

The King Paradox

A group of friends are brought in for questioning after one of them goes missing the previous night but as their stories get more complicated, they all go from witnesses to suspects. The scene begins in an interrogation room. Declan West, a distant and cold detective, begins questioning three teen girls: Mason, Piper, and Valerie. The night in question is the night that their friend, Liv, was last seen. The girls begin by describing a sleepover on a Saturday night at Valerie's house when her parents were out of town. The girls, clearly distraught, individually recount the events of that fateful night. West listens intently and between interrogations discusses the case with fellow detective, Charlie McKenna. West expresses skepticism about the stories he's been told, believing that there may be more to the story than the girls are letting on. McKenna, unconvinced, assures West that teen girls will be teen girls and she probably just ran away. The girls then give West a timeframe of the entire night, starting with the arrival of their friends. Liv arrived first at 8:00. Mason arrived at 8:30, Piper (fashionably late) arrived around 9:30. They then recount typical sleepover activities: movies, games, snacks, all leading up to a game of truth or dare.

At some point during the game, the girls reveal that Liv went upstairs to use the bathroom. At about 1:30, they noticed that Liv had not returned. When they went upstairs to check on her, the bathroom was empty and the door connecting the bathroom and the yard was ajar. Immediately, they called the cops. Upon hearing this, Detective West pressed about why and exactly when Liv went upstairs. As the stories progress, West notices a huge discrepancy in the story. Mason says that the game began at around midnight. When asked when she arrived, Piper said 9:30. Valerie tells West the game started right after Piper got there, but she doesn't remember exactly when Piper arrived. West, only speaking with Valerie now, asks if the game began at around 9:30, why were the cops called at 1 in the morning? Valerie freezes as she realizes her mistake.

Valerie is the first to break. She confesses as soon as West points out her error. She begins to cry even more and she tells him what actually happened that night, blaming Mason for her death. She tells him that they heard a sickening thud from the upstairs bathroom, but Mason insisted it was nothing. After about an hour, the girls went to check on her and found her lifeless body on the floor, blood pooling around her head, spilling from a gash. Piper is the next to break. She doesn't cry necessarily, she seems to be in a guilt induced shock as she realizes the gravity of the situation. She tells him it took 2 hours to clean off the blood stained tiles and dispose of the evidence. Mason never truly breaks. She holds onto this lie for as long as she can until she accepts defeat. The feeling of failure lingers behind her eyes. A triumphant smile crosses Declan's face. On his way out of the interrogation room, he smirks at McKenna. McKenna shakes his head and chuckles—his good friend has done it again. We see the girls being loaded into a police car, red and blue lights flashing in the night. West pats the door of the car as it drives away.