

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 1

CHARACTERS

- JULIA – Detective, curious, nervous, mid-20s
 - MR. WILSON – Retired security guard, calm but secretive
 - TERRI – Outspoken, skeptical, doesn't trust anyone
 - LUKAS – Teenager, tech-savvy but jumpy
 - THE VOICE – Distorted signal from the radio
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INT. JULIA'S APARTMENT – NIGHT

[SFX: HEAVY RAIN BEATING AGAINST WINDOWS, THUNDER RUMBLES, FAUCET DRIPPING, CLOCK TICKS LOUDLY.]

JULIA

(to herself, pacing)

It's probably nothing... some automated spam... or a prank. But the voice... it sounded... real. Too real.

[SFX: PHONE BEEP. VOICEMAIL TONE. STATIC CRACKLES LOUDLY.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, slow, chilling)

Julia... he's not gone. Basement... find the truth.

[SFX: STATIC CUTS. HEAVY SILENCE. JULIA BREATHING.]

JULIA

(whispering, anxious)

What... what the hell is this?

[SFX: SHE DIALS HER PHONE. RINGING. SHE PACES.]

TERRI

(over phone, groggy)

Julia? It's... late. I was asleep. What's going on?

JULIA

Terri, I... I just got a voicemail. From Callum.

TERRI

(flat, skeptical)

Callum? He's been... gone... dead, Julia. Two years.

JULIA

I know. But he said something... something about the basement. Something important.

TERRI

(reluctantly)

Of course. Because nothing scary ever happens in basements at night. Fine. I'll come.

JULIA

(urgently)

You don't understand. This isn't just creepy. It's... something he wanted me to find. He wanted someone to see it.

TERRI

(sarcastic)

Ah, yes. Because basements are the obvious choice for "find the hidden truth." Makes perfect sense.

JULIA

I'm serious. I've been thinking about this all evening. If it's a clue, then it could explain what happened before... why he disappeared.

TERRI

(flat)

Or it's a trap. Could be someone wants us wandering around in the dark while they watch.

JULIA

Then we stay alert. But we can't ignore it. I have to know.

TERRI

(grumbling)

Fine. But I swear, Julia... if we end up in some moldy, rat-infested basement being haunted by a dead journalist, I'm quitting your sidekick service.

JULIA

(smiling faintly)

You'd never quit.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS DESCENDING STAIRS. THUNDER CRASHES. WIND WHISTLES THROUGH CRACKS.]

TERRI

(whispering)

I hate this. I have a bad feeling.

JULIA

(measured, whispering)

I know... but curiosity's the only way we'll get answers.

INT. APARTMENT BASEMENT – NIGHT

[SFX: METAL DOOR CREAKS OPEN, BANGS AGAINST WALL. WIND RUSHES DOWN STAIRS. FOOTSTEPS ECHO ON CONCRETE.]

TERRI

(low, muttering)

Perfect. Dark, damp, creepy basement. Check, check, and check.

JULIA

(whispering)

Focus. Something's down here... something that left the clue.

[SFX: FLASHLIGHT CLICK. LIGHT SWEEPS ACROSS WALLS. RATS SCUTTLE. WATER DRIPS.]

JULIA

Do you hear that? Metal... something under the floorboards.

TERRI

(flat)

Of course. Because metal noises in a dark basement are reassuring.

JULIA

(softly)

We just need to see what it is. Carefully.

[SFX: FLOORBOARD CREAKS, PRYING. DUST FALLS. RAT SCUTTLES.]

JULIA

(picking up a small object)

It's... a recorder.

[SFX: CLICK – STATIC BURSTS FROM RECORDER. HUM OF MACHINE.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Look beyond the walls... the place you fear... holds the key.

TERRI

(deadpan)

Oh yes. Because cryptic riddles are reassuring.

JULIA

This isn't just riddles. He wouldn't leave this if it wasn't important.

TERRI

(flat)

Or... he's dead and someone's messing with us.

JULIA

(serious)

Then we follow it. That's the point. Whoever left this wants us to find something.

[SFX: HEAVY FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. SHADOW MOVES.]

MR. WILSON

(calm, gravelly)

Detective... you shouldn't be down here alone... or even at all.

JULIA

(startled)

Mr. Wilson... do you know something?

MR. WILSON

I know this building... it remembers. Some things... people prefer to forget.

TERRI

(whispering)

He's hiding something.

MR. WILSON

(pausing)

Curiosity can be dangerous. You'll see... eventually.

[SFX: KEYS JINGLE AS HE WALKS AWAY. FOOTSTEPS FADE. DOOR CREAKS.]

TERRI

(low, muttering)

I don't trust him one bit.

JULIA

(quietly, determined)

Then we pay attention. We'll figure it out ourselves.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS TO CORNER. FLASHLIGHT SWEEP. METAL CLINKS.]

JULIA

There... under the stairs. Something else.

[SFX: SCRAPING METAL. SHE PULLS OUT DUSTY BOX. CLICK.]

TERRI

(peering)

A recorder? Another one?

JULIA

No... a USB drive.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course. Someone wants us to play treasure hunt in the basement.

JULIA

We follow it. Whoever left this... wants the story found.

[SFX: JULIA PLUGS USB INTO LAPTOP. COMPUTER HUMS, LIGHT BLINKS.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Find the place... find the truth... before it's too late...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I think... someone's watching us.

JULIA

Then we go downtown. We find the newsroom.

TERRI

(grim, muttering)

Downtown. Rain, darkness, danger... of course.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS UP STAIRS. DOOR CLICKS OPEN. RAIN INTENSIFIES. DISTANT THUNDER.]

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 2

INT. LUKAS' WORKSHOP – NIGHT

[SFX: COMPUTER FANS HUM, ELECTRICITY BUZZING, KEYS CLACKING. DISTANT THUNDER. RAIN TAP-TAP-TAPPING AGAINST WINDOWS.]

JULIA

(urgent, pacing)

Lukas... this isn't a joke. I need your help. There's a message — from Callum.

LUKAS

(startled, jittery)

Callum? But... he's—he's gone. Dead. Julia, I... I don't even know where to start. How is this even possible?

TERRI

(flat, leaning against a table)

You're telling me. Dead people leaving voicemails. Seriously. That's... creepy. Way creepier than anything I've dealt with before.

JULIA

(leaning on desk, whispering)

I know it sounds insane, Terri. But listen — he mentioned the basement. Something he wanted us to find. And now, Lukas... I think someone else is using him to guide us.

LUKAS

(pacing, muttering)

Okay... I can trace signals, maybe... if the tech isn't too messed up. But whoever did this... they know what they're doing. They masked everything.

TERRI

(skeptical, arms crossed)

So... we're walking into a digital maze made by a ghost... genius. That's comforting.

JULIA

(exhaling sharply)

It's not a ghost. Someone wants us to follow the clues. That's why the USB drive exists — that recording, the files, everything — it's leading somewhere.

LUKAS

(squinting at screen)

Okay... let's plug this in carefully. USB drive, check... humm... the files are old, some news footage, Callum's notes. Whoever did this compiled it meticulously.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Compiling old files... because that's normal. Nothing suspicious about that.

JULIA

(nods)

Exactly. But the recording isn't just an old clip. It's been altered, enhanced, made to sound... real-time. Whoever did this knows exactly how to manipulate audio.

LUKAS

(typing rapidly)

Yes... the voice frequencies are modified... they've inserted pauses, breaths, ambient noise... meant to make it sound live. If you didn't know better, you'd think Callum was speaking right now.

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

Of course. Why wouldn't someone go full horror-movie mode on us?

JULIA

Then we trace the signal. We find where it originated — even roughly — and see if it matches the newsroom.

LUKAS

(leaning closer, nervous)

I can attempt it... but... it's tricky. The signal is bouncing through multiple layers of encryption and proxies. Whoever did this... they didn't leave a straight trail.

TERRI

(sarcastic)

Because nothing says “welcome back to the living” like layers of digital misdirection.

JULIA

(ignoring sarcasm)

Do it. Carefully. And Lukas, keep an eye on everything — if there's a trace of monitoring, we'll know immediately.

LUKAS

(nodding, typing furiously)

Okay, okay... running analysis now. This might take a few minutes. But... something's odd.

There's interference. Whoever set this up didn't just want us following the clues — they're watching reactions.

TERRI

(flat)

Fantastic. So we're both the prey and the detectives. Love it.

JULIA

(softly, pacing)

Lukas, can you isolate the IPs, the origins? Even roughly?

LUKAS

(frowning)

Yes, kind of. It's bouncing through servers, but I can narrow it down... downtown. Old newsroom district. There's a specific section — basement, unused offices...

TERRI

(sarcastic, muttering)

Of course. The creepy, abandoned newsroom. Because that's never terrifying.

JULIA

Then that's our next stop. Carefully. Lukas, stay here. Monitor everything digitally. Any anomaly... you alert us immediately.

LUKAS

(jumping slightly)

Yeah... yeah, I can do that. But... seriously, don't touch anything weird down there. Don't move objects. Don't... interact. Anything.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

We won't. Promise. Ghosts and cursed typewriters, we'll leave alone.

JULIA

(ignore sarcasm)

Someone is controlling this from somewhere. We follow the breadcrumbs... but they set the pace.

[SFX: RAIN PATTERNS INTENSIFY AGAINST WINDOWS. THUNDER CLAPS.
ELECTRICAL HUM OF COMPUTER.]

LUKAS

(concentrating)

Signal trace almost done... okay, got it. Yes... this confirms it. Real-time feed, downtown newsroom, basement offices... the data matches the location we suspected.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course it does. Why would it be easy?

JULIA

(softly, determined)

We go, step by step. Careful. Watch for any anomalies. If whoever's behind this notices us... we need Lukas to guide us remotely.

LUKAS

(nodding, tense)

I can monitor everything. Motion sensors, security cameras still active in parts... any unexpected activity, I'll see it immediately.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Wonderful. So we're being watched and guided. Great.

JULIA

We follow the trail. Whoever made this wants us to find it all... and the newsroom is the next piece.

TERRI

(whispering, anxious)

I have a very bad feeling about this.

JULIA

(quietly, resolute)

So do I. But that's why we go.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS IN RAIN, DOOR OPENS. THUNDER CRASHES. WIND HOWLS.]

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 3

EXT. DOWNTOWN NEWSROOM – NIGHT

[SFX: HEAVY RAIN, THUNDER, DISTANT SIRENS, PUDDLES SPLASHING UNDER FOOTSTEPS. WIND WHISTLING AROUND OLD BUILDING.]

JULIA

(quietly, to Terri)

This is it... the old newsroom. The drive pointed here.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Great. Abandoned, creepy, stormy night. Perfect. What could go wrong?

JULIA

(under her breath)

Everything could go wrong. Stay alert.

[SFX: METAL GATE CREAKS, DOOR CLICKING OPEN. FOOTSTEPS ON WET CONCRETE. THUNDER.]

TERRI

(whispering)

I hate this. Every shadow looks like it's alive.

JULIA

(checking flashlight)

Exactly why we need to move slowly. Lukas, you still tracking the signal?

LUKAS

(over comms, tense)

Yes. The feed's live. Motion sensors indicate low movement... for now. But there's interference. Someone—or something—is here.

TERRI

(flat)

Fantastic. Watching us while we watch it.

JULIA

Focus. First floor, offices are empty. We need the basement.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON WOODEN FLOORS, DOORS CREAKING. DRIPPING WATER. DISTANT HUM OF ELECTRICITY.]

JULIA

(whispering, examining a desk)

Look at this... papers scattered everywhere. Notes, old articles... some reference Callum's investigations before he disappeared.

TERRI

(peering)

So someone recreated his work... maybe to bait us? Or warn us?

JULIA

(sifting papers)

Possibly both. But look — some pages are torn, folded, highlighted. Someone left breadcrumbs.

[SFX: WIND HOWLING THROUGH BROKEN WINDOWS. SHADOW MOVES.]

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

I don't like that. There's something... watching.

JULIA

(quietly)

We're being cautious. That's all we can do.

LUKAS

(over comms)

Signal's strengthening... basement area. Any movement detected near the old editing rooms.

TERRI

(deadpan)

Editing rooms. Fantastic. Creepy dark rooms with old machines. Because why not?

JULIA

(under her breath)

Every step counts.

[SFX: STAIR CREAKS AS THEY DESCEND, FLASHLIGHTS SWEEP ACROSS ABANDONED DESKS, WIRING HANGING FROM CEILING.]

JULIA

(softly)

Look... over there. A folder marked with Callum's initials.

TERRI

(suspicious)

And inside?

[SFX: PAPER RUSTLING. JULIA FLIPS THROUGH.]

JULIA

Notes about missing sources... meeting times... even hints at stories he hadn't published. Someone compiled this. Or left it for us.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Great. So the person behind this knows everything he knew. Or wants us to think they do.

JULIA

Either way... we follow it.

[SFX: COMPUTER BEEP. OLD MONITOR LIGHT FLICKERS.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, slow)

Closer... the truth waits where the shadows sleep...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I don't like this one bit.

JULIA

(whispering, determined)

Neither do I. But it's the only lead we have.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ECHO AS THEY MOVE DOWN HALLWAY, METAL DOORS CREAK. WATER DRIPS, ECHOES THROUGH BASEMENT.]

JULIA

Check the computers. Some might still have backups... logs... anything.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

I swear... old keyboards sound like they're whispering.

JULIA

Stop joking. Concentrate.

[SFX: JULIA TYPES, MONITOR HUMS. SHE LEANS CLOSER TO SCREEN.]

JULIA

Here... emails to an unknown contact... references to surveillance... threats. Whoever took over Callum's work didn't just leave a voicemail — they orchestrated this entire breadcrumb trail.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

So now we're in someone else's puzzle. Brilliant.

LUKAS

(over comms)

Movement in the corner... basement storage. Could be a person... or automated triggers.

JULIA

(whispering)

Slow. Approach carefully. Check shadows. Listen for noises.

[SFX: RUSTLING, METAL CLANKS, DISTANT FOOTSTEPS. JULIA PAUSES, BREATHING HEAVILY.]

TERRI

(low, tense)

I hate this. I hate shadows. I hate that voice.

JULIA

(quietly, reassuring)

We're together. Focus. Find the next clue. That's all.

[SFX: JULIA PICKS UP BOX, FLIPS IT OPEN. OLD RECORDINGS, PHOTOS, AND NOTES INSIDE.]

JULIA

This... this is it. Callum's research... leads to something bigger. Someone didn't want it published.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Or someone wants us to think that.

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... truth waits in the place forgotten...

JULIA

(whispering)

The place forgotten... the archives? Storage?

TERRI

(flat)

Great. We go deeper. Fantastic.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS INTO DARK ARCHIVE ROOM, DOORS CREAK. WATER DRIPS INTO PUDDLES. DISTANT HUMS. STATIC CRACKLES.]

JULIA

Look... a wall of boxes. Files everywhere. Some marked with Callum's old initials, some with cryptic numbers.

TERRI

(flat)

This is insane. Whoever did this... they planned it. Every detail.

JULIA

Exactly. And we're following it. Carefully. Step by step.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE ECHOES THROUGH SPEAKERS.]

THE VOICE

(dark, distorted)

The next step... is closer than you think... but the watcher waits...

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

We find the watcher... eventually. But first... we need the next clue.

TERRI

(whispering)

I have the worst feeling about this...

JULIA

(softly)

Me too... but that's why we go on.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS MOVE THROUGH PILES OF BOXES, RUSTLING PAPERS. DISTANT THUNDER, DRIPPING WATER. STATIC ECHOES.]

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 4

INT. NEWSROOM ARCHIVES – NIGHT

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON CONCRETE, DRIPPING WATER, WIND HOWLING THROUGH BROKEN WINDOWS. METAL CAGE DOORS CREAKING. THUNDER CRASHES.]

JULIA

(whispering, examining boxes)

Every box... every folder... it's like Callum documented everything... and someone added breadcrumbs.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course. Because that's normal. Whoever's doing this... is either insane or a genius.

JULIA

(calm, thinking aloud)

Or both. But the pattern is clear — someone wants us to follow. Carefully. Step by step.

LUKAS

(over comms)

Signal fluctuates... someone's here. I can't see them on the camera yet... but interference is growing.

TERRI

(flat)

Great. Watching us while we hunt their breadcrumbs. Perfect.

JULIA

(under breath)

We knew that already. Focus.

[SFX: METAL CLANKS FROM DISTANT ARCHIVE ROOM, RUSTLING PAPERS.]

MR. WILSON

(calm, low)

Detective... you shouldn't be here.

JULIA

(startled, whispering)

Mr. Wilson... what are you doing here?

MR. WILSON

(pausing, deliberate)

This place... it remembers more than you think. Some truths... are dangerous.

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

Of course. Cryptic warning from the mysterious ex-guard. Couldn't be more obvious.

JULIA

(urgent)

Then tell us. What do you know?

MR. WILSON

(sighing, tense)

I... I can't tell you everything. Not yet. But the Voice... it's not just a recording. Someone is controlling this. Watching. Waiting. Testing.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Fantastic. Testing us now? Because that's reassuring.

JULIA

(firm, whispering)

Mr. Wilson, we're following the trail. If you know more... you need to tell us.

MR. WILSON

(pensively)

All I can say... the next step will bring answers... but also danger. And not just for you... for everyone involved.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS FROM LAPTOP, THE VOICE DISTORTED AND LOUDER.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... you're closer... but the watcher waits...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I told you... I hate this.

JULIA

(quietly, determined)

We're almost there. We just follow the clues. One step at a time.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS THROUGH ARCHIVE, SHADOWS MOVING. DRIPPING WATER, RUSTLING PAPERS.]

JULIA

Look... a small folder, tucked behind boxes. Marked with Callum's handwriting.

TERRI

(peering)

And inside?

[SFX: JULIA FLIPS THROUGH FOLDER. PAPER RUSTLES.]

JULIA

Coordinates... dates... names. And... notes about people he trusted, threats he received, files he hid. Someone wants us to see this.

TERRI

(flat)

Or to lure us deeper. Because that's more fun, right?

JULIA

(whispering, thinking aloud)

It's either a warning or a trap. Or both. But the pattern matches the USB... everything points downtown.

LUKAS

(over comms)

Signal is spiking... basement office. Someone... or something is moving near the old editing machines.

TERRI

(flat)

Editing machines. Perfect. Creepy, dusty, ghostly, and definitely hiding secrets.

JULIA

(sotto, focused)

Careful. Shadows can hide anything. Listen to every sound.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACHING, STATIC BURSTS, WIND WHISTLING. METAL DOOR CREAKS.]

MR. WILSON

(serious, low)

Remember... curiosity can lead to answers, but it can also reveal... things you weren't ready to see.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

I hate riddles. I hate shadows. I hate dead journalists.

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

Then we move slowly, check every box, follow the clues... until we know the truth.

[SFX: JULIA PICKS UP AN OLD RECORDER. STATIC CRACKLES. THE VOICE BECOMES LOUDER.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent, almost angry)

You are close... closer than ever... but the watcher sees all...

TERRI

(low, whispering)

I told you... I hate this... I hate that voice... I hate everything about this basement.

JULIA

(quietly, firm)

We're almost there. The next folder... the next box... it has to lead us further.

[SFX: JULIA FLIPS THROUGH BOXES. PAPER SHUFFLES, METAL CLANKS. DISTANT THUNDER.]

JULIA

(whispering)

Here... another USB. More data, more recordings. Whoever left these... they're guiding us step by step.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Or torturing us slowly.

JULIA

(quietly)

Either way... we follow. Step by step.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ECHO AS THEY MOVE DEEPER INTO ARCHIVES. STATIC CRACKLES, VOICE ECHOES.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

The truth... waits... but the watcher is patient...

JULIA

(quietly, determined)

We find the truth... eventually.

TERRI

(low, muttering)

And I'm not sure I want to.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS, RUSTLING PAPERS, DRIPPING WATER, THUNDER.]

JULIA

(softly, thinking aloud)

Every clue... every folder... every shadow... it's all part of the puzzle. Whoever left the first voicemail... they're leading us here for a reason. And we're going to see it through.

[SFX: DISTANT METAL DOOR SLAMS. STATIC BURSTS. VOICE WHISPERS, UNINTELLIGIBLE.]

TERRI

(flat, tense)

Yeah... definitely hate this.

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

But we keep going. One step at a time. The truth is just ahead.

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 5

INT. NEWSROOM BASEMENT – NIGHT

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON WET CONCRETE, DRIPPING WATER, DISTANT HUM OF ELECTRICITY. METAL DOORS CREAKING.]

JULIA

(whispering, examining walls)

These walls... they don't end like they should. There's a space... a hidden passage here.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course. Hidden passage in a dark basement. Because that's normal. Absolutely normal.

JULIA

(sotto, determined)

This is where Callum left his trail... or someone else did.

[SFX: JULIA PUSHES A HEAVY PANEL, CREAKING LOUD. DUST FALLS. WIND HOWLS THROUGH CRACK.]

TERRI

(low, whispering)

I hate this. Every second feels like something's about to jump out.

JULIA

(firm, calm)

Then stay close. Watch shadows. Listen.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS INTO PASSAGE, ECHOES. METAL GRATE UNDERFOOT. WATER DRIPS.]

JULIA

(whispering, thinking aloud)

Every step... careful. Whoever set this up... wanted us here.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Probably to see us trip over boxes and scream.

JULIA

(ignore sarcasm)

Or to guide us to the next clue.

[SFX: DISTANT STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE CRACKLES LOUDER.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... the hidden... the truth waits...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I told you... I hate that voice... I hate it more when it gets louder.

JULIA

(quietly, focused)

We follow. Carefully. Lukas, can you monitor the signal?

LUKAS

(over comms, anxious)

Yes... signal spiking... coordinates match a small hidden room. Temperature sensor shows slightly warmer air. Someone's been here... recently.

TERRI

(flat)

Of course. Recently. Because that's not terrifying at all.

JULIA

(under breath)

Step by step. Watch for traps.

[SFX: JULIA PUSHES HEAVY DOOR. IT GRINDS, ECHOES THROUGH BASEMENT.]

JULIA

(whispering)

It's... a small vault. Files, boxes, recordings... everything Callum hid.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Fantastic. Creepy, hidden, stormy basement vault. What could possibly go wrong next?

JULIA

(whispering, examining a box)

Look... notes on hidden sources, safe locations, names... someone didn't want these found. But they left them... maybe as a test.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Test or trap... same difference.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS FROM OLD RECORDER, THE VOICE DISTORTED, INTENSE.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

The watcher waits... closer than you think...

JULIA

(quietly, thinking aloud)

The watcher... someone has been observing us this whole time. Step by step.

TERRI

(low, tense)

I hate being observed. Hate it. Every second.

JULIA

(whispering)

We can't stop now. Every clue... every folder... it's part of the puzzle.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ECHO AS THEY MOVE THROUGH VAULT, PAPER RUSTLING, METAL CLANKS.]

JULIA

Here... another USB. And... notes about people involved. Callum trusted someone... but someone betrayed him.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Betrayal... of course. Nothing creepy happens without betrayal.

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

Step by step... we piece this together.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE ECHOES, UNINTELLIGIBLE.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Truth is near... the watcher sees... you are close...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I... I don't like that. I don't like that at all.

JULIA

(quietly, firm)

We move carefully. One step... one clue at a time.

[SFX: RUSTLING PAPERS, DISTANT THUNDER, DRIPPING WATER. SHADOW MOVES.]

JULIA

(whispering)

Every box... every file... Callum's legacy... and whoever left the first voicemail... they're leading us here... for a reason.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Yeah... and I still hate it.

JULIA

(softly)

Me too... but that's why we continue.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS MOVE DEEPER INTO VAULT. STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE ECHOES.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, dark)

The truth waits... but the watcher is patient...

JULIA

(quietly, thinking aloud)

We're close. Every step, every clue... leads us further. And the watcher... whoever it is... is counting on us to find it.

[SFX: METAL DOOR CREAKS. DISTANT FOOTSTEPS FADE. DRIPPING WATER. STATIC CRACKLES.]

TERRI

(flat, tense)

And I'm not sure I want to see the next step.

JULIA

(soft, determined)

We have to. That's why we started. That's why we follow the trail.

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 6

INT. NEWSROOM VAULT – NIGHT

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON WET CONCRETE, DRIPPING WATER, METAL CREAKS, DISTANT HUM OF ELECTRICITY. WIND HOWLING THROUGH BROKEN WINDOWS. THUNDER CRASHES.]

JULIA

(whispering, examining files)

Every folder... every USB... it's a pattern. Callum left something here. But someone else... has been here too. Recently.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Yeah. And now we're sharing his hiding place with a ghost, a hacker, or both. Perfect.

JULIA

(sotto, determined)

Or a warning. Or a trap. We have to move carefully... one step at a time.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS FROM OLD RECORDER, FOOTSTEPS ECHOING.]

LUKAS

(over comms, anxious)

Julia... Terri... movement detected near the far corner. Multiple signals. Someone else is here.

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

Great. Creepy basement, storm outside, someone—or something—is moving in the shadows. Just what I needed.

JULIA

(quietly, firm)

Stay calm. No sudden movements. Watch shadows. Follow the clues.

[SFX: METAL CLANK, PAPERS RUSTLING, FOOTSTEPS ECHO.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... closer... the watcher sees...

JULIA

(under her breath)

The watcher... they've been following us all along. Whoever left the voicemail... they're not just guiding us. They're testing us.

TERRI

(low, tense)

I hate this. Every sound... every shadow... every second.

JULIA

(quietly, thinking aloud)

Step by step. That's all we can do. One step, one clue, one folder...

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS AGAIN. A SHADOW MOVES ACROSS THE WALL. METAL CREAKS.]

MR. WILSON

(calm, low)

Detective... someone else has access to this place. You need to be careful.

JULIA

(urgent, whispering)

I know, Mr. Wilson. But we have to see this through. Step by step.

TERRI

(flat, tense)

Step by step... my favorite. Nothing terrifying about that.

[SFX: SHADOW MOVES, STATIC BURSTS, METAL DOOR CREAK.]

JULIA

(whispering)

The next folder... over there. Callum left coordinates, names, messages... someone wants us to see this.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Or to trap us. Probably both.

JULIA

(quietly)

We follow. Carefully.

[SFX: JULIA PICKS UP FOLDER, PAPER RUSTLING. STATIC BURSTS FROM RECORDER.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent, menacing)

Truth waits... the watcher sees all...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I told you... I hate this... every sound... every shadow...

JULIA

(quietly, thinking aloud)

The watcher... whoever they are... planned this. Every clue, every file... meant to lead us here... and test us.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ECHO, METAL CREAKS, PAPERS RUSTLING.]

LUKAS

(over comms, panicked)

Julia! Terri! Someone just touched the cameras... feed flickered... I can't see clearly... too close...

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

Perfect. Just what I needed. Ghostly intruder while we sift through Callum's secrets.

JULIA

(quietly, determined)

Step by step. Shadows first. Follow the trail. Check every box.

[SFX: METAL DOOR CREAKS, FOOTSTEPS NEARBY, STATIC BURSTS.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent, dark)

You are close... closer than you think... the watcher waits...

TERRI

(low, tense)

I... I don't want to see the next step.

JULIA

(soft, firm)

We go anyway. Every clue... leads us closer... to whoever left the voicemail.

[SFX: SHADOW MOVES, PAPERS RUSTLE, METAL CLANKS. DISTANT THUNDER.]

JULIA

(whispering, thinking aloud)

Every shadow, every step... the watcher is patient. But so are we.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

I still hate it.

JULIA

(soft, determined)

Me too... but we continue. The truth is just ahead.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS MOVE THROUGH VAULT, PAPER RUSTLES, METAL CLANKS, STATIC BURSTS. THE VOICE ECHOES.]

JULIA

(quietly)

One more box... and maybe the answer... or at least the next step.

TERRI

(flat, tense)

Next step. Horror movie logic. Fantastic.

[SFX: METAL BOX OPENS, PAPERS SHUFFLE, STATIC BURSTS. FOOTSTEPS FADE.]

JULIA

(soft, whispering)

Here... more recordings. More names. Locations. Clues Callum left but never published.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course. Because it wouldn't be a proper mystery if it were easy.

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

Step by step. We're closer than ever... and the watcher... they'll have to reveal themselves soon.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE DISTORTED, LOUD, URGENT.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, dark)

Closer... you will see... but are you ready...

TERRI

(low, whispering)

No... no I'm not ready.

JULIA

(soft, firm)

Neither am I... but that's why we keep going.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS, PAPERS RUSTLING, METAL CLANKS, STATIC BURSTS. DISTANT THUNDER.]

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 7

INT. NEWSROOM VAULT – NIGHT

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON WET CONCRETE, METAL CREAKS, DRIPPING WATER, DISTANT THUNDER. STATIC BURSTS.]

JULIA

(whispering, examining files)

There's something here... Callum marked it differently. Not just names or dates... something hidden.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Hidden again? Fantastic. We love playing "find the needle in the creepy basement haystack."

JULIA

(softly, focused)

Stay quiet. Step by step. Every clue counts.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS FROM OLD RECORDER, THE VOICE DISTORTED, WHISPERING.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... the truth waits... but are you ready to see it?

TERRI

(low, tense)

I hate that voice. I hate every second it speaks.

JULIA

(whispering)

We ignore it. Follow the clues. Every folder, every note... it leads us closer.

[SFX: PAPER RUSTLING, METAL CLANKS, FOOTSTEPS ECHO.]

JULIA

(quietly, thinking aloud)

Callum hid something bigger. This isn't just a missing journalist... it's... it's a network. People he trusted... people who betrayed him... files that could expose them all.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Great. So now it's a conspiracy. Just perfect.

LUKAS

(over comms, panicked)

Julia, Terri... I just traced multiple digital signatures. Someone's been remotely accessing the archives, manipulating signals... even controlling the Voice you're hearing.

JULIA

(softly, determined)

Someone has orchestrated all of this... step by step... every breadcrumb, every warning... it's not just a game. They want us here.

TERRI

(flat, tense)

Yeah, and they want us scared, too. Mission accomplished.

[SFX: SHADOW MOVES ACROSS WALL, METAL CREAKS, DISTANT FOOTSTEPS.]

MR. WILSON

(calm, low)

Julia... whoever left the voicemail... they knew Callum. They knew him better than most. And... they've been waiting for someone to follow the trail.

JULIA

(urgent, whispering)

Why leave the trail at all? Why guide us here?

MR. WILSON

(pausing)

To reveal something. Something only someone persistent would find... and someone willing to see the truth, no matter the risk.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Oh, sure... "persistent." That's comforting.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE DISTORTED, LOUDER, MENACING.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... you are close... the truth watches... the watcher waits...

JULIA

(quietly, thinking aloud)

The watcher... not just someone in the shadows... someone controlling everything. Step by step... testing us... pushing us.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS, METAL CLANKS, PAPER RUSTLING. DISTANT THUNDER.]

JULIA

(whispering)

Here... a folder marked in red... Callum's own handwriting. Coordinates... locations... a schedule... and a note: "Only the brave see the end."

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Great. Another puzzle. Because regular mysteries are too boring.

JULIA

(softly, focused)

Step by step... follow it. Every box, every USB... it leads us further.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, SHADOW MOVES. THE VOICE DISTORTED, NEAR.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent, almost whispering)

The brave... follow the trail... the watcher sees...

LUKAS

(over comms, anxious)

Julia, Terri... there's someone physically here. Close. Moving between the stacks. I can't see clearly... signal interference...

TERRI

(flat, tense)

Perfect. Creepy intruder AND digital manipulations. Just what we needed.

JULIA

(quietly, firm)

Step by step. Shadows first. Check each box carefully. Listen.

[SFX: METAL BOX OPENS, PAPER RUSTLES, STATIC BURSTS. FOOTSTEPS ECHO.]

JULIA

(whispering)

Another USB... recordings... Callum's voice... messages about meetings, threats... and someone watching him... all the way to the day he disappeared.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course. Everything leads back to the disappearance. Because mysteries are never simple.

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

Step by step... we're closer than ever... and the watcher... whoever they are... they'll have to reveal themselves soon.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE DISTORTED, LOUD, URGENT.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, dark)

Closer... you will see... but are you ready...

TERRI

(low, whispering)

No... no I'm not ready.

JULIA

(soft, firm)

Neither am I... but that's why we keep going.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS, PAPERS RUSTLING, METAL CLANKS, STATIC BURSTS. DISTANT THUNDER.]

THE VOICEMAIL – PART 8

INT. NEWSROOM VAULT – NIGHT

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS ON CONCRETE, DRIPPING WATER, METAL CREAKS. WIND WHISTLING THROUGH BROKEN WINDOWS. DISTANT THUNDER. STATIC BURSTS.]

JULIA

(whispering, scanning folders)

Step by step... every clue... every folder... Callum left breadcrumbs... but something doesn't add up.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Of course. Nothing ever adds up until someone flips the whole table.

JULIA

(quietly)

The Voice... the watcher... all these intrusions...

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS. THE VOICE DISTORTED, INTENSE, SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT TONE.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent)

Closer... closer... do you see?

TERRI

(low, tense)

No. I see fear. That's all I see.

JULIA

(whispering, thinking aloud)

The signals... the interference... someone had access all along. But who?

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS, PAPERS RUSTLE. METAL CLANK.]

MR. WILSON

(calm, low)

Julia... Terri... pay attention. Sometimes the most obvious watcher... is the one you trust the most.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Oh, perfect. Cryptic advice right before we all get murdered.

JULIA

(soft, determined)

Step by step... the folders, the clues... it has to show us the truth.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS LOUDER, THE VOICE CHANGES TONE, MORE PERSONAL.]

THE VOICE

(distorted, urgent, almost mocking)

You've been patient... careful... brave... and yet... the truth is closer than you imagine...

JULIA

(whispering, tense)

Wait... that tone... it's... it's different.

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

Different? It's still terrifying. That's enough for me.

[SFX: COMPUTER BEEPS, HACKER SOUNDS, DISTORTED SIGNALS.]

LUKAS

(over comms, calm, manipulative)

You've done well following the trail, Julia. Terri. Very well. Almost at the end.

JULIA

(shocked, whispering)

Lukas...? You're... the Voice?

TERRI

(flat, panicked)

WHAT? That kid?! The one we thought was just monitoring?

LUKAS

(over comms, chillingly calm)

Yes. Every step, every clue, every fear you felt... I orchestrated it. Callum's disappearance, the voicemail... all of it. I needed to see if you were worthy of the truth.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, METAL CREAKS, FOOTSTEPS, PAPERS SHUFFLE.]

JULIA

(whispering, furious)

Why, Lukas? He was missing... people could've died!

LUKAS

(over comms, calm)

I had to control the narrative. To push you to follow the trail. To see how far you'd go. To find the ones responsible... the ones who betrayed Callum.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

Brilliant. We've been pawns in a teenager's game. Fantastic.

JULIA

(whispering, thinking aloud)

Every clue... every shadow... every piece of interference... it was him. The watcher... the Voice... the mastermind.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS, THE VOICE NOW CLEARLY LUKAS'S MODULATED TONE.]

THE VOICE (LUKAS)

(distorted, urgent)

Step by step... you found the folder in red... the coordinates... the secrets... and yet... the final truth awaits...

TERRI

(flat, whispering)

Final truth? I don't want to know.

JULIA

(quiet, determined)

We're here... we see it. Step by step. We follow... every clue.

[SFX: FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. METAL CREAKS. PAPERS RUSTLE. STATIC BURSTS.]

JULIA

(whispering, tense)

The last USB... it's here. The recordings... Callum's final messages... names, locations... everything.

TERRI

(flat, muttering)

I hate it. I hate this. I hate everything.

LUKAS

(over comms, calm)

Take a deep breath. Open it. The watcher... the Voice... it was me. But the real danger... isn't over.

[SFX: METAL DOOR CREAKS BEHIND THEM. FOOTSTEPS ECHO. STATIC BURSTS.]

JULIA

(whispering, shocked)

Someone's coming... the shadows... they're moving closer...

TERRI

(flat, panicked)

Step by step, Julia... step by step...

JULIA

(soft, determined)

Step by step... we've come this far... we have to see the next moment.

[SFX: STATIC BURSTS LOUD, METAL CLANG, THUNDER, FOOTSTEPS CLOSING IN.]

LUKAS

(over comms, chillingly calm)

And now... the watcher will be revealed...

[SFX: SILENCE. SLOW DRIPPING WATER. FAINT BREATHING. STATIC FADES INTO WHISPERS.]

TERRI

(low, trembling)

I... I don't like this silence.

JULIA

(whispering, tense)

Neither do I... but it's the calm before the storm. Step by step... we'll see what's next.

[SFX: METAL DOOR SLAMS. FOOTSTEPS STOP. STATIC BURSTS.]

THE VOICE (LUKAS)

(distorted, whispering)

The truth waits... but the game... has only just begun...

FADE OUT

