

THE LONG BLACK VEIL

Written by

Alexander Scott

1 INT. BACKROOM IN A BAR NIGHT

1

A woman frantically screaming and crying flails her arms as she runs into a locked door. Her face is bloodied and her shirt is ripped. Slamming her hands on the door, she lets out a high-pitched wail. A hooded man slowly walks into frame, approaching the woman from behind before he pulls out a knife, sliding it into the woman's back. She contorts in pain, as he pulls it out, he slams it into her side, again and again and again. Her lifeless body slides to the ground, but the attacker continues to turn her into a pin cushion.

After he is satisfied, the man looks up at the camera in the corner, and removes his hood. Smiling, he brings the knife to his mouth, sticking out his tongue as he starts to lick the blood off the knife like a child with a lollipop.

We slowly zoom out to reveal that this was footage from a cctv system in a local bar, being played on a small monitor in an **INTERROGATION ROOM MORNING**

JACOB, a nerdy but loyal lawyer, stands at the front of the interrogation room staring at the tv. HAYDEN, an extremely eloquent and well-liked marriage counselor, sits silently in an orange jumpsuit cuffed to the table. We notice that he is the same person we just watched murder the woman.

JACOB

First thing we need to do is get a solid alibi to put reasonable doubt into the minds of the jury. Where were you that night?

Jacob turns to look at the silent and emotionless Hayden. Hayden is looking down at the table, fidgeting with a small golden object, as Jacob turns around, he slips it into a pocket

HAYDEN

...

JACOB

Hayden, pay attention, this is serious. This is your life we're talking about here.

HAYDEN

How bad is it?

JACOB

It's pretty bad...but winnable.
Video evidence isn't cut and dry
evidence anymore, it could very
easily be deepfaked. We saw this in
the Summerhouse case. Computer
engineer pranked Walmart by placing
deepfaked footage into a cctv
system.

Hayden looks up from the table and locks eyes with Jacob for
a split second. We can see a faint glimmer of hope in his
eyes.

He quickly looks back down at the table.

HAYDEN

Forget it Jacob...There are so many
eye witnesses.

JACOB

Like I said, we just need a solid
alibi. Were you with anyone that
night?

HAYDEN

No.

JACOB

Ok, then where were you, did anyone
see you? If we can get any eye
witnesses of our own, that could be
enough.

HAYDEN

...

JACOB

Oh my God, Hayden! Just cooperate
please. No matter what you were
doing it cannot be this bad. We're
talking about death row for fuck's
sake.

Jacob is noticeably exhausted. The dark bags under his eyes
begin to quiver with indignation.

HAYDEN

...

JACOB

Say something for fuck's sake
Hayden! Silence is not going to
help!

HAYDEN
I'm sorry Jacob...

Hayden's voice quivers, showing emotion for the first time.

JACOB
ARE YOU FUCKING SERIOUS HAYDEN THI-

In the middle of Jacob's outburst, the guards bust into the room.

GUARD 1
Play time's over toots

Jacob juts himself between Hayden and the guards. Tears start to spill from his eyelids.

JACOB
10 more minutes! 10 more minutes!

GUARD 2
Nope

The two guards push Jacob aside and grab Hayden, unlock him from the table, and carry him away.

Jacob lunges at the guard, grasping at his shirt begging:

JACOB
Pleeeeaaseee!!!

Jacob's sudden advance was met with an elbow to the nose, which suddenly sends Jacob right to the floor.

As the door closes, we see Jacob's nose spurting blood, and a gnarly black eye already forming.

Jacob slowly picks himself up and drops himself into the hard metal chair with a thud. He pulls out a small folded black and white photo from his pocket

As blood drips onto the small, creased square, we see four smiling kids hand-in-hand

Jacob quickly gets up, carefully puts the photo back into his wallet, and rushes out the door.

2 INT. ADRIAN AND LISA'S HOUSE DAY

2

Adrian and Lisa sit together on a couch, holding hands as they methodically place jigsaw pieces into place on their coffee table.

Suddenly, there is a frantic knocking at the door, Adrian and Lisa both bolt up.

As Adrian looks through the peephole, he relaxes and lets out a breath,

ADRIAN

It's just J

As he unlocks the door, Jacob bursts in, and walks straight over to the coffee table, throwing a hefty amount of files directly on top of the coffee table, shattering the puzzle in the process.

Both Lisa and Adrian have a mixture of disgust and irritation on their faces.

JACOB

Ok, the footage is really bad, and
Hayden is STILL not saying a
goddamn word

At the mention of Hayden, Lisa's whole body tightens

JACOB CONT.

but I think we're making progress.

He pulls out some papers, and looks up at the two.

JACOB

What is it?

Adrian does a small motion with his hand towards the table, Jacob looks down at it

JACOB

Oh...Sorry about the puzzle--back
to Hayden-

Adrian's face changes to a look of contempt

ADRIAN

J, I think it's time that we all
take a look at reality. You have to
realize, there's no coming back
from this evidence. I mean, you
said it yourself; there's video of
him doing it...

JACOB

It's not him. I'm sure of it.

Adrian shrugs his shoulders

ADRIAN

I know...I'm as surprised as you are, but I just can't get over the evidence...and if he really didn't do it, why won't he say something...

JACOB

...I don't know why, but I know he didn't

ADRIAN

The video, J

JACOB

The video could be fucking AI. Come on Adrian, don't give in on me now. If Hay isn't gonna help I need you to! He is innocent!

When he says this, Lisa quietly turns around and walks upstairs to her room.

ADRIAN

I can't just disregard reality J.

JACOB

And you can't just disregard family Adrian! When we were new here and had no friends, he was there for us. We need to be there for him now.

ADRIAN

People change. You need to let go of the past, and move on.

At this point Jacob's face contorts into a snarl

JACOB

You're right, people do change. You are NOT the same person I knew in school. I don't know who you are, but you are NOT Adrian. You should be ashamed of yourself. You too Lisa! He's not just a friend...he's our family.

Jacob aggressively packs his things, throwing the small folded up picture onto the table and slams the front door.

Adrian sighs, looking back up, he notices Lisa is gone, and looks around.

ADRIAN
 Lisa? Lisa, where are you?

He hears a soft sobbing emanating from their bedroom. He runs up to investigate.

We see Lisa pull out a photo of the four smiling friends at her wedding.

This triggers a flashback.

We see High school aged Lisa and Hayden sitting alone together on a bench, surrounded by a green forest, overlooking a breathtaking view of their small town.

Hayden slowly slides his hand into Lisa's, playing with the small ring on her pinky finger.

Looking up, Hayden stares into Lisa's piercing blue eyes.

We then abruptly cut to the two of them worriedly looking from a distance at the shabby, small, and unkempt **DOORSTEP OF ADRIAN'S HOUSE**

3 EXT/INT. DOORSTEP OF ADRIAN'S HOUSE NIGHT

3

We see three police officers surrounding Adrian, one with his hand on Adrian's shoulder.

OFFICER 1
 I'm sorry Adrian

ADRIAN
 Both of them?
 (Through sobs)

OFFICER 2
 Do you have any other relatives?

ADRIAN
 No.

As we pull back from the scene, we see Hayden and Lisa standing just within earshot, eavesdropping on the conversation.

Lisa, overwhelmed by the stressful situation resorts to fidgeting with the small cross necklace around her neck.

HAYDEN
 Are you sure your parents are going to be ok with taking him in?

LISA

It will be best for him. He has nowhere else to go, and I'm the only one who has enough room.

HAYDEN

Yeah I know that, but this is a big decision.

LISA

We'll figure it out. My parents will have to make do, this is important to me.

Hayden puts his hand on Lisa's shoulder, looking into her eyes once more.

LISA CONT.

I need to be there for Adrian...I need to think of him first...

Hayden's face drops slightly, as he pulls his hand off of her shoulder.

Lisa watches as Hayden walks to Adrian to put a hand on the crying boy's shoulder.

4 INT. POLICE STATION NIGHT TO MORNING

4

We see that Jacob is sitting in front of a row of computers in a dark, high tech, sound-proofed room. We see a police officer standing in the doorway,

OFFICER

To search the criminal database, you just type the description in here, to look over the CCTV's I set them up for you in this folder here.

He hands Jacob a key.

JACOB

Thanks.

We see a clock in the right side of the desk, and it shows 5:00 PM.

We cut and see that the clock shows 12:00 PM. We see Jacob, who is tired and barely awake, lazily scrubbing through the timeline, suddenly widen his eyes and lean in.

On the screen, we see that upon zooming in on the footage, there is a small purple birthmark on perpetrator's neck.

He quickly searches the known criminal database for someone with similar characteristics to Hayden with a birthmark on his neck. The search returns no results.

Frustrated, he returns to the video.

We see Jacob asleep on the keyboard in front of the computer. We see that the clock reads 6:00 am. He jerks awake to the sound of a notification on his phone.

It reads "Icelandic Family Reunion March 17"

This triggers a flashback, transitioning to a newspaper with the same date-

5 INT. JACOB'S CHILDHOOD HOME MORNING

5

We see child Jacob walk into the kitchen, and on the table sits a newspaper with the headline, "Another Grizzly Murder"

Breaking news, another two people
have been found murdered.
Investigators think it to be
connected to the string of murders
around the country. Three
eyewitnesses place the suspect at
the scene, but video footage places
him three hours away at the same
time on a business trip.
Investigators don't have an
explanation, and the locals believe
it to be the work of the Eigi
Einhamer--

Child Jacob's mom walks into the room

JACOB'S MOM
What are you reading?

CHILD JACOB
Is the Einhamer real?

The young mother's demeanor suddenly shifts. She becomes serious and leans close to Jacob's ear.

JACOB'S MOM
Yes, is the newspaper saying
something about him?

CHILD JACOB

Yes, they say he could be the
culprit of a murder.

At this, Jacob's mom grabs the newspaper from his small
hands,

JACOB'S MOM

Let me see what they are saying.

After a moment of reading

JACOB'S MOM (CONT'D)

Sounds about right. I think they
are probably right. Honestly, it
reminds me of this one time when I
was a child when I saw the
Einhamer.

CHILD JACOB

You saw them?

JACOB'S MOM

Yes. When I was young, the town
mayor was a very bad guy. He was
known for doing bad things to
little girls, but since he was
mayor, he was paying the police
chief off to not look into it.

JACOB'S MOM (CONT'D)

It just so happened that I lived on
the same street as Mr. Police
Chief. Well, one night, while the
Mayor was giving a public speech, I
saw him walk down our street and
into the Chief's private house, and
the Chief's security cameras did
too.

JACOB'S MOM (CONT'D)

Well, the Chief was stabbed
thirteen times by the Mayor. Proved
by eye witnesses and camera
footage, yet, at the same time,
thousands of eye witnesses and
cameras placed him at the public
speech.

CHILD JACOB

How could he be in two places at
once?

JACOB'S MOM

The Einhamer takes the physical appearance of the victim, and does bad things to other bad people in their name.

CHILD JACOB

Are you sure you saw the Einhamer? Maybe that was truly the Mayor.

JACOB'S MOM

I am sure. I will never forget, he had a purple mark that disappeared as he walked by, his smell was...we could smell him from down the street. And the authorities say that he stabbed the chief with his left hand, but the mayor was right handed...

Jacob's father walks into the room, seeing what is happening, he slowly sneaks up behind the two and yells

JACOB'S DAD

BOOOO!!!

The two shriek in unison,

Chuckling, Jacob's dad asks,

JACOB'S DAD

Is momma telling ghost stories again?

JACOB'S MOM

Noooo, these are real stories...

Jacob's dad shoots her a look

JACOB'S MOM

Alright fine, there may have been a bit of exaggeration, but I swear they are real.

Noticing that the young boy is still upset, he leans over and says gently

JACOB'S DAD

There is no need to worry buddy, the Einhamer is not real. He is what you call a folk tale. Have you heard of the boogiemer?

CHILD JACOB

Yeah.

JACOB'S DAD
Same thing. A fictional thing that
mommies tell their kids so that they
don't misbehave. She's just trying
to scare you.

He says as he gently puts his arms around her shoulders.

JACOB'S DAD (CONT'D)
And that's why we love her, she
keeps us in line.

The two pull together and kiss.

CHILD JACOB
EEEEEEWWWWW!!!!

Child Jacob recoils in disgust.

All three burst into laughter.

JACOB'S DAD
You better come visit us when we're
old.

6 INT. POLICE STATION MORNING

6

Back in real time, Jacob smiles a nostalgic smile when
looking at the notification on his phone.

JACOB
It will be nice to see you guys
again.

Shaking his head and sighing out of frustration. He packs up
and leaves.

7 EXT. SUPERMARKET MORNING

7

Jacob pulls into an empty alleyway adjacent to the
supermarket. He carefully exits his car. We watch as he peaks
his head around the corner of the alleyway, looking at the
taped-off parking lot of the supermarket.

He notices one police sentry on either side of the parking
lot, guarding the crime scene.

He quickly rounds the building and creeps to the backside of
the supermarket, in an attempt to sneak into the building
without being seen.

Looking around for an opening, Jacob notices an open window.

He struggles to jump up and reach the ledge, but after a couple of tries, he makes it.

Crawling through the window, he drops to the floor.

Off to his right behind a pillar, he sees a man. Slowly, he sneaks behind a large metal barrel. Leaning his head over, he looks around the corner, trying to get a good look at his face.

The man, seemingly looking for something turns his head toward Jacob.

Jacob, startled, sees that it is Hayden.

Dropping his phone, Jacob yells out:

JACOB
Hayden? How did you get out?

The man, being alerted to Jacob's presence quickly turns and runs out of the building

Jacob realizes that this is not Hayden and must be the murderer

JACOB
Hey! Stop! You are not supposed to
be here!

The man quickly runs out the back door.

Jacob springs into action, chasing after the man, hot on his heels.

Weaving through small alleyways, the chase spills out onto the street.

When Jacob finally catches up, he sees the man pull his hood up, approach a bus stop, and sit down on the bench, next to some strangers.

Jacob charges at him, grabbing his hood from behind and pulling it back.

JACOB
YOU!!! You were the one that
tampered with the cctv footage!

The face that is revealed by the hood, was one of a completely different person. An old, bearded man with a prominent mole on his left cheek, sat bewildered, looking up at Jacob.

JACOB
Y...y...you...you

OLD MAN
I...I don't know you son.

The two people sitting at his side stood up, approaching Jacob.

STRANGER 1
Hey man, leave him alone.

STRANGER 2
Wait, you're the crazy guy's lawyer aren't you?

STRANGER 1
Yeah, how do you sleep at night. Do you seriously believe that asshole is innocent?

STRANGER 2
Ha!

JACOB
W...W...What...He is innocent.

STRANGER 1
Holy shit. You're just as crazy as he is then.

Jacob, slowly turned and began to run away towards his car. He lost his entire grip on reality as he knew it.

No longer did he trust what he thought, what he saw.

8 INT. JACOB'S HOUSE MORNING

8

Jacob enters through the front door, dejected. He slowly walks to his couch and drops himself onto it. He reaches underneath the coffee table in front of him grabbing a photo book, and begins to flip through it, reminiscing over all the times he's had with Hayden. After a little while, he puts it back and turns on the tv.

He flips to the local news channel

NEWS CASTER

Breaking news, the three women killed have just been found to be involved in a white-collar extortion attempt. Investigators who previously thought the victims were unrelated, discovered that they all worked together under a large umbrella company...

Jacob leans forward, intrigued. This triggers the words of his mother to play in his head

We cut to the same flashback from earlier in **JACOB'S CHILDHOOD HOME**

CHILD JACOB'S MOM
...there's no need to worry, he only goes after bad guys.

We cut back to realtime in **JACOB'S HOUSE**

Jacob sprints to the door, and slams it behind him, only to burst through it once more to grab his keys from a table near the door.

9 INT. POLICE STATION MORNING

9

We watch as Jacob frantically runs into the building. Out of breath, he pants to the receptionist, a heavy set older lady with a thick southern accent, his name:

JACOB
My...Name is...Jacob, and I was just here...looking at the cctv footage...

RECEPTIONIST
Yeah honey, I remember you. You were just here. How can I help you?

JACOB
I need to get back in there.

RECEPTIONIST
Okay, you just catch your breath, I'll go get Officer Ramirez.

We see Jacob quickly trying to wipe the sweat off his brow with his tie.

OFFICER RAMIREZ
Ok boss, you'll be in the same room again, room three.

JACOB

Thank you
(Breathlessly)

We see Jacob throw himself down into the chair in front of the monitors. He quickly scrubs through the footage of the bar stabbing once more. Going further back than he previously did.

Jacob leans into the monitor, getting so close his nose is practically touching the screen.

On the screen, we see Hayden sign the bill with his left hand, but as Jacob scrubs through the timeline, he pulls out the knife in his right hand.

JACOB

A-Ha! I got you now you bastard.

Quickly, Jacob writes this down, and jots down the timecode next to it.

Jacob gets up, grabs the note, and runs toward the door, mumbling as he runs:

JACOB

Fucking investigators. Didn't even know that Hayden is right-handed. How would he sign a bill with his left hand? Idiots.

10 EXT/INT. NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE EARLY EVENING

10

We see Jacob in his car speeding, flying down backroads. We cut to him pulling over in front of a house, as he sprints toward the door, he pulls out a slip of paper and crosses off a name.

We transition into him sitting down on the couch asking the man about the night of the stabbings.

JACOB

Please state your name, and where you were on the night of the stabbings.

MAN

Micheal Strick, I was at the supermarket at the time of the stabbings

JACOB

Did you see the assailant?

MAN

Yes, I saw him grab one of the girls and take her back behind the employees only section.

MAN (CONT'D)

When I walked back to confront him I saw her lying in a pool of blood, and he rushed past me and ran away.

JACOB

Did he have weird markings on his skin, was he left-handed, or have a bad smell?

MAN

Yes! He smelled horrible. Like an animal, I just wrote it off as something that I imagined though. Is there something to that?

JACOB

Thank you that's all I need.

MAN

What's going on? What's all this about--

Before he could finish, Jacob swiftly gets up and exits the door.

11 EXT/INT. JACOB'S HOUSE NIGHT

11

We cut back to Jacob, frantically running out of his car, dropping papers all the while. He is simultaneously speaking into his mini pocket recorder. He is speaking so fast, it is borderline unintelligible.

As he enters his house, he rushes over to his computer and starts hammering away furiously at the keys, drafting up a legal document.

In the background, we hear his TV playing the local news channel.

POLICE CHIEF

It was a shock to all of us who knew him. He was a pillar to the community, but it is obvious that was not who he really was.

At this, Jacob suddenly stopped typing to listen to the statement.

POLICE CHIEF CONT.

We have closed this investigation,
and have no other suspects. There
is no need for further
investigation, we already have the
truth.

At this, Jacob shot up from his seat in front of the
computer, stormed over to his tv set, screaming:

JACOB

The truth?! What the fuck do any of
you schmucks know about the truth?!
You don't know the truth, you don't
care about the truth! you just want
someone to blame, you lazy
ASSHOLES!!!!

Shaking in rage, he grabbed a chair from the media room, and
hurled it at the screen. Upon impact, the tv disintegrated
into a mess of glass, and circuit boards.

Jacob, standing over the mess he just created, was panting in
fury. Suddenly, he straightens up and jogs over to his
computer, and prints out the document he just typed up.

12 INT. VISITATION ROOM EARLY MORNING

12

We cut to Hayden longingly looking at an unknown visitor.

We do not see who it is, but we see from behind that the
person is a woman with long flowing hair.

UNKNOWN WOMAN

I think he is going to find out,
what are you going to do?

HAYDEN

I don't know...Maybe I should tell
him, that would legally stop him
from sharing it due to attorney-
client privilege--

The unknown woman cuts him off-

UNKNOWN WOMAN

I don't want you to die...

HAYDEN

There's no other way...

Tears begin to stream down his face.

HAYDEN
This is yours...

Hayden attempts to hand her a small golden cross necklace.

UNKNOWN WOMAN
Keep it.

The unknown woman stands up, but before we can see her face-

13 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM MORNING

13

Jacob bursts into the room, grinning ear to ear. We see Hayden calmly sat at the table, hands clasped together in prayer, head bent over the table, tears in his eyes.

Jacob throws down the newly created documents, the second it hits the table, Jacob begins to talk at a million miles an hour.

JACOB
I figured it out Hayden! I figured
it out. You're gonna be alright. I
got the eye witness that we needed!
I told you we would!!!

HAYDEN
...

JACOB
Did you hear me, Hayden? I just
said we did it. I think you're as
good as free!

HAYDEN
...

We can slowly see the smile fade from Jacobs face. He can tell something isn't right. He speaks again, this time in a softer, more subdued tone.

JACOB
Hayden. I just need you to sign the
paper, it will rescind your
confession, that we can go to
trial...

Sullenly, Hayden responds.

HAYDEN
It can't go to trial.

JACOB

What are you saying?

HAYDEN
I'm not signing the paper.

JACOB
Why?!

Jacob's tone begins to rise.

HAYDEN
I can't.

JACOB
What the fuck do you mean you
can't?!

HAYDEN
...

JACOB
Hayden, sign the damn paper!!

HAYDEN
No.

JACOB
Hayden! Goddammit please!!!

Jacob's voice begins to crack as his voice raises higher.

HAYDEN
NO! FOR THE LAST TIME NO!

Jacob stands there with a look of pure shock on his face. He is taken aback by the uncharacteristic outburst by Hayden.

After a moment of silence.

JACOB
Why?
(Softly)

HAYDEN
I was with Lisa.

JACOB
So what. She's your friend she will
testify--

HAYDEN
I was having an affair with her.

After a long pause.

JACOB

Oh God.

(Getting choked up)

HAYDEN

Yeah.

JACOB

Well...just lie, say that you guys were just going shopping or something--

HAYDEN

Won't work...She lied to Adrian about being at the office. We were in a hotel room together, cameras would place us there if attention was drawn to it. No matter how we spin it, Adrian will find out, and it will kill him.

After a moment of silence.

HAYDEN CONT.

I don't want any more attention on this than there already is. I'm just gonna take the fall.

After another moment of silence.

JACOB

Adrian is a tough guy--

HAYDEN

No. Lisa is all he has, I am not gonna be the one to take that away from him. I wouldn't be able to live with myself.

JACOB

Hayden... Please...there's gotta be another way

(Through tears)

HAYDEN

My life would be ruined too. I was seeing them professionally as a couple. If it came out that I cheated with a client, my career would be over.

JACOB

So you would rather die? You're just gonna fucking kill yourself?!

HAYDEN

It's my decision J. You can't do anything about it - attorney client privilege.

JACOB

You're a coward Hayden. A fucking coward!

Jacob gets up and storms off.

14 INT. COURTHOUSE DAY

14

We see Jacob, sitting down in the court, tears streaming down his face, as we hear the judge slam the gavel three times.

We see Adrian sobbing, but trying to act like he's not crying. Trying to keep a straight face through the streams of tears.

We see Lisa staring straight-faced off into the distance. A dead expression on her face. Her eyes are full of tears.

We cut back to Jacob, whose jaw clenches, and face contorts into a snarl at the sight of Lisa.

15 INT. DEATHROW DAY

15

We cut to Hayden being walked back into a small cell, and we watch as he gets strapped into a metal chair.

We intercut to a man in a beat-up car at **THE PARK**. He is on the phone-

HOODED MAN

I know honey. Hang in there. Just keep her comfortable. I promise I'm close. I've got 5,000 so far, all we need for her first dose is 7.5. Alright, I've gotta go, I love you.

He hangs up the phone, pulls out a photo of a small bald girl, with bandages on her arms. He kisses it, and places it back in his pocket.

He cautiously gets out of the car, looking around as he crosses the street.

He walks up to an anxious kid no older than 15 years old, tapping his right foot as he sits waiting on a park bench. The two shake hands, and we see an exchange take place.

The hooded man walks back to his car.

The kid walks in the opposite direction. He pulls out a phone, and dials a number.

NERVOUS KID
I got the stuff.

UNKNOWN CALLER
Good.

NERVOUS KID
How long will she be out for?

UNKNOWN CALLER
Long enough.

NERVOUS KID
Good. This is going to be a great first date.

UNKNOWN CALLER
You're fucked up you know that?

We see another hooded man step out from behind a bush as the nervous kid passes, following him from behind.

We cut back to the **Deathrow**

We see Hayden grimace as a colored liquid enters into his veins. At this moment, we cut back to **THE PARK**

We see the mysterious man following the nervous kid pull off his hood, and we see his face suddenly morph from Hayden's face to the face of the drug dealer we just saw.

Smash to black. The end. Credits roll.

Post-credit scene:

16 EXT. GRAVEYARD NIGHT

16

We see Lisa in a long black veil crying at Hayden's grave, as the song "Long Black Veil" by Johnny Cash plays.