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NUMB3RS

"Killer Chat"
#311/Ep.48

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SCOTT FREE in association with CBS PARAMOUNT NETWORK TELEVISION, a division of CBS Studios.

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BUFF Rev
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NUMB3RS

#311/Ep.48
"Killer Chat"
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GOLDENROD	11/07/06	(4, 21, 54)
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"KILLER CHAT"

TEASER

BLACK BOX OPENING:

491,000	Registered Sex Offenders
3.2	Million Uploads
34	Million Teenagers
24,452,621 (last 4 digits flip)	Chatroom Sites

1 **EXT./INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY** 1

FROM POV OF A HAND-HELD VIDEO CAMERA from inside the house... A car pulls up. JOHN SANTOS, 30, Latino, dress shirt (no tie), slacks, cellphone on belt (think Radio Shack manager), gets out, a six-pack of beer under his arm. He walks across the lawn, circles around to the back door...

NOW FROM POV OF "DATELINE"-style fixed surveillance video cameras... we see Santos enter. HEAVY METAL ON THE STEREO. Santos moves through the house, looking around.

JOHN SANTOS

Hey. It's John. You here...?

No answer. He spies a note on the fridge tacked up by a magnet: "*Chill out. I'm in the shower.*" Santos smiles. He notices steam coming from under the bathroom door down the hall, hears the shower. He pops a beer, calls toward the bathroom:

JOHN SANTOS (cont'd)

You want some company?

He starts to unbutton his shirt, move toward the bathroom. A SHADOW falls across the floor. He turns. TRANSITIONING NOW TO OBJECTIVE FILM POV... A BASEBALL BAT comes at him. It clocks him, sends him to the carpet, unconscious... HANDS IN HEAVY GLOVES duct-tape his legs, drag him to a CHAIR. CUT TO:

2 **INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT** 2

FLASH! CRIME SCENE PHOTOGRAPHER snaps a photo of our VICTIM duct-taped to the chair, slumped over, beaten to death. LAPD Uniforms, Detectives, Coroner on site. DON enters, sees SID bagging evidence. DAVID and COLBY walk up...

DAVID

Victim is John Santos, 30, recently divorced. He's a video store manager.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COLBY

Found his wallet in his back pocket.
License shows a Riverside address.
His car was parked on the street.

DON

Long way from home.

Colby nods to SID bagging the six-pack of beers...

COLBY

He brought his own refreshments,
receipt was in his wallet.

Don spies a WOMAN, 35, well dressed, with a YOUNG COUPLE.

DON

Real estate agent found the body?

DAVID

Same as last time. House has been
on the market. Agent shows up with
prospective buyers and finds him
like this.

DON

(knowing the answer)
And she's never seen him before...

COLBY

Killer must have used the key from
the lock box. We found the "for
sale" sign tossed in the bushes.

DON

Getting to be a familiar story.

Don takes a closer look at the body: not pretty.

DON (cont'd)

Tied up, beaten to death.

DAVID

Six weeks, three victims, all the
same M.O.--

COLBY

All in unoccupied houses for sale.

DON

Looks like we have a serial killer
on our hands, fellas.

3 INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - NIGHT

3

CHARLIE enters, carrying a briefcase, looks around...

CHARLIE
Larry...?

LARRY
Behind you, Charles...

He turns to see LARRY on an inversion table, inverted.

CHARLIE
What are you doing?

LARRY
...Preparing myself for the event horizon of a new perspective.

CHARLIE
I guess that makes two of us...
(off Larry's inverted look)
I know I haven't been exactly supportive of your decision to sit atop a Roman candle and blast off into the unknown--

LARRY
--If an apology is coming, Charles, your launch window is closing fast.

Larry swings back to vertical, extricates...

CHARLIE
Look, I've done some soul-searching and... I think it's great that you're pursuing your dream.

LARRY
I appreciate that.

CHARLIE
But I am going to miss you.

LARRY
It's only six months. And while I will be 250 miles above the earth, travelling at 18,000 miles per hour, I'm just a phone call away.
...A very expensive phone call.

Charlie pulls out a gift-bag from his briefcase --

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

...Going-away present.

LARRY

I'd say you shouldn't have, but given your behavior of late--

CHARLIE

--Open it.

Larry takes the gift bag, opens it to find... a faded T-shirt -- his shirt.

LARRY

This is my shirt, Charles. Which I entrusted to you for safekeeping.

CHARLIE

Look, I just thought... You're rocketing into space, Larry. There's no downside to packing a lucky shirt.

LARRY

I'm going to be okay, Charles. Really.

CHARLIE

(beat)

I'm heading to the FBI. Case for Don. Wanna come?

INT. FBI OFFICE - WAR ROOM - NIGHT

Don, MEGAN, David. ON PLASMAS: PHOTOS (crime scene photos and DMV photos) of SCOTT TILLMAN, white, 40; JARED HOLT, African-American, 55; JOHN SANTOS (from Teaser). Also a map of GREATER L.A. showing the THREE HOUSE LOCATIONS. And photos of the HOUSES: A Spanish style bungalow, a two-storey Colonial, and a one-story ranch-style.

MEGAN

So we've got three victims now, all bound and beaten to death... Victim #3, this guy Santos, the video store manager...

DAVID

Victim #1 -- Scott Tillman, 40, teacher, family man from Mar Vista. Murdered six weeks ago in Westwood.

MEGAN

Victim #2 -- Jared Holt, 55, single, stock analyst from Malibu. Killed in Glendale ten days ago.

DAVID

No apparent connection among them--

CHARLIE (O.S.)

--Except for one thing...

REVEAL NOW Charlie and Larry, sitting in --

CHARLIE (cont'd)

The houses they were all found in... unoccupied, for sale.

DAVID

The three houses were listed with three different real estate companies. No connection there.

DON

So what were these three guys doing at these houses?

MEGAN

They went willingly, drove themselves; cars were found at the scene.

DAVID

Plus you don't bring beers to your own funeral.

(CONTINUED)

DON

Which means the killer chooses these locations, then gets them there without a fight.

CHARLIE

The houses are the key...

LARRY

...While they may appear to be randomly selected, may even appear different on the surface, there's very likely a discernible pattern.

CHARLIE

...Commonalities that may not be readily apparent -- influences on his selection process.

MEGAN

...By profiling the houses, we can profile our killer.

CHARLIE

Using Multi-Attribute Compositional Model, I can analyze houses by looking at the individual parts that make up the whole... Think of it like someone selecting a wardrobe...

BEGIN AUDIENCE VISION

WE SEE a "Colorforms"-like MALE FIGURE in boxer shorts... CLOTHES are applied onto the FIGURE (as with "Colorforms"): sweatshirt, jeans, sandals. BOOKS land on one arm...

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
A College Kid chooses very
different clothes from, say...

The CLOTHES change now: sweater, khakis and sneakers. A
SOCCER BALL lands on the arm...

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
...a Soccer Dad...

The CLOTHES change again: hip shirt, pants, shoes. A HOT
CHICK lands on the arm.

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
...who in turn would dress nothing
like a Player looking for action...

The CLOTHES now rotate quickly for DIFFERENT PERSONALITIES:
PIPE-SMOKING ACADEMIC, HIP-HOP GUY, PREPPY GUY...

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Using my math, I can analyze our
killer's past choices to assign
probabilities to his future ones...

BACK TO SCENE

CHARLIE (cont'd)
Given what our killer's revealed to
us about his preferences, I can
composite his "dream house"--

DON
--Which you can compare to
databases of other houses for sale.

MEGAN
...Generating a list of likely
locations where he'll strike again.

DAVID
Clothes make the man, maybe houses
make the murderer.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

5 **EXT. FBI OFFICE - BRIDGE - DAY** 5

TWO SECOND GRAPHIC BUMPER: FIND Don, David, Colby on the move.

COLBY

This guy's definitely got his own
playbook. Most serial killers
stalk their victims or take them
home to do the deed.

DAVID

But he's doing neither. He lures
them to these houses.

DON

Which means our killer doesn't just
have access to houses for sale. He
has access to information.

COLBY

...He knows which houses are empty.
And when.

DAVID

Sounds like we're looking for a real
estate agent, maybe a contractor.

DON

(beat, working the facts)
But how does he get these guys to
the houses?

COLBY

(checking his notes)
Bank records show right before the
murders all three victims withdrew
money from an ATM.

DAVID

Maybe he's baiting them -- drugs?

COLBY

...Or something else. Second
victim, Jared Holt? Had a
solicitation rap two years ago. Got
busted with a hooker in Hollywood.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

5

DAVID

Hustle-turned-murder.

DON

He's making contact with these guys somehow... Get their cell phones, e-mails, all their records... First victim had family, right -- a wife?

COLBY

Megan's already on it.

6

INT. TILLMAN HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

6

CLOSE ON HAPPY FAMILY PHOTOS: ELAINE TILLMAN (38) AND SCOTT TILLMAN (40) with their SON (10) (one photo shows son in his Little League uniform) and DAUGHTER (13).

ELAINE TILLMAN (O.S.)

We were married 16 years.

TILT UP TO FIND: ELAINE TILLMAN, fragile, but with an inner strength. She looks to Megan --

ELAINE TILLMAN (cont'd)

...On the phone, you said the FBI had some new information?

MEGAN

Another man's been found.

ELAINE TILLMAN

(blanches at the news)

Tomorrow it'll be six weeks to the day. It's been hardest on the kids. Tom cries every morning, wants his Daddy. But Susan's the one I really worry about -- she doesn't cry at all.

MEGAN

I'm sorry to put you through this again.

ELAINE TILLMAN

It's okay. It's just, I'm not sure what more I can tell you.

MEGAN

Well, we've found some commonalities between the murders.

(CONTINUED)

ELAINE TILLMAN
Commonalities?

MEGAN
Before your husband was murdered,
he withdrew some money from an ATM--

ELAINE TILLMAN
Money?

MEGAN
Few hundred dollars.

ELAINE TILLMAN
You think that could be significant?

MEGAN
We're not sure. I'm just wondering
what he might have been doing at
the house... Why he'd get money....

ELAINE TILLMAN
I told you... We moved here a year
ago. We needed a house fast, bought
this one sight unseen. We'd talked
about getting a bigger place--

MEGAN
Seems pretty unusual he'd be there
alone.

ELAINE TILLMAN
Scott made most of our financial
decisions, so if he thought we
should buy a house... Plus my
birthday was coming up... The only
thing I can think of is that he
wanted to surprise me.
(beat, wistful look)
Some birthday present, huh?

Charlie is at his laptop. LARRY at the desk, fine-tuning a
tabletop telescope. AMITA studies notations on the board:
"PRICE"; "SQUARE FOOTAGE"; "NUMBER OF ROOMS"; "PRIVACY"...

AMITA
Looking at houses as a way to look
into the soul of a killer...
interesting application, Charlie.

CHARLIE

They say a house has personality.
We're just... quantifying it.

LARRY

Imagine a tortured psyche avenging
some childhood slight -- he chooses
houses that remind him of where he
grew up, completes the circle...

CHARLIE

Very "Hitchcock," Larry.

AMITA

I'd say very "Megan." You two have
been spending so much time together
your minds are melding.

LARRY

We've been maximizing the hours,
given that soon we'll be limited to
more... creative communication.

AMITA

You better be careful, Larry. I
hear that NASA usually listens in
on its satellite communications...

On Larry,

CHARLIE

(then, to the telescope)
That part of the plan?

LARRY

I was unable to secure CalSci's
Celestron, so Megan and I've
devised a new arrangement. I'll be
able to look down on her. Now she
can look up at me.

Larry smiles, his ebullience evident. His cell RINGS. He
checks the display. Charlie does a double-take --

CHARLIE

Since when do you have a cell phone?

(CONTINUED)

LARRY
...Since Houston started calling.

Larry steps away to take the call. Charlie and Amita swap a smile at Larry's boyish glee.

AMITA
I don't think I've ever seen him so excited.

They return to their work --

CHARLIE
Larry's theory about our killer's childhood makes me think maybe we should re-weight these variables--

Charlie stops, troubled by Larry's look as he returns --

CHARLIE (cont'd)
What's up?

LARRY
My journey may be over before it started.

AMITA
The shuttle mission was scrubbed?

LARRY
No... Apparently, I was.

8 **INT. FBI OFFICE BULLPEN - LATE DAY** 8

Megan at her desk, a stack of files piled. David walks up...

DAVID
I cross-checked the list of names the real estate companies gave us -- people who had access to each of the three houses the past few months.

MEGAN
Anyone pop?

DAVID
Couldn't find the name of anyone who had a connection to all three houses.

(re: Megan's files)
...You're going through the victims' backgrounds?

(CONTINUED)

MEGAN

Employment histories, medical histories, education...

DAVID

You see anything in common?

MEGAN

Not sure...

(scanning the file)

... This last victim, John Santos, bounced around foster care most of his childhood. He has a sealed file with Child and Family Services.

DAVID

So?

MEGAN

So, our second victim, Jared Holt, had that solicitation rap.

DAVID

Not sure I see the connection.

MEGAN

Well, the violence, the rage, it does suggest some kind of sexual component to all this...

(off David's maybe look)

Just have to keep digging...

9 **INT. EPPES HOUSE - DINING ROOM/LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

9

Charlie and Amita sit opposite, working. Amita looks up from her laptop, frustrated. Softens when she sees...

ALAN pacing in the Living Room, talking quietly on his cell.

CHARLIE

(can't bear to watch)

...Does it look bad?

Amita watches as Alan ends his call...

AMITA

I'm not sure. But we'll know in a second.

...and joins them in the Dining Room.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

So what's the story?

ALAN

According to Millie, some unnamed rival of Larry's at an unnamed institute in Massachusetts lobbied for an eleventh hour background check. It seems some of his recent lifestyle choices became a subject of concern at NASA--

CHARLIE

--They found out he's been living in the steam tunnels.

AMITA

How could they? We're his friends and we didn't know until--

Amita and Charlie realize it at the same time --

CHARLIE

Millie... And just when I was beginning to like her--

ALAN

Oh c'mon, Charlie. How can you blame this on Millie?

CHARLIE

Blame her? How can you defend her? She sold Larry down the river.

ALAN

NASA called her, Charlie. Not the other way around. She didn't want to tell them, but she had to.

AMITA

Millie's the department chair, Charlie. If NASA pressed her for full disclosure, she couldn't lie.

ALAN

Believe me. She feels horrible about the whole thing. So do I.

(CONTINUED)

Alan notices their work spread out on the table.

ALAN (cont'd)
What is all this anyway?

AMITA
Real estate data. We're trying to quantify a serial killer's emotional attachment to the houses where he's committed murders.

ALAN
(shrugs)
Killer or a homebuyer, boils down to one rule, right? Location, location, location.
(then)
When you see Larry, tell him I'm sorry.

Alan then exits to the kitchen. Charlie looks down at the map of GREATER L.A. showing the THREE HOUSE LOCATIONS...

FLASH CHARLIE VISION

Details (maybe popping up in 3-D) appear around each of the HOUSES: a CHURCH, FIREHOUSE, SCHOOL, HOSPITAL...

BACK TO SCENE

AMITA
What is it, Charlie?

CHARLIE
Dad's right... We're looking at the houses -- what we should be looking at are neighborhoods.

10 INT. FBI OFFICE - HALLWAY/BULLPEN - NIGHT 10

Don and David head for the Bullpen...

DAVID
I ran the victims' phone logs, credit cards. They didn't go to the same places, talk to the same people.

DON
E-mail?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Colby's been on the phone with
their internet service providers.
So far, not looking good.

They ENTER THE BULLPEN... to FIND Megan at her desk.

DON

So we're back to square one.

MEGAN

Maybe not completely.

DON

You got something.

MEGAN

I called Child and Family Services
about Victim #3, John Santos.

DAVID

The guy with the sealed juvie record.

MEGAN

Age seven he was removed from his
home on suspicion of sexual abuse.

(off their looks)

What do we know statistically about
victims of sexual abuse?

DON

A lot of them go on to become
abusers, themselves.

MEGAN

Which is why I took a fresh look at
the rest of our victims.

She picks up another file, reads...

MEGAN (cont'd)

Victim #2, Jared Holt... We knew
about his solicitation rap. What
we didn't know was the prostitute
was underage. Fourteen. Lawyer
got the rape charge dismissed.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

What about Victim #1, the teacher?

MEGAN

His wife told me they'd recently moved. Fact is they've moved a lot. Five schools in seven years... No comment from any of the school's administrators--

DON

But we can read between the lines.

MEGAN

Which means we got a guy soliciting an underage prostitute, a teacher messing with kids and a victim of sexual abuse who very likely may've been an offender himself...

COLBY

(entering now)

I just got off the phone with the victims' ISPs. There was nothing in their e-mails, but there were records of visits to chatrooms. Dozens of sites...

(reading off titles)

...Names like "Lonely Girls Only" and "Cheerleader Diaries."

DAVID

Maybe they took it a step further than talk.

Megan looks at Don...

MEGAN

And maybe that's the reason they died.

Off Don's look --

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

11 INT. FBI OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY 11

TWO SECOND GRAPHIC BUMPER: Don, Megan, Colby run the facts.

DON

Alright, so we have a killer who's going after sex-offenders...

MEGAN

Combined with the brutality of the murders, it suggests one motive...

DON

Revenge.

MEGAN

Something happened in the past, killer's getting payback now.

COLBY

So he's likely a victim of abuse--

MEGAN

--Or connected to one. A family member, daughter, sister...

DON

Only connection all these victims have is the internet, right?

MEGAN

(follows, realizing)
The chatrooms... He lures them through the chatrooms.

DON

We need transcripts of all the chats.

COLBY

On it...

MEGAN

If the killer's meeting these victims online, he's gotta be leaving an electronic trail.

DON

So we look for someone they all talked with; a username they all chatted with in common.

(CONTINUED)

COLBY

Find the common user, we find our
killer.

12 INT. TILLMAN HOUSE - DINING ROOM - DAY 12

Megan observes, as Elaine Tillman cleans up the mess from her kids' breakfast (cereal, spilled milk, etc). A stoic vibe...

ELAINE TILLMAN

Sorry for the mess. I just got the
kids off to school.

Megan measures Elaine, her eyes locked on...

MEGAN

Your internet service provider gave
us a list of chatrooms your husband
visited -- they were more suited to
the interests of a 14-year old girl
than a 40-year-old man...

(off Elaine's tense look)

We know why your husband was at
that house that night, Mrs.
Tillman... I think you do, too.

ELAINE TILLMAN

I'm sorry. I can't help you.

MEGAN

(taking a harder line)

All those years, moving cities,
changing schools... You have
children -- how could you continue
to protect him?

ELAINE TILLMAN

My husband and I were married for
16 years -- I have a family. You
think I could throw it all away?

(caving, tears flowing)

He tried counseling, promised me
he'd stop...

MEGAN

But he didn't, did he?

Megan eyes the photo of their kids; Elaine reacts.

ELAINE TILLMAN

He told me, swore to me he'd never
touched the kids.

(CONTINUED)

MEGAN

He met someone in a chatroom --
someone he thought was a young
girl. That's why he went to that
house; to meet her...

(beat, holds her look)

If you know anything... saw a name,
found an IM on his computer...

(eyes staying on her)

You protected him once and look
what happened... Keeping yourself
in denial now is only going to
protect his killer.

Off Elaine's look -- devastated, failed as wife and mother.

13 **EXT. CAMPUS - LUNCH TABLE - DAY** 13

Charlie and Amita at a lunch table, their work spread out.
Amita peers at Charlie over her laptop:

AMITA

You haven't said a word in the last
ten minutes.

CHARLIE

I'm just... thinking.

AMITA

By now I can distinguish between
Professor Charles Eppes puzzling
over a math problem and Charlie
Eppes worrying about a friend.

CHARLIE

(beat, off her look)

It isn't just Larry. It's me. I
mean, a little while ago I was in
total denial that he was leaving...

Another beat, as Charlie struggles with his emotions --

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Worst part is, I convinced myself I
was happy for him, but when I heard
the news he wasn't going...

(then)

To think I was glad that my best
friend's dream had been destroyed.
What does that say about me?

(CONTINUED)

AMITA

That you're human. That you care about Larry... When it comes to emotions, maybe Professor Eppes has to cut Charlie Eppes a little slack.

CHARLIE

(grateful look; then)
You haven't said a word, either.

AMITA

Didn't seem right somehow. You had enough on your plate without --

CHARLIE

No. I'm here for you, too. I don't want you to ever feel that I'm not.

AMITA

Thanks, Charlie... Good news is though I've been working.

She turns her laptop so he can see it. Onscreen we see the map of GREATER L.A. showing the THREE HOUSE LOCATIONS...

AMITA (cont'd)

The current thinking is our killer was targeting sex-offenders...

CHARLIE

Who were preying on young teens.

AMITA

Which is why I reset the parameters of our neighborhood analysis to reflect the interests of teenagers.

CHARLIE

And?

She punches up neighborhood details on the map: schools, playgrounds, malls, internet cafes, etc. appear --

AMITA

Our three houses are all near schools, playgrounds, shopping malls.

CHARLIE

...Places where kids go.

Off the laptop's ONSCREEN MAP --

14 **OMITTED** 14

15 **INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT** 15

Larry and Megan at dinner. Larry nurses his white wine...

MEGAN
You don't like the wine?

LARRY
It's an excellent choice. Stopping
at half a glass merely eliminates
the potential risk of descending
into an oenophilic black hole.

MEGAN
Einstein would call that a bender.

LARRY
...A relativity joke, I like that.

Beat. Megan looks at Larry, trying to help --

MEGAN
NASA still hasn't made a decision,
Larry. It's not over yet.

LARRY
What was I thinking? That I had
the "Right Stuff" -- Larry
Fleinhardt, the steam tunnel freak--

MEGAN
You're not a freak, Larry. You are
an eccentric, a delightful one, but
not a freak.

LARRY
(downing his wine)
I'll drink to that.

MEGAN
It's healthy to let yourself feel
pain at a lost opportunity. But
don't let this be about you--

LARRY
--How can this not be about me?
(softening; confessional)
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED:

15

LARRY (cont'd)
...Y'know, when I was a kid I used
to sneak out of the house at night,
ride my bike to this park away from
the lights of the city. I'd lie on
the grass, feeling the earth
beneath me hurtling through space.
I'd stare up at the stars and--

He stops short, not wanting to continue. He eyes Megan --

LARRY (cont'd)
Do you know why I bought my car --
the '31 Ford?

MEGAN
I remember something about
organization and Art Deco lines--

LARRY
Yes. But the tipping point, what
made me take the pecuniary plunge
was actually the hood ornament... a
bird in flight.
(beat, wistful)
A day ago, I was that bird. Now...
my wings have been clipped.

16

INT. EPPES HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

16

Don enters, as Alan is exiting the kitchen, carrying a plate.

ALAN
Donny. Not your usual hour.

DON
Thought I'd grab a quick bite.

ALAN
Everything alright?

DON
Strange case...

ALAN
Charlie told me. Toughest ones
must be the ones that involve kids.

DON
We got this guy out there killing
other guys who prey on young
girls... Can't help feeling maybe
he's performing a service.

(CONTINUED)

ALAN

C'mon. Public lynching's not an answer. You know that.

DON

Up here, sure. But when I think about if it was my kid... When we were young you ever worry about stuff like this?

ALAN

Times were different. You didn't have to worry about someone coming into your home, over a DSL line.

DON

I see a lot of things on the job, y'know. Sometimes it's hard... not giving into your emotions.

ALAN

You wouldn't be human, if you thought any other way.

(then)

Tell you one thing I find heartening in this conversation though.

DON

Yeah? What's that?

ALAN

You thinking about being a dad.

Don attempts a smile. Alan turns for the stairs -- Exits. On Don. Alone with his thoughts...

Morning. Colby and David walk up, find Don at his desk.

COLBY

Found a bunch of chatrooms all three victims visited. The day each of them was murdered they chatted with the same person -- username is "cheerchik15".

DAVID

Transcripts indicate our killer pretended to be a 15-year-old girl.

DON

Can we trace it to a computer?

COLBY

This guy's smart, he used internet cafes. Paid cash. Made sure there were no cameras around.

DON

Another dead end.

DAVID

Except we had the Techs check visitor logs of all the chatrooms going all the way back to the fall.

DON

And you found "cheerchik" made a previous appearance.

COLBY

...Three months ago.

DON

Killer meets these guys online months ago, then finds them again. How do we explain that?

COLBY

We can't yet... But now we've got someone to ask...

DAVID

Guy slipped up three months ago, used his own computer. IP address trace led to a Brendan McCrary.

DON

What do we know about him?

COLBY

He fits our profile. Daughter was victimized by an online predator... She committed suicide last year.

DON

Suicide...

David hands Don a print-out...

(CONTINUED)

DAVID
Wife works for a mortgage company.

COLBY
Which gives him access to real
estate information.

DON
Pick him up.

18 **EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY** 18

A GROUP OF BOYS practice. On the sidelines, not watching,
busy on his cell is BRENDAN MCCRARY, 40, All-American dad...

As McCrary is distracted on his cell... On the field his son
MATT MCCRARY, 15, picks his way through three defenders and
puts the ball past the goalie, into the back of the net. He
looks to the sideline for his dad's approval --

MATT MCCRARY
Yo, Dad! Y'see that?

McCrary doesn't hear. He's busy on his cell. Matt spies two
men in suits approaching his dad -- David and Colby.

DAVID
(badging him)
Brendan McCrary? -- FBI. We need
to talk to you.

BRENDAN MCCRARY
About what?

COLBY
Your exploits on the internet...
"cheerchik15" ring a bell?
(then)
C'mon, turn around. Put your hands
behind your back.

BRENDAN MCCRARY
Wait. This is nuts -- we're all on
the same side.

(CONTINUED)

COLBY

Same side?

BRENDAN MCCRARY

I can explain...

His son Matt and several other BOYS are watching now.

DAVID

I don't think you wanna do this
here.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

(considers; then to Matt)
Call your mother. Tell her I
need the lawyer.

David and Colby take McCrary into custody. Off Matt,
watching his dad being led away...

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

19 INT. FBI OFFICE - INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 19

TWO SECOND GRAPHIC BUMPER: Don grills Brendan McCrary, his
LAWYER present.

DON
"cheerchik15"--that's you, isn't it?

BRENDAN MCCRARY
It's a username I go by.

DON
When you go into chatrooms,
pretending to be a 15-year-old girl
trying to get men to solicit sex.

LAWYER
Excuse me, but what is it you think
my client's done here?

Don lays PHOTOS OF THE THREE VICTIMS out on the table.

DON
Scott Tillman, Jared Holt and John
Santos. Three men "cheerchik"
talked to, three men who are now
dead.

BRENDAN MCCRARY
What?

DON
The day they were killed "cheerchik"
gave them the address of a house,
told them to meet her...

Don slides the transcripts across --

DON (cont'd)
Transcripts... The killer's chat
with the last victim, John Santos--
(reading the transcript)
Santos: what r u wearing? cheerchik:
wouldn't u like 2 know, LOL (laugh
out loud). Santos: can i come over?
cheerchik: parents r away 4 weekend.
i'll get pretty 4 you...

BRENDAN MCCRARY
That's my username, but it's not me.

(CONTINUED)

Don slides across another set of transcripts --

DON

Guess you're gonna tell me it
wasn't you three months ago either.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

You don't get what this is about...

DON

Oh I get what it's about. Payback.
For what happened to your daughter.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

My daughter...

LAWYER

I think a serious mistake's been
made here.

DON

You couldn't protect her, could you--

BRENDAN MCCRARY

--You're the ones who couldn't
protect her! The guy who lured her
was out on parole. She was a sweet
kid going through the pains of
adolescence and this scumbag--
(stops, catching himself)

DON

You want to kill them, don't you?

Don indicates to the photos. McCrary regains his composure --

BRENDAN MCCRARY

You've got it all wrong... I
belong to a group. "Parents Stop
Predators." We go into chatrooms,
pretend to be teens, try to get
these creeps to show up so we can
have them arrested.

DON

(say what?)

You're telling me all this... it
was all just you playing online
cop?

McCrary picks up the second set of transcripts on the table.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN MCCRARY

These chats are from three months ago. Look, I tried to set them up, have them arrested. But they didn't take the bait.

(beat, holds Don's look)

Maybe someone at the group hijacked my username... whoever killed these men, it wasn't me.

INT. FBI OFFICE - BULLPEN/COFFEE LOUNGE - DAY

Don walks with Brendan McCrary.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

My son called my wife. That was an hour ago. She must be here by now.

DON

I had her escorted her up. She and your son are waiting in the lounge.

McCrary looks toward the Coffee Lounge where COLLEEN MCCRARY, 39, soccer mom, and son Matt are waiting. The McCrarys make eye contact. Colleen jumps to her feet and hurries over, Matt in tow. Brendan McCrary looks to Don.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

I assume I'm free to go?

DON

For now.

Colleen McCrary and Matt walk up --

COLLEEN MCCRARY

Brendan? Are you alright?

BRENDAN MCCRARY

It's okay. Everything's fine.

COLLEEN MCCRARY

I just saw the lawyer, he said the FBI was questioning you about some murders.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

Turns out, it was all just a big mistake.

COLLEEN MCCRARY

A mistake? You people are always making mistakes.

DON

I'm sorry for what happened to your family, Mrs. McCrary, but I'm not apologizing for doing my job.

COLLEEN MCCRARY

If you were doing your job, my daughter would still be alive.

(CONTINUED)

She glares at Don. Son Matt hangs back, sheepish.

BRENDAN MCCRARY
C'mon, Colleen. Let's go home.

The McCrary Family turns and exits as...

Colby, holding a print-out (having seen the exchange with the McCrarys), comes from the Elevator Area, picking his way through the crowd. He glances at the McCrary's exiting --

COLBY
...Don't think this is gonna help
your mood any either.

As Don and Colby move down the hallway...

COLBY (cont'd)
McCrary's story checks out. Local
police confirm three months ago he
tried to lure the victims to a
house, but they didn't go for it.
So he sent them a letter instead.

DON
A letter?

COLBY
Notification they'd attempted
explicit sexual conversations with
a minor. He threatened to "out"
them to their families if they
didn't go into counseling.
(beat)
McCrary also has an alibi for the
last murder.

Don registers this, sees Charlie and Amita approaching --

DON
Hey, what's up?

CHARLIE
I think we figured out why the
killer's picking these houses...

Don, Charlie and Amita continue into...

Where Megan is at work. As Don and Megan observe, Charlie and Amita present their findings.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

We hit a wall trying to composite our killer's ideal house; then we realized he's not choosing houses.

AMITA

...He's choosing neighborhoods.

CHARLIE

I assume you're all familiar with Megan's Law?

MEGAN

--It requires police to share data on sex-offenders with the public.

AMITA

There's also something called "Jessica's Law."

DON

--Right. It restricts where sex-offenders can live. They can't be within 2000 feet of a school, playground, day care center... Where are you going with this?

CHARLIE

We ran an analysis of Jessica's Law "hot-zones" and mapped it against the locations of the three houses.

Charlie puts up the map of GREATER L.A. showing the THREE HOUSE LOCATIONS, now encircled by red "hot-zones" --

MEGAN

The houses where the murders occurred are all dead-center...

DON

...Okay. So we should be looking for houses in these areas.

CHARLIE

Except for one thing. I mapped out all the other Jessica's Law "hot-zones" in the L.A. area...

Charlie punches them up. A hundred red "hot-zones" appear.

DON

No way we can cover that much ground.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

MEGAN

Exactly our killer's message. He's saying we can't stop these guys.

DON

-- Only he can.

David enters now, a grim look to Don --

DAVID

We just got a call from a web host monitoring one of their sites. Our killer posted a video...

22 **INT. FBI OFFICE - TECH ROOM - DAY**

22

Don watches the PLASMA, David works the remote... Onscreen is a VIDEO IMAGE of VICTIM #3 (John Santos). Tied to the chair we saw earlier, he faces CAMERA, beaten, bloodied. (NOTE: We see his "video confession" in JUMP CUTS -- the physical and emotional effects of the beating accumulating over time...)

JOHN SANTOS (ON VIDEO)

I didn't do anything-- I just came by to see a friend--

(more beaten, more resigned)

You know why I came here-- I admit it-- Why are you doing this--

(more beaten, more resigned)

Just tell me what you want me to say--

(defeated, dead eyes now)

My name is John Santos... I came to this house to have sex with a 15-year-old girl. This isn't the first time. I've had relations with over 30 girls under the age of 15. I ask for forgiveness from them... from their families--

DAVID

(FREEZES THE VIDEO)

...You don't want to see the rest. Killer uploaded to a site that puts up suicides, beheadings, you name it.

DON

And this was posted today?

DAVID

This morning; I did a search, found a similar video of Victim #2 put up two days after he was killed.

(CONTINUED)

DON

What about the first victim?

DAVID

Nothing yet.

DON

This guy's playing judge, jury and executioner.

(eyes the VIDEO, grim)

Can we trace the source of the video?

DAVID

Techs've been trying. Killer used a masking program, can't crack it.

DON

Maybe Charlie can...

INT. CHARLIE'S OFFICE - DAY

Megan with Charlie, as he reviews the FBI Techs' findings...

CHARLIE

...I'd say the killer used some kind of "Onion-Routing" technique. It's a way of sending content over a network while staying anonymous. Think of it like a sender mailing a series of letters inside letters...

BEGIN AUDIENCE VISION

A HAND drops ENVELOPE #1, stamped & addressed, in a mail box.

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

He mails the first one to a friend.

ENVELOPE #1 lands on a desk. HAND #2 opens it, finds a second smaller ENVELOPE #2, stamped & addressed, inside...

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Who finds a second envelope inside.

HAND #2 drops ENVELOPE #2 into a post office mail slot...

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
All he knows is that he's supposed
to forward this letter. So he
does.

A quick series of envelopes opening to reveal smaller ones.
The last one is opened. The message: "Buy more envelopes."

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)
Each envelope is like a layer of an
onion that's peeled back until the
message inside reaches the end.

BACK TO SCENE

CHARLIE (cont'd)
It works the same on the internet,
except instead of envelopes, the
sender uses a series of routers.

MEGAN
Can you crack something like this?

CHARLIE
I created an algorithm for one of
Larry's projects. I can adapt it.

MEGAN
(beat)
Speaking of Larry... I've been
thinking, Charlie... there must be
some way we can help him.

CHARLIE
How?

MEGAN
You know people in the science
community, there has to be someone
we can talk to.

CHARLIE

Larry's NoiseTamper project is an NSA initiative, but if NASA's questioning Larry's fitness--

MEGAN

--Charlie, Larry's devastated. His spirit is crushed. He's like... a star collapsing in on itself--

CHARLIE

--You two have been hanging out a lot.

MEGAN

(beat, eyeing Charlie)
I don't want Larry to go, either. But if there's anything we can do-- We have to let Larry be Larry.

EXT. FBI OFFICE - BRIDGE - LATE DAY

Don and Colby on the move...

COLBY

(running the facts aloud)
Killer's timeline's accelerating. From six weeks between kills to ten days, this last one just 72 hours.

DON

We gotta trace the source of these video uploads. How soon'll Charlie's algorithm be up and running?

COLBY

Megan said he'll have it in an hour... But there's a problem.

DON

What?

COLBY

Charlie's math can't run a trace after an upload's been done. It's only designed to look for content during transmission.

DON

So we have to wait for another murder.

25 **INT. FBI OFFICE - TECH ROOM - LATE DAY** 25

Charlie gives instructions to a TECH at a computer station
(NOTE: TECH has TWO COMPUTER SCREENS; plus Charlie has his
computer for his math). Charlie looks up, sees Don entering.

CHARLIE

I've got the algorithm set to scan
the site the killer's been
uploading to. As soon as we get a
hit, we'll know he's transmitting.

DON

Megan said Larry's been helping you
out?

CHARLIE

I think he likes the distraction.

DON

How's he doing?

CHARLIE

He hasn't been saying much.

DON

Larry not talking...

CHARLIE

...Speaks volumes. I know.

Off which...

26 **INT. FBI OFFICE - COFFEE ROOM - LATE DAY** 26

Megan enters to find Larry reading a Shakespeare play --

MEGAN

(checking the play)
Shakespeare? "All's Well That Ends
Well" -- this mean you're trying to
see the glass as half-full?

LARRY

I've been seeking a credo to get me
through. My first instinct was
"screw your courage to the mast."
But then I thought, screw that.

MEGAN

So did Shakespeare come through?

(CONTINUED)

LARRY

(reads from the play)

"Our remedies oft in ourselves do
lie. Which we ascribe to heaven.
The fated sky gives us free scope,
only doth backward pull our slow
designs when we ourselves are dull."

He looks up from the book...

LARRY (cont'd)

Soaring into the heavens was my
ambition. It's clear now that it
was an Icarus illusion... The
fated sky is telling me something --
it's time to stop reaching for
what's beyond my grasp.

As Megan takes in Larry's desolation... HARD CUT TO:

INT. FBI OFFICE - TECH ROOM - LATE DAY

The FBI TECH monitoring the trace at the computer station.

FBI TECH

...We've got a hit, Professor!

Charlie and Don rush over. A VIDEO IMAGE appears ON THE TECH'S
FIRST SCREEN: WENDELL HENDERSON, 32, white, nerdy. NOTE: This
should look like the last "video confession," but as it was at
the very end of the sequence... staring INTO CAMERA, resigned.
(*find additional dialogue to run under sequence in ADDENDUM)

WENDELL HENDERSON (ON VIDEO)

My name is Wendell Henderson. I
came to this house to have sex with
a 15-year-old girl. In the past ten
years, I've molested over 40 young
girls, some as young as 11...

Charlie types commands feverishly on his computer.

DON

Is the trace working?

CHARLIE

Getting there. Another minute...
(eyeing his calculations)
That's odd...

DON

What is it?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

...This transmission... The file size and video time are steadily increasing...checksums are changing... It's uploading live -- Don, he hasn't killed him yet.

DON

Can you get me a location?

FBI TECH

I'm tapping into the server. I should be able to run a ping trace to find the broadcasting socket--

DON

Do it... Call me in the car.

Don is out the door. As Charlie observes, the TECH works his computer... ON THE SECOND COMPUTER SCREEN a satellite map telescopes from a zip-code zone...to a 10-block radius...to a street...then a house. An address pops: 252 ESTRELLA AVENUE. Off the address, HARD CUT TO:

28

EXT. ESTRELLA AVENUE HOUSE - LATE DAY

28

252 Estrella Ave. Helicopters buzz overhead. Don's SUV arrives simultaneously with TWO LAPD UNIFORMS. Don, David, Colby jump out of the SUV, join up with the FOUR LAPD UNIFORMS. Don looks to Colby and the first TWO UNIFORMS --

DON

The three of us'll take the front.
(to David and other two
LAPD Uniforms)
David, you guys cover the back.

David and the other TWO UNIFORMS head around back. While Don, Colby and the first TWO UNIFORMS move fast to the front door. Don gives Colby the nod and he kicks in the door...

29

INT. ESTRELLA AVENUE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

29

...Don, Colby and the TWO UNIFORMS swarm the Living Room.

DON

FBI! FBI...!

Guns levelled at... a MOM reading to her CHILD. They look up, frightened. David and the other TWO UNIFORMS arrive now from the back, guns out.

(CONTINUED)

29

MOTHER
What is this--what's happening?

DON
Are you alone here?

MOTHER
Yes. What's going on?

DON
(then, working the facts)
Have you been on the internet?

MOTHER
No--no, it's been down today. I
don't understand...

DON
Everything's okay. We've just got
the wrong house...

Don's already on his cell phone --

DAVID
Killer's covering his tracks.

COLBY
He must have piggybacked her
router.

DON
(on cell phone)
Charlie, we got a problem...

30 **INT. FBI OFFICE - TECH ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS** 30

Charlie and the Tech at the computer workstation. Suddenly
the VIDEO CONFESSION OF WENDELL HENDERSON CUTS, GOES TO SNOW,
as... Charlie replies on speaker phone --

CHARLIE
...Don, what's going on? -- I just
lost the video transmission--

31 **INT. ESTRELLA AVENUE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS** 31

Resume Don, with David and Colby. Don's on his cell --

DON
We've got the wrong house. The
killer piggybacked the signal.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE (ON CELL PHONE)
(thinks it through)
If he did, he has to be in the area
using a WIFI link.

COLBY
Which means he's close.

DON
Charlie, check your database of
houses for sale...

32 **INT. FBI OFFICE - TECH ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS** 32

Resume Charlie, checking the database. On speakerphone --

CHARLIE
I'm showing a house two streets
over, 2463 North Irving Boulevard--

33 **INT. NORTH IRVING BOULEVARD HOUSE - LATE DAY** 33

Door wide open. Guns sweeping, Don, David and the first TWO UNIFORMS MOVE INTO THE LIVING ROOM TO FIND: VICTIM #4 (WENDELL HENDERSON), tied to a chair, slumped. A video camera left on a tripod facing him. Don checks his pulse. Looks to... Colby and the other TWO UNIFORMS entering from the back. Colby's carrying a large gym bag.

DON
He's dead.

DAVID
He probably heard the chopper,
left in a hurry.

COLBY
Not before leaving this...

Colby holds open the gym bag -- inside it are cameras, wireless transmitters and other electronic gear.

DAVID
We were close.

Don, David and Colby eye the body of VICTIM #4, grim --

DON
Not close enough.

END ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

34 INT. FBI OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY 34

TWO SECOND GRAPHIC BUMPER: Colby briefs Don. Charlie's sitting in. Colby pins up a PHOTO OF VICTIM #4...

COLBY
Victim #4 -- Wendell Henderson, 32,
computer geek.

DAVID *
Same story. He talked dirty to
Brendan McCrary in a chatroom three
months ago.

COLBY *
Killer contacts him again, uses
McCrary's username to lure him.

DAVID *
Electronic gear we found was all
bought with cash. Store owners
couldn't remember who made the
purchases.

DON
(working the facts)
Whoever's targeting these guys has
to be someone with access to
McCrary's files, the names of the
men he's met in these chatrooms.

COLBY
Maybe McCrary's right -- someone in
his group hijacked his username.

DAVID *
I got a list of all the "Parents
Stop Predators" volunteers,
transcripts of their chatroom chats.

CHARLIE
Can I take a look?

David hands Charlie the file. Charlie scans it -- *

DAVID *
Lotta names to go through...

Charlie's eyes go from the list of names in the group to...
the transcripts of their chatroom chats with predators --

(CONTINUED)

FLASH CHARLIE VISION

A block of chatroom chat -- words pop, illuminating (ie. "A Beautiful Mind"): LOL, B4N, @TEOTD, AAR8, P911, ROFL.

BACK TO SCENE

CHARLIE

Maybe we don't go through the names,
maybe we go through the chat.

DON

How do you mean?

CHARLIE

Like any language, online messaging
has its own vocabulary, syntax...
Senders of messages develop unique
patterns of speech, which we can
analyze using Statistical
Linguistic Analysis.
(off Don's look)
Think of it like a jeweler beading
a necklace.

BEGIN AUDIENCE VISION

A HAND strings a strand of beads of varying color and size.

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

*The jeweler chooses certain beads,
decides what pattern to string them
in, depending on his personal style.*

A HAND strings another strand -- different beads, order...

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

*Other jewelers will have different
styles, exhibit different patterns.*

*Several different strands line up for comparison. Letters
now appear on the beads, revealing message sequences...*

CHARLIE (V.O.) (cont'd)

*Just like different IM senders will
exhibit their own styles --
patterns of speech unique to them.*

BACK TO SCENE

DON

You think you can compare samples
of our killer's chat?

CHARLIE

...To transcripts of the volunteers
in the "Parents Stop Predators"
group. If the killer's in the
group, his chat will betray him.

EXT. CAMPUS - QUAD - DAY

Amita crosses the Quad carrying a stack of papers. Megan
catches up with her, carrying a folder with chat transcripts.

MEGAN

Hey.

(off Amita's turn)

Have you seen Charlie? I've got
transcripts of the killer's most
recent chat.

AMITA

He's working in Larry's office.
Larry's at a symposium and Charlie
thought he could concentrate better
there.

MEGAN

He's got you working on this, too?

AMITA

My experience using asymptotic
combinatorics comes in handy.

MEGAN

Sounds like a positive sign of a
working relationship...

AMITA

Charlie and I work well together.

MEGAN

Must be nice.

AMITA

(beat, eyeing Megan)

You're gonna miss him, aren't you.

(CONTINUED)

MEGAN

More than I realized...

(then)

But I have a telescope, right?

AMITA

He's coming back.

MEGAN

I know...

Megan smiles. Then holds up her stack of transcripts --

AMITA

I was heading over to that side of
campus anyway. I'll go with you.

Off Megan and Amita, heading off.

36 INT. LARRY'S OFFICE - DAY

36

Charlie, on the phone, WALKING AROUND THE OFFICE, looking at PHOTOS OF LARRY, mementos, awards, other reminders --

CHARLIE

I've been on the phone 40 minutes;
I need to speak with Dr. York--yes,
about Lawrence Fleinhardt--Okay,
well I guess you're the person I
need to talk to. Look, here's the
thing-- I've known Larry Fleinhardt
since I was 14. And I admit he's
an eccentric, and you have
concerns. But the man's brilliant,
and maybe the kindest, most decent
person I know. And if it were my 2
billion dollars and I were going on
this mission, I'd want no one else
in the seat beside me... Yes. I
am personally vouching for him...
I appreciate that. Yeah, I guess
that is all I have to say.

REVEAL OUTSIDE THE DOOR: Megan and Amita, listening, moved.
RESUME CHARLIE, contemplative, looking at a PHOTO OF LARRY.

37 INT. FBI OFFICE - WAR ROOM - LATE DAY

37

Don, Megan and Colby enter to find Charlie at the PLASMA. He has a split-screen display: the killer's chat on the left; the "Parents Against Predator" volunteer chat on the right.

DON

So you got something?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

Comparing our killer's messaging patterns against the "Parents Stop Predators" group, I've isolated a near-match -- within a margin of error of five percent.

DON

So who's our killer?

CHARLIE

According to my math, Brendan McCrary.

COLBY

McCrary? -- That's impossible, he alibied for two murders.

MEGAN

Charlie said he found a near-match.
(off their looks)
Y'know how they say people and pets start to look alike. Similar thing happens in family dynamics. People start to think and talk alike.

DON

Someone in the McCrary family?

COLBY

(looks to Don)
His wife went off pretty good on you...

MEGAN

The rage here is pent up, finds release in carefully calibrated violence. That's not the wife.

DON

If it's not McCrary or his wife--

COLBY

Leaves only one survivor--

38 INT. MCCRARY HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 38

CLOSE ON MATT MCCRARY, seated across the dining room table from Don. His parents, Brendan and Colleen McCrary, are present. Don slides a list of names and transcripts across.

DON

This was on your laptop, Matt.
Only it's not schoolwork. It's a
list of names of sexual predators,
logs of chatroom conversations.

BRENDAN MCCRARY

They say you downloaded it from my
computer -- is that right?

No response. Not even making eye contact...

DON

Four names from your dad's list...
all four murdered. Your father
didn't do it. You were the only
other source of this information,
so how is it these men are dead?

BRENDAN MCCRARY

(off the boy's silence)
Agent Eppes asked you a question.

MATT MCCRARY

I didn't kill anyone.

DON

But you know who the killer is,
don't you... Because you helped
him.

Matt looks at Don now -- Don's struck a chord of truth. Don spies a FAMILY PHOTO (including DAUGHTER KATIE) on the wall.

DON (cont'd)

You don't think I understand but I
do. You wanted to get back at guys
like the one who hurt your sister.
I want to hurt them, too. But that
makes us no better than they are...

Don's words crack Matt's shell. Tears for the first time.

MATT MCCRARY

I didn't know they were gonna get
hurt, I swear.

(CONTINUED)

BRENDAN MCCRARY

Tell them what they need to know.

MATT MCCRARY

I met this person in a chatroom -- for families of victims of sexual predators. I don't know their name, anything about them. All I know is they listened...

COLLEEN MCCRARY

Honey, if you were having problems why didn't you come to us?

MATT MCCRARY

--You? What were you gonna do?

BRENDAN MCCRARY

Matt--

MATT MCCRARY

--Seriously, Dad. You're too busy with your "catch the creep" group.

(looks to his mom--)

--You don't even leave your room half the day. Except when you go into Katie's bedroom to look around. You don't think I see?

(in tears now; to parents)

I loved Katie. Losing her sucked. But I didn't just lose her... I lost you, too.

Don leans in, holds Matt's look.

DON

This person you met, you say they listened. To what? What did you talk about?

MATT MCCRARY

My dad's group mostly. How useless they are, getting these guys into counseling; how counseling doesn't do anything.

(then)

They said they were just gonna scare them...

DON

So you gave them the list of names.

(CONTINUED)

Matt nods, looks to his parents. Remorse now, no anger.

MATT MCCRARY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean for this to happen. I never wanted any of this; I wish we could just go back.

Matt collapses into his mom's arms, crying. Brendan McCrary hesitates, at a loss. Slowly he pulls mother and son into an embrace. Off Don, watching the heartbreak.

39 **EXT. CAMPUS - QUAD - DAY** 39

Charlie crosses the Quad, reading a journal. Larry intercepts him...

LARRY

Charles...

(off Charlie's turn)

I thought you should know I heard from NASA; I'm back on the mission.

CHARLIE

That's great news, congratulations.

LARRY

Apparently, someone at the NSA did some arm-twisting.

CHARLIE

They're the experts. Off the record.

LARRY

On the record. Thank you, Charles.

CHARLIE

I didn't do anything -- Aside from making them see the error of their ways. Consider it my contribution to national security.

LARRY

You think me off the planet improves our security?

CHARLIE

I didn't say it.

LARRY

I know you don't want me to go, Charles. Therein lies the nobility of what you did.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

What I did is repay a debt. When we first met, when I was a 14-year-old kid at Princeton and you were my adviser, remember what you said?

LARRY

As I recall, I said many things.

CHARLIE

You said you wanted to see me safely launched into the academic firmament. Now it's my turn.

LARRY

(beat; emotional)

Just so you know... Letting go is always harder on the mentor than it is on the student.

INT. FBI OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY

Don and Colby crossing through, heading toward Megan...

COLBY

I traced the username of the person Matt McCrary talked to in that chatroom. It was a dead end.

DON

Killer covered his tracks again.

They land at Megan's desk. She's scanning a file, mulling --

DON (cont'd)

Find something?

MEGAN

I've been going back over my interview notes... Matt McCrary and the killer talked about how counseling was useless for guys like this...

(off their looks)

Sounds a lot like a conversation I had with Elaine Tillman.

COLBY

The first victim's wife? -- You think she has something to do with this?

(CONTINUED)

MEGAN

She told me her husband swore he'd never touched their kids.

DON

You think she was lying.

MEGAN

We wondered why we never found Scott Tillman's video confession on the web -- I think I know why...

COLBY

...Elaine Tillman didn't need a confession.

DON

Because she already knew her husband's crimes.

COLBY

Going with your theory, I get why she kills her husband, but why all the others?

MEGAN

...The notification letter Brendan McCrary sent... It must've been a trigger, pushed her over the edge. Then when she met Matt online, to know that there were all these men out there, like her husband...

COLBY

We know Scott Tillman taught high school computer science -- she could've learned what she needed to know from him.

DON

(beat)

He gave his wife motive. Then gave her the tools...

MEGAN

The architect of his own demise.

END ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

41 **EXT. FBI OFFICE - BRIDGE - DAY** 41

TWO SECOND GRAPHIC BUMPER: Don, Megan and David...

DAVID

We checked Elaine Tillman's e-mail.
Over the past three months she's
contacted a half-dozen real estate
agencies.

MEGAN

She said she and her husband were
looking to buy a bigger house...

DAVID

She used different names to contact
the real estate agents, make the
appointments.

DON

Where is she now?

DAVID

Two hours ago, she left her kids at a
neighbor's. Said her mom was sick,
she had to take her to the hospital.

MEGAN

...She's lined up her next victim.

DON

(beat, working the facts)
These listings you found in her e-
mail... how many houses were there?

DAVID

Almost a hundred.

DON

Let's get the list to Charlie.

42 **INT. FBI OFFICE - WAR ROOM - DAY** 42

CLOSE ON A MAP OF GREATER L.A. -- 85 BLACK X's liberally
scattered, showing Elaine Tillman's house listings. Charlie
is at the PLASMA. Don and Megan listening...

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

I mapped the locations of all the houses from Elaine Tillman's list. Assuming our killer sticks to her M.O. of live uploads, she'll need a strong WIFI connection.

DON

Last time she sent us to the wrong house.

CHARLIE

--And she'll try to do it again. Only this time, we'll know where she's transmitting from.

DON

How?

CHARLIE

When I did my real estate analysis, one thing I looked at was WIFI connectivity. I had the Techs cross-check the database of broadband users in these areas against owners of WIFI routers--

MEGAN

--Sounds like a lot of houses.

CHARLIE

Yes, but not where we're looking.

Charlie now punches up his previous map showing Jessica's Law "hot-zones" split-screened with the map of house locations...

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Remember our killer was selecting houses in these Jessica's Law "hot-zones"... Overlaying these hot-zones on our map of houses...

Charlie hits the remote: the two maps overlay; simplifying down to 5 BLUE X'S now in 5 RED HOT-ZONES.

CHARLIE (cont'd)

Factoring in WIFI connectivity, I've isolated five locations where the killer will likely strike.

(CONTINUED)

DON
Alright. Let's call LAPD, get
units in those areas. As soon as
we locate her vehicle, we move in.

43 **OMITTED** 43

A44 **EXT. LOS FELIZ HOUSE - NIGHT** A44

TWO SUV's pull up behind an ND STATION WAGON. Megan and
David jump out, checking out the ND STATION WAGON --

DAVID
LAPD spotted Elaine Tillman's car.
House is around the corner -- 2152
Floresta...

MEGAN
LAPD has the perimeter?
(off David's nod)
Alright. We go in quiet.

44 **INT. LOS FELIZ HOUSE - NIGHT** 44

CLOSE ON A LAPTOP SCREEN: VICTIM #5, 35-ish, bruised and
bloodied, stares out at us with frightened eyes. PAN OFF THE
LAPTOP SCREEN to find VICTIM #5 lashed with duct tape to a
chair; a VIDEO CAMERA there. Elaine Tillman stands over him.

VICTIM #5
What do you want from me?

ELAINE TILLMAN
Everything.

Her eyes are filled with hatred and, in this moment, control. She cuts the last of the duct tape with a kitchen knife as...

ELAINE'S POV:

THE FRONT DOOR SPLINTERS OPEN. SHOUTS OF "FBI! FBI!" Megan, David and the SWAT TEAM surge into the room, guns out. ANOTHER SWAT TEAM enters from the back. But Elaine has the drop on her victim, behind him. Kitchen knife to his throat.

ELAINE TILLMAN (cont'd)

One more step, he's dead...

MEGAN

Easy, Elaine. No one moves, until you and I talk.

ELAINE TILLMAN

--About what? You know why I'm here. You know what I have to do--

MEGAN

Put the knife down. Look, I know what happened. I know your husband hurt your daughter--

ELAINE TILLMAN

--He lied to me. He promised me he'd never touch Susan.

MEGAN

--So think of your kids now. They wouldn't want you to do this...

DAVID

(nods to victim in chair)
This man didn't do anything to your daughter--

ELAINE TILLMAN

--What about other daughters?
(through anguished tears)
I have to stop them. Go ahead and shoot, I'm still gonna kill him--

MEGAN

Listen to me. We know why he came here. We have proof, on his own computer, his words. He's not walking out of here a free man.

Elaine's resolve is weakening. Megan's almost got her --

(CONTINUED)

MEGAN (cont'd)
Put down the knife. Trust me,
prison will be worse than anything
you can do to him.

Beat. Elaine drops the knife, crumbles under the weight of
the guilt she's been carrying. A SWAT TEAM MEMBER takes her
into custody, as VICTIM #5 looks to Megan and David, shaken.

DAVID
You okay?

VICTIM #5
Yeah. I thought for sure she was
gonna kill me... Thank you.

DAVID
Don't.

45 **INT. FBI OFFICE - BULLPEN - DAY** 45

A BOX OF FBI BALLCAPS drops on a desk. TILT UP TO FIND: Don
with Larry. Charlie, Megan, David and Colby gathered around.

DON
I threw in a few extras, just in
case the Russians send some guys.

LARRY
My colleagues on the shuttle and in
the space station salute you.

DAVID
It'll be reassuring to know we have
an FBI presence in space.

COLBY
Who says there isn't one already.

Colby gives Charlie a look. David steps up, extends a hand.

DAVID
(as they shake hands)
Professor, it's often been
confusing... but always real.

COLBY
I second that. We'll be looking up
for you, Fleinhardt.

(CONTINUED)

DON
 (shaking hands now)
 Good luck, Larry. We're gonna miss
 you.

Charlie's turn...

CHARLIE
 Professor Fleinhardt.

LARRY
 If you need to call...

CHARLIE
 I'll make sure to put it on the
 NSA's tab.

Larry turns to Megan, who's been silent until now...

MEGAN
 I'll walk you out.

Larry and Megan at the door. A pregnant pause, then...

MEGAN
 Well, I guess the next time I see
 you, you'll be in a space suit--

Larry puts his fingers to her lips, hushing her...

LARRY
 Shhhh...
 (beat)
 Newton had his apple. But it took
 you falling into my life to make me
 see the world anew. In your eyes,
 I become new. How we see ourselves
 changes how we see the world. Even
 from space.

*
 *
 *
 *
 *

He leans in and kisses her. Megan fights back tears...

MEGAN
 Just be careful.

LARRY
 (nods, then)
 I have to go. Someone's waiting.

Larry looks toward a FIGURE standing on the Bridge...

MEGAN
Is that Buzz Aldrin?

LARRY
I think NASA's afraid I'd get lost.

Megan smiles. Larry turns and crosses to BUZZ ALDRIN. CLOSE ON LARRY AND BUZZ ALDRIN walking TO CAMERA IN SLO-MO. Think "The Right Stuff." WE HEAR A VOICE:

COUNTDOWN VOICE
T-minus one minute to launch...

47 **INT. EPPES HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EARLY MORNING** 47

Don, Charlie, Megan, David, Colby, Amita at the TV. ON TV we see the space shuttle on the launchpad, the final countdown.

AMITA
I have goosebumps.

MEGAN
Me, too.

DON
I hope he's wearing his ballcap.

DAVID
Don't they wear pressure suits?

COLBY
Fleinhardt in a pressure suit--a mental image I didn't need.

MEGAN
(looking to Charlie)
You've been pretty quiet.

CHARLIE
It's not everyday you get to watch your friend live out his dream.

MEGAN
(quietly, to Charlie)
It's not every friend who can make it happen.

COUNTDOWN VOICE
T-minus 30 seconds...

CHARLIE
Dad! You're gonna miss it!

(CONTINUED)

Alan enters now from the kitchen, carrying a tray of champagne glasses filled with milk. He sets it down for all.

DON
Where's the champagne?

ALAN
I thought in honor of Larry --
given his thing for white food --
milk was a more appropriate choice.

COUNTDOWN VOICE
T-minus 20 seconds...

ALAN
I propose a toast. To Larry.

They all grab glasses of milk...

CHARLIE
May the orbit rise with you...

DON
And the solar winds be at your back.

AMITA
(to Don, teasing)
...I think you've been hanging out
with us nerds too long.

MEGAN
Shhhh! Here we go...

COUNTDOWN VOICE
10...9...

GROUP/COUNTDOWN VOICE
8...7...6...5...4...3...2...1...

COUNTDOWN VOICE
...We have ignition.

As they all clink glasses, celebrating --

CHARLIE
Godspeed, Larry Fleinhardt...

Off the TV IMAGE of the shuttle climbing into the clouds...

END OF SHOW

ADDENDUM

ENTIRE DIALOGUE FOR VIDEO CONFESSION, SCENE 27

Dialogue as it appears in script:

WENDELL HENDERSON

My name is Wendell Henderson. I came to this house to have sex with a 15-year-old girl. In the past ten years, I've molested over 40 young girls, some as young as 11...

Additional dialogue to continue under action sequence that follows:

WENDELL HENDERSON (cont'd)

...I understand that I can never give these children their lives back. What I've taken from them cannot be replaced or restored. I've stolen from them their trust and their innocence. I've destroyed them and their families. I ask forgiveness from these young girls and from their parents for the pain and suffering I've caused them.