Old friends. New murders.
ACT ONE

ON A WELL-WORN PHOTO -- SEVEN FRIENDS. Early 20s, laughing, bottles of beer, lives full of possibility. Almost all in POLICE UNIFORMS. We HEAR --

JD (V.O.)
What can you say about old friends that hasn't been said already? That you were richer for knowing them, poorer for losing them. And not a day goes by that you don’t wish they were in your life again.

INT. TOWNHOUSE -- SAN FRANCISCO - NIGHT

KEVIN ULSTER, 30s -- handsome with an instantly likeable face -- HOLDS THE SNAPSHOT. As he reflects on the photo, the DOORBELL RINGS. He slips it onto a closet shelf.

JD (V.O.) (CONT’D)
Sometimes if you’re lucky... they find their way back.

IN THE HALLWAY -- Kevin approaches entry, peers through the PEEPHOLE and pulls the door open. The back of his head obscures the face of the visitor.

JD (V.O.) (CONT’D)
And sometimes...if you’re not -- they don’t.

A GUN rises in the Visitor's hand. FIRES. A DEAFENING SHOT blasts Kevin backward. As his falling body BLACKS OUT THE FRAME, we SMASH CUT to...

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

A COUPLE. Bodies intertwined. Steamy, passionate SEX. The MAN is gruffly handsome; the WOMAN raven-haired and beautiful. It’s the kind of sex that only happens in Forum Letters or dreams.

JD
(as he kisses her neck)
Remind me again why we got divorced.

KATHERINE
(throes of passion)
Not thinking with my brain right now...

As their all-world lovemaking continues, we HEAR the INCESSANT RINGING of a doorbell and we SMASH TO --
INT. JD’S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JD CONLIN -- 30s, gruffly handsome -- the MAN IN THE DREAM -- BOLTS upright in bed. The sex was a dream, the doorbell isn’t.

INT. JD’S FRONT DOOR - (MOMENTS) LATER

JD opens the door to face KATHERINE MILLER, 30s, raven-haired and beautiful. In other words, THE WOMAN IN THE DREAM. His ex-wife.

KATHERINE
 I know it's your night and I didn’t want to wake the kids --

JD
 It’s...fine. I musta dozed off. What's wrong?

KATHERINE
 It's Kevin. He's dead.

As JD stares, his world rocked....

INT. JD’S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JD sits, lost in thought. Katherine sits nearby.

JD
 ...doesn’t seem fair. Of all the guys to take a bullet.

KATHERINE
 He always asked about you. Complained that -- since you transferred out of the Precinct -- he never saw you anymore.

JD’s detective brain kicks into gear.

JD
 What do you know so far?

KATHERINE
 Not much. Just what the CIs reported. He answered his front door. Shot point blank. Died en route to the ER.

JD
 Jesus. That's an execution.
KATHERINE
Brass is all over me on this. A Detective gets killed, they want answers yesterday. Normally, I’d assign Malcolm, but he was Kevin’s partner so --

JD
You’re the Captain, so it’s your call. But you need someone strong. Who can handle the pressure from upstairs.

Katherine looks at him. JD’s one step ahead...

JD (CONT’D)
(shakes his head)
No, Kat. I’m chasing serial killers out in Oakland, you know that. I can’t just --

KATHERINE
You said it yourself -- I need someone strong. And there’s no stronger Detective in this city than you.

Just then, EMILY, 9, and WILLIE, 7, enter, sleepy-eyed.

WILLIE
Mommy?

KATHERINE
(maternally)
Hi, sweethearts...

EMILY
What are you doing here? Are you and Daddy getting back together?

JD can’t help but smile.

KATHERINE
No, sweetie. Mommy and Daddy are talking about work.

WILLIE
But you don’t work together.

JD
Actually...we do now.

Now, Katherine can’t help but smile.
JD (CONT'D)
But go back to bed, guys. Daddy’ll be right in.

The kids shuffle off. Before Katherine can thank him --

JD (CONT'D)
I'll need Walker.

KATHERINE
Still on suspension.

JD
For cruelty to a pit bull. Did the judge know there was a kid attached to that dog’s mouth?

KATHERINE
Walker has a drinking problem.

JD
I saw him last week. He’s been sober three months. Drank nothing but grape soda. (then) And I want Peter, too.

KATHERINE
What? JD, you can’t dictate the prosecutor.

JD
No, but you can. And when Walker and I catch the sonafabitch who killed our friend, I want the best ADA in the city making the case. And someone who loved Kevin as much as we did.

KATHERINE
JD... it’s more complicated than that.

JD
Then it’s a good thing you’re the Captain. Because if anyone can make it happen, it’s you.

As Katherine nods, stands...

JD (CONT’D)
And Kat? How the hell do you look so beautiful at 2 AM?
She smiles at him, improbably touched. And as she exits, letting the APARTMENT DOOR close behind her, we MATCH TO --

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

As a CAR DOOR opens... JD and WALKER McRAE -- 30s, handsome, African-American -- exit their sedan.

    WALKER
    I have a feeling I owe you.

    JD
    For what?

    WALKER
    Getting my suspension lifted.

    JD
    She wanted the best. That's why you're back.

    WALKER
    You're a good partner. Bad liar.
    But a good partner.

JD smiles, as they move UP THE COURTHOUSE STEPS.

    WALKER (CONT'D)
    You gonna be able to work with her?

    JD
    Who, Kat? Yeah, piece of cake.

    WALKER
    'Cause I remember -- after the divorce. Precinct had a pool. How long before they get back together? I had July '07. You lost me a hundred.

    JD
    Should picked “never.” Coulda paid for some of your vino.
    (beat)
    Anyway, I don’t think about her like that anymore.

    WALKER
    (smiles)
    Like I said, good partner. Bad liar.
INT. COURTROOM - SAN FRANCISCO SUPERIOR COURT

Assistant District Attorney, PETER CALLAHAN -- mid-30s, movie-star good looks, Italian suit -- addresses the jury.

PETER
-- sometimes the right decision
isn’t the popular one. But that
doesn’t make it any less right.

THREE FEMALE JURORS stare back at him, smitten. Peter returns to the prosecution table. JOSH, his fellow ADA, leans in.

JOSH
We’ve got Jurors 3, 6, 8. They all but threw their panties at you.

ANGLE ON A MALE JUROR also staring longingly at Peter.

JOSH (CONT’D)
And 11, too. Man, if you don’t practice in the right city.

Just then, Peter BEAMS as JD and Walker enter the courtroom. As the JUDGE bangs his gavel and adjourns the court, Peter makes a beeline for the gallery.

PETER
(elated)
What the hell -- ? Look at you.
What it’s been, two years? I tell people about you guys, no one believes you even exist --
(off their sober looks)
Wait a second. This isn’t a social call, is it?

As JD and Walker look back at Peter, their faces telling all, we’re --

INT. HALLWAY - COURTS BUILDING - LATER

JD and Walker talk with a stunned Peter in the hallway.

PETER
Of course, I’m in. The DA owes me, won’t be a problem. Jesus...Kevin. I’ve been so wrapped up in this trial I haven’t been checking my cell. When’s the last time you --?
JD
Talked to him? Last year. He left a message a few months ago, but... you know --

PETER
We didn’t make time for each other anymore.

JD nods.

WALKER
Kevin dropped by Best Mart a couple times. While I was doing security.

PETER
I’m sorry about your suspension. I’d heard, but --

WALKER
It’s okay. Got me sober.

JD
And a discount on DVDs.

As the old friends share a smile, we’re --

INT. BULLPEN -- LATER (NIGHT)

The OLD FRIENDS greet each other. JD gives MAUREEN MINILLO (30’s) - sexy but perenially-single civilian secretary - a hug.

MAUREEN
I always knew you'd be back. Or maybe I just hoped.

Peter embraces Detective MALCOLM GOLD -- mid-30s, rumpled, cynical, receding hairline.

PETER
I like the beard, Malc.

MALCOLM
It scares children.

Now Maureen hugs Walker.

MAUREEN
(whispers in his ear)
You smell nice. Not like Scotch.

WALKER
Ralph Lauren For Men. Smells better, doesn’t taste as good.
Back to Malcolm and Peter --

MALCOLM
So you’re prosecuting... JD and Walker are running point. And I can’t do a damn thing to help. Don’t even have a new partner yet.

JD
(to Malcolm)
Heard you took the plunge, Malc.

MALCOLM
(hugging JD)
Yeah, sorry I didn’t invite you guys. To the wedding. It was just immediate family. Amy’s parents. My lawyer and shrink.

Now, Peter and Maureen hug.

PETER
Mo. You look exactly the same...

MAUREEN
(smiles)
I am exactly the same. Still single, still the Precinct secretary --

PETER
Still beautiful.
(then, sympathetically)
How you doing-- okay?

Maureen shrugs -- she’s been better. Peter nods, understanding. We’re BACK to Walker, JD and Malcolm --

WALKER
So how’s married life treating you?

MALCOLM
The truth? You get a roommate who never leaves. You wake up, she’s there. Come home, she’s there. “What’d you do today, hon?” Why do I have to tell her what I just did? I just did it. How about we talk about something that I didn’t just do? That would be interesting for me.
JD
(smiles)
Nice to see you haven’t changed.
Still better with the dead than the living.

MALCOLM
(laughs, then)
It’s good to see you guys.

WALKER
Damn shame it took a bullet.

Malcolm nods ruefully.

INT. KATHERINE’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Katherine sits behind a desk covered with police briefings and framed photos of her kids. Pacing is CAPTAIN RAYMOND PERKINS, coiled, early 40s, Internal Affairs.

PERKINS
Your top detective is gunned down at his front door and the rumors are sure to follow.

He gauges her. She’s poker-faced.

PERKINS (CONT’D)
We think Ulster was mixed up with some questionable types. Spotted at nightclubs up in North Beach that front for drug operations.

KATHERINE
If you’re suggesting Kevin was dirty, I have no proof. I do know he and Detective Gold had the highest clearance rate in the Precinct.

PERKINS
This is the new IA, Captain. We don’t rush to judgment. But rumor also has it that Bay City Vice caught Kevin in some surveillance photos. Muling a briefcase of gambling money to the Bank of California.

KATHERINE
Any more rumors and you’ll put TMZ out of business.
PERKINS
Strange thing is no one can find those pictures. They disappeared.

KATHERINE
Raymond, this is the Mission. You’re barking at me cause Bay City Vice lost photographs? Talk to them - not me.

Perkins glances out through her office window to the bullpen, where JD hugs and talks to the old friends.

PERKINS
Working with the ex.

KATHERINE
Who better?

PERKINS
Don’t get me wrong. JD’s a great cop.

Perkins starts for the door - stops --

PERKINS (CONT’D)
So you might mention to him I’m looking for those photos. And when he finds them...that his first call is to me.

He flashes a smile, exits. Off Katherine, thinking...

INT. KEVIN’S TOWNHOUSE

Glass walls provide a stunning panoramic view of San Francisco. The CRIME SCENE is a bustle of activity -- uniforms, CIs. JD and Walker enter into it --

WALKER
Sweet place. Kevin was doing okay for himself.

JD
On a detective’s salary.

Walker notes the inference, then reads from his NOTEPAD.

WALKER
(reading)
Killed by a .32 caliber bullet. As indicated by the shell casing found on his doorstep.

(MORE)
WALKER (CONT’D)
(as they climb the stairs)
Gun hasn’t shown up yet.

JD
Good thing the city’s not
surrounded by water or anything.
More guns in the Bay than an estate
sale at Lil Wayne’s house.

They reach the landing, enter the bedroom. Walker turns to
the C.I. lifting evidence from the bed.

WALKER
Anything worth telling me about?

CI
(re: hair fibers)
One black, one blonde. I’ll have
to confirm it back at the lab.
But looks like hair fibers from
multiple sources.

WALKER
Meaning he was sleeping with more
than one woman. Nice to know some
things never changed.

JD enters Kevin’s walk-in closet.

JD
(calling to WALKER)
Same old Niners’ jerseys. At
least we know he didn’t blow his
paycheck on clothes.

JD scans the closet. Looking for something.

JD (CONT’D)
You wonder? How a cop affords a
place like this?

WALKER
You think Kevin was dirty?

JD
(shakes his head)
He was our training officer. He
taught me everything I knew about
being a cop. And half of what I
know about being a man. But let’s
be honest -- I’m not sure I knew
him anymore.

Walker nods. Neither did he. A UNIFORM pulls Walker off. JD
remains, alone. Then he sees something, reaches, pulls out --

The PHOTO OF THE FRIENDS. Lives full of possibility. The same photo Kevin held moments before his death. JD’s transfixed. Memories flooding back. From the photo, we MATCH DISSOLVE to --

INT. CHURCH -- DAY

The GROUP sits SIX ACROSS, not unlike the photo except with one distinction -- Kevin is no longer with them. As the priest offers the BENEDICTION, we HEAR --

PETER (PRELAP)
So... what have you turned over so far?

EXT. PRESIDIO CEMETERY -- DAY

OUR SIX FRIENDS sit in the shade of the RECEPTION TENT amidst the lush, tree-lined cemetery overlooking San Francisco Bay.

WALKER
Been through a dozen field reports. No one saw anyone approach his apartment. No one saw anyone leave.

JD
That’s not what he’s asking.

Peter nods at JD.

MALCOLM
We’ve all heard the rumors. But all I knew was he’d been doing off-hours security for some rich chick. That's not a crime.

JD
Her name's Mia Sherman. Got her name off his cell phone records. We're seeing her after this.

MALCOLM
Ten bucks says she was hot and blonde. With near-perfect breasts.

MAUREEN
(ignoring Malcolm)
Protecting someone in need. That was Kevin. He never changed.

KATHERINE
No. We did.
Peter looks up.

PETER
Wait...what are you saying? He died because he didn’t have us anymore?

MALCOLM
I shared a sedan with him for the last three years. He hated that we drifted. If I had to hear that story about JD and Peter and that jumper on the Bay Bridge one more time --

WALKER
(laughs)
Helluva story though.

MALCOLM
Not if you heard it every day.

JD
(looking at Pete)
We made a great team back then. Til you wussed out and went to law school.

Peter laughs.

WALKER
Malcolm’s right. Why do you think Kevin dropped by Best Mart? Or left birthday messages on everyone’s cell phones? He remembered what we were like together and he didn’t want to let it go.

PETER
So we drifted. But we had lives to live. I loved him as much as anyone. But we didn’t pull the trigger.

JD
No, but he was in trouble and we let him down.

MAUREEN
He never said a word to me. About anything. How could I help him if he never said a word?
KATHERINE
Because back then, he wouldn’t have
had to. We would’ve just known.
(beat)
I need some air...

Katherine, full of emotion, stand and walks off. The others
exchange concerned looks.

JD
I got it.

As JD follows, we’re --

EXT. KEVIN’S BURIAL PLOT - MOMENTS LATER

Katherine stands alone at Kevin’s grave, a fresh mound of
dirt and flowers. She feels JD behind her.

KATHERINE
Don’t mean to be a drama queen. I
know we’re all hurting.

JD
Nice turn-out today. Kevin would
be happy that we all showed.

KATHERINE
We used to take it for granted.
All of us together. Now... it’s an
event.

JD
Hard not to miss that. The six of
us. You and me.

She looks at him, smiles. But there’s something she wants to
say...

KATHERINE
There was a part of me that always
thought you and I would end up
together. Even after the divorce --

JD
I know. Me, too. In fact, I’d
been thinking --

KATHERINE
I met someone, JD.

JD
(surprised)
What? You...?
KATHERINE
(apologetically)
I didn’t plan it. I was lonely and
he was a good listener. At first,
I mainly talked about you -- hours
on end -- I was surprised he even
kept listening.

JD
So...who is he? The guy?

Katherine looks at JD. Wants to respond but...can’t. Just
then, Peter steps in.

PETER
You okay, Katherine? I just wanted
to make sure...

JD
Pete...we’re kinda in the middle of
something here.

KATHERINE
(apologetically)
JD...

And, in that moment, JD puts it together. Katherine and...

JD
(stunned)
Peter.

Katherine looks apologetically at JD. She’s dating Peter.
And as the trio trades awkward looks, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT ONE
ACT TWO

EXT. PRESIDIO CEMETERY - DAY

JD strides off, Peter following closely behind him.

PETER
(concerned)
JD...you weren’t supposed to find out like that.

JD
(clenched)
Pete. It’s fine.

PETER
I know we haven’t talked in awhile, but I was gonna call you about this --

JD
(still clenched)
Pete. It’s fine.

PETER
How come every time you say “it’s fine” I feel like you want to hit me?

JD
(really clenched)
Pete. It’s fine.

JD walks off. Peter knows it’s best to let him go.

ANOTHER ANGLE -- as JD approaches Walker IN THE PARKING LOT, leaning against their unmarked sedan. Walker notes his mood.

WALKER
What’s wrong? You okay?

JD
My ex-wife is dating Peter.

WALKER
O-kay. Taking that as a “no.”

As JD SLAMS the car door closed, we’re --

EXT. STREET -- DAY

Malcolm clicks the lock on his SEDAN, when we HEAR --

KATHERINE
Mal...?
They share a hug. She feels his bubbling emotions.

KATHERINE (CONT’D)

How you holding up?

MALCOLM

(wistful)

I’d bust Kevin’s hump about what a slob he was. Now the sedan’s spotless and what I wouldn’t give for some burger wrappers on the dash. The things you miss, huh?

Katherine gives him a sympathetic look. Then --

KATHERINE

Just got word from Dispatch. You caught a 187 up on Russian Hill. But if you’re not ready --

MALCOLM

What are you kidding? I was ready to pop someone myself, just to get my mind off him --

KATHERINE

(smiles, then)

And you’ll be happy to know your new partner came through. She’s on her way here now.

MALCOLM

Great. About time --

(then, realizing)

“She?”

Off Malcolm’s look, we SMASH TO --

INT. MALCOLM’S CAR – DRIVING

DETECTIVE TESS FLYNN -- late 20s and beautiful -- reads from the DISPATCHER’S REPORT, as Malcolm drives. And seethes.

TESS

Susannah Ross wrote a popular blog. About her dating life in San Francisco. Dog-walker found her body this morning. Strangled in her apartment.

MALCOLM

You’re really my new partner? Or is this just some elaborate Strip-o-gram?
TESS
I was a P3. Due for promotion.
Don’t worry-- I’m well-qualified.

MALCOLM
Now Walker gets JD back to solve my
partner’s murder. And I get who,
Veronica Mars?

TESS
I’m sorry about your loss. I
admired Detective Ulster’s work.
(then)
Word in the precinct is that you
all came up together. Some sort of
clique or something.

MALCOLM
That’s the word?
(then, grudgingly)

TESS
Ten years ago the Mission was
pretty hot. What was it like for
you guys?

MALCOLM
You don’t quit, do you? I know you
ten minutes, you’re interrogating
me like I’m Mohammed Atta.
(beat)
“What was it like?” JD and Peter
were both chasing Katherine. And
even though she picked JD, they
were still like brothers. Walker
could handle his liquor. I was an
optimist, believed nice guys got
the girl -- ‘til I found out
Maureen had a thing for Kevin. And
Kevin... lovable, magnetic, messed-
up Kevin... Kevin was alive.

He takes a moment to remember. Then...

MALCOLM (CONT’D)
(sincere)
They were my best friends. I loved
them all.
(then)
Interrogation over?
INT. MIA SHERMAN’S APARTMENT – LATER

JD and Walker question MIA SHERMAN, 30s with beauty that can only lead men to no good end, in her opulent Pacific Heights apartment.

MIA
Around the time of my divorce, my ex-husband made certain threats. Threats that I took seriously. I hired Kevin to provide security for me.

WALKER
And what did that entail?

MIA
He’d accompany me in public. Places I felt vulnerable. There was no set routine. Anywhere I didn’t feel safe.

JD
What about when you felt lonely?
(off Mia’s look)
We found hair fibers in Kevin’s bed. It’s not a technical analysis but I’d say about your color and length.

MIA
You’re right -- it’s not a technical analysis.

JD
No, I’ll get that from the lab in about an hour. I can read it to you in my Captain’s office.

Sensing her evasiveness is futile, Mia relents.

MIA
Yes, I was sleeping with him.
(then)
But it was casual. No strings.

JD
First thing you said that I believe.

MIA
I cared for him, but...he wasn’t someone easy to get close to.
(MORE)
MIA (CONT'D)
Maybe he saved that for another
woman. Or maybe for his friends.
He wouldn’t be the first man like
that.

WALKER
Your ex-husband. How would he
react if he knew you were seeing
someone?

MIA
Nothing my ex does surprises me
anymore. Even murder.

INT. SUSANNAH ROSS’ APARTMENT

Small but stylish. Just like the victim. Malcolm studies
the beautiful, lifeless body of SUSANNAH ROSS, 30s.

MALCOLM
(to a nearby CI)
Petechial hemorrhaging consistent
with asphyxiation. Bruising on the
neck confirms manual strangulation.

TESS
(walking up)
No sign of forced entry. Meaning
Susannah knew her killer.

MALCOLM
Great, I see how this partnership
is gonna work. You’ll handle all
the obvious deductions, I’ll take
the rest.

Malcolm notices Tess’ reaction to the corpse.

MALCOLM (CONT’D)
(needling)
You ever seen a vic before?

TESS
I was a beat cop before getting
bumped. Not a shut-in.

Tess does her best to hide any discomfiture. Malcolm
indicates a PILLOW under the victim’s head.

MALCOLM
See the pillow. Supports your
theory that the killer knew the
victim. Probably even had feelings
for her.

(MORE)
After killing Susannah, the guilt reflex kicked in -- wanted to make sure she was comfortable. Even in death.

(off Tess's look)
You can say it -- it's creepy.

Just then, Malcolm finds a SMALL PILL under the dust ruffle of Susannah’s bed (don’t worry, he’s wearing gloves). Motions to a CI --

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
Get this to the lab.

The CI takes it, as a Uniform cop comes over. Tess watches Malcolm in action, impressed by his detective skills.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
(to the Uniform)
Whaddaya got?

UNIFORM
Last known sighting was her neighbor. Said she saw the victim yesterday morning.

EXT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Malcolm and Tess face MOLLY COUGHLIN, 30s, plain but sweet-looking. And devastated.

MALCOLM
(introducing)
Miss Coughlin.

MOLLY
-- Molly.

MALCOLM
I’m Detective Gold. This is --
(swallowing hard)
-- Detective Flynn.

MOLLY
Susannah was my friend. This is devastating.

MALCOLM
You saw her...

MOLLY
Yesterday morning. She was going to meet her fiancee. Brunch.
(MORE)
They were supposed to get married next month.

Tess and Malcolm exchange a look.

TESS
What did you know about him? Her fiance?

MOLLY
Nothing, we’d never met. He lived in Seattle. But I felt like I really knew him. The way she wrote about him on her blog was magical.

MALCOLM
Thank you, Molly.

Molly smiles appreciatively, clears. Tess turns to Malcolm.

TESS
What do you think?

MALCOLM
I think JD and Walker are solving the murder of my former partner. And I’m trapped in an episode of “CSI: Vagina.”

(as he exits)
C’mon...let’s go read her blog.

As Malcolm huffs off and Tess follows, we’re --

EXT. STREET - NORTH BEACH - LATER

JD and Walker emerge from their sedan outside the club “Gate.” Walker notes JD’s demeanor.

WALKER
I know that look.

JD
What look?

WALKER
Just because I haven’t seen you in awhile doesn’t mean I don’t know your looks. And that look says you’re thinking about how to get her back...

JD
Bullshit.
WALKER
Oh yeah?

JD
I’m thinking about solving Kevin’s murder. And that’s all I’m thinking about.

WALKER
And I drank because I liked how it tasted with fish.

As they enter into the club, we’re --

INT. JOHN LEESON’S OFFICE

A BACK OFFICE at a hip, urban club. Pre-business hours. Walker and JD talk with JOHN LEESON -- 40s, slick and no-bullshit. Also in the room is ALEX, 30s, John’s associate.

JD
Your ex-wife says that she was scared of you.

JOHN
Please don’t tell me my tax dollars are paying for cops who believe what my ex-wife says...

An OPUS X CIGAR burns in an ashtray on John’s desk.

WALKER
(fanning the air)
You’re saying she’s lying?

JOHN
I’m saying I never laid a hand on her. Or threatened her. Her shyster lawyer convinced her to scream abuse. Told her it would help in the divorce trial. Hiring your cop friend was all part of the act.

JD
So you had no problem she was sleeping with Kevin?

JOHN
(laughs)
You kidding? I was thrilled to know that I wasn’t the only moron who fell into that velvet trap. (MORE)
Too bad Kevin didn’t marry her, I coulda ended spousal support. Tell ‘em, Alex.

Alex nods in agreement. Walker and JD exchange a look. Though coarse, John seems convincing enough.

And if I really had a problem with Kevin... why would I have hired him?

Stunner. Walker and JD are shocked.

WALKER
He worked for you?

JOHN
You didn’t know? I met him at one of our court hearings. He was there with Mia -- providing “security.” We got to talking-- easy guy to like, you know?

They nod. They know.

Nightclubs are a cash business. Having a cop around keeps people from getting ideas.

INT. “GATE” - MOMENTS LATER

JD and Walker exit through the club.

JD
You want to say it or should I?

WALKER
Kevin was mixed up with some bad dudes.

JD
Thanks for not making me say it. Vice thinks Leeson’s into gambling and drugs.

WALKER
I don’t get it. He had more service commendations than any cop in the Bay. And this is how he pays the rent? Providing muscle for some douchebag.
JD
Kat was right -- we were his family. Look what happened when we split -- Kevin goes bad, you fell into a bottle, my marriage imploded. Only Peter came out ahead -- he got the girl.

WALKER
Malcolm got married.

JD
He came out ahead. Not so sure his wife did.

Walker smiles, as Alex heads them off.

ALEX
Detectives.

WALKER
What can we do for you, Alex?

ALEX
I don’t know if this means anything, but I got to know Kevin a little. At the end of the night and he was always rushing off. To see some girl.

JD
Mia?

ALEX
No. Wouldn’t give a name. But you know the look when a guy’s excited about who he’s got waiting for him.

As JD and Walker consider this, we’re --

INT. KATHERINE’S APARTMENT

Doorbell. Katherine answers it -- JD and their kids enter.

KATHERINE
(kissing her kids as they struggle past her)
Hi. Hello. Nice to see you, too...
(re her kids’ lack of interest)
They do wonders for my self-esteem.
JD
They ate already. Emily needs to finish her Science homework.
Something about invertebrates.

A beat, as they face each other.

KATHERINE
I’m sorry, JD. I didn’t know how to tell you...

JD
So. How long have you and Pete...?

KATHERINE
A few months. First month was coffee. Second month was dinners.

JD
We can skip the third month, thanks.

KATHERINE
My point is, I never intended it to be Peter. He was a friend. When I didn’t have many to talk to.

JD
You coulda talked to me.

KATHERINE
About what? How much I missed you. How much I hated you for not missing me.

JD
You don’t think I missed you...?

KATHERINE
By the end, I was never sure what you were thinking. I mean, maybe if we’d gone to therapy. Or...not rushed into signing. None of this would be happening. But...

JD
I made a lotta mistakes, I know. Probably why I dream about you, Kat. A chance to finally get it right.

As she looks at him, touched, we HEAR --

PETER (O.S.)
Sorry I’m late. Traffic up and down Stockton.
JD turns to see Peter entering behind him. He’s got a TAKE-OUT BAG and a BOTTLE OF WINE. He gives Katherine a kiss.

PETER (CONT’D)
Hey, JD. You wanna join? I ordered way too much.

JD
No... you two go ahead. Walker’s waiting for me.

JD leaves. Katherine and Peter watch him go, conflicted.

INT. BULLPEN - PRECINCT

Malcolm scrolls through Susannah’s blog on his computer, as Maureen sits nearby.

MAUREEN
I read Susannah’s blog every day. Probably coulda written it, too. All about a single woman trying to find love in San Francisco.

MALCOLM
You mean, science fiction?

MAUREEN
But after years of trying, she finally found the man of her dreams.

MALCOLM
Would’ve been nice if she gave him a name. “The One.” Talk about pressure. Guy won’t be “The One” for long after he drops a deuce in the crapper and forgets to flush.

Malcolm looks at Susannah’s beautiful photo on the screen.

MALCOLM (CONT’D)
Look at her. How could it be so hard for her to meet the right guy?

MAUREEN
It’s not easy finding your soulmate. That’s what Susannah was looking for.

MALCOLM
Or maybe he came along years ago, but she was too busy thinking of someone else.
Malcolm offers a sympathetic smile.

MALCOLM (CONT’D)
God bless him, Mo -- I loved him too -- but Kevin wasn’t soulmate material. You know that.

Maureen nods. She knows.

MALCOLM (CONT’D)
And soulmate-- I think most people settle for the nearest warm, willing body and just call them their "soulmate" so nobody'll judge them for settling for the nearest warm, willing body.

MAUREEN
That's a sad thought.

MALCOLM
We're not in our 20s anymore. And our soulmates aren't what they used to be.

(then)
You seeing anyone?

MAUREEN
Malcolm...

MALCOLM
Sorry. Just curious what the guy who gets you will have that I didn't.

Pretending not to have overheard anything, Tess enters with a printed blog entry.

TESS
No luck tracking down the fiancee. And all of Susannah’s friends and family members have clear alibis. But listen to this --

(reading)
"Thank God for James. Sometimes I think his friendship is more meaningful than any love affair could be."

MAUREEN
(realizing)
James! That’s her best friend. He knew everything about her.
MALCOLM
(to Tess)
C’mon, Nancy Drew, let’s go see a man about a soulmate.

INT. SECURITY ROOM - KEVIN’S BUILDING - DAY

JD enters with two cups of coffee. Hands one to Walker, who pores over SECURITY CAMERA footage on a pair of monitors.

JD
Night of the murder, building records show Kevin buzzed someone in just before eight P.M.

WALKER
Except I’ve been through every camera, every angle. No sign of a mystery woman paying Kevin any late night booty calls.

JD
He probably went to her house. No danger of her wanting to stay over.

Walker smiles. Then JD notices something on the split security screen. A WOMAN emerging from her car in the parking garage.

JD (CONT’D)
Wait a second. What’s that? Zoom in, will you?

ON THE MONITOR -- we FREEZE on a GRAINY FIGURE.

JD (CONT’D)
Can you get any closer?

Walker nods. And we ZOOM in on the FACE of the WOMAN until it’s unmistakable. The mystery woman is --

JD (CONT’D)
Katherine.

Off JD, shocked, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT TWO
Malcolm, on his cell, and Tess emerge from their car.

MALCOLM
(hanging up phone)
Got preliminary notification from the coroner. Susannah had ninety migs of Diazepam in her stomach.

TESS
Valium.

MALCOLM
And traces of rum, sugar cane, and mint.

TESS
(knowingly)
Mojitos.

MALCOLM
Nice to see you’re up on your club cocktails. I’m having the uniforms do a canvas of all the local bars.

TESS
I think maybe Susannah’s fiancee killed her. Then split town. Not sure of motive yet, but --

MALCOLM
You know what I think? That maybe you shouldn’t think so much.

Tess suddenly stops short.

TESS
Okay. Your friend died. And you’re upset about it. Half-pissed and half-sad and I’m sorry for you, I truly am. But Susannah Ross had friends too and they deserve her murder solved just as much as you do Kevin’s. So instead of being such a prick to me, why don’t you remind yourself that you’re one of the best detectives in this city and help me find the person who killed Susannah?

And for once, just this once, Malcolm has no retort.
EXT. BALCONY - (MOMENTS) LATER

Malcolm and Tess talk with JAMES ALBERTSON, late 20s and nice-looking, on the BALCONY of his Nob Hill apartment.

JAMES
Susannah and I were friends. I did the web design for her blog. And when she went on blind dates, I’d sometimes sit at the bar to keep tabs on her.

TESS
James. Can you tell us a little about her fiancee?

MALCOLM
His real name, for instance.

JAMES
I wish I could. Except... there was no fiancee.

Malcolm and Tess exchange a look. Stunned.

MALCOLM
Wait a second. You’re saying her fiancee didn’t exist?

JAMES
Susannah was always writing about these lousy dates and sexual misadventures. She created “The One” to give her readers hope. She swore me to secrecy. Said at least she wanted her fictional life to have a happy ending.

MALCOLM
(skeptical)
You two never dated?

JAMES
She wasn’t my type. Remember, this is San Francisco...

Malcolm nods, getting it.

MALCOLM
Can you think of anyone who might've had a reason to hurt her?
JAMES
Well... there was one guy -- really had a thing for her. They had a date that ended badly. But she never wrote about him on the blog.

TESS
Why not?

JAMES
He threatened her. Said if she did, she’d regret it.

As the Detectives consider this, we’re --

INT. PRECINCT -- DAY
Maureen types up a report on her computer. Peter crosses through the bullpen, pauses by Maureen's desk.

PETER
Hey. How's the wake coming along?

MAUREEN
Tomorrow at five at McSorley's.

PETER
(smiles at the memory)
McSorley's. It'll be good to be back there again. Even if Kevin can’t make it.

MAUREEN
(a beat, then)
It’s nice about you and Kat.

PETER
Maureen...

MAUREEN
It’s okay -- you and I were just friends with benefits. And only then because we both struck out with the people we really wanted. But I think you and Katherine have a chance at something good.

Peter nods, appreciative. Then, he steals a glance at her computer.

PETER
(indicating the screen)
What’s cooking there?
MAUREEN
Request for DNA testing.

PETER
Yeah? Whose?

MAUREEN
I'm sure JD told you about the hair strands at the scene. One's Mia Sherman's. The other belongs to an unidentified female. Our so-called "mystery woman."

No, JD didn’t tell him. As Peter wonders why, we’re...

EXT. PRECINCT

JD and Walker roll up in their car, step out. Still stunned from what they saw on the security tapes.

JD
What was she doing at his apartment the night he was killed?

WALKER
I think it's safe to assume she didn't kill Kevin.

JD
Yesterday, I assumed she wasn’t dating Peter. How about we go easy on the assumptions for awhile?

INT. PRECINCT - (NEARLY) CONTINUOUS

JD and Walker move through the Precinct entry.

WALKER
I'm gonna check out-of-state rap sheets for all our probables.

IN THE BULLPEN -- Peter immediately steps in.

PETER
Hey...JD. Um, why didn’t you tell me about a second female suspect?

JD
She's not a suspect yet.

PETER
C’mon, buddy. You know how this works. I'm the ADA. My ass is on the line, too.

(MORE)
PETER (CONT'D)
So you need to tell me everything you’re doing. At all times.

JD
I'm working. In about ten minutes, I might grab some coffee. And depending on how much I drink, maybe take a piss. That cover it?

PETER
Whoa...Jesus. What’s up with -- ? (stopping, realizing) Oh, I see what this is about. You want to punish me, don’t you?

JD says nothing. Then...

PETER (CONT'D)
I waited a year, JD.

JD
What?

PETER
A year after the divorce. Before I asked her for a drink.

JD
She said Month One was coffee. You guys should really get your stories straight.

PETER
What should I have done? If I’d come to you and asked your permission to take her out on a date...what would you have said?

JD
I’da said “no.” But I woulda respected you for asking.

PETER
Listen to you. I mean...what is it? Is it because I make her happy? Or because you couldn’t? I really want to understand.

JD
If I have to explain it to you, Pete, you never will.

JD and Peter face each other.
PETER
I want this "mystery woman" brought in for questioning.

WALKER
Pete... no.

JD
I told you. She's not a suspect at this time.

PETER
Then I have no choice but to invoke prosectorial privilege. I want the suspect interrogated. Now.

JD
(a beat, then)
Fine. Suit yourself.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM

A subdued Katherine faces JD across the table. Peter paces the room, agitated. Walker sits behind JD.

PETER
Kat. What were you doing there?

JD
Peter, I'll handle this.
(turns to Kat)
Kat...?

KATHERINE
I needed to talk to Kevin. Privately. Bay City Vice was looking into some nightclubs with high drug activity. They spotted Kevin in some of their surveillance photos.

She slides an ENVELOPE OF PHOTOS across the conference table. ANGLE ON THE PHOTOS -- Kevin carrying a briefcase into a bank; Kevin with John Leeson and Alex Barnes at the bar.

PETER
(concerned)
What're you saying? You were there to warn him? About an internal investigation?

JD
Pete. This isn’t a courtroom. It’s where we eat lunch.
WALKER
We know Kevin was providing security for John Leeson. He owns some of those clubs.

KATHERINE
Vice wanted to turn the pictures over to Internal Affairs. I called in a favor - got them to bury the photos.

JD
So you broke policy to protect him.

KATHERINE
Kevin had a stellar career and he needed to be told it was all going to end unless he straightened up. He promised me he would. A few hours later he was dead.

PETER
Jesus, Kat. I get the loyalty. But subverting an IA operation? Forget his career, what about yours?

KATHERINE
You know IA. They're jackals. One lousy picture and Perkins'll drag his body down Lombard Street. His life was the job - someone needed to protect him.

PETER
If it ever comes out you short-circuited an IA probe, your career's done. Over. Everything you've worked for the last ten years...

JD
There's no reason it has to come out. We know why you did it. I'm sure we'd all have done the same thing for Kevin. Right, Pete?

PETER
(to JD)
You're so self-righteous. I loved Kevin, too. But no, I wouldn't have given up my career for him.

(MORE)
Peter considers her reasoning, as JD scoops up the photos of and stuffs them in his jacket.

JD
I’ll take care of these.

As JD exits, we’re --

INT. APARTMENT -- DAY

Malcolm and Tess question STEVEN ABBOTT, 35, average in most respects, in a modest apartment.

MALCOLM
Susannah Ross was found strangled in her apartment. You went on a date with her a few months earlier that ended badly.

STEVEN ABBOTT
Yeah, for me. Took her to Fog City Diner. Dropped a hundred bucks on dinner. After which, she told me she wasn’t interested.

MALCOLM
Maybe she wanted Italian.

STEVEN ABBOTT
I had real feelings for her. But she didn't have any intention of dating me.

(MORE)
STEVEN ABBOTT (CONT' D)
I was just fodder for her stupid blog. She practically admitted as much.

TESS
(working him)
That doesn’t seem fair. You drop real money on dinner and she disrespects you like that --

STEVEN ABBOTT
Exactly. I mean, I may not be George Clooney or some nerd with Google stock options, but I could’ve given her a good life. Women always complain men want some unrealistic fantasy, but they’re no different...

MALCOLM
So were you upset when you heard Susannah was getting married?

STEVEN ABBOTT
No, I was happy.
(then)
‘Cause if she was off the market once and for all, I’d know the cause was lost. I could move on.

This resonates with Malcolm, who sighs.

MALCOLM
Well you got your wish. She's off the market.

INT. WOMEN’S ROOM – PRECINCT

Katherine splashes water on her face. Maureen enters.

MAUREEN
You...okay?

KATHERINE
(covering)
No, I'm fine, thanks. Just so dry in here. My skin gets...so dry.

Maureen nods. Sensing Katherine’s guard is up.

MAUREEN
You and Pete...wow. Here I work twenty feet from you and I didn't even know...
KATHERINE
I wanted to tell you. I meant to --

MAUREEN
No, I get it -- you're busy. Kids. A precinct. Peter now. Can't have time for everyone.

KATHERINE
(realizing)
Is that what you think? That I don't have time for you anymore? Mo... I don't have time to shave my legs anymore. Why do you think I wore pants all summer?

Maureen smiles, Katherine continues.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
If I'm with the kids, I feel guilty I'm not working. If I'm at work, I feel bad I'm not with the kids. Throw in Peter and the only thing I'm consistent at is neglecting someone at all times.

MAUREEN
You know what I see? I see the only female Captain in the city. A great Mom. And someone -- in my opinion -- who looks good in pants. (then, wistful) I coulda told you those things anytime.

Maureen exits. Katherine watches her go, exhales.

EXT. PRECINCT - DAY

Peter sits alone on the precinct steps. After a beat, Walker exits the Precinct. Peter takes him in.

PETER
You think I wanted to fall in love with my best friend’s ex?

WALKER
How's that?

PETER
How many dead-end relationships have I been through? You met those girls. (MORE)
PETER (CONT'D)
Nob Hill society chicks, 
executrixes from the Financial 
District. All they made me feel 
was alone. And then...Kat. I 
didn’t wanna fall for her ten years 
ago and I didn’t wanna fall for her 
now. Christ, I loved being a cop 
but half the reason I left for the 
DA's office? 'Cause I couldn’t 
look at them together every day.

Walker nods, remembering.

PETER (CONT’D)
And now -- I agonized. She and I 
talked about it ad nauseum. “What 
about JD? How to tell JD?” He came 
so up often, I felt like I was in a 
goddamn menage a trois.

WALKER
He’s hurting. You can understand.

PETER
JD and I went thru the Academy 
together. We walked a beat in the 
Tenderloin together. I’m hurting, 
too. I fell in love, but I don’t 
want to lose my best friend over 
it.

WALKER
Hate to be the wise black man here. 
But Pete... I’m not sure you’re 
gonna have a choice.

Peter looks at Walker, nods solemnly. He understands.

INT. HALLWAY - PRECINCT - LATER

As Katherine walks to her office, an eager Malcolm steps in 
beside her.

MALCOLM
Hey...what’s the latest? They gonna 
crack Kevin?

KATHERINE
If anyone will, I’d bet on JD and 
Walker. What about you -- where 
are we on Susannah Ross?
MALCOLM
No suspects, no motive, no fiancee.
A complete dead end. On the bright side, Flynn’s been my partner 24 hours and she hasn’t yet requested a transfer.

KATHERINE
(smiles)
Give her time.

Malcolm peels off, as Katherine enters --

INT. KATHERINE’S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

-- where she’s surprised to see JD waiting for her.

JD
I’m sorry about that. I know it got a little out of hand --

KATHERINE
Let’s forget it. We have enough to worry about -- where are we on Kevin?

JD
Uniforms and secondary teams are still canvassing, but Walker and I are focused on Mia Sherman and her ex-husband, John. Neither has a credible alibi.

KATHERINE
What's your gut?

JD
Database found a Nevada warrant on Mia Sherman. She got arrested 18 months ago in Vegas. Assault with a deadly weapon, which just happened to be a .32.

KATHERINE
Ballistics?

JD
Waiting on the lab. But Mia confirmed a sexual relationship with him, so I’m thinking --

KATHERINE
Love affair gone bad?
JD
If you could imagine a failed love affair producing that kind of drama.

Katherine offers a faint smile.

JD (CONT’D)
I respect what you did for Kevin. Too bad Pete can’t see it.

KATHERINE
Please, JD. Let’s not.

JD
Actually, let’s. Because I need to understand...

KATHERINE
What do you need to understand? That I was alone and heart-broken? That I fell in love with a man who listened and cared?

JD
You love him? He makes you happy?

KATHERINE
(softly)
He doesn’t make me unhappy.

JD
What else doesn’t he do?

KATHERINE
He doesn’t go out for drinks every night with Walker and Malcolm. He doesn’t get threatened by my promotions. And when we have a fight, it doesn’t take him seven years to say I’m sorry.

JD
(stung)
I never doubted Peter was more fully evolved than I am.

KATHERINE
(shakes her head)
Do you see what you’re doing? If I say nice things about Peter, I’m an insensitive bitch. If I tell you he’s not you, I’m some flighty tease.

(MORE)
Look, I don’t know where Peter and I end up, but maybe that’s the appeal. Because I know how you and I’d end…and I don’t think my heart could take that again.

JD looks at her.

JD
I think you still love me, Kat.

KATHERINE
(a beat, then)
Do I? Some days, I’ll admit it. But you know what you have to admit -- we didn’t work. In theory we worked, for those two kids we worked, after a bottle of wine we worked. But day-in, day-out...

JD
I'm different now.

KATHERINE
And so am I.

JD
I can leave my work at the office.

KATHERINE
Not being able to is what makes you great.

JD
I’d rather be a good husband than a good detective.

KATHERINE
And you’d resent me for that choice. All over again.

JD
I think we owe it to Kevin. To give it a shot. It’s what he would have wanted...

KATHERINE
You know what we owe to Kevin? To solve his murder. So...

She indicates the door. He nods. Starts out, turns back--

JD
One more thing.
He KISSES her, lips pressed tight, and for the briefest moment she gives in to it before pushing free.

JD (CONT’D)
We more than just worked. We were scorching.

He exits, leaving her breathless-

INT. HALLWAY - PRECINCT

JD exits through the bullpen. Unseen by JD is someone perched in a corner of the room. Someone who saw the kiss through Kat’s cracked door. Someone more than a little pissed.

Off Peter, simmering, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT THREE
ACT FOUR

INT. MIA SHERMAN'S APARTMENT -- DAY

CLOSE ON THE FLICKERING FLAME of a candle. WIDEN as JD and Walker face Mia Sherman. The CANDLE burns on her mantle.

WALKER
Ms. Sherman, we're back because you're a person of interest in the murder of Kevin Ulster.

JD
That's cop talk for “we think you know more than you’re telling us.”

MIA
I didn't have anything to do with Kevin’s death.

JD slides an arrest report towards her.

JD
You were arrested at the Mirage Hotel last year for threatening your ex-husband with a .32 caliber handgun.

MIA
He’d been cheating on me. I thought it was mature that I didn’t actually fire.

WALKER
We don't have proof it was the murder weapon, but Detective Ulster was murdered with a .32. Can you see why we're suspicious?

MIA
Then you’re talking to the wrong person. The gun was John’s. I grabbed it from his overnight bag.

JD notices a PAIR OF WINE GLASSES sitting next to Mia’s sink.

JD
You two still in touch?

MIA
Only when I take him to court for nonpayment of spousal support.

Walker breathes in the candle’s aroma.
WALKER
Candle smells nice.

MIA
Tell you what. Leave me alone and I’ll let you have it.

EXT. MIA SHERMAN’S APARTMENT

Walker and JD stride toward their sedan.

WALKER
You smell that up there?

JD
The burning wax? Or the cigar smell it was meant to cover up?
(then)
I’m thinking Opus X. Same stick that was burning in John Leeson’s ashtray.

WALKER
(smiles)
Nice to know you’re still part bloodhound.

JD
Plus the wine glasses.
(then)
Maybe those two aren’t quite as estranged as they’d like us to believe.

WALKER
24-hour surveillance on both?

JD nods, as Walker starts to dial his cell.

JD
That candle did smell nice, though.

They sit into their sedan, doors closed with a SLAM.

INT. BULLPEN - PRECINCT

Maureen is packing up for the night. Tess approaches.

TESS
Oh...hi. I need to run jackets on some POIs in the Ross murder.
MAUREEN
I’m leaving for the wake. But the database is up. You can use my passcode. Top drawer.

Tess smiles appreciatively, as she sits at the computer. Maureen pauses before exiting.

MAUREEN (CONT’D)
Malcolm was devastated about Kevin. Whether he shows it or not --

TESS
That’s sweet.

What is?

TESS
You’re apologizing for him.

MAUREEN
No. I’m just telling you who he is. After ten years of being his friend.

TESS
(nods, then)
Can I ask? You two. You never...?

MAUREEN
(a little wistful)
No, I couldn’t see past Kevin. Back then, loyal and dependable could never compete with sexy and unavailable. And now...“sexy and unavailable” is still unavailable. And “loyal and dependable” is too.

TESS
If it makes you feel better...I majored in choosing the wrong guy. And I graduated with honors.

Maureen smiles. A bonding moment. As Maureen exits and Tess turns back to the computer, we HEAR --

JD (PRELAP)
What can you say about old friends that hasn’t been said already? That you were richer for knowing them, poorer for losing them.
INT. MCSORLEY'S - DAY

Kevin’s wake is packed, as JD gives his speech which we now realize is the VOICE OVER from earlier.

JD
And not a day goes by that you don’t wish they were in your life again.

ANGLE on our friends, looking back at JD from the crowd.

JD (CONT’D)
Kevin was once a part of such a group of friends. Who loved each other. Who made the world safer and sweeter for each other. And then...who lost each other. We struck out at the world alone. Convinced ourselves that’s what growing up meant. Maybe it was easier than admitting how much we needed each other.

Shots of our friends, reacting.

JD (CONT’D)
If I could do it again, I’d hold these old friends closer. And maybe we wouldn’t be here tonight.

(then, raising a glass)
Alright. I’ve exceeded my limit on cliches. So to Kevin. Our friend. To those he brought together. And to those he leaves behind...

As the room toasts, we’re --

INT. MCSORLEY'S -- ONE HOUR LATER

It’s an Irish wake -- in other words, a party. Music blares. At a FRONT TABLE, Katherine gently touches Peter’s forearm as he slugs down another G&T. Motions to the SERVER for another.

KATHERINE
(concerned)
That’s three.

PETER
I knew there was a reason I wasn’t drunk yet.
KATHERINE
Peter, I understand why you’re angry and I’m sorry. But what you saw was...nothing.

PETER
Guess we have different definitions of nothing. Because what I saw...certainly looked like something.

As Katherine watches him down another drink, we’re...AT THE BAR, with Walker and JD --

WALKER
That was a nice speech.

JD
Found it on-line. Hope I stuck Kevin’s name in in the right places.

Walker smiles, as JD’s eye is drawn toward Tess, entering. A CASE FILE under her arm.

TESS
Detectives. Anyone seen Malcolm?

JD
He’s been detained.

He indicates a corner table, where Malcolm and Maureen are deep in conversation.

TESS
Got a report I need to discuss with him.

JD
Interesting.

TESS
The report?

JD
That you two are still talking.

JD glances over at Katherine and Peter. Turns back to Tess.

JD (CONT’D)
How about a drink while you wait?

TESS
I'm on-duty.
JD
You’re a detective now. You’re always on duty.

She smiles, a flicker of attraction. Then we’re AT THE CORNER TABLE -- as a tipsy Malcolm speaks to Maureen.

MALCOLM
I’m an asshole. The way I treat her. My wife’s a goddamn saint and I take it out on her.

MAUREEN
Take what out on her?

MALCOLM
That she’s not you.
(beat)
It should be you I just married, Mo. It should be us in that house in Nohe Valley.

MAUREEN
But Malcolm, you and I -- we never even...

MALCOLM
Of that I’m painfully aware. Could never compete with that thing you had for Kevin.

MAUREEN
I overlooked more than a few nice guys because of him. Maybe you more than anyone.

And perhaps this is the greatest gift she could have given him - an acknowledgement of what might have been.

MAUREEN (CONT’D)
I loved him. But in the end, what did we have? A few great months and then years of missing those few great months. But you’re my friend, Mal. And that never has to go away. Losing you would be harder than losing any lover.

MALCOLM
(gently)
Do me a favor. Get married. Take yourself off the market so I don’t have to live with the hope you might change your mind.
Off Maureen’s look of sympathy, we’re --

AT A BOOTH -- JD nurses a whiskey. Tess sips Diet Coke.

   TESS
   So how’s it being back? In the precinct?

   JD
   Great. You know. Get a bunch of old friends together, smooth sailing...

   TESS
   (smiles, then)
   You know... when I was a Uniform, I heard a lot about you.

   JD
   Oh yeah?

   TESS
   That you want a murder solved -- that you’re the man.

   JD
   That it?

   TESS
   That you’re a good Dad.

   JD
   Homicide and kids -- my specialties.

   TESS
   That you still have a thing for your ex.

   JD
   (wincing)
   And Malcolm questions your Detective skills...

   TESS
   My two cents? Maybe the past is the past for a reason. Maybe it’s time to look forward. Find someone new. Who makes you feel something more than regret.

   JD
   Know anyone?
TESS
Sorry, no.
(then, smiles)
But I find her, I’ll let her know
you’re looking...

JD smiles. The flicker starting to ignite. Cut short when Walker approaches.

WALKER
(nod to Tess, then)
Surveillance just checked in.
A dude just left Mia Sherman’s apartment.

JD
They make him?

WALKER
They left that for us.

ANOTHER ANGLE -- we’re with Peter and Katherine, doing their best to smile, as JD and Walker approach.

JD
(to Peter)
Just want you to know we have a lead on a suspect.

Peter nods. Then, his discretion weakened by the alcohol --

PETER
Thanks for the heads-up. Glad not everything’s on the sly these days.

JD
What’s that mean?

PETER
I think you know.

PETER (CONT’D) KATHERINE
In her office. I saw you kiss her.

Walker shakes his head. This can’t be good.

WALKER
Oh, crap.

JD
How’s it feel to have your friend kiss your girl? Not too good, does it?

(MORE)
JD (CONT'D)
You couldn’t get her back then.
But I’ll give you this -- you’re a patient SOB.

PETER
You’re such a hypocrite. You talk about friendship. But you’re no better a friend than anyone else.

JD
Maybe not. Maybe I’ll just settle for being a better kisser.

PETER
You sonofab--

And with that, Peter decks JD with a solid right cross. As JD hits the floor, we...SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF ACT FOUR
ACT FIVE

EXT. MCSORLEY’S - NIGHT

The wake’s over. Stragglers depart. MALCOLM sits on the curb, watches Maureen getting into her Civic. Tess approaches.

TESS
(re: Maureen)
The one that got away?

MALCOLM
Not really. Never had her.

She sits down on the curb next to him.

MALCOLM (CONT’D)
Do not pity me.

TESS
I don’t, actually. I kind of envy the friendship you guys had.

Whether it’s the booze or the mood, MALCOLM lowers his guard.

MALCOLM
Maureen said sometimes it's harder to lose a friend than a lover.

TESS
I think she’s right. That’s what I came to talk to you about...

As Tess hands Malcolm her CASE FILE, we’re --

INT. JAMES ALBERTSON’S LOFT - LATER

Malcolm and Tess question James Albertson, Susannah's friend.

JAMES
Yes, I filed suit against Susannah in 2004. That blog was my idea and when it started making money...I wanted my share.

TESS
The verdict was sealed. Can you tell us what happened?

JAMES
I spent 30 grand on lawyers to get a 20 grand settlement. And Susannah and I patched things up.
MALCOLM
You were with her the night she died.

JAMES
(exhales)
We had drinks at Libre. I already told you that.

MALCOLM
Did you go back to her apartment with her?

JAMES
No. She was a little drunk. So I put her in a cab at the bar and went home.

TESS
That we can verify. A neighbor saw Susannah return home alone.

JAMES
A neighbor? Who, Molly?

TESS
Why? You have a problem with Molly?

JAMES
Molly liked to think she was Susannah’s friend. But I thought she was just a groupie. A fan of the blog. Who didn’t understand that what Susannah wrote was... fiction.

TESS
What do you mean?

JAMES
It was an ego boost for Susannah. Having Molly in her life. But I just thought it was creepy.

As Malcolm and Tess share a look, we’re --

EXT. MIA SHERMAN’S APARTMENT - NIGHT

JD and Walker emerge from their car.

WALKER
You were outta line to bait Peter like that.

(MORE)
I know you don’t want to hear it from me. But you were outta line.

This what happens? You sober up and you become the voice of reason? (beat, conceding)

I know...

WALKER
How’s the jaw?

JD
Sonafabitch has a right like Manny Pacquiao.

PRELAP -- KNOCK, KNOCK.

INT. MIA SHERMAN’S ENTRY

Mia opens her front door to face JD and Walker.

MIA
(upon seeing them)
You’re kidding.

JD
One question. You answer honestly, you won’t see us again. You don’t, Detective McRae and I might have to lease the sublet next door...

As she looks at them...

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Malcolm and Tess sit across the table from Molly Coughlin.

TESS
Molly?
(then)
Susannah was your friend, right?

MOLLY
Of course --

TESS
Not easy losing a friend, is it?

MOLLY
I told you, I didn't kill her.
I'm talking about the fact she was getting married.

There's a slight flicker across Molly's face.

TESS (CONT'D)
I get it. I hate it when one of my single girlfriends suddenly ups and gets married. Like she's found the Golden Ticket and you're stuck eating Kung Pao-for-one the rest of your life.

MOLLY
I was happy for her!

MALCOLM
You were jealous!

Malcolm slides the Medical Report across the table.

MALCOLM (CONT'D)
Our tox report said Susannah had Valium in her system the night she was strangled. She didn't have a prescription for Valium. According to the CVS on Union, you did.

MOLLY
Oh, so I'm the only one in this city who takes Valium? What else you gonna charge me with? Rooting for the Niners?

Tess motions to Malcolm. Let me take over. He nods.

TESS
Here's what I think happened. On the night she died, she couldn't sleep. Came to you to borrow some Valium. You gave her some. Just before you killed her.

MOLLY
You're crazy, you know that? This is crazy--

TESS
We ran a background. You didn't tell us you spent six months in a psych ward for an attachment disorder after your college roommate filed a restraining order.
MOLLY
That was a totally different thing.

TESS
The sad part is, you weren't going to lose Susannah at all. Because her fiancee doesn't exist.

Molly stares at TESS, stunned.

MOLLY
What? No that’s not possible. She told me all about him --

TESS
He was a hoax. Fiction. A made up story for the readers of her blog. It was joke, Molly. You killed her for no reason at all.

Molly lowers her eyes. A long beat passes.

MOLLY
She said we'd always be friends. But they all move on. They meet their perfect men and they live their perfect lives. And they forget you. All of them. Why didn’t she just tell me the truth?

Molly hangs her head, as Malcolm gives Tess an approving nod: You’ve done good. Tess smiles to herself.

INT. “GATE” - JOHN LEESON'S OFFICE

JD and WALKER face John Leeson.

LEESON
I thought we were done with this crap.

WALKER
We're not here to see you.

They gesture to Leeson's associate, Alex Barnes, nearby. He's busy lighting a cigar. An Opus X.

JD
Mr. Barnes, were you in a sexual relationship with Mia Sherman?

LEESON
(wtf?)
What did you say?
ALEX
John, I don't know what the hell they're talking about--

JD
Our surveillance saw a man matching your description leave her apartment an hour ago.

WALKER
We thought John was the cigar smoker. We were wrong. It's you.

ALEX
You guys on the rock? That doesn't prove anything.

JD
True. Luckily, Mia just did that for us. Admitted you were sleeping together.

WALKER
Accessory to murder charges have a way of making people cooperative.

JD
She said when you found out she was also seeing Kevin -- you went nuts.

WALKER
(to Alex)
Guess that's why you were so eager to tell us Kevin was running off to meet a "mystery woman."

JD
We may not look bright, but we catch on eventually. And by the way, no good comes from smoking.

Cornered, Alex suddenly SPRINTS for the door. JD and Walker follow in pursuit.

INT. "GATE"

Alex RACES through the packed club. Music pumps from the speakers. Dancers are bowled over like ten pins. Alex reaches a back door, RAMS through it.

JD and Walker dodge clubgoers, follow. JD pushes through the same back door, Walker goes in another direction.
OUTSIDE -- Alex flies INTO THE ALLEY. A private GARBAGE TRUCK doing nighttime collections blocks the north end.

    ALEX
    Jesus. Move it!

The SANITATION WORKER barely reacts. Alex is trapped. Not sure what to do. ANOTHER ANGLE, as JD approaches with gun held high. Tension as JD inches forward. NO SIGN OF ALEX.

    JD
    (calling)
    Come out! Show hands!

Alex suddenly RISES from BEHIND THE DUMPSTER. His GUN TRAINED on JD. But before he can fire --

A BULLET PIERCES HIS CHEST. Alex drops to the ground, revealing WALKER -- behind him -- in a shooter's stance.

    WALKER
    (looks at JD)
    That's for Kevin.

As Walker and JD share a look of rueful satisfaction, we HEAR --

    PETER (PRELAP)
    The man who murdered Detective Ulster has been identified as Alex Barnes.

INT. DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Peter addresses a throng of REPORTERS from a makeshift dais at a hastily-called press conference.

    PETER
    Mr. Barnes was shot and killed when he engaged Detectives McRae and Conlin in a gunfight.

BACK OF THE ROOM -- JD watches Peter. Has to admit he’s smooth. Then...Perkins from IA steps in next to JD.

    PERKINS
    Good job today.

    JD
    Thanks.
PERKINS
(a beat, then)
I’m sure you’ve heard about the photos Bay City Vice took of your friend Ulster. Word has it your ex-wife had ‘em buried. Happen to stumble across those photos?

JD
No, sir.

PERKINS
(studies him)
I know what it’s like having friends on the job, but I can have your badge if you’re lying...

JD
I don’t believe you, Perkins. I don’t think you have any idea what it’s like having friends on the job.
(then)
We done? Cause the man is talking about me...

Perkins gives him a lingering look that says “this isn’t over.” As he exits, JD turns his attention back to Peter.

PETER
-- though we have yet to recover the .32 caliber handgun used in the murder, the D.A.‘s office considers the case closed. No further statements at this time.

Peter moves off the dais, ignoring the inevitable barrage of questions to find --

KATHERINE, waiting for him.

KATHERINE
You’re good at those.

PETER
Good at some things, not so good at others.
(off her look)
You know how long I’ve loved you, Kat --

KATHERINE
Peter --
PETER
(continuing)
So long that I believed it when you
told me you were over JD. But it’s
clear to me...you’re not. And I
can’t be the guy you’re with while
you’re thinking about another guy.

KATHERINE
Peter --

PETER
One day, maybe... who knows? But
for now, I’d like to stick to the
things I’m good at.

He exits. Katherine, hurt, watches him go. From across the
room, Katherine sees JD WATCHING her. A moment. But it’s a
moment of empathy. DISSOLVING TO...

EXT. SAN FRANCISCO

MUSIC RISES. The city at Golden Hour. The Bridge, the
Wharf, Chinatown. The hour growing later.

INT. MCSORLEY’S - NIGHT

The old hang-out. JD, Walker and Malcolm share a booth.

MALCOLM
I’m not here for five years and
suddenly...twice in one night. What’s
that called...when that happens?

WALKER
Called too much free time, I think.

Malcolm smiles.

JD
(then, exhales)
This is lame. What are we even
doing here?

MALCOLM
You’re here to set things straight.
McRae and I are here for the steak
fries.

They look up as Peter enters. JD stands. They face each other.

JD
Thanks for coming.
PETER
(a beat, then)
Sorry for that punch.

JD
Sorry for giving you a helluva reason to throw it.

JD reaches out his hand. Peter takes it, pulls him into a hug.

PETER
Guess we both lost her.

JD nods, as the old friends sit down at their table. Then Walker looks OFF-CAMERA --

WALKER
(surprised)
You gotta be kidding me.

ANGLE ON THE FRONT DOOR -- as Katherine enters with Maureen. MUTUAL SHOCK as they see the men at the table.

WALKER (CONT’D)
What are you guys -- ?

KATHERINE
(a look to Maureen)
We just thought it was time to catch up.

WALKER
Cool. Awkward but cool. You guys want to -- ?
(indicates the table)

Katherine settles between JD and Peter. The trio trades glances, doing their best to deny the OBVIOUS AWKWARDNESS.

JD
(standing)
Why don’t I get a pitcher?

AT THE BAR -- as the BARTENDER slides a pitcher to JD. He reaches for his wallet, instead pulling out the OLD PHOTO of the FRIENDS. He stares at it, as WALKER steps in behind him.

WALKER
(to the Bartender)
Cranberry and soda.

The Bartender moves away. Walker studies the photo.
WALKER (CONT’D)
Look at us. Young and dumb.
(long beat, then)
Be nice to have that back.

JD
Maybe we do.

A nice thought. Walker considers, then--

WALKER
Know what’s funny? We solved
Kevin’s murder, but we never found
the gun or the mystery woman.

JD
(shrugs)
Guns disappear. And for all we
know, there was no mystery woman.

INT. APARTMENT -- NIGHT

CLOSE on a GUN in someone’s hand. A .32, To be exact. WIDEN
to reveal that someone is...

TESS
(on phone)
Yes, I have it. I know it can be
traced back to you. I’ll get rid
of it, I promise. Please...just
stop calling.

To WHOM she’s speaking to will be REVEALED later. For now,
Tess clicks off the phone. Troubled.

But instead of getting rid of the gun, she... SLIDES it deep
into her underwear drawer. Off her, we... SMASH TO BLACK.

END OF SHOW