

Coyle I

TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

A pump shotgun stands upright in its bracket. Atop a mobile data terminal sits a takeout soda cup. A hand snags it.

OFFICER KENNETH MENCK slurps his Coke, rolls the ice-cold cup against his forehead. He drums his steering wheel, waiting.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET - CONTINUOUS

"To Protect and to Serve" is on the black-and-white's side. It idles in front of a modest stucco home. Above, palm trees stand out against a night sky pink with light pollution.

We're in Los Angeles. Except for a distant, rumbling string of jumbo jets on their way into LAX, the evening is quiet.

A second cop exits the house, hurries to the parked cruiser. He carries something under his jacket and giggles with joy.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

This second officer, DAVE COYLE, plops into the passenger seat. Like his partner, Coyle is early 30s, barrel-chested. Typical uniform cop. Big personality.

COYLE

You ready for this?

Grimacing, Coyle holds up an ancient brown BASEBALL contained inside a clear plastic box. Menck squints at the autograph.

MENCK

Lou Gehrig. Right on.

COYLE

"Right on?" Lou Iron Horse Gehrig.
With certificate of authenticity.
Condition of signature, six out of
a possible ten, condition of ball --
(grabbing it back)
Don't open it, you simpleton. God.
Who raised you?

MENCK

How much?

COYLE

That's the best part. Talked him
down to fifteen hundred.

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2.

MENCK

(dry)

Fifteen hundred. For a baseball.
Wow, Dave. Well played.

COYLE

(smiling)

It's worth five times that. Dude
needed some quick cash. I happily
obliged.

Coyle admires his new treasure -- sets it on the dashboard.
Menck chunks the Crown Vic into drive and pulls away.

MENCK

Well hell, s'all gonna be Monopoly
money sooner or later, right?

COYLE

That's the spirit. You freakin'
sad sack.

Despite the way they rag each other, it's clear these two are
the best of friends. Coyle calls dispatch on the radio.

COYLE

6-A-44 is westbound on Sunset at
Normandie. We are end of watch.

*
*

EXT. HIGH OVER HOLLYWOOD - CONTINUOUS

As seen from a helicopter.

DISPATCHER (V.O.)

6-A-44, end of watch. Good night.

We pace the cruiser, which motors along below us. LA is LA.
Nothing about it seems different. Nothing looks unfamiliar.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Light traffic. The car rounds a corner onto a side street.
It's even quieter back here. No one's in sight. Save for...

... A MAN walking smack-dab in the middle of the street.

His back is to us. Our headlights cook him up bright, but he
doesn't turn around. He doesn't go any faster -- just keeps
wandering along, blocking our path.

MENCK

Now what the hell is this?

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3.

This guy's one big motherfucker. Age and race indeterminate. He's dressed for dumpster diving, or maybe cat burglary. Something else about him -- he's got strange MOTTLING along the back of his bald head, down his spine. Very odd.

Menck gives a short BOOP of the siren. No response at all. Coyle snorts and picks up the mike, calls out over the PA.

COYLE (AMPLIFIED)

Get outta the street.

(no reaction)

Outta the street, you stupid booch!

Still nothing. Coyle clicks off, fuming.

COYLE

I do not like insouciance.

MENCK

Wait a minute. Check out his ear.

We see it -- the big man is MISSING most of his LEFT EAR. Seeing this, Coyle goes from cocky to leery. Menck, too.

COYLE

Aw, man. Think that's Timex?

MENCK

Gotta be, right? K9 unit's dog came back with the dude's left ear. Gotta be Timex.

COYLE

Aw damn, man. Timex.

(a beat)

Whaddya say?

Menck gives a nod. Off the two cops, steeling themselves:

EXT. SIDE STREET - CONTINUOUS

The big man -- TIMEX -- keeps walking, seemingly oblivious. The cruiser whips around him in the left lane and speeds past as if to depart. But then Menck throws it into a squealing J so that the cruiser winds up blocking Timex's path.

Coyle and Menck climb out and cautiously move to intercept the man. Their hands rest on their batons.

MENCK

Sir, you are under arrest. Please lace your fingers behind your head.

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We're still behind Timex, who cocks his head oddly and stands his ground. We don't see his face throughout what follows.

COYLE

He's asking you nicely.

(off the silence)

Alright, you know what? Bring on the S-H, 'cause I got the I-T.

Coyle moves to take hold of the big man and turn him around. No dice. With a GROWL, Timex flings him against the car.

Menck reacts fast, diving for a tackle. He can't bring the guy down, try as he might -- his heels just moonwalk the pavement as if he's trying to push around a refrigerator. Timex hammers his back with both big fists.

The two cops double-team their suspect. Nothing pretty. After a short, wild fight they seem to be losing, they fell the big man like a tree. Timex still won't give up.

Out come the batons. Silhouetted by the cruiser's headlights, both cops beat the living hell out of the guy.

Lots of panting. CLOSE - HANDCUFFS get snapped on tight.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

As seen through the steel mesh divider, Timex slumps in the dark back seat. Menck drives. He and Coyle check themselves for damage, gingerly touching their bruises.

COYLE

Takes a lickin' and keeps on tickin'. Friggin' A-straight. How you doing back there, buddy?

Timex leans forward. In the on-and-off light of passing streetlamps, we finally get our first real look at the man.

He's a MONSTER. That's the only way to describe it. He was human once, but now... he's got yellow eyes. Blue-black gums. The skin around his eyes has some kind of disturbing -- almost shivering -- high-speed TWITCH to it, but otherwise his expression is unblinking and dead.

We've never seen anything quite like him. He is simply goddamned FREAKY.

The cops aren't the least bit thrown by his appearance, however. Coyle sees him staring at the BASEBALL on the dash.

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COYLE

Lou Gehrig. The Iron Horse. With certificate of authenticity. You know Gehrig?

Silence. Timex gives a little upward thrust of his head that looks pretty much like a nod.

COYLE

Yeah. You a baseball fan?
(off Timex's nod)
Dodgers? You like the Dodgers?
(off his nod)
Right on. Minkie, this guy's alright.

MENCK

Says you. I hate the Dodgers.

COYLE

(to Timex)
Minkie's obviously an idiot.
You're alright, man. I'm sorry we had to tune you up.

Timex slowly sinks back in his seat -- back into the darkness, into silhouette. Menck slurps his soda, drives.

A beat of silence. Now... Timex starts to GRUNT softly.

MENCK

What's he doing back there?
(to Timex)
Hey! You better not be pinching tootsie rolls in my back seat!

GROWLING, louder. Straining. And now, a loud SNAP of STEEL.

COYLE

Oh hell. He broke the cuffs.
Minkie, he broke the cuffs --

Suddenly -- WHAM! Two big feet swing up, kicking the hejeezus out of the steel screen dividing the front from the back seat. The screen bulges toward us. A second kick.

COYLE

Minkie, pull over! --

Too late. A third huge KICK. The screen breaks loose, slamming straight into us, obliterating our view.

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MUTATED FEMALE

7.
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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - VARIOUS VIEWS - DAY

Hazy and sunny. Overpopulated. Car capital of the world. As seen from a distance, this is the Los Angeles we're all accustomed to. This is NOT some dark, post-apocalyptic land. * Angelyne still has her billboards, there's still a Starbucks on every corner. Geeky, hopeful, myrmidon-like TV writers still overdo the scene direction and use too many adjectives.

You get the picture. It looks exactly like our Los Angeles. * But only from a distance.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD STATION - DAY

START SC. 1 ↓

A low, 70s-era brick box on Wilcox. A faded Tercel turns into the employee lot. PAIGE MOSCAVELL, early twenties and attractive, climbs out. She wears civvies, pulls a garment bag out of the back seat. The nervous excitement she works to hide says "first day on the job."

Heading into the building with her bag, she lets two UNIFORMS pass. They're struggling mightily with a handcuffed MONSTER. Not Timex -- this is a different monster, different looking. Plus, she's a WOMAN. However, she does share with Timex the traits of yellow eyes and black gums.

She's a wild, HOWLING creature, fighting the two uniform cops the entire way. She's as strong as a man, and scary.

UNIFORM COP

I swear to god I'll put that prune
head of yours through a wall, you
piss-eyed bitch.

This sight gives Paige pause. *What am I getting myself into?*
Off her, continuing into the station:

INT. HOLLYWOOD STATION - DAY

- END SC. 1 -

A hallway leads to a booking area, and beyond it, a large bullpen with desks. It's Grand Central in here -- lots of uniform cops, detectives, non-sworn secretaries and office workers. Every race, creed and persuasion of human.

Lots of human arrestees, too -- car thieves, gangbangers, junkies, prostitutes. Just what you'd expect. But salted in among these folks are a handful of MONSTERS, all in custody.

CAPT SOBEK

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8.

This place will always be a loud mess of activity, people coming and going, often in a hurry. Paige takes it in, a bit overwhelmed. She finds the DESK SERGEANT.

PAIGE

Hi. Officer Paige Moscovell,
reporting for duty. Here's my --

DESK SERGEANT

Yeah. Here, fill this out.

The Sergeant, busy, not unfriendly, hands her a clipboard and goes back to talking on the phone. A banged-up Coyle and Menck enter behind Paige, Menck noticing her favorably.

MENCK

(under his breath)
Who's the new poo-butt? Yeeow.

Coyle looks too, but his mood is still grim from last night. A weathered but handsome detective, MARK JACOCKS, calls out.

JACOCKS

Hey Coyle! Good news! We found
your Lou Gehrig!

Jacocks tosses a baseball, which Coyle eagerly catches. His smile turns to a frown as he checks the signature.

COYLE

Oh, friggin' hilarious.

LAUGHTER in the bullpen. Menck grabs the ball, reads aloud.

MENCK

"Dear Coyle -- don't lose me again,
you schmuck! Love, Lou."

COYLE

(to the detectives)
Least I work for a living! Buncha
desk monkeys in your clip-on ties.

CAPT SOBEK
↓

Jacocks and the other detectives laugh and go OOOOH. It's all good-natured on everyone's part. We'll remember Jacocks, though. There's something flint-hard behind his eyes.

The boss, CAPTAIN SOBEK, mid-40s and somewhat Gray Davis-ish, steps out of his office.

CAPTAIN SOBEK

Everybody, your attention, please.

CAPT. SOBOK

PAGE 2 of 6.

DESK SERGEANT

Listen up for the Captain! --

The place quiets down. Sobek holds up a MEMO for all to see.

CAPTAIN SOBOK

Memo from Deputy Chief Shimura.
This was prompted by complaints
he's received from the community
oversight board.

(reading aloud)

"Slang and derogatory terms for
mutated individuals are not and
will not be tolerated by this
department. No employee of the
LAPD shall refer to such
individuals as," and here I quote:
"Amp Heads, Boilers, Boko Grandes,
Bolos, Boochies, Chicken Skins,
Cob Mouths, Dobies, Ducrots,
Foamers, Fuglies, Johnny Choads,
John Q. Mutant, Jojo the Dogfaced
Taxpayer, Klingons, Piss Eyes,
Prune Heads, Scabbos, Scab Hogs,
Scabby Hayes, Screaming Yellow
Monkeys, T-Cell Cowboys, Wattle
Jobs, Wrinkly-Dinks or Zits."

*

Throughout this litany, stifled GIGGLES and guys making faces
at one another. Sobek, expecting as much, plows through.

CAPTAIN SOBOK

Are we clear? Zero tolerance,
people, and I am not kidding.
Acceptable nomenclature is "mutated
individuals" or "mutational
actives." Or better yet, your
"friends and neighbors."

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*

As the Captain segues into another subject, suddenly --

-- AAAAAHHHH! The female monster, or ACTIVE, we saw earlier
suddenly goes absolutely APESHIT in the background. Cuffed
to a bench and awaiting booking, she skins her hand right out
of her handcuff, sending blood spattering against the wall.

The two uniforms are on it quick, but she sends one crashing
through a window. She LEAPS OVER the other one -- it's as if
she has springs for legs. She's heading for the front door.

Beefy cops put themselves in her path, to no avail. She's
making straight for wide-eyed Paige, who instinctively grabs
a TROPHY CUP off a shelf. Before Paige can swing it...

— 300 —
F.4E →

F.Y.I

... Detective Jacocks, expertly flipping a police BATON on its lanyard, swings like Sammy Sosa, folding the active in half. A second, teeth-rattling baton UPPERCUT lays her out.

Everything gets quiet again. Cold-as-ice Jacocks gently takes the trophy cup from Paige's hands and puts it back on the shelf. To a couple of uniforms:

JACOCKS
Gentlemen, could you take our...
"friend and neighbor" to a cell?

Frosty sarcasm, aimed squarely at the Captain. Off Jacocks, clearly the Dirty Harry of this precinct, we PRELAP:

SPICER (V.O.)
They're not all violent.



CUT TO:

A BLACKBOARD

Before it stands DETECTIVE ROBERT SPICER. He's mid-30s, handsome and substantial. Soft-spoken. Not hard-edged like Jacocks, he'd nonetheless be an even match for the man.

SPICER
Even the ones who are don't always mean to be. They're not thinking straight. They're... confused. That doesn't make them bad people. It's just what the mutation does.

*

As he speaks to us, we slowly PULL BACK to reveal...

INT. ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM - DAY

Spicer stands before twenty cute KIDS, age eight. He has their full attention, and that of their TEACHER, as well. This is an upscale, Warner Avenue-type school.

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*

Spicer's partner stands here too -- both their names are on the blackboard. DETECTIVE KATRINA CABRERA is a bit younger than Spicer and just as professional. Though she dresses to downplay it, the letters H, O and T spring to mind.

SPICER
Who here knows somebody who's changed?

*
*

Three little hands out of twenty go up. Of the three:

FIRST KID

Our mailman. He got it.

SECOND KID

My uncle got it. He says everybody's gonna change, only they don't know it yet.

THIRD KID

That's not true! He's a liar!

The kids are nervous, start to fidget. Teacher shushes them.

SPICER

He's not a liar, that's just his opinion. These days there's a lot of opinions floating around, but nobody knows anything for sure. Some people think these mutations have something to do with a comet that passed by earth three years ago. Other people think they're caused by rays from outer space, or maybe something that's gotten into the drinking water. Still others think this is evolution. Have you talked about evolution in class?

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Several kids nod.

*

SPICER

Your teacher's probably told you that scientists say we're evolved from apes. Well, some scientists think we may be evolving again. And that's what we're seeing now.

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(a beat)

That's the way it is with this disease, AMP. A-M-P, it stands for "Aggressive Mutagenic Pathogen."

That's a mouthful, huh?

(off their smiles)

Essentially, that's a lot of big words to say nobody knows what we're dealing with.

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The kids listen, rapt. Spicer would make a good teacher -- he doesn't talk down. He studies their anxious faces.

SPICER

The main thing I want you to remember is, there's a lot of smart people trying to make sense of this. I believe they will. Soon. Meantime, we all have to go on with our lives. We can't live in fear.

*
*

Off Cabrera, also listening, her expression hard to read:

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

~~GO DEEP~~

Minutes later. Construction paper art on the walls. Spicer and Cabrera round into view, heading for the exit.

CABRERA

You paint a rosy picture.

Spicer considers.

SPICER

Can't let 'em lose hope.

Cabrera gives him a little smile, not meant for him to see. She respects this man greatly, we'll come to learn.

Cabrera's cell phone RINGS. She answers it.

CABRERA

Cabrera --
(listens a beat)
Yeah, we'll take it.

Her look tells Spicer it's something big. Off this:

CUT TO:

EXT. BODEGA - DAY

A mom & pop corner grocery. Malt liquor posters in the window are faded blue by the sun. Parked black-and-whites and police line tape tell us it's a crime scene.

An unmarked sedan pulls up -- Spicer and Cabrera.

INT. BODEGA - DAY

Coyle and Menck, the first responders, have secured the place and are looking around, careful not to disturb evidence. Spicer and Cabrera enter the PROPPED OPEN door behind them.

TRAINING OFFICER / SHIBAD
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15.

The two uniforms shakes their heads. Off Spicer, thinking:

CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD - NIGHT

A typical evening. Sunset Boulevard a few miles east of the Strip looks exactly the same to us. The people are human. *

The strange and monstrous ACTIVES, we'll come to learn, mostly keep a low profile. They maybe make up only four or five percent of the population, besides.

A police cruiser motors by, in no particular hurry.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

START SCENE 1 ↓

Paige Moscovell rides in the passenger seat, wearing her fresh new uniform. Her TRAINING OFFICER, a competent and amiable cop, is behind the wheel.

TRAINING OFFICER

Always looking. Always scanning -- look in every car, peek in every window. Be nosy. You wanna train that sixth sense to work for you. That Spiderman thing -- WEEEEEEEEEE! You know what I'm talking about?

PAIGE

I think so. Always on the alert.

TRAINING OFFICER

Exactly. It'll keep you alive. Here, take this. *

He reaches to open the glove box, hands her a CASSETTE TAPE. *

TRAINING OFFICER

You didn't get it from me, alright? But I want you to listen to that. That's the complete dispatcher tape from the Mount Olympus shootout.

PAIGE

Mount Olympus..?

TRAINING OFFICER *

Please don't tell me you haven't heard of this. God, they should be teaching this at the Academy!

(sighs)

Okay, two years ago. Early days.

(MORE)

TRAINING OFFICER (CONT'D)

Most of us hadn't even laid eyes on an active yet, much less knew what to call 'em if we saw one.

Detective Spicer was still a patrol officer then. You met Bob Spicer?

Paige shakes her head no.

TRAINING OFFICER

You will. Spicer and his partner were in a basic just like this. They get a call -- home alarm going off at some rich jagoff's house up in Mount Olympus. Cat or squirrel, you know, typical nothing call. Except it wasn't. It's an ambush.

(a beat)

Spicer's partner was driving. He's got one foot on the pavement when these things attack. Two of 'em -- kill him instantly. Slice him open here to here. Right through his vest. Yank him right out of the driver's seat.

Paige listens intently. Here inside the dark car, it has the feeling of a ghost story told around a camp fire.

TRAINING OFFICER

A third one's on Spicer. Rips a chunk out of his shoulder the size of a golf ball. Still, Spicer manages to draw with his weak hand. Bam! Puts a round in its eye.

(appraising her)

So, what's Spicer do next?

PAIGE

He... calls for backup.

TRAINING OFFICER

Well yeah, but where's his partner?

(off her silence)

The other two amps are dragging his partner away. So Spicer, bleeding like a spigot, pops loose the shotgun and goes after 'em. Chases 'em up a steep hillside, weeds like out of a Tarzan movie. Chases 'em a half a mile. Kills both of them -- but not before they do another forty stitches' worth of damage to him.

(MORE)

DRIVER | ANDREW LITVAK

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TRAINING OFFICER (CONT'D)
Air unit finally finds him, half
dead, guarding his partner's body.

Paige is stunned and respectful. That's a lot to live up to.

TRAINING OFFICER
Listen to the tape. You'll hear
him panting like a bastard, but the
man is frosty. The whole time.
This is a cop's cop.

(changing the subject)
Ohhh, look what we have here.

FIRST SC 1 ↓

We've pulled up at a stoplight behind a fancy BMW 7-SERIES. *
We can make out the silhouette of the DRIVER, alone in his
car. The mishapen outline of his head tells us he's ACTIVE.

TRAINING OFFICER
Scab city, out on the town in an
eighty thousand dollar Beemer. *
What's wrong with this picture? *
(a beat) *
Run his plate, wouldja? *

Paige types the license plate into their MDT. The Training *
Officer frowns at what comes back, dissatisfied.

TRAINING OFFICER
Bupkis. Know what that means...
(off her uncertainty)
Gotta find a reason to pull him.

PAIGE
(studying the car)
The left brakelight is out.

TRAINING OFFICER
Now you're talking.

He fires up the light rack and BOOPS the siren.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD STREET - NIGHT

The sedan pulls to the curb, the cruiser right behind it.
The Training Officer climbs out, quietly instructs Paige.

TRAINING OFFICER
Hang back where you can cover me.

Paige nods. We stay back here with her as her partner goes
to talk to the driver. We hear him ask the creature for his
license and registration.

Paige stays frosty, trying to do her job right and keep an eye on everything. Now, she notices... the sedan's dead brakelight FLICKERS briefly to life. It BLINKS on and off in an irregular staccato, then goes dead again.

Paige, her sixth sense working overtime, eases closer and gives a light RAP-RAP-RAP on the trunk lid with her knuckles.

A beat. A faint BOOMP sounds from inside. Paige swallows hard and smoothly draws her pistol, keeps it low at her side.

PAIGE
Officer Shibano? --

Shibano, her T.O., notes her drawn gun. He sees her indicate the trunk. He turns back to the driver -- who, though we glimpse him only briefly, is the most horribly mutated active we've yet seen (every MUTATION is different, we'll learn, because every individual's DNA is unique). *

Instantly, Shibano draws his gun, aims at the man's head. *

TRAINING OFFICER
Shut the engine and gimme the keys.
(off the man's hesitation)
GIMME THE KEYS! NOW!

The driver shuts off the engine, hands over the remote key. Eyes squarely on the driver, Shibano flings it to Paige. *

While her partner is busy with the driver, Paige finds the little-button on the key. Nervous as hell, her gun at the ready, she pops the trunk. She opens it with a slow CREEAK. *

Her eyes go wide. She lowers her gun. *

Curled inside the trunk is a fourteen year-old BOY. His legs and arms are hogtied. Duct tape covers his mouth. He's frightened out of his mind, but he's alive. *

TRAINING OFFICER
Paige, whaddya got? Whaddya got?!

Off Paige, unsure how to answer...

— 60 Sc 1 —
END ACT ONE

Paige I

19.

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM + HALLWAY - DAY

The active driver from last night is in custody now, double-cuffed to a table in a small room. Detective Jacocks leans over him, interrogating. The driver stares into space.

He is truly hideous to look at. But we have to imagine as much as we see, because we're watching him from a distance, through one-way glass, and Jacocks often obstructs our view.

PULL BACK to reveal we're out here in the hallway with Paige, watching through the observation window. Paige is like a kid at the zoo, studying the polar bears. So fascinated is she that she barely notices when Spicer comes up beside her.

Spicer stares inside, too. While he's appraising the driver:

SPICER

Great first day.

PAIGE

Thank you, Sir.

SPICER

My first shift, I spilled chocolate milkshake all down in my holster.

You're gonna make us look bad.

(off her smile)

Bob Spicer. Welcome to Hollywood.

Paige's eyes widen when she realizes who this is.

PAIGE

Paige Moscovell. It's good to...
a pleasure to meet you, detective.

She shakes his hand. If Spicer notes her sudden deference, he pretends not to. He indicates the driver.

SPICER

What's his story?

PAIGE

(shakes her head)

He's not saying much. His name is Andrew Litvak, no police record. He's a millionaire -- some kind of big real estate entrepreneur. As for what he wanted with a fourteen year-old boy...

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START
↳

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PAIGE I

20.

SPICER
How is the boy? *

PAIGE
He wasn't assaulted, at least.
They're treating him for
dehydration, but he'll be okay.

SPICER
(confused)
Dehydration? How's that work?

Suddenly feeling on-the-spot, Paige checks her notepad.

PAIGE
Uh. He was taken on Tuesday
afternoon. He was on his way home
from school when he got grabbed in
his front yard. *

SPICER
Tuesday. Donald Trump there drove
him around for... what's that? *
Thirty-some hours. *
(off her nod)
Huh.

He studies the stone-faced driver. Paige studies Spicer.

PAIGE
Is that uh... noteworthy?

SPICER *
Just seems like an awful long time
to get his nut up for whatever he
was gonna do.

It's a mild curiosity for Spicer, but it starts Paige
thinking. They both look to Jacocks as he exits the room.

END

SPICER
Heya Mark.

JACOCKS
Heya Bob.

Civil -- but even Rain Man could figure out these two aren't
friends. There's a whiff of suspicion on Jacocks' part,
seeing Spicer here. He plays it cool, turns to Paige.

JACOCKS *
Elephant man's fixin' to crack!

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Jacocks heads off to the toilet. Spicer gives a last look to the driver locked in his interview room, then nods to Paige.

SPICER
Good job last night.

He heads in the opposite direction from Jacocks. Off Paige, swelled with pride... but wondering now, too:

INT. STATION - BREAK ROOM - DAY

A TV broadcasts the local news. A distinguished-looking COUNCILMAN in his late 50s is holding a press conference.

COUNCILMAN (ON TV)
They're our friends and neighbors.
They're our brothers and sisters,
our children, our parents. In
short, they're us. Our police
need to take this fact to heart... *Start Sc 1*
not work to erode our civil rights.

Shiban and another COP watch sourly, hating this guy.

COP
What a scumbag.
(listens some more)
Go active already, you piece a --

Shiban NUDGES the cop, stopping him. Confused, the cop glances over his shoulder and sees what Shiban sees -- DETECTIVE CABRERA has entered the room behind them.

Cabrera pretends not to notice, goes about her business. Major faux-pas sheepish now, the cop and Shiban exit. Cabrera looks after them, stares at the councilman on TV. Alone, she quietly shuts the TV off. *Go Sc 1*

Cabrera pours a mug of coffee, stirs in some cream and exits, leaving us not real sure what exactly we just witnessed. Doesn't matter. We don't need to know in this first episode.

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - DAY

CLOSE ON mug shots -- only not the kind we're accustomed to. These photos are of MONSTERS. Actives. We see a veritable rainbow of different mutations, each one worse than the last.

The 60 year-old WIDOW of the dead bodega owner studies these SIX-PACKS at Spicer's desk. Exhausted, her eyes red from crying, she's having a hard time with it.

CABRERA I

22.

START
→

WIDOW

I don't... I don't know. I don't know. They're all...

Spicer sits beside her, a silent, reassuring presence. Cabrera joins them, bringing the woman the mug of coffee.

CABRERA

Take your time. Any who look familiar. Any you might have seen in the store, or on the street.

WIDOW

I never look at these things! I see one on the street, I cross the street to avoid it! They're so... God, they're so horrible.

(looking to them both)

Besides, Ruben never let them come in the store. I suppose that's "wrong" and all. But see what happens?

She's tearing up again. Realizing the photos are a dead end, Cabrera gently takes the six-pack away.

~~WIDOW~~ CABRERA

Mrs. Gureghian, we found an envelope in the register containing a thousand dollars cash. Do you know anything about that?

WIDOW

It's in ~~the~~ rent. My husband and I own an apartment house in ~~Silverlake~~. It's due about now. The first of the month.

(self-conscious)

I guess we like the rent in cash. I hope that's not a problem.

Spicer shakes his head, not concerned for the IRS. He shows the woman the envelope, contained inside an evidence bag.

~~WIDOW~~ CABRERA

Would you happen to know which tenant paid this?

The widow gives it a cursory glance, shakes her head.

WIDOW

My husband always took care of it.

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CABRERA I

23.

Spicer looks to Cabrera, who's thinking along the same lines.

CABRERA

Ma'am, that apartment house...
could you write down the address?

The widow nods and picks up a pen. Off Cabrera and Spicer:

~~INT. STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY~~

~~The mutated driver is f.g., SOFT-FOCUS. Jacocks leans over him. They're both reflected in the 2-way mirror behind them.~~

~~Jacocks has just now made a hard-fought breakthrough in the interrogation. He slides a pad and pen in front of the man.~~

~~JACOCKS~~

~~Good. Good. Write it up.~~

~~The driver considers, then slowly, shakily begins to write. Jacocks reads over his shoulder a beat, nods approvingly.~~

~~JACOCKS~~

~~Feel better? You should.~~

~~While the man continues to write, Jacocks exits.~~

~~INT. STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM + HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS~~

~~Out in the hall, Jacocks joins Paige, who still remains here. They watch the driver through the window as they talk.~~

~~JACOCKS~~

~~Son of a bitch just copped to
attempted murder. Says he was
gonna drive the car to Pyramid Lake
and roll it in with the boy inside.~~

~~He shakes his head to himself, smiles at Paige.~~

~~JACOCKS~~

~~Congratulations. How's it feel to
save someone's life?~~

~~PAIGE~~

~~(a bit absent)
Good. It feels good.~~

~~He looks at her quizzically. She turns to him.~~

"AMPED" PILOT - SPIKE TV

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END

p2/a

Jacocks I

24.

PAIGE

Detective Jacocks... why do you think he waited so long? I mean, if he planned to kill the boy...

JACOCKS

Who cares?

PAIGE

Yeah. I just... what was the motive, you know? The whole thing makes no sense.

*
*

Jacocks studies her. He says simply, without anger:

JACOCKS

You've been talking to Bobby Spicer.

*

(off her silence)

Yeah. Look. A word of advice. You're obviously a smart cop, and God bless you. Use that big brain to catch bad guys. Once they're caught -- stop using it. Don't waste your time.

She's puzzled by this. Jacocks, it needs to be understood, isn't an asshole here. Not in the least. He's simply preaching this newbie the gospel as he knows it.

JACOCKS

Think too hard in the field, it'll make you hesitate. Hesitate, and you will get killed.

*

End of story. Jacocks slaps her shoulder and heads to get some coffee. Off Paige, left with a lot to consider:

CUT TO:

END

EXT. SILVERLAKE STREET - DAY

Bungalows dating back to the twenties house working class families. The quiet street slides away from us down one steep hill, then rises up another in the distance.

The unmarked sedan pulls to the curb. Cabrera and Spicer climb out and take in the neighborhood. They approach a small APARTMENT HOUSE.

It is definitely nothing special -- bleary and run-down. With maybe eight or ten units at the most, it's the style of building where each apartment has its own exterior door.

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She squats down, grasps the corner of an envelope and tugs it into view. She freezes when she sees --

-- Bright red BLOOD, still wet, soaking the exposed half.

CABRERA

Bobby...

Spicer already has his gun out. He and Cabrera quickly take position. He rears back and KICKS the door. Ow -- no dice. He kicks it again. It's starting to give.

INT. APARTMENT SEVEN - CONTINUOUS

Third time's the charm. Light explodes into this black space as the door hurls open. Spicer and Cabrera sweep in toward us, guns aimed. A throw rug-size STREAK of BLOOD is by the door. They have to tread carefully so as not to slip in it.

Nobody in sight. It's a horror show in here -- flies as big as the end of your thumb buzzing around. The smell must be god-awful. Stacks of old newspapers and junk form a kind of unintended maze, and offer plenty of hiding places.

Spicer and Cabrera quickly sweep the room and move into the next one. It gets DARKER the further they go. A faint BUMP as Cabrera's toe connects with something on the floor.

Her eyes adjusting, she sees what it is: a big THIGH BONE, stringy meat still hanging off the end. The gorge rising in her throat, Cabrera sees still MORE of them littered about.

CABRERA

(softly)

Ah God. Bobby, there're bones all over the floor.

He nods, moving still deeper into the darkness... easing toward a faint, wet SMACK-SMACK-SMACKING sound.

It grows louder as we ease closer. It's the sound of something... EATING. Spicer and Cabrera, their hearts pounding, find themselves at a closed bedroom door.

Spicer looks to his partner. You ready? -- he says with his eyes. She takes a deep breath, nods. Keeping his pistol aimed with one hand, Spicer slowly... silently... reaches for the knob. The moment he closes his hand around it...

... The eating sound STOPS. Oh shit.

MENCK

Here, here.

*
*

Reflective silence. Coyle stirs, noticing something.

COYLE

Hey Shibán... you tell your young
boot about Peenie Pablo?

*

SHIBAN

(looks over his shoulder)
Oh yeah. Paige, check this out.

Grinning, he points behind them. As seen through their rear
window, a YOUNG MAN sits on a low wall across the street,
looking for business. He chugs a 2-LITER BOTTLE of soda.

SHIBAN

Peenie Pablo there isn't dying of
thirst -- he's simply manufacturing
his product. He sells his urine.
For like, forty bucks a whizz.

PAIGE

Seriously.

*
*

MENCK

Nice work if you can get it.

The guys smirk. Paige raises an eyebrow. Shibán explains.

SHIBAN

Employee testing. We gotta pee in
a cup every two weeks. As does the
Sheriff's Department, fire
fighters, airline pilots... all the
life-and-death jobs. You can't
have somebody hiding the fact
they're going hot.

*

COYLE

But if they are, clean pee-pee'll
buy 'em maybe another six months of
paychecks. Before they go monster
and can't hide it anymore.

(nods toward the man)

I'd bust ol' Peenie, 'cept I'd have
to spend the rest of the day
bagging the evidence.

Paige smiles. Shibán reaches in his glove compartment.

SHIBAN

Speaking of going hot -- we have a present for you.

He hands her a palm-size item with a tiny digital readout. Though it likely looks unfamiliar to us, it can currently be purchased at any Sears or Track Auto for maybe fifty bucks.

PAIGE

(wry)

Thanks. What is it?

SHIBAN

Infrared thermometer. Point it at anybody even twenty feet away, you can read their body temperature.

MENCK

ACTU's not cool with it, so don't flash it in front of the Captain.

SHIBAN

Yeah, seriously. But with that, you can tell if a suspect's going active. Even if he's still looking normal, his temperature will be up around a hundred. Just point and click.

PAIGE

Muh. Thanks.

She plays with it, pointing it at a travel mug. Over in the other cruiser, Coyle's CELL PHONE rings. He answers it.

COYLE

Dave Coyle --

(listening intently)

Lou Gehrig. Spelled G-E-H-R-I-G.

You sure? Hundred percent?

(growing excited)

God bless you, bro. I'll be there!

Hanging up, Coyle DRUMS his palms on the dash like a maniac.

COYLE

I'm getting my ball back! --

Menck shakes his head tiredly. Coyle cranks the engine. With a REBEL YELL, he and Menck blast out of the parking lot, lights and SIREN going. Off Paige and Shibana, askance:

- 60 Sec. 2 - CUT TO:

Menck II

30.

EXT. PAWNSHOP - DAY

Three yellow balls on the sign. Lots of guitars and crap on display in the windows. Coyle and Menck exit the place. Coyle looks dyspeptic, his good mood vanished.

COYLE

Freakin' moron. Sandy Koufax?!
How's this moron get "Gehrig" from
"Koufax?!"

MENCK

It's a mystery...

COYLE

(yelling back behind him)
MORON! --

MENCK

Dave, you gotta move the next step
up the grief chain from anger to
acceptance. You can't keep tabs on
every pawn shop in the city.

COYLE

Hell I can't. I got feelers out!
I'll get that Timex!

MENCK

Brother, you ain't ever seeing
Timex again.

Coyle sighs and cracks his neck. Ah, screw it. They walk to their cruiser. As Coyle is about to climb inside...

... His eyes narrow on something in the distance. He stands stock-still, staring for the longest time. Speaking softly:

COYLE

Minkie..? This is like... one of
those desert mirages born of
privation. Right?

Menck stares, too. Shakes his head. Total disbelief on both their faces, they see... the huge figure of TIMEX shambling up the middle of the street toward them. He's tossing and catching a familiar BASEBALL as he walks.

Timex looks up, sees them too. Nervous but playing it cool, he turns on his heel and walks back the way he came.

Coyle takes two steps after the big active, then rethinks.

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MENCK II

31.

COYLE

Nope. I want some steel around me.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDE STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Timex rounds a corner into view, walking faster now that he's out of sight of the cops. The ROAR of an approaching engine.

The cruiser SQUEALS into frame. With Coyle behind the wheel, it beelines straight for Timex. Timex looks back, starts to RUN, but it's too late --

-- BAM! Coyle RUNS HIM OVER! The car winds up half on the curb with Timex out of sight under the front wheels. Coyle drops the gearshift into park, leaves it there. He and Menck fling open their doors and jump out.

MENCK

What the HELL, Dave?! You freakin' killed him! --

COYLE

The hell I did! --

Indeed, we now hearing GROWLING coming from beneath the car. It ROCKS up and down on its springs as Timex struggles to get free. Coyle could give a shit -- he's busy looking around for his ball. He drops on all fours, yells under the car.

COYLE

WHERE'S MY GEHRIG, YOU SCUMBAG?!
YOU AIN'T GETTING OUT TILL YOU
GIMME MY GEHRIG!

The front of the Crown Vic BOUNCES HIGHER now -- it's starting to hop like one of those lowrider hydraulic deals.

MENCK

Dave..? Please step away, Dave.

Coyle's not listening. The car jumps still higher.

COYLE

GIMME MY BALL! --

LOW ANGLE -- off the 4000 pound cruiser flipping sideways, rolling toward Coyle and us and blotting out the sun, we...

END ACT TWO

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ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - DAY

A moment of downtime. Paige stands in the loud bullpen, fiddling with her new infrared thermometer. She surreptitiously aims it around the room, experimenting.

The red laser AIMING DOT ripples across a crowd of COPS and SUSPECTS -- human, mostly -- in the booking area. It lands on Menck, who's just now entering. Bruised, battered and pissed, Menck is in no mood.

START SC. 2 ↓

MENCK

Hey!

Paige instantly lowers the thermometer, snicks it off.

MENCK

Don't ever point that at another cop. It's bad luck.

Paige nods -- lesson learned -- as...

... Coyle enters behind Menck. He's even more beat up than his partner, with cuts and scrapes and a sleeve torn off his shirt. He, however, is not pissed. He's victorious.

Lo and behold, TIMEX shuffles in behind him, escorted by no fewer than four UNIFORMS. Timex is triple-cuffed, wears two sets of leg irons. No one's taking any chances.

Seeing this catch of the day, the Desk Sergeant APPLAUDS.

DESK SERGEANT

Whoa! How'd you do it?

COYLE

A judicious application of mass and velocity.

(slaps down his keys)

Gonna need a new squad car, Sarge.

- GOLF -

The Sergeant's smile turns to a frown. Coyle takes hold of Timex's remaining EAR, pinches it tight and tows him along.

COYLE

And you, you thievin' twitch. You're gonna tell me where my ball is. Now.

Coyle and his guys steer Timex to the holding cells.

MRS. ALESSI
Officer MOSCAVELLI

Paige turns and sees a middle-aged woman, MRS. ALESSI.

PAIGE
Mrs. Alessi. Hi. How's Josh
doing?

MRS. ALESSI
He's, he's better. Thank you.
Out of the hospital. He uh...

She nods and trails off, looking around distractedly. It's
been a rough couple of days for her, and she's likely never
set foot in a police station before. She's nervous.

PAIGE
Is there something I can help you
with?

A beat. The woman nods yes. This is hard for her.

MRS. ALESSI
I know the man who abducted my son.
I told you I didn't, but I do.

Off Paige's confusion...

START SC 3 ↓

CUT TO: - F. 41

INT. STATION - INTERVIEW ROOM + HALLWAY - DAY

The familiar, monstrous driver sits hunched at the table,
alone in the room. Staring into space.

JACOBS
Can you see him okay? Want me to
bring him closer to the window?

Mrs. Alessi, reflected in the glass, stands with Jacobs and
Paige in the hall. She shakes her head, just stares.

MRS. ALESSI
Andrew Litvak.

JACOBS
You recognize him.

MRS. ALESSI
Not anymore. Only by name.

Half repulsed, half fascinated, the woman turns to them.

CABRERA

Dog, mostly. Some cat. Lotta neighbors reported missing pets.

(off Spicer's distaste)

Yeah. Lotsa gnaw marks. I asked them to compare the dental to the bite wound on our bodega owner's throat. But I'd say we've found our killer. Or at least his... lair.

SPICER

Yeah. Seeing as he had the dead man's gun in his toilet tank.

Spicer holds up a bagged .32 REVOLVER. Cabrera studies it.

SPICER

What do we know about him?

CABRERA

"Joseph Blau" is the name on the lease. Age twenty-nine and a model citizen... until he grew those big-ass teeth and learned to jump like a flea. *

COP

'Scuse me. Detectives?

They turn to see a familiar cop in the open doorway (this is the man who was ragging on the Councilman we saw on TV).

COP

I got somebody downstairs, says he's the brother of the guy who lives here.

Off Spicer and Cabrera, interested:

EXT. APARTMENT HOUSE - DAY - MINUTES LATER

START SCENE 1



ANTHONY BLAU is early twenties, clean-cut and good-looking. *
He wears a UCLA sweatshirt. He shakes his head, upset. *

ANTHONY

No. He wouldn't do that.

The two detectives sit with him out front. They go easy.

CABRERA

He's changed a great deal, Anthony.

SPICER II

36.

ANTHONY

~~Not that much. Joey wouldn't kill anybody.~~

~~CABRERA~~

~~Okay. Either way, you can see we need to talk to him.~~

ANTHONY

(nervous)

Yeah, right. I hear all the time what police do to actives. Sorry -- but no way I'm helping you.

*
*
*
*

He shuts up, defiant, but mostly scared. Spicer considers.

SPICER

Anthony, for what it's worth... I believe your brother may have killed that man in self-defense.

Cabrera looks to Spicer -- he hasn't shared this with her.

SPICER

(points to the sign)

Lots of vacancies. People move out because there's an active in the building -- we see it all the time. The landlord wants the active to go, but he can't just evict him. It's illegal. So instead, he jacks the rent sky-high.

*

Anthony swallows hard, nods. He's angry.

*

ANTHONY

I support my brother the best I can. I'm barely making it through school, working two jobs, giving him all my extra cash. This rat hole's supposed to be six-fifty a month. Gureghian told Joey it's now a thousand a month. "Special price for bolos."

*
*
*
*
*

SPICER

So maybe Joey goes to pay the rent, and Gureghian demands still more. They argue. Gureghian pulls a gun, waves it. Your brother feels his life is in danger...

*
*

START

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SPICER II

37.

Spicer trails off, lets Anthony do the math. Cabrera is impressed by Spicer's narrative, as is the young man. Anthony's bitter edge softens into sadness.

ANTHONY

What jury's gonna care about all that, seeing the way he looks?
(off their silence)
If he goes to prison... he'll die.

Spicer doesn't argue any of that. Silence, then:

SPICER

Would you take a drive with us?
I'd like to show you something.

CUT TO:

INT. CATHOLIC HALFWAY HOUSE - DAY

We TRACK PAST rooms, backlit by windows of orange sunshine. *
The silhouettes of the PATIENTS suggest they're all too *
disfigured or disabled to function in the outside world. *

Mission-style architecture. This place is well-funded, clean *
and bright. It's positive, hopeful. STAFFERS go about their *
duties. Anthony walks the halls with Spicer and Cabrera. *

ANTHONY

This is some kind of halfway house?
(off Spicer's nod)
For actives only, right?

SPICER

That's right. It's charity-run.
There's a few of them in the city,
with hopefully more opening up.
But this one is the best.

Anthony peers into a locked room at an oblivious PATIENT.

ANTHONY

People locked in their rooms, doped
out of their minds? I'm supposed
to want this for my brother?

~~CABRERA~~ SPICER

You did see the inside of his
apartment, right? You can't
possibly think this is worse.

Anthony says nothing, just stares at the mutated man.

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SPICER II

38.

SPICER (cont'd)

I know the people here. I think I can get Joey in. I can talk to the DA, tell him the extenuating circumstances...

(shrug)

Prisons are full up. The public doesn't care where we put actives, as long as we put 'em away.

~~CABRERA~~ SPICER

Help us bring your brother in.

Anthony doesn't know what to do. TEARS shine in his eyes.

ANTHONY

I... I'm supposed to betray him?

SPICER

No. I'm asking you to save him.

A CELL PHONE chirps. Anthony digs the phone out of his pocket, silently stares at its caller ID display.

CABRERA

Is that Joey? Anthony?

His reluctant look tells them it is. The phone keeps RINGING. ~~On~~ this, Anthony's moment of truth:

CUT TO:

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - EVENING

LONG LENS -- in the distance, Detective Jacocks sits at his desk talking to Mrs. Alessi and her son JOSH. We recognize the teenager from when we saw him in the car trunk.

They're all too far away to hear. We're seeing this from the POV of Paige, who's lingering at the soda machine while her training officer, Shibani, fills out some paperwork nearby.

Paige watches Josh with interest. In the distance, the boy and his mother finish up with Jacocks -- they rise and shake the detective's hand, then exit toward us.

MRS. ALESSI

(seeing Paige)

Josh? Remember Officer Moscovelli?

This boy, a sweet kid, would be shy on a good day -- and after the ordeal he's been through, he's even more withdrawn. But he is grateful. He gingerly offers his hand.

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END

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JACOBS II

39.

JOSH
Thank you, Ma'am.

PAIGE
(shakes his hand)
You're looking good, Josh. You
take care of yourself.

He manages a smile. Mrs. Alessi touches Paige's arm.

MRS. ALESSI
God bless you.

With that, they're on their way toward the door.

Paige is touched. But she's thinking now, too. As the teen
and his mom walk away, Paige secretly aims her THERMOMETER. *

The red laser dot lands unnoticed on the back of the boy's
neck. Paige studies the display, her expression unreadable. *

INT. BULLPEN - MOMENTS LATER - JACOBS

Sits at his desk, scribbling notes. He looks up to see Paige
approaching, deep in thought.

JACOBS
What's up? You look like your dog
just got run over.

PAIGE
(a beat)
He's hot.

Mistaking his silence for confusion, she elaborates.

PAIGE
The boy, Josh Alessi. He's hot.
He's going active.

JACOBS
Yeah. I figured.

PAIGE
(surprised)
You figured?
(off his silent nod)
Ah. Okay. So his father, planning
to kill him? Driving him around
all that time, trying to get his
courage up to kill his own son?
It makes some weird kind of sense.
He meant to spare his kid the pain.

START

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CAPT. SOBOK

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Jacocks stares at her evenly.

JACOCKS
Yeah. So what?

She's dumbfounded by this attitude, doesn't know what to say.
He gathers some papers and heads for the photocopier.

JACOCKS
(points to his head)
Turn it off. I'm telling you.

Off Paige, at sea...

INT. STATION - HOLDING CELLS - EVENING

Coyle's at the end of his rope.

COYLE
Don't you shake your head at me!
You know where it is! I freakin'
saw you with it!

START SC 2
↓

He's yelling at huge Timex, who sits chained and inert inside
his cell. Timex ain't sweating it. He gives a SHRUG.

The PA system interrupts. CAPTAIN SOBOK'S VOICE is heard.

CAPTAIN SOBOK (V.O.)
Surprise, folks! It's that time
again. Please pick up your testing
cups at the watch desk.

Coyle shuts his eyes -- Christ. As if this day wasn't shitty
enough. He sticks a finger in Timex's face.

COYLE
You better get your mind right with
Jesus, 'cause I'll be back.

- GO SC 2 -

Coyle turns on his heel and exits.

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

The rest of the cops out here are just as irked as Coyle.
They reluctantly drift to the watch desk, where trays of
empty URINE SAMPLE CUPS await them.

Coyle grabs a cup, frowning. The Sergeant checks him off.

COYLE

I feel like giving 'em the old
number two today, Sarge. How's
that grab you?

DESK SERGEANT

Yeah, yeah. Where's your partner?

Coyle glances around, suddenly wondering. — ← 5c. 3 —

EXT. STATION - MOTOR POOL AREA - EVENING

Purple twilight. Coyle exits to... his wrecked CROWN VIC,
the one that Timex flipped. It's parked off to the side.

COYLE

Minkie-San. Please to come and
make golden water.
(watching him)
The hell you doing, bro?

Menck is down on his hands and knees by the stoved-in front
bumper of their car, shining his Mag-Lite into the wreckage.

MENCK

Trying to save myself.

COYLE

From what?

MENCK

From listening to you bitch about
your damn Gehrig ball for the rest
of my natural life.
(sees something)
Ah-hah...

Menck smiles triumphantly up at his partner, who's confused.

MENCK

We knew he had it when you hit him.

Taking his meaning, Coyle drops to his knees and peers where
Menck's light is shining. Buried deep within the broken
black plastic egg-crate of the grille is... a BASEBALL!

Glory Hallelujah! Coyle is beside himself, grabbing for it.

COYLE

OH YES! OH... YES! Minkie, you
freakin' genius, you're like
freakin' COLUMBO! I love you, man!

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43.

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. STATION - ROLL CALL ROOM - DAY

A full house of cops, sitting in classroom-style chair desks. All eyes are on Spicer and Cabrera at the front of the room. The boss, Captain Sobek, stands by.

Folks we've come to know are prominent here -- Coyle, Menck, Shiban and Paige. We linger on MENCK a moment, remembering the secret he conceals. Jacocks stands in back, arms folded. They all listen as Spicer lays it out.

SPICER

Suspect's name is Joseph Blau. He's hiding in a bar on North Orchid called the Rooster. It's strictly actives only.

Coyle raises a perfunctory hand, then just speaks up.

COYLE

Detective? The Rooster is freaksville. We go busting in there, it wouldn't hurt to get the tank over from SWAT.

(to the room)

Seriously, it's like that bar in "Star Wars."

CAPTAIN SOBEK

Coyle...

The Captain puts a finger to his lips. Coyle shuts up.

~~CABRERA~~ SPICER

We don't need the tank, because we're not going inside.

SPICER

The suspect's brother is helping us out. The plan is for them to meet out front on the sidewalk. Once Mr. Blau gets in his brother's car, we move in and take him.

A STREET LAYOUT is on the dry-erase board. He marks on it.

SPICER

Let's talk positions. Motor units in a perimeter here, here, here, here and here. Our arrest team...

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Spicer I

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JACOCKS
How about snipers?

Spicer stops drawing, looks to him. Cabrera does, too.

JACOCKS
I'm just thinking, Grauman's
Chinese is a half-block west.
A zillion tourists -- if "Mr. Blau"
winds up in the middle of them...

~~CABRERA~~ SPICER
No snipers. He won't get the
chance to run if we do this right.

Spicer agrees. He addresses the whole room.

SPICER
I made a promise to the suspect's
brother -- we're going to take this
man alive and unharmed. We clear?

A few nods and affirmatives. Jacocks says nothing.

END

"AMPED" PILOT - SPIKE TV
08/11/06

~~EKT. NORTH ORCHID AVENUE - DAY~~

~~Dead quiet. The Rooster, at mid-block, is a crumbly dive,
its windows painted black. Although less than a block from
redeveloped Hollywood Boulevard, this street is run-down and
empty.~~

~~It's only as we cut to VARIOUS ANGLES that we see, in fact,
there are COPS everywhere: hiding in alcoves and alleys,
parked in unmarked cars, watching from storefront windows.~~

~~A piece-of-shit VAN is parked across from the Rooster.~~

~~INTERCUT WITH:~~

~~INT. UNMARKED VAN - DAY~~

~~Spicer and Cabrera hide in the back, surveilling the bar
through a louvered side window. Waiting. Tension. Cabrera
checks her watch, then speaks softly into her walkie.~~

~~CABRERA (INTO RADIO)
One minute. Give a click if you're
not in position.~~

~~No clicks are heard. Spicer speaks into his own radio.~~

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SPICER (INTO RADIO)
You still with me, Anthony?

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. AROUND THE CORNER - CONTINUOUS

ANTHONY BLAU sits alone in his '89 Jetta, parked at the curb on Hollywood Boulevard. He's beyond nervous, about to pass over into numb. He listens on a tiny EARWIG SPEAKER.

ANTHONY (INTO RADIO)
Yeah.

Spicer hears the young man's fear, reassures him.

SPICER (INTO RADIO)
Be strong. You're doing the right thing.
(checks his watch)
Alright, Anthony. You're on.

Anthony swallows hard, starts his car and drives.

Spicer and Cabrera watch intently as... around the corner comes the Jetta, motoring into view. It pulls up in front of the Rooster, which puts it directly across from the van.

Anthony HONKS HIS HORN -- two short beeps, one long.

SPICER
Good man.

That's the signal. Hearing the honks, JOSEPH BLAU appears.

He stands in the shadow cutting across the bar's front door. He can't quite stand still. His head gently SWAYS back and forth, a byproduct of his disease.

He's bizarre. Disturbing. And though he starts toward his brother's car, he now PAUSES halfway. He cocks his head. It's as if he's smelling the morning air. *

CABRERA
What's he doing?

SPICER
(realizing)
Oh hell... how could he..?

Anthony motions to Joseph -- *get in the car*. Joseph studies his brother a long moment... then BOLTS!

F.Y.I.

SPICER

Dammit! GO, GO, GO, GO! --

He yells this in the radio as he and Cabrera burst out of the van, in pursuit. They'll be damned if this dude gets away.

MOVING ANGLES - WITH JOSEPH

Cops are coming out of the woodwork left and right, but this guy is like The Flash, he's so fast. He sprints down Orchid and, as two UNIFORMS appear in front of him, he briefly RUNS UP the side of a BUILDING to get past them!

At the intersection, a black-and-white SCREECHES into frame, blocking his path. Joseph LEAPS CLEAR OVER the roof of the car, then disappears around the corner.

Spicer and Cabrera, huffing and puffing as they run flat-out, take a chance on an alley as a short cut.

GO
F.Y.I

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - DAY

- SCENE START

A sidewalk crowded with TOURISTS. Lots of neon and lights. The Chinese Theater looms beyond. Bystanders startle and part as Joseph runs past them. He's home-free. Until --

-- PAIGE MOSCAVELL steps out in his path, her pistol aimed.

PAIGE

STOP RIGHT THERE!

Joseph immediately grabs a WOMAN SHOPPER, whose bags scatter to the ground. The woman SCREAMS, then gasps for breath as his hand tightens on her throat. He can kill her instantly.

Paige's heart is in her mouth. She steadies her aim.

SPICER

Don't shoot!

Spicer and Cabrera come trotting up, Spicer raising his hands both to Paige and to Joseph. Paige slowly lowers her gun.

SPICER

Joseph? Nobody wants to hurt you.
Let her go, okay?

Joseph's eyes are wild, frightened, like a trapped animal. SIRENS wail, drawing closer. Other cops are arriving on foot now. Spicer stays cool, waves for them to stay back.

SPICER

Joseph. Let's talk. Talk to me.

For the FIRST TIME, we hear an active SPEAK. Joseph sounds perfectly HUMAN. And scared out of his mind.

JOSEPH

I didn't do it! I didn't do it!

A beat. Joseph starts to pull his hostage back, maybe as if he means to get away. It's hard to tell, because what happens next is immediate: a SHOT rings out.

BOOM! Joseph drops to the sidewalk, lifeless. Blood flows. The woman hostage SCREAMS and runs free.

Spicer and Cabrera are stunned. They look to Paige, but she's in shock as well. She didn't fire. Spicer turns to --

-- JACOBS, standing with his pistol still raised. Having hit his target, he holsters it calmly. With an even glance to Spicer, he steps away to calm the freaked-out hostage.

A whirl of activity around us, but we stay CLOSE on Spicer. Off him, feeling kicked in the gut, staring down at the body:

— GND SCENE —

TIME CUT TO:

EXT. HOLLYWOOD BOULEVARD - DAY - AN HOUR LATER

The area is cordoned off with yellow tape. TECHS photograph and take measurements. A GURNEY wheels past us, carrying Joseph in his body bag to a waiting ambulance.

The ambulance pulls away, wiping through frame to reveal... ANTHONY standing in b.g. at the police line. Coyle and Menck are there with him, keeping him back.

Spicer still stands over the dinner table-size BLOOD STAIN. He looks up at Anthony. We can feel the young man's glaring hatred even from here. Spicer steels himself, walks over.

Tears streak down Anthony's face. Coyle puts a gentle, restraining hand to his chest. Anthony can barely talk.

ANTHONY

You lying son of a bitch.

SPICER

(a beat; beyond sincere)
I'm sorry.

ANTHONY

YY-You... liar...

*

Spicer III

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Too choked with emotion to yell, Anthony abruptly turns on his heel and stalks off. Spicer watches him go.

CUT TO:

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - DAY

MOVING POV - we're looking through someone's eyes, entering the building and gliding through the place. It's business as usual inside, but everything is slightly SLOW-MOTION, floaty.

CLOSE ON SPICER - it's his POV. We stay just ahead of him as he makes for his desk. His thoughts are dark and far away.

LAUGHTER, gales of it, growing louder as we get closer to it. It stirs Spicer out of his reverie. He sees...

... JACOBS standing with a group of male cops, laughing with them. He's telling them a wild story, maybe sex or fishing. Whatever -- it's clear his mind has already moved well on from the man he shot and killed this morning.

It's too much for Spicer -- but he keeps it off his face.

SPICER

Detective, may I have a word?

JACOBS

(not surprised)
Absolutely.

Mild and professional, both of them. They head toward:

INT. STATION - LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They enter. Without a word, they both check the place. Once they see it's empty...

... WHAM! Spicer instantly spins Jacobs by the lapels and SLAMS him HARD against the lockers, RATTLING the entire row.

JACOBS

(low)
You got about one more second to
take your hands off me.

Spicer responds by -- WHAM! -- SLAMMING him again. Jacobs shoves back HARD. Spicer bangs against the opposite lockers.

JACOBS

You wanna go? --

"AMPED" PILOT - SPIKE TV
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START



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Spicer III

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"AMPED" PILOT - SPIKE TV
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SPICER

You murdered that man!

JACOCKS

(correcting him)

I saved that woman. Did you even notice her, Spicer? Did you even notice she was there?

SPICER

I saw you execute a suspect who was about to surrender. He was scared! He didn't want to hurt her!

JACOCKS

He was this, he was that... it's always what they think, what they want, with you. How 'bout you leave your home life at home for a change?

Whatever this means, it has the effect of throwing gasoline on a bonfire. Spicer immediately steps up. They're about to come to blows when Cabrera appears behind them.

CABRERA

Bobby.

Spicer keeps his eyes fixed on Jacocks. Cabrera, firm:

CABRERA

I need to talk to you. Now.

A beat. Spicer gives Jacocks a wicked last SHOVE and breaks off, walking past Cabrera out of the locker room. Cabrera lingers a moment, shoots Jacocks a chill look. She follows.

INT. STATION - BREAK ROOM - DAY

Looking for some privacy, Cabrera leads Spicer in here. The room is empty except for them.

Cabrera knows her partner better than to bring up what just happened. Besides -- she's got something else on her mind.

CABRERA

We... have a bit of a problem.

(off his look)

Remember those bite marks on Ruben Gureghian's throat? Turns out they don't match the bite marks on the bones we found in Joseph Blau's apartment. Not even close.

END

P7/7

ANTHONY BLAU

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50.

F. Y. I

↓ 0-47

She hands him the FORENSIC REPORT she carries. Spicer studies it, bewildered.

CABRERA

I just checked it with the coroner.
He measured Joseph's bite radius.
It's not a match.
(a beat)
Joseph Blau didn't kill that man.

Spicer closes the report, shuts his eyes. *Christ Almighty.*

SPICER

He said "I didn't do it."

CABRERA

Then who did?

Spicer's thinking.

SPICER

Gureghian's widow said they didn't
let actives in their store.
(a beat)
Gureghian couldn't tell his killer
was active. Neither could we.

F. Y. I

*

↓

He looks to Cabrera, a queasy realization dawning.

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

ANTHONY BLAU enters the building. Eyes red from crying, he's on autopilot -- numb and purposeful. Fixing his gaze on...

... Jacocks, who's back at his desk, working at the computer.

DESK SERGEANT

Can I help you, sir?

Anthony doesn't answer, just crosses through the bullpen, making a beeline for Jacocks. Moving FASTER now.

DESK SERGEANT

Sir. HEY!

Jacocks looks up just as Anthony RAMS into him, DRIVING HIM backward, backward, against a far wall. Jacocks reaches for his gun, which goes tumbling.

It all happens so fast. Jacocks fights hard, but can't make any headway against Anthony's incredible strength. The detective's feet rise off the floor as Anthony LIFTS HIM.

Anthony & Co

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51.

* F.Y.I
only

Jacocks' eyes go wide as Anthony's MOUTH... UNHINGES. It stretches open, impossibly wide. A second set of TEETH, sharp and gnarled, extend into view. As Anthony is about to bite Jacocks' throat out, just like he did to Gureghian --

-- BLAM!BLAM!BLAM! Three quick SHOTS ring out, incredibly loud inside the station house. Anthony drops the detective, staggers and collapses. A freaked-out Jacocks, looking up from the floor, stares at his rescuer.

It's SPICER. He lowers his smoking pistol. Having saved Jacocks' life and closed a murder case, he takes no great satisfaction from either.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LOS ANGELES - NIGHT - VARIOUS VIEWS

A brief MONTAGE of our familiar LA. Streetlights coming on. People going home from work. Evening turns to NIGHT.

EXT. HOLLYWOOD STATION - NIGHT

It's many hours later. The end of the shift. Time enough for things to get back to business as usual. More or less.

INT. STATION - BULLPEN - NIGHT

Paige Moscovell drinks from the water fountain, checks the bulletin board... but what she's really doing is keeping a lingering eye on Spicer, who stands talking to the Captain.

Spicer is oblivious to Paige's attention. Cabrera, however, is not. The Captain heads back to his office. Cabrera watches out of the corner of her eye as Paige works up her nerve and approaches Spicer.

PAIGE

Excuse me, Detective?

(quickly includes Cabrera)

Detectives? A couple of us were gonna go out for a beer tonight.

I was wondering..?

Cabrera looks to Spicer, awaits his answer. Spicer smiles, as gracious as we'd expect.

SPICER

I'd like that, but uh... can I take a raincheck?

Cabrera smiles too, also gracious.

Cabrera's silent. Jacocks smiles wistfully.

JACOCKS

Still. You're with me, not him.

Jacocks slowly rolls over to kiss her. Cabrera kisses him back, wraps an arm tight around him. Their passion is as undeniable as it is unlikely.

CUT TO:

EXT. CATHOLIC HALFWAY HOUSE - NIGHT

Familiar mission-style architecture. Quiet -- just crickets chirping under the moonlight. An SUV pulls to a stop in front. Spicer, in jeans, steps out of the truck, alone.

INT. CATHOLIC HALFWAY HOUSE - NIGHT *Start Scene* —

This is the place we recall Joseph Blau would have wound up, had he lived. Spicer walks the hall, his footsteps clicking. He pauses before one particular room, then goes inside.

ANGLE - AS SEEN FROM THE HALLWAY

Spicer silently pulls up a chair, sits down beside an ACTIVE FEMALE PATIENT asleep in her bed. We stay at a distance -- we can't see much of the young woman's face.

Her wrists are STRAPPED to the steel bedframe. Spicer puts a hand atop her hand and just sits with her. In FOREGROUND...

... A STAFFER softly closes the door, not wishing to disturb. As she does, a name card swings into view: "CYNTHIA SPICER."

CUT TO:

EXT. BASEBALL DIAMOND - NIGHT *End Scene*

TWIN BOYS, still in uniform from a Little League game, throw a ball back and forth on an empty field. NIGHT LIGHTS blaze.

Menck sits alone on the bleachers, watching his two sons.

MENCK

Keep that elbow above the shoulder,
Matthew!

Coyle appears, carrying a six of beer. He, like Menck, is wearing his civvies. He unsnaps two cans, gives one to his partner as he sits beside him. They both drink and watch.

COYLE

Geez. Your kids throw like the Andrews Sisters. No offense.

MENCK

(irritated)

There were three Andrews Sisters, Dave -- nor were they identical. That doesn't even make any sense.

Coyle shrugs -- whatever -- and drinks his beer. A beat.

COYLE

Some shift.

Menck nods. He can drink to that. They tap cans.

Out on the field, one of the twins throws the ball wild. It flies out of sight into thick HEDGES. Gone.

SECOND TWIN

Dad! He did it again!

The boys are about to hunt for it, but Coyle stops them.

COYLE

Hold up, guys!

From his pocket, Coyle produces the blackened GEHRIG BALL. His once-prized possession. Coyle looks to Menck, who smiles appreciatively. Coyle winds back and PITCHES it to the boys.

THE TWINS

Thanks, Dave!

They start playing catch again with the blackened ball. Coyle watches the twins play, takes another pull on his beer.

COYLE

Minkie, you're one lucky man.

Menck, his mind on many other things, nods.

On the two friends, drinking their beers, watching the ball fly back and forth, we...

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END

- GO FURTHER -
