

THE DARK WATCH

By Jim Lawrence

INT. AUTOMOBILE -- NIGHT

With TWO MEN IN UNIFORM lit up by the dashboard.

OFFICER ONE
You see it now?

OFFICER TWO
No.

OFFICER ONE
Up in the big canyon, on the right.

They lurch off the dirt road onto a bumpy trail. Mesquite branches whip into the windshield.

OFFICER ONE (CONT'D)
Might want to black out. It's up ahead.

Suddenly the trail nearly disappears in the darkness with the headlights off.

OFFICER TWO
Jesus.

OFFICER ONE
I know.

The SUV slides to a halt and both officers get out. Then TWO leans back in. He takes the shotgun out of the floorboard mount, hesitates and then snaps it back into the mount.

ON THE CAR DOOR

As he closes it to reveal a Bureau of Land Management insignia on the panel.

EXT. DESERT -- NIGHT

With the two BLM OFFICERS as they walk through the darkness whispering.

OFFICER ONE
Who else has reported this kind of stuff?

OFFICER TWO
Hanavan did, I think. While ago. Hear it?

OFFICER ONE
Maybe. Something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

They stop together and listen to the faint sound in the distance. It could be VOICES, WIND TURBINES, or even ANIMALS, but they can't make it out.

OFFICER ONE (CONT'D)

Yeah. I got it.

OFFICER TWO

Let's see what we got.

They climb to the higher ground and ease down flat. ONE begins to focus his binoculars as the SOUND seems to get louder.

OFFICER ONE

Jesus Christ.

OFFICER TWO

Holy shit. Now what the hell are we supposed to do?

OFFICER ONE

You see any crimes being committed?

OFFICER TWO

No, I don't. But what do we do now?

OFFICER ONE

Nothing.

OFFICER TWO

Nothing?

The NOISE suddenly stops and Two recoils back from his binoculars.

OFFICER TWO (CONT'D)

(hissing)

Jesus! They made us!

OFFICER ONE

Nah, don't think so but let's go anyway.

The NOISE starts up again.

OFFICER TWO

We are out of here.

ON THE TRAIL BACK

The BLM Officers are working their way back to the unit until the SOUND of SOMETHING MOVING in the brush behind them makes them both freeze up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ONE unsnaps his holster and puts his hand on his pistol as he listens to the wind rustling everything around them.

TWO looks scared as he tries to pinpoint another sound above the wind, like a FAINT GROWLING.

OFFICER TWO (CONT'D)
Can't be coyotes. Even a pack
wouldn't stalk humans.

OFFICER ONE
Let's go.

Now the GROWL, louder and closer, stops them again and they sweep around the area with their flashlights and guns drawn.

OFFICER TWO
Mountain lion? Maybe rabid?

OFFICER ONE
Just keep moving.

INT. SUV -- NIGHT

Both officers pile in with relief until One looks down and sees that the shotgun has been ripped out of the mount.

OFFICER ONE
Let's go. The pump's gone.

TWO jams the car into gear and ONE keeps watch out the windows with his gun drawn down for a target.

They bump and heave through the desert as One reaches down for the radio's microphone and brings it up with the cord slashed.

OFFICER ONE (CONT'D)
Shoot anything that moves.

OFFICER TWO
You don't need to tell me that.
Let's just get the fuck. . .

TWO BLINDING MUZZLE FLASHES FROM GUNSHOTS

Explode the windshield in front of them.

EXT DESERT -- NIGHT

From miles away the darkness shows only a faint dot of their SUV's headlights visible along with a string of barely audible POPS. The dot goes dark and the desert silence settles back in.

EXT CITY STREET -- DAY

Palm Springs Police Officers WILL HERRICK and ERIC STOGNER step out of a coffee shop into the weekend chaos of a resort town. They are in plain clothes, but they have earpieces and their issued navy Tommy Bahama knock offs have a bulge on the right side that screams "cop".

They wind their way though the crowd toward their unmarked car. Both look to be journeymen cops somewhere in their thirties: the taller Herrick could be an accountant, Stogner has a wrestler's build and swagger.

HERRICK

How is it?

Slurping some iced coffee drink Stogner points toward some city workers scrubbing a circle of red graffiti off the bronze statue of former Mayor Sonny Bono.

DISPATCH

Three charles standby to copy.

STOGNER

Three go.

DISPATCH

Three Charles attempt to locate parolee Justin Weemer.

Herrick points almost across the street where a shirtless, white boy has some vacationing couple and their kids at bay.

DISPATCH (CONT'D)

Violated yesterday by parole agent Billings.

STOGNER

Three copy, from downtown.

Stogner shakes his head at the scene across the street as they get in their car.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

What happened to laying low?

HERRICK

And what is up with the graffiti on Sonny? Thank god they didn't touch the Lucy statue on Tahquitz. Now that would have been heinous.

STOGNER

The back of city hall got tagged with the same pentagram shit too.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOGNER (CONT'D)
 (looking across the
 street)
 Now Weemer has to know that he's
 been violated and he's downtown
 hassling tourists in the daytime.

Herrick eases into traffic

HERRICK
 I'll make contact, don't spook him.

STOGNER
 His dad is a urologist and they
 live in a Las Palmas mansion. How
 can he be such a fuckstick ...?

HERRICK
 Don't make him run.

STOGNER
 If that piece of shit runs on me...

HERRICK
 He's going to run if you scare him.
 They're parolees, don't take it so
 personal.

STOGNER
 I'm fine. Don't trip.

Herrick eases the car next to the curb and they both get out.
 Justin is a known commodity but for policy and the public
 they pull out the badge necklaces from the shirts.

The sunburned tourist couple slink away gratefully with their
 kids in tow. JUSTIN WEEMER stands there squirming.

HERRICK
 Hey Justin, what's up. You staying
 in contact with the powers that be?

JUSTIN
 (jittery)
 Billings? Yeah we're cool.

STOGNER
 No, you're not

Stogner taps his earpiece and Herrick steps in front of him.

HERRICK
 Hey, what were you so amped up
 about with those people?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Justin starts twitching in earnest now, keeps looking around, especially at Stogner.

JUSTIN
Just some stuff.

HERRICK
That's a little vague, bud.

JUSTIN
Fucked up stuff. Seriously fucked
up stuff, okay

HERRICK
Come on, Justin. If you really know
anything tell us and do yourself a
favor.

JUSTIN
(almost gibbering)
Do me a favor? You've got people
out there doing people and you guys
are fucking clueless about it? Ever
wonder where Lonnie K went to?
Indian John or Nicky O'Barr? Ever
wonder where they went? What kind
of favor can you do for me? I need
some kind of immunity to even talk
to you about it. There's some shit
headed this way that nobody has...

Stogner can't help himself, he circles around Herrick.

STOGNER
That's it.

Justin sees the look in Stogner's eye and bolts away down
Palm Canyon Drive. Herrick clamps his hand on Stogner's
shoulder before he can chase him.

HERRICK
C'mon you know where he's headed.
The other units will grab him on
Indian.

Stogner bristles like a junk yard dog but allows himself to
be turned towards the unit by Herrick.

INT THEIR UNIT - DAY

STOGNER
Immunity?

HERRICK
What did we say?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

DISPATCH RADIO

Three David to Three Charles, we have your parolee Weemer in custody. You can call off your pursuit.

Herrick drives around the corner to see Weemer standing with another police unit and glaring at him.

HERRICK

There now, see?

STOGNER

Not even in the mood anymore.

EXT. REMOTE DESERT -- DAY

The Bureau of Land Management unit sits in the arroyo with flies buzzing and the metal ticking in the heat of the day. The two officers are slumped behind the shattered windshield in the their seats.

Now a BLM patrol drives up slowly to stop about thirty yards away from the crime scene. The Ranger gets out, shakes his head over the sight and picks up the unit mike.

INT. PSPD UNIT -- SAME DAY, SAME SHIFT

STOGNER

It just makes us look flaky when they run on us, that's all.

HERRICK

Then, next time don't start off by...

Herrick stops the car abruptly. They back up and he nods down the alley to a battered panel truck backed up against an office rear door with the sign DESERT REALTY.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

Whaddya think?

Stogner takes a token glance out the window, but he is still pissy.

STOGNER

Looks like moving day to me. But it's got to be ISIS to you. Maybe the cartels.

A LARGE MEXICAN MAN carries two crates out the door like they were grocery bags and puts them in the truck as the unit pulls up. He faces the car smiling as a SECOND LARGE MEXICAN MAN comes out of the office with a sofa under his arm.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

There's just one tense moment until FRANK BACALL (spry eighties, dusty riding clothes) comes out of the doorway.

BACALL

Gentlemen.

HERRICK

Mr. Mayor.

BACALL

Don't call me that. I already served my time. Just taking some old things out of the office down to St. Theresa's.

STOGNER

Things are a little different downtown without you.

BACALL

A little different? Now you have him and those council idiots hamming it up on cable access TV now, like it's Watergate.

HERRICK

(to Stogner)

One more term?

BACALL

(catches himself)

Ah, Jesus. You boys get the hell out of here and go solve a crime.

Bacall looks over their shoulder as a dark blue Bentley glides to a halt and EVA VASEK slithers out.

She's a forty-ish Grace Kelly type stunner but now she's stalking toward them with narrowed eyes. Bacall gulps and even the two big guys go back inside.

EVA VASEK

(hissing)

For fuck's sake, Frank.

BACALL

Hi Eva, you know these officers?

Eva give the cops a dismissive wave at their car as she walks past them all toward Bacall's office. Bacall gives them a sheepish grin after she's passed.

BACALL (CONT'D)

Little listing dispute.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

EVA VASEK
 (from inside the office)
 Frank!

Bacall gives a low whistle as he heads that way.

BACK IN THE UNIT NOW -- MOMENTS LATER

STOGNER
 That's a fine looking honey badger
 back there, but what a bitch.

DISPATCH
 Three-0-Six to Three Charles.
 Clear for a meet?

STOGNE
 Name it.

DISPATCH
 Zelda'a on the north side.

EXT. ZELDA'S NIGHTCLUB PARKING LOT -- DAY

Stogner/Herrick pull up their unit door to door with SGT.
 RODRIGUEZ (hard fifties, seen it all) sitting in his car
 going through paperwork, tapping at the unit's computer.

STOGNER
 Sarge.

RODRIGUEZ
 Guys. Remember the clusterfuck at
 the Crawford's last week? The
 D.A.'s office needs your
 supplemental.

STOGNER
 We handed that in last week.

RODRIGUEZ
 Then they must have lost it if they
 kicked it back.

STOGNER
 But, Sarge, if they lost it...

Rodriguez raises a hand, stopping the debate with a quick
 look.

RODRIGUEZ
 Just un-fuck it. Please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DISPATCH

Three-Charles. Standby to copy a report of a woman screaming at the Desert Moon apartment 270.

Rodriguez is already head down in more paperwork, waves them off.

RODRIGUEZ

Guys.

EXT. LOW RENT APARTMENT BUILDING -- DAY

Herrick and Stogner stand on either side of the door to apartment 270 as Stogner knocks. The badges are out again and their shirts are tucked into the right side for access to the guns.

The door rips open before the third knock by a HUGE GUY who flings his buffed, tattooed arms upward at the sight of the cops.

HUGE GUY

Okay, I'm the one you want. I'm the bad guy.

Herrick holds up his palms.

HERRICK

Bud, we don't know that we want anybody. We're just here to find out what the problem is.

HUGE GUY

There's no problem here.

STOGNER

Well, some people around here thought there might be.

HUGE GUY

Who said that? One of these assholes?

(yelling to the other units)

Which one of you assholes called the cops on me?

(to Herrick)

Who was it?

HERRICK

We don't know and it doesn't matter. And quit yelling, okay?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HUGE GUY

Is there a law against a man
yelling in his own home? In his own
castle?

HERRICK

You know, at your level there
actually is. But that's not why
we're here. We need to talk to your
wife. See how everybody's doing.

The Biker laughs so loud and unexpectedly that both Officers
flinch a little. They give each other the look: standby, this
is a call that could kill you.

HUGE GUY

(gasping)

My wife? That bitch?

STOGNER

(into his HT)

Three. Roll us a routine back.

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

With the cops right behind him he points to a WOMAN huddled
on the couch fussing with her long hair.

HUGE GUY

There you go, see? She's okay.
Now can we just get on with our
fucking lives now?

STOGNER

Yeah, looks that way. We need to
take a quick look at your I.D.
while we're here, sir.

WITH HERRICK ON HIS SIDE OF THE ROOM

Motioning her up off the couch he positions her so that she
is facing away from the guy, but Herrick still has a clear
line of sight toward Stogner.

HERRICK

We'll need to see your I.D. too
ma'am.

WOMAN

It's expired, okay?

HERRICK

(low)

S'alright. Any guns in the house?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stares back blankly as Stogner and the HUGE GUY can be heard talking o.s.

HERRICK (CONT'D)
(con't)
He can't hear you.

WOMAN
(lower)
In the bedroom. They're all legal though, okay? We don't want a problem.

While he talks Herrick extends his forefinger with a cocked thumb and points it toward the bedroom down the hall. Stogner nods back from the other side of the room.

HERRICK
Come on, we had five different neighbors call in with you screaming.

WOMAN
I said I was okay.

When she nervously whips her head back around toward the Biker Herrick catches a glimpse of bruising around her neck.

He catches Stogner's eye across the room and gives him a quick nod.

HERRICK
You don't look okay.

WOMAN
Hey, what do you know about it, anyway?

HERRICK
(at the bruises)
I know that much.

BACK WITH STOGNER AND THE HUGE GUY (MR. SPICER)

STOGNER
Mr. Spicer, you're under arrest for domestic violence. Need to have you turn around and put your hands behind you back.

SPICER whirls around to glare at the Woman, but finds Herrick already positioned behind him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

SPICER

So I go to jail over this? Anybody want to hear my side of the story?

HERRICK

The whole story is pretty much the bruises on her neck for now.

SPICER

Okay, you've heard her story. Now you need to listen to my side of this bullshit issue of hers.

HERRICK

We aren't the debate club. We're just the police. And we need you to put your hands behind you now.

Spicer steps to square sideways toward the two cops.

SPICER

I know my rights.

Stogner's eyes light up and he puts his hand on his baton.

STOGNER

(laughing)
Really?

Spicer eyes start to dart around and his shoulders make a couple of twitchy, kinetic tics. Herrick sees it coming

HERRICK

(slow and even)
Spicer, this is not going to turn out like you're thinking it right now.

Somehow the words penetrate Spicer's crazy machismo for just a moment before he regroups his rant in another direction.

SPICER

This is what you want, Sherry? Now you've got it, you happy?
(to the cops)
I need to get some shoes.

Spicer tries to lunge between them toward the bedroom. Stogner tries to grab his right arm in a wrist lock and Herrick goes for the left side. He can't get to the guns in the bedroom.

HERRICK

We'll get your shoes for you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Spicer bucks and slams all three of them into the hallway wall. The fight is ugly and ungraceful. Just hands, elbows and knees up close.

SPICER

All I want is my goddamn shoes.
This is still my fucking castle.

Bellowing with rage Spicer slams the trio down the hallway and off the walls until Herrick gets his weight over Spicer's elbow and cranks it down.

Until Stogner gets the cuffs on, Herrick is stuck with this face up against Spicer's arm looking a little too closely at some elaborate red devil tattoo.

HERRICK

Sherry, come on out here for us.

STOGNER

(to the HT)

Three. Cancel the back. We're code four.

Sherry steps into view as they ease Spicer up from the ground and Herrick winces as he rubs his shoulder that slammed into the wall.

EXT. APARTMENT -- DAY

As they walk Spicer out in cuffs some of the other apartment dwellers watch from their porches and windows.

SPICER

(yelling)

Okay. Here's what you all wanted.
The bad guy's going to jail.
Everybody happy?

HERRICK

Jesus, Spicer, chill out a little.
We're out of the castle now anyway.

SPICER

(yelling)

Sherry!

Spicer locks his knees and tenses up so they can't move him along.

SPICER (CONT'D)

Just wait a minute, goddamnit. I'm cooperating.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Oh yeah. You've been great.

SPICER

I need to fucking talk to her
before I go. Get her out here.

HERRICK

Spicer, call it a hunch, but I bet
Sherry doesn't want to talk right
now.

SPICER

Then why don't you just ask her
like I told you? And when did you
get the right to take over our
lives?h

STOGNER

I'll tell you exactly when. It's
when your neighbors called 911
'cause you get too goddamn loud
when you're beating your poor,
dumbass woman.

Herrick gives Stogner a quick pained look just before Spicer
charges Stogner and they all go down in a pile with a lawn
flamingo whacking Stogner in the head in the fracas.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

That's it.

He rips the flamingo up to his shoulder, ready to hammer on
Spicer below him with Herrick.

HERRICK

(looking up)

No, no, no. We got him.

Stogner is still amped up and steps toward him as Herrick
cranks Spicer's wrist to bring him to his feet. Herrick waves
him off.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

Come on, come on.

Another police unit shows up for the back now but Herrick
flashes them four fingers: we're OK, code four.

INT. HOSPITAL -- DAY

Shows Herrick and Stogner sitting in an exam room with the
rack of X-Rays behind them, mid debate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

So say somebody videos you with their phone. How would that play out for us?

STOGNER

Hey, nobody at the Desert Moon would...

HERRICK

Say they did, how would we look on the six o'clock local with you chopping wood on Spicer with the cuffs on?

STOGNER

Don't you ever just lose it? Ever? Might be good for you just once. Get the cork out.

HERRICK

(deadpan)

So where does the flamingo fit in on the force continuum for you? Is it before the OC or the taser? After the baton...?

Exam room door opens to admit Dr. LIZ TORRES, (thirties, strong presence). She goes right to the X-Rays, no cooing of concern or hellos.

TORRES

Boys.

STOGNER/HERRICK

(almost together)

Doctor.

TORRES

Playing rough again?

(to Stogner)

Let me see the paw. Anything real uncomfortable here?

Torres tweaks his hand toward several angles while looking at the X-Rays.

STOGNER

Nope, just the one bruise.

TORRES

You never get hurt in these deals, do you?

(to Herrick)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TORRES (CONT'D)

You could learn from your partner here.

(to Stogner now)

You're a marvel. Get out of here.

Stogner hops to his feet and heads for the door smiling smugly as Torres turns to the other X-ray.

TORRES (CONT'D)

Don't forget, cowboy. As good and fast as you are out there...

STOGNER

(at the door)

Yeah?

TORRES

There's always gonna be someone new riding into town a little faster on the draw with their flamingo.

Torres smiles for the first time as Stogner slams the door on his way out. She taps Herrick's x-ray.

TORRES (CONT'D)

Will. You are a little less than a marvel.

She starts to work Herrick's shoulder around as he winces from the pain.

TORRES (CONT'D)

You slam this into a couple more walls or sidewalks we're looking at surgery with Dr. Reber. Like we talked about.

HERRICK

It's not that bad. And I can't afford not working overtime this close to Christmas.

TORRES

(shrugging)

I'm not your banker. Let's see the strawberry.

Herrick takes off his shirt to display a nasty red abrasion that has already seeped through the shirt a bit.

TORRES (CONT'D)

Nice one.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HERRICK

We still seeing you and Gary this weekend?

TORRES

Depends on the shifts. Here we go.

Torres swabs on the disinfectant, waits for his back to arch from the sting, then slaps on the gauze and bandage pack.

TORRES (CONT'D)

Like new.

HERRICK

(through his teeth)

Thanks.

Torres, over her shoulder she leaves the exam room.

TORRES

I mean it about the shoulder. Call us.

INT. HERRICK HOME -- NIGHT

As Herrick enters and then makes his way through a living room with three kids watching some kung-fu movie: their nine year old girl, JORDAN, their seven year old boy, JUSTIN, and another YOUNG BOY.

The two boys are circling each other and hissing a lot of Bruce Lee noises. Jordan is glued to the TV and ignores him.

JORDAN

Hi.

HERRICK

Who's that again?

JUSTIN

That's Eric.

ERIC

Hi.

JORDAN

Shh!!

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

As Herrick rounds the corner the karate sparring escalates in volume O.S. as his wife MAGGIE (smart, luminous eyes) looks up from carving a pumpkin with mild surprise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

Hey, why what are you doing here?

Herrick snakes an arm around her.

HERRICK

Left the wind-breaker here.

She leans back into him.

MAGGIE

S'Stogner?

HERRICK

Finishing a report in the car.

MAGGIE

What's it like out there today?

The volume back in the living room peaks now O.S. with Eric/Justin fighting and Jordan shrieking at them.

HERRICK

Like that.

MAGGIE

Could you handle that on the way?

HERRICK

You got it.

Herrick pulls out his taser and walks toward the room.

MAGGIE

Uh-uh. No WMD's.

Her eyes narrow a bit as she watches him leave the kitchen.

BACK IN THE LIVING ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

As Herrick walks through the kids toward the hall.

HERRICK

Hey.

They rage on oblivious to him. He pulls the badge necklace out and hitches up the shirt to display his gun. Nothing.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

Hey.

The fighting goes on as he stops to look at them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK (CONT'D)

So do you really want me to bring
your mom in here?

The noise level immediately drops to just the television now.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

Good. Everybody o.k.? Everything
code four?

Justin nods solemnly and holds up four fingers in response.

IN THE BEDROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Herrick changes the shirt with the bloodstain for a fresh one
and puts on a police wind-breaker over it.

BACK IN THE KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

He hustles through planting a kiss on Maggie's cheek on the
way out.

MAGGIE

Hey?

She walks up to him smiling

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Be careful out there...You asshole!

She smacks him on the shoulder and Herrick jumps back with a
wince.

HERRICK

Jesus.

MAGGIE

You think I'm not going to notice
that later tonight...or tomorrow
morning?

HERRICK

It's a scrape. You'll see.

MAGGIE

Come here.

Maggie grabs him by the belt buckle and pulls him closer.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Listen, this was one of our deals.
I would never make you grade papers
and you wouldn't lie about your
day.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Now if you want to change that I've got thirty essays I'll leave out for you.

HERRICK

That was the deal.

MAGGIE

And what's the word on Ray Hapner from Land Management? I guess his wife is nearly over the edge.

HERRICK

Nothing yet.

Maggie buttons the shirt pocket of his windbreaker.

MAGGIE

What a nightmare. Just show up later tonight, huh?

As she leans onto the step to kiss him, the door frames a full moon over Herrick's shoulder.

INT. LARGE BEDROOM -- NIGHT

Two figures are at an oversize, elaborate bed with a canopy and drapes. A PREGNANT WOMAN, with a sweating, contorted face, writhes around uncomfortably on the bed. A MAN in the shadows hovers over as she looks out the window at the full moon.

WOMAN

I need something now.
(then)
Just a little, please.

TIGHT ON A WRISTWATCH

Followed by that hand making a notation on a chart.

MALE VOICE

(o.s.)
We're not that close yet. I'll call and see.

BACK WITH THE WOMAN

Desperately turning her head toward the voice.

WOMAN

Please.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MALE VOICE

(o.s.)

I said I'll see, Lonnie.

CUT TO:

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT BRIEFING ROOM -- DAY

The briefing is winding up with Sgt. Rodriguez at the table in front of a dozen shift officers.

RODRIGUEZ

That's it for the shift.

(looking up)

And Lt. Donnelly has a patrol update for us. L.T.?

LT. DONNELLEY (forties, self-assured) takes a spot next to Rodriguez.

DONNELLEY

The first item isn't much of an update. Nobody still has a thing yet on the two BLM Rangers that died last night. Their people, the chippies, Riverside County. Nothing.

STOGNER

Nothing from the scene?

DONNELLEY

No real evidence to go on at the scene. No problems at home. No nasty open cases. They're park rangers, for Christ's sake.

RODRIGUEZ

Where was their last transmission?

DONNELLEY

Somewhere up in northern Joshua Tree, way out of our jurisdiction, but if you have any CIs on the street, you might want to squeeze them for anything they might have. And while you're squeezing also check on the whereabouts of our own Billy Scanlon who finally made it to the big leagues last night in Cathedral City by capping Hector Morales and his little brother, Victor.

The BRIEFING ROOM shift reacts to this news.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COP #2

Dead?

DONNELLEY

Hector's dead. Victor's circling
the drain at Desert ICU.

COP #3

Scanlon's usually all burgs though.

DONNELLEY

Up to last night. One of the vice
snitches thinks he's in in L.A.
Wherever he is, he's trailing
smoke. We want him, Cat City PD
wants him.

RODRIGUEZ

The Morales want him.

DONNELLEY

Popular guy. He's a killer now so
treat him like one. Don't hesitate
if he's making moves. The
bulletin's going around the room.

EXT. POLICE YARD -- DAY

Herrick and Stogner walk toward their car with their
equipment for the shift.

STOGNER

Billy, Billy, Billy.

HERRICK

You that surprised?

STOGNER

I don't know. You know him too.

HERRICK

(shrugging)

A crack head burglar shoots a crack
head dealer. Who'd a thunk it?

STOGNER

Yeah, but his dad's a science
teacher at Palm Springs. I had him
for. . .

Stogner breaks off mid-sentence to yank the door open and
snatch out a plastic pool flamingo.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He slams it away into the bushes as another patrol car drives by with a jeering BLAST from its AIRHORN on its way toward the gate.

STOGNER (CONT'D)
 (like nothing happened)
 Anyhow, his dad was a good teacher.
 You knew one of the guys, didn't
 you?

HERRICK
 Yeah, Ray Hapner. He retired here
 and went on for a federal double
 dip with BLM. Said he was tired of
 the streets.

STOGNER
 So much for just ridin' the range
 out there. Let's drop the kit off
 to Manger before we get slammed.

EXT. LARGE SPANISH STYLE MANSION -- NIGHT

As Herrick and Stogner at the door.

STOGNER
 Don't get Manger twitchy in here,
 o.k.?

HERRICK
 We're here to drop off a lab kit
 and assist. His beat, his call.

A FEMALE HOUSEKEEPER opens the door to let them in.

STOGNER
 (to Herrick)
 Where does the money come from to
 buy all of this?

HERRICK
 Overtime. Just like us.

INT. MANSION - NIGHT

They turn a corner to find OFFICER MANGER (huge cop, huge mustache) filling out a report for an ELDERLY COUPLE. Herrick hands him the kit. Manger steps away from them.

HERRICK
 Here you go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MANGER
(not looking at him)
Thanks.

STOGNER
Whaddya got?

MANGER
Point of entry on one of the back
sliders. At least a day cold and
they scored a shitload.
(holds up the clipboard)
I got four pages of property and
we're not done.

HERRICK
Need a hand with anything?

MANGER
Yeah. . .

Manger hands the kit to Stogner.

MANGER (CONT'D)
Work the back slider for me.

STOGNER
(to Herrick)
Walk around and look busy.

INT. ANOTHER WING OF THE HOUSE -- NIGHT

Herrick comes face to face with what appears to be a small,
bona fide Renoir dramatically lit on one of the walls. He
turns to see the ELDERLY HUSBAND walking through the room.

HUSBAND
Officer.
(then, stopping)
It's beautiful, isn't it?

HERRICK
It's a real Renoir?

HUSBAND
(impressed)
Why yes it is. You're absolutely
right.

HERRICK
It's the academy.

HUSBAND
I beg your pardon?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Nowadays at the police academy we have to take a lot of art history.

HUSBAND

I had no idea.

HERRICK

But we all have, you know, just specific areas of emphasis. We don't know it all.

HUSBAND

Of course, of course.

HERRICK

But I have to tell you something.

Husband leans in as Herrick lowers his voice a little.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

(con't)

The larger officer handling your burglary? He'd be the last to tell you, but he's quite an authority on ballet. But you didn't hear that from me.

HUSBAND

That's amazing. He's the last person on...

HERRICK

I know, I know. He loves to talk about it, but you'll have to, you know, draw him out a bit about it. Doesn't like to flaunt it.

HUSBAND

Of course, of course. Good night officer. . . I can't see your name without my glasses?

HERRICK

It's Stogner, sir.

EXT. LAS PALMAS MANSION -- NIGHT

As they walk toward the unit.

HERRICK

Jesus.

STOGNER

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Look at that one. Makes this place
look like Mr. Spicer's castle.

STOGNER

Wow, never noticed it before
either, must never been on a call
there.

THEIR POV

Takes in an estate on the ridge that dwarfs the mansion they
are in now.

EXT. LAS PALMAS NEIGHBORHOOD STREET -- SAME NIGHT

Two homeless men are scaling a wall with some difficulty. The
FIRST GUY over reaches up to the SECOND GUY still wobbling
drunkenly on the wall

FIRST

Don't drop the fucking bottle.

SECOND

I got it.

FIRST

Toss it down to me.

SECOND

I said I got it.

Second Guy tumbles down onto ground with his partner who
snatches the bag with the bottle away from him.

The SECOND GUY turns out to be Spicer looking the worse for
wear and on the streets now since his recent domestic issues.

FIRST

Yeah, you got it, Spiderman.

They begin to move through the bushes.

SPICER

Check it out, like I said. Lights
are on in the house up there every
other weekend. Meantime...

FIRST

Looks dark up there tonight.

They emerge from the bushes next to a large pool with the
estate off in the distance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FIRST (CONT'D)

Goddamn!

SPICER

That's what's up, like I said.
Billy Scanlon hooked me up with
this place.

First Guy plops down into an expensive teak patio chair and reaches for the bottle.

SPICER (CONT'D)

Home sweet home.

FIRST

Till these snowbirds show back up.

SPICER

Gotta full moon, full bottle and a
swimming pool. What else do...

He breaks off mid-sentence at the SOUND of an ANIMAL SNARLING just once in the brush.

SPICER (CONT'D)

What the fuck was that?

FIRST

Probably some rich bitch's house
cat.

SPICER

That didn't sound like a house cat.

Second Guy whips his head toward the SOUND of MOVEMENT nearby in the bushes.

SPICER (CONT'D)

You hear that?

FIRST

It's a cat, you jumpy motherfucker,
Since when have you been scared of
a little pussy.

Laughing at this own joke, First Guy tilts his head back to take a huge gulp. SPICER gets up to peer into the bushes beyond the patio.

He hears the First GUY laughing so hard he starts choking on the liquor as he comes back to the chairs,

SPICER

(calmer now)

I guess so. And I'd rather have...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Now Spicer sees the First Guy sitting up in his chair with his hands clamped around his throat trying to stop the blood streaming out.

SPICER (CONT'D)

Goddamn!

He sprints off in terror back into the bushes toward the wall at the street.

SPICER'S POV

The bush is whipping into him as he races toward the wall. Just as it comes into view, a machete cleaves FULL FRAME into his face.

EXT. HERRICK PATIO -- DAY

Torres and Donnelley sprawl around the patio with Maggie and Herrick. Torres is much more animated and relaxed than when last seen in the E.R.

TORRES

I'm telling you, you two have to go with us one of these summers.

DONNELLEY

It'll knock you out. It's like nowhere else in the world.

HERRICK

I don't know. It all depends.

TORRES

It's not like Paris and all that glitzy shit.

MAGGIE

(archly)

For us, it just comes down to schedules and money. Glitzy shit like that.

Torres looks to Donnelley for an awkward moment before Jordan bounces onto the patio and fawns over Torres pulling her away.

JORDAN

Doctor Liz, I want to show you something.

MAGGIE

A house call?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JORDAN

You too, mommy.

As the three of them go inside, Donnelley opens another beer and plops down in a chair next to Herrick flipping steaks on a grill. Donnelley rocks his palm on the table.

DONNELLEY

You and Maggie. . .?

HERRICK

We're fine. It's just the normal stuff, money, quality time, you know.

DONNELLEY

Not the job?

HERRICK

No, Lieutenant. It's not the job.

DONNELLEY

Listen, if you're looking for more money there's a Sergeant's test in December.

HERRICK

(looks up sharply)

Now that would solve everything.

DONNELLEY

No it wouldn't, but you're wasted in patrol. Plainclothes rove unit or not.

HERRICK

I don't think so. I like the job. Don't tell me you really like being the lieutenant doing those crime stats power points for the city council. And if you do, don't tell me.

DONNELLEY

(shrugging)

Okay, I can see I'm not going anywhere with this tonight. All I'm telling you, there's a whole different world out there.

Herrick looks in on Maggie and Jordan inside clustered around Liz laughing on a sofa.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK

Gary, I appreciate it, but I like
my world...as is.

INT. HERRICK BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A wide awake Herrick turns toward the back of a sleeping Maggie and kisses a shoulder blade on the way out of bed.

WITH HERRICK

As he enters the hallway with the two family golden retrievers behind him and heads downstairs.

INT. HERRICK KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

He refills one of the dog's water bowls and reflexively checks that the kitchen slider bolt and dowels are in place. On the way back up the stairs he fingers the front door lock and glances at the alarm system pad on the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. UNKNOWN BEDROOM -- NIGHT

A newborn baby wails piteously in a crib with an old fashioned kind of black canopy draping over it.

CLOSER ON THE CRIB

There are O.S. footsteps going briskly to the crib and a female arm brings a bottle into the frame. The bottle is inserted in the baby's mouth and the crying stops without any endearments or talk from the woman.

BACK LARGER ON THE ROOM

We see just the back of the woman with a black shawl over her head and shoulders. One hand holds the bottle in the crib and the other hand traces some pattern in the air over and over.

CUT TO:

CU ESPRESSO MACHINE WITH STEAM HISSING LOUDLY

INT. COFFEE HOUSE -- DAY

It's packed as Herrick and Stogner stand at the counter. A YOUNG BARISTA brings the mug to Stogner with a wide, flirty smile.

YOUNG BARISTA

Here you are, Eric. Vente latte
with the almond syrup.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOGNER

Thanks, Denise. That is just the way I like it.

HERRICK

Black coffee, thanks.

STOGNER

You know you need to enjoy life a little, try new things . . .

(then)

Standby.

Officer Manger bulls his way into the coffeehouse up next to them and drops his metal posse box/clipboard down on the counter and rolls his eyes in frustration.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

What's up, bud?

MANGER

I'm a day out with that fucking burg report.

(barks at Denise)

Large decaf!

STOGNER

The big one with the old couple?

MANGER

You won't believe this. I'm humping the report and it's a long, fucking detailed account of everything that got jacked and then, out of nowhere, the old man walks up to me and starts chipping.

STOGNER

About what?

Manger flips open the posse box for the report.

MANGER

About shit that has nothing to do with the burg. Names like...

(with some difficulty)

Balanchine, Nureyev, Nijinsky. I don't know if these are employees, domestics or whatever, that are possible suspects or what.

Stogner sneaks a sidelong, quizzical glance at Herrick putting a dollar in Denise's empty tip jar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MANGER (CONT'D)

(cont.)

I don't want to leave them out of the report but I don't know what's up with these names and he won't tell me. Keeps winking at me when I ask him, like I already know.

HERRICK

Forget about it. Rich people are weird, bud.

There's an ALERT TONE sounded on the HT's.

RADIO

Three-Charles, report of a DB out in the wash, past Overture Road.
Break

(pause)

Continuing. Possibly County jurisdiction just on or past city lines, so the S.O. is responding as well.

EXT. DESERT -- DAY

There's several families cordoned off just behind the yellow tape watching as the Riverside County Deputies work the scene. There is a body under a tarp in the middle of things. Herrick and Stogner step up to the RIVERSIDE COUNTY SGT in charge.

SERGEANT

Gentlemen.

STOGNER

Sarge.

HERRICK

Guess this one's all yours this side of the highway. Whaddya got?

SERGEANT

Looks like a dope deal gone bad with a twist, the victim's a hype, no I.D., but they spent some time carving on him postmortem. Pretty detailed work.

HERRICK

(nodding at the families)
These folks found him?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SERGEANT

Yeah, our crime scene's pretty well
blown. Eight kids on ATVs here
before us.

The three men watch as the body is loaded onto the coroner's
gurney near the van.

STOGNER

Mind if we take a look to see if
he's a known commodity?

SERGEANT

Be my guest.

The County Sergeant lifts back the blanket for them.

THEIR P.O.V.

A bearded white man in his thirties with a horribly elaborate
series of wounds cut into his torso. The dominant design
seems to be a flaming circle with some kind of pentagram
within it.

STOGNER

(O.S.)
Holy shit.

HERRICK

(O.S.)
Man, they took their time with home
slice here.

BACK ON THE THREE OFFICERS

SERGEANT

Someone from the local talent pool?

STOGNER

Not that I recognize. Will?

HERRICK

Nope. Thanks, sarge.

INT. POLICE UNIT -- MOMENTS LATER

As they drive back into the city.

STOGNER

Go ahead and say it.

HERRICK

I don't need to. They're the same
and you know it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOGNER

The marking on the guy in the wash
and the graffitti are the same.
Exactly the same?

HERRICK

Close enough.

STOGNER

I don't know.

HERRICK

Yes you do.

STOGNER

So what do we got?

HERRICK

Okay, first we had the little girl
snatched out in Joshua Tree last
month. We've got Ray Hapner and
his partner.

STOGNER

And now...

HERRICK

And now we have our Sonny shrine
and city hall with the symbols like
the junkie in the wash. We have
homeless people missing in droves.

STOGNER

Okay.

Stogner pulls the car over and turns toward Herrick.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

Look outside for just five seconds
before we go on with this horse
shit.

Herrick holds up a hand in agreement and looks out the window
at a crowded Palm Canyon Drive filled with people along the
colorful, palm tree lined avenue.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

There now, does this look like,
what, fucking Transylvania to you?
You think maybe because it's
Halloween you're...

HERRICK

Doesn't any part of this make you
hink up just a little?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STOGNER

No. And I'll tell you why when we take our Seven.

CUT TO:

INT. VERN'S GRILL - NIGHT

Tacky restaurant with one of the other tables occupied by uniformed shift officers and a decent crowd up at the mezzanine bar.

There are some half ass Halloween decorations on the wall and the PRETTY WAITRESS handling the tables in their section is in a slinky witch costume.

STOGNER

So here's my big, elaborate theory for you now. It's Halloween and, in this very town, you know we have a handful of fuckstick kids that could easily go to the dark side and goth-y for a week with the graffiti.

HERRICK

The future Spicers of the world.

STOGNER

Exactly. Until something else distracts their little tweaker asses next week. And besides you know how you obsess about things anyway.

(looking up)

Hey, Tina. Nice costume.

TINA

Hey, guys. You all set?

STOGNER

What are the specials.

TINA

You never eat our specials.

STOGNER

I know, but if I make you go through them I get to keep you here at the table a little longer.

TINA

(busy, but flattered)

Yeah, right. I'll check back with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stogner watches her walk away.

STOGNER

You think she likes me?

HERRICK

I don't see why not. You meet all her requirements. You have a badge and you work swing shift.

STOGNER

Now that's a shitty thing to say. You with your tidy little Ward and June Cleaver life. We're both adults with our own histories and what she did before and with whom is not any...

HERRICK

(interrupting)

You know how they say you sleep with a woman, it's like sleeping with everyone they ever slept with?

STOGNER

(cringing)

I hate that.

HERRICK

Me too. It's bad enough in the abstract, but with Tina you know the last five. I mean, how could you sleep with Melanson,
(ticking them off)
Castillo, Palmer, Madison?

STOGNER

Okay, okay okay.

HERRICK

Manger. My God, Manger. I think we both know what role in the relationship you'd have to assume there.

STOGNER

Okay, okay, forget it. I don't want to talk about her with you anymore. End of discussion. But how about this.

(nods toward the bar)

Who are the guys with Rodriguez?

Sgt. Rodriguez stands at the bar in street clothes talking with two somber looking men.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK

I think those are the two captains from the BLM making the rounds for Ray Hapner and his partner. Guess they've got nothing yet other than the bodies and the car.

STOGNER

Jesus, what a fucking nightmare they got. What are they going to tell their families? We just don't know a fucking thing, but we'll keep you posted.

Rodriguez seems to sense their gaze and looks up to shoot a piercing glare right at them from across the room. They both cringe back to looking at their coffee cups.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

Yo, didn't mean to intrude, Sarge.

(to Herrick now)

So think about what I'm saying, o.k.? I mean, plainclothes or not, we're just patrol shift cops, we aren't the guys in back catching cases or FBI profilers looking for Hannibal. Right?

INT. HERRICK BEDROOM - NIGHT

A weary Herrick sits down the bed next to a sleeping Maggie after his shift. Yawning, he puts a pistol on the night stand where the clock reads 2:35 a.m.

TIGHT ON THE CLOCK

Now reading 3:00

ON HERRICK

As something wakes him up in the dark.

TIGHT ON THE DOWNSTAIRS ALARM KEY PAD

As the display lights go dark from the power being cut off.

CLOSE ON THE BACK DOOR NOW

As it turns.

BACK WITH HERRICK

He grabs his gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DOWNSTAIRS BACK DOOR

Two figures in black cowled robes quickly pour in through the back door and head for the stairs.

CLOSE ON THEIR HANDS

Shows the large ceremonial knives each one carries

BACK IN THE BEDROOM

Herrick hears the family dogs snarling followed by yelps and then silence. He listens intently to the footsteps on the stairs and turns to shake Maggie awake.

HERRICK

(whispering)

Baby, wake up. Call 911. Tell them we have a home invasion. You stay here and...

(turning toward her)

Maggie, wake up. I need you to call dispatch.

CLOSE ON MAGGIE

As she finally turns toward him with huge yellow eyes and a cadaverous face.

MAGGIE

(demon-voiced)

It's too late!

WITH HERRICK NOW REAL TIME AWAKE

Lurching upright in bed from the nightmare.

HERRICK

Jesus!

MAGGIE

What? What is it?

HERRICK

Jesus Christ.

MAGGIE

Are you okay? Was it a nightmare?

HERRICK

Oh, yeah.

MAGGIE

Police stuff or something with the kids?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK
 (rubbing his eyes)
 Little of both, I guess. You were
 in it though, honey.

Herrick laughs at his private joke and Maggie reaches over
 him to turn on the bed stand light.

MAGGIE
 You're still thinking about the
 body in the wash, aren't you?

HERRICK
 Must be.

MAGGIE
 Come on. Why don't you talk to
 Gary about it?

HERRICK
 I don't know.

MAGGIE
 Nothing formal with a paper trail.
 Just tell him what you're feeling
 about all this.

HERRICK
 You know, it's still really not the
 kind of job here we go in talking
 to supervisors about "feelings".

MAGGIE
 Well, thanks for making me sound
 like the problem here. Listen to
 me. He's your best friend. Talk to
 him about it, okay? Especially
 since you don't seem too eager to
 talk to me about things lately.

Tight-lipped, she turns out the light.

INT. POLICE DETECTIVE BULLPEN - DAY

Herrick stands at the office door on Donnelley who waves him
 in while hanging up a phone.

HERRICK
 Can this be a non-chain of command
 conversion?

Donnelley smirks a little at the formality.

DONNELLEY
 Sure, whaddya got?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

I'm thinking there's a chance there's some kind of connection in some of the things happening out here.

DONNELLEY

Okay.

HERRICK

Like the little girl snatched out at Joshua Tree. Ray Hapner and his partner. Sonny's statue and the city hall now. And the body the sheriff's guys took out on the county line wash. Rumors from the homeless guys about people disappearing.

DONNELLEY

And the connection?

HERRICK

Now this is all gut, so the only thing to even start to work with are the symbols, the ones on Sonny, the City Hall and on the guy in the wash are the same. They both look like this...

Herrick starts to draw on Donnelley's desk calendar.

DONNELLEY

(interrupting)

Wait a minute. I've been to all the occult crime seminars too. Some kind of circle with a pentagram in the center, right?

HERRICK

Yeah, but these two were exactly the same. Like a sun around it.

DONNELLEY

Okay, I got that, but that's pretty much it, right?

Herrick nods and then shrugs, embarrassed.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNELLEY (CONT'D)

OK listen, first of all those symbols do look a lot alike, but I'll ask the county homicide guy on it to share anything he gets with us and we'll match it to our Sonny graffiti deal. It's a county case, but I'll get it for us.

HERRICK

Okay, thanks.

DONNELLEY

Hey, it was a homicide and it would have been ours if it was hundred yards west. We sure want to know if there's some new Manson gang out there, but the other stuff. The little girl, the BLM guys?

HERRICK

Yeah?

DONNELLEY

Aside from the fact that neither are our jurisdiction, it could be anything. Mountain lions, cartel drops, or alien abductions. And sometimes the homeless don't always update their Facebook page when they leave town.

HERRICK

Right.

DONNELLEY

Don't worry about it. You got it off your chest. Maggie make you come to me?

HERRICK

Thanks, see you later.

Herrick slinks out and Donnelley laughs to himself before opening the next report on his desk.

INT. POLICE UNIT - LATER THAT NIGHT

With Herrick and Stogner back on duty.

HERRICK

The look he gave me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOGNER

And I'm telling you he did what I wanted him to which is to have you lighten up on this thing.

HERRICK

(into the mike)

Three Charles, put us on the seven list.

(to Stogner)

Your turn to pick the place.

INT LARGE SHOWCASE HOME - NIGHT

A YOUNG MAN WITH A PONY TAIL bends over a jewelry case in a woman's dressing room emptying the contents into a gym bag. He reaches in to the bag to extract a large ring and admire it before stepping out of the room.

TIGHT ON AN ELECTRONIC RED DOT

Which is briefly obscured by the passing burglar as he goes down the hall.

INT POLICE UNIT - NIGHT

AS the ALERT TONE sounds on the radio

DISPATCH

(o.s)

Three Charles. Stand by to copy, interior motion detector at 184 Camino Encanto.

HERRICK

La Verne's the fastest?

STOGNER

Yeah.

INT. BATHROOM LARGE HOUSE - NIGHT

The Burglar opens the medicine cabinet and checks out various prescriptions.

EXT. - LARGE HOUSE - NIGHT

Herrick and Stogner silently move toward the home. They stop as Herrick stops to put his hand on the hood of the Mercedes in the driveway.

He shakes his head at Stogener and they continue. Now at the side of the house they see a slightly ajar door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

STOGNER

(to the HT)

Three. Open door on the east side.
Roll K9 and any available.

(to Herrick)

How about Chinese after this?

HERRICK

We'll have some other units clear
for us here in a second.

STOGNER

(toward the door)

We're a two man car.

Herrick braces as Stogner pushes the door in.

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

The Burglar strolls down the hall with his swag bag over his shoulder, flashing his light on family pictures and snickering.

INT. HOUSE ON THE OTHER WING - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

Herrick and Stogner enter a large living room in their stance with guns drawn towards their fields of fire.

BACK WITH THE BURGLAR

He opens a hallway door and steps into a large dining area. He freezes at the sound of a rubber-soled shoe on tile. He draws out a semi-automatic pistol and starts to back-pedal.

ON THE DINING ROOM DOOR

Opening as Herrick/Stogner enter the room.

THEIR POV

Catches the Burglar in movement, lit up briefly by their flashlights.

HERRICK

(o.s.)

Police!

STOGNER

(o.s.)

Show us your hands!

Before they can get him in their light or take cover, two muzzle flashes strobe across the room before the ROAR of the TWO GUN SHOTS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WITH STOGNER

He takes a round square in the chest knocking him to the ground in a sitting position with his legs outstretched.

CU STOGNER'S GUN

He fires on reflex shattering the large plate glass picture window in the dining room.

WITH THE BURGLAR

He continues scrambling.

WITH HERRICK

He jumps in front of Stogner and FIRES a sweeping ROUND a second in an arc towards the direction of the burglar he can't clearly see.

ON THE BURGLAR

Cowering down from Herrick's rounds.

VASES AND DINING ROOM GLASSWARE

Exploding as rounds hit them.

BACK WITH HERRICK

He continues pumping the rounds as he reaches back for Stogner to drag him to safety.

DOWN WITH STOGNER

Reaching up to grab Herrick by his belt and pull him back.

ON THE BURGLAR

Leaping for the hallway door.

CU BURGLAR'S LEG

One of Herrick's rounds hits, shredding a patch of his jeans and splattering blood.

WITH HERRICK/STOGNER

Herrick releases the used magazine, jams in another and continues firing until Stogner yanks him to cover behind the wall with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK
 (to the HT)
 Three Charles, shots fired, roll
 medical and all units code!

Stogner starts to hyperventilate as he he rips open his shirt. He feels the bullet lodged in his vest before yanking it up to see a huge bruise on his chest, already seeping blood.

HERRICK (CONT'D)
 (cont.)
 Fire-fight with one male suspect,
 unknown position. Expedite all
 backs!

Dazed to be alive, Stogner reaches up to flip on a light switch and taps his vest for Herrick. The dining room is in shambles from Herrick's rounds along with blood near the door.

HERRICK (CONT'D)
 Three. Got a blood trail heading to
 the south wing of the house. All
 incoming units watch for additional
 suspects.

WITH THE BURGLAR

He hops through the house away from them, his face twisted with pain as he holds his bleeding leg with one hand and his gun in the other.

BACK WITH THE OFFICERS

STOGNER
 (still hyper ventilating)
 Homey's a good shot. Let's go.

HERRICK
 How many times do you want to get
 shot today? The other units are in
 route.

STOGNER
 That motherfucker shot me! And...

He looks out the shattered window.

STOGNER (CONT'D)
 There he is!

Stogner and Herrick leap through it and fan out toward the suspect.

EXT. BACKYARD/POOL - NIGHT

HERRICK
It's Scanlon.

STOGNER
(yelling)
Billy! Freeze! Drop the gun!

HERRICK
(yelling)
Drop it and lay down!

The burglar, SCANLON, stops facing away from them, but the gun is still in his hand pointed at the ground.

STOGNER
Come on, Billy. It doesn't have to be like this.

Scanlon laughs when he recognizes Stogner's voice and turns around brushing his hair out of his eyes with the gun.

HERRICK
(almost firing)
Billy!

SCANLON
Well, that's a fucking relief. I thought I was in deep shit there for a while.
(gestures with the gun)
Just what does it have to be like.

STOGNER
(screaming at the gesture)
Goddamn it, Billy!
(a little calmer)
Come on, Billy. You know what we need to do. Put it on the ground and nothing's gone down that we can't work out.

SCANLON
Now just what the fuck does that mean?

HERRICK
It means, you don't want to die and we don't want to kill you.

Billy seems to think this over with a glazed smile.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SCANLON

Well, shit.
(shakes his head)
Maybe you're half right.

Scanlon jerks his gun to waist level before Herrick BLASTS THREE quick ROUNDS into him center mass.

Scanlon hits the ground and then instinctively turns to crawl away on his elbows before the wave of pain hits him. Stogner kicks the gun away from him.

STOGNER

Quit moving, Billy. We already got an ambulance coming.

Scanlon screams as he rolls over onto his back.

SCANLON

Don't leave me like this. I can't move my legs. You didn't shoot my leg again, did you?

HERRICK

Just lay still, man.

SCANLON

Where did you shoot me? I can't...

He suddenly turns his head sideways to vomit out a torrent of dark blood.

SCANLON (CONT'D)

Oh, fuck.
(wipes his mouth)
This must be what hell's going to be like.

STOGNER

Come on, Billy. Hang on. The only place you're going to is the ER.

SCANLON

I deserve it, but Lonnie...
(starts to cry)
I put Lonnie in hell, man. You know what I did?

STOGNER

Just keep still.

SCANLON

I put her in hell. I've done shit you can't...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK

It's okay, we know you, Billy.

SCANLON

(defiant)

You don't know anything. There's people in this town doing...

(starts coughing)

They're out there.

Herrick goes down on one knee next to Scanlon.

HERRICK

Just hang on, Billy. Who do you mean?

He reaches up for Herrick who instinctively recoils from the blood, leaving him hanging onto the cuff of his pants.

SCANLON

(shaking his head)

They're out there.

Scanlon breaks off with another spasm of coughing followed by one last shudder.

LARGE OVERHEAD VIEW OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Shows the back up units arriving along with the paramedics scrambling their equipment out.

POST SHOOTING MONTAGE FEATURES:

HERRICK AND STOGNER

Standing at the shooting scene as Herrick gives his gun to supervisors as the evidence techs work the scene around them.

HERRICK AT THE POLICE STATION

Being interviewed by supervisors in one of the interrogation boxes.

OFFICER MANGER

Trying to give an awkward high-five in the hall to a shaken Herrick.

AT THE BATHROOM DOOR

As Herrick exits with a urine specimen and a supervisor in tow.

IN THE WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

AS Herrick signs more forms and accepts an appointment card for the resident city psychiatrist.

AT HERRICK'S FRONT DOOR

AS he's embraced by Maggie.

MONTAGE SEQUENCE ENDS WITH HERRICK IN HIS BATHROOM

On the floor with his arm wrapped around the base of the commode dry heaving.

INT. CHURCH -- DAY

Herrick sits in a back pew uncomfortably. When a PARISHIONER leaves the confessional, Herrick looks up and waits until the PRIEST emerges from the booth.

PRIEST

Sorry, didn't see you back there.
(points toward booth)
Do you want to...

HERRICK

No. I've got to tell you I've always liked the look of this church, but I'm not Catholic.

PRIEST

(extends his hand)
I'm George Palomares. Let's just sit here and talk.

HERRICK

Will Herrick.

PALOMARES

What's up?

HERRICK

(pitching right in)
I shot a guy yesterday. I'm a cop here in town and I killed a guy on the job. Like he wanted me to.

PALOMARES

Maybe he did.

HERRICK

I know the board will clear me, but...

(lowers his voice)

It's hard to explain.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PALOMARES

Well, let me take a stab. You gotta be glad it's him instead of you, that you made the right decision under stress and all that. But when it's a close quarters like this one, you're going to remember the expression on that face the rest of your life, 'cause let's face it, you put it there.

(looks up)

How am I doing so far?

Herrick stares at him transfixed.

PALOMARES (CONT'D)

(off Herrick's stare)

Recon Marine in Afghanistan. Two tours.

Palomares touches his clerical collar and smiles grimly.

PALOMARES (CONT'D)

Enough to make me want to change uniforms.

HERRICK

This never goes away, does it?

PALOMARES

No. But time will take the edge off it. And faith.

HERRICK

Faith, huh?

PALOMARES

Yeah, faith. It's an underrated commodity and you're gonna need some. What else has come up in all this for you?

HERRICK

Uh...I'm thinking that there's some kind of a cult here in the valley that might be behind some things.

Palomares bursts out laughing as Herrick looks at him uncomfortably. Palomares fishes a cigarette out of his pocket and nods toward the back door.

EXT. CHURCH COURTYARD -- MOMENTS LATER

PALOMARES

Man, you walk in here off the street and dump off a mortal sin and a conspiracy about cults. You know, you would have made a hell of a good Catholic.

HERRICK

I know how all this sounds, but I just can't shake it off.

PALOMARES

Okay, but you have to realize that ninety-nine plus percent of that stuff is just kids trying it on for size or fundamentalist paranoia. The incidents of anything substantial or organized are so few... And don't ask me anything about the "dark spirit" up in the Tahquitz canyons. That's just local tribal folklore that the local paper trots out on Halloween.

HERRICK

But if this was the one percent?

PALOMARES

(evenly)

Then we'd have a sizable problem.

(then)

But it's not worth you worrying about right now. Believe me, you've got enough on your plate as it is. You have a family?

HERRICK

Yep, wife and two kids.

PALOMARES

Hang onto them for dear life. You'll have plenty of time to replay this shooting in your head the rest of your life.

Palomares stubs out his cigarette and pats Herrick on the shoulder as he goes back into the church.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PALOMARES (CONT'D)

Also, you don't have to convert to
come back.

INT. WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE -- DAYT

Herrick sits at a desk in uniform without any weaponry on his
belt.

HERRICK

(to the phone)

Right, so on Monday just contact
the city offices. Thanks, bye.

He hangs up to see Lt. Donnelley step in.

DONNELLEY

Well, how's desk duty treating you?

HERRICK

Never thought I'd miss daily
contact with dirtbags.

DONNELLEY

Yeah? How's the whole deal? Those
sessions with the city's Doctor
Proud doing anything yet?

HERRICK

No.

DONNELLEY

Still depressed? Can't sleep, food
doesn't taste good, Maggie's
wondering why she married you?

HERRICK

Well.

DONNELLEY

Good. You're right where you should
be.

HERRICK

Miserable and fucked up.

DONNELLEY

(beaming)

Right on schedule.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE DEPARTMENT -- DAY

As Herrick in street clothes after the shift drives his truck out of the police yard.

EXT. PALM CANYON DRIVE -- MOMENTS LATER

Herrick drives slowly past two YOUNG WOMEN in short dresses who watch his truck slow down and then pull into a parking lot just ahead.

They both approach the truck smiling. One is a an attractive LATINA, the other a slim WHITE GIRL.

HERRICK

Hey, Yolanda. What's up, Cindy?

YOLANDA

Wow. Pork. The other white meat.

CINDY

You not getting it at home?

HERRICK

No, it hasn't come to that.

YOLANDA

Herrick, please don't tell me this is some humbug sting and you're supposed to be the undercover john.

HERRICK

I just want some street on somebody's missing.

CINDY

Who's that?

HERRICK

Lonnie Krause.

The two women exchange glances and then Cindy twitches away on her high heels a little unsteady.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

Now what does she know she doesn't want to tell me?

YOLANDA

She doesn't know shit. She's real high and doesn't have anything to give you.

Herrick peers a little closer at her eyes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

You look a little down yourself.
Why aren't you walking away?

YOLANDA

'Cause I got what you want.

HERRICK

Walk on up to Denny's. I'll be the
back booth. I'd offer you a ride...

YOLANDA

In this piece of shit?
(backing away from his
truck)
Hey, I got a reputation too. See
you there.

INT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- DAY

In the booth as coffee is set before Herrick and Yolanda. She
pours in the sugar.

YOLANDA

Well, what do you need on Lonnie?

HERRICK

Where she is for starters.

YOLANDA

I can tell you where she isn't.
Out on the streets or any of the
house parties.

HERRICK

For how long?

YOLANDA

Probably less than a year. Ten,
eleven months.

HERRICK

How about her and Billy Scanlon?

YOLANDA

They were an item. 'Bout as in love
as you can get considering.

HERRICK

Considering what?

YOLANDA

(matter of fact)
Considering she's a 'ho and he was
a dope fiend.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Well yeah, but did he whack her around, turn her out to the boys?

YOLANDA

Herrick. Are you listening? She was a strawberry and he had the rock, but they were still in love. He even had some religious trip he got her jumped into.

HERRICK

The two of them playing bingo at St. Marks?

YOLANDA

No, some spiritual, new age kind of bullshit...

HERRICK

Like what?

YOLANDA

I don't remember it all. There was some girl that hung at the Pepper Tree they hooked up with first and she got it rolling. Then...

HERRICK

What was her name.

YOLANDA

I don't remember her name, but you won't miss her.

HERRICK

Why?

YOLANDA

(laughing)

Herrick, I know you got the home fires burning blah blah, but you don't have to be a cop to notice her. Bout any man would.

HERRICK

So how did this all play out with Lonnie? What was her deal?

YOLANDA

I don't know. Something...mystical, new age shit I guess. At first she wouldn't talk about anything else, but then Billy came down on her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK

But when she was talking, what was she saying?

YOLANDA

(searching)

Like it was the biggest thing that had ever happened to her and there were these important people Billy knew, and once you went through the gates of power you were never the same. You were special after that. You had to go through the doors to get...

HERRICK

Yeah? Don't nod on me, Yolanda. This is important.

YOLANDA

(insulted)

Please. The last thing I remember, she was scared of the whole deal.

HERRICK

Scared like she wanted out?

YOLANDA

Scared like shitless. Shr was in a panic toward the end, crying all the time.

HERRICK

Yolanda, you've ever seen something that looks like this?

Herrick grabs a napkin and starts drawing something.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM DENNY'S -- NIGHT

AS Stogner drives by the restaurant slowly taking in Herrick and Yolanda in the window booth.

STOGNER

(aloud to himself)

Please don't be drawing that fucking symbol on that napkin, Will. Just let it go.

EXT. PARKING STRUCTURE ACROSS FROM DENNY'S -- NIGHT

Sgt. Rodriguez has been watching both these two scenes unwind from his blacked out unit, hidden from everyone's view.

EXT. PEPPER TREE BOOKSTORE/CAFE_-- DAY

Off duty, Herrick stops with his hand on the door when he sees an ATTRACTIVE WOMAN in sunglasses sitting at one of the outside cafe tables with a stack of books next to her. As he skirts her table behind her he glances down at the pile of books.

MOVING WITH HERRICK

"A Wiccan Life" and "The Power of Spells" are on the top of the pile. Suddenly she looks over her shoulder to stop him dead in his tracks.

WOMAN

I must be the one.

HERRICK

What do you mean?

WOMAN

You tell me.

HERRICK

I'm sorry?

Herrick jumps a little when she kicks the other chair at her table toward him and tilts her head back with a peal of laughter.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

I didn't mean to...

WOMAN

Sit.

Herrick sits down obediently and is still searching for composure when she leans in toward him.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

(evenly)

Yes, I am the witch. Boo!

HERRICK

What makes you so sure...

She just looks at him and waits. He holds up his palms in surrender and pitches in.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

OK, my name's Will Herrick. I'm a cop here in town and I just had some informal...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WOMAN

(fiercely)

You know, a couple of centuries ago
your kind would have had already
had me tied to a burning stake
before you asked any informal
questions.

Herrick stares back speechless for a moment until her face
crinkles back into laughter.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

You should see your face.

She takes off her sunglasses now and levels her beautiful
eyes at Herrick as she extends her hand.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Well, Will the Cop. I'm Maggie the
Witch.

HERRICK

That shouldn't be hard to remember.

MAGGIE/THE WITCH

Also known as Maggie Hallam if this
really is a police inquiry. What is
it you think I can help you with?

Finally Herrick can stop looking at her and gets to ask some
questions.

HERRICK

Did you ever know Lonnie Krauss or
Billy Scanlon?

Immediately MAGGIE HALLAM'S eyes cloud over.

MAGGIE HALLAM

I know them both...or I knew Billy
I guess I should say. I haven't
seen Lonnie for a while.

HERRICK

Do you have any idea of any groups
or interests they might have had
that...

Herrick stops as he sees Maggie Hallam looking back at two
stern, middle-aged ladies standing at one of the book tables.
They stare at Maggie with undisguised malice.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Yes, I do. But not here in the
bible belt.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAGGIE HALLAM (CONT'D)

They really would have me at a
burning stake.

(packing up her books)

Four hundred Avenida Las Cruces.

HERRICK

Up in the south canyon.

MAGGIE HALLAM

That's right. And don't bring the
old hellfire bats there with you
either.

EXT. DUPLEX ON AVENIDA LOS CRUCES -- DAY

Herrick knocks at the door and looks around at the dramatic canyon rocks that butt up next to the two units. The wind chimes on her side of the duplex stir in the breeze as Maggie Hallam opens the door with a smile just as radiant as that first one.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Hi, cowboy. Come on in.

INT. DUPLEX -- DAY

Herrick steps into a living room that is casual, but well-furnished with expensive furniture and real artwork. Looking around the room, he can't help but be impressed.

HERRICK

Are tips this good serving
margaritas to the tourists at Las
Casuelas?

MAGGIE HALLAM

(from the kitchen)

You like it?

HERRICK

Yeah, it looks like my house would
if I had money instead of kids.

Maggie Hallam comes around the corner with a tray of appetizers and two bottles of Guinness Stout. She points him toward the sofa and uses a remote to turn on the audio system which starts purring out some old silky R&B ballad.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Thanks. I like it too, but it's a
trust fund paying for it, not tips.

Herrick stares fixedly at the tray and then around the room again as an awkward silence sets in

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE HALLAM (CONT'D)
We've already established that
you're married if you're feeling...

HERRICK
No, it's not that...

MAGGIE HALLAM
Well...?

HERRICK
It's just this. The house. The
Guinness, the food and the old Al
Green track.
(looks at her directly)
It's all exactly the stuff I happen
to like. How did you possibly have
all the same...

MAGGIE HALLAM
(incredulous)
Hey, let's not over think this.
What is the deal with you? I
thought I was supposed to be the
creepy one.

Laughing she takes a long pull at the bottle of Guinness and
it foams up out of the bottle onto her blouse.

MAGGIE HALLAM (CONT'D)
Great. Some cocktail professional.

Herrick laughs at her and himself now as she scoots into the
kitchen for a towel and comes back to the sofa rubbing a
towel on her blouse.

MAGGIE HALLAM (CONT'D)
Okay, now that we're established
that I can't serve liquor and you
can't interrogate people. What
about Billy and Lonnie?

HERRICK
Everything you can think of. When
you met them, what you all did
together.

MAGGIE HALLAM
I met Lonnie first. She's a sweet
girl, but you don't need me to tell
you about her career choices.
Billy was an unstable guy with a
temper, but he did love her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HERRICK

And your...group stuff.

She leans toward him.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Look, you don't have to walk on eggshells here with me. I'm into the wiccan world, the witch world, whatever you want to call it, but it really isn't any more sinister than what we are doing here right now.

She breaks off mid-sentence as her eyes tear up.

MAGGIE HALLAM (CONT'D)

Oh, fuck. I'm sorry.

She pops off the sofa and starts dabbing at her eyes with the towel. She moves off toward the window to stare out the window into the canyon as Herrick stands to approach her from behind.

MAGGIE HALLAM (CONT'D)

This is so embarrassing.

HERRICK

Look, I understand that these are bad memories.

She turns around to face him and he starts to say something, but she closes the gap between them and kisses him with a ferocity that seems to buckle his knees as she wraps her arms around him.

When he looks at her shimmering eyes again the room seems to almost spin around him like maybe there was something in his drink. Now his arms reflexively wrap around her.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Do you feel it?

Before Herrick can answer she locks him into another kiss that has him spiraling more out of control. Suddenly he comes up for air and steps back from her, gasping for control.

HERRICK

Jesus, I'm sorry.

She tries to recapture him.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

No, I'm sorry. I don't know what I'm doing like this. I'm married...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MAGGIE HALLAM

I know.

HERRICK

I've never done anything like this.
I have to go.

Herrick starts for the door and she blocks his way.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Don't go. I know you felt that.
That you meant it.

HERRICK

I know. I did feel it. But I can't
stay. I'm sorry.

Now she looks at him with real pleading in her eyes. The self-assured trust fund veneer is gone and now she seems desperate.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Please. Don't go.

HERRICK

I'm sorry.

Herrick turns at the door and she looks scared now that he is leaving.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Please. You don't understand what's
at stake here.

Herrick closes the door on her rising panic.

INT. HERRICK FAMILY ROOM -- DAY

A nearly comatose looking Herrick sits channel-surfing in front of a TV with a beer on the table in front of him. Maggie walks into the room and plops down onto the arm of his chair.

MAGGIE

What's up?

HERRICK

So far, bass fishing and food
dehydrators. If I call right
now...

She reaches across to take his pulse.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAGGIE

You gonna be able to take all this excitement?

HERRICK

Doctor Proud says this is all part of the process.

MAGGIE

(toward the TV)

This?

HERRICK

(toward himself and the room)

This.

Maggie lets herself slide off the armrest onto his lap. Out of reflex he puts his arm around her, but keeps watching the screen.

MAGGIE

(into his ear)

Listen, I'm actually in here to warn you.

(doorbell rings o.s.)

That's Elaine. She's taking all the kids through the neighborhood for trick or treat.

Now the kids barge into the room wailing and growling, both of them costumed as devils with horrible masks and pitchforks.

Herrick stands up quickly leaving Maggie in the chair and knocks into the coffee table, spilling the can of beer and grabs Justin's pitchfork.

HERRICK

Now, what the hell is this supposed to be?

(to Maggie)

Is this supposed to be funny? Who picked these costumes out?

JORDAN

(upset)

We did, Daddy. What's wrong with them? They're just costumes.

JUSTIN

Chill, dude.

Maggie takes the pitchfork away from Herrick and hands it back to Justin as the doorbell RINGS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MAGGIE

Yeah, dude. Chill.
(to the kids)
Let's go.

Herrick slumps back into the chair. He's picking up the can of beer from the floor when Maggie stalks back into the room after seeing the kids off and sits down on the coffee table facing directly across from Herrick.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Okay, first of all, we will get through this. I swear to you we will get through this shooting deal, but you're scaring me with this other thing.

HERRICK

It scares me too.

MAGGIE

I mean, Gary heard you out and hooked you up with the Sheriff's office. He showed you the report, didn't he?

HERRICK

Just like he said he would.

MAGGIE

Then let it go. I'm not going to play the whiny cop's wife while you just suffer along in some macho, stoic silence.

Herrick slumps, knowing what's coming.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Remember why we left LA to raise a family here.

HERRICK

Of course, it was the right move for us.

MAGGIE

I know that. That's why we took jobs that were going to mean something, remember? So, here we are. Cop. Teacher. Two kids and a house and we're happy now. Right?

She pauses to control herself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

We're happy. But you're withdrawing from me, into this thing you've created. Don't do this to me. Don't do this to us, to what we have here.

INT. POLICE RANGE -- NIGHT

Herrick has come off the line and stands examining his target. Other officers can be heard FIRING MUFFLED ROUNDS under the direction of the RANGEMASTER from the safety-glassed control room in the background.

STOGNER

(O.S.)

How you throwing 'em?

Herrick turns to face him and points to some bullet holes on the right side of the target silhouette.

HERRICK

I'm still heeling them.

STOGNER

Not when it counts. Ask Billy...

Stogner's would-be compliment hangs there awkwardly for a beat.

STOGNER (CONT'D)

(Cont.)

Guess you got a few more days on admin.

HERRICK

Yep. So can Hernandez keep you alive out there another three days?

Herrick waits for a response from Stogner.

STOGNER

I gotta ask you what you were doing talking to Yolanda Perez at Denny's after your shift yesterday.

HERRICK

What, you think I'm in there trying to get some?

STOGNER

No, what worries me is if you were in there digging for more stuff on Billy and his crazy shit.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Well, that's exactly what I was doing so why does that worry you?

STOGNER

Because you're making us look like a couple of paranoid, flaky assholes.

HERRICK

Listen, I'm the one that's working on this. I'm the flaky asshole. This doesn't have anything to do with you.

STOGNER

(too loud)

It has everything to do with me if we're partners.

(easing it down)

You know that and you know the worst thing that can happen to you here is you lose your credibility. Remember how we use to laugh at police movies when they're always disobeying orders, wrecking city cars, punching out their supervisors and still keep their jobs? Well, we know that's not the way it is, we are city employees just like the guys in the street sweepers and the airport.

HERRICK

I don't want to lose this job either. I just need to see this through until...

Stogner stands up disgusted.

STOGNER

(interrupting)

Listen, we don't have to make any big decisions now, but I'm going to have to hang with Hernandez through the next shift change.

HERRICK

(too quickly)

Sure, I understand.

STOGNER

No, you don't. Listen, I would back you up going through anything, but not this. Not this bullshit.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

STOGNER (CONT'D)

Do you really think there is a big pack of crazed killers out there?

HERRICK

I don't know that. But if there's people who ...

STOGNER

I'll check back with you in three months. See if you can get your life back in the meantime.

Herrick watches him leave and stares at his target blankly.

INT. CAB OF HERRICK'S TRUCK -- MORNING

Herrick drives talking into the car's hands free system.

HERRICK

Hey, Maggie. I wanted to call to apologize for the other day. Obviously it wasn't the way either of us planned it. Anyhow I'm in the canyon area now and I thought I could come by to finish the questions. If I miss you, try to give a call on the cell number I gave you on the city card. Thanks.

EXT. MAGGIE HALLAM'S DUPLEX -- MORNING

Herrick knocks on the door with the wind chimes barely tinkling at all. After no response he moves to the front picture window to peer in as he taps on the window.

HERRICK

Hey, Maggie?

A huge hand reaches out to tap Herrick's shoulder.

O.S DEEP MALE VOICE

Can I help you?

Nearly jumping out of his skin, Herrick whirls to find himself facing the largest biker he has ever seen. He steps back a few feet to get some distance between himself and this giant.

HERRICK

I'm looking for Maggie.

BIKER

(toward the window)
Keep looking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Herrick moves a bit further way from him to peer closer through the window. As his eyes adjust he sees that her place really is empty.

HERRICK

I was just here last night. How could she...

BIKER

There's nobody there.

HERRICK

I'm telling you...

BIKER

And I'm telling you that there's nobody there. I live in the other unit here. Look closer.

Now Herrick jams his face up to the window to see inside that not only is the unit empty, but there are piles of dust, old tiles and cobwebs.

BIKER (CONT'D)

(o.s.)

I've lived here for two years now and this one has been vacant the whole time.

Herrick turns away from the window on shaky legs to face him directly.

BIKER (CONT'D)

(then, remembering)

But you're about the fifth guy that's been here looking for someone named Maggie.

Herrick leans up against the wall as the world reels around him. Herrick stumbles to his truck and looks up once more at the Biker watching him from the porch as he starts it.

As Herrick finally drives off there is some movement over the Biker's shoulder from within the abandoned unit.

CLOSE ON THE ABANDONED DUPLEX WINDOW

There is just a quick flash of what appears to be Maggie Hallam's beautiful face peering out before it collapses horribly into a ghastly, corpse-like visage and withdraws from the window.

INT. SAINT THERESA'S CHURCH -- DAY

Father Palomares opens his side of the confessional door and steps out into the church vestibule. He sees Herrick sitting in the back row, waves and points outside.

EXT. SAINT THERESA'S CHURCH -- DAY

HERRICK

I know I was just here.

PALOMARES

I told you what you're in for,
remember?

HERRICK

It's gotten worse.

PALOMARES

OK?

HERRICK

I came this close to cheating on my
wife and I'm losing my mind.

PALOMARES

Well, guilt can make us...

HERRICK

No, no I didn't cheat on my wife,
but when I went back to see this
woman about the guy I shot...

PALOMARES

But you didn't sleep with her,
right?

HERRICK

No, I really didn't. Listen I'm
gulping the drugs the city
psychiatrist gave me with both
hands and they don't even make a
dent. I was really there, there
with her....

PALOMARES

After what you've been through...

HERRICK (CONT'D)

I am losing it and the fact that I
know it doesn't make it any better.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Palomares takes a long drag on his cigarette and, gauging Herrick's distress, holds his hand out for him to just take a break. They sit outside of the church in silence for a moment.

Across the courtyard of St. Theresa's they see Frank Bacall with his two man crew handing out bags of groceries and clothes to the local poor.

HERRICK (CONT'D)

He never stops, does he? How old is he now?

PALOMARES

Pushing eighty-five I think.

Palomares waves at Bacall who give him a dismissive wave back. Surprised now to see Herrick, Bacall give him a more earnest wave before he turns back to his work

PALOMARES (CONT'D)

All the wealthy people in this town are desperate for that black tie picture in Palm Springs Life accepting an award for their good work. Our diocese tried that a couple of times and he practically spit on them.

HERRICK

Yeah, the city tried giving him some award too last year I think.

PALOMARES

How'd that turn out?

HERRICK

Got spit on like the diocese.

Herrick and Palomares laugh a little and watch the goods being handed out across the courtyard. One of the large Mexican guys smiles as he's swarmed by kids while he hands out toys from a sack.

PALOMARES

Go back to your wife and family. I know you think you never left, but you probablu haven't really been there with them. Start tonight, but be there. Because they are your way out of all this.

CUT TO:

INT. HERRICK KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Herrick sits at the kitchen table playing poker with Jordan and Justin as Maggie prowls the kitchen prepping dinner. Each player has a pile of Halloween candy in front of them as chips. Jordan holds up a piece of candy as Herrick deals.

JORDAN

How much are these?

HERRICK

I told you, the Butterfingers are ten dollars, the Snickers are fives and the Reese's are ones.

JUSTIN

I'll take one down and dirty, dude.

JORDAN

I want to wait for the flop.

Maggie puts her hands on Herrick's shoulders from behind.

MAGGIE

What was that?

JORDAN

There's the flop before the river card.

MAGGIE

Watching a lot of TV with daddy, huh? Real nice. You're raising a card shark.

HERRICK

Hey, you're the one that's ruined them.

JUSTIN

I want a river card.

JORDAN

Not yet.

Maggie smiles radiantly as Herrick grabs a giggling Justin up from the table and shakes him upside down until a few candy bars fall out of his pockets. Herrick give Maggie a happy, lopsided grin.

INT. WATCH COMMANDER'S OFFICE -- DAY

With Herrick sitting at the desk with a glossy French travel brochure in his hands as Donnelley walks in. Herrick makes a half hearted effort to hide it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

DONNELLEY

What the hell are you doing with those?

HERRICK

Just browsing. You guys did say this summer...

DONNELLEY

I know what I said. You know, I think this Scanlon thing has you more fucked up than I thought. You wouldn't even talk about this before.

HERRICK

Well, it's a new day.

DONNELLEY

Right. Did you have some breakthrough session with Doctor Proud?

HERRICK

No, just a long weekend, stared into space, maybe touched the bottom finally.

There's a tap on the Dispatcher's glass wall and a FEMALE DISPATCHER hands Donnelley a sheet of paper.

DONNELLEY

Well, whatever it is it's good to have you back.

(hands him the note)

Can you go pick up their dinners? Better go now so you don't get yourself jammed in the Halloween parade crowd.

Donnelley squeezes Herrick's shoulder on the way out.

EXT. DENNY'S RESTAURANT -- LATE AFTERNOON

Herrick walks toward the police unit loaded down with cartons of food. As he sets them down in the back seat he turns to see Yolanda walking up.

YOLANDA

Hey, Herrick. This is messed up. They got you doing catering now?

HERRICK

It's a living. How you doing, Yolanda?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

YOLANDA

Things aren't too bad. You look like you're doing better since the last time I saw you.

HERRICK

You know, I am.

YOLANDA

How much longer you gonna be on the beach for Billy?

HERRICK

Three more days.

YOLANDA

(lighting a cigarette)

Well, sometimes it's good to step back from it all. I was laid up for a week after some fucking degenerate threw me down the stairs at the Tropics.

HERRICK

Yeah. I better hump this on back. Be good.

YOLANDA

You know me.

Herrick sits down and starts the engine. Yolanda snaps her fingers.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Yo, Herrick, I just remembered. I told you wrong about Lonnie last time I saw her picked up.

HERRICK

Yeah, what do you mean?

YOLANDA

(leaning down)

It was...

Yolanda's voice is drowned out by THREE GUYS ON HARLEYS revving their engines as they pull up to Denny's. Herrick reacts to her answer with some mild surprise, then shrugs his shoulders as he drives off.

EXT. PALM CANYON DRIVE -- LATE AFTERNOON

AS Herrick looks down the main street he sees that the parade has already started.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A GROUP OF COSTUMED PEOPLE ON HORSEBACK

Clatter past Herrick to queue up for the parade as he begins to thread his way through the elegant Las Palmas neighborhood to the station since the direct route is jammed.

EXT. LAS PALMAS DISTRICT -- NEARLY SUNSET

Herrick drives past the estates idly munching on a handful of French fries stolen from somebody's dinner carton. He thinks he's gone up far enough to avoid the parade, but ends up at another roadblock on Palm Canyon Drive with the parade in full swing. Smiling at the rookie mistake he turns the car around and glances in the rear view mirror.

EXT. PALM CANYON DRIVE -- MOMENTS LATER

Herrick can't resist and gets out of the car for a moment to watch the town's Halloween parade: a surprising, small town Americana tradition in a wealthy, jet set town. Lots of school bands in Halloween costumes, car dealers and local civic people in convertibles.

THE DESERT RIDERS --

About thirty old guys, pillars of the community types, clatter by on horses done up like charros. Frank Bacall is in the lead and he does a small, ironic rear up on his horse salute when he sees Herrick standing on the street. Herrick waves back and nods.

EVA VASEK --

Seated in a convertible with other women from her realty office follow up the riders, Eva seems a different person now. She smiles radiantly out at the crowd and even gives a friendly wave to Herrick.

HERRICK --

He can't seem to not smile at the whole goofy parade scene as he gets back into the unit. There has to be worse places to work.

IN THE MIRROR

He sees Yolanda gliding through the crowd across the street until she stops and grimaces as Justin Weemer comes up to her. Justin starts ranting and pointing back toward the top of the mountains in the area that Herrick has just been driving through.

BACK WITH HERRICK

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Shaking his head, he is about to drive off when he stomps on the brake flinging the French fries to the floor. He takes another long look in the mirror and then guns the engine.

EXT. LAS PALMAS ESTATES -- SUNSET

Herrick drives purposefully up the hill almost straight in the direction that Weemer pointed. He still scans left and right, but his vision keeps getting drawn to one vast estate that seems to drape itself over the top of the hill looming in front of him.

HERRICK'S POV

AS he pulls into the driveway of the estate the angle of the setting sun blinds him until, as his eyes adjust, he finally sees a HUGE PENTAGRAM within the ornate grillwork of the large iron gates.

Normally lost within the intricate design, it now seems to be on fire with the sun behind it at this angle. Just a few moments later the setting sun shifts and the symbol seems to disappear and fade back into the design pattern.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Shows that Herrick is at the gate of the huge estate seen earlier next to the Renoir house burglary.

HERRICK'S POV AGAIN

Now takes in a security camera mounted next to the gate in front of him. As he backs up the camera swivels to keep him locked into view.

CU SECURITY TV MONITOR

Herrick is seen backing out of the driveway.

IN THE CAR WITH HERRICK

As he races back to the station with his face set.

COMING AROUND A TURN

He nearly slams his unit into five antique cars finishing up from the parade. He locks up the brakes and waves an apology as he backs up for another route.

AT THE STOPLIGHT

Herrick squirms, waiting for the light to turn green and then the cluster of parade pedestrians to clear the intersection.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK
Come on, come on.

INT. POLICE STATION -- EVENING

Herrick briskly drops off the food cartons to the dispatchers.

INT. DOWN THE HALL - RECORDS ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Herrick searches for a particular file, opens it and turns to the last page. After a moment he puts the file back. He picks up a phone on the wall, pauses, then puts it back in the cradle.

ON HIS WAY OUT OF THE STATION

He nods to everyone normally, but finds himself edgy as he walks past everyone. In his current amped up state, they all seem to be looking at him like they know something.

EXT. POLICE YARD -- NIGHT

As Herrick walks to his truck he veers by the closest police unit and snags a shotgun out of the mount. He throws the shotgun into the cab and picks up his cell phone to punch in a number.

HERRICK
Come on, pick it up.

As the rings drone on he checks his rear view mirror.

MESSAGE TAPE/MAGGIE'S VOICE
(o.s.)
Hi, we're not in. Please leave
your message after the tone.

HERRICK
(yelling over the message)
Maggie, pick up the phone right now
for Christ's sake. Jordan.
Justin. Anybody.

INT. HERRICK KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Maggie runs in from the back patio to pick up a phone from the counter.

MAGGIE
(breathless)
Geez, all right, all right. What's
the big deal. I know you're all
right or someone else would be
calling me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

(o.s.)

I'm fine. Listen, I know you don't want to hear this but it looks like I was right.

MAGGIE

I can't hear everything you're saying. What's right?

HERRICK

(o.s.)

The cult thing. I want you and the kids to get ready to leave town for a few days. I'll be there in ten minutes.

Maggie bangs the phone on her palm.

MAGGIE

Will, I can't hear you, you're breaking up on this shitty phone. I think I heard you say you'd be home in ten minutes. Just tell me then. Gotta go, someone's at the front door. Bye.

As Maggie starts toward the front of the house the FIGURE of a MAN moves behind her in the background of the patio toward the back door.

HERRICK TRUCK INT. - NIGHT

HERRICK

(yelling)

Don't answer the door! Do you hear me? Stay on the line!

The line goes dead with a DIAL TONE. Herrick throws the phone down to take the wheel with both hands as he skids around a corner.

EXT. HERRICK RESIDENCE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

As Maggie opens the door her face shows that she knows the person standing there, out of view, but she still looks surprised to see them.

MAGGIE

Oh, hi. Is this...it?

INT. JORDAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Jordan sits on the bed watching a kid's video on television until something distracts her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CU BEDROOM DOORKNOB TURNING

Jordan watches the door a little scared until it opens. Then she smiles broadly.

JORDAN

Dr. Liz. I didn't know you were here.

She runs to hug Liz Torres who embraces her looking at her wristwatch over Jordan's head.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

Where's mommy?

TORRES

She's downstairs right now. She sent me up to bring you down so that we can all go to a party together.

JORDAN

A party? Is daddy coming too?

Torres scoops her up from the embrace and quickly carries her out of the room.

TORRES

We sure hope so, Jordan.

EXT. HERRICK HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Herrick brings his truck to a silent stop one house away from his and steps out with the shotgun. Racking a round into the chamber he stalks his own home, moving within the shadows and glancing in windows.

AT THE DOOR NOW

He finds it unlocked and swings it open with his shotgun leveled.

INT. HERRICK HOUSE - NIGHT

He edges into the house and clears the front rooms on his way to the kitchen.

IN THE KITCHEN

There's still no sign of people or a struggle as Herrick looks at the preparations for a dinner spread around.

Amped up, he swirls with the shotgun at the sound of POUNDING and SCRATCHING at the door before the two family dogs push their way into the kitchen from the patio.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

UP THE STAIRS

With the dogs at his heels he bolts up the steps to check Jordan and Justin's rooms. The video is still playing in Jordan's room.

BACK DOWNSTAIRS NOW

Herrick freezes in the kitchen doorway at the sound of the phone ringing. He snatches it up on the third ring and looks at the phone for just a second like his whole life is on that line.

HERRICK

Hello.

DONNELLEY

(o.s.)

Hey, bud. What's up?

HERRICK

I guess you're going to tell me,
Gary.

INT. KAUFER ESTATE SECURITY ROOM - NIGHT

Donnelley sits a desk in a room filled with security monitors and motion detector site pads displays in the background. He idly punches up and views different screens while he talks.

DONNELLEY

So this obviously isn't the way we
wanted to bring you in. Guess I
didn't spin up Lonnie's booking
package well enough for you.

INTERCUT THE FOLLOWING PHONE CONVERSATION

HERRICK

Let's get to it. What has to happen
now?

DONNELLEY

Okay, Will, here's the deal. First
of all don't even think about
calling anyone else into this. Our
guys, the county sheriff, the local
feds, anyone. Don't reach out to
Stogner because we're all over him
too.

(lets this sink in)

You try to out think me on this and
you've killed your family.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

(evenly)

Okay, I got all that. Now what.

DONNELLEY

You show up alone in your truck at the service gate on the west side of the property in the next thirty minutes. I want you to remember how much you have to lose before you calmly drive over here with you head screwed on straight. Okay?

HERRICK

Absolutely. Don't hurt them, Gary

DONNELLEY

Hey, the only person that could hurt them is you. The clock starts when I hang up. Stay smart, Will.

EXT. SAINT TERESA'S CHURCH -- NIGHT

As Father Palomares walks whistling from the church toward the rectory a figure stalks him in the nearby bushes.

Palomares senses this and, still whistling, picks up a metal sprinkler pole without missing a step. He hefts it up to his shoulder as he approaches the gap in the foliage ahead. Herrick steps into view,

HERRICK

Father.

PALOMARES

Geez. Herrick.

(with one look at him)

What is it?

INT. RECTORY KITCHEN -- MOMENTS LATER

Palomares waits as Herrick gulps down a glass of water from the tap.

HERRICK

They've got my family. Remember all my cult questions?

PALOMARES

I just thought you were under a lot of stress after the shooting.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

I didn't believe it anymore either, but it's true and I've only got a few minutes here to plan this. First of all when you talked about that one percent chance of a real problem, what did you mean?

PALOMARES

The worst case scenario would be an organized, disciplined group that we'd never know was there. No crazy Manson types. You'd need connected people, people with money. A doctor or nurse to help runaways with their babies for sacrifices. Someone to keep an over watch on security. A complete closed circle with no leakage. Nothing that would get out to the world.

Herrick's shaking hand clatters the glass as he sets it down on the counter.

HERRICK

Well, that's exactly who has my family captive. In a fortress up in Las Palmas and I've got another ten minutes to get there.

PALOMARES

I'll do anything I can, but why me? Why not the police?

HERRICK

(barely holding on)

Because he is the police. More than I am right now.

PALOMARES

I've got an uncle in the San Diego Police Department. Plus, you know, church authorities.

HERRICK

They'd route an inquiry from him right to the watch commander. No, it's going to be all me.

PALOMARES

Well, I do have a background. Remember? You think I'm just going to wish you well and then just check the obituaries to see if you show up?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

Herrick nods as he draws himself together. He glances at his watch as Palomares opens a drawer.

PALOMARES (CONT'D)

Okay, draw me a map of this house,
the fences, the gates, tree lines,
anything you can remember.

Palomares reaches into a drawer of kitchen knives and looks over his shoulder at Herrick's unprotected back. His hand moves over several butcher's knives for a while until he finds a pen and a pad of paper.

HERRICK

It's gonna be rough. I've only
driven past it.

Palomares hands him the pen and paper.

PALOMARES

I'll take it rough.

INT. HERRICK'S TRUCK -- MINUTES LATER

As Herrick drives down a street in the Las Palmas neighborhood he checks his watch.

HERRICK'S P.O.V.

As he turns a corner to bring the estate into view. Before it just looked huge. Now it seems like the most sinister structure imaginable: Dracula's castle in the desert.

EXT. SERVICE GATE

Turning on his interior cab light Herrick pulls his truck up to the gate and waits. After a few moments the gate opens and he drives through.

HERRICK'S P.O.V.

As he scans the foliage there seems to be some movement but he can't make it out clearly. Then the gardener's shed comes into view.

INT. HERRICK'S TRUCK

He takes several deep breaths and then turns off the engine.

EXT. GARDENER'S SHED -- CONTINUOUS

Herrick kicks the door open and sticks his empty hands out first before shifting himself up out of the seat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GUARD VOICE
 (o.s. crisp and
 professional)
 Okay, first of all before I start
 with the commands look down at your
 chest.

A red laser dot appears in the middle of his chest followed quickly by a second dot that focuses in.

GUARD VOICE (CONT'D)
 (o.s.)
 You know what those are. If you
 resist that's where the rounds hit
 and you'll never see your family.
 Understand?
 (Herrick nods)
 Good.

At the sound of brush underfoot Herrick instinctively whips his head around.

GUARD VOICE (CONT'D)
 (with some menace)
 Keep your eyes straight ahead!
 (back to professional)
 Alright. Keep your hands in the air
 and drop slowly to your knees.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As the GUARD steps from behind the foliage and approaches Herrick from behind. This Guard's red laser dot is in the center of Herrick's back.

CLOSER ON HERRICK

As the Guard grasps Herrick's laced fingers with his left hand he holsters his gun and reaches for the cuffs on his belt with his right.

EXT. IN THE BUSHES -- CONTINUOUS

The SECOND GUARD has a small assault rifle resting against a tree trunk to keep the laser on target. Suddenly he seems to crumple inward and then slams to the ground.

BACK WITH HERRICK

He sees the red dot on his chest go away at the same time there is a muffled crash in the bushes. Guard One relaxes his hold on Herrick's hands for a second when he hears the noise, just long enough for Herrick's hands to whip around and latch onto him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BACK WITH THE SECOND GUARD

He is locked up with Palomares violently struggling to break free. The Guard manages to snake a hand down toward the pistol on his belt until Palomares, seeing the intent, instinctively knees him in the spine and twists his neck with a fatal pop.

HERRICK'S FIGHT

Herrick bucks the FIRST GUARD off his back and pins him down as he slams his fist and elbow into his face until he's out.

INT. MANSION SECURITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Donnelley sees the attack on the perimeter guards on one of the room's monitors.

DONNELLEY

Goddamn it, Will.

(then into his headset)

Everybody stand by. They took down the arrest team at the shed.

BACK AT THE GARDENER SHED

A shaken Palomares limps out of the brush and heads toward Herrick as he drags his Guard toward the water pipe stanchions at the side of the shed.

HERRICK

Father! You okay? Where's yours?

PALOMARES

He's gone.

INT. MANSION SECURITY ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Donnelley's hand tracks the gardener shed camera while keeping an eye on the other monitors as well.

DONNELLEY

(into the set)

Okay, it looks like just the two for now. Make sure the shadows know these guys are armed.

EXT. GARDENER SHED -- CONTINUOUS

Palomares seems shell-shocked over killing his guard. Now he's in the confessional.

PALOMARES

He was going for the gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK
Give me a hand with...

PALOMARES
(sharply)
He's coming around.

The Guard groans and tries to sit up with his hands cuffed in front of him. Herrick grabs him by the hair.

HERRICK
How many more of you are there?

The Guard starts mumbling and makes a series of motions with his hands. Palomares listens intently to the Latin-sounding mumble until his face hardens.

HERRICK (CONT'D)
I said, how many...
(to Palomares)
What's he doing with his hands?

PALOMARES
(sickened)
It's the sign of Satan. Some
litany.

HERRICK
(interr.)
That's it.

Herrick whacks him unconscious with the shogun butt.

HERRICK (CONT'D)
Let's go.

Herrick uses a second pair of handcuffs to secure the Guard to the water pipe. They duct-tape his mouth and sprint off toward the house up the hill.

THEIR P.O.V. RUNNING

Now there really does seem to be a LARGE FIGURE shadowing their route toward the house. They both freeze up to stand listening to a faint GROWLING.

EXT. ESTATE GROUNDS -- CONTINUOUS

Herrick and Palomares stand back to back trying to somehow penetrate the darkness with their vision.

PALOMARES
(whispering)
We've got one with us.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Why hasn't he made a move?

PALOMARES

Who knows. We need inside.

EXT. ESTATE SIDE DOOR

Herrick butt strokes a hole in the glass of the locked door with the shotgun and they pour in.

INT. DARKENED KITCHEN

After listening intently for a moment they push through a door into a:

INT. LARGE FORMAL DINING ROOM

Both men slide along opposite walls of the darkened room. Just when they are about to step down into it:

THE HOUSE EXPLODES AROUND THEM

As a stuttering HAIL of SILENCED MACHINE GUN ROUNDS disintegrate everything near them.

THEIR P.O.V. FROM THE FLOOR

Wood chips from the floor, patches of plaster and shattered glass rain down around them.

DONNELLEY

(o.s. yelling)

Control fire. That's it Stand by.

(then)

Not too smart, Will. You stay proned out like that when we turn on the lights.

When the dining room light goes on, three Guards move in, take their weapons and search them.

INT. LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

Herrick and Palomares are brought in with their hands on their heads and guns trained on them. A murderous looking Donnelley motions them into chairs.

DONNELLEY

Will, I appreciated you killing Scanlon before we could get to that idiot, but what can I do with you now, with this priest you drug in?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Gary, you know you need help.
There's nothing that's happened so
far that the department...

DONNELLEY

Hey, we're doing something here
that dwarfs your life. And, you
know, in spite of it all I still
think you belong with us. That's
why we sent The Other into your
tidy little world.

HERRICK

What are you talking about?

DONNELLEY

Maggie Hallam. That's how you knew her.

Donnelley steps in closer to Herrick.

DONNELLEY (CONT'D)

You know, we're not some new age
fad that just sprang up. We have
people in our family that you would
never guess, people from the
headlines and magazine covers.
Jesus, Will. I'm your best friend.
You know me. Do you think you have
to lose your sense of humor or
slink around like Bela Lugosi? You
know something else? Our lord isn't
a department store mannequin on the
wall of a church with a crown of
thorns. He's real and...

Suddenly there is an eerie change in the atmosphere of the
room they're in and the whole house almost like a non-
mechanical generator turning on.

DONNELLEY (CONT'D)

(with reverence)

He's here with us now.

Palomares suddenly sits bolt upright in his chair in horror.

HERRICK

Come on Gary. Just spare me all
this psycho babble recruitment
bullshit and tell me how I get my
family back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

DONNELLEY

Well, it's real simple. The psycho babble has to work for you or things get real problematic for you and your kids.

HERRICK

(wary)

What about Maggie?

DONNELLEY

(rushing on)

At least you have a choice. The future's a little more limited for the padre here. He's either going to be put to sleep quickly or we let the sombras play with him for a while.

Herrick and Palomares exchange a look over what they both knew.

HERRICK

(buying some time)

Okay, okay I'm willing to hear more. But I don't know about Maggie.

DONNELLEY

Don't worry about Maggie. And don't worry about family. Geez, we're the ultimate family. Show you what I mean.

(yelling toward upstairs)

Liz!

ON THE SECOND STORY LANDING

Out from the hallway steps a dazed looking Maggie with Liz next to her. Maggie walks to the railing and gives Herrick a tight sheepish smile that says it all.

MAGGIE

Will.

Herrick sits up in his chair, then slides back into it caving in from what he has just seen.

DONNELLEY

(o.s.)

Well, that kind of streamlines the decision for you, doesn't it Will? Come on, why do you think she kept telling you to come to me with all your paranoid stories anyway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

Herrick can't take his eyes off Maggie as she raises her hands to him with a resigned shrug.

Then just before she lowers them she locks his gaze and folds back the thumb of her right hand showing him four fingers for a second without anyone else noticing.

DONNELLEY (CONT'D)

(o.s.)

Okay, then. While we're all on the same page for a second is there anything else I need to know? You were stupid once tonight. Anything else going to complicate things?

ON THE BALCONY/FROM ANOTHER ANGLE

Liz has been discreetly training a small caliber pistol on Maggie during the above and now Liz motions her back from the edge of the landing.

HERRICK

Settles his focus on Palomares who stares back.

ON DONNELLEY

Somehow wary.

DONNELLEY (CONT'D)

Will?

THE UPSTAIRS LANDING

Maggie stumbles a bit, recovers, and then grabs Liz's gun with both hands. When Liz pulls back Maggie uses the counter momentum and swings her into the wall as the gun falls to the floor and clatters toward the hallway.

DOWNSTAIRS/HERRICK

At the first sound of the fight upstairs Herrick uses the distraction to grab the gun barrel of the Guard nearest him with his left hand as he scoops up and hurls a heavy ash tray with everything he's got to smash into Donnelley's jaw with his right hand.

UPSTAIRS

While the fight rages on with Liz and Maggie a hand reaches out from the shadows of the hallway to snatch up the pistol that has slid that way.

DOWNSTAIRS/PALOMARES

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

As soon as Herrick made his move Palomares spins to grab Guard Three's gun and twist it around to fire a spray of ROUNDS into Guard Two's chest while he struggles with Three.

UPSTAIRS LANDING

With a charge Liz tries to push Maggie over the wrought iron railing and gets her torso half-way over. Desperate, Maggie grabs Liz' hair as she topples over taking her with her as they both scream and clutch onto the railing with their legs dangling over the floor twenty feet below them.

PALOMARES

Locked in a death struggle for the gun with Guard Three who still has his finger on the trigger. Now, with both men fighting for control, the ROUNDS start to spray out in jerky, uneven bursts.

ANOTHER ANGLE

As the rounds shatter the glass coffee table near Herrick's fight and then clang off the wrought iron staircase up toward Liz/Maggie.

HERRICK

Seems to be overmatched by a larger, stronger Guard One while Donnelley tries to get up from the ground clutching the bloody right side of his face.

BACK WITH PALOMARES

AS he finally gets the grip he wants and ratchets Guard Three's gun hand back toward him and fires a CONTACT BURST of BULLETS into him that blasts him back ten feet.

THE STAIRWAY

AS Liz starts to fall and latches onto Maggie sending them both hurtling toward the floor. Liz lands horribly with a snapped spine and eyes open as Maggie hits hard with her left foot collapsed beneath her.

NOW GUARD ONE

Breaks free from Herrick with a roar and brings the machine gun back up on him. Just as the ROUNDS start to spit out Palomares hurls himself onto the Guard taking all the bullets intended for Herrick. Palomares takes the Guard with him as the bullets fling him back toward the coffee table where the Guard caves his neck in on the table edge.

DONNELLEY

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

Is now on his knees and reaching out for the pistol he dropped when Herrick kicks up into his ribs so hard that Donnelley is actually airborne for just a second. As Donnelley gasps for air Herrick picks up the gun and rushes over to Maggie, bent over in pain.

MAGGIE

Will. I'm not in this thing. They said you were having a nervous breakdown, that's why...

HERRICK

It's okay. Other than your foot...

MAGGIE

I think I'm okay. I'm full of thorazine or some shit Liz gave me.

Herrick moves back to Donnelley and rolls him over.

HERRICK

(evenly)

Real quickly, Gary.

DONNELLEY

(clutching his jaw)

You don't know the damage you've done. For nothing...

HERRICK

Gary.

DONNELLEY

Come on, what are you going to do now? You going to shoot me now, your best friend, unarmed, in front of your...

Donnelley interrupts himself with a yelp of pain as Herrick fires a ROUND into his thigh. Donnelley grabs the wound with both hands and rolls onto his side as Herrick closes in on him to lightly place his shoe right on the wound.

HERRICK

How many more and which way did they take them?

DONNELLEY

What do you think you're...

Herrick stomps down and waits for Donnelley's scream to die down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (6)

DONNELLEY (CONT'D)

(panting)

There's one more of mine...and the two sombras. There's a trail out of the property in the back.

HERRICK

The who?

DONNELLEY

(slipping into shock)

Sombras. The shadows. They're sanctioned mortals, but they think they're half jaguars or something. Their fathers guarded the Presence for thirty years before them. They'll gut you like a rabbit if you follow them.

HERRICK

What do you mean mortals? Or sanctioned? What kind of...

DONNELLEY

(gasps a laugh)

You still don't get it, do you. What you dealing with...

MAGGIE

(o.s.)

Will!

Herrick whips his head around toward her.

MAGGIE (CONT'D)

Get them back!

Herrick holds her gaze for a second and then slides her the cell phone from Donnelley's belt along with one of the pistols from the Guards.

HERRICK

Call 911 now and then shoot him in the other leg if he moves.

Herrick glances at the fallen Palomares as he picks up his shotgun on the way out. Maggie picks up the gun, racks the slide back to chamber a round and points the pistol at the writhing Donnelly with a smile of pure hatred.

INT. HALLWAY -- MOMENTS LATER

Herrick races down the hall just as the last of the Guards races in through the doorway from outside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the dead run Herrick fires a DEAFENING SHOTGUN ROUND square into his chest knocking him back out the door.

He stops at the SOUND of a handgun inside firing a ROUND followed by Donnelley's scream. He racks another round into the shotgun and shakes his head.

HERRICK
That's my girl.

EXT. ESTATE GROUNDS -- CONTINUOUS

Herrick leaps from the back patio and runs for the trails. The vegetation is thicker at the edge of the property at the trail's mouth and closes over him.

HERRICK'S P.O.V.

As the bushes and shrubs whip into his face, he stops when he hears Jordan crying something to her captors far ahead on the trail where an occasional strobe of a distant flashlight can be seen.

HERRICK

He's closing the distance quickly until, like earlier, he senses someone running in the underbrush near him.

Herrick draws up short and tries to control his breathing as he slowly revolves in the darkness pointing the shotgun at the enemy he can't see. Straining for a sign he hears one, then several, POLICE SIRENS in the distance and races on warily.

EXT. ON THE RIDGE OF THE TRAIL -- NIGHT

Trying to get a view of things just ahead, he tenses up again sensing something closing in on him as he turns to look behind him. The animal noises heard earlier are so soft and close now that it's like PURRING.

FROM THE TREE LIMB ABOVE HIM

A huge SHADOW GUARD leaps onto Herrick taking him to the ground and then hoists him up with a roar. Herrick's legs dangle a full foot off the ground as he hangs onto the forearm with both hands gasping for air.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SHADOW

I have him.

MAN'S VOICE

(o.s.)

Bring him on out into the
moonlight, Amador. Let's take a
quick look at this pilgrim.

EXT. TOP OF THE RIDGE -- CONTINUOUS

Another SHADOW stands next to Frank Bacall with Jordan and Justin in tow. The kids are harnessed up with toddler style walking leashes and a WOMAN huddles on the ground crying.

BACALL

Well, you've been a righteous pain
in the ass.

The kids squeal at the sight of Herrick and are jerked back in line by the second Shadow.

JORDAN/JUSTIN

Daddy!

Herrick struggles with everything he has at the sight of the kids but he's helpless.

HERRICK

(gasping)

Just give them to me. I won't stop
you.

BACALL

Really? You know from here you
don't really seem to be in good
position to dictate terms.

HERRICK

C'mon, you're ruined here. Giving
them up could help your case.

BACALL

No, no, I'm far from ruined, but
I'll miss this desert though. You
know, that magnificent front gate
you stumbled onto was hand forged
right after the war. They just
couldn't resist having our truth
laid into the design. Believe me,
you have no idea of the things I've
seen here, the stature of the
people who've come through that
gate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HERRICK

Where can you run to?

BACALL

Anywhere I want. In an hour I'll be wheels up in a Gulfstream toward any of a number of receptive locations. You know we prepare for disruptions like you.

Bacall displays three small thumb drives from his coat and then replaces them.

BACALL (CONT'D)

(cont.)

Believe me, there's nothing left in that house that will lead anyone to me or mine. In twenty-four hours I'll have a whole new identity and be walking through the park in some other city watching the leaves turn.

The sound of the SIRENS getting closer snaps him out of the reverie.

BACALL (CONT'D)

(cont.)

But for you, things don't look so good. You'll never have any idea the power you challenged here. Did you really think...? Never mind. Amador.

As Bacall turns to walk away TWO SHOTS ring out and he goes down to his knees gagging. The woman on the ground LONNIE KRAUSE has fired two rounds into him from the handgun lost earlier in the fight on the balcony.

BACALL (SFX)

Suddenly stops gagging and tenses up with his eyes bulging and vacant. A strange hissing sound seems to come from within him as his hands shoot up toward the sky begging for something.

Now his skin starts to sickeningly slough off in sheets as from within the core of this body something else is emerging: a translucent face with dark, cruel eyes set into a death's head oozes out.

Now the ENTITY lets out a shrill roar of defiance that deafens everyone as it looks around before speaking.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

THE ENTITY

(an unearthly rasp)

I've ridden that vain old man for
over half a century. How fitting
that he's killed by a whore.

The ENTITY turns toward an already cowering Lonnie now
catatonic with horror and leans down to her.

THE ENTITY (CONT'D)

All the care and precautions we've
taken just to be undone by an
insect like you.

Everyone is still in a state of shock at what they're seeing.
Even the Shadows are shivering in awe seeing what they have
really been serving for the first time in their lives.

THE ENTITY

(to the two Shadows)

Finish things here and wait for me
in the canyons as your fathers did
before you.

Now the Entity crouches down and crawls preternaturally
backward, crab-like up the side of a rock outcropping to
disappear into the brush.

HERRICK AND THE SHADOW

As he slams Herrick onto the ground like a doll and bolts in
a fury toward Lonnie who still has the gun in her hand. Then
as an afterthought he turns back to finish Herrick.

SHADOW'S P.O.V.

Face to face with Herrick crumpled on the ground still
gasping, but now with the recovered shotgun levelled at his
face just before the MUZZLE FLASH and ROAR of the gun.

THE RIDGE

As the other Shadow yanks the pistol away from Lonnie.

SHADOW TWO

Putta!

The kids run away in terror as he furiously fires TWO SHOTS
into Lonnie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

The Shadow stands over her in confused fury and looks over toward a barely conscious Herrick still on the ground. Then, like the predator instinctively chasing the prey, the Shadow bolts off to catch up with the Kids on the trail.

THE SHADOW

Is nearly on them as his hand reaches out for control of the leash.

THE KIDS

Look back at the Shadow reaching for them, scream and run through a low mesquite tree's covering branches to escape the grab.

HERRICK

Is on the ground still trying to get to his feet after being nearly choked to death. He is on one knee when he hears the kids scream which launches him into a run toward them.

THE SHADOW

Has waited for the kids to flush out further up the trail and now closes the gap between them with his huge strides.

HERRICK

Sprints up the ridge for the kids with everything he's got left, jumping over rocks on the trail, branches from the brush whipping into his face.

AT THE RIDGE TOP

Just as the Shadow's hand closes in on the leash Herrick jams the shotgun into his ribs with a CONTACT SHOTGUN BLAST that blows him off the trail into the bushes. Herrick scoops up the terrified kids and hugs them tightly as he goes back to Lonnie on the ground dying.

BACK DOWN THE HILL

HERRICK

Lonnie, hang on.

LONNIE

I'm not one of them. They took my baby.

HERRICK

Come on, Lonnie. You can hear the sirens, can't you? I guarantee you one of those is an ambulance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LONNIE

I'm not one of them, okay? I never
was...they took my baby.

Lonnie closes her eyes to die.

MAGGIE

(o.s.)

Will!

ON THE TRAIL

As Herrick carries the Kids down toward Maggie who has hobbled part way up the trail. He brings the Kids to her and all four cluster together on a small knoll on the side of the trail.

EXT. OVERHEAD VIEW OF ESTATE -- NIGHT

As four police units and an ambulance converge on the site, spilling out personnel.

EXT. ON THE KNOLL -- CONTINUOUS

With the shotgun still pointed at the trail Herrick loads another round with his family huddled around him.

MAGGIE

Are we all right? Is it over now?

HERRICK

Think so. Try to keep the leg
still.

MAGGIE

But is it over?

They all tense up at the sound of people coming up the trail until the POLICE HT's can be heard. Sgt. Rodriguez, Stogner, and a Third Officer approach the knoll.

STOGNER

Jesus, Will! Maggie! Are you hit?

HERRICK

Her foot's broken. There's four
more just up the trail.

STOGNER

Dead?

(then to Herrick's nod)

Jesus Christ. Will, I'm so sorry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Stogner's pained look shows how wrong he's been. Without taking his finger out of the shotgun's trigger guard Herrick exchanges a long look with a stone-faced Rodriguez. Stogner races on up ahead to the ridge.

RODRIGUEZ

Hell of a day, Will. Maggie,
they're coming up with a gurney.
You just lay still.

HERRICK

Donnelley?

RODRIGUEZ

On his way to ER right now.

(then)

Prison later. Hell of a job you
did here, Will. We all thought
that you...

Rodriguez finally smiles when he reaches down to soothingly cup the face of a shaking Jordan. Now Herrick puts the shotgun down to put his arms around his family and what he has just witnessed is seared onto his face.

INT. POLICE LOCKER ROOM -- NIGHT

Rodriguez, Stogner, and the Third Officer seen earlier have finished changing into street clothes and packing up their gear. Stogner makes a drinking motion to the Third Officer who nods and then looks toward Rodriguez.

STOGNER

Sarge, care to join us at the
Fireside for a taste? We're all in
some kind of shock.

RODRIGUEZ

I'd like to, guys, but I got ten
hours of paper on this, minimum.
Plus the interviews from the DA's
office start for all of us start
tomorrow.

STOGNERH

Yeah. Just your average night on
the job, huh?

RODRIGUEZ

Right. Unbelievable.

They leave Rodriguez in the locker room by himself. When he's sure he's alone his expression seems to shift a bit harder and he opens his locker door wider.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FROM AN ANGLE BEHIND HIM

Rodriguez drops to his knees and makes a series of gestures with his hands as he whispers some Latin sounding litany toward his locker.

CU LOCKER INTERIOR

Shows a calendar poster of Jesus from Saint Mark's with a crucifix on a chain next to it.

EXT. PORCH -- NIGHT

Stogner knocks on the door and looks around nervously as the WIND CHIMES next to the door twist in the evening breeze. The door opens and Maggie Hallam stares at him: no girlish stuff now, just dark and high voltage now.

STOGNER

The protocol said to bring these to you. I didn't know how to...

He stops, takes the three drives from his pocket and extends his hand toward her like she may bite it. She gives him a long look like maybe she's deciding his fate.

Then she opens the door to her place once again furnished lavishly with the lights down low. She gives him a predator's wide smile.

MAGGIE HALLAM

Well, come on in, cowboy.

FADE OUT:

THE END