

SIDE: F 40s M 20s

## CHARACTERS

April Anderson, 40 s: United Methodist Minister, married to the Chief of Police

Zane, 24 – 28 years-old; a very troubled soul

Story so far:

After an horrific school shooting, Derek, the brother of April has captured and badly beaten Zane, the shooter, and brought him to the kitchen of April's house. She has persuaded her brother to hand Zane over to the police and he has left to get his truck and take Zane to the station. Zane is tied up, sitting on floor.

**Zane:** I've been to your church.

(April freezes.)

**Zane:** Maybe I went there for redemption. Maybe I just wanted to see you an' try to understand... no. Understand's the wrong word. Um, try to, try to feel your pain. I listened to you preach. For weeks after your daughter was killed in that shooting at her college. I saw you grow older, faster than you should have. You were devastated. But you said that you forgave the shooter. How can you do that? I mean, hell, why would you do that?

**April:** Holding on to anger will... (She pauses.) It would have destroyed me.

**Zane:** You were already destroyed.

**April:** No. I'm not having this conversation. You just worry about yourself and stay quiet. That's it! There's no more talking.

**Zane:** Your brother, there. Derek? He's right. There is no God. If there were, how could he allow me to do what I did?

**April:** As I told my brother...

**Zane:** You don't know.

**April:** I...

**Zane:** It's okay to say it. To say you don't know. None of us know anything, really. You know? We just pretend we do and make other's believe we have the answers.

**April:** I said I'm not having this conversation.

(April stands and busies herself with random kitchen work.)

**Zane:** Do you forgive me, Pastor?

**April:** It is what the Lord asks us to do. So, yes, I forgive you. I have to.

**Zane:** Even though I'm a monster?

**April:** You're not a monster. That's the easy way out. You are very much a human...

**Zane:** Oh, I am a monster, Pastor. You know when those little kids were crying, an' bleeding, an' wailing, it made me smile. Children are mean, you know. They're selfish.

**April:** I think you should be quiet, now.

**Zane:** One of those older girls, you know those older girls are the meanest creatures that ever walked the earth, she was lying on the floor...

**April:** Please, Lord, get this man out of my house.

**Zane:** Bleeding out, and crying for her mother and father. I wanted to watch her die, but I had to go 'cause I knew the cops would be on their way...

**April:** Derek, please hurry up and get off of the damn phone.

(Zane holds a moment and thinks.)

**Zane:** Why do you think your brother brought me here? I wonder why he would do that? Why would he bring me here, Pastor?

(April appears to be feeling nauseous.)

**April:** It doesn't matter; we're taking you to the police station and then that's that. You'll be their problem.

**Zane:** Do you think your daughter cried out for you as she bled-out on that concrete? Do you think the monster who killed her, the monster that you forgave, got the same satisfaction as he watched her die that I got?

(April puts her hand to her mouth and holds for a moment. She is about to throw-up. She quickly exits stage and vomits.)

**Zane:** What would you do if I told you that I was that monster... the monster that shot your daughter and eight others four years ago? Would you still forgive me?

**April:** (Off-stage.) Why would you say something like... (April vomits again.)

**Zane:** That's right, get all of that bad stuff out. All those bad emotions and feelings. They'll make you sick. That's called purging. I always had a crush on you daughter. Didn't know much about her, but I knew I liked her. Ever since high school. Yeah, we went to high school together. I know you don't remember me; I don't remember you much from back then, either. I just remember your daughter. Liked her so much, I followed her on to college.

(April enters the kitchen.)

**April:** You're the one Christy told me about. You're the one who wouldn't leave her alone.

**Zane:** Well, they say persistence is what makes the difference between winners and losers. Well, I wasn't goin' to be no loser, so I was persistent. But, she just flat out rejected me. Told me off in front of everybody, one day. Said she had enough of me followin' her around and askin' her out all the time. They laughed at me, her stupid friends. Just like they used to do in high school 'n' junior high. They weren't nice people. That's how I knew I had to do what I did. I was careful in how I planned it out. I was all, Lee Harvey Oswald with that shit, but I did it better than him. That's how I was never caught. I purge the earth of bad people, people who are unkind. That's my purpose in life, I realized. I regret nothin' and I would do it all again if I had to.

(April picks up her cell phone from the counter and places a call.)

**Zane:** Who, who you callin', there, Pastor?

**April:** Hello? Roger? (Listening.) Yes, I'm fine... well, no. No, I'm not, actually. (Listening.) It's about the man you're looking for. The shooter, yes. (Listening.) He's here, in our home. (Listening.) No, no, I'm okay, I'm not hurt. He's incapacitated. (Listening.) That's right, he's not a threat. Can you send some of the guys over as soon as possible? (Listening.) Roger? There's one more thing: he's going to need some medical attention. (Listening.) No, I don't think he's going to last long. He's bleeding out. I had to shoot him. (April disconnects the call and turns to face Zane.)

**Zane:** No... no. Wait, wait, wait, wait...

(Zane begins to wiggle and squirm and push his way across the floor to get away from April, who slowly and calmly follows him. He grunts and strains to move faster, but is encumbered by the pain in his lower leg and ankle, and is weakened by his loss of blood.)

**Zane:** No, no, no, no, no... I only did what I was meant to do, Pastor. It was my Calling. I only did what I was meant to do!

(April stops following him and watches as he squirms his way to the door.)

**Zane:** No, don't! Don't! You forgave me! You said you forgave me!

**April:** I'm leaving the forgiveness to God. You're His burden, now.

(April raises and aims the gun at Zane and fires. Zane cries out in pain, reaches out to her, and then his arm drops and he lies still.)

(April begins to shake. She drops the gun on the kitchen table and unsteadily takes a seat.)