

THE BODY FARM

PILOT

"The End"

Written by

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THE BODY FARM

"THE END"

COLD OPENING

EXT. DARK, WOODED PLACE - LATE NIGHT

In the near blackness, we can make out thick trees and dense undergrowth. This is the middle of nowhere, in the middle of the night. Sinister. It's 1976, but who can tell out here?

Over crickets and other wildlife sounds, another sound rises: the crunch of someone's boots, and the ragged breathing of exertion. And the sound of something heavy being dragged along the ground.

Our eyes adjust: we see an OLD MAN and his burden. He moves a few feet then something snags whatever it is he's dragging.

OLD MAN
Goddam sumbitch!

He fumbles with a backpack and tugs out a flashlight.

The frail beam of light makes things even more ominous.

The OLD MAN fumbles his way along the side of the object he dragged.

The flashlight cuts across its surface.

It's a BODY BAG.

CUT TO:

EXT. - TICK-TOCK BAR, NORTH TRENTON, TENNESSEE - SAME TIME

A droopy banner across the front reads: "T-N-T STUDENTS!
WELCOME BACK! 2-FOR-1 PITCHERS WITH STUDENT ID!"

This place is seedy even by college standards. It's late. A final few cars dot the parking lot. License plates: Tennessee, Tennessee, Tennessee. Off by itself, one VAN sports California plates. 70's rock pours out of the jukebox inside.

INT. - TICK-TOCK BAR - CONTINUOUS

An OLDER MAN - for a college student - sits at the bar, sipping his coffee.

In the corner, SIX ROWDY STUDENTS - MALE - cheer each other on as they drain beer pitchers.

DRINKERA

Chug! Chug! Chug! Chug!

IKE (O.S.)

Observe! The natives in their natural habitat. The dominant males exhibit highly ritualistic patterns of behavior.

At a table for five, three STUDENTS sit, observing the action. Snarky but smooth IKE VERA narrates for this captive audience: SAMANTHA FISHER and MARTIN McNAMARA. Ike and Sam banter back and forth. They've done this before.

SAMANTHA

Ah. But assuming this is *learned* behavior, what are the cultural advantages?

Ike gestures to the pretty COEDS watching the heavy drinkers.

IKE

Sex, Samantha. Always sex.

One of the chuggers suddenly vomits. The coeds shrink back, horrified.

SAMANTHA

I'm gonna call that a definitive non-verbal response.

IKE

Agreed.

CARTER JAMES, college student and Tick-Tock jack-of-all-trades, sets down another pizza.

CARTER

Last call. Get you anything else?

Ike jerks his head toward the mess.

IKE

A mop?

Carter doesn't bite back. He clears some dishes and leaves.

CARTER
I'll ring you up.

Samantha throws a wadded napkin at Ike.

SAMANTHA
That was rude.

IKE
I'm here to observe the natives.
Not associate.

SAMANTHA
Dr. Rensman said try and make nice.

IKE
No he didn't.

Ike glances around as he counts money.

IKE (CONT'D)
Where's Drew? And Genie?

Sam raises an eyebrow.

SAMANTHA
Some place dark?

IKE
At least she's not Heather.

Sam raises a half-empty glass and toasts.

SAMANTHA
To "Not Heather".

EXT. - DARK, WOODED PLACE

The OLD MAN struggles to untangle the end of the body bag from the snare of tree roots. He's losing.

OLD MAN
(heavy grunt)

He leans back on his heels for a moment.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Well. Here's as good a place as any.

He props up the flashlight with some loose rocks.

He rummages through the backpack. He pulls out a LENGTH OF ROPE a HACKSAW and a LARGE PAIR OF TONGS.

Then he pulls on a pair of medical-grade DISPOSABLE GLOVES. He gently unzips the bag. There's a ghastly MALE CORPSE inside: cloudy eyes open, mottle skin taut, mouth slack in a silent scream.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)
Hey, young scholar. How you doing?

INT. - TICK-TOCK BAR - CONTINUOUS

DRUNK STUDENT #1 staggers to the bar. Carter tops off the OLDER MAN's coffee cup.

DRUNK STUDENT #1
Set 'em up!

CARTER
Sorry. Closing time.

Drunk Student #1 turns nasty.

DRUNK STUDENT #1
That's bull shit! You just said
'last call'!

The OLDER MAN pulls out a POLICE BADGE, sets it on the bar. This is DETECTIVE WOMACK.

DET. WOMACK
No. He just said 'closing time'.

Drunk Student #1 reconsiders, steps back.

A CAB DRIVER enters, approaches Carter.

CAB DRIVER
Hey, Carter? You call for a pick-up?

Carter nods toward Drunk Student #1 and his drunken buddies.

Det. Womack puts two dollars on the bar for a fifty-cent cup of coffee, rises. He puts a hand on Student #1's shoulder, waves over the other drunks.

DET. WOMACK
I got it.

CARTER
Thanks, Detective.

EXT. - DARK, WOODED PLACE - CONTINUOUS

The OLD MAN wrestles with the body bag, struggling to free the corpse. He starts singing an old hymn "one Day Closer to You".

OLD MAN

"The sun comes up. The sun goes
down. One day closer to you. This
weary world keep spinning
'round..."

The BODY flops free. The OLD MAN sets it up against a tree, posing it.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

"But I'm one day closer to you. The
task at hand has bent my head, one
day closer to you. But I will
follow where you've led..."

The camera PULLS BACK ever so slightly. In EXTREME FG we see something new in the darkness: a football-shaped writhing pile of something. But then it snaps into focus.

It's actually a HUMAN FOOT, covered in MAGGOTS.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

"And be one day closer to you. One
day, one day, one day closer to
you..."

So this is how SERIAL KILLERS operate -- off the radar, away from civilization, in a ritualistic fashion.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

"One day, one day, one day closer
to you."

The OLD MAN admires his handiwork on the posed corpse. Then he nods toward the rotted foot, attached to a rotting body.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Hey, Jasper. Brought you a new
neighbor.

EXT. - TICK-TOCK BAR - CONTINUOUS

Under dim light, GENEVIEVE GREELEY - artistic, sensitive - and DREW CHANNING - sincere, smart, one of the good guys - make out, braced against a wall. The oblivious DRUNKEN ROWDIES exit with their detective escort, startling the pair.

Genie turns her face to the wall. Drew whistles, trying to act nonchalant. Coast clear, they start laughing and kissing. Then Genie pulls back.

GENEVIEVE

Drew, Drew, wait. You sure about this?

DREW

Yes. Right here. Right now. With you. Yes.

GENEVIEVE

Not what I meant -

Now Drew pulls back.

DREW

I know.

He looks at her, the whole world ahead of them.

DREW (CONT'D)

And what I just said. Yes. I'm sure.

They resume kissing. Then Drew remembers something. He pulls a folded-up envelope out of his back pocket.

DREW (CONT'D)

I almost forgot. Voila!

Genevieve's eyes light up.

GENEVIEVE

Housing assignments?

DREW

I'm Hulen Hall 215. You're Hulen Hall 315. Right next to the back staircase.

Genevieve throws her arms around him. Kissing continues. They're interrupted again, this time by Carter, setting out a mop and bucket by a back faucet.

CARTER

Don't mind me.

GENEVIEVE

We should go.

DREW

Yeah.

SAMANTHA (O.S.)
Genevieve!

Samantha staggers out the door, spinning around Drew and gesturing back toward Ike inside.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Pay the man, my good sir! Genie!
There you are!

Sam gives Carter the one-over.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Hey, you the bartender? You're
cute.

Genie grabs Sam, moves her toward the van with the California plates.

GENEVIEVE
(to Carter)
Forget she said that, okay?

SAMANTHA
What, he's not cute?
(to Carter)
I'd do you.

GENEVIEVE
Sam!

SAMANTHA
Swear to God, I'd do you!

Ike, Martin and Drew exit. Ike has the bar bill in one hand and several bills in the other. Ike shoves it at Carter as he marches toward the van.

GENEVIEVE
Sorry about that.

Carter gathers the loose bills. Ike's a bad tipper.

SAMANTHA
Good night. Don't forget I'd do
you!

The group tumbles into the California plate van. It then screeches out of the near-empty lot.

EXT. - LAKE FONTAINE / SMALL BOAT - EARLY, EARLY MORNING

In the dim morning light, it's a pretty lake.

A FATHER and 10-year-old SON fish. The father starts to pack up.

FATHER
Time to head back. Mom's planned
that brunch.

SON
Dad! I got something!

FATHER
Well. Reel it in quick.

SON
Dad! Look!
(tone change)
What is that?

The Father glances over the side of the boat at whatever his son is dragging up through the water.

Something is very, very wrong.

FATHER
Kenny. Give me the rod. Get the
net.

SON
Dad! I caught it!

FATHER
Now!

The Father takes over.

SON
No fair --

FATHER
Open up the ice chest. And turn
around.

The Son opens the ice chest, then turns away. But he can't help peeking. He sees what the Father sees - but we don't see it yet.

SON
Whoa! Dad! Look it!

FATHER
Turn around, Kenny! I mean it!

SON

That is so cool! Is it real? Jamie
won't believe me!

FATHER

Kenny! I said now!

CUT TO:

EXT. - DARK WOODED PLACE - EARLY, EARLY MORNING

Whatever he was doing, the OLD MAN is finished now. He
roughly gathers his gear into his backpack. He's not that
limber, so it's not that easy.

OLD MAN

Catch you all later, Jasper.

He moves past a tree, nodding as he passes.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Talk to you next time, Lucy.

CAMERA catches ANOTHER CORPSE, female, face down in the dirt.

The Old Man pauses to readjust his bag.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

See ya, Mr. Lewis.

Over buy a SMALL CREEK, another CORPSE lies partially
submerged in the water.

The Old Man passes a shallow MOUND.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

Bye-bye, Miz Snodgress.

Half-covered with dirt, a smaller adult female CORPSE appears
to be clawing her way out of her shallow grave.

OLD MAN (CONT'D)

I know you heard me, Maggie.
Maggie?!

From under a nearby tree, an aging GOLDEN RETRIEVER lurches
to her feet.

The Old Man drifts into the morning shadows. And we will soon
learn who he is and where he is: he's not some serial killer.
He's DR. CHARLES "CHARLIE" BELL, head of Forensic
Anthropology at TNT. This place is the world's largest
outdoor laboratory. A high fence runs around the space.

On these acres out in the Tennessee woods, Dr. Charlie has spent the last six months arranging donated corpses to watch them decay and decompose, unlocking the secrets of death. It's important work, but gruesome. This place is a great big secret.

Dr. Charlie passes through TWO HIGH GATES, like at a salvage yard.

He moves to an OLD TRUCK, the only vehicle around for miles.

He stores his gear. He HONKS THE HORN.

DR. CHARLIE
Hustle, Maggie!

Maggie pads out. Dr. Charlie closes the gates and padlocks them.

They both climb into the truck. It starts with a roar.

As the truck moves, it reveals an EXTREMELY WORN METAL SIGN attached to the gates: FORENSIC ANTHROPOLOGY RESEARCH MANAGEMENT.

Someone has added in graffiti spray-paint:

BODY. And now we see the words *BODY FARM*.

GO TO MAIN TITLES

ACT ONE

EXT. TENNESSEE-NORTH TRENTON UNIVERSITY CAMPUS - MORNING

T-N-T University is in full late-summer bloom, all crisp and golden. The students buzz with excitement as they haul their American Tourister luggage, stereos and portable typewriters into their dorms and find their way around campus. Soft 70's pop filters out from a window.

GENEVIEVE (O.S.)
Come on. I've got to go!

INT. HULEN HALL - DREW'S DORM ROOM

Geneieve and Drew are tangled in his bed, in the throws of their "sweet sorrow" parting after their first night together at T-N-T. His room is bare except for a single twin bed, two suitcases and a box of books. Drew, drowsy, is in no hurry to let her go. He nuzzles and tickles her. She laughs.

GENEVIEVE
Drew!

Someone slides a note under his door. She freezes.

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)
Drew, stop!

They share one last deep kiss before she wiggles out of bed. She grabs the note and hands it to him as she quickly dresses.

DREW
My mom called the front desk.

GENEVIEVE
Didn't you call her last night?

Drew pulls her back into bed.

DREW
I was busy.

GENEVIEVE
Meet you at the van in an hour. And
call your mother.

One more kiss, then she peeks out the door for 'all clear'. She ducks out. He leans back in bed. His whole life is in front of him, with her, and it looks spectacular.

EXT. T-N-T CAMPUS - BOYCE HALL - DAY

People spill out of Boyce Hall festooned with a banner: 'CAP-AND-CROWN PRAYER BREAKFAST". The event is over. STATE SENATOR STEVE CROCKER - next to a poster with his own face saying 'Welcome, Senator!' - holds court. He owns every room he enters with is easy command. DR. ALICE LEE - Chinese-American TNT Administrator- and new hire DR. AARON RENSMAN - a top-tier anthropologist himself - make their way down the casual receiving line. Sen. Crocker spots them, ready.

SENATOR CROCKER

Dr. Alice Lee! My favorite college coed!

Dr. Lee takes it in stride.

DR. LEE

Senator Crocker. I want you to meet Dr. Aaron Rensman. He's taking over for Dr. Bell.

Like the old pro he is, Sen. Crocker wraps his arms around Lee and Rensman, removing them from the crowded space.

SENATOR CROCKER

And I want to meet you, Dr. Rensman.

Out of hearing from the others, Crocker gets serious.

DR. RENSMAN

Senator. It's a pleasure -

SENATOR CROCKER

Fuck that, son. Just to be clear. We all on the same page here?

Dr. Rensman is taken aback slightly, but rallies.

DR. RENSMAN

You mean about Dr. Bell's little side project?

SENATOR CROCKER

I mean that God damn devil science!

DR. LEE

'Forensic anthropology' -

SENATOR CROCKER

Hoodoo voodoo ol' Dr. Charlie has going on out there. Doing God knows what to those... dead people.

Dr. Lee believes in the work, but understands the reality.
However, Dr. Rensman agrees with the Senator.

DR. LEE
I know it's a brand-new science.
But it's important work.

A couple of matronly ladies pass by, waving to the Senator.
He smiles back, then hisses.

SENATOR CROCKER
There's not a preacher fifty miles
of here would agree with you. If
word got out about that
abomination, how long you think any
of us would last?

DR. RENSMAN
Senator. My first priority is
shutting down that 'abomination'.
As quickly, and quietly, as
possible.

Rensmen nods to Lee.

DR. RENSMAN (CONT'D)
That's the very promise that wooed
me back here. Right, Dr. Lee?

Before she can respond, an AIDE hurries up to the Senator and
whispers in his ear. The Senator stiffens, alarmed.

SENATOR CROCKER
(to the aide)
Well, find him!

Then the Senator catches himself and smiles darkly.

SENATOR CROCKER (CONT'D)
Can't wait for Dr. Bell's
retirement part tomorrow night. See
you all then.

EXT. ANCIENT FOR-AN BUILDING - DAY

The original Forensic Anthropology Building on the TNT campus
is about as low-tech as a building can get. Squat and ugly,
it was built as an athletic shed decades ago.

It sits in a lonely corner directly under the bleachers of
the TNT Nitros FOOTBALL STADIUM.

Samantha, Ike, Genevieve and Martin pull up in the California van. They are not impressed by what they see.

IKE
This can't be it.

Samantha consults various photocopies and maps.

SAMANTHA
No. Pretty sure this is it.

GENEVIEVE
We're just storing our stuff here.
Everybody relax.

Martin - hulking, probably on the spectrum but high-functioning - methodically unloads boxes from the van. He walks to the door but can't wiggle it open. It's an old door.

IKE
Genie, where's Drew? Why do we have
to do all the heavy lifting?

GENEVIEVE
"We"?
(all innocence)
How should I know Drew is?

IKE
Oh. Right. You're not seeing each
other. Because you're not Heather.

Samantha punches Ike in the shoulder.

IKE (CONT'D)
You dick.

THE SCARY OLD MAN's pick-up truck pulls up. DR. CHARLIE gets out - Maggie stays in, windows down; she can hop out if she ants to. Dr. Charlie is pissed.

At the same moment, DREW walks around the corner. Genevieve hurries over to him.

GENEVIEVE
Drew! You - you missed the van.

DREW
I need to talk to you.

They're interrupted by the antics around them.

DR. CHARLIE
You! All of you! Get away from my building!

SAMANTHA
"Your" building?

IKE
You with maintenance? Because we're with Dr. Rensman.

DREW
From Warren University? We're the new Anthropology people.

DR. CHARLIE
I said. Get away from my building.

Dr. Charlie stomps over, brushing past Ike just as Martin yanks the door open.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(angry)
Carter! Get your ass out here!

There stands CARTER, the bartender from the night before.

CARTER
Sorry, Dr. Bell. I was on the phone with the path lab -

SAMANTHA
Well, fuck me.

Carter freezes in the door. Dr. Charlie muscles right past him. Martin marches in right behind him, carrying boxes. Carter's left facing Genevieve, Samantha, Drew and Ike. Awkward.

GENEVIEVE
It's you! From last night.

CARTER
And it's you. From last night.

SAMANTHA
What are you doing here?

CARTER
I work here.

Ike sizes him up as he brushes past him.

IKE

In a storage hut? Impressive.

Genevieve leans in to Carter. They share a moment.

GENEVIEVE

Sorry about that. Ike's just...
really, really, rude.

Drew moves in past her. She follows him in.

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

If the Body Farm acreage is where the decomposing occurs,
then this For-An building is where everything else happens.

Bare wires, exposed ducts -- this place is OLD. But it has
the lived-in feel of effective, ground-level, fundamental
scientific work. This place is sacred to Dr. Bell. The most
high-tech piece of equipment visible is the rotary wall
phone.

SAMANTHA

Wait - was this place like a *lab*?

DR. CHARLIE

Not *like* a lab, little missy. It *is*
a lab.

Drew pulls out some official looking papers and offers them
to Dr. Charlie.

DREW

Dr. Rensman told us to store our
stuff here.

Dr. Charlie scans the papers as he lays them out on a tray
table - like for surgical instruments. Carter recognizes that
look. He quietly steps out the door.

DR. CHARLIE

(reading)

"Dr. Aaron Rensman hereby
requisitions the building... For
purposes of storage... blah blah."

He picks up a baseball bat leaning against the wall. With one
fluid motion he swings it down on the tray table, smashing
it. The students freeze, startled and terrified. He keeps
smashing.

DR. LEE (O.S.)
Dr. Bell! I see Dr. Rensman's
students found the lab.

At the sound of her voice, Dr. Charlie freezes just an inch from contact on his last smash, in complete control. Carter holds the door open for Dr. Lee, who glares at Dr. Charlie.

DR. CHARLIE
Dammit, Alice. I'm not finished.

DR. LEE
I need to speak with you. Now.

She and Dr. Charlie step outside. As she moves, Dr. Lee takes the bat out of Dr. Charlie's hands and tosses it to Carter. He casually catches it. They've done this before.

The other students stare, stricken.

DREW
What the fuck was that?!

EXT. FOR-AN BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

As soon as they're clear of the door, Alice spins on Charlie.

DR. LEE
Charlie! You knew they were coming.
Today!

DR. CHARLIE
I never signed off on any of this,
Alice --

DR. LEE
It was never up to you! It has
never been up to you!

DR. CHARLIE
Took me ten years. More than ten
years. To get it up and running -

DR. LEE
You and I had a deal.

DR. CHARLIE
I'm just getting started out there!

DR. LEE
After Senator Crocker found out, I
shielded you for three more months.

DR. CHARLIE

Alice --

DR. LEE

No one else on the planet would have done that. *Could* have done that.

DR. CHARLIE

You know how *important* --

DR. LEE

Not more important than the *entire* anthropology department. Which will go down in flames unless I shut. You. Down. That's a fact.

From inside, the ROTARY WALL PHONE RINGS.

CARTER (O.S.)

For-An Building.

DR. LEE

Charlie. Take your research. Write that book you keep talking about.

He looks at her, stern. She hands him a fancy invitation. To his own retirement event.

DR. LEE (CONT'D)

Six o'clock tomorrow night. Do not miss your own going-away party.

DR. CHARLIE

Alice. Please. No.

DR. LEE

Then they'll escort off campus today. Whatever research you've got'll get buried so deep even you won't find it.

She moves away as Charlie slumps, cursing under his breath. He heads back inside.

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - CONTINUOUS

Carter covers the phone and calls out to Dr. Charlie.

CARTER

Dr. Charlie? Sir? It's Detective Womack. He's got something.

Dr. Charlie enters, glaring at each student. They're defensive.

DR. CHARLIE
Any of you go out and work a crime scene?

They all look like he's just spoken Pig Latin.

GENEVIEVE
A crime scene? Why would we do that?

SAMANTHA
We're anthropologists. We study people.

DREW
You know. Cultures. Biological differences.

IKE
(pointedly)
In an actual lab.

DREW
We're just here to store our stuff.

Dr. Charlie makes a decision. He turns to Carter.

DR. CHARLIE
Tell him we're on our way. Come on. All of you.

SAMANTHA
Come where?

IKE
Yeah. With you?

DREW
We don't do that.

DR. CHARLIE
I'm in charge until six tomorrow night. So you do now.

They glance at each other, then follow him out the door.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LAKE FONTAINE / DOCK - DAY

This is the opposite of excitement: no flashing police lights, no 'Do Not Cross' tape. A single squad car sits by the dock. The Father/Son boat is already tied off. The anxious FATHER paces the dock. The SON bubbles with excitement. Dr. Charlie's truck pulls up with the California van close behind. Dr Charlie greets Det. Womack. They walk to the dock.

DET. RICK - short for Frederick - WOMACK is several years younger than Dr. Charlie, and with a street-sharp edge. He's spent his life taking shit from red necks because of his high cheekbones and brown skin. But they both have observant souls, and over time have become very good friends.

DR. CHARLIE

You got the camper this weekend,
Womack?

Womack conveys his divorce and his contempt for this ex-wife's new squeeze with a shrug.

DET. WOMACK

LuAnne has it. With that Bobby Ray.
What about next weekend?

DR. CHARLIE

Lemme get through this weekend
first.

DET. WOMACK

They're not shutting down the whole
department, Charlie. Just your
outdoor lab.

DR. CHARLIE

And me.

DET. WOMACK

Charlie --

DR. CHARLIE

It's still a good idea, Rick.

DET. WOMACK

Don't have to sell me. You're just
a man ahead of his time is all.

Dr. Charlie gestures over to the students following behind.

DR. CHARLIE

Nope. I'm a man out of time.

Ike leans in toward Carter.

IKE
Thought he said this was a crime
scene.

CARTER
He did.

DR. CHARLIE
(calling out)
Carter? We're up.

Carter leads the other students toward the dock. Genevieve carries a large SKETCH PAD and PENCILS.

DET. WOMACK takes a battered ICE CHEST from the father. The Father and Son join them.

DET. WOMACK
This it?

FATHER
Yes, sir.

SON
I caught it! I caught it!

FATHER
Kenny! Hush up, now.

SON
But, Dad! I caught it! I caught it!
That was me!

DR. CHARLIE
You're a stout young fellow, and I
appreciate your attentiveness.

He turns to Carter. Dr. Charlie gestures the other students to cluster around the ice chest. Carter pulls on some gloves.

DR. CHARLIE
Carter, my boy. Let's take a look.

The Father looks queasy. Womack checks some paperwork.

FATHER
Can we leave now?

DET. WOMACK
Don't you want your Igloo back?

The Father waves him off.

SON

Dad! They're just getting to the good part!

DET. WOMACK

We have your information, sir. You can leave if you'd like to.

SON

Dad! I wanna see!

FATHER

My wife is going to kill me.

SON

(brightly)

We missed a brunch!

DR. CHARLIE

You have my sympathies.

SON

Pleeease?!

The Father reluctantly nods.

CARTER

You might want to take a step back.

Dr. Charlie gestures sharply to the other students to stay put.

DR. CHARLIE

Not you!

Carter opens the cooler.

The SMELL hits the Father and the unsuspecting students.
Note: Carter's fine. The others struggle to keep from retching. They mostly fail.

SON

(thrilled)

That is so gross!!!

IKE

Jesus!

The Son pulls out an Instamatic camera, but by now his Father is bent over, hands on knees.

The Son thrusts the camera into Dr. Charlie's hands. He shrugs, aims.

SON
'Cheese'.

The Son poses by the cooler just as Carter lifts out the contents.

FLASH CLICK!

STILL SHOT: The Son smiles next to a kneeling Carter who holds up a GROTESQUELY SWOLLEN MOTTLED HUMAN ARM.

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. LAKE FONTAINE / DOCK

Det. Womack attaches a paper luggage tag-type marker to the cooler. He jots down some information then hands the paperwork to Dr. Charlie.

Dr. Charlie stares at the MOTTLE ARM as Carter lowers it back into the cooler. Genevieve quickly finishes a sketch on her note pad.

DET. WOMACK

Think you can get anything off it?

DR. CHARLIE

Maybe gender. General age. Water recoveries are tough.

DET. WOMACK

I'll check with Missing Persons.
But I can just about guarantee no
one's walked into the station
lately looking for a missing arm.

Ike's still struggling with the smell.

IKE

Then why are we here?

Det. Womack eyes the students.

DET. WOMACK

Don't you know? Dr. Bell is our
department's secret weapon.

DR. CHARLIE

Detective Womack, you'll make me
blush.

SAMANTHA

But, we're not pathologists. We're
anthropologists.

IKE

Or do people in Tennessee not know
the difference?

Det. Womack walks away with Dr. Charlie to his truck. They shake their heads.

DET. WOMACK

Lord help us.

DR. CHARLIE
Maggie! Come on, girl.

They reach the truck but no sign of Maggie.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Maggie?

At the truck, he glances in through the open window. Maggie's already there. She never left the front seat. She's limp.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
(stricken)
Girl? You okay?

She whimpers.

CUT TO:

EXT. BLACKNESS

The SOUND OF A ROARING CHAIN SAW ERUPTS.

Then the ROAR improbably STOPS, SKIPS BACKWARDS and STARTS AGAIN, as if someone were playing with it digitally.

INT. A HOME GARAGE, SOMEWHERE

TIGHT ON A CHAIN SAW CUTTING THROUGH MEAT AND BONE. Is that a human leg? For the record: no.

BITS of MEAT AND BONE FLY EVERYWHERE.

The video picture looks a little bit 'off': we don't know it yet, but we're watching a 3/4" video tape on a small screen monitor.

THE CHAIN SAW shudders to a stop. The camera pulls back artlessly. CHAIN SAW GUY sets aside the saw and tugs off his safety goggles. It's our CARTER JAMES. He glares at the camera - and his camera-man, off-screen bratty brother GOMER.

CARTER
Don't pull back so fast, Gomer!

GOMER (O.S.)
Carter! It's fine! Keep going!

The garage walls are half-covered with taped-up garbage bags. They don't even begin to handle the mess Carter is making. Bloody bits are everywhere.

GOMER (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Mom is going to kill you so hard!

CARTER
 Gomer!

He takes a breath and composes himself. Like a bad infomercial, Carter gestures to a row of THREE CHAIN SAWS beside the mauled STEER LEG. Incongruously, a QUILTED SEWING KIT sits off to one side. Carter glances at his notes..

CARTER (CONT'D)
 (stilted)
 As you can see, the Husky's slim design makes it light and agile. Voted most popular in a recent survey --

Then the IMAGE JUMPS AHEAD>

Carter wraps a TAILOR'S YELLOW MEASURING TAPE around a chunk of the leg, measuring it.

JUMP AHEAD.

A WIDER SHOT now, Carter grinding through the leg meat with another CHAIN SAW. More BITS SPLATTER.

Carter completely SEVERS the leg with a third SAW. One chunk hits the floor with a THUD.

CARTER (CONT'D)
 Of course, here in Tennessee, you're likely to see a lot of Porter-Cable saws. Since they're made here --

JUMP AHEAD.

Carter gestures to the THREE CUT SURFACES on the LEG CHUNK. He measures the cuts with a HEM-RULER.

CARTER (CONT'D)
 -- the kerf width, while similar, is distinct to each brand, and could be a useful indicator --

JUMP AHEAD.

Carter stands in his spot. But now every surface is covered with bits of blood, meat and bone.

CARTER (CONT'D)
 My name is Carter James.

A DOOR OPENS O.S. Someone enters.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Thank you for considering me for
the Tennessee-North Trenton
Anthropology Department. Go,
Nitros!

Quick beat. Carter glances at his 'camera man'.

CARTER (CONT'D)
Okay, Gomer. Cut it.

But Gomer doesn't. Then...

UPSET MOM (O.S.)
Carter!

CARTER
Mom! What? I told you not to come
in here!

UPSET MOM (O.S.)
What have you done to the garage?!

CARTER
I haven't cleaned up yet --

GOMER (O.S.)
Oh, you're in trouble now! Ha!

Angry, Carter flings the HEM-RULER at him.

CARTER
Shut it, Gomer.

UPSET MOM (O.S.)
You got it on the ceiling?!

CARTER
Mom --

UPSET MOM (O.S.)
Is that my sewing kit?!

The screen goes BLUE.

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - DAY

The chunky 3/4" video tape - pre-VHS - ejects loudly from the
clunky system. We realize that we've been watching a video
presentation.

Actually, Sam has been viewing Carter's old submission tape on a small TV monitor. Carter preens just a little bit.

SAMANTHA

Wait. So you do that kind of stuff here. All the time?

CARTER

Only place in the whole wide world. WAS the only place.

IKE

How come I've never heard of you?

CARTER

No one was supposed to. Somehow Senator Crocker found out. He freaked.

SAMANTHA

No kidding.

CARTER

Look. In the last six months Dr. Bell's found more ways to ID remains that no one else can. Cause of death. All kinds of things.

IKE

Seriously? Here?

CARTER

Well. Here and the other place.

IKE

What other place?

CARTER

Doesn't matter. Your Dr. Rensman is shutting it all down tomorrow.

DR. CHARLIE enters. Carter, Sam, Ike and Martin gather around the SWOLLEN MOTTLED ARM on a METAL EXAMINATION TABLE. Drew and Genevieve are not present.

DR. CHARLIE

Carter. What have we got?

Carter tugs on his protective gear: apron, goggles, gloves. Sam, Ike and Martin don't.

CARTER

Left arm. Separated below the shoulder.

DR. CHARLIE
RCP?

CARTER
Don't know yet --

IKE
"RCP"?

CARTER
Rip. Cut. Pull. Three main ways to
lose a limb.

SAMANTHA
"Main" ways?

CARTER
There're dozens. That we've
catalogued.

Carter adjusts a 1976-era VIDEO CAMERA at the arm.

DR. CHARLIE
Anybody else?

Sam slips on an apron and gloves. She can't help herself.

SAMANTHA
The arm appears to be human. Adult.

DR. CHARLIE
'Appears'?

SAMANTHA
Bear paws can 'read' as human. In X-
rays. Never assume anything.

Dr. Charlie tosses an apron to Ike. He puts it on, also drawn
into the conversation.

DR. CHARLIE
Good job. What else?

IKE
Discoloration too severe to verify
ethnicity or gender --

Martin still stands off to one side. He stares fixedly on the
arm.

MARTIN
Extract bone. You could extract the
bone.

(MORE)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You can fix the age by extracting bone. But you need a femur. A femur is the best bone.

DR. CHARLIE

Which we do not have at this point. Continue.

MARTIN

Then there's no point. No point in extracting the bone. Because it's not a femur --

Without glancing at Martin, Sam claps her hands sharply.

SAMANTHA

Got it, Martin.

He stops. Samantha glances at Dr. Charlie.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)

He can get stuck sometimes.

DR. CHARLIE

Can't we all.

Carter holds up a prepared glass slide.

CARTER

I fixed nail scrapings to the slides.

DR. CHARLIE

Which indicate what?

CARTER

Wasn't in the water that long.

Sam glances at Carter.

SAMANTHA

How come?

CARTER

In water? Fingers, toes and face are first to go. Easiest access for bugs. Fish. If the body's not naked. If it's naked, genitals go first.

IKE

So. Probably less than twelve hours?

DR. CHARLIE
What's the quickest, cleanest,
easiest ID? Always.

The students, engrossed, lean over the arm.

SAMANTHA
Dental records --

DR. CHARLIE
No head.

IKE
We don't work. On ID's. The bodies
we use at Warren. They're all
known.

DR. CHARLIE
Really? Hmm... Guess we're back to
basics here. What's the simplest --

The wall phone RINGS. Carter goes to answer it but Dr.
Charlie beats him to it. This is unusual.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
For-An -- yeah, Mike. How is she?

Carter watches him. The other students keep going.

IKE
Well. We're not getting
fingerprints off this one.

SAMANTHA
Too swollen.

IKE
Too bad.

DR. CHARLIE
(into phone)
On my way.

BACK TO DR. CHARLIE - He hangs up the phone, distracted.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Everything documenting? Camera
running?

CARTER
You know it is.

Dr. Charlie grabs his keys, heads out for his truck.

DR. CHARLIE
Keep going.

As he exits, he bumps into Genevieve on her way in. She doesn't look good.

IKE
He can move fast for an old guy.

SAMANTHA
(to Carter)
Who's 'Mike'?

CARTER
Dr. Shannon. Maggie's vet. His dog.

IKE
Genie. Where's Drew?

GENEVIEVE
Probably with Rensman.

Carter picks up on her distress.

CARTER
You okay?

She yanks on an apron.

GENEVIEVE
Fine. I'm fine.

CARTER
Okay.

GENEVIEVE
Just. Just tell me what to do.

Carter notices that Ike, Sam and Martin are engrossed in the arm, and not in Genevieve's distress. He makes a mental note.

WIPE TO:

EXT. CAMPUS - EARLY EVENING

Lights are coming on all over the campus as the sun goes down.

The For-An Building glows like a small chunk of amber under the stadium bleachers.

At the ceremony site, Dr. Lee directs the last of the workers setting up the temporary stage.

By the river, Dr. Rensman pounds out his daily five-mile run, complete with 1976-style extra-short running shorts. Drew runs up on one side. Rensman doesn't slow down.

DREW

Dr. Rensman! Dr. Rensman!

DR. RENSMAN

Channing. You're late. Had to start without you.

Drew falls into pace with Resman. Apparently they do this a lot.

DREW

Sir. I'm... I'm going back home.

DR. RENSMAN

Dammit, Channing. Well. Maybe Vera and McNamara can handle the move-in. But be back Monday.

DREW

No. Sir. I need to leave the program. I'm moving back home.

DR. RENSMAN

What? Why?!

DREW

My old girlfriend. Heather.

DR. RENSMAN

You broke that off months ago.

DREW

Three months ago.

DR. RENSMAN

Aren't you with Greeley now?

DREW

Sir. She's pregnant.

Rensman finally stops jogging.

DR. RENSMAN

(genuine anger)

Genevieve Greeley is pregnant?! This is why I've never liked female students. *They* get pregnant and quit on you.

DREW
No, sir. My old girlfriend.
Heather. *She's* pregnant.

Rensman, self-absorbed as he is, shakes his head,
disappointed.

DR. RENSMAN
So?

DREW
So. I'm going back. To be with her.
The baby.

DR. RENSMAN
You do realize this is the 1970's,
not the 1870's.

Drew doesn't respond.

DR. RENSMAN (CONT'D)
So that's it, then?

DREW
I guess so, Dr. Rensman.

DR. RENSMAN
You had real talent. What a waste
of my time.

With that, Rensman takes off again, leaving a stung Drew
behind.

CUT TO:

EXT. BODY FARM HATES - EARLY EVENING

Dr. Charlie sits alone in his truck, contemplating the locked
gates. This had been the place he finds his greatest peace.
Maggie is not with him.

He redirects his attention to a LEGAL PAD he has propped
against the wheel.

He jots a few more words. Signs it. Tosses the pad on the
passenger seat.

Dr. Charlie exits the trucks. Unlocks the gates to the Farm.

He returns to the truck and removes a RIFLE: 308 Magnum.

He checks. It's loaded.

Dr. Charlie enters the Farm, closing the gates behind him.

HOLD A BEAT ON THE GATES.

THE CALIFORNIA VAN pulls up, with Carter driving.

Ike, Sam, Martin, Genevieve and Carter climb out, look around.

GENEVIEVE

Just let me get my sketchbook.

IKE

Place doesn't look like much. No offense.

Genevieve grabs her sketchbook and bag of art supplies from the back of Charlie's truck.

GENEVIEVE

Got it.

Something in the cab catches her eye. It's Dr. Charlie's legal pad. She makes out some of the scrawl. The words pop up in BOLD: "TIME TO PASS", "MY DEPARTURE, "GOOD-BYE TO DR. LEE".

GENEVIEVE (CONT'D)

Guys? Guys! Get over here!

CARTER

What?

GENEVIEVE

Uhm. Is that what I think it is?

CARTER

What do you think it is?

Genie steps back, agitated. Ike leans in.

IKE

(reading)

"Time to pass"? "Good-bye to Dr. Lee"? Suicide note maybe?

Ike shrugs.

IKE (CONT'D)

Maybe the old guy's dog died.

Reflexively, CARTER HITS IKE in the face. Ike goes down on one knee. Genevieve gasps sharply. Carter throws the van keys at Ike. Tellingly no one moves to help Ike.

CARTER
Get in the van! Get the fuck out
here! You don't want to be here.
You don't deserve to be here.

SAMANTHA
Carter?

Carter leans over Ike.

CARTER
And last night? At the bar? It's
called a tip, you dipshit!

BLAM! A RIFLE SHOT rings out. Everyone freezes, then spins
toward the gates.

GENEVIEVE
What was that?!

Martin responds as he always does when he has information.

MARTIN
(detached)
A three-oh-eight. Magnum.

Carter runs toward the gates.

CARTER
Dr. Charlie!

There's a slight echo.

MARTIN
Yeah. A three-oh-eight. Magnum.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. BODY FARM GATES - EVENING

Carter charges through the gates.

CARTER
Dr. Charlie!

Sam, Ike and Genevieve fall in step behind Carter. Then Genevieve takes a few steps back and tugs Martin's arm to get him to go along.

GENEVIEVE
Come on, Martin.

EXT. BODY FARM INTERIOR - CONTINUOUS

Carter charges ahead of the others.

CARTER
Dr. Bell!!

Carter rounds a corner just ahead of them as ANOTHER SHOT goes off.

AN EXPLOSION OF RED GOO ERUPTS in Carter's face. Carter gasps.

Sam, Ike, Genevieve and Martin arrive. To their amazement, they see Carter covered in red goo, Dr. Charlie shouldering a rifle and a heavy plastic bag hanging from a tree. There are two other bags, both shot open. There's a very messy blast radius around the two men.

GENEVIEVE
Carter!!

SAMANTHA
Dr. Bell?! Please. Put down the gun.

He glares at them.

DR. CHARLIE
Back up! Now!

They do.

Dr. Charlie aims the rifle at the last bag and fires.

BLAM!! The bag EXPLODES. Carter clutches a tree branch to steady himself. He had expected the worst.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)

What?!

GENEVIEVE

Ohmigod! Ohmigod! What are you doing?!

DR. CHARLIE

What does it look like I'm doing?

MARTIN

Told you already. He's shooting a three-oh-eight. Magnum. Bolt-action.

IKE

Martin. Got it.

GENEVIEVE

Carter! Oh, my God! You're bleeding!

Carter starts scraping off the red goo.

CARTER

I'm okay. It's from those --

He gestures to the exploded plastic bags.

SAMANTHA

Dr. Bell. You... startled us.

DR. CHARLIE

Sometimes a body just needs to shoot a ham-bag.

SAMANTHA

Okay. Pause tape. Rewind. What's a ham-bag?

Carter catches his breath.

CARTER

Eight-gallon bags filled with bone-in hams. Red corn syrup.

Sam stares at him.

CARTER (CONT'D)

For spatter patterns. Rate of ejection. Blood analysis.

DR. CHARLIE
What are you all doing here?

CARTER
She left her art stuff in your
truck. I figured you'd be out here.
(concerned)
How's Maggie?

Dr. Charlie picks up a beat-up garden hose and turns on an ancient faucet on the side of a shed. He hands the hose to Carter.

DR. CHARLIE
Old. Doc Shannon wants to watch her
some.

CARTER
Well, okay then.

Dr. Charlie senses something is wrong but Carter steps away to hose himself off.

DR. CHARLIE
(to the others)
Well. Seeing as how you're here.
Might as well take a look.
Rensman's shutting it all down
tomorrow.

Ike rubs his jaw.

IKE
I've seen enough.

GENEVIEVE
Dr. Bell? You sure you're okay?

SAMANTHA
Probably better if we go now. Come
on Martin -- Martin?

He's gone -- off behind some shrubs.

SAMANTHA (CONT'D)
Martin?

MARTIN
Can't go. Not now.

SAMANTHA
Why?

Then they all see what Martin sees: a decaying CORPSE bound with PLASTIC TIES around its ankles and hands.

GENEVIEVE

Is that -- ?

DR. CHARLIE

Some very good people have donated their remains. So we can get a better idea of what happens after.

SAMANTHA

Wait a second. This is on purpose? But the hands --

DR. CHARLIE

We stage some things. See Mr. Ramon here. The way the skin's worn around the ties. Shows us he was bound *after* he died. Which he was. By me.

SAMANTHA

Are you kidding me?

GENEVIEVE

Is this even legal?

Dr. Charlie gestures around him. The others look up, and for the first time see a FIELD OF CORPSES in various stages of decay, as far as the eye can see.

DR. CHARLIE

That's all we do out here.

The new students are stunned. And a little impressed.

GENEVIEVE

Wow.

WIPE TO:

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - FLASHBACK - TWELVE YEARS AGO - EVENING

SUPER "TWELVE YEARS AGO:" on screen. A YOUNGER RENSMAN angrily shoves some folders into a beat-up briefcase. A large grid map is on a desk. Mid-60's music wafts in from a nearby window.

YOUNGER RENSMAN

You want to pile up human corpses and just watch them... *rot*?

(MORE)

YOUNGER RENSMAN (CONT'D)
How in God's name do you even call
that anthropology?!

YOUNGER DR. CHARLIE
That's the point, Aaron! It's
uncharted territory!

YOUNGER RENSMAN
If you think I'm going to let you
drag me down with you --

YOUNGER DR. CHARLIE
Look. We present this together. Go
in as a team.

Younger Rensman grabs the map and tears it in half.

YOUNGER RENSMAN
This sick experiment of yours is
never going to happen. Not now! Now
in a million years!

This catches Dr. Charlie off-guard.

YOUNGER DR. CHARLIE
There's still a year left on your
contract. And a chance to do
something really important. Right
here.

Younger Rensman pulls out a fancy envelope.

YOUNGER RENSMAN
I got an offer. From Warren
University. I'm taking it.

Charlie considers, then reluctantly waves him off. Rensman
leaves.

EXT. BODY FARM - BACK TO PRESENT TIME - EVENING

Genevieve, Sam, Ike and Martin adjust their disposable
aprons, gloves and clear face shields.

DR. CHARLIE
Hadn't planned to weigh this
particular specimen today. But
since you're here.

Carter, damp but all decked out, moves a large-frame FARM
SCALE close to a decayed HUMAN LEG - partial pelvis, thigh,
upper leg, lower leg, foot.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I say never waste free labor.

He points to Genevieve and Martin, and the scale. A large metal specimen tray hangs from a large spring-loaded scale.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Lower that platform. You two --

Samantha and Ike.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Carter, show 'em how to lift the leg.

Martin lumbers past Samantha. Sam steps aside.

SAMANTHA
He likes to lift things.

Martin lines up by the exposed pelvic bone. Ike pauses next to him on his way down to the foot.

CARTER
It'll be slippery.

Ike pointedly ignores him.

IKE
Martin. On three.

Martin automatically lifts the pelvic bone. Ike isn't quite ready.

Ike fumbles and grabs at the loose skin on the pelvis. Martin swings his end of the leg onto the scale-platform. Ike can't keep up.

IKE (CONT'D)
What the hell? I said 'on three'!

The LEG SKIN in Ike 's hands peels back like a long glove, inside out, off the entire length of the leg, from the pelvis to the toes.

The now-skinned leg ends up on the platform.

MARTIN
You said 'three'.

Ike ends up on his ass on the ground, with the leg skin plopped in his lap. But rather than react in horror, he pauses.

He's now a convert. He looks up, smiling broadly.

IKE
Got any more?

WIPE TO:

EXT. NORTH TRENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

Establishing shot.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - NIGHT

DET. WOMACK steps out of his office carrying a folder. It's empty, and that doesn't make sense to him.

He buttonholes the department's long-suffering office manager ANISSA JOHNSTON - wry, middle-age, takes no crap. Together they walk toward the MAIN LOBBY.

DET. WOMACK
Anissa. Wait up. Why is Senator Crocker in Interrogation Two?

ANISSA
He has nice shoes.

DET. WOMACK
Nice shoes?

ANISSA
Didn't want him to have to walk through the lobby.

The instant they step into the lobby, THREE DRUNK STUDENTS - from the Tick-Tock bar in the opening - try very, very hard not vomit as they sit handcuffed to a bench. Splattered trash cans sit in front of them.

DET. WOMACK
Frat rush already?

Womack and Anissa quickly march through en route to Interrogation Two. Then Womack slows. He and Anissa enjoy their little game, now that they've cleared the danger zone.

DET. WOMACK (CONT'D)
(loudly)
Shoot. Left my chili and cheese in the microwave.

ANISSA

The good stuff? With extra beans?

The frat boys groan and clutch their stomachs.

DET. WOMACK

You know me too well.

ANISSA

I'll fetch it to you when it dings.

DET. WOMACK

Toss on some onions? There's
chopped in a plastic bag. In the
fridge by the milk.

ANISSA

The two-per-cent or the whole milk?
You know the whole milk's curdled,
right? All chunky.

Bingo. One VOMITS, which sets off Number Two. With that,
Number Three vomits. Which sets off Number One again. Repeat.

DET. WOMACK

(quietly, to Anissa)

Want me to call maintenance?

ANISSA

Hell, no. Let 'em wait 'til they're
good and crusty.

DET. WOMACK

Anissa, you're a remarkable woman.

ANISSA

You're not the first to notice.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM TWO

Det. Womack enters, still looking at the empty file.

DET. WOMACK

Senator Crocker? I'm Detective Rick
Womack. And I'm a little confused.
I've got an empty folder here.
What exactly can I do for you, sir?

He's surprised by the Senator's appearance: exhausted, red-
eyed, unshaven. He looks awful.

DET. WOMACK (CONT'D)

Senator Crocker, you okay?

SENATOR CROCKER
No, no. You have to help me.

DET. WOMACK
That's what I'm here to do.

SENATOR CROCKER
Someone... a member of my staff...
he's missing.

DET. WOMACK
Let me get some information then --

SENATOR CROCKER
No. No. This has to be strictly off
the record.

DET. WOMACK
For a missing person? That's not
how it works.

SENATOR CROCKER
That's how it works now.

Sen. Crocker removes a set of official "Office of the
Senator" employee fingerprints from his jacket. He also hands
over a small photo.

SENATOR CROCKER (CONT'D)
Calvin Randall. My Chief of Staff.
I have his fingerprints. And this.

Det. Womack studies the photo: it's a candid shot of a
handsome young black man. It's obvious from Crocker's
distress that Randall is not 'just' Chief of Staff.

SENATOR CROCKER (CONT'D)
(imploringly)
Please. Help me.

WIPE TO:

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - NEXT DAY

Det. Womack shows a photocopy of the photo to Dr. Charlie as
they consider the ARM. The other students are NOT there.

DR. CHARLIE
Well. It's sure a possibility. But
you know how hard it is to get an
ID without dental.

DET. WOMACK
This one can't get past us,
Charlie. At least not yet.

DR. CHARLIE
Never does, Rick.

DET. WOMACK
I know.
(beat)
You gonna say something tonight? At
the ceremony?

Dr. Charlie laughs at the word 'ceremony'.

DR. CHARLIE
Not because I want to. No, sir. Dr.
Lee has ordered a command
performance.

Det. Womack smiles.

DET. WOMACK
Now I *have* to come. Don't want to
miss that.

WIPE TO:

EXT. BOYCE HALL - EVENING

It's a good-sized gathering at the temporary stage. DET.
WOMACK finds a seat near the back, on the aisle. Various
important people sit on the stage, including DR. RENSMAN, but
DR. CHARLIE is ABSENT. DR. LEE is mid-speech. She glances
around, trying to find Dr. Charlie.

DR. LEE
Tennessee-North Trenton could not
be more grateful to have lured Dr.
Aaron Rensman here from Warren
University. Their loss is our
tremendous gain!

Dr. Rensman adjusts his jacket. He's reveling in his moment
of glory.

DR. LEE (CONT'D)
And, also, this is a bit of a
homecoming. Years ago, Dr. Aaron
Rensman had been a member of our
anthropology department. Now he
returns to lead it.

Applause.

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - EVENING - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Charlie fumbles with an old necktie. He uses a stainless-steel paper towel dispenser as a mirror.

The rotary phone rings.

DR. CHARLIE
For-An -- hey, Mike?
(tense)
What about Maggie?

EXT. BOYCE HALL - EVENING

Back behind the raised stage area, SAMANTHA, MARTIN and IKE get in last-minute primping. For the first time since they arrived, four of them are excited about TNT. GENEVIEVE walks up.

IKE
My God! That place was insane!

SAMANTHA
Hey, Genie. Where's Drew?

GENE
Not now.

Genie pulls herself together and gestures at the steps up to the stage area. They all file up.

DR. LEE (PARTIAL O.S.)
But as we welcome the new head of
our anthropology department, we
also say good-bye to the man who
has led us here for so many years.
Dr. Charles Bell.

More applause. But no Dr. Charlie.

EXT. NORTH TRENTON BUS STATION - CONTINUOUS

As we hear Dr. Lee speak, we watch a forlorn Drew climb on the bus. As the door shuts, his fate is sealed.

DR. LEE
Who, apparently, continues to
operate on Dr. Bell-Standard-Time.
(MORE)

DR. LEE (CONT'D)
Which means he arrives when he's
good and ready.

EXT. BOYCE HALL - CONTINUOUS

Dr. Lee vamps. She's good at it. Polite laughter from the audience. Dr. Womack likes that one.

DR. LEE
We look forward to hearing his
remarks when he makes his entrance.

More laughter.

DR. LEE (CONT'D)
And now, ladies and gentlemen, Dr.
Aaron Rensman!

APPLAUSE! Dr. Rensman steps to the podium. Ike, Samantha, Martin and Genevieve step on the stage and take their seats. Dr. Rensman bows to the crowd. Straightens. Bows again.

DR. RENSMAN
Thank you. Thank you all.

He basks in the moment.

DR. RENSMAN (CONT'D)
I would be remiss if I failed to
acknowledge the work of Dr. Charles
Bell. My... *unorthodox* predecessor.
But instead of looking back, let us
now look forward.

Det. Womack scans the area. Still no Dr. Charlie.

DR. RENSMAN (CONT'D)
Let us consider tonight to be the
passing of the baton. The passing
on an era. The passing of --

Something's wrong with Dr. Rensman. He clutches the podium.

DR. RENSMAN (CONT'D)
The passing of--

THEN DIES. He crumples and takes a header off of the stage to the ground below.

The crowd reacts. Stunned silence, then gasps.

DR. LEE
Dr. Rensman?!

Instant chaos as people swarm his fallen figure.

At that moment, Det. Womack leaps to his feet, ready to rush to the aid of the fallen figure. He's blocked by -- DR. CHARLIE, who has just arrived. He has MAGGIE on a leash. She moves slowly, but looks otherwise healthy.

Dr. Charlie innocently observes the commotion.

DR. CHARLIE
What'd I miss?

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

EXT. TENNESSEE-NORTH TRENTON CAMPUS - DAWN

The sun comes up.

EXT. BOYCE HALL - DAY

Everything's as it was for last night's ceremony EXCEPT workers now drape black streamers around the stage. Others bring up large floral bouquets. A LARGE PHOTO BLOW UP of DR. RENSMAN is secured to an oversized easel.

CUT TO:

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - DAY

CARTER, alone, labors over the SWOLLEN ARM.

DR. CHARLIE (O.S.)
So tell me, Carter. What's going on
here?

Carter looks up as DR. CHARLIE enters. Carter gestures to the arm. He gets back to his work.

There's an awkward silence between them.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I can see that. I meant, what's
going on with you?

Carter keeps working.

CARTER
Yesterday. At the farm.

Dr. Charlie puts on an apron and gloves.

DR. CHARLIE
Maggie was sick. I was upset.

Dr. Charlie joins the work.

CARTER
The gunshot.

Dr. Charlie doesn't get it.

DR. CHARLIE
I've shot a ham-bag before, Carter.

CARTER

Looked like you left a note. In the truck.

(beat)

Thought you were gone.

DR. CHARLIE

Carter, I was right there --

CARTER

I thought you shot yourself.

Dr. Charlie absorbs this just as the door opens. SAM, IKE, GENEVIEVE and MARTIN awkwardly enter.

SAMANTHA

We just came to get our stuff. Out of your way. Not sure what we're doing after that.

IKE

You heard Drew Channing's left the program, right?

Sam punches Ike on the arm. Again. Genie hands Dr. Charlie a series of sketches she made of the arm. They're anatomical and very good.

GENEVIEVE

Here, Dr. Bell. You can just throw these away if you want.

DR. CHARLIE

You have quite the talent.

Genie nods her head. Carter peels off his gloves, ready to leave.

Several things quickly catch Dr. Charlie's eye:

**) Martin picks up a box.*

**) Flashback: At the farm, Martin picks up the human leg.*

**) Carter peels off his gloves.*

**) Flashback: At the farm, Ike pulls off the leg-skin.*

Carter steps away but Dr. Charlie stops him.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Carter. Wait --

Dr. Charlie runs his hand down Carter's arm. He lifts up Carter's hand and quickly examines it. He calls out to the others.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Everybody. Raise your hands. Now.

Martin instantly raises his hand. The others aren't so quick to play along.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
I said raise your hands!

One by one, Sam, Ike and Genevieve raise their hands. Dr. Charlie studies their raised hands. He's got something in mind.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
You. Come here.

He grabs Genevieve's arm and moves her to the table.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
You - Janet? Janie?

GENEVIEVE
It's Genevieve. Genie.

Dr. Charlie signals Carter to help him with the swollen arm. They both don gloves. He points to Sam.

DR. CHARLIE
You there. How long after death
does it take for skin to loosen?

SAMANTHA
Depends on conditions.

DR. CHARLIE
Underwater.

SAMANTHA
Almost immediately.

DR. CHARLIE
Show me.

Sam pulls on disposable gloves. She gently tugs the loose glove.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Keep going.

Carter holds down the exposed bone. Sam gently tugs the skin 'sleeve' down a little bit further. Dr. Charlie points a finger in her face.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Fortune favors the bold!

Startled, Sam carefully tugs the skin 'sleeve' all the way down the length of the arm. It peels off as a complete inside-out arm-glove with the skin on the inside now.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Now, Miss Genevieve?

Dr. Charlie holds out a pair of disposable gloves. She tugs them on.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Hold out your left hand.

She does.

Dr. Charlie carefully fits the "skin" glove over Genie's fingers.

GENEVIEVE
Wait - what are you doing?

She freezes as he tugs the "glove" into place, gently stretching the skin over her fingertips, turning it back skin-side-out.

IKE
Holy shit!

DR. CHARLIE
Young scholars. Watch and Learn.
Human flesh is fairly elastic. As demonstrated by our little adventure with that leg yesterday. I saw some of you fiddle with your gloves and it occurred to me.

Dr. Charlie presses the fingertips to a black ink pad.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
What if we used the skin like a glove, to tease out those swollen fingerprints?

GENEVIEVE
Dr. Bell. I think I need to sit down.

DR. CHARLIE
Mind over matter, missy.

IKE
I'll do it! I volunteer! Pick me!

DR. CHARLIE
In this case, size matters.

Off Ike's look.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Her hands? They're smaller.

Dr. Charlie presses the fingertips against a white card. He holds up the neat fingerprints for inspection.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
Carter, please call Detective
Womack. Let him know we're on our
way.

Genevieve holds her "gloved" arm out, not quite able to react.

The door opens. DR. LEE steps in. She holds out a LARGE ENVELOPE.

DR. LEE
Excuse me, Dr. Bell. This is for
you.

DR. CHARLIE
Alice, we're all a little busy
right now.

DR. LEE
It's from Rensman.

Off Charlie's startled look...

EXT. NORTH TRENTON POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Establishing shot.

INT. NORTH TRENTON POLICE - DAY

DET. WOMACK directs CARTER, IKE, SAMANTHA, MARTIN and GENEVIEVE as they gather around a large microscope in the middle of a table. DR. CHARLIE stands to the side. There's a wide one-way mirror along one wall.

DET. WOMACK
Let's say I'm trying to rule
someone out. Can you tell me. The
prints you just brought me. Are
they a match for these?

Each student stares into the microscope and pronounces
judgment.

SAMANTHA
No.

IKE
No match.

MARTIN
No.

GENEVIEVE
Not a match.

Dr. Charlie steps over, looks.

DR. CHARLIE
These aren't a match, Detective.

Det. Womack shakes his head 'no' at the mirror.

DET. WOMACK
Dr. Bell. I need a word.

They step out into a dark hallway.

DR. CHARLIE
We still don't know who that arm
belongs to, Rick.

DET. WOMACK
But now we know who it *doesn't*
belong to.

Det. Womack opens the door for the 'observation room' behind
the one-way mirror. Dr. Charlie is surprised to see Senator
Crocker sitting there. Sen. Crocker is in awful shape: hasn't
slept, eyes red. Det. Womack quickly closes the door.

DET. WOMACK (CONT'D)
Senator Crocker. We have some good
news.

SENATOR CROCKER
It's not him? It's not Calvin? You
sure?

DET. WOMACK
We're sure. Thanks to Dr. Bell
here.

Senator Crocker startles Dr. Bell with a weepy hug.

SENATOR CROCKER
Oh, my God! Thank you! Thank you so
much! You don't know -- !

Senator Crocker pulls himself together as best he can. He
shakes a very confused Dr. Bell's hand.

SENATOR CROCKER (CONT'D)
Detective Womack. How come the
police didn't know how to do that?
What Dr. Bell did?

DET. WOMACK
It's never been done before.

DR. CHARLIE
It's something I figured out at my -
outdoor lab, Senator.

Senator Crocker decides something. Leans in.

SENATOR CROCKER
If word ever gets out about this, I
will destroy you.

Dr. Charlie isn't sure what's going on.

DR. CHARLIE
Excuse me?

SENATOR CROCKER
You can keep it going. Your lab
thing. But you *only* work with
Detective Womack here, understand?

DR. CHARLIE
I get to keep it going?

SENATOR CROCKER
The public hears *one word* about
what you do out there, I will
crucify you myself.

Senator Crocker adjusts his tie, grabs Dr. Charlie's hand in
his, shakes it.

SENATOR CROCKER (CONT'D)
Long as you can keep a secret, so
can I. I'll work things out with
Dr. Lee tomorrow.

He hurries out of the room. Dr. Charlie looks at Det. Womack.

DET. WOMACK
Calvin Reed went missing two days
ago.

DR. CHARLIE
Senator Crocker's chief of staff?

DET. WOMACK
Senator Crocker's... special
friend. Lover's quarrel. That kind
of thing.

Dr. Charlie didn't see that coming.

DR. CHARLIE
So that arm we got --

DET. WOMACK
Crocker's been a wreck thinking it
was Calvin's. And we really didn't
have a way to prove it wasn't.
Until you got us some fingerprints.

DR. CHARLIE
But Calvin's still missing.

DET. WOMACK
Not the first time Reed's run off.
But the Senator thought he was at
the bottom of Lake Fontaine.

DR. CHARLIE
Well, I'll be damned.

INT. FOR-AN BUILDING - LATE DAY

Alone, Charlie carefully opens a folded legal page from the
envelope packet. He reads to himself.

DR. CHARLIE
"In the event I should pre-decease
Dr. Charles Bell then the following
instructions constitute the
fulfillment of the remainder of my
original contract."

He reads on silently. He's startled. He sets the paper down.

EXT. BOYCE HALL CEREMONY SITE - NIGHT

Now it's time for the rushed memorial service for Dr. Rensman. The HUGE POSTER BLOW-UP of Rensman stands on an easel. Mounds of floral arrangements cover the stage area and spill over onto the lawn. The place swarms with mourners.

Improbably, it's Dr. Charlie's voice we hear.

DR. CHARLIE (V.O.)
Dr. Aaron Rensman was an ass. One
of the biggest asses in the whole
wide world.

EXT. BOYCE HALL CEREMONY SITE - LATER THAT NIGHT

It's very dark now. Empty of people. There's Rensman's large photo on that easel.

DR. CHARLIE (V.O.)
He may have loved science. But he
hated getting his hands dirty.

The coast's clear.

Out of the shadows scamper a few people who grab the photo then run off.

DR. CHARLIE (V.O.)
And that's what anthropology is all
about. Getting in it. Getting
dirty. Trying to learn everything
nature is trying to teach us. Even
if it's not pretty.

EXT. BODY FARM GATES - NIGHT

DR. CHARLIE enters in the darkness, followed by CARTER, SAM, IKE, MARTIN and GENEVIEVE.

DR. CHARLIE (V.O.)
Especially if it's not pretty.
Because death itself is many
things. But it's not pretty.

EXT. - BODY FARM SHACK - NIGHT

DR. CHARLIE directs the STUDENTS as they adjust something on the side of the shack. It's the giant POSTER. Dr. Charlie's wrapping up his little speech.

DR. CHARLIE
But I can't think of anything more
important. Or sacred. Than what I
do here. Than what we'll do here.
If you'll join me.

And opposite the poster, leaning against a tree, is the BODY OF RENSMAN.

DR. CHARLIE (CONT'D)
And, I wouldn't have believed it
before tonight. But Dr. Rensman
thought so, too.

With one final adjustment, Samantha, Genevieve, Ike, Martin and Carter all admire their work.

DR. CHARLIE.
Well, Aaron. Welcome to the Body
Farm.

They turn and quietly head for the gates.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END