

"SUSPECT"

Screenplay
by
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SUSPECT

FADE IN:

We're looking at something black, ominous. Suddenly a GAVEL sounds, startling. A sharp voice:

VOICE (OVER)
All rise.' The Supreme Court of the
United States stands adjourned.

The black moves. We see it's a judge's robe. The nine Supreme Court Justices, standing, file in solemn procession out of the courtroom.

INT. SUPREME COURT BUILDING - NIGHTFALL

The Justices move along a quiet corridor, past the portraits of their distinguished predecessors, their feet echoing on the tile floor. CHIEF JUSTICE WILLIAM F. REYNOLDS, a tall, thin man, with a shock of white hair, in his late seventies, crosses to his chambers hallway door.

A JUSTICE
Merry Christmas Bill.

JUSTICE REYNOLDS
Merry Christmas.

The Justices move off. A young, red-headed WOMAN, wearing a winter coat, shyly stands from a hallway couch.

THE YOUNG WOMAN
Your honor...

JUSTICE REYNOLDS
Hello. I hope you haven't been waiting
too long. We ran late. Please come
in.

INT. CHIEF JUSTICE REYNOLDS' CHAMBERS - EARLY EVENING

Degrees, photographs, mementos, crowd the dark wooden walls. A suitcase, an overcoat draped over it, is on the floor by a couch. Propped against the suitcase is a sleeved shotgun. The Chief Justice neatly hangs his robe on a hall tree.

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JUSTICE REYNOLDS

Do you have plans for the holidays?

THE YOUNG WOMAN

I'm staying in the city. Spending Christmas with some friends.

He slows by a small pile of Christmas gifts on a table.

JUSTICE REYNOLDS

...I never know what to get people. My wife would buy our gifts. She always seemed to get just the right thing...

He turns to his desk. He opens a drawer. He gives her an envelope embossed with the seal of the Supreme Court.

JUSTICE REYNOLDS

I hope this is appropriate...Use it well.

THE YOUNG WOMAN

(after a beat)

Thank you, your honor. I will.

JUSTICE REYNOLDS

(warm)

Have a good Christmas.

THE YOUNG WOMAN

And you too.

He shakes her hand. And she shyly leaves, quietly closing the door behind her. He looks after her for a brief moment, then turns toward his desk. Stopping, he takes the sleeve off the shotgun, admiring the hand-tooled stock. There's a light knock on another door. A SECRETARY comes in.

SECRETARY

Would you like your car brought around your honor?

JUSTICE REYNOLDS

Not just yet Marie. I want to clear off my desk.

(meaning shotgun)

You know Abraham Lincoln hunted wild turkey just down our road. You can still bag a turkey for Christmas dinner.

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She smiles and leaves. He sits at his desk, resting the shotgun against a desk leg. He signs some correspondence in his precise hand, neatly putting them away in a drawer. He takes off his glasses, setting them on the empty desk top. He takes the shotgun, propping it muzzle up between his knees, bends his forehead to the barrels, and squeezes the trigger, blowing his brains out.

A SIREN SOUNDS.

EXT. THE POTOMAC RIVER, WASHINGTON, D.C. - EARLY MORNING

Snow's falling. A drawbridge is slowly raised, its siren wailing. A freighter, horn bellowing a response, moves under the bridge going downriver. Along the riverbank, a knot of OLD MEN cluster in the snow. Suddenly, they undress down to swimming shorts, running into the freezing water. "Polar Bears," dashing life into their veins, steam rolling off their bodies, they briefly swim in the icy river. Running out, invigorated, they bundle under heavy woolen blankets. As they gingerly put on slippers, one of them stops. A WOMAN'S SHOE is in the snow by the river's edge, the water gently lapping at it. And wedged in a nearby bush, in a shallow pool of water, in a winter coat, floating face down, is a WOMAN'S BODY.

EXT. THE POTOMAC - DAY

Police radios crackle. Police Cars, their lights blinking blue, are parked along a road above the river. POLICEMEN, in yellow rain-slickers, DETECTIVES, in fur-lined coats, their shields pinned to their coat pockets, move along the riverbank. FORENSIC MEN in thigh-high rubber boots slosh through the water. A Police Photographer's camera flashes. A Forensic Man kneels over a WOMAN'S supine body, talking into a mini-cassette recorder. He bends to look at her neck. Her throat's been cut.

FORENSIC MAN

...razor cut -- throat slit at the larynx. Contusions on the scalp, mid-lateral and frontal. Severe hematoma by right temple. Estimate T.O.D. midnight to five a.m...

Another Forensic Man tweezers up scattered papers from a discarded wallet, sealing them in plastic baggies. A Forensic Man, wearing gloves, puts the woman's shoe in a plastic bag, and tags it. Still another Forensic Man is making plaster molds of footprints left in the wet bank. He lifts a print. There's the unmistakable imprint of an emblem on the sole.

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FORENSIC MAN

Size twelve, Converse All Star...

The BODY'S put in a body bag. Two Policemen carry it up the steep hill. One of them slips on a patch of ice, dropping the bag, the bag sliding back down the hill. The Police laugh, a gallows humor, that makes their grim job bearable. Retrieving the bag, it's carried up the hill and put into a Coroner's Ambulance. The siren stutters as the ambulance slowly leaves, in no hurry this time.

A Forensic Man blows snow off the riverbank, uncovering more of the footprints imbedded in the ground. He follows them under the drawbridge until they disappear. He looks up at the banks. Scrap fires burn. Huge DRAINS sit high and dry, etched into the banks above the low winter river. Pockets of MEN, Washington's Derelicts, unable to find room in the crowded mens' shelters, warm themselves by fires in old oil drums, and huddle asleep in the drainage pipes.

EXT. THE POTOMAC RIVER - NIGHTFALL

The lights from Washington are in the near distance. And POLICEMEN, some of them carrying shotguns, swarm the transients' camp, rousting the derelicts. There are the sounds of a struggle. A ruddy-complected, middle-aged DETECTIVE, ducks out of a drain pipe. And emerging behind him, a trio of Policemen wrestle a burly, bearded MAN, filthy, with matted hair, his pants held together with caked dirt, his feet covered with layers of old socks, out of the drain. Two more Policemen come out of the drain pipe. One of them is holding up a pair of muddy Converse All Star SNEAKERS. The other Policeman is carrying in one hand a plastic evidence bag with a WOMAN'S PURSE inside it, and in his other hand, a smaller plastic bag that has a thin KNIFE in it.

Strong, the bearded MAN violently struggles to get away. He bites a Policeman's finger to the bone, blood covering his mouth. A Policeman shoots him with a Taser. The shock knocks him to the ground, his body in spasms, literally smoking in the frozen air. Cuffing him, reading him his rights, the Police drag him up the bank to a Police Car. As the Police Car's siren screams, racing across the bridge into Washington:

A faucet drips.

INT. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA MORGUE - LATE NIGHT

It's empty. A faucet's dripping. Smocks hang from hooks on a wall. Steel surgical instruments, in their sterile cellophane sleeves, wait on metal counters. Drawers of bodies line the walls. And the WOMAN'S BODY, still in the body-bag, an identifying tag on its zipper, lies on a steel table. As she lays with the bodies of the ordinary, the unidentified and the dispossessed...the faucet dripping:

ROLL MAIN TITLES:

"SUSPECT"

And there's the hollow sound of horses' hooves on pavement.

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. - EARLY MORNING

It's quiet, the streets empty. A light snow's still falling. Flags flutter at half-mast. And a HORSE DRAWN CART, driven by a uniformed Capitol Policeman, bearing the flag-draped casket of the Chief Justice, comes along Pennsylvania Avenue. The horses' breath shows in the cold air, their nostrils flared, their hooves echoing on the concrete. And turning a corner, at a distance, the wagon's followed by a procession of Limousines. Their headlamps accentuate the snowfall, their wipers slapping, as the cortege follows the wagon past the White House. In contrast to the solemn procession, colored lights blink from the Christmas Tree on the White House lawn. The wagon jounces in a rut, moving down Pennsylvania toward the Capitol dome. The cortege circles the Capitol Building, crossing onto East Capitol. And as the wagon passes the Supreme Court, taking the Chief Justice to his final resting place: HORNS break the stillness.

EXT. D.C. EXPRESSWAY - MORNING

Traffic's snarled, horns uselessly sounding, as cars crawl along the beltway into the Capitol.

INT. KATHLEEN RILEY'S CAR - MORNING

A used Dodge. KATHLEEN RILEY, in her thirties, wearing a wool suit, impatiently inches along with the traffic. She sips at a styrofoam cup of 7/11 coffee. Rusted wipers squeal as they scrape snow off the windshield. An ineffectual defroster blows. A dress, in a dry-cleaner's plastic bag, hangs in her back seat. Christmas presents and a roll of wrapping paper are on the front seat. The radio's on:

(CONTINUED)

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NEWSCASTER

...The Chief Justice is said to have had cancer and was despondent over failing health. The President, speaking this morning at a memorial service at the Washington Presbyterian Church, said his death was a loss for all Americans. He called the Chief Justice one of our most eloquent jurists, a man dedicated to law and devoted to truth --

Suddenly a brick explodes through the front window. Kathleen instinctively slams on the brakes. Her car doors are yanked open. A young BLACK WOMAN and two young BLACK MEN scramble into the car, grabbing the dress, the Christmas gifts and her purse. As they run out, as quickly as they've come, the young WOMAN pulls off Kathleen's necklace.

KATHLEEN

(enraged)

...That was my mother's -- !

She jumps out after them.

EXT. D.C. BELTWAY - MORNING

They run along the lines of cars.

KATHLEEN

(chasing them)

Somebody help me...

The people lock their doors. The thieves dart across the beltway and disappear down an embankment. Kathleen gives up. Turning, she moves back along the cars...

KATHLEEN

What's the matter with you people?!

The jam starts to break up, the cars gathering speed. And as Kathleen stands in the middle of the expressway, cars racing by her:

END MAIN TITLES:

INT. COURTHOUSE, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - MORNING

Kathleen, carrying a briefcase, moves quickly along a busy corridor with a thin, balding BLACK MAN laden with legal folders.

BLACK MAN

You make a police report?

KATHLEEN

I stood in line over an hour. You're supposed to list the cost of everything taken. The necklace isn't worth two cents. I try to explain to the clerk it has sentimental value. He keeps wanting to know what it's worth. We dance for twenty minutes and I finally said to hell with it. Everybody's worried about worth -- nobody gives a shit about value.

She abruptly pushes through a door marked "SUPERIOR COURT."

INT. SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - MORNING

The Courtroom's filled. A BLACK JUDGE, in his late fifties, is on the bench hearing pleas. A Defense Attorney argues for his client's bail reduction. An Assistant U.S. Attorney, representing the People, sits at a desk stacked with complaints. In contrast to the orderly, quiet courtrooms we see on television, life isn't that way. A radiator hisses. It's hot, the tepid smell of too many people in one place. It's noisy. People going in and out. A steady nervous chatter. Forced whispers. Defendants murmur, consulting with Attorneys. A Woman's crying. A Man swears at something. Most of the people, as is the constituency of the District of Columbia, are Blacks.

Kathleen moves quickly down the side of the courtroom. Sitting toward the front, on ballpark cushions, are a trio of "roosters." HENRY, a diminutive older man in a natty suit, VIVIAN, a corpulent woman with a cherub's face, and CECILLE, a thin old Black woman, who constantly mutters as if she's in church. The "roosters" are perched there day after day because it's better than soap operas. Henry stops Kathleen.

HENRY

You're in a slump. You're four for eleven this month with a no-contest and two postponements. For the year that makes you .325.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN
Your problem's your hair. You
shouldn't have cut your hair.

CORINNE
(murmuring)
Tell it.

VIVIAN
It's too severe. You look angry.
You used to look sweet.

KATHLEEN
I used to be sweet.

She crosses behind a bench crowded with Defense Attorneys waiting
to have their cases heard.

KATHLEEN
Did you get my message?

She's come behind a rumpled, bespectacled Man in his early
forties, with long hair and a wrinkled suit, engrossed, reading
a transcript. MORTY ROSENTHAL. A young Black Attorney stands
over him patiently waiting.

MORTY
(busy reading)
You all right?

Kathleen nods.

MORTY
(taking off glasses)
See if he'll call a recess for a
couple weeks. Blow some smoke up
his judicial ass.

The Attorney nods, and moves off.

MORTY
(to Kathleen)
Your assault with intent skipped.

KATHLEEN
That figures. He promised me he
wouldn't.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORTY

He'll turn up around March with a good Florida tan... Here's today's top forty.

He gives her a list of names and their case reports.

KATHLEEN

Busy night.

MORTY

52 felony arrests. A record for a Tuesday. I don't know what it is, must be something in the air.

KATHLEEN

The Christmas spirit.

And balancing the paperwork against her chest, she crosses the courtroom to the prisoners dock.

KATHLEEN

(looking at a report)

What is this a joke? Mr. King.
Mr. Martin Luther King.

A MAN'S VOICE

No joke, sister.

A burly, perfectly bald, Black Man, stands.

KATHLEEN

(all business)

Mr. King, I'm Kathleen Riley with
Public Defenders Service.

She turns through a door into a short hallway off the courtroom.

INT. CORRIDOR - DAY

Federal Marshals lead prisoners in and out. A Defense Attorney counsels a client.

KATHLEEN

(studying report)

You've been accused of attempted rape,
breaking and entering.

KING

There's circumstances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

I'm not interested. How do you want to plead?

KING

Not guilty.

KATHLEEN

Do you understand the charges Mr. King?

KING

Read my lips bitch, not guilty.

KATHLEEN

(unfazed)

I can trade the attempted rape for the B and E. You'll do a cheap 120 at Raleigh.

KING

I ain't guilty. I was resting. They make that a crime?

KATHLEEN

When they find you in a stranger's bedroom with your pants down to your ankles and you're bumping on somebody who doesn't want the pleasure of your company.

KING

I don't know how I ended up there. I'm a sleepwalker. I musta layed down and she crawled under me.

KATHLEEN

(looking at report)

Martin, the last time you were "sleepwalking," they "woke" you up in a Safeway with a Saturday Night Special in your hand. You take this to trial they'll string you up by the balls.

KING

Isn't that what you're here for baby -- to protect my balls.

The door opens.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A BAILIFF
(calls)
Martin Luther King.

KATHLEEN
(a shrug)
They're your balls.

She leads him back into the courtroom.

INT. SUPERIOR COURT - DAY

They stand before the bench.

KATHLEEN
Not guilty your honor.

JUDGE JULIAN FRANKLIN
(stopped short)
Have you discussed this plea with
People Ms. Riley?

She glances at the Assistant U.S. Attorney.

KATHLEEN
No your honor.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
I'm short on patience this morning
Ms. Riley. The evidence in this case
is substantial. I don't think the
judicial system wants to spend its
precious time or the public's money
to adjudicate this. You would do well
to confer with the People's counsel
and reach an amicable arrangement.

KING
I don't want no arrangement. Not
guilty.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
(exercised)
What's the basis of your plea?

King looks at Kathleen.

KATHLEEN
(after a moment)
A medical disorder your honor. My client
has chronic somnambulism. He sleepwalks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE FRANKLIN
Are you fully awake Ms. Riley?

KATHLEEN
I am your honor. We would attempt to show non compos mentis, a diminished capacity while sleeping. Your honor this is a serious disorder that should be given its day in court. There are thousands of suffering somnambulists who, in a deep sleep, can't account for their actions.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
You'll go to the wall with this?

KATHLEEN
I'm sworn to defend my client to the best of my ability.

Judge Franklin looks over at the Assistant U.S. Attorney. He makes a motion with his hands as if he's tearing paper.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
Against my better judgment, case dismissed! I'll warn you Mr. King, if you appear before this bench again, you will feel the full measure of the law.

As Kathleen walks her client away from the bench:

KATHLEEN
Congratulations asshole.

He grabs his balls, smiles, and walks off.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
(still seething)
Ms. Riley.

He motions her back to the bench.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
You're making it difficult for me to dispense what little justice there is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

What has justice got to do with it?

She looks at him, and as she crosses the courtroom for her next client, troubled:

Bells sound, incessant.

EXT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Snow blankets the Capitol Mall. In the distance a lone figure comes through the snow across the Mall. A Man in his thirties. He's wearing a wool tout's cap, an overcoat over a gray suit. He runs up the Capitol Building's steps and hurries inside. EDDIE SANGER.

INT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Showing a Guard a photo I.D. BADGE that's around his neck, "Lobby," "American Dairy Council," he crosses through a metal detector. He moves quickly across a marble foyer to a broad hallway. There's a rush of NOISE. The brocade carpeted hallway, outside the House of Representatives, is choked full with Congressman and Lobbyists. Bells repeatedly sound, lights blinking on the hallway clocks, signalling the Congressmen of an impending vote on the floor. Eddie slows, taking off his cap. There's a boyish, self-effacing quality about him. American heartland. His eyes belie the innocence. He has the soul of a pool shooter.

He moves through the crowded hallway, occasionally slowing to greet a Congressman. Hands in his overcoat pockets, he stops by the busy doors to the House Chamber. A Man who looks older than his years, stands in the doorway. WALTER ABBOTT. He has the worn face of a veteran who rarely sees the light of day, who's lobbied through seven administrations, and the world offers him few surprises. He looks over at Eddie.

EDDIE

(perceptive)

We're in trouble.

WALTER

(a nod)

We're in deep shit. Support's drying up quicker than an old whore. Right now it's too close to call.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The bells pattern changes, becoming more urgent. Eddie's pressed close to Walter by the crowd of Congressmen at the door.

EDDIE

What about the whip? He said he'd keep his people in line. He told me he'd never turn his back on the American Farmer.

WALTER

And the world turns. He got a sudden backache. He's sitting out the vote. He told his side of the aisle to vote their conscience.

EDDIE

(an ironic smile)

That would be a first.

(a beat)

What's the leadership saying on the other side?

WALTER

They're soft. Nobody wants to take a position.

EDDIE

Did Comisky declare?

WALTER

She's still on the fence. Eight or nine are waiting to see which way she falls.

EDDIE

Has she gone in yet?

Walter nods. Eddie turns to a Doorman. He says something to him. The Doorman goes into the Chambers. A moment, and an attractive woman in her mid-forties, wearing a tailored suit, a colored scarf around her neck, her trademark, comes out of the House. A tough, seasoned politician, despite her years in this particularly male world, she's managed to maintain her identity and her dignity. CONGRESSWOMAN GRACE COMISKY.

EDDIE

(hands in coat pockets)

What do you think Grace?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE
I can't help you Eddie. I've
decided to go the other way on
this.

EDDIE
(an understanding nod)
I just wanted to see which way the
wind was 'blowing.

Grace hovers, expecting something more.

GRACE
That's it?

EDDIE
(a shrug)
That's about it. I respect you Grace.
I don't want to insult you with some
promise out of left field. You've
got to vote your conscience.

GRACE
Since when are you so understanding?

EDDIE
(a smile)
I used to box a little. Golden Gloves.
You learn it's smarter sometimes to
stay down.

The bells are at their most demanding.

GRACE
Hang around, I'll buy you a drink.

She starts back into the Chambers.

EDDIE
Grace.

She slows.

EDDIE
What happened? Maybe I can pick up
something so I won't make the same
mistake next time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE

(studying him)

When you get humble, I get nervous.
Like I'm being set up.

Eddie smiles, taking his hands out of his pockets, showing her nothing's there.

GRACE

You did what you could. It's a good piece of legislation. I wish I could support it. I'm in a tight spot. My district's blue shirt. Union. The way they look at it, you work an hour, you get paid for an hour. They don't like government subsidies.

EDDIE

I'm on their side. I'm from a farm family...of dirty shirts. Nobody knows more about the work ethic than I do... But everybody expects milk on their tables. It doesn't grow on trees. Somebody has to pay for it. If the price isn't right, they're gonna dump it. Have you ever seen them dump milk? They pour it in a river. It's a terrible waste.

GRACE

It's a gut issue Eddie. They look at the corporate farmers you handle and all they see is long fingers.

The hallway empties, the last of the Congressmen going inside. The bells suddenly stop, accentuating the quiet.

EDDIE

Grace, when you were in trouble...When you needed the crop states support for the car company bailout...I ran up the flag for you. I pulled a lot of votes.

GRACE

(a shrug)

That's life Eddie.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

(wry)

No, that's politics, Grace. You forget. You've been on the hill too long. Life's what everybody else does.

Quiet, she fingers her scarf.

GRACE

Forget about this one, Eddie.

EDDIE

This one I can't. The Dairy Council's making noises about changes. I guess I've gotten used to clean shirts.

GRACE

(a beat)

I'm sorry...

He nods. Opening the door, she starts into the Chambers.

EDDIE

(as if an afterthought)

Grace...Your district has a big inner-city lunch program, doesn't it?

(a beat)

I don't see why we couldn't donate a years free milk. No point in it going down the river.

She's motionless.

EDDIE

Give me some time to shore up support. Have the vote tabled until after the holiday.

GRACE

Why did you wait so long?

EDDIE

It slipped my mind.

GRACE

Nothing slips your mind. You set me up. "Life's what everybody else does..." You're dangerous.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He shrugs, boyish. She stands in the doorway, thinking it over. There's the sound of the Speaker's gavel in the Chambers, calling the Members to order.

GRACE

(after a beat)

I'll get it tabled. But this squares us, Eddie. Don't ask me for my vote. It isn't for sale.

He nods. She gives him a look, and turns into the House, the doors closing behind her. Eddie turns. Walter's come beside him.

EDDIE

I bought some time...

WALTER

What did you give her?

EDDIE

(a small smile)

A free lunch.

Walter smiles. A pager, on his belt, sounds. He hurries off. Eddie leans against the wall, by the doors, his hands in his pockets, waiting for the session to end. A thin, attractive young WOMAN, in a business suit, is quietly talking with a Congressman at the end of the hall. There's a subtle intimacy. Turning, the Congressman hurries into the Chambers through a far door. The Woman sits on a bench, rubbing at a scuff on her shoe.

EDDIE

(without turning)

How many does that make?

In her twenties, rawboned, pale, with touseled hair, she's a turbulent mixture of anorexic and hungry. MARILYN HORN.

MARILYN

This session, two steady. I'm cold-watering another one -- He doesn't have a prayer of being re-elected. It doesn't do me any good to be associated with losers.

Eddie smiles at her pragmatism.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
Where you working?

MARILYN
(fingering her badge)
Justice. Third girl in the Deputy
Attorney General's office.

EDDIE
(a smile)
Type much?

He motions, meaning her long nails.

MARILYN
(chewing on a nail)
The job doesn't require much typing.
(a beat)
Anyway, it's temporary. The Deputy
says he wants to groom me for
management...You know him, Eddie?
Paul Gray.

EDDIE
(a nod)
Yeah, I know him. He's a snake.

She nods. She lapses into quiet.

MARILYN
...That Congressman says he's looking
for a legislative assistant. If I had
a dollar for every promise...Just once,
I wish somebody would tell me, "I can't
do a thing for you."

Eddie starts along the hallway.

MARILYN
Aren't you going to wait? You never
know what opportunity is going to walk
out those doors.

He's halfway down the hall.

MARILYN
Eddie. You want some company?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
(turning, a smile)
I can't do a thing for you.

She smiles. As he moves along the empty hallway:

INT. SUPERIOR COURT FOR THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - AFTERNOON

Kathleen's standing at the prisoners dock advising a client, a young pregnant Black Woman in dreadlocks.

COURT CLERK
Call Carl Wayne Anderson.

BAILIFF
Carl Wayne Anderson.

The hallway door is pushed open. The bearded DERELICT, his feet manacled, his hands cuffed, is led by two Federal Marshals into the courtroom to stand in front of the bench. He's motionless. In his late thirties, there's a constant fury in his eyes.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
Mr. Anderson you have been charged with the murder of Elizabeth Rose Quinn. Is Mr. Anderson's counsel present?

ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY
Your honor, Mr. Anderson refused to speak with an attorney. As a matter of record he has refused to speak to anyone at all.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
Mr. Anderson, do you understand the serious charges that are being brought against you?

The Transient's motionless, unresponsive.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
You are being accused of first degree murder. Do you understand that Mr. Anderson?

Silence.

JUDGE FRANKLIN
Do you know where you are Mr. Anderson?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Silence.

JUDGE FRANKLIN

As I am unable to determine Mr. Anderson's competency to plead, I will postpone a plea hearing pending psychiatric evaluation. Does Mr. Anderson have means of support?

ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY

He's indigent your honor.

JUDGE FRANKLIN

The court will then appoint counsel.

He surveys the busy courtroom.

JUDGE FRANKLIN

Let the record show that Ms. Riley with the Public Defenders Service will represent Mr. Anderson.

KATHLEEN

Your honor, I'm scheduled for a vacation over Christmas. I haven't had a vacation in a year...I'm close to a burn-out...

JUDGE FRANKLIN

(the last word)

Ms. Riley accompany Mr. Anderson to the attorney's room and advise him of his rights.

INT. AN ATTORNEY'S ROOM - DAY

A small, windowless room. Kathleen's sitting across a table from the bearded derelict, his case file open in front of her. He's motionless, silent, his stare fixed. Her chair squeaks accentuating the heavy silence.

KATHLEEN

I can't do anything for you if you won't talk to me...

He looks through her.

KATHLEEN

This is a waste of time.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Standing, putting the papers away in her briefcase, she starts to leave. She stops beside him, staring at him.

KATHLEEN

Do you understand what's happening?

He suddenly turns and punches her in the face, knocking her down. He comes after her. Screaming, she manages to scramble away from him. Marshals run in, grabbing him. A Marshal puts a choke hold on him, rushing him out. As Kathleen sits on the floor, blood running down her face from a cut on her cheekbone:

INT. A WASHINGTON BAR - EVENING

An old Downtown bar and chop house. It's crowded with denizens of the courthouse, trying to wash down the taste of the day before they go out into the world. Kathleen's at a crowded table with Morty, some staff members and young Attorneys, from the Public Defenders Service. Her cheek's swollen purple.

AN ATTORNEY

Did you file a complaint?

KATHLEEN

What for? He's history. They'll hand down an incompetency, send him over to Richmond State Hospital, and keep him singing on Thorazene and Ridalin into the next century.

(touching her cheek)

I've never seen anybody with blood in his eyes like him...

ANOTHER ATTORNEY

It's open season. This month alone, two clients pulled weapons on me. I got this just in case.

He opens his corduroy suit jacket. He's wearing a corduroy bullet-proof vest.

A YOUNG ATTORNEY

(suddenly)

There's that son-of-a-bitch...

(getting up)

Judge Helms, could I please speak with you sir.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A group of Judges are crossing the barroom. JUDGE REUBEN BISHOP HELMS, a meticulous man in his fifties, with short gray hair, and steel blue eyes under wire-frame glasses, wearing a conservative suit, slows. Soft-spoken, there's an air of authority about him.

JUDGE HELMS

Make an appointment with my secretary
Mr. Tauber.

PETER TAUBER

It will only take a minute your honor.

JUDGE HELMS

(turning)

Not tonight.

PETER

(moving after him)

Why did you call me out like that in
open court?

Morty rushes to Peter's side.

MORTY

It's been a long day your honor. Sit
down Peter.

PETER

(not moving)

We could have discussed it in chambers.
It was humiliating.

JUDGE HELMS

(quietly)

You were unprepared Mr. Tauber. I
won't stand for shoddy law in my
courtroom. Morty, you should have
a talk with your young associate.

He turns into the dining room to wait with the other Judges for
their table. He softly laughs at something one of the Judges says.

MORTY

Swallow it Peter.

PETER

(upset)

The man called me incompetent. He
said I wasn't fit to practice.

(loud)

He's an arrogant prick!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Judge Helms turns around. Morty pulls Peter back toward the table.

PETER

(yelling)

He always lays down for the other side... sticks it right up your ring --

And Judge Helms comes face to face with Peter.

JUDGE HELMS

(controlled)

Counselor, I've been on the bench for twenty-two years...Nobody has ever questioned my objectivity! You be in my chambers at seven tomorrow morning...

He turns to leave.

PETER

(yelling after him)

Who the fuck do you think you are?!

The bar's suddenly very quiet.

MORTY

Take him home Steven.

An Attorney walks Peter out of the bar. Morty quietly sits down next to Kathleen.

KATHLEEN

He's finished.

MORTY

(a nod, drinking)

He'll never practice criminal law in the District of Columbia again... Stupid bastard.

A YOUNG ATTORNEY

So he lost his temper. What's the big deal? He'll go and apologize.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORTY

He appears before the bench in the district they'll treat him like he's got AIDS. There's two kinds of people in the world. Judges and everybody else. You don't ask a Judge who the fuck he thinks he is. He knows damn well he's God.

INT. WASHINGTON D.C. METRO - NIGHT

Kathleen's riding on a nearly empty subway car. She sits back, shutting her eyes. She lightly touches the bruise on her cheek. Opening her eyes, she stares, thoughtful. Troubled by something, she goes into her briefcase, taking out a case file. "CARL WAYNE ANDERSON."

She looks at the front sheet. There's a mug shot. There's the vital statistics. AGE: 39 (etc.) PRIOR ARRESTS: Aggravated assault. Assault with intent. Attempted rape. Assault. She flips the page. There's a SERVICE RECORD: Vietnam. 25th Infantry. "Psychiatric Discharge." She flips the page. A sheet is headed. "VETERANS ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL, BETHESDA, MARYLAND." And there's a lengthy MEDICAL RECORD. Within the medical history: "1974...contracted spinal meningitis, severely damaged auditory functions."

KATHLEEN

Those morons.

As she stuffs the file in her briefcase, hurrying to the doors, waiting for the train to come to a stop:

INT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA GENERAL HOSPITAL, PSYCHIATRIC WARD, JAIL UNIT - NIGHT

Kathleen stands in an empty, silent corridor, watching an ORDERLY unlock a door. She goes into a room.

INT. A HOSPITAL ROOM, PSYCHIATRIC WARD, JAIL UNIT - NIGHT

A small room on a top floor with grated windows. CARL ANDERSON is strapped by restraints to a bed. He turns and stares malevolently at her. She writes something on a legal tablet. She turns it for him to see.

She's written: "You're deaf, aren't you?"

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He's motionless, staring at her with his angry eyes. The room's thick with quiet. He motions for her to unstrap his restraints. She hesitates. Then, taking a deep breath, she unbuckles his restraints. He sits up. She backs toward the door. He suddenly reaches, grabbing her wrist. She starts to wrestle from his grasp, but realizes all he wants is her legal tablet. He writes something, handing it to her.

He's written: "Deaf and dumb."

He sits back onto the bed, staring at her, measuring her.

She writes: "Guilty or not guilty?"

He writes: "Will you defend me if I killed her?"

She writes: "Yes. You're entitled to defense."

He writes: "Do you want to know if I killed her?"

She shakes her head, she doesn't.

He writes: "Do you think I killed her?"

She writes: "It doesn't make any difference what I think."

It's quiet. He studies her.

She writes: "Can you sign? Do you know sign language?"

He shakes, "No." He writes: "Never learned how."

She writes: "Why not?"

He writes: "Nobody to talk to."

Head down, he looks at his hands.

Kathleen writes: "How do you want to plead?"

He stares at her. And for the first time, he smiles. It's a contemptuous smile. And he writes: "NOT GUILTY."

EXT. GEORGETOWN - NIGHT

An old weathered brick apartment building on a narrow cobbled street on the fringes of Georgetown.

(CONTINUED)

INT. KATHLEEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A small three room apartment. A Christmas tree is on a bookshelf. Some framed photographs of Kathleen with her mother. Her law degree is on a wall. "University of Virginia." Off the livingroom, down a short hall, is Kathleen's bedroom. In silhouette, undressing, she puts on a nightgown. Turning off a bedside lamp, she gets into bed. A streak of light from the livingroom brushes her. It's still. She closes her eyes. Her hand touches her shoulder. She pushes the nightgown off her shoulder, touching her breast. Her hand moves down across her stomach, under the covers. Her breath's shallow. There's a slight noise in the apartment. She opens her eyes. The noise again. Sitting up, she looks down the hall into the quiet livingroom. It's nothing. Feeling terribly alone, she folds her arms across her bare chest, starting to cry.

AND IT'S RAINING. THE RAIN FALLING ON A STATUE OF BLIND JUSTICE, THE BLINDFOLDED FIGURE OF A WOMAN HOLDING THE SCALES OF JUSTICE, OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTHOUSE.

EXT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTHOUSE - MORNING

A Marshal's bus is parked by a side door. Prisoners, joined by hobble chains, move through the rain from the Bus into the Courthouse. And EDDIE, wearing his cap, hurries across the street. Moving up the Courthouse steps, past the statue of Blind Justice, he goes inside.

INT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTHOUSE - MORNING

Passing through a metal detector under the stoic gaze of a Federal Marshal, he stops in the lobby, taking a letter out of his pocket, looking to see where he's going.

EDDIE

Could you tell me where room
34 is?

Kathleen, carrying her briefcase, rushes by him without answering, moving quickly up some stairs. Eddie admires her ass for a moment, smiles to himself, and turns to a Guard for directions.

INT. ROOM 34, THE JURORS ROOM, D.C. COURTHOUSE - MORNING

A dark, large old room. Lights are turned on. There's the smell of antiseptic and rain. Televisions are mounted to the olive walls. Well worn tables, chairs, and institutional sofas, fill the damp room. An American Flag hangs from a stanchion. More than a hundred prospective Jurors crowd the entryway, standing in lines as four Black Women, JURY CLERKS, at separate tables, check them in. Eddie waits as a CLERK, her name on a badge, PRIOLA LEE, looks at his letter, finding the corresponding information in a computer print-out book. Efficacious, she takes satisfaction from evening up race relations on a one to one basis.

PRIOLA

Do you have some form of identification
Mr. Sanger?

EDDIE

I'd like to be excused from serving.

He gives her his drivers license.

EDDIE

When I called they said I had to
personally appear...

PRIOLA

(meaning drivers license)
This has expired.

EDDIE

It has?

PRIOLA

Is this your current address?

He nods. And she writes something.

EDDIE

(friendly)
Will this take long? I'm supposed
to speak at a Congressional caucus
this morning.

PRIOLA

(looking at print-out)
You were excused in June of last year
for occupational reasons.

EDDIE

(a nod)
It's even more important this year. I
have a bill coming up for a vote on the
House floor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRIOLA

(disinterested)

It's a citizen's responsibility to be available for jurors (sic) duty.

EDDIE

I can appreciate that. But it's necessary for me --

PRIOLA

The second time you're called, unless there are extraordinary circumstances, you're required by law to serve.

And what he thought would be a waltz has turned into a morass.

EDDIE

Come on, there has to be something I can do...

She's impassive.

EDDIE

What's considered extraordinary circumstances?

PRIOLA

Illness...family problems...Work isn't sufficient.

EDDIE

There's got to be exceptions.

PRIOLA

Rarely. And only in extreme cases, where it would present a financial hardship. Would it be a financial hardship on you Mr. Sanger?

EDDIE

(charming)

Priola, is it? That's a unique name... I realize you have a job to do...and you have to go by the rules. But could you look at this as a special circumstance?

PRIOLA

There's a hundred other people here -- I'm sure each of them has special circumstances. I can't make distinctions. The law's the same for everybody.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Can I get it re-scheduled then? Give me some time to get my stuff together.

PRIOLA

You were notified three months ago... You had ample time.

EDDIE

We're not getting anywhere. Can I talk to your supervisor?

PRIOLA

I'm the supervisor.

EDDIE

(a beat, frustrated)

There must be somebody else I can talk to.

PRIOLA

You're welcome to file a complaint with the Clerk of the Courts Office. In the meantime, you have two choices Mr. Sanger. You can either fulfill your obligation, or I can issue a failure to comply, and you would be in contempt of court and subject to arrest.

EDDIE

I can't believe this.

PRIOLA

(rote)

You are required to be available for duty for at least two weeks. We ask that you arrive on time. And please remain in the Jurars room until you are called. Don't lose this...

She gives Eddie a numbered badge..."87."

EDDIE

Where's the phone?

PRIOLA

If you would please stay in the Jurars room until everyone can be processed.
(and the standard bureaucrat's farewell)
Have a nice day.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She turns to the next person in line. Eddie, his hands in his pockets, angry, moves inside the Jurors Room. He sits on a worn couch under the Flag. His fellow citizens, a varied group, but predominantly Black, get situated. They read magazines, write letters, pay bills. A card game forms. A Man begins to jog around the room. An older BLACK WOMAN sits down beside Eddie. She reads a Bible. The room's quiet. And the wall-mounted televisions come on. A VIDEO TAPE OF A JUDGE, standing before the Bench, explaining The Jury System.

PRIOLA

(calling)

Jurars, 46, 27, 132, 16, 58...

The called prospective Jurors, thirty or so, gather their belongings, and follow the Clerk out of the room. Sitting back, Eddie folds his arms across his chest.

THE JUDGE

(on the televisions)

In our system a man is innocent until proven guilty...

And as Eddie, and the Black Woman, sit on the couch under the flag, waiting with their fellow citizens for the wheels of justice to turn:

A RADIO ECHOES IN A BASEMENT

INT. POLICE PROPERTY ROOM - DAY

A large bare room in a Police Station basement. There's a worn wooden counter the length of the room. A Policeman opens a counter-top for Kathleen. She follows him, behind the counter, to a wire-mesh screen that closes off the property bins. He unlocks a chain-link gate. They move along rows of floor to ceiling numbered shelves. The shelves crowded with stacked metal baskets, filled with tagged articles retrieved from burglaries, assaults and murders. Somewhere, in the recesses of the room an unseen woman is crying. They turn a corner, coming along another row of shelves. The Policeman stops. He unlocks a basket.

THE POLICEMAN

...What they found on her person, and in her car...

Taking it down, he hands it to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE POLICEMAN

You go out of this world the same way
you came in...with nothing.

KATHLEEN

(a smile)

I like somebody who enjoys their work.

She turns to sit at a well used table. The Policeman sits some distance from her, on a straight-back chair, watching to see she doesn't take anything. It's quiet. Uncomfortable, feeling as if she's invading a privacy, Kathleen hesitantly opens the basket. She takes out tagged articles, the things that had defined Elizabeth Quinn. The winter coat. Her dress. A cotton blouse. Undergarments. Her shoes. Earrings. A necklace. She stops at the necklace, remembering her own necklace that was stolen from her. Two bobby-pins. A hair clip. And her belongings from her car: A Christmas gift, opened, inside the gift box some bath oil. An old sweater. Some pencils. Gasoline receipts. A hairbrush. Some cassette tapes, a variety of music. One of the plastic boxes, for a recording tape, empty. An electric bill. Some small change. A bottle of aspirin. A church flyer. An envelope, torn open across an end, so that just the edge of an embossed seal remains, and the letters: "ES."

KATHLEEN

(an instinct)

What was in here?

POLICEMAN

What's the tag?

KATHLEEN

EQ-658872.

He gets up to look through a huge property book.

POLICEMAN

(reading)

One opened letter-size envelope...
Contents unknown.

(reading on)

Dusted. Only legible prints were
of the deceased.

She nods. She discards it. She looks through a small cosmetic bag. She flips through a paperback book. A polaroid picture falls out. A photograph of Elizabeth Quinn by the ocean. The young red-headed girl startled, turning and smiling. As Kathleen stares at the dead girl's photograph:

A WARNING BUZZER SOUNDS.

INT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JAIL - AFTERNOON

Kathleen, among a group of Attorneys, waits in a jail corridor as an electric gate slides open. The Attorneys moving along the corridor, going into Attorneys' Rooms to meet with their clients. Kathleen turns into a room.

INT. AN ATTORNEY'S ROOM, D.C. JAIL - AFTERNOON

There's a round table with a ballpoint-pen scratched top. A blackboard. Rain runs down a grilled window. Kathleen sets her briefcase down. She takes out some loose pages of legal tablet. The lined yellow pages are filled with barely legible writing. Putting on reading glasses she quietly reads them. Abruptly, the door's swung open. Two BLACK JAILERS lead CARL into the room. He's handcuffed, his legs in a hobble chain. His face is badly swollen, his eyes nearly shut. There are bloodstains on his issue denim.

KATHLEEN

What happened?

JAILER

He beat on a jailer last night -- like to put his eye out. That's twice this week. He keeps going on like he is, he's goin' to wake up a morning and find hisself hung.

KATHLEEN

(a deadly look)

I didn't hear that.

(after a beat)

Did a doctor see him?

JAILER

Came and went. He wouldn't let him touch him.

Kathleen nods.

KATHLEEN

Take off the iron.

JAILER

Chief said not to. Not around other people.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN
I'll take the responsibility.

JAILER
(a shrug)
You're wearing the suit.

The Other Jailer draws his pistol. He trains it on Carl as the Jailer takes off the cuffs and leg irons.

JAILER
(a parting thought)
They put animals to sleep.

And they leave. Carl stands motionless. Kathleen suddenly shoves him back into a chair.

KATHLEEN
Sit down! Are you trying to commit suicide? Because I have better things to do.

He's still, his breathing laboured. Kathleen unbuttons his shirt. His chest and stomach have been beaten purple. He coughs. A small spot of blood forms in the corner of his mouth. She instinctively wipes the blood off his mouth with her hand. She turns and knocks on the door. The Jailer opens it.

KATHLEEN
Get the doctor.

She shuts the door. She sees the blood on her hand. Not knowing what to do with it, she wipes it on her skirt. It's quiet, just the sound of the rain.

She writes on the blackboard: "Are you cold?"

He nods he is. She gives him her coat. He wraps it over his shoulders. Putting on her reading glasses, she takes up the loose pages of legal tablet.

KATHLEEN
I couldn't read your writing in some places, but I got most of it...

She moves to the blackboard. And she writes: "Have you told me everything?"

He nods.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She underlines "everything?"

He nods he has.

She writes: "December 12." "Potomac River."
"After midnight."

He nods.

She writes: "What were you doing there?"

He painfully gets up, crossing to the blackboard.

He writes: "Looking for wood. For a fire."

She writes: "You found her body." "She was already dead."

He nods.

She writes: "And you robbed her."

He nods he did.

She writes: "And that's it?" "That's your story?"

He nods it is. She studies him. She abruptly claps her hands.
She walks around the small room.

KATHLEEN

Piece of cake. Maybe there's a jury who won't wonder why you were out in the dead of night, in a snowstorm. Maybe they'll forget about your police record. Maybe they'll forgive you because you didn't go for help when you "found" a dead body. Maybe it won't bother them your fingerprints were all over her. Maybe they won't care the Police found a knife on you. Maybe they'll understand...She was dead anyway. Why not rob her?...Maybe I'll sprout wings and fly.

She stops by the window, looking out at the rain. She turns to look at him. He's hunched over the table, in his silent world, disinterestedly scratching the table-top with her pen. He looks up.

KATHLEEN

You're going down Carl. Tell me you did it. Let me ask for mercy. Save us both the heartache...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And she slows, seeing something behind Carl's eyes.

KATHLEEN

You haven't told me everything, have you?

He mutely stares at her.

KATHLEEN

Carl. What else?

He's still. She writes on the blackboard: "Help me." He's expressionless. She shrugs.

KATHLEEN

I'll do what I can.

She quietly puts the papers back into her briefcase. There's the unmistakeable sound of chalk on the blackboard. She turns. He's written: "Michael."

KATHLEEN

Michael?

He writes: "He was there, before me."

She writes: "Why didn't you tell me this before?"

And he writes: "What's the difference?"

Kathleen's quiet.

Then she writes: "Michael what?"

He shrugs, he doesn't know his last name.

She writes: "White?" "Black?"

He points at White.

She writes: "How old?"

He shows her with his hands he's thirty or so.

She writes: "Hair?"

He motions at her hair, indicating the color.

She writes: "Eyes?"

He points at his own, blue.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She motions, tall, short?

He motions average.

She writes: "Marks?"

He writes: "A tattoo, on his hand."

And he draws a cross, with writing under it: "Jesus, The Saviour."

KATHLEEN

What else?

He makes a cutting motion.

She writes: "He carries a knife?"

He shakes "no." He makes like he's holding...

KATHLEEN

A razor.

It's quiet. The rain beats staccato on the window. She stares at him, trying to see the truth through his silent mask. There's an abrupt knock on the door. The Jailer opens it.

JAILER

Doctor's here.

She nods. The Other Jailer manacles Carl. Carl turns, and without looking at her, he's led off. The door edges shut behind them. Kathleen's still, absorbed in the quiet of the room. She starts to gather her things off the table. She slows. Carl's scratched into the table-top, as a gesture of faith, her name, "Kathleen."

INT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA COURTHOUSE, A CORRIDOR - NIGHT

JUDGE LOUIS DUSETTI, an older man, carrying a briefcase, walking with the aid of a cane, comes out of his chambers. Putting on a hat, he moves along an empty hallway. Another door opens. JUDGE REUBEN HELMS, carrying a briefcase, shrugging on an overcoat, comes out of his chambers.

JUDGE HELMS

Hello Louis.

The older man nods. Judge Helms moves along the quiet hallway with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS

Reuben, I hear you're up for an appointment to the First Circuit Court.

JUDGE HELMS

I've heard those rumors.

LOUIS

(smiling)

Don't bullshit a bullshitter. They're more than rumors.

Judge Helms smiles.

LOUIS

When is the announcement?

JUDGE HELMS

The President's supposed to make his choice known by the first week of February.

He slows, putting a muffler on.

JUDGE HELMS

Louis, I'm scheduled to hear the Spilotro racketeering case. It has to drag into March. I was wondering if you would consider making a change? I'd like to clear my docket if the appointment comes through.

He takes out a xerox copy of the Master Calendar.

JUDGE HELMS

You're scheduled for People vs. Anderson. It looks pro forma...two weeks at the outside. It would make my life a lot simpler.

Louis nods.

LOUIS

As a member of the Democratic Central Committee I should do everything I can to delay your appointment...

(his smile)

But in the spirit of bi-partisanship -- and future considerations...

He makes a motion, one hand washing the other.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS

I don't have any problem with a change.

(a beat, uncomfortable)

Excuse me, Reuben. My prostate's shot. Sitting on my ass for too many years.

Tapping a goodbye on the younger Judge's shoulder with the head of his cane, he turns into a restroom. Judge Helms lights a small cigar, and goes down some stairs. The hallway's empty, still. The doors open on the silent courtrooms:

INT. THE PUBLIC DEFENDERS SERVICE OFFICES - NIGHT

A floor in an old downtown office building. There's a tired, foot-worn, reception area with glass doors. Branching off the reception area are rows of ceilingless cubicles. They're dark, the attorneys gone for the night. A light is on in an end cubicle. Kathleen, exhausted, is bent over her desk filling out legal forms. The floor's strewn with photographs of bag ladies and derelicts, books and magazine articles about the homeless.

MORTY (OVER)

You want a ride?

Morty, in his overcoat, carrying a hat and his briefcase, has stopped in the doorway.

KATHLEEN

Thanks. I have my car...Morty, I need some investigative help.

MORTY

We're short-handed. The interns are all studying for the bar.

KATHLEEN

I have to locate a material witness.

MORTY

Get a subpoena. Let the Marshal's office handle it.

KATHLEEN

I did. Getting lucky, they won't find him for six months.

MORTY

Kate, is the witness hard, or a figment of somebody's imagination?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

It's suspect.

MORTY

Can you live without him?

KATHLEEN

I can. Anderson can't.

MORTY

(a nod)

I'll see if I can move some money
around, get you a P.I.

(a beat)

If the witness doesn't materialize?

KATHLEEN

Then it's a dog and pony show.
Circumstantial evidence. Reasonable
doubt. And we'll be dead in a week.

MORTY

Who's prosecuting?

KATHLEEN

Somebody named Charlie Dodd.

MORTY

He just came on. He was hot shit in
Baltimore. He wants to be a Senator
after he's President.

Kathleen smiles, nodding she knows the type.

MORTY

Prosecution owes me a few. You want
to go to the table, plea bargain and
cut your losses?

KATHLEEN

(shaking "no")

He's got nothing to lose.

And her tone's inference is, neither does she. She riffles the
legal papers on her desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

Motion to dismiss for failure to properly Mirandize. Motion to dismiss for illegal search and seizure. Motion to dismiss for insufficient evidence...

(meaning the paper)

It's a waste of trees.

Tired, she takes off her glasses.

KATHLEEN

I can't even remember the last time I looked at a tree. It's been a year since I went to the movies. The only time I listen to music is in my car. I spend half my life in jail.

MORTY

(nods)

You get used to it.

KATHLEEN

I can't get used to it. I go to bed, and I feel dirty. And for what? So I can spring a rapist on sleepwalking? It doesn't make any sense.

(after a beat)

I can't do this anymore, Morty. I'm quitting after this case. Look for a job in corporate litigation. If I'm going to get my hands dirty, I might as well get paid for it.

MORTY

(a nod, quietly)

You've stuck around longer than most.

KATHLEEN

I've been kidding myself. I remember when I was studying for the Bar. There were six of us, sharing a house, living on coffee and amphetamines. We knew where we'd be in ten years. We were going to fix everything you men had fucked up.

(a moment)

Ten years later my girlfriends have all quit their jobs and are having babies...

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MORTY

The clock.

KATHLEEN

That's bullshit. You make choices.
We expected too much. We thought
there was something to believe in.

(a beat)

I can see why everybody's having babies.

She self-consciously pushes some hair off her forehead.

KATHLEEN

I know I've lost my innocence. I
can live with that. What breaks my
heart is, I've lost my faith. That's
the clock you don't want to hear.

She puts on her glasses, going through the papers on her desk as
if she's lost something. After some time:

KATHLEEN

Why do you stay?

MORTY

(a smile)

The glory.

(shrugging)

I don't know. I just look fat in a
three piece suit...

She slightly smiles. He affectionately touches her shoulder.

MORTY

You coming down?

KATHLEEN

I want to finish. Go ahead.

He quietly puts on his hat. Weary, he moves along the row of
dark cubicles, out the glass reception doors, and into the hallway.

Kathleen settles at her desk. It's quiet. She stares at the
photographs of the derelicts. Chilled, she folds her arms across
her chest. Resigned, she bends to the legal forms. She quietly
writes. There's the sound of the glass reception doors rattling.

KATHLEEN

Morty?

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

Morty?

Silence. Getting up, she goes out of her cubicle. She looks down the dark row of cubicles, into the empty reception area. Nobody's there. Feeling vulnerable, going back into her office she packs her briefcase. Putting on her coat, she crosses out of the offices.

INT. DOWNTOWN OFFICE BUILDING, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

She stops to lock the glass doors. Turning, she starts. A DERELICT, wrapped in a torn blanket, is lying on his side against a wall. She quickly crosses by him into a waiting elevator. She pushes "Close Doors." Nothing happens. She pushes it again. The doors don't move. She comes back into the corridor. Moving by the derelict, she goes into a stairwell door.

INT. STAIRWAY - NIGHT

It's pitch dark. She fumbles for a light switch. The light comes on. Nobody's there. She hurries down the stairs. She reaches a landing on the next floor. The stairs, dark in front of her. She turns on the light. The stairs are empty. She runs down the flight. Another landing. A pool of darkness. She flips on the light switch. Nothing happens. She flips it on and off. The light's out. Taking a breath, she edges down the dark stairs, feeling her way along the wall...She reaches a door. Pulling it open she hurries out.

EXT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, DOWNTOWN - NIGHT

She comes out of the building. The rain's stopped. The street's quiet. She moves along a dark sidewalk. She hurries across the street to an empty parking lot. She gets in her car.

INT. KATHLEEN'S CAR - NIGHT

She locks the doors. She breathes a sigh of relief. And suddenly there's a face at her window. A toothless Derelict, peering in, rapping on the glass. She presses the horn, holding it down, the horn blaring. The Derelict moves off.

EXT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, DOWNTOWN PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The wet street reflecting the traffic lights. The empty parking lots. The lone car. Kathleen, locked in her car, the horn wailing.

AND A DOOR IS OPENED. JUDGE REUBEN HELMS, STRAIGHTENING HIS ROBE, STEPS UP TO SIT AT THE BENCH. He reads some paperwork as if he were alone.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - MORNING

The Jury Box is empty. There's nobody in the gallery. Kathleen sits at the Defense Table. Carl, clean-shaven, wearing a used sweater, and faded slacks, sits beside her. A BAILIFF, sits impassively behind them. On the other side of Carl, at the end of the Defense Table, a middle-aged Black Woman, A CLERK TYPIST, sits in front of a COMPUTER KEYBOARD AND SCREEN.

Across from them, a Man in his early thirties, dressed conservatively beyond his years, stands at the Prosecution Table studying some papers. ASSISTANT U.S. ATTORNEY, CHARLIE DODD.

A COURT CLERK sits to the side and below the Judge. A STENOGRAPHER is in front of the bench. ANOTHER BAILIFF stands by the bench. It's quiet. Judge Helms, in his domain, takes his time. He initials a document, handing it to his Clerk. And he looks up, as if it occurred to him somebody else was there.

JUDGE HELMS

Are counsel ready to proceed with voir dire?

KATHLEEN

We are your honor.

CHARLIE DODD

Yes your honor.

The Clerk Typist types on the computer screen the proceedings for Carl to read.

KATHLEEN

Your honor, could the Bailiff sit somewhere else? A juror could be given the impression Mr. Anderson is dangerous.

JUDGE HELMS

The Corrections Department has notified us Mr. Anderson is to be considered dangerous.

(a beat)

And Ms. Riley, the court doesn't need your approval of its seating arrangements.

He takes off his glasses, cleaning them with his handkerchief.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE HELMS

Before we begin, I want to remind
counsel of our charges. Justice is
to be done, "Swift, certain and sure."
I emphasize the swift.

(putting on glasses)

Call the prospective jurors.

A Bailiff leaves. Kathleen turns to look at Carl. He's bent over the table. Kathleen motions him to sit up. And the Courtroom doors open. The Jury Clerk leads thirty prospective Jurors into the Courtroom. Eddie, carrying his coat over his arm, is the last to come in. They're seated in the gallery. The Jury Clerk collects their badges. Eddie looks around the Courtroom. At Carl. At Kathleen. She instinctively turns. His eyes meet hers. She looks away.

JUDGE HELMS

The court thanks you for coming.

As Judge Helms explains the jury selection process, and "Voir dire," to them, Kathleen takes out of her briefcase a square piece of cardboard. She sets it beside a list of the prospective Jurors' names. She puts small slips of blank gum-backed paper onto the cardboard representing twelve jurors.

The Court Clerk shakes a box. She randomly draws a badge out of it.

CLERK

Mr. Alan Young.

And another:

CLERK

Mrs. Lucille Combs.

A Bailiff seats them in the Jury Box.

CLERK

Mr. Eddie Sanger.

Kathleen watches as Eddie crosses the Courtroom to sit in the Jury Box. She checks off the names called. She writes their names on the small slips of gum-backed paper as the Clerk randomly draws badges until twelve prospective Jurors are seated.

JUDGE HELMS

Challenges for cause. Mr. Dodd.

Charlie Dodd, relaxed, approaches the Jury Box. Kathleen looks up at the Jurors, measuring them. Her eyes meet Eddie's. She avoids his eyes. As she puts a question mark by his name:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
Ms. Riley.

She turns. A corpulent BLACK MAN in his forties, wearing a cheap suit, has come behind her. EVERETT TURNER.

EVERETT
I'm Everett Turner. A private investigator. I understand you're looking for somebody.

INT. THE COURTROOM - LATER

Kathleen's bent over the cardboard, writing a note beside one of the prospective Jurors' names. The gum-backed slips of paper are covered with her small notations. Charlie Dodd leans against the Jury Box railing facing Eddie.

CHARLIE DODD
What are your feelings about capital punishment Mr. Sanger?

KATHLEEN
(quickly rising)
Mr. Dodd knows capital punishment isn't an option in the District of Columbia. I'm sure Mr. Sanger has a thoughtful opinion, but it isn't germane.

JUDGE HELMS
I'll determine what's germane.

KATHLEEN
Your honor, it's misleading. My client is not facing the death penalty, much less convicted of any crime. We resent the implication.
(for Charlie Dodd)
Don't bring a rope, counselor, unless you intend to use it...Would your honor please instruct the prospective jurors?

JUDGE HELMS
(instructing them)
The death penalty is not an option... although some of us feel it should be.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

(furious)

I thank your honor for his consideration.

JUDGE HELMS

Would you please answer Mr. Sanger?

EDDIE

(simply)

I think the punishment should fit the crime.

CHARLIE DODD

(satisfied)

Thank you Mr. Sanger.

And he turns to sit at the Prosecution Table. Kathleen approaches the Jury Box. She leans on the railing, in front of Eddie.

KATHLEEN

Eddie? Is that short for Edward?

EDDIE

Just Eddie. Do I look like an Edward?

She smiles.

KATHLEEN

You said you were a lobbyist?

EDDIE

(nods)

For the American Dairy Council.

KATHLEEN

The lobbyists I've known are very persuasive people.

EDDIE

I don't know. It's un-American not to like milk.

KATHLEEN

Unfortunately, I'm allergic to milk...

She rubs the railing with her hand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

You don't come from Washington, do you?

EDDIE

Wisconsin, originally. Does it still show?

KATHLEEN

There's some home-town left.

(a beat)

Did you go to college?

EDDIE

The University of Wisconsin. Excuse me...

He reaches to touch her sleeve. She steps back.

EDDIE

You have a thread.

KATHLEEN

(quietly)

You don't have to be seductive with me, Mr. Sanger. You're not selling anything.

She pulls off the loose thread. After a moment:

KATHLEEN

Do you have faith in the American Justice System?

EDDIE

It seems to work.

KATHLEEN

Do you believe a man is innocent until proven guilty?

EDDIE

Absolutely.

KATHLEEN

And you said the punishment should fit the crime.

He nods.

KATHLEEN

You're sure of that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He nods.

KATHLEEN
Would you turn around?

EDDIE
Excuse me?

KATHLEEN
Turn around.

He turns around.

KATHLEEN
What color is my hair?

EDDIE
Brown.

KATHLEEN
Brown? Does my hair look brown to you?

EDDIE
(turning)
You asked me what color your hair was.
I thought you wanted the real color.

She smiles.

KATHLEEN
You're very observant...

Regaining her stride:

KATHLEEN
My point is appearances can be
deceiving. Sometimes there are
circumstances that make the truth
harder to find. The punishment
doesn't always fit the "crime."

She wanders in front of the Jury Box.

KATHLEEN
You will be asked as jurors to have
an open mind. To put aside your
assumptions. To look for the truth.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She comes back to stand by Eddie, making her mind up about him.

EDDIE
What if I had said black?

KATHLEEN
I ask the questions here Mr. Sanger.

And she turns to the Defense Table. She sits down, looking at the cardboard, the gum-backed slips of papers with the names.

KATHLEEN
How many pre-emptory challenges do I have left?

THE COURT CLERK
One.

KATHLEEN
(looking up)
Thank you for coming, Mr. Sanger.

EDDIE
Does that mean I'm excused?

KATHLEEN
No, it doesn't.

As she bends, staring at the twelve names on the cardboard:

INT. A LUNCHEONETTE - DAY

A small, noisy and crowded lunch stand, near the courthouse. There's a horseshoe counter. A few tables. People stand, eating at counters along the walls. Kathleen's standing, eating a sandwich, studying the jury list. A Waiter puts a glass of milk down in front of her.

KATHLEEN
I didn't order this.

THE WAITER
(rushing off)
It's paid for.

She instinctively turns. Eddie's standing at a counter across from her. He smiles. She doesn't. She turns back to her sandwich. A moment, and a tray's set down next to hers. Eddie's come beside her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

I hate eating alone. I feel like everybody's watching me.

KATHLEEN

Excuse me.

And taking her tray and her briefcase, she moves to another counter.

KATHLEEN

(her side to him)

I can't talk to you. It's unethical.

EDDIE

That's a first. A lawyer worried about ethics.

And for the first time, she smiles.

EDDIE

What if we don't talk about the case?
Is that legal?

KATHLEEN

If somebody saw us talking, they could get the wrong idea. They might think there was collusion. You're supposed to stay "pure."

EDDIE

It doesn't seem right. You know alot about me. I don't know anything about you -- except your hair isn't all real...

She softly laughs. She washes down the sandwich with the milk.

EDDIE

I thought you were allergic to milk?

KATHLEEN

I lied.

And taking up her briefcase, she turns out of the luncheonette.

EXT. D.C. STREET - DAY

Kathleen hasn't gone far, when Eddie, wearing his cap, chewing on a toothpick, catches up to her. She ignores him, moving quickly along the sidewalk.

EDDIE

How long does a trial like this usually take?

KATHLEEN

You don't take "no" for an answer, do you? I mean it. I can't talk to you.

And turning, she hurries across the street. They move along opposite sidewalks. She crosses back over at the Courthouse. And as they go up the steps, separated by some people, and into the Courthouse through different doors:

EXT. A CAPITOL HILL STREET - NIGHT

It's raining. Limousines wait along the curb. A Taxi's stopped in the street, outside of an old brick building with an awning over its front door. The staid Republican Club, in sight of the Capitol Building, on The Hill. Eddie and Walter climb out of the taxi under a Doorman's umbrella.

EDDIE

...He's supposed to have cut somebody's throat.

WALTER

Since when's that a crime? It happens up here twice a day...

Eddie slows. MARILYN'S waiting under the awning for someone.

EDDIE

Hello, kid.

MARILYN

How's things, Eddie? You haven't been around much.

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Let's go.

Eddie turns. A heavy-set MAN, almost fifty, shrugging on an overcoat, is coming out of the Club. Impassive, he has the "dead eyes," and the ironic smile, that comes with power. DEPUTY ATTORNEY GENERAL, PAUL GRAY.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PAUL
(his smile)
The Boy Wonder.

EDDIE
(nods)
Paul.

He shakes his hand. There's no love lost.

PAUL
Let's catch up sometime.

And roughly taking Marilyn's arm, he virtually shoves her into a Limousine. As Eddie watches the car pull off:

INT. THE REPUBLICAN CLUB - NIGHT

Senators, Congressmen and Lobbyists are at an upstairs Bar. A large room with dark-wood paneling, Georgian furniture, and oil paintings of the Presidents. There's a quiet babble of sound. The sound that alcohol makes when people are talking too loud about nothing. It's the time of night when people stretch their drinks, invent conversations, to avoid going home. When mortality is too present. Eddie and Walter come up the stairs. A Congressman, on his way out, comes by them.

CONGRESSMAN
How does it look Eddie?

EDDIE
Down to the wire Congressman.

CONGRESSMAN
Call me if I can do anything.

He leaves.

EDDIE
Fuck him. I've called him about ten different times. He doesn't return my calls.

He instinctively turns. Grace Comisky is sitting at a table by a window.

EDDIE
(to Walter)
Excuse me.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He crosses the room to her.

EDDIE

Hello Grace.

GRACE

(looking up)

Hello Eddie.

EDDIE

Are you alone?

GRACE

(nods)

I was in the office late. I stopped to catch my breath. I was just getting ready to leave...I'm beat.

EDDIE

(a nod)

I'm out on my feet. We've been up and down the Hill looking for votes... Do you mind?

She shakes "no," motioning him to sit down. He sits heavily in a chair.

GRACE

Do you want a drink?

EDDIE

I don't think it would have any effect anymore. I've been nursing drinks and listening to the sound of my voice since five.

GRACE

I know the feeling. When a vote's coming up on something of mine, I get a knot in my stomach like a small fist. The closer the vote, the tighter it gets.

EDDIE

It grabs me a little lower.

She smiles.

GRACE

How close is it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

By my count, if everything falls
right, I'm a handful short.

She nods. They lapse into quiet. She lights a cigarette.
Eddie stares at her.

EDDIE

I never noticed that before. Your eyes
are more hazel than green.

GRACE

(a soft laugh)
You're still a handful short. I told
you my vote wasn't for sale.

EDDIE

(a smile)
I can't help myself.

Her smile fades.

GRACE

It was a lovely thought anyway, Eddie.
Nobody's mentioned my eyes in a long
time.

And they lapse into quiet again.

EDDIE

How many terms have you served?

GRACE

This is my eighth. Sixteen years...
The game never changes. Just the
faces.

She looks out the window.

GRACE

I remember as a small girl taking the
train here with my parents from Detroit.
My father was a big man. All neck and
back. He was president of a local. A
butcher's union. McCarthy went after
him in the fifties. He said he was a
Communist. My father didn't know
Bolshevism from the Bolshoi.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

GRACE (Continued)

I sat beside my mother in a hearing room. We were sitting behind him when he testified. The Committee's lawyer did a job on him. He started naming names of anybody he could think of. I still can remember his back...

(looking at Eddie, a smile)
Tell me some more lies.

As they sit by a window, in the bar on the Hill:

EXT. A WASHINGTON STREET - NIGHT

A Taxi idles in front of a brownstone. Eddie stands in the street holding open the cab's door. Grace gets out. They quietly stand in the wet street.

EDDIE

(after a beat)

Would you like me to walk you in?

GRACE

Are you just being polite?

EDDIE

No. I'd like to come in.

She looks at him. He takes her arm, and as they cross the street into the brownstone:

INT. GRACE'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

She turns on a light in the livingroom. Eddie, still wearing his coat, comes beside her. He kisses her. And she kisses him, passionately. As he takes off her scarf:

INT. GRACE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room's dark. Light, from a hall. Grace is lying in a mussed bed. Eddie, naked, stands by a window. She looks at his back. And she turns over. As Eddie stands motionless, looking out the window:

EXT. WASHINGTON, D.C. - NIGHT

Eddie, hands in his pockets, his feet echoing on the pavement, walks along Independence Avenue. It's quiet, the street empty, the Government Buildings closed for the night. As he crosses the street:

EXT. DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, "BOWERY" - NIGHT

Transients sit and stand along a street, laughing too loud, muttering at private demons, talking about anything, in Washington's "bowery." The block's lined with narrow bars and package stores, old brick hotels, flop houses with elegant names like "The Capitol Hotel," and "The Thomas Jefferson." There's a row of Mens' Shelters. "Salvation Army." "Christian Fellowship." "St. Jude's." EVERETT TURNER, the corpulent Black private investigator, comes out of a flop house. He crosses the street into a shelter.

INT. A MEN'S SHELTER - NIGHT

There's a large room, a cross painted on a wall. Men are lined up for soup, eating at long wooden tables. Some other men are sprawled in chairs, dully watching a black and white television. Everett stops to talk to a Transient. He motions at his hand, meaning a tattoo. The Transient says something, and motions upstairs. Everett turns and climbs the staircase.

There's a dim corridor. Rooms, off the hallway. He turns into a room.

Ten bunk beds line a long narrow room's walls. Some men are sleeping on bare mattresses under old green wool blankets. A Man walks around in his underwear, talking to himself. Everett approaches a bottom bunk. A thin Man's lying on his side, his back to the room, seemingly asleep. He has stringy hair to his shoulders. He's wearing a filthy ankle-length great coat, old work boots with the laces missing. One of his hands rests on his head. There's a tattoo, a tattoo of a cross, and the words "Jesus The Saviour," under it. Everett bends, tapping his shoulder.

EVERETT

Michael. You've been served...

He drops a SUBPOENA on the bed. And Michael suddenly rolls over, a straight-razor in his hand, and repeatedly slashes Everett across the face. The heavy Black Man stumbles backwards, his face covered with blood. He careens out of the room, along the corridor to the staircase. And he keeps going, down the stairs, lurching through the main room, and out the door, until he collapses on the sidewalk.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' CHAMBERS - MORNING

A PAINTER, on a ladder, using a razor scraper, scrapes old paint off a ceiling. Judge Helms, in his shirtsleeves, his suspenders at his sides, stands at a window, looking out at Washington. Kathleen's sitting in a chair by his desk.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

His face was rearranged. He was in surgery most of the night.

Judge Helms turns to a wardrobe. Pulling up his suspenders, he puts on his robe. He looks at himself in the wardrobe's mirror.

KATHLEEN

By the time the police arrived the assailant had fled. We're requesting a continuance until this Michael Paul Guthridge, a.k.a. Michael Paul, can be apprehended.

Judge Helms takes a lint brush, cleaning his robe.

JUDGE HELMS

I don't see any need for a continuance. The subject was served a subpoena and is required to appear or be in contempt of process.

KATHLEEN

There's about as much chance of this man voluntarily appearing as me being elected Pope.

JUDGE HELMS

I can sympathize with you. I was an attorney for ten years...at the mercy of witnesses. But Riley, the system would grind to a halt if we had to wait for every supposed "witness." It could take weeks, even months, to locate this man. And then there are no assurances he will testify, if he has anything to testify about.

KATHLEEN

(a plea)

Judge, in fairness to my client, we can't present a complete defense without this witness.

Putting the lint brush away, he closes the wardrobe.

JUDGE HELMS

I'm sorry. Your request for a continuance is denied.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE HELMS (Continued)
(a knowing look)
And don't try to contaminate the process with any back-door comments about this "witness" in open court.

KATHLEEN
(caustic)
How could I contaminate this process?

JUDGE HELMS
(a smile)
I think I'm going to like you Ms. Riley.

Kathleen starts to say something, thinks better of it, and gets up and leaves. Judge Helms straightens his robe. As he looks at himself in the mirror again:

A DOOR IS PUSHED OPEN. CARL, ON A HOBBLE CHAIN, IS LED BY TWO FEDERAL MARSHALS FROM THE GARAGE INTO THE COURTHOUSE BASEMENT.

INT. COURTHOUSE BASEMENT - MORNING

They come along a corridor. They turn a corner. Kathleen, standing by a stairway door, is holding a hanger with a man's new suit. She gives Carl the suit. He looks at her, fearful.

KATHLEEN
I'll do my best.
(motioning)
I hope it fits.

And as she turns into the stairway:

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - MORNING

There's an undercurrent of electricity, the smell of blood, that's present at the start of any murder trial. The gallery's nearly full. Henry, Vivian and Corinne, the "roosters," are perched on their ballpark cushions in the front of the gallery, sitting like spectres behind the Defense Table.

HENRY
(for Kathleen)
Defense is 4 for 27 over the last three months in this courtroom. I don't like your chances.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIVIAN

Is there any sex in this case?

KATHLEEN

Just violence.

VIVIAN

Oh, that's good too.

And a door opens. Carl, awkward in the new suit, is led in. He sits between Kathleen and the Typist. The Jury is led in, filing into the Jury Box. Besides Eddie, there are seven black men, a white man, two black women, and a white woman. As they get situated, a young Black Man:

MARVIN JOHNSON

(to Eddie)

It's a powerful thing, isn't it? The way it works. Lettin' ordinary people sit in judgment.

Eddie nods.

THE BAILIFF

All rise.

And Judge Helms, crosses to sit at the Bench. Kathleen turns to look at the Jury. Eddie looks over at her. She looks away, bending to write something.

JUDGE HELMS

Opening statements. Mr. Dodd.

Charlie Dodd, approaches the Jury Box. For effect, he stops to tie his shoes. He gets their full attention. Straightening, he simply says:

CHARLIE DODD

Elizabeth Rose Quinn.

He lets the name hang there for a moment.

CHARLIE DODD

She was 24. A pool typist at the Justice Department. She made \$17,000 a year. She was single. She liked to swim. She was a member of the First Baptist Church in Arlington. She wasn't very important. Especially in a city that has so many important people.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE DODD (Continued)
She was just a decent, hardworking human being. And on the night of December 12th, two weeks before Christmas, Carl Wayne Anderson, in cold blood, cut her throat.

He lets it sink in. Carl reads the computer screen. He shows no emotion.

CHARLIE DODD
I have prosecuted more than twenty murder cases. It's always a horror. It's always senseless. But of the murder cases I have prosecuted, this is the most horrible, the most senseless, the most indefensible. It is simply the work of an animal. A brutal, dispassionate animal, who for nine dollars...nine dollars...

He takes nine dollars out of his pocket, moving the five dollar bill and the four singles from hand to hand.

CHARLIE DODD
Nine dollars...That's all she had...

Looking at the money.

CHARLIE DODD
Is this what we've become? Is the value of human life so cheap...?

He drops the money as if it were too repugnant to hold. It lies at his feet.

CHARLIE DODD
Elizabeth had worked late that night. It was cold, she was tired, and anxious to get home. She took the park and ride bus across the Johnson Avenue bridge to the Monroe Street parking lot where her car was parked. That's as far as she got. We will show that Carl Wayne Anderson had been in the parking lot trying to break into cars.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE DODD (Continued)
 He had been sleeping in Elizabeth's car, and a parking lot attendant had chased him. But he had come back. And when he saw Elizabeth alone, and defenseless, he beat her, dragged her down to the river, slit her throat and robbed her.

He leans on the Jury Box.

CHARLIE DODD
 This isn't the eleven o'clock news. We can't just shake our heads, go to bed, and forget about it. We have a responsibility to Elizabeth Rose Quinn. She is too important.

INT. THE COURTROOM - A SHORT TIME LATER

Eddie, looks at the nine dollars still on the floor in front of the Jury Box.

JUDGE HELMS
 Ms. Riley.

Eddie turns to look at Kathleen. She stays seated at the Defense Table. The Jurors have to lean to see her.

KATHLEEN
 Carl Wayne Anderson is not a decent, hardworking citizen.

Getting up:

KATHLEEN
 Carl Wayne Anderson is a tragedy. The dark side of the American dream.

Charlie Dodd, trying to distract the Jurors, feigning disinterest, looks through a law book, making notes on a legal tablet. Kathleen crosses to the Jurors:

KATHLEEN
 He's like so many other lost souls. The homeless. The hollow-eyed drifters. The transients. The bag ladies. The thousands of faceless, nameless derelicts that wander aimlessly in every city.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN (Continued)

We cross the street to avoid them.
We step over them in doorways. We
look at them with contempt and fear.
We forget that under the blankets,
under the filthy coats, behind the
mutters and shouts, there's a person,
a frightened, lost, human being, who
has a name, and a history, and dreams
of a future.

She puts her hands in her skirt pockets.

KATHLEEN

Carl Wayne Anderson grew up in Richmond,
Virginia. He was married once. He
fought in Vietnam. He wasn't a hero,
just a dog soldier. He suffered the
traumas of the war, tried to regain
his identity in a Veterans Administra-
tion Hospital, and was struck deaf and
dumb as a result of spinal meningitis.

She bends, picking up the nine dollars. She crosses the court-
room to put them on the Prosecution Table. She stops.

KATHLEEN

Carl stole nine dollars from Elizabeth
Rose Quinn. The fact is he callously
robbed her. But he is guilty of no
other crime...

Still holding the money, she walks back toward the Jury Box.

KATHLEEN

We will show he was cold, and hungry.
We will show he lived in a drain pipe
because the shelters were full. We
will show he lived in a world where
nine dollars could buy him some soup.
Where nine dollars could buy him a
place to sleep.

She turns and puts the money down on the Prosecution Table. She
moves toward the Jury Box:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

At the heart of our Criminal Justice System are the rules of evidence and reasonable doubt. We will show there is grave doubt that Carl Wayne Anderson killed Elizabeth Rose Quinn. We will show that the evidence is circumstantial.

(after a moment)

As Mr. Dodd so eloquently stated, we have a responsibility to Elizabeth Quinn. But we also, have a responsibility to Carl Wayne Anderson. Weigh the evidence fairly. Judge him by the the evidence, not your fears. For who among us, cannot say, "If not for the Grace of God, go I?"

And she looks at each of the Jurors. Her look lingers for a moment on Eddie. She catches herself, and as she turns back to the Defense Table:

WE'RE LOOKING AT A POLICE PHOTOGRAPH OF ELIZABETH ROSE QUINN WITH HER THROAT CUT.

INT. COURTROOM - LATER

The Jurors pass the photograph, silently looking at it, wanting to gag, or weep, or turn away. It's passed to Eddie. He stares at it for a moment, and returns it to Charlie Dodd. Charlie holds the photograph at his side, in such a way it doesn't leave the Jurors' sight...

CHARLIE DODD

Could you describe what you found?

A FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST, a lanky Man with aquiline features, is on the stand.

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Her throat had been cut laterally across the larynx and the carotid artery from right to left.

Charlie Dodd traces with his finger the wound on the photograph. Eddie turns. He looks at Carl. He's squeezing a balled-up piece of legal tablet in his left hand as he watches the computer screen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE DODD

And what kind of instrument caused this?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

A very thin straight blade -- a surgical knife. A razor.

Charlie Dodd crosses to the Clerk's side. He takes up a plastic bag with Carl's razor-edged knife. Taking out the knife he hands it to the Pathologist.

CHARLIE DODD

Have you seen this knife before?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Yes. I was asked to do a forensic examination on it.

CHARLIE DODD

And what were your conclusions?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

The width of the blade and its sharpness were consistent with the deceased's wound.

Charlie Dodd takes the knife, handing it to the Clerk.

CHARLIE DODD

We would like this marked Exhibit A.

JUDGE HELMS

Without objection.

CHARLIE DODD

(turning)

Would you describe the physical effects of a wound like this?

KATHLEEN

(rising)

Objection. Your honor, we are all appalled by the results. A physical description is unnecessary.

JUDGE HELMS

Overruled.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST
Victims who have survived say there is a burning sensation, then sudden, extreme pain. The victim either chokes to death in his own blood, or the loss of blood through the carotid artery literally suffocates the brain.

Charlie Dodd pointedly looks at Carl, turns and sits down.

CHARLIE DODD
Your witness.

JUDGE HELMS
(quietly)
Before Ms. Riley cross-examines, we will take a fifteen minute recess.

EDDIE
Excuse me, your honor. Could I look at the photograph again?

KATHLEEN
(a cold look at Eddie)
Objection your honor. This is becoming ghoulish beyond purpose.

JUDGE HELMS
Overruled.

The Bailiff brings Eddie the photograph. He studies it for a moment, then quietly returns it.

JUDGE HELMS
I will remind the Jurors you are not to discuss this case with anyone.

Judge Helms stands and leaves the Courtroom. The Jurors are led out. Eddie looks over at Kathleen. She looks at him with contempt, and looks away. Carl is taken out by a Bailiff. The Courtroom empties, until Kathleen and Charlie Dodd are the only ones left. Not a word is exchanged. Charlie gets up, gives her a respectful nod and leaves. And Kathleen's alone.

A VOICE (O.S.)
Ms. Riley.

A Bailiff comes down the aisle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE BAILIFF

There was just a call for you. He wouldn't give his name. He left a number.

He gives her a slip of paper with the phone number. Taking the piece of paper she crosses out of the Courtroom.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - DAY

It's busy and noisy. There's a line of phone booths. Kathleen goes into one.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, PHONE BOOTH - DAY

She dials the number.

KATHLEEN

This is Kathleen Riley.

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Kathleen, do you know if your client is right or left handed.

KATHLEEN

What?

THE MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

Do you know if Carl's right or left handed?

KATHLEEN

Who is this?

THE MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

I noticed something. I don't know if you did...?

KATHLEEN

Who is this?!

And the phone's hung up. Kathleen's motionless, troubled. She quietly hangs up. She comes out of the phone booth.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - DAY

As she crosses back into the Courtroom: We see Eddie, in an end phone booth.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - DAY

Kathleen's standing in front of the witness stand, holding a pathology report.

KATHLEEN

Is this your pathology report?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Yes.

KATHLEEN

Would you tell us what you found on the knife?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Some rust, a hair follicle, and microscopic traces of human tissue.

KATHLEEN

Did you match the tissue with Elizabeth Quinn's?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Yes.

KATHLEEN

And what were your findings?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

They were inconclusive.

KATHLEEN

Excuse me. Could you speak up.

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

They weren't conclusive.

KATHLEEN

(turning to Jury)

Then you have no direct evidence this knife was the one used to murder Elizabeth Quinn. No traces of her blood. No bone fragments. No matching tissue.

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

(stopping her short)

I don't know what we would have found. The knife had been recently wiped clean.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Kathleen's stuck.

JUDGE HELMS

Ms. Riley, are you through with the witness?

She half-nods, moving to sit at the Defense Table.

JUDGE HELMS

You're excused.

The Forensic Pathologist starts to get up. Kathleen looks over at Eddie, and realizes he was on the phone. She hesitates, then:

KATHLEEN

(turning)

Just one more thing.

JUDGE HELMS

Make up your mind Ms. Riley.

KATHLEEN

(an apologetic smile)

I'm sorry. I'm a woman your honor.

And she approaches the witness stand.

KATHLEEN

You said the wound was right to left?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

That's correct. The entry wound was right of median, the exit wound left of median...

KATHLEEN

(showing on her own neck)

Entrance wound here? Exit wound here?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

That's correct.

KATHLEEN

Could I ask you to come down from the stand for a moment?

CHARLIE DODD

Objection.

JUDGE HELMS

What's the point of this Ms. Riley?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

I need to make a clarification your honor.

JUDGE HELMS

(after a beat)

I'll overrule the objection.

(to witness)

You may stand down.

The Forensic Pathologist comes off the stand. Kathleen faces him. She raises her hand as if she were holding a knife.

KATHLEEN

I'm right-handed. If I was to cut you...The natural motion would be right to left...

(making the motion)

Is that correct.

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Yes.

KATHLEEN

If I was left-handed, it would be unnatural to cut in this direction, wouldn't it?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

You would cut left to right.

KATHLEEN

(making motion)

Like this?

FORENSIC PATHOLOGIST

Yes.

KATHLEEN

Thank you.

(a beat)

Thank you your honor. I have no further questions.

And she turns toward the Defense Table. As she approaches the Defense Table she takes a key ring out of her pocket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

Carl.

He reads his name, and turns. She tosses the keys to him. He instinctively catches them with his left hand. Judge Helms slams his gavel.

CHARLIE DODD

(standing, irate)

Objection your honor! There is no evidence Mr. Anderson is either right or left-handed, or uses both hands equally well.

JUDGE HELMS

(infuriated)

The Jury will disregard Ms. Riley's actions.

(and turning)

Ms. Riley, the next time you try something like that in this courtroom you will be held in contempt!

KATHLEEN

I apologize your honor. It won't happen again.

She sits at the Defense Table. Eddie looks over at her. As she avoids looking at him:

EXT. THE D.C. COURTHOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

It's cold and windy. Eddie, putting on his cap, comes out of the Courthouse. He starts down the steps.

KATHLEEN (V.O.)

Mr. Sanger.

Eddie turns. Kathleen comes down the steps.

KATHLEEN

(furious)

Don't ever do that again!

She gives him a look, and hurries down the steps, onto the sidewalk. Eddie moves to catch up with her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Wait a minute. You should thank me, Counselor.

KATHLEEN

(walking quickly)

Thank you? What I'm supposed to do is talk to the Judge and have you thrown off the panel.

She goes into a Parking Lot.

EXT. D.C. PARKING LOT - LATE AFTERNOON

She moves quickly along the rows of cars. Eddie hurries after her.

EDDIE

Nobody twisted your arm to use that information...I was just trying to be helpful.

KATHLEEN

I didn't ask for your help.

EDDIE

You aren't the one on trial.

He's touched a sore spot. She slows.

EDDIE

I thought the whole idea was to find the truth. I guess I have the wrong idea about justice.

KATHLEEN

Don't hustle me. Save the bullshit for Capitol Hill.

She moves between the cars.

EDDIE

(angry)

You think you're the only one who has integrity...? Who the fuck do you think you are, questioning my integrity?

She slows.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

(turning)

I'm sorry...I didn't have any
right to say that.

They stare at each other. The wind flaps at their coats.

EDDIE

You're a very impressive woman.

KATHLEEN

(disarmed)

Thank you.

She pushes some hair off her forehead.

KATHLEEN

If you really want to be helpful,
please stay away from me. Jury
tampering's a felony.

EDDIE

You haven't tampered with me.

KATHLEEN

And I don't want to be tempted to.

EDDIE

You want to win, don't you?

KATHLEEN

(a nod)

I want to win. But not that bad.

She moves her foot, as if making a line between them.

KATHLEEN

I draw the line at certain things.

(after a beat)

Don't you ever draw the line?

It's something he doesn't want to think about. He covers:

EDDIE

(smiling)

I change it all the time.

She turns to get in her car, starting it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Kathleen.

She rolls down the window.

EDDIE

Did he kill her?

KATHLEEN

That's your problem.

She pulls out of the space. As he watches her drive off:

Across the Parking Lot, Judge Helms, carrying his briefcase, on his way to his car, has stopped, watching them. And as he thoughtfully moves to his car:

BELLS SUDDENLY SOUND, DEMANDING.

INT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING, HALLWAY - LATE AFTERNOON

The bells incessantly ring. Congressmen hurry into the House. And Eddie comes running along the hallway to Walter.

EDDIE

What's going on? They weren't supposed to vote until next week.

WALTER

They were getting ready to adjourn and leadership called for the vote.
(turning)
Congressman...

He rushes off to talk with a Congressman. A Legislator moves by Eddie.

LEGISLATOR

We'll see what kind of muscle you have Eddie.

Eddie nods. He turns. Grace, with some Congressmen, comes quickly along the hallway. She slows at the doors, looks at Eddie, and goes inside. The bells abruptly stop. The hallway's quiet. Door-men, station themselves at the closed doors, to prohibit anyone else from entering. Turning, Eddie crosses an empty foyer, and goes up an ornate marble staircase.

INT. THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES GALLERY - LATE AFTERNOON

He comes to stand at a gallery railing, looking down at the House. He watches as the House casts their votes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HOUSE CLERK
Congressman Castle of Iowa...

CONGRESSMAN
Yes.

HOUSE CLERK
Congressman Collins of New York...

CONGRESSMAN
No.

HOUSE CLERK
Congresswoman Comisky of Michigan...

Grace rises at her desk. She hesitates, then:

GRACE
Yes.

She quietly sits back down. Eddie, his hands in his coat pockets, is motionless. The House concludes their vote:

HOUSE CLERK
HR. BILL #7459326 is approved.

As the House adjourns, the Chambers emptying, Grace looks up at Eddie, and leaves. Eddie sits in a gallery seat. Sounds echo in the quiet Chambers. Clerks, at the rostrum, finish their work. They leave. The House is still. And as Eddie, feeling empty, a solitary figure, sits alone in the gallery in the House of Representatives:

WE'RE LOOKING AT A TATTOO. A TATTOO OF A CROSS AND THE WORDS
"JESUS THE SAVIOUR."

INT. UNION STATION - EVENING

Michael, bundled in his filthy great coat, mumbles to himself, slouched in an old leather-backed chair in the train station's waiting room. He takes out of his pocket the wrinkled, blood-stained subpoena. He stares at it. He runs a dirty finger across: "Respondent: Attorney for the Defense...Kathleen Riley." Getting up, he crosses to a phone booth. He looks through a phone book. He stops, finding "Kathleen Riley," her address and phone number. As he rips the page out of the phone book:

INT. A WASHINGTON APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

Kathleen stands in an apartment building's entryway, looking at the names on the mail boxes. Once a stately brick building, the years had taken their toll, until it was refurbished to look like something it never was, and rented to single secretaries and bureaucrats. Kathleen turns into an elevator.

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY - EVENING

She comes along a quiet hallway. She reaches an apartment's door. There's wide strips of yellow tape across the door. "POLICE INVESTIGATION...DO NOT CROSS." Kathleen hesitates, then tries the door. It's open. Climbing between the tape, she goes inside.

INT. ELIZABETH QUINN'S APARTMENT - EVENING

Kathleen stands just inside the door. It's quiet. Gray evening light mutes a livingroom. She turns to a wall switch. The electricity's off. Adjusting to the gloom, hands in her coat pockets, she silently walks through the small, neat apartment. There's a brown Christmas tree. Some framed photographs. Street auction paintings of landscapes. Nothing, out of the ordinary. She comes along a short hallway. A bedroom door, ahead of her, is closed. She momentarily hesitates, then opens the door. She crosses into the bedroom. The bed's neatly made. A bath towel left on the floor. Some clothing, Elizabeth had decided not to wear, is on the floor by a closet. Kathleen slows at a bureau with a dressing mirror. Photographs, of Elizabeth with friends, are tucked into the edges of the mirror. Uncomfortable, she opens a bureau drawer. She bends, looking at the things in the drawer. Underwear. Stockings. A sachet. A box of personal stationary. She bends to the next drawer. As she looks through it, we see in the reflection of the bureau's mirror, from the chest down, a figure standing in the bedroom door. Kathleen's absorbed, unawares. The figure approaches her. Kathleen instinctively looks up, and sees the figure's reflection in the mirror. She starts, turning: An OLD WOMAN, in a housedress, who's passed into that time of life when the physical characteristics that differentiate men and women become indistinguishable, stands behind her.

THE OLD WOMAN

What are you doing in here?

KATHLEEN

(catching her breath)

I'm defense counsel...

She takes a card out of her purse, giving it to her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD WOMAN
Do you have a search warrant?

KATHLEEN
(shaking "no")
I can get one.

The Woman puts Kathleen's card in her pocket.

OLD WOMAN
I live across the hall. I'm supposed
to call the police if I see anyone
come in here.

Kathleen nods.

KATHLEEN
You're welcome to.

The Old Woman turns into the livingroom. Evening's slipped into
night.

KATHLEEN
(following her)
Can you tell me anything about her?

OLD WOMAN
(slowing)
She wasn't as innocent as everybody
thinks.

KATHLEEN
Why do you say that?

OLD WOMAN
She was seeing somebody.

KATHLEEN
That isn't a crime.

OLD WOMAN
He was older than her. Very well
dressed. He'd only come at night.
I heard her crying once, when he left.

KATHLEEN
What did he look like?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD WOMAN

I only saw him once. In the hallway.

KATHLEEN

Do you remember anything about him?

OLD WOMAN

He had a look in his eye...

KATHLEEN

What kind of look?

OLD WOMAN

Like somebody from the Hill.

(a beat)

I was a secretary for thirty-five years on the Hill. You never forget that look.

KATHLEEN

(a beat)

Can you remember anything else about him? Was he tall? The color of his hair?

OLD WOMAN

I'm eighty-seven years old. I don't see very well. I have to read large-print newspapers. All I remember is his look.

(leaving the apartment)

I'm going to call the Police.

Kathleen nods. As she stands in the dark apartment:

EXT. GEORGETOWN STREET - NIGHT

Kathleen, carrying her briefcase, gets out of her car. The street's empty. Her feet echo as she crosses the narrow street. She comes along a sidewalk. There's the sound of footsteps behind her. She turns. A Man walks by her. She goes up her apartment's steps. Unlocking the door, she goes into the building. As the door clicks shut behind her:

EXT. PARK AND RIDE LOT, ABOVE THE POTOMAC RIVER - NIGHT

Light stands, with high intensity lamps, flood the Park and Ride Parking Lot. A young Black LOT ATTENDANT, in a bulky winter coat and ear-muffs, moves through the lot chalking cars' front tires, writing down their license plate numbers on a form on a clipboard. Eddie, hands in his overcoat pockets, walks along with him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOT ATTENDANT

...We got to write them down every four hours see how long they been here. You'd be surprised the number of people try to beat you out of a couple bucks telling you they lost their tickets.

EDDIE

(motioning)

That's a 9. You wrote an 8.

The Lot Attendant corrects the license number.

LOT ATTENDANT

(writing)

You say you're involved with the trial?

Eddie nods.

LOT ATTENDANT

I got a subpoenas. I'm supposed to testify. Last time I was in the court was for a friend. A character witness. Prosecutin' attorney tore me a new asshole. Made me feel like a criminal for backin' a friend. You aren't a lawyer, are you?

EDDIE

No.

LOT ATTENDANT

They should send the shit load of them back to Israel...I'm froze to the bone, let's get inside.

They cross toward the booth.

LOT ATTENDANT

It was slow that night, cause of the snow. Couldn't of been more than ten, fifteen cars in the lot. She was parked down on the end. The blue Honda.

He motions at a Honda at the end of the lot.

LOT ATTENDANT

The Police went through it. The City's supposed to pick it up for impound. They take their sweet ass time.

They go into the booth.

INT. ATTENDANT'S BOOTH - NIGHT

A small kerosene floor heater burns orange. A television's on. He sits on a tall stool with a cushion.

LOT ATTENDANT

The bearded prick, the bum, he'd been hangin' around off and on most of the night. I got a case of trouble with them people. Some of them even done their business in the cars. He was roamin' around tryin' to find a car wasn't locked. He crawled into that woman's car and went to sleep. I ran his dirty ass out of there...

(a beat)

The Bus dropped her off a little after midnight. I saw him comin' back, but it was too fucking cold to go out and mess with him again. I remember thinkin' it was strange she didn't drive right out. But my girl called, we got into it, and I just forgot about her.

EDDIE

You didn't see anybody else?

LOT ATTENDANT

No. Just me and my shadow.

EDDIE

What did you do with the list of license plate numbers? The cars that were here that night?

LOT ATTENDANT

The Police took the original.

He hops off the stool, opening an old wooden file drawer.

LOT ATTENDANT

I got a copy if you want it.

He takes out a form with the license plate numbers for that night, giving it to Eddie.

LOT ATTENDANT

Keep it. I don't know why they save this shit for anyway?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A Park and Ride Bus pulls in. People get off crossing to their cars. The Lot Attendant moves to talk with the Driver. Eddie comes out of the booth.

EXT. PARK AND RIDE LOT - NIGHT

He crosses the lot to Elizabeth Quinn's car. It's covered with grime. There's a masking tape X on the front window. An "IMPOUND" sticker. The doors are taped shut. The tape imprinted with "Police." Eddie looks in a window. It's empty. Turning, he wanders to the embankment, looking down at the river. A light on the drawbridge blinks. He walks down a dirt path to the river.

EXT. POTOMAC RIVER - NIGHT

It's quiet. Fires burn in oil drums across the river at the Derelict's camp. He walks along the river. The drawbridge's light blinks, lights the river, and it's dark again. His feet sound on the cold ground. And there's a noise behind him. He turns. A figure's in the shadows. The light blinks. A WOMAN, of indeterminate age, old blankets around her shoulders, her feet bare and swollen, sits on the ground under a blanket that's strung between two trees. A shopping cart's beside her filled with rags and bags. They look at one another. Some cars clang on the drawbridge grating as they go over the bridge. Eddie starts to turn, to walk back. The light blinks. And he sees, in the light, on her sweater, in a buttonhole, she's wearing a gold CUFF LINK. A cuff link with the Presidential Seal on it.

EDDIE

(bending)

Where did you get that?

BAG LADY

Over there.

She motions some feet away, near the protruding rock with Elizabeth's bloodstains.

EDDIE

When did you find it?

BAG LADY

For Christmas.

EDDIE

Would you sell it?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BAG LADY

It isn't for sale.
(a beat, eyeing him)
I'll trade for it.

EDDIE

What do you want?

BAG LADY

Your shoes.

He hesitates, then takes off his shoes.

BAG LADY

And your socks.

He takes off his socks. She gives him the cuff link. Eddie turns to walk away. Slowing, he shrugs off his overcoat. He tosses it to her. And as he walks off:

THERE'S A SYMPHONY. MAHLER'S "KINDERTOTENLIEDER."

INT. THE KENNEDY CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS - NIGHT

The Washington Symphony is performing. Eddie, wearing a tuxedo, comes down the aisle. He crosses to sit next to a middle-aged COUPLE.

EDDIE

(a whisper)
I apologize, Senator, Mrs. Lowell,
for being late.

He settles in his seat, listening to the symphony. He takes the cuff link out of his pocket. He turns it in his fingers, making up his mind about what he should do. And as the music resounds through the great hall:

INT. KATHLEEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

It's very quiet. Down the short hall, the bathroom door is ajar. Kathleen, her eyes closed, her head leaned back against the porcelain, soaks in the bathtub. The faucet slowly drips. There's what sounds like a window rattling. She listens. It stops. There's just the slow drip. She lies her head back. A window rattles again. Then silence. She nervously taps the water with her fingers. There's a noise. Her fingers go still. The apartment's quiet. Then, there's a definite creak. She leans to look out the ajar door. She can see into the hall. She doesn't see anything. Then, there's another sound, like something falling.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stands. Pressing a towel to her front, dripping, she moves to the door. She opens it. The hallway's empty. She goes into the livingroom. A window, off the fire escape, is open. Wind rattles the pane. Turning, she moves down the hallway toward her bedroom. The door's shut. She hesitates, then opens it. And she starts as the phone suddenly rings, jarring.

KATHLEEN
(grabbing it)

Hello.

There's the sound of a lot of noise, a public place.

AN OPERATOR
Deposit twenty-five cents for the
first three minutes.

There's the sound of coins dropped. Then there's a Man's Voice, barely audible.

KATHLEEN
I can't hear you.

THE MAN'S VOICE
(quick)
...I said, I've got something to tell
you. Come to the Lincoln Memorial.

KATHLEEN
Who is this?

Silence, just the background noises of the public place.

KATHLEEN
Eddie?

There's no response.

KATHLEEN
Eddie, I told you to stay away from me.

Silence, and it dawns on her, it could be:

KATHLEEN
Michael?

And the phone's hung up. She's motionless. She quietly puts the phone down. After a moment, she picks it up again, dialing.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)
Seventh Precinct, Sergeant Mosely.

Thinking better of it, she hangs up. She's still, deciding what to do. She turns. And as she starts to get dressed: There's the strains of the SYMPHONY...

INT. THE KENNEDY CENTER - NIGHT

Eddie puts the cuff link back in his pocket. As he closes his eyes, listening to the music:

EXT. KATHLEEN'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

The street's quiet. Kathleen comes out of the building. She crosses to her car. She gets in.

INT. KATHLEEN'S CAR - NIGHT

She locks the doors. She puts the key in the ignition, turning it. There's the ominous "click, click, click," of a dead battery. She tries it again. It's dead. Cursing, she gets out.

EXT. STREET, GEORGETOWN - NIGHT

A Taxi drives by.

KATHLEEN

Taxi.

But it doesn't hear her, moving into the distance. Buttoning her coat, Kathleen starts to walk. She moves along the sidewalk. There's what sounds like footsteps behind her. She turns. There's a slight movement. A shadow? Then it's still. The street seems empty. She starts walking quicker. Lengthening her stride, until she's running. As she hurries across a street:

EXT. THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL - NIGHT

The Great Emancipator's seated figure, lit by small spots, looks out from the Memorial across the Reflecting Pool to the Washington Monument. Kathleen comes along an empty walkway to the Memorial. She climbs the steps, waiting in Lincoln's shadow. Nervous, she walks at the base of the statue, her feet sounding on the polished marble. She stops, waiting. And then, there's footsteps. Somebody coming up the steps, into the Memorial, behind her. They keep coming, moving behind the statue, approaching her. She apprehensively turns, and...Eddie, in his tuxedo, his hands in his coat's pockets, comes toward her. She noticeably relaxes. She's too tired to be angry.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

What are you doing?

EDDIE

If I said it was me, you wouldn't have come.

KATHLEEN

You're right.

She turns to leave. He grabs her arm. He takes the cuff link out of his pocket.

EDDIE

A bag lady found this where Elizabeth was killed.

KATHLEEN

(laughs)

You're a detective now.

EDDIE

Look at it. The Presidential Seal's on it.

KATHLEEN

So what? You can buy it in any gift shop.

EDDIE

Not this you can't.

He puts it in her hand.

EDDIE

It's all gold. He gives them out as gifts. And only a few. Senators, cabinet members, big donors...some lobbyists...

He pulls back his jacket sleeve showing her his cuff links, with the Presidential Seal.

KATHLEEN

The river's filled with garbage. Half the city washes up there. What does it prove?

EDDIE

(an echo)

That's your problem.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He turns.

EDDIE

Get some sleep, counselor, you
look tired.

And he walks past the statue, down the back steps and onto a walkway. She stares after him. She looks at the cuff link in her palm. Putting her hands in her coat pockets, she starts down the steps. Suddenly, she's literally jerked backwards. An arm's around her neck, a straight-razor at her throat. She's pulled into an alcove. Michael kneels over her, pressing the straight-razor against her windpipe.

MICHAEL

God is angry with the wicked.

He pushes the razor closer. She can only whimper.

MICHAEL

Why did you send the black Devil
for me?

KATHLEEN

(manages)

Carl...

MICHAEL

Carl has already been judged. The
mighty hand struck him deaf and dumb.

Pressing the razor.

MICHAEL

Only the Lord Jesus can take a soul.
I watched her die. I saw her spirit
leave her body. She gave me a message
from the Almighty. A key to the
Kingdom.

He takes out a crucifix that's around his neck. There's a small
key on the chain next to it.

MICHAEL

The innocent shall know the glory of
heaven...

And he presses the razor harder. Tears run down Kathleen's
cheeks.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And suddenly, an arm's around Michael's neck, pulling him off her. Michael whirls, slashing with his razor. He cuts Eddie across the chest. Eddie grabs his arm. They wrestle at Lincoln's feet across the marble floor. Eddie slams Michael's head against the pedestal. Michael rolls down some steps. Stumbling to his feet, yelling something about Jesus, he runs off. Eddie, leaning against the base of the statue, manages to stand. His coat and jacket are open, the front of his tuxedo shirt covered with blood. His legs give out. He slides back down the statue, sitting at its base. As Kathleen comes to him, bending to hold him:

INT. EDDIE'S TOWNHOUSE - NIGHT

A comfortable, but spare, renovated brick townhouse on Capitol Hill.

Blood's on a bathroom sink. A wall heater's on, the coils humming. Eddie, naked to the waist, stands by the sink. There's an ugly cut above his right nipple on his chest. Kathleen pours hydrogen peroxide over it. He grimaces. She covers it with gauze, bandaging it.

KATHLEEN

You're lucky you had your coat and jacket on.

He nods, looking at her.

KATHLEEN

You're a good man.

EDDIE

You think so?

She smooths the bandage down. Her finger grazes his nipple. She looks at him. She touches his chest. He passionately kisses her. He unbuttons her blouse. She presses her breasts against him. He kisses her neck, pushing her blouse back, kissing her shoulders. She looks at him. And they stop, realizing they can't. He nods, he understands. She quietly buttons her blouse. Turning, she crosses into the livingroom, getting her coat. Eddie comes to stand in the bathroom doorway. Kathleen looks at him, appreciating his understanding, and quietly leaves. As Eddie stands in the doorway, leaning against the doorframe:

INT. KATHLEEN'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Kathleen, in her underwear, stands by the window, looking out at the distant Capitol Hill.

INT. A TAXI, WASHINGTON, D.C. - EARLY MORNING

Kathleen rides in a cab through the empty streets.

EXT. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JAIL - EARLY MORNING

Kathleen crosses from the Taxi into the District Jail.

INT. ATTORNEY'S ROOM, DISTRICT JAIL - EARLY MORNING

Kathleen, sitting at a round table, quietly waits. The door opens. A Jailer leads Carl inside. Barefoot, Carl's half-asleep. The Jailer leaves. It's quiet. Kathleen gets up.

She writes on the blackboard: "I can't handle your case anymore."

He's still, impassive.

KATHLEEN

(roaming, to herself)

I know nobody has any values anymore.
Psychiatrists sleep with their patients.
Attorneys sleep with their clients.
Professors sleep with their students.
Everybody's cheating on somebody. I'm
not any saint, but I can't go on like
it's business as usual.

He mutely stares at her. And tears run down his battered face.

He writes on the blackboard: "I'm innocent."

INT. A CAPITOL HILL COFFEE SHOP - EARLY MORNING

It's crowded with Congressional staff members and aides who work on The Hill. There's the smell of ambition. Eddie, tired, unshaven, sits at a booth by the window, nursing a cup of coffee. A manila envelope is abruptly dropped on the table. An attractive WOMAN in a business suit, stands over him.

EDDIE

I owe you one.

THE WOMAN

You owe me about ten. I'll settle
for one.

And she leaves as quickly as she's come. Eddie opens the envelope. He takes out a folder embossed with the Presidential Seal. It's labeled "Presidential Gifts," and the year. He opens the folder. There's lists of the President's gifts, and the recipients. Eddie goes through the folder. He comes to, "Presidential Cuff Links." He runs his finger down the list. Halfway down he slows. "Department of Justice...Deputy Attorney General, Paul Gray."

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

Did you hear me?

MARILYN (OVER)

I think so. There were a couple girls he brought up from the pool... They were working nights. She was one of them.

(a beat)

What's so important about her?

Eddie doesn't say anything. He pulls open the drapes. Daylight floods the room. Washington, in the rain, spread out below him. It's quiet. Sensing something, Eddie crosses to the bedroom.

EDDIE

Marilyn?

He opens the door. He slows. Marilyn's sitting on the edge of the bed in a nightgown. Her face has been badly beaten.

EDDIE

Oh, Jesus.

He bends to her.

EDDIE

Who did this?

MARILYN

What's the difference? You think one person did this? This is five years worth. It's just the first time it shows.

She's still, fingering the hem of her nightgown.

MARILYN

My mother named me for Marilyn -- Marilyn Monroe. She thought Marilyn was what a woman should be. Powerful men worshipping her...

(crying)

Don't you think it's strange to name your daughter after a woman who killed herself?

INT. WASHINGTON CONDOMINIUM TOWER, LOBBY - MORNING

It's raining out. Eddie, his coat wet, waits in the lobby of a new condominium building, as a Doorman talks on a house phone. He hangs up.

DOORMAN

Twelve B.

Eddie nods, turning into an elevator.

INT. CONDOMINIUM TOWER, CORRIDOR - MORNING

Eddie comes to a door. It's ajar, left open for him. He lightly knocks, and goes inside.

INT. MARILYN'S CONDOMINIUM - MORNING

The drapes are drawn in a dark livingroom.

EDDIE

Marilyn.

Her voice comes from a bedroom.

MARILYN (OVER)

Give me a couple of minutes...

Eddie nods.

EDDIE

Did I wake you up?

MARILYN (OVER)

I didn't sleep much.

(a beat)

What do you need?

EDDIE

Did you ever run into a girl,
Elizabeth Quinn, at Justice?

MARILYN (OVER)

The girl who the bum killed? Just
to nod at. She did some clerical
for our section.

EDDIE

Did she know Paul Gray?

She's quiet.

(CONTINUED)

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - DAY

Charlie Dodd paces in front of the Jury Box. A ruddy-complected Man, in his fifties, is on the Witness Stand. Kathleen sits with Carl and the Typist at the Defense Table. She turns to look at Eddie. He's motionless, engrossed in the testimony.

CHARLIE DODD

(finishing)

...and in your sixteen years as a Homicide Detective, how many times have you arrested the wrong man?

THE DETECTIVE

Seven that I know of. But only one went to trial.

CHARLIE DODD

That's an astounding record.

KATHLEEN

Objection. This isn't an award ceremony.

JUDGE HELMS

Overruled. Continue Mr. Dodd.

CHARLIE DODD

In over a hundred cases, you've made only seven bad arrests?

KATHLEEN

Objection...As irrelevant.

JUDGE HELMS

Overruled. Please answer the question Detective.

THE DETECTIVE

It's usually the most obvious suspect.

CHARLIE DODD

And the evidence in this case convinced you beyond any doubt that Carl Wayne Anderson murdered Elizabeth Rose Quinn?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN
(on a string)

Objection.

JUDGE HELMS
Overruled. Detective.

THE DETECTIVE
I wouldn't have arrested him if
it didn't.

CHARLIE DODD
Thank you Detective. Your witness
Ms. Riley.

He sits down. Kathleen comes to her feet. Hands in her pockets,
she approaches the Witness Stand.

KATHLEEN
Detective, isn't it true, in
our system, the Police don't
determine the guilt or innocence
of a man?

THE DETECTIVE
Yes.

Kathleen walks toward the Jury.

KATHLEEN
Did you know from the Justice
Department's own research, at
least 343 innocent people have
been convicted of capital crimes?
Twenty-five of them were executed
and later found to be innocent.
(quickly turning)
I would assume most of them were
"obvious suspects," too.

CHARLIE DODD
(on his feet)
Objection!

JUDGE HELMS
Ms. Riley, that will be enough of
that! This is a cross-examination of
a witness, not an indictment of the
criminal justice system. Her remarks
will be stricken from the record. I
will remind the Jury to deal with the
facts, and not defense's rhetoric.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

Your honor, I am trying to show
that the Police are not infallible.
None of us are.

Eddie watches her struggle.

JUDGE HELMS

Ms. Riley, you will either argue
the merits of the case, or I will
excuse the witness.

(banging his gavel)

We will take a one hour recess for
lunch.

BAILIFF

All rise.

They stand as Judge Helms leaves the Courtroom. The Jurors are
led out. As Kathleen looks at Eddie:

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

Kathleen moves along the busy hallway toward a Rest Room.
Eddie comes behind her.

EDDIE

Keep on walking...

She shakes "no," starting into the Rest Room. Eddie suddenly
takes her arm, opens a stairwell door, and pulls her into a
stairway.

INT. COURTHOUSE STAIRWAY - DAY

It's empty. Eddie's close to her, her back against a wall.

KATHLEEN

You're going to get me disbarred.

She tries to get by him. He won't let her go.

EDDIE

Just listen to me. The President
gave thirty pair of cuff links for
Christmas presents. He gave a set
to the Deputy Attorney General,
Paul Gray. Elizabeth Quinn worked
for him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

What are you telling me? Because
she happened to work for the man,
he killed her?

There's the sound of the stairwell door opening.

KATHLEEN

Oh, Christ!

Eddie suddenly grabs her, kissing her, hiding her. A Man,
carrying a briefcase, comes down the stairs. He hurries by
them and disappears.

KATHLEEN

This is insane.

She starts out of the stairwell.

EDDIE

I need the cuff link.

KATHLEEN

Fuck the cuff link. I have
to find Michael.

She starts to open the door.

EDDIE

Why are you doing this,
Kathleen?

She slows.

EDDIE

Don't you want to prove he's
innocent?

She quietly looks at him.

EDDIE

You have to do everything by
yourself, don't you?

(a beat)

Doesn't it get lonely?

She's still. Then, turning, she reaches for the door. She
stops. She stares at him. She quietly opens her purse.
Taking out the cuff link, she hands it to him. And quickly
turning, she goes out the door.

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

Straightening her jacket, she comes into the hallway. She stops. Judge Helms is in the hall.

JUDGE HELMS

I want to see you in my chambers.

She follows the Judge into his chambers.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' CHAMBERS - DAY

A painter's ladder is in a corner on a dropcloth. Kathleen stands by a wall looking at the Judge's law degrees. Judge Helms is standing over his desk signing some papers. He doesn't look up:

JUDGE HELMS

I was in the parking lot yesterday.
I had the impression you were
talking with one of the jurors.

And he looks up.

JUDGE HELMS

Have you had any contact with a
juror on this trial?

Kathleen turns. After a moment:

KATHLEEN

No. No I haven't your honor.

JUDGE HELMS

I'll take you at your word. But
if I find out there is any collusion,
I'll have you disbarred, and charged
with jury tampering.

KATHLEEN

(a beat, anxious to leave)

Is that all, your honor?

JUDGE HELMS

I'm disappointed. I had heard good
things about you. Your "cross" has
been weak. Your behavior in the
courtroom unprofessional.

KATHLEEN

I'm frustrated your honor. Without
the material witness I have no
defense. I feel like I'm standing
on one leg. I desperately need a
continuance.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE HELMS

We've gone through this already.
You know how I feel.

KATHLEEN

He contacted me last night. He threatened me. He said some things that convince me if he isn't the real suspect, he saw who is.

JUDGE HELMS

And you think this man will be able to identify the "killer?"

She nods.

JUDGE HELMS

Why is it, when defense is in trouble, there always seems to be a "real" suspect? Ms. Riley, I would genuinely like to help you... but it would be imprudent for me to grant a continuance just because your case is weak. You will have your opportunity to call witnesses for the defense. I hope, for your sake, he appears.

As Kathleen turns, and leaves his chambers:

A GAVEL SOUNDS.

INT. A CONGRESSIONAL HEARING ROOM, THE CAPITOL BUILDING - DAY

Eddie, his "Lobby" badge around his neck, stands in the doorway of a crowded Hearing Room. Congressmen sit at tiered tables. Paul Gray is at the witness table.

THE COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN

...The Judiciary Committee will be adjourned until three o'clock.

The room's noisy. Eddie crosses to the witness table. Hands in his pockets, he quietly waits while Paul talks to some aides. As Paul turns, gathering up some papers, putting them in a briefcase, he sees Eddie.

PAUL

(his smile)

Eddie Wonder.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
You have a minute, sir?

PAUL
What's this "sir" shit, Eddie?
You never showed me any respect
when I was a lobbyist.

EDDIE
You weren't a sir, then.

Paul laughs. He says something to an aide, who hurries off.
Eddie moves with Paul out of the Hearing Room.

INT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING, CORRIDOR - DAY

They come along a carpeted hallway. Some attractive Clerks
cross by them. The rustle of nylon.

PAUL
(looking)
I miss it here. From where I
sit, you have to be very discreet.

EDDIE
(smiling)
Discretion wasn't ever your
best position, Paul.

PAUL
(meaning Grace)
I hear you've picked up my slack.

He smiles at Eddie as they go into an elevator.

INT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING, ELEVATOR - DAY

As they ride down:

EDDIE
A funny thing happened. I was at
a party the other night. A friend
of mine's a jogger. He runs down
by the Potomac. He found this.

He takes the cuff link out of his jacket pocket. Paul looks at
it, impassive. They move out of the elevator.

INT. THE CAPITOL BUILDING, SUBWAY PLATFORM - DAY

They come onto the platform for the Congressional Subway. The
train that connects the Capitol Building with the House
Senate Offices.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

I remembered you were wearing them at a reception. It isn't something you want to lose. We've known each other a long time, I thought maybe you hadn't been discreet enough.

He gives the cuff link to him. Paul turns it between his fingers:

PAUL

(cold)

I haven't lost one that I know of, Eddie...But I appreciate your concern.

He gives it back to Eddie. An open-roofed subway pulls in, idling. Paul gets on.

PAUL

...Whoever it belongs to might not want it found. Asking people about it isn't such a bright idea. It's a good way to make enemies, Eddie. This is a bad place to have enemies.

EDDIE

Weren't you the one that said, "Everybody's your enemy?"

PAUL

(a nod)

It just isn't very smart to go looking for them.

Eddie nods. He turns to leave.

PAUL

Eddie.

Eddie slows.

PAUL

Let me see that again.

Eddie tosses it to him. He catches it in his right hand.

PAUL

I'll take a look at home. Maybe it is mine. You don't need it for anything, do you?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE

What would I do with it?

They look at each other as the subway pulls off. Eddie adjusts his sleeve. We see his own cuff link is gone. As he takes the evidence, the "real" cuff link out of his pocket, turning it in his hand:

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Eddie hurries across the foyer. He starts up the busy main staircase. Kathleen's waiting at the top of the stairs, standing by a large window, looking outside. She turns and looks down at him. He shrugs, he doesn't know any more than he did. She makes a quick mark on the window, and moves off along a corridor. Eddie reaches the top of the stairs. As he comes by the window he sees she's drawn on the moisture the mark of a cross "+," as if to say, "I've got to find Michael."

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - AFTERNOON

KATHLEEN

Where was Mr. Anderson arrested?

THE DETECTIVE

He was apprehended in a drain-pipe on an embankment above the Potomac River.

KATHLEEN

What was he doing there?

THE DETECTIVE

He lived there.

KATHLEEN

He lived there? In a drain-pipe?

THE DETECTIVE

To the best of my knowledge.

She wanders, tossing something around in her mind. She stops.

KATHLEEN

Do many people live in drain-pipes?
This is the nation's Capitol.

THE DETECTIVE

We have an abnormally large population of vagrants. They live where they can.

She crosses to the Defense Table, sitting on the corner of the table, facing the Jury. Eddie watches her.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN
I've seen them in Dupont Circle.

THE DETECTIVE
(a nod)
There's a group that lives there.

KATHLEEN
Anywhere else?

THE DETECTIVE
Lafayette Square...And Union
Station. We have a real problem
down there.

Seemingly preoccupied, Kathleen lapses into silence. Everybody waits.

JUDGE HELMS
Ms. Riley?

KATHLEEN
(pulled from reverie)
I'm sorry, I lost my train of
thought. Would the clerk repeat
the question?

COURT STENOGRAPHER
Ms. Riley. "Anywhere else?"
Mr. Purcell. "Lafayette Square...
And Union Station. We have a real
problem down there."

KATHLEEN
Thank you Detective Purcell. I
have no further questions at this
time.

She turns to sit at the Defense Table. As Eddie looks over at her:

EXT. LAFAYETTE SQUARE - DUSH

It's raining. Across the street from the White House, smoke drifts from an encampment. An army of transients living in Lafayette Square around Andrew Jackson's statue. Eddie comes through the encampment. The people living in refrigerator boxes, makeshift tents and lean-to's, bundled in coats and blankets, trying to keep out the weather. A man dances naked in the rain. Another man suddenly hits him, knocking him to the ground. As Eddie stops to talk to a man, the rain beating on them:

EXT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHTFALL

The block long building on Constitution Avenue.

INT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, LOBBY - NIGHTFALL

Kathleen, waiting for an elevator, looks at a portrait photograph of The Deputy Attorney General, Paul Gray, hanging on a wall in the lobby. As she turns into an elevator:

INT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, TYPING POOL - NIGHTFALL

There's a huge room. Typists, finishing their work for the day, are at endless rows of desks, working on computers. There's the strange quiet of their keyboards, when you're expecting the sound of typing. Kathleen's moving along a row with a middle-aged Woman, the CLERK SUPERVISOR.

SUPERVISOR

Her desk was over there.

She motions at an empty desk across the room. There's a bud vase on the desk with a rose in it.

SUPERVISOR

She was very quiet. She wasn't close with anybody here. We made a collection and sent a wreath. I'm sorry I never really made an effort to know her.

Kathleen sympathetically nods.

KATHLEEN

(after a beat)

Offices are small places. People talk. Was she going out with anybody? Were there any rumors?

SUPERVISOR

I made it a policy a long time ago not to listen.

That ends that discussion. Kathleen watches the typists work. It occurs to her:

KATHLEEN

What was she working on?

SUPERVISOR

We're putting case transcripts onto disks. When we're finished we'll have fifty years of cases computerized. I'm not exactly sure what she was assigned?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She stops at a desk, talking with a Woman. Kathleen looks at the room. A long bank of file cabinets line the back wall.

SUPERVISOR

She was processing cases of 1965.

KATHLEEN

Could you show me her files?

SUPERVISOR

I'm sorry. They're government property.

Kathleen nods. As she turns to look at the endless file cabinets lining the back wall:

INT. KATHLEEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Rain runs down the windows. Kathleen, in a nightgown, sitting at the kitchen table, reads a law book, taking notes. Pre-occupied, she keeps looking at the phone. Getting up, she crosses to a window, looking out at the wet street. As she anxiously turns to stare at the phone:

INT. UNION STATION, TERMINAL - LATE NIGHT

Sounds echo in the old domed building. Eddie, wet and exhausted, comes into the empty waiting room. A Black Man, listening to gospel music on a portable radio, mops the floor. A DERELICT, carrying his belongings in a Hefty trash bag, rummages through a garbage basket. He takes out a half-eaten candy bar. Eating the candy, he crosses the terminal. Eddie, follows him. The Man goes through double doors to the tracks.

INT. UNION STATION, TRACKS - LATE NIGHT

Dark trains wait in their berths in the cavernous track area. The Derelict moves along a platform. Eddie's at a distance behind him. The Man reaches the end of the island. He climbs down onto the tracks. Eddie, follows him. They move along the tracks. The lights of the platforms recede. The tracks lit by metal hooded bulbs on concrete pilings. A track switch bangs, coupling. A train, its headlight on, shudders by them. The Derelict slows. Steam comes out of a pipe in the ground. There's a grating over a Gas and Electric Company construction hole. The Derelict pulls the grating off, and climbs down into the hole, disappearing. Eddie approaches the hole. There's metal rung hand-holds cemented into the sides of the hole. He climbs inside. He makes his way down the rungs. Light flickers below him. As he climbs down into the bowels of the station:

INT. SUBTERRANEAN, UNION STATION - LATE NIGHT

He's met by the acrid smell of urine and smoke. And as far as the eye can see, living in the building's catacombs, amongst the foundations, the gas and power conduits, the steam tunnels, are derelicts. Small fires burn. Eddie moves along a narrow passage. Men are sleeping. A man has an animated conversation with himself. He passes a line of men, sitting against a wall, silently staring at him. A slight, bearded Man with dirty hair, wearing a torn car coat and old suit pants, motions to Eddie.

MAN

(a whisper)

Who do you want?

EDDIE

He has a tattoo on his hand -- a cross, it says "Jesus the Saviour."

The Man nods. Eddie gives him some money. The Man stands. He leads Eddie through the maze of passages. They reach another passage. The Man motions, and walks off. Eddie goes into the passageway. Some men sleep along the wall. And at the end of the passage, lying on his side against a wall, his back to the channel, seeming asleep, is Michael. Eddie cautiously approaches him. He takes a .22 out of his coat pocket. He nudges Michael with his foot. He doesn't move. He nudges him again. Michael's still. Eddie bends, taking him by the shoulder.

EDDIE

Michael...

He rolls him over, and...Michael stares at him with bulged eyes. He's covered with fresh blood. His throat's been cut. Eddie recoils. Michael's head lolls back. Swallowing his reflex to vomit, Eddie opens Michael's shirt. He pulls the chain with the small crucifix and the key off his neck. Standing, he turns out of the passage. As he moves down another passage past the lines of sleeping men:

A figure steps out of a dark alcove. There's blood on his shoes.

INT. DISTRICT COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - MORNING

The hallway's empty. Kathleen's in a phone booth.

INT. PHONE BOOTH - MORNING

She listens as a phone keeps ringing. Hanging up, upset, she turns out of the booth, crossing into the Courtroom.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - MORNING

It's oddly empty, except for Judge Helms, the Clerk, the Stenographer, a Bailiff, and Charlie Dodd. Kathleen comes down an aisle.

KATHLEEN

Is anything wrong?

JUDGE HELMS

I asked for a delay in the start of this morning's proceedings. I just received a call from the Homicide Bureau.

Kathleen pales.

JUDGE HELMS

A man was found murdered at Union Station this morning. He's been identified as...

He looks at a slip of paper.

JUDGE HELMS

Michael Paul Guthridge.

Kathleen swallows.

KATHLEEN

I will ask for a continuance until the Police can ascertain if his murder was related to this case.

JUDGE HELMS

I'm inclined to agree with you. Mr. Dodd?

CHARLIE DODD

Your honor I don't think a decision should be made on a continuance until more complete information is available. I would propose we press on.

JUDGE HELMS

(after a beat)

I want to give this proper consideration. We will continue with the proceedings, and I will let you know my decision by the end of the court day...Bring the defendant in. Call the jury.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The Bailiff turns out a door to get Carl. The Clerk goes for the Jury. Kathleen sits down at the Defense Table. She looks at the door by the Jury Box, worried about Eddie. Carl's brought in. The Clerk Typist crosses to the table, sitting at her computer screen.

KATHLEEN

Tell him Michael's dead.

The Typist puts it into the computer. Carl's motionless. Suddenly, enraged, he comes to his feet, and hurls his chair at the Bench. The Bailiff wrestles him to the floor, cuffing him. Carl strains against the cuffs, the Bailiff's knee in his back. Kathleen, kneels to him.

KATHLEEN

Don't. It isn't over.

Carl looks at her. He relaxes. The Bailiff pulls him up, sitting him in a chair.

KATHLEEN

(standing)

We apologize your honor. I promise you it won't happen again.

JUDGE HELMS

The defendant will remain with his hands cuffed during the proceedings.

KATHLEEN

Don't do that to me.

JUDGE HELMS

Your client has done it for you.

She sits back at the Defense Table. The Jury Door opens. Kathleen turns. The Jury's led in. Eddie's not among them. They file into the Jury Box, taking their seats. Kathleen looks at Eddie's empty chair, distraught. Then, the door opens. Eddie, hurries in. Kathleen looks over at him relieved. He settles in his chair. He loosens his collar. He takes out, on a chain around his neck, the small crucifix...and the key.

JUDGE HELMS

Call the first witness for the defense.

THE CLERK

Call Dr. Alan Alpert.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

A heavy-set Man in a corduroy suit takes the stand. The Clerk swears him in.

THE CLERK

Please state your full name
and your address.

He repeats his name and gives his address. Kathleen crosses to the Witness Stand.

KATHLEEN

You're a Professor of Sociology
at the University of Maryland,
is that correct?

DR. ALPERT

Yes.

KATHLEEN

And what is your specialty?

DR. ALPERT

Transient behavior.

A door behind the Judge opens. His Secretary gives him a note, and leaves.

KATHLEEN

I would like to read some of Dr.
Alpert's accomplishments in this
field --

JUDGE HELMS

Excuse me counsel. The President
has announced his nomination for
the First Circuit Court. I've been
asked to come to the White House.
This court will stand adjourned
until Monday at 8 a.m.

He pounds his gavel. Standing, he turns to the door.

BAILIFF

All rise.

KATHLEEN

Your honor, what about my
continuance?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He disappears through the door. Kathleen turns to look at Eddie. The Bailiff is leading the Jurors out. Eddie turns back to look at Kathleen, and moves with the other jurors, disappearing into the Jury Room. Kathleen hurries out of the Courtroom.

INT. COURTHOUSE CORRIDOR - DAY

Judge Helms, accompanied by a Presidential Aide, moves along the corridor. A local television news camera crew, films him.

KATHLEEN

(yelling after him)

Your honor, my continuance.

He goes down the stairs. Kathleen's motionless. She starts to turn back into the Courtroom. She slows. Eddie, with some of the other Jurors, walks by her. Their eyes meet for an instant, and then he's gone. She quietly turns into the Courtroom.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - DAY

It's nearly empty. Carl's been taken away. Charlie Dodd packs his briefcase. Kathleen sits at the Defense Table, gathering her things. Troubled, she looks over at the empty Jury Box. And she sees Eddie's jacket, still on the chair. After a moment, she crosses to the Jury Box. She retrieves the jacket. Reaching into a pocket, she takes out the key. She looks at it quickly. Stamped in small letters, "Department of Justice." She holds it in her fist.

KATHLEEN

One of the jurors left his jacket.

She gives the jacket to the Bailiff. As she quickly crosses to get her things:

EXT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

The building's lit up. As busy at night as it is during the day..."Justice never sleeps." Kathleen goes into the building.

INT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

She comes into the lobby. Eddie's across the expansive lobby, sitting on a couch. Walking by him, Kathleen waits with a group of people for an elevator. An elevator arrives. They go into the car. Getting up, Eddie moves into the elevator. As they wait for the doors to close:

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Paul Gray comes into the building. As he crosses the lobby towards the elevator, he sees Eddie. And as the elevator doors close:

INT. THE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT, TYPING POOL - NIGHT

The lights are off. The computers down. The endless rows of desks, with their touches of persona, a sweater on the back of a chair, a husband's picture, a shopping bag, an umbrella. The double doors open. Eddie and Kathleen come inside. They stop to adjust to the dark. Kathleen crosses to Elizabeth's desk. She opens the drawers. She shakes her head to Eddie, they're empty. She crosses to the wall of file cabinets along the back wall. Eddie comes beside her.

The cabinets are numbered "0000001 - 0001000" (etc.). Starting with the end cabinet, Kathleen tries Elizabeth's key. It doesn't work. She tries the next file cabinet with the same results. And the next. There's the sound of somebody in the corridor. They stand stock still. Footsteps approach the door...then move past. It's quiet. Kathleen tries the next file cabinet. The key doesn't work. One by one she moves along the row of cabinets. Eddie, hands in his pockets, quietly follows her. She inserts the key. The file "clicks." And the drawer opens. Kathleen's motionless. Then she pulls the drawer out. There's a protective canvas covering, over the drawer. There's an index card taped to a metal slide plate at the front of the file: "WASHINGTON DISTRICT COURT CASES" "1965." And on a line under that: "Operator..." And Elizabeth Rose Quinn's last signature.

Kathleen slides back the canvas covering. She stops. The drawer's empty. A blue card is at the bottom of the empty drawer. It's stamped, "WORK COMPLETED," along with a date, and "FILES RETURNED TO CENTRAL STORAGE." Kathleen bites her lip, stopping herself from yelling out of frustration. Tears comes to her eyes.

EDDIE

What were you expecting?

KATHLEEN

A message from God.

As they stand by the empty file drawer, diminutive in the huge room at the Justice Department:

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C., CONSTITUTION AVENUE - NIGHT

They come along the dark, empty street.

EDDIE
I'm sorry counselor.

Cold, she presses her hands in her coat pockets. They cross the street. Steam rises from a grating. Two derelicts sleep on the grating, keeping warm. After some moments:

KATHLEEN
(meaning files)
Something's buried in there.

EDDIE
Paul Gray's past?

KATHLEEN
(shrugging)
1965. I'm going to have to read the transcripts for every one of the cases...She found something.

They turn onto a quiet SIDE STREET.

EDDIE
How many cases?

KATHLEEN
In Federal. For the District Court of Washington. At least a hundred...

They lapse into quiet. After some time:

KATHLEEN
Where's he from?

EDDIE
Paul Gray. Ohio.

KATHLEEN
He started as a Government Prosecutor, didn't he?

Eddie nods.

KATHLEEN
Was he ever a prosecutor here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Eddie shrugs. Kathleen thinks about it for a moment, then crossing the street, she goes into a corner phone booth. Eddie, hands in his pockets, waits in the street while she makes a call. The phone booth's light accentuates the night.

KATHLEEN

(coming out)

Morty said he was here for a while in the sixties. He defended against him.

(a beat)

We can start with the cases he prosecuted...

A car drives by. They stare at each other. For a moment, the realities are forgotten. And there's a sadness, for both of them, at the death of dreams.

EDDIE

Can you get home from here?

KATHLEEN

(a nod)

The subway's close.

EDDIE

I'm the other way.

(a beat)

Goodnight, Kathleen.

She nods. Eddie turns, crossing the street. As he walks off:

KATHLEEN

Eddie.

And she runs across the street to him.

KATHLEEN

(embracing him)

Take me home.

INT. KATHLEEN'S APARTMENT, HER BEDROOM - NIGHT

Eddie and Kathleen making love.

It's suddenly very quiet.

AND THE TRANSCRIPT OF A TRIAL ROLLS ACROSS A MICROFILM SCREEN.
"ASSISTANT UNITED STATES ATTORNEY: MR. PAUL GRAY."

INT. THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, LAW LIBRARY - DAY

Under a rotunda, there's a large study room. Judges and Law Clerks, Attorneys, Lawmakers, Congressional Aides, and Students, diminutive from our perspective, pore over law books at library tables. Kathleen, at a small desk, boxes of microfilm and stacks of transcript books around her, peers at a microfilm screen, making notes on a legal tablet.

The book stacks, behind open grillwork, with separate floors of their own, are along the walls. And Eddie, on the top floor of the stacks, sits at a table between bookshelves, along the grillwork, reading transcripts.

INT. THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS, LAW LIBRARY - NIGHT

Kathleen's moved to a library table, reading a transcript. Eddie, restless, stands by the grillwork on the top floor of the stacks. He looks down at her. She looks up, shrugs, and goes back to her book. Eddie turns to sit at his table. He opens another book.

It's quiet. A chair squeaks. Somebody coughs. Then, there's footsteps. And Judge Helms, carrying a briefcase, comes into the study room. He stops at a bookshelf, looking for a particular book. Finding the book he wants, he turns to a table. Taking a legal tablet out of his briefcase, opening a pen, he starts to read. Neither of them has seen the other.

Judge Helms writes something. And looking up, he sees Kathleen. She instinctively looks over, and sees him. He nods. She nods, and goes back to her book. Judge Helms bends to his book. Kathleen barely raises her eyes, trying to get Eddie's attention. But he's reading a book, oblivious.

The moments stretch as none of them move. And then Judge Helms slightly looks up, and he sees Eddie. The Judge imperceptibly stops, and nods to himself. Kathleen realizes he's seen Eddie. She doesn't give any indication, staying as she is, bent over the book. The Judge returns to his reading. And finally, Eddie turns. And he sees the Judge. He avoids looking at Kathleen, and goes back to his book.

And now it's a war of nerves. The three of them steadfast, playing poker hands. Eddie's the first to make a move. Standing, he puts on his coat. Taking up a book, he comes out of the stacks. He crosses the study room, stops briefly to check out the book, and leaves.

Kathleen and the Judge haven't moved. The war of nerves is turned up a notch. Then, Judge Helms gets up, puts his legal tablet back into his briefcase, shrugs on his coat, turns through the study room and goes out.

Kathleen's motionless. And as she quietly closes the book:

INT. EDDIE'S TOWNHOUSE, THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

Out a window the Capitol Dome seems close enough to touch. And Eddie and Kathleen, alleviating their anxiety, are making love on his bed:

INT. THE BEDROOM - LATE NIGHT

Kathleen, naked, lies on her side. Eddie, falling asleep, is pressed against her.

KATHLEEN

(quiet, ruminating)

I've read twelve cases so far that Paul Gray prosecuted. There's nothing unusual in any of them.

He murmurs. She closes her eyes. She opens them, staring. Staring at the CUFF LINK, with the Presidential Seal, on Eddie's dresser. After some moments:

KATHLEEN

Where's the list?

EDDIE

(just awake)

What list?

KATHLEEN

Of the President's gifts.

EDDIE

In the desk.

Getting up, she crosses to the desk. She takes out the folder, looking through the list of gift recipients. She stops.

KATHLEEN

...Chief Justice Reynolds was given a pair.

Eddie opens his eyes.

KATHLEEN

He was the Presiding Judge in some of the cases I read.

EDDIE

When did he kill himself?

KATHLEEN

Right before Christmas.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

EDDIE
(after a beat)
What's his connection with
Paul Gray?

THEIR SILENCE IS BROKEN BY A GAVEL POUNDING.

CLERK (OVER)
Superior Court for the District
of Columbia is now in session:
Judge Reuben Bishop Helms presiding.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - MORNING

Kathleen's with Charlie Dodd, standing before the bench. Carl,
hands cuffed, is at the Defense Table, the Typist beside him.
The Jury hasn't been brought in yet.

JUDGE HELMS
I have heard arguments on both
sides. I am going to deny Ms.
Riley's request for a continuance.

KATHLEEN
Your honor -- !

JUDGE HELMS
I've made my decision Ms. Riley.
If evidence is presented that
changes the course of things you
may request a continuance at
that time.

(to Clerk)
Call the Jury.

Charlie Dodd turns to his table. Kathleen, still angry, stands
before the bench, looking at Judge Helms. He responds by
reading some correspondence.

JUDGE HELMS
(without looking up)
Please take your seat Ms. Riley.

And he looks up. Kathleen turns to the Defense Table. The
Jury's led in. They file to their chairs. Eddie glances at
Kathleen. She turns to type something for Carl to read.

JUDGE HELMS
(turning to jurors)
It is my responsibility as a jurist
to insure that these proceedings
maintain the highest standards
of integrity.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

He looks at each of the jurors, stopping to look at Eddie.

JUDGE HELMS

It has come to my attention there is the possibility these standards are being compromised. To insure that this doesn't happen, I am going to sequester the jury for the duration of the trial. I will remind the jurors of their solemn oath, to remain impartial, to weigh the evidence, and independently render a verdict of your conscience.

(a beat)

You will be made as comfortable as possible under these circumstances ...and I thank you for your perseverance.

He turns, to both counsels, avoiding putting the onus of misconduct on either of them.

JUDGE HELMS

(sharp)

And counsel, I expect you to be the models of propriety for the remainder of this proceeding.

He lets that sink in, then:

JUDGE HELMS

Will the Clerk call for the witness.

CLERK

Recall Dr. Alan Alpert.

As Kathleen avoids looking at Eddie:

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - AFTERNOON

KATHLEEN

(rising)

Your honor, we call Carl Wayne Anderson to the stand.

And we see the Courtroom has been rearranged. A table with two chairs is by the Witness Stand, raised and in full view of the Courtroom. The computer has been moved onto the table. The Bailiff taps Carl. He stands, his hands cuffed in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE HELMS

The bailiff may remove Mr. Anderson's handcuffs. Mr. Anderson's hands can be free while he testifies so long as he doesn't abuse the privilege.

KATHLEEN

Thank you your honor.

The Bailiff takes off the handcuffs. Carl crosses to the witness table, sitting down. The Black WOMAN TYPIST sits beside him.

JUDGE HELMS

(to Bailiff)

Swear in the witness.

Holding a Bible the Bailiff approaches Carl.

BAILIFF

Please stand.

Carl reads on the computer what he's asked, and complies. He raises one hand, the other on the Bible.

BAILIFF

Do you swear to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you God.

Carl nods he does.

JUDGE HELMS

For the record, the witness indicated his assent.

BAILIFF

You may be seated.

Carl awkwardly remains standing, not understanding him. Kathleen motions he can sit down. He sits back down.

COURT CLERK

Please state your full name and address.

Carl reads, then slowly types into the computer his response. The Black Woman typist, acting as his voice:

BLACK WOMAN (FOR CARL)

Carl Wayne Anderson.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURT CLERK
Your address?

Carl reads, then types:

BLACK WOMAN (FOR CARL)
None.

COURT CLERK
We need a home address your honor.

Kathleen, reading some notes, looks up.

KATHLEEN
In care of me, at the Public
Defenders Service.

JUDGE HELMS
Without objection.

Kathleen looks down at her notes. It's quiet. Eddie watches her. Standing, she approaches the witness table.

KATHLEEN
Have you ever killed anybody
Mr. Anderson?

BLACK WOMAN (FOR CARL)
Yes.

KATHLEEN
Why?

BLACK WOMAN (FOR CARL)
I'm not sure.

KATHLEEN
You killed somebody, and you're
not sure why?

BLACK WOMAN
I was in Vietnam. I was 19.

KATHLEEN
You were a soldier. It was your
job to kill. You did your job.
You didn't need a reason. Do
you think you needed a reason?

BLACK WOMAN
Yes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kathleen walks toward the jury.

KATHLEEN

The fact is, it upset you so much, you had a breakdown. You were discharged by the army for psychiatric reasons. You spent six years in a Veterans Administration Hospital. All because you were a good soldier...

She turns back to the witness stand.

KATHLEEN

What were your dreams, Carl?

BLACK WOMAN

My dreams?

KATHLEEN

Your dreams. When you were young? What did you want to be? Everybody has dreams.

Carl's motionless, thinking about it. He types into the computer:

BLACK WOMAN

I wanted to be a carpenter. Build my own house.

KATHLEEN

Have you ever been in love Carl?

He's still.

KATHLEEN

Carl.

He types into the computer:

BLACK WOMAN

I loved Caroline.

KATHLEEN

Caroline was your wife?

BLACK WOMAN

Yes.

KATHLEEN

How old were you when you got married?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLACK WOMAN
Seventeen. We were still in
High School.

KATHLEEN
I didn't know you went to High
School...Were you and Caroline
planning to have children?

BLACK WOMAN
We talked about it.

KATHLEEN
You're divorced? You and Caroline?

BLACK WOMAN
Yes. She left me.

KATHLEEN
Why?

BLACK WOMAN
After the sickness I had nothing
left to offer her...

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - LATER

Kathleen stands at the Defense Table. She looks at some notes,
as if she's trying to find something.

KATHLEEN
It's been rough. You've had your
share of problems. You've been
kicked around pretty good.

She suddenly looks up.

KATHLEEN
Am I supposed to feel sorry for you?

She walks toward Carl.

KATHLEEN
There's plenty of people who've
been kicked around. Plenty of
people who had their noses rubbed
in it for one reason or the other.
You know the difference between
you and them? They have dignity.
They don't lay in the street
wrapped in a blanket.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN (Continued)

They don't eat out of trash cans.
They don't piss in people's yards.
They take showers. They change their
clothes. They don't walk around
feeling sorry for themselves.
They get jobs and have children
and take care of their lives. They
don't sleep in people's cars! They
don't steal nine dollars from anybody!

Whatever remained of Carl's dignity is gone. He silently sobs,
his body shaking.

KATHLEEN

(yelling)

Did you kill Elizabeth Rose Quinn?

And he tries to scream, but all that comes out is a guttural
sound. The primal sound of "No!" And Kathleen, turns back to
the Defense Table.

KATHLEEN

Your witness, Mr. Dodd.

And Charlie Dodd smiles, appreciating the task in front of him.
Getting up, he paces. The daylight's gone, the globe lights
have taken over.

CHARLIE DODD

(a nod to Kathleen)

That was a wonderful performance.
Counselor's in the wrong profession.
(expansive)

The man shouldn't be on trial,
he should be given a medal.

And he quickly walks toward Carl.

CHARLIE DODD

You were discharged from the Army for
psychiatric reasons, is that right?

BLACK WOMAN (FOR CARL)

Yes.

CHARLIE DODD

Did you beat your superior officer
with a shovel because he asked you
to dig a trench? Was that one of
the reasons?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BLACK WOMAN

Yes.

Charlie Dodd paces.

CHARLIE DODD

Violence seems to follow you
wherever you go.

KATHLEEN

Objection.

JUDGE HELMS

Sustained.

CHARLIE DODD

Were you arrested in 1978 for
assaulting a Congressional aide
on Constitution Avenue?

He waits for Carl's response.

CHARLIE DODD

Were you Mr. Anderson?

BLACK WOMAN

Yes.

CHARLIE DODD

And were you arrested in 1980 for
stealing a woman's purse in
L'Enfant Plaza?

BLACK WOMAN

Yes.

CHARLIE DODD

And were you in the District of
Columbia Correctional Center for
six months for beating a man?

BLACK WOMAN

He stole my shoes --

CHARLIE DODD

And did you punch your own
attorney in the face when she
first interviewed you?

KATHLEEN

Objection? That's hearsay.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE DODD
I'll withdraw the question.

He turns, moving across the courtroom.

CHARLIE DODD
Were you in the parking lot on Monroe
Street the night of December 12th?

BLACK WOMAN
Yes.

CHARLIE DODD
And did you break into Elizabeth
Quinn's car?

BLACK WOMAN
It was cold --

CHARLIE DODD
Just yes or no, please. Your counsel
has given us enough explanations.

KATHLEEN
Objection! I resent that your honor.

JUDGE HELMS
Could we proceed?

CHARLIE DODD
Did the parking lot attendant
throw you off the lot?

BLACK WOMAN
Yes.

CHARLIE DODD
And did you come back, just
before midnight?

BLACK WOMAN
Yes.

CHARLIE DODD
And did you attack Elizabeth Quinn
there, and drag her down to the river?

BLACK WOMAN
No.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHARLIE DODD
You were at the Potomac River
after midnight weren't you?

BLACK WOMAN
I was looking for --

CHARLIE DODD
Yes or no, please.

BLACK WOMAN
Yes.

CHARLIE DODD
And we know Elizabeth Quinn was
there because you stole her purse.
Didn't you?

BLACK WOMAN
Yes.

CHARLIE DODD
(simply)
Elizabeth was there. You were there.
You had a knife. Her throat was cut.
Her purse was stolen. Those are
the naked facts. Ms. Riley has
the gift of speech. I'll let the
facts speak for themselves.

(a beat)
How do you expect us to believe
you didn't kill her?

And he strides to the Prosecution Table.

CHARLIE DODD
No further questions at this
time, your honor.

It's quiet.

JUDGE HELMS
It's almost six. I would prefer
not to start re-direct until
tomorrow. Without objection,
court will stand adjourned until
9 a.m. tomorrow morning.

BAILIFF
All rise.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

And Judge Helms leaves the Courtroom. Kathleen looks over at the Jury Box. The Jurors are putting on their coats. Her eyes meet Eddie's.

A FEDERAL MARSHAL
Ladies and gentlemen, this way please.

The Marshal leads the Jurors up a side aisle. Eddie looks back at Kathleen, puts on his cap, and follows the jurors out. Kathleen watches him go. Turning, she packs her briefcase. Putting on her coat, she leaves. Under the Defense Table, she's forgotten some books.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Buttoning her coat, she comes along the quiet hallway. The door to Judge Helms' chambers is open. The Judge is gone. The painter, on a ladder, scrapes paint off a corner of the ceiling. He drops the scraper into a bucket. As Kathleen moves along the empty hallway to the stairs:

EXT. THE COURTHOUSE - EVENING

Kathleen comes out of the Courthouse. She comes along the sidewalk. On the side of the Building the Jurors are getting on a Court Bus.

INT. COURT BUS - EVENING

Eddie sits by a window. The Bus moves along the street. Eddie turns. He sees Kathleen walking on the sidewalk. She looks over at him, and he watches her disappear into the distance. The Bus stops for a light. Eddie looks out the window. Judge Helms is in the parking lot, talking with the older man, Judge Dusetti. They shake hands. Judge Helms turns to his car. Getting in, he drives out of the lot.

The light changes, the Bus moving off. Eddie sits back. He closes his eyes, getting comfortable. And he opens his eyes, something crossing his mind. As he rests his head back, shutting his eyes again:

INT. THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - NIGHT

The large reading room is nearly empty. Kathleen, sitting alone at a library table, is asleep, her head resting on her arms on top of an open transcript. The lights blink, the library closing. She comes awake. Getting up, putting on her coat, taking some books, she crosses the huge room and leaves.

EXT. THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS - NIGHT

She stops in the doorway. It's raining, hard. Disconsolate, running out of time, she cradles the books. As she moves down the steps:

INT. A HOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

The door's open. The young Black Man, Marvin Johnson, and some of the other male jurors, sit around Eddie's room, having a drink. Eddie stands by the window, looking out at the rain. He wanders to the doorway, looking into the hall. A Federal Marshal's sitting on a chair in the hallway. He nods to Eddie.

EDDIE

Can I go out and get some air?

MARSHAL

(meaning hall)

This is as far as I can let you go.

Eddie nods. As he stands in the doorway, his hands in his pockets:

INT. THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA JAIL - AFTER MIDNIGHT

A JAILER, walks with Kathleen along a row of cells.

JAILER

I can only give you five minutes.

She nods. The row's quiet. Most of the men, in cell after cell, asleep. Somebody says something in their sleep. And it's quiet again. They reach a cell. Carl, isolated, in a one-man cell, laying under a blanket on his cot, is sleeping. He almost looks peaceful. The Jailer starts to open the cell to let her in.

KATHLEEN

I changed my mind. Don't bother him.

As she watches him sleep:

EXT. THE POTOMAC RIVER - LATE NIGHT

It's pouring. The rain hissing as it hits the water. Kathleen, soaked, moves along the riverbank at the murder scene. The bloodstains are still visible on the protruding rock. She looks up at the far bank, at the Derelicts sitting under lean-to's, like a Walker Evans Depression photograph, bundled in their filthy coats, watching the rain. Turning, Kathleen moves back up the path to the Park and Ride Lot.

EXT. THE PARK AND RIDE LOT - LATE NIGHT

The Lot's nearly deserted. The Black Lot Attendant, in the distance, is in the sanctuary of his booth. Kathleen crosses to her car. She slows. Elizabeth Quinn's car sits off by itself, the X's taped on its windows. Kathleen turns to the car. She tries the door. It's unlocked. She opens the door. She hesitates, then gets in the car, shutting the door.

INT. ELIZABETH QUINN'S CAR - LATE NIGHT

The rain beats staccato on the roof. Chilled, Kathleen folds her arms across her chest. She looks around the car. It's empty. She's still, absorbed in the sound of the rain. Turning, she starts to get out...She slows. There's a small scrap of wadded paper on the floor, by her foot. She picks it up. She straightens it. It's the small, torn off end piece of the envelope, with the embossed seal and the words, "Supreme Court Of The United Stat..." The "ES," missing. She's motionless. Her mind racing. (And somewhere, deep in the recesses of her mind, she remembers there was an empty recording tape cassette box among Elizabeth's things in the property room.) She instinctively pushes the eject button on the tape deck. And an unmarked cassette, pops out. As she takes it out of the machine, the door's suddenly yanked open. The Black Lot Attendant confronting her.

LOT ATTENDANT

What do you think you're doin'?!

Startled, her reaction is:

KATHLEEN

I was her friend...

She gets out of the car.

EXT. PARK AND RIDE LOT - LATE NIGHT

She moves by him, hurrying through the rain to her car.

INT. KATHLEEN'S CAR - LATE NIGHT

She locks the door. She puts the key in. She turns the ignition on. She puts the cassette in the player. There's the tape's metallic hum. Then, a voice from the dead:

A MAN'S VOICE (OVER)

...This is Chief Justice William
F. Reynolds.

EXT. PARK AND RIDE LOT - LATE NIGHT

As Kathleen sits in her car, listening to the tape, the rain falling:

INT. HOTEL, EDDIE'S ROOM - LATE NIGHT

It's dark. Eddie's in bed. He can't sleep. He switches the bedside lamp on. He crosses to his jacket. He takes out the list of license plate numbers the parking lot attendant had given him. He runs his finger down the numbers. He stops at one. He changes a 9 to an 8. As he turns, quickly getting dressed:

INT. DOWNTOWN OFFICE BUILDING, HALLWAY - LATE NIGHT

The hallway's dark. The elevator open. A light shows, through the glass reception doors, from somewhere in the rear of the Public Defenders Service Offices.

INT. PUBLIC DEFENDERS SERVICE OFFICES - LATE NIGHT

The offices are empty. The Chief Justice's voice comes from a back office.

INT. MORTY'S OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

Kathleen, still in her coat, stands by a window. Morty, in street clothes, stands motionless, in the middle of the room. They listen to the tape.

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNOLDS (OVER)

...For twenty-two years I've lived with this burden, always expecting exposure from a law student, a legal scholar, a colleague. Elizabeth Rose Quinn, a typist at the Justice Department, unfamiliar with the law, recognized the injustice of the decision in People vs. Cook.

(a pause)

More than the fear of exposure, I've had to live with myself. It's a terrible price to pay for ambition.

His voice cracks. He's quiet, then:

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNOLDS (OVER)

In 1965, while I was the presiding judge on the case of People vs. Cook in the Federal Court, Washington District, I conspired to fix the case. I accepted a bribe. In exchange for an appointment to a seat on the United States Circuit Court, I dismissed all charges of fraud against a politically influential defendant.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

After some moments:

CHIEF JUSTICE REYNOLDS (OVER)

I leave the others that were
involved, to their consciences.
I will make my peace somewhere else.

(a long beat)

I have asked Elizabeth Quinn to
make this public after my death.
This is my last small measure of
justice.

And it's silent.

MORTY

(upset)

I feel like it's a death in the
family. He was the man I admired
most in this profession. He had
great dignity. He spoke for social
justice. He was the most judicious...

KATHLEEN

The most human.

MORTY

I'm afraid so.

He quietly wanders.

MORTY

You need an unholy alliance to
fix a case. The pact is ambition.
The sin is arrogance. A willing
judge. A corrupt prosecutor. An
influential defendant. A politic
defense attorney.

KATHLEEN

People vs. Cook. I never read it.
Paul Gray had to be the prosecutor.

MORTY

(turning)

You're accusing the Deputy Attorney
General of the United States of
murder.

KATHLEEN

I've got to find that case.

She hurries out of the office.

INT. KATHLEEN'S OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

She's looking in her briefcase. Morty comes in.

KATHLEEN

I had an Index to the Federal
Cases. I must have left it in
the courtroom...I'll be right back.

And quickly turning, she rushes out of the office.

EXT. DOWNTOWN, DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA - LATE NIGHT

She runs out of the building. Hurrying, she crosses the empty street. As she runs up the block: There's the sound of a car starting. Headlights come on. As the headlights come at us:

INT. HOTEL, CORRIDOR - LATE NIGHT

Eddie, comes into the hallway.

EDDIE

(to the Marshal)

I have to make a phone call.

MARSHAL

I'll have to make it for you.

EDDIE

No, that's all right.

He turns back into the room.

INT. EDDIE'S ROOM - LATE NIGHT

He looks around the room trying to figure a way to get out. He looks at the ceiling. Quickly turning he gets a book of matches. Standing on a table, he lights a pack, holding it by a ceiling fire sprinkler. The sprinkler, heat sensitive, goes off, whirling, spraying water. Fire alarms sound in the halls. Eddie runs out of the room, shutting the door behind him.

INT. HOTEL CORRIDOR - LATE NIGHT

People run out of their rooms, crowding the hall. The Marshal's busy with them. Eddie runs to the stairway door. As he disappears into the stairway:

EXT. THE COURTHOUSE - LATE NIGHT

As Kathleen runs up the steps, going inside: There's the sound of a car door closing.

EXT. D.C. STREET - LATE NIGHT

Eddie's in a phone booth. After a moment, he runs out. He yells at a Taxi. The taxi stopping. As he runs up the street to the cab:

INT. THE COURTHOUSE - LATE NIGHT

Kathleen moves up the stairs. She comes along the quiet hallway, her feet echoing on the tiled floor. The courtrooms' doors along the hall are open, the courtrooms dark. As she turns into the Courtroom, the door gently closing behind her: There's the sound of footsteps, coming up the stairs.

INT. THE COURTROOM - LATE NIGHT

It's dark. She turns on the lights. She locks the door. She crosses to the Defense Table. She gets the Federal Index Book. Sitting at the Defense Table, her back to the empty gallery, she opens the book. It's quiet. Alone in the Courtroom, it's foreboding. The empty Jury Box. The Witness Stand. The Judge's Bench. She looks down at the Index. She turns to "Federal Cases, 1965." She runs her finger down the entries, to: "People vs. Cook." And she sees a name. She's motionless. Suddenly, the door rattles. Somebody trying to get in. Taking up the book, she moves past the Judge's Bench, and through the door into the Judge's Chambers.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' CHAMBERS - LATE NIGHT

It's dark. She stumbles against his desk. She catches herself. And it's quiet. Just her breathing. Then there's a sound. The door handle, on the Chamber's corridor door, slowly turns. Kathleen looks for something to defend herself. She takes a razor-edged paint scraper out of the painter's bucket. As the door starts to open, she backs through the door into the Courtroom.

INT. THE COURTROOM - LATE NIGHT

She hurries through the Courtroom into the corridor.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - LATE NIGHT

The Courtroom door edges open behind her. She silently turns into another courtroom.

INT. ANOTHER COURTROOM - LATE NIGHT

She waits in the dark gallery. It's quiet. And she waits. And waits. It's completely still. She stares at the razor-scraper with its cutting blade. A clock clicks. A step at a time, she moves to the door. Holding the razor-scraper like a knife, she edges open the door. She steps into the corridor and:

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - LATE NIGHT

It's dark. The lights have been shut off. She moves slowly along the hallway, past the open doors of the courtrooms. She takes a step, stops and listens. It's quiet. She takes another step, past a courtroom door, and suddenly a figure comes out of the courtroom, their arm around her neck, hand over her mouth, pulling her into the dark courtroom.

INT. A COURTROOM - LATE NIGHT

She wheels, trying to slash him with the razor, and she sees it's Eddie. She looks at him, and he nods, he knows who it is too.

KATHLEEN

(a whisper)

How did you know I was here?

EDDIE

(whispering)

I talked to Morty...

There's the sound of footsteps, approaching the door. He takes her hand. They edge back into the dark courtroom. The door slightly opens. The shoes we recognize from Union Station, come just in the door. Eddie and Kathleen are motionless, standing by the Defense Table in the dark. The shoes turn back out. Eddie and Kathleen are still. They wait some moments, then silently move across the courtroom to the door. They go into the dark corridor.

INT. D.C. COURTHOUSE, CORRIDOR - LATE NIGHT

They move along the corridor. The open courtroom doors are between them and the stairs. There's a slight sound. They stand still. Then, they make their way along the corridor, past an open door. Another slight sound. They stop. The stairs are just ahead of them, between them and a last door. They wait a moment, then, they dash to the stairs. As they disappear down the stairs: A figure comes to stand in a dark courtroom's doorway.

AND THERE'S THE SOUND OF THE GAVEL.

INT. JUDGE HELMS' COURTROOM - MORNING

Judge Helms straightens his robe at the bench. Kathleen's with Carl and the Typist at the Defense Table. Carl's hands are cuffed again. Morty sits behind Kathleen. The "roosters" are perched on their cushions in the gallery. Charlie Dodd is at his table. Eddie, with the other Jurors in the Jury Box.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COURT CLERK
Superior Court for the District
of Columbia is now in session.
The Honorable Judge Reuben Bishop
Helms presiding. People vs.
Carl Wayne Anderson.

JUDGE HELMS
We were going to begin re-direct.

KATHLEEN
Defense doesn't require re-direct,
your honor.

JUDGE HELMS
Mr. Dodd. Re-cross examine?

CHARLIE DODD
I have no further questions
your honor.

The door in the back of the Courtroom opens. Paul Gray, with
two other men, lawyers with briefcases, come in. They quietly
stand in the back.

JUDGE HELMS
(startled)
Mr. Gray?

PAUL GRAY
Defense called me to appear, your
honor.

JUDGE HELMS
I wasn't aware of any subpoena?

PAUL GRAY
I've come, under advisement of
counsel, on my own volition. To
hear charges.

He looks at Kathleen through "dead eyes."

KATHLEEN
(standing)
We thank the Attorney General
for his compliance.

JUDGE HELMS
Ms. Riley, approach the bench.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Kathleen crosses to the bench.

JUDGE HELMS
Why wasn't I informed of this?

KATHLEEN
It's defense's prerogative to call
witnesses vital to their case.

JUDGE HELMS
Don't lecture me on the law
Ms. Riley.

KATHLEEN
I apologize your honor.

She turns, walking back to the Defense Table.

JUDGE HELMS
Do you have any further witnesses
Ms. Riley?

KATHLEEN
We do.

JUDGE HELMS
Are they present, Ms. Riley?

KATHLEEN
They are.

JUDGE HELMS
You may call your first witness.

She looks at Paul Gray.

KATHLEEN
(turning)
Your honor, we call your honor
to the stand!

JUDGE HELMS
Ms. Riley what's the meaning of
this? I can't be called to the
stand.

KATHLEEN
Your honor has knowledge that is
vital to our case. We call Reuben
Bishop Helms to the stand.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE HELMS

Approach the bench, Ms. Riley!

KATHLEEN

Call Reuben Bishop Helms to the stand.

JUDGE HELMS

Approach the bench, Ms. Riley, or I will find you in contempt of court!

KATHLEEN

If necessary we will have a subpoena issued to compel you to testify.

JUDGE HELMS

I cannot be compelled to testify!

KATHLEEN

You are not above the law! Please stand down Mr. Helms.

JUDGE HELMS

If you persist, I will be forced to declare this a mistrial!

KATHLEEN

Mr. Helms, were you the Federal Prosecutor on the People vs. Cook trial in 1965?

JUDGE HELMS

(pounding gavel)

This trial is a mistrial!

KATHLEEN

Did you conspire with then District Court Judge William F. Reynolds to dismiss the case, in exchange for his appointment to a higher court, and your appointment to the seat you now hold?

Judge Helms keeps pounding his gavel.

KATHLEEN

Did you wait twenty-two years while "lesser men" passed you by? Men without half your "judicial acumen." Twenty-two years watching other men get appointments to higher courts?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JUDGE HELMS
(hammering the gavel)
You're in contempt of court!

KATHLEEN
And when your day had finally come,
an appointment to the First Circuit
Court, a heartbeat from the Supreme
Court, did your past rise up to
haunt you, and did you strike it
down and kill it?!

JUDGE HELMS
Remove Ms. Riley from the courtroom!

KATHLEEN
Did you willfully plan and murder
Elizabeth Rose Quinn when she
approached you with your past?

JUDGE HELMS
(hammering the gavel)
The Bailiff will remove Ms. Riley
from the courtroom.

The Bailiff grabs Kathleen. Carl, bolting from the Defense Table, knocks the Bailiff down. And Federal Marshals appear at the doors. Judge Helms looks at Paul Gray. His gavel's silent. He's lost.

KATHLEEN
Was your car, license number 482886
parked at the Monroe Street Park
and Ride Lot on the night of
December 12th?

She walks toward the bench.

KATHLEEN
Did you wait, and when Elizabeth
Quinn arrived at her car, did you
beat her, drag her down to the river
and cut her throat?

She reaches the bench.

KATHLEEN
We would like to enter this as
evidence.

She takes out of her pocket the painter's razor scraper.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN

We believe this to be the instrument that killed Elizabeth Quinn, and a material witness, Michael Paul Guthridge. We ask that it be sent to the Police Forensic Pathologist to be examined.

She puts it on the Clerk's desk. Judge Helms stands, the robe seeming too large on him.

KATHLEEN

I have filed charges with the District of Columbia Police Department for the arrest of Reuben Bishop Helms for murder in the first degree.

She quietly turns to sit at the Defense Table. Judge Helms, the only one standing, left at the bench.

INT. THE COURTROOM - LATER

It's nearly empty. Eddie sits alone in the Jury Box. Kathleen and Carl at the Defense Table. Charlie Dodd stops to shake her hand, and leaves. It's quiet. Kathleen looks at Carl. She types into the computer:

"You're a free man." "Build yourself a house."

He stares at her. And he embraces her. Awkwardly standing, he slows, looks at Eddie, and crosses out of the Courtroom. The Clerk files some papers. The Stenographer folds up her machine. Kathleen packs her briefcase. Eddie puts on his coat and cap. Turning out of the Jury Box, he tips his cap to her, and moves out of the Courtroom. Kathleen's motionless. Sitting alone in the empty Courtroom.

EXT. D.C. COURTHOUSE - DAY

Eddie's coming down the steps. Kathleen comes out of the Courthouse, catching up with him. They move past the statue of Blind Justice.

KATHLEEN

How did the cuff link get there?

EDDIE

A guy on the jury was a jeweler. I had him look at it. He said it was gold plated. Just garbage.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KATHLEEN
(smiling)
Appearances can be deceiving.

Eddie smiles. They cross the street.

EDDIE
Let's go home.

KATHLEEN
(shaking "no")
Let's go out. Someplace
public.

And as they walk across the crowded Judiciary Square:

FADE OUT: