

EPIDEMIC

Written by

Katrina Valaike

FADE FROM BLACK.

EXT. RUNNING TRAIL NEAR RIVER - DAWN

SURVIVOR is running down the trail, fearfully looking behind them every so often.

While approaching the railroad support beam, which allows the track to go over the river, there is a man who steps out from behind the beam, hands hidden behind his back. Survivor is clearly not expecting to see him, stopping dead in their tracks and hesitating on running away.

SURVIVOR

Y-You?

Beat.

SURVIVOR (CONT'D)

I thought...

AGENT 1

You lost him, not me. And he doesn't appreciate losing clientele in this fashion.

AGENT 1 reveals that he is holding a pistol and shoots him immediately.

SFX: The SHOT from a pistol.

AGENT 1 (CONT'D)

Pleasure doing business.

INT. CARTER HOUSE, KITCHEN - MORNING

CROSS FADE.

EMILY's bag is on the chair next to her as she has breakfast with her father, DAVID, with his briefcase on the table in front of the chair with Emily's bag. David is looking through the daily newspaper.

DAVID

You ready for exams this week?

EMILY

As ready as I'll ever be.

DAVID

There's nothing to worry about.  
You'll do fine.

Emily stands up, smiling. AMY walks down the steps into the kitchen, putting in her earrings.

Beat.

Emily leaves the table with her empty coffee cup to make herself another cup of coffee.

AMY

You trying to give our daughter the pep talk of the century?

DAVID

Perhaps.

Emily gives a weak smile as David moves onto the next section of the paper. Emily chooses a K-cup before putting it in the holder of the Keurig.

DAVID (CONT'D)

She's got a Chemistry exam today.  
I'm trying to not have her all stressed out.

Emily turns on the Keurig and watches her parents while waiting on her coffee.

AMY

You're being extremely optimistic right now, David.

DAVID

What's wrong with that?

AMY

It might come back to bite her in the butt.

David takes a sip of his coffee, directing his attention to a story at the bottom of the paper.

EMILY

(teasing)  
Alright, mom.

Emily's coffee is done, so she pours some creamer into her finished cup of coffee. Amy sits down at the table, Emily returns with her coffee.

AMY

You have everything ready for class?

David turns the page of the paper.

EMILY

Even ready for the dreaded midterm exam today in Chem.

AMY

I wish you all the best.

Emily gives another weak smile.

David picks up the paper off the table.

DAVID

Looks like there are more cases of that virus being admitted to the intensive care ward of St. Maria. Still no way of knowing what causes it.

Turns the page.

DAVID (CONT'D)

It's currently believed that government officials are shirking off relevance that this is a real crisis.

AMY

Well, of course the government avoids everything that doesn't involve them.

DAVID

They don't want to cause an uproar over a health crisis. It should be the duty of scientists and doctors.

AMY

The CDC is a government entity, their job revolves around public health. Tell me how does this not involve the government.

The question lingers in the air for a few beats.

David stands while reaching for his briefcase and keys, visibly irritated.

DAVID

I should be going to work, just as Emily should be going to class.

David turns to leave.

Beat.



BACK TO SCENE

Emily takes a breath before going to take her seat.

DANA  
You alright?

EMILY  
Yeah. I'm- I'm fine.

DANA  
You don't look fine.

Emily takes a deep breath.

EMILY  
Alright, I feel like crap.

Emily briefly glances over to her classmates.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
(quiet)  
I can't keep anything down since  
last week and I haven't used the  
bathroom in the last twenty-four  
hours. Is that what you want to  
hear?

DANA stares at her.

Beat.

DANA  
Are- Are you just pulling my leg or  
are you serious?

EMILY  
Of course I'm being serious. Why  
would I tell you if I wasn't?

Two beats.

DANA  
(quiet)  
The epidemic was mentioned in my  
bio class lecture this morning, my  
professor had-

DANA (CONT'D)  
-said that she-

EMILY  
-and nothing came from it.  
It's nothing. I'm young and  
healthy. It's impossible that  
this is related.

Beat. Dana is straining to keep herself calm and collected.

DANA

My professor has connections. A former colleague says that the digestive system is one of the first systems to fail.

Two beats.

DANA (CONT'D)

Let's leave the conversation at that. Did you do the homework? It took me forever to figure out what she meant by-

SFX: Dana's voice is drowned out.

Emily stares off towards the front of the classroom, outer edges of screen become blurry.

The PROFESSOR walks in to start class. Emily breaks from thought.

Professor logs onto the computer at the podium.

PROFESSOR

Good afternoon, I hope that-

EMILY P.O.V. - THE PROFESSOR

looks visually distorted, blurry and dark edges.

Professor uses the remote to turn on the projector mounted from the ceiling.

PROFESSOR

-we're all excited for this upcoming fall break.

BACK TO SCENE

Professor pulls up the homework assignment as a PDF on the computer.

PROFESSOR

Let's turn in the homework before going over it. A couple of you have emailed me-

SFX: RUSSLING as homework is pulled from bags and PAPERS are passed to the front of the class.

PROFESSOR (CONT'D)  
To let me know how much of a doozy  
this one was.

Dana pulls out a piece of paper from her bag and puts it in front of Emily.

Emily takes it from her to examine it more closely a party invitation. It was happening tonight.

Putting the invitation onto the table, Emily thinks about it for a moment before going through her bag.

She takes out her pen and writes onto the invitation.

EMILY  
(writing)  
Maybe.

Emily hands back the invitation.

EXT. CARTER HOUSE, FRONT DOOR - MIDAFTERNOON

Dana is at the front door and rings the doorbell. A few beats. Emily opens the door.

EMILY  
I wasn't sure if I was going  
tonight.

Dana appears dejected by the statement.

DANA  
Oh, I thought that you were joking.  
Why not?

Emily shrugs it off.

EMILY  
I just feel like crap. Can I take a  
raincheck?

DANA  
Not happening.

EMILY  
Alright, fine.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT - DUSK

Emily and Dana walk into the party. Conversations and drinks are everywhere, and food is on the counter.



DANA

I hope you don't mind me dragging you out to this party tonight.

DANA (CONT'D)

(hushed)

Oh, look! Is that Trevor Milson?

Both of their attention turns to TREVOR, looking at him from afar.

EMILY

I take it that the name has significance?

DANA

He's the star quarterback of the football team.

Emily rubs her temple, giving a small smile.

EMILY

Only you would know that.

DANA

He's also in the honor's program and a member of a fraternity.

Emily coughs into hand. SARAH is looking around to see who made it to the party.

EMILY

Which one?

Dana isn't paying any attention to Emily. Emily coughs up blood onto her hand, not flinching.

DANA

Oh it's-

Turns back to Emily and notices the blood.

DANA (CONT'D)

Are you okay?

EMILY

Oh, I'm fine. Just need to wash this off.

Emily walks into the bathroom and washes her hands. Emily's hands have been washed but the sink remains on. Sarah comes up from behind to grab Emily by the wrist while drying her hands, dragging her out of sight.



EMILY

I don't have options. My options  
are being fine or being  
quarantined.

SARAH

You have my option.

EMILY

What is it then?!

SARAH

Running for your fucking life.  
Chances are that neither of us have  
a tomorrow to look forward to.

EMILY

How am I supposed to trust you? You  
could be some snitch for all I  
know!

SARAH

I know what you're going through,  
Emily, you just need to trust me on  
this and-

EMILY

I can't unless you prove it to me!

Sarah takes off her shirt to show how her body is  
disintegrating; collarbone and shoulders are covered in  
rashes, abdomen is a sickly shade of blueish-green.

SARAH

I've had this for months, maybe  
even a year.

Sarah throws her shirt onto the bed.

SARAH (CONT'D)

You've had it for maybe a month or  
two.

Sarah sits on the edge of the bed, near her shirt, and looks  
down at the floor.

A few beats. Sarah looks back at Emily.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I can't guarantee how long either  
of us have.

A few beats.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
 We can't let anyone know we're  
 leaving.

Sarah gives a sad smile, beat, before getting up.

EXT. JACK'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah goes over to open up the window of the apartment.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Emily is watching Sarah push out the window screen nervously  
 biting her thumb. Emily gasps at-  
 SFX: The sound of KNOCKING on the door.

DANA (O.S.)  
 Emily? You in there?

Emily looks to Sarah. Two beats. Sarah motions for her to  
 respond.

EMILY  
 Y- Yeah. G-Give me a minute, I  
 started my period.

DANA (O.S.)  
 Some strange men-  
 SFX: A STRUGGLE starts on the other side of the door.

Beat. Sarah is the first to go for the window.

EXT. JACK'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah pulls herself out of the window.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

The door to the bedroom slams open revealing Dana being  
 restrained by Agent 1. AGENT 2 is in the doorway and holding  
 a student ID card.

Beat.

Agent 2 lunges toward Emily as she goes for the open window.  
 He manages to grab Emily and pin her against on the floor.

EXT. JACK'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Sarah flees from the apartment.

INT. JACK'S APARTMENT, BEDROOM - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Emily is lifted onto her feet and dragged out of the room.

INT. GOVERNMENT VAN, BACKSEAT - DUSK

Emily is sitting in the right seat of the van, blindfolded and bound at the hands.

Three beats.

The left back door is opened. Beat.

Sarah, also blindfolded and bound at the hands, is guided into the van by Agent 2 and buckled into her seat. The door is slammed shut.

INT. GOVERNMENT VAN - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

Agent 1 is driving, and Agent 2 is in the passenger seat, Agent 1 glances in the rearview mirror.

AGENT 1

Both of you know the current situation that you're in.

AGENT 2

Letting us know who else might have been infected is of great importance.

Beat. Agent 2 looks into the back of the van.

AGENT 2 (CONT'D)

Don't put half of the city in quarantine to save a few people that you've been close to.

SARAH

We don't even know how we got it. You expect us to know who else would be susceptible?

AGENT 2

You know what it's like more than we do. Think of it-

Beat.

AGENT 2 (CONT'D)  
-as a favor. It would take our  
department fewer resources to  
confirm the illness if you give us  
a lead on where to start.

A few beats.

EMILY  
Deal.

SARAH  
What?

EMILY  
We have to agree with them.

AGENT 1  
She's a smart one.

SARAH  
You're being suicidal. This is the  
discussion of isolated quarantine  
over independent livelihood, for  
people who might not even get  
tested for this.

AGENT 2  
The other is also a smart one.

A few beats.

AGENT 2 (CONT'D)  
We'll make sure that your loyalty  
has been repaid, Emily.

Another few beats.

EXT. BOAT RAMP - DUSK

The government van with the two Agents, Sarah, and Emily comes down to the boat ramp. The EXECUTIONER is clothed from head to toe, making it nearly impossible to determine his identity, and is carrying a pistol.

INT. GOVERNMENT VAN, BOAT RAMP - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

The Agents aren't responsive to seeing The Executioner, especially with the "mysterious" identity.

AGENT 1  
Looks like he beat us here.

AGENT 2  
Wonder where he parked his car, I  
don't see it around here.

EXT. BOAT RAMP - DUSK - CONTINUOUS

The van stops close to The Executioner and the Agents get  
out, opening the doors to the back.

AGENT 2  
Alright, time to get out.

Agent 1 goes into the back of the van and practically drags  
Emily and Sarah out onto the boat ramp. Both still bound at  
the wrist and blindfolded.

SARAH  
What's going on?

AGENT 1  
We're going to be having a nice  
chat with our-

Beat. Agent 2 takes over guiding both over to a small  
clearing.

AGENT 1 (CONT'D)  
-friend over here.

AGENT 2  
I'm sure that both of you-

Beat as Agent 2 forces Sarah to kneel.

AGENT 2 (CONT'D)  
-would enjoy the conversation-

Beat as Agent 2 forces Emily to kneel.

AGENT 2 (CONT'D)  
-that you'll have with him.

AGENT 1  
The two of us should be going. I've  
been told that this is meant to be-

Beat.

AGENT 1 (CONT'D)  
-a private conversation.

The Agents get back into the van, starting the engine.

EMILY  
They're leaving?

The van returns the way it came.

SARAH  
That was the plan all along.

Beat.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Was it not?

EMILY  
Wh- Why are you asking-

SARAH  
I wasn't asking you, Emily.

Two beats.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
Please. Make it painless.

Beat.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
I-

Beat.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
-I suffered enough.

The Executioner does not hesitate in taking Sarah's life.  
SFX: The SHOT from a pistol.

Sarah falls over as Emily flinches and starts sobbing.

EMILY  
Sarah?

Beat.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Sarah?!

Beat.



EMILY (CONT'D)  
 Please, just take me. I can't live  
 like this. The only person who  
 understood me is gone.

Beat.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
 I would like an answer. I would  
 like to see the face of the man who  
 is about to take my life.

The Executioner allows this, carefully taking off her  
 blindfold.

The Executioner takes off his mask, framed in such a way as  
 not to reveal his identity to the camera.

THE EXECUTIONER P.O.V. - EMILY STARES AT HIM FOR SEVERAL  
 BEATS.

EMILY  
 Go on.

She closes her eyes.

FADE TO BLACK.

SFX: Takes one final BREATH.

Beat.  
 SFX: The SHOT from a pistol.

BACK TO SCENE INT. OFFICE - DAY

FADE FROM BLACK.

The Executioner is walking into work, when he runs into The  
 SUPERVISOR while in the break room. The camera follows him  
 from behind, obscuring all identifying features.

SUPERVISOR  
 Oh, Carter! I personally wanted to  
 apologize for the other day. I  
 wasn't expecting that outcome to  
 happen in the slightest, all of the  
 paperwork I filed involved only one  
 of those girls and..

The Supervisor looks off to the side as if losing the train  
 of thought. Looks back to the Executioner.

SUPERVISOR (CONT'D)

And we should applaud you for having both the mental and moral capacity to go through with it, especially in the circumstances surrounding this job.

The Executioner nods.

SUPERVISOR (CONT'D)

I'll be letting you get back to work, but I want to promise you that I'm going to avoid another such circumstance.

FADE TO BLACK.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

SFX: CELL PHONE VIBRATES over the black screen.

FADE IN.

Emily's cell phone is sitting on a desk that is not currently being used, notifying that "Dana Shepherd" is calling.

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Dana is sitting outside of the library on her phone, hoping that Emily picks up her phone.

INT. OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The call goes to voicemail.

EXT. LIBRARY - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Dana lets out a heavy sigh before coughing slightly.

DANA

Kind of figured that you wouldn't pick up. I heard that you were admitted to St. Maria last night. Why didn't you tell me that you got sick from something at the party? I would've drove you there myself.

Beat.

DANA (CONT'D)

I hope that you start feeling better soon, I'll see if I can come visit this afternoon. Not sure if I'll be allowed into the intensive care section of the hospital, but I'll see what I can do.

Two beats.

DANA (CONT'D)

Oh, I was meaning to ask.. How quickly did your symptoms flare up? Just curious is all.

Beat.

DANA (CONT'D)

Hope to see you soon, Emily.

Dana hangs up the phone, looking at it for a beat and sighing before putting it back into her pocket.

INT. OFFICE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Emily's phone displays that there is a new voicemail before turning itself off.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

CREDITS