



THE WHISPER

By J.A. Brown

GENRE: Sci-fi, Thriller

LOGLINE:

After a series of mysterious and unexplained deaths, Adrian Steele discovers his family's bloodline was cursed. When the Police discover more unexplained deaths involving Adrian, he is pursued as the prime suspect and must uncover and stop the deadly curse before it takes the life of the woman he loves.

SYNOPSIS:

During a recent family reunion in England, Adrian Steele is told about a deadly curse placed upon his family's bloodline 100 years ago by a powerful warlock after the death of his beloved Daughter Isabella. Not knowing about the full power of the curse, a word that once whispered, gives you the power to control anyone without hesitation. A single word, that will make anyone love you to death.

When the Police discover several unexplained deaths of women involving Adrian, he is pursued as the prime suspect, but when the truth of the deaths are later revealed, Adrian must fight to save the woman he loves before she succumbs to this deadly spell.

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FADE IN:

FLASHBACK - EXT. TOWN OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE, ENGLAND - EVENING

SUPER: Gloucestershire England - 1908

The lights in the town of Gloucestershire are seen as the evening sun begins to set.

EXT. LOCKE MANOR - EVENING

A beautiful large, gated home is seen in the distance.

INT. LOCKE FAMILY STUDY - EVENING

Identical twins ISABELLA and ISADORE LOCKE (10), Caucasian play in the study of their brooding father MANDOR LOCKE (45), a Caucasian as his rail-thin wife ELIZABETH LOCKE (30), a Caucasian sit humming and knitting nearby.

Isadore SLAPS Isabella across the face.

ISABELLA

Ouch!

She starts to CRY. Mandor runs over to Isabella and hugs her.

MANDOR

Sweetheart, are you OK? Isadore,
why did you strike your sister?

ISADORE

She wouldn't let me play with the
dolls, father! I hate her!

Isadore runs over to Elizabeth's side.

ELIZABETH

Why do you hate your sister? You
should always love each other no
matter what.

MANDOR

Apologize to your sister, Isadore!

ISADORE

I'm not apologizing to her! Why do
you love her more than me? You
always treat her better than me,
always! I will not apologize!

MANDOR

Then go to your room, young, lady
and think about what you've done!
Now!

Isadore marches toward the door.

ELIZABETH

Isadore! You apologize to your
sister. Isadore!

Isadore angrily looks back at her father rocking Isabella and
storms out of the study, just as their butler WILLIAM OVERLY
(50), an African enters and addresses Mandor.

WILLIAM

Sir, Mister Raymond Chapman is here
to see you.

MANDOR

Thank you, William. Please show him
in.

William nods and steps out.

ELIZABETH

Mandor, I'm going to check on
Isadore.

She exits the study. Mandor looks down at Isabella.

MANDOR

Now, now beautiful. I'll have a
talk with your sister later and I
promise she will never strike you
again.

ISABELLA

She is always mean to me. Why does
she hate me, father?

MANDOR

She doesn't hate you. I'll deal
with Isadore when she calms down,
now run along while daddy talks to
his guest.

ISABELLA

Yes, father.

Isabella walks out of the study. William escorts a frazzled
RAYMOND CHAPMAN (50), a Caucasian into the study.

MANDOR

Raymond, how nice it is to see you.

Raymond bends down and kisses Mandor's ring.

RAYMOND

Thank you for seeing me on such short notice.

MANDOR

Please, have a seat. Can I pour you a drink?

RAYMOND

No, no, thank you.

MANDOR

What brings you all the way here from Wiltshire?

Mandor pours himself a drink.

RAYMOND

There is something you should know. It's about Angus Hughes' son, Jacob. His boy forced himself on my oldest daughter Ruth, and now she's having his child.

Mandor puts down his drink.

MANDOR

I see.

RAYMOND

Mandor, I want him to pay for what he's done, but I need your permission as Grand Warlock to proceed.

MANDOR

This is disturbing news. But, as you know, using spells and curses for retaliation is strictly forbidden. Such permission must be granted by the council.

Raymond POUNDS his fist on the table.

RAYMOND

They will never approve this! Angus is on the council and with his friendships and business dealings with the other members, they won't punish his son! Please, Mandor!

Raymond drops to his knees in front of Mandor and clasps his hands in a pleading motion.

Mandor places his hand on the shoulder of Raymond.

MANDOR

Taking actions into your own hands will only lead to trouble, Raymond. Allow the council to decide Jacob's fate, and I promise a fair and impartial decision will be made. If he is found guilty of these allegations, he will suffer the full force of my power.

Raymond raises his stare to meet Mandor's eyes.

RAYMOND

Thank you for your support, Mandor. Then I will look forward to bringing this to the council.

Mandor eases away from Raymond and takes a sip of his drink. He makes his way to a large desk that sits beside a window. He shuffles through a stack of bottles filled with liquid.

MANDOR

Now, in the interest of justice for your daughter, may I ask what spell were you hoping to use?

Raymond rises to his feet and stands tall. He takes a deep breath before speaking.

RAYMOND

The Whispering Death.

MANDOR

Raymond, that is the most deadly curse we have, and as such it has been banned! No exceptions.

RAYMOND

I know, my Lord, but I want him to suffer just like my daughter did while he was raping her!

Mandor thinks for a beat.

He nods his head.

MANDOR

I'll prepare a meeting of the council for later this week. In the meantime, get home safely, my friend. You have a long ride back to Wiltshire.

Mandor gestures over to William.

MANDOR

William will show you out.

RAYMOND

Thank you again for seeing me. May peace be with you and your family.

Raymond bows and William closes the main doors. Mandor sighs as he proceeds upstairs.

SUPER: Atlanta Georgia - 2017

PRESENT DAY - EXT. BAILEY LUXURY APARTMENTS - LATE EVENING

INT. GIA CHESNIK'S APARTMENT - 22ND-FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

The Atlanta skyline is seen from the balcony of the 22nd floor apartment, as heavy rain pelts the city below.

Standing on the balcony in her nightgown is a gorgeous, Caucasian model, GIA CHESNIK (22).

The wind blows into the apartment moving the curtains and whisking Gia's long black hair back and forth. Her eyes are glassy and she SOBS uncontrollably.

Behind her in the apartment, clothes are laid out on the bed.

Gia wipes her eyes, clutching her cell phone tightly against her ear.

GIA

Pick up the phone, dammit! Adrian, pick up the phone!

The RINGING stops and Adrian's voice mail is heard.

ADRIAN (V.O.)

"This is you-know-who, I'm not at you-know-where, so leave a message after you-know-what and I'll get back to you when I can."

GIA

Adrian, where are you?! I need to see you! Why haven't you called me? You promised you would come here tonight! I need to be with you, Adrian!

Gia drops the phone and wipes her tears. She staggers back inside and picks up a piece of paper on her nightstand and begins writing. She finishes the note and drops it on the bed next to her red silk top. Then --

She runs toward the balcony and jumps over the railing --

A loud CRASH followed by SCREECHING tires is heard below.

EXT. ADRIAN STEELE'S BUILDING - EARLY MORNING

ADRIAN STEELE (27), an African American with a long scar running down the left side of his face, approaches the building after his morning jog.

INT. UNMARKED CAR - CONTINUOUS

Homicide Detectives WAYNE WILKINSON (32), a Caucasian, and DARRYL PERRYMAN (40), an African American, watch Adrian from an unmarked Impala parked across the street.

Perryman nudges Wilkinson.

PERRYMAN

Is that him?

WILKINSON

Yeah, that's him.

They watch as Adrian greets the building DOORMAN then enters the building.

PERRYMAN

Call it in.

Wilkinson picks up the POLICE RADIO.

WILKINSON

Dispatch, this is Car 1141. Please alert Captain Whitman that the suspect Adrian Steele has just entered his building. Over.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Affirmative, Car 1141. I'll pass this to Captain Whitman.

WILKINSON

Thank you. Awaiting instructions.

Wilkinson lights a cigarette and Perryman sips from his coffee for a moment. Then --

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Car 1141, Captain Whitman says to pick up Steele.

WILKINSON

Roger that.

INT. ADRIAN STEELE'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Adrian is getting dressed in his bedroom when there's a KNOCK on his front door. He walks over and looks through the peephole.

ADRIAN

Who is it?

PERRYMAN (O.S.)

Adrian Steele, this is the Atlanta Police. We need to speak with you.

ADRIAN

The police? What is this about?

PERRYMAN (O.S.)

Mr. Steele, please open the door. We have a warrant for your arrest.

Adrian reluctantly opens the door in disbelief.

ADRIAN

A warrant? What for?

Perryman steps forward with hand-cuffs.

PERRYMAN

Adrian Steele, you're under arrest
for murder. You have the right to
remain--

ADRIAN

What murder?!

PERRYMAN

Anything you say can be used
against you in a court of law. Do
you understand your rights?

ADRIAN

I need to contact my lawyer. This
is bullshit!

INT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER/INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Adrian sits nervously in the interrogation room, with
numerous bruises and abrasions visible.

Wilkinson and Perryman sit across him with a tape recorder in
the middle of the table.

PERRYMAN

Can you tell me where you were
yesterday?

ADRIAN

I met some friends at a club.
What's all this about?

PERRYMAN

Do you know Ben Jenkins?

ADRIAN

Yes, he's a good friend of mine.

WILKINSON

What about his wife, Kim?

ADRIAN

Yes, Detective, I know them. What
is this all about?

PERRYMAN

They were found dead, and we have
an eyewitness placing you at the
scene.

Adrian's face lights up in shock and disbelief.

ADRIAN

What?! Ben and Kim are dead?

WILKINSON

We're asking the questions, Steele.
What were you doing at their home
yesterday?

Adrian rubs the side of his head. He takes a deep breath.

ADRIAN

Ben called me over to talk to Kim.
She thought he was having an affair
and he wanted me to talk to her --
But I assure you they were both
alive when I left.

Perryman glares intently at Adrian.

WILKINSON

Why would he ask you to talk to
her?

ADRIAN

Because Kim was a very jealous
woman. Ben knew she had a temper. I
went over to help calm things down.

Perryman smirks as he glances at Wilkinson.

PERRYMAN

You mean lie for him?

ADRIAN

I mean, I went over there to help
my friend calm down his jealous,
temperamental wife!

PERRYMAN

Our eyewitness said he saw you
arguing with the victim's wife --

Wilkinson brings his attention to scratches on Adrian's neck.

WILKINSON

Is that how you got those scratches
on your neck?

ADRIAN

I was scratched by Kim, but--

PERRYMAN

So the tissue under her fingernails
is yours then.

ADRIAN

Man, this is bullshit! She accused me of lying for Ben and threatened me if I didn't tell her who Ben was seeing. She got very angry and reached for Ben and scratched me by accident. I told her they were crazy, and I left!

The door opens and Adrian's curvy, African American lawyer HOPE ATKINSON (25) walks in, taking immediate notice of the scratches and bruises on her client's face.

HOPE

Cut the recorder off, this interview is over! Adrian, what happened to your face, did they assault you?

Adrian shakes his head.

ADRIAN

No, the scratches are from Kim and my face is from the asshole in my cell.

HOPE

What happened?

ADRIAN

Nothing, he approached me and things got a little rough... So, when am I getting out of here?

Hope motions Adrian to come with her out of the interrogation room.

Perryman rises to his feet and raises his hand.

PERRYMAN

Not so fast, counselor, we have grounds to hold your client until further test results are concluded by the crime lab. We found some skin under of one of the deceased fingernails. We believe they belong to your client.

HOPE

That's enough fishing, Detectives.
My client has not been charged, and
we have a preliminary hearing this
afternoon, so stop trying to pin
three counts of murder on him
without any clear-cut evidence!

Wilkinson cuts off the tape recorder. The Detectives depart
the interrogation room.

ADRIAN

This is bullshit, Hope! I didn't
kill anyone!

HOPE

These are very serious allegations.
They want to pin these and another
death on you.

ADRIAN

What other death!?

HOPE

A woman by the name of Gia Chesnik.
You know her?

ADRIAN

Yes, I know Gia. Why?

HOPE

She was found dead this morning.
Her body's all over the pavement
outside her building. The police
think she was pushed. How well did
you know her?

Adrian thinks for a beat and moves to the other side of the
room. He faces opposite Hope.

ADRIAN

Not that well, she's just a model I
met a week ago in England. She had
some emotional issues, I mean --

HOPE

Did you sleep with her?

Adrian sighs.

He turns to face Hope with a guilty expression.

ADRIAN

Yes, but it's complicated. I was supposed to meet up with her this morning, but I was thrown in here -
-

HOPE

That's great, their timeline doesn't add up then. Now what about Ben and Kim, what happened to them?

ADRIAN

Ben was messin' around with my cousin Jessica. He said Kim would kill him if she ever found out he was cheating on her. I went over there to calm her down and she scratched me swinging at Ben and then I left. That's it.

HOPE

They're trying to pin this on you, so keep your mouth shut. I'm headed back to the office. I'm going to see if I can pull some strings and get a Judge to get you out of here.

INT. ATLANTA DETENTION CENTER - CELL 265 - LATER

Adrian is returned to his cell, where CLARENCE DOBY (42), a tattooed muscular African American built like a football player, greets him.

CLARENCE

Welcome back, pumpkin! Did you meet with your lawyer?

Adrian leans against the cell wall ignoring Clarence.

CLARENCE

I asked you a question! I said, did you meet with your lawyer?

ADRIAN

Yes, I met with my lawyer. Why?

CLARENCE

Look, sweetheart, I suggest you make the best of our living arrangements and start enjoying my company.

ADRIAN

Look, Bubba or whatever your name is, I don't want any trouble. I'll be out of here today, so all I want is to be left alone. We clear?

Clarence approaches and grabs Adrian's arm and SLAMS him up against the wall.

CLARENCE

Look, you cocksucker, you just do what I say, when I say it or you're gonna get hurt --

Adrian forcefully pulls away from Clarence.

ADRIAN

I thought I made myself clear this morning, asshole! I'll tell you again -- don't fuck with me!

Clarence GRASPS Adrian by the throat and lifts him off the floor.

CLARENCE

Do you think because you're rich, I'm supposed to treat you differently? You don't think I know about you and all that money you have!? Do I look dumb to you, cocksucker?

Adrian GASPS for air and kicks the cell bars. A nearby OFFICER hears the commotion and pulls out his whistle and BLOWS --

OFFICER 1

Let him go, Doby! Goddammit, I said let him go!

CLARENCE

This motherfucker's gonna die today!

OFFICER 1

Open Cell 265! Open 265!

The cell door slowly open. A team of OFFICERS rush into the cell and attempt to subdue Clarence.

OFFICER 1

Let go of him, Doby! You're killing him!

Clarence releases Adrian. Adrian slumps to the floor unconscious. Clarence starts fighting the Officers -- throwing one against the side of the cell, as another Officer reaches for his TASER.

The taser hits Clarence in the chest. He falls to the floor twitching.

Officer 2 takes Adrian's pulse.

OFFICER 3

How is he!? Is he gonna make it?

OFFICER 2

He's alive, but he'll be sore when he comes to.

Officer 2 stands and looks down at Doby's unconscious and battered body.

OFFICER 2

Get that piece of shit out of here!
Take him to the infirmary and when he wakes up, take him to solitary.

OFFICER 3

Yes, sir. Will you be informing Director White of the incident?

Officer 2 sighs as he walks out of the cell.

INT. DETENTION CENTER INFIRMARY - AFTERNOON

DR. PAUL ROBERTS (40s) Caucasian, and NURSE SUSAN WALKER (30s) African American are monitoring Adrian's vitals when Adrian slowly comes to and tries to speak.

DOCTOR ROBERTS

Don't try to speak. You got beat pretty bad. A minute or two more and we wouldn't be having this conversation.

ADRIAN

What happened?

DOCTOR ROBERTS

Doby strangled you. Fortunately for you, the Officers on patrol got there in time.

Adrian tries to sit up.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
Here, let me help you.

Dr. Roberts assists.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
You're the second person Doby's put
in here in a month! They should
hurry up and ship him straight to
State Prison.

Adrian points to the water.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
Do you want some water?

Adrian nods. Dr. Roberts hands him a glass of water. Adrian slowly takes a sip, but coughs and spits the water out.

Dr. Roberts holds the glass and helps him with another small sip.

DOCTOR ROBERTS
You're going to be sore for a few
days, young man. I suggest you
massage the area around your throat
and you'll be fine.

Adrian nods his head slowly and closes his eyes.

INT. DETENTION CENTER/ 5TH FLOOR - LATER

The elevator doors open on the 5th floor and Nurse Walker steps out of it, pushing Adrian in a wheelchair. The pair is escorted by a GUARD down the long corridor and into Director White's office.

INT. DIRECTOR WHITE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

The Guard closes the door behind Adrian who wheels himself toward the desk where DIRECTOR THOMAS WHITE (52), Caucasian, heavy-set sits.

DIRECTOR WHITE
Good Afternoon, Mr. Steele. My sincerest apologies for the earlier incident with Clarence Doby. He should have been sent to state prison a few days ago, but his trial was rescheduled. Anyway, I was just informed that you are being released--

ADRIAN

It's about time.

DIRECTOR WHITE

Sorry for bringing you all the way up here, but given how important you are, I wanted you to hear it from me first. I'm sure you'll think twice about any legal actions or negative publicity you might pursue against us concerning this unfortunate incident. Mr. Doby is in confinement, so you can return to your cell and pick up your belongings for release.

ADRIAN

That won't be necessary Mr. White, but I'll definitely take suing you into consideration.

Adrian turns and wheels himself out of the office. He looks up at the Guard with a smug expression who is waiting in the hallway.

ADRIAN

Get me out of here!

Adrian and the Guard proceed down the hall.

EXT. BAILEY LUXURY APARTMENTS - AFTERNOON

Outside Gia Chesnik's building, a CRIME SCENE POLICE VAN and a POLICE CRUISER is parked. A YELLOW TARP covers the spot and body where Gia Chesnik fell.

INT. BAILEY LUXURY APARTMENTS - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

A CSI TEAM darts back and forth from the elevator to the exit. Hope walks through the revolving doors and approaches DETECTIVE SERGEANT WALTER JOHNSON (45), African American.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Hope, glad you made it. The moment I saw Adrian's name I figured I'd better call you before the media found out.

HOPE

Thanks for looking out for us, Walter. How have things been?

Detective Johnson scribbles in his notepad before glancing back up at Hope.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Not too good for my stomach after seeing what's left outside, but things are well otherwise. I was promoted to Detective Sergeant last year, thanks to you!

HOPE

Congratulations on your promotion, Detective Sergeant. My client thanks you for testifying on his behalf against the wishes of the prosecution. Even though he did six months upstate for nothing. Did they ever find the gun or is your partner still looking for it?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Abrams died a few months ago. Cancer.

HOPE

My condolences, Walter... So what do we have here?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

The victim was Gia Christine Chesnik, 25. From the looks of it she was a model of some kind. There were no signs of forced entry and the door was locked from the inside. We found several sets of fingerprints, semen, her personal diary... and get this, a suicide note.

Hope appears intrigued. She walks over to the elevator.

HOPE

Can I go up and look around?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

You know better than that, Hope. I can't let you snoop around an active crime scene! I called you here to let you know that Adrian's name is all over her diary and I believe we'll find those are his fingerprints and fluids up there.

HOPE
Can I see the diary?

Detective Johnson considers.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON
Fine, but this stays between us.

He crosses over to a bin of collected evidence and retrieves a diary in a zip-lock bag.

Hope pulls it out and flips to a random page.

HOPE
(reading)
June -- "Dear Adrian, these past few days have been amazing. I go to bed thinking of you, I wake up thinking about you. You're like a drug I can't put down. I'm going mad just thinking about the next time we'll be together!"

She and Detective Johnson exchange a glance.

HOPE
"Adrian, where are you? I can't handle this. I cancelled all of my engagements. I need your arms around me. I need you, Adrian!"

Hope flips the page and continues reading.

HOPE
"...Adrian, it's been three days. I can't think clearly without you..."

Hope shakes her head and closes the diary.

HOPE
Can I see the suicide note?

Johnson retrieves the suicide note.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON
Listen, do you have time for lunch?

HOPE
Walter, Adrian's sitting in lockup for a crime he didn't commit. Having lunch with you is the last thing on my mind right now.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

And by the look of that ring
outline on your finger, it should
be the last thing on yours, too.
Now Detective Sergeant, can I
please see the damn note?

Detective Johnson sighs and hands it over. Hope reads --

HOPE

"Being without you is tearing me
apart! Not making love to you is
killing me and I can't go on living
if I can't be with you. Goodbye,
Adrian. I will always love you..."

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Now that's deep. But what the hell
does Adrian have to make this woman
take a swan dive?

HOPE

I don't know, but something isn't
right.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

You want to hear something strange,
Hope? The victim was a lesbian!
Everyone we interviewed confirmed
it.

Johnson reaches for some photos and hands them to Hope.

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Look at these pictures, she's
seriously hugged up on this one.

Hope scans the pictures with intensity. She holds one up to
Detective Johnson.

HOPE

Do we know who this woman is?

DETECTIVE JOHNSON

Her name is Katherina Surapova.
She's another model, Russian. But
you don't have to be a detective to
figure what's going on. Here's her
info --

Johnson hands Hope Katherina's contact information.

HOPE

Was the victim bisexual?