

PERSON OF INTEREST

written by

Bob Bowersox

Adapted from the novel BRAINWASH by John Wainwright  
and the screenplay UNDER SUSPICION by  
Tom Provost and W. Peter Iliff

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CHARACTERS

HENRY HEARST, mid-50's, male

INSPECTOR CATHERINE LYLE, 60's, female, British

DETECTIVE JAMES BELL, 30's, male

SUSAN HEARST, 30's, female

SERGEANT ADAMS, late 40's, male

UNIFORMED OFFICER, late 20's, female (could be male)

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES GRIMES, 60's, male

PLACE

A police station in a small coastal U.S city.

TIME

Present day. 10:30pm.

The stage is divided into three rooms. Center stage is the MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM, the largest room, a virtual cube, but with the SL and SR side walls cutouts to allow for sightlines to the adjacent rooms. A door on the SL upstage wall leads to a mostly-unseen hallway that runs the length of upstage, leading to the other rooms. SR of the door is a wooden chair. On the wall, SR of the chair, is a two-way mirror. On a section of the SL wall is a small shelf holding paper towels and a pump bottle of hand sanitizer, and above which hangs a very small rectangular mirror. In the center of the room is a rectangular table; a tin ashtray sits on it. A chair is set at either end of this table.

SR of this MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM is the BULLPEN, a very small room with a door on the upstage wall, a small desk and office chair along the SR wall, and a file cabinet set on the SL (cutout) wall. Over the desks hang a dozen or so wanted posters, 8 x 10 B&W crime scene photos, various post-it notes stuck any old place, a rabbit's foot thumb-tacked to the wall. DS of the desk is a counter on which sits a coffee pot, coffee tin, filters, coffee cups, sugar box, dried cream box, old spoons, a box of donuts, Etc.

SL of the MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM is the SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM, also very claustrophobic, with a single door on the US wall, and a single, small, square wooden-topped table, flanked by two wooden chairs, set DSC in the room. A single, round, industrial-type lighting fixture hangs over the table.

Everything on the set is monochrome -- blacks, various shades of grey from charcoal to light, and cream whites. All costumes will be in textured materials in the same color palette.

In a world of secrets, the truth is never what it seems.

ACT ONE

CURTAIN UP

LIGHTS UP ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM ONLY

The door to the MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM opens.

HENRY HEARST enters. He's immaculately dressed in an expensive grey serge suit, brilliant white shirt and rep tie, black shoes. There's arrogance in his manner, though he would call it being "distinguished".

Hearst is followed immediately by a UNIFORMED OFFICER, who points him toward the table. The Uniform sits on the wooden chair at the door.

Hearst looks around the room then at the Uniform.

HEARST

May I smoke?

UNIFORM

Won't bother me.

Hearst smiles, reaches into his coat, pulls out a silver cigarette case, lights a cigarette. He peruses the room, then sits at one end of the table.

LIGHTS DOWN ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP FULL ON BULLPEN.

SERGEANT ADAMS, in uniform, enters, moves to a file cabinet, looks through a file drawer.

He's followed by DETECTIVE SECOND GRADE BELL, CHIEF OF DETECTIVES GRIMES, and INSPECTOR LYLE.

Bell is fit, crewcut, sport coat, with an aggressive, menacing energy. He squeezes a white tennis ball in one hand.

Grimes is gray, gruff. Once an adequate cop, he's now settled comfortably into being a bureaucrat.

Lyle is understated, observant, dark charcoal jacket over grey skirt, black blouse buttoned to the throat. She exudes a quiet confidence. She looks through reading glasses at one of several files she carries.

BELL

It's him, I tell you.

Bell sits on one of the desks, his feet on the chair.

BELL  
You get the feeling sometimes, and  
you know you're right.

LYLE  
Did you arrest him?

BELL  
No. Just to come in to clear up  
some points in his statement. That's  
all.

LYLE  
And he raised no objection?

BELL  
No. I told him no more than a few  
minutes.

LYLE  
I see.

GRIMES  
He accepted that bullshit story?

BELL  
Why shouldn't he accept it?

GRIMES  
The man's a big-time lawyer.

BELL  
A weasel tax lawyer to the rich.

GRIMES  
A lawyer nonetheless, and by  
definition, that makes him not stupid.

BELL  
So what? He found the body. As far  
as he's concerned, that's all we  
know.

LYLE  
That *is* all we know.

GRIMES  
Lot of coincidences, you ask me.

BELL  
Oh, come *on*, Chief. Three separate  
sets of coincidences?

(MORE)

BELL (CONT'D)

Look, it's him. It's Hearst. We may be light on physical evidence, but that doesn't mean we're wrong. He'll do it again, we don't nail him now. I say we hound the bastard till he breaks. Till he's *there*.  
(squeezes the ball)

GRIMES

Big-time lawyers might call that harassment.

BELL

When a perp gets to that, he's almost under. It's the last plea before "guilty."

GRIMES

Well...for whatever reason, he's here, so we make the most of it. But one wrong move with this guy, we're all up the creek. Even a tax lawyer knows his way around Wrongful Arrest.

Bell starts to protest.

GRIMES

And don't tell me you didn't "arrest" him. You've deprived him of his liberty. That's all he needs.

Bell stands, moves toward the door.

BELL

I'll break him before he gets that far.

GRIMES

No. Not you.  
(to Lyle)  
Inspector Lyle--

BELL

(stopped cold)  
WHAT?!? Sir, he's *my* collar--

GRIMES

Look, Bell...That's what an exchange program's all about, why Scotland Yard sent us Lyle in the first place. New approaches and all that. If this is our guy...

BELL

He *is* our guy--

GRIMES

...*If* this is our guy, he's pretty unshakable. Already been through two tough interviews without a scratch. Maybe Inspector Lyle here...

BELL

Sir, I can--

GRIMES

Bell. You're a good cop. With a good future. Be happy with that right now, okay?

(looks at Lyle)

Lyle. What do you think?

Lyle looks up from the files she's been perusing.

LYLE

I've seen men like Hearst before, sir. In London. Not your typical killers, all testosterone and defiance. Not ignorant like that. No, this type is smart...won't give strong-arm the time of day.

GRIMES

(glances at Bell)

My point exactly.

LYLE

We have to be smarter than he is, that's all.

GRIMES

Are you?

Lyle smiles.

LYLE

Let me talk to him.

GRIMES

Do it.

Grimes turns and walks out. Adams follows him.

Bell eyes Lyle.

BELL

(derisively)

You're going to "talk to him".

LYLE

Yes.

BELL

This isn't a coffee clatch with the girls, Inspector.

(beat)

Talk. Jesus.

LYLE

I suppose that's how I've taken to referring to the art of interrogation.

BELL

Uh-huh.

LYLE

Been doing it a long time, Detective. No small measure of success.

BELL

Uh-huh. Well...

(punches his fist)

I guess I like a more direct kind of art.

LYLE

I see. Well, Grimes gave this to me, didn't he? So...we can work this together or not. Your call. But if you stay, I want it understood: this is *my* play. *My* way.

A momentary standoff, then...

BELL

Yeah. Right. So...?

LYLE

So let's talk to him.

BELL

A nice little *conversazione*?

LYLE

Something like that.

Bell looks Lyle in the eye.

BELL

Listen, Mizzzzz Lyle. I didn't bring Hearst in for the purpose of organizing a quiet little chat when I could be catching up on lost sleep.

(MORE)

BELL (CONT'D)

The man's a living argument for the return of the electric chair. I want him broken.

LYLE

Oh, I'll break him, Detective. He'll get no easy ride from me. I don't cry for these people. Never shed a tear for a single one of them, never will.

BELL

Uh-huh. Well, just know this: if it doesn't work your way, we're gonna do it mine.

Lyle studies Bell a moment, then exits. Bell follows.

LIGHTS DOWN ON BULLPEN. LIGHTS TO FULL ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM AS LYLE AND BELL ENTER.

Hearst virtually ignores them. He taps his cigarette in the ashtray, takes another puff, almost nonchalantly.

Bell closes the door as the Uniform exits, leans against it. Lyle walks to the table and stands behind the vacant chair.

LYLE

Mr. Hearst. My name's Lyle.  
Inspector Lyle.

HEARST

A woman...

LYLE

It would appear so, yes.

HEARST

You're not from here.

LYLE

Brighton, actually. Here on exchange.

A slight smile breaks Hearst's face.

HEARST

Welcome to America, Miss.

LYLE

Inspector, if you don't mind.  
(indicates Bell)  
You've met Detective Bell?

HEARST  
Yesterday at the house.

BELL  
(derisively)  
A real pleasure.

Hearst hears the hostility in Bell's voice, glances back at him. Lyle sits.

LYLE  
We have a few things we'd like to clarify. A few inconsistencies. You've no objections, I hope?

HEARST  
No. Not at all.

LYLE  
It's a little late.

HEARST  
It's quite all right.

LYLE  
Probably inconvenient.

HEARST  
I've told you. It's all right.  
(beat, then with edge)  
Unless you don't get on with it.

LYLE  
Yes. Well, it's very good of you in any case, Mr. Hearst.

Lyle sorts through papers in a file as she talks.

LYLE  
Detective Bell tells me your wife would have liked to come with you.

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
I've no objection. If you'd like your wife present while we--

HEARST  
No! No...thank you. It's...not necessary.

LYLE  
The choice is yours, of course.

HEARST  
(quietly)  
I'd prefer her not to be here.

LYLE  
As you wish. Now. First things  
first. Your full name's Henry Hearst?

HEARST  
Henry Llewellyn Hearst.

LYLE  
Address 43 Hampton Ridge? That's  
over near that large golf course?

HEARST  
Yes. Cypress Hills.

BELL  
Pretty hoity-toity over there.

Hearst glances at Bell, then smiles.

HEARST  
It's fairly exclusive, if that's  
what you mean. Maybe someday you'll  
get to see it. They occasionally  
have a gate guard position open up.

Lyle gives Bell a "back off" glance before he can reply.

LYLE  
Your age is fifty-four?

HEARST  
Fifty-five, actually. It was my  
birthday last week.

LYLE  
I see. Thank you.

Lyle pulls a pen from her jacket and makes a note in the  
file in front of her.

LYLE  
Married, yes?

HEARST  
Aren't you?

LYLE  
(after a moment)  
No.

HEARST

Huh. Looking at you, I would have bet you were.

Lyle smiles.

LYLE

You're an attorney?

HEARST

Yes. Senior tax attorney at Doyle, Liggett. I oversee the entire department.

LYLE

Mm-hmm.

Lyle pulls another sheet from the file.

LYLE

Well. Now. Let's talk about the dog.

Bell leans over Hearst.

BELL

Right. The Mystery Dog. Actually, I prefer Ghost Dog.

HEARST

(to Bell)

Excuse me?

(to Lyle)

Is there some reason he's being...?

LYLE

This case has everybody on edge.

(gives Bell a look)

It's a particularly unpleasant business that all of us would prefer not to deal with, I'm sure. But let's see...

Lyle puts on her reading glasses and finds a page in the file.

LYLE

Briefly, according to this report, you took this dog for a walk. That was the evening you found the body of the Roberts girl. Gwendolyn Roberts.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

You returned home, telephoned the police, then made this statement...  
(shows page to Hearst)  
...to Detective Bell here in the presence of a Detective Alcock.  
Right?

HEARST

If you say so.

LYLE

The dog--

HEARST

A fox terrier. Rough-haired.

LYLE

Owned by a neighbor of yours at Hampton Ridge named Carlton.

HEARST

Yes. Older gentleman. Doesn't get out much.

LYLE

Ever own a dog yourself?

HEARST

When I was a boy. My family had Danes.

LYLE

But you don't have one of your own now.

HEARST

My wife likes cats but thinks they're too unsanitary. Susan would have one only if it could be sanitized.

BELL

Whaddaya mean? Cat's are always licking themselves. Dumped a girlfriend once 'cause of her damn cat. It had me up all night slurping away. A dog's way more unsanitary, but at least when you're sleeping, *they* sleep.

LYLE

(beat, then to Bell)  
Thank you for that.

HEARST

The messiest is the canary. She refused that too, but for once I stuck to my guns. I'm quite firm when I need to be.

Lyle looks at Hearst over her reading glasses.

LYLE

What was his name again?

HEARST

Carlton.

LYLE

No. The dog...

HEARST

Tango.

BELL

(jotting in notepad)

Tango. You write that the same as "tango"?

HEARST

(arrogantly)

How else would you write it? Like cha-cha?

LYLE

Dogs. Fox terriers, in particular. Good hunting dogs. They nose things out long before the human eye can catch sight of them. Rabbits, for example.

HEARST

Yes. I suppose so.

LYLE

Tango. Did he chase rabbits?

HEARST

Sometimes.

LYLE

On the jogging path around the golf course near your home, for example?

HEARST

Yes. On the golf course.

Lyle pauses, then rises.

LYLE  
But Tango didn't find the body.

HEARST  
Pardon me?

LYLE  
You said in your statement that you found the body.

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Not Tango.

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
I find that odd.

HEARST  
Why?

Lyle pulls an 8x10 photo from the file and slides it across the table to Hearst.

LYLE  
Look at it.

HEARST  
I'd rather not. I don't like--

LYLE  
*Look at it!*

Hearst reluctantly pulls the photo to himself, stares at it.

LYLE  
That's how she was. How we found her.

BELL  
How you left her.

LYLE  
In the ditch in the mango grove behind the fifteenth hole. That's how her clothes were. Ripped to hell. Remember?

Hearst is unable to take his eyes from the photo.

LYLE

And the blood. You see it? You can't rape a seven-year-old without there being a lot of blood. On her legs. On what's left of her clothes. Everywhere! Fresh blood, Hearst...and *the dog didn't find it?*

Hearst looks up from the photo.

LYLE

One of the inconsistencies I mentioned. One of the reasons we asked you to come here this evening.

HEARST

(puzzled)  
The dog?

LYLE

That the dog--

BELL

A hunting dog, no less...

LYLE

...didn't sniff out the bloody body first.

HEARST

Well, maybe he did. I don't know.

LYLE

But your statement says *you* found the body.

HEARST

Me. The dog. What the hell's the difference?

LYLE

The difference is...why would you leave the jogging path, go deep into that grove, down into that ditch, if the dog didn't lead you there?

HEARST

Okay, then the dog was there. We were together. We found the body. What difference does it make? I called the police.

(glances at Bell)

Unless perhaps you think the dog was a ventriloquist.

LYLE

*Mr. Hearst! Three small girls were found strangled within a period of twenty-two days! You're a principle witness to one of the crime scenes, and it's my job to make certain the facts in your statement match the facts of the case.*

HEARST

How noble of you.

Bell comes off the wall toward Hearst.

BELL

Listen, you bastard...!

Hearst spins.

HEARST

*What did you call me?!*

Lyle backs Bell off with a touch to his shoulder.

LYLE

Please. Let's all relax here.

(beat)

So you're saying the dog was with you.

HEARST

(angrily)

What dialect you need this in?

(then, trying to behave)

Yes. The dog was with me.

LYLE

Mr. Carlton says not.

Lyle taps the file with her fingertips.

LYLE

I can quote, if you wish. Mr. Carlton's statement.

HEARST

Mr...?

LYLE

Your next-door neighbor. The owner of Tango.

HEARST

Yes. Of course.

LYLE

He states, quite categorically, that you *did not* call for Tango that evening.

HEARST

He just doesn't remember right. He's old.

LYLE

That could be. But what about your other neighbors -- Mr. Falkener, and Mr. and Mrs. Chalmers -- you know them?

HEARST

(getting irritated)  
Yes. Yes, I know them.

LYLE

They all know Carlton's fox terrier?

HEARST

Everybody in the area knows Tango.

BELL

The ghost dog.

Hearst stands, whirls on Bell.

HEARST

Listen, you, I've about--

LYLE

(firmly)  
The dog wasn't with you, Mr. Hearst.

BELL

So what were you doing down in that ditch in that grove if he wasn't?

HEARST

He was!  
(calmer)  
I'm sure he was.

LYLE

Falkener. The Chalmers. They saw you that night, but not the dog. Unless they're all suffering memory loss too. Who am I supposed to believe?

HEARST  
(petulantly)  
Them.

LYLE  
Mr. Hearst. Sit in my chair. Listen to what I've been listening to. Your neighbors -- Carlton, Falkener, Chalmers. They've nothing to gain. Why would they lie about this?

HEARST  
How should I know?

LYLE  
What possible reason?

HEARST  
Maybe because I'm very rich...because I have a big house and a glamorous wife. I have all those things and it happens I don't deserve them. My looks are entirely ordinary, and I'm no genius. Mediocre people can accept when someone special is successful -- a movie star, or an athlete -- but when it's one of their own, it strikes them as being an injustice. Wouldn't you agree?

LYLE  
Would you believe that, if you were sitting where I am?

HEARST  
It doesn't matter what I believe. Obviously.

Hearst sits. Lyle looks at the file again.

LYLE  
There is another inconsistency regarding this matter. There was no trace of a dog at the crime scene. No tracks, no canine saliva, no feces in the entire general area.

BELL  
As in, your Ghost Dog story reeks.

HEARST  
*The dog was there.* He was running around in circles.  
(MORE)

HEARST (CONT'D)

You know how dogs behave, when they're enjoying themselves. I --  
(suddenly realizing)  
Hold it. Hold on.

LYLE

Yes?

HEARST

That day. Right. They're all right about Tango. I *didn't* pick him up from Carlton. He was already out. Playing on the golf course.

BELL

Oh, the dog's a member? Have a decent handicap, does he?

HEARST

He gets out sometimes. I find him on the course when I'm walking.

LYLE

Perhaps you can understand how our interest peaks every time you change your story, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

(cavalierly)  
And I sure hope this one works to get me off the hook, Inspector.

Bell moves toward Hearst.

BELL

Do I have to listen --

LYLE

*Bell!*

Bell halts. Hearst notices.

HEARST

(to Bell)  
Good dog.  
(smiling, to Lyle)  
You've got him trained well, Inspector. Better keep him on that leash, too. You don't want me in a litigious mood.

A long silence. Lyle reaches over, slides the photo back to herself and puts it into the file.

LYLE

Did you know Gwendolyn Roberts well?

HEARST

A man my age can't know a seven-year-old well. She was known in the neighborhood, if that's what you mean. Seemed happy.

LYLE

She must have been very trusting.

HEARST

Nobody who knew her would have harmed her.

LYLE

Somebody did.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

You have no children?

HEARST

No.

LYLE

From choice? None of my business, of course.

HEARST

You're right. It's none of your damn business.

Lyle waits. Hearst stares at her, then:

HEARST

What the hell. From choice, if you must know.

LYLE

I see.

Lyle waits again.

HEARST

My wife has always been...afraid.

LYLE

(quietly)  
Understandable.

This triggers something in Hearst. His voice takes on an edge.

HEARST

No. It's not. Maybe to you. But not to a man.

(beat, he stands)

A woman gets married, Inspector. Sex may not be all-important, it may not be the main ingredient in the marriage. But it is a *part*. Sex. And motherhood. A woman who marries, while not acknowledging at least *that*, perpetuates a con game. She takes, but refuses to give.

An awkward moment.

LYLE

Your marriage, I take it?

HEARST

Is this pertinent?

LYLE

I wouldn't ask otherwise.

Hearst considers Lyle.

HEARST

Then yes, for whatever it's worth to you.

LYLE

I'm sorry.

HEARST

Sorry?!

(beat)

Are you married, Inspector?

LYLE

(beat)

No.

HEARST

Then how the devil do you know what I'm talking about? By what yardstick? By what impudence do you claim the right to appreciate what I mean?

Hearst walks to the small mirror, checks his tie.

HEARST

Twenty-five years, Inspector. Twenty-five years. That's a long time. A time for celebration. For silver wedding anniversaries.

(turns)

Twenty-five years of near-celibacy. Sex being a dirty word. Sex being something bestial. To be told that you're filthy. Depraved. A pervert.

(an anger rises)

And the condom...never forget the condom. Not the pill. To use the pill would be tantamount to an admission that she copulated. To tell a doctor -- an outsider -- that she and her husband actually coupled. So, no pill. Always the condom. Then, as if I'd injected her with some foul disease, the douche. God only knows what sanitizing muck she washed herself out with.

(beat)

And then, in a final act of...of...  
She...she...

The rage leaves him. He seems to deflate. The transformation is utter and instantaneous, like turning off a tap.

LYLE

(quietly)

She killed your unborn child.

Hearst's head nods once. Lyle gives him a moment.

LYLE

The shock of finding her. Roberts. There in the ditch, in the mango grove. It must have been very great.

Hearst looks down in front of him, as if seeing the body.

HEARST

It was.

LYLE

Did you recognize her?

HEARST

She was lying face downwards.

LYLE

But you recognized her?

HEARST

(getting impatient)

Yes. Yes, I knew who it was. By her skirt and blouse...her school uniform.

(looks at his watch)

Look, this is getting ridiculous. I was told this would only take a few minutes...

Lyle stands.

LYLE

I'm afraid it's going to take a bit longer than that.

HEARST

What do you mean?

LYLE

Mr. Hearst. Put yourself in our shoes. First, the garbage dump at Pittston, near Milford. Ten-year-old Pauline Standish is found raped and strangled. Your car was tagged that night as parked illegally *in* Milford, within a quarter-mile of that dump, which placed you at the scene.

HEARST

I gave a full explanation.

LYLE

You gave *an* explanation. A quiet glass of beer, you claim, in a Milford pub. Then you returned home.

HEARST

That's right. One glass of beer.

LYLE

Yes. Well, we'll get back to that. Then second, four days later, near Layton Beach. Where the body of Rosemary Wallace was found.

HEARST

I made another statement. You no doubt have it in your file there.

LYLE

A conference.

Hearst sighs and sits.

HEARST

A legal conference, yes. One every year. I attended. The evenings tend to become a little boisterous for my taste, so I took a walk along the sea-front up to Dane's Point. I returned to the hotel and went straight to bed. And that's all.

LYLE

Not *quite* all. Eight-year-old Rosemary Wallace can't be dismissed so readily. Her body was found next morning in Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

I don't even know where Jobson's Cove is.

LYLE

Halfway between Layton Beach and Dane's Point.

Hearst flares.

HEARST

What are you getting at?!

LYLE

What I'm getting at is why you're still here, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

(contemptuously)  
Suppose you tell me.

LYLE

You know, you should probably have a lawyer come down here.

HEARST

*I am a fucking lawyer!*

LYLE

All right.

(beat; Lyle circles  
Hearst slowly)

Here's why you're here: Police procedure. We start with anyone who knew the victim, then proceed outward from there. After Wallace was found, the State Police questioned all people known to be visiting Layton Beach at that time.

HEARST

So naturally you come to me?

LYLE

You were there, weren't you? And good police work showed you'd been at Milford, four days earlier. A coincidence we couldn't ignore.

HEARST

That's just what it was: a coincidence.

BELL

My ass.

LYLE

Perhaps a coincidence, perhaps not. To our manner of thinking, you had exhibited a...how should I put this?...a *habit* of being around when little girls were raped and murdered. First, Pittston. Then Layton Beach. Now, two days ago on the golf course right next to your home at Hampton Ridge, for God's sake!

BELL

You should have been arrested the first time.

Hearst whirls to Bell.

HEARST

I don't like your tone, Deputy Tinkerbelle.

BELL

*Detective. Detective Bell.*

Hearst turns to Lyle.

HEARST

Jesus. You think I killed her.

Lyle suddenly leans into Hearst, hands flat on the table.

LYLE

Yes. We think you killed her. Which in turn means we think you raped, then strangled, all three. Carbon-copies. Whoever did one, did them all. *That's* why you're here, Hearst.

A silence. They stare at one another.

HEARST

I was asked and I came, Inspector.  
That's why I'm here. I came  
voluntarily. Now I'm going.

Hearst rises and moves toward the door.

LYLE

(firmly)  
Sit down, please.

Hearst doesn't stop. Bell aggressively blocks him.

BELL

Please. Give me a reason.

LYLE

(very firmly)  
Sit down, Mr. Hearst.

Hearst glares at Lyle in defiance, remains standing.

LYLE

Let's take the "voluntarily" out of  
this, then. Henry Hearst, you are  
under arrest on suspicion of murder--

HEARST

*You can't be serious!*

LYLE

That being the case, you are not  
obliged to say anything unless you  
wish to do so, but--

HEARST

*This is ridiculous!*

LYLE

--whatever you say will be taken  
down in writing and may be given in  
evidence.

HEARST

You're not even American!  
(turns to Bell)  
Can she even do this here?

BELL

The office arrests you, Hearst, not  
the man...woman. Whatever. But if  
you prefer, I'll be glad to...

Hearst abruptly turns his back on Bell, jerks his jacket.

BELL

Thought so.

LYLE

You have the right to phone an attorney. In your case, one more suited to this matter. If you don't know one, we can supply you with a list.

Hearst still says nothing. Lyle shrugs.

LYLE

Okay, then. Turn out your pockets. The lot. Everything on the table.  
(to Bell)

Detective, please check that they're empty.

Bell moves toward Hearst. Hearst moves away.

LYLE

Please, Mr. Hearst. Don't make this more difficult.

Hearst slowly begins to empty his pockets.

Lyle removes her jacket, hangs it on a hook on the back of the door. She rolls up her blouse sleeves, walks to the wash basin, washes her hands, dries them.

LYLE

Everything on the table, Detective?

BELL

(patting Hearst down)  
He's clean.

LYLE

Good. Thank you.  
(to Hearst)  
Please, sit.

Hearst slowly sits.

Lyle looks through Hearst's possessions: a checkbook, a Waterford fountain pen, a silver cigarette case, a silver lighter, a comb, some coins, a calfskin wallet.

Lyle picks up the wallet and sits down, fingering her way through the contents: a driver's license, insurance card, a restaurant receipt, a library card, some photos.

Lyle looks at the photos, picks one and turns it to Hearst.

LYLE  
Your wife?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Susan, I believe you said?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
She'll have to know.

HEARST  
Tell her if you have to, but I don't  
want to see her.

LYLE  
She might want to see you.

HEARST  
(bitterly)  
I doubt it.

Lyle puts the photo back in the wallet, and slides Hearst's possessions to the side. She reaches into her jacket pocket, withdraws a small, portable tape recorder.

HEARST  
My God. You're recording this?

LYLE  
It's necessary at this point.  
(snaps it on)  
This is Inspector Catherine Lyle, at  
Central Precinct, August 5th, 20xx.  
The time is 11:45 pm. With me are  
Detective First Grade James Bell,  
and Mr. Henry Hearst.

Lyle sets the recorder on the table.

HEARST  
So. What do we discuss? We've pretty  
much exhausted canaries and dogs.

Unfazed by Hearst's petulance, Lyle picks up a manila folder from a small stack to her left, with "Standish" printed in black marker across the top.

LYLE  
Let's talk about the first murder.  
(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

Three weeks ago at Pittston.

(opens the file)

Pauline Standish. Speak no ill of the dead -- in particular the violently slaughtered -- but the fact remains that she was not a well-loved child.

HEARST

I wouldn't know.

LYLE

Of course not. But for your information: a drunken father, her mother a known -- how shall I put this? -- a woman of easily-obtained favors. She herself, despite her years, was known to the police. Following her mother's lead.

(shakes her head)

Ten years old. A ten-year-old tart. Sad.

HEARST

Why tell me this?

BELL

Because you killed her, you son of a--

HEARST

I've done nothing! I keep telling you!

LYLE

So you do.

(beat)

Ten years old. Teddy bears, dolls, crayons. The expression, "a ten-year-old"...that's the impression it evokes.

HEARST

I take it she wasn't?

LYLE

She was a little bitch, according to this.

Lyle runs her finger down a page in the file.

LYLE

Expelled from school twice.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

Ran away from home four times in less than a year. Thumbed rides. Some of those long-distance truckers aren't too choosy. Last time all the way to Los Angeles. There's some suspicion -- rather more than a suspicion -- that she found her way into some pornography.

HEARST

Pornography?

LYLE

Hard-core stuff. Kids and animals. That brand of perversion.

HEARST

My God! You seriously think I'd take a girl like that into...where was it?...the Pittston *dump*?

BELL

Chances are *she* took you, Hearst.

HEARST

Not that either.

LYLE

Right. You were enjoying a quiet glass of beer at the time.

HEARST

Actually half a glass. I'm no drinker. Didn't finish it.

LYLE

But you can't remember which pub.

HEARST

We call them "bars" over here.

LYLE

Yes. Which *bar*, then.

HEARST

I didn't notice. I told you -- I'm not really a drinker.

LYLE

And an uncommonly slow one. A half a glass, you say. And it takes you almost two hours?

HEARST

That's what you say.

LYLE

No. That's what the Milford police say. Your car was parked where it shouldn't have been for more than ninety minutes. Right before the body of Standish was found. That's slow drinking, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

But that isn't against the law, is it?

LYLE

Slow drinking?

(smiles)

No, that's not yet illegal. Just, shall we say, one more oddity.

(sighs)

So you can't remember the name of the bar. Or its specific location?

HEARST

Sorry.

LYLE

Just that you parked your car.

HEARST

That's all.

LYLE

You walked one hell of a long way.

HEARST

I don't follow.

LYLE

Well, we know exactly where you parked your car. Six hundred yards to the nearest bar. Quite a walk.

HEARST

I like walking. I was out walking when I found Gwen's body, remember?

LYLE

I have a good memory, Mr. Hearst. But walking isn't the same as going for a beer. And why walk? Every bar along that strip in Milford has a parking lot.

HEARST

Perhaps they were full. I don't remember.

LYLE

Thursday evening. Not the best night of the week for the bar business. And every bar owner, waiter, waitress, bartender and barmaid has been interviewed. They all say the same: locals only. They'd certainly remember somebody dressed like you who ordered one beer, then took almost two hours to drink only half of it.

HEARST

(expressionlessly)

I parked my car. I walked to a bar. I had a drink. A single glass. Then I returned to my car. That's what *I* say, Inspector.

LYLE

And *I* say you're a damn liar! That I don't mind, but you're taking me for an idiot in expecting me to believe it. And that, I *do* mind!

Lyle turns away, controlling her anger. Bell takes the opportunity.

BELL

I need to use the john. You want me to send Adams in?

Lyle checks her watch.

LYLE

No. Just don't be long.

Bell leaves the room. Hearst turns to her, indicates the now-gone Bell.

HEARST

Bit of a hot-head, isn't he?

LYLE

We have different styles.

HEARST

Uh-huh. More *genteel* across the pond? Strong-arm frowned upon, is it?

LYLE  
My choice these days.

HEARST  
*These days? Meaning what?*

Lyle sits, considers Hearst a moment. Then she picks up the little recorder, turns it off.

LYLE  
(smiles)  
Off the record.

HEARST  
Is it ever?

LYLE  
Until Bell comes back.

HEARST  
An honorable woman. Surprising.  
(realizing)  
Sorry. I didn't mean...

LYLE  
It's all right. In this line of work, honor is not always a given.

Lyle picks up the photo of Hearst's wife.

LYLE  
Tell me about Susan.

HEARST  
She'll tell you she tries to be a good wife.

LYLE  
Most would, wouldn't they?

HEARST  
How many do you think actually succeed?

LYLE  
Depends on what you're looking for.

HEARST  
A partner. That's all.  
(beat)  
You weren't completely honest with me earlier, were you?

LYLE  
I wasn't?

HEARST  
When we were talking about marriage.

LYLE  
I said I wasn't married.

HEARST  
But you are.

LYLE  
On paper.

HEARST  
So you know what it's like...

LYLE  
No. Not like you. Not the way you mean. My husband left. "Split". That's the expression he used. He "split".

HEARST  
With another woman?

LYLE  
At a guess. Who knows?

HEARST  
You never made it your business?

LYLE  
To find out? No.

HEARST  
Why not?

LYLE  
(rising)  
He's a human being. I married him, I didn't own him.  
(beat)  
We married young. The idea of my being a strong woman in a man's world was probably appealing in some way in the beginning. But after years of being late...not being there at all many times...the brass on the uniform tarnishes, if you know what I mean.

HEARST  
You loved him presumably.

LYLE

A rebuttable presumption. I must have loved him, or thought I did.

HEARST

And now?

Lyle shrugs.

HEARST

Children?

Lyle shakes her head.

LYLE

No. Just as well. I'm not in a business where warmth and nurturing are prized.

Hearst smiles.

LYLE

How do you feel about your wife?  
About Susan?

HEARST

(matter-of-factly)

I'm an attorney. In the main, people think we're a breed apart. But we're like any other white collar worker when you first come into the game. For advancement you must always agree with the man above you. Use a blue ballpoint when he prefers a black one -- you're finished. You stay an office boy with a jurisprudence degree.

LYLE

You advanced.

HEARST

By using a black pen.

LYLE

Ah.

HEARST

Little dictators, Inspector. Those of us who carry any authority, I mean. You have to be. The decent men, they're all on the lower rungs. That, or they become sick to their stomach and leave.

LYLE

And you?

HEARST

I have an iron stomach. Those under me dislike me intensely. I make no mistakes, because I can't afford to make one. Nobody would point it out to me, or even think of covering up for me. I make no mistakes, therefore I tolerate no mistakes.

LYLE

That hasn't answered my question about Susan.

HEARST

No? I thought it had.

LYLE

Analogies aren't answers.

HEARST

They can sometimes explain a truth.

LYLE

I prefer cat-sat-on-the-mat language. I'm a very simple woman.

HEARST

No, you're not *that*.

(smiles, rises)

All right. Susan. The old joke, Inspector: the young, beautiful, distant wife and the older, rich, love-struck husband. But in real life it isn't a joke. Consider -- would *that* man ever have married *that* woman? A cold -- if I may use the term -- bitch -- for a wife? No. In the beginning, they're equals. Both with visions of a future together. There is love. Or, if not love, something they both mistake for love. Then, suddenly, the bitch emerges. And as she does, the man, for some unknown reason, loves her, pursues her, all the more. The old joke becomes real. But in fact, it's not funny. It is the most unfunny situation a man and a woman can ever get into.

(beat)

I tell you, Inspector. Were I capable of murder, she's the one I'd kill.

LYLE

We're all capable, Hearst. The issue is will. And circumstance.

HEARST

You speaking from experience?

LYLE

Let's just say that experience has taught me that with higher reasoning comes the ability to rationalize. Any of us can justify anything to ourselves if we feel we have to.

The door opens. Bell returns. Hearst smiles.

HEARST

Back on the record?

Lyle nods, clicks on the recorder. She picks up another file, on which is printed "Rosemary Wallace", circles Hearst as she talks.

LYLE

Let's turn to Layton Beach. Rosemary Wallace. A year younger than the Standish girl. A nice kid by all accounts. Good home. Well brought up. And, about two weeks after the Standish killing, she's found in Jobson's Cove. Dead. Sexually assaulted...that's the polite term for it.

(beat)

Well?

HEARST

I was in Layton Beach. I've already explained...

LYLE

What you *haven't* explained, Mr. Hearst, is why you're connected by presence to all three murders...Standish, Wallace, Roberts. Why do you keep showing up?

HEARST

I can't help you.

Bell throws up his hands.

BELL

Jesus, will you--!?

Lyle pushes Bell back.

LYLE  
It might be difficult, Hearst, but  
nothing's impossible.

HEARST  
(shakes his head)  
I can't believe you think I killed  
her.

LYLE  
Which one?

HEARST  
For God's sake!

LYLE  
Standish? Wallace? Roberts? Which  
one?

HEARST  
The same man killed them all according  
to you.

LYLE  
Well, didn't he?

HEARST  
You're conducting the investigation,  
Inspector. Not me.

LYLE  
*Don't get smart with me! Don't push  
what little luck you may think you  
have left. You're in it, man. Right  
up to the ears. Be warned.*

Hearst smiles.

HEARST  
I'm so used to it, Inspector. The  
threats. The bullying. It's part  
of my life. It doesn't bother me  
anymore. I doubt if even reaches  
me.  
(taps the table)  
Be outraged with this table,  
Inspector. You'll get far more  
response.

Bell bolts at Hearst.

BELL  
*You slimy fuck...!*

LYLE  
*BELL! SHUT UP OR LEAVE THE ROOM!*

Bell angrily turns away.

HEARST  
I'm beginning to see your point about  
violence and circumstance, Inspector.

Lyle walks to the door, hangs her jacket on a hook.

LYLE  
You're something of a zombie, Mr.  
Hearst.

HEARST  
Perhaps.

LYLE  
Nothing affects you.

HEARST  
I've been conditioned, Inspector. I  
have no real feelings left.

LYLE  
Okay. Let's talk to the man with no  
feelings, then. Layton Beach.

HEARST  
I was there for that legal conference.

LYLE  
Check. That I believe.

HEARST  
I went for a walk.

LYLE  
And a child dies.

HEARST  
I had nothing to do with that. Look.  
I'm not a gregarious person,  
Inspector. I prefer solitude.

LYLE  
Check. That, too, I  
believe...especially when you're  
committing child-rape.  
(beat)  
This walk you took. From Layton  
Beach to where?

HEARST

Dane's Point.

LYLE

Too vague.

HEARST

I'm sorry?

LYLE

Dane's Point. It covers a lighthouse. Stretches of cliffs. A couple of meadows inland. It also covers a very private little area called Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

The lighthouse. I walked as far as the lighthouse, then walked back to Layton Beach.

LYLE

The meadow paths? Or along the cliff top?

HEARST

Along the sands out of Layton. Then along the tops of the cliffs.

LYLE

How far?

HEARST

I told you. The lighthouse.

LYLE

Past Jobson's Cove, then?

HEARST

I keep telling you, I don't know Jobson's--

LYLE

Mr. Hearst, it's impossible to get from Layton Beach to Dane's Point without passing Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

If you say so. I don't know the area well enough to argue.

LYLE

So you'll agree, then, that at some point, you were at or above Jobson's Cove?

HEARST

Yes. If you say so.

LYLE

Where, next morning, the body of Rosemary Wallace was found?

HEARST

If you say so.

LYLE

(softly)

Hell of an admission to make.

HEARST

That I walked from Layton Beach to the Dane's Point lighthouse?

LYLE

That you admit to being at Jobson's Cove about the time Rosemary Wallace was murdered. Dusk, correct?

HEARST

Yes. It was almost dark when I reached the lighthouse.

BELL

The time's right.

HEARST

(smiles)

That should give you some satisfaction.

BELL

But you didn't kill her?

HEARST

No, I didn't kill her, Depu...Detective.

LYLE

Was the lighthouse flashing?

HEARST

Yes, it was flashing.

LYLE

And the weather?

HEARST

Foggy. Fairly thick.

LYLE

How thick?

HEARST

Fifty-yard visibility...thereabouts.

LYLE

And when you reached the lighthouse?

HEARST

I stood there. Looking out to sea.  
Just, you know, thinking. Relaxing.

LYLE

Just you?

HEARST

Yes, just me.

LYLE

Watching the lighthouse beam in the  
fog?

HEARST

Yes.

BELL

Peaceful, eh? Just you and the sea  
and the fog.

(under his breath)

Bullshit.

LYLE

Nothing else?

HEARST

Nothing.

LYLE

Sea birds? Gulls?

HEARST

It was dark, Inspector. Gulls don't  
fly much in the darkness.

LYLE

Surf?

HEARST

Yes. I could hear the surf hitting  
the rocks and cliffs around the point.

LYLE

But nothing else?

HEARST  
No. Nothing else.

LYLE  
No people?

HEARST  
No.

LYLE  
No voices.

HEARST  
Not that I can remember.

LYLE  
Nothing?

HEARST  
Nothing. It really was soothing.

LYLE  
Okay. You stood there. For how long?

HEARST  
Ten minutes. A quarter of an hour, perhaps.

LYLE  
And then what?

HEARST  
I walked back.

LYLE  
Which way?

HEARST  
The same way I'd come. Uh...no...not quite. I didn't go down to the sands at Layton. I stayed along the cliff path.

LYLE  
Back to your hotel?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
And to bed?

HEARST

To my room. I read a little. Then  
I went to bed.

LYLE

(politely)  
That is a very nice fairy story.  
But -- and forgive me -- you're a  
damn liar--

Hearst sits up, but before he can speak, a knock comes at  
the door. Lyle looks up, annoyed.

LYLE

(impatiently)  
Yes! What?!

The door opens and the Uniform enters.

UNIFORM

Excuse me, ma'am. Sorry to interrupt.  
Mrs. Hearst's here. She demands to  
see her husband. She won't take  
"No" for an answer.

A flicker of panic crosses Hearst's eyes, then disappears.

LYLE

(gruffly to Hearst)  
You want to see her?

HEARST

No! Under no circumstances do I  
want her to--

LYLE

Fair enough.

Lyle moves to the door, slides into her jacket.

LYLE

I'll have a word with her. And when  
I get back, Mr. Hearst, I want you  
to explain to me what you were *really*  
doing in Milford and Layton Beach.

(to Uniform)

You sit here until we come back.

UNIFORM

Yes, sir.

The Uniform moves to the chair. Lyle turns to Bell, jerks  
her head.

LYLE  
Detective Bell.

Bell nods and moves out the door, followed by Lyle.

LIGHTS TO ONE-QUARTER ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP  
FULL ON BULLPEN.

Lyle and Bell enter. Adams leans on the file cabinet. SUSAN HEARST, 30s, tall, slender, exotically beautiful, stands with her back to them, smoking a cigarette. She snuffs the cigarette in an ashtray and turns to Lyle.

SUSAN  
Are you in charge here?

LYLE  
(to Adams)  
Where's Grimes?

ADAMS  
Making rounds, last I heard.

LYLE  
(to Susan)  
Yes, madam. It seems I am, at the moment, in charge.

SUSAN  
I wish to see my husband.

LYLE  
Unfortunately, Mrs. Hearst, he has expressed a strong desire not to see you.

SUSAN  
That's ridiculous.

LYLE  
Probably, but quite within his rights.

SUSAN  
Is he under arrest?

LYLE  
Oh, yes.

SUSAN  
On what charge?

LYLE

It is debatable whether I'm legally obliged to tell you. It is, however, hardly likely that you don't know.

SUSAN

(somberly)

He's a murderer.

LYLE

Whether or not he *is* a murderer is something a court will decide. But as far as the police are concerned, he is *suspected* of being a murderer.

SUSAN

Technicalities. Stupid technicalities.

Lyle considers her a moment, then indicates the door.

LYLE

Perhaps we should discuss the matter, Mrs. Hearst. In private?

Susan nods stiffly, and exits to the hall. Adams raises his eyes to the ceiling in a silent prayer of thanks.

Lyle turns to Bell.

LYLE

Coffee, Detective. I think Mrs. Hearst would appreciate a cup. I know I would.

(points to coffee counter)

And some of those donuts or something.

Lyle exits. Bell looks at Adams.

BELL

A fucking waiter, now.

LIGHTS OUT IN BULLPEN. LIGHTS UP FULL IN SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Susan and Lyle enter. Lyle indicates a chair at the table for her to sit, then takes the other chair.

SUSAN  
I think I may file a complaint. I think I should have been notified.

LYLE  
Of your husband's arrest?

SUSAN  
Yes. Why wasn't I called?

LYLE  
You *would* have been. Within, say, the next hour or so.

SUSAN  
It's...  
(glances at watch)  
...almost one in the morning, Detective.

LYLE  
Inspector. Inspector Lyle.

SUSAN  
There's a difference?

Lyle smiles.

LYLE  
Your husband is under strong suspicion, Mrs. Hearst. It was necessary to interview him at some length.

SUSAN  
This time of night?

LYLE  
We don't work office hours.  
(beat)  
I've talked with your husband.

SUSAN  
Yes?

LYLE  
Of the murders, obviously. But of other things too.

SUSAN  
Probably didn't tell you much.

LYLE  
No.

SUSAN  
He's got a lot of secrets.

LYLE  
Yes. Well. As regards that, Mrs. Hearst, I feel it incumbent upon me to explain that you can't be called as a witness against your husband.

SUSAN  
Which means you want to ask me some questions.

LYLE  
Please.

SUSAN  
You can ask them. I'll answer those I wish to.

LYLE  
(quietly)  
You called him a murderer.

SUSAN  
I did.

LYLE  
Why?

SUSAN  
He's in police custody, isn't he?

LYLE  
But my general impression is that you have other reasons for making the accusation.

SUSAN  
Call it intuition.

LYLE  
Intuition. That he's a child-murderer.

She's momentarily surprised at Lyle's directness, then...

SUSAN  
Yes.

LYLE  
And a child-rapist?

SUSAN  
Yes.

LYLE

Three times.

SUSAN

Three...?

(then more firmly)

Yes, Inspector. All those things,  
...and other things.

LYLE

Other things?

Susan contemplates something. Then she looks up.

SUSAN

Henry is a voyeur. He takes a walk  
each evening. Takes the neighbor's  
dog. He claims to be a birdwatcher.  
That's what he'll tell you. It gives  
him an excuse for carrying binoculars.  
For tip-toeing around bushes and  
woods. For seeking hidden places  
where he can watch people fuc-...  
fornicating. Which is why he goes  
to such places. Not to watch birds.  
To watch the sex. He's been a Peeping  
Tom for years, Inspector.

(beat)

It's disgusting. Degrading.

LYLE

You talk as if it's more than  
suspicion...as if you know.

SUSAN

Oh, I know. Twice I've followed  
him, saw him. Three times I've caught  
him using his binoculars in the  
bedroom at night, watching through  
neighbor's windows. Two years ago,  
he came home with a bloody nose and  
a black eye. Said he'd tripped and  
hit his face against a log. I didn't  
believe that story then, and I don't  
believe it now. I think he was caught  
by somebody and given a beating.

LYLE

Nevertheless, and accepting the truth  
of what you say...voyeurism to murder.  
It's a big step.

SUSAN

Voyeurism to the rape of eight-year-old girls. That's the step. Not a very big step, either. After the rape, murder's a necessity. In order to preserve his so-called "respectability".

LYLE

His "so-called" respectability?

Susan considers Lyle a moment.

SUSAN

He's a tax attorney. You know that, of course.

LYLE

At Doyle Liggett.

SUSAN

A pompous position, held by pompous little men.

LYLE

Not always, surely.

SUSAN

With few exceptions. They inflate their own petty importance.

LYLE

(indicates the building)  
Like bureaucrats.

SUSAN

Just like. They try to bring their stupid bureaucracies home. Henry, for example. Unimportant things in themselves, maybe, but they say a lot.

LYLE

Such as?

SUSAN

He has a uniform. He never changes it. Work, home...always the same: white shirt, grey suit, black shoes, a tie. No matter what the weather, he always wear a damn tie. Like a badge. And he dry-cleans the suits every two weeks. Every other Friday without fail. It's a ritual.

LYLE

Image is important to men like him.

SUSAN

I don't know what's important to him anymore. I don't care.

(beat)

Genuine respectability I wouldn't mind. But his facade of super-decency, trying to cover his perversion. Living a foul, perpetual lie.

LYLE

Mrs. Hearst. Voyeurism. Watching sexual acts. He's not alone. He's not even uncommon. Our culture's full of it. Advertising. Films. Television shows. Plays written by respected playwrights. A form of voyeurism, wouldn't you say?

SUSAN

I don't watch that kind of play.

LYLE

Not you, madam. But a great many do. And most not murderers.

Susan smokes her cigarette in silence.

LYLE

You called *him* a murderer.

SUSAN

I did.

LYLE

Why?

SUSAN

(softly)

I have my reasons.

LYLE

Tell me.

SUSAN

I've already told you--

LYLE

Nothing, Mrs. Hearst. That he's a Peeping Tom. We get a complaint along those lines every week. But nobody accuses peepers of murder.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

Or of rape. You're certain, however.  
"He's a murderer." What makes you  
so sure?

Susan sits back and considers Lyle.

LIGHTS TO ONE-QUARTER ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS  
UP FULL ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

The door opens. Bell enters. He leaves the door open, taps  
the Uniform's shoulder.

BELL

The coffee's brewing. Lyle and this  
bastard's wife want some. Come back  
when you've delivered it to them.  
(off the Uniform's  
quizzical look)  
Come. Back. When. It's. Delivered.

The Uniform hesitates, then stands and leaves the room.  
Bell closes the door, saunters to the table, unhurriedly.  
Threateningly. Like a big cat approaching a tethered prey..

BELL

I bet they run fast, don't they?

HEARST

Excuse me?

BELL

The little girls. When you chase  
them.

HEARST

You'll know what fast is when you  
see my lawsuit hit you.

Bell ignores the threat, circles Hearst.

BELL

Amazing. Three children strangled  
and raped and yet you find humor in  
it.

HEARST

Raped and strangled.

BELL

What?

HEARST

You said strangled and raped. These things should be put in the right order. Don't you agree, Detective?

Bell just smiles.

BELL

You smile at them, call 'em over?  
"What's your name, sweetheart? My, you're awfully pretty."

(beat)

But what do I know? Maybe the kids lured and seduced you. It happens.

HEARST

You're obsessed, you know it?

BELL

I'm just curious. Come on. Tell me about it. You touch them?

(pokes him)

Like that?

Hearst knocks Bell's hand away.

BELL

That hurt? You hurt them, don't you? Those little girls.

Hearst turns from him.

BELL

You kiss them?

HEARST

Stop it.

BELL

Is that what you do? "Come here little girl...I'd like to run my hands all over you..."

HEARST

This is insane.

Bell's hand shoots out, twists his fingers into Hearst's hair and jerks the now-frightened man's head back. He moves his face directly into Hearst's.

BELL

Just you and me, now, fucker. And you're going to spill your lousy guts. Get it? Word-perfect.

Hearst, terrified, doesn't move a muscle.

BELL

Stand up.

Hearst slowly rises, Bell's hand still grasping his hair. As Hearst straightens, Bell suddenly and viciously buries his fist into Hearst's midsection, crumpling him to the floor.

Hearst lays there, curled into a ball, gasping.

BELL

(tonelessly)

Who did you kill?

Hearst just moans. Bell circles him.

BELL

Gwendolyn Roberts?

Bell kicks out as he says the name, the toe of his shoe thudding into the vertebrae in the small of Hearst's back.

Hearst spits a quick, animal-like scream of pain, then curls forward again, hugging the lower half of his body.

Sneering, Bell kicks Hearst in the back again.

BELL

Pauline Standish?

Hearst tightens himself into a ball, chin buried in his chest, knees pulled up, blood now trickling from his mouth.

BELL

Rosemary Wallace?

A third kick to Hearst's spine. A groan of agony.

Bell leans against the wall, arms crossed, looking at Hearst...No pity, no remorse...just naked contempt.

BELL

Who did you kill, fucker? I'll wait.

LIGHTS OUT IN THE MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL IN THE SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle considers Susan.

LYLE

Well?

She tells it as if talking to herself.

SUSAN

Five years ago...six perhaps. How long ago doesn't matter. I have a brother...a married brother. We were at a Christmas party at his house, with he and his wife. And his daughter. A very beautiful little girl. Cindy. I love her dearly. She deserves to be loved. Some children...they have a touch of magic about them. An innocence. Cindy had it. She was seven then, or eight.

A painful memory stops her, then she continues.

SUSAN

We'd had a nice day. Exchanging presents. Watching television. Helping Cindy play with her toys. Talking. That sort of thing. Just the five of us.

(beat)

We'd had lunch. A lovely salad. Cake and ice cream. It was wonderful. And we were all so happy. Really happy. Like a family should be at Christmas. We'd had this lovely meal, and we were cleaning up. I carried the dishes into the kitchen. Beautiful china. Tiny pink roses. I was so afraid I might break one of them. I carried them so carefully. From the dining room to the kitchen. It would have spoiled everything if I'd...

Lyle listens intently, her eyes riveted to Susan.

SUSAN

And Bill -- that's my brother -- Bill was upstairs. He's one of those old-school hi-fi guys. Records only, you know? He was playing carols, I think. Yes, Christmas carols. And we -- Alice and I -- were in the kitchen. And that left...

(beat)

That left Henry and Cindy in the dining room. Alone.

She stops. Pain crosses her face, but she deflects it.

SUSAN

The bread plates. We'd used five of them. And I'd only brought four in from the dining room. I thought I'd brought them all. But I'd only brought four. So...So I went back into the dining room. A lot of wrapping paper around. Christmas paper. What we'd wrapped the presents in. I thought the bread dish might be under...

(long beat)

He was there. Henry. Still on the dining chair. Turned away from the table. And...And Cindy was sitting on his knee, and...

(beginning to tremble)

And he had his hand...She was wearing a lovely red dress. Trimmed with white fur. Like Santa Claus. We'd called it her Santa Claus dress. Such a pretty dress. Alice had made it for her. For Christmas. And...and...

She emits a low, despairing groan.

SUSAN

He had his hand under the hem of the dress. Under the fur. His...his whole hand. His whole forearm. And -- the *animal* -- with his other hand he was guiding Cindy's hand...He was -- he was unzipped. And he was...was...was...

Susan breaks. Tears spill from her eyes and roll down her cheeks. She stares into Lyle's eyes.

SUSAN

*Do I have to paint you a picture!?*

LYLE

(gently)

No.

She pulls a handkerchief from her purse, puts it to her eyes.

SUSAN

That poor child. I saw her face. She was terrified...

She stops. Swallows. Then straightens up. Puts her handkerchief in her purse and snaps it closed.

SUSAN  
(hard, cold)  
He's a child-rapist, Inspector. And  
a child-murderer. Never doubt it  
for a moment.

LIGHTS OUT IN SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL IN  
MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Bell leaves the wall, goes to Hearst.

BELL  
Get up, filth. Enough crying.

Hearst continues to moan.

BELL  
GET UP! Get up, you bastard! Tell  
me the truth! *Who did you kill?!*

Hearst turns his face up at Bell. He sets his jaw.

HEARST  
(through his teeth)  
I. Killed. *NOBODY!*

BLACKOUT.

CURTAIN.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

CURTAIN UP

LIGHTS UP ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Scene is as at end of Act One: Bell stands over Hearst. At lights up, Bell snaps out a hand and grabs the front of Hearst's shirt and raises the other hand in a fist to punch him.

BELL

Killed nobody my ass!!

The door suddenly opens, and the Uniform enters.

UNIFORM

The coffee's ready. Do you...

(realizing)

Detective! For God's sake!

(out the door)

*Sergeant!*

Bell straightens, lets Hearst drop, points.

BELL

Close the door...

UNIFORM

Oh, no! I'm sorry Detective. I want none of this. This makes me a witness, and I want none of it.

BELL

It's two to one, if he squawks.

UNIFORM

Two to one if I lie. Two to one if I tell the truth. I'm fucked either way. So, sorry. I won't lie for you.

Adams enters. He sees Hearst wiping blood from his mouth and immediately knows.

ADAMS

Jesus.

(to Bell)

Outside. Now.

(to Uniform)

You too.

UNIFORM

With pleasure.

The Uniform exits immediately. Bell hesitates.

BELL

He's a fucking child-killer!

ADAMS

Detective. Get a coffee. Take a piss. Go home. I don't care. Just leave.

Bell stares at Adams a moment, then strides out. Adams closes the door behind him.

Adams helps Hearst up into the chair. Hearst wipes his bloody mouth with his sleeve.

ADAMS

He bounce you around a bit?

HEARST

That what you people call it?

ADAMS

Your mouth's bleeding.

HEARST

It's nothing.

Adams points to the shelf.

ADAMS

There's some towels over there.

Hearst rises, still doubled up a bit, moves to the shelf, takes a towel and dabs at his lip.

ADAMS

Need a doctor?

HEARST

No.

ADAMS

If you need a doctor--

HEARST

I don't need a fucking doctor!

Adams sits on the corner of the table.

ADAMS

How you want to play this?

HEARST

What?

ADAMS

You gonna say anything?  
(off of Hearst's  
silence)

Bell...you know...he's a bit of a  
one-man commando unit sometimes.  
Likes a scrap. But he's a good cop.  
No excuse, of course.

HEARST

You're right. No excuse.

ADAMS

So...you gonna make a complaint or  
what?

HEARST

After what he's done to me, I should.  
(beat)  
Just let it go.

Hearst walks back to the table, towel against his mouth.

HEARST

But I don't want to see the man again.  
You understand? You can tell that  
to Inspector Lyle. Only her from  
now on, unless she wants to see what  
I can do with a lawsuit.

ADAMS

I'll do that.

Adams moves to the door.

ADAMS

I'll do that right now.

Adams exits, closes the door. Hearst sits at the table,  
nursing his lip with the towel.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL  
ON THE SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle and Susan sit facing one another, just as we left them.

LYLE

What about divorce? I'd say the  
incident with Cindy would have formed  
a basis.

SUSAN

Maybe I should have. That would have given his precious "respectability" a kick in the teeth.

LYLE

Indeed.

SUSAN

But he'd have fought it. And that would have meant Cindy testifying -- that little girl trying to explain what he'd done. I couldn't allow that.

LYLE

But you still stayed with him.

SUSAN

Don't believe all you hear about the "liberated woman", Inspector Lyle. Most of us are indentured servants when you get down to it. Even someone like me: a trophy some say. Kept. But with the security of marriage, Henry can't easily trade me in. I get what I want. I have a home that is *my* home. I come and go as I please.

LYLE

But what about--

SUSAN

The physical side of such a marriage?  
(off Lyle's nod, she rises)

You're a woman. You know. If a woman decides to make that part of marriage unimportant, it *becomes* unimportant. Mind over matter, right?

(off Lyle's silence)

Anyway, I have no right to refuse him. But I can make it repellent. In any number of ways. Most women know them. Played properly they can make a man feel unclean, decayed. In time, I'm told, they can even make him impotent.

LYLE

So...you've repaid him, in your way.

SUSAN

And will for the rest of my life.

LYLE

Just one thing...

(stands)

Three children have been raped, then murdered. It could be argued that the man responsible was grabbing at forbidden fruit because the fruit to which he had claim was being denied him.

SUSAN

(sneering)

Little girls?

LYLE

A Peeping Tom's a coward isn't he?

SUSAN

Henry's certainly that.

LYLE

Well?

It suddenly hits her.

SUSAN

(whispered)

Oh, my God!

(she sinks into chair)

Oh my God, if I've been indirectly responsible...

LYLE

I wouldn't know.

SUSAN

You just said...

LYLE

A possible argument, no more.

SUSAN

I'd hate to be married to you, Inspector.

LYLE

I don't see what--

SUSAN

You know how to drive the knife home. To give it that little twist that really hurts.

LYLE

You're the one who called him a  
murderer. Who was so sure.

SUSAN

And he isn't?

LYLE

A court will decide that...eventually.

SUSAN

No, I mean you. What do *you* think...?

LYLE

(calmly)

I think you're right. I think he *is*  
the murderer. The rapist. And I'm  
certain I'll get him to admit it.  
But that doesn't change what you--

A tap on the door breaks the moment.

LYLE

Yes.

The Uniform enters, carrying a tray with two coffee mugs and  
a small plate of donuts.

UNIFORM

With the compliments of Sergeant  
Adams, sir. And he asked to speak  
with you as soon as it's convenient.

Lyle nods, looks at Susan.

SUSAN

I'd like to go home, Inspector.

LYLE

Of course. I'll arrange for someone  
to take you.

SUSAN

No. Thank you. I'd rather walk.

LYLE

It's after one a.m. Not the safest  
time of the night to be walking these  
streets. I'll have somebody--

SUSAN

No.

Susan rises, moves toward the door.

SUSAN  
I want to be alone. I need to think  
a little. Perhaps more than a little.

Susan steps past the Uniform, exits.

Lyle looks at the Uniform.

LYLE  
Adams?

UNIFORM  
Bullpen, ma'am.

Lyle exits.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO ONE  
QUARTER ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Hearst picks up his pack of cigarettes, takes one out and  
gingerly places it on his bruised lip. He lights it, takes  
a deep pull and blows smoke at the ceiling.

Hearst sits forward, but the motion makes his abdomen hurt.  
He winces, rubs his stomach.

LYLE (O.S.)  
(muffled, through the  
wall)  
WHAT?!?

Hearst looks around, as if to see where the outburst came  
from, sees nothing, returns to his smoke.

LIGHTS TO FULL ON THE BULLPEN.

Lyle enters, followed by Adams.

LYLE  
Stupid! Uncalled for! And quite  
unnecessary!

ADAMS  
Perhaps he thought it would--

LYLE  
Don't defend him. Where is he?

ADAMS  
I'm not sure. I suggested he go  
home for the night.

LYLE

Probably going to be longer than that.

ADAMS

Need we say anything upstairs?

LYLE

We don't say anything, Hearst can blackmail us all.

ADAMS

Oh, I don't think--

LYLE

Don't take Hearst for granted, Sergeant. He's in a corner, but he's still capable of fighting back.

ADAMS

Bell said Hearst's not going to crack without--

LYLE

Oh, he'll crack. That's what I do, and I do it well. I can prove him a liar half-a-dozen times over on what he's already said and get a conviction. But I want it from his own lips. That's what *I* want. I want him inside *my* box...nailed, screwed, glued, and dovetailed. And *that* I intend to have.

Lyle turns and walks out of the Bullpen. Adams follows.

LIGHTS OUT ON BULLPEN. LIGHTS REMAIN FULL ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle enters the room, followed by Adams. Lyle sits, faces Hearst.

LYLE

You have, of course, cause for complaint.

HEARST

What?

LYLE

I'm told Detective Bell assaulted you in my absence.

HEARST  
He lost his temper.

LYLE  
A poor excuse.

HEARST  
It doesn't matter. Forget it.

LYLE  
Meaning you don't want to file a  
complaint?

HEARST  
(beat)  
This is complicated enough for me  
already. You deal with him as you  
see fit. Leave me out of it. Just  
keep him away from me or you *will*  
have trouble.

Lyle considers Hearst a moment.

LYLE  
Very well.

Lyle squares up the papers in one of the files on the table.

LYLE  
In that case, if you're up to it.  
Let's move to--

HEARST  
My wife...?

Lyle looks up at him.

LYLE  
She's on her way home.

HEARST  
No. I mean...what did she say?

LYLE  
Oh, many things. A great many things.  
Very interesting things.

HEARST  
About me?

LYLE  
Naturally.

HEARST  
What, for example?

LYLE

Correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Hearst.  
But as I recall, you refused to see  
her.

HEARST

Yes, but --

LYLE

You could have been present. You  
could have heard every word she said.  
You chose not to.

They stare at one another...a clash of wills. Then:

HEARST

It was all lies, anyway.

LYLE

Perhaps.

HEARST

But you'll believe her.

LYLE

I don't believe lies, Mr. Hearst.  
Whoever tells them. I find the truth.

Lyle sits back, then picks up a file.

LYLE

Now, I want to go back to yesterday.  
When, as you say, you *found* the  
murdered body of the Roberts girl.

HEARST

I've already told you everything...

LYLE

No. Not quite everything. For  
example, you say you recognized her.

HEARST

Yes.

Lyle stands and paces around Hearst.

LYLE

Let me get the picture properly  
painted, Mr. Hearst. As you tell  
it, of course. You're there on the  
path around the golf course. Enjoying  
yourself in your own quiet way. It  
wasn't a bad evening.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

A little rain during the day, as I recall. But the evening turned clear, very pleasant. Am I right so far?

Hearst nods.

LYLE

Good.  
(beat, then leans  
over Hearst)  
Why the ditch?

HEARST

The ditch?

LYLE

Where the body was. In the mango grove. It had rained, remember? Ditches are messy places at the best of times. A nice gravel path to walk on and you walk in the ditch. Why?

HEARST

The dog--

LYLE

Forget the dog. There was no dog. We've been over that.

HEARST

The body. I saw--

LYLE

Oh, no. Not from the path. Long, dead grass and lots of old, dead leaves. Where golf balls go to die. The body was virtually invisible from the path. And yet you just *found* it...or so you claim.

HEARST

I don't follow your line of argument.

LYLE

I think you do, Mr. Hearst.

Lyle picks up a large tablet and marker and draws.

LYLE

There...the golf course. Here...the path. There...the ditch in which the body was found.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

And there -- separated from the golf course by the ditch in the mango grove -- a ridge. You know that ridge, of course?

Hearst doesn't react.

LYLE

Of course you do. It overlooks the backs of the houses of Hampton Ridge, doesn't it?

HEARST

I suppose so.

LYLE

You know so. You live there. And more specifically, it overlooks the bedrooms. And there, in the ditch, (marks a big "X")  
...the body of Gwendolyn Roberts.

Hearst is silent.

LYLE

You're with me so far?

HEARST

I suppose.

LYLE

Were you walking along the ditch in the grove? By that I mean *in* the ditch? Along the run of the ditch?

HEARST

No. Of course not. After that rain, you'd need rubber boots...

LYLE

My point precisely. Therefore you must have been *crossing* the ditch.

HEARST

Why would I cross the --?

LYLE

To get *to* the ridge or return *from* the ridge, obviously.

HEARST

I don't know what you're getting at.

LYLE

Going to? Or coming from?

Nothing from Hearst.

LYLE

*Going to? Or coming from?*

HEARST

Coming from, if it's any of your business.

LYLE

It's *all* my business. So. Coming from the ridge?

Hearst nods.

LYLE

Good.

(a satisfied smile,  
sits)

Fine. That's another step forward isn't it?

(quickly, pointedly)

Why did you run all the way home?

HEARST

(startled)

What?

LYLE

You ran all the way home.

HEARST

After I'd found the body?

LYLE

Yes. Why?

HEARST

The...shock.

LYLE

But why run *home*?

HEARST

To-to telephone. To--

LYLE

You don't have a mobile phone?

HEARST

Not on me. Not that night.

LYLE  
You passed people, certainly.

HEARST  
Yes, I suppose I did. But--

LYLE  
Why not tell one of them?

Hearst rises.

HEARST  
I wanted the police. I--

LYLE  
You could have stayed by the body.  
Have someone else call.

HEARST  
Yes. I know, but--

LYLE  
Dialed 9-1-1.

HEARST  
Can't you understand...?

LYLE  
The quickest way, surely?

HEARST  
I know. Sitting here--

LYLE  
So why go all the way home?

HEARST  
(angrily)  
Who the hell knows why they do what  
they do? Christ!

LYLE  
When you arrived home, you still  
didn't call.

HEARST  
I'm sure I did.

LYLE  
(pulls a page from  
the file)  
A statement from your wife. You ran  
into the house and upstairs. That's  
what *she* says.

Nothing from Hearst.

LYLE

Why?

HEARST

I went to the bathroom, if you must know.

LYLE

Why?

HEARST

Dammit! I wanted to vomit. To be sick. That's why.

LYLE

From shock?

HEARST

From seeing what I just--

LYLE

How many suits do you have, Mr. Hearst?

HEARST

What?

LYLE

(patiently)  
Suits. Clothes? How many suits?

HEARST

I don't know. Dozens.

LYLE

How many grey serge?

HEARST

What on earth?

LYLE

Your suits, Mr. Hearst. Grey serge. How many?

HEARST

(sits)  
I don't know. Three. Four. What does that matter?

LYLE

Three or four?

HEARST

Three. Four. Well, three good ones.  
Look, I can't see--

LYLE

And all your shirts are white, of course?

HEARST

I don't see how you know--

LYLE

And--presumably--all your shoes are black?

HEARST

Yes. Yes, they're all black, but what does that--?

LYLE

Good. Good.

(rises, circles Hearst)

The picture then. You find the body. You're shocked. Still in a state of shock, you run home. You rush to the bathroom to vomit. Then you go back downstairs, telephone the police and arrange to meet them where you found the body. Correct so far?

HEARST

Yes. Yes, that's exactly what happened.

Lyle nods, hesitates a moment, then leaning over him, a pointed...

LYLE

Now tell me what you were doing on the ridge!

Hearst gags, puts his hand to his mouth.

HEARST

I need to use the toilet.

LYLE

Wonderful timing.

HEARST

I need--!

LYLE

Yes, yes.

Hearst bolts up toward the door, hand still on his mouth.

LYLE

Sergeant Adams will escort you.  
It's necessary, I'm afraid.

Lyle points to Adams, who rises and opens the door for Hearst.

Hearst hurries out, followed by Adams. Lyle stands a moment, rubs the back of her neck, then exits the room as well.

LIGHTS DOWN ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON THE BULLPEN.

Lyle enters the room, moves to the coffee pot. Grimes is already there.

GRIMES

Ah. Lyle. Finished with Hearst?

LYLE

No, sir. At the moment, he's attending to the wants of nature.

GRIMES

Uh-huh.

LYLE

Hearst's under formal arrest, by the way. He's been given your Miranda.

GRIMES

You're as sure as *that*?

LYLE

That he's the murderer? Yes. I've enough evidence to justify an arrest. I'm certain, though, that he'll give me the confession I want before morning.

GRIMES

Good. Good. I'll leave it to you then.

LYLE

Yes, sir.

Grimes turns to go, then stops and turns back.

GRIMES

Oh...by the way...his wife's down the hall. I told her you'd be in to--

LYLE

She's *here*?

GRIMES

Yes. Odd time of night, but...Ran into her in the foyer. Said she wanted to see you. I thought the small--

Lyle sets her coffee down, moves to the door.

LYLE

Yes. Yes, that will be fine. Thank you.

GRIMES

(to Lyle's back as he exits)

You'll keep me informed...?

LIGHTS DOWN ON BULLPEN. LIGHTS TO FULL ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Susan stands at the table. Lyle enters.

LYLE

Mrs. Hearst?

Susan turns to Lyle. Not nearly as defiant...almost timid.

LYLE

I thought you'd gone home.

SUSAN

Halfway...I turned back.

LYLE

May I ask why?

SUSAN

(beat)

I'm frightened, Inspector.

LYLE

Of going home alone? I said we'd--

SUSAN

No. Of what...what I might have done.

Susan lowers herself into one of the chairs by the table.

Lyle pulls out her pack of cigarettes.

LYLE  
Cigarette?

SUSAN  
No. Thank you.

LYLE  
All right.

Lyle studies her a moment, then as she makes a move to leave, Susan looks up.

SUSAN  
Is Henry...?

LYLE  
He...needed a break. We both did.

SUSAN  
Has he...?

LYLE  
Not yet. But he will.

SUSAN  
You're sure?

LYLE  
Yes. I'm sure.

SUSAN  
What about a lawyer...?

LYLE  
He's refused one. Just as he refused to see you.

SUSAN  
Why? Why won't he see me?

LYLE  
I'm sorry. I can't answer that. Perhaps there's a certain amount of shame...?

SUSAN  
You...you won't hurt him?

LYLE  
You have my word.

SUSAN  
And...if he *does* ask for me...

LYLE  
You'll be told immediately.

Lyle then turns and exits the room.

LIGHTS DOWN ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON  
MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle enters. Adams, sitting in the chair by the door, stands.  
Hearst sits at the table, slouched over.

Lyle nods toward Hearst.

LYLE  
(to Adams)  
He all right?

ADAMS  
He threw up. Sick as a dog. Dry  
heaves by the end.

Lyle walks to the table, assesses Hearst.

LYLE  
Are you unwell, Mr. Hearst?

HEARST  
No. It's...I'm all right.

LYLE  
You've been vomiting? Do you need a  
doctor?

HEARST  
No. No doctor...thank you.

LYLE  
(smiling)  
Something you ate, perhaps?

HEARST  
I don't know. Perhaps.

LYLE  
Or guilt? Guilt plays havoc with  
the digestive system.

HEARST  
(through clenched  
teeth)  
I'm all right, Inspector.  
(MORE)

HEARST (CONT'D)

As you say, it must have been something I ate. Christ! How much longer is this going to take?

LYLE

As long as it does.

Lyle reaches for a file.

LYLE

So let's get back to --

HEARST

*For God's sake!* I keep telling you--

LYLE

(wearily)

You do indeed. But unfortunately, what you tell me doesn't jive with what we know--

HEARST

I can only say what--

Lyle raises her hand to stop Hearst.

LYLE

(politely)

Let's turn to the Layton Beach problem.

HEARST

Problem?

LYLE

Discrepancy, then. Two weeks -- thereabouts -- after the Standish affair.

HEARST

So you say.

Lyle begins to circle Hearst again.

LYLE

You were at this convention get-together. You weren't interested in the drinking and chatting of the evening, so you went for a walk. Right so far?

Hearst nods.

LYLE

A pleasant walk along the beach to Dane's Point and the lighthouse. A few lungfuls of clean, salt air then back to the hotel and bed. Still right?

HEARST

That's what happened.

LYLE

You met nobody?

HEARST

Nobody I knew. Nobody I can remember.

LYLE

You passed Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

I told you, I might have passed it...I just don't know.

LYLE

Will you take my word? That it's impossible to reach Dane's Point by land without passing by Jobson's Cove?

HEARST

I'll take your word.

LYLE

Good. It's dusk. To quote your own words, you just "stood there". Looking out to sea. The light flashing. Not a sound. Tranquillity would, I think, be an appropriate word to use.

HEARST

It was very tranquil, yes.

LYLE

And, what sounds there might have been were, presumably, deadened by the fog. Is that the picture?

HEARST

It was very nice.

LYLE

Mm-hmm.

(beat)

Ear-plugs?

HEARST

What?

LYLE

Were you wearing ear-plugs?

HEARST

Why on earth should I be --

LYLE

I've been to Dane's Point, sir.  
I've seen the fog. Thick as the pea-  
soupers in Britain sometimes.

HEARST

So what? What's that got to do--?

LYLE

The old lighthouse. Very beautiful  
at night, with the beam sweeping  
around like a searchlight. But not  
much good in fog. Hence...the  
foghorn.

HEARST

Foghorn...

LYLE

Quite. The foghorn.  
(leans into him)  
Don't try another now-I-remember  
routine, sir. I know that foghorn.  
Anywhere near the lighthouse it would  
be blasting your ears off. The one  
thing you *would* remember.

Hearst opens his mouth, as if to speak, but doesn't.

LYLE

At Jobson's Cove you can just about  
hear it, but only if you really *listen*  
for it because it points out to sea.  
But if you're otherwise  
engaged...busy...raping and killing  
an eight-year-old child, for instance--

HEARST

That's not true!

LYLE

(mockingly)  
Listening to the surf. *Hearing* the  
surf with a foghorn blasting your  
ears off.

HEARST  
I didn't kill her.

LYLE  
Fog. Visibility fifty yards. But that stuff swirls a lot, so visibility nil at odd moments.

HEARST  
I didn't kill her.

LYLE  
Walking back in the fog and near-darkness. Those cliff tops don't have street lighting, Hearst. How did you do it? Radar?

HEARST  
I didn't kill her.

LYLE  
You never went near Dane's Point, Hearst! You never went within a mile of it! You've been feeding lies since you sat in that chair. When are you going to stop taking me for a fool? When are you going to say something I might conceivably believe?

Hearst slams the table, stands and leans into Lyle.

HEARST  
I didn't kill her. *I didn't kill her!* I DIDN'T KILL HER!

LYLE  
(calmly)  
If you didn't kill her, Then why so obviously lie?

HEARST  
(beat)  
I didn't...I didn't actually *lie*.  
Not...*lie*.

Hearst sits, reaches out to his case of cigarettes.

LYLE  
(sighs)  
Oh, come, now. Don't let's have to start at the beginning again. The truth, now...if you don't mind.

HEARST  
 God, does this ever end?

Hearst lights a cigarette.

HEARST  
 The truth. You want the truth.  
 (off Lyle's nod, rises)  
 All right. I've told you about my  
 marriage. My wife and the way she...  
 (beat)  
 I have wants, Inspector. Needs.  
 I'm normal in that respect. I'm not  
 an old man.

Hearst hesitates. Lyle waits.

HEARST  
 I go with women, alright? Sometimes.  
 When I'm away from home. Often in  
 fact. That's where I was. At Layton.  
 With a woman.

LYLE  
 With a whore?

HEARST  
 You could call her that, I suppose.  
 I don't choose to.

LYLE  
 (flatly)  
 What else?

HEARST  
 That's it. I didn't go to Dane's  
 Point. Nowhere near it. I was with  
 this woman.

LYLE  
 Which woman?

HEARST  
 What difference does it make? She  
 was a prostitute I picked up. At  
 Milford, too.

LYLE  
 Same woman?

HEARST  
 No. Different ones. A different  
 one each time.

LYLE

Young ones?

HEARST

I don't see--?

LYLE

You like them young?

HEARST

Fuck you! You going to tell me you don't like the young boys? You're divorced. You're not dead. So who do you talk to in a bar? The best-damn-looking guy you can get away with, that's who. And he's not fifty. Probably mid-thirties. But in his twenties, now we're talking! You go for the best you can get. It's not any different for me, for men. Young girls, they don't talk...they laugh, they live. They make you feel alive. And their bodies: hard, tight, and smooth, the way bodies are supposed to be. And saying that doesn't make me a pervert any more than it does you. Yes, I like them young. At least I'm honest enough to say so.

LYLE

(smiling)

Interesting.

HEARST

What?

LYLE

No more glass of beer. No more lighthouses. Now it's ladies of the street. Young ones.

HEARST

Look, a man doesn't like to broadcast--

LYLE

Didn't seem to worry you.

HEARST

I told you. It's my wife.

LYLE

Your wife was with you, then?

HEARST  
 For God's sake! Of course not.  
 That's not what --

LYLE  
 Then why bring her into it?

HEARST  
 It's her fault. She's the one to  
 blame. Fundamentally.

LYLE  
 Not you?

HEARST  
 No. Not really. She's --

LYLE  
 (softly)  
 Home-spun psychology. Nobody does  
 anything because he *wants* to do it  
 anymore. You go to bed with a couple  
 of tarts but it's not your fault.  
 It's your wife's fault. You weren't  
 tempted. You didn't fall. You were  
 pushed. That's supposed to make it  
 okay?

HEARST  
 It's an alibi. It proves I wasn't--

LYLE  
 (wearily, sitting)  
 Their names, please?

HEARST  
 Who?

LYLE  
 The whores. The one at Milford.  
 The one at Layton Beach. Their names  
 and addresses.

HEARST  
 I don't know them.

LYLE  
 You called them *something*, surely?

HEARST  
 No.

LYLE  
 Nice. The mind boggles.  
 (MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)  
Non-identifiable fornication.  
Copulation on a "Hey, you" basis.

HEARST  
I never asked.

LYLE  
You propositioned them, surely?

HEARST  
I use taxi drivers. I tell them  
I'm looking for a woman. One of  
them always knows somebody.

LYLE  
And?

HEARST  
They drive me to a house. I never  
ask where it is. I pay them, ask  
them to come back for me in two hours.

LYLE  
(mockingly)  
Good Lord!

HEARST  
That's what happened! At Milford.  
And at Layton Beach.

LYLE  
But you don't know the names of these  
"ladies" nor where they live?

HEARST  
No.

LYLE  
The names of the taxi drivers?

HEARST  
No. There was no need.

LYLE  
The license numbers of the taxis?

HEARST  
No.  
(a sigh of defeat)  
No. I don't have any of the names.  
Or the addresses. But it's the truth.  
It's something I dare not tell you  
before. My reputation. Can't you  
see that?

Lyle rises.

LYLE

What do *I* see? I see three children sexually assaulted, then murdered. That is what I see, Hearst. That is all I am allowed to see. Indeed, all I *want* to see. However, criminal law requires I identify "means", "motive", and "opportunity". You were in the vicinity of each crime on the day and time that crime was committed. Opportunity. You have hands. Means. The motive? Well, now, the sexual assault in each case is motive enough for the murder. Self-preservation...the assurance that your petty "respectability" remains untarnished. But motive for child-rape over and above that? Shall we call it "Cindy"?

Hearst reacts physically to the name.

LYLE

Yes. I know *exactly* what happened. Men like you don't change. They hold themselves in check for just so long, then the madness touches them once more, and a "Cindy" situation suddenly presents itself. They lose control. And that periodic loss of control is all the "motive" needed.

A silence falls on the room. Lyle and Hearst face one another, motionless. The silence of defeat gazing at the silence of victory.

HEARST

(very softly)  
Cindy...she told you?

Lyle nods, sits.

LYLE

(quietly)  
Your wife, too, knows how to hate.

Utter silence. Then Hearst breaks away from Lyle's gaze. He rises, walks to and faces the wall.

HEARST

My God. I never dreamed she'd take it to such lengths...to take it to this point. It's...it's surreal.

A long moment of silence. Then Hearst, staring at the wall, speaks, his voice suddenly different...broken, somehow.

HEARST

You know, when I arrived here, I had one thing left. My dignity. By your yardstick -- by Susan's yardstick -- a dignity I had no right to claim, and yet, a dignity. The dignity which comes only with continual humiliation. My dignity. And you -- the both of you -- are stripping me of even that. How dare you?

Lyle looks at her watch. She then reaches for the last file.

LYLE

I think it's time we talked about the last killing again...Gwendolyn Roberts.

Hearst whirls.

HEARST

*What do you want?!*

Lyle rises.

LYLE

I want you to sit, please.

Hearst regards Lyle a moment, then sighs, and moves to his chair and sits. Lyle begins to pace around the room slowly, deliberately, head down.

LYLE

A quick question: about your clothes.

HEARST

What's that got to do with--?

LYLE

Humor me. You have your suits dry-cleaned, so I'm told?

HEARST

I like to look smart.

LYLE

Regularly?

HEARST

Don't you?

LYLE  
How regularly?

HEARST  
Every two weeks. Every alternate  
Friday.

LYLE  
Good. Good. Now...the question you  
didn't get around to answering:  
Just exactly what were you doing on  
the ridge?

HEARST  
The ridge?

LYLE  
We established...remember? You found  
Roberts's body in the ditch. You  
had to be in the ditch to find it.  
Crossing the ditch...that's what you  
said. Coming from the ridge, you  
said. What were you doing on that  
ridge?

Hearst is quiet.

LYLE  
The ridge, sir?

HEARST  
(beat)  
I have a hobby. Bird-watching. I  
take every opportunity possible.  
Most evenings, in fact.

Lyle begins circling again.

LYLE  
You had your binoculars with you?

HEARST  
You can't really pursue the hobby  
without--

LYLE  
You were on the ridge? With your  
binoculars?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Enjoying the peepshow.

HEARST  
I beg your pardon?

LYLE  
The peepshow. Couples. In their  
bedrooms.

HEARST  
Inspector, if you seriously think--

LYLE  
Yes, I "seriously think", Hearst.  
Your wife's seen you at it.

HEARST  
She told you...?!?

LYLE  
Binoculars come in useful for that  
particular hobby. So do ridges along  
groves of trees where you can hide  
as you look into private bedrooms.  
(laughing)  
Birdwatching.

HEARST  
This is a nightmare.

LYLE  
So, you were the only one on that  
ridge that night?

HEARST  
I can't see how--

LYLE  
And the murder was committed in the  
grove by the ridge.

HEARST  
That's taking a lot for granted.  
That's--

LYLE  
That's taking *nothing* for granted,  
Hearst. You were on the ridge by  
the grove. You admit it. And the  
times tally. Tell me. What am I  
taking for granted?

HEARST  
That I killed her.

LYLE  
Did you?

HEARST  
Of course I didn't.

LYLE  
The "of course" prefix doesn't follow.

HEARST  
All right, I *didn't*. Does that satisfy you?

LYLE  
As a denial. But not necessarily as the truth. You've had a problem with the truth tonight.

HEARST  
You can't prove I was the only one on the ridge that evening.

LYLE  
I can't imagine you doing what you were doing with a crowd around.

HEARST  
Fuck you.

LYLE  
Roberts was there.

HEARST  
Obviously.

LYLE  
And *if* you were the only other person there...what then? Maybe she stumbled on you, saw what you were doing with your binoculars.

HEARST  
Speculation.

Lyle leans over the table, looks directly at Hearst.

LYLE  
It's not speculation that Gwendolyn Roberts was raped and strangled in that grove.

HEARST  
Dammit! I didn't--

LYLE  
Somebody did! Somebody killed her!  
(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)  
 Somebody dragged her into the grove,  
 killed her, and made an effort to  
 hide it. *Somebody* did.

Hearst rises, moves DS, where he looks and gestures to a spot in front of him, as if looking into the ditch.

HEARST  
 I keep telling you. I *found* her in  
 the ditch.

Lyle joins him, looking into the "ditch".

LYLE  
 Yes, you keep telling me. That you  
 found her. That you recognized her.

HEARST  
 Yes.

LYLE  
 Face downwards.

HEARST  
 Her clothes. I recognized her--

LYLE  
 School uniform. You recognized her  
 school uniform.

HEARST  
 (nods)  
 Yes.

LYLE  
 Don't be a damn fool! A school  
 uniform. Filthy. Torn.  
 Bloodstained. And the wearer is  
 face downwards in a ditch. Half-  
 covered in muck and leaves. Wearing  
 what? A uniform worn by hundreds of  
 other kids. And you "recognized"  
*her*. Without even touching her.

HEARST  
 I didn't touch her.

LYLE  
 But you recognized her...so you claim?

HEARST  
 Yes.

LYLE

How? Exactly *how* did you recognize her? Unless you personally dumped her there, how in God's name did you recognize her as Gwendolyn Roberts?

HEARST

(hands up, backing away)

No...No...No...

Lyle begins circling again.

LYLE

Okay. Forget that lie a moment. You found her.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

And you didn't call anyone, or shout out. You just ran home?

HEARST

I told you. I was panic-stricken. I'd just found a murdered child. I wasn't thinking clearly.

LYLE

When you arrived home, you didn't immediately call the police.

HEARST

Not immediately.

LYLE

Why?

HEARST

I've already told you.

LYLE

Tell me again.

HEARST

I wanted to vomit.

LYLE

You didn't vomit at the scene.

HEARST

No, I didn't vomit at the scene.

LYLE

Why not?

HEARST

I don't know. One doesn't control these things. They just happen.

LYLE

But you were sick when you arrived home?

HEARST

Yes. Violently sick.

LYLE

Your wife didn't help you?

HEARST

No.

LYLE

Why not?

HEARST

(sitting)

How do I know? She doesn't care. We live under the same roof...that's all.

Lyle begins circling now, in ever tighter circles, more aggressive with each question.

LYLE

All right. You were sick, then you telephoned the police?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

And arranged to meet them at the scene?

HEARST

They asked me to go back and meet them there.

LYLE

And you agreed?

HEARST

Yes. Naturally.

LYLE

Earlier this evening -- last night now -- I showed you a photograph.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

You didn't want to look. Remember?

HEARST

Yes, I remember.

LYLE

Clothes ripped to hell. Blood everywhere. You implied that's how you left her. When you went for the police.

HEARST

Did I? I can't--

LYLE

A specific implication. "That's how I left her." Remember?

HEARST

I think so...I don't--

LYLE

A statement likely to be made by a murderer.

HEARST

For God's sake! It was how I left her. How the police found her when--

LYLE

Nevertheless, the kind of statement likely made by a murderer.

HEARST

You're twisting my words. You're--

LYLE

If you killed Roberts, you killed Standish and Wallace.

HEARST

But I never--

LYLE

Carbon copies, Hearst. Perfect replicas. One man, three murders.

HEARST  
I didn't kill Roberts.

LYLE  
Standish?

HEARST  
No.

LYLE  
Wallace?

HEARST  
No! How many more times? I was--

LYLE  
I know. You were with a woman...or  
you were gazing out to sea. You  
were with a woman...or you were  
enjoying a quiet drink. Anything  
but killing children.

HEARST  
Look, if I lied, it was because--

LYLE  
You lied. You're still lying.

HEARST  
You've no right...no proof...

LYLE  
You reported the murder of Roberts  
to the police and met them at the  
scene?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Cooperated with the police as much  
as possible?

HEARST  
Of course.

LYLE  
Statements, for example?

HEARST  
Yes. Three statements. One about  
each murder.

LYLE  
Statements containing lies?

HEARST  
I...Look, it's not that I--

LYLE  
Statements containing lies?

HEARST  
Yes. All right. At least, not *all*  
the truth.

LYLE  
At the Roberts killing, you handed  
in your clothes?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Normal procedure. Clothes. Shoes.  
All of it. For forensic examination.

HEARST  
Yes.

Lyle points at the files on the table.

LYLE  
It's in there. The report from the  
forensic science lab.

HEARST  
I expect it is.

LYLE  
They're very thorough, the forensic  
scientists. Very thorough. They  
examine every inch microscopically.

HEARST  
I suppose they do.

LYLE  
No mention of leaves, Hearst. No  
mention of muck from the ditch or  
traces of vomit, or anything at all  
of the kinds of things expected from  
the story you tell were on one square  
centimeter of your clothes.

Lyle lunges into Hearst, leaning over him.

LYLE  
You changed clothes, Mr. Hearst!  
You weren't sick.  
(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

When you arrived home, you changed clothes *before* you telephoned the police.

HEARST

I-I...

LYLE

Identical suit. Identical shirt. Identical shoes. So easy for you because it's all you own.

Hearst appears more and more desperate.

LYLE

Blood. Semen. Vomit. That's why you *had* to change clothes before you called the police. Destroy the evidence.

HEARST

It wasn't like that...!

LYLE

Thursday rape and kill! Friday, dry-cleaning! The murder one day, evidence-free clothes the next!

HEARST

It's not like that! It's just that-just that...!

LYLE

'Just that' what?!

A sudden and profound silence, then both speak quietly.

HEARST

(beat)  
I'm sorry.

LYLE

About?

HEARST

Truly sorry.

LYLE

Yes?

HEARST

I seem to be...

LYLE

What?

HEARST

(long beat)

There's no way out...is there?

LYLE

You've lied too much, Hearst. A lot too much.

HEARST

So many lies.

LYLE

No more, though...eh?

HEARST

No. No more lies.

LYLE

The truth? Just for a change?

HEARST

I can't...do this anymore.

Lyle crosses her arms across her chest.

LYLE

You killed Roberts?

Another long beat.

HEARST

(almost whispered,  
with a nod)

Yes.

LYLE

After sexually assaulting her?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

And Standish?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

And Wallace?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE  
All three?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Sexual assault...then murder?

HEARST  
(tortured, tormented)  
Yes. Yes. YES!!

Then there is abject silence. Deep, pregnant silence.

Hearst rests his elbows on the table, lowers his head and places his palms over his temples and ears.

Lyle stands, breathes deeply. She moves to the small mirror, observes herself, smiles slightly. She pumps hand sanitizer into her palm, rubs it into her hands.

LYLE  
(into the mirror)  
It's done with. It's out. From here on, it gets easier.

Nothing from Hearst. Lyle moves to him.

LYLE  
I know what I'm talking about, Mr. Hearst. I've gotten confessions too many times to have any doubt.

Hearst still doesn't move.

LYLE  
A statement now. It's the usual thing.

Hearst finally drops his hands flat on the table, staring straight forward at nothing.

HEARST  
Why not?

LYLE  
I'm not pressing. It's your decision.

HEARST  
Will it help?

LYLE  
It gets your side down in black and white. Keeps things clean.

HEARST  
All right. I'll give you your  
precious statement. Just tell me  
how you need me to say it.

Lyle looks at Adams.

LYLE  
Statement forms, please, Sergeant.

Adams rises from the chair.

ADAMS  
Yes, ma'am.

Adams opens the door, exits into the hall.

LYLE  
Your wife's still here.

HEARST  
I don't want to see her.

LYLE  
Why not?

HEARST  
She'd no right to tell you...to give  
you--

LYLE  
In her defense, she didn't give it  
as much as I took it. Cindy.  
Standish. Wallace. Roberts. It's  
a pattern. I needed that pattern.  
Cindy was the key only your wife  
could give me. I needed it to unlock  
you.

HEARST  
Your key. Your pattern.

LYLE  
Try to be grateful--it's over. It  
stopped at Roberts.

HEARST  
(disgusted)  
Jesus!

Adams returns, carrying tablet and cheap ballpoint pen. He  
places them on the table in front of Hearst.

LYLE

Your statement, Hearst. Your own words. Write it yourself or dictate it to Sergeant Adams.

HEARST

I'll dictate it.

LYLE

Fine.

Lyle looks to Adams, who takes Lyle's chair, sits down, takes the tablet and pen in hand.

HEARST

One thing, Inspector. May I ask Sergeant Adams questions?

LYLE

What sort of questions?

HEARST

Exact locations? Specific times? I don't remember every...you understand.

LYLE

Yes. But he'll only help you jog your memory. He won't put words into your mouth.

HEARST

All right.

LYLE

Good. I'll be back presently.

Hearst looks at Adams, who readies to copy. Lyle moves to the door, opens it, looks back at Hearst a moment, then exits the room.

LIGHTS TO ONE-QUARTER IN MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle enters, flops wearily into the vacant chair. Neither she nor Susan speaks for a moment.

SUSAN

(quietly)

He's confessed.

LYLE

Yes.

SUSAN  
It's taken longer than I expected.

LYLE  
He'd a lot to lose.

SUSAN  
What...exactly?

Lyle lets her eyes fall directly onto Susan.

LYLE  
His life. In this state, he'll get life. There'll be recommendations attached to limit parole. He'll be lucky if it's less than twenty-five-thirty years.

SUSAN  
He'll be an old man.

LYLE  
(harshly, pitilessly)  
Lady, he won't live it out. The other prisoners will know what he's done, will make his life hell. Given the chance, they'll cripple him in some way. Given a free hand, they'll kill him.

SUSAN  
Oh, my God!

Lyle stands, towering over her.

LYLE  
It's what you wanted, madam. It's what *I* wanted. This so-called civilized community demands it. We must not, now, cry in our beer.

SUSAN  
We mustn't forget...

LYLE  
The children. Oh, no. We must not forget the children. Cindy, for example.

SUSAN  
Cindy?

LYLE  
Your husband. Men like him.  
(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

They're twisted. But they hide it. And they're *helped* to hide it, Mrs. Hearst. Their families. Their wives. Their brothers, sisters...everybody. This damned "respectability". It's the family's as much as the guilty man's. It's like having an alcoholic in the family. It's a skeleton in the closet...so let's close the door and keep it locked. Let no one know. So--eventually--something like this happens. They rape. They kill. Because "respectability" needed to be protected. But who the devil wants "respectability" at *that* price?

Lyle leans into her, her fingers on the table.

LYLE

You do, madame. You and thousands like you. Cindy was the tip of the iceberg. You knew it, but you chose to ignore it. "For Cindy's sake" you said. The hell it was. Three children had to die "*for Cindy's sake*". It's disgusting.

Lyle moves to the door, turns back to her.

LYLE

He needed treatment five years ago. You knew it, you're not a fool, but you chose to punish him instead. How did you put it? "Played properly a woman can make her husband feel unclean." You played it well, madam. But you played the wrong game -- you could have forced him to seek treatment, but you played the wrong game...and you played it very skillfully.

Lyle opens the door.

LYLE

For the record, madam. I'm undecided. I don't know who I despise more -- you, or your husband.

Lyle exits the room. Susan stares at the closed door for several moments, then her shoulders begin to shake, and sobs boil up from her throat. She explodes into tears and bolts from the room.

LIGHTS DOWN ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON BULLPEN.

Lyle enters. She notices Bell, who sits on the desk as in the first scene. The Uniformed Officer is standing at a FAX machine, which is printing out a bulletin page.

As Lyle moves to the coffee stand, begins to pour herself a cup of coffee:

LYLE

Thought you were going to go home,  
do whatever it is morons do.

BELL

Still my case.

LYLE

Not any more.

BELL

What do you mean?

LYLE

In the court's hands now.

BELL

(surprised)  
He *confessed*?

LYLE

Of course he did. I told you I know  
how to handle these things.

BELL

Everything? Rapes *and* murders?

LYLE

All of it. All three.  
(pointedly, proudly)  
And I didn't lay a hand on him.

The Uniform picks up the printed FAX and reads it.

BELL

(just as pointedly)  
No. You left that to me.  
(stands)  
You counted on me making a move,  
didn't you, Inspector? You saw it  
coming, right?

(MORE)

BELL (CONT'D)

Knew that if you gave me an opportunity, that if I had a little dance with him, it would soften him up for you. A "little talk" my ass. You needed me to remind him he's in America, where we don't care so much about being polite. You just didn't want to get your own hands dirty.

Lyle smiles.

LYLE

Perhaps. But it's like shedding tears for them, Bell, the rough stuff is. Different end of the spectrum, that's all. And I'll never give them the satisfaction of my doing either. Never met one of them worth it.

(beat)

You'll get there. It's an art. Just takes a little time.

UNIFORM

(under her breath)

Jesus.

BELL

Yeah, well...Never considered myself an artist. Hope I never do.

(a two-finger salute)

Cheerio.

Bell exits.

The Uniform looks up at Lyle.

UNIFORM

Ma'am.

Lyle continues with her coffee, doesn't look up.

LYLE

Yes?

UNIFORM

I think you should see this, ma'am.

Lyle looks up at the Uniform, who holds out the FAX.

Lyle sets her coffee down, takes the FAX, rubs her eyes, puts on her glasses and reads. When she's finished, she looks up at the Uniform.

LYLE  
This is confirmed?

UNIFORM  
Yes, ma'am. They wouldn't put it on  
the wire unless it was.

LYLE  
Christ.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE BULLPEN. LIGHTS UP TO FULL ON THE MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM.

Hearst and Adams are still at the table.

ADAMS  
That's it, then? That's everything?

HEARST  
Yes.

ADAMS  
Nothing you want to add?

HEARST  
I don't think so, no.

ADAMS  
Sign it, then, make it official. At  
the bottom there.

Hearst does so.

The door opens. Lyle enters, carrying the FAX.

Adams stands, tablet in hand. He moves to Lyle.

ADAMS  
Just in time, ma'am. Signed, sealed,  
and delivered.

LYLE  
A full statement?

ADAMS  
Yes, ma'am.

LYLE  
All three murders?

ADAMS  
Yes, ma'am.

LYLE

How much help from you, Sergeant?

ADAMS

Not much. Names and dates. Addresses.  
Odd bits and pieces he'd forgotten.

Lyle closes the door gently, walks slowly and deliberately to the table, stands looking down at Hearst.

LYLE

(softly)

Why?

HEARST

The explanations you wanted -- they're all in the statement. As you said.

LYLE

No. I don't mean that. I mean *why*?

Hearst frowns, puzzled.

HEARST

I don't understand. It's what you--

LYLE

This...

Lyle holds up the FAX.

LYLE

From the Southport police, just north of here. It came in moments ago. Double-checked and confirmed. Eleven o'clock last night. An eight-year-old girl was attacked...dragged into a wood. Two men -- passersby -- heard her screams. They got there too late to save the girl, but grabbed the man. A long-distance truck driver. The Southport detectives interviewed him most of the night. He confessed an hour ago. Knows things about the Standish killing, the Wallace killing, the Roberts killing...things only the murderer can know. Things I haven't even told you.

ADAMS

My God.

Lyle taps the statement from Hearst.

LYLE

*Why?* In God's name, why *this*?

Hearst is silent. Lyle, obviously completely stunned, lowers herself into the chair across from Hearst.

LYLE

(gently, steadily)

Mr. Hearst. Will you *please* tell me *why*?

Hearst pauses, then speaks to the table, quietly.

HEARST

Why not? I know what I am. It *could* have been me. In other circumstances it might of been. Susan will never believe it was someone else. Not after...Cindy. She'll always believe it was me.

(beat)

I'm just so fucking tired of it all.

Hearst stands, looks directly at Lyle. His voice steels.

HEARST

And you. You painted me so tightly into your little picture, hell-bent, all because of some stupid lies about sordid infidelities that *any* man would wish to keep private. The sad details of my life were just puzzle pieces to you. Who cares about the agonies they represented. It had to be me. You were so damned cocksure. Well, it *could* have been me, so *let* it be me. You'd left me nothing. It just didn't matter anymore.

(beat)

That's why, Inspector.

Hearst begins gathering his belongings from the table.

HEARST

I assume I'm free to go.

LYLE

(standing)

Yes. Yes, you are. With our apologies.

Hearst turns to Lyle as he prepares to leave, faces her.

HEARST

You know what you did tonight,  
Inspector? You and your 'art of  
interrogation'? You simply proved  
that sometimes it's easier to confess  
to a lie than lie about the truth.

Lyle sinks into her chair.

LYLE

All while another girl died.

HEARST

(twisting the knife)

Yes. Tragic. How do you feel about  
that?

Hearst turns toward the door, then stops and turns back.

HEARST

I'm curious. Did you tell Susan  
about the prostitutes?

A devastated Lyle shakes her head "no".

HEARST

But you would have.

Lyle nods "yes".

HEARST

I thought so.

Hearst turns to go.

LYLE

You must love your wife very much,  
Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

That's none of your business anymore,  
is it? If you don't mind, tell her  
I'll meet her at home. I don't want  
to see her in...

(looks around)

...this place. I assume you  
understand.

Hearst exits. Lyle sits a moment, frozen and in shock, then  
rises, moves to the door.

LYLE

I'll speak with Mrs. Hearst.

ADAMS

Yes, sir.

Lyle exits. Adams turns out the light and follows.

LIGHTS DOWN ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

The room is empty as Lyle enters. She's surprised. She turns to go back out when the Uniformed Officer rushes in, breathless, distraught.

UNIFORM

Ma'am...Mrs. Hearst. Outside.  
Just now. She-she stepped off the  
sidewalk...straight into the path of  
a moving bus. Deliberately. Dozens  
of witnesses. The driver had no  
chance to...She's...she's...

LYLE

(like a 2x4 across  
the forehead)  
Not...Dead...?!

The Uniform nods. Lyle's body seems to implode on itself. Sobs well up from her chest. Tears explode from her eyes. She runs from the room.

SLOWLY CROSSFADE LIGHTS, DROPPING SLOWLY TO BLACK ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM, AS THEY RISE SLOWLY TO FULL ON BULLPEN.

Adams stands at the coffee table, pouring himself a cup of coffee. A moment later, Grimes enters the room in a huff.

GRIMES

What the hell's going on?

ADAMS

Sir?

GRIMES

I just passed Lyle in the hall. She  
looked -- I don't know -- she looked  
like a damned corpse!

ADAMS

Sir?

GRIMES

And for God's sake, she was *crying!*

BLACKOUT.

CURTAIN.

THE END.