

ECHOES OF MALLORY KAY

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Original Script

1. INT. BEDROOM - DUVAL HOUSE - MORNING

A PAINT BRUSH hangs inches away from a blank canvas from the hand of SAM (18), a thin, shouldered low young man, bags around his eyes, barely holding himself together. The easel stands in the corner of the room, surrounded by various paint supplies, a singular window sits behind it, the blinds closed tightly, letting only small beams of light to filter in.

Its opposite, sits a messied bed, its covers basically on the ground. An ALARM CLOCK BLARES to life on the nightstand next to it, causing Sam's unsure expression to falter, returning to reality, the canvas forever blank.

Moving along the dirtied floor to the nightstand, Sam knocks over a PICTURE FRAME, a photo containing a group of happy young adults, Damien, Theia, David, Artimis, Mal and Sam at its center.

As Sam hits the alarm clock off a plume of dust erupts from the nightstand.

JUMP CUT TO: SAM SITTING IN SCHOOL CAFETERIA

2. INT. CAFETERIA - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

The room is packed to the brim as incoherent, loud voices emanate from students. Sam sits back to the wall, far from anyone else, alone. He takes a bite from his slice of pizza as he slides to the floor.

Among the bustling crowd, Sam catches sight of familiar faces. DAMIEN (18), a shallow young man, imbuing a tough guy persona, stands with a group of jocks, smirking and obnoxiously loud. ARTIMIS (18), a charming, charismatic young lady, sits at another table, a group of girls chitter with her in close proximity. DAVID (18), a military cut young man always playing by the rules, dressed in a JROTC uniform, sits with his peers, silently conversing. Sam's gaze lingers on each for a moment.

As Sam finishes his pizza, his eyes drift to a sketchbook inside his backpack beside him. He hesitates a moment before picking it up. Flipping through its pages, he sees sketches of memories of him and his old friends; laughter around a campfire, faces twisted in anger, accusing fingers pointed in blame.

His gaze falls on a sketch of MAL (18), a beautiful young woman, intent on her future, the heart of any group, drawn out in intricate lines, distorting and reaching out. The shadows in the room seem to mimic her movements, looming over him. Sam's hand trembles as he closes the sketchbook, looking up into the crowd. For a moment, Mal stands at its center, a shadow, pointing, accusing.

Suddenly, the LUNCH BELL RINGS, snapping Sam back to reality, Mal gone. The cafeteria begins to empty as students head off to their next classes. Sam remains seated a little longer, the weight of his memories heavy on his shoulders.

Sam takes a deep breath as he gathers his things. As he stands he catches a glimpse of THEIA (18), a kind-eyed young woman, always taking the side of good. She stands across the room, she smiles a bright smile, talking to her group of friends. Sam stare a long moment at his old friend and for a moment she looks over at Sam, their eyes locking, causing Sam to look away and move with the flow of students out of the cafeteria.

3. INT. ART CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Students line tables, each set up with an easels and canvas. Paint pours from bottles, brushes stroke the paintings. Color spews from every inch of the scene. MR. GENEVIE (late 50's), the art teacher, awkward but poetic with his teachings, mingles around the room, giving each student a once over as they create their images.

MR. GENEVIE

Student! Remember, the showcase is tomorrow! I expect all of you to participate as it is in remembrance of your fellow art student, Mallory Kay.

He points over to a white board, a black and white poster featuring Mal is centered on the board. It states: IN REMEMBRANCE OF MALLORY KAY: 2005-2023; MAY SHE REST IN PEACE.

Sam, stationed in the far corner, away from everyone else, stands before his own easel, his brush at the ready, he stands still, staring at the white canvas. His SKETCH BOOK lays beneath him, on the table, unopened. His eyes shift down to it, expression pained, the ideas calling out to him. He pulls his brush away, hovering it above his COLOR PALETTE, different shades of gray in each pocket. A SLOW TICKING protrudes from the wall mounted CLOCK, Sam's eyes reaching up to look. Sam lets out a sigh, unwilling to dip into the colors, unwilling to paint.

Mr. Genevie walks over to Sam's station.

MR. GENEVIE

Sam, you...  
(pause)  
Haven't even started.

The CLASS BELL RINGS and students begin to pack up, Sam included.

MR. GENEVIE

Hold on Sam, I've noticed you've been distant these last few months, after, well...

Sam stiffens.

MR. GENEVIE

Look, the Kay's are going to be at this event. I know they expect to see at least one familiar face representing their daughter.

Sam looks down at his feet, staying silent.

MR. GENEVIE

The scholarship their giving to the winner can shape your future Sam. And as a senior, I want to watch you succeed and grow as a talented young artist. I hope you decide to come.

#### 4. INT. BEDROOM - DUVAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam sits in a circular ring of sketches, drawings and grayed paint blobs. It's too dark to make anything out, except the hauntingly distorted faces of Mal, all stretching, reaching out to Sam. His canvas, white, stands over him and the ring. Daunting, taunting, blank.

MEMORY FLASH: Sam, smiling, all his friends laughing around a campfire.

Sam picks up his brush, dipping it straight into a paint can. Grey.

MEMORY FLASH: The laughter turns into incoherent arguments, fingers pointing, accusing.

Shadows whisper as his brush touches the canvas, dark swirls in the making.

MEMORY FLASH: Sam pointing, accusing Mal.

Sam, deep in thought, looks at his unfinished painting. Horrified by what it shows.

MEMORY FLASH: The shocked faces of Damien, Theia, David and Artemis, fear in their faces.

Sam throws a cloth over his art, unable to finish. The movement sends Sam backward, causing him to knock over the photo of his friends. Happier times, vibrant with color.

MEMORY FLASH: All five friends look over the railing, facing downward to see the mangled body of Mal at the bottom of the cliffside.

Sam smiles at the photo, a CHIME emanates from his PHONE as a single tear rolls down his cheek.

ON SAM'S PHONE

The text message reads: "Hey"

Theia, a long stream of one sided conversation is shown as Sam opens up the message. He never response to any of her texts.

His fingers hover over the keyboard. He looks over at the draped canvas, an expression of unsure and uneasiness riddle his face.

Then he types.

SAM (TEXT)

*Hey*

5. EXT. PARK - NIGHT

Sam sits alone on a bench in a dimly lit park. His phone in hand. The faint glow illuminating his face. A line of streetlights cast long shadows across the empty pathways, creating an eerie atmosphere.

Theia walks down that path and towards Sam's bench. Her silhouette emerging from the shadows, though her face glows like a beacon of light.

THEIA

Hey, Sam.

Her voice is soft, unsure as she takes her place next to Sam on the bench. Sam offers her a faint smile, the conversation stalling due to uncertainty and lost time.

SAM

Hey.

Sam fidgets with his fingers, unsure how to continue.

THEIA

So... How've you been?

SAM

(softly)

I've been... Okay, I guess.

Theia nods, a kind smile, understanding in her eyes. She reaches into her bag and pulls out a small box.

THEIA

I, uh... I've been meaning to give this to you. It's nothing much and I know we haven't talked, any of us has really talked since...

She stops, holding out the box. Sam accepts, his expression one of curiosity with a hint of apprehension. Slowly he opens it to reveal a set of brand new paintbrushes.

SAM

(quietly)

Theia...

Sam smiles, and Theias smile broadens.

SAM

I... I can't accept these.

Theias smile falters.

THEIA

Why not?

Sam closes his eyes and sees Mal. Distorted like his sketches.

SAM

Mal.

Theia begins to interject.

SAM

(softly)

I can't paint... not after what happened. Every stroke, every color, it's all tainted by her memory. I see her face in every canvas, hear her voice in every brushstroke. I can't escape it, Theia. I can't...

Theia's expression softens, sympathy evident in her eyes as she reaches out to place a comforting hand on Sam's shoulder.

THEIA

Sam. I understand. I see her everywhere, she haunts me. But, I've learned or tried to learn to let go, what happened was a mistake.

SAM

A mistake? We killed her! We were suppose to stay together! Go to the same college, live in the same town! But we killed her!

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

And all because I couldn't see past  
her acceptance into some  
prestigious school.

Theia roughly brings Sam into an embrace.

THEIA

We didn't kill her Sam.

Sam begins to sob.

SAM

Yes we did, yes we did, yes we did.

THEIA

No! Sam, listen to me! We all got  
into an argument that day! We  
fought! There was no way we  
could've known we'd send her off  
the edge.

Sam seems to shrink.

SAM

Yes there was... We were her  
friends and we failed her.

Theia holds Sam closer.

THEIA

Sam, we ARE her friends, and  
blaming ourselves for that day  
won't bring her back.

Sam tries to pull away, his gaze locking with Theias earnest  
expression, tears leaking from her eyes too.

SAM

But... How?

Theia lets Sam go, enclosing the box of brushes in his hands.  
A moment of silence between them.

THEIA

We keep moving forward.

6. INT. BEDROOM - DUVAL HOUSE - NIGHT

Paint splatters everywhere as Sam sits in front of his  
canvas, darkness encloses the room, making it too dark to  
make anything out, the only noise; the vigorous BRUSHES of  
Sam's new PAINT BRUSH.

Sam, sleep deprived, gray, looks at his work. Shadows from  
the sketches of Mal whisper as he gets a good look at his  
work.

Tears roll down his cheek as a smile slowly forms.

7. INT. HALLWAY - HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Crowded by students heading to class, LOCKERS opening and closing with a CLANK. A banner above reads: MALLORY KAY MEMORIAL SHOWCASE TONIGHT.

Sam weaves his way through the crowd, his painting, encased and enclosed is held between his arm and his torso.

As he passes by familiar faces, there's a subtle shift in their expressions. Some offer nods of acknowledgment, others a faint smile of encouragement.

8. INT. ART CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

He stops as he enters the art room, students and staff setting up for the night's event. He unboxes his painting and holds it out in front of him, unsure on whether or not to enter it. Mr. Genevie sits at his desk, aware Sam entered the room.

MR. GENEVIE

Ah. Sam, You have an entry.

He smiles, getting up and walking towards Sam. He goes to take the painting out of Sam's hand, but Sam pulls away, uneasy in his movements. He looks down at his painting, his fingers tightening around the edges of the canvas. His gaze fixed on the swirling shades of gray, memories flooding his mind as he studies each brushstroke.

MR. GENEVIE

Sam, it's okay. You don't need to submit anything, it's up to you.

Sam's breath catches in his throat, wrestling with emotion. His guilt boiling back up, threatening to overwhelm him. Then, suddenly, determination sparks in his eye and he hands it over to Mr. Genevie.

SAM

I... I'll enter it.

Basically a whisper, but Mr. Genevie's face is plucked with shock, overlaid with an grandfatherly smile, supporting. Sam returns a weak smile.

9. INT. ART CLASSROOM - HIGH SCHOOL - LATER

Paintings shine atop easels, hanging from walls, all presented in museum-like fashion. Far in the back, Sam stands by his painting, it covered by cloth. Students, parents and viewers begin to crowd into the room. Mr.



Genevie brings in Mal's parents, MR. KAY and MRS. KAY (late 40s), two somber faced parents, both carrying the worlds biggest burden, ex-artists themselves.

The crowd begins to look at the various paintings, each depicting Mal. The Kays look at each painting with distinct value and sadness. Other parents offer the Kays words of comfort and support as they move down the line.

Their steps seem to echo in Sam's mind as they get slowly closer to his station. His FOOT begins to TAP repeatedly with a nervous tick. Then the Kays were upon him.

MR. AND MRS. KAY

Sam! It's good to see you.

The pair give Sam a warm smile, a smile of recognition, but Sam begins to shutter in their view, the guilt seeping back in as he looks into their faces.

SAM

Hi, Mr. And Mrs. Kay.

The pair clap their hands in glee and urge Sam to present his canvas.

Sam smiles at the crowd forming behind the Kays, sweat beads from his forehead as he grasps the edges of the cloth. He takes a deep breath and with a manic shake, he pulls down the cloth, revealing his painting.

On the CANVAS, a hauntingly beautiful depiction of Mal emerges. Her likeness, captured in intricate detail, her eyes holding a mixture of sadness and longing. Its background, a combination of colored swirls, conveying sorrow and happiness. A sense of moving forward.

The Kays stand, stunned a moment, their expressions a mixture of fascination and sorrow. The crowd, slack-jawed, hold their breath as the pair lean in examining the composition. Then the two turn to Sam.

MR. AND MRS. KAY

Thank you.

They nod in approval, both taking Sam's hand in a firm handshake. Mr. Genevie begins to clap and the crowd follows, erupting in applause.

Sam lets out a long breath. Relief washes over him as he looks from his creation to the crowd. The faces of his friends stand out to him, all aren't together, but each give Sam a nod of approval signaling their grief and joy with somber grins as they clap along with the crowd.

A sad smile lingers on Sam's face as he looks back up into his painting and the eyes of his past, a past he's finally ready to let go of.

## 10. EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - HIGH SCHOOL - EVENING

A game is being played on the field. Bleachers hum with excitement, jampacked by students from the two competing school, color coordinated, cheering for their teams.

Sam hides under the bleachers, watching as the game progresses. In his hands, he fiddles with a DOCUMENT, it reads: ART SCHOLARSHIP. Sam glances at it now and then, smiling.

THEIA (O.S.)  
Whatcha doin'?

Startled, Sam jumps, quickly ducking further under the bleachers. He peeks out to see Theia approaching, a playful smirk on her face.

THEIA  
Didn't expect to find you hiding  
out here.

Sam blushes, feeling caught off guard by Theia's unexpected appearance.

SAM  
Uh...

THEIA  
Mind if I join you?

Without waiting for an answer, Theia slides in beside him, making herself comfortable on the ground. She watches the game a moment before turning her attention back to Sam.

THEIA  
You win?

Sam nods, holding up the scholarship and Theia smiles.

THEIA  
That's great.

Sam smile back.

SAM  
Thanks.

They sit in comfortable silence, watching the game unfold before them. The cheering from the bleachers grow louder as a touchdown is scored. Sam begins to relax in Theia's presence as they sit together.

As they watch the game, Sam finds himself enjoying the moment, the cheers of the crowd blending into the background as he focuses on Theia's smile and the camaraderie between them. Suddenly, a loud cheer erupts from the bleachers above as another touchdown is scored.

Theia laughs, her eyes sparkling with excitement.

THEIA

Looks like our team's doing pretty well, huh?

Sam nods and smiles.

SAM

Yeah, seems like it.

They continue to watch the game together, the sounds of the crowd and the excitement of the game filling the air around them. For a moment, Sam forgets about his worries and simply enjoys the company of his friend.

**THE END**