

Fade In

INT. GEORGE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Pale moonlight beams in through an open window. Sheer curtains float eerily with the calm breeze. Besides the moonlight, the only source of light is from a TV across the room, playing a RERUN of THE TWILIGHT ZONE. The furniture is all leather and wood. We slowly move through the room.

The walls are decorated with medals and plaques and hunting trophies. There is an empty rack above the fireplace where a rifle would normally be. We linger on that a moment. Odd.

Sticking out from in front of the couch is a man's dress shoe. A very nice shoe. The shoe isn't empty - It's being worn. Blood begins to roll into view as we get closer to the shoe. Music swells.

BLACK. The screen cracks like a spider's web.

On-screen, the words - The Winnower's Web

EXT. RICHARD RODRIGUEZ' HOME - NIGHT (EARLIER)

A wide shot of a truly impressive work of architecture that sits on a well-manicured lawn. The building is massive, with tall glass windows and a set of stone stairs leading to the open double doors of the home, where many individuals in formal dress stand mingling. Nice cars pull in and out of the circular driveway.

The camera tilts down to reveal a mayoral campaign sign in the yard. The sign says "ELECT RICHARD RODRIGUEZ FOR MAYOR - A FACE YOU CAN TRUST" and has a picture of RODRIGUEZ smiling. RODRIGUEZ has perfectly styled dark brown hair, shining white teeth, and smile lines. He is in his late 40s.

INT. RICHARD RODRIGUEZ' HOME: FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Laughter and bubbling conversation fills the mostly white marble and polished black stone interior. Blue and white lights shine up the walls and columns in the room. The sound of a string ensemble echoes from somewhere in the home.

RICHARD RODRIGUEZ weaves his way through the crowd, shaking hands with and hugging the various attendees. He seems genuinely happy to see every one of them, and after he leaves each group to talk to the next, they watch him go with a look of admiration. He is dressed in a sharp gray suit with a two-toned blue striped tie and elegant cufflinks.

RODRIGUEZ finally makes his way to a group of three people standing together. We only see their shoes. All three wear the same style of shoe as the shoe that was in the opening scene.

The camera tilts up, revealing three POLICE OFFICERS

RODRIGUEZ

Well well well, if it isn't Chicago's  
finest! I am so glad you all could  
make it tonight!

RODRIGUEZ speaks with a laid-back tone, but there is something oddly commanding about it.

One of the officers offers his hand to RODRIGUEZ, who takes it and then pulls him in and embraces him.

GEORGE

Richard! How are you, buddy? Long time  
no see!

The two separate.

The Officer is Detective GEORGE JOHNSON, a man in his late 40s with a well-trimmed graying beard. Weathered and experienced, this guy has seen some shit and dealt with it. Nothing about him is outwardly threatening, but he's the kind of guy you would run the other way from in a dark alley.

RODRIGUEZ

You're telling me? I can't believe  
it's been so long! What is it now, 25  
years?

RODRIGUEZ turns to the other two officers.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Did you know that George and I went to  
high school together? Go Eagles!

GEORGE

Ah, let me introduce you. This is my  
partner, Detective Chris Mathers.

We see CHRIS MATHERS, a man in his mid-40s. CHRIS has a handsome jawline with intelligent eyes. Top of his class but doesn't want anyone to ever know it.

They shake hands.

CHRIS

It is very nice to meet you, sir. It's nice to finally see your face somewhere other than on a campaign sign!

The four laugh.

RODRIGUEZ

Ugh, those things are so tacky, but my campaign manager insists on putting them *everywhere*. Please, call me Rich.  
(they release the shake)  
Any friend of George is a friend of mine.

GEORGE

And I'm sure you already know the Chief.

RODRIGUEZ

Yes, no need for introductions. It's nice to see you again, Chief Greymore.

GREYMORE

Richard. Lovely home.

COMMISSIONER JEAN GREYMORE is a built woman in her mid-late 50s. Her tanned skin with cracking frown lines is outlined by her short, greying black hair. Definitely votes red.

The two briefly shake hands. GREYMORE is obviously giving a fake smile.

RODRIGUEZ

Please, enjoy the party! I'm sure I'll catch you all before you leave.

RODRIGUEZ makes his departure, laughing out a loud greeting to the next group of people.

We stay on GEORGE, CHRIS, and GREYMORE.

GEORGE

Don't like the guy?

GEORGE turns to face GREYMORE, who has now dropped the fake smile.

GREYMORE

He's just another liberal pansy who wants to take away our funding.

GEORGE

Is that such a bad thing?

GREYMORE gives GEORGE the stink-eye, grabs a flute of champagne from a passing-by waiter, and walks off while taking a long sip.

CHRIS and GEORGE wait until she gets out of sight and then burst out laughing.

CHRIS

The hell is her problem?

GEORGE

Eh, I don't know. Everything is so political with that woman.

GEORGE tries to laugh it off, but there is a glint of hesitation.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Drinks?

CHRIS

Yeah, drinks!

INT. RODRIGUEZ' HOME - BAR

GEORGE and CHRIS stand leaning at a bar in the main foyer of the home, mid-conversation.

CHRIS

So does Rodriguez live here all alone?

GEORGE

Nah, his husband Derek is probably around here somewhere.

CHRIS

This place is massive. Like, I could fit seven of my apartments into this one room.

CHRIS takes a sip from his glass.

GEORGE

God, I hate these things. Too formal.

CHRIS

You showed up, didn't you?

GEORGE sips his drink, then smiles.

GEORGE

Okay, maybe I like them a little.

(Pauses)

Still too formal.

The two laugh for a moment before going back to their drinks.

CHRIS

Look at us, being thanked by a mayoral candidate at a campaign event. We're really moving up in the world, huh?

GEORGE

I can't believe it myself, either. Though, locking up a guy like Preston Romano? Biggest bust of the year. Hell, maybe the decade.

They share a smile.

CHRIS

The Kingpin of Chicago. Bribery, burglary, kidnapping, murder, fraud, money laundering...

GEORGE

No drugs though, guy's clean there!

The two laugh.

CHRIS

Here's to being the best fucking detectives in Chicago!

GEORGE

I'll drink to that one, brother!

They drink.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Hey, Chris, I've been meaning to tell you -

GEORGE is interrupted by two arms wrapping around him from behind. He turns around to see his daughter, MARILYN JOHNSON, embracing him tightly.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Marilyn! I'm so glad you could make it!

MARILYN is an attractive woman in her early-mid 20s. Dark brown hair with olive skin. She always has an air of confidence that disguises her big heart.

MARILYN  
Of course, dad! This is a big deal! Wouldn't miss it for the world.

GEORGE  
Eh, but your mom and brother would!

MARILYN  
Dad!

GEORGE  
I'm kidding, I'm kidding!

MARILYN turns to CHRIS.

CHRIS  
Oh, come here, you!

MARILYN hugs CHRIS as if he were her uncle.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
What, no Henry?

GEORGE  
No, he's busy at the hospital tonight.

CHRIS  
Ah, that's too bad. Haven't seen your brother since Christmas.

They release their embrace.

JACE (O.S.)  
He really wanted to be here, but duty calls, right?

CHRIS, GEORGE, and MARILYN all turn to face officer JACE HAWTHORN, who has snuck his way into the conversation.

JACE is tall with an athletic build, hidden behind a pair of glasses and a bookish composure. He is young, attractive, and introverted.

GEORGE

Jace! The whole gang is here! Chris, have you met Jace?

CHRIS

I think I've seen him around the office, but I don't think I've had the pleasure.

(To JACE)

Chris Mathers.

CHRIS extends his hand to JACE, who shakes it.

JACE

Jace Hawthorn. I've heard a lot about you.

GEORGE

Jace here was in the academy with Marilyn and is an extremely talented detective. And hopefully soon to be Henry's fiance, yeah?

JACE laughs with embarrassment.

JACE

Things are going well, Mr. Johnson, but that's a ways off. And I wouldn't say *extremely* talented.

GEORGE

Give yourself some credit, kiddo.

Before they can continue the conversation, their attention is directed to the makeshift stage at the front of the room where RODRIGUEZ stands leaning over a podium.

RODRIGUEZ

Hello hello hello? Is this thing on?

He turns to look offstage and gives a thumbs up to an unseen crew member.

RODRIGUEZ (CONT'D)

Alright, here we go! Hello everyone!  
Thank you so much for coming out  
tonight, it really does mean so much  
to me!

(Applause)

It is an honor and a privilege to know  
that you all have supported me on my  
journey to become mayor of this great  
city. Sure, Chicago isn't perfect, but  
I really believe that if we all work  
together, we can make it a safe,  
friendly city that people all over the  
world will want to make their home!

(Even louder applause)

Now, we still have a ways to go, but I  
have invited a very special guest here  
tonight who can help us make this  
change. I have known this man for a  
long time, and want to acknowledge the  
great deed he has done for this city  
by putting notorious mob boss Preston  
Romano behind bars. Ladies and  
Gentlemen, give it up for Detective  
George Johnson!

The sea of faces turns to face GEORGE standing at the bar,  
accompanied by cheers and applause.

GEORGE and CHRIS exchange a smile before they shake hands  
into a hug.

CHRIS

Congratulations, brother.

GEORGE

Thanks, partner.

(He winks)

GEORGE hugs MARILYN and JACE, then struts up to the stage,  
waving and shaking the hands of various attendees on his way.  
One of the BAR LIGHTS begins to FLICKER in and out behind  
CHRIS, and as he goes out of focus we see his clap slow and  
expression shift to slight contempt.

Blink and you'd miss it.



GEORGE finally makes his way up onto the stage, where he shakes the hand of RODRIGUEZ as they pose for a photo.

RODRIGUEZ  
Proud of you, buddy.

GEORGE  
You didn't have to do this.

RODRIGUEZ  
Sure I did.

They share a laugh and GEORGE continues to the podium. He reaches to adjust the mic and there's a loud SCREECH of feedback.

GEORGE  
Ope! Sorry about that, folks.  
(LAUGHTER)  
Thank you all, really. I'm just doing my job, so I really do appreciate all this hullabaloo. And thank you, Richard, for putting all this together!

There's a generous amount of applause as GEORGE motions to RODRIGUEZ, who does the classic "oh, stop it!" gesture while smiling big and laughing.

GEORGE (CONT'D)  
Of course, I have to thank the department for giving me the resources necessary for the challenge. I would also like to thank my wife for putting up with my late nights. She couldn't be here tonight, but she'd kill me if I didn't say anything!  
(LAUGHTER)  
Finally, I'd like to give a shoutout to my two amazing children. My son, Henry, who works tirelessly in the hospitals every day, and my daughter, Marilyn who has been on the force coming up on three years now!

CUT to MARILYN back at the bar. She raises her glass at him and smiles. Proud daughter moment.

GEORGE (CONT'D)

Seriously, I am extremely humbled to be up here talking to you all. I hope I won't let any of you or Mr. Rodriguez down in future endeavors. Thank you!

Applause erupts and George smiles and waves. He makes eye contact with GREYMORE, who is standing with her arms crossed, not clapping. GEORGE chuckles as she turns to leave.

EXT. RODRIGUEZ HOME: BALCONY - NIGHT

The night outdoors is nice and quiet, save for the muffled sounds of music and conversation from inside the home. GEORGE and CHRIS stand out on the balcony looking over the driveway, drinks in hand.

CHRIS

So, where are you going on vacation to celebrate?

GEORGE

Actually, I'm not this time. Not yet, anyway.

CHRIS

What!? C'mon, you always go on a big vacation after a bust!

GEORGE

There's still work to be done. You really think it ends with Romano? Sure, we bagged him. But how do you get that powerful without a little help?

CHRIS looks puzzled and sets his glass down.

CHRIS

Are you saying what I think you're saying?

GEORGE

(Immediately)

Don't you think it's odd that *no one* else in the department had any idea what was going on? Why did it take us to finally be the ones to take him down?

CHRIS  
Who is it, George?

GEORGE takes a sip from his glass and looks over his shoulder to see if anyone is near the door.

GEORGE  
I've got one lead, and it looks like  
Greymore is involved somehow...

CHRIS  
CHIEF GREY---

GEORGE  
Shhhhh! Jesus, man, I'm not sure yet.  
And I'm sure as hell not letting this  
get out. This is between you and me,  
got it?

CHRIS  
Yeah, I got it. Of course, I got it. I  
want to know everything.

CHRIS turns around to face the door, taking a sip of his drink.

GEORGE  
Tomorrow. But tonight let's forget  
about all that. I think we've earned  
one night. No vacation until it's  
over, though.

CHRIS  
To no days off.

GEORGE  
To no days off.

The two clink glasses again, down the rest of their drinks,  
and walk to the door to head back inside.

INT. RODRIGUEZ' HOME: HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

GEORGE opens the door from the balcony, and as he and CHRIS  
make their way through the frame CHRIS runs right into  
RODRIGUEZ, who accidentally spills his drink onto CHRIS.

RODRIGUEZ  
Woah! Oh shoot, I am so sorry about  
that, Chris. Here, I think I've got a  
napkin here somewhere.

RODRIGUEZ starts rummaging through his pockets.

CHRIS

No, no, it's fine. I ran into you! Is there a bathroom around here I could use to wash up?

RODRIGUEZ

Down the hall and to the left. Again, I'm so sorry.

CHRIS

Don't even worry about it.

(To GEORGE)

I'll meet you back downstairs?

GEORGE

Yeah, I'll see you there.

CHRIS smiles at RODRIGUEZ and then heads down the hall towards the bathroom.

RODRIGUEZ

I've been looking for you for the past 15 minutes, man. What're you doing all the way up here?

GEORGE

Eh, Chris and I went outside for a breath of fresh air. My social battery was getting a bit low.

RODRIGUEZ

I totally get that. Believe me, I just want to curl up into bed, but *someone's* gotta campaign for mayor!

They laugh.

GEORGE

So, you were looking for me?

RODRIGUEZ

Yeah, just some of my donors who were hoping to meet you. I think they may still be downstairs if you're up for it.

GEORGE

Sure, why not?

(a beat)

Hey, really, thank you for all this.  
You didn't need to do it.

RODRIGUEZ

Sure I did. If I get elected I really  
want to make sure we work together to  
keep this city safe. We need more guys  
like you. Right this way.

RODRIGUEZ stands aside and motions for GEORGE to lead the way. GEORGE begins walking, and RODRIGUEZ takes a look back through the balcony window, then back down the hall where CHRIS had walked. His expression shifts slightly from his happy predisposition into something a little more curious for a moment before he follows GEORGE.

INT. RODRIGUEZ' HOME: FOYER

MARILYN and JACE are standing a little ways from the main crowd of people mingling. The crowd has slowly begun to disperse, but there are still a number of people there.

MARILYN

Oh my god, I cannot *believe* my dad  
said that about you and Henry.

JACE

Nah, nah, it's cool. He's just excited  
about it I guess.

MARILYN

Wait you aren't planning on popping  
the question soon, are you?

JACE laughs a little too loud at MARILYN's sudden excitement and some of the people nearby give him an odd glance. JACE gives a small wave.

JACE

No, not anytime soon. Don't worry.  
It's nice to know that he really does  
approve of me and Henry, you know? Not  
many cops are cool with it.

MARILYN

Oh, please. My dad would rather be  
caught dead than be called a cop.

JACE

Yeah, I know. But you know what I mean.

He takes a sip of his water.

JACE (CONT'D)

This is all really cool. I really hope that you and I can be acknowledged for something this big one day.

MARILYN

Oh yeah, I can already see it: Jace Hawthorn and Marilyn Johnson - Partners in Stopping Crime!

JACE

When do we get the bumper magnets?

MARILYN

Shut up, Jace.

MARILYN playfully punches JACE's shoulder, who reels back in fake agony.

GREYMORE (O.S.)

Marilyn?

JACE and MARILYN immediately stiffen and whip around at the sound of GREYMORE's voice.

MARILYN

Chief Greymore. How are you this evening?

GREYMORE

I'm fine. About to take my leave actually. Just make sure you get that report on my desk in the morning.

MARILYN

Yes, Ma'am.

GREYMORE

Good. Jace.

JACE

Ma'am.

GREYMORE tilts up her chin, saying nothing, and walks away stumbling a bit from the alcohol. As she nears the door she passes RODRIGUEZ and GEORGE, who have just finished a conversation with a group of people.

We see them from a distance. GEORGE and RODRIGUEZ exchange goodbyes, and then GEORGE makes his way over to JACE and MARILYN.

GEORGE

Alright Mary, I'veve had a few too many to drive. Ccare to drive me home?

MARILYN

Yeah, sure!

She turns and hugs JACE goodbye.

MARILYN

See you tomorrow!

GEORGE

YEah, see you tomorrow, Jace!

JACE

You two drive safe, now!

GEORGE

Oh, we will!

They turn and walk off, leaving JACE standing all alone.

CHRIS walks over to JACE, head down as he's still messing with the wet spot on his button-up.

CHRIS

Hey, can you all notice th-- Where'd everyone go?

JACE points to GEORGE and MARILYN who are just stepping out of the front doors.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

They didn't even say bye to me.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MARILYN's car pulls into the driveway of GEORGE's house. The house is on a quiet suburban street, with nice tall trees lining the paved sidewalks. She turns off the car and the two exit.

GEORGE stumbles a bit on the way to the door but is helped by MARILYN. GEORGE gets his keys out and fumbles with them before finally unlocking the door.

GEORGE  
Ah, there we go.

They enter the dark interior of the home.

INT. GEORGE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

GEORGE plops down onto the living room couch and turns on the TV. This is the same room as the opening scene. An old episode of THE TWILIGHT ZONE pops onto the screen. GEORGE fumbles the remote but is unable to change the channel. He sets the remote down on the couch in defeat.

GEORGE  
I guess it's Twilight Zone tonight.

MARILYN, who was in the connecting kitchen, walks into the room holding a glass of water.

MARILYN  
Oh! I love this one! Have you seen it?

GEORGE  
No, I haven't.

GEORGE takes the glass of water from MARILYN.

MARILYN  
We oughtta have a marathon sometime. I started watching it on Netflix and I love it.

GEORGE  
No time like the present!

MARILYN  
I'd love to, dad, but I've gotta get a report finished for the Chief before the morning.

GEORGE  
Boooooo!

MARILYN laughs and hugs her dad.



MARILYN

I love you, dad. Don't stay up too late. I'll see you in the morning.

GEORGE

Love you too, baby. Goodnight.

She kisses him on the forehead before leaving him to watch TV.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

MARILYN leans over the plant to the right of the door and pulls out the spare key. She locks the door and replaces the key.

CUT to her car pulling out of the driveway. We see another car parked in the background down the street, opposite the direction MARILYN turns.

CUT to inside the car POV. A hand grips the steering wheel as MARILYN's car drives out of sight.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

Officers maneuver the maze of desks and cubicles that scatter the floor of the police station. PHONES are RINGING, and people are chattering.

At one desk sits LIEUTENANT JEFFREY RENSHAW. RENSHAW is a gruff, burly man in his mid-40s. He has perpetual eyebags and a no-bullshit demeanor, but something about him gives off a warm bear hug effect.

RENSHAW has a newspaper in one hand and a cup of coffee in the other.

RENSHAW

Morning, Chief.

RENSHAW, who hasn't even looked up from his paper, addresses COMMISSIONER GREYMORE as she walks up to his desk.

GREYMORE

...Lieutenant Renshaw... Do you have George's paperwork from the Romano case?

RENSHAW  
Already on your desk, boss.

She seems surprised.

GREYMORE  
Oh, well, thank you. Anything you need  
from me today?

RENSHAW looks up from the paper. He gestures with it as he  
says

RENSHAW  
If you could make it not rain this  
weekend I'd appreciate it. My  
daughter's playing in the state soccer  
tournament and I don't want to have to  
sit in the rain for 3 hours.

GREYMORE  
I'll see what I can do.

GREYMORE walks away towards her office.

RENSHAW  
You're the best!

She smirks. He takes a sip of coffee and puts his feet up on  
his desk. He scans the station and watches as CHRIS comes out  
of his office.

RENSHAW  
Morning, Chris! You catch the Bulls  
game last night?

CHRIS makes his way over to RENSCHAW's desk.

CHRIS  
No, did they win?

RENSCHAW deflates.

RENSCHAW  
No.

CHRIS  
You haven't seen George yet this  
morning, have you?

RENSHAW

If this is about the paperwork he gave it to me yesterday and I reviewed it and put it on Greymore's desk this morning.

CHRIS

No, it's not that. Thanks, though. He's not in yet, and he's usually here before I am.

The two look over at GEORGE's closed office door.

RENSHAW

Eh, he's probably got a hangover. He'll be in later.

CHRIS

He's not answering my calls or texts.

RENSHAW

I'm sure he's fine. If he's not in later I'll send someone to check on him.

CHRIS

Thanks, Jeff.

RENSHAW

It's what I do.

RENSHAW starts working on the crossword.

INT. CHRIS' OFFICE - LATER

CHRIS is filling out some paperwork when his CELL PHONE begins to RING. He glances over at it and sees that it's MARILYN. He picks it up and answers it.

CHRIS

Hey kiddo, what's up?

We hear muffled shouts and cries through the phone.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Marilyn are you okay? What's going on?

We hear MARILYN through cries and deep breaths.

MARILYN  
Chris! Oh my god -  
(SOBS)  
It's my dad, Chris.

CHRIS  
Hey hey hey what's wrong?

MARILYN  
He's... He's dead!

MARILYN can barely keep it together at this point. Something in her voice is harrowing. CHRIS begins to seem frightened.

CHRIS  
What do you mean he's dead, MARILYN?

He starts to gather his things, holding the phone with his shoulder.

MARILYN  
There's blood... Everywhere... He's not... He's not breathing... Chris, he's just lying on the floor...

CHRIS  
Okay Marilyn I'm gonna be right there just hang on, okay?

She sobs out an "mhhh."

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Alright, I'm gonna hang up now and head that way. Don't call anyone else, you hear me?

MARILYN  
Chris, please hurry!

CHRIS  
Just hang tight kiddo.

CHRIS hangs up, having gathered all of his things.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CHRIS bursts out of his office and makes eye contact with RENSHAW.

CHRIS  
Officer down.

RENSHAW  
Jesus. Chris is it -

CHRIS  
Yeah, it is. Ride with me. Everyone  
else - Johnson residence, now!

The office springs to a panicked life while CHRIS and RENSCHAW speed to the elevator.

INT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAY

CHRIS and RENSCHAW walk into the already open front door of GEORGE's home.

CHRIS  
Marilyn?!

MARILYN (O.S.)  
(Through sobs)  
In here...

CHRIS barrels through the hallway and into the living room. He comes to a stop when he runs into MARILYN who is still just staring at her dad's body. GEORGE lies in a pool of blood at the foot of the couch, with a gash across his temple and multiple stab wounds across his chest.

CHRIS wraps his arm around her and drags her away.

CHRIS  
I'm here kid, everything's gonna be  
okay. Renschaw, start locking things  
down!

RENSCHAW gives a nod and then starts going about the scene.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - DAY

CHRIS brings MARILYN out to the front porch and sits her down on the stairs. Other police vehicles begin to pull onto the scene.

CHRIS  
Stay here okay? I've gotta go back  
inside, but you'll be okay out here.

He tries to pull away but she grips him tighter. The hint of tears begin to well in his eyes but he shrugs them off and squeezes her back. She lets go, and he goes inside as officers begin to jog up to the door.

INT. GEORGE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

CHRIS enters into the room, followed soon by various other officers and investigators.

He goes over to the body and stares at it, emptily, while putting on a pair of rubber gloves.

We see from CHRIS' POV as he investigates from this spot. He looks at the gash across the temple, and then at the stab wounds on the chest. From there, he looks down to the left knee which is at an uncomfortable angle. A little blood has seeped through the pants in that spot.

He looks over to the fireplace, where GEORGE's hunting rifle lays on the ground out of its rack. There is blood on the stock. Next to the gun are faint, mud-caked shoe prints, which lead to an open window to the right of the fireplace.

The TV, which is still on, catches our attention with a loud GUNSHOT from an old western show. This pulls us out of CHRIS' POV.

By this time, RENSHAW has led a team putting CAUTION TAPE on the door and the room has filled with personnel. Gloved CSI individuals have started doing a close examination of the body.

CHRIS

You, check that window for prints and see if you can identify where those footsteps come from.

An officer nods and goes over to the window to begin testing.

CHRIS

Renshaw, see if there's anything else odd in the house.

RENSHAW grabs a couple of people and sends them all in different directions. He stops by CHRIS and puts his hand on his shoulder.

RENSHAW

Hey, Chris. Take it easy. I know this is hard. No reason to make it any harder.

CHRIS looks at RENSHAW, takes a deep breath, and nods. RENSHAW gives a sentimental half smile, and turns back to the kitchen.

CHRIS

Someone take a look at that gun.

He points to the gun by the fireplace, and two people turn to begin investigating it.

BANG! BANG! BANG! More GUNFIRE comes from the TV. CHRIS beelines to the couch and picks up the remote, turning off the TV. He stares at his reflection in the black void of the screen.

CHRIS then trudges over to the FIREPLACE, careful not to step on the body or in the bloodstains on the elaborate rug. While inspecting the empty gun rack, his eyes wander down to the mantle. There are many pictures and knick-knacks lining the mantle, but one stands out in particular.

CHRIS reaches for a picture. We see a younger JOHNSON FAMILY on a Grand Canyon vacation. GEORGE is in a gaudy Hawaiian shirt with a large straw hat and has a shit-eating grin. His arm is around his wife KELLY, who is mid-laugh as if GEORGE had just cracked a joke. MARILYN and HENRY are standing in front of them. HENRY is mid-sneeze and MARILYN is rolling her eyes at her dad's lame joke. CHRIS lets out a brief chuckle.

WOMAN INVESTIGATOR

Detective Mathers, I think I found something!

CHRIS puts the picture back down on the mantle and turns around.

CHRIS

Whatcha got?

The investigator holds a cufflink between two gloved fingers.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Let me see that.

She tosses it to CHRIS. He inspects it.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Is this from his suit?

WOMAN INVESTIGATOR

It was under the couch, sir.

CHRIS looks at GEORGE's shirt sleeve, stained in blood. There is no cufflink. He checks the other. Nothing.

CHRIS

Okay, go upstairs and see if you can find a match in his collection or a set with one missing.

He hands it back to her and she gets up from the body.

RENSHAW comes back into the room.

RENSHAW

House seems to be clear. Just the open window.

CHRIS stands up from crouching beside the body.

RENSHAW (CONT'D)

Who could have done something like this?

CHRIS

I can think of 30 people off the top of my head who'd want him dead. But 30 that would actually do it?

RENSHAW

Once we run some tests maybe we can narrow that down.

GREYMORE (O.S.)

Detective Mathers!

CHRIS and RENSHAW turn to the door, where CHIEF GREYMORE has just ducked under the caution tape.

CHRIS

Chief?

GREYMORE

What the hell do you think you're doing?

CHRIS

I'm trying to figure out who the fuck did this to my partner!

The room goes silent as the two get into a shouting match.

GREYMORE

So you're just assigning yourself to cases now? Last I checked you don't have that authority!



RENSHAW  
Chief, let's calm do--

GREYMORE  
Lieutenant this is NOT the time for  
you to butt in!

RENSHAW collects himself and doesn't say any more.

CHRIS  
Well, you weren't here to make a call  
so I used my own judgement.

GREYMORE  
You don't get to make that call. Go  
home. We'll discuss this tomorrow.

CHRIS  
Chief I really think that -

GREYMORE  
GO. HOME.

CHRIS chews his tongue and stares GREYMORE down, who has an unmistakable aura of wrath. He snaps away and storms out, tearing the CAUTION TAPE out of the doorway as he leaves. RENSCHAW watches him leave, hands on his hips. GREYMORE swivels her head, following CHRIS as he brushes past her.

GREYMORE  
Back to work, everyone!

People immediately avert their gaze and go back to their tasks.

EXT. GEORGE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CHRIS bounds out of the house past MARILYN, who is about to stand up and follow him. But before she can, JACE approaches after stepping out of CHRIS' way.

She looks up with a tear-stained face and sees JACE, who meets her gaze. JACE's shoulders deflate, and his expression says it all. She makes her way to JACE, who pulls her in for a hug.

They both cry.

JACE  
I am so sorry Marilyn. I am so, so  
sorry.

The two sit back down on the porch stairs. JACE puts his arm around MARILYN, who buries her head into his shoulder.

MARILYN

He wasn't answering his phone. I wanted to run my report by him before I turned it into the chief. So I... I went home to see if he had maybe forgotten to set his alarm a-and... I saw the window was open so I just bolted inside to make sure he was okay... And I got to the living room and I..

JACE

Marilyn you don't have to tell me. You don't have to say anything.

MARILYN

No, I do. God I wanna find the fucker who did this so bad Jace.

JACE

We will, Mar. It's gonna take time, but we will.

MARILYN

I know, I know. We'll get them.

MARILYN closes her eyes for a second.

MARILYN (CONT'D)

I need to call mom and Henry and let them know.

JACE

No, don't worry about that. I'll call them and tell them.

MARILYN

Thanks, Jace.

JACE

Of course, Marilyn.

JACE pulls out his phone and dials a number. He puts the phone up to his ear and listens to it ringing.

HENRY (V.O.)

Hey, Jace. I'm kinda busy now, what's up.

JACE stands up and takes a few steps into the yard.

JACE

Hey, Henry. This is important...

His voice trails off as he goes out of frame, leaving MARILYN sitting alone on the stairs.

INT. CHRIS' APARTMENT - SUNRISE

CHRIS' apartment is a total bachelor pad. It's a one-bedroom with a kitchen/living room combo. Old concert posters are framed on the walls in juxtaposition to the mostly minimalist interior decor.

CHRIS stands in the shower propped against the wall with an outstretched arm, the water streaming through his hair and dripping down his nose. He turns it off.

The fogged mirror gives a blurry outline of CHRIS as he approaches the mirror and wipes away enough to see his face. He stares at it contemplatively.

CHRIS sits at the kitchen bar eating a bowl of CINNAMON TOAST CRUNCH. Beside the bowl rests a notepad and pen. He picks up the pen and begins writing.

- Preston Romano

He starts to write another name but hesitates.

- Chief Greymore?

He turns the page.

- Where was Kelly?

- Find George's notes on Greymore.

- Who could Romano have sent?

- Talk to the family in a couple of days.

He clicks the pen closed, flips back to the previous page, and just stares at it.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

CHRIS enters the station through the elevator doors. The room is much more somber than usual. He sees MARILYN sitting with JACE at his desk and heads over to them.

CHRIS

Hey, you two. How're you holding up?

MARILYN stands up and hugs CHRIS.

MARILYN

Pretty shitty, if I'm being honest.  
But better than yesterday.

CHRIS

Yeah, better than yesterday is good.  
Listen, I don't know what anyone has  
told you all, but I want to be the one  
to get to the bottom of this. George  
and I were partners for 20 years. He  
took me in fresh out of the academy.

JACE

I don't think anyone would be more  
qualified or justified to do it than  
yourself. I heard what happened with  
the Chief at the scene yesterday.  
Sounds extremely insensitive.

CHRIS turns to JACE.

CHRIS

Yeah. It was.

CHRIS looks side-eyed towards GREYMORE's office. The door is closed, but the light is on.

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Let me know if you hear anything. And  
I'm just over in my office if either  
of you need anything. Door is always  
open.

MARILYN

Thanks, Chris.

He nods and heads to his office. A few beats after his door closes GREYMORE's opens.

GREYMORE  
Detective Hawthorn, a word?

JACE  
Yes, ma'am.

He looks at MARILYN with an "I have no idea" face and then stands up and heads into GREYMORE's office.

INT. GREYMORE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

GREYMORE closes the door behind JACE.

GREYMORE  
Please, have a seat.

JACE sits down, slowly. He's a bit nervous.

JACE  
Have I done something wrong?

GREYMORE  
No, no. Actually, I want to thank you for your excellence recently. Your report on the 5th street burglaries extremely neat.

GREYMORE takes her seat.

JACE  
Thank you, Chief.

GREYMORE  
I also want to inform you that I'm putting you on the Johnson case.

JACE's expression immediately snaps to surprise/horror.

JACE  
Oh, wow. Uh, thank you, but I don't think I'm ready for that kind of pressure. Don't you think Detective Mathers would be a better choice?

GREYMORE  
Detective Mathers is a wild card, Jace. Yes, he is a talented detective, but he's too close to George to make any rational decisions.

She pauses, not convinced that she's convinced JACE.

GREYMORE (CONT'D)

And, with him no longer being able to work alongside Detective Johnson, who knows where his ability truly lies anymore.

JACE

With all due respect, Chief Greymore, I think that Detective Mathers is the only qualified candidate to take the case. He's got the experience and the talent. And more importantly, he's got the drive to see this through.

GREYMORE

Are you saying that you don't have the drive or the talent?

JACE leans back in his chair.

JACE

No. I'm saying that I won't take this case unless Mathers is leading it.

INT. CHRIS' OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

CHRIS is flipping through files. His desk is starting to become disheveled with other files and items.

The door suddenly thrusts open and in walk JACE and GREYMORE.

CHRIS

Chief, how can I help you?

GREYMORE shoves JACE into the office.

GREYMORE

You're on the case. You have this one to thank. Don't fuck it up.

She turns around and slams the door.

CHRIS

What the hell was that?

JACE

She put me on the case but I told her I wouldn't do it unless you were leading it.

CHRIS  
Seriously?

JACE nods.

CHRIS (CONT'D)  
Thank you, Jace. We're gonna nail  
whoever did this to the fucking wall.  
You ready?

JACE  
Yes sir.

CHRIS  
Good, start looking for anything  
interesting in these files. They're  
all past cases, maybe there's a  
connection. We'll know more when we  
get the evidence cleared later today.

JACE takes a seat at the desk across from CHRIS and grabs a  
file.

They share a nod, and then begin the search for anything that  
could possibly connect anything in the files to GEORGE's  
death.

INT. CHRIS' OFFICE - LATER

CHRIS unlocks his office and the two step inside. CHRIS flicks the lights on and hangs his coat on the rack beside the door. He takes a cup from JACE

JACE

I went through the case file last night, and I put sticky notes on everything I thought might be important.

JACE offers CHRIS the file.

CHRIS

Just set it on the desk for now.

(sips coffee)

I wanna apologize for yesterday. It had nothing to do with you. A lot had happened and it wasn't fair for me to take it out on you.

JACE

No need to apologize Detect-- Chris. I understand. Yesterday was hard for all of us.

CHRIS

Yeah, it was. So what you got for me?

CHRIS picks up the file.

JACE

Obviously, the head wounds match the stock of his hunting rifle. I imagine that's also what shattered the kneecap.

CHRIS

That certainly tracks. What do you make of the stab wounds?

JACE

That's where things start to get a bit hazy. If the killer used the gun to kill him, then why did they not just use whatever they stabbed him with to do the job?



CHRIS

We're sure the gun stock was what did it?

JACE

They haven't performed an autopsy yet, but it looks that way.

CHRIS

So, the stab wounds would have happened after the blows to the head. Any idea on what kind of weapon?

JACE

No, I can't tell from the pictures.

CHRIS hands the file back to JACE.

CHRIS

So a killer comes into George's house, uses his gun to kill him, but has another weapon. George must have forced the killer to change plans. George grabbed the gun off the wall but was too drunk to defend himself. Killer grabs the rifle, cracks the knee, then the head. George hits the ground, killer pulls out the knife, and goes to work.

JACE

My god.

CHRIS

The puncture marks aren't a kitchen knife either. Too clean.

JACE opens the file and studies the photo of GEORGE's body.

CHRIS

Any fingerprints been identified?

JACE

Yeah actually.

JACE pulls out a sheet of paper with a fingerprint and a name in the top corner.

JACE

This is from the window that was open. No prints on the outside. Just the

inside. They're yours.

CHRIS furrows his brow as he studies the sheet.

CHRIS

The window was open when I got there.  
I closed it before I left.

JACE

The window was already open?

CHRIS

Yeah, I thought it was a bit odd, but  
George told me he had burned some  
pizza rolls earlier that day and must  
have left it open.

JACE

You don't think that the killer could  
have been there the whole time you  
were there, do you?

CHRIS begins to think.

CHRIS

I'm beginning to think that might be  
the case. I know I locked the window  
back.

He takes out a notepad and writes down a few notes.

CHRIS

We need to get a jump on possible  
suspects. First person that comes to  
mind is Romano, but he's been in  
prison for the last month. If you can  
go grab the Romano case files and  
start looking for any known  
accomplices, that may help us start.

JACE

You got it. You wanna look too?

CHRIS

Bring them to my office tonight. I've  
gotta look into some things George  
told me about. May have some  
connections to this.

JACE

Call me if you find anything.

CHRIS  
You do the same.

INT. POLICE STATION - MORNING

JACE walks out of CHRIS' office and heads to collect the old case files. MARILYN falls into step beside him.

MARILYN  
So? Any news?

JACE  
Marilyn, you know I can't talk to you about it.

MARILYN  
Oh, come on, Jace! Just cause it's my dad doesn't mean I can't handle it.

JACE  
It's not about that, Mar.

JACE stops and looks to see if anyone is listening. They aren't.

JACE  
I've only got a few things so far. Mostly about the murder weapon and whatnot. I'm going to grab some of the Romano case files to see if there's any connection.

MARILYN  
So Romano did it?

JACE  
No... He didn't... Look, I could get in a lot of trouble if I told you any of this.

MARILYN  
Alright, fine. You know I'm going to look into it with or without your help, right.

JACE  
Marilyn...

MARILYN  
What? This is my dad we're talking about! I trust Chris with my whole

heart, but I know my dad better than anyone.

JACE sighs.

JACE  
You're really gonna do this?

MARILYN  
Yes.

JACE  
Fine. I'll give you copies of any relevant information. *But*, I'm taking out pictures and descriptions of what happened to him. And, if I learn anything new, you will too.

MARILYN  
Thanks, Jace. You're the best.

She squeezes him tightly. He just stands and looks slightly frustrated. But he enjoys it. MARILYN turns steps back, keeping eye contact. She smiles and turns away, then heads off.

JACE stands there for a moment, watching her leave. He shakes his head and then turns back.

INT. CHRIS' OFFICE - NIGHT

Papers, files, and pictures lay disheveled on a large walnut desk. CHRIS and JACE are thumbing through what they've got on the case. ALL THE SINGLE LADIES by BEYONCE plays faintly in the background. JACE repeatedly CLICKS his PEN in a consistent rhythm.

TK TK TK... TK TK. Pause. TK TK TK... TK TK.

JACE lets the pen slip through his fingers as he raises a photograph. It is a picture of PRESTON ROMANO walking out of a restaurant. JACE looks closer and sees through the window MAYOR RODRIGUEZ sitting alone at a table, with a half-eaten meal at the empty seat across from him.

CHRIS  
You good, Jace?

JACE

When was this photo taken?

JACE slides the picture across the piles of evidence strewn about the table. Chris pushes up his glasses as he looks at the photo.

CHRIS

I think George took this when we were working on the Romano case, why?

He offers it back to JACE. JACE doesn't accept.

JACE

Look through the window, behind him.

CHRIS takes a moment and then we see the recognition.

CHRIS

Holy shit.

JACE

Mayor Rodriguez. Chris, *when* was this taken.

CHRIS

I'd have to take a look at the files on my computer, but I'd say about 7 months ago?

We can see the pieces falling into place in JACE's head.

JACE

Then that means this was taken...

JACE AND CHRIS

... before the election!

JACE hops off the window sill as CHRIS spins around to his computer and begins searching through files. CHRIS SCROLLS and SCROLLS until he finds the image. He inspects it. We see on screen -

DOWNLOADED: DECEMBER 14, 2018

JACE

The election was in February! Romano

got Rodriguez elected! And if he knew George had taken this...

CHRIS

Maybe. This could be related but there's no way to know. Either way, something's going on here and we gotta get to the bottom of it.

JACE

So what do we do now?

CHRIS slowly spins to face JACE as he dramatically pulls off his glasses.

CHRIS

We go to the one man who knows for sure. Romano.

CHRIS gets up and grabs his coat. He tosses his car keys over his shoulder to an unsuspecting JACE who juggles them before finally securing them.

CHRIS

You're driving.

JACE frantically picks up his things and dashes to the door, mumbling as he catches it with his foot before dancing out of the frame.

CHRIS (O.S.)

LIGHTS!

JACE's hand darts in and flicks the switch right before the door slams shut.

INT. CHRIS' CAR - NIGHT

The pale blue of the dash gives dim light to the dark interior of CHRIS's black Genesis G70. Blurs of light whiz past as JACE maneuvers the vehicle in and out of traffic. Some cars HONK as they pass, but JACE keeps his cool.

CHRIS pulls out his phone and dials a number.

RENSHAW (V.O.)

Officer Jefferey Renshaw -

CHRIS

Jeff, I need you to get me into Stateville Correctional Center in 15

minutes.

RENSHAW (V.O.)  
I'm doing well Chris, thanks for asking.

CHRIS doesn't laugh.

RENSHAW (CONT'D)  
Any particular inmate you want to see?

CHRIS  
Preston Romano.

JACE swerves the car and HONKS.

JACE  
Learn how to use your FUCKING TURN SIGNAL! Asshole...

RENSHAW (V.O.)  
This isn't about George, is it?

CHRIS  
We're just getting some facts straight.

RENSHAW (V.O.)  
Awful urgent for some fact-checking.

CHRIS  
Jeff, can you do it or not?

RENSHAW (V.O.)  
Of course, Chris. Request is already sent. I'm just checking on you. Take this case slow, you really gotta nail this one.

CHRIS ponders for a moment. The car hits a few small bumps as JACE pulls onto the freeway.

CHRIS  
Thanks, Jeff. I'm okay. I'll let you know more when I can.

RENSHAW (V.O.)  
Take it easy, bud.

CHRIS  
You too.

EXT. CHRIS' CAR - NIGHT

JACE maneuvers the car through heavy traffic before speeding away into the distance.