

Hotel California

by

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EXT. A HOUSE - NIGHT

A well kept house in a well-to-do neighborhood-

Manicured lawn, sculpted bushes.

Sells the idea of the *perfect life*.

The neighborhood is quiet-

Only the drone of crickets.

Until-

INT. HOUSE, BASEMENT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

BANG

The sound of furniture toppling over comes from somewhere behind the basement door.

And then, rope tightening.

There's the sound of a struggle.

MMMMMM

A muffled moan that grows *LOUDER-*

AND LOUDER

AND LOUDER

Until-

HHHHHH

The slow exhale of a fading life.

INT. LOS ANGELES TIMES - DAY

A blinking cursor on a computer screen-

A blank newspaper template.

The time and date -- 3:00, 10/18/2016

ANDY (40s), business casual wear, stares at the barren screen.

There's an air of hopelessness to him.

Awards adorn his cubicle walls-

A Pulitzer prize for investigative journalism stands out.

His cubicle is the only one not decorated for Halloween.

He doesn't feel very festive these days.

He slouches back in his chair and stares out the window.

Beat.

Looks down past the other cubicles when he hears something-

A door opening.

DAN (60s), suspenders and a tie, walks out of his office-

No doubt he's the boss.

ANDY

Shit.

Andy quickly sits up and acts like he's got his shit together.

Dan stops at a desk plastered with sports memorabilia.

DAN

Looks like the 2016 Lakers aren't
gonna treat me any better than the
2015 team did.

The **SPORTS JOURNALIST** shoots a toy basketball into a hoop hanging from their cubicle wall.

SPORTS JOURNALIST

You're not numb to it yet?

Dan smirks and walks away.

DAN

Hope is a hell of a drug. HELL of a
drug.

SPORTS JOURNALIST

If it makes you feel any better, it
can't get any worse.

(beat)

Probably.

Dan stops at Andy's desk.

DAN
How's Andy today?

Andy looks up from the notes he's pretending to read-
Does his best imitation of a smile.

ANDY
Good. You?

He's not all that convincing.

Dan briefly peers out the window.

DAN
It's another sunny day in the city
of angels. I have no real
complaints.

He peeks at Andy's computer screen-
The blank template still there.

DAN (CONT'D)
I'd ask how the article was coming
along, but...

Andy glances at the screen-
Embarrassed.

ANDY
It's been uh...
(beat)
Elusive.

DAN
I can see that.

Andy's eyes drop.

Dan recognizes his exhaustion.

DAN (CONT'D)
Alright, I'm pushing the article
back a couple weeks.

Andy's head snaps up.

ANDY
What?!

DAN
Trust me, it's for the best.

ANDY

No. Dan, I can get it finished in time.

DAN

I know you believe that, but I also know that you know it'd be a steaming pile of horseshit. I'm not doing that to you, or me.

Andy drops back in his chair-

Irritated, but he knows Dan's right.

Beat.

DAN (CONT'D)

Why don't you take some time off? Spend some time with the family. Recharge your batteries a bit.

It's clear Andy hates the idea.

ANDY

I'm fine. It's just a little writer's block, that's all.

Dan leans against the desk, choosing his words carefully.

DAN

Listen, what happened...

ANDY

Dan.

DAN

I'm just saying it's a hell of a thing to go through and I think it would do you some good to take a little time off.

ANDY

I'm not talking about this.

DAN

Andy, we all knew Derek...

ANDY

NO! No! Don't!

(beat)

Don't. I already told you, I'm not taking any goddamn time off.

Dan bites his tongue.

Beat.

Andy stares back out the window-

His anger gradually displaced by sorrow.

ANDY (CONT'D)
(softly)
I'm sorry.

DAN
It's fine. I get it. I completely
understand.

Beat.

Andy's lost in his thoughts.

DAN (CONT'D)
There's another story I want you to
take a crack at.

Andy perks up a bit, his interest piqued.

ANDY
Yeah?

DAN
Something a little more fun than
you're accustomed to.

ANDY
Fun?

DAN
Ever heard of the Cecil Hotel?

ANDY
The shithole in Skid Row?

DAN
That's the place. I want you to
write the Halloween special on it.

Andy deflates again.

ANDY
Great.

DAN

Supposedly, the place is haunted.
Been a bunch of murders and
unexplained deaths there over the
years. Some witchcraft too. Real
spooky shit.

ANDY

Dan, I'm not doing a holiday puff
piece. I'm sorry.

DAN

Come on, it'll be fun. Spend the
night. Interview the locals. See if
anything weird happens while you're
there. It's an easy assignment.

Andy points to his Pulitzer.

ANDY

See that? That means I don't do
fun. I don't do spooky. I write
things that mean something. Things
that are important. Not ghost
stories.

JACK

Yeah? Well, you see that?

Jack points down the hall to his door-

The plaque reads, *Editor in Chief. Dan Wilson.*

DAN

That means my job is to tell you
what your job is.

(beat)

But, I'll give you the choice. You
can take the assignment or you can
take the time off.

Beat.

DAN (CONT'D)

Think about it and let me know.

Dan stands and leaves Andy to contemplate his offer.

EXT. LOS ANGELES TIMES, BACK PATIO - DAY

Andy lights up a cigarette and takes a long drag.

His shoulders decompress just slightly-

The nicotine melting some of his stress.

A MAN and his **TEENAGE SON** walk by on the sidewalk-

Joking and laughing with each other-

Happy.

Andy remembers a time he was that happy-

And a soft smile cracks his stoic look.

It's short-lived though-

Those memories come with their fair share of heartache.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Andy?

Andy turns to see a **CO-WORKER**, lighting a cig of her own.

CO-WORKER

I didn't know you were a smoker.

ANDY

It's more of a recent development.

She takes a quick drag.

CO-WORKER

Bad habit to pick up now. Next
thing you know, you'll've spent 70
bucks a week for the last 30 years
just to kill yourself.

Andy takes another drag.

ANDY

It's a shame they take so long.

His co-worker shoots him a puzzled look.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'm kidding.

(another quick drag)

Kind of.

CO-WORKER

Are you alright?

He takes one last drag and crushes the butt out in the
trashcan ashtray.

ANDY

Fantastic.

Andy heads towards the building.

CO-WORKER

Andy.

He turns back.

CO-WORKER (CONT'D)

You know, some people just don't get it. Grief. They expect you to be over it in a few days or something. Cause they are. They don't really get that for some of us, it's a real process.

He gets it, but he's not willing to let his guard down.

ANDY

Right.

(beat)

Thanks.

Not knowing what else to say, she awkwardly smiles.

Andy turns back and continues inside.

INT. ANDY'S DESK, LA TIMES - DAY

Andy sits at his desk-

Watching a video on his computer and jotting down notes.

The video depicts a **CECIL GUEST** recounting her experiences at the hotel.

CECIL GUEST

I always preface this story with the fact that I was pretty hard into drugs around the time I was hanging out at the Cecil.

Andy chuckles at the admission.

CECIL GUEST (CONT'D)

I saw things that I can't fully explain. Awful things. Things that were supernatural, I guess. It was like I was teleported somewhere else. Somewhere evil.

Andy rolls his eyes.

ANDY

What did you get yourself into?

CECIL GUEST

I thought it was all random at first, but then I started to notice that the experiences were becoming really specific to things that were going on in my life.

(beat)

At the time, I was really struggling with the loss of my son.

Andy's attention lifts from his notepad.

CECIL GUEST (CONT'D)

He died in a car crash, and I was having a lot of survivor's guilt.

Andy pauses the video.

He tosses the pad on his desk and stares at his notes.

Beat.

He looks up at the clock -- 1:00pm.

ANDY

Shit.

He quickly gathers his things.

EXT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY

A tall, indistinct building that could really be anything -- offices, apartments, etc.

PSYCHIATRIST (V.O.)

There are always going to be those people who think you should be back to "normal" after a couple weeks.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A PSYCHIATRIST sits across from Andy, a note pad open on her lap-

A pen lies on the blank page -- he hasn't given her much.

PSYCHIATRIST

That's because they're over it.
They may not understand that this
IS normal, and grief is a process.

Andy smirks.

PSYCHIATRIST (CONT'D)

Did I say something funny?

ANDY

No. It's just that a co-worker said
the same thing to me earlier today.

PSYCHIATRIST

Yeah?

ANDY

I mean not verbatim, but close
enough to make me wonder why I
drove all the way down here to hear
you say it.

She chuckles.

PSYCHIATRIST

I only tell you that to say, some
people aren't really going to know
how to act towards you. That's not
your fault, they just don't know
that you...

ANDY

Want everyone to leave me alone? To
stop trying to fix me?

The psychiatrist gently smiles.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Because spoiler alert, they can't.

She gives him some space.

Beat.

PSYCHIATRIST

Let's talk about something else.
Maybe we can touch on some of the
things we haven't talked about in a
while.

ANDY

Okay.

PSYCHIATRIST

How are you sleeping? Are you still having nightmares? The ones with the moans?

Andy lies.

ANDY

Nope.

She's not convinced, but plays along.

PSYCHIATRIST

Good. The mental exercises before bed must be working.

ANDY

It's probably the pills.

She sighs.

PSYCHIATRIST

What about the basement? Have you been able to go down there yet?

Andy looks out the window.

Beat.

He shakes his head.

Beat.

ANDY

You know I'm a journalist, right? An investigative journalist.

The psychiatrist, surprised he's talking about something without persuasion, picks up her pen.

INT. ANDY'S HOUSE, BASEMENT DOOR - DAY

Andy stands, staring at the basement door-

A small movie theatre decoration hangs at the center.

ANDY (V.O.)

I've literally built an entire career on being perceptive.

(beat)

Understanding people and why they do what they do. Being able to find the answers no one else can.

His eyes drop to the door knob-

MMMMMMM

An agonizing moan comes from behind the door.

He contemplates opening it.

ANDY (V.O.)

But I don't know why Derek did what he did. I didn't even know he was hurting the way he was. That he needed help. I'm his dad and I had no idea.

(beat)

And the worst part...

He's afraid of the door.

ANDY (V.O.)

The worst part is I know I could have done something. Paid more attention. Been there more often to make sure he was okay.

(beat)

Hell, if I would have just been faster that night. He'd still be here.

Andy loses his nerve and walks away.

INT. PSYCHIATRIST OFFICE - DAY

PSYCHIATRIST

What has your relationship with your daughter and wife been like since that night.

Beat.

ANDY

I love them. I know that. And I know they make me happy. But that feeling... It's like a memory.

INT. HOME OFFICE - DAY

Andy sits at his desk, reading a file.

A documentary-style YouTube video about the Cecil plays on his laptop.

A stack of files rests next to it.

One lies open-

A number of headlines spilling out.

-A serial killer using the hotel for his heinous crimes in the 1980s.

-A bellhop who slit his own throat in the 70s.

-Rumors of demon possession.

The article in Andy's hands depicts a man who killed his son, wife and himself with a shotgun-

It's evident that he's bothered by it.

He takes in as much as he can before tossing the folder on the desk.

He picks up an old tape recorder-

The buttons are worn -- it's been with him through a lot over the years.

He raises it to his mouth and presses record.

ANDY

The hotel has seen its fair share of brutal crime and... uh...

(it tough for him to say the word)

Suicide.

(beat)

It's not at all surprising that stories of hauntings and possessions have risen out of the very real horrors that have taken place there. It's simple human nature to want to give reason to things like these.

He clicks the recorder off and sets it down.

His attention turns towards the documentary-

A **COLLEGE-AGED GIRL** walks up and down a Cecil hallway in a state of paranoia.

She steps onto an elevator to hide.

Peeks around the corner and down the hall, as if to look for someone.

No one else is there.

She retreats back into the elevator-

Before peeking out again.

Something else catches Andy's eye and he pauses the video.

One of the room doors in the hallway is opened slightly.

A dark, lanky figure, barely visible in the dark, stares out at the girl.

Andy leans close to the screen, trying to get a better look at the figure.

Beat.

SUDDENLY, a hand grabs his shoulder.

He whips around.

ANDY (CONT'D)
FUCK!

His wife, **AMANDA**, shrinks back, startled.

ANDY (CONT'D)
You scared the shit out of me.

AMANDA
Since when do you scare so easy?

Andy shakes his head.

Amanda looks over his shoulder at the computer.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
What are you watching?

ANDY
It's a... It's a work thing. It's dumb. I guess I got caught up in the moment.

AMANDA
(reading the screen)
The Cecil Hotel.
(beat)
The haunted hotel downtown?

Andy purses his lips and nods.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
That's... different.

ANDY
Yeah, tell me about.

AMANDA
Sounds kind of interesting though.

ANDY
I don't know that I'd call it that.

Amanda can hear the distance in his voice -- he's here, but not really.

AMANDA
Anyway, do you want to drive together tonight or were you planning on going separate?

Andy's looks like a deer in headlights.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
You're kidding, right?

Andy racks his brain.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Tell me you're kidding, Andy.

He shakes his head.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
Brittany's recital. She's only been talking about it for months now.

Andy's head drops.

ANDY
Shit.

AMANDA
Please tell me you're not flaking again.

ANDY
I'm sorry, I told Dan I'd take this assignment tonight.

AMANDA
Then call him and tell him you can't do it.

(MORE)

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I'm sure there are other
assignments that don't require you
to miss another one of your
daughter's events.

ANDY
That's not how it works. It was
this or...

Amanda waits for him to finish his sentence.

AMANDA
Or what?

ANDY
Nothing.

AMANDA
Or what, Andy?

ANDY
Or he was going to make me take
time off.

AMANDA
And have to spend some actual time
with your family? You can't do
that. God forbid you have to act
like you're still here with us.

ANDY
Amanda.

AMANDA
Might have to act like you have
another kid.

She instantly regrets saying that.

Andy stares, hurt.

AMANDA (CONT'D)
I'll let her know you can't make
it.

She heads towards the hall.

ANDY
(quietly)
What do you want from me?

Amanda stops in the doorway.

Beat.

AMANDA (O.S.)
To pick up some milk on your way
home. We're out.

She leaves.

Andy turns back to his laptop.

The screensaver is up-

Him and his family at the beach.

Andy's buried in the sand with a muscular body sculpted
around him.

EXT. BEACH - DAY - FLASHBACK

BRITTANY and **DEREK** huddle around a buried Andy, sculpting
sand with their hands.

MAX, their dog, lays close by with a big, panting smile.

Derek and Brittany part to present Andy's new, sandy muscles
to their mom.

DEREK
Mom, what do you think of Dad's new
look?

Amanda, laying on a beach towel, lowers her book.

AMANDA
Ohhh wow.

She crawls over to Andy's side.

ANDY
Yeah? You like what you see?

AMANDA
Do I?

She pretends to rub his pecs and nuzzles her face into his
neck.

ANDY
You love your big muscle daddy?

BRITTANY
(disgusted)
Gross.

DEREK
Of course you guys found a way to
make it super weird.

Amanda looks down at her own chest, then back at Andy's.

AMANDA
Honestly, I'm kinda jealous.

Derek grabs his phone and approaches a **STRANGER**.

DEREK
Excuse me. Do you think you could
take a picture for us?

STRANGER
Yeah, sure.

The family gathers around Andy, Max laying at his feet.

STRANGER (CONT'D)
Everyone smile.

The stranger snaps the picture of the happy family.

INT. HOME OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

Andy cracks half a smile, staring at the screen-
He misses those days.

Beat.

He wakes the computer and opens a search engine-
Types *Hotel Cecil*.

He scrolls through a few links when one headline in
particular stands out.

THE SUICIDE

A local nickname given to the hotel, for obvious reasons.

The article highlights a number of suicides that have taken
place at the Cecil over the years-

People who have shot themselves-

Hanged themselves-

Jumped from a 14th floor window.

The more he reads, the harder it is for him to continue.

Until-

He *SLAMS* the laptop shut.

His breathing, rapid and shallow.

Sweat beads on his forehead.

His throat tightens-

And he struggles to catch his breath.

He reaches for the satchel at his feet with clammy hands.

Rummages through and pulls out a prescription bottle-

Pops the lid and empties it into his mouth.

Swallows the pills dry.

He closes his eyes tight and focuses on his breathing.

Beat.

Beat.

Beat.

His breathing slows.

He opens his eyes and looks down at the empty bottle.

INT. BATHROOM, ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Andy opens the medicine cabinet-

Searches through a number of prescriptions.

Beat.

Frustrated by a fruitless search, he closes the cabinet.

ANDY

Fuck.

He catches a glimpse of his reflection and immediately looks away-

Ashamed of the guy looking back.

He stares down at the faucet-

A distorted reflection is easier to look at.

INT. PHARMACY - EVENING

Andy waits patiently-

The sound of computer keys clicking away.

A **PHARMACY TECH** briefly glances up at Andy with a forced smile before looking back at her computer.

Beat.

PHARMACY TECH

(shaking head)

I'm sorry. I'm not going to be able to fill this tonight. You're not due for a refill yet, so we'd need authorization from your doctor first.

ANDY

No, that can't be right. Can you check again?

PHARMACY TECH

I've already checked twice.

ANDY

(desperate)

Please, just try again.

PHARMACY TECH

I'm sorry, but...

ANDY

Could you just *FUCKING LOOK AGAIN!*

The tech shrinks back, and the room falls silent.

Guilt displaces Andy's anger.

Beat.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I just...

PHARMACY TECH

Let me get the pharmacist for you.

Andy nods, and the tech disappears to the back.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE - EVENING

Andy stares at a cooler of milk.

Beat.

And then turns around without getting any.

He searches the selection of booze for his favorite.

Beat.

There it is-

He grabs a bottle of Jack Daniels and heads for the checkout.

INT. CONVENIENT STORE CHECKOUT - CONTINUOUS

Andy sets the bottle down and digs for his wallet.

BEEP

The **STORE CLERK** scans the bottle.

STORE CLERK
You have any ID on you?

Andy freezes, hands still in his jacket pockets-

And stares blankly at the clerk.

Beat.

The clerk's stern look fades into a goofy smile.

STORE CLERK (CONT'D)
I'm just messin' with ya, dude.

Andy, unamused, pulls his wallet out.

STORE CLERK (CONT'D)
(looking at the bottle)
Having yourself a little party
tonight?

ANDY
(shakes head)
It's my medicine.

He tosses a hundred dollar bill on the counter.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Keep the change.

Andy grabs the bottle and leaves.

The store clerk, caught off guard, holds the bill up.

STORE CLERK
Dude, this is a hundred bucks.

Andy walks out the door.

STORE CLERK (CONT'D)
Alrighty then.

EXT. HILLSIDE LOOKOUT - EVENING

The sun sets.

Andy sits in his car-

Overlooking the city as skyscraper offices light up.

Beat.

He takes a swig from the bottle of Jack.

He stares out at the skyline, contemplating his life.

Beat.

Takes another swig-

And then picks a handgun up from the passenger seat.

He presses the barrel to his temple-

His jaw tightens, and he braces himself.

Beat.

Tears fill his eyes as he struggles to pull the trigger-

His breathing heavy.

Beat.

He can't do it-

Drops the gun to his lap.

Beat.

Andy screams into the void until he collapses onto the steering wheel-

And cries.

The horn blares-

BRRRRRR

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT

BRRRRRR

Another horn yanks Andy out of his day dream.

The traffic light ahead is green.

MOTORIST (O.S.)
Move your fuckin' ass!

Andy sarcastically waves and drives off.

He travels through downtown LA.

EXT. SKID ROW - NIGHT

There's an almost instant, stark visual difference as he makes his way into **SKID ROW**.

Graffitied walls, the backdrop to a number of homeless encampments-

Tents and piles of clothing litter the sidewalk.

POLICE execute a vehicle search on the corner.

Andy pulls up to the front of the Cecil-

A monument as rundown and forgotten as the streets it towers over.

His eyes travel up the neon marquee-

HOTEL CECIL

Beat.

His eyes drift to the alley next to the hotel, where a drug deal takes place.

ANDY
What the fuck am I doing here?

Beat.

He digs through the glovebox and pulls out his gun.

He shoves the gun in his satchel and exits the car.

EXT. HOTEL CECIL - NIGHT

Andy approaches the hotel, the marquee stretching ominously over him into the night sky.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Right through the door, Andy's met by a lobby that has an unexpected flair of elegance to it.

AN ADDICT sits on a bench against the wall-

Talking to people who aren't there

Suddenly, her head snaps towards Andy.

ADDICT
You made it!

Andy keeps walking, his eyes locked on her.

ADDICT (CONT'D)
It's been waiting for you. It has
so many things to show you.

An unnerving smile stretches across her face.

Andy's too entranced to notice-

SQUEEEAK

He slips on the freshly mopped floor.

It's almost cartoonish, the way he catches himself.

He laughs it off and looks around to see if anyone saw.

There's no one there.

Even the addict has vanished.

Andy's eyes dart around the lobby, searching for her.

She's nowhere to be seen.

Beat.

Andy walks through the unsettlingly quiet lobby, towards the front desk.

He taps the service bell.

Beat.

No one comes.

Glancing around the lobby, he goes to tap the bell again.

SOMEONE'S hand stops him.

ANDY
(startled)
Jesus fu...

An elderly **DESK CLERK** stands behind the counter-

His uniform a callback to the 1920s.

DESK CLERK
How can I help you, sir?

ANDY
I um... I have a reservation. It's
under Philips.

The clerk looks almost disappointed-

Sad even.

DESK CLERK
I see.

ANDY
(sarcastically)
I'm really stoked about it too.

The clerk gently smiles and turns around to a wall of skeleton keys.

ANDY (CONT'D)
You might want to think about
putting a wet floor sign out.

Andy turns back, but the wet floor is completely dry.

ANDY (CONT'D)
It's... Dry?

He sways back and forth to try to catch a glimmer of the floor.

The clerk returns with a single key.

DESK CLERK
You work for the Los Angeles Times
then?

Andy whirls around, caught off guard by the clerk's seeming clairvoyance.

ANDY
What makes you say that?

The clerk peers down at the credentials hanging from Andy's neck, peeking from under his jacket.

Andy's eyes follow.

ANDY (CONT'D)
(chuckling)
Right.

The strangeness of this place is already getting to him.

He peeks the clerk's nametag-

Frank

ANDY (CONT'D)
You're a perceptive guy, Frank.

FRANK
Comes with the territory, I
suspect. A little knack I've picked
up over the years.

Frank gently sets the key on the counter and reluctantly pushes it towards Andy.

There's something about Frank that Andy can't quite put his finger on.

Andy picks the key up.

ANDY
Old school.

FRANK
It's an old hotel.

Andy takes another look around.

ANDY
How long you been here, Frank?

FRANK

A long time. Sometimes, I think too long.

ANDY

What keeps you around? The atmosphere?

Frank smirks.

FRANK

The people.

(beat)

The Cecil attracts a certain crowd.

ANDY

I've noticed.

Andy gestures back to the bench, then remembers the addict's gone.

FRANK

Everyone's on their own journey, Andy. Everyone's looking for something.

(beat)

What are you looking for?

Andy searches for an answer.

ANDY

I'm... Not.

FRANK

Everyone... Is looking for something.

(beat)

Plus, you'd have to be. To come to the Cecil. No one comes here unless they're lost or don't know any better.

Andy smirks.

ANDY

You do a great job at selling the place.

Frank just smiles.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I suppose you're going to tell me about how haunted it is next.

FRANK
What good would it do at this
point?

Andy's still having trouble reading Frank.

ANDY
I like you, Frank.

FRANK
Your room is on the 14th floor.
Please don't hesitate to let me
know if you need anything during
your stay.

Andy's taken aback by the abrupt end to the conversation.

ANDY
Thanks.

He awkwardly heads towards the elevator-

Briefly looking back at Frank.

He arrives at the elevator and presses the call button.

DESK CLERK (O.S.)
Andy.

Andy turns back towards Frank.

DESK CLERK (CONT'D)
I'm sorry this is how you have to
spend your evening. But, I do hope
you find what you're looking for.

Frank's words hit an unexpected nerve.

Andy nods and turns back to the elevator.

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

DING

The doors drag open to reveal Andy waiting-

Concerned by the state of the elevator.

He's afraid to even step inside.

It looks like it's ready to fall apart.

He finally convinces himself in.

It's dimly lit and grimy -- A far cry from the lobby.
The buttons are disgusting-
Brown drip stains running down them.
The last thing he wants to do is touch one.
Still, he presses the 14 with a knuckle-
And then immediately wipes his hand on his pants.
The doors grind **ALMOST** shut, leaving a gap between them.
He can still see a sliver of the lobby.

CRAAAK

The lights flicker, and the elevator rumbles.
Andy watches the shaft pass by through the cracked doors.

ANDY
What a piece of shit.

Floor after floor zips by.

Beat.

Beat.

Beat.

Andy notices the ride is taking much longer than it reasonably should.

He peers up at the floor indicator-

A glitching, jumbled mess.

Beat.

Suddenly, the elevator comes to a violent stop-

Tossing Andy back against the wall.

The floor indicator flickers and then displays a 14.

DING

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

The doors open, and Andy steps out into the hall-

Instantly hit by the smell of cat piss and cigarettes.

He does his best to stomach the odor while looking for his door.

Beat.

He walks down the past several other rooms before finding his.

He pushes the key into the lock and tries to turn it-

But it's stuck.

He looks over at the room number to make sure he has the right one.

The number matches the tag on the key.

He pulls the door tight and tries again.

This time it turns over.

Now the door is jammed.

ANDY

You've got to be kidding me.

He turns the knob and rams his shoulder into the door.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

The door flings open, and Andy stumbles in.

Catches himself on the wall.

He surveys the room.

It's exactly what he expected-

Worn and dated.

He tosses his things on the end of the bed and plops down.

He looks around, taking everything in.

Beat.

He opens his satchel and digs around-

Pulling out his old tape recorder.

He hits record and raises it to his mouth.

ANDY

The room is every bit as charming
as one might expect.

The paint is peeling of the far wall-

And leads to a dark stain on the carpet.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I'm not entirely certain someone
hasn't died in this room.

(beat)

But I guess that's part of the
deal, isn't it?

He clicks the recorder off.

Grabs the bottle of Jack from his bag.

ANDY (CONT'D)

(to bottle)

It's going to be a long night, bud.

He opens the bottle and takes a swig-

And then another.

He stands up and walks to the nightstand-

Setting the bottle down with the room key.

He looks down at the street through the window.

Raises the recorder again.

ANDY (CONT'D)

The view isn't...

He stops when he notices something strange.

The streets and sidewalks are empty.

No people. No cars. No tents.

Andy looks at the alarm clock on the nightstand-

8:00

ANDY (CONT'D)

Where is everyone?

(into the recorder)

The streets are completely empty on
a Friday night at 8 o'clock.

That's... That's unusual.

He clicks the recorder off and tries to think of a reasonable explanation.

KNOCK KNOCK

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy stands outside another room-

Notepad and recorder in hand.

Beat.

He knocks again.

Beat.

Nothing.

He saunters down the hall a few more doors-

And knocks.

Beat.

No one here either.

ANDY

We're off to a great start.

Just then, he notices something another few rooms down-

Someone staring at him through a cracked door.

He walks that direction.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

The closer he gets, the slower his pace.

The face hiding in the shadows has an unnatural, gaping smile and wide, sunken eyes.

Andy pushes through the feeling in the pit of his stomach-

And slowly approaches the door.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

The figure retreats into the room and slams the door shut.

Andy stops just a few feet away.

Inaudible chatter comes from inside the room.

Against all his better judgement, he slowly-

Slowly-

Creeps forward and gingerly presses his ear to the door.

He hears panicked whispering.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Hello?

Andy's filled with immediate regret.

The chatter stops.

Beat.

After some debate, Andy slowly crouches-

And peeks through the keyhole.

The room is dimly lit, but as far as he can tell, it's empty.

Beat.

Beat.

Beat.

BANG

A hanging body crashes into the door.

Andy falls back and quickly scoots away until his back is pressed against the opposite door.

HAHAHA

His head snaps in the direction of a child's laughter.

A SMALL BOY (5) runs down the hall, fast, towards Andy's room.

Andy's struck with a feeling of familiarity-

Pulls himself up.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Hey.

The boy ignores him and keeps running.

Andy goes after him.

The boy dashes into Andy's room.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy runs into the room.

It's empty.

Andy looks everywhere for the boy-

Under the bed-

In the closet-

In the bathroom-

Behind the shower curtain and in the tub.

Andy feels like he's losing his mind.

And then it hits him like a ton of bricks -- where he knows the boy from.

With trembling hands, he pulls out his wallet.

And stares at it, hesitant to open it.

Beat.

He opens the wallet to a sleeve of photos.

The first is a slightly weathered picture of Andy and Derek at Derek's fifth birthday party-

The same clothes. The same boy.

EXT. BACKYARD, ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Quick flashes of the party-

Derek walking around, double fistfing slices of pizza-

Blowing out his birthday candles-

Excitedly opening gifts-

Andy and him playing with his new toys.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - NIGHT - PRESENT

Andy stares off, trying to understand.

ANDY

What the fuck is going on here?

His head snaps up when he hears something-

A charismatic voice traveling down the hall.

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy tracks the voice-

Coming from somewhere at the other end of the hall.

The voice becomes clearer with each step.

An old church sermon-

The sinners in the hands of an angry God kind.

PREACHER (O.S.)

Hell is a real place, folks. And it
awaits those who leave this world
unprepared to meet the Lord.

Andy finally reaches the room the sermon is coming from, the door wide open.

INT. SERMON ROOM, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy steps inside.

The sermon plays on an old black and white TV set.

TV PREACHER

The bible says that Hell was
created as punishment for Satan and
his angels.

Andy takes a quick look around-

It's like he's stepped back in time -- decor of the 1930s.

His eyes circle back to the TV.

TV PREACHER (CONT'D)
 Man's depravity changed everything.
 Make no mistake, if you do not seek
 the forgiveness of the Lord our
 God, you shall be cast into the
 lake of fire.

Andy turns to see a **YOUNG WOMAN** (early 20s) sitting outside
 an open window-

Staring down at the street.

ANDY
 Woah, woah, woah. What are you
 doing?!

She snaps around, startled-

Tear tracks running down her cheeks.

YOUNG WOMAN
 I did a bad thing, mister. I sinned
 real bad. And God's gonna burn me
 up for it too.

She's in a blue sun dress with white trim.

A deep pain in her eyes-

A pain Andy can physically feel.

ANDY
 Whatever you did... It's not worth
 doing what I think you're doing,
 alright?

He slowly-

Slowly

Steps towards her.

ANDY (CONT'D)
 It's okay. Just come back inside.
 Everything's going to be ok.

The young woman cries.

YOUNG WOMAN
 I didn't mean to, mister. He just
 wouldn't stop. He wouldn't stop
 cryin'.

ANDY

Who? Who wouldn't stop crying?

YOUNG WOMAN

I only held him under for a minute,
I swear. Just till he stopped
cryin'. I swear, mister. Only till
he stopped cryin'.

Andy looks over at the bathroom-

The tub is overflowed, and the floor is soaked.

YOUNG WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

He just wouldn't stop.

A little hand floats against the side of the tub.

YOUNG WOMAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Lord Jesus... Please forgive me.

Andy's eyes snap back to the young woman just as she slides
off the window sill.

ANDY

NO!

He lunges for her.

Their fingertips brush-

But it's too late.

A big *THUD* below.

Andy leans out and sees the young woman crumpled on the
sidewalk.

His breathing becomes rapid and shallow-

Another panic attack.

He pushes himself up-

Stumbles past the TV.

TV PREACHER

Your last breath in this world is
your first breath in eternity, and
you better be ready.

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy stumbles into the hall.

Heads for his room, using the wall as a guide.

His throat tightening-

The sound of his heartbeat and the buzz of the lights above grow louder with each step.

His vision vacillates between blurry and tunneled.

He's on the verge of passing out.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy bursts into the room and heads straight for his satchel.

Tears into it, searching for his pills-

Only to remember he's out.

ANDY

FUCK!

In a frantic search, his eyes lock onto the bottle of Jack on the nightstand.

He scurries across the bed and snatches it up.

Chugs-

Some escapes his mouth and dribbles down his chin.

Andy drops onto the bed.

Lays back and closes his eyes.

He waits for the alcohol to do its thing.

Beat.

His breathing slows.

Beat.

He opens his eyes and stares at the ceiling.

Lays there for a while.

Beat.

He sits up and gathers his things.

INT. HALLWAY, ELEVATOR - NIGHT

Andy hits the call button.

Beat.

Nothing happens.

He presses it again and notices it's not lighting up.

He presses it again and again.

Nothing.

He smashes the button over and over in frustration.

POP

All the lights go out, plunging the hall into complete darkness.

Andy's exhale is all that can be heard.

Until-

A far off cry-

Child-like cries, indistinct.

Their distance makes Andy feel like he's standing in the middle of nowhere.

But, they're getting closer.

And then-

CRYING VOICE
(clearly)
Dad.

Andy's breath goes silent.

CRYING VOICE (CONT'D)
Dad, where are you?

Andy frantically looks around the dark.

CRYING VOICE (CONT'D)
(getting closer)
Where are you?

ANDY
(whispering)
Derek?

CRYING VOICE
It's me, dad.
(beat)
Help me.

ANDY
Where are you? Are you ok?

The cries disappear.

Beat.

Silence so deafening that it rings in Andy's ears.

And then, over his shoulder-

CRYING VOICE
(deeper; whispering)
I see you.

He whirls around in a panic.

THUNK

A single spotlight ignites from the ceiling down the hall.

Under it, Derek, around 10 years old now-

Terrified.

THUNK. THUNK. THUNK.

One at a time, spotlights flash on in each direction away from Derek.

One ignites directly above Andy.

He shields his eyes-

Squinting through the harsh light, his vision gradually adjusts.

The lights stretch as far as he can see-

Much further than the hallway should be long.

ANDY
What the fuck?

Between each light are voids of darkness that refuse to retreat.

Derek, very still, stares at Andy with pleading eyes.

The outline of **SOMEONE** moves in the darkness behind Andy, who is none the wiser.

The figure lingers for moment and then disappears.

Andy carefully-

Carefully-

Steps from under the light.

In an instant, the void expands-

The spotlights race away from each other as if the hall is being stretched by an unseen force.

Derek is now tiny in the distance.

Andy looks around to realize he's in the middle of the huge void -- an equal distance from each light.

Whispers flood the darkness around him.

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 1
 It's all your fault.

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 2
 Where were you?

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 3
 He called out for you in the dark.

They trample over each other -- some audible, some not.

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 4
 He was so scared.

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 1
 He's in pain.

They become unbearable, and Andy runs towards the next spotlight.

As soon as he steps underneath its glow, the hall snaps back in place.

And the whispers are gone.

Derek stands a single light away.

It's a surreal moment for Andy-

But it's short-lived.

The figure that had stalked him, now stalks Derek from the shadows.

Andy tries to make them out.

And then-

A **MAN** steps into the light and places his hand on Derek's shoulder.

He wears a sack-like mask with a smiley painted across the face.

Derek's eyes are filled with terror.

DEREK
(whimpering)
Dad.

Andy tries to speak, but the words won't come.

All at once, The Man yanks Derek backwards and disappears into the dark.

Derek's screams fade into the distance.

Andy finally finds his voice.

ANDY
DEREK!

He rushes into the void, and it again expands-

The whispers immediately return.

Andy shrinks back, trying to desperately to retreat back into the light.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Fuck!

His words suffocated by the whispers.

He screams just to hear himself.

ANDY (CONT'D)
FUUUUUUCK!

TINK

The sound of a single spotlight going out, far away.

Beat.

TINK-

TINK-

TINK

One by one, they turn off, heading towards Andy.

TINK. TINK. TINK. TINK. TINK.

MMMMMMM

The familiar moan rises from the fast approaching shadows.

Andy runs towards his room.

TINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINKTINK

He barely outpaces the roaring darkness.

It's painfully familiar darkness-

One he's been trying to outrun for months.

He reaches his room just as the final light goes out.

The towering darkness consumes him.

He frantically tries getting into the room, but the door won't budge.

The moans bear down on him, and the whispers grow louder.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 1

Your son is pissing his pants in
Hell.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 2

Hell awaits those who leave this
world unprepared.

He hopelessly digs through his pockets, searching for the
room key.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 3

You could have saved him from all
of it.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 4

Saved him from the lake of fire.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 5
Why couldn't you see his pain,
daddy.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 1
Feel his pain.

A wave of emotion plows through Andy.
Fear. Anxiety. Heartbreak. Grief.
They've all come for him-
Everything he's tried to suppress.
Every painful memory.
It's too much.
Desperate, he looks for any escape he can.
And then, a sliver of hope-
A but further down the hall, light trickles through a small
window on the stairwell door.
He makes a run for it.
Looks back into the void, something is coming for him.

INT. STAIRWELL, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy barrels through the door-
His momentum throwing him down the stairs.
He crashes onto the landing and rolls into the wall.
The door slams shut at the top of the stairs.
Silence.
Andy sits against the wall, his breath heavy, and stares up
at the door.
It's safe here, somehow.
Beat.

ANDY
I need to get the hell out of here.
He pulls himself up and limps to the stairs.

Peers over the railing.

The coast is clear, though he's not quite sure of what.

Beat.

He runs down the stairs as fast as his body allows.

Reaches the next landing and keeps going.

Flight-

After flight-

After flight-

Pushing through the throbbing pain.

He finally makes it to the lobby door and shoulders through into-

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

The same hallway he just left.

Now, somehow, at the opposite end.

The room number to his left, 1401.

That can't be right.

He steps back into the stairwell-

A 14, posted on the wall next to the door.

ANDY

What?

Beat.

INT. STAIRWELL, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy goes down two more flights of stairs to the next door.

A 14 here too.

Beat.

He runs down another-

And another-

And then several more until his legs on the verge of giving out.

He collapses and sits at the bottom of the stairs.

Looks up at a taunting 14.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy makes his way back towards his room-

The sickening feeling that he's tapped here growing in the pit of his stomach.

He stops in front of the elevator.

Despondent, he presses the call button.

Nothing.

He somehow looks more defeated than he already did.

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL, ANDY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Andy grabs the doorknob, and the door swings right open this time.

He just laughs. What else can he do?

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy sits on the edge of the bed, staring at the wall-

Thoughts racing through his head.

Beat.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

He's startled by the vibration in his pocket.

A look of frustration, realizing he's had his phone the whole time.

ANDY

Andy, you're a fucking idiot.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

He pulls the phone out and stares at a number he doesn't recognize.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

He declines the call and then tries calling Amanda.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

The phone rings again, overriding his call-
Same number.

He declines again, and tries to dial Amanda even faster.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

Too late, same number.

He answers this time and raises the phone to his ear.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hello?

Beat.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hello? Who is this?

Beat.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hello?!

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
911, what's your emergency.

ANDY
Excuse me?

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
911, please state your emergency.

ANDY
Um... I... I didn't call you. But I
do need some help. I...

Just then, another voice emerges-

Broken, crying.

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.)
Please... Please send help.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
Sir, what's your emergency?

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.)
My son... he hung himself. I
think... I know... He's dead. He
died. I can't...

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
Sir, what's your address?

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.)
I couldn't...
(Beat)
I couldn't help him. I can't even
get him down.

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
Sir, your address. What's your
address?

UNKNOWN VOICE (O.S.)
Um... it's uh... 4619 Harborview. I
don't... I don't... Why'd you do
this?

As the man sobs, Andy realizes it's his own voice-

From the night his son died.

Amanda's panicked voice emerges.

AMANDA (O.S.)
(wailing)
No no no no no no. Nooooo.

PAST ANDY (O.S.)
Amanda, baby. Don't. He's...

CLICK

Andy stands there for a long time listening to the silence of
the disconnected phone.

Tears roll down his face.

He looks up at the door.

Beat.

He snatches his satchel from the bed.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy enters the hall and immediately stops in his tracks.

Standing at the elevator is a **COLLEGE-AGED GIRL**, scared, pressing the call button over and over.

Andy's seen her somewhere before too.

Beat.

And then it comes to him, she's the paranoid girl from the Cecil documentary.

Beat.

ANDY
(hesitant)
Hey.

Her head snaps up, terrified.

Her eyes lock with Andy's-

And she frantically pounds on the button.

He walks towards her-

Throwing her into a full blown panic.

She tries prying the doors open.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hey, hey, hey, it's okay.

DING

The girls squeezes through the opening before the doors are barely open.

Andy runs for the elevator.

She briefly peeks her head out, her face filled with dread, and then ducks back inside.

Andy arrives at the elevator to see-

She's sitting on the floor, cowering in the corner with her face buried in her knees.

She's soaking wet, her drenched hair hanging over her legs.

The floor is submerged, and water leaks from the elevator walls.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Are you ok?

Beat.

ANDY (CONT'D)
I'm not going to hurt you.

Beat.

COLLEGE-AGED GIRL
It's cold in here.

ANDY
Are you hurt?

COLLEGE-AGED GIRL
It's so dark.
(beat)
They can't find me in here?

ANDY
Who? Who can't find you?

COLLEGE-AGED GIRL
They think I did this to myself.
(beat)
I'm not crazy. I don't want to be
here. I don't want to be alone.

Andy steps into the flooded elevator.

And slowly-

Slowly-

Crouches down.

ANDY
Here, give me your hand.

He touches her arm.

Her head snaps up.

The entirety of her eyes are black-

And water pours from them.

Her skin is bruised and bloated.

Her mouth widens and she let's out a spine-tingling scream.

The scream twists and distorts.

MMMMMMM

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - NIGHT

MMMMMMM

Andy startles awake to the sound of a fading moan.

He sits up from a puddle of sweat.

And frantically looks around the room.

Beat.

He calms down after realizing it was all a dream.

ANDY
Jesus, Andy.

His things are still strewn across the foot of the bed.

The half-empty bottle of Jack lies next to him.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Holy shit, man.

He falls back on the bed and stares at the ceiling.

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy presses the elevator call button.

It lights, and-

DING

INT. ELEVATOR - CONTINUOUS

Andy steps in and presses the lobby button.

The doors close, and the elevator rumbles down the shaft.

Andy cracks the smallest of relieved smirks.

INT. LOBBY - NIGHT

DING

Andy exits in a hurry.

The front desk is again empty-

But, he couldn't care less as he heads straight for the exit.

He walks through the set of doors only to-

Walk right back into the lobby in a weird portal-like way.

He's caught completely off guard.

Turns back and can clearly see the street through the glass doors.

Beat.

He pulls one door open to reveal the lobby.

Through the closed door, he can still see the street.

Beat.

He let's go of the door, and it closes to again become a window to the outside world.

He turns and something catches his eye.

On the other end of the lobby, a door that's different than any of the others.

Even at this distance, Andy recognizes it.

He slowly-

Slowly-

Walks towards it.

The closer he gets, the more sure he becomes.

It's the basement door from his home-

The same movie theatre decoration hangs at the center.

He stands a few feet away, his eyes tracing it.

MMMMMM

A moan cries out from somewhere behind it.

A look of sorrow and fear returns as he stands before the gateway to all of his pain.

MMMMMM

INT. BEDROOM, ANDY'S HOME - NIGHT - FLASHBACK

BANG

Andy's startled awake.

Amanda is already sitting up in bed.

ANDY
What the hell was that?

AMANDA
I don't know.
(beat)
I think someone's downstairs.

Andy listens for another beat-

Nothing.

ANDY
Stay here. I'll be right back.

He carefully makes his way to the door-

And peeks out into the empty hallway.

INT. HALLWAY, ANDY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Andy creeps across the hall to another room.

Looks inside-

Brittany, fast asleep.

He moves swiftly to a closet and retrieves a golf club.

Looks down the hall at another room-

The door is closed.

INT. STAIRCASE, ANDY'S HOME - NIGHT

Andy slowly-

Slowly-

Makes his way down the stairs.

A death grip on the golf club.

The house is deathly quiet.

Until-

MMMMMM

A groaning moan let's out from somewhere below him.

He stops mid-staircase, his heart racing.

Beat.

Another quieter moan fades.

Beat.

The basement door is cracked open.

INT. BASEMENT, ANDY'S HOME - NIGHT

Andy stands at the top of the stairs.

White-knuckling the club.

He takes a step down, as quietly as he can.

The stairs are a mix of wood and iron without risers, so you can see through them.

He carefully-

Carefully-

Takes a few more steps down.

And then a few more until his feet land on the vinyl flooring.

The basement is finished, more like a living room.

It **appears** empty.

Beat.

Dangling just beyond the stairs, behind Andy, are two bare feet.

MMMMMMM

INT. STAIRWELL, CECIL - NIGHT - PRESENT

MMMMMMM

Andy looks up from a daze-

Sitting on the floor with his back against the wall.

Beat.

He raises his tape recorder and hits record.

ANDY

I can't figure out what's going on here. It won't let me go. The hotel, it's keeping me here somehow.

He clicks the recorder off.

Shakes his head and runs his fingers through his hair-

He feels like he's losing his mind.

ANDY (CONT'D)

You sound fucking crazy.

His fingers stop mid-air when he remembers something.

Hits record again.

ANDY (CONT'D)

The woman in the video. She said her experiences started to become specific to her.

(beat)

I keep seeing Derek. I don't know if he's somehow trapped here. But that doesn't make any sense. Why would that be?

(beat)

Maybe I'm just losing my mind.

He clicks the recorder off.

He stares off, lost in thought.

Beat.

His head snaps up when he hears something coming from the lobby.

He stands up and walks to the door.

Through the window he sees the lobby has been replaced with the 14th floor hallway.

But now it's packed with people.

Andy looks to the right of the door-

The L that was just there, is a 14.

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy steps into the hall.

People are traveling in both directions.

He tries to wave one of them down.

ANDY

Excuse me.

They completely ignore him and walk right by, disappearing into one of the rooms-

It's pitch black inside, a void of nothingness.

Another person follows.

Andy moves further down the hall.

The crowd passes him by as if he doesn't even exist-

Traveling to-and-fro, entering and exiting different rooms.

He tries getting someone else's attention.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Hey, excuse me.

He's met with the same non-response.

He keeps moving, nudging his way through the crowd.

Stops when he sees another door open-

This one with an interior, one right out of the 70s.

The Man with the smiley-face sack stands at the center.

A PRE-TEEN BOY stands on a stool in front of him-

He too wears a smiley-face sack.

His hands and feet are bound.

Andy's stomach drops when he notices the clothing on the boy-

It's Derek.

The Man drops a noose around Derek's neck-

ANDY (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?!

Andy does his best to fight through the hoard, but stops when Amanda steps into the doorway wearing flowy house dress-

She looks directly at him.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Amanda?

Her eyes betray her smile-

Andy knows that look.

She peers back into the room-

A bloody gunshot wound bored into the back of her head.

AMANDA

He's such a good daddy.

She turns back, trying to convince herself with a forced smile.

Andy's gaze shifts back to The Man and Derek.

Both are now facing him-

The Man with his arm draped over Derek's shoulders.

AMANDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

We're so lucky to have him.

In a blink, the faces change-

The Man's into a deep scowl-

And Derek's into a frown with a tear drop.

Beat.

The Man suddenly kicks the stool from under Derek's feet.

ANDY

NO!

Derek drops, and the noose tightens around his neck.

His feet writhe inches above the floor.

ANDY (CONT'D)

You son of a bitch!

Andy violently elbows his way through the crowd, the swarm growing denser-

But he barely gains any ground.

The Man's face has returned to a smiley as he watches Derek clinging desperately to life.

ANDY (CONT'D)
You piece of shit! I'm going to
fucking kill you! You hear me!

Derek contorts into a convulsive fit.

Andy pushes forward as hard as he can-

Inch by inch.

Andy's determined to save his son this time.

The crowd is completely oblivious, unphased by what's happening.

Andy gains more ground-

Reaching for the door frame.

Derek's muscles tighten, and his body becomes rigid as he fades away.

The Man bends down and scoops a shotgun from the floor.

Beat.

He traces the frown on Derek's face with the barrel.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Don't you fucking do it!

The door is **just** out of Andy's reach.

ANDY (CONT'D)
You fucking hear me! Don't you
FUCKING do it!

With one last push, he grabs a hold of the frame.

The Man rests the barrel against Derek's forehead.

Andy pulls himself free, and then-

BOOM

Derek's brains splatter against the wall, and his body falls limp.

The concussive blast radiates through Andy's body.

He stands still, his brain fighting to grasp the reality of what just happened.

Beat.

Derek's body swings back and forth, blood painting the floor like a pendulum.

The anguish of failing to save his son for the second time sets in.

ANDY (CONT'D)
(whispering)
I'm sorry. I couldn't...

The Man stares at the floor, showing some level of remorse for what he's done.

He turns to Andy.

Beat.

Places the barrel of the gun under his chin, and-

The door slams shut with the sound of the shotgun blast.

The hall falls silent.

Andy is frozen, his face inches from the door.

Beat.

He steps back into the parting crowd.

They quietly stare, now aware of his presence.

Beat.

Andy rushes to a trashcan across the hall and throws up.

The crowd begins to whisper amongst themselves.

CROWD MEMBER #1
He could have done something.

CROWD MEMBER #2
He's a total joke of a dad.

Andy looks up-

Recognizing a number of them.

CROWD MEMBER #3
(an elderly woman)
I lost a beautiful grandchild
because of him.

Heartbreak creeps across his face when he sees her.

ANDY
Mom?

She has a stern, angry look.

CREEEAK

The room door creeps back open-
It's pitch black inside.

DEREK (O.S.)
DAD!

Andy's face drops.

MMMMMM

Beat.

The Man stumbles into the hall-
Missing chunks off the top of his head-
The tattered sack mask hangs on, clinging to bits of flesh.
Blood pours from the bottom of his chin and down his chest.
With a wet, gasping moan, he falls to his knees and then
collapses.

Andy stands still, staring down at the body.

Beat.

He bends to get a better look.

The body jerks.

Andy stumbles back and falls over the trashcan-

Dragging it to the floor with him.

Puke spills out all over his hand.

But his eyes stay locked on the body.

Beat.

He finally allows himself to notice that the hall is empty.

Just him and The Man.

Beat.

Disgusted by the puke on his hand, he wipes it off on the carpet.

ANDY
Goddamn it.

Suddenly, the body jerks again.

Andy freezes.

Beat.

The body still again, Andy slowly scoots away.

Another jerk.

And then-

CRRRCCKK

One of The Man's arms breaks and twists around, stretching to twice its length.

His fingers snap and stretch, leaving open wounds.

His opposite leg dislocates at the knee, twisting completely around and grows to an exaggerated length.

The Man pushes himself off the floor-

Bone cracking, and blood dripping from his limbs.

Andy scurries to his feet and takes off down the hall.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy quickly sneaks into the room and gently closes the door.

He looks for somewhere to hide.

Just then, the doorknob rattles-

Beat.

The door creeps open-

And then slams into the wall.

The Man stands in the doorway-

Twisted and deformed into something just barely human-

A THING.

With an uneven gait, it takes a painful step into the room and loses its balance.

It catches itself on the floor with its long, lanky arm and intently studies the room.

It spots Andy's satchel stick out around the corner of the bed.

It crumples to the ground and crawls around the bed, groaning through its pain-

Only to find just Andy's satchel.

Beat.

In a fit of rage, it throws the bed against the wall and thrashes through the room towards the bathroom.

EXT. OUTSIDE WINDOW, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy hugs the wall just outside the window.

The back of his feet hang off the ledge.

He looks down at the street-

It looks a mile away.

Makes him sick to his stomach.

He closes his eyes and presses his forehead against the cold brick.

Beat.

He takes a breath and creeps towards the window and peeks inside-

Immediately, snaps back against the wall.

The Thing's face is pressed against the glass.

Its exposed eye strains to look around the corner.

Beat.

Irritated, it headbutts the window, splintering the glass, and retreats into the room.

Andy looks up to see if there's another escape route, but the next ledge is too far away.

Beat.

He forces himself to look down again, contemplating a dumb idea.

Beat.

He slowly-

Slowly-

Drags his chest against the wall and slides into a crouch.

He stalls, silently trying to convince himself to keep going.

Beat.

He reaches down with a single leg-

His fingertips digging into the brick.

He stretches as far as he can-

Searching for any sort of footing.

Beat.

He overreaches and rocks back, away from the wall.

His stomach drops, and he frantically reaches for the wall.

Just before he falls completely falls out of reach, his fingertips grip the window seal.

He thrusts himself up and falls into the window, splintering the crack more.

The Thing emerges rushes out of the bathroom, alerted by the sound.

Andy pulls himself behind the wall.

Beat.

He peeks inside.

The Thing storms out of the room-

Slamming the door so hard that it bounces back open.

Andy relaxes and works to collect himself.

Unknown to him, The Thing crawls back into the room, across the ceiling and disappears into a dark corner.

INT. ANDY'S ROOM, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy cautiously crawls back through the window, as quietly as he can-

His eyes locked on the open door.

He crouches next to the bed and feels around for his satchel.

Suddenly he's hit with the strange feeling of not being alone.

His eyes survey the room and stop on the pitch dark bathroom.

He's so still that he stops breathing.

Beat.

CRRKKK

Andy's eyes widen.

He slowly turns his head-

And then his body.

The Thing looks in at him through the window.

It lets out a painful, guttural scream that sends a shiver down Andy's spine.

He has to negotiate with his body to move-

And runs towards the door.

The Thing tears into the room after him.

Just as Andy reaches the door, The Thing snatches him by the ankle.

It digs its dirty fingernails into his leg and flings him back across the room.

Andy crashes into a dresser mirror, glass exploding everywhere.

He rolls over to see his satchel and quickly crawls towards it.

But before he can get there, The Thing folds him backwards with a kick to the face.

It grips his face and runs his head through the wall.

Andy's briefly in the bathroom before it rips him back out and tosses him across the room.

Andy lands right by his satchel.

He struggles to sit up and pulls his gun from the satchel.

He aims the gun, but The Thing is already there.

It drags him across the floor and then hurls him into-

INT. HOTEL HALLWAY, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

The wall on the other side of the hall.

He tries to lift his busted up body, but slips on something wet.

His hand is covered in blood.

He looks down to find himself upon a floor of naked, gory bodies.

Beat.

He spots the gun and tries to grab it, but it's pulled under by hands of rotten flesh.

The Thing leaps from the room at Andy.

He dives out of the way, and The Thing crashes into the wall.

Andy jumps to his feet and tries to run-

Another hand grabs ahold of his ankle.

He falls on top of one of the bodies, and it bites at him, missing by an inch.

The countless number of corpses that make up the floor come to life.

They cry out in agony.

The Thing crawls towards Andy.

Andy pushes himself up and crawls away as fast as he can.

The Thing holds no favor with the corpses, and they grab and scratch at it as well.

It's powerful though and tears through their blood-soaked flesh as it drags itself along.

BRRRHHHH

The hall violently shakes, and the walls crack.

Andy looks towards the stairwell door -- he knows he'll be safe there, or he hopes.

A single hand reaches up and grabs him by the throat.

He sinks into the bodies.

Tongues lick him all over his face, one slipping into his mouth causing him to choke.

He pushes as hard as he can and frees himself from the grip.

He looks back to see The Thing getting closer.

It reaches out to grab him, but he crawls away just fast enough.

Andy desperately trudges towards the stairwell.

And then-

The floor abruptly gives way and collapses a number of feet.

Dust settles with the aftershock of a quake.

Andy knows he's running out of time.

He pushes forward, crawling on his stomach-

The corpses scratching and biting at him.

The Thing stands and throws a number of bodies aside.

It takes a step, and the floor collapses again-

Turning the hall into a mountain of corpses.

The Thing falls backwards down the sloped deck.

Andy also falls, sliding across the slick bodies, towards The Thing.

Just before falling into its grasp, he grabs a hold of a tuft of hair.

Andy hangs inches above The Thing's reaching hand.

Beat.

The hair begins to tear from the scalp, The Thing's fingers inching closer.

Beat.

Just as the hair rips free, Andy grabs a hold of another corpse's hand-

He drops slightly, his feet brushing The Thing's fingertips.

Andy climbs quickly-

Making it mere feet away from the peak before The Thing digs knuckle-deep into his calf.

He screams out in pain.

Beat.

Without warning, the floor collapses again.

The blood-soaked mountain, now a wall of tattered bodies.

The Thing slips and falls a distance, clawing through a number of corpses on its way down-

Profuse amounts of blood pouring down the wall.

Andy almost loses his grip, but jams his hand into an open mouth and uses the jaw as a handhold.

Beat.

The mouth bites down on Andy's fingers.

He grunts through the pain, blood rolling down his hand.

The blood drips onto The Thing's face as it gallops up the wall, tossing bodies into the pit.

Andy grits his teeth and rips the jaw free from the head.

He scales the wall as fast as he can and reaches the door frame.

He pulls himself up, pushing the door open.

The upper half of his body lies across the threshold when The Thing claws into his leg.

He fights with everything he has to pull himself further into the stairwell.

He pulls himself, and The Thing's arm across the threshold.

The Thing screams as its flesh burns.

Andy reaches a stair balusters and pulls.

The Thing stubbornly holds on, it's skin charring, but then succumbs to the pain.

It let's go, and Andy pulls himself against the railing.

The door immediately slams shut.

INT. STAIRWELL, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Smoke rolls off Andy's leg.

He frantically pats out the burning embers left from The Thing's hand.

Beat.

He gingerly touches the gashes on his leg, grimacing.

Beat.

He slowly stands.

The sound of broken plastic rattles in his pocket.

He reaches in, and his face instantly drops.

He pulls out his tape recorder, shattered-

Pieces hanging on by wires.

At first he's sad-

And then, furious.

He snaps, punching and kicking at the railing in an uncontrollable fit of anger.

He let's out a broken scream that echoes through the stairwell.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY - NIGHT

Andy marches to the front desk.

And forcefully rings the bell.

Beat.

No one comes.

He taps the bell again and again, continuously.

When it still doesn't attract the clerk, he hammers it with his fist before smacking it off the desk in frustration.

Beat.

Just as he's ready to turn around, he hears-

The quiet sound of music.

It coming from behind a door to the side of the desk.

He's drawn to the recognizable melody and walks in its direction.

INT. SIDE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Andy enters a long hallway adorned with elegantly framed pictures-

Old pictures of the Cecil and its staff.

At the end of the hall, an ornate front door -- the kind you'd see on a nice home.

The music now more than a melody-

Sinatra -- "That's Life"

INT. KITCHEN, ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

"That's Life" plays through a Bluetooth speaker.

Amanda rinses vegetables in the sink.

Andy chops food on the kitchen island.

Derek enters bobbing to the music and grabs a snack from the cupboard.

He snatches a wooden spoon from a holder on the counter-

And dances around the kitchen, singing along -- the spoon, his microphone.

He dances past Brittany, who's studying in the breakfast nook.

She shakes her head with a smile.

Max walks around him, full body wagging his tail.

Derek stops and puts the "mic" in Andy's face.

Andy, amused, refuses.

ANDY
(laughing)
There is no way, dude.

DEREK
Come on, dad.

ANDY
Nope, not gonna happen.

Derek notices his mom laughing.

He continues singing and dances his way over to her.

He holds the spoon out, and she almost immediately grabs it and starts belting out the lyrics.

The two dance around the kitchen, Andy watching-

Happy.

INT. A HOME WITHIN THE CECIL - DAY - PRESENT

Andy steps into the foyer of a gorgeous home-

Warm tones and mahogany trim.

Sunlight filters in through a set of tall windows.

He follows Sinatra's voice deeper into the home.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The tune leads Andy to a grand dining room, with a long table

The velvety voice flows from an old stereo on the far wall.

He walks over-

And picks up the "That's Life" record sleeve from the table.

A smile breaks his stern look.

FRANK (O.S.)
I don't think music ever got any
better than that.

Andy whips around.

Frank walks in from the kitchen-

Wearing a robe and house shoes, stirring a cup of tea.

He gestures towards the record player.

FRANK (CONT'D)
You a Sinatra guy?

The confusion is evident on Andy's face.

ANDY
I knew someone who was.
(beat)
He was a real old soul in that kind
of way.

Frank gently smiles.

FRANK
You know, a lot of people say I
sound like him... Frank... The
other Frank.

He sings along, comically out of tune.

Beat.

He stops when he sees the smile is gone from Andy's face.

FRANK (CONT'D)
But that's not why you're here.

ANDY
What is this place?

Frank's expression becomes somber, studying the trauma to
Andy's body.

FRANK
I suppose we're beyond wondering if
the Cecil's haunted or not.

ANDY
No, there's clearly something
fucked up going on here.
(beat)
How do I get out?

Beat.

Without another word, Frank leaves through a large set of doors.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hey.

Andy follows him.

EXT. FRANK'S PATIO - DAY

Andy steps out onto a brick patio-

A warm cascade of sunlight beams down on him.

ANDY
Hey...

He's stunned by the beauty that unfolds before him.

Rays of sunlight dance across the gentle waters of a large lake.

A soft breeze blows through lush green grass and vibrant wild flowers.

He could stand there in the warmth for hours.

Beat.

FRANK
It's something, isn't it?

Andy turns to Frank, who's seated in a patio recliner.

ANDY
It's so different here. There's
no...

FRANK
Pain?

Andy nods.

Frank sips his tea, gesturing to the seat across from him.

Andy goes to sit.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Wait.

Frank grimaces over the filthiness of Andy's clothing.

FRANK (CONT'D)

These cushions are new.

(beat)

It's fine. Sit down. Sit, sit, sit.

Andy sits, facing the water.

He notices **SOMEONE** way on the other side of the lake, playing fetch with a dog.

FRANK (CONT'D)

People always ask the same questions about the Cecil. Is it haunted? Have I seen ghosts walking the hallway?

Frank chuckles and shakes his head.

FRANK (CONT'D)

They never imagine it could be them. That they might be the ghosts that haunt the Cecil. Ghosts of who they used to be.

Andy's curiosity is piqued.

FRANK (CONT'D)

What haunts them? That's the question they should be asking.

ANDY

I don't know that I understand.

FRANK

You do. You don't need me to tell you that there are people in this world who carry with them an immense amount of pain. Of guilt. Fear and shame.

Andy tries to hide behind a blank stare.

ANDY

What does that have to do with the Cecil?

FRANK

Broken people are who the Cecil attracts. People running from things they can't hide from. Desperately searching for something they won't allow themselves to have. Haunted by all the pain they harbor.

(beat)

The voices, they tell them they're to blame. That what's happened is their fault. That they could have done more.

A somber look betrays a chink in Andy's armor.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Even worse is you believe those voices. You allow them to hold you hostage. To twist and deform you into something you no longer recognize.

(beat)

Until one day you can't even look at yourself in the mirror anymore.

Andy's eye grow misty.

FRANK (CONT'D)

You push hope away, deep inside, like a stairwell at the back of an old building because you think you don't deserve it. And feeling even the slightest bit of hope makes you feel like you've done something wrong.

(beat)

That hopelessness festers and eats at your soul, until you become your own worst monster.

(beat)

When pain like that gathers in one place, side-by-side with all the evil the Cecil has witnessed, it bridges your world with... somewhere else.

(beat)

That's what the Cecil is. A bridge.

ANDY

To Hell?

FRANK

A state that we create when hide
from hope and refuse to forgive --
others or ourselves. It uses that
unforgiveness, the guilt and pain
to keep it's occupants hopeless.

(beat)

To keep them in a Hell tailor-made
for them.

ANDY

Why can't you just tell me how to
get out? That's all I want. I just
want to go.

FRANK

Andy, you're not just here to face
your son's death.

ANDY

What?

FRANK

You're here to face yourself.

Andy is visibly shaken.

ANDY

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

FRANK

What happened wasn't your fault,
but you live like it was.

ANDY

Shut up, shut the fuck up. I told
you, you don't know what the fuck
you're talking about.

Frank leans forward.

FRANK

You need to stop running from that
night.

Andy springs to his feet, on the run again.

ANDY

This is a waste of time.

Frank stands to meet him.

FRANK

There's only one through. You have to keep moving forward. Past your guilt. Past your regret. That's where you'll find yourself. That's where you'll find forgiveness.

ANDY

(teary-eyed; shaking head)
I can't. I just can't do that.

Andy turns and walks towards the door.

FRANK

Don't let it kill what little hope you still have hidden away.

Andy walks through the doors.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Andy, you still have time.

INT. DEREK'S ROOM, ANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Andy steps into a dimly lit bedroom-

And instantly recognizes it, his heart sinks.

The room is very obviously lived in by a young man.

Andy works to keep his composure.

Beat.

He wanders to a bookshelf in the corner.

The shelves are heavy with pictures and trophies.

Andy picks up a framed photo-

A goofy picture of him and Derek.

He smiles.

Beat.

Placing the picture back, his eyes drop to a small wooden box-

A paw print plaque reads, *Max, 2000-2016.*

EXT. BACK DECK, ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY - FLASHBACK

Andy stands on his back deck, Derek ahead of him, sitting on the steps.

Derek holds a dog collar in his hands-

A bone-shaped tag hanging from it, *Max*.

Derek stares down at the collar, tear tracks on his face.

Andy doesn't say anything, just sits next to him-

And looks off into the yard, he wouldn't know what to say anyway.

Beat.

DEREK

I should have taken him on more walks.

Andy looks over at Derek.

DEREK (CONT'D)

If I would have gotten him more exercise or something, maybe he'd lived longer.

ANDY

Don't do that to yourself, bud.

DEREK

I could have done something, I know I could have.

ANDY

No. Sometimes things happen that we can't control.

(beat)

Max lived a really good life.
You've seen how many beds and toys this guy has?

Derek briefly smiles through the tears.

ANDY (CONT'D)

He deserved them though, didn't he?

Derek nods.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Yeah he did. He was good boy. And believe me, he knows you loved him.

(MORE)

ANDY (CONT'D)
There was never a doubt in his
mind.

Derek's tears get heavier and he falls against Andy.

DEREK
I'm going to miss him so much, dad.

Andy wraps his arm around Derek.

ANDY
Me too, bud. Me too.

DEREK
I hope I get to see him again.

INT. DEREK'S ROOM, ANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT - PRESENT

Andy's teary eyes move on from the box to a plaque with
Derek's favorite quote on it-

*Remember, hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and
no good thing ever dies. - Stephen King*

Beat.

He turns around and stops when he sees someone sleeping in
the bed.

Beat.

He quietly-

Quietly-

Walks towards the bed-

Sticking to the perimeter of the room-

Until he gets close enough to see who it is-

A teenaged Derek.

Andy hovers over him, not sure what to do.

Beat.

He reaches down and rests his hand on Derek's shoulder.

Derek reacts just slightly to Andy's touch-

He's really there.

Andy gently-

Gently-

Sits on the edge of the bed, trying not to wake him.

He brushes the hair from his son's forehead.

It's all a bit overwhelming-

He stares out the window to keep calm.

Beat.

Suddenly, his hand passes through Derek and drops to the bed.

Derek's gone.

Andy looks around the room-

But he's nowhere to be seen.

As quickly as he had him back, he's lost him again.

Andy fiddles with the comforter-

And then buries his face, sobbing.

Beat.

He abruptly stands, angry, and heads for the door.

He walks through into-

INT. DEREK'S EMPTY ROOM, ANDY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Derek's room again.

This time, it's completely empty.

Dust gathered on the window sill.

The bookshelf, still there, but barren.

The empty room is like a gut punch-

A cold reminder that Derek's gone.

Andy stares, defeated, at the center of the room.

Beat.

He turns around, but freezes when he sees the door.

It's now his basement door.

MMMMMM

He backs away and looks for another way out.

He runs to the window and tries to open it, but it won't budge.

He turns back towards the door.

Beat.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

Andy pulls his phone out.

Derek is displayed on the screen.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

He stares at the screen for a beat-

Reluctant to answer.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

He can't help himself and accepts the call.

Beat.

He raises the phone to his ear-

And is met by static.

ANDY

Hello?

More static.

ANDY (CONT'D)

Derek?

The call immediately disconnects.

Andy tries to call back-

The phone screen stuck on *calling*, never connects.

Andy ends the call and stares at the basement door.

Beat.

He walks over and reaches out for the knob-

But his hand stops just before touching it.

Beat.

He can't do it.

MMMMMM

His hand drops, and he rest his forehead against the door.

Beat.

He let's out a soul-shattering cry and punches the door-

Again-

And again-

And again until he can't lift his arm anymore.

With bloodied knuckles, he collapses against the door and slides to the floor.

He sits there for a long time-

A long time.

Exhausted physically and emotionally.

Beat.

Suddenly, he falls backwards through the door into-

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

The hall.

But the hallway is broken into disjointed sections, floating around a vortex-like void.

Andy stands in awe of what he sees.

Beat.

He looks up to see other parts of the hallway passing above him.

His eyes drop just in time to see another section barreling towards him.

He jumps as it collides with his and flies through an oncoming door.

It spits him out onto another section.

He stares back at the door, realizing they're portals to each other.

He again looks up at the pieces of hallway flying by.

One of the sections is low enough to reach.

He times his jump and grips the edge.

He travels with the section around the void.

Another section rolls through and knocks him off the ledge.

He lands hard on another platform.

Beat.

When he finally makes it to his feet, he sees another section floating by with a noose-like strap hanging from it.

He watches it circle back around several times, the "noose" a difficult sight for him.

A look of determination grows on his face, and he readies himself for the noose's return.

He grabs a hold of it.

Climbing up the strap, he avoids another incoming section and kicks off of it.

He climbs to the top, another door waiting for him.

He takes a breath and opens it.

AHHHHHHHH

The Thing screams in his face from the other side and backhands him off the platform.

The landing knocks the wind out of Andy.

He looks up to see The Thing staring down at him.

It's even more deformed than before.

All of it's limbs are abnormally long, bursting through tattered clothing.

The two sections rotate around the void, swaying closer to each other.

Andy struggles up to his feet.

The Thing jumps up, ramming itself into the bottom of Andy's section.

The section rotates on its axis, and Andy loses his footing-

He tumbles back, towards the door, catching himself on the from.

The Thing crawls, in its disjointed fashion, around the edge of the floor.

Andy tries to get to his feet, but The Thing launches itself, tackling him through the doorway.

They fly through another door, skid across the floor and off the edge of the platform-

Crashing onto another below.

The Thing picks Andy up and flings him through the air to the next platform.

Andy rolls across the floor and off the side-

At the last second, he grips the edge of the platform and hangs on.

The Thing lands, standing above him.

Drool soaks through what's left of its mask and drips on Andy's face.

Andy spots something embedded in The Thing's chest-

The edge of a plastic ID card, and a loop of lanyard.

He peers down at his own ID-

They look the same.

Andy's grip is beginning to fail.

He looks down, but the next section is too far to fall to.

The Thing crouches down and reaches for Andy.

One of Andy's hands slips off the ledge.

His eyes go straight to the lanyard hanging out of The Thing's chest.

In one swift move, he lets go and grabs the lanyard.

He briefly hangs there, blood and puss oozing from the wounded.

In pain, The Thing yanks away, and the ID rips from its flesh.

Andy falls a distance before passing through open elevator doors-

The ID flying off in another direction.

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy's spills out into the hallway-

It's whole again, but rotating around it's center.

Andy uncontrollably rolls across the walls, ceiling and floor-
Over and over again.

Until the hall abruptly stops and is consumed by red light.

Andy hits the floor and rolls to his feet before dropping to his knees in a dizzy stupor.

Beat.

DEREK
(from one end of the hall)
DAD!

Andy's head snaps up towards the sound of Derek's voice.

DEREK (CONT'D)
(from the opposite end)
DAD! PLEASE!

Andy whirls towards the other end.

He stands, desperately trying to track Derek's voice.

His voice pours from a number of rooms-

Sometimes all at once.

DEREK (CONT'D)
DAD! PLEASE HELP ME!

DEREK ECHO
I'M IN HERE!

DEREK
PLEASE HURRY!

DEREK (CONT'D)
IT HURTS, DAD!

DEREK (CONT'D)
I'M SCARED.

Andy heads towards one end of the hall.

All of the doors hang open.

Painful screams and cries echo from them -- a literal wailing and gnashing of teeth.

Andy reaches the first room and reluctantly looks inside, grimacing through the sound of painful cries.

Inside, a **VICTIM**, strapped to an old wooden surgical table.

They scream out in agony, a **SURGEON** standing over them, flaying their skin.

DEREK (CONT'D)
(down the hall)
DAD!

Andy walks in the direction of Derek's voice, looking in each room.

In another, a **WOMAN** on her knees fighting to keep her **BABY** from a **MAN**.

The man wrestles the baby free and walks away.

The woman goes after him, but she's hit in the face with a sledgehammer by a **SECOND MAN**.

The first man throws the baby in a microwave and closes it.

The second man hammers at the woman's head, over and over as she lies on the floor-

A puddle of blood pooling around her.

Andy has to turn away.

DEREK (CONT'D)
DAD, YOU CAN HELP ME!

Andy passes several more rooms-

Trying to ignore the horrible things happening in them.

He can't stand anymore and runs as fast as he can towards the stairwell door.

But no matter how far he runs, the stairwell never gets any closer.

He's stuck in this perpetual tunnel of pain and agony.

Horror after horror passing by.

And then-

MMMMMMM

He looks back, and all of the room doors slam shut at once.

BOOM

Andy hits the stairwell door at full speed.

Bounces off, onto the floor.

He curls into a ball.

Beat.

Once he's able to sit up, he sees that the stairwell door has become his basement door.

And then-

It swings open.

A huge rush of wind whips into the hall.

Andy shields his face with his hand.

Inside, Derek moves about the basement -- his movements rigid, similar to The Thing's.

He sets a bar stool down, playing out the events of his suicide.

Andy's teary eyes are locked on the scene.

Derek climbs the stool.

He tightens a duffle bag strap around his neck-

And then tips the stool.

Andy's stomach drops.

The stool reaches it's tipping point, and the door slams shut with a *BANG* that causes Andy to tremble.

All at once, the red light lifts, and the hallway is back to normal-

The basement door, the stairwell door again.

INT. STAIRWELL, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy sits on the landing.

Beat.

He digs into his pocket and pulls out his wallet.

He flips to the sleeve of photos.

He focuses on the first -- the picture of Derek's 5th birthday party.

A light smile flashes across his face.

He flips by the next few-

Pictures of the family, some of Max-

Until he gets to one in particular -- the same beach photo that was his laptop screensaver.

His eyes are misty.

He feels so much guilt-

Not just because he wasn't able to save his son-

But because he died with him, leaving the rest of his family behind.

Beat.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

Andy pulls his phone out.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ

The caller ID reads *Derek*.

BZZZ BZZZ BZZZ.

Andy accepts the call and raises the phone.

The other end is silent.

ANDY
(with a shaky voice)
Hello?

Andy stands.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hello?

A look of frustration creeps across his face.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hello?
(beat)
Derek?

Beat.

Andy's shoulders drop, ready to give up when-

A weak voice, too quiet to hear, speaks-

It sounds far away, repeating itself.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Hello?
(beat)
Who is this?

The voice grows a bit louder, as if it's getting closer-

Still, inaudible.

Andy plugs his ear with a finger.

The voice mumbles something and then goes quiet.

Beat.

DEREK ON PHONE
Dad?

ANDY
Derek?

DEREK ON PHONE
Dad, I need you.

ANDY
Derek, I...

DEREK ON PHONE
Please help me, dad.
(beat)
I'm scared.

ANDY
Where... Where are you?

DEREK ON PHONE
The Cecil...

ANDY
Derek, where in the Cecil are you?

Beat.

ANDY (CONT'D)
Derek?
(beat)
Derek?!

DEREK
(crystal clear)
You know where.

The phone chimes.

Andy looks at the screen, the call has dropped.

He quickly redials.

PHONE RECORDING
We're sorry, but the number you're
trying to reach has been
disconnected.

He hangs up, dials again.

PHONE RECORDING (CONT'D)
We're sorry, but the number you're
trying to reach...

INT. CECIL LOBBY - NIGHT

The expression on Andy's face is one of complete dread-

Knowing what he has to do.

He's stands in the middle of the lobby-

Staring at his basement door.

MMMMMMM

He can still hear the moan from that night.

Beat.

It's now or never.

He slowly-

Slowly-

Steps up to the door and lays his hand on the knob.

Beat.

He overcomes his fear and turns the knob.

INT. BASEMENT, ANDY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The door slowly opens-

Andy stands at the top of the stairs.

The stairs are a mixture of iron and wood.

His heartrate spikes and his hands get clammy.

He closes his eyes, recenters himself-

Takes control.

He carefully-

Carefully takes his first step down.

And then another-

And another.

Each step a little easier than the last until he's at the bottom of the stairs.

It's cold-

Very cold-

Andy's breath is visible in the air.

He stands there for a long beat, knowing what awaits him when he turns around.

Behind him, through the open stairs risers, are a pair of dangling feet.

BANG

Andy's eyes snap forward, towards the patio door.

BANG BANG BANG

Outside the door, through thick fog, a multitude of hands smack against the glass.

People climbing over top each other, their moans muffled-
A frigid Hell.

Andy takes a step and turns around to face the hanging body.

Amanda sits beneath the body's feet, crying-

She doesn't seem to notice Andy.

Beat.

Andy again fights through his fear and takes a step forward.

The body is covered with a blanket.

The closer he gets, the dimmer the basement lights become-

Until the body is the only thing lit.

The room is dead quiet.

The moans outside have gone.

Amanda is gone.

Andy's reluctant to even look at the body.

Beat.

He reaches up and grips the blanket without looking.

The blanket drops to the floor.

Beat.

Andy's eyes slowly wander over.

Not ready to look at the face, he studies the clothes-

Just the way he remembers them from that night.

Beat.

He takes a deep breath and then looks up.

Derek's eyes are still open, cloudy and blood shot, looking straight ahead into the darkness.

He's had a nose bleed that's dried over his lips.

And there's deep bruise around his neck.

Andy breaks down.

ANDY

I'm sorry.

(beat)

I'm sorry I wasn't there when you needed me.

He buries his face on top of his boy's feet and weeps.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I didn't know. Why didn't I know?

(beat)

I should have been there. I'm so sorry.

Andy glances back up-

And then stumbles backwards.

Derek stares down at him, angry-

A deep scowl, and curled lip.

DEREK

SORRY?! You're sorry?!

Andy shrinks back.

DEREK (CONT'D)

Why didn't you help me? Why weren't you there when I needed you?!

The haunting, taunting whispers return.

DISEMBODIED VOICE 1

You could have saved him.

ANDY

(shaking head)

I...

DEREK

How did you not know?!

DISEMBODIED VOICE 2
 What kind of father doesn't see his
 own child's pain?

 ANDY
 (sobbing)
 I don't know.

 DEREK
 You should have been there! You
 should have KNOWN!

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 3
 It's all your fault!

 ANDY
 I'm so sorry.

 DEREK
 You let me die all alone. In the
 dark with no one there.

The disembodied voices rise from a whisper to a normal
 speaking volume-

Their vocalization, altered.

 DISEMBODIED VOICE 4
 Alone in the dark.

 DEREK
 Without love! Without hope!

The final voice Andy hears is his own.

 FINAL DISEMBODIED VOICE
 (Andy)
 Without hope, into the lake of
 fire.

 ANDY
 (whispering)
 I'm...

Andy looks back up at Derek-

His face twisted into something he doesn't recognize.

Andy can finally see through the charade. Through the lies.

 ANDY (CONT'D)
 You're not my son.
 (beat)
 It's all bullshit.

A deep, grizzly laugh comes from the dark, just behind Derek.

The Thing slowly emerges-

With a disgusting wet grin.

It's even more deformed now, spidery looking.

The fingers of one hand, deep in the flesh of faux Derek's back-

Controlling him like a puppet.

It rips its hand free and grips Derek by the neck-

Gurgling sounds, and crunching bones.

Andy backs away.

The Thing pulls down-

Derek screams as his neck shreds apart.

His hand reaches out for Andy.

DEREK

DAD!

Andy knows it isn't real, but it breaks his heart all the same.

The Thing grins and rips the body free from its head.

The head rolls to Andy's feet.

The Thing holds the body upside down, pouring blood over its face.

Andy runs.

The Thing launches the body at him, knocking him to the ground.

Andy stumbles to his feet and turns the corner, running up the stairs.

The Thing reaches through an open riser and grab him by the ankle.

Andy crashes into the stairs and then is flung backward as The Thing pulls him through.

Andy grabs at anything he can to keep from being pulled in.

He loses his grip, and The Thing drags him further back into the basement.

At the last second, Andy grabs a stair tread and pushes against it.

It takes everything he has, but Andy starts to pull away.

The Thing is relentless, clawing at him.

In a last ditch effort, Andy drives his heel into The Thing's face as hard as he can.

The Thing stumbles back, releasing Andy.

Andy pulls himself up the stairs and runs-

But stops when he sees The Thing's mask falling off.

He knows he should keep going, but he has see this.

The Thing regains its bearings-

And turns towards Andy.

What's left of The Thing's face is identical to Andy-

It's like looking in a mirror.

ANDY
(whispering)
Until I become my own worst
monster.

Beat.

The Thing lunges at Andy, snapping him out of his daze.

He dodges The Thing's reach and takes off up the stairs.

The Thing squeezes through the riser, contorting its body in unnatural ways to pull itself through.

INT. ANDY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Andy slams the door shut and runs through the living room, to the front door.

It won't budge.

He tries the deadbolt, but it's jammed.

CRRAACKMPH

The Thing rips the basement door off its hinges and darts towards Andy-

Destroying everything in its wake.

Andy dives out of the way, and The Thing crashes face-first into the door.

Andy slides around the corner and up the stairs.

The Thing jumps over the railing and chases him down.

It grabs him by the neck and throws him through the balusters.

The coffee table shatters under the force of Andy's body.

He looks up to see The Thing flying through the air towards him.

He rolls to his feet, and The Thing tumbles into the fire place.

INT. KITCHEN, ANDY'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Andy runs into the kitchen, looking for something to use as a weapon.

Grabs a knife from the block on the counter.

The Thing tears into the kitchen, ripping the breakfast island from the floor.

It charges Andy, and he slashes it across the face.

The Thing retaliates, driving him against the counter, and he drops the knife.

The Thing opens its mouth to reveal jagged, razor-sharp teeth and lunges at Andy.

He instinctively headbutts it in the mouth, gashing his forehead, and knocking The Thing back.

Andy drives his shoulder into The Thing, pushing it against the counter.

He grabs another knife and pins The Thing's hand to the countertop.

He pulls another knife and stuffs it in his back pocket before dashing for the patio door.

The Thing runs after him, but is yanked back by its pinned hand.

Andy runs through the doors-

INT. FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Right into the middle of a funeral home.

The seats are full of people quietly chatting.

The sound of heavy doors closing behind Andy echo through the chapel.

He cringes as the chatter goes quiet, and the congregation turns to look at him.

Beat.

FUNERAL PATRON (O.S.)
(whispering)
That's him. That's the boy's dad.

FUNERAL PATRON 2 (O.S.)
I can't imagine what he's going
through.

FUNERAL PATRON 3 (O.S.)
Not exactly father of the year
material.

Andy ignores the murmurs, his eyes locked on the casket.

He slowly makes his way down the aisle.

He can feel everyone's eyes on him.

The walk to the casket feels like an eternity-

But he finally makes it.

Derek rests peacefully inside.

Andy rests his hand on top of Derek's.

ANDY
I know what I need to do.
(beat)
I just don't know that I can.

He closes his eyes briefly and when he opens them, the casket is empty.

The murmurs fade.

Andy turns back to an empty chapel-

Left behind service programs are all that remain.

The sunlight shining through the windows rapidly disappears as nightfall arrives.

When he turns back to the casket, he's met by-

EXT. CEMETERY - NIGHT

Derek's grave.

The dirt is fresh.

Andy drops to his knees atop the dirt.

And stares quietly at the headstone.

The drone of crickets, and rustling leaves, the only sound the night has to offer.

Beat.

His eyes wander to the quote etched on the stone-

Remember, hope is a good thing, maybe the best of things, and no good thing ever dies.

He focuses on one word-

HOPE

Beat.

A groan comes from somewhere out in the darkness.

Andy stands, expecting The Thing.

Suddenly, the dirt falls through the ground-

And Andy is slips into the sinkhole.

INT. ELEVATOR, CECIL - NIGHT

Andy falls through the elevator ceiling with a flurry of dirt-

And slams to the floor.

The room spins as he struggles to a knee.

He fights through the dizziness and stands.

INT. HALLWAY, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

Andy steps out into the hall.

It's quiet-

Eerily quiet.

He looks back inside the elevator-

Expecting The Thing to follow him through.

But it doesn't.

He looks down the hall towards the stairwell.

FRANK (V.O.)
Hope. Like a stairwell at the back
of an old building.

He slowly-

Slowly-

Makes his way down the hall-

And then suddenly, The Thing punches down through the ceiling.

Dirt pours out onto the floor.

A moment later, The Thing drops down-

A cascade of dirt pouring over its shoulders.

Beat.

A casket lands behind it.

Andy stares up at The Thing, no longer afraid.

Beat.

It backhands him-

Sending him flying through a table against the wall.

It explodes into splintered wood-

One of the shards pierces his thigh-

He let's out an angry scream.

Beat.

Andy grips the spike and pulls it out.

The Thing rushes him, and he lunges forward, spearing it in the gut with the spike.

It shrieks and grabs him by the face-

And throws him against the wall.

Andy falls to the floor and tries to crawl away.

The thing rips the stake out and stabs Andy in the leg.

Andy flips over, kicks The Thing in the face.

It's stunned enough for him to drag himself on top of the casket.

The Thing recovers and leaps onto Andy's back.

It digs it's fingernails into his head.

Andy desperately reaches for the stake.

The Thing presses his face into the casket, denting it.

Andy kicks its knee out-

Buckling it, and giving him the opportunity to grab the stake.

He stabs it through its forearm, and it releases him.

He pulls the stake out and stabs it in the back of the neck.

It retaliates with a thunderous elbow, toppling Andy over the casket.

The Thing lunges at him again-

But Andy pulls the lid open.

The Thing bounces off headfirst, knocking Andy backwards.

Andy scrambles up to a run, heading towards the stairwell.

The Thing crawls up and chases him down.

It springs into the air, tackling him back to the ground.

It claws at his back like a rabid animal.

Andy swings a wild elbow, striking The Thing in the face.

He pulls away, but can't escape-

The Thing pounces again, pinning Andy on his back.

It takes a bite at him, but misses.

Andy remembers the knife in his back pocket-

And struggles to reach for it.

He dodges another bite and grips the knife.

He jams it in The Thing's neck-

Blood sprays across his face.

The Thing stumbles back, but Andy's not finished.

He jumps to his feet and stabs it over and over again.

It stumbles into the wall, and Andy stays with it-

Unleashing all of his pent-up anger.

The Thing, in a blood-soaked mess, raises a hand to shield itself from the onslaught.

Andy drives the knife through it's hand and then uses all his bodyweight to pin it to the wall.

He leaves The Thing a gory mess and heads towards the stairwell door.

Andy makes it to the door and turns his back to it-

Cracking it open behind him, his heel keeping it open.

He faces The Thing-

Bloodied. Bruised. Defiant.

The Thing rips its hand free and stands, angrily staring Andy down.

ANDY

Come on you son of bitch.

It launches itself onto the floor, and crawls towards him at an unnervingly fast pace.

Andy holds his ground.

The Thing jumps into the air and barrels into him.

INT. STAIRWELL, CECIL - CONTINUOUS

They crash onto the top landing.

The Thing let's out a gut-wrenching scream as its flesh ignites.

It tries to flee-

But Andy wraps his arms around it, holds on tight.

The door, slowly closing.

Blisters boil up from The Thing's smoldering skin.

It scratches and claws, but Andy refuses to let go.

The boils pop and splatter.

Its skin dries up and cracks.

The door, halfway closed now.

In a panic, The Thing sinks its teeth into Andy's shoulder.

Andy won't give up-

Even as The Thing's smoking skin burns his own.

But his grip is failing.

He looks over at the door-

It's about a foot from being completely closed.

Tears in his eyes, he whispers in The Thing's ear-

ANDY
I forgive you.

He let's go and kicks the door the rest of the way shut.

The Thing jumps up, trying to retreat into the hall, but its too late.

It screams as its skin flakes off.

It turns back to Andy one last time-

And falls apart into smoldering ash.

Andy lays back on the floor, exhausted.

Beat.

A gentle hand touches him on the chest and helps him up.

EXT. FRANK'S PATIO - DAY

Frank walks Andy out onto the patio, Andy's arm over his shoulders.

Sunlight beams down on them.

It's peace washes over Andy. He hasn't felt peace in a long time.

The two stand there, staring out at the calm lake.

Beat.

FRANK

Look over there.

He points to the young man on the other side of the lake, playing fetch with his dog.

Andy let's go of Frank and takes a step forward.

ANDY

I've seen him. They've been playing
fetch for hours.

Frank laughs.

FRANK

Time works a little different here
than it does back there.

ANDY

Who is he?

FRANK

I think you know who he is.

ANDY

Derek?

FRANK

I think you know the guy with four
legs too.

ANDY
Is that... Max?

FRANK
You should have seen his face when
Derek got here.

Andy weeps.

ANDY
Derek's not alone?

FRANK
Not at all.

ANDY
And he's not in pain? He's not...
In Hell or anything?

FRANK
He couldn't be further from it.

Andy laughs through his tears.

ANDY
I want to see him.

He goes down the patio stairs, into the grass.

Frank follows him.

They walk through the field of wildflowers until they reach
the golden sand of a beach.

They cross the beach and walk to the end of a small dock.

ANDY (CONT'D)
How do we get over there?

FRANK
You don't.

ANDY
What? Why not?

FRANK
That's a one way ticket, and it's
not quite that time.

Andy looks back across the lake, disappointed.

FRANK (CONT'D)
Until then, he watches over you. He
watches over all of you.

That makes Andy smile.

Beat.

A curious look grows across Andy's face.

ANDY

Why do you stay on this side, and
in the hotel, and not over there?

FRANK

A lot of things happened in that
hotel on my watch. Things I'm
ashamed happened right under my
nose. I have a lot of regret. So
I've made it my responsibility to
help the Cecil's guests now. It
doesn't always work out, but I
guess I'm just like everyone else.
Searching for something. Redemption
I guess. Hope.

The two quietly watch the rippling water.

Beat.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Are you ready?

ANDY

For what?

Frank looks at him in a way that says, *you know what*.

Andy looks back at Derek one last time.

ANDY (CONT'D)

I have so many questions.

FRANK

Sometimes what we're really
searching for is closer to us than
we think.

Frank turns Andy by the shoulders so that his back is to the
water and lays his hand on his chest.

FRANK (CONT'D)

There's much more I could share
with you, but sometimes what we
really need is to hear it from
those we love most.

Andy goes to speak, but Frank pushes him backwards, off the deck.

Andy tenses at first, but relaxes as soon as he hits the water.

He sinks like a stone, but he's calm.

There's no panic, just peace.

All of the blood and dirt washes away.

Every wound on his body heals.

Memories flash around him-

Memories that make him happy.

Memories of Derek-

His birth-

Birthdays-

Learning to ride a bike-

Trips with his family-

A young Derek giving him a Christmas gift, a tape recorder.

Getting Max as a puppy-

The birth of his sister-

Plays-

Family games-

Every happy moment they'd had, until he comes to a rest on the bottom of the lake.

He lies there for a while, completely at peace.

And then gently, but rapidly all at the same time, he rises.

This time, ascending through visions of the future.

Brittany's graduation-

Her going to college-

Trips that Andy and Amanda will take-

Brittany getting married-

His grandchildren-
He and Amanda growing old together-
A light at the end of the tunnel-
And then he breaks through the surface.

INT. CECIL LOBBY - NIGHT

Andy jolts awake on the wet lobby floor-
Water splashing off his face.

He's met by a **YOUNG DESK CLERK**, in a modern uniform.

YOUNG DESK CLERK
Are you alright, man. You really
smacked your head there.

Andy looks over to see the drug addict back on the bench.
She sobers almost immediately when she sees him-
As though she can see where he's been.

ANDY
Where's Frank?

YOUNG DESK CLERK
Who's Frank?

Andy sits up.

ANDY
You know, the old man that works
the desk.

YOUNG DESK CLERK
I don't know any Frank.

ANDY
He was just there, at the desk,
earlier tonight.

The young clerk looks back at the desk.

YOUNG DESK CLERK
I've been the only one at the desk
all night. You must've hit your
head good. You want me to call an
ambulance?

Andy looks around the lobby, shakes his head.

The young clerk helps him up.

YOUNG DESK CLERK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You sure you don't want an
ambulance? You're lookin' a little
wobbly, man.

Andy look above the front door at a large framed picture-
Of the staff the day the Cecil opened-

12/20/1924

Right at the center is Frank.

YOUNG DESK CLERK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
You good?

EXT. CECIL - NIGHT

Andy steps onto the sidewalk in front of the hotel.

Everything is back to normal.

Cars and people in the street.

Police activity down the way.

Andy walks across the road and gets in his car.

He looks back at the hotel-

The neon Cecil Marquee stretching into the night sky.

Andy digs into his satchel and pulls out his old beat up tape
recorder.

He fiddles with the warn buttons.

INT. MUSIC HALL - NIGHT

Andy stands in the back.

Brittany plays the violin on stage.

He scans the crowd-

He and Amanda spot each other at the same time.

She has a puzzled look on her face.

Andy holds up a gallon of milk-

Mouths, *I'm sorry.*

She smiles.

Andy goes back to watching Brittany.

INT. HOME OFFICE, ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Andy sits in front of his laptop, a fresh newspaper template.

He hits rewind on his tape recorder-

The wheels spin for a beat, then stop.

He takes a pen in his other hand, ready to jot down notes.

Hits play.

There's static briefly, and then something he wasn't expecting.

DEREK (O.S.)

Hey, dad. It's Derek. Obviously.

Shocked, Andy drops his pen and hits stop on the recorder.

He's not sure what to do next.

Beat.

He takes another breath and hits play.

DEREK (CONT'D)

I can't believe you still have this old thing. Actually, yeah I do. I don't think you get rid of anything.

Andy smiles.

DEREK (CONT'D)

I remember when I got it for you for Christmas. I saw it at the store with mom. Clark Kent had one, so my dad had to have one too. Because he was my Superman.

Andy can hear the shakiness in Derek's voice, and his eyes tear up.

He bites his tongue, trying not to cry.

DEREK (CONT'D)
I'm glad you kept it. I have something that's really hard to tell you. And I can't do it... I can't do it in person, so I'll do it through this, like you were right here.

Andy rests his head in his hand.

DEREK (CONT'D)
Dad, I'm struggling. A lot. And I'm scared to talk to you about it. I'm afraid you'd think I'm weak or something. Which is ridiculous, I know. But there's these voices that tell me all kinds of horrible things about myself. And I haven't known what to do... But, I think I found a way out.

INT. ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Andy stares at the basement door.

DEREK
I'm sorry, for all the hurt I'm going to cause. To you. And mom. I just can't take it anymore. I can't hide from it.

INT. BASEMENT, ANDY'S HOUSE - DAY

Andy steps down into his real basement for the first time since Derek's death.

DEREK
But I want you to know that it's nothing you guys did. It was never anything you did or didn't do. You have given me more than I could have ever asked for. You were always there for me.

Andy looks over at the area where Derek hung.

DEREK (CONT'D)
And I love you for it. I will always love you.

Sunlight beams in through the windows, a stark opposite to the darkness that had filled this room on that night.

INT. LOS ANGELES TIMES - DAY

Andy sits at his desk, gathering a few of his things.

DEREK

I am so thankful for the time we
got. And I wish I could find a way
that we could have more... here.

(beat)

I'm going to miss you so much.

He looks down the aisle to see Dan holding up a newspaper,
giving him a thumbs up before disappearing into his office.

DEREK (CONT'D)

But we'll see each other again...
someday.

(beat)

I love you, dad.

Andy finishes gathering his things and stands up from his
desk, revealing-

His article on the LA Times website-

*In Search of Monsters, I Faced My Own: My Night at the Cecil
Hotel*

INT. ANDY'S CAR - DAY

Andy sits, staring out the windshield of his car.

He gives himself a moment-

Reflecting on all that has happened.

He reaches over and scoops something off the passenger seat.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Andy steps out of the car with a bouquet of flowers.

He looks out at the rows of gravestones.

And then makes his way towards his son's.

THE END