BACKSTROM

PILOT

"DRAGON SLAYER"

Written by

Hart Hanson

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Feb 25, 2013 - WHITE PRODUCTION SCRIPT
Mar 05, 2013 - BLUE PRODUCTION SCRIPT
Mar 18, 2013 - PINK PRODUCTION SCRIPT

Character

1. DET. EVERETT BACKSTROM
2. DET. NICOLE GRAVELY
3. DET. JOHN ALMOND
4. DET. FRANK MOTO
5. SGT. PETER NIEDERMAYER
6. NADIA PAQUET
7. GREGORY VALENTINE
8. ANNA HOLT
9. DR. DEB CHAMAN
10. GENE VISSER
11. CASSANDRA LASTRANGE
12. CHARLES TURNER
13. ALYSON COX
14. TOBIAS PERCIVAL IV
15. SENATOR PERCIVAL
16. SANDRA PERCIVAL
17. ARCHIE DANFORTH
18. PRESIDENT LEYLAND EATON
19. GENERAL COUNSEL REBECCA OAKES
20. TV ANCHOR
21. BARTENDER (STUNT)
22. VISSER BAD GUY #1 (STUNT)
23. VISSER BAD GUY #2 (STUNT)
24. VISSER BAD GUY #3 (STUNT)
25. VISSER BAD GIRL #1 (STUNT)
26. GRAVELY'S LOVER
27. ALYSON'S LOVER

XX. STUNT COORDINATOR
X1. BACKSTROM STUNT
X2. GRAVELY STUNT
X3. ALMOND STUNT
X4. MOTO STUNT
X5. NIEDERMAYER STUNT
X10. VISSER STUNT
X20. ND STUNT DRIVER 1
X21. ND STUNT DRIVER 2

Locations

INT. ALYSON COX'S LIBRARY CARREL
EXT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE
INT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE
EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / ATOP THE WOODEN BRIDGE
EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / BENEATH THE WOODEN BRIDGE
EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / THE POND
EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / THE WOODEN BRIDGE
EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / ULTRA-MODERN SOLARIUM
INT. BEECH COLLEGE / ULTRA-MODERN SOLARIUM
INT. BEECH COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
EXT. CHINATOWN STREET CAFE
INT. GRAVELY'S VEHICLE (TRAVELING)
INT. OLD DORM BLOCK / TOBY'S DORM ROOM
INT. POLICE ASSOCIATION HEALTH BUILDING
EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS
INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS / JAIL VISITING
INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS / MEDICAL OFFICE
EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS / ROOF
INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS STAIRWELL
EXT. RIVERSIDE BAR
INT. RIVERSIDE BAR
INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP
INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / BACKSTROM'S OFFICE
INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INCIDENT ROOM
INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INCIDENT ROOM
INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INTERROGATION ROOM
INT. VENI VIDI VAGINA STRIP CLUB / DRESSING ROOM
INT. VENI VIDI VAGINA STRIP CLUB / GYNECOLOGY ROW
EXT. WHOLLY GROUND COFFEE SHOP
INT. WHOLLY GROUND COFFEE SHOP

BACKSTROM
PILOT: "Dragon Slayer"

1 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / BENEATH THE WOODEN BRIDGE - NIGHT 1

Two Portland Police detectives, a middle-aged black man and a melancholy white woman, stand in the pouring rain beneath a wooden bridge on the campus of Beech College. DETECTIVE JOHN ALMOND (50's, African-American, kind, warm) regards a printed up photo of 19 yr. old Tobias Percival IV, smiling, happy; Almond's face is semi-obscured by his plastic-wrapped fedora. DETECTIVE NICOLE GRAVELY, (30's, adept at suppressing her emotions, sad, competent, beautiful) stares upward from under her umbrella, her facing getting wet -

GRAVELY
And yea, it came to pass in the city-state of Portlandia, Tobias Percival, evil logger baron, begat Governor Tobias Percival Jr, who begat State Senator Tobias Percival III, who in turn begat Tobias Percival IV.

ALMOND
Maybe the boy killed himself on account they wore out his name.

COME AROUND TO REVEAL -- A DEAD 19 YR OLD BOY

hangs from the bridge by a leather cord. He is painfully young, athletic, good looking, dressed in a faux-shearling flannel shirt over a hoodie; on his left foot is a heavy combat-type boot. The right foot is clad only in a sodden work sock, sagging from the steady rain -

ALMOND (CONT'D)
Too early and wet for Backstrom? Perks of being the boss.

GRAVELY
Mandatory physical. Moto will bring him here directly after.
(off Toby's corpse)
Go ahead, pray for the boy if that's what you want.

Gravely moves off. Almond looks up at Heaven, removes his fedora, and prays intently -

ALMOND
Jesus, it's my intention to pray for this poor boy's immortal soul but You can see into my heart so You know my Dark Secret which is that I implore You, Lord Jesus, to work Your wonders that Backstrom fails his physical or, even better, if it be Thy will, call him home to Your loving arms by hitting him with a truck. Amen.

Almond feels simultaneously ashamed and unburdened.

CUT TO:

2 INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS / MEDICAL OFFICE - DAY 2

DETECTIVE EVERETT BACKSTROM, 40's, hung-over, worn, wary, in constant opposition to the world, sits in his boxing shorts on the examination table, facing faun-like DR. DEB CHAMAN (East Indian, male, earnest) -

DR. DEB CHAMAN
What do the following have in common: hyper-tension, hepatitis, anemia, enlarged heart?

BACKSTROM
I got 'em all and you could use 'em to fail me outta my job.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
More importantly THEY COULD KILL YOU! Are you still drinking?

BACKSTROM
Absolutely not.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
When a patient says "absolutely not" he is absolutely lying.

BACKSTROM
If Hindus are so smart, why do 98% of you live at the dump?

DR. DEB CHAMAN
Five years ago you were demoted to Traffic because of your health--

BACKSTROM
That was just the excuse.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
Why were you demoted?

BACKSTROM
I arrested a white supremacist who killed six Indians -- not Tandoori Indians, like you, whoo-whoo like Geronimo.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
You were not demoted for that.

BACKSTROM
At the press conference I sang: *One little, two little, three little Indians--*

DR. DEB CHAMAN
My point is, we have a new Police Chief who wishes to bring you back.

BACKSTROM
Chief Holt totally appreciates the full Backstrom package.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
But first you must convince me that you will not drop dead chasing a villain down an alley.

BACKSTROM
I'm an underpaid Hindu police doctor ... how much payola do I need to pass a guy on his physical, nobody gets hurt?

DR. DEB CHAMAN
<u>You</u> get hurt! You will die.

BACKSTROM
All the men in my family die young, nothing we can do about that.

There's a KNOCK on the door and uniformed OFFICER FRANK MOTO (early thirties, an ex-fighter, earnest, honest, not very bright) sticks his head in -

MOTO
Sorry to interrupt, Det. Backstrom--

BACKSTROM
Meet Officer Frank Moto, the reason I will never have to chase villains down alleys.

MOTO
Chasing's my job. Dead body out at the College.

BACKSTROM
I'm done here. Get the car.

Moto nods and leaves. Chaman dashes off a prescription -

DR. DEB CHAMAN
Here is my prescription.

BACKSTROM
(reading the prescription)
Make a friend.
(to Chaman)
What am I? Six?

DR. DEB CHAMAN
You have one week to fill this prescription or I fail you.

BACKSTROM
Two things, Deb. One: knowing I don't have long to live gives me the courage to do what's right. Two: Deb is a girl's name.

Backstrom leaves. Chaman is exhausted.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / BENEATH THE WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY 3

Backstrom, drenched photo in hand, wearing green duck shoes, a fluorescent orange poncho and a cap, stands with Almond and Gravely regarding Tobias Percival hanging from the bridge -

BACKSTROM
Why's the well-hung male model wearing only one boot?

CUT AHEAD TO:

4 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / ATOP THE WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY 4

Backstrom, Gravely, Almond, and Forensics Liaison SGT PETER NIEDERMAYER (yoga-slim, triathlon fit, the Perfect Evolved Man) stand over the lone, soggy, laceless boot -

GRAVELY
Campus cop saw this on his 6am security sweep then found the body.

ALMOND
This bridge is the main route from the dorms to the athletic fields.

NIEDERMAYER
Ligature is obviously the missing lace. No rigor so dead less than three hours.

Backstrom makes his SOUND OF DISMISSAL. Niedermayer enjoys Backstrom heartily, despite Backstrom's obvious disdain -

NIEDERMAYER (CONT'D)
I know you think that forensics are only for lawyers but to quote the Buddha, *"Things are not what they appear. Nor are they otherwise."*

ALMOND
What it appears is crazy that this rich, white boy kills himself.

GRAVELY
Broken heart situation? He's a Romeo who got Julietted?

BACKSTROM
Like you? Except with you, it's all Juliettes.

NIEDERMAYER
You and Dianne broke up?

ALMOND
I'm sorry, Nicole.

GRAVELY
You and your church made it pretty clear you never wanted people like me and Dianne getting married.

ALMOND
I'm personally sorry for your personal pain.

Gravely can sense Almond's sincerity and nods grudgingly -

BACKSTROM
I'm your eco-lesbo-pro-bono anti-death penalty girlfriend. I totally freak out when the press nicknames you *Killer Queen* after you kill three guys in a shoot out.

QUICK POP: Gravely sits miserably on a bed, watching her girlfriend pack. PUSH INTO GIRLFRIEND'S POV - Gravely weeps.

ALMOND
Those shootings were justified.

NIEDERMAYER
You should take the "Queen" part as a compliment.

GRAVELY
How's about we pretend we're professionals?

BACKSTROM
I'm professionally declaring this death a possible homicide.

GRAVELY/NIEDERMAYER
(in unison)
Why?

ALMOND
Homicides the department covers meals. Suicides we're on our own.

NIEDERMAYER
I need a rationale for the coroner.

Backstrom looks toward the Asian and white students gawking from the other side of crime scene tape. Just inside the tape is an African-American Campus Security Officer -

BACKSTROM
Tell him Almond is questioning a suspicious party.

GRAVELY
What suspicious party?

BACKSTROM
That black African-American.

ALMOND
His color makes him suspicious?

BACKSTROM
Guy stands out like a raisin in a bowl of buttered popcorn!

Niedermayer LAUGHS, Gravely silences him with a look -

ALMOND
That raisin is campus Security Officer Charles Turner. He found the body and called us in.

BACKSTROM
Like Niedermayer said, it's not what it seems or otherwise. Who's for a hot breakfast?

Almond looks to Gravely. She shrugs. It's Backstrom's unit.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

5 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / THE WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY 5

Gravely makes notes as Tobias Percival's body is removed from the bridge. POLICE CHIEF ANNA HOLT, (40's, shrewd, beleaguered, African-American) approaches Gravely -

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
Det. Gravely, do you know why I formed the Serious Crimes Group?

These two have the rapport of women who have to do twice as good a job as the men around them to stay even -

GRAVELY
Good morning, Chief. The SCG was formed to slay dragons without heed for politics-as-usual or public relations.

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
This case is a dragon. Big, noisy and everybody gets burnt. And yet surprise! You suck up to a Senator by announcing “suspicious circumstances” around his son’s obvious suicide.

GRAVELY
Backstrom’s call, Chief.

They both see Backstrom walking towards them, eating a donut, clad in his poncho. Backstrom must pick his way between uniformed cops who do not budge -

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
When I was his Captain, Backstrom told the Mayor he had “lying Slavic eyes”. He’s no diplomat.

GRAVELY
No, but he does love a free breakfast.

Backstrom arrives. Holt grabs his donut and tosses it -

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
Backstrom, Det. Gravely and I are discussing your suspicions of foul-play in an obvious case of suicide.

NIEDERMAYER (O.S.)
Det. Backstrom is correct.

Backstrom doesn't mask his delight as they all turn to see Niedermayer accompanying Toby's body as the M.E.'s attendants wheel it by -

NIEDERMAYER (CONT'D)
This is not a suicide. This boy died of a heroin overdose.

GRAVELY
Maybe the kid needed a little bump to calm down before--
(grabbing her throat)
-- ACK!

Niedermayer indicates the victim's nostrils. They are caked in a phlegmy-brownish goo. Same with his mouth. Pulling back eyelids reveals red eyeballs -

NIEDERMAYER
The heroin was jammed into the victim's face with enough force to scratch his corneas.

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
Huh. What's your next move?

GRAVELY
Dorm room, start a canvas...

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
After Backstrom and I next-of-kin the parents.

GRAVELY
Oh, Chief, usually I do next-of-kin because--

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
This is a <u>senator</u>. It's gonna be the <u>Head</u> of the Serious Crimes Group who tells him the heir to the throne is dead.

Holt <u>rips the poncho off Backstrom</u> -

CHIEF ANNA HOLT (CONT'D)
(to Backstrom)
I'll do the talking.

CUT TO:

6 INT. BEECH COLLEGE / ULTRA-MODERN SOLARIUM - DAY 6

Backstrom and Holt speak with SENATOR TOBIAS PERCIVAL III (50's) and his wife SANDRA PERCIVAL (40's) -

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
Senator Percival, Mrs. Percival; Det. Backstrom heads up the investigation into your son's death.

BACKSTROM
(by rote)
- sorry for your loss -

SENATOR TOBIAS PERCIVAL
Sandra and I were holding out the foolish hope it wasn't Toby.

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
I'm sorry.

SENATOR TOBIAS PERCIVAL
There will be no official confirmation of suicide until after a full autopsy. Also, you will bring in the State Police and FBI.

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
That will not be necessary.

SENATOR TOBIAS PERCIVAL
One would think a new and untested Chief of Police would embrace this opportunity to place a senator in her debt rather than make an enemy.

SANDRA PERCIVAL
My son did not kill himself.

BACKSTROM
How do you know?

SANDRA PERCIVAL
Toby had recently fallen in love. He wouldn't tell me the girl's name but my son was standing on the cusp of happiness.

BACKSTROM
I'm a boy, in love for the first time, the girl goes back to her old boyfriend, I hang myself from a bridge ...

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
Which is not what happened.

BACKSTROM
It could have, is all I'm saying.

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
In fact Toby was murdered.

BACKSTROM
You got any theories why? Like maybe your mania for gun control?

SENATOR TOBIAS PERCIVAL
We just lost our only child and you want to blame me?

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
Det. Backstrom doesn't mean to be offensive. It's a pertinent question...asked in a very insensitive manner.

Sandra Percival's control slips. She is heartbroken for her lost son -

SANDRA PERCIVAL
Toby was murdered and left to hang from a bridge?

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
We will find who killed your son.

BACKSTROM
You got a list of people who hate you?

CHIEF ANNA HOLT
(to Backstrom)
I'm sure the Percivals understand that you have to get back to work.

Backstrom leaves.

CUT TO:

7 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / ULTRA-MODERN SOLARIUM - DAY 7

Backstrom exits to find Gravely waiting for him -

GRAVELY
How'd it go?

BACKSTROM
The kid recently fell in love, wouldn't give Mom a name so maybe Mexican or old or something.

GRAVELY
Sir, word of warning, this is our first dragon together and the media's gonna be all over us so--

BACKSTROM
Media's your thing.

GRAVELY
My thing is to keep this group running efficiently.

BACKSTROM
Speaking of efficiently, you don't need me to search the victim's dorm room.

GRAVELY
I need you to get permission.

BACKSTROM
From who now?

CUT TO:

8 INT. BEECH COLLEGE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE - DAY 8

Backstrom and Gravely face President of the University LEYLAND EATON and General Counsel REBECCA FORRESTER -

PRESIDENT LEYLAND EATON
I am Leyland Eaton, President of the College and this is our General Counsel, Rebecca Forrester.

Backstrom is drawn toward a table of coffee and pastries -

GENERAL COUNSEL REBECCA FORRESTER
To have someone like Toby Percival take his own life is a mystery beyond all comprehension.

BACKSTROM
With all disrespect, you ivory tower types do not understand that people who get murdered always deserve it.

Backstrom chooses a creamy killer pastry -

GENERAL COUNSEL REBECCA FORRESTER
Murdered? We were told that Toby Percival hanged himself.

GRAVELY
He didn't hang himself.
(to Backstrom)
Sir? Maybe a muffin?

PRESIDENT LEYLAND EATON
Toby was Captain of the rugby team. How many people would it take to hang him against his will?

Backstrom puts down the pastry and takes a muffin -

GRAVELY
Toby Percival died of a forced heroin overdose.

BACKSTROM
My doctor Deb says sugar is a drug, there should be a policy against it like any other dangerous substance.

GENERAL COUNSEL REBECCA FORRESTER
If drugs were <u>forced</u> upon Percival then technically the college's drug policy is moot.

Gravely realizes that Backstrom has seemingly inadvertently jammed his thumb into a sensitive area -

GRAVELY
Det. Backstrom didn't reference the college's drug policy. He referenced sugar.
(off their silence)
Has there been another drug incident involving heroin?

PRESIDENT LEYLAND EATON
Absolutely not.

BACKSTROM
When people say "absolutely not" they're lying.

GRAVELY
Inform your client of the penalties for impeding a homicide investigation.

Leyland looks at Forrester. Forrester nods permission -

PRESIDENT LEYLAND EATON
Heroin overdose. Three months ago. But the student recovered.

GRAVELY
The student's name, please?

Eaton leans over and whispers into Leyland's ear, then -

PRESIDENT LEYLAND EATON
We respectfully decline to divulge such sensitive information without a warrant.

GENERAL COUNSEL REBECCA FORRESTER
But you are welcome to search Toby's room.

Backstrom pinches just a bit of pastry before they leave.

CUT TO:

9 INT. OLD DORM BLOCK / TOBY'S DORM ROOM - DAY 9

Backstrom and Gravely stand in the doorway of Toby's room. It's a total mess -

BACKSTROM
I'm a typical rich kid who knows someone else will clean up my mess.

GRAVELY
This room was tossed.

They move in to look around -

GRAVELY (CONT'D)
Did you mean what you said? About all murder victims deserving what they get?

BACKSTROM
I mean everything when I say it.

GRAVELY
What could a nineteen year old kid do to deserve getting murdered?

BACKSTROM
When we know that, we'll know who killed him.

GRAVELY
(indicating)
Laptop charger, no computer...

Backstrom is looking into the closet. Gravely dials her cell -

GRAVELY (CONT'D)
The room didn't get tossed for a computer in plain view. What were they looking for?

BACKSTROM
Wooden hangers! There's a sign you got too much money.

But there is one wire hanger, pulled out of shape, elongated -

GRAVELY
(into phone)
Nadia, I got something for you.

INTERCUT WITH:

10 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INCIDENT ROOM - DAY 10

NADIA PAQUET, SCG'S civilian support, world-wise, poetic, French immigrant, cell pinned to shoulder by chin, has started a time-line of Toby's murder which stretches along one entire wall. Time of death is marked at 6am, body discovery at 6:32 am, Backstrom's arrival 7:23am - **[NOTE: This timeline grows and expands with every bit of information gleaned during the investigation]** -

PAQUET
Shoot it at me.

Gravely watches Backstrom tap around the dorm room like a blind man with the elongated wire hanger -

GRAVELY
Just "shoot", Nadia. The college won't cough up the name of a student who OD'ed and a warrant will take days.

PAQUET
Time frame?

Backstrom opens the window and taps the hanger around the eaves and the gables outside -

GRAVELY
Three months.

PAQUET
You got it, Hobbit.

They both hang up. Backstrom hooks a zipped bag -

GRAVELY
How'd you know the hanger trick?

BACKSTROM
I was a boy. Boys hide things.

GRAVELY
Pretty tough to hide things from your old man, I guess.
(off Backstrom's look)
Your Dad's a pretty famous old-school sheriff, sir. My Dad was police too. Bull sergeant.

Backstrom pulls an envelope labelled "Cass" from the bag before handing the bag over to Gravely. He looks in the envelope. It's full of cash -

BACKSTROM
I got about a thousand bucks.

Amazed, Gravely shows that the bag holds fifteen bags of brown powder (about the size of racquet balls) -

GRAVELY
I got about a pound of heroin.

BACKSTROM
I get murdered, I deserve it. Always and every time.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

11 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INCIDENT ROOM - NIGHT 11

Final meeting of the day, the entire team, Gravely presiding. Backstrom is more interested in the old pizza he has found in the refrigerator than the debriefing -

GRAVELY
Theory: the murder is tied to the heroin Det. Backstrom found hidden in Tobias Percival's dorm room.

NIEDERMAYER
The operatic gesture of hanging the boy from the bridge suggests either revenge or warning.

ALMOND
Revenge? Could be the unidentified overdose victim.

PAQUET
Students who canceled their student loans cross referenced with E.R. Admittance maybe that's our junkie.
(off their confusion)
Still looking.

GRAVELY
Toby's mother said he fell in love.

BACKSTROM
With a girl named Cass who he was ashamed of. Fat maybe. Hare-lip.

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
What's the verdict on pizza?

NIEDERMAYER
Only thing worse than sugar is dairy.

BACKSTROM
How about anthrax, Niedermayer?

Niedermayer LAUGHS. Backstrom scrapes congealed cheese off the pizza and looks in vain for a place to put the blob -

ALMOND
The man's a grown-up, let him eat what he wants. As directed by Det.
(MORE)

ALMOND (CONT'D)
Backstrom, I questioned the Campus Security Guard. Charles Turner, 28, no priors, exemplary work record, football scholarship to U of O--

MOTO
Go Ducks!

The timeline now features Charles Turner's activities -

ALMOND
-- in 2006, injured 2007, the coach got him a job at Beech--

BACKSTROM
Next!

GRAVELY
Forensics?

NIEDERMAYER
The heroin found in the victim's sinal passages matches--

BACKSTROM
NEXT!

Finding nowhere to discard the cheese, Backstrom shoves it in his mouth, totally unconsciously -

GRAVELY
The victim's laptop is missing. His house advisor says there's a sticker on it like this...

Paquet raises her tablet to display a sketch of a stripper-like silhouette in Cupid wings, firing an arrow at an exploding heart -

GRAVELY (CONT'D)
Finances?

PAQUET
Four withdrawals over the last five weeks, totalling fifty-two thousand, eight hundred dollars leaving a balance of nothing-doing.

ALMOND
That's about the going rate for a brick of heroin.

BACKSTROM
Next!

ALMOND
Narcotics says that until last year, when a task force cleaned house, heroin came onto campus through the Laotian kitchen staff. Currently there is no conduit.

BACKSTROM
No conduit! I'm a rich kid with a pound of heroin? Where'd I get it? Forget Narcotics, I'll ask my decorator.

MOTO
Your decorator is a drug informant?

NIEDERMAYER
You have a decorator?

GRAVELY
That's it for today. We hit it again hard in the morning.

As everyone files out, Niedermayer approaches Backstrom -

NIEDERMAYER
Sir, I left a hemp bag on your desk containing a tea set which will help you rid your body of toxins.

BACKSTROM
Then can I eat cheese?

Niedermayer LAUGHS at Backstrom and they are out.

Gravely is pulling together her notes as Almond approaches -

ALMOND
Can we please recognize that Backstrom forced me to question a black man so he could get a free breakfast?

NIEDERMAYER
I have an alternate explanation.

Niedermayer pulls crime scene photos onto his tablet showing gawkers, cops, reporters, etc. -

NIEDERMAYER (CONT'D)
Notice how Turner positions himself <u>away</u> from the city cops?

ALMOND
Now he can't stand where he wants?

GRAVELY
Security Guards always insert themselves among real police.

NIEDERMAYER
Backstrom lives intensely in the moment, a higher plane of existence from which he is able to hear the universe speak. Living in the moment is also why Backstrom is unable to resist temptation or delay gratification. We have to help him with that.

ALMOND
I don't think Buddha would be impressed you enabling a racist.

Almond leaves -

GRAVELY
You really believe in higher plane Backstrom?

NIEDERMAYER
Yeah. But I also believe that time and space are illusions so grain a'salt.

Niedermayer grins and leaves Gravely alone.

CUT TO:

12 INT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE - NIGHT 12

Backstrom, sits in a crazy Sergio Rodrigues designer chair, chewing disconsolately on broccoli, watching GREGORY VALENTINE (late teens/early 20's, gay, whip-smart, fence/entrepreneurial crook) swap out a small sculpture on Backstrom's mantle for a vase. Backstrom's place is strangely FANTASTIC because Valentine uses it as a holding area for stolen art, counterfeit antiques, objets d'art, and acts as Backstrom's de facto decorator -

VALENTINE
Why are you eating that? It's as unnatural as a fish eating spaghetti.

BACKSTROM
Deb says I’m gonna die because I’m so big-hearted.

VALENTINE
That is hard to believe. Who's Deb?

BACKSTROM
My doctor.

VALENTINE
She's right.

BACKSTROM
She's a he.

VALENTINE
Look at you having a drag queen for a doctor! *Tres* progressive.

BACKSTROM
Why do queers make everything gay?

Backstrom indicates a rather large box of bottles -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
Deb says no drinking or he’ll fail my physical so you want my liquor?

VALENTINE
Hundred bucks?

Backstrom holds out his hand for the money -

VALENTINE (CONT'D)
Does Deb know about the gambling and prostitutes and cigars?

BACKSTROM
If it weren't for hookers, I'd never’ve met your Mom.

VALENTINE
I said “prostitute” not hooker.

BACKSTROM
What’s the difference? Your mother was a hooker and so were you!

VALENTINE
I was a scintillating companion to older gentlemen. Whole other league.

BACKSTROM
(gloating, off 100 bucks)
You could'a had it for free.

VALENTINE
Tell Deb I'm your friend.

Backstrom takes a beer from a cooler near his chair -

BACKSTROM
A queer decorator/fence/man-companion? No thanks. Besides, you can't be my friend and my underworld connection.

VALENTINE
Fine, heroin on campus...cops force out the Laotians and a downtown meth-and-weed guy named Visser steps into the void.

BACKSTROM
Visser. What's his system?

VALENTINE
Heroin is dead-dropped on campus, pre-cut. Visser's guy picks it up and distributes.

BACKSTROM
Who's Visser's guy?

VALENTINE
What am I, Google? Money exchanges hands off campus, the buyer is given a code word which is repeated to Visser's guy and the buyer gets his fix. That info will cost you a hundred bucks.

Valentine snatches the money back from Backstrom, kisses him on the forehead, picks up his newly acquired box of liquor, and makes to leave -

VALENTINE (CONT'D)
If you go after Visser take someone who knows how to shoot a gun.

BACKSTROM
I'll take the Killer Queen.

VALENTINE
The lady cop from that liquor store shoot-out massacre?

BACKSTROM
Three robbers call her a dyke, she shoots ‘em dead and now she’s totally at my command.

VALENTINE
You’ll need her. Visser’s a psycho

Valentine shuts the door. Backstrom stares at the broccoli hatefully, crunches into it, then spits it across the room -

CUT TO:

13 INT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE - DAY 13

Backstrom sleeps exactly where Valentine left him, wearing the same clothes. The broccoli is gone but there's a lot of beer cans on the floor beside him and an ashtray with cigar butts in it. His tv displays the morning news -

TV NEWS ANCHOR
...newly installed Police Chief Anna Holt, generally regarded as a stop-gap appointment, faces her first high profile homicide with the murder of Tobias Percival, son of Senator and Sandra Percival.

Backstrom’s CELL RINGS. Finally, Backstrom rouses himself and finds the cell amongst the discarded beer cans -

BACKSTROM
What?

Backstrom cycles through the beer cans, draining off the dregs of what he didn’t get last night -

GRAVELY (OVER CELL)
It’s noon.

Backstrom fails to light the sodden stump of a cigar -

BACKSTROM
‘Bout time you called! I need Narcotics to cough up background on a drugger last name Visser. Then ask Niedermayer if Toby’s heroin has any forensics crap on it that gives us a dead-drop location on campus. Then send a car to pick me up.

GRAVELY (OVER CELL)
Why does your voice sound like gravel?

BACKSTROM
I stayed up all night working the case. It's called a work ethic.

He hangs up and drains the last of the beer dregs.

CUT TO:

14 EXT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE - DAY 14

Backstrom exits his place in a new poncho. He sees Gravely standing, no sign of a cruiser -

BACKSTROM
Where's the car?

GRAVELY
It's good for me to walk, sir.

Beauty and the Beast pick their way off the barge -

GRAVELY (CONT'D)
I took Toby's rugby team. Almond took teachers and classmates. Everybody loved Toby, some cried over his death. Kid was generous, didn't drink much, no drugs ever -

BACKSTROM
Except his pound of heroin?

GRAVELY
Kid was rich. Why deal heroin?

QUICK POP: Toby is busy in his dorm room, PUSH INTO TOBY'S POV: he is stuffing the money and heroin into the bag.

BACKSTROM
I'm a spoiled brat who decides to defy Senator Dad, be a bad boy. Fifty grand in seed money gets me Visser's campus dope franchise. Vengeful Chinamen want their territory back, hang me from a bridge to warn off Visser.

Gravely doesn't like it, but the theory holds water -

GRAVELY
Almond and I both got the name of a girl Toby broke up with six weeks ago. Maybe she can shed light.

BACKSTROM
Moto's attractive, right?

GRAVELY
If you like 'em manly, tough, brave, trustworthy, modest, dumb, and sincere. Why?

BACKSTROM
He can moisten up Toby's ex.

Gravely winces as they continue walking.

CUT TO:

15 INT. ALYSON COX'S LIBRARY CARREL - DAY 15

Moto holds a quiet conversation with the beautiful, pathologically cynical 20-yr-old ALYSON COX. Bored, Backstrom clocks the environment -

ALYSON COX
Toby and I were together for less than four months, so...

BACKSTROM
We know Toby dumped you for someone new. What's her name?

Alyson Cox bursts into tears -

MOTO
Oh, ma'am I'm sorry!

Backstrom sees a computer sporting a Cupid/Stripper sticker firing an arrow into a broken heart -

BACKSTROM
She's faking - distracting us from finding this.

Backstrom hands the computer to Moto, who opens it. Alyson stops crying, unembarrassed by getting caught -

ALYSON COX
Hey, you need a warrant.

MOTO
No, we don't. Stolen property. Password please?

ALYSON COX
I have no idea. Toby must've changed it after we broke up.

BACKSTROM
Type in "Cass". Why'd you steal Toby's computer?

ALYSON COX
Private personal material.

MOTO
Yowza! I'll say.

Moto shows the laptop screen to Backstrom -

MOTO (CONT'D)
This individual in a sexual situation with a boy who is <u>not</u> Toby Percival.

BACKSTROM
That's a girl, Moto. You can tell because she doesn't have a penis.

MOTO
I thought that much forest there had to be a tree.
(*Eureka!* to Alyson)
Toby took these photos and was blackmailing you for lesbianism.

ALYSON COX
You know what century it is, right?

BACKSTROM
I'm you...

ALYSON COX
What do you mean you're me?

<u>QUICK POP: Alyson Cox, naked, is setting up a camera for a timed photo, obscuring someone in her bed. PUSH INTO ALYSON'S POV -- turning to make out with the girl in her bed. FLASH</u>!

BACKSTROM
Toby dumps me. To prove I'm better off without him, I send photos of me snorkeling a girl.

Backstrom is obviously correct -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
What time did you steal Toby's computer?

ALYSON COX
I saw Toby was dead on Twitter, ran over ... say 7:30.

BACKSTROM
How did it look?

ALYSON COX
His room? Clean as ever. Boring Boy Scout.

MOTO
If he's such a boy scout how come he got murdered?

BACKSTROM
Everybody hates boy scouts.

CUT TO:

16 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP - DAY 16

Moto and Backstrom enter. Moto carries the computer -

MOTO
If I was Toby and a girl sent me photos like that, I'd figure it was an invite to a threesome.

BACKSTROM
Had a lot of threesomes, Moto?

MOTO
The regular amount.

BACKSTROM
The regular amount is none.

MOTO
I was a Mixed Martial Arts fighter. We attract groupies. But I've put that behind me now, sir, to concentrate on my career in law enforcement.

BACKSTROM
You're over thirty and still in uniform. I'm you I go back to fighting and threesomes.

Moto splits; Backstrom approaches Niedermayer and Gravely who regard a projection of a satellite photo of the campus -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
What's this?

NIEDERMAYER
Bushtits, sir. And bushtit feces.

GRAVELY
It's a bird. The heroin showed traces of poop and feathers.

NIEDERMAYER
(off the photo))
Behold! Every bushtit feeding station on campus.
(off a heroin pen test)
Testing each station for the presence of heroin should allow us to unearth the dead drop.

BACKSTROM
Everything you say sounds like a toast to the queen.

Niedermayer finds that hilarious -

GRAVELY
Narcotics clocked Visser. First name Eugene, owns a bar in Hawthorne, dedicated scumbag.

BACKSTROM
Let's go ask Eugene if he got Toby killed.

GRAVELY
What's your plan, sir? It's not like we have any leverage.

BACKSTROM
If Visser helps us with the murder, we'll turn a blind eye to his dope dealing.

GRAVELY
He knows we can't do that, sir, so not really a plan or leverage.

CUT TO:

17 INT. RIVERSIDE BAR - DAY 17

Backstrom and Gravely with GENE VISSER, (30'S, big, biker-tough, a career criminal.) Visser cracks a raw egg into a boilermaker -

VISSER
The protein in the albumin bonds with the alcohol transforming this from a noxious libation into a healthful concoction.

GRAVELY
Where were you yesterday morning?

VISSER
Why would I tell you?

Gravely holds up a photo of Toby Percival. When Visser takes it from her, Backstrom slams back Visser's boilermaker -

GRAVELY
Yesterday morning this boy got murdered at Beech College.

VISSER
And, what? You want to eliminate me as a suspect?

Visser sees his drink is gone -

VISSER (CONT'D)
That'll be eight bucks.

Backstrom digs through his pockets coming up with bits and pieces of fluff and coins -

BACKSTROM
Our dilemma is, do we work you for this murder or the drug dealing Chinamen you replaced?

Visser digs a card out of his pocket and hands it to Gravely

GRAVELY
Laotians. Drug-dealing Laotians.

GRAVELY (CONT'D)
(off card to Backstrom)
Look, Eugene has one of those slimy drug lawyers.

Backstrom drinks Visser's second boiler maker then BELCHES -

BACKSTROM
(to Gravely)
He's right about the concoction. I feel energized.

Annoyed, Visser pokes Backstrom in the chest -

VISSER
I'm gonna have to insist you pay for-

Gravely reaches over and deftly dislocates Visser's finger. It takes Visser only a moment to regain his composure. He snatches back the lawyer's card with his good hand -

VISSER (CONT'D)
You won't be needing this. My lawyer will find you.

Visser, wrenches his finger back into place.

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

18 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / BACKSTROM'S OFFICE - DAY 18

Backstrom is reading a "Wellness Blog" on his computer when Gravely enters. Backstrom is indignant -

BACKSTROM
Visser lied about the egg.

GRAVELY
He lodged a police brutality complaint against me.

BACKSTROM
Visser attacked me. You responded appropriately. Punch me in the chest, leave a bruise, we'll take a photo for evidence.

GRAVELY
Thank you, sir. I appreciate you stepping forward like that.

BACKSTROM
I'll also testify that he called you a dyke and is lucky you didn't shoot him in the eye.

GRAVELY
You want the truth about that?

BACKSTROM
You didn't shoot a guy in the eye?

GRAVELY
Do your thing, sir. You're me. You go into a liquor store. There's three guys with guns! At what point between saying, "Freeze!" and all the shooting, was there time for name-calling?

BACKSTROM
That story never made sense to me because who ever heard of an angry lesbian?

Gravely smiles for the first time in weeks. Paquet enters with a print-out -

PAQUET
You should die for what you did.

GRAVELY
Me or Backstrom?

Paquet hands the print out to Gravely -

PAQUET
E-mail from three weeks ago I found on the victim's computer.

BACKSTROM
Signed "Cass"!

GRAVELY
Signed "Archie".

PAQUET
Archibald Danforth. A rugby boy who dropped out of college.

GRAVELY
Dropped out. Wants Toby dead. Could be our overdose victim.

PAQUET
He works at *Wholly Ground*.

BACKSTROM
Cemetery on Fremont.

GRAVELY
Fancy coffee shop on Lovejoy.

BACKSTROM
I'll take Almond. Rugby's a sport and black guys got an inside edge.

Gravely punches Backstrom in the chest. He gapes at her -

GRAVELY
Taking you up on your offer, sir. Photo evidence against Visser.

CUT TO:

19 INT. WHOLLY GROUND COFFEE SHOP - DAY 19

Backstrom, rubbing his chest, and Almond have waylaid uniformed barista ARCHIE DANFORTH with the printed out email -

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Yeah, I sent Toby that email.

Almond takes the boy's arm and indicates that they should head outside -

ALMOND
You got your wish. Toby's dead.

BACKSTROM
Cream and sugar?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
You don't want cream and sugar.

CUT TO:

19A EXT. WHOLLY GROUND COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS 19A

They move outside and into the adjacent alley -

ALMOND
Did Toby provide you with heroin?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
What? The drug heroin? No sir!

BACKSTROM
I do so want cream and sugar.

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Cream and sugar obscure the sensory profile of the blend.

ALMOND
You're not supposed to have sugar anyway. Or dairy. Or caffeine. Did you drop out of school because of Toby Percival?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Yessir. Toby diminished me as man.

ALMOND
Diminished you how, exactly?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Rugby team hazing.

ALMOND
Rugby's a team sport? I thought it was handball.

BACKSTROM
English people call it soccer.

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Rugby is not soccer. I lodged an official complaint but the Percival family has way tons of influence and that was that.

ALMOND
The Percivals got you expelled?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
I expelled myself. Post-traumatic stress. It's a real thing.

ALMOND
For soldiers in Afghanistan, son. Not soccer players in Oregon.

BACKSTROM
What'd Toby do? Hot dog butt stuff? Super glue man-bits tug-of- war stuff? Put tapioca in your eye?

ALMOND
Put sugar in your coffee?

Backstrom LAUGHS. Who knew Almond had a sense of humor?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
They held me down and Toby smeared black shoe polish on my testicles.

ALMOND
(to Backstrom)
This coffee kid didn't kill nobody.

QUICK POP: Archie dressed at his locker, the team coming out of the showers, led by Toby, PUSH INTO ARCHIE'S POV - LAUGHING Toby SNAPS Archie in the face with his towel.

BACKSTROM
I'm kind of a weinie, working in a weinie coffee shop, I'm thinking how much everybody loved Toby, nobody likes me.

Almond sees how that hits home with Archie -

ALMOND
You know anybody else who didn't love Toby?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Once I saw Toby get slapped.

BACKSTROM
By someone named “Cass”?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
A stripper named Cassandra. How’d you know?

ALMOND
Toby Percival and a stripper?

ARCHIE DANFORTH
Private off-campus team party. There was a financial misunderstanding and the stripper slapped Toby and said her brother would break his legs.

Backstrom pulls out his phone and speed-dials, heading for the car. Almond makes to follow, then turns back to Archie -

ALMOND
Son, I been a coach, real football, not botchey-ball soccer, and I’m telling you, go back to school, get back on that team and prove to those boys, and more important prove to yourself, you aren’t in any way diminished as a man. And I got black balls, son. Not any kind of handicap.

Archie blinks, the lesson landing. He sticks out his hand and shakes with Almond.

CUT TO:

20 EXT. CHINATOWN STREET CAFE - DAY 20

Moto is bringing everyone their order on a tray: Almond gets duck, Gravely, chow mein; Paquet, seafood soup; Moto, shrimp; and, finally Backstrom gets steamed vegetables -

GRAVELY
Our mysterious Cass is a stripper, name of Cassandra.

MOTO
I personally know three strippers named Cassandra. We use them as ring girls for our Mixed Martial Arts bouts.

Moto digs for his wallet and pulls out cards -

ALMOND
There's more strippers per capita in Portland than Bangkok. Half of them gotta be named Cassandra.

BACKSTROM
I ordered deep fried chicken balls.

GRAVELY
My bad, sir. Almond, you talk to Vice. I'll take the Sex Workers Union. Paquet, search on-line ads and escort services.

Backstrom snatches Moto's cards -

BACKSTROM
(to Moto)
All that fighting, how many times did you get kicked in the head?

MOTO
A few times. Why?

Backstrom holds up one of Moto's cards. It is for a stripper named "Cassandra LaStrange" and the graphic on it matches the sticker on Tobias Percival's computer -

BACKSTROM
This why you're doomed to be a uniform your whole life.

MOTO
Why?

ALMOND
That pretty much matches the sticker on our victim's computer.

GRAVELY
Cassandra LaStrange. *Veni, Vidi, Vagina* Strip Club. Classy.

Moto finally gets it. Almond pats him on the back -

PAQUET
Don't worry, Moto. You are a good man in a fight.

Backstrom snags one of Almond's duck legs.

CUT TO:

21 INT. VENI VIDI VAGINA STRIP CLUB / GYNECOLOGY ROW - NIGHT 21

Backstrom and Gravely watch CASSANDRA LASTRANGE (21, African-American, beautiful, vulnerable, melancholy) as she finishes up her Cupid-themed routine -

GRAVELY
Poor thing...

BACKSTROM
I don't buy that whole "victimized stripper" theme. Lotsa girls got bad fathers; they don't end up flashing their vajayjays for a living. You know why strippers strip? Because they hate men and get off on controlling them.

Cassandra fires a suction-cup arrow into a projected heart, which splits in half.

CUT TO:

22 INT. VENI VIDI VAGINA STRIP CLUB / DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT 22

Cassandra regards a photo of Toby. She is unconvincingly putting on a hard face. Backstrom pokes around the room -

CASSANDRA
I don't know him.

Backstrom finds a photo booth series of Cassandra and Toby kissing and holds it up for Cassandra and Gravely -

BACKSTROM
He told his mommy he loves you.

Cassandra's face crumples, her heart obviously broken -

CASSANDRA
When Toby asked me out, I said "no". Like a <u>hundred</u> times. College boys, all they want is bragging rights, bagging a stripper.

GRAVELY
We interviewed all his friends, teammates, family ... nobody knows about you.

BACKSTROM
Toby was scared of Senator Dad.

GRAVELY
I think it was because Toby loved you. He kept you private so he didn't have to hear jokes or answer questions.

BACKSTROM
Toby left you a thousand bucks. What for? Fake boobs? Abortion?

CASSANDRA
Junior college tuition.

BACKSTROM
I'm a stripper but I what I really want is to be a beautician!

CASSANDRA
Social worker. But I got debts and I didn't want Toby's money.

BACKSTROM
Unless he tucked it in your G-string.

GRAVELY
We found a pound of heroin hidden in Toby's dorm room.

BACKSTROM
Do you use? Check between her toes for puncture marks.

CASSANDRA
I don't use. And there's no way Toby had anything to do with heroin. You got that 100% wrong.

GRAVELY
Can you think of anyone who'd want to kill Toby?

CASSANDRA
No. Toby was beautiful.
(then)
Do you think the Percivals will let me come to Toby's funeral? If I got the right clothes?

BACKSTROM
I'm a senator burying my son the dope dealer. Why wouldn't I want the black stripper he was banging showing up for the tv cameras?

Cassandra shakes her head, crying again, heartbroken.

CUT TO:

23 INT. GRAVELY'S VEHICLE (TRAVELING) - NIGHT 23

Gravely drives, Backstrom snoozes in the passenger seat without a seat belt. Gravely jabs at the brakes jerking Backstrom forward into the dash -

GRAVELY
What you do is see the worst in yourself and apply it to everyone else. That's not any higher plane of existence.

BACKSTROM
Did you do that on purpose?

Gravely's CELL RINGS. She answers it hands-free -

GRAVELY
Gravely.

PAQUET (OVER SPEAKER)
Cassandra LaStrange's real name is Cassandra Turner. Sister to Campus Security Officer Charles Turner.

GRAVELY
The Security Guard?

BACKSTROM
I don't see the worst in everyone. I see the everyone in everyone.

CUT TO:

24 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INCIDENT ROOM - NIGHT 24

Backstrom, Gravely, Almond, and Niedermayer watch as Paquet indicates her time-line, featuring Niedermayer's marked up satellite photo of the campus -

PAQUET
Charles Turner's patrol route took him through Toby's dorm building after the threesome girl stole the computer but before Backstrom and Gravely got there.

Niedermayer indicates his marked up campus map -

NIEDERMAYER
This bushtit feeding station tested positive for heroin. It's on Turner's patrol route. The bridge is not on his patrol route so why was he the one to find Toby's body?

BACKSTROM
Get Turner in the box. I'm a genius in the box.

GRAVELY
Get him on what charge?

ALMOND
Lying to a police officer. Turner denied knowing a "Cass".

GRAVELY
When?

NIEDERMAYER
Su Shi tells us "*Clear conscience never fears midnight knocking.*"

Backstrom is up and heading out the door -

BACKSTROM
Order sushi midnight tonight.
(to Paquet)
I need the name of the student who overdosed.

Backstrom is gone -

ALMOND
Backstrom tosses an epileptic fit and you all pretend it's dancing.

NIEDERMAYER
Backstrom embodies a very highly evolved Buddhist koan: *Chaos reveals what Order obscures*.

GRAVELY
Nadia, find our overdose victim before midnight.

CUT TO:

25 INT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE - NIGHT 25

Backstrom sits in his chair, watching the news, sipping one of Niedermayer's teas.

At first he doesn't notice Paquet entering like she owns the place, a bottle of brandy in the crook of her arm -

TV NEWS ANCHOR
...In the wake of the murder of his son, Senator Percival has declined to confirm or deny that he will run for Governor, stating that he is loath to exploit personal tragedy for political capital.

PAQUET
I maybe found your Overdose Boy but I cannot confirm because he's locked up in a mountain rehab. I brought brandy, do you play chess?

BACKSTROM
Deb said I can't drink alcohol.

PAQUET
Who is Deb?

BACKSTROM
My doctor. Did you even knock?

PAQUET
If you mix cognac with Niedermayer's tea, it becomes medicinal.

Which is all the loophole Backstrom needed.

CUT AHEAD TO:

BACKSTROM & PAQUET

play chess. Paquet drinks from a snifter, Backstrom out of his teapot. They are both happily inebriated -

BACKSTROM
This team Gravely put together sucks. She wants me to fail so she can lead Serious Crimes herself.

PAQUET
You are a crazy man. Gravely hand-picked us to make you look good.

BACKSTROM
A killer dyke, a bible-thumper, a moron, a Yoga-master, and Marie Antoinette.

PAQUET
Gravely is the Heart; Almond is the Soul; I'm the Brain--

BACKSTROM
I'm the Brain!

Paquet makes her next chess move confidently -

PAQUET
I am the Brain. Moto is the Muscle. Niedermayer is the Third Eye.

BACKSTROM
What am I? The rectum? Checkmate.

PAQUET
You play like a child. You strike out alone, leaving all support behind, ignoring your own defense. This chess set is worth twenty thousand dollars. Some of these other pieces are worth a fortune. Are you wealthy, Det. Backstrom, or are you very, very naughty?

BACKSTROM
I can't have sex with you.

PAQUET
Because your bad health gives you plumbing problems?

BACKSTROM
No!

PAQUET
Sex is against the police rules?

Backstrom shows Paquet his "prescription" while drinking directly from his tea pot -

PAQUET (CONT'D)
Dr. Deb prescribed you a friend? What kind of doctor says stop drinking but make friends? This is a mixed message.

BACKSTROM
Friends can't have sex. Everybody knows that.

PAQUET
Oh, you require me for a medicinal friend? I accept the challenge!

They drink again, then Backstrom's CELL BEEPS. He has to concentrate to read it, then shows it to Paquet -

BACKSTROM
Gravely and Almond arrested Turner and I'm drunk-ass drunk.

PAQUET
With your permission, I will administer a Corsican folk remedy.

BACKSTROM
OK. Thank you.

Paquet SLAPS Backstrom across the face as hard as she can, knocking him right out of his chair.

CUT TO:

26 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP / INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT 26

The wee hours. Backstrom sits across from Turner, eye swollen, hair wet from a cold shower and guzzling his fourth cup of scalding coffee, as promised, mostly sober -

BACKSTROM
I'm on a jury. I hear about the murder of a senator's son. A white boy who's banging a black drug dealer's stripper sister. Now who do you think I'm going to convict of that homicide? The Senator?

CHARLES TURNER
I'm not a drug dealer.

Backstrom flips over a photo of a long-haired 18yr old boy and pushes it across the table to Turner -

BACKSTROM
Recognize this kid?

CHARLES TURNER
Absolutely not!

INTERCUT WITH:

27 INT. SERIOUS CRIMES GROUP - CONTINUOUS 27

Almond and Gravely watch on a monitor, exchange looks -

ALMOND
C'mon, the "absolutely not" rule can't be true every time.

BACKSTROM
He says you provided him with heroin.

Backstrom produces a photo of a bush-tit feeding station -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
I'm also going to charge you with endangering bush-tits ... we got witnesses that you tossed Toby's dorm room ... we know everything.

GRAVELY
Backstrom does not shirk from lying.

Turner feels more and more pushed into a corner -

BACKSTROM
The question you're asking yourself right now? Answer is lethal injection.

CHARLES TURNER
I didn't kill that white boy. That's the truth.

BACKSTROM
I don't care about the truth; I care about getting convictions.

CHARLES TURNER
Toby loved my sister. He tried to buy her debts so she could quit stripping.

BACKSTROM
What debts? Glitter? Suction cup arrows?

CHARLES TURNER
She owed Visser for getting her dancing career going.

GRAVELY
Visser owns the whole damn family.

CHARLES TURNER
Visser sees the Golden Goose, bleeds Toby dry. Once his money is gone, Cass expects Toby to quit on her but somehow Toby figures out what I do for Visser, hijacks the stash from the bird nest, tells me, "*Set up a meet with Visser*."

BACKSTROM
I'm you, wondering if Toby's gonna save my sister...

QUICK POP: Visser and Toby approach each other on the bridge, Turner holding back, watching, PUSH INTO TURNER'S POV Toby and Visser approach each other.

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
I watch to see how it plays out.

CHARLES TURNER
No, Visser told me to go find the rest of his heroin.

BACKSTROM
I'm Toby, I bring a bag of heroin to show Visser I'm serious.

QUICK POP: Toby and Visser. PUSH INTO TOBY'S POV: He holds up the heroin, Visser grabs the heroin

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
I'm Visser facing a boy. I could break a few bones, make the boy give me my heroin -- but I kill him instead. But why?

QUICK POP: Toby, holding up the heroin, and Visser grabs it. PUSH INTO VISEER'S POV: Toby, scared, is holding a gun

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
The stupid kid brought a gun.

Turner is amazed that Backstrom figured that out -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
If you don't tell me what you saw, I'll charge you with the murder.

QUICK POP: Turner watches as Visser LAUGHS and attacks Toby, jamming the heroin into his face. In seconds Toby is dead, the gun falling from his hands, his body limp. It's over.

CHARLES TURNER
Like you said. Toby pulls this junk revolver. Visser laughs, jams the junk in the boy's face and ... Toby kicks but once.
(then)
I didn't stay for the hanging.

UP MUSIC: "TAKE 5" by The Portland Cello Project.

ALMOND
A raisin in popcorn, Backstrom called Turner. A raisin in popcorn.

Almond is disgusted with the world.

CUT TO:

28 EXT. RIVERSIDE BAR - NIGHT 28

Music continues over

Moto is on point with a shotgun. Gravely, with an assault weapon is next followed by Almond. Backstrom heads around back.

CUT TO:

29 INT. RIVERSIDE BAR - CONTINUOUS 29

Music continues over...

Visser is taking money from Bad Guy #1 as Moto comes through the door. There are a couple of early drinkers who pose a threat to no one but the Bartender is one of Visser's tough guys and snatches up a shotgun.

Moto shoots at the Bartender, who dives for cover.

Visser has a handgun. Gravely raises her weapon but cannot bring herself to fire. Bad Guy #1 shoots Gravely in the body armor and she goes down. Almond pulls Gravely to cover. Moto, frustrated because the Bartender could spray them all with his shotgun, hollers at Almond to keep the Bartender down. Moto slides along the bar shoots Bad Guy #1, killing him.

Visser heads toward the back door. Bad Guy #2 fires at Almond.

The Bartender stands up with his shotgun and Moto kicks him in the head.

A moment of silence before Bad Guy #2 fires at Moto, who responds by advancing on him firing his weapon. Bad Guy #2 gets the point and tosses out his gun, surrendering. Moto will hold him prisoner.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. RIVERSIDE BAR - CONTINUOUS 30

Music continues over ...

Backstrom at the back door. Visser bursts out. The two men collide. Both guns go flying. Both men struggle to get their guns. Visser is faster but the finger that Gravely dislocated slows him down because he has to switch hands.

Backstrom FIRES just before Visser does, striking Visser in the throat.

Visser falls into the river. Backstrom looks to see that he’s been shot in the arm, blood dripping down his hand.

Almond and Gravely arrive at the back door just in time to see dead Visser slip slowly beneath the surface of the water.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

31 INT. BACKSTROM'S PLACE - DAY 31

Valentine and Paquet watch Backstrom wash down a handful of Vicodin with Niedermayer's tea. Paquet is setting up a digital camera for a delayed shot -

PAQUET
So these various treasures are not Backstrom's? They are yours?

VALENTINE
I'm an art and antiques dealer. These items are between owners.

Valentine and Paquet go over to pose with Backstrom -

PAQUET
You are a hero. They are going to give you a medal. Why aren't you celebrating?

BACKSTROM
Where's Toby's gun?

PAQUET
In the river with Visser. You are a lazy and selfish man. Everyone is satisfied, leave it alone.

VALENTINE
Lazy and selfish but one thing Backstroke can't stand is the idea of someone outsmarting him. Smile.

They all smile at the camera as it FLASHES.

CUT TO:

32 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / THE WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY 32

Another cold wet morning. Backstrom, unlit stogie in his mouth, stares at the crime scene, then down at a print-out of Niedermayer's map of the college -

CUT TO:

33 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / THE POND - DAY 33

Backstrom stands on the edge of the pond. He seems to be alone, brooding, until -

BACKSTROM
Toby had a revolver. Visser shot me with a 9 millimeter.

GRAVELY
If Toby Percival was your son, you'd be proud of him. No way he deserved to die.

BACKSTROM
Yeah, he did. Kid pulls a gun on a career criminal but doesn't shoot? Doesn't get any stupider.

GRAVELY
If you really believed people get what they deserve, you wouldn't smoke cigars.

BACKSTROM
Cigars are fine if you don't inhale. Arnold Schwarzenegger said so on a cigar aficionado web site.

A fleeting connection between them ... until a diver rises from the pond. In his hand he holds a .38 revolver. He removes his mask. It's Niedermayer -

NIEDERMAYER
For him I am not lost; And he is not lost for me.

BACKSTROM
I hate Niedermayer.

GRAVELY
Niedermayer says love and hate are the same energy; it's how you receive it that matters. The more hate you throw at Niedermayer, the more love he feels.

CUT TO:

34 EXT. BEECH COLLEGE / ATOP THE WOODEN BRIDGE - DAY 34

Standing at the back of Niedermayer's vehicle, Niedermayer, still in a wet suit, presents his findings to Backstrom and Gravely -

NIEDERMAYER
This gun is fully loaded. The trigger was pulled twice but misfired both times.

GRAVELY
Toby shot at Visser twice?

BACKSTROM
How do you know?

Niedermayer shows them two of the bullets -

NIEDERMAYER
The firing pin has been filed so that it barely dimples the cartridge. Called a soft strike.

GRAVELY
Visser laughed when Toby pulled the gun. He knew it wouldn't fire.

BACKSTROM
Visser killed the boy but someone else murdered him.

CUT TO:

35 INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS / JAIL VISITING - DAY 35

BACKSTROM'S POV - CASSANDRA & CHARLES TURNER

Cassandra talks to her brother. Charles Turner is obviously distraught. Cassandra is reassuring him, seemingly in vain.

BACKSTROM

watches as Charles and Cassandra Turner make their good-byes before Cassandra approaches Backstrom, upset and vulnerable, tears in her eyes -

CASSANDRA
The District Attorney has decided to go for the death penalty even though Charles didn't kill anyone.

BACKSTROM
When someone is killed in the commission of a felony, anyone involved in the felony can be charged with homicide.

CASSANDRA
But Charles cooperated.

BACKSTROM
Let's go somewhere we can talk.

CUT TO:

36 EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS / ROOF - DAY 36

Backstrom and Cassandra stand in the shadow of Mt. Hood -

CASSANDRA
Can you help my brother?

BACKSTROM
I don't want to help him.

CASSANDRA
(shocked)
Why?

BACKSTROM
How many times did you and Visser make this play before? Rich college kid falls in love with stripper -- *oh, poor me trapped in a life I never chose!* -- other boys quit after you bled them dry. But not Toby.

INTERCUT WITH:

37 INT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS STAIRWELL - CONTINUOUS 37

Gravely and Almond watch a hidden camera on a laptop -

ALMOND
This gonna be admissible?

GRAVELY
There's no reasonable expectation of privacy at Police Headquarters, so yeah.

ALMOND
Your idea?

Gravely won't take the credit, but yes -

CASSANDRA
Why are you so mean?

BACKSTROM
I'm a soft boy pretending to be a hard man. I need a gun. Do I ask my Dad the anti-gun Senator? The guys on my rugby team who are afraid of shoe polish? No, I ask my lowlife stripper girlfriend. And where does she get a gun? From her boyfriend the lowlife drug dealer.

CASSANDRA
You’re making that up.

BACKSTROM
You loaded the gun. We found your fingerprints on the bullets.

Cassandra considers, then drops into her Damsel-In-Distress mode, mocking Backstrom, tears springing to her eyes -

CASSANDRA
Yeah, I bought Toby the gun. But only because I was afraid for his life! I didn't know it was broken.

BACKSTROM
How do you know now?

ALMOND
I’ll be damned.

Gravely heads off, pulling her handcuffs -

CASSANDRA
You're a racist pig who hates women. I lost the boy I love. Who do you think people will believe?

BACKSTROM
I’m a stripper who sends the boy who loves her to his death. Why do I hate him so much? Because there was this moment when he made me believe in him. True Love! White Knights!

QUICK POP: Toby and Cassandra in the stripper dressing room. Cassandra is handing him a gun. He takes it. PUSH INTO CASSANDRA’S POV as she embraces Toby. She catches a glimpse of her own teary face in the mirror, then shuts her eyes.

BACKSTROM (CONT’D)
But someone as rotten as me can’t have that kind of faith in another person.

Cassandra gapes at Backstrom for a moment because she cannot understand how he could possibly know such a secret truth -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
I stood on the cusp of an extraordinary life and I chose the wrong path.

QUICK POP: Toby and Cassandra pull apart. He kisses her. PUSH INTO CASSANDRA'S POV. Toby moves away jauntily, looking over his shoulder and smiling before disappearing into the dark hallway. Cassandra sees her own hard, cruel face in another mirror.

Backstrom utters the profound sadness of his own life -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
Like everybody always does.

Cassandra slips her mask to reveal the reptile within -

CASSANDRA
Men comes in two flavors. Nice and stupid, like my brother and Toby; smart and awful, like you and Visser.

Gravely approaches Cassandra, handcuffs at the ready -

GRAVELY
Cassandra Turner, you are under arrest for the homicide of Tobias Percival.

CASSANDRA
I didn't kill Toby.

Gravely handcuffs Cassandra -

GRAVELY
You bought a gun for Tobias Percival so that he could blackmail Eugene Visser. Blackmail's a felony.

BACKSTROM
Even when a White Knight blackmails a drug dealing murderer.

GRAVELY
You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be held against you...

CUT TO:

38 INT. POLICE ASSOCIATION HEALTH BUILDING / OFFICE - DAY 38

Backstrom, clad again in his boxers, is having his wound bandage re-applied by Dr. Deb Chaman -

DR. DEB CHAMAN
Your liver tells me you have not quit drinking.

BACKSTROM
Drinking saved my life, Deb.
(off Chaman's confusion)
My partner dislocated the bad guy's trigger finger because he assaulted me because I drank his boilermaker. Slowed him down enough to save my life. Plus, in my defense it had an egg in it!

Backstrom starts pulling on his clothes again -

BACKSTROM (CONT'D)
I'm drinking African tea and eating vegetables...

DR. DEB CHAMAN
And making friends.

Backstrom has no idea what Chaman is talking about so Chaman shows Backstrom a very official signed affidavit by Nadia Paquet accompanied by the photo of Backstrom, Valentine, and Paquet -

DR. DEB CHAMAN (CONT'D)
I, Dr. Nadia Paquet, swear that Everett Backstrom and I play chess and drink herbal tea together. We are true friends.

BACKSTROM
We don't sleep together. She's some kind of genius.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
The first statement proves the second.
(then)
This young man ... I see a resemblance. Are you related?

BACKSTROM
No. That's Valentine. He's my decorator.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
Another friend, then. Fair enough. We'll talk next week.

BACKSTROM
What, I gotta see you every week?

DR. DEB CHAMAN
Yes. I have given you only a provisional reprieve.

BACKSTROM
I'm a Hindu. I believe we die and come back to live again. So why am I a doctor? What's with my obsession with keeping people alive. It's because I know that reincarnation is crap; we have one life and it's meaningless. I'm terrified of dying.

DR. DEB CHAMAN
And you aren't?

BACKSTROM
Absolutely not!

And Backstrom leaves.

CUT TO:

39 EXT. POLICE HEADQUARTERS - DAY 39

Backstrom exits in his poncho into the crowds of cops. He doesn't notice but we do -- this time the cops move out of the way. Backstrom lights a stogie and moves off into the rain.

END OF STORY