

AFTERMATH
EPISODE 1X01: "THE UNIMAGINABLE"

Written by

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Content Warning: This script contains graphic depictions of potentially triggering content involving gun violence, mental illness, and suicide.

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TEASER/ACT ONE

EXT. CARTER MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - **NEWSREEL**

A maelstrom of police cars, SWAT vehicles, ambulances, and news vans sit in a crowded parking lot. Before them, a sweeping campus of six buildings loom in the late morning.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
We're live with footage from the
active shooter situation at Carter
Magnet High School...

A chyron on the bottom of the screen reads: "ACTIVE SHOOTER
AT GA HIGH SCHOOL - MULTIPLE CASUALTIES CONFIRMED."

EXT. MATH BUILDING - DAY - **NEWSREEL**

Armored POLICE escort a single-file line of teenage STUDENTS -
hands behind their heads - out of the building.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
According to officials, the death
toll has risen to twenty-seven
students and teachers...

Two EMTs push a gurney from the same building, a sheet pulled
tight over the occupant.

EXT. CARTER MAGNET HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - **NEWSREEL**

Two more armored POLICE drag the SHOOTER (a generic white
teen) to a transport van. Several other OFFICERS follow with
semi-automatic rifles in their hands.

NEWS ANCHOR (V.O.)
...the shooter from Carter Magnet
will be moved on Monday to the
county courthouse to face trial...

INT. TALK SHOW SET - DAY

A talk show HOST (60s) interviews two teenagers. Text on the
screen introduces the teens as MONIQUE Trace and MICHAEL
Brighton (both 18). Below their names, both are identified as
"Carter Magnet Shooting Survivors."

HOST

Over the past couple of weeks, you and your classmates have done interviews, hosted rallies. Now, you're heading back to school for the first time since that day. What are you feeling right now?

MONIQUE

I'm not really sure, actually. The interviews, the rallies. That's for them, for the twenty-eight. It's easy because it's for them.

Beside her, Michael nods in agreement.

MONIQUE (CONT'D)

Tomorrow is for us.

INT. MATH & SCIENCES BUILDING - DAY - **NEWSREEL**

A REPORTER walks through a school hallway, pointing out dozens of bullet holes in the wall.

MONIQUE (V.O.)

Tomorrow's the day we take back our lives.

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

The reporter steps into a classroom off the main hall. Bullet holes scatter the door, the whiteboard, a few of the desks.

MONIQUE (V.O.)

Take back our school.

A dark stain on the carpet sucks up the camera lights in a dull, rusty red color.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

A classroom of STUDENTS sits in their desks, bored out of their minds. At the whiteboard, Mr. BRINKMAN (30s) writes out a complex calculus equation.

MONIQUE (V.O.)

Tomorrow is the day we prove that he failed. That we still live the lives he wanted to end.

Some students chat quietly between themselves. A few take notes. One, NINA Alvarez - a 17-year-old, overweight Latina girl - hides her phone under her desk, smiling at the screen as she reads a text.

MONIQUE (V.O.)

Tomorrow is the day we prove that
our lives were only just beginning
the moment we heard those first few
shots.

PRELAP: BANG!

INT. SCIENCE BUILDING / HALLWAY - DAY - **PRESENT**

A hallway full of STUDENTS slams to a halt. One BOY ducks, throwing his hands over his head. A group of GIRLS pull each other close. A TEACHER, standing at her classroom door, freezes in terror, along with most of the others in the hall.

All look toward the same spot in the bay of lockers on one wall, where a scrawny, pimple-faced boy - DANNY (14) - stands with his eyes wide open, staring at his locker door, which shudders as it bounces off the door beside it.

Shaking, Danny turns his gaze upward to the end of the hall.

Where a SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER stands, gun drawn and aimed at the teenager.

The entire hallway seems to hold its breath. Danny cautiously raises his hands above his head as the fabric of his khaki pants darkens in a stain spreading out from his crotch.

The officer, features softening as he realizes his mistake, lowers his weapon.

Abysmally slowly, life bleeds back into the hall. Students and teachers relax, quietly TITTERING amongst themselves. All returns to a weary normal. Except for one student.

Nina Alvarez sits on the floor below an open locker down the hall, eyes wide in a catatonic state. Her breath comes in short pants. Phantom SCREAMS fill the air, along with the sound of RAINING GUNFIRE.

ZAHIRAH (V.O.)

Nina. Nina!

DR. ROSEN (O.S.)

Nina?

Nina starts, her head jolting upward - and straight back into the metal of the locker below her open one.

With a groan, she raises a hand to her sore head as she glances up at the woman standing before her. DR. ROSEN - a pretty woman in her late 40s - stares with a pitying and understanding smile.

DR. ROSEN (CONT'D)
Are you alright?

Nina nods and attempts a sorry-ass "reassuring" smile.

NINA
I'm fine.

DR. ROSEN
Doesn't look like it to me.

Confused for a moment, Nina follows the teacher's gaze to her own hand, where a shallow gash oozes fresh blood.

NINA
Oh.

DR. ROSEN
Probably caught it on your locker
when you fell.

From her back pocket, Rosen pulls a notepad of hall passes.

DR. ROSEN (CONT'D)
It's alright. I'll just give you a
pass to visit the nurse -

NINA
No.

She scrambles to her feet.

NINA (CONT'D)
I mean, it's just a scratch. I'll
be fine.

DR. ROSEN
You need to get it bandaged at
least.

NINA
I'll just go wash it off in the
bathroom real quick -

DR. ROSEN
Nina -

NINA
I can't miss class. Not today. I...
(pause)
I need things to be back to normal.

A moment of silence envelops them as Rosen processes this.

NINA (CONT'D)
Please. I'm fine.

DR. ROSEN
None of us are fine, Nina. Fine and normal are going to take more than just two weeks. We both know that.

Nina sighs as Rosen fills out a hall pass and hands it over.

DR. ROSEN (CONT'D)
Get your hand checked out. Class will be there when you're done.

Nina takes the pass reluctantly. Doctor Rosen gives her a approving smile before she turns and exits down the hall.

Nina examines the hall pass and her injured hand, then turns to shut her locker door gently and stalk away in the opposite direction of the good Doctor.

INT. SCIENCE BUILDING / HALLWAY - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

Nina leans against her locker, nose stuck in her cell phone.

SUPER: A countdown clock reads "31w 3d 02h 28m"

Nina sends a quick text message to a contact named LANA:
"Where are you? You're gonna be late."

A bell RINGS, and Nina looks up in surprise.

NINA
Shit.

She takes off down the hall, sending another text message. She doesn't see the person in front of her until she runs straight into her. Nina loses her footing and falls, dropping her phone.

ZAHIRAH (O.S.)
Oh my gosh!

ZAHIRAH Yousufzai (17), a gorgeous Middle Eastern girl, hovers over Nina, embarrassment bleeding from every pore. A South African accent dances through her words.

ZAHIRAH (CONT'D)

I am so sorry. I didn't see you.

Nina sits up and reaches for her cell phone. She frowns at the cracked screen.

NINA

Damn.

ZAHIRAH

I'm so beyond sorry. Here.

Zahirah offers her a hand. Nina takes it and Zahirah hefts her upward onto her feet. Nina sighs as she brushes off her jeans, then looks up at the new girl for the first time.

Surprise flashes across her face as she takes in the gorgeous creature before her, the light hitting the other girl's hair just perfectly. Nina coughs awkwardly.

NINA

Hi.

ZAHIRAH

Hi. Look, I'm sorry about all that.
I'm just totally late and -

NINA

No. Yeah, it's fine.

Zahirah beams at her. Realizing she's just staring, Nina offers her a hand.

NINA (CONT'D)

I'm Nina.

Zahirah shakes the proffered hand.

ZAHIRAH

Zahirah.

NINA

So, you're new?

ZAHIRAH

That obvious?

NINA

Only because it's a small town. If I haven't known you since diapers, you're almost definitely new.

ZAHIRAH

Ah.

NINA

Plus.

She points to the class schedule in Zahirah's hand.

NINA (CONT'D)

You're holding that thing like it's
the map to the holy grail.

ZAHIRAH

If only. This place is a maze. I'm
beyond lost.

NINA

I can probably help with that.
Where are you first period?

Zahirah scans the page.

ZAHIRAH

Doctor Rosen. Biology.

NINA

Same here. I can show you. If you
want, that is.

ZAHIRAH

Yes. Thank you. That'd be great.

Zahirah smirks and holds out her arm expectantly, like a
courtier waiting for an escort.

ZAHIRAH (CONT'D)

Lead the way.

Nina hesitantly links arms with Zahirah.

EXT. SCIENCE BUILDING - DAY - **PRESENT**

A depressing drizzle engulfs the campus of Carter Magnet as
Nina exits the building. A SECURITY OFFICER (40s) stops her
at the door.

SECURITY OFFICER

Pass?

Nina fishes her hall pass out of her pocket and hands it to
him. He checks it over quickly, then hands it back.

SECURITY OFFICER (CONT'D)

Head straight to administration.
And keep this handy. They'll need
to see it there, too.

Nina nods and sidesteps the cop to walk out into the rain.

EXT. COURTYARD - CONTINUOUS

The campus is a macabre kind of silent as Nina makes her way across the courtyard.

About halfway to the small admin building, Nina slows to a stop and looks up at the building beside her. A chain link fence stands around it, a forgotten piece of crime scene tape blowing in the breeze.

Nina drops her gaze and quickly turns to continue on her way.

INT. NURSE'S OFFICE - DAY

Light pours in through the open door to a tiny, dark closet of a nurse's office. Nina enters, glancing around for the office's owner.

VOYEGA (O.S.)
Be right with you.

Across the room, a shadow behind a privacy curtain bustles about. Nina takes a seat in an chair by the desk stuffed into the corner. Behind the curtain, WHISPERED VOICES argue.

VOYEGA (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I don't care.

WHISPERED VOICE #1 (O.S.)
I'm fine.

VOYEGA (O.S.)
Just lay down for five minutes
while I take care of someone else.
Alright?

A GRUMBLED, INDISTINCT series of curses follows as the curtain ruffles and a man steps out.

Nurse Jubriel VOYEGA (30s, handsome, and kind-hearted), smiles warmly at Nina as he crosses the room to his desk.

VOYEGA (CONT'D)
How you doing, Miss Nina?

She shrugs as he kneels before her, carefully examining her hurt hand.

VOYEGA (CONT'D)
What happened here?

NINA

I fell. Locker door caught me. Dr.
Rosen overreacted.

He gives her a conspiratorial grin as he stands.

VOYEGA

Doesn't she always?

He makes his way over to a cabinet and gathers bandages and
antiseptic in a small basket.

VOYEGA (CONT'D)

How are you holding up?

He returns to her side and sets the basket on the ground.

NINA

Sick of hearing that question, to
be honest.

Voyega nods as he sets to his work cleaning and bandaging.

VOYEGA

Yeah. Me, too.

KASS (O.S.)

Me three.

Nina and Voyega both glance up to where the privacy curtain
has been pushed back to reveal KASS (16, Middle Eastern,
smart, flippant, dry sense of humor), lying on a cot.

VOYEGA

Man, what did I just say? You need
to rest.

KASS

I'm reclining. Horizontally. What
more do you want?

Voyega shakes his head, but returns to Nina's hand. Kass
locks eyes with Nina.

KASS (CONT'D)

Hey.

NINA

Hi.

Nina drops her gaze.

KASS

What're you in for?

NINA
Locker attacked me. You?

Kass shrugs and sits up.

KASS
Apparently upping the dosage on my
anti-depressants had some side
effects. Like sunlight giving me a
migraine from hell.

NINA
Oh.

The room falls silent. Voyega tapes a thick bandage around
Nina's wound.

VOYEGA
You're good to go.

He drops the trash in the basket and stands, carrying the
supplies back over to the counter. Nina rises as well and
squeezes her hand shut, grimacing.

NINA
Can you write me a hall pass for
Rosen's class, please?

VOYEGA
You got it.

He pulls out his pad and starts writing. Kass stands from the
cot and stretches.

KASS
I'll take one, too.

Voyega pauses and glares at him.

VOYEGA
Kassim -

KASS
I'm fine.

VOYEGA
You're not.

Kass raises his voice.

KASS
Yes, I am. I'm fine. Why does
everyone keep - ?

Nina starts at the sudden noise. Kass instantly calms.

KASS (CONT'D)

Sorry.

NINA

Can I go now?

Voyega nods and hands her a pass. She snatches it up and rushes out the door.

EXT. COURTYARD - DAY - **FLASHBACK**

Surrounded by a throng of students, Nina and Zahirah make their way to their next building.

SUPER: COUNTDOWN CLOCK - "31w 3d 01h 31m"

ZAHIRAH

Six buildings is a uni campus, not a high school.

NINA

You get used to it.

ZAHIRAH

I hope so.

She nudges Nina with her shoulder.

ZAHIRAH (CONT'D)

I'm sure you have better things to do than play tour guide.

NINA

Trust me. I don't.

She glances around the courtyard, searching.

NINA (CONT'D)

Especially when Lana's not here.

ZAHIRAH

Lana?

NINA

My friend. She's super late. I'm getting a bit worried, actually.

ZAHIRAH

Have you tried texting her?

NINA
Yeah. A bunch.

She turns back to Zahirah with a smirk.

NINA (CONT'D)
What do you think I was doing when
I ran into you?

ZAHIRAH
Technically, I think 'barreled
into' might be the term.
'Sprinted,' even.

The girls LAUGH as they enter the Humanities building.

INT. HUMANITIES BUILDING / HALLWAY - DAY

Zahirah steps out of the flow of traffic by an open classroom door and pulls Nina with her.

ZAHIRAH
I wish you didn't have to go.

NINA
Not my fault you're taking Latin
instead of French.

ZAHIRAH
I'm already fluent in French. They
wouldn't let me take it.

NINA
Ah. Makes sense. Same thing
happened to me with Spanish.

Nina leans against a bank of lockers.

NINA (CONT'D)
But you'll be fine by yourself.
It's just high school. If you do
anything embarrassing, it only
lasts until graduation.

She pauses, considering.

NINA (CONT'D)
Unless they get it on camera...

An arm wraps around Nina's shoulder in a jarring hug.

JAZZ
Alvie! What's up?

JAZZ Phillips (18) - typical high school boy in almost every regard - drops a kiss on Nina's forehead. Much to Nina's apparent disgust.

NINA

Hi, Jazz.

Jazz pretends to notice Zahirah for the first time and holds out a hand.

JAZZ

Oh, hey. Jasper Phillips. But you can call me Jazz. Nice to meet you.

Zahirah glances between Jazz and Nina before cautiously taking the former's hand.

ZAHIRAH

Zahirah Yousufzai.

JAZZ

Digging the accent. British?

ZAHIRAH

South African.

JAZZ

You don't look African.

ZAHIRAH

Afghan, actually.

JAZZ

Sweet. Well, hey, if you're looking for someone to show you around -

Zahirah shakes her head politely.

ZAHIRAH

That's really sweet. Honestly, thank you for offering.

With a salacious smirk, she slips her hand into Nina's in the most non-heterosexual way possible.

ZAHIRAH (CONT'D)

But I've already got the perfect escort.

Nina blushes as Zahirah leans in and drops a kiss on her cheek. Jazz releases Nina's arm to step back and watch, utterly confounded.

JAZZ

Oh.

Zahirah straightens, never letting go of Nina's hand.

ZAHIRAH

You're meeting me after class so we
can head to third period, right?

Nina grins like an idiot.

NINA

Yeah.

Zahirah squeezes her hand, then lets go, taking a step toward the classroom door behind her. She passes Jazz one last dismissive glance.

ZAHIRAH

Bye.

With a wink back at Nina, Zahirah steps into her classroom.

Jazz waits for a moment, frozen, before leaving without another word.

A giddy GIGGLE escapes Nina as she raises a hand to her cheek. The stupid grin on her face remains as she turns and exits down the hall.

END OF ACT ONE