

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

CLOSE ON a large topographic map, spread out on a conference table. A man's thumb measures the distance between an orange sticker and the U.S./Canada border.

JUNIOR

As you can see here, the bodies were at least a kilometer within Canadian territory.

Prescott, Harper, Vico and Mathers sit across the table from three stoic Canadians. One is a UNIFORMED MOUNTIE, evidently a commander. The other two are the Junior and SENIOR legal counsellors for the territory.

Both the Maple Leaf and Yukon Territorial flags hang on the walls.

HARPER

No one is questioning that the bodies ended up on Canadian soil. But the locus of the crime was clearly within U.S. borders, specifically under the jurisdiction of the Alaska State Troopers.

JUNIOR

So your theory is, rather than move the bodies west, some "person" or "people" carried the bodies east across the border?

With some exaggeration, he traces the route on the map. Harper injects, hoping to defuse some of the rising tension.

JUNIOR (cont'd)

In that case, we should be interfacing with a federal agency. If you want to bring in the FBI, I'm sure we could coordinate through them.

Both Mathers and Vico bristle at the suggestion. Prescott's had enough:

PRESCOTT

Gentlemen, this isn't about jurisdiction, or protocol, or an imaginary line that divides us. We are not divided. We are exactly the same.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

PRESCOTT (cont'd)  
(re: Junior)  
You keep pointing at this map like  
it's reality, and it's not. Take  
a look at a bigger map. We are  
living at the edge of the world.  
Right now, we are closer to  
Finland than we are to FBI  
headquarters, so the suggestion  
that we should defer to their  
better judgement is not only  
asinine, it's insulting.

Everyone knows better than to interrupt.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)  
One of our Troopers is dead. If  
it were one of yours, and somehow  
he ended up on the wrong side of  
the fence, you should damn well  
believe we wouldn't be wasting  
your time debating the obvious.

(beat)  
All of us in this room have the  
same job. We are responsible for  
upholding the law under next-to-  
impossible circumstances. So  
don't talk to me about a line. We  
are that line.

Chastened, the Junior counsellor holds his tongue.

SENIOR  
(to the Mountie)  
Where are the bodies now?

[END OF SCENE]

INT. COURTROOM - NIGHT

Harper and Prescott have the courtroom to themselves. The main lights are dim, leaving just the table lamps.

PRESCOTT

Right now, the only Satchel in custody has the IQ of an eight-year old. His brother just beat a murder rap, so he's not too likely to cooperate. And there's no physical evidence linking the father to the scene.

(simply)

I don't see how you can win.

HARPER

The father had motive. He wanted to destroy the crime scene in order to protect his son. And his privacy. He also had opportunity...

PRESCOTT

And a heart condition. No jury is going to believe a seventy-year old man can carry two bodies four miles in the wilderness.

HARPER

He got Connie to carry the bodies.

PRESCOTT

So now we blame the mentally handicapped. That's a winner.

HARPER

It's what happened.

PRESCOTT

I believe you. But if I'm on the jury, I don't believe you beyond a reasonable doubt.

Frustrated, Harper stands up. She needs to move. She needs to look at things fresh.

HARPER

Okay, it's that night. You're Elias Satchel. You're at home.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARPER (cont'd)  
You just found out your eldest son  
is dead, and his younger brother  
has been arrested for killing him.

PRESCOTT  
(deadpan)  
Oh no. I'm grieving for my dead  
son. The only good one I had,  
apparently. A real saint.

HARPER  
But you also want to protect  
Bobby. He is also your son. And  
he's the only able-bodied person  
you have left to run your  
business.

PRESCOTT  
So I'm grieving, but pragmatic.  
(off her look)  
Tell me how to play this. Do I  
really think it was a terrible  
accident misportrayed by the evil  
government taxocracy? Or do I  
think Bobby really killed Glenn?

ANGLE ON Harper. A strange realization...

HARPER  
You know he did it.

PRESCOTT  
How do I know?

HARPER  
Because you told him to.

PRESCOTT  
I told Bobby to kill his brother  
with a rock?

HARPER  
And make it look like an accident.

[END OF SCENE]