

ECHOES OF MALLORY KAY

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Original Script

2024-2025

1. INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - UNKNOWN

A **PAINT BRUSH** trembles inches away from a dark canvas. It's tip never touching the black and grey abyss - frozen in hesitations. A chill creeps through the dimly lit room.

VOICE (O.S.)

Sam...

SAM (20), a done, overworked, bags under his eyes young man, sits before an easel, his hand trembling, gripping the brush. His breath catches at the sound of the voice, he turns his head slightly reluctant, yet compelled.

The shadows shift in the room.

VOICE (O.S.)

Sam...

Sam grips tightens on the stool.

QUICK FLASH: A pale, ghostly figure stands in the corner.

Sam's eyes widen.

QUICK FLASH: The ghostly figure is closer, still barely visible.

VOICE (O.S.)

Sam...

Sam shuts his eyes, trembling.

The ghostly figure stands inches away from Sam.

VOICE

Look what you did to me S-

CUT TO:

2. INT. LECTURE HALL - UNIVERSITY - DAY

A sharp **RINGING** pierces the silence.

Sam's eyes snap open, his breathing is erratic, fingers digging into his chair for dear life.

The world around him slowly comes into focus-a classroom, the dull hum of the students chatting and sketching. The ghostly presence is gone.

Sam blinks rapidly, disoriented. A bead of sweat slides down his temple.

TEACHER

-AM!

Sam jerks his head towards him. Too fast.

He sits in a university classroom, the seats empty besides him. **MR. GENEVIE (30s)**, the art professor, an awkward but poetic kind of man, stands at the front of the room, mid-lecture.

Students glance over at Sam, some amused, others concerned.

MR. GENEVIE
You with us?

Sam swallows hard, nodding.

SAM
Y-yeah... Sorry.

Mr. Genevie gives Sam a tight smile and nods before continuing his lecture.

MR. GENEVIE
You see, students, Pablo Picasso once said, "Art is the lie that enables us to realize the truth."

He paces in front of the room, gesturing with his hands.

MR. GENEVIE
Every brushstroke, every shade of color, is a reflection of something within us. Our emotions, our memories, even our regrets.

Students eye the clock, and begin packing their bags.

MR. GENEVIE
That's class. Remember the showcase is tomorrow, and I expect each and everyone of you to participate.

He clicks to the next slide of his presentation. It reads: REMEMBRANCE OF MALLORY KAY ART SHOWCASE. A picture of **MALLORY (20)**, a beautiful young woman, looking towards her future, yet haunted by something.

Sam winces seeing the photo. Denial she's gone.

MR. GENEVIE
It's in remembrance of your fellow art student, Mallory Kay. A talented young artist, taken too soon.

Sam packs his bags, then shuffles out of the room.

3. MONTAGE:

-Sam walks through the campus hallways, a bubble of empty space around him, yet the halls are crowded.

-Sam sits at lunch, seats beside him empty. Cliches around him chatter away. Loud.

-Sam walks through the campus courtyard. Students pass by in groups, laughing and chatting. Sam walks alone, head down.

-Sam sits in the campus library. Sketchbook open. The pages are blank.

-Sam in a lecture hall, back row, slouched. Invisible.

-Sam sitting on a bus stop bench. Either side, empty. Alone.

MONTAGE END

CUT TO:

4. INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - EVENING

A PHOTO sits atop Sam's nightstand next to a few knick-nacks and his phone. The photo depicts six friends, smiling, happy, hugging. Damien, Artimis, David, Theia, Sam and Mallory, whom is at the heart of the group.

Sam paces the room, surrounded by sketches, all variations of the same face. Mallory's. Some serene, some distorted, reaching out as if trapped inside the paper. In the corner, his unfinished painting looms above them all.

VOICE (O.S.)

Remember what YOU did to me...

Sam grips his paintbrush. His hands hovering over the grays. His mind spirals-

MEMORY FLASH: Laughter around a campfire. Six friends smile at chat with each other. Damien, Artimis, David, Theia, Sam, and Mallory.

Dip. The brush meets paint.

MEMORY FLASH: Accusations. Yelling. Fingers pointing.

Swirl. Dark strokes bleed across the canvas.

MEMORY FLASH: Mallory standing at an outlook. A scream, then silence.

Sam flinches. His brush slips, smearing the paint. His breath stutters. He yanks a cloth over the canvas, shutting it out. Haunted by the colorless ghost.

A CHIME erupts from his phone. His eyes flicker over to the nightstand, to the photo, then to the screen.

ON SAM'S PHONE: A text message reads: "Hey"

It's from Theia.

Sam walks over to it. Longing as he sees the name. A glance up at the photo, the smiles and joy, and reaches for his phone.

It's the latest in a long string of unanswered messages. His fingers hover over the keyboard for a moment, then he types.

SAM (TEXT)

Hey

5. **EXT. PARK - NIGHT**

Sam sits alone on a bench, the glow of his phone illuminating his face. A line of streetlights cast long shadows across the empty pathways.

FOOTSTEPS approach. **THEIA (20)**, a kind-eyed young woman, always looking towards the light, emerges from the darkness. A hesitant smile on her face.

THEIA

Hey Sam.

Her voice is soft and unsure as she takes her place beside Sam.

Sam offers her a faint smile in return.

SAM

Hey Theia.

Both are unsure how to continue. Silence lingers a moment.

THEIA

So... How've you been?

SAM

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 mean meaning to give this to you. It's... I know we haven't talked recently-any of us really haven't talked since...

She stops, holding out the box to Sam.

Silence between them as Sam accepts the box, a hint of apprehension.

SAM
(puzzled)
I...

Theia stops him, gesturing he opens the box.

Slowly Sam opens the box, revealing a set of paint, brushes and various other materials. Used, but loved.

Sam's eyes widen, understanding comes to him. He shuts the box quickly.

THEIA
(pleading)
Sam!

Sam pushes the box back to Theia. She refuses. Tears forming in both their eyes.

SAM
I don't want them.

THEIA
Sam, please.

They pause.

SAM
Those were hers.

THEIA
Sam! I've seen you in the halls,
I've seen you walk around like a
ghost! You're a shell of yourself!

Sam closes his eyes.

QUICK FLASH: Mallory, holding out her brush, painting. Sam next to her, both laughing.

Sam takes a deep breath.

QUICK FLASH: Mallory distorted like one of his sketches.

SAM
I... I can't. I can't paint. Not
after what happened. Every brush
stroke, every color that touches my
canvas, it's all tainted by her.
Her memory. I see her face in every
picture, hear her voice in the
recesses of my mind. I can't Theia.
I can't escape her. Not like you or
the others did.

Theia's expression softens, sympathy evident. She reaches out and pulls Sam in for a hug. Comfort either of them have had in a long time.

THEIA

Sam. I understand. She haunts me too. Everywhere I go, she follows me like a ghost. She haunts the other too. We only act like she doesn't. I've learned or tried to learn to let go. Mallory was my best friend. And what happened to her was none of our faults.

Sam breaks lose from her embrace.

SAM

None of our faults?! We killed her! We were suppose to stick together! Go to the same college, live in the same town! But... But we failed her! And I let her go! I killed her.

Theia roughly brings Sam into an embrace.

THEIA

Sam! It was none of our faults. Not mine, Damiens, Artemis or David. And definetly not yours.

Sam full on is sobbing.

SAM

Yes it is. Yes it is. Yes it is.

THEIA

No! Sam, listen to me! We all got into an argument that day! We all 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. We knew what she was going through at home. We were her friends and we failed her.

Theia holds Sam closer. Silence between them.

6. EXT. CAMPSITE - NIGHT - THEN

Six friends dance around a campfire. Sam, Theia, Mallory, **DAMIEN (19)**, a shallow, tough guy persona, **ARTIMIS (19)**, charming, charismatic popular girl and **DAVID (19)**, military cut, always-plays-by-the-rules kind of guy.

The flames flicker, casting dancing shadows on the group as they sway to the music blasting from a small speaker. Laughter fills the air. Beer bottles clinking, their movements free, young and invincible.

Mallory stands a bit away, detached from the others. A beer in one hand, her arm momentarily illuminated as the flames flicker. Small lines-scars riddles her skin. Cuts, surrounded in bruises.

7. EXT. CAMPSITE - LATER - THEN

The six sit around the campfire. Beers in their hands. The energy has shifted-subdued, contemplative.

ARTIMIS

Ok, ok, but what if, hear me out...
We all got an apartment together?

DAMIEN

One place? Like all of us?

ARTIMIS

Yeeeessss! Like while we're in college. Keep the gang together. No matter what!

DAVID

Sounds like a disaster waiting to happen.

SAM

Oooorrr an amazing idea!

THEIA

Let's do it!!!

Mallory softly smiles. She's looking up at the stars.

MALLORY

That'd be nice.

The group looks to her.

MALLORY

Just the thought of us, together.

She looks down at her arms, covered now in a blanket.

MALLORY

You think we'll be like that
forever? Ten years from now?
Friends till the end?

A quiet settles in. The youthful certainty fades a little. Mallory hugs her knees to her chest. Theia, sitting closest, notices Mallory's mood, and gently places her hand on Mallory's arm, grounding her.

Mallory forces a small smile, but something lingers in her eye—something distant, something that none of them see.

8. EXT. CAMPSITE OUTLOOK - LATER - THEN

The night sky shine bright. The stars clear as day. Mallory stands atop the outlook, at the edge, looking down into the valley of trees. The wind rushes around her, rustling the leaves far below.

DAMIEN (O.S.)

Hey Mal! Return to the party! We're
sorry! Hey!

Damien, Theia, David and Artemis are distant, calling out for Mallory.

Sam enters through the brush, seeing Mallory at the edge. He approaches hesitantly, stopping a few steps behind her.

SAM

Mal...

Mallory turns to him, her gaze blank.

MALLORY

Isn't it beautiful? The way the
world just stretches on and on.
Like forever?

Mallory holds herself, her hands gripping the edges of her sweater sleeves. She turns to Sam, the moon behind her, illuminating her like a ghost.

SAM

Why-why didn't you tell us before?

Mallory smiles, sadness in her eyes.

MALLORY

I-I was afraid. Sam, my family
hates me.

Sam's chest tightens. He reaches for her arm.

MALLORY

They always have. No matter how much I tried to be perfect for them, it never was enough.

DAMIEN (O.S.)

I think I hear her this way.

Theia, Artemis, David and Damien rush into the outlook.

THEIA

Mallory!

Mallory looks up to them as they rush over.

MALLORY

I can't afford to leave them.

SAM

You don't have to go through it alone, we're 19. You can just leave them.

Mallory exhales shakily, looking back over the valley.

Sam's grip tightens on her sleeve. Mallory backs closer to the edge.

DAVID

Mal... We're you family. We care for you. You don't have to do this.

A tense silence fills the air. The wind howls. Fear flashes in the friends eyes.

Mallory looks down at the trees, lifting her sleeve up, revealing the cuts. A lone tear falls from her eyes.

MALLORY

I... I wish I could believe you.

She takes a step forward, Sam releasing his grip and she falls. Theia screams. Damien and David stand in shock. Artemis rushes over to the edge. Sam stands, his **HAND** still stretched out.

9. INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - NOW

Sam stand, his **HAND** stretched out, a paint brush in his grasp, inches away from the canvas.

The **BOX** sits on his bed, beckoning him.

VOICE

Sam...

Sam turns to the bed, and the box atop it. Standing in the corner, the ghostly figure, pale, unmoving, shrouded in darkness. Mallory.

Sam's breath catches.

Mallory steps forward. Shes a pale imitation of the night. Same clothes, the scars across her arm, visible, but her face is obscured in shadow.

MALLORY

Why did YOU let me fall?

Sam closes his eyes tight.

SAM

I...

He opens his eyes, Mallory is closer now, catching Sam off guard and stumbling back into his canvas and paints.

SAM

...I tried to save you?

Mallory stops.

MALLORY

Then why did you let me go?

Sam falls to the ground, tripping on the supplies. The screams and shock as Mallory fell echoes throughout the room.

SAM

I-I didn't mean to.

Mallory walks closer, dropping in front of him, her face, a greyed, colorless monstrosity.

MALLORY

Then paint me.

She indicates to the box. The lid open.

Sam's eyes meets hers. An understanding.

The two get up, a pale stream of light, ghostly, illuminates them, like a pathway now opening up.

Sam walks over to the box. He reaches out, hesitating, then picks up the brush.

Taking his seat in front of his canvas, Sam begins to paint.

10. INT. SHOWCASE - UNIVERSITY - THE NEXT DAY

Paintings shine atop easles, hanging from walls, all presented in muesuem 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.

A sign reads: REMEMBRANCE OF MALLORY KAY ART SHOWCASE.

Theia, Damien, Artemis, and David stand among the crowd, not together, their eyes searching. Theia spots Sam first and makes her way over. The others follow.

She reaches out and gives Sam's hand a little squeeze.

THEIA

You nervous?

Sam looks to her, then to his other friends. They wave sheepishly-They haven't been together since the night.

A heavy silence lingers between them, regret, grief and unspoken words.

Sam gives them a sad smile. The room full of Mallory's, dedications that make them all feel uncomfortable.

His fingers tighten around the cloth covering his painting.

He exhales, steadying himself. Then-

He pulls it away.

The painting of Mallory stands before the group, vivid and raw. Shades of blue and green swirl around her figure, her face peaceful, yet haunting. Her eyes hold a story-one of pain, love and remembrance.

His friends stand in shock, shifting uncomfortably, but unable to look away. A hush beholding the room. Theia lifts a hand to her mouth, her eyes glistening with unshed tears.

Others in the room begin to notice, murmurs spread and a crowd begins to form around Sam's painting. Admiration. Mr. Genevie walks over, nodding approvingly.

Sam watches their reactions, his heart pounding.

Theia turns to him, her lips trembling into a small, sad smile.

Sam returns the smile.

THE END