

The Hotline
Written by
Rick Jay Glen

Story by
Victor Chen

5TH DRAFT
3RD PRODUCTION DRAFT

06/15/16 © 2016

PROLOGUE

FADE IN:

1 EXT. L.A. CITY UNDERPASS - EVENING 1

A young girl, SABRINA, late 20's, in a hooded sweat shirt stumbles drunkenly through a city overpass.

HEAVY RAIN.

2 INT. VALLERY'S HOUSE - EVENING 2

SERIES OF SHOTS. VALLERY'S HOUSE. We see shots of VALLERY'S house with voice overs.

INTERCUT BETWEEN SABRINA AND VALLERY'S HOUSE.

CALLERS speak in overlapping bits. CALLERS talk about their frustrations on what appears to be a suicide hotline.

SHOT of an old tube television surrounded by photos and plants.

CALLER MAN A (O.S.)

(trembling)

...I don't understand how she could do this to us.

(beat)

We have children... We have a dog.

(beat)

We were supposed to be a family...

SABRINA stumbles to the underpass.

SHOT OF VALLERY'S old couch with a quilt draped over the backrest.

CALLER TEENAGE GIRL (O.S.)

(crying hysterically)

...I don't want to go there anymore. I don't want to be anywhere anymore.

(beat)

You don't know how it feels to be the one person everyone wishes would just disappear.

(beat)

They don't want me. I know if I just wasn't alive, they would all be much happier. It hurts!

(beat)

Nobody wants me... and it hurts so much!

SABRINA catches her breath and holds up her cell phone, shaking.

SHOT OF VALLERY'S kitchen tea kettle on the stove.

CALLER MAN B (O.S.)

(angry)

...I can't do it anymore!

(beat)

The stress, the lies, the constant ass-kissing. People are not forgiving or worthy. They just take and consume, take and consume.

(beat)

If life really is as cruel as I've seen, then I've seen enough.

(beat)

There's nothing more to see, you know?

SABRINA puts the phone down and looks up at the heavy rain.

SHOT OF VALLERY'S messy computer desk with calendar and post-it notes everywhere.

CALLER WOMAN A (O.S.)

(crying)

... he was the only man I loved, and now he's gone and I just don't want to be here anymore! I just don't want to be alone anymore.

(breaks down hysterically)

I don't want to have another day without him.

SABRINA slouches down, softly tapping her phone against her head.

SHOT of a table covered with thank you cards, gifts, and flowers.

CALLER MAN C (O.S.)

(calm)

...where's my salvation, you know? Where is my happy fucking ending? I mean, I see all these people stumbling into happiness, and here I am...

(drags a cigarette and cries)

...another year older and still trying to answer that one cruel joke of a rhetorical question...

(MORE)

CALLER MAN C (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(crying)

Is waking up even one more day even worth it?

SHOT OF the hallway decorated with family photos.

SABRINA leans against the tunnel wall holding her phone. breathing heavily. She starts to dial.

Multiple CALLERS overlap in a crescendo of noise.

CALLER SABRINA (O.S.)

(trembling voice)

It's every day. not just once in a while. Not two or three times. Every day.

(beat)

They leave dildos in my locker. They keyed my fucking car.

(crying)

They even shout at me, relentlessly across the campus...

(chokes up)

"Dyke bitch!" "Abomination!" "Hell is waiting, Whore!"

(crying hysterically)

You tell me not to think about taking my life.... but they've already taken it from me. I'm just a fucking joke to them. They think it's funny.

(beat)

(calms herself)

I just can't do this anymore.

VALLERY (O.S.)

I want you to listen to me now, okay Sabrina?

SABRINA (O.S.)

(weeping)

What?

The faint sound a slight RATTLING through the phone, followed by the sound of a plastic bottle OPENING.

VALLERY (O.S.)

This, right now, what you're experiencing, are simply feelings.

(beat)

It doesn't mean ignore them. It doesn't mean they don't matter.

(beat)

It means that they will pass.

(MORE)

VALLERY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

You have to understand that these
feelings that you have, will pass.
Do you understand?

(beat)

Sabrina, I want you to breathe with
me. Lets just take a moment and
breathe together, okay?

VALLERY, a mid 40's, beautiful widower, takes a deep breath
and waits to here SABRINA on the other line. The phone remains
silent.

VALLERY takes another breath.

VALLERY

Sabrina, are you breathing with me?

(beat)

Sabrina?

(beat)

Sabrina!!!

SABRINA

(whimper)

I'm sorry.

VALLERY

(urgently)

Wait!

SABRINA slumps over to her side. The bottle of pills rolls
across the underpass pavement.

VALLERY holds her hand to her mouth in shock, realizing that
SABRINA had just taken her own life. Her eyes well up with
tears.

VALLERY slowly holds the phone away from her head, looking
at it, as if it were SABRINA.

SABRINA lies dead under the underpass.

END OF PROLOGUE

ACT ONE**3 INT. VALLERY'S HOUSE - BATHROOM - AFTERNOON 3**

SERIES OF SHOTS. VALLERY'S BATHROOM. We see VALLERY in the shower dealing with loss of SABRINA.

SHOT of VALLERY in the shower crying.

SHOT of the shower drain.

SHOT of the towel hanging next to the shower door.

SHOT of VALLERY looking in the bathroom mirror after showering, exhausted.

4 INT. VALLERY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM OFFICE - AFTERNOON 4

CLOSE ON phone RINGING.

VALLERY enters from the hallway, drying her hair with a towel.

She approaches the phone and answers it.

VALLERY

Hello?

CALLER (O.S.)

(hysterical)

Oh my God!! I've tried to reach you like, twelve times.

VALLERY

(sigh)

Why aren't you calling my cell-phone, Abby?

ABBY (O.S.)

Uh... Why aren't you answering your cell phone?

VALLERY walks to check her cell on the couch.

CLOSE ON CELL reads "8 Missed Calls".

VALLERY

(irritated)

I was in the shower.

ABBY (O.S.)

Okay. I know that tone. I know when something's bothering you. I'm

(MORE)

ABBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 starting to think that this whole
 "save the world" idea is getting to
 you.

VALLERY
 I'm fine.

ABBY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Why don't you take a break? Go for a
 walk. You know... meet a guy?

VALLERY
 Abby...

ABBY (O.S.)
 At least get your feet elevated...

VALLERY
 (laughing)
 ABBY!!!

VALLERY sits down in her office chair.

ABBY (O.S.)
 Okay, okay. Sorry.
 (sarcastically)
 So.. How many lives did you save
 today?

VALLERY
 Not a good time.

ABBY (O.S.)
 (sincere)
 Oh! I'm sorry, honey.

VALLERY stares at a collection of thank you cards, gifts and
 flowers from CALLERS she has helped.

She picks up a thank you card and rereads it.

ABBY (O.S.)
 Listen! I think it's great what you
 are doing, honey, but you can't be
 responsible for everyone who wants
 to give up.
 (beat)
 Eventually, you have to take your
 own advice. Focus on you.

VALLERY
 Right...

ABBY (O.S.)
 You don't always have to be there to help.

VALLERY
 (defensively)
 I choose to help.

ABBY (O.S.)
 I know, I'm just saying, It's a wrong number. A coincidence, Val. That's all!

VALLERY puts the card back down.

She looks at a framed photo of a her daughter and granddaughter.

VALLERY
 Well, that's where we disagree. You see it as a coincidence, whereas I see it as a purpose.

ABBY (O.S.)
 (sigh)
 Would you listen to yourself? You act like you committed a crime.
 (beat)
 Honey, you don't owe the world anything.

CLOSE on VALLERY.

VALLERY
 I owe it to the girls--

CLOSE ON framed photo of a young, handsome man in military uniform.

VALLERY
 --and Brandon.

VALLERY and ABBY sit quietly on the phone for a brief moment.

ABBY (O.S.)
 I'm sorry, you're right. You know what? You're doing a good thing, helping people.

VALLERY
 (lacking confidence)
 Yeah, if only all of them wanted help.

ABBY (O.S.)
Let's go out!

VALLERY
Abby, I'm fine.

ABBY (O.S.)
Come on.
(rhetorically)
Dinner Friday? Bottega Louie? Your
treat?

VALLERY
(smiling)
Alright, fine.

ABBY (O.S.)
(in a snotty voice)
Love you, Val.

VALLERY
(humorously annoyed)
Bye!

VALLERY hangs up the phone.

FADE TO

5 INT. VALLERY'S HOUSE - EVENING

5

SERIES OF SHOTS. VALLERY'S HABITS. We see VALLERY in several shots making dinner and hanging around her house. VALLERY seems uneasy and exhausted.

SHOT OF VALLERY brushing her teeth in the bathroom.

SHOT OF water and toothpaste foam going down the drain. She looks down at the drain for a moment.

SHOT OF VALLERY looking at herself in the mirror.

SHOT OF VALLERY putting on moisturizer in her bedroom.

SHOT OF VALLERY relaxing on the couch with the TV on low and a book in her hand.

SHOT OF tea kettle on the stove top beginning to steam.

VALLERY looks towards the kitchen with a concerned look. She hesitantly gets up and walks to the kitchen.

She begins to pour herself a cup of tea. Her hands shake nervously.

The phone RINGS, startling VALLERY.

She looks back at the phone, accidentally pours hot water onto her hand, burning herself, and drops the mug.

CLOSE ON the phone RINGING.

She rushes to the sink and holds her hand under cold running water.

She quickly wets a towel, grabs a bag of frozen peas from the freezer, and holds it against her hand.

ACT TWO

She peers around the kitchen doorway at the phone.

She hesitantly answers the phone, holding the towel with the bag of frozen peas on her burnt hand.

VALLERY
(clears throat)
Hello?

A MAN BREATHES on the other end of the line.

VALLERY
Who is this, please?
(beat)
(scared)
If you don't respond, I'm going to
hang up the phone.

The MAN starts crying without replying.

VALLERY hangs the phone up quickly. She sits back in her chair, stroking a silver necklace, with the name "EMILY" on it, against her lower lip and chin.

CLOSE ON phone RINGING.

VALLERY waits a moment, then answers.

VALLERY
(trembling)
Listen... you'd better--

MAN (O.S.)
(interrupts)
I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Please don't
hang up.

(MORE)

MAN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

(beat)

I just need to talk. I'm sorry. Please
don't hang up. Please!

VALLERY sits down calmly, holding the frozen bag of peas and
hand against her chest, almost to comfort herself.

VALLERY

(defensive)

I'm here. You can talk to me.

MAN (O.S.)

(distressed)

I just, uh... I don't know how to do
this type of thing. I've never done
this before.

VALLERY

(calm and comforting)

Alright. I understand.

(beat)

Why don't we start by you telling me
your name.

(beat)

Can I have your name, please?

MAN (O.S.)

No.

(slurring)

I don't want to do that.

(beat)

Can we just talk? Please. I don't
want to give you my name.

VALLERY

(reassuring)

Okay. Okay, sure. You don't have to
tell me your name if you don't want.

MAN (O.S.)

And, and I don't want to know your
name either.

VALLERY

Okay.

MAN (O.S.)

Sorry.

VALLERY

It's quite alright.

(beat)

So how can I help you? What do you
want to talk about?

The MAN hesitates. VALLERY looks around unsure what to say.

VALLERY

Hello?

(beat)

Are you there?

MAN (O.S.)

I'm here.

(beat)

It's just not exactly easy, okay?

VALLERY

Okay.

MAN (O.S.)

It's just... I just need a little time to..

(begins to weep)

...to figure--

VALLERY

Have you been drinking tonight?

6 INT. MAN'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

6

CLOSE ON a coffee table, a cigarette burning in an ashtray. MAN'S legs pace back and forth.

MAN

(exhales cigarette)

A little confidence juice.

VALLERY

I see.

7 INT. VALLERY'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM OFFICE - EVENING

7

INTERCUT BETWEEN MAN and VALLERY

MAN (O.S.)

I'm guessing you have a problem with drinking.

VALLERY

Not in moderation, no.

MAN (O.S.)

Do you drink?

VALLERY

I do not.

MAN (O.S.)

Doesn't matter.

(beat)

Some of us have a tongue for the
goofy sauce, and the rest of you
live decent lives.

VALLERY turns back to the photo of BRANDON.

VALLERY

My husband was...

(beat)

A drinker, I mean.

MAN (O.S.)

Was?

(beat)

(chuckle)

What happened? Oh, Let me guess. He
knocked you around too many times,
until you divorced his sorry ass,
right?

VALLERY shakes her head in frustration.

VALLERY

(defensively)

He died... in Iraq.

MAN (O.S.)

Oh. I-- I'm sorry.

VALLERY struggles to put her words together.

VALLERY

No. You didn't know.

MAN (O.S.)

Shit, I'm really sorry.

VALLERY

Anyway, he promised he would quit
when he finished his tour.. when our
daughter was just born, but..

(beat)

I think being away from home must
have gotten to him.

MAN (O.S.)

Daughter?

VALLERY

Yes.

MAN (O.S.)

Well she must be a looker, if she's
as pretty as you sound.

VALLERY smiles and blushes at his compliment.

MAN (O.S.)

How old is your daughter?

VALLERY

Twenty-six.
(beat)
Last year.

MAN (O.S.)

Last year?

VALLERY

She died.

MAN (O.S.)

Oh, my God! I'm sorry.

VALLERY

No. It's uh..

MAN (O.S.)

You lost your daughter and husband?

VALLERY

(clears throat)
He believed in what he did so much.
He used to say,
(mockingly)
"We have to show those bastards we're
serious, otherwise we'll all be
speaking Iraqi!"
(beat)

I always agreed, just to humor him.
I didn't have the heart to correct
him when he was so passionate. Really
though, I was terrified of losing
him.

(beat)

Guess I'm sort of selfish in a way,
but--

MAN

I don't think it's selfish at all, a
woman who wants to keep her man
around.

VALLERY pauses to reflect.

VALLERY

He's probably turning in his grave
after what I just said.

(beat)

I guess talking about him, just,
makes it feel like he's still just
away for duty... and that he'll come
back.

VALLERY sits on the phone quietly for a moment, continuing
to play with the silver necklace.

MAN (O.S.)

James.

VALLERY

Pardon?

MAN (O.S.)

(big sigh)

My name--

(beat)

--it's James.

VALLERY

I'm Vallery.

JAMES

I didn't used to drink.

CLOSE ON collection of beer and whiskey bottles on an
apartment floor.

CLOSE ON hash pipe next to the ashtray.

VALLERY

(confused)

Okay.

JAMES (O.S.)

I mean, I didn't... I don't have a
drinking problem...

VALLERY

I'm not here to judge you, James.

JAMES (O.S.)

(voice trembles)

It just gets so hard to deal with--
everything.

VALLERY

Well, I won't pretend to know what
going through, but if you want to

(MORE)

VALLERY (CONT'D)

tell me what's bothering you, I will listen. But James, drinking yourself to death isn't going to solve your problem.

JAMES (O.S.)

(sarcastically)

You believe that, really?

VALLERY

Yes. Drowning yourself will only drive you further away from dealing with whatever problem is haunting you.

JAMES (O.S.)

You don't get it. I am the problem.

(beat)

My wife, she... she left.

(beat)

My kids--

(crying)

She won't let me see my kids. My babies.

(beat)

Two girls.

VALLERY starts to cry.

CLOSE ON photo of VALLERY'S daughter and granddaughter.

VALLERY

(calmly)

Oh.

There's a slight pause on the phone. VALLERY looks back to the kitchen, remembering the spilt tea and broken mug.

JAMES (O.S.)

Last year, she was more and more distant. At first she just gave me the cold shoulder for weeks at a time. But then...

(trying to hold back
tears)

It was like I didn't even exist to her.

(beat)

To her, I was already.

VALLERY gets up, walks to the kitchen, grabs the broom and dust pan, and starts cleaning up the mess.

VALLERY

You're not dead. You still have a
life to make right.

(beat)

If you give up now, you'll never get
the chance to make things right.

JAMES stops pacing and stands still.

JAMES

I went to AA for her.

(beat)

She thought I needed help. So, twice
a week after work I went to get
better.

(beat)

I was doing well, had my sponsor...

VALLERY

That's no easy thing to undertake.

JAMES (O.S.)

Four and a half months without a
drop. Everyone was looking at me
differently. Like I was doing right
by my family. Like I was healing.
But she...

(beat)

You know that look, when they smile
at you, but they're just waiting?
Just waiting...

(beat)

She always seemed to be waiting for
something.

(beat)

She was the only one who was looking
at me as if I would be gone soon...

VALLERY dumps the dust pan into the garbage can.

VALLERY

Sometimes, when a woman is afraid of
her husband, she acts brave...

JAMES (O.S.)

(interrupts)

No. This wasn't fear.

VALLERY

Are you sure?

JAMES (O.S.)

I know my wife. I remembered her
"scared". But this was different.
This wasn't fear.

(beat)

It was patience.

VALLERY

Patience?

JAMES (O.S.)

The kind of patience you see in a
predator. Calm.

VALLERY

Maybe she had her own things going
on.

JAMES (O.S.)

Now that is exactly why I stopped
going to AA.

(beat)

Whatever she was waiting for, it
wasn't for me to get better.

(beat)

It was for me to get out of the house.

VALLERY

She already made up her mind...?

JAMES (O.S.)

She and my neighbor made up her mind,
every day the girls were at school,
rehearsals, or soccer practice, while
their drunken, loser father was
getting treated by like minded
addicts.

(beats)

She was taking him... to my bed.

VALLERY

That's when you fell off the wagon?

JAMES (O.S.)

Like you read about! But, at first
I was good at hiding it from them.
I didn't want them to get suspicious.

(beat)

I needed to plan carefully what was
going to happen next.

VALLERY

(concerned)

James?

JAMES

Yes?

VALLERY

What did you do?

JAMES (O.S.)

(hysterical)

She was tearing our family apart.

VALLERY

Did you...?

JAMES (O.S.)

(interrupting)

No! I loved my wife. I would never hurt her.

VALLERY

And the man, your neighbor?

CLOSE ON JAMES' hand holding the phone to his ear.

JAMES

You don't take another man's family away.

VALLERY

You did something you regret.

(beat)

Is that why your calling?

JAMES

I'm not ready to talk about that.

VALLERY

Okay. Well..

VALLERY gets interrupted by the buzz of her cell phone - "CALLING... ABBY".

VALLERY

Oh, can you wait, one minute?

VALLERY answers her cell phone.

VALLERY

(whispers)

Abby?

JAMES (O.S.)

Hello?

ABBY (O.S.)

You will not believe how many gorgeous
men there are at this conference.
You're missing out!

VALLERY

Abby, hold on!

(beat)

(to JAMES)

Can you give me just a second?

JAMES (O.S.)

Uh...

VALLERY

(whispering)

Abby, I can't talk to drunk Abby
right now, I'm dealing with something
right now.

JAMES (O.S.)

Hello?

VALLERY

(quietly)

(to JAMES)

Just a second.

ABBY (O.S.)

Do you have a guy over?

VALLERY

(whispering)

Oh, Abby!

ABBY (O.S.)

Okay, okay. Call me back later.

VALLERY hangs up the phone.

JAMES (O.S.)

Is this...?

VALLERY

Sorry about that.

JAMES (O.S.)

Am I interrupting something?

VALLERY

No. Just my friend.

JAMES (O.S.)

She called you at work?

(MORE)

JAMES (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Aren't there rules about taking
personal calls on the clock?

VALLERY
(laughs)
I'm at home.

JAMES (O.S.)
You work from home?

VALLERY
(correcting him)
I work at a diner in Downy, on
weekends.

JAMES (O.S.)
I don't understand.
(beat)
Is this not the County Medical and
Health hotline?

VALLERY lies down on her couch, looking up at the ceiling.

VALLERY
I always had this dream of leaving
the diner and starting my own
business. A florist business. It
started out pretty good.
(beat)
Most of my clients were local
residence, but I really wanted to
start a chain!
(beat)
Weddings, bridal showers, baby
showers, graduations, birthdays, you
name it.

JAMES (O.S.)
So, you're not a professional mental
health care employee...

VALLERY
A few years after Brandon, my husband,
passed away, and my business didn't
become a global success, I just
stopped trying so hard.
(beat)
That's when the calls started coming
in.
(beat)
At first I thought they were crank
calls, so I ignored them or hung up.
(MORE)

VALLERY (CONT'D)

(beat)

But then, one day I got a phone call from a young girl. She was crying. I knew it wasn't a joke.

JAMES (O.S.)

So you helped her?

VALLERY

Been doing it ever since.

JAMES (O.S.)

Why?

VALLERY clutches EMILY'S necklace to her chest.

VALLERY

Because James, after you lose everything, you realize that life might be painful, but you still only get one. You have to see the value in your life.

JAMES (O.S.)

--and what about you?

VALLERY

(smiling)

What do you mean?

JAMES (O.S.)

You don't think about moving on? Finding happiness?

VALLERY

It's different now.

JAMES (O.S.)

Oh yeah? Why is that?

VALLERY

(confident and cute)

My happiness comes from helping others.

JAMES puts whiskey bottle on the coffee table and puts out his cigarette.

JAMES

Well, I don't know about that.

VALLERY

About what?

JAMES (O.S.)

It seems like relying on whether or not others live or die is only a temporary supply of happiness. Eventually, we all die.

VALLERY

--And only every source or supply of happiness is temporary.

JAMES (O.S.)

(rhetorically)
Aren't you clever?

VALLERY

(big smile)
Well...?

VALLERY smiles and stands up, fondling EMILY'S necklace.

SERIES OF SHOTS. VALLERY TALKS TO JAMES. We see moments of VALLERY on the phone with JAMES, talking, laughing and smiling, giving the illusion of a few hours passing by without audio.

FADE MUSIC IN

SHOT of VALLERY sitting at the window, looking outside her window.

SHOT of VALLERY eating ice-cream in the kitchen, talking on the phone and smiling.

SHOT of VALLERY at the office desk laughing hysterically on the phone.

SHOT of VALLERY walking down the hallway, with big arms gestures, on the phone.

SHOT of VALLERY lying on the couch, relaxing.

FADE MUSIC OUT

ACT THREE

VALLERY kicks her legs off the edge of the couch.

She gently takes off EMILY'S necklace, and hangs it on the photo of EMILY and BETHANY.

VALLERY

You're actually a very charming guy,
James.

JAMES (O.S.)

When given the right circumstance.

VALLERY

I'm starting to wonder what you look
like.

JAMES

Well, you don't sound so bad,
yourself, now do you?

VALLERY smiles a huge smile.

VALLERY

I don't know what your wife is
thinking...

There is a pause on the phone.

VALLERY'S smile fades to a look of concern.

VALLERY

James?

JAMES (O.S.)

I'm sorry it's just very hard to
think about.

VALLERY

I understand.

(beat)

But, the way I see it, she drove you
away.

JAMES (O.S.)

You're sweet.

VALLERY

(soft spoken)

Talk to me.

JAMES (O.S.)

(clears his throat)

Um. My daughter was very ill... last
year--

VALLERY

Okay.

JAMES (O.S.)

--cancer.

VALLERY

Oh.

JAMES (O.S.)

We thought we were going to lose her!

(beat)

But, with everything Rachel was doing, I just... and Bailey kept getting worse and worse...

JAMES starts to weep.

VALLERY looks down at the photo of her daughter and granddaughter.

VALLERY

That's awful.

JAMES (O.S.)

My wife called me on my way home from work.

(beat)

My baby... My little girl passed out and wouldn't wake up.

VALLERY

(catch in her throat)

Oh my God.

JAMES (O.S.)

(restless)

I panicked... I, I, I didn't know what I was doing.

(beat)

I just knew I had to get to her. I had to see her.

VALLERY

Of course.

(beat)

I'm sorry about your daughter.

(beat)

Is she okay?

JAMES (O.S.)

I didn't even see them until it was too late.

VALLERY

(confused)

What?

JAMES (O.S.)
I was so afraid and worried... I
couldn't...

VALLERY
What do you mean?

JAMES (O.S.)
(beat)
(hysterically crying)
It was dark, and they just appeared
right in front of me. I, I couldn't..
I didn't have time to react.

VALLERY
(concernedly)
See who, James? Who didn't you see.

JAMES (O.S.)
(crying)
I didn't want to leave them there,
but I was terrified. God, forgive
me...
(beat)
She just didn't move, and her mother
kept screaming for her...

VALLERY
(whispers)
Emily.

A silhouette of JAMES in front of the light from the window.

AUDIO of BETHANY SCREAMING "EMILY".

JAMES
--Emily! Emily!!

VALLERY
No.

JAMES CRIES hysterically.

VALLERY clutches EMILY'S necklace and breathes heavily.

JAMES (O.S.)
She was so little. She wouldn't move.

VALLERY
(calmly)
You!

VALLERY tries to catch her breath.

VALLERY

Emily?

JAMES (O.S.)

(crying hysterically)

That was her name! The little girl!

VALLERY stands up abruptly.

VALLERY

My daughter--

JAMES (O.S.)

What?

VALLERY

--Bethany Michaels.

JAMES (O.S.)

No! Wait! What?

VALLERY

My granddaughter--

VALLERY breaks down in tears.

JAMES (O.S.)

No, no, no.

VALLERY

Emily--

JAMES

No!

VALLERY

--Michaels.

JAMES (O.S.)

You have to listen to me, there is no way that...

VALLERY

(interrupts)

Those are the girls you hit?

(crying)

You took my girls!!

(angry)

You took my girls!!

JAMES (O.S.)

This has gotta be some mistake, there's no way..

VALLERY
Oakwood Dr. ... October 13th...

JAMES (O.S.)
Oh...

VALLERY
(crying)
It was you?
(beat)
(angry)
You took them from me?

JAMES (O.S.)
You have to understand. I just wanted
to be with my daughter.

VALLERY
(screams)
And I just want mine!!!

JAMES holds his head in his hand.

CLOSE ON JAMES' hand setting down an empty whiskey bottle.

JAMES (O.S.)
(crying)
I'm sorry! I'm sorry!
(beat)
Val, please forgive me.

VALLERY
No.

VALLERY holds the phone down while crying.

JAMES (O.S.)
(crying)
Please, Vallery. Don't leave me like
this!
(beat)
You said, every life has value! What
about mine?
(beat)
Vallery? I'm sorry. I didn't... I
would never...

VALLERY
You did!

JAMES (O.S.)
(crying)
I'm sorry.
(beat)
Val...?

VALLERY looks down at the phone in anguish.

She takes a deep breath and closes her eyes.

JAMES (O.S.)

Vallery, please don't just leave me
like this. I really don't know what
to--

VALLERY hangs up the phone. She starts to break down and cry.

She paces through the house, holding her hair, and looking back at the phone, with teary eyes.

She grabs the silver necklace and clutches it in her fist, just tightly enough to not bend or break it.

CLOSE ON the phone RINGING.

VALLERY stares at the phone in anticipation.

SLOW ZOOM on PHONE.

The phone stops RINGING. VALLERY rushes to the phone and grabs it after the last RING RANG.

VALLERY (O.S.)

(trembling)

Hello?

ABBY (O.S.)

Val?

VALLERY cries even harder.

VALLERY (O.S.)

No!

(beat)

No, no, no, no, no!!

(screams)

NO!!!

CUT TO BLACK

ABBY (O.S.)

Val?

END.