

Lockdown

written by

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EXT. HERMANN HESSE HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MORNING

A vacant parking spot awaits its usual occupant as the last school buses RUMBLE away and the CHATTER of a smattering of teenagers fills the morning air. A RED SEDAN eases into the spot, and its driver MARGARET KIM (31, shoulder-length hair, pant suit) holds her phone to her ear and her conversation can be heard through the open window.

MARGARET

I'll see if I can get those days off. I'm sure it'll be fine... That won't matter to Mrs. Frederickson... Because it doesn't matter... I know... I know. I will... I just pulled up to the school so can I call you at lunch?... Yes, I will.

Margaret rolls up her window and steps out. She makes her way to the front doors of the school, still on the phone.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Just book it. We can talk about it tonight... What's the cancelation policy?... I'm not being rude.

STUDENT

Hi, Ms. Kim!

MARGARET

(re: Student)

Good morning, Candace. How's calculus? No?

(laughing)

All right, we'll talk later.

(re: phone)

What?... No, I'm at the school... I'm literally walking in right now.

The doors CREAK open as Margaret enters the school.

CONTINUOUS TO:

INT. HERMANN HESSE HIGH SCHOOL ENTRYWAY

The doors CLATTER shut. The first period bell RINGS and clusters of students begin making their way to their classes. Margaret walks through the front hall to the main office. As Margaret approaches her office, ALLEN CAMERON (50s, slightly overweight, blue collared shirt and khakis) walks by.

MARGARET

I don't know what to tell you,
Jordyn... If it's a twenty-four
hour policy-

ALLEN

Morning, Ms. Kim.

MARGARET

Good morning, Mr. Cameron.

(re: phone)

Fine, then let's just wait for
tonight... Just tell me what to say
and I'll say it, okay? I'm at work.

Margaret fumbles in her BAG and Allen waits awkwardly off to
the side. Margaret sees him and gives him a forced grin.

ALLEN

Is now a bad time?

MARGARET

No, it's fine.

(re: phone)

Jordyn, I really have to go. Just
pick what you think is best. I
trust your judgment... Okay...
Okay, I love you, too... Bye.

Margaret hangs up the phone and puts it in her pocket.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

Sorry about that. What can I help
you with?

ALLEN

Are you good?

MARGARET

Yeah. Everything's fine. What's up?

ALLEN

I was on my way to grab some
coffee. Do you want anything?

MARGARET

That's very sweet of you but if
you're in a hurry, don't worry
about it. Oh, wait this is your
prep period, right?

ALLEN

Yeah, it's not a problem.

MARGARET

Okay, whatever little cups they have is fine. Just not decaf.

ALLEN

Are you busy? We could go to the teacher's lounge together.

Margaret searches more in her bag. The hallway is now empty as the last students filter into their classrooms.

MARGARET

I'm a little overbooked today.
Where are my keys?

ALLEN

Are you sure? I'm actually really glad I caught you. There's a student I think could use your help.

MARGARET

Okay, I don't like talking about students in the hallway.

ALLEN

Right, of course. Teacher's lounge?

MARGARET

Might as well.

Allen and Margaret walk down the hall. Margaret continues searching her bag, then finds her keys in her pocket.

MARGARET (CONT'D)

I'll find my keys eventually. Oh!
Of course they weren't even in my bag.

ALLEN

We always find what we need in the most unlikely of places. So, how does referring students to you work?

MARGARET

It depends on what they need. I always go-

A SCREAM breaks their conversation. They pause in the hallway. BOOM! A gunshot is heard on the other side of the school. BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! More SCREAMS echo down the hallway. Allen takes Margaret by the shoulders and they rush back to her office. Margaret tries to open the door on instinct.

ALLEN

Keys.

Margaret grabs her keys which RATTLE loudly as she tries to find the key to the door. Her hands are shaking as two more BOOMS echo down the hallway. The SQUEAKING and POUNDING of sneakers can be heard coming from the direction of the gun shots.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

Hurry up.

MARGARET

I am.

Margaret unlocks the door and Allen shoves her in the room, going in after her.

CONTINUOUS TO:

INT. MARGARET KIM'S OFFICE

Allen closes the door behind him and tries to figure out the lock.

MARGARET

It locks automatically.

Margaret moves Allen aside and pulls the blinds over the thin frosted window in the door. Another fainter BOOM causes them both to flinch. They head deeper into the office.

A thin hallway leads into the rest of the office, a large, square room with a beanbag chair in the corner and a large PRIDE FLAG covering most of the wall behind Ms. Kim's desk. A banner with "Black Lives Matter" is draped above the pride flag. A large window lets sunlight in at the far end overlooking a grassy area just in front of the baseball diamond. Three degrees hang on the wall nearest the door, opposite the windows.

Margaret and Allen sit below the diplomas. Margaret pulls out her PHONE and turns it off. Margaret INHALES shakily and tries to let out a smooth breath. Allen puts a hand on her shoulder.

ALLEN

(whispering)

We'll be okay.

Margaret nods and puts her finger over her lips. Allen nods. They sit silently for a minute. DING DONG! Margaret and Allen GASP at the intercom alert.

PRINCIPAL FREDERICKSON

(hastily)

All faculty, staff, and students,
this is a full lockdown. I repeat,
this is a full lockdown. This is
not a drill. We are on full
lockdown.

The announcement CUTS out in a muffled haste. Margaret and Allen breathe heavily. The building SETTLES and Allen flinches. He looks at Margaret, who nods at him, closes her eyes, breathes DEEPLY, and EXHALES slowly through the smallest hole she can make with her lips. She looks at him again, then nods at him to do as she did. He nods with little confidence, closes his eyes, and breathes DEEPLY. He holds his breath a moment longer than Margaret; then SPUTTERS an exhale through his nose.

Margaret places a hand on Allen's shoulder. She grins and nods, then surveys the room. PICTURES of students smiling with her, some in groups and some as one-on-ones. An INVITATION to a piano recital. Half-open BLINDS let in thin rows of sunlight. A CHART titled "How am I Feeling Today?" with thirty-or-so illustrated faces with labels ranging from "Excited" to "Fearful" to "Annoyed." A CANDY DISH next to HANDOUTS titled "Emotional Management Strategies YOU Can Use in Class" on her desk. A PICTURE of Margaret and JORDYN WEISS (27, purple hair, pierced septum) beaming from ear to ear. A POSTER with emergency numbers for various suicide and overdose prevention hotlines.

Margaret's face contorts as she starts breathing slowly again. The sound of her EXHALE catches Allen's attention, and he looks at her in alarm.

ALLEN

Hey. Hey, it's okay.

Margaret nods and puts her finger to her lips. She shakes as she breathes.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

It's going to be okay.

Margaret closes her eyes, takes in a deep BREATH, then smoothly EXHALES. Opening her eyes, she looks at Allen and nods more resolutely.

Allen nods back. Casting a furtive glance at Margaret, who has continued deep breaths, he pulls his phone out of his pocket. He clicks it on and the light from the screen floods his face. He winces, then turns down the brightness. He begins typing.

Margaret opens her eyes and notices the brightness. She grabs Allen by the shoulder and shakes him as vigorously as she can without making too much noise.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

What?

Margaret points to his phone.

MARGARET

(mouthing)

Off.

Allen turns the other side of his head to her so she can talk to his good ear.

ALLEN

What?

Margaret taps him to get his attention. She points at his eyes and then to her lips.

MARGARET

(mouthing)

Turn. It. Off.

ALLEN

The brightness is down. I'm checking for updates.

Margaret relents. Carefully, she peeks her head around the corner to check the front door. Nothing moves behind the frosted glass. As she moves back to her position facing forward, her eyes dart around as if calculating mid-air statistics. She turns to Allen and has to motivate herself to speak.

MARGARET

(quietly)

You can't have your phone on during a lockdown.

ALLEN

What? Margaret, you have to speak in my good ear.

Margaret grabs his shoulder and turns his body so she can talk to his left ear.

MARGARET

It's a full lockdown. You have to turn your phone off.

ALLEN

What if I'm calling the police?

MARGARET

That's Principal Frederickson's job. We don't want to clog the lines up.

ALLEN

I'm checking for updates.

MARGARET

You already said that. It doesn't matter.

ALLEN

What if we miss something?

MARGARET

Principal Frederickson will keep us updated.

ALLEN

It might not be Frederickson.

They both sit with Allen's statement.

MARGARET

Turn your phone off.

ALLEN

We're also not supposed to be talking.

MARGARET

I'm only talking to tell you to turn off your phone. If he sees the light-

ALLEN

(losing his temper)
He'll hear you talking before he sees my phone light. Maybe stop talking.

Margaret recoils and looks forward. Allen rubs his forehead, then silences and locks his phone.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

It's off now.

A beat.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I shouldn't have snapped at you.

Margaret composes herself.

MARGARET

We can't take risks. This isn't a drill.

ALLEN

I know.

MARGARET

You were talking before I was talking.

ALLEN

I know. I'm sorry.

MARGARET

I know. We just have to follow the rules if we want to survive this.

ALLEN

I know.

A beat.

ALLEN (CONT'D)

I only checked my phone because the shots sounded like they were on the other side of the school.

MARGARET

(calming down)

I know. That's why I thought it was okay to talk to you.

ALLEN

Then why were you mad at me about my phone?

MARGARET

Because we don't know where he's going. We don't know when he'll get to this side of the school. I want to survive this, don't you? Don't you?

ALLEN

Yes, I want to survive.

MARGARET

Then we can't take risks. If you
keep breaking the rules it'll get
you eventually.

ALLEN

Enough about rules, okay? I get it.

MARGARET

Okay.

ALLEN

My phone is off. Let's move on.

MARGARET

Okay.

They both sit silently facing forward.