

Where Do We Go From Here

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FADE IN:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

SIRENS scream as an ambulance races down the darkened street.

CHARLIE V.O.

After the body dies, It's said
there's eight minutes of brain
activity that still remains. Some
believe it's the time it takes for
the soul to travel out of the body.
Others believe we're reliving our
last memories. Where we go from
there - nobody really knows.

EXT. SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

SAMANTHA SIMMONS (8), rides a bike back and fourth in the
street. A SCREAM emanates from one of the houses.

Her bike drops to the ground. She darts away.

INT. PAUALA AND LIINAS' HOUSE - DAY

PAULA SIRENE (20's) wakes in bed to her PHONE ringing.

PAULA

Yeah? - It's my only day off. This
is the second day in a row. Okay.

She clicks of the phone and drags herself into the

KITCHEN

She reaches the coffee pot. Empty. She picks up a script with
a stick-it note attached. "Rent's due" She crumples it.

BATHROOM

Barley visible through the steam, Paula lathers herself.

PAUALA'S ROOM

She dabs her cheeks with foundation. Applies eyeliner, then
slinks into her work uniform. She styles her hair until
decidedly pretty enough. She wavers at her reflection.

PAULA
Where do we go from here?

I./E. BETTY MCLANE'S HOUSE - DAY

Blood stains the carpet. Facing the couch is a rookie cop, CARLYLE, (20's). He's aghast. He speaks into his walkie.

CARLYLE
Hamilton, you gotta get down here.
I've never seen anything like this.

FRONT YARD

An officer rolls police tape around the perimeter of the house as Carlyle steps out.

Squad cars and fire engines line the street. Crowds gather. An EMT wheels Samantha on a gurney into an ambulance.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

ETHAN POLLARD (30's), lays down a bouquet of Lilies next to a tombstone reading, "Grace Ann Pollard."

ETHAN
Love you, Gracy.

He gives himself a moment. Regains composure, then gets on his black 1977 MOTO GUZZI. He fires it up and roars away.

INT. BETTY MCLANE'S HOUSE - DAY

DWIGHT HAMILTON (30's), is knelt in front of the couch, inspecting the scene. Forensic officers snap photos.

Other officers dust for fingerprints. Carlyle stands aside with a note pad.

CARLYLE
Betty McLane. No signs of forced entry.

DWIGHT
Cause of death?

Carlyle mocks.

CARLYLE
Pretty cut and dry, isn't it?

Dwight looks up at him. Carlyle reluctantly bends down. Dwight points at the victims neck.

DWIGHT

And this?

Carlyle sees bruising around Betty's neck. He looks at his pad then to Dwight.

DWIGHT

The answers are in the details.

Carlyle looks disappointed.

CARLYLE

Sorry...

Dwight takes the not pad and rises. Carlyle follows suit.

DWIGHT

Neighbors found a little girl --

CARLYLE

Samantha Simmons.

DWIGHT

Unit two was first on the scene?

CARLYLE

That's when I got here.

He hands Carlyle back his note pad.

DWIGHT

Talk to friends and family. Her employer. Who she was talking to? Dating anybody and so fourth.

CARLYLE

Yes, sir.

He sprints away. A FORENSICS OFFICER snaps a photo.

FORENSICS OFFICER

Whoever did this was precise.

DWIGHT

Get a sample from the wall?

FORENSICS OFFICER

Already did.

DWIGHT

And the weapon?

FORENSICS OFFICER

No weapons.

DWIGHT

You didn't find a weapon?

FORENSICS OFFICER

Said there wasn't a weapon,
Hamilton. Pollard need to be your
ears, too?

Dwight gives him a penetrating stare, then ambles away. A bloody, tattered woman's body lies motionless on the couch. Her heart's in her palm.

On the wall above is written, "She found pleasure in ripping out the hearts of others. Now she understands first hand."

INT. BANDERA'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Paula clips in. She's immediately met by the owner, MR. WENDELL (40's), tough.

MR. WENDELL

Paula, you're late.

PAULA

I'm covering for Betty. This is supposed to --

MR. WENDELL

I don't want to hear any excuses. Betty's ass is fired. You don't want to work, your ass can be fired too. Clock in. You're in section 3.

He treads away. Paula grabs an apron from behind the counter. LIINA CREEL (20's), strolls up and puts dirty dishes away.

LIINA

Just missed Eric. Says you've been blowing him off.

PAULA

Between work and rehearsals, I just don't have the time.

LIINA

Just give him a chance.

PAULA

Liina, not today.

Liina smirks. They walk to the food counter.

LIINA
Off book yet?

PAULA
No. And there's only two more
rehearsals. I should be studying.

LIINA
Get my note?

PAULA
I'll have it by today. Hopefully.

Liina takes some dishes into the dining room. Paula pours herself some coffee. Ethan steps through the door. He sits himself at a booth. Liina comes back.

LIINA
Your crush just came in.

Paula looks over.

LIINA
If you're not going to talk to Eric
at least talk to him.

A cowardice smile creeps on to Paula's face. She pours a second cup of coffee.

LIINA
Never going to have a date unless
you talk to somebody.

PAULA
I have a date tonight, actually.

She heads into the dining room.

INT. CAR - STATIONARY - SAME

A MAN in black gloves and a leather jacket parks a car across the street from the restaurant. He snaps pictures of Ethan.

ETHAN'S TABLE

Paula sets down a cup of coffee. Ethan's delighted seeing her.

PAULA
Number three?

ETHAN

Excuse me?

PAULA

Your order. Always the same.

ETHAN

Oh, right. I'm a creature of habit.

PAULA

Be out in a few minutes.

She smiles and trots away. His PHONE rings. He silences it. A VOICE from a tv grabs his attention.

EXT. PRISON - DAY (ON TV)

A reporter stands in front of a large crowd.

MALE REPORTER

Moments ago Kurt McManahan was released after being acquitted for last years brutal murder of Grace Ann Pollard.

Kurt McManahan walks down the steps of the prison followed by a barrage of reporters.

FEMALE REPORTER

How does it feel to be released?

KURT MCMANAHAN

Can't put a price on innocence. I never would've hurt Grace. Hope detective Pollard now understand.

INT. BANDERA'S BAR AND GRILL - CONTINUOUS

Paula watches the tv. Liina comes back to the counter.

PAULA

So sad.

LIINA

It's been a year. You need to help him forget.

She winks.

PAULA

God, Liina. Have a heart.

Liina grabs dishes from the counter. Paula follows her into the dining room.

LIINA

Tell me about this date. Since when are you talking to someone?

PAULA

You'll just laugh.

LIINA

Don't tell me you met on one of those dating sites?

She sets the plates in front of customers. They walk away. Paula's guilty.

LIINA

You did! Paula, those sites are for the lazy and the creeps.

PAULA

Thought you'd be happy. I'll no longer be living vicariously through you and Blake.

LIINA

We broke up.

PAULA

Again?

LIINA

This time for good.

Mr. Wendell's waiting for them at the front.

MR. WENDELL

When you're here - you're working. I'm gonna stop scheduling you two if you can't keep your mouths shut.

He walks off.

LIINA

I'm seriously going to kill that guy one of these days.

PAULA

Better watch what you say.

She nods to Ethan.

LIINA

If you're not going get his
attention maybe I will. God know's
Blake's not fulfilling my needs.

Paula grabs a plate of food and walks over to

ETHAN'S TABLE

He's working a crossword puzzle. He shoves it aside as she
sets his dish down.

ETHAN

Thanks. Figure I'd know your name
by now.
(Noticing her name tag)
Paula.

PAULA

Ethan, right?

ETHAN

Right.

PAULA

You're that detective.

ETHAN

Once upon a time.

Thanks for making it awkward.

PAULA

Well Ethan, let me know if you need
anything else.

She slinks away. Liina's impatient as she comes back.

LIINA

I saw you talking to him.

PAULA

Hardly.

INT. CAR - STATIONARY - SAME

The man snaps one last photo. He sets his camera aside and
drives away.

INT. BANDERA'S BAR AND GRILL - LATER

Ethan's plate is set to the side. He sips his coffee. His PHONE rings. He looks at the caller, then silences it.

DWIGHT O.S.
Just what I thought.

Ethan's shocked. He gives a wry smile as Dwight paces over. He sits across from Ethan with a thermos and manila folder.

DWIGHT
Never knew you to do crosswords.

ETHAN
Never really understood 'em. I get the concept, but gotta be cautious. Mistakes you make in the beginning eventually catch up with you.

DWIGHT
Look, Ethan, the department and I are very sorry for your loss.

Ethan continues his puzzle.

ETHAN
Three across. A greek philosopher, inventor and astronomer.

Paula approaches.

PAULA
Hi. Would you like something?

Dwight stares at Ethan.

DWIGHT
Coffee.

She grabs ethan's dish and walks away.

DWIGHT
Sure you've heard by now.

ETHAN
Know any greek philosophers?

DWIGHT
Not enough admissable evidence.

ETHAN
How'd you find me?

DWIGHT

Weren't at the other two places I know you to frequent.

ETHAN

If this is about a case, no thanks.

DWIGHT

Should record yourself saying that. Almost sound convincing.

Paula sets down the coffee. She walks away. Dwight leans in.

DWIGHT

There's been a murder.

Still enthralled in his puzzle.

ETHAN

Ten letters. Speak up if you know.

Dwight fills his thermos with the coffee.

DWIGHT

Only witness was a little girl, but her tongue... Have a look.

He slides over the folder. Ethan's eyes are on his puzzle.

ETHAN

Leaving the department's given me a lot of time to think.

He finally looks up at Dwight.

ETHAN

I always put work first and she suffered for it. Though it doesn't matter now, I can't do it anymore.

He slides the folder back. Dwight throws a five dollar bill on the table. He picks up the folder as he stands.

DWIGHT

We've been friends a long time, Ethan. Don't throw your career away. Should you change your mind.

He motions with the folder as he walks away.

ETHAN

Name a greek philosopher.

DWIGHT
Archimedes.

Ethan smiles quizzically as he fills the blank.

INT. FIVE STAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Customers in formal attire scatter the elegant dining room. Paula sits across from her online date, SCOTT (30's).

SCOTT
You're rehearsing for a play, isn't
that what you said?

PAULA
Where do we go from here?

SCOTT
Pardon?

PAULA
It's the name of the play. I've
always wanted to be an actress.
Spotlight, glitz and glamour.
Cliche', I know.

He pours the rest of a wine bottle into their glasses.

SCOTT
Beats a forty hour a week desk job
with the occasional business trip.

PAULA
Wish you weren't leaving tomorrow.

SCOTT
One night's just not long enough.
Come back to my hotel with me.

Scott grabs her hand. She slowly slides it back.

SCOTT
We've only got tonight. We don't
have to do anything you don't want
to. Just as long as we're together.

Unabashed, she slides her hand back into his.

INT. HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The room's classy and overlooks the downtown skyline. Paula gazes out of the window. Scott comes over with some drinks.

PAULA

I've never seen the city from this high up before. It's beautiful.

She takes one of the drinks.

SCOTT

Not as beautiful as you.

He caresses her cheek and plants a smooch. She may be in to it but she is hesitant. It becomes forceful. She backs away.

PAULA

I need to use the bathroom.

She rushes away. Scott downs his drink and stares after her.

BATHROOM

She turns on the faucet. She pants at her reflection.

SCOTT O.S.

Knew we had to meet when we started to talk. I really like you, Paula.

Paula's confident now. She prepares herself - then a wedding band catches her eye. Confidence smashed.

HOTEL ROOM

She walks out. Tears in her eyes. Scott's shirtless under the covers. She holds up the ring.

PAULA

You're married?

He sighs.

SCOTT

It doesn't mean anything.

PAULA

That you're married or I'm just some girl you're trying to fuck?

She tosses the ring at him and hastens out of the room.

INT. BUS - NIGHT

Paula clutches her script and tries to practice her lines. She can't contain the deluge of tears.

EXT. MCMANAHAN'S HOUSE - DAY

A car pulls into the driveway. KURT MCMANAHAN (30's), steps out with a sack of groceries. He breathes deep. Freedom.

Neighbors play with their KIDS in their yard. They stop and pull them close. They hustle inside. Kurt frowns.

JULIE CARPENTER (50's), wheels her trash can to the side of the street. She stands next to Kurt.

JULIE

Just take some gettin' used to.

KURT

Being accused of murder leaves an indelible mark on your name, Julie.

JULIE

We always believed you didn't do it. He'll sure be happy to see you.

She hands him a stack of mail and pulls him into a hug.

JULIE

As everything always seems to fade, in time this will too.

INT. KURT MCMANAHAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Kurt puts away his groceries.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

He sets a glass of whisky on a table and sorts through his mail. He lands on a letter from a local music institute.

He quickly scans over the letter.

"Due to the unfortunate circumstances, on behalf of the American Music Institute, we regretfully accept your involuntary resignation."

His eyes dart further down the letter

"With no chances of future employment." He's deflated. He throws the letter on the counter.

MUSIC ROOM

Kurt grabs a guitar and sits at a piano bench. He's entranced as he picks some TUNES. He sees a picture of him and Grace. The guitar falls to the ground as he sobs.

LIVING ROOM

He pours himself another drink, then flips through tv channels. They're all reporting about his release.

He sips his drink and looks at the picture of him and Grace. He holds it warmly. The clock on the tv says 7:45.

LATER

The only light comes from the clock that now says 10:15. He wakes up and turns on a lamp.

He notices the picture is upright on the coffee table. He grabs it and walks into his -

MUSIC ROOM

The guitar still lies on the floor. He sets the picture back atop the piano and walks out.

KITCHEN

He flips on the light. His PHONE rings.

KURT

Hello? Hi Julie. Nope, didn't wake me. Just a little jumpy. It's kinda late. Why don't you tell John to swing by in the morning. Okay. Wait what? No I don't have any visitors.

The phone goes dead.

KURT

Hello? Julie...

He looks at the phone, then presses the receiver. Total blackout. He finds a flashlight in a drawer, then walks into his -

BEDROOM

He flips the switches at the breaker box. The electricity flashes back on. He's startled by his reflection in a mirror.

He jerks his head to GLASS shattering from the music room.

MUSIC ROOM

The picture of him and Grace is spider-webbed on the floor. He kneels and cleans the broken glass. He doesn't realize his guitar is leaned up against the wall with a missing string.

He takes the broken frame and heads into the -

KITCHEN

Before he can throw away the shards, from a darkened corner, A Masked FIGURE emerges from behind him in black gloves.

He pulls out the guitar string and wraps it around Kurt's neck. Kurt drops the picture and GASPS, grabbing at the string. He writhes to the ground, dead.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Dwight looks through photos at his desk of the previous crime scene. Carlyle hovers over his shoulder.

CARLYLE

She was a waitress at Bandera's bar and grill. Little diner downtown.

DWIGHT

Talk to the employer?

CARLYLE

Said she didn't show up for her shift Wednesday. Didn't seem to care much neither. Possible suspect?

DWIGHT

Could be.

Dwight looks at the photo of the message on the wall.

CARLYLE

Sure pissed off the wrong guy, huh?

DWIGHT
Probably more to it.

CARLYLE
What makes someone do shit like
that?

Dwight shuffles through the photos.

DWIGHT
Same thing that makes a person
throw a baby into a trash can
moments after conception.
Something's just not right up here.

He points to his head. An OFFICER walks up.

OFFICER
DNA results you requested.

DWIGHT
Thank you, officer.

The officer hands him the file. Dwight skims through it.

CARLYLE
Gotta be one sick son of a bitch to
do something like this.

DWIGHT
This is an act of vengeance.
Someone's been pushed too far and
acting on their emotions.

CHIEF DUCLOSE (50's), walks up to his desk.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
Call just came in. There's been
another one eight seven.

Dwight's shocked.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
It's McManahan.

CARLYLE
McManahan?

CHIEF DUCLOSE
Son, haven't you been watching the
news? Grace Pollard's murderer.

CARLYLE
Detective Pollard's wife?

CHIEF DUCLOSE
 Bingo. Dwight, I want you to get
 down there. Take the rookie.
 This'll be good experience for him.

DWIGHT
 You got it, chief.

Dwight sits back for a moment.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
 Something else?

Dwight grabs his blazer from off the back of his chair.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
 Oh Hamilton, wait a minute.

He hands Dwight a news paper clipping.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
 This was found in the pocket of the
 Simmons girl.

Dwight studies the clipping.

CARLYLE
 What is it?

DWIGHT
 Grace's obituary.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
 Best he finds out from you than the
 media. Give him this too.

He throws over Ethan's badge. Dwight nods.

INT. THEATRE - DAY

A male's dressed as an EMT. Another in slacks and a blazer. A
 man lies in a gurney motionless, bleeding from his head.

Paula's nervous next to KATIE HOPKINS (20's), conceded. They
 exchange glances. A DIRECTOR (40's), sits below the stage.

DIRECTOR O.S.
 Thank you, Mrs. Coultur. Next -
 Paula Sirene. Have you're lines
 memorized this time?

PAULA
 Yes.

She calms herself, then walks forward.

KATIE
Don't freeze.

Paula whirls.

DIRECTOR
Remember, you're portraying a woman
in love with her dying boyfriend.
Are you able to do that?

PAULA
I think so.

DIRECTOR
I don't want you to think, Mrs.
Sirene. I want you to act. Can you
act the part or not?

PAULA
Yes.

DIRECTOR
Show me.

MALE IN BLAZER
That's it, isn't it?

PAULA
(re: script)
Wake up. Come on, don't die on me.
You can't give up on him. Have you
ever been in love?

She fidgets and pulls up her script.

DIRECTOR
Stop! Stop! Have you ever been in
love, Mrs. Sirene?

She's embarrassed. The director comes on to the stage.

DIRECTOR
Well, have you?

PAULA
I -- I...

She's daunted.

DIRECTOR

I don't believe you. Which means
they won't believe you. People you
should be off book by now.

The director addresses the whole cast at Paula's expense.

DIRECTOR

Know the characters you're playing.
Feel their emotions. Make me
believe you.

(looking at Paula)

I'll only settle for the best. And
if you're not the best, than you'll
be replaced. Take a seat. You'll
have another chance next week.

Paula looks to Katie. She's enjoyed every minute. Paula walks
off the stage in dismay. The director holds up his sheet.

DIRECTOR

Katie Hopkins?

He grins as she steps out. The director gives a nod. They
start READING. Paula watches with hate in her eyes.

DIRECTOR O.S.

Very good, Katie.

Paula cowers out of the auditorium.

VIDEO ON TV:

INT. DINNER BANQUET - NIGHT

Dozens of formally dressed people CLAP from tables. Ethan and
Dwight stand in a group of officers. The MAYOR's at a podium.

MAYOR

For maintaining peace and securing
the city of it's criminals, I award
you, detective Ethan Pollard, the
medal of valor. Let's give this
city's best damn detective a big
round of applause.

END VIDEO:

I./E. ETHAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Boxes scatter the house. Ethan pulls down the medal from the video and studies it. He looks up at the APPLAUSE.

He notices that Dwight looks annoyed. He throws the medal into the box and tapes it down.

GARAGE

Dwight strolls up and sees at a 'for sale' sign in the yard. Ethan's bike is disassembled. He walks out with a box.

DWIGHT
Cuttin' out on you again?

He sets the box among a collection.

ETHAN
Probably the spark plugs.

Ethan starts working on it.

DWIGHT
Moving?

ETHAN
Eventually.

DWIGHT
Where you headed?

ETHAN
Fort Collins. Grace loved it there.

Dwight observes the boxes.

DWIGHT
What about your stuff?

ETHAN
Got a storage unit.

DWIGHT
Running away never solves anything.

ETHAN
I'm not running.

DWIGHT
You left the department. You're selling your house. This past year you've practically been a ghost.

An ambulance races down the street. SIRENS blaring. Ethan's startled. Dwight doesn't notice.

ETHAN

Can't do it anymore. No time for a social life.

DWIGHT

You never had a social life.

ETHAN

Maybe If I had, we could have saved our marriage. You knew she was having an affair.

DWIGHT

With McManahan. I knew.

Ethan wipes his hands with a towel. He fires up his bike. He smiles and REVS the engine.

ETHAN

Spark plugs.

DWIGHT

You can't blame yourself.

ETHAN

Are you here to talk about Grace or what are you doing here?

DWIGHT

Ethan - look...

ETHAN

The case, again. How many times do I have to say it? I'm done, Dwight.

DWIGHT

McManahan was murdered last night.

Ethan clutches his temple in pain.

DWIGHT

Don't you care?

ETHAN

I try not to.

DWIGHT

We all grieve differently.

ETHAN

I'm done grieving. This is me moving on. This is your time. Find whoever's doing this.

Ethan turns to walk back inside.

DWIGHT

I told them to leave the body until you got down there.

ETHAN

I'm not getting involved.

DWIGHT

You're already involved.

Ethan swings around to face Dwight.

E./I. KURT MCMANAHAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Police tape surrounds the house. Barricades hold back the crowds and reporters.

REPORTER

Detective pollard--

Ethan and Dwight dart past the media into the house.

BEDROOM

Written in blood above the bed, "Can't be any windows for the soulless." Kurt's sprawled out on his bed. Eyes gouged out.

DWIGHT

Know anyone who wanted him dead?

ETHAN

Not anymore than I did.

A PHOTOGRAPHER snaps a picture.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

Ethan's at his desk on the phone. A COP throws down a file.

COP

Good work, detective.

ETHAN
 (on phone)
 Grace, I can't do this right now.
 I'm working

GRACE V.O.
 You're always working, Ethan.

He hears a VOICE in the background.

ETHAN
 (on phone)
 Who's over there?

GRACE V.O.
 Kurt. We're working on a new song.

INT. KURT MCMANAHAN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - END FLASHBACK:

A Photo flashes, snapping Ethan out of his trance.

ETHAN
 Any witnesses?

Carlyle ambles in next to Dwight. He checks his note pad.

CARLYLE
 No one saw a thing. Hell, no one
 heard a thing. John and Julie
 Carpenter from next door came over
 this morning to welcome him back.
 The door was opened. They came in -
 found him like this.

He hands Dwight a news paper clipping dated last year. The
 headline reads, 'Lead detective retires after wife's murder.'

CARLYLE
 This was found next to him.

Dwight looks it over, then hands it to Ethan.

DWIGHT
 Ethan, this is officer --

Carlyle edges up to Ethan for a handshake. Ethan eyes him and
 shakes his hand.

CARLYE
 Carlyle.

DWIGHT

He's on his way to becoming a detective.

CARLYLE

Going to be hard to fill your shoes, but I'm gonna give it my best. Good to have you back.

ETHAN

I'm not back.

PHOTOGRAPHER

Sick son of a bitch.

A forensics officer takes samples of blood from the wall. Ethan watches the photographer snap a close up of Kurt.

ETHAN

Always swore his innocence.

CARLYLE

Obviously somebody didn't think so.

Ethan compares his wife's obituary to the other clipping. Then hands them over to Dwight.

KITCHEN

Ethan picks up the broken picture of Kurt and Grace.

CARLYLE

Happened here. Must've been hiding in the closet or somewhere over there. Asphyxiation like before. Wire or rope of some kind. After he was dead they dragged him into the bedroom and laid him out like an exhibit. Then cut his eyes out.

AGENT

Detective.

A forensics officer hands the guitar to Dwight.

ETHAN

There's your smoking gun.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN (30's), arrogant, strolls in with a few other FBI agents.

CHARLIE

Detective Pollard. Seeing how you're no longer with the force, why don't you step aside and let the FBI do their job.

Ethan sighs, shocked.

ETHAN

Charlie. You haven't changed a bit.

DWIGHT

Agent, Buchanan. Shouldn't you and your bureaucrats be handling something more federal?

CHARLIE

Yes we should, Hamilton. But your chief didn't think you boys were capable of handling a serial murder case. Besides, Ethan's no longer this cities front man.

Ethan looks over to Dwight. Dwight tosses him his badge.

DWIGHT

He is now. Whoever's behind this wants Ethan working the case.

He hands Charlie Buchanan the news paper clippings.

CHARLIE

This evidence doesn't suggest anything remotely close to that.

DWIGHT

This is the beginning to something much larger.

They stare at one another.

CHARLIE

That's the way you want to do things, take it up with your chief. I'll be following this case very closely. One more victim - one more and we take over.

ETHAN

There ever going to be another day you and I work together again? Cordial at least.

Charlie laughs, sarcastically.

CHARLIE

I'm with the FBI now. You're just some haughty city cop who got off seeing his name in the headlines.

(to Dwight)

One more, Hamilton. Let's go.

He and the other agents leave.

ETHAN

Forgot how much I missed him.

DWIGHT

He's an asshole.

ETHAN

I'll assist you on this case, but after that - I'm done.

DWIGHT

This'll be the last case.

INT. PACO'S PLACE - NIGHT

The place bounces. Liina and Paula are at the bar.

PAULA

It was humiliating, Liina.

LIINA

Oh baby, don't worry about her. This is the city of dreams. You're going to be just fine.

PAULA

The dreams going to be over if I can't remember my lines.

A bartender hands two martini's to Liina.

LIINA

We're not thinking about that tonight. Just sip on this and forget it.

Paula sips hard. A dandelion tickles Paula's neck. She swings around to see ERIC LATHEM (20's). He plops down beside her.

LIINA

You were supposed to be here an hour ago.

ERIC
Got caught up. See you started
without me.

She hugs him. He waves to the bartender.

PAULA
Want a sip of my martini?

ERIC
You know I can't drink fruity shit.

LIINA
Paula's a little blue. We have to
cheer her up.

ERIC
When I'm feeling blue I take a
yellow.

He holds out a small bag with some yellow pills.

PAULA
I thought you quit all that.

He shrugs.

LIINA
I'll take one of those.

PAULA
Liina!

LIINA
It'll turn your sadness into
gladness. And you could use a
little gladness right now.

He passes one to Liina and holds out another.

PAULA
I don't think so.

ERIC
Cheers.

He and Liina pop the pills. The bartender sets down a beer.

ERIC
Three Jamies.

PAULA
You know I can't do whisky.

The bartender pours three shots.

ERIC
No molly, no whisky. Thought we
we're celebrating?

PAULA
What exactly are we celebrating?

ERIC
You, of course.

Eric passes out the shots.

ERIC
Just one. This may be the last time
we get to hang with you before
you're too famous for us.

PAULA
Whatever.

Paula's loving it. They cheers their shots, then slam them.
Paul's joy dissolves upon seeing Katie walk in.

LIINA
I know that stare. Who is she?

PAULA
She's the other actress.

LIINA
Ugh-ugh, I'm gonna slap that bitch.

ERIC
I missed the conversation. Why are
you going to slap that bitch?

PAULA
She's auditioning for my part. She
hates me for no reason.

LIINA
You've got the talent. She's got to
suck off the director for the role.

She gets up from her chair.

PAULA
Liina, don't.

LIINA

I've got quarters in my hand and
spy a jukebox in the corner.
Someone's gotta change the music.

She walks away. Paula lights a cigarette.

ERIC

Thought you quit.

Paula shrugs.

PAULA

I'm stressed.
(handing him the cig.)
I gotta pee.

She heads towards the bathroom. Eric drags her smoke, fixated
on her. Liina trots back.

LIINA

This is the jam. Where's our girl?

ERIC

Peeing...

LIINA

Just need to tell her.

ERIC

Tell her what?

Liina smiles to him and sips her drink.

BATHROOM

Paula exits. Katie rounds the corner, blocking her.

KATIE

Paula Sirene.

PAULA

Excuse me.

Paula tries to walk past her. Katie's not having it.

KATIE

Guess I should thank you for giving
me the role.

PAULA

What's your problem with me?

KATIE

You're little whimpering act has
run its course. It's pathetic.

Paula's taken aback.

KATIE

You gonna cry?

Courage.

PAULA

At least I don't have to sleep
around to get what I want.

KATIE

What did you say?

Paula glares. Katie slaps the shit out of her. She jumps at
Katie. They predictably start pulling each other's hair.

People stop the little cat fight. Eric and Liina hear the
commotion and run over. Eric pulls Paula away.

PAULA

I wish you were dead.

She scrambles away.

ERIC

You really can't do whisky.

PAULA

Give me the molly.

He smiles.

DANCE FLOOR

The music's jamming. Liina and Paula dance together. Eric's
at the side. He scoots in between them. Liina backs off.

Paula and Eric dance close. It's intimate or just dancing.

INT. PAULA AND LIINA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Liina's lulled over a love seat. Paula and Eric sit apart on
the couch. It's almost awkward. A RECORD plays in the BG.

ERIC

She scratched you.

He scoots over and touches her cheek. She seems to enjoy it. The record stops. She breaks the moment.

PAULA

We need to flip the disc.

She canters to the record player. Eric chases after.

ERIC

It's a record.

She flips the record. Eric crowds over and helps her.

ERIC

Here...

Their fingers graze. They look into each others eyes. Eric goes for the kiss. She backs away. Eric's shot down.

ERIC

It's my turn to pee.

BATHROOM

The TOILET flushes. Eric walks out. Paula's leaned against the wall. She slowly approaches him.

PAULA

Hey.

ERIC

Hey...

She grabs his shirt, pulling him close. She gently kisses him. He's getting into it. She backs away.

PAULA

I need to go to sleep.

Eric misinterprets this as an invite. She nods toward the living room.

PAULA

You can sleep on the couch.

She creeps into her room. He can't take his eyes off her.

PAULA

Goodnight.

PAULA'S ROOM

She shuts the door and sighs.

LIVING ROOM

Eric plops down on the couch. His mind racing.

LIINA

I'm proud of you.

ERIC

You're supposed to be asleep.

INT. POLICE STATION - LAB - DAY

Duclose, Dwight, and Carlyle stand back. a PATHOLOGIST, performs an autopsy on Kurt. Betty's body lays aside.

PATHOLOGIST

Holy shit, look at this guy. I was going to ask him to lend an eye but apparently he already did.

They're not laughing.

PATHOLOGIST

Come on. Lighten up a little. I'm in here day after day. Six days a week. Cuttin' and cuttin' autopsy after autopsy. Gotta have some sense of humor about this shit.

CHIEF DUCLOSE

Get to it.

He lowers goggles over his eyes.

PATHOLOGIST

If you got a weak stomach, I recommend stepping outside. This can get messy.

He smiles and digs into the body. Carlyle's queasy.

DWIGHT

Can't believe you got Buchanan involved. Anybody but that guy.

CHIEF DUCLOSE

This is the biggest case since Grace.

DWIGHT
And we're handling it.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
Who, you and the rookie?

CARLYLE
Oh, God.

Duclose looks over at Carlyle.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
Better buck up son if you plan on
being a detective.

The pathologist removes some of Kurt's organs. Carlyle
retches. He sprints out of the door.

DWIGHT
The FBI doesn't handle homicide.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
Owed me a favor. Besides, you know
how much they hate doing pro bono.
Thought you could use the help.

PATHOLOGIST O.S.
Everything appears intact here.

DWIGHT
Let Ethan and I handle the case.

Duclose stares at him.

CHIEF DUCLOSE
Dwight, the mayor's already up my
ass about this. I'll tell him to
back off for awhile. But if someone
else gets killed he's got full
jurisdiction. That's the best I can
tell ya.

Dwight holds a blank stare.

PATHOLOGIST O.S.
Well, they're dead alright.

Duclose and Dwight edge closer.

PATHOLOGIST
Just because he didn't make a mess,
doesn't make him a surgeon.

CHIEF DUCLOSE

What do ya got?

PATHOLOGIST

They were both strangled.
Sweetheart's vocal chords were
crushed. His are good. After they
were dead, he repositioned the
bodies and proceeded to remove her
heart and cut out his eyes. This is
one sick mother detectives.

The pathologist rests his arms on Kurt's body.

PATHOLOGIST

Boy, I love my job.

EXT. BANDERA'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Business is slow. Liina hands her apron to Paula.

PAULA

Thank you.

LIINA

You got it, baby. Hopefully it
picks up.

Liina leaves. Paula pulls up her script and rehearses her
lines. Mr. Wendell walks in from the back.

MR. WENDELL

Where's Liina?

PAULA

She had to run. I'm taking her
shift.

MR. WENDELL

Better not go over forty this week.

Paula nods and goes back to her script.

MR. WENDELL

What are you doing?

PAULA

Going over my lines.

MR. WENDELL

Not here you're not.

PAULA
But we're dead.

He throws her a rag.

MR. WENDELL
Here. Clean something.

He walks away. She puts her script below and begins wiping the counter top. She wipes over near a man at the end.

MAN
Paula. That's a pretty name.

Paula perks up, then looks at her name badge.

PAULA
Thank you.

MAN
You like this job, Paula?

PAULA
Pays the bills. Most of the time.
Not what I hoped to be doing.

MAN
What'd you hope to be doing?

PAULA
I'm an actress. Well, aspiring.

Eric rushes in with a giant smile. Paula grins, bashful.

PAULA
(To the man)
Get you anything else?

He shakes his head. Paula meets Eric at the opposite side. He hangs a leather jacket around his chair.

ERIC
Hi, Paula.

She gives him a flimsy smile.

PAULA
Hungry?

ERIC
Already ate.

PAULA
Oh. What are you doing here?

Eric leans in.

ERIC

I came to see you.

Paula's saved by The VOICE of a reporter on the tv. She looks over. Eric's impatient.

REPORTER (ON TV)

Victims, Betty McLane, age twenty six and Kurt McManahan, age thirty seven, are now in what police are calling a serial murder. The killer is still at large. Officers ask if you have any information regarding the victims to call this number.

Paula notices him starring at the screen.

PAULA

Can't believe this is happening. Still hasn't sunk in. I mean You dated her.

ERIC

Didn't date. Went out a few times. Everything's going to be fine, Paula. They'll catch this guy.

The man from the opposite side of the counter walks over.

MAN

Thanks, Paula. Good luck with your acting career.

He leaves. Eric watches him. Paula cleans his dish.

ERIC

Who was that?

PAULA

Just a customer.

Eric tries to be flirtatious. Paula's not interested.

PAULA

We should talk about the other night.

ERIC

Yeah. Paula, I've always felt -

PAULA

Eric, I care about you. I really do. But it was a mistake.

ERIC

A mistake?

PAULA

It's my fault. I'm stressed and vulnerable. I was emotional.

ERIC

Not you, too.

Eric jumps up from his seat.

PAULA

Eric, we're friends.

ERIC

You girls are all the same. Just because you get sad and vulnerable one day, you think we can fool around and it's not going to mean something? I got feelings too.

PAULA

Wait, Eric - It's not like that.

He tries to snatch his jacket - but it's gone. He gives her one last blazing stare, then hustles out. Paula's stunned.

EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Dwight and Ethan amble up the steps and are bombarded by a pack of reporters, journalists, etc.

JOURNALIST

How do you feel about justice being brought to your wife's murder?

Ethan stops and faces the barrage.

ETHAN

You can't justify a murder with another murder. There will be no justice until the case is solved.

JOURNALIST 2

Detective Pollard, are you taking on the case? Couldn't you be named a suspect?

Dwight looks at Ethan. They walk inside.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Ethan stops in front of an office with a box of some of his belongings. The tag on the door says, 'Detective Pollard.'

OFFICE

He sets the box on the desk. He walks over to the door and removes the name tag.

HALL

Dwight walks past an officer.

DWIGHT

What's the status on the girl?

OFFICER

Nothing yet.

OFFICE

Dwight sits at a desk. Ethan holds up a photo of Betty.

ETHAN

She have any priors?

DWIGHT

Background check came back clean.

ETHAN

She found pleasure in ripping out the hearts of others, now she understands. What are your thoughts?

Dwight stares at Ethan.

DWIGHT

She broke some poor boys' heart. He found justice the way he saw fit. Same as any typical murder case.

Ethan studies a photo of McManahan.

ETHAN

Nothing's typical about this case.

DWIGHT
The man murdered your wife.
Everyone knows that.

He spots the corner of a picture of his wife in the box. He grabs it and caresses her face with his thumb.

INT. ETHANS' HOUSE - NIGHT/ BEGIN FLASHBACK:

He walks in with a bouquet of lilies. He sets his gun and badge down on a side table.

ETHAN
I'm home.

He walks into his -

BEDROOM

The flowers drop to the floor. He falls to his knees next to the bed. Grace lies motionless on the floor.

Three bullet wounds in her chest. He grabs her and SCREAMS.

LIVING ROOM - LATER

Ethan talks with officers. Dwight hands him a name tag that says, 'Kurt McManahan.'

INT. OFFICE - END FLASHBACK:

DWIGHT
Might help if you went over there.

ETHAN
Where?

DWIGHT
McLane's house.

ETHAN
They didn't find anything. What good would it do going over there?

Dwight shrugs.

DWIGHT
There's a reason you were always in the headlines.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

They park in front of Betty's house, but stay in the car.

ETHAN
They were friends.

DWIGHT
Who?

ETHAN
Grace and McManahan. Maybe they
were having an affair. I never knew
for sure.

Ethan stares out of the window. He slowly steps out. Dwight follows. They head towards the house.

ETHAN
He never committed a crime in his
life. But he murdered Grace. Where
was his motive?

DWIGHT
Sometimes people aren't always who
they appear to be.

Dwight notices a car parked across the street.

ETHAN
A single finger print. That's all
they found. A single finger print.

DWIGHT
And three '38 casings around her
body. Don't forget that.

Ethan looks at him.

DWIGHT
That's all it takes. You know that.

INT. JAIL CELL - DAY/BEGIN FLASHBACK:

McManahan's handcuffed. Ethan's on the other side.

KURT MCMANAHAN
I'm innocent. I swear to God,
Ethan. I loved her. You know I
loved her.

INT. BETTY'S HOUSE - DAY/END FLASHBACK:

Ethan and Dwight come through the door.

ETHAN

Don't know what you expect to find.

Ethan paces around. He uses a glove to open dresser drawers. Dwight looks around, suspiciously.

DWIGHT

Looking for something particular?

ETHAN

Doing my due diligence.

Dwight pulls a little note pad from his back pocket.

DWIGHT

5'7. Strawberry blond hair. Twenty six years old. Occupation, waitress. Cause of death, asphyxiation.

Ethan knocks a picture out of the drawer. He picks it up. A NOISE comes from the back of the house.

DWIGHT

Wait a minute.

Ethan looks up. Dwight brandish's his gun and slowly moves towards the kitchen. Ethan stands back.

A PERPETRATOR in a leather jacket and mask pushes past Dwight and runs out of the house.

Ethan's quick to his feet. He draws his gun and chases him.

ETHAN

LAPD, stop.

The perp jumps in the parked car and speeds away. Dwight runs around the corner.

ETHAN

Come on!

They run to his cruiser.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - MOVING - DAY

They speed through residential neighborhoods, barreling through stop signs. The perp's yards ahead.

JOGGERS with headphones run across the street. Dwight blares the HORN. They barely evade the speeding car.

EXT. CITY - DAY

The perp is a good distance ahead. He flies through traffic. Dwight drifts into a main street. HORNS blare. People YELL

ETHAN (INTO RADIO)
Were in pursuit of a '97 buick,
red. Suspect's a male.

Dwight SCREECHES around a corner, slamming into some mailboxes. People jump back through the swirl of mail.

INT. LIINA'S CAR - SAME

It's a red light. Liina jams to music. Green. She pulls forward.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

BAM! The perp T-bones her.

The car flails through the air, end over end. It stops upside down. Smoke billows. The HORN blares. The perp slides out of his car with a limp.

He takes his gun and fires two SHOTS. The crowd scatters.

Dwight and Ethan pull up to the scene. They jump out and chase after him.

Dwight kneels beside Liina's window. It's busted. She's strapped to her seat, unconscious.

DWIGHT
Are you okay in there?

He looks to a bystander.

DWIGHT
Call 9-11.

He darts off. SIRENS scream from all directions.

ALLEY

A delivery truck's unloading. The guy walks out right as Ethan jumps over the ramp. They collide, falling over boxes.

A GUNSHOT. The bullet hits near Ethan's foot. Ethan jumps back to his feet and chases after the perp.

Dwight finds the alley and stops. The perp climbs a fire escape. Ethan aims his gun at the perp from below.

DWIGHT

Ethan!

Dwight fires a ROUND. The Perp shoots Ethan. He flies to the ground. Dwight FIRES several more times. The Perp gets away.

DWIGHT

You alright?

Dwight helps Ethan to his feet. Ethan puts pressure on his left shoulder. Dwight helps him. They walk away.

DWIGHT

Not quite what I had in mind.

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

The two wrecked cars are loaded on to a tow truck. There's a large Crowd. EMT's bandage Ethan in the back of an ambulance.

EMT

Need to get to the hospital.

ETHAN

I'll be fine.

Dwight's to the side using his phone. Ethan throws a sling over his shoulder. Carlyle approaches.

ETHAN

What's the word on the car?

CARLYLE

Reported stolen three days ago.

Dwight walks back up to Ethan.

DWIGHT

Got the call. Samantha's awake.
Your friend back there dropped this
at McLane's house.

He holds out a switch blade with his handkerchief.

INT. THEATRE - DAY

The stage is set like the back of an ambulance. An ACTOR's dressed as an FBI agent.

Two OTHERS are dressed as EMS technicians. Paula squeezes an actor's hand on a gurney. Eric watches from the auditorium.

FBI ACTOR
That's it, isn't it?

PAULA
You can't die. We just found each other. Where do we go from here?

Eric leans up in his chair. His phone RINGS.

ERIC
Hello? What?

He races down the auditorium.

DIRECTOR O.S.
Stop!

The director stamps on to the stage.

DIRECTOR
What do you think she's thinking?
Her boyfriend's been shot. He's not going to make it.

Paula searches.

KATIE
She wants to believe.

Paula faces Katie.

DIRECTOR
Exactly. Hope, Ms. Sirene. Let's take it from the top.

Eric runs up to the stage.

ERIC
Paula!

She leans over.

PAULA
Eric, what are you doing here?

He WHISPERS into her ear.

PAULA
I have an emergency.

DIRECTOR
Of course you do, Ms. Sirene.

Paula and Eric run for the exit.

DIRECTOR
Really letting me down, Paula.

INT. HOSPITAL - LIINA'S ROOM - DAY

Liina lies sedated in a bed hooked to machines. Paula and Eric hover over the bed.

PAULA
Look at her.

She grabs her hand. Eric rubs Paula's shoulders. A NURSE checks her status.

PAULA
Can she hear us?

NURSE
She's heavily sedated.

ERIC
She's going to be fine, right?

NURSE
It's too early to tell right now.

Paula cries. Eric hugs her.

NURSE
Just keep talking to her.

The nurse leaves.

ERIC
She's going to pull through it.
She's going to be alright.

INT. PERP'S HOUSE - DAY

The perp holds ice packs to his leg. He makes a call on his cell phone.

PERP

Everything got fucked. Did you get it? Don't worry. Don't worry! Everything's still going to plan.

INT. POLICE STATION - OFFICE - DAY

Ethan posts pictures of both murder victims to a bulletin board. Dwight walks into the office.

DWIGHT

Almost feels like we're re-opening Grace's case.

ETHAN

That's what he wants. Grace is the cornerstone. How she connects them, I don't know.

He takes down a photo and stares at it.

ETHAN

He cut out her heart. Removed his eyes. And Grace... Maybe I should have looked more into it.

DWIGHT

What?

Ethan sits near Dwight.

ETHAN

Solving the case.

DWIGHT

Don't think it's solved?

ETHAN

I'm not sure if I was more angry or saddened by her death.

DWIGHT

Come again.

ETHAN

We'd been strangers for years. Guess Kurt comforted her in ways that I couldn't anymore.

Dwight takes this in.

ETHAN

I loved her. Just wasn't in love with her anymore. Kurt swore they weren't sleeping together. Made sense at the time. Him the one to kill her. Doesn't seem to anymore.

Ethan throws the picture aside and jumps up.

DWIGHT

What are you doing?

ETHAN

I don't want to think about this anymore. You're leading the case. You solve it. I'm trying to get this out of my head.

He leaves the office.

EXT. BANDERA'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Paula takes off her apron and grabs her coat. Mr. Wendell meets her around the corner.

MR. WENDELL

Where are you going?

PAULA

My shifts over.

MR. WENDELL

No. With Liina out and Betty - Well, I need you to stay tonight.

PAULA

But Mr. Wendell, I've got --

MR. WENDELL

Either stay or get the hell out. You can be replaced too.

He walks away. She stands in defeat. She hangs her jacket back up. Ethan walks through the door. Her face lights up.

PAULA

Hi.

ETHAN

Hey. Everything okay?

PAULA

Been a long couple of days. Coffee?

ETHAN

Thanks.

Ethan sits in the same booth as before. Paula sets a cup of coffee in front him.

ETHAN

Thank you.

She sits across from him. He sips his steaming coffee.

ETHAN

You look sad. Why don't you tell me what's going on?

PAULA

Where to begin? My friend was in an accident. I'm pretty sure I didn't get the part I'm auditioning for and my boss is an asshole.

ETHAN

That's rough. Is your friend okay?

PAULA

Doctors don't know if she'll pull through. I'm really worried.

ETHAN

Sure she'll be fine.

PAULA

I'm sorry. You don't even know me and here I am rambling.

ETHAN

I like hearing you ramble.

She notices a manila folder beside Ethan.

PAULA

Is that about Betty?

ETHAN

Yeah.

PAULA

Can't believe she was murdered. Never been so close to someone who was killed before.

ETHAN

You two were friends?

PAULA
She mainly kept to herself.

ETHAN
Noticed anyone hanging around here?

PAULA
Besides you?

They chuckle.

PAULA
Kind of hard keeping track of all
the people coming and going.

ETHAN
Understandable.

PAULA
Are you really as good as they say?

ETHAN
Who's they?

PAULA
The media.

ETHAN
Don't believe everything you hear.
Something I'm starting to note.

A couple walks in. Paula eyes them, then back to Ethan.

ETHAN
Back to work, huh?

They're lost in each other's eyes. She smiles and gets up.

ETHAN
Have dinner with me.

PAULA
I'd like that.

Ethan takes a pen from the inside pocket of his blazer and
tears a piece of paper from his note pad.

ETHAN
Let me give you my number.

The pen won't write. He shakes it. Paula holds out a pen.

PAULA
Here...

She writes her number down and slides it over.

PAULA
Now you have to call.

She smiles and walks away. Ethan's PHONE rings.

ETHAN
Ethan here.

DWIGHT V.O.
Ethan, we got him.

EXT. ERIC'S HOUSE - NIGHT

A bus pulls up to a stop. Eric steps out and heads down the street. From the bushes, officers tackle him.

ERIC
Get off of me.

Dwight and Ethan approach.

DWIGHT
You're under arrest for the murders
of Betty McLane and Kurt McManahan.

The officers escort Eric to their cruiser.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Eric's handcuffed to a chair. Dwight sits across from him. Ethan stands in the back of the room.

DWIGHT
You drive a '97 Buick?

ERIC
So you found it. How is she?

DWIGHT
Totaled.

ERIC
Fuck.

DWIGHT
Did you know Betty McLane?

ERIC
Yeah. So did a lot of people.

DWIGHT
What was your affiliation with her?

ERIC
We went out once or twice.

DWIGHT
How recent?

ERIC
I don't know, six months ago,
maybe.

DWIGHT
Why'd you guys split?

Eric just sits back dazed.

DWIGHT
She hurt you, didn't she? You
wanted to hurt her back. You took
her heart the way she broke yours.

ERIC
Get my lawyer over her. I'm not
answering anymore questions without
a lawyer.

DWIGHT
We found your knife, Mr. Lathem.

Dwight holds out a plastic bag with a knife.

DWIGHT
Guess where we found it? Same place
you murdered her.

ERIC
I didn't kill Betty!

ETHAN
Dwight.

Dwight goes to Ethan. They step out of the room.

ETHAN
He didn't kill her.

DWIGHT
He was at the scene with a knife.

ETHAN

Someone was at the scene with a knife. Does he look like the guy we chased through town?

DWIGHT

How should I know? He wore a mask.

They look at Eric through the two-way mirror.

ERIC

Are you going to charge me with Betty's murder?

Dwight and Ethan come back into the room.

ETHAN

We don't have enough evidence to convict you.

ERIC

Well until you do, get these fucking handcuffs off of me.

Dwight releases the handcuffs. Eric rubs his wrists.

ERIC

I always keep my knife in my jacket. The one I told one of your officers was also stolen.

DWIGHT

You got some bad luck, don't you?

Eric looks over to Ethan.

ERIC

Hopefully you're as good as everyone thinks you are detective.

Eric leaves. Dwight throws the handcuffs down on the desk and stares back at Ethan.

DWIGHT

We've got a weapon at the scene. His prints all over it. Motive.

ETHAN

He went out with her once.

DWIGHT

So he says.

ETHAN
It's not him.

He leaves the room.

INT. THEATRE - DAY

Paula sees the whole cast on stage dressed in character.
Katie glances over. Paula walks up to the director.

PAULA
What's going on?

DIRECTOR
Ah, Mrs. Sirene.

PAULA
Why's Katie on stage?

DIRECTOR
Take five everyone.

The cast moseys off stage.

DIRECTOR
I gave Katie the role.

He walks away. She follows.

PAULA
I've been working hard for this
role. I wanted it --

DIRECTOR
Just because you want something
doesn't mean you'll get it. Your
constant absenteeism, not having
your lines memorized...

PAULA
My friend was in a serious
accident.

DIRECTOR
The cast has been set. Good day,
Mrs. Sirene.

He trots away. Katie's at the concession stand. Paula
approaches.

PAULA
Congratulations. I know you'll play
the part well.

She sticks out her hand. Katie hesitantly shakes it.

EXT. THEATRE - DAY

A man takes photos from a car across the street.

I./E. KATIE HOPKINS HOUSE - NIGHT

DOOR BELL rings. A small POMERANIAN BARKS incessantly. Katie's in a bath robe. She checks the front door. Nothing.

KATIE
Percilla, no!

The dog stops barking. She walks away. The DOOR BELL rings again. Dog BARKS.

She opens the door and looks around. Nothing. She walks outside and peeks around. The door's ajar. The dog YELPS. She Comes back in and closes the door.

KATIE
Percilla!

A POP comes from the kitchen. She jumps. Startled, she creeps into her -

KITCHEN

The director's drunk. He popped open a bottle of champagne. Katie's fear is put to bed. Percilla continues to BARK.

KATIE
How'd you get in here?

DIRECTOR
Back door was open. Might want to lock it.

KATIE
Percilla, enough! What are you doing here?

The dog goes silent. The director slurps the spilling champagne, then fills two glasses.

DIRECTOR
I thought we could celebrate. Wanted to surprise you.

KATIE
I'm surprised.

He hands her a glass.

KATIE
I was getting ready for bed.

DIRECTOR
Oh, come on. Just one.

KATIE
You're drunk...

DIRECTOR
I may have already had a few. Just
drink one with me. Live a little.

She takes the glass.

KATIE
Just one. Then you have to go.

DIRECTOR
Okay, if that's what you want.

He prepares to make a toast. Annoyed, she raises her glass.

DIRECTOR
To my beautiful star that'll ignite
a career.

They sip their glasses.

KATIE
Why did you give me the role?

The director scoffs and sips again.

KATIE
You know Paula's perfect for it.

DIRECTOR
Maybe. But you're just so damn
gorgeous.

He tries to kiss her. She pushes him away.

KATIE
Okay. That's enough. You got to go.

She guides him toward the door. He tries to set his glass
down, but it SHATTERS to the floor.

DIRECTOR
I'm sorry. Stupid glass.

KATIE
It's fine. I got it.

DIRECTOR
Just one kiss.

He comes at her. She pushes him off, then slaps him.

KATIE
Next time it's going to be your
balls. Get out. Now.

He rubs his rosy cheek and glares. They walk to the front.
She opens the door. Percilla BARKS and runs out.

PATIO

The director steps out, rubbing his cheek. Percilla's BARKING
around the corner.

KATIE
Percilla, come. Come!

The dog turns and runs into the house.

DIRECTOR
Most girls would kill to be sitting
where you are.

KATIE
I'm not most girls.

DIRECTOR
You were the other night.

He comes at her once again. Katie steels herself. Tearful.

KATIE
Get out!

DIRECTOR
I could have made you a star.

He scoffs and heads away. She just stares at him. He stumbles
into a car parked in the shadows.

He watches her salaciously as she goes back inside.

KITCHEN

Katie does her best to keep composure. She sweeps the glass from the floor. She sets the broom in her pantry.

BATHROOM

The SHOWER runs. Katie de-robes and steps inside the tub. Percilla BARKS.

LIVING ROOM

Percilla WHIMPERS as two gloved hands forcefully snatch her.

BATHROOM

The dog's BARK is muffled. Katie turns off the water. She throws on her robe and walks out.

LIVING ROOM

Katie comes in drying her hair with a towel. She hears Percilla WIMPERING.

KATIE

Percilla, quit already. Where are you?

She opens a closet in the hallway and finds Percilla.

KATIE

How'd you get in here?

She picks Percilla up. A door behind her cracks open. The perp's got a knife and edges closer to her.

She sets Percilla back down just in time. The perp swings the knife, missing her head.

She SCREAMS and falls to the floor. She kicks the perp in the leg. He goes down. She tries to run. He grabs her ankle.

She kicks him in the face. She's almost on her feet when he stabs her leg. She SCREAMS in pain and tries to crawl away.

He pulls her back. Her hands knock over fireplace tools. She gets hold of a fire poker.

She hits him across the face. He goes back. She's on her feet staggering. SCREAMING. Percilla BARKS

She manages to get to the front door. She opens it.

Another PERP quickly snaps her neck. She falls to the ground. He walks inside and closes the door. The BARKING ceases.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Paula rubs Liina down with a damp rag. A NURSE adjusts her medications.

PAULA
She looks a lot better.

NURSE
She's making incredible progress.

The nurse walks out of the room. Paula's PHONE rings.

PAULA
Hello?

INTERCUT BETWEEN HOSPITAL ROOM AND INT. ETHAN'S HOUSE - SAME

Ethan's at his computer going over the case.

ETHAN
Paula? It's Ethan.

PAULA
Detective. Wasn't sure you were going to call.

ETHAN
Hope it's not too late.

PAULA
It's fine. What are you doing?

ETHAN
Nothing, really.

He clicks out of the images on his computer.

ETHAN
Look, I'm just going to say this.

PAULA
Okay.

ETHAN

I want to get to know you. Walked away from too many good things. Don't want that to happen again.

PAULA

I want to know you, too.

ETHAN

Can we go out? Friday night?

PAULA

Better not stand me up.

ETHAN

I wouldn't do that to you.

PAULA

See you then. Goodnight.

He hangs up the phone. A bright white light flashes. Ethan's body jolts vigorously. He sits back, confused.

INT. HOSPITAL - SAMANTHA'S ROOM - DAY

Samantha lies in the bed. Her mom, REBECCA, 30's, is at her side. She jumps up as Dwight and Ethan enter the room.

REBECCA

How many times are you people going to come up here? My daughter was nearly killed. Aren't you supposed to be out there finding this guy?

ETHAN

Mrs. Simmons, we're doing everything we can. But we need to ask Samantha a few questions. If she's up to it.

He nods to Dwight. He hands Rebecca a pen and note pad. She leans over Samantha.

REBECCA

Hey, baby. These men need to ask you some questions, okay?

Samantha takes the pen and pad. Rebecca stands aside. Ethan kneels beside the bed. Dwight stands back.

ETHAN

Hi, Samantha.

She waves her little hand.

ETHAN

I need to ask you some questions.
Is that alright with you?

She nods.

ETHAN

Remember what were you doing the
day you got hurt?

Samantha writes.

DWIGHT

If you could read it Mrs. Simmons.

REBECCA

I - was - riding - my bike.

ETHAN

Good. Bet you want to ride your
bike right now, don't you?

She nods.

ETHAN

Okay, Samantha. Do you remember how
you got hurt?

She nods her head. Dwight's concerned and steps forward.

ETHAN

Did you see anyone?

She nods again.

DWIGHT

Remember what he looked like?

She shakes her head.

ETHAN

What's the last thing you remember?

She writes.

REBECCA

He - whispered.

DWIGHT

What'd he say, Samantha?

She starts to cry. Rebecca consoles her.

REBECCA
I think that's enough.

ETHAN
You did a good, Samantha. You just
get some rest.

Ethan heads for the door.

REBECCA
That's it? Now what?

Dwight takes his pen and note pad back.

ETHAN
Samantha's been a big help. Thank
you.

Dwight's PHONE rings.

DWIGHT
Hamilton...

Dwight shoots a look to Ethan.

DWIGHT
Be right there.

EXT./INT KATIE HOPKINS HOUSE - DAY

Police tape surrounds the house. Barricades keep back the
crowds. Ethan and Dwight pull up in separate cars.

CARLYLE (PRE LAP)
Katie Hopkins. Neighbors found her
this morning. You gotta see this.

LIVING ROOM

Dwight and Ethan enter. Carlyle's at their side.

DWIGHT
Shit.

Charlie hovers near the body on his walkie-talkie. Pages from
Katie's script are scattered around.

A message is written in blood on the floor. "She wanted to be
in the spotlight, now she is".

CHARLIE O.S.

This is officially a federal crime scene.

Ethan and Dwight to see Charlie approach.

DWIGHT

Buchanan, this is a serial. Evidence leads back to Grace's murder.

CHARLIE

I've seen the evidence, Hamilton. Got reports on all the victims. You need to come downtown, Ethan.

Ethan laughs.

CHARLIE

Your wife's killer just released from prison - now a victim. Seem a little suspicious to you?

Ethan and Dwight look at each other.

CHARLIE

Alright everyone clear out. Let forensics do their job. Get the family on the horn. They can identify the body at the morgue. You had your chance. You blew it.

DRIVEWAY

Dwight and Ethan head for their cars.

DWIGHT

Ethan, you can't walk away from this. You've got work to do.

ETHAN

I never wanted this case, remember? I've lived through this once. I can't do it again.

Ethan jumps back against his car as a speeding ambulance races past. He looks around confused. Dwight doesn't notice.

DWIGHT

What are you gonna do now? This is all you know, Ethan.

ETHAN

It's time I learned something new.

Ethan gets in his car and speeds away. Dwight watches.

INT. HOSPITAL - LIINAS ROOM - DAY

Liina lies motionless in the bed. Machines BUZZ and BEEP. Tubes run in and out of her body. She COUGHS.

Paula awakens in a chair next to the bed. She tucks a blanket around Liina. A MALE NURSE walks in.

MALE NURSE

Did she open her eyes?

PAULA

She just coughed. Everything okay?

MALE NURSE

Yeah. She's healing very fast.

PAULA

That's good.

MALE NURSE

Just push the button if you need anything.

He exits the room as Eric comes in.

PAULA

Hey...

ERIC

Did you hear?

PAULA

Hear what?

ERIC

Katie Hopkins was murdered.

Paula's PHONE rings.

PAULA

Hello?

(beat)

Yes, this is she.

(beat)

What for?

She looks over at Eric.

INT. FBI INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Paula sits opposite Charlie Buchanan at an aluminum table.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
You knew the victim, Katie Hopkins,
is that right?

PAULA
Yes.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
How well did you two know each
other?

PAULA
We were rehearsing for the same
role in a play.

Charlie Buchanan shuffles through some papers.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Were you at Bandera's place on the
tenth of this month?

PAULA
I'm not sure what date it was. Do
you think I killed her?

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
You two got into a little fight.
That's where you got that scratch,
isn't it?

PAULA
She slapped me.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Witnesses say you said you wished
she was dead. Did you say that?

PAULA
I didn't kill her.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Why did you say you wished she was
dead?

PAULA
She hated me... We were in a
fight.... It just came out... I
didn't kill her.

A MALE AGENT walks into the room.

MALE AGENT
Her alibi checks out. She was
visiting a Liina Creel.

Charlie nods.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Do you know anybody who might have
wanted to kill Katie?

PAULA
No.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Okay.

He stands up from his chair, picking up his papers.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Alright, you're free to go. Here's
my card. Give me a call if you
remember anything that could help
the investigation.

She stands up and takes his card as she leaves the room.

MALE AGENT
You're going to let her walk?

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
What am I going to charge her with?
Her alibi checked out. We've got
nothing.

He slams his hand against the door as he exits the room.

INT. PAUALA AND LIINAS' HOUSE - DAY

Eric and Paula sit at the dinning room table.

PAULA
They think I may have killed Katie.

ERIC
I got questioned for Betty. They
found my knife at her house.

PAULA
What was your knife doing there?

ERIC

I don't know. All I do know is you didn't kill Katie. You wouldn't do something like that.

PAULA

Yeah, thanks.

ERIC

Do you think it's odd that we both knew one of the victims?

EXT. PAUALA AND LIINAS' HOUSE - DAY

The man in the dark leather jacket is outside Paula's house taking pictures of her and Eric.

INT. PAUALA AND LIINAS' HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

PAULA

I should talk to Ethan.

Eric, put back.

ERIC

That detective that you've been getting close to?

PAULA

Eric...

He rises from the table.

ERIC

I'm not stupid, Paula. It's okay. We're just friends.

He rushes toward the door.

PAULA

Eric, hold on.

ERIC

You deserve to be happy. And if it's with him, then I'm a glad for you. Just hope he treats you right.

She gives an uneasy smile. He turns and walks out.

EXT. BANDERA'S BAR AND GRILL - DAY

Paula comes in. She stops and looks around. She notices TWO NEW EMPLOYEES. One waits on a table.

The other's behind the counter. Paula walks over.

PAULA
I didn't know he hired anyone.

STEPH
Steph. It's my first day.

PAULA
Paula.

They shake hands. Mr. Wendell comes around the corner.

MR. WENDELL
Paula, I need to talk to ya.

They walk into the back.

MR. WENDELL
Paula, I'm gotta let you go.

PAULA
What? Why?

MR. WENDELL
This is the third shift you've been late for. I got customers complaining about poor service.

PAULA
Mr. Wendell, you know what's been going on with Liina. You can't fire me.

MR. WENDELL
Be that as it may, You're no longer a commodity over here.

He hands her an envelope.

MR. WENDELL
Here's you're last two weeks pay.

She takes the envelope. He walks away. She stands in disbelief.

INT. FBI STATION - DAY

Charlie and the MALE AGENT go over files at a desk.

MALE AGENT

Dark clothes and a ski mask --
Hardly a lead to go off of.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

We'll find him.

MALE AGENT

What's the story between you and
Pollard? Seems like there's some
hostility.

Charlie looks away.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Used to work together. Long time
ago. Even if there was... I'd have
his back anytime.

He throws a file on to the desk.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Go through the database. See who
else fits the bill.

He walks away.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

The place is packed. A jazz band plays music. People dance.
Paula and Ethan sit at a table in the back.

A waiter comes by and delivers their food.

ETHAN

Smells good.

Paula unravels her napkin. Her knife falls to the floor.
Ethan picks it up.

PAULA

Guess I'm still a little nervous.

ETHAN

Here. I don't need it. You're
nervous?

He hands her his knife.

PAULA

The last few dates that I've been on have ended badly.

ETHAN

I'm glad I'm not the only one. I haven't been on a date in years.

(beat)

Surprised I could pull you away from work.

PAULA

Actually, I got fired the other day. And was questioned by the FBI.

ETHAN

What? Who's going to serve me fried eggs and whole wheat toast now?

PAULA

Maybe time to try something new.

They smile at each other.

ETHAN

You said you were questioned by the FBI? For what?

PAULA

I'm sure you heard Katie Hopkins was murdered.

ETHAN

You knew her, too?

PAULA

Better stay away from me. Everyone I know is getting murdered.

ETHAN

I'll take my chances.

PAULA

The FBI are assholes.

ETHAN

Let me guess - Charlie Buchanan?

PAULA

Yes. That one of your buddies?

ETHAN

Went to the academy together. I remember it like it was yesterday.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

We were working this huge drug bust I caught wind of. We burst in and they start firing pap, pap, pap, pap, pap. I jump behind a dumpster. Shots flying all around. I froze. Charlie comes out of nowhere and shoots them all like it was nothing. I could've never done that. He saved us though. Guy behind it went to prison, Charlie joined the FBI and I became a detective.

PAULA

That's quite a story.

ETHAN

He's taken over this case now, too. Which I'm fine with. I can't do this kind of work anymore.

PAULA

What are you going to do now?

ETHAN

I don't know. Learn to play the guitar. Write a book. Things I never made time for in the past.

He sips his wine. Paula notices his wedding band.

PAULA

Do you always wear it?

He looks at her, then to his finger.

ETHAN

Guess I've never gotten around to taking it off.

PAULA

Do you miss her? That's stupid. Of course you miss her. I'm sorry.

Ethan pauses, then looks to the other side of the restaurant.

BEGIN HALLUCINATION:

Dwight slowly walks towards them with his gun drawn.

ETHAN

(to himself)
What's he doing here.

Ethan jerks his head in the other direction. An ambulance races by outside.

END HALLUCINATION:

PAULA

Ethan?

He looks at her, then back to where Dwight was. He's gone now. Paula doesn't seem to have noticed. He shakes it off.

ETHAN

Do you dance?

PAULA

You want to dance?

ETHAN

Let's be impulsive.

He grabs her hand and leads her to the dance floor. They find a spot between other couples. They dance in silence, briefly.

ETHAN

Our marriage was over.

PAULA

You stopped loving each other?

ETHAN

Over time we just grew apart. Ever been in love?

PAULA

I'm not so sure anymore.

ETHAN

What happened?

PAULA

After four years he decided he didn't want to be in a relationship anymore. Couple of months later one of my friends was pregnant. Turned out to be his. Since then it's just been one bad relationship after another and a head full of bad memories I can't seem to let go of.

ETHAN

People hold on to the past because they're too afraid of moving on.

They stop dancing. He grazes her cheek. She likes it.

ETHAN
God, you're pretty.

PAULA
You think I'm pretty?

ETHAN
Very pretty.

She smiles, bashfully.

PAULA
People don't say pretty enough
anymore.

He kisses her gently.

INT. PAUALA AND LIINAS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Paula and Ethan come in. Laundry's piled on the couch. The house is cluttered.

PAULA
Sorry for the mess. Liina usually
does the cleaning around here.

She takes off her jacket, throwing among the laundry. Ethan goes to her. She faces him. They kiss.

PAULAS ROOM

Paula falls back on the bed, pulling Ethan on top of her. She takes off his shirt and continue to make out.

PAULAS ROOM - DAY

Ethan crawls out of her bed. She wakes up and looks at him.

PAULA
Were you trying to sneak away?

He smiles and hands her a note from her side table.

NOTE: You're beautiful when you sleep. Call me later.

She smiles. He bends down and kisses her.

ETHAN
This, what happened between us...
Where do we go from here?

She laughs.

PAULA
That's the name of the play. Where
do you want to go from here?

ETHAN
I want to see you again.

She pulls him into a kiss.

PAULA
You will.

ETHAN
I was planning on moving, but I
think I've found a reason to stay.

PAULA
you better stay.

She kisses him again.

ETHAN
Well, right now I got to go talk to
our FBI friend.

PAULA
Good luck.

ETHAN
I'll call you later.

He smiles and walks out. She lays back down, glowing.

INT. ETHANS' HOUSE - DAY

Ethan walks through the front door. He goes into his bedroom
and places his phone on the charger.

He grabs a glass from the cabinet. He sticks it under the
running faucet and watches it fill with water.

He slowly pulls up the glass, looking at it intently. The
glass says Fort Collins CO.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. ETHANS' HOUSE - DAY

Dwight hands him a news paper with a piece cut out.

DWIGHT
You're already involved.

He hands him his wife's obituary.

END FLASHBACK:

The glass SHATTERS to the floor. Ethan runs into his -

BEDROOM

He kneels beside the bed and pulls out a box of files. He sifts through it, eventually pulling one out.

It's pictures and news paper clippings of Grace's murder. It shows Dwight made the report and wrote her obituary.

FLASHBACK:

INT. ETHANS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Ethan talks to some officers. Dwight walks up and hands him Kurt McManahan's name tag.

IN. JAIL CELL - DAY

Kurt McManahan is locked behind bars. Ethan talks to him from the opposite side.

KURT MCMANAHAN
I've been set up.

EXT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

DWIGHT
You've got work to do, Ethan.

END FLASHBACK:

His land line RINGS. The answering machine picks up.

DWIGHT V.O.
Ethan, I've been trying to reach you all morning. You need to get down to the station as soon as possible. It's important.

The phone hangs up. Ethan grabs the phone and dials. He opens a drawer and pulls out a voice recorder. Turns it on, then off. He ticks it in his pocket.

ETHAN
Charlie, it's Ethan.

INT. PAULA AND LIINA'S HOUSE - DAY

Paula strides into her kitchen. She pulls a coffee cup from her cabinet. She pours herself some coffee.

She sips it and notices her script laying on the table. She sets her coffee down and picks it up. She shreds the pages.

The DOOR BELL rings. She throws the shards of her script into the trash and goes to the front. She opens the door.

PAULA
Hi. Can I help you?

Two black gloved hands reach in and cover her mouth. The incognito perp forces his way into the house.

INT. FBI INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Ethan sits at a small aluminum table across from Charlie. A manila file next to them.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Alright, Ethan.

ETHAN
Look, can we just forget for a minute who we both work for and just talk? Friend to friend.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Okay...

Charlie slides the folder aside and sits back.

ETHAN
I know why it looks like I'm a suspect. I think someone's trying to set me up.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Set you up? Why would someone want to set you up?

ETHAN
It just started coming to me.
(beat)
Okay, we have the first victim.
Betty. A waitress.

ETHAN (CONT'D)

No connection between her and I.
Then the third victim, Katie. A
young woman I don't know. But then,
in between the two we have Kurt
McManahan.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Right, the guy you had put away for
murdering your wife.

ETHAN

That's just it. That's what this
whole thing's about. His murder is
the connection.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

I'm not following.

ETHAN

I don't think McManahan killed
Grace. I was sure of it a year ago.
After that I quit the force, right?
But the case was still open.
Grace's killer is still out there.
And he's behind this too.

Charlie Buchanan leans up in his chair.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Okay, and where do you fit in to
all of this?

Ethan leans in closer.

ETHAN

After Grace's murder, after
McManahan went to prison, I quit
the force. Case still open. To
close the case, who better to take
the fall, right? I think I'm
supposed to look like the one
committing the murders.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

...And you're leaving subtle clues
with each of the victims. Old news
paper clippings, your wife's
obituary...

ETHAN

Exactly.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
That's why the FBI doesn't handle
homicide. You were always good,
Ethan. Got any leads on suspects?

ETHAN
Someone from the inside who knows
my past.

He stands.

ETHAN
I got to get back to the station.
Dwight called, said it was
important.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Tell that guy to relax.

Charlie rises from the table also.

ETHAN
You two never did get along, did
you?

Charlie shakes his head.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Keep me updated. I'll help you
however I can. And I'll finally get
Duclose off my back. Here...

Charlie hands him a walkie-talkie.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
This is a direct line to me and it
has a GPS tracker. If anything
comes up just push this button.

He shows Ethan the button on the walkie-talkie. Ethan takes
it from him.

ETHAN
What happened to us, Charlie?

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
What always happens. Shit gets in
the way and we neglect the things
we care about the most.

ETHAN
Everything's just too complicated.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
It wouldn't be life if it wasn't.

ETHAN
See you around, Charlie.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN
Just push the button.

Ethan leaves.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

Ethan finds Dwight sitting at his desk. Officer Carlyle's beside him.

DWIGHT
There you are. I've been trying to reach you all morning.

ETHAN
Phones dead. What's going on?

Dwight hands him a large manila envelope.

DWIGHT
This arrived for you.

ETHAN
You didn't open it?

DWIGHT
It's addressed to you.

Ethan opens the folder. He pulls out several photos and a note. A key falls to the floor. Dwight picks it up.

ETHAN
What the hell?

DWIGHT
What is it?

He hands the photos to Dwight. Ethan looks at the note.

CARLYLE
What's it say?

ETHAN
(reading not)
Your suspects. The evidence is in storage unit twenty three near tenth and central. Come alone.

CARLYLE
Where the hell is that?

ETHAN
That's my storage unit.

DWIGHT
This the key?

He shows Ethan. He takes it.

DWIGHT
Let's go.

ETHAN
We should tell the chief.

DWIGHT
He doesn't need to know about this.
He's already handed the case to the
FBI. Come on, Ethan. Like old
times. Let's finish this.

Ethan looks over to Carlyle, who's excited.

CARLYLE
Says come alone. We can handle it.

DWIGHT
You're staying behind.

ETHAN
No.
(looking at Dwight)
He comes with us.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Carlyle drives. Ethan's in the back and Dwight in the front.
They pull through the entrance of the obscured -

EXT. STORAGE UNITS - NIGHT

Carlyle puts the car in park. Ethan gets out.

DWIGHT
Carlyle, you stay here.

Dwight opens his door.

CARLYLE
What am I supposed to do?

ETHAN

If you see anything, honk.

Dwight slams the door and withdraws his gun. Ethan eyes him.

DWIGHT

Let's go.

Ethan unbuttons his gun holster as he follows Dwight. They walk through rows of storage units.

ETHAN

That's it.

He spots the one at the end. They walk up to it.

DWIGHT

Open it up. I'll cover you.

Ethan bends down to the lock. He pulls the key out of his pocket and unlocks the door.

ETHAN

On three...

Dwight nods and aims a flashlight and his gun at the unit. Ethan quickly pulls open the door.

The small light reveals Paula tied and gagged in a chair. Ethan quickly runs over.

ETHAN

Paula!

He removes the gag and checks her vitals. She is passed out. Dwight pulls the string. A light bulb lights the storage.

ETHAN

She's alive. Paula, can you hear me?

CARLYLE V.O

(on walkie)

I've got headlights.

Ethan stands and talks into his walkie-talkie.

ETHAN

Don't hesitate. You see anyone, fire at will.

EXT. STORAGE BUILDING - NIGHT

Carlyle gets out of the cruiser as a car slowly approaches. He waves his left hand, his right grips his holstered gun.

CARLYLE
Stop right there!

The car keeps moving. He pulls his gun out and aims ahead.

CARLYLE
Turn off the car and get out with
your hands up!

The car drives closer and closer to him. He backs up.

CARLYLE
Stop or I'll shoot!

The car doesn't stop. He fires three SHOTS at the windshield.

INTERCUT:

Ethan and Dwight stare off toward that direction.

ETHAN
(in his walkie)
Carlyle, talk to me. What's going
on over there?

INTERCUT:

Carlyle backs away as the car creeps past him. It crashes into a storage unit. He edges up to it. Gun drawn.

INTERCUT:

Ethan notices pictures taped to the wall of the unit. They're of him, Eric and Paula and all three of the murder victims.

CARLYLE V.O.
The car's empty.

He shows Dwight. A GUNSHOT echoes. Ethan and Dwight startle.

INTERCUT:

Carlyle falls to the ground.

ETHAN V.O.
 Carlyle! Carlyle, do you copy?

The man in the leather jacket goes to the crashed car.

INTERCUT:

Ethan retrieves his gun and cautiously edges out of the unit.

DWIGHT O.S.
 We crave the things that hurt the
 most. We become souls who've lived,
 loved, and lost. Nothing left but
 memories we were once a part of.

Ethan looks back to him. Dwight aims his gun at Ethan,
 wearing black gloves.

DWIGHT
 All starting to make sense now
 isn't it, Ethan?

ETHAN
 You...

DWIGHT
 All these years being your
 partner... Not once did I get any
 recognition for the work I put in.
 Never any appreciation. Well, now
 I've given them something to
 appreciate.
 (beat)
 Hand it over.

The Man appears from the side of the storage unit. He grips
 Eric tied up. Ethan tosses his gun over to Dwight.

DWIGHT
 And the radio.

Ethan slowly throws it over and puts his hand in his pocket.

DWIGHT
 Ah-AH!

He re-aims his gun. Ethan puts his hands up.

ETHAN
 Who's this?

DWIGHT
 You remember Harold Fisch, don'cha?

Harold has a bandage on his left cheek. He throws Eric in the unit next to Paula, then comes over to Dwight.

HAROLD FISCH

Detective Pollard. Bet you never thought you'd see me again.

ETHAN

You're behind this? You were put away for drugs. You were never a murderer.

HAROLD FISCH

Bribery goes a long way in this country. When detective Hamilton told me he could get me off of parol, I couldn't resist. I had to get back at you for taking eight years of my life away.

ETHAN

You're a drug smuggler. That's the rules of the game.

HAROLD FISCH

...And you know the hazards of being a detective.

ETHAN

So, I guess the plan was to frame me, right? I understand McManahan, but how do the others fit in?

DWIGHT

You're disappointing me, Ethan. Come on, smart detective like you should've figured it out by now.

Dwight picks up Ethan's gun and exits the storage.

HAROLD FISCH

You couldn't just kill Mcmanahan. You'd get caught. You had to kill the others to seem like a series.

ETHAN

Why would I want to kill them?

HAROLD FISCH

It's all in the pictures.

Ethan picks up the pictures. He sees photos of Paula, Eric and Katie that the perp took earlier.

HAROLD FISCH

Just watching people you really get to know 'em. Betty used people to get what she wanted. Personal gratification, really. Katie, well she just made everything come together.

(beat)

If you're going to frame someone they better have affiliation or motive -- and hell, why not get creative with it?

He motions to Paula.

HAROLD FISCH

She had a motive. You knew that.

ETHAN

And the little girl?

HAROLD FISCH

I may have killed people, but I still have a heart. She saw us. We did what we had to.

ETHAN

(to Dwight)

These photos - Couldn't they just as easily suggest you?

DWIGHT

Suppose they could. But where's my motive? You've been a recluse for the past year. Your wife's murderer gets released -- you're ever so eager to work the case. Something in you just snapped.

ETHAN

I was always with you.

DWIGHT

True. That's why you had an accomplice.

Harold LAUGHS. Dwight points Ethan's gun at Harold and shoots him in the head. He goes down.

A flash of white light and a sharp BEEP sends Ethan falling against the wall of the storage.

He snaps out of it and throws the pictures at Dwight. He punches out the light bulb. The storage unit goes dark.

Dwight fires an aimless SHOT. He shines his flashlight, but Ethan is gone. Dwight turns and creeps away from the unit.

DWIGHT

Ethan...

He quickly aims his gun down a small alley. Nothing. Ethan tackles Dwight to the ground, knocking his gun from his hand.

They roll around on the ground. Dwight gets on top of Ethan and hits him. Ethan gets his way out of Dwight's grasp.

He grabs Dwight's gun and runs behind a storage unit. Dwight goes and shuts the storage unit with Paula and Eric inside.

He snatches Ethan's gun from the ground and fires a shot in Ethan's direction.

DWIGHT

I loved her, Ethan. I couldn't bare it when she told me she wanted to stay with you. Try to work things out. I couldn't live with that. Neither could she.

Dwight fires another SHOT towards Ethan.

DWIGHT

Kurt McManahan always being around, well he was the perfect person to frame. You believed it.

(beat)

Always sounded so convincing, him pleading his innocence to you.

INT. STORAGE BUILDING - NIGHT

Eric and Paula remain tied up.

ERIC

Paula, wake up. Can you hear me?

She becomes alert and starts SCREAMING.

ERIC

Shh. Paula, calm down. I'm going to try to untie you.

He gets on his knees and puts his back up against hers. He tries to untie her.

EXT. STORAGE BUILDING - NIGHT

Ethan runs across, ducking behind another storage unit.
Dwight FIRES at him.

DWIGHT

Ethan, there's no way out of this
for you. Alive, at least.

ETHAN

I think I understand what you meant
when you said people aren't always
who they appear to be.

DWIGHT

I said that?

Dwight FIRES another shot at Ethan. The bullet RICKSHAS off
the side of the unit near Ethan's head.

He looks down touches his stomach. Blood dampens his shirt.
He takes a breath and runs to another unit, FIRING his gun.

Dwight jumps behind a storage unit and clutches his shoulder.

DWIGHT

You got me.

(beat)

I guess this constitutes you
turning on your partner. Saves me
from shooting myself.

They're on opposite sides of the same unit. Back to back.

INT. STORAGE BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Eric unties Paula. She hurries and unties him. Once she gets
him untied, they push open the storage door and peer out.

It SQUEAKS. Dwight turns his head to see them running away.
He fires his last SHOT and ejects his clip. He reloads.

Eric and Paula run out of the storage yard. Ethan ejects his
clip. Two shots left. He replaces the clip.

ETHAN

You and I were friends.

DWIGHT

You didn't deserve her, Ethan. She
was too good for you.

Ethan looks into the distance and sees Grace smiling and beckoning him. Ethan has a look of complete complacency.

Another burst of white light flashes. The BEEPING is louder. His body jerks vigorously.

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - NIGHT

A quick flash of white light. Two EMS technicians hunched over Ethan with CPR paddles. VOICES inaudible.

BACK TO:

EXT. STORAGE BUILDING - NIGHT

Ethan is back against the unit. He reaches for Grace.

DWIGHT V.O.

We're all dead anyway. Life is a funny thing, isn't it? We're all walking around day to day waiting for it all to end.

Ethan nods his head up and down.

ETHAN

(whispering)

I'm ready for it to end.

DWIGHT

Come on, Ethan. Let's finish this.

ETHAN

Okay, I'm coming out.

Ethan clutches his crimson soaked stomach as he walks around meeting Dwight aiming his gun at him. Ethan tosses his gun.

DWIGHT

I'm sorry it had to end this way for you.

ETHAN

Maybe for the both of us.

Dwight smiles, puzzled.

ETHAN

I finally took your advice.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out the voice recorder.

ETHAN

I've got your full confession.
You'll get your recognition, but it
may not be what you had in mind.

Dwight LAUGHS.

DWIGHT

See, this is what I'm talking
about. Never cease to amaze me.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN O.S.

Drop the gun, Hamilton.

Dwight's shocked and turns to see Charlie aiming his gun at
him from a few yards back.

ETHAN

He may be an asshole, but he's
efficient.

DWIGHT

Alright. Alright, you got me.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Drop it, dwight. Put your hands
above your head.

Dwight turns and looks at Charlie, then back at Ethan.
Ethan's body Jerks vigorously.

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - NIGHT

A quick flash of white light. Two EMS PATHOLOGISTS are
hunched over Ethan with CPR paddles. VOICES inaudible.

Charlie sits beside him. Paula squeezes his hand.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Come back, Ethan.

BACK TO:

EXT. STORAGE BUILDING - NIGHT

Ethan sees Grace beckoning him in the distance. He smiles.
Dwight raises his gun and FIRES at Ethan. He goes down.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

No!

Charlie unloads on Dwight. His body jerks from the many hits and he falls to the ground. Charlie runs over to Ethan.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Ethan! -- Ethan, can you hear me?

ETHAN

I knew there'd be another time we'd work together again.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

You called it, partner. Just hang in there.

ETHAN

Thanks for always having my back.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

You're gonna make it. Don't talk.

Ethan lies motionless. A bullet wound in his head. Charlie pulls out his walkie-talkie.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

I need an ambulance. Officer down.

Repeat, officer down.

(to Ethan)

Stay with me, Ethan.

A white flash of light. Ethan's body jolts up.

INT. AMBULANCE - MOVING - NIGHT

Ethan lies on a gurney inside the ambulance. His head pours blood and his shirt is stained red.

He lies motionless, starring straight up. A heart monitor holds a steady BEEP.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Hit him again.

Charlie grabs Ethan's lifeless hand and squeezes it tight.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

Come back, Ethan. Don't give up.

The pathologists hit him with the CPR defibrillators again and again. His body jolts, but there just a steady BEEP.

PAULA

Wake up. Come on, don't die on me!

Paula squeezes his hand and puts it to her cheek. The pathologists put the paddles down. There's a steady BEEP.

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

That's it, isn't it?

PAULA

You can't give up on him. Have you ever been in love?

EMS PATHOLOGIST

I'm sorry.

Paula looks at Ethan, tears streaming.

PAULA

You can't die. We just found each other. Where do we go from here, Ethan? Where do we go from here?

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

It's been said that after the body has died, there's an eight minute window of brain activity that still remains. Some people believe it's the time it takes for the soul to travel out of the body. Others believe we're reliving our last memories. Where we go from there, nobody really knows.

(beat)

He's just dreaming now.

Charlie continues to look at Ethan and squeezes his hand. Tears well in his eyes.

EMS PATHOLOGIST

Friend of yours?

CHARLIE BUCHANAN

I couldn't stand the son of a bitch. But he was the best damned detective I ever had the privilege of working with.

(beat)

Dream away, Ethan.

Paula's a retch. Tears roll down Charlie's cheeks as the ambulance drives away down the darkened city streets.

FADE OUT.

THE END