

WALKS LIKE A MAN

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. KRAMER COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL - NIGHT

The hospital is only a few years old. It's a six story structure, with an overhang for the emergency room department on one side.

It's raining really hard, with some lightning.

There are a few ambulances in the parking lot, along with a couple of police cars. A security guard stands near the entrance.

INT. KRAMER COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL, ICU, NURSE'S STATION - NIGHT

It's quiet, only the hum of the air conditioner, and the muted beeping of cardiac monitors when one gets close to a patient's room.

The rooms are arranged so that the nurse at the station can see into each of them.

The counter for the nurse's station has a shelf set up beneath the eye-line of any visitors with a row of monitors showing the vitals for the patient in each occupied room.

Sitting at the station is LAURA HANSON (38, Caucasian), Registered Nurse, wearing scrubs.

Laura has a patient's chart open on the desk in front of her, making notes in it with a pen.

CAROL (35, Caucasian), another RN, also wearing scrubs, enters, coming over to the nurse's station.

CAROL

I wasn't expecting to see you tonight.

LAURA

Why not?

CAROL

I saw the news. They found him.

LAURA

We don't know that it's him. Not yet.

CAROL
Who else could it be?

LAURA
They find skeletal remains in the forest all the time, Carol. It could be a drifter. Hell, it could be Native American, hundreds of years old.

CAROL
Yeah. Right.

Carol goes around the counter to sit next to Laura.

CAROL (CONT'D)
When will the cops know for sure?

LAURA
Probably in a day or so. There's an expert they want to bring in.

CAROL
God, Laura, I'm so sorry. I know this is hard for you, having to wait.

LAURA
I've waited eight years. I can wait another day or so.

CAROL
Yeah. I guess that's one way to look at it.

INT. KRAMER GENERAL ICU PATIENT'S ROOM - NIGHT

The patient in the bed is an elderly man, HOPKINS (88, African American, frail), who is in a coma. He's attached to monitors, a breathing tube attached to a tracheotomy on his throat.

A respirator nearby breathes for him. A beeping cardiac monitor shows his heartbeat at the bedside. IV bottles drip into tubes.

Catheters emerge from beneath the sheets, carrying away his urine and fecal waste.

Laura sits in a chair in the room. She's holding a pencil and a newspaper, turned to the crossword puzzle, draped over a patient's chart to provide a surface to bear down on.

LAURA
 Okay, four down. Four letters.
 "Type size or eating disorder."
 Third letter is a 'C.' Oh. Pica.

She writes the answer on the puzzle.

INT. KRAMER GENERAL HOSPITAL ICU NURSE'S STATION - NIGHT

Laura is gathering her coat, purse, and cell phone, getting ready to leave. Carol is sitting at the nurse's station.

LAURA
 Well, I guess that's it for me
 tonight.

CAROL
 Are you okay? Really?

LAURA
 I'm fine.

CAROL
 I'm just asking because

Carol nods towards Hopkins's room.

LAURA
 Mr. Hopkins? I talked to him before
 his second infarct. He's really
 nice. And nobody's been by to visit
 him.

CAROL
 Still

LAURA
 They'll probably be unplugging him
 in the next few days. I didn't want
 him to die alone. So I decided to
 spend a little time with him while
 I was on break. Let him hear a
 human voice that isn't calling out
 vitals or giving orders for a
 change. Is that so bad?

CAROL
 No. Not at all. Just ... I know
 it's been really hard for you.

LAURA
 It's hard for everybody.

Carol sighs, giving up.

CAROL

You call me, okay? You don't need a particular reason to, either.

LAURA

I'm sorry for being such an asshole to you. And thanks. For everything.

CAROL

No problem. Get some rest.

LAURA

I'll try.

Laura exits. Carol watches her leave, then shakes her head, dragging a computer keyboard over and typing.

EXT. LAURA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

It's a two story house in a quiet suburban neighborhood. There are some minor maintenance issues that need to be addressed and the lawn needs mowing.

It's still raining, but not quite as hard as earlier.

Parked in the yard next to the car port is another car, older than the one Laura's driving as she parks under the car port.

Motion detectors turn on the light. She sits in the sudden brightness, no expression on her face.

Then she takes a deep breath and gets out, going to the side door, eyes in hand.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Laura unlocks the door and enters, flipping on the lights, tossing her keys and purse on the nearby counter.

The kitchen is messy, with unwashed dishes and an overflowing trash can. A lot of the trash is cartons used for pizza delivery. There are also some Chinese food containers.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, BATHROOM - NIGHT

The bathroom is equally messy. The sink and toilet need a good scrubbing, as does the bath tub.

Laura has changed into a T-shirt and pajama bottoms. She's brushing her teeth, looking at herself in the mirror on the front of the medicine cabinet.

She opens the cabinet and takes about a half-full bottle of Prozac as she continues to brush.

She looks at the label, opens the bottle with the toothbrush still in her mouth, and looks at the pills inside. Then she takes out a pill and places it on the counter, puts the cap back on the bottle and puts it back into the cabinet.

She rinses and spits before popping the pill into her mouth and washing it down with water from her cup.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Laura opens the freezer and takes out a bottle of gin. She looks around for a glass and takes a short, dirty one out of the sink.

She rinses it out quickly and then fills the glass with gin, recapping and putting the bottle back in the freezer.

She takes the glass and exits.

LIVING ROOM

The living room is also full of old pizza boxes and other clutter.

On the wall are several framed pictures of birds. There's also a wedding photo, of Laura and EARLY TWENTIES WALTER (23, Caucasian), along with several pictures of Laura posing with different animals.

A couple of framed magazine covers are also there, pictures of birds in their natural habitat. These were taken by Walter.

There's another picture of YOUNG LAURA (17), YOUNG WALTER (17), and YOUNG PHILIP (17, Caucasian, tall and clueless), all of them wearing high school graduation gowns. They're throwing their caps in the air.

There's a framed picture of MID-TWENTIES PHILLIP (25), taken while he was out on a boat on a lake, holding up a huge, freshly-caught large-mouth bass.

Laura sits on the couch, holding her glass of gin. The TV is showing an infomercial that she's ignoring.

On the coffee table in front of the couch, next to a laptop computer, is a framed picture of her husband, WALTER HANSON (30), taken outdoors.

On one of his forearms is a long and heavy glove, to protect his arm from the fearsome talons of the large great horned owl perched there. Walter looks like he thinks this is extremely cool.

Laura's looking at the picture.

LAURA

It was a pretty good night tonight at work. I had a nice conversation with Carol. She's worried about me.

She takes a big gulp of gin and coughs a little bit.

LAURA (CONT'D)

She's just being a friend. I'm lucky to have her. I'm lucky to have Phil, too, I guess. He tries so hard. He can't help it that he's ... like he is.

Laura chuckles and takes another slug of gin.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Those geese are still here. They didn't migrate. Maybe it's climate change or something.

She takes another gulp. The glass is almost empty.

LAURA (CONT'D)

And it won't stop raining! Jesus fucking Christ! Every day it comes down in sheets! Climate change again, I guess.

She finishes off the last of the gin, putting the glass on the coffee table. She's struggling against tears and starts losing the battle.

LAURA (CONT'D)

I miss you so fucking much. I don't know if I want them to tell me that it's you they found or that it isn't.

She leans back on the couch and weeps.

LATER

Sunlight is streaming through the windows.

Laura has slept on the couch. On the coffee table is the glass she was drinking from.

The TV is showing a morning news show. Laura is out cold, ignoring it.

The front doorbell rings. It rings again. Then there's an insistent knocking.

Laura stirs, finally staggering to her feet and going to the front door.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Okay, okay! I'm coming! Jesus.

She opens the door, squinting in the bright light.

Standing at the door are Detectives PATRICIA YOUNG (33, Caucasian) and DUANE CARTER (34, African American).

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Ms. Hanson? I'm so sorry to bother you so early.

LAURA

It's okay, Detective ... Young?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Yes. I'm glad you remember me.

LAURA

Yeah, you were working Walt's ... oh, my God.

DETECTIVE CARTER

I'm Detective Duane Carter, Ms. Hanson. May we come in?

LAURA

Yeah. Sure.

Laura turns and walks back over to the couch and sits heavily down on it as the two detectives enter.

She's staring off into space, no expression on her face, bracing herself.

Carter closes the door and they come in, Young sitting next to Laura on the couch, Carter sitting in a chair.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

I'm afraid we have some bad news.

LAURA

It's Walter.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Yes. The specialist we brought in compared the dental records against the teeth in the skeletal remains that were found a few days ago and it was a positive match.

Laura takes a slow breath. Her voice is shuddery, evidence of tears fighting to be shed.

LAURA

Do you know what happened? How he died?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Not yet. The Medical Examiner will examine the remains to see if he can make a determination but with skeletal remains, I'm sure you know, it can be difficult. We did determine that the remains are several years old. Whatever happened to him probably happened around the time he went missing.

LAURA

Yeah. I guess that's good to know.

Laura's stoic facade is cracking. She takes another deep breath, almost regaining her composure.

LAURA (CONT'D)

How sure are you that it's him?

DETECTIVE CARTER

Historically, the method we used is ninety-nine point ninety-seven percent accurate. Our expert said he was extremely comfortable identifying the remains as belonging to Walter.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

I'm so sorry, Laura.

LAURA

I guess I'm not surprised. Walt would never leave like that. He'd never just disappear and not call or write or anything.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

The M.E. (Medical Examiner) will keep the remains until we can determine cause of death. When he's done he'll release them to whatever funeral home you identify as handling the final arrangements.

LAURA

Okay.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Is there anybody we can call for you? Anything we can do?

LAURA

No. There's nothing ... nothing anybody can do. Thank you. I need to get dressed now.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

You still have my number?

LAURA

Yes. It's in my contacts.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Good. Call me if you think of anything that might be helpful, or even if you just want to talk.

LAURA

I will. Thank you.

The detectives get up and head for the door. When they get there they pause.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

I'll call you in a few days to check on you, and I'll keep you posted about anything we find out.

LAURA

Thank you, Detective.

The two detectives see themselves out, closing the front door, leaving Laura sitting on the couch alone.

She stares straight ahead, tears beginning to stream down her face. She looks at the picture of Walter and starts crying again.

She picks up the phone and makes a call.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 Hey, Phil. Yeah. Could you come
 over? Right now? Thank you.

She disconnects the call and puts the phone on the coffee table.

LAURA (CONT'D)
 (whispering)
 Hurry.

LATER

Laura is still on the couch when there's a knock on the side door in the kitchen. She gets up and exits towards it.

KITCHEN

Visible through the window in the door is PHIL (35). Laura opens the door and he stands there, looking her over.

PHIL
 It was ... you heard ...

Laura nods, tears starting again. Phil enters the kitchen and hugs her tightly, tears streaming down his face, too.

PHIL (CONT'D)
 I was hoping. I was praying.

He cries along with her as he continues to hold her.

INT. BRADWELL BROTHERS FUNERAL HOME, BUSINESS OFFICE - DAY

It's a nice, comfortable office, with solid-looking bookshelves full of books and portfolios, and framed photos of peaceful landscapes.

Sitting in the visitor's chairs are Laura -- now wearing a T-shirt and jogging pants she'd thrown on -- and Phil.

LAURA
 This place looks nice.

PHIL
 For a funeral home.

Laura manages a tired chuckle. The door opens and LANGFORD BRADWELL (34, Caucasian) enters.

LANGFORD

Hello, Ms. Hanson. (shakes Laura's hand.) And ... (looks at Phil)

PHIL

Phil Bailey. I'm a friend.

They shake hands.

LANGFORD

Ah. It's so good to have friends during a time like this.

LAURA

Yes. It is.

Langford settles behind the desk.

LANGFORD

Let me extend my deepest condolences. We pride ourselves on making it as easy as possible for our clients, so you can focus on mourning your loved one and not on making arrangements. I understand that the Medical Examiner still has possession of the remains?

LAURA

Yes.

LANGFORD

Okay, I'll need you to sign a waiver to authorize us to take possession of the remains when the M.E. releases them. After that, what would you like for us to do? I understand that you haven't already purchased a plot in a cemetery or anything like that. We have available slots in some prime mausoleums, along with plots in some of the most beautiful cemeteries in the area.

LAURA

Walt wanted to be cremated.

LANGFORD

Sure. We can handle that. Let me get the book so we can start the paperwork. And we'll need to discuss any life insurance payments

...

EXT. LAURA'S HOUSE - DAY

Phil and Laura are in Phil's old pickup.

Phil drives up and parks in the driveway behind Laura's car, which is still parked on the car port.

It's cloudy, and thunder can be heard rumbling in the distance.

INT./EXT. PHIL'S TRUCK - DAY

LAURA

I'm glad that's over.

PHIL

Yeah. One less thing to worry about.

Phil reaches to turn the ignition off but Laura reaches over touches his hand, stopping him.

LAURA

I'm sorry, Phil. I know you want to stay but I really want to be alone for a while.

PHIL

Are you sure?

LAURA

Yeah. I'm sure.

Laura gets out of the truck. Phil rolls down the window as she heads for the side door to the house.

PHIL

Call me in a little while, okay? Or I'm coming back over.

LAURA

Okay. Thank you, Phil.

Phil backs out of the driveway as Laura gets out her keys and unlocks the side door.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - DAY

Laura enters, on autopilot, putting her purse on the counter before a movement catches her eye.

It's WALTER (30), who had just come in from the living room.

She looks at him, moving her mouth but with no words coming out. She drops her keys.

WALTER
What's wrong?

She rushes him, pounding on his chest as he automatically wraps his arms around her.

LAURA
You're dead!

WALTER
What? I'm right here! What are you talking about?

LAURA
You're dead! You're dead!

WALTER
I'm not dead, Baby!

He holds her and she stops struggling, finally relaxing in his embrace, crying.

EXT. LAKE RONA (EIGHT YEARS AGO) - DAY

The lake is nestled in a valley, mountains all around. There are a few ducks on the water, and a couple of boats with people fishing.

Nearby is a brisk waterfall.

A tent has been set up here by Walter and Phillip. They are sitting outside the tent, Phillip looking over some fishing gear and drinking a can of beer.

Walter's car is parked nearby -- it's the same car parked next to Laura's car port. There is a big cooler next to Phil.

Walter has his photography gear spread out on a blanket in front of him. He's looking it over while he makes a call on a flip phone.

Walter hears an answering machine greeting, then a tone.

WALTER
Hey, babe. We made it okay, and got the tent set up. I wish you could be here. Anyway, I should be able to get some good shots tomorrow morning, and me and Phil will spend the rest of the day fishing.

PHIL
And drinking!

WALTER
Anyway, I'll see you day after
tomorrow. Love you!

He disconnects the call.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Give me one of those, will you?

Phillip digs in the cooler, grabbing a can and tossing it to him.

PHIL
You got some catching up to do, my
man.

WALTER
I'm not even going to try, you
alcoholic asshole.

Walter opens the beer and takes a swig.

INT. LAKE RONA, WALTER'S TENT (EIGHT YEARS AGO) - NIGHT

Walter is lying on the floor of the tent wrapped in a sleeping bag. His cameras and gear are carefully stowed. Walt is tossing and turning, unable to sleep.

Phil is wrapped up in a sleeping bag nearby. He's snoring, dead to the world.

There's a bright flash of light on one side of the tent, then another. Walter tries to ignore it but it continues.

It's a bit like lightning but there is no thunder.

WALTER
Goddammit. I'm going to talk to
them. Hey. Hey! Asshole!

He tosses an empty beer can at Phil, who snorts and rolls over, going back to sleep.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Useless fucker.

Walter gets up and grabs an electric lantern, turning it on and exiting the tent.

EXT. LAKE RONA (EIGHT YEARS AGO) - NIGHT

WALTER

Hello? We're trying to sleep over here.

There is no reply.

He sees another bright flash and heads towards it. It seems to be from a hundred yards or so away, at the base of a mountain.

He walks towards it.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE (EIGHT YEARS AGO) - NIGHT

The light is coming from inside a cave. Walter pauses at the entrance, looking inside.

Then there's another flash of light that comes from the back of the cave

WALTER

Hello? Is anybody there?

Now there's a faint buzzing noise that sounds electronic. Walter goes inside the cave.

INT. CAVE ENTRANCE (EIGHT YEARS AGO) - NIGHT

The cave is large enough for him to stand up comfortably, and goes a few feet back before narrowing into a tunnel. The walls of the cave are covered with graffiti and the floor is littered with trash.

There is no graffiti on the tunnel walls, no trash on the floor.

The flashing light is coming from up that tunnel. Walter goes on into it.

INT. UNDERGROUND RIVER (EIGHT YEARS AGO) - NIGHT

There's a roar of water in a large chamber with a roof that vanishes into darkness, a fast-flowing river running through the middle of the floor.

There is a big amorphous blob in the water that is flickering with a strange and intensely bright luminescence, the source of the light Walter had seen.

Other tunnels branch out from this area. The strange buzzing noise is louder, and the walls of the chamber are damp.

As Walter approaches the flashing light steadies into a pulsing glow, not as bright as the flashes.

The buzzing sound becomes urgent and insistent.

WALTER

Hello? Is anybody there?

He steps further into the chamber.

There's something on the cave wall nearby, a dark spot that could have been a cocoon for some creature that is roughly the size of a large man.

The cocoon is opened and empty. When he touches it he finds it's brittle enough to break in his hands.

The interior, inside the part that looks broken, is moist and slimy.

Walter spins around quickly as if he heard something, his lantern along with the flickering from the water making crazy shadows on the wall.

Walter turns around as if he heard something

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM (PRESENT DAY) - NIGHT

Laura and Walter are sitting on the couch.

LAURA

You don't remember anything else?

WALTER

No. I just woke up in some kind of cocoon thing, stuck to the wall of that cavern. I was able to break free. When I came out the campsite was gone, along with the car. I had to hitch a ride. What happened? I tried to call you but your cell phone has been disconnected. How did my car get here? And when did we get a new TV?

LAURA

You really don't know?

WALTER

Don't know what?

LAURA

You've been gone for eight years.

WALTER

That's not possible.

LAURA

Eight fucking years. Somebody stole my phone four years ago so I got a new one and changed my number. And some hunters found your skeleton in some trees near the lake a couple of days ago. The cops just told me today they identified it as you.

WALTER

What? How?

LAURA

Dental records.

WALTER

They made a mistake.

LAURA

They don't make mistakes like that.

WALTER

It looks like they do.

Laura is still shaken. She gets up, pacing nervously around the room.

LAURA

Why are you lying to me?

WALTER

I'm not lying.

LAURA

Yes, you are. I've been in that cave. I went in there a dozen times, looking for you. There's no tunnel in the back. No cavern.

WALTER

There's a cavern, a tunnel, an underground river

Laura sits back down next to him on the couch.

LAURA

I swear, baby. I looked for you. I searched high and low.

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

Phil did, too. He felt like it was his fault, that he got so drunk he wasn't able to help and you got into some kind of trouble.

WALTER

My God. Eight years?

LAURA

Yes.

Laura her phone and opens her contacts, looking through them.

WALTER

What are you doing?

LAURA

I'm calling Detective Young. She was working your case.

Walter touches her arm, lowering it.

WALTER

Don't call her.

LAURA

Why not?

WALTER

Just don't. Not yet. I mean, they'll probably think I'm up to something, right? They won't believe me.

LAURA

Dammit, Walter. Just ... dammit.

WALTER

Aren't you happy they were wrong?

LAURA

Yeah. I'm so happy that it scares me. I'm having trouble believing it.

WALTER

This isn't a reason for you to be upset, baby. I'm here. Safe and sound.

LAURA

I know. It's just such a shock.

WALTER

I'm so sorry. God. What you must have gone through.

LAURA

Well, it's over now, right? You're home. Let's not worry about how right now.

WALTER

That sounds like a good idea to me.

There's a knock on the kitchen door.

PHIL (O.S.)

Laura? You there?

WALTER

(whispering)
Is that Phil?

LAURA

(Whispering)
Yes.

PHIL (O.S.)

I just wanted to double-check. Are you sure you're all right?

LAURA

(whispering)
Can I at least tell him?

WALTER

(whispering)
No. Not yet.

PHIL (O.S.)

Laura?

LAURA

Coming! (whispering) If you don't want him to know, go to the bedroom and be really still.

Walter exits, heading upstairs for the bedroom.

Laura waits for him to leave before opening the door.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM

The bedroom is small and cozy, the bed made.

Walter enters quietly, glances around, then lies down on the bed.

He can still clearly hear Laura and Phil.

LAURA (O.S.)
Hi. Sorry.

PHIL (O.S.)
I just got up the street and decided that maybe I needed to circle back and check on your again, you know?

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

Laura has let Phil inside the kitchen but no further. She picks her keys up off the floor and hangs them on a rack.

LAURA
I swear, I'm okay. I think I need to be alone right now.

PHIL
Are you sure? You know you don't have to be afraid to ask for help if you need it.

LAURA
Yeah. I know.

INTERCUT - WALTER EAVESDROPPING ON PHIL AND LAURA

PHIL
Is somebody else here?

LAURA
No.

PHIL
I could swear I heard somebody going up the stairs.

LAURA
It's probably just the house settling.

PHIL
Are you sure you don't want me to stay?

LAURA
I'm sure. Really, I need some time
to myself.

PHIL
Okay. I'll head on back home, then.
Call me if you need me for
anything.

LAURA
I'll do that.

Walter's hand tightens around the covers on the bed, making a
fist.

PHIL
I'll come back tomorrow, okay?

LAURA
Sure.

He kisses her, going for her lips, but she turns her head and
offers him her cheek.

Phil takes what he's offered before exiting.

At the sound of the door closing Walter gets up and goes
downstairs.

KITCHEN

WALTER
So, you and Phil?

LAURA
Nothing has happened between him
and me.

WALTER
Sounds like he wants something to
happen.

LAURA
He took it really hard. He spent
days camping up there, looking for
you. He searched everywhere. And he
hasn't touched a drop of alcohol
since that night.

WALTER
Really?

LAURA

Really. Let me call Detective Young. She'll know what to do. She'll be overjoyed that you're still alive.

WALTER

What's the hurry? You can tell her tomorrow. Or the day after.

LAURA

Walt --

Walter's voice takes on an odd characteristic, slightly echoing and a little deeper in tone than it was before.

WALTER

Trust me. Please?

Laura's eyes glaze over slightly and she moves and speaks like she's under the influence of a mild sedative.

LAURA

Oh, okay. I can't say no to you. Never could.

WALTER

Thank you. And speaking of that ...

.

In answer Walter pulls her close and starts kissing her. After a moment of resistance she gives in to his embrace.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

There's a thunderstorm going on outside, with heavy rain and frequent lightning.

Laura is asleep and naked in bed, post-coital. Walter is naked, too, as he stands next to the bed and looks at her.

He reaches over and gently shakes her, trying to rouse her, and she just rolls over and goes back to sleep.

He stands up, looking down at her and smiling.

WALTER POV: The room is in black-and-white, except for Laura, who is in full color. His view of her is like infrared -- there's a hotspot outlining her ribcage and her spine. The hotspot is shifting slightly, as if settling in.

There's something growing in her abdomen, a tiny blob that has tendrils extending throughout Laura's body.

He turns to face the dresser, looking at himself in the mirror. He can hear the buzzing sound from the cave again.

He starts getting dressed.

EXT. LAURA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Walter emerges from the house.

He goes over to his car, getting in the driver's side and cranking it, then backing out of the driveway.

It's still raining.

INT. MORGUE AUTOPSY SUITE - NIGHT

Dr. FRED CERTAN (55, African American), the county Medical Examiner, is standing over a table where a weathered-looking human skeleton has been laid out.

Detective Young and Detective Carter enter.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
What did you find, Fred?

DR. CERTAN
There's a thin layer of some sort of organic compound covering these remains. It's highly corrosive.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Any ideas as to what it is?

DR. CERTAN
No. Perhaps it was a chemical agent used remove the soft tissue.

Dr. Certan takes a cotton swab and runs it along a bone, then holds it up to Detective Young's face, near her nose.

DR. CERTAN (CONT'D)
Here. Take a whiff.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
(taking a whiff)
What -- oh, God.

He offers it to Carter who takes a whiff and makes a face indicating he didn't find it very pleasant, either.

DETECTIVE YOUNG (CONT'D)
Have you ever smelled anything like
that before?

DR. CERTAN
No. I don't recall encountering
anything similar. I've sent a
sample to the CDC for analysis.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
I'm guessing you didn't find --

DR. CERTAN
I found nothing to indicate cause
of death. So far.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Well, let us know.

DR. CERTAN
You'll be my first call, Detective.

Young and Carter leave the suite and Certan gets back to his
examination.

INT./EXT. WALT'S CAR - NIGHT

Walter's driving around, slowing whenever he sees anyone
walking the otherwise deserted streets.

WALT'S POV: the world is in black-and-white.

There's a faint but insistent buzzing sound.

EXT. PHILLIP BAILEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

In a residential neighborhood Walter is parked at the curb,
up and across the street from a one-story house with an old
pickup truck in the driveway.

INTERCUT - WALT'S CAR AND PHILLIP'S HOUSE

Walter has positioned the side mirror of his car where he can
see the house's porch. Sitting in an old lawn chair on the
porch is Phillip, smoking a cigarette.

Walter stares at him until Phillip flicks the cigarette butt
off into the front yard, and goes back inside.

Walter cranks the car and drives away.

INT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The rain has stopped for now. There are puddles here and there, and rumbles of thunder. RONNIE (16, Caucasian, male), a prostitute, is standing there trying to hustle up some more business.

It's late and there is no traffic.

INT./EXT. WALTER'S CAR - NIGHT

Walt is parked on the street, watching Ronnie. He has cracked the driver's side window.

Walt cracks the window a little more and leans towards it, inhaling slowly and deeply. He stares at Ronnie and he starts hearing the buzzing.

WALTER POV: The world is in black-and-white except for Ronnie, who is in bright, living color.

Walt's hands start shaking and he stares at them until they stop.

While Walt was watching his hands Ronnie has come over to his car.

RONNIE
Hey, mister, you okay?

Walter jumps, startled. The buzzing abruptly stops.

WALTER
Huh? What did you say?

RONNIE
Are you okay?

Walt rolls down the window the rest of the way.

WALTER
Sorry. I'm okay.

RONNIE
Are you looking for a little company?

WALTER
What? Oh. No. Nothing like that.

RONNIE
Are you sure?

WALTER
Yeah. Sorry.

The young man begins walking away, a smirk on his face.

WALTER (CONT'D)
Hey! Wait! You know what? Maybe I
am.

The young man turns and walks back to the car, going over to
the passenger's side.

He gets in and looks at Walter for a moment as he buckles up.

RONNIE
Oh, it's fifty bucks. I need it up
front, too.

WALTER
Fifty?

RONNIE
Yeah. Sorry.

WALTER
Uh -- can we go to an ATM?

RONNIE
Sure. Just don't get squirrely on
me, okay? It's been a long night.
I'd hate to have to cut you.

Walter's voice gets deeper and echoing again.

WALTER
You won't have to do anything like
that.

Ronnie acts like Laura, as if he'd been drugged.

RONNIE
You know what? I think I believe
you. My name's Ronnie. What's
yours?

WALTER
Uh --

RONNIE
It's okay if you don't want to tell
me.

WALTER
Walter.

RONNIE
 Okay. Hi, Walter. I know a place
 where we can have some privacy.

Walter now has the knowing smile as he drives away with
 Ronnie and the street is now completely deserted and quiet.

INT. CAROL'S APARTMENT, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The room is small but neat. The lights are off.

Someone starts ringing the doorbell insistently and Carol
 enters, wearing a robe over the oversized T-shirt and pajama
 bottoms she was sleeping in.

She pauses at the door, looking through the peep hole.

She opens the door to find Laura standing there.

Laura looks rough, like she'd thrown on some clothes after
 waking up.

LATER

Laura's sitting on the couch. Carol enters, carrying a cup of
 tea that she puts on the coffee table in front of Laura.

CAROL
 So, you're sure it was him?

LAURA
 It looks like him, and smells like
 him. It even ... well, it even has
 sex like him.

CAROL
 This is so weird.

LAURA
 Remember that automobile accident I
 had, about ten years ago? Where I
 got that cut on my head?

CAROL
 I remember.

LAURA
 I was in Walt's car, and all of his
 photography stuff was in it. When I
 called him to tell him about it,
 you know what the first thing he
 asked me was?

(MORE)

LAURA (CONT'D)

Not, am I okay, or even what kind of shape was the car in. He asked about his Goddamned camera equipment.

CAROL

I'd have snatched a knot in his ass.

LAURA

Oh, I did. Anyway, about a year after he disappeared I got a good offer on his equipment. I sold it. And Walt didn't say the first thing about it tonight.

CAROL

Really? Maybe he just didn't --

LAURA

When he got home the first thing he would have done is turn the house upside down looking for that stuff. And, when I woke up tonight he was gone. He took his car and left. I was out looking for him when I drove by here and decided to stop.

CAROL

What do you think is going on?

LAURA

I don't know. What do I do?

CAROL

Call the cops. Let them sort it out.

LAURA

No! I promised him I wouldn't.

CAROL

Well, that right there should tell you he's hiding something.

LAURA

He's my husband, Carol.

CAROL

Is he?

LAURA

Yes. I mean, it has to be him, right?

CAROL
Who else would it be?

LAURA
Exactly. Even though

CAROL
Even though what?

LAURA
Well ... he didn't taste quite
right.

CAROL
Oh, God, I didn't need to hear
that.

LAURA
Sorry. But it's true. There's this
weird aftertaste, like --

CAROL
Okay, I get it! Jesus.

LAURA
Promise me you won't tell anybody
about this.

CAROL
Sure, but --

LAURA
Promise me. Please?

CAROL
Okay. Sure. But you owe me. And you
call the cops the second you think
he's getting crazy on you. Got me?

LAURA
Sure.

Laura gets up and gets out her keys.

CAROL
You're leaving?

LAURA
I think I need to get home in case
he comes back.

CAROL
Maybe you should just stay here.

LAURA

No. Talking about it with you helped, but I think I need to be home.

CAROL

Okay. Well, let me know if anything comes up.

LAURA

I will.

Laura exits. Carol closes the door behind her.

CAROL

(whispering)
Jesus fucking Christ.

INT./EXT. LAURA'S CAR - NIGHT

The rain has eased off, down to a drizzle. Laura drives up to park under the car port.

Walter's car is back, parked in it's usual spot.

Next door, Laura's neighbor JUNE (16, Caucasian) is out in her front yard, holding a leash and a flashlight.

JUNE

Brutus! Here, boy! Brutus? This isn't funny!

Laura goes inside the house.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

Laura drops her keys and purse on the counter just inside the door.

LAURA

Walt?

WALTER (O.S.)

In the bedroom.

She exits, going to the stairs.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

The lights are out, though the TV atop the dresser is on and showing a late-night talk show.

Walter is lying there in a T-shirt and jogging pants, holding the remote.

Laura enters.

LAURA
Where did you go?

WALTER
I went out for a little drive. To clear my head. Thank you for taking care of the car.

LAURA
You couldn't tell me you were going?

WALTER
I wanted to let you sleep.

LAURA
I -- what's that smell?

WALTER
Smell?

LAURA
You don't smell it? Some sort of acidic smell?

WALTER
No. Come here.

LAURA
No. We're not doing that again.

WALTER
We have a lot of catching up to do. Unless you've been getting it from someone else.

LAURA
You know I wouldn't do that.

WALTER
I would understand. I just disappeared, without a word. For all you knew I really was dead.

LAURA
I didn't cheat on you.

WALTER
So you and Phil never

LAURA

No! God, Walt! Maybe you should sleep on the couch. Or maybe I should.

WALTER

Where did you go?

LAURA

I was out looking for you.

WALTER

I see. How do you feel?

LAURA

What?

WALTER

Do you feel okay?

LAURA

I don't ... now that you mention it I feel strange. Like I'm getting sick.

Walter's voice changes again.

WALTER

Maybe you should relax a while.

Laura's movements become sluggish, her eyes glassy, like she's been drugged.

LAURA

I think I should relax a while.

WALTER

Why don't you come to bed now?

LAURA

I'm coming to bed now.

Laura walks like she's in a trance to the bed and climbs into it. Walter pulls her into an embrace and kisses her gently on her forehead.

WALTER

(whispering)

It's going to be okay, baby. Just you wait and see.

INT. CDC MIDWEST REGIONAL DIRECTOR DANVERS' OFFICE - NIGHT

It's a cluttered office, lots of hard copy reports, books, note pads. There's a window with a view of the city.

Midwest Region Director BEN DANVERS, MD, (45, African American) sits behind the desk, reading a printed report. The intercom on his phone beeps, his SECRETARY (30, female, Caucasian) calling.

SECRETARY (O.S.)
(filtered)
Dr. Danvers? She's here.

Danvers sighs. He reaches over and pushes the button on his phone to respond.

DANVERS
Okay. Send her in.

He leans back in his chair, crossing his arms across his chest.

Dr. HANNAH ROGERS (35, Caucasian) enters, looking flustered and angry. She slams the door behind her.

ROGERS
When were you going to tell me?

DANVERS
Calm down, Dr. Rogers. Tell you what?

ROGERS
There's been another one. Like Montana. Like Elk Horn.

DANVERS
How did you find out about that?

ROGERS
I'm right.

DANVERS
Yeah. You're right.

He turns the report he was reading around on his desk and slides it over to the other side. Rogers comes over and looks it over.

ROGERS
I knew it.

DANVERS

It's an old case. At least eight years.

ROGERS

But just coming to light now.

DANVERS

Hannah, you need to let this go.

ROGERS

Let me talk to the detectives investigating this case. Or at least the medical examiner.

DANVERS

No. No way.

ROGERS

Why not?

DANVERS

You know why not.

ROGERS

Elk Horn was an isolated community, even more isolated because of a record-setting blizzard. There were sixteen people, and the same thing happened to all of them. A one hundred percent occurrence rate. Now this (indicates report) happens in a much larger community. Hundreds of thousands of people live there. Millions more in the surrounding area. Old case or not, do you really think we can take the chance that this won't continue to happen? That it won't spread out to involve who knows how many more people?

DANVERS

Hannah --

ROGERS

Let me go there and talk to the investigating officers and the medical examiner. Maybe I can help.

Danvers sighs again.

DANVERS

No, Hannah.

ROGERS
You can't just disregard --

DANVERS
Yes, I can. I went to bat for you
after Elk Horn. You pursue this I
won't be able to protect you any
more.

ROGERS
But Ben --

DANVERS
Go home. It's late.

ROGERS
Ben --

DANVERS
Go. Home. And don't speak to me, or
anybody else, about this.

ROGERS
But --

DANVERS
Remember what you promised me after
your little demonstration in the
H.H.S. Secretary's office after Elk
Horn?

ROGERS
I really think --

DANVERS
What did you promise me, Hannah?

ROGERS
(quietly)
No repeat performances.

DANVERS
What? I didn't catch that.

ROGERS
(louder)
No repeat performances.

DANVERS
Right. So, forget this case. You've
got plenty of other work to do.
Work that won't destroy your career
and will actually help people.

ROGERS

Right.

DANVERS

So, go home, get some sleep, then come back refreshed and ready to dive into work that actually means something. Okay?

ROGERS

Okay. Sure.

Rogers exits. Danvers leans forward, rubbing his temples. Then he reaches over and hits the intercom button on his phone.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

(filtered)

Yes, Dr. Danvers?

DANVERS

I've left for the day.

SECRETARY (O.S.)

(filtered)

Understood.

Danvers turns off the comm and leans back in his chair, his eyes closed, rubbing his temples.

EXT. ALLEY NEXT TO CISCO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The alley is lined with overfilled garbage cans from the restaurants on either side.

There's a neatly folded stack of clothing being examined by OFFICER BENNETT (30). It's the clothes Ronnie was wearing.

Other officers and forensic techs are busy working in the alley, taking pictures and samples.

A few feet away from the clothing is a human skeleton, moist and leaning against the wall. It is Ronnie-sized.

Dr. Certan is squatting next to it, looking it over.

Detective Young and Detective Carter enter, stopping when they see the skeleton. Around them a number of forensic techs and officers are gathering evidence.

Young and Carter are putting on latex gloves.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Damn.

DR. CERTAN

Now you see why I called you.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Any ideas as to who it is?

DR. CERTAN

Male. Late teens, early twenties. Obviously I can't do my usual tests to determine time of death, but I did notice something. Come take a look. Or a sniff.

They both squat next to the body.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What -- oh. Shit.

DR. CERTAN

You smell it?

DETECTIVE CARTER

Smell -- damn. Yeah.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

It's a lot stronger here.

DR. CERTAN

It's probably fresher. Not a lot of mess so whatever was done to him was done elsewhere and this was dumped here.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

No shit.

DETECTIVE CARTER

What the hell is going on here, Fred?

DR. CERTAN

You're the detectives.

Officer Bennett approaches, holding a wallet.

OFFICER BENNETT

Found this just over there in a pair of pants. Along with a shirt and underwear. And shoes. And a smart phone.

He hands the wallet to Detective Young, who opens it up and pulls out a driver's license.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Ronald Terrance James. Looks like he's sixteen. No money. Home address is in Kentucky. We may be looking at a runaway.

DETECTIVE CARTER

If that was the case he may have been hustling to survive.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

I don't doubt it.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Are you sure that belongs to this guy?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

It would be a hell of a coincidence if it didn't, wouldn't it?

DETECTIVE CARTER

Yeah.

DR. CERTAN

Well, let me get him back to the office so I can give him a good going over.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Give us a call the second you have something, Fred.

DR. CERTAN

Will do.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Let's see if we can find any security cam footage of the alley. Maybe he got sloppy and we'll have pictures.

DETECTIVE CARTER

What the hell?

Carter is looking at the brick wall above the skeleton.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What?

Carter goes over to it, shining his flashlight on a section over the skeleton. He leans forward slightly and sniffs, then jerks his head away.

DETECTIVE CARTER
There's a trail of the same
substance that's on the body. At
least it smells the same.

The substance on the wall glistens slightly under his flashlight beam. He shines it up the wall, moving it around.

DETECTIVE CARTER (CONT'D)
Looks like it goes all the way up
to the roof.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
What do you think it is?

DETECTIVE CARTER
You're asking me?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
You just seemed so insightful all
of the sudden.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Hell, maybe he's a slug or
something.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Whatever it is, I bet it's there
because he climbed down from the
roof and left the body and the
clothes here, then climbed back up.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Which means we probably won't be
seeing him on any security cam
footage.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
So fucking weird. Well, let's check
security cams anyway.

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE, BEDROOM - NIGHT

Outside it is raining again, with lightning and thunder.

The bedroom is dark, and Laura is in the bed, tossing and turning. She's sweating.

She finally sits up.

Walter is not in bed next to her.

LAURA

Walter?

She gets out of bed and exits.

HALLWAY

It's dark here, too, illuminated by occasional flashes of lightning.

The door to the bathroom, just up the hall, is open a crack, though the light is not on. The shower is running.

She pushes open the door.

BATHROOM

It's extremely steamy. Laura enters, sees that someone is in the shower.

There's a faint noise she can barely hear over the sound of the water. It sounds like heavy breathing, gasping and moaning.

Laura flips on the light.

The barely visible silhouette of the person in the shower is oddly shaped. It could be a man but with far too many arms and legs.

She approaches the shower curtain and reaches out to pull it back.

LAURA (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Walter?

She snatches the curtain open and screams at what she sees
... .

BEDROOM

Laura is in bed. She abruptly sits up in the darkened bedroom.

She's sweating, and breathing heavily. She reaches to the other side of the bed.

It's empty. Walter is gone.

She unsteadily gets to her feet, and finds a note left for her on the dresser.

It says, "BE BACK SOON. DON'T WORRY. W."

She puts the note back down and then sniffs. A faint buzzing sound begins. She exits.

HALLWAY

Laura goes to the bathroom and looks inside.

It's unoccupied and dry.

Laura sniffs, and starts following her nose back up the hallway.

She comes to a small rope hanging from the ceiling. She gives it a tug, bringing down the ladder that gives access to the attic.

As she stands and contemplates the ladder the buzzing sound gets louder, more insistent.

She climbs the ladder.

ATTIC

It's dark in the junk-filled attic. Laura enters and fumbles around, finding the light switch and turning it on.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Walter?

The buzzing is more insistent, and she's sniffing.

There's a pile of old clothes on the floor and she starts digging through them, pushing them aside.

The buzzing is even louder now and almost sounds like words.

At the bottom of the pile is an old quilt, wrapped around something. Laura pauses and sniffs at it, then picks it up and carries it over to a clear spot on the floor.

She grabs the edge of the quilt and flicks it, unrolling it quickly onto the floor.

Flying out of the quilt onto the floor is a bloody mess, skeletal with tufts of hair and some organs.

It's the remains of a medium-sized dog, still wearing the collar and the tag.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Fuck. Fuck, fuck, fuck

Laura looks at the tag, sees the name BRUTUS on it. Then, she takes a long sniff of the dead dog. Then she takes another, and wipes her mouth with the back of her hand.

The buzzing is quieter but more insistent. She reaches towards the dead dog, her hand changing shape, claws beginning to emerge from the fingertips.

Laura's heart is beating faster, and she's panting. The buzzing is growing more and more urgent.

Her mouth starts changing shape, widening and starting to grow into a snout

Then she stops, shaking her head to clear the cobwebs, and the buzzing stops. Her hand and face return to normal.

Then she gathers the dog's corpse back up in the quilt.

EXT. SIDEWALKS IN THE CITY, MONTAGE - NIGHT

Walter is walking the streets.

He looks over everyone he meets and then moves on, many people shaking their heads after he passes because of the intensity of his gaze and the abruptness of his loss of interest.

Walter can hear the buzzing, not loud but insistent, like a whispering co-conspirator.

WALTER POV: the people he sees are all black-and-white, as is the rest of the world.

EXT. CLUB DIS - NIGHT

Outside of Club Dis is a line of people waiting to get in. The throb of dance music can be heard.

KATE BECKETT (24) is standing in line.

Walter walks past and suddenly stops next to Kate on the sidewalk, looking at her.

WALTER POV: Kate is in living color, while others around her are still black-and-white.

She meets his gaze and they stare at each other, not saying anything, before Walter moves on.

The buzzing calms down now, quieter and patient. Like a hunter that has finally spotted its prey.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM CLUB DIS - NIGHT

Walter is standing in the shadows of a doorway, watching Kate as she gradually moves with the line towards the door.

Kate shows her ID to the BOUNCER (23) at the door and he lets her pass, after stamping the back of her hand.

Walter crosses the street.

INT. CLUB DIS - NIGHT

The music is loud and the dance floor is crowded as Kate steps inside.

She immediately attracts the attention of several men who start angling their way towards her as she heads for the bar.

Kate sits on a bar stool. The BARTENDER (24, female, Caucasian) puts a napkin on the bar in front of her.

KATE

Could I have a glass of whatever
you have on tap?

BARTENDER

Sure.

The bartender fills a glass with beer and puts it on the napkin and Kate puts money on the bar next to it.

The bartender takes the money and leaves the change. A man comes over to sit on the stool next to her. Kate puts a couple of bills in the bartender's tip jar.

In the darkness in the far corners of the club Walter is lurking, watching Kate. He can't hear what they're saying but she obviously dismisses the man, who gets up angrily and stalks off.

Kate says something to the bartender, who pours her a shot of bourbon and puts it in front of her.

Kate pays for the shot and downs it, chasing it with the beer.

LATER

Kate's dancing by herself on the dance floor. She's a bit sweaty and has a good buzz going.

Walter is still watching.

When the song ends she goes back to the bar. The bartender pours her another beer and another shot.

Walter watches another man talk to Kate and get dismissed. She takes another shot.

Then, Walter comes over and settles on the barstool next to Kate.

KATE

In case you didn't realize it
already, I'm not -- oh. Sorry.

Walter's voice is low and echoing.

WALTER

Apology accepted.

Kate begins acting as if she were drugged -- sluggish and slow.

KATE

I'm Kate.

WALTER

Walter.

KATE

You don't have a stupid line or
anything?

WALTER

No. Do I need one?

KATE

No.

They smile at each other.

INT. LAURA'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Laura is sitting on the couch.

Her cell phone is on the coffee table in front of her. She's staring at it. She's opened her contact list.

Detective Young is selected but Laura hasn't touched the "Call" button.

She's sweating, and her eyes are wild. She can hear the buzzing.

There's a knock on the kitchen door and she gets up and exits to answer it.

KITCHEN

She pauses, taking a couple of deep, slow, breaths, before she opens the door to see June standing there, holding Brutus's leash.

The buzzing is still there, though quieter and slower now.

JUNE

I'm so sorry, Ms. Hanson, but I saw your light was on so I thought you'd be up --

LAURA

It's okay, June. What's going on?

JUNE

Have you seen my dog?

LAURA

No, I don't think I have.

JUNE

He slipped out of the door this afternoon when I got home and I haven't seen him since.

Laura is staring at June, her hands trembling slightly. The buzzing is increasing in volume and intensity.

LAURA

If I see him I'll let you know.

JUNE

I'm so sorry about your husband. I heard --

LAURA

It's okay. You need to go now.

JUNE

Just give me a call if --

LAURA

I will! Please leave. Now!

JUNE

Okay, okay. I'm so sorry.

June leaves and Laura closes the door, the quiet buzzing stopping abruptly. Laura turns around and puts her back to it, breathing heavily.

INT. UNDERGROUND RIVER - NIGHT

Walter sits on the bank of the river, his eyes closed. He's barefoot and shirtless.

The buzzing sound is louder and now is showing some modulation. It almost sounds like words, some sort of language, but not quite intelligible.

Walter smiles and bows his head slightly. He gets up and heads for the tunnel to the outside.

On his way he passes a pair of cocoons on the wall. One is fresher, lighter in color and wetter looking than the other.

The fresher looking one is trembling slightly.

Walter pauses to look them over, then exits.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

It's quiet, but it has just finished raining. Walter emerges from the cave.

EXT. BANK OF LAKE RONA - NIGHT

He walks down to the bank of the lake and sees some ducks several feet away, some of them dozing as they float on the water's surface.

With almost no noise Walter slips into the inky water, nothing on the surface betraying him swimming underneath.

One of the dozing ducks on the water suddenly disappears, something under the water jerking the bird down. The other birds fly away, startled.

INT. MORGUE AUTOPSY SUITE - DAY

Ronnie's skeleton is laid out onto a tray, while Dr. Certain looks it over. Detectives Carter and Young are observing.

DR. CERTAIN

It looks like the same substance I
found on the Hanson remains is
here, too.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
How long before the CDC gets back
to us with their analysis?

DR. CERTAN
A couple of weeks, I'd imagine.
Maybe longer.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
That's too long, Fred.

DR. CERTAN
I wish I had the clout to speed
things up, Detective.

DETECTIVE CARTER
(to Young)
You think there are going to be
others?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
I think it's likely. Something like
this isn't just some random
killing. This is a low-risk victim.
He's got a taste for it.

DETECTIVE CARTER
I'll check AFIS and the other
Federal databases again in case I
missed something.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Good idea. I think --

There's a rapping on the door and it opens. Dr. Rogers enters
the autopsy suite.

DR. ROGERS
Dr. Certan?

DR. CERTAN
Yes?

Rogers takes out her ID and shows it to him.

DR. ROGERS
Dr. Hannah Rogers. Centers for
Disease Control.

DR. CERTAN
Pleased to meet you, Dr. Rogers.
What can I do for you?

DR. ROGERS

You recently sent us samples of an unknown substance you found on some skeletal remains? The Hanson case?

DR. CERTAN

Yes.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Dr. Rogers? I'm Detective Young, and I'm the primary on that case. This is Detective Carter, my partner.

DR. ROGERS

Pleased to meet you.

Rogers shakes hands with the detectives.

DR. CERTAN

Why is the CDC interested? I was just requesting an analysis.

DR. ROGERS

The chemical profile of the substance you submitted matches that of a substance that was found in a situation that was ... similar to yours. Nine years ago.

DR. CERTAN

Really? Where?

DR. ROGERS

I can't tell you that.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What kind of situation?

DR. ROGERS

I can't tell you that.

DETECTIVE CARTER

What can you tell us?

DR. ROGERS

I can give you some info because you need to know but you can't share it with anyone.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Our lieutenant is going to want to know.

DR. ROGERS
I'll take care of him. Dr. Certan?

DR. CERTAN
Yes?

DR. ROGERS
Could you please lock the door for
a minute?

Certan goes over to the door and locks it. Dr. Rogers's phone buzzes with an incoming call. She takes it out of her pocket and declines the call, putting it back in her pocket.

DR. CERTAN
Okay.

DR. ROGERS
We -- I mean, I -- don't think your
victim was killed by a human
agency.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
What? What killed him, then?

DR. ROGERS
Uh ... I believe that your killer
is an alien creature.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
A what?

DETECTIVE CARTER
You mean, like in the movies?

DR. ROGERS
The substance found on the remains
is not one that is known to us. We -
- I -- suspect it is of
extraterrestrial origin.

DR. CERTAN
That is one hell of a jump to make
from your inability to identify the
substance, Dr. Rogers.

DR. ROGERS
There's a lot more to it than that.

DR. CERTAN
So, what do you think this
mysterious substance is?

DR. ROGERS
I'm fairly convinced that it's
digestive juices.

DETECTIVE CARTER
This is nuts.

DR. ROGERS
Have there been any others?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Maybe.

Rogers nods at Ronnie's bones.

DR. ROGERS
I see skeletal remains on the
autopsy tray. These are not the
ones you obtained the sample from.
Those were several years old. These
are fresh. They're still damp. I
can smell the substance from here.
You've got another one, don't you?
A recent one.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Jesus. Detective Young, Dr. Certan,
could we talk? Privately?

DR. CERTAN
Dr. Rogers, could you please wait
in my office?

Certan lets Dr. Rogers out.

DR. CERTAN (CONT'D)
Through that door over there.
Please make yourself comfortable.

DR. ROGERS
Thank you.

Rogers exits and Certan closes the door.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Okay, are you fucking kidding me?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Hey! I'm the primary on this case,
remember?

DETECTIVE CARTER
Okay, then. What do you want to do?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

I think we should at least look at the evidence she has.

DETECTIVE CARTER

You mean whatever evidence she can show us. Which doesn't sound like much.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What would it hurt?

DETECTIVE CARTER

She'll have us chasing our tails. She's crazy, Young.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Doc? What do you think?

DR. CERTAN

I have my doubts about her, too, but her ID looked legitimate to me.

DETECTIVE CARTER

She could still be crazy and work for the CDC, Fred.

DR. CERTAN

I'm aware of that. Let her assist me on this, at least for now. Maybe she'll come up with something useful.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What do you think, Carter?

DETECTIVE CARTER

(sighs)

Okay. Fine. But the second she falls off the deep end we cut her loose.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Sounds like a plan. Dr. Certan?

DR. CERTAN

Yes?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Keep an eye on our new friend.

DR. CERTAN

What would I be looking for?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Any signs of mental illness.

DR. CERTAN
Ah. Of course. Yes.

INT. CERTAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Certan's office is tiny, with a desk, a computer setup, and a couple of chairs. His degree is on the wall, along with a couple of family pictures of his wife and children.

Dr. Rogers sits in one of the visitor's chairs, looking at a text on her phone.

The contact name is BEN DANVERS, and the message says, "CALL ME ASAP. I HOPE YOU AREN'T WHERE I THINK YOU ARE."

While she's reading the message the phone starts buzzing with an incoming call. The contact name that comes up is "BEN DANVERS."

She declines the call as Certan enters.

DR. CERTAN
You were right. There's been another one. A recent one.

DR. ROGERS
How recent?

DR. CERTAN
We found it last night.

DR. ROGERS
There will be more.

DR. CERTAN
How do you know that?

DR. ROGERS
May I take a look at the remains?

DR. CERTAN
Follow me.

Certan exits. Dr. Rogers gets up as her phone starts buzzing again. She checks the screen and declines the call again and follows Certan.

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

Laura is sitting at the computer, looking over search results for "CAUSES FOR SUDDEN HOMICIDAL URGES".

She is pale and sweaty, and her movements are a bit sluggish.

There's a knock on the kitchen door. Laura closes the browser and exits.

KITCHEN

Laura enters and goes to the door, opening it to see Phil standing there.

PHIL
Good morning.

LAURA
Good morning.

PHIL
Can I come in?

Laura steps aside and admits him. They stand in the kitchen.

LAURA
What do you want?

PHIL
Where's Walt's car?

LAURA
I'm going to sell it. Somebody's
test driving it.

PHIL
Be careful he doesn't steal it. Or
wreck it.

LAURA
What do you want, Phil?

PHIL
I wanted to check in with you. You
wouldn't call me back.

LAURA
I'm sorry, but I'm still in a state
of shock.

PHIL
I know. That's why I'm here. To
support you.

LAURA
Thank you, but I think I'd rather
be alone right now.

Phil stands there, not looking her in the eye, shifting his
weight from one foot to another nervously.

PHIL
Are you?

LAURA
Am I what?

PHIL
Alone?

LAURA
Yes. Why would I say I was if I
wasn't?

PHIL
Because maybe there's something you
don't want me to know.

LAURA
Like?

PHIL
Like maybe you're seeing somebody.

LAURA
What? No.

PHIL
Whose really driving the car?

LAURA
Some guy who wants to buy it for
his daughter.

PHIL
I bet.

LAURA
How is this any of your business
anyway?

PHIL
I

Laura leans forward a little and sniffs. Then she leans back.

LAURA

You've been drinking again, today,
haven't you?

PHIL

So? Can you blame me? Walt was my
best friend, and he's dead, and
maybe it was my fault.

LAURA

It wasn't your fault.

PHIL

You don't know that.

LAURA

You didn't do anything wrong. Okay?
Now, I have some things to do.

PHIL

Maybe I can help.

LAURA

No. You can't. I'm asking you to
leave, okay?

PHIL

Why?

LAURA

I need to be alone.

PHIL

Something's going on.

LAURA

Goddammit, Phil, I --

PHIL

Your boyfriend who is out driving
Walt's car is due back any minute
now, right?

LAURA

Boyfriend? Where did that come
from? You need to go. Right now.

Laura looks away and he touches her cheek and forces her to
look at him.

PHIL

After all I've done for you?

LAURA

I've done a lot for you, too, you know. Especially financially.

Phil's breathing heavier, his face reddening now.

PHIL

Eight years. Three years since the plant closed down and I got laid off. I could have taken that job in Albuquerque. I could be working on my cousin's ranch in Wyoming. But I stayed.

LAURA

I didn't ask you to.

PHIL

And now I don't even get a chance.

LAURA

You stayed because you wanted to try to help find Walt. Now that he's been found there's no reason for you to stay.

PHIL

I stayed for you! Dammit! After all this time you still don't know?

LAURA

Know what?

Phil tries to kiss her, on the lips. Laura slaps him.

LAURA (CONT'D)

You're drunk! Go home, Phil!

PHIL

No.

She starts shoving him.

LAURA

Get out. Right now. Now! Go!

PHIL

No, Goddammit. No. You owe me.

He grabs her wrist.

LAURA

Let go of me. Let go!

Laura draws back her other hand, behind her back, out of Phil's sight, fingers curling into a claw, like she's going to scratch him. The nails on that hand start extending as if preparing for an attack.

Phil releases her and steps back, a look of horror on his face as he realizes what he's done.

PHIL
Oh, my God. Oh, my God. I'm so
sorry. So fucking sorry.

He turns and runs out of the side door.

Laura's nails retract back to normal. A ripple passes up her hand and forearm, shaking her entire body a moment.

Laura shakes her head, as if clearing cobwebs.

LAURA
(whispering)
Jesus.

EXT. FOREST AROUND LAKE RONA - DAY

It's a heavily wooded area with a steep slope, going up the side of a mountain across the lake from the one with the cave.

Rogers is there talking with HENRY PRESTON (24, Caucasian) and PAMELA CLIFFORD (22, Caucasian). Rogers is carrying a folder with papers and photos inside. She has the strap of a bag holding some equipment draped over her shoulder.

ROGERS
So, show me where you found the
remains?

PAM
Right over here.

She steps behind a stand of thick brush and points at the ground. Rogers comes over and takes a look.

Rogers points.

ROGERS
There?

PAM
Yeah.

HENRY

She came over here to take a dump.

PAM

It's not really necessary to tell her that, Henry.

HENRY

What? It's a natural bodily function. She's a doctor. And it may be, what you call it? Relevant?

PAM

I'm sure it's not.

Rogers slips the strap of the equipment bag off her shoulder and places it on the ground, then kneels next to the indicated spot, touching it lightly with the palm of her hand.

ROGERS

You were here to hunt deer?

HENRY

Right. It's bowhunting season.

PAM

I got a ten point buck last season.

ROGERS

I see.

Rogers stands up.

PAM

Yeah, it was just before dawn and we were looking for a place to set up our stands when I ... well, you know. Needed to find a spot. I came back here. The moon was out and it was shining just perfect for me to see the skull right there.

HENRY

I wish you could have heard her scream!

ROGERS

Have you ever been here before?

HENRY

Not this particular spot, no.

PAM

No, ma'am. Only reason I came back here then was, you know.

ROGERS

Yeah. Okay. Thank you.

HENRY

We're done?

ROGERS

Yeah, I think so.

HENRY

You don't think we caught anything, do you?

ROGERS

I'm sorry, what?

HENRY

Like Ebola? Something like that?

PAM

Henry, you dumbass.

ROGERS

No. You don't catch Ebola like that.

HENRY

It's just that I saw this movie --

PAM

I told you it's just a stupid movie.

Rogers is looking around now, mostly dismissing the two kids now that she knows what she wants to know.

ROGERS

She's right, Henry. Even if it were Ebola, you wouldn't have caught it. It would take a lot more exposure than that.

PAM

Okay, let's go. C'mon, Henry.

HENRY

I just saw in on the news --

PAM

When did you start watching the news? C'mon, you moron.

She grabs his arm and drags him away. Rogers ignores them both. She picks up her bag, slipping the strap back on.

EXT. LAKE RONA - DAY

The former campsite. Rogers looks around, hearing ducks quacking on the water, a boat pulling a pair of water-skiers going by out on the lake.

She turns towards the mountain with the cave and heads towards it.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

Rogers stands at the entrance of the cave. She consults the notes in her folder, takes out her GPS and checks it.

She's about to enter the cave when she stops, turning back around to face the lake.

ROGERS

Hello? Is somebody there?

She gets no response.

On the nearby bank of the river, something large but indistinct moves among a thick patch of bushes. Without exposing itself it manages to quickly slip into the water.

Rogers runs to it just in time to notice something big moving rapidly into the depths of the lake.

She stands there, staring, trying to see with no luck what it was.

In a patch of reeds several feet away a rounded shape emerges quietly from the water, unseen by Rogers. Two eyes suddenly appear -- it's Walter, watching her.

Rogers turns, heading back over to the cave and then going inside.

Walter ducks back beneath the surface with barely a ripple.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Rogers enters the cave, taking out her flashlight and shining it around.

She takes a deep breath and then coughs, her eyes starting to water.

DR. ROGERS
Hello? Is anybody in here?

She coughs again after speaking and wipes her watering eyes with her sleeve.

There is no sign of the tunnel, only some fresh graffiti and crushed beer and soda cans.

Rogers sniffs, going to the back of the cave. She touches the back wall, squinting at some fresh graffiti there.

Someone has spray painted "BON SCOTT FOREVER" there. This was not there before. The second "O" is uneven, like someone had broken the wall in half right through it and then put it back together slightly misaligned.

The letters after the "O" line up with it instead of the first part of the graffiti.

She looks around but the only other graffiti in that section are more pictures than words and may or may not be misaligned.

She photographs it with her phone. The phone buzzes as she does so with an incoming call from "FRED CERTAN, MD."

She answers the call as she heads back to the cave's entrance.

DR. ROGERS (CONT'D)
Dr. Certan. What can I do for you?

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

Rogers steps outside.

DR. CERTAN (O.S.)
(filtered)
Where are you?

DR. ROGERS
I'm at Lake Rona. I found this cave
where --

DR. CERTAN (O.S.)
(filtered)
I'm familiar with it. We need you
back here. We've got another one.

DR. ROGERS
On my way.

She disconnects the call, puts the phone in her pocket, and exits at a brisk pace.

EXT. ALLEY NEXT TO CLUB DIS - DAY

Parked in the alley is Kate's car. Surrounding it are crime scene techs, and Dr. Certan. Detective Carter and Detective Young enter, wearing latex gloves, their shoes covered with sterile, disposable booties.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
What do you have?

DR. CERTAN
Take a look.

He leads the detectives to the driver's side of the car.

There is a fresh and moist human skeleton in the driver's seat.

It's Kate.

Young steps over to take a closer look. Carter hangs back, looking over the whole scene.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Do we know who it is?

DR. CERTAN
Car's registered to a Kathryn
Becker. Southside address. We found
clothes in the back seat and a
purse and the driver's license. The
name matches. And there's ... take
a whiff.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Yeah. There it is again. Carter?

DETECTIVE CARTER
I'm good.

DR. CERTAN
And there's this.

He points to a section of wall. Once again, there's a faint trail of a slimy residue leading up to the roof.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Still no ideas as to what that stuff is, I'm guessing.

DR. CERTAN

No.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Where is Dr. Rogers?

DR. CERTAN

She went to Lake Rona. She wanted to check out the spot where Hanson's remains were found. She's on her way back.

DETECTIVE CARTER

At least we have a tentative ID on the body.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Yeah. Again. It was nice of him to leave the victim's personal effects all neatly folded and left nearby, wasn't it? And he drove the car here and posed the skeleton behind the wheel.

DETECTIVE CARTER

He's taller than she was. He forgot to move the seat forward.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Have the car towed and the interior dusted for prints. Especially the steering wheel and the switch to adjust the seat.

DETECTIVE CARTER

In the mean time, what now? Check out the club next door?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

It's as good a place to start as any, I guess.

INT. CLUB DIS - DAY

The club is closed and there are people getting the tables organized, cleaning and straightening, with a DJ setting up in the booth and checking the sound system.

The Bartender from the night before is behind the bar, restocking and organizing.

Young and Carter enter, look around, and approach the Bartender, showing her their badges.

BARTENDER

Well, well, well. What can I do for you, officers?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

That's "detectives". Have you seen this person in here lately?

She shows her Kate's license, which is in a plastic evidence bag.

BARTENDER

Yeah, she was. Last night. Why?

DETECTIVE CARTER

Last night? You're sure?

BARTENDER

Yeah, I'm sure.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Did you see her talking to anybody?

BARTENDER

A couple of guys took shots at her. They didn't get very far.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Did either of them seem to be especially angry about that?

BARTENDER

Not really. They're regulars. Losers, but harmless. She did leave with a guy, though.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Really? Did you get a good look at him?

BARTENDER

Yeah.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Was he another regular?

BARTENDER
I don't think so.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Did it look like she left
voluntarily?

BARTENDER
Yeah. It looked like she was into
him.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
You've got security cameras, right?

BARTENDER
Sure.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
We need the footage from last
night. You've got a camera on the
bar?

BARTENDER
Yes. But he won't be in the frame.
It doesn't cover the whole bar.
Just the cash register.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Figures.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Would you be willing to work with a
sketch artist?

BARTENDER
Does it have to be now? I need to
get ready to open.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Yes. It has to be now.

DETECTIVE CARTER
We'll square it with your boss.

INT. POLICE INTERVIEW ROOM 1 - DAY

Laura is sitting at the table. She's glassy-eyed, pale, and sweating.

There's a rap on the door and it opens, Detective Young entering with Detective Carter. She's holding a manila folder with some papers and pictures in it.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Good morning, Ms. Hanson. Sorry to get you up so early.

LAURA

Why am I here?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

You're here because we need answers to a few questions. About Walter.

LAURA

What about him?

DETECTIVE CARTER

A woman was murdered last night. We got a description and a sketch of the last person she was seen with by a witness.

Young opens the folder and puts the sketch in front of Laura.

It looks like Walter.

LAURA

What does this have to do with me?

DETECTIVE CARTER

That doesn't look like Walter to you?

LAURA

I guess it sort of does. But how could it be Walter?

DETECTIVE CARTER

We gave the witness a photo array of potentials and she picked Walter's picture out of it.

LAURA

That doesn't prove anything.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

The victim was found in her car. We dusted it for prints, and guess what we found?

DETECTIVE CARTER

Walter's fingerprints.

LAURA

That's not possible. He's dead. You said so.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Is he?

LAURA

Why wouldn't he be?

DETECTIVE CARTER

Laura, if he's contacted you, if you know where he is, we need to know.

LAURA

He's dead.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Look at this.

Young takes out an evidence photo from the folder.

It's a shot of Kate's skeleton in her car.

There's another shot of Kate's skeleton on an autopsy tray.

DETECTIVE YOUNG (CONT'D)

Until last night this was a young woman named Kathryn Becker. Now, you're a nurse so I know you've seen some terrible things in your life. But to completely remove all of the soft tissue from a human skeleton in a few hours is, as far as we know, impossible. So, whatever he did to her, it's beyond sick. It's monstrous.

LAURA

Walter wouldn't do something like that. He wouldn't.

DETECTIVE CARTER

This information is being distributed as we speak to officers who are going out on patrol. They will be looking for him, and they'll be fully aware of what he's suspected of doing.

LAURA

What are you saying?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

This murder was horrific. And we have another body in the morgue, same circumstances, from two nights ago. We suspect him for that one, too.

DETECTIVE CARTER

What we're saying is, if uniformed officers find him they won't be taking any chances. He's a suspect in two horrific murders.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Tell us where he is. We'll go and bring him in, without hurting him.

LAURA

Walter's dead. He's been dead for eight years.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Okay. Fine. If he gets shot or even killed, I hope you can live with yourself.

LAURA

Can I go now?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Yes. You can go. Thank you, Laura.

Laura gets up and exits, closing the door behind her. Young and Carter remain.

DETECTIVE YOUNG (CONT'D)

He's been in touch with her.

DETECTIVE CARTER

He's probably been by the house. What now?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

We work the case with Walter as the suspect.

INT. MORGUE AUTOPSY SUITE - NIGHT

Certain is looking over Kate Becker's skeletal remains as Rogers enters.

DR. CERTAN
Did you phone anything interesting
at the lake?

DR. ROGERS
Maybe. I --

Her phone buzzes with another incoming text from Danvers. She opens it.

It says, "I KNOW YOU WENT TO THE SITE. HHS SECRETARY IS ABOUT TO FIRE YOU. CALL ME BACK RIGHT NOW."

She closes the text and puts the phone away.

DR. ROGERS (CONT'D)
Maybe it's time I told all of you
what I know.

DR. CERTAN
(confused)
Okay. I'll call Young and Carter.

EXT. PHILLIP BAILEY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Phil drives up in his truck and gets out, staggering a little.

He fumbles with his keys as he unlocks the door, going inside.

INT. PHILLIP BAILEY'S HOUSE, KITCHEN - NIGHT

He flips on the light and tosses his keys on a counter as he makes a call on his cell phone. There's an inaudible message, like someone's voice mail, then a beep.

PHIL
Dammit, Laura, where are you? We
need to talk about this. Call me.
Please. As soon as you get this.

He disconnects the call and slips the phone in his pocket, then he jumps, like he's heard something.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Is somebody there? Laura?

He exits into the living room.

LIVING ROOM

It's dark and Phil flips on the light.

Phillip is not a very good housekeeper. The room is cluttered, the carpet desperately needs vacuuming, there's dust on the walls and drapes.

Sitting in one of the chairs is Walter.

PHIL (CONT'D)
Fuck! Walt?

WALTER
Hey, Phil. How's it hanging?

PHIL
You're not dead?

WALTER
No. Not yet.

PHIL
I'm so happy to see you. So fucking happy!

Phil approaches Walt and Walt gets up, embracing him.

PHIL (CONT'D)
I can't tell you how happy I am.
Jesus fucking Christ!

WALTER
Yeah. Old friend.

They end the embrace as Phil looks Walter over.

PHIL
Have you talked to Laura?

WALTER
Yes, I have.

PHIL
She didn't say anything to me about that.

WALTER
I told her not to.

PHIL
Why not? You didn't want your best friend to know you're still alive?

Walter is smiling but not with joy.

WALTER
Are you? My best friend?

PHIL
What?

WALTER
I heard you've been trying to get
into Laura's pants.

PHIL
I was drunk.

WALTER
I thought you quit drinking.

PHIL
So, I had a relapse. I had just
found out that my best friend in
the whole world, my best friend
since seventh grade, was dead.
Where have you been, all this time?

WALTER
It's hard to explain. Maybe I
should just show you.

PHIL
Show me? Okay. Are we going
somewhere?

WALTER
Yes.

So quick it's a blur something shoots out from under Walter's
shirt.

It's some sort of appendage, like a tentacle, with a hard,
translucent tube at the end.

It wraps tightly around Phil's throat. It slips into Phil's
mouth as he struggles to breathe.

Phillip grabs at the thing, trying to pull it out, but it's
doing something, moving around inside his mouth and down his
throat. Phillip makes muffled groans as he tries to fight it.

Phillip collapses as Walter steps forward to stand over him.
He continues to struggle for a few seconds, then he lies
still on the floor.

Even though he has the appendage in his mouth and down his
throat he seems to be breathing normally, if a little
heavily.

Walter has grown taller, his arms and legs longer, his face and body distorted.

Walt's also breathing heavily, and his breathing is in synch with Phillip's.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Yes, old friend.

INT. AUTOPSY SUITE - NIGHT

Two autopsy trays, Ronnie's remains on one, Kate's on the other, are in the middle of the room.

Drs. Rogers and Certan are waiting as Detectives Young and Carter enter.

DR. CERTAN

Dr. Rogers has an interesting story to tell us.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Dr. Rogers?

DR. ROGERS

Elk Horn, Montana.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Elk Horn?

DR. ROGERS

Yes. Up until nine years ago it was a community of sixteen people in the mountains. That was before a blizzard hit the area. It was record breaking, and nobody could get into or out of there for weeks. When someone finally did, they found the people there were all dead.

Dr. Rogers nods at the remains on the trays.

DR. ROGERS (CONT'D)

They were like that.

DETECTIVE CARTER

And we've heard nothing about this at all. Nothing in any of the databases.

DR. ROGERS

No. My superiors at the CDC, and leadership at the FBI, felt like it wouldn't benefit anyone for word to get out. They hushed it up.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Were you one of the initial investigators?

DR. ROGERS

Yes. I was point person for the CDC at the site, once the FBI figured out it wasn't a mass shooting or something like that. And, over the years, I've gotten reports of some of the residents of Elk Horn being spotted, from all over the country. They were acting strange, and one or two are suspected of murder, but they disappeared before they could be brought in. People who left their skeletons behind in Elk Horn.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What do you think is going on here, Doctor?

DR. ROGERS

A creature that walks like a man. That's how it's able to move around without attracting attention.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Walter Hanson.

DR. ROGERS

Not anymore. It looks like him. I guess it has his fingerprints. Maybe it even has his memories and thinks it is him. But it isn't.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

This is crazy. What's he doing with these people?

DR. ROGERS

I don't know. I thought maybe he was eating them, but now I think it's more complicated than that.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Dr. Rogers, this is insane.

DR. ROGERS

Look at this.

She opens the pic she took of the graffiti in the cave and hands her phone to Young.

Young looks at it, squinting, confused.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

What is this?

DR. ROGERS

It's fresh graffiti in a cave near where the remains were found.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

So? We've been in that cave a dozen times.

DR. ROGERS

This graffiti is no more than a couple of days old. Notice anything?

DR. CERTAN

Whoever wrote it is a classic AC/DC fan.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

The first half doesn't line up with the second half. Like somebody broke the wall in half and then didn't line it back up quite right.

DR. ROGERS

Yes.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

So? Whoever did this was probably high on something.

DR. ROGERS

There's one more thing. While I was in that cave I smelled that same distinct odor.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Are you sure?

DR. ROGERS

Yes. I'm sure. It was strong, too. Almost overwhelming.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
What are you saying?

DR. ROGERS
I think that cave is more important to whatever is going on here than we realize. But there's something else I need to tell you.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
What?

DR. ROGERS
I'm not authorized to be here. I came after being explicitly ordered not to. I got a text from my boss a few minutes ago informing me that I'm being fired.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Why were you ordered not to come here?

DR. ROGERS
Because this is something they don't understand. They're scared of it. They think if they just ignore it, sweep it under the rug, it'll go away. But it won't. It's going to spread until who knows how many people are affected. So you'll have to decide if you still want me along, given that I'm no longer employed by the CDC.

DETECTIVE CARTER
I'm okay with it. But I'm not the primary.

Carter looks at Young.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Well ... I don't see any reason why not.

DETECTIVE CARTER
How would we track down this thing?

DR. ROGERS
I'd suggest you track it just like you would anybody who doesn't want to be found. But I'm not a detective.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Yeah, but Walter Hanson is off the grid. He doesn't have any active credit cards or anything.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

There is one place we can look, though.

DETECTIVE CARTER

Where? His house?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

No. He'll go back to where it all started. And I think we have a really good idea now where that is.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Walter's car is parked nearby, carelessly driven into a rough, boggy area.

Laura approaches, walking unsteadily, her face pale and her eyes glassy. She looks like she may be running a high fever.

She looks at Walter's car, then goes into the cave.

INT. CAVE - NIGHT

Now the back of the cave is open.

Laura pauses as there is a throbbing light coming from it.

The buzzing sound is back, lower and calmer than before.

LAURA

Walt? Walter? Are you there?

She steps into the cavern.

INT. UNDERGROUND RIVER - NIGHT

The water is flowing swiftly, the river swollen again from all the rain.

It's glowing but not quite as bright as it was before.

On the wall between the two cocoons is Phil.

He's naked, the resin only covering his wrists, ankles, and his forehead, so he's held spread-eagle on the wall, unable to move.

He's breathing heavily and covered with sweat. His clothes are on the ground nearby.

LAURA

Phil!

She runs to him, reaching out to him.

PHIL

Stop! Don't touch me!

Laura stops.

PHIL (CONT'D)

You need to leave right now.

LAURA

What's happening to you?

PHIL

It's Walt. He's gone crazy. He's not human. He's some kind of ... thing.

LAURA

Let me get you out of here.

PHIL

Don't touch me! Don't --

She touches him. There's a tiny pop, like static electricity discharging, and all of Phil's flesh, musculature, organs, all of his soft tissues, slip off of his skeleton and splash onto the ground.

His bloody skeleton remains on the wall.

Laura backs away in horror at the bloody mess on the ground that's writhing a bit, as if it's still alive.

Walter has come up behind her.

Walter is taller than before, his face changed a bit, his arms and legs unnaturally long and thin.

WALTER

Hello, babe.

Laura jumps in surprise, and turns to face him.

LAURA
What did you do?

WALTER
He wasn't worthy.

LAURA
You killed him.

WALTER
No, you killed him.

LAURA
He was your best friend.

WALTER
Was. I'm surprised you could make it up here. But you've always been surprisingly strong. You've made me proud.

LAURA
What are you?

WALTER
I don't know

Walter touches one of the cocoons.

LAURA
What is that?

WALTER
I'm not sure, really.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Detectives Young and Carter enter, followed by Officer Bennett, OFFICER JONES (27), and Dr. Rogers.

Rogers is carrying her kit.

They pause at Walter's car.

DETECTIVE CARTER
I think that's Walter Hanson's car, isn't it?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Yep. Sure is. With the wife's car down in the parking area it looks like they're both here.

DETECTIVE CARTER
He's getting sloppy. He doesn't
care anymore.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Which means he's getting to the end-
game for whatever it is he's doing.

DETECTIVE CARTER
I think that scares the shit out of
me.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Right. Okay. Let's see what's in
here. Dr. Rogers? Stay back and
down.

DR. ROGERS
I've been in these situations
before, Detective.

INT. CAVE ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The back is still open and they shine their flashlights at
it.

DETECTIVE CARTER
(whispering)
Jesus. I guess this explains the
graffiti.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
(whispering)
Yeah. How the fuck did he manage
this?

OFFICER JONES
(whispering)
Damn. This place is creepy.

OFFICER BENNETT
(whispering)
Hold your bladder, Jonesy.

They go on into the tunnel.

INT. UNDERGROUND RIVER - NIGHT

WALTER
It won't be much longer.

LAURA

What?

Walter shudders, grows another couple of inches taller. His face gets a little wider.

LAURA (CONT'D)

What's happening to you?

WALTER

It'll be a lot different, for you.

LAURA

What will be a lot different? You did something to me. I know you did.

Walter jerks his head, like he's heard something, then he turns and runs for the underground river.

He dives into it as the detectives, Rogers, and Bennett and Jones enter, sidearms drawn.

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Walter Hanson! Come out of the water with your hands up! We will shoot if you do not surrender!

LAURA

No! Don't hurt him!

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Laura Hanson, get on your knees on the ground, hands behind your head. Do it!

LAURA

What?

DETECTIVE YOUNG

Do it. Now!

Laura complies with Young's request. Her eyes are wide with terror.

Officer Jones sees the remains of Phil on the ground and vomits.

Rogers sets her kit on the floor next to what's left of Phil, opening it to take out some swabs and other sampling gear.

DR. ROGERS

Fascinating.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
(to Carter and the
officers)

Come on.

She leads them to the river. There's a shapeless glowing mass in it but no Walter.

DETECTIVE YOUNG (CONT'D)
Walter Hanson! Come out with your
hands up!

WALTER
Over here!

They shine their lights up the tunnel in the direction of Walter's voice, across the river, several feet away.

Walter is there.

He throws his arms out as his sides and his clothes rip and fall away, along with his skin, revealing a different creature beneath.

He's a tall humanoid creature, a bit like an insect, a bit like a reptile, with huge, bat-like wings.

In his eyes, his retinas reflect back red.

His fingers and toes are tipped with knife-like claws. There is a writhing mass of tentacles on his torso.

He takes a couple of steps towards them, wings spread, and leaps, flying upwards and vanishing into the darkness of the cavern roof.

At the same time the glowing mass in the river goes dark and the buzzing sound stops. The only light comes from the flashlights.

They begin shining their lights around, desperately hunting for Walter.

Rogers comes over to Laura, kneeling next to her, checking on her.

There's a quick yelp and the flashlight Jones was holding drops to the floor. Young points her light there but Jones is gone.

There's a wail of agony, then a splash in the river.

It's Jones, his body mangled and bloody.

Bennett is wildly shining his light around and fires a shot at the roof, the shot ricocheting around the cavern.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Hold your fire until you have a target, Bennett!

OFFICER BENNETT
I thought I saw it. I thought I saw that thing. It killed Jonesy.

DETECTIVE CARTER
Stay calm, Bennett.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Walter! Come out where we can see you!

There's the sound of something big flying around but none of them can catch more than a brief glimpse of Walter in their flashlights.

OFFICER BENNETT
Oh, fuck this.

Bennett turns and starts running for the entrance

DETECTIVE CARTER
Bennett! Wait!

In the dark all they can see is the beam from Bennett's flashlight as he runs for the entrance.

He gives a startled yelp and the beam begins rising from the floor.

OFFICER BENNETT
Oh, my God, oh shit, he's got me!
He's got me!

He fires wildly several times, the shots ricocheting around the cavern. The flashlight falls to the ground. Bennett gives a long wail of agony, then goes quiet.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Walter! There's no way you're getting away! We've got every police officer in the city coming. There's nowhere for you to go!

Carter stands back-to-back with Young as they shine their lights around.

There's a muted splash in the river and they turn to see Bennett's mangled corpse floating in it.

Suddenly, Carter is gone, Walter sweeping him away so quickly he drops his flashlight.

DETECTIVE CARTER (O.S.)
Goddamn you! Goddamn you! I'll kill
you. I swear, I'll kill you, you
fucker!

He screams in agony, and then grows quiet.

There's a quiet thud! The sound of Carter's body hitting the ground.

Young runs to where the noise came from and finds Carter's mangled body. She kneels next to it, tears streaming from her eyes.

DETECTIVE YOUNG
Goddammit. Duane.

She touches his face gently. Then she stands.

She runs over to where Laura is kneeling, still being attended to by Rogers.

Young puts her pistol to Laura's head.

DETECTIVE YOUNG (CONT'D)
I'll kill her, Walter. I'll put a
bullet in her skull.

DR. ROGERS
Detective? Have you lost your mind?

DETECTIVE YOUNG
He ... killed Duane. Walter! I
swear, I'll do it!

Laura's eyes are opened wide but she doesn't move.

Rogers backs away.

DR. ROGERS
Detective, you need to think this
through.

Abruptly Young spins and kneels, pointing her light at the ceiling, and pins Walter with the beam as he's descending to attack her.

She fires several shots as Walter flies over her quickly, reaching down and slashing at Young, his arm no more than a blur, before vanishing into the darkness above again.

DR. ROGERS (CONT'D)

Did you hit him? Detective?

Young's head slides off her shoulders, severed by a quick blow from one of Walter's razor sharp claws. Her body collapses to one side.

DR. ROGERS (CONT'D)

No. No, no, no

Then Walter's body hits the ground a few feet away, riddled with bullets from Young's gun.

LAURA

Walter!

Laura gets up and runs over to Walter, kneeling next to his body.

Rogers follows, standing behind Laura, looking down at her and Walter.

There is still a faint light in Walter's strange, inhuman eyes.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Walter ... Don't you die on me now.
Not now. Baby, I need you.

One of Walter's hands reaches up and touches Laura's hand gently.

The light in Walter's eyes goes dark and his body begins to melt, his hand falling away from Laura's.

LAURA (CONT'D)

Oh, my God. Walt

DR. ROGERS

Come on. Let's go. We need to get a team in here.

Laura nods and Rogers helps her to her feet.

LAURA

Look.

She points at the wall where Phil's damp and bloody skeleton is hanging between the two cocoons.

Both of the cocoons are now open, and empty.

EXT. CAVE ENTRANCE - DAY

SELENA ROWAN (30), a local news reporter, is doing her standup with her CAMERA OPERATOR (26).

Behind her is a hazmat-suited CDC team, going into the cave with lots of equipment.

There's tape marking off the boundary and there is a small crowd there trying to see what's going on.

Rogers is there, behind the tape, directing the team.

SELENA

The entire area has been cordoned off until the spill has been contained. Officials are warning campers and hikers to stay away until the all clear is given.

The NEWSANCHOR (50, male) is interviewing Selena about the story.

NEWSANCHOR (O.S.)

Any indication as to what exactly the spill was?

SELENA

Nothing so far.

Two of the people in the small crowd observing the scene are Kate Beckett and Ronnie. Both of their faces are blank, expressionless.

Ronnie is wearing Phil's clothes, which are too big for him. Kate's clothes don't fit her, either, and are a mix of items that don't match.

INT. WALTER'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DAY

The TV is on and tuned to Selena's station, playing to an empty room.

NEWSANCHOR (O.S.)

If there were fatalities it must be pretty serious. Any word at least as to where the chemical came from?

SELENA (O.S.)

Indications are it was an illegal dump of waste products from one of the factories in the area. As you can see behind me the CDC is investigating the scene. Police Commissioner Joel Raymond and Mayor Juanita Alexander have scheduled a press conference later today to address lingering questions.

KITCHEN

The kitchen is as messy as ever.

The sound of the shower running can be heard over the babble from the TV.

The NEWSANCHOR (40) takes over.

NEWSANCHOR (O.S.)

Thank you, Selena. We will keep all of you posted on this developing story. Now, to our meteorologist Tanya Graham. Tanya, we've had a break in the torrential rains. Is the record setting rainfall finally over?

HALLWAY

There's no-one in the hallway but the bathroom door is open and the shower is running.

Heavy steam flows out of the bathroom door as TANYA (30) begins giving the weather forecast.

TANYA (O.S.)

Enjoy the break in the rain while you can, is all I can say.

The sound of the shower is getting louder. The bathroom door is open and steam is coming out of it.

The persistent buzzing sound is there, underneath the audio from the TV but slowly becoming more noticeable.

NEWSANCHOR (O.S.)

Oh, no. Don't tell me.

TANYA (O.S.)
Yes, I'm afraid another cold front
will be moving into the area
overnight ...

BATHROOM

Someone is in the shower, indistinct through the shower
curtain and the heavy steam.

The buzzing is getting a little more noticeable.

TANYA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
... which, mixing with the moisture
coming in from the Gulf, will
destabilize the atmosphere and
create sometimes severe
thunderstorms. We may see some
funnel clouds, as well.

BEDROOM

TANYA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
It will start pouring again
tomorrow morning and will continue
over the next several days. At this
point there is no end in sight.

On the bed is a fresh, moist, bloody skeleton, Laura-sized.

FADE OUT