



IN THE END

WRITTEN BY M. LATHROM

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FADE IN:

EXT. BUILDING - NIGHT

Over the ledge, the side of the towering skyscraper disappears into a distant point, like an endless road.

City lights gleam in the windows. Lights scurry down roads, going on without notice to what's above them.

The toes of white low-top chucks scoot over the edge.

DANNI (23) looks down over the edge, jittery with nervousness. Her loose flannel pajama pants and white shirt flap in the wind.

She leans over a bit too far, tips forward. A pulse of adrenaline stiffens her body. Her arms shoot out for balance. She stabilizes.

She closes her eyes, calms herself.

Then looks out at the city. It's huge, almost endless. A vast landscape of sharp skyscrapers and electric, pulsing roads.

She pulls off her necklace. Peers down at it in her hand.

CLOSE ON the gold horse pendant on her necklace. He tips her hand over. It drops. Disappears toward the ground below.

Danni takes a deep breath, lifts her right leg, puts it over the edge as if to step, then leans into it.

A slight scraping sound as her left leg leaves the ledge.

The side of the skyscraper and the surrounding buildings sweep by her like the walls of a tunnel. The dots of light on the street become headlights. The indistinct movement becomes people. The ground grows closer.

Danni's nervousness leaves. A look of sadness washes over her. The rushing air sweeps tears away from her face. She closes her eyes.

The sidewalk rockets toward her. Then:

INT. THERAPIST OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON Danni's mouth. She gasps for air.

A mechanical helmet attached to a leather chair covers the top half of her face. Red light emanates from beneath it.

The helmet goggles open. The spine attaching the helmet to the chair folds back, lifting the helmet off her face. As it folds back, two red diodes where her eyes were dim.

A glow of red inside her pupils fades away.

Danni's expression is one of total immersion. Not present in the moment.

She looks around as if waking. She locks on to something in front of her.

DR. MCMULLEN (45), dressed in modest business casual. He has thinning brown hair and a sweater vest. He pulls off his thin, wiry glasses.

DR. MCMULLEN

Danni. Danni, can you here me?

Danni lets out a deep breath.

DANNI

Yes, I... okay.

Dr. McMullen waits a moment for Danni to catch her breath.

DR. MCMULLEN

You took a big step today, Danni.

Danni stares off, deep in thought.

DANNI

I never... I never thought I could actually do it. I've fantasized, but didn't think... I didn't know it what it would be like to feel the end coming so quickly.

DR. MCMULLEN

And now that you have, how do you feel.

DANNI

I feel like I never want to be there again. Like it was some kind of morbid curiosity that drove me there.

DR. MCMULLEN

The fantasy of suicide versus the reality of suicide. The fantasy is the end of pain. The feeling you get when endorphins ease the stinging of a twisted ankle.

But if you ever did this, truly did it, you wouldn't be around to feel the pain end. And in that way, it never would.

Danni nods, accepting.

Dr. McMullen rises from his chair. Danni follows suit. He leads her to the door.

CLOSE ON the mechanical helmet. The red eye diodes flicker.

FADE OUT.

THE END