

ALASKA

“Gravedigger”

written by
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NOTE:

Because of Alaska's arctic setting, "DAY" and "NIGHT" don't always mean what you'd expect.

For scripts set in the summertime, we will be using the term "BRIGHT NIGHT" to designate the time from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m., when the kids are asleep but the sun is still shining.

Likewise, winter scripts will use "DARK DAY" to indicate normal daytime hours when the sun has never risen.

"Gravedigger" is a summer script.

FADE IN:

Morning rises on a tranquil ocean bay, fed by glaciers in the nearby mountains. The tree-lined peaks continue right down to the shoreline, as if the whole world had recently flooded.

TITLE OVER:

**CHATHAM STRAIGHT
15 MILES NORTHWEST OF JUNEAU**

The water is mirror-still. The last wisps of fog still cling to the surface. A beat, then we...

CUT TO:

A PADDLE,

pulling back the water. Lift, turn, dig. Lift, turn, dig. The movement is hypnotizing. A fan of water drips off the edge of the blade with each stroke.

Our canoeist is a very old Native man named CARL COODAY. It's not clear what he's paddling to or from. This may just be his morning constitutional.

The paddle drags the water. Turns. The canoe begins to slow.

Carl looks to his right. Paddles a few more strokes.

A BODY

is floating facedown in the water. It's a woman, fully clothed in a red dress. Her ankles and arms are milky-white.

Carl seems completely unsurprised to see a dead woman floating here. He uncoils a length of hemp rope and begins to tie it to the woman's ankles.

CUT TO:

EXT. SHORELINE FOREST - DAY

The canoe is pulled halfway onto the shore. The woman's body lies beside it.

We find Carl with a shovel, turning back the dirt. He digs just like he paddles: no hurry, no wasted motion.

The animals of the forest are very active: birds CHIRPING, insects BUZZING. It's going to be another beautiful summer day.

Carl stops his work, winded. He holds the shovel in his right hand, looking down at his left arm. It hurts.

He leans against the shovel for support. The blade digs into the soft earth.

Carl presses against his chest, where his heart should be beating. It isn't anymore.

With a GASP, the old man collapses halfway into the grave he was digging. Just like that, he's dead.

A beat, then we slowly RISE UP to reveal that this is one of
FOURTEEN GRAVES

on this forest beach, each marked with a handmade cross.

Carl Cooday has been very busy.

CUT TO:

OPENING TITLES

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

EXT. SHORELINE FOREST - DAY

Chief Medical Examiner PAUL VICO oversees a team of four uniformed CRIME-SCENE ANALYSTS. Vico is sweaty and grumpy.

VICO
Gentlemen! This is not a race!
We do not try to dig the bodies
out. We only move the dirt away.

Carefully leaning over an exposed grave, he uses a chopstick to push mud from a partially-decomposed hand. Near one finger, he finds a tarnished silver ring. He lifts it up with the chopstick, sliding it into his hand.

As Vico reads the inscription...

MATHERS (O.S.)
He left the jewelry on.

Vico looks up to see Lieutenant RAY MATHERS, just arrived.

VICO
He wasn't a collector. He just
buried 'em.

Vico stands, sealing the ring in a plastic baggie.

MATHERS
How many?

VICO
We got fourteen graves. So far,
one body per. Even split male-
female. Plus a woman on the
shore. Looks like the old guy had
a coronary digging her grave.

MATHERS
The old guy have a name?

VICO
Carl Cooday. Lived out here by
himself forty years. Married
couple from town found him this
morning. He'd been dead a few
days.

MATHERS
Theories?

They begin to move down to the shore.

VICO

Well, any time you're looking at this many corpses, you gotta think serial. But this guy doesn't fit any profile.

MATHERS

He was a loner.

VICO

Him and half of Alaska. No, he's too old, too isolated. Apparently, he never went into town. Hard to get new victims if you're not willing to mingle.

At the water's edge, Vico pulls back the translucent plastic over the woman's body. (We never get a good look at what they're examining.)

VICO (cont'd)

You got rope marks around the ankles. Probably a match with what we found in the canoe. But look at the tissue abrasion. The body was already swollen from salt water when the rope was attached.

MATHERS

She was already dead.

VICO

Yup.

MATHERS

Drowned?

VICO

We won't know until we check the lungs. But I doubt it. Look here. Lazy stitches running across the abdomen. I think she died on the operating table. Med student sewed her up.

A beat, trying to make the pieces fit.

MATHERS

I still don't see how she ended up here.

VICO

Neither do I. But I don't think
Carl Cooday killed these people.
He just put 'em in the ground.

INT. PHARMACY - DAY

A combination pharmacy, post office and coffee shop, the tiny store splits the difference between folksy and professional.

TITLE OVER:

**PUTNAM PHARMACY
JUNEAU**

LYNNE PUTNAM (32) talks with Mathers while her husband JOHN (34) finishes up an order, neatly sliding pills across his tray. The Putnams are a wholesome, attractive married couple with a bit of Samaritan smugness.

Lynne Putnam hands Mathers a small stack of mail.

LYNNE PUTNAM

Carl never came into town, so we'd go out to see him. Bring him his mail, his prescriptions, make sure he knew how to take them. Just check up on him in general.

MATHERS

That's what you were doing out there this morning?

LYNNE PUTNAM

Exactly. When he wasn't there, we started looking around.

JOHN PUTNAM

That's when we found the body.

LYNNE PUTNAM

Bodies, I guess.

She's clearly a little rattled by the experience.

MATHERS

How long did you know Mr. Cooday?

JOHN PUTNAM

Four years. That's how long ago we bought the business.

LYNNE PUTNAM

Carl didn't have any friends. But it wasn't that he was unfriendly.

MATHERS

What medications was he taking?

JOHN PUTNAM

I'll give you a list. But it's nothing out of the ordinary. Nothing that would explain...

LYNNE PUTNAM

Lieutenant Mathers, Carl Cooday didn't kill anybody, I know it in my heart. He and I had several conversations. He had taken Jesus as his savior.

Mathers notes Lynne Putnam's sincerity.

MATHERS

You never noticed anything unusual before today?

JOHN PUTNAM

No.

LYNNE PUTNAM

Well. That's not really true.

John gives his wife a silencing look, but she goes ahead anyway.

LYNNE PUTNAM (cont'd)

Last few months, Carl said he'd been visited by spirits.

MATHERS

Spirits?

LYNNE PUTNAM

The dead.

JOHN PUTNAM

We thought it was just an Indian thing. You know, a metaphor.

LYNNE PUTNAM

Maybe he really was talking about the dead.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Vico and a CRIME LAB TECH hoist a black body bag onto a long white cafeteria table, the kind with attached benches. This bag is just one of nine already set up in this impromptu morgue.

TITLE OVER:

**DZANTIK'I HEENI MIDDLE SCHOOL
JUNEAU**

Vico wipes his brow. Tells his man...

VICO

Go find the principal. See if this school has air conditioning.

TECH

What if it doesn't?

VICO

Then it's going to smell worse in a couple hours.

As the Crime Tech heads off, he crosses ROGER PRESCOTT and ALISON HARPER, just arrived. Each has an overnight bag.

PRESCOTT

Dr. Vico, what's the special today?

VICO

You flew all the way from Anchorage and that's the best cafeteria joke you could come up with?

PRESCOTT

(to Harper)
Careful, he's grouchy.

VICO

I'm hot, I'm tired, and I've got five more bodies coming. Rest of my team is out at the site.

HARPER

How can we help?

Vico takes a clipboard off a nearby body bag.

VICO
Can you write neatly?

She takes the clipboard with a smile.

HARPER
I'm a lawyer, not a doctor.

PRESCOTT
Have you been able to ID any of
the bodies?

VICO
Not yet. But we already checked
the records, and there aren't
fourteen people missing in Juneau.

PRESCOTT
So where did these bodies come
from?

EXT. CHATHAM STRAIT - DAY

A 25-foot COAST GUARD BOAT cuts through the same quiet bay we
saw earlier. It would be a beautiful day for a tour, if only
there weren't pressing business.

INT. COAST GUARD BOAT - DAY

Mathers rides with a young Coast Guard PETTY OFFICER.

MATHERS
If a body ended up in the bay, how
long before it drifted out to open
water?

OFFICER
Probably never would. Current
doubles back on itself. That's
why the whales come through here.
Keeps the food all in one place.

The officer gestures to an outcropping on the shore.

OFFICER (cont'd)
See over by those rocks? Least
once a month we'll get a call
about a canoe that's drifted away.
Half the time, it ends up there.

MATHERS

So if you were to dump something
in the bay, same place every
time...

OFFICER

Odds are it would end up the same
place every time. Like clockwork.

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - BRIGHT NIGHT

Assisting Vico, Harper begins filling out a new form. She
checks her watch. Surprised...

HARPER

Is that really the time?

Vico checks his watch.

VICO

Ten 'til ten.

Harper looks out the windows, where it could easily be mid-
afternoon. Something about the sound and the stillness feels
like night, however.

HARPER

I don't know if I can get used to
this daylight thing.

VICO

Wait 'til winter. It'll all even
out.

Back to the body he's examining, Vico shines a penlight into
the corpse's mouth.

VICO (cont'd)

Minor laceration of the
thyroarytenoid* muscle. T-H-Y-R...

*[THY-roh-uh-RET-in-oid]

HARPER

I know how to spell it. My
boyfriend, Jeff, is finishing his
ENT residency back East. I helped
him study for his boards.

A beat. Playfully lecherous...

VICO

So you like doctors?

HARPER

Love 'em.

Vico continues his work, checking out the rest of the mouth.

VICO

Is he gonna move to Alaska?

HARPER

To be determined.

Noticing something unusual...

VICO

Huh.

HARPER

Huh what?

VICO

This man has a wisdom tooth
growing in sideways. He never had
it removed.

HARPER

Is that unusual?

VICO

It's a little too familiar.

CUT TO:

A FAX MACHINE

printing a forensic report. We are...

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - BRIGHT NIGHT

Vico takes the first page of the report. The rest is still
printing. Harper waits patiently.

VICO

That man's name is Henry Banks.
Resident of Juneau.

HARPER

How do you know him?

VICO

Came through my office last
spring.

Vico hands her the paper. She looks through it.

HARPER

You performed an autopsy on him in April. "Accidental death."

VICO

Death by stupidity. He tried to swallow a Monopoly hotel. Choked on it.

HARPER

So it wasn't a homicide.

VICO

Absolutely not.

HARPER

After you examined him, his body should have been returned to his family for burial.

Vico takes the just-finished second page out of the fax machine.

VICO

Transportation rec. Shows we shipped him home to Juneau. Green Mountain Cemetary here in town.

HARPER

So how did he end up on a muddy beach instead?

VICO

Maybe he wanted a change of scenery.

EXT. CEMETARY - TWILIGHT

Prescott emerges from his rental car to find Harper, Vico and Mathers waiting for him.

TITLE OVER:

**GREEN MOUNTAIN CEMETARY
JUNEAU**

Prescott is nursing a coffee, unhappy to have been woken up so early.

PRESCOTT

Tell me this couldn't have waited
until morning.

MATHERS

It is morning.

The foursome begins to walk toward the cemetery office.

HARPER

I saw the sun go down over there.
But then it came right back up.

PRESCOTT

Sort of like our mysterious
bodies.

EXT. DEEPER IN THE CEMETARY - DAY

CLOSE ON a granite marker reading:

Henry Banks
1974 - 2003

We REVERSE to find the foursome approaching with cemetery director is GERALD LEPAGE (45), whose innate paranoia is heightened by this early hour. Even with his very thick glasses, one senses he's nearly blind.

LEPAGE

You can see here, there must be
some mistake. No one has
disturbed Mr. Banks's grave. The
grass is grown over.

Mathers runs his fingers through the grass, checking that it's intact.

VICO

Twenty hours of daylight. Grass
grows quick.

LEPAGE

Listen, my office looks out over
the whole cemetery. Digging a
grave is a lot of work. It takes
hours. It's not like someone
could just sneak in here and do it
without me noticing.

PRESCOTT

Mr. LePage, I mean no offense.
But with those glasses, I bet
there's a lot you don't see.

HARPER

We'd like to exhume the casket.

Alarmed...

LEPAGE

No. You can't, legally. Not
without the authorization of the
state chief medical examiner.

VICO

That'd be me.

Vico hands LePage a form out of his back pocket.

LEPAGE

This is insane. You honestly
think someone has been desecrating
these graves?

MATHERS

Let's find out.

We MOVE BEHIND the gravestone, letting it fill the frame.
When we EMERGE on the far side, it is now...

LATER.

Mathers and two MEN from Vico's team are digging up the grave.
It's dirty, back-breaking work.

Four feet down, they hit a major rock. It's much larger than
the width of the grave, and would obviously have to be removed
in order to go deeper.

Mathers TAPS it with his shovel blade. Looks up to Prescott,
Vico, Harper and LePage at the grave's edge.

MATHERS

Well. We could probably break it
up with a pickaxe.

PRESCOTT

Mr. LePage should have a pickaxe.
After all, they would have needed
one when they dug this grave the
first time.

HARPER

Except they never dug it, did they?

LEPAGE

What are you implying?

MATHERS

I don't think anyone was ever buried here. You or somebody working for you has been dumping these bodies in the bay.

With a hand from Vico, Mathers climbs out of the grave.

HARPER

Who was responsible for digging the graves?

LEPAGE

I'm not going to answer any questions. Not until I get a lawyer.

PRESCOTT

Yeah. A lawyer's a pretty good idea right now.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. CEMETARY OFFICE CRY ROOM - DAY

Consisting of a couch and two wing-back chairs, this area is intended for family members overwhelmed by losing loved ones, or having to pay the associated costs.

Prescott and Harper meet with LePage and his ATTORNEY, a curly-haired woman who doubles as the town's top realtor.

ATTORNEY

My client will cooperate only if he's granted full immunity from prosecution.

HARPER

Excuse me?

ATTORNEY

That's the offer on the table.

A look of disbelief between Harper and Prescott. He nods. You handle this idiot.

HARPER

To begin with, you're not in a position to be making offers. Cooperating with a murder investigation isn't a negotiable right. It's the law.

LEPAGE

Who said anything about murder?

HARPER

This began as a suspected homicide investigation. Until we talk with you, we can't rule out foul play.

ATTORNEY

Please don't address my client.

HARPER

I was answering your client's question. If you'd like to do that job...

ATTORNEY

I don't appreciate your tone.

HARPER
(politely)
We're investigating fourteen dead
bodies. Sorry if I don't sound
cheery.

Prescott suddenly chimes in, ignoring the defense attorney
altogether.

PRESCOTT
How do you think the town is going
to react when they find out you've
been throwing away bodies?

ATTORNEY
This interview is over.

The Attorney stands, pulling LePage with her. Harper and
Prescott stand as well.

PRESCOTT
If I were a shotgun-toting bear
hunter who found out my dear
mother had been dumped in Chatham
Strait...

LEPAGE
I don't know anything about that!

HARPER
So who does?

ATTORNEY
As your attorney, I strongly
advise you...

LEPAGE
Shut up, Lois!

LePage is now really sweating. He feels the walls closing in
around him.

LEPAGE (cont'd)
Look, I really don't know what's
happening here. I hired a man to
dig the graves, and I truly
thought that's what he was doing.

HARPER
Who's the man?

LEPAGE

Ooto Olsson.* He's been working
for me for six, eight months.

[Swedish: OO-too OHL-son]

HARPER

You have an address?

LEPAGE

I do.

PRESCOTT

Alright. We're going to need
that, and the records of everyone
who was supposed to be buried here
in the last year. Plus your
financials and anything else Lt.
Mathers needs for his
investigation.

LEPAGE

Okay. Alright. Anything you
want.

EXT. CEMETARY - DAY

Harper walks with Prescott back to his car. She's reading
through pages from a ledger.

HARPER

Get this: Mr. LePage started
buying caskets from a new supplier
about four months ago.

PRESCOTT

Let me guess. He found a bargain.

HARPER

He was buying them for a hundred
and selling them for over a
thousand.

PRESCOTT

What do you want to bet he was
buying the same coffins over and
over again?

HARPER

You think LePage knew what was
going on?

PRESCOTT

On one hand, he's a fool if he didn't. On the other hand, he may be a fool.

Harper smiles.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)

I want the gravedigger, this Ooto Olsson. Sounds like he's the mastermind behind this idiotic scheme.

HARPER

Mathers is going out to find him right now.

Prescott puts his briefcase in his car.

PRESCOTT

Morbid as it is, I'm happy it worked out this way. Think about it: we've got fourteen bodies and not one homicide. Not bad for a long day's work.

HARPER

We'll count our blessings.

PRESCOTT

See you back in Anchorage.

He climbs in and SHUTS the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST ROAD - DAY

We follow MATHERS'S TRUCK as it drives along the bay, glints of sunlight coming off the water.

EXT. RUNDOWN HOUSE - DAY

Mathers's truck pulls up to a stop in front of a rundown, ramshackle house. It doesn't look like it could weather a strong breeze, much less an Alaskan winter.

TITLE OVER:

**RESIDENCE OF OOTO OLSSON
JUNEAU**

Along the road, a broken fence separates wilderness from rural decay -- a torched car on the front lawn, sunbleached clothes hanging on the line. The bent mailbox has been lashed to the post, after having been driven over a few times.

An ANGRY DOG BARKS ferociously as Mathers gets out of the truck and puts on his ID lanyard. The dog is chained to a tree, pulling with all his strength, trying to break free and attack.

MATHERS

(yelling)

State Trooper! Anyone home?

A beat, then a dishelved woman named CARLA OLSSON emerges from the broken screen door. She's 27, but it's hard to pin her age at a glance. Around her eyes she looks much older. There's a desperation and exhaustion you ususally only see after great tragedy.

She's clearly nervous, and seems unaccountably cold -- she holds her arms tight. Yelling at the dog...

CARLA

Batty, shut up! Shut up!

Eventually, the dog quiets down.

CARLA (cont'd)

(to Mathers)

Yeah? What do you need?

She approaches Mathers at the fence, if only to keep him from coming onto her property.

MATHERS

I'm looking for Ooto Olsson.

CARLA

He's not here.

MATHERS

Do you live here with him?

CARLA

I do. But he's not here.

MATHERS

My name is Ray Mathers. I'm with the Alaska State Troopers.

CARLA

Hi.

She nervously shakes his hand, then pulls her arm back to her chest.

MATHERS
Are you his wife?

CARLA
Yeah. Carla Olsson.

MATHERS
When do you expect your husband
back?

CARLA
Hard to say.

MATHERS
How long has he been gone?

She genuinely has to think.

CARLA
A day maybe. It's hard, with the
days so long. You lose track.

MATHERS
When was the last time you slept?

CARLA
Oh, I was actually just sleeping
before you came.

MATHERS
Really. What day of the week is
it?

CARLA
(a little unsure)
Saturday.

MATHERS
It's Tuesday. How long have you
been tweaking, Carla?

She just stares at him, not sure if he's fishing or if he really knows the truth.

MATHERS (cont'd)
Couple days? A week?

Carla backs away from him. Mathers pushes the gate aside. Follows her.

MATHERS (cont'd)

Are you smoking or shooting up?
I'm guessing the latter. That's
why you don't want to show me your
arms.

CARLA

Look, I don't know where Ooto is.

MATHERS

Is he out getting more crystal
meth for you?

CARLA

Oh, like I'm the one with the
problem.

MATHERS

Your teeth are falling out, you
have bruises on your arms and you
live in squalor. I'd say you have
a problem.

She doesn't even try to argue.

MATHERS (cont'd)

You have any kids?

CARLA

No.

MATHERS

Great. One thing you've done
right.

She nods. She'd be crying if her wiring weren't so screwed
up.

MATHERS (cont'd)

Your husband, he's in some serious
trouble. And if he's half as high
as you are right now, he could be
dangerous to himself and other
people. If you care about him at
all, you're gonna take me to him
before anyone gets hurt.

(beat)

Now, do you know where he is?

CARLA

He has a trailer. It's about an
hour away, up one of the fire
roads.

MATHERS
You know the way?

She nods.

MATHERS (cont'd)
Right then. First we're going to
feed that dog of yours, and then
we're going to go.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Harper and Vico walk down the rows of tables, matching up
bodies to cemetery records. Vico takes a clipboard off a
closed bodybag, checking the stats.

VICO
Female, Black. Early forties.

HARPER
Loretta Jones.

Harper hands him the file. He checks it over. Seems like a
match. He places both the clipboard and the file folder on
top of the bodybag, then moves to the last corpse in the row.

VICO
Last one.
(checking clipboard)
Male, Caucasian. Early twenties.

Harper looks through the possible files -- only two left.

HARPER
All I have is women.

VICO
So we got an extra body.

HARPER
Someone who was never supposedly
buried at Green Mountain.

VICO
Looks that way.

HARPER
Do you know the cause of death?

VICO
Haven't even started yet.

Both Harper and Vico stare at the zipped-up body bag.

VICO (cont'd)
Just when it was looking easy.

CUT TO:

EXT. JUNEAU AIRPORT / PARKING LOT - DAY

Prescott walks down a row of cars, pulling his overnight bag. He tosses his keys to a male RENTAL ATTENDANT.

PRESCOTT
Pleasure as always.

The Attendant nods. A beat later, Prescott's cell phone RINGS. He answers it without stopping.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)
Prescott. Yeah. Really.

He stops, listening more carefully.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)
Okay. I'll be right there.

He hangs up. Turns and starts walking back the way he came. Calling over to the Attendant.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)
Rick! I'll need those keys back.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

Prescott joins Harper and Vico examining the extra body. We don't get a very good look at it -- for the best, really, because the body's in pretty rough shape.

VICO
Man died of heart failure.

PRESCOTT
This kid's 25 years old, tops.

VICO

Wasn't cholesterol that killed him. Massive drug overdose. Some sort of amphetamine, probably crystal. Fried him from the inside out.

HARPER

Was he a junkie?

VICO

No way. Arms are clean, no tracks. Except for this bruise on his shoulder.

We go CLOSE ON a blackened patch. It's unpleasant, but not gruesome or bloody.

VICO (cont'd)

Crystal is like gasoline cut with battery acid. It melted through the muscle.

PRESCOTT

You think he did it himself?

VICO

No. Someone shot him up with enough to kill him. Probably enough to kill an elephant.

HARPER

You think it was a homicide.

VICO

Absolutely.

PRESCOTT

So we've got a killer after all.

CUT TO:

EXT. FOREST NEAR THE WATER - DAY

We COME UPON Mathers's truck as it makes its way down a dirt road. It's not quite 4-wheel time, but that winch might come in handy.

TITLE OVER:

**FIRE ROAD SW-83
OUTSIDE JUNEAU**

As the truck stops, we REVEAL a battered camper trailer sitting on cinderblocks with an equally mistreated Ford out front.

Mathers climbs out of the truck. He's parked quite a ways away, just to be safe.

INSERT SHOT:

Mather's satellite phone RINGS. The display reads: HARPER. The call goes unanswered.

CUT TO:

INT. CAMPER TRAILER - DAY

From SOMEBODY'S P.O.V., we look out through the dirty curtains, spotting the white STATE TROOPER truck parked in the distance.

A NEW ANGLE reveals an improvised double-boiler RATTLING on the camper stove, with a drip pipe leading to a gallon container. A second Coleman stove has a different brew bubbling up and smoking.

This isn't just a camper. It's a meth lab.

BACK TO:

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Mathers crosses around to the passenger door, where Carla Olsson climbs out. As he talks, Mathers keeps one eye on the trailer at all times.

MATHERS

Is your husband alone?

CARLA

I don't know.

MATHERS

Who else would be here with him?

CARLA

I don't know.

MATHERS

A buyer or a seller? Carla?

Off her non-answer...

MATHERS (cont'd)

Your husband's cooking meth, isn't he? That's why he has the trailer out in the middle of nowhere.

CARLA

He just makes enough for us.

MATHERS

Yeah, I believe that. Does he have a gun?

CARLA

No. Never.

INT. THE TRAILER - DAY

CLOSE ON a man's trembling hands as he loads a cheap .22 calibre -- classic Saturday night special. The hands are filthy, covered in grime and sores.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

Mathers points to Carla.

MATHERS

Back behind the truck. Now.

CARLA

Don't hurt him. He's not a bad man. Really.

Yet, she obeys Mathers. Moves behind the truck. Mathers unholsters his weapon while inching towards the trailer.

MATHERS

(yelling)

State Trooper! I need you to come outside with your hands up!

There's no movement from inside.

MATHERS (cont'd)

Mr. Olsson! I have your wife here...

INT. TRAILER - DAY

MATHERS [O.S.]
...she'd really like you to come
out and talk with us.

For the first time, we reveal OOTO OLSSON (30). Once a strapping Swede, six years of homemade meth have left him skinny, feral and paranoid. He's well on his way to becoming Gollum.

He's crouched by the door, gun ready.

EXT. ROAD - DAY

Mathers slowly approaches, his weapon at ready.

MATHERS
Mr. Olsson?

ANGLE ON Carla, turning as she spots a SECOND MAN creeping out of the woods behind her. He is heavysset, a biker, carrying a 9-millimeter. He puts a finger to his mouth. Be quiet.

INTERCUT

Mathers approaching the trailer.

Ooto inside.

The Biker taking aim at Mathers.

Carla, choosing sides. At the last moment...

CARLA
No!

Mathers turns. With a hunter's eye, he finds his mark and FIRES, dropping the biker with two shots.

Carla SCREAMS, freaked out of her mind.

INT. THE TRAILER - DAY

Hearing the gunshots, Ooto panics. He SLAMS himself against the dinette table, which collapses.

The Coleman stove falls off it, the bubbling cauldron spraying everywhere. Ooto SCREAMS in pain as the boiling liquid hits him.

Smoke rises, and then a SPARK.

EXT. THE ROAD - DAY

The trailer EXPLODES, blowing out the glass with licks of flame. Mathers isn't knocked down, but he turns away by reflex.

Carla watches in wide-eyed horror. A beat, then the smoldering door of the trailer opens and

A FLAMING MAN

falls out. It's Ooto, obviously, but it seems more like his ghost. He walks away from the smoking wreckage, step after step.

Carla runs towards him. Mathers catches her. Holds her back with one arm while keeping aim on Ooto. Just in case.

The burning man finally falls.

The flames live longer than he does.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

EXT. WRECKAGE OF THE TRAILER - DAY

Harper and Mathers walk-and-talk past the still-smoking hull of the trailer, while UNIFORMED TROOPERS do a line-sweep of the area in the background.

HARPER

So this man, Ooto Olsson, had two jobs: gravedigger and drug manufacturer.

MATHERS

You're familiar with crystal meth?

HARPER

Not really. Back East, the drugs we saw were mostly import-export.

Mathers picks up a small, charred canister.

MATHERS

Meth is homegrown. Basically, fertilizer, allergy medicine, some sort of solvent. Everything you need to make it is close at hand.

HARPER

So, you can't stop it at the border.

MATHERS

You can't stop it at all. You'll see whole villages fall to it. These two men who died, they weren't even big players. It's a do-it-yourself addiction.

As they move behind the trailer, we see what Mathers wanted to show her: stacks of coffins, many covered with tarps.

HARPER

And here are all the caskets. Ready for resale.

MATHERS

According to the wife, Olsson took the gravedigger job during his last bout of sobriety. A few months ago, he started doing more crystal. That's when the bodies stopped getting buried...

HARPER

...and started getting dumped in the bay. Still doesn't explain our John Doe.

MATHERS

You said he died of crystal overdose. That's a connection.

HARPER

It was a homicide. We need a motive.

MATHERS

First you need a name.

HARPER

Vico's working on it. He took the body back to Anchorage.

(beat)

Truth is, with Olsson dead, we may have lost are only lead.

MATHERS

We'll find something.

As she examines the stacks of caskets...

HARPER

Ironic. Olsson had all these coffins, and now there's not enough of him left to bury.

INT. VICO'S LAB / ANCHORAGE - DAY

Vico is on the phone, the twisty cord stretching across half the lab as he tries to continue his work on the extra male victim. We don't see much of the body, staying more on Vico.

VICO

(on phone)

The body I'm working on has a needle puncture in the right hip bone. Mostly healed, no sign of infection. Which gets me thinking, this guy might be a bone marrow donor.

(listening)

Uh-huh.

(MORE)

VICO (cont'd)

We found the body in Juneau, but since the only hospital that can do a bone marrow transplant is here in Anchorage, this guy probably came up to your hospital. Uh-huh. How quick can you get me a list of male donors in the last six months?

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE IN ANCHORAGE - BRIGHT NIGHT

A modest home in a fringe neighborhood of Anchorage. It's still bright enough to do needlepoint outside, yet all the porchlights are on. It's probably nine o'clock at night.

TITLE OVER:

**RESIDENCE OF VIRGINIA LARSON
ANCHORAGE**

Vico walks the house, carrying a supply bag. His messy VW van is parked at the curb.

Vico RINGS the bell.

INT. LIVING ROOM / HOUSE IN ANCHORAGE - BRIGHT NIGHT

CLOSE ON a framed photograph of SCOTT LARSON, 22. He's a very good looking kid, classic Abercrombie and Fitch.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Scott moved down to Juneau last year.

A woman's hand picks up the photograph. We reveal VIRGINIA LARSON (46), mother of the deceased. She's a somewhat brittle woman overwhelmed by conflicting emotions.

VIRGINIA

We'd had some arguments, personal matters. We both agreed it would be best if he moved out.

She hands the photo to Vico. Virginia's daughter AMY (13) stands off to the side. She's a very thin, pale girl. Unhealthy.

VIRGINIA (cont'd)

I hadn't spoken to Scott for a few months...

AMY

Six months. Not since the operation.

VIRGINIA

She's right. Probably six months. I assumed he was still living there.

(simply)

I assumed he was still alive.

Vico senses he's in the middle of some awkward family dynamics, heightened by the sudden news of Scott's death.

VICO

Actually, we can't say for certain the body we have is Scott. There was damage.

VIRGINIA

Oh.

VICO

So it would help if you could give me a blood sample to match.

VIRGINIA

Me?

VICO

Yes. If you don't mind.

VIRGINIA

I suppose Amy's had enough needles in her life.

Virginia takes a seat. Vico pulls supplies from his kit. While we usually see him handling dead people, Vico's quite good with living ones as well. He effortlessly keeps up a conversation while preparing to take the blood sample.

VICO

So, Amy. You were the one that got Scott's bone marrow.

AMY

Yeah.

VICO

Lucky that you and Scott were a match. Only a one-in-four chance, even for a brother and sister.

AMY

We were always a lot alike.

VICO

What kind of cancer did you have?

AMY

Leukemia. I still have it.

VIRGINIA

The transplant didn't do what we hoped.

VICO

I'm sorry.

AMY

Odds weren't that good anyway.

A beat to acknowledge that, then Vico is ready to actually draw blood.

VICO

You'll feel a sting.

Virginia looks away as the blood fills the vial.

VICO (cont'd)

A bone marrow transplant is very expensive.

AMY

Two hundred thousand dollars.
Insurance would't cover it.

A look from Virginia to Amy.

VICO

How did you pay?

VIRGINIA

We held a fundraiser, a pancake breakfast.

VICO

That's nice.

He finishes with the blood sample. Presses a cotton ball into Virginia's arm.

VIRGINIA

That's Alaska. Everyone helps each other out.

EXT. HOUSE IN ANCHORAGE - BRIGHT NIGHT

Vico is about to get back into his van when Amy comes up from behind.

AMY
Dr. Vico?

Amy clearly doesn't want her mother to know she's talking to him.

VICO
Hi. What is it?

AMY
She's not telling you everything.

VICO
Okay.

AMY
The reason why Scott and my mom weren't talking was because he didn't like girls. Not in that way.

VICO
Oh. I don't know if that's important now, but it's good you told me.

AMY
Also, the pancake breakfast? We only made \$8,000 dollars.

VICO
So how did you get the rest of the money?

AMY
Scott did it. I don't know how.

INT. TWO-BEDROOM APARTMENT - DAY

Mathers talks with TED ZIERING (23), a lanky waiter at the town's best restaurant.

TITLE OVER:

**BAYVIEW APARTMENT COMPLEX
JUNEAU**

Ted is putting away groceries as he talks. This is the first he's heard of Scott's death, so he's still processing.

TED

Scott was a good friend, but he was a crappy roommate. He was always late with the rent or borrowing stuff without asking.

MATHERS

How did you meet him?

TED

At the restaurant. We were both waiters. Turned out we had mutual interests.

(beat)

Preferences.

MATHERS

Were the two of you roommates or something more than that?

TED

Just roommates. Definitely. Some lines you do not cross.

MATHERS

Was he involved with drugs?

TED

No way. Total straight-arrow. Never even saw him drunk.

MATHERS

Either of these men look familiar?

Mathers shows him photos of Ooto Olsson and the dead biker.

TED

No. And not his type, if that's what you're asking.

MATHERS

What was his type?

TED

Preppy. Older, sometimes. Honestly, I never met anyone he was seeing. He was kind of secretive that way.

A beat.

MATHERS

When was the last time you saw him?

TED

Spring. Maybe not even. One day I got back from work and he was gone. Took a lot of his stuff, not everything.

MATHERS

You didn't report him missing?

TED

He emailed me a couple days later. Said he was going down to Los Angeles. He'd always talked about wanting to be an actor.

MATHERS

When was the last time you got an email from him?

TED

Couple weeks ago.

MATHERS

(surprised)

Scott's been dead at least four months.

A beat. Genuinely perplexed...

TED

So who's been sending the emails?

MATHERS

Probably the same person who came to get Scott's stuff.

(closer)

I think they were looking for something.

CUT TO:

LATER

Three UNIFORMED TROOPERS work with Mathers to search the apartment from top to bottom. They search behind every drawer, TAP along every baseboard.

In the kitchenette, Mathers pulls the refrigerator away from the wall. Shines a flashlight into the space behind it, where he finds a manila envelope. Fishes it out.

He dumps out the envelope on the counter, spilling out several thousand dollars in cash and a small mini-DV videotape.

Picking up the tape, Mathers turns to Ted.

MATHERS

Did Scott have a videocamera?

TED

No, I do. Scott always borrowed it without asking.

CUT TO:

LATER

Ted hooks up his videocamera to the TV. Puts in the videotape.

We see Mathers reflected in the black TV glass, until the picture comes up.

VIDEO FOOTAGE

We're in a bedroom. Scott Larson, shirtless, moves past the camera, which is evidently tucked behind something, hidden away. From this perspective, we mostly just see the bed.

A MAN'S VOICE

You are so damn sexy. And the worst part is, I think you know it.

Another man's bare back crosses the lens. With a cocky smile, Scott sits the man down at the foot of the bed, then disappears below frame. It's left to our imagination exactly what Scott's doing down there, but it certainly seems pleasurable.

INTERCUT MATHERS AND TED

watching the screen.

TED

I know that guy. He's the pharmacist.

Indeed, the man receiving oral gratification is the Samaritan pharmacist from the start of the show, John Putnam.

CUT TO:

INT. PUTNAM PHARMACY - DAY

John Putnam appears calm as can be. He and his wife Lynne talk with Mathers.

JOHN PUTNAM
What can we do for you?

MATHERS
We're trying to piece some things together. I'm wondering if any of these men look familiar to you.

One at a time, he shows photos of the Dead Biker, Ooto Olsson and Scott Larson. Mathers is trying to gauge John Putnam's reaction, but the man gives up nothing.

JOHN PUTNAM
I don't recognize any of them. Do you, honey?

LYNNE PUTNAM
No. I don't think they were customers. Certainly not regulars.

MATHERS
Alright.

Mathers pulls out a piece of paper.

MATHERS (cont'd)
Mr. and Mrs. Putnam, I have a search warrant for this location, along with your house and automobiles. This includes your business records, computer equipment and email accounts.

On cue, SEVERAL TROOPERS enter the pharmacy. Lynne is bewildered. John is visibly terrified.

LYNNE PUTNAM
What is this? What's going on?

MATHERS

Mr. Putnam, we'd like to take you to the village office for questioning. It would be in your best interest to cooperate.

LYNNE PUTNAM

I don't understand what's happening!

JOHN PUTNAM

It's nothing, Lynne. It's a mistake, that's all.

EXT. PUTNAM PHARMACY - DAY

In the background, troopers are carrying out boxes of records. Mathers walks over to Harper, who's finishing up a phone call.

HARPER

Anything good?

MATHERS

The computer in the back office. Putnam was sending email on Scott Larson's account. He wanted the roommate to think Scott was still alive as long as possible.

HARPER

Jackpot.

MATHERS

Putnam would have gotten away with it too, if Ooto didn't dump the body the same place he always did. Things have a way of circling around down here.

HARPER

Tell me, honestly. Do you think Putnam killed Scott himself, or did he have Olsson do it?

MATHERS

He had Olsson do it. He wanted to keep his hands clean.

HARPER

Either way it's...

INT. HALLWAY NEAR PRESCOTT'S OFFICE - DAY

Harper and Prescott walk-and-talk.

PRESCOTT
Murder one.

HARPER
Absolutely.

PRESCOTT
You don't happen to have a
confession, do you?

HARPER
No. But we've got a pretty good
case.

PRESCOTT
I'm the jury. Connect the dots
for me.

They reach Prescott's office.

INT. PRESCOTT'S OFFICE - DAY [CONTINUOUS]

Prescott goes through his phone slips while they talk.

HARPER
Alright, you've got John Putnam,
well-respected town pharmacist.
And Ooto Olsson, part-time
gravedigger, full-time drug
dealer. Olsson's wife will
testify that her husband knew
Putnam and was illicitly buying
allergy medicine from him. The
same medicine Olsson used to make
his meth.

PRESCOTT
Olsson's wife is a meth addict.
Her credibility is a problem.

He crumples up some of his phone messages. Tosses them.

HARPER

We back it up with invoices. Putnam's pharmacy was ordering twenty times the amount of allergy medicine you'd expect for a store that size.

PRESCOTT

Good. But can we positively match the drugs that killed Scott Larson back to Olsson?

HARPER

Every cook has a different recipe. Vico says the chemical signature is unique.

PRESCOTT

It was Olsson's batch that killed him?

HARPER

Guaranteed.

Prescott is restless. Dubious.

PRESCOTT

So far, you can make a compelling case that Olsson was involved in Larson's death. Problem is, Olsson's already dead. It's Putnam we want.

HARPER

Putnam and Olsson had a pre-existing criminal relationship.

PRESCOTT

My wife and I drive over the speed limit. That's a pre-existing criminal relationship.

Harper is unamused.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)

Fine. Just give me the motive.

HARPER

Scott Larson was blackmailing Putnam. We have it on videotape.

PRESCOTT

No, what we have on videotape is two consenting adults engaged in sexual activity. It may be distasteful, but it hasn't been illegal since 1980.

HARPER

Scott Larson was threatening to reveal the tape and expose the affair.

PRESCOTT

Prove it.

She's frustrated, but knows he's right.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)

If you can't put a witness on the stand to show a pattern of blackmail, you don't have a motive, which means you don't have a case.

HARPER

John Putnam wasn't the only one Larson was sleeping with. There are two other men on the tape. One we can't identify.

PRESCOTT

Who's the other?

HARPER

Hank Firestone. The state senator.

EXT. TENNIS COURTS - BRIGHT NIGHT

TWO COUPLES in their fifties finish up their match, shaking hands over the net. One of the men is State Senator HANK FIRESTONE, whose partner is his WIFE.

TITLE OVER:

**SPRING VALLEY COUNTRY CLUB
ANCHORAGE**

As the couples leave the court, they come upon Prescott, who was evidently waiting for them to finish. He has his jacket off, but he clearly came straight from work.

FIRESTONE

Roger! We haven't seen you around much lately.

PRESCOTT

No rest for the wicked. I'd love a few minutes if I could.

FIRESTONE

Of course.

(to his wife)

Lois, I'll meet you inside?

A consummate politician's wife, she's used to being sent away.

FIRESTONE'S WIFE

Roger, please say hello to Linda for me.

PRESCOTT

I will.

Firestone's wife and the other couple leave the court. A few beats until they're out of earshot.

FIRESTONE

I don't like that look in your eye, Roger.

PRESCOTT

Scott Larson is dead.

A beat. Firestone is inscrutable.

FIRESTONE

I don't think I know a Scott Larson.

PRESCOTT

Senator, I didn't come here to trap you in a lie. I came to help you out of one.

Firestone begins walking away. The two men have the entire court to themselves.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)

There's a videotape that shows the two of you together.

FIRESTONE

That's impossible.

PRESCOTT

Why? Because you bought the only tape?

(following Firestone)

You bought a copy. Scott Larson kept the original. It's already state's evidence.

FIRESTONE

Evidence of what?

PRESCOTT

Murder. Scott Larson was killed. Shot up with so much crystal meth he had a heart attack.

Suddenly realizing the possible implication...

FIRESTONE

I had nothing to do with his death.

PRESCOTT

You're not a suspect. We know who did it.

FIRESTONE

So what's the purpose of this visit? A little advance notice on the end of my political career? My marriage?

PRESCOTT

We need you to testify that Scott Larson was blackmailing you.

FIRESTONE

Never.

PRESCOTT

Then a killer is going to walk.

Firestone crosses around the far side of the net.

PRESCOTT (cont'd)

Listen, I don't know what Scott Larson was to you. You had every right to hate him. But at some point, on some level, you cared for him.

Firestone nods, suddenly coming upon a new theory. He looks dead at Prescott.

FIRESTONE

You're loving this, aren't you?
This is what you always dreamed
of.

PRESCOTT

What are you talking about?

FIRESTONE

A chance to knock out the
competition. One less opponent on
the way to becoming governor.
Just remember, Roger. You have
your own history of marital woes.

PRESCOTT

This isn't politics, Hank.

FIRESTONE

It's all politics.

PRESCOTT

It'll come out one way or another.
I'm giving you the chance to
control it.

FIRESTONE

You're giving me the chance to
hang myself. It'll be my name in
the headlines, not some dead
hustler.

PRESCOTT

He was more than that to you.

FIRESTONE

You're right. Absolutely.

For the first time, we see a chink in Firestone's armor, a
real sense of loss.

FIRESTONE (cont'd)

The thing is, he's dead. But I'm
the one who's getting buried.

PRESCOTT

You dug your own grave, Senator.
Start digging your way out.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Harper approaches the witness stand. We see John Putnam sitting at the defense table, along with his ATTORNEY.

TITLE OVER:

**SUPERIOR COURT
ANCHORAGE**

HARPER

Mr. Firestone, would you tell the court what do you do for a living?

Hank Firestone is calm and collected. He's trying to seem less patrician and more common man.

FIRESTONE

I own a mining research company. I'm also a State Senator representing Anchorage. I'm in my third term.

HARPER

As a Senator, how often do you travel to Juneau for legislative business?

FIRESTONE

Usually twice a month.

HARPER

Where did you first meet Scott Larson?

FIRESTONE

At the Rosewood Inn. It's a restaurant in Juneau. Scott worked there as a waiter.

In the audience, we find Prescott, along with Lynne Putnam, Virginia Larson and young Amy Larson.

HARPER

When was this?

FIRESTONE

Approximately a year ago.

HARPER

What was the nature of your relationship?

FIRESTONE

He was a paid companion.

This was clearly a mutually planned choice of words.

HARPER

Would you explain what you mean by that?

FIRESTONE

We would spend a few hours together in the evening. Occasionally the whole night.

HARPER

What did the two of you do?

FIRESTONE

Mostly we talked. Watched TV. We also had sexual relations.

He tries to say it as if he were talking about backgammon.

HARPER

How many times total did you see Scott Larson?

FIRESTONE

I'd estimate twenty to thirty.

HARPER

Did you care for Scott?

FIRESTONE

Yes.

HARPER

Did you love him?

FIRESTONE

Yes. He was a remarkable young man.

HARPER

When did you last see Scott?

FIRESTONE

Six months ago, he met me at my apartment in Juneau. He told me he needed one hundred thousand dollars.

HARPER

Did he explain why?

FIRESTONE

His sister needed a bone marrow transplant. I told him I was sorry, but I couldn't give him that kind of money.

HARPER

What happened next?

FIRESTONE

Scott told me he had a tape showing the two of us together in bed, and that he would send it to my wife and my colleagues if I didn't give him the money.

HARPER

What did you do?

FIRESTONE

I gave him the money. He gave me a videotape. I naively assumed it was the original. It wasn't.

HARPER

Senator, do you hold any resentment towards Scott Larson?

FIRESTONE

No. Scott did what he thought he had to do. That's all any of us can.

CUT TO:

INT. PRESCOTT'S OFFICE - BRIGHT NIGHT

Prescott sits with Firestone, who seems completely defeated. Firestone sips a scotch, while Prescott sticks with bottled water.

PRESCOTT

The jury sentenced Putnam to forty years, and that's thanks to you. We could never have established a pattern of blackmail without your testimony.

FIRESTONE
Glad something good came out of
it.

Firestone nods, a forced smile.

PRESCOTT
You holding up?

FIRESTONE
My wife left me.

PRESCOTT
Been there.

FIRESTONE
My kids are still figuring out how
to approach the subject.

PRESCOTT
It'll come in time. Normal life
will resume.

A beat.

FIRESTONE
I don't know. I feel like the
person I was is dead. And the
strangest thing is, I don't miss
him.

INT. VICO'S LAB - BRIGHT NIGHT

Vico is alone in the lab, closing up for the night. He pulls
a cover over the body on the table, then fastens a "DO NOT
TOUCH" Post-It note to it.

A voice from behind him...

AMY
Dr. Vico?

He turns to see young Amy Larson. She's carrying a stack of
file folders with colored tags on the edges.

VICO
Amy. How did you...

AMY
There wasn't anybody at the desk.

VICO

Yeah. Joe's wife had a baby. A girl.

Both just stand there for a beat.

AMY

I went to my oncologist. When we were done, they had all my files just sitting on the counter. So I took 'em.

That's what she's holding.

VICO

I see.

AMY

I was wondering, if you're not too busy...

VICO

Sure. Sure.

CUT TO:

LATER

Vico sits next to Amy, looking through her files. She points to a figure on lab printout.

AMY

I looked it up on the internet, and that one's supposed to be higher, right?

VICO

Yeah, it's the ratio that matters.

AMY

The ratio's bad.

VICO

Yeah. It's not good.

He flips to a new page. A beat before she finally asks the big question:

AMY

I'm going to die, aren't I?

To his credit, Vico doesn't reach for the quick denial.
That's not what Amy's here for.

VICO
Yeah. We all do eventually.

AMY
But I'm going to die sooner.

VICO
Yeah.

AMY
What's that like?

Put on the spot, Vico finds he doesn't have a good answer.

AMY (cont'd)
That's why I wanted to ask you.
Because you're like, the expert.
No one else will tell me.

VICO
I don't know much about death. I
mean, I can tell you how and when
and where people die. Everything
else, it's just...life.

CUT TO BLACK.

THE END