

SOMEONE IS WAITING

Written by

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**1 INT/EXT. MEMORIES - CONTINUOUS 1**

Flashes of JULIANA's past: her FATHER, DUSTIN MILLER, towering over her younger self, his voice sharp, his demeanor cold.

INTERCUT WITH:

YOUNG JULIANA playing alone on the floor. Her father sprawls unconscious on the couch, a liquor bottle dangling from limp fingers. She tugs at him for attention—nothing.

Rapid, fractured glimpses of FLASHBACKS 1-3, never fully formed.

CUT TO:

**2 INT. JULIANA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 2**

Juliana, early 20s, sits at her desk, the glow of a BLANK COMPUTER SCREEN washing her face pale.

She drums her fingers, taps faster, then lets her forehead drop onto the desk.

She types a few words, freezes, then backspaces everything. She sinks into her hand with a heavy, irritated sigh.

Her PHONE RINGS. She deflates and answers.

JULIANA

Hello?

PUBLISHER

(over the phone)

Hello, Juliana, it's Mary Steinfeld. I just wanted to see how the book is coming.

JULIANA

Well, it's coming.

Juliana looks at her blank screen.

JULIANA (CONT'D)

Yeah, I got nothing.

PUBLISHER

(sighs)

Look, Juliana, you've got a gift. You have a way with words that speak to people. I just don't want to see it go quiet, okay?

(beat)  
 But the draft's due in three days.  
 Can you do that? If not, I'm afraid  
 I'm going to have to let you go.

Juliana's face falls. But she quickly bounces back and says:

JULIANA  
 Of course, I understand. Thank you,  
 Mary.

PUBLISHER  
 My pleasure, dear. Have a great  
 day.

We hear the BEEP as the phone call ends. Juliana's shoulders slump. She presses a palm to her face.

A dust-coated Bible sits beside her. She drags a finger across the cover, revealing a clean streak, then wrinkles her nose.

She eyes the blank screen again. A louder, more dramatic groan escapes as she lets her forehead thunk onto the desk.

JULIANA  
 (muffled)  
 Why is my brain so empty?

CUT TO:

**3 INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING**

**3**

Juliana shuffles in wearing pajama pants, her hair barely contained in a messy bun. Her eyes are half-open.

JEREMIAH, early 20s, works the counter, a simple cross resting against his shirt.

She joins the short line. As the person ahead of her leaves, Jeremiah steps up to the register and takes in her disheveled state-familiar territory.

JEREMIAH  
 Rough night?

JULIANA  
 Yeah. My deadline is in three days,  
 and I've still got nothing.

JEREMIAH  
 Ooh, I can't imagine.  
 (beat)

So you want your usual then?

JULIANA  
Yes, please, but with extra  
caffeine.

JEREMIAH  
(grins)  
Coming right up.

CUT TO:

4 INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATER

4

Juliana is seated at a table near the window, then Jeremiah brings her order to her.

JULIANA  
Thank you.  
(takes a sip)

JEREMIAH  
(sitting across from her)  
So, you have writer's block?

JULIANA  
(sarcastically)  
Hmm, is it that obvious?

JEREMIAH  
(pointing to her mouth;  
foam is on her lip)  
Kind of.

She realizes what he's pointing to, then her eyes go wide and she wipes it off. Jeremiah chuckles.

JULIANA  
It's not funny. I literally cannot  
force myself to write. And if I  
can't write, then what's the point  
of any of this? It seems  
meaningless.

JEREMIAH  
Jules, don't say that—

JULIANA  
I'm serious, Jere. If I can't tell  
a story, then why am I even here?

Jeremiah reaches across the table, touching her hand gently,  
not creepily.

JEREMIAH

(sincere)

You're here because you're meant to be, because you have a story to tell.

JULIANA

Have you not been listening? *What story?* I literally have no ideas. No inspiration. No direction.

JEREMIAH

Then write what you know—write *your* story.

JULIANA

My story? There's nothing to my story—it's too sad. No one would read it. People don't want to cry anymore, they want to laugh.

JEREMIAH

(quiet, knowing)

You'd be surprised. It just might change someone's life.

Juliana leans back, lost in thought. A FLASH of her father's face slices through her mind.

JERE's voice pulls her out—

JEREMIAH

Well, I better get back to work. Good luck on your book. I can't wait to read it.

She watches him walk away, then whispers:

JULIANA

Thanks.

She takes a sip of her coffee, then:

CUT TO:

**5 INT. JULIANA'S APARTMENT - DAY**

**5**

Back at her desk, Juliana sets down her coffee and stares at the unblinking screen.

MONTAGE — TIME PASSING:

- typing

- deleting
- pacing
- burying her face in her hands
- trying again

Clock reads: 11:45 PM.

JULIANA  
And I'm still empty.

Then her phone CHIMES. She looks, picking up the phone-it's a text message from an unknown number.

It reads:

YOU ARE NOT EMPTY.

Her eyes go wide. She quickly swipes it off, terrified.

Then suddenly, a door SLAMS. Juliana gasps, remembering:

**FLASHBACK 1 – The Door:**

**6 INT. JULIANA'S HOUSE - NIGHT**

**6**

YOUNG JULIANA (8) clutches a worn STUFFED ANIMAL as she stands in the corner of a room. Her father, DUSTIN, looms over her, red-faced, angry, and drunk.

He grabs her arm, jerking her upwards. She starts screaming, trying to resist as he starts dragging her down the hall.

YOUNG JULIANA  
No, no! Daddy, please no! I'm  
sorry! I'm sorry!

DUSTIN  
(venomous)  
You never learn. You never shut up.

He forces young Juliana into her room, then SLAMS the door shut. She's still screaming the whole time.

We see a quick INSERT SHOT of her stuffed animal lying on the ground outside the door as her screams echo into:

**7 INT. JULIANA'S APARTMENT - PRESENT**

**7**

Juliana comes out of the flashback, shaken.

Then her phone chimes again. A text from the same mysterious number:

WRITE THE STORY ONLY YOU CAN TELL.

Still creeped out, she remembers what Jeremiah said to her:  
"Write *your* story."

JULIANA  
(whispers to herself)  
No, no. It doesn't matter now. It's over.

Another message:

YOUR VOICE MATTERS, BECAUSE IT'S NOT OVER.

Then another:

REMEMBER. REMEMBER WHAT HE SAID.

JULIANA  
No.

**FLASHBACK 2 – THE WORDS:**

**8 INT. KITCHEN – MORNING**

**8**

Young Juliana sits at the table, humming and writing. Dustin stumbles in, hungover, as he opens the fridge. Young Juliana tugs on his shirt.

YOUNG JULIANA  
Daddy, look.  
(shows him the paper)  
I wrote this for you.

Dustin, clearly uninterested, grabs the paper. He scoffs and turns his nose up. He shoves it back to her.

DUSTIN  
That's terrible.  
(sharp beat as he grabs a  
beer from the fridge)  
You're a little nuisance, you know.  
You'll never amount to anything.

We see Young Juliana's dejected little face as Dustin abruptly walks away.

**CUT TO:**

**9 INT. JULIANA'S APARTMENT - PRESENT**

9

Juliana is trembling, near tears, but fights them off. Her eyes start to become heavy.

Another chime:

YOU WERE NEVER WHAT HE CALLED YOU.

Then another comes:

YOUR SCARS DON'T DEFINE YOU.

Juliana's eyes become even heavier as she stares at the bright screen. She begins to fall asleep. Then:

**FLASHBACK 3 - THE BRUISE:****10 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT**

10

A beer bottle falls to the ground and shatters, Dustin shouting offscreen. Young Juliana hides under the table, trembling and clutching her stuffed animal.

DUSTIN  
(slurred and angry)  
You make me sick! Look at me when  
I'm talking to you!

He kicks the table leg, she gasps, dropping her stuffed animal.

SILENCE.

Then we hear the JINGLE of his belt buckle. The final shot we see is Juliana's terrified face as her punishment looms nearer.

CUT TO:

**11 INT. JULIANA'S APARTMENT - MORNING**

11

Juliana jolts awake at her desk, breath uneven, face damp.

She swallows back nausea, then glances at the clock: 8:18 AM.

She lets her head fall onto the keyboard, releasing a dramatic "Ugh."

CUT TO:

## 12 INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

12

Juliana stumbles in, even more ruffled, ignoring the curious stares.

She approaches the counter.

BARISTA  
Hey, what can I get you?

JULIANA  
Is Jeremiah here?

BARISTA  
(confused)  
I'm sorry?

JULIANA  
Jeremiah. He works here.

BARISTA  
I'm sorry, but no one named  
Jeremiah works here.

JULIANA  
(insistent)  
But I just saw him yesterday  
morning. I see him here all the  
time.  
(she sees him wiping off  
a table)  
Look, he's right there.

BARISTA  
(looks and sees nothing,  
disturbed by Juliana)  
There's no one there.

Juliana looks again. He has disappeared. Her hands start shaking.

JULIANA  
(whispers to herself)  
What?

BARISTA  
Are you on something?

JULIANA  
No. I swear I just saw him  
yesterday.

BARISTA  
(quietly)

Yeah, you're definitely on something.

(beat)

I'm sorry, do you want some coffee?

Juliana, dazed and confused, doesn't respond. The world blurs around her as she starts out of the coffee shop. Then her phone buzzes, and she stops.

It's from the same unknown number and reads:

YOU DON'T KNOW THE WHOLE STORY.

She glares, even more puzzled than before.

Then another comes:

DON'T BE AFRAID OF THE TRUTH, JULIANA.

A beat, then another:

SOMEONE IS WAITING FOR YOUR STORY.

Juliana has had enough, and finally decides to reply:

REALLY? WHO?

A pause as the dots appear. Then:

TURN AROUND.

She looks up and gasps, sensing a PRESENCE behind her. She slowly turns around, revealing Jeremiah behind her. He is looking at her in a way he never has before, something that feels otherworldly. Juliana now realizes he's not real.

JULIANA

Who are you? Why am I the only one who can see you?

JEREMIAH

Because you survived, Juliana. I didn't.

JULIANA

Survived what?

JEREMIAH

There's only one person who knows the truth.

Juliana thinks for a moment, then rapid flashes of her father bombard her senses—

She lifts her head. Jeremiah is gone.

Fear gives way to steely resolve.

CUT TO:

**13 INT. PRISON - DAY**

**13**

Juliana, composed but tense, marches through the prison. We see her approach the visiting windows.

A beat as she takes a deep breath, then sits down.

Then, Dustin Miller, early 40s, shackled in an orange jumpsuit, comes in and sits down behind the shield.

DUSTIN

Juliana. How are you?

JULIANA

(leaning forward,  
determined)

I'm not here for that. I'm here for  
the truth.

(beat. breaking:)

I wanna know... I wanna know why you  
treated me the way you did. Why  
were you always telling me I was a  
mistake.

DUSTIN

I was drunk, Juliana. I didn't know  
what I was saying.

JULIANA

Don't lie. Sometimes you were  
sober.

(beat)

Now tell me the truth.

DUSTIN

(gravely)

You really wanna know?

JULIANA

Yes. I wouldn't be here otherwise.

Dustin hesitates, looking off into the distance. Then:

DUSTIN

(sighs)

I was nineteen when I met your mother at a college party. We got really drunk and slept together that night. But I never saw her again. I didn't even know she was pregnant until I received a call from the hospital telling me she had a baby and abandoned it. They were only able to find me because of a DNA test.

(haunting beat, near breaking:)

When I got there, they told me there had been two of you, but one of you didn't survive, because she terminated him a few months earlier. You survived because he was hiding you. Your brother saved you. The doctor even said it was a miracle that were the perfect little baby.

Juliana is in tears now, but not sobbing.

JULIANA

(voice thick with emotion)

Then why did you treat me the way you did?

DUSTIN

I felt responsible for your mother's choice—what she did tore me apart. So I drowned myself until I became a man I never wanted to become—a man that started to think that maybe she was right to make that choice. And for the longest time, I believed it, even after they took you away from me.

(a tense beat; Juliana doesn't want to listen anymore)

I didn't understand why you survived... until I read your first book.

Juliana perks up, surprise in her eyes.

JULIANA

You read my book?

DUSTIN

I did. It changed everything I ever thought about you... and God. You were never a mistake, Juliana.

(leaning in)

Which is why I want you to know there's nothing I regret more than how I treated you. I'm not gonna ask you to forgive me—I don't deserve it. But not a day goes by that I don't think about you—or your brother.

Juliana stares straight ahead, taking this in as a tear rolls down her cheek. She sniffs.

**14 INT. JULIANA'S APARTMENT — NIGHT**

**14**

Juliana enters her "writing room," the weight of all she learned on her shoulders. She's completely broken as she grabs her Bible, trembling. She leans her back against the door, breathing heavily.

She glances up, then at the Bible in her hands. She lets it fall to the ground as she begins sobbing. She slides down the door, covering her face with her hands.

A beat as she sobs. Then she looks up, face stained with tears.

JULIANA

(completely broken)

Why? Why am I here and not him? Why didn't she want us? Why didn't he survive?

She can barely say the last word—she's so overcome with grief. Then, she remembers what Jeremiah said to her earlier: "You survived, Juliana. I didn't."

It echoes in her mind as everything starts to come full circle. She gasps, covering her mouth and leaning back against the door.

She experiences flashes the MEMORIES she has hanging out with Jeremiah at the coffee shop, including them smiling and laughing, eating together, and just hanging out.

Then we come back to her shocked face. She squeezes out a single tear.

JULIANA (V.O.)

At that moment, I realized Jeremiah was my brother. He was the part of me that was missing. His blood was crying out to me, pleading with me to tell our story.

Juliana glances at the Bible next to her, wide open. She picks it up: it's opened to Jeremiah, with the highlighted verse:

Jeremiah 1:5, "I knew you before I formed you in your mother's womb."

Juliana contemplates this verse. Another tear slides down her cheek as she remembers who she is, smiling as she internally surrenders her life to God once more.

Now inspired, she gets up, Bible in hand, ready to write. She begins as her voiceover continues and we INTERCUT all the things that follow, which include the success of her book (book signings, talks, etc.).

JULIANA (V.O.)(CONT'D)

It was a hard story to tell. But I knew who I was now. I knew I survived for a reason—I had a purpose beyond my wildest dreams.

(beat)

But I couldn't help but wonder what Jeremiah's purpose would have been if he had lived—if any of them had lived. At first, I believed he'd appeared to me just to be my angel—to guide me and encourage me as I walked through life. But that wasn't the case at all.

**15 INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY**

**15**

Juliana is sitting by herself on her laptop at the coffee shop. Then, KIRSTYN, late teens, comes up to her.

KIRSTYN

Excuse me, are you Juliana Miller?  
The author of (book title)?

JULIANA

Yes, I am.

KIRSTYN

Wow, it's so amazing to meet you. I just wanted to say your story changed my life - I wouldn't be here if my friend hadn't encouraged me to read it.

(gently touches her slightly protruding abdomen)

And neither would she.

Juliana sits, speechless.

JULIANA (V.O.)

And as she told me *her* story, I realized just how important *my* story was in her life.

She glances up—Jeremiah stands nearby, smiling.

JULIANA (V.O.)(CONT'D)

And that he'd appeared to me for that very reason—to encourage me to tell our story *for the one*. Because she was the one who was waiting... And so was I.

She smiles back. He nods, the sadness of a farewell in his eyes—

But not for long.

FADE OUT

**THE END.. IS ONLY THE BEGINNING.**