

PERRY MASON

(Inspired by the early novels of Erle Stanley Gardner)
Written by Fitz and Jones, Jones and Fitz

Episode Two

Team Mason

3465 Larga Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90039

Boom. Boom. Boom. Concussive artillery in the distance.

ARMY CHAPLAIN (V.O.)
"Be careful for nothing; but in every
thing by prayer..."

EXT. MONTFAUCON, FRANCE, WESTERN FRONT - PRE-DAWN (D0)

POPS of the duck-board trench occupied by the 79th Infantry
Division. Mud, rats, dysentery, young men out of their depth.

A soldier tries to hear orders over his field telephone.

ARMY CHAPLAIN (V.O.)
"...and supplication with thanksgiving,
let your requests be made known unto
God..."

MAJOR MCCAFFREY looking through a trench periscope at No
Man's Land. Barbed wire, dead bodies, wounded bodies, a
broken-down tank, a small scouting company heading back.

A soldier burns lice off his body with a lit candle. Boom.

A soldier in the Latrine Sap mid-business. A few soldiers
waiting their turn. Boom. Boom.

ARMY CHAPLAIN (V.O.)
"And the peace of God, which passeth all
understanding, shall keep your hearts and
minds through Christ Jesus..."

The CAMERA makes its way down the zig-zagged frontline
trench, soldiers in varying states of readiness, towards an
ARMY CHAPLAIN and a prayer circle of soldiers following along
in their military-issued bibles.

ARMY CHAPLAIN
"Finally, Brethren, whatsoever things are
true, whatsoever things are honest,
whatsoever things are just, whatsoever
things are pure..."

One soldier begins reciting with the Chaplain. IT'S CAPTAIN
PERRY MASON, a little older than the rest of them, reciting
Philippians 4 from memory.

MASON & ARMY CHAPLAIN
"...whatsoever things are lovely,
whatsoever things are of good report, if
there be any virtue, and if there be any
praise..."

MAJOR MCCAFFREY (O.C.)
CAPTAIN MASON!

Mason immediately turns around and heads back through the trench toward Major McCaffrey, who's listening to one of the Scouts, and relaying the message into a field telephone.

MASON

(muttering)

"...and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus..."

MAJOR MCCAFFREY

WHAT? WHAT? English. Speak Fucking English. Fuck.

Major McCaffrey hands the phone to a soldier. Faces Mason.

MASON

Major, sir.

MAJOR MCCAFFREY

Fuckin' Frenchmen, who knows half what they're saying. Scout says the Huns are thin. Whaddya say, Cap? Knock 'em stiff?

MASON

Yes, sir!

MAJOR MCCAFFREY

Creep the men at fifty yards per.

MASON

Yes, sir!

A volley of artillery close by. Major McCaffrey looks through the periscope -- the raiding company behind the tank moves forward through clouds of earth. Mason heads down the line.

MASON (CONT'D)

Fixed bayonets!

Soldiers begin fixing their bayonets, cocking pistols, readying themselves on the fire step. The shout of "Fixed bayonets" making its way down the line. Mason locks eyes with a FRECKLED FACE PRIVATE, having trouble catching his breath.

FRECKLES

Captain.

MASON

You ever drink German beer, Private?

FRECKLES

No, sir.

MASON

Ain't but a dozen fucking Huns over there, sitting on a thousand bottles.

(MORE)

MASON (CONT'D)

They've been serving you piss back in the States.

FRECKLES

I don't drink, sir.

Fuck this kid, I tried. Mason looks back at the Major McCaffrey, who has a whistle in his mouth. They both check their watches. Major nods, blows the whistle, heads over the top first. The soldiers head over the top, shouting out their hometowns or giving a war cry: "Spokane! Bakersfield!"

MASON

Edendale!

FRECKLES

Provo!

Major McCaffrey almost instantly gets his helmet split. Drops dead. We follow Mason from behind in No Man's Land. Squirming through lines cut in the barbed wire. BOOM!

Men dropping to the left and right. Mason hides behind a few dead bodies hung up on some barbed wire. The bodies absorb shrapnel. BOOM! BOOM!

BOOM! A mortar explosion, followed by the slow drifting of a greenish-yellow cloud of CHLORINE GAS.

Mason, Freckles, and a few make it to the abandoned tank.

MASON

Gas! Gas!

Between artillery booms, we hear the shouts of "Gas!" down through the battlefield. Mason, Freckles, and soldiers begin putting on gas masks. There's a tear in Mason's.

MASON (CONT'D)

Fuck... "Whatever things are honest, whatever things..."

He puts on his gas mask and COVERS THE TEAR WITH ONE HAND, making him one-armed on his rifle. He waves his enlisted to follow him and they surge toward the German trench. WE MOSTLY HEAR MASON'S BREATHING, his halting, confined recitation of Philippians 4 amidst the muted sounds of horror and chaos as they charge through the poisoned air, the dead German, French, and American corpses, and INTO THE ENEMY TRENCH.

EXT. GERMAN TRENCH - CONTINUOUS

Corpses and the wounded everywhere. Those alive are worse off, their lungs burning, eyes beginning to bleed out from the poison gas. German and American alike. As German soldiers retreat into the depths of their trench labyrinth, Mason grabs a gas mask off a dead American soldier's pack. Mason takes a big breath, then takes off his gas mask...

The SOUNDSCAPE EXPLODES WITH THE HORRORS OF WAR... for a second Mason looks up and down the line... not enough American soldiers coming over to defend it. Freckles takes a position. Mason puts his new gas mask on. The SOUND SHIFTS BACK to Mason's breathing.

The breaching American soldiers all take positions as Mason goes down the line bayoneting whatever wounded Germans are left. He steps over a screaming American who's lost an arm.

Mason watches two of his company turn a corner and eat a flamethrower stream. One is instantly down on his knees burning to death, another tries hurling his body back and forth against the walls of the trench. Mason runs to help but is cut off by another stream of fire. He waits for the flame to fade, then turns the corner, firing at the German flame thrower who gets hit, drops his hose, and finds cover.

Mason sees that German reinforcements are amassing only one trench over. He looks back and sees maybe a half-dozen American men behind him. This position can't be held. He starts waving the men back, takes off his mask, yells...

MASON

Retreat! Retreat! Back over! Now! Now!

The half dozen lift themselves back into No Man's Land.

Mason runs over to the armless American soldier, clearly dying. He looks around, sees a few more mortally-wounded Americans. A German leaps into the trench. Mason shoots him dead. But he knows more are coming.

He makes a decision.

He takes his pistol and fires a bullet into the armless American's head. He fires a bullet into an American choking on the gas. He fires a bullet into an American Soldier bleeding out. He turns around and sees one American Soldier standing in the middle of the trench, staring at him...

MASON (CONT'D)

Get back to our side!

The Soldier doesn't move.

MASON (CONT'D)

What the fuck are you doing?!

The Soldier takes off his mask. Freckles. He saw it all.

Mason points his pistol at the Private.

MASON (CONT'D)

Now, Private!

Mason shoots past him at a German reinforcement. Freckles heads over back to No Man's Land. Mason looks down...

A pristine bottle of German Beer.

SMASH TO:

EXT. W.M. GARLAND & CO. - EARLY MORNING (D1)

Before a post-New Year's city lurches back to life. It's Sunday, so things are fairly quiet downtown. A HOMELESS MAN, in worn cap and tattered overcoat, sleeps on the sidewalk. A THREE-LEGGED DOG sniffs at him, moves on.

A ragged-looking Mason smokes and watches the dog find something to eat in the gutter. Sitting on the step leading to the iron-gated alcove of a sweatshop, he's clearly been up all night, fueled by adrenaline, nicotine, and Charlie Dodson. He barely moves as FINKEL, the Manager of the place, unlocks the chained gate and swings it open. Mason rises, flicks his butt away, and follows Finkel inside...

INT. W.M. GARLAND & CO., SEWING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Finkel flips switches as he proceeds deeper into the shop. Banks of overhead lights buzz to life, revealing row after row of sewing machines. He leads Mason further inside.

INT. W.M. GARLAND & CO., FABRIC STORAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Mason passes bolts of cloth, stacked floor to ceiling.

INT. W.M. GARLAND & CO., THREAD STORAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Finkel heaves aside a large sliding door. Mason follows Finkel inside, watches him fumble for the lights which finally come on, revealing AN ENTIRE WALL OF THREAD. Hundreds of spools in every color under the sun. Mason looks at CHARLIE'S TINY PIECE OF THREAD, then back at the wall.

FINKEL

You wanted thread? There's thread.

Off Mason, taking in the enormity of it all.

EXT. VERMONT KNOLLS NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY

Some dozen-plus African-American KIDS in the middle of inning number sixteen or nineteen -- they've lost count. A tiny kid, CHEWING GUM, at bat; long-limbed MAD WIND-UP pitching.

CHEWING GUM

You can rub, spit, shine all you want,
I'm hitting anything come out ya hand
right back in ya face.

MAD WIND-UP

You ain't hit shit ten feet all day.

CHEWING GUM

Gonna make you pee yourself.

KIDS
 Shut that fool up, Junior./ Give 'em a
 haircut!/ Etc.

Wind up. Throw. Smack. A fly ball. The kids all look up, one runs to get under it. Just as the ball is coming down into his mitt, it's ripped out of the air by a massive bare hand.

The name tag on the uniform: POLICE OFFICER PAUL DRAKE
 (African-American, 30's-40's). Paul holds the ball away from the kids.

DRAKE
 We gonna do this everyday now?

KIDS
 Aw, c'mon./ We in the middle of the
 game!/ Give us the ball back!/ Etc.

Paul grabs the bat from Chewing Gum, points it at three different neighborhood windows, two boarded up, one broken.

DRAKE
 So for the fourth time this week...

He points to a vacant lot.

DRAKE (CONT'D)
 You play there, or you don't play.

He hurls the ball into the lot, the kids run after it, bitching and complaining. He grabs Chewing Gum by the shirt collar.

DRAKE (CONT'D)
 And be grateful y'all ain't living in
 Michigan or Missoura, freezing your
 drawers off. Baseball in winter, dat's a
 gift from Jesus.

He lets go of Chewing Gum, handing the bat back to him.

DRAKE (CONT'D)
 You too scrawny to be swinging for the
 fences. Choke up on it, start spraying
 singles and doubles. Know yourself.

He continues past the fence of GRANNY JAMES. She sips from a well-used coffee cup, worn "Woolworth's" shadow on the side.

GRANNY JAMES
 Them little 'uns just beget big 'uns. An
 most big 'uns is no good.

DRAKE
 Happy New Year, Ms. James.

GRANNY JONES
Where's the happy? All I seen last night
is upchuck and drunken fools.

DRAKE
Whatcha got in your cup there?

GRANNY JAMES
None a your business.

DRAKE
(smiling)
"None a your business," and gin?

Granny scowls, but before she can answer, A FREAKED-OUT MAN
in JANITOR's coveralls calls out from the end of the block.

FREAKED OUT
Hey! Police! You come on up here! Hurry!

Paul registers his panic, starts over.

DRAKE
Talk to you later, Ms. James.

GRANNY JAMES
Yeah, okay.
(sips "coffee," winces)
Nosy son of a bitch.

INT. VERMONT KNOLLS WAREHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Paul and the Janitor climb the stairs to the second-floor
landing. Janitor gestures down the hall with a shaky arm.

FREAKED OUT
Down there. Three-oh-six.
(off Drake's look)
This is far as I go. Hateful spirits
about. They ain't getting my name for
their book. Not today.

Paul slowly moves down the hallway. As he nears the doorway
to 206, he spots the BLOOD TRAIL left by Pinky Ring in the
pilot, leading to an open window and the fire escape beyond.
But first things first. Paul steps over the blood and into...

INT. VERMONT KNOLLS WAREHOUSE, OFFICE 206 - CONTINUOUS

...a gruesome scene familiar to those who watched the pilot.
RUMBLING VOICE and BLACK HAT, dead on the floor in patches of
dried blood, still fresh enough not to stink, though some
flies are already helping themselves to the spoils of murder.
Paul clocks the position of THE BODIES, THE GUNS, THE EMPTY
RANSOM MONEY SUITCASE with the bullet holes in it.

EXT. WAREHOUSE, FIRE ESCAPE/ROOF - MOMENTS LATER

Paul follows Pinky Ring's blood trail up the rusty iron stairs to the roof. As he climbs, we may spot the faded "Colored Air Circus" billboard seen in the pilot.

ON THE ROOF

Paul tracks the trail of blood towards the edge of the building. Reaching the end, he peers over the exact spot where Pinky Ring made his desperate, and failed, leap to escape Ennis. ON PAUL as he leans over the edge, and sees...

Nothing. No car. No body. Just an empty alley.

And the audience gasps: *Where the fuck did he go!?! Stay tuned, Dear Reader, stay tuned.*

Off Paul, wheels turning, looking back towards the fire escape, wondering what the hell happened here.

EXT/EST. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD, ECHO PARK - DAY

An enormous Temple, with a giant statue of a woman in a nurse's robe looking skyward to the Lord. We hear a distant organ supporting a voice...

VOICE OF SISTER ALICE (O.S.)

Oh yes, it's a heathen's morning in Los Angeles! From the gambling boats off Santa Monica to the brothels on Broadway...

INT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD - SAME

Four thousand souls seated, four hundred standing, in the city's most lavish house of worship. White faces, brown faces, black faces: old, young, well-to-do, dirt-poor-and-left-for-dead-but-what's-a-little-discomfort-when-you're-in-the-presence-of-the-holy-ghost.

SISTER ALICE (O.S.)

...they are tipping back their bottles, rolling bones in the alleyways, cheating themselves out of a life with Christ! Liars! Thieves! Fornicators!

REVEAL SISTER ALICE McKEEGAN on stage: mid-20's, strawberry blonde hair, bright eyes. Her gown, drenched with sweat, a nurse's robe via Hollywood costume shop. She's surrounded by a BAND, a CHOIR, and a row of CHURCH ELDERS -- among them her mother BIDDIE McKEEGAN, early 50's, and HERMAN BAGGERLY. Sister Alice preaches into a microphone set at the center of a long table with actors costumed as the Seven Deadly Sins: Lust, Gluttony, Greed, Sloth, Wrath, Envy, Pride are seated to her left and right.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

Guests at the Devil's table, served a seven-course meal, that feeds the body but starves the soul -- isn't that right, Mother?

She looks to Biddie.

BIDDIE

It most certainly is, Sister Alice.

SISTER ALICE

Brothers and Sisters, I've been given a calling... been given a voice and gifted a pair of lungs that would make Tarzan himself green with Envy.

Envy stands up.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

No, no, no. I'm not talking about you. Sit your hindquarters back down.

The Organist plays a chord. The congregation laughs. Envy sits back down.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

It's my purpose and privilege to let you know right here and now, on this very first day of this very new year -- and I know it ain't been easy getting here. We've all been through some rough times, we all know what it's like to have an empty stomach...

CONGREGATION

Amen!/ Say it, Sister./ Don't you know it.../ Etc.

SISTER ALICE

Brothers and Sisters of Radiant light, and those of you at home listening on your radio boxes, I'm here to tell you there's another table you can sit at, with food from a kitchen where God does the cooking. And it too serves seven courses!

A trumpet blares from the church band. She points to the aisle where eight costumed actors descend as Father Time 1932 and the Seven Christian Virtues: Chastity, Temperance, Charity, Diligence, Patience, Gratitude, and Humility.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

I shout it, you shout it!

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D) Chastity! Temperance! Charity!... Diligence! Patience! Gratitude! and Humility!	CONGREGATION (repeating after Alice) Chastity! Temperance! Charity! Diligence! Patience! Gratitude! Humility!
---	---

She nods to her Choirmaster, who directs his choir to begin singing a joyful rendition of "Let's Go Round The Wall." Sister Alice sings along as the Virtues climb the stage and subdue the Sins, stripping them of their costumes, revealing Good Christians underneath.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
 (shouted over the singing)
 Happy New Year, Brothers and Sisters! Go
 out! Out into the world and preach the
 gospel to every creature great and small.

She hands the microphone off to ELDER BROWN, who encourages the crowd to be generous as COLLECTION PLATES are passed around. Herman Baggerly watches as Sister Alice waves to the crowd and heads off-stage, followed by Biddie and the camera.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
 How'd I do?

BIDDIE
 Halfway to Heaven, a mile from Moses.

Sister Alice stops for a second, leans up against the wall. Biddie supports her by the arm, steadies her.

BIDDIE (CONT'D)
 They're waiting for you around the corner
 ...they usually sit in the balcony,
 audience right, mostly on weeknights
 ...get your breath now.

Sister Alice takes a breath. Nods. They walk on.

BIDDIE (CONT'D)
 You apparently met them at a sponsorship
 potluck two years ago. The mother is very
 fragile. But, of course she is, lead with
 the obvious, why don't I?

They turn a corner into the...

INT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD, SACRISTY - DAY

More like a vaudeville theatre, than a sacristy: furniture, tables for food, dressing station. Sitting in the center of it are MATTHEW and EMILY DODSON, looking sad but also nervous in the company of their spiritual leader. They rise.

BIDDIE
 Sister Alice, this is Mister and Missus
 Matthew Dodson.

SISTER ALICE
I've been praying every night and morning
since I heard, Miss Emily.

EMILY
(barely audible)
You know my name?

SISTER ALICE
For the worst reasons, I'm sorry to say.
Read about you in the papers.

MATTHEW
We've been in our home for nearly a week.

Matthew gestures to E.B. JONATHAN, on a phone in the corner.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Mr. Jonathan thought it might be a good
idea to get Emily out somewhere. Then we
got your invitation.

Herman Baggerly enters, catches eyes with Matthew.

SISTER ALICE
I saw your picture in the paper and I
said to Mother, don't they sit up in the
balcony weeknights? Then I said, "We must
do everything we can for them." Didn't I
say that mother?

BIDDIE
The very words, Sister.

BAGGERLY
If you haven't made arrangements, we'd
like to offer the Temple for Charlie's
funeral.

Biddie shoots him a look: "*Did we discuss that?*"

BAGGERLY (CONT'D)
The Elders have offered to pay for any
and all expenses.

MATTHEW
That's... very generous. Thank you.

The Sins and Virtues come off-stage. Emily takes the
opportunity, steps closer to Sister Alice.

EMILY
We actually met once before...

SISTER ALICE
At a potluck...
(looking at Biddie)
(MORE)

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
I want to say I remember, but there are more potlucks than you'd think.

MATTHEW
That's okay. We just wanted you to know, we owe everything to the Assembly. And Mr. Baggerly.

Emily starts crying.

MATTHEW (CONT'D)
Our family's out of state and... we were in need.

Sister Alice grabs Emily's hand.

SISTER ALICE
Your family is here.

E.B. Jonathan hangs up the phone. Walks over to the group.

E.B.
Excuse me for interrupting. I need to take the Dodsons downtown.

BAGGERLY
What's this, Elias?

E.B.
The police have something to show us. Good news, I think. We need to go now.

OUT on Matthew and Emily looking hopeful...

EXT. MAY COMPANY DEPARTMENT STORE - LATER THAT DAY

The TOY DEPARTMENT. Mason moves down a well-stocked aisle, searching for something as STRICKLAND reads from a newspaper.

STRICKLAND
"Marcia, fresh from the tub, powdered and scented like an exquisite flower, stood before the mirror in her scanties, brushing her hair vigorously..."
(to Mason)
Oh yeah. It's getting good now, huh?

MASON
No. It's not. Come on, Pete, I'm tired.

STRICKLAND
You want my help? Feign interest.

MASON
Where are all the fire trucks?

He shuffles past two GRANDMA SHOPPERS.

STRICKLAND

"A sculptor, seeing her, would have gasped at the picture and rushed for clay and scalpel..."

That draws an odd look. Strickland politely tips his hat.

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

See, I think we're headed for a showdown. In one corner, you got besotted Ted Stanton, childhood friend and garage mechanic. In the other, the mysterious Percy DuMott, sophisticated man of distinction. Hard times ahead for Lipstick Girl. Hard choices.

MASON

Gosh. Whatever will she do?

STRICKLAND

Doesn't sound like you really want my help.

MASON

For Christ's sake -- it's just a little legwork. Help me chase down some thread samples. Do some digging on that Phaeton. There's good money here.

STRICKLAND

Fucking huge case. Better be great.

MASON

It is. And I want Charlie's killer fucking caught. It's why I need you to help me--

(spotting something)

Ah hah! There you are.

Mason bends down and grabs A TOY FIRE TRUCK.

STRICKLAND

E.B. know I'm hired?

MASON

(lying)

It's all worked out.

STRICKLAND

He thinks I'm a degenerate.

MASON

And a good investigator. He also thinks that.

Strickland eyes Mason. Mason doesn't crack.

STRICKLAND
 Fine. Match the thread. Get a line on
 that car. I want expenses.

MASON
 Of course.

STRICKLAND
 Yeah. You look like shit, you know.

MASON
 Yes, thank you.

STRICKLAND
 It's a nice truck. Teddy's gonna like it.

MASON
 If it gets there this time.

Mason heads for a cashier. Strickland follows, reading...

STRICKLAND
 "Marcia danced across the room to the bed
 and picked up the cloud of orchid mist
 that lay there..." Hey Perry, what's
 orchid mist? Think they got that here?
 Can we get some? What's it smell like?

Off Mason, trying desperately to ignore him.

INT. LAPD HQ, HALLWAY - CITY HALL - DAY

Formidable prick DISTRICT ATTORNEY MAYNARD BARNES moves
 confidently down these marble halls of justice. HOLCOMB and
 ENNIS ride in his wake. REPORTERS waiting for a break in the
 case pepper him for a scoop...

REPORTERS
 Hey Barnes, what's the ruckus?/ You catch
 the kidnapping creeps?/ Don't hold out on
 us, Barnes!/ We gotta eat too!/ Etc.

Barnes keeps moving, breaks out a classic dodge.

BARNES
 Criminal activities will be put down and
 the laws fairly and energetically
 enforced to the benefit of all.

L.A. Examiner reporter TROY CHISOM makes a note.

CHISOM
 Quote, huge load of horseshit, end quote.

Barnes and crew open a door, turn into...

INT. LAPD HQ, RECEPTION AREA/BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Where COPS and SECRETARIES busy themselves keeping crime at bay. E.B. Jonathan and Matthew Dodson rise as Barnes and gang approach. DELLA and Emily remain seated.

BARNES

E.B. Jonathan, you old so-and-so...

E.B.

Mr. Barnes. May I introduce you to--

BARNES

No need. Matthew Dodson. Emily Dodson. The lovely Miss Della Street. It is still Miss, I hope?

DELLA

Depends who's asking.

Barnes smiles warmly.

BARNES

(to Ennis)

Sergeant, why don't you see if the ladies would like a glass of water while we go inside and talk? This way please, gents.

Emily CLINGS TO MATTHEW who gently frees himself as Barnes leads them to a nearby office.

Off Emily, feeling abandoned.

INT. LAPD HQ, OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Matthew checks out THE RANSOM MONEY SUITCASE.

MATTHEW

Sure looks like it. I'm fairly certain this is the one. Yeah.

(noting the bullet hole)

What's that?

HOLCOMB

Looks like a bullet hole to me.

E.B.

And how did this item come to be in your possession, Detective?

HOLCOMB

Found it in a Warehouse. Along with a couple of stiffs.

BARNES

We believe these "stiffs" were involved in the kidnapping and murder of your son, Mr. Dodson.

Barnes watches Matthew. Matthew nods, looks to E.B.

E.B.

And...? You didn't bring us down here to show us a suitcase, did you? Who the hell are these guys? Why the hell did they--

BARNES

You own a gun, Mr. Dodson?

E.B.

What?

MATTHEW

Yeah, sure.

BARNES

What kind?

E.B. stops Matthew from answering.

E.B.

Hold on, Matthew. Just what exactly are we doing here, Maynard?

BARNES

(to Matthew)

Where were you the night Charlie was taken, Mr. Dodson?

MATTHEW

I already told you guys.
(points to Holcomb)
I told him.

HOLCOMB

At the store, totaling the receipts.

E.B. rises.

E.B.

Alright Matthew, let's go.

BARNES

Sit down, E.B.

HOLCOMB

But you weren't at work. Were you, Dodson?

Matthew pales.

E.B.

You bring us down here under false pretenses for some goddamn ambush? We are leaving.

HOLCOMB

Sit the fuck down, gramps.

E.B.

You can't speak to me like that.

Holcomb hurls the suitcase against the wall.

HOLCOMB

He's lying! A patrol officer stopped by his store twice that night to check on an open transom window. And you weren't there!

BARNES

You were at home, Matthew. At home the night your son was taken.

E.B.

Enough! This man is represented by counsel! He has nothing to say to you.

BARNES

We have an eyewitness, E.B.. Saw him go in the back door. Saw him leave a minute later. With something in his arms.

E.B. stunned, looks to Matthew.

MATTHEW

I wasn't there! I swear to God!

BARNES

Something he could turn into money. A quick score to cover his debts. Because you owe all over town, don't you Matthew?

E.B. is reeling, trying to get a grip on the situation.

E.B.

This is not proper procedure, not at all. And besides, it's circumstantial.

BARNES

Excuse me?

E.B.

At best. Who is this eyewitness? Matthew did not kidnap his own son. You should be ashamed of yourself.

BARNES

I got motive. I got opportunity.

E.B. laughs, finds his footing.

E.B.

You got...? Maynard, you got entirely a bucket of eels.

BARNES

Oh really?

E.B.

You're gonna tell a jury this man kidnapped his own son because he had debts? And that his plan was to extort money, which he clearly didn't have, from himself?

(shit-eating grin)

Please. Be my guest. I'm gonna get a two-dollar haircut so I look good in the papers laughing my ass off.
Let's go, Matthew. G'day gents.

Barnes blocks their path to the door.

BARNES

That's the one thing we couldn't figure. Why would someone pull a snatch job on a grocer's kid? And a hundred thousand ask? Why so steep? Makes no sense.

HOLCOMB

Unless they knew he had the money. Or knew that he could get the money.

Matthew looks panicked.

BARNES

Like get it from his rich father, perhaps. Now who'd know a thing like that? I mean such a well-kept secret... Who could possibly know?

HOLCOMB

Want to take a guess, Mr. Dodson?

BARNES

Or should we call you Mr. Baggerly?

E.B.

(to Matthew, stunned)
Baggerly? Herman is your father?

Matthew droops. Holcomb grabs the phone, hits a button.

HOLCOMB

(to Matthew)
You're under arrest tough guy.
(on phone)
Send Ennis in with some bracelets.

Matthew is close to vomiting. E.B. looks to Barnes.

BARNES

Might want to hold off on that haircut, E.B..

INT. E.B. JONATHAN'S OFFICE, WAITING ROOM - THAT EVENING

Della hanging up the phone, taking a message to go with a dozen messages from every newspaper in town.

DELLA

It's your nickel, I can take as many messages as you want to leave. It does not change the fact that Mr. Jonathan is in a meeting. I'll tell him you...

He hangs up.

DELLA (CONT'D)

...hung up with a mighty "slam."

The second she hangs up, the phone rings again.

DELLA (CONT'D)

E.B. Jonathan and Associates...

INT. E.B. JONATHAN'S OFFICE, INNER ROOM - SAME

Herman Baggerly sits across from E.B., his head bowed. Mason smokes by the window, looking out at the city.

BAGGERLY

Used to do a bit of traveling for my father, for the company. Sales and such. I was a different man then.

E.B.

Matthew's your son?

BAGGERLY

A woman in Missouri. A dumb woman. She lied to me. It was my fault certainly, but I was lied to. I was a different man.

MASON

So that's a yes?

BAGGERLY

He's a godfearing boy. He's not without his troubles...

MASON

The most immediate being the conspiracy murder charge he's up against.

BAGGERLY

He would never get mixed up in anything like that. That he sits in a jail cell tonight...

MASON

Never? Sure lied to the cops like a pro.

E.B.
 Because he was engaged in illegal gambling on the night in question, son. Given the circumstances I can understand his hesitation...

MASON
 They have a witness saw him at home!

E.B.
 And you'll go find one that saw him rolling dice.

BAGGERLY
 I assure you, Mr. Mason, my son is incapable of harming anyone, let alone my grandson.

MASON
 Listen to this guy, now suddenly it's all *my son, my grandson*. Last week you didn't know Matthew from the fucking gardener.

E.B.
 Take it down a peg, boy-o.

MASON
 We waste your money, Mr. Baggerly, if you lie to us.

BAGGERLY
 I did not lie. I do not lie. I told you what you needed to know.

MASON
 You told us he's a fellow parishioner in your church, not that you knocked up his mother in between train whistles.

E.B.
 Mason!

MASON
 ...Excuse me, I haven't slept much. Been looking for a child murderer.

E.B.
 If you say he had nothing to do with it, Baggerly, that's gold to me. Golden.

BAGGERLY
 (to Mason)
 And I was told you were a decorated officer. But you were discharged with a blue ticket, is that correct?

Mason turns to face down Herman.

E.B.
Let's talk about Matthew...

BAGGERLY
A blue ticket is reserved for undesirable servicemen. Negroes and homosexuals. You're not Negro, are you?

MASON
A quarter Welsh and queer only once, when I sized myself with Gary Cooper at the piss trough.

Della laughs/coughs from outside. Answers another call.

DELLA (O.C.)
E.B. Jonathan and Associates...

BAGGERLY
I heard they called you the "Butcher of Montfaucon." Did I hear wrong, Mr. Mason?

Mason takes a long drag.

BAGGERLY (CONT'D)
We tell one another what we need to tell one another, do we not?

E.B.
Son, why don't you--?

MASON
I'm gonna double back to the Dodsons'. Check out this witness who suddenly remembers seeing Matthew in the alley.

Mason goes to get his hat, coat.

E.B.
Good idea. That's really all they got on him, Herman.

BAGGERLY
He didn't do it. Believe me, I'd know.

Mason opens the door, revealing Della.

BAGGERLY (CONT'D)
And Mr. Mason, can you check in on Emily while you're out? She's all alone and I suspect she's wilting under the weight.

MASON
Regards from the father-in-law. You bet.

Another phone call. Mason closes the door.

E.B.
He's good at his job.

BAGGERLY
I heard that too... Now... how do I keep
myself out of the newspapers?

EXT. DODSON NEIGHBOR CATTY-CORNER HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

Mason, camera slung over his shoulder, stands in the doorway of MR. KITT, neighbor to the side of the Dodson house. In the background, a PORTLY COP making sure cars-that-slow-down-to-look, move on.

MR. KITT
Saw him going through the back alley,
across the way there. Seemed strange.

MASON
'Cause he usually uses the front door?

MR. KITT
That's the purpose of a front door.

MASON
Can't argue with you there... Guess it's
also strange that when you first talked
to the police, you said a man went in the
alley. A man. Not Matthew Dodson.

MR. KITT
The detective who interviewed me must
have written it down wrong. Mr. Dodson's
lived next to me for over a year. I think
I know my neighbor when I see him.

MASON
It was night time, wasn't it, Mr. Kitt?
You're, what, eighty feet from--

MR. KITT
(points to a street lamp)
There's a street lamp.

Mason looks back. Yep. Street lamp near the alley behind the Dodson house. He takes a click or two with his camera.

MASON
Wonder how much light that lamp throws?

MR. KITT
Throws?

MASON
Does it reach that far, is all I'm
saying.

(MORE)

MASON (CONT'D)

Lamps like that, they make a pool of light... Actually make it harder to see the dark just outside it.

MR. KITT

The human retina can perform its light detection function in a great range of light intensities.

Mason is thrown.

MASON

You talk like an eye doctor, Mr. Kitt.

MR. KITT

An ophthalmologist. Because I am one.

MASON

...You're an eye doctor.

EXT. DODSON HOUSE - MINUTES LATER

Mason, impressed by the eye-doctor witness, heads to the Dodson house, ignoring the Reporters, passes A FRUIT SALESMAN selling his wares to the looky-loo horde that has invaded the neighborhood.

REPORTERS

Anything new, Mason?/ Got a cig?/ When's the last time you cleaned that suit?

MASON

(to the Fruit Salesman)
How much for a banana?

FRUIT SALESMAN

Dime.

MASON

For one banana?

FRUIT SALESMAN

There's a store a mile away, maybe you like them prices better?

MASON

I look like an asshole?

FRUIT SALESMAN

A mile away...

Mason flicks a cigarette at him. Tries walking past OFFICER COBB who guards the Dodson house.

OFFICER COBB

Where you think you're going?

MASON
I work for the Dodsons.

OFFICER COBB
Uh-huh. Heard that one already. Join the
rest of your pack over there.

Mason whips out his detective's license. Cobb looks at it.

OFFICER COBB (CONT'D)
Oh, yeah I know you. Mason. Detective
Holcomb sends his regards.

He throws the license on the street. Mason turns back to see
where it landed.

OFFICER COBB (CONT'D)
Lady of the house comes out says you can
come in, you can go in. Until then, other
side of the street.

MASON
Go home, tell the wife you kept the
streets safe.

Mason bends over to pick up his license. Stands, glaring at
Cobb when the NEIGHBOR ACROSS THE STREET catches his eye,
staring down from her window. Then, just like she did in
episode one, she SNAPS HER DRAPES SHUT.

PRE-LAP door knocking...

CUT TO:

EXT. NEIGHBOR HOUSE ACROSS THE STREET - SECONDS LATER

MRS. TROTTER, the drape-shutting neighbor, opens her door.

MRS. TROTTER
No solicitors.

MASON
Not a solicitor, Ma'am. Name's Peter
Strickland, I'm a reporter for...

MRS. TROTTER
No, you're not.

A moment.

MRS. TROTTER (CONT'D)
I've seen you inside their house the
other day. No solicitors and no liars.

MASON
Perry Mason. Private detective. I work
for E.B. Jonathan. The Dodsons' attorney.

MRS. TROTTER

That's better.

CUT TO:

INT. NEIGHBOR HOUSE, KITCHEN - MINUTES LATER

Mrs. Trotter with Mason at her breakfast nook. Mason, listening intently, is reloading his camera. A half-eaten piece of pie sits before him.

MRS. TROTTER

When they first come to live here, I told Mr. Trotter, we oughta bring them a pie as a kind of welcome-to-the-neighborhood gesture. I do that. Nice enough young people, I think. Two days later she brings over a pie for me. Mr. Trotter choked down a slice so as not to be rude, fed the rest to the dog. Days, weeks... come to find out they go to that church with the woman priest. Well, Mr. Trotter says that's enough of that. We're right Catholics... So... we're neighbors, but not exactly neighborly.

MASON

Did you see anything the night the boy disappeared?

When she doesn't respond, Mason forks up another bite. Mrs. Trotter is pleased.

MRS. TROTTER

May he rest in peace... No different than any other night. That poor woman calling her mother on the phone, eating by herself.

MASON

How do you know she was on the phone with her mother?

MRS. TROTTER

We got a good view of her living room from upstairs. They got cheap drapes. They got the light on, you can see through them at night.

MASON

But you think mother.

MRS. TROTTER

She was on the phone for hours all that night. Mother? Sister? Someone. Lights up like a firecracker on that phone. Only time you see her smile...

MASON
 (re: pie)
 This is excellent.

MRS. TROTTER
 We got one of those new gas-powered
 ovens. Probably gonna blow us up one day,
 but it's good for baking. That's good
 pie. Hers tasted like a foot.

EXT. VANOWEN AIRFIELD - GUARD GATE - NIGHT

Mason rolls up. Bert holds a half-eaten peach up to his nose.

MASON
 Beans.

BERT
 Evening, Mr. Mason.

MASON
 It's been a long day, Bert. Could ya, the
 gate? Beans.

BERT
 You smellin' what I smell?

MASON
 I don't.

BERT
 Wait for it.

They wait. Smell hits Mason. It's not good.

MASON
 Okay, I smell it now.

BERT
 They say six feet deep for a man. Must
 needs be eight or ten for a cow. You get
 me, Mr. Mason?

MASON
 That's my cow?

BERT
 Peaches for eating, not smelling, but
 I've had this here on my nose ever since
 the winds come over the hill. I ain't
 happy about it.

MASON
 Sorry, Bert. I'll take care of it.

Bert stares... not lifting the latch to the gate.

MASON (CONT'D)
 ...Beans, beans, side of greens...

Bert moves the gate.

BERT (O.S.)
 (a tinge cranky)
 ...and a side of greens. What the world
 can't see is it's all in the *beans*.

Mason drives on.

BERT (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Ain't happy, Mr. Mason! No, sir!

EXT. MASON DAIRY - MINUTES LATER

Perry pulls up not far from the burial mound, from which a couple of coyotes are digging and gnawing at one of Martha's rotting feet, now sticking out of the earth. He whistles. They scatter off. Mason gets out, looks to his house, then to the pilot bar, a light on from inside.

INT. HAPPY BOTTOM RIDING CLUB - MOMENTS LATER

LUPE cleaning up behind the bar. A PASSED-OUT PILOT, BUCK, has his head down on the bar. The piano from episode one has been moved inside, its broken leg propped up by a miniature cigar store Indian. Otherwise it's empty. Mason enters. Lupe looks up. Goes back to cleaning.

MASON
 Hello.

LUPE
 Your fucking cow brought vultures.

MASON
 Oh.

LUPE
 We're closed.

Lupe pounds the bartop next to the Passed-Out Pilot.

LUPE (CONT'D)
 Wake up, Buck.

BUCK
 (startled)
 Send back the mushrooms!

LUPE
 Go home.

Buck heads for the door.

Milkman. BUCK

Buck. MASON

Buck stumbles out into the night. Mason toys around with a few keys on the piano.

MASON (CONT'D)
I wanted to apologize.

LUPE
Short runway already, don't need to be ducking vultures. And the smell...

MASON
For that and the other night. I was in the middle of it with the ex.

LUPE
Why she left you remains a mystery.

A moment. Mason takes off his coat, revealing a bloody shirt where his wound has opened up.

MASON
You don't happen to have any iodine do ya?

She goes to the backroom behind the bar. He begins taking off his shirt.

MASON (CONT'D)
I'm on that Dodson case, the one in the papers with the dead kid? It's got me not right in the head...

She comes back with a first aid kit and a rag.

LUPE
They really do that? Sew his eyes open?

MASON
Yeah.

She douses the rag with iodine.

LUPE
You owe me a date.

She grabs him by the neck, presses the rag into his wound. Fucking hell.

MASON
(through the pain)
Whaddya have in mind?

LUPE

Not some cheap picture show. I wanna wear a nice dress.

She takes the rag off him. Let's go of his neck.

MASON

Okay.

She leaves a bandage for him, takes him to the back room.

MASON (CONT'D)

Say...What's the longest you've ever stayed on a phone call to your mom?

She shuts off the lights.

LUPE

We're closed.

She shuts the door leaving Mason in the moonlit dark.

MASON

Yep.

EXT. MASON'S HOUSE - HOURS LATER

Mason, filthy, sweaty, his wound bandaged, his bloody shirt tied around his mouth and nose, trying to dig a fresh new grave next to the old one. Martha's rotting half-eaten foot still sticking up. The Smell! He's been digging a long time, and the new hole isn't nearly big enough. Where were you Christmas Eve, Matthew? Who's Emily calling? Dig or Sleep?

TIME CUT

Mason, digging around Martha's carcass, trying not to retch.

Mason, pouring a tank of gas on top of Martha.

Mason, lighting a match. Whoosh! A big roaring flesh fire.

We hear a low moan. Mason looks off to the side. Helvetia is there, staring at Mason.

MASON (CONT'D)

...It's a Viking Funeral. It's honorable.

Helvetica gives him a looks that says "If I Could Walk On Two Legs, I'd Shove My Hoof In Your Mouth And Choke You Out." Mason senses this. Helvetica takes a shit. Walks away.

OFF Mason, his face lit up by the flickering flames...

DISSOLVE TO:

Emily's face, almost catatonic, listening as best she can.

MR. HARTE (O.C.)
 We are a full service home, Ma'am. Our services include preparation of the deceased, preparation of all legal paperwork, livery from our facilities to the church and to the grave site...

INT. HARTE AND HANNA FUNERAL HOME - MORNING (D2)

Funeral Directors MR. HARTE and MR. HANNA sit behind a desk in a somberly dressed office.

MR. HARTE
 Printed programs, flower arrangements, obituary composition for the memorial ceremony. Casket and tombstone, the inscriptions thereon. That is to say, it is our business to take care of each and every detail... so that you and your husband... your family... can concentrate on the grieving at hand.

REVEAL E.B. and Della, sitting on opposite sides of Emily.
 Emily says nothing.

E.B.
 Let me speak for the Dodsons when I say thank you, Mr. Harte.

MR. HARTE & MR. HANNA
 Thank you, Mr. Jonathan.

Mr. Hanna places a brochure of caskets in front of Emily.

MR. HANNA
 Now, we have a variety of caskets, as you can see here. Most are lined in satin, and the embroidery is first rate from a seamstress in--

EMILY
 (pointing to one)
 Is this one blue? Charlie liked blue. Half his clothes are blue. His eyes...

Mr. Harte and Mr. Hanna share a look.

MR. HANNA
 Well yes, that particular casket is available in a hue of blue. Unfortunately, not in the smaller dimensions that will be needed for your son.

Mr. Harte takes out a small pointer.

MR. HARTE

Any of these caskets. This one. This one. Might I suggest this one. Redwood casing, blue interior stain, gold leaf on the pillowing and it's...

EMILY

I'm hungry.

MR. HARTE

...available in an infant's sizing.

EMILY

I just realized I haven't eaten since yesterday morning.

Mr. Harte and Mr. Hanna look to E.B.

E.B.

You know, there's a swell diner down over on Larchmont, that's not too far. You know that place, Della, with the awning?

DELLA

Swen's.

E.B. pulls out some cash, hands it quietly to Della.

E.B.

Swen's, that's it. Ms. Emily, why don't you let me handle the affairs here and Ms. Street can drive you there in my car.

EMILY

Gentlemen. Thank you.

Della helps Emily up.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME - LATER

REPORTERS waiting outside. Della opens the front door and leads a distraught Emily to E.B.'s CAR, a 1928 Chevrolet National, as men in hats snap their photos and do their parasitic best.

REPORTERS

Mrs. Dodson, have you talked with your husband since the arrest?!/ Were you drinking the night your husband stole your baby?!

Della comes around to the driver's side, a few Reporters follow her.

REPORTERS (CONT'D)

Do you think your husband killed Charlie himself or do you think he had the hoods do it?!/ Is it gonna be an open casket, or are you cremating Charlie?

Della shoots a look at the bum that shouted that last one.

DELLA

Sleep well at night, do ya?

Della starts up the car, pulls out into traffic. The Reporters laugh and jump in their cars to follow. As they head off in pursuit, we catch a glimpse of A FAMILIAR FORMER MILK TRUCK--

Mason at the wheel, blending in behind the reporters' cars, tailing the ladies likewise.

INT. VERMONT KNOLLS DIVISION HQ - DAY

Paul fills out F.I. cards among DESKS, BUSY COPS, CLERKS, and so forth. We become aware that this HQ is entirely staffed by non-whites. Having just come in off the street, Paul has plenty of tickets to file as he talks.

DRAKE

...Odd enough, finding two dead white folks down this way. You occasionally catch a stiff coal burner or tea head, but that's mostly about a knife stuck in them somewhere. Bullets, see, that's some executive murder. Plus, the suitcase...

REVEAL that Paul is talking to HOLCOMB and ENNIS.

HOLCOMB

You connect it off the briefings?

DRAKE

Yessir. And the hat. That sketch.

Ennis reads/flips through some typed pages.

ENNIS

Your report here mentions a blood trail?

DRAKE

Yessir. Up the fire escape to the roof.

ENNIS

Leading to what?

DRAKE

Nothing.

HOLCOMB

Nothing?

DRAKE

Yessir.

ENNIS

Could be you got that wrong. Could be the trail starts on the roof and leads down.

Paul is starting to sense an agenda. And trouble.

DRAKE

Yessir. Could be.

(can't help himself)

Only the, um, the drops of blood. Tail on the splash points up those stairs.

Holcomb and Ennis share a look.

HOLCOMB

Get a load of this character.

ENNIS

Officer Drake here is a detective.

HOLCOMB

That right, Officer Drake? You a detective like me and Sergeant Ennis?

Uh-oh.

DRAKE

(treading lightly)

Nossir.

ENNIS

'Cause there are no colored detectives. Not even down here in fucking jungleland.

HOLCOMB

Maybe Officer Drake will be the first.

ENNIS

Takes ambition. You got ambition, Officer Drake? You got dreams?

Paul holds his tongue. Holcomb taps Ennis, directs his gaze to WATCH COMMANDER JOE MORTON standing in his office doorway.

HOLCOMB

I personally don't agree with the policy. Had me a colored mammy as a young-'un. Just as soon work with a colored Detective as Ennis. But, such is life.

Holcomb heads for the office. Ennis lingers.

ENNIS

This is some good work, Drake.

He taps Paul with the report and joins Holcomb in the Watch Commander's office, closing the door behind him.

Paul, unsettled, pretends to go on with his paperwork. He glances furtively at the men in the office. Ennis throws the report on the Commander's desk and jabs a thumb in Paul's direction. The Watch Commander looks out at Paul, annoyed. Paul quickly looks away. *Shit. Something is definitely up.*

INT. SWEN'S DINER, BACK BOOTH - LATER

Della, Emily, soup, sandwich, and coffee. Della chews, watches as Emily pokes at her soup with a spoon.

DELLA

You haven't eaten very much.

Emily stirs some more. Then...

EMILY

They won't let me see him. How can they not let a wife see her husband? It's...

DELLA

It's wrong. I know. The police... They, they sometimes forget you're innocent until proven guilty.

(Emily tears up)

E.B. will take care of it.

Emily pulls it together. Dabs at her eyes with a napkin.

EMILY

It's an odd feeling. I keep looking around, thinking I forgot something. And there's nobody there to, to...

DELLA

Is Matthew innocent?

EMILY

Of course he is.

Della smiles reassuringly.

DELLA

Then you have nothing to worry about.

Emily stares, on the verge of laughter, or tears, or...?

EMILY

We just went casket shopping for my dead son, Ms. Street.

(then)

I need to be excused for a moment.

Emily heads towards the restrooms. Off Della...

INT. SWEN'S DINER, OUTSIDE RESTROOMS - MOMENTS LATER

Emily, in a phone booth, dabs at her eyes.

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
Hold for your connection please.

EMILY ON PHONE
Thank you, Operator.

On Emily as her call clicks and wends its way across the wires. She listens: *Ring... Ring... Ring*. Desperate tears fall with each unanswered *Ring... Ring...*

REVERSE TO FIND

Perry Mason. Blending in amongst the other ruffled suits at the lunch counter. Mason watches Emily give up on her call, struggling to hang up as sobs wrack her slight frame. Emily lurches into the Ladies' Room. Mason darts to the phone.

IN THE BOOTH

With Mason, one eye on the Ladies' Room, as he toggles the plunger, calling the...

MASON ON PHONE
Hello, Operator? Operator?

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
Operator. How may I direct your call?

MASON ON PHONE
My wife was just this very moment trying to reach her doctor and, well, it seems she got cut off.

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
One moment, sir. I'll try the line again.

MASON ON PHONE
Thank you kindly, ma'am.

Ring... Ring... TAP, TAP, TAP. Mason turns, SEES--

Della outside the booth, glaring at him.

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
I'm sorry, sir. Your party doesn't seem to be answering.

Mason turns away from Della.

MASON ON PHONE
No answer? But this is very important. It's a medical situation, you see.

Tap, tap, tap. Mason ignores her.

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
I'm sorry, sir.

Mason readies his pad and pencil.

MASON ON PHONE
Well, what number are you trying?

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
Sierra 3-6517.

MASON ON PHONE
Holy crow, that's our own number. No wonder we're not there.

He hangs up. Notes the number she gave him. Exits the booth.

MASON
Great coffee they got here, huh?

DELLA
Why the hell are you following us?

Della pokes him in the chest, right where his wound is.

MASON
(wincing)
E.B. wanted me to make sure, I mean with all the reporters, that--

DELLA
You're a bad liar. And a lousy tail.

MASON
I don't lie to you, Della.

DELLA
Then you want to try again?

Earnest. Eye to eye.

MASON
I'm working the case. Doing my job.

Before Della can press the issue, they HEAR the restroom door UNLOCKING. Mason ducks back into the booth as Emily emerges. Della moves to further screen Mason from view.

DELLA
Hey, kid, let's get you home, okay?

EMILY
Thank you. I... Yes, okay.

As they walk away...

OPERATOR ON PHONE (O.S.)
What number, please?

MASON ON PHONE
Gimme Boyle 2-3405.

BACK IN THE BOOTH

On Mason.

DIANNE ON PHONE (O.S.)
Perry Mason Confidential Investigations.

MASON ON PHONE
Dianne, it's me.

DIANNE ON PHONE (O.S.)
Oh, he knows my name today!

MASON ON PHONE
Look, just... You got the reverse look-up
handy? I need a name and address on
Sierra 3-6517.

As Mason catches one last over-the-shoulder glare from Della.

INT. L.A. ATHLETIC CLUB, BATHROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Ornate fixtures, marble sinks, gilded mirror. E.B. Jonathan, in his shirtsleeves, pats his face dry with a gleaming white towel. He inspects himself in the mirror. Reaches for a comb, adds the finishing touches, recites. [Housman verse quoted by Clarence Darrow in Leopold and Loeb summation]

E.B.
"Now hollow fires burn out to black,
And lights are fluttering low:
Square your shoulders, lift your pack
And leave your friends and go.
O never fear, lads, naught's to dread,
Look not to left nor right:
In all the endless road you tread
There's nothing but the night."

BLIND MO, the aged bathroom attendant, dutifully helps him back into his suit jacket.

E.B. (CONT'D)
Thank you, Maurice.

BLIND MO
My pleasure. What's it been now, Mr.
Jonathan? Ten some years?

E.B.
Ten years. Maybe more. Maybe more...

E.B. adds a coin to Mo's tray.

BLIND MO
Thank you kindly, sir. You'd be surprised
how many of these fancy folk just tap the
tray nowadays. Splash of lavender?

E.B.
I think not.

Mo brushes off his shoulders and lapels.

BLIND MO
I may be blind, but I'm still sharp.
Still sharp where it counts, yessir.

E.B.
(to himself)
Ready.

BLIND MO
It's good to see you again, Mr. Jonathan.
That's Blind Mo's "go to" joke. He smiles broadly.

INT. L.A. ATHLETIC CLUB, CLUB ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

E.B. sits in a dark leather chair. Barnes in another. Scotch
on a silver tray between them, a splash in crystal glasses.

BARNES
Must feel good. To be back. You were...
quite the stalwart around here.

E.B.
I don't know about that.

BARNES
I've seen the pictures, heard some
stories -- a lot of stories, actually...
(he chuckles)
Practically an original member. One of
the "best young men the city contained."

E.B.
Smaller city in those days. And "best"
has always been a relative term.

He sips his scotch, looks at the glass.

BARNES
You had a lot of friends here.

E.B.
Still do. Here. City Hall.

Barnes catches his drift. Smiles, unconcerned.

BARNES

I'm sorry about catching you out like that. Big case. Lot of pressure to, uh... you know how it is.

E.B.

I do.

BARNES

And there was no disrespect intended. That's why I asked to meet with you.

E.B.

You want to be my friend.

BARNES

I want to be your friend.

E.B. gives him a "cut the shit" look.

E.B.

Okay. So let's hear it already.

Barnes grins, admiring E.B.'s perception, downs his scotch.

BARNES

Dodson signs a confession. I take hanging off the table. We pin the murder on one of the dead guys.

E.B.

That's tidy.

BARNES

I like it. Mayor likes it. Newshawks are gonna love it.

E.B. sips his scotch, makes a small face, sets it aside.

E.B.

You took me once, Maynard. It won't happen again. I relish -- and that's not a word I casually throw around -- I truly relish the thought of going into court with you.

BARNES

If Baggerly is your friend, you should relish the chance to save his son's life.

E.B.

Matthew Dodson is innocent.

Barnes rises to refill his glass.

BARNES

Come on, I have an eyewitness, I have--

E.B.

My investigator is currently looking into what *little* you have.

BARNES

This is a hanging case, E.B., not some gray-hair that wants to leave her sweaters to a cat.

E.B.

My trial reputation is well-documented, Maynard.

BARNES

Your scrapbook cases of yesteryear? Yeah, I've read them.

E.B.

Well there you go.

Maynard chuckles at the inference.

BARNES

This is a major case, E.B.. You may want to consider the possibility that you're out of your depth here. Before...well, before you drown.

Maynard downs his scotch. Sets the glass on the tray.

BARNES (CONT'D)

Stay as long as you want. Have another round. On me.

E.B. watches as Barnes moves on to glad-hand some bigshot.

INT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD, CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING

ELDER SEIDEL, Elder Brown, Herman Baggerly, and DESIGNERS from the church sit around a long table. Biddie sits at one end, going over the many details of tomorrow's funeral. Sister Alice sits at the other end, surrounded by every daily and evening city newspaper on the Dodson case, as well as her Bible, writing notes for a eulogy.

BIDDIE

The District Attorney? Where are we putting him?

ELDER BROWN

House right, under the balcony lip.

BIDDIE

Oh, no, no. That's not nearly close enough. Let's put him here on the aisle.

Elder Brown checks his clipboard.

ELDER BROWN

I believe that's where you've sat Mr. Clark Gable, Mother McKeegan.

BIDDIE

He's a bread loaf over six feet, isn't he?

SISTER ALICE

(looking up for a moment)
He's a tall man, yes, Mother.

BIDDIE

Can't have the District Attorney leaning and preening to see the stage. Swap them.

ELDER BROWN

So many requests, you'd have thought grim circumstances would have driven everyone away, but it's been quite the opposite.

BIDDIE

(looking at Herman)
Well, who knew we were even hosting the event. But here we are. And we should do it as we do all things. Best and better. Anyone know a Mr. Julian Hammersmith?

ELDER SEIDEL

He owns one of the minor motion picture studios, Mother McKeegan. We've actually had a few small investments with them.

BIDDIE

We're in the picture business? Who knew? Elder Seidel, would you be willing to part with your normal pew and allow this movie person your view.

ELDER SEIDEL

Whatever accommodates.

BIDDIE

Thank you. I'll make sure Mrs. Seidel gets a moment with Mr. Gable before we part for the cemetery.

ELDER BROWN

Perhaps it would be wise to move the event directly to the cemetery, considering...

BIDDIE

Considering what?

ELDER BROWN

One of our members is being laid to rest, yes. One is grieving, yes. But one is also being charged with murder.

BAGGERLY

Conspiracy. Not murder. And the police are in serious error on that matter.

ELDER BROWN

I merely wonder if this is a light too bright for our Church.

BAGGERLY

My son did not do this. He is a child of Christ's blood, like you, like me.

An awkward moment for all.

BAGGERLY (CONT'D)

Don't let the sin of his birth, nor the fact that I kept this shame from all of you... Do not let it blind you.

SISTER ALICE

...Blessed are the mourners.

All heads turn to the Sister. She looks up from her Bible.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

Isn't that the truest thing you ever heard? Mother, Brother Baggerly...do you think I could speak on that tomorrow?

BIDDIE

That sounds lovely, Sister.

Biddie looks to Herman.

BAGGERLY

I'm sure that would bring great comfort to all in attendance.

Off Alice, looking back down at a picture of Charlie.

INT. DODSON HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Emily sits on the couch, her mind somewhere far away. Della is laying out some of Charlie's clothes on the coffee table.

DELLA

I picked these out. Not sure which ones you liked... which ones would be most appropriate...

Emily looks at each of them. Not really connecting.

DELLA (CONT'D)
This little suit. I think this would look nice, maybe?

Emily looks up again, stares at the dried-out Christmas tree in the corner.

DELLA (CONT'D)
If you want to do this in the morning, Mrs. Dodson, we can do...

EMILY
Where do you think they take all the trees?

DELLA
Trees?

EMILY
The Christmas trees. When they're put out on the street. I imagine the garbage men must take them someplace different.

DELLA
...I never thought about it.

EMILY
(re: the clothes)
...I can do this, Ms. Street. Thank you for all your help today. I think I'd like to be alone.

DELLA
Of course.

Della goes to get her coat and purse.

DELLA (CONT'D)
Would you like it if I came back in the morning? Mr. Jonathan and I can pick you up?

Emily looks up. Lost.

DELLA (CONT'D)
For the service. The funeral.

EMILY
Oh. Yes. Okay...

Della nods.

DELLA
Goodnight, Mrs. Dodson.

Della lets herself out. Emily listens for the sound of Della's heels receding away. OFF her blank, fearful face...

EXT. SIERRA VISTA - OUTSIDE BUNGALOW - LATER

Mason looks up at a modest shack. The curtains are drawn. The place feels very still. Is anyone home? He casually strolls by. Taking a glance up the driveway that leads to the back alley, he sees -- A PARKED CAR'S BLUE FENDER.

EXT. SIERRA VISTA BUNGALOW, BACK ALLEY - MOMENTS LATER

Mason creeps up on a 1929 BLUE FORD PHAETON. He spots the ding where it smashed into the Trolley (ep 101). Fuck yeah!

EXT. SIERRA VISTA BUNGALOW, BACK DOOR - MOMENTS LATER

Mason peers in the windows. No sign of life. He knocks.

MASON

(not too loud)

Fuller Brush Man. Get a free Handy Brush for only two minutes of your time.

He knocks again. Checks that the coast is clear.

INT. SIERRA VISTA BUNGALOW, KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

As Mason picks the lock and enters. And that's when the smell hits him. He presses a handkerchief to his nose. Goes into...

INT. SIERRA VISTA BUNGALOW, LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A NEARLY HEADLESS BODY "sitting" on the couch. BLOOD and BRAIN MATTER splattered on the wall behind. SHOTGUN "held" upright on the floor between his legs by limp hands. And on one of those hands, a familiar PINKY RING. Mason just FOUND THE MISSING BODY, Dear Reader! The same man that we saw fall to his death in Episode 101 has been set up to look like a suicide victim. And it is not a pretty sight.

MASON

That your car outside? 'Cause I'd like to ask you a few questions.

Mason grits his teeth and moves in to examine what is left of the man's face. Google "suicide by shotgun." I dare you. Pretty hard to ID a guy with half a head. Something catches Mason's eye. An oddly discolored tooth? He pokes at it with his pencil stub. HALF A DENTURE drops onto the corpse's lap.

That's enough of that. Mason steps back, collects himself. Looks around the room. On a table nearby, A BOX OF SHOTGUN SHELLS. And next to that A SUICIDE NOTE.

Mason picks up the note with his hanky, reads it.

MASON (CONT'D)

So you kidnapped Charlie Dodson... Felt guilty... Blood, atonement, etcetera... Burned the wages of sin in the...

ANGLE ON FIREPLACE

Mason pokes at a large pile of ashes. Pulls something out...
THE CHARRED END OF A TWENTY DOLLAR BILL.

He stands at the mantel. Thinks. Why was Emily calling this guy? Did she have something to do with the kidnapping of her own son? He shakes his head in disbelief. None of this makes sense. Looks around. What am I missing? What am I missing?

MASON (CONT'D)

Why was she calling you? Why was she...?

A LITTLE ALLIGATOR. About four feet long. Dead and stuffed. Sitting there on the mantel. Alligator? He picks it up. Turns it over. Scrawled on the bottom: "L.A. Alligator Farm." Just like the Turtle in Charlie's room.

And there's a seam. And there it opens. And hidden inside...

A STACK OF LETTERS.

INT. BUNGALOW COURT - EVENING

CLARA, with a big beautiful belly -- we recognize her as the pregnant girl from the prologue to 101 -- is at the stove, finger-testing a pork chop. Almost done. She pours a glass of milk, sets it on the table, revealing a preoccupied Paul. We see his badge and gun on the side table.

DRAKE

Don't want any milk.

CLARA

Don't have any. It's for me.

She gives the pork chop a final turn, plates it.

DRAKE

How're you gonna drink milk and make milk at the same time?

CLARA

Don't be stupid. And you'd best start smiling, or I'm gonna leave you for a better-looking man.

Paul is served. He pulls her close. Head on belly.

DRAKE

How's my little Lucy?

CLARA

You mean Luther. I think it's a boy now.

DRAKE

How's that?

CLARA
I had chipped beef the night we made her.

DRAKE
(to the belly)
What if I want a little girl?

CLARA
Feed me potatoes and onions next time.

DRAKE
Now who's stupid?

He talks to her stomach.

DRAKE (CONT'D)
Your mama got some foolish ideas. You
tell your daddy if you a boy or a girl.

He puts his ear up against her stomach.

DRAKE (CONT'D)
Hm. Hm. It's a girl. I make girls.

CLARA
(laughing)
Stupid.

She sits, sips her milk. Catches him staring at her.

CLARA (CONT'D)
What?

DRAKE
Nothing. Work.

He cuts a bite, chews. She nods, waits...

DRAKE (CONT'D)
Watch Commander says I made a mistake.
'Cept I didn't make no mistake. 'Cept he
says I did. So.
(shrugs)
I had to change my report.

CLARA
This Joe Morton?

Paul gets up to grab the ketchup.

DRAKE
Yeah.

CLARA
You say, "Joe Morton's dumber than a bag
of retarded hammers."

DRAKE
'Cuz he is.

CLARA
So why'd you change it?

He squats beside her.

DRAKE
Why'd you think?

He kisses her, nuzzles her neck.

CLARA
(shoving him off)
Outta my face, cop.

DRAKE
That's Officer Drake, Miss Lip.

CLARA
Uh-huh.

Paul sits. Off Clara, watching him eat...

EXT/INT. DODSON HOUSE, FRONT DOOR/KITCHEN - NIGHT

Mason parks across the street. Slams his car door. Heads straight for the front door. Officer Cobb stands guard.

OFFICER COBB
Back in the car.

Mason keeps walking. Cobb puts a hand on him. Mason knocks it away. Heads for the front door. Cobb pulls his gun.

OFFICER COBB (CONT'D)
Stop where you are.

Mason knocks on the front door.

OFFICER COBB (CONT'D)
Get away from the door.

Cobb shoves Mason into the front door, gun to his head. Mason keeps knocking.

OFFICER COBB (CONT'D)
That's a gun.

MASON
Go ahead.

OFFICER COBB
I'll fucking do it.

MASON

Uh-huh.

Emily opens the front door, startled.

EMILY

What's...? Mr. Mason, what are...?

MASON

(to Cobb)

See? We're good.

EMILY

It's okay.

Mason enters, slams the door on Cobb's face. He takes Emily by the arm to the kitchen, away from the front door.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What's going on?

MASON

Be quiet.

EMILY

You're hurting me.

In the kitchen. Lets go of her.

MASON

Who's George Gannon?

Emily goes ashen.

EMILY

George... Gannon? I don't...

MASON

Don't do it.

EMILY

I don't know anyone named--

MASON

Do not lie to me. Who is George?

She hesitates.

EMILY

George is a friend. A friend from church.

Mason produces one of the letters he took, reads from it.

MASON

"My beautiful George... It's been three days since we saw each other, but it feels more like three years..."

EMILY
A friend from church.

Mason skips to the page two of the letter, reads.

MASON
"Take me away, George. To some island in the ocean. Where we might never leave, and set fire to the boat that got us there..."

EMILY
It's not what you think...

Mason flips over page two, reads the end.

MASON
"God must want us to be together, or we wouldn't be feeling this way. I love no one more than you -- Emily."

She starts crying.

MASON (CONT'D)
God. Isn't. Watching.

EMILY
...Where's George?

MASON
George is dead.

Emily falls to her knees... inconsolable.

EXT. E.B. JONATHAN'S OFFICE - EVENING

Della and E.B. look over the "love letters" Mason has scattered on E.B.'s desk. Mason is commanding the room, feeling it. Everyone's at each other's throat, except for Strickland, who sits in the corner pouring some bourbon from *Huckleberry Finn* and reading the latest installment of "Lipstick Girl." Out in the waiting room, the phone rings.

MASON
She's lying! I gave her a chance to come clean, she dithered. She's letting her husband swing for it.

E.B.
You took evidence from a crime scene! You could lose your license for this!

MASON
This gets our client off.

DELLA
And gets another client the rope.

E.B.
 (to Della, re: the phone)
 Are you going to answer that?

Della goes to answer the phone.

E.B. (CONT'D)
 The client is Herman Baggerly, who's out
 a hundred thou, whose wife and legitimate
 kids are gonna be humiliated...
 MASON
 Who's a good Christian and a
 bastard dad, with a bastard
 son who's a card donkey and
 whose bastard daughter-in-
 law's a goddamned cheat.

DELLA (O.C.)
 E.B. Jonathan's office, how
 can I help you?

STRICKLAND
 A holy trinity.

E.B.
 You shut up. I didn't hire you.
 (to Mason)
 He's a degenerate.

STRICKLAND
 See?! He even uses the word!

MASON
 Don't shut up. Tell him what you got.

STRICKLAND
 I ran down two chinks say they were in
 that dice joint with Dodson on the night.

E.B.
 (to Mason)
 I told you to check out Matthew's alibi.

Della re-entering. The phone starts ringing again.

DELLA
 He was too busy following me and Emily.

MASON
 Good thing I did.

DELLA
 She didn't have anything to do with
 Charlie's murder.

MASON
 (re: the letters)
 These say different.

DELLA

Those say she had an affair. So what? You didn't spend the day with her. The woman's broken. I got a feeling, E.B.

MASON

There's a guy on Vista Drive with no fucking head and Little Charlie's getting embalmed over at Harte and Hanna. So spare me your intuition.

E.B.

(to Della)

Do I pay you to answer the phone?! Yes, I do.

Della goes out to answer the phone.

MASON

Cops got it half right, it's extortion gone way wrong. But it ain't Matthew. It's Emily and this George guy, and those hoods he got in with...

DELLA (O.C.)

E.B. Jonathan's office. How can I help you?

MASON (CONT'D)

...Cops coached the Eye Doc's statement. That was George Gannon he saw in the alley. *

STRICKLAND

I thought you said George was on the phone, distracting her.

MASON

He was.

E.B.

How'd he manage both?

MASON

...Then it was one of the stiffs they found in that warehouse! I don't know!

E.B.

You're pulling this outta of your ass, boy-o...

Della re-enters.

DELLA

That I agree with.

E.B.

(to Della)

And it's "E.B. Jonathan and Associates," when you answer the phone!

DELLA

Haven't been *associates* for six years!

STRICKLAND
You people got some things to sort out.

E.B.
(to Strickland)
I don't reimburse for whorehouses.

STRICKLAND
(to Mason)
I was tailing a guy for him. You don't order egg rolls at Madam Jin's.

MASON
George's place -- it was all wrong. Some trumped-up suicide note? I kill my partners, burn the money, blow my head off, 'cause woe is me, I got a guilty conscience?

STRICKLAND
(reading "Lipstick Girl")
You know who also has a guilty conscience? Percy Dumott, sophisticated man of distinction!

MASON
(to Strickland)
Shut the fuck up.

E.B. gathers the letters. Holds them up.

E.B.
You're giving me migraines, son. How am I even supposed to introduce these? Where did I get 'em?

MASON
That's why you're the lawyer.

E.B.
These are reasonable doubt for Matthew.

DELLA
Infidelity is not murder.

E.B.
...We're looking where they want us to look. Matthew's a gambler. Emily's a cheat. Either of you think they killed their kid?

MASON & DELLA
No.

They sit there for a moment. Everyone calming down.

E.B.
 (to Mason)
 I don't suppose you could put 'em back
 where you found them?

MASON
 I had Strickland dime it in. Cops are
 probably crawling already.

E.B. clacks the letters into a neat stack.

E.B.
 The letters stay here. We sit on them
 until I figure the best way to use them.
 Everyone hear that? Until I figure.
 Someone has to lead and that's me. We
 look like amateurs.

The phone rings again.

STRICKLAND
 You're gonna need more phones. Or an
 answering service.

Della goes to answer it. Mason and E.B. look at each other.

DELLA (O.C.)
 E.B. Jonathan *and Associates*.

PRE-LAP CHOIR SINGING: *"All Creatures of Our God and King..."*

INT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD, DRESSING ROOM - DAY (D3)

Sister Alice, deep in prayer. Sound of the choir on the
 monitor. A knock on the door. Another knock. The door opens.

BIDDIE (V.O.)
 Sister Alice.

Sister Alice looks up, sees Biddie.

BIDDIE
 We're ready.

CUT TO:

INT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD, BACKSTAGE - MINUTES LATER

We follow Sister Alice and Biddie into the sacristy, down the
 long hallway and onto the...

INT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD, STAGE AND PEWS - CONTINUOUS

Where the choir and band are nearing the end of the hymn. The
 stage is overridden with memorial flowers. Charlie's casket
 stands in front of the microphone'd pulpit. The Elders sit in
 funereal black suits. The entire congregation is full
 standing, singing from their hymnals.

We POP around the congregation to familiar faces. A veiled Emily front and center, Della and E.B. seated next to her. Holcomb and Ennis a few rows behind them. District Attorney Barnes and CLARK GABLE. JULIAN HAMMERSMITH, Police and Fire Commissioner VINCENT. A MARTIN, Members of the PRESS, UNIFORMED SECURITY AND LAPD, Mason and Strickland are on opposite sides, leaning against support beams, close but not too close.

NOTE: Leaving it to the artfulness of our As-Yet-Unhired Director, this is a classic eyefucking scene. All the tensions, biases, and secrets each character has with others exploited as Sister Alice speaks. But the "A" story here should be watching a dismissive Mason, becoming steadily intrigued by Sister Alice. Back to our story.

The choir finishes. Sister Alice takes in the congregation. The usual multi-ethnic faces having been moved to the balcony. It's bright and white in the good seats. Biddie takes a seat next to Herman. Sister Alice opens her Bible.

SISTER ALICE

"Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." The Gospel of Matthew, Chapter 5, Verse 4.

CONGREGATION

Amen!/ Praise be!/ Hallelujah!/ Etc.

SISTER ALICE

The words of Christ Our Lord, from his Sermon on the Mount.

That ol' chestnut..., thinks Mason.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

There's another name for that part of the good book, and that name is the Beatitudes. And it is a beautiful thought: "Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted." But how will Emily Dodson be comforted? This mother among us, this glorious woman, who birthed the child, who bathed the child, who fed the child from her body, how do we, Brothers and Sisters, provide comfort for her when the child, Charlie Dodson, lies in this very box now before me? I don't know if we can.

She looks directly at Emily. Holcomb and Ennis lean over to get a look at her.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

Do not misunderstand me, Emily. We will try. We will be there for you in all depths and all directions.

(MORE)

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

You will not know a friendless day for the rest of your life, and as God is my witness, may this Temple crumble to its foundations if we fail you.

Sister Alice and Emily share a nod. Mason and E.B. share a look. As Sister Alice turns back to the congregation, Emily glances with faint reproach over her shoulder at Mason. Flinching, Mason has to lower his eyes to the ground a moment before looking back to Alice.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

I see new faces down in the front. Men -- the most powerful in our city...

Where's this going? Thinks Mason. What's going on here? Thinks Biddie and Elder Brown.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

And, just as I can't be sure we can provide comfort for the mother in mourning, I can't be sure I'll ever see you men under our roof again. So let me address you directly.

She closes her Bible and puts her hand on Charlie's casket, casts her gaze at the first eight rows.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

The Devil put Charlie in this box. He flew up from hell, walked our streets and laid his violent hand on this child's head.

She looks back at Biddie.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

Read just about every newspaper printed last night, didn't we, Mother?

BIDDIE

(very uncomfortable)
We did, Sister Alice.

She looks back at the front of the house.

SISTER ALICE

I understand from the reading that justice for this act is in process. It is my hope, and the hope of this congregation, that you will proceed with vigor but also with caution.

She looks over to Herman Baggerly.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)

Mistakes can be made... The Devil lives for mistakes.

She addresses the entire building. (The camera should linger on Mason and Alice unless otherwise noted.)

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
 Beatitudes for the day at hand... Blessed
 be the police who will gather evidence
 against the Devil.

ANGLE on Ennis and Holcomb.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
 Blessed be the attorneys who will
 prosecute the Devil.

ANGLE on E.B. Jonathan and D.A. Barnes.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
 Blessed be the jury who will convict the
 Devil. Blessed be the judge who will
 sentence the Devil. Blessed be the
 hangman who will snap this Devil's neck.
 Blessed be the gravediggers who will bury
 the Devil a thousand feet deep, and
 blessed be the worms who will eat this
 Devil's flesh and disappear it from this
 earth.

She picks up her Bible again, looks back at Biddie, who is not pleased. Not at all. Alice turns back.

SISTER ALICE (CONT'D)
 This is the work of the Lord. You do this
 work for little Charlie Dodson.

She nods to her Choirmaster.

CHOIRMASTER
 In your hymnals, page 178.

The Band and Choir sing a solemn but undoubtedly uplifting version of *When The Roll Is Called Up Yonder*.

Alice makes eye contact with Mason. Now there's a face, she thinks. Sister Alice recovers, joins the singing and returns to her mother's side.

BIDDIE
 (whispering)
 What was that, young lady?

Sister Alice looks straight ahead. As the choir continues singing. We see POPS of the rest of the Service.

Emily laying hands on the casket, weeping.

Emily walks back to her seat, leans into Della, who does her best to comfort her.

Various members of the Congregation forming a line, taking their turn to look at the casket, leaving a token (flowers and toy turtles) before going over to Emily with words. Clark Gable, D.A. Barnes, Julian Hammersmith -- who looks over at Mason, tapping his heart. Mason nods back as if to say, "Yeah, it's healing. Fuck you."

EXT. RADIANT ASSEMBLY OF GOD - MINUTES LATER

AS THE CHOIR CONTINUES TO SING, we see a procession of parked vehicles with DRIVERS waiting by their cars as mourners pour out of the Temple. The Pallbearers lead Charlie's casket towards the flower-covered HEARSE. Photographers snap away at Emily, who is arm-in-arm with Sister Alice. Biddie and Della follow them. Elders of the Church last. E.B. and Mason hold back for reasons about to become obvious.

As the casket is being placed in the hearse and the funeral parties are getting into their cars, several UNIFORMED POLICE descend around Emily. What's going on? The Police pull her from Sister Alice's arms. "Let go of her!" Detectives Holcomb and Ennis tell Emily and a visibly angry Sister Alice that Emily is being arrested for conspiracy in the murder of her son. The Newspaper Photographers swarm. Emily is wailing, stretching her arms out towards the hearse with Charlie's body, as she is being dragged away. Chaos.

Della tries to argue with the Detectives. She looks around for E.B. She sees him standing off to the side next to Mason. Their faces tell a story. She looks back at Holcomb and Ennis, they nod back to E.B. and Mason. She looks back at E.B. and Mason.

So much for sitting on those letters.

E.B. turns away, walks over to D.A. Barnes, leaving Della staring at Mason. It's not unlike the look Captain Mason got from that Freckled Face Soldier in France. Della is furious. Mason can't look her in the eye. He's ashamed.

Emily is shoved into a black mariah. Cops stand guard on the railboard as the car pulls out and heads to the Downtown Police Precinct, camera bulbs catching every horrible second as Emily stretches out towards the Child she will not see be put into the earth.

INT. LOS ANGELES ATHLETIC CLUB - EVENING

A BARTENDER finishes making a martini. Picks it up along with a scotch rocks, places the drinks in front of Mason and E.B.

BARTENDER

That's one coffee and one cold tea.

The Bartender takes the finished "Coffee" and "Cold Tea," gives them room to drink their second round.

MASON
This where you come?

E.B.
Don't like it? We can go somewhere else.

MASON
...Doorman downstairs gave me a look.

E.B.
Man spends his days taking it from these hot shots. He sees a suit like yours pass by, makes him forget for a second who he is. Let him have it.

MASON
I should get a new suit, huh?

E.B.
Eh. It "suits" you.

Not even polite funny. They drink.

MASON
Don't feel right, what we did.

E.B.
It was the right call, son. Believe me.

He looks over, sees D.A. Barnes drinking with some other suited men.

E.B. (CONT'D)
We'll get Matthew out by lunchtime tomorrow. Baggerly stays happy. We stay in the fight.

They drink.

MASON
Della. What she said... It's still in my head.

CUT TO:

INT. LAPD DOWNTOWN STATION, CORRIDOR/HOLDING CELL - EVENING

A DESK SERGEANT walks Della walks through the station. She holds a brown paper bag.

E.B. (V.O.)
That's my fault, son. Given her way too much rope. Thinks she's something more than a secretary. We're in the big light now. Don't listen to her.

MASON (V.O.)
She was right.

E.B. (V.O.)

Maybe.

Della stops. The Sergeant steps away. REVEAL Emily alone in a holding cell, dead-eyed. Della pulls a change of clothes out of the bag, slips them inside the bars for Emily.

E.B. (V.O.)

Dim bunny housewife gets in with a kidnapping ring from Chicago? Can't see that one holding, even if she did it.

BACK TO ATHLETIC CLUB

E.B. looks back at Barnes. Barnes raises a glass, E.B. nods.

E.B.

He thinks I'm last night's eggs. Thinks he's playing me... We do our thing, we're gonna run him over like a streetcar.

They drink.

MASON

They shoulda let her see the kid get buried.

E.B.

They said they would. But who tells the truth anymore?

EXT. VERMONT KNOLLS NEIGHBORHOOD - DUSK

Officer Paul Drake walking his regular beat. The Kids play baseball in the vacant lot, sun coming down. Granny James is passed out drunk on her porch. Paul stops, turns back.

E.B. (V.O.)

Is there a man left out there who values it? Cause it's been a long, longgggg time since I met one, boy-o.

EXT. VERMONT KNOLLS WAREHOUSE, ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Spot the "Colored Air Circus" billboard as Paul stands at the head of the alley. He looks up at the warehouse roof.

MASON (V.O.)

Maybe it's the business we're in... We only meet people when they need us. After they've made a mess of it.

Paul looks back down at the debris of New Year's Eve. Broken bottles, newspapers, a sad party hat or two, what looks to be vomit...

MASON (V.O.)

We get used to seeing folks at their worst. Desperate. This one you caught, E.B., whatever the truth of it is, was, will be... You'd almost rather not know.

Paul toes a newspaper aside. Underneath is a dark stain. Blood? He tries to smear it with his shoe. The dark spot reveals nothing. He squats, wipes his fingers across its surface. Nothing again. Wait. He carefully sorts through the jagged chunks of a broken bottle. What's this...?

E.B. (V.O.)

The business we're in.

MASON (V.O.)

The business we're in.

Something off-white. Is it a tooth, or...?

He rises. Examines the object more closely. Not a tooth. PART OF A DENTURE. And though Paul doesn't know it, we immediately recognize this mangled masticator as THE OTHER HALF OF WHAT MASON FOUND IN GEORGE'S BUNGALOW!

BACK TO ATHLETIC CLUB

Mason takes out the bag holding the single strand of thread used on Charlie, holds it up to a candle on the bar.

MASON

You know how many types of thread there are in this city?

E.B. stares at it. Signals for another "Cold Tea."

E.B.

You'll find it, boy-o. That's just the kind of thing you're good at.

INT/EXT. HOLLYWOOD ATHLETIC CLUB - LATER, AS EVENING FALLS

Mason walks outside into the dusk. People coming and going. A DRUNK is looking through some garbage across the way. Perry watches him as he lights up in his fashion. Half an apple. A bottle. The Drunk rolls the bottle out on the street. It stops near Mason's feet. Mason looks at it for a time.

France is far away. France is far away. France is...

Suddenly the street lights come on. The city coming to life. Bright. Dark. Both. Mason takes a drag, turns around, looks back up at the window of the Club.

Mason sees a silhouette of E.B. and District Attorney Barnes swapping stories. E.B. gets a laugh. E.B.'s killing it.

END OF EPISODE

