

## THE MOONDIALER

Written by  
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FADE IN:

**1 EXT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PLAYGROUND - DAY**

School playground (overcast). MOONDIALER (4<sup>th</sup> grader, overweight, bully) approaches Black classmate (thin, weak) on sidewalk between fields sopping in mud. Smirks with hands on victim shoulders. Points to muddy ground. Boy shakes head, cries. MOONDIALER laughs, pushes boy down slowly on all fours, walks away giggling. Victim cries. Scared classmates wait for friend. Camera lingers on young girl (9) who watches.

HUMBLE DISSOLVE:

**2 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - NIGHT**

Tall thin man with confederate arm tattoo drives pickup on dark road. Swerves onto gravel drive. Small unlighted two-bedroom house framed alone on large dark overgrown lot. Stumbles drunk to door glancing up at full moon. Struggles with lock. Enters, flips dead light switch.

SEMINAL VICTIM  
Fucking house.

Walks to fridge. Retrieves beer, shakes head, puts back. Pulls off shirt. Walks toward back bedroom. Stops and returns to air conditioner. Pauses at slightly open window. Stumbles into bed. Eyes closed in dark room. Seconds later, opens eyes wide. Rises and flips on light. Peers at closed closet. Steps to door. Grabs knob. Pauses.

HUMBLE DISSOLVE:

**3 INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY OFFICE - DAY**

DOVELAND (59, 6'2, 240 lbs, smart, self-assured, somber) behind mahogany desk (floor-to-ceiling books). ROBBIE (29, 5'6", 130 lbs, dirty blond) & MANDY (29, 5'8", 190 lbs, brunette) enter. Calendar reads July, 1985.

D.A. DOVELAND  
Jeb Hartman called from the New Orleans homicide unit. The NOPD has a serial killer with a victim count of 6 rapes, 7 murders, and 2 abductions. His police chief insisted the FBI be brought in.

MANDY  
The Behavioral Analysis Unit?

D.A. DOVELAND

Yes, they generate leads from inferences about the perp's psychological makeup. Hartman sees behavioral science as a bunch of hooey. Like asking for help from psychics or fortune tellers.

ROBBIE

That's a small minded perspective.

D.A. DOVELAND

Interesting you say that. City brass briefed U.S. Senator Ellen Jane last week.

MANDY & ROBBIE fidget.

MANDY

Senator Jane?

D.A. DOVELAND

Yep, outta the blue she mentioned YOUR names.

ROBBIE

Our names?

D.A. DOVELAND

That's right, your names. Said she heard you employed creative investigative strategies.

MANDY

You must be kidding? We have no police training.

D.A. DOVELAND

It didn't seem to matter. Come on, you know her?

ROBBIE

Well, not really Dove. Have you met her Mandy?

DOVELAND flashes knowing smile.

D.A. DOVELAND

It was smart whatever its reason. Jeb was annoyed. Said you'd have to work for Youngblood.

ROBBIE

Are they aware of our personal relationship?

D.A. DOVELAND

It's the one thing about your backgrounds they don't care about. It's New Orleans Robbie.

MANDY  
And a serial killer investigation! It's perfect!

D.A. DOVELAND  
You'd be case consultants for \$1,500 a month. I  
already told Hartman you'd be in early Monday.

**4 INT. DRIVING OVER ATCHAFALAYA BASIN - DAY**

MANDY & ROBBIE drive east over Atchafalaya Basin overpass.

MANDY  
The basin is as haunting as our first encounter.

ROBBIE  
You dragged me out to Gator Moses swamp tours in  
Henderson. I was scared to death!

MANDY  
As he always said, hear me all and listen good.  
Dis is Gator Moses swamp! It always has been, and  
it always will be!

ROBBIE  
I can't believe all those alligators came  
swimming when he banged the side of his boat.

MANDY  
Tour guides have em well trained.

ROBBIE  
It's a good thing Gator keeps close watch from  
his tower every night. Residents don't like  
shenanigans in their swamp. He's there if needed.

HUMBLE DISSOLVE TO:

**5 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

ROBBIE and MANDY enter old musty building. People move  
slowly. Stochastic conversation. Enter "Homicide Division".  
OPEL (secretary, Creole descent) types without looking up.

OPEL  
Who are ya here to see and wadda you want?

MANDY  
I'm Mandy Powers, and this is my associate  
Robbie Whit. Captain Hartman is expecting us.

OPEL

Is that right? Associate, huh? So you have an appointment? Oh, that's changes everything.

MANDY

Just ask Captain Hartman. He's expecting us.

OPEL

Don't see no appointment for you and your associate. Neva know when the captain will be available. Y'all welcome to wait if ya like.

ROBBIE

Ma'am, we're sure he said 8. Could you buzz him? He may be disappointed if he misses us.

OPEL

Oh don't worry bout dat darlin. Captain Hartman is always disappointed bout something anyway.

ROBBIE & MANDY slump into seats with heads slung low.

MANDY

Any chance we could get coffee while waiting?

OPEL

Across da street on South Broad.

MANDY

That's OK. Thanks anyway. We best wait.

OPEL

Suit yourself.

ROBBIE & MANDY sit silently watching other encounters.

CITIZEN

I needs to talk to da po-lice bout drug dealers in midtown. Der was a shootin last night.

OPEL

Get in line dear. This woman and her associate over there in the corner are ahead of you.

CITIZEN

Dis is da fourth time I been here this month, and you tell me the same thing every time.

OPEL

Might I suggest you file a complaint if unhappy.  
If you leave your number we may look at it.

CITIZEN

I ain't gots no phone. Bell disconnected it.

Clock reads 10:30. Urgent muffled talk emanates from hall.  
Door bursts open. YOUNGBLOOD (40, slender, glasses, full  
head of hair, attractive) with agents LEAT & SLOTA.

YOUNGBLOOD

Those coeds have of no idea of the risks.

SLOTA

Everyone here is so naive!

MANDY rises, approaches YOUNGBLOOD with hand extended.

MANDY

Agent Youngblood? I'm Mandy Powers . . .

YOUNGBLOOD glares with annoyance. Turns into office without  
acknowledgement. MANDY shrugs. ROBBIE sits. OPEL sighs.

OPEL

Why don't you girls just go home for the day.  
I'll make sure the captain knows you were here.  
Your appointment must have slipped his mind.

Screaming ensues in office. Selected words decipherable.

HARTMAN (V.O.)

. . . Tulane.

LEAT (V.O.)

. . . Boot.

SLOTA (V.O.)

. . . Garden.

HARTMAN (V.O.)

. . . CLOISTER!!

YOUNGBLOOD (V.O.)

. . . Sorlot.

SLOTA (V.O.)

. . . Overpass.

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
MOTHERFUCKER!

OPEL types. Glances up to notice ROBBIE & MANDY staring.

OPEL  
A Tulane coed this time. Just horrible.

YOUNGBLOOD (V.O.).  
Canvass yourself if you're so damned smart!

YOUNGBLOOD, LEAT & SLOTA rush out. OPEL flinches. HARTMAN (50, 6'3", slight paunch disguised by disciplined posture, full goatee, black jeans, western plaid shirt) rushes out.

HARTMAN  
Get you act together or I'm sending you back where you came from! Big shots, huh?! THIS AIN'T NEW YORK! THIS IS NEW ORLEANS!

OPEL nods toward ROBBIE & MANDY.

HARTMAN  
Who the hell are they?

OPEL  
They said something about being assigned to the task force from Lafayette. That's all I know.

HARTMAN  
Oh, you two. You actually came, huh? Don't have time today. Come back tomorrow.

MANDY  
It's our understanding we're on the payroll as of today. We're used to working for our wages.

HARTMAN  
We'll see about your payroll status. Just go to the library and read the newspapers. At least you'll know something about the case tomorrow.

HARTMAN storms back into office closing door behind.

**6 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

OPEL ushers MANDY & ROBBIE into office. HARTMAN leans back smoking, newspaper, phone at chin. Waves for them to sit.

HARTMAN

Come on Mayor, it's only been 3 months with the task force. He's been prowling since June of '83. Just keep cool Richard. We don't want this city dissolving in panic.

YOUNGBLOOD & SLOTA/LEAT (preppy looks). HARTMAN hangs up phone. Stares at YOUNGBLOOD.

HARTMAN

OK Johnny, you've got to figure out what to do with these two. Powers and Whit, right?

YOUNGBLOOD

These women may have grad degrees but no academy training. I don't know who they are or why they're here, but they have nothing to offer.

HARTMAN

D.A. Will Doveland in Lafayette says they're competent, and Senator Jane pressured Richard and Renny to appoint them.

YOUNGBLOOD

This case is too serious to waste time placating politicians. This intrusion is outrageous.

HARTMAN

Slow your roll there Youngblood. At least these women are from MY state. I'm still trying to figure out what you bring to the table.

YOUNGBLOOD

I'm a senior special agent with the FBI!

HARTMAN

Remind me again of your credentials in science, technology, intelligence, analytics, or national security? Oh, that's right, your expertise is in . . . behavioral analysis.

YOUNGBLOOD

That's right. The BAU is in the Criminal Investigative Division. We serve a function.

HARTMAN

Well you three haven't served much of a function around here. Ya might wanna worry about your own credentials before dissing folks in my backyard.



YOUNGBLOOD

We don't want to babysit these women Jeb. You have 5 unit chiefs with 50 officers working this case. We're not facing a manpower shortage.

HARTMAN

Besides Youngblood, they have serious support back home. What the hell did you two do anyway?

MANDY

As teens we helped Lieutenant Frost in Redmand apprehend a serial arsonist.

HARTMAN

Pat's a great cop. How'd you catch the guy?

ROBBIE

He was running an insurance recovery scheme. His mistake was urinating before lighting the blaze.

HARTMAN

You busted him for peeing or arson?

MANDY

Asparagus urine Captain. A surfur odor that only half of us can smell. We knew the arsonist ate asparagus at local restaurant every Friday night.

HARTMAN bemused.

HARTMAN

Asparagus pee, huh? Never heard of that one.

ROBBIE

Then we nailed Bobby Lee Booker for murder in Lafayette. Took us 6 months to catch him and the homicide detective who planted evidence.

HARTMAN

Oh yeah. We know about David Jackman. Up and coming big shot. You busted him too?

HARTMAN whistles quietly.

ROBBIE

We worked with D.A. Doveland on that case. We figured out a prostitute worked the motel room before the murder. We found and tracked her to Booker. The dump site for his gun was intuitive.

YOUNGBLOOD, SLOTA, & LEAT avert eye contact.

HARTMAN

Where was it?

ROBBIE

A pond by his house. Dove was then able to bust Jackson for planting slugs to frame a man.

HARTMAN

The perp went down hard too, right?

ROBBIE

Convicted of attempted murder as well. He took a shot at Mandy who was working at the motel desk.

HARTMAN now stares tauntingly at YOUNGBLOOD as he speaks.

HARTMAN

Anything else Whit?

ROBBIE

Last year we caught a serial extortionist who used homing pigeons to recover ransoms.

HARTMAN

Serial extortion, huh? Homing pigeons? Right.

ROBBIE

It was a janitor at the Mental Health Institute in Baton Rouge. He stole psychiatric records and coerced payments as ransom.

MANDY

The victims were folks like Congressman Johnny Strane from Mississippi, the mayor of Thibodeaux, preacher James Saunter, and actor Bobby Strelow.

ROBBIE

Don't forget Senator Rue Deak from up in your neck of the woods Agent Youngblood. Y'all must have heard something about that cases last year?

HARTMAN continues to stare at YOUNGBLOOD.

HARTMAN

Why didn't the victims realize there was a Breach at the psychiatrist's office?

ROBBIE

Delays between the patient visits and extortion demands murred up the source. We had to identify unreported victims and track their common link.

HARTMAN

How'd you catch the janitor?

ROBBIE

A friend in my psychology program scheduled fake counseling sessions and planted a false story about a USL professor who was then extorted.

MANDY

The scheme skirted some ethical lines, but it was cleanup after the extortion phone call.

HARTMAN slams his hand down hard on desk while laughing.

HARTMAN

Damn Youngblood! These girls solved more crimes than you ever investigated. They won't need much babysitting. Let's get to the morning staffing.

**7 INT. TASK FORCE BRIEFING ROOM - DAY**

Briefing room adjoins press area with desks, phones and typewriters. Podium below large white board and projector.

HARTMAN

The initial stalking ground was Pontchartrain Beach. He went dormant for 9 months after the first murder of Eula Roux. He returned with the World's Fair in June of last year.

YOUNGBLOOD

He forces his way into houses every month or so. He needs privacy for suffocation rituals.

BORDER

We have no fingerprints and only degraded DNA profiles without FBI database hits. He leaves a one inch signature cut on the left buttock.

HARTMAN

The survivors will eventually speak to the press, but let's keep that detail classified. Green?

GREEN

He's a Caucasian male between the ages of 21 and 35. Victims smelled smoke and beer on him.

HARTMAN

The Roux murder appears unplanned. A subsequent 9 month hiatus was followed by routine killings. Recent abductions are a change of pattern.

**8 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

BAU suite (desks/table/phones/VCR). YOUNGBLOOD unlocks cabinet. Dumps 16 folders on table before MANDY & ROBBIE.

YOUNGBLOOD

Sit. Here's the victim files. Interview tapes are included. We'll be outside if needed.

BAU trio exits. ROBBIE projects timeline on screen.

MANDY

It makes sense to start with Sheila Etienne.

MANDY presses play. Distraught victim speaks haltingly with GREEN & HANSON. ETIENNE visible to audience with shift to video montages with voice over narrations.

**MONTAGE: 8A EXT. PONTCHARTRAIN BEACH - NIGHT**

ETIENNE at Pontchartrain Beach; rides Zephyr with friends.

ETIENNE (V.O.)

I was with friends at Pontchartrain Beach where we went every Saturday night. We rode the Zephyr, and I drove home alone before midnight.

**MONTAGE: 8B INT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

ETIENNE home arrival alone; dark house entry; bathroom lights; ceased from behind.

ETIENNE (V.O.)

I unlocked my door and went inside. I turned on the lights and went into the bathroom. When I came out, he grabbed me from behind and put his arms under mine and around the back of my neck.

HANSON

Take your time. Tell us what happened then.

**MONTAGE: 8C EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT**

ETIENNE dragged to bed face down; MOONDIALER (imposing, hood, sunglasses, knife) ties wrists to bedposts.

ETIENNE (V.O.)

I couldn't move . . . he dragged me toward . . . toward . . . my bedroom. He threw me on the bed and I got a glance at him. Big guy with a hood, sunglasses, and a long knife. He shoved me face down on the bed and tied ropes around my wrists.

GREEN

We know this is hard, but please keep going.

**MONTAGE: 8D EXT HOUSE - NIGHT**

ETIENNE shred eagle mouths screams; MOONDIALER (imposing, hood, sunglasses, knife) mouths loud laughs; pulls ETIENNE hair back; gags victim; obscured disrobing & taunting.

ETIENNE (V.O.)

He tied me with ropes to the bedposts spread eagle. He started laughing real loud saying crazy stuff. Said I was an idiot who needed to call him master. He grabbed my hair back and raped me.

HANSON

Let's take a break Shiela.

Video stops. Video reconvenes. ETIENNE recomposed.

**MONTAGE: 8E EXT HOUSE - NIGHT**

MOONDIALER returns to room; Mad Moon Rising soundtrack played loudly (slow haunting unearthly electronic synthesizer dirge conjures danger. Volume and tempo grow. Ends in crashing metal screeches). Rape obscured in video.

ETIENNE (V.O.)

I heard him leave the room. Then he came back and turned my stereo way up. A slow weird orchestra vibe like something horrible was about to happen. Crashing sounds with metal screeches like a slasher movie. He told me to enjoy the ride.

HANSON

Would you like another break?

ETIENNE waves off the offer.

ETIENNE (V.O.)

He put a plastic bag . . over my head . .

and laughed as I started gasping for breath. I passed out and became conscious some time later. He laughed every time I came to. After the third time, and he was gone.

MONTAGE: **8F EXT HOUSE - NIGHT**

MOONDIALER'S left hand making his signature triangle cut (1 in) on ETIENNE's left buttock (horizontal line at bottom extending upward toward vertex).

**9 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY enter office carrying coffee and newspapers. YOUNGBLOOD, LEAT, & SLOTA enter room.

YOUNGBLOOD

Any questions regarding your reviews yesterday?

ROBBIE

Maybe it's a reach, but we were also speculating that the killer might be a lefty.

YOUNGBLOOD

OK Whit, make your case.

ROBBIE

I posit he etched the triangles sitting on the victims' legs. Most people would cut a horizontal line at the bottom and extend up to the vertex.

LEAT

That's reaching Whit! He could have just as well been a right hander who sat on her back and just reached down further to make the horizontal cut.

ROBBIE

A right-hander would have to cross his body to make the first incision. A southpaw could just drop his left hand down from where he sat.

SLOTA

Maybe he wasn't even sitting on the victim when he made the cuts. He coulda been off to the side.

ROBBIE

This guy rivets the attention of victims toward himself. He'd prefer looking up at their heads To watch them react. That's better stagecraft.

**10 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

ROBBIE sits in the BAU suite. YOUNGBLOOD, SLOTA, & LEAT enter lazily holding coffee cups. HARTMAN enters looking weathered (eyes red, goatee unattended, jeans and black jacket of an outlaw country musician).

ROBBIE

Margie Taylor, abducted December last year.  
Tulane pre-med, completes finals, and out to  
Copeland's and Fat Harry's with friends.

HARTMAN

Roux's murder was thought to be a one off. His  
phone message directed us to her body in a  
Cocodrie ditch his signature buttock incision.

MANDY

A month later Lilly Landry goes to the horse  
races with her father and uncle. She goes missing  
while running after dark along the lake.

HARTMAN starts tape.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted)

Hartman, a few people lead but others are born to  
serve. You are one of those losers. This little  
filly sure put up a fight. I wish you coulda been  
there to watch. You'll find her in the bayou out  
in New Orleans East.

HARTMAN

There's miles of bayous in that region.

ROBBIE

Maybe the location's a riddle?

YOUNGBLOOD

No mystery here. He was just taunting us.

MANDY

You weren't able to trace the call?

HARTMAN

Not enough time. Move on.

MANDY

Elvia Dugas, 19, aspiring model with nude posters  
all over the Quarter. Loved the night life. Went

missing after leaving The Dungeon.

MANDY pulls out postcard (addressed to *Your Master, 999 Higher Order Lane, Storyville, LA*) with nude photo of victim. The name Sofie Sorlot scribbled across her bust.

HARTMAN

Sorlot was a famous model killed instantly in August of '59 in a car crash at Irish Bayou.

ROBBIE

What's the connection with Dugas?

HARTMAN

Green figured he was referencing a memorial at Irish Bayou. Sorlot was in the marsh at the site.

MANDY

What's known about his master and higher order fixations? What the heck is that all about?

HARTMAN

I'm paying you to figure that out. I gotta go.

# **11 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

HARTMAN irritated. YOUNGBLOOD, MANDY & ROBBIE fidget.

HARTMAN

I need some original ideas. I can get more value from you answering the phone for Opel.

YOUNGBLOOD

OK Jeb, Whit believes the killer is left-handed.

ROBBIE

The triangle incisions. We figure he woulda preferring sitting on the legs while looking up at head expressions during incisions.

MANDY

Incisions on the left buttock would have been easier using his left hand.

HARTMAN

Anything else ladies?

MANDY

Patsy Herbert mused that her assailant was no



Saints fan. He saw Kenny Stabler's poster on her wall and said "fuck all you Saints losers!"

ROBBIE

We think he's from outside the city. If not an outsider, he's a pretty unusual New Orleanian.

YOUNGBLOOD surprised. HARTMAN nods with satisfaction.

HARTMAN

What else?

ROBBIE

Instrumental music is unusual in record stores. We think it came from a movie sound track. We're gonna visit video rental places this week.

YOUNGBLOOD

Now Jeb, we checked a number of video rental places earlier. It was a waste of time.

HARTMAN

Keep me informed ladies.

## 12 INT. WINNY'S WIDEO RENTALS - DAY

ROBBIE & MANDY enter store. WINNY (30-years-old, full beard, corpulent, eccentricities, head swivels as gesture of emphasis when speaking) behind counter with newspaper.

WINNY

Yes, I'm Winny Smithers. Can't see why you think I'd know anything about a serial killer?

ROBBIE

We're looking for a disturbing sound track.

MANDY

Slow weird music like a slasher movie. It has crashing sounds and metal screeches as well?

WINNY

Sounds like a 100 slasher movies if you ask me.

ROBBIE

We were wondering if you'd allow us to see a listing of your inventory? It looks quite vast.

WINNY

Over 1,000 titles. Whadda you want with my list?

MANDY

We're just jotting down titles for reference.

WINNY

Sit here with my VCR. Play videos if you like.

MANDY

You don't object?

WINNY

Why would I object?

MANDY

Oh, not saying you should object. Just asking.

WINNY

There's no reason for me to object.

MANDY

OK, fine then. We have a plan.

WINNY

There's no reason why it shouldn't be fine.  
Take as long as you like. I close at 10:00 p.m.

ROBBIE & MANDY look up at cuckoo clock that reads 4:30 p.m.

DISSOLVE TO:

ROBBIE & MANDY with videos. Clock at 9:45 pm. WINNY enters.

WINNY

I see you're still here. You musta looked at a dozen movies. Aren't you done yet?

MANDY

Not really. Could we return tomorrow?

WINNY

Ugh, naw, I don't know. It's kinda distracting having you here. Maybe you could finish tonight? The door locks on its own when you leave.

ROBBIE

Really?! Just a few more videos and we'll be on our way. You can trust us alone in your store.

WINNY nods to office surveillance camera.

WINNY  
I'm sure I can. I'll be watching.

WINNY exits store. Door locks loudly. MANDY whispers.

MANDY  
So strange. Helpful, but so strange.

ROBBIE  
Looks like we've been on candid camera.

DISSOLVE TO:

MANDY looks up. Cuckoo clock strikes midnight.

ROBBIE  
Let me try this last one with the full moon on  
the cover. Mad Mood Rising, from 1972. Released  
for home rental in the summer of 1981.

ROBBIE plays VCR. Wide eyed looks in dimly lit office. Slow  
haunting unearthly electronic synthesizer dirge conjures  
danger. Volume and tempo grow. Crashing metal screeches.

### **13 INT. COMMANDER'S PALACE - NIGHT**

MANDY & ROBBIE sit at dark corner table. Giddy with Pinot.

ROBBIE  
It was smart to stay mum today until we could  
learn more about the movie.

MANDY  
Brandi and Helena reacted to it like a flashback.

ROBBIE  
Released in '72 with a cult home market in 81.  
Some critics said it had redeeming value as a  
depiction of societal degradation.

MANDY  
The perp was a popular high school teacher abused  
by his mother during childhood. Police never  
figured out his identity.

ROBBIE  
Strangulations perpetrated multiple times before

death. No plastic bags but victims were tied to their bedposts. He taunted the police until an old church lady ran a stop sign and killed him.

MANDY

The actor used handcuffs, not rope. Our guy didn't impersonate a cop. Rope's more natural.

ROBBIE

Something about this movie inspired him. Why This one? Something about the title as well. Both killers are "mad" in anger or insanity, but then there's also a reference to . . .

MANDY

Come on! What have you got! Cough it up!

ROBBIE squints at notes in dark restaurant.

ROBBIE

The killer's crimes are happening almost monthly, but never more than once a month. Why is that?

MANDY

I don't know. What are you thinking?

ROBBIE

Phases of the moon occur monthly. Patsy Herbert said he was waiting for midnight? What if his crimes correspond to the lunar phase?

MANDY

I don't know Robbie. That take things too far.

ROBBIE

Mad Moon Rising? The timeline might make sense within the context of the lunar phase?

MANDY

The moon had nothing to do with the movie plot.

ROBBIE

Let's still go back to the library tomorrow.

#### **14 INT. TULANE LIBRARY - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY stand back-to-back. After minute, MANDY closes almanac. Looks at ROBBIE who turns with ashen look.

ROBBIE

All 4 murders this year occurred on full moons.

MANDY

I went 6 for 6 on the sexual assaults.

ROBBIE

What about the two murders. Roux and Taylor?

MANDY

They also occurred on the nights of full moons.

ROBBIE

So the rapes and murders were all on full moons?

MANDY

It sure looks like it. Worse yet, the three missing women were abducted 3, 4 and 5 days *before* upcoming full moons. Sounds ominous.

ROBBIE

Remember that Patsy Herbert said her assailant was waiting for midnight to 'dial up' her fate.

MANDY

The week before a full moon looks like a high risk window for abduction. The next one occurs on August 30<sup>th</sup>. Five days from now.

ROBBIE & MANDY freeze while maintaining eye contact.

MANDY

This is a breakthrough, isn't it?

ROBBIE

We're chasing the Moondialer.

**15 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

YOUNGBLOOD sits stone faced staring at MANDY & ROBBIE.  
SLOTA & LEAT share grins at their dress-down attire.

YOUNGBLOOD

And you've given up our cop impersonator theory?

ROBBIE

The theories are not mutually exclusive. We just think his reliance on rope better fits the bill.

YOUNGBLOOD

You're flipping through theories on whim.

ROBBIE

These lunar associations seem too compelling to ignore. We've entered a window of maximum risk.

YOUNGBLOOD

You really think I'd go down this road with you?

SLOTA

Silly claims of tidal and magnetic forces on the brain go way back in forensic science. You know how many serial killers had full moon fetishes?

ROBBIE

I'd guess just a few.

SLOTA

No Whit. I'm afraid you're off a bit. The correct answer is actually ZERO! Not a single case. The FBI busted the moon lunacy myth long ago.

YOUNGBLOOD

You two are not gonna make fools out of us by floating this idea to Jeb Hartman or anyone else on the task force. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?

MANDY

Don't lecture us! Just look at the dates! We're on record. We should be blanketing nightclubs tonight. An abduction is imminent.

YOUNGBLOOD

You don't know that! He doesn't even strike every single month. Have you even double checked your dates? I wouldn't be surprised if some are wrong?

YOUNGBLOOD storms out.

ROBBIE

Why didn't you just tell him about the movie?

MANDY

It wouldn't have mattered. Let's check our facts and let the lunar connection ferment over night.

ROBBIE (black velvet skirt, fishnet sleeves, black jeans) and MANDY (tight lace corset, leather chaps, black jeans, purple wig) outside Molly's Bar. Smoky eye makeup with dusty pallor suggests discoloration of asphyxia.

MANDY

What did you find at the library this afternoon?

ROBBIE

They were right. No serial or mass killers linked to the moon. It's a myth birthed in the 1800s by Charles Hyde who claimed lunar insanity.

MANDY

Don't tell me. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde?

ROBBIE

You've got it. The myth of full moon werewolf transitions goes back a 1000 years.

MANDY

The movie connection is still a breakthrough even if our lunar theory falls on deaf ears.

# **17 INT THE DUNGEON - NIGHT**

Medieval wooden door. Small window with steel bars. Long dark musty alley. Bouncer permits entry. Music blares. New wave sounds. Wrought iron spiral stairs. ROBBIE heads up. MANDY orders drink at lower bar. LESBIAN approaches.

LESBIAN

Looking for a little women action honey?

MANDY

More in the market for some guy S & M action.

LESBIAN moves on. MONTAGE OF other approaches on both the upper and lower floors directed toward ROBBIE & MANDY.

DISSOLVE TO:

MANDY looking weathered at lower bar. watch says 3:20 a.m. Ascends to small upper dance floor. ROBBIE dances with two women. Men along wall leer. MANDY weaves into threesome.

MANDY

Play this out. We've got a receptive audience.

Music rages on. COWBOY (tall, athletic, twenty-something, brownish-blond, Scandinavian, five o'clock shadow) makes move (seductive grin, arms spread wide, beer in left hand).

COWBOY

You two look like ya know how to have a good time! Old Tommy here could give you hours of entertainment. I'm from the west coast. Staying at the Monteleone. Got a king size bed ladies.

ROBBIE

Sorry Cowboy, but me and this little filly already have our hands full.

COWBOY (radiant smile) surprised. Music transitions (Devo, Whip It), dance floor wild with gyrations. TOMMY watches from wall. Song ends. ROBBIE & MANDY walk down to small booth on the ground floor. COWBOY pushes into booth.

COWBOY

Come on girls. It's getting late. Give me a chance to get to know you.

ROBBIE

I'm not sure we have a taste for what you're cooking. I'm bi, but Sally here hates men.

MANDY

The thought of watching you have sex gags me.

COWBOY

Really? Gag huh? Well I wouldn't wanna see a pretty thing like you choke or feel uncomfortable darling. It's no fun if you don't enjoy it.

ROBBIE

Listen Cowboy, maybe we'd be interested if ya told us a little more bout your bad self. What kinda music and movies ya into? We like goth, bikers, horror flicks, wrestling. Those scenes.

MANDY

We also love going to the dome to see our Saints.

COWBOY

I'm not much of a talker. I'm more of what you might call a doer. Not much into football, but I can show you some good movies if you wanna party.



ROBBIE  
How'd ya end up in Nawlins anyway?

COWBOY  
Listen girls, this sounds like an interrogation.  
This big one here is a real bore.

COWBOY & MANDY glare as jabs her with his left finger.

MANDY  
I'm not trying to be unfriendly Tommy. I see  
Heather finds you amusing, and Heather gets  
what Heather wants. That's our rule.

ROBBIE  
Let's walk down Bourbon toward the Monteleone?

COWBOY  
Now that's a fine plan young lady. Don't you  
know, tomorrow never comes in Nawlins.

**18 EXT. BOURBON STREET - NIGHT**

COWBOY'S arms around ROBBIE & MANDY. Stroll down Bourbon.

COWBOY  
Listen gals, I really live in Kenner. I do have  
that king-sized bed as promised. My car's up  
here in the Monteleone garage. Still game?

MANDY nods assent signal to ROBBIE. High anxiety. Trio  
walks into unlit garage stairwell. Up 3 flights. COWBOY  
delighted. MANDY lapses behind. Checks gun position.

COWBOY  
Here we are. You can sit up front with me.

COWBOY leads to dark corner area. Opens door (1980 black  
4-door Buick Skylark, tinted windows). MANDY spies plate.

ROBBIE  
This was fun while it lasted Tommy, but we're  
not going with you to Kenner.

COWBOY  
You bitches led me on. That wasn't very nice.

ROBBIE  
Just for the record, is your name really Tommy?

COWBOY

That's none of your damned business! You're probably not even named Heather.

ROBBIE

Come on Mandy. He's just another player. It's almost sunrise. Let's get some sleep before work.

**19 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

YOUNGBLOOD, LEAT, & SLOTA in conference room as ROBBIE & MANDY arrive. YOUNGBLOOD unnerved. HARTMAN seething.

YOUNGBLOOD

Glad to see you decided to make it in this morning. Two college roommates on Jefferson failed to show for yoga class. Their car was parked in the driveway, but no one answered the door.

HARTMAN

You two look like hell. Tied one on last night? Just go home and get some sleep.

MANDY

We're fine Captain. We went undercover last night.

HARTMAN

Undercover, huh? Well you didn't do a good job. Ruth Sepion and Tamala Tabor are now missing.

YOUNGBLOOD

Last seen at supper with classmates. Regent and Macon interviewed the friends. Nothing useful.

HARTMAN

Looks like the daily double. It's gonna generate blue heat at the presser. This will get ugly.

**20 INT. NOPD PRESS ROOM - DAY**

HARTMAN rushes out room waving away questions. Cocophony of urgent chatter remains. Walks hall, enters office. Slams door. Simmers in discontent. BAU team enters uneasily.

HARTMAN

Whadda you guys want? Bigger travel budgets?

YOUNGBLOOD

We may have figured out that the killer will next strike within a few days of September 24th.

HARTMAN

How would you geniuses know something like that?

YOUNGBLOOD pauses. Takes deep breath. Looks to ROBBIE.

ROBBIE

The task force hasn't noticed yet, but the first 13 assaults and murders all occurred on full moons.

HARTMAN

You have no idea when he'll strike again. He kills monthly because it's his fix cycle. Trust me. The killer is not moon crazy.

ROBBIE slaps victim list on desk with lunar phase column. HARTMAN picks up summary. Blood pulses through his temples.

YOUNGBLOOD

Are you OK Jeb?

HARTMAN raises hand for silence. 10 second pause. Stares at ROBBIE'S wide eyed look. Raises eyebrows in dramatic pose.

HARTMAN

Why the hell are these abductions happening days *before* full moons?

ROBBIE

We think he's taking victims to a secure location to be violated for days before midnight executions.

HARTMAN never breaks eye contact with ROBBIE.

HARTMAN

Really? That's what you think, huh?

ROBBIE

Yes sir. That's what we think.

HARTMAN

And all of this because of full moon lunacy, huh?

MANDY

Not necessarily sir. We don't buy that angle. We're suspecting the pattern occurs for other reasons.

HARTMAN'S gaze fixated on YOUNGBLOOD.

YOUNGBLOOD

The BAU sees this hypothesis as speculative.  
It can't be ruled out, but we need more evidence.

ROBBIE

Captain?

HARTMAN

Just talk Whit! You don't need permission.

ROBBIE

There's one other thing. We found the movie sound track the killer plays during his assaults. Sheila Etienne and Patsy Herbert confirmed it.

HARTMAN and YOUNGBLOOD raise eyebrows in surprise.

HARTMAN

Where the hell did you find it?!

ROBBIE

It was produced by Firestone Pictures in 1972. It made it to home video in 1983. It's about a serial killer who rapes and smothers his victims.

HARTMAN

What have you've been holding back Youngblood?!

YOUNGBLOOD

It's probably not even relevant to what animates this guy. It's gonna be a nothing burger clue.

HARTMAN

So what's the name of the movie Whit?

ROBBIE

Mad . . . Moon . . . Rising.

HARTMAN & YOUNGBLOOD thunderstruck. Reply in unison.

HARTMAN/YOUNGBLOOD

Mad Moon Rising?!

Robbie nods. Pulls over cassette player. Maximizes volume. Slow haunting unearthly electronic synthesizer dirge conjures danger. Volume and tempo grow until crashing metal screeches.

HARTMAN

Mad MOON Rising. You got that Youngblood?

YOUNGBLOOD

Well yeah, OK, I get it Jeb.

HARTMAN

Moon is in the FUCKING title of the movie. You still think this is coincidental?

YOUNGBLOOD

I don't know. This is coming at us quite suddenly.

HARTMAN

When was this figured out Youngblood? Please tell me it wasn't before these girls were abducted?

YOUNGBLOOD

I didn't know anything about this movie, and I wasn't gonna float the lunar thing without further evidence. These women are flying rogue Jeb.

HARTMAN

So let me just get this straight. You knew yesterday there was a high risk of an abduction, and you stood down while your consultants busted their asses in a desperate midnight surveillance effort?

YOUNGBLOOD

I wouldn't put it exactly that way.

HARTMAN

Where were you last night Powers?

MANDY

Molly's and the Dungeon. A person of interest came on to us at the Dungeon, but he wasn't in good position to strike before daybreak.

HARTMAN

I want a briefing on everything known about this lunar pattern. And Youngblood, you give these women *everything* they need to do their work.

**21 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY sit alone in BAU suite.

ROBBIE

You know, something's been bothering me about the Sepon and Tabor police reports too. There's no mention of busted locks or security equipment.

MANDY

Right. Here's notes. Sepion's friend the night before said "no one could get into the house without tripping an alarm."

ROBBIE

That's odd. I didn't see any equipment in the crime photos. Let's go have a little look see.

**22 INT. ABDUCTION SCENE APARTMENT - DAY**

Dark and vacant two bedroom house. Auto in drive. House in disarray. MANDY looks at front door. ROBBIE moves to back.

ROBBIE

I see vacant screw holes on the front door jam. Looks like dead bolts were removed.

MANDY

Come see! Something was sitting below this fuse box. The kitchen sill had empty screws as well.

ROBBIE

What if the killer installs dead bolts and alarm systems? The fox could be guarding the hen house!

**23 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

MANDY & ROBBIE debrief YOUNGBLOOD & SLOTA. HARTMAN enters.

HARTMAN

Cowboy Tommy's license plate was traced to a car in Lafayette. Owner died in a car crash, and the vehicle ended up in the dump. That's a dead end.

YOUNGBLOOD

Security equipment was taken from the last house.

HARTMAN

How do you know they had security equipment in the first place? Why would that be significant?

MANDY

It's in the police report. Friends of Ruth Sepion said she was reassured by the recent acquisition.

ROBBIE

There was no mention of security equipment from the criminalist. We double checked and suspect

the killer removed it. Why would he do that sir?

HARTMAN stares intently at ROBBIE.

HARTMAN

So you two reviewed police reports and noticed the inconsistency? Then you went to see directly?

ROBBIE

Yes sir.

HARTMAN

So the theory is that he installs security equipment and removes it after crimes to cover his tracks? Sounds too elaborate and risky to me.

YOUNGBLOOD

We thought the same thing.

ROBBIE

Probably a rabbit hole but let's rule it out. We're meeting with Sumer Austin's live-in boyfriend to see if they had security equipment.

HARTMAN

I'll direct Border's team to revisit the other assault houses. Keep me in the loop Youngblood.

**24 EXT. TULANE UNIVERSITY POOL - DAY**

SEMBLE (21, fit, shirtless, lifeguard) oversees outdoor swimmers. Smiles at trio of attractive COEDS. Breaks from coterie. Struts to ROBBIE & MANDY with seductive grin.

ROBBIE

We believe Sumer may have been abducted by the serial killer. Six weeks and still no word?

SEMBLE

Sumer musta run off. She woulda kicked the ass of any guy who moved on her.

SEMBLE grins oddly with levity. ROBBIE stares motionless. MANDY tilts head in surprise. Glares at SEMBLE.

MANDY

You understand we think she was murdered, right?

SEMBLE turns theatrically somber.

SEMBLE

Well, yes detective. Please disregard my gallows humor. It's how I grieve. Then I just move on.

ROBBIE

We wondered if you two argued at the bar?

SEMBLE

Uh, no arguing for sure. She claimed a work obligation, but I knew she was waiting in bed for me. She gave the signal, if you know what I mean?

MANDY

Really? Then how come you stayed at the bar until 2:30 am? You kept her waiting well over an hour.

Coy grin from SEMBLE.

SEMBLE

You caught me! I was teasing her you know. We liked to play cat and mouse like that.

MANDY

Absence makes the heart grow fonder?

SEMBLE

I think you've got it.

MANDY

But then she was gone when you returned? Her absence musta been disturbing?

SEMBLE

It annoyed me a little, but I figured turnabout was fair play. That girl had a mind of her own.

MANDY

"Had" a mind? I thought you assumed she's alive?

SEMBLE

I don't know. Been waiting for you people to figure that one out. I still miss her though.

COEDS walk past SEMBLE.

COED

See ya at home hun.

MANDY shakes head.



MANDY

You ever think about installing security locks?

SEMBLE

Naww. Didn't need it. I could handle an intruder.  
We tossed away flyers that came to the house.

MANDY

You didn't by any chance save any of those?

SEMBLE

Naww. They didn't come that often. Sorry.

**25 INT. BAU SUITE - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY sit in BAU suite.

MANDY

That Ricky sounded grief-stricken. Not sure how  
he carries on?

ROBBIE

It's the counseling. Those were his therapists  
at the pool. After 6 weeks he's as good as new.

MANDY

His movements on the night of the crime were  
suspicious. He was the last to see Sumer, and  
he didn't report her missing until the next day.

Phone rings.

SEMBLE (V.O.)

Hey Robbie. How's it going girl? Thought I'd  
touch base since it occurred I mighta said  
something that put you off a few days ago?

ROBBIE raises eyebrows. MANDY listens to speakerphone.

ROBBIE

Did you have something to share Ricky, or is  
This just a social call?

SEMBLE (V.O.)

A social call? Oh sure! Wanna get together for  
a drink at The Boot or somewhere else? My place?

ROBBIE

I have a lot of work to do. You might recall

the whole city is still looking for Sumer.

SEMBLE (V.O.)

Oh sure, I'm still looking for her too.

ROBBIE

Anything else on your mind?

SEMBLE (V.O.)

Well, actually yes. My girlfriend's been hassling me about cleaning our car. So I went outside, and low and behold, guess what I found?

ROBBIE

No idea. What did you find?

SEMBLE (V.O.)

A flyer, crumpled on the floor. Just like you asked for. Budget Lock & Security. Wanna see it?

**26 INT. HARTMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN chain smokes at desk. YOUNGBLOOD, ROBBIE, MANDY, LEAT & SLOTA examine flyer with full moon watermark.

LEAT

We traced the number to a pay phone at UNO.

YOUNGBLOOD

A pay phone?

SLOTA

That's right. A pay phone next to the library.

HARTMAN

Could anything sound more suspicious than that?

LEAT

Maybe students gaming for a few extra bucks?

MANDY

He's probably selective in only dropping flyers in the mailboxes of surveilled targets. He assumes errant flyers get discarded.

HARTMAN

I want an around the clock stake out at that pay phone. The next full moon is ten days away.

**27 INT. NOPD MEDIA ROOM - DAY**

BAU around conference table. Glance at library video feed. Episodic audio static breaks. HANSON leads operation.

HANSON

Here's images of men coming and going this past week. It's already the 25<sup>th</sup>. We might be too late.

HANSON pushes button. Video montage of many sketchy men using phone. HARTMAN & BORDER enter, demoralized.

HARTMAN

Joan Arceneaux, 21, UNO history major, left the library at 6:00 last night. Missing at 8:00 a.m.

BORDER

Get this. Screw holes found on the door frame.

YOUNGBLOOD

How about the phone number?

BORDER

Traced a mile away to a SUNO phone booth.

HARTMAN

Damn it! A week wasted on the wrong phone. What am I supposed to say to Arceneaux's family?

ROBBIE

He's still unaware we've cracked his method.

YOUNGBLOOD

But there's hundreds of phone booths around town.

ROBBIE

Why not monitor every college library pay phone. Those sites seem to have special appeal.

HARTMAN

I don't see other options, but the press is in a fever pitch. I can't sustain secrecy much longer.

**28 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT BRIEFING ROOM - DAY**

HARTMAN attends special morning staffing.

CHIEF STABLE

Lila Taber's headline today reads, "Is there any end in sight?" 7 murders, 6 abductions, 6 rapes.

HARTMAN

We're monitoring 8 campus phone booths full-time.

MAYOR SMART

That looks like a shot in the dark to me.

HARTMAN

I agree Mr. Mayor, so let me propose a bolder alternative. Bell Telephone lists 852 pay phones around town. Let's cold call every one of them?

CHIEF STABLE

What would be the point? What would they say?

HARTMAN

Our women would identify themselves as college students living alone and worried about security. They heard about the company from a friend.

CHIEF STABLE

Jack Macon's Assault Unit would be prepared to converge on every phone booth location?

HARTMAN

We'd move quietly on the booth while scheduling an appointment at a trap house run by the NOPD.

MAYOR SMART

That makes sense Jeb. Let's take the offensive!

## **29 INT. NOPD MEDIA ROOM - DAY**

Phone bank (insulated booths). Detectives (HANSON, GREEN, ROBBIE, MANDY, others) make calls. HARTMAN chain smokes. YOUNGBLOOD & SANFORD at dispatch. Clock reads 8:00 a.m.

HARTMAN

Is the trap house fully functional Dale?

SANFORD

Yes. It's been vacant months. A two-bedroom house on Press Drive down the road from SUNO.

Static cuts in and out on CB dispatch feed.

MACON (V.O.)

Macon here. What's up at ground zero? I've got guys with me in the house. Cruisers around back.

HARTMAN

The ladies have begun calls. You found ample bait if he passes for a look-see?

MACON (V.O.)

You bet. Young intern assigned to parade alone in front of the picture window. Quite inviting Jeb.

HARTMAN

Sounds like what I had in mind.

MACON (V.O.)

This gal put on quite a show. Dressed casually, if you know what I mean. Take as long as you like Jeb. We'll be fine here in the house.

HARTMAN

I'll bet you will Jack. I'll bet you will.

DISSOLVE TO:

YOUNGBLOOD & SANFORD exhausted. Clock reads 9:00 p.m.

SANFORD

Margaret, notify the captain that operations have been suspended for the day. Tell him no nibbles.

DISSOLVE TO:

YOUNGBLOOD & SANFORD drowsy. Clock reads 2:43 p.m. GREEN'S right hand waves above booth. Snaps fingers twice. All attention drawn. Callers rise to listen.

GREEN

Thank you so much Arnie. I've been so scared about crime, but you're gonna give me some real peace of mind. Could you get here by 5:00 today?

ROBBIE whispers to GREEN. SANFORD rushes out of room.

ROBBIE

You disconnected?!

GREEN

ALL CLEAR! He bit every step of the way!

SANFORD rushes back in with HARTMAN in tow.

HARTMAN

Was it him Green? Are you sure it was him?!

GREEN

He sounded surprised I had his number.

HARTMAN

Where'd he place the call?

GREEN

Looks like the student union at Loyola.

HARTMAN

Dale! Get units to Loyola. NO LIGHTS OR SIRENS!  
Avoid attention unless he's found.

YOUNGBLOOD

E.T.A. at 5:00 p.m. This has to be it. No legit  
security firm would use a pay phone.

**30 INT. POLICE CRUISER 1 - DAY**

MANDY & ROBBIE sit in unmarked parked cruiser 1.

MANDY

Good look here at SUNO. House is really close.

**31 INT. POLICE CRUISER 2 - DAY**

HARTMAN & YOUNGBLOOD in unmarked parked cruiser 2. HARTMAN  
keys dispatch. Episodic static in communications feed.

HARTMAN

Any contact Macon? This is Hartman at Walmart.

MACON (V.O.)

All quiet so far Jeb.

HARTMAN

Unit 52? You in position?

SNIPER (V.O.)

In position.

HARTMAN

Unit 36? Ready on Simon?

SNIPER (V.O.)

Yes sir.

HARTMAN  
Regent and Matter, what's the status at Loyola.

MATTER (V.O.)  
We're ready to rock and roll.

HARTMAN  
Snipers! Don't let em leave once he arrives.

**32 INT/EXT. TRAP HOUSE - DAY**

MACON at trap house waiting. Intern prances in window.

MACON  
What time is it?

OFFICER  
4:48.

MANDY (V.O.)  
HEADS UP ALL UNITS. A dark brown four-door Buick LeSabre with tinted windows heading south at slow rate of speed. Driver's looking at addresses.

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
POWERS! Wasn't that sketchy guy you surveilled at the Dungeon driving a Buick with tinted windows?

MANDY (V.O.)  
Yes sir, but . . .

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
HEAD'S UP EVERYBODY! THIS MUST BE OUR GUY!

MACON  
We have the vehicle in our sights. He's slowing to a crawl right outside. TAN BUICK LESABRE, LA PLATE #346N23B! Wait or converge Jeb?

Baseball field sniper across street sights on driver.

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
ALL UNITS CONVERGE! LET'S GET HIM!

Units converge. MACON and officers rush in with guns drawn.

MACON

OUTTA THE VEHICLE BASTARD! NOW! KEEP YOUR  
HANDS HIGH IF YOU WANNA STAY ALIVE!

SUSPECT  
DON'T SHOOT! DON'T SHOOT! I DIDN'T DO NOTHIN!  
Just trying to deliver a pizza!

Scared SUSPECT emerges. Officers tackle. Pizza on seat.

MACON (V.O.)  
Everybody stand down! We got the wrong guy.

**33 INT. POLICE CRUISER 1 - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY hear dispatch. ROBBIE puts hands to head.

MANDY  
Uh oh, we moved too quickly on that notification.  
I was trying to say the car didn't look the same.

ROBBIE  
Hartman's on a hair trigger.

MANDY  
He's long gone if he came near the house.  
LOOKOUT ROBBIE! HE'S COMING RIGHT PAST US!

Red 4-door Dodge pickup races past toward lake at 100 mph.

ROBBIE  
ATTENTION ALL UNIT'S! RED FOUR-DOOR DODGE PICKUP  
RACING PAST SUNO AT A HIGH RATE OF SPEED. DRIVER  
IS FLEEING. BE READY ON SIMON UNIT 36!

**34 EXT. LEON C. SIMON DRIVE - DAY**

Dozen police cruisers race down Leon C. Simon Drive.

CUT TO:

Pickup races over Seabrook Bridge. Speed increasing.  
Police cars pursue quarter mile behind. Pickup reaches  
I-10. Drone shows pickup moving off into the far distance.

DISSOLVE TO:

**35 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESS ROOM - DAY**

Press room packed. Clock reads 8:00 a.m. HARTMAN, STABLE,



& YOUNGBLOOD enter without entourage.

HARTMAN

Media accounts of a police chase last night of a serial killer suspect through Gentilly out to Leon Simon and I-10 East were accurate.

Flashbulbs around room. Journalists jostle for position.

REPORTER

Did anyone see the man or his license plate?!

HARTMAN

The plates were stolen from a car in 1982.

REPORTER CHEE

Rumors are circulating that last night was only the mistaken identification of a pizza driver? Could the city seek federal jurisdiction?

STABLE

Today we ask for help from the public. The killer may be associated with a bogus firm called Budget Lock & Security Systems. We are also releasing a police sketch and image of his red Dodge pickup.

Audible gasps as flyer, sketch, & pickup images projected.

HARTMAN

This voice mail came in February. It's been edited and his voice and prosody are muddled. Focus on the language rather than voice itself.

Lights dim. Recording plays loudly. Dead silence in room.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted)

Hartman, how can you think so much about me and still know so little? You're such an idiot! Haw, haw! Looking around for my latest work? How bout the North Shore overpass below the bridge. Think you can handle this one now, or am I going to have to start mailing pictures?

Lights rise to reveal stunned audience.

**36 INT. HOMICIDE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY**

YOUNGBLOOD, SLOTA, LEAT, MANDY & ROBBIE brief HARTMAN.

YOUNGBLOOD

We're still coming up empty for real leads.

HARTMAN

The line was flooded after the pressor, right?

YOUNGBLOOD

The blurred image of the pickup alone generated 432 calls. They've all checked out negative.

HARTMAN

We're back in a wait-and-see posture even after the press conference and profile update?

MANDY

The sting in October blew everything up.

**37 INT. HOMICIDE CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN with his legs on desk corner smoking Maduro cigar.  
YOUNGBLOOD, SLOTA, LEAT, MANDY & ROBBIE sit around desk.

HARTMAN

Youngblood, our killer's been on a 3 month hiatus, and the mayor's forcing cutbacks. I'm afraid your time here has come to an end.

YOUNGBLOOD

What?! He took a 9 month hiatus in '83? We're federally funded. Why are we in the conversation?

HARTMAN

The bean counters reminded me that office support and consultative expenses are not covered.

YOUNGBLOOD

OK Jeb. If that's the decision we're more than happy to get back to New York. It's a cultural oasis compared to this backwards city.

HARTMAN

Cultural oasis? Nawlins has more culture in Bucktown than you have on the Eastern Seaboard.

YOUNGBLOOD

So these crimes are destined for cold case files?

HARTMAN

Who said anything about dissolving the task

force? We're calling it reorganization.

YOUNGBLOOD nods toward ROBBIE & MANDY.

YOUNGBLOOD

How bout them? What are they supposed to do?

HARTMAN

Sorry guys. I hate to be the bearer of bad news.

ROBBIE

We'll be unemployed. Aren't you concerned about the return of the Moondialer?

HARTMAN

Moondialer, huh? Catchy Whit. I like it.

MANDY

Come on Robbie. Let's go. This is a done deed.

HARTMAN

It is what it is. Thank you for your service.

Dismissed BAU team grumbles out. HARTMAN exhales quietly. Right hand betrays a tremble as he snuffs out Maduro. OPEL enters with tight smile.

OPEL

I get the impression they won't be back.

HARTMAN

No. Doesn't look like it. Go ahead and notify payroll that the deed is done. Bastards. Heading out early. I'll be at the Maple Leaf if needed.

DISSOLVE TO:

### **38 EXT. GULF OF MEXICO - NIGHT**

Middle aged women (FRANIE & JODY) pray in terror below deck of a 40-foot trawler in thunderstorm. ROBBIE (6) watches in terror.

FRANIE

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee.  
AAAHHH! JODY! WE'RE GOING UNDER! GET ROBBIE NEAR  
THE HATCH!!

JODY

ROBBIE! COME TO MAMA! HURRY UP BABY!

ALBERT (V.O.)  
MERKEL FELL OVER!

FRANIE  
ALBERT! HE CAN'T SWIM! GOD HAVE MERCY!

**39 EXT. MARSH ISLAND - NIGHT**

Young ROBBIE (6) splashes in dark water looking for sunken vessel. Squints to see vague image of red flashing oil rig surrounded by petrified trees in distance. Mystical music.

**40 INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT**

ROBBIE bolts awake screaming in dark bedroom.

MANDY  
It's OK Robbie. I'm here. It's just a nightmare.

ROBBIE  
When is this gonna stop? Swimming for my life in the Gulf of Mexico after my mom and dad died.

MANDY  
The flashing oil rig and petrified trees?

ROBBIE  
Yeah . . . when will they go away?

**41 INT. CHARITY HOSPITAL - DAY**

Crowded, noisy, busy hospital. Men with wheelbarrow crowd into elevator with patient on a gurney. Door opens sixth floor. ROBBIE enters Psychology Unit. Greeted by KIM. Gazes trepidly at wall photos of MITKER achievements.

KIM  
Are you here about the tech position?

ROBBIE  
Yes. I'm Robbie Whit.

Suite door opens. Trish Mitker (47, 5'5", 125 pounds, curly dirty blond hair, imposing, strikingly attractive) appears.

MITKER  
Oh, hello, I'm Trish Mitker. Here for the job?  
ROBBIE

I don't think I'm qualified Dr. Mitker.

MITKER

Come into my office and we'll see.

**42 INT. MITKER'S OFFICE - DAY**

MITKER behind desk. ROBBIE smiles and laughs freely.

ROBBIE

. . . and then our friend Oliver flipped his fingers into the air like a magician and said To Mandy and me, Robbie I'm hooked!!

MITKER laughs disarmingly. KIM enters.

KIM

Trish, don't forget your meeting with the CEO.

MITKER

Thank you Kim. Call Bill and tell him I'll be down shortly. Well Robbie, it was nice to meet you. I'll see you first thing in the morning.

ROBBIE

You want me in the position?!

MITKER

You'll administer test batteries. Can you type?

ROBBIE

Yes ma'am. In fact, 60 words a minute.

MITKER

Really? How about that. A value added benefit.

MITKER waltzes out. ROBBIE exhales, eyes wide.

KIM

Are you OK Robbie? You look really alive?

ROBBIE

Just processing my conversation with Dr. Mitker.

KIM

Many people leave Trish's office this way.

**43 INT. APARTMENT - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY at kitchen table over coffee.

ROBBIE

She's like famous Mandy! I was intimidated but she insisted I come into her office. She talked to me thirty minutes, then said I had the job!

MANDY

That was great luck. Maybe she knows a university administrator who would look at my application. MANDY opens morning paper. Startled with surprise.

MANDY

ROBBIE! LOOK AT THE HEADLINE!

MANDY holds up headline: SERIAL KILLER SUSPECT IN CUSTODY!

ROBBIE

Who is it? Where'd they catch him!

MANDY

April Chee says he's Tomas Hansen, a Danish transfer student from UNO who raped a coed.

ROBBIE

Here's a picture. Hey, that's Cowboy Tommy!

MANDY

Good grief, it is! They musta nailed him.

ROBBIE

I suppose, but he was at the Dungeon with us at 3:30 am the night Sepion and Tabor were abducted.

MANDY

Hansen woulda had to leave the Monteleone loaded to go prowling on 5 miles away before sunrise.

ROBBIE

Our testimony would be exculpatory. The captain needs to be waived off on this suspect.

**44 INT. HARTMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN enters office. Smug jump in step. Brown Stetson hung on coat rack. Sits with coffee at desk. OPEL enters.

OPEL

On your desk.

HARTMAN frowns. Sighs knowingly. Picks up folded newspaper.  
OPEL leaves office. Waits for reaction at her desk.

HARTMAN  
DAMMIT! DEEP BACKGROUND SOURCE CLOSE TO THE  
INVESTIGATION, MY ASS! Now Taber thinks she's  
playing some kinda Watergate deep throat game?!

OPEL  
Not good for us, huh?

HARTMAN  
This blows up the prosecution! Screwed by fired  
consultants who I didn't even want to hire.

OPEL  
They know both Taber and Chee well.

HARTMAN  
Doesn't Lila know they haven't even worked here  
for months?! Get her on the phone immediately!

**45 INT. MITKER MANSION - NIGHT**

ROBBIE, MANDY & MITKER in overstuffed chairs. Wine and  
pizza on marble table. MITKER looks captivated.

MANDY  
Thanks so much Trish for calling President Shy at  
Southern University. It's great teaching there.

MITKER  
Emory and I go way back. I once marched with him.  
Let's talk about the serial killer investigation.  
How come the police have not moved ahead on an  
indictment of Cowboy Tommy? It's been weeks.

MANDY  
We're not sure. It seems to have something to do  
with Lila Taber's expose on police incompetence.

MITKER  
So you don't think this Hansen guy was your guy?

MANDY  
We think it would be an errant prosecution.

MITKER

Wonder where Taber got her information for the expose? Sounds like a pretty compelling source.

MANDY & ROBBIE shrug, exchange sheepish glance.

ROBBIE

Trish, you've conducted research on paraphilias. In your gut, what's your read on this guy?

MITKER pauses. Sips wine and sighs in resignation.

MITKER

So you really want to hear inferences? They're no more relevant than any cop on the beat. Just free-floating speculation. Buyer beware.

MANDY

Yes! Tell us everything you've been thinking!

Camera fades out on MITKER in lamp-lighted living room.

ROBBIE and MANDY slump comfortably in leather armchairs.

JUMP CUTS focus on MITKER body repositions to convey time.

MITKER

Your killer dated infrequently in high school with failed relationships that were humiliating.

JUMP CUT:

Single domineering mother. Absent father. Probably a victim of physical or sexual abuse.

JUMP CUT:

Small sibship. A younger brother may help cover his crimes. Sisters would be reluctant to do so.

JUMP CUT:

Assume bully victimization and/or perpetration as a youth with sealed juvie court records.

JUMP CUT:

Cold psychopathy with reflexive acts of defiance. Emotions of revulsion and fascination commingled.

JUMP CUT:

Probably long captivated by suffocation. Someone



he knows maybe choked to death? That sorta thing.

JUMP CUT:

Might have some college but without a degree.

JUMP CUT:

Seeks jobs with authority. Maybe a rescue worker, bouncer, fireman. Not a cop given your rope analysis. Lots of job transitions.

JUMP CUT:

Exposed to pornography in youth. Novel appetites like suffocation fantasies require role modeling.

JUMP CUT:

He loves horror movies and late night TV.

JUMP CUT:

He's not psychotic and the moon nexus is more practical than delusional. It woulda been advertised if central to his brand.

JUMP CUT:

Lives outside city in remote location.

JUMP CUT:

Your killer doesn't want or expect you to find Lilly Landry's body. That location is a clue.

Camera pulls away revealing mesmerized ROBBIE & MANDY.

**46 EXT. SEAFOOD BOIL SHOP - NIGHT**

MANDY, ROBBIE & OLIVER sit outside with beer & crawfish.

ROBBIE

It's great to see you again Oliver! All the way from North Dakota! Let's have fun this weekend!

OLIVER

Seize the day ladies, seize the day!

MANDY

Just what we had in mind Oliver. Here's our pitch. We're still searching for victim Lilly Landry who's been missing since last January.

ROBBIE

The location could be an important clue. The killer said she was left in a Nawlins East bayou.

OLIVER

OK, I see. We're looking for a body on my weekend visit. Like visitors do.

MANDY

Well not exactly. We thought it might be amusing to consult with a psychic on Airline Highway.

OLIVER

Oh, that's more like it. What the heck? I'm in. Let's play parlor games?

**47 EXT. SISTER AYUDA DIRT DRIVEWAY - DAY**

ROBBIE, MANDY & OLIVER at psychic parlor (eerie shack surrounded by cypress trees). SISTER AYUDA answers door (22, Black, tall, slender, sheer muumuu dress, dark head wrap, jewels set in moon pendant, crystal ear rings in black obsidian, amulet). Odd smiles, mannerisms.

SISTER AYUDA

Welcome to Sister Ayuda's parlor. I don't see you on my schedule today. Why are you here?

MANDY

We've heard that a person like you can provide insights into questions that are troubling us?

SISTER AYUDA

You mean a reading? My fee is \$90. Cash up front.

**48 INT. PSYCHIC PARLOR - DAY**

Reading room behind heavy drapes. Heavy marble table (purple crystal decorative rock centerpiece), overstuffed chairs, red velvet fabric, cold dark room. AYUDA stares at ROBBIE, faint eerie grin. Trio trembles from cold.

SISTER AYUDA

I'm sensing a history here . . . one of mystery .  
. . one of searching . . . one of longing . . .

one of sinfulness . . . one of cynicism.

AYUDA grimaces, shakes head with reluctance to continue.

ROBBIE

Sister, we're looking a missing women, and the man who took her.

SISTER AYUDA

The man you seek is far away. He's watching and waiting. He's with other evil spirits. They say that he has an . . . um . . . um . . . um-bil-i-cal . . . yes that's it, attachment to your missing woman. Spirits warn of the fine line between chaser and chased.

AYUDA falls into deep trance for moments.

SISTER AYUDA

I see the woman you are seeking. She's no longer on our side. She rests in . . . a lake of water . . . dark water . . . black, like it's hiding a creature . . . where no one should go.

ROBBIE (whispers)

Yes . . . that's it.

SISTER AYUDA

The spirits call out her name. Hold my hand. It sounds like . . . Wha . . . Wha . . . Whi . . . Whitten. . . Now I'm hearing a different name. Sounds like . . . Bob . . . no, no, it's not a man's name they reference. What remains rests in dangerous waters. She looks desperate.

ROBBIE stares down. MANDY startled. OLIVER scans room. AYUDA collapses in heap. Trio rises for departure.

ROBBIE

We appreciate what you had to say today.

SISTER AYUDA

Not me madam. I'm just a conduit, a translator.

**49 EXT. CAR PARKED IN DIRT DRIVEWAY - DAY**

Trio in car, visibly shaken. OLIVER nervous laughter.

OLIVER

Well now, tell me what we learned today ladies?

MANDY

THAT was WEIRD! She came so close to Robbie's full name! Bob Whitten!! What the hell was that??

ROBBIE

Lilly Landry was left in the Bayou! Not me! I had a strange feeling of déjà vu.

MANDY

She said the killer was waiting at a distance. Does she even know the word umbilical?

MANDY stops car, exits, opens mailbox, rifles through mail.

ROBBIE

Mandy! Get in this car! Tampering with mail is a federal offense. That's a felony!

MANDY

Look!! Sister Ayuda is Ophelia from Mystik!

MONTAGE OF SISTER AYUDA (10, 5'1", 65 lbs, mischievous smirk, magnetic unblinking eye contact) SITS ON COUCH IN A DARK MUSTY LIVING ROOM WHILE GRANDPARENTS, ROBBIE & PEERS (JOE & LYNN) WATCH TRANSFIXED; FALLS INTO TRANCE; DROOPS LAZILY TO FLOOR; THERAPISTS LOOK ALARMED.

ROBBIE (V.O.)

That con artist! She really got us! Remember Oliver, I went to her house a decade ago for Dr. Amery. She was the little girl from Mystik who claimed to be possessed.

OLIVER

"Oh yeah! Now I remember! You generated evidence regarding the power of circumstances in cultivating supernatural beliefs?"

ROBBIE

Yep. Ophelia and her big brother were putting on quite a show for their grandparents. She got a lot of attention. Quite talented.

MANDY

She made a career out of it. Busted us for \$90!

OLIVER

She recognized Robbie from the start.

MANDY

At least we can breath a little easier.

Frenetic banter continues on drive back to New Orleans.

ROBBIE

I still wonder how she made her connections?

OLIVER

Could umbilical mean biologically related? Mitker wondered if the killer had a family accomplice.

MANDY pages through aerial photography book in front seat.

MANDY

Searches were conducted in bayous right off the highway. Look here. There's a small lake called Brothers Bayou that adjoins Chico Lagoon.

OLIVER

Remember what Ophelia said, the water was black and looked like it was hiding a creature! Like maybe the creature from the black lagoon?

MANDY

Maybe we should consider experimentation?

MANDY & ROBBIE smile. OLIVER frowns with dismay.

OLIVER

Experimentation? We're certainly not going into the swamp looking for a dead body! I didn't fly 1,300 miles for that! Not THIS time ladies.

**50 EXT. FORT MACOMB - DAY**

Daybreak (muggy fog, air thick, 50 foot visibility). Trio putt-putts west under bridge into Bayou Sauvage. MANDY hands out flashlights. OLIVER looks acutely anxious.

MANDY

It's less than three miles.

OLIVER

What the hell would we do if we actually found a body? Please say we're not planning a recovery?

ROBBIE

It's just a little recognizance mission. What are the odds we'd stumble on her remains?

ROBBIE at front of skiff. Shines flashlight ahead. Turn into narrow water around lagoon. North arm of Brothers Bayou size of football field. Tree stumps, marsh. Daybreak.

OLIVER

You're gonna get us trapped in here Mandy. That's what you're gonna do. I feel it in my bones.

ROBBIE

No one would wander around here at night?

MANDY

They would have had the benefit of the full moon.

ROBBIE

I guess it's like any other waterway for hunters. Lots of guys come and go, but it seems like someone woulda stumbled on her body if left here.

Flock of loud crows circle marshy island 300 feet ahead.

ROBBIE

Move us a little closer to the side over there. Looks like something over there, right?

MANDY

Oh! I see it. Looks like a big plastic bag just below the surface thirty feet ahead.

OLIVER

Don't go further! We're gonna get stuck I tell you. Let me get in front to take a gander.

Dark plastic garbage bag with flies in marsh. OLIVER gasps.

OLIVER

AHHH! STOP MOVING! THERE'S A HEAD IN THAT BAG!

MANDY

REALLY?! You're sure you see it?!

OLIVER

ARE YOU CRAZY?! I KNOW A SKULL WHEN I SEE ONE!  
IT'S A FLOATER! This is for the police!

MANDY  
GIVE ME THOSE BINOCULARS! Oh yeah, that's a body!  
Don't know if it's Landr wouldn't bet against it!

OLIVER  
Let's get back! We need to call the police!

**51 INT. AIRPORT TERMINAL - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY at airport security with OLIVER.

OLIVER  
So dental records confirmed it was Lilly Landry?

MANDY  
Yep, and not even courtesy contact from the NOPD.

ROBBIE  
Hartman's still salty about Taber's exposé. He's  
got us pegged as the Cowboy leak.

OLIVER  
Don't you think Ophelia needs a closer look? She  
seems to have special knowledge about the case.

ROBBIE  
She didn't directly finger Brothers Bayou.

OLIVER  
She implied a family connection. I was there. I  
heard her say an um . . bil i cal attachment.

MANDY  
We are going back for a return engagement.

**52 EXT. SISTER AYUDA'S PORCH - DAY**

ROBBIE knocks hard. AYUDA cracks door. Waves away visitors.

SISTER AYUDA  
You two don't belong here no more.

ROBBIE  
We're on to you Ophelia Myrtle! I remember you as  
from Mystik. You've got some explaining to do.

SISTER AYUDA  
I'll talk to you, but what's in it for me? My  
rate just went up. It's \$100, or I'm not talking.

MANDY

You've gotta deal, but no cash up front this time. You deliver first for this Benjamin.

SISTER AYUDA

I remembered you, but mediums use everything They know to contact the spirits.

MANDY

Oh come on Ophelia, cut the crap! This scam has nothing to do with bringing out the spirits.

AYUDA contorts face with grimaces and contortions.

SISTER AYUDA

Robbie, you never understood that I DO have the gift. I'm trying to save your life. You need to repent if you want to exorcise the demons that quake your soul in the night. They told me so.

ROBBIE frozen with blood rushing from face.

ROBBIE

Do you know ANYTHING about the men we're chasing? You don't know the word umbilical?

SISTER AYUDA

The spirits come into me. I'm not in the room while in trances. I neva heard dat word you said. I got no college learning.

MANDY

That's all ya know huh? That's not much for \$100.

SISTER AYUDA

I knows she's a sinner who's been haunted since childhood. Something to do with water. Unless she repents and prays to the Lord, she drowns in sin.

MANDY

I've heard just about enough from you Ophelia!

SISTER AYUDA

God is great, and she can be saved even with only one breath remaining. She will know at the time of the Lord. Pray with all your soul as commanded, and your demons will be dispatched.

ROBBIE

You claimed the woman we found was left dead in



black waters. You said her name was Bob Whitten.  
Why did you use my name instead of the victim?

AYUDA dramatic pause.

SISTER AYUDA  
Because, they are one in the same.

MANDY  
It's time to go . . .

SISTER AYUDA  
I'll pray for both of your souls. Especially  
this one (nods to Mandy). Such anger issues.  
So true to your word.

AYUDA holds hand for payment. MANDY shows and keeps \$100.

MANDY  
You didn't really think we'd pay more today?

SISTER AYUDA  
You SHOULD, especially for your girlfriend. A  
life is worth more than \$100 you know.

### 53 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

MANDY & ROBBIE on couch. TV on in background.

ROBBIE  
It's been 9 months since leaving the task force.  
I'm itching for more leads. Eunice Trahan was  
left in that pool at Camp Cloister Retreat.

MANDY  
He had to be familiar with that camp. Visited or  
attended at some point. Consider the challenge of  
transporting a body through the woods?

ROBBIE  
Musta had an accomplice. Summer's here, and  
you're off from SUNO. Let's go investigate.

MANDY  
We can interview video store owners, librarians,  
car dealers, ER nurses and others in towns from  
Cocodrie to Bay St. Louis.

ROBBIE

We can also touch base with Vera and Junior at the Bikini Inn! I've been missing them so much.

**54 INT. BIKINI INN MOTEL - NIGHT**

VERA (64, thin, chain-smoking) & JUNIOR (65, lean, balding, beaming) watch MANDY & ROBBIE eat crawfish etouffee.

JUNIOR

I hears ya still lookin for that killa, huh?

MANDY

We were laid off when he went on hiatus.

JUNIOR

Guys like dat don't fade away. Dey bide time.

VERA

Now Junior! Let da gurls talk! Dey ain't intrested in ya theories.

MANDY

We're still on the case Vera. Just cause the task force dissolved doesn't mean we had to give up.

JUNIOR

See der Vera! Dats what I'm talkin bout! Our two detective friends operate like bulldogs. Ya still got da pink Magnum I gave ya darlin? You'll need it when ya get eye to eye with dat bastard.

MANDY nods to her car outside.

MANDY

I keep it close, and ya taught me how to use it.

VERA

Don't let this hothead get ya revved up Mandy. His temper is not something a gurl should copy.

**55 INT. REDMAND POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY with Lieutenant FROST (74, silver-haired).

MANDY

We just got back from Cocodrie to check out the location of an earlier drop. Nobody saw a thing.

ROBBIE

We lifted a print from a coke can left in the woods at Camp Cloister. The FBI has it.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Sounds like a long shot.

MANDY  
Maybe you could help us in terms of unsolved homicides involving suffocation?

FROST rolls chair to filing cabinet. Extracts records.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Let's see. We had 32 murders over the past 5 years. None involving suffocation. There are 100s of other crimes in my files you can examine.

ROBBIE  
Lots of sex offenders I suppose?

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Sure. Lots of sex offenders. Too many to count.

**56 INT. RIC'S FLIX, BAY ST. LOUIS - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY enter video store. Greeted by owner (WISE). MANDY shows sketch. WISE studies it a minute. Hands back.

WISE  
I don't know. I guess he looks vaguely familiar, but I can't place the guy.

MANDY  
Do you know of a movie called *Mad Mood Rising*?

WISE  
*Mad Moon Rising*? Let me check my records.

WISE flips through log book.

WISE  
Oh yes, here it is. *Mad Mood Rising*. Betamax purchase from early '83. Like other videos, it generated early rentals. Looks like 14 in the first 2 months. Then tapered off. Pretty typical.

ROBBIE  
Nothing unusual about those early rentals?

WISE

The first 3 rentals were a week apart. Kept it the maximum 3 days each time. Guess that was a little odd. Paid cash. That's unusual.

MANDY

Do you have any identifiable information?

WISE

No, not without a credit card. He paid cash. We still required a signature, but you can see it's just scribble.

MANDY

Can I take a good look at that signature?

ROBBIE

Hard to make anything out of these scribbles. It looks a little like left strokes, right?

MANDY

Was cash rental unusual.

WISE

These tapes are expensive. Way over \$100. They're especially produced for repeat usage. We require a credit card in case they get damaged.

ROBBIE

So it's uncommon for customer's to fork out that much cash in advance?

WISE

Why tie up a \$200 cash deposit. Maybe he didn't have a credit card? Some guys are sensitive about people seeing their video rentals.

MANDY

Or maybe he didn't want to be identified? So he laid down the money 3 times in 3 weeks and then got disinterested in the movie?

WISE

My records indicate he lost it. I kept his deposit. Maybe it got damaged and he was embarrassed to bring it back?

ROBBIE

Or maybe he just wanted to keep it?

## 57 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY

HARTMAN enters unit. OPEL nods to corner where FARAROMO (portly, dark Italian, rimmed glasses, rumpled suit) waits. FARAROMO rises, trails HARTMAN into office. Sits to right.

HARTMAN

Fararomo, are you sure you're a Tulane professor?

FARAROMO

Yes Captain, I am. A full tenured professor.

HARTMAN

You've taken so long to do so little. One might see my overture to you as a real long shot.

FARAROMO

Not such a long shot sir. Public records are being digitized at a fast pace. Big data holds promise for sorting otherwise innocuous patterns into a gold mine of information.

HARTMAN

Before you go off to become rich and famous, could you please help me find the owner of the red 4-door Dodge Ram pickup? Just one vehicle we know exists. Why can't you find it Fararomo?

FARAROMO

You asked me to assemble an ownership list of all such auto purchases over the past 20 years. I explained a project like that takes time. I'm very busy Captain, as a professor you know.

HARTMAN

Please, don't get me started. Are you gonna help the city of New Orleans or not?

FARAROMO

Yes sir. I am a man who lives up to his promises.

HARTMAN

Fararomo. I need to see something from your efforts. It's time for you to deliver.

FARAROMO

OK, I wanted to spend more time, but here it is.

FARAROMO reaches into brief case. Dumps thick green

computer printout on desk. HARTMAN scans, slams shut.  
Pulls Marlboro from top pocket. Ritualist lighting.

HARTMAN

What am I supposed to do with this? How many  
entries are on this list?

FARAROMO

I believe 152,399. They're all there Captain.  
Your killer is right there on your desk.

HARTMAN

You do realize Fararomo that my killer will be  
dead by the time we clear all these car owners?

FARAROMO

May I remind you sir that my work has been  
unpaid. I'm what you might call a volunteer.

HARTMAN

May I remind you that my dozen meetings with you  
over the past year has also been uncompensated.

FARAROMO

Perhaps your expectancies were too high, but I'd  
advise against flushing away our initiative.

HARTMAN

Really? That's precisely what I'm considering.

FARAROMO

A great philosopher once said Captain that we're  
all charlatans to some degree. What I've done is  
assemble a list that gives clues to where your  
killer might be. As far as I'm concerned, that's  
my part. From now on, it's up to you.

HARTMAN

So this your part, huh? You think officers should  
be sent to all these addresses until our killer  
invites them in for coffee? How many addresses?

FARAROMO

Only a thousand or so in the immediate vicinity.

HARTMAN

OK. I see where this has taken me. In industry  
it's referred to as sunk costs. Next time could  
ya try to sort your big data into small buckets?

FARAROMO

Think of it as our proof of concept project.

**58 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT**

MANDY & ROBBIE at table with wine and Chinese take out.

MANDY

The killer said nobody was going anywhere when he set the lines. No fail safes were needed. A student mentioned rope access technicians.

ROBBIE

What's that?

MANDY

Oil field guys descend, ascend, and traverse ropes while suspended by harnesses. They thread a safety line for 'fail safe' desents.

ROBBIE

Brandi was told to call him Luke. But the force was with him, not her! Like Luke Skywalker?!

MANDY

Roustabouts go out for weeks at time. It should be easy to rule out workers based on their schedule and the 19 crime windows. We should screen every oil platform worker!

ROBBIE

Not tonight though! Morgus is about to start!

CUT TO:

MANDY & ROBBIE cuddle on couch with popcorn. Clock reads 10:25 p.m. ***The character of Morgus the Magnificent is owned by WWL-TV in New Orleans. Use of his likeness would require a copyright release for reproductions or archival footage. In lieu of permission, this character would be redrafted as a generic late night horror show host from the 1970s.***

ROBBIE

Reminds me of childhood. Back to his legendary lab above the old French Quarter ice house!

MANDY

Wonder what kind of ridiculous technology he has in store tonight to cure all our social ills?

ROBBIE

Chopsley will be at his side to save him! Poor guy can't talk cause of that old lab accident. Disfigured too. Poor guy has to wear that hooded executioner outfit!

MANDY

Here they comes! His triumphant return!

Bubbling lab beakers. Skull cyborg ERIC starts show with eerie voice and tingling space background jingles culminating in crashing sounds.

ERIC

Good evening. Welcome to . . . Morgus Presents.

Professor MORGUS (wild Einsteinian hair, tattered filthy lab coat, stethoscope, crooked bucked teeth) ambles out.

MORGUS

Good evening my dear students, and friends of science and those of the higher order.

MORGUS forms shape of pyramid symbol with fingers framed around left eye. Looks back and forth as if to protect shared secret from interlopers outside room or camera.

ROBBIE

Oh yeah, the Higher Order!

MANDY

Secret sect of scientists bringing higher intelligence to the universe!

ROBBIE

It's on the back of the dollar bill since a founding member was an architect at Giza!

MANDY

Shush Robbie. Morgus is talking!

MORGUS

You're gonna see me tonight like you've never seen me before. Totally out of my normal intellectual mode. That's your cue Chopsley.

Blackboard behind MORGUS rises. CHOPSLEY (7' tall, full black executioner hood) emerges from rest. Lumbers over.



MORGUS

We have here a little machine just like a videorecorder at home, except this is a Morgusatroid Lobotometer recorder. It transfers brain wave impulses into the lobotometer just like they were sound waves in the air.

MORGUS laughs deviously looking back and forth.

MANDY

This is so good Robbie!

MORGUS

Here's the catch ladies and gentlemen. My lobotometer records from a part of the brain that controls human talents. It can transfer talent into the brain of anyone I select.

ROBBIE

So wild!

MORGUS

We'll get into it as the night unfolds ladies and gentlemen. I'm inviting average New Orleanians to my lab tonight atop the old ice house above Pirate's Alley.

MANDY

Behind the Cabildo in Jackson Square!

MORGUS

You'll see the transfer of unimaginable talents before this night is over. In the meantime, the boys down at the station scheduled a classic tonight. *Night of the Living Dead*. Let's get to it, and we'll meet again at the next break.

# **59 INT NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

OPEL unlocks door, enters office, turns on lights. Clock reads 7:30 a.m. (Wed, 2/11/87). Enraged voices of SMART, STABLE, and HARTMAN from Captain's office.

MAYOR SMART

I'M NOT PROTECTING EITHER OF YOU ANY LONGER!

CHIEF STABLE

THE HELL WITH THAT RICHARD! THIS IS ON YOU AS

MUCH AS US! Do what you have to do, but don't act so goddamned uninvolved! Your implicated with us!

MAYOR SMART  
JUST LOOKING FOR DETECTIVES WHO KNOW WHAT THE  
HELL THEY'RE DOING!

HARTMAN  
I'VE GOT FORTY FUCKING YEARS OF EXPERIENCE SMART.  
SHOVE THAT POLITICAL SPIN UP YOUR ASS MAYOR!

CHIEF STABLE  
Just go back to your office Richard and let us  
handle it. We'll call you back in a few hours.

MAYOR SMART  
I'll do that. I'm calling the governor and FBI.

HARTMAN  
Richard, you'll regret it if this case is taken  
from our jurisdiction. It'll never get solved.

SMART storms out. Glass door slammed, vibrates wildly.

CHIEF STABLE  
Jeb, you've got to come up with a viable plan. By  
next week our position will be unsustainable.

# **60 INT APARTMENT - DAY**

ROBBIE and MANDY sip wine. Phone rings. MANDY answers.

OPEL (V.O.)  
Mandy, this is Opel at the NOPD. Captain Hartman  
wants you two to join him for drinks at the Seaport  
Bar on Bourbon Street at 9:00 p.m. tonight.

MANDY  
Tell him we're otherwise committed tonight Opel

OPEL (V.O.)  
I know you girls have a beef, but it sounds  
important. I'm gonna tell him to expect you.

MANDY hangs up.

ROBBIE  
Bet he wants to attack us for the Picayune story  
that busted Cowboy Tommy. He's still steamed.

MANDY

A good reason to just stay Uptown tonight.

ROBBIE & MANDY turn up the TV. Stare ahead. Pretend to watch.

MANDY

Damn it! I can't believe he's picking a fight after cutting us off at the knees. It's unacceptable! Let's meet to give him a piece of our minds.

ROBBIE

Can't let a good fight go, huh?

MANDY

Come on. We'll take in supper in the Quarter and meet him after. I promise to be on my best behavior.

**61 INT SEAPORT LOUNGE (BOURBON STREET) - NIGHT**

ROBBIE & MANDY enter Seaport Lounge.

MANDY

Look at him holding court like a celebrity.

ROBBIE

At least there's no groupies flocking around him.

HARTMAN (cigar, Manhattan on rocks, proud posture) at bar, laughs loudly with two wing men. MANDY approaches from behind.

MANDY

Hello Captain. We're here as requested. What's up?

HARTMAN turns. Makes eye contact. Surveys women. MANDY suddenly recognizes smiling man at captain's right.

MANDY

Whoa! Bobby Hebert?!

HEBERT rises respectfully to greet visitors.

HEBERT

Hello ladies. Glad to meet you. Don't tell me you're fans of Big Chief here? His ego is swollen enough!

HARTMAN

These two don't count in that number Bobby.

HEBERT

Why not Big Chief?! What did you do to chase these ladies away? They must be good judges of character!

More laughter. HARTMAN amused by star struck stammerings.

HARTMAN

Bobby, this is Mandy Powers and Robbie Whit. They used to work for me on the serial killer task force.

HEBERT

Really? You're finally hanging out with respectable women Big Chief! At least that case is behind ya. I'd advise against spending too much time with this guy ladies. Not good for your reputations.

HARTMAN

Gentlemen, I need to retire to the back booth with my audience. No need to thank me for the honor of my company this evening.

HARTMAN to back corner table. Lights cigar. Swigs whiskey.

HARTMAN

Glad you joined me tonight. I understand that you woulda preferred staying with Bobby at the bar, but no slight registered.

ROBBIE

Listen Captain, we want you to know we had nothing to do with Lila Taber leak on Tomas Hansen.

Drinks arrive. HARTMAN waves hand to dismiss confessional.

HARTMAN

It was Lauri Green. I fired her last summer Whit.

MANDY

Are you sure it was her? That doesn't sound like something she would have done. How'd you know?

HARTMAN

Well contrary to your apparent misunderstanding, I really AM a detective. You see, detecting is what I do. Figured it out from the article and confronted Taber who refused to confirm or deny.

MANDY

But Lila protected her source, right?

HARTMAN

She's a lousy poker player. Green coughed it up when confronted. It was time for her to move on.

ROBBIE

Seems like you mighta wanted to keep her around since, after all, her skepticism was wise

HARTMAN

Nope. Someone in my position can't tolerate breaches of confidence. It's bad for morale. As far as the substance of the story, it was probably best that the Hansen investigation was slow rolled.

MANDY

So Lauri did the department a service?

HARTMAN

I'll concede he's not the killer. In fact, it's obvious that none of our suspects are the killer.

MANDY

Obvious?

HARTMAN

Yes, obviously. A 16-year-old student from Destrehan High was abducted Monday. The bastard left a message last night.

ROBBIE

Sure it's him, right? Not a copycat?

HARTMAN

No copycat. He knew about the girl and warned there'd be more. He said Tavia would die tonight, and there was nothing us morons could do about it.

ROBBIE

Fuuck! How long has this hiatus been? Arceneaux was abducted in late September of '85. It's mid-February. That's 16 months, right?

HARTMAN

Yeah, 16 months.

ROBBIE

So what's the task force gonna do now? Has the investigation made progress since we left?

HARTMAN

Progress? Not exactly. As far as Tavia Teriot goes, that poor girl will be splashed all over the paper by morning. Her family's distraught.

HARTMAN fumbles lighting another cigar. Pauses.

ROBBIE

Sounds like a resurrected crisis. We appreciate the heads up before reading about it in the newspaper.

MANDY

Seems like you should be getting some sleep given what you'll be facing this week?

HARTMAN

I was just wondering. Have you two been giving any thought to the case since you left the task force?

MANDY

You mean since we were summarily dismissed.

HARTMAN

Laid off Powers. Let's keep the record straight. Anyway, you somehow found Landry's body in Brothers Bayou, right? How the hell y'all do that? Sounds like you never stopped working the case?

MANDY

Let's just say we followed tentative leads pointing in that direction. Any useful physical evidence?

HARTMAN

No. She was out there too long.

ROBBIE

We believe the killer has a partner. We think it's a brother or childhood friend.

HARTMAN

Crap. How the hell did you come up with that?

MANDY

It makes sense given the effort required to drag Eunice Trahan through the woods to a swimming pool.

HARTMAN

Listen, I'm done second guessing your reasoning and logic. You have nothing to prove to me, and the task force has no actionable leads. I'm sitting

on a 20th victim and need you back Monday morning.

MANDY frowns. Shakes head.

MANDY

That's not possible. We've got good jobs after getting laid off a year ago. Why would we give them up to get browbeat by you again?

HARTMAN raises voice through cloud of smoke.

HARTMAN

I'll have the Mayor make a special appeal to your employers if necessary. You WILL report for duty Monday morning.

MANDY

That's just not in the cards sir.

HARTMAN

I don't care what you do for the remainder of your days on this earth, but this city needs you, and you are not going to let it down.

ROBBIE & MANDY look down at drinks.

ROBBIE

We understand your situation.

HARTMAN pause his delivery with an uncharacteristic gulp.

HARTMAN

And frankly . . . I might need you too.

MANDY

Lots of water under this bridge Captain. We gave you complete loyalty, and you cut us loose without a second thought. Of all people, you should understand that level of disrespect.

HARTMAN pauses. Drinks again.

HARTMAN

I'm not asking for your approval Powers. Judge me as you like. Your vanity and moral imperatives will allow you no other option. If nothing else, you'll return to prove I was wrong.

ROBBIE

Why do you need our help? Just bring back  
Johnny Youngblood? He does works for the FBI.

HARTMAN slams hand on table splashing alcohol in  
all directions. Patrons glance awkwardly at conflict.

HARTMAN

DAMN IT! I don't WANT Johnny Youngblood, OR the  
FBI! I want the BEST analytic minds this city  
and state have to offer. I already have access to  
FBI lab resources. I need your . . . imaginations.

ROBBIE

That's flattering sir. We'll think about it.

HARTMAN

You two get this straight. WE have a common enemy,  
and WE are gonna go get em like big dogs. As of  
tonight, the Moondialer is living on borrowed time.

Hartman stands. Drops \$20 on table. Strolls out to Bourbon.

ROBBIE

Pretty good pitch. Still has his fast ball.

MANDY

One day that man is gonna light himself on fire.

## **62 INT NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT -DAY**

Clock reads 8:00 am. HARTMAN rises at desk. OPEL looks in,  
shrugs. Strides into briefing room. Hushed tension in air.

HARTMAN

Let's get started. We need to saturate Destrehan to  
gather info about Teriot's abduction. A neighbor  
saw a silver pickup moving at high speed south on  
Ormond Blvd headed toward the river.

BORDER

Did the neighbor see the driver?

HARTMAN

He believed there were two men, but he was not  
sure where they headed after River Road.

MANDY and ROBBIE enter back room. Assume old BAU seats.

HARTMAN



Whit and Powers have been conducting their own investigation over the past year. I'm glad to say they're now back with us as of this morning.

Soft room applause. ROBBIE & MANDY look ahead awkwardly.

HARTMAN

So Whit, y'all mentioned a couple of ideas at our business meeting Friday night. Anything to offer?

ROBBIE

We've come to believe the killer may have the assistance of a brother. We think the partnership began with the Taylor murder in December of '84.

MANDY

Our profile now suggests he was raised in a small family without a father. We believe his mother was educated and abusive.

ROBBIE

We think he lives outside the city which could account for limited leads from the public.

MANDY

In fact, we believe he may have lived in Bay St. Louis early in the spree. It's 50 miles east and may have been enrolled in college at the time.

ROBBIE

We like UNO and a major involving medical sciences. He may harbor a lifelong fascination with breathing irregularities, and a family member may have had a respiratory condition or mysterious death.

MANDY

We also have reason to believe he worked at some point as a rope access technician on an oil rig. Those employees warrant close attention.

ROBBIE

We also found a latent fingerprint on a coke can at Camp Cloister Retreat where Eunice Trahan was found. It may or may not be relevant.

MANDY

I'm not sure if you've been discussing our other angle? The matter of the timings of the abductions?

HARTMAN

No Powers. Let's keep that discussion to the unit chiefs. Anything else for now?

ROBBIE

This is all we have at this time sir.

Awkward silence in room.

BORDER

Jeb, these inferences sound speculative? Are they real leads or just shots in the dark?

HARTMAN scans room with direct eye contact. Brings down gavel at podium with startling clamor. Room bolts upright.

HARTMAN

I'm not sure you guys are listening this morning. You were just given a profile update from the BAU.

BORDER

Yes sir, but what specifically are you suggesting?

HARTMAN

I want the names and addresses of every college student in this city who has lived in Bay St. Louis over the past seven years. I want the names of every oil field worker employed during the same time frame. I want to their positions and schedules.

BORDER

Jeb, there's hundreds of platforms alone in the gulf. It would take a long time to access those records, even if companies cooperate.

HARTMAN

Then you'd better get started Stewart. I also want hospital records and unresolved death report from every town within an hour of the city. The first wave of these canvases by Friday morning.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

Friday morning Captain?!

HARTMAN

Yes Bob. Friday morning. And one more thing. I'm directing you all to respond directly to requests made by Whit or Powers. Assume they speak for me, and give them what they need. Any questions?

MANDY

The killers are migrating to high schools outside the city. We're going to need to mobilize surveillance resources in these small towns.

HARTMAN

Jason Matter. Broaden community deployment. Let's go people. You've got new marching orders as of this morning. We've got work to do.

**63 INT NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

HARTMAN smokes at desk. MANDY and ROBBIE at opposite sides.

HARTMAN

Home addresses for all college enrollments. Looks like 358 residents of Bay St. Louis attended college in New Orleans over the past seven years.

ROBBIE

Surnames followed by first names with some middle initials. Spotty enrollment dates and addresses. Not as precise and organized as we might like.

HARTMAN

We need to clear everybody on the list. The NOPD doesn't have the resources for all of these door-to-door clearances in Bay St. Louis.

MANDY

We could go out there if you want?

HARTMAN

No, I need you here. I'll contact their police chief with a request for their officers to take our sketch and conduct calls.

MANDY

How big is their force? There's 358 addresses.

HARTMAN

Sounds like about 25 officers. We've got two weeks before the March abduction window. Not sure he's operating so far east, but let's pursue it.

**64 EXT MOONDIALER TRAILER - DAY**

Drone footage. Isolated wooded area. Rundown trailer. Gulf of Mexico off in distance. Blue sedan parked off deck.

**65 INT MOONDIALER TRAILER - DAY**

MOONDIALER (29, 6'1", 240 lbs, long unkempt brown hair, full beard, homeless look) sits with brother ALMUS (27, 5'9", 175 pounds, long blond mullet, no facial hair, shirtless). Men laugh at movie *Manhunter* in background.

MOONDIALER

What a joke. Who would believe this cop would be able to catch up with that guy?

ALMUS

Grandpa said only the strong survive. Look how worked up that cop gets. Such a pussy. Remember Grandpa and the horror movies?

MOONDIALER

Oh yeah. He was a member of the Higher Order!

ALMUS

He knew how to take care of himself. Remember him breaking that bottle over the head of that guy at the bar? That loser asked him to quiet down!

MOONDIALER

I was walking with him in Lafayette once, and we passed this homeless guy. All of a sudden he stops and spits on the guy! It was so funny!

ALMUS

He didn't take guff off nobody!

MOONDIALER

I know you never liked Grandpa's midnight boat trips into the basin. Great adrenalin rushes!

**MONTAGE: 65A EXT ATCHAFALAYA BASIN - NIGHT**

Midnight, glaring full moon shadows on water around 20-foot skiff from distance). GRANDPA (standing in silhouette waving arms ominously at two young). 5 second clip.

ALMUS (V.O.)

Lake Bigeaux was wild in the moonlight. Pretty heavy for a couple of kids. Felt like another world. I thought he might leave us out there.

MOONDIALER

He was teaching us how to confront our fears. You need an extreme environment for that lesson.

ALMUS

I coulda done without the ghost music! He'd throw out that chum and pound the boat to call the gators. Always scared the shit outta me.

MOONDIALER

At least we had moonlight. He warned us to only go out with a full moon. Too easy to get lost.

ALMUS

I can do without routine visits to that place. It's your job to take out the garbage.

MOONDIALER

The gators help. They know I'm coming when the moon turns full. It's freakish out there!

ALMUS

You sure have a lot of nostalgia for that place. It's just not normal. Count me out. I don't want to even hear about what goes on out there.

MOONDIALER

Come on, you know what goes on out there. Let's just say, to each his own. You ever wonder how Dad got along with Grandpa growing up?

ALMUS

Probably not well. At least Grandpa was there as kids. Dad went and got shot in Texas robbery. We was better off without him.

MOONDIALER

Grandpa's camp is perfect for our purposes. A couple hundred feet into the woods just around the bend of La Rose. Easy access to the basin.

ALMUS

The bitch didn't even tell us when he died.

MOONDIALER

The town's own Florence Nightingale didn't even attend her father-in-law's funeral. She claimed to keep it quiet to "protect" us from grief.

ALMUS

What a load of crap! She didn't wanna be bothered with the funeral. You know she hated him.

MOONDIALER

That's OK little brother. You gave her what she deserved. I'll never forget her with that clear bag over her head. It was hilarious!

ALMUS

That bitch was a real fighter though. She called me a loser one time too many. But remember, the emphysema did her in. So said the coroner!

MOONDIALER

Tell me about charging at her.

ALMUS

You woulda loved it. I approached her with a smile and forced her down to the floor. She kept mouthy until I pulled out the bag.

MOONDIALER

Never saw her so terrified! The last thing I expected to see when I came home from the rig was you sitting on top the bitch snuffing her!

ALMUS

You arrived in time for cleanup on aisle 9!

ALMUS laughs loudly. MOONDIALER grins.

MOONDIALER

That was easy. A few drinks with steak and fries to celebrate. Then you called 911 to report her death from an emphysema attack. So easy.

ALMUS

Yep. Natural causes secondary to uncontrolled emphysema. We even got the camp and \$50,000 in cash. Shoulda done it years ago.

MOONDIALER

The money helped me transition away from the rigs. That job was too damned dangerous.

ALMUS

Still not sure why you wanted to become a nurse? Never made sense given our feelings for dear mom.

MOONDIALER

Emergency rotations are fun. Lots of people dying right in front of me. It felt like being some kind of god. I was their only hope.

ALMUS

Don't know how you get off on that scene. Sounds like a big hassle. Who cares about those losers?

MOONDIALER

Just for the record, my EMT certification and nursing degree was in reach. Those big shot supervisors never gave me a break.

ALMUS

Bitches. They think they know every goddamned thing. And what about this dump of a trailer?

MOONDIALER

It's only \$300 a month and 30 miles from UNO. I like the low profile. Place looks vacant.

ALMUS

You should move back to Redmand. We have the camp as well. No more college. Nothing keeps you here. We have all the privacy in the world at the camp. Nobody can even hear our monthly parties.

MOONDIALER

I do like both the privacy and the parties.

ALMUS

Why didn't you just kept working for Marcelo. He liked Dad and Grandpa. You had his trust.

MOONDIALER

Yeah, but a guy can end up on the wrong end of the mob scene before he knows it. That first hit was just extra money. Call it moonlighting.

ALMUS

It was a loser who welched on a bet with Manny, right? He deserved it.

MOONDIALER

It was fun. I asked Manny for a couple weeks since the full moon was around the corner. Then I followed the target home from the bar.

ALMUS

He was too stupid to see you coming?

MONTAGE: 65B    EXT    ATCHAFALAYA BASIN - NIGHT

MOONDIALER (27, 6'1", 200 lbs) in silhouette in 20-foot skiff under full moon. Slips VICTIM (wiry, shirtless, confederate flag tattoo on right arm) into swamp with nary a splash. Pounds metal side five times. Gators move in.

MOONDIALER (V.O.)

He let me into his place. Neva knew what hit him. Left in a sealed bag. Call it Ernie's body disposal business. A cool 10K for 36 hours.

ALMUS

That's a lot of money. Then again the next month?

MOONDIALER

Second hit was \$25K. Still living off the cash.

ALMUS

Who was the mark?

MOONDIALER

Herby Goldman. Remember him, right?

ALMUS

Sure. Small timer bookie who worked for Manny.

MOONDIALER

I actually felt a tinge of guilt when doing Herb. I told him, nothing personal. It's just business.

ALMUS

It's the law of the jungle.

MOONDIALER

Single 32 caliber shot directly to the heart. That's all it took. Went into the same body bag and off to supper at the camp that same night.

ALMUS

One might say you were perfecting your craft.

MOONDIALER

True, but you can't get too cocky working for the mob. One day you do a job, and da next day you are the job. Ain't worth it.

**66 INT MOONDIALER TRAILER - DAY**

MOONDIALER & ALMUS play cards in trailer.



ALMUS

And what's with the damned movie? I don't get it.

MOONDIALER

Come on Al. You know it's fucking scary? It terrifies the bitches. The title is even fucking prophetic! Like they made it just for me.

ALMUS

It's just another movie.

MOONDIALER

Oh no, it's not just another movie. Admit it Al. You got into it when I told you about my date with that girl Etienne from Pontchartrain Beach.

ALMUS

As I recall there were two other dates as well before you . . . let's say, lost control.

MOONDIALER

I wouldn't call it loosing control. It's not my fault that Roux girl had a broken stereo and called me a coward. Got what was coming to her.

ALMUS

That Higher Order symbol you cut on those chicks is nuts. Your fantasies are outta control. You're lucky I came out here for 8 months after. Then I miss 1 fucking full moon and you slip right back. You've got the discipline of a 3rd grader Ernie.

MOONDIALER

Oh come on, you didn't mind hearing about my dates with those three new ones. So sweet, and give me some credit. Catch and release, right?

ALMUS

You don't get points for letting them live Ernie.

MOONDIALER

You sure got turned on when I told ya about em. You even watched the movie with me that night.

ALMUS

It was the grass and booze. It got me fucked up. I neva shoulda let you drag me into this mess.

MOONDIALER

Oh no you don't. It wasn't the pot. It was the

library photo I snapped of that Tulane blond. One look at her little brother and you were all in.

ALMUS

I was just curious and wanted to tag along.  
Pre-med 20-year-old you stalked like an animal.

MOONDIALER

*WE* stalked, brother. Just remember that it was your idea to dump her body when we were done.

ALMUS

I was just worried about physical evidence.  
That's all. Neva said nothing about killing them.

MOONDIALER

Well you didn't argue either. Not much moral high ground left after suffocating our mother.

ALMUS

OK, I helped nab the chick from Fat Harry's, and yeah, I got my rocks off with her back here at the trailer. But you're the one who suffocated her. That's your thing, not mine.

MOONDIALER

It was part of the plan from the start. Like you said, we had to be more careful about witnesses.

ALMUS

Dumped her in Cocodrie when heading back to Redmand must have confused those idiot cops!

MOONDIALER

Misdirection is fun. I led them to Voisin, but it took a long time to find Brothers Bayou.

ALMUS

I kinda wish you'd left me out of it. I mean, Brothers Bayou? That might get them thinking?

MOONDIALER

Who do you think we're dealing with? These losers don't have a clue. The Sorlot and Camp Cloister dumps were fun too. That pool operation will provide blue smoke if we're ever implicated.

ALMUS

That Fontenot actress was a bit over the top.

Leaving her skull off Jackson Square and all.

MOONDIALER

Not just Jackson Square. She was left on Pirate's Alley below the old ice house!

ALMUS

There's no old ice house Ernie. It's a TV show!

MOONDIALER

Let it rest? Are you kidding? He's back. It's like getting the band back together.

ALMUS

A little too ready if you ask me. This live sacrifice stuff is as sick as it gets Ernie. The first basin dumps made sense, but nobody deserves what you're putting these girls through.

MOONDIALER

Just get the fuck off my back! Everybody's got their own thing. You have fun until the time comes to take our dates out for midnight swims.

ALMUS

How the hell did you come up with that idea?

MOONDIALER

The first was at the expense of Wade Banyan.

ALMUS

Oh fuck! You took him out at midnight too?

MOONDIALER

Hell yeah! The bastard thought it was funny I liked wrestling magazines. I spiked his booze, and he woke up just in time for a moonlight swim. He lost his humor standing naked at the bow.

ALMUS

Never liked the guy anyway.

MOONDIALER

You woulda loved his final curtain. Squealed like a little girl until the gators took him under.

ALMUS

Glad I neva seen any. Not sure why you insist on

disposing the garbage on that schedule? What difference does it make? In fact, I woulda liked keeping a few of those cuties around longer.

MOONDIALER

Too risky in daylight. Full moons are perfect. I could navigate blindfolded. The boat was crowded with two though. They almost tipped me into the water. Double the trouble, but double the fun.

ALMUS

The bodies are starting to add up.

MOONDIALER

Those bodies will never be found. You really should come out and watch. Maybe I'll start taping them for posterity?

MOONDIALER'S eyes drunk with lust.

ALMUS

Please Ernie, no videos. That's a really bad idea. It's hard to convict guys without a body. Our only risks now are the pick ups.

MOONDIALER

They're a lot easier and safer than your Budget Security scheme. We got lucky for six months.

ALMUS

The scheme worked fine with the exception of that Fat City party girl who jumped into your pickup.

MOONDIALER

Working fine? Are you forgetting the part where they almost killed me on Press Drive?

ALMUS

That one was on you. I warned you it was time to stop, but you didn't listen. You went out alone.

MOONDIALER

No matter. We just have to make sure to stick on back streets without witnesses.

ALMUS

The police profile implicates you, not me. Just keep me out of it.

MOONDIALER

It's a little late Al. Don't worry though. That sketch was a joke, and we blazed the pickup. I'm 6'1" and 240. I've got long brown hair and a beard. Gave up shades and caps. Not even close.

ALMUS

He actually said you were between 5'11 and 6'2", and what about your college experience and issues with women? The public even heard you talk.

MOONDIALER

Lots of people attend college, and every man has issues with women. My voice was altered.

ALMUS

Hartman seems to know that you worked with ropes.

MOONDIALER

Lucky guess. Detectives throw shit at the wall.

**67 INT/EXT MOONDIALER TRAILER - DAY**

MOONDIALER & ALMUS drink beer, watch wrestling on TV.

ALMUS

I don't mind visiting you out here Ernie but Bay Saint Louis is kinda boring.

MOONDIALER

Ah, I've got videos to watch Al. I don't need nothing else. Besides, I like the privacy.

Loud knock at door. Brothers look slowly at door, then at each other. Both calm, cool, collected. MOONDIALER rises, approaches side window. Looks out, yawns, retrieves 12-gauge shotgun from under couch. Waives ALMUS to door.

MOONDIALER

Two cops on deck. Send them away, or I will.

ALMUS rises, stretches, approaches door. MOONDIALER stands with shotgun. Officers BENTLEY and PLOUD strut outside.

OFFICER PLOUD

No answer. Come on Bent, let's just say it was cleared. I wanna hit Popeye's before the crowd.

OFFICER BENTLEY

Not so fast young buck. The chief gave us an

assignment. Those Nawlins detectives even came to see us. I don't wanna have to come back here.

PLAUD knocks loudly again. Moments pass. ALMUS steps out. MOONDIALER hears every other word from inside.

OFFICER BENTLEY (O.S)

Officer Bentley . . .

partner . . .

Ploud . . .

Are you . . .

resident . . .

Frances?

wife or mother . . .

really your name . . .

Laughter outside.

girl's name . . .

MOONDIALER muffles guttural growl inside.

ALMUS

Yes officer, it's me. Your records musta flipped my first and middle names. You guys should be more careful about a thing like that. Whadda ya want? I'm kinda busy.

OFFICER BENTLEY

We're just surveying the neighborhood looking for a person of interest who looks like this sketch. He may drive a red four-door Dodge pickup.

ALMUS

Nope. Neva seen the guy. Whadda you want him for?

OFFICER BENTLEY

We're not sure. There's been complaints so we're asking around. Ya live here alone? Whadda you do?

ALMUS

I live alone and drive an ambulance in Biloxi.

OFFICER BENTLEY  
You mean like an EMT or something?

ALMUS  
Well yeah, like an EMT. You could call me that.

BENTLEY shrugs and smiles playfully.

OFFICER BENTLEY  
Well OK FRANCES, we'll be on our way.

ALMUS stares coldly at officer.

ALMUS  
So you find my middle name kinda funny, huh?

BENTLEY disarming wave of hand.

OFFICER BENTLEY  
Naw, just bustin balls sir. Just be sure to call headquarters if ya see this guy or his pickup.

ALMUS  
I'll be sure to do that.

PLOUD pauses while leaving. Points at object in flower bed.

OFFICER BENTLEY  
What the heck's that thing? It looks like some kind of old ocean navigational device?

ALMUS  
Oh, that thing? My grandfather gave it to me before he died. He called it a sundial. It can tell time from the shadow it casts.

OFFICER BENTLEY  
Oh. What's those moon images on the side?

ALMUS  
Gee, not sure. Probably just ornamental.

BENTLEY and PLOUD wave goodbye. ALMUS returns inside.

ALMUS  
You've got to get the hell outta Bay St. Louis. They're closing in! How the hell could they suspect you live here in the middle of nowhere?

MOONDIALER

Fuck em.

ALMUS

They must have leads we don't know about. Move back home with me, and let's cool it for a few months. Just forget the lease here. You can straighten it out with that landlord guy.

MOONDIALER

That cop thought my middle name was funny, huh?

ALMUS

Yeah, I guess so, but he's an idiot, a moron.

MOONDIALER

They just got lucky finding this place. Nobody could recognize me from that sketch. They struck out on that masterpiece. Let's keep to our plans.

ALMUS

Are you kidding?! Not March! Come on now. Let's just play it safe for a few months. It ain't worth taking another big risk so soon.

MOONDIALER

Well, OK. I'll pack and drive back with you. I can get an EMT shift back home. We'll give it another month or two. Then we revisit the high school prospects I've been working.

MOONDIALER stares ahead with confidence.

**68 INT POLICE CRUISER - DAY**

BENTLEY self-content. PLOUD hungry.

OFFICER BENTLEY

See there Ploud. Ya gotta know how to talk to folks in the community. This uniform and badge intimidates dem. Ya gotta put em at ease if you expect anything useful to come from contact.

OFFICER PLOUD

Yah, I can see that.

OFFICER BENTLEY

It's all about social skill and a little common sense. You'll eventually get it.



OFFICER PLOUD

I gotcha Bent. It was still some waste of time.  
No serial killer here. Gotta load of his mullet?!

OFFICER BENTLEY

Pretty funny alright. Probably some kinda loser  
living out here all by himself.

OFFICER PLOUD

You're gonna check the plate on that vehicle in  
the drive? Looked like a blue sedan, right?

OFFICER BENTLEY

Naw. No need. We cleared the trailer. Waste of  
time. Let's get some fried chicken!

**69 INT NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

HARTMAN confers with MANDY & ROBBIE in office over coffee.

HARTMAN

Why did he go dark for the last three months?

ROBBIE

We're in the June window. No news is good news.

HARTMAN

I now can trigger a phone trace with this button  
under my desk. The engineers still need time.

Phone call comes in. HARTMAN slumps back in his chair.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Jeb, this is Pat Frost in Redmand.

HARTMAN

What's up Pat? Is this call good news or bad?

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Definitely bad on our end. A 16-year-old high high  
school student, Misty Latour, abducted last night.  
She was walking back from church alone when two men  
in a blue sedan snatched her. No license plates.

HARTMAN

Sure sounds like our M.O. Thanks for the heads up.

Phone rings. HARTMAN answers. Presses trace button.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
Hey Hartman, I'm baaack!

HARTMAN  
Let's get to know each other, man to man.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
Told ya that Teriot girl was just the start of my return engagement! We've been friends so long and you people still know so little. Such idiots!

HARTMAN  
Just explain your intentions and demands.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
HAW HAW! So anyways, wonderin if you read any newspapers other than the Picayune? You know, it's a great big world out there. So many girls, so little time. How bout the Redmand Dispatch?

HARTMAN  
Ya think you're a real smart guy, huh? Just know I'll be the last face you see in the electric chair.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
YOU BASTARD! Who do you think you're talking to?! I'm the Crescent City serial killer! I'm not taking any more of your disrespect!

MOONDAILER slams down receiver. HARTMAN frowns. Holds breath in surprise. MANDY and ROBBIE listen. HARTMAN whispers.

HARTMAN  
Bastard failed to hang up. They're tracing it!

CUT TO:

HARTMAN, ROBBIE & MANDY wait quietly. OPEL buzzes in.

OPEL  
BellSouth on line 1.

HARTMAN  
This is Hartman.

SMIT (V.O.)  
Denny Smit at BellSouth. It's a pay phone at a gas station on 707 Dunton Street in Redmand, Louisiana.

HARTMAN  
Heads up everyone! Killer just screwed up and left  
an open phone line from a gas station in Redmand!

**70 EXT REDMAND GAS STATION - DAY**

Dozen police units converge. Receiver dangles from phone  
booth cord. HARTMAN approaches FROST leaving booth.

HARTMAN  
Dusting in progress on that phone?

LIEUTENANT FROST  
No prints other than a bunch on the booth door. The  
gas clerk saw the guy walk toward the apartments.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
He was wearing shades and a confederate cap.  
Manager says it sounds like a resident who works  
off shore and pled guilty to rape a while back.

**71 INT STORMAN APARTMENT - DAY**

HARTMAN knocks loudly at suspect's door. STORMAN answers.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Mr. Storman, I am Patrick Frost with the Redmand  
Police, and these are my associates.

STORMAN  
What's going on. I see all the cop cars. What do  
you people want now? I didn't rob no gas station!

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Just a few questions sir, and we can move on.

STORMAN  
You guys never give up. I ain't done nothing.  
I want my attorney. You're trying to frame me.

HARTMAN  
Storman, we know about your rape conviction.

STORMAN  
Statutory! Statutory rape! It was consensual!

HARTMAN  
You served time? When and where was it?

STORMAN

Dixon Correctional Institute, October 85 to the end of 86. She was my girlfriend. I plead out.

**72    SMELLS GOOD RESTAURANT - NIGHT**

FROST, HARTMAN, ROBBIE & MANDY debrief.

HARTMAN

I like Storman as a suspect. He's a sex offender living next to the phone booth.

FROST

Don't worry about that. He's out of commission.

HARTMAN

His history dovetails with our timeline.

LIEUTENANT FROST

But where's the girl?

Table falls silent.

HARTMAN

Maybe he killed her?

ROBBIE

That's not our profile. There's three days left.

HARTMAN

Maybe the abduction window doesn't apply this time around? Maybe he couldn't wait?

ROBBIE

I'm not sure about Alby. He's right-handed.

HARTMAN

We coulda got that wrong too.

ROBBIE

He's a Saints fan. Saw a poster on his wall.

MANDY

Any luck on the toothbrush I lifted from his bathroom? You got DNA and a print, right?

LIEUTENANT FROST

Yep. Your office FAXed the latent print on the discarded coke can. It was a partial match.

HARTMAN

How partial?

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Eight points. They tell me that's about an 92% probability the prints came from the same man.

HARTMAN  
That match would stand up in court.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Courts prefer a better error rate than 1 in 10.

HARTMAN  
What about the DNA?

LIEUTENANT FROST  
We can rule out about 65% of men in this town based on DNA, but not Alby Storman.

HARTMAN  
So how the hell did a coke can with Storman's fingerprint end up at a remote murder scene?

Everyone stops eating.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
We'll interrogate him in the morning. I'll first contact his supervisor at Upstart Oil.

### **73 REDMAND HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

FROST, HARTMAN, ROBBIE & MANDY convene in station office.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Storman's supervisor said he was a good worker.

HARTMAN  
He gave us his shift dates.

ROBBIE looks intently at notes.

ROBBIE  
What about this last shift?

HARTMAN  
He cut it by a week to attend his trial.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
No alibis for any crime. What are the odds?

ROBBIE

The closest was May 30th, the night of Sally Boudreaux's abduction. But even then, his shift ended early leaving time for the abduction.

MANDY

He may have an accomplice.

HARTMAN

I think it's time to turn this over to Destrene. That's eight consecutive two week shifts and none coincide with a crime?

ROBBIE

These dates wouldn't have given him much time for stalking or his home security gambit.

MANDY

Let's find out if Storman has a brother.

#### **74 REDMAND HOMICIDE INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY**

STORMAN uneasy in interrogation room with ATTORNEY.

HARTMAN

Tell us about your family? Are you from Redmand?

STORMAN

Born and raised here. Finished high school and worked sugarcane until moving out to the rig.

HARTMAN

Any siblings?

STORMAN

Two younger brothers.

HARTMAN

Are you three close.

STORMAN

Nope. Don't even know where they live anymore.

HARTMAN

So Storman, ever visited Camp Cloister Retreat?

STORMAN bolts in surprise. Confers quietly with ATTORNEY.

STORMAN

I spent two weeks there every summer as a teen. I haven't set foot on that property since 1968.

HARTMAN

That's pretty confusing Alby since we found a coke can with your print on it. Explain that?

STORMAN

I have no idea, but it wasn't me out there! It's your job to figure things out. Remember, I'm the guy who's innocent until proven guilty.

**75    EXT    BEST O'BURGER - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY eat burgers on an outside bench.

ROBBIE

The lieutenant put a tracker on Alby's Chevrolet last night. He went to the movies with friends.

MANDY

The abduction window's passed. Let's see what Alby's old girlfriend says. Here she comes.

GOODALL (19, attractive, friendly) pulls up to table.

ROBBIE

We're just trying to clear up some loose ends involving a cold case investigation that doesn't appear to involve Alby. Just a few questions.

GOODALL

What do you have in mind? I feel kinda bad about him going to jail. It wasn't that bad.

MANDY

You're not sure if he raped you?

GOODALL

I don't know. Guess it depends on the law. He neva done nothing to me that I couldn't stop.

MANDY

I understand this is a personal question, but we were wonderin if your sexual relationship with Alby was normal?

GOODALL

Normal?

MANDY

That's right. Was there anything unusual about his sexual interests? Did he ever ask you to do anything that made you uncomfortable?

GOODALL

Whadda you mean by unusual or uncomfortable? You know men. They ask you to do all sorts of things. I don't like oral, but I did it cause he asked. I put my foot down on anal though. He asked once.

MANDY

How about this. Did he ever hurt you during sex?

GOODALL

Alby woulda never hurt me. He was a harmless guy.

MANDY

I guess that's all we wanted to know at this time. Thanks again.

GOODALL

You know, now that you mention it, he did tell me once about people putting plastic bags around their heads until they passed out during sex.

ROBBIE & MANDY looked at GOODALL wide-eyed.

ROBBIE

That's interesting Sandra. Can you tell us more?

GOODALL

He heard that a loss of oxygen made people high. Some people even hallucinate. He claimed it was a turn on for a "friend" of his.

MANDY

A friend, huh?

GOODALL

Yeah, a friend. Wasn't no friend I knew about. He musta seen it in a porn magazine or something.

MANDY

You didn't experiment with it, right?

GOODALL

Oh no, of course not. Just like the anal stuff, I told him no way. He got embarrassed and said it wasn't his idea anyway. It never came up again.



## 76 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY

HARTMAN in office with STABLE.

CHIEF STABLE

Well Jeb, at least no abduction last month.  
What about that lead you had in Redmand?

HARTMAN

Storman's still on our radar, but the guy hasn't  
made a mistake. He's aware of the surveillance.

CHIEF STABLE

And Adam's still not game for an indictment.

HARTMAN

You know Adam. Mr. Conservative.

CHIEF STABLE

Probably best Jeb. The last thing we need is a  
trial and acquittal. That would be a disaster.

HARTMAN

Yeah, I get that.

OPEL buzzes in.

HARTMAN

Yes Opel, what is it?

OPEL (V.O.)

Hahnville on line 1.

HARTMAN

Hartman. Yes, . . . Hahnville? Walking her dog?  
Two men, blue sedan? Forced into back seat? No  
plates, huh? We'll be there in an hour.

HARTMAN hangs up.

CHIEF STABLE

Déjà vu all over again?

HARTMAN

Hahnville. Tammy Touns, 17. The count now 22.

HARTMAN, beleaguered. Slowly snuffs out cigarette. Folds  
arms. Shrugs at STABLE in gesture of resignation.

**77 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

HARTMAN sits despondently with ROBBIE & MANDY.

HARTMAN

We've got about 14 hours left for Tammy. Her parents came in to see me. They're distraught. This came in close to midnight Saturday.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)

Give up Hartman! You've tried hard, but ya neva gonna catch me. My higher power is too much for you. No need looking for that Hahnville girl. I'm with her now. Would you like to hear from her?

Muffled sounds and movements heard on line.

TAMMY (V.O.)

HE TOOK ME ON A BOAT!

Muffled sounds as phone pulled away.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)

Ya try to do one nice thing and ya see what happens. Anyway, she'll be gone by Tuesday. Hope everyone is enjoying the show.

Synthesizer cuts out briefly at end. Hardly audible eerie tingling (cyborg ERIC from lab of Morgus). HARTMAN slumps in chair. Lights cigarette. Blows smoke. Looks at ceiling.

ROBBIE

That's rough Captain. Were any of Alby Storman's movements in Redmand suspicious this week?

HARTMAN

Frost says the guy never left town. He has nothing to do with this Hahnville abduction.

**78 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT**

MONTAGE: MOONDIALER in ETIENNE'S bedroom playing loud Mad Moon Rising soundtrack (slow haunting unearthly electronic synthesizer dirge conjures danger. Volume and tempo grow. Ends in crashing metal screeches). Rape obscured in video. ROBBIE alone on floor crying in dark staring up at shadowed mural evidence wall. Empty bourbon bottle at side. Camera focus on ROBBIE'S distraught face. MANDY enters.

ROBBIE

He's in my head. I can't stop thinking about him. Night and day. When you're trying to sleep, I'm awake thinking about HIM. I'm losing my mind.

MANDY

Try not to be so hard on yourself Robbie.

ROBBIE

All those poor girls! All of those poor families! AND NO END IN SIGHT MANDY!

MANDY

This is the nature of our profession.

ROBBIE

We've let SO many people down. Our family, friends, the victims, the whole state. We're on a gangplank, and he's pushing us off step by step.

MANDY

Nightmares, huh?

ROBBIE

The same one. Every night Mandy.

MANDY

They're back, huh?

ROBBIE

I'm always drowning, looking up at that oil rig and those petrified trees. WHAT THE HELL IS THAT? Am I losing my mind? I need help. Do I have to live with that family tragedy my entire life?

**79 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

MANDY and ROBBIE rush into HARTMAN'S office.

HARTMAN

Recording made at 11:55 Saturday night. It was in a cache with other messages. I almost deleted it.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted)

Another sweet one came to visit this weekend. The publicity is making them jump outta da water right into my boat! Keep em coming Chief. Tune in next time moron for another tour into my realm of dominance and control.

HARTMAN

Mae Sanier. Houma. 15, Caucasian. Terrebonne High dropout. Ran away a week ago.

ROBBIE

That gives us until midnight Tuesday night.

MANDY

Forty hours. Not much time.

**80 INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - NIGHT**

MANDY pretends to sleep. Clock chimes midnight. ROBBIE begins to wail at her side. Embraces her from behind.

**81 INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT PRESS ROOM - DAY**

Press room packed. HARTMAN at podium, ROBBIE & MANDY at each side. Reporters TABER and CHEE front audience.

HARTMAN

The count now stands at 23 with evidence of a transition to younger victims outside the city.

REPORTER CHEE

Is there any hope that these abducted girls are still alive? Could they be held for ransom?

HARTMAN

We'd like to remain optimistic but there's no evidence the lives of these victims were spared.

REPORTER TABER

Ms. Whit, you and your partner are our behavioral science specialists. Don't you have some idea of when and where the killers will strike again?

ROBBIE

We believe he's migrated away from the city, but where and when he'll strike remains uncertain.

REPORTER TABER

Ms. Powers, do you see the investigative process as linear in nature? Is it a gradual accumulation of evidence that leads to a capture, or does the NOPD require a major breakthrough?

MANDY

The best answer is both. Breakthroughs are great

but arrests often require cumulative leads. We've been able to clear many suspects.

**82 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT**

ROBBIE with headphones. Inserts cassette. Listens intently.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
Tune in next time moron for another tour into my realm of dominance and control (*fumbling sound, barely audible tingling space background jingles*)

MANDY loudly interrupts.

MANDY  
It's past midnight. Get some rest. You've been listening every night. Whadda you expect to hear?

ROBBIE  
I don't know. There's something about these last two calls that I just can't let go. Both from midnight on Saturday nights. Something in the background. Listen.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
Another sweet one came to visit this weekend. The publicity is making them jump outta da water right into my boat! Keep em coming Chief. Tune in next time moron for another tour into my realm of dominance and control (*fumbling sound, barely audible ingling space background jingles*).

MANDY  
I can't hear a thing. The synthesizer distorts his voice too much to identify anything.

ROBBIE  
Am I just hearing things? The synthesizer seems cut off at the end of calls.

MANDY  
OK, so what do you make of that?

ROBBIE  
There's a faint sound in the background of these two midnight calls. Maybe coming from the other room. Like a pinging sound, but rhythmic.

MANDY

I can't hear it. It's subaudible to me.

ROBBIE

I think there's something there. Maybe a TV or stereo left on in the other room?

MANDY

OK, give me that thing. Let me try again.

ROBBIE

Nothing?

MANDY listens transfixed in dark silent room. 15 seconds. Phone rings. Women startle. MANDY throws headset.

ROBBIE

Hello? Hello? Hello?!

Holds out phone so Mandy can hear silent line. Dial tone.

MANDY

I'm going to sleep now. You've entered a phase of hearing things. I'm getting worried about you.

### **83 INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT**

ROBBIE on headphones. MANDY enters, brings chips and wine.

MANDY

It's almost 10:30! You've been listening to that darned player all week. It's time for Morgus!

ROBBIE

Good reason for a break, but then its back to work late tonight. I feel like something's staring us right in the eyes.

MANDY

Maybe Dr. Morgus has invented a machine for insights tonight! We can go down to the station!

ERIC

Good evening. Welcome to . . . Morgus Presents.

MORGUS

Good evening my dear students, and friends of science and those of the higher order.

MORGUS forms shape of pyramid with fingers framed around

eye. Looks back and forth to protect shared secret.

MANDY

Let the games begin!

MORGUS

Ladies and gentlemen, all scientists know the speed of light, but only I have figured out how to calculate . . . the speed of dark! HAW HAW HAW! My discovery gives new hope for the dead.

MANDY

Speed of dark! New hope for the dead!

MORGUS

This discovery will earn me an overdue Nobel Prize, and my devoted fans will see it here first! Ladies and gentlemen, history in the making in my old French Quarter ice house lab.

CHOPSLEY lumbers in making hand turning motions.

MORGUS

Oh, the movie. OK, I guess Chopsley's right for once. The boys down at the station have a good one for you tonight. Something called *The Blob*. We'll reconvene at the break.

Movie begins. ROBBIE stares ahead transfixed in a daze.

MANDY

What's wrong? You're not even paying attention.

ROBBIE

I think Morgus helped me figure something out.

MANDY

What are you talking about? The speed of dark or giving new hope to the dead?

ROBBIE

Mandy, the Moondialer is a huge Morgus fan! The sound at the end of his phone calls. It was the tingling space background jingles ERIC plays.

MANDY

WHAAT?! What on earth are you talking about?!

ROBBIE

Think of the kooky laughing just like Morgus.  
Calling people idiots and morons. The killer's  
signature. That's not a triangle. It's the  
Higher Order pyramid! An illuminati symbol!

MANDY jumps, grabs headset, turns down TV. Listens to tape.

MOONDIALER (synthesized/distorted V.O.)  
Tune in next time moron for another tour into my  
realm of dominance and control (fumbling sound,  
*barely audible ingling space background jingles*)

MANDY

I hear it! I can hear it! The Moondialer was  
actually listening to the end of Morgus on those  
Saturday nights he called the captain!

ROBBIE

Mandy! His lab is above Pirate's Alley over St.  
Anthony's Garden! Dusty Fontenot's skull was  
staged in that exact location.

MANDY

Half the city is a Morgus fan. I don't see how  
this gets us closer to catching him.

ROBBIE looks up at ceiling in deep thought.

ROBBIE

If he's hooked on Morgus, maybe I have an idea.

**84 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

HARTMAN (confused, grumpy) smokes with ROBBIE and MANDY.

HARTMAN

Let me get this straight. You want me to do what?

MANDY

We know it could cost the department a few  
dollars, but it might draw him in. Remember that  
we know what he looks like.

HARTMAN frowns, big puff of smoke into air.

ROBBIE

We know it's a long shot, but word on the street  
is that you're *the* long shot expert.



MANDY

As we hear it, an 80-footer at the buzzer.

ROBBIE

Against Jesuit, end of your senior year.

HARTMAN breaks into a grin.

HARTMAN

Well played Powers, well played. Such flattery is so unfair since you know it'll work even when your target knows he's being manipulated.

ROBBIE

So about your next long shot Captain?

HARTMAN

OK you two operators, here's what I can do. I know an executive at the station. Doesn't mean he'll authorize contact with the talent, but it's at least a potential opening.

**85 INT. WWL TELEVISION, FRENCH QUARTER - DAY**

HARTMAN walks ahead of ROBBIE & MANDY as station entered. Secretary ushers trio down long narrow hall to small inauspicious office. They are greeted by SID (57, white-haired, well-dressed, dignified, formal demeanor).

HARTMAN

Ladies, this is Sid. He's been at this station a long time, and done it all. Fundraiser, promoter, announcer, even occasional weatherman.

SID

Hello Jeb, how have you been? Long time since our last get together. Sounds like you've had a rough go of it with this serial killer case. The guy's still on the loose, huh?

HARTMAN

Yeah, we're still looking. In fact, that's what we'd like to discuss this morning. Sid, let me introduce you to Robbie Whit and Mandy Powers. They're my BAU experts, and pretty good at it.

SID

Oh I know all about them Jeb. I watch the press

conferences, and I must say that you ladies have impressed me with your poise and smarts. It's an honor to meet you both.

ROBBIE & MANDY beam. MANDY takes on air of authority.

MANDY

Thank you sir. It's taken a while, but we're getting the hang of this public communication thing. As you know, it's a hard skill to develop.

HARTMAN exchanges quick glance with SID.

SID

So Jeb, what can I do for you today?

HARTMAN

Well Sid, I'm afraid the ladies have a really strange request. They are asking you to approach Morgus to see if he might consider a special appearance on Halloween night?

SID

Morgus? Oh, Morgus. We'll his schedule is set by his manager months in advance. Lots of agencies request appearances. That might not be possible. What do you ladies have in mind?

ROBBIE

Well you know sir, everyone loves Morgus, but guess who appears to be one of his biggest fans?

SID

You don't mean, your boy? A Morgus fanatic?

MANDY

Yes sir. Believe or not, we've developed a pretty good case for that inference.

SID

Good grief. Not sure Morgus would approve. So what if he's a fan of the television program?

HARTMAN

Well Sid, these ladies have devised an ingenious strategy to ensnare him on Halloween night. We know what he looks like. He doesn't know we fingered him as a Morgus fan. He might show up.

SID

The brass would never approve guys coming to the studio for something uncontrolled.

ROBBIE

No, no sir, that's not what we have in mind. We'd like to publicize that Morgus will make a Halloween appearance at the Rivergate.

MANDY

Open to the public. After the show we'd put him on a Mardi Gras float for a ride down Canal to Pirate's Alley for his 10:30 show.

SID

So Morgus would appear at the Rivergate for an hour and then get transported on a float to the Quarter to create the illusion of a live show?

MANDY

Bourbon would be packed waiting for his arrival!

HARTMAN

The station could keep the post-expense revenue. We'd handle the logistics. All Morgus would have to do is show up and greet his fans. Maybe he brings his Morgusaroids to play some music?

SID

How would you snare your guy?

MANDY

We'd have video cameras everywhere. He wouldn't know we were expecting him. He might even muscle his way right to front of the stage.

ROBBIE

We'd hold persons of interest for questioning. If it fails, no one knows the difference.

SID

You don't see any danger to our talent or the station, right Jeb? The brass cares about that.

HARTMAN

Not really. No one would ever know Morgus was part of the greatest sting in NOPD history.

SID and HARTMAN exchange a wily grin.

SID

OK Jeb, if we keep it secret there shouldn't be a problem. Let me confirm with my higher powers.

SID smiles at HARTMAN. ROBBIE laughs.

ROBBIE

Higher powers! Morgus and the station brass!

MANDY

Let's hope he agrees!

SID

I'm betting he'll wanna help you ladies. It's been a pleasure meeting both of you.

SID rises, shakes hands. Trio exits.

**86 EXT. RAMPART STREET, FRENCH QUARTER - DAY**

HARTMAN walks ahead of ROBBIE & MANDY (spring in steps).

MANDY

What a nice man! Mr. Noel sounds like an administrator who's respected at the station. I'll bet he's seen everything in the business.

ROBBIE

So dignified! Grandfatherly!

HARTMAN

Oh yeah, Sid's served many functions for the station over the years. If he says this is a go, you can count on it.

ROBBIE

Well I won't rest until he verifies that Morgus is game. Still seems like a pretty big hurdle.

HARTMAN

Oh no, I don't think so. You two can start the planning when we get back to the office. Book the Rivergate. Call public relations and to assure a media blitz. We need to move fast.

MANDY furled her brow.

MANDY

Excuse me Captain, but don't you think we might

wanna wait until we have Morgus officially on board? He is THE essential piece.

HARTMAN

Well sure Powers. He's the essential piece, but I thought we just did that . . .

HARTMAN flashed Cheshire cat grin. Unlocks car doors.

ROBBIE & MANDY stand speechless with open mouths.

MANDY

Oh my God . . .

HARTMAN

Let's get moving ladies. We've got a lot of work to do. You understand that today's meeting was absolutely confidential, right?

DISSOLVE TO

**87 INT. RIVERGATE COMMAND CENTER - NIGHT**

HARTMAN at table in back of empty arena. MATTER, MACON, SANFORD, REGENT, HANSON, ROBBIE & MANDY around table.

HARTMAN

Well Whit and Powers, this little Morgus drama of yours better produce. The mayor is upset over the expenses. Final status checks. Sanford . . .

SANFORD

6,000 tickets purchased. Lines around block.

HARTMAN

Hanson, what about cameras and surveillance?

HANSON

A dozen cameras, all angles. We'll have shots of every movement in the arena. It may get chaotic given the size of the crowd.

HARTMAN

Matter, what's our undercover status?

MATTER

We've got the place blanketed.

HARTMAN

Good. I want you two on the floor at all times. Are the ear mics and pods working properly?

Macon, assault unit, are your guys ready?

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

We're ready to intercept and interview men. Legal office worked overtime to iron out the protocol.

HARTMAN

Let's not go crazy intercepting innocent guys. We don't need civil rights lawsuits either.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

He's likely to be alone or only with his partner.

MANDY

The costumes concern me. Too many disguises.

HARTMAN

Too late now. Let's do the best we can. It's 5:00 so go ahead and open the doors. Morgus arrives in an hour. Let's get this show on the road.

CUT TO:

ROBBIE mingles, hundred early patrons. Whispers in lapel.

ROBBIE

Mandy, can you read?

MANDY (V.O.)

I've got you Robbie.

ROBBIE

Captain, can you read us?

HARTMAN (V.O.)

Got you Whit. Just circulate. The night is young.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE OF undercover agents circulating, energetic costumed crowd, Mardi Gras music, MANDY scanning crowd, HARTMAN behind stage with headset and monitors.

Commotion erupts, thunderous applause, procession from back. MORGUS and CHOPSLEY grand entrance with Morgusaroids. Arena dark, loud, shadowy figures move in all directions. MANDY raises voice to be heard on audio feed.

MANDY

We've intercepted three guys Captain. Had to let em go. They were not happy with the imposition.

HARTMAN (V.O.)

This looks futile with costumes and visibility.

ROBBIE (V.O.)

Hostile looks from guys who see me staring.

Camera focuses briefly on men at stage who look suspicious.

MANDY

Too many characters here tonight. I'd like to interview them all. At least we'll have videos.

SANFORD (V.O.)

Affirmatory Powers. We'll have a lot of footage to examine. Just keep playing it cool.

CUT TO:

ROBBIE moves to center of arena. Dead stop. Focuses on man (6', 200 lbs, sunglasses, confederate cap) 20 feet away. Suspect stares ahead at women in crowd.

ROBBIE

Heads up! Got a ringer in my sights. Get ready to move on my command!

Woman with large cup of beer approaches man from behind. Hands him retractable white guide cane. Shouts over din.

PATRON

Billy! Ya dropped your cane. You'd be in trouble without that!

Suspect smiles awkwardly.

ROBBIE

False alarm everyone! Guy's as blind as a bat.

ROBBIE watches couple begin to walk slowly toward stage. As blind man moves out line of vision MOONDIALER comes into sight (29, 6'1", 240 lbs, uncostumed, long unkempt brown hair, full beard, no glasses or hat).

IRIS IN:

ROBBIE'S face flushed, eyes wide open, obvious recognition.

IRIS IN:

MOONDIALER blank stare, eye-to-eye, obvious recognition.  
Remains expressionless while turning and walking away.

CUT TO:

ROBBIE watches him drift away. Begins to tremble.

ROBBIE

MANDY, COME FIND ME! I'm at the eastern wall 30  
feet from stage in the middle of the room. HURRY!

ROBBIE scans for suspect. MANDY arrives quickly.

MANDY

What's is it! What did you see!

ROBBIE

I came face to face with ERNIE Blank! He's here  
Mandy, and he gave me a stone cold look of  
recognition. He knew why I was here!

MANDY

OH MY GOD! He could be our guy! He acted strange  
when he saw you looking at him, right??

ROBBIE

Yeah! Direct eye contact! Neither of us said a  
word! HE KNEW MANDY! HE KNEW I MADE HIM!

MANDY

Captain! Captain! This is Powers. We have  
something. All points notice! Keep an eye out  
for an Ernie Blank. 29 years old, 6''1", 230 lbs.  
Retain him before he leaves! Confidence is high!

ROBBIE

Suspect has a full beard without cap or shades.  
No costume. Headed for an exit. Block all exits!

CUT TO:

Chaotic scene. Crowd in full roar. MORGUS heads to door.  
ROBBIE & MANDY confused. MANDY raises arms in uncertainty.  
Homicide team convenes behind stage. Arena now quieter.

HARTMAN

Are you sure it was him Whit?

ROBBIE



Yes I'm certain it was him.

MACON

How could you determine anything from a brief look twenty feet away. It was dark and visibility was poor. It may have not even been him.

HARTMAN

That's enough Macon. Whit knows what she saw. Everyone back to the briefing room. We've gotta review the videos to see what we uncovered.

**88 INT. NOPD HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY**

Videotaped MOONDIALER encounter played for unit chiefs. ROBBIE'S distress and MOONDIALER egress evident.

ROBBIE

He gave me a tell Captain! Blank is our guy!

MANDY

That's him Captain. We remember him well from childhood in Redmand. He was a sadistic punk!

MACON

How come you didn't identify Blank from the sketch Whit? What's up with that?

Room falls silent. ROBBIE shakes head with uneasiness.

ROBBIE

No Jack, I didn't recognize Ernie Blank from the sketch. We haven't seen him since childhood.

MANDY

People age! The sketching process must have been imperfect. It's common in homicide cases, right?

MACON

So that's how you're gonna play this? You two are confident about your assertions until they get busted. Then the evidence no longer counts.

BORDER

How do you know this wasn't just a casual encounter? Maybe the guy didn't even remember you? Maybe he never liked you. Didn't wanna chat?

MANDY

He would have at least nodded or acknowledged her presence. It takes a hell of a stressor to elicit a reaction from a stone cold psychopath.

ROBBIE

Blood drained from his face when he saw me guys. He instantly put the scene together in his mind. He knew his identity as the killer was revealed.

MACON exhales loudly.

MACON

Virtually certain? And how again can you know this Blank fellow is a stone cold psychopath?

ROBBIE reflects on question. MONTAGE OF MOONDIALER ON PLAYGROUND FORCING BOY INTO MUD (Scene 1, brief cut).

ROBBIE

I'm asking you to trust my instincts. Find him. The interrogation will confirm it.

Detectives avert eye contact. Glance around uncomfortably.

BORDER

Sounds a little like a personal vendetta Whit.

HARTMAN slams fist down on lectern with furor. Unit chiefs all startled. Scans room slowly. Intense facial expression. Focuses on ROBBIE. MANDY holds breath.

HARTMAN

I expect EVERYONE here first thing tomorrow!

MACON

Oh come on Jeb, not Sunday morning . . .

HARTMAN

I said TOMORROW morning Macon! Whit says THIS is the man who's been raping and killing for years. She knows him. She identified him. He knew she made him. I BELIEVE HER! Let's close this loop.

HANSON

How exactly do you propose we do that sir?

HARTMAN

I wanna know everything about Ernie Banks. Where he lives and works, his handedness, fingerprints,

DNA, criminal history, the cars he's owned, the schools he's attended, the bars he frequents, the movies and music he likes. Even his goddamned sentiments about wrestling and the Saints.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

This could take time Captain.

HARTMAN

THEN GET STARTED! Do all of you understand? Because if you don't, I will replace you with someone who does. That includes you too Bob. THIS GUY IS NOW OUR TOP PRIORITY!

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

We've got it sir. This is our top priority.

HARTMAN

When is the next abduction window Whit?

ROBBIE

This upcoming week unless Blank was scared off by our encounter. We don't have much time.

Room dead silent.

HARTMAN

OK, the clock is ticking. Our full court press doesn't stop unless one of you exculpates this suspect named Ernie Blank. WHIT! Is this guy left- or right-handed?

WHIT

Uh, uh, Captain, I'm not really sure.

MANDY rises quickly. All eyes on her.

MANDY

I AM. I dealt with him up close and personal as a teen. Ernie Bank is a LEFTY.

HARTMAN

Lefty huh? Why does that not surprise me?

MANDY

One other thing. He had a younger brother named Almus and a dominating mother who was a nurse. I once saw her embarrass him at a baseball game.

HARTMAN again scans room with pregnant pause.

HARTMAN  
ALL OF YOU GET MOVING! ALL HANDS ON DECK! THIS IS  
NOT A DRILL! LET'S GO FIND THIS GUY! NOW!

**89 INT. REDMAND POLICE STATION - DAY**

ROBBIE & MANDY meet Lieutenant FROST at his office.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Ernie Blank? Is that so? You say he grew up here  
in Redmand, and you even went to school with him?

ROBBIE  
My memory goes back to 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. I watched him  
force a kid down into the mud at recess. He  
laughed while Freddy cried with mud all over his  
clothes. We knew to stay away from the bully.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Did that tactic work?

ROBBIE  
No, not really. At some point he started taunting  
me with the nickname "Little Orphan Annie".

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Oh, you mean because of your parents' death.

ROBBIE  
Yeah, that was it. He thought it was funny. He  
would ask how it felt not having a mother or  
father? Said I probably couldn't swim either.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
So a real bully as a kid?

ROBBIE  
He was, but his torment didn't last too long.

ROBBIE glances at MANDY, smiles lovingly.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
How'd it stop?

MONTAGE OF MOONDIALER, PEER ENABLERS IN TOW, FORCING YOUNG  
(9) ROBBIE BEHIND GYM DOOR.

ROBBIE (V.O.)  
Ernie locked me behind a metal gym door. He was

laughing while calling me Little Orphan Annie who wishes she had a mother or father to save her!

LIEUTENANT FROST

That awful Robbie. How was *that* a turning point?

MONTAGE OF ROBBIE PEERING THROUGH DOOR GLASS (EYES WIDE),  
MANDY CLOSES WITH LIGHTNING SPEED, MOONDIALER  
SENT SPRAWLING, REPEATED BLOWS BY MANDY TO HEAD & BODY.

ROBBIE (V.O)

You see, he was right about my missing parents,  
but wrong about my defenselessness. As I looked  
through the glass, Mandy sent him sprawling. His  
minions ran, and she beat the hell out of him.

MANDY grins slightly, shrugs at FROST.

LIEUTENANT FROST

Mandy nailed him, huh?

ROBBIE

That's an understatement. His high-pitched cry  
left him laying in humiliation. That was my  
introduction to Mandy Powers.

MANDY

Call it a teachable moment.

FLASHBACK OF MANDY WHISPERING INTO MOONDIALER EAR.

ROBBIE (V.O.)

She whispered something into Ernie's ear, and  
let me out so we could go home and watch Get  
Smart. Ernie never bullied me again.

LIEUTENANT FROST

What did you tell him Mandy?

MANDY pauses momentarily. Somber, dead serious tone.

MANDY

I told him to listen good. If he ever did anything  
again to hurt you I would kill him. I asked him  
to nod if we had an understanding.

LIEUTENANT FROST

And he nodded?

MANDY

He did, and we never spoke again.

LIEUTENANT FROST

Are you both sure Ernie and your killer are one in the same? It's still an inference, right?

ROBBIE

It was him at the Rivergate, and yesterday we showed Christy Dumond, Patsy Herbert, and Sheila Etienne footage from the encounter. They recognized some gestures and movements.

LIEUTENANT FROST

Body movement can be recognized at a distance.

MANDY

Does he have a police record in Redmand?

LIEUTENANT FROST

No record, but his mother was a nurse named Ruth Gene Auther. Guess how she died a few years back?

MANDY

Let me guess. An accident of some sort?

LIEUTENANT FROST

I can do even better. The death certificate said she died of complications from emphysema.

ROBBIE

So she essentially died of asphyxia!

LIEUTENANT FROST

You got it. His full name was listed in the obit as Ernest Frances Blank. His brother was listed as Almus Blank. Did you know his middle name?

MANDY

Oh yeah, we knew about it. I remember how sensitive he was to anyone calling him by his middle name. He musta thought it sounded gay.

ROBBIE

Fits Trish Mitker's profile. Probably homophobic, and that middle name wouldn't help. His little brother Almus was real goon as well.

LIEUTENANT FROST

I've got something else. I checked my arson case file. Remember Wade Banyan from the theater?

ROBBIE

Yeah. Never liked that guy either. Mr. EG ran him off. I'm glad he was gone when I got there.

LIEUTENANT FROST

Banyan and Blank were friends. Ernie also worked as a lock smith.

MANDY

Sure! Blank's prints were on the bathroom door. Pretty incriminating until we cleared him.

LIEUTENANT FROST

That's right. Blank was cleared in the arson, but he probably learned a lot about locks as a teen. One other thing. Did you know that both Wade Banyan and Herby Goldman went missing in 1983?

MANDY

Naw! You must be kidding? Ernie was associated with both guys who went missing at the same time!

LIEUTENANT FROST

Not the same time. Herby disappeared in March and Wade went missing . . . a month later.

MANDY

Just a couple months before Sheila Etienne's sexual assault. Wade and Herby were never found?

LIEUTENANT FROST

Never found, and both were priority cases. I was wondering if we had a serial killer. A gambler named Lipsy Lusso also went missing in January.

ROBBIE

The last two were a month apart? What were the exact dates of their disappearances?

LIEUTENANT FROST

Goldman was March 27<sup>th</sup>. Banyan was April 26<sup>th</sup>.

ROBBIE

Sheila's assault was on June 25<sup>th</sup>. I'll bet there were full moons in late March and April as well.

MANDY

Sounds like preseason for the Moondialer.

LIEUTENANT FROST

Ruth Auther died in the second week of April in the middle of those two missing persons.

MANDY

Definitely not a full moon for her.

LIEUTENANT FROST

Still another mysterious death for those boys. The coroner said complications from emphysema.

MANDY

Would a plastic bag over her head constitute complications from emphysema? The captain needs to hear about this. We have 80 hours.

ROBBIE

I promised Uncle Stanley to stay overnight. Go brief the captain Mandy. I'll follow tomorrow.

LIEUTENANT FROST

The Blank's property will be surveilled 24/7 by morning. We don't wanna tip our hand just yet.

**90 INT MOONDIALER'S LIVING ROOM - DAY**

MOONDIALER & ALMUS watch living room TV.

MOONDIALER

This oughta be good. Let's see if that bitch said anything to Hartman about running in to me.

ALMUS

I don't like it. Why did Whit act weird when she saw you? Why so many cops at that event?

MOONDIALER

Who knows? Whit never liked me as a kid.

ALMUS

So how you know she wasn't there looking for suspects? She's on the task force you know.

MOONDIALER

Why on earth look for suspects at a Morgus event?



ALMUS

Listen up. Hartman's starting to talk.

REPORTER TABER

We've been tracking credible sources who say the task force is refocused in Redmand?

HARTMAN

We cleared a suspect from Redmand weeks ago.

ALMUS sits up nervously on couch.

ALMUS

Storman's out but they're still poking around!

HARTMAN

We conducted routine canvassing there this week.

REPORTER CHEE

Ms. Powers, it's my understanding that you and Detective Whit were born and raised in Redmand?

MANDY

That's correct. We're from Redmand.

REPORTER CHEE

It's our understanding the task force relies heavily on you and Ms. Whit. Does the recent focus in Redmand involve leads you developed?

HARTMAN

Now April, as said previously, let's not misinform the public about potential leads.

REPORTER CHEE

One last question? Detective Whit usually attends briefings. Wondering where she might be today?

MANDY

Ms. Whit happens to be in Redmand this morning.

REPORTER CHEE

Really?

MANDY

Yes, a personal visit. She's due back today.

ALMUS turns down volume.

ALMUS

How the hell did those bitches end up on that task force? It's almost like they're leading the damned thing, and Whit just happens to be in town this morning after seeing you over the weekend.

MOONDIALER

They just blew off Storman. Thought that coke can was a sure bet.

ALMUS

Maybe best to go to the camp while we can.

MOONDIALER

That's no fun. I still wanna party Tuesday night. The Rivergate date I was tracking was lost.

ALMUS

It might not be as much fun this month, but at least we'll be off the map. Let's get outta here?

MOONDIALER

You know little brother, we do have an old friend in town who might be looking to party?

ALMUS frowns momentarily in confusion. Eyebrows then rise.

ALMUS

You don't mean? Naw Ernie. It's too risky.

MOONDIALER

She's at the police station. Easy to find.

ALMUS

I don't know Ernie. This may be too much.

**91    EXT       REDMAND POLICE STATION - DAY**

ROBBIE pulls into parking lot across courthouse. Exits. Crosses street. Blue sedan screeches to halt (left lane opposing traffic). MOONDIALER (hooded) exits, opens rear right door. ALMUS (hooded) forces ROBBIE into back seat. Car runs red light onto freeway. FROST runs out. Walks into street. Picks up ROBBIE'S keys.

**92    EXT       LIEUTENANT FROST OFFICE - DAY**

MANDY (overwhelmed) rushes into FROST'S office with REGENT and MACON in tow. HARTMAN pale, quiet. FROST aggrieved.

MANDY  
THEY GOT HER! IT HAS TO BE THE FUCKING BLANKS!

LIEUTENANT FROST  
It looks that way, but we still can't be positive.

HARTMAN  
Yes Pat. We can, and we have until midnight to find these guys. That's less than 60 hours.

MANDY  
OH MY GOD! I can't believe this is happening! The Blank's house is under surveillance, right?!

LIEUTENANT FROST  
I'm afraid Mandy the units aren't yet in place.

MANDY  
OH NO! Does Ernest have an address too?

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Our records indicated he moved away some time back.

MANDY  
ROBBIE IS BEING ASSAULTED AS WE SPEAK!

FROST (calm, firm) ushers MANDY (wails of grief) to corner.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
Mandy, listen. Robbie needs YOU. There's no time for grief. You need to tell us how to find her.

MANDY  
OK, OK, you're right. Let me collect my thoughts.

MANDY'S hands at temples. Scribbles notes feverishly.

HARTMAN  
Hold your position at the unit Renny. We're mobilizing here in Redmand. Notify the mayor and D.A. we're at a crossroad. NO PRESS LEAKS JUST YET!

MANDY  
I need to get into that house on Suthon immediately.

LIEUTENANT FROST  
We're ready to move. Let's go!

MANDY

We might get lucky if they think Robbie failed to make the Rivergate connection. Ernie mighta figured he could neutralize the threat before she talked. Put out a national APB!

HARTMAN

It's too soon to publicly accuse them of serial murder. Cops around the state are looking for em, and they may not know it. That's an advantage.

MANDY

Nothing matters if we fail to apprehend them!

HARTMAN

That's not correct Mandy. We still have a murder investigation to close . . . even if we lose Robbie.

MANDY grabs stomach in dismay and disillusionment.

MANDY

Captain, if we fail there *is* no tomorrow for me.

LIEUTENANT FROST

The units are waiting. Let's get to the house.

**93    EXT        BLANK HOME   -   DAY**

Cruisers converge at home (old, 3 bed, curtains drawn, dark, unoccupied). Team breaks in, mulls about.

OFFICER PETE

They're on the move.

MANDY flips feverishly through mail on table.

MANDY

No additional names or addresses.

HARTMAN returns from bathroom.

HARTMAN

I bagged these two toothbrushes from the bathroom.

**94    INT        HARTMAN'S OFFICE   -   NIGHT**

HARTMAN slouches at desk. Cigarette soot stains cover sleeve. DESTRENE tries to reassure him.

D.A. DESTRENE

I regret my counsel caused a rift with Powers. Precipitous public accusations are a huge liability risk if these guys turn out to be innocent.

HARTMAN

They're not innocent Adam.

D.A. DESTRENE

I trust your judgment, but a capable defense attorney could spring these guys in a heartbeat. Double jeopardy could wipe their slates clean.

HARTMAN

The problem is Adam that I trust my lead detectives. It's a blind spot I happen to have. I stand by loyal officers under my command. After four and a half years, they've brought Ernie Blank into my sights.

D.A. DESTRENE

Take a deep breath Jeb. Just let the investigation breath. It's gotten too personal here tonight.

HARTMAN

You're damned right it's personal Destrene! THEY TOOK MY TOP DETECTIVE! YOU'RE DAMNED RIGHT!

D.A. DESTRENE

OK, we agree, we agree. You've notified state and local police to be on the lookout. Let's just make sure we both catch AND convict these guys.

**95 INT BAU SUITE - NIGHT**

MANDY sits alone. Clock reads 10:00 pm. HARTMAN enters.

HARTMAN

Ernie Blank's DNA can't be ruled out. The coke can print from Camp Cloister doesn't match.

MANDY

I'm having trouble finding leads from the 358 Bay St. Louis college students.

HARTMAN

Look, I gotta get some sleep. We've still got 50 hours. Keep your poise Powers.

**96 INT TASK FORCE BAU OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN enters. MANDY on phone with FBI. Clock at 7:50 am.

YOUNGBLOOD (V.O.)

I can confirm Ernie Blank served time in juvy for petty theft and breaking and entering.

MANDY

Anything else?

YOUNGBLOOD (V.O.)

Listen Mandy, we have sources in interesting places at the FBI. Rumors won't hold up in court.

MANDY

Please tell us what you know Johnny!

YOUNGBLOOD (V.O.)

Word on the street is that Blank deposits checks in a credit union. Does Upstart Oil ring a bell? You didn't hear it from me. Understand?

MANDY

Thanks! We certainly didn't hear it from you.

MANDY hangs up. HARTMAN lights cigarette. Sees first one already lit. Snuffs out first. Grabs phone and dials.

HARTMAN

Give me Chief Bison.

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

Hello Jeb. How things going in New Orleans?

HARTMAN

Not too damned good Dale. Powers is here with me. Update us on the car used in Whit's abduction?

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

The Blanks once owned both a red Dodge pickup and a blue Honda Civic just like the getaway car.

HARTMAN

That's helpful Dale. I'll be in touch.

MANDY stares at HARTMAN without speaking. Raises eyebrows. HARTMAN fidgets, looks away trying to light cigarette.

MANDY

We need to examine those 158 Timbalier Island

platform workers. Ask the CEO to go back a few more years to see who worked with Alby Storman.

HARTMAN

MACON! REGENT! Get Powers what she needs.

**97 INT BAU UNIT - NIGHT**

MANDY on phone. Clock reads 9:30 pm.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

I found a guy who says Almus was a bouncer at Dooley's Bar. I went over there and the owner just said Almus worked part-time. He had to let him go due to absences on weekend shifts.

MANDY

Let me guess. Monthly absence?

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

You got it. Said Almus became undependable.

MANDY

Any sense where he went during those absences?

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Not really. Said Almus was secretive and he never met Ernest. Almus did mention something about a camp he owned with his brother near Lafayette.

MANDY

Lafayette! PLEASE go back and talk to EVERYBODY at that bar. Somebody has to know the location.

MANDY hangs up. HARTMAN enters. Drops Upstart Oil folder.

HARTMAN

242 names and addresses. I pressed the super, and he came up with additional names.

MANDY

Lieutenant Frost says the camp is near Lafayette.

HARTMAN

You're old neck of the woods. We're closing in.

MANDY sifts feverishly through list. Moments later.

MANDY

Here it is! Ernest Blank, 701 Suthon Avenue, Redmand. His shifts coincided at times with Alby!

HARTMAN

Maybe just two ships passing in the night.

MANDY

Ernie could have known about Alby's criminal history and even his high school summer camp attendance. Maybe he tried to frame him!

HARTMAN

How about this? Maybe Alby was his side kick? They're from the same town and worked together.

MANDY

Alby woulda had trouble getting to the Boudreaux abduction hours after leaving the rig in May of '85. He's also a right-handed Saints fan.

HARTMAN

Also a sex offender who dabbled in asphyxiophilic fantasies. Did you forget that part?

MANDY checked notes. Dials speakerphone. Four rings.

MANDY

Alby, this is Mandy Powers. We met during our police interview investigating that coke can discarded out at the Camp Cloister Retreat.

STORMAN (V.O.)

Damn it! I told you guys that I had nothing to do with it! Why won't you leave me alone!

MANDY

No, no, slow down Alby. That's not what I'm calling about. You've been cleared of suspicion.

STORMAN (V.O.)

Well, OK, so why are you disturbing me tonight?

MANDY

Just a couple of questions. Did you by chance know a guy named Ernie Blank? He worked with you on the Timbalier oil platform.

STORMAN (V.O.)

Yeah, I knew the guy. Nobody liked him much.



Asked a lot of nosey questions. Seemed a little too interested in me if you know what I mean.

MANDY

Did he by any chance ever talk to you about, this is gonna sound strange, people putting a plastic bag over his head to elevate sexual arousal?

Silence on other end.

STORMAN (V.O.)

How could you possibly know that?

MANDY

Was he trying to get you to do it to somebody?

STORMAN (V.O.)

Look. On smoking breaks he would say weird shit like that. I told him to never mention it again.

MANDY

What other weird stuff did he say?

STORMAN (V.O.)

I don't know. Lots of things. Bragged about being a member in some sort of elite club for geniuses.

HARTMAN

Alby, this is Jeb Hartman with the NOPD. Did you two have the same job on the rig?

STORMAN (V.O.)

Yeah, roustabouts, but Blank acted like he owned the place. He was no better than me though.

HARTMAN

He never became a rope access technician?

STORMAN (V.O.)

A rope access tech! Oh yeah, another delusion. They sent him back from training with his tail between his legs. It became a sensitive topic.

MANDY

Thanks Alby. We appreciate your help. Good night.

**98 INT HARTMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN slouches on couch. MANDY bursts in.

HARTMAN

What? What time is it? You been up all night?

MANDY

5:00 a.m! Here it is! A UNO enrollment misprint.  
Frances Auther on 520 North Beach in Bay St.  
Louis. It's his middle and mother's name!

HARTMAN rises drowsy, walks to desk. Picks up phone.

HARTMAN

I guess that sounds like him. Lemme wake up.

MANDY

We need an assault team at North Beach!

Finds index card on desk, lights cigarette, places call.

HARTMAN

BSL dispatch? This is NOPD Captain Jeb Hartman. I  
need Chief Splat at his home.

Mumbles on the line.

Yes. IMMEDIATELY. This IS an emergency.

SPLAT (V.O.)

Hello. Chief Splat. What's so damned important?

HARTMAN

Bill, this is Jeb Hartman. Sorry to wake you.  
When you guys completed that house-to-house  
canvas we requested, do you remember hearing  
about a guy living on 520 North Beach Boulevard?

SPLAT (V.O.)

It was a routine house check 9 months ago Jeb. I  
could ask the guys when they come in at 8:00.

HARTMAN

I need to hear from those cops right away Bill.

SPLAT (V.O.)

Really? Well, OK, I'll call and get back to you.

HARTMAN moves to coffee pot. MANDY exits. REGENT enters.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

What's up Jeb? I heard some commotion.

HARTMAN

We've got two leads. A camp is near Lafayette and Powers is all over an address in Bay St. Louis.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

This could be progress.

HARTMAN

Get us mobilized. We could be heading out soon. Summon the task force now. Call Opel at home. Alert the mayor and chief.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

You got it. Anything else?

HARTMAN

Yeah. Bring Dale Bison from the state police into the loop. He's critical.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

One other thing Jeb. The lobby is inundated with press. They know Whit's been abducted.

HARTMAN

The mayhem has begun. Surprised it took em so long. We'll just have to deal with it.

**99 INT HARTMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN at desk. Rises, puts on coat. MANDY rushes back in with REGENT, BORDER, MACON & STABLE right behind.

BORDER

We made contact late last night with 3 of our six survivors who said they'd be willing to testify that he was their assailant. We've got him Jeb!

HARTMAN

They also made partial identifications from the Rivergate video, right? These witnesses could be impeached due to videotape contamination.

MANDY

OH COME ON!

HARTMAN

OK, OK, these are problems for Destrene.

Phone rings. HARTMAN raises hand for silence. Calm answer.

HARTMAN

Go ahead Bill. What can you tell us?

SPLAT (V.O.)

Sorry Jeb. Sounds like a dry hole. Bentley and Ploud cleared that trailer on 520 North Beach.

HARTMAN

So what did the resident look like?

SPLAT (V.O.)

About 27, maybe 175 pounds, well short of 6 feet. Said Frances was his middle name. He was a UNO graduate working as an EMT in Biloxi.

HARTMAN

He said Frances was his middle name, huh?

SPLAT (V.O.)

He did. They said he was shirtless and looked like a redneck bum. They wondered how he managed to complete a nursing program at UNO

HARTMAN scans faces in room.

HARTMAN

So that's about it, huh? Anything else?

SPLAT (V.O.)

Oh yeah, probably nothing, but they said he had some sort of weird sundial on his deck with moon images on it. Said he got from his grandpa.

Startled glances around room. HARTMAN raises eyebrows.

HARTMAN

Thank you Bob. We'll probably be visiting your town sometime today to double check that trailer.

SPLAT (V.O.)

Well, OK Jeb, but nothing to see out there.

HARTMAN slams phone down.

HARTMAN

A MOONDIAL! ALL UNITS OUT TO BAY ST. LOUIS!

Officers scurry to cruisers. HARTMAN and MANDY trailed by shouting reporters. Enter cruiser with REGENT & BORDER. Units leave lots with sirens and lights.

**101 EXT MOONDIALER TRAILER - DAY**

Drone closes on HARTMAN & MANDY arrival at dilapidated trailer with six units of flashing lights. Door forced open on vacant trailer. Mull about. No moondial or physical evidence. SPLAT, BENTLEY & PLOUD approach MANDY & HARTMAN.

BENTLEY

I'm Officer Bentley. You guys don't really think that guy coulda been your serial killer?

MANDY shakes head. Walks to Hartman on phone. He hangs up.

HARTMAN

The owner just informed me the occupant was Frank Auther. Looked about 30, 6"1, and maybe 200 lbs. The guy called in March and said the month's rent was on the table. Stiffed him outta 4 months.

MANDY

What now?

HARTMAN

Stewart, get every inch dusted for prints and body fluids. Look for personal belongings left behind. Get Adam Destrene and Scotty Broussard ready for a call once I'm downtown.

BORDER

Broussard? The judge?

HARTMAN

Yeah, the judge. He's an old friend. Sanford, come with me. I'll fill you in on the drive.

MANDY

Captain, there's less than 14 hours.

HARTMAN

Powers, I need you to return to headquarters with Bob. I won't be far behind.

MANDY stares tearfully with desperation in her eyes.

HARTMAN

I know. I understand.

Reporters besiege HARTMAN at cruiser.

REPORTER TABER

Has Detective Whit been abducted?! Reports from Redmand say the serial killer have her!

REPORTER CHEE

CAPTAIN! CAPTAIN! Did he live in this trailer?!

HARTMAN pauses at car door.

HARTMAN

Press conference downtown in thirty minutes.

CUT TO:

REGENT, MACON, BORDER & MANDY race down interstate with lights and sirens. MANDY in rear with hands over head crying. Radio plays low in background.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

Turn it up Jack! WWL! Something's happening!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This is WWL breaking news. We interrupt today's programming to bring you an unscheduled press conference simulcasted on CNN from the police station in downtown Bay St. Louis.

MANDY looks up with confusion.

MACON

What's he up to?

ANNOUNCER (V.O. whispers)

Captain Jeb Hartman from the Crescent City Task Force is approaching the microphones.

HARTMAN (V.O.)

Good morning. I'm Jeb Hartman, homicide captain and head of the New Orleans serial killer task force. I'm here today to announce warrants for the arrests of ERNEST FRANCES BLANK and ALMUS JASE BLANK in connection to the serial killings.

Cameras clicking throughout press room.

The Blank brothers are armed and dangerous. We

need information about their movements and property ownership, especially around Lafayette. High school photos are shown above. The prior police sketch appears inaccurate.

REPORTER TABER (V.O.)  
Captain! Captain! Do they have Detective Whit?!

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
Yes, we believe Detective Whit is being held by the Blank brothers.

REPORTER CHEE (V.O.)  
Please confirm that you believe Ernest and Almus Blank are the serial killers?

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
That's for a jury to decide, but I'm prepared to arrest these men on 17 counts of capital murder.

REGENT glances over at forlorn passenger.

REPORTER CHEE (V.O.)  
Does that count include Detective Whit sir?

HARTMAN (V.O.)  
That certainly does NOT include Detective Whit Ms. Taber. That's all now. Thank you everyone.

REGENT turns down radio.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT  
There it is Mandy. Now the whole nation is now looking with us. It's only a matter of time.

MANDY  
Time is something we don't have.

**102 INT HARTMAN'S OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN sits. Smoky clock reads 1:00 p.m. OPEL enters.

HARTMAN  
No reporters in these upstairs halls. Make sure you keep them out Opel. I don't have time for these people. Screen my calls. I only want to hear from sources with real information.

OPEL

Yes sir. Mandy is outside. Can she enter?

HARTMAN

She enters this office whenever she damned well wants Opel. Don't ever ask again. Send her in.

MANDY enters.

MANDY

He's fixated on the midnight of full moons. Patsy Hebert said he was waiting for midnight. He said Tammy Touns would be gone by midnight.

HARTMAN

That's our theory. The murders occur at midnight.

MANDY

But that's just the projected deadline. We don't know if his fetish requires murder *precisely* at that hour. Maybe Robbie has a little more time.

HARTMAN

OK, maybe even hours?

MANDY

Exactly. Let's not assume it's over at midnight.

**103 INT BAU OFFICE - DAY**

Clock reads 8:30 p.m. HARTMAN enters. MANDY picks up phone.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Hello?

MANDY

It's me.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Oh, didn't expect to hear from you. My wife and I have been glued to TV all day. No further leads?

MANDY

No sir. Can you process something with me from the Jewel Theater arson case?

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Certainly Mandy, go ahead, what's on your mind?

MANDY



I remember Blank was friends with Wade Banyan? We surveilled them at Banyan's house late one night.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Oh yes, I recall the debriefing. There was some sort of drug purchase in play that night?

MANDY

That's right. Ernie was looking for drugs, and Banyan was his supplier. That's not much help.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

I've got notes here at home. Give me a minute.

FROST puts down phone. MANDY glances at HARTMAN.

MANDY

He's looking for notes from our surveillance of Blank during the arson case. Grasping at straws.

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

Hey listen, my notes indicated he was headed somewhere that weekend.

MANDY

I remember now! Did we note where he was going?!

LIEUTENANT FROST (V.O.)

No, I don't have anything else. I'm so sorry.

MANDY puts hands over face to think. Ten seconds.

MANDY

Wait a minute! I took notes too! They're stored in our closet at the apartment! Maybe they were more specific! Thanks Pat! I'll be in touch.

MANDY hangs up. HARTMAN bellowing orders outside office.

HARTMAN

GET ME A UNIT! WE'RE HEADED DOWN SAINT CHARLES!

**104 INT POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT**

Cruiser races (sirens, lights) down Saint Charles at 70 mph. HARTMAN in passenger seat. REGENT in back with MANDY.

HARTMAN

How are we doing on time?

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

10:22.

HARTMAN

Fuck.

**105 EXT APARTMENT - NIGHT**

MANDY in bedroom closet. Retrieves notes. Thumbs through.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

Anything?

MANDY

Robbie made notes in the margin . . . drug and cash exchange. Let's see. Looks like . . .

MANDY wide eyed pause.

HARTMAN

What is it Powers?

MANDY

Looks like . . . boating to bayou camp on weekend . . . 4 miles south of Butte La Rose.

**106 INT POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT**

Racing cruiser. HARTMAN barks orders. MANDY transfers 44 Magnum (pink grip) from purse to waistband. Scribbles note.

HARTMAN

Is State Police Chief Bison plugged in yet?

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

I'm here Jeb. Whadda you need?

HARTMAN

Air support authorization at Lakefront Airport.

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

How far out? A copter will be waiting.

HARTMAN

DRIVER?!

DRIVER

Little traffic sir. Only about 8 minutes.

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

I just ordered the copter to warm up and move

out on the tarmac. It's always ready to go on short notice Jeb. Where are we headed?

HARTMAN

Not sure. Four miles south of Butte La Rose. We're pouring over maps. We'll get more precise in transit. How fast does this copter fly?

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

Over a hundred knots. You can make it to Butte La Rose in less than an hour.

HARTMAN

Where are your guys positioned?

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

Still in Baton Rouge. We'll be at the interstate bridge cutoff shortly. We've got resources coming from both ends of the interstate.

HARTMAN

I'll need State Police and Fish and Game cruisers on site when we arrive. Alert Catahoula PD. We're at the airport. I see the copter.

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

You got it Jeb. We'll see you in an hour.

HARTMAN

LESS THAN AN HOUR! We don't have an hour!

**107 EXT STATE POLICE HELICOPTER - NIGHT**

HARTMAN races to copter. MANDY close behind. MACON & REGENT greet. MANDY slips note to unidentified officer over blast of copter blades (hand gestures of urgency). Lift off.

**108 EXT STATE POLICE HELICOPTER - NIGHT**

HARTMAN, MANDY, MACON & REGENT inspect aerial maps under dim helicopter lights. Team has to yell over engines. HARTMAN points to Bayou La Rose. MONTAGE OF Google Earth imagery from space to town focus.

HARTMAN

Look at this. Henderson's this small town on the basin close to Lafayette.

MANDY

We know Henderson. Been there many times to see our friend Gator Moses. He runs swamp cruises.

HARTMAN

Looks like this road off the interstate east of Henderson gives the best access to Butte La Rose.

MANDY

The camp is four miles south of town!

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

Yeah, look here. The narrow Bayou La Rose begins in town and runs almost 3 miles south before a right turn along unpopulated marshy banks.

MACON

Look at the aerial photography! A small camp in the woods at the precise distance. It's isolated on the south bank of the bayou!

MANDY

THAT'S GOTTA BE IT! An isolated camp on the bayou 4+ miles south of Butte La Rose!

HARTMAN grabs radio transmitter.

HARTMAN

Bison? You there? Can you read me?

Crackling radio transmissions.

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

We're in transit approaching the rest area on the Atchafalaya River. Less than 6 miles away.

HARTMAN

We're landing at the Herman Dupuis boat launch in 20 minutes! Get us three boats and a dozen assault team officers.

CHIEF BISON (V.O.)

Wild Life Management has vessels stationed on the Atchafalaya that runs into Butte La Rose. Boats were appropriated for tonight just in case.

HARTMAN

Great work Chief. See you shortly.

MANDY stares wistfully at moonlit basin. Turns to see  
HARTMAN smile grimly with thumb's up. Looks back at swamp.

**109 EXT BUTTE LA ROSE - NIGHT**

Butte La Rose lit up like carnival. Residents mull at boat  
dock gawking. Copter lands. HARTMAN greeted like celebrity.

CITIZEN

Is this about the serial killer?!

HARTMAN

No comment. Let us do our work.

HARTMAN greets BISON. Assault team boards three boats.  
Depart down Bayou La Rose in dark.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT

What the hell time is it?

MANDY

11:45.

MACON

There's still time Mandy. Just hang in there.

**110 EXT BUTTE LA ROSE - NIGHT**

HARTMAN & MANDY at bow of lead boat. HARTMAN peers ahead  
with spotlight into moon lit darkness.

HARTMAN

We're past the turn. Let's slow down officer.

MANDY

WE GOTTA MOVE CAPTAIN! WE'VE CUT THIS TOO CLOSE!

HARTMAN rises. Waves to cut engines. Boats drift to dock.

HARTMAN

We want to surprise them Powers. LOOK! 50 yards.  
See that small dock? Slow the engine. Quiet.  
Jack, take the lead with State Police. We'll  
follow. Careful about shooting. Whit's exposed.

REGENT disembarks with 6 assault troopers up wooden steps  
into dense woods. Cabin lighted. Creepy sound track of Mad  
Moon Rising emanates loudly from within. HARTMAN directs  
MANDY'S attention to moondial on outside deck.

**111 INT MOONDIALER CABIN - NIGHT**

On three count, SWAT team bursts into cabin.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT  
POLICE! HANDS UP! DON'T MOVE BASTARD!

ALMUS in underwear, hands held high. Padded gurney (wrist & ankle restraints, spotlights, no wheels, heavy duty plastic bag) centers room. REGENT cuffs ALMUS. MANDY claws ALMUS, fierce kick to groin. ALMUS recoils & screeches like child.

MANDY  
WHERE'S ROBBIE! WHERE THE FUCK IS SHE!

ALMUS  
THERE'S NOBODY HERE! I DON'T KNOW WHO YOUR TALKIN BOUT. LOOK AROUND. YOU'VE GOT NOTHIN ON US.

MANDY  
ALMUS, WHERE'S ERNIE??!! WHERE THE FUCK DID HE GO THIS CLOSE TO MIDNIGHT?! WHERE'D HE TAKE ROBBIE?!

HARTMAN & REGENT pull MANDY back. HARTMAN confronts ALMUS.

HARTMAN  
We know who you are what you did! Tell us where Ernie went if you want to save your life!

ALMUS  
I don't know nothing!

HARTMAN fiercely kicks ALMUS in groin.

HARTMAN  
Once again! Tell us EXACTLY where he took her!  
I'M NOT GONNA ASK YOU AGAIN ALMUS!

ALMUS  
DON'T KNOW ABOUT NO GIRL. Ernie's in da basin dumping our garbage. He'll be back soon enough.

HARTMAN again attacks handcuffed ALMUS. Pulled away.

DEPUTY CHIEF REGENT  
STOP IT JEB! We don't have time for this. Don't give 'em ammunition for the trial!

Room buzzes with confusion. HARTMAN looks for MANDY. Sound of boat speeding away. HARTMAN runs out cabin alone down wooden steps to bayou. Sees MANDY in boat speeding out west on bayou. HARTMAN jumps into adjacent cruiser. Roars away.

**112 EXT BAYOU LA ROSE (MANDY'S BOAT) - NIGHT**

MANDY turns north at bend. Small masthead light illuminates ahead. Bayou dark, eerie, movements in brush, no cars across levee. Glances at watch (12:17 am).

CUT TO:

HARTMAN (intense close-up) trails MANDY in the distance.

CUT TO:

MOONDIALER races boat from basin into mouth of bayou. Squints at approaching boat in distance. Slows engine for encounter.

CUT TO:

MANDY glares at approaching skiff. Pulls 44 Magnum.

CUT TO:

MOONDIALER stands shirtless. Squints to see approaching mariner. MANDY orients spotlight on him. At 30 feet she's recognized in her Weaver stance. Gun aimed squarely at groin. MOONDIALER drops flashlight, smirks.

CUT TO:

MANDY

PUT YOUR HANDS UP ERNIE! NOOOWW MOTHERFUCKER!!!

Skiffs approach, make soft contact. MANDY peers distraught at empty boat. Begins to wail in anguish.

MOONDIALER

Go fuck yourself Powers. I ain't afraid of you.

MANDY

WHERE IS SHE??? WHERE DID YOU LEAVE HER ERNIE??

MOONDIALER

You can't shoot me! You'd neva find what's left of her! You want something to bury, don't ya?

MANDY  
TELL ME NOW!

MOONDIALER  
Get outta my way . . .

MANDY steadies stance. First 44 caliber bullet tears through MOONDIALER scrotum. Boat rocks, MANDY still upright. MOONDIALER bends down in agony. Looks up with animal rage. Sees MANDY slowly adjusting aim at his forehead. She slows breathing, leans into stance.

CUT TO:

MOONDIALER close up image of terror.

CUT TO:

MANDY'S second shot blows MOONDIALER'S head to smithereens along eastern bayou periphery. MANDY collapses in fits of sobs. Gators heard splashing along marsh bayou bank.

**113 EXT BAYOU LA ROSE (HARTMAN'S BOAT) - NIGHT**

Close up of HARTMAN in desperate pursuit. HARTMAN flinches at gun flashes and reports 300 feet ahead. Mumbles to himself. Pushes throttle back to full speed. Approaches boat quickly. MANDY hysterical in fetal position on skiff. HARTMAN looks across his back to verify still alone. Slows engine at approach. Sees MOONDIALER'S headless torso in water. Gators moving in. MANDY with smoking gun.

HARTMAN  
DAMN IT POWERS! WHAT DID YOU DO?

MANDY  
IT'S OVER! MY LIFE IS OVER! THERE'S NOTHING LEFT!

HARTMAN  
WAS HE ARMED? DID HE HAVE A WEAPON POWERS?

MANDY  
I DON'T CARE. I GOT THE JUMP ON HIM!

HARTMAN inspects scene, deep in thought.

HARTMAN  
NO GUN POWERS?! HE HAD NO GUN?



MANDY  
NO! NO! NO! HE GOT WHAT HE DESERVED!

HARTMAN  
GET UP! GET UP! WE'VE GOT TO GET OUTTA HERE  
IMMEDIATELY! LET'S GET TO THE BASIC! MAYBE WE  
CAN STILL SAVE HER! THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE.

MANDY continues to sob.

MANDY  
WADDA YA WANT ME TO DO?! I CAN'T GO ANY FURTHER!  
I'M RUINED! I'M FINISHED! I'M DEAD!

HARTMAN  
POWERS! LISTEN TO ME! GIMME YOU'RE GUN! NOW!!!

HARTMAN grabs rag from skiff. MANDY slowly hands Magnum.

MANDY  
HERE'S MY GUN! GO AHEAD AND ARREST ME!

HARTMAN  
MOVE YOUR BOAT ASIDE!

MANDY pushes off. HARTMAN aims at 20-foot metal skiff.

GUN REPORT  
BAM . . . BAM . . . BAM . . . BAM!

MOONDIALER skiff begins sinking.

HARTMAN  
THIS NEVER HAPPENED! YOU UNDERSTAND?!

MANDY begins to recompose. Nods.

MANDY  
I guess so. If that's what you say.

HARTMAN  
We saw this boat sinking a mile into the basin.  
Blank crashed it trying to get away. THAT'S THE  
STORY, OK? NOTHING ELSE HAPPENED IN THIS BAYOU!

MANDY  
What about the boat and his body over there?

HARTMAN  
What boat? What body? I don't see anything. This

bayou won't get attention for a long time.

MANDY

What if . . . what if . . .

HARTMAN

Nobody's gonna care about the boat. YOU GOT IT?

MANDY glances at remains getting tugged under. Faint boat motors in distance. HARTMAN tosses Magnum in water.

HARTMAN

LET'S GOOO! MAYBE WE CAN STILL FIND HER ALIVE!

HARTMAN & MANDY race off at top speed toward the basin.

**114 EXT BAYOU LA ROSE (HARTMAN'S BOAT) - NIGHT**

HARTMAN & MANDY stand in vessels scanning the surface of the moonlit basin. Fish and Game cruisers closing in from all around. Spotlights scan the eerily basin waters in all directions. MANDY drops in anguish.

HARTMAN

Right over there guys! He went down over there!

HARTMAN drops down, head in hands, crying in torment.

**115 EXT BUTTE LA ROSE - NIGHT**

Large crowd (reporters, police, citizens) illuminated by spotlights around helicopters at staging area. TV moved to the camp porch. Bernard SHAW breaks into regular programming.

SHAW

It's 1:00 a.m. and we're receiving reports of a break in the New Orleans serial killer case. CNN sources now confirm that one of the killers, Almus Jase Blank, was apprehended this evening at his camp on Bayou La Rose east of Lafayette. His brother, Ernest Frances Blank, was lost and presumed dead in the Atchafalaya Basin.

SHAW softens tone.

We must also share reports that task force Detective Robbie Whit was murdered earlier this evening. Whit was 31-years-old. She was born and raised in Redmand, Louisiana. She joined the task

force in July of 1985. Whit was highly regarded, and her loss will be mourned widely. She was the final victim in this four year crime spree.

MONTAGE: GERT & STANLEY Whit sob in Redmand; OLIVER drinks heavily and cries in North Dakota; MITKER sobs in mansion.

**116 INT MOONDIALER CABIN - NIGHT**

BISON with HARTMAN & MANDY as SWAT team explores cabin.  
ALMUS shouts in rage when hearing his brother was lost.

ALMUS

YOU LIE! He knows dat basin like the back of his hand! He could navigate it blindfolded! You guys killed him! You murdered my brother!

MANDY

SHUT THE FUCK UP! YOU MURDERED MY GIRLFRIEND!

HARTMAN

Enough Powers! Guys get him the fuck out of here.

here. There's no need to keep him here.

Officers drag screaming handcuffed killer out of cabin.

CHIEF BISON

Jeb, I have a few questions for you and Powers.

HARTMAN

This isn't the time. The search for Whit is still in progress. We can debrief tomorrow.

CHIEF BISON

Drivers on Henderson road reported gunshots projecting from the lower basin. Faint reports were even heard in Butte La Rose. You hear em?

HARTMAN

We heard em. There were two, followed a minute later by four more. We were in the basin watching Blank go under. They came from Breaux Bridge.

CHIEF BISON

The shots had nothing to do with your pursuit?

HARTMAN

No. We were busy trying to close on Blank's boat

as it sank. We got there too late.

CHIEF BISON

Can you present your revolver Jeb. I need to verify it hasn't been fired.

HARTMAN

Sure. Here it is. Take it. You probably want ballistics to check it out as well.

CHIEF BISON

Yeah, I think that's best. How about you Powers? Were you packing when you took on pursuit?

MANDY

I was unarmed. I was looking for Robbie, not her abductor. I've gotta get back out there Captain! We need to go help search for Robbie!

HARTMAN

We'll get back. Let's just finish with the chief.

CHIEF BISON

Internal Affairs will question why Powers went out alone without a weapon? I need to frisk her.

HARTMAN

DAMN IT BISON! She was traumatized! I'm telling you Powers was unarmed. We boarded the copter in New Orleans without prior notice.

CHIEF BISON

OK, OK, just keep your cool. It's been a rough night. Let me verify you're unarmed Mandy.

BISON conducts quick frisk of both. HARTMAN heads for door with MANDY at side. BISON'S radio crackles loudly (3 sec).

RADIO TRANSMISSION (V.O.)

Chief, we've been asked to convey a message to Powers. Some guy called us from Henderson.

CHIEF BISON

Go ahead, what's the message?

RADIO TRANSMISSION (V.O.)

Guy says his name is . . . Gator . . . yeah, Gator Moses. Told dispatcher to tell Powers, let get this right, that this is Gator Moses' swamp. It always has been, and it always will be.

MANDY begins to scream wildly.

MANDY  
WHAT?! SAY IT AGAIN OFFICER! WHAT EXACTLY DID  
GATOR MOSES SAY?!

HARTMAN  
SAY IT AGAIN OFFICER! Loud and clear for Powers.

More transmission crackle.

RADIO TRANSMISSION  
This guy says he's Gator Moses and this is his  
swamp. It always has been and it always will be.

MANDY again screams in glee. Others look on with confusion.

HARTMAN  
WHAT DOES IT MEAN POWERS?! WHAT'S IT MEAN?

MANDY  
IT MEANS SHE'S ALIVE!! ROBBIE'S ALIVE! SHE'S  
GOT TO BE WITH GATOR MOSES IN HENDERSON!

HARTMAN  
LET'S ROLL GUYS. GOTTA GET TO HENDERSON! NOW!

# **117 INT HELICOPTER - NIGHT**

Black Hawk helicopter races above moonlit basin. HARTMAN  
looks at MANDY (transfixed on window). Camera closes on face.

## **FLASHBACK MONTAGE: 117A EXT. ATCHAFALAYA BASIN - DAY**

Hot basin swamp (murky algae, petrified stumps).

GATOR  
Hi y'all folks! I be Jean-Baptiste Gator Moses  
and this is my swamp!

FLASH CUT TO:

RYAN  
What if a guy fell in?

FLASH CUT TO:

GATOR  
Truth is son, you'd be in a heap a trouble.

FLASH CUT TO:

GATOR

Best ting would be to float and not splash about.

FLASH CUT TO:

GATOR

Every now and den somebody has trouble in my swamp.

FLASH CUT TO:

GATOR

As I always say, hear me all and listen good. Dis is Gator Moses swamp! Ya'll remembers dat. It always has been, and it always will be.

**118 INT HELICOPTER - NIGHT**

Copter races above moonlit basin. MANDY calls out above din.

MANDY

I gave Gator's phone number to a beat officer before lifting off from Lakefront. He called him to warn that Robbie and the killer were heading their way.

HARTMAN

Gator Moses?

**119 EXT HENDERSON (GATOR MOSES CAMP) - NIGHT**

MANDY directs pilot to beacon atop Moses' 40-foot viewing platform. Flashing lights saturate shoreline below platform. CNN reporters maneuver into position. Black Hawk lands. MANDY exits, runs to tower. GATOR (broad smile) in distance.

GATOR

HEAR ME ALL AND LISTEN GOOD! DIS IS GATOR MOSES' SWAMP!! IT ALWAYS HAS BEEN, AND IT ALWAYS WILL BE!

MANDY

GATOR! GATOR! DO YOU HAVE HER?! IS SHE OK??!!

GATOR

She's pretty shook up but in one piece Mandy. She's over der in dat ambulance wid da flashing lights!

MANDY throws arms around GATOR. Runs to ambulance. ROBBIE on stretcher with IV (large neck hematoma, arm/leg bruises.

MANDY

ROBBIE! YOU'RE ALIVE! YOU'RE ALIVE! THANK GOD!  
What did they do to you Robbie? What did they do?

ROBBIE

I regained consciousness on a gurney looking  
through a plastic bag at Ernie laughing. The movie,  
the music, it was awful Mandy.

MANDY

Look at these neck and body bruises! Oh my God! Ah,  
ah, what did those bastards do to you?

ROBBIE hesitates, looks down. Regains eye contact. Smiles.

ROBBIE

I looked at Almus and begged him to leave me alone.  
Musta freaked them out knowing me personally. Ernie  
tried, but couldn't do anything.

MANDY

You're the bravest person I've ever known.

ROBBIE

They argued. Ernie pushed him aside and said it was  
garbage disposal time. He dragged me naked with my  
hands tied to his boat. I saw the full moon and  
knew he wanted to watch me get eaten alive.

ROBBIE dissolves in anguish. MANDY overwrought.

MANDY

You survived. It'll take time to recover.

ROBBIE

You caught em, right? They're in custody?

MANDY

Well, that's half right. Ernie crashed his boat and  
suffered a fate intended for you. Almus is in jail.

ROBBIE

So Ernie's dead? I thought he got away after leaving  
me in the swamp. He heard Gator in the distance.

MANDY

Oh yeah, trust me, he's dead all right. He sank  
running toward the bayou.

ROBBIE

I have to tell you something remarkable. I heard Ophelia Myrtle's voice and saw her in the distance talking to me. She was calm and reassuring.

MANDY

What?

ROBBIE

She told me to pray with my last breath. The time was upon me. God told her there was nothing to fear. It was ordained that I would survive the demons.

MANDY

What did the vision mean to you?

ROBBIE

I knew what Ophelia was referring to all along. I kept calm as he shook the boat and made me fall in. Everything slowed down and a calm came over me. I rolled over, floated, and prayed. The moment felt . . . transcendent.

MANDY

Good Lord! Ophelia was with you in mind and spirit? Visions kept you calm?! What was Ernie doing?

ROBBIE

He was laughing and making . . . sexual sounds. The boat in the distance musta spooked him.

ROBBIE sits up (gown, IV, heating blanket). EMT enters.

MANDY

Gator saved you! Even from rape. It's a miracle!

EMT makes eye contact with ROBBIE, looks away.

EMT

Detective Whit, we need to go to the hospital for a thorough examination. These are serious injuries.

ROBBIE jumps up. Points at GATOR'S tower.

ROBBIE

Look at Gator's tower. I could see it from way out in the swamp. Does anything look familiar Mandy?

MANDY



Sure. We've even been to the top of that tower.  
Gator says the beacon can be seen a mile away.

ROBBIE

I saw it in my periphery while floating. It looks  
like a red oil rig platform surrounded by petrified  
trees. The beacon made it look red from the water  
angle . . . just like my nightmares.

CUT TO:

FLASHBACK: **119A EXT. MARSH ISLAND - NIGHT**

Young ROBBIE splashes in still dark water. Squints to see  
vague image of a red flashing oil rig surrounded by  
petrified trees in distance.

CUT BACK:

MANDY

Whoow . . .

ROBBIE

They weren't nightmares. They were visions of a  
rebirth. The loss of control felt in the basin was  
empowering. You see, I've never been alone.

MANDY swallows hard looking up at the platform and it's  
narrowed shape resembling an oil platform.

MANDY

It feels like . . . divine intervention.

ROBBIE nods seriously.

ROBBIE

I wonder if Ophelia was the real deal right from  
the start? I mean, she wasn't perfect in her  
visions. Her readings about you were way off.

FLASHBACK CUT:

SISTER AYUDA

I'll pray for your souls. Especially this one.  
Such anger issues darling. So true to your word.

RETURN CUT:

MANDY

One outta two ain't bad I guess?

MANDY grimaces, gulps. Embraces ROBBIE beneath platform.

**120 INT CNN NEWS - NIGHT**

SHAW (V.O.)

It's 3:00 a.m. Eastern Standard Time, and this is Bernard Shaw with CNN BREAKING NEWS. An hour ago we reported that Detective Robbie Whit perished in the Atchafalaya Basin tonight. CNN can now confirm that Detective Whit DID NOT die at the basin camp of the serial killers. I REPEAT, ROBBIE WHIT DID NOT perish tonight in the basin.

MONTAGE: GERT & STANLEY Whit sob in Redmand; OLIVER tosses drink in North Dakota; MITKER laughs at mansion. SHAW chokes away emotion, continues.

SHAW

She's alive and being treated for hypothermia. One suspect is dead and another under arrest. Whit's unlikely rescue was implemented by 55-year-old Jean-Baptiste 'Gator' Moses of Henderson, Louisiana. Here's what he had to say.

**121 EXT HENDERSON (GATOR MOSES CAMP) - NIGHT**

REPORTERS swarm about beaming GATOR hero.

GATOR

Hi y'all all! I'm Gator Moses. I been living on dis swamp my whole life. Dis is one a da largest wildlife refuges in da world. I always tells da kids, if ya ever falls in, keep calm since old Jean-Baptiste Gator Moses is comin to gets ya.

**122 EXT GATOR MOSES VIEWING PLATFORM - NIGHT**

HARTMAN joins ROBBIE & MANDY under platform. Gives both women an uncharacteristic warm embrace.

HARTMAN

I've gotta leave you with this media storm. You caught our serial killers. The city will always be indebted.

HARTMAN begins to walk away. MANDY calls out.

MANDY

Captain?

HARTMAN

Yes Powers (choking back tears)?

MANDY

Thank you sir.

HARTMAN removes brown Stetson, tips hat, voice cracking.

HARTMAN

This is your show ladies. I'm just the M.C. It's been an honor and privilege working with you.

HARTMAN turns, fades away into distance.

ROBBIE

Wow. Never seen him go so soft. He could hardly get his words out. What I miss in the basin?

ROBBIE looked to MANDY choked up as well. EMT approaches.

EMT

Detective Whit, we need to transport you now.

MANDY

Go with the medical team. I'll book Room 1 at the Bikini Inn. Vera and Junior will be waiting.

### **123 INT PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY**

Packed NOPD press room. Mayor, Police Chief, and D.A. in place behind podium. HARTMAN (sleep deprived, brown Stetson, dark jeans, plaid western shirt, full goatee trimmed overnight, upright 6'3" frame). Room entry prompts standing ovation. As the applause peaks, theatrical lighting of Maduro cigar.

HARTMAN

Ladies and gentlemen, after nearly five years in this chase, WE GOT EM.

Room erupts. HARTMAN pauses with practiced timing.

The terror of these brothers from Redmand is over. Victims were sadly left in the Atchafalaya Basin, and Ernest Frances Blank suffered the same fate last night trying to escape. His brother is in custody facing the death penalty. This crime spree began unnoticed in early 1983 with murders that included the Blank's own mother. The final count stands at 21 with 7 rape survivors.

HARTMAN collects himself for final flourish.

When the history of this investigation is told, it will establish that our success rested disproportionately on the backs of two freelance Lafayette detectives recruited 30 months ago. In the end, the task force took its leads from these behavioral consultants who will be recorded as two of the most historic homicide detectives in our ranks. Robbie Whit cracked the case on Halloween night. As a direct result, she found herself days later in harms way. Mandy Powers was then instrumental in tracking the killers into the Atchafalaya Basin late last night.

REPORTER CHEE

Captain! What about this fellow Gator Moses?! How'd he end up in a serial killer investigation?

HARTMAN

There's no shortage of heroes April. Gator Moses warrants special mention, but citizens would be surprised to hear about others who prefer to remain out of the limelight. Thank you everyone.

**124 INT STATE POLICE OFFICE - DAY**

HARTMAN meets with BISON in his office. Tone is somber.

CHIEF BISON

How's Whit Jeb? Sounds like she got roughed up pretty bad out in the swamp.

HARTMAN

She's recovering. She's one tough cookie.

CHIEF BISON

That she is. That she is. Sounds like a hell of an investigation. Legendary teamwork.

HARTMAN glances at watch.

HARTMAN

Wondering what prompted our meeting today?

CHIEF BISON

Just some loose ends. Skull fragments of Sanier and Toups were found in the basin. No other remains. Can you believe it, no skiff either?

HARTMAN

Just some skull fragments from those two, huh?

CHIEF BISON

That's about it. Blank had a good strategy for body disposal. Did you hear a fisherman also found a section of Blank's torso along the east bank of Bayou La Rose?

HARTMAN

I heard something to that effect.

CHIEF BISON

Jeb, how you imagine that torso ended up 2,000 feet down the bayou from the basin?

HARTMAN

I don't know Dale. Bodies can float you know.

CHIEF BISON

Against the current?

HARTMAN

Awh, there's not much current in Bayou La Rose. Besides, gators can migrate with their prey.

CHIEF BISON

Really? Never heard of that before?

HARTMAN

Oh sure. Animal behavior's unpredictable.

BISON pauses again.

CHIEF BISON

Just for the record, ya still sure you led the boys to the right part of the swamp that night?

HARTMAN

Yes I am Dale. Had to be within a 100 yards.

CHIEF BISON

A 100 yards huh? It's curious we never found him.

HARTMAN

Not easy for a guy to get his bearings on a dark night in Louisiana swamp waters. We understand that down here, don't we Dale? I'm neva going back.

CHIEF BISON

Some of the brass in Baton Rouge wanna dredge the bayou lookin for the skiff. I guess you wouldn't see a need for that sorta thing, right?

HARTMAN

Seems like it would be a waste of hard earned Lusiana taxpayer money. I heard Almus Blank was gonna plead out for a life sentence. That'll preclude an unpleasant trial for Destrene.

CHIEF BISON

That would wrap things up nicely, huh?

HARTMAN

Yep, case closed. Time for everyone to just move on. Guess it's your call about dredging though.

BISON stares expressionless at Hartman for seconds.

CHIEF BISON

What could an old sunken skiff tell us anyway, right? My father always told me it's best to just leave well enough alone.

HARTMAN

Funny Chief, my daddy told me the same thing.

CHIEF BISON

That was a mighty fine job your boys did out there Jeb. History will record it favorably.

HARTMAN

We appreciate that but remember it was my girls who closed out the case. This behavioral science stuff can be pretty uncanny.

CHIEF BISON

Just you and Powers in the bayou that night, wasn't it?

HARTMAN

Sure Dale. Just me and Powers. You remember, we were all together before that at the camp.

BISON pauses again, stares at HARTMAN.

CHIEF BISON

Oh yeah. I remember it quite well.

HARTMAN

Good. I guess you could say we've got three eyewitnesses of the night's events.

BISON stares with no facial reaction. Seconds pass. Laughs.

CHIEF BISON

The cojones on your two star detectives! Send Powers my regards. We support one another in these parts. I suspect she gets that by now?

HARTMAN

Yep, I thinks she does. She certainly does Dale.

CHIEF BISON

All for one, and one for all. It's amazing what can be accomplished when we all pull together.

**125           INT   SISTER AYUDA HOME   -   DAY**

Drone shot (Sister AYUDA'S parlor). Psychic on phone with grandmother (MAMAW). Opens unaddressed envelope. \$100 bill.

MAMAW

Your Pawpaw would have been proud of you Ophelia.

SISTER AYUDA

I have visions of him Mamaw. He talks to me.

MAMAW

I'm sure he does dear. Tell him I love him.

SISTER AYUDA

Oh Mamaw! I just opened a letter in my mailbox and guess what I found? A \$100 bill! No address.

MAMAW

That's strange. Who would mail you cash money? It must be a mistake honey, huh?

SISTER AYUDA

A mistake?! Oh no Mamaw, it's no mistake. I sees visions of it now. I earned it a while back.

MAMAW

You earned it? How ya know without an address?

SISTER AYUDA

MAMAW!

MAMAW

Oh yes dear. I'm sorry. Your gift slipped my  
mind. Your visions sure help a lot of people.  
Spend that money wisely.

SISTER AYUDA

I will Mamaw. I will. I love you.

Drone rises over parlor into clouds over Maurepas Swamp.

FADE OUT