

INT. CAFÉ - DAY

In a run-down, Northern cafe, ETHAN HOLT, now 28, stares over his shoulder at a canal outside the window. He is northern, skittish, and determined to live by his own code, a knight for modern times. He sweats through trackies and a threadbare hoodie.

ETHAN

I didn't have a choice.

Sat across from him is ABI CLARKE, southern, blonde hair, mid 20s but looks 19, curious, but nervous and trying to hide it. Ethan reaches across the table for her hand, she pulls it back.

ETHAN

I'm not a bad person.

ABI

Can I speak?

ETHAN

Course.

ABI

Why do this?

ETHAN

I know this is not how you thought your day was gonna turn out. I'm sorry.

A WAITRESS carries a tray through the shabby room and puts toast in front of Abi.

WAITRESS

There you go pet...
(to Ethan)
And for you love?

Ethan pauses, the Waitress notices his hand shaking.

WAITRESS

We do a decent fry up, cures a hangover right good.

ETHAN

Couldn't even handle one baked bean right now love.

WAITRESS

Aye, we've all been there, anything else?

ABI
Could we have some more napkins
please?

The Waitress grabs some napkins from a nearby table, Abi looks annoyed.

WAITRESS
There you go pet.
(to Ethan)
You get yourself back to bed.

The Waitress turns to leave, catching her side on a BLACK HOLDALL beside Ethan, pulling it to the floor. He instantly scrambles for it, wide-eyed, but the Waitress hands it back.

WAITRESS
Sorry love.

He gives a weak smile as the Waitress bounces away, then grabs the NAPKINS and stuffs them into his zip-up hoodie.

ETHAN
You didn't have to...

ABI
I want to help.

ETHAN
No you don't. No one does.

ABI
Do you want something to drink?

ETHAN
(sarcastically)
You think they'll do a double vodka? Maybe a couple of Jagers?

ABI
Just talk to me.

ETHAN
Why drag this out?

ABI
Tell me what happened.

ETHAN
There's no point.

DING - the cafe door opens and TWO POLICEMEN enter, laughing and jovial. Ethan grips his holdall and stares at them as they walk past and order at the counter.

ABI

We can stop this.

Abi stirs her coffee into a black whirlpool - Ethan is transfixed. She delicately places her spoon on the NAPKIN and touches his hand.

ABI

Just tell me why.

ETHAN

I just couldn't keep doing the same day over and over... But... I didn't mean to... this shouldn't happen to someone like you.

Below the table, Ethan's shaking left hand holds a **GUN** pointed at Abi.

ABI

You can still walk away.

CLING - the cash register opens, the Waitress smiles at the police as Ethan exhales in pain, he pulls another napkin into his hoodie - BLOOD - the whole left side of his T-shirt is covered.

ABI

I'll give you my car keys and I won't tell anyone.

ETHAN

Eat your toast.

ABI

Excuse me?

ETHAN

I don't want you getting hungry.
(weak joke)
And don't worry about the bill.

ABI

We'll make an agreement. I'll put my keys on the table, go to the bathroom and you can just leave.

He shakes his head, gripping the napkins tight. The police walk towards Abi, carrying cups of tea, Abi notices and slyly puts out her leg, enough so that it might trip them.

ABI

I'll give you my phone as well,
and I'll stay in the bathroom and
count to one hundred--

ETHAN
-- Stop talking

ABI
I'll not say anything, I promise
I...

The police are just about to hit Abi's leg, Ethan notices and jams the gun into her thigh, she flinches and brings her leg in. The police pass.

ETHAN
You need to stop messing with my
head.

Abi relents; she stirs her coffee and dabs her napkin with her spoon as Ethan looks over his shoulder at the police sitting down.

ABI
Please, don't do this.

ETHAN
We're gonna get up and we're
gonna leave. Nice and simple,
just like any other day.

Ethan places COINS on the table, shoves his GUN in his hoodie and grabs the BLACK HOLDALL. The pair stand and move from the booth.

ETHAN
Bracelet.

Abi freezes - caught - on the table is one of her BRACELET CHARMS: a PSI SYMBOL. Ethan places it in her hand.

ABI
Why me?

ETHAN
I really didn't have a choice.

The two of them leave, Abi's NAPKIN sits on the table, underneath her mug. The Waitress clears the table, the word 'HELP' is coffee stained on the napkin. The Waitress doesn't notice and sweeps the napkin into a bin bag.

INT/EXT. ABI'S CAR/ROADS - DAY

Empty road - run down-streets - Ethan stares in the rearview mirror as he shivers in the passenger seat. Abi drives the messy five door car.

Ethan glances out the window, a graffitied school wall reads "FUCK FALLY." Ethan cranes his neck to look at it as they pass.

ABI

Are you from around here?

He presses the napkins under his BLOODY T-SHIRT.

ABI

Where are we going?

ETHAN

I'll tell you the turns.

ABI

I've never driven on the motorway, I just got my license.

ETHAN

It's like any other road, only bigger.

Abi's charm bracelet tinkles against the wheel: a mouse, a star, Psi, the letter S.

ABI

I want to help you, and when we get where we're going, you can let me go. Can we decide that together?

Ethan turns the radio on.

ABI

If this is about money, I don't make a lot so...

He cranks the volume up. They stop at a red light. A POLICE CAR pulls up behind them - the same police from the cafe, Ethan glances in the mirror. The light turns green, Abi doesn't move.

ETHAN

Drive.

HONK! - The car behind revs. Ethan reaches for his gun, Abi slams the gearstick back and reverses into the car behind - SMASH.

ETHAN

Shit!

Abi grapples with the seatbelt.

ETHAN

Don't move!

The OLDER POLICEMAN lumbers out from the car behind.

OLDER POLICEMAN
Are you alright!?

Ethan springs out, it's all happening too fast. Abi's eyes dart to the mirror as Ethan rushes the Older Policeman and CRACKS him in the face. The Younger Policeman panics, trying to yank his seatbelt off.

Abi shifts into first gear and STALLS. She twists the keys off and on again, revving the engine, desperately shifting gears, but - too late - Ethan yanks the back door open and tumbles in.

ETHAN
Drive.

Abi panics. In the mirror, the OLDER POLICEMAN lies in the road. Ethan raises the GUN to her head.

ETHAN
Drive!

She presses her foot down and the car shoots off.

ETHAN
Slow down.

Abi struggles to hold it together, Ethan's gun presses into her skull.

ETHAN
Drive like nothing's wrong.

Abi slows, her whole body shaking.

ETHAN
When you don't do what I say,
people get hurt. I don't have a
choice.

He looks down the gun barrel at her BLONDE HAIR, he loses himself for a moment, slows his breathing and sits back. It's cluttered back here: books and notes, empty food containers.

The book on top is titled: 'The Anxiety Solution'. Ethan tilts it open, it's full of ANNOTATED NOTES.

ETHAN
Tell me when you get tired.

ABI
Excuse me?

ETHAN
When something scary happens, you
get really awake, then really
tired. So tell me.

Abi nods; she glances at her HANDBAG on the seat beside her, inside is a BLACK NOTEBOOK and PHONE. Ethan notices the glance, reaches around and grabs her phone.

ETHAN
 (Northern slang replaces
 "me" with "us")
 And tell us your favourite
 sandwich.

She glances at Ethan, confused.

INT. SUPERMARKET - DAY

Ethan walks along a row of sandwiches, picking out several. Ethan then grabs medicine, bandages, zipties, a stanley knife, a baby monitor and a bottle of vodka.

INT. SUPERMARKET BATHROOM - DAY

Ethan stands, shirtless, with both arms against the side of a cubicle. He psyches himself up, grabs the vodka and pours it on a BULLET GRAZE on his side. He winces sharply.

He sprinkles salt on the graze and then wraps a bandage around his waist.

He looks for a place to hide his bloody t-shirt, he lifts off the back of the cistern and puts it in there. He flushes: bloody toilet paper is flushed away by water, which is tinged red.

INT/EXT. CAR BOOT/RIVERSIDE ROAD - DAY

Abi writhes in the pitch-black boot of her car.

ABI
 Help! Help!

KNOCK KNOCK KNOCK - the sound echoes through the boot.

ABI
 Hello! Hello! I'm in here!

ETHAN (O.S.)
 It's me.... Now, if there were
 any point screaming, I wouldn't
 be opening the boot, yeah?

Ethan opens the boot, he wears a SMART BLUE SUIT. The car is in a secluded area by a river.

ABI
(scream)
Help!

She jolts up, but Ethan holds her down.

ETHAN
What did I just say! Look around.
Look!

She stops and looks, realising the situation.

ETHAN
I just need you for one night--

Abi's face drops, her worst nightmare.

ETHAN
-- No, not like that! It's just
in case they catch us, no one
wants to hurt a pretty face! I'm
gonna make all this shit right
tomorrow, then you'll never see
us again.

ABI
You're lying.

ETHAN
I'm shite at lying.

Abi thinks for a second, Ethan steps closer.

ABI
Don't move.

He freezes, hands up, placating.

ABI
One night?

ETHAN
Aye, yeah. On me life.

ABI
How can I possibly trust you?

ETHAN
I'm not gonna be a dick about it,
but you don't have much of a
choice.

Abi stares down Ethan, considering.

ABI
Give me the gun.

ETHAN

You what?

ABI

You keep the bullets, I get the gun. That's trust.

ETHAN

What makes you think I'm up for negotiating?

ABI

I can cry and scream, or you can give me the gun and we can get through this.

Ethan considers for a moment, then gets out the GUN and takes out the CLIP. He checks the chamber to show her it's empty and then holds out the gun.

Abi slowly takes the gun, Ethan helps her out the boot.

ETHAN

I got you some clothes and that, you can change in the back.

Abi looks into a SHOPPING BAG full of clothes, she looks at a tag on a bra saying "34-DD", He shrugs.

ETHAN

And I'm sorry about this.

He takes Abi's phone out of his pocket and chucks it in the river. She watches it sink.

ETHAN

Not gonna say anything?

ABI

My contract was over anyway.