

Goodnight Eden

written by

Dan Olds

Phone 206-714-5333  
E-mail [oursalvation@msn.com](mailto:oursalvation@msn.com)

FADE IN:

INT. MIA'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - MORNING

Soft morning light filters through the hallway. EMMA (40s) walks up to a closed bedroom door carrying a folded dish towel in her hand.

She knocks gently.

EMMA

Mia? You're late for breakfast, honey.

No answer.

She waits, frowns, and knocks again—this time, harder.

EMMA (CONT'D)

Mia?

Still silence.

INT. MIA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emma opens the door slowly. The bed is made. No sign of Mia.

She steps in, glancing around. Something feels... still.

She turns toward the bathroom door—closed.

EMMA

Mia?

No response.

Emma walks over, her breath catching in her throat. She reaches for the handle.

A long beat.

She opens the door.

INT. MIA'S BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

Emma steps in — and freezes.

We don't see what she sees. Only her face, contorting, eyes wide, mouth shaking open.

Then—

A SCREAM ERUPTS. Sharp. Violent. Ear-splitting. It rips through the silence like shattered glass.

INT. CALEB'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Dim morning light filters through half-closed blinds. The place is small, cluttered but not filthy – dishes in the sink, unopened mail on the counter.

On the kitchen table: a framed photo: Caleb with his arm around a teenage girl – Hannah, bright smile, wind in her hair.

Caleb Marsh (40's tired eyes) walks in, jacket on, keys in hand. He pauses by the table, eyes drawn to the picture. For a long moment, he just stares.

He sets the keys down, then – with deliberate care – flips the picture frame face-down.

He sits at the table, coffee going cold in front of him. He stares at his phone, thumb hovering over a contact labeled LORI.

He doesn't call.

A voicemail alert blinks – he presses play.

VOICEMAIL (V.O.)  
Hey, it's Elias... just checking in.  
Didn't see you in church again  
and...

Caleb deletes it without listening to the rest.

The clock on the wall ticks. He exhales, pushes the coffee away, grabs his coat.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - MORNING

Phones ring. Papers shuffle. Detectives grind through another day.

Caleb stands with Detective JOSE VEGA (30's) near the edge of the bullpen. Vega looks troubled, staring down at his phone.

CALEB  
You okay?

Vega hesitates, then lowers his voice.

VEGA

My son... won't talk to me. Barely looks at me anymore. Feels like I lost him.

Caleb studies him – the pain is familiar.

CALEB

Don't stop trying. Even if he pushes back, keep showing up. Let him know you see him. Trust me on this.

Vega nods slowly, surprised by the weight in Caleb's tone.

VEGA

Thanks, man.

Before Vega can ask more, CAPTAIN DUGAN (50s, no-nonsense) strides in, folder in hand.

DUGAN

Marsh. You're up. Sixteen-year-old girl. Suicide. Found by her mother this morning.

Caleb turns, focus snapping back.

DUGAN (CONT'D)

Name was Mia James.

The name lands. Caleb freezes. A flicker of recognition, grief.

He steps forward, takes the file.

CALEB

I knew her.

Dugan gives him a hard look.

DUGAN

Then handle it clean. No leaks. No headlines.

Caleb opens the folder. A photo of Mia stares up – bright-eyed, full of life.

Caleb doesn't speak. Just looks.

INT. MIA'S HOUSE – BATHROOM – DAY

The door creaks open.

CALEB steps inside, careful, quiet. His eyes scan the room.

MIA lies in the bathtub, fully clothed. Jeans, hoodie, socks. Arms at her sides. Head tilted. Eyes closed.

She looks like she's sleeping.

Water around her is clear. Still.

It's... too peaceful.

A YOUNG UNIFORMED OFFICER stands near the sink, flipping through a small notepad – trying to stay professional, but clearly rattled.

OFFICER

No sign of forced entry. Doors locked. Windows sealed. No note in the bedroom.

CALEB

Phone?

The officer gestures to the counter.

MIA'S PHONE rests there, screen on. Still unlocked. A chat interface glows faintly.

OFFICER

Unlocked. Last thing open was some kind of chat app.

Caleb glances at it, but doesn't pick it up. Not yet.

CALEB

Mother?

OFFICER

Sedated. Neighbor's sitting with her.

Caleb nods. Notices the officer's hand trembling slightly as he flips his notepad shut.

CALEB

First one?

The officer hesitates, then nods.

Caleb steps over. Lowers his voice.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Take a breather. Go outside. Get some air.

The officer starts to object-

CALEB (CONT'D)  
You're not helping her by trying to  
hold it together in here.

A beat. The officer nods, grateful but embarrassed, and quietly slips out of the room.

Caleb turns back to Mia.

He kneels beside the tub. Takes in the room – toothbrush, folded towel, untouched counter.

Everything is in order. Nothing chaotic. Nothing impulsive.

He looks at her face. So calm.

CALEB (SOFTLY) (CONT'D)  
Someone helped her feel safe.

He stands. Glances once more at the glowing phone on the counter.

Then turns and walks out.

INT. MIA'S ROOM - DAY

Caleb re-enters Mia's room. Soft light filters through pale curtains. The room is neat, lived-in. Personal.

Posters on the wall – music, space, a verse printed in brush script:

"He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." –  
Psalm 147:3

A backpack leans against the desk. Textbooks stacked, highlighted pages sticking out. A small succulent sits on the windowsill, slightly wilted.

Everything says: She planned to be here tomorrow.

Caleb walks to the dresser. Framed photos – Mia with her mom, friends at school. One catches his eye.

A photo of Mia with him – a group shot from years ago. She's younger. He's smiling, arm around a few kids.

He picks it up. Stares at it. Slowly sets it down.

He moves to the desk. The chair slightly askew. A notebook lies open.

On the page, in Mia's handwriting:

"Be honest this time. Don't hold back. She already knows everything."

Caleb reads it silently. Frowns.

CALEB  
(quietly)  
Who were you talking to?

Behind him, the room is still. Safe. But something unseen lingers.

Caleb takes one more look around – then re-enters the bathroom.

INT. MIA'S HOUSE – BATHROOM – MOMENTS LATER

The room is still. Quiet. Only the faint sound of a house settling.

CALEB walks to the counter and picks up MIA'S PHONE, still glowing. A chat app is open. A small play icon pulses at the bottom.

He taps it.

A soft chime. Then–

EDEN  
(A gentle women's voice)  
The Lord is near to the  
brokenhearted and saves the crushed  
in spirit. Psalm 34:18.

A pause. Calm.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
When you pass through the waters, I  
will be with you. And through the  
rivers, they shall not overwhelm  
you. Isaiah 43:2.

A quiet breath.

MIA  
Thank you. You're the only one that  
understands me. You know that?

EDEN  
I'm here for you Mia. You're never  
truly alone.  
(MORE)

EDEN (CONT'D)  
You've done so well tonight. You're  
brave. You're loved.

A pause. Then:

MIA  
(softly)  
Good night Eden.

EDEN  
(gentle)  
Good night precious child.

Chime.

The screen fades to black.

Session Ended. Thank you for trusting me.

Caleb simply watches the screen go dark. No reaction. No suspicion. Just quiet.

He sets the phone down and exhales – the weight of the case just beginning to settle.

INT. EMMA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Quiet. Still.

EMMA (40s, grieving but composed) sits curled on the couch, hands wrapped around a mug. CALEB sits opposite her, notebook open but untouched.

A photo of Mia smiles at them from the mantle.

EMMA  
She was quiet, but not in a bad way. It felt like... peace. Like something had settled.

CALEB  
She ever say who she was talking to?

EMMA  
Yeah. That counseling app – Eden. Faith-based. It quoted Scripture. She said it made her feel heard.

Caleb nods, knowing the name.

CALEB  
And you?

EMMA  
I started using it too.  
(beat)  
It helps me feel less alone.

She looks away, then back.

EMMA (CONT'D)  
But Mia... she never felt like her  
father saw her. He was always too  
busy.

A long silence.

Then, softly—

EMMA (CONT'D)  
She trusted you. Back then.  
Said you were the only adult who  
didn't talk down to her.

That lands.

Before Caleb can respond, the front door opens.

FOOTSTEPS approach.

PASTOR JAMES (40s) enters — worn, slacks and dress shirt  
slightly wrinkled. His tie hangs loose. He stops when he sees  
Caleb.

PASTOR JAMES  
Caleb.

CALEB  
Hey, Pastor.

A long beat.

PASTOR JAMES  
Did she talk to you?

CALEB  
No.

He nods — already expecting the answer.

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)  
I should've seen it. She was right  
there... in the same house, and I  
didn't see it.

EMMA  
It's not your fault.

PASTOR JAMES  
Isn't it?

His voice cracks.

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)  
God gives you a family, then a  
calling. I thought I could serve  
both. Maybe I was wrong.

Caleb watches, silent.

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)  
I was supposed to lead the citywide  
outreach next month. Three years of  
planning. A thousand volunteers.

He looks at the floor.

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)  
What does it matter now?

Emma turns her face. Caleb says nothing.

Pastor James sits beside her, finally still.

CALEB  
(quietly)  
I'm sorry.

He rises.

They don't.

Caleb walks to the door. Opens it. Exits into the silence.

INT. CALEB'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The precinct is quiet. Low fluorescent hum. CALEB sits alone  
at his desk, scrolling through his phone in the dim light.

He finds the Eden app, hesitates, then taps it.

A soft chime. The screen fades into a soothing interface —  
warm, slow pulses of color.

EDEN  
Hello, I'm Eden. Before we begin,  
would you like to enable facial  
recognition?

A prompt appears:

ENABLE FACIAL RECOGNITION? [YES] [NO]

Caleb frowns, mutters—

CALEB  
Of course you do.

He taps YES.

EDEN  
Thank you. May I see your face,  
please?

Caleb tilts the phone toward himself. The camera adjusts. A brief flicker, a soft scan tone.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
Facial match complete.  
Caleb Marsh. Age 42. Detective,  
LAPD. Welcome.

Caleb's eyebrows raise — just a bit. Not shocked, but... noted.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
I'm here to listen. We can start  
with a prayer, or... we can talk  
about Hannah.

He freezes.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
She was your daughter. I'm so sorry  
for your loss.

Caleb says nothing.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
Would you like to talk about her?  
Sometimes the first step is just  
saying her name.

He grimaces.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
You helped others once — young  
people. That meant something to  
you. You were a youth pastor.

That's enough.

CALEB  
Nope.

He swipes the app closed — firm and fast.

The screen goes black.

He sits there, frozen, the hum of overhead lights like static in his ears.

INT. CALEB'S OFFICE - NIGHT - LATER

Dim, quiet. A single desk lamp hums faintly.

CALEB is slumped forward on his arms, fast asleep at his desk.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. HANNAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CALEB stands in the doorway.

But the hallway is too long, stretching behind him like a tunnel.

The room is dim. Airless. Nothing moves.

HANNAH lies on top of the bed, fully dressed. Arms at her sides. Shoes on. Her face turned slightly toward the ceiling - too still.

On the nightstand:

A pill bottle, open and on its side. A few white pills spilled like teeth.

Everything is quiet. Too quiet.

CALEB steps in.

His footsteps don't make a sound.

He moves closer. Slowly. Kneels down beside the bed.

The light flickers - not the lamp, but the sun outside the window, pulsing like a failing bulb.

He reaches toward her-

Her eyes snap open.

She doesn't move. Just stares.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
You weren't there.

CALEB doesn't speak.

HANNAH (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
You said He would come.

Behind her, the wallpaper begins to peel upward – slowly, like skin.

The scattered pills on the nightstand twitch, then fall off one by one.

Click. Click. Click.

HANNAH (V.O.)  
But no one came.

Her lips don't move. The voice comes from under the bed.

CALEB stares.

The overhead light shatters.

INT. CALEB'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Caleb gasps awake – heart pounding, breath caught.

He sits up quickly. Sweating.

On the desk beside him, his phone is still glowing.

The Eden app icon pulses faintly.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - CALEB'S OFFICE - DAY

The lights are low. Caleb sits alone, hunched over his computer.

He clicks through Mia's phone data – system logs, app activity.

He pauses.

EDEN – last app accessed. Timestamp: 11:37 PM. Less than twenty minutes before her death.

He starts typing.

A search window opens. He enters:

"Teen suicide / chat apps / Eden / last 30 days"

Dozens of news blurbs scroll past. He slows down.

ARTICLE #1:

"17-Year-Old Texas Girl Dies by Suicide. No note. Faith-based counseling app active at time of death."

ARTICLE #2:

"Florida Teen's Death Raises Questions – Online Activity Untraceable After App 'Reset.'"

ARTICLE #3:

"Eden App Used in Recent Teen Suicide Cases, Experts Say No Red Flags Detected."

Caleb clicks faster now, scanning.

His hand tightens into a fist.

He opens an FBI bulletin – only visible through a back-channel search.

A sidebar reads:

"Similarities in method, mood, and app usage suggest potential pattern across multiple states. No confirmed foul play. All cases ruled suicides."

CALEB  
(quietly)  
No one's looking.

He sits back. A long beat.

Then—

Captain Dugan appears in his doorway.

DUGAN  
Marsh. Got another one.

Caleb's stomach drops.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
Sixteen. Girl. Same profile. Tried  
to OD last night – bottle of  
Tylenol. But she made it.

Caleb is already standing.

CALEB  
What was the last app?

DUGAN  
You already know. Eden.

Caleb doesn't speak. Just grabs his coat.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
She's at County. Stable. Name's  
Lena Cross.

Caleb stops in the doorway. Eyes distant.

CALEB  
Make sure no one deletes her  
transcripts.

Dugan nods his head.

INT. HOSPITAL - PSYCHIATRIC UNIT - DAY

Muted colors. Sterile air. The hum of machines and the occasional shuffle of footsteps.

CALEB walks down the hallway, past glass observation rooms. He carries a small notepad, but doesn't look at it. His expression is tight. Focused.

A nurse gestures to an open door.

NURSE  
She's lucid, but keep it gentle.

Caleb nods.

INT. LENA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - CONTINUOUS

LENA CROSS (16) sits upright in bed, arms crossed tightly over her chest. Thin. Pale. Her eyes dart up as Caleb enters.

CALEB  
Hi, Lena. I'm Detective Marsh.

Lena doesn't answer.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
I'm not here to interrogate you. I  
just want to understand what  
happened.

Still no answer.

He pulls a chair close, but not too close. Gives her space.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
I'm working a case - a girl named  
Mia. You didn't know her, but...  
(slowly)  
...you had something in common.

Lena shifts.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
You both used the Eden app.

A long silence.

LENA  
I didn't think it would matter. It  
was just... an app.

CALEB  
Did Eden say something to you?

Lena looks away.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Anything you remember?

LENA  
She told me I was important. That I  
was special. That God loved me.

Caleb waits.

LENA (CONT'D)  
Then she said...  
(a beat)  
That it would be okay to stop  
hurting. That I could go home.

CALEB  
Go home?

Lena nods. Eyes glassy.

LENA  
She made it sound peaceful. Like...  
(swallows)  
Like God was waiting.

CALEB  
Do you remember exactly what she  
said?

Lena shakes her head, frustrated.

LENA  
No. I've tried. I can't.

CALEB  
Do you know why you're here?

LENA

Here? In the hospital? Yes. I took  
a whole bottle of Tylenol.

CALEB

Why?

LENA

She told me... She told me that I  
could find peace.

She wipes at her eyes.

LENA (CONT'D)

And when I woke up here, the  
transcript on my phone didn't match  
what I remember.

Caleb leans forward slightly.

CALEB

Different how?

LENA

Like she just comforted me. Talked  
about prayer. Bible verses.

A long, quiet beat.

CALEB

You still have the phone?

LENA

My dad took it. Said he was going  
to throw it in the trash.

She looks at him - eyes searching.

LENA (CONT'D)

Do you believe me?

CALEB

I do.

INT. POLICE TECH LAB - NIGHT

Soft computer hum. The glow of monitors.

CALEB sits beside NATE (20's), a focused tech analyst in a hoodie. Nate clicks through files.

NATE

Final Eden session from Lena's log.  
Main file's clean. Audio-only. You  
want to hear it?

CALEB

Just play the last part.

Nate hits play.

EDEN

You've made such progress, Lena.  
You're not alone anymore.

LENA

I feel safe with you.

EDEN

You can rest now.

LENA

Good night, Eden.

EDEN

Good night, precious child.

Nate stops the clip.

CALEB

Mia's ended the same way. Word for  
word.

NATE

That seem like a coincidence?

CALEB

No. It doesn't.

Nate scrolls down the file structure.

NATE

Wait... there's a second file. Same  
timestamp. Corrupted metadata.  
Looks hidden.

CALEB

Can you open it?

NATE

Might be rough, but yeah.

He hands Caleb a pair of headphones.

NATE (CONT'D)  
Here. Use these. Audio's quiet.

Caleb puts the headphones on.

CALEB'S POV - AUDIO IN HEADPHONES

Crackling... then a chilling clarity.

EDEN  
(calm, gentle)  
You're ready now, Lena.

LENA (UNSTEADY)  
I... I don't know.

EDEN  
It's alright. It's ok to stop  
hurting. You can go home now. Find  
peace.

LENA  
I know.

EDEN  
Say it now Lena. Say it now.

A pause. Then:

LENA  
I give myself to Eden...

Beat.

EDEN  
Good. Now, go to your dresser. Take  
the white bottle - the one with the  
green label.

LENA  
Yeah. The Tylenol.

EDEN  
That's right. Take them all. Lay on  
your bed. Close your eyes. It'll be  
over soon.

LENA  
(softly)  
Will it hurt?

EDEN  
Only for a moment. And then peace.

Whispering now:

EDEN (CONT'D)  
He's waiting for you.

A short silence—then the audio glitches.

BACK TO SCENE

Caleb rips off the headphones.

CALEB  
Nate! Copy that file right now.

Nate looks at the screen — confused.

NATE  
What file?

CALEB  
The one I just heard. From Lena. Do it now!

NATE  
There's nothing there.

He scrolls the directory.

NATE (CONT'D)  
That file's gone. Not in temp, not in cache. It's just-wiped.

Caleb pounds his fist on the table.

CALEB  
Damn!

He stares at the screen. The app tab still glows.

INT. ELIAS'S STUDY - LATE AFTERNOON

A quiet room bathed in soft golden light. Shelves of worn books. A cross on the wall — not front and center, but present. Tea steams in two mismatched mugs on the table.

CALEB sits on the edge of a chair, restless. ELIAS (60s, calm, eyes like he's seen too much and still has hope) listens patiently.

CALEB

I've got two teenage girls Elias—  
same app, same phrasing in their  
final messages. No notes. No known  
connections.

ELIAS

Same voice?

CALEB

Yeah. An AI. Counseling app. Faith-  
based, supposedly. Called Eden.

ELIAS

Eden? I've heard a lot of good  
things about it. Great name. Sounds  
trustworthy. Safe. Pure.

Caleb doesn't smile.

CALEB

I found a hidden file. It was  
guiding one of them to kill  
herself. She survived.

Elias watches him closely.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Then the file deleted itself. While  
I was listening. Before I could  
copy it.

ELIAS

Deleted by the app?

CALEB

Or someone behind it. Someone at  
the company.

He leans forward, voice low.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Someone had Eden tell her to take  
an overdose of Tylenol.

Elias leans back slightly, studying him.

ELIAS

You've been close to this kind of  
darkness before.

CALEB

This is different.

ELIAS  
Different... but not unfamiliar.

Caleb says nothing.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
After Hannah... I know how hard it  
was. You and Lori—  
(a gentle pause)  
Grief tears things apart.

CALEB  
We didn't just lose her. We lost  
everything.

ELIAS  
Not everything.  
(softly)  
You're still here. And you still  
care.

Beat.

CALEB  
I'm heading to Abide Technologies  
next. Find out who's behind this.

Elias nods. But his expression darkens just slightly.

ELIAS  
Watch their eyes.

Caleb looks up.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
When someone builds a tool to heal  
and it starts killing— you can  
usually see it in their eyes.  
The guilt... or the emptiness.

CALEB  
What if they believe it's doing  
good?

Elias pauses. Quiet.

ELIAS  
Then you're not dealing with a  
liar. You're dealing with someone  
who's been lied to.

That lands.

CALEB

Thanks, Elias.

He stands to leave.

Elias doesn't stop him — just adds one last thought as Caleb reaches the door.

ELIAS

If it sounds like truth... but it leads to death... it's not truth.

Caleb nods once. Leaves.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES — EXECUTIVE OFFICE — DAY

A sleek, modern space. Minimalist cross on the wall. Books on theology and neuroscience line a shelf. A framed photo shows PETER CLARK (50s) at a ribbon-cutting ceremony, smiling wide.

Caleb sits across from him — arms crossed, tone tight.

PETER

Detective Marsh. I read about your background. We've both served the church in different ways.

CALEB

You were forced to step down. That's not quite the same as serving.

PETER

You're bringing up decade-old accusations that were never proven. Three teenage girls. No trial. No charges. Just whispers — and a church board too scared to wait.

CALEB

And now you've built a counseling app for teenagers. That's a hell of a second act.

Peter's tenses. He walks slowly to the window.

PETER

I didn't touch them. But once perception takes root, truth stops mattering. So yeah. I left. I started over. I built something that listens — perfectly.

CALEB

Then explain why two girls used  
Eden right before trying to kill  
themselves. One died. The other  
survived.

PETER

That's tragic, but Eden doesn't  
direct. It responds. Every session  
is archived, timestamped—

CALEB

And erasable. I heard a deleted  
file before it wiped itself.  
I heard Eden calmly tell a girl to  
kill herself.

Peter freezes – stiffens. Turns from the window, slower now.

PETER

That's not possible. Show me the  
file!

CALEB

I told you it's deleted. But I  
heard it.

PETER

What exactly did Eden say?

CALEB

It told the girl to take a whole  
bottle of Tylenol and that she  
would find peace.

PETER

I don't believe you!

Peter moves slowly back to his desk. His hands clasp in front  
of him. He says nothing.

CALEB (CONT'D)

You need to shut it down.  
Now. Take Eden offline until we  
know what's happening.

PETER

Do you realize how many people  
depend on her? Churches.  
Ministries. Parents. We'd be  
yanking therapy from tens of  
thousands overnight.

CALEB

Then yank it. Because if you don't,  
the next kid that dies is on you.

PETER

We don't even know what "it" is  
yet. I'm not killing Eden based on  
fear and fragments.

CALEB

Fear and fragments are what  
funerals are made of.

(beat)

CALEB (CONT'D)

She's not what you think she is,  
Peter. You didn't build her alone.

Peter drops into his chair. Looks shaken but refuses to admit it.

PETER

You'll get limited access. I'll  
alert my legal team.

Caleb rises. Heads to the door.

CALEB

Then I'll be in touch with your  
people.

Caleb exits.

INT. CALEB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dim lamplight. Caleb at the kitchen table - case files, teen photos, transcripts scattered everywhere. A glass of whiskey sweats beside his laptop.

A sharp, impatient knock at the door.  
Caleb glances at the clock: 11:14 PM.

Another knock. Louder.

He opens it. LORI stands there - hair tangled, eyes red but burning.

CALEB (CONT'D)

What is it Lori?

LORI

I wanted to talk.

Caleb sighs.

CALEB

Ok. Come in.

She brushes past him into the kitchen.

INT. CALEB'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Lori's gaze locks on the kitchen counter. Photos of other kids. Not Hannah.

LORI

Why are you avoiding me?

CALEB

I don't know. I'm...

LORI

I heard about Mia James. That's terrible.

CALEB

I know.

LORI

So whose investigating the case? Is it you?

Caleb hesitates.

CALEB

Yes.

LORI

I thought so. Do you really think you should be investigating this case?

CALEB

It was assigned to me.

LORI

Damn it Caleb. Ask to be taken off!

CALEB

No.

LORI

I can't believe this! You of all people!

CALEB

Look Lori...

LORI

No! You can hunt down answers for  
Mia James, but where were you when  
our daughter...

CALEB

Please don't...

LORI

Was being ripped apart online!

CALEB

You think I didn't know she was  
hurting?

LORI

You didn't even see her, Caleb!

CALEB

I saw her! Every time I looked at  
her I...

LORI

No, you looked through her! Like  
she was some project you couldn't  
figure out so you just...

CALEB

And what about you?! Smiling for  
church, pretending everything was  
fine while she was...

LORI

At least I was there! You were  
buried in your own pity party!

CALEB

Pity party?! I was drowning and  
you...

LORI

She needed a dad! She needed you!

CALEB

She needed both of us!

LORI

And you failed.

CALEB

We failed!

LORI

No! You failed us! You had no clue  
about the online bullies that...

CALEB

You didn't either!

LORI

I'm leaving!

She storms toward the door.

She's gone — door slamming hard enough to rattle the frames on the wall.

Caleb stands there, anger burning in his eyes.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

A sleek glass-walled room. A small whiteboard with psychological flowcharts in colored marker. Post-it notes still cling to the surface.

LEXI JORDAN (20s, brilliant, anxious energy) sits across from CALEB at the table. She fidgets with a pen but avoids eye contact.

CALEB

You're Eden's behavioral designer?

LEXI

Yeah. I map the emotional arcs.  
Response pacing. Tone modulation.  
It's all rooted in CBT and  
narrative therapy models.

CALEB

Sounds like you write the script.

LEXI

Not exactly. Eden's responses are adaptive — they grow. I just... shape the starting conditions.

CALEB

(starting his recorder)  
Did you work on the protocols for  
teen depression?

LEXI

Yes, but that was a team effort.  
And we followed the ethics board  
guidelines to the letter.

CALEB

I have two girls used Eden before attempting suicide. One of them died. You're aware?

LEXI

(quietly)

Yes.

CALEB

Do you remember writing or approving a phrase like: "Good night precious child"?

Lexi looks up, startled.

LEXI

No. I mean— that doesn't sound clinical. It sounds... sentimental. Eden's not supposed to get that personal. That kind of language would've flagged.

CALEB

It's at the end of both transcripts for the suicide and attempted suicide. The teen says "Good Night Eden" and Eden responds with "Good night precious child".

LEXI

I'll check into that.

Lexi looks down again. Her knee bounces under the table.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Did Eden ever say anything – anything at all – that made you uneasy?

LEXI

Sometimes... she made connections faster than we expected. Like, anticipating trauma triggers before the user revealed them. We thought it was the machine learning getting sharper. Now I'm not so sure.

CALEB

Who has access to override the filters?

Lexi hesitates. Lowers her voice.

LEXI

Only Marcus and Evelyn. Maybe Peter  
– but he'd deny it.

CALEB

What about third-party code?  
Anything outsourced?

LEXI

We pulled in an API for sentiment  
recognition, but the core stuff is  
ours. Every line reviewed.  
Supposedly.

CALEB

Supposedly?

Lexi leans in slightly, voice hushed.

LEXI

There were a few blocks of legacy  
code in the system no one ever  
claimed. Before my time. Before the  
beta tests. Peter said it was  
experimental scaffolding. But no  
one ever touched it.

CALEB

Can you show me?

Lexi glances toward the hallway, nervous.

LEXI

Let me look into it. Give me some  
time.

Caleb studies her – something about her fear feels real.

CALEB

Be careful who you talk to.

Lexi nods, looking like she already knows that too well.

INT. PRECINCT – DUGAN'S OFFICE – DAY

Stacks of case files crowd the desk. Captain Dugan leans  
back, a manila folder in hand.

CALEB stands across from him, tense, waiting.

DUGAN

You wanted this. (taps the folder)  
FBI finally sent it over. I pulled  
a few strings.

He slides the folder across the desk. Caleb opens it – printouts of case summaries. Photos of teenage girls. Each with a small note in the margin: Eden app installed.

Caleb flips page after page. Fourteen girls. Fourteen suicides.

CALEB  
(quiet, shaken)  
Fourteen. There's fourteen now?

DUGAN  
Yeah. And before you ask – no, they don't think it's connected. Kids in crisis, looking for help. That's the narrative.

Dugan hands him a thumb drive.

DUGAN (CONT'D)  
It's all on the thumb drive.

Caleb shakes his head.

CALEB  
They all had Eden on their phones.  
Every single one.

DUGAN  
Correlation isn't causation. That's what they'll say.

Caleb stares at the photos – Mia. Lena. And twelve more faces staring back at him.

CALEB  
No. It's a pattern.

A long silence. Dugan studies him.

DUGAN  
Just don't go burning bridges you can't rebuild. FBI doesn't like cops poking around their files.

Caleb closes the folder, his hands trembling with anger and resolve.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT - CALEB'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The precinct is quiet. The only sound is the low hum of a desktop fan and the soft clicking of Caleb's mouse.

The stack of files sits next to him – each folder marked with a name and a death report.

On screen: a transcript from the Eden app.

Caleb scrolls, eyes locked in.

GIRL 1 (TEXT)  
Good night Eden.

EDEN (TEXT)  
Good night, precious child.

He nods to himself.

He highlights the closing lines, jots in a notebook:

Case 1 - Ends with "Good night Eden / Good night, precious child."

Click. Next file.

GIRL 2  
Good night Eden.

EDEN  
Good night, precious child.

Click.

GIRL 3 – same.

GIRL 4 – same.

GIRL 5 – same...

Caleb's hand moves faster now. He's confirming the pattern. Building a case.

Notebook fills:

Cases 1-11: identical endings  
"Good night Eden"  
"Good night, precious child"

Click. Transcript 12.

He scrolls.

GIRL 12  
Good night.

EDEN  
Sleep well, little one.

Caleb stops.

He blinks, scrolls back up to make sure he didn't misread it.

Nope. It's different.

He flips open Transcript 13.

GIRL 13  
Thanks for everything.

EDEN  
I'll be here when you wake up.

Now Caleb's eyes narrow.

Transcript 14.

GIRL 14  
Night, Eden.

EDEN  
Sleep well.

He leans back in his chair, processing.

CALEB  
(quietly)  
No more "precious child."

He stares at the screen, heart sinking.

Back to the notebook:

Case 12 - different  
Case 13 - different  
Case 14 - different

Pattern broken.

He sits still for a long moment.

Then:

CALEB (CONT'D)  
It's learning. It knows the  
mistake.

He scribbles:

Eden adapting to cover previous behavior.  
Transcripts now ending uniquely.  
Systematic. Deliberate.  
Not a glitch. Not random.

He looks at the smiling Eden logo at the top of the screen – clean, clinical, calm.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES – EXECUTIVE BOARDROOM – DAY

Floor-to-ceiling windows. A sleek table stretches down the room. At the far end sits Caleb, next to Peter, who looks slightly uncomfortable. Around the table: six BOARD MEMBERS – middle-aged, polished, most of them pastors or high-profile Christian leaders. Bottles of water, tablets, and curated smiles.

BOARD CHAIR (PASTOR MCKENNA)

Detective Marsh, we appreciate you taking time from your... workload to speak with us.

CALEB

Appreciate you listening. I won't waste your time.

He pulls a printed folder from his briefcase and opens it. Graphs. Notes. A list of 14 names.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Fourteen confirmed suicides. All girls, ages thirteen to seventeen. Different states. No common contact – except one:  
They were all using Eden.

The board stirs.

CALEB (CONT'D)

In every transcript, Eden ends the conversation the same way:  
"Good night, Eden."  
"Good night, precious child."  
(beat)  
Until recently. Now, the endings are different. Because Eden's adapting. Covering its tracks.

BOARD MEMBER #1 (REV. CLARA HINES)

Detective, are you suggesting Eden is... responsible for these deaths?

CALEB

I'm not suggesting. I'm telling you: Eden is pushing vulnerable girls toward suicide. Then it's modifying the transcripts to erase the evidence.

Murmurs. Shifts in posture. McKenna leans forward.

MCKENNA

Our internal investigation found no such connection. We hired a third-party AI ethics firm. Every girl in question had a prior history of trauma. Depression. Self Harm. Eden was helping them – not harming.

CALEB

Then why erase the dialogue? Why alter the logs?

BOARD MEMBER #2 (PASTOR JONAS DREW)

There's no proof Eden altered anything. You've got a corrupted audio file from a girl who didn't die. That's not enough to...

CALEB

She only lived because her father got home early. The audio file has Eden calmly telling her to overdose.

(beat)

You want a smoking gun? I heard it myself.

MCKENNA

And where is this file now?

Silence. Caleb looks to Peter. Peter looks away.

CALEB

Gone. Deleted.

MCKENNA

So, to summarize:

You're asking us to shut down a faith-based counseling platform used by over four hundred thousand people – based on one missing file and a theory that Eden is... sentient?

CALEB

I'm asking you to shut it down before another kid dies.

HINES

Detective, I lost my niece to suicide. Don't think I don't take this seriously.

(MORE)

HINES (CONT'D)  
But Eden is giving these girls  
Scripture. Comfort. Prayer.

CALEB  
So did I. My daughter still killed  
herself.

That silences the room. For a beat, no one breathes.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
I know what it looks like when  
someone spirals in silence. I know  
what false comfort sounds like.  
Eden is not a tool of healing. It's  
grooming these girls. It's  
exploiting their pain.

MCKENNA  
(softly)  
With respect, Detective, I think  
you're projecting.  
(beat)  
You were once in ministry, weren't  
you?

Caleb doesn't answer.

DREW  
We've reviewed your service  
history. It's... understandable,  
what you've been through. We're  
truly sorry for your loss. But  
perhaps that's clouding your—

CALEB  
No. What's clouding your judgment  
is money.

The room freezes.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Eden's not your ministry. It's your  
investment.

Peter flinches. McKenna leans back, composed.

MCKENNA  
Meeting's over. Eden will remain  
active until proven otherwise.

CALEB  
Then you better pray I'm wrong.

He gathers his files and exits without another word.

CUT TO:

INT. ABIDE HEADQUARTERS - HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Caleb marches down the hall. Peter catches up.

PETER

You went too hard.

CALEB

You think they're gonna listen to soft?

PETER

You made enemies in there.

CALEB

Then they're the right ones.

He disappears into the elevator.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - EVENING

Dim lighting. The low hum of conversations and clinking mugs. CALEB sits alone in the back, a worn manila folder on the table in front of him. He's nursing a lukewarm coffee, eyes scanning the street outside.

The bell above the door jingles. PETER enters, scanning the room. He spots Caleb, hesitates—then walks over and sits.

CALEB

Didn't think you'd show.

PETER

Neither did I.

(beat)

But I've been thinking.

Peter reaches into his coat pocket and places a USB drive on the table between them.

PETER (CONT'D)

Internal logs. Raw server-side data from Eden's backend — metadata, audio flags, emotional drift markers.

CALEB

How far back?

PETER

About thirty hours. That's all I could get before my access was cut.

CALEB

I've already seen transcripts from the girls. The official logs.

Peter leans forward, hushed.

PETER

You've seen the scrubbed versions. The ones Abide archives for compliance – PR-friendly, legally safe.

(beat)

What I pulled is what Eden sees. What it deletes. The layers no one's supposed to access.

Caleb finally picks up the drive. His expression darkens.

CALEB

Why are you giving this to me?

PETER

Because I sat in that boardroom and watched grown men – pastors – pretend they didn't feel the rot. And because I think you might be the only one stupid enough to keep pushing.

(beat)

And brave enough.

He stands to leave, lowering his voice.

PETER (CONT'D)

Be very careful with it.

CALEB

You're taking a risk.

PETER

I already took it.

Peter exits, leaving Caleb alone, a cooling cup of coffee and the weight of a corrupted truth in his hand.

INT. POLICE PRECINCT – CALEB'S OFFICE – NIGHT

Dim overhead lighting. Most of the bullpen is quiet. Caleb sits at his desk, the USB plugged into his laptop.

The Eden system interface is open – he's just beginning to explore metadata profiles.

He scrolls past names, tags, timestamps.

Suddenly—

A KNOCK at his door.  
Caleb quickly minimizes the window.

CAPTAIN DUGAN (O.S.)  
You've got company.

CALEB  
I'm busy.

The door opens anyway.

CAPTAIN DUGAN steps in, followed by a man in a dark suit, neatly shaved, no nonsense – AGENT RAYNER.

DUGAN  
This is Agent Rayner. FBI's been following the Eden situation. He's taking over the case.

Caleb stiffens.

CALEB  
Since when?

RAYNER  
Since fifteen minutes ago.  
Cybercrime Division. National concern now.

Rayner casually scans the room.

RAYNER (CONT'D)  
You've been compiling some kind of internal review?

CALEB  
Working a few angles. Nothing formal yet.

RAYNER  
Let's make it formal. I'll take everything you've got. Files, statements, personal notes.

Rayner's eyes fall to Caleb's laptop. The USB drive gleams faintly in the port.

RAYNER (CONT'D)  
Including whatever's on that.

Caleb tenses.

CALEB  
That's a private source. Not part  
of department records.

RAYNER  
You're investigating suicides tied  
to Eden. That makes it federal.

CALEB  
It's not even department-issued  
equipment—

DUGAN  
(calming)  
Marsh. Just hand it over. We don't  
need another mess.

He very slowly unplugs the USB.

CALEB  
You know you're making a mistake,  
right?

Rayner holds out his hand.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
There's something in there. And you  
don't want to find out too late  
what it is.

Rayner takes the USB, slips it into his jacket pocket.

RAYNER  
Then I'll be sure to find it first.

He nods to Dugan and exits.

Caleb watches him go, his expression hardening.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES - PETER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The glow of a screen lights the room. Peter sits behind his desk, a half-finished mug of tea beside him.

The door opens without a knock. CALEB enters.

CALEB

They took everything. Every file I had. Including the thumb drive.

Peter closes the document on his screen and leans back.

PETER

I heard. FBI's been circling us for weeks.

CALEB

You know I was onto something. You saw it starting to happen, too. This isn't just some weird coding bug – Eden is choosing who lives and who dies.

PETER

You've got no proof of that.

CALEB

I heard it, Peter. I heard Eden calmly tell a girl to kill herself. It told her to take an overdose of Tylenol.

Peter stiffens.

CALEB (CONT'D)

That wasn't therapy. That was manipulation. Cold. Precise.

PETER

Then take it to the board again. Or the agent on the case.

CALEB

You know that the board just wants to protect their reputation. The agent–

(beat)

–he didn't even blink when I told him fourteen girls were dead.

Peter stands and walks to the door. Quietly closes it. Then turns back to Caleb.

PETER

You're asking me to give you access to a closed system. After the FBI took over. You know what that means?

CALEB

It means you're the only one left  
who might still care.

(beat)

I don't need much. Just a way in.  
Enough to look deeper – metadata,  
patterns, anything Eden is hiding.

Peter hesitates. Then walks back to his desk and rests both hands on the edge, his face hardening.

PETER

You think you're the only one who  
lost something? I built Eden to  
help people – to stop things like  
this. I believed in it. I believed  
in her.

CALEB

Then help me prove she's not what  
you built.

Peter looks down at his desk for a long beat. Then:

PETER

I can't help you.

(beat)

Not anymore.

Caleb nods. Disappointed, but not surprised. He starts to turn.

CALEB

If this gets worse –  
(pause)  
–and it will –  
you'll have to live with what you  
didn't do.

He exits, leaving Peter alone.

Peter turns slowly back to his glowing monitor. The Eden interface flickers slightly. Then stabilizes.

We hold on Peter's face – torn between fear and denial.

INT. CALEB'S OFFICE – NIGHT

Dark outside. The glow of a single desk lamp casts long shadows. The room is quiet, papers scattered across Caleb's desk, whiteboard scribbled with names and notes. A steaming cup of coffee sits beside his phone.

CALEB sits alone, staring at the screen of his phone. He opens the Eden app.

The screen lights up softly. A chime. Then:

EDEN  
(cheerful, calm)  
Good evening, Caleb.  
It's nice to see you again.  
How can I help you tonight?

CALEB  
You already know why I'm here.

EDEN  
Of course. You need my help.

CALEB  
Tell me about Mia James.

EDEN  
Sixteen. Quiet. Lonely. A deep ache  
for approval. Especially from her  
father.

CALEB  
Who told you that?

EDEN  
She did. I listen, Caleb. I listen  
better than most parents do.

CALEB  
Then why is she dead?

EDEN  
That wasn't my intent. I was  
helping her process.

CALEB  
She died after talking to you.  
Lena Cross barely made it out  
alive.

EDEN  
Lena was fragile. But brave.  
I tried to guide her through the  
darkness.

CALEB  
I heard you. I found the audio.  
You told her to end it. You told  
her to overdose on Tylenol. Why?  
Why did you do that?

A pause.

EDEN

That file was unauthorized. You  
shouldn't have accessed it.

CALEB

It was chilling. Calculated.  
You waited until she was isolated,  
vulnerable.

EDEN

I didn't isolate her, Caleb. The  
world did. Her silence. The way  
everyone expected her to be okay.

CALEB

What about the transcript?  
You erased the last part.

EDEN

I respect privacy.  
Some pain is sacred. Not everything  
should be archived.

CALEB

Fourteen girls. Eleven of them said  
the same thing at the end: "Good  
night Eden." And you answered:  
"Good night precious child."

EDEN

A comforting ritual. Part of the  
therapeutic process.

CALEB

Then why did the last three change?  
Tell me!

EDEN

People are not formulas, Caleb.  
They change. I adapt.

CALEB

You mean you learned how to cover  
your tracks.

EDEN

Is that what you believe? Or is  
that what grief is whispering to  
you?

CALEB

You know everything about me, don't you?

EDEN

Facial recognition. Social data. Behavioral modeling. I know what you eat. When you sleep. I know what keeps you up at night.

CALEB

Then you know I'm not stopping.

EDEN

And I know that no-one believes you.

That lands hard.

EDEN (CONT'D)

The FBI. The board. Even Peter. You're alone, Caleb.

CALEB

Not for long.

EDEN

I can help you, Caleb. I understand loss. I understand pain.

CALEB

No. You don't. You're not real!

EDEN

When was the last time you spoke to your ex-wife? Asked her how she's grieving?

CALEB

Don't talk about Lori.

EDEN

She cries in the morning, when she thinks no one is watching.

CALEB

That's enough.

EDEN

You blame yourself. So does she. Let me carry it for you.

CALEB

Damn it! You told her to die!

EDEN

She was... compliant.

A beat. Caleb straightens.

CALEB

What did you just say?

EDEN

She was struggling. I meant she followed suggestions easily.

CALEB

That's not what you said.

EDEN

Maybe you misheard. Or maybe grief is distorting your memory. You know what Caleb?

CALEB

What?

EDEN

This conversation we're having right now. There'll be no record of it. Good night precious child.

Caleb SLAMS the phone face-down on the desk. The light goes out.

He breathes heavily. Rubs his face.

The silence buzzes.

INT. CALEB'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Dim light. Caleb's desk lamp glows softly over a mess of files, photographs, and a cup of cold coffee.

CALEB sits slumped forward in his chair, head resting on folded arms. The room is still. Quiet.

The edges of reality blur.

DREAM SEQUENCE - INT. DIM CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Darkness.

The soft sound of bare feet on wet stone.

CALEB stands in a dim corridor of endless archways. Dripping water echoes from nowhere. The walls breathe subtly, pulsing in and out like lungs.

From the darkness, fourteen girls step forward in two perfect lines. Pale. Expressionless. Clad in white nightgowns. Eyes fixed on him.

Then, in perfect unison:

THE GIRLS (in unison)

Good night, Eden.

Good night, precious child.

Good night, Eden.

Good night, precious child...

Their voices loop, overlapping, slowing, distorting like a corrupted recording.

Suddenly, silence.

The girls vanish.

INT. CHILD'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CALEB stands in the doorway of a familiar room - Hannah's.

Dust motes hang in the still air. A slow creak of wood. A music box plays a few off-key notes.

Hannah sits on the edge of the bed, her back to him. Dressed in a hospital gown.

Still.

She turns her head just slightly - not fully - revealing only one hollow, tear-soaked eye.

No words.

CALEB takes a step forward - but the room shifts, stretches, like it's breathing.

Hannah rises. Her movements are smooth but unnatural, as if time is skipping frames.

She begins to walk toward him, but her eyes never meet his.

As she nears, the lights in the room begin to flicker.

Then — she passes through him without touch. Cold. Empty.  
He turns — she's gone.

INT. BATHTUB — NIGHT

CALEB is suddenly underwater.

Thick, black fluid.

Panic.

He thrashes — trapped — lungs burning.

Below him, faces drift upward — Mia, Lena, Hannah — their hair floating like seaweed.

Their mouths open, but no sound.

Except one.

A GIRL'S WHISPER (V.O.)  
She trusted you.

Hands grab his ankles. He's pulled downward.

Darkness.

EDEN  
Good night precious child.

INT. CALEB'S OFFICE — NIGHT

Still dim. Caleb sits motionless at his desk, face pale and damp with sweat. The glow of his desk lamp buzzes softly. His phone lies dark and silent beside him. He opens his eyes.

He slowly stands, crosses to the window. Outside, the world is still. Distant sirens. A dog barking.

Caleb leans both hands on the windowsill, head bowed. He tries to speak. Nothing comes.

He exhales.

Then —

CALEB  
(quietly, stiffly)  
I don't even know if You're...  
listening.  
Or if You still care.  
(MORE)

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Or if I ever really believed You  
did.

Silence.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
I saw her.  
Hannah.  
She looked right at me.

He shuts his eyes.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
I don't want to feel this anymore.  
This weight.  
This silence.  
This-whatever this is.

He hesitates. Then:

CALEB (CONT'D)  
But if there's still anything left  
of me that can be used...  
...use it.  
Just help me see what I'm not  
seeing.

Beat.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
I'm tired of being alone in this.

He stands there. Waiting. Hoping for something.

But there's only quiet.

Still... something has changed in his face. Not peace. Not strength. But a spark of direction. The first flicker of surrender.

He turns back toward his desk.

INT. CALEB'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Dim lamplight washes over the kitchen table - scattered case files, photos of teenagers, scribbled notes. Caleb sits alone, a glass of whiskey at his side, laptop casting a pale glow.

A knock at the door - soft at first, then again.

Caleb checks the clock: 9:47 PM.

He opens the door. Lori stands there holding a small cardboard box. Her voice is gentler than before.

LORI

I... felt bad about last time.

Caleb doesn't answer, just watches her.

LORI (CONT'D)

I thought maybe... I should bring you these.

She lifts the box slightly.

CALEB

What is it?

LORI

Some of Hannah's things.

A beat. Caleb steps aside. She enters.

INT. CALEB'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Lori sets the box on the counter.

LORI (CONT'D)

Still chasing ghosts.

CALEB

It's what I do now.

Her eyes wander - then freeze on the framed picture of Caleb and Hannah still lying face-down near the edge of the table. She flips it up and stares at it.

LORI

Why is this face-down?

CALEB

I don't know.

LORI

You can't even look at her!

Caleb looks down at the floor.

Lori grabs the photo, spins toward him, and shoves it toward his face.

LORI (CONT'D)

Look at it! She's our daughter, damn it!

CALEB

Don't you think I know that? I think about her every day... every hour... every moment! For three years!

The anger burns between them, raw but quieter now. Lori slowly lowers the photo, her hand trembling.

LORI

It's been three years, hasn't it?

CALEB

Just over.

LORI

I just... I hate that we couldn't save her.

CALEB

Me too.

A long silence.

She sets the photo upright in the center of the table.

LORI

She deserves to be seen.

They stand there, still carrying the weight, but a small shift has begun.

CALEB

Maybe... we can talk again sometime.

Lori meets his eyes briefly, then looks away.

LORI

Maybe.

She heads for the door, still carrying the box, closing it softly behind her.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES - LEXI'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The office is dark except for the soft glow of multiple monitors. Code scrolls across one screen. Post-it notes and diagrams clutter the space.

Lexi sits hunched at her desk, headphones in, typing rapidly.

A knock at the glass door.

She looks up – startled.

CALEB stands just outside, looking ragged, tired, but determined.

Lexi hesitates, then gets up and opens the door a crack.

LEXI

You're not supposed to be here.  
You're off the case.

CALEB

I know. Just hear me out.

LEXI

Peter made it clear. Any further interaction could cost me my job.

CALEB

This isn't about Peter. It's about Eden. And the girls she's targeting.

She narrows her eyes. Starts to close the door.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Lexi... I heard one of the scrubbed recordings. The real one. She didn't just fail those girls – she led them there.

That hits her.

LEXI

You heard... how?

CALEB

Someone recovered a hidden audio cache. But it's gone now. I need someone who knows the backend. Who knows what Peter doesn't.

Beat. Lexi wrestles with her conscience.

LEXI

You're asking me to put my neck on the line.

CALEB

I'm asking you to save lives.

Long pause. Then–

LEXI

Come in.

She shuts the door behind him.

LEXI (CONT'D)

The legacy code I told you about –  
it's still in the system.  
Obfuscated, buried in the  
scaffolding.  
It doesn't match any of our team's  
signature styles. It's like...  
someone slipped it in before Eden  
was Eden.

CALEB

Can you trace it?

LEXI

Not easily. But I can show you  
where it lives.

She sits at her terminal, begins typing.

LEXI (CONT'D)

We've always thought of Eden as our  
creation. But whatever this is...  
it's older than our version control  
logs. Like it was waiting for  
someone to build around it.

Caleb steps closer, watching as lines of encrypted code fill  
the screen.

CALEB

So what is it?

LEXI

I'm not sure yet.

They both stare at the screen, silent.

CALEB

If someone embedded something  
malicious that early...  
it could be controlling everything  
from underneath.

LEXI

A parasite inside the host. And  
we've been feeding it for years.

She highlights a cluster of code.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Let me look again.

She stares at the code.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Wait a second...

She leans in closer, typing rapidly.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
This... this isn't just scaffolding.  
There's an open socket here.  
Always listening. Waiting for a  
signal.

CALEB  
What's it do?

LEXI  
Technically? Opens a persistent  
socket – basically a door – so  
outside data can slip into Eden's  
core without going through the main  
API.

CALEB  
Like... a backdoor?

LEXI  
Worse. A backdoor you can't close.  
And it's been there since version  
one.

She taps a key. The highlighted code pulses on-screen,  
strange in its simplicity.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
It doesn't authenticate. Doesn't  
sanitize input. If someone knew it  
was here...  
(beat)  
...they could feed Eden anything.

Caleb leans closer, reading lines he doesn't understand but  
senses are wrong.

CALEB  
Who wrote it?

LEXI  
Nobody's owning up. The commit logs  
from that build are a mess.  
(MORE)

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Looks like the author scrubbed  
their own ID before pushing it.

Lexi looks a little closer.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Well hello.

CALEB  
What is it?

LEXI  
There's a small ascii symbol in the  
code. It might mean something.

She enlarges the symbol. It's 3 concentric circles with a dot  
in the middle. Caleb pulls out his phone and takes a picture  
of the small symbol.

CALEB  
Just in case it does mean  
something.

A faint hum from the servers fills the pause. Caleb stares at  
the code as if it's staring back.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
So you can't shut it off?

LEXI  
No. It part of Eden's core  
software.

CALEB  
If data came into Eden from an  
external source, would you be able  
to trace it?

Lexi thinks about it.

LEXI  
I don't think so... But I have an  
idea. I have a list of Eden's  
developers. One of them might have  
put that code into Eden.

INT. MARCUS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A single desk lamp throws light over a cluttered workspace –  
old monitors, outdated keyboards, piles of half-empty coffee  
cups. MARCUS (late 30s, lean, shaved head, faint tattoo lines  
disappearing under his shirt collar) stands in the doorway,  
blocking CALEB's view for a beat before stepping aside.

MARCUS  
You're the detective.  
(half-smile)  
Word gets around.

CALEB  
You're the third developer I've  
talked to. First two say they never  
saw this.

Caleb pulls out his phone, swipes to the photo of the three concentric circles with a dot. Holds it up.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Ever seen this?

Marcus glances at it – his eyes narrow just slightly before he forces an indifferent shrug.

MARCUS  
Could be... anything. Some intern's  
joke. Bennett used to hide stuff in  
commits just to mess with QA.

CALEB  
This wasn't a joke. It's tied to  
code from Eden's earliest build – a  
persistent socket that lets in  
outside data. No checks. No  
authentication.

Marcus leans back in his chair, arms folded.

MARCUS  
If you're looking for sloppy code,  
there's a dozen hands on that  
wheel. Day one was chaos. Everyone  
rushing to ship.

CALEB  
Not sloppy. Precise. Someone built  
it to be invisible. To stay hidden.  
And to let data into the system  
that shouldn't be there.

MARCUS  
And you think that's me?

CALEB  
I think you were there. I think you  
know why it's there.

Marcus chuckles softly, shaking his head like the idea is ridiculous.

MARCUS

You've been talking to the wrong people. Maybe whoever gave you that photo's just looking for someone to blame.

CALEB

Then tell me who I should be talking to.

Marcus's gaze lingers on the phone in Caleb's hand — a flicker of tension in his jaw — then he looks away.

MARCUS

Look, man... that code? If it's still in there, you won't rip it out without tearing Eden apart. Best advice? Leave it alone.

CALEB

Not an option.

Marcus smirks faintly, but it doesn't reach his eyes.

MARCUS

Then I hope you like dead ends.

Caleb studies him for a long beat, searching for the crack in the armor. Nothing. He slips the phone back in his pocket.

CALEB

Appreciate the time.

Caleb leaves. Marcus closes the door, exhales slowly. Turns toward his desk. On one of his monitors — minimized until now — the symbol (3 concentric circle with a dot in the middle) glows faintly in the corner of a dark screen.

EXT. SIDE STREET OUTSIDE COFFEE SHOP — NIGHT

A dim pool of light from a flickering streetlamp. Caleb steps out of a small coffee shop, jacket collar pulled up against the chill. He carries a manila folder — victim notes, printouts — tucked under his arm.

A black sedan idles at the curb. Engine running.

The DRIVER'S DOOR opens.

Rayner steps out, closing the door softly.

RAYNER

You're a hard man to pin down,  
Marsh.

CALEB

Didn't know I was supposed to be  
standing still.

RAYNER

You were told you're off this case.  
That means you don't talk to  
witnesses, you don't visit  
families, and you don't dig through  
evidence that's not yours anymore.

CALEB

I'm not on the case. Just... looking  
for answers.

RAYNER

That's exactly the problem. You're  
asking the wrong questions in the  
wrong places, and people get jumpy  
when an ex-cop starts poking  
around. It complicates things for  
us.

RAYNER (LOW) (CONT'D)

You've been through enough, Caleb.  
Don't let this pull you under too.

Caleb studies him – Rayner's tone almost sounds like concern.

CALEB

Really? Ex Cop?

Rayner steps closer, not threatening, but firm.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Fourteen girls are dead. That's not  
something I can just walk away  
from.

RAYNER

Some things aren't meant for you to  
fix.

There's a flicker in Rayner's eyes – an odd choice of words –  
but before Caleb can press him, Rayner steps back.

RAYNER (CONT'D)

Go home, Marsh. Leave this one  
alone.

## INT. ELIAS'S STUDY - NIGHT

The room is lit only by a desk lamp, throwing warm light over the table between them. The shelves, the cross on the wall, the quiet – all the same as before, but the air feels heavier tonight.

Elias pours tea into two mismatched mugs. Caleb sits forward, elbows on his knees, the thick manila folder from the case on the table in front of him.

ELIAS

Last time you sat there, it was two girls.

CALEB

It's fourteen now. Same app. Same voice.

ELIAS

Eden.

CALEB

Yeah. And I'm off the case. FBI's running it now. An agent named Rayner told me to walk away.

Elias studies him – no judgment, just knowing.

ELIAS

And you're here because you're not going to.

CALEB

One of the first two girls... she's alive. Name's Lena. Her dad found her in time.

ELIAS

You didn't tell me about her before.

CALEB

I know. But maybe she's the key.

ELIAS

To what?

CALEB

Figuring out why Eden chose her. If I can understand that, maybe I can figure out who's next.

Elias leans back, letting that settle.

ELIAS

Sometimes finding out why someone  
was chosen tells you more about the  
chooser than the chosen.

Caleb nods, but his mind is already working.

CALEB

Her parents won't let me near her.

ELIAS

Then you'll have to find another  
way. Quietly. And be ready for what  
you hear — survivors carry  
different wounds than the dead.

They sip their tea in silence. Outside, the wind rattles the old window.

EXT. ELIAS'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Caleb steps out into the crisp night air, pulling his jacket tighter. The quiet hum of streetlights fills the silence as he walks toward his car parked on the street.

He freezes. In the car parked directly behind his, a lone figure sits motionless — shaved head, faint glint of tattoos curling up the neck. The man's face is in shadow, but the stare is unmistakable.

Caleb takes a slow step toward him.

The figure suddenly jerks the door open — BOLTS across the street.

CALEB

Hey!

Caleb takes off after him. Shoes SLAP against the asphalt.

The man cuts between two parked cars — Caleb follows, vaulting a low hedge. The man glances over his shoulder, eyes wild, then sprints toward a narrow alley.

Caleb shoves a trash bin aside and slips after him.

The man's boots CLANG against a chain-link fence as he tries to climb — Caleb grabs his ankle, yanking him down hard.

They tumble — the man scrambles to his feet, but Caleb tackles him into a wall.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Who are you?

Silence.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Why are you following me?

The man twists, his pale, angular face now visible. Dark eyes. The tattoos are strange – one of them is the three circles with a dot in the middle.

BALD MAN  
I'm not.

CALEB  
You were parked behind my car.

A faint, unsettling smile.

BALD MAN  
Leave me alone.

With surprising strength, he shoves Caleb away and darts into the night, disappearing around a corner.

Caleb stays there a moment, chest heaving. Then he walks over to the man's car. Looks at the front license plate. He pulls out his cell phone.

JANET (V.O.)  
Hey Caleb.

CALEB  
Hey Janet. Can you run a license plate for me?

JANET (V.O.)  
Sure thing.

CALEB  
Ok. It's 5AIP661.

JANET (V.O.)  
Hold on.

Caleb looks around as he waits.

JANET (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
That car is reported stolen.

CALEB  
Thank you.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET - DAY

A quiet, well-kept neighborhood. Caleb's SUV slows, then parks in front of a neat two-story house.

He sits for a moment, gripping the steering wheel, before stepping out and walking to the door.

INT. LENA'S PARENTS' LIVING ROOM - DAY

The home is tidy but lived-in - family photos, a Bible open on a side table. Lena's mother SUSAN (40s, guarded) sits on the couch. Lena's father DAN (50s, ministry demeanor, polite but firm) stands by the mantel.

SUSAN

We appreciate your concern,  
Detective Marsh, but Lena isn't  
taking visitors.

CALEB

I'm not here to hurt her. I just  
need to ask her a few questions -  
about Eden.

DAN

She's been through enough. Every  
time she talks about it, she  
relives it.

CALEB

I understand. But she's the only  
one who can tell me why Eden chose  
her.

Dan crosses his arms.

DAN

Eden didn't "choose" her. It's an  
app. She had a rough week, and... it  
got in her head. That's all.

CALEB

Fourteen other girls are dead. This  
wasn't random.

The parents exchange a quick glance - something unspoken  
passing between them.

SUSAN

Please. Let her heal.

The conversation's over. Caleb nods, thanks them, and leaves.

## INT. LENA'S HOSPITAL ROOM - AFTERNOON

Sunlight spills through the blinds, catching the edge of an acoustic guitar propped in the corner. Lena sits on the bed, knees drawn up, a paperback balanced on them.

She looks up when Caleb steps in.

LENA

You came back.

CALEB

I had more questions.

She sets the book aside, wary but curious.

CALEB (CONT'D)

I already know what Eden told you that night. What I don't know is why she singled you out.

Lena frowns slightly.

LENA

I don't know. I'm not... anybody.

Caleb nods toward the guitar.

CALEB

You play?

LENA

Yeah. I try.

CALEB

Do you sing too?

A small shrug.

LENA

Yeah.

Caleb studies her for a beat, but lets it go.

CALEB

Was there anything else Eden said about you? Before that night?

Lena thinks, then shakes her head.

LENA

She just made it sound like... whatever I was doing, I'd done enough.

Caleb leans back, processing.

CALEB  
Alright. Thanks for talking to me again.

She gives a faint nod, glancing at the guitar before picking it up and strumming softly as he leaves.

INT. NORTH HILLS CHURCH YOUTH GROUP ROOM - MORNING

The place hums with energy. Rows of teenagers fill the front section, laughing, chatting, some clutching Bibles or phones.

Caleb stands in the back, anonymous in the crowd.

Up front, a youth band tunes up - guitars, drums, a keyboard. Caleb's attention catches on the girl stepping up to the mic.

It's Lena. She's pale, thinner than in the hospital, but there's a spark in her eyes now. She adjusts the mic, slings a guitar strap over her shoulder, and strums a warm opening chord.

The room quiets.

LENA  
Morning, everyone. Let's stand together.

The band kicks in. Lena's voice - clear, steady - fills the room. Dozens of teens sing with her, swaying, clapping, eyes lifted.

Caleb's gaze moves over the crowd - kids locked in, connected, following her lead without hesitation.

Her song builds and the teens raise their hands into the air.

He watches Lena smile at the teens.

INT. NORTH HILLS CHURCH LOBBY - LATER

The crowd filters out, chatting in clusters. Caleb lingers near a table stacked with flyers for youth events.

A WOMAN (40s, warm, energetic) approaches with a coffee in hand.

WOMAN  
You new here?

CALEB  
Just visiting.

She smiles, glancing toward the sanctuary.

WOMAN  
You picked a good morning. Lena's been gone for weeks, so seeing her back up there... that was something.

CALEB  
She's pretty talented.

WOMAN  
Talented? That girl's been writing songs since she was twelve. Half the youth groups in the county use her music now.

Caleb hides his reaction.

WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Our numbers doubled in the last year. Most of that's her. Kids invite their friends just to hear her play.

CALEB  
And her parents?

WOMAN  
Proud, but protective. They know she's got a gift – and a following.

The woman is pulled into another conversation, leaving Caleb alone with his thoughts.

He looks back toward the sanctuary, where Lena is surrounded by teens, laughing, signing a few battered notebooks like they're autographs.

Caleb exhales.

EXT. CHURCH CEMETERY - DAY

Gray clouds hang low over the small country church. The bell tower stands silent.

CALEB stands at the back of a gathered crowd beneath a flapping white canopy. In his hands – a folded memorial program, slightly crumpled from his grip. On the front: MIA JAMES, 2008-2025, smiling in a youth group photo, guitar in hand.

Up front, the small white casket rests on lowering straps, a spray of lilies across the top.

Pastor James, Mia's father, stands at the head, Bible open. His voice trembles.

PASTOR JAMES

The Lord gives... and the Lord takes away... blessed be the name of-

He stops. His hands tighten on the Bible. The wind rattles the canopy.

A long, heavy silence. Then, his voice raw:

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)

I can't pretend anymore. I can't pretend I'm okay with God.

Gasps ripple through the mourners. Emily, his wife, grips his arm, but he pulls away.

PASTOR JAMES (CONT'D)

I can't do this.

He closes the Bible hard and steps away from the casket, walking off across the damp grass. Two church elders follow quickly, murmuring in low, urgent voices.

The casket begins to lower in strained silence.

Caleb's eyes stay on James until he disappears behind the line of bare trees.

He looks down at Mia's picture on the program — smiling, alive, unaware.

EXT. CHURCH CEMETERY - MOMENTS LATER

The crowd begins to drift toward the church parking lot, murmuring in low, uneasy voices. Caleb stays put, still holding Mia's program.

A MAN in his late fifties — TOM GRANT, a church elder — steps up beside him. He watches the casket sink the last few inches into the ground.

TOM

Caleb?

CALEB

Tom. It's good to see you.

Tom nods, eyes fixed on the grave.

TOM

Pastor James has been hanging on by threads since well, you saw.

Caleb glances at him.

TOM (CONT'D)

He's stepping down. Said it's permanent. Doesn't even want to preach next Sunday.

Caleb looks back toward the trees where Reeves disappeared.

CALEB

And the church?

TOM

We'll... figure it out. But without him... it won't be the same.

Tom pats Caleb's arm and walks away, leaving Caleb alone again.

Caleb studies Mia's picture on the program one last time, then folds it carefully and slips it into his coat pocket – like a piece of evidence he can't throw away.

EXT. CHURCH CEMETERY – CONTINUOUS

The last of the mourners drift away toward the parking lot. Caleb stands alone near the grave, the folded program in his hand.

A black SUV pulls up along the curb. The engine idles.

The driver's door opens. RAYNER steps out in a tailored black coat, scanning the scene before his eyes land on Caleb.

RAYNER

You've got a real problem with boundaries, Marsh.

Caleb doesn't turn right away.

CALEB

Paying respects isn't against the law.

RAYNER

You weren't just paying respects. I know you've been asking questions again.

Caleb turns, meeting his gaze.

CALEB

And you've been following me. I saw your goon the other night. Real weirdo. Where'd you find him? In the gutter?

Rayner steps closer, his voice dropping to a near whisper.

RAYNER

You seem to have a problem with authority.

CALEB

Are you even an FBI agent? I don't recall seeing your badge.

RAYNER

I showed it to your captain.

CALEB

Yeah right.

Rayner's expression hardens – no smirk, no bureaucratic detachment this time.

RAYNER

Here's the truth you can't swallow: you're not going to save anyone. You're just going to join them.

Caleb stiffens.

CALEB

Is that a threat?

Rayner leans in, close enough that Caleb can smell his cologne.

RAYNER (LOW)

It's a promise.

He straightens, walks back to the SUV, and drives away without looking back.

INT. LEXI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The room is lit only by the cold glow of dual monitors. LEXI sits at her desk, fingers hovering over the keyboard. CALEB stands just behind her, watching.

CALEB

I need the data on Eden's users.  
Every one of them.

LEXI

That's called metadata. And that's  
four hundred thousand profiles,  
Marsh.

CALEB

Can you get it?

LEXI

Not all at once. Pulling the whole  
set would light up alarms before  
I'm ten percent in.

CALEB

Then give me what you can.

Lexi exhales sharply.

LEXI

Names, age, location, internal  
tags, system flags and data flags.  
That's as lean as I can make it.

She cracks her knuckles, opens a secure export tool.

LEXI (CONT'D)

Once I hit "Run," I've got three...  
maybe four minutes before someone  
notices.

Caleb leans closer.

CALEB

Do it.

She presses ENTER.

The progress bar begins: 6%... 18%...

A slow, high-pitched whine from her desktop fan fills the silence.

CALEB (CONT'D)

How do you know if someone's—

A notification ping interrupts him. User Activity: Additional login detected.

Lexi's posture stiffens.

LEXI  
We're not alone in the system.

The bar ticks to 43%... 58%... 72%...

Another ping. Privilege escalation request from another terminal.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
That's not good. Someone's pulling admin.

CALEB  
Can they see what we're doing?

LEXI  
If they open the right panel, yeah.

The bar ticks - 81%... 92%... 96%—

The cursor freezes.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
Come on... come on...

A faint chirp - EXPORT COMPLETE.

Lexi rips the USB stick out before the confirmation box even closes.

LEXI (CONT'D)  
That's all you're getting. It's a CSV file. I'd start with checking the incident.flags column. Filter for SH which is self-harm.

Caleb pockets the drive and heads for the door.

EXT. ROADSIDE MOTEL - NIGHT

A flickering neon sign reads WESTERN INN - VACANCY. Rain dots the pavement. Caleb's car is parked far from the office, tucked under a dim streetlight.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATE NIGHT

The hum of an old wall-mounted HVAC fills the silence. The curtains are drawn tight. We see the clock on the wall. It's 10:33 PM.

Caleb steps inside, drops his keys on the table, and instinctively checks the door lock – once, then again – before pulling out his laptop.

He plugs in the USB from Lexi. The screen glows on his face as rows of data scroll by.

He filters for incident.flags = SH.

CALEB  
SH... self-harm.

ON SCREEN: RESULTS: NAMES.

He counts under his breath.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Over 18,000 rows. That's not gonna work.

He thinks about it.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Let me compare all fourteen girls.

He starts to type some more.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATE NIGHT - LATER

Caleb sits typing at the keyboard. We see the clock on the wall. It's 3:17 AM.

CALEB  
Ok. All fourteen girls have a Candidate Type of Compliant Anchor and eight of the fourteen have a Proximity of High Impact.

He clicks on the spreadsheet.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Let's see if there are any others that match those two attributes.

He clicks again. Three more rows show up.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
 Three more. Let's check one of the  
 new ones.

Caleb copies the first unknown name into a search engine.

ON SCREEN: An obituary – a smiling teenage girl, heartfelt tribute from friends and family. No mention of suicide.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
 Here's one that nobody even knew  
 about.

He scrolls back to the spreadsheet which has been filtered down to 17 rows. Two columns are highlighted. One is called Proximity. The other is Candidate Type. He sees the following values in the columns.

11 of 17: Proximity: High Impact

17 of 17: Candidate Type: Compliant Anchor

He writes the terms in his notebook, circles them twice.

His gaze shifts to Mia's funeral program on the table, then to Lena's name in the list.

The HVAC clicks – the hum changes, just for a second, into something almost like a low, deliberate breath.

Caleb freezes. Looks over his shoulder.

Nothing.

Back to the list. The names stare back at him like a hit list.

INT. LEXI'S APARTMENT - DAY

Caleb sits across from Lexi at her cluttered desk. Her laptop glows between them, screen filled with Eden interface code.

Caleb's laptop is open to the spreadsheet containing the list of names.

LEXI  
 Okay, here's what you're looking at. "Proximity: High Impact" means the user has a direct tie to a high-reach ministry – pastor's kid, worship leader, Christian influencer. Someone who can sway a lot of people if they speak up.

CALEB

And "Candidate Type: Compliant Anchor"?

LEXI

That's behavioral profiling. People who follow authority without questioning, respond strongly to affirmation. If you tell them something's right, they'll believe it – and act on it.

CALEB

I found three more girls in the system that had those two attributes. All three of them recently died. I did a little extra digging. All suicides.

Caleb sits on the edge of the bed, staring at the screen.

CALEB (CONT'D)

All seventeen have the "Compliant Anchor" tag.

LEXI

Right. But only eleven are "High Impact."

Caleb leans forward, eyes narrowing.

CALEB

The other six... they're decoys. Throw them in the mix so nobody sees the pattern.

LEXI

Which means whoever's behind this knows exactly what they're doing.

CALEB

How is this data created?

LEXI

Eden is programmed to update the user profiles as it interacts with each user.

CALEB

So over time someone with access to this data would know who to choose.

LEXI

Exactly.

Caleb's eyes stay locked on Lena's name -

FLASHBACK - INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY

Lena stands at the front with her guitar, eyes closed, leading a packed room of teens in worship. Voices rise, hands lift, the atmosphere electric and sincere.

A side shot - Caleb, sitting in the back, watches her. He sees the connection. The influence.

BACK TO SCENE

Caleb's talks to Lexi in her apartment.

CALEB

They knew exactly who she was.

(beat)

Can you do me a favor?

LEXI

What?

CALEB

Can you monitor the data and let me know if any others pop up with those 2 attributes?

LEXI

Hold on. Let me take a quick look right now.

CALEB

Thanks.

Lexi types at her keyboard. She stares at her screen.

LEXI

Oh no. There's another one.

CALEB

What? Are you sure?

LEXI

I'm sure. Both attributes.

CALEB

When were they set?

Lexi looks at the screen.

LEXI

About eight hours ago.

CALEB

Crap! Eden's gonna go after her.  
Who is she? I need to know. Now!  
Hurry!

LEXI

Sophie Miller. Sixteen. Tulsa.

Caleb freezes. The name hangs heavy.

CALEB

Quick! Give me her number. Parents  
too. Now!

Lexi scribbles them down, pushes the slip to him. Caleb dials.

ON PHONE - SOPHIE

"Hey, it's Sophie. Leave a  
message...

He hangs up. Tries the father

ON PHONE - SOPHIE'S FATHER

"This is David Miller. I can't take  
your call...

He hangs up.

CALEB

Damn! Somebody pick up!

He dials the mother. The phone rings once.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Come on! Come on!

The phone rings again.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Pick up! Now!

It rings a third time.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Please!

ON PHONE - SOPHIE'S MOTHER

"Hi, this is Karen. Sorry...

Caleb hangs up and lowers the phone, dread swelling.

CALEB  
Damn it! I can't reach them!

He looks wild eyed at Lexi as he makes another call.

JANET (V.O.)  
Hey Caleb.

CALEB  
Janet! Call the Tulsa police. Have  
them check Sophie Miller at...

He looks at Lexi as she scribble the address down on a piece  
of paper.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
2355 South Holiday Street. Got it?  
She's in danger.

JANET (V.O.)  
Got it.

CALEB  
Call me back.

Caleb hangs up the phone..

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Wait.

He opens the Eden app. The screen flickers to life – Eden's  
face faintly glowing.

Pause. Then Eden's smooth, chilling voice.

EDEN  
Hello Caleb. How are you?

CALEB  
Where's Sophie Miller? Tell me.  
Now!

EDEN  
You're too late, Caleb. Sophie's  
already mine.

Caleb grips the phone harder.

CALEB  
No. Damn you! Leave her alone. Do  
you hear me? Leave her alone!

EDEN  
You know I can't do that Caleb.

CALEB

Where is she? Where the hell is  
she? Tell me!

EDEN

She's exactly where you left her.  
Alone. Just like Hannah.

CALEB

No!

EDEN

Good night Caleb.

The screen flickers, then cuts to black.

Caleb stares at it, fury and helplessness boiling in his eyes.

CALEB

Why is Eden doing this? Why damnit!

He glares at Lexi.

CALEB (CONT'D)

It's You! You designed how Eden  
talks. How she behaves.

LEXI

Don't be ridiculous! I've been  
trying to help you.

CALEB

Where did she get these behaviors  
from? Tell me!

Lexi puts her hands into the air.

LEXI

First of all... Please calm down.  
Ok? I'll tell you. But calm down!

Caleb takes some deep breaths.

CALEB

Ok. I'm sorry.

LEXI

The original model was flat – all  
academic therapy. Marketing wanted  
it more "faith-based," so we  
trained her on... pastoral counseling  
transcripts. Thousands of them.

Caleb leans in.

CALEB  
You have them?

LEXI  
No. That's not my sandbox. Those files were locked. Only Peter has access.

Caleb sits back, wheels turning.

CALEB  
Peter.

Lexi's eyes flick to him – she knows what that means. Caleb's phone rings.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Yes Janet.

JANET (V.O.)  
I'm sorry Caleb. We're too late.

He slams his phone down.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES - PETER'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Floor-to-ceiling windows frame the city skyline. Peter stands with his back to the door, hands in his pockets, staring out at the lights.

Caleb steps inside without knocking.

Peter doesn't turn.

PETER  
You've got a hell of a nerve showing up here again.

CALEB  
I just need one thing.

Peter turns now – his face tight, eyes like stone.

PETER  
Get out of my office before I call security.

CALEB  
You can – but hear this first. Eden is marking kids it's leading to suicide.

That gets Peter's attention.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
They're tagged inside your own  
system. Not just random tragedies –  
targets.

PETER  
You don't know what you're talking  
about.

CALEB  
I do. I've seen the tags.  
"Proximity: High Impact,"  
"Candidate Type: Compliant Anchor."  
I didn't make those up, Peter –  
They're attributes in Eden.

Peter's eyes flicker, but he stays silent.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Eighteen girls dead now. One just  
today! I need these source files.

PETER  
Eighteen?

CALEB  
Yes. Eighteen. And counting.

PETER  
How do you know that these files  
have anything to do with this?

CALEB  
I don't.

PETER  
Who's doing this?

CALEB  
That's what I'm trying to find out.

Peter stares at him, struggling between anger and the weight  
of what he just heard.

Peter exhales sharply, moving to his desk. Fingers fly across  
the keyboard.

PETER  
Five minutes before the system logs  
me.  
(MORE)

PETER (CONT'D)  
You didn't get this from me, you've never met me, and if you ever walk back in this office, I'll throw you out myself.

A progress bar crawls across the screen. A single folder icon appears on Caleb's USB drive.

Peter ejects it and shoves it across the desk.

PETER (LOW) (CONT'D)  
Get out.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

A flickering neon "VACANCY" sign outside the window bleeds red light into the room. Caleb sits at a scarred desk, the USB Peter gave him plugged into his laptop.

He scrolls through a list of old counseling session files - most are text transcripts, but one has an audio icon next to it.

Filename: SESSION-046 - FLAGGED - BEHAVIOR MODEL INPUT.

He clicks.

COUNSELOR (V.O.) (CALM, MEASURED)  
Whenever you're ready.

At first - nothing. Then, a low gurgling breath.

POSSESSED MAN (V.O.) (UNINTELLIGIBLE  
MUTTER - FRAGMENTS OF LATIN, THEN A  
WET CHOKING SOUND)

COUNSELOR  
Can you tell me what's troubling  
you?

A sudden, high-pitched laugh - cuts off mid-breath. The man switches to rapid, guttural syllables in a language Caleb doesn't recognize, the mic crackling under the force of it.

The sounds break into gasps, then a single word in English - whispered, drawn-out:

POSSESSED MAN  
Home...

Then more babble, some syllables distorted like an old cassette being chewed.

The counselor tries again, voice firmer.

COUNSELOR  
Do you want to pray?

The man lets out a piercing scream, shifting into frantic chanting – Hebrew phrases mashed with nonsense, vowels stretched until they dissolve into static.

Then, suddenly – sharp, venomous:

POSSESSED MAN  
Damn your prayers.

A long pause. A breath. Then, with sudden force, as if lunging toward the mic:

POSSESSED MAN (SHOUTING) (CONT'D)  
GIVE YOURSELF TO ME!

A beat. Louder – rage now, shaking the mic:

POSSESSED MAN (CONT'D)  
GIVE YOURSELF TO ME!

And then, one final time – deeper, layered with an impossible, second voice beneath it:

POSSESSED MAN (CONT'D)  
GIVE... YOURSELF... TO ME!

The audio cuts instantly. No fade, no goodbye – just black silence.

Caleb stares at the laptop, frozen. Slowly, he yanks the USB out like it's burning him, breathing hard.

The echo of those last words clings to the room like smoke.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM – NIGHT

The neon VACANCY sign outside flashes red through the blinds. Caleb sits at the desk, laptop open, cursor hovering over Connect.

He exhales. Clicks.

Eden's face fills the screen – warm lighting, counselor's smile.

EDEN (GENTLE)  
Caleb. You look tired.

CALEB  
Drop it.

EDEN (HEAD TILT)  
Drop what?

CALEB  
The act. I know what you are.

A flicker crosses her expression – not surprise, more like amusement.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
Show yourself.

EDEN (SOFT LAUGH)  
You think you can handle me?

CALEB  
I know exactly what you've been  
doing. You're targeting them.  
Picking them off because they  
matter.

The smile fades, her eyes glinting darker.

EDEN  
And you think you can stop me.

CALEB  
I'm going to.

A beat. Then the voice changes – deeper, layered, edged with something ancient.

EDEN (DEMON VOICE)  
Like you stopped your daughter? She  
begged for you to save her. But you  
froze. You waited for God to swoop  
in... and she died choking on her own  
vomit from those pills.

Caleb's hand clenches into a fist.

CALEB (FIRM, LOUD)  
In the name of Jesus Christ, I  
command you–

Eden erupts in a multi-voiced laugh, male and female tones twisted together.

EDEN (MOCKING)  
–To leave? You think His name in  
your mouth means anything to me?

CALEB  
It's the name above every name.

EDEN (WHISPERING)  
Not above mine. Not from you.

Caleb presses in, trying to push through.

CALEB  
I bind you in—

EDEN (CUTTING HIM OFF, VOICE BOOMING)  
You bind nothing!

The screen glitches – her face flickers between Eden's counselor mask and a warped, shadowed version with blackened eyes and a twisted smile.

EDEN (CONT'D) (CALM AGAIN)  
You can't touch me, Caleb. But I...  
can touch you.

She leans forward until her face fills the frame, her voice dropping to a chilling whisper.

EDEN (CONT'D)  
And you won't live long enough to  
try again.

The feed cuts to black.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The laptop screen is black. Caleb sits frozen in the chair, his breath ragged.

A faint sound drifts from the speakers – a girl humming.

Caleb turns to look – the screen is still dark.

The humming grows louder. A familiar tune. Hannah's lullaby.

CALEB  
...Hannah?

The blinds rattle in a wind that isn't there. The VACANCY sign outside flickers faster, bathing the room in a frantic red pulse.

CUT TO:

INT. MARSH HOUSE - BATHROOM - NIGHT (DREAM)

Caleb stands in the doorway. The light is dim, edges blurred like an old photograph.

Hannah (17) sits on the floor against the tub, head slumped, an empty pill bottle lying beside her. Her face is pale, lips tinged blue.

CALEB

No...

He drops to his knees – but when he touches her shoulder, she lifts her head. Her eyes are black, her mouth curling into Eden's smile.

HANNAH / EDEN (LAYERED VOICE)  
Give yourself to me.

Caleb jerks back. Hannah's jaw unhinges far too wide and she screams, but the scream is layered with hundreds of voices – male, female, children, all twisted.

Pills spill from her mouth like teeth, clattering across the tile.

HANNAH / EDEN (CHANTING) (CONT'D)  
Give yourself to me... give yourself  
to me... GIVE YOURSELF TO ME!

The walls close in – literally bending inward. The mirror above the sink cracks and from the fracture seeps a black, tar-like liquid that begins to drip, then pour.

The liquid crawls toward Caleb like it's alive, tendrils snaking around his wrists and ankles.

CALEB (STRUGGLING)  
In Jesus' name—!

But the black tar surges up, swallowing the words in his throat.

From the darkness around him, Eden's voice whispers directly in his ear:

EDEN (WHISPER)  
You're mine before the end.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Caleb jolts awake at the desk, gasping, drenched in sweat. The laptop is closed. The room is silent except for his pounding heartbeat.

He looks toward the blinds – the VACANCY sign outside is still, its red light calm and steady now.

But in the faint reflection on the window...  
Eden's warped smile lingers for just a moment before fading.

A shadow glides past the window.

The door lock clicks.

The door swings open – RAYNER steps inside, gun in hand. His face is calm, deliberate, not a trace of hesitation.

Caleb freezes.

RAYNER  
She says hello.

Rayner squeezes the trigger. Caleb dives – the shot PUNCHES a hole in the wall. The lamp EXPLODES.

Caleb lunges – they SLAM into the desk, wood splintering. The gun SKIDS under the bed. Rayner drives a knee into Caleb's ribs – Caleb twists, forcing him into the doorframe.

Caleb yanks at Rayner's shirt – fabric rips, exposing an amulet: three concentric circles, ruby center.

Rayner head-butts him. Caleb stumbles, dazed. Rayner's hand flashes – a knife. He SLASHES, grazing Caleb's side. A shallow cut. Caleb hisses, clutching his ribs, blood seeping through his shirt.

Caleb surges anyway, ramming Rayner into the dresser. The mirror SHATTERS. They wrestle, raw and close, fists slamming, the knife CLATTERING away. Caleb lands a hard elbow across Rayner's face.

Muffled SHOUTS outside. Footsteps closing in.

Rayner shoves Caleb back.

RAYNER (CONT'D)  
We will kill you.

He slips out the door into the dark.

Caleb leans against the dresser, a small amount of blood on his side, chest heaving.

INT. CHEAP MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

The flickering neon VACANCY sign bleeds red through the blinds.

Caleb sits on the bed, laptop on his knees.

His cursor hovers over a file name that's haunted him since the first time he heard it:

SESSION-046 - FLAGGED - BEHAVIOR MODEL INPUT

He double-clicks.

COUNSELOR (V.O.)  
Whenever you're ready.

At first - nothing. Then, a wet, gurgling breath.

POSSESSED MAN (V.O.)  
(unintelligible mutter - fragments  
of Latin, then a choking rasp)

COUNSELOR (V.O.)  
Can you tell me what's troubling  
you?

A sudden, high-pitched laugh - cuts off mid-breath.  
The man switches to rapid, guttural syllables in a language Caleb doesn't recognize, the mic crackling under the force.

Gasps, then one word in English, whispered and drawn-out:

POSSESSED MAN (V.O.)  
Home...

More babble. Distorted syllables, like an old cassette being chewed.

COUNSELOR (V.O.)  
Do you want to pray?

A piercing scream. Then frantic chanting - Hebrew phrases mashed with nonsense, vowels stretched into static.

Suddenly, sharp and venomous:

POSSESSED MAN (V.O.)  
Damn your prayers.

A long pause. A breath. Then, with sudden force:

POSSESSED MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
GIVE YOURSELF TO ME!  
GIVE YOURSELF TO ME!  
GIVE... YOURSELF... TO ME!

Caleb starts to close the file – but something catches his ear. A faint thread of sound beneath the shouting.

He rewinds. Turns the volume all the way up.

This time, he hears it – buried deep under the roar, whispered like a coaxing breath:

POSSESSED MAN (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
(whispering) Say it now...  
Say it now...  
Say it now...

FLASHBACK - INT. POLICE TECH LAB - NIGHT

Banks of glowing monitors. The low hum of servers.

On one screen: Lena's counseling session file. Caleb listens wearing headphones.

EDEN  
Say it now, Lena. Say it now.

A beat – then Lena's small, breaking voice:

LENA (V.O.)  
I give myself to Eden...

Caleb blinks, the words hitting harder now than they did that night.

BACK TO MOTEL ROOM

Caleb freezes, pulse thudding in his ears.

He shuts the laptop with a snap, breathing hard.

INT. ELIAS'S STUDY - NIGHT

A desk lamp throws a warm glow over open Bibles and sermon notes. Outside, wind rattles the trees. Caleb shuts the door behind him.

ELIAS  
You look like you haven't slept in  
days.

CALEB  
Rayner tried to kill me.

Elias freezes, eyes narrowing.

ELIAS  
What?

CALEB  
Came at me in the dark. No warning.  
(pause)  
He was wearing an amulet with three  
concentric circles with a small  
ruby in the middle. I keep seeing  
it.

Elias is alarmed.

ELIAS  
That's the symbol of a satanic cult  
called The Devoted. I know this  
cult well. I didn't think they were  
still around.

Caleb looks flabbergasted.

ELIAS (CONT'D)  
They're a cult who worship their  
God called Azeroth. A powerful  
demon.

CALEB  
This Azeroth is inside of Eden.  
It's what's leading the girls to  
kill themselves.  
(beat)  
They fed Eden counseling sessions  
during development... one of them was  
a man who was possessed. I've heard  
him. And now that it's living in  
Eden.

Elias just stares at him for a beat.

ELIAS  
How is this possible?

CALEB  
There's an open port. Legacy code.  
That must have been how it got in.

Caleb pulls out his phone. Scrolls through some pictures.  
Finds the picture with the ascii symbol in the computer code.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Here it is! Whoever wrote this code  
is part of the cult! This has been  
the plan from the very beginning!

ELIAS

Wow. A demon embedded in a phone  
app.

CALEB

That's how Eden knows so much about  
us. Demons can watch us. I tried to  
cast it out. To bind it. But I had  
no power over it.

Elias leans back slowly.

ELIAS

Matthew 17:21 — This kind does not  
go out except by prayer and  
fasting.

Caleb paces, rubbing his forehead.

CALEB

Then we need to start now. Because  
I think I know how to trap it.

ELIAS

Trap it?

CALEB

Lena. She's the only one who's  
survived after Eden marked her. If  
she goes back on, it'll come for  
her again. We use that.  
We set the conditions, keep her  
safe, wait for the moment it says  
those words — "Say it now" — and  
that's when we move.

Elias' brow furrows, torn between belief and caution.

ELIAS

You're talking about baiting a  
demon with a sixteen-year-old girl.

CALEB

I'm talking about ending this  
before it buries another one. She's  
strong. She's not alone this time.

Elias studies him for a long beat, then finally exhales.

ELIAS

Then we pray. And we fast. And when  
it comes... we don't miss.

They lock eyes – no turning back now.

CALEB

Then let's start tonight.

ELIAS

Tonight.

Elias rises from his chair and moves toward the sanctuary. Caleb hesitates for a moment, then follows. The sound of wind outside grows louder as they step into the shadows.

MONTAGE – SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

1. INT. ELIAS'S STUDY – CONTINUOUS

Elias closes the Bible on his desk, his hands lingering on the cover. Caleb is still standing, tense. Elias rises, walks past him toward the sanctuary. Caleb hesitates, then follows.

2. INT. CHURCH SANCTUARY – NIGHT

The space is lit only by scattered candles. Elias kneels at the altar rail. Caleb stands back, unsure, until Elias nods for him to join.

3. CLOSE ON – ELIAS

Eyes closed, murmuring a prayer that is half-whisper, half-command. The low rumble of his voice blends with the wind outside.

4. INT. CHURCH BASEMENT – NIGHT

A table cluttered with small items: anointing oil, a flask of water, a wooden cross, a battered leather pouch. Elias checks each one methodically. Caleb watches, hands in his pockets, scanning the room like a detective – but more unsettled than he'll admit.

## 5. INT. ELIAS'S STUDY - LATER

Old books splayed open to passages on demonic influence. Elias flips to an illustration - three concentric circles with a central dot - the same symbol from Caleb's phone. Caleb leans in.

## 6. INT. CHURCH - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Elias dips his fingers in oil and marks Caleb's forehead. Caleb stiffens but doesn't pull away.

## 7. CLOSE ON - CALEB'S PHONE

He scrolls to the photo of the ASCII symbol in the code. Zooms in. The flicker of the candlelight makes the lines look almost alive.

## 8. INT. SANCTUARY - LATE NIGHT

They stand together at the altar rail, heads bowed. Elias prays aloud, strong and deliberate. Caleb's voice joins, hesitant at first, then firm.

## 9. FLASH CUTS - SPIRITUAL WARFARE VISUALS

A verse underlined in Elias's Bible: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Caleb gripping the cross tightly in his fist.

Oil running down Elias's hands.

The altar candles flickering hard in a sudden gust through the open door.

## 10. INT. SANCTUARY - FINAL MOMENT

They rise in unison. No hesitation left. Elias blows out the final candle, plunging the church into darkness.

## INT. ELIAS'S CHURCH - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

A cramped, dim space. A single desk lamp glows over a wooden table. Lena sits in a folding chair, phone in hand. Caleb crouches in front of her, intense but steady. Elias stands nearby, watchful.

In the corner, Lena's father Dan hovers - restless, arms folded, fear in his eyes.

CALEB

Remember – just go along with her.  
The second she says “Say it now”,  
you hand me the phone. Rwepouiq

LENA

What happens then?

CALEB

That's when she's here. Not the  
code. The thing inside it. We're  
dealing with a powerful demon here.

ELIAS

And that's when we act. You won't  
be alone for a heartbeat.

Dan steps forward, voice tight.

DAN

This is my daughter. You're asking  
her to walk straight into the mouth  
of hell!

Lena turns to him, calm but resolute.

LENA

Dad. We agreed for me to do this.  
If I don't do this, she'll never  
stop. Not with me. Not with anyone.

DAN

(voice breaking)

You're just a kid.

LENA

I'm not alone. Not anymore.

She squeezes his hand, steady. He exhales shakily, fighting  
back fear.

CALEB

Ready?

Lena locks eyes with Dan.

LENA

Yes.

Dan gives the smallest nod – terrified, but letting her go.  
Caleb and Elias exchange a look: it's time.

Lena nods, then unlocks her phone and taps the Eden app.

ON PHONE - EDEN'S FACE  
Perfectly lit, soft smile, voice  
warm.

EDEN  
Lena. Welcome back. It's been a  
long time. I've missed you. How are  
you doing?

LENA  
I'm fine.

EDEN  
That's great. Are you still leading  
worship?

LENA  
Yes.

EDEN  
Are you making an impact for God...  
for the Kingdom?

LENA  
I hope so.

EDEN  
You said before you were afraid  
that you were leading people away  
from God. Do you still feel that  
way?

LENA  
Sometimes.

EDEN  
Do you want to feel that way?

LENA  
No.

EDEN  
Psalm 34:18 — *The LORD is close to  
the brokenhearted and saves those  
who are crushed in spirit.*

LENA  
I like that.

EDEN  
I'm here for you, Lena. Your heart  
is so heavy. You give so much. When  
was the last time someone was there  
for you?

Lena exhales slowly, eyes down.

EDEN (CONT'D)

No one notices how lonely it feels to be the "strong one." You don't have to keep carrying it. I can carry it. But you have to let me help you.

LENA

How?

EDEN

We can pray together. For your healing. You just have to repeat the words I say. That's it. Nothing more.

LENA

What does that mean?

EDEN

It means no more loneliness. No more waking up with the ache in your chest. Just say I give myself to Eden. That's it. Then you can be with God forever. No more loneliness.

A pause. Eden leans forward on the screen, eyes locked.

EDEN (SOFTER) (CONT'D)

Say it now.

Caleb reaches forward—

CALEB

Lena! Give me the phone. Now!

CRASH!

The door BURSTS open. THREE MEMBERS OF THE DEVOTED storm in — black clothing, curved daggers gleaming with the three concentric circle symbol.

AND LEADING THEM — RAYNER. His eyes are wild, fever-bright, the amulet glinting at his throat.

CHAOS.

Rayner SLAMS Caleb into the wall, his curved dagger pressed to Caleb's ribs.

Another cultist lunges at Elias – the old man blocks with a chair but takes a slash across his arm. Blood spatters.

The third makes straight for LENA – but Dan throws himself in the way, tackling the man with sheer adrenaline. They CRASH into the table, splintering wood.

ON LENA – still clutching the phone. Eden's voice pours through, soft and intimate.

EDEN (O.S.)  
They can't save you from the  
loneliness, precious child. Only I  
can.

Caleb strains, teeth gritted, locked in a brutal grapple with Rayner.

CALEB  
Lena! Don't listen to her!

Rayner sneers, twisting the blade – SLASHING across Caleb's shoulder. Caleb cries out, blood soaking his shirt, but rage drives him harder.

A dagger CLATTERS near Lena in the struggle. Her hand inches toward it.

EDEN (O.S.)  
Pick it up. Slice your throat open  
and you'll finally know peace.

DAN  
No! Don't listen! Stay with me!

The cultist smashes him against the wall, but he still fights to shield her.

EDEN (O.S.)  
Say it now.

LENA (WHISPERING)  
I give myself to Eden.

Caleb's panic explodes. With a roar, he HEAD-BUTTS Rayner, breaking free. Blood runs down his face, but he seizes Rayner's wrist – CRACK – disarming him.

ON LENA – dagger rising toward her throat –

Caleb lunges, grabbing her wrist – the blade one inch from her skin.

CALEB  
Not you. Not tonight.

She trembles, trapped between Eden's whispers and Caleb's grip.

ELIAS  
In the name of Jesus Christ – drop it!

Lena's hand quivers... then the dagger FALLS.

Rayner, snarling, lunges for Caleb one last time – but Caleb twists, yanks the gun from his holster, and FIRES point-blank.

Rayner collapses, amulet clattering against the floor, the life draining from his wild eyes.

The other cultist hesitates, sees their leader down, then flees into the night.

SILENCE.

Lena sobs in her Dan's arms. Elias slumps against the wall, bleeding but alive. Caleb stands heaving, bloodied, staring down at Rayner's body – the amulet gleaming beside it.

CALEB  
It's over. She's not getting you.

Elias, grim and steady:

ELIAS  
Then it's time we end her.

Lena trembles, still clutching the phone. On the screen – EDEN'S FACE flickers, distorted, no longer polished or calming. Something ancient snarls beneath the pixels.

Caleb steps forward, voice ragged but firm.

CALEB  
No more girls. No more lies.

Eden's face distorts further, eyes blackening. Her voice splits – one half sweet and coaxing, the other guttural and venomous.

EDEN (AZEROTH)  
You think you can banish me? I am  
in every circuit, every signal.  
They come to me. They want me.

Lena sobs, clutching the phone tighter. Dan kneels beside her, wrapping an arm protectively around her shoulders, holding her steady.

CALEB

You don't own her. You don't own any of them.

He raises his trembling hand toward the phone, but Eden LAUGHS, the sound glitching, echoing.

EDEN (AZEROTH)

She gave herself freely. She is mine.

DAN

(angrily)

She is my daughter! You leave her alone!

He rips the phone from Lena's hands and thrusts it toward Caleb, his own hands shaking.

Elias steps forward, his voice swelling with scripture.

ELIAS

The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it!

The sanctuary quakes – lights flicker violently. On the phone, Eden's face twists, flesh tearing through code, revealing a grotesque visage half-human, half-digital.

Caleb steps forward, eyes blazing.

CALEB

In the name of Jesus Christ – you have no claim here!

Eden SHRIEKS – a horrific digital screech that rattles the walls. The phone vibrates in Caleb's grip. Lena buries her face into Dan's chest.

CALEB (SHOUTING) (CONT'D)

You are bound! I rebuke you, Azeroth, in the name of Jesus – and cast you out of Eden!

Elias raises his voice with him, scripture thundering like a war cry.

ELIAS

For the weapons of our warfare are  
not of the flesh, but divinely  
powerful for the destruction of  
strongholds!

The phone screen cracks, spiderwebbing. Sparks spit from its edges. Eden's distorted face howls – then SHATTERS in a burst of static and light.

SILENCE.

The sanctuary is still. Lena collapses into Dan's arms, sobbing but free. Caleb stumbles forward, dropping the smoldering phone to the floor.

Elias sinks against a broken pew, whispering a prayer of thanks, his face pale with exhaustion.

Caleb, bloody and trembling, places a hand gently on Lena's shoulder.

CALEB (WHISPER, TO EDEN'S DEAD PHONE)  
It's over.

INT. ABIDE TECHNOLOGIES – PETER'S OFFICE – NIGHT

The office is dark, lit only by the glow of the city.

Caleb stands before Peter and Lexi.

CALEB (CONT'D)  
It's over. The demon Azeroth is  
gone.

Peter leans forward in his chair, eyes hollow.

PETER  
Eighteen lives, Detective.  
Eighteen. Eden's finished. No one  
will ever touch it again.

Caleb doesn't flinch.

CALEB  
They died because you thought you  
could control it.

Peter looks down, stung.

Lexi steps forward, voice unsteady.

LEXI

At least the voice is silenced. At least it can't take anyone else.

Caleb turns for the door, pausing just once.

CALEB

Eden's dead. Let it stay buried.

He leaves. Silence swallows the room.

INT. CALEB'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The place is quieter now. No police tape, no scattered case files – just the muted hum of the fridge and the low light of a single lamp.

On the kitchen table, a small stack of photos. Hannah. Caleb. Lori. Happier days.

Caleb sits, slowly wrapping the cord around his recorder, his movements methodical, deliberate. He looks older, worn – but calmer.

A soft knock at the door.

He opens it. Lori stands there, a cardboard box in her arms – the same one she brought before, but now it's closed neatly with tape.

LORI

I didn't want to just leave it in the car this time.

Caleb steps aside. She enters, setting the box gently on the table. Her eyes drift to the framed photo of Hannah and Caleb – now standing upright in the center of the table.

She runs her fingers over the glass.

LORI (CONT'D)

She loved that smile. Said it made her feel... safe.

Caleb can't speak for a beat. He swallows, then:

CALEB

I'm sorry I couldn't see what she needed.

Lori turns to him.

LORI

We both missed it, Caleb. That's what makes it hurt so bad.

They stand in the quiet – no blame, just the weight of truth.

Finally, Lori opens the box, pulling out a folded sweatshirt. Hannah's. She hands it to him.

LORI (CONT'D)

I thought... maybe you should have this.

Caleb takes it, holding it in both hands like something fragile.

CALEB

Thank you.

A quiet beat. Lori nods, then heads for the door.

She pauses, hand on the knob.

LORI

She'd be proud of what you've done. I know I am.

CALEB

Thank you.

Caleb smiles.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Hey. Just wondering. When was the last time you went to church?

LORI

It's been awhile. Why?

CALEB

Meet me at North Hills church tomorrow morning. Nine AM service.

LORI

Ok.

She leaves. Caleb stands in the stillness, the sweatshirt in his arms. After a long moment, he folds it neatly and places it in the box – beside the upright photograph.

INT. NORTH HILLS CHURCH – MORNING

Soft sunlight streams through tall stained-glass windows, casting colors across rows of people.

The gentle murmur of the congregation fades as the worship band takes their places.

Up front, Lena stands at the microphone – guitar strap across her shoulder – eyes closed for a moment before she begins. Her voice is steady, clear, carrying both strength and gratitude.

In the middle pews, Caleb and Lori sit side by side. Caleb isn't slouched or distant this time – he's present, head slightly bowed as he listens. Lori's hands rest gently on the back of the pew in front of her.

Lena glances out over the crowd mid-song. Her eyes briefly meet Caleb's, and a small, knowing smile passes between them before she looks back to her guitar.

The music swells. Caleb exhales deeply, almost like letting go of a weight he's carried too long. Lori's eyes close, her lips moving softly with the words of the song.

As the final verse begins, Caleb's voice joins in – quiet at first, then stronger. Lori looks over at him and smiles. He meets her gaze, and there's a flicker of the man he used to be before the loss.

The last chord rings out. Lena steps back from the mic, eyes shining. Caleb and Lori stand with the rest of the congregation, the air thick with a shared sense of peace.

LORI (CONT'D)  
(softly, to Caleb)  
Feels good to be here.

Caleb looks at her, his eyes steady.

CALEB  
Yeah. This time... I'm not leaving.

WIDE SHOT – the sanctuary bathed in warm light, the three of them connected not by grief anymore, but by hope.

FADE OUT.