

# THE GULF

A Storm is Coming



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NEW ORLEANS, LA.

SHOWING LOCATION OF CEMETERIES

SCALE OF MILES.

Two detectives looking for a murderer on an oil rig uncover a racist conspiracy. As a mass poisoning hits New Orleans, they try to figure out who is involved before a wave of killings spreads across the US.

**"A Storm is Coming"**

FADE IN:

EXT. / INT. GULF OF MEXICO RIG - MORNING

A portly supervisor, BEN GONZALEZ, 50's, mutters profanities as he ascends a flight of rusted metal steps.

Clipboard in hand, he YANKS a steel door open and enters a ramshackle accommodation block.

Ben turns sharply several times as he snakes his way through a series of corridors.

Eventually he arrives at his destination.

He KNOCKS.

No answer.

He THUMPS again.

Nothing.

INT. CABIN

Pissed off, ben barges in.

He is greeted by a middle-aged man sitting upright in overalls. A shocked look on his ashen face, and -

An AXE LODGED in his skull.

BEN

What the --

Ben stumbles backwards, hyperventilating, and SPRINTS away from the gruesome scene.

Ben's SCREAMS fade as he flees.

Dying candles surround the corpse.

Strange symbols COMPOSED IN BLOOD adorn every surface.

EXT. GULF OF MEXICO SEA - AFTERNOON

EMILY JOHNSON and JAKE OWENS, two African-American Detectives in their mid-to-late 30's, stand silently at the bow of a supply boat as it crawls through fog.

A petite but confident woman, Emily's short brown hair and pinstripe suit demand respect on first sight.

At 6'3", Jake gets no less. He towers over Emily.

Small waves CLATTER the hull during the eerie journey.

Suddenly, a giant offshore drilling structure appears from the wall of gray.

The Detectives stare up in awe as they pass alongside one of her massive metal legs.

Their boat comes to a stop.

A flimsy yellow transfer capsule, known as a 'FROG', dangles invitingly at the end of a winch.

Emily eagerly motions to her slightly older colleague.

JAKE

Age before beauty again, is it?

Jake nervously surveys it before returning said offer, hopefully.

She shakes her head.

EMILY

You know how stubborn I am. We'll be here all day.

Chivalry forces him off the side of the vessel into the swinging plastic pyramid.

Up he goes.

EXT. DRILLING RIG HELIPAD

Jake is holding shut his tailored coat in SWIRLING GUSTS as he dismounts.

He throws out a hand to greet Ben who darts across the platform towards him.

BEN

How was your journey?

JAKE

Long.

BEN

Sorry 'bout that, they don't like  
to fly in fog.

Jake waves away the apology.

BEN (CONT'D)

Doubt we'll see choppers for days  
with the storms on the way.

Jake observes the dark horizon that brews.

WELDING SPARKS fly dangerously close to them. Ben spots  
Jake's concern and BELLOWS at the roughnecks nearby.

Jake sees Emily appear and offers a hand out of the FROG.

She refuses the assistance. He's not surprised.

The conversation between Ben and the Detectives is inaudible  
due to increasing metal work and winds.

The trio walk indoors.

INT. ACCOMMODATION BLOCK

Not a word is exchanged as the group hastily file along a  
narrow corridor.

Several interested observers pop their heads out of cabins.

Emily doesn't pay them any mind.

Jake, ever the easy-going charmer, acknowledges each and  
every person with a tilt of the head and a warm smile.

In reality, he's looking right through them.

Jake EXPERTLY SCANS each room over their shoulders.

EXT. EDDIE'S CABIN

As they approach the victim's room, Ben slows down and steps  
to the side.

He guides Emily and Jake in as a sentry with one latex glove  
opens the door.

Carnage.

INT. CABIN

The Detectives cautiously enter; they avoid the blood and various trinkets that take up most of the floor.

None of the candles are lit now.

Jake nonchalantly puts on his own gloves and begins FLIPPING UP and LOOKING UNDER belongings on the desk and shelves.

He ignores the corpse.

His partner takes out her trusted pad and pen.

Emily crouches down in front of the pale, rotund man and looks him over a couple times before WRITING FRANTICALLY.

She barely looks at the note-pad as she moves, surveying every angle while she scribbles.

Behind them a SMALL CROWD watch on, silent.

The Detectives finally stand alongside one another.

JAKE

Hm.

EMILY

What?

JAKE

Something seems off.

EMILY

The whole thing.

JAKE

Yeah, but does something seem *off*?

Beat.

EMILY

It's strange he's perfectly upright in a swivel chair, after having an axe planted in his cranium.

JAKE

You think he was positioned that way? To shock whoever found him.

EMILY

Not implausible that the sudden trauma made him seize up.

JAKE  
Unlikely though.

EMILY  
Unlikely.

She takes more notes as Jake begins flicking through the closet.

T-shirts, sweatshirts, overalls. Nothing of note.

BEN  
They're not all his by the way - he shares the space with a cabin-mate.

JAKE  
And where's he just now?

BEN  
Gave him a spare bed, down the hall.

EMILY  
He never removed anything did he?

BEN  
No. No-one entered the room after I found him. Made sure of that.

EMILY  
I'm sorry, but can we get all these people away from the scene? We need to make room for the forensic team.

Ben starts to shepherd the vultures from the door.

On cue, a PHOTOGRAPHER covered head-to-toe in white enters, as the rest of his team hang back.

Jake and Emily also exit the tight space.

INT. CORRIDOR

The Detectives watch on, as the photographer snaps away.

BEN  
The luggage will be in your rooms.

JAKE  
Thanks. Once we've freshened up we'd like to talk to you and the room-mate, for starters.  
(pause)  
(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

Is there somewhere we can conduct interviews in private?

BEN

Oh yeah, plenty empty offices since the crash. I'll get one of those cleaned up.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - EVENING

Emily sits behind a large metal desk in the corner of a filthy office.

Abandoned folders and worksheets have been shunted to the side. Police stationery now sits center.

Jake leans on a filing cabinet.

Ben faces Emily, describing events.

BEN

He was a good worker, don't get me wrong, but his time-keeping was a fuckin' disgrace. I'd had enough, went looking for him thinking.

EMILY

Had someone told you he was in his cabin?

BEN

No, but they're usually either there, the gym, TV room or smokers lounge. He didn't smoke.

Ben lets out a somber laugh.

BEN (CONT'D)

And you seen the size of him; sure as shit didn't work out. So I figured he slept through his alarm.

JAKE

You walked from where to his cabin?

BEN

Same door we entered earlier. Was doin' my rounds by the pipe-handler machine he was meant to be at.

JAKE

Did you meet anyone else on the way? Or notice anyone where they shouldn't have been?

Ben thinks hard.

BEN

Nah. Nobody. But he had no color in him anyway, right?

EMILY

We have to wait for confirmed time of death but, yes, it probably happened through the night.

JAKE

Had he fallen out with anyone?

BEN

Look, these guys are out here for two, three, four weeks at a time. No families, no alcohol. They fall out all the fuckin' time.

(Pause)

All I get is bitchin' about this guy, that guy. It never ends.

JAKE

What about the room-mate?

BEN

You seen the space these guys have to share. I'm surprised they don't kill each --

He looks apologetically at the Detectives.

EMILY

Could he have done this?

BEN

Eric?

(Snorting)

No way. You'll see when you meet him Ma'am, he's a pussycat - ain't got that in him.

JAKE

Any recent violent incidents here? Any reprimands? Warnings?

Ben shakes his head.

BEN

People complain of minor thefts and such. But they're paid too well to risk getting fired - particularly the way the industry is right now.

EMILY

Everyone keeping their head below the parapet?

BEN

Something like that.

Jake places a seat at the end of the desk.

JAKE

OK, thanks Ben. Show the room-mate in if you don't mind?

As Ben leaves, Jake leans back in his seat and EXHALES LOUDLY.

EMILY

Spit it out.

JAKE

If he's right about the room-mate, we're going to have to shut the rig down. No-one on or off 'til we've investigated fully.

EMILY

We're going to be popular.

JAKE

Killer's here somewhere.

She nods as ERIC OLSEN, a timid twenty-something with bushy blonde hair, gets ushered in.

He looks nervous, glancing at them both before sitting down.

EMILY

I'm Detective Larsen, this is Detective Owens. We're here to investigate the murder of Eddie Hamilton.

(Pause)

How are you dealing with it?

ERIC

I -- I don't -- My head's spinning.

EMILY

When did you last see Mr. Hamilton,  
Eric?

ERIC

Last night. I was heading out to  
begin my night-shift when he came  
into to the room.

EMILY

Did he seem off to you at all?  
Anxious? Upset?

ERIC

No, he was fine. He made a joke  
about -- well, just a joke.

JAKE

About what?

They stare at him as he looks at Emily.

ERIC

It was a -- masturbation joke.

They're unmoved as he shifts in his seat, uncomfortable  
saying the word in her presence.

ERIC (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. That's a common punch-  
line out here.

JAKE

Did Eddie ever mention involvement  
with any religions or cults?

ERIC

He wasn't religious. At all. If  
anything, he was a staunch atheist.  
Used to argue with folk about  
science n' shit.

Emily and Jake look at each other, acknowledging the first  
relevant thing they've heard.

EMILY

Anyone in particular he argued  
with?

ERIC

I wouldn't say so. He just used to  
wind guys up who mentioned God or  
debated in the break room.

JAKE

Can you think of anyone who would  
want to do this to him?

ERIC

He was a good man. He --

Eric begins SOBBING into his hands.

Jake pats him on the back.

He helps Eric to his feet.

JAKE

We'll talk more later; that's  
plenty for now.

As Jake closes the door, Emily starts jotting frantically  
again.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Boss man was right. No way that kid  
did it.

EMILY

But he may have given us the  
motive.

JAKE

Maybe.

INT. SMOKING AREA - LATER

Emily sits crafting an unfiltered roll-up at the back of the  
room.

In front of her are approximately TWENTY-FIVE MEN spread over  
various tables.

She senses them all watching, warily.

As she lights up, they look away.

Emily observes each person subtly.

One table in particular grabs her attention.

She stubs out her half-finished cigarette and ambles past the  
table to get a closer look at a symbol on one of them.

An open eye inside a black triangle.

INT. BEN'S OFFICE - LATER

Ben listens intently as Emily, Jake and the forensics technician, SCOTTY, a thirty-something hipster, discuss what was found in the room.

SCOTTY

There were dozens of sets of fingerprints in there, but none on the body.

JAKE

The killer would have had gloves on.

SCOTTY

Be surprised if he never. The scene was immaculately laid out, right down to the lines and angles of the ornaments.

BEN

That mean you won't be taking finger prints from my people?

SCOTTY

We'll still do that, but my guess is we won't find any that match the killer.

EMILY

Or killers.

Scotty acknowledges his minor faux pas, before leaving.

EMILY (CONT'D)

I've got someone I want to speak to. Older guy, gray buzz cut with ink on his bicep - a triangle with an eye?

Ben wracks his brain.

BEN

Possibly Steve? Steven Meyer.

JAKE

What's he do?

BEN

Crane Op.

EMILY

Was he friends with Mr. Hamilton?

BEN

Hard to say. I don't really mix with the staff - like to keep my distance, y'know. I could find out though?

JAKE

That's okay, best if we ask. What's he like temperament wise?

BEN

Quiet old head. Been out on these rigs most of his adult life. Seen it all, these guys.

EMILY

Until yesterday.

Ben nods solemnly.

He goes to speak again, but stops himself.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What?

Ben smiles nervously.

JAKE

Nothing you say to us leaves this room, you have our word.

BEN

I best warn you that, um, that --

Emily circles her hand to move him along.

BEN (CONT'D)

Look, a lot of these guys, you know the type - they don't trust cops. So these interviews may not go as well as you hope.

(Pause)

And another thing, is, well I'm not sure how to --

EMILY

That we're black police?

Ben sheepishly acknowledges it.

JAKE

Don't worry, this isn't our first day. Weren't expecting boy scouts out here.

Ben laughs, embarrassed.

EMILY  
Thanks for the warning.

As he leaves, the Detectives share a look.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Scotty is taking the last fingerprint, as the Detectives begin to quiz Steve.

JAKE  
So, tell us about your relationship  
with Eddie Hamilton?

Steve's not amused, wipes the ink of his hands.

STEVE  
Relationship?

EMILY  
You two ever have a disagreement?

STEVE  
Didn't know him enough to argue  
with the man.

EMILY  
Not even about religion?

He looks perplexed.

EMILY (CONT'D)  
Your tattoo, I've seen it before.  
Why did you get that?

STEVE  
Dunno. Guess I liked it.

JAKE  
You must know its significance  
though. The all-seeing eye is a  
cult symbol, right?

STEVE  
Look man, I got this over thirty  
years ago. A dumb kid with too much  
time n' money.

JAKE  
So you've no religious ties then?

STEVE  
I never said that.  
(Pause)  
I go to church.

EMILY  
Which one?

He looks at them, quizzically.

STEVE  
Y'all trying to pin this on me or  
somethin'?

EMILY  
We're just covering all the angles,  
sir. Nobody's accusing you of  
anything.

STEVE  
Yeah?

Steve leans back, folds his arms.

STEVE (CONT'D)  
Well, I know my rights. And I ain't  
about to be pushed into some  
fuckin' corner by two smartasses.  
Ain't saying another damn word  
without my lawyer.

JAKE  
Ain't no lawyers out here friend.

Steve leans back in, POINTS HIS FINGER.

STEVE  
Don't patronize me, son. Arrest me  
and take me off this shit-hole.  
Then you can speak to my lawyer;  
how's that?

Ben BURSTS into the room.

The two Detectives wait for him to catch his breath.

BEN  
There's been an attack.

INT. CORRIDOR

Jake and Emily exit swiftly, following Ben.

EMILY

Scott!

Scotty reappears from an adjacent room as Emily side-steps down the corridor.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Don't let him leave.

They RUN.

EXT. PORTACABIN

The resident first aiders are attending to WILL, a young apprentice, who is CAKED IN BLOOD oozing from several puncture wounds.

It's blindingly bright inside the portacabin.

The walls are packed with chains and hook-blocks of various colors and conditions.

WILL

AAAHHHGGGHHH!

JAKE

Easy kid, easy. Tell us who did this to you?

WILL

(Struggling to talk)

I don't -- he wore a cloth hood. Big guy.

JAKE

How tall was he?

WILL

He was a -- taller than meeeNGGGGHHH.

JAKE

Could you see skin color? Any identifying marks? A watch?

WILL

His hands. White.

JAKE

OK, that's good. What else?

Will HOWLS in agony.

FIRST AIDER

He needs airlifted now Detective.

BEN

We don't have a chopper!

EMILY

Did he say anything to you?

WILL

He said I... I'm gay. Started talking about cleansing my sins, sounded like --

EMILY

Like what Will? What else?

He starts to fade.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Will! Come on.

WILL

He was talking to...

His eyes roll back.

The Detectives step away as THE MEDIC begins CPR.

Everyone watches in shock as they battle to save him.

EXT. PORTACABIN

A sheet is pulled over Will's head.

Emily stares blankly at the new crime scene, as Jake paces back and fore.

JAKE

OK. Ben, we need you to put an announcement out. Production stops.

BEN

What? I'm not sure that I can authorize --

JAKE

I'm fucking authorizing it. Anybody tries to give you shit, pass them onto us.

EMILY

We need to put the rig into full lockdown too.

BEN

Is that necessary?

Will's blanket-covered body is removed on a stretcher.

Ben changes his position quickly.

BEN (CONT'D)

We can confine them to quarters.

EMILY

Everyone has a room-mate, right?

BEN

Most do.

JAKE

We mention that in the P.A. address - anyone who goes walkabout is to be reported. Let's get to sunrise incident-free.

Ben nods.

EMILY

Everyone gathers on deck at dawn for us to address.

EXT. HELI-DECK - MORNING

Almost ONE HUNDRED PEOPLE stand attentively on the platform, despite STORMY conditions.

Jake uses a megaphone to talk to them.

JAKE

I know this is an unprecedented situation. We need cooperation. There's a killer standing amongst you right now.

They all look around, suspicious.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Nobody gets off this rig 'til we find out who it is.

WORKER (O.S.)

And how you gonna do that?

The mob GRUMBLES in unison.

JAKE

You have our cards. E-mail us, or message securely through WhatsApp.

(Pause)

If you've seen anything that was strange, however minimal, let us know. All confidential.

The crowd get a little hostile, causing Emily to take to the mic.

EMILY

Will Rodgers was butchered last night. Stabbed multiple times and strung up, before the killer was interrupted.

(Pause)

This was a young man who had done nothing wrong. The culprit will have blood on their clothing. We will catch them.

She passes over to Ben.

BEN

(Pleading)

We're all in shock here guys. Please go back and await further instruction. Any problems I'll come speak to you. Thanks.

The staff disperse quickly for shelter, as Ben gives the Detectives a warning.

BEN (CONT'D)

Weather's starting to turn. You may be on your own here.

Emily gives Jake a look of concern.

EXT. GULF OF MEXICO SEA - AFTERNOON

Heavy rain pours down from IMPENDING, DARK CLOUDS.

the oil rig sits in the middle distance, caught between MASSIVE SWELLS.

## INT. STEVE'S CABIN

Steve looks relaxed as Emily and Jake quiz him in more familiar surroundings.

EMILY

Has anyone ever discussed devil-worship or the occult; anything like that?

STEVE

I've discussed my faith with guys in the past, but learned years ago to stay away from the subject.

His passive aggressive tone has disappeared, now he's no longer a suspect.

EMILY

Why?

STEVE

Too many redneck nut-jobs offshore. The bigotry I heard over the years was bad. Each to their own though, don't do me no harm.

JAKE

Anyone on here now like that?

Steve shrugs as Ben KNOCKS and enters the room apologetically.

EMILY

Thanks for your help Steve.

STEVE

Don't mention it.

## EXT. STEVE'S CABIN

Jake and Emily walk out as Ben hands them some sheets of paper.

BEN

Here's the list of guys who were Will's height or taller, at a guess. Names and room numbers.

Emily stops walking.

JAKE

What is it?

EMILY

Let's take a look at the wounds again before we do the rounds. Might be something we can use to trip them up.

INT. WALK-IN FREEZER - LATER

The TWO VICTIMS are covered up on makeshift mortuary tables in the cold store.

BEN

The families were understanding. They know we gotta wait for the storm to pass before they get 'em home.

EMILY

That's good.

JAKE

Scott will escort you back to the office, for safety. We should be the only ones roaming around. If you see anyone on cams, call us.

As he leaves, Emily puts her head against the wall.

EMILY

I'm so fucking tired.

Beat.

EMILY (CONT'D)

There's about seventy names on that list, this is going to take forever.

JAKE

Let's split up opposing rooms. Anyone without a room-mate we return to later, so we're never alone with anyone.

INT. CORRIDOR

Emily leans against the wall, as she waits for her partner to finish his interview in a nearby cabin doorway.

JAKE

Okay -- yep -- got it, thanks.

As he shuts the door behind him, he RAISES AN EYEBROW towards her.

EMILY  
Ever get the feeling you're not  
wanted?

JAKE  
Every day of life.

She laughs as they walk towards the next rooms.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
I'll get that one, you speak to Mr.  
Roberts.

Jake knocks lightly in the background as she gets to the end door at the corridor junction.

Out of the corner of her eye, SOMETHING MOVES.

A chill runs through Emily.

She pauses for a second, before looking left at:

A LARGE MAN in a blood-stained burlap mask.

He stares at her motionless, through two dark eye holes.

EMILY  
Jake!

She goes for her gun.

The man BOLTS.

Emily is away after him.

She SPRINTS down the corridor.

Jake rounds the corner in her wake.

The corridors are short and narrow.

She has no shot as the suspect darts through the maze.

Emily keeps catching glimpses of his heels.

They eventually arrive at a CREAKING, RUSTY DOOR as it shuts.

Silently moving forward, Emily and Jake enter with extreme caution.

INT. BOILER ROOM

The lights are off.

Jake pulls out his torch and takes the lead.

Emily looks annoyed - she doesn't have hers.

They move STEALTHILY through the steam-filled room.

The foreboding is exacerbated by HISSING GAS PIPES all around.

Each dark crevice is rife with danger.

CLANG.

Jake spins.

Nothing.

They reach a fork in the metal roads.

Emily taps his shoulder, lets him know she's heading for the lit section straight ahead.

He turns right, heads along a blacked-out area.

INT. OFFICE

Emily enters and clears her corners in the first room.

The place is a shithole.

Dog-eared, yellowing posters from the 90s of half-naked women share the walls with charts and maps of all sizes.

She continues on to the next room.

INT. / EXT. BOILER ROOM

Jake KICKS OPEN the door.

The blast of ocean air almost knocks him over.

He steps outside.

As he crosses a shaky, raised gangway over to a warehouse block he is BATTERED by horizontal rain.

It's PITCH BLACK on the makeshift bridge.

He can barely keep his torch straight due to the storm's ferocity.

Head down, he aims for the emergency light above the door.

Jake SHOULDER-BARGES into the metal door in desperation.

INT. WAREHOUSE

He stumbles in, to be greeted by -

A LEAD PIPE.

Jake instinctively pulls the trigger as he's struck.

INT. / EXT. BOILER ROOM

Emily cautiously heads in Jake's direction.

She HEARS A GUNSHOT.

She sprints towards the flapping door.

Through the rain, she sees a hooded silhouette LOOM OVER the unconscious Jake.

Emily takes aim.

INT. WAREHOUSE

The killer creepily stares down at Jake.

Emily FIRES TWICE.

One clips the man's shoulder, SPINNING HIM away from Jake and out of sight.

EXT. / INT. WAREHOUSE

Emily strides across the bouncing bridge, gun raised.

She slows down upon reaching the entrance.

There is no sign of the killer as she enters.

Crouching down, she checks Jake's pulse.

He's alive.

Blood seeps from his skull.

Breathing heavily, she GLARES down between rows of tall steel shelves.

INT. BEN'S OFFICE - LATER

A staff member is tending to a woozy, grimacing Jake.

Emily, Scotty and Ben play back the security footage.

The killer SPRAYS SHAVING FOAM over the lenses as he walks past each camera.

BEN

We have no idea where he went.

EMILY

Go back further, see where he emerged.

BEN

I tried; some cameras don't work. He first appeared in one of the corridors.

EMILY

The clothing?

BEN

Standard issue, could've gotten 'em anywhere.

EMILY

He was waiting for us. He'd have heard us talking, could've hidden but never.

JAKE

Wanted to take us out first?

EMILY

I don't think so. He had a good ten seconds after your gun went off, but didn't kill you.

JAKE

So what then - A message?

Emily has nothing.

JAKE (CONT'D)

When can the helicopters get here Ben? We need reinforcements.

BEN

The storm dies down tomorrow.  
Another 16-17 hours anyway.

EMILY

Fuck. Can you take a couple guys  
with you, clean those cameras?

BEN

What if he's still around?

SCOTTY

He'll need to fix up and recover if  
she hit him. You'll have a couple  
hours at least.

EMILY

Okay. Then we go again. Let's watch  
the monitors in --

(yawning)

-- shifts. You mind going first? I  
need some damn sleep.

SCOTTY

Sure. I'll update the Lieutenant as  
well.

EMILY

Thanks. I don't care what anyone  
says Scott, I think you're a good  
man.

He's not sure what to do with her sarcastic praise.

INT. KILLER'S CABIN

The walls DANCE WITH LIGHT as candles FLICKER.

In the center stands a wounded man.

Shaven head bowed, his identity remains a mystery.

He removes a stained, checked shirt.

Blood drools from the hole in his shoulder.

Dropping to his knees, he bends over and braces himself.

The man dabs at his arm with a cloth.

The hole is illuminated as he moves a candle towards it,  
placing the flame DIRECTLY INTO the wound.

The SIZZLE echoes.

KILLER  
NNNGGGHHH.

He's in agony, but can't scream.

After a few seconds he puts the candle down then COLLAPSES, face down on the floor.

INT. JAKE'S CABIN - MORNING

Emily is on a video call as Jake recovers in his bed.

LT. STEWART  
I knew it. I fucking knew it. I told them at the time. Damn it!

On her screen, a fuming LIEUTENANT STEWART.

The tall, gray-haired man, late 50's, LAUNCHES AN EMPTY CUP across the room in rage.

EMILY  
Which case, sir?

LT. STEWART  
One of my early ones. Bosses wanted a quick fix. Whole state was losing its mind over a possible serial killer... The guy who was sent down didn't fit any witness reports.

EMILY  
So who did?

He calms himself down and straightens his tie.

LT. STEWART  
Couple of local weirdos I never got to. Taller, twenties and balding - exactly as the sole survivor described the man.

EMILY  
You got their names?

LT. STEWART  
One died not long after. The other guy went off the grid.

EMILY  
You think it's him?

LT. STEWART  
Burlap hood, religious symbols?  
Yeah, good chance.  
(Pause)  
There's a police sketch somewhere  
in the archives. I'll send when I  
find it.

Beat.

LT. STEWART (CONT'D)  
Be careful Larsen. This guy may  
have been killing unchecked for  
thirty years. Wait for backup.

JAKE  
Not sure we can, sir.

INT. BEN'S OFFICE - LATER

As the printout is revealed, Ben's face drops in horror.

EMILY  
You know him.

BEN  
That's Rick. Ricky Jackson.

Jake stands up, ready to go.

EMILY  
You're sure?

BEN  
100 percent.

JAKE  
Where is he?

INT. KILLER'S CABIN

THUD... THUD...

Jake BOOTS THE DOOR IN and they enter, weapons drawn.

The room's empty.

Candles burn everywhere; walls are SMEARED IN BLOOD.

Emily cranks her neck to read what's on the ceiling:

*'We are the saviours of a sick world. We shall cast light upon it!'*

JAKE

The fuck?

Her phone starts ringing.

EMILY

Tell me you have him?

BEN (O.S.)

Heli-deck.

EXT. HELI-DECK

Ricky Jackson, late 50's, teeters on the edge of the platform.

He stares down at the temperamental Gulf waters with a DISTURBING GRIN.

The Detectives approach from behind, breaking either side of their target.

Their pistols point directly at him.

They stop ten meters away.

JAKE

Ricky Jackson, you are under arrest for the murders of Will Rodgers and Eddie Hamilton.

Ricky LAUGHS MANIACALLY.

RICKY

Those weren't murders.

He turns to face them.

His shirt is open to his navel.

He has a large symbol carved into his bleeding chest.

RICKY (CONT'D)

Those men needed my help - one a homosexual? The other an addict? They were sinners. I cured them. Can't you black devils see that?

Ricky seems genuinely upset.

Jake and Emily ignore the ingrained racism.

EMILY

Mr. Jackson, walk slowly towards us  
and place your hands behind your  
head.

RICKY

Oh no, 'fraid not. My work here is  
done.

The Detectives look at each other.

JAKE

If that's true, then there's no  
reason not to give up.

RICKY

It's too late for that I'm afraid.  
The sanitization has begun, and my  
part is over with.

JAKE

What's begun Ricky?

Jake tightens his grip and steps forward.

RICKY

I had one more person to get but  
you ruined that.

He steps backwards.

RICKY (CONT'D)

So I have to sacrifice myself in  
their place. That's my punishment  
for failure.

Emily looks concerned.

EMILY

What are you talking about?  
Sacrifice yourself for what cause?

Beat.

RICKY

You'll find out soon enough.

He GIGGLES peculiarly for a man of his age, almost child-like  
in his apparent joy.

RICKY (CONT'D)

You should be grateful. You're in the safest place of all.

(Pause)

It's the ones you love that you should be worried about.

Emily snaps.

EMILY

I swear Mr. Jackson, I will put you down where you stand if you don't tell us right now what you're talking about!

RICKY

Sure. It's too late to stop now. The wheels are in motion, as they say.

Ricky takes a deep nasal breath and stares skyward, stretching out his arms.

RICKY (CONT'D)

We're going to change the world. The non-believers will have to return to cold, dark corners.

JAKE

Who are you working with Ricky?

Jake lowers his gun.

RICKY

Ohhh, some amazing people. They let me get my family out of harms way as my reward.

JAKE

What're they going to do?

Ricky laughs again.

RICKY

It's already done. The movement will have started.

JAKE

What movement Ricky? You can talk to me. I'd like to know more.

RICKY

We are *The Brotherhood*, and we've come back to reclaim our America.

JAKE  
Reclaim it from who?

RICKY  
Those who have dragged New Orleans  
and this once great country to her  
knees!

He has a CRAZED LOOK in his eyes.

RICKY (CONT'D)  
People like you. With your 'Black  
Lives Matter' bullshit.

Emily backs away and places a call urgently.

Jake tries to stall, tries to coax something out of him.

JAKE  
They won't change anything Ricky.  
You see that, right?

RICKY  
We know people will spout fake news  
like that. But we have a mission,  
and we're set up across the nation  
ready to prove everyone wrong.

JAKE  
Who is?

Emily returns with trepidation.

RICKY  
We'll give you something to protest  
about.

Ricky smiles at Emily, then STEPS BACKWARDS.

EMILY  
No!

He vanishes.

They run a short distance and look cautiously over the edge.

A VIOLENT SEA swirls.

No sign of Ricky.

JAKE  
Shit.

EMILY

The Lieutenant's raising the alarm.

INT. KILLER'S CABIN - SHORTLY AFTER

The Detectives look on as THE FORENSICS TEAM carefully pack up Ricky's belongings.

Emily looks crestfallen.

Ben appears at the door.

BEN

Your boss is on the line.

INT. BEN'S OFFICE

Jake sits, bandaged head in hands.

The Lieutenant is on LOUDSPEAKER.

Emily leans over the desk.

EMILY

So he was telling the truth?

LT. STEWART

Dozens dead. Poisoned.

JAKE

Fuck me.

Jake looks up, drained.

LT. STEWART

We don't know how, or what by yet.  
Could have been worse if we hadn't  
stopped the march.

EMILY

What about the other places he  
mentioned they were set up in?

LT. STEWART

Nothing yet. They reckon this could  
have been a test run.

JAKE

Every protest is a potential  
target, sir.

LT. STEWART

It's with the Feds already. They want to speak to you, get your asses back here.

INT. LT. STEWART'S OFFICE - MORNING

AGENT CONNORS, a middle-aged FBI archetype, is a mean-looking, square-jawed unit of a man.

He sits in the main chair.

Lt. Stewart is uncomfortably perched on the corner of his own desk.

AGENT CONNORS

We found nothing. If there's a group out there then they've taken great measures to remain hidden.

JAKE

Trust us, no way this guy did it all himself.

AGENT CONNORS

(Condescendingly)

Well this '*Brotherhood*' doesn't appear to exist.

The room falls silent.

EMILY

No way Ricky Jackson put this together. There has to be others out there.

Connors stands and GATHERS HIS FILES as he leaves.

AGENT CONNORS

We'll keep trying and let you know if anything comes up.

EMILY

If he was telling the truth, then they could be anywhere in the country. There's marches in every city. Have we alerted every other state?

AGENT CONNORS

We get threats like this daily. Let us handle it.

Lt. Stewart shakes the Agent's hand before taking his seat back.

The door SLAMS SHUT in his wake.

JAKE  
What an asshole.

LT. STEWART  
Who did you expect the bureau to send us?

Emily smiles, knowingly.

LT. STEWART (CONT'D)  
Take today and tomorrow off, then return to rotation.

EMILY  
I was gonna come back in later and start trying to find out Ricky's true identity.

LT. STEWART  
Leave that to the FBI, Larsen.

EMILY  
C'mon Lieutenant, you heard him - they're big picture guys. They won't spend time on this shit.

The Lieutenant SIGHS.

LT. STEWART  
You're going to do it regardless of what I say, aren't you?

Emily nods, partly in thanks.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

Rejuvenated, Emily sits at her desk TRAWLING THROUGH POLICE REPORTS from the original serial killer hunt in the 1980's.

JAKE  
Anything?

She shakes her head.

EMILY  
I wish they'd pull their finger out and digitize these old cases. Pain in the ass.

JAKE

Coffee?

He gets a thumbs up.

As Jake fills her mug at the chugging machine in the corner, Emily's intensity levels rise.

She begins TOSSING PAPERS out of the way, searching for a specific item.

She finds it and races over to her partner.

EMILY

Hey, check this out.

She points at an address logged on an official report.

Jake looks at her, stirring; awaiting more.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Okay, so Delery Street also appears here.

Emily passes him a second sheet.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Uniforms chased a guy there but lost his car.

JAKE

Yeah but the first one says they checked the house, it was an old woman.

EMILY

His mother, covering for him?

JAKE

It's thin, Em.

EMILY

Thin's better than nothing?

Emily grabs his coat and holds it out.

JAKE

Guess these coffees are to go then, huh?

EXT. DELERY STREET - EVENING

The Detectives exit Emily's battered silver motor, proceed up the unkempt path of an overgrown yard.

JAKE

Been a while since I was down in the Ninth. Not much changed.

EMILY

Yeah, damn shame.

Jake knocks on a door that's seen better days.

They hear the SHUFFLING of an approaching inhabitant.

ALISON, a rough and tumble pensioner in grey track pants and white blouse, opens the door.

She remains behind the outer screen.

ALISON

Yeah?

EMILY

Evening Ma'am.

They flash their badges. The woman doesn't look.

EMILY (CONT'D)

We were looking to track down someone who may have lived here a while back.

Alison doesn't flinch as she takes a drag of her cigarette.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Have you lived here long?

ALISON

Mm-hm.

EMILY

Do you mind if I ask when you moved in?

ALISON

Dunno, 'bout twenty years back.

EMILY

You wouldn't happen to know who the previous tenant was?

ALISON

My Grandma, but she's long dead.  
You may have figured that, lookin'  
at me.

Jake issues a fake smile.

He pulls a photo of Ricky from his inner pocket.

JAKE

Did you ever see this man around  
here back then?

Alison recoils.

FEAR FILLS HER EYES.

She tries to close the door.

Emily opens the screen, stops her.

EMILY

Miss, please. We need your help.

ALISON

I can't help you.

JAKE

The man is dead, you don't have to  
worry about him.

Alison opens the door again, cautiously.

ALISON

He is?

EMILY

Yesterday. We were there.

Alison reacts to the news with VENOM.

ALISON

Good riddance to bad fuckin'  
rubbish then.

She breathes, rubs her eyes.

JAKE

Could we come in and ask you some  
questions?

INT. ALISON'S LOUNGE

Even in the dark room, the home's innards look no better than the outside.

Alison is quite the gracious host, however. She pours her guests fresh lemonade.

Jake picks at the biscuit selection on the table.

EMILY

When did you last see him?

Emily flashes Jake a disgusted look.

He shrugs off her evident and well-founded hygiene concerns.

ALISON

Momma's funeral back in '03. He caused a scene as usual; that boy always was a wrong 'un.

JAKE

He's a relative?

ALISON

First cousin.

She snorts, MOCKINGLY.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Thought he was getting the house, ha!

JAKE

What's his name?

ALISON

Bobby. Robert Madley.

JAKE

Do you know where he lived last?

Alison shakes her head.

EMILY

When you saw the photo you looked terrified. Why?

ALISON

Because I should be.

Emily looks at Jake, sensing it.

EMILY

Had he -- did he do something you knew of?

She looks at them both, still afraid.

JAKE

We believe he may have been involved in some serious incidents back in the eighties?

ALISON

Yeah. At least I think he was.

EMILY

The serial killings?

Alison goes quiet, looks at her feet.

JAKE

Why did you think that?

She lights another cigarette, hands trembling.

ALISON

He'd live with my Grandma on occasion, when he'd get evicted. Before her death, she told me of a night he burst in as sirens wailed. Blood all over him.

Emily notes it all down.

ALISON (CONT'D)

Some detective or other came by the house, looking for him a few months later. To do with them murders.

JAKE

But your grandmother said she didn't know him?

ALISON

Because he'd have killed her... Killed 'em both.

(Pause)

He was hiding in the kitchen with a knife that day.

Emily looks a little shocked.

ALISON (CONT'D)

That's what she told me anyhow.

EMILY

Alison, could you come to the station with us, to give a full statement.

ALISON

I don't think --

JAKE

There's more at stake here. The poisonings this week, you heard about them?

ALISON

Of course. All anyone's spoke about.

EMILY

We believe he was involved.

Alison begins to cry.

JAKE

Will you help us?

She nods meekly.

Jake stands, puts a sympathetic hand on her shoulder.

EXT. NEW ORLEANS RESIDENTIAL AREA - DAWN

Several high-powered police and FBI vehicles SPEED through a neighborhood.

As they turn onto side streets they slow down, spread out.

HEAVILY ARMED AGENTS exit in full tactical gear.

They sprint across multiple front lawns, towards their targeted building.

Jake and Emily hang back with Agent Connors.

The lead unit stealthily approach the front door.

One operative steps forward with a battering ram.

INT. BOBBY'S HOUSE

Light POURS IN the pitch black hallway as the front door gives way.

Angry silhouettes pile in.

Torches FLASH as agents scan right and left.

They enter and exit doors all through the house.

Acknowledgements sound.

FBI AGENTS (O.S.)

Clear!

INT. BEDROOM

Emily and Jake root through wardrobes and shelves.

AGENT CONNORS

Whatever you find comes to us, got that?

JAKE

Sure thing.

Emily flashes a *'go fuck yourself'* look at Jake, as the obnoxious lawman exits the room.

They keep searching.

Jake finds a pile of sheets in an old shoebox under the bed.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Printed some e-mails. Looks like it could be something... Or nothing, lot of it's blacked out.

She looks them over.

EMILY

Weird. Add it to the pile by the door.

Emily starts rooting through the back of a dusty walk-in closet.

She has to CROUCH INSIDE to reach something.

The floorboard CREAKS; gives its secret away.

Producing a pen-knife, she expertly jimmies it open.

Emily pulls out a folded plastic wallet; a weathered rubber band tied around its center.

Opening it gently, Emily flicks through some photos that are contained within.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Shit.

(Whispering)

Jake.

He walks over and gets shown a particular image.

The photograph shows a teenage Robert Madley - posing smugly alongside a couple of FEDERAL AGENTS.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Grab those e-mails before they get back.

She stuffs the photos into her inside coat pocket.

She replaces the floorboard swiftly.

INT. LT. STEWART'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Emily and Jake join Lt. Stewart at his dinner table, evidence spread out before them.

The Lieutenant looks stunned.

JAKE

The cousin said she thought it was maybe an uncle on the other side of the family.

LT. STEWART

So -- fuck. That explains why we never caught him back then. Motherfuckers!

JAKE

You recognise them?

LT. STEWART

Nah. But there were dozens of them milling about back then. All looked the same to me.

He flicks through the e-mails.

LT. STEWART (CONT'D)

So what's scored out?

JAKE

We don't know. Yet.

EMILY

We don't know who to trust, sir. I think Connors is batting for someone too.

LT. STEWART

Really?

EMILY

He was adamant we hand everything over to him. Something's off with that guy.

JAKE

I know someone who might be able to digitally extract the info. On the quiet for us?

LT. STEWART

Do it. Keep all this to yourselves, until we know what we have.

The Lieutenant leans back, tightly GRIPPING HIS SEAT.

His knuckles go white.

LT. STEWART (CONT'D)

You don't go after the Feds until it's concrete.

EMILY

We can't keep any of this at the station either. Too risky.

LT. STEWART

Agreed. Act as if you're working on something else.

JAKE

Could say we're re-opening the serial killings due to new evidence? Might draw the conspirators out.

Beat.

LT. STEWART

Too dangerous until we know who we're dealing with.

Lt. Stewart looks dejected.

LT. STEWART (CONT'D)  
I need to visit the family of the  
man they convicted. Never gave up  
on him, even after he died in  
prison. Damn disgrace.

Emily gathers everything together, puts it safely into a folder.

EMILY  
I'll scan it all tonight and send  
you both an encrypted file.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - MORNING

Jake sits in a back corner booth with an untouched latte.

He constantly SCANS CUSTOMERS, before the person he's waiting on arrives.

SARAH  
Hey stranger, long time no hear.

He stands up and gives SARAH, late 30's, a hug and peck on the cheek.

She's an infectiously chirpy brunette, with a warm smile.

Sarah immediately knows something is wrong. Her smile quickly evaporates.

SARAH (CONT'D)  
What is it?

JAKE  
We stumbled on something, my  
partner and I. We need your help,  
but you can't tell anyone about it.

The waitress arrives.

Sarah doesn't even look up.

SARAH  
I'll have the same.

JAKE  
I'm sorry for blind-siding you with  
this. I couldn't tell you over the  
phone.

She half-laughs and takes off her jacket, irritated.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry. I didn't mean to --

SARAH  
Get my hopes up? Don't worry about it. I guess we'll never get around to that chat.

JAKE  
We will. Soon.

She looks at him skeptically.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
This is to do with the recent BLM attack. There's something deeper at play we think.

Sarah is a little taken aback.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
This may not be the work of some lone wolf, like they're saying.

SARAH  
Jeez... Who else is involved?

JAKE  
That's why we need your help.

Jake hands her a folder.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
There's dozens of sheets, see what you can get.

She looks through them.

JAKE (CONT'D)  
Be very careful.

SARAH  
They were thorough, but might be able to glean something. Who am I looking for?

JAKE  
FBI. We don't have the facts yet, but there's a link.

Sarah looks at him, a little worried.

JAKE (CONT'D)

It'll be OK, your name stays out of it.

Jake puts some cash on the table.

JAKE (CONT'D)

I'll swing by tonight to go through whatever you get. We can have that chat too. Promise.

Sarah lets out a hint of smile.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Safer if we're not seen together. Give it a few minutes, then leave.

He holds her hand, briefly and tenderly, before exiting.

EXT. FBI ARCHIVE ROOM - DAY

Emily approaches the booth.

A BORED OFFICER sits reading a broadsheet.

She shows him her ID.

EMILY

Hi. I was hoping you could let me know the first name of an Agent Madley that worked here in the 80's. Probably retired now?

He types the surname into the database.

OFFICER

Nope. No Madley on record.

EMILY

Damn. Maybe I was given the wrong surname. Could I get a look at case files for the Riverside Serial Killer from back then?

The officer seems put out as he types.

OFFICER

Section H-96 at the back, right side.

INT. FBI ARCHIVE ROOM

Emily sits at a private table, swiftly flicking through a plethora of documents.

Eventually she finds what she was looking for.

A large crime scene photograph is labelled:

*'SENIOR INVESTIGATOR, CHARLES JEFFREYS, GUIDES THE FORENSICS TEAM.'*

EMILY

Gotcha.

EXT. FBI OFFICE PARKING LOT - LATER

Emily gets to her car, struggling to locate the keys in her handbag.

She glances up.

Her EYES WIDEN.

She drops her handbag to the tarmac on noticing the back door ajar.

Emily FLINGS IT OPEN and begins searching high and low for something.

EMILY

No, no, NO!

She slumps onto the seat and places a call.

EMILY (CONT'D)

They broke into my car. They got the copies, they know we're onto them.

JAKE (O.S.)

Shit. Who's there? You in danger?

Emily gets back out and carefully surveys the area.

EMILY

I don't think so.

JAKE (O.S.)

We have to be careful what we say on here.

EMILY

Yeah.

(Pause)

Go to last night's spot. Take the battery out of your cellphone. Watch for tails.

INT. LT. STEWART'S GARAGE - EVENING

In fading light, Jake, Emily and Lt. Stewart stand among piles of recycling and cardboard boxes.

A tense atmosphere.

Jake keeps an eye on their surroundings, through a small window.

LT. STEWART

Need to watch our backs. If they were willing to do that in broad daylight, they're capable of anything.

JAKE

No more calls or e-mails. Assume our places are bugged too.

LT. STEWART

Good point.

(Pause)

Pick up burner phones from me each morning. We need to get a step ahead of them.

EMILY

Might want to get someone in to help us boss.

LT. STEWART

Not yet. I've long suspected some higher-ups. I don't trust a single fucking badge, lawyer or anyone else right now.

They stand in silence for a moment.

The gravity of the situation hits home.

JAKE

Me and Larsen ain't got nobody with us Lieutenant. But you should send Gina and the kids to her mom's or somewhere?

Stewart stands up and EXHALES DEEPLY.

LT. STEWART

You might be right. God knows what depths they'll sink to.

EMILY

Let's see what those printouts give us, take it from there.

JAKE

I'll head over now. Meet you at the sports bar 9ish?

Emily nods.

JAKE (CONT'D)

If we get anything, I'll call you from the pay-phone there, sir.

EXT. / INT. APARTMENT BLOCK - LATER

Jake walks in the shadows, towards the main door of some apartments.

The night is eerily still.

He looks around, ensuring no-one's followed, then enters a well-lit lobby.

Jake JOGS UP the stairwell, constantly checking over his shoulder.

EXT. / INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT

He KNOCKS on Sarah's door.

No answer.

He knocks again, louder.

JAKE

It's Jake.

He puts an ear to the door. No movement inside.

Jake tries the handle.

It opens.

He immediately DRAWS HIS GUN.

Gliding into the dark corridor, he shuts the door quietly behind him.

Bedroom's empty. Kitchen too.

Light creeps out under the bathroom door.

He taps gently.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Sarah?

Slowly opening it, he's greeted by -

A RED POOL.

Sarah's mutilated body is upright under the sink.

Her face is pulp.

Stab wounds LITTER her torso.

Her eyes are open, but she's gone.

Jake cradles her neck and head as he CRIES.

He tries to shake her awake.

RAGE FILL HIS EYES.

Jake places Sarah's head gently back on the wall.

He STORMS OUT into the hallway.

Jake stares back at her, trying to figure out what to do.

He pulls out his cellphone and dials, as -

The front door CRASHES OPEN.

Half-a-dozen armed, YELLING FBI AGENTS storm in, forcing jake to the ground.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Wait. I didn't --

His cell goes flying.

CHAOS all around.

Jake's BLOOD-SOAKED HANDS are tied behind his back, as his cheek HITS THE CARPET. A knee goes in his spine.

Realization spreads over Jake's face.

INT. EMILY'S APARTMENT

Emily is in UTTER SHOCK.

Listening at the disaster unfolding on the other end.

FEDERAL AGENT 1 (V.O.)  
She's dead!

FEDERAL AGENT 2 (V.O.)  
We are arresting you on suspicion  
of the murder of Sarah Bell. You do  
not have to say anything. But  
anything you do say may --

The call gets cut off.

Emily shuts her eyes.

INT. BOTTLING FACTORY - NIGHT

A shifty-looking PALE MAN in his 40's with sunken, dead eyes  
is dressed in an unknown company's overalls.

He sprays a CLEAR CHEMICAL, stemming from a large backpack,  
over empty plastic water bottles.

As he walks along a dormant conveyor belt, he blankets  
HUNDREDS OF BOTTLES with poisoned droplets.

The man disappears into the darkness.

Beat.

A machine STARTS UP.

The bottles begin to move towards an automatic filling  
system.

EXT. BOTTLING FACTORY

Over the building's low roof, the New York skyline stands,  
gloriously lit.

FADE OUT.

- TO BE CONTINUED -