

THE BOSTON STRANGLERS

by

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Adapted from the book

"The Boston Stranglers:
The Public Conviction of Albert DeSalvo
and the True Story of
Eleven Shocking Murders"

by Susan Kelly

THE BOSTON STRANGLERS

OPEN ON --

The famous film-clip in FULL COLOR, of:

JOHN FITZGERALD KENNEDY --

Tall, proud, charismatic -- he stands before the CAPITOL in topcoat, no hat, on a cold, winter day -- probably the greatest day of his life. The day he was inaugurated the 35th President of the United States. January 20, 1961.

JOHN F. KENNEDY

"Let the word go forth -- from this time and place -- to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans -- born in this century -- tempered by war -- disciplined by a hard and bitter peace..."

SLOW PULL BACK TO REVEAL -- we are watching JFK on TV --

INT. MALDEN APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

JOHN F. KENNEDY

...And so my fellow Americans...ask not what your country can do for you -- ask what you can...

Way before remote controls -- A man's HAND enters frame and changes the channel. Obviously someone doesn't give a shit to hear this historic speech. Now on TV:

We see the black and white image of actor BOB CUMMINGS -- he stands behind his professional photographer's camera -- holds up the flash -- and speaks the opening catch-phrase to his weekly TV series:

BOB CUMMINGS

"Hold it! I think you're gonna like this picture."

Bob Cummings snaps his camera and the flash FLASHES brightly -

And ACROSS THE TV SCREEN comes the show's title:

LOVE THAT BOB

Across the room -- as he settles onto the sofa, we meet:

ALBERT DESALVO --

Not exactly the "hero" of our story -- let's say, "the main focus". Albert was once portrayed by TONY CURTIS, and it's not a bad fit. Albert was almost as handsome as Tony -- except for his nose. Straight-on you couldn't tell -- but in profile, Albert had a schnozz on him often described as "beak-like" or "beaky".

Otherwise, Albert is 29, 5'9", big, broad-shouldered; thick, wavy, dark hair. And when Albert smiles, he can be adorable. A real charmer.

The problem is -- for a guy who later confessed to killing thirteen women -- Albert is so damn likeable. He loves his kids, he loves his wife, and -- he's got a sense of humor.

Albert sings with Love That Bob's lush orchestrated theme song:

ALBERT
"A romantic guy, I...
Da, da-da-da-da, Da-da..."

Albert looks back, over his shoulder, across the APARTMENT (this is not a rich apartment):

INTO THE KITCHEN -- where Albert's German wife, IRMGARD, prepares dinner. Irmgard is young, attractive, nicely built, over-tired. She bends over to retrieve a pot from a cabinet -

ALBERT admires her ass. He's getting hot. This is Albert's problem. His wife would later describe him as "insatiable".

Albert's kids -- JUDY, 4, and MICHAEL, 2, come racing into the small living room. Albert is very gentle with his kids.

Albert has that Boston longshoreman-sound. ("Pahk the cah in Hahvahd Yahd".)

ALBERT (cont'd)
Okay, Judy, Mikie, play nice...okay?
Judy, watch your leg, honey.

IN THE KITCHEN -- Albert enters -- Irmgard has her back to him, cooks at the stove. The radio plays, Connie Francis sings *Where the Boys Are*. Albert loves his wife -- but he's nervous here.

ALBERT (cont'd)
Judy's leg is looking normal, you know, I think that pelvic thing is finally over.

IRMGARD
 (GERMAN accent)
 Yes, thanks God.

ALBERT
 You need some help here?, lemme do that.

IRMGARD
 No, that is alright, I am fine.

Albert -- nervously (afraid of rejection?) -- wraps his arms around her from behind, presses up against her bottom.

IRMGARD (cont'd)
 Sex, that is all you have on your mind all the time. Sex, sex, sex.
 Al. I am cooking dinner.

He looks at her, can't think of a reply, walks out.

IN THE LIVING ROOM

The kids play. Albert enters defeated, plops onto the couch. And is about to experience a seminal moment in his life!

ON TV -- BOB CUMMINGS, in his role as a fashion photographer -- is sizing up TWO BUXOM BABES in tight fifties' dresses with pointed, conical, fifties' TV breasts. (NOTE: We'll use the actual episode.)

BOB CUMMINGS ON TV
 Excuse me, girls, I'm a fashion photographer -- have you girls ever considered being models?

GIRLS ON TV
 Models?...Us?...Really? You think we could be?

ALBERT perks up, watches with new interest.

ALBERT
 Kids, kids, sh-sh-sh-sh...this is *Love That Bob*...

BOB CUMMINGS ON TV
 Oh, yeah, if you have the right measurements. If you'd like, I could check your measurements right now...

ON THE TV -- BOB CUMMINGS takes out a TAPE MEASUREMENT --

-- and begins measuring the girls around the hips, around the waists -- the girls are giggling, laughing...

ALBERT -- is mesmerized. He nods...he smiles...he's in.

MUSIC: Bob Cummings' Theme Song, "*A Romantic Guy, I*" continues to play OVER:

CLOSE ON APARTMENT DOOR -- ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #1 stands in the doorway -- listens to Albert. SHOT OVER ALBERT'S SHOULDER, ON ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #1 --

ALBERT
(hesitant -- hasn't got it
down yet)
I'm Mr. Johnson from da...uh, I'm with
da Black and White Modeling Agency,
and your name was given to me as
someone who might make a good model...

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #1
(dubious)
How did you hear about me?

ALBERT
Uh, your neighbor, Mrs. uh...

Attractive Woman #1 nods and slams the door.

CLOSE ON 2ND APARTMENT DOOR -- and ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2: SHOT OVER ALBERT'S SHOULDER, ON ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2
No, thanks, I'm not interested.

ALBERT
You could make up to forty dollars a
week...no posing nudity, just dresses,
maybe swimsuits...

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #2
(wields a BROOM)
I'm not interested.

ALBERT
(backs off -- not a tough-guy
response)
Okay, not interested, gotcha.

CLOSE ON 3RD APARTMENT DOOR -- the door OPENS -- and an ELDERLY LADY stands there. Albert reacts -- not exactly his kind of chick. SHOT OVER ALBERT'S SHOULDER, ON ELDERLY WOMAN.

ELDERLY LADY

Yes?

ALBERT

(beat --)

Uh -- my apologies. Wrong apartment.

CLOSE ON 4TH APARTMENT DOOR -- and ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3. And she is hot, although dressed in a sweater and a long skirt.

Albert, now in a sport coat, he's got his act down now...

ALBERT (cont'd)

(he's getting better)

...nothing nudity, only evening gowns
and swimsuits -- you really are quite
lovely and attractive...

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3

(flattered)

Well, thank you...

ALBERT

I can definitely see you have all da
qualifications to be a successful,
beautiful model...

(SHE blushes)

Your neighbor downstairs was right to
recommend you. She was a blond person...

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3

Doris?

ALBERT

Doris, right. You know, your eyes,
they're a beautiful aqua-blue, like
da ocean at eventide...

Attractive Woman #3 steps back -- and invites Albert in --

INT. ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3'S APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Albert sits at a table, pad and pencil in hand, as Attractive
Woman #3 walks up and back for him, posing.

ALBERT

You're perfect, I'm, I'm speechless.
Okay, our, uh, photographer will be
by tomorrow -- but for right now I'm
authorized to, uh, gather a little
more information, like for instance,
your exact measurements...

(ready to write)

(MORE)

ALBERT (cont'd)
Do you know your bust size? Your hips?
Your waist? Your calf?

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3
My calf? ...Gee, I'm sorry, I don't
know my exact measurements...

ALBERT
Oh. Well, we need these here, you
understand, for clothes fittings and
such...you know, wait, I just
remembered -- you're in luck...
(takes out TAPE MEASURE)
...I could take your measurements right
now, that is -- if you don't mind...

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3
Oh, no, no, of course...

ALBERT
Just, uh, you know, you'll have to put
on something a little less -- well,
less than you have on now -- 'cause we
do need them to be exact...

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3
(what will she do? --)
I'll be right back...

MUSIC UP: Bob Cummings' *A Romantic Guy*, I gives way to the
arpeggio guitar riff opening of BOBBY DARIN'S *Dream Lover*.

ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #3 -- comes back out of her bedroom --
wearing the skimpiest shorty nightgown.

ALBERT -- with eyes gleaming, a man who can't believe his
luck -- kneels before this gorgeous woman and sets to work --
measuring her -

- as BOBBY DARIN sings: "*Ev'ry night, I hope and pray, A
dream lover will come my way...*" And continues singing OVER:

IN VIDEO-QUICK CUTS:

WE SEE -- ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #4, then ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #5, then
ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #6, then ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #7, then
ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #8 --

Each one in a new apartment --

Each one gorgeous --

Each one wearing only slips or nighties or sexy, slinky
clothes --

Each one sexier than the last --

Each one getting measured by Albert -- whose hands are growing more and more bold --

Lingering too long on a bare inner thigh --

Holding the tape measure a little too long against breasts barely contained by a brassiere --

UNTIL...Albert, kneeling before ATTRACTIVE WOMAN #8, watches as she helpfully raises her slip -- revealing her panties.

Albert measures her inner thighs -- and rests the back of his hand right between her legs. He looks up at her -- waits for her reaction -- She smiles, enjoying it. Albert -- never breaking eye contact with her -- pulls her panties down to her ankles -- then moves in, as she drops the slip back over him and clutches his hair.

AND IN MORE VIDEO-QUICK CUTS:

THREE BEAUTIFUL WOMEN -- one after another -- fall back onto their beds -- one in a bra/ one in a negligee/ one in a slip -- as Albert pleasures them orally.

Bobby Darin continues to sing Dream Lover, as we are:

ANOTHER HOUSE -- TWO SISTERS -- both attractive, both in their negligees -- Albert is at the door, on his way out.

ALBERT

You know da two of youse -- sisters,
both nurses -- I think I could do
somethin' special witchoo at da agency
-- how 'bout I come back, say, Friday
afternoon, and we explore this further?
(smiles --)
I'll bring Danish.

The sisters share a suspicious look.

SISTER #1

Sure, Friday's good.

Albert grins and goes.

SISTER #1 (cont'd)

(closes the door)
He's coming back? This guy's full
of shit. Call the cops.

MUSIC is out!

EXT. THE NURSES' SMALL HOUSE - DAY

The end of winter, still cold. The houses are gray and brown, brick and wood. Built in the early twenties.

SUPER: FRIDAY, MARCH 17, 1961

PAN: Around the corner -- sits a black-and-white BOSTON P.D. car. TWO UNIFORMED COPS sit and wait. Short-cropped hair.

OFFICER JAMES MCCAULEY is behind the wheel, chews gum.

McCauley is tough, young, about 30. He's got an edge, a touch of the street. Different from the other cops we'll meet -- his presence. Not arrogance -- it's confidence. And determination. He's going somewhere.

His partner, OFFICER DAVENPORT, 50's, smokes. If he was going somewhere, that was long ago, and he forgot about it.

OFFICER DAVENPORT

Sittin' here waitin' on a pervert. He ain't so fuckin' dumb to come back.

MCCAULEY

(looks thru binoculars)
Wrong again, your instincts are still 100%. Congratulations.

THRU THE BINOCULARS -- Albert walks up to the nurses' small house. Carries a bag of danish. Knocks on the door. No answer. Tries the door. It's locked. Takes out a screwdriver and tries to jimmy the lock.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Oh, this guy's cuckoo --

MCCAULEY & DAVENPORT -- step out of the car and cross the street.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Hey, you hold it.

ALBERT

(turns -- sees them)
Oh, Jesus H....

Albert takes off running, drops the bag. Runs to the side of the house -- scales a five foot fence. Lands on the other side -- tosses the screwdriver -- starts running for the alley.

McCauley, in great shape, follows over the fence. He pulls his revolver.

MCCAULEY
Stop or I'll fire!

Albert keeps running -- dashes for the alley.

McCauley aims -- and FIRES! Once in the air -- then FIRES twice -- into the ground near Albert.

Albert halts -- petrified -- his hands raised high. Spins around.

ALBERT
OK, OK, don't shoot! Don't shoot me!

Davenport huffs and puffs over the fence. McCauley points out the screwdriver --

Davenport picks it up as McCauley goes to Albert -- his gun pointed at Albert's belly.

MCCAULEY
Turn around! On your knees!

ALBERT
(kneels --)
Those girls are friends of mine, I
was just gonna surprise 'em...

McCauley roughly cuffs Albert. Davenport runs up, gun drawn.

MCCAULEY
Shut-up. So you're the Measuring Man.

OFFICER DAVENPORT
You're one sick fucker.

ALBERT
(looks back over his
shoulder -- thrilled)
The Measuring Man? I got my own name?

McCauley reacts, surprised. This guy is proud of it?

INT. THE CAMBRIDGE POLICE STATION - THE LINE-UP ROOM -- DAY

Albert stands beside five other men - mostly cops with their jackets and ties off. Albert looks away.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE GLASS -- IN THE VICE ROOM --

A good number of the Measuring Man's conquests -- some of the ATTRACTIVE WOMEN, the BEAUTIFUL ROOMMATES, the NURSES/SISTERS -- all point out Albert.

The VICE COPS stand back -- in awe -- at this gorgeous gallery of women. McCauley and Davenport stand by and watch.

OFFICER DAVENPORT

I hear these dames weren't pissed
'cause he conned 'em into sex -- it's
'cause he didn't keep his "photo-
grapher" promise and come back.
I oughta try this modeling thing.

MCCAULEY

Unbelievable. This looks like the
Miss Universe pageant.

McCauley watches -- the Vice cops are overly-solicitous as they thank the gorgeous women --

INT. BOSTON POLICE STATION - VICE SQUAD - DAY

A large, open room on the second floor. Desks are arranged, one next to the other. The walls are all yellowish/tan. Dim.

Albert sits beneath the windows -- handcuffed on a long chain (one hand) to the radiator. A HALF DOZEN detectives sit or stand around him. All white males. Anglo-Irish, Italian.

McCauley stands against the wall, across the way. Watches. Uniforms don't get to interrogate, we feel his impatience.

ALBERT

OK, look, I'll be straight witchoo
here -- I got a record since I was 12
-- four arrests for B & E, plus I done
time at Lyman Reform School. If I, uh,
tell you guys everything, can I ask a
favor? Don't let my wife see me in
handcuffs?

PAN the cops. Tough guys, ex-servicemen in their 40's and 50's, all smoke. The Vice cops share looks. Nod "yes".

CUT TO:

ALBERT (cont'd)

You wouldn't think this would work,
right? But you know, you flatter 'em,
and build up their egos, you touch
their skin, next thing you know, if
you'll excuse my expression, you're
getting your knob polished.

QUICK CUT:

ALBERT (cont'd)

I can do three Measuring Mans in a morning and still masturbate in the car on the way home.

QUICK CUT:

ALBERT (cont'd)

No, thanks, I don't smoke. That's a disgusting habit, if you don't mind me saying so.

QUICK CUT:

ALBERT (cont'd)

My father taught me how to break and enter when I was five. He beat us kids every day -- he brought home prostitutes in front-a my mother! -- he once broke each finger on my mother's hand, snappin' 'em like twigs. What kinda man would do that? -- I love my mother...

QUICK CUT:

ALBERT (cont'd)

I'm an uneducated guy, but I outsmarted all these Harvard college girls, you unnerstand? So it wasn't just the sex only. Well, okay, a large portion --

QUICK CUT:

ALBERT (cont'd)

So these two buffalo were out grazing on da range, see -- and these two tourists come by and one says, "Geez, will you lookit these buffalo are da ugliest, mangiest, lice-ridden, scummiest beasts I've ever seen" and one buffalo looks at da other and says, "I think I just heard a discouraging word".

Albert laughs. The cops laugh.

QUICK CUT:

ALBERT (cont'd)

I need help, I know I'm not normal.
I need to be put with a psychiatrist.
(MORE)

ALBERT (cont'd)
 This isn't natural, all the sex I
 need. I'm like my own sperm bank.

The vice cops can't believe it. McCauley is amused. Albert smiles his charming smile.

IN THE CORNER OF THE VICE ROOM -- LATER

Albert stands in the corner, waits. No handcuffs, as promised. Irmgard is led into the room by a detective. McCauley watches. She walks over to Albert. Albert and Irmgard face each other.

How do you explain this to your wife?

ALBERT (cont'd)
 Irm...

Irmgard stares, says nothing.

ALBERT (cont'd)
 I dunno, I, I'm messed up. I...you
 say I'm an animal, I love you so
 much... more than anybody has ever
 loved anybody...

Irmgard violently slaps his face. Loudly. Ouch.

EXT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY HOUSE OF CORRECTIONS - DAY

Albert walks out of jail. His younger brother, RICHARD -- in thick glasses -- waits for him by his Chevy. They hug.

SUPER: ELEVEN MONTHS LATER/APRIL, 1962.

EXT./INT. RICHARD'S CHEVY - DAY

Richard and Albert drive along the highway.

RICHARD
 Eleven months, Al, and you didn't see
 a psychiatrist in there?

ALBERT
 What, shrinks in County? You're lucky
 to get ham with a ham sandwich. I
 learned my lesson, boy, I'll tell ya,
 never again. I'm gonna make this up
 to Irmgard, I swear to God. She's da
 whole world to me...da whole world...

INT. THE DESALVO BEDROOM - NIGHT

A hot, sticky, Spring night. Lights out, a cool breeze lifts the flimsy, lace curtains. Moonlight streaks across two bodies in bed.

Irmgard, in a nightgown, is under the sheets. Albert -- sweat-streaked -- in only his boxers, is on top of the sheets. Eleven months' worth of waiting for this night.

IRMGARD

I wasted one year of my life -- if you ever hurt me again, I will leave you and take the children far away. You understand? You will have to prove yourself and learn to control yourself, and if I wish to make love to you I will let you know.

ALBERT

I can't believe you're doin' this...
I love you so much...prison was
enough torture.

Irmgard shrugs off his touch, turns away on her side. Albert's in shock -- and in heat.

DISSOLVE TO:

Irmgard is asleep. Albert looks at her, restlessly tosses and turns -- rubs his aching cock thru his shorts.

He can't stand it. He slowly pulls the bedsheet down and then lifts up her nightgown. He spreads her legs and lies on top of her and starts to enter her. Albert begins to move up and back on top of her. Irmgard opens her eyes.

IRMGARD

My God, what are you doing? You are sick, you know that? You are dirty and disgusting doing this to me...
(ALBERT rolls off her)
You are no better than an animal.

ALBERT

You make me feel low and unlike a man, you know that?...I could jerk off and get a better thrill.

IRMGARD

Then by all means...

Irmgard rolls over, her back to Albert.

ALBERT

This ain't fair, I been locked away...
 I'm in love witchoo...you wouldn't
 gimme love, that's how I got in
 trouble in da first place...
 (beat, whispers to himself)
 I swear to God, I'm burning up...

CUT TO:

HAND-HELD, POV SHOT --

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

ANNA SLESSERS, 56, in a blue housecoat, stands at her open apartment door, #3F and talks to the POV camera.

ANNA

Why don't you just cool off? All right,
 come in.

The hand-held POV camera follows Anna into her nicely kept one-bedroom apartment. She walks toward her hallway that leads to her bathroom and her kitchen. POV camera follows.

ANNA (cont'd)

You think all I have is time to sit
 around and wait for you? I have a
 thousand things to do this evening, I
 have to take a bath...you were supposed
 to be here an hour ago...when someone
 says they'll be here at six, I expect
 them to be here at...

A HAND comes shooting into frame and grabs Anna around the face and the neck and pulls her toward the POV camera.

CUT TO:

A BLACK & WHITE "NEWS DOCUMENTARY" on the Boston Strangler begins -- Narrated by DAVID BRINKLEY. This short documentary will use as much actual black & white news footage from 1962 as possible, matched with our own characters in black and white.

DAVID BRINKLEY (V.O.)

(in his halting style)

A mad Strangler -- is loose -- in Boston.

ACTUAL FOOTAGE -- VARIOUS SHOTS of Boston Police outside APARTMENTS -- as bodies on stretchers (covered by blankets) are carried out of buildings and placed into MEDICAL EXAMINER AMBULANCES.

Over David Brinkley's introductory speech -- black & white head shots of the first five victims -- ANNA SLESSERS, NINA NICHOLS, HELEN BLAKE, IDA IRGA & JANE SULLIVAN flash across the screen -- with their names superimposed over the photos.

DAVID BRINKLEY (V.O.) (cont'd)

Over the past ten weeks -- five elderly women -- between the ages of 55 and 75 -- have been found sexually assaulted and strangled -- in their apartments -- in the cities of Boston and neighboring Lynn, Massachusetts.

Our black & white footage -- LT. JOHN DONOVAN, 40's, gruff, talks to television reporters in his office, sits at his desk. SUPER: "LT. JOHN DONOVAN, HEAD OF BOSTON HOMICIDE."

DONOVAN

Each killing has grown in its sexual, uh, depravity -- um, the victims were each found strangled, with their own apparel, tied in a grotesque bow around their necks...

QUICK SHOTS OF CRIME SCENE PHOTOS -- showing the victims' bodies with a SILK STOCKING around their necks tied in a FLAMBOYANT BOW. Under which we HEAR:

SHERRY (V.O.)

We've interviewed over 400 suspects, we've searched the city from Beacon Hill to the Back Bay...

Our black & white footage -- LT. EDWARD "EDDY" SHERRY. Late 50's, gray hair, bachelor, number two man in the BPD Homicide Division. (Everyone said he was a good man, a good cop.)

Sherry stands outside a crime scene as a body on a stretcher is being placed into an ambulance. SUPER: LT. EDWARD SHERRY.

SHERRY (cont'd)

-- we receive a 100 tips a day, and so far, nothing.

IN COLOR -- INSIDE BOSTON HOMICIDE DEPARTMENT -- and gathered around the small b&w television are a dozen or so BPD Homicide detectives -- all white males -- including:

Sherry, LT. PHIL DINATALE, short, stocky mid-40's, good cop; and DETECTIVE RILEY, overweight, 50's, a thug -- and MCCAULEY -- in plain-clothes now, we SEE he's a detective now.

ON TV are b&w shots of women in Boston, 1962, scurrying into Locksmith stores and Pet Shops and the Pound.

DAVID BRINKLEY (V.O.)
 Meanwhile -- when the sun goes down in
 Boston -- the elderly female population
 -- lives in a state of panic.

1962 B&W TV FOOTAGE -- INSIDE THE DOG POUND --

A MAN in his 30's, black suit, bald, glasses -- points to empty dog pound cages -- talks uncomfortably into camera --

DOG POUND MAN
 ("Bahston" accent)
 "...There has been a tremendous demand
 for animals of sizes both large and
 small since the phantom strangulations
 began."

1962 B&W TV FOOTAGE -- INSIDE THE LOCKSMITH STORE --

LOCKS MAN -- 40's, stands in front of an empty locks display.

LOCKS MAN
 ("Bahston" accent)
 "...After each one of these phantom
 stranglings we get quite a spurt for
 locks -- especially these chain locks."

OUR FOOTAGE, B&W -- DONOVAN, again, at his desk.

DONOVAN
 In a case like this, everyone is a
 suspect. Your neighbor, your favorite
 uncle, even your neighborhood priest.

OUR FOOTAGE, B&W -- An EXPLOSION of noise and floodlights and popping flashbulbs. And we are at a BPD Headquarters Press Conference. Crowded room, overflowing with media --

OUR FOOTAGE, B&W -- COMMISSIONER EDWARD MCNAMARA at the podium. A little heavysset, receding hairline, 50's, tough old Irishman. Donovan and Sherry flank him.

COMM. MCNAMARA
 ("Bahston" accent)
 What we're dealing with is not so much
 sexual crimes as what we're terming
 "mother-hate." It's unspeakable, I know.

STAY on this footage, reporters shout out questions, under:

DAVID BRINKLEY (V.O.)

Police Commissioner Edward McNamara -
appointed only four months ago -- since
CBS cameras caught Boston cops taking
bribes in a bookie joint - is the man
-- on the hot seat

COMM. MCNAMARA

We are doing everything we can to find
this killer or killers. We're not
totally convinced yet this is the work
of one man...the bow around the neck
could be imitations...

The reporters shout questions -- one reporter yells loudest:

MEGAN LEARY -- Boston Irish, late-20's, fearless and
confident. She has to be -- she's one of the rare, few women
in this room packed with sweaty, cigar-chomping men.

MEGAN

Killers? What in God's name are you
talking about?!

OUR FOOTAGE, B&W -- now a CLOSE-UP interview with Megan
Leary, with the end of the press conference behind her.
SUPER: MEGAN LEARY, BEAT REPORTER, THE BOSTON POST."

MEGAN (cont'd)

(rapidly to the TV camera)

I've studied these murders -- all the
women were fifty-five or older, all
lived alone in apartment buildings, all
were strangled with their own apparel --
all were left in hideously compromised
positions...for the police to say the
city is not being terrified by the --
(she makes it up:)
-- the Boston Strangler defies all logic.

IN COLOR - THE BOSTON POST NEWSPAPER OFFICE -- Megan stands
with her colleagues -- all white males, and watches herself on
the b&w TV. She smiles, enjoying her appearance.

ON THE TV -- B&W 1962 FOOTAGE -- EXT. BRIDGEWATER STATE
MENTAL HOSPITAL

DAVID BRINKLEY (V.O.)

Meanwhile criminal psychologists, such
as Dr. Ames Robey -- when asked by
reporters -- are equally baffled for
answers.

OUR FOOTAGE - B&W AMES ROBEY, 6'4", about 30, crew-cut blond hair, already balding, in his white doctor's coat.

DR. ROBEY

We have no profile for this type of, uh, serial violence against women in America. There are no precedents for this.

OUR FOOTAGE, B&W -- BACK TO PRESS CONFERENCE WITH MCNAMARA.

COMM. MCNAMARA

(over reporters' shouts)

I have a list here...I'd like to read, of safety recommendations for our elder ladies living alone: One, lock your doors...

IN COLOR -- Albert sits in his apartment, watches this on TV.

PUSH CLOSE on Albert as we hear:

DAVID BRINKLEY (V.O.)

Call him the Mad Strangler, the Phantom Strangler, or the Boston Strangler -- until the police find him -- Boston is now -- the City of Frightened Woman.

ON THE B&W TV -- 1962 FOOTAGE OF DAVID BRINKLEY --

DAVID BRINKLEY (cont'd)

Back to you, Chet.

INT. THE BOSTON POST NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

The EDITOR, 50's, graying hair, turns off the TV.

Megan preens with pride -- amidst this all-white, all-male boys' club, not unlike the Cambridge and Boston cop shops. But these dudes are sharper, less coarse, less physical.

EDITOR

Our own, cub, huh, naming him the Boston Strangler. How'd you drunks like that -- out-scooped by a girl? Meg. I'm greedy. I want more.

Megan smiles. The boys' club members don't look too thrilled. The Editor walks away.

MALE REPORTERS

Fuckin' bullshit...you bitch.

MEGAN
 (smirks, walks away --)
 Hey, fellas, kiss my Irish ass...

INT. BPD - HOMICIDE DIVISION - DAY

One of the detectives turn off the TV. McCauley and DiNatale walk back toward their desks.

We get a better look at BOSTON HOMICIDE as they walk thru -- a bastion of testosterone. No female cops, not even as clerks. No black cops, either. In the b.g. busy activity. McCauley chews gum -- he's far & away the youngest detective.

DINATALE
 This is swell, huh -- the press now
 named him the "Boston Strangler".

MCCAULEY
 Catchy. Very helpful.

DONOVAN
 Boy Wonder! Your ass. My office.

McCauley looks over. Donovan stands in his office doorway --

INT. DONOVAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

McCauley enters. Sherry is also there.

MCCAULEY
 I know, that report was hell,
 Lieutenant, but the goddamn press has
 been rapping us for weeks, right?...

Donovan sits behind his desk, coat off, hands behind his neck
 -- listens curiously --

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 ...the department looks bad 'cause-a
 those flat-foots who took the bribes
 -- and this new Commissioner from the
 FBI...he's a hairbag, a desk jockey,
 what's he know of a down-and-dirty
 investigation on the street?

DONOVAN
 McCauley, I don't think you've
 officially met the Chief.

Now we see Commissioner McNamara standing by the far window.
 McCauley reacts, embarrassed. Sherry withholds a laugh.

MCCAULEY

(recovers, quickly --)

Oh. Uh, no, no, I haven't...

(offers hand)

How do you do, sir?

McNamara steps forward, shakes McCauley's hand.

COMM. MCNAMARA

(smirks)

McCauley. I hear you're the best
young detective I've got.

McCauley steals a quick look at Sherry, nods in appreciation.

MCCAULEY

Well, sir, that's probably 'cause I'm
the only young detective you've got.

COMM. MCNAMARA

That's why they call you "Boy Wonder"?

MCCAULEY

Uh, no, that's jealousy, sir. See,
I still have all my hair and I'm the
only bum in this building who still
gets laid. Sir.

SHERRY

(steps in)

Detective McCauley was at each crime
scene -- he knows more first-hand
about these stranglings than anyone.

COMM. MCNAMARA

Mm-hm. Well, the press is using my
ass for a *barbeque pit*. So tell me,
Boy Wonder, why the hell can't you
gold shields make a goddamn arrest?

McCauley looks to Sherry. Sherry nods, to say "Go on."

MCCAULEY

Well sir, we've never seen this kind
of thing before -- this uh, repeated,
killings of women. You have to go
back -- eighty years or so to Jack-
the-Ripper in London for a comparison.
And he was killing hookers.

COMM. MCNAMARA

Okay, fine, go back. How'd they catch
the Ripper? Somebody. Anybody.

Donovan, Sherry, share looks, they don't know.

MCCAULEY

They didn't. They never caught him.
And -- I'm starting to see why...

All eyes are on McCauley.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

There's no eyewitnesses, no evidence,
no clues, no forced entry -- no finger-
prints...this is expert B & E work. He
-- or they -- seem to come and go...
(pause)
...like magic.

EXT. ALBERT'S SISTER, IRENE'S HOUSE - DAY

A small wood and brick house. Lower-class neighborhood.
Late 50's model cars parked on the street.

INT. ALBERT SISTER'S KITCHEN - DAY

Albert enters the kitchen. His sister IRENE slices fruit. He
hands her a paper bag. Irene pulls out of the bag -- a
cuckoo clock.

IRENE

Is this hot? You still breakin'
inta houses? What'sa matter witchoo,
Al? You just got outta prison.

ALBERT

I won't get caught. Da last five
years, I been in an' outta four hundred
apartments. I own Commonwealth Avenue.
You want da clock?

Yes, she takes the clock.

EXT. IRENE'S BACKYARD - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Adults: Irmgard, Richard, his wife, ROSALIE, brother JOE,
Joe's wife, and IRENE sit, talk. Kids play in the b.g. Tiny
Boston back yards. Irmgard, not close to the DeSalvo family,
sits apart, reads the paper. Radio blares Chubby Checker:
Twist Again Like We Did Last Summer.

RICHARD

Say, Al, remember the time we couldn't
find you and Irene -- and the old man
had sold you guys to a farmer in Maine?

ALBERT

Yeah, for nine lousy bucks.

The DeSalvos all laugh. The spouses watch --

JOE

Geez, it's a wonder we're not all crazy.

More laughter. Irmgard sighs loudly, sets down the paper.

ALBERT

Honey -- you okay?

IRMGARD

This Strangler. He is frightening.

ALBERT

Oh, you got nothin' to worry about him.
He only likes old ladies who live alone
in big apartments. They all look alike,
you know, and he doesn't even have sex
with 'em...

(beat --)

That's -- what all the papers say. You
guys know my memory...

(gently pats Irmgard's arm)

You need anymore lasagna, or anything?

IRMGARD

(coldly, moves her arm away)

I am fine.

Irmgard stands, walks away. You can tell they haven't fucked
for weeks. Albert looks embarrassed.

ALBERT

Everything's great between us, she's
just not feeling herself, you know,
we're da Liz an' Dick of Malden.

IRENE

Uh-huh.

Albert grabs the newspaper, gets up from the table, walks to
the cooler for another bottle of beer. Richard follows him.

RICHARD

You okay, Al?

ALBERT

(long beat)

You know, when I was in Germany an'
I first saw Irmgard...I swear to God,

(MORE)

ALBERT (cont'd)
 love at first sight is a true thing,
 a true thing.
 (beat, mood change)
 Then Judy got born with that hip
 defect -- an' Irm says no more babies
 an' boom, da sex dried up. Maybe I'd
 get a hand-job, but what's that there?
 From a wife? So I messed up -- now
 she won't even touch me. She won't
 touch me...
 (leans in)
 Sometimes I just need a woman, you
 know what I mean? A woman.

Albert looks at the front page. The lead line: "MARILYN
 MONROE FOUND DEAD" -- with her photos.

ALBERT (cont'd)
 Lookit this, if we croaked, who cares?
 Marilyn gets da whole front page.
 Famous people, dey get everything...

Albert looks down farther on the page: CLOSE on newspaper:
 "STILL NO CLUES ON DORCHESTER STRANGLE VICTIM FOUND IN TUB."

MUSIC fades up: Andy Williams sings "*It's the most wonderful
 time of the year...*" Song continues over:

EXT. HUNTINGTON AVENUE - BACK BAY - NIGHT

WINTER. Snow. A busy BOULEVARD. Christmas decorations.

The SUBWAY LINE -- down the middle of the boulevard --
 emerges out from underground here. Tall apartment and
 business buildings on both sides of the street. Blocked off
 with police and media vehicles. Crowd of on-lookers.

SUPER: DECEMBER 5, 1962/SOPHIE CLARK - 3 MONTHS LATER

INT. SOPHIE CLARK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

McCauley shows Sherry and Donovan the crime scene. Police
 activity. In the b.g., DiNatale and Riley also work the
 room.

MUSIC: Andy Williams fades out...

MCCAULEY
 This time we found cigarettes and
 semen -- no sex, but he jerked his
 joint off on the carpet. Same ligature,
 a silk stocking in a bow...but -- look
 at the victim:

We SEE: Sophie Clark lies dead. Partially dressed in sexy undergarments: black stockings and a garter belt. Ripped open print housecoat, a menstrual harness.

Around her neck: a half-slip and a tightly tied nylon stocking. In a BOW. Near her body: a ripped bra, blood-stained pink flowered underpants, and the sanitary napkin.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Twenty years old, gorgeous -- and a Negro.

DONOVAN

Christ. Nobody's safe. The city's gonna explode.

(to the cops)

We work the building, work the block. Canvas the area, no one sleeps. Find me a witness, a footprint. Son of a bitch.

Sophie's TWO ROOMMATES, both black, on the sofas, weeping, to uniformed cops. Both are well dressed, college students.

McCauley looks at both of them -- weeping.

IN THE HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Detectives come out of the apartment, start down the stairs.

DINATALE

What I don't get -- why disappear for three months, then kill a young girl?

RILEY

Our boy bought some jig pussy and strangled it. That broad was a hooker.

MCCAULEY

A hooker? 'Cause she's colored, you bigoted ape?

Donovan & Sherry react -- a rookie taking on a veteran?

RILEY

She and her two roommates had locks on their bedroom doors, okay, asshole!

MCCAULEY

They're all college students, asshole!

RILEY

You arrogant punk -- how'd you get promoted anyway, you pay somebody off or you suck somebody off?

McCauley waits a beat -- then leaps forward and grabs Riley and slams him against the wall. The others quickly pull them apart.

DONOVAN/SHERRY

McCauley! Goddamnit!...Jimmy, for chrissakes...

DONOVAN

(to McCauley)

You want back in uniform?!

(to Riley)

I've no time for this shit, Riley, I got a madman killing everybody now goddamnit!

MCCAULEY

(straightens out his coat)

It's not the same guy.

RILEY

Yeah, bullshit.

MCCAULEY

(heated -- to Donovan)

The guy who killed the old ladies, if it is one guy, hates his mother and can't get a hard-on -- this guy leaves his jism as a calling card. If we weren't sure before, we are now -- at least two killers out there.

(beat)

There's no "Boston Strangler".

SHERRY

Kid's right. At least two.

The detectives nod, continue down the stairs. McCauley starts down -- Sherry angrily grabs him by his coat -- pulls him back.

MCCAULEY

Riley's bigoted scum.

SHERRY

So's half the department, Boston's finest. You gonna punch em all out? Focus. We gotta catch these pervs.

MCCAULEY

I'll catch 'em, Eddy. I don't lose.

EXT. SOPHIE CLARK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The Detectives and Uniforms emerge from the building -- the print reporters rush them. A wild herd. Megan among them.

MEGAN/REPORTERS

Lieutenant...is it another strangling?

DONOVAN

We've nothing conclusive at this time...

MEGAN

Six stranglings in six months,
Lieutenant, and you have nothing?!

Megan and the male reporters converge around the cops, all shouting questions. Donovan and group push through.

Megan ends up pushed up against McCauley. They lock eyes. For just a beat -- there's a spark of sexual heat there. Then McCauley and the cops move on...

INT. PATRICIA BISSETTE'S APARTMENT - DAY

SUPER: DECEMBER 31, 1962 -- PATRICIA BISSETTE -- **BOSTON**.

CLOSE ON: Patricia Bissette, white, 23, lies in bed under the covers -- looks calm, almost asleep -- the sheet pulled up all the way to her chin, completely covers her neck.

McCauley watches as Sherry stands with MR. BERKSON, 53, business suit, beside the body. Police activity in b.g.

With a gloved hand, Sherry gently lowers the sheet -- now revealing the stocking in a bow around Patricia's neck. McCauley takes strong note of this.

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - NIGHT

LARGE CHART on the wall. Photos of the slain women -- in order: FANNY/NINA/HELEN/IDA/JANE/SOPHIE --

-- with pertinent info listed by category below: dates, ages, time of death; ligature used...etc.

McCauley watches Sherry add PATRICIA'S photo to the board. McCauley sighs a deep sigh from deep in his soul.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOMICIDE - CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT -LATER

The detectives around the conference table -- McCauley, Sherry, DiNatale, Riley etc. -- all look exhausted. They eat Chinese out of cartons.

Donovan enters the room, hangs up his overcoat and hat. He's dressed in a nice suit for a New Years party.

DONOVAN

Spending New Years's Eve with you
bums isn't what I had in mind.

(sits)

All right, where are we?

Sherry holds up b&w photos of three suspects.

SHERRY

The son is still our best bet for crime
number one -- he finds his mother
exposed on the floor, stocking around
her neck, he tells the uniforms he
thinks it was a suicide --

DONOVAN

-- but we can't prove shit --

SHERRY

(tosses that photo down)

-- our best guesses for the other old
ladies -- Harris, killed his mother in
the hospital with a pillow...

(tosses that photo down)

And Chimerinsky -- tried to rape his
mother and he beat the crap out of his
father. He takes this Oedipus thing
seriously.

DINATALE

(eats with chopstix)

I like Harris. How do you eat with
these damn things?

SHERRY

It's an intelligence test, Phil.

DONOVAN

(OFF the photos)

OK, pick these two up.

SHERRY

They're both in Danvers right now. The
"Hoo-Hoo" Hotel.

(MORE)

SHERRY (cont'd)

Which means -- these pervs weren't out strangling anybody for the holidays.

DONOVAN

Goddamnit. The white girl. Anything like the colored girl?

MCCAULEY

Just the bow. Sophie Clark was a rape gone wrong. This girl, Patricia, was tucked neatly into her bed. She knew her killer. But look at this...

McCauley shoves the newspapers to the center of the table -- *The Globe, The Post, The Herald*, all with headlines about: "BOSTON STRANGLER CLAIMS 7TH VICTIM".

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

We say it's not one guy, they say it's the Boston Strangler. It's insane.

SHERRY

They're outta control, Jack. Twenty-eight years, I've never seen it like this, never.

DONOVAN

So whatta we got? Four killers?

(OFF McCauley's nod)

Can we arrest -- anybody?

EXT. THE BACK BAY BAR - NIGHT

Neon flashes its name. The watering hole across from the BPD.

INT. BACK BAY BAR - NIGHT

Loud, noisy, police hang-out. Megan sits at the bar with DR. HAWKS, 50's bearded. He tosses back a shot. She pretends to sip hers. MUSIC on the jukebox: *Hey Paula* by Paul & Paula.

MEGAN

The police have their head so far up their ass, excuse my language, they couldn't find a Chinaman in Hong Kong.

DR. HAWKS

I still can't help you.

MEGAN

Your autopsy reports prove a pattern of one killer, right? -- but the cops won't listen to you. They don't

(MORE)

MEGAN (cont'd)
 respect you. They call you a lush,
 you do know that?

DR. HAWKS
 A guy wants a little taste after work,
 what's the harm in that? Those shanty
 bastards, where'd you hear this?

MEGAN
 I hear things. I respect you -- I know
 everything points to one killer. Those
 dumb mick cops won't listen to you. I
 understand, my father was a dumb mick
 cop.
 (she works him --)
 Help me. I'll make you famous, Dr. Hawks.

Two more shots are set down before Dr. Hawks. He downs
 one. Megan slides the other shot from her over to him.

MEGAN (cont'd)
 Show me the autopsy reports...?

EXT. THE BOSTON POST BUILDING - DAY

A great, old, looming ten story gray-stone edifice.

Still snowy. Megan, dressed for the January weather, walks
 up out of the nearby SUBWAY STATION, and enters the building.

INT. BOSTON POST EDITOR'S OFFICE - DAY

CLOSE ON -- Megan drops copy and photos onto her EDITOR'S
 desk. Then sits across from him, crosses her legs.

MEGAN
 I've done what the cops haven't done:
 a comprehensive comparison of the
 victims, where they worked, time of
 death, type of ligature -- and I've
 developed a psychological profile of
 the killer, working with two
 psychiatrists...

EDITOR
 Meg -- this is unbelievable!

MEGAN
 Thank you. I want my own series on
 the Strangler -- with my own by-line.

EDITOR

(laughs)
What? Honey, I got veterans here who
don't get...

MEGAN

You mean those sots around here who
can't write even when they're sober?
Fine, I quit.

(stands -- grabs the copy)
I'll take this to the *Globe*. I'm not
languishing in a cubbyhole 'cause I
don't use a urinal. The Strangler's my
ticket to a Pulitzer. Fuck off, Ben.

EDITOR

You're vicious, aren't you? OK. Sit
down. Your own by-line.

Meg sits back down. She triumphantly hands Editor the copy,
crosses her legs.

EDITOR (cont'd)

Tell me, Megan, when you cross your
legs, does it hurt your balls?

MEGAN

Wouldn't you like to know?

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MORNING

Albert -- on the job -- hard-hat on and holds a clipboard.

The back of his jacket advertises: "Highland Construction".
He checks over a phase of construction -- the construction
CREW GUYS nearby -- all smoke, all in hard hats.

ALBERT

Hey, come on, you guys, this is a
sloppy job, Jesus Christ, you know
I can't okay this...show some pride
in your work...

Crew Guys mumble -- then go back to work. Albert watches
them -- waits -- then sits and picks up his folded newspaper.

The lead line is: THE STRANGLER CHECKLIST -- BY MEGAN LEARY --
With a second line: "A Girl Reporter Analyzes the Strangler".

It features a photo of all Seven Victims across the top --
and facts and comparisons of each murder.

Albert is enthralled. Reads every word --

INT. BPD HOMICIDE DIVISION - DAY

Frantic activity. Cops on phones, checking files, photos...

McCauley stands at his desk, reads the same CHECKLIST.
Furious, he crumples the paper closed -- charges over to
Sherry, at his desk.

McCauley throws the *Post* down onto Sherry's desk.

INT. BPD - MEDICAL-EXAMINER'S LAB - BASEMENT - DAY

Medical-Examiner, DR. HAWKS, at work on an unrelated homicide
victim. McCauley enters, BOOM. Looks around.

MCCAULEY

Where's Hawks?

(spots him, hurries over)

The Strangler Checklist? The details
of every crime scene's in here! You
gave her the autopsy reports, you
goddamn drunk?

DR. HAWKS

(backs off, frightened)

Who are you calling a drunk, you rookie
prick?

Donovan & Sherry charge in to see McCauley go to Hawks' desk -
- open a bottom drawer, take out a bottle of bourbon -- then
smash it on the floor. Hawks is cowed.

DONOVAN

Hawks, one more leak, I'm gonna take
that scalpel and cut your nuts off.
You got that? McCauley...!

(McCauley follows Donovan &
Sherry aside --)

You're a good cop. But you're a wild
card. I don't like wild cards.

Donovan walks away. Hawks, embarrassed, adjusts his lab-coat.

DR. HAWKS

Drop dead, McCauley.

McCauley makes a sudden move for Hawks, Sherry holds him
back.

MCCAULEY

I'm fine, I'm fine, I know, I know, it's
just another case. I'm not emotionally
involved....

(MORE)

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 (yells back to Hawks)
 Great way to run an investigation!
 (back to Sherry)
 I'm fine.

INT. BOSTON POLICE HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Lobby. Oak wood, marble floors. Elevators and stairs.
 Megan chats with other reporters -- she turns and sees
 McCauley come down the stairs and walk to the door and exit.

EXT. THE BPD HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

McCauley goes down the cement steps -- about to cross
 Berkeley Avenue toward the BACK BAY BAR. Megan steps out on
 the landing behind him. Winter, cold.

Above her, chiseled in stone, reads: CITY OF BOSTON POLICE
 DEPARTMENT HEADQUARTERS.

MEGAN
 Detective McCauley...
 (he stops, looks back)
 ...Megan Leary of the...

MCCAULEY
Boston Post.

MEGAN
 Well -- a homicide cop who can read.

She stays above him. In the power position. There's an
 attraction here, in spite of themselves.

MCCAULEY
 (walks back up, a step or two)
 Oh, hey, I'm a big fan. I love to
 start my day off with a cup of coffee
 and read how stupid and incompetent I
 am. It gives me that extra motivation,
 you know, to go to work.

MEGAN
 If the shoe fits. I wanted to ask you,
 Detective...

MCCAULEY
 No comment, but let me ask you
 something...
 (walks to her, eye to eye)
 Your masterwork, the *Strangler Checklist*
 -- you know it's a primer for any lunatic
 who wants to imitate or confess?

MEGAN

I'm laying a case out which is more than you cops have done -- and I didn't print half the rumors raging through the streets.

MCCAULEY

Name one.

MEGAN

How's two? The wine bottle used on Nina Nichols, Sophie Clark's blood-stained kotex...

(beat -- McCauley reacts, surprised)

Half the women were nurses, the others were out-patients, have the police followed that up?

MCCAULEY

No. We're idiots. Don't you read the *Post*?

MEGAN

(smirks)

This guy's outsmarted your whole corrupt department. It's not my fault none of you knows your ass from your elbow.

MCCAULEY

Oh, really? Well, for your information...

(points)

This is my ass -- and this is my elbow.

Megan, surprised, smiles and almost laughs.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

(softer tone now)

We're killing ourselves to solve this, you're not helping. We keep telling you -- this isn't one guy. Print the truth, help us out. You've a tear in your stocking. Right knee.

McCauley turns and crosses Berkeley Avenue to the Back Bay Bar. Megan looks down -- sees the hole -- is she pissed -- or amused?

INT. BPD HOMICIDE DIVISION - NIGHT

McCauley, alone -- the room is nearly deserted, dark -- stands before the STRANGLER CHART -- and studies it --

-- a man obsessed. Camera PANS and reveals -- THREE MORE PHOTOS have been added -- making a total of ten.

SUPER: 1963

BEVERLY SAMANS, 26 -- under her name we read "Cambridge";
EVELYN CORBIN, 58 (but looked 37) -- under her name is
"Salem" -- and JOANN GRAF, 23 -- under her name reads
"Lawrence".

CUT TO: In b&w: JOHN KENNEDY'S FUNERAL ON TV --

The riderless horse is led thru the streets of Washington.
The wagon with the Presidential casket wrapped in the
American flag follows. The streets are JAMMED with mourning,
stunned, crying Americans.

INT. BACK BAY BAR - DAY

ON THE B&W TV -- JOHN KENNEDY'S FUNERAL. Little John-John's
famous salute to his father.

McCauley sits at the bar. Sherry sits beside McCauley,
smokes, drinks. A COCKTAIL WAITRESS, dyed-blond, stands
nearby, weeping. McCauley wipes away a tear of his own.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

What's happened to the world, Jimmy Mack?

MCCAULEY

(wipes away his tears)

God's put a curse on Boston...

EXT. MARY SULLIVAN'S APARTMENT - BEACON HILL - NIGHT

Beacon Hill -- the oldest section in Boston. It has an
"other-worldly" look about it.

Quaint, charming, no high-rises -- it's old-fashioned lantern
lights, cobbled, bricked sidewalks. You expect Holmes and
Watson to ride up in a horse-driven cab.

Unmarked car pulls up -- McCauley, Donovan and Sherry step
out. The mob scene outside this murder has already started.

SUPER: JANUARY 4, 1964/MARY SULLIVAN

44A Charles Street -- a tall, narrow, four-story, white brick
building. PAN UP to the fourth story...

INT. MARY SULLIVAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

However the previous murder scenes will be filmed -- this one can only be seen from the back. A young woman, 19, is propped up, in a sitting position on her bed -- her back against the headboard. Around her neck are: a charcoal nylon stocking, a pink silk scarf, and a pink-and-white scarf with a floral design.

The detectives -- McCauley, Sherry, Donovan, DiNatale and Riley -- stand at the victim's bed -- stare in horror.

DINATALE

She's 19...those are bite marks...And,
he left a personal note.

CLOSE ON MARY'S LEGS -- outstretched before her on the bed -- the BROOM END of the broomstick is visible between her legs -- the handle is obviously shoved up inside of her.

McCauley, with a handkerchief -- turns over a greeting card propped up against her left foot. The greeting card says, simply: "HAPPY NEW YEAR!" The detectives look horrified.

MCCAULEY

I hope to God she was already dead.

SHERRY

Jesus.

DONOVAN

Not a word of this to the press.
Clear? Send in the M.E.

As they move to leave --

MCCAULEY

How do you get an image like this out
of your head?

SHERRY

You find out, you let me know.

EXT. MARY SULLIVAN'S APT. BUILDING - BEACON HILL - NIGHT

Charles Street is filled with police cars and wagons. Onlookers. Neighbors, reporters, photographers, camera crews -- it's a carnival.

McCauley, Sherry and Donovan step outside -- as Mary's body, covered, is brought out on a stretcher and placed into a wagon.

REPORTERS/MEGAN

Can't ya find one maniac?...How many more have to die, Lieutenant...?

DONOVAN

Go ahead, whip up more hysteria!

(to McCauley & Sherry)

That's it -- it's balls to the wall.

Haul in every suspect.

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - DAY

QUICK SERIES OF CUTS -- INTERROGATION ROOMS --

1) Sherry & Donovan with a black man, GIL WILSON, 30's -- McCauley stands, watches.

DONOVAN

Gil, you're a bisexual sadist, you dated Sophie Clark, you pimp...

2) ...with MR. BERKSON, 50's. (From Patricia Bisette's) --

SHERRY

You were screwing Patricia, she was your secretary...

3) ...with GIL WILSON --

DONOVAN

Neighbors saw you leaving Sophie's apartment that night, Gil...

4) ...with CHRISTIAN COLES, college kid, 22. McCauley takes over now.

MCCAULEY

Your girlfriend was Mary Sullivan's roommate, isn't that right...?

5) ...with MR. BERKSON --

SHERRY

You knocked Patricia up, she knew all your business secrets, you're a happily married man...

6) ...with CHRISTIAN COLES --

MCCAULEY

...your girlfriend's apartment key disappeared the day before Mary's

(MORE)

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
murder, that's some coincidence,
Christian...

7) ...with GIL WILSON --

DONOVAN
Sophie wouldn't give you any, huh, Gil,
'cause you're a part-time faggot,
maybe?...that why you killed her?

8) ...with MR. BERKSON --

SHERRY
You climbed in the window, you found
Patricia, the bedsheet was pulled up
to her chin but somehow, magically, you
told the handyman she'd been strangled.

9) ...with CHRISTIAN COLES --

MCCAULEY
You failed two lie detector tests,
Chris...

DONOVAN
We know what happened. Mary had a loose
reputation, you knew that, right?

CHRISTIAN COLES
No, I-I-I, no...

MCCAULEY
You knew -- and you expected her to put
out for you, but she made fun of you
'cause you stuttered, right, Christian?
-- so you were gonna teach the little
bitch a lesson, but when the moment
came you couldn't get it up, right...?
(Christian Coles starts to
look uncomfortable)
...so you showed her good with a
broomstick, isn't that it, Christian,
you limp dick, rich kid asshole, isn't
that why you killed her?!

10) ...with MR. BERKSON --

BERKSON
I'm married! Pat was my secretary...
why do this to me? Everybody knows
the Boston Strangler killed her!

McCauley, Sherry and Donovan share looks --

11) ...with GIL WILSON --

GIL WILSON
Yeah, go lynch the Negro. The Boston
Strangler killed Sophie Clark.

McCauley, Sherry and Donovan share looks again, building --

12) ...with CHRISTIAN COLES --

CHRISTIAN COLES
Give me a break.
(calmly, and smugly)
The Boston Strangler ki-killed Mary.

McCauley's face says: that's it. Then BOOM! McCauley grabs
Christian and slams him into the wall.

MCCAULEY
Wipe that smirk off your face, you
rat faced scum! There is no Boston
Strangler! You wanna feel what's it
like to be strangled, you fucking
worm...?!

McCauley presses his forearm against Christian Coles' neck --
he's strangling him. Donovan and Sherry pull McCauley off.

DONOVAN/SHERRY
All right...enough...all right!

THE CORRIDOR - MOMENTS LATER

McCauley with Donovan and Sherry. All are pissed off.

MCCAULEY
I can't stand it, Jack, I can't
fucking stand it! We gonna arrest any
of these scumbags, huh!?

DONOVAN
No proof, no confessions! You the
only onr who cares, McCauley? I got
five daughters! And I don't run
Homicide like those animals in Vice!
(pauses)
You got something to prove? Don't
prove it on my watch.

Donovan storms off. McCauley looks at Sherry, says nothing.

INT. BACK BAY BAR - NIGHT

Almost empty. Deserted. McCauley and Sherry sit in a booth. Drink. Sherry smokes. Both looked wiped.

MUSIC: *There I've Said It Again* by Bobby Vinton on the juke box. COCKTAIL WAITRESS, Cassie, brings another round of drinks.

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

You forget my phone number, Jimmy?

MCCAULEY

Pennsylvania 6, 5000? Cassie, I been, you know...

COCKTAIL WAITRESS

Uh-huh, spending all your time with dead women. Once in a while remember one of us is alive.

(to Sherry)

You look like shit, Lieutenant.

SHERRY

I feel good, too.

She goes.

MCCAULEY

You think I got somethin' to prove?

SHERRY

Promoted over a lotta cops. Corrupt department, Boy Wonder, high hopes ...inflated ego. You tell me.

MCCAULEY

I don't lose, Eddy. Cards, sandlot games, pool, I don't ever lose.

SHERRY

Then you're in the wrong business -- people get away with murder every day.

(drinks)

These killings -- JFK -- I don't even recognize the goddamn world anymore -- but trust me on this: no one will ever go down for these.

MCCAULEY

...I don't accept that.

SHERRY

Eleven strangled women, our only suspects walk, the press makes us look incompetent -- whatta we got? You gonna suddenly solve this?

Sherry drinks. McCauley says nothing else. Stares off.

MEGAN (V.O.)

There's no cooperation between the cops in Boston, Salem, Cambridge...

INT. BOSTON POST NEWSPAPER OFFICE - EDITOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Megan stands at the window, smokes -- we see the lights of the city, the Charles River. Editor, behind his desk, pours drinks.

MEGAN

...the only psychiatric profile of the Strangler was ordered by me --
 (turns -- he hands her a drink)
 If Mary Sullivan, the Irish girl who could have been anyone's daughter doesn't wake up all of Massachusetts ...what's it going to take?

EDITOR

They woke up. The Attorney General's office wants to speak to you.

She smiles. She knew it all along.

INT. MASSACHUSETTS ATTORNEY GENERAL OFFICE - DAY

A desk with the SEAL of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts -- an Indian clutching a quiver of arrows -- emblazoned upon its front, readied with a number of microphones. The name-plaque on the desk: ATTORNEY GENERAL EDWARD M. BROOKE.

EDWARD BROOKE, 40s, distinguished, light-skinned African-American, sits behind his desk -- he speaks to reporters and News Cameras.

Megan -- of course -- sits right up front among the reporters. Brooke speaks eloquently.

BROOKE

It is because of my great concern over the fact that these crimes have been committed over a period of eighteen months...across five cities in three separate counties in the Commonwealth...

INT. BPD HOMICIDE DIVISION - DAY

The Detectives, include McCauley, Sherry, DiNatale and Riley stand around the small b&w television --

BROOKE (ON TV)
...that I am announcing the formation
of a special "Strangler Task Force."

DETECTIVES
Oh, Christ...oh, come on...

BACK TO: THE PRESS CONFERENCE - LIVE (COLOR)

BROOKE
This effort will be under the supervision of one of our ablest attorneys, Mister John Bottomly, of Eminent Domain.

Brooke gestures to JOHN BOTTOMLY to join him. Bottomly is 40's, Clark Kent dark-framed glasses, and tall -- really tall, six-foot-four tall. Physically kind of awkward.

BOTTOMLY
Thank you, Attorney General Brooke.
Uh, I, John Bottomly, just want to stress -- this is not a take-over of the separate police investigations...

BACK TO: THE HOMICIDE SQUAD ROOM -- Bottomly in b&w on TV.

BOTTOMLY (ON TV) (cont'd)
...this is a coordination. Our first order of business will be to make copies of each and every file from...

RILEY
What the hell's "Eminent Domain"?

SHERRY
That's where the state takes property, you know, for highways, boulevards...

DINATALE
What's this guy gonna know about a criminal investigation?

MCCAULEY
Street lights. He'll know street lights.

BROOKE (ON TV)

I would also like to announce the unprecedented formation of a Medical-Psychiatric Committee, to form a psychological profile of the killer or killers.

Brooke nods his thanks to Megan. Megan smiles, vindicated.

INT. DONOVAN'S OFFICE - DAY

McCauley stands and faces Donovan. Sherry is also there.

DONOVAN

The Task Force wants two of my men. I'm sending DiNatale and you.

MCCAULEY

Under that hairbag, Bottomly? Lieutenant, please, Jack -- I'll be buried over there -- this isn't police work now, it's politics...

DONOVAN

Which is why I'm not wasting Lieutenant Sherry on this.

McCauley stands there, frustrated beyond belief.

MCCAULEY

(pauses)

You guys smell that? Elephant dung. The circus has come to town.

INT. HOMICIDE ROOM - OUTSIDE DONOVAN'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

McCauley steps out -- and disgustedly kicks over a waste basket. Riley sees it and chuckles.

EXT. CAMBRIDGE STREET - DAY

Albert's '62 Chevrolet, four-door Sedan (a new car for him) pulls up in front of an apartment building - a GREEN car.

Albert steps out of the green car -- dressed head to toe -- in GREEN -- green trousers, green work shirt, green jacket -- even oversized green sunglasses cover a good part of his face. A loaded tool belt around his waist. Albert is now THE GREEN MAN. He enters an apartment building.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DAY

Albert stands outside an apartment door.

ALBERT

Uh, sorry to bother you, I'm da plumber,
da super called me about da leak.

MRS. CARSON (O.S.)

(thru the door)

I don't know of any leak.

ALBERT

Well, the basement is half-fulla water
and I have to get in and shut off all
da pipes, da water pipes.

MRS. CARSON (O.S.)

My apartment has no leaks.

ALBERT

Well, okay, but will you do me a favor
so's I don't get fired? Would you call da
super and tell him I was here and you
didn't let me in, okay?

MRS. CARSON (O.S.)

All right. Wait a minute.

INT. MRS. CARSON'S APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

The door opens. It's early in the A.M., MRS. CARSON, in her
30's, in her bathrobe, holds a coffee cup. Albert enters.

MRS. CARSON

I'm sorry, you know, you just can't
be too careful these days, you know?
You could've been the Boston Strangler.

ALBERT

Sure, I understand, I get this all da
time. Da Strangler's got everybody
nervous. Hey, this is a nice place
you got here. You have excellent
taste in design. Lovely curtains.

MRS. CARSON

Thank you. Uh, the bathroom's this way.

She walks ahead of Albert. He follows, he stares at her ass -
PAN UP to her hair pulled up atop her head -- reveals a patch
of skin of her neck, her shoulder...Albert is getting hot.

ALBERT

You know, I hope you don't mind me
saying, but you ever thought of being
a model?

MRS. CARSON
A model? Are you crazy?

ALBERT
Well, it's just that, when I'm not
doin' pipes, I also scout part-time
for da Black and White Modeling Agency.
They're always looking for all ages,
you know, Christmas catalogues...

MRS. CARSON
Look, are you a plumber or not?

ALBERT
Sure, I am. I'm just saying...even
through da terry cloth I can see you
got a curvy figure, and I, uh...I
appreciate beauty, so, you know...

MRS. CARSON
You'd better leave. In fact, I
think I'll phone the super and have
him escort you out.

Mrs. Carson grabs the phone -- starts to dial. Albert grabs
her from behind -- wraps his left hand over her mouth -- and
wields a butcher knife in his right hand.

ALBERT
Don't scream, I don't wanna hurt you,
you unnerstand me? Don't scream.

Terrified, she nods "yes".

ALBERT (cont'd)
Do not fight me. Da police are
already looking for me. I have even
got an old lady but they don't know
it.

IN THE BEDROOM -- The woman lies on her bed -- her hands tied
together now -- with her pajama tops.

ALBERT (cont'd)
Don't look at me. Don't look at me.

Albert rips her shorty pajamas bottoms off -- she's naked
now. And tied spread-eagle on the bed. He looks at her --
overly excited. Then blindfolds her with her pajama bottoms.

ALBERT (cont'd)
You are a beautiful dame, you know
that? Forgive me what I'm about to do.

MRS. CARSON
 (terrified)
 My God. What do you want from me?

ALBERT
 (touches her, kisses her
 stomach -- innocently:)
 I'm gonna lick you -- then you're
 gonna blow me.

EXT. MASSACHUSETTS JUSTICE BUILDING - DAY

Seven stories, old-New England formidable red brick building.

INT. TASK FORCE OFFICE - DAY

Bottomly sits with his Task Force. Eating lunch. McCauley, DiNatale. Also four more detectives and two female secretaries. (NOTE: This was Bottomly's first ploy:)

MCCAULEY
 You're not serious. The first move
 -- you're bringing in a psychic?

DINATALE
 Whoever heard of that? John, the press
 will roast us.

BOTTOMLY
 I've got that covered -- I'm going to
 call them all in and request a news
 embargo. This can't hurt -- and this
 guy is good. My mother assures me.
 And you don't want to argue with mother.

McCauley looks to DiNatale. His mother?

Bottomly opens his sandwich.

BOTTOMLY (cont'd)
 (flummoxed)
 I ordered tuna salad, this is chicken
 salad.

INT. BACK BAY BAR - NIGHT

TV hung over the bar -- a RED SOX game is telecast -- in b&w.
 Juke-box blares the Beatles' *Do You Want to Know a Secret?*

McCauley sits at the bar. Drinks Guinness. Chews gum. The
 BARTENDER, a former longshoreman.

BARTENDER

The fuckin' Red Sox. They shoulda shut down Fenway when Teddy Ballgame retired, I swear to Christ.

(off the music:)

Another thing I'm sick of: the Beatles, Chrissakes, all that long hair, I say they're limey fags. Detective. You okay?

MCCAULEY

No. This is hell on my chewing gum.

McCauley takes his gum out, drops it in an ashtray. Looks over. Megan Leary stands there. She looks great. In spite of themselves, there's real sexual heat between them.

MEGAN

Juicy Fruit holds better than Bazooka.

(to bartender)

Vodka, rocks.

(to McCauley)

Detective? Will you answer a few questions? I understand you were involved with the psychic caper?

MCCAULEY

(drinks, sarcasm)

Oh, yeah, yeah, Peter Hurkos -- great guy, scared of ghosts -- we shoulda taken him to the track, let him pick the horses.

MEGAN

(smiles, writes that down)

Well, underneath your macho pose, you have a sense of humor.

MCCAULEY

And what do you have under your macho pose?

McCauley smiles, Megan smiles. It's heating up between them.

MEGAN

Only my dates get to see that.

She takes out a pack of cigarettes. The underlying sexual tension is high.

MEGAN (cont'd)

Smoke?

MCCAULEY

I don't smoke.

MEGAN

Oh, you're the rebellious type.

(taps cigarette on the bar)

You're the youngest homicide cop, right?

What's that about?

MCCAULEY

It's about seven grand a year.

(OFF her smirk)

You've made yourself the most famous reporter in Boston. What's that about?

MEGAN

It's about my skirt. You big, strong cavemen run the world. I have to try harder -- just to get noticed.

MCCAULEY

Oh, I don't see you having any trouble getting noticed. Truth is -- Miss Leary -- besides causing city-wide panic and ignoring police work, what you're best at is making yourself famous.

MEGAN

(sips her vodka)

Two years later and you Keystone Cops still can't find one killer, but if it makes you feel happier, blame me. Got a match?

McCauley grabs a pack of matches off the bar.

MEGAN (cont'd)

I ask you something...off the record?

MCCAULEY

(opens matchbook)

Make it on the record.

MEGAN

(cigarette between her lips)

Why can't you guys find the Strangler?

MCCAULEY

How many times you wanna hear it...?

(strikes match)

...there is no "Strangler".

MEGAN
 (gently touches her hand on his
 to help guide the match)
 That's ridiculous.

MCCAULEY
 (holds the flame, looks into
 her eyes)
 The truth often is.

They don't break eye contact. The heat is up. They both feel it. So do we. Cocktail waitress, Cassie, across the room -- she sees it, too.

INT. MCCAULEY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Keys in the door. Door opens. McCauley flicks on a lamp. He enters, followed by Megan. She looks around -- it's a one-bedroom place, decorated early bachelor. It's a mess.

MEGAN
 Swanky pad. You must impress a lotta
 dates like this, McCauley.

MCCAULEY
 Usually I keep the lights off.

Megan glances around and sees -- thru a half-opened door --

HER POV -- ON a small office WALL -- matching the chart at the BPD squad room -- are the photographs of all eleven Strangler victims -- Anna thru Mary. And below those photos -- are other PHOTOS -- of various SUSPECTS for each murder.

Just a bit of this wall chart is visible --

McCauley flicks the light off. The room goes dark again. Megan wraps her arms around McCauley's neck.

MEGAN
 I think I'm going to like it here.

And she kisses him...deeply, long, and serious.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - EVENING

Cold. Albert pulls up in his green car. Gets out. He's the "Green Man" again. Looks up. Enters an apartment building.

STAY outside the building. SLOW PAN up to the second floor -- then PAN across to a window. Doily curtains block the view.

Catch a glimpse of an old woman as she walks by.

HEAR a knock at the door. She says: "Who is it?" We can't hear anything, she says: "Oh, all right". She unlocks the door --

OLD WOMAN

Oh, my God, no, no, no --

PUSH THRU -- see her collapse on the floor. Albert freaks.

ALBERT'S VOICE

Oh, Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ, lady.

Albert picks her up, sets her gently on the sofa -- then rushes out.

EXT. BOSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

Cold. No snow yet.

INT. BPD - VICE ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Carson sits with a sketch artist -- finishes the composite sketch she has described. With her are a Vice cop and McCauley's ex-partner, Officer Davenport.

MRS. CARSON

That's him, yes. That's who tied me up and...and...did those things.

OFFICER DAVENPORT

Wait, hey, hey...I think I busted this creep a while back with Jimmy Mack.

THE VICE ROOM - LATER

McCauley walks through with Davenport.

MCCAULEY

I've heard of the Green Lantern, The Green Hornet, The Green Arrow...but The Green Man...?

They reach Mrs. Carson, Davenport shows the sketch to McCauley.

OFFICER DAVENPORT

Okay -- does this perv look familiar or am I cracking up?

MCCAULEY

The Measuring Man. He's changed his act.

INT. ALBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

The PHONE RINGS. Albert's on the floor, plays Chutes and Ladders with his kids.

ALBERT
 Another chute! Oh, no...!
 (the KIDS giggle with glee)
 Okay, hold on a second, it's your turn.
 (calls out)
 I'll get it!

Albert goes to phone, answers it.

ALBERT (cont'd)
 Yeah, hello?

MCCAULEY (ON THE PHONE)
 Albert DeSalvo? Remember me? McCauley,
 from the precinct?

ON ALBERT -- PUSH IN --

ALBERT
 (sweats -- looks off at
 Irmgard in the kitchen)
 Uh, yeah, sure. Jim, right? How are
 ya?

INTERCUT: McCauley -- Davenport and Mrs. Carson nearby.

(NOTE: This is exactly what happened when the Cambridge cops called DeSalvo.)

MCCAULEY
 I need you to come in and talk to us,
 Al.

ALBERT
 (goes pale)
 What about?

MCCAULEY
 Well, you come down to the station and
 we'll talk about it.

ALBERT
 You better tell me now or I'm not comin'.

MCCAULEY
 About an assault on a woman.

ALBERT
 (light-headed -- beat)
 Well -- okay -- I'll, uh, I'll be right
 down. I just gotta square things, you
 know, with my family first.

MCCAULEY
 One hour, okay, Al?

Albert slo-o-o-o-o-owly lowers the phone. Irmgard walks
 over.

IRMGARD
 Who was that?

ALBERT
 Nobody. Wrong number.

Irmgard lovingly runs her hand through Albert's hair, kisses
 him.

IRMGARD
 I am sorry I took so long to forgive
 you. You are a good father, a good
 man. I want to make love again tonight.

She kisses him lightly, returns to the kitchen. Albert is
 sweating, pale and pasty white. If ever there was a man in
 his own created living hell -- it's Al.

EXT. RICHARD & ROSALIE DESALVO'S HOUSE - CHELSEA - NIGHT

Small, one-level, brick and wood. Working class
 neighborhood. Albert pulls up in his Chevy.

INT. RICHARD & ROSALIE DESALVO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Albert enters -- Richard closes the door behind him.

ALBERT
 Dicky -- I'm in big trouble. Big
 trouble.

Rosalie holds a two month old baby. On the b&w TV in the
 b.g., President Lyndon Johnson talks to reporters.

RICHARD/ROSALIE
 What?...What, Al?

ALBERT
 (plops onto couch -- bursts
 into tears)
 I really done it this time, oh boy.
 (MORE)

ALBERT (cont'd)
 I dunno whatsamatter with me. I'm sick,
 I'm sick. But I never meant to hurt
 no one, I swear to God, I swear...

RICHARD
 Al, what, were you measuring again?

ALBERT
 Worse, worse. Oh, Jesus...Irmgard, she
 wouldn't touch me, you know. I got
 needs, I got needs...I'd do a B & E,
 there'd be these women in their
 bathrobes....

ROSALIE
 Oh, Jesus, Al.

ALBERT
 (still sobs)
 Just last month, we start making love
 again. After two years! Why'd I do
 this?
 (calms himself --)
 I, I gotta turn myself in. Can you
 help me, sell da house and da car, so
 there's money, you know, for da kids?

RICHARD
 Sure, sure...

ALBERT
 (looks up -- desperate)
 How'm I gonna tell her...

EXT./INT. THE CHEVY - NIGHT

The Chevy drives along -- Richard in the front seat, Rosalie
 holds her baby in the back seat. Al's still in tears.

ALBERT
 I'm such a jerk, I'm gonna be in jail
 for da rest-a my life...

ROSALIE
 Not for a couple rapes, Al.

ALBERT
 You don't unnerstand! I been all over!
 An' one old lady...
 (sobs now:)
 -- she dropped dead of a heart attack
 soon as I broke in...it was horrible!
 To them that's murder! I'll never
 get outta prison!
 (MORE)

ALBERT (cont'd)
 (bangs the steering wheel)
 Why couldn't I stop myself?

RICHARD
 Oh, God. They're waiting for you.

THEIR POV -- Parked in front of Albert's house are two squad cars and an unmarked car.

ALBERT
 No. No. I ain't ready. I ain't ready.

Albert puts the gear in "reverse" and backs up, down the street --

He speeds away. TIRES SQUEAL. This catches the cops' attention -- especially McCauley and Davenport -- who race for their cars.

INT./EXT. THE CHEVY - SPEEDS ALONG

RICHARD
 Al! What are you doin'!

Albert looks scared to fucking death -- guns the accelerator. The Chevy picks up speed. The police cars race after it, SIRENS wailing.

McCauley drives in the lead, in his unmarked car.

INSIDE: ALBERT'S CAR --

RICHARD/ROSALIE
 Al! Stop it! Al! You can't do this! The baby! Where you gonna go, Al? You can't hide from them!

The Chevy perilously turns a corner -- drives up along the sidewalk! CLANG! Metal hits metal, smashes over garbage cans. The Chevy races along the sidewalk.

RICHARD/ROSALIE (cont'd)
 (bouncing up and down)
 Stop the car, Al! This is crazy!
 The baby! Stop the goddamn car!
 Now! THE BABY!

Albert squeals to a halt -- all of them pitch forward.

No seat belts in those days. Albert throws open the door.

ALBERT
 Tell Irmgard I'm sorry.

Albert takes off running -- a desperate man on a run to nowhere. McCauley's car squeals past the DeSalvo's car -- brakes to a stop. McCauley hops out and gives chase -- points his revolver.

RICHARD

(hops out of the Chevy)
Don't shoot him! For God's sakes!

Albert runs for his life. McCauley's after him at high speed.

MCCAULEY

Stop! DeSalvo! Goddamn you!

Albert keeps running. McCauley gains on him --

Albert rushes past more metal garbage cans -- and throws them over in McCauley's path and then rushes on.

McCauley -- running too hard to stop in time -- trips over the cans and falls to the cement -- hard. He loses his gun which slides away.

Albert sees this -- and rushes back. He picks up the gun. Holds it. McCauley looks up -- terrified --

Albert makes a decision. We see him make it. Albert is not a killer. He slowly walks over to McCauley -- and gently hands him back his gun.

McCauley is surprised. Davenport rushes up, responds with no kindness.

OFFICER DAVENPORT

Turn around, on your knees, you
fuckin' son of a bitch!

McCauley seems stunned. Davenport roughly cuffs Albert, then knocks him to the ground -- more cops, detectives rush up --

Richard and Rosalie, holding her baby -- watch. Helpless. Bereft.

INT. BPD - VICE ROOM - THAT NIGHT

Albert is in a line-up. FOUR WOMEN, include Mrs. Carson and SUZANNE MILLS (30'S), on the other side of the glass --

All four women i.d. Albert. McCauley stands off to the side with Davenport. Sips coffee.

MCCAULEY

I wanted in on this bust, feel like
a cop again. Why didn't he blow my
head off?

INT. C.I.D. ROOM - THAT NIGHT - LATER

Albert -- handcuffed to the radiator as once before --
surrounded by Vice Detectives as once before -- and McCauley
and Davenport, concludes his rap:

ALBERT

-- besides these assaults, there's in
addition prob'ly twenty rapes you
don't know about, not just here. In
Connecticut, New Hampshire -- and Rhode
Island, too. If youse want, we could
drive around and I'll show you all da
buildings I broke into, and where I
assaulted all these women.

The Detectives exchange looks. As do McCauley and Davenport.

MCCAULEY

Al, while you're in the mood to
confess -- the Beverly Samans murder
in Cambridge, or Joann Graff up in
Lawrence. Know anything about those?

ALBERT

No, no, Jim, listen, I done some
terrible things to women, but I never
killed no one. You gotta believe me.
I wouldn't hurt no broads. I love
broads!

Albert looks up -- and now he reacts truly frightened:
Irmgard has entered the room -- along with his sister, Irene.

POLICE HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

Albert and Irmgard -- a deja vu nightmare --

ALBERT

I hadda tell 'em everything. For once
I wanted to be a man for just once.

IRMGARD

(not yelling -- she's really
through with him)
You are very sick, I do not know why I
did not see how sick. I feel only pity
for you now. Maybe you can get help.
(MORE)

IRMGARD (cont'd)

I am through with you. You bastard --
you let me fall in love with you again...

Irmgard turns and goes. Albert watches her walk out of his life.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - DAY

Out in the boonies -- surrounded only by forest -- a block-long, white, old-brick three story hospital complex, built in the 1800s, fronted by high chain-link gates and barbed wire.

A STATE POLICE CAR enters through the main gate.

We catch a glimpse of Albert in the back seat. As the car passes -- we read the sign: "BRIDGEWATER STATE MENTAL HOSPITAL".

INT. BRIDGEWATER - ENTRANCE - DAY

Albert, hand-cuffed and manacled -- is led inside by two County Deputies. At the entrance, waiting, are FOUR OF THE BIGGEST UNIFORMED GUARDS you've ever seen -- each one holds a wet towel.

Albert looks panicked. The four guards step forward -- and grab Albert. He struggles.

BRIDGEWATER CORRIDOR - LATER

Albert -- trussed up like a pig -- with a wet towel securely wrapped around each wrist and ankle -- is dragged on his back down a cold, stark corridor by the four uniformed guards.

Other inmates SCREAM from inside their cells. A cacophony of true insanity. It's horrible.

INT. "F"-WARD JAIL CELL - DAY

Albert -- stripped completely naked now -- resists the guards -- who then forcibly throw him into the cold, dark, tiny cell. Tiny, 5 x 8. No toilet. No bed, just a canvas.

Albert hits the cold floor. The cell door SLAMS and LOCKS.

BRIDGEWATER GUARD

Welcome to Bridgewater.

Footsteps -- they walk away. Albert looks up -- only a tiny ray of light comes through the barred door window. The SCREAMING FROM THE OTHER INMATES is unbearable. Albert curls up, almost into a fetal position:

ALBERT

Oh, God. What did I do? What did I do?

PULL BACK -- a naked, wreck of a man --

INT. TASK FORCE OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Bottomly sits at the head of the table. McCauley, DiNatale and other Task Force members sit, stand nearby.

Around the table sit the five members of the MED-PSYCH COMMITTEE. All white males, naturally. The Committee Leader presents Bottomly with a thick report.

COMMITTEE LEADER

Our committee report, John. We thought we'd present our final conclusions to you, in person.

BOTTOMLY

Good. Time is precious, and this looks like...a lot of reading...

COMMITTEE LEADER

In essence, we semi-agree with Boston Homicide. This is the work of at least two killers. One for the old women, we've dubbed "Mr. S." -- and at least one other killer for the young girls, quite possibly an unstable homosexual.

McCauley and DiNatale exchange looks -- that say "What?!"

BOTTOMLY

Interesting. And this is unanimous?

DR. BRUSSELS -- 60's, distinguished, end of table, speaks up.
(NOTE: This was Dr. Brussels' true opinion:)

DR. BRUSSELS

No. James Brussels, Assistant Commissioner of Mental Health, N.Y.C. It's my belief this is the work of one man in search of his manhood. Initially, he symbolically murders his mother -- repeatedly -- until he has the courage to approach younger women, slowly gaining potency through each subsequent attack until the final victim -- wherein he symbolically penetrates her with a broomstick -- and thereby finally regains his manhood. Thus the murders stopped.

McCauley's eyes widen.

BOTTOMLY
(stunned -- long beat)
Uh...huh.

INT. JUSTICE BUILDING HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER - DAY

Bottomly and the Task Force leave the conference room.
McCauley and DiNatale bring up the rear.

MCCAULEY
Homos raping women, one man in search
of his boner -- these guys are good.

INT. MCCAULEY'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT

McCauley and Megan in bed. Candles lit. Soft music plays --
Stan Getz/Astrid Gilberto...*Girl From Ipanema*. Megan leans
over him -- and kisses him, a sweaty, hot after-love kiss.

MEGAN
(breathless, teases:)
I can't believe...I've fallen for a cop.

MCCAULEY
(breathless)
It could be worse...you could fall for
a reporter.

MEGAN
I'll let you do that.
(kisses him again)
I have to finish my article for tomorrow.
I'm sorry, baby. If it's not in by
two...

MCCAULEY
I understand. Your public awaits.

Megan stands -- crosses the room. McCauley turns on a lamp
on the night stand. (We SEE McCauley's tattoo on his
shoulder - an anchor and the words: "Property U.S. Navy".)

Megan twirls about, shyly covers herself with her blouse.

MEGAN
Am I the floor-show?
(shy, giggling)
No, I'm sorry, I can't do this, no --
I'll get dressed in the other room,
thank you very much.

Megan gathers her things and scurries out of the bedroom. McCauley nods, amused, reaches for his trousers.

INT. MCCAULEY'S FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Lights are out. McCauley enters, now in his trousers. He sees something. Reacts.

HIS POV -- Megan, in her skirt and blouse now, stands in front of his small office wall -- making notes off his Strangler Chart -- writing by the light of a lamp.

MCCAULEY
(quietly)
What the fuck are you doing?

Megan's startled, McCauley has snuck up behind her.

MEGAN
Just...admiring your wallpaper.

MCCAULEY
Gimme that...what the fuck are you...?

McCauley reaches for her notebook, she quickly spins away.

MEGAN
Uh-uh, no one touches my notebook.
You can touch my ass all you want,
baby, but not my notebook.

MCCAULEY
Is this why you came up here?

MEGAN
Is that what you thi...

MCCAULEY
Answer the question, is this why you
came up here?

MEGAN
(caught -- she's indignant:)
Hey, I'm not one of your suspects being
interrogated, okay? -- I'm horrified
you'd even suggest...I just gave you
the best three hours of sex of your
goddamned life and you think I came up
here to look at your wall? You have a
sick and devious mind, you know that?,
'cause you're a cop! I don't even know
what this is! A love affair is built
on trust, McCauley, and as beautiful as
(MORE)

MEGAN (cont'd)
 you are, if you don't trust me, boom,
 goodbye, I'm gone.

MCCAULEY
 Is that a "yes"?

MEGAN
 You prick, I'm out of here.

Megan makes a move to go, McCauley grabs her arm, stops her.

MCCAULEY
 OK, wait, OK...you're right. You want
 to know what this is? I'll tell you.
 It's -- just my own theory -- but
 you won't like it.

MEGAN
 I don't care.
 (gently kisses his lips)
 Trust me, McCauley.

Megan sits on a kitchen chair, crosses her legs, lights up a
 smoke. If this is Megan's game, it looks like McCauley's
 fallen for it. He looks at the wall chart -- how to begin?

MCCAULEY
 I spend time with these women, you
 understand? To me, they're not...
 not really dead.
 (points)
 Joann, shy, religious, hardly ever
 been kissed -- Beverly, an opera
 singer, and deaf -- the last thing she
 wrote in her journal that night was...

MEGAN
 ..."What sins did I commit to deserve
 this?" Tell me what I don't know.

MCCAULEY
 Evidence says the son killed Anna.
 (holds up one finger)
 One mother-hating lunatic killed the
 next four -- Nina, Helen, Ida, Jane.
 (holds up two fingers)
 Witnesses saw a light-skinned Negro man,
 anxious and sweating, leave Sophie
 Clark's building the time of her
 murder...

McCauley holds up three fingers. Megan starts to look
 uncomfortable.

MCCAULEY (CONT'D (cont'd)
 Patricia, one month pregnant by her
 married, 53 year old boss-slash-
 boyfriend, who checked out an abortion
 for her...he found her body, the only
 girl tucked neatly into bed...
 (four fingers)
 Beverly in Cambridge -- the only victim
stabbed -- twenty-one times -- death
not by strangulation...

Megan squirms uncomfortably in her seat. Exhales smoke.

MCCAULEY (CONT'D) (cont'd)
 (five fingers)
 Evelyn in Salem -- the only victim
 forced to give the killer a blow-job...
 (six fingers)
 Joann in Lawrence -- the only victim
raped...
 (seven fingers)
 Mary Sullivan -- impaled on a broomstick
 and left with a Happy New Year card.
 (eight fingers --)
 Eight. There's no connections here.
 No pattern. Eight separate killers.

PUSH CLOSE ON MEGAN --

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 There never was a Boston Strangler.
 You made that up.

For just a moment -- Megan is stunned into silence.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 OK? Your reputation is built on
 a fairy tale. You wanna print this?
 Please, be my guest.

MEGAN
 (takes a moment to recover --)
 This is such...unadulterated bullshit.
 Eight killers? And in two and a half
 years, not one of you lawmen can make one
 fucking arrest?!

MCCAULEY
 (heated -- points to Beverly)
 This guy confessed and drowned --
 (points to Evelyn)
 This guy's in jail for another rape
 and murder --
 (MORE)

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 (points to Mary)
 This guy failed two lie detector
 tests! Two!

MEGAN
 Not admissible in court, pal!

MCCAULEY
 He still killed her! Her roommate's
 boyfriend! There's no M.O. here! You
 wanna kill a girl? -- tie a stocking
 around her neck!

MEGAN
 You know what this is? You're
 incompetent. You're pathetic! You
 can't solve this, can you? -- you
 can't solve a goddamn thing!

MCCAULEY
 What is it you're looking for, lady? The
 truth or the Pulitzer Prize?

MEGAN
 (glares at him --)
 Fuck. You.

She storms away, grabs her things in a heap from a living
 room chair. She starts pulling on her winter coat.

MEGAN (cont'd)
 Want to know why you can't catch one
 guy? -- you won't admit he exists! It's
 right there on your forehead, McCauley,
 a big, flashing, sign that says "loser".

MCCAULEY
 We can't catch a fiction, okay -- you
 helped create a Frankenstein! I'm
 handing you truth here, open your eyes.

McCauley stands between her and the door.

MEGAN
 You're in my way.

MCCAULEY
 You never answered me. My wall chart, is
 this why you came up here?

MEGAN
 (mixed emotions on her face --)
 You're such a brilliant detective.
 You figure it out.

She pushes past McCauley and SLAM! She's out the door and gone.

McCauley takes a beat -- then looks back at the Strangler photos -- on the kitchen wall. Glares at the photos.

Then grabs a vase and hurls it against the wall. It shatters.

FADE TO BLACK:

THE SCREEN IS PITCH BLACK --

In the blackness, two small dots of light appear in the distance -- moving dots of light, that come closer. Soon we realize these are HEADLIGHTS coming our way.

A small, two-lane highway. SUPER: ROUTE 125, MASSACHUSETTS.

The auto pulls into an isolated TEXACO STATION. Around it is only wooded forest, dark at night, eerie.

The MOTHER drives, her 14-year old DAUGHTER sits beside her.

They pull up to the pumps. The mother turns off the engine. Sudden silence -- she looks over to the garage, 30 feet away:

THE MOTHER
Oh, my God!

HER POV:

A man, the service ATTENDANT, is on his knees, a knife sticks out of his back. He is BEGGING FOR HIS LIFE from another MAN -- dark-haired, medium height, in a tan trench coat -- who stands over him, and points a revolver. The man fires once -- the attendant falls to the ground.

WIDE SHOT --

A TRUCK pulls into the station, with TWO MEN -- just in time to also witness the man fire three more shots into the attendant. Then the man rushes over to the car with the mother and daughter.

INSIDE THE CAR --

the mother quickly snaps the latch to lock the car -- just as she and her daughter see the man -- thru the driver's side window -- reach their car and try the door handle.

THE MAN
Open the door!

The man points the small, black gun in his right hand --

THE MOTHER
(covering her daughter)
Get down!

He fires twice. Click. Click. The gun is empty! He merely shrugs.

WIDE SHOT

The man rushes away into his own car and speeds away. The Two Men rush out of the truck -- and one hurries to the women -- the other man rushes over to the victim...

INT. BPD - SQUAD ROOM - DAY

The Mother and Daughter and the Two Men -- they flip through the Suspects Book of Photos - endless b&w mug shots.

The Mother stops -- and points at a photo. The others agree.

DETECTIVE
(reads the perp's name)
George Nassar. Got him.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - DAY

Two County Deputies escort the man -- a manacled GEORGE NASSAR -- out of a van. Early 30's, Syrian, olive skin, jet-black hair combed straight back; in black trousers, white shirt, short zip jacket. Handsome presence. Yet, everyone who knew him, described him the same way: "cold -- with killer eyes."

INT. TASK FORCE OFFICE - DAY

Around a conference table sit McCauley, Bottomly, DiNatale, and all the Task Force. DiNatale reads from the *Post*. INTERCUT reactions from McCauley and Bottomly.

DINATALE
(reads aloud)
"So now that we have the pronouncements of this unidentified source close to the Task Force, we finally know the reason the Boston Strangler is still at large: the inability of our law officials to comprehend that a psychotic, homicidal maniac may torture and murder each victim in very different ways. Thanks to this unidentified source close to the Task Force -- the incompetence of our law
(MORE)

DINATALE (cont'd)
 officials is finally explained --
 leaving the rest of us still living under
 the haunted shadow and the endless terror
 of the Boston Strangler." Ouch.

BOTTOMLY
 I've been crucified. Unidentified source
 close to the Task Force? Who the hell
 could...McCauley, you always know
 everything. Who the Christ could this be?

MCCAULEY
 (thru his blood boiling --)
 I'll try to find out.

BOTTOMLY
 Jesus Christ, can we indict anybody,
 goddamnit!? Ah! shit, a paper cut.
 These take weeks to heal, goddamnit.

DINATALE
 John, we've narrowed down new possible
 suspects, one for the old ladies, and
 one for the young girls. The kicker is
 -- they're all on the same psycho ward.
 It's a long shot.

BOTTOMLY
 (blows on his finger)
 This pain in the ass case, I'll take it.

INT. BRIDGEWATER CAFETERIA - DAY

Bottomly, stands in the food line beside DR. AMES ROBEY. (Who
 met in the David Brinkley investigation.) Both men are 6'4".

BOTTOMLY
 I'm told all criminally and sexually
 dangerous prisoners are sent here for
 observation, correct? The murders
 stopped months ago -- maybe -- the
 Stranglers are already here.

DR. ROBEY
 Stranglers? Plural?

BOTTOMLY
 The Med-Psych Committee agrees, two
 killers. One for the old ladies, one
 for the girls, possibly a homosexual.

DR. ROBEY
 (what?)
 Who was on this committee?

BOTTOMLY

Screw 'em. Just interview the sexually
crazy ones. And the cold-blooded
reptiles. Lunch is on me.

(reaches for wallet)

They take Master Charge here?

INT. BRIDGEWATER CONFERENCE ROOM - DAYS LATER

Albert, dressed in Bridgewater issue: dark-blue denim work
shirt and trousers, is led into the room by a beefy orderly.
Albert sits across from Robey. Orderly stands nearby -- for
Robey's protection.

DR. ROBEY

So, Albert, what brought you here to
us?

ALBERT

(in braggadocio mode)

What can I tell you? I gotta sex
problem: I got a hard-on all day long.
Have you heard-a me? I'm da Green Man.

DR. ROBEY

Should I have heard of you?

ALBERT

Yeah! I was in all da papers.

DR. ROBEY

Well, so was it the -- "Green Man" who
committed these crimes?

INTERCUT George Nassar's interview -- the questions should
flow from one intake into the other:

NASSAR

No. It's all a mistake. Mistaken
identity.

Nassar, although brilliant (he had a genius IQ), speaks in a
Boston slang ("pahk the cah"). Also in Bridgewater blues.

DR. ROBEY

Really? -- it says here you were
identified by four separate individuals.

NASSAR

I'm an ex-convict. People have a
grudge against convicts. Those who
identified me are guilty of the worst
kind of prejudice.

(MORE)

NASSAR (cont'd)
They have limited soul. I know such things, I've taught Sunday school.

DR. ROBEY
So, you're a man of many talents.

INTERCUT ALBERT:

ALBERT
Oh, yeah. I raped over 500 hundred women. I'm famous in certain circles of da city.

DR. ROBEY
Uh-huh. The police found a letter you were writing in response to a sex ad?

INTERCUT NASSAR:

NASSAR
I was incarcerated a long time. A man can entertain...certain fantasies.

DR. ROBEY
It says here when you were seventeen you murdered a grocer as a "thrill kill"? Was that also a fantasy of yours?

Robey has crossed the line with Nassar. Nassar looks at the beefy orderly nearby.

NASSAR
A youthful indiscretion. I paid my debt. Don't try to outthink me, Doctor. I'll match my I.Q. to yours any day, any time.

DR. ROBEY
I'll remember that.

INTERCUT ALBERT:

ALBERT
Hey, I'm unforgettable. Women can't believe my stamina, my powers. Not to mention, I'm also blessed with a photographic memory...I'm not bragging, you understand, this is just da real me.

DR. ROBEY
Well, that's who I'm here to meet, Albert. The real you. Tell me -- how do you feel about your mother?

INTERCUT NASSAR:

NASSAR

If I despised my mother, would that
make me the Boston Strangler?

(beat -- smiles -- a cold,
calculating smile)

I love my mother. Very much.

INT. BRIDGEWATER CORRIDOR - LATER

Robey walks with DR. ALLEN, 60's, also in doctor white coat.
They pass two huge guards roughly treating an inmate --

DR. ROBEY

God, how I hate the way Corrections
runs this place.

(they walk on)

DeSalvo is a pathetic braggart, a
classic abused child who lies to
impress -- but Nassar -- he's a
psychopath.

INT. BRIDGEWATER G-WARD - DAY ROOM - DAY

A huge center room where the 40-50 G-Ward patients in
Bridgewater-blue spend their days. Some play backgammon,
cards, others sit, stand, roam, chat. Three GUARDS sit on
chairs, up three feet high. Like lifeguards at the beach.

Dr. Robey & Dr. Allen walk through on their way out.

DR. ROBEY

And there they are -- the two possible
suspects for the Strangler.

See DAWSON. 25, crew-cut. Psychotic, laughs to himself.

DR. ROBEY (cont'd)

Maxwell Dawson, arrested in Cambridge
for beating his pregnant wife on the
street while he was dressed as Othello --

See NASSAR. Sits quietly, smokes,

DR. ROBEY (cont'd)

And -- Mr. Thrill-kill himself, George
Nassar. This is one demented stew...

Robey & Allen pass Albert, exit. Albert walks up to a GUARD.

ALBERT

Do you know who I am? I'm da Green
Man. I raped between 900 and 1300
women.

GUARD

Of course, you did.

Nassar, off by himself, smokes, observes Albert. Intrigued by him, amused by him. Dawson (Othello) walks up. Sits beside Nassar.

DAWSON

Want to hear my plan? I'm going to move to an island off Australia, build a fence around it with machine-gun nests, and no women are going to be allowed in.

NASSAR

(cold as ice)

Is there anything in my physical posture that suggests I want to speak to you?

Dawson, shaken, frightened, stands, walks away.

A well-built BOXER, a black man, stands -- spars in the air, practices combinations. Albert approaches him.

ALBERT

Hey, you're a fighter? I'm a fighter. I was Middleweight champion in da army, when I was in Germany. You wanna go a few rounds? Whattaya say?

BOXER

Suck my dick.

Nassar pays attention to this.

ALBERT

You're afraid of me. I don't blame you. Right here is a 180 pounds of undefeated.

BOXER

You wanna piece of me, jagoff? Let's go.

Albert & the boxer raise their fists, circle each other.

BRIDGEWATER INMATES

Hey, fight! Fight! Fight! Fight!

The inmates quickly form a circle around them. Even Nassar stands for this occasion.

ALBERT

Don't say ya weren't warned.

They dance around a bit -- Albert moves in, throws a jab. It lands. Throws another -- and a third. All land.

Al looks good, better than you'd expect. Then:

The Boxer fakes left, fakes right, fakes left and WHAM! Connects with a roundhouse to Albert's jaw -- and Albert hits the floor - decked. Boxer walks away. The inmates break up.

BRIDGEWATER INMATES

What a buncha bullshit. Bullshit!

They all disperse. Leave a dazed Albert on the floor. Only Nassar approaches him. Bends down.

NASSAR

You got balls, pal. Is it broken?

ALBERT

(clutches his jaw)
I don't think so. I'm just a little outta shape.

NASSAR

(all friendly)
No kidding.
(offers his hand)
George Nassar.

ALBERT

(shakes it)
Al DeSalvo. I'm da Green Man.

NASSAR

(already, he plays Al like a Stradivarius -- impressed)
Really? I've heard of you.

ALBERT

You have?

NASSAR

(helps him up)
Sure. You raped a lot of women, right?

ALBERT

(proudly; the number goes up:)
Over fifteen-hundred.

NASSAR

That's amazing -- that's real cojones.
If I was famous like you. I'd get rich.

ALBERT

Rich? In this joint? Yeah, right.
How?

NASSAR

There are ways.

Nassar knows what he's doing -- he walks away. Sits. Lights a smoke. Albert follows, of course.

NASSAR (cont'd)

Smoke?

ALBERT

No, that's a disgusting habit, I mean nothin' personal by that. Uh, what ways would that be?

NASSAR

You ever do hard time, Al?

ALBERT

No.

NASSAR

It's scary shit. To survive inside you need connections, and connections take money, coin of the realm. The way to make a fortune? Write a book. "The Confessions of"...make a million dollars. Next thing -- you're portrayed in a movie by, who knows -- Marlon Brando.

ALBERT

(impressed)

Marlon Brando? That guy's a genius, he can act Napoleon, a Jap houseboy... you know, people say we look alike ...'course I got more hair.

NASSAR

Yeah, I see the resemblance. Definitely.

(beat)

It's unfortunate no one would care about The Green Man right now.

ALBERT

(perfectly set up -- now
perfectly let down)

Why not?

NASSAR

Think, Al. Who are they looking for out there? The big best seller waiting to happen -- the police can't find him.

(conspiratorially)

Between you, me and the wall?...the authorities suspect the Boston Strangler is here at Bridgewater. He could be in this room, right now.

(beat, smiles)

You like backgammon?

ALBERT

(beat, brags)

I'm da best backgammon player in da world.

Nassar nods, smiles -- he's got Al's number -- then goes to the backgammon table. Albert sits there, thinks -- he's not thinking about backgammon.

INT. BOSTON POST - WINDOW OFFICE - DAY

Megan's desk is being moved into a huge office with a window -- Megan hangs her photos on the wall -- we see her at a function with Teddy Kennedy, circa 1965.

Megan's new SECRETARY -- enters with the late edition.

SECRETARY

Congratulations, Miss Leary, another front page...

Secretary holds up the *Boston Post*.

CLOSE ON the front page: "ONE YEAR AFTER LAST STRANGLING/ POLICE STILL CLUELESS ON THE BOSTON STRANGLER" BY MEGAN LEARY. With Megan's photo. And we CUT TO --

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

McCauley sits at the counter, sips coffee, reads the same headline. Pissed off, pushes the paper away.

INT. BPD - DONOVAN'S OFFICE - DAY

McCauley rants at Donovan. Sherry sits, smokes. Behind them, rain hits the window.

MCCAULEY

The Task Force is bullshit...I'm sick of this, Lieutenant, I'm sick of it!

(MORE)

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

We know who killed some of these women,
and we sit around and do nothing like
a bunch of goddamn housewives...!

DONOVAN

You smug dick, you think I'm happy about
this?

MCCAULEY

Then let me arrest that rich college
kid for Mary Sullivan! We know he's the
perp, he failed two lie detector tests...

DONOVAN

...and he was down here five times. No
proof, no confession!

MCCAULEY

You want a confession? I'll shove a
broomstick up his ass -- he'll confess
to killing Abraham Lincoln!

DONOVAN

It may come as a shock to you but we
follow laws around here. You stay on
the Task Force until I say so -- that's
an order. Now get outta my face.

Sherry give McCauley a look -- what did you expect? McCauley
sighs, looks out the window. Thunder and POURING RAIN.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - G-WARD - SAME DAY

POURING RAIN strikes the barred windows. Albert and Nassar
stand at the window together -- in deep conversation. Lost
in their secret discussion.

INT. G-WARD - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Albert & Nassar turn from the window and walk together, never
break their intense conversation. As they walk & talk -- the
other inmates part for them, cutting a wide berth. It's
eerie.

Robey and Dr. Allen make their daily rounds, and hand out
medicine -- accompanied by an orderly. Robey notices Albert
and Nassar. Stops. Studies them.

DR. ROBEY

Those two. They're inseparable.

(watches more:)

Look how the other inmates part for
them -- like the Red Sea parting for
Moses and the Israelites.

(MORE)

DR. ROBEY (cont'd)
 It's as if they have their own force
 field around them. It's spooky. Let me
 show you something amazing...
 (they approach Albert and
 Nassar -- who immediately
 stop talking)
 Albert -- Dr. Allen and I have a little
 bet going. Yesterday, when we passed
 through, did you notice us?

ALBERT
 For a second.

DR. ROBEY
 -- what color ties were we wearing?

ALBERT
 Uh, yours was blue and green diagonal
 stripes, not too appealing, and his
 was red with black dots. Not my taste
 in haberdashery. You wanna test my
 memory, gimme somethin' challenging.

Dr. Robey nods -- he and Dr. Allen walk away.

DR. ROBEY
 He's practically an idiot savant.
 (looks back at Albert & Nassar,
 deep in conversation)
 What in hell could they incessantly be
 talking about?

INT. BRIDGEWATER - VISITOR'S ROOM - DAY

Albert sits, faces his lawyer, ASGEIRSSON. 40's, suit,
 briefcase.

ALBERT
 Have you found Irmgard?

ASGEIRSSON
 She's moved with your kids to her
 sister's in Colorado. She's going
 through with the divorce, Albert.

Albert sighs, deflated. Asgeirsson takes papers from his
 briefcase.

ASGEIRSSON (cont'd)
 Alright, these Green Man arrests are
 four counts of assault, and one count
 of armed robbery because you stupidly
 took two dollars from one woman's purse.
 (MORE)

ASGEIRSSON (cont'd)

Two dollars. I can plead you, four to seven, you'll be out in three to five.

ALBERT

You forget I confessed to rape in three other states? Any angle you look at it, I'm in prison 'til death do I part.

ASGEIRSSON

We'll prove coercion. This deal's a gift.

ALBERT

Well, actually, Mister A., I, uh, I think I shouldn't do no prison time, I oughta be inna mental hospital -- a real one, not this dump, cuz, uh...

(beat)

...I feel bad, cuz, well, I...haven't always been that straight witchoo.

ASGEIRSSON

What haven't you told me, Albert?

ALBERT

It's big, it's really big. Bigger than da Brinks robbery, that's how big this is. Big.

ASGEIRSSON

I understand. It's big. What, Albert?

ALBERT

I, uh -- in da future, I just might be known as -- da "Boston S-Man".

ASGEIRSSON

Albert, are you trying to tell me you're the Boston Strangler?

Asgeirsson stares at Albert. And continues to stare. Albert doesn't respond.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER GROUNDS - DAY

Albert and Nassar on the grounds, talk under a tree. Nassar smokes. As always, the other inmates leave them alone.

ALBERT

He don't believe me. My own lawyer!

NASSAR

Forget him, Al. I have the perfect guy for you. He has the brains of a
(MORE)

NASSAR (cont'd)
Harvard scholar -- and the balls of
King Kong.

ALBERT
My kinda guy. What's his name?

EXT. ESSEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

SUPER: ESSEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE/SALEM, MASSACHUSETTS --
FEBRUARY 4, 1965

A sparkling new 1965 Pontiac GTO pulls up in front of the
courthouse. The license plate reads: "TRIAL".

The door opens and out steps the LAWYER: 33 years old, 5'7'',
distinctive receding hairline. He drapes an expensive winter
coat over his three-piece suit -- and carries his briefcase
and walks up the Essex County Courthouse steps -- stops for a
moment to pose for the two papparazzi-like photographers, who
wait in the cold. The Lawyer smiles and waves.

INT. ESSEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

The Driver walks down the hallway and signs in at the desk.

BAILEY (THE LAWYER)
F. Lee Bailey. I'm here to see my
client, George Nassar.

Bailey continues down the corridor.

INT. COURTHOUSE ANTEROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Small Jail Cell. Bailey and Nassar shake hands and sit.
Nassar is in a suit and tie -- and handcuffed. Bailey speaks
clearly, quickly and authoritatively -- his erudition is
apparent.

BAILEY
All they have on you are those
eyewitnesses. And eyewitnesses
categorically can be wrong.

NASSAR
Mistah Bailey, I wasn't there.

BAILEY
The clergy in Lawrence believe you --
that's all the recommendation I need.
(checks his watch, he's on a
clock --)
Today will be perfunctory. We'll file
the brief, the Judge will set the court
date, I'll see you out there, George.

Bailey stands, closes his briefcase

NASSAR

Mistah Bailey -- suppose an individual at Bridgewater is responsible for various murders? Could he write a book and profit from it?

BAILEY

Yes -- but I wouldn't recommend it. He'd be writing himself into certain electrocution. Who are we discussing?

NASSAR

The Boston Strangler.

BAILEY

George...I'm certain half the population in that nuthouse will gleefully confess to being the Strangler. Why believe this particular lunatic?

NASSAR

He knows things, details. He trusts me. I'm not a stupid person, Mistah Bailey, I'm not easily fooled. He's the Strangler. He'd -- like to meet with you.

Bailey is suddenly no longer in a rush.

INT. BACK BAY BAR - NIGHT

Crowded. Smoky. McCauley holds his pool cue, chews gum, watches Sherry line up a shot. Other cops around watching. MUSIC: The Temptations' *My Girl* plays on the jukebox.

Sherry sinks the ball. Other cops cheer. Sherry laughs.

SHERRY

Next round's on you, Jimmy Mack!

McCauley turns, walks thru the crowd to the bar -- sees Megan sitting at the bar. She finishes talking to someone, jots down a note and closes her notebook. She sees him.

MEGAN

(surprised to see him)
Detective McCauley.

MCCAULEY

Oh, remember me? The unidentified source close to the Task Force? What a masterful piece of gutter journalism.

MEGAN

(smokes)

Arrest any of the eight Stranglers yet?

MCCAULEY

You're a snake, Megan. You wait in the weeds, then you crawl up and strike.

MEGAN

Yeah, well, you can kiss my Irish ass.

She grabs her purse.

MCCAULEY

I already did that. Remember?

Megan looks at him. A moment. She remembers. She tosses a few bills onto the bar and walks out.

AT THE POOL TABLE - Sherry racks the balls. McCauley comes up with a tray of drinks -- Riley makes his way up to Sherry.

RILEY

Eddy. Donovan needs to see you.
Somethin' about the Strangler.

McCauley and Sherry share surprised looks.

INT. BPD HEADQUARTERS - DONOVAN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Donovan sits behind his desk, coat off. Sherry settles himself in a chair before him, his winter coat and hat on.

McCauley stands in the doorway, also with his winter coat and hat on. Donovan pulls on and plays with a rubber band.

DONOVAN

Who's F. Lee Bailey?

SHERRY

He's that lawyer, the, uh, the Torso-Murder case, they say a guy chopped his wife in half...Bailey got him off.

(smokes, smirks)

He likes to see his name in the papers.
Why?

DONOVAN

He's going to visit a guy in Bridge-water who claims he's the Strangler. He wants some questions to ask, things not generally known to the public.

McCauley & Sherry share another surprised look.

SHERRY
Who's the guy?

DONOVAN
He's not dumb, he wouldn't say. Make him
a short list. Let's see what he's got.

MCCAULEY
Jack, wait, c'mon...

Sherry holds up his hand, signals McCauley to keep quiet.

SHERRY
Jack, there's no Strangler. That
black pimp killed Sophie Clark, that
college kid killed Mary Sullivan...

DONOVAN
...And we could never prove it, could
we? And who killed the old ladies?
(looks to McCauley)
You get back to the Task Force, Boy
Wonder, I'll worry about Bailey.

Donovan fires the rubber band. It hits the lamp across the
room on the file cabinet. McCauley sighs and turns away.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - DAY

Bailey drives thru the gate in his GTO.

SUPER: MARCH 4, 1965.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY

Bailey is led to a small visitor's room -- Nassar and DeSalvo
enter behind him. Robey and Dr. Allen step out of their
office and see them enter. Robey doesn't like it.

DR. ROBEY
Why is Lee Bailey meeting with Nassar
and DeSalvo? That's an unholy
alliance.
(turns to secretary)
Mary, get Albert's attorney on the
phone.

INT. VISITORS' ROOM - SAME DAY

Albert and Nassar sit side-by-side, on one side of the table.
Bailey sits across from them.

BAILEY

Albert, George may be my client --
however, if he remains in the room, you
forfeit the attorney-client privilege
for anything that you might say in his
presence. Do you fully understand that?

ALBERT

(nods, looks at Nassar)
I knew that. Yes, right.

BAILEY

This is your meeting. Why am I here?

ALBERT

Well, regretfully, I have to say...I am
da Boston "S"-man.

BAILEY

The Boston Strangler has successfully
eluded the authorities for almost three
years. Why come forward now?

Albert takes a quick glance to Nassar, then continues.

ALBERT

Mistah Bailey, I'll be honest, cuz
that's da kinda guy I am -- I done
these things while under da influence
of mental sickness an' now, I wanna
help society.

BAILEY

That's certainly an altruistic urge.
How do you propose to accomplish this?

ALBERT

Ya see, I know I've screwed up my life
so bad, I'll be in pinstripes forever,
an' I don't mean on da Yankees -- so
I'd like to, A)...offer myself to a
classy mental hospital so to be studied
by experts -- instead da idiots in
dis hell-hole, an' this way make sure
nobody else does these terrible things
in da future. And 2)...I wanna write
a book so to make money for my little
children. Without committing hari-
kari. Naturally...

BAILEY

Well, there's certainly a small fortune
in publishing your story -- if you
(MORE)

BAILEY (cont'd)
indeed are the Strangler -- but it will
have to be handled gingerly so that you
don't write yourself into certain
electrocution.

Albert and Nassar share a look. Really good news.

ALBERT
Good, see, da most important thing to
me is my family. Taking care-a my kids
-- and who knows, with a fortune, maybe
my wife will even love me again.

BAILEY
Yes -- assuming she forgives you for
being the Boston Strangler. However,
before I spend another moment here,
Albert -- you must unequivocally
convince me you are who you claim to be.

ALBERT
Absolutely.

Albert and Nassar share an encouraging look.

BAILEY
(takes out notes from
briefcase)
These questions were prepared for me by
certain Boston homicide detectives. I
assume you know what they pertain to?

ALBERT
I think I could guess.

BAILEY
All right, then...Tell me:
(off list:)
"What was Nina's last name?" Quickly.

ALBERT
Nina?...Nina Nichols.

Bailey and Nassar share a look. Bailey nods. (NOTE: These
were the actual questions asked.)

BAILEY
"June 30, 1962 -- what happened?"

ALBERT
June 30th...June 30th...Nina Nichols
and Helen Blake, both strangled.
Same day.

BAILEY

"What kind of foreign objects figured in the stranglings?"

ALBERT

Bottles, kotex -- a broomstick.

BAILEY

"In which cities did the stranglings occur?"

ALBERT

Boston, Lynn, Salem, Cambridge and, uh, what's that...Lawrence.

BAILEY

"Miss Clark's first name?"

ALBERT

That was da colored girl, Sophie. Sounds Jewish. Sammy Davis is Jewish, right?

BRIDGEWATER GUARDS enter. These are the big guys.

BRIDGEWATER GUARD

Mr. Bailey, you're not Mr. DeSalvo's lawyer, you're not authorized to visit him. You have to leave -- now.

BAILEY

I am here by expressed invitation...

(OFF their look --)

Albert - talk to no one else about this.

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - DAY

Donovan speaks on the phone -- then hangs up, comes out of his office -- walks over to Sherry.

DONOVAN

Bailey's going back to Bridgewater. He wants another list, harder questions, murder details. He says this could be the Strangler.

(OFF Sherry's surprised look)

Yeah. What if the press has been right all along?

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - ANOTHER DAY

Bailey pulls up in the GTO. He lugs out his briefcase and a tape recorder.

INT. PRIVATE VISITORS' ROOM - DAY

Albert & Nassar watch Bailey set up a REEL-TO-REEL tape recorder.

BAILEY
George, it's prudent that Albert and
I speak one-on-one today.

NASSAR
(a quick look with Albert)
I'll see you later, Al.

Albert nods, Nassar goes. Bailey turns on the tape recorder.

BAILEY
Ready, Albert?

INT. BRIDGEWATER HALLWAY - LATER - DAY

Bailey talks on the wall pay-phone.

BAILEY
The Boston Strangler is at Bridgewater,
and I am now his lawyer...My office,
one hour.

Bailey hangs up. Albert is escorted out of the visitor's room by a beefy orderly.

BAILEY (cont'd)
Trust me. I'll get you a civil
commitment in Johns Hopkins. You
won't spend a day in prison. By the
time I get done, you'll be so rich,
you'll be able to buy two hospitals.
(comforting hand on Al's
shoulder)
I'll phone Irmgard at her sister's in
Colorado. You have to be prepared,
she'll be shocked initially, but
hopefully she'll appreciate the vast
sums that will be coming to the family.

ALBERT
(all smiles, all's right with
the world)
Thanks, Mister Bailey, thank you. To
me, you're a God.

PAN OVER -- to see a stunned Ames Robey who's overheard this exchange. Bailey walks past Robey on his way out.

INT. G-WARD - DAY

Albert sits with Nassar -- they talk -- and, as usual, the other inmates give them a wide berth. Robey walks up --

DR. ROBEY

What is it you two are constantly jabbering about?

NASSAR

The Civil Rights struggle.

ALBERT

Da Red Sox.

NASSAR

We're also concerned over the escalation of U.S. troops in Viet Nam.

DR. ROBEY

Albert -- could we speak for a moment? Privately.

Nassar gives Albert a look -- a stern look, a warning look. Nassar stands and walks away. Robey takes the empty seat.

DR. ROBEY (cont'd)

(incredulous)

Albert -- are you telling people that you're the Boston Strangler?

ALBERT

Mr. Bailey is my attorney now and he has instructed me not to converse with you beyond pleasantries from this time ad nauseum.

DR. ROBEY

That's ad infinitum. You're not the strangler, Albert. This is bullshit. You couldn't kill anyone, unlike your best friend, Nassar.

(Albert offers no reply)

You're just out to be famous, isn't that right? Bailey promised you Johns Hopkins, big money from a book? You're in a mental hospital, Albert. This is insane behavior.

ALBERT

Tony Congliario's gonna have a great year, don't you think? I think so.

EXT. BAILEY'S OFFICE BUILDING - DOWNTOWN NO. BOSTON - NIGHT

The financial district. By 1965, tall office buildings starting to appear. Sunday night, quiet, dead.

ALBERT'S VOICE ON TAPE

"...and then I tied da stocking around her neck, and I strangled her..."

INT. BAILEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Plush. Indirect lighting. (Judge Francis Newton said it "felt like you were going into a lounge, not a law office.")

Bailey sits behind his desk, turns off his reel-to-reel. Donovan and Sherry sit at a round table, eat Chinese food and drink whiskey.

Two sexy secretaries, long blond hair, short skirts, dark stockings, great legs in high heels.

DONOVAN

No question. He's the best we've had so far.

SHERRY

I concur.

BAILEY

(excited)
Let's get him down here.

INT. MCCAULEY'S APARTMENT - THAT NIGHT

McCauley sits at a small table, his shirt off, cleans his gun: squirts oil in the chambers, cleans with the wire brush. In the b.g., the TV is on -- a Celtics game.

ANNOUNCER ON TV

Cousy's got the ball, over to Havlicek, inside to Russell...score!

The PHONE rings. He grabs the receiver.

MCCAULEY

Hello?

INTERCUT: SHERRY IN BAILEY'S OFFICE

As McCauley listens -- he can't believe what he hears...

SHERRY

Jimmy, we found the Strangler, a construction worker from Malden. He outsmarted all of us. Albert DeSalvo. We need you to pick up the Chief, he's at a dinner party, he won't leave unless he's dragged out...

MCCAULEY

Albert DeSalvo? Wait, wait...

SHERRY

(cuts him off)
Just pick the Chief up.

EXT. BAILEY'S OFFICE BUILDING - DOWNTOWN NO. BOSTON - NIGHT

McCauley's unmarked car pulls up, he and McNamara get out, in long winter coats.

COMM. MCNAMARA

This goddamn better be worth being dragged down here, goddamnit.

McCauley opens the office door for McNamara.

COMM. MCNAMARA (cont'd)

The Med-Psych committee said two killers, right? One for the old ladies, one for the young girls?

MCCAULEY

That's what they said. It was eight killers.

McNamara stops walking -- looks at McCauley.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Wanna kill a woman, tie a stocking around her neck. I'd bet my badge on it. Sir.

COMM. MCNAMARA

You do have balls, McCauley.

McNamara enters the building.

INT. BAILEY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

McNamara now sits before Bailey -- in a tuxedo. Donovan and Sherry still sit and drink at the round table.

McCauley stands in the back. The "secretaries" offer McNamara a drink -- he passes.

BAILEY

Thank you, girls.

The girls smile and leave, passing McCauley.

COMM. MCNAMARA

This is some place, Lee. Is this a law office or the Playboy Club?

BAILEY

Unlike you suffering civil servants, I don't believe in working in a depressing atmosphere. Now, Ed, before I play you these tapes, we have to set certain conditions.

COMM. MCNAMARA

You're dictating conditions?

BAILEY

This is not admissible evidence. This is attorney-client privilege I am sharing with you -- voluntarily -- in order to prove to you that I am indeed representing the Strangler.

COMM. MCNAMARA

If you're talking about DeSalvo, forget it.

Bailey's mouth just about drops open. As do Donovan's and Sherry's.

COMM. MCNAMARA (cont'd)

The evidence says it's not one man. And I don't make deals. You got the wrong guy. Talk to the D.A.

(angrily -- to Donovan and Sherry)

You pulled me out of a party on a Sunday night for this bullshit? What the hell is the matter with you two? Jesus Christ. Tomorrow morning, both your asses in my office, 8 A.M.

McNamara storms out. Bailey shares a "can-you-believe-that-idiot?" look with Donovan and Sherry.

McCauley sees this -- reacts: suddenly it's a troika of Bailey/Donovan/Sherry.

BAILEY
 Alright. Next. Bottomly.

McCauley notes this -- and leaves.

INTERCUT: BOTTOMLY - ON THE PHONE IN HIS DEN AT HOME

BOTTOMLY
 (his expression says
 otherwise:)
 Well -- this is very exciting news, Lee.
 Very. I look forward to the polygraph...

Bottomly looks concerned. Very concerned.

BAILEY
 In the meantime, here's a brief sample...

Bailey holds out the receiver. Turns on the reel-to-reel
 tape recorder on his desk. Looks at Donovan and Sherry.

ALBERT'S VOICE ON TAPE
 "...on Mary Sullivan I used, uh, three
 things: a stocking, charcoal color --
 an' two scarves, one pink silk, an'
 da other was pink and white with
 flowers..."

Donovan and Sherry share looks, nods. Albert's the guy.

INT. BOSTON POLICE DEPT. - GARAGE - DAY

Donovan & Sherry come out of the elevator. McCauley drives
 up. He hurries out of his car. They walk & talk, quickly --

MCCAULEY
 Wait, wait, you guys have got to
 be fucking joking about DeSalvo...

DONOVAN
 I don't wanna hear it, McCauley...

SHERRY
 You didn't hear the tapes, okay?...

MCCAULEY
 I heard DeSalvo confessing -- twice.
 He was a con-man seducing would-be
 models -- why would this guy start
 whacking old ladies? It makes no sense.

DONOVAN
 He's a rapist!

SHERRY

He raped them at knife-point!

MCCAULEY

Yeah, he's trash, he's scum, that doesn't make him the Boston Strangler.

SHERRY

He knows the layout of every goddamn apartment...

DONOVAN

...the exact size of the blood-stain on Sophie Clark's kotex...things not in the goddamn papers!

MCCAULEY

Jack -- every cop in the state comes up zeros and suddenly F. Lee Bailey single-handedly finds the Strangler? Is this a joke? You're bailing, you've strapped on a parachute...how desperate are you to clear these cases...?!

Donovan wheels about, abruptly --

DONOVAN

One more word you can forget ever coming back to Homicide. Go ahead -- say one more word. Say it!

McCauley quiets. Donovan gets into his car. Slams the door. McCauley looks to Sherry -- with a deep fear of betrayal.

MCCAULEY

We've always known it's not one killer, Eddy. Tell me this is just a bad dream and you haven't lost your mind?

SHERRY

Look, he confessed to thirteen murders -- two more than we even knew. We blew it, we were wrong, he's the guy. And if you had him and didn't play him as a suspect -- I could roast your ass, Detective. Stay out of this. That's an order.

Sherry gets in and they speeds away. McCauley stares after him. Stunned. He's alone in this now.

INT. BOSTON POST - MEGAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Megan sits behind her desk in front of her wide window.

She types a story. On her desk is the Boston Post, front page headline: "WHO KILLED BLACK MUSLIM LEADER MALCOLM X?"

Megan's secretary enters.

SECRETARY

Excuse me, Miss Leary, line two. They say it's urgent.

MEGAN

(lifts receiver, pushes button)
This is Megan Leary.

Megan listens, leans forward. Excited. Amazed.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - OUTSIDE THE FENCE - LATER - DAY

TV NEWS trucks and vans are parked outside -- camera crews are filming Bridgewater. Megan is there, naturally.

TV REPORTER

...the news broken this morning --
an unnamed mental patient here at
Bridgewater State Hospital, has
confessed to...

INT. JUSTICE BUILDING - CORRIDOR - DAY

Brooke and Bottomly walk briskly down the corridor.

BROOKE

Who leaked this?

BOTTOMLY

Boston Homicide or Bailey's office. No
one else knew...sons-a-bitches...

BROOKE

Lee Bailey blatantly marched in and
took over another attorney's client.
That may not be illegal, but it's highly
unethical. Perhaps he'd like me to
bring this to the Bar Association?

BOTTOMLY

Bailey thinks he can hijack credit for
finding the Strangler? John Bottomly
will find the Strangler -- if this nut-
bag is the Strangler!

BROOKE

John. I thought there were two Stranglers. Who's running things -- the Attorney General's office or some North Boston lawyer?

(Bottomly winces)

File an immediate injunction. I want a gag order on this story. Today!

EXT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE STEPS - DAY

Steps of the courthouse are crowded, jammed -- a madhouse.

OVERHEAD WIDE: Print and electronic media -- still photo flashes -- TV camera floodlights. Over two hundred reporters -- from all over the world. Even Tass and Reuters!

Thunder sounds. SWOOP DOWN through this mass of media to find Bottomly and Bailey facing a collection of microphones.

BOTTOMLY

The judge has enforced a gag order -- the patient's name will not be released, he will undergo psychological testing, and the Strangler Task Force, under my personal direction, John Bottomly, shall pursue a full and complete investigation. Are there any questions?

REPORTERS

Mister Bailey, Mister Bailey...

Bottomly reacts unhappily at the rush for only Bailey. McCauley is there -- watches --

BAILEY

As a duly sworn officer of the court I will naturally obey its ruling -- and therefore I am not at liberty to express what I know at this time.

Thunder again. It begins to RAIN.

The crowd begins a frenzied move to get out of the rain. We SEE Megan rushing toward Bottomly & Bailey as they walk away.

Megan is jostled by the commotion -- she's almost knocked over to the ground. Arms reach out and grab her. It's McCauley. She's surprised to see him.

MEGAN

Chivalry isn't dead...

They look at each other a moment. The sexual attraction and tension between them is still there. Commotion around them continues. She speaks over the rain and the clatter.

MEGAN (cont'd)
This is an historic day. The Boston Strangler confessed. Guess you'll have to change your wallpaper now.

The rain starts to really pour down on them. Both react. Megan opens her umbrella and hurries away.

McCauley watches her reach Bailey -- and she and Bailey enter the courthouse together.

McCauley, heavily rained on, turns and walks away.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - ANOTHER DAY

News crews are gone. A caravan of three unmarked police vehicles drive up.

INT. BRIDGEWATER - VISITING ROOM OFF G-WARD - DAY

Dimly lit. The Bottomly party -- Donovan, Sherry, DiNatale and McCauley -- joined by Robey. Thru a large window we see into the G-WARD Day Room.

Two women -- MRS. LULKA and MISS WILSING -- study the inmates through the window. Mrs. Lulka is middle-aged, black. We watch her as Bottomly whispers to Robey.

BOTTOMLY
Marcella Lulka was Sophie Clark's neighbor. The evening of the murder a "Mr. Thompson" knocked on Mrs. Lulka's door, and claimed to be a painter sent by the super. When he learned her husband was home, he hurried away.

PAN -- to see Miss Wilsing, mid-30's, white.

BOTTOMLY (cont'd)
Erika Wilsing is the only survivor we believe of a Strangler attack -- she bit his hand so badly, he rushed out. But she's been in shock, hasn't been able to recall his face. These are the only two possible witnesses to the Strangler. This is a big day. Big day. I'm reclaiming this case from Bailey, here and now.

DONOVAN

Ladies -- whenever you're ready...

BOTTOMLY

Lieutenant, if you don't mind...this
is my bailiwick. Ladies. Do you
recognize that man at the table?

The two women step close to the window. Survey the inmates.
Albert sits at a card-table -- telling tall tales.

BOTTOMLY (cont'd)

Mrs. Lulka?

MRS. LULKA

(studies Albert, at the glass)
No -- it's not him.

BOTTOMLY

(surprised)
It's not? You're certain?

MRS. LULKA

I'm old. I'm not blind.

BOTTOMLY

(nods -- recovers -- moves on)
Miss Wilsing? Is that the man whose
hand you bit?

MISS WILSING

No.

BOTTOMLY

No?

Donovan, Sherry, Bottomly -- are surprised. McCauley is more
than interested. Robey is amused.

MISS WILSING

But that other man looks very
familiar.

All perk up.

BOTTOMLY

Which other man?

MISS WILSING

That man there, leaning against the
wall.

She points. George Nassar leans against the far wall.

MRS. LULKA

Yes, yes, I was thinking the same thing. If his hair was light brown 'stead of black -- he could be the man who said he was Mr. Thompson.

BOTTOMLY

(...what?...)
You're positive of this?

MRS. LULKA

I said I was old. Not blind.

MISS WILSING

Yes. I've seen him before, too.

The men exchange looks. What the hell is this?

BOTTOMLY

Thank you, ladies, for coming down...
could you please wait outside for a
-- thank you...

The ladies go. Bottomly, DiNatale, Donovan, Sherry look stunned. McCauley watches, chews gum.

BOTTOMLY (cont'd)

You know -- okay -- nothing in this case goes as expected, but remember ... DeSalvo knows things only the killer could know...

DR. ROBEY

Oh? I understand this case has sprung more leaks than the Titanic.

DINATALE

(an attempt)
Look...Nassar's face was splashed all over the press when he was arrested...

BOTTOMLY

Right, this could be a misidentification by two, confused, foggy, hostile women.

DR. ROBEY

Or -- George Nassar's one of the real Boston Stranglers. Plural.

BOTTOMLY

(pause --)
Christ, I'm getting a pain right here.

SHERRY

Your Task Force checked Nassar out, he doesn't fit any killing!

DONOVAN

This is nuts. For Christ's sake, DeSalvo voluntarily confessed! Why would anyone confess to these horrible murders, if you're not the guy?

As Robey speaks -- PUSH CLOSE thru the glass on Albert.

DR. ROBEY

Beside the reward money and avoiding prison?...Albert has a pathological need to become a watch-word on everyone's lips: the Measuring Man, the Green Man...the Boston Strangler ...what's the difference? To misquote Shakespeare... something's rotten in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

ON DONOVAN --

DONOVAN

With all due respect -- this is a load of shit. Sitting right there is the Boston Strangler. Forget these broads, I heard Bailey's tapes.

MCCAULEY

You know, I'm no lawyer, but normally -- doesn't a defense attorney try to convince you his client is not guilty?

Donovan stares daggers at McCauley. Even Sherry stares daggers.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

You guys don't get this yet? This isn't about murdered women anymore.

BOTTOMLY

Let me just assure everyone of one thing: Lee Bailey is not in charge of this case -- the buck stops with John Bottomly.

DONOVAN

Fine. It's your mess. You screw it up.

Donovan nods to Sherry, they go. Bottomly looks to Robey.

BOTTOMLY

Okay. Uh, our shrinks -- and Bailey's -- will be marching through here to examine DeSalvo. I'll be in touch.

Bottomly, DiNatale go. McCauley holds back alone with Robey.

MCCAULEY

DeSalvo's not bright enough to think this up himself. Nassar?

DR. ROBEY

Albert has a photographic memory -- George has a genius I.Q. Albert's a perfectly manipulated pawn. But they can't seriously hope to pull this off -- can they?

McCauley looks thru the window. PUSH CLOSE thru the glass on Albert. Telling stories -- bragging and laughing. Nassar stands against the wall, coolly, smokes a cigarette.

MCCAULEY

Bailey believes them. And Donovan. Even Sherry who's a great cop. They can pull this off.

(pause)

We've got ourselves -- a hoax.

INT. BRIDGEWATER - G-WARD - ANOTHER DAY

ALBERT -- is on a wall pay phone.

IRMGARD (ON THE PHONE)

Al? Is that you?

ALBERT

Oh, honey, geez, it's so good to hear your voice. I thought I'd never talk to you again...

IRMGARD (ON THE PHONE)

How deeply insane are you exactly...?

ALBERT

Honey, honey, look, I know what I'm... I'm doin' this for you an' da kids...

IRMGARD (ON THE PHONE)

You are saying you are the Boston Strangler for me and the children? Do you realize how this will destroy them?!

ALBERT
Irmgard, honey, please...

IRMGARD (ON THE PHONE)
(quickly calms down)
No, Al, no, you listen very carefully.
If you do not stop telling these
monstrous lies, you will never see Judy
and Michael again. I will disappear,
I swear to God, Al. I swear to God!

Slam. She hangs up. Albert is shaken -- we FOLLOW Albert as
he returns to the G-Ward Day Room and sits -- all alone.

GUARD
(walks up)
You hear the news, Al? Bailey lost
Nassar's murder trial -- He's off to
Walpole for life.

This is bad news for Albert.

INT. TASK FORCE CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Bottomly paces in his office. The whole Task Force has
gathered. Including a New York WRITER, who takes notes.

BOTTOMLY
God, this case gives me such a head-
ache...I feel it in my ass.
(to the Writer)
Don't write that. Not that I don't
want your book to be 100% accurate...
(to the group)
What happened with Bailey's hypno-
analyst from L.A.?

DINATALE
He saw Albert, he found nothing...of
course what the hell is a hypnoanalyst?

BOTTOMLY
How the hell do I know? I'm...I'm
flummoxed. Alright: Nassar's the
Strangler or one of the Stranglers,
he's told DeSalvo everything, or --
DeSalvo's the Strangler or one of the
Stranglers and he confessed to Nassar
-- or they're both the Strangler --
or neither one's the Strangler...

MCCAULEY
Bingo. We have a winner.

BOTTOMLY

What about the two hour confession?
Donovan and Sherry signed off on it.

MCCAULEY

They heard pieces. No one's heard the
whole thing except Bailey.

THE WRITER

Excuse me, just for my own clarification
-- no one's heard DeSalvo's full
confession except his own lawyer?

BOTTOMLY

I was about to bring that up.

DINATALE

I'm on it. Bailey's agreed to let me
and Donovan interrogate DeSalvo --
the only proviso is the confession is
legally inadmissible.

BOTTOMLY

Bailey's already arranged this...? F.
Lee Bailey's deciding who interviews
DeSalvo? No, no, no, no -- John
Bottomly decides who interviews DeSalvo.

INT. TASK FORCE OFFICE HALLWAY - DAY

McCauley walks up to DiNatale in the hallway.

MCCAULEY

John Bottomly decided. He chose...
John Bottomly.

EXT. BRIDGEWATER - SUMMERTIME - DAY

MUSIC up: The Rolling Stones' *Get Off My Cloud*. (#1 hit
then). Bottomly drives through the gates as Mick Jagger
sings "...two's a crowd on my cloud, baby, yeah!"

SUPER: AUGUST 19, 1965.

INT. BRIDGEWATER - CORRIDOR - DAY

Guards escort Bottomly, with his briefcase and tape recorder,
into the private visitor's room.

INT. BRIDGEWATER VISITOR'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Bottomly sets up his tape recorder. The door opens.

Albert, in his Bridgewater blues, is led into the room by a beefy orderly. The orderly leaves, closes the door. Bottomly offers his hand.

BOTTOMLY

Hello, Albert. John Bottomly.

ALBERT

Mistah Bottomly. Al DeSalvo. You're tall for a white guy.

MUSIC: Out!

ALBERT & BOTTOMLY - LATER

(NOTE: From the confession transcripts:)

BOTTOMLY

You see, normally the Attorney General isn't involved in a homicide, that's left to the District Attorney. He took it over and handed it to me -- "go solve that problem."

ALBERT

In other words, he gave you something you couldn't handle?

BOTTOMLY

I don't know. Here we are. Maybe we could handle it. Although, to be perfectly honest, I'm not convinced you murdered all these women, Albert.

ALBERT

Sometimes, it's hard for me to believe it myself. But this could mean a lot to society, you know -- for me to tell da truth and get studied inna hospital ...so to maybe help somebody else in da future.

(beat, in all sincerity)

I feel -- at least this way -- these women, I don't believe, will have died in vain.

INT. TASK FORCE OFFICES - NIGHT

Late. McCauley and DiNatale, alone at the conference table -- reading thru TWO, THICK SPIRAL NOTEBOOKS: Albert's confession.

MCCAULEY

This is unbelievable...

(OFF DiNatale's nods --)

DeSalvo only knows what's in the papers and he repeats mistakes that were in the papers. And Bottomly doesn't know fuck-all about an interrogation -- he showed him crime scene photos...

EXT. STORROW DRIVE - NIGHT

Spring. McCauley and Sherry walk along Storrow Drive -- which runs alongside the Charles River. Across the water, the lights of Cambridge twinkle at night. Sherry smokes.

MCCAULEY

That's how he knew everything -- his photographic memory, he memorized Megan Leary's *Strangler Checklist*.

SHERRY

A sixty hour confession -- he knows thousands of details, and this is your proof?

They reach McCauley's car -- McCauley reaches in and pulls out one of the Thick Spiral Notebooks.

MCCAULEY

No one outside the Task Force is supposed to see these. I want you to look at this, Eddy.

McCauley rests the spiral notebook on the roof of his car.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Pick any page.

SHERRY

(smokes)

No. You pick for me.

McCauley opens randomly to a page.

MCCAULEY

Be warned, sometimes Bottomly practically feeds him the answers. Other times they sound like Abbott and Costello. Dig some of this...

BACK TO ALBERT & BOTTOMLY --

in the interview room. (NOTE: All verbatim.)

BOTTOMLY

Okay. Now -- so when you grabbed Blake, you probably fell back into the kitchen, in the kitchen area, I mean...

ALBERT

(agrees)
In da kitchen area...

BOTTOMLY

Boy, there must have been a thud when the two of you hit the ground?

ALBERT

(agrees --)
Oh, yeah -- she was a big woman. Big.

QUICK CUT TO:

ALBERT (cont'd)

I can't understand why I didn't put Anna Slessers in da tub when she was taking a bath and why did I put Mrs. Sullivan in da tub when she was taking a bath? Just like why did I leave a broom and a bottle? Everything was done differently. I didn't follow no pattern, I dunno what I was thinking...

BOTTOMLY

Well you, you can only recall so much here...

QUICK CUT TO:

BOTTOMLY (cont'd)

One thing I've noticed --

ALBERT

What?

BOTTOMLY

-- is the older women don't disturb you like the other women.

ALBERT

Oh, yeah. They don't bother me at all. But da young ones, I can't see that... I can't see hurting no girls, nobody.

(MORE)

ALBERT (cont'd)
 (realizes his slip -- covers:)
 I mean, what a helluva feeling to know
 that you really hurt somebody. It kills
 me, boy.

QUICK CUT TO:

ALBERT (cont'd)
 So Irmgard -- you see? She felt like,
 by giving me food and this and that,
 I was completely contented, or just
 giving me a hand job. What is that
 there? That's no good.

BOTTOMLY
 Well, it's not, that's not life.

ALBERT
 Right, right. How did she talk about
 me? What kind of attitude did she say?

BOTTOMLY
 She was, couldn't praise you enough. Not
 possible...She just doesn't believe it.

ALBERT
 (a knowing nod)
 She still cares for me in many ways.

QUICK CUT TO:

BOTTOMLY
 Do you remember a wastebasket in Anna's
 kitchen? Do you see a wastebasket?
 (OFF Al's struggles to
 remember)
 Do you see a table?

ALBERT
 Ah, there is ah...I can picture this,
 um...wastebasket? I don't recall.
 But I do remember what her bedroom set
 looked like...

INTERCUT: IN BLACK & WHITE NOW: McCauley and Sherry at the
 crime scene, in the hallway, near Anna Slessler's body. The
 turned over wastebasket is visible behind them.

MCCAULEY (V.O.)
 Remember the wastebasket? DeSalvo
 didn't, 'cause it wasn't in Megan
 Leary's *Checklist*.

BACK TO MCCAULEY & SHERRY

SHERRY
 (not buying)
 Maybe he forgot. How could he describe
 her apartment? Her furniture?

MCCAULEY
 Three ways. Details in the papers --
 (flips thru pages)
 -- two, he used to visit the crime
 scenes, he admitted this to Robey, he
 practically admits it here...

BACK TO ALBERT & BOTTOMLY

ALBERT
 You see what I do, I remember a
 complete apartment in detail, right?
 This you could say well, you coulda
 went there just for da hell of it,
 looked at da apartment and remembered
 this...I understand your way of
 thinking.

BACK TO MCCAULEY & SHERRY

MCCAULEY
 (OFF a page in the notebook:)
 Three -- Bottomly, that genius of
 interrogation, showed him the crime
 scene photos to "jog his memory"...

BACK TO ALBERT & BOTTOMLY

Bottomly lays out crime scene photos onto the table.

BOTTOMLY
 Alright, go into these photographs
 that I've showed you previously...they
 are numbered photographs, ah, you had
 an opportunity to refresh your
 recollection ...

SHERRY (V.O.)
 This is high school, debate team crap.

BACK TO MCCAULEY & SHERRY

SHERRY (cont'd)
 You read a few sentences - you claiming
 he faked through a thousand pages?

MCCAULEY
 Yes. Pick a murder. Any murder.

SHERRY

You want to play? OK. Ida Irga, 75 years old. The lady whose feet were left up on the chairs.

INTERCUT: IN BLACK & WHITE NOW: A quick series of still photos of the murder scene -- McCauley, Donovan, Sherry, the victim's legs on chairs -- some of these we've seen before.

ALBERT (V.O.)

These two chairs, I remember taking them and laying them down on their backs and I put her legs up there.

BOTTOMLY (V.O.)

Where'd you get the chairs? From the dining room?

BACK TO ALBERT & BOTTOMLY

ALBERT

From da dining room...right.

BOTTOMLY

Well, then you fixed her legs?

ALBERT

Right. Opened.

Bottomly nods, looks at the black-and-white crime photos -- pictures Albert at the crime scene now, in black and white.

BOTTOMLY

What kind of sex act did you perform with her, any?

Albert at the crime scene, in black and white answers:

ALBERT

No, nothing on her.

BOTTOMLY

Nothing at all?

Albert -- back in color, in the interview room.

ALBERT

(sees it is the wrong answer -- quickly changes his tune:)

I had intercourse with her but when you said to me "sex act" right, I know what you're trying to have me...

BOTTOMLY

No, no. No, I'm not -- any kind --
normal or abnormal -- ?

ALBERT

(watches Bottomly carefully --
checks to see if he's giving
the right answer)
Yeah, I had a -- I think I had
intercourse with her.

BOTTOMLY

Well, what do you mean by intercourse?
Does that mean you ejaculated in some
manner?

(OFF Albert's hesitation)

Was it inside her or outside or what?

ALBERT

(clearly doesn't know the
answer)
This is da most baffling thing, this
is what bothers me.

BOTTOMLY

Do you remember having intercourse
with her or do you just want to
remember it now?

Albert's having real trouble with this one.

ALBERT

I know how, how I set her up. I
remember taking her clothes apart,
ripping them, right?

Now Bottomly stands with Albert inside the black and white
photos at the crime scene:

BOTTOMLY

Yes. Oh, you set her up after you
strangled her with the pillowcase?

ALBERT

Yes, after I strangled her with da
pillowcase...
(struggles to remember,
searches Bottomly's face for
clues --)
I - I'm trying to be sure about
everything I say.

BOTTOMLY

Uh-huh.

ALBERT

Uhhh -- I - I would say yes, I had inserted my penis inside her and ejaculated I would say.

Bottomly & Albert back, in color, in the interview room.

BOTTOMLY

But you don't sound very positive to me.

ALBERT

It's - to me, it's sickening to talk about this.

MCCAULEY (V.O.)

One small problem. Ida wasn't raped.

BACK TO MCCAULEY & SHERRY

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

None of the old ladies were raped, you know that. Why doesn't the killer know that? Want more: Sophie Clark, cigarettes and semen -- Albert didn't mention the semen. See, it's tough to remember jerking off on a carpet if you didn't read about it first in the *Boston Post*.

SHERRY

You remember every time you jerked off?

MCCAULEY

Oh, come on, Eddy...

SHERRY

He knew about her kotex, which wasn't in any goddamn paper -- way back when Bailey taped him! -- and before he saw any crime scene photos. Explain that.

MCCAULEY

Rumors on the street --

SHERRY

Rumors, oh, that's solid police work, now I'm convinced --

MCCAULEY

Beverly Samans, stabbed 21 times with
her own kitchen knife. Albert said...

QUICK CROSS-CUTTING TO ALBERT:

ALBERT

About five or six times, seven.

BACK TO MCCAULEY & SHERRY

MCCAULEY

...with his own push-button knife! The
Cambridge cops found the knife in her
sink, DeSalvo said he threw it in a
swamp...

SHERRY

All right! Enough! I don't give a shit!

McCauley's stunned into silence.

SHERRY (cont'd)

So maybe he didn't kill the Samans girl.
Maybe he only killed half of 'em and he
wants all the credit. I don't give a
shit! You know what matters? The
murders stopped!

MCCAULEY

The real doers are still out there...
what kinda cop are you anyway?

SHERRY

I'm an old cop -- and I'm tired. And
I'm sick of hearing about this. You're
not the Attorney General, this isn't
your problem.

MCCAULEY

The truth isn't my problem...?

SHERRY

Does it matter if he killed Mary
Sullivan or not? If Christian Coles
killed her, we can't arrest him anyway!
The public wants the Boston Strangler.
They'll sleep better at night. Here
he is. The truth of this case is not
up to you -- we're cops, that's all.
Albert DeSalvo is trash. For once,
Jimmy, just do your job and shut the
hell up!

McCauley has been cowed. He stands there. Says nothing.

SHERRY (cont'd)
 (pauses, calms himself)
 You ever read *Moby Dick*? The guy
 obsessed with the whale -- goes down.

Sherry walks away. Gets into his car. Drives off. McCauley stands there, looks out to the Charles River. Chews his gum.

BACK TO ALBERT & BOTTOMLY - (NOTE: verbatim)

BOTTOMLY
 Well -- we have to corroborate what
 you're saying in every way we can.

ALBERT
 Yeah.

BOTTOMLY
 See, this is the big thing, Albert.
 There's got to be some things here
 that are provable.

ALBERT
 Yeah.

BOTTOMLY
 Because if we get to the point where
 all we know is what you've told us
 -- we're gonna be in trouble.

Albert stares at Bottomly. Bottomly stares at Albert.
 Albert nods, slowly -- he understands.

INT. ATTY. GENERAL BROOKE'S OFFICE - DAY

Brooke and Bottomly meeting.

SUPER: APRIL, 1966

BROOKE
 We're in trouble. Eight months.
 Eight months and you can't find one
 piece of corroborating evidence?
 (Bottomly shakes his head "no")
 Did DeSalvo kill anyone?

BOTTOMLY
 He might have...accidentally. An old,
 old woman had a heart attack, Al wept
 when he spoke about it. It was an
 uncomfortable moment for me...

BROOKE

(stares -- can't believe this)
I'm running for the Senate, John. I
am a Republican in Kennedy country.
Not to mention, I am a Negro. The
public believes the Strangler is in
Bridgewater. If I announce we don't
have him after all this time, I will
be extremely unpopular.

(pause)

Without that gag order, this office
would appear completely incompetent.

BOTTOMLY

You're saying that's my fault?! I
never wanted this goddamn job in the...
(spills coffee on his pants)
Ah, son of a bitch!

Brooke's SECRETARY enters the room.

BROOKE'S SECRETARY

Excuse me, Mr. Brooke. Barbara Walters
on line two for you.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - DAY

McCauley sits at the counter, sips coffee. Opens the Boston
Post to the story on Page Three: "BOTTOMLY RESIGNS FROM
STRANGLER TASK FORCE" BY MEGAN LEARY." With her photo.

MCCAULEY -- on the coffee shop's wall pay phone --

MCCAULEY

Megan Leary -- Detective McCauley,
Homicide...Where is she?

INT. FANCY RESTAURANT - DAY

McCauley enters, it's busy with the elite crowd. In his
brown suit, he's under-dressed. He walks right past the
Maitre d'.

MAITRE D'

Excuse me, sir, have you a reservation?

MCCAULEY

(flashes his badge)
I wouldn't eat in a dump like this.

AT A CORNER BOOTH -- in conversation with a WHITE-HAIRED
GENTLEMAN in his 70's, is Megan.

Dressed elegantly, hair piled up on her head. She looks beautiful. McCauley walks up, reaches Megan.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
Excuse me, Miss Leary...?
(flashes his badge, to the
White-Haired Gentleman)
Official business. You'll excuse us
a moment?

The White-Haired Gentleman is surprised -- Megan is dumbfounded.

WHITE-HAIRED GENTLEMAN
If you need any help, my dear, let me
know.

The White-Haired Gentleman stands and walks away. McCauley slides into the booth. Megan can't believe this.

MEGAN
McCauley, goddamnit, do you know who
that was?

MCCAULEY
Your husband? Wait, Fred Astaire?

MEGAN
Try a federal judge.

MCCAULEY
You his nurse?

MEGAN
Why are you here?

McCauley tosses the *Boston Post* onto the table.

MCCAULEY
A gag order is still in effect on the
Strangler, but you're printing
information no one else has. You don't
get leaks, you get the whole fountain.
Maybe I'm here to arrest you.

MEGAN
(can't believe this)
I called them rumors.

MCCAULEY
Are they true? Bailey's making a deal
with Brooke to try the confessed Boston
Strangler? Are they true?

Megan pauses. She grabs her drink off the table.

MEGAN

Yes. It's true.

MCCAULEY

It's a fine thing when Boston's answer
to Lois Lane knows more than the cops.
But the important thing is you're
feasting on caviar that costs more
than my furniture.

He looks at her -- she looks back at him. Does she still
care for him? It seems that way. Then she covers it.

MEGAN

What do you want from me? An apology
for caring more about my own career
than for a seven grand a year civil
servant who has a talented penis?

MCCAULEY

You're not just ambitious, are you?
You're shallow. I told you the truth,
your whole career is based on a work of
fiction. You're a lost soul, Megan.

MEGAN

How profound -- for an ignorant cop.
Anything else?

MCCAULEY

Yeah. Break the gag order again, next
time your picture's in the paper it'll
be your mug shot.

McCauley rises and walks away. Megan sits there, mixed
emotions of anger, regret --

MUSIC: Martha & the Vandellas' *Nowhere to Run* plays OVER:

INT. BRIDGEWATER - G-WARD - DAY

Albert sits alone -- stares off into space. Robey walks up.
Holds hard-cover book: *THE BOSTON STRANGLER* BY GEROLD FRANK.

DR. ROBEY

I've read through this book, Albert.
I see you've claimed to have raped
over 2,000 women. Tell me -- when
did you find the time?

ALBERT
 (matter-of-fact)
 Weekends.

INT. BACK BAY BAR - NIGHT

McCauley sits at the bar. MUHAMMAD ALI on the b&w TV tells reporters: "I ain't got no quarrel with them Viet Cong."

A book lands on top of the bar. Sherry stands there. McCauley looks at the book: *THE BOSTON STRANGLER*.

SHERRY
 It's official. DeSalvo's been publicly
 named as the Strangler.

MCCAULEY
 Really? You think we oughta arrest
 him for it?

Sherry signals the bartender for a drink. McCauley flips
 thru the book

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 Well, we have officially entered *The*
Twilight Zone. Bottomly's resigned...
 and Bailey and Brooke have brokered a
 deal to try DeSalvo not as the Strangler,
 but for the Green Man assaults.
 (lifts his glass in toast)
 Cheers.

Nowhere to Run continues over:

EXT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

It's a mob scene. Unbelievable -- crowded like the
 Thanksgiving Day Macy's Parade.

F. Lee Bailey arrives with his assistant, Burnim -- stops and
 poses for pictures. Megan stands with a photographer.
 Winter coats. It's cold.

SUPER: JANUARY 13, 1967

MEGAN
 (to the photographer)
 Look at this! It's the biggest trial
 in Massachusetts since the Salem
 Witch Hunts. Incredible!

INT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS - DAY

Second floor. Absolute MADNESS. A mob scene. Reporters, photographers, cameras, floodlights -- people packed like sardines, clamoring to get in.

McCauley fights his way through to the door. He passes TV REPORTER who interviews TEENAGE GIRLS who wait to get in.

TV REPORTER

Why are you hoping to get into the trial?

GIRLS

Are you kidding?...Come on...This'll be better than reading a racy novel...

McCauley hears this, shakes his head. (NOTE: This was an actual exchange between a TV Reporter and young girls.)

INT. THE COURTHOUSE

McCauley shows his badge, is allowed in. The courtroom has seating for 150 spectators -- half of them press. The place is filled to capacity.

Albert is led by County Deputies to the Defense Table -- where Bailey, Burnim and Asgeirsson wait. Albert's all spiffed up -- a dark suit, his thick hair combed high in front and slicked back. He is overcome with awe at the scene all around him.

McCauley takes a seat in the back row, next to DiNatale. *Nowhere to Run* fades out.

DINATALE

Nice madhouse.

MCCAULEY

Human nature's a beautiful thing, isn't it? Albert's fifteen minutes -- he looks good. Kinda like Elvis in *Viva Las Vegas*.

DINATALE

Never saw it. I saw *Kissin' Cousins*. This is the hottest ticket in town.

MCCAULEY

Brooke's in the Senate. DeSalvo and Bailey have their moment in the sun. The press have their spectacle. Life in Boston is good.

AT THE DEFENSE TABLE --

ALBERT

(looks around --)

I can feel da tenseness and da drama...
Any of my brothers or sisters here?
Any of my family?

BAILEY

Uh, no, Albert, they've all elected to
stay away. The notoriety, they said
you would understand.

ALBERT

(hurt)

Oh, yeah, yeah. Sure. Sure.

SLOW PUSH on Albert -- he looks around --

ALBERT'S POV -- the crowd piles into the courtroom --
excited, loud, uncomfortably loud -- with all the excitement
of going to an old-fashioned public hanging.

ALBERT -- he's all alone. No family, no friends. This is
where his actions have led him. A momentary down -- then he
looks on the bright side. We SEE this change happen.

ALBERT (cont'd)

Hey, is that da singer Connie Francis?
I read she was in town. This is very
nice of her to stop by. She's a
headliner.

BAILEY

Now you understand my strategy, Albert?
I will endeavor to prove that you are
not guilty by reason of insanity, by
any means at my disposal.

ALBERT

Oh, yeah, yeah. Two years I been ready
for John Hopkins. I have full trust in
you, Mistah Bailey.

MEGAN -- sits in the front row. She chats with a colleague.
This is her big day, too. The JURY enters. All white males.

MEGAN

(to reporter beside her)

See the jury? They thought the trial
might be unfit for female ears.

THE JUDGE enters.

BAILIFF

All rise.

THE COURTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Megan writes notes.

MEGAN (V.O.)

Day one. Opening statements.

BAILEY -- addresses the jury -- a real showman.

(1ST NOTE: Bailey's speech is verbatim from transcripts.)

(2ND NOTE: the courtroom relied upon microphones. There is a microphone at the witness stand, and each lawyer has a hand-mike. It was said Bailey wields it with the expertise and panache of Tony Bennett.)

BAILEY

...He was released early in June of 1962 and went home with anticipation to pick up the home life that had been interrupted...but his wife said, "No, Albert, oh no, you are not going to come back into marriage until you prove yourself again."

(beat)

Immediately the defendant reverted to the reprehensible conduct of before... only by this time the sexual drive was so pent up within him that not only did he perpetuate crimes of mere measuring and assaults...but for a period of 18 months, he committed 13 acts of homicide. These were done by a completely uncontrollable vegetable walking around in a human body.

Albert sits, arms folded, doesn't seem to mind being called a completely uncontrolled vegetable. The prosecutor, DONALD CONN -- tall, dark hair, 30's, minds.

DONALD CONN

Objection! The defendant is on trial for robbery and assault, not murder!

CLOSE ON - *The Boston Post*. Full front page headline blares:

"DESALVO IS THE STRANGLER! BAILEY BARES 13 MURDERS IN 18 MONTHS AS ACTS OF AN INSANE MAN". (NOTE: Actual headline.)

Two photos of Albert -- one from the courtroom, and one his mug shot -- also adorn the front page. WE ARE --

EXT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COURTHOUSE - DAY

Repeat madhouse. Spectators fight to enter. McCauley stands on the steps, looks at the *Boston Post*.

Megan walks up with a few colleagues. Passes McCauley. They share a quick, tense look, then she continues on.

McCauley spits his gum onto the paper, folds it, trashes it, and enters the courthouse.

Donald Conn and associates walk up the steps, speaks to TV reporters.

DONALD CONN

Defense counsel is attempting to prove DeSalvo is not guilty by reason of insanity. My job is to prove that DeSalvo is a merely a cunning crook, and that's all he is...

INT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY COURTROOM - DAY

Victim MRS. CARSON -- on the witness stand.

(NOTE: Testimony from court documents.)

MRS. CARSON

He held the knife to my throat and said, I have even got an old lady but the police don't know about it.

DONALD CONN

What did the defendant ask you then?

SUZANNE MILLS -- on the witness stand.

SUZANNE MILLS

He asked me, "Where do you keep your silk stockings around here?" I told him I don't have any, that I don't wear stockings this time of year. Then I saw him go across the room -- and he was masturbating.

Albert looks around, shrugs like that isn't such a bad thing. Bailey is doing the questioning.

BAILEY
Silk stockings, such as those employed
by the Boston Strangler?

DONALD CONN
Objection.

BAILEY
Withdrawn.

EXT. COURTHOUSE - END OF DAY

Albert is led out and into a waiting car. Young girl
spectators rush to the car.

GIRLS
There he is...there's the Strangler!
...Hey, Albert...

In the back seat of the car -- Albert smiles and waves.
FLASH! FLASH! FLASH! The photographers capture the moment.

McCauley witnesses this. Nods. Albert's dream come true.

INT. THE COURTHOUSE - ANOTHER DAY

The trial resumes. Megan writes her notes.

MEGAN
Day five. Duelling psychiatrists.

DR. JAMES BRUSSEL on the stand. (Of the Med-Psych Committee.)

(NOTE: Testimony from court documents.)

DR. BRUSSEL
Mr. DeSalvo was born into a household
marked by sexual distortion. The
father was quite sadistic to all the
children...This was the genesis, I
believe, of his schizophrenia.
(beat)
He also possessed a sex drive that was
insatiable -- and one rare in the
annals of psychiatry.

Albert looks -- what's that look? Pride? McCauley sees this,
reacts. Yeah, it's pride. Albert looks around, beaming.

BAILEY
Was the defendant at the time of these
acts able to determine right from wrong?

DR. BRUSSEL
He was not able to.

BAILEY
At the time Mr. DeSalvo committed these acts, was he reacting under an impulse?

DR. BRUSSEL
He was reacting to an insatiable, compulsive drive.

BAILEY
Was that drive controllable, or uncontrollable?

DR. BRUSSEL
It was irresistible.

DR. ROBEY -- on the witness stand.

(NOTE: Testimony from court documents.)

DONALD CONN
On the dates in question, is it your opinion that the defendant knew right from wrong, or was he laboring under an irresistible impulse?

DR. ROBEY
In my opinion Mr. DeSalvo knew that his conduct was criminally and morally wrong, and he was not laboring under an irresistible impulse.

DONALD CONN
In your opinion, has Mr. DeSalvo ever been driven by an irresistible impulse?

DR. ROBEY
The only irresistible impulse I believe he suffers from is his desire to be known as the Boston Strangler.

Bailey and Albert don't like this. McCauley smiles.

CUT TO:

Bailey now questions Robey.

BAILEY

Is it not a fact, Doctor, that on your initial determination of Mr. DeSalvo's competency, your diagnosis was that he was a paranoid schizophrenic?

DR. ROBEY

Yes, that's true.

BAILEY

(indignant)

But now today you have suddenly decided that Mr. DeSalvo is not mentally ill after all -- because you feel you had been taken in?

DR. ROBEY

Yes.

BAILEY

You're asking us to believe that Albert conned you? The Chief Psychiatrist at the state run mental hospital?

DR. ROBEY

That's exactly what I'm trying to say.

IN THE COURTROOM - End of the day. People are filing out. Bailey gathers his papers beside Albert.

ALBERT

Mistah Bailey, when are you gonna put me on da stand? I wanna tell my story.

BAILEY

I don't think that's advisable, Albert.

Albert reacts stunned -- not what he's been expecting.

INT. COURTHOUSE HALLWAY - AFTERNOON

The courtroom empties out. Robey comes out, looks wiped out. McCauley approaches him.

MCCAULEY

Dr. Robey. Thank you for being the voice of reason in the wilderness.

DR. ROBEY

One thing about the wilderness, Detective -- it can get very lonely.

INT. THE COURTHOUSE - NEXT DAY

Bailey is in mid-closing statement to the jury. (NOTE: Verbatim.)

BAILEY

...I am going to ask you to discount the testimony of one witness for his lack of professionalism and candor... If, as Shakespeare said, "Let's kill off the lawyers", I say, well, let's kill off the psychiatrists, too.

INT. THE COURTHOUSE - NEXT DAY

The Judge instructs the jury. As he speaks, CUT AROUND the courtroom: Albert, Bailey, Donald Conn, Megan and McCauley.

THE JUDGE

There are three possible verdicts you can bring back: guilty, not guilty and not guilty by reason of insanity. It is essential that you decide the guilt or lack of guilt on the ten indictments before us and on these charges only. The defendant is not on trial for homicide, nor is he on trial for rape. He is on trial for the offenses set forth in the indictment, and these only.

INT. MIDDLESEX COUNTY JAIL - DAY

Albert in his holding cell, wears prison issue.

He sits and reads aloud the *Boston Post* -- the full front page headline reads: "JURY HOLDS STRANGLER'S FATE" -- with a photo of Albert in the police van. (NOTE: Actual headline and newspaper copy.)

ALBERT

"This Sunday -- da F. Lee Baileys at Home -- a report as bright and informal as da Baileys really are... Da color cover shows da family relaxing before a blazing fire...?"

DeSalvo puts down the paper, annoyed. His expression asks: whose trial is this anyway? A JAIL GUARD walks up.

JAIL GUARD

They're ready, Al.

ALBERT

So soon? It's only three hours...

INT. THE COURTHOUSE - LATER

Everyone there. Courtroom is packed. Albert, Bailey and Burnim are on their feet.

JURY FOREMAN

We find the defendant...guilty.

Reactions: Albert, Bailey, McCauley, Megan -- the rumbling reaction in the courthouse begins --

THE JUDGE

Albert DeSalvo, being found guilty by a jury of your peers...I hereby sentence you to life imprisonment without possibility of parole, to be served at the maximum security facility at MCI-Walpole.

The judge bangs his gavel. Hubbub, major crowd reaction now. Megan and reporters rush out for the phones. The prosecutors congratulate themselves. Albert is in shock.

ALBERT

(numb)

Life? Mr. Bailey, what happened to John Hopkins, my million dollars?

BAILEY

Don't worry, Al. We'll win on appeal. This conviction will never hold up. Trust me.

But Al's face says it all: this wasn't supposed to happen.

The Cambridge cops come and cuff Albert and start to lead him away. McCauley pushes his way through the hub-bub to Albert.

MCCAULEY

DeSalvo!

The cops pause a moment, wait for McCauley to reach them.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Well, your big plan failed, didn't it? No cushy hospital, no big money -- before you confessed to Bailey, your lawyer was gonna plead you four-to-seven, out in five. Not bad for a rapist.

(MORE)

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 Now you've fucked yourself for life, you
 dumbshit pervert. Life!

Albert hates hearing this.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)
 You got one chance. Tell the truth.

ALBERT
 (desperate shot:)
 Lee says we'll win on appeal.

MCCAULEY
 Don't you get it, you asshole? No
 judge, no jury, no parole board will
 ever release the Boston Strangler!

Albert hates hearing this worse -- The cops push open the
 door and yank Albert out the courtroom. McCauley follows.

INT. HALLWAY - BEHIND THE COURTROOM - CONTINUOUS

It's suddenly quieter here, the hub-bub of the courtroom is
 shut out. McCauley grabs Albert by the arm, turns him to
 face him.

MCCAULEY
 Look me in the eyes and tell me you're
 the Strangler. Look me in the eyes --
 and tell me you're the Boston Strangler.

Albert looks McCauley in the eyes -- a long moment of silence
 filled with Albert almost about to -- but he says nothing.

CAMBRIDGE COP
 Let's go, DeSalvo.

They yank Albert away. McCauley stands there, watches.

EXT. COURTHOUSE STEPS - DAY

Bailey with the press, print and TV cameras. Megan is out
 front. (NOTE: verbatim.)

BAILEY
 (in mid-speech --)
 ...to say that DeSalvo's conduct --
 both as a homicidal strangler and as a
 more subdued sex deviate...was not the
 result of mental illness, flies in the
 face of reason. Today, Massachusetts
 has burned another witch.

Bailey steps away. McCauley walks out, passes them. He and Megan come face to face.

MEGAN

You finally satisfied?

MCCAULEY

You want a quote? OK, here's a quote...
Brooke sat on the confession...the D.A.'s
in all five counties don't believe
DeSalvo...no one's ever indicted him
for any murder, and no one ever will.
Unquote.

Megan won't write this -- she snaps her notebook shut.

MEGAN

He confessed. He's got a life sentence.
Indicting him is redundant, isn't it?
You are one pathetic, sore-ass loser.

They look at each other. McCauley chews his gum.

MCCAULEY

DeSalvo's not a killer, he won't
accept life in prison. This isn't
over. You could still win your Pulitzer.

McCauley walks away -- Megan calls after him.

MEGAN

McCauley! When you arrest one of your
eight killers, do let me know!

McCauley doesn't look back, he walks away --

INT. BACK OF COUNTY SHERIFF'S VAN - IN MOTION - DAY

On the highway, in the boonies. Albert sits in the back, in his Bridgewater blues, handcuffed to the seat -- on his way back to Bridgewater -- and stares out at the woods -- stunned. Numb.

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - MORNING

McCauley enters. He sees -- Uniformed officers pile box upon box of files onto hand-trucks - boxes marked: "STRANGLER".

MCCAULEY

Where are you going with these?

BPD COP

Down to the basement.

MCCAULEY

These cases aren't closed.

DONOVAN

(steps over)

The Boston Strangler is in Walpole,
and once his appeal fails -- and it
will as sure as Howdy Doody has a
wooden ass -- he will rot in there
forever.

MCCAULEY

The Green Man is in Walpole. No one's
ever been arrested as the Boston
Strangler. Sir.

DONOVAN

(to BDP cop)

Take 'em out.

The BDP Cop rolls out the handcart. Donovan turns to
McCauley.

DONOVAN (cont'd)

You're back here 'cause the Commish
likes you. Fuck up just once...

Donovan walks away. Riley stands there, grins, bites into a
cherry-filled danish, that spreads across his face.

RILEY

Boy Wonder. I believe you've
tarnished your halo.

McCauley makes a sudden move, like he's going to deck him.
Riley drops his danish, readies his fists.

MCCAULEY

Riley, you slob, you dropped your
danish.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. HOMICIDE DIVISION - LATER - NIGHT

Quiet. Not much going on. McCauley sits at his old desk.
Sighs. Opens his bottom desk drawer, takes out his old file
of the Strangler case -- looks at the head shot PHOTOS of all
the victims.

BANG. A GLASS OF SCOTCH is placed on his desk. McCauley
looks up. Sherry stands there, holds a glass of his own.

SHERRY

I'm taking my pension. I won't be around to protect you anymore.

Sherry sits in a chair, drinks.

SHERRY (cont'd)

You gotta decide now, you wanna be a cop, or you wanna be out on the streets with those hippies protesting at Harvard? Your choice.

MCCAULEY

Remember, Eddy -- once upon a time this was a murder investigation -- real women were strangled. Remember that?

SHERRY

Doesn't matter. It's over.

MCCAULEY

(OFF the photos)

Tell that to them. What about truth? What about justice?

SHERRY

Truth and justice is a liquid thing. When you finally understand that, you'll finally grow up. The world isn't black and white, Jimmy, it's a very, dull, ugly gray.

(finishes his drink)

Bury this case now. Be a good cop. You could run this place one day. Let it go.

Sherry stands, grabs his coat, starts to walk out.

MCCAULEY

Eddy. DeSalvo can't do hard time. I saw it in his eyes. One day he'll tell the truth. And it won't be gray.

Sherry shrugs, tips his hat, turns and walks away.

CLOSE ON F. LEE BAILEY -- (IN BLACK & WHITE)

Dressed in a three-piece suit and tie, sits on a chair in a well-furnished HOLLYWOOD living room, and speaks directly into CAMERA.

BAILEY

Good evening, I'm F. Lee Bailey and welcome to *In Person*. Each week on
(MORE)

BAILEY (cont'd)
 this program, we'll visit the home
 and enjoy an in-depth conversation
 with one of the important figures of
 our time.

McCauley -- in his apartment, watches this on b&w TV.

BAILEY (cont'd)
 For my premiere guest, I am honored to
 be invited for a relaxing chat into the
 home of international motion picture
 star and heartthrob -- Tony Curtis.

ANGLE ON THE REAL TONY CURTIS -- (using the real clip)
 actually greeting Bailey (our actor via CGI).

TONY CURTIS ON TV
 Thank you, Lee, and welcome.

CUT TO

CLOSE ON JOHNNY CARSON -- the real Johnny Carson on the
Tonight Show in 1968 -- sits behind his desk. (Use actual
 show if it still exists.)

Our actor Bottomly -- (via CGI) talks with Johnny Carson.

BOTTOMLY
 Yes, Johnny, I'm consulting on the
 picture, I learned that's Hollywood-
 ese, they say "picture", not movie --

JOHNNY CARSON
 And Tony Curtis is playing the Strangler?

McCauley at the BACK BAY BAR, watches Bottomly on the TV.
 Dumbfounded.

BOTTOMLY
 Yes -- and my character in the
 "picture" is the hero of the film,
 and I'm being played by Henry Fonda.
 He's played Abe Lincoln, Wyatt Earp
 and now me. John Bottomly.

McCauley has had it. He takes his revolver out -- aims --
 and fires. BLAM! And he blows out the television.

The bartender and all the other patrons jump. McCauley
 calmly lowers his gun and sips his drink.

MCCAULEY
 Just something I picked up from Elvis.

SLOW DISSOLVE TO --

A HELICOPTER FLYING IN THE BLUE SKY -- PAN down to see the helicopter is flying over:

EXT. WALPOLE STATE PRISON - DAY

Maximum Security Prison surrounded by woods. Many separate buildings, all painted white, dirty. A huge common yard.

INT. PRISON CELL-BLOCK - DAY

Bell rings. The cell doors slide open. The prisoners step out of their cells and line up -- watched by armed guards. There's Albert -- his eyes darting around. Scared.

INT. WALPOLE MESS HALL - DAY

Albert carries his tray of food. Other prisoners all around him. Albert sits at CENTER TABLE, which is oddly unoccupied.

At that moment -- three WISE GUYS plunk their trays down.

One Wise Guy has long, greased hair. On the street, he hurts people for a living. He doesn't like the Boston Strangler.

WISE GUY

Hey, choker. Big tough guy. This table's reserved, you mudder-fucker! One of those old broads you whacked coulda been my mother, you gutless piece-a-shit! Sit here again you're a dead man. Got it, freak?

ALBERT

(frightened, quickly stands)
I'm sorry, I didn't know...da Strangler never killed no Italians...

Albert takes his tray, turns to hurry away. BOOM. Bumps into another con. It's Nassar, holding his own tray.

NASSAR

(wicked smile)
Hi, Al.

EXT. WALPOLE PRISON YARD - DAY

Albert and Nassar walk and talk. Both wear coats. Other cons notice Albert. Guards are around. Nassar smokes.

ALBERT

Lemme ask you -- if Bailey lost your retrial, and couldn't get you out on appeal, how's he gonna get me out?

NASSAR

I miscalculated. He used us for notoriety. He abandoned me. He'll abandon you.

Albert's face falls.

NASSAR (cont'd)

Remember what I once told you, Al? To prosper like a King in here you need coin of the realm. Where's all our money from the book and the movie?

ALBERT

Good question. I dunno.

INT. PRISON WORKSHOP - DAY

Albert at work on a small-sized project. Nassar walks up, frenzied -- holds legal papers.

NASSAR

(pissed off, astounded)

You signed a power of attorney to Bailey in Bridgewater?

ALBERT

I did? I, I never knew what I was signin', he'd held the paper all folded up like this, here...he said, "Trust me, I'm your lawyer." I thought he was God.

NASSAR

Well, right now -- God's got all our money. It's in an account under the fictional name of Robert McKay. This is surreal. Everyone's cashed in except us! How much cash could Bailey be holding?

ALBERT

Thousands, prob'ly, I dunno, maybe thousands. I send him letters asking to see everything I signed, he don't answer me back.

NASSAR

(pauses)

Bailey thinks we're powerless in here?
We're going to hire another lawyer and
sue his North Boston legal ass.

ALBERT

Good! I saw him on Merv Griffin callin'
me da Strangler, how dare he. An' while
we're at it, let's sue 20th Century-Fox,
too. Who gave them da right to call
Albert DeSalvo da Boston Strangler?
Not me.

Nassar stares at Albert. Astounded, as usual.

NASSAR

Al, are we suing for the money -- or
because they're "soiling" your
reputation?

ALBERT

Both. 'Though, you know -- Tony
Curtis is playin' me. Not bad, huh?
We look alike, doncha think?

Nassar just stares at Albert. Albert holds up a string
necklace. Proudly.

ALBERT (cont'd)

Whattaya think?

NASSAR

What is it?

ALBERT

A "choker" necklace. Get it?

(big smile)

I figure they'll be a big seller in
da prison Gift Shop. Ladies, want
something different for Valentine's
Day...?

INT. MOVIE THEATRE

ON THE SCREEN -- HENRY FONDA steps out of a car at night, hat
and raincoat on, walks toward a crime scene. A REPORTER asks
him "Mr. Bottomly, this is the ninth victim, you must have
something to say..." as Henry Fonda walks by him.

MCCAULEY -- sits in the theatre, watches, eats popcorn.

ON THE SCREEN -- in an interrogation room, a character dressed as "Othello" suddenly rushes to the door to attack a woman -- and Henry Fonda PUNCHES Othello squarely on the jaw, knocking him ass over tea-kettle.

MCCAULEY -- laughs out loud, other movie-goers nearby look at him strangely. McCauley offers them popcorn.

EXT. U OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR CAMPUS - DAY

SUPER: "UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN, ANN ARBOR, APRIL, 1969"

Busy campus activity. Spring day. Robey, briefcase in hand, steps out of a university building and begins walking across campus. Robey is reading a campus paper -- "ANOTHER DEAD GIRL FOUND."

Robey walks along campus -- then passes someone -- and stops. The man he passed stops, too, and looks back.

It's Maxwell Dawson -- the man incarcerated in Bridgewater, known as "Othello." It's a chilling moment. Dawson panics seeing Robey and hurries away.

INT. ANN ARBOR POLICE STATION - DAY

Robey sits, talks with two ANN ARBOR DETECTIVES. Plain-clothes.

DR. ROBEY

Maxwell Dawson. He was nicknamed "Othello" because that's how he was dressed when the police arrested him for beating his pregnant wife on the streets of Cambridge. He was a suspect in the Boston stranglings.

ANN ARBOR DETECTIVE

They got the Boston Strangler, Doc.

DR. ROBEY

DeSalvo was not the Strangler, but because of his confession, the police stopped looking for the real murderers. Now maybe it's utter coincidence or maybe Maxwell Dawson is responsible for one or more of these seven hideous murders of young girls here in Michigan.

ANN ARBOR DETECTIVE #2

And when did you come out here, Doc?

DR. ROBEY

I began commuting to run the psychiatric center here back in June of '67.

ANN ARBOR DETECTIVE

The murders started that July. Funny coincidence, huh?

DR. ROBEY

You can't be serious. Gentlemen, certainly some individuals got away with murder in Massachusetts but I assure you, I was not one of them...

INT. REPORTERS PUB - NIGHT

Megan and other colleagues having a drink. Sit and watch the TV over the bar.

CLOSE on b&w TV. Neil Armstrong's moonwalk, August, 1969.

Megan sits, watches, sips, smokes. Editor appears beside her, holds a newspaper.

MEGAN

One small step for Nazi scientists we smuggled into this country.

EDITOR

(shows her article)

Wanna laugh? Self-Confessed Boston Strangler Sues 20th Century-Fox -- for profits. P.S. He lost. How come you didn't want to write this?

MEGAN

Benny -- nobody cares about Albert DeSalvo anymore.

INT. ALBERT'S CELL - DAY

ALBERT -- in his cell, sits and stares at pictures of Irmgard and the kids.

Suddenly the guards charge in -- and ROUST Albert and his cellmate -- throwing both of them out of their cells -- along with other prisoners also being roused.

The guards tear apart Al's cell, his personal belongings, his bed, violating his small space -- searching for something.

Albert's face shows his despair.

EXT. THE PRISON YARD - DAY

October, chilly. Albert and Nassar talk, both in jackets.

SUPER: OCTOBER, 1973

NASSAR

You'd better think carefully and listen to me...

ALBERT

I listened to you -- I listened to your fabulous lawyer -- and here I am stuck in this pit for da rest-a my life. I was supposed to be rich, I was supposed to have hot and cold running nurses.

NASSAR

We have an arrangement. I found us a new publisher in New York, you can still tell your story. You don't walk out on an arrangement!

ALBERT

No, no more arrangements! I want my goddamn life back! I wanna see my wife! I want my kids...

(down, sad)

I wanna go home.

NASSAR

You're a rapist, Al. And a confessed killer. You are home.

ALBERT

That's what you say.

Nassar glares at Albert -- with a menacing chilliness.

NASSAR

There are a lot of cons in here who hate your guts -- you're only one step up from a chicken hawk. And you brag about it, trade on it, you think it's humorous to sell "Choker Necklaces" in the gift shop. What's worse, you think you're a real big man with your drug deals! You forgetting you're just a front-man stooge for the racketeers? How long you think you can last in here without my protection?

ALBERT
I'll take my chances.

NASSAR
Without me, you have no chances.
(stares at him -- those
cold eyes)
Goodbye. Al.

Nassar glares at Albert, then walks away. Albert looks around -- sees hate glares from various Wise Guys and Tough Cons around the yard.

Two cons walk by, bump him. Albert tries to hide it, but he's scared.

INT. THE VISITORS ROOM - DAY

A lot of cons at tables with their visitors. Albert sits with Richard and Rosalie. Rosalie's brought food. Albert looks like absolute hell.

ROSALIE
Here, we brought the pepperonis and
the cakes...I made the cakes special
for you.

ALBERT
Oh, thanks. Thanks.

ROSALIE
Well, for once we get to see you
without Nassar here.

ALBERT
Yeah, yeah.

Al nods, a man lost in despair.

RICHARD
You don't look so good. You feelin'
okay?

ALBERT
Tell you da truth, I'm fed up. I'm
sick and I'm tired. I'm gonna check
myself into da infirmary for a while.

RICHARD
Whatsamatter?

ALBERT
 Nothin', nothin'. Listen -- things is
 getting a little strange around here.
 I think maybe it's better if you don't
 come and see me for a while, okay?
 (stands, gathers his food)
 Thanks again, you know. For stickin'
 by me. You're da only ones, you know.

INT. WALPOLE INFIRMARY - DAY

Albert waits in line for the pay-phone. Waits nervously.
 Another CON is on the phone. In the b.g., the prison medical
 staff is in view.

SUPER: SATURDAY NIGHT, NOVEMBER 24, 1973.

CON
 (into phone)
 It's nothin' serious, I'm all
 right...I'll call again soon. Bye.

The con hangs up. Turns, sees Albert.

CON (cont'd)
 All yours, choker.

EXT. ROBEY HOUSE - SUBURB OF BOSTON - NIGHT

HEAR the phone ring.

INT. ROBEY HOUSE - NIGHT

Kitchen. MRS. ROBEY, prepares dinner, answers the phone.

MRS. ROBEY
 Hello?...Collect call from who?...Is
 this a joke?...Yes, we'll accept.
 (surprised)
 Just a moment.
 (turns)
 Dear -- it's Albert DeSalvo.

DR. ROBEY
 (the patrician in him)
 Really?
 (takes the phone)
 Albert? Is that you?

INTERCUT ALBERT: On the pay phone in the INFIRMARY.

ALBERT

In da flesh, Doctor Robey. Well, on da phone, anyways.

DR. ROBEY

Albert. How did you know I'd just returned to town?

ALBERT

Da grapevine. We know more in here than da CIA. Uh, Doctor Robey -- somethin' strange is going down and I need to see you right away.

(looks around -- then, surreptitiously)

I wanna finally tell you da truth about this Strangler business. Can you come up right away?

(with emphasis)

I gotta see you right away.

DR. ROBEY

How does nine A.M. Monday morning sound?

INT. MEGAN'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Megan reads in bed. Her hair is longer and straight now -- a change in look like Priscilla Presley's. The phone rings.

MEGAN

Hello?...Yes?

(sits up -- excited)

Mister DeSalvo, hello...to what do I...Monday, 9 A.M., yes, of course, I will...I'll wait 'til then to write anything, I promise...thank you for calling me...Goodbye.

Megan hangs up, slowly. Stunned by what she's just heard.

INT./EXT. WALPOLE PRISON - NIGHT

IN CUTS -- we watch a PRISONER'S legs and feet walk through the infirmary, out of his block, his cell, his corridor, his section, across the YARD: "No Man's Land" -- into the Infirmary, thru the Admin. Area into the patient area, then into Albert's private room.

The prisoner stands there. Lights out. Albert in bed, stirs, looks up.

ALBERT

Hey, what're you doin' here?

Unseen Prisoner raises an ICE PICK -- it's a bloody mess.

THE NEXT MORNING -- INTERCUT:

- 1) ROBEY stands in his bathroom, shaves --
- 2) MEGAN in her bedroom, slips into her skirt --
- 3) MCCAULEY steps out of his office -- "Squad Commander/Homicide" -- (dressed casually now, reflecting the times: open collared shirt, longer hair, a full moustache ala Robert Redford as the Sundance Kid.)

Women Cops and African-American detectives on the force now.

WOMAN COP

Lieutenant -- you'll want to hear this...

INTERCUT: Robey, Megan and McCauley. All listen to the radio:

RADIO DJ

WBMC news at the hour. Self-confessed Boston Strangler, Albert DeSalvo, was found stabbed to death in his prison hospital bed early this morning....

STAY on McCauley -- not surprised. It had to end this way.

RADIO DJ (cont'd)

...DeSalvo was stabbed several times in the back with an ice pick. He was 42 years old.

McCauley shares a look with an African-American detective.

EXT. WALPOLE - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

November. Cold. McCauley parks his car, steps out and walks to the front entrance. Black steel double-doors, with the Gold Seal of Massachusetts emblazoned above. McCauley enters the facility.

INT. WALPOLE - CORRIDORS - ANOTHER DAY

McCauley walks with an OFFICIAL, in shirt and tie. No jacket.

WALPOLE OFFICIAL

He was either killed over a drug deal or over two pounds of stolen industrial bacon. He was supposed to share it with another inmate, and he reneged.

MCCAULEY

Or...he was killed because he was about to tell the truth about the Boston stranglings...?

WALPOLE GUARD

He was a thief. I think it was the bacon.

MCCAULEY

The perfect ending to Albert's story -- murdered over a pound of pork.

EXT. BOSTON POST BUILDING - LATE AFTERNOON

McCauley stands there, holds a newspaper.

He looks at *Boston Post* full page headline: "BOSTON STRANGLER MURDERED IN PRISON". He enters the building.

INT. BOSTON POST - AFTERNOON

McCauley walks through, holds the folded *Boston Post*. Half the desks and offices are deserted. Others are being packed up. McCauley stops a secretary asks a question. The secretary points.

MEGAN'S OFFICE --

Megan has a new, hipper look: suede jacket, tight jeans. She takes down her photo of herself with young Teddy Kennedy, boxes it up. McCauley appears in her doorway.

MCCAULEY

Been fired?

MEGAN

(surprised to see him,
then always keeps her cool)
Save your compassion. The paper's been sold, people get their news more from TV now. I'm going to work for WMAQ -- on air reporter. I hear you're the new Chief of Homicide. Surprise, surprise.

MCCAULEY

New time. I can make sure this mockery of justice doesn't happen again.

MEGAN

Wait, let me put my sunglasses on, your halo's blinding me. Why am I honored by this visit?

MCCAULEY

Doctor Robey told me DeSalvo was gonna phone a reporter, I figure that was you.

MEGAN

Why not? Yeah. Yeah, he said he wanted to tell the truth and use his "Get-Out-Of-Jail-Free" card. It could have been my Pulitzer. Then again, it could all have been a big, fat, friggin' lie.

MCCAULEY

You mean like this headline?
(tosses down newspaper with
BOSTON STRANGLER headline)
What the hell. "Green Man Murdered"
wouldn't sell as many papers, right?

MEGAN

I didn't make DeSalvo confess. That was his choice -- any question he was a rapist? I don't cry any tears for him.

MCCAULEY

Hey, you helped him. Did you know he confessed to every mistake you ever wrote?

(MEGAN reacts)

No, I guess not. Well, see ya.

McCauley turns to go. Megan stops boxing up her possessions -
- takes all this in.

MEGAN

Okay, wait, wait, wait. He confessed to every mistake?

McCauley nods yes. Megan sighs -- takes this in.

MEGAN (cont'd)

(slowly)

OK. OK. Let's say -- just for conversation -- all this time you were right. So then...lying, taking credit for killing all these women -- what in God's name was this all about?

MCCAULEY

I thought you knew. It was a show. The Bottomly and Bailey Circus. You were their best press agent.

Megan remains silent. The weight of all of it falls upon her. McCauley picks up the paper.

MCCAULEY (cont'd)

Albert DeSalvo, America's first modern serial killer -- except for the small, minor fact that he never killed anybody. But Albert knew: what's important is being a celebrity -- right? Call me a vicious murderer, just call me something.

McCauley walks out.

MEGAN

McCauley...

McCauley looks back -- Megan is as always filled with mixed emotions. Does she ever say what she wants to say? McCauley looks at her -- waiting. No, she can't say it.

MEGAN (cont'd)

...see ya.

McCauley waits a beat, then walks away.

EXT. BOSTON POST NEWSPAPER OFFICE - DAY

McCauley steps out. Starts walking.

SLOW PULL-BACK as McCauley walks along, and grows smaller and smaller until we see the WHOLE CITY OF BOSTON, 1973.

OVER THE FINAL IMAGE OF BOSTON:

1ST CARD: In 1977, F. Lee Bailey turned over the remainder of \$50,000 to the estate of Albert DeSalvo.

2ND CARD: No one was ever indicted or prosecuted for the various murders labeled as the Boston Stranglings.

3RD CARD: All 13 murders that Albert DeSalvo confessed to are still officially listed as -- "unsolved".

MUSIC OVER END CREDITS: the Rolling Stones' 1969 *Midnight Rambler*, which was based on the exploits of the Boston Strangler.

Mick Jagger sings: "Well, you talk about the Midnight Rambler..."

THE END.

