

Composure

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1 EXT. DARK STREET - A COLD NIGHT

1

A MAN walks alone, carrying some notebooks and loose papers. He walks with a purpose, dressed mostly in black. This is CLAY COOPER.

CLAY
(singing)
CONCERN ON MY MIND
A LOST STATE OF TIME
WE'VE BEEN FOLLOWED
CONSTANTLY
WHERE DO WE TURN NOW?

Clay walks into--

2 INT. LIBRARY - SAME TIME, ETC.

2

--a library, where he passes by acquaintances, nodding and giving a slight smile. Something is obviously wrong. He heads downstairs to the archives and meets up with his GIRLFRIEND and OTHER FRIEND. This is RACHEL TURNER and SARAH LANE, respectively. Rachel is sitting at a table covered in various papers, photographs, newspaper clippings, etc. Sarah stands at a microfilm projector looking at old magazines.

SARAH
Hey, Clay.

CLAY
(walking past Sarah to Rachel;
talking to S.)
Hey, how are you?

SARAH
You know.

CLAY
(now next to Rachel; kisses
her)
Hey there.

RACHEL
I missed you.

CLAY
I missed you, too.
(singing)
WHERE DO WE STAND NOW?

SARAH
 (handing Clay an opened
 letter)
 We got another one.

CLAY
 Shit.
 (takes letter)
 What does it say?
 (reads letter while S. and R.
 look at each other uneasily)

CUT TO:

CLOSE-UP of LETTER:
 "I saw your new hair cut Rachel. Its nice. I cant wait to
 see it in person."

Clay looks up at Rachel, alarmed.

CLAY (cont'd)
 Jesus Christ. Are you okay?

RACHEL
 I'm . . .
 (she trails off, avoiding eye
 contact and shaking)

Clay sighs hopelessly and gives a pleading look to Sarah,
 who shrugs in reply.

CLAY
 (together w/ S.; singing)
 THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE

SARAH
 (together w/ C.; singing)
 THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE

CLAY
 Did the police ever call you back?

Rachel laughs at this, still shaking.

SARAH
 What the fuck do you think?

CLAY
 Okay.

Clay closes his eyes, sighs, and then looks back at Rachel,
 who looks back at him with empty eyes.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: "Composure"

TITLE: "directed by Brad Baker"

3 INT. LIBRARY - MOMENTS AFTER WHERE LAST SCENE LEFT OFF 3

Clay, Rachel, and sarah all stand over the paper-littered table; the letter they received is in the middle, surrounded by endless information.

SARAH

We'll have to find him ourselves.

Rachel nods at this; Clay gives them both a disapproving look.

CLAY

That's a stupid--

RACHEL

I'm scared, Clay. You're not the one getting these letters. You're the one who's not. The . . . the only one, actually.

A pause between all three of them.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

It's just . . . I'm just freaked out. I guess. I don't know. We've been here for hours and haven't come up with anything. It's been a month. A month of this shit. I can't take it.

She sighs and puts her head in her hands; Clay puts his hand on her shoulder.

CLAY

Come on, let's get some air. You could use some time--

SARAH

Guys. Look.

Sarah slowly holds up a letter; Clay's name is written on the outside.

SARAH (CONT'D)

(to Clay)

It's for you.

Clay takes the letter from her and opens it. Inside is a picture of him asleep; written on the picture is: "I didnt forget you"

4 INT. CLAY AND RACHEL'S APARTMENT - THE KITCHEN - THE NEXT MORNING 4

Clay sits at the breakfast table, glancing at a paper and drinking coffee. Rachel walks in still pulling on a shirt; she walks to the counter and starts to make toast. Clay looks up at her.

CLAY
How are you?

RACHEL
I'm fine. Good. How are you?

CLAY
I'm alright.

A beat passes. Clay watches Rachel butter a piece of bread.

CLAY (CONT'D)
Toast?

RACHEL
What? Oh, yeah.

Rachel gives him a quick smile and turns back around. Clay puts down the paper and looks into the air.

CLAY	RACHEL
So what are you going to--	What time did you say that--

CLAY
You first.

RACHEL
No, you.

CLAY
I was just wondering what you were going to do--

The toast pops out of the toaster; they both jump. Rachel drops her knife. They look at each other and awkwardly laugh the moment away.

RACHEL
Sorry, I'm just--

CLAY
Yeah, I know. Me too.

5 EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

5

Sarah sits in her car. She is excitedly talking on the phone. Clay and Rachel pull up next to her. Sarah gets out and walks over to their window.

CLAY
Why are we here?

SARAH
Well, I just got off the phone with my friend Emily from Investigation. At the paper. She's trying to help us out so we have to meet her in half an hour.

RACHEL
How much have you told her?

SARAH
Nothing. Not yet.

CLAY
Good. We'll follow you.

SARAH
Okay.

Sarah walks back over to her car and drives away. Clay and Rachel exchange nervous looks.

RACHEL
Do you think this'll do any good?

CLAY
I don't know.

6 INT. NEWSPAPER OFFICE - A WHILE LATER

6

A woman sits at a cluttered desk, writing down information; she is completely lost in her work. This is EMILY PEREZ.

Clay, Rachel, and Sarah walk in.

SARAH
 (singing)
 EMILY HOW ARE YOU

EMILY
 Good.

SARAH
 (singing)
 THIS IS CLAY AND RACHEL

EMILY
 Hi, how are you?

CLAY
 Good.

RACHEL
 Fine.

SARAH
 (singing)
 THANKS FOR TRY'NG TO HELP US

EMILY
 (singing)
 I'LL DO WHAT I CAN
 (to Clay, still singing)
 TELL ME, WHAT'S THE PROBLEM

CLAY
 The letters.

EMILY
 (singing, nods)
 I'VE DONE THE BEST I COULD

Emily picks up a file folder filled with a few of the letters the trio have received.

RACHEL
 And?

EMILY
 (singing)
 YOUR MAN HAS DONE HIS HOMEWORK
 AS WELL AS HE CAN

CLAY
 So, what, you can't find him?

EMILY
Did I say that?

A beat.

EMILY (CONT'D)
No. I found an address. It's all I
could get.

Emily hands Clay a piece of paper with an address scrawled on it. He puts it in his pocket and shoots Sarah a thankful glance.

CLAY
Let's go.

RACHEL
(to Emily; singing)
THANKS SO MUCH FOR HELPING

SARAH
(to Emily)
I'll see you Tuesday.

EMILY
(to Rachel, then Sarah)
It's nothing. Okay.

CLAY
(singing)
WE'LL BE SEEING YOU AGAIN SOON

Clay, Rachel, and Sarah leave.

7 EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - LATER THAT AFTERNOON

7

Sarah, Rachel, and Clay slowly approach the front door.

RACHEL
(hesitating and stopping
before reaching the door)
I can't.

Clay and Sarah stop and turn around.

CLAY
(walks to Rachel; hugs her)
Rachel?

RACHEL
I can't go in there.

SARAH
We have to.

CLAY
This guy has been torturing us for
the past month.

RACHEL
Exactly! What if he's--

SARAH
He doesn't know we're here. He's
not expecting us.

RACHEL
Well, he's known everything else
about us so far. What if he wanted
us to find him?

A beat.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
I'm . . . I'm fucking scared, okay?

Rachel begins to sob.

SARAH
Rachel. Hey.

Rachel and Sarah embrace. Two beats; they let go.

SARAH (CONT'D)
(singing)
WE'RE SCARED
BUT WE'RE HERE TOGETHER

CLAY
(singing)
WE'LL BE OKAY
WE'LL END THIS TODAY

They walk to the door.

CLAY (CONT'D)
I'll knock.

Clay knocks on the door; there is no answer. Sarah begins to
look around.

RACHEL
Let's come back later.

CLAY

No. We need to find him.

Sarah's eyes land on a thick envelope near their feet.

SARAH

(pointing to the envelope)

Look.

The three of them stare at the envelope. After a few moments pass, Clay walks over to it and picks it up. Inside are three envelopes, each marked with their names and the words "READ IN PRIVATE". They each study the envelopes and each other, afraid to be the first to speak.

RACHEL

I--

She clears her throat.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

--I think we should read them together.

SARAH

No. I don't--I don't want to be part of this anymore. You stay the hell away from me.

Sarah walks back to her car, breathing unsteadily, and drives away. Rachel and Clay can only watch.

RACHEL

(gesturing to their envelopes)

Will you--

Clay slowly shakes his head and guides her back to the car. Rachel begins to sob as they drive away.

8

INT. CLAY/RACHEL'S BEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

8

Clay and Rachel lie in bed, breathing heavily, naked except for a sheet. They have just had sex. Clay reaches for Rachel, who pulls away and sits up, looking away from him. Clay rolls back over and holds back tears. Rachel gets up, goes into the bathroom, and closes the door.

CUT TO:

9 INT. SHOWER - MOMENTS LATER 9

Rachel cries in the shower.

INTERCUT WITH:

10 INT. BEDROOM - SAME TIME 10

Clay stares catatonic at the floor from the bed.

INTERCUT WITH:

11 INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - SAME TIME 11

Sarah is lying awake in bed. She hears a NOISE from down the hall. She slowly gets up, wrapped in a sheet, and walks towards the sound. She reaches a doorway. She turns on the light and sees a MASKED MAN standing right in front of her. She screams and--

--wakes up in bed. It had been a dream. She clutches her pillow and tries to fall back asleep.

12 CLAY AND RACHEL'S APARTMENT - THE NEXT AFTERNOON 12

Rachel sits at the dining table staring out the window. Clay is by the kitchen counter eating cereal.

CLAY

(to Rachel, slamming his bowl
on the counter)

What the fuck, Rachel!

RACHEL

(startled)

What?

CLAY

(singing)

YOU HAVEN'T SAID A WORD
TO ME ALL DAY
EVERY TIME I TRY
YOU LOOK AWAY
I KNOW THIS IS ROUGH
BUT GIVE ME A BREAK
DON'T LET IT GET TO YOU

RACHEL

Well, what else should I do? You
don't know what this is like. I
just. I had a bad night last night.

CLAY
Oh, thanks.

RACHEL
(sighs)
That's not what I meant.

CLAY
Then what?

RACHEL
You know damn well--

A knock at the door. Clay walks to the door, looks through the peep hole, and opens it. Sarah enters, clearly shaken.

CLAY
(suddenly concerned)
What is it? [beat] Another letter?

SARAH
(on the verge of tears)
A phone call.

A beat.

RACHEL
What?

Rachel moves towards Sarah, who is against the wall giving Clay and Rachel suspicious looks.

CLAY
What did he say?

RACHEL
What does it matter?

CLAY
Everything!

RACHEL
You don't give a shit, do you?

CLAY
What! Why the hell would you--

SARAH
(suddenly)
He knew I didn't read the letter!
He knew.

Sarah begins to sob and then tries to catch her breath. Rachel and Clay exchange glances.

SARAH (CONT'D)
 I'm so sick of this shit! [beat]
 Did you get a phone call?

Clay and Rachel simply stare at Sarah, who is looking more and more uneasy.

SARAH (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 Did you get a fucking call?

RACHEL
 No--

SARAH
 Fuck!

RACHEL
 (an attempt at consolation)
 Sarah, I--

SARAH
 (voice rising)
 No, don't . . . don't even try to
 be fucking sympathetic to me,
 Rachel! You have no idea what I--

CLAY
 Don't yell at us!

SARAH
 (hysterical)
 Stop acting so clueless! You two
 were the only ones there with me!
 One of you--

CLAY
 Get a hold of yourself!

Sarah begins to say something, then catches her breath. A beat before she speaks.

SARAH
 (singing)
 YOU'RE NOT THE ONE
 WHO LIVES ALONE
 FLINCHING AT CREAKS
 IN THE NIGHT
 YOU'RE NOT THE ONE
 WHO'S ON YOUR OWN
 SCARED THAT IT WON'T BE ALRIGHT

CLAY
 (singing)
 THAT DOESN'T MEAN
 EVERYTHING IS PERFECT FOR ME

Clay sighs; he's lost sight of talking reason into her.

CLAY (CONT'D)
 Go ahead and believe what you want
 to believe.

SARAH
 I'll just go.

RACHEL
 Sure, go ahead and walk out on us
 like you did before.
 (singing)
 YOU HAVE NO IDEA
 WHAT I'M GOING THROUGH
 IT'S SO MUCH EASIER
 FOR THE TWO OF YOU

CLAY
 (talking to himself,
 but in rhythm with the
 music; sim. w/ S. and
 R.)
 How can she think that I
 don't give a damn? Doesn't
 she see I'm doing the
 best I can? Why did she
 turn away from me last
 night? All I want to do
 is make things right.

SARAH
 (singing; sim. w/ C.
 and R.)
 YOU'RE NOT THE ONE
 WHO LIVES ALONE
 FLINCHING AT CREAKS
 IN THE NIGHT
 YOU'RE NOT THE ONE
 WHO'S ON YOUR OWN
 SCARED THAT IT WON'T BE
 ALRIGHT

RACHEL
 (singing; sim. w/ C.
 and S.)
 JUST LEAVE ME BE
 DON'T YOU SEE THE PAIN
 INSIDE OF ME

RACHEL (CONT'D)
 I CAN HARDLY BEAR THIS MOMENT

A long, long pause. They all exchange glances; slowly, the mood in the room changes.

CLAY
 (gently)
 Sarah. What did he say?

SARAH
 (after a pause)
 He wants to meet.

13 INT. CHRIS' CAR - A FEW HOURS LATER

13

Clay, Sarah, and Rachel are in a car; Clay is driving.
 Silence. They stop the car.

CLAY
 Well. Here we are.

SARAH
 Yeah.

RACHEL
 Let's just . . . let's just go and
 get this over with.

SARAH
 Are you sure?

RACHEL
 (getting out of car)
 Yeah. Come on.

Clay and Sarah follow Rachel and begin to walk away. They
 know the end is near. They are not afraid.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END.