HOMICIDE: LIFE ON THE STREETS

"The Sniper: Part 1"

by

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FADE IN:

INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS AUDITORIUM - EVENING

"Education & Training" Graduation. Barnfather, Giardello, Russert on stage at attention, while GRADUATES file in. Everyone's in full-dress uniform, spit and polish. A lot of brass on stage and in audience. Civilians too. Giardello and Barnfather are steamed. Russert's tense.

BARNFATHER
Every detective is required to hand in his run sheets at the end of each shift. Your unit is consistently in violation.

GIARDELLO
My guys are out on the streets ten, twelve, fifteen hours every day.

RUSSETT
How is it I was not apprised of these findings?

BARNFATHER
(to Russert)
His unit is lax, Captain--

GIARDELLO
My detectives are putting down cases.

BARNFATHER
(to Russert)
--because their immediate superior is lax.

GIARDELLO
My unit is handpicked for self-motivators. The reason they're the best is because I let them be.

BARNFATHER
That suggests a clearance rate one look at the Board belies.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RUSSERT
(to Barnfather)
Nevermind which are the whodunits,
which are the dunkers, when the
stats are down, suddenly ACTIVITY
sheets, paper--

BARNFATHER
(to Giardello)
Lieutenant. It'll be a write up
-- noncompliance and
insubordination.

Giardello gets signal from across stage, rises, walks over to
microphone, looks out. Russert turns to Barnfather.

RUSSERT
Next time you decide to dress down
one of my men, I'd appreciate you
not just springing it on me.

BARNFATHER
Now we know whose side you're
really on.

Giardello taps mike, clears his throat.

GIARDELLO
To the class of nine-five-three.
We, the Baltimore Police
Department, are honored to say,
"Welcome to our happy family."

Two rows of graduates stand. On their exuberant faces, and the
applause all around them,

FADE TO:

MAIN TITLES
ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. SQUAD ROOM - MORNING

TIM BAYLISS, JOHN MUNCH, FRANK PEMBLETON and KAY HOWARD at their desks, the rest of our guys are out, a few UNIFORMS milling about. It's been slow. Munch is reading the paper. Bayliss, a heating pad on his back, is fretting over forms.

BAYLISS
Consent form reads like a goddamn death sentence. You ever have surgery?

HOWARD
Nose job. I was fifteen.

They all check out her nose.

HOWARD
Hardball took a bad hop.

PEMBLETON
Caught it with the schnoz, huh?

MUNCH
(swats one)
Roaches again.
(flicking off desk)
Potato chip crumbs. Higby must be back from his hemmoroid operation.

BAYLISS
Please, no more talk about operations.

HOWARD
It just rained. They come out after the rain.

PEMBLETON
Hemmoroids?

HOWARD
Roaches.

MUNCH
There's a question, if you could wipe out one, which would you choose, roaches or hemmoroids?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PEMBLETON
I admire roaches. Our evolutionary superiors.

MUNCH
Had one once as a pet in college, named Kafka.
(swats; kills one)

Phone rings. Bayliss picks it up.

BAYLISS
Three people shot over on Madison and Whitelock.

Bayliss and Pemberton pack up. Bayliss, his back worse than ever, moves like he's 80, and Pemberton, nimble, an added bounce to his step, to annoy Bayliss.

PEMBLETON
Shall we call you an ambulance?

BAYLISS
You never had back pain did you, Frank?

PEMBLETON
I'm riding shotgun. You're the primary.

CUT TO:

EXT. DRUID HILL (MADISON & WHITELOCK) - DAY

Pandemonium. Black neighborhood. The whole block is cordoned off. Crawling with UNIFORMS keeping people out of area. Pemberton's signing off with DR. SCHEINER, Medical Examiner, who directs his ATTENDANTS to load two bodies into body bags, and into WHITE VAN marked "O.S.M.E."

Bayliss moves on to a third victim, being placed onto stretcher and into ambulance. Uniform #1 is hovering outside ambulance.

UNIFORM #1
Scott Thompson, I was the first arriving officer.

BAYLISS
Can he talk?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

UNIFORM #1
She. Little girl. No, she can't.
Gunshot pierced her lung. They're enroute to Shock Trauma.

Bayliss peers into Ambulance. A little Black girl, twelve, lifts her head and smiles at him. Paramedics push past Bayliss into Ambulance, then take off, siren blaring.

BAYLISS
Get the girl's name?

UNIFORM #1
Yes, sir.
(checking notes)
Farrington. Kathryn.
(eager)
My first homicide, Detective, any tips'd be gratefully received.

BAYLISS
Congratulations.
(going over notes)
So. Three victims, two adults, one male, one female, both ten-seven, third, female child--

Bayliss rubs his back.

UNIFORM #1
Critical but stabilized.
(notices Bayliss' pain)
You okay, Detective?

BAYLISS
Fine. Any eyewitnesses?

UNIFORM #1
A few outside that bodega there, heard the shots, saw the vics go down. Thought the shots came from--
(pointing)
--one of those rooftops.

Bayliss looks up, sees Uniforms scouring two rooftops across the street.

CUT TO:
EXT. BODEGA - DAY

Bayliss talks to REGIS DOWNES, 35, Black, wired and freaked. Pemberton is in b.g., interviewing a Black woman, 50's.

REGIS
Bam bam. That lady was walkin' right in front of me, two full shopping bags. Bam Bam.

BAYLISS
Bam bam. So you heard two shots?

REGIS
Three shots, like I said. Bam bam.

Bayliss studies him, not sure if Regis gets the discrepancy.

BAYLISS
(makes notation)
Three shots. Bam bam. Got it.

Officer #1 approaches Bayliss, out of breath, his radio crackling.

UNIFORM #1
They found something.

CUT TO:

EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

UNIFORMS doing a preliminary check of the roof. Uniform #1 watches Bayliss circle shell casings with chalk. LAB TECHS and POLICE PHOTOGRAPHER peruse rooftop.

BAYLISS
This is how we determine the trajectory, anticipating an overzealous defense attorney trying to turn his case around.

Bayliss picks up a shell, studies it closely.

UNIFORM #1
I'm no firearms expert, but...

BAYLISS
Thirty ought-six.

Uniform #1 does a take, truly awed. Bayliss plays with the kid.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS
(shows etching inside casing)
Says so right here. Nine times out of twenty, evidence is staring right up at you.

Bayliss hands shell to LAB TECHS and points to other casings. As the LAB TECHS collect the casings in the b.g., Uniform #1 wanders further along roof ledge.

UNIFORM #1
Detective.

Bayliss heads over to Uniform #1. Pembleton arrives on roof, joins them.

UNIFORM #1
Maybe this was here before but--

On the ledge, drawn in chalk, is a HANGMAN GAME -- a stick man minus an arm and leg, hanging from a scaffold, with letters and spaces underneath. "S", space, space, "D", space, "E", space, space.

PEMBLETON
Chalk looks fresh.
(calling out to Lab Techs)
Can we get some scrapings here.

BAYLISS
(to Uniform #1)
Probably unnecessary. But a fresh crime scene to a primary is like panning for gold.

PEMBLETON
(bending; pointing)
A chunk fell off here, let's get that, too...

As Lab Techs are busy getting chalk samples, Bayliss, Pembleton and Uniform #1, walk along ledge.

BAYLISS
Always want to watch the chain of custody when handling evidence. Let the Lab Techs or the primary handle it all.

(Continued)
Bayliss and Uniform #1 look down at crime scene below. Several officers are milling about the chalked outlines where the victims fell.

UNIFORM #1
The shooter must've used a scope, wouldn't you say, Detective?

Bayliss throws back an aspirin, swallows it with spit.

PEMBLETON
(re: distance)
Yeah, a telescope.

BAYLISS
(to Photographer)
Get close ups of the Hangman game.

UNIFORM #1
It's a pleasure watching you guys work a case, Detectives.

BAYLISS
(musing to himself)
Bam Bam.

UNIFORM #1
So you guys have a theory, I mean, what do you think we're looking at?

BAYLISS
Bam Bam. Wasn't that the name of Fred Flintstone's baby?

PEMBLETON
I believe it was Barney Rubble's.

On Bayliss and Pembleton, looking out over crime scene, and Officer #1 looking up at them,

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY

Giardello addresses Bayliss, Munch, Howard, Pembleton, Kellerman and Lewis.

GIARDELLO
Witnesses?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS
Canvassed the area. No one saw anything. Talked to two witnesses who heard the shots.

GIARDELLO
Motive?

PEMBLETON
Drugs, hands down. BAYLISS
Could be domestic...

PEMBLETON
You want to kill your wife or husband, you want to see the surprise on their face, make sure they're dead. Somebody comes threatening your drug income, a nice clean shot sends the message.

BAYLISS
(shaking his head)
A man, woman and child expunged, that's familia, that's passion, not drugs.

LEWIS
Expunged?

MUNCH
Family planning gone bezerk.

GIARDELLO
Okay. We follow a two-pronged investigation.

KELLERMAN
Our most eloquent witnesses are the victims.

They all take that in.

GIARDELLO
Bayliss, give us the profiles.

BAYLISS
(reads from notebook)
Louise Wilcox, forties, charge nurse at St. John's, oncology unit.

LEWIS
Access to medications...

(CONTINUED)
PEMBLETON

Aka drugs.

BAYLISS

James Miller, nineteen, on disability, found a pocketknife on him and about a quarter ounce of reefer...

PEMBLETON

Dingaling. Drugs again.

BAYLISS

Kathryn Farrington, twelve, stabilized at the scene, now on life-support at University Hospital.

KELLERMAN

Heard about her stash of Gummy Bears.

BAYLISS

All three victims, African-Americans.

PEMBLETON

Mark my words, drugs is where these three vics intersect.

HOWARD

Why the little girl?

PEMBLETON

Sends a message he's a hard-ass.

GIARDELLO

Let's doh-see-doh partners, Bayliss and Howard take the Farrington girl. Bayliss, because you're the primary and she's our only eyewitness, Howard, in case she talks easier to a female.

(beat)

Kellerman and Lewis take James Miller.

(beat)

Pembleton and who does that leave... Munch, the Wilcox woman.

(more)

(continued)
GIARDELLI (Cont’d)

(beat; to everyone)
DMV ’em, get arrest records,
previous addresses, I want
everything, family grudges,
girlfriends, boyfriends, where’d
they hang, what toothpaste they
used. If these three victims had
anything in common, it may lead
us to our shooter.

They’re in full throttle.

On the BOARD, under Bayliss’s name, A HAND writes in RED,
WILCOX, MILLER, as we,

CUT TO:

INT. WILCOX HOME - DAY

Munch and Pemberton in den with adult daughter, EVELYN WILCOX,
who is comforting JONATHAN WILCOX, her father, dazed and
distraught, keening on the couch.

MUNCH

I know this is hard for you, Mr.
Wilcox, but we need to ask you
some more questions about your
wife.

PEMBERTON

You said Louise had a generous
nature. Is it possible, in her
work, she was helping someone
overcome their drug problem?

EVELYN

(indignant)
You think my mother was killed
because she got mixed up with an
addict? Is that what you’re
suggesting?

JONATHAN WILCOX, tears streaming down, calls out for Louise,
over and over.

CUT TO:
INT. JAMES MILLER’S APARTMENT - DAY

Kellerman and Lewis in the kitchen with James Miller's brother, P.K., and a roommate, TOMMY HASTINGS.

LEWIS
We found weed on your brother, P.K., he have any other bad habits?

P.K.
He left the toilet seat up, would drive my girlfriend crazy.

Kellerman rises, noses around apartment, not lost on Hastings.

HASTINGS
Hey, you got a warrant or something?

Lewis slides his chair back from table with panache, getting their attention, stretching out his legs.

LEWIS
Kellerman, sit down over here with us. P.K. here wants to find his brother's killer. Am I right, P.K.?

P.K.
You better hope you find him before I do.

LEWIS
See, we ain't looking to pin anything on you or your friend here.

KELLERMAN
(looking around; sensing it's a drug house)
Believe it or not, we're working for you.

LEWIS
We need to know if your brother, maybe because of his drug habit, got himself mixed up with some low-life might’ve wanted him... expunged.

HASTINGS
Expunged?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

P.K.
Jimmy was a doper, yeah, sure. But we're talkin' weed, nothing more. Sixty a month habit. Jimmy never bought, never sold, I copped it for him. Just so he'd never have't'a deal with the man.

KELLERMAN
Any married girlfriends, y'know, pissed-off husbands, anything like that?

P.K.
Jimmy was afraid of girls.

HASTINGS
(indignant)
Hey, P.K. took care of Jimmy -- better than--

P.K.
(deep pain)
Yeah... not good enough.

CUT TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL - ICU CORRIDOR - DAY

Through the open door we see Kathy, a tiny brown girl dwarfed by the technology keeping her alive -- a feeling of all the King's horses and all the King's men... she is enveloped by tubes and IV's and catheters. Plasma hangs by her bed, dripping into her. A life-support machine by her bed towers over her. A respirator is breathing for her.

Outside Kathy Farrington's ICU room, Howard and Bayliss sit on either side of MR. HAROLD FARRINGTON, 30's, shattered.

MR. FARRINGTON
Who'd wanna shoot a little girl?

HOWARD
Where's Kathy's mother?

MR. FARRINGTON
Run off. Haven't seen her for six years. Kathy thinks she's dead.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS
What was Kathy doing home from school?

MR. FARRINGTON
I had the day off. We were going to treat ourselves to the zoo.

HOWARD
Rough neighborhood for a little girl. Do you know where she was headed on Whitelock?

MR. FARRINGTON
I was still sleeping. I'd come home from the night shift, bring scraps from the cafeteria, Kathy liked to feed 'em to the cats in the alley.

Mr. Farrington looks inside at his daughter.

MR. FARRINGTON
All she ever wanted was a kitten. (terrible pain) I'm allergic...

On Howard and Bayliss,

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - DAY

Bayliss and Howard walk toward elevators. Bayliss walks with difficulty.

BAYLISS
How was it to be put under?

HOWARD
I don't remember.

BAYLISS
You don't remember your whole being suddenly obliterated? How can someone not remember anesthesia?

HOWARD
I was a kid.

(continues)
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS
Did you know your heart could have stopped? Or you could've been allergic to the anesthesia and died from it?

HOWARD
You know, a lot of back problems are psychosomatic.

BAYLISS
(takes out form; reading)
Listen to this. "I recognize that during the course of the operation/procedure UNFORESEEN conditions, blah, blah, blah may necessitate additional or different procedures than those set forth above... blah blah blah". I’d be giving them carte blanche.

HOWARD
It’s a conspiracy.

They get to the elevators, press button, wait.

BAYLISS
Every day you read about the mistakes. Lady goes in for a simple gallstone operation, comes out with her leg amputated.

HOWARD
They should sell insurance at hospitals the way they used to at airports. That way, if your operation does a nosedive, your family collects.

BAYLISS
That’s not even funny.

HOWARD
When’s your operation?

BAYLISS
I’m still on "if".

The elevator doors open, they enter, Bayliss winces.

CUT TO:
INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY
Bayliss gathers Pemberton, Munch, Howard, Kellerman and Lewis.

KELLERMAN
The bullet recovered from Kathy Farrington's chest had a left
twist five. We're looking for
a Mauser or a Remington.

BAYLISS
What'd we get on the victims?

LEWIS
James Miller. Arrest record shows
shoplifting and one minor CDS for
possession of marijuana. Loner,
blew reefer, supported by his
brother, Paul Miller, aka P.K.
Think Miller was probably the
target, the other two victims...

KELLERMAN
Collateral damage.

MUNCH
Louise Wilcox, the Angel of St.
John's.

PEMBLETON
Domestic's ruled out. Access to
pharmaceuticals but no history
of abuse.

BAYLISS
Kay and I checked out the
Farrington girl.

HOWARD
Unless some one out there really
hates cats, we got zip.

BAYLISS
I've jumped over to Pemberton's
side. Concentrate on the Miller
kid. Follow the drugs.

Off them,

CUT TO:
EXT. HIGHLAND TOWN - TREE-LINED STREET - DAY

TWO WHITE TEEN AGE GIRLS walk, wearing backpacks. The girls glance over at the center of the street where a heavy-set Gas and Electric WORKER and his scrawny, pony-tailed CO-WORKER, prepare to go down manhole.

An ELDERLY LADY comes out of a shop, carefully closing the door. The teenage girls pass Elderly Lady and she smiles at them.

TWO SHOTS CRACK THE AIR. Elderly Lady looks up, falls. The girls run, looking for cover behind some parked cars, holding their hands over their heads, screaming.

CO-WORKER ducks down open manhole. WORKER starts toward ELDERLY LADY to help her, takes a shot in the back, falls face down in the street just as a taxi turns and almost smacks into him, screeching to a stop, horn BLARING.

FADE OUT.

END ACT ONE
ACT TWO

FADE IN:

13 EXT. HIGHLAND PARK - SAME TREE-LINED STREET - DAY

CLOSE ON Taxi.

PULL BACK AND UP to see street scene from above. The bodies are gone now. The manhole is still open. The entire block is yellow-taped and UNIFORMS and LAB TECHS are crawling all over the scene.

14 EXT. ROOFTOP - DAY

Howard peers over the side of the building. She looks down at her feet, marks the spot of a shell casing and starts methodically walking around the perimeter of the roof.

Bayliss, Pembleton and Munch are gathered around another chalk-drawn Hangman game, different letters and spaces.

MUNCH
Anyone remember this game?

PEMBLETON
Of course. Your opponent picks a word, you guess a letter, every time you guess a letter not in the word, you draw more and more of the stick man till you’re hung, then you lose.

LEWIS
Our guy’s hanging himself.
Literally.

BAYLISS
Or he’s working something out for himself.

LEWIS
Maybe he’s just modifying the rules, each wrong guess, he shoots somebody.

MUNCH
I just had a terrible notion--

PEMBLETON
He’s toying with us.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MUNCH
--don't you need two to play this game?

The implication dizzies them.

PEMBLETON
Two shooters...

LEWIS
All we know so far is we got a helluva marksman.

MUNCH
Or marksmen.

BAYLISS
Who play word games while using the city of Baltimore for target practice.

Off them, staring down at the Hangman game,

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - DAY

Full Redball chaos. The two shifts crowd in, forming an uneasy alliance. Russert crosses toward a huge map of Baltimore. Giardello stands by her side. Officers and detectives gather around with a high, nervous energy. Barnfather watches from the back. Howard, Munch, Lewis, Kellerman, Bayliss and Pembleton scrutinize the other shift.

RUSSERT
Settle down. Please, I need your attention.

Things settle.

RUSSERT
Our shooter from the Druid Hill area has moved on to Highland Park.

KELLERMAN
There go the property values.

(CONTINUED)
RUSSERT
Irma Watts, 73, retired secretary, Armando Layzek, 31, BG&E worker.
We've gone from a possible drug at Madison and Whitelock to a
city-wide Redball. What we've
got here is a sniper on the loose
in Baltimore.

Russert lets that sink in.

LEWIS
(sotto voce; to Munch)
Sure, Blacks get killed, we're
lookin' for a shooter, for some
sleazeball drug dealers gettin' over on each other--

HIGBY
How do we know it's the same
sniper?

LEWIS
(sotto voce; to Munch)
Now that it's white folks, we're
lookin' for a sniper, now it's
a redball.

Bayliss overhears, doesn't react.

GIARDELO
(re: Higby's question)
Detective Bayliss, you're the
primary, why don't you field that?

BAYLISS
The through and through bullets
recovered at Highland Park were
too damaged for IDing. However,
we did get a result on the shell
casings. They match the Druid
Hill shooter.

MUNCH
Also, second Hangman game found
at the crime scene.

PEMBLETON
Our guy's signature.

(CONTINUED)
RUSSERT
Under no circumstances does that
information leave this squad room.
Nobody even thinks "Hangman"
outside these walls.

BAYLISS
Witnesses from Highland Park?

HOWARD
Two teenage girls hid behind a
car, treated for shock and
released. All they know is it
started raining bullets.

KELLERMAN
The BG&E co-worker jumped down
a manhole, didn't see a thing.

KELLERMAN
I'm running down all firing ranges
and gun clubs, getting a list of
registered Mausers and Remingtons.

RUSSERT
Location of the shooter?

PEMBLETON
Highland Park Library. Five
stories high. Druid Hill building
was seven. Our guy likes heights.

BAYLISS
What about the chalk samples?

HOWARD
They're at the Lab.

RUSSERT
I've got Larry Orloff, our
resident handwriting expert on
board, he's preparing a profile
based on the chalk letters in the
hangman games.

BAYLISS
One large crimp. Munch, you wanna
explain?

MUNCH
We're tossing around the
possibility of a second shooter.

(CONTINUED)
RUSSERT
Based on?

MUNCH
The Hangman game normally involves
two players.

RUSSERT
Have Larry compare the letters
in both games, see what he can
come up with.

GIARDELL
We’ve got to work fast and we’ve
got to coordinate all our moves.

They turn to Bayliss.

BAYLISS
Let’s recanvass, hope to hell we
get more than we got.

Lewis and Munch head back to desks. Bayliss pursues Lewis.

BAYLISS
What were you saying, Lewis, I
didn’t handle the Druid Hill
shootings as seriously as Highland
Park because it involved Blacks?

MUNCH
(to Bayliss; fooling
around)
Hey, we’re Baltimore cops, our
color is blue... right...

LEWIS
C’mon, Bayliss, drop it.

BAYLISS
No. I won’t.

LEWIS
Bayliss, maybe it ain’t your back
that’s out, maybe it’s your brain.

BAYLISS
No wait, Lewis. You were the one
pushing the Miller kid’s drug
history.

Lewis rises, takes his coffee cup, starts to head off. Bayliss
can’t drop it, follows after him, swallowing another aspirin.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED: (4)

PEMBLETCH

Maybe Bayliss’s back is out bearing all that white man’s burden.

BAYLISS

This is a private conversation, Frank.

MUNCH

Look at the bright side, Bayliss, at least it’s an “equal opportunity” sniper.

On Bayliss, getting sniped at from all directions,

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT – EVENING


RUSSERT

Any building over five stories should be checked for roof access and secured. We have notified all public utilities and County and State building managers to do the same. Anyone with any information, please contact the Homicide Unit of the Baltimore Police. Thank you for your cooperation.

REPORTER #1

Is it the same guy?

REPORTER #2

What’s the motive?

REPORTER #1

When will you release the names of the Highland Park victims?

RUSSERT

I’m sorry. That’s all.

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Kellerman and Munch join Howard at her desk.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HOWARD
Our first break. ID'd the chalk. DaVinci. Manufactured by Majestic, Inc. Art stores. They're giving us a list of distributors. Meanwhile...

Howard throws Kellerman Baltimore Yellow Pages.

MUNCH
That sure narrows it down.

HOWARD
You got something better?

(beat)
You guys divvy 'em up, we start making house calls. Talk to managers, store clerks. We want leads on anyone who bought DaVinci chalk.

Giardello and Russert at a fast clip, approach. They're adrenalized, excited.

RUSSERT
About the chalk.

HOWARD
Nice break, eh, Captain.

GIARDELLO
We want any and all credit card receipts.

RUSSERT
Any reluctant storeowners, tell 'em it's either now or we come back with a subpoena.

KELLERMAN
I don't get it. How could we recognize, from a credit card receipt, our shooter's signature?

RUSSERT
Because he may have left a different kind of "signature" at the crime scene.

KELLERMAN
(nickel drops)
The Hangman letters. Can handwriting tell us that?
CONTINUED:  (C)

GIARDELLI
It's a long shot.

RUSSELL
It's a shot.

Off everyone mobilized, finally getting something to go on,

CUT TO:

INT. TONY'S FRAME AND SUPPLY - EVENING

Pemberton and Bayliss at the back of store, at a table on which sit three overstuffed shopping bags. Next to them is an open box of DaVinci chalk.

BAYLISS
All this for DaVinci chalk?

Tony yells out from the front of the store.

TONY (O.C.)
No, that's all my receipts for the last three years.

BAYLISS
His accountant must love him.

Bayliss and Pemberton paw through receipts.

BAYLISS
Smell that?

PEMBLETON
Smell what?

BAYLISS
Chalk. I love that smell. What does that smell remind you of?

PEMBLETON
Detention. Sister Mary Anne. Writing on the blackboard two hundred times, I shall not talk out of turn.

BAYLISS
Margaret Winniford. Hopscotch queen. I see London, I see France. I see Peggy's underpants.

Pemberton takes out a huge stack of receipts.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PEMBLETON
You get Peggy. I get Sister Mary Anne.

Bayliss takes out another huge stack.

BAYLISS
I have only one thing to say about our sniper.

PEMBLETON
Shoot.

BAYLISS
May they bring back cruel and unusual punishment.

On this,

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM - EVENING

Russert emerges from her office with LARRY ORLOFF, early 20s, pear-shaped, looks 16, sport’s jacket, slacks, carrying an overstuffed briefcase and a lap-top.

Howard and Bayliss come forward and hand Larry a huge stack of receipts.

RUSSELT
Detective Bayliss is our primary. Detective Howard, meet Larry Orloff, our resident handwriting expert from crime lab.

LARRY
I don’t want to get your hopes up...

BAYLISS
I don’t want to scare you, Larry, but you’re our only hope...

LARRY
That scares me.

Larry reaches down to pick up his lap-top, drops a shoebox full of receipts, which scatter all over.

(CONTINUED)
Bayliss and Howard react, their confidence in Larry waning.
Larry picks up receipts, stuffs them back in shoebox, grabs laptop, heads off to an Interview Room.

Howard, Bayliss look nervously to Russert.

**RUSSELL**
The Deputy Commissioner is pushing me to get psychological profiles on snipers from Quantico. What normally will take weeks, the Commissioner assures me because of his intervention, will now just take days.
(looking to where Larry ambled off)
But we may not have days.

**HOWARD**
We do have Larry.

**RUSSELL**
(no confidence)
Yeah.

Russert spins on her heels and walks off.

**CUT TO:**

**20**
**INT. SQUAD ROOM - NIGHT**

Phone rings. Howard picks it up. Ten o'clock at night.

**HOWARD**
36442 Carrington Way. Got it. We'll be right over.

**MUNCH**
Don't tell me our snipers have struck again?

**HOWARD**
Another Hangman game.

**21**
**INT. CAVALIER - MOVING - NIGHT**

Munch drives. Howard is looking for address.

(continued)
CONTINUED:

HOWARD
Random victims, no motive, our
ace in the hole is some
handwriting nerd from the crime
lab. I'm getting buggy even
driving around.
(focusing her mind)
Point is what does a sniper get
out of it?

MUNCH
Publicity?

HOWARD
Control?

MUNCH
Putting the entire city of
Baltimore at his beck and call?

A long beat as Munch mulls this over.

MUNCH
The Mayor have an alibi?

Munch sees something, slams on the brakes. Howard follows his
grim gaze to:

A SCHOOLYARD. Basketball hoops, monkey bars, sandboxes,
hopscotch boards.

EXT. STREET - ADJACENT TO SCHOOLYARD - NIGHT

Munch and Howard work their way to UNIFORM #2 standing across
from schoolyard gates. Uniform #2 aims flashlight at cement
wall.

Another Hangman game. Munch takes flashlight, bends down, takes
a closer look, looks up at Howard.

MUNCH
A warning?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HOWARD
Possibly.

UNIFORM #2
Warning? My kids go to this school.

Munch and Howard share a look.

FADE OUT.

END ACT TWO
FADE IN:

INT. RUSSERT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Giardello's pacing, Russert at her desk. Barnfather sits across from her.

RUSSERT
It's ten fifty-two. In eight hours, a hundred and fifty kids, age six to twelve, will be going to school. If you don't give an order to cordon off the block and close that building, I will.

BARNFATHER
And on your whim, set off a city-wide panic...

GIARDELLO
Captain Russert's right. We've got a sniper warning us where he'll hit next, we cannot risk those children.

A knock on the door. Bayliss enters, out of breath.

BAYLISS
Howard and Munch found two kids a block away from the school -- playing hangman.

RUSSERT
You mean this might not be--

BAYLISS
The chalk the kids were using is consistent with the game found across from the schoolyard, different from Druid Hill or Highland Park.

BARNFATHER
(told you so)
Looks like a false alarm.

RUSSERT
Leave a detail at the schoolyard, as a precaution.

BAYLISS
One more thing.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

RUSSELL
What's that?

BAYLISS
The Farrington girl died.

Bayliss exits. Off Barnfather burning a hole into Russert with
his look,

CUT TO:

EXT. MT. WASHINGTON COUNTRY CLUB -- MIDNIGHT

Limousines lined up outside. A sprawling lawn leading to a
Colonial mansion. On one side, a church with a tall bell tower.
Through the windows we can see a ballroom, HEAR "Good Night
Ladies", a lot of laughter. The party is winding down. On
the lawn, people head toward their cars, while a few stragglers
balance champagne glasses and plates. Servants hover with
trays, some beginning to clean up.

FOUR SHOTS RING OUT.

A servant and three guests fall. Pandemonium. People scream
and run for cover.

EXT. MT. WASHINGTON COUNTRY CLUB -- LATER

Media everywhere. UNIFORMS and TECHNICIANS scour the block.
Pemberton talks with a WOMAN in a white evening gown, torn and
spattered with blood. Across the lawn, Bayliss, shifting his
weight to relieve his back, interviews DONALD HAZELTON, retired
Judge, 70's, stiff, stoic. Donald holds his eyeglasses in one
hand, remarkably calm.

DONALD
There was an echo, but I believe
the shots came from over there
-- that Church. The Bell Tower.

BAYLISS
(writing)
You spell your name with a "z"
or an "s", Judge Hazelton?

DONALD
A "z".

BAYLISS
Did you see anyone or anything
unusual?

(CONTINUED)
DONALD
Young man, I just saw a young friend of mine get killed.

BAYLISS
Why don't you have a seat, Judge...

As Bayliss leads Judge Hazelton to a chair, plops down next to him, his back on fire:

DONALD
I wish I could say that was unusual. But it's happened to me before. D-Day, Omaha Beach, in Normandy, well before your time, we had to make it from the beachhead to cover, with the Germans shooting at us from the cliffs. I threw my glasses off, afraid the reflection would give me away.

BAYLISS
If you remember any more details... Judge.

Bayliss hands Hazelton his card.

HAZELTON
My friends call me Brownie. Old Yale name.
(laughs; rubs his eyeglasses)
Walked all the way from Normandy Beachhead to Berlin. Couldn't see a thing.

Bayliss knows Hazelton is in shock, this is his way of dealing with it.

CUT TO:

26 INT. CHURCH BELL TOWER - NIGHT

In the gloom, three flashlights trace a HANGMAN GAME. Bayliss, Pemberton and a UNIFORM examine it. Bayliss turns to Uniform.

BAYLISS
Whatever else you do, keep the press the hell outta here.
INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - 2:30 A.M.

Russert's just convened the troops. Giardello and Bayliss hover nearby. Everybody's exhausted and defeated. This last incident has put them all over the top. They are working their third shift overtime. This is war.

RUSSERT
Victim IDs have just been made official from the Mt. Washington incident. Among the four killed were Even Reinhart, Deputy Assistant to the Mayor and Joel Reitman, a well-known Baltimore physician.

GIARDELLO
We've got a redball on top of a redball.

RUSSERT
Let's go over everything we know and don't know. First, are we sure it's the same sniper?

BAYLISS
Signature Hangman game found at the Church next door.

HOWARD
Also, chalk matches the chalk found at both other sites.

MUNCH
I still stand behind the two shooter theory.

RUSSERT
Yes, good, did Larry come up with anything on that?

BAYLISS
A single writing style has emerged from the photos of the letters in the Hangman game.

MUNCH
Still doesn't erase the possibility of a second suspect.

PEMBLETON
Two to play the game... no, no, no. I think we got a lone nut out there.

(CONTINUED)
MUNCH
Two play, maybe only one's doing
the letters.

PEMBLETON
Crazy enough to shoot up
Baltimore, certainly crazy enough
to play hangman solitaire.

BAYLISS
I agree with Pemberton, not enough
evidence to support a two shooter
theory.

RUSSERT
Let's pursue this as a single
sniper unless something more
emerges.

GIARDELLI
Kellerman, you're on the weapon?

KELLERMAN
Casings from Mt. Washington
matches Druid Hill and Highland
Park. I'm tracking all the
registered Remingtons and Musers.
Thought I got lucky when I talked
to a guy whose Mauser was stolen
a couple weeks back, turned out
his wife hid it in the attic.

GIARDELLI
What about the victims? Any
pattern emerging?

HOWARD
All sexes, ages, and colors. Our
guy likes the variety pack.

Russer flips to a clean page in a notebook, she's sweating,
exhausted.

RUSSERT
Okay, I know we're tired. Let's
keep rolling here. One more time.
Let's go over the crime scenes.

BAYLISS
Druid Hill, ten a.m., three shots
from a seven story warehouse, as
of today, three deaths.

(CONTINUED)
HOMICIDE - "The Sniper: Part I" Sennis/Murphy 7/24/95 35.

CONTINUED: 2)

HOWARD
Highland Park, five o'clock. Three shots from a Library, five stories. Two victims, both dead.

PEMBLETON
Mt. Washington Country Club, midnight, four shots from a three story Church tower, four vics, all four dead.

HOWARD
All clean kills except for the Farrington girl.

KELLERMAN
Maybe this sniper's one of Tim's buddies from Quick Response Team.

BAYLISS
No one was that good a shot on QRT. This guy's gotta be military.

PEMBLETON
What about a correlation between the number of shots fired and the letters in the game...

KELLERMAN
All the shots came from up high.

MUNCH
So they're not acrophobic, excuse me -- he's not -- got so fond of him as a couple.

Russert looks at her notes.

RUSSERT
These are the exact times?

PEMBLETON
Those are the times recorded.

RUSSERT
No minutes, seconds, just the hour on the dot?

PEMBLETON
(see's it)
There's a pattern.

(CONTINUED)
RUSSELL
Jesus. They're seven hours apart.

Beat.

BAYLISS
No.

PEMBLETON
Our guy strikes every seven hours.

BAYLISS
C'mon, that's too simple.

KELLERMAN
What the hell time is it now?

RUSSELL
If Mt. Washington was midnight, the next hit'll be seven in the morning.

Everyone's looking at the clock on the wall, synchronizing their watches.

RUSSELL
We have less than five hours to find this psycho and prevent another massacre.

CUT TO:

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Bayliss is lying on the bathroom floor, his knees up. Pembleton's washing his face.

PEMBLETON
You think those cold tile floors are doing your back any good?

BAYLISS
Doctor tells me I gotta have what's called a laminectomy. Remove the bad disc.

PEMBLETON
If a disc was hurting me that bad, I'd say bye bye to that puppy.
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS
They say the disc is like a shock absorber. And this one's shot.

PEMBLETON
Too bad about the Farrington girl...

BAYLISS
Yeah. Then they do what's called a spinal fusion.

PEMBLETON
My brother-in-law had that. They fuse two vertebrae together. Nothing to it.

BAYLISS
If it works. I don't like the odds.

PEMBLETON
Thought you were a gambling man.

BAYLISS
That Farrington girl died during surgery. It might've been the surgery that killed her.

PEMBLETON
Bayliss, look at you. You gotta do something.

BAYLISS
I could end up worse off after surgery. I could get an infection on top of an infection and have to have even more surgery. Or I could go through all that surgery and get no improvement at all. Still have this pain.

PEMBLETON
That girl died from a bullet lodged in her chest that came from a high-powered rifle, not surgery.

BAYLISS
I could end up paralyzed. Neurological damage. I could end up with drop foot.
CONTINUED: 2)

PEMBLETON
Drop foot?

BAYLISS
That's when your foot doesn't hold the normal ninety degree angle, you never walk right again.

PEMBLETON
C'mon, bunk, we gotta go get us a sniper.

BAYLISS
I could die. Not be able to walk anymore. I could lose bladder control.

PEMBLETON
Does our insurance cover both hospitalization and outpatient?

BAYLISS
Help me up.

On Pembleton giving Bayliss a hand,

CUT TO:

"THE BOARD", a hand writes under Bayliss's name, "Farrington" in RED. Under Pembleton's name, also in RED, "Ted Greene", "Evan Reinhart", "Michela Hernandez", and "Joel Reitman".

CUT TO:

INT. RUSSERT'S OFFICE - THREE IN THE MORNING

Three Baltimore citizens, BONITA GREEN, 40s, African American, carrying notebook, MIGUEL GUITERREZ, 50's, gentle nobility, and Donald "Brownie" Hazelton stand in front of Russert's desk. Everyone's talking at once.

BONITA
Nine people have been killed in the last twenty four hours.

DONALD
We don't understand what the Baltimore Police Department is doing about it.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BONITA
There are rumors the police have information they are not disclosing.

MIGUEL
Information we need in order to defend ourselves against this maniac.

DONALD
If the Baltimore police can't protect us, who the hell can?

Barndfather enters quietly, observes.

RUSSERT
We are doing everything in our power. Please be patient.

MIGUEL
My neighbor's little girl was found two years ago raped and stabbed to death. The police still haven't found her killer.

BONITA
How is it someone can shoot nine people, some in broad daylight in front of countless witnesses, and still you can't make an arrest?

MIGUEL
Why haven't you caught this guy?

RUSSERT
We've got a lot of details out on this.

BONITA
And meanwhile what do we do? The people who pay you to protect us. Do we stay in at night, lock our doors?

MIGUEL
Do we go to work even? Do we let our children go to school?

(CONTINUED)
RUSSERT
I urge you to go about your daily lives, confident the Baltimore Police is doing it's job.

DONALD
That's not good enough.

BONITA
We're forming a group, Captain, Baltimore victims of violent crimes.

RUSSERT
I will do this.
(beat)
We can set up phone banks, an eight hundred number. Any citizen that wants to, can call in and be informed of any and all progress in our investigation.

That seems to placate them.

RUSSERT
Please, every minute I spend with you is one less minute I have to catch this sniper. Do yourself and the Police a favor, it's three in the morning, go to bed.

BONITA
Who can sleep?

DONALD
I'm afraid you haven't heard the last of us.

Russett goes to door, opens it, ushers them out.

RUSSERT
My door is always open.

They exit. Russett closes the door, leans up against it, drained.

BARNFATHER
Great idea.

RUSSERT
Thank you. Which?

(CONTINUED)
BARNFATHER
The eight hundred number. Of course fortunately by the time you get approval for the funding, you'll have this case closed.

Barnfather exits. On Russert, too exhausted to react,
CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - TWO HOURS LATER

As Russert steps out of her office into the squad room, defeated, time pressing in on her, Larry Orloff rushes in with papers and acetates in his hands, exuberant, pushes her back into the office, closes the door.

INT. RUSsert'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Hands Russert two notebook sized acetates with the letter "S" on them.

LARRY
Take a look at these.
(points to one)
"S" from the first Hangman game.
(points to the second)
"S" from a credit card purchase of DaVinci chalk.

Russert holds them to the light, slides them together.

We see the acetates in Russert's hand, light pouring through them, sliding one on top of the other. The two letters merge perfectly.

LARRY
We got a match.

FADE OUT.

END."ACT THREE
HOMICIDE - "The Sniper: Part I" Sennis/Murphy 7/24/95 42.

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - CRACK OF DAWN

Russert, Giardello, with Staff gathered around. Russert grips a
printout tightly in her fist. She's running on nerves.

RUSSERT
(reads)
Steven Mariner, 43, insurance
executive, lives at 2234 Beckman
Drive.

GIARDELLO
No prior arrest record, no prior
medical or mental history.

RUSSERT
He's up to date on his bills, a
member of his church. Married
to Linda Mariner, they have three
kids, two girls and a boy.

KELLERMAN
What's the game plan?

GIARDELLO
Distract the press, move out in
teams, connect with firepower
close to the target.

RUSSERT
We go in with QRT. Bayliss,
that's your alma mater, you lead
the charge.

GIARDELLO
Keep in mind. This guy's a former
marine and a crack shot.

RUSSERT
And we now have evidence linking
him to NINE deaths. One way or
another, he's going down.

MUNCH
(to Lewis)
All that info from a credit card
receipt. Let that be a lesson
to us.

CUT TO:
EXT. SUBURB - ESTABLISHING - EARLY MORNING

Norman Rockwell land, Fifties Modern, garages, gravel driveways, well planted, surrounded by other charming split-level houses. The newspaper is just being delivered.

EXT. MARINER HOUSE - MORNING

Kids toys and bicycles speckle the otherwise pristine yard. Three kids play on a swing set -- JESSICA, eight, SUSIE, six, and BILLY, two.

We hear GIGGLES and SCREECHES from the kids as they enjoy their play. A DOG begins BARKING, and keeps barking, getting more and more excited.

On the sides of the house and along the driveway we suddenly see figures. Marksman in dark jumpsuits and protective gear, carrying rifles with scopes, close in on this picture perfect, Middle America vision.

From an aerial perspective we see: The whole block has been converted into a "war zone". Squad cars, their cherries lit, hover near fire engines parked across intersections. Uniforms everywhere, steer traffic away.

CUT TO:

EXT. ACROSS FROM THE HOUSE - DAY

TECHNICIANS scramble in and out of a mobile unit disguised as a BG&E truck. Bayliss, Pemberton, Lewis, Munch, Kellerman and Howard huddle with Russert around a portable two-way radio. Giardello joins them.

RUSSERT
All teams in place. Let's get the kids out of the way, then the wife.

(to Bayliss)
How's your back holding up?

BAYLISS
Next question.

(beat)
Howard, grab the baby. Lewis, Munch, grab the older kids. Pemberton, go in as backup.

RUSSERT
Wait for my signal.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

SIARCELLO
And remember, Bayliss, you've got
time.

CUT TO:

EXT. MARINER HOUSE - A FEW MOMENTS LATER

As Howard scoops up Billy, Munch and Lewis grab the two girls,
muffling their screams with their hand, as they carry them off
to Mobile Unit. All is deadly quiet for a moment.

LINDA (O.C.)
Billy? Girls, breakfast.

Suddenly Linda, 30's, blonde, would be pretty but for the bags
under eyes, appears from the kitchen. Pembelo and Kellerman
run toward her, grabbing her, carrying her off behind the mobile
unit. Pembelo's got his hand tightly across her mouth and
keeps it there. Bayliss hobbles over.

PEMBLETON
Linda. Linda, that's your name,
 isn't it? Everything's gonna be
 alright, I'm Detective Frank
Pembelo. Call me Frank...

Linda, terrified, looking around at all the firepower around
her, nods.

PEMBLETON
Linda, I want to take my hand off
your mouth but I can't do that
unless I know you can be quiet
and not scream. Think you can
do that?

Linda nods. Pembelo gives Bayliss a look, then removes his
hand.

BAYLISS
We have evidence your husband may
be responsible for the shooting
deaths of nine people.

LINDA
(a gut-wrenching wail)
No.

(continues)
BAYLISS
I need you, Linda, please stay
with me. If you love your
husband, work with us, we're here
to get him out alive.

LINDA
Please don't hurt him.

BAYLISS
We all want the same thing here.

Munch joins them.

MUNCH
I'm sending the kids with a
uniform to IHOP, get 'em some
breakfast.

LINDA
Oh God, get them out of here.

Munch signals Bayliss to join him out of Linda's earshot.

MUNCH
You gonna ask her if her husband's
got a buddy?

BAYLISS
Drop it, Munch. We've got a
single sniper, and right now all
I care about is getting him out
alive.

MUNCH
He's got a buddy, watch your ass.

Munch goes off. Bayliss returns to Linda. Russert and
Giardello join them in b.g.

BAYLISS
How many guns in the house, Linda?

LINDA
I'm not sure. At least one. He's
got them locked away in his
private room.

BAYLISS
What do you mean his private room?

(CONTINUED)
LINDA
The study. For the last three months, he's locked himself away there. Night and day. Doesn't let anyone in.

PEMBLETON
Is that where he is now?

Linda studies Bayliss' face.

LINDA
Yes.

BAYLISS
We need you to give us the layout of the house. I need to know exactly where that room is and how to access it. Can you do that for me, Linda?

Linda hesitates.

PEMBLETON
Your husband may be responsible for the death of nine innocent people. One of them was a little girl, about the same age as your own little girls.

BAYLISS
We can get your husband help, Linda.

Linda looks over at the house, then back at Bayliss and Pemberton.

LINDA
Down the hall, last door on the left.

PEMBLETON
Anyone else in the house?

LINDA
No. He's alone.

BAYLISS
Good. I can tell, you love your husband.

LINDA
I do. Very much.

(CONTINUED)
BAYLISS
Did you tell him you were leaving
him, did he get fired or
something?

Linda cries, the shock's wearing off and she realizes what's going on.

LINDA
My husband is crazy. He moved
into that room. Makes me leave
his food outside the door.
There's even a bathroom there so
we don't see him for days. When
we do, it's like he hasn't slept,
like there's something eating his
brain.

BAYLISS
Does he talk about anything in
particular?

LINDA
Steve's obsessed. With the
population explosion. The
neighborhood's being taken over
by gangs. The Government is owned
by Organized Crime. He's the only
one, of course, who sees through
"the game" as he calls it.

Giardello approaches Bayliss, who takes a quick look at the
house, gets his bearings.

GIARDELLO
QRT's here and holding.

BAYLISS
I'm going in.

CUT TO:

INT. MARINER HOUSE - CORRIDOR

Bayliss, his back giving him one bad spasm as he goes down the
hall, followed by QRT marksmen. He gets to the door Linda
indicated, knocks.

BAYLISS
Steven Mariner. This is Detective
Tim Bayliss.

(more)
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS (Cont'd)

We've got your house surrounded.
There is no chance of escape.

No response.

BAYLISS

Steve? Can I call you that?
Nothing's going to happen here
that you don't want to. Steve?
You in there?

Bayliss listens at the door, hears rustling inside.

BAYLISS

My back is killing me, mind if
I sit down? Linda is real worried
about you. She wants me to tell
you that she loves you. That she
wants you to give up your gun,
and come out. I'm here to help
you do that.

INT. MARINER'S HOUSE - DEN - CONTINUOUS

STEVEN MARINER, gray at the temples, tortured, trapped, draws
with chalk on the wall, sweating, concentrating, breathing hard,
dragging his rifle on the ground. All around him, on the walls
and the floor and the ceiling are chalk Hangman Games, like he's
been trying every permutation, looking for the right
combination.

BAYLISS (O.C.)

You know, you would really be
doing us all a favor if you'd just
come on out of there and talk to
me.

STEVEN

I figured it out.

Bayliss is heartened the guy's talking.

BAYLISS (O.C.)

What did you figure out?

STEVEN

The answer.

BAYLISS (O.C.)

You got the answer? Great. What
is it?
CONTINUED:

STEVEN
There isn't just one answer.

BAYLISS (O.C.)
How many answers are there?

STEVEN
That's a stupid question. It's irrelevant how many answers there are.

BAYLISS (O.C.)
Okay, I hear you. I agree, it is irrelevant. So let me ask you this, what is it that you finally figured out?

STEVEN
The question.

CUT TO:

INT. OUTSIDE DOORWAY - CONTINUOUS

Bayliss moves closer to the door, crouching, his back killing him.

BAYLISS
And what is that? What's the question?

STEVEN (O.C.)
That's for you to figure out.

Bayliss considers his response.

A RIFLE SHOT is heard from inside the room.

BAYLISS
Steven?

A couple of QRTs crowd past him, kick the door in. Pembleton enters, looks in the open doorway. Bayliss slumps down a wall, looks up at one of the QRTs, recognizes him.

BAYLISS
Hey Bob, thought you retired.

PEMBLETON
(re: Mariner)
Bob may not have, but this guy sure did, big time.
CONTINUED:

BAYLISS
(can't even look)
Damn.

Bayliss helps Bayliss to his feet.

CUT TO:

INT. BARNFATHER'S OFFICE - MORNING

Russet, exhausted, stands while Barnfather sits at his desk.

BARNFATHER
Captain. Have a seat. You must be exhausted.

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/COFFEE ROOM.- MORNING

TV is on. Kellerman, Howard, Bayliss, Pembleton, Lewis and Munch crowded around it.

TV NEWS REPORT

IMAGE from outside Steven Mariner's house.

IMAGE of A WOMAN, 30s, squinting in the morning sun.

REPORTER (O.C.)
We spoke today with some of Mr. Mariner's neighbors who are appalled at this turn of events. Mrs. Candace Oliver?

CANDACE
We didn't really know them that well. We just moved in a few months ago. They seemed like a nice family. I can't believe Mr. Mariner could hurt anyone.

INT. BARNFATHER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Russet and Barnfather.

RUSSELT
Is this about the press conference?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARNFATHER
I'm citing you for violation of
General Order, cee dash-three.
Rule number one.

Beat.

RUSSELT
I'm waiting for the punchline.

BARNFATHER
Every Captain goes through a
year's probation.

RUSSELT
I'm sorry, Colonel, I'm cry-tired,
can we start over?

BARNFATHER
I'm citing you for non performance
of duty. You have failed to
complete the probationary period
as Captain.

Russer! stands there, still unable to compute.

INTERCUT TV REPORTS FROM COFFEE ROOM.

CLEAN CUT MAN, 30s, in jeans and sparkling white T-shirt, next
to a lawnmower.

CLEAN CUT MAN (ON TV)
He really didn't seem like the
type. A good guy, you know.

INT. BARNFATHER'S OFFICE - SIMULTANEOUS

Russer! and Barnfather.

RUSSELT
You're demoting me?

BARNFATHER
I wouldn't use that term. Not
everyone's meant to be Captain.
That's the reason we have the
probationary period.

RUSSELT
How in hell can you accuse me of
non-performance of duty?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARNFATHER
A man, surrounded by a hundred and fifty law-enforcement officers, is now dead. I hold you directly responsible.

T.V. REPORT

MAN, 60's, golf clothes.

GENTLEMAN (ON TV)
I mean, when you wake up to a shot like that, "BOOM," like a cannon, at the crack of dawn, in your own neighborhood...

INT. BARNFATHER'S OFFICE - MORNING

BARNFATHER
The perception from above is poor judgment, poor command responsibility.

T.V. REPORT

TEENAGER in sexy grunge gear.

TEENAGER (ON TV)
It's terrible he had to go and kill himself. I mean, the police were right there. Couldn't they, you know, DO something?

INT. BARNFATHER'S OFFICE - MORNING

RUSSELL
I see what this is. Under the guise of vaguely worded departmental regulations, you're doing what you wanted to from the moment I made Captain -- get rid of me.

BARNFATHER
Perhaps you'll be happier not having such intense command responsibilities.

RUSSELL
Thank you.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

BARNFATHER
You're tired. You've had a rough
couple days that would test the
mettle of even the best officer.

RUSSERT
(fuck you)
Bull. Goddamn you.

Barnfather looks like he's been spat in the face.

BARNFATHER
And when you return from two weeks
suspension...

RUSSERT
(laughing crazily)
Now I'm suspended.

BARNFATHER
You'll report back as detective.

Russett takes this in.

RUSSERT
Let me get this straight. In the
space of five minutes, I've been
demoted from Captain to detective.

BARNFATHER
Think of it this way, you'll get
more time to spend with that
little girl of yours.

RUSSERT
And Toto too. Shame on you,
Colonel.

BARNFATHER
Check in your badge and weapon.
And Detective... get some rest.

CUT TO:

INT. SQUAD ROOM/HOMICIDE UNIT - FOLLOWING

Russett stumbles back toward her office. Her troops report in.

HOWARD
Lab came back with prints on the
shell casings. Got ten point
matches on two.
Russett nods. Howard's not sure Russett heard her.

MUNCH
It's the same gun, the same bullets all the way down the line.

KELLERMAN
This was definitely our sniper.

Russett stops, stands there, shell-shocked, watches as:

On "THE BOARD, a HAND erases the eighth and ninth names in RED and writes over them in BLACK.

The PHONE RINGS a couple of times. Pembleton picks it up.

PEMBLETON
Detective Pembleton, Homicide.
(listens; beat)

Pembleton grabs a pen and scribbles an address.

PEMBLETON
Right. We'll be right there.

Pembleton picks up his holster, his gun, his badge and his jacket.

PEMBLETON
Report of a sniper at Redwood and Paca.

BAYLISS
C'mon, that's not funny.

PEMBLETON
You don't see me laughing, do you?

As they all mobilize:

HOWARD
There are two snipers.

LEWIS
Please nobody say it.

KELLERMAN
Munch was right.

LEWIS
(to Kellerman)
I begged you not to say it.
CONTINUED: (2)

MUNCH
Don't seem so shocked...

As they exit, Russert hangs back, suspended, literally.

CUT TO:

48 INT. COFFEE ROOM - MORNING

TV is on. We see graphic: "Special Bulletin"
Take in the empty room.

ANNOUNCER
We interrupt this program for a
special news bulletin...

FADE OUT.

THE END