

STRANGER 456

HOUR THREE

Of a limited series

Written by

Peter Lance

Based on his novel

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EPISODE THREE
TEASER

INT. CONTAINER - LATER - NIGHT

In a storage yard along THE CHICAGO RIVER, blocks from Michigan Ave. Maddy wakes up and peers through the doors of the shipping container where Axel has hidden her.

POV: He's bringing CANS OF FUEL down to A 20 Foot BAYLINER inboard/outboard MOTOR BOAT on the river below.

Using her small belt-buckle KNIFE she breaks the flex-ties he's bound her with and pushes open the door, just enough for the light to reveal:

THREE BODY BAGS lined up in the container. She unzips them. Jesus. AN OLD MAN, A 50-YEAR-OLD WOMAN + A CHERUB-LIKE BABY.

MADDY
(in a whisper)
What in Christ is he doing?

Suddenly, Axel approaches. Maddy holds her breath until he's inches away, then pushes with all her strength against the heavy steel door. KNOCKING HIM DOWN, she bursts out of the container and starts running, trying to get her bearings.

EXT. STORAGE YARD

The yard full of containers is surrounded by a 20 foot-high CHAIN-LINK FENCE. Now behind her, she hears Axel screaming.

AXEL
I don't know why you're
making this so *hard*. I brought
you back here for a reason.

But Maddy is halfway across the yard by now, zig-zagging in and out of the containers, toward the fence along the street.

Axel races back to another container where he'd previously stored the TOYOTA PICKUP WITH THE CAMPER SHELL as...

Maddy approaches the chain link fence, whereupon, Axel ROARS OUT OF THE CONTAINER, giving chase.

At the base of the fence she looks up and sees POV:
that the top is covered IN RAZOR WIRE.

She bends down and reaches into her RIGHT SOCK where she's
hidden her iPHONE. She's stowed THE BATTERY in the other
sock, so she quickly pops it in and fires up the cell.

It rings once, twice and Forbes picks up.

INTERCUT:

INT. TAURUS - NIGHT

He's racing along Lake Shore drive by the Zoo.

FORBES
Where the hell have you been?

MADDY
No time now.
(hyperventilating)
He's got me in some kind of
container yard down by the
river.

She starts climbing the fence for a better view. As she gets
higher she sees that...

MADDY (CONT'D)
It's by Merchandise Mart...

Forbes eyes a map and fixes on the location.

FORBES
Franklin St. Bridge. O.K. Keep
the line open. I'm two minutes
out.

He pushes the pedal to the floor, doing 80 toward the Wacker
exit off Lake Shore as he speed-dials Captain Jamal.

INTERCUT:

INT. HOMICIDE BULL PEN

Sgt. Xie answers.

SGT. XIE
Task Force.

FORBES

This is Forbes. The I-80 suspect has Deputy Bergstrom captive in a storage yard south of the Franklin Street Bridge. Request immediate uniform response...

EXT. STORAGE YARD.

Maddy clings to the top of the fence now, unable to get past the razor wire as Axel, kissing the fence with the pickup, yells up at her through A SUN ROOF.

AXEL

You know, I have been *incredibly* patient with you. Do you have any idea the lengths to which I've gone to keep you from sustaining any serious trauma? I could have broken your fucking neck back in Washington. I could have drilled you that night at the motel or slit your throat at the Zoo. I think, at this point, you owe me the courtesy of a little understanding!

MADDY

You're out of your fucking mind.

AXEL

Can I quote you on that later for the insanity defense?

Just then, Maddy hears sirens. Up on the Bridge, two Chicago PD UNITS approach, sending Axel into a rage.

AXEL (CONT'D)

Have it your way. You're coming off that fence, one way or another.

He puts the pickup into reverse, then ROARS FORWARD SLAMMING into one of the 20 foot FENCE POSTS. BOOM!

THE FENCE VIBRATES and Maddy loses her grip. She falls about five feet, but grabs a lower section and holds on.

Down below, Axel backs up again and roars forward. BOOM!

Maddy falls another couple of feet, holding tightly to the fence as she weighs her options. She can't get over the razor wire and the next time he hits the post, she'll go down.

So just as the pickup slams into the fence for the third time, she pushes off BACKWARDS and drops onto...

THE ROOF OF THE CAMPER SHELL.

Axel screams when he hears her hit the roof.

Roaring into reverse, he speeds BACKWARDS through the yard. Maddy grabs THE KNIFE from her belt buckle and jams it into the camper shell roof so that she has something to hold onto.

She lays spread eagle on the roof as Axel spins the pickup into a 180 degree turn and races toward the river.

AXEL (CONT'D)
 Goddamnit, baby, You are
 fucking with history now and
 I have run out of *patience*.

Axel slams his right fist against the pickup roof as he spins the wheel with his left hand and roars in and out of the containers. Meanwhile...

INT. TAURUS

Forbes is blocks away. He turns the Ford right on Orleans Street, almost taking the corner on two wheels, as he uses the massive Mart building as a guide to get him to the river.

Maddy has kept the cell phone connection open and now, on the SPEAKER OF HIS OWN CELL, Forbes can hear the psychopath screaming as he tries to knock Maddy off the truck.

AXEL (O.C.)
 That's it. I don't give a fuck
 what this does to your skin...
 I'll fix it in post...

EXT. STORAGE YARD.

And with that, he slams on the brakes, causing Maddy to shoot forward and onto the HOOD OF THE PICKUP. She rolls down onto the ground in front of him, stunned for a moment as...

Axel GUNS THE ENGINE and hits THE HIGH BEAMS

The sirens from THE TWO PD UNITS are getting louder now as...

BOOM! The Taurus blasts through the gates of the container yard and Forbes roars in.

He looks left, right, around the yard and spots the Toyota with Maddy in front of it, so he turns and T-BONES the pickup BROADSIDE, flipping it onto its side.

Now with the gas pedal to the floor, he uses the Taurus to push the pickup against the side of a container.

Upended now, Axel is temporarily pinned, but he kicks out the WINDSHIELD and exits, taking off toward the river as Forbes jumps out of the Taurus and rushes to Maddy's side.

He doesn't even have a chance to ask her if she's all right, before she's up and running, yelling at him.

MADDY

Let me have your Beretta.

But Forbes is already in motion. He pulls a Walther 9 from an ankle holster and tosses it to her as they give chase.

The amphetamines are coursing through Axel's bloodstream now. He makes it to THE BAYLINER and jumps down into the cuddy cabin, grabbing Maddy's Smith & Wesson.

He hasn't come this far to leave his prize in that yard, so he fires - BANG- forcing Forbes behind one of THE BIG STORAGE BOXES.

Maddy ducks behind another container and comes up firing.

BOOM... One of her Glaser Safety Slugs explodes on the Bayliner above Axel's head, sending a hot spray of lead BB's at him.

AXEL

Goddamnit bitch... I've got to look good for this too!

The two CHICAGO PD UNITS race into the yard now, as Axel trades shots with Maddy and Forbes. Just then, one of the UNIFORMS issues a warning OVER THE SPEAKER in his squad car.

UNIFORM #1

Chicago Police! Stop firing or you will be fired upon!

But Maddy won't stop. She sends another round toward the Bayliner and the two UNIFORMS draw their weapons, exiting their units and closing in on Forbes and Maddy from behind.

Forbes realizes that if he doesn't do something soon, they'll be killed by friendly fire. So he stops and hold his Beretta in the air, yelling.

FORBES
Don't shoot. FBI.

He pulls out his old FBI ID and holds his thumb over the word "RETIRED" while the cops approach him cautiously.

But now, down at the river's edge, Maddy races forward.

Axel has moved from the Bayliner and hidden behind a concrete BRIDGE SUPPORT, plotting to grab her from behind and pull her into the boat. Then, as she passes, he lunges out, but she spins on him.

MADDY
I should've let that van drop
the first night...

She fires point blank at his head. But THE WALTHER JAMS: the slug literally stands upright in the slide as Axel smiles.

AXEL
Fate, baby. Monstrous and
empty.

UNIFORM #2 is moving toward them now, brandishing a shot-gun.

UNIFORM #2
Drop your weapons. Repeat.
Drop those guns...

He fires a warning shot and it whizzes over Maddy's head.

Just then, she manages to rack the slide on the Walther and frees the round. The cop fires again, as Axel turns and DIVES INTO THE RIVER, whereupon...

Maddy rushes to the river's edge. She fires multiple shots down into the water: BANG, BANG, BANG!

But as the Uniform shines a flashlight, on the blackened water: The phantom killer has disappeared.

END TEASER

ACT ONE**EXT. CHICAGO RIVER - NIGHT**

After jumping into the river with Maddy's bullets slicing the water around him, Axel surfaces in the dark.

Knowing that he'll soon die from hypothermia in the frigid November waters, he watches...

POV: as one of THE UNIFORMED COPS pans the searchlight from his squad car along the container yard dock, looking for him.

Suddenly, Axel hears the sound of A MOTOR APPROACHING 50 yards to the east. A HUGE GARBAGE BARGE is bearing down on him. It's closing in at an alarming rate, so he does A SURFACE DIVE and swims with all his strength for the opposite bank.

EXT. RIVER BANK - CONTINUOUS - NIGHT

Axel crawls ashore just west of the bridge. The bank is rimmed by a twenty-foot wide swath of SMALL TREES AND BUSHES, giving him cover as he shivers almost uncontrollably.

He drops amid the bushes, trying to keep from going into shock and looks up to see a parking lot that services the HOLIDAY INN at Mart Plaza, next to the Merchandise Mart.

His only hope is to get into one of the cars in the lot. So he drags himself up and drops down between an older model HONDA CIVIC and a newer SUBARU OUTBACK.

He peers into the back of the Honda and sees POV: an empty baby's car seat and A BLANKET. So he leans backed against the Subaru and kicks out the driver's side window on the Civic. He holds his breath, but THERE'S NO ALARM.

INT. HONDA CIVIC - CONTINUOUS

Now quickly, Axel reaches in through the shattered glass and opens the door. Pulling off his water-soaked jacket and pants, he jumps inside, covering himself with the blanket. To keep out the cold, HE JAMS THE BABY SEAT into the empty space where the window had been and tries to stop shaking.

This is not the first time in his life he's been cold.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. TINGLEY HOME - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Six-year-old Bobby is in his bed shivering. The bed clothes have been stripped and he's lying on the mattress in his tiny underpants which are stained yellow.

His foster step brother Ray Ray is at a desk skinning a squirrel. He looks over towards Bobby's bed and sniffs.

RAY RAY
(yelling)
Bobby's peed hisself again.

Suddenly, Dotty rushes in, grabbing Bobby by THE HAIR and yanking him off the bed.

DOTTY
(to Ray Ray)
Get the key and open that closet.

BOBBY
Please mama, no. Not in there.

Bobby struggles to squirm away, but Dotty grabs him by his tiny wrist and DRAGS HIM across the room, whereupon...

She reaches the closet and pulls a chain which turns on A LIGHT BULB inside.

DOTTY
I warned you.

The chain is several feet above Bobby's head. When she pulls it again, the closet goes dark and she SLAMS THE DOOR.

INT. THE CLOSET - LATER - NIGHT

Bobby is lying on the closet floor whimpering. There's a shaft of light under the door. He looks over and spots:

POV: a small box of CRAYONS.

INT. THE CLOSET - EVEN LATER - NIGHT

Bobby listens at the door and hears Ray Ray snoring, sound asleep. So he pulls himself up and climbs onto...

A CLOTHES HAMPER at the back of the closet.

He reaches up and tries to grab the end of THE LIGHT BULB CHAIN, but he's inches too short, so he climbs down and finds AN OLD SUITCASE which he puts on top of the hamper.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Now as we ANGLE Ray Ray sleeping, we can see A LIGHT go on at the bottom of the closet. Ray Ray stirs, but stays sleeping.

INT. THE CLOSET - NEARLY DAWN

Bobby has used the crayons to draw a series of pictures on the wall at the BACK OF THE CLOSET.

They're obscured by THE CLOTHING hanging there. But as we ANGLE BOBBY we can see that he's drawn...

A PAIR OF ANGELS. They are taking flight, each one holding the hand of A SMALL BOY as they carry him above the rooftop of a house like the Tingleys into THE CLOUDS.

Just then, Bobby hears A KEY go into the door. He quickly covers the drawings with the clothes, but he doesn't have time to get onto the hamper and turn off the light when...

Dotty swings open the door.

DOTTY
Goddamn you boy.

With that she grabs A WOODEN COAT HANGER and SMASHES the light bulb. Then she takes Bobby by the hair, pulls him out of the closet and bends him over the bed.

SHE HITS HIM HARD on the buttocks with the hanger. The little boy SCREAMS. Turning, he puts up his hands to protect himself, but Dotty swings the hanger again and we hear A CRACK.

She's broken his tiny RIGHT WRIST.

FLASH FORWARD TO:

INT. HONDA CIVIC - LATER - NIGHT

Where Axel, much older, but still in distress, wills himself to stop shivering. He pulls back the rear seat of the Civic and kicks out the separation into THE TRUNK where he finds:

A WOMAN'S GYM BAG.

He rips it open and pulls out a pair of FEMALE WORKOUT PANTS and A HEAVY SWEATER. He dons the pants, which fit tightly, and drags the sweater over his head.

SUDDENLY, the migraines start and Axel rubs his temples. He crawls into the front seat and opens the glove box rifling through it until he finds a bottle of ADVIL.

He bites it open and dry swallows a half dozen gel caps.

CLOSE ON THE ASHTRAY of the Civic as Axel pulls it open and finds a couple of dollars worth of QUARTERS.

He ties his wet clothes into a bundle, then exits the Civic cautiously.

EXT. A NEARBY ALLEY - LATER - NIGHT

Axel dumps the wet bundle into A DUMPSTER. He hears SIRENS and stays in the shadows as A SQUAD CAR roars by on North Wells Street, whereupon...

He exits the alley and turns left. In the distance he spots

POV: THE CTA STATION at West Kinzie Street.

EXT. UNION STATION - LATER - DAWN

Axel emerges from THE ELEVATED TRAIN, lost in A CROWD OF MORNING COMMUTERS. He turns toward UNION STATION where...

INT. UNION STATION - MOMENTS LATER

He keeps A LOCKER full of supplies in the alcove of the historic railroad station. One of his many stashes.

Axel swings open the locker door and pulls out A BACK PACK with a change of clothing and CAR KEYS in a zippered compartment.

INT. UNION STATION GARAGE - LATER - DAY

Now dressed in jeans and a CUBS JACKET, Axel walks along a row of vehicles and stops at A RED BRONCO. He opens the back door and sticks in the back pack, then finds A CHICAGO BEARS HAT and puts it on along with a pair of RAY BANS.

As he enters the Bronco and turns on the ignition we pan down to the rear license plate (from Mississippi).

Two of the digits are COVERED IN MUD.

INT. THE BRONCO - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

As Axel drive out of the garage, he looks toward the right and spots something, so he skids to A STOP. He pulls the SUV into a space at the curb, then jumps out and walks to...

A SUN TIMES VENDING MACHINE

As we go close on the morning paper we see A PICTURE OF MADDY

The headline reads: **HERO DEPUTY TO MONSTER: TAKE ME!**

Off Axel smiling...

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWOEXT. STORAGE YARD CRIME SCENE - DAWN

In addition to the three local stations, there are microwave trucks from all four broadcast networks, plus CNN and MSNBC along with reporters from *Time*, *The Daily Beast* and *The NYT*.

With the discovery of three fresh bodies and the attempted abduction of the attractive young female deputy, the serial killer stalking Chicago is now a national sensation.

We pan across a series of local TV reporters doing stand-ups, starting with Deborah Schilling from WBBM.

SCHILLING

Fear blankets Chicagoland this morning with word overnight of three more missing persons and a life and death shoot-out in the storage yard behind me involving Deputy Maddy Bergstrom who spoke to us exclusively hours before.

REPORTER WGN

...police have announced the formation of a special Task Force to probe the disappearances, confirming that the abductions may be the work of the I-80 Killer.

REPORTER WMAQ

....a sketch of the suspect was released just moments ago. Police say he's a white male in his mid twenties identified by the FBI simply as "Stranger Killer 456."

CLOSE ON monitors inside the WMAQ Truck showing the SKETCH which closely resembles AXEL.

INT. CPD'S MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Killebrew, with SA's METZGER and GONZALVES, is inside the CPD's Mobile Command Center leaning on Capt. Jamal, trying to spin the container yard shooting against Forbes and Maddy.

KILLEBREW

Let me run the numbers for you Winston. You've got an out-of-state uniform with less than two years on the job, who happens to be one of the prime suspect's intended victims. She puts herself in harm's way, resulting in an officer-involved shooting in which she uses a hand gun that's not even registered to her. On top of that, she refuses two direct orders from your men to lay down her weapon, and for the third time, by my count, she allows a predatory serial murderer to escape.

CAPT. JAMAL

I'm not surprised you see it that way, but you have to admit... there's another perspective.

He shows him the morning SUN TIMES with a front page picture of Maddy below the "Take Me" headline:

CAPT. JAMAL (CONT'D)

(reading the story)

"Sources say that Bergstrom took the job after her brother, a Marine hero, was killed in Iraq. She flew to Chicago at her own expense, when the suspect, identified as Axel, sent her a lock of hair from Ginny Kendrick, 12, whose father, Dr. Otto Kendrick, is chief of surgery at Cooke County Hospital."

(nods at Killebrew)

Quote: "Our family is deeply grateful to this young Deputy," said Dr. Kendrick.

(MORE)

CAPT. JAMAL (CONT'D)
 "She was willing to put
 herself at grave risk in order
 to further an investigation
 into our daughter's
 disappearance."

Just then, a phone rings. Jamal picks up.

CAPT. JAMAL (CONT'D)
 Yeah. Send them in.

Forbes and Maddy enter and cross to Jamal, ignoring
 Killebrew. Forbes hands the Captain a fax.

FORBES
 Ten minutes ago the lab in
 Tacoma got a positive DNA match
 tying 456 to the I-80 murders.

MADDY
 That's eighteen, plus Kendrick
 and Sloane
 (shows him pix of Ginny
 and Christie)
 Plus the three new missings
 makes it twenty-three

CAPT. JAMAL
 (incredulous)
 But men and middle aged *women*?
 Now a baby?

FORBES
 He defies any profile ever
 constructed.

He shoots a look toward Killebrew who turns away in disgust.

MADDY
 (to Capt. Jamal)
 It gets worse.

Atop A U.S. MAP Forbes overlays A LIST OF MISSING PERSONS.

MADDY (CONT'D)
 Excluding runaways and custody
 abductions there are 250 open
 missing cases nationwide.

THE OVERLAY has LINES fanning out from CHICAGO as the
 epicenter.

FORBES
Assuming the Midwest as a
base, and given the timing of
disappearances, we think he's
connected...

CAPT. JAMAL
To how many?

Forbes and Maddy eye each other.

MADDY
Maybe all of them.

That's it for Killebrew.

KILLEBREW
This is fucking insane.

MADDY
We think he's taking them in
an organized pattern.

Forbes traces them on the map as Maddy starts tossing down
Missing Person photos and reports. As she does, we...

INTERCUT:

QUICK FLASHES to the same pictures on Axel's MISSINGS WALL.

MADDY (CONT'D)
August 5th, Robert Dowd, a
meter reader, vanishes in
Atlanta. Father of four.
Afghan war vet. Disappears.
(picture of Dowd)
The next day, Jacqueline
DeFries, a flight attendant
with Delta goes missing in
Nashville.
(Delta I.D. Photo)

FORBES
A day later, the mail truck of
Connie De Angelo, a postal
worker, is found abandoned in
Muncie, Indiana.
(picture of the truck)

As Maddy puts the pictures down, Forbes traces...

FORBES (CONT'D)

Each of the abductions is on a straight line back to the Midwest toward Chicago.

MADDY

We've only had time to check this one leg, but we suspect that he's followed a similar pattern for months.

CAPT. JAMAL

You're talking about *hundreds* of people vanishing. Why hasn't there been an alarm?

KILLEBREW

Yeah. Even with *alien* abductions you get those little *crop* circles.

He elbows his agents, mocking Maddy and Forbes.

CAPT. JAMAL

Back off and let them finish.
(nods to Forbes)

FORBES

First off, he's crossing jurisdictions, so the cases are isolated. As to the abductions, vs. straight-out homicides, he has some reason for keeping the bodies fresh.

CAPT. JAMAL

How's he accomplishing that?

Forbes gestures for Maddy to hand him a file.

FORBES

Killebrew knows. When they inventoried the van Axel crashed up in Washington, they found a trochar. It's a tool used by undertakers for embalming.

CAPT. JAMAL

Jesus...
(stunned by the theory)
(MORE)

CAPT. JAMAL (CONT'D)
 How the hell is he financing
 this?

MADDY
 Robbing the victims. Cash,
 credit cards; their jewelry...

Finally, Killebrew weighs in.

KILLEBREW
 And what's the grand *design*
 behind this insanity?

Forbes and Maddy shake their heads.

FORBES
 We don't know.

KILLEBREW
 Of course not, 'cause there
is none.

CUT TO:

INT AXEL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS DAY

We shoot high and wide NOW SHOWING THE SCAFFOLDING on either side of the four-story structure with the dozens of portraits Axel has painted using his murder victims as subjects.

Clearly there's a grand design, but at this point we're uncertain as to the ultimate goal of Axel's magnum opus.

He has Manowar's BROTHERS OF METAL playing in the bg as he paints feverishly against his deadline.

MANOWAR
 Strike while the iron is hot.
 And if we were not brothers of
 metal would we fall? No.

As he finishes THE FACE of a small child, we flash on the FRESCOS of the three missing persons cited by Forbes & Maddy.

Robert Dowd, the meter reader
 Jacqueline Devries, the Delta attendant
 Connie DeAngelo, the mail carrier

MANOWAR (CONT'D)
 They tried to test our spirit.
 They tasted steel before we
 were done.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. AXEL'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

With the music blaring we pan across the wall of missing person photos and driver's licenses to find THE PHOTOS of those three abductees.

The camera moves through the office past Axel's EMBALMING TABLE and out to...

EXT. AXEL'S LAIR - CONTINUOUS

THE LOADING DOCK where, just below the huge FURNACE in the SMOKESTACK we discover AN ASH PIT WITH BONE FRAGMENTS.

MANOWAR
 Grinding their bones into the
 dust of the past. All blown
 away like the shot from a gun.
 Strike while the iron is hot!

Continuing out from the smokestack to the perimeter...

The camera moves though A RUSTED CHAIN-LINK FENCE, coming to rest on an old PADLOCKED GATE. There's a WOODEN SIGN affixed to it that says:

**PLANT DEMOLITION
 November 30th**

CUT TO:

INT. CPD'S MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Forbes and Maddy are continuing to press Capt. Jamal as Killebrew and his two agents stand by smirking.

FORBES
 The one vulnerability we've
 found is that whatever he's
 doing seems to have some kind
 of expiration date.

MADDY

He's escalated his captures...
I mean, look how reckless he was
with me, risking a possible
stakeout in Lincoln Park.

KILLEBREW

You want to talk "reckless?"
How about disabling your cell
phone so nobody could make
that happen?

Maddy looks away. Even Forbes can't defend her on that one.

KILLEBREW (CONT'D)

(continuing to press)

You know what you should do
Captain? Find a judge and
appoint a guardian ad litem
for both of them. They're
certifiable.

(points to Axel's sketch)

If this guy did all the open
missings I have, plus all
these from around the country
and the I-80 deaths, you're
talking about--

FORBES

The most prolific serial
killer in history. A body
count bigger than Green River,
Sobhraj in Asia or Chikatilo
in Russia.

CAPT. JAMAL

But we still don't know why?

FORBES

We need to go back and work
his file. Right now we have a
single DCFS report, but
Killebrew has paper on him
dating back to his childhood.

MADDY

His birth name was Bobby Cole.

She shows him the DCFS picture of little Bobby.

CAPT. JAMAL
 (to Killebrew)
 Then let's do it. Where are
 those files?

Killebrew hesitates, then leans in and whispers.

KILLEBREW
 I need to speak with you
 privately.

FORBES
 Don't listen, Captain. He's
 playing you.

But Killebrew cocks his head for Jamal to follow him outside.

EXT. CPD'S MOBILE COMMAND CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The FBI Supervisor pulls the Captain aside and whispers.

KILLEBREW
 I didn't want to have to show
 you this, 'cause the
 sonovabitch is on his last
 leg, but during I-80 we found
 him tampering with evidence.

CAPT. JAMAL
 What?

KILLEBREW
 He seeded three of the crime
 scenes with the same DNA to show
 a pattern. The AG let him cash
 out at half-pension to avoid a
 circus on Capitol Hill.

He takes out A LETTER on Dept. Of Justice letterhead signed
 by former Attorney General ERIC HOLDER. As Jamal scans it...

POV: we see PHRASES like: "evidence tampering" and "agent
 suspended." But before he can finish reading...

Forbes bursts out of the Command Center, ripshit. He grabs
 the letter and slams Killebrew back against a wall.

FORBES
 You cocksucker. That was a rat fuck
 and you know it. I was set up.

Killebrew just smiles and turns to Capt. Jamal.

KILLEBREW

Read his psych report.
"Paranoid and delusional."

FORBES

Fuck you. It's classic Bureau,
Captain. An ad hominem attack.
They can't take the criticism
so they denigrate the critic.

Forbes, starts rubbing his leg now. He's getting more excited. Jamal eyes them both, not sure who to believe. So Killebrew moves over and puts his arm on his shoulder.

KILLEBREW

In about five minutes when you
confront that mob out there,
if they think this case has
gotten away from you, they
will be merciless. Trust me.

He points toward the front gate of the Storage Yard when THE MEDIA is waiting for some announcement.

KILLEBREW (CONT'D)

So who do you want to have
standing next to you when you
face the cameras? The head of
the FBI's Behavioral Analysis
Unit, or some washout who lost
his security clearance?

The homicide captain hesitates. He's got no love for the FBI and resents the heavy-handedness of the Feds. But he looks down at the FBI file on Forbes with the Red, White & Blue logo marked OFFICIAL DECLASSIFIED.

He eyes Killebrew in a doubled-breasted blue suit, starched white shirt and red tie - his shoes with the spit 'n polish of an ex-Army Major. Then he looks at Forbes in jeans under a rumpled tweed jacket. Finally he turns to Maddy.

CAPT. JAMAL

I'm sorry.

Humiliated, Forbes exits bitterly, DROPPING SOMETHING into Maddy's pocket as he rushes off.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE**EXT. STORAGE YARD CRIME SCENE - MINUTES LATER DAY**

Maddy reaches into her pocket and finds: THE KEYS to the Ford Taurus, so she quickly moves to the spot where Forbes drove it into Axel's (still up-ended) Toyota pickup.

A CRIME SCENE TECH is just finishing processing the scene.

MADDY

How much longer before you
clear this vehicle?

TECH

Thirty minutes, assuming it's
drivable.

EXT. STORAGE YARD CRIME SCENE - LATER - DAY

A CPD TOW TRUCK pulls the Taurus away from the pickup. The tech hands Maddy a clip board with A RELEASE FORM to sign.

EXT. STORAGE YARD GATE - MOMENTS LATER

As Maddy drives out through the press mob. Deborah Schilling rushes up to the car.

SCHILLING

(leaning in)
Where's your partner?

MADDY

(anxious to leave)
Not now, O.K.?

As she drives off, Schilling motions to her cameraman, circling her index finger for him to roll.

SCHILLING

Follow the Taurus and then
pull back to me.

CAMERAMAN

Speed...

SCHILLING

(doing a standup)

In the serial killer case the tabloids are now calling "The Axel Murders," the latest missing person appears to be the ex-FBI agent T.C. Forbes.

INT. THE TAURUS - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

As Maddy roars up I-94 towards Niles, she dials her cell.

MADDY

Come on, pick up.

Over the Bluetooth speaker in the Ford we hear the phone ring once, twice, then.

FORBES

(voice on the phone)

This is Forbes.

His cell beeps to voice mail.

MADDY

Hey Doc. I know I don't have the best track record when it comes to taking off and leaving my partner stranded, but cut a girl some slack and call me, will you? Please?

EXT. TRAVELER'S INN - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

As The Taurus roars into the lot, Maddy parks quickly, jumps out and BOUNDS UP THE STAIRS to the second floor.

INT. WAR ROOM - CONTINUOUS

She unlocks the door and rushes in.

MADDY

Forbes? Tom, are you here?

She checks HIS ROOM - empty, then hers. Deserted. Then she goes back into the War Room and eyes the wall of evidence.

MADDY (CONT'D)
Where the fuck did you go?

Maddy gets an idea and goes into HIS BATHROOM. She opens the medicine cabinet. POV: it's full of PERCODAN BOTTLES UNTOUCHED.

She returns to The War Room and powers up her MacBook.

MADDY (CONT'D)
What does a Perc addict do in
Chicago without a prescription
and no meds?

She looks over and spots the small empty bottle of COGNAC.

MADDY (CONT'D)
He medicates a different way.

Now in her Safari browser she GOOGLES Chicago + Bars + Taverns. The search results yield 118,000 hits.

MADDY (CONT'D)
Right. A hundred and eighteen
thousand.
(thinking about it)
What are you always telling me
Doc? You hit a brick wall, you
go back and work the history.

She CLICKS ON one of the BOOKMARKS she used when she first did the 411 on Forbes. Her Lexis/Nexus search comes up.

MADDY (CONT'D)
(reading)
Forbes, Thomas C. FBI
Quantico. Behavioral Analysis
Unit. Born... yadda yadda...
(FBI I.D. photo of Forbes)
Master's at Emory... Atlanta
Child Murders... Ph.D. Kennedy
School.. 2014... Dissertation
on John Wayne Gacy. Bang!

She rushes over to Forbes CARRY-ON BAG and rifles through a series of files, ultimately coming to: THE DISSERTATION. It's been bound with a black cardboard cover.

She pages through it and starts reading.

MADDY (CONT'D)
 "Dubbed "The Killer Clown,"
 Gacy got the nickname from the
 block parties he'd throw for
 children in his neighborhood
 of Norwood Park, a middle
 class suburb in northwest
 Cooke County."

As she takes notes we see VARIOUS B&W shots of Gacy.

MADDY (CONT'D)
 "Gacy was a former shoe
 salesman who'd volunteered as
 a Democratic precinct captain.
 He ultimately confessed to the
 rape and murder of thirty-
 three young men and boys
 between 1972 and 78."

Grisly crime scene photos

MADDY (CONT'D)
 "Prior to his death by lethal
 injection, Gacy was
 interviewed by Dr. Helen
 Morrison, a medical doctor who
 also examined his brain, post-
 mortem."

Shot of Dr. Morrison

MADDY (CONT'D)
 "She clashed with FBI
 profilers during testimony at
 Gacy's trial, insisting that
 his sadistic style of sexual
 torture defied all known
 patterns. Further, like Wayne
 Williams in Atlanta, Gacy had
 used multiple dump sites. He'd
 dropped several of his victims
 in the Des Plaines River in
 addition to the 27 bodies he'd
 buried in a crawl space
 beneath his house."

Maddy flips to the ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS at the end of the thesis.

MADDY (CONT'D)
 "I'd like to thank Dr.
 Morrison for generously giving
 of her time... Conducted a
 lengthy series of interviews
 at a tavern just blocks away
 from Gacy's dump site home on
 West Summerdale Avenue.

She pulls out A YELLOW HIGH LIGHTER and marks it.

MADDY (CONT'D)
 The Old Style House.
 (grinning)
 Damn it Doc, you are
 beautifully predictable.

Another quick GOOGLE SEARCH for the address which is...

MADDY (CONT'D)
 Two blocks from the Metra Rail
 station in Norwood Park.

Off Maddy racing out of the War Room...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE OLD STYLE HOUSE - LATE - AFTERNOON

It's just getting dark as Maddy pulls up in the Taurus and parks across from the bar on North Avondale Avenue.

There's no mistaking the red, white, blue and gold sign outside. The chevron-like logo for Heileman's "Old Style" beer is ubiquitous in Chicago. The regional brew.

INT. THE OLD STYLE HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The place is packed with A Happy Hour crowd; mostly LAB TECHS AND NURSES from Resurrection Medical Center located a few blocks away near the Kennedy Expressway.

THE JUKEBOX is playing Sinatra.

SINATRA
 Embrace me, my sweet
 Embraceable you. Embrace me,
 you irreplaceable you.

Maddy pushes through the crowd and finally spots Forbes.

He's standing at the end of the bar. Above him on the wall there's a framed SUN TIMES front page of Gacy dressed as "Pogo The Clown." He's making balloon animals for children.

The headline: GACY: "I RUN A CEMETERY WITHOUT A LICENSE"

SINATRA (CONT'D)

Just one look at you, my heart
grew tipsy in me. You and you
alone bring out the *gypsy* in me.

Forbes leans on the bar with A MARTINI GLASS in his hand. His tie's over his shoulder and he looks like a lost little boy. Maddy smiles at the tough, but hardened serial hunter.

MADDY

Hey Doc...

No response. His eyes are closed and he's shit-faced; reciting something.

FORBES

(eyes closed)

I love to drink a martini, two
at the very most. At three I'm
under the table. At four I'm
under the host.

MADDY

(standing next to him)

Not a bad line.

FORBES

(eyes still shut)

Dorothy Parker... Now that was
a woman who could drink.

He takes a sip from the empty glass.

MADDY

Happy Hour's over Doc.

FORBES

(slurring)

Unh uh. The bars in Cooke
County stay open until 2:00
a.m. And I'm still not happy.

He opens his eyes and raises his index finger to the bartender.

FORBES (CONT'D)
One more, please.

But Maddy pulls out HER SHERIFF'S BADGE and shakes her head.

MADDY
Just his tab and some coffee.

The bartender nods and sets a cup down with a shot glass next to it full of milk and some sugar.

Maddy takes the stool next to Forbes.

MADDY (CONT'D)
Actually, could you make it two?

She drops a MASTER CARD on the bar, but Forbes seems to ignore her. He's staring straight ahead now, looking down the bar at the Happy Hour crowd. A long beat, then finally, he smiles.

FORBES
You found me. You worked my file. That was good.

MADDY
Thanks.

FORBES
So the trip wasn't a washout after all. The next time you come across a predatory psychopath, you'll know what to do.

He glances up at the Sun Times portrait of Gacy.

MADDY
Yeah. Here, drink some coffee.

She pours A SPLASH OF MILK in it but notices that HIS HAND IS SHAKING. She's not sure he can drink it without burning himself.

MADDY (CONT'D)
(to the bartender)
On second though could we have a rocks glass full of ice?

The bartender complies. Maddy pours the coffee over the ice, waits a beat and then puts the glass in Forbes' hand. Another beat and he takes a sip.

FORBES
(seemingly touched)
You remembered how I take it.

MADDY
Yeah. Just like you, Doc. Very
dark with no sugar.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. FORBES'S MOTEL ROOM - LATER NIGHT

Where we replay the opening scene from APOCALYPSE NOW as Maddy slams him into a cold shower fully clothed.

FORBES
Aaaaaaaaaahhhh!

She sobers him up with more coffee
Walks him around the motel room then...
Scoops up all his PERCODAN bottles but one and...
Flushes the capsules down a toilet.

INT. MOTEL WAR ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Finally, she pulls him into The War Room and props him up in a chair facing the wall of evidence. She grabs his Beretta, racks the slide and slams a round into the chamber. KAJACK!

This startles him. Now, beginning to sober up, Forbes stares at THE VICTIM wall covered with pictures of all the missing. He starts to turn away, when Maddy stands in front of him.

FORBES
I have to get packed...

MADDY
No! I've been listening to you
for a week. Now I get to talk.

FORBES
(tries to get up)
Leave me alone.

MADDY

Sit down.

She pushes him back in the chair and starts circling.

MADDY (CONT'D)

You have this knowledge and
you wish you didn't.

(nods to the pictures)

You carry all of this sickness
in your head. This pathology.

FORBES

I don't want to hear this.

He starts to get up again but she slams him back in the chair.

MADDY

Let me FINISH!

She grabs his Beretta and in one deft move, ejects the
cartridge, catches it with one hand, and pops the mag out.

MADDY (CONT'D)

You wish you could crawl into
a Perc bottle, but you can't.
I mean, who's gonna stop it if
you walk away?

She stands in front of the PICTURES of Axel's victims.

MADDY (CONT'D)

It comes down to this, Doc:

Door Number one

(points to the evidence)

Or Door number two.

(holds up the bottle)

I'm gonna get him whether you
help me or not and I don't
have the time to pull you
through rehab.

(no response)

Come on, damnit. The green
pill or the red pill?

A long beat as Forbes looks up at the victim wall. Finally...

FORBES

It takes a cold hearted bitch to
tempt a junkie with his dope.

He grabs THE PERC BOTTLE. Maddy turns away, sure she's lost him. She seems crushed.

FORBES (CONT'D)
But that's just what I need
right now.

HE OPENS THE DOOR and flings the pill bottle outside.

Maddy looks up at him, thrilled.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**INT. TAURUS - NIGHT**

They pull up outside THE DRAKE HOTEL on Lake Shore Drive.

FORBES
(eyes the entrance)
He's staying on Eleven, right?

MADDY
I don't get what we're doing here. The FBI field office is on West Roosevelt...

FORBES
You think Ronnie keeps paper that could trash his career over there?

MADDY
What are you saying?

FORBES
Ever since we went head to head on I-80 I smelled something. Killebrew couldn't wait to get me out of BAU.
(turns to her)
You see how fast he changed the conversation with Jamal when we brought up Bobby?
(pulls on Latex gloves)
There's something that Killebrew knows about Axel and it's in those files.

MADDY
So we're going to what? Just ask him for them?

FORBES
No. Deputy. We're going to steal them.

He exits and looks up at THE 11th FLOOR of the hotel.

FLASH FORWARD TO:

INT. DARKENED ROOM - HO CHI MINH CITY - NIGHT

Forbes is at the Toughbook. He pulls up the official FBI photo of Supervisory Special Agent Ron Killebrew.

FORBES (V.O.)

As a Supervisory Special Agent, Ron Killebrew had an expense account for travel that would have precluded the suite of rooms he occupied at the legendary Drake Hotel.

He pulls up shots of THE DRAKE from the 1940's & 50's.

FORBES

They rented for eight hundred dollars a night. But the FBI maintained a number of Off Site locations for debriefing witnesses. As such, hotels like the Drake often cut deals for The Bureau. Career agents like Ronnie were expert at exploiting these perks.

Shot of an FBI expense report.

FORBES (CONT'D)

So on the expense report he'd later file after returning to Quantico, his nightly room charge would be \$140.00; a figure that wouldn't buy him a Standard Queen at the Comfort Inn on East Ohio Street. But as I studied his file, it soon became clear that Killebrew was a criminal with a badge. He didn't just cut corners, he had larceny in his heart.

DCFS shot of BOBBY LEROY COLE

FORBES (CONT'D)

He also knew things about Axel and what drove him. Evidence, that for unknown reasons, he was keeping to himself.

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. CLOSET TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - NIGHT

Bobby's wrist is in AN ACE BANDAGE after Dotty's latest round of abuse. But he's drawing, feverishly.

By now the closet walls are NEARLY COVERED with drawings of angels, devils and other Biblical figures. So many that Bobby has to stand up on a stack of old phone books to find empty space. He's using a CUB SCOUT FLASHLIGHT for illumination.

Suddenly, somebody POUNDS on the door. Raymond is outside.

RAY RAY
You stole my flash light, you
little fuck.

Bobby quickly turns off the light. He looks down:

POV: under the door Ray Ray brandishes THE BLADE of his skinning knife.

RAY RAY (CONT'D)
You know what they said I
could do to you, right? You
keep wee weeing the bed.

Just then, off camera we hear ROGER YELLING.

ROGER (O.C.)
Goddamnit it, get to sleep in
there. You got Bible school in
the mornin'.

Bobby looks down as Ray Ray removes the knife and backs away.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - THE NEXT DAY

Bobby at the breakfast table with Dotty, Roger, Ray Ray and three other foster kids: a pair of six year-old red-headed TWINS and a ten year-old girl named JUANITA.

Bobby's, in a pair of jeans and sneakers under an old hand-me-down checkered shirt.

The other kids are spooning down HOT OATMEAL sprinkled with brown sugar. Bobby has to do with cold shredded wheat.

ROGER
 (eyes Bobby)
 I don't know how much longer
 we can put up with you, boy.

DOTTY
 I'm done washin'. I just pulled
 on them jeans over his undies.
 He's goin' to church that way.

RAY RAY
 The other kids won't sit near
 him in the pews, mama.

JUANITA
 They wouldn't anyway, even if
 he didn't smell like--

BOBBY
 (interrupting)
 Give me a verse papa...

ROGER
 What?

BOBBY
 See if I don't know the Bible.

DOTTY
 How 'bout Deuteronomy 27:16:
 "Cursed is the one who
 dishonors his father and his
 mother."

RAY RAY
 (taunting)
 Yeah... Bed wetter.

JUANITA
 Bed Wetter! Bed Wetter!

Bobby starts to cry now, tears streaming down his face.

BOBBY
 I can't help it Mama. I go to
 sleep and I wake up wet. I
 can't stop it.

Just then, THE FRONT DOORBELL RINGS.

ROGER
 (surprised)
 Eight o'clock on a Sunday?
 (to Juanita)
 Go see.

She runs into the LIVING ROOM and peers through curtains at the front porch where A MID 30's WOMAN is standing holding a briefcase.

JUANITA
 (rushing back)
 It's that lady from Family
 Services.

Roger points to Bobby and turns to Dotty.

ROGER
 Upstairs. Get him cleaned up
 now!

Dotty jumps up and grabs Bobby.

CUT TO:

INT. LIVING ROOM - TINGLEY HOUSE - LATER - DAY

AN AFRICAN-AMERICAN CASE AGENT from The Dept. of Child and Family Services is seated on A SOFA with a file in front of her.

Across from her on another couch the four other Tingley foster children are seated posed like little angels.

Roger is leaning forward in an old Naugahyde Barcalounger.

CASE AGENT
 I take it you understand the
 reason for this unannounced
 inspection.

ROGER
 Actually, no. Please tell me.

CASE AGENT
 Robert Cole's teacher reported
 that he came to school Friday
 with his wrist in a bandage. I
 need to see him.

ROGER
There's a simple explanation
for that.

CASE AGENT
Tell me.

ROGER
The little fella loves to
climb trees and he fell--
These things happen.

CASE AGENT
I need to see him.
(sternly)
Now, Mr. Tingley!

Just then, Dotty comes down the stairs leading Bobby by the hand. He's in a freshly pressed shirt and slacks.

She leads him over to the couch where he sits down next to the other kids, STARING STRAIGHT AHEAD.

CASE AGENT (CONT'D)
Bobby, will you talk with me?

BOBBY
(nervous)
O.K.

ROGER
Go ahead. He'll tell 'ya the
truth, won't you son?

CASE AGENT
Alone. I'd like to talk with
him outside.

Bobby looks over to Dotty for guidance. She looks away.

ROGER
You heard the lady.

Bobby gets up and the Case Agent leads him out.

EXT. TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

She looks up at a series of trees outside the house.

CASE AGENT
They said that you fell from one
of these, Bobby. Which one?

BOBBY
(trembling)
Yes ma'am. That one over there.

He points to a tree with branches so high it's impossible for him to have climbed it.

CASE AGENT
Did they ask you to lie honey?

BOBBY
Ma'am. I just...

CASE AGENT
What?

BOBBY
I just wanna make my drawin's.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out A LITTLE PAD.

It's a square: three inches by three inches. He riffles the pages and we see that he's created A FLIP BOOK. It has a short animation of ANGELS carrying A BOY over a house.

The Case Agent looks at him sadly. She picks up his wrist and eyes the ACE BANDAGE. Then she looks at the house in disgust.

CASE AGENT
You're a very gifted young man
Bobby. Do you have any idea
how smart you are?

BOBBY
No ma'am.

CASE AGENT
Just hold on a few more days
and I'll get you out of here.
I promise.

BOBBY
(starting to weep)
O.K.

CASE AGENT
I won't let you down.

INT. BEDROOM - TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - DAYS LATER - NIGHT

Ray Ray has now mounted a series of small animals: the squirrel, a small possum, a rat, a mouse and a starling.

Bobby is cowering in his bed when Rogers walks in. He's carrying A STROP like barbers use to sharpen razors.

ROGER
(to Bobby)
Get up. I got news.

He slams the strop across Bobby's tiny legs.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Remember that Negra woman from
the DCFS? One who said she was
gonna take you away from us?

Bobby's eyes go wide.

ROGER (CONT'D)
Well, you got your wish. Only
you won't be going to another
nice place like this. They're
sending you to a holdin'
facility up in Joliet. You'll
be in with all them coloreds.

Another slap across Bobby's legs.

ROGER (CONT'D)
You know what they do to
little blue-eyed blonde boys
like you?

He hauls back, ready to deliver another slap when BOBBY KICKS him in the groin. Roger doubles over as...

Bobby jumps out of bed and takes off from the room whereupon:

Ray Ray gives chase.

RAY RAY
Get back here, you little shit.

He chases Bobby DOWNSTAIRS and into:

INT. THE KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Where Bobby runs UNDER THE TABLE. But Roger catches up to him and SLAMS THE STROP on the table top.

Bobby cowers with fear.

ROGER

We got one more day and night
'for they ship you off son,
and I promise it's gonna be
24 hours you'll never forget.

He slams the strop one more time and it knocks A CONTAINER of MORTON'S SALT onto the floor. Off Bobby eyeing it.

CUT TO:

EXT. TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - MORNING

Roger's on AN OLD TRACTOR driving through a row of dingy, wilted corn with the farm house in the background.

He takes a swig of liquor.

INT. TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The kids are lined up by the front door as A SCHOOL BUS pulls up outside and beeps its horn.

Dotty hands lunches to the kids. They all exit except...

DOTTY

(yelling)
Bobbeeee!

No answer, so she rushes upstairs and into:

INT. THE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Where she finds Bobby with his head over the side of the bed VOMITING. Just under a sheet we see THE BOX OF SALT that the gifted child used to make himself throw up.

Dotty grabs him by his underpants and drags him into...

THE CLOSET, slamming the door and locking him in.

DOTTY (CONT'D)
O.K. You wanna spend your last
day in here chokin' on your
own phelgm, so be it.

And with that, she takes off.

INT. THE CLOSET - MOMENTS LATER

We see that Bobby has palmed Ray Ray's SKINNING KNIFE. He uses it to unlock the door from the inside.

Then he rips off his vomit covered PJ's and quickly dresses himself.

He runs around and grabs ALL OF Ray Ray's stuffed animals, rushing into:

INT. ROGER AND DOTTY'S BEDROOM

Where he places them in the center of the bed. He finds a can of LIGHTER FLUID and pours it over the bed sheets.

INT. HIS BEDROOM

Bobby pops out A HEATING GRILL from the floor. There he's stashed a small BACK PACK.

INT. THE KITCHEN

He gets up on a chair and climbs onto A COUNTER below the cupboard. He opens cabinets and locates: DOTTY'S MASON JAR full of coins, throwing it into the back pack.

Finally, he grabs a box of SAFETY MATCHES and runs back upstairs into:

INT. ROGER AND DOTTY'S BEDROOM

With the noise of the tractor outside, little Bobby strikes a match and tosses it into the middle of the bed.

There's A FLASH OF LIGHT as Ray Ray's animals start to burn.

EXT. TINGLEY FARM HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Wide on the house as the flames start to lick out of the upstairs bedroom windows.

ANGLE ROGER across a field, with his back to the house as...

BOBBY runs across the field with the backpack and ducks into a row of corn.

Running like there is no tomorrow, he makes it about fifty yards across the field when he turns back to see:

THE FARM HOUSE explode in a fireball.

For the first time since we've met this tortured little boy, he looks happy.

FADE OUT:

END ACT FOUR