

YOU DO NOT RECOGNIZE THE BODIES IN THE
WATER

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Characters:

DR. WENDY LEONG, 30-45, a veteran in her field, she leads a field study conducted by [REDACTED] to discover and contain anomalous events; reserved and objectivist, little to no sense of humor, deeply cares about her assistant's wellbeing, but will never admit to it, [REDACTED].

*note to composer, leong is pronounced [li'ʌŋ]

MARIAH ATKINS, 20-30, a former inmate sentenced for arson [REDACTED] and current member of [REDACTED]; she is bound by the organization to be a lab rat in exchange for her freedom; somewhat sarcastic and curious to a fault.

INTERVIEWER, no age (older male), an interviewer for the organization for anything related to the most recent incidents of SCP-2316; [REDACTED].

CAROL, 50-60, an older woman who lost her only son in a car crash.

MARK, 20-30, a freshly graduated college student who lost his best friend to suicide.

THE BODIES (4), [REDACTED]

[you do not recognize the bodies in the water]

Synopsis:

Scene 1: The shore of a large body of water, there is a thick fog that coats the air with a reverent atmosphere; one month ago.

Mark is walking along the shore of a lake finishing up a phone call with his friends. He just graduated college and tells them he will meet up for the party later that night. In his hand are two graduation caps: one for him and one for his best friend Jacob who committed suicide. As he throws the cap into the water, he hears Jacob's voice call out to him. SCP-2316, an anomaly known as the Bodies in the Water, manifests itself in the voice and form of Jacob. In Mark's surprise and confusion, he is swiftly and violently drowned.

Scene 2: Present day, a stuffy and isolated lab with various medical technology and monitors; a large monitor shows the report of Mark, with a scientist prepping assistants on the case.

The newest assistant Mariah arrives late to her briefing on the latest case of a string of mysterious disappearances. Dr. Wendy Leong who leads the investigation heavily scolds her, and reminds her that her help in this case is what grants her freedom. Mariah denies the accusation of being an arsonist. After the debriefing, the two agree to go out to the lake as soon as dawn breaks.

Scene 3: Later that evening, at the lakeshore.

Carol, an older woman, parks her car and walks up to the shore to plant flowers on the spot where her son passed away in a car crash. This is the 5th anniversary of his death, and his birthday. As she leaves, she hears a voice that is unmistakably her son's. When she approaches the water, a slew of bodies appears floating close by, taking the form of her son. She joins them.

Scene 4: The same shore, the next morning.

Dr. Leong and Mariah arrive at the shore. After they repeat the precautionary phrase "I do not recognize the bodies in the water" to protect against the anomaly's influence, they begin scouting the area. To their surprise, they discover Carol's car just beneath the water, but no one body to be found. Mariah begins setting up recording devices while Dr. Leong discovers Carol's purse half buried in the mud on the shore. She digs through her belongings and finds a picture of her son but begins to see him as someone she knew from the past. Mariah asks what they plan to do with the anomaly once contained, and then suggests that they simply destroy it as soon as it appears to prevent further deaths. Dr. Leong lashes out at Mariah, insisting it must be

studied alive, and begins hearing the voices of the bodies. When questioned, the scientist pulls out a gun to end the conversation. They return to the lab without results.

Scene 5: The laboratory, that afternoon.

Back at the lab, Mariah continues questioning Dr. Leong, causing her to lash out at Mariah. The two fight over what should be done with the anomalies, and Dr. Leong threatens to send Mariah back to prison for life or to even be put on death row. Dr. Leong makes a snide comment about Mariah's parents, which causes Mariah to confess to her crimes and what really happened to them in the fire. Mariah throws hydrochloric acid from a vile at Dr. Leong and manages to escape the facility with her keys and gun, driving to the lake to face the anomaly herself.

Scene 6: The lakeshore, that evening.

Mariah arrives at the lakeshore with gun in hand, ready to kill whatever is causing people to disappear there. SCP-2316 manifests in front of Mariah in the form of her deceased parents. She enters the water and aims the gun at the bodies but cannot get herself to shoot her own family. She turns the gun on herself, but not before Dr. Leong rushes to the scene to rescue her. The Bodies manifest as Dr. Leong's past assistants whom she had done the same field study with but had all perished due to the Bodies. Dr. Leong apologizes to Mariah, taking the gun. Mariah runs away, repeating the phrase "You do not recognize the bodies in the water" before hearing a gunshot in the distance.

Scene 7: Undisclosed location, a cold and grey containment cell with a single desk and chair in the middle; a recording device and microphone are on the desk for an interview.

Mariah, completely soaked and shivering, is sitting at a desk in an interrogation room recounting her recent exposure and experience with SCP-2316, now known as an anomalous hivemind being which manifests as a score of corpses floating in a body of water. The interviewer sends over a pen and paper to sign and begins recording. Throughout the interview, the Interviewer tells Mariah to repeat the phrase "I do not recognize the bodies in the water." Mariah's sanity seems to break down as the interview goes on, influenced still by her encounter with the Bodies. Before Mariah is completely lost, she remembers Dr. Leong's sacrifice and is able to release herself from SCP-2316's influence. Now sober, Mariah demands to take on Dr. Leong's role as the head researcher.

Scene 1

The shore of a large body of water, there is a thick fog that coats the air with a reverent atmosphere; one month ago.

(Mark is walking along the shore of an isolated lakefront wearing a backpack and college regalia, talking on the phone)

MARK

I'm heading over later, don't worry.

I just needed some fresh air.

(pauses)

Yeah, it's Jacob.

Thanks...I'll see you there.

(hangs up the phone and takes out a second graduation cap from his backpack, there is a long and contemplative pause)

Dear Jacob, it's me, Mark.

It's been a while since we last spoke...

Me and the boys got some pretty great photos,
these school colors aren't half-bad, don't you think?

You won't believe this:

The commencement speaker fucking fainted!

Got up too fast! Ha ha ha...

(pause)

You should be the one walking out with us,
laughing with us,
helping us pre-game for the best night of our lives.

Jacob, remember Spring Break, junior year?

Drinking in Miami, you got a hurricane, and I got a beer.

You downed it so fast
your face kissed the floor as soon as you stood up.

All of that before...before...

Oh God, Jacob!

No, it's not your fault,
I should have been there for you.

Should have seen the signs.

Maybe if I called that night
to ask if everything was alright...

Here's to our graduation Jacob.

Class of twenty-ten forever.

To my best friend.

(takes out a beer from his backpack and takes a drink before emptying the rest on the shore)

BODIES

(one of them speaks in Jacob's voice from a distance)

Thank you, Mark. You were always a real one.

MARK

(jumps back in shock, quickly putting away the beer)

Who's there?

JACOB (BODIES)

What's the matter Mark?

Did you forget what I sounded like already?

MARK

(pauses)

No, I know that voice exactly,
but I needed to be sure.

It's you Jacob, it's you!

JACOB (BODIES)

It's been too long.

MARK

Am I losing it?

JACOB (BODIES)

Look at you.

You're graduated now.

You're a man, ready for the real world.

MARK

No, this can't be true!

I remember that day!

You went home for the holidays,
and then when everyone was out,
you took your father's gun he always kept in the closet,
...and...and...

JACOB (BODIES)

You know my voice, Mark.

I'm sorry, there was no other way.

MARK

(irritated, in denial) You must be one sick fuck
whoever's pretending to be Jacob!

JACOB (BODIES)

(Jacob's corpse along with other bodies float to the top of the lake and make their way to Mark, they all reveal various memorabilia such as his father's shotgun and pictures of them)
Do you believe me now?

MARK

Jacob...oh God, Jacob!
(Mark frantically wades through the water to get Jacob out)

JACOB (BODIES)

It's been a while.

MARK

How is this possible?
Am I dreaming?

JACOB (BODIES)

It's just me.
(he puts his hand on Mark's shoulder)

MARK

You're...warm!

JACOB (BODIES)

I'm so happy that you came to this special place.

MARK

What is this place exactly?

JACOB (BODIES)

Home, Mark. It's home.
Don't you feel it?
How the fog blankets us,
how it wraps its motherly arms around us,
nursing us back to health?
Surely you feel it too?

MARK

It's only our voices here,

the water comforts me...
...like wading through honey,
what is this Jacob?

JACOB (BODIES)
Don't be scared.
Only here can I exist with you,
look how serene it is.

MARK
I shouldn't be here.

JACOB (BODIES)
Do you doubt me?

MARK
No, I...this isn't right.
I can't stay here.

JACOB (BODIES)
Please, for me, just stay a while longer.
We have so much to catch up on.

MARK
(smiles)
We do, don't we...
Maybe this can be our secret place, and I can –
(Mark is suddenly and violently pulled underwater, the bubbles eventually stopping as Jacob and the rest of the bodies surround the spot where he drowned)

Scene 2

Present day, a stuffy and isolated lab with various medical technology and monitors; a large monitor shows the report of Mark, with a scientist prepping assistants on the case

WENDY

(speaking in front of a group of Disposables)

Mark Thompson, age 22, went missing one month ago, but we can presume him deceased. An empty beer bottle and a graduation cap were the only things left of him at the scene of his disappearance. This makes five cases in the past year. I think you can all gather by now the gravity of the situation –

(The Assistant, Mariah, runs into the room, out of breath)

MARIAH

Is this the debriefing room!?

WENDY

My mistake, *almost* all of you...

MARIAH

You're Wendy Leong, right?

WENDY

Doctor Leong.

MARIAH

My apologies, Doctor Leong!

WENDY

Name?

MARIAH

Oh! Um – Mariah Atkins.

(the entire room becomes silent)

WENDY

(with a smile)

Can everyone except for Ms. Atkins kindly leave the room?

(the rest of the assistants leave; Wendy approaches Mariah completely dropping her façade)

Are you really going to fuck with me on the first day?
What is your position at the lab?

MARIAH
(completely taken aback)
Wh-what?

WENDY
Your position!
I will not repeat myself.

MARIAH
D-disposable, ma'am—Doctor!

WENDY
Then what is your “name”?

MARIAH
D-209, I'm sorry!
It won't happen again!

WENDY
(utterly perplexed)
You're much too apologetic for an arsonist you know.
Not narcissistic enough.

MARIAH
Arsonists burn things down on purpose.

WENDY
Oh, you're saying you didn't want to light your parents on fire?

MARIAH
Don't you ever say that again.

WENDY
Easy. Remember why you're here.
It doesn't matter what happened.
If the law believes, and the public believes you did it,
then you can look forward to a lifetime rotting in a cell.
And that's where we come in!

MARIAH

(interrupting and imitating her as she says it)

That's where we come in!

Yeah, you said that in the training video.

WENDY

Oh, you watched it!

Maybe you won't die on the job after all.

MARIAH

What kind of...

Just call the others back. Let's get this moving.

WENDY

You mean the pencil pushers?

It's just you and me from here on out.

Here's hoping you won't die!

MARIAH

That's not reassuring...

WENDY

(with a smile)

One death is better than fifty.

MARIAH

I'm better off rotting in jail then...

WENDY

Yet here you are.

MARIAH

So, who's the guy on the screen?

WENDY

Mark Thompson.

Last seen one month ago,

but we can safely assume he's dead.

MARIAH

Cause of death?

WENDY

That's the question of the day.

He's not the first to go missing at that lake.

MARIAH
So he was murdered?

WENDY
But by *what*? Missing reports go back a hundred years.
This lake itself may be the source of the anomaly.

MARIAH
Anomaly? You think the lake itself took him?

WENDY
Something like that.

MARIAH
Unbelievable,
I signed up to find the goddamn Loch Ness Monster!

WENDY
You'll get used to it.
(fills two glasses of scotch and offers one to Mariah)
Here, I feel bad about what I said about your parents,
I don't need that weighing on my conscience.

MARIAH
Are you sure this is alright?

WENDY
You're gonna find out real soon
you have no say in anything here.
Bottoms up!
(they toast and drink)
We leave tomorrow, crack of dawn.
Don't be late this time.

Scene 3

The lakeshore, that same evening. Carol parks her car in the background, shining her headlights on stage and walks up to the shore where a roadside memorial with candles, flowers, and a picture frame can be seen not too far off.

CAROL

My boy, my son.
Happy Birthday Luke.
What a handsome man you'd have grown up to be.
Dad and I think about you every day.
He says it's too much,
but I still make your breakfast every morning, six A.M.
Eggs as the eyes with a bacon smile.
Just the way you like it.
Yet here you are,
reduced to a cross on the side of the road.
No mother should have to see what I've seen.
It happened so fast,
brutally swift,
a glance to you long enough to only see
blinding, rapturous lights.
No last words, no final breath.
Just me crawling out of a broken window
to the ambulance, and a confirmation of death.
Luke, my son, my little boy...
I'm sorry...this is too much on my soul.
Too heavy for your special day.

LUKE (BODIES)

It's...okay...mommy...
Don't...be sad...

CAROL

(shining her flashlight)

Who's there!
I'm sorry, I was just leaving!

LUKE (BODIES)

Don't...leave... please stay with me...

(Carol's car's headlights begin to flicker)

CAROL

I don't want any trouble,
I told you I was on my way!

LUKE (BODIES)

Please stay...mommy...

CAROL

Luke...it can't be!
Sweetie is that you?

LUKE (BODIES)

Mommy...please don't leave me again...

CAROL

Luke it's me! Mommy is here! *(pauses, then looks to the flowers)*

Ha...ha ha... *(her laughter turns to crying)*

What am I doing?

Your father was right Luke,
I should go home, and move on...

LUKE (BODIES)

(behind her, they grow in number; Carol shines her light on them, revealing their grotesque, decaying features)

Mommy...stay with us...forever...

CAROL

(drops her flashlight at the sight of them)

No! What is that!

LUKE (BODIES)

Mommy! Mommy!

CAROL

Stop calling me that!
Why do you have his voice!

LUKE (BODIES)

Stay! Stay!

CAROL

(running to her car, hastily unlocking it with her key)

You may sound like my little boy,

but I know a devil when I see one!

(Carol jumps into the driver's seat and tries to start the car with several unsuccessful attempts)

Fuck! Start, just fucking start!

(the car starts up, but Carol's demeanor drastically changes from frantic to a trancelike state)

Ha ha...ha ha...ha...Luke...my Luke...

LUKE (BODIES)

Mommy...mommy...

Come back mommy.

CAROL

Luke...

How could I forget?

Don't you worry.

Mommy's here...

Mommy's here with you forever...

(Carol calmly gets out of the car, and slowly walks into the lake, drowning herself as the car's headlights strobe; as she drowns the car completely shuts off, and then come back on in the silence afterwards)

Scene 4

The same shore, the next morning. Mariah and Dr. Leong emerge from her car.

WENDY

(Catches Mariah by the shoulder)

Don't forget the safety prep, 209.

MARIAH

Right.

"I do not recognize the bodies in the water, I do not – "

(breaks her concentration)

you sure we don't need gloves and shit?

WENDY

Just repeat the phrase.

MARIAH

How this is safety prep...

WENDY

Aiya...why are you so difficult?

MARIAH

You've kept me in the dark,

I'm rightfully concerned!

WENDY

Jesus Christ, were you like this with your parents?

Is that why you gave them an early cremation?

MARIAH

I told you, I'm no murderer.

WENDY

Sorry, I only remember the important stuff.

MARIAH

Like your weird "safety prep"?

WENDY

(appears a bit flustered, but then clears her mind)

"I do not recognize the bodies in the water,
I do not recognize the bodies in the water."

We're good to go.

(the two approach the shore)

MARIAH

What exactly are we looking for?

WENDY

A body, preferably, but it's too dark to see.

MARIAH

(stops walking)

Then why did we come this early?!

WENDY

The lake is prettiest at sunrise.

MARIAH

(takes a moment to process her words)

Are you messing with me?

WENDY

Not at all.

MARIAH

How...oddly wholesome of you.

WENDY

Did you think I dragged you out of bed just for kicks?

MARIAH

Yeah, kind of.

WENDY

(playfully) Tell me how you really feel.

MARIAH

(bewildered)

You've been lashing out at me since I arrived,
treating me like an untrained dog!

You don't even call me by my real name!

So *sorry* if I'm a *little* suspicious,

WENDY

(laidback)

Easy, easy.

When you first arrived,

I thought you'd be a stone-cold killer

who needed to be knocked down a peg or two.

Don't get me wrong, I don't fully trust you yet,

but you're a sweet girl.

Not at all what I imagined.

MARIAH

Again, oddly wholesome.

(pauses)

I thought you were a psycho,

(catching herself)

I *still* think you are.

WENDY

Uh huh?

MARIAH

I bet you even sleep in your lab.

WENDY

I was born here, facility hospital.

I have never known the world outside my lab,

except from old magazines

my mother brought home.

And things like this, *(motions vaguely around her)*

when people go missing.

She always told me

we are the heroes unsung,

soldiers without medals.

We don't get to watch your movies,

or taste your food.

But if people are safe, that was good enough for her.

And one day, on a dawn just like this,

she was taken away from me.

You could say I inherited the "family business",

though you can't just quit a job like this.

MARIAH

(awkwardly, a bit embarrassed)

Do you like your job?

WENDY

Enjoyment and fulfillment aren't requirements here.

MARIAH

I don't get you.

WENDY

You don't have to.

MARIAH

Let's say you could quit.

No murders, no anomalies,
what would you be doing?

WENDY

(pauses slightly to think)

When I was little,
my dream was to be a surgeon
like in those ER dramas.

MARIAH

No way, me too!

BOTH

Like in Grey's Anatomy!

(both laugh as the sun begins to rise)

WENDY

Here it comes! Just look
at that natural painting over the water.
Brushes of orange, crimson sky.

MARIAH

So still. No one around.

I didn't think I'd get a view like this again.

Thank you for this, Wendy.

(they kiss)

WENDY

This job has its perks, Mariah.

MARIAH

I'm not going home
after this is done, am I?

WENDY

You and me both.
Don't think about it too much,
time to get to work.

MARIAH

(quietly sets up equipment and sees Carol's car illuminated by the sunrise)
Did Mark have a car?

WENDY

(approaching Carol's car, then the lake)

Not in the report.

(she quickly backs away, releasing Carol's corpse which floats up, carrying her purse; Dr. Leong carefully retrieves the purse)

Another!

Looks freshly drowned.

(pulls out her ID)

"Carol Saunders"...

(takes a long branch on the ground and flips Carol's corpse to expose her face, Mariah looks and almost vomits from the sight)

...faces match, just barely from all the –

MARIAH

Please stop.

WENDY

You'll get used to it.

I've seen far worse.

MARIAH

(wiping her mouth, annoyed)

An accident?

WENDY

(approaches the roadside memorial and kneels down, checks the ID)

Don't know - this is her son's grave though.

MARIAH

How can you tell?

WENDY

Fresh flowers,
shallow footprints, and...

(takes out a picture of Luke from Carol's purse)

...a photo of her son.

(takes out tracking equipment and hands it to her)

Go, make yourself useful!

Set these up along the shore,
and if you hear a high-pitched ring,
run straight to the car.

MARIAH

(apprehensively places trackers along the shore)

You're quite familiar with all this,
yet I'm completely lost.

WENDY

The less you know the better...

MARIAH

Don't play games.
If I'm in danger, tell me...

WENDY

The less you know...

MARIAH

You can be a real pain, you know.

WENDY

Just like Nathan...

BODIES

Nathan...

MARIAH

Nathan? Who's that, your ex?

BODIES
Nathan...

WENDY
Nathan was my – oh god!

MARIAH
Your what?

BODIES
Remember...I was...

WENDY
Nathan...was...my...my...
No! Not now!

MARIAH
Wendy, you're scaring me.
What's gotten into you?

WENDY
(angrily) Shut up and do your job!

MARIAH
(setting up more, phased by Dr.Leong)
If we find your so-called anomaly,
we're making sure it never kills again, right?

WENDY
You're here to take data, that's all.
The less you know the better.

MARIAH
Give me a real answer!

WENDY
Our orders are to study it,
to know how it works.

BODIES
Why won't you remember me?

MARIAH
How many people need to die to get your precious data?

WENDY

(takes a gun out and points it at Mariah)

That's enough, 209!

You're here to follow orders!

That's all, Nathan!

BODIES

Nathan...remember...your sins.

Let us help you remember.

MARIAH

Wendy?

WENDY

(frantically to herself)

"You do not recognize the bodies in the water.

You do not recognize the bodies in the water..."

We need to go, *now!*

Leave your things and get to the car!

(They hurry back to the car as the alarm gets louder; Mariah looks back at the lake and sees a body appear from the lake approaching her slowly, they escape)

Scene 5

The laboratory, that afternoon.

MARIAH

What was that back there Wendy?
What did you see in that photograph?

WENDY

Watch yourself 209,
and refer to me as Doctor Leong.

MARIAH

That wasn't Carol's son in the picture.
Who was it? Who did you see?

WENDY

That's classified.

MARIAH

That's bullshit.

WENDY

Why do you want to know?

MARIAH

Whatever is killing these people,
this thing in the lake has you terrified!

WENDY

That's enough from you, you hear!

MARIAH

(musters the courage to speak)
I saw them too. The other bodies.

WENDY

What did you say?

MARIAH

Perhaps they were more victims.
But I felt them stalking me like an alligator
slowly drifting towards its prey.

WENDY

Repeat the phrase:
“I do not recognize the bodies – “

MARIAH

Enough with the phrase!
I need answers, Wendy!
You’re not telling me the whole story.

WENDY

Repeat it! That’s an order!

MARIAH

Why study it?
Why wait for people to die?
What does that accomplish!

WENDY

Know your place, *disposable*.

MARIAH

What the hell is your problem!?
One moment you’re showing me the sunrise,
and now it’s back to treating me like dirt!

WENDY

What happened between us at the lake wasn’t real.
You’re better off forgetting.
I am your superior!
And you are a disposable.
You’ll probably be dead by next week.

MARIAH

You’d be dead if I wasn’t there!

WENDY

Don’t make me write you up,
or better yet send you back to jail.

If you want to be a fuck up
like you have your whole life,
then keep talking!

MARIAH

(silent as if ready to cry, but instead has a fire lit inside her)

My father liked to hit me
whenever I screwed up.
But whenever he screwed up,
he would hit mom twice as hard.
And one day, he really screwed up -
he messed his whole life up!
That day he was fired
for threatening the new guy.
Had a broken bottle in his hand,
drunk enough to kill a man.
When he got home,
he had bourbon on his breath.
Mom was making dinner
when he strangled her to death.
I wanted it all to end.
I wanted to burn his whole world down,
and so, I did.
But I just couldn't get myself
to take his precious little girl.
That shame follows me like my own shadow.
I can still smell my father and mother,
The stench of their flesh turning to ashes.

WENDY

(in shock at Mariah's confession)

Why are you telling me this?

MARIAH

Because for some reason, back at the lake,
I was foolish enough to think
things would get better for me here.

*(Mariah tries to escape and struggles with Wendy before knocking her down, taking her gun
and escaping the facility; Wendy realizes Mariah has taken her firearm and chases after her)*

Scene 6

The lakeshore, that evening.

MARIAH

(arrives at the shore of the lake with gun in hand, the trackers are now silent)

Show yourself! I'm right here!

Human, animal, monster – I don't give a damn!

I saw you when we ran to the car.

You don't frighten me!

FATHER (BODIES)

What cruel words...

MOTHER (BODIES)

...to say to your parents...

FATHER (BODIES)

(bitterly)

...didn't we raise you better?

MARIAH

Mom!...Oh God, I –

No...I saw you both die!

I do not recognize the bodies in the water.

MOTHER & FATHER (BODIES)

What cruel words...

Have you no love for your own parents?

Have you no shame?

No remorse after all this time?

MARIAH

(to Father)

Remorse? Shame?

Is that what you tried beating into me all those nights ago?

I see your faces in my sleep,

your bodies engulfed in flames!

But I will never regret standing up to you!

FATHER (BODIES)

(arrogantly; approaching Mariah)

I see now what a failure I've been.

A proper child requires discipline,
a proper father demands respect!

MARIAH

(pulls out handgun)

You were never a proper father to me!

(fires gun at Father, but it appears to do nothing)

FATHER AND MOTHER (BODIES)

How dare you...

(they both approach Mariah, each dragging her slowly into the water)

Come back home...where you belong...

The warm embrace...water grave...

Join us and be whole again...

(as Mariah is lulled into the influence of the bodies, Dr.Leong rushes to the lakefront and wrestles Mariah out from the bodies)

MARIAH

(still in a stupor)

Wendy? How did you?

WENDY

(quickly grabs the handgun from Mariah)

Give me that before you hurt yourself.

You stupid child, you had me worried sick!

MARIAH

You're not mad?

WENDY

Oh, I'm fucking furious,

but we'll settle that back at the lab.

MARIAH

It's a date.

(more bodies emerge from the water, encircling them; Dr.Leong pushes Mariah out to the shore)

What are you doing?

WENDY

Run! Run till your knees give out.

You deserve a better life.

MARIAH
Wendy –

(Wendy pulls out her gun and shoots a warning shot to Mariah's right; they lock eyes one final time before Mariah understands and runs)

WENDY

Fuck me, right...it had to be you.

Maybe I was too harsh on you.

Oh Mariah, you never deserved any of this.

Not what your father did, not prison, not me.

If you hadn't come that day,

what would have become of me?

What would have become of you?

(looking at the bodies)

Matthew, '205'

Janine, '206'

Heather, '207'

Nathan, '208',

I haven't forgotten,

except what you told me long ago, mother:

"there is no such thing as a disposable life."

Perhaps I've always yearned for your freedom,

or maybe an excuse to die.

If this is punishment for my sins,

thank the Lord it's not you in there.

I hope you live a better life, Mariah...

(the scene shifts to Mariah who is running away while repeating the phrase before a gunshot is heard in the distance; she pauses, collapses in tears, and then continues running)

Scene 7

Undisclosed location, a cold and gray containment cell with a single desk and chair in the middle; a recording device and microphone are on the desk for an interview. Mariah is sitting in the chair, shivering, and completely soaked with only a thin towel to warm themselves.

INTERVIEWER

(nonchalantly)

Alright, let's get started.

Please state your name.

MARIAH

(startled by the voice on the intercom)

Wh-what's going on?

INTERVIEWER

Please state your full name and time of exposure.

MARIAH

My...name?

INTERVIEWER

(speaks something away from microphone to a co-worker; then to Mariah lightheartedly)

My apologies, an honest mistake.

D-Class personnel usually don't make it this far.

Please state your identification number into the mic.

MARIAH

Number?

(checks her lanyard and sees the number)

D-209. That's right, I was running...

I ran till I collapsed...because Wendy told me...

(Mariah dry heaves from remembering the prior events)

INTERVIEWER

D-209, acute amnesia noted...

Time of exposure?

MARIAH

Where the hell am I?

INTERVIEWER

(a sterner tone)

Date please. Don't make me do all the work.

MARIAH

J-June eighth...

INTERVIEWER

(slides a clipboard and pen through a slit in the wall)

Please sign this at the bottom. I will only ask you once. *(Mariah signs the paper)*

Let us begin: Do you know whereabouts of Doctor Wendy Leong? *(Mariah is grimly silent)*

Very well, please repeat the following:

"I do not recognize the bodies in the water."

MARIAH

(hesitant at first)

I do not recognize the bodies in the water.

INTERVIEWER

Good. Now describe the moments leading up to your encounter with the anomaly.

MARIAH

We left early, took the equipment, drove up to the lake, and...

(remains silent, on the verge of tears)

INTERVIEWER

Please, continue.

MARIAH

I scouted the area.

She said the lakeshore was the prettiest at sunrise.

INTERVIEWER

That is irrelevant to this case.

MARIAH

Well, what do you want to hear?

INTERVIEWER

I'm told there was an incident that afternoon.

MARIAH

We had a fight, that's all.
When we returned to the lab, I drove back to the lake.

INTERVIEWER

Why?

MARIAH

Why? To kill that...*thing* in the lake.
And then...and then...I saw it.

INTERVIEWER

What did you see?

MARIAH

(trembling)

I...I...it was them!
I swear to God it was my parents!

INTERVIEWER

Repeat the phrase now:
"I do not recognize the bodies in the water."

MARIAH

How long will I be kept here?
Ah! My parents! I need to see them now!

INTERVIEWER

You do not recognize the bodies in the water.

MARIAH

Fuck you! I'm tired of that goddamn phrase!
I know what I saw! Their faces, their voices –
They were real! They were real and I killed them!

INTERVIEWER

Who did you kill?

MARIAH

I should've been left to die.

INTERVIEWER

Did you kill Dr. Leong by leaving her to die?

MARIAH

(she stops her struggling and grows silent)

No...Wendy, she saved my life.
Even after she learned the secrets I'll take to my grave,
she saved someone like me.

INTERVIEWER

(regaining composure)

So, what will you do now, 209?

MARIAH

What will I do? It's still out there!
It must be wiped clean from the earth before it kills again.
I will finish Wendy's work!

INTERVIEWER

Bold words for a disposable, but know your place.

MARIAH

I know more about this than anyone.
I have seen it and lived.
I may be the only soul!
The lake, it takes hold of you.
It knows you better than you know yourself
And brings your soul to its knees.
Makes you gladly put yourself in chains
of things lost to oblivion.
It knows your whole life
and drowns you in your deepest longing.
And what I yearned for most
was for that little girl to bathe in the fire,
away from her father,
away from the pain of the world.
But her parents are gone,
and that girl is gone,
and Wendy is gone.
I will finish Doctor Leong's work,
or let me die!

INTERVIEWER

(a long pause; now growing with intrigue and delight)

Very well! Shall we continue? *(Mariah nods)*

Please state your name.

MARIAH

Mariah Atkins.

BOTH

I do not recognize the bodies in the water.