

DEADALIVE

By

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OVER BLACK:

"The Silver Swan, who, living had no note, when death approached unlocked her silent throat"

- Orlando Gibbons.

FADE IN:

EXT. SOUTH EAST GEORGIA, THE SUBURBS - DAY

Little brown-haired BILLY (10), rake-thin and sickly pale, puts his face to a glass jar, watches the BUTTERFLY trapped inside flutter its wings in repeated, futile attempts to escape.

Across the street, old MISSUS HAWKES (77) fans herself on her porch, her eyes milky with glaucoma.

DEBBIE RHODES (12), pretty, blond, rides her bike down the quiet street, a grocery bag hangs from the handlebars.

She passes rows of 50's style bungalows, each one distinguishable from the next by the color of the mailbox.

Star spangled banners hang from porch roofs, no hint of a breeze. 'Bush/Quayle 88' Posters are prominent here.

Sprinklers water lawns. Dogs bark in the distance. It's not perfect. But it's home. It's safe.

EXT. RHODES RESIDENCE - DAY

Debbie cruises the bike up her drive to her house and past a full mailbox.

Next door, Billy takes his eyes off his butterfly-in-a-jar to watch Debbie.

She speaks with a southern, low country accent.

DEBBIE
Mornin' miss's Hawkes.

Across the street Missus Hawkes just keeps on staring straight ahead but waves back all the same.

MISSUS HAWKES
Hey there Debbie. Say Hi to your Mom and Dad for me.

DEBBIE
Will do.

Debbie makes her way to her house.

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

Hi Debbie.

DEBBIE

Oh, Hi Billy.

BILLY

Like my butterfly?

DEBBIE

It's pretty.

BILLY

Wanna ride out to the wells
today?

DEBBIE

Maybe later.

Her father, DENNIS, calls from inside the house.

DENNIS (O.S)

Debbie, that you girl? Bring the
mail, will ya?

DEBBIE

Sure, Dad.

Billy watches Debbie walk back to end of her drive. A
WHITE 1980 BUICK SKYLARK eases up to the curb beside her.

Billy is forced to squint and shield his eyes from the
sun.

A MAN, silhouetted against the light, climbs out from the
driver's side, walks with a slight LIMP, and approaches
Debbie.

Low murmurs can be heard. The Man points back down the
street the way he came. Debbie nods before getting in the
car. The man limps back to his side and climbs in.

The Skylark turns in the road and drives quietly back up
the street.

EXT. CAR, BUSY ROADSIDE - DAY

MELANIE FULLER (33). She sits in her 1986 Ford Taurus. Car
after car rushes by her window at 70 mph.

Her eyes are on the NEWSPAPER on her lap. And the 9mm H&K
in her hand. The front page reads "KILLER SPARED DEATH
PENALTY". She puts the muzzle in her mouth. That's when
her PAGER beeps.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

A pair of AVIATORS now shield Fuller's eyes from the sun. She puts the car through its paces, weaving in and out of traffic on the freeway.

The city surroundings turn ever more rural.

EXT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Fuller's Taurus speeds past a sign welcoming her to Bell County, Georgia. Population 13,101.

EXT. RHODES RESIDENCE - DAY

Fuller steers her car into the street and takes it slowly through a crowd of NEIGHBORS and COPS.

She stops the car, slides her 9mm into a holster on her belt and slips into a jacket with FBI on the back.

INT. RHODES RESIDENCE - DAY

Fuller notes the breakfast dishes laid out, knives and forks dropped in a hurry, food attracting flies. She looks to the mantle. Potted plants. Photos of Debbie.

CONWAY (O.C)

You the expert?

Fuller finds a large, friendly-faced man in a tan sheriff's uniform stood in the doorway. Kind of guy you'd find doing the rounds as the local Santa every December. ARTHUR CONWAY (54).

FULLER

(Showing her badge)
Special agent Melanie Fuller from
the Atlanta field office,
behavioral science unit.

CONWAY

The expert.
(Offers his hand)
Sheriff Art Conway.

FULLER

(Shakes his hand)
Any phone calls, demands for
ransom, letters?

CONWAY

What's it like, a woman, doing
this kinda work?

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Same as a man, 'cept it takes longer to get an answer to a question.

Conway smiles, not unfriendly. Appreciative.

CONWAY

Nope. No letters, no phone calls. Not yet.

FULLER

Any reason to think this is anything other than an abduction?

CONWAY

Little girl gets in a car with an unknown adult male, voluntarily or not, my attitude is do somethin' not nothin'.

FULLER

Witnesses?

CONWAY

Two; old woman across the street, blind as a turd, swears she heard the man walk with a limp. That and a ten year old boy next door says he saw Debbie get into a white car.

DEN

Billy sits. He clutches his jar as the captive butterfly flutters feebly.

PATROL DEPUTY KURT RESSLER (24), well-oiled dark hair, closely-shaved, hands braced on his Sam Browne belt.

RESSLER

C'mon now Billy, you can talk to us, we're the police. Didn't yer Mom and Dad ever tell you you can trust a police officer?

Fuller and Conway enter the room behind Ressler.

CONWAY

Ressler here was first on the scene.

RESSLER

Ya don't wanna get in trouble, do ya, Billy?

CONWAY

Don't let the cocky little
dickhead routine fool you. He
really is a cocky little
dickhead.

FULLER

(To Ressler)

You tried bamboo under his
fingernails?

Fuller brushes past Ressler, gets eye level with Billy.
Ressler looks to his Sheriff for an explanation.

CONWAY

Special Agent Fuller. The expert.

FULLER

Hi Billy, my name's Melanie. You
a friend of Debbie's?

Billy nods.

FULLER

That's good. Everybody needs a
friend. These police officers,
they want to help find Debbie,
but first we need your help. Do
you think you can help us?

He nods a second time while Conway and Ressler watch.

FULLER

You've already told us that you
saw Debbie leave in a white car,
now, did Debbie get in all by
herself or did somebody make her
get in?

BILLY

A man got out, spoke a little,
then Debbie got in.

FULLER

Have you seen this man before? He
drive by here some other time?
You see him around?

Billy shakes his head.

FULLER

Ok, thanks Billy.

Fuller regroups with Conway and Ressler.

FULLER

Have one of your men bring him some car magazines, see if he can identify the car we're looking for.

BILLY (O.C)

I wrote her a love letter.

Fuller looks back and Billy's eyes meet hers for a brief moment before she pulls away.

FULLER

I need to speak to the parents.

KITCHEN

Conway, Ressler and Fuller sit across the table from DENNIS (37) and PEGGY (34) Rhodes.

PEGGY

I sent Debbie for milk and eggs.

FULLER

The store name?

PEGGY

Bonnie's, just a few blocks away.

FULLER

How often does she go to Bonnie's?

PEGGY

Whenever I need her to?

FULLER

Not daily? No routine?

Peggy shakes her head, confused.

FULLER

Is Debbie shy? Outgoing? Is she the kind of girl to disobey you? Talk to strangers, secret boyfriend?

PEGGY

Secret boyfriend? She's twelve years old.

DENNIS

Why all these questions about Debbie?

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER

We don't have time for this.

FULLER

Time is all we have, deputy Ressler. It can be our ally or our enemy. You wanna look for Debbie Rhodes, you'll need a place to start.

Ressler looks to Conway for some hint of instruction. He offers none.

FULLER

Has there been anything out of the ordinary, doesn't have to be big, doesn't have to be today?

DENNIS

Like what?

FULLER

Anything to suggest that Debbie may have been watched? Followed. Anything out of place around the house.

PEGGY

Well...

FULLER

Slightest thing, Missus Rhodes.

PEGGY

Someone might have taken some laundry from the yard.

FULLER

Clothing belonging to Debbie?

PEGGY

It could have been kids were playing a prank. At first I thought I must have misplaced them or dropped them.

FULLER

What was it?

PEGGY

Debbie's panties.

FULLER

Debbie is missing a pair?

PEGGY

All of them.

DENNIS

He's going to Hell, I tell ya. I get my hands on him, he's going straight to Hell.

Fuller ushers Conway and Ressler to the doorway, out of earshot of Peggy and Dennis, speaks in hushed tones.

FULLER

We need to question every registered sex offender you have living within a 25 mile radius.

CONWAY

We don't have them types 'round here.

FULLER

You'd be surprised.

CONWAY

This is an out of townner, from the city.

FULLER

He'll search for victims in an area he knows but he'll do it in an area far enough away from home to avoid suspicion. He's local.

RESSLER

You a goddamn psychic?

FULLER

No. Just a goddamn smart person. Taking this girl from right outside her home, in broad daylight, that's a huge risk. He doesn't do that unless Debbie is worth it to him. This was a crime of choice, not opportunity. The panties; he's watched her, made plans, knows the area. He didn't get her in the car by force, he used a ruse. Though he'll most probably carry restraints with him, just in case. And a kill kit.

RESSLER

A kill kit?

FULLER
It's exactly what it sounds like.

CONWAY
Jesus.

RESSLER
This aint a homicide
investigation yet.

FULLER
You worked many kidnap cases,
Ressler?

RESSLER
...This is my first.

FULLER
Hope it's your last. It's not
often they end the way you want.

Fuller moves at a quick pace through the open house leading Ressler and Conway to follow. They walk and talk.

FULLER
Sheriff, you know this family?

CONWAY
As well as anybody in town.

FULLER
The father, he own a gun?

CONWAY
A forty-five and a huntin' rifle,
why?

FULLER
Make sure they stay in the house.
And Sheriff?

CONWAY
Yeah?

FULLER
Keep the details about the
missing underwear away from the
press.

The three emerge from the house...

EXT. RHODES RESIDENCE - DAY

...and into the path of several other LAW ENFORCERS zig-zagging across the lawn.

FULLER
Anyone got a map of the area?

CONWAY
(To a passing Deputy)
Bristow, map.

Fuller, Conway and Ressler come to a stop by a patrol car.

RESSLER
What was all that bullshit about
"is she shy or is she not shy"?

FULLER
Rape victims are told to fight
their attackers. But psychopaths
are different; act aggressive and
you'll piss 'em off more. How
Debbie Rhodes interacted with her
abductor has already dictated
whether she's lived or died.
That's what that bullshit was
about.

RESSLER
Smartass.

FULLER
Better than a dumbass.

Bristow returns with a map. Conway rolls it out flat across the trunk of the patrol car.

FULLER
The sad truth is we're more
likely looking for a body than a
pretty twelve year old girl.

RESSLER
You don't know that.

FULLER
Well either he's keeping her
somewhere or he's dumped the
body. And when he hears we're
sniffing around he's gonna wanna
move her, destroy evidence.
(Scanning the map)
You're a local boy, you want
privacy, where'd you go?

Conway and Ressler take turns at pointing out areas on the map. Fuller circles the indicated areas with a felt pen.

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER

Out by the old Prior farm?

CONWAY

The Barrens. Dirt road, plenty of forest cover.

RESSLER

The wells. The Dukes own the land but there's acres of it. We used to fuck around there as kids.

CONWAY

Bluebell woods, right here.

FULLER

Ok. We call a press conference, announce that Georgia state police, FBI and Sheriff's department are searchin' here, here...and here.

She points to the Wells, the Prior farm, and the bluebell woods.

CONWAY

We're not gonna search The Barrens?

FULLER

That's where we sit and wait.

RESSLER

...Not bad.

FULLER

Now imagine you thought of it.

RESSLER

It's goddamn genius.

FULLER

Cute as a tack and sharp as a button.

EXT. THE BARRENS - DUSK

A green canopy casts shade over a bed of tall grass.

RESSLER AND FULLER.

He slaps a mosquito against his neck.

Fuller, sweating, keeps her focus on the distant dirt road, seen through a network of trees. She lets the winged blood-suckers gorge themselves.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER
Hell's already here.

Ressler wipes away the mess of squashed bug in the grass.

RESSLER
Huh?

FULLER
Can't threaten a man with Hell
when Hell has come to us.

Ressler stares at her profile and considers this.

THE DISTANCE.

The sound of tires crunching gravel draws his attention to the road about 100 yards away.

THE BARRENS.

Twelve other assorted FBI agents and State Police Officers form a line, hiding in the grass. Conway takes up the end. A dozen anxious hands go to a dozen leather holsters.

THE DISTANCE.

A white 1980 Buick Skylark rolls slowly into view.

RESSLER.

Ressler breathes through pursed lips.

THE DISTANCE.

The car creaks to a stop. A MAN climbs from the car, scans his surroundings and LIMPS to the trunk, slides the key in and opens up.

CONWAY.

He whispers into his radio mic.

CONWAY
Anybody got a visual on the trunk
of that car?

COP (OVER RADIO)
Negative.

CONWAY

Ok, let's bring it in.

The various law enforcement offers begin slowly making their approach, closing the man-made net.

THE DISTANCE.

A traveling cloud of dust and grit blooms from behind a treeline and the roar of an engine cuts through the quiet.

A SECOND CAR slides to a stop, its tires toss up gravel.

The driver's door is thrown wide open and Dennis Rhodes, red-faced, marches towards the MAN, pointing a Colt 45.

FULLER.

She gets moving.

FULLER

Fuck.

THE DISTANCE.

The MAN turns, sees the long line of law enforcers moving quietly towards him. Dennis shoots. The MAN falls out of view behind the Skylark.

RESSLER AND FULLER.

Fuller breaks into a sprint.

The MAN gets to his feet, runs.

Ressler follows Fuller while all other Police, FBI and Dennis make a beeline for the car with its open trunk.

WOODED TRAIL - DUSK

Fuller has her H&K drawn and aimed at the ground as she follows the trail of trodden grass.

The sound of running water grows in volume until finally she comes to a river's edge. The MAN is gone from sight.

She lets her gun arm fall to her side as Ressler, gun also drawn, crashes through the greenery on full alert.

He quickly reads her expression. A mutual look of regret passes between the two of them.

BACK AT THE BARRENS - DUSK.

Activity is muted, looks of resignation shared by those present.

Fuller's gaze drifts to Dennis, hands cuffed at his back, Conway's hand on his shoulder. Her eyes meet Conway's before he shies from her gaze.

She approaches the Skylark. The trunk is empty save for a shovel, dirty with fresh soil.

Fuller looks out across the massive area, hope gone.

FULLER
Start searching.

FADE TO BLACK:

OVER BLACK: 21 YEARS LATER

FADE IN:

INT. PAULDING COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER, ATLANTA - DAY

A small gathering of mismatched people mill about and greet each other with half-hearted pleasantries.

KELLY (41), huge tight-lipped smile.

KELLY
Right. Everybody here?

The group drag plastic chairs to form a circle.

Fuller, now 54, sits eating a pastry. She watches the entrance as SUMMER (9) climbs from the passenger side of a Mercedes.

Summer sports big blue eyes that defy her sickly pale complexion, and a Minnie Mouse hat covering her scalp. She bounces on her heels on her way towards the group.

KELLY
Shall we get started then?

Summer pulls up a seat next to Fuller and smiles up at her. Fuller buckles under the child's happy expression and looks away.

INT. RESSLER RESIDENCE - DAY

Rain pummels the windows of the modest home. Kurt Ressler, now 45, graying, stubble, shares breakfast with Sam (7) and Kayleigh (9). Around a mouthful of Cheerios...

SAM

You gonna shoot some bad guys today, Dad?

Ressler makes a pistol of his hand and fingers and pulls the trigger.

KAYLEIGH (9) starts fingering at a stack of CASE FILES on the seat next to Ressler.

Ressler is struck by fear, panic._

RESSLER

Kaleigh, NO.

It comes out hard. Harsh. Kayleigh backs off.

RESSLER

Daddy's work stuff.

He smiles, trying to illicit the same from his daughter.

INT. FULLER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Fuller, wearing baggy gray sweats, haggles with a short, BALD MAN. Two REMOVAL MEN wait impatiently in the heavy rainfall by the open door.

BALD MAN

I'll give you seventy five for the sofa.

FULLER

I'll take 60 and throw in the armchair.

BALD MAN

What else you selling?

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, PARKING LOT - DAY

The Removal Men load a TV into a truck where it joins a ton of other household goods. The doors slam shut.

Ressler's Toyota swings into the parking lot, sheets of rain hammering the windshield.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING, PARKING LOT - DAY

Ressler runs from the car, finds the door he's looking.
knocks. He's taken aback by the face that appears.

FULLER
Yeah?

RESSLER
Melanie Fuller?

FULLER
Yeah?

RESSLER
Special agent Melanie Fuller?

FULLER
I left the bureau twenty years
ago.

He stops her from closing the door.

RESSLER
My name's Ressler, Kurt Ressler.
I'm a detective, Atlanta PD.

Her expression tells him he better get to the point.

RESSLER
You don't remember me?

FULLER
Well either it was a long time
ago or you failed to make an
impression.

RESSLER
May I come inside?

INT. FULLER'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ressler follows Fuller through the apartment.

The place is barren and what's left could do with a
cleanup. Dust swirls in pools of murky light, curtains
half-drawn.

RESSLER
Getting ready for a move?

FULLER
Somethin' like that. Coffee?

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER
Caffeine is bad for you.

FULLER
Being a cop is bad for you.

She drains two mugs of their cold leftovers into the coffee pot and puts it on the heat.

FULLER
So, detective Kurt Ressler of the Atlanta PD, what I can I do for you?

RESSLER
There's been another one.

FULLER
Another what?

Ressler slaps a case file down on the coffee table.

RESSLER
This is the kidnapping we worked in '88.

He slaps down a second case file.

RESSLER
And this is a homicide dated last August. Anna Littlethwait.

Fuller gives it a second before picking up the case files and scanning over them. She gestures; "So what?".

RESSLER
Two little girls, one twelve years old, one eleven, both blond, both taken from right outside their homes.

FULLER
And you think that's enough to make a connection?

RESSLER
You see the town? Tidewater. That's in Bell County.

FULLER
You've got a kidnapping from 1988 with no body, and a body in 2009 with no details of the abduction.

RESSLER
Anna Littlethwait's parents never filed a missing persons because

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER (cont'd)
they were too fucked up on meth
to notice or care. It was only
after a school teacher contacted
Sheriff Hague down in Bell County
that it became a MISPER. A
neighbor's boyfriend - the kind
that pays - last saw her right
out front of her home. Riding her
bike. Her body was so decomposed
she had to be identified by a
broken collarbone; a ninth
birthday present from her mother.
M.E says she were in that field
just shy of three weeks...in
August heat.

(Pause)

Who's to say Debbie Rhodes never
suffered a similar fate?

FULLER

I'm still not convinced.

RESSLER

"Many serial killers target
victims with shared
characteristics. Criminal
psychologists believe this is a
connection to a figure from
childhood".

FULLER

You read my book?

RESSLER

I've read all your books.

FULLER

So you've got taste.

RESSLER

I got more than that. When the
Littlethwait household was
searched, poor little Anna's
meager and filthy wardrobe were
one dress, one pair of dungarees,
one skirt, one knit sweater -
frayed, but not a single item of
underwear.

FULLER

So what do you want from me?

RESSLER

I need your help. I need a
profile.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

I don't do that anymore.

RESSLER

And I don't take 'no' for an answer.

FULLER

Then you haven't heard the right 'no' yet.

RESSLER

The sun and heat destroyed any potential DNA evidence. You're my last hope.

FULLER

That's a fucking tragedy.

RESSLER

You're the best there is. You've got a gift.

FULLER

Of all the things I coulda been good at.

(Pause)

Any number of profilers will do. You go to Robert Bentley?

RESSLER

And Ian McCammon. And Frazer Turner.

FULLER

Turner. His face still trading places with his asshole? Why me?

RESSLER

I guess I made the mistake of thinking you might give a shit.

FULLER

Giving a shit is for those who have somethin' to lose. Or gain.

RESSLER

(Gets to his feet)

Whether I'm right or wrong about this, there's still a dead little girl. Somebody killed her. Thanks for the coffee. I'll let you get back to whatever it is that's so important.

He collects his case files and shows himself out, leaving Fuller sitting alone.

EXT. PAULDING COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Fuller winces beneath the rain as she exits the building. Kelly smiles as she passes.

KELLY

See you next time, Melanie. Bye Summer.

SUMMER

Bye Kelly.

Fuller sees the little girl waiting by the side of the road, seemingly happy to be pelted by rain, waiting alone.

FULLER

You got someone with you?

SUMMER

I'm waiting for my step Mom to pick me up.

Fuller takes a look around. The rest of the group have dispersed. The child is dwarfed by the city and its fast-moving traffic, human and vehicular.

FULLER

Ah shit.

INT. DINER - DAY

Still dripping wet, Fuller slides into a booth across from Summer and passes her a mug.

SUMMER

What's that?

FULLER

Coffee.

SUMMER

They didn't have milkshakes?

FULLER

There's milk in that. Move it side to side and you got yourself a milkshake.

(Pause)

It'll get you warm, drink it.

The two of them sip their drinks. Summer recoils.

FULLER

Your step mom has more important things to do than come with you?

(CONTINUED)

SUMMER
She's a busy lady.

FULLER
Your dad?

SUMMER
He's on a business trip. Jenny,
she's my step sister, she says
the meetings are too depressing.

FULLER
Jenny sounds swell. So you come
alone?

SUMMER
You're alone.

FULLER
But I'm a grown up.

SUMMER
Does that make it different?

Fuller tries to avoid those big blue eyes.

SUMMER
Do you have a husband?

FULLER
No.

SUMMER
Do you have a boyfriend?

FULLER
The boys I know aren't the friend
type.

SUMMER
Ain't you got no brothers or
sisters?

FULLER
What time did you say you were
expecting that step mom of yours?

SUMMER
What are you?

FULLER
What do you mean?

SUMMER
What's your job?

FULLER

What you are and what you do
don't have to equate to the same
thing. It's better they don't.

(Pause)

What do you want to be when you
grow up?

SUMMER

Jenny says I won't get to grow
up.

Fuller looks away from those big round, hopeful eyes. She
fingers her coffee cup.

A big Mercedes pulls into the parking lot, its windshield
wipers fighting a losing battle.

SUMMER

That's my step mom. See you next
time.

She slides out of her seat and runs to the door.

INT. HOSPITAL, ONCOLOGY WARD - DAY

Fuller sits with a neutral, indifferent look on her face.

DOCTOR BYRNE (35). Kind face. He breathes heavily through
his nose before speaking.

DOCTOR BYRNE

Your constant refusal to undergo
chemo or radiation therapy has
led us to the inevitable. Unless
you are willing to pursue one
last option, which involves
getting your cytotoxic cells to
recognise your tumor as something
to attack, I'm afraid you will be
left with very little time.

FULLER

I'm already dead, Doctor Byrne,
my body's just finally catching
up. How long?

DOCTOR BYRNE

A couple of months, maybe less. I
regret that there wasn't
something else I could have done
to change your mind. I'm sorry.

FULLER

Don't be. How many of us get to
know how and when we go?

(CONTINUED)

DOCTOR BYRNE

You still going to the support group meetings?

FULLER

'Course, the free pastries are the best in town.

INT. PAULDING COUNTY COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Fuller sits at her place in the circle. Today, an EMPTY SEAT next to her commands her attention. She looks at all the faces present, searching.

KELLY

Right, we all here?

GRAHAM

My name's Graham, I have testicular cancer. I was -

FULLER

Where's the little girl?

KELLY

Summer? I'm afraid she took a turn for the worst. She passed away yesterday morning.

(Pause)

Graham, this might sound strange but I want you to think about any positives that may have come from your experience with cancer; any gains, strengths, or changes in perspective?

GRAHAM

A feeling of hope. I actually feel more optimistic now than I did before my diagnosis. Up until then I think I was just complacent, in life.

KELLY

That's great. Anybody else?

STEPH

Hi, my name's Steph, I was diagnosed with stage 4 breast cancer. I like to feel that I am more than just my cancer. I like to believe that...

(tearing up, still smiling)

...even if I don't make it...I get to see people that I've lost.

(CONTINUED)

KELLY

Melanie? Melanie? Do you have anything to add?

FULLER

...I'm Melanie. I'm dying from a tumor somewhere in my head. Positives? Sure; pity will get you a free beer now and then. Negatives...it's a lot harder to get laid when you're dying.

KELLY

You struggle to find companionship?

FULLER

I have a fuck-it list, you know, like a bucket list. The last guy I slept with couldn't even spell orgasm. Heaven? Heaven to me would be kittens, coffee and vibrators that don't take batteries.

STEPH

You don't believe in life after death?

FULLER

I wish I could. I like the idea of believing there's something better than this.

STEPH

Then how about life before death? You seem to be stuck somewhere in between.

Fuller is without a response and her attention is drawn back to the EMPTY SEAT beside her.

INT. FULTON COUNTY POLICE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Ressler sits at his cluttered desk, case files open in front of him.

He studies two photos side by side; a school photo of Debbie Rhodes and a school photo of Anna Littlethwait. The resemblance is noteworthy.

More pairs of images; a black and white of an abandoned bicycle from 1988 and a colored image of the same scenario from 2009.

Ressler swallows hard at the final photo; the decomposing body of Anna Littlethwait lying in a patch of tall grass.

EXT. RESSLER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Lights still burn behind curtains. The dark Toyota cruises past the house and stops at the end of the street.

INT. TOYOTA - NIGHT

Ressler lets the engine idle while he closes his eyes, grips the wheel, and breathes deep. After a while he recomposes himself and turns the car around.

INT. RESSLER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

He looks up the stairs, in neighboring rooms, expectant.

RESSLER

Emma?

EMMA (O.S)

In here.

KITCHEN

EMMA (39), hair in a ponytail, under the sink with a wrench.

RESSLER

Hey. Kid's asleep?

EMMA

(Good humour)

Damn well hope so.

Ressler nods, thankful.

RESSLER

Want some help?

EMMA

You can massage my shoulders when I'm done.

Ressler smiles crookedly. He heads out the room, up the stairs and to a...

CHILD'S BEDROOM

He inches the door open. Sam and Hayleigh sleep in their beds. Ressler quietly eases the door shut.

BEDROOM

Ressler and his wife lie together in bed. He kisses the back of her neck, prompting her to rub her body against his. She kisses him passionately. He stops her.

RESSLER

Not tonight...is that ok?

In response, she kisses his forehead and holds him.

INT. FULTON COUNTY POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Ressler carries a bottle of spring water through the halls. He pauses when he finds Melanie Fuller sat at his desk reading the case files.

FULLER

You weren't the investigating officer?

RESSLER

No. It's a cold case that I dug out. There was a lack of evidence. The few leads the Sheriff's department had dried up, the case was no longer a media darling and it got shut down.

FULLER

Ok. What's in this for you?

RESSLER

I wanna catch the guy.

FULLER

You lookin' to climb the ranks, get your picture in a glass cabinet at the end of a hall, grow a bigger dick?

RESSLER

I've worked a lot of homicides. Inner city stuff. I used to put stock in the lie that all men are created equal.

(Pause)

I now know not all corpses are created equal neither. Hard to shed a tear for some pimp when he falls victim to a shotgun castration. Or some meth-head who ODs right after microwaving his baby.

(Pause)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER (cont'd)
Whoever killed those girls... I
want to stop the guy, plain and
simple. Good enough.

FULLER
Good enough. Then what?

RESSLER
"Then what"?

FULLER
After you "stop the guy"?

RESSLER
I don't understand.

FULLER
You will.
(Pause)
If we do this, we do it my way.
You do what I say.

RESSLER
And your reasons? What changed
your mind?

FULLER
Look, I don't know you, you
certainly don't know me and I got
little incentive for making new
friends. Good enough?

RESSLER
Good enough.

FULLER
I write your profile, then you
leave me in peace, or the closest
thing to it.

INT. FULTON COUNTY POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

Ressler and Fuller pore over the case files and masses of
paperwork. CRIME SCENE PHOTOS and M.E REPORTS are posted
to the corkboard on the wall.

Fuller nods to two still images; Debbie's abandoned
bicycle in 1988 and Anna's decades later.

FULLER
What makes you so sure we're not
looking for a copycat?

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER

The details about the missing underwear were never revealed to the press. Just like you suggested in 88.

FULLER

So, two abductions spanning twenty one years. You check prison releases up to six months prior? This guy would have been quiet, a loner. Model inmate.

RESSLER

Nineteen inmates convicted of sex crimes were released from state or federal prisons in that time. Twelve were convicted after re-offending, one committed suicide, two were beaten to death and the remaining four have water-tight alibis.

FULLER

(At a still of the car)
Anything recovered from the Skylark in '88?

RESSLER

A few hairs, blond. No prints, no blood or semen. Not to mention genetic profiling was just getting started back then. We never found no kill kit either.

FULLER

The car itself?

RESSLER

Unregistered. Previous owner remembers selling it in cash. To a man with a limp.

(Pause)

So what does that leave us with?

FULLER

The victims.

INT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - NIGHT

Ressler takes the wheel, Fuller rides shotgun.

FULLER

Best way to profile the perp?
Profile the victim. This guy is choosing his victims for a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FULLER (cont'd)
reason. The choice of victim must
have as much significance as the
act itself.

RESSLER
He's a chomo.

FULLER
Maybe.

RESSLER
Why else would he kidnap and
murder little girls?

FULLER
You know, cases like this can be
tough.

RESSLER
That's why I called on you.

FULLER
I mean...when a case like this
comes along it's not just the
families that feel it. Are you
prepared for this?

RESSLER
I've covered my share of
homicides.

FULLER
These guys are different. If it
weren't for guys like this I
might have been something else.

RESSLER
Like what?

FULLER
A better person.

Ressler turns his head and tries reading her expression.
She remains neutral.

EXT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - DAY

The car barrels past the 'WELCOME TO BELL COUNTY' sign.

EXT. FORMER LITTLETHWAIT RESIDENCE - DAY

Ressler takes the Toyota along a run-down street. Yards are unkept, cars up on brinks sans-wheels.

He stops the car in front of a shanty bungalow with a 'PUBLIC AUCTION FORCLOSURE SALE' sign out front. Ressler and Fuller exit the vehicle.

RESSLER

Despite being their first, and thanfully only, born, little Anna was treated like the ginger step-kid.

FULLER

And grew up in a part of town where the toilet roll is under lock and key.

INT. FORMER LITTLETHWAIT RESIDENCE - DAY

Blinds hang broken, carpets are torn up, random items of furniture remain.

CHILD'S BEDROOM

A few colored drawings tacked to the walls, the work of a child, are all the house has to offer in terms of color.

RESSLER

The last thing mumma and puppa Littlethwait claim to remember is Anna leaving the house on her bike in the morning, the John across the street sees her from a window as he's zipping up, and a couple of local kids said they think they saw her leaving town with a man in what might have been a green, may have been blue, could have been black truck.

Fuller runs her hands over the drawings, over a doll, and over the small bed in the corner.

FULLER

Anna Littlethwait was born a victim.

RESSLER

If it's any consolation, the parents are both serving time. Drug trafficking.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

It's not. Where was the body found?

EXT. FIELD - DAY

Ressler and Fuller wade through knee-high grass and head for a spot as innocuous as the rest of the field, nothing more than a patch of green. Ressler knows it by heart.

RESSLER

The condition of the body made it pretty much impossible to determine cause of death or whether or not she'd been sexually assaulted. No obvious trauma. Though they did find traces of tocopherol, dimethi - dimethic -

FULLER

Dimethicone.

RESSLER

And Oxybenzone and titanium dioxide.

FULLER

Makeup.

(Pause)

The case file said she was found with her face covered?

RESSLER

That's right.

FULLER

He feels remorse. He is compulsive, what he does gratifies him, but he feels guilty after the high has subsided.

RESSLER

Remorse?

FULLER

His version of it. He didn't kill her here. What he does takes time, privacy. He'll live alone, though he's likely been married unsuccessfully. He's well organized and meticulous. The abductions show finesse. He likely visited this site several times. To him he maintained a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FULLER (cont'd)
relationship with the girl,
post-mortem. In his mind he's
living out a fantasy where his
feelings are reciprocated.

RESSLER
So does he dump the bodies
because he understands the value
of evidence? Or is there
something he wants people to see?

FULLER
Dumping them could still be part
of the act, part of a ritual. We
won't know until the next one. We
need the scene fresh.

RESSLER
You're saying we're relying on
him to kill another little girl
so that we can stop him from
killing little girls?
(Pause)
What if he doesn't?

FULLER
He will. In time his needs will
outweigh his guilt and he won't
be able to help himself.

EXT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - DAY

Rain. Ressler's Toyota swings into the parking lot.

INT. TOYOTA - DAY

FULLER
Check us in, I've got something I
need to go do.

RESSLER
You don't wanna check out the
crummy bar? Go over the case?

FULLER
No. And get separate rooms.

RESSLER
Wouldn't have it any other way.

FULLER
It's like we're practically
married.

EXT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON - DAY

Fuller takes the Toyota to the front gate where she is waved through.

INT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON - DAY

Fuller sits in front of a piece of two-way glass, an empty seat on the other side.

After a harsh BUZZ and the heavy CLANK of metal doors, CLARENCE WHITEHALL (55), a small man, saunters into view dressed in orange coveralls. He smiles as he sits.

CLARENCE

Good to see you, Melanie. I look forward to your visits, not that I'm short on company. I have one hundred and sixty-nine dinner guests on a daily basis. And we have a lot more in common than just our outfits. What can I do for you?

Fuller stares at the man. This was all the reaction he was expecting. It's what he's used to.

CLARENCE

I'm well. You?

(Pause)

Did you happen to notice the new paint job?

He indicates the walls. They look like shit. A coat of salmon pink peels from the walls in chunks, cold gray beneath.

CLARENCE

After reading that pastel colors can have a calming effect on one's mood, our good warden suggested redecorating. It seems my fellow inmates objected to the new shade. They've been eating it. I thought that might make a nice anecdote for one of your little books. I found the last one...old hat. Still trying to figure us out?

(Pause)

You're a little earlier than expected this month. What ever has prompted your change in routine must be important. Has time become more pressing? You look unwell.

(CONTINUED)

(Pause)

Is it true what they say, that
time is a great healer? Do we
heal? Or do we rot?

(Big smile)

See you next month Melanie. Won't
I?

Fuller gets up and walks away. Clarence watches her leave
before doing the same.

INT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - NIGHT

FULLER'S ROOM.

Every light burns. Fuller is laid out on the sofa staring
vacantly at the TV, glass in hand and bottles of rum and
coke on the floor.

RESSLER'S ROOM.

Ressler brushes his teeth vigorously until the toothbrush
comes away pink. He spits blood.

He goes to the phone, dials, and waits.

EMMA (OVER PHONE)

Hello?

RESSLER

Hi Honey.

EMMA (OVER PHONE)

Hey.

RESSLER

What you doin'?

EMMA (OVER PHONE)

Not much, just about to go to
bed.

RESSLER

um-hmm.

EMMA (OVER PHONE)

Wanna talk?

RESSLER

(Lying on the bed)

...Could you maybe just...stay on
the line for me?

(CONTINUED)

EMMA (OVER PHONE)

Sure.

He rolls on to his side and pulls the blankets over himself. He keeps the phone to his ear, listening to the silence, shuts off the lights and closes his eyes.

A KNOCK at the door wakes him up. The phone is now dead. He answers the door. Fuller raises the rum and coke.

FULLER

The bar came to us.

RESSLER

I was asleep.

FULLER

Ressler, that German?

RESSLER

Fuller, is that intolerable pain in the ass?

FULLER

Intolerable pain in the ass is my Indian name.

She step past him and pours them each a drink.

FULLER

I lost my virginity when I was 15. Engaged once, never married, no kids, and I can set a clock to my menstrual cycle. There, we got to know each other. Now we can drink.

She passes him a rum and coke, which he makes a point of putting down without sipping. She takes a gulp of her own.

RESSLER

Is everything ok?

FULLER

My sister married three times. Four if you count booze. And she had the guts to lecture me on men and my..."lifestyle choices".

(Pause)

You're not all bad-looking, Ressler.

She looks him in the eye and they regard each other for a few quiet moments.

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER
I'm married, Melanie.

FULLER
That don't always make a
difference.

RESSLER
Makes a difference this time.

She looks to the floor, smiles crookedly and nods her head.

BLOOD drips on the carpet. She looks to the drops of blood between her feet, puzzled.

RESSLER
Fuller?

She puts two fingers to her face and finds her nose bleeding. She runs to the bathroom and quickly shuts the door.

RESSLER
You ok?

The phone rings.

BATHROOM.

With the water running, Fuller blots away the blood under her nose with tissue.

There is a KNOCK at the door. When she opens the door, Ressler confronts her with a grim expression.

RESSLER
Another girl's been kidnapped.

INT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - NIGHT

Ressler drives, Fuller rides shotgun. They ride in silence. The scene through the windshield is one of chaos.

Patrol cars from the Georgia State Police and Sheriff's department are parked askew in the street and TV news crews light up the night.

EXT. GORMAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

A PATROLMAN, GRAVES (27), evidently given guard duty, stands at the front gate to a middle class home.

Ressler gives Graves a hard but friendly tap on the shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

GRAVES

Kurt.

RESSLER

Thanks for calling, Rick. How long ago was she taken?

GRAVES

Three hours.

Ressler nods and heads for the house. The Patrolman stops Fuller as she follows.

GRAVES

ID.

FULLER

I'm with him.

GRAVES

Sorry Mam, I need to see some ID.

FULLER

Quit being a fucking boy scout and let me pass.

GRAVES

Mam, I need you to step aside -

FULLER

Ressler

Ressler stops at the end of the path.

RESSLER

It's ok, let her through.

INT. GORMAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

More activity, more COPS. SHERIFF HAGUE (40) looks puzzled to see Ressler enter and survey the room.

HAGUE

Ressler? You quit Atlanta PD to come back to us, or what?

Hague acknowledges Ressler's rather serious expression, looks past Ressler's shoulder, sees Fuller.

RESSLER

We're working a couple of cold cases.

HAGUE

Still pushing the Debbie Rhodes thing?

(CONTINUED)

Ressler nods.

HAGUE

Not sure you'll find a connection
but I'll give ya the particulars.
Little girl, eleven years old,
snatched from her bedroom.
Fourteen year old sister she
shares with saw it happen.

Fuller looks down a hall until she sees a pretty blond
girl, ELIZA (13), sandwiched between her sobbing mother,
MAUREEN(38) and shell-shocked brother, JACKSON (15).

FULLER

The two sisters, they look alike?

HAGUE

Could be twins. No prints on the
ledge or the glass. And before
you ask, she only saw him from
the back, not the face. Neighbors
heard a car drive off. FBI from
the Atlanta field office are on
their way and we got AMBER
alerts going out.

Ressler and Fuller turn to each other.

RESSLER

M.O's different.

FULLER

But the victim profile is a
match.

HAGUE

(To Ressler)

Who's your partner.

FULLER

Partner?

RESSLER

Melanie Fuller, criminal
psychologist. She's here in a
semi-official capacity.

HAGUE

Little girl missing, I'm happy
for all the help we can get.

FULLER

Check with the mother, ask her if
they're missing any items of
clothing...specifically the
child's underwear.

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

Oh Jesus.

RESSLER

Gather your men, send out search teams. Alert the press to all your chosen search areas but one.

FULLER

If this is the same guy, he's gonna be wise to that.

RESSLER

What if it's not?

Hague follows the conversation like he's watching a tennis match until Fuller faces him directly.

FULLER

You got a town hall?

HAGUE

We got a church.

FULLER

Hold a community meeting, say you're asking for search volunteers as well as any possible witnesses.

HAGUE

I don't want to start a panic.

FULLER

So then say it with a smile.

(Pause)

Can you spare any men?

HAGUE

I got hundreds of acres of woods and farmland out there to search, not to mention door to door teams to round up.

FULLER

One man. Send him home, tell him to change into civilian clothes then get his ass to the church.

HAGUE

You think there's a connection to what you're working on?

RESSLER

We hope not.

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

If it is?

FULLER

A panic will feel like a day at
the fair.

Hague is quiet for a moment before he gets on his radio.
Ressler and Fuller exit the house.

EXT. GORMAN RESIDENCE - NIGHT

RESSLER

You really think this is our guy?

FULLER

M.O's can change. Either he's
more daring or more desperate.
Signatures don't change.

RESSLER

Signatures?

FULLER

What he needs. What he gets out
of doing what he does.

Fuller, to the surprise of Ressler, makes a beeline for a
TV NEWS CREW. The red-headed REPORTER can't believe her
luck.

REPORTER

Mam, what can you tell us -

A camera is shoved in Fuller's face. She blocks the lens
with her hand.

FULLER

You're helping us.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Dozens of flashlight beams swing back and forth as COPS
and FBI AGENTS search and scrutinize the dark woods.

INT. ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH - NIGHT

Every seat amongst the pews is filled. People stand in the
isles.

Town folk, young and old, look to Sheriff Hague at the
front of the church. They fan themselves with magazines,
prayer books.

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

Thank you for coming, my men and
I appreciate it. And I'm sure
little Becky Gorman's parents
damn well appreciate it too...

Eliza, her brother Jackson and mother, Maureen, sit
amongst the crowds.

EXT. ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Two FBI AGENTS, stalk around in the dark writing down the
license plates of each and every car gathered there.

INT. ST. JOHN'S METHODIST CHURCH - NIGH

HAGUE

...now try to pay the news crews
no mind...

Patrolman Graves, dressed in jeans and a shirt, carries a
TV camera on his shoulder. He pans from Hague to the
crowd. He zooms in on each and every face.

At the entrance to the church, Fuller watches Ressler
pace. Beads of sweat seep from the pores on their faces.

RESSLER

You really think he's gonna turn
up? Wave for the camera?

FULLER

These guys love to revel in the
media circus of their own making.
They also like to act the part of
the samaritan. There's a good
chance he's here.

RESSLER

They all look so...normal.

FULLER

You were expecting cloven hooves
and a pitchfork? It's easy to
imagine a monster, the hard part
is finding out he's just a man.
Always just a man. Harder still
when you learn they were a kid
once. Shit start in life. Absent
father. Abusive mother.

RESSLER

I'm supposed to feel sorry for
these psychotics now?

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Psychopath. Psychotics don't know right from wrong. This guy knows. He just doesn't care enough to stop.

RESSLER

(Sarcastic)

Can you repeat that so I can write it down?

FULLER

Just telling it like it is.

(Pause)

Dog bites little boy; bad dog.
Little boy pulls dog's tail, dog bites back; bad little boy.

RESSLER

You got a point you plan on arriving at?

FULLER

Who are we looking for, the mean little boy? Or the dog biting back?

Ressler moves out of the doorway and into the parking lot, raising his voice.

RESSLER

Got any more cute riddles? This is a waste of fuckin' manpower. Why aren't I out there searching?

FULLER

Because you're doing what I tell you to do, remember?

RESSLER

I'm waiting around with my thumb up my ass.

FULLER

Who told you to put your thumb up your ass?

RESSLER

Why do you always have to be -

FULLER

A bitch?

RESSLER

I was gonna say difficult. But yeah, bitch works.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

You acting as though I got a say
in who I am.

RESSLER

Fine, you be you. I'll be me,
I'll go out and look for the
girl. Be sure to let me know if
anybody turns up wearing a T
shirt with the words "serial
killer" written on it.

He starts walking away. He stops, turns, as if coming to a sudden realisation.

RESSLER

That's it, isn't it. Our priority
isn't the girl, it's the guy?

FULLER

We find one, we find the other.

RESSLER

Maybe. But there's only one I
care about finding alive.

Ressler storms to his Toyota and speeds out of the parking lot.

Fuller turns back to the rows of people, a few of which have turned in their seats at the sound of the commotion.

ELIZA looks back over the top of the pew she sits on. She and Fuller lock stares for a beat. The girl waves.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

Ressler bares a grim, intense expression as he joins the search teams, probing the night with flashlights.

EXT. ST JOHNN'S METHODIST CHURCH - NIGHT

The citizens of Tidewater file from the church, chattering.

Fuller distances herself from the moving throng and heads for her car.

ELIZA

You the police lady?

Fuller stops and turns. She scans the crowds before fixing her intense gaze on the girl.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

I'm an - I'm with the FBI, of sorts.

ELIZA

FBI?

FULLER

Like a cop, only with less personality. You here with someone?

ELIZA

With my Mom and Brother.

The girl points back over her shoulder without so much as a glance. She tugs an orange rucksack from her shoulder, reaches in and withdraws a flashlight.

She clicks it on and off for good measure.

ELIZA

We're gonna help find 'Becca. She's my sister, you know?

FULLER

Yeah, I know. I'm sorry.

Fuller rattles the car keys in her hand.

ELIZA

I want to be a lady policeman, just like you.

FULLER

There's a thousand and one things you could choose to be. Don't be me.

ELIZA

But you help people.

MAUREEN

(Calls out)

Eliza? C'mon girl.

ELIZA

Gotta go.

Eliza is about to leave.

FULLER

Eliza?

ELIZA

Yeah?

FULLER

My name's Melanie. Be careful.

The girl nods and smiles before taking off at a jog to join her small, and now dwindling family.

Fuller watches her.

FROM BEHIND A WINDSHEILD

...So does HE. Knuckles turn white as strong fingers on a hand patched with a bandaid squeeze the steering wheel.

INT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - NIGHT

Fuller lies back on the sofa under the breeze of a dusty desk fan. All lights are on. The TV broadcasts local news. It's the same Redheaded Anchorwoman...

REPORTER (OVER TV)

...the FBI have now joined Georgia State Police and the Bell County Sheriff's department here in the small town of Tidewater to assist in the search for eleven year old Rebecca Gorman. This most recent abduction is now thought to be linked to two previous unsolved cases; that of Anna Littlethwait, who was found tragically murdered last August, and that of Debbie Rhodes who went missing over twenty years ago and was never seen again. Residents here in Tidewater are sure to feel frightened, anxious and, quite possibly, angry. The question on most parents lips; what more could have been done? And why weren't we warned? Amy King, MJB News.

Fuller stares vacantly at the TV for a little longer before switching over to a sitcom. She falls asleep to the canned laughter.

EXT. TOWN OF TIDEWATER - SUNRISE

GAS STATION.

Night recedes and sunlight forges a path across the empty forecourt and inactive pumps.

CHURCH.

The shadow of a cross stretches its limbs far and wide as the sun rises.

WOODS.

The rich green canopy is still cloaked in morning mist. Out of this mist appear several DARK FIGURES, opaque at first, but sharper with every pace forward. They scan the ground, searching, tired.

Ressler, exhausted, wipes the sweat from his brow.

SUBURBAN STREET.

Steam rises from the asphalt. A milk truck rumbles slowly from house to house.

EXT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - DAY

A tired Ressler, his shirt sweat-stained, climbs the outside steps to the second floor and takes his keys out.

INT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - DAY

His surprise at seeing Fuller sitting in his room manifests itself as nothing more than a lingering heavy-lidded gaze before he looks away to close the door.

RESSLER

All I want is to go to bed.
Alone.

FULLER

My sister was murdered.

Ressler pauses, chooses to remain standing.

FULLER

Two years before Debbie Rhodes.
It should have hurt like shit but
I felt nothing. I was numb.

(Pause)

But pretty soon the anger came.
And the hate. All I lived for was
finding her killer.

(CONTINUED)

Ressler sits across from her, listening intently.

FULLER

A man named Clarence Whitehall met my sister at a bar. She refused to go home with him so he stabbed her seventeen times. Just before Whitehall was to be given the death sentence I wrote a letter to the Governor asking that it be reduced to life.

RESSLER

Why?

FULLER

Death was the release I wanted. Life was my cage. He should share it with me.

(Pause)

After he was sentenced I thought my life could begin. But the opposite was true. I was left with nothing again. Nothing to live for...whatever it takes for a person to commit suicide, I don't have it.

(Pause)

Then you went and knocked on my door.

RESSLER

To ask for your help in writing a profile...

FULLER

For the man I allowed to get away.

RESSLER

But, what you're saying, when we find our guy...you'll be back where you started. With nothing.

FULLER

That no longer matters.

He gives her a slightly puzzled look. As he's about to pose another question she gets up, hands him something.

FULLER

I got you something.

She places in his hand a packet of 'Sleep Aids' before exiting.

EXT. WOODED TRAIL - MORNING

A DOGWALKER wearing a flannel shirt and sucking on a cigarette lets his dog off the leash.

TV REPORTER(V.O)

It has now been almost
forty-eight hours since an AMBER
alert was issued and the FBI
joined the search for missing
eleven year old Rebecca Gorman...

He rounds a bend in the trail when the sight of something stops him dead in his tracks. He crosses himself.

DOGWALKER

Holy Mary, mother of God.

INT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - DAY

Fuller sips WATER with one hand, the other on the wheel.

FULLER

Get much sleep?

Ressler takes a sip of COFFEE.

FULLER

You remember your first body?

RESSLER

Just another dead junkie.

He takes another swig, seemingly unfazed by what he knows awaits them.

EXT. WOODED TRAIL, CRIME SCENE - DAY

Hague leads Ressler and Fuller. They pass COPS, some coming, some going. Some vomiting. The men they pass keep their heads down, eyes to the ground.

FULLER

(Shaking head)

Good job preserving the integrity
of the crime scene, fellas.

There is a parting of uniformed bodies as Fuller, Hague and Ressler approach the hub of all the activity.

Fuller steps aside allowing Ressler to lay his eyes on the BODY OF REBECCA GORMAN. Her face is painted in MAKEUP. But it's not enough to mask death.

(CONTINUED)

She has been POSED, standing on a tree stump, her ankles crossed, hand under her chin. Ropes tied between her limbs and the surrounding tree branches hold her in position.

Beneath a white dress, the skin on her arms, neck and upper legs is a greenish red. From her feet to her knees she is a deep, dark purple. Almost black.

A BEETLE crawls across her face.

The flash of a camera.

FULLER

You ok?

Ressler nods once.

The PHOTOGRAPHER continues to take shots of the body. One COP triangulates the scene with a tape measure.

RESSLER

You ever seen anything like this before?

FULLER

No. Not like this.

A short, sweaty-faced man in a white shirt with black tie looks up from his thermometer. He is HERBERT PARSONS (63).

HERBERT

Let's move her fast before we lose her to the bugs.

EXT. PARSON'S FAMILY FUNERAL HOME - DAY

Hague's patrol car, Ressler's Toyota, and a second patrol car - swing into the curb.

Hague, Fuller, Ressler, Graves and a STOCKY PATROLMAN called MORTIMER file out from their vehicles.

They walk fast, talk fast.

HAGUE

Graves, Mortimer guard the entrance. No use pretending that word aint already out.

Ressler, Fuller and Hague hurry up the steps.

HAGUE

Small town chinese whispers. Word is, the drugstore already sold out of brown hairdye, and Vic's gunstore had to turn away customers.

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER

Christ.

FULLER

You got your media darling.

By the entrance to the building Eliza Gorman sits astride her bike, orange rucksack on her back.

Fuller offers Eliza a simple wave, just the lift of her hand. Eliza returns the gesture. It doesn't go unnoticed by Ressler.

FULLER

(To the adults present)

I'll catch you up.

ELIZA

I want to help.

FULLER

You have something you can tell us about Rebecca or anyone that would want to hurt her?

ELIZA

I want to help you find the person that killed her.

FULLER

How old are you, sweetheart?

ELIZA

Call me Eliza. Old enough to understand the world we live in. Young enough to want to change it.

Fuller can't help but smile. A smile that sits halfway between sympathetic and impressed.

FULLER

Your time will come. But the way it is right now, it could change you. I want you to promise me you won't let it.

ELIZA

Promise you'll find the man that killed my sister.

Fuller reaches for the door...

ELIZA

You can use me as bait.

Fuller steps inside without word, leaving Eliza outside.

INT. SHOWROOM - DAY

Ressler waits for Fuller. She walks past him, leading the way to the embalming room. She holds the door but finds he has not followed.

RESSLER
Tell me you're not thinking about it.

FULLER
Let's just get this over with.
You ok?

RESSLER
Let's just get this over with.

He hurries past, avoiding her gaze.

INT. EMBALMING ROOM - DAY

Rebecca's body is laid out on the steel. Herbert is dressed and prepped and the PHOTOGRAPHER is ready.

Fuller takes a look around the small room.

FULLER
Is this it?

HERBERT
This is all we have, miss.

Hague nods, his signal for Herbert to begin. He does so by combing her hair. The camera FLASHES...and again.

Ressler is having a hard time watching.

The comb goes into an evidence bag and Herbert takes an oral swab.

HERBERT
Fly's eggs in the oral and nasal cavities. Also present in the ear canals.
(Pause)
Cyonosis of the skin around the face.
(Pause)
I am now going to take swabs of the vagina and anus.

Ressler turns away.

The swabs go into more evidence bags.

Herbert takes scrapings from the fingernails of the right hand before moving onto the left.

(CONTINUED)

HERBERT

Note that the fingernails on the left hand are cut short.

Fuller looks to the left and right hands, quickly making comparisons.

FULLER

The nails on the right are manicured, polished.

(Pause)

Hague, let your house to house teams know that this man may well have scratch marks on his arms or neck or face. If she took her pound of flesh he likely cut her nails to destroy the evidence.

HERBERT

I see no obvious signs of injury or trauma with the exception of minor abrasions on both knees and the forehead. These occurred prior to death.

RESSLER

How many eleven year olds don't have scraped knees?

HAGUE

Any idea how she died?

HERBERT

Based solely on my initial findings...asphyxiation.

HAGUE

She was strangled?

HERBERT

No. That's just it. I see no typical signs one would expect to find that would result from strangulation, manual or otherwise, or even suffocation. Her airways are clear and show no evidence of having been obstructed.

RESSLER

So she just stopped breathing?

HERBERT

That's not the strangest part.

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

What is?

HERBERT

You see the lividity in the lower legs?

He points them to the deep, dark purple tone.

HERBERT

She died standing up. And remained that way for some time.

FULLER

So she just stood still and ran out of breath?

The five of them are silent.

HAGUE

Time of death?

HERBERT

Approximately twenty four hours, give or take.

RESSLER

(Checking watch)

So he kept her alive for a whole 24 hours before killing her.

HAGUE

Then making her up like a porcelain doll.

HERBERT

...We'll know more shortly. I'll start now with the Y-incision.

He takes a scalpel to her chest and Ressler makes his way quickly out the room.

FULLER

We're gonna need a toxicology report.

HERBERT

Look around you, miss.

FULLER

Ok. Can you have the body sent to the FBI labs at quantico?

Herbert and Hague exchange glances.

(CONTINUED)

HERBERT

I'm not sure the Gorman family
are going to like that.

FULLER

That's unfortunate, but probably
the least of their concerns right
now.

She turns and leaves.

SHOWROOM

She finds Ressler against the glass, looking out at a
small crowd gathered, held off by Mortimer and Graves.

FULLER

It doesn't matter how much you
read about it, how many pictures
you look at...never does justice
to the real thing, does it?

RESSLER

Just the profile, Mel. Just the
profile.

FULLER

...Fine.

INT. DINER - DAY

Ressler watches Fuller order at the counter. A WAITRESS
takes her order.

FULLER

Can I get two waters.

RESSLER

Coffee.

FULLER

One water, one coffee. Two club
sandwiches.

RESSLER

Not hungry.

FULLER

One club sandwich. Thanks.

The Waitress hurries away.

RESSLER

Are we looking for somebody
who...?

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

No. Necrophiles are disorganised, impulsive. We already know this guy likes to plan.

RESSLER

What about the stolen underwear?

FULLER

The panties are likely souvenirs.

RESSLER

The makeup?

FULLER

Theatricality. This guy wants attention.

RESSLER

He's got it.

(Pause)

Anna Littlethwait's face was covered, Rebecca Gorman's wasn't.

FULLER

We got to the body before he had time to return. Any remorse he might feel hasn't had a chance to set in.

RESSLER

How does all this help us?

FULLER

We can try and anticipate his next move, identify a potential victim. The alternative is to hope that he makes a mistake next time.

RESSLER

That ain't no kind of alternative.

FULLER

Or we set a trap. Use bait.

RESSLER

Out of the question.

FULLER

It's the reality of the situation. Otherwise the best we can hope for is that the next victim has more time.

INT. VEHICLE - DAY

From behind the wheel, HE watches ELIZA ride her bike.

The engine idles and HE shifts gear. A bandaid on the back of his hand bares a small dot of blood turning rusty at its center.

EXT. DINER - DAY

Fuller chews and drinks. Ressler keeps changing hands with his hot coffee. They walk and talk.

RESSLER

You say he's, getting more sophisticated, right? Cutting the fingernails, getting rid of evidence?

FULLER

Right.

RESSLER

So what if all those years ago Debbie Rhodes was just...practice. What if he's already made a mistake?

FULLER

But Debbie Rhodes was never found.

RESSLER

But we know where to start looking for her.

EXT. BELL COUNTY MALL - DAY

Ressler puts aside an old CRIME SCENE PHOTO of police and FBI searching the woodland area and looks across a huge parking lot.

FULLER

Looks mighty different than it did twenty-one years ago.

RESSLER

Fuck.

FULLER

It was a hell of a long shot to begin with, Ressler.

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER

The car.

FULLER

What car?

He routes around in the back of the Toyota and takes out a case file.

FULLER

(Reading)

...White 1980 Buick Skylark
impounded by police...later sold
at auction.

EXT. MIDDLE CLASS HOME - DAY

A HOUSEWIFE with an apron on stands in her open doorway.

HOUSEWIFE

You sayin' a serial killer owned
my car?

EXT. GARAGE - DAY

The garage door swings up and Ressler and Fuller lay eyes on the vehicle.

HOUSEWIFE

Ex-husband left me with two
rotten kids, mortgage repayments
I can't afford, and a car that
don't even drive. They say it's
vintage. What does that make me?

RESSLER

Thanks.

As if on cue, two kids can be heard fighting and the Housewife hurries to the house, cursing.

FULLER

It would have been searched in
1988.

RESSLER

Not by me.

The two investigators get busy searching the skylark.

A - Ressler lifts the hood and searches, feeling around in every crevice.

B - Fuller searches the trunk. Ressler joins her and rips the upholstery away.

(CONTINUED)

C - Fuller holds a flashlight for Ressler while he lays on his back underneath the car.

D - Ressler digs around in the glove box, reaching around beyond where he can see.

E - Fuller runs her hands under the wheel arches.

F - Ressler rips away the roofing fabric. He grabs a screwdriver from a toolchest and stabs the seat upholstery.

G - Ressler removes the headlamps...

H - The grill...

I - The front fender...

J - The rear fender...a small, dirty canvas tool bag hits the ground. The sound of a heavy, metal CLANK.

Ressler and Fuller look at each other. She passes him a rag which he uses to undo the zipper without touching it.

Inside the bag are a pair of handcuffs, a strip of cloth, a pair of leather gloves, rope, duct tape, and an icepick.

RESSLER

That what a kill kit looks like?

INT. FBI FIELD OFFICE, ATLANTA DIVISION, LAB - DAY

Ressler and Fuller wait anxiously, excited, as they watch a TECHNICIAN dust the contents of the kill kit, now layed out on the stark white surface, with a fine, dark powder.

A clear print becomes visible.

TECHNICIAN

Looks like you found yourselves a print. Just give me a minute we'll see if we can get you a match.

Our investigators smile at each other.

ARCHIVES.

Fuller and Ressler wait on one side of a huge library-like counter as a neatly-dressed WOMAN stands at a printer. The sheet barely has time to hit the tray before she grabs it, scans it and slides it across the counter.

(CONTINUED)

NEATLY-DRESSED WOMAN

He's got a record.

(Pause)

Damien Peller, convicted of larceny in 1992, served eleven years in Georgia State of a twelve year sentence before he died in prison in 2003.

RESSLER

What?

FULLER

He's dead?

RESSLER

All this time, we never were looking for the same man.

EXT. BELL COUNTY MALL - DAY

Jackson Gorman cruises along on his skateboard. Behind him, Eliza runs to keep up with him, her BRIGHT ORANGE RUCKSACK slung over her shoulder.

ELIZA

Wait up. I said wait up.

Behind them a BLUE PICKUP crawls along and pulls into a space where it then sits and idles.

Jackson skids to a halt at the main entrance. Without a word, Eliza holds out her hand. Reluctantly, Jackson puts a five dollar bill in her palm.

ELIZA

Mom gave you twenty. That's ten bucks each.

He puts another five dollars in her hand, which she quickly snatches away.

JACKSON

Beck back in fifteen, Mom wants us home before dark.

Jackson waits for her to go inside before skating over to a SCRUFFY TEEN (19), hanging out nearby.

JACKSON

Hey man, you got any weed?

SCRUFFY TEEN

You wanna shout that any louder? Not here, little dude.

INT. BELL COUNTY MALL, FLORISTS - DAY

Eliza slaps her ten dollars down on the counter. The FLORIST looks from the cash to the girl.

ELIZA
How many lillies does that get
me?

LOADING BAY.

Jackson follows Scruffy Teen to the side of the building and to some wheelie bins.

There's a brief exchange of cash and a plastic baggie and Scruffy Teen is soon on his way.

TIME CUT:

Jackson smokes on his newly-acquired weed and skates back around to the...

MAIN ENTRANCE.

...where he catches a glimpse of a BLOND GIRL climbing into a BLUE PICKUP TRUCK.

JACKSON
Eliza?

Through the rear windshield he can just make out the back of a man's head and the top of the blond girl's head.

JACKSON
Eliza?

The truck drives off. Jackson drops his joint and follows on his skateboard.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Once out of the parking lot the truck picks up speed and Jackson skates like a hellion to keep up.

He can only watch as the truck steadily pulls away. But it is then forced to stop for a red light.

Jackson pours on the speed, pumping with his leg.

The light goes green and the truck moves off, rounds a bend.

Jackson's heart sinks when he finds himself at the foot of a steep hill, the truck mounding the top before slipping over the other side and disappearing.

EXT. FBI FIELD OFFICE, ATLANTA DIVISION - DAY

Fuller and Ressler make their way on fast moving legs to the waiting Toyota.

RESSLER

Peller abducted and likely killed
Debbie Rhodes in 1988.

FULLER

And now someone familiar with
that crime is killing girls of
the same age who match her
description.

RESSLER

This whole thing is fucked.

FULLER

Let's see if we can make it
un-fucked. The stolen underwear
was known by the family, a few
officials -

RESSLER

And Peller himself.

FULLER

Right. He was inside a long time,
let's see if he talked. Maybe he
had an accomplice or maybe he's
passed the torch.

They stop at the car. Ressler seems deflated. Eventually
he follows her lead and eases himself into the car.

RESSLER

How many guys like this are out
there?

FULLER

We put away one and two take
their place.

INT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON, CORRIDOR - DAY

Fuller, Ressler and the WARDEN (52) walk side by side at a
brisk pace.

FULLER

We need to speak to Peller's
former cellmate. It's possible
that Peller might have opened up
to him, mentioned details of a
crime he was never convicted for,
details known only to law
enforcement.

(CONTINUED)

WARDEN

No need to speak to the cellmate,
I can answer that for you here
and now.

FULLER

What do you mean?

WARDEN

Peller did indeed open up to his
cellmate, a man named Kittrosser.
The next day Kittrosser stabbed
Peller in the throat with a filed
down toothbrush.

RESSLER

And you never contacted the
Sheriff's department in Bell
County to tell them an inmate
here had cofessed to an unsolved
crime?

WARDEN

Other than proudly boasting that
he'd killed a Chomo, Kittrosser
was characteristically
tightlipped. Snitches are revered
to the same degree as child
molesters within prison walls,
Miss Fuller. But if you would
like to speak to Kittrosser, be
my guest.

INT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON, VISITING ROOM - DAY

A loud BUZZ is followed by the crash of sliding, heavy,
metal doors.

KITTROSSER, a plain-looking man, short dark hair,
physically fit, is escorted into the room by a GUARD.

If it wasn't for the orange jumpsuit the man could pass
for a school teacher.

The looks, glances and stares from his fellow INMATES
don't go unnoticed by Kittrosser.

The Guard shoves Kittrosser into his seat.

GUARD

He misbehaves...holler.

The Guard leaves and Kittrosor looks Fuller up and down.

(CONTINUED)

KITTROSSER
They say you're FBI.

FULLER
Used to be.

KITTROSSER
You say so. Still look like law.

RESSLER
Atlanta PD.

KITTROSSER
Cops, FBI, I aint got nothin' to
say to either one of ya.

FULLER
(Pause)
They say you killed Damien
Peller.

KITTROSSER
Peller was a piece of shit.

FULLER
I don't doubt it.

KITTROSSER
Shit gets wiped off.

RESSLER
Tell us what he told you.

KITTROSSER
He once told me he preffered
vanilla ice cream over chocolate.
You beleive that shit?

RESSLER
Tell us what he told you that
made you stick a shiv in him.

FULLER
Did he ever say the same thing to
anyone else? Details about his
crimes?

KITTROSSER
Come on man, I aint gotta talk to
you.

FULLER
No...no you don't.

RESSLER
We don't have to make your life
difficult neither.

(CONTINUED)

KITTROSSER

Look where I am man, you think it gets much harder than this?

RESSLER

Want me to put the same question to your friends in orange?

Kittrosser looks left, looks right. Hardened criminals on both sides look back at him. And his two official-looking visitors with "law" written all over them.

One particularly WELL-GROOMED CON blows Ressler a kiss.

FULLER

You don't have to tell us if Peller told anyone else what he told you. You don't have to tell us if he said anything about an accomplice.

Kittrosser is listening, curious to see where she's going.

FULLER

You can always just kick up a stink so bad we have to call that nice guard back over.

His smile grows a little wider. He gets it.

KITTROSSER

Fuck you, bitch. And fuck you, pig.

He then kicks his chair back against the wall, getting a cheer from the other PRISONERS, and waits for the guards to rush in and restrain him.

KITTROSSER'S CELL.

The Guard slams the door shut on Kittrosser, Fuller and Ressler.

RESSLER

We're alone. Talk. Unless you want us to walk out of here singing your praises.

KITTROSSER

Peller thought he was smarter than us. Better than us. Took the odd beating for it. Never get him to step out of line. Everybody gives the guards here shit. Everybody. Not Peller. Swear that gimpy-legged mother fucker would

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KITTROSSER (cont'd)
have washed the Warden's car if he could have. Then I guess one day he took one beating too many. He starts telling me he aint the choirboy everybody thinks he is. Says how he likes little girls and that one time, he gets a girl to go with him. Even tells me how his hearts going, hands sweating. Dick's hard in his pants. That's when he smiles at me and tells me he..."did her". "Did her right, then did her wrong". Peller must have forgot I got two daughters of my own; guess he weren't as smart as he thought he was.

Ressler swallows, blinks slow.

RESSLER
He told you he worked alone?

He nods.

RESSLER
You the only person he told?

KITTROSSER
The fucker said he was "giddy" to finally share it with someone. That's the word he used "giddy".
(Pause)
He bled good.

EXT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON - DAY

Fuller and Ressler walk and talk on their way back to the car.

FULLER
We need to look back over the case files, the profile. See if there's something we've missed. Something I'm not seeing.

RESSLER
You go on ahead, I'll catch up with you later.

FULLER
Something wrong?

RESSLER
You get a ride out of here ok?

He barely waits for a reply and gets in his toyota and drives away.

INT. RESSLER RESIDENCE, BEDROOM - DAY

Ressler sits on the edge of the bed in the empty room, his hands shaking.

He can't hold it any longer and bursts into tears. Ressler buries his face in his hands.

SAM (O.C)

Daddy?

Ressler starts and looks up with tears in his eyes. He is lost for words, goes to speak. He then simply grabs hold of his seven year old son - a little too hard.

Sam is scared, this is not the father he knows.

SAM

Daddy. DADDY.

Ressler is shocked. He suddenly lets Sam go. The boy takes a step back and regards his father with a frightened look.

DINNER TABLE.

Emma, Sam, Hayleigh sit eating. Ressler simply sits.

RESSLER

Emma, your brother still looking for a new foreman?

Sam carries on eating his food, happy in his ignorance. Hayleigh can't hide her disappointment and watches Emma put down her knife and fork to reach out to her husband.

INT. FORD CAR (MOVING) - DAY

Jackson sits in the passenger seat while his mother, Maureen takes the car through the quiet streets. The pair wear their anxiety on their faces

MAUREEN

You definitely saw it going this way?

JACKSON

Positive.

MAUREEN

We need to call the police.

(CONTINUED)

JACKSON

You think they're gonna drive up
and down every street in the
county based on my word that I
saw a blue truck headin' south?

MAUREEN

Why weren't you watching your
sister? I already lost one
daughter and now -

JACKSON

I said I'm fuckin' sorry.

MAUREEN

You watch your goddamn mouth.

JACKSON

THAT'S IT.

MAUREEN

What?

JACKSON

That's the truck.

MAUREEN

Where?

JACKSON

There.

She looks to where he is pointing and stops the Ford.

She looks out her window at a blue pickup truck parked in
the drive beside an innocuous-looking house that matches
several dozen others that line the street.

She takes out a phone and dials 911.

INT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - DAY

Fuller has surrounded herself with crime scene photos,
case files, notes, books, and food and drink wrappers.

She paces the room speaking into a Dictaphone.

FULLER

The killer is intelligent,
charming, attractive to others,
he makes detailed plans with
contingencies, he will likely
introduce himself to his chosen
victim and ask them preliminary
questions to become familiar with
them and build trust quickly.

(CONTINUED)

(Pause)
His crimes are driven by
possession and anger.

Blood drops onto her hand holding the dictaphone...onto a
crime scene 8x10 and the carpet around it.

She puts a finger to her nose and finds it flowing freely
with blood. Fuller then collapses.

INT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - DAY

Ressler steers the car into the MOTEL PARKING LOT.

RESSLER
(Quiet. To himself)
Fuller I...Mel I...Listen.

EXT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - DAY

He crosses the parking lot, climbs the stairs and knocks
on Fuller's door.

RESSLER
(Quiet. To himself)
I can't...I don't want to...
(Loud)
Fuller? Melanie?

He tries the handle and the door opens.

INT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - DAY

Fuller lies unconscious on the motel room floor amongst
her mess and blood.

RESSLER
Melanie.

He runs in and scoops her up in his arms.

EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - DAY

A POLICE PATROL CAR pulls to a stop behind Maureen
Glover's Ford. Two PATROLMEN climb out and are met by
Maureen and Jackson.

Maureen points towards the house and the Patrolmen gesture
for her to remain calm and head for the house by
themselves.

They knock. Wait.

(CONTINUED)

WILLIAM DUKE (31) opens his door. He wears dirty overalls and a pair of gardening gloves.

WILLIAM
Officers.

LATER:

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE, KITCHEN - DAY

William watches through the window as one Patrolman searches the BACKYARD - looking in the shed, under a tarp.

The other Patrolman searches the house.

PATROLMAN 1
You understand, mister Duke.

WILLIAM
Of course. I've been following it in the news.

PATROLMAN 1
Hope we're not bothering you.

WILLIAM
Not at all. I was just doing a spot of gardening.

Patrolman 2 comes in from the backyard. He and his colleague exchange brief looks and Patrolman 2 shakes his head.

PATROLMAN 1
We'll just take a quick look around upstairs, if you don't mind.

WILLIAM
Go right ahead.

The two Patrolmen go on up.

LATER:

EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - DAY

Maureen, scruffy hair, red around the eyes, bites her nails. Jackson sits on the kerb. He gets to his feet when the Patrolmen are shown out by William.

PATROLMAN 2
We searched the house, Mam.

(CONTINUED)

PATROLMAN 1

Now, you sure she didn't just run off after fighting with her brother? With everything that's happened she may have just found everything too much and -

JACKSON

I saw her get into that truck.

PATROLMAN 2

You catch the license plate, Son? You even sure it were your sister you saw getting in the truck?

(Pause)

The best thing you can do for your sister is go with your Mom down to the Sheriff's office and file a missing person's report.

MAUREEN

That's it? That's all you're gonna do?

PATROLMAN 2

Mam, until you file a report that's all we can do. I'm sorry, truly sorry.

INT. HOSPITAL, ONCOLOGY WARD - DAY

Dr Byrne and Ressler stand in the dingy waiting area, surrounded by the flurescent glow of vending machines.

DOCTOR BYRNE

She went into hypovelemic shock. We're just moving her out of ICU now.

RESSLER

Is she ok?

DOCTOR BYRNE

Your friend has what's called a nasopharyngeal mass. It's a tumour between the superior concha and the sphenoidal sinus.

RESSLER

Cancer? What happens now, how do you treat that?

DOCTOR BYRNE

Mister Ressler, Melanie has refused all available options for the past eighteen months and now

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DOCTOR BYRNE (cont'd)
I'm afraid her tumor has
metastasized. She's looking at
weeks, maybe even days.

INT. HOSPITAL, ONCOLOGY WARD, MELANIE'S ROOM - DAY

Melanie is deathly pale and dark orange-brown around her eyes. She has a breathing tube under her nose and a machine attached to her arm measuring her blood pressure.

Ressler knocks gently and enters.

FULLER
I hate hospitals. They're full of
sick people.

He sits next to her bed.

RESSLER
How come you never said anything?

FULLER
If it doesn't matter to me, why
should it matter to you?

RESSLER
Do I need a reason?

FULLER
I'm just sorry I never got to
tick everything off my 'fuck it'
list.

RESSLER
A 'fuck it' list?

FULLER
It's like a bucket list for grown
ups.

RESSLER
I get it.

Fuller shows him a bittersweet smile. He breathes out long and slow before speaking again.

RESSLER
...There's been another
abduction.

Her eyes sharpen and focus on Ressler.

RESSLER
That's not all.

FULLER

What?

RESSLER

The FBI called from their lab in Quantico. Our Coroner in Bell County missed something in his postmortem. Turns out Rebecca Gorman died of chemical asphyxiation. She did run out of oxygen, but she also breathed in toxic levels of carbon dioxide; she was trapped somewhere airtight.

FULLER

Like being buried alive?

RESSLER

Yes.

FULLER

Who's the vic?

RESSLER

Rebecca Gorman's sister, Eliza Gorman.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

An increasingly stressed out and overworked Hague is stopped in his tracks by Graves. The Patrolman shoves a phone into his hands.

GRAVES

Mayor on line two, Sir.

HAGUE

Ok -

OFFICER 1

FBI on line four.

HAGUE

Wait a minute -

OFFICER 2

Call for you on line three, Sheriff.

HAGUE

Take a name and get 'em to call back.

(CONTINUED)

OFFICER 2
(Serious)
You need to take this call
Sheriff.

The Officer's bleek tone seems to drown out all other noise and chaos. Sheriff Hague picks up his phone.

HAGUE
Sheriff Hague here.

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
I'm the one you're looking for.

INT. HOSPITAL, ONCOLOGY WARD - DAY

Ressler stands in the corner of the room. He watches Dr Byrne inject Fuller in her forearm.

DOCTOR BYRNE
This should active your TC and NK
cells and jump start your immune
system.

FULLER
Will it get me out of bed?

DOCTOR BYRNE
It's an aggressive form of
treatment.

Doctor Byrne nods at Ressler before setting his sympathetic gaze on Fuller then shows himself out

Fuller immediately begins dressing but she is clearly in a weakened state.

FULLER
You say Eliza Gorman went missing
about three hours ago?

RESSLER
Just the profile, Mel. Remember?

FULLER
Assuming he's still in the habit
of keeping them alive for twenty
four hours, that leaves us with
twenty one hours to find her.

RESSLER
And just how long do you have?

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Death and taxes, Kurt. The only two certainties in life. And Eliza Gorman is too fucking young to have to worry about either.

RESSLER

Mel.

She slips into her shoes and takes her jacket from the back of the door. Just when she gets one hand on the doorknob...

RESSLER

I always wanted to be a detective, as long as I can remember.

FULLER

Not what you thought it would be?

RESSLER

It's exactly what I thought it would be. I'm just not the man I thought I could be.

FULLER

You're quitting?

RESSLER

I'm doing what I have to for my family.

FULLER

...Your wife, what's her name?

RESSLER

Emma.

FULLER

You got kids?

RESSLER

Two. A boy and a girl.

FULLER

You happy?

RESSLER

Not sitcom happy. But real life happy, yeah.

FULLER

You made me a part of this. Made it a part of me.

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER

I'm sorry.

FULLER

What if I told you I need your help now?

Ressler looks to the floor.

FULLER

It's ok to find this stuff hard. It'd be fucked up if you didn't.

RESSLER

You don't.

FULLER

Don't I?

She leaves the room and leaves the door open behind her.

INT. MILANO'S BAR - DAY

The place is lit by low-hanging, shaded lamps. Fuller calls to the BARMAN but he appears to be deep in conversation with at the other end of the bar.

FULLER

Hey.

She goes ignored.

FULLER

Hey.

Still nothing.

FULLER

Hey, college dropout.

He does a double-take before sauntering over.

BARMAN

You talking to me?

FULLER

I said "college dropout" and you responded.

BARMAN

For your information I finished college with a first class honors.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

And yet you're still a barman.

BARMAN

What you want?

FULLER

I'm in my fifties and by myself.
What do you think I want?

The BARMAN gets busy pouring her drink.

BARMAN

You know decency isn't a
personality flaw, right?

He puts a full glass of something in front of her which
she quickly drains til it's only half full.

The Barman shrugs and leaves her to it.

She takes out a pen and grabs a napkin and writes "Buried
alive?" and "posed...makeup?" The pen then remains
hovering above the napkin.

LATER:

The CROWD has thinned in places, grown in others.

A TV on the wall goes largely ignored. On the TV; a split
screen image consisting of a still PHOTO OF ELIZA GORMAN
and a stock photo of an ORANGE RUCKSACK.

The Barman clears the empty glasses that surround Fuller.

BARMAN

So tonight it's your turn?

FULLER

What?

BARMAN

The person with the problem.

FULLER

That makes you the
problem-solving Barman?

BARMAN

No. Just a Barman. But I still
get half of Atlanta coming in
here spilling their guts about
their shitty girlfriends and
their shitty husbands. And
tonight that's you.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Don't worry, that's not me.

BARMAN

Good. Because if you were, I'd tell you the same thing I tell them; don't ask me why your girlfriend sucked your best friend's dick. Ask your girlfriend.

(Pause)

When my car is running like shit, I don't go to my priest, I go to my mechanic.

FULLER

What if you wanted to know why evil exists?

BARMAN

I'd ask the devil.

Fuller thinks for a moment. She takes out some cash and throws it down on the bar before hurrying out.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - EVENING

A phone rings.

Dozen's of voices rise in excitement then immediately quiet down.

Hague looks to Maureen and Jackson Gorman, then to an FBI AGENT wearing headphones and sat at an IMSI Catcher device - a machine which traces calls. The FBI Agent signals the 'OK' to Hague with a simple nod.

Hague picks up the phone.

HAGUE

Sheriff Hague.

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)

(Distorted)

Hello Sheriff.

HAGUE

And who am I speaking with?

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)

(Distorted)

You can call me The Revelation.

HAGUE

The Revelation? Ok. What can I do for you?

(CONTINUED)

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
You can prepare.

HAGUE
What should I be preparing for?

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
Prepare to bare witness.

HAGUE
Witness to what?

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
Bring the world and I will
enlighten thee. You will witness
two become one.

Maureen and her Son grow evermore anxious and sick.

HAGUE
You're talking about the girl,
you're talking about Eliza?

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
Ah, Eliza, Eliza, Eliza. The
Revelation knows her as The
Light. You will witness the
Revelation become one with The
Light.

Jackson and Maureen's anxiety becomes further heightened.

HAGUE
Is Eliza ok?

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
Not Eliza, only The Light.

HAGUE
Ok, The Light...Now, Revelation,
I want to believe you, I want to
trust you. You're gonna have to
give me some kind of garauntee
that you know where I can find
Eliza, that you know where The
Light is and that she's safe?

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)
(Distorted)
Orange rucksack.

HAGUE

With respect, Revelation,
pictures of that rucksack have
been going out on news bulletins
every fifteen minutes.

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)

(Distorted)

Leopard print purse, photograph
of The Light accompanied by one
mother, one brother, one sister,
pair of sunglasses, one
flashlight, one teen horror novel
and a bunch of lillies.

Hague looks to Maureen and Jackson. Maureen's fresh flood
of tears is all the confirmation he needs.

The FBI Agent copies down an address and hands it to
Hague.

HAGUE

Ok, you have my attention. Where?

Hague reads the address; '1428 Sicamore'.

THE REVELATION (OVER PHONE)

(Distorted)

1428 Sicamore Street. Bring the
world, Sheriff Hague.

The line goes dead.

COPS, DEPUTIES, PATROLMEN and FBI AGENTS are already
filing out of the building.

HAGUE

What the Hell does he mean,
"bring the world".

FBI AGENT

The media. The news. Whatever he
has planned, he wants the world
to see it.

EXT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON - EVENING

Fuller skids the car to a halt in front of the barrier by
the GUARD STATION.

GUARD

You know visiting hours.

INT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON, WARDEN'S OFFICE - EVENING

The Warden collects his jacket from the back of his chair, turns off a desk lamp and is about to turn off the main light when the phone BUZZES and a REDLIGHT on it flashes.

He sighs and presses the button to respond.

WARDEN

Yes?

INT. GEORGIA STATE PRISON, CORRIDOR - EVENING

The Warden and Fuller walk side by side again for the second time today.

WARDEN

You appear to be under the misconception that you have a free pass in my prison.

FULLER

Are we not friends?

WARDEN

You have my respect for your years of service. But respect is a two-way street.

FULLER

I'm sorry, but I'm running out of time. A little girl's life is at stake.

WARDEN

And you have reason to believe there's a connection between my prisoner and the most recent abduction?

FULLER

No.

WARDEN

So what do you hope to gain?

FULLER

I'll know it when I hear it.

INT. CLARENCE WHITEHALLS CELL - EVENING

Clarence lies back on his bed, a book open on his chest. He looks past the bars of his cell expectantly.

Footfalls can be heard, growing louder, getting nearer.

(CONTINUED)

Fuller is escorted to the cell by a GUARD.

GUARD
Whitehall, visitor.
(Pause)
Just call if you need anything.

Fuller nods and the Guard leaves. She takes a look around and sees shelves of books, walls covered with pieces of art, all within a neatly-kept cell.

FULLER
Ok. Why'd you do it?

CLARENCE
(Smiles)
Ah, finally the question that has taken you twenty-three years to ask. But you already have your answer.

FULLER
I've always known why. I've just never cared why. I want to hear it from you?

CLARENCE
But that's not why you fought to spare me the death penalty, is it?

FULLER
No.

CLARENCE
So then tell me why.

FULLER
Stop playing games. You already know that one.

CLARENCE
Astute, as always. But I want to hear it from you.

FULLER
I want you to wish you were dead.
(Pause)
And I want you to know that it was me that denied you that wish.

CLARENCE
You can long for my suffering til your last breath, it will never bring your sister back. We are both living out our days in

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLARENCE (cont'd)
prisons of our own making,
Melanie. I have found a way to
live beyond mine. I have come to
terms with what I am. Have you?

Fuller gives this some serious contemplation. The two of them both seem to drop their bullshit, their fronts that they're in the habit of wielding.

CLARENCE
If you want to know why
psychotics murder, you need to
first ask yourself why you spend
your life amongst the murdered.
It is tragic, Melanie, that you
best know a person after their
death. You assemble the scattered
pieces of their lives cut short
and convince yourself it is as
good as knowing them in life.
(Pause)
But it is a crude substitute for
companionship. And your's is a
poor imitation of a life.

Fuller's changing expression speaks volumes; she comes to a realisation.

FULLER
Thank you.

INT/EXT. POLICE CONVOY (MOVING) - EVENING

PATROL CARS and UNMARKED GOVERNMENT vehicles race through the streets.

Hague sits in the back of a BLACK VAN which, though unmarked, may as well have 'GOVERNMENT VEHILCE' painted in pink down the side.

He removes his shirt, puts on a KEVLAR VEST over his white undershirt, then puts his uniform back on.

KOVITZ (38), dark crew cut, leans in.

KOVITZ
Sheriff Hague, I'm agent Kovitz,
the negotiation commander. The
address is registered to a
Richard Doran. As far as we know
Doran lives alone and has
received treatment for
schizophrenia and bipolar
disorder. He is likely to be
withdrawn from reality, appear

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KOVITZ (cont'd)
delusional and elevate his
relationships to a state of
fantasy. This includes his
perceived relationship with you.
You are going to have to work
hard to earn his trust.

Hague nods, nervous.

KOVITZ
This is agent Lang, our advisory
commander. He's going to brief
you.

LANG (42) is a short, squat man with a round face and
neck.

LANG
As hard as it may be, you need to
be a friend to this guy. Appeal
to any sense of reason he has and
understand him.

A third AGENT, OLSEN takes his turn.

OLSEN
My name is agent Olsen, I'm the
tactical commander. We'll have a
tactical team surround the
property. The ultimate goal here
is to contain the situation and
resolve this clean, but if it
comes to it, my men will be
prepared.

Hague, ever more nervous, takes a deep breath.

OLSEN
We've got your back.

HAGUE
So much for cats in trees.

EXT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - EVENING

Fuller brings her car to a stop outside the building and
struggles to haul her thin frame up the steps and through
the glass double doors into the...

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - EVENING

Fuller finds the place in a mess and almost empty of people.

A sole deputy, Graves, mans the office.

FULLER
Where's Hague?

GRAVES
Haven't you heard?

FULLER
Heard what?

EXT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

Police vehicles and FBI vehicles swing into the otherwise quiet suburban street.

NEWS VANS are not far behind and they too take their positions on the other side of the street from the house.

TACTICAL OFFICERS in black combat gear hurriedly seal off the area.

The BLACK GOVERNMENT VAN comes to an abrupt stop at the tail end of the convoy.

Olson has a mic unit around his neck. He puts a finger to his ear.

OLSEN
Tactical unit, talk to me.

TACTICAL TEAM.

POSITION 1 - SWAT TEAM MEMBER 1 positions himself between two neighboring houses. In the distance he sees THREE MORE SWAT TEAM MEMBERS move stealthily along the side of 1428.

SWAT 1
Bravo One, in position.

POSITION 2 - SWAT TEAM MEMBER 2, from the rear of the three-man sub team moving along the side of the house, calls in his position.

SWAT 2
Charlie One, Delta One and Echo one getting into position on the west-facing side of the property.

(CONTINUED)

The TEAM MEMBER out in front stops at the corner of the house and hand signals a colleague who rounds the opposite corner.

POSITION 3 - He responds to the hand signal. Two men behind him keep close to the wall.

SWAT 3
Foxtrot One, Gold One and Hotel
One in position on the
East-facing side of the house.

POSITION 4 - A SNIPER readies himself on the roof of a nearby store.

SWAT 4
India One, in position. Have a
visual of the whole property, no
sign of adult male or the kid.

The SNIPER rolls his shoulders as he watches Hague exit the van and share a final word with Lang.

EXT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

Lang puts a hand to Hague's shoulder.

LANG
If he has something big planned
and is waiting for the news crews
we need to stall him but without
raising suspicion or getting him
worked up.
(Pause)
We'll be lookin' and listenin'
ok.

Hague fiddles with an inner ear piece.

Hague makes his way around the van and across the street with his arms out at his sides.

HAGUE
Richard, it's me, Sheriff Hague.
You can call me Ian. You can see
I'm unarmed.

LANG
(Off)
Good, good.

HAGUE
I brought the world with me, I
brought the cameras. They want to
see what you have for us,
everybody does. But it's gonna
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE (cont'd)
take some time for them to get
ready.
(Pause)
Why don't we talk for a bit, huh?

LANG, KOVITZ AND OLSEN.

Kovitz calls out a command on his mic.

KOVITZ
Call the number.

HAGUE

As he makes his way slowly and steadily towards 1428 a
phone can be heard RINGING from inside. It rings a dozen
times and goes unanswered.

LANG (OVER RADIO)
We'll keep trying to establish
contact. Keep talking Hague.

HAGUE
We just want to make sure that
Eliza is ok, Richard.

He steps up to the front door, finds it ajar.

HAGUE
(Into Mic)
The door is open. I'm going
inside.

KOVITZ (OVER RADIO)
No, Hague. Wait.

Hague steps inside.

HAGUE
(Into Mic)
I'm in.

INT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

The place is murky, dusty. The curtains are pulled shut.
There are piles upon piles of garbage. Some of it waist
high.

Stacks of garbage sacks block doorways and hallways, some
spilling their contents across the filthy carpet.

Hague's feet cause the floorboards to groan and there is
the distinct sound of buzzing flies.

KOVITZ

I'm FBI special agent Kovitz, I'm the negotiation commander here. Who are you?

FULLER

My name's Melanie Fuller, I'm -

KOVITZ

Melanie Fuller the behavioural sciences agent?

FULLER

You've got the wrong guy.

KOVITZ

He called to confess.

FULLER

You know how many sad crazies make deluded confessions to high profile cases?

KOVITZ

He accurately described items Eliza Gorman had on her person at the time of her disappearance.

FULLER

It's not him.

INT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

Hague scrutinizes a particular dark corner of a room before slowly moving in on it.

He reaches down and pulls back a dirty blanket and unveils the ORANGE RUCKSACK.

HAGUE

I've found Eliza Gorman's rucksack.

EXT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

FULLER

Whoever killed these girls, his motive is not fame or attention.

(Points to house)

You invited the circus here but you don't know who this guy is or what he has planned. Get Hague out of there. Now.

A SHOT fires and a car window is taken out.

(CONTINUED)

Everybody ducks.

DORAN (O.C)
Prepare to barewitness. I am The
Revelation and I join The Light.

A second SHOT rings out and Graves' eye turns to a red pocket of gore. His body hits the tarmac.

Fuller looks up.

FULLER
Jesus.

Kovitz follows her line of sight, followed by Olsen and Lang and eventually everybody present.

High up on a PYLON is a bare-chested MAN. He is RICHARD DORAN. He is THE REVELATION.

He fires round after round from a rifle. Glass shatters, car tires burst, holes appear in the bodywork of several patrol cars. A COP takes a bullet to the shoulder, another to the foot, a TV cameraman takes one in the chest.

Doran throws down the rifle, sets himself alight and jumps.

Hague emerges from the house just in time to see Richard Doran land on the roof of a patrol car. The roof caves in and the windows explode.

The body of Richard Doran lies twisted and mangled and bloody and burning.

LATER:

EXT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

An FBI AGENT sporting a windbreaker and a ball cap addresses the crowd of LAW ENFORCERS; COPS, FBI, SHERIFF DEPUTIES.

FBI AGENT
Our objective here remains the same; to find the girl alive. I want a complete background check, properties owned, bought, sold. Favourite hangout spots, does he rent a garage, lock-up, storage container? Any space big enough to hide a little girl, I want turned inside out and upside down. Ok, go.

They disperse.

INT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

Hague watches from the doorway as Graves' body is zipped up and loaded onto a gurney. A COP brushes past him with the ORANGE RUCKSACK in a clear plastic bag .

HAGUE

Get that to forensics.

POLICE and FBI pore over the house.

Fuller roams the hallways, a confused look on her face.

FULLER

This doesn't make sense.

HAGUE

Because it doesn't fit your profile?

(Pause)

How'd you explain how he came to be in possession of the backpack?

FULLER

I can't.

Hague's patience is wearing thin.

FULLER

At first I thought the flair our guy showed with the body was theatrics, a desperate need for attention.

HAGUE

Which is exactly what Richard Doran was after.

FULLER

That sad bastard out there was just a nobody looking for infamy.

(Pause)

What the killer is doing was never about getting attention...it was to make her look alive. To maintain the illusion of life.

HAGUE

So why not just keep them alive?

FULLER

He does, for a while.

HAGUE

So then why kill them at all?

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Because they fail to satisfy. All his victims share physical traits...he's looking for the perfect idealised version of that type. When they turn out to be less than a perfect match for his fantasy he kills them and attempts to mould them into who he wants them to be.

(Pause)

He's trying to recreate the very first victim. I think he knew Debbie Rhodes.

HAGUE

Look, Fuller, I appreciate your help on these cases, I really do. But you're just a civilian. We got the guy, and it cost me a good deputy. Now let us find the girl.

EXT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - EVENING

Fuller heads from the commotion inside the house to the commotion outside the house.

COPS and FBI zig and zag across Fuller's path as if she were a ghost.

She makes a beeline for the BLACK VAN, passing Kovitz and Lang as she goes.

She eyes the pair with the skill of a spy, and with the finesse of a cat burglar, she reaches into the van and into the pocket of a jacket and removes Lang's FBI badge.

EXT. RHODES RESIDENCE - EVENING

Fuller pulls the car over.

She gets out and knocks on the front door. Peggy Rhodes, now 55, answers.

Fuller flashes the badge.

FULLER

Peggy Rhodes?

PEGGY

You're here about my Debbie, aren't you?

INT. RHODES RESIDENCE - EVENING

Fuller and Peggy sit in the LIVING ROOM.

PEGGY

Have you found my Daughter, agent Fuller?

FULLER

You remember me?

PEGGY

I remember everything about that day Debbie was taken from us.

FULLER

Is your husband here?

PEGGY

Dennis died five years ago.

FULLER

I'm sorry.

PEGGY

You never answered my question.

FULLER

I'm afraid I don't have any new information on Debbie's whereabouts.

(Pause)

Did Debbie have any boyfriends?

PEGGY

She was just a little girl.

FULLER

Any boys from her class that she might have hung out with, gone to see a movie with?

PEGGY

She never got the chance.

FULLER

Any first crushes?

PEGGY

The sweet little boy who used to live next door took a liking to her. Such a sickly little thing, in and out of hospital, even as a littl'un. But always cute as pie. Billy.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Billy?

(Remembering)

He by any chance ever send any
love letters?

PEGGY

As a matter of fact, he did.
How'd you know?

FULLER

I don't suppose you still have
them?

PEGGY

Debbie wanted to throw 'em out, I
made her keep 'em. Thought it was
nice that a boy so young could be
so charming. I'll go see if I can
find 'em.

FULLER

Thank you.

EXT. 1428 SICAMORE STREET - NIGHT

Hague watches his DEPUTIES and PATRLMEN carry out evidence
bag after evidence bag which appears to be nothing more
than garbage.

A DEPUTY joins him.

DEPUTY

Nothing in the house. We've
searched every inch.

HAGUE

Goddamn.

His radio hisses with static.

MORTIMER (OVER RADIO)

Sheriff, forensics called about
Eliza Gorman's backpack.

HAGUE

Yeah?

MORTIMER (OVER RADIO)

They found blood that doesn't
match either the girl's or
Doran's.

HAGUE

Shit.

INT. RHODES RESIDENCE - NIGHT

While Peggy sits with an open shoe box on her lap, Fuller reads from a long-faded, handwritten letter.

FULLER

(Reading)

My Sweetest Deborah, you are beautiful beyond compare. I belong to you, and you belong to me. You possess my every thought and every dream. I see you as you are, as you will be. My love for you is eternal.

PEGGY

Strong stuff for a ten year old boy.

FULLER

What was Debbie's reaction to these letters?

PEGGY

She was always polite.

FULLER

She never reciprocated?

PEGGY

She was polite.

FULLER

...You know where I might find Billy now?

PEGGY

Ask his father. He still lives next door.

EXT. OTIS DUKE RESIDENCE - DAY

Fuller knocks on the door and OTIS DUKE (65) answers.

OTIS

Yes?

FULLER

Mister Duke? My name's Melanie, I'm an old friend of Billy's, may I come in?

EXT. OTIS DUKE RESIDENCE, BACKYARD - DAY

Otis offers Fuller a seat at the garden table, a glass of ICED TEA and a BOTTLE OF DRINKING WATER on top.

OTIS

I don't remember Billy having many friends.

FULLER

Well it was a long time ago.

OTIS

Time aint got a thing to do with it. My son weren't never mister popular. Especially with the girls.

FULLER

Nevertheless, I'd like to try and track him down.

OTIS

You forgotten about all that trouble?

FULLER

What trouble?

OTIS

Damn kid kept bringing home girl's clothes. Got so his mother was scared to tidy his room, scared she'd turn up more of the things. Thought he might have been a fruit. Imagine our releif when he met a good woman and married.

FULLER

Billy's married?

OTIS

I never said it lasted. Finally he seems to have his act together though, taking over the family business.

FULLER

Doing what?

Otis reaches across the table and turns the bottle of water so Fuller can see the label; an ARTIST'S RENDITION OF A DEEP WELL.

(CONTINUED)

OTIS
Duke's Spring Water. Sourced
right here in Bell County.

EXT. BELL COUNTY MALL - DAY

Hague and Mortimer cross the parking lot. They reach a corner of the building and stand beneath a CCTV camera.

HAGUE
This is the last place anyone saw
Eliza Gorman.

MORTIMER
We already checked. Cameras
aren't yet operational.

HAGUE
(Pointing across the street)
What about those cameras.

They look across to a GAS STATION.

INT. GAS STATION, OFFICE - DAY

Hague and Mortimer hang over the shoulders of the MANAGER as he rewinds through hours of CCTV footage. Though the forecourt fills most of the screen, a strip of road can be seen at the top and shows passing traffic.

HAGUE
Wait, play there.

They watch a FIGURE on the SCREEN - he strolls along by the roadside, kicking over rocks, picking up litter.

HAGUE
That's Richard Doran.

Doran stops dead, bends, picks up an ORANGE RUCKSACK, before slipping it over his shoulders and moving on.

HAGUE
Back up.

The Manager rewinds the footage.

HAGUE
Stop.

The footage resumes playing. A BLUE PICK UP TRUCK speeds by and the backpack can just about be seen as it is thrown from the driver's window.

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

I want to know who was driving
that pickup.

Hague hits PAUSE. The image of the BLUE PICK up is frozen
in time.

MORTIMER

Camera doesn't pick up the
license plate.

HAGUE

We're gonna need a list of all
matching vehicles registered in
Bell County.

EXT. DUKE RESIDENCE - DAY

Fuller passes Billy's BLUE PICKUP TRUCK as she walks up
the drive and knocks on his door.

No reply, no movement from inside.

She puts her face against the glass and attempts to peer
inside. She does the same at a larger window then decides
to walk around the side of the house and enter the...

BACKYARD.

...which she finds well-kept; Manicured lawn, flower beds,
hedgerows.

FULLER

Hello? William Duke?

She tries the back door. It opens. She takes a brief look
around before stepping inside.

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE - DAY

The house is neat. Tidy. Every surface sparkles and
glistens. She moves slowly around the house, checking
drawers, cupboards. The...

LIVING ROOM

...is empty. As is the...

KITCHEN

...which leads to the...

DINING ROOM

Also empty. Nothing.

Fuller heads upstairs, quickly checking the...

MASTER BEDROOM

...and finally the...

BATHROOM

...where amongst the toothpaste, aftershave, shaving cream, and moisturizer, she finds MAKEUP; lipstick. Foundation. Blusher. Eye shadow. Mascara.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Hague moves through the busy office, looking more stressed out and underslept by the second.

Mortimer sides up to him, matches his pace, and hands him a sheet of paper.

MORTIMER

Here's that list you asked for.

HAGUE

Don't hand it to me, get working on it.

He's about to hand it back when he snatches it away again and scrutinizes it.

MORTIMER

What is it?

HAGUE

William Duke -

MORTIMER

The water guy?

HAGUE

Fuller said she thought the killer knew Debbie Rhodes.

(CONTINUED)

MORTIMER

So?

HAGUE

So William Duke used to live right next door to her.

MORTIMER

How'd you know that? Wouldn't you have been just a kid back then?

HAGUE

Exactly, we all went to school together. Billy Duke watched the girl he had the hots for get snatched from her front door. Not counting her killer, he was the last person to see her alive.

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE, BATHROOM - DAY

A MOVEMENT from outside catches Fuller's eye. She goes to the window and sees Billy heading up the drive towards the house and fishing a set of keys from his pocket.

INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT - DAY

Mortimer hands Hague a second sheet of paper.

MORTIMER

List of vehicles the FBI came up with the night you called the community meeting. For what it's worth, the woman was right; he was there.

HAGUE

Somebody get Melanie Fuller on the phone. And call Judge Warner, we need a search warrent issued now. I'm going to make the arrest.

He grabs his HAT on the way out, checks his gun is loaded, and hurries to a PATROL CAR.

INT. DUKE RESIDENCE - DAY

Fuller slips downstairs and round a corner just as William opens the front door.

She keeps her back pressed to a wall while William unties his laces.

Her PHONE RINGS.

(CONTINUED)

William pauses, rises to a stand and makes a slow beeline for Fuller's hiding place.

She steps out and flashes him the stolen FBI badge, making sure it is only a flash.

FULLER
Stop right there sir, I'm gonna need you to back up.

WILLIAM
Get out of my house.

FULLER
We've had a report of a break in.

WILLIAM
No you haven't.

FULLER
Back up and identify yourself.

WILLIAM
You first.

He continues his approach, closing the gap between himself and Fuller.

WILLIAM
Show me that badge again.

FULLER
I'm giving the orders here.

WILLIAM
Does it feel like it?

FULLER
I said stop.

WILLIAM
And I said "you first".

FULLER
I am an FBI agent, sir.

WILLIAM
Once, maybe.

FULLER
Tell me who you are.

WILLIAM
But you already know who I am.

Fuller stops, narrows her gaze.

The sound of sirens nearing.

WILLIAM

Why would you be here if you didn't? You think I don't recognise you? You think I wouldn't remember you? You were so nice to me.

He calmly picks up his phone and dials, not afraid to let Fuller see the BANDAID covering a wound on the back of his hand.

WILLIAM

(Into the phone)

This is William Duke, I'd like to speak to my lawyer please.

The sirens are, by now, much louder. A car screeches to a stop outside. Hague throws the door open, his gun drawn, and throws confused looks at both William and Fuller.

INT. BELL COUNTY JAIL, CELL - DAY

William sits passively, his hands cuffed.

HALLWAY

Hague, Fuller and MICHAEL DIAZ (43), a lawyer with the suit, tie, cufflinks, and briefcase to match, all fight to be heard over each other in the tight hallway.

DIAZ

Impersonating an officer of the law, theft, gaining unlawful entry.

He slaps a folded piece of paper against Fuller's chest.

FULLER

What's that?

DIAZ

Restraining order. Harass mister Duke again and you won't even be able to occupy the same hemisphere as my client.

HAGUE

Harassment?

DIAZ

Two of your patrolmen already searched mister Duke's home, during which, my client was more than cooperative. You didn't know? Get your house in order, Sheriff Hague.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

What about the makeup?

DIAZ

His ex-wife's. And your being a civilian aside, anything else either one of you think you may have found in that house would be inadmissible without a warrant.

HAGUE

Well I'd be happy to throw one your way.

DIAZ

Judge Warren? Forget it. He got one word of miss Fuller's actions and cancelled the search warrant.

(To Fuller)

You're lucky you're not being prosecuted by the DA, the FBI, or my client.

HAGUE

What shit did he come out with to explain how he came by the little girl's bag?

DIAZ

The grainy CCTV footage? Please.

FULLER

How do you sleep at night?

HAGUE

We find out that's his blood on it...

DIAZ

In order to clear himself, Mister Duke has agreed to assist in your investigation by providing a swab. I'd strongly advise you to agree and accept.

Fuller and Hague look to each other. She nods

HAGUE

Do it.

DIAZ

I'll make the necessary arrangements.

CELL.

A DOCTOR with his shirt sleeves rolled up takes a saliva swab from William's mouth.

Diaz stands, hands crossed at his front, briefcase in hand, by the open door of the cell.

Fuller and Hague watch William Duke from further down the hall.

HAGUE

What the fuck were you thinking?

FULLER

I was thinking about the little girl who only has a few more hours left to live.

(Pause)

It's him.

HAGUE

If the swab matches the blood from the rucksack, we'll know. Unless that time comes, there's nothing you or I can do about it.

FULLER

I know. It's him.

Back in the cell the Doctor places the SWAB SAMPLE in a clear plastic bag.

William gets up and he and Diaz make their way down the hall, past Hague and Fuller, and out of sight.

HAGUE

My men searched his house, you searched his house. If it's him, where's he keeping the girl?

INT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - EVENING

The door slowly swings open, creaking on its hinges. Mel stands in the doorway, her shoulders slumped, before stepping inside the room.

She packs her bags, clears away the case files, picks up trash from the carpet; bags of chips, pizza boxes, bottles of booze, bottles of water. She pauses, stares.

Fuller reaches into the trash can and takes out one of the empty bottles of DUKE'S SPRING WATER. She focuses on the painted image of a WELL on the label.

She grabs a pen, draws a STICKMAN at the bottom of the well.

She runs from the room.

EXT. TIDEWATER MOTEL - EVENING

On the phone, Fuller runs to her car.

FULLER

Hague...I know where he keeps
them. I know where he keeps the
girls.

She jumps in the car. The engine fires and the tires spin before the car shoots forward, screams out of the parking lot and barrels down the road.

EXT. ROAD, FULLER'S CAR - EVENING

The car moves along straight and steadily before suddenly veering and swerving and crawling into a ditch.

INT. CAR - EVENING

Fuller lies slumped over the wheel, unconscious.

INT. HOSPITAL, ICU - EVENING

Fuller is back with a tube through her nostril and a machine attached to her arm measuring her blood pressure. Her complexion is almost that of the starched white sheets she lies on. She is close to the end now. She is dying.

She wakes to find Ressler sat at her side and Hague standing by the window, hat in hand.

FULLER

...You find Eliza?

HAGUE

Fuller.

FULLER

I finally figured it out.

RESSLER

Mel.

FULLER

Rebecca Gorman sustained
abrasions on her knees and
forehead while alive, right?

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

It's not William Duke. The results from the swab came back negative.

FULLER

He keeps them in the wells. They die standing up because he seals them air tight and the bodies have no space to fall. They slump with their knees bent and their heads forward.

HAGUE

It's not him. I just thought you should know.

He nods a solemn goodbye and replaces his hat before walking out.

HAGUE

If you don't mind, I got a little girl to find.

FULLER

You were right all along.

RESSLER

Right about what?

FULLER

"...a figure from childhood".

RESSLER

Your words Mel, you wrote that.

FULLER

But you reminded me of it. You reminded me of more than you'll ever know.

(Pause)

I used to think people cling to the idea of heaven because they want to believe there's something better than this. But really they're afraid of wasting what we already have.

Ressler turns his eyes to the floor at his feet.

FULLER

You'll find her at William Duke's water plant...in one of the wells.

RESSLER

Mel, you know I can't. It's not who I am.

FULLER

I'm human, just like you. I fuck things up, get things wrong. Get afraid. It's ok to do all those things.

(Pause)

What I thought I wanted isn't what I want at all.

RESSLER

What is it you want?

FULLER

For someone to hold me and mean it.

The pair are silent for a few passing moments. Ressler finally gets up out of his seat.

FULLER

Remember what you always wanted. What you wanted to be.

(Pause)

You still want the same thing, it's just your reasons for wanting it aren't what you thought.

His fingers cover her's before he turns and heads for the door and hovers there as a NURSE enters.

NURSE

Can I get you anything?

FULLER

You can bring me a phone and a bunch of medical books, thanks.

The Nurse shoots her a puzzled look.

Ressler turns and quietly leaves.

TIME CUT:

Fuller lies on her side in bed, phone to her ear.

FULLER

Gregor, it's Fuller. I need you to do something for me, something two parts creative and one part illegal...I need you to pull a suspect's medical records.

INT/EXT. TOYOTA (MOVING) - EVENING

Ressler watches the road from beneath a heavy brow as he drives.

He takes his eyes from the road to glance at the 'THANK YOU FOR VISITING BELL COUNTY' sign as he passes.

The car stays the course for a moment before Ressler pulls hard on the wheel and the car slides across the grassy central reservation and finds traction on the road heading back the way he came.

EXT. CORNFIELD - EVENING

Hague is joined by TEAMS OF COPS and FBI, every man and woman searching, forming a line and canvassing the field.

Hague answers his ringing phone.

HAGUE
Sheriff Hague.

FULLER (OVER PHONE)
When he was twelve years old
William Duke had a bone marrow
transplant.

WE CUT BACK AND FORTH:

HAGUE
I don't have time for this. None
of us do.

FULLER
Time is all we have. You can make
it our enemy or our ally.

HAGUE
What?

FULLER
Debbie Rhodes' mother mentioned
that William was sick as a kid -

HAGUE
Let it go, Fuller. Enjoy some
peace while you can.

FULLER
Listen, little Billy Duke
suffered from something called
Aplastic anemia. When he was
twelve he underwent an allogenic
bone marrow transplant.

Hague stops, sighs.

(CONTINUED)

FULLER

Over time, people who have that kind of treatment, the DNA in their blood cells changes. In other words, the DNA from their blood no longer matches the DNA from their saliva.

HAGUE

Oh Jesus.

FULLER

William Duke knew this.

Hague hangs up and turns on his heels, running. Waving his arm and motioning for others to join him.

HAGUE

Let's go.

They all head for their vehicles.

EXT. DUKE'S SPRING WATER PLANT - EVENING

William's BLUE PICKUP pulls up to the gates. He climbs out, unlocks the gates and drives on through.

After driving past an office and processing plant the truck enters a HUGE FIELD interspersed with short, squat, concrete SILOS that rise three feet off the ground and are capped with slabs of concrete, themselves topped with a small inner-circle of concrete and an iron entry point.

William takes the truck slowly through the field of WELLS, passing dozens of them, every one identical to the next.

The truck stops. He climbs out and lowers the tailgate. He unravles a LARGE SHEET OF PLASTIC.

He then begins slowly, and methodically, placing various items of makeup on a corner of the plastic.

WILLIAM

Debbie, my sweet Debbie. It pains me that this is the way it has to be. I give you chance after chance to prove yourself. You will never know how much I love you. I try, I try so hard for the both of us. But you never listen, you never learn.

(Pause)

You refuse to realise your own potential. But I will show you how.

(CONTINUED)

RESSLER (O.C)

Which one?

William turns to find Ressler levelling his gun at his chest.

RESSLER

Which one is Eliza in, William?

WILLIAM

I love her.

RESSLER

Is it really you, that little boy
from all those years ago?

Sirens approaching.

RESSLER

You don't want to get in trouble
now, do ya Billy? Now which one
is she in? Open it.

WILLIAM

The bad Billy won't let the good
Billy do that.

RESSLER

Both Billy's are gonna get shot.
Open the fucking well.

WILLIAM

I won't let anything come between
us.

He draws a gun from his belt, puts it in his mouth and pulls the trigger. The top of the well, makeup and all, are showered with his brains and pieces of skull.

Ressler runs to a well - and finds a combination lock. He bangs on the lid.

RESSLER

ELIZA?..ELIZA?

He hears no response, just the the sound of his own pounding echoed back at him off the water's surface.

The approaching sirens continue to rise in volume until a stream of PATROL CARS comes barreling through the dust-covered field.

Ressler waves his fingers across his throat - cut the sirens.

He runs to the next well. Bangs. Nothing, just more wet echoes.

(CONTINUED)

On to anohter. He pounds his fist and is about to run to the next in line when...A HOLLOW ECHO comes back at him. The well is dry.

Hague leads a dozen PATROLMEN as they all file from their vehicles and run to join Ressler.

RESSLER

We need to find the combination.

HAGUE

Shit.

Ressler takes off running, heading for the front OFFICE.

INT. DUKE'S SPRING WATER PLANT, OFFICE - EVE

Ressler skids in the dirt and falls to his knees, gripping the door frame as he barely slows to round the curve.

He raids the office at speed, throwing open doors and spilling drawers, running his hands over corkboards and sending items crashing to the floor.

He stops at a clipboard, runs his finger down a column; 'Well 12, Well 13, Well 14 - his finger moves to a second column listing the combination codes.

He runs out the door.

EXT. WELL - EVENING

Ressler finds Hague and his men attempting to pry the lock. He fumbles as his fingers shake, struggling to enter the code.

Finally, it unlocks.

The men throw the lid open and it groans at the hinges.

Fifteen feet below, slumped with her knees and head pressing against the inside of the bone-dry well, is Eliza Gorman, unconscious and deathly pale.

TIME CUT:

Eliza is lowered to the ground and Ressler breathes air into her lungs. Nothing. He tries again. And again. And again.

INT. HOSPITAL, ICU - EVENING

Ressler stands looking at Fuller, laid out in her bed, her eyes closed. She looks peaceful.

DOCTOR BYRNE

She went into a coma about an hour ago. It's just a matter of time now.

RESSLER

...Can she hear me?

DOCTOR BYRNE

We don't know for sure. I like to think so.

(Pause)

I'll leave you alone.

RESSLER

Thank you.

Ressler waits for Doctor Byrne to leave before approaching Fuller. He speaks softly.

RESSLER

We found the girl...she's going to be ok. I thought you should know. They found sealed bags of underwear hidden in Duke's house. They were all dated. The earliest belonged to Debbie Rhodes. My guess, he was born wrong. After Debbie was abducted by Peller, little Billy Duke went from wrong to worse.

He bends, holds her hand, whispers in her ear.

RESSLER

You can rest now.

He kisses her on the lips and her fingers gently squeeze his own. He quickly looks to her face, but it remains neutral. Sleeping. No further suggestion of life.

EXT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

Hague stands outside, smoking. Ressler steps out into the lamplight.

RESSLER

Since when you smoke?

(CONTINUED)

HAGUE

Since about twenty minutes ago.
Come for a drink?

RESSLER

I don't much feel like drinking.

HAGUE

You did what you could, Kurt. I'm
sorry the girl never made it.

RESSLER

You tell her mother? Brother?

HAGUE

Yeah. twenty one minutes ago. We
got the guy.

RESSLER

Doesn't feel like cause for a
celebration. Feels like mild
relief. Like an interval before
the next one.

(Pause)

I'll see you around.

He walks away and gets into his car.

THE END.