

## Midnight Mass - S01E04 - Book IV: Lamentations

Erin: I'm just realizing that you must think I'm foolish.

Riley: No.

Erin: You prayed with me all day, and I love you for that. [sniffles] But you don't... You don't believe it. Any of it.

Riley: I understand it. I do. The appeal of it. The comfort of it. Everything happens for a reason. There's good in everything. There's a plan. It's... I don't know. I guess I just lived a moment at complete odds with the existence of a loving God.

Erin: So what do you think? You think I'm delusional?

Riley: No.

Erin: You think I'm naïve.

Riley: No. No, I think... I think we all want... So badly for there to be a reason. For everything. And some justice, and some comfort when we die.

Erin: Yeah, that's where religion comes from. That's the whole question.

Riley: It is.

Erin: What happens when we die?

Riley: What the fuck happens?

Erin: So what do you think? What happens when we die, Riley?

Riley: I don't know. And I don't trust anyone who tells us they do, but... I can speak for myself, I guess.

Erin: Then speak for yourself. What happens when you die?

Riley: When I die... My body stops functioning. Shut down. All at once, or gradually, my breathing stops, my heart stops beating. Clinical death. And a bit later, like, five whole minutes later... My brain cells start dying. But in the meantime, in between... Maybe my brain releases a flood of DMT. It's the psychedelic drug released when we dream, so... I dream. I dream bigger than I have ever dreamed before, because it's all of it. Just the last dump of DMT all at once. And my neurons are firing and I'm seeing this firework display of memories and imagination. And I am just... tripping. I mean, really tripping balls because my mind's rifling through the memories. You know, long and short-term, and the dreams mix with the memories, and... It's a curtain call. The dream to end all dreams. One last great dream as my mind empties the fuckin' missile silos and then... I stop. My brain activity ceases and there is nothing left of me. No pain. No memory, no awareness that I ever was, no... That I ever hurt someone. That I ever killed someone. Everything is as it was before me. And the electricity disperses from my brain till it's just dead tissue. Meat. Oblivion. And all of the other little things that make me up, they... The microbes and bacterium and the billion other little things that live on my eyelashes and in my hair and in my mouth and on my skin and in my gut and everywhere else, they just keep on living. And eating. Uh... And I'm serving a purpose. I'm feeding life. And I'm broken apart, and all the littlest pieces of me are just recycled, and I'm billions of other places. And my atoms are in plants and bugs and animals, and I am like the stars that are in the sky. There one moment and then just scattered across the goddamn cosmos. Your turn. What happens when you die?

Erin: Speaking for myself?

Riley: Speaking for yourself.

Erin: No. Not for myself. I'm not the one that died today. She was never awake. When she came down into this little body, this just-forming little body, it was asleep. So all she ever knew was dreaming. She only ever dreamed. She didn't even have a name. And then in her sleep, that perfect little spirit just lifted up. Because God didn't send her to suffer through life on Earth. No. This one? This special little soul... God just sent her down here to sleep. Just a little nap. A quick dream. And then He called her back. He wanted her back. And so she went back. Same as she floated down, she rose up above the Earth. Past all the souls in the atmosphere and all the stars in the sky and then into a light so bright. And then, for the first time... She starts to wake up. She's wrapped in a feeling of

love. Just pure, amazing love. Of course she is. She's pure. She has never sinned. She never hurt a single living thing, not even an ant. And she's not alone. She's home. There are people there, she doesn't know it, but they're her family. Her grandfather and her great-grandfather, and they love her. And they name her. And then when God reaches down and kisses her head, and the second He says her name, she grows up. In a blink. And she's perfect. Her body as it would have been on her best day on Earth. Her perfect age. The peak of herself. And they tell her about her mom down here on Earth, and how I'll be there soon enough. And she's happy. And nothing but joy for all eternity. And she's loved. And she isn't alone. And that's what we mean when we say Heaven. No mansions, no rivers of diamonds, or fluffy clouds or angel wings. You are loved. And you aren't alone. That is God. That is Heaven. That's why we endure all that we endure on this... Big, blue, sad rock. I'll be there soon enough. And I'll see my father. And my grandmother. And I'll see my little girl, and she will be happy and safe. And I will be so glad to meet her.

Riley: I really hope you're right.