

DELAYED JUSTICE

By

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First Draft
6.25.2009
WGA #123456
c 2009

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EXT. NEAR BONG SON - VIETNAM - 1969 - DAY

From an aerial view rice paddies pass below. Vietnamese women and children work the paddies in straw hats and traditional peasant clothing. A man plows a new row behind an oxen, the wind from the bird blows their hats.

Roll opening credits.

FADE TO BLACK

The title appears: "DELAYED JUSTICE"

FADE IN:

EXT. HOT LANDING ZONE - DAY

The helo lands roughly in the LZ, 2ND LT FRANK DESIO and his fellow marines hastily debark from the aircraft. The last man jumps out, the helicopter rises, then--

TAT TAT TAT, sparks burst all over the helicopter's body as it gets peppered by gunfire.

All the marines hit the ground and return fire.

EXT. JUNGLE - DAY

The marines dirty from weeks in the bush, hack their way through the thick jungle underbrush. Their eyes constantly search the treetops and ground for any sign of enemy soldiers. It starts to lightly rain.

They come across a small village. The marines crouching in the bush watch the action.

The village is small with only two dirt roads intersecting in the middle. At the intersection is what looks to be a crude well, with a bucket attached to a rope. A woman is drawing water from the well. There is a pen with several pigs feeding and chickens in the road pecking at grain on the ground.

The houses are simple, wood shacks with crude tin covers. Several men and women ride up and down the road on bicycles, wearing simple peasant clothes.

One man is struggling with, but is hauling a wood cart full of straw. He stops in front of one of the shacks.

Another man comes out to join him and they pull a wooden box out from under the straw and take the box into the shack.

FRANK
(in a whisper)

Look at these bastards. I know
they're up to something.

RADIO OPERATOR
Do you want to call it in LT?

FRANK
Yeah, call the base camp and give
'em our position.

Frank and the marines watch the activity in the village a
little longer, their anger building.

FRANK
(with a hand motion)
Okay, mount up. Let's go down and
take a look. Move out.

EXT. THE VILLAGE -DAY

The marines enter the village M-16's at the ready. The locals
protest the marines entrance.

The marines search the village shack by shack. Two marines
drag out one man, with blood oozing from a head wound and toss
him in the street like a bag of trash.

One marine runs out of a door pursuing a young woman who is
screaming. Her clothes have been ripped partially off, she is
crying. He grabs her and starts to grope her.

FRANK
Hey Jones, we ain't got time for
that shit right now. You'll have to
get with your girlfriend, later.
Back to work.

JONES
Oh hell, LT, okay, shit.

INT. VILLAGE - DAY

SHACK

The marines enter the shack where the two men had put the
crate from the cart. They find wooden drums filled with rice
and crates of grenades and brand new soviet AK-47's.

CORPORAL

(excitedly)

Look at this shit, LT, there's enough rice here to feed a whole VC regiment. (He says digging his hand through the barrel of rice)

FRANK

And looky here, I wonder who all these fucking rifles and grenades are for? (He says opening a crate with his K-bar knife) Round up all of these assholes and put them in the middle of town by the old well.

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

BY THE OLD WELL

The marines round up all the villagers and put them in a line in the middle of the dusty road.

One man protests louder than the others, he seems to be the HEADMAN of the village.

HEADMAN

Yankee dog, American swine. Please leave us in peace.

Frank motions towards the headman.

FRANK

Bring that asshole over here.

They tie him up, spread eagle, arms raised between two posts of a broken down fence. The Headman spits in defiance as Frank approaches.

Frank holds his chin up and bangs him in the side of the head with his rifle butt. Blood gushes from the wound and the headman lets out a yell.

The corporal steps up and wacks him another good lick which knocks him unconscious. Frank throws a bucket of water in his face to revive him.

FRANK

We know you're VC, whose all the rifles for? Where are your friends, shithead?

CORPORAL

Fuck yeah, he's VC, who's all the rice for, motherfucker? You better talk, or we're gonna put you in a hurt locker. I shit you not. Where they at, Goddammit!

Frank and the corporal are really getting pissed off now.

Frank takes out his knife and makes a threatening gesture, like he is going to poke the headman's eye out. Frank diverts from his eye and slices a big chunk out of his face.

The Headman is still defiant, and refuses to talk.

They grab the Headman's hand and tie it securely to a fence rail. They start to cut off his fingers, one by one, starting with his little finger. Blood squirts from the wounds and the headman screams in pain.

HEADMAN

(spitting in Franks's face)

Fuck you, I not afraid to die.

By this time a large part of the platoon has gathered around, watching the interrogation.

CORPORAL

Screw this, I bet if we start capping a few of these dinks, he'll talk then. What you think LT?

UNIDENTIFIED MARINE

Hell yeah, let's do it.

He suddenly steps up and shoots one of the villagers in the head. IN SLOW MOTION- We see the blood and brains blow out of his head from the exit wound and he falls to the ground with a slight thud.

BACK TO FULL SPEED ACTION- Just like a chain reaction several other marines open fire on the town's people lined up in the street.

Frank grabs his M-16, that is slung over his shoulder and yells at his marines in hope of stopping the slaughter.

FRANK

Cease firing, cease firing, drop
your weapons!

They do not stop, so Frank begins shooting his own men. Before he is through 5 marines lay dead in the dust and blood. The rest drop their weapons and raise their hands in surrender.

Frank stands awestruck, as he surveys the gruesome scene. The air is still thick with smoke from the firefight. Bloody bodies of villagers and marines scattered everywhere.

Frank yells for his platoon sargeant, who is now on the scene of the carnage.

FRANK

Mother fucker, shit! Sargeant,
where the hell were you? You didn't
do nothing to try and stop this
shit. What the fuck? Police all the
weapons. I want the platoon in
ranks in five minutes.

SARGEANT

Yes, sir!

EXT. THE VILAGE - DAY

IN THE ROAD BY THE OLD WELL

Frank walks back and forth, holding back his anger as he addresses his men. He speaks in a solemn tone.

FRANK

There's going to be a butt load of
questions about what happened here
today. This never happened, you
understand? We came into this
village in late afternoon, where we
met resistance and five of our men
were killed in a fire fight. We
found VC in the village and took
them as prisoners. We'll never
speak of this day, ever, to no one.
You got that?

The men shake their heads in agreement.

FRANK

Doc and sarge, bag and tag our
 dead. Blow up the shack with all
 the weapons and rice. Gather up all
 the men in the village, prepare to
 move out. Let's move people.

The shack blows up with a loud explosion, smoke and fire belch
 out of the shack as it disintegrates. The men of village are
 marched out with the exploding shack as a background.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - PRESENT - DAY

BEDROOM

FRANK is in bed asleep engulfed in a horrific nightmare. He is
 tossing and turning, eyes blinking, REM. His covers are
 disheveled, and wrapped around him. His wife, MARIA, sleeps
 quietly beside him.

There is a ceiling fan purring lightly, the bedroom window is
 open, a curtain gently blowing in the breeze. A slight stream
 of daylight peeps into the room through the drawn curtains.

DREAM SEQUENCE:

The ceiling fan becomes a helicopter blade, and the room spins
 round and round, landing him in the middle of the jungle. The
 jungle comes alive, the ground lights up in brilliant colors,
 as souls of dead marines rise up as dark apparitions, that
 move slowly towards him. The ghoulish figures still bloody
 from 40 year old wounds, howl, just barely audible, "you
 killed us, you killed us, why did you kill us?" Frank fires
 his M-16 rifle, but still they come. He fires over and over
 again screaming, "leave me alone, leave me alone."

Suddenly, as if from the Heavens, a giant hand reaches down and
 shakes him violently.

MARIA

(shaking Frank)

Frank, Frank wake up sweetheart.
 You're having a nightmare again,
 Frank wake up.

Frank, still disoriented, tries to speak but can only manage a
 mumble.

MARIA

Frank, honey are you okay? Say something.

FRANK

(in a trembling voice)

Yeah, yeah, I'm alright. God, I don't know how much longer I can take these dreams. I feel like my head is going to explode...

MARIA

(questioning)

Have you been taking your meds, Frank? You know what the doctor said.

FRANK

Screw doctors, they don't know everything.

MARIA

So you haven't been taking your meds?

FRANK

No...no, well, not for a few days. I don't like the way they make me feel. I can't concentrate. I'll start back today, I promise.

MARIA

You better buster, I'm getting tired of this shit. All this fuckin' tossing and turning and moaning and carrying on. It's getting on my last nerve. Take your meds, Frank. I'm serious, take your meds, so we both can get some sleep.

FRANK

Oh, alright, I'll take the meds for Christ sake. I'm gonna give Bill a call, see if he can see me today.

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

DEN

Frank is sitting on the couch in the den of his upper middle class home. It is tastefully decorated, family pictures on the wall, fire place, big screen T.V. etc.

Frank is still in his pajamas. He takes a long drag off a cigarette, and sips coffee from a Marine Corps mug. He dials the number of his friend and psychiatrist, BILL RILEY.

FRANK

(talking on the phone)

Hey Bill,... it's uh Frank. Man, I could really use some couch time, if you can fit me in. I had a fucking bad one this morning.

BILL(O.S)

Frank, are you taking your meds?

FRANK

(apologetically)

Well... not like I should, I guess.

BILL(O.S.)

You've got to take 'em Frank, I swear. I can work you in. I was planning on playing 18 today, but if it's that important. Come on down when you can, I'll meet you at the office. But Frank, please take your meds.

FRANK

Thanks, Bill, you're the man. I'll see you in an hour or so.

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

BILL is sitting in an exquisite leather chair. The room is elaborately decorated in the fashion of an upscale downtown, doctor's office. Frank is lying on an equally exquisite leather couch, his shoes are still on.

BILL

(a little peeved)

So Frank, what's so important you had to drag me downtown on a Saturday afternoon? I know you get a kick out of lying on my couch, but take your fucking shoes off, Frank, please.

Frank sits up, takes his shoes off, puts them on the floor, and lies back down.

FRANK

Bill, man, I had another bad one this morning. The demons in my head keep getting worse, I can't shake this shit, doc.

BILL

Tell me about your dream, Frankie.

Bill, sits in his chair, nodding as Frank tells his story.

FRANK

Like usual, I'm in the bush in Vietnam. The jungle starts whirling around me, and the ghosts of those guys I killed rise up from the ground, all bloody and shit. They start dragging their rotting corpses towards me.

Frank stops, looks up at Bill in terror, eyes wide, sweating...

BILL

Go ahead, then what happens?

Bill continues to nod at Frank, writing in a note pad.

FRANK

They keep dragging towards me saying, "you killed me, why did you kill me"? I freak the fuck out and start shooting, but they won't stop, Bill, they keep coming, and I keep shooting. I can't shake this shit, I'm totally losing it, man.

Bill leans forward in his chair, and speaks to Frank with a comforting tone.

BILL

We've been over and over this Frank. You did what you had to do, it's not your fault. You've got to let it go.

Frank is sitting up on the couch now, totally distraught.

FRANK

I can't, it's eating me up inside.

Frank is standing now, waving his arms frantically.

FRANK

I think, I'm going insane. I've got to come clean, I can't keep this secret anymore, it's killing me, Bill.

BILL

Frank, you remember what you told us, we can't talk about that day ever, to no one. We all have too much to lose. You've got to hold it together.

FRANK

Okay Bill, I'll try, I don't know. I'll try.

BILL

(writing a prescription and handing it to Frank)

I'm giving you a scrip for some stronger medication. But you've got to stay on your meds, Frank. I'm not shitting you. You've got to promise, promise me , Frank.

FRANK

I...I swear, I'll stay on 'em, I've got to get my shit together.

INT. DOWNTOWN BAR - NIGHT

Bill is seated at a back table of a swank uptown yuppie night club. Customers seated at the bar talking, waitresses serving drinks, music playing, usual hustle and bustle of a busy night spot.

With Bill are RICK SANCHEZ and FRED WILLIAMS, engrossed in a heated but guarded conversation.

BILL
(excitedly)
I'm telling you guys, Frank is losing it man. He's gonna cave. What are we gonna do about him?

RICK
Are you shitting us, Bill? I thought you had him under control.

FRED
Yeah, you're the one who's supposed to make sure he keeps his big fuckin' mouth shut.

RICK
What do you mean what are we gonna do? What the hell can we do, Bill?

BILL
I don't know, but we all have too much to lose, if he goes to NCIS.

RICK
That shit was forty years ago, man.

FRED
Doesn't matter, it was still murder. Hell, it was a war crime for God's sake.

RICK
Yeah, that's fuckin'a right, we can still burn behind that shit fellows.

BILL
And I don't know about you guys, but I'm too damn old to be doing

CHL at fucking Levenworth.

FRED

No shit!

BILL

Hell, we've got to do something. We can't just sit around waiting for him to rat us out.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

Frank is in a low budget motel with his girl friend, JENNIFER. She is in her late thirties, beautiful, with long blonde hair and green eyes. The motel is very plain, double bed, TV and cheap furniture.

They make love and afterwards Frank is smoking a cigarette.

JENNIFER

WOW, that was incredible, Frank. How do you do it like that, at your age?

FRANK

(blowing out a puff of smoke)

With a little help from my friends, baby. A miracle of modern science, a small blue pill.

JENNIFER

Well, whatever you're doing, keep on doing it.

Jennifer kisses Frank, long and deep. Frank rolls over and puts his arm around her. They kiss further and embrace.

FRANK

I tell you what, if I have an erection lasting more than four hours, I'm not going to consult my physician, I'm giving you a call.

JENNIFER

Um, Um... I tell you what, you stud, I'm just the girl to help you with that problem. The doctor is in.

FRANK

I'll be sure to make an appointment. By the way.. when can I see you again?

JENNIFER

Oh Frank... Looks like we're gonna have to cool it for a while, my husband's starting to get suspicious. He doesn't want to screw me, but he doesn't want anybody else screwing me either.

FRANK)

Yeah, I can dig that.

JENNIFER

You know my husband's a mean mother fucker and you don't want him after your ass, I shit you not.

FRANK

You said that right.

JENNIFER

So we'll just have to play it by ear. I'll give you a call on your cell, when I can get away.

FRANK

Okay, it is, what it is, I guess. Well, I'd better make hay while the sun shines then, as they say.

They make love again.

INT. DESIO REIDENCE - NIGHT

Frank opens the front door to find an upset Maria, waiting for him. She gets up from the couch, and approaches Frank as he comes in.

MARIA

(sounding pissed off)

Frank, where the hell have you been? I called Bill's office, and you left hours ago.

FRANK

I...I stopped by my office to catch up on some paper work. I guess I should have called, sorry dear, didn't mean to make you worry.

Maria gets up in Frank's face, waving her hands.

MARIA

I don't believe you Frank. What's the bitch's name? I know you're seeing someone, stop lying to me.

FRANK

I'm not lying, babe. I was at the office, I swear on my dead mother's soul.

Maria pokes Frank in the chest with her right index finger.

MARIA

You fucking better not be.

FRANK

I swear, I'm telling the truth, Maria. I can't believe after all these years, you still don't trust me.

MARIA

Cause if you ain't, you remember that Bobbitt chick? I'm gonna cut your shit off, and toss it in the street. You understand me , Frank?

Maria grabs Frank by his crotch.

MARIA

If I find out, your're cheating again, I'm not going to be responsible for what I might do. I could make it look like an accident. Two million dollars would come in pretty handy right now.

FRANK

Yeah, yeah, don't worry. Chill out, Maria.

EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jennifer leaves the motel, walks across the almost deserted lot to her car, a blue late model Toyota Camry, parked all by itself on the back side of the motel.

Jennifer gets in her car, slams the door shut with a bang.

INT. JENNIFER'S CAR - EVENING

Jennifer drives the few miles to her ratty apartment, where she knows her loving husband Buster will be waiting for her. She mutters to herself as she drives, car radio playing.

JENNIFER

(distraught)

I've got to get away from fucking Buster, that bastard is really dragging me down. God...I hate my life.

Jennifer pulls into her parking spot...

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Jennifer walks slowly and apprehensively across her parking lot. She takes a deep breath and turns the key in her lock. She eases the door open...

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Jennifer enters the front door of her junky apartment to find Buster, as she suspected, sitting on the living room couch, drinking a beer.

There are empty beer cans and other assorted trash strown about on the coffee table. The apartment is small and

distastefully decorated. with mismatched, cheap furniture.

BUSTER is a tall, muscular man, with sandy blonde hair and brown eyes. He is actually quite handsome when he cleans himself up, which is rare.

Buster stands up and approaches Jennifer, as she comes in through the door.

BUSTER

(angrily)

Where the hell have you been all day, bitch? I've been waiting for you to get home and cook me some fucking dinner, I'm hungry

Buster grabs Jennifer's arm roughly as she walks by, turning her around.

BUSTER

Do you hear me, you cunt?

Jennifer, trying to shake free from the grasp Buster has on her arm.

JENNIFER

I can't help but hear you as loud as you are. Let go of my arm, asshole.

Buster gets in Jennifer's face, she fans the air.

JENNIFER

You smell like you already drank your dinner, a 12 pack and 2 bottles of gin. You make me sick.

Buster finally turns loose of Jennifer's arm. Throws his hands up in the air, as in surrender.

BUSTER

Fine, you're right, I already had my dinner.

Buster says, with a devilish, playful look on his face, grabbing his crotch.

BUSTER

Now, I want some desert.

JENNIFER

Forget it you ass wipe, you're too drunk to even get it up, you pathetic fucking loser.

BUSTER

You better not be fucking anybody, or I swear, you and that son of a bitch are dead, I promise you that. You hear me, Jennifer, you bitch. I don't know what I ever wanted with a sorry ass tramp like you anyway.

Buster follows Jennifer down the hallway, she retreats into the bathroom and slams the door in his face.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CITY STREET - DAY

Frank leaves out of his downtown office enroute to grab a bite to eat. Cars are passing by, people walking up and down the street, usual activity on a busy street at noon.

He waits at the stop light for the light to turn red so he can cross the busy street. He starts crossing the street at the intersection crosswalk.

Out of nowhere, a old cadillac screeches out of a parking space, and hits Frank as he crosses the street. Frank flies up in the air and lands on the pavement a few feet from the intersection.

Frank, lies on the street face down, a heavy trickle of blood flows from underneath his twisted body.

EXT. INTERSECTION CITY STREET - DAY

The police arrive, block off the area where Frank lies near death in the street.

A crowd of people gather, traffic comes to a stand still, people craning their necks to see, inquiring about what happened (adlib crowd murmur).

The camera pans around the crowd, stops briefly on an Asia man around sixty years old.

Two uniform policemen approach a crowd standing on the sidewalk. They are dressed in blue poifice uniforms and official ball caps.

One is AFRO-AMERICAN, late twenties, medium build and height. The other officer is WHITE, tall and thin, in his forties, corporal stripes.

AFRO-AMERICAN OFFICER

Okay, let's move on... Keep it back people.

WHITE OFFICER

Hold it down, hold it down. Did anybody see what happened?

The officers look around the crowd. A lady and a man step forward gestering to the officers.

FEMALE WITNESS

Yes, officer I saw the whole thing, it was horrible. Oh my God, I know I'm going to have nightmares about this for weeks. That poor man, is he going to be okay?

AFRO-AMERICAN OFFICER

We don't know about that yet, m'am. Just tell us what you saw.

FEMALE WITNESS

Well, we were walking across the street... uh... my two girlfriends and I, when out of nowhere this car goes speeding through the crosswalk and runs right over a man who was crossing the street, only a few yards in front of us. Oh God, is he going to be alright, a terrible thing...

WHITE OFFICER

Calm down m'am, just calm down. Did you see what kind of car the man was driving? Can you describe the driver at all, m'am.

FEMALE WITNESS

I..I, uh... I didn't really get a look at the driver, it all happened so fast. All I know was, it was an old cadillac, one of those big models, sort of a faded green or blue, I... I'm not sure. But I can tell you one thing, officer, the driver didn't even try to stop.

AFRO-AMERICA OFFICER

(speaking to the male witness)

Sir, what happened here?

The male witness has been standing quietly while the lady tells her story. He steps up to tell what he saw.

MALE WITNESS

Well...I was crossing the street and like a bat out of hell, this big ragly car barrels through the intersection and hits dude. Knocked his ass in the air... He went flying and the car kept on going... Looked like they ran over the man on purpose to me.

WHITE OFFICER

Thanks folks, let us finish writng your statements, step over to the black and white, so we can get your contact information and then you'll be free to go.

An ambulance arrives, siren blarring and comes to a stop in the street where Frank lies, severely injured.

The EMTs quickly remove a stretcher from the back of the ambulance and head over to attend to Frank.

EMT#1
(says to his partner)
Check his vitals and for extent of
injuries, before we move him.

EMT#2
I'm on it.

He checks Frank carefully for injuries, takes his blood
pressure and pulse.

EMT#2
Blood pressure, 90 over 48, pulse
50 bpm, breathing shallow. Looks
like he has a possible concussion,
broken left leg, and multiple cuts
and contusions. We better watch him
closely, and make sure he doesn't
go into shock.

EMT#1
Immobilize his left leg, cover him
with a blanket and get him ready to
transport. We need to get him in
the ambulance and to the hospital
asap.

EMT#2
(talking to Frank)
Sir, can you hear me? You're gonna
be fine. We are taking you to the
hospital.

FRANK
Yeah, yeah... okay. My doctor...at
Mercy. Take me to Mercy.

EMT#2)

Will do, sir.

The EMTs put Frank in the ambulance and speed off to the
hospital.

EXT. STREET INTERSECTION - DAY

Detectives JOHN CARSON(30) and CHUCK BROWN(52) stand at the scene of a horrific car accident. The cars involved in the accident are mangled and twisted in the middle of the intersection.

The driver of the one of the vehicles is sticking out of his windshield. His head is smashed and almost severed from his bleeding twisted body.

The detectives Chuck, dressed in a stylish expensive suit and Carson in a wrinkled out of date ensemble, chewing on the stub of an unlit cigar, survey the scene...

Carson(looking at the
wrecked cadillac)
What do you see, Chuck?

Chuck, rubs his chin, with a puzzled look on his face.

CHUCK
I don't know, an accident?

CARSON
Well let me clue you in there son.
There was another incident, in a
crosswalk, 2 blocks away...
(pointing down the
street).
Our stiff here, according to
witnesses interviewed by the
uniforms, ran a guy down
intentionally, and fled the scene
at a high rate of speed.

Chuck is listening attentively, nodding his head, and shifting his weight from one foot to the other.

CARSON
You get where I'm going with this
Chuckie?

Chuck continues to nod his head, punching in the information in a palm pilot as Carson speaks.

CARSON

I don't know Chuck, but I think this guy, was trying to kill that other guy, which makes it a case for us. Ole blood and guts here is not talking, so I guess we'll have to find somebody who is. Did he have any I.D. on him ?

Chuck looks up from his palm pilot, shaking his head.

CHUCK

No, he didn't have any identification on him, boss. But he had \$5000 in cash in his pocket, very peculiar. We ran the plates and found out this car was reported stolen. The car is registered to a Emma Harris, National City address.

Carson chews on his cigar and shakes his head.

CARSON

Well, I guess we got some investigating to do here, son. I'll head on down to hospital and see if I can have a few words with the poor gentleman who got himself run over, and you go to his residence and see what you can find out from the wife.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Frank is in hospital bed. The room is private with all the usual equipment you see in a nice hospital room. Frank's left leg is in a cast and elevated, he has a bandage around his head, IV sticking in his right arm, bag and tubes hanging.

He has visible cuts and bruises. He is just waking up as his doctor, DR. GOODRIGHT enters the room and approaches Frank.

DR. GOODRIGHT

Frank, how do you feel? Dumb question, huh? You look like shit, but you'll live.

Frank looks up at the doctor, still very groggy.

DR. GOODRIGHT(CONT'D)

Nothing broken but your left tibia. You have a mild concussion, and miscellaneous cuts and bruises. You're gonna have a hell of a headache for a few days, but you were lucky Frank.

FRANK

I don't feel too lucky, but thanks doc. I feel even shittier than I look. What the hell happened?

DR. GOODRIGHT

Well according to witnesses, some asshole ran you down as you were crossing the street. He sped off in a hurry and had an accident two blocks down the street and was killed.

Frank in disbelief shakes his head, and looks away at the IV sticking out of his arm.

FRANK

Damn. Why would anybody run over me on purpose, doc?

Dr. Goodright checks Frank's IV and and speaks to him in a comforting tone.

DR. GOODRIGHT

Well, I wouldn't worry, Frank. The police will get to the bottom of it. Just get some rest, I'll be back to see you later on.

FRANK

That's fucked up. Why would anybody try to kill me? By the way, did anybody call Maria?

DR. GOODRIGHT

Yeah, we called her, she should be here anytime. Get some rest.

INT. CITY MEDICAL EXAMINER'S LAB - DAY

Body of dead vehicle driver lies on the autopsy table. There are numerous other cadavers laying on tables, covered with sheets.

Dr. PHILLIP MORTON, medical examiner, is busy preparing the body for autopsy, along with his ASSISTANT.

MORTON

(speaking to his assistant)

Damn this guy is a mess. It's hell what centrifugal force can do to the human body, when it flings it through a glass windshield.

Dr. Morton points at the body, takes a drink from a cup of water, clears his throat, and continues his summation.

MORTON

I'd say right off hand, this guy died from his head injuries and loss of blood, but there could be extenuating circumstances that are not immediately evident. He could have had a seizure, a heart attack, who knows.

ASSISTANT

Yeah, you're right doc, We won't know for sure until we open him up. Let's get some pictures before we proceed.

The assistant goes into another room and comes back with an autopsy camera.

The assistant takes pictures from a variety of angles, including a head shot. He opens his mouth and gets a closeup of his teeth as best as he can.

MORTON

Let's get some fingerprints and draw some blood for typing and DNA. Right now, this guy is a John Doe. Send them off to the lab, when you're done.

ASSISTANT

Right away, Dr. MORTON

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

DEN

Maria is sitting on the couch, rollers in her hair, mud pack on her face. She is painting her fingernails and talking to her best friend CASSEY on the phone.

MARIA

Girl, Frank must think I'm a total moron. I know that fucker is cheating on me again. He came home late Saturday night with this lame ass story about having to work late at his office. I know he was with some woman, I can tell. He had that look.

CASSEY(O.S.)

Yeah, you can always tell, they've got that shit eating grin on their face, you know the one, Maria.

MARIA

Hell, I could smell her on him. He thinks he's fooling me, I wasn't born yesterday. Frank is a terrible liar, I don't know why he even tries.

CASSEY(O.S.)

Who do you think he's seeing, Maria?

MARIA

I don't know, but I'm gonna find out.

CASSEY(O.S.)

I bet it's that bitch Jennifer, you know Paul's secretary. I've seen him eyeballing that slut, like he'd like to throw her down on the couch, right there in the office, for Christ's sake. It's so obvious, she's always flirting with Frank. Everybody in the office suspects them, but nobody says anything, since he's the boss.

MARIA

Frank is a dead man. I swear I'm gonna kill him this time. I'll make it look like an accident and collect double on his life insurance, that'll serve that bastard right, teach him to fuck with Maria Angela Desio.

CASSEY(O.S)

You go girl!

Maria gets a call on her other line, puts Cassey on hold.

MARIA

Cassey, hang on a sec, I've got a call on the other line, gonna put you on hold, don't hang up.

CASSEY

Okay.

Maria answers the other line, still frowning from her conversation with Cassey.

MARIA

Hello.

NURSE(O.S)

This is Mercy Hospital calling, is this Mrs. Desio.

MARIA

Yes, this is Mrs. Desio.

NURSE(CONT'D)(O.S.)

Yes, I'm calling to inform you your husband Frank was struck by a car crossing the street and we have him here in intensive care. His condition is serious, but not critical. He'll be fine.

MARIA

(shocked)

Oh my God, what happened? Is he going to be alright? Oh God, Frank. You're sure he's okay?

NURSE(O.S)

Yes m'am, he's going to be fine, don't worry, he's getting the best of care. The doctor says he will make a full recovery.

MARIA

(relieved)

Oh thank the Lord. I will be down as soon as I can, I appreciate you calling. Bye.

Maria clicks back over to Cassey who is still waiting on the other line.

MARIA

Cassie, you are not going to believe this shit. That was Mercy hospital, Frank was run over by a car and he is in intensive care.

CASSEY

Damn! You better go to the hospital, Maria.

MARIA

Yeah I've got to go, I'll call you
later and let you know what's going
on, bye.

EXT. MERCY HOSPITAL - DAY

Carson pulls into a parking space in the hospital lot. Normal activity, cars pulling in and out people going to and fro.

Carson saunters slowly across the parking lot towards the front door of the hospital. Sign over the door says HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS.

A car backs out of a parking space almost striking Carson.

He bangs on the back of the vehicle with the palm of his hand, as it passes by. He stops, shakes his head and mutters something undistinguishable under his breath.

He drops his glasses that are hanging on a chain to his chest, pulls a handkerchief from his back pocket and wipes the sweat off his face. He replaces the handkerchief when he is finished, puts his glasses back on, and continues his journey.

He starts to cross the street to the admissions door, when another car wizzes by almost striking him blowing their horn. He mutters some more obscenities under his breath and finally makes it to the hospital door.

INT. HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS - DAY

Franks walks gingerly towards the admissions desk, stopping to turn around a couple of times, as if somehow confused.

Normal activity in the hospital, people walking about. TWO NURSES are seated behind the front desk. One nurse is talking on the phone, the other is on the computer. She notices Frank as he approaches the desk.

NURSE

Yes sir, could I help you?

CARSON

(with a funny look on his
face, chewing on his unlit
cigar)

Uh...yes m'am, you sure could.

Carson flashes his detective first grade badge, he almost
magically pulls out of his coat pocket

CARSON(CONT'D)

(clearing his throat)

I'm Detective Carson with the SDPD,
could you tell me what room a...

He stops to pull his book from his pocket, check the name and
then continues.

CARSON(CONT'D)

Okay, here it is... a Frank Desio
is in, please m'am?

NURSE

One minute, let me check, sir.

The nurse punches the name into the computer, Frank's name and
room number appears.

NURSE

Sir, he is in room 709, seventh
floor, in the intensive care unit.

CARSON

Okay, that's room 709, in intensive
care. Is that in this building?

NURSE

No sir, that is in building 206. Go
out the way you came in, take a
right, go down one building and
take another right, it's the first
building on your left.

CARSON

(somewhat confused)

Okay...let me see if I have this right. I go out this door, then I make a right, then another right and it's the building on my left. I think I've got it.

NURSE

If you have any problem, just come back and I'll get someone to show you...okay?

CARSON

Thank you, I'll find it.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Carson walks into Franks's room, a NURSE is giving Frank a shot and fluffs his pillow. The room is private with a hospital bed, table and other normal items. Frank's leg is elevated, an IV bag hangs and the needle is inserted into his right arm.

The nurse approaches Carson as he enters the room.

CARSON

Is this Frank Desio's room?

NURSE

Yes sir, it is, may I help you?

CARSON

I'm detective Carson, I need to speak to Mr. Desio, for a minute.

NURSE

Sir, that would be fine, try not to tire him out. Just for a minute.

CARSON

Yes, m'am, I'll just be a minute.

Franks lays in his hospital bed, just barely awake. He sips water from a cup through a straw.

FRANK

(very groggy)

Who are you?

CARSON

I'm detective John Carson, just wanted to ask you a couple of questions...if you feel up to it.

FRANK

Detective, the nurse just gave me a shot, I'll do my best. What's this about, can't we talk some other time?

CARSON

Sir, I understand this is a bad time for you and I hope you're making it alright, but I have a couple of questions I must ask.

FRANK

Well, okay, but I really don't feel up to it.

CARSON

Mr. Desio, did you know that a man, according to witnesses at the scene, tried to kill you today?

FRANK

No, it was just an accident. Nobody tried to kill me, detective.

CARSON

No sir, it was no accident. Do you know why anyone would try to kill you, Mr. Desio?

FRANK

No, I do not. I really don't want to talk about this right now. Nurse, could you adjust my bed, I'm really uncomfortable. Would that be all, detective?

CARSON

Okay, Mr. Desio, I'll let you get some rest now. I'll come back to see you tomorrow. Maybe you'll feel like talking more then. Give some thought to who might want you dead and why.

FRANK

Yeah, yeah, nurse.

EXT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

Chuck is on the porch of the Desio home looking sharp in his suit and tie. He rings the doorbell and waits, humming to himself. He gets no answer with the ring so he pounds on the door several times.

About this time the door flies open. Maria is suddenly at the door and is startled to see Chuck standing on her porch.

MARIA

(irritably)

Could I help you?

CHUCK

Uh, yes ma'am...I'm Detective Chuck Brown,SDPD. I need to talk to you a minute about your husband, Frank. Frank is your husband, right?

MARIA

Yes, of course. I'm on my way down to the hospital to see him, right now.

CHUCK

Well, this will only take a minute.

MARIA

Damn, would you like to come in?

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

MARIA

Have a seat.

(she motions towards the
couch)

Would you like some coffee, Mr.
Brown was it?

CHUCK

Yes, that would be great, thanks.
Black.

Maria goes to the kitchen, makes coffee, and returns with a
tray and two cups.

MARIA

So...what is this all about,
detective? Why would you come to my
house to tell me about an accident?

CHUCK

Well, m'am, I don't know if anyone
told you, but we suspect that
someone was trying to kill your
husband today.

MARIA

Oh my God, you're shitting me. Dear
God, who would want to kill Frank?

CHUCK

Well, m'am, that's what I was hoping
you could tell me. Do you know of
anyone who want your husband
dead, Mrs. Desio?

MARIA

Oh Lord no, shit... everyone loves
Frank. He doesn't have any enemies
that I know of. Do they know who
ran Frank down?

CHUCK

No, m'am. We don't know yet. We
have just started our investigation.

MARIA

I wish I could help you, but I can't think of anyone.

CHUCK

Mrs. Desio, I always hate this question... but I have to ask. Was your husband having an affair? Maybe a jealous husband might have meant Frank harm.

MARIA

(starting to get pissed)

No, my husband is not having an affair. I resent the insinuation, detective.

CHUCK)

I'm sorry, mam, but I had to ask. How is your relationship with Frank, are you two having any problems?

Maria starts to really get mad now. She is standing up and gets in Chuck's face. Waving her hands in anger.

MARIA

Hold the fuck up. You've really gone too far. You think I had something to do with it...I wouldn't get somebody to run over him with a car, I'll strangle him with my bare hands, you asshole.

CHUCK

(apologetically)

Calm down, m'am, these are just standard questions. Sorry.

Maria, calms down a little and backs away from Chuck, still standing.

MARIA

You know what? This conversation is over. Get the fuck out of my house. If you want to talk to me any further, talk to my lawyer.

Chuck pulls out one of his cards and hands it to Maria.

CHUCK

Fine, ma'm. If you think of anyone
or just want to talk, give me a
call, anytime.

MARIA

Don't hold your fucking breath.

EXT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

Chuck, licking his wounds from his conversation with Maria,
leaves the Desio house, walks to his car parked in the
driveway and crawls in...

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - DAY

He looks in his rearview mirror at himself, brushes his hair
briefly and shakes his head.

He drives down the street, his cellphone rings. Chuck answers.

CHUCK

Hello, Detective Brown.

CARSON(O.S)

Chuck, where the hell are you?

CHUCK

I'm just leaving the Desio
residence.

CARSON

How did that go?

CHUCK

Uh... not so good, boss. That's one
angry ass bitch, if you'll excuse
my language.

CARSON

Yeah, tell me what happened,
Chuckie.

CHUCK

Well... everything was going just fine, 'til I started asking about her husband and affairs and their relationship. Then everything sorta went to shit after that.

CARSON

Chuck, Chuck... how many times do I have to tell you. You've got to use a little tack and charm when you talk to the ladies concerning these personal matters.

CHUCK

Yeah... guess I'll have to work on my technique, there boss. How did it go with the husband?

CARSON

About the same. He clammed up. Didn't even want to talk about it. We'll give them a day or two, then we'll take another go at them. Right now, meet me down at the city coroners. We'll see how they're doing with our stiff.

CHUCK

Okay, see you down there.

INT. FRANKS'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Maria is sitting in a chair beside Frank's hospital bed with her face in her hands.

INT. COFFEE SHOP MERCY HOSPITAL - DAY

Bill and Maria are at a back table in the coffee shop. Standard coffee shop, people at their tables, drinking coffee, eating and talking. The waitress takes their order. They then become engrossed in an intense, but guarded conversation.

INT. HOSPITAL FLORIST SHOP - DAY

Maria looks through the flowers in the shop picks a plant from the shelf. She goes up to the counter to pay for it.

FROM AN UNKNOWN POW- A shot of the back of the man working in the florist shop. He gives Maria her change. He is missing two fingers on his right hand.

INT. MEDICAL EXAMINER'S LAB - DAY

Dr. Morton and his assistant are just finishing with ROY HARRIS JR. The body is nude with the standard "Y" cut that is used in autopsy. The sutured scar around his head indicates his skull cap was removed to examine his brain. Carson and Chuck enter the lab and approach Dr. Morton who is busy at work on the body.

CARSON

Dr. Morton, what's the word on our stiff? And by the way...good afternoon. Uh... this is my new partner, Chuck Brown.

MORTON

Yeah... good afternoon to you too, Carson. Nice to meet you Chuck. Not such a good afternoon for him, though.

CARSON

Enough of the small talk, what did you find out about our distinguished guest here?

MORTON

Well, I found out a couple of things. His prints came back from the lab, there was a match. Let me introduce you to Mr. Roy Harris Jr.

CARSON

Mr. Harris, good to meet you. Wish it were under better circumstances.

CHUCK

And what was the second thing,

doctor?

MORTON

Yes, yes, ..I was coming to that.
Very interesting case indeed.

Dr. Morton directs the detectives over to a large computer screen and brings up the record on Roy Harris Jr.

MORTON

My assistant, as well as myself were relatively certain your victim was killed from the impact with the windshield. A concussion and he bled out and so forth.

Dr. Morton brings up the lab results on the computer screen.

MORTON(CONT'D)

However when the lab results came back, we were in utter dismay. This man had a virtual laundry list of drugs in his system. I'm not talking about street drugs, gentleman.

Chuck has his blackberry out taking notes as the Doctor speaks. Carson just nods his head, with a look of confusion.

MORTON

We found traces of: aripiprazole, clozapine, lithium, carbamazepine, and astemizole which are used to treat some one who is bi-polar and schizophrenic. Also diltiazem which is for high blood pressure and cisapride which is used to treat symptoms of nighttime heartburn due to reflux disease.

Carson and Chuck look at the Doctor in dismay.

CHUCK

So Doc, imagine for one minute we didn't go to medical school. What the hell does all this mean?

MORTON

Number one, all these medications would have to had been prescribed by a doctor. Also no way in hell a doctor would give all these medications to one patient, all at the same time. This man was clearly over medicated by some one or by himself, I can't say which.

CARSON

So what are you saying Doc, that these medications killed him and not the collision?

MORTON

You are correct, Carson, the medications did indeed kill him. This man did not die from the crash... He died from a heart attack.

CHUCK

Are you shitting us? How, in God's name?

MORTON

Well certain drugs interact with each other and can have dire consequences. The mixing of drugs like diltiazem and cisapride with astemizole can cause the patient to go into cardiac arrest. This is what happened here.

CARSON

So hold up... hold up, let me get this straight. Crashing into a windshield at a hundred miles an hour is not what killed this man?

MORTON

Well, yes, but he would have died

anyway. But the heart attack is what caused him to crash his car. So gentleman, I think, what you have here is a murder. That's what my report will say. Cause of death is homicide.

CARSON

Well that's just great. We come over here on an attempted murder case and a homicide case drops right in our laps.

CHUCK

Yeah, boss, it's been one of those days huh?

CARSON

You've got that right, Chuckie.

MORTON

And let me throw this up for your consideration. Unless I'm way off base, I guarantee, and I hate to say this, there is a doctor involved in this sorted business. Only a doctor would know about drug interaction and be able to get the drugs needed to pull this off.

CHUCK

Yeah, I see your point, but who and why? Now, it seems this is a murder case and Roy Harris Jr. is the victim. Was he trying to kill Frank Desio or were these two events just a happenstance. Damn!

CARSON

Damn, is right. We have some work to do on this case, no doubt. Well thanks Dr. Morton, if you have any other interesting tidbits about this case give me a call.

He motions at Chuck, with that come on let's go, I'm tired look on his face.

CARSON

Well, I'm beat Chuck, we're gonna call it a day. I think we've done about all we can do on this today. Hey, my wife is making her famous pot roast tonight, with all the trimmings, you up for that, Chuck?

CHUCK

Are you kidding me? Show me the way.

INT. CARSON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Carson and Chuck enter the beautiful upper middle class home. It is stylishly decorated in direct contrast to Carson's persona. Carson's wife VERONICA calls to him from the kitchen. She is Afro-American, with shoulder length braids. She is very refined, attractive, slim and around mid-forties.

VERONICA

Is that you Carson?

CARSON

No, it's a serial killer, I'll be right with you, as soon as I sharpen my knife, just a minute. Yes, dear, 'tis I, your one and only Snuggles. I've brought company. My new partner, Chuck. He's white... and hungry, I hope that's okay?

Veronica comes into the living room to greet them, wiping her hands with a towel. She gives Carson a brief kiss on the cheek.

VERONICA

Sure, Snuggles, any partner of

your's is welcome anytime. We have plenty of roast, I'll set another place. Chuck, nice to meet you. Carson has told me almost nothing about you.

CHUCK

Nice to meet you Mrs. Carson. The boss has told me everything about you. But he didn't say how breathtakingly beautiful you were.

VERONICA

Oh Chuck, please call me Veronica.

CHUCK

Okay, nice to meet you, Veronica.

CARSON

I think I better keep an eye on you two.

VERONICA

Would you like a drink before dinner, Chuck?

CHUCK

Yes ma'm, I'll take a glass of sherry... if you have it.

VERONICA

But of course... and you Carson... your usual, Budweiser?

CARSON

Yes, dear... no glass.

INT. CARSON RESIDENCE-NIGHT

DINING ROOM

Veronica serves up a lavish feast. The table is decoratively set with candles, fine china, the whole nine.

The trio is seated at the table enjoying the roast dinner with the trimmings.

CHUCK

Veronica, this roast is delicious,
I sure appreciate the invite. I
don't get home cook meals very
often. I'm single, and I eat out. I
have to, only way I can survive.
I'd starve trying to eat my
cooking.

VERONICA

You're very welcome Chuck. You know
most people don't know, but Carson
is a exceptional cook... Isn't that
right, dear.

CARSON

(with a mouth full of
food)

Um... Um, if you say so. I never
did care for it much myself, but
thanks for the compliment anyway.
And no, I'm not cooking you
anything, so don't ask.

CHUCK

(smacking)

Yes, Veronica,... this is
delicious.

CARSON

You said that already.

CHUCK

Well it is.

CARSON

Don't talk with your mouth full...
No home training..

VERONICA

Thanks Chuck...Let the man enjoy
his food, Carson.

CARSON

Just hate someone smacking and
talking at my dinner table, that's

all.

VERONICA

Allright, allright, you made your point. You really like it, Chuck?

CHUCK

Yes, m'am. I sure do.

CARSON

Don't think this is going to be a habit. So you better eat up.

VERONICA

Shut up, Carson... Chuck can come over anytime he likes. Don't pay any attention to him. He's just old, and grumpy.

The trio finish up their meal, pretty much in silence.

INT. UPTOWN YUPPIE BAR - NIGHT

Same bar scene as before. Bill, Rick, and Fred are seated at their usual table. Again they are involved in a heated but guarded conversation.

FROM AN UNKNOWN POV- The camera scans the patrons drinking at the bar, momentarily stops on an Asian man around sixty years old. He lifts his right hand to drink displaying two fingers missing.

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - NIGHT

DEN

Maria is seated on the couch. She is reading a document. CLOSEUP- It is Franks's Insurance policy with Prudential for a million dollars. She looks to be in deep thought.

INT. CARSON RESIDENCE - NIGHT

The trio have concluded their meal and Chuck is preparing to leave the residence for the evening.

CHUCK

Thanks again for that fabulous meal, Veronica. Boss, I sure appreciate the invite.

They are talking as Chuck, Veronica and Carson are heading for the door.

VERONICA

You're very welcome, Chuck... Come back anytime. I'm making chicken cardon blue tomorrow night.

CARSON

Don't hold your breath for another invite.

VERONICA

Carson!

CARSON

Yeah, of course...you're welcome anytime, just like Veronica said. Now get out. In the morning, we're going to the Harris residence to get to the bottom of this mess. So you'd better get your beauty rest, son.

CHUCK

Okay, boss, see you in the morning. thanks again, Veronica, good night.

EXT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - DAY

Carson and Chuck stand on the porch of EMMA HARRIS, mother of Roy harris Jr.

Chuck lightly taps on the front door.

CARSON

Oh hell...act like you got a pair, son. We're the police... Knock with authority. Damn... I can't teach

you nothing.

CHUCK
Sorry boss... I...

CARSON
Here, let me show you , youngster.

Carson bangs loudly on the screen door. The wood door is open to let in some air. He is just about to knock again when a huge rotweiller bolts against the door, rattling it and barking loudly

CARSON
Jesus, Mother Mary of God!

Carson jumps back a couple of feet from the growling dog

CHUCK
Oh, Shittttt...

Chuck yells as he falls of the porch, on the ground.

CARSON
Boy, get back on this porch... why you're embarrassing me.

Chuck pulls himself up from the ground and brushes himself off. He rejoins Carson back on the porch.

About this time EMMA(60) Afro-American, with a rag on her hair, wearing a raggly house dress, shows up at the front door.

EMMA
Roco...Roco... what's all this fuss about, you mangy critter?

She sees Chuck and Carson on her front porch.

EMMA
Well... who are you two gentleman?
Can I help you with something?

CHUCK
M'am, we're with the San Diego Police Department. I'm Detective Brown and this is Detective Carson.

They both flash their detective shields.

EMMA

Well, come on in, boys.
Roco...Roco...

The dog is still barking and growling.

CARSON

Ma'm, you're going to have to put
your dog up.

EMMA

Oh, Roco? He wouldn't hurt a fly,
would you Roco?
(she says to the dog,
petting his head)

CARSON

M'am, it's not a fly we're worried
about, put the damn dog up!

EMMA

Oh, okay...Roco come on now. These
nice men don't have time to play
with you this morning... I'll get
you a nice treat, later on. C'mon
now.

Mrs. Harris finally gets the dog safely locked up in one of
the bedrooms.

INT. HARRIS RESIDENCE - DAY

LIVING ROOM

The house is old and ratty. The furniture is mismatched,
second hand junk.

She motions to Carson and Chuck to have a seat on the couch.

The couch is cluttered with a lot of newspapers, magazines and
other assorted stuff

EMMA

You boys, have a seat on that couch there. Just knock that stuff on the floor...I'll get it later. Would you like some coffee? I can make some... it's no trouble...it's instant but it's pretty good.

CARSON

No, m'am.

CHUCK

No thank you, m'am.

Emma slides up a wooden chair, from across the room, and places it right in front of where the detectives are seated on the couch. It creaks as she drags it across her wood floor.

EMMA

So what's this all about? I bet you found my car, didn't you. I bet it was my crazy son, who stoled it too wasn't it? That boy ain't never been any good. And since his ole Daddy passed... let me see was uh two months ago, he's done gone plum crazy.

Emma is leaning up in her chair and waving her hands about, as she tells her story.

EMMA(CONT'D)

Taking all them drugs, that doctor gave him... That boy ain't right, I tell you. But if it was him, who stole the car, I won't press charges, he is my son, but he ain't right.

Emma, bows her head and says sort of solemnly.

EMMA(CONT'D)

Sorry, I... I carry on sometime... I do... don't mean to.

CHUCK

M'am, m'am... Yes, we are here about your car in a way... but that's not the real reason. I can't think of any easy way to say it. Mrs. Harris your son Roy is dead. I'm sorry to have to tell you that.

Emma is now out of her chair, screaming and crying.

EMMA

Roy is dead... oh no...no, he can't be dead. You're lying to me, say you're lying. Not my baby...my baby. No that's not right. I just saw him yesterday, or was it the day before. What day is this?

CARSON

Tuesday, m'am.

Emma sits back in her chair and calms down somewhat.

EMMA

How did my boy die? His father is dead, now Junior is dead, what am I supposed to do?

CARSON

We understand this is hard for you... but we have a real mystery on our hands. We hope you can help us, if you feel up to it.

EMMA

Why yes, I can make it. I'm a tough old broad, but how can I help you?

CHUCK

Your son was driving your car yesterday and he ran over a man

named Frank Desio. Frank is in the hospital but it looks like he is going to pull through. Do you know if your son knew Mr. Desio?

EMMA

Frank Desio, of course he knew him. I've known him for years. He and my husband were in the Nam together back in 1969, I think it was. Frank was my husband's commanding officer. He used to come over to the house and visit with Roy sr. all the time.

CARSON

Can we speak to your husband... is he here.

EMMA

Not unless you can speak to the dead. I told you, he's dead. He was killed a couple of months ago in an accident at the shipyard. Very strange...but they said it was an accident. But I don't believe 'em. Roy never had a serious accident in twenty five years of working at that God forsaken place.

CHUCK

M'am, do you know of any reason why your son, would want to kill Mr. Desio?

EMMA

No, Junior liked Frank well enough... I guess. He used to come over to the house and talk.

Emma, looks down at her feet and seems sad suddenly.

EMMA

Both of them had bad dreams,

terrible thing that happened over there.

CARSON

What do you mean, Mrs. Harris?

Emma looks up from her feet and into Carson's eyes. She speaks quietly.

EMMA

Why over there in the Nam. Sometimes when they were talking, I'd ease drop on their conversation. They never knowed, though... I can be real sneaky when I want to.

Emma straightens up in the chair and speaks a little louder.

EMMACONT'D)

I heard them talking one night... they both was a crying and going on. They said they murdered some folks in a village one day. They had covered it up then, but now after forty years both of them was thinking about confessing, what they done.

Carson and Chuck look at each other wide eyed, almost in disbelief.

EMMA(CONT'D)

Frank said, he had killed five of his own men, to stop the marines from killing everyone in the village. He was at the point of losing it, he said... Roy said he had lived with the guilt for so many years, it had made him crazy. Both of them had almost made up their minds to confess.

CHUCK

Did they ever get a chance to confess?

EMMA (CONT'D)

No...no... shortly after that night, Roy was killed.

Emma lowers her head and starts to cry softly again.

Carson and Chuck are feeling uncomfortable on the couch, but still have a couple of questions, they need to ask. They continue.

Emma, takes a handkerchief out of her pocket and blows her nose.

CARSON

Mrs. Harris, just a couple more questions...Was your son under a doctor's care for anything?

EMMA

Yes, lord... he was seeing Dr. Riley... his shrink. Like I said that boy was crazy. They said he was manic depressed or something or 'nother and bipolar. I don't know what all that fancy doctor talk means... but all I know, he was nuts.

CHUCK

This Dr. Riley, who is he?

EMMA

Believe it or not, he served in the same outfit as Frank and Roy in Vietnam. They said he was the doc. That's how Junior ended up seeing that quack.

CHUCK

Do you have an address or a phone number for this Dr. Riley?

She goes back to the bedroom where the dog is being imprisoned.

EMMA(O.S.)

Roco... roco... get down... be a good boy. Mommy has to find something. I'll give you a treat later...okay?

She comes back out in a minute, holding a medicine bottle.

EMMACONT'D)

Here is one of the boy's medicine bottles... The address and phone number is on it.

Carson takes the bottle from Emma and gives a slight glance, puts it in his pocket.

CARSON

Thank you m'am...I think we have all we need right now from you. Again, sorry for your loss.

Carson pulls a card out of his pocket and hands it to Emma.

CARSON

If you think of anything else, give me a call... If you need anything.

CHUCK

Yes m'am, I'm sorry for your loss. Thank you. Goodbye now.

EXT. SANCHEZ RESIDENCE - DAY

Rick Sanchez walks slowly out of his house towards his car. He clicks the remote to turn off the alarm on his late model Ford. He whistles to himself as he strolls, like an individual without a care in the world.

A unidentified man is hiding in the bushes and eases up on Rick as he heads for his car.

The streets are deserted, there is not a soul around.

CLOSEUP-A HAND reaches up and puts a rag over Rick's mouth. Rick tries to yell and pull away, but because of surprise and

the power of his assailant, is unable to do so.

The unidentified man plunges a large hypodermic into Rick's neck. Rick falls to the pavement ,twitching and gasping for air.

The assailant is gone as quickly as he came, leaving Rick to die.

Rick's wife ANDREA, comes outside trying to catch him before he leaves and sees him lying on the pavement gasping for air.

ANDREA

Rick, Rick... what's wrong? Rick...

Rick is still gasping for air...

INT. BILL RILEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill is seated in his usual chair. Carson and Chuck are seated on the couch. They are engrossed in a heavy conversation.

BILL

So what's this all about..
detectives.

(Bill inquires, looking
back and forth between the
two for an answer.)

CHUCK

This is about one of your
patients... A Roy Harris Jr.

Bill rares back in his chair with a cocky attitude. He makes a gesture with his hands as he talks.

BILL

Gentleman... you know I can't
discuss any information about a
patient without their approval.

Chuck sort of half way laughs at Bill's statement.

CHUCK

Well, I don't think he'll mind...
since he's dead, Doc.

Bill quickly leans up in his chair, as if they just got his

undivided attention.

BILL

Junior, is dead?.. Oh my God, when?
What the hell happened?

Carson, clears his throat and quietly speaks to Bill.

CARSON

We were kinda hoping you could tell
us.

Bill, is shocked and shakes his head in disbelief.

BILL

I had no idea the man was dead...
How would I know?

CARSON

You were his doctor, right?

BILL

Yes... so what are you implying,
detective?

CHUCK

What we're getting at.. Doc... is
Junior was involved in a hit and
run car accident after he attempted
to kill Frank Desio. He
subsequently died, presumably from
his injuries. However, the coroner
ruled his death as homicide.

CARSON

What my partner is trying to say is
he had a heart attack induced by
the massive amount of drugs he was
taking.

Bill jumps up from his chair and is very upset from the
implied accusation, waving his hands.

BILL

And you two think I had something
to do with it... Are you fucking
shitting me?

Carson motions for Bill to sit down and chill out.

CARSON

Doc...Doc... just calm down for a minute. Do you know Frank Desio?

Bill calms himself and sits back down in his chair.

BILL

Sure, I know Frank... I know his wife Maria too. I'm his doctor as well. I visited him at the hospital yesterday evening as a matter of fact. So are you saying Junior is the one who ran over poor Frank. Oh my God, why would he do that?

CHUCK

What was Roy jr. being treated for and what medications were you prescribing for him?

Bill goes over to his desktop computer and brings up Roy Jr.'s file.

BILL

Junior was being treated for bipolar disorder and manic depression. He was taking lithium and astimezole. That was the only two medications I prescribed for him.

CARSON

And in your opinion, doctor... would the interaction of these two drugs cause a heart attack.

BILL

In my expert opinion, they would not... no. Now if he was taking other drugs I didn't know about...

I don't know.

Bill gets up from the computer chair and turns to face the detectives.

BILL(CONT'D)

Come to think of it, Junior was acting more sedated the last time I saw him. I didn't think anything of it at the time. But now..

CARSON

You see doc,.. we have a real mystery on our hands. We have a man that we thought had died from an accident who turns out died of a heart attack, which the coroner says was murder. And this individual was our only suspect in the attempted murder of your friend Frank Desio. You see where I'm going with this?

BILL

No I'm sure I don't detective.

CARSON

Oh, I think you do, doc.

CHUCK

I have a question for you doc. Do you have any idea why Junior would have \$5000 in his pocket when he died?

BILL

\$5000... Are you shitting me?

CARSON

No... we shit you not doc... And another strange thing... so you served in Vietnam with Junior's father and Frank Desio. Emma said

Frank and Roy sr. were fixing to spill the beans about those people you guys killed over there. What you got to say about that doc?

Bill is really pissed now.

BILL
Damn it, I told you I didn't know anything about this shit... We're done here. I'm through talking until my lawyer can be present. Good day gentleman.

CHUCK
If you..

BILL
I said good day!

Bill is on the phone talking to Maria, there is urgency in his voice

BILL
Yeah, they just left... Can you believe fucking Junior had the \$5000 in his pocket when he died.

MARIA(O.S)
Where the hell did he get \$5000.. Bill? What the fuck...

BILL
I gave the idiot money to buy a car, instead he kept it, and stoled his mother's car.

MARIA
I told you about messing around with junkies.

BILL
Well, he's dead at any rate.

MARIA
Just stick to the story... you don't know shit. They can't prove

anything.

BILL

Yeah... you're right... We better not talk for a while in case they're monitoring the phones. Take care of Frank...Talk to you when I can...bye...

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - DAY

Carson and Chuck are in Chuck's car heading to the police precinct.

CARSON

Damn son... we got a sum total of didlum shit on this case. Nobody knows anything.

CHUCK

Or nobody's saying boss. I think this Bill knows a hell of a lot more than he's saying...

CARSON

Yeah, that son of a bitch knows something... cocky bastard.

CHUCK

I can't stop thinking about the five grand Junior had in his pocket. If we could connect it to this Dr. Riley.

CARSON

Well.. you know what they say Chuck..cash in the hand tells no man..

CHUCK

I know, you're right... then there's the Vietnam angle..

CARSON

We can't prove any of it son... so we've got to lean on this doctor... follow his ass... put a tap on his phones.

CHUCK

Dump his records and see who he's been talking to...

CARSON

We'll get on that when we get back to the office... and also...

Carson's cell phone chirps, he grabs it out of pocket.

CARSON

Hello, Detective Carson...may I help you?

DR. MORTON(O.S.)

Yeah, Carson this is Dr. Morton. How the hell are you?

CARSON

I ain't doing worth a damn, if that answers your question.

DR. MORTON(O.S.)

Well I got something that might brighten your day... or maybe not.

CARSON

Get on with it Morton..

DR. MORTON(O.S.)

I've got one on the slab here that might be of interest to you. His name is Rick Sanchez. And just so happens he had business cards in his wallet from Frank Desio and Bill Riley...A coincidence you think?

CARSON

You know I don't believe in coincidences, Doc..

DR. MORTON(O.S.)

I know you don't... just started working on him. Why don't you and your partner hot foot it over here and take a look.

CARSON
Hell yeah... we'll be there asap.
Bye...

Carson motions at Chuck

CARSON
Come on son... we got business...
city morgue, step on it..

INT. CITY MORGUE - DAY

Dr. Morton has Rick Sanchez on the table, he is busy performing an autopsy.

Chuck and Carson enter the lab and walk over to the table where Dr. Morton is working.

CARSON
So what the hell was so important?

MORTON
Meet Rick Sanchez...

CARSON
How he hell you doing Mr.
Sanchez... Now what the hell is
this about, doc?

Dr. Morton produces an autophy report and refers to it as he speaks.

MORTON
You are not going to believe what
this guy died of... go on and try
and guess.

CARSON
We don't have time for this shit...
get on with it, damn it.

CHUCK

He's right doc, we are really very busy.

MORTON

He died of air embolism...

CARSON

What the hell does that mean...

MORTON

A very skilled individual shot him up with a large quantity of air.

CHUCK

Air...

MORTON

That's right my friend... caused an air bubble in his blood stream...killed him.

CARSON

Holy shit...

CHUCK

Damn...

MORTON

What tipped me off, his wife said she found him gasping for air...then he died...seemingly from natural causes. But in my examination... I noticed a small puncture wound on his neck... This was the only evidence of trauma I found on the body.

Chuck and Carson watch intently as Morton describes the cause of death.

MORTON(CONT'D)

I at first thought he might have been injected with some type of poison... but the tox screen came back negative for any known

poisons.

CARSON

This is all very interesting doc...
but get on to the point.

MORTON

Very well... my friend. Just on a
hunch I remembered a case where a
doctor had killed his wife with an
injection of air and almost
succeeded. So when I opened him up
I did so in water... When I
disected his veins, I found the air
bubble.

CARSON

I take doc that not just anybody
could do what you're describing?

MORTON

You are correct in that assumption.
Only a trained person... a doctor
or a nurse could probably hit the
artery in the neck like was done
here.

CHUCK

So we are looking at another murder
here?

MORTON

Correct again my young friend.

Dr. Morton covers the body with a sheet.

Morton pulls some items out of a manila envelope.

MORTON(CONT'D)

This is the wallet that was found
on the body. He was on his way to
work. Murderer caught him on his

way out to his car... wife found
him a minute or two later...
gasping for air in his driveway...
called 911.

Carson, takes the wallet, opens it and examines it's contents.

CARSON

I see the business cards you
referred to doc. Frank Desio, Real
Estate Broker and Bill Riley.

Carson hands the wallet over to Chuck.

CHUCK

He has a driver's license... Chula
Vista... L street.

CARSON

What the hell you waiting on
boy...let's get over there and talk
to Mrs Sanchez. Doc, we'll see you
later.

INT. MERCY HOSPITAL FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Maria is siting by the bed watching Frank who is sleeping
soundly.

She gets up and leaves the room, heads to get a snack and some
coffee.

TIGHT ON A HAND with a hypodermic needle. The needle plunges
deep into Frank's left arm.

CLOSE-UP FRANK'S FACE- He wakes up as if he feels the needle.

He points a finger at the intruder.

FRANK

You....

Then he passes out.

INT. SANCHEZ HOME - DAY

Chuck and Carson sit on the couch in the Sanchez living room.

Typical middle class home and living room, couch, chair
,lamps, coffee table and pictures of the family on the wall
and the mantle.

ANDREA is middle age, attractive Latino woman. She sits across
from them in a love seat, wipes her eyes with a tissue, blows
her nose.

ANDREA

Sorry...detectives. Rick's death
was just so sudden.

CHUCK

We understand...mam, sorry for your
loss.

CARSON

Yes m'am ...we surely are sorry.

Carson pulls out his pad, Chuck his blackberry.

CHUCK

M'am... do you feel up to telling
us what happened?

ANDREA

Yes...uh... I'll try...

Andrea wipes her eyes again with the tissue, then places it in
her lap.

ANDREA

Rick had already walked out the
door... I realized he'd forgotten
his briefcase. So I ran to the door
in hope of catching him before he
left.

CARSON

You then found him on the driveway,
gasping for air... you called 911.

ANDREA

Yes... I tried to talk to Rick...
but he couldn't speak.

CARSON

What did the paramedics say when
they arrived?

ANDREA

They said it looked like a heart
attack. They put him in the
ambulance and we went to the
hospital. Rick died before we made
it...

Andrea begins to cry again. Pulls a fresh tissue out of the
box and wipes her eyes and nose.

CHUCK

Did you see anybody hanging around
before or after your husband's
death.. any strange cars or
anything.

ANDREA

No... no one... Do you mean you
think someone killed Rick? Oh my
God..

CARSON

Yeah, according to the autopsy your
husband was murdered.

ANDREA

Mary Mother of God...

(she crosses herself)

Who would want to kill Rick? He
never did nothing to anyone. He had
many friends... they all loved him.

CHUCK

Did Rick know Frank Desio or Bill Riley?

ANDREA

Yes... of course... they were in the Nam together.

Andrea goes over to the mantle and takes a picture off of it. It is an old and faded picture of a marine corps unit.

ANDREA

See here's Frank... right here...
(pointing at the marine on the picture)
And Bill... and Rick... and their other friend Fred.

She puts the picture down on the coffee table, she looks down at it, sadly. She rubs the picture as if she's carressing her late departed husband.

CARSON

Did you know, a couple of days ago someone tried to kill Frank? He's in the hospital?

ANDREA

Yes... Rick told me... poor dear Frank. He's a good man... Just like my Rick was.

CHUCK

Do you know the last time your husband spoke to Dr. Riley.

ANDREA

No more than a day or so... they are close friends. Rick always hang out with Bill. They talk about Vietnam things, you know.

CHUCK

Well Mrs. Sanchez... that will be

enough for right now.

CARSON

Yes m'am. I think we have all we need. Again sorry for your loss.

Carson reaches in his pocket and produces a card.

CARSON

If you can think of anything that you think might help us, give me a call.

INT. MERCY HOSPITAL - FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Frank wakes up momentarily, palpitating, labored breathing, struggles to push the call button to summon the nurse to his aid. He finally reaches the button, pushes it and passes back out.

The nurse hurries to Frank's side, she recognizes the symptoms of a possible drug overdose.

She pages the doctor on call.

The doctor rushes in and sees Frank is not breathing. They tube and shock him. The normal life saving procedures.

INT. MERCY HOSPITAL - DAY

ELEVATOR

An Asian man around sixty years old rides silently on the elevator. He puts his right hand on the elevator rail. He is missing his little and ring fingers.

INT. MERCY HOSPITAL - SNACK MACHINE - DAY

Maria pulls a candy bar from the snack machine in a waiting room.

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - DAY

Carson and Chuck ride down the street for a minute in silence, Chuck rakes his hand through his hair, blows out a breath.

CHUCK

Damn it...seems the more we learn about this case... the less we know.

CARSON

Yeah, you said that right Chuck. We still got nothing. But to me, everything we do have seems to point to the good doctor.

CHUCK

But we still have no way to prove he had anything to do with either murder.

CARSON

Call in my gut... call it years of experience... call it what ever you like. This Riley is in this mess up to his eyeteeth.

CHUCK

Let's get back to the office and dump his phone calls... see what kind of dirt we can dig up.

CARSON

You're driving...

INT. MERCY HOSPITAL - FRANK'S ROOM - DAY

Frank is in his hospital bed, with oxygen mask over his face, tubes stuck in both arms and hooked up to heart monitor.

Frank pulls the mask off of his face, he speaks in a whisper.

FRANK

I saw... I saw him

NURSE

Mr. Desio... don't try to speak.. you must put the mask back on.

She tries to put it back on but Frank refuses.

FRANK

There was a Vietnamese
man...standing over me...

NURSE

Mr. Desio...try and get some rest..

INT.MERCY HOSPITAL-DAY

Maria enters Frank's hospital room shocked at the scene. She screams.

MARIA

Frank..Frank... Oh my God...What
happened.

The nurse grabs Maria, who is reeling.

NURSE

He had a bad reaction to his pain
medication..Mrs. Desio..he'll be
fine.

She sits Maria down in a chair next to Frank's bed.

MARIA

Frank..I'm here sweetheart.

INT.FRED WILLIAM'S CAR-DAY

FRED WILLIAMS is driving down the interstate listening to
classic rock on the radio, singing along.

EXT. FRED'S CAR - DAY

TIGHT ON: Bomb under the bottom the car with a timer. The
timer shows: 5.4.3.2.1.

INT. FRED'S CAR - SECONDS LATER - DAY

Fred continues listening to rock music.

EXT. FRED'S CAR - SECONDS LATER - DAY

The bomb explodes, blowing pieces all over the interstate. The

car flips over, lands on it's side a hundred yards down the road.

The car burns, flames and smoke belch out. Other cars smash into the wreckage and crash into each other. There is a massive multiple vehicle pileup.

INT. POLICE OFFICE - DAY

Chuck and Carson enter the detective's office. Typical office with computers on a number of desks, telephones, other detectives walking around, making phone calls.

The detectives sit down at their desks.

Chuck gets on his computer, brings up phone records, prints out several documents. Carson pulls out his note pad from his back pocket, he thumbs through it.

The phone on Carson's desk rings, he picks up.

CARSON

Carson... may I help you?

DR.MORTON(O.S.)

Yeah, this is Morton... how the hell are you?

CARSON

I'm busy as a one legged man in a butt kicking contest...what you want Morton?

MORTON

Stop the presses... you're gonna want to hear this. I got another one on the slab, I think might interest you. Name is Fred Williams. He's another one of the Bill Riley fan club.

CARSON

How do you know that?

MORTON

Cause he was driving Riley's car...
got himself blown to hell. He's
nothing but a crispy critter here
on my table...but it's him...dental
records confirmed it for sure.

CARSON

Damn this shit just keeps getting
better and better.

Carson reaches in his desk drawer, pulls out an ink pen

CARSON

Give me this guy's address.

Carson writes the address down on his note pad.

CARSON

Thanks Doc... I don't know how this
helps me... but I'll add it to the
list.

Carson hangs up the phone, whirls around in his chair to tell
Chuck.

CARSON

Well Chuck, we got another
one...Fred Williams... name ring a
bell?

Chuck searches through his printout, finds the name and
thumps the paper

CHUCK

Yeah... hell yeah. there he is..

Chuck searches further and finds several entries

CHUCK

In fact he's on the list several
times...definitely a friend of the
Doc's.

Carson refers to his note pad.

CARSON
How about Rick Sanchez...Maria
Desio?

Chuck checks the printout again, running his fingers down the columns.

CHUCK
Yeah... I see a butt load of calls to Rick Sanchez. And look at all these calls to Maria. All in the last couple of days since her husband has been in the hospital. Wholly shit!

CARSON
How about Maria...Did she make any other interesting phone calls?

Chuck rifles through the pages and finds the pages for the Desio residence.

CHUCK
Um...no...um. Wait a minute...this is interesting...She made several calls to the Prudential Insurance Company...Chula Vista number... in the last few days.

CARSON
Give them a call and see how much insurance Frank has with the company. I've got a feeling.

Chuck dials the number, tapping his ink pen on his desk as they put him on hold.

INT.POLICE OFFICE-DAY

Chuck finally finishes his call, waves at Carson who is over at the coffee machine making him a cup.

Carson crosses the room and sits back down in his chair.

CHUCK

I got it boss. Oh this is good.
Frank Desio has a million dollar
policy...pays double for accidental
death.

CARSON

Whoa Nellie... we got something
now. Let's get over to Riley's
office and rattle his cage.

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill is in conference with a patient.

He is in his usual chair, his patient is on the couch.

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - LOBBY- DAY

The detectives enter the lobby, walk across the room to the
desk where the RECEPTIONIST is working at her computer.

CARSON

We need to see the Doc... right
now.

RECEPTIONIST

He's with as patient...

They flash their shields almost in unison, they wave their
hands in a dismissive fashion.

CHUCK

We need to see him now!

RECEPTIONIST

Gentleman... He's...

Chuck and Carson push their way by the receptionist and barge
into Bill's office...

INT. BILL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bill's jumps up waving his hands in the air in protest of the

detectives intrusion.

BILL

You can't come in here...I'm in the middle of a session.

CARSON

Correction... you were in a session.

Pointing at the patient sitting on the couch in dismay.

CARSON

You'll have to leave... don't worry he'll reschedule. That's if we don't arrest his ass today.

The patient flees quickly out of the office door in a huff.

Bill is beside himself, he slams the door the detectives left open in a rage.

BILL

What the hell do you think your doing?

CARSON

Sit down...we're asking the questions here.

CHUCK

That's right... and we've got a butt load of them.

Bill sits down in his chair, with a pissed off look on his face, rakes his hand through his hair.

BILL

Okay, what's this all about. I've told you everything I know.

CHUCK

We know you killed Roy Harris Jr. and we know why...But why did you blow up Fred... and why did you kill Rick...that's what we can't figure out.

BILL

What...what in the hell are you talking about. I didn't kill anyone. I'm a doctor for Christ's sake.

(a long beat)

Wait a minute... Rick and Fred are dead...oh my God, I didn't know.

Bill shakes his head and puts his hands over his face.

BILL(CONT'D)

I know you don't think I had anything to do with it.

CHUCK

We know all about Vietnam, doc. They were going to NCIS... and you weren't having that. You had way too much to lose.

CARSON

We know about your girlfriend too.

BILL

Girl friend...what girl friend?

CHUCK

Your girl friend Maria. We know all about your plan to kill Frank and collect on his million dollar life insurance policy.

Carson is up waving his hands and pointing at Bill as he speaks.

CARSON

You might as well go ahead and confess... save us all a lot of time and trouble.

BILL

Oh...my...God. You guys have a hell of an imagination. You need help, I might could fit you in...it's not cheap...maybe your insurance would cover it.

Bill stands up and motions towards the door.

BILL(CONT'D)
Get the hell out of my
office...this conversation is over
gentleman.

Bill reaches in the top drawer of his desk and pulls out a
business card.

BILL(CONT'D)
Talk to my lawyer if you want to
talk
(Bill hands Carson the
card)
I'm through talking to you guys.
Goodnight... shut the door on the
way out.

CHUCK
We'll do that...believe me... we're
only getting started.

BILL
Bye... see you...

Bill waves to the detectives as they leave his office.

He has a smirk on his face, but lets out a sigh of relief as
they leave the room.

EXT. BILL'S OFFICE PARKING LOT - DAY

Bill exits his office building, looks both ways in an attempt
to spot anyone who might be following him.

He heads out to his car in the now almost empty parking lot.

He unlocks his car door, opens it and get in...

INT. BILL'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Bill puts the key in the ignition, adjusts his rear view
mirror, catches a quick glimpse of a figure in the back seat.

POV THROUGH BACK WINDSHIELD...

VIEW FROM THE REAR... a man with a pistol with silencer puts two rounds in Bill's head.

EXT. OFFICE PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

The man gets into a black Mercedes and drives out of the lot.

INT. POLICE DETECTIVES OFFICE - DAY

The detectives sit at their desks in the their office.

Chuck is busy pecking on his computer keys, while Carson is thumbing through his note pad and scribbling frantically on a piece of scratch paper.

CARSON

Damn Chuck... we got nothing on this thing... nothing but a lot of dead bodies and no answers.

CHUCK

Yeah, you're right... we got nada...zippo. I still like Riley ...but we're missing one little thing... evidence.

Chuck grabs the receiver of the telephone sitting on Carson's desk.

CHUCK

Could I speak to Mr. allen please...

(long beat)

Yeah, Mr. Allen this is Detective Brown...SDPD. I was calling about one of your clients... Dr. Bill Riley.

MR. ALLEN(O.S.)

Dr. Riley? I guess you haven't heard... He was shot and killed yesterday evening. Damn I thought you guys would know that.

CHUCK

Damn...I guess that's that. Thanks,
Mr. Allen.

Chuck jumps up and slams the phone down on the hook, rattling the desk.

Carson looks at Chuck with a puzzled look.

CARSON

Damn son... what the hell's wrong
with you?

CHUCK

You ain't gonna believe this...Our
one and only suspect was shot and
killed last night...You'd think
someone would bother to tell us
about it.

Carson leans forward in his chair, slams his fist on the desk,
knocking the pictures off of his desk.

CARSON

Damn it...we had next to nothing...
now we got nothing

CHUCK

Well at least we've still got Maria
Desio. I don't think she knows
anything but... we got nothing to
lose.

Carson reaches in his desk drawer and pulls out his keys.

CARSON

Let's go...I'm driving.

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

Chuck and Carson sit on the couch in the Desio living room.

Maria paces back and forth, obviously scared and angry.

CARSON

We know you're involved in all this

Maria... You know a hell of a lot more than you're saying. We can talk here or at our house... your choice.

MARIA

I told you before... I'm done talking... I want my lawyer.

CHUCK

Yeah...oh by the way.. .your boy friend's dead.

MARIA

What the hell sre you talking about? I don't have a boy friend.

Chuck stands up and motions for Maria to sit down and sits back down.

CARSON

We're talking about Bill Riley. that boyfriend. Somebody put two bullets in his head last night.

Maria starts to cry softly, puts her head in her hands, looks up shocked

MARIA

Bill is dead... my God...I didn't know... Oh my God Bill ,what did you get yourself into?

CARSON

You know... you could be next... you need to tell us everything... and now.

MARIA

I told you.. I don't know anything.

(a long beat)

Oh shit... Frank swears he saw a Vietnamese man standing over him yesterday...said he tried to kill him. The doctor said he had a reaction to his pain medication.

CARSON

Are you sure he wasn't just
imagining it Maria?

MARIA

No...Frank swears he saw him...he
tried to kill him. Stuck him with a
hypodermic needle... then Frank
passed out.

CHUCK

This Vietnamese man... did Frank
know him?

MARIA

That's the bizarre thing. He swears
it was the man he had tortured in
the village in Vietnam... forty
years ago..

CARSON

There's no way...

MARIA

Frank said he had a huge scar on
his cheek...he was missing two
fingers on his right hand..about
the right age. Frank swears it was
him.

CARSON

Damn... I believe him for some
reason. It's the only thing I've
heard yet on this case that made
any sense.

CHUCK

I think you're right.. we were way
off

MARIA

I suggest you go and talk to Frank.
I told you I don't know shit. All I

know is Frank has had nightmares about that day for years. I didn't know he tortured anyone... but it was war

Carson gets up. He chews on the butt of an unlit cigar.

He motions to Chuck, pointing at Maria.

CARSON

Okay... little lady... we'll go and talk to your husband. But remember...we've got our eyes on you.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

The detectives sit in chairs in the hospital room next to Frank's bed.

Frank is heavily medicated, he has tubes running out of his arms, he is hooked up to a heart monitor.

FRANK

I swear... I saw that mother fucker... it was him... the Vietnamese guy we tied to the fence. I cut off two of his fingers. He had a big scar on his face... He was one tough son of a bitch.

CHUCK

Where did you see him Frank?

Frank points his finger at a spot right next to his hospital bed.

FRANK

I saw him right there...He had a hypodermic needle in his hand...He injected me with something. I passed out... They say I had a bad reaction to my pain medication. That's bull shit... That son of bitch tried to kill me.

CARSON

Did anybody else see him?

FRANK

No... I was alone... but I swear
for god... I saw him.

Carson and Chuck look at each other like they're not sure
what to believe.

CARSON

Do you know where we can find this
man?

FRANK

How the hell would I know...

CHUCK

We'll ask around the hospital.
Surely someone would remember
seeing a man with such a bizarre
appearance.

CARSON

We need to find him. If he killed
Rick, Fred and Bill I'm sure he'll
be back to try to finish you off.

FRANK

Oh God... they're all dead. I knew
this day would come. Delayed
justice will not be denied. He's
finally come for us... I dreamed
about it... judgement day..

CARSON

We believe you Frank. We're going
to put a cop outside your door 24
hours a day. We'll be watching the
hospital. Don't worry we'll catch
this guy.

INT. BEN NYUEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

BEN NYUEN sits on his couch, he cleans his gun.

There is a chart on the wall with pictures of marines. All of them are X'd out except one...Frank Desio...

INT. BEDROOM OF DESIO RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Maria is in the bedroom packing her clothes into two large suitcases.

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - DAY

Maria carries her bags into the living room and places them in the middle of floor.

CLOSE ON ... bags sitting on the floor.

Maria grabs the bags carries them to the door, puts them down and opens the front door.

TIGHT ON MARIA'S FACE...A single tear streams down her face.

INT. FRANK'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

Maria is in Frank's room sitting in the chair next to Frank's bed.

MARIA

I... I know it's bad timing... but I'm leaving you Frank. I'll send for the rest of my things. I'll be at my sister's in Phoenix. I'm sorry we just don't work anymore

FRANK

Maria...please don't go...we can work this out. At least stay until I get out of the hospital.

MARIA

No...no... Frank. I've got to go...I'll send you the divorce papers.

With a tear rolling down her cheek she leaves Frank's hospital room.

Frank waits until she leaves the room and sheds a tear as well

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - TWO MONTHS LATER - DAY

Franks walks across his large eat-in kitchen.

He has a walking cast on his leg and walks with a cane.

Jennifer is sitting at the breakfast bar, drinking a large cup of coffee.

Franks gives Jennifer a big kiss and a good morning hug.

FRANK

Good morning Jennifer...is there some more coffee?

Jennifer points over at the coffee pot, that is full of piping hot brew.

JENNIFER

You know it ..baby..

Jennifer gets up and gives Frank another kiss and hug.

FRANK

God... it's good having you here Jennifer. I hate to say it... but I'm so happy to be rid of Maria...that bitch was really dragging me down.

Frank goes over to the kitchen window and peaks out of the curtains.

FRANK

I see our friends are still with us. I guess I should be happy, but

I'm getting tired of living like this.

JENNIFER

Oh... it's not so bad. Try living my life sometimes. Buster has really gotten intolerable

FRANK

When you gonna leave that asshole?
(giving Jennifer a hug)
Come live with me.

JENNIFER

It's not that easy Frank... it's complicated.

FRANK

Well...uncomplicate it.

JENNIFER

You don't know Buster... I'm scared shitless of him...and you should be too.

FRANK

Screw Buster... he better be afraid of me. I've got the law outside of my door 24 hours a day.

JENNIFER

Okay,okay... I'll tell him today. I'm leaving him...Damn just saying it out loud scares the hell out of me.

Jennifer goes to the window and looks out at the officers sitting the car outside of the house.

JENNIFER

Maybe I could get them to go with me.

Jennifer finishes up her cup of coffee and puts it in the sink.

JENNIFER

I've got to go baby... Someone has to go do some work around here.

She gives Frank a goodbye hug and kiss, walks out of the front door.

INT. JENNIFER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Jennifer enters her apartment to find Buster in his usual spot on the couch, drinking beer and watching a ballgame on T.V.

BUSTER

Get me another beer... and fix me something to eat.

Jennifer walks across the apartment and slams her purse down on the kitchen table.

JENNIFER

Fuck you Buster...get your own damn beer. You sit your happy ass around here all day... and don't do shit. Could I sit down for a minute?

BUSTER

I said get me a fucking beer bitch.

Buster gets up off the couch and confronts Jennifer, pushing her.

BUSTER

And where the hell were you last night?

JENNIFER

I told you my mom's sick... I stayed with her last night.

Buster takes an empty beer bottle and throws it up against the wall.

It hits with a loud crash, shards of glass fly everywhere.

BUSTER

You're a lying sack of shit. You were with that mother fucker Frank...Don't fucking lie bitch... I told you I'd kill him and you too... I swear to God..

JENNIFER

You know what... you're right Buster... I was with Frank. We fucked all night...He was good too... better than you ever were, you limp dick mother fucker.

Buster picks up another beer bottle and bashes Jennifer in the head.

She falls to the floor, blood gushing from the wound.

BUSTER

Limp dick...huh... I'll show you who the man is...

Buster rustles through the cabinet in the kitchen and finds his 357 magnum...loads it up...steps over Jennifer.

He heads out the front door not even bothering to close it.

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - DAY

Chuck and Carson are on a stakeout watching the Desio residence.

Chuck is messing with his pda, Carson is eating a donut and drinking a cup of coffee.

CHUCK

(looking at his watch)
Damn... it's only five o'clock..
this shift is dragging big time.

Carson, stretching finishes up a donut and the rest of his coffee, tosses the cup in an empty bag, throws it in the back seat.

CARSON

You said that right son... I'm thinking about pulling the plug on this whole operation. Two months and nothing. This guy's not gonna show... I think we scared him off.

CHUCK

Or... he's just waiting for us to leave then he'll show up.

CARSON

That's true, but we can't keep this up forever... it's got to end sometime..

CHUCK

Let's give...

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - DAY

POV THROUGH THE DRIVER'S SIDE WINDOW...

An unknown individual is pounding at Frank's door.

EXT. DESIO RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Buster is at the door yelling for Frank, he holds the 357 in his right hand.

BUSTER

Open this fucking door Frank... I know you're in there.

INT. CHUCK'S CAR - AT THE SAME TIME - DAY

CHUCK

Holy shit...

CARSON

What the fuck....

Carson and Chuck bail out of the car...

EXT. STREET ACROSS FROM FRANK'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

CARSON

Police officers...drop the gun.
Drop it...do it now.

EXT. DESIO RESIDENCE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Buster whirls around and points the gun at the two detectives.

Carson and Chuck open fire on Buster still on Frank's porch.

Buster's gun falls to the concrete with a thud.

He falls in a heap on the ground, blood oozing out of his wounds and mouth.

Chuck runs over and kicks Buster's gun out of his reach, bends down and checks his pulse. Buster is dead.

INT. DESIO RESIDENCE - AT THE SAME TIME - DAY

Ben Nyuen has entered the house during the confusion at the door.

Franks has been watching the scene out of his front window when suddenly he is aware of the presence of the intruder.

Nyuen is pointing a gun at Frank and motions him away from the window.

NYUEN

We meet at last Lt.Desio...I
dreamed of his day for forty
years... Vengeance is sweet and
justice delayed is not justice
denied.

Frank holds his hands in the air totally shocked and sits down in a chair in the living room.

FRANK

I knew this day would come...I'm so
happy to finally be free of that
terrible day.

NYUEN

It took me all these years... I had
to leave my homeland and come to

America... But I made a vow to my
 dying wife, I would find all the
 murderers and bring them to
 justice... You are the last one...
 you don't die easy...LT.

Frank starts to get get up but Nyuen motions for him to stay
 seated.

NYUEN

I know you stopped your men from
 killing everyone... for that I
 thank you. But you were the
 leader...you were responsible.I
 bore your mark everyday of my life
 since then.

Nyuen holds up his right hand displaying the missing fingers
 and points to the scar on his face.

NYUEN

I regret having to kill you .. but
 I took a vow... surely you
 understand.

Frank looks down at his feet, a tear rolls down his face.

FRANK

I understand... I am ready to
 accept my punishment.

Nyuen motions for Frank to stand up.

NYUEN

I will make it fast...You deserve
 to die like a soldier.

Nyuen raises his gun to carry out the sentence.

Carson and Chuck suddenly burst through the front door shocked
 by the scene that is transpiring.

Seeing the gun in Nyuen's hand they immediately fire killing
 him.

CLOSE ON body of Nyuen laying bleeding on the living room floor.

FADE OUT:

INT. COURT MARTIAL HEARING ROOM - ONE MONTH LATER - DAY

Frank stands in front of the court martial participants, dressed in his dress blues, high and tight hair cut. A COLONEL presides over the proceedings.

COLONEL

Having weighed all the facts on the event that transpired on 10Aug1969.. we exonerate 2nd Lt. Frank Desio in any wrong doing on the events that took place on or about that day. You are free to go..

INT. OUTSIDE OF COURTROOM - DAY

Frank pushes the door and leaves out of the coutroom to find Jennifer waiting for him.

She gives him a hug amd a kiss

FRANK

(looking relieved)
Let's go home

They walk out arm and arm...

FADE OUT:

THE END

