

SECOND SKIN

written by

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INT. CAR - DAY

It's a gray February day in Chicago. HANNAH, 24, is waiting in her car outside a tattoo shop. She's scrolling on her phone. Her sister, HARLEY, 27, opens the door and gets into the car. Hannah puts her phone away.

HANNAH
Hey!

HARLEY
Hey.

HANNAH
So, how'd it turn out?

HARLEY
Good.

HANNAH
Cool... can I see?

HARLEY
...I'm wearing like three layers
right now.

Hannah shifts gears in the car and starts driving.

HANNAH
Okay... did you take a picture?

HARLEY
I'll take one and send it later.

HANNAH
Okay. I'm sure Caleb would love it.

Harley freezes at the sound of his name. Hannah senses her tension. A beat.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Did it hurt?

A beat. It's a dumb question.

HARLEY
I think around the twentieth one
you get used to it.

Hannah's not sure how to respond. A few beats.

HANNAH
Hey, you sure you're good to go
back home tonight?

HARLEY

I have to at some point.

A beat.

HARLEY (CONT'D)

Thanks for letting me stay.

HANNAH

Of course. It's just- you know...
The girls are getting anxious
and...

HARLEY

It's cool. I get it.

A beat.

HANNAH

And Tyler, he's just very
particular-

HARLEY

Hannah, seriously. I'm fine. I
overstayed my welcome, to be
honest. It's okay.

HANNAH

(reluctantly)

Okay.

The car pulls up in front of Harley's greystone home in the
city.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Well. Call me if you need anything,
okay? You're sure you don't want me
to come in with you or anything?
I'm serious, I can.

HARLEY

Hannah. I'll be fine, okay.

HANNAH

(sighs)

Okay. I love you.

Harley starts getting out of the car.

HARLEY

I love you too.

INT. HARLEY'S GREYSTONE - DAY

Harley walks into her house and sets her keys on the entryway table next to a vase of dying flowers. We follow her into her home past several more vases of wilted flowers. Detail shots of tacky, *Sorry for your loss* cards. Pictures of Harley and her late fiancé, CALEB, 28, everywhere.

The music gives an eerie, unsettling ambience. We get the sense that Harley's mental health hasn't been the best. Dishes are piled up in the sink. Two full trash bags sit next to the trash bin. The place is a mess.

Harley goes to the fridge to get some food to heat up.

INT. DINING TABLE - NIGHT

Harley's sitting in the dining room, eating a microwaved dinner by herself.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Harley's sitting in the living room with the empty dinner container next to her. The TV is on, but she's scrolling on her phone dejectedly. She looks numb.

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT

Harley is getting out of the shower, wrapped in a towel. We're seeing her new tattoo for the first time, the last tattoo to complete a full sleeve on her arm. It's an Arabic word. يقبرني. She takes a picture of the tattoo and texts it to Hannah.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Harley's scrolling on her phone again; her face is the only thing that's illuminated in a pitch black room. She's scrolling through old videos of her and Caleb.

We watch one of the videos.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

It's a sunny July day at a crowded North Avenue Beach in Chicago.

Caleb is recording a video in selfie mode of him and Harley building a sandcastle.

CALEB

You're back with the Master Castle
Builders here at North Avenue Beach
with another architectural
masterpiece.

Harley giggles in the background. The sandcastle is almost
done. It actually looks very professional and intricate.
Harley is digging in the sand, adding the finishing touches.

CALEB (CONT'D)

This one took us... How long did it
take us, baby?

HARLEY

Four hours and counting!

She's very bubbly in the video, a stark contrast to how we
know her in present day.

CALEB

Four hours and counting! We just-

HARLEY

Wait, what's this?

Harley pulls a small box out from under the sand.

CALEB

What's what?

Harley looks at it for a second and then hands it to him.
Caleb pretends to examine it.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Let me see...

He sets the phone up against something, keeping them in
frame.

Then he gets down on one knee and opens the box.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

We hear the rest of the video play off screen. Hear Harley
scream ecstatically.

HARLEY (O.S.)

Oh my god!

She smiles at the videos as a tear rolls down her cheek. We
hear Caleb's laugh from the phone speakers.

Harley exits from the video to scroll deeper into her photos when we hear Caleb's exact same laugh again.

Harley's countenance shifts. She sits up straight.

HARLEY (CONT'D)
(to herself)
God, no... Please...

A whisper penetrates the darkness.

CALEB
Harley.

HARLEY
(to herself)
Please, God. I can't do this again.
I can't do this again.

CALEB
Harley. Turn on the light.

Harley squeezes her eyes tight and shakes her head. Her face is still illuminated by the phone.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Harley...

The whisper is closer again. She opens her eyes and reaches toward the lamp hesitantly.

Cut back to the darkness of the room. The lamp light brightens the room.

Caleb's face appears from the darkness, but he looks nothing like the photos. He's mangled, his jaw is clearly dislocated and hanging open, giving his face a haunting, elongated look. He's covered in blood.

Plastered in huge lettering across the wall behind him is the symbol. يقبرني.

Harley gasps. Caleb sits on the bed in front of her. She pushes back away from him. He scoots closer.

CALEB (CONT'D)
What happened, Harley? Why are you
so afraid of me? I thought you
loved me.

His jaw doesn't move, but his voice fills the room.

He scoots closer, she dashes out of the bed. He's following her. He backs her into a corner. Now the symbol is plastered all the corner of the walls, several etched into it, overlapping. She looks back at it and sees the symbol behind her.

CALEB (CONT'D)

How can you run from me?

HARLEY

This isn't you, Caleb. You would never do this to me!

CALEB

Of course it's me, Harley. In the *flesh*. And this is all thanks to you.

HARLEY

I'm sorry. I said I'm sorry.

He's not whispering anymore, but speaking aggressively.

CALEB

What can a dead man do with a fucking sorry? Huh?

Then she takes her chance and runs for it. She dashes out of the corner, down the hallway, and into a shoe closet. She closes the door and locks it.

INT. SHOE CLOSET - NIGHT

We hear him calling her from a distance, voice still deep and getting louder. Harley crouches down on the floor to cry. Her phone is still in her hands. It lights up her face again.

We hear Caleb banging loudly on the door, one bang at a time, rhythmically. He's much much louder now, voice still getting deeper.

CALEB

I should have never let you *drive* Harley!

HARLEY

Please stop...

CALEB

Why *me*, Harley?

HARLEY
(sobbing)
Why are you doing this?

CALEB
Why was it me? Why me and not you?
Why not both of us?

HARLEY
Caleb, please...

CALEB
It should have been you!

HARLEY
STOP!

The banging stops. The screaming stops. Harley catches her breath and finishes her sobbing.

She turns on her phone again, trying to call Hannah with shaky hands. The light from the phone shows that the walls of the shoe closet are now made of skin and covered completely with the symbol.

After a moment, Harley notices the walls. And we notice that Harley's tattoo is no longer just a sleeve. It's now spreading up her neck toward her chin and across her chest. And the whole sleeve is the same symbol all over.

Caleb starts back screaming and banging again. His voice sounds distorted.

CALEB
Open. The fucking. Door. Harley.
Look at what you've done! Open the door!

Harley stares shocked at the room and what's going on with her own skin. She bursts out of the closet, and this time, out of the house.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

As she's running down the street, she slips on the icy ground and falls. The fall knocks the wind out of her lungs.

We see now that the tattoo has spread even more, now creeping up the bottom of her chin, down her other arm, and around to her back.

The world spins around her in slow motion, and she's taken back to the moment when her life changed forever.

As her vision is blurred, she sees a car flipped on its head in the street, smoke escaping the hood. She sees herself crawl out from the driver side.

We hear Caleb's voice now, but we don't see him anymore.

CALEB

You know why I love that symbol,
Harley? *Ya'aburnee*. It means you
bury me. My mom used to say it all
the time growing up. It's supposed
to mean the love is so strong that
I don't want to live without you.
So I go first.

A beat. We're still watching as Harley escapes the overturned car just before it catches fire. Cut to the real Harley's face, glowing against the flames, the tattoo claiming even more of her face. It looks like the version of her that is crawling out of the car makes eye contact with her.

CALEB (CONT'D)

I think you took it a little too
literally, Harley. You buried me.
And I know your guilt must haunt
you. So I'm trying to free you. You
know it shouldn't have been me. I
just want us to be together again.

Harley finally comes to. Throughout Caleb's monologue, she's laboring more and more with what he says. It's driving her crazy.

CALEB (CONT'D)

You know what I want you do.

INT. HANNAH'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Hannah is standing at the kitchen sink, washing dishes. Her husband, TYLER, 24, is sitting on the couch, watching sports commentary. Hannah's phone is on the dining table, halfway in between the kitchen and the living room.

In her peripheral, Hannah sees her phone light up.

HANNAH

Hey honey? Can you look and see
who's calling me?

A beat. Tyler chuckles aloofly at the tv.

TYLER

Huh?

HANNAH

The phone, hun. I'm getting a call.

TYLER

Oh, uh...

Another beat of him not being attentive. A smaller chuckle.

TYLER (CONT'D)

Uh, where is it honey?

Hannah rolls her eyes, shuts off the sink, dries her hands and looks to see who's calling.

HANNAH

Oh shit...

She picks up the phone and answers.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Hey, what's up?

Her expression changes immediately.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

Harley?... Harley- slow down, I can't understand... What?... Oh my... Oh my god. Don't move. I'm coming. Don't! Move.

Tyler loosely perceives that something is wrong. He turns his attention to her but doesn't get off the couch.

Hannah stays on the phone while she grabs the keys and throws on a jacket and shoes, she's still trying to calm Harley down while explaining what's going on to Tyler.

HANNAH (CONT'D)

(to Tyler)

Tyler. I need you to stay here with the girls. It's an emergency.

Tyler's just in shock, unsure of how to help.

TYLER

Yeah, okay.

Hannah rushes out the door.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Hannah gets into her car in the driveway of their suburban home. She speed reverses out of the driveway and down the street, scraping the bumper against the concrete.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Hannah is driving super fast and looking frantically as lights pass her.

HANNAH
Harley, I need you to stay on the
phone with me okay?

A beat.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Okay?

Another beat.

HANNAH (CONT'D)
Harley? Harley?!

Hannah's panicking more now. She pulls up onto Harley's street.

Harley's phone is face up on the sidewalk where she slipped, it still says the call is going.

Hannah parks on the street and gets out the car with a purpose. The flipped car is no longer there- it was a hallucination. Hannah sees that the front door to Harley's house is open. She's scared herself now, but she walks in.

INT. HARLEY'S GREYSTONE - NIGHT

HANNAH
Harley? Harley!... Harley where are
you?

Hannah is turning on lights as she goes, making her way through the first floor and toward the kitchen. In the darkness, we see her foot step in a puddle.

She turns the light on in the kitchen and looks down at the floor. She screams at the top of her lungs.

A close up of Harley's limp hand laying on the floor in a pool of blood, a bloody cheese grater loosely in hand.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

We hear the beeps and buzz of a hospital atmosphere. It's a continuous shot. A doctor and two police officers are asking Hannah questions in the hallway outside of Harley's hospital room.

HANNAH

I don't know, I don't know. I don't know if she was hallucinating? She told me she's been seeing her dead fiance lately but... I didn't know it was this bad. Oh my god, it's my fault. I kicked her out.

POLICE OFFICER

Ma'am, slow down. It's okay. Does your sister have a history of hallucinations or delusions?

HANNAH

N-no... not that I know of?

The conversation fades as we're entering the hospital room. Harley is in the bed, almost completely wrapped in gauze from what we can see above the blanket.

We're closing in on her face, which is also wrapped up except for her eyes. The skin around her eyes is still intact, but crusted with blood.

We get closer until Harley's eyes shoot open. The whites of her eyes are not white- they're covered with the symbol all over. We hear a gasp for air and-

CUT TO BLACK