

Homicide Hotline

by

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FADE IN:

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT- LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JOEL(24) sits on his couch in the middle of a filthy, disheveled apartment with a cell phone to his ear. He is a skinny man with short, blonde hair and pale skin.

JOEL

Oh ha ha...Yeah, real cleaver asshole! Why don't you go fuck yourself!

Joel SLAMS the phone on the table and kicks his feet up. The front door opens. Two men holding Chinese takeout enter the apartment.

MORGAN(23) is a tall, lean man with tall, dark hair and chiseled features. He is followed by EZRA(19), a well dressed man with an average build and light, wavy hair.

JOEL

About fuckin' time.

Joel leaps over the couch and joins the them at the table. The men tear open the boxes like savages as Ezra fetches plates. Joel shovels food onto his plate.

JOEL (CONT'D)

(to Morgan)

You! Another God damned call.

EZRA

Yeah? How'd this one go?

JOEL

"Oh, is this for real?! Cause I'm thinkin' of shoving a chainsaw up my bosses ass! Ha-Ha-Ha!"
(stuffs his mouth)
...Fuckin' pissin' me off.

Joel holds his chopstick to Morgan like a knife.

JOEL (CONT'D)

You better take that ad down.

MORGAN

Not yet. I'm still expecting a call.

JOEL

Wha-

DEREK(22) barrels into the apartment with a box of beer. He is a large man with a shaved head and baggy clothes.

DEREK

Time to get DRUNK!

He places the beer in the fridge, grabs four and places them in front of everyone at the table. Ezra waves his hand.

EZRA

I'm actually good tonight, thanks.

DEREK

What tha fuck?! Take the beer.

JOEL

Hey. We're gonna need him sober if he's gonna towing your fat tits back home.

Derek scolds Joel as he puts the beer back in the fridge.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

A car is parked in a lot across the street from an apartment building. The neighborhood is poor with plenty of rundown buildings and old, broken -down cars.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

BENJAMIN(36) sits in the car with a bottle of bourbon in his lap. He is a large man dressed in corporate casual with a beard and receding hairline.

He takes a drink then sets it on his lap by a black pistol. His eyes are locked on a lit, second floor window.

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The crew plays cards at the table. Dozens of empty beer bottles stack across the table and counter. Derek deals out the cards, knocking over some empty beer bottles.

JOEL

Oh! Party foul. Another shot for you, you fat bastard.

DEREK

(slurring)

Shit.

Joel pours a shot and hands it to Derek. Derek scolds the shot before pouring it down his throat.

MORGAN

How many is that?

JOEL

Like eleven.

(to Derek)

All that blubber aint soakin' up shit, eh Derek?

The group chuckles as Derek shakes his head.

EZRA

So how many calls did you get today, Joel?

JOEL

Too many to count. Great fuckin' prank, Morgan.

Joel smiles and cheers Morgan before bringing his beer to his lips. Morgan takes the deck of cards.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Dick.

MORGAN

You kept complaining that no one ever called you. Hear from anyone interesting?

JOEL

You mean besides the chainsaw-up-the-ass story? No.

Derek nearly spits his beer out as he laughs.

EZRA

I can only imagine the look on that coroner's face.

MORGAN

Or the proctologist if he's lucky-
(squinting)
Or unlucky.

Joel slaps down his cards and takes another drink.

JOEL

No, just that uptight bitch Morgan and I talked to like three days ago. Remember that?

MORGAN

How can I forget.
(to Ezra)
She was talking about a homicide suicide but we talked her down to just the suicide.

EZRA

Yeah right.

Morgan and Joel look at one another and smile inconspicuously. Morgan deals out the cards.

JOEL (CONT'D)

Anyways, I'm gonna have to change my number. Thanks Morgan.

EZRA

So how do you answer your calls
anyway?

JOEL

You wanna know?..

Joel straightens up and releases a thunderous burp. The boys chuckle and nod. Morgan rolls his eyes.

JOEL

Hello, this is Candydick Dennis
with Homicide Hotline. Tell me
about-

Joel's phone RINGS.

JOEL

Mother fucker!

EZRA

Now's your chance Candydick.

Joel groans as he stumbles to the living room. He grabs the phone and returns to the table.

EZRA (CONT'D)

If you're gonna change you number
tomorrow, we might as well hear a
few more stories.

Joel flips open the phone, puts it on speaker and places it in the middle of the table. He clears his throat.

JOEL

(softly)

Hello, you've reached the Homicide
Hotline. My name is-
(looks at beer bottle)
Dubweiser. Tell me about yourself.

Joel shuffles the deck and deals out the cards.

MAN (O.S.)

Eight years! We've been married
eight years and she does this to
me!

Joel points his finger at his head and "pulls" the trigger, rolling his eyes to the back of his head and sticking out his tongue. He smiles and tosses away two cards.

JOEL

What'd she do?

Morgan fixes his sight on the phone. Ezra looks at Morgan's face down cards and nudges him but Morgan ignores him.

MAN (O.S.)
She's...fucking some guy.

JOEL
I sorry to hear that.

Joel takes a drink while the throwing four of a kind jacks down on the table, flipping off the group. Ezra mouths "fuck you" and collects the cards.

JOEL
Well here at Homicide Hotline, we like our callers to...walk us through their "murder". So why don't you do that for me.

Ezra deals out the cards.

MAN (O.S.)
Well...first I'd get out of my car. Walk across the street and into the apartment building. Go up to the second floor and to the second to last door on the right.

Morgan's eyebrow raises.

MAN (CONT'D O.S.)
I'd enter the apartment then shoot my wife and the man she's fuckin'.

Joel puts his cards down and stares at the phone.

JOEL
That's really specific uh...what's your name?

MAN (O.S.)
Steven.

JOEL
Steven. Is all this...is your wife cheating on you right now?

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin starts crying as he hunches over the steering wheel, strings of spit and mucus dangling from his mouth.

BENJAMIN
I saw them just now. Across the street in his apartment before...

He lets out a furious yell, banging his fist into the steering wheel. Tears roll down his cheeks.

BENJAMIN
We have a daughter. And-

JOEL (O.S.)
One second Benjamin.

BENJAMIN
Fucking whore!

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Joel covers the phone and looks to Morgan with a grin.

JOEL (CONT'D)
Sounds real enough.

The rest of the group looks to Morgan. He corrects his throat with a crack of a smile.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin takes another drink as he holds the phone. He breathes heavily as he shuffles around in his seat. Benjamin looks up at the lit window.

MORGAN (O.S.)
Hello Steven, my name is Kaleb. I
don't know how serious you are-

Benjamin takes the revolver and holds the gun to the mouthpiece. He pulls back the hammer. A hard CLINK.

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

The apartment is silent as the guys stare at Morgan. Morgan stands at the table with a smirk across his face. Ezra looks on nervously as Morgan leans forward.

MORGAN
How old's you daughter if you don't
mind my asking.

BENJAMIN (O.S.)
I do.

Morgan stands and heads for the kitchen counter.

MORGAN
Well eight years of faithful
devotion, a daughter and here we
are, Steve.

Morgan retrieves a bottle of vodka along with the shot glass. He glances out the window for a moment, smashes a scurrying cockroach with the bottle then returns.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
How long has she been cheating?

Silence. Morgan pours his shots.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Steve?

BENJAMIN (O.S.)

Two months...at least.

MORGAN

Wow.

Morgan slams back the shots. He grabs his pack of cigarettes and lights one up.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

So let me tell you why you called.

(exhales smoke)

You've resorted to an anonymous conversation with a stranger in hopes of being talked out of killing your wife and her lover or-

(looks at Ezra)

Perhaps to be talked INTO it?

Morgan exhales the smoke. Ezra shoots a wide-eyed look at Morgan. He bumps Derek's arm and signals toward the room. Muffled SNIVELING emanates from the phone.

BENJAMIN (O.S.)

For over eight years I've busted my ass for her but it's never enough.

Ezra and Derek head for the bedroom and ease the door shut.

MORGAN

(over his shoulder)

I know.

BEDROOM

Dirty clothes and blankets are scattered throughout the room. The mattress hangs off the bed frame and the wallpaper has begun to peel. The two stand by the door.

EZRA

Do you hear this shit? It's getting real.

DEREK

Yeah...

Derek tilts over against the wall, breathing heavily.

DEREK (CONT'D)

It was-

(hiccup)

fun at first but-

EZRA

But Morgan never knows when to stop. We gotta end this shit.

DEREK

Uh, fuck.
 (grabs stomach)
 What do you want to do?

Ezra leans against the door, scratching his head.

MORGAN (O.S.)

When was the last time you and your
 wife had sex?

An inaudible rant follows. Ezra cracks the door open and
 peeks at Morgan and Joel huddling over the phone.

MORGAN

A lack of passion is the number one
 cause of infidelity in marriages.
 Don't mean to be rude but are you-

Morgan bobs his head back and sighs. He brings it back.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Lacking...in the performance
 department.

Joel nods and performs a "jerk off" gesture. Ezra shuts the
 door and turns to face Derek. He opens his mouth to speak
 but stops himself.

DEREK

You didn't seem...that concerned
 before-

EZRA

I wasn't but this man has a gun.
 He's gonna get somebody killed.

DEREK

You wanna call the cops or
 something?

EZRA

What? No, idiot. We don't know
 where this guy is and we can't narc
 on ourselves.

Derek's eyes go wide before he barges through the-

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Derek stomps past Morgan and Joel and heads for the
 bathroom. Morgan looks at Joel and points to the bathroom.
 Joel rolls his eyes and heads for the bathroom.

MORGAN

More often than not, it takes two
 for a marriage to crumble.

Morgan looks back to Ezra and gestures him toward the empty chair beside him. Ezra sits down, staring at the cards.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

The wife cheats on the husband because he's so preoccupied with work. But-

Morgan pours two shots and slides it in front of Ezra.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

That's no excuse. You had your wife and daughter in mind and she, well-

(downs shot)

She had only herself in mind, right?

Ezra covers the phone and glares at Morgan. Morgan leans back in his chair, his arm dangling off the backrest.

EZRA

Stop this, Morgan. He has a gun and you're fucking with his head.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin throws the empty bottle into the passenger's seat and steps out-

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin crosses the street, one hand in his coat pocket and the other holding the phone to his ear.

BENJAMIN

You're right, Kaleb. I've given her everything and look at what she does.

EZRA (O.S.)

Steve, I know how devastating this is for you but whatever you're thinking about doing with that gun. It's not going to help.

Benjamin stops on the other side of the street.

BENJAMIN

Who is this.

MORGAN (O.S.)

An associate of mine, Steve. Now he believes that you shouldn't confront your wife.

Benjamin enters-

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - FIRST FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin stumbles down the hall, searching for the stairs.

MORGAN (O.S.)

He thinks you should bottle up that
rage. Seal it up.

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

MORGAN

Hell, maybe he's right. Maybe-

Ezra jumps out of his seat.

EZRA

Maybe you should think about your
daughter!

(eyes on Morgan)

Maybe you shouldn't be taking
advice from some ad which started
off as a bullshit prank to begin
with.

BENJAMIN (O.S.)

A prank?

Morgan grins as a pause follows. He taps the ash off the
cigarette and leans toward the phone.

MORGAN

Where are you now, Steve?

BREATHING from the phone. The two stare at the phone.

BENJAMIN (O.S.)

I'm in the building.

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Ezra grabs the phone off the table and removes the speaker
feature. He turns away from Morgan and enters-

BEDROOM

Ezra shuts the door behind himself and sits on the bed. The
door knob jiggles back and forth.

EZRA

Think about what you're doing,
Benjamin! You have a daughter.

The door BURSTS open. Morgan takes a step in.

MORGAN

That's right. You have a daughter-

EZRA

Shut the fuck up, Morgan!

Joel shows up behind Morgan

JOEL
What? What happened?

MORGAN
What happened is that Steve is in the building where he plans to put a bullet into the head of his wife and the man currently railing her.

JOEL
No way.

Morgan inches towards Ezra.

MORGAN (CONT'D)
But Ezra here feels that he's acting irrationally.

Ezra turns away from Morgan and Joel.

EZRA
Listen Steven. Just get out-

Morgan snatches the phone from Ezra and jumps back. Ezra lunges toward Morgan. Joel intercepts and wraps him up in his arms. Ezra struggles.

EZRA
Joel! Get the fuck off me!

JOEL
I'm sorry Ezra but this is just too damned good.

Ezra shakes him off and delivers a hard punch to Joel's jaw. Joel stumbles back against the dresser.

EZRA
Is this is how you want to end it, Steve! Fine!

Ezra storms out of the bedroom. A slam of the front door soon follows. Joel wipes the blood from his lip.

MORGAN
You still there Steven.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin walks down the hall, his eyes darting from door to door. A young man walks by him, favoring his knuckles and cursing under his breath; Benjamin ignores him.

BENJAMIN
So was this all just a joke? Some fuckin' prank?

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Morgan reaches under the bed and pulls out a pistol. He places the gun on the bed beside his thigh.

MORGAN

More or less. Hundreds of dumbasses calling for a cheap laugh. So we humor 'em.

Morgan's face contorts into a scold as he looks at Ezra.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

But you. I told you exactly what you wanted to hear didn't I?

Ezra focuses his glare at Morgan as he sits beside him on the bed. Morgan lies back on the bed and places the phone on the crate beside the bed.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

Benjamin stands outside room 214 in the hall. He stares blankly at the doorknob.

MORGAN (O.S.)

I bet you're at that door right now, debating whether to kick that door down and shoot them dead or prance back home like some spineless, pussy-whipped bitch.

Benjamin face turns red as he reaches for the doorknob.

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

MORGAN

But this time around, you're humoring us. I mean, here we are, practically laughing at your dilemma and yet you're still here.

Morgan shakes his head and laughs.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Seriously, how's you find out, Steve? Did she write in on one of your post-it notes?

(looking back at Joel)

"I'M FUCKIN' YOUR CASHIER IN APARTMENT 214! FEEL FREE TO WATCH, YOU LIMP-DICK FAGGOT!!!"

Joel gives a "pained" look to Morgan and smiles.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

Can you hear them in there? Can you hear your wife moan and scream as he rams her like a-

BENJAMIN (O.S.)

You know what the joke was? I planned this for weeks but the bitch killed herself a few days ago. And you know who she talked to before she did it?..

Derek hears a CREEK behind him. He turns his head. A GUNSHOT before Derek falls to the ground. Blood and brain matter gush from his head. Joel scurries onto the bed.

JOEL

What tha fuck!

Benjamin enters the room, points the gun at Joel and shoots him twice. Joel screams and collapses on the bed. He turns his sight to Morgan as he stands. Benjamin's eyes widen.

BENJAMIN

Morgan?

Morgan swings his arm around and points his pistol at Benjamin. Benjamin's arm tenses as he aims.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING - SECOND FLOOR - CONTINUOUS

SHOTS startle Ezra. He glances back over his shoulder.

EZRA

Oh my God.

INT. JOEL'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Morgan stands over Benjamin as he bleeds out on the floor. He kneels down and lifts Benjamin up by his bloodied shirt and pulls him close.

Morgan looks down. Three bloody holes leak like broken faucets. He looks back up at Benjamin's shocked face.

MORGAN

Hello Mr. Henson. I guess now you know why I'm always late to work. As you've clearly heard, I've had SO MUCH to tell you. So glad it's all finally off my chest.

FOOTSTEPS from the kitchen. Benjamin coughs up blood. He glares at Morgan. Red saliva seeps through his clenched teeth as he squeezes Morgans forearm.

EZRA (O.S.)

Holy shit! Derek!

Morgan wipes the blood from Benjamin's lip with his own tie. Ezra stands over Derek's body in the doorway.

BENJAMIN

We were supposed to have this talk a week ago. I was supposed to kill her...ME! Not you!

MORGAN

I know. And I'm sorry for spoiling it all Mr. Henson.

Ezra steps over Derek's body and into the bedroom. He spots Joel on the bed, still breathing and soaked in blood before darting over to Morgan who is squatted beside Benjamin.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

But I couldn't have Mrs. Henson gun me down too.

Benjamin's breathing slows. The color in his face fades. Joel rolls on his side. He is shot in his shoulder and upper chest. He presses on the wound and watches Morgan.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

For what it's worth, she hated herself just a bit more than she hated you.

JOEL

This is fuckin' legendary.

Benjamin smiles before a DEATH RATTLE resonates from his mouth. Ezra steps forward, his eyes locked on Morgan.

MORGAN

(to Joel)

You alright?

Joel licks his bloody finger and gives a thumbs-up.

EZRA

What did you do.

MORGAN

I killed a cheating whore and a vengeful, murderous bastard.

Morgan drops Benjamin's head and stands.

MORGAN (CONT'D)

And wound up saving their four year old daughter, Camille.

Morgan takes the cellphone off the bed and dials a number. Morgan quickens his breathing and shuts his eyes.

MORGAN

(dramatically)

911? I'm reporting a homicide.

FADE OUT