

FOR WARNER BROS. AND TNT ONLY

THE CLOSER



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Episode #2

“The Big Picture”

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GABRIEL

Excuse me, ma'am. What are you doing?

BRENDA

And good morning to you, too, Sgt. Gabriel. I'm checking toe tags. And I can't reach the ones on the top. 611053187 is the winning number.

GABRIEL

You're supposed to let the morgue attendants do that.

BRENDA

Mm-hm. Well, they're not here, Sgt. So. 611053187. And if you could...
(she points)
..start over there please.

Gabriel looks up at the higher shelves above his head. Yuk.

DIP TO BLACK

4

INT. COLD CRYPT - DAY (A LITTLE LATER)

4

Some of the plastic bodies lie strewn across the floor. Two or three are leaning straight up against the door.

Brenda and Gabriel, having cleared off the top layer of bodies from the bottom shelf, crawl around the remaining ones checking TOE TAGS.

GABRIEL

Maybe if I knew who we were looking for this might go a little faster.

BRENDA

Don't have a name. Young lady. A prostitute. Been in here three days already.

She moves too far to the right, knocking over the bodies leaning against the door: they fall in Gabriel's direction. He abruptly stands, moving out of the way.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Damn it. Sorry.

One of the body's had its wrapping stuck in the door: it unravels and falls half-naked at Gabriel's feet. Gabriel shakes his head and closes his eyes.

DIP TO BLACK

5 **INT. COLD CRYPT - DAY (A LITTLE LATER)** 5

The room is now in total disarray.

Triumphantly, Brenda pulls on an end of one of the few bodies that remains undisturbed (on a middle shelf all the way back against the wall).

BRENDA

I found her. Here she is. If - you -
could - help me --

Gabriel joins Brenda and aids her in carrying the body to one of the few clear areas of the floor. As they go...

GABRIEL

So what makes this hooker a high
priority all of a sudden?

BRENDA

Her client list, as disgusting as
that sounds. Robbery/Homicide found
it on her computer just last night.
Which is why we were so late being
handed the case.

Brenda catches her breath for a second while reaching for her purse and pulling out a SLIM MURDER BOOK. Standing on her knees, she begins unwrapping the face end of the burrito.

Gabriel stands and turns away.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Okay, Miss 611053187.
(checking her paperwork)
Let's see if you look anything like
your photo.

The last of the plastic is turned away revealing the ravishingly beautiful face of a young girl, probably no more than eighteen or nineteen-years-old.

Brenda stares at the woman, her eyes registering a glimmer of sadness.

MORGUE ATTENDANT #2 (O.S.)

What the hell is going on here?

Brenda and Gabriel look up to see...

...a furious MORGUE ATTENDANT (#2) standing at the door.

DIP TO BLACK

6 **INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE COLD CRYPT -DAY**

6

As other Workers exit into the vault to straighten out the mess, Brenda explains herself to Morgue Attendant #2 as he rolls her victim away on a GURNEY.

BRENDA

(extra southern)

And bein' new here - I'm from Atlanta by the way - Deputy Chief Brenda Leigh Johnson, Priority Homicide - I've been depending a lot on Sgt. Gabriel here to keep me informed on proper protocol. And I think, because y'all are a little behind, and we needed this to be done in a hurry, he just got -

MORGUE ATTENDANT #2

(turning on Gabriel)

Misleading your boss this way. I'm surprised at you Sergeant.

GABRIEL

Yeah, I'm surprised myself.

BRENDA

You know? He just got carried away. You want him to stay and help straighten things up while we get the M.E. to start the autopsy?

And off Gabriel's stunned irritation we...

DIP TO BLACK

7 **INT. BRENDA'S OFFICE - DAY**

7

Brenda multi-tasks at her desk, talking on the PHONE while looking at CRIME SCENE PHOTOS and arranging a happy face out of a BAG OF DUMPED CHEETOS strewn across her desk.

BRENDA (ON PHONE)

Yes, but M.E. says this girl had sex before she died.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

And I want to know if anyone in Robbery/Homicide had the foresight to collect a kit on her before she was dumped at the morgue. Yes, I'll hold. Thank-you.

Brenda eats half a Cheeto.

Gabriel enters and puts a file on his boss's desk.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Anything on the ID?

GABRIEL

No California record. I could go national.

BRENDA

(waving a couple of papers)

Go international. I got an inventory from the crime scene here. And her taste in furniture: it's eclectic.

CAPTAIN TAYLOR steps up to the door of Brenda's office in a controlled temper holding a MANILA FOLDER in his hand.

TAYLOR

Excuse me, ma'am? If you want to accuse my people of bad work, would you mind doing it through me?

BRENDA

(hanging up the phone)

All right, Captain Taylor. Let me be clear about this.

(standing and wiping all the cheetos off her desk)

I was not accusing your people of bad work. I was accusing them of apathy. I have a victim who was murdered three days ago and I still don't know who she is.

Gabriel, physically caught between Taylor and Brenda, tries to move out of their argument.

TAYLOR

I have forty-three active cases. You have one.

(waving the folder)

And of course we ran a sex kit on the body. We found her naked.

BRENDA

Well, how come I don't have the DNA results. Is it because all your department saw was another dead hooker?

TAYLOR

No. It's because it takes at least a week for DNA results to come back. Unless someone springs for the extra thousand dollars. Which no one was willing to do until her client list turned up.

BRENDA

And, now, suddenly, everyone cares.

TAYLOR

Let's not forget that it was my boys who found that list in the first place.

(walking to her desk)

Every morning, you and I see the exact same homicide report. And I didn't hear you calling this girl's death some high priority, either.

(dropping the folder on her desk)

Maybe because all you saw was another dead hooker.

And off Brenda's reaction, and the laughter and hoots of the squad, we CUT TO:

8

INT. MURDER ROOM - DAY

8

FLYNN, PROVENZA, DANIELS and SANCHEZ laugh as they read the CLIENT LIST while Gabriel sets up a POWER POINT PRESENTATION.

Brenda watches in front of the MURDER BOARD.

FLYNN

She was doing Judge Kelsey? The guy's eighty and on a walker.

SANCHEZ

And lots of Viagra. Look at #49.

DANIELS

Congressman Hill. Whooh. There's over 200 names here.

BRENDA

We can narrow that down.

(checking her watch)

Okay, everyone. Here's the basics. Put the client list down for a moment please. Thank you. Our young lady here was stabbed twice in the back with a six-inch serrated blade. The M.E. can tell from the angle of the knife wounds that the killer was taller than the victim, and she was just shy of six feet. That should eliminate most of her customers. We think it might have been one of her johns because there were no signs of a break-in, struggle or robbery. Sgt. Gabriel?

Brenda shuts off the lights.

Using a COMPUTER and PROJECTOR, Gabriel displays his first picture, a come-on pose of THE DECEASED. High-lighted around her half-naked body are a set of computer links: About Me, My Schedule, Read My Reviews, etc..

GABRIEL

Our victim was one of many available ladies at an internet escort service. This is her web page: Strawberry Lollipop dot com.

PROVENZA

Lollipop? She looks more like an all-day sucker to me.

Laughter from the squad.

BRENDA

All right, everyone, I would appreciate it if we could remember this girl is a murder victim. And, unfortunately, Strawberry Lollipop is all we have to call her at the moment.

GABRIEL

Now, inside the web site, she has a booking program. And on the computer from her house, we got a calendar. December, 65 clients. January, 71. February 68. Then, last March, she moves into the little house where we found her.

SANCHEZ
Name on the lease?

BRENDA
Owner listed as an off-shore real estate company in the Cayman Islands. Paid for in cash.

GABRIEL
Probably not entirely by coincidence, Miss Lollipop moves into her new house and drops to 25 clients. In April, to 13. May: 11.

FLYNN
She was down to her regulars.

BRENDA
And these are the ones we should interview first. Six are over six feet. Three of whom the LAPD brass has dubbed VIPs.

DANIELS
Very Important Penises.

More laughter. Brenda sighs. Exchanges glances with Gabriel.

GABRIEL
(continuing the show)
And here's the crime scene.

Following this announcement, a SERIES OF SHOCKING PICTURES of the dead girl around the area of her bed. Violent. Not pretty. Sobering. The squad watches as the laughter fades.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Estimated time of death, last Friday night between 8 p.m. and midnight.

BRENDA
(during the above)
We need alibis from every man on that list who was taller than she was, starting with the most recent and working our way back.

Lights on. A beat. People seem more serious.

SANCHEZ
Maybe one of her johns became her sugar daddy? Bought her the house.

FLYNN

Or somebody she cut loose got mad.

BRENDA

Det. Gabriel, if you'll check and see if this M.O. of the knife in the back matches any other recent homicides, especially related to prostitutes. Det. Sanchez, start setting up appointments with her customers.

SANCHEZ

What if they don't want to come in?

BRENDA

Tell them we'd hate to visit them at work to talk about their sex lives, but if we must...

(off Sanchez's nod)

Lt. Flynn, a warrant for her phones, please. Det. Daniels, if you wouldn't mind coming with me to the crime scene. And if any of her customers pop in while I'm gone, Lt. Provenza? Will you talk to them?

PROVENZA

Yeah. Okay. I can be disgusted all afternoon. Why not?

9

INT. HALLWAY TO INTERROGATION ROOMS - DAY

9

With her CASE FILE sticking out of her PURSE, Brenda prepare moves towards the exit. ASSISTANT CHIEF POPE approaches from the opposite direction in intercept mode.

POPE

Where are you going? Aren't you going to interview the johns?

BRENDA

Lt. Provenza can talk to them.

POPE

He is? Okay. Provenza? Are you sure? I don't want any feathers ruffled.

BRENDA

I'm confused. Is prostitution a crime in Los Angeles? Or not?

Pope takes her arm, and ushers her into --

10

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

10

Brenda watches Pope check the switch under the table to make sure the room is not "hot". Satisfied, he turns to Brenda.

POPE

I don't want people's careers ruined if all they did was pay for sex. That means no prying into their personal lives unless you think they're good for the murder.

BRENDA

(a beat)

Will. Are you talking about someone in particular?

POPE

Yeah. Yeah. Danny Booth. He's an Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agent. I've known him eight years.

BRENDA

You're his alibi?

POPE

More of a character witness. Look. Danny's a basically solid guy.
(looking for sympathy)
And his wedding's next month.

BRENDA

(checking her papers)

Well, I'd hate to ruin what sounds like a promising marriage.

(reading)

Your friend Mr. Booth was one of her few remaining regulars. Saw her last Thursday. And he's over six feet. Sorry. He's coming in.

POPE

I want to be there.

BRENDA

Okay.

POPE

Off the books.

BRENDA

On.

POPE

My office. Eight a.m. tomorrow.

Pope opens the door for her and, irritated, Brenda exits.

11 **EXT. MID-CITY NEIGHBORHOOD - VICTIM'S BUNGALOW - DAY** 11

Slamming the car door behind her Brenda stands by the curb for a moment as Daniels joins her. They walk towards a...

....CHARMING BUNGALOW where an LAPD officer stands watch.

BRENDA

(re: bungalow)

Great place.

DANIELS

Except for the murder.

BRENDA

(walking to the porch)

Well, we all have a past.

12 **INT. VICTIM'S BUNGALOW - LIVING ROOM - DAY** 12

The furniture is expensive, Russian antique with a twist of tacky Americana. An American flag quilt. Statue of Liberty Candlesticks. Cow lamps and pillows.

Brenda looks at a UCLA BRUINS CRYSTAL CARAFE.

BRENDA

How did she pay for all this?

13 **INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - SAME TIME** 13

Provenza talks with JUDGE RAY KELSEY, 80, white. Kelsey digs in a BAG attached to his WALKER, pulls out a SMALL NOTEBOOK.

JUDGE KELSEY

Five hundred dollars a dance. Four times a month. That's the only thing I knew about her, absolutely. Her real name was her business. But her accent was Russian.

PROVENZA

Where were you last Friday night, Your Honor?

JUDGE KELSEY

Are you seriously looking at me for her murder because of my height? I'm only taller than her when I stand up straight, which I haven't done since 1993.

(off Provenza's glare)

All right. Last Friday night. My girlfriend and I went to Santa Barbara that weekend. I'd rather you confirm that with the hotel.

PROVENZA

Did she ever talk to you about other boyfriends?

JUDGE KELSEY

I wasn't paying that mouth to talk. All I cared about was what she could do to me in her bed.

14 INT. VICTIM'S BEDROOM - LATER 14

A BLOOD-SOAKED MATTRESS on the romantic antique four-poster goes awkwardly with the black-smudged night tables.

Brenda looks away and opens drawers of a dresser.

On one side she finds LADY'S UNDERWEAR; on the other, she discovers MEN'S WHITE BOXER SHORTS and MEN'S BLACK SOCKS.

Suddenly, Brenda frowns. She HEARS something. What is it? She freezes, listens... MEOW. It's a skinny, ugly, bewildered CAT slowly coming out from under the bed.

15 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - SAME TIME 15

Provenza talks to CONGRESSMAN HILL, 45, crushed.

CONGRESSMAN HILL

My dog was hit by a car, I was at the vet with my whole family, wife and kids, Lieutenant...until about eleven, I think. Then we went home.

PROVENZA

Sorry about that Congressman. Your dog make it?

CONGRESSMAN HILL

What? Yeah. God. Who knows about all this? What sort of information are you letting out to the press?

PROVENZA

I can tell you cared about her.

CONGRESSMAN HILL

You know what? Screw you. She had a boyfriend. Go after him.

PROVENZA

Name?

CONGRESSMAN HILL

Mr. Lollipop? How the hell should I know. Check with some contractors. He'd just remodeled her kitchen.

16 INT. ZOYA'S KITCHEN - DAY

16

A Dodger baseball schedule is on the open refrigerator door, And next to it, attached by a COW MAGNET, a TAKE-OUT MENU from a nearby Chinese restaurant. Brenda pulls the menu off the refrigerator and walks purposefully towards the PHONE.

DANIELS

(as BRENDA dials)

Granite countertops. Custom-made cabinets. Viking stove. Sub-zero fridge. Expensive stuff. New.

BRENDA (ON PHONE)

Hello. I'd like to order two sweet and sour chicken dinners to be delivered, please...707 Edgemont. And my phone number is 323-555-6458. You might have my credit card number on file.

(to Daniels)

There's a cat in the bedroom.

DANIELS

I'll call the pound.

BRENDA

Should we feed it? It looks --

(into phone)

Oh, great. Hey. I'm sorry. Is the name on that card mine or my boyfriend's?

And off Brenda's reaction as she listens we cut to:

17 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

17

NICK KOSLOFF, 30, handsome, sophisticated and well-dressed.

18

INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT

18

Brenda watches Nick. Flynn drinks COFFEE and fills her in. Gabriel stands behind him. BUZZ waits at the monitors.

FLYNN

Meet Nick Kosloff. Illegitimate son of Ivan Kosloff, top guy in the Russian mob. They're pretty new here. Captain Taylor is our resident expert on them. Rather have him brief you.

BRENDA

Not really.

FLYNN

Okay. Well. Their chief business is heroin distribution, which means money laundering and bank fraud. Nick handles their prostitution biz. Just a sideline for his dad. Brings girls over from Russia.

GABRIEL

Allegedly. All we got on him for real is an old assault-and-battery charge. Which was dropped.

BRENDA

Daddy must have good lawyers. Where are they?

GABRIEL

We offered counsel and he declined. Though he said he was thirsty.

19

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

19

Brenda enters. She carries a SHEAF OF FILES under her arm and a SODA she offers to the cool, self-assured Nick.

BRENDA

Deputy Chief Brenda Johnson. You wanted something to drink?

NICK

Thanks.

Brenda sits across from Nick, who sips from the can.

BRENDA
Nikoli Kosloff. Did I pronounce
that right?

NICK
Perfectly. But people call me Nick.

BRENDA
You went to UCLA?
(off his inquiring look)
Your ring.

NICK
Oh. Yeah. Go Bruins.

BRENDA
More of a Bulldog fan myself. So.
This is a sad occasion, Nick. A
young lady you know died the other
night. Stabbed in the back.

NICK
You're talking about Zoya Petrovna
I presume.

20 INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - SAME 20

Flynn sighs. Brenda's too good at this for him.

FLYNN BRENDA (ON MONITOR)
Okay, Gabriel. Zoya Petrovna. So you knew her.
You got a name now.

GABRIEL NICK (ON MONITOR)
(as he exits) Professionally. She was a
If I can spell it. whore.

21 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - SAME 21

BRENDA
Do you regularly give whores access
to your credit cards? Buy them
houses? Remodel their kitchens?
Because all that makes it look like
your relationship might have been
more serious.

NICK
You know why you think that?

BRENDA
Why?

NICK
Because you're a woman.

BRENDA
Oh.

NICK
You don't give a whore money and jewelry and bullshit like that because you love them. You do it so you can get off and leave.

BRENDA
I see. Well. That would explain why you seem relatively unaffected by her death.

NICK
Look. I'm sorry for her. And it's inconvenient. I'll have to find someone else. I don't mean to sound cold, really, and she did have some redeeming qualities. But she's not the kind of girl I could have taken home to dinner.

BRENDA
She was just there for sex.

NICK
Exactly. When I wanted it.

BRENDA
And did you want it last Friday?

NICK
Twice. In the afternoon.

BRENDA
So I might find evidence of your semen in the sex kit we took off the body.

NICK
(grinning)
Depends on where you check. But yeah. Probably.

BRENDA
And where were you later, Nick? That night? Between eight and midnight?

NICK
Unfortunately, I was stuck at 10080
Wilshire Boulevard.

BRENDA
(stunned)
The Federal Building?

NICK
Yeah. On the fifth floor. Ever been
there?

22 INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT 22

Flynn shakes his head.

FLYNN
Well that sucks.

23 INT. INTEVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 23

Brenda stares at Nick, surprised and disbelieving.

BRENDA
You were with the FBI?

NICK
(smiling)
From seven p.m. 'til five in the
morning.

And off Brenda's stymied reaction, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

24 INT. BRENDA'S HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

24

The room is a disaster. Clothes, suitcases, maps, casework files, some towels. Brenda, dressed for a date, tries to straighten things up. There's a KNOCK at the door.

BRENDA
(stunned)
Fritz?!

FRITZ (O.S.)
I'm a little early.

BRENDA
Oh. Oh. Uh - Give me one second.

Brenda immediately shifts gears, circling the room and swooping up as much of the soft merchandise as she can and dumping it all in a chair. She pulls the COMFORTER off the bed, throws it on top of the heap, then moves to the dresser and with one arm slides everything on its surface into the top drawer while checking herself in the mirror.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
(during the above)
Just - just one second. I got home late. Almost done. Almost. Almost.

FRITZ (O.S.)
I'm sure you look terrific.

Brenda scowls at her room but goes to open the door anyway.

BRENDA
Thank you. Well, come on in.

Fritz enters the room, has to sidestep SUITCASES, putting himself unexpectedly right next to Brenda. She bends over to pick up the suitcases. Fritz bends over with her.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Whoops. I need to find a place to put those.

FRITZ
How about your own house?

BRENDA
L.A.'s so big. I don't even know where I want to be.

FRITZ

Well, when you see something you like, snap it up. The market's hot here. Good stuff doesn't stay on the shelf very long.

Brenda, startled by Fritz's closeness, moves away from him carrying a suitcase and putting it by her dresser. Fritz follows and sits on the bed. During the above...

BRENDA

I don't want to move too fast. It's a big decision. Where to live.

FRITZ

It is. Well, if you're comfortable here... You want the good news or the bad news?

BRENDA

Good news.

FRITZ

I got us a table on the patio. Bad news...your guy was telling the truth. We had Nick Kosloff in custody from 6:30 until 5:00 a.m. Sorry.

OFF Brenda --

DANNY (O.S.)

I was in bed by nine on Friday.

25

INT. POPE'S OFFICE - DAY

25

DANNY BOOTH, 45, white, worried, and hung over sits in front of the desk. Pope watches.

DANNY

I had to be at work at five on Saturday. So Friday's tough for me. Uh - is there an aspirin around here somewhere?

BRENDA

Can anyone verify that?

Pope goes about attending to Danny's request.

DANNY

My dog. Other than that...

BRENDA

Did you know you were Zoya's very first customer?

DANNY

Her name was Zoya?

BRENDA

Not to burden you with too much information about the woman you were having sex with on a regular basis, but yes. Her name was Zoya Petrovna. She immigrated here from Russia. And back when she started keeping records, January 2, you're listed as her first john.

DANNY

Really?

POPE

What's the significance of that?

BRENDA

Because last Thursday, the day before Zoya was murdered, Mr. Booth was also the last appointment in her calendar. Which makes him her Alpha and Omega. The beginning and the end.

POPE

Coincidence.

BRENDA

(to Pope)

Excuse me, are you acting as his defense counsel?

Pope gives Danny the WATER and ASPIRIN.

POPE

He doesn't need a lawyer, Brenda.

BRENDA

Then he should have no problem answering questions on his own.

(back to Danny)

You saw Zoya three, four times a week. Was she that good?

DANNY

I like certain things.

BRENDA
How did you meet her?

DANNY
(taking the aspirin)
An ad in LA Weekly.

BRENDA
She never had an ad in LA Weekly,
she had a web page.
(to Pope)
So your friend is lying.

POPE
Come on, that's an easy thing to
get mixed up.

Brenda takes Danny's cup.

BRENDA
So you like certain things, Mr.
Booth. Certain things cost money.
In the neighborhood of five hundred
dollars an hour. So. You were
shelling out two thousand dollars a
week? On a Federal salary.

Danny stares at her, then at Pope.

DANNY
Do I have to answer that?

BRENDA
(to Pope)
Okay, I've had enough. Mr. Booth,
you and I will meet again under
more formal circumstances.

She exits with the cup.

26

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

26

Pope catches up to Brenda.

POPE
All right. The guy's a bit of a
mess. But you didn't have to swipe
the cup. He would have given you a
DNA sample. And you're wasting your
time. Danny's innocent.

BRENDA

I don't know if he killed her yet,
but he's not innocent.

POPE

Guys lie! Especially about hookers.

Brenda stops, faces Pope.

BRENDA

Zoya Petrovna, Will. Zoya Petrovna.
She had a name. She was eighteen-
years-old. Practically a child. And
she came here from Russia. On a
visa. And where does your friend
work again? Immigration and Customs
Enforcement.

POPE

Last night you were hot on Nick
Kosloff. What happened to him?

BRENDA

When the crime took place, he was
in FBI custody. And they've
confirmed that.

POPE

How did the FBI get back to you so
fast? I'm still waiting to hear
back on Oswald and Kennedy.

BRENDA

Maybe because you're pals with a
man named Booth.

Brenda stalks off. Pope watches her go.

27

INT. MURDER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

27

Provenza and Sanchez are on the phone while Flynn types at
his computer. Brenda enters carrying a FOLDER and Danny's
CUP.

BRENDA

What do we have on the phone dump?

FLYNN

She talked to three people almost
every day. Nick Kosloff, Nadia
Orwell, and a cat psychic named
Madam Lulu.

BRENDA

Any calls to ICE? Or someone named
Danny Booth?

Provenza hangs up the phone. Brenda hands him a folder.

FLYNN

Mm. Uh - no. Nothing.

BRENDA

Lt. Provenza? I want a full
background check on this
immigration officer at LAX.
Financial, criminal, public, and
pay special attention to his
fiance. Where she was and what she
was doing the night of the crime.

(to Sanchez)

Find me this Nadia Orwell. And if
we can do it quickly, that would be
great.

(to FLYNN)

Take this cup and the soda can Nick
Kosloff drank out of and rush them
through the DNA lab. And yes, I
know, it's an extra two thousand
dollars.

(looking around)

Where's Sgt. Gabriel?

28

INT. HOMICIDE ANALYSIS - DAY

28

FRANNY, middle-aged and in a floral print pant suit, works at
her computer with Gabriel hovering behind.

FRANNY

Let's see...okay...here we go.
Russian females and we'll add some
of the breakaway Soviet Republics
as well. What's the basic M.O.?

GABRIEL

Six-inch serrated blade in the
back.

FRANNY

Stabbings. Let's see how this new
program works.

(typing)

C'mon honey. We want to hear some
music.

Taylor approaches, pauses behind Gabriel.

TAYLOR

You want my homicide analyst, your boss is supposed to ask my permission.

GABRIEL

Hey, Captain. I only need Franny for ten minutes tops.

TAYLOR

I don't know if Franny's work is up to Miss Atlanta's exacting standards.

GABRIEL

(conspiratorially)

Frankly, sir? Miss Atlanta doesn't know I'm here.

TAYLOR

Really?

(pleased; looking over Franny's shoulder)

I hear she likes Pope's friend for this Russian hooker.

GABRIEL

I'm trying to clear him, sir.

TAYLOR

(pleased; a laugh)

Yeah. Okay. Good. Keep at it.

FRANNY

Our lucky day, Sgt.

(as Gabriel leans over the screen)

I should be in Vegas this morning. Another Russian girl. Knife in the back. About six months ago.

GABRIEL

Doesn't get closer than that.

(to Taylor)

Say, sir? You're the expert on the Kosloffs. You hear anything that might help me with this?

TAYLOR

(smiling)

You run along now, Gabriel. Miss Atlanta decides she needs me, she knows where I am.

29 INT. BRENDA'S CAR - HOLLYWOOD NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY 29

Brenda waits across the street from a church's day care center. She watches...

...small children play in a cheerfully plastic playground as NADIA ORWELL, early twenties - pretty in hard sort of way - walks up the sidewalk with an EMPTY STROLLER.

Brenda picks up a PICTURE of Nadia from beside her on the passenger seat: a booking photo from vice. She slips it into her lap and then grabs her CELL PHONE and dials as she opens the car door.

30 EXT. FRONT OF DAYCARE CENTER - DAY 30

Nadia disappears inside the church with her STROLLER.

31 EXT. SIDEWALK IN FRONT OF DAYCARE CENTER - DAY 31

Brenda watches the children play for a moment, waiting for an answer. She sighs. It's a message service.

BRENDA (ON PHONE)

Hey, Fritz, it's me. Uh- Brenda. Just wanted to say thank you for dinner last night. And see, I can call when it has nothing to do with work. Ha, ha, ha. And I had a very nice time, too. Nice. Sorry. What a stupid word. I meant to say I enjoyed myself very much. And I just, you know, wanted to call and tell you that so, okay, and thanks again, really, and I guess I'll talk to you later. Bye.

Nadia reappears with her baby.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

You have a good day now. Bye-bye.

Brenda hangs up. Puts the phone back in her voluminous PURSE. Nadia pushes the STROLLER towards her. Brenda approaches, displaying her BADGE.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Nadia Orwell? Deputy Chief Brenda Jean Johnson, LAPD. I need to talk to you for a moment about Zoya Petrovna.

Nadia tightens her grip on the stroller and quickens her pace. Brenda continues walking beside her.

NADIA
(Russian accent)
I do not know this Zoya.

BRENDA
Really. She calls you almost every day. When's the last time you talked to her?

NADIA
I have American husband now. We have money. Pay tax. My baby is citizen.

BRENDA
But you used to work for Nick Kosloff.

Brenda steps in front of the stroller to stop Nadia.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Don't you think it's strange you haven't heard from Zoya since last Friday?

NADIA
I do not know this Zoya.

Nadia tries to leave. Brenda pulls a PICTURE of the dead Zoya from her purse and holds it up for Nadia to see.

Nadia's hands tighten for a moment on the stroller.

BRENDA
Did you care about her at all, Nadia? Did she mean anything to you? Can you help me? Please? Can you help me?

32

EXT. CHURCH STEPS - DAY

32

Nadia sits, one hand clutching the handle of the STROLLER, the other propping up her head with an elbow on her knee.

NADIA
I try tell her is more bad than we thought. But Zoya come anyway. We all come anyway.

BRENDA
How do you get in?

NADIA
Is arranged. Visa and passport
arrive in mail with ticket to LA.
We get off plane. Queue up for man
in airport. What is it? Customs.

As she speaks, Brenda pulls PICTURES out of her PURSE.

BRENDA
One of these men stamp your
passport?

Nadia points out Danny Booth. She spits.

NADIA
Sick pig. We all have to date him.
Zoya his favorite. She look young,
you know. To him, she was a drug.

BRENDA
Think he could have killed her?

NADIA
(shrugs)
Any drug can make you crazy.

Brenda shows her more pictures.

BRENDA
What about one of these men?

Zoya points to the picture of the Congressman.

NADIA
He not kill her. He not do nothing.
Just smell feet.

BRENDA
And Nick Kosloff?
(as Nadia looks away)
You're afraid of the Kosloffs. I
understand. Nick was your boss,
right? His father's a scary guy.
But nothing you say will go
anywhere else. I'm just trying to
find out the truth. I just want to
know what happened to Zoya.

NADIA

(a beat)

Nick like her. Took her to a party.
Put her in nice house. Zoya happy
at first.

BRENDA

What happened?

NADIA

She want husband like I get. Want
to be American, okay? One day she
call. Tells me she coming up with
baby. Next day she cry. Nick hit
her. Said she have baby, he send
her home.

BRENDA

Was she planning on leaving him?

NADIA

She cannot leave. Nick keep our
passports until we have money to
get them back. Always is more than
they say.

BRENDA

You got away though.

NADIA

(a beat; near tears)

You get three others to take your
place, they let you go.

BRENDA

(getting it; it's ugly)

And so you got Zoya to come?
Knowing what would happen to her?

NADIA

(shaky)

I betray her. Yes. So will you. Who
was Zoya to Americans?

(rocking her stroller and
weeping)

Nothing but Russian whore. Like me.

(Nadia weeps)

I tell her not to come. I tell her
is more bad. I tell her.

Brenda puts a consoling arm on Nadia's shoulder.

33

INT. BRENDA'S OFFICE - DAY

33

Brenda sits at her desk, demoralized, staring at...

...two PHOTOS: Danny Booth and Nick Kosloff.

A KNOCK at the door. She looks up to see...

...Gabriel enters, a THIN MURDER BOOK in his hand. He gives it to Brenda.

GABRIEL

Unsolved Brentwood homicide from
November 6, 2004.

BRENDA

(looking at the book)
Vanya Kostenka, 19, stabbed twice
in the back with a serrated blade.
(flipping through)
Where's the M.E. report?

GABRIEL

Wasn't with the file. I asked the
coroner's office for a duplicate,
but that usually takes a week.

BRENDA

(reading; to herself)
Entered the U.S. at LAX on 9-19-04
on a visitors visa.

GABRIEL

She paid her rent on time in cash,
had unclaimed property worth
several thousand dollars. Booth
can't afford these things.

BRENDA

On his salary. But I'm thinking he
does a little moonlighting.

Brenda rises, putting the new murder book aside, staring
through her window as...

...Pope enters the murder room accompanied by Two Men in
suits and ties. These are FBI AGENTS STEVEN SIMMS and BILL
BLACKBURN. They head straight for Brenda's office.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I have a bad feeling about this.

Pope enters and stands aside for Steven and Bill to follow after him.

POPE
Deputy Chief Johnson, this is Bill Blackburn and Steve Sims. From the FBI.

BRENDA
(shaking their hands)
Pleased to make your acquaintance, gentlemen. And to what do I owe the privilege?

SIMS
I'm afraid we have a little overlap issue on the Zoya Petrovna murder.

BRENDA
Really? And what would that be?

BLACKBURN
National security. Need to know basis. Sorry. We'll get back to you when it's played out.

SIMS
Meanwhile, if you could get your files together we'd deeply appreciate it.

And off Brenda's look at Pope, we cut to:

34 **INT. MURDER ROOM - DAY** 34

The Detectives go about closing up their BOXES and handing them over to the FBI interlopers. Provenza looks particularly sour about the exchange.

35 **INT. AREA IN FRONT OF BRENDA'S OFFICE - DAY** 35

Pope stands next to Brenda as they observe the FBI leave.

POPE
I had nothing to do with this.

BRENDA
Just a lucky break for your friend then, I guess.

POPE
You know what? Think what you want. I don't control the FBI.

He exits. Gabriel rejoins his boss.

GABRIEL

Look at 'em. Smug bastards. Taking
all our stuff.

BRENDA

(steely-eyed)

Oh, no, Sergeant. Not all. Though
it's interesting to me how an
eighteen-year-old Russian hooker
becomes a vital concern of our
national security apparatus, who
are we to question the FBI? They
ask for Zoya, Zoya they get.

(Lifting up the MURDER
BOOK Gabriel brought
her.)

But they didn't ask for Vanya
Kostenka, did they? And suddenly I
find I have all this time on my
hands.

Brenda exits into her office. And as Gabriel watches her go
we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

36 **EXT. RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CEMETERY - DAY (FROM ABOVE)** 36

A GIANT FORKLIFT raises a casket out of its grave, revealing as it PASSES OUT OF FRAME...

...Brenda and Gabriel, wearing MASKS over their faces. They stand behind gathering clouds of dust, a series of other open caskets behind them complimented by giant mounds of dirt. A phone rings in the b.g.

37 **EXT. GRAVESITE - DAY** 37

Gabriel and Brenda watch as the coffin swings to one side of its former resting place. Brenda's PHONE continues to RING.

GABRIEL

You ever gonna answer that?

BRENDA

(watching the coffin)

It's Pope. If I answer it, he'll tell me to come back. And I have no intention of doing that until I've compared Vanya's wounds with the morgue pictures we have of Zoya's.

Brenda's phone stops ringing as the coffin begins to make its descent; we PULL BACK to observe as it's lowered into a macabre row of the previously opened coffins. Gabriel's PHONE starts to RING.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Don't answer that, Sgt. And that's an order.

Gabriel looks at the caller I.D.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

You're out of range.

An OLDER RUSSIAN PRIEST steps up beside them. This is the apologetic FATHER CONSTANTINE ILLYICH.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I know this is unsettling, Father.

FATHER CONSTANTINE

No, it is my fault. We bury so many Russian girls - drugs, AIDS, suicide - too much liberty too fast I think. I should start a fund for headstones.

(MORE)

FATHER CONSTANTINE (CONT'D)

(disconsolate)

How do they get here? Why do they
come? I cry for them, but I don't
know who they are.

38 EXT. CLOSER TO THE GRAVE - DAY (A FEW MOMENTS LATER) 38

The fourth casket is now ready to be opened.

Brenda's PHONE RINGS again. She turns it off.

SID and Morgue Attendants gather at the coffin. A SPECIALIST
moves to the side with a STEEL ROD and...

...POP! PUFF!

Instinctively, everyone turns away, putting their MASKS back
up over their faces.

Brenda squints into the gaseous discharge.

Father Constantine slowly moves towards the casket. Brenda
follows him. And then Gabriel.

Father Constantine bows his head over the coffin, mournfully.

FATHER CONSTANTINE

Ah. Here she is. This is the girl
you are looking for, is it not?

Gabriel joins Brenda. Brenda checks the picture in the FOLDER
she carries. Then looks inside the casket.

BRENDA

Yeah, that's her.

Brenda motions to the MORGUE ATTENDANTS, who come forward.

Gabriel, almost against his will, leans over and glances into
the coffin.

FATHER CONSTANTINE

(shaking his head)

I meant to put a special little
marker on her grave. But I never
got around to it.

As the Morgue Attendants descend on the casket, Brenda almost
misses the import of this last statement. But after a beat...

BRENDA

A special marker. Why?

FATHER CONSTANTINE
Oh. Because she was pregnant.

And off Brenda's stunned response we cut to:

39 **EXT. MORGUE VAN AT CURB OF CHURCH - DAY** 39

As Vanya's body is zipped up into a body bag and loaded into the back of the van...

...Brenda and Gabriel, without their masks, listen in contained astonishment to the old Russian Priest.

FATHER CONSTANTINE
She always sit in the back row. Usually with a man. One day she stopped me after the service. When the man wasn't with her. Told me she was pregnant but afraid to have the baby.

He looks behind him as the doors of the morgue van close on the body.

FATHER CONSTANTINE (CONT'D)
Maybe I gave her the wrong advice.

Brenda holds up two different PICTURES for the priest.

BRENDA
The man who came with her. Do you recognize either of these gentlemen?

FATHER CONSTANTINE
Oh, yes. Him. He was very tall.

He points to one of the pictures. We don't see which one.

40 **INT. ELECTRONICS ROOM - DAY** 40

On the monitors, we see Danny Booth at a table, his head in his hands.

Pope paces back and forth while Buzz prepares to tape the interview. After a moment, Brenda enters.

POPE
Four exhumations? You know how much that's going to cost us?

BRENDA
No. We ready Buzz?

BUZZ

Yes ma'am.

POPE

I told you this case is closed.

BRENDA

This isn't about Zoya. It's about Vanya Kostenka.

POPE

Who?

We see Gabriel enter the interview room and take a seat opposite Danny, though we don't hear what they're saying.

BRENDA

Another girl - nineteen - Russian immigrant. Killed by the same knife.

Provenza and Sanchez enter. And Daniels.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I have reason to believe that your friend Danny Booth has information material to this murder.

Pope stares at Brenda and at...

...Provenza, Sanchez, Daniels and Buzz, who are all looking at him for a response.

BRENDA (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Where were you on November 6, 2004?

41 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - CONTINUOUS

41

Brenda sits opposite Mr. Booth. Gabriel stands in the corner.

DANNY

That was six months ago. I have no - wait - wait. November 6. Wait. November 6, that was the day before my mom's birthday. I was in the hospital. Glendale Memorial. Appendectomy the day before. Check it out.

BRENDA

I'll take your word for it. You did not commit the murder of Vanya Kostenka.

DANNY
(unconvincingly)
Vanya?

BRENDA
Although I'm sure you slept with
her.
(holding up Vanya's
pictures)
As you do with all the girls from
Russia whose passports you stamp,
and visas you approve. Is that not
right Mr. Booth? In addition to the
money the Russian mob pays you,
don't you also get your choice of
the young ladies you illegally
allow into the country?

42 INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - DAY 42

Pope listens, astonished. He sits in front of the monitors.

DANNY (ON MONITOR)
Oh, God. Oh, God. You know what? I -
I think I might need an attorney.

BRENDA (ON MONITOR)
Oh, no, Mr. Booth. You don't need
an attorney. Because if you get an
attorney?

43 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 43

BRENDA
I intend to immediately sit down
with your fiance and have a nice
long chat with her about you and
your penis.

44 INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - SAME TIME 44

Pope leans into the interview, fascinated.

Provenza bends down by his shoulder.

PROVENZA
We could throw his little
lady a bridal shower,
actually. Things are slow
around here.

DANNY (ON MONITOR)
You'd - you'd do that? You'd
drag Ellen into this?

45 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

45

BRENDA

Mm-hm. I'd do that and much, much more than that.

GABRIEL

Yeah, I'd hold off on that deposit for the caterers, too, man. 'Cause frankly, I don't see it. The wedding. It's not clear to me yet.

BRENDA

Or you could call the FBI. Make an appointment to tell them what you do for the Kosloffs.

DANNY

(reeling)

My God. What - I can't do that. I can't talk to the Feds.

BRENDA

I didn't ask you to talk to them. I asked you to make an appointment to talk to them. Special Agents Steven Simms and Bill Blackburn.

(handing him the phone)

DANNY

Make the appointment? And then what?

BRENDA

And then? And then, Mr. Booth, you are going to put your life in my hands. And hope for the best.

46 INT. ELETRONICS ROOM - DAY

46

Pope watches as his friend Danny takes the RECEIVER from Brenda and begins to dial.

POPE

Son-of-a-bitch.

47 INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

47

Brenda puts her BADGE, GUN, PURSE and JACKET in a TRAY and goes through the metal detector. Spots Fritz on the other side stepping out of the elevator.

He steps over to her.

FRITZ
Hey! I just called you back.

BRENDA
I know you're busy.

FRITZ
Check your messages.

BRENDA
Will I find one that explains why
the FBI stole my case?

Brenda slams her gun into her HOLSTER, walks toward the elevators. Fritz, bothered, follows her.

FRITZ
Hey, hey. I'm working gangs. This
other investigation is none of my
business. And, look, Brenda?
Brenda, wait.

Brenda pauses at the elevators and turns around to Fritz.

FRITZ (CONT'D)
Coming over here and raising hell
is not going to get you the case
back. It just isn't.

The elevator doors open.

BRENDA
As it so happens, Fritz, I'm not
trying to get my case back. It's
just that when your colleagues
packed up my office, there was
something I didn't give them.

FRITZ
What's that?

BRENDA
A piece of my mind. Bye now. Bye.

The elevator doors close on Brenda.

48

INT. FBI OFFICE - DAY

48

Brenda KNOCKS on the open office door, smiles sweetly. Sims and Blackburn are surprised to see her.

BRENDA
Hi y'all. Remember me?

BLACKBURN

Chief Johnson, sure. What can we do for you?

BRENDA

Mind if I come in?

SIMS

Actually, we have an appointment.

Brenda enters and closes the door behind her.

BRENDA

Mr. Booth sends his regrets. May I sit?

Sims nods, unsure what to make of this woman.

Brenda takes a chair and pulls out a MURDER BOOK, which she references during the rest of the scene.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I found another case that might interest you, gentlemen. Another murder. Vanya Kostenka, also a Russian immigrant, also a hooker, also stabbed to death in the back by a six-inch serrated blade. Also, in what I can only describe as an alarmingly coincidence, dating Nicholas Kosloff. In fact, DNA samples show she was pregnant with his child when she was murdered. Isn't that amazing? And I began to wonder if that would be the end of the similarities between this case and that of Zoya Petrovna. Or if, you two might also have known where Nick Kosloff was when Vanya Kostenka got a knife in her back?

Sims and Blackburn exchange glances.

BLACKBURN

We've had him under surveillance for a year-and-a-half. We might be able to save you some time. What's the date of death?

BRENDA

September 6th 2004. 5 to 9 p.m.

Sims enters the information, reads from the screen.

SIMS

He had the flu. He was home sick.
September 6, it's right here.

BRENDA

Did I say September 6th. Sorry. I
met October 6th. Between eight in
the morning and two in the
afternoon.

Quiet descends. Sims and Blackburn stare at Brenda, who holds
their gaze with perfect equanimity. Finally, Simms types.

SIMS

He was in Vegas. Caesar's Palace.

BRENDA

And if I give you another day? And
another time?

BLACKBURN

We'll have been watching him then,
too. Okay? Is it clear to you now?

BRENDA

And what about the next time he
brutally murders a teenage girl?

Another silence. Brenda strides towards the door.

BLACKBURN

Ms. Johnson.

Brenda pauses and turns back to them.

BLACKBURN (CONT'D)

How about we promise to keep a
better eye on him.

BRENDA

That would be a lot easier to
accept if you hadn't already
successfully proven to me you were
blind.

She exits, slamming the door behind her.

And off the FBI agents reactions, we...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

49 INT. FEDERAL BUILDING - LOBBY - EVENING

49

Fritz paces in front of the elevators, waiting. Doors open. Brenda steps out of the lift, CELL PHONE to her ear. Fritz walks up to her. Brenda ignores him.

BRENDA (ON PHONE)

I'm getting out of the elevator.
Can you hear me now? I said arrest
Nick Kosloff, but I want you to
wait until he's with his
father...Sgt. Gabriel, please, just
do what I said. And don't forget to
ask Captain Taylor for his help.
Thank you.

Brenda hangs up and starts walking away from Fritz.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

You and I should not be talking
right now.

FRITZ

(following her)

Why not?

Brenda stops, faces Fritz. She's shaking mad.

BRENDA

Were you lying to me when you said
that Nick was in custody here?

FRITZ

I told you what they told me. Look.
Brenda. This is a giant RICO
investigation. Ivan Kosloff runs a
drug smuggling empire worth
billions of dollars. I know it's -
it's hard. But you have to try and
see the big picture.

BRENDA

I used to paint the big picture,
okay? I know what's going on. Nick
was never in FBI custody. Your
friends flipped him, got him to
turn against his father, which is
why they're giving him an alibi.

FRITZ

Look. What do you want me to say?

BRENDA

I want you to say that letting a potential serial killer murder teenage girls because he has good connections to the mob is wrong. I want you to say that in America, we're all equal under the law. I want you to say that you believe what's going on here is morally reprehensible. Please, Fritz. Please say that. Because...I'm not sure where we go from here if you don't.

FRITZ

(a beat)

What's going on here is morally wrong. And I'd never do it myself.

BRENDA

(a beat)

Well. Thank God for that.

FRITZ

But it doesn't matter what I think, or you think, because...this is what's happened. I'm sorry. They're going to stand by their story.

BRENDA

Well, I certainly hope that's what they do, because that's how I plan to close my case.

Brenda walks away. Fritz watches her go. After a few steps.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

(turning around; still walking)

I hope you're not mad at me tomorrow.

And off Fritz's perplexed reaction...

50

INT. MURDER ROOM - NIGHT

50

Pope enters as Brenda heads back to her office. He catches up with her.

POPE

What's the FBI calling me about?

BRENDA

I was just on my way to see you.
First, I can help your friend Danny
Booth.

POPE

Forget it. Sex with a hooker is one
thing. But this other stuff. I'll
turn him over to the Feds myself if
you want. Just tell me why they're
calling.

They enter...

51

INT. BRENDA'S OFFICE - DAY

51

Taylor stands as Pope and Brenda step inside.

BRENDA

I had Nick Kosloff arrested for
murder.

TAYLOR

He's in one of your interview rooms
right now.

POPE

Brenda, you can't.

BRENDA

One minute. Just - hold on.
(to Taylor)
And his attorney's here?

TAYLOR

Andy Palermo. One of the top mob
lawyers in the city. I don't know
why you wanted it that way, ma'am.
He'll never let Nick talk to you.

POPE

Oh, God.

BRENDA

(to POPE)
Hold on a moment. I'll explain
this.
(to Taylor)
Captain Taylor, I would really
appreciate anything you could tell
me about Nicholas Kosloff.
Especially in regard to his
relationship with his family.

TAYLOR

(unhappily conscious that
Pope's in the room)

Sure. Nick's from the wrong side of
the sheets. Son of his father's
second mistress - American girl,
forget her name. A pro. She went
missing when Nick was about four.
What else might help you? He's not
that high up in the ladder, really.
His legitimate brothers get most of
the bigger responsibilities. And
the money. Nick just manages the
ladies. He's the family pimp.

(a beat)

If that helps any.

BRENDA

It explains a couple of things.
Yes. Thank you very much.

TAYLOR

Mind if I watch your interview?

BRENDA

Not at all.

Taylor bows his head to her and exits.

POPE

Why don't you ever call me and say,
"Listen, I'm running around today
and while I'm out, I might be
ruining your life." This is an FBI
case, Brenda. What do you expect me
to say to them?

BRENDA

Just keep them off me for five
minutes, Will. I'm not arresting
him. I promise. I just want to ask
him some questions. Five minutes.
Pretty please?

POPE

Okay, but if you hear black
helicopters circling the building,
wrap it up.

...Brenda and Gabriel enter and take their seats opposite Nick Kosloff and his powerful family attorney, ANDY PALERMO, late 50's.

BRENDA
Hello, Nick. Mr. Palermo, I'm
Deputy Chief Brenda Johnson.

53 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INTERVIEW ROOM- NIGHT 53

Taylor watches at the door, listening at the intercom.

54 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 54

Brenda and Gabriel take their seats.

PALERMO
(wearily)
You always jerk people out of family dinners in handcuffs? You sent Mr. Kosloff's uncle to the hospital with chest pains. That's not a good beginning to our relationship.

BRENDA
Oh, this isn't the beginning of mine and Nick's relationship. We're old friends now, aren't we, Nick?

Nick tries not to act nervous.

PALERMO
How so?

BRENDA
I talked to him about the murder of Zoya Petrovna a couple of days ago.

PALERMO
Without an attorney?

BRENDA
Offered and declined.

PALERMO
(to Nick, irritated)
What are you, stupid?

NICK
It was no big deal. I didn't do it. That's all I said. I didn't want to blow it all out of proportion.

55 INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT 55

Buzz works the controls. Provenza, Sanchez and Flynn observe.

BRENDA (ON MONITOR) SANCHEZ
Well, now we have something You know what? This isn't
new to talk about. about breaking the alibi
guys.

PROVENZA
It's a good thing. Because it's not
gonna happen.

56 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 56

BRENDA
You have an alibi for Zoya's
murder, but -
(looking to Gabriel)

Brenda places a picture in front of Nick.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Do you recognize this woman?

PALERMO
Don't answer that.

BRENDA
I'll help, Nick. Her name was Vanya
Kostenka. Also a prostitute with
whom you were familiar. Also
stabbed in the back. And with the
same knife used to kill Zoya.

PALERMO
We freely admit Nick's attraction
to young whores. You're boring me,
Ms. Johnson.

GABRIEL
Well, this particular whore might
be more interesting than the others
because DNA tests prove that she
was the mother of Nick's child.

57 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 57

Taylor leans in, more interested.

58

INT. THE INTERVIEW ROOM

58

PALERMO

So he knocked up a whore. It happens.

Brenda slides the picture closer to Nick.

BRENDA

Yes, it does. In fact, it's how little Nicholas entered the world, isn't that right?

Nick stiffens. Straightens.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

And all the expensive watches and college rings and nice clothes you can buy won't change that, will they, Nick? How do your brothers treat you? How does your father's wife treat you? Were you brought up thinking that whores like your mother were disposable?

PALERMO

If all you're going to do is insult us with armchair psychology, Ms. Johnson, really, we should stop wasting time. If you have evidence, I'd like to hear it. If you don't, we'll get this dismissed at the arraignment, if any district attorney is stupid enough to put it before a judge.

BRENDA

Not going to talk, Nick? Don't want to confess? What about you, Mr. Palermo. Maybe you'd like to change your story?

59

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

59

Pope joins Taylor.

PALERMO (ON MONITOR)

My story? What the hell are you talking about? My story?

60 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 60

BRENDA
Your Nick's criminal attorney,
right? For his whole family?

PALERMO
I am.

BRENDA
So you were with him last Friday
when he was being interviewed by
the F.B.I.? From...
(she looks to Gabriel)

GABRIEL
Yeah. From seven p.m. 'til five in
the morning.

Nick stares at Brenda, but Palermo stares at Nick, stunned.

BRENDA
Weren't you? Goodness, I can't
imagine the FBI would arrest and
question a criminal suspect without
his attorney present. Or that Nick
wouldn't have called for one under
those circumstances.

61 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 61

Pope and Taylor look on, stunned.

62 INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM 62

Provenza and Flynn are also floored. Sanchez shrugs.

SANCHEZ
Still don't see how this changes
things. He confesses, the feds
swoop him up.

63 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM 63

Palermo looks at Nick.

BRENDA
And since the FBI provides your
client with an alibi, my only hope
is that you and Nick here will
change your story. Any possibility
of that?

PALERMO

No. No. I don't think so. No.

BRENDA

All right. Well. I tried. I guess
you're free to go, Nick. Thank you.

Palermo stands. Slowly. Nick doesn't move.

Brenda and Gabriel stand.

Nick doesn't move.

64 **INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT** 64

Pope nods his head, he and Taylor move back towards the
electronics room

BRENDA (ON THE SPEAKER)

That's it, Nick. Nothing more to
do.

65 **INT. ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE ROOM - NIGHT** 65

Nick remains frozen in his chair. Palermo puts a firm hand on
his arm.

PALERMO (ON MONITOR)

C'mon, Nicky. Time to go home.

66 **INT. INTEVIEW ROOM - DAY** 66

Brenda and Gabriel are at the door.

Palermo looms over Nick, who jerks away from him and
addresses Brenda.

NICK

(to Brenda)

I want to confess. I want to
confess. I did it.

(yelling, pulling away
from his attorney)

I said I did it.

67 **INT. ELECTRONICS ROOM - NIGHT (CONTINUOUS)** 67

Brenda moves in front of the cameras. Gabriel grabs Nick and
pulls him backwards.

BRENDA (ON MONITOR)

Could I have some help please?
Could I have some help?

Flynn and Sanchez exit towards the hallway.

NICK (ON MONITOR)
I killed both of them! Used
the same knife.

PALERMO (ON MONITOR)
The kid doesn't know what
he's saying. I was with him.
He was being questioned by
the feds.

68 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

68

Brenda shakes her head and opens the door. Sanchez, Gabriel and Flynn grab hold of a struggling Nick, who pants.

BRENDA
I'd love to help you Nick. But I
can't break your alibi, see? And I
just don't know who the jury would
believe: you or the F.B.I.

Gabriel, Flynn and Sanchez stare at Brenda, stunned.

Nick stares at her, too, also stunned.

Palermo nods. Glares down at his client.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
(to the detectives)
Please escort Mr. Kosloff out of
the building would you?

69 INT. ELECTRONICS ROOM - NIGHT

69

Pope and Taylor watch as Nick is dragged out of view.

TAYLOR
I say you call the Sims and
Blackburn at the FBI and let them
know we've released Nick in about,
oh, three hours.

POPE
He'll be dead in three hours.

TAYLOR
No. He'll be buried in three hours.
He'll be dead when he leaves the
building.

On the MONITORS, Brenda slowly sits down, somewhat shaken, in Nick's chair. She picks up something off the table. And we
CUT BACK INSIDE TO:

70 INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT 70

Brenda picks up TWO PICTURES off the table and gazes at them...

INSERT: SEPARATE PHOTOGRAPHS OF ZOYA AND VANYA

Both girls still young, alive and pretty.

RESUME

Brenda, looking up from the pictures, sitting alone in the interview room, thinking about what she's done.

71 INT. ZOYA'S BUNGALOW - LIVING ROOM (NEXT AFTERNOON) 71

KNOCK, KNOCK. Brenda opens the door. It's Fritz And it's awkward. She steps aside, he steps in.

FRITZ

So this is the place you're thinking about buying?

BRENDA

It's going at a reduced price. Because of the murder, I guess. And I had the inside track.

(as they look around)

It comes furnished, too. Not exactly my style. But I can move next week.

FRITZ

Nice. Close to work. Nice. I'm sure you heard they found Nick Kosloff murdered last night.

BRENDA

Yeah, had his throat slit.

FRITZ

And the Kosloff empire remains standing.

Brenda picks a FOLDER off the coffee table.

BRENDA

Not exactly. Meet Danny Booth. An Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent your friends can use to replace Nick. He's ready to make a deal and he needs protective custody.

FRITZ
From the Kosloffs?

BRENDA
No. From his fiance.

Fritz takes the folder. Opens it. Nods.

FRITZ
You know what? Maybe we shouldn't
talk about work for a while.

BRENDA
Okay. What would you like to talk
about?

FRITZ
(a beat)
I'll let you know Brenda.
(holding up the folder)
Mind if I take this?

BRENDA
No. No. Go right ahead.

MEOW! MEOW! MEOW! The cat shivers back into the room.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
Damn it. The pound was supposed to
come and pick him up.

FRITZ
(smiling in spite of
himself)
That's what I love about you,
Brenda. That sentimental heart of
yours.

Brenda looks at him, not knowing what to say.

Fritz exits. Brenda watches him go for a minute, not sure
what she should do.

MEOW! MEOW!

BRENDA
All right. All right. Well, she
must have food for you here
somewhere. All right.

She looks at the door one last time and then bends down,
following after the shaky cat.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Here, Kitty, Kitty, Kitty. Here
Kitty. Come on. Here you go. Come
on. That's a good girl. You can
trust me. Come on. Yes. Yes.

(grabbing the cat)

Gotcha!

END OF EPISODE