

TIME CATCHERS
EPISODE 1X01: "PILOT"

Written by

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TEASER

EXT. BACKROAD - NIGHT

A flashy new sports car guns its engine as it speeds down an ill-lit gravel road, surrounded by trees and overgrowth.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The car's driver, JAMESON Dormer (mid 20s), a handsome and normally-laid-back black man, shifts the car's gears with the speed and dexterity of a race car driver.

He tosses an anxious glance in the rearview mirror. The road behind is clear, but he doubles down on the gas nonetheless.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Scores of well dressed MEN and WOMEN mill about an upscale party with freely flowing champagne. On a sign by the door, next to bright cover art for a novel, text reads:

MOIRA PUBLISHING PRESENTS

"CHASING FATE" RELEASE PARTY

FEATURING AUTHOR JAMESON DORMER

Walking past the sign, a well-dressed, classy Latino man named STEPHEN Avgerinos (mid 20s) glances around the ballroom, anxiously seeking someone out.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

The car takes a hairpin turn too quickly, tossing Jameson violently into his door. He regains control on the skidding vehicle quickly and drives on, undeterred.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Stephen's attention catches on someone across the ballroom, and he makes his way across the floor toward them.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

The gravel road devolves into a poorly maintained dirt drive, causing the car to bounce uncontrollably. Jameson holds tight to the jerking steering wheel as the tires lose traction.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

A young couple argues quietly in the corner of the room. The girl (MELINDA Dormer, 22, an Afro-Latina woman with a fierce air and no time for bullshit) berates her boyfriend (ALEC Wolffe, early 20s, Abercrombie model type).

MELINDA

Why did I even bring you tonight?

ALEC

Don't beat yourself up. I mean, you gotta piss your brother off some way, right?

MELINDA

Oh, screw you.

Stephen joins the couple, clearing his throat awkwardly. Melinda glares up at him.

MELINDA (CONT'D)

What?

STEPHEN

Sorry to interrupt. But have either of you seen the guest of honor?

Melinda, Alec, and Stephen all look up to the stage, where sign next to an empty podium again shows the book cover and the title of the event. This one, however, also features the smiling face of the author -- the man from the car. Jameson.

INT. SPORTS CAR - NIGHT

Jameson turns another corner -- and slams on his brakes. Momentum throws him forward as the car's brakes shudder in an attempt to stop on the loose dirt. His head bashes against the steering wheel as the car hits something violently.

EXT. DIRT ROAD - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

The car's hood is smashed nearly to the windshield, a tree the obvious culprit. The engine smokes dangerously. All around, CRICKETS and trees seem to be the only witnesses to Jameson's predicament out here in the middle of nowhere.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

A myriad of clothing, pillows, a couple pairs of shoes, and a throw blanket scatter the floor of a massive, richly decorated bedroom.

SUPER: "THREE WEEKS LATER"

Inverted on the lush bed at the room's center, with their feet against the headboard, lay Melinda and Alec. A thick comforter covers their naked bodies.

Across the room, on the nightstand, a cell phone alarm blasts RAP MUSIC. Alec stirs awake first and sits up, squinting in the sunlight streaming through the large bay window.

Melinda GROANS as Alec stands, pulling the comforter tighter around herself. Alec grabs the phone off the nightstand and dismisses the alarm with a frown. He hesitates a moment, lost in thought, before he turns back to the bed.

He sits beside Melinda and nudges her shoulder.

ALEC

Hey. Melinda. I have to go.

Melinda's eyes peel open and she raises her head.

MELINDA

Hmm?

ALEC

I'm late for a meeting at Dad's office. I gotta to go.

Melinda raises herself up onto her elbows.

MELINDA

Late? What time is it?

ALEC

Only about eight.

Melinda's eyes widen in shock.

MELINDA

In the morning? Damn it!

She pushes Alec off the blanket and stands with the comforter wrapped around her as she pads around the room, snatching up clothes as she goes.

ALEC
Lindy, chill. It's fine.

MELINDA
It's not fine.

Dropping the blanket, Melinda pulls on her bra first.

MELINDA (CONT'D)
I shouldn't have stayed over.

Alec smirks as he pulls on a pair of sweatpants.

ALEC
Don't see me complaining.

Pausing with her jeans half-on, Melinda glares at Alec.

MELINDA
Stephen's going to kill me if he
finds out I was here all night.

She turns her gaze to the rest of the room, searching.

ALEC
Looking for this?

Hanging off the tip of his index finger, Alec holds up a girl's shirt. Melinda frowns and reaches out for the shirt. Alec snatches it back, instead running his free arm around Melinda's waist and dropping a kiss on her forehead.

Melinda grabs her shirt and pushes Alec away to pull it on.

MELINDA
Don't start.

She pushes Alec away as she pulls on her shirt.

MELINDA (CONT'D)
This doesn't mean anything. We are
not back together.

ALEC
Sure we're not.

Melinda grabs a pair of battered sneakers from the floor, and the messenger bag they lie next to.

MELINDA

I mean it. One time thing.

She stands and scurries toward the door.

ALEC

Love you.

Melinda pulls the door open without a look back at him.

MELINDA

Nice screwing you, too, Alec.

The door clicks closed behind her.

INT. MELINDA'S HOUSE / FRONT HALL - DAY

A key turns in the front door. Carefully, Melinda pushes the door open and steps inside, tiptoeing around to shut it near-silently behind her.

STEPHEN (O.S.)

Hi, Lindy.

Melinda grimaces. *Busted*. Plastering a smile on her face, she steps into the --

INT. MELINDA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

Melinda awkwardly enters the room, smiling at Stephen, who sits on a couch in a well-appointed, modern living room.

STEPHEN

Where have you been all night?

MELINDA

The library. Fell asleep studying.

STEPHEN

I didn't know they moved the campus library to Alec Wolffe's house. How generous of him.

With a heavy SIGH, Melinda moves to sit in a giant, strangely shaped chair across the room.

MELINDA

Please don't start.

STEPHEN

Did I say anything?

MELINDA

You're about to.

STEPHEN

Didn't say anything.

MELINDA

Please. I know you and Jamie think Alec is a snake from hell that's going to strangle me in my sleep.

He LAUGHS a bit at the description.

STEPHEN

I definitely didn't say that. Or did I?

Melinda gives him a knowing glare.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

I thought you two called it off after the release party.

MELINDA

We did.

STEPHEN

But you slept at his house?

Exhaustion tugs at her features as she throws her head back against the chair dramatically.

MELINDA

We ran into each other last night, and I missed him and I just needed a shoulder to cry on and then I was kissing the shoulder and...

She GROANS obnoxiously.

MELINDA (CONT'D)

I know. I'm a slut.

Stephen SCOFFS.

STEPHEN

You're drawn to the familiar is all. It's comfortable. And with all that's going on with Jamie, I'd imagine comfortable is...nice.

Melinda looks up to meet his gaze.

MELINDA

Have you heard from him?

Though he forces a smile, worry plays on Stephen's face.

STEPHEN

No. You?

MELINDA

Trust me. If Jameson needed something, I'd be his last call.

With that and a wry half-smile, Melinda stands and shuffles toward the doorway.

STEPHEN

Lindy?

She stops to glance back at him.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Just be safe with Alec, okay?
That's all Jamie and I ever wanted.

She stops to think, but doesn't respond before leaving.

INT. LAKE HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Jameson sits on a couch in a homey, quaint living room. He bounces his leg anxiously as he checks the clock on the wall above an upright piano. 6:17.

A KNOCK at the French doors across the room causes him to jump in surprise. He rises to his feet, rushes across the room, and yanks the door open.

On the other side stands KALA, 17, Afro-Latina, keeper of the power of time, and currently sporting a bloody face, her dated clothing definitely worse for wear. In one hand, she holds an ancient wooden bo staff.

She nearly falls inside when Jameson opens the door. He reaches out his hands to steady her.

KALA

Hey, Jamie.

Her eyes slip closed and she passes out. Jameson catches her easily, worry pouring from him.

INT. MELINDA'S ROOM - DAY

At a pristine desk in an OCD paradise of a bedroom, Melinda works on a laptop. On the screen, a text document sits open with a title of "Importance of Food in Roman Culture" -- followed by an entirely blank page.

Melinda's fingers hover over the keyboard. Hesitantly, she types "The Romans". Then she pauses, frowns, and backspaces.

She closes the document and pulls up an internet tab, where a research article takes up the screen. Melinda scrolls down the page until a notification pops up in the corner. A new email. Melinda clicks on it.

The email application opens to a short and simple message. Melinda stares at it, confused.

ON SCREEN: "4323 Moldova Drive. I need you. Come alone. Please. - J"

Downstairs, the doorbell RINGS.

Melinda hits "REPLY" and types out "What's going on? Where have you been?". Her cursor hovers over "SEND" when Stephen calls from downstairs.

STEPHEN

Melinda? Can you come here for a minute?

Melinda hesitates, then minimizes the screen and gets up.

INT. MELINDA'S HOUSE / FRONT HALL - DAY

As Melinda comes to the foot of the stairs, she spots Stephen at the open front door, a uniformed police OFFICER standing on the other side.

Melinda joins them, smiling politely.

MELINDA

Hello.

OFFICER

Melinda Dormer?

MELINDA

Yeah. Can I help you?

OFFICER

Miss Dormer, I have some news about your brother.

Melinda SCOFFS.

MELINDA

Did someone finally find him passed
out outside a bar in midtown?

STEPHEN

Melinda...

He shakes his head. The officer's expression turns pitying.

OFFICER

I'm sorry to have to tell you this.

Melinda grin slips.

OFFICER (CONT'D)

We located Jameson Dormer's car
early this morning. Salvage team
recovered it from the lake.

Devastation and surprise battle for dominance on Melinda's
face. The officer DRONES on unintelligibly in the background,
but Melinda doesn't seem to hear.

INT. MELINDA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Melinda sits at the kitchen table, dried tears streaking her
cheeks. Her cell phone lies on the table before her, BUZZING
with near-constant notifications.

STEPHEN

Hey.

Stephen sits in the chair beside her. He sets a mug of tea in
front of her, beside her phone. She doesn't move.

MELINDA

Everyone keeps calling and texting
and asking if I'm alright. I guess
the story broke.

STEPHEN

Yeah. Half an hour ago.

He pulls his cell phone from his pocket and holds it up.

STEPHEN (CONT'D)

Mine's been going nuts too.

As if to illustrate his point, the phone BUZZES in his hand.
He checks the caller ID, frowns, and ignores the call. He
sets it down and places his hand on Melinda's shoulder.

MELINDA

I don't know what to tell them.

STEPHEN

Then don't. It's your grief. If you don't want to share it with anyone, you don't have to.

New tears well up and she sniffles.

MELINDA

They didn't find a body.

STEPHEN

No. Not yet.

She turns to him.

MELINDA

Maybe he's okay. He could have gotten out before the car went in.

STEPHEN

They found blood. A lot of it.

MELINDA

So he's hurt. Maybe he needs help.

An idea seems to form in her head. Stephen's phone goes off on the table again. He checks it, scowls, and ignores the call again.

STEPHEN

I think we both just need some time. Turn off the phones, rest a bit. Maybe get something to eat?

Melinda grabs her phone and stands suddenly.

MELINDA

No. I mean, I don't want to stay in right now.

Stephen looks at her with concern.

STEPHEN

Okay. We could go somewhere.

MELINDA

Actually, I want to take a drive. Alone. Clear my head, you know.

She rushes out before he can protest.

INT. MELINDA'S HOUSE / FRONT HALL - DAY

Melinda grabs a coat off a hook by the door, then rushes up the stairs just as Stephen enters the room behind her.

STEPHEN

I'm not sure you should be driving alone right now.

MELINDA (O.S.)

I'll be fine.

She rushes back down the stairs, messenger bag over her shoulder and car key in hand. Stephen takes her arm gently.

STEPHEN

Just wait a day or two. You need rest, Lindy.

She pulls him into a quick hug.

MELINDA

I'll stop somewhere if I get tired. And I'll call you later. Promise.

She pulls away with a flash of a reassuring smile, then breaks away for the front door. It closes behind her with a BANG, Stephen looking on with sincere concern.

INT. LAKE HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Kala lies seemingly asleep on the couch in a clean tank top and men's sweatpants. Jameson paces around the room.

KALA

You're going to wear straight through the floor.

He looks up at the sound of her voice just as she opens her eyes and smirks at him.

JAMESON

Hey.

He crosses the room to sit on a chair beside the couch. She grimaces as she tries to sit up on her own. Jameson reaches out to help and she bats his hand away.

KALA

I got it.

Jameson sits back.

JAMESON

You're late. I had plans tonight.

KALA

So go. I'm fine.

JAMESON

Seriously? After the way I found you? Hell no.

Kala picks at her clothes.

JAMESON (CONT'D)

What happened to you?

She shrugs.

KALA

I couldn't get to my watch. You were fighting, I didn't want to distract you. So I didn't say anything. Just jumped without it.

JAMESON

Eight months? You could have died.

KALA

Occupational hazard.

Jameson SIGHS heavily but nods.

JAMESON

You have it now, though?

KALA

You got my stuff?

Jameson reaches beside his chair to retrieve a heavy belt full of little pockets and sheathed daggers. He hands it to Kala. She pops open one of the pockets and pulls open an antique pocket watch on a long chain.

KALA (CONT'D)

We're good.

Jameson shakes his head.

JAMESON

Keep it around your neck next time.

He stands and stretches.

KALA

In a hurry to get back to those plans, huh?

He gives her a look.

JAMESON

I'm going to put your clothes in the dryer, smart ass.

KALA

If you have a date, don't let me stop you.

He rolls his eyes as he leaves the room. After he's gone, she takes a moment to examine her watch, then pulls the chain over her head so that it hangs from her neck.

EXT. BURNED HOUSE - DUSK

The tires of Melinda's car crunch on gravel as she comes to a stop before a burnt-out shell of a house.

INT. MELINDA'S CAR - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

Melinda glances at her GPS, which assures her that she has arrived at her destination. *4323 Moldova Drive*. The address from the letter.

The clock on the dashboard reads *7:57 pm*.

EXT. BURNED HOUSE / PORCH - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

Cautiously, Melinda steps up the CREAKING stairs onto the porch. The front door stands wide open.

INT. BURNED HOUSE / FRONT HALL - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

The house GROANS eerily as Melinda enters.

MELINDA

Hello?

She continues forward, hesitant with each step.

MELINDA (CONT'D)

Jamie?

A light CLATTER in a room up ahead draws Melinda's attention.

MELINDA (CONT'D)

Jameson, I swear to god, if you're pulling one of your pranks, I'mma gut you.

She stalks down the hallway toward the noise.

INT. BURNED HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - DUSK (CONTINUOUS)

The scorched remnants of furniture loom in the darkness like skeletons. Shadows engulf the room against the dim light streaming in from the window. Melinda takes it all in as she steps inside.

MELINDA

Hello?

Her examining gaze falls on the wall behind the hollow hull of an upright piano. Near the seams between one panel of wood in the wall and another, the blanket of soot has been recently disturbed by a swipe of fingerprints.

In her pocket, Melinda's cell phone RINGS. She ignores it, kneeling beside the wall to get a closer look. With her nails, she prods at the space between the panels and pulls. The disturbed panel pops out, revealing a hidden compartment.

Melinda's phone continues to RING. She doesn't seem to hear.

She reaches into the dark space in the wall and pulls out a small, square box. Cautiously and curiously, she flips the lid open, and frowns at the contents. A tiny, folded piece of paper sits on top of a familiar antique pocket watch.

She retrieves the paper first. Her phone VIBRATES again, and this time she takes it out of her pocket and silences it. On the screen, the clock reads 7:59 pm.

She sets the box to the side, her phone along with it, to the side and unfolds the paper.

ON PAGE: "June 12, 2012. 8:00 pm."

MELINDA (CONT'D)

The hell?

She turns the paper over, but finds no more writing. She turns her gaze to the box and the watch inside. Discarding the note on the floor, Melinda reaches for the watch.

MELINDA (CONT'D)

What am I supposed to do with -- ?

Melinda picks up the watch, and her words instantly cease. Her eyes glaze over, as if in a trance.

INT. LAKE HOUSE / LIVING ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)

A young voice steals Melinda's gaze from the watch.

KALA (O.S.)
Who the hell are you?

Melinda gasps and hops up. She comes face to face with Kala -- and the bo staff she holds, ready to strike.

Melinda freezes, holding her hands up.

MELINDA
I don't want any trouble. I just --

She stops as she takes in the room around her. Not burned, not in ruins. A proper lake house.

MELINDA (CONT'D)
Oh, what the hell?

JAMESON (O.S.)
What's going on?

Jameson steps forward from the entryway to join Kala. His face furrows in confusion as he takes in their guest.

JAMESON (CONT'D)
Melinda?

Melinda stares at him aghast.

MELINDA
Jameson.

Kala looks back and forth between the two, utterly lost.

END OF ACT ONE