Dexter

Episode 102
"Crocodile"

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DEXTER
102
“Crocodile”

EXT. LIMBO - DAY

THE SCREEN IS WHITE. CAMERA moves; more a feeling of movement than anything else.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I dream... I dream I’m floating on the surface of my own life...

RESOLVE: CAMERA travels over STILL WATER until we find: DEXTER, floating on his back. Pure leisure.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Watching it unfold. Observing it. I’m the outsider looking in.

He turns, mildly curious. HIS POV: across flat water, a dock. Two teenage BOYS toss a young GIRL into the water. A fan of ripples widens from where she went in. Finally, she surfaces, screams at her tormentors.

GIRL
Such assholes!

But she’s laughing, too. ON DEXTER. Watching the fun. The ripples reach him.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Look at them: they can laugh and play. It comes so easily.

The boys lift the girl back onto the dock. Laughing, they turn their backs on the girl. She abruptly SHOVES THEM BOTH IN THE WATER: sweet revenge.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Even though I’m not one of them...

The boys come up, sputtering and grinning.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Even though sometimes I can really be a monster...

ON DEXTER, watching the girl jump in to swim with the boys.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Today I’m just...
He allows himself to slip into the water; and, just before he goes all the way under, his eyes remain above surface level. Like a crocodile watching the world.

DEXTER (V.O.)
(playful)
... a sea monster.

And he sinks from view.

OMITTED

EXT. WATERWAY - EARLY MORNING

The ’Slice of Life’ bobs tranquilly at anchor. A beat. Then Dexter ERUPTS from the water and, in one graceful move, pulls himself onto his boat.

He crosses to the cooler, retrieves a gleaming red apple and takes a healthy bite. SLOW PUSH IN on the apple.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Soon enough I’ll have to go back to doing what I do.

THE SCREEN BLOOMS TO RED. Bright, translucent crimson.

DEXTER (V.O.)
So I make a point of enjoying days like this when I have them.

SLOW PULLBACK and we realize we’re looking at one of Dexter’s slides. We’re --

INT. DEXTER’S APARTMENT - MORNING

Dexter holds the blood slide up to the light. Admires it. A KNOCK at his door pulls him from the moment. He returns the slide to the box and puts the box in its hiding place behind the air conditioner.

Starting to cross, he spots the Doll Head on the refrigerator. He quickly tosses it into the freezer, goes to the door and opens. The chain catches. There’s DEBRA.

DEXTER
Hey.

DEBRA
(holds up bag)
Bagels, brother. Lemme in.

Dexter unlatches the chain, letting his sister pass. She immediately pulls open the drapes.
DEBRA
Could it be more depressing in here?

Dexter regards her, amused.

DEBRA
Got anything to drink? It’s hot as hell out there.

DEXTER
OJ?

DEBRA
... with ice.

Dexter grabs a glass.

DEBRA
So... how’re you doing?

Dexter opens the freezer. There are the Doll Parts. He scoops up some ice.

DEXTER
Things are fine. Breakfast, which I already had, was fine.

He closes the freezer, crosses back to Debra and smears a bagel with cream cheese.

DEXTER
But you know me: always hungry.

He takes a messy bite, wipes his lips.

DEXTER
So... what’s up, hotshot?

Debra grins, happy for permission to get down to business.

DEBRA
All right, get this: the Lieutenant is looking for that refrigerated truck in every swamp, glade and chop-shop from here to the Keys.

She pours the OJ over her ice.
DEBRA
Way I see it: the whack-job truck
driver threw a severed head at your
car for Chrissake. It’s not as if
he’s shy.

DEXTER
(leading)
You think he’s hiding the truck in
plain sight? Wanting it to be found?

DEBRA
I could answer that if LaGuerta didn’t
have me back with my hookers looking
for a...

   (hand quotes)
   ...
   “wit-ness”.

DEXTER
Finding that truck is your golden
ticket into Homicide.

DEBRA
Tell me about it.

DEXTER
Look, just because she’s got you
talking to hookers on her time,
doesn’t mean you can’t look for the
truck...

   DEXTER  DEBRA
   ... on your time.        ... on my time.

Debra nods to several ties draped over the back of a chair.

DEBRA
What’s with these?

DEXTER
I’ve got court.

She takes a healthy swig of her OJ.

DEBRA
Why is it we never talk brother-sister
stuff?

DEXTER
Our dad was a cop. You’re a cop. I
work for the cops. For us, this is
brother-sister stuff.

Debra picks up a green tie. Holds it up to Dexter’s face.
DEBRA
Brings out your eyes.

Off Dexter, considering the green tie...

CLOSE ON DEXTER’S FACE.

VOICE (O.S.)
For the record, please state your name and occupation.

DEXTER
My name is Dexter Morgan and I’m a Forensics Specialist in Blood Spatter Analysis for the Miami Metro Police Department.

We’re --

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM 1 - DAY

Dexter on the stand; being questioned by a LAWYER.

LAWYER
And how long have you been doing blood spatter analysis, Mr. Morgan?

DEXTER
Almost twelve years.

LAWYER
You’ve been involved in quite a few cases then?

DEXTER
Two thousand one hundred and three.

LAWYER
(a joke try)
Give or take?

DEXTER
(complete deadpan)
No. Two thousand one hundred and three.

LAWYER
(moving on)
Then it’s safe to say: blood is your life?

Dexter’s lips curl into the slightest grin.
DEXTER
... safe to say.

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INT. COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - LATER

Dexter emerges from the courtroom and weaves through the crowded corridor.

DEXTER (V.O.)
The guys at the station hate coming downtown to do the expert witness thing. But I love it. It puts me in touch with...

A Lowlife Prick bumps into him, glares and continues on.

DEXTER (V.O.)
... the common man.

DEXTER’S POV: Dozens and dozens of people -- some legit, mostly the dregs -- teem through the halls.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I like the way people behave in courthouses. Like someone turned down the volume on the humanity soundtrack. They’re more subdued, less impetuous.

HIS POV: a SLOW-MOTION parade of shit-heads crossing from every direction.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Everyone’s on their best behavior; like they’re being watched...

Back to NORMAL SPEED as Dexter looks around.

DEXTER (V.O.)
... and they are.

A Bailiff tools by with an A/V Set-up. He passes a Family (FATHER, MOTHER, and teenage DAUGHTER) and enters a courtroom. Dexter stops, regards the Family. They’re a clenched-fist of unyielding grief -- the Girl and Mother holding on to each other, the Father utterly bereft.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Some people would look at this family and see only tragedy and heartbreak. But I see so much more than that...

He nods to them; a mask of compassion darkening his face.
DEXTER (V.O.)

... I see opportunity.

The Father separates from his wife and daughter.

FATHER

(a hoarse ruined whisper)

I’ll do this.

He crosses past Dexter and enters the courtroom. A beat. Then, curious, Dexter follows.

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM 2 - DAY

THE VIDEO SCREEN. Photo slides of a fresh-faced young man, ALEXANDER PRYCE (18). The PROSECUTOR steps into the light.

PROSECUTOR

Alexander Pryce finished his homework, kissed his mom and went for a jog. He told her he’d be home in time to take out the trash cans. Just another night. Until...

He steps aside and the slides now show Alexander’s body, mangled and bloody, lying in a ditch.

ON DEXTER, in the back row of the darkened courtroom. He’s... stirred.

BACK TO SCENE:

PROSECUTOR

... until the defendant not only struck him with his car -- a heinous act in itself -- but fled the scene; leaving Alexander Pryce alone and dying for hours and hours before his body was found the next morning. (beat, for effect) From heinous to unspeakable.

The defendant, MATT CHAMBERS (35), handsome and humble, looks to the jury and lowers his head.

PROSECUTOR

The People will prove that, not only did Mr. Chambers strike and kill Alexander Pryce, but did so...

PHOTOS of a late model sedan, its hood caved, its windshield cracked.
PROSECUTOR
... while once again under the influence of alcohol.

He gestures toward Matt Chambers.

PROSECUTOR
Mr. Chambers has a history of problems with alcohol here in the state of Florida and the People plan to pursue that aspect of this case vigorously.

VIDEO COMES UP. Alexander Pryce’s birthday. He’s opening presents. A family happy, hopeful and whole. Alexander holds up a heavy sweater.

ALEXANDER
Thanks guys, but it’s like 80 degrees out.

His Father slips into FRAME.

FATHER
But next year at this time? We’re coming to visit you at Harvard...

He puts his arm around his son.

FATHER
It’s everything I’ve ever wanted for you, Alexander.

ON THE FATHER IN THE COURTROOM. Unable to bear any more, he hurries up the aisle. CAMERA follows him as he takes us past the gallery -- all so deeply moved. In fact, there isn’t a dry eye in the house; until we come to... Dexter.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I see their pain. On some level I even understand their pain.
(beat)
I just can’t feel their pain.

He turns to watch the Father leave the courtroom.

FLASHBACK:

ON A FILET KNIFE shaking off blood and guts. We’re--
EXT. MARINA - ON HARRY’S BOAT

Teenage Dexter uses the knife to clean and gut a sizable collection of freshly-caught fish. He tosses the guts overboard and rinses his bloody hands in a bucket of fresh water. Then he looks over to Harry, who’s putting away tackle. Harry turns and grins at him.

HARRY
Good day today.

TEENAGE DEXTER
Yeah it was. And let the record show -- the three biggest were mine.

HARRY
It ain’t who caught ‘em; it’s who eats ‘em. And we got a week’s worth of good eating here.

Teenage Dexter grins proudly at Harry.

HARRY
‘Course, with your metabolism, we’ll be lucky if it lasts us --

The boat’s radio SQUAWKS to life, interrupting him.

DAVEY
(from the radio)

Concerned crosses Teenage Dexter’s face: he knows what this is.

HARRY
(into radio)
Yeah, Davey, I’m here. You ready?

DAVEY
(from the radio)
Waitin’ on you, partner.

HARRY
On my way.
(to Teenage Dexter)
Gotta go earn a living.

He pulls his kit-bag from a boat locker, unzips it and drops a few things in.

HARRY
(re: the fish)
You good to get this stuff on ice?
Teenage Dexter notes the pistol and police badge in his father's bag, constant reminders of Harry's dangerous job.

TEENAGE DEXTER
(distracted)
... uh... sure.

Harry starts to go.

TEENAGE DEXTER
Dad...

Harry stops, turns around.

TEENAGE DEXTER
Be careful, okay?

HARRY
I'll be fine.
(a re-assuring smile)
Hey, I'm one of the good guys.

He smiles a big, confident smile at Teenage Dexter and steps onto the dock (passing Dexter's bicycle) and heads to his truck. On Teenage Dexter, watching his father go...

END FLASHBACK.
INT. COURTHOUSE - ELEVATOR - DAY

Matt Chambers and his Attorney ride the crowded elevator in silence. A beat. Then Chambers wipes the tears from his eyes, turns to his lawyer and, almost imperceptibly... smiles.

RACK TO: Dexter, against the back wall, only his predator eyes visible above the heads of the people in front of him. The doors open and everyone files out. Dexter hangs back, watching Chambers cross the lobby.

INT. RITA’S HOUSE - EVENING

CODY and ASTOR lie on the floor. Wet strips of papier-mache over their faces, they breathe through drinking straws. RITA sits cross-legged next to them, loving the connection Dexter has with her children.

DEXTER
You guys are doing awesome.

He deftly smooths water over the strips.

DEXTER
Couple more seconds and we will achieve total mask-ness.

Rita wipes trickling water from the children’s necks.

ASTOR
Uh, mom, hello? Tickles.

RITA
Oops, sorry.

Dexter gently blows his warm breath over each of the masks. He lifts them off to reveal Cody and Astor’s sweet faces. Then he places the masks on a piece of cardboard.

CODY
Stinks.

DEXTER
Only till you wash the gunk off.

ASTOR
Lemme see...

Dexter shows them the masks. Astor’s face lights up.

ASTOR
It’s... it’s beautiful!
DEXTER
Like you.

Astor blushes. Dexter hands them their masks.

DEXTER
Put these under the light in your room
and think about which watercolors you
want to use when they’re dry.

CODY
Still stinks though.

The kids go off.

RITA
You have a way, Mr. Morgan.

They sit on the couch.

DEXTER
They’re such great kids; I’m just
following their lead.

Rita snuggles in. Dexter tentatively kisses her.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Lately, the thing that surprises me
most about Rita is... how much I like
being with her.

Rita responds to his kiss.

DEXTER (V.O.)
But, she’s been trying to move us to
the next level. Physically. Problem
is: every time I’ve gone to that place
with a woman, it all goes wrong... for
both of us... and then the relationship
is over.

Rita separates; interrupting Dexter’s train of thought.

RITA
I’ve got the early shift at the hotel
tomorrow. Some big convention coming
through.

Dexter takes Rita’s hand, feigns sympathy.

DEXTER
I understand. You need the hours.

A beat as two damaged people hide their relief. Then --
RITA
Dex, it’s been a long time since we’ve gone out -- really gone out -- and I want that. So, pick a date.

Dexter kisses her nose.

DEXTER
I pick you.

12 EXT. BENEATH PARALLEL CAUSEWAYS - DAY (SUNRISE)
CAMERA at street level. All is still. A beat. Then the tranquility is shattered when a BODY CRASHES into FRAME from somewhere above, slamming hard against the wet pavement.

13 EXT. BENEATH PARALLEL CAUSEWAYS - DAY (LATER THAT MORNING)
Detectives, Uniforms and Forensics, Dexter and BATISTA among them, swarm the body. LAGUERTA approaches.

LAGUERTA
Morning, Detective. We got an ID?

BATISTA
First on-scene pulled the wallet. Still waiting.

Dexter leans over the body. LaGuerta moves in. He turns to her. She tilts her head at him.

LAGUERTA
Hello, Dex.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Our boss, Lieutenant LaGuerta. She worked the Trifecta of being, one: female, two: Cuban, and three: in the right place at the right time when promotions came around.

LaGuerta puts her hand on Dexter’s shoulder, a squeeze.

DEXTER (V.O.)
In keeping with her total sense of entitlement, she has this, this attraction to me.

(beat)
And I thought I was creepy.

LaGuerta looks around, takes it all in.
LAGUERTA
Where’d he come from?

Dexter squats down for a closer look.

DEXTER
Given the skin rupture and secondary spatter distance, had to be a 50-60 foot drop.

He glances up, studies the Causeways overhead.

DEXTER
Eastbound is maybe 40 feet... not high enough for this kind of damage. So, best guess, originating point was the Westbound Causeway.

LaGuerta strides off, barking at her minions as she goes.

LAGUERTA
Get me a team on the Westbound Causeway.

BATISTA
(no she isn’t)
She’s good.

But Dexter’s distracted. He leans over the victim.

DEXTER
There’s something in his mouth.
Angel, lemme have your tweezers.

Batista passes them over and, as Dexter moves in even closer, the victim suddenly EXHALES -- spewing out a mist of blood that catches Dexter full in the face.

Dexter, his face covered in blood, turns to Batista. But Batista’s already on the move.

BATISTA
Paramedicos, vengan!

As the EMTs rush in, Dexter stoops to retrieve what was in the victim’s mouth.

EMT
Just a death rattle. He’s gonzo.

Batista hands Dexter a towel, turns to the Paramedics.

BATISTA
Better check out my friend, too. No telling what that guy is carrying.
Dexter wipes his face, holds the tweezers up to the light.

DEXTER
Here’s what he’s carrying.
It’s a three inch chunk of meat.

DEXTER
Call me crazy...
(beat)
... but I think this is human flesh.

INT. POLICE STATION - DEXTER’S INNER LAB - DAY

TIGHT ON Dexter. A beat. Then he sprays something on his face. He switches off the lights and we go DARK. Then the eerie glow of a BLACK-LIGHT comes on and we realize that Dexter has Luminoled his own face. He passes the blue-light wand in front of it. Fascinated, he observes the blood residual from the man in the alley.

INT. POLICE STATION - DEXTER’S LAB - DAY

Dexter working at his desk. Debra hovering, snooping.

DEXTER
Tried calling you last night.

DEBRA
I hooked up with Sean.

DEXTER
Cable guy Sean?

DEBRA
God no. He smelled like cheese.

DEXTER
So, then mechanic Sean?

DEBRA
Yup. He came over. Two things led to another and next thing I know we’re doing the...

Dexter keeps busy, not really focusing on his sister.

DEBRA
You really want to hear this?

DEXTER
Actually... no. But if you guys are getting serious, I’d like to meet him.

Debra takes something from his desk. He takes it back.

DEXTER
How about you and Sean the mechanic join me and Rita the girlfriend for dinner tomorrow night?
In the b.g., Batista works at a nearby desk.
DEBRA
Why, so you can tell me later that he’s not good enough for your little sister?

DEXTER
You’re the one who was going on about brother-sister stuff this morning.

DEBRA
And that becomes brother-sister double-dating? What exactly goes on in that head of yours?

DEXTER
Come on. It’ll be fun.
(beat)
Please.

DEBRA
An official ‘please’ from my brother? Fine, we’ll go; but I’m not promising I’ll have any fun.

DOAKES enters from the stairwell; moving past Dexter, Debra and Batista with a scowl.

BATISTA
What crawled up his ass?

DEBRA
He hates lab rats.

Batista turns to Dexter.

BATISTA
Here’s the headline: it’s you lab rats that make us cops look good.

LaGuerta comes out of her office. Somber.

LAGUERTA
Listen up. We just got an ID on the body from the alley. His name was Ricky Simmons... he was a cop.

A hush falls over the room. Everyone shocked to learn they lost one of their own. Especially Doakes.

16
OMITTED  

17
EXT. SIMMONS HOUSE – DAY

LaGuerta and Doakes pull up in her car. Before they get out:
LAGUERTA
Ask you something?

SGT. DOAKES
... yeah.

LAGUERTA
When we were partners, you came up with every excuse in the book to get out of making a next-of-kin notification...

SGT. DOAKES
I knew Ricky from the Department softball team. He was a good guy, a good cop. Least I can do.

They get out, head up the walk and climb the porch steps. LaGuerta rings the bell. No answer. Again. Nothing. Doakes goes to a window, looks inside. A beat. Then he sees something.

SGT. DOAKES
Motherfuck!

He pushes past LaGuerta and, pulling his weapon, KICKS in the front door.

INT. SIMMONS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Doakes and LaGuerta burst in. LaGuerta stops.

LAGUERTA
Jesus mio.

KARA SIMMONS (30) lies in a pool of blood. The walls and floor are a mosaic of blood spatter. Barely alive, Kara stares, weak and terrified, at Doakes and LaGuerta.

SGT. DOAKES
Call it in!

He rushes to Kara and drops to his knees. There’s a bullet wound high in her chest. Doakes compresses the wound with the heel of his hand and looks to a shocked LaGuerta.

SGT. DOAKES
CALL IT IN!

LaGuerta grabs her walkie.

LAGUERTA
3H77 to Dispatch. GSW at my 20. Need EMT and police back-up now!
SGT. DOAKES
Check the house.

LaGuerta pulls her weapon and moves down the hall. Doakes whispers softly to Kara.

SGT. DOAKES
Kara, Kara? It’s me, James. Help is on the way.

Kara tries to speak, can’t. The light in her eyes fading.

SGT. DOAKES
You’re okay, Kara...

(not believing it)

... you’re okay.

PULL BACK AND UP as Doakes cradles her in his arms. As we CONTINUE TO CRANE UP, Laguerta steps into FRAME and takes in this anguished Pieta.

INT. COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM 2 - DAY

Matt Chambers on the stand. He addresses the jury.

CHAMBERS
... and yes I’ve made mistakes with alcohol in the past. I’d never try to hide that. But you heard from my AA sponsor...

He gestures to a kind-faced Elderly Man.

CHAMBERS
I’ve been sober for over a year now.

His eyes well with tears.

CHAMBERS
Look, I’m not disputing it was my car that hit Mr. Pryce. But I reported it stolen earlier that same night.

ON DEXTER slouched in the back row. Crocodile eyes peering between the heads of the people in front of him. He studies the jury.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Men like Matt Chambers know how to pull on the invisible mask of sympathy -- even empathy -- and otherwise right-thinking people don’t stand a chance... a concept not entirely foreign to me.
His pager vibrates. He slips out of the courtroom.

**INT. SIMMONS HOUSE - LATER**

Dexter examines the bloody floor where Kara was found. Batista comes up.

**BATISTA**
This is fucked-up, man: going after a cop’s family. Who’d do such a thing?

Dexter clicks off a rapid series of PHOTOGRAPHS.

**DEXTER**
’Swhy we’re here.

But Batista is shaken.

**BATISTA**
It’s still fucked-up.

**CAPTAIN MATTHEWS** snaps his cell phone shut, turns to LaGuerta and Doakes.

**CAPTAIN MATTHEWS**
Major Crimes says Ricky Simmons was under deep cover in Carlos Guerrero’s family. He’d been working the gig for 10 months and everything was good.

**LAGUERTA**
Until Ricky face-planted in an alley from 60 feet up.

**CAPTAIN MATTHEWS**
Shitty as it is, taking Simmons out could fall under the risk of doing risky business. But this...

He indicates the bloody crime scene.

**CAPTAIN MATTHEWS**
... Guerrero’s crossing a whole new line. He’s sending us a message --

**SGT. DOAKES**
Yeah: ‘back the fuck off’. That ain’t happening, is it Cap?

**CAPTAIN MATTHEWS**
Not on my watch. Guerrero’s been living the life, working the system, way too long. But now he’s pissed off the entire Miami Police Department.
Dexter and Batista listen in as they work.

SGT. DOAKES
What’s the word on the wife?

LAGUERTA
Should be in surgery by now.

DEXTER checks the screen on his digital camera, clicking through photos he’s taken.

BATISTA
Que paso?

DEXTER
There’s an inconsistency somewhere.

BATISTA
And that would be?

DEXTER
Not sure, but it’s the answer to a question we haven’t thought of yet.

Something on his camera screen grabs his eye: a thin streak of blood on the floor, ending at the couch. Dexter moves to that section of the floor and finds the streak -- thick where Kara’s body was; almost translucent at its other end. He drops to one knee and looks under the couch.

DEXTER
... Angel.

Batista joins him. Shines a flashlight on a bloody cell phone. Using his pencil, Batista slips it out into view.

BATISTA
Uh, Lieutenant.

LaGuerta and Doakes come over. See the phone.

LAGUERTA
Whose is it?

SGT. DOAKES
Check last number dialed.

Batista presses a button with the pencil’s eraser. The readout shows: ‘Ricky’. Doakes flips his cell open.

SGT. DOAKES
I want Ricky Simmons’ cell phone out of property and on my desk right away.

(MORE)
SGT. DOAKES (CONT'D)

(looks to Batista)
Good work, Angel.

BATISTA
It was Dexter who...

But Doakes moves off. Batista bags Kara’s phone.

LAGUERTA
Have the tech guys get me a complete history on both cell phones. Incoming and outgoing. Land-lines too.

She goes. Dexter steps up.

DEXTHER
Angel, when can I get back in here to do my red-string thing?

BATISTA
We got a shitload of work to do. I can’t release this scene till tomorrow. Lo siento, bro.

Dexter nods and leaves the house.

INT. COURTHOUSE - ROTUNDA - LATE DAY

Chambers steps out of the elevator. He notices the Pryce family, crosses to them and humbly offers his hand. Wanting no part of him, they move off. Chambers shrugs and heads for the exit doors.

PAN to Dexter at a shoe-shine stand. Watching, studying... making sure.

DEXTHER (V.O.)
Not guilty. Matt Chambers may have found a way to beat the system... but so have I.

INT. DEXTER’S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

ON THE LOUVRED WINDOWS sweating with condensation. As we PAN to find Dexter asleep in his bed, we HEAR the AC working overtime, already fighting the early morning Miami heat and humidity.

The phone RINGS. Dexter stirs, checks the caller ID and answers. INTERCUT with Debra on a street corner.

DEXTHER
Sister.
DEBRA
So Miami is the haystack and the ice truck is the needle, right?

DEXTER
... o-kay.

DEBRA
Then, brother... I just found the fucking needle!

22 EXT. MIAMI STREET - DAY

Dexter walks with Debra. OVER THEIR SHOULDERS: an ice truck parked near a busy street corner.

DEXTER
How’d you find it?

DEBRA
I put the word out with patrol. You know, the whole hide-in-plain-sight thing? Juan-Pierre flagged this one and called me.

DEXTER
Busy street. Anyone see the driver?

DEBRA
Kinko’s guy said it was here when he opened up this morning. Abandoned and idling. Is this the one you saw?

DEXTER’S SLO-MO POV: moving closer to the truck.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I feel like a kid at his own surprise party. This is the same truck. Happy Birthday to me.

He turns to Debra. Covering.

DEXTER
Maybe. It all happened kinda fast.

DEBRA
Let’s go out on a non-Forensic-geek limb and assume it is. Why’s the engine still running?

DEXTER
Keeps the back compartment refrigerated.
INT. ICE TRUCK - LATER

A Uniform Cop POPS THE LOCK AND THE DOOR FALLS OPEN. Dexter, Debra and Batista climb in. In the b.g., we can see the area is now a full-blown crime scene with LaGuerta and Captain Matthews huddled nearby.

BATISTA
Cold in here.

DEBRA
Duh, ice truck.

But Dexter is looking below CAMERA.

A BLOCK OF CLEAR ICE. Our guys squat down and peer into it.

BATISTA
Dios mio.

DEBRA
Looks like candy.

PUSH IN ON THE ICE. There are five multi-colored jellybeans suspended in the frozen water. Then we understand what we’re looking at: five fingertips, each nail painted a different cheerful color. Debra jumps back.

DEBRA
Holy shit, they’re fucking fingertips!

DEXTER
(looking closely)
Clean slices. No Blood. I’m guessing he drained it from the body before these cuts were made.

DEBRA
How’s he do that? Some kind of pump?

BATISTA
Nope. Forensics did a work-up on the last victim. Our guy’s old school.

DEXTER
He hoists them up and severs the jugular. Lets the heart do all the work. It’s the most effective method, really.

Debra and Batista turn to go.
DEBRA
Fucking butcher.

They exit the truck, leaving Dexter alone with the grisly find.

DEXTER (V.O.)
There are 206 bones in the human body.
He could have left any of them.

Dexter circles the block of ice, looks at the fingerprints.

DEXTER (V.O.)
But he gave us exactly what we need to identify the victim.
(beat, a smile)
Like he’s leaving a trail of bread crumbs.

EXT. ICE TRUCK CRIME SCENE - DAY

Captain Matthews and LaGuerta watch Batista climb back into the truck.
CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Who made the find?

LAGUERTA

(kills her to say)

... Officer Morgan.

The Captain looks across to where Debra fills out a report.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Harry’s daughter? Must be in the genes. Her and her brother. This truck is a good get. We finally have a solid lead.

LAGUERTA

I encourage all my officers, uniform and detectives, to think outside the box. Paid off big time.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Nice work, Lieutenant.

(looks at his watch)

I’ve got the Deputy Mayor. Congratulate Morgan for me.

BACK OF THE ICE TRUCK. Dexter steps from the cold into the sun. He looks to the sky.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Another beautiful Miami day: mutilated corpses with a chance of afternoon showers.

He sees LaGuerta crossing toward Debra.

DEBRA LOOKS UP, expectant, as LaGuerta approaches.

DEBRA

Chalk one up for Miami Metro, eh, Ma’am?

LAGUERTA

Last time I checked, Morgan, I’m the Lieutenant. That means my officers keep me apprised at all times on all things. You pull a stunt like this truck thing again, it won’t matter who your father was.

She storms off. Debra turns to Dexter in the maw of the ice truck. All he can do is shrug a smile her way.
INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - DAY  

Batista moves through, on his cell phone.  

    BATISTA  
    What, a man can’t call his wife three  
    times in one day?  
    (listens, melts a little)  
    Sí, claro. Bueno, kiss my baby and  
    tell her Daddy will be home para la  
    cena. I’m getting beeped. Te amo.  
    (clicks call-waiting)  
    Batista.  
    (listens)  
    De veras? I’m there in two minutes!  

He hurries out, taking us to Dexter’s Lab.  

DEXTER studies his photos from the Kara Simmons shooting.  

    DEXTER (V.O.)  
    To some cops, blood spatter analysis  
    makes about as much sense as using a  
    napkin. ‘Drip pattern’. ‘Cast-off’.  
    ‘Point of origin’. But a single drop  
    of blood...  

He closely examines one of the photos.  

    DEXTER (V.O.)  
    ... can tell a whole long story.  

He swivels in his chair until he’s facing the Bullpen.  

HIS POV: Doakes at his desk. Headphones on, he listens to a digital recorder. His face a solemn grimace of concentration.  

A bulletin board behind him displays the ‘GUERRERO CRIME FAMILY TREE’. At the top of the pyramid is a photo of CARLOS GUERRERO. Tanned, handsome, imposing.  

LaGuerta comes out of her office, puts a hand on Doakes’ shoulder. He takes off the headphones, looks up.  

    LAGUERTA  
    She’s still in surgery. The doctors  
    are... hopeful.  

Doakes takes a beat, then plugs the digital recorder into a small speaker and presses ‘play’.  

KARA’S VOICE
(an urgent whisper)
Ricky! Someone’s in the house! Shit, Ricky, where are you?
(her panicked breathing)
Okay, I’m gonna try for the back door... Oh God! He saw me!

Everyone in the Bullpen stops their work to listen.

KARA’S VOICE
(a desperate plea)
... please don’t hurt me...

Then it comes... the sound of a GUNSHOT. Doakes looks to his colleagues. Everyone’s stricken. A beat, then --

Batista bursts in. Breaks the silence.

BATISTA
Lieutenant...

He holds up a specimen jar with the chunk of flesh from the alley.

BATISTA
National Database kicked back a DNA match.

He crosses to the ‘GUERRERO CRIME FAMILY TREE’ and points to a photo halfway down the pecking order.

BATISTA
Norberto Cervantes.

Doakes grabs his jacket and hauls ass out of there.

EXT. DOMINO PARK - DAY

A public park where Latin men of all ages play dominoes.

PAN OFF the mist of sprinklers shimmering in the late-day sun to FIND NORBERTO CERVANTES at a concrete table playing dominoes with crime boss CARLOS GUERRERO. Each man has a stack of hundreds in front of him. Two Bodyguards hover nearby as Cervantes lays down a tile.

Note: this scene will play in Spanish (without subtitles).

GUERRERO
Es tu dia de buena suerte. (Today’s your lucky day.)

He slides a hundred toward Cervantes.
GUERRERO
Estoy agradecido por tu lealdad. (I am grateful for your loyalty.)

He pushes the rest of his money toward Cervantes.

CERVANTES
El gusto es mio, patron. (It is my pleasure, patron.)

As he reaches for the money, he notices a red dot on his hand. Then one on his shirt. Guerrero spots this, quickly rises and turns to see --

Emerging through the sprinkler spray, five MIAMI SWAT OFFICERS approaching in a tense crouch. Each has his MP-5 9mm rifle laser-locked on Cervantes’ body. Cervantes rises, arms outstretched, the smug grin of an untouchable on his lips.

The Bodyguards start to move; and each is immediately laser-locked on the forehead by a SWAT Member.

Doakes comes up from behind. A little excessive force and Cervantes is cuff ed.

GUERRERO
Is that necessary?

SGT. DOAKES
It’s a dangerous world.

GUERRERO
And one can’t be too careful, Detective.

Doakes levels him with a glare, hustles Cervantes away.

INT. SPORTS BAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Dexter sits at the bar.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Happy hour, there’s a misnomer. People don’t drink to feel happy; they drink to not feel anything at all. (beat) Me? I’ve got other vices.

REVEAL... Matt Chambers, two stools away, sipping a drink.

DEXTER
(to Bartender)
I’ll have what he’s having.
CHAMBERS
A wise choice.

He swigs his drink, savors it. Dexter regards him.

DEXTER
Celebrating?

CHAMBERS
Something like that.

Chambers looks this curious, charming stranger over.

CHAMBERS
Have we met?

DEXTER
Doubt it. I just moved to Miami. Needed a new start.

CHAMBERS
Girlfriend? ... uh, boyfriend?

The BARTENDER sets a drink in front of Dexter.

DEXTER
Ex-wife. Said I drank too much. (a wink) Hence the ex part.

Chambers raises his glass. A toast.

CHAMBERS
Fuck her.

He drinks. Dexter barely touches the glass to his lips.

DEXTER
She was all over me to change. Like she’d never done anything wrong in her life. (beat) Besides marrying me.

CHAMBERS
We all make mistakes. Unfortunately mine usually involve lawyers.

A football game plays on a TV above the bar. The crowd roars. Touchdown.

CHAMBERS
Goddammit.
DEXTER
I thought I was the only one who hated the Hurricanes. Take it you didn’t grow up down here?

CHAMBERS
I’ve had to move around some.

DEXTER
Say no more.

CHAMBERS
But home is where my ass is. And I’m getting mine out of town. Enjoy Miami.

He wobbles to his feet, fumbles for his wallet.

CHAMBERS
Remember: there’s nothing a new city can’t cure.

DEXTER
You got that right.

He plunks down a twenty.

CHAMBERS
Thanks, buddy. Next one’s on me.

DEXTER
You good to drive?

CHAMBERS
I’ve been a lot worse.

He goes. Once Chambers is out the door, Dexter lifts his glass from the bar and pockets it.

Then he cranes his neck to look out the window and watches as Chambers passes a family getting into a mini-van. Clearly drunk, he gets in his car and fishtails away.

INT. DEXTER’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dexter’s VO carries us through a series of DISSOLVES as he lifts fingerprints from Chambers’ drinking glass and scans them into his computer.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Matt Chambers is accused of committing a crime in Florida. He was arrested in Florida and is being tried in Florida.
ON DEXTER’S MONITOR: the NATIONAL CRIME DATABASE.

DEXTER (V.O.)
So the good people of Florida only went as far as validating their own assumptions: that Matt Chambers is a Florida bad guy.

The fingerprints match positive to two other crimes in two other states. Dexter prints-out the results. We see news clippings and photographs:

‘1997: SANTA FE WOMAN PARALYZED IN HIT-AND-RUN DUI’

‘2000: OFF-DUTY FIREFIGHTER KILLED IN WRONG-WAY COLLISION. SOUTH BOSTON MAN ARRESTED’

Dexter taps at his keyboard and two NEWS PHOTOS appear.

‘MATT BREWSTER OF ALBUQUERQUE WAS APPREHENDED…’

‘MATT RASMUSEN OF SOUTH BOSTON WAS ARRESTED AT THE SCENE OF…’

ON THE PHOTOS of Brewster and Rasmussen. Each is a picture of a younger… Matt Chambers.

Dexter leans back in his chair, swivels toward CAMERA.

DEXTER (V.O.)
(mocking)
‘Nothing a new city can’t cure.’

PRE-LAP KARA’S VOICE in the phone message to her husband.

KARA’S VOICE
... please don’t hurt me...

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - NEXT MORNING

A seething Doakes clicks off the recorder, scowls at an arrogantly stoic Cervantes. LaGuerta hovers nearby.

SGT. DOAKES
Way we see it: you’re in at the kill of Ricky Simmons. But that’s not enough for you… or for Guerrero...

CERVANTES
Ricky is dead? That saddens me.

SGT. DOAKES
Shut the fuck up!
The door opens and a Cop hands something to LaGuerta. As she pockets it, Cervantes glances through the open doorway and sees half a dozen other cops watching him with unconcealed contempt.

CERVANTES
Wait, you’re not implying that Ricky Simmons was a cop, are you? I’m truly... disappointed.

LaGuerta shifts her weight. A subtle reminder that she’s there and that Doakes has to stay professional.

INT. SIMMONS HOUSE - MORNING

Dexter considers his web of red strings. Batista watches, fascinated.

BATISTA
You musta been a motherfucker at cat’s cradle.

DEXTER
Never played it.
(back to work)
Okay, Kara Simmons was shot while she was running. Her phone call tells us that; her blood tells us that.

He walks through and around the maze.

BATISTA
She was running for the back door...

They’re in the kitchen now. Batista nods to the door.

BATISTA
There.
(beat)
Then she sees the shooter.

DEXTER
And the shooter sees her.
(beat)
She’s shot high in the chest. She stumbles, throwing blood on the walls: here and here. And leaving this blood-trail on the floor. But her forward momentum only brings her to...

He steps back into the living room; to the bloody spot where Kara was found.
DEXTER

... here.

He ponders this. Then, charged, he whips around.

CLOSE ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR. A tiny dark red dot. TILT UP as Dexter kneels down to study it. Batista leans in.

BATISTA
(dawning, hushed)
Kara Simmons never got this far.

DEXTER
Ergo: this is not her blood.

Batista takes out his utility knife. Together, they slice a wedge containing the red dot out of the linoleum. Dexter holds it up to Batista.

DEXTER
Angel, meet our shooter.

INT. POLICE STATION - INTERROGATION ROOM - MORNING

Doakes has moved closer in on a still-defiant Cervantes.

SGT. DOAKES
Not only do I have a dead cop, someone broke into his house and shot his wife.

CERVANTES
Word out in the world, Sergeant, is Simmons’ wife was fucking around. Maybe he tried to kill the bitch himself; then felt so bad about it, he committed suicide.

An evil grin as he leans forward.

CERVANTES
Cop murder-suicide. It’s like a health crisis for you guys, ain’t it?

Without warning, Doakes PUNCHES Cervantes, sending him reeling. LaGuerta grabs Doakes, but he’s too far gone. Other cops rush in and separate Doakes and Cervantes. Doakes, straining against their grip, screams at Cervantes.

SGT. DOAKES
You think it’s a fucking coincidence you’re in here? We’ve got you on the roof the morning Ricky Simmons died.
CERVANTES

Bullshit.

LaGuerta steps in. She RIPS Cervantes’ shirt sleeve up to his elbow, exposing a bandaged wound on his forearm. Then she tears the bandage off. The gash in Cervantes’ arm is just the right size.

LAGUERTA

We don’t deal in bullshit. We deal in good police work and...

She pulls the specimen jar with the chunk of flesh from her pocket.

LAGUERTA

... good science.

INT. POLICE STATION - LAGUERTA’S OFFICE - LATER

Dexter and Batista do a computer slide show for LaGuerta and Doakes. Slide one:

BATISTA

DNA from the flesh in Ricky Simmons’ mouth.

Click. Next slide.

DEXTER

DNA from a rogue drop of blood we found in the Simmons’ house.

Click. Side-by-side slides. Doakes leans in.

SGT. DOAKES

(to Dexter)

Tell me you’re sure about this.

DEXTER

100 percent.

SGT. DOAKES

Game... set... fuckin’ match.

He turns to LaGuerta, filled with purpose.

SGT. DOAKES

This puts Cervantes at both crime scenes. Let’s nail his coffin and ship him.

He starts out.

LAGUERTA

Hang on, Sergeant.
Doakes stops, turns to her. Dexter and Batista stand there like two kids watching their parents argue.

LAGUERTA
We get Cervantes to roll-over on Guerrero, then we own them both.

SGT. DOAKES
You’re talking about throwing a deal at Cervantes? And what then, he walks?

LAGUERTA
He does, we pick him up on a hundred other charges. If he gets us Guerrero, it’s win-win.

SGT. DOAKES
Gets us Guerrero? We can’t catch the guy! We’ll never catch the guy. He’s un-fucking-touchable!
(gathering himself)
C’mon Lieutenant, we’ve already got a win.

LAGUERTA
No, you’ve got a win. I want the big picture.

DEXTER looks out to the Bullpen. The Cops out there move slowly, dented by the death of a brother.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I’ve seen this before. Whenever a cop is killed, it’s like everyone’s life has been stopped in mid-sentence.

FLASHBACK:

CLOSE ON HARRY in his dress blue uniform. Hat, medals, etc. BEGIN SLOW PULLBACK.

HARRY
... Davey Sanchez was a fearless and dedicated cop. Davey Sanchez was a son, a husband... a father...

PULLBACK REVEALS Harry rehearsing into a mirror. We’re --

INT. MORGAN HOUSE – BEDROOM – DAY

Harry glances at his notes.
HARRY
... Davey Sanchez was my partner.
Davey Sanchez was my... hero.

CONTINUE PULLBACK. There’s Teenage Dexter on the edge of the bed. Harry glances to him in the mirror.

TEENAGE DEXTER
That... that was great.

Harry sits on the bed next to his son; blows a huge sigh.

TEENAGE DEXTER
What, Dad?

HARRY
It’s just that ever since Davey was killed, my world feels out of control.

TEENAGE DEXTER
How do you fix it?

HARRY
Two ways, I guess: honor Davey’s memory. And catch the bastard who did this to him.

He rises and straightens his coat.

HARRY
It’s not about vengeance, it’s not about retaliation or balancing the books... it’s about something so deep inside, so microscopic, that it’s as pure as truth. As perfect as nature.

He hugs his son and goes. END FLASHBACK.

OMITTED

INT. LIMBO STORE - DAY

Dexter readies the abandoned space for his upcoming kill.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Harry said nature is perfect...
(serious as death)
I’ll be perfect too.

He sets up the table, the rubber sheets, the plastic.
DEXTER (V.O.)
If God is in the details... and if I believed in God, then he’s in this room with me.

He lays out the lethal power tools. Then stretches out the cord to the rechargeable battery and looks for an outlet.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I just wish he’d brought an extension cord.

He fills the syringe, presses out the air bubble.

INT. HOSPITAL - KARA’S ROOM - DAY

We watch through the observation window as Kara lies in her bed, heavily bandaged and heavily sedated. Doakes appears, nods to the Uniformed Cop on protection-detail and enters.

He looks across to Kara and stops, absorbing the sight of a fragile life so cruelly damaged. Then he sits next to her and takes her hand.

He talks softly to her. Her eyes glisten as she tries to smile. Doakes looks to the Uniform. The Cop makes himself scarce.

Kara points to a glass of water. Doakes retrieves it and, holding the back of her head, helps her drink. A tender moment.
Doakes turns to put the water down. When he turns back, Kara is... mercifully... asleep. Doakes touches the back of his hand to her cheek.

LAGUERTA IN THE CORRIDOR; watching this tableau through the observation window.

INT. LOCO’S CRAB SHACK - DAY (MAGIC HOUR)

Dexter, Rita, Debra and her date, SEAN at a table.

DEBRA
This guy is toying with us, bro. And LaGuerta’s too fucking dumb to see it.

SEAN
Deb says this psycho cut off that chick’s fingertips. Man, that’s gotta suck.

Dexter glances over to see a GOOMBAH throw down some cash and grab a large take-out box of live lobsters. Dexter’s eyes follow the guy outside where he climbs into a black Escalade. Sitting in the back seat: Carlos Guerrero.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Guerrero taking home lobsters to boil alive. Not his style... He usually leaves the killing to someone else.

Guerrero looks blankly back at Dexter - not registering him at all - and powers up his tinted window.

A beat as Dexter realizes everyone’s waiting for him to respond. But Rita goes for the subject change.

RITA
So, how long you two been going out?

Sean forks up the last remnants from Debra’s plate, chews.

SEAN
Coupla weeks maybe.

He pulls Debra into a rather moist kiss.

DEXTER
Uh, Deb never mentioned how you met.
SEAN
She brought her car into my shop.

Rita puts her hand on Dexter’s leg, an attempt at affection. Dexter looks down, at a bit of a loss.

DEXTER
Oh, you run your own place?

SEAN
I wish.

Rita withdraws her hand.

DEXTER
Someday, huh?

DEBRA
Dex, enough with the inquisition.

SEAN
Hey, if I had a sister with legs like yours, I’d be checking out the dude she’s seeing too.

DEBRA
Is this guy a keeper or what?

She kisses Sean, bites his lower lip. An awkward beat between Dexter and Rita. Such effortless intimacy sorely missing in their relationship.

INT. LOCO’S CRAB SHACK - LATER

Dexter, Rita, Debra and Sean get ready to leave. Debra kisses her brother; then hugs Rita.

DEBRA
Let’s do this again sometime.

She mouths the words ‘No Way’ to Dexter.

RITA
I’d like that.

Sean puts a possessive arm around Debra.

SEAN
C’mon, babe. Papa wants dessert.

Debra kisses him and, laughing, they exit.

DEXTER
Seems like a nice guy.
He goes to put his hand on the small of Rita’s back, but she doesn’t notice. She looks off, lost in thought.

RITA
They could barely keep their hands off each other.

She seems small and alone as she heads for the doors.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I can kill a man, dismember his body, and be home in time for Letterman. But knowing what to say when my girlfriend’s feeling insecure? I’m totally lost.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

Cervantes in his cell, lying on his cot. The sounds of caged men echo off the walls. A GUARD approaches.

GUARD
Off your ass, Cervantes. Hands behind your back; walk backwards and assume the position.

Cervantes is an old pro at this. Walking backwards, he puts his hands through the slot in the cell door and the Guard cuffs him.

GUARD
Step away.

Cervantes steps away and the Guard unlocks the door.

GUARD
Exit the cell.

CERVANTES
Where we going?

GUARD
Call came down: they want you moved to a more secure block.

Cervantes smiles as the Guard leads him away.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - ANOTHER CORRIDOR - NIGHT

The Guard and Cervantes continue, Cervantes jabbering.

CERVANTES
You think that call to take care of me came down from the warden?

(MORE)
CERVANTES (CONT'D)
Who the fuck you think the warden listens to? Get used to it because...

The Guard SHOVES Cervantes into a dark alcove and SLAMS a shiv into Cervantes' chest. Again and again and again. It’s alarmingly vicious and thorough. Cervantes slumps to the floor. Already dead.

The Guard drops the shiv and walks away.

HOLD ON CERVANTES’ BODY as a LULLABY comes up. A male voice singing ‘FRERE JACQUES.’

"Are you sleeping, are you sleeping;
Brother John, Brother John..."

INT. RITA’S HOUSE - KIDS’ BEDROOM - NIGHT

Dexter sings to Astor and Cody as they drift off to sleep. He has a beautiful, haunting, voice.

DEXTER
"Morning bells are ringing,
morning bells are ringing.
Din Din Don... Din Din Don"

Astor and Cody are now asleep. Dexter notices the papier-mache masks beneath the night-light, each brightly painted with watercolors, and smiles. Then he sees Rita in the doorway, moved by the tenderness in her man.

INT. RITA’S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Dexter and Rita watching TV, her head resting peacefully on his shoulder. Dexter turns to her and smiles that smile of his. Then he puts his arm around her and pulls her close as they resume watching TV.

A beat as Rita makes a decision. She clicks the TV to ‘mute’, then lifts her head and nibbles Dexter’s earlobe.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Every time a woman tries to do this to me it... tickles.

Rita flicks her tongue in his ear.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Still, it’s not entirely unpleasant.

He turns to her; hesitates.
RITA
What?

DEXTER
The kids.

RITA
They sleep through thunderstorms.

She kisses him on the lips, her tongue searching. Dexter, in his way, responds. He cups her breast, kisses it. Then he starts unbuttoning her blouse and slips his hand inside.

Dexter brings his head up and, closing his eyes, kisses her lips. Rita catches her breath, stiffens. At first, Dexter thinks it’s a desired response. But Rita doesn’t unstiffen. Dexter opens his eyes. Rita looks away.

RITA
I’m sorry.

DEXTER
(softly)
... tell me.

RITA
I can’t do this.

Dexter gently takes her face in his hands.

DEXTER
It’s okay. I’m okay. It’s okay.

Rita sits back, emotion filling her eyes.

DEXTER
We have an elephant in the room and its name is sex. Far as I’m concerned, that elephant can just sit in the corner and mind its own damn business.

RITA
Easier said than done.

DEXTER
Yeah, but it needs to be right for both of us. Or it won’t be right for either of us. I don’t want that, do you?
RITA
Uh... no... whew... y’know?

She brushes away a tear. Dexter pulls her close. We see, but Rita doesn’t, the look of relief on Dexter’s face.

RITA
I just can’t believe I found the one good, truly decent man still left on the planet.

As Dexter kisses the top of her head, he notices that the local news is on. He remotes the volume higher. A REPORTER stands in front of a dull grey building that we recognize as the County Jail.

REPORTER
... was found dead in a basement hallway of the Miami Metro Jail. Norberto Cervantes was a known associate of reputed drug lord Carlos Guerrero.

VIDEO plays of Guerrero and Cervantes.

REPORTER
Speculation is that another inmate...

OMITTED

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - MORNING

ON THE GUERRERO CRIME FAMILY TREE. WIDEN to include Doakes staring at the photos, disappointment and anger pulling at him. He steps up, removes Cervantes’ picture and, frustrated, drops it into a drawer.

Then he looks over. Dexter’s watching from his lab. Instead of showing his usual disdain for Dexter, Doakes simply nods. Dexter nods back. A fleeting connection.

Debra enters the bullpen and crosses to --

INT. POLICE STATION - DEXTER’S LAB - DAY

Dexter turns away from Doakes and presents a tray with the severed fingertips. Back in his element now, he’s drawn to them.

DEXTER
See how the skin is gloving around the joints?

Debra leans in.
DEBRA
And that’s important because?

DEXTER
Sure sign of post-mortem severance. Meaning: she was already dead when she was relieved of her fingertips.

DEBRA
But why the different nail polishes? What the hell’s this guy thinking?

DEXTER
Don’t know yet. You have an ID?

DEBRA
Shari Taylor. Another hooker.

DEXTER
At least he’s consistent.

DEBRA
Yeah, killing young women who have to sell their bodies just to survive... or feed their kids.

She turns away, moved and angry.

DEXTER (V.O.)
My sister puts up a front so the world won’t see how vulnerable she is. Me? I put up a front so the world won’t see how vulnerable I’m not. I don’t care who these fingertips belong to. Only what my new friend out there is trying to say.

They’re interrupted by UNIFORM #1.

UNIFORM #1
Morgan, Captain wants you.

Both Dexter and Debra move toward the door.

UNIFORM #1
Her.

Brother and sister share a look. This can’t be good. Debra goes. Dexter looks after her, then leaves.

INT. POLICE STATION – LAGUERTA’S OFFICE – DAY

Debra enters to find LaGuerta and the Captain waiting for her. She’s fully prepared for a serious reprimand.
DEBRA
You wanted to see me, sir?

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS
Lt. LaGuerta has something she wants to tell you.

LaGuerta forces a smile. Hating this.

LAGUERTA
Officer Morgan, you’ve shown tremendous initiative these last few days. Because of you, we were able to track down that ice truck and we now have an ID of the latest victim. The Captain believes you should be reassigned from Vice to Homicide.

Debra can barely believe what she’s hearing.

LAGUERTA
And I concur. Congratulations.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS
You’re a good cop. Like your old man.

Debra can’t contain herself. She gives the Captain a hug.

DEBRA
Thank you, sir. Thank you so much.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS
Keep it up and I see a Detective’s shield in your future.

DEBRA
I won’t let you down, sir.

She bolts from the office.

LAGUERTA
I hope you know what you’re doing.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS
I promoted you, didn’t I? (beat, gruff) Now find me this ice truck sonofabitch.

He leaves. LaGuerta goes out to the bullpen where Doakes moves other photos up higher in the ‘GUERRERO CRIME FAMILY TREE’, replacing the void left by Cervantes’ now-missing picture. She clocks his expression: utter desolation. Then she continues on to --
INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN KITCHEN - NIGHT

Batista pours himself a cup of coffee. LaGuerta enters.

**Note:** This scene will play in **SPANISH** *(without subtitles)*.

LAGUERTA
Carmen y tu hija, estan bien? (Carmen and your daughter, they’re good?)

BATISTA
Estan... maravillosos. (They’re wonderful.)

LAGUERTA
Ellos tambien te necesitan. (They need you too.)

(guides him to the door)
Vete a casa, Angel. (Go home, Angel.)

EXT. CHAMBERS’ HOUSE - NIGHT

Dexter watches Chambers pull into his driveway. He takes the syringe from his pocket and holds it up to the light; admiring the amber fluid.

DEXTER (V.O.)
In slaughter houses, they stun the animals before butchering them. It’s the humane thing to do. Those animals? They’re the lucky ones.

ANGLE ON Chambers, weaving up his steps and disappearing into his house.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Gone to rest his weary head. Good news is he’ll still be here when I come back for happy hour.

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - NIGHT

Doakes at his computer, searching the database for more information on the Guerrero Crime Family. As a name and a photo come on-screen, he turns to the bulletin board and notes something on the family tree. Back to the computer, back to the bulletin board and... there’s LaGuerta.

LAGUERTA
Burning the oil?

SGT. DOAKES
I clocked out.
LAGUERTA
Why’re you going at this so hard?

SGT. DOAKES
Someone comes after one of us, he comes after all of us.

LaGuerta pulls a swivel chair from an empty desk and sits. She takes a long beat, casting for the right words.

SGT. DOAKES
I know that look, Maria. Whatever you’ve got to say, say it.

LAGUERTA
I just got off the phone with the hospital...

Doakes turns to her -- trapped between hope and dread.

LAGUERTA
Kara Simmons suffered massive heart failure 30 minutes ago.

Doakes grabs his jacket and starts to rise. LaGuerta puts her hand on his leg, keeping him in place.

LAGUERTA
James... she died.

Doakes struggles with his ricocheting emotions: anger, outrage... grief. He closes his eyes, his lips quivering for the briefest moment.

LAGUERTA
You and I rode together for years. Shared a lot of shit, good and bad. You helped make me the cop I am today.

(beat)
And it’s the cop in me who has to ask you... was Cervantes right? Was Kara Simmons sleeping with someone other than Ricky?

Doakes looks away. LaGuerta presses on...

LAGUERTA
(almost a whisper)
... was it you?

Doakes stands up; looks from his computer to the board to LaGuerta. And then, finally... he nods.
LAGUERTA
What the fuck were you thinking?

SGT. DOAKES
And what the fuck business is it of yours?

LAGUERTA
My precinct. My cops... My business.

Doakes takes a long, reflective pause.

SGT. DOAKES
Kara was going to ask for a divorce as soon as Ricky finished his undercover. She didn’t want to hurt him while he was on the case.

(beat)
She still had love for him.

LaGuerta is humbled by such a rare confession from this stoic man.

LAGUERTA
And you loved her.

Doakes turns to her, his eyes red.

SGT. DOAKES
... completely.

LaGuerta takes a beat. Regards Doakes carefully.

LAGUERTA
If I go by the book, I take you off this case.

Doakes looks at her, his jaw set.

SGT. DOAKES
(softly)
Fuck the book. There’s no one in this building who’s more motivated to get...

LAGUERTA
Revenge?

SGT. DOAKES
Justice.

LAGUERTA
Good answer. Then I want you to take point on Guerrero.
LaGuerta rises, puts a hand on his shoulder and leaves.

Dexter and Debra hammering their way through a pile of crabs.

DEBRA
(mouth full)
God these things are so good.

DEXTER
Not as good as your good news.

He hoists his beer. They clink.

DEXTER
(a loving tease)
My little sister’s all growed up and transferred to Homicide.

DEBRA
And the best part? LaGuerta had to say the actual words. I thought her head would explode.

DEXTER
I’m really proud of you.

DEBRA
You had my back the whole way and I appreciate it. I mean that. You’re the best; and I wanted you to be the one to share this moment.

DEXTER
So then... Sean was busy?

Debra wipes her hands. Sips her drink. Takes a beat.

DEBRA
Turns out there was another woman.

DEXTER
Who?

DEBRA
... me.

DEXTER
Sean the mechanic is married?
DEBRA
Technically... okay, yes. Imagine me falling for the wrong guy, huh?

She blinks away a tear.

DEXTER
And you and he are...

DEBRA
So over. I dumped his married ass.

She blows her nose into her napkin.

DEBRA
I just wish I could get into a healthy relationship like you and Rita. You know, without the drama and the tension and the uncertainty.

DEXTER
Yeah, I'm a lucky guy.

Debra goes back to her meal. Just then, the front door opens and Carlos Guerrero and his Driver enter. Patrons either stare or avert their eyes as Guerrero makes his way to a long table in back. The other guys at the table rise. They offer him the respect due a powerful and dangerous man. Then Guerrero peels off and heads for the restroom.

FLASHBACK:

EXT. RURAL ROAD - LATE DAY

Teenage Dexter stands next to his bike in the teeming Miami rain. Harry's truck pulls up, slams to a stop. Teenage Dexter whips open the door.

TEENAGE DEXTER
Jesus, Dad, it's called being on time, ever heard of it?

He throws his bike into the bed of the truck, climbs in and YANKS the door shut.

HARRY
I was having a bad day. Captain and I had to have a discussion.

TEENAGE DEXTER
Yeah, well, maybe you shoulda --

Only now does he notice his father's face, ashen and strained.
TEENAGE DEXTER
Wait. What kind of bad day?

Harry stays still, staring off into the pelting rain; the wipers whapping back and forth. Too angry to answer; too angry to drive. Teenage Dexter studies his father, then, dawning...

TEENAGE DEXTER
It's about the guy who killed Davey, isn't it? His trial started today.

Harry finally turns, looks to Teenage Dexter. Doesn't say a word.

TEENAGE DEXTER
What happened?

HARRY
Judge said the bust wasn't righteous and let him walk.
TEENAGE DEXTER
A bad guy kills a cop and nothing happens?

HARRY
That’s how it looks.

TEENAGE DEXTER
But that’s totally not fair!

HARRY
Life’s not fair, Dexter.

TEENAGE DEXTER
God, Dad, can’t anyone do anything?
Can’t you do anything?

HARRY
No. Not now.

TEENAGE DEXTER
So, what? The world keeps spinning out of control?

HARRY
No. The world can always be set right again.

TEENAGE DEXTER
How?

HARRY
It’s all about the choices you make.

He turns back to the road, slips the truck into gear and drives off. On Teenage Dexter, next to him, that truth sinking in. END FLASHBACK.

RESUME - INT. LOCO'S CRAB SHACK - NIGHT

as Dexter rises from the table and turns back to Debra. Crab-focused, she missed Guerrero’s entrance.

DEXTER
Back in a sec.

DEBRA
I’m kind of running the gamut here, emotion-wise. And you’re leaving me?

Dexter gestures toward the bathroom and shrugs.

DEXTER
Nature calls.
Guerrero at a urinal. Dexter’s head rises part-way into FRAME, our crocodile shot, and we realize we’ve been looking in a mirror. Dexter finishes washing his face.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Sometimes the universe plays itself out in beautiful mystery. It’s like fate has chosen to speak just to me.

He grabs some paper towels, wipes his hands.

DEXTER (V.O.)
All the planning, the making sure... does it go away because I have a chance to rid the world of a cop-killer and balance the books?

He tosses the paper towels in the trash.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Do I just ignore everything my father taught me about how to do this right, about how to stay safe so I can do it again?

(beat)
I just need a sign.

Just then, Guerrero’s cell phone rings. He answers.

GUERRERO
Yeah.

(listens)
I don’t give a shit about your problems. Do your goddam job and take care of him.

Guerrero sees Dexter staring at him in the mirror.

GUERRERO
The fuck you looking at?

Dexter simply holds his look, his eyes giving nothing away.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. KILLING ROOM - NIGHT

PAN ALONG the legs of a naked man’s body, up his torso, to his face. Matt Chambers lies on the killing table. A nearby laptop plays the Christmas footage of his last victim, Alexander Pryce, and his family. News clippings of his New Mexico and Massachusetts victims line the walls.
Dexter steps into FRAME, dressed to kill. Chambers gasps.

CHAMBERS
You!

DEXTER
(a taunt)
And... you. We meet again.
Dexter SLICED his cheek with the scalpel.

DEXTER
For the last time.

He draws blood for his slide. Chambers is frantic.

CHAMBERS
I didn’t do anything!

DEXTER
Some people believe that. Problem is: I don’t.

CHAMBERS
But it’s true.

He tries for the charm that has gotten him this far in life... even the tears. Let’s call them crocodile tears.

CHAMBERS
I was set-up.

DEXTER
By whom?

CHAMBERS
That family. They needed someone to blame. It’s the natural thing to do when you’re grieving.

DEXTER
Then none of this is your fault?

CHAMBERS
I swear.

DEXTER
And you have no remorse?

CHAMBERS
How can I? I already told you: I didn’t do anything.

DEXTER
Thank you.

CHAMBERS
For what?

DEXTER
For making this easier.
CHAMBERS
What do you mean?

DEXTER
I have no remorse either.

He reaches for the surgical power saw.

CHAMBERS
Please! Wait, wait... okay. It was me... only it wasn’t me. It was the booze...
(weeping now)
It... it takes me over.

DEXTER
A point of view to which I’m not unsympathetic. Neither you nor I is completely in control of our own destinies. Although, at this moment...

He brings the vibrating blade to Chambers’ neck.

DEXTER
... I seem to have the upper hand.

CHAMBERS
NO! I’m sorry. Really, I’m so sorry.

DEXTER
Oh, that’s nice...

He nods to the photos of the New Mexico and Massachusetts victims.

DEXTER
... but you’ve done this too many times to be sorry.
(he looks into his eyes)
You are beyond forgiving.

He kills Matt Chambers.

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INT. LOCO’S CRAB SHACK - NIGHT

CAMERA TRAVELS over the late-night crab lovers. FIND Guerrero and his mob reveling at their long table.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Carlos Guerrero has chosen to live in a dangerous world. That’s his truth. My truth is: that world doesn’t need me to balance its books.
PUSH IN on the Wiseguy, none the wiser.

INT. KILLING ROOM - NIGHT

Dexter packs up: his equipment, the bloody plastic -- pieces of Matt Chambers.

EXT. ABANDONED STRIP MALL - NIGHT

Dexter crams the Hefty Bags into his trunk, gets in his car and pulls away. As he leaves the empty parking lot, we CRANE UP to see just where he performed this last deed.

There, above the storefront, is the broken, ramshackle sign of an old Liquor Store.

INT. DEXTER’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Dexter slips his newly-won slide into the box, then places the box behind the AC unit.

DEXTER (V.O.)
The problem with spending so much time on the outside looking in... watching people, studying them...

He crosses to the refrigerator and opens the freezer. There are the Doll Parts, each so carefully wrapped.

DEXTER (V.O.)
... is that I almost always know what they’re going to do.

He takes out the Doll Head, smiles, and puts it back on the freezer door. He starts to close the freezer; stops.

DEXTER (V.O.)
So when someone does something I didn’t see coming...

THE TINY WRAPPED DOLL HANDS. Dexter unwraps one. Nothing unusual. He unwraps the other.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I really have to stop and...

The fingernails are painted with the same colors as the fingertips from the block of ice.

DEXTER (V.O.)
... appreciate the moment.

GO TO WHITE and we’re --
INT. LIMBO - NIGHT

CAMERA slowly moves over still water (reminiscent of the opening shot). CAMERA FINDS Dexter again submerged up to his eyeballs. The human crocodile.

DEXTER (V.O.)
There are no secrets in life.

The breath from his nostrils ripples the water. We’re --

INT. DEXTER’S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - NIGHT

Dexter in his bathtub.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Just hidden truths that lie beneath the surface.

And he sinks into the water, disappearing from view.

END OF EPISODE