

Allens' Wake

Written By:

Shaun W. Davis

A story about men's mental health. Based on many of true  
stories.

Copyright #1-11525401241

Shaun@DavisMajor.com |  
sdavis30@me.com  
(916) 533-2238  
1292 Paddington Way  
Plumas Lake, CA 95961

FADE IN:

EXT. FUNERAL - DAY

Four men stand together adorned with military dress uniforms. They are standing to the side of a coffin as a minister is reading the last rights. No other family or friends are present, no color guard for this fallen brother of arms.

MINISTER:

1	...Yay though I walk through the	1
	valley of Death, I shall fear no	
	evil...	

All four men are standing in silence with different expressions: Angry, devoid of emotion, one appears to wipe a tear from his eye, and another appears to be staring miles in front of him as he looks to the ground. As the last man is seen, a high pitch noise begins to play.

FADE TO:

EXT. BACK DECK - AFTERNOON

The four men are sitting in silence outside on a deck as the high-pitched noise begins to trail off. They've all come to hangout at Allen's house. Deck is moderately big with a BBQ sizzling in the background and a patio set sits in the middle of the space where they are all sitting. All four men appear to have come from the funeral as they are much more casually wearing their dress uniforms and drinking.

MAN 1 KYLE:

2	Did you guys catch the score of that	2
	game?! I swear those refs were paid	
	off or something.	

MAN 3 DAN:

3	That's what you want to talk about? We	3
	just lost a brother.	

MAN 1 KYLE:

4	What else would I want to talk about?	4
	You expect me to shed a tear for a	
	coward?!	

MAN 2 STEVE:

5	Seriously though.	5
---	-------------------	---

MAN 4 ALLEN:

6	Wait, what?	6
---	-------------	---

7 (finally paying attention)  
7 Why would you say that?! After all the  
deployments and everything we have  
been through together?! Seriously?!

Man 1 gets up from his seat and heads to the barbecue and  
continues cooking.

8 MAN 1 KYLE:  
8 All I'm saying is that we all have  
problems.  
(gestures to Man 4 Allen)  
Your wife slept with half the  
neighborhood,  
(Referring to Man 2)  
Steve lost his foot in a claymore  
sweep,  
(Referring to Man 3)  
Dan's family won't talk to him because  
he's gay. Now those are problems, and  
we're all here.

9 MAN 2 STEVE:  
9 And your kids won't have anything to  
do with you.. for obvious reasons.  
(laughs at Kyle)

We see all 4 men looking uncomfortable and worse for the  
wear.

10 MAN 1 KYLE:  
10 Asshole.

The men sit in silence for a moment and they contemplate the  
actions of their fallen brother.

11 MAN 3 DAN:  
11 Just because we're all dealing with  
things doesn't mean that they aren't  
real to us. All these issues have an  
impact and that can sometimes be too  
much to handle.

12 MAN 4 ALLEN:  
12 Yeah, when my wife took my kids from  
me...  
(Cut off by Kyle)

MAN 1 KYLE:  
13 Exactly! We're all dealing with shit. 13  
Which means that we're not taking the  
cowards way out. You think that we're  
all not dealing with shit? Like I  
don't want to see my kids? My ex is  
just a bitch.

MAN 3 DAN:  
14 Looks like you're not letting it 14  
affect you at all..  
(Sarcastically)

MAN 1 KYLE:  
15 Yeah, it affects me. But Im not gonna 15  
go and kill myself because I can't see  
my kids.

MAN 2 STEVE:  
16 Kyle's got a point. You don't see me 16  
killing myself over my missing foot.  
Shit, I was in rehab for 2 years after  
that mine took me out.

MAN 3 DAN:  
17 Right, but isn't that why you go to 17  
counseling and take anti-depressants?

MAN 2 STEVE:  
18 Yeah, Im going to counseling and 18  
taking pills so I don't kill myself.  
(Sarcastically)  
I don't see why you're defending what  
he did to himself.

MAN 4 ALLEN:  
19 Why is it always a problem to talk 19  
about mens mental health? It's like  
we're not allowed to have feelings or  
something.

MAN 1 KYLE:  
20 See, now you get it. 20  
(Laughs)

Allen is frustrated as Kyle and Steve share a laugh in his direction.

21                   MAN 4 ALLEN:                   21  
I'm serious.

22                   MAN 2 STEVE:                   22  
So are we..  
                  (Continues laughing)

23                   MAN 3 DAN:                   23  
Look, the mens mental health stigma is  
real. And it's something that needs to  
be discussed.

24                   MAN 1 KYLE:                   24  
Stigma-shamigma

25                   MAN 4 ALLEN:                   25  
(sighs in frustration)

26                   MAN 2 STEVE:                   26  
What's wrong with you? (To Allen)

27                   MAN 4 ALLEN:                   27  
Dan's right. You think I was able to  
talk to my wife about the things she  
was doing to me, to my kids?

28                   MAN 1 KYLE:                   28  
Are you done with the pity party?

29                   MAN 2 STEVE:                   29  
Damn.  
                  (to Kyle)

30                   MAN 3 DAN:                   30  
Aren't you forgetting something?  
(Gestures to the BBQ)

31                   MAN 1 KYLE:                   31  
Shit.  
                  (Glancing over at the grill)

Kyle Gets up and walks to the grill which has started to  
flame over the withered burgers as they sizzle on the grill.

32                   MAN 3 DAN:                   32  
Steve, you can't sit there and pretend  
that you didn't go through a  
tremendous amount of pain and

depression following that.  
(gesturing to Steve's leg.)

33	MAN 2 STEVE: Well, no. But..	33
34	MAN 4 ALLEN: Do you remember how your wife reacted to your rehabilitation?	34
35	MAN 2 STEVE: Of course I do, she- (Cut off)	35
36	MAN 3 DAN: She didn't care. She treated it a lot like he's acting right now (referencing Kyle)	36
37	MAN 1 KYLE: And Steve kept going, and didn't jump out a window or throw himself into traffic, right?! (Continues flipping burgers) Anyone want cheese?	37
38	MAN 4 ALLEN: No.	38
39	MAN 2 STEVE: Yes... And no, I didn't do anything to myself. I accepted what happened in service to my country and I moved on.	39
40	MAN 3 DAN: That must've been hard. Did you talk to someone about that? I know I never heard about it.	40
41	MAN 2 STEVE: You're damn right it was hard, and no one wanted to hear me complaining about it. Who'd even listen to me if I did?	41
42	MAN 4 ALLEN: And that's the problem.	42
43	MAN 3 DAN: Exactly. No one wants to talk about	43

these issues that are very real to us all. There is a stigma that we're all guilty of falling into where we don't feel safe talking about it.

Kyle rejoins the group by walking back from the grill with a plate full of finished burgers. He carries them inside to the coffee table in the living room, and all the men follow inside and sit in the chairs and couch surrounding the square coffee table. Allen takes a seat on the couch with Kyle at opposite ends of the spacious couch.

MAN 1 KYLE:

44	Of course not! We're men, not pussys. You want to paint this as some huge problem, but no one cares. We could talk about this all night and it wouldn't bring our brother back, it wouldn't undo his bullshit way of giving up on life. You think I don't know pain? What makes you think he's any worse off than any of us?!	44
----	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

MAN 4 ALLEN:

45	You're right, we're all 'okay'. (rolls eyes)	45
----	-------------------------------------------------	----

MAN 1 KYLE:

46	You know what I mean. No one wants to hear it, we're men and we need to act like it.	46
----	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

MAN 3 DAN:

47	And that's the problem right there. We're expected not to feel, or cry or allow it to hurt us. If we show emotion we're considered weak, so we just hide it and allow it to build up inside of us until we can't take it anymore.	47
----	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

MAN 1 KYLE:

48	This conversation's starting to hurt. (Sarcastically) We're all still standing, and working past our issues everyday.	48
----	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

MAN 4 ALLEN:

49	But for how long?! When are people going to wake up to the fact that we	49
----	----------------------------------------------------------------------------	----

all have a breaking point?! All it takes is one bad day.. One. And you're gone.

50                   MAN 2 STEVE:                   50  
What's that supposed to mean?

51                   MAN 1 KYLE:                   51  
He's had a hard life. We've all heard it before... Shitty marriage, homelessness, druggy mom..

52                   MAN 3 DAN:                   52  
                  (Interrupting)  
That's fucked up man.  
                  (To Kyle)

53                   MAN 4 ALLEN:                   53  
He's not wrong though. I have dealt with a lot in my life, things that I would never wish on anyone el..  
                  (Cut off again by Kyle)

54                   MAN 1 KYLE:                   54  
Come on man, Don't start telling us that 'my life sucks'.  
                  (Whiney Voice)

Kyle continues talking and we start to see Man 4, Allen sitting in his chair with his eyes closed. As Kyle begins speaking of all the whiney men in the world and rambling on, his voice fades out as a high pitch noise begins to fade in and the image of Allen has subtle but noticeable shake as the noise gets louder.

55                   WOMANS VOICE (V.O.):                   55  
Real men don't cry..

56                   WOMANS VOICE (V.O. CONT. OVERLAPPING):                   56  
I'm going for a walk with the neighbor.

57                   WOMANS VOICE (V.O. CONT. OVERLAPPING):                   57  
Maybe you'd be able to please me if you lost some weight.

The pitch gets louder as the woman's voice trails off, then immediately stops as Kyle continues to speak.

MAN 1 KYLE:  
(Fading In quickly)  
58 You see, he's not even listening 58  
anymore. HELLO!?

The audio stops and we see a wide shot of the men sitting together and Kyle snaps his fingers to get Man 4's attention.

MAN 4 ALLEN:  
59 I'm sorry you think my struggles are 59  
whining or petty. I get it, you don't  
understand. You haven't watched your  
sister almost get killed in front of  
you. You haven't left starving because  
your foster parents couldn't stand the  
sight of you. You haven't seen your  
mom so drugged up that when you leave  
for school, you wonder if today was  
the day you came home and she was  
dead. You didn't spend your first few  
months of high school living on the  
streets and struggling to find food or  
someone to take you in. Then, when you  
feel like you finally married someone  
who you think is your world, only to  
find out they were everyone else's.

MAN 1 KYLE:  
60 Dude, you're not starving for food 60  
(laughs)

MAN 2 STEVE:  
61 Oh come on- 61  
(To Man 4, Cut off)

MAN 4 ALLEN:  
62 No! 62  
(Stronger tone)  
There are days I wonder what my kids  
are going through with her, because as  
a big 'fuck you' to me she went and  
started dating someone who yells at my  
kids and threatens them daily. And  
while I'm working to get them out of  
that situation, I sit here knowing  
that the courts don't favor fathers  
because we're looked at as the lesser  
of two parents. Society tells us all  
we need to know about 'fathers', when

you see the sitcom with the inept  
father who has no interest in his  
kids, let alone how to raise them.

Kyle sighs at Allen as he continues to vent about his current  
worries. The group is uncomfortable and he continues and  
begins to gather their belongings.

	MAN 4 ALLEN:	
63	Tell me Kyle, do you know the percentage of how many fathers get custody of their kids in this state?	63

	MAN 1 KYLE:	
64	No.. I- (Cut off)	64

High pitch noise starts slowly fading in.

	MAN 4 ALLEN:	
65	Exactly! It's 32%. Thirty-two percent of men are deemed able to care for their own children in this state. And we're not allowed to even have a say in how they're cared for, or what influences they're going to have around them. And you wonder why I might consider ending it all?! All I see is the failures I brought to my family. I've failed my kids for the sake of my own sanity.	65

	MAN 3 DAN:	
66	Wait.. (faintly in the background)	66

High pitch noise gradually getting louder.

	MAN 4 ALLEN:	
	(Stressed and exasperated)	
67	Yes, my life's been hard, so has yours. No one hits harder than life, but at what point are we allowed to ask for help?!	67

High pitch noise stops, and the room paused as Allen deeply  
inhales and exhales.

68 MAN 2 STEVE: 68  
Dude, you need to relax.  
(Calm tone)

69 MAN 1 KYLE: 69  
Look, we're all stressed out and  
clearly things aren't going well for  
you, but it'll all work out.

70 MAN 3 DAN: 70  
And how's that, Kyle?

71 MAN 1 KYLE: 71  
You know what I mean. He'll go to  
court, show what his wife did and how  
she screwed everyone in town.

72 MAN 3 DAN: 72  
It's a no-fault state, the court won't  
care about all that.

73 MAN 2 STEVE: 73  
He's right you know  
(Gesturing to Man 4)

74 MAN 1 KYLE: 74  
So what... You're saying all this is  
enough to off yourself? Why would you  
do that to your kids? Like, I get why  
you'd want to get outta here with an  
ex like yours but-  
(cut off by Allen)

75 MAN 4 ALLEN: 75  
You don't get it. I feel like a  
failure. I failed my ex, my kids, my  
work, my relationships. I haven't  
gotten to see my family since my mom  
died. I never even got to tell her  
goodbye.

76 MAN 3 DAN: 76  
But to your kids?  
(To Man 4)

77 MAN 4 ALLEN: 77  
Maybe they're better off without me.

There's silence for a moment as the men take it in, and Man 1 and 2 start to gesture up from their seats and toward the door.

MAN 1 KYLE:  
78                   ...Look guys, this is getting a little                   78  
                  too intense. It's been fun, but this  
                  is getting to be a little too much.

MAN 2 STEVE:  
79                   Would you like to talk about it?!                   79  
                  (Mocking Kyle)

MAN 1 KYLE:  
                  (Laughs and shoves him)  
80                   Knock it off.                   80

MAN 3 DAN:  
                  (To Allen)  
81                   It's been good catching up, man. It's                   81  
                  good to let these things out, but you  
                  can't hold on to them alone.

As the 3 men start to make their way toward the door to leave, we see Allen still very much in thought and exhausted from everything he's said.

MAN 2 STEVE:  
82                   Seriously dude, you should talk to us                   82  
                  before letting things get this bad.

MAN 4 ALLEN:  
83                   Sure. I will..                   83

The 3 men exit the house leaving Allen in the empty silence of his living room. Allen sits in the middle of the couch and opens the coffee table drawer to reveal a pale brown bag. He then unzips it and removes a pistol, laying it on the table. Allen leans forward, hands on his head as the high pitch noise fades in, and the image slightly shakes as the noise increases.

WOMANS VOICE (V.O.):  
84                   I was just talking to those guys, it                   84  
                  didn't mean anything..  
                  (Fading In and out)

WOMANS VOICE (V.O. CONT. OVERLAPPING):  
85                   Maybe if you were a better husband I                   85

wouldn't need to get attention from  
other men.

(Fading in and out)

The noise pierces with every comment as we begin fading out  
on Allen alone, with his pistol.

86 WOMANS VOICE (V.O. CONT. OVERLAPPING): 86  
You've never been there for your  
kids.. That doesn't count  
(Fading In and out)

87 WOMANS VOICE (V.O. CONT. OVERLAPPING): 87  
You're never going to win. I will make  
sure of it one way or another. You'll  
be lucky to ever see my kids again.  
(Fading In and out)

Camera is fully faded out as the last comment begins.

88 WOMANS VOICE (V.O. CONT. OVERLAPPING): 88  
I'm going to take you for everything  
you're worth, you won't have shit when  
I'm done, trust me.  
(Fading In and out)

Allen is heard inhaling through his nose in a long, deep  
breath. 3 seconds later a gun shot is heard. Men's mental  
health resources are shared on-screen with gentle music  
playing to ease the tension.