

Episode #92-018

FOREVER KNIGHT

"Feeding The Beast"

written by

Alison Bingeman

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7 Curity Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4B 3L8
119 Spadina Ave. Suite 900, Toronto, Ontario Canada

SHOOTING DRAFT
August 24, 1992

08/27/92 PINK - FULL SCRIPT
08/28/92 BLUE - FULL SCRIPT
09/01/92 YELLOW - PAGES ONLY
09/02/92 GREEN - PAGES ONLY
09/03/92 GOLDENROD - PAGES ONLY

Episode #92-018

"Feeding The Beast"

CAST LIST

NICK KNIGHT.....Geraint Wyn Davies
SCHANKE.....John Kapelos
NATALIE.....Catherine Disher
STONETREE.....Gary Farmer
JANETTE.....Deborah Duchene
LACROIX.....Nigel Bennett
MONIKA/WOMAN//WOMAN #1
HILLARY/WOMAN #2
SKIP PAULEY/MAN
HENRY
ANGIE

YOUNG WOMAN
ROCKHEAD
COP

SETS

INT. COMMUNITY HALL - KITCHEN
INT. COMMUNITY HALL
EXT. COMMUNITY HALL PARKING LOT
INT. COFFEE SHOP - DREAM SEQUENCE
INT. NICK'S BEDROOM
INT. NICK'S LOFT
INT. PRECINCT
INT. MORGUE
INT. COMMUNITY HALL - HALLWAY
INT. COMMUNITY HALL - MAIN ROOM
EXT. DONUT SHOP PARKING LOT (SCENE OF THE CRIME)

INT. CAFE
EXT. COMMUNITY HALL
EXT. THE STREETS
EXT. A DEAD END
INT. RAVEN CLUB
INT. RAVEN CLUB - BACK ROOM
EXT. TORONTO LANDSCAPE
EXT. MESSAGE PARLOUR
INT. HOTEL
INT. SEEDY ROOM
INT. HALLWAY (HOTEL)
INT. HOTEL STAIRCASE
INT. MONIKA'S ROOM
EXT. SEEDY STREET/INT. CAR
INT. PRECINCT - INTERROGATION ROOM
INT. CADDIE
INT. WALK-IN FREEZER (COMMUNITY HALL KITCHEN)
INT. STAIRWELL (COMMUNITY HALL)

"Feeding The Beast"

PAGE HISTORY

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TEASER

1 INT. KITCHEN - COMMUNITY HALL - A BACK ROOM - NIGHT

1*

Curtains are drawn. It's BLACK but for a sliver of red light emitting from the flickering neon sign beyond an open door - casting a faint glow.

SOUND of HEAVY BREATHING draws CAMERA to two silhouettes, faintly, intermittently illuminated - in the throes of a passionate embrace.

(N.B. we must not be able to identify the woman's face.)

She sits on a high counter, her legs wrapped 'round the torso of a man. He kisses her neck, her shoulders, her cleavage... Suddenly he pulls away.

MAN

I gotta go.

But the woman draws him back.

WOMAN

No, just wait -

And she pulls him into another hot embrace. He pulls away, she folds her arms around him and draws him back.

MAN

I can't. I'm first up.

WOMAN

They'll get someone else -

And she puts her hands on his body. He WRENCHES away.

MAN

No - I can't do this anymore.

WOMAN

What do you mean...?

MAN

I don't know - it's sick -

WOMAN

Skip, no. Don't say that... just -
put your arms around me one more
time -

MAN

(cutting her off)
No! I gotta go out there!

(CONTINUED)

1 CONTINUED:

1

But she is unstoppable - and follows him across the room.

WOMAN

Come on, Skip - five more minutes!
Five. Please! I feel so cold
all of a sudden -

★
★

She pushes her body up next to his - he tries to break free - can't. Angry, frustrated, he HURLS her away from him.

MAN

I said forget it!
(beat)
You don't get it - do you?

He abruptly leaves. She leans over, reeling from the pain of rejection. This ain't romance - it's obsession.

ANOTHER WOMAN'S VOICE

What are you doing?

ANGLE : Another woman (with the identical profile - same height, hair, build, etc.) stands in the doorway (again, we can't see her face.) They speak in low whispers.

WOMAN #1

I was... just -

WOMAN #2

You were with someone in here.

★

WOMAN #1

I was not.

WOMAN #2

Who was it? Skip?

WOMAN #1

I said I was alone.

WOMAN #2

Okay, okay... Fine. I just thought I heard a man's voice... Maybe I'm just paranoid.

(beat)

Come on. The meeting's started - let's go.

The first woman collects herself and walks out of the room.

SKIP (O.S.; MIK

Hello, my name's Skip...

CUT TO:

2 INT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT

2*

A crowded hall - people sit in folding chairs, facing a podium where a man stands, giving a testimonial. The neon sign's red light flickers at the blinds.

SKIP (cont'd)
...and I'm an addict.
(polite applause)
I was in love with a bottle.
(MORE)

SKIP (cont'd)
We slept together, we worked together, we got fired together...
I was in love with the beast.

PAN THE AUDIENCE and read EMPATHY on the faces.

SKIP (cont'd)
And if booze was the demon, 12 Steps to Recovery's been my angel of mercy. It didn't happen overnight - and I'd never've made it without my sponsor, Monika H.

*
*

More applause. Several turn to MONIKA HOWARD (Woman #1). She's 29, attractive, seated in the back row. They smile in recognition, continuing their applause as:

SKIP (cont'd)
The message is - don't give up.
Keep coming back - it works!

3 EXT. COMMUNITY HALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

3

TIGHT ON A CAR DOOR - a package wrapped in a brown paper bag sits on the seat. FOOTSTEPS approach and the door opens. HAND reaches into frame and picks up the parcel - ripping off the bag - A BOTTLE OF BOOZE.

*

PULL BACK - Skip, standing in the DESERTED parking lot, bottle in hand, mystified. Angry. In the background, the neon sign... 'Salvation Hall'. He hears a noise, turns to look, recognizing someone approaching.

SKIP
What's this? Your idea of a sick joke?

BOOM! Bullet SHATTERS the bottle - EXPLODING glass FLIES in Skip's face. He falls to his knees, hands clawing at bloody face, screaming in pain.

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

POV (Steadicam): Approaching Skip - stops. Gloved hand strikes a match - PFFFT - and tosses it on the man soaked in alcohol. FOOM - THE SCREEN is engulfed in FLAMES.

TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

4 INT. COFFEE SHOP - NIGHT - DREAM SEQUENCE 4

A 50's-style coffee shop with lots of chrome and red leather stools and benches. Middle-aged waitresses in short, hot pink outfits and beehive hairdos glide in and out of frame. Something just a little off here. Lynchian. *

FOLLOW ONE OF THE WAITRESSES (We see her beehive hairdo - but not her face) as she picks up a huge order at the kitchen window... and delivers it to a booth containing: NICK AND NATALIE. Nick looks excitedly at the food, as plate after plate is put in front of him. French fries, a burger, an omelette... Natalie shakes her head... *

NATALIE

I know this is a big step for you, but...don't you think we over did it a little? *

NICK

Do you have any idea what it's like to have lived 700 years and never tasted a french fry? Pass me the ketchup. *

She does... Nick ceremoniously takes the squirt bottle, holds it above the fries, and squeezes... To his horror:

CLOSE ON a fry as he lifts it, dripping with blood.

Suddenly nothing's quite so funny. The waitress' face is still Off Camera.

WAITRESS

Want a little coffee to wash that down?

She pours from her pot... but it's not java she's pouring. It's red and warm and sticky...

Nick looks up to the waitress... it's JANETTE. LACROIX, dressed as a cook stands behind her.

JANETTE

Drink up, Nicholas.

LACROIX

You know it's what you really wanted....

And he and Janette smile... laugh. Their fangs protruding from their mocking mouths. Natalie looking on in horror. AN ALARM sounds from somewhere in the distance... taking us to:

5 INT. NICK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

5

TIGHT ON AN ALARM CLOCK - it's face reading 9:00 p.m., it's alarm blaring. A HAND gropes to shut it off... succeeds... then we pan to:

NICK. Groggy and disturbed by his nightmare. He pulls himself out of bed and heads:

6 DOWNSTAIRS

6

Pads slowly across to the kitchen and opens the fridge. Only BOTTLES OF BLOOD inside.

He stares at them for a long moment.

7 EXT. COMMUNITY HALL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

7

Scene of the crime - police have cordoned off the area and the site investigation has been underway for some time.

Schanke is making his way through a line of witnesses - and obviously having a hard time. Comes up to a young woman named ANGIE, smoking a cigarette. Skank looks longingly at it.

SCHANKE

Uh... ma'am. Your name please?

ANGIE

Angie. W.

SCHANKE

Angie W... Tricia S... Tony Z...
Don't you people have last names?

ANGIE

Look - I heard the gunshot, I saw the fire - just like a hundred other people - okay? Can I go now?

SCHANKE

(beat)

Yeah, yeah... but first - you mind if I bum one? Thanks...

Angie gives him a cigarette and starts off. Schanke looks at the nail for a guilty moment... then - what the hell - lights up. Takes a long, slow, satisfying drag.

MONIKA (O.S.)

Having a rough time?

(CONTINUED)

Schanke looks up to see - MONIKA HOWARD, late 20s, high energy, sexy. Throughout the scene, she remains on high gear - friendly, but tweaked. Nods to his cigarette...

MONIKA

Nasty habit.

Schanke quickly tosses it. Smiles as he grinds it into the pavement.

SCHANKE

I'm handling it.

MONIKA

That's what they all say.

SCHANKE

Seriously - down to one a day. Buy a pack a month. Tops.

MONIKA

How many more do you bum?

SCHANKE

(busted - a beat)

A few. And you must be... Clara B.?

MONIKA

(laughs)

Clara Barton? No. Monika, Monika Howard.

SCHANKE

You're the first one who's given me a full name.

MONIKA

Twelve Steps is anonymous - and talking to police is NOT part of the program.

SCHANKE

So how well did you know Skip Pauley?

MONIKA

I was his sponsor. He was a great guy - doing so well with his recovery.

SCHANKE

Did he have friends? Enemies? A relationship?

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: 2

7

MONIKA
(vaguely)
Probably all three. I'm not much
help. We talked about booze -
that's about it.

Schanke: Frustration reads clearly on his face.

SCHANKE
If we have any more questions...

MONIKA
(nods)
You can get in touch with me here.
Anything I can do, detective...

SCHANKE
Schanke. Don Schanke... Thanks.

She starts to walk off. Schanke stops her.

SCHANKE
Uh, Monica... If you don't mind me
asking, what was your, ah...?

MONIKA
Addiction?
(beat, smiles)
I do mind.

She walks off as a SMOKING DETECTIVE comes up to Schanke's
side. Schanke admires her walk, then, almost to himself...

SCHANKE
I was hoping she'd say married men
with bald spots...
(turns to detective)
Mind if I bum one of those? Trying
to keep it to one a day...

He lights it up... takes a drag... then holds it in as
STONETREE appears from out of nowhere. Looks at him long and
hard.

STONETREE
I thought you quit.

All Schanke can do is exhale a long white stream of smoke.

8 INT. NICK'S LOFT - NIGHT

8

Nick stands in front of a large canvas... brush in hand...
fiercely painting.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

We're not sure exactly what the subject is... but it's large and dark. Big, bold strokes. A Rorschach monster of some kind to match Nick's brooding mood.

He steps back. Studies it.

Shakes his head - something pulling him. Damn - throws down the brush and heads for the refrigerator. - He pulls the door open and pulls out a bottle of blood. Beat. Losing again, he yanks off the cork and gulps.

He lowers the bottle, full of self-contempt, as THE PHONE rings. Nick lets the machine pick up. Listens as...

SCHANKE (phone)

Hey Nick...Got any bad habits?

8A INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

8A

Stonetree winding through, Nick and Schanke following.

NICK

You want me to go undercover? As what?

STONETREE

A member of the 12-step program.

SCHANKE

It makes sense, Nick. You weren't at the crimescene - no one knows you're a cop.

NICK

(dryly)
Well there's a bit of a catch 22.

STONETREE

(apologetic)
Yeah, I know. Your vacation.

(beat)
Look, I wouldn't have called you in if I didn't need you.

(to Schanke)
Tell him.

SCHANKE

They're stonewalling. Nobody wants to say diddly about the victim because it's part of their 'code' or something. It's a dead end.

Nick looks at them both.

*

(CONTINUED)

8A CONTINUED:

8A

NICK
Unless I become one of them.

STONETREE
Got any bad habits? Maybe it'll
do you some good.

Off Nick's reaction, to:

SCENE 9 OMITTED

10 INT. MORGUE - NIGHT

10

Natalie covers the body with a sheet. As Nick comes to stand
beside her.

NATALIE
(indicating the body)
Third degree burns on fifty percent
of his body... he burned to death.
Someone must've been very angry at
him.

NICK
Or very sick.
(beat)
He was an alcoholic?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

NATALIE

(nods)

But no sign of it in his blood - he hadn't been drinking.

A pause. Natalie studies Nick for a moment.

NATALIE

So... You're gonna do it? *

Beat. Nick crosses to her work desk. Picks up a coffee mug containing what it's supposed to contain. *

NICK

(a detour) *

I had the diner dream again.

NATALIE

Did I heave the plate of bloody french fries across the room?

NICK

Woke up before you had a chance... but I think you were about to.

They share a smile. But Nick is serious.

NICK

What do you think about 12-Step programs?

NATALIE

I think they can be very helpful... for mortal addictions.

NICK

And the more... exotic ones?

NATALIE

You know my theory: It's the blood that's keeping you from coming over...

NICK

Yes. I know... and I've been trying, believe me I have - but can 12-steps make me give it up?

NATALIE

No one can answer that one, Nick. But it isn't gonna hurt you to give it a shot.

Hold on their moment... then to:

11 INT. HALLWAY - COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT 11

POV (Steadicam): walking down a long hallway.

MONIKA (O.S.)
It's essentially - feeding the
beast. This big... ugly... greedy
beast inside of you who demand
to be fed...

POV walks through the door and into

12 INT. MAIN ROOM - COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT 12

A speaker meeting in progress. Monika is on the podium,
giving her testimonial. She looks up - establishes eye
contact with Nick.

MONIKA
(continuing)
Just - over and over...

REVERSE ANGLE - POV is Nick - he smiles, responding.

MONIKA (cont'd)
When I came here three years ago, I
was on my knees - almost
literally... I was desperate. The
'beast' was eating me from the
inside out.
(beat)
I felt like a complete and total
failure as a human being...

NICK: Inspired - he KNOWS this.

MONIKA (cont'd)
And I hated myself. I couldn't see
any way out of my addiction.
(beat)
What finally happened was... I
accepted a power greater than
myself. Life still isn't perfect,
but today I stand before you, alive
and well and on the road to
recovery.

The group bursts out in applause. She smiles and then
becomes quiet...

MONIKA (cont'd)
...I think we need to say a few
words about Skip.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

*

MONIKA (cont'd) (cont'd)
 (she hesitates, clearly
 upset - her eyes well)
 He was one of our shining lights.
 That's for sure. - A support to
 many of us.

Moved, upset, she can't continue and climbs off the podium.
 Applause. Another man stands up, call him HENRY, 40ish.

HENRY
 If everyone wants to stand - we'll
 say a prayer for Skip Pauley.

Everyone stands up and we:

DISSOLVE TO:

12A LATER:

12A

People drink coffee, eat cookies, and talk.

ANGLE: Nick at the literature table, examining books and
 pamphlets. He overhears a conversation between two
 members - one of them, ANGIE, a woman about Monika's shape
 and size.

HENRY
 I threw it out six times, but every
 bloody time, I pulled it out of the
 garbage.

ANGIE
 It's not a contest - You gotta
 just take it one day at a time. *

Nick examines the table.

ANGLE: A handwritten sign-in sheet of participants and their
 phone numbers. Nick looks around and quickly slips the
 sheet into his jacket. He looks around... just as

MONIKA (O.S.)
 Is this your first meeting?

Nick turns to see Monika Howard. There's something very
 supportive and friendly about her. She carries a clipboard -
 obviously one of the organizers.

NICK
 Uh, yeah, actually... I'm Nick...

(CONTINUED)

12A CONTINUED:

12A

MONIKA

Monika...

NICK

Your words were... I guess
inspirational is the word.

HILLARY (O.S.)

Yeah... she's great, isn't she?

HILLARY - who is just about Monika's size and shape (Woman #2 from Teaser), comes up behind them.

MONIKA

This is Hillary... Nick...

HILLARY

Hi... listen, if it's your first
time, you shouldn't feel pressured
to join this group. There are
others in the city you might want
to check out.

MONIKA

Hillary's right. It's really
important to trust the people
you're going to be looking to for
help.

HENRY

And who would you rather look to
for help than Monika?

Henry, a manic ex-coker, comes up behind Monika and places
his hands on her shoulders. Hillary doesn't like this.

HENRY

You come here to get off drugs and
you meet Monika - a pretty good
deal. I'd marry her tomorrow if
she'd give me the word.

MONIKA

(embarrassed)

Settle down, Henry, or you'll scare
Nick off.

She removes Henry's arms from her shoulders.

HENRY

That's what I'm trying to do - less
competition.

(beat - to Monika)

We'll talk later, right?

(CONTINUED)

12A CONTINUED: 2

12A

She nods... turns back to Nick, as Henry exits.

MONIKA
I'm his sponsor.

A moment between Nick and Monika, broken by...

HILLARY
Look, why don't I take Nick over to
the literature table? Angie's got
books and pamphlets...

MONIKA
It's gonna be rough, Nick... but
we're all here for you. If you ever
need help... give me a call.

She writes her name and number (left-handed) on the
clipboard, tears off the sheet and hands it to Nick.

NICK
Where do I start?

MONIKA
The first step is admitting to
someone you love and trust that
you're powerless before your
addiction.

NICK
Won't be easy...

MONIKA
It'll hurt like hell. But the
program works, Nick. It really
does. Just give it time.

And Nick is sincerely moved. Sincerely hopeful.

13 EXT. ALLEY/PARKING LOT - NIGHT

13*

CLOSE ON Henry pulling up in his car (alone) and parking.

A GLOVED HAND moves into frame and KNOCKS ON THE WINDOW.
Henry looks up, smiles and rolls down the window.

HENRY
Hey there -

but the gloved hand - SMASHES his face with a brick - knocks
him out. As he slumps over the wheel of his car - the hand
JABS a needle in his arm and PUMPS IN AN OVERDDOSE.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON: A pool of blood. PULL BACK TO

14 EXT. DONUT SHOP PARKING LOT - SCENE OF THE CRIME - PRE-DAWN 14*

Nick staring at the blood, mesmerized. Hearing Monika's voice in his head.

MONIKA (V.O.)

It's like feeding the beast. This big, ugly, greedy beast inside of you who demands to be fed... over and over again.

STONETREE

So how do we know it's the same killer?

Nick snaps out of it - he's standing there with Schanke and Stonetree. Most of the evidence is collected - it's been a long night.

SCHANKE

Similar M.O. He kills with the victim's drug of choice.
(stops passing cop)
Mind? Bum one?

He gets a cigarette as...

NICK

And if the killer knows their addictions, he knows them pretty well.

Natallie joins them.

NATALIE

Maybe very well. *

STONETREE

When?

NATALIE

Fairly close to time of death.

NICK

After the meeting?

She nods.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED:

14

STONETREE
How 'bout the last victim?

NATALIE
(nods)
That's why I checked.

STONETREE
(to Nick and Schanke)
Okay... let's start making
connections. Do we have the
members' full names?

Nick takes a piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to Schanke. Natalie fades into the background, filling out a form on her clipboard.

NICK
And telephone numbers. It's the
sign in sheet from the meeting.
Although, I gotta say I feel a
little like Judas.

SCHANKE
How come? It's not like you're one
of them...

Stonetree crosses to the Paramedic's van as the body wheels past Schanke and Nick AND THE POOL OF BLOOD. Schanke takes a look at the body.

Nick looks at Schanke, thinking...deciding...then -

NICK
What if I told you I was...
(beat;courage)
What if I told you...I'm an addict?

Natalie glances at Nick. She knows how difficult this is for him. Also how out on a limb. Should Schanke know this?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: 2

14

SCHANKE
(laughs; disbelieving)
Yeah, and I'm the Mahareshi.

But Nick isn't laughing. Schanke's fades out. He stares at him. Wha? Nick just looks at him steadily.

SCHANKE
An addict?
(realizes)
Wait - We're not talkin' the wine
in the refrigerator are we, 'cause-
(seeing Nick's look)
No way. Absolutely not! Nick...
you're fine, all right? I'm
serious. You're absolutely
perfectly fine. Trust me.

Schanke gives Nick a friendly pat on the back and walks off.
NICK: Mortified... turns to Natalie who now approaches
again.

NICK
So much for step number one.

NATALIE
What's step number two?

15 INT. LOFT - DAWN

15

A row of full bottles are lined up on the counter. Nick stands, staring at them.

He uncorks a bottle and pours it down the sink.

He takes another bottle and pours it out... THE BLOOD swirling into the drain....

WE HOLD on his face. This is hard - but he's determined.

16 INT. COMMUNITY HALL - DAY

16

A Twelve-Step meeting. Only something oddly different - we may or may not realize it - but daylight is streaming in through the windows.

CAMERA finds the backs of peoples' heads as it TRACKS to podium - Nick is there, giving his testimonial.

NICK
My name is Nick and I'm an
addict...

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

Light applause. Some supportive "Hello, Nick"s from the crowd.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

NICK

It's the hunger that drives me.
And it's not for booze or crack or
junk.... it's for...

He can't say it. Then he looks down... at his HAND SHAKING
on the podium... lifts it... and we see it's the PODIUM
that's shaking.

REVERSE ANGLE ON the podium - as blood begins to seep out,
run down the sides, to Nick's absolute horror. He looks
out -

CAMERA sweeps the audience - their smiling faces, as if
nothing's amiss... then over to the far wall where - LACROIX
begins to approach, smiling - a female victim in his arms.

Lacroix brings her limp body forward... offering her to
Nick.

LACROIX

Why do you need blood, Nicholas?

*

NICK

I drink so I can live forever.

LACROIX

Is that such a terrible thing?

And now Nick sees that the victim is MONIKA - body limp as
though dead, yet still alive. Looking up into his eyes with
calm, unflinching reassurance. When she speaks it is with
warmth and encouragement - totally at odds with the position
her body is in - totally oblivious of her predicament - a
bizarre contrast.

*

*

MONIKA

You have to fight it, Nick... You
don't have to listen to him...

LACROIX

She's right. Don't listen to
me - Listen to your hunger.
Listen to that beast in your
veins... calling to you....

*

*

Monika's heart thumps in Nick's ears. Her open neck pulsing.
So inviting....

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: 3

16

MONIKA

I'm here for you, Nick. I can help...

LACROIX

Who can help your hunger? Your craving for the warm, sweet taste of blood?

MONIKA

You can beat it...

LACROIX

Surrender....

Nick tries to resist... but his eyes are YELLOW. His FANGS extended. Monika's pulse pounds in his ears.

MONIKA

You can fight it... *

LACROIX

Yield to your thirst.

And Nick does. Brings his fangs down hard onto her neck and feeds.

17 INT. LOFT - DAY

17

Nick leaps out of bed, PANICKED - he wipes the sweat from his brow and stares at his hands. Bloodsweat.

His body SHAKES with withdrawal... and stands. Heads

18 DOWNSTAIRS

18

Nick moves to the fridge, opens the door - hunting for blood - nothing. Checks the cupboards - nothing. He races to the garbage and pulls out a broken bottle, its jagged edges still smeared with blood. His hand shakes - he brings the bottle to his mouth - Nick catches himself...

NICK

No....

(CONTINUED)

18 CONTINUED:

18

DUNKS the bottle into the garbage and moves to the phone to dial a number.

NICK
Monika? It's Nick...

19 INT. CAFE - NIGHT

19

The same chrome and red cafe of the first dream sequence. Nick sits at the same table as before - Monika across from him.

NICK
Is it always this bad?

MONIKA
Sometimes worse.
(beat)
You need to find you inner strength... your will to live...

NICK
My humanity...

MONIKA
(beat, smiles)
I guess that's right. We humans all have our weaknesses... as well as the strength to fight them. It's the desire to find the human and get rid of the beast... that's what drives us to heal. To deal with our addictions.

The waitress comes over, delivers a plate of fries and a bottle of ketchup to Nick. Monika holds out her coffee cup - the waitress pours her a cup.

Nick's greatly relieved to see that it's not blood.

MONIKA
The worst victims are ourselves, you know.

NICK
(shakes his head)
Not with me.

The waitress moves on. Nick contemplates the ketchup - Monika watching - then very carefully squeezes some out onto the plate... scared as hell that he'll see blood. All he gets is... ketchup.

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED:

19

MONIKA

(takes his hand)
It's like walking through a door
for the first time. You might fall
thirteen stories onto the
concrete... You have to trust that
the pain means you're getting
better.

This is helping Nick... it seems like she almost is aware of
his non-mortal problem. He dips a french fry into the
ketchup. Twirls it...

And then he takes the plunge. Bites into the fry and chomps
it down. To his amazement... it doesn't come back up. Nick
smiles... takes another fry...

MONIKA

What is it?

NICK

I just fell thirteen stories and it
didn't hurt a bit.

(beat)

You help a lot.

MONIKA

That makes me feel good...

(beat... sighs)

These days that's a rare
emotion....

NICK

The murders...?

MONIKA

(nods)

Skip and Henry... you met Henry...

NICK

You were his sponsor.

MONIKA

Sponsored both of them. This whole
thing is so bizarre... Y'know...
you really get close to people...

NICK

How close?

(CONTINUED)

19 CONTINUED: 2

19

MONIKA

(beat, gets implication)
It's a standing, hard-line rule. No romance between members and sponsors. And, frankly, the question is...

NICK

I don't mean to pry. I just... need to know. Establish the rules, I guess. I've never accepted help from anyone...

MONIKA

(softens)

Of course - trust is earned, not given. It takes time to build.

(beat)

Take as much time as you need, Nick. I want you to know I'm here for you. *

A moment between them.

NICK

Thanks...

And he eats another fry.

20 INT. PRECINCT / BULL PEN - NIGHT

20

Schanke reviewing evidence with Natalie - but the talk's gotten personal.

SCHANKE

I think it's that 12-Step baloney they've been feeding him. They got him believing he's sick.

NATALIE

So if you don't think Nick has a problem, what's the big deal?

ANGLE: The door, Nick appears. Schanke doesn't see him.

SCHANKE

Okay, I'll tell you what the big deal is - Everywhere you go these days you've got people telling you there's something wrong with you. I mean, you buy more than a six pack of beer and the clerk gives you the fish eye...

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

She calls to the unconscious Rockhead.

MONIKA
Jimmy! Jimmy!

And they're

37 IN STAIRCASE

37

MONIKA
You're hurting me!

Nick pushes her up into a dark corner.

NICK
I'm all over you... Isn't that what
you wanted? Isn't that what you
were begging me for?

And now her face is a map of fear... as she finds herself
gazing into Nick's YELLOW EYES. A monster before her.

MONIKA
No...

NICK
I'm just doing what you wanted.
'Cause Skip and Henry - they
didn't do what you wanted, did
they?

Her eyes are teared in fright....

MONIKA
No... I didn't hurt them... I
didn't...

NICK
Come on, let the beast out,
Monika. My beast to your beast.
You want love - maybe a little
punishment? I'll love you to
death.

*
*
*
*
*

MONIKA
NO!

She wrenches free... slaps him... and bolts out of the
stairwell. Crying. Hysterical.

STAY WITH NICK. As he just seems to deflate. What the hell
is he doing? What in God's name has he come to?

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED:

20

NICK

Or a pack of cigarettes?

Schanke spins as Nick enters. Embarrassed, but still into his point... especially now that Nick's hit his sore point.

SCHANKE

Exactly. Why should I feel guilty buying a pack of cigarettes every now and then? It's not like I'm a chimney. I gave it up. But every once in awhile I oughta be able to take a few puffs without everybody looking at me like I got 'Property of Betty Ford' tattooed on my forehead.

NATALIE

And you don't have a problem?

SCHANKE

See? You're doing it. No. I definitely, and emphatically do not have a problem. And neither does Nick.

Natalie looks to Nick... reacts.

NATALIE

Wow - you look great - your cheeks are actually rosy.

NICK

Must be the french fries.

NATALIE

You ate french fries?

NICK

With lots of ketchup...

NATALIE

Nick, that's incredible.

SCHANKE

Am I missing something here? I ate four falafels for lunch yesterday... Did I get this kind of reception?

NICK

(ignoring him)
I guess I'm in recovery.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: 2

20

NATALIE

It agrees with you.

NICK

Monika's really helped me. I think this could be it, Nat. I don't know why... I just...

NATALIE

Do me a favour and don't get your hopes up too high...?

NICK

(his hopes are very high)
Ah... a little jealousy, maybe?

NATALIE

(beat...)
Just... realism.

Stonetree comes in, breaking the moment. *

STONETREE

(to Nat)

What'd you get on the last victim?

Nat hands him a file folder.

NATALIE

According to the angle of the arm wound, the killer's right-handed... and I found identical skin cells under both victims' fingernails.

SCHANKE

(sardonic)

Two back scratchers? I see a pattern here.

STONETREE

(ignores that)

Any women in the Program linked to both victims?

NICK

Monika Howard. They both had her as their sponsor.

STONETREE

You got a sponsor yet? *

NICK

(nods)

Monika Howard.

NATALIE: Concerned.

21 INT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT

21

ON A POV of Monika, organizing the meeting with Angie at the podium, before it starts. She has a comforting, mature way about her - a born leader.

MONIKA

Okay, if everyone would please have a seat... We'll get started with the meeting...

ANGIE (O.S.)

I don't think there's a better sponsor in the city.

The POV belongs to NICK AND ANGIE, as they find their seats. Both eyeing Monika with admiration... and maybe a little something more.

ANGIE (cont'd)

I was a mess when I came in here. Monika guided me through. Just... suddenly seemed to make life worth living again...

NICK

She seems to have a magical effect on people.

ANGIE

(studies Nick - a beat)
Yeah... she really does.

HILLARY takes the podium.

HILLARY

All right... Welcome. Let's start this out right. Is there anyone who has anything they'd like to share with us?

ON NICK: A beat. Suddenly he rises and faces his peers.

NICK

My name is Nick and I am an addict... It's been three days since I stopped abusing and... I'm still alive.

The group bursts into wild applause and whooping.

Nick trades a proud look with MONIKA. A moment between them... noticed by both:

ANGIE and HILLARY. Is that concern in their expressions?

22 EXT. N.D. STREET (CHEAT NEAR COMMUNITY HALL) - NIGHT 22*

A MYSTERIOUS POV (through a car window) watches as NICK crosses to his Caddie and climbs in. The Cad pulls out into traffic and

THE POV follows... tailing Nick through:

23 THE STREETS - NIGHT 23

An ominous, spooky sequence... the caddie being followed... to:

24 EXT. A DEAD END - NIGHT 24

Nick's headlights pick up the barricade ahead as he swerves - coming around to stop opposite the other car which has followed him in and now has no way out.

He looks over and sees -

MONIKA - the driver of the car. Something strange about her. Something oddly predatory.... desperate even. Nick recovers...

NICK
You're following me?

MONIKA
I, uh... Look - do you mind if we talk?

25 INT. LOFT - NIGHT 25

Monika lounges on the couch while Nick fixes her coffee.

MONIKA
I was so proud of you at the meeting tonight...

NICK
I'm making real progress, thanks to you.

She smiles, nods.

MONIKA
It's the connection we've been able to make. It comes through that, I think...

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

NICK

You've connected with a lot of people. You seem to have a talent...

He comes over and hands her a cup of coffee. She leans over, takes the cup, her hand resting on Nick's thigh.

MONIKA

Mmm... yeah, but with us I think... it's a little different. I have a sense about you - that you're on the edge - a very sharp edge - like me, I guess... It makes me feel very close to you.

NICK: Jarred by her shift in gears, but continues.

NICK

That's why we have to fight so hard.

Nick moves away to his easle. His painting. Monika joins him from behind.

MONIKA

Work in progress?

NICK

My beast... yes.

MONIKA

The beast within.

(beat)

It's a good description for it, isn't it? The way it gnaws at you - chews your insides...

She places a hand on his arm. It's a gesture that could be interpreted any way, but there's definitely only one way she wants it interpreted - we can see that in the steady way she looks at him.

NICK

(disturbed)

Yes. It is a good description...

She steps closer. Places her hand lightly on his arm.

MONIKA

Sometimes, though, it really does get to be too much...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 2

25

MONIKA (cont'd)
(shaking her head)
Too much to hold in.
(beat; intense)
Feels like you just want to say
'what the hell' - just give it a
breather... just let it out.

She closes her eyes and leans her head on his shoulder. *

NICK
Ant that's when you have to control
it...

MONIKA
I'm not so sure... I'm really not
so sure.

He looks at her hard. Moves her away from him and holds her
at bay. *

NICK
...Not sure?

MONIKA
(hoarse; pleading eyes)
It's hard to be sure all the time.

Nick closes his eyes - knowing now what her addiction is.

NICK
Go home, Monika.

She pulls his hand to her lips... Kisses his palm. Nick is
in pain... his role model shattered.

NICK
I need... my sponsor.

MONIKA
I need you too. I need to be close
to you - *

He shakes his head, begins to back away...

MONIKA
I've been dreaming about you. I
wake myself up reaching for you -
Then I can't believe you aren't
really there...

NICK
- Monika.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 3

25

MONIKA

Now you are.

She places his hand on her cheek. Nick pulls it away.

NICK

Go home.

Monika flashes anger beneath her pain.

MONIKA

Don't get self-righteous on me...

Nick's filled with disillusionment, anger. His faith in the program wavering...

NICK

I'm trying to recover, Monika.

MONIKA

Come on, Nick - Recovery's just the space between fixes. - It's not like doing something about the need once in a while is going to make it any stronger... God knows the need can't get any stronger -

NICK

Monika - please don't do this to me - to yourself.

MONIKA

Just a little warmth...That's all I need -

(off his look)

Where can I get the strength to recover if I never get any relief? I helped you with your addiction - why won't you help me with mine...?

Monika moves to him - but he pushes her away.

NICK

Go home!

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 4

25

MONIKA

Nick...

She moves to him again, wanting so badly -

NICK

No!

This time she backs off. But she's glaring at him.

MONIKA

(bitter)

Why do you all have to be the same?
All coming to me, bleeding with
your addictions - God forbid I
should weaken for a fraction of an
instant. Does that make me a
monster?

(beat)

It doesn't go away, Nick. There's
no magic bullet. There's no cure.
Our beasts are on our backs
forever... and we'd damn well
better learn to carry them around.

She gets up, collects her things and goes for the door.

MONIKA

I'm gonna get help, Nick. With you,
or without you. And it's going to
feel pretty damn good.

She turns and exits.

LACROIX (O.S.)

This is the humanity you seek? This
is the mortal strength?

Nick spins to see LACROIX (overexposed, lit with an eerie
blood-red light that seems to make him transcendant - a
projection of Nick's mind apart from the objects in this
room) - leaning, leering over the stair rail above him.

LACROIX

I told you, Nicolas...You're
wasting your time.

Hold on Nick. He turns away. Shattered. Exhausted.

LACROIX (O.S.)

Come on, Nicolas...Where is it?

Nick closes his eyes against the intrusion in his mind.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 5

25

LACROIX
Where's the last bottle?

Then something in him snaps.

AT THE REFRIGERATOR DOOR - NICK

wrenches it open. It's FULL OF BOTTLES.

They DISSOLVE AWAY. He slams the door.

The phone rings - he leaves it on the machine, just stares
at it...

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED: 6

25

SCHANKE (filtered)
Got news for you - Monika Howard?
She's got a rap sheet. Used to
give 'massages' at the Windsor Arms
Hotel - been busted three times.
Last one was only a couple of
months ago. Can you beat it - a
love junkie? Stonetree wants her
brought in for questioning and you
drew the gig. Lucky bastard!

Nick sags against the fridge door. His head snaps up as

LACROIX (O.S.)
(eerily echoing over)
Where did you hide it, Nicolas?
Think!

NICK'S POV - SWISH to fireplace.

AT FIREPLACE - NICK'S HAND

pulls the bottle of blood from the chimney...

ON MACHINE.

SCHANKE (V.O.)
(from the machine)
And by the way, about what I said
earlier... the addiction stuff?...
Stricken from the record, okay?
Apology time. You're my partner and
I'll take ya any way I can get ya.

ON NICK. As he lifts the bottle to his lips.

NICK
Good.

He takes a mighty, bitter, ominous swig. It tastes good.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

A BOOMING BEAT pulsates as we FADE UP TO:

26 INT. RAVEN - NIGHT

26

The dance floor crowded with cadaverous mortals and non. The beat box throbs - slick and nasty... WE FIND and PUSH IN ON:

NICK. Something dangerous about him. Something bitter. A nearly empty wine bottle sits in front of him on the bar, another opened and ready to go. Takes a long, dark pull from a full glass... as he watches:

A BEAUTIFUL YOUNG WOMAN dancing nearby. Her eyes are made up darkly in the style that makes her head look almost like a macabre scull. Her eyes are on Nick, as well...

JANETTE
(in French)
Thirsty?

Nick turns. Focuses on Janette... (but from time to time his eyes drift back to the dancer).

NICK
(French)
More than you'll ever know.

He takes another long drink. Janette watches silently, then...

JANETTE
Word has it you're on the path to recovery.

But Nick doesn't respond - just refills his glass. Janette smiles... but it's clear that her emotions are mixed. Does she really want Nick to be just another bloodsucker? Maybe she liked the rebel in him.

JANETTE
I guess word has it wrong.

NICK
There's no way out of this, is there? No answers. No great big shining light around the corner. Might as well just embrace it and hang on for the ride.
(beat, smiles)
I'm revamping myself, Janette.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

26

He toasts himself...

NICK

From now on, I brush my teeth, look in the mirror, and say "I'm a vampire, and proud of it." To hell with the mortal world.

JANETTE

And what brought about this sudden change of heart?

NICK

(beat)

Their weakness. Their false hopes... their lies...

JANETTE

Their humanity?

*

*

*

*

NICK

What strength is there in mortality? None. What advantage? The ability to die?

(facetious)

Sign me up for that, right away. I'll be first in line.

*

He goes to drink again... but Janette stops his hand.

JANETTE

Maybe you've had enough...

NICK

I'm hungry - I feed...

JANETTE

Your eyes.

And yes... his eyes have gone YELLOW.

JANETTE

I can't have a scene, Nicholas.

And her firm hand and steady gaze stop him.

JANETTE

Dance... work it off a little...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED: 2

His eyes now go back to dancer with the skull-like make-up.

26

NICK

Yes...

He moves onto the dance floor with the girl, leaving a concerned Janette behind.

27 INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

27

Natalie, looking a little worse for wear (It's way past her bedtime) and Schanke (his shift ended hours ago, his tie undone) wait, tense by the phone. Then it RINGS. She throws him a look of worried anticipation.

SCHANKE

This better be him and he'd better have Monika Howard.

He answers.

SCHANKE

Schanke...

(beat)

Yeah... what's -

(pales)

Yeah, right, right... we'll be right over...

He hangs up, exchanging a little "uh-oh" glance with Nat...

SCHANKE

Found him.

28 INT. RAVEN - NIGHT

28

Janette hangs up the telephone at the bar... turns back to:

THE DANCE FLOOR - Nick and the young woman are gone.

Janette starts a search... clearly alarmed.

29 INT. BACK ROOM - NIGHT

29

A boudoir, parlour-type room, somewhere in the depths of the club. The beat thumps numbingly outside, as Nick leads the young woman in... sharing a sexy kiss...

YOUNG WOMAN

I didn't know there was anything back here...

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

NICK
It's... a private club. VIPs...
denizens of the night... I think
you belong...

YOUNG WOMAN
I'm not sure...

NICK
Maybe it's just your makeup.
He strokes her hair. It's chilling. Dangerous. Predatory.

YOUNG WOMAN
How does it make me look?

NICK
Like death...

YOUNG WOMAN
Is that sexy?

NICK
More than that...

Nick has her pinned back against the wall... this is all
very intimate. Very creepy. Nick's eyes YELLOW...

YOUNG WOMAN
It is to me...

NICK
Death...

His mouth close to her neck. Her pulse hammering in his
ears. Fresh blood...

YOUNG WOMAN
Sexy...

NICK
Yes...

YOUNG WOMAN
Death is incredibly sexy to me.

NICK
Then maybe you'd like to die a
little...

And Nick opens his mouth... starts toward the pale white
flesh of her neck...

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: 2

29

JANETTE (O.S.)

Nicholas!

Nick spins... sees Janette at the door, crossing quickly.
The Young Woman sees Nick... his fangs... stifles a scream.

Janette quickly pulls the girl away. Looks into her eyes.

JANETTE

Leave and forget... Forget...
Run.

And the girl does... Janette turns to Nick. Furious.

JANETTE

What did I say to you! What?!

Nick glares dangerously, his voice low....

NICK

Get away from me....

Janette senses his power... backs off...

30 IN THE CLUB

30

The Young Woman tears out, one hand oddly on her neck...
across the dance floor... pushing past an entering SCHANKE
AND NATALIE.

SCHANKE

What the hell is her problem...?

Nat thinks she knows...

NATALIE

Maybe you'd better stay out here...

She heads back in the direction from which the girl has just
come. Schanke isn't about back off.

SCHANKE

I think not...

TOWARDS THE BACK ROOM

A retreating Janette almost bumps right into Natalie as she
and Schanke hurry to the door.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

Janette quickly turns... pushes them away from the door.
Damage control.

JANETTE
He needs to be alone. Both of you
go... please...
(covering)
He's dangerous. He's had - too
much to drink.

NATALIE
I'm going in anyway.

A hard moment between them... then Janette gives. Shakes her
head...

JANETTE
(sotto)
It's your neck.

She leaves them. Natalie opens the door.

31 IN THE BACK ROOM

31

Natalie bursts in. She pulls up cold when she sees:

NICK in the far shadows, next to a window. Yellow eyes.
Feral.

SCHANKE
Nick? - What the hell's wrong with
him?

Natalie quickly turns, pushes him back out the door -

NATALIE
Let me talk to him alone -

SCHANKE
Yeah... sure, sure. Nick...
whatever you're goin' through, I'm
just outside, here. Hang in there,
buddy...

He goes out, leaving Natalie and Nick alone in the room. A
long pause.

NICK
Come to ogle the beast?

NATALIE
I came to help.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

She walks into the darkness, towards Nick.

NICK
You all want to help.

NATALIE
Take my hand.

She advances - A HISS, a monster's growl.

NICK
No.

Natalie stops in a pool of light. She's frightened now.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 2

31

NATALIE

What happened tonight, Nick?

NICK

I was riding on this wagon...
somebody gave me a push...

NATALIE

Monika?

Nick studies Natalie for a long, suspicious moment. His eyes and teeth becoming normal.

NICK

Aren't you the one who said "be realistic"? I think I've just had a fair dose of reality. A good, hard look at the mortal soul.

(eyes her)

What secrets are you hiding, Natalie? What kind of betrayal?

NATALIE

(hurt)

Nick...

NICK

Maybe you're writing a medical paper about me... or seeking some dark little sexual thrill...
What is it Natalie?

NATALIE

Dammit that's enough.

NICK

Because there is no hope, is there?
There is no cure - from Monika,
from you - it's all a bluff.

NATALIE

There aren't any hard and fast answers, Nick - You have to find it within yourself. Just because Monika failed, doesn't mean you have to...

NICK

She betrayed my trust... my hope...

NATALIE

She's an addicted co-dependant.
She lost control.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: 3

31

NICK
She's a murderer.

That silences Nat for a beat... then softly...

NATALIE
A suspect...

NICK
A killer just like I am. An
irredeemable, uncontrollable beast.
That's the way it is - that's the
reality.

NATALIE
(pause)
Do you know where she is?

NICK
(a thought - chuckles)
That's right - I'm supposed to
bring her in.

A chilling thought races across Nat's face - the same
thought occurring to Nick.

NATALIE
Let Schanke do it...

NICK
Oh, no... no, it makes perfect
sense. Monika said that recovery's
just a space between fixes.

Nick glances out the window at the moonlight. When he turns
back he has RE-VAMPED - Eyes YELLOW. TEETH EXTENDED.

NICK
(bitter, dangerous)
I think I'll show her what
backsliding really is...

He SMASHES the glass and SAILS through the window. Natalie
races to the window...

NATALIE
Nick?!

But he's gone.

32 EXT. TORONTO LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

32

Aerial POV sails over the streets of the city. INFRA-RED
vision checks the HOT BODIES on the street. The flashing
lights of THE RED LIGHT DISTRICT.

33 EXT. SEEDY HOTEL - NIGHT

33

Nick emerges from an alley... heads inside.

34 INT. HOTEL - NIGHT

34

A hallway. Sound of laughter from within. A large man behind the counter, call him ROCKHEAD.

ROCKHEAD

You want a room? Company? I can get ya a nice massage.

NICK

Where's Monika?

ROCKHEAD

(shakes his head)

She's with a customer, but you come -

Nick seizes Rockhead... heaves him across the hallway, crashing into the elevator's closed doors.

Then Nick starts down the corridor... vamp listens... MOANS from some of the rooms... and from one at the end hears the sound of a HEARTBEAT GROWING STRONGER as he zeroes in on it.

35 INT. SEEDY ROOM - NIGHT

35

BLAM! The door bursts off its hinges and NICK strides in.

MONIKA straddles a man who lies face down under a towel on the bed - she's wearing her blouse unbuttoned to the waist, her camisole exposed underneath. She spins as

NICK grabs her...and yanks her out of the room...

36 DOWN THE HALLWAY

36

Monika struggles... but it's hopeless against Nick's strength.

MONIKA

Take your hands OFF me! What are you doing?!

NICK

Just taking the monster for a little walk...

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

She calls to the unconscious Rockhead.

MONIKA
Jimmy! Jimmy!

And they're

37 IN STAIRCASE

37

MONIKA
You're hurting me!

Nick pushes her up into a dark corner.

NICK
I'm all over you... Isn't that what
you wanted? Isn't that what you
were begging me for?

And now her face is a map of fear... as she finds herself
gazing into Nick's YELLOW EYES. A monster before her.

MONIKA
No...

NICK
I'm just doing what you wanted.
'Cause Skip and Henry - they
didn't do what you wanted, did
they?

Her eyes are teared in fright....

MONIKA
No... I didn't hurt them... I
didn't...

NICK
Come on, let the beast out,
Monika. My beast to your beast.
You want love - maybe a little
punishment? I'll love you to
death.

*
*
*
*
*

MONIKA
NO!

She wrenches free... slaps him... and bolts out of the
stairwell. Crying. Hysterical.

STAY WITH NICK. As he just seems to deflate. What the hell
is he doing? What in God's name has he come to?

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

37

He slowly makes his way back to the hallway, dazed... as if emerging from a bad dream. Just stands there... until he hears:

THE SCREAMS. Monika. From somewhere inside the flophouse.

Nick turns... then something in him clicks. The cop in him emerging. He starts down the hallway at a run.

38 INT. MONIKA'S ROOM

38

Nick quickly appears at the door. The sound of KEENING, as horrible as what he sees:

MONIKA kneels over the naked man in bed. The man she just left. Only, now, there's blood on him. - His throat. Very, very dead. She turns to Nick... fearful... in shock...

MONIKA

I didn't do this... I didn't....
Oh, God....

All of the vampire has left Nick... replaced with nothing but compassion. And shared pain.

MONIKA

Why is this happening...?

Nick goes to her side, looks at the man's bloody throat... but there's no desire to drink on his part. It's as if he's had a blast of cold, sobering air. Nick gently gathers Monika into his arms.

NICK

I'm so sorry...

She breaks down completely - loses all composure and simply LETS GO.

MONIKA

I swear I didn't do it...

NICK

I know...

And Nick holds her... rocks her gently as he cradles her in his arms...

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

39 EXT. SEEDY STREET/ INT. CAR - NIGHT 39

WE MOVE slowly past the massage parlour, now a crime scene complete with police cars and flashing lights.

NICK (V.O.)
She didn't do it, Nat.

40 EXT. SEEDY STREET - NEW ANGLE - NIGHT 40

Nick stands under a street light next to the Coroner's van as Natalie finishes up. He looks distant, worn... contrite.

NICK
It's funny... something you said about finding it within myself? I ran up to the room... she was over the body... and it all just seemed to go away. It was like... the cop took over.

NATALIE
Maybe that's part of the equation.

NICK
(beat, nods, then...)
We're supposed to acknowledge and apologize for the pain we've caused.

She puts her arm on his shoulder. An acceptance of the unspoken apology.

NATALIE
No one said it was gonna be easy.

Nick reaches up and squeezes her hand.

NICK
(beat)
Monika's innocent, Nat.

NATALIE
The needle jab of the second victim, and tonight's knife slashes were made with the killer's right hand.

Nick turns to her - this is interesting information.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

NATALIE

Unless she's a lefty - I'd say you don't have a leg to stand on.

Schanke comes out of the building - a bummed cigarette in his paw.

SCHANKE

Will you two please let me in on what's goin' on here? And how the hell did you get from the Raven to here that fast without a car?

NICK

(ignoring the question)
Schanke, I truly apologize for my behaviour tonight... and any pain I have caused you.

*

SCHANKE

You're not gonna answer the question, are you?

NICK

Can we set up an interrogation with Monika tonight?

Schanke lights up the smoke.

SCHANKE

She's already at the station - why not?

Nick takes the cigarette out of Schanke's mouth... Twists his answer to Schanke's rhetorical question.

NICK

Because it's bad for you - that's why not.

He crushes the smoke underfoot... heading off as...

SCHANKE

It wasn't mine alright? I bummed it.

*

41 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - COP SHOP - NIGHT

41

Very late. Monika, Nick, Schanke. She looks worn... completely drained... contrite, hating herself; much the way Nick looked earlier.

She's looking at a sheet of paper and pen in front of her.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

MONIKA

You want me to write a confession?

NICK

I want you to write down every
12-step member you've had a
relationship with.

*
*

MONIKA

(beat)

It's a long list.

SCHANKE

We have all night.

She looks at the pen and the paper...

NICK

You're not betraying anyone - you
can't think of it that way.

MONIKA

It's a little too late not to
betray anyone.

They look at each other.

Beat. She picks up the pen and starts writing - with her
left hand. Schanke shoots Nick a look... Nick smiles.

42 INT. COP SHOP - NIGHT

42

WITH NICK AND SCHANKE cruising through, Monika's list in
Schanke's hand.

SCHANKE

Okay, she's left handed... that
still doesn't mean she didn't do
it.

NICK

It means, along with her alibis,
that we don't have enough to hold
her.

SCHANKE

Which makes me real comfortable.

NICK

The killer's on that list.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

SCHANKE

You better hope so. And it'd be nice if we could've narrowed it down a little. Gotta be twenty names...Some dance card.

*

This draws a look from Nick.

*

*

*

*

43 INT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT

43

ON ANGIE / HILLARY (separate cuts) watching:

NICK - AT THE PODIUM. Everyone is seated. Schanke hangs by a rear door.

NICK

My name is Nick and I have a confession to make. I've been lying to you over the last couple of weeks. While I freely admit to my addiction... I was also here because I'm a cop.

MURMURS of disapproval from the crowd.

NICK (cont'd)

You are an incredibly courageous group - recovery's a painful road - I know. I've learned a lot from you - about surrender, about powerlessness, about control, and even about forgiveness. But murder is not forgivable. And it is not an addiction that can be treated by a 12-step program.

PAN the faces of the crowd. Angie, Hillary, the others...

NICK (cont'd)

(beat)

There's a killer in this room tonight. A killer that some of you may have information about. A killer that knew Monika and her problem intimately... We have a list of names.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

NICK (cont'd) (cont'd)
And we'll systematically begin to go through them - possibly embarrassing many of you. Certainly violating the program's tenet of privacy.

This draws another angry murmur.

NICK
But that'll take time. And the killer may have a chance to murder again. That's why I'd like anyone with information to break the privacy rules and come forward. It's not addiction - it's murder. And we need your help.

(beat)
I left my home phone number on the table in the back. I'll keep it as confidential as possible. Please... give me a call.

Nick gets off the podium to an uncomfortable silence...
Heads out with Schanke...

SCHANKE
(sotto)
Think it'll work?

NICK
Wait and see... wait and see...

ANGIE watches as they walk out the door.

44 EXT. THE SUN

44

rises over the city with a low, dull roar.

45 INT. LOFT - DAY

45

Nick at work on his painting. His beast. Furiously painting as

THE PHONE remains silent.

DISSOLVE TO:

43 CONTINUED:

43

NICK (cont'd) (cont'd)
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44 EXT. THE SUN

44

rises over the city with a low, dull roar.

45 INT. LOFT - DAY

45

Nick at work on his painting. His beast. Furiously painting as

THE PHONE remains silent.

DISSOLVE TO:

46 INT. LOFT - LATER

46

Nick still painting..

The phone not ringing...

He steps back... and takes a good look at what he's done:
The beast, almost finished, is now smaller... and surrounded
by color. A beast contained in a colorful world. Controlled.

Nick allows himself a satisfied smile... and then THE PHONE
rings. He lets the machine pick it up... listening as A
FEMALE VOICE identifies herself as:

ANGIE (filtered)
Nick? This is Angie from the group.
I... I really like what you had to
say last night and think we should
get together and talk...

Nick snatches up the phone.

NICK
Angie? Hi....

47 INT. CADDIE - NIGHT

47

Nick, on the fly, on his cellular.

NICK
We're meeting at the 12-step
center.

INTERCUT WITH:

48 INT. PRECINCT - NIGHT

48

Schanke at his desk on the phone.

SCHANKE
Aw, c'mon... it's my bowling night.

NICK
All I need you to do is hang for
twenty minutes. If I don't call
back, send in some back-up.
(beat)
Schanke?

SCHANKE
I am holding you personally
responsible if my average suffers.

49 EXT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT 49

POV: A faint light glimmers from the inside of the building.
POV WATCHING NICK as he approaches, tries the door. Door falls open and he steps inside.

50 INT. HALL - NIGHT 50

Silence but for a leaking kitchen tap.

NICK

Angie?

Nick moves to the light source - a downstairs light source.

POV: As his vision goes INFRA-RED. He pulls his gun and slowly descends the stairs.

51 INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT 51

Tap dripping intensifies. Light filters out through a half-open metal door. Nick approaches.

NICK

Angie?

Silence. He moves to the door - a walk-in freezer. He steps in.

52 INT. WALK-IN FREEZER - NIGHT 52

ANGLE: Angie sitting in a chair - looking at Nick - a terrified look on her face.

NICK

Angie!

But her face is blue - she's dead - a piece of paper in her hand. Nick pries it out of her hand and reads it.

INSERT NOTE: "Love me." *

SLAM! The sound of a door behind him.

53
THRU OMITTED
54

53
THRU
54

SCENE 52 CONTINUES:

Nick looks up - INCREDULOUS.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

NICK

Monika.

It's a chilling moment for Nick. Is she really the killer?

MONIKA

Angie called me and said she needed
to talk...

(sees Angie)

Oh my God....

Nick is trying to figure out what the hell is going on...
He looks at her hard.

NICK

Angie's dead.

The disbelief is plain on his face. This is another
betrayal.

NICK

How could she have called you?

He stares at her -

BOOM! A shot rings out. Nick grabs Monika, pulls her under
a counter and hits the lights.

NICK

(whispers)

Is there a back exit here?

Frightened, Monika nods.

NICK

Then take it - GET OUT of the
building and call 911.

(grabs a pan)

When I throw this - you take off.

He tosses the pan across the kitchen - hitting a table and
CLANGING to the floor. BOOM - gunshot around the pot.

He shoves Monika out.

NICK

Move - move it!

She dashes to the exit - A GUNSHOT - a bullet hits the wall
as she disappears behind the door.

Nick sneaks through the darkness, listening for sound.
ANGLE: A silhouette JUMPS OUT - Nick moves his gun into
position - TOO LATE! A BURST OF FIRE ERUPTS.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: 2

52

BULLETS smash into Nick's chest - hurling him back into a table... near

A STOVE. Hissing from a bullet. A GAS LEAK. Suddenly...

MORE GUNFIRE and FOOM the kitchen erupts in flame!

The figure darts off, as Nick struggles...

BATTLES his fear of the fire... crawling through the flames... to:

55 INT. STAIRWELL - NIGHT

55

NICK'S INFRA-RED VAMP POV: climbing the stairs. Listens with his VAMP HEARING to :

HILLARY (O.S.)
Hello, everybody... I'm a little nervous...

56 INT. HALL - NIGHT

56

Nick enters the hall. SOURCE LIGHT ON HILLARY: at the podium, facing rows of empty chairs. A pump action shotgun aimed at:

MONIKA sitting on the front row. Hillary's clearly on the edge - her voice falters.

HILLARY
My name is Hillary H. And I have an addiction. I'm addicted to looking out for my sister... Monika.
(beat)
I'm obsessed with saving her...
(beat; quietly)
Everything I do is for her protection...

*
*

She senses movement off to the right... Nick.

HILLARY
Let me finish!

- FIRES in his direction. Nick dives for cover at the side of the stage.

HILLARY
Dammit - I'm sharing!

57 EXT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT (COULD BE INT.) 57

Schanke and a couple of uniformed units pull up outside.
React to ANOTHER GUNSHOT and move toward the entrance. Enter
cautiously as...

58 INT. COMMUNITY HALL - NIGHT 58
HILLARY continues...

HILLARY
See... Monika was hurt - badly -
when we were kids... She has
problems because of it... I couldn't
help her then but I can help her
now.

Cops move to turn on the lights - but Schanke holds them
back - listens... watches as

NICK slowly starts to make his way toward Hillary.

HILLARY
They used her. All of them. Skip
and Henry and Angie... all the
others - they didn't love Monika...

NICK
Not like you did? Not like her
sister did?

HILLARY
(nodding; starts to weep)
How could I stand there and watch
them use her? They were taking
advantage of her need for
comfort - her need to have that
dark, wounded space filled with the
warmth of another person...

NICK
You did what you though was
right...

HILLARY
Yes. Yes. She was just too
weak.... You can not take
advantage. It's a rule. They
deserved to die.... You can't
take advantage of someone who's
addicted...

NICK
Give me the gun, Hillary...

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

HILLARY

It's not fair.... I... I was the
one who cared about her...I was the
only one.

She breaks down - Nick makes his move... and gently lifts
the gun from her hand... Embraces Hillary... then turns her
over to Schanke and the cops.

Nick goes down to the audience and approaches Monika.

NICK

Come on - Let's get a cup of coffee
and talk...

SCHANKE watches, as Monika stands numbly into Nick's
sheltering arms...

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

COP
Ciggie, Skank?

A cop has extended his pack to him. Schanke considers, then

SCHANKE
You gotta be kidding.

And he turns back to watch Nick leading Monika out of the
hall.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: 2

58

TAG

FADE IN:

59 INT. NICK'S LOFT - NIGHT

59

CLOSE ON the painted canvas - Nick's beast is now flecked with infusions of yellow pigment.

He and Natalie stand looking at it.

NICK

So... What do you think? You've been standing there, staring at it - You haven't said a word.

She opens her mouth but words don't come easy.

NICK

(chiding)

Come on, Nat. You're the one who asked to see it.

NATALIE

It's... great. It's... bright -
(beat)

I already told you I like it. I don't know what else to say - I mean, it's abstract - it's not like a still life where I can say 'The apples look so real, Nick'. All I can say is I like it. Alot. Did I say 'alot'?

She gives him a shove. He grins.

NICK

Okay - I guess I've tortured you enough. For now... when we get back you can help me figure out where to hang it -

He turns the easel around as she reaches for her purse. The door opens. Schanke.

SCHANKE

Hang what?

NICK

We were just on our way down, Schanke.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

SCHANKE

Yeah well, never mind. The fuel tank's just about evaporated itself empty by now.

(sees the easel)

What's this?

NICK

Nothing. Just something I was fooling around with-

SCHANKE

Let's see.

(off their looks)

What - think I know nothing about art?

NICK

You have a velvet painting of Elvis in your locker.

SCHANKE

Very funny.

He moves the easel around and stands facing it. Natalie and Nick wait, amused. Beat.

SCHANKE

Interesting.

Another beat.

SCHANKE

Very interesting.

Nick and Natalie are about to head for the door.

SCHANKE

I'm seeing...

They halt. Wait. He licks his lips...

SCHANKE

...a kind of... subtextural renaissance of the ideal...

They look at him. He continues, straining with everything he's got... gathering momentum as he goes...

SCHANKE

The use of... light and shadow, if I'm not mistaken, almost... ah...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 2

59

SCHANKE (cont'd)
portends a stylistic opening - no -
unfolding within the realms of
psychological recognition...
self-acceptance. A journey from,
oh, darkness into light, doubt into
hope... ultimately the defeat of
the existential and...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: 3

59

SCHANKE (cont'd)
I'm delighted to see, triumph of
the humanistic.

He pauses, almost surprised at himself. Natalie and Nick are
staring at him, dumbfounded.

SCHANKE
(shrugs)
Myra keeps the Andy Warhol Diaries
next to the john.

NATALIE
I'm very impressed - In fact, I'd
say you pretty much nailed it.

She looks to Nick for confirmation.

NICK
Yeah. That's a pretty thorough
interpretation...

Schanke grins, proud of himself.

SCHANKE
Yeah? Yeah. Well... what can I say?

As they shake their heads and turn to go, he squints and
steps closer. Beat.

SCHANKE
(following them out)
...Except that the apples could use
more work. They don't look real
enough.

As passes them at the door, we HOLD ON NATALIE AND NICK -
FREEZE FRAME

FADE OUT.

THE END