

PERSON OF INTEREST

written by

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## CHARACTERS

HENRY HEARST, mid-50's, male

INSPECTOR CATHERINE LYLE, 60's,  
female, British

DETECTIVE JAMES BELL, 30's,  
male

SUSAN HEARST, 30's, female

SERGEANT ADAMS, late 40's,  
male

UNIFORMED OFFICER, late 20's,  
female (could be male)

CHIEF OF DETECTIVES GRIMES,  
60's, male

## PLACE

A police station in a small  
coastal U.S city.

## TIME

Present day. 10:30pm.

The stage is divided into three rooms. Center stage is the MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM, the largest room, a virtual cube, but with the SL and SR side walls cutouts to allow for sightlines in the adjacent rooms. A door on the SL upstage wall leads to a mostly-unseen hallway that runs the length of the stage, leading to the other rooms. SR of the door is a wooden chair. On the wall, SR of the chair, is a two-way mirror. On a section of the SL wall is a small shelf holding paper towels and a pump bottle of hand sanitizer, and above which hangs a very small rectangular mirror. In the center of the room is a rectangular table; a tin ashtray sits on it. A chair is set at either end of this table.

SR of this MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM is the BULLPEN, a very small room with a door on the upstage wall, a small desk and office chair along the SR wall, and a file cabinet set on the SL (cutout) wall. Over the desks hang a dozen or so wanted posters, 8 x 10 B&W crime scene photos, various post-it notes stuck any old place, a rabbit's foot thumb-tacked to the wall. DS of the desk is a counter on which sits a coffee pot, coffee tin, filters, coffee cups, sugar box, dried cream box, old spoons, a box of donuts, Etc.

SL of the MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM is the SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM, also very claustrophobic, with a single door on the US wall, and a single, small, square wooden-topped table, flanked by two wooden chairs, set DSC in the room. A single, round, industrial-type lighting fixture hangs over the table.

Everything on the set is monochrome -- blacks, various shades of grey from charcoal to light, and cream whites. All costumes will be in textured materials in the same color palette.

ACT I

CURTAIN UP

LIGHTS UP ON MAIN INTERROGATION  
ROOM ONLYThe door to the MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM opens.

HENRY HEARST enters. He's immaculately dressed in an expensive grey serge suit, brilliant white shirt and rep tie, black shoes. There's arrogance in his manner, though he would call it being "distinguished".

Hearst is followed immediately by a UNIFORMED OFFICER, who points him toward the table. The Uniform sits on the wooden chair at the door.

Hearst looks around the room then at the Uniform.

HEARST

May I smoke?

UNIFORM

Won't bother me.

Hearst smiles, reaches into his coat, pulls out a silver cigarette case, lights a cigarette. He peruses the room, then sits at one end of the table.

LIGHTS DOWN ON MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP  
FULL ON BULLPEN.

SERGEANT ADAMS, in uniform, enters, moves to a file cabinet, looks through a file drawer.

He's followed by DETECTIVE SECOND GRADE BELL, CHIEF OF DETECTIVES GRIMES, and INSPECTOR LYLE.

Bell is fit, crewcut, sport coat, with an aggressive, menacing energy. He squeezes a white tennis ball in one hand.

Grimes is gray, gruff. Once an adequate cop, he's now settled comfortably into being a bureaucrat.

Lyle is understated, observant, dark charcoal jacket over grey skirt, black blouse buttoned to the throat. She exudes a quiet confidence. She looks through reading glasses at one of several files she carries.

BELL

It's him, I tell you.

Bell sits on one of the desks, his feet on the chair.

BELL

You get the feeling sometimes, and you know you're right.

LYLE

Did you arrest him?

BELL

No. Just to come in to clear up some points in his statement. That's all.

LYLE

And he raised no objection?

BELL

No. I told him no more than a few minutes.

LYLE

I see.

GRIMES

He accepted that bullshit story?

BELL

Why shouldn't he accept it?

GRIMES

The man's a big-time lawyer.

BELL

A weasel tax lawyer to the rich.

GRIMES

A lawyer nonetheless, and by definition, that makes him not stupid.

BELL

So what? He found the body. As far as he's concerned, that's all we know.

LYLE

That *is* all we know.

GRIMES

Lot of coincidences, you ask me.

BELL

Oh, come *on*, Chief. Three separate sets of coincidences? Look, it's him. It's Hearst. We may be light on physical evidence, but that doesn't mean we're wrong. He'll do it again, we don't nail him now. I say we hound the bastard till he breaks. Till he's *there*.

(squeezes the ball)

GRIMES

Big-time lawyers might call that harassment.

BELL

When a perp gets to that, he's almost under. It's the last plea before "guilty."

GRIMES

Well...for whatever reason, he's here, so we make the most of it. But one wrong move with this guy, we're all up the creek. Even a tax lawyer knows his way around Wrongful Arrest.

Bell starts to protest.

GRIMES

And don't tell me you didn't "arrest" him. You've deprived him of his liberty. That's all he needs.

Bell stands, moves toward the door.

BELL

I'll break him before he gets that far.

GRIMES

No. Not you.

(to Lyle)

Inspector Lyle--

BELL

(stopped cold)

WHAT?!? Sir, he's *my* collar--

GRIMES

Look, Bell...That's what an exchange program's all about, why Scotland Yard sent us Lyle in the first place. New approaches and all that. If this is our guy...

BELL

He *is* our guy--

GRIMES

...*If* this is our guy, he's pretty unshakable. Already been through two tough interviews without a scratch. Maybe Inspector Lyle here...

BELL

Sir, I can--

GRIMES

Bell. You're a good cop. With a good future. Be happy with that right now, okay?

(looks at Lyle)

Lyle. What do you think?

Lyle looks up from the files she's been perusing.

LYLE

I've seen men like Hearst before, sir. In London. Not your typical killers, all testosterone and defiance. Not ignorant like that. No, this type is smart...won't give strong-arm the time of day.

GRIMES

(glances at Bell)

My point exactly.

LYLE

We have to be smarter than he is, that's all.

GRIMES

Are you?

Lyle smiles.

LYLE

Let me talk to him.

Do it.

GRIMES

Grimes turns and walks out.  
Adams follows him.

Bell eyes Lyle.

BELL  
(derisively)

You're going to "talk to him".

LYLE

Yes.

BELL

This isn't a coffee clatch with the girls, Inspector.  
(beat)

Talk. Jesus.

LYLE

I suppose that's how I've taken to referring to the art of interrogation.

BELL

Uh-huh.

LYLE

Been doing it a long time, Detective. No small measure of success.

BELL

Uh-huh. Well...  
(punches his fist)

I guess I like a more direct kind of art.

LYLE

I see. Well, Grimes gave this to me, didn't he? So...we can work this together or not. Your call. But if you stay, I want it understood: this is *my* play. *My* way.

A momentary standoff, then...

BELL

Yeah. Right. So...?

LYLE

So let's talk to him.

BELL

A nice little *conversazione*?

LYLE

Something like that.

Bell looks Lyle in the eye.

BELL

Listen, Mizzzzz Lyle. I didn't bring Hearst in for the purpose of organizing a quiet little chat when I could be catching up on lost sleep. The man's a living argument for the return of the electric chair. I want him broken.

LYLE

Oh, I'll break him, Detective. He'll get no easy ride from me. I don't cry for these people. Never shed a tear for a single one of them, never will.

BELL

Uh-huh. Well, just know this: if it doesn't work your way, we're gonna do it mine.

Lyle studies Bell a moment,  
then exits. Bell follows.

LIGHTS DOWN ON BULLPEN. LIGHTS  
TO FULL ON MAIN INTERROGATION  
ROOM AS LYLE AND BELL ENTER.

Hearst virtually ignores them.  
He taps his cigarette in the  
ashtray, takes another puff,  
almost nonchalantly.

Bell closes the door as the  
Uniform exits, leans against  
it. Lyle walks to the table  
and stands behind the vacant  
chair.

LYLE

Mr. Hearst. My name's Lyle. Inspector Lyle.

HEARST

A woman...

LYLE

It would appear so, yes.

HEARST

You're not from here.

LYLE

Brighton, actually. Here on exchange.

A slight smile breaks Hearst's  
face.

HEARST

Welcome to America, Miss.

LYLE

Inspector, if you don't mind.  
(indicates Bell)  
You've met Detective Bell?

HEARST

Yesterday at the house.

BELL

(derisively)

A real pleasure.

Hearst hears the hostility in  
Bell's voice, glances back at  
him. Lyle sits.

LYLE

We have a few things we'd like to clarify. A few  
inconsistencies. You've no objections, I hope?

HEARST

No. Not at all.

LYLE

It's a little late.

HEARST

It's quite all right.

LYLE

Probably inconvenient.

HEARST

I've told you. It's all right.  
(beat, then with  
edge)

Unless you don't get on with it.

LYLE

Yes. Well, it's very good of you in any case, Mr. Hearst.

Lyle sorts through papers in a  
file as she talks.

LYLE

Detective Bell tells me your wife would have liked to come  
with you.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

I've no objection. If you'd like your wife present while we--

HEARST

No! No...thank you. It's...not necessary.

LYLE

The choice is yours, of course.

HEARST

(quietly)

I'd prefer her not to be here.

LYLE

As you wish. Now. First things first. Your full name's Henry Hearst?

HEARST

Henry Llewellyn Hearst.

LYLE

Address 43 Hampton Ridge? That's over near that large golf course?

HEARST

Yes. Cypress Hills.

BELL

Pretty hoity-toity over there.

Hearst glances at Bell, then smiles.

HEARST

It's fairly exclusive, if that's what you mean. Maybe someday you'll get to see it. They occasionally have a gate guard position open up.

Lyle gives Bell a "back off" glance before he can reply.

LYLE

Your age is fifty-four?

HEARST

Fifty-five, actually. It was my birthday last week.

LYLE

I see. Thank you.

Lyle pulls a pen from her jacket and makes a note in the file in front of her.



LYLE

Briefly, according to this report, you took this dog for a walk. That was the evening you found the body of the Roberts girl. Gwendolyn Roberts.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

You returned home, telephoned the police, then made this statement...

(shows page to Hearst)

...to Detective Bell here in the presence of a Detective Alcock. Right?

HEARST

If you say so.

LYLE

The dog--

HEARST

A fox terrier. Rough-haired.

LYLE

Owned by a neighbor of yours at Hampton Ridge named Carlton.

HEARST

Yes. Older gentleman. Doesn't get out much.

LYLE

Ever own a dog yourself?

HEARST

When I was a boy. My family had Danes.

LYLE

But you don't have one of your own now.

HEARST

My wife likes cats but thinks they're too unsanitary. Susan would have one only if it could be sanitized.

BELL

Whaddaya mean? Cat's are always licking themselves. Dumped a girlfriend once 'cause of her damn cat. It had me up all night slurping away. A dog's way more unsanitary, but at least when you're sleeping, they sleep.

LYLE

(beat, then to Bell)

Thank you for that.

HEARST

The messiest is the canary. She refused that too, but for once I stuck to my guns. I'm quite firm when I need to be.

Lyle looks at Hearst over her reading glasses.

LYLE

What was his name again?

HEARST

Carlton.

LYLE

No. The dog...

HEARST

Tango.

BELL

(jotting in notepad)

Tango. You write that the same as "tango"?

HEARST

(arrogantly)

How else would you write it? Like cha-cha?

LYLE

Dogs. Fox terriers, in particular. Good hunting dogs. They nose things out long before the human eye can catch sight of them. Rabbits, for example.

HEARST

Yes. I suppose so.

LYLE

Tango. Did he chase rabbits?

HEARST

Sometimes.

LYLE

On the jogging path around the golf course near your home, for example?

HEARST

Yes. On the golf course.

Lyle pauses, then rises.

LYLE

But Tango didn't find the body.

Pardon me? HEARST

You said in your statement that *you* found the body. LYLE

Yes. HEARST

Not Tango. LYLE

Yes. HEARST

I find that odd. LYLE

Why? HEARST

Lyle pulls an 8x10 photo from the file and slides it across the table to Hearst.

Look at it. LYLE

I'd rather not. I don't like-- HEARST

*Look at it!* LYLE

Hearst reluctantly pulls the photo to himself, stares at it.

That's how she was. How we found her. LYLE

How you left her. BELL

In the ditch in the mango grove behind the fifteenth hole. That's how her clothes were. Ripped to hell. Remember? LYLE

Hearst is unable to take his eyes from the photo.

And the blood. You see it? LYLE

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

You can't rape a seven-year-old without there being a lot of blood. On her legs. On what's left of her clothes. Everywhere! Fresh blood, Hearst...*and the dog didn't find it?*

Hearst looks up from the photo.

LYLE

One of the inconsistencies I mentioned. One of the reasons we asked you to come here this evening.

HEARST

(puzzled)

The dog?

LYLE

That the dog--

BELL

A hunting dog, no less...

LYLE

...didn't sniff out the bloody body first.

HEARST

Well, maybe he did. I don't know.

LYLE

But your statement says *you* found the body.

HEARST

Me. The dog. What the hell's the difference?

LYLE

The difference is...why would you leave the jogging path, go deep into that grove, down into that ditch, if the dog didn't lead you there?

HEARST

Okay, then the dog was there. We were together. We found the body. What difference does it make? I called the police.  
(glances at Bell)

Unless perhaps you think the dog was a ventriloquist.

LYLE

*Mr. Hearst! Three small girls were found strangled within a period of twenty-two days! You're a principle witness to one of the crime scenes, and it's my job to make certain the facts in your statement match the facts of the case.*

HEARST

How noble of you.

Bell comes off the wall toward Hearst.

BELL

Listen, you bastard...!

Hearst spins.

HEARST

*What did you call me?!*

Lyle backs Bell off with a touch to his shoulder.

LYLE

Please. Let's all relax here.

(beat)

So you're saying the dog was with you.

HEARST

(angrily)

What dialect you need this in?

(then, trying to

behave)

Yes. The dog was with me.

LYLE

Mr. Carlton says not.

Lyle taps the file with her fingertips.

LYLE

I can quote, if you wish. Mr. Carlton's statement.

HEARST

Mr...?

LYLE

Your next-door neighbor. The owner of Tango.

HEARST

Yes. Of course.

LYLE

He states, quite categorically, that you *did not* call for Tango that evening.

HEARST

He just doesn't remember right. He's old.

LYLE

That could be. But what about your other neighbors -- Mr. Falkener, and Mr. and Mrs. Chambers -- you know them?

HEARST  
 (getting irritated)  
 Yes. Yes, I know them.

LYLE  
 They all know Carlton's fox terrier?

HEARST  
 Everybody in the area knows Tango.

BELL  
 The ghost dog.

Hearst stands, whirls on Bell.

HEARST  
 Listen, you, I've about--

LYLE  
 (firmly)  
 The dog wasn't with you, Mr. Hearst.

BELL  
 So what were you doing down in that ditch in that grove if he wasn't?

HEARST  
 He was!  
 (calmer)  
 I'm sure he was.

LYLE  
 Falkener. The Chalmbers. They saw you that night, but not the dog. Unless they're all suffering memory loss too. Who am I supposed to believe?

HEARST  
 (petulantly)  
 Them.

LYLE  
 Mr. Hearst. Sit in my chair. Listen to what I've been listening to. Your neighbors -- Carlton, Falkener, Chalmbers. They've nothing to gain. Why would they lie about this?

HEARST  
 How should I know?

LYLE  
 What possible reason?

HEARST

Maybe because I'm very rich...because I have a big house and a glamorous wife. I have all those things and it happens I don't deserve them. My looks are entirely ordinary, and I'm no genius. Mediocre people can accept when someone special is successful -- a movie star, or an athlete -- but when it's one of their own, it strikes them as being an injustice. Wouldn't you agree?

LYLE

Would you believe that, if you were sitting where I am?

HEARST

It doesn't matter what I believe. Obviously.

Hearst sits. Lyle looks at the file again.

LYLE

There is another inconsistency regarding this matter. There was no trace of a dog at the crime scene. No tracks, no canine saliva, no feces in the entire general area.

BELL

As in, your Ghost Dog story reeks.

HEARST

*The dog was there.* He was running around in circles. You know how dogs behave, when they're enjoying themselves. I --  
(suddenly realizing)  
Hold it. Hold on.

LYLE

Yes?

HEARST

That day. Right. They're all right about Tango. I *didn't* pick him up from Carlton. He was already out. Playing on the golf course.

BELL

Oh, the dog's a member? Have a decent handicap, does he?

HEARST

He gets out sometimes. I find him on the course when I'm walking.

LYLE

Perhaps you can understand how our interest peaks every time you change your story, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST  
 (cavalierly)  
 And I sure hope this one works to get me off the hook,  
 Inspector.

Bell moves toward Hearst.

BELL  
 Do I have to listen --

LYLE  
*Bell!*

Bell halts. Hearst notices.

HEARST  
 (to Bell)  
 Good dog.  
 (smiling, to Lyle)  
 You've got him trained well, Inspector. Better keep him on  
 that leash, too. You don't want me in a litigious mood.

A long silence. Lyle reaches  
 over, slides the photo back to  
 herself and puts it into the  
 file.

LYLE  
 Did you know Gwendolyn Roberts well?

HEARST  
 A man my age can't know a seven-year-old well. She was known  
 in the neighborhood, if that's what you mean. Seemed happy.

LYLE  
 She must have been very trusting.

HEARST  
 Nobody who knew her would have harmed her.

LYLE  
 Somebody did.

HEARST  
 Yes.

LYLE  
 You have no children?

HEARST  
 No.

LYLE  
 From choice? None of my business, of course.

HEARST

You're right. It's none of your damn business.

Lyle waits. Hearst stares at her, then:

HEARST

What the hell. From choice, if you must know.

LYLE

I see.

Lyle waits again.

HEARST

My wife has always been...afraid.

LYLE

(quietly)

Understandable.

This triggers something in Hearst. His voice takes on an edge.

HEARST

No. It's not. Maybe to you. But not to a man.

(beat, he stands)

A woman gets married, Inspector. Sex may not be all-important, it may not be the main ingredient in the marriage. But it is a *part*. Sex. And motherhood. A woman who marries, while not acknowledging at least *that*, perpetuates a con game. She takes, but refuses to give.

An awkward moment.

LYLE

Your marriage, I take it?

HEARST

Is this pertinent?

LYLE

I wouldn't ask otherwise.

Hearst considers Lyle.

HEARST

Then yes, for whatever it's worth to you.

LYLE

I'm sorry.

HEARST

Sorry?!

(beat)

Are you married, Inspector?

LYLE

(beat)

No.

HEARST

Then how the devil do you know what I'm talking about? By what yardstick? By what impudence do you claim the right to appreciate what I mean?

Hearst walks to the small mirror, checks his tie.

HEARST

Twenty-five years, Inspector. Twenty-five years. That's a long time. A time for celebration. For silver wedding anniversaries.

(turns)

Twenty-five years of near-celibacy. Sex being a dirty word. Sex being something bestial. To be told that you're filthy. Depraved. A pervert.

(an anger rises)

And the condom...never forget the condom. Not the pill. To use the pill would be tantamount to an admission that she copulated. To tell a doctor -- an outsider -- that she and her husband actually coupled. So, no pill. Always the condom. Then, as if I'd injected her with some foul disease, the douche. God only knows what sanitizing muck she washed herself out with.

(beat)

And then, in a final act of...of... She...she...

The rage leaves him. He seems to deflate. The transformation is utter and instantaneous, like turning off a tap.

LYLE

(quietly)

She killed your unborn child.

Hearst's head nods once. Lyle gives him a moment.

LYLE

The shock of finding her. Roberts. There in the ditch, in the mango grove. It must have been very great.

Hearst looks down in front of him, as if seeing the body.

HEARST  
It was.

LYLE  
Did you recognize her?

HEARST  
She was lying face downwards.

LYLE  
But you recognized her?

HEARST  
(getting impatient)  
Yes. Yes, I knew who it was. By her skirt and blouse...her school uniform.

(looks at his watch)  
Look, this is getting ridiculous. I was told this would only take a few minutes...

Lyle stands.

LYLE  
I'm afraid it's going to take a bit longer than that.

HEARST  
What do you mean?

LYLE  
Mr. Hearst. Put yourself in our shoes. First, the garbage dump at Pittston, near Milford. Ten-year-old Pauline Standish is found raped and strangled. Your car was tagged that night as parked illegally in Milford, within a quarter-mile of that dump, which placed you at the scene.

HEARST  
I gave a full explanation.

LYLE  
You gave an explanation. A quiet glass of beer, you claim, in a Milford pub. Then you returned home.

HEARST  
That's right. One glass of beer.

LYLE  
Yes. Well, we'll get back to that. Then second, four days later, near Layton Beach. Where the body of Rosemary Wallace was found.

HEARST  
I made another statement. You no doubt have it in your file there.

LYLE

A conference.

Hearst sighs and sits.

HEARST

A legal conference, yes. One every year. I attended. The evenings tend to become a little boisterous for my taste, so I took a walk along the sea-front up to Dane's Point. I returned to the hotel and went straight to bed. And that's all.

LYLE

Not *quite* all. Eight-year-old Rosemary Wallace can't be dismissed so readily. Her body was found next morning in Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

I don't even know where Jobson's Cove is.

LYLE

Halfway between Layton Beach and Dane's Point.

Hearst flares.

HEARST

What are you getting at?!

LYLE

What I'm getting at is why you're still here, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

(contemptuously)

Suppose you tell me.

LYLE

You know, you should probably have a lawyer come down here.

HEARST

*I am a fucking lawyer!*

LYLE

All right.

(beat; Lyle circles

Hearst slowly)

Here's why you're here: Police procedure. We start with anyone who knew the victim, then proceed outward from there. After Wallace was found, the State Police questioned all people known to be visiting Layton Beach at that time.

HEARST

So naturally you come to me?

LYLE

You were there, weren't you? And good police work showed you'd been at Milford, four days earlier. A coincidence we couldn't ignore.

HEARST

That's just what it was: a coincidence.

BELL

My ass.

LYLE

Perhaps a coincidence, perhaps not. To our manner of thinking, you had exhibited a...how should I put this?...a *habit* of being around when little girls were raped and murdered. First, Pittston. Then Layton Beach. Now, two days ago on the golf course right next to your home at Hampton Ridge, for God's sake!

BELL

You should have been arrested the first time.

Hearst whirls to Bell.

HEARST

I don't like your tone, Deputy Tinkerbelle.

BELL

*Detective. Detective* Bell.

Hearst turns to Lyle.

HEARST

Jesus. You think I killed her.

Lyle suddenly leans into Hearst, hands flat on the table.

LYLE

Yes. We think you killed her. Which in turn means we think you raped, then strangled, all three. Carbon-copies. Whoever did one, did them all. *That's* why you're here, Hearst.

A silence. They stare at one another.

HEARST

I was asked and I came, Inspector. *That's* why I'm here. I came voluntarily. Now I'm going.

Hearst rises and moves toward the door.

LYLE  
(firmly)

Sit down, please.

Hearst doesn't stop. Bell  
aggressively blocks him.

BELL  
Please. Give me a reason.

LYLE  
(very firmly)  
Sit down, Mr. Hearst.

Hearst glares at Lyle in  
defiance, remains standing.

LYLE  
Let's take the "voluntarily" out of this, then. Henry Hearst,  
you are under arrest on suspicion of murder--

HEARST  
*You can't be serious!*

LYLE  
That being the case, you are not obliged to say anything  
unless you wish to do so, but--

HEARST  
*This is ridiculous!*

LYLE  
--whatever you say will be taken down in writing and may be  
given in evidence.

HEARST  
You're not even American!  
(turns to Bell)  
Can she even do this here?

BELL  
The office arrests you, Hearst, not the man...woman.  
Whatever. But if you prefer, I'll be glad to...

Hearst abruptly turns his back  
on Bell, jerks his jacket.

BELL  
Thought so.

LYLE  
You have the right to phone an attorney. In your case, one  
more suited to this matter. If you don't know one, we can  
supply you with a list.

Hearst still says nothing.  
Lyle shrugs.

LYLE

Okay, then. Turn out your pockets. The lot. Everything on the table.

(to Bell)

Detective, please check that they're empty.

Bell moves toward Hearst.  
Hearst moves away.

LYLE

Please, Mr. Hearst. Don't make this more difficult.

Hearst slowly begins to empty his pockets.

Lyle removes her jacket, hangs it on a hook on the back of the door. She rolls up her blouse sleeves, walks to the wash basin, washes her hands, dries them.

LYLE

Everything on the table, Detective?

BELL

(patting Hearst down)

He's clean.

LYLE

Good. Thank you.

(to Hearst)

Please, sit.

Hearst slowly sits.

Lyle looks through Hearst's possessions: a checkbook, a Waterford fountain pen, a silver cigarette case, a silver lighter, a comb, some coins, a calfskin wallet.

Lyle picks up the wallet and sits down, fingering her way through the contents: a driver's license, insurance card, a restaurant receipt, a library card, some photos.

Lyle looks at the photos, picks one and turns it to Hearst.

LYLE

Your wife?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

Susan, I believe you said?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

She'll have to know.

HEARST

Tell her if you have to, but I don't want to see her.

LYLE

She might want to see you.

HEARST

(bitterly)

I doubt it.

Lyle puts the photo back in the wallet, and slides Hearst's possessions to the side. She reaches into her jacket pocket, withdraws a small, portable tape recorder.

HEARST

My God. You're recording this?

LYLE

It's necessary at this point.

(snaps it on)

This is Inspector Catherine Lyle, at Central Precinct, August 5th, 20xx. The time is 11:45 pm. With me are Detective First Grade James Bell, and Mr. Henry Hearst.

Lyle sets the recorder on the table.

HEARST

So. What do we discuss? We've pretty much exhausted canaries and dogs.

Unfazed by Hearst's petulance,  
Lyle picks up a manila folder  
from a small stack to her left,  
with "Standish" printed in  
black marker across the top.

LYLE

Let's talk about the first murder. Three weeks ago at  
Pittston.

(opens the file)

Pauline Standish. Speak no ill of the dead -- in particular  
the violently slaughtered -- but the fact remains that she  
was not a well-loved child.

HEARST

I wouldn't know.

LYLE

Of course not. But for your information: a drunken father,  
her mother a known -- how shall I put this? -- a woman of  
easily-obtained favors. She herself, despite her years, was  
known to the police. Following her mother's lead.

(shakes her head)

Ten years old. A ten-year-old tart. Sad.

HEARST

Why tell me this?

BELL

Because you killed her, you son of a--

HEARST

I've done nothing! I keep telling you!

LYLE

So you do.

(beat)

Ten years old. Teddy bears, dolls, crayons. The expression,  
"a ten-year-old"...that's the impression it evokes.

HEARST

I take it she wasn't?

LYLE

She was a little bitch, according to this.

Lyle runs her finger down a  
page in the file.

LYLE

Expelled from school twice. Ran away from home four times  
in less than a year. Thumbed rides. Some of those long-  
distance truckers aren't too choosy.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

Last time all the way to Los Angeles. There's some suspicion -- rather more than a suspicion -- that she found her way into some pornography.

HEARST

Pornography?

LYLE

Hard-core stuff. Kids and animals. That brand of perversion.

HEARST

My God! You seriously think I'd take a girl like that into...where was it?...the Pittston *dump*?

BELL

Chances are *she* took *you*, Hearst.

HEARST

Not that either.

LYLE

Right. You were enjoying a quiet glass of beer at the time.

HEARST

Actually half a glass. I'm no drinker. Didn't finish it.

LYLE

But you can't remember which pub.

HEARST

We call them "bars" over here.

LYLE

Yes. Which *bar*, then.

HEARST

I didn't notice. I told you -- I'm not really a drinker.

LYLE

And an uncommonly slow one. A half a glass, you say. And it takes you almost two hours?

HEARST

That's what *you* say.

LYLE

No. That's what the Milford police say. Your car was parked where it shouldn't have been for more than ninety minutes. Right before the body of Standish was found. That's slow drinking, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

But that isn't against the law, is it?

LYLE

Slow drinking?

(smiles)

No, that's not yet illegal. Just, shall we say, one more oddity.

(sighs)

So you can't remember the name of the bar. Or its specific location?

HEARST

Sorry.

LYLE

Just that you parked your car.

HEARST

That's all.

LYLE

You walked one hell of a long way.

HEARST

I don't follow.

LYLE

Well, we know exactly where you parked your car. Six hundred yards to the nearest bar. Quite a walk.

HEARST

I like walking. I was out walking when I found Gwen's body, remember?

LYLE

I have a good memory, Mr. Hearst. But walking isn't the same as going for a beer. And why walk? Every bar along that strip in Milford has a parking lot.

HEARST

Perhaps they were full. I don't remember.

LYLE

Thursday evening. Not the best night of the week for the bar business. And every bar owner, waiter, waitress, bartender and barmaid has been interviewed. They all say the same: locals only. They'd certainly remember somebody dressed like you who ordered one beer, then took almost two hours to drink only half of it.

HEARST

(expressionlessly)

I parked my car. I walked to a bar. I had a drink. A single glass. Then I returned to my car. That's what I say, Inspector.

LYLE

And *I* say you're a damn liar! That I don't mind, but you're taking me for an idiot in expecting me to believe it. And that, I *do* mind!

Lyle turns away, controlling her anger. Bell takes the opportunity.

BELL

I need to use the john. You want me to send Adams in?

Lyle checks her watch.

LYLE

No. Just don't be long.

Bell leaves the room. Hearst turns to her, indicates the now-gone Bell.

HEARST

Bit of a hot-head, isn't he?

LYLE

We have different styles.

HEARST

Uh-huh. More *genteel* across the pond? Strong-arm frowned upon, is it?

LYLE

My choice these days.

HEARST

*These* days? Meaning what?

Lyle sits, considers Hearst a moment. Then she picks up the little recorder, turns it off.

LYLE

(smiles)

Off the record.

HEARST

Is it ever?

LYLE

Until Bell comes back.

HEARST

An honorable woman. Surprising.  
(MORE)

HEARST (CONT'D)

(realizing)

Sorry. I didn't mean...

LYLE

It's all right. In this line of work, honor is not always a given.

Lyle picks up the photo of  
Hearst's wife.

LYLE

Tell me about Susan.

HEARST

She'll tell you she tries to be a good wife.

LYLE

Most would, wouldn't they?

HEARST

How many do you think actually succeed?

LYLE

Depends on what you're looking for.

HEARST

A partner. That's all.

(beat)

You weren't completely honest with me earlier, were you?

LYLE

I wasn't?

HEARST

When we were talking about marriage.

LYLE

I said I wasn't married.

HEARST

But you are.

LYLE

On paper.

HEARST

So you know what it's like...

LYLE

No. Not like you. Not the way you mean. My husband left.  
"Split". That's the expression he used. He "split".

HEARST  
With another woman?

LYLE  
At a guess. Who knows?

HEARST  
You never made it your business?

LYLE  
To find out? No.

HEARST  
Why not?

LYLE  
(rising)  
He's a human being. I married him, I didn't own him.  
(beat)  
We married young. The idea of my being a strong woman in a man's world was probably appealing in some way in the beginning. But after years of being late...not being there at all many times...the brass on the uniform tarnishes, if you know what I mean.

HEARST  
You loved him presumably.

LYLE  
A rebuttable presumption. I must have loved him, or thought I did.

HEARST  
And now?

Lyle shrugs.

HEARST  
Children?

Lyle shakes her head.

LYLE  
No. Just as well. I'm not in a business where warmth and nurturing are prized.

Hearst smiles.

LYLE  
How do you feel about your wife? About Susan?

HEARST

(matter-of-factly)

I'm an attorney. In the main, people think we're a breed apart. But we're like any other white collar worker when you first come into the game. For advancement you must always agree with the man above you. Use a blue ballpoint when *he* prefers a black one -- you're finished. You stay an office boy with a jurisprudence degree.

LYLE

You advanced.

HEARST

By using a black pen.

LYLE

Ah.

HEARST

Little dictators, Inspector. Those of us who carry any authority, I mean. You have to be. The decent men, they're all on the lower rungs. That, or they become sick to their stomach and leave.

LYLE

And you?

HEARST

I have an iron stomach. Those under me dislike me intensely. I make no mistakes, because I can't afford to make one. Nobody would point it out to me, or even think of covering up for me. I make no mistakes, therefore I tolerate no mistakes.

LYLE

That hasn't answered my question about Susan.

HEARST

No? I thought it had.

LYLE

Analogies aren't answers.

HEARST

They can sometimes explain a truth.

LYLE

I prefer cat-sat-on-the-mat language. I'm a very simple woman.

HEARST

No, you're not *that*.

(MORE)

HEARST (CONT'D)

(smiles, rises)

All right. Susan. The old joke, Inspector: the young, beautiful, distant wife and the older, rich, love-struck husband. But in real life it isn't a joke. Consider -- would *that* man ever have married *that* woman? A cold -- if I may use the term -- bitch -- for a wife? No. In the beginning, they're equals. Both with visions of a future together. There is love. Or, if not love, something they both mistake for love. Then, suddenly, the bitch emerges. And as she does, the man, for some unknown reason, loves her, pursues her, all the more. The old joke becomes real. But in fact, it's not funny. It is the most unfunny situation a man and a woman can ever get into.

(beat)

I tell you, Inspector. Were I capable of murder, she's the one I'd kill.

LYLE

We're all capable, Hearst. The issue is will. And circumstance.

HEARST

You speaking from experience?

LYLE

Let's just say that experience has taught me that with higher reasoning comes the ability to rationalize. Any of us can justify anything to ourselves if we feel we have to.

The door opens. Bell returns.  
Hearst smiles.

HEARST

Back on the record?

Lyle nods, clicks on the recorder. She picks up another file, on which is printed "Rosemary Wallace", circles Hearst as she talks.

LYLE

Let's turn to Layton Beach. Rosemary Wallace. A year younger than the Standish girl. A nice kid by all accounts. Good home. Well brought up. And, about two weeks after the Standish killing, she's found in Jobson's Cove. Dead. Sexually assaulted...that's the polite term for it.

(beat)

Well?

HEARST

I was in Layton Beach. I've already explained...

LYLE

What you *haven't* explained, Mr. Hearst, is why you're connected by presence to all three murders...Standish, Wallace, Roberts. Why do you keep showing up?

HEARST

I can't help you.

Bell throws up his hands.

BELL

Jesus, will you--!?

Lyle pushes Bell back.

LYLE

It might be difficult, Hearst, but nothing's impossible.

HEARST

(shakes his head)

I can't believe you think I killed her.

LYLE

Which one?

HEARST

For God's sake!

LYLE

Standish? Wallace? Roberts? Which one?

HEARST

The same man killed them all according to you.

LYLE

Well, didn't he?

HEARST

You're conducting the investigation, Inspector. Not me.

LYLE

*Don't get smart with me!* Don't push what little luck you may think you have left. You're in it, man. Right up to the ears. *Be warned.*

Hearst smiles.

HEARST

I'm so used to it, Inspector. The threats. The bullying. It's part of my life. It doesn't bother me anymore. I doubt if even reaches me.

(taps the table)

Be outraged with this table, Inspector. You'll get far more response.

Bell bolts at Hearst.

BELL

*You slimy fuck...!*

LYLE

*BELL! SHUT UP OR LEAVE THE ROOM!*

Bell angrily turns away.

HEARST

I'm beginning to see your point about violence and circumstance, Inspector.

Lyle walks to the door, hangs her jacket on a hook.

LYLE

You're something of a zombie, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

Perhaps.

LYLE

Nothing affects you.

HEARST

I've been conditioned, Inspector. I have no real feelings left.

LYLE

Okay. Let's talk to the man with no feelings, then. Layton Beach.

HEARST

I was there for that legal conference.

LYLE

Check. That I believe.

HEARST

I went for a walk.

LYLE

And a child dies.

HEARST

I had nothing to do with that. Look. I'm not a gregarious person, Inspector. I prefer solitude.

LYLE

Check. That, too, I believe...especially when you're committing child-rape.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

(beat)

This walk you took. From Layton Beach to where?

HEARST

Dane's Point.

LYLE

Too vague.

HEARST

I'm sorry?

LYLE

Dane's Point. It covers a lighthouse. Stretches of cliffs. A couple of meadows inland. It also covers a very private little area called Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

The lighthouse. I walked as far as the lighthouse, then walked back to Layton Beach.

LYLE

The meadow paths? Or along the cliff top?

HEARST

Along the sands out of Layton. Then along the tops of the cliffs.

LYLE

How far?

HEARST

I told you. The lighthouse.

LYLE

Past Jobson's Cove, then?

HEARST

I keep telling you, I don't know Jobson's--

LYLE

Mr. Hearst, it's impossible to get from Layton Beach to Dane's Point without passing Jobson's Cove.

HEARST

If you say so. I don't know the area well enough to argue.

LYLE

So you'll agree, then, that at some point, you were at or above Jobson's Cove?

HEARST

Yes. If you say so.

LYLE  
Where, next morning, the body of Rosemary Wallace was found?

HEARST  
If you say so.

LYLE  
(softly)  
Hell of an admission to make.

HEARST  
That I walked from Layton Beach to the Dane's Point lighthouse?

LYLE  
That you admit to being at Jobson's Cove about the time Rosemary Wallace was murdered. Dusk, correct?

HEARST  
Yes. It was almost dark when I reached the lighthouse.

BELL  
The time's right.

HEARST  
(smiles)  
That should give you some satisfaction.

BELL  
But *you* didn't kill her?

HEARST  
No, I didn't kill her, Depu...Detective.

LYLE  
Was the lighthouse flashing?

HEARST  
Yes, it was flashing.

LYLE  
And the weather?

HEARST  
Foggy. Fairly thick.

LYLE  
How thick?

HEARST  
Fifty-yard visibility...thereabouts.

LYLE  
And when you reached the lighthouse?

HEARST  
I stood there. Looking out to sea. Just, you know, thinking.  
Relaxing.

LYLE  
Just you?

HEARST  
Yes, just me.

LYLE  
Watching the lighthouse beam in the fog?

HEARST  
Yes.

BELL  
Peaceful, eh? Just you and the sea and the fog.  
(under his breath)  
Bullshit.

LYLE  
Nothing else?

HEARST  
Nothing.

LYLE  
Sea birds? Gulls?

HEARST  
It was dark, Inspector. Gulls don't fly much in the darkness.

LYLE  
Surf?

HEARST  
Yes. I could hear the surf hitting the rocks and cliffs  
around the point.

LYLE  
But nothing else?

HEARST  
No. Nothing else.

LYLE  
No people?

HEARST  
No.

LYLE  
No voices.

HEARST  
Not that I can remember.

LYLE  
Nothing?

HEARST  
Nothing. It really was soothing.

LYLE  
Okay. You stood there. For how long?

HEARST  
Ten minutes. A quarter of an hour, perhaps.

LYLE  
And then what?

HEARST  
I walked back.

LYLE  
Which way?

HEARST  
The same way I'd come. Uh...no...not quite. I didn't go down to the sands at Layton. I stayed along the cliff path.

LYLE  
Back to your hotel?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
And to bed?

HEARST  
To my room. I read a little. Then I went to bed.

LYLE  
(politely)  
That is a very nice fairy story. But -- and forgive me -- you're a damn liar--

Hearst sits up, but before he can speak, a knock comes at the door. Lyle looks up, annoyed.

LYLE  
(impatiently)  
Yes! What?!

The door opens and the Uniform enters.

UNIFORM

Excuse me, ma'am. Sorry to interrupt. Mrs. Hearst's here. She demands to see her husband. She won't take "No" for an answer.

A flicker of panic crosses Hearst's eyes, then disappears.

LYLE

(gruffly to Hearst)

You want to see her?

HEARST

No! Under no circumstances do I want her to--

LYLE

Fair enough.

Lyle moves to the door, slides into her jacket.

LYLE

I'll have a word with her. And when I get back, Mr. Hearst, I want you to explain to me what you were *really* doing in Milford and Layton Beach.

(to Uniform)

You sit here until we come back.

UNIFORM

Yes, sir.

The Uniform moves to the chair. Lyle turns to Bell, jerks her head.

LYLE

Detective Bell.

Bell nods and moves out the door, followed by Lyle.

LIGHTS TO ONE-QUARTER ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP FULL ON BULLPEN.

Lyle and Bell enter. Adams leans on the file cabinet.

SUSAN HEARST, 30s, tall, slender, exotically beautiful, stands with her back to them, smoking a cigarette. She snuffs the cigarette in an ashtray and turns to Lyle.

SUSAN

Are you in charge here?

LYLE

(to Adams)

Where's Grimes?

ADAMS

Making rounds, last I heard.

LYLE

(to Susan)

Yes, madam. It seems I am, at the moment, in charge.

SUSAN

I wish to see my husband.

LYLE

Unfortunately, Mrs. Hearst, he has expressed a strong desire not to see you.

SUSAN

That's ridiculous.

LYLE

Probably, but quite within his rights.

SUSAN

Is he under arrest?

LYLE

Oh, yes.

SUSAN

On what charge?

LYLE

It is debatable whether I'm legally obliged to tell you. It is, however, hardly likely that you don't know.

SUSAN

(somberly)

He's a murderer.

LYLE

Whether or not he *is* a murderer is something a court will decide. But as far as the police are concerned, he is *suspected* of being a murderer.

SUSAN

Technicalities. Stupid technicalities.

Lyle considers her a moment,  
then indicates the door.

LYLE

Perhaps we should discuss the matter, Mrs. Hearst. In private?

Susan nods stiffly, and exits  
to the hall. Adams raises his  
eyes to the ceiling in a silent  
prayer of thanks.

Lyle turns to Bell.

LYLE

Coffee, Detective. I think Mrs. Hearst would appreciate a cup. I know I would.

(points to coffee  
counter)

And some of those donuts or something.

Lyle exits. Bell looks at  
Adams.

BELL

A fucking waiter, now.

LIGHTS OUT IN BULLPEN. LIGHTS  
UP FULL IN SMALL INTERROGATION  
ROOM.

Susan and Lyle enter. Lyle  
indicates a chair at the table  
for her to sit, then takes the  
other chair.

SUSAN

I think I may file a complaint. I think I should have been notified.

LYLE

Of your husband's arrest?

SUSAN

Yes. Why wasn't I called?

LYLE

You *would* have been. Within, say, the next hour or so.

SUSAN

It's...

(glances at watch)

...almost one in the morning, Detective.

LYLE

Inspector. Inspector Lyle.

SUSAN

There's a difference?

Lyle smiles.

LYLE

Your husband is under strong suspicion, Mrs. Hearst. It was necessary to interview him at some length.

SUSAN

This time of night?

LYLE

We don't work office hours.

(beat)

I've talked with your husband.

SUSAN

Yes?

LYLE

Of the murders, obviously. But of other things too.

SUSAN

Probably didn't tell you much.

LYLE

No.

SUSAN

He's got a lot of secrets.

LYLE

Yes. Well. As regards that, Mrs. Hearst, I feel it incumbent upon me to explain that you can't be called as a witness against your husband.

SUSAN

Which means you want to ask me some questions.

LYLE  
Please.

SUSAN  
You can ask them. I'll answer those I wish to.

LYLE  
(quietly)  
You called him a murderer.

SUSAN  
I did.

LYLE  
Why?

SUSAN  
He's in police custody, isn't he?

LYLE  
But my general impression is that you have other reasons for making the accusation.

SUSAN  
Call it intuition.

LYLE  
Intuition. That he's a child-murderer.

She's momentarily surprised at Lyle's directness, then...

SUSAN  
Yes.

LYLE  
And a child-rapist?

SUSAN  
Yes.

LYLE  
Three times.

SUSAN  
Three...?  
(then more firmly)  
Yes, Inspector. All those things, ...and other things.

LYLE  
Other things?

Susan contemplates something. Then she looks up.

SUSAN

Henry is a voyeur. He takes a walk each evening. Takes the neighbor's dog. He claims to be a birdwatcher. That's what he'll tell you. It gives him an excuse for carrying binoculars. For tip-toeing around bushes and woods. For seeking hidden places where he can watch people fuc-... fornicating. Which is why he goes to such places. Not to watch birds. To watch the sex. He's been a Peeping Tom for years, Inspector.

(beat)

It's disgusting. Degrading.

LYLE

You talk as if it's more than suspicion...as if you know.

SUSAN

Oh, I know. Twice I've followed him, saw him. Three times I've caught him using his binoculars in the bedroom at night, watching through neighbor's windows. Two years ago, he came home with a bloody nose and a black eye. Said he'd tripped and hit his face against a log. I didn't believe that story then, and I don't believe it now. I think he was caught by somebody and given a beating.

LYLE

Nevertheless, and accepting the truth of what you say...voyeurism to murder. It's a big step.

SUSAN

Voyeurism to the rape of eight-year-old girls. That's the step. Not a very big step, either. After the rape, murder's a necessity. In order to preserve his so-called "respectability".

LYLE

His "so-called" respectability?

Susan considers Lyle a moment.

SUSAN

He's a tax attorney. You know that, of course.

LYLE

At Doyle Liggett.

SUSAN

A pompous position, held by pompous little men.

LYLE

Not always, surely.

SUSAN

With few exceptions. They inflate their own petty importance.

LYLE  
(indicates the  
building)

Like bureaucrats.

SUSAN  
Just like. They try to bring their stupid bureaucracies home. Henry, for example. Unimportant things in themselves, maybe, but they say a lot.

LYLE  
Such as?

SUSAN  
He has a uniform. He never changes it. Work, home...always the same: white shirt, grey suit, black shoes, a tie. No matter what the weather, he always wear a damn tie. Like a badge. And he dry-cleans the suits every two weeks. Every other Friday without fail. It's a ritual.

LYLE  
Image is important to men like him.

SUSAN  
I don't know what's important to him anymore. I don't care.  
(beat)  
Genuine respectability I wouldn't mind. But his facade of super-decency, trying to cover his perversion. Living a foul, perpetual lie.

LYLE  
Mrs. Hearst. Voyeurism. Watching sexual acts. He's not alone. He's not even uncommon. Our culture's full of it. Advertising. Films. Television shows. Plays written by respected playwrights. A form of voyeurism, wouldn't you say?

SUSAN  
I don't watch that kind of play.

LYLE  
Not you, madam. But a great many do. And most not murderers.

Susan smokes her cigarette in  
silence.

LYLE  
You called *him* a murderer.

SUSAN  
I did.

LYLE  
Why?

SUSAN  
 (softly)  
 I have my reasons.

LYLE  
 Tell me.

SUSAN  
 I've already told you--

LYLE  
 Nothing, Mrs. Hearst. That he's a Peeping Tom. We get a complaint along those lines every week. But nobody accuses peepers of murder. Or of rape. You're certain, however. "He's a murderer." What makes you so sure?

Susan sits back and considers Lyle.

LIGHTS TO ONE-QUARTER ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP FULL ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

The door opens. Bell enters. He leaves the door open, taps the Uniform's shoulder.

BELL  
 The coffee's brewing. Lyle and this bastard's wife want some. Come back when you've delivered it to them.  
 (off the Uniform's quizzical look)  
 Come. Back. When. It's. Delivered.

The Uniform hesitates, then stands and leaves the room. Bell closes the door, saunters to the table, unhurriedly. Threateningly. Like a big cat approaching a tethered prey..

BELL  
 I bet they run fast, don't they?

HEARST  
 Excuse me?

BELL  
 The little girls. When you chase them.

HEARST

You'll know what fast is when you see my lawsuit hit you.

Bell ignores the threat, circles Hearst.

BELL

Amazing. Three children strangled and raped and yet you find humor in it.

HEARST

Raped and strangled.

BELL

What?

HEARST

You said strangled and raped. These things should be put in the right order. Don't you agree, Detective?

Bell just smiles.

BELL

You smile at them, call 'em over? "What's your name, sweetheart? My, you're awfully pretty."

(beat)

But what do I know? Maybe the kids lured and seduced you. It happens.

HEARST

You're obsessed, you know it?

BELL

I'm just curious. Come on. Tell me about it. You touch them?

(pokes him)

Like that?

Hearst knocks Bell's hand away.

BELL

That hurt? You hurt them, don't you? Those little girls.

Hearst turns from him.

BELL

You kiss them?

HEARST

Stop it.

BELL

Is that what you do? "Come here little girl...I'd like to run my hands all over you..."

This is insane.

HEARST

Bell's hand shoots out, twists his fingers into Hearst's hair and jerks the now-frightened man's head back. He moves his face directly into Hearst's.

BELL

Just you and me, now, fucker. And you're going to spill your lousy guts. Get it? Word-perfect.

Hearst, terrified, doesn't move a muscle.

BELL

Stand up.

Hearst slowly rises, Bell's hand still grasping his hair. As Hearst straightens, Bell suddenly and viciously buries his fist into Hearst's midsection, crumpling him to the floor.

Hearst lays there, curled into a ball, gasping.

BELL

(tonelessly)

Who did you kill?

Hearst just moans. Bell circles him.

BELL

Gwendolyn Roberts?

Bell kicks out as he says the name, the toe of his shoe thudding into the vertebrae in the small of Hearst's back.

Hearst spits a quick, animal-like scream of pain, then curls forward again, hugging the lower half of his body.

Sneering, Bell kicks Hearst in the back again.

Pauline Standish?  
BELL

Hearst tightens himself into a ball, chin buried in his chest, knees pulled up, blood now trickling from his mouth.

Rosemary Wallace?  
BELL

A third kick to Hearst's spine. A groan of agony.

Bell leans against the wall, arms crossed, looking at Hearst...No pity, no remorse...just naked contempt.

Who did you kill, fucker? I'll wait.  
BELL

LIGHTS OUT IN THE MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL IN THE SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle considers Susan.

Well?  
LYLE

She tells it as if talking to herself.

SUSAN  
Five years ago...six perhaps. How long ago doesn't matter. I have a brother...a married brother. We were at a Christmas party at his house, with he and his wife. And his daughter. A very beautiful little girl. Cindy. I love her dearly. She deserves to be loved. Some children...they have a touch of magic about them. An innocence. Cindy had it. She was seven then, or eight.

A painful memory stops her, then she continues.

We'd had a nice day. Exchanging presents.  
SUSAN  
(MORE)

SUSAN (CONT'D)

Watching television. Helping Cindy play with her toys. Talking. That sort of thing. Just the five of us.

(beat)

We'd had lunch. A lovely salad. Cake and ice cream. It was wonderful. And we were all so happy. Really happy. Like a family should be at Christmas. We'd had this lovely meal, and we were cleaning up. I carried the dishes into the kitchen. Beautiful china. Tiny pink roses. I was so afraid I might break one of them. I carried them so carefully. From the dining room to the kitchen. It would have spoiled everything if I'd...

Lyle listens intently, her eyes riveted to Susan.

SUSAN

And Bill -- that's my brother -- Bill was upstairs. He's one of those old-school hi-fi guys. Records only, you know? He was playing carols, I think. Yes, Christmas carols. And we -- Alice and I -- were in the kitchen. And that left...

(beat)

That left Henry and Cindy in the dining room. Alone.

She stops. Pain crosses her face, but she deflects it.

SUSAN

The bread plates. We'd used five of them. And I'd only brought four in from the dining room. I thought I'd brought them all. But I'd only brought four. So...So I went back into the dining room. A lot of wrapping paper around. Christmas paper. What we'd wrapped the presents in. I thought the bread dish might be under...

(long beat)

He was there. Henry. Still on the dining chair. Turned away from the table. And...And Cindy was sitting on his knee, and...

(beginning to tremble)

And he had his hand...She was wearing a lovely red dress. Trimmed with white fur. Like Santa Claus. We'd called it her Santa Claus dress. Such a pretty dress. Alice had made it for her. For Christmas. And...and...

She emits a low, despairing groan.

SUSAN

He had his hand under the hem of the dress. Under the fur. His...his whole hand. His whole forearm. And -- the *animal* -- with his other hand he was guiding Cindy's hand...He was -- he was unzipped. And he was...was...was...

Susan breaks.

Tears spill from her eyes and roll down her cheeks. She stares into Lyle's eyes.

SUSAN

*Do I have to paint you a picture!?*

LYLE

(gently)

No.

She pulls a handkerchief from her purse, puts it to her eyes.

SUSAN

That poor child. I saw her face. She was terrified...

She stops. Swallows. Then straightens up. Puts her handkerchief in her purse and snaps it closed.

SUSAN

(hard, cold)

He's a child-rapist, Inspector. And a child-murderer. Never doubt it for a moment.

LIGHTS OUT IN SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL IN MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Bell leaves the wall, goes to Hearst.

BELL

Get up, filth. Enough crying.

Hearst continues to moan.

BELL

GET UP! Get up, you bastard! Tell me the truth! *Who did you kill?!*

Hearst turns his face up at Bell. He sets his jaw.

HEARST

(through his teeth)

I. Killed. *NOBODY!*

BLACKOUT.

CURTAIN.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

CURTAIN UP

LIGHTS UP ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Scene is as at end of Act One: Bell stands over Hearst. At lights up, Bell snaps out a hand and grabs the front of Hearst's shirt and raises the other hand in a fist to punch him.

BELL

Killed nobody my ass!!

The door suddenly opens, and the Uniform enters.

UNIFORM

The coffee's ready. Do you...  
 (realizing)  
 Detective! For God's sake!  
 (out the door)

*Sergeant!*

Bell straightens, lets Hearst drop, points.

BELL

Close the door...

UNIFORM

Oh, no! I'm sorry Detective. I want none of this. This makes me a witness, and I want none of it.

BELL

It's two to one, if he squawks.

UNIFORM

Two to one if I lie. Two to one if I tell the truth. I'm fucked either way. So, sorry. I won't lie for you.

Adams enters. He sees Hearst wiping blood from his mouth and immediately knows.

ADAMS

Jesus.

(MORE)

ADAMS (CONT'D)  
(to Bell)  
Outside. Now.  
(to Uniform)  
You too.

UNIFORM  
With pleasure.

The Uniform exits immediately.  
Bell hesitates.

BELL  
He's a fucking child-killer!

ADAMS  
Detective. Get a coffee. Take a piss. Go home. I don't  
care. Just leave.

Bell stares at Adams a moment,  
then strides out. Adams closes  
the door behind him.

Adams helps Hearst up into the  
chair. Hearst wipes his bloody  
mouth with his sleeve.

ADAMS  
He bounce you around a bit?

HEARST  
That what you people call it?

ADAMS  
Your mouth's bleeding.

HEARST  
It's nothing.

Adams points to the shelf.

ADAMS  
There's some towels over there.

Hearst rises, still doubled up  
a bit, moves to the shelf,  
takes a towel and dabs at his  
lip.

ADAMS  
Need a doctor?

HEARST  
No.

ADAMS

If you need a doctor--

HEARST

I don't need a fucking doctor!

Adams sits on the corner of  
the table.

ADAMS

How you want to play this?

HEARST

What?

ADAMS

You gonna say anything?

(off of Hearst's  
silence)

Bell...you know...he's a bit of a one-man commando unit  
sometimes. Likes a scrap. But he's a good cop. No excuse,  
of course.

HEARST

You're right. No excuse.

ADAMS

So...you gonna make a complaint or what?

HEARST

After what he's done to me, I should.

(beat)

Just let it go.

Hearst walks back to the table,  
towel against his mouth.

HEARST

But I don't want to see the man again. You understand? You  
can tell that to Inspector Lyle. Only her from now on, unless  
she wants to see what I can do with a lawsuit.

ADAMS

I'll do that.

Adams moves to the door.

ADAMS

I'll do that right now.

Adams exits, closes the door.  
Hearst sits at the table,  
nursing his lip with the towel.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS  
TO FULL ON THE SMALL  
INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle and Susan sit facing one  
another, just as we left them.

LYLE

What about divorce? I'd say the incident with Cindy would  
have formed a basis.

SUSAN

Maybe I should have. That would have given his precious  
"respectability" a kick in the teeth.

LYLE

Indeed.

SUSAN

But he'd have fought it. And that would have meant Cindy  
testifying -- that little girl trying to explain what he'd  
done. I couldn't allow that.

LYLE

But you still stayed with him.

SUSAN

Don't believe all you hear about the "liberated woman",  
Inspector Lyle. Most of us are indentured servants when you  
get down to it. Even someone like me: a trophy some say.  
Kept. But with the security of marriage, Henry can't easily  
trade me in. I get what I want. I have a home that is *my*  
home. I come and go as I please.

LYLE

But what about--

SUSAN

The physical side of such a marriage?

(off Lyle's nod,  
she rises)

You're a woman. You know. If a woman decides to make that  
part of marriage unimportant, it *becomes* unimportant. Mind  
over matter, right?

(off Lyle's silence)

Anyway, I have no right to refuse him. But I can make it  
repellent. In any number of ways. Most women know them.  
Played properly they can make a man feel unclean, decayed.  
In time, I'm told, they can even make him impotent.

LYLE

So...you've repaid him, in your way.

SUSAN  
And will for the rest of my life.

LYLE  
Just one thing...  
(stands)  
Three children have been raped, then murdered. It could be argued that the man responsible was grabbing at forbidden fruit because the fruit to which he had claim was being denied him.

SUSAN  
(sneering)  
Little girls?

LYLE  
A Peeping Tom's a coward isn't he?

SUSAN  
Henry's certainly that.

LYLE  
Well?

It suddenly hits her.

SUSAN  
(whispered)  
Oh, my God!  
(she sinks into chair)  
Oh my God, if I've been indirectly responsible...

LYLE  
I wouldn't know.

SUSAN  
You just said...

LYLE  
A possible argument, no more.

SUSAN  
I'd hate to be married to you, Inspector.

LYLE  
I don't see what--

SUSAN  
You know how to drive the knife home. To give it that little twist that really hurts.

LYLE  
You're the one who called him a murderer. Who was so sure.

SUSAN

And he isn't?

LYLE

A court will decide that...eventually.

SUSAN

No, I mean you. What do you think...?

LYLE

(calmly)

I think you're right. I think he *is* the murderer. The rapist. And I'm certain I'll get him to admit it. But that doesn't change what you--

A tap on the door breaks the moment.

LYLE

Yes.

The Uniform enters, carrying a tray with two coffee mugs and a small plate of donuts.

UNIFORM

With the compliments of Sergeant Adams, sir. And he asked to speak with you as soon as it's convenient.

Lyle nods, looks at Susan.

SUSAN

I'd like to go home, Inspector.

LYLE

Of course. I'll arrange for someone to take you.

SUSAN

No. Thank you. I'd rather walk.

LYLE

It's after one a.m. Not the safest time of the night to be walking these streets. I'll have somebody--

SUSAN

No.

Susan rises, moves toward the door.

SUSAN

I want to be alone. I need to think a little. Perhaps more than a little.

Susan steps past the Uniform,  
exits.

Lyle looks at the Uniform.

LYLE

Adams?

UNIFORM

Bullpen, ma'am.

Lyle exits.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE SMALL  
INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO  
ONE QUARTER ON MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM.

Hearst picks up his pack of  
cigarettes, takes one out and  
gingerly places it on his  
bruised lip. He lights it,  
takes a deep pull and blows  
smoke at the ceiling.

Hearst sits forward, but the  
motion makes his abdomen hurt.  
He winces, rubs his stomach.

LYLE (O.S.)  
(muffled, through  
the wall)

WHAT?!?

Hearst looks around, as if to  
see where the outburst came  
from, sees nothing, returns to  
his smoke.

LIGHTS TO FULL ON THE BULLPEN.

Lyle enters, followed by Adams.

LYLE  
Stupid! Uncalled for! And quite unnecessary!

ADAMS  
Perhaps he thought it would--

LYLE

Don't defend him. Where is he?

ADAMS

I'm not sure. I suggested he go home for the night.

LYLE

Probably going to be longer than that.

ADAMS

Need we say anything upstairs?

LYLE

We don't say anything, Hearst can blackmail us all.

ADAMS

Oh, I don't think--

LYLE

Don't take Hearst for granted, Sergeant. He's in a corner, but he's still capable of fighting back.

ADAMS

Bell said Hearst's not going to crack without--

LYLE

Oh, he'll crack. That's what I do, and I do it well. I can prove him a liar half-a-dozen times over on what he's already said and get a conviction. But I want it from his own lips. That's what *I* want. I want him inside *my* box...nailed, screwed, glued, and dovetailed. And *that* I intend to have.

Lyle turns and walks out of the Bullpen. Adams follows.

LIGHTS OUT ON BULLPEN. LIGHTS  
REMAIN FULL ON MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle enters the room, followed by Adams. Lyle sits, faces Hearst.

LYLE

You have, of course, cause for complaint.

HEARST

What?

LYLE

I'm told Detective Bell assaulted you in my absence.

HEARST  
He lost his temper.

LYLE  
A poor excuse.

HEARST  
It doesn't matter. Forget it.

LYLE  
Meaning you don't want to file a complaint?

HEARST  
(beat)  
This is complicated enough for me already. You deal with him as you see fit. Leave me out of it. Just keep him away from me or you *will* have trouble.

Lyle considers Hearst a moment.

LYLE  
Very well.

Lyle squares up the papers in one of the files on the table.

LYLE  
In that case, if you're up to it. Let's move to--

HEARST  
My wife...?

Lyle looks up at him.

LYLE  
She's on her way home.

HEARST  
No. I mean...what did she say?

LYLE  
Oh, many things. A great many things. Very interesting things.

HEARST  
About me?

LYLE  
Naturally.

HEARST  
What, for example?

LYLE

Correct me if I'm wrong, Mr. Hearst. But as I recall, you refused to see her.

HEARST

Yes, but --

LYLE

You could have been present. You could have heard every word she said. You chose not to.

They stare at one another...a  
clash of wills. Then:

HEARST

It was all lies, anyway.

LYLE

Perhaps.

HEARST

But you'll believe her.

LYLE

I don't believe lies, Mr. Hearst. Whoever tells them. I find the truth.

Lyle sits back, then picks up  
a file.

LYLE

Now, I want to go back to yesterday. When, as you say, you *found* the murdered body of the Roberts girl.

HEARST

I've already told you everything...

LYLE

No. Not quite everything. For example, you say you recognized her.

HEARST

Yes.

Lyle stands and paces around  
Hearst.

LYLE

Let me get the picture properly painted, Mr. Hearst. As you tell it, of course. You're there on the path around the golf course. Enjoying yourself in your own quiet way. It wasn't a bad evening. A little rain during the day, as I recall. But the evening turned clear, very pleasant. Am I right so far?

Hearst nods.

LYLE

Good.

(beat, then leans  
over Hearst)

Why the ditch?

HEARST

The ditch?

LYLE

Where the body was. In the mango grove. It had rained, remember? Ditches are messy places at the best of times. A nice gravel path to walk on and you walk in the ditch. Why?

HEARST

The dog--

LYLE

Forget the dog. There was no dog. We've been over that.

HEARST

The body. I saw--

LYLE

Oh, no. Not from the path. Long, dead grass and lots of old, dead leaves. Where golf balls go to die. The body was virtually invisible from the path. And yet you just *found* it...or so you claim.

HEARST

I don't follow your line of argument.

LYLE

I think you do, Mr. Hearst.

Lyle picks up a large tablet  
and marker and draws.

LYLE

There...the golf course. Here...the path. There...the ditch in which the body was found. And there -- separated from the golf course by the ditch in the mango grove -- a ridge. You know that ridge, of course?

Hearst doesn't react.

LYLE

Of course you do. It overlooks the backs of the houses of Hampton Ridge, doesn't it?

HEARST

I suppose so.

LYLE

You know so. You live there. And more specifically, it overlooks the bedrooms. And there, in the ditch,  
(marks a big "X")  
...the body of Gwendolyn Roberts.

Hearst is silent.

LYLE

You're with me so far?

HEARST

I suppose.

LYLE

Were you walking along the ditch in the grove? By that I mean *in* the ditch? Along the run of the ditch?

HEARST

No. Of course not. After that rain, you'd need rubber boots...

LYLE

My point precisely. Therefore you must have been *crossing* the ditch.

HEARST

Why would I cross the --?

LYLE

To get *to* the ridge or return *from* the ridge, obviously.

HEARST

I don't know what you're getting at.

LYLE

Going to? Or coming from?

Nothing from Hearst.

LYLE

*Going to? Or coming from?*

HEARST

Coming from, if it's any of your business.

LYLE

It's *all* my business. So. Coming *from* the ridge?

Hearst nods.

LYLE

Good.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)  
 (a satisfied smile,  
 sits)  
 Fine. That's another step forward isn't it?  
 (quickly, pointedly)  
 Why did you run all the way home?

HEARST  
 (startled)  
 What?

LYLE  
 You ran all the way home.

HEARST  
 After I'd found the body?

LYLE  
 Yes. Why?

HEARST  
 The...shock.

LYLE  
 But why run *home*?

HEARST  
 To-to telephone. To--

LYLE  
 You don't have a mobile phone?

HEARST  
 Not on me. Not that night.

LYLE  
 You passed people, certainly.

HEARST  
 Yes, I suppose I did. But--

LYLE  
 Why not tell one of them?

Hearst rises.

HEARST  
 I wanted the police. I--

LYLE  
 You could have stayed by the body. Have someone else call.

HEARST  
 Yes. I know, but--

LYLE  
Dialed 9-1-1.

HEARST  
Can't you understand...?

LYLE  
The quickest way, surely?

HEARST  
I know. Sitting here--

LYLE  
So why go all the way home?

HEARST  
(angrily)  
Who the hell knows why they do what they do? Christ!

LYLE  
When you arrived home, you still didn't call.

HEARST  
I'm sure I did.

LYLE  
(pulls a page from  
the file)  
A statement from your wife. You ran into the house and  
upstairs. That's what *she* says.

Nothing from Hearst.

LYLE  
Why?

HEARST  
I went to the bathroom, if you must know.

LYLE  
Why?

HEARST  
Dammit! I wanted to vomit. To be sick. That's why.

LYLE  
From shock?

HEARST  
From seeing what I just--

LYLE  
How many suits do you have, Mr. Hearst?

HEARST  
What?

LYLE  
(patiently)  
Suits. Clothes? How many suits?

HEARST  
I don't know. Dozens.

LYLE  
How many grey serge?

HEARST  
What on earth?

LYLE  
Your suits, Mr. Hearst. Grey serge. How many?

HEARST  
(sits)  
I don't know. Three. Four. What does that matter?

LYLE  
Three or four?

HEARST  
Three. Four. Well, three good ones. Look, I can't see--

LYLE  
And all your shirts are white, of course?

HEARST  
I don't see how you know--

LYLE  
And--presumably--all your shoes are black?

HEARST  
Yes. Yes, they're all black, but what does that--?

LYLE  
Good. Good.  
(rises, circles  
Hearst)

The picture then. You find the body. You're shocked. Still in a state of shock, you run home. You rush to the bathroom to vomit. Then you go back downstairs, telephone the police and arrange to meet them where you found the body. Correct so far?

HEARST  
Yes. Yes, that's exactly what happened.

Lyle nods, hesitates a moment, then leaning over him, a pointed...

LYLE

Now tell me what you were doing on the ridge!

Hearst gags, puts his hand to his mouth.

HEARST

I need to use the toilet.

LYLE

Wonderful timing.

HEARST

I need--!

LYLE

Yes, yes.

Hearst bolts up toward the door, hand still on his mouth.

LYLE

Sergeant Adams will escort you. It's necessary, I'm afraid.

Lyle points to Adams, who rises and opens the door for Hearst.

Hearst hurries out, followed by Adams. Lyle stands a moment, rubs the back of her neck, then exits the room as well.

LIGHTS DOWN ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON THE BULLPEN.

Lyle enters the room, moves to the coffee pot. Grimes is already there.

GRIMES

Ah. Lyle. Finished with Hearst?

LYLE

No, sir. At the moment, he's attending to the wants of nature.

GRIMES

Uh-huh.

LYLE

Hearst's under formal arrest, by the way. He's been given your Miranda.

GRIMES

You're as sure as *that*?

LYLE

That he's the murderer? Yes. I've enough evidence to justify an arrest. I'm certain, though, that he'll give me the confession I want before morning.

GRIMES

Good. Good. I'll leave it to you then.

LYLE

Yes, sir.

Grimes turns to go, then stops and turns back.

GRIMES

Oh...by the way...his wife's down the hall. I told her you'd be in to--

LYLE

She's *here*?

GRIMES

Yes. Odd time of night, but...Ran into her in the foyer. Said she wanted to see you. I thought the small--

Lyle sets her coffee down, moves to the door.

LYLE

Yes. Yes, that will be fine. Thank you.

GRIMES

(to Lyle's back as he exits)

You'll keep me informed...?

LIGHTS DOWN ON BULLPEN. LIGHTS TO FULL ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Susan stands at the table.  
Lyle enters.

Mrs. Hearst? LYLE

Susan turns to Lyle. Not nearly as defiant...almost timid.

I thought you'd gone home. LYLE

Halfway...I turned back. SUSAN

May I ask why? LYLE

I'm frightened, Inspector. SUSAN  
(beat)

Of going home alone? I said we'd-- LYLE

No. Of what...what I might have done. SUSAN

Susan lowers herself into one of the chairs by the table.

Lyle pulls out her pack of cigarettes.

Cigarette? LYLE

No. Thank you. SUSAN

All right. LYLE

Lyle studies her a moment, then as she makes a move to leave, Susan looks up.

Is Henry...? SUSAN

He...needed a break. We both did. LYLE

Has he...? SUSAN

LYLE  
Not yet. But he will.

SUSAN  
You're sure?

LYLE  
Yes. I'm sure.

SUSAN  
What about a lawyer...?

LYLE  
He's refused one. Just as he refused to see you.

SUSAN  
Why? Why won't he see me?

LYLE  
I'm sorry. I can't answer that. Perhaps there's a certain amount of shame...?

SUSAN  
You...you won't hurt him?

LYLE  
You have my word.

SUSAN  
And...if he *does* ask for me...

LYLE  
You'll be told immediately.

Lyle then turns and exits the room.

LIGHTS DOWN ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle enters. Adams, sitting in the chair by the door, stands. Hearst sits at the table, slouched over.

Lyle nods toward Hearst.

LYLE  
(to Adams)  
He all right?

ADAMS

He threw up. Sick as a dog. Dry heaves by the end.

Lyle walks to the table,  
assesses Hearst.

LYLE

Are you unwell, Mr. Hearst?

HEARST

No. It's...I'm all right.

LYLE

You've been vomiting? Do you need a doctor?

HEARST

No. No doctor...thank you.

LYLE

(smiling)

Something you ate, perhaps?

HEARST

I don't know. Perhaps.

LYLE

Or guilt? Guilt plays havoc with the digestive system.

HEARST

(through clenched  
teeth)

I'm all right, Inspector. As you say, it must have been something I ate. Christ! How much longer is this going to take?

LYLE

As long as it does.

Lyle reaches for a file.

LYLE

So let's get back to --

HEARST

*For God's sake!* I keep telling you--

LYLE

(wearily)

You do indeed. But unfortunately, what you tell me doesn't jive with what we know--

HEARST

I can only say what--

Lyle raises her hand to stop Hearst.

LYLE  
(politely)  
Let's turn to the Layton Beach problem.

HEARST  
Problem?

LYLE  
Discrepancy, then. Two weeks -- thereabouts -- after the Standish affair.

HEARST  
So you say.

Lyle begins to circle Hearst again.

LYLE  
You were at this convention get-together. You weren't interested in the drinking and chatting of the evening, so you went for a walk. Right so far?

Hearst nods.

LYLE  
A pleasant walk along the beach to Dane's Point and the lighthouse. A few lungfuls of clean, salt air then back to the hotel and bed. Still right?

HEARST  
That's what happened.

LYLE  
You met nobody?

HEARST  
Nobody I knew. Nobody I can remember.

LYLE  
You passed Jobson's Cove.

HEARST  
I told you, I might have passed it...I just don't know.

LYLE  
Will you take my word? That it's impossible to reach Dane's Point by land without passing by Jobson's Cove?

HEARST  
I'll take your word.

LYLE

Good. It's dusk. To quote your own words, you just "stood there". Looking out to sea. The light flashing. Not a sound. Tranquillity would, I think, be an appropriate word to use.

HEARST

It was very tranquil, yes.

LYLE

And, what sounds there might have been were, presumably, deadened by the fog. Is that the picture?

HEARST

It was very nice.

LYLE

Mm-hmm.

(beat)

Ear-plugs?

HEARST

What?

LYLE

Were you wearing ear-plugs?

HEARST

Why on earth should I be --

LYLE

I've been to Dane's Point, sir. I've seen the fog. Thick as the pea-soupers in Britain sometimes.

HEARST

So what? What's that got to do--?

LYLE

The old lighthouse. Very beautiful at night, with the beam sweeping around like a searchlight. But not much good in fog. Hence...the foghorn.

HEARST

Foghorn...

LYLE

Quite. The foghorn.

(leans into him)

Don't try another now-I-remember routine, sir. I know that foghorn. Anywhere near the lighthouse it would be blasting your ears off. The one thing you *would* remember.

Hearst opens his mouth, as if to speak, but doesn't.

LYLE

At Jobson's Cove you can just about hear it, but only if you really *listen* for it because it points out to sea. But if you're otherwise engaged...busy...raping and killing an eight-year-old child, for instance--

HEARST

That's not true!

LYLE

(mockingly)

Listening to the surf. *Hearing* the surf with a foghorn blasting your ears off.

HEARST

I didn't kill her.

LYLE

Fog. Visibility fifty yards. But that stuff swirls a lot, so visibility nil at odd moments.

HEARST

I didn't kill her.

LYLE

Walking back in the fog and near-darkness. Those cliff tops don't have street lighting, Hearst. How did you do it? Radar?

HEARST

I didn't kill her.

LYLE

You never went near Dane's Point, Hearst! You never went within a mile of it! You've been feeding lies since you sat in that chair. When are you going to stop taking me for a fool? When are you going to say something I might conceivably believe?

Hearst slams the table, stands and leans into Lyle.

HEARST

I didn't kill her. *I didn't kill her!* I DIDN'T KILL HER!

LYLE

(calmly)

If you didn't kill her, Then why so obviously lie?

HEARST

(beat)

I didn't...I didn't actually *lie*. Not...*lie*.

Hearst sits, reaches out to his case of cigarettes.

LYLE

(sighs)

Oh, come, now. Don't let's have to start at the beginning again. The truth, now...if you don't mind.

HEARST

God, does this ever end?

Hearst lights a cigarette.

HEARST

The truth. You want the truth.  
(off Lyle's nod,  
rises)

All right. I've told you about my marriage. My wife and the way she...

(beat)

I have wants, Inspector. Needs. I'm normal in that respect. I'm not an old man.

Hearst hesitates. Lyle waits.

HEARST

I go with women, alright? Sometimes. When I'm away from home. Often in fact. That's where I was. At Layton. With a woman.

LYLE

With a whore?

HEARST

You could call her that, I suppose. I don't choose to.

LYLE

(flatly)

What else?

HEARST

That's it. I didn't go to Dane's Point. Nowhere near it. I was with this woman.

LYLE

Which woman?

HEARST

What difference does it make? She was a prostitute I picked up. At Milford, too.

LYLE

Same woman?

HEARST  
No. Different ones. A different one each time.

LYLE  
Young ones?

HEARST  
I don't see--?

LYLE  
You like them young?

HEARST  
Fuck you! You going to tell me you don't like the young boys? You're divorced. You're not dead. So who do you talk to in a bar? The best-damn-looking guy you can get away with, that's who. And he's not fifty. Probably mid-thirties. But in his twenties, now we're talking! You go for the best you can get. It's not any different for me, for men. Young girls, they don't talk...they laugh, they live. They make you feel alive. And their bodies: hard, tight, and smooth, the way bodies are supposed to be. And saying that doesn't make me a pervert any more than it does you. Yes, I like them young. At least I'm honest enough to say so.

LYLE  
(smiling)  
Interesting.

HEARST  
What?

LYLE  
No more glass of beer. No more lighthouses. Now it's ladies of the street. Young ones.

HEARST  
Look, a man doesn't like to broadcast--

LYLE  
Didn't seem to worry you.

HEARST  
I told you. It's my wife.

LYLE  
Your wife was with you, then?

HEARST  
For God's sake! Of course not. That's not what --

LYLE  
Then why bring her into it?

HEARST

It's her fault. She's the one to blame. Fundamentally.

LYLE

Not you?

HEARST

No. Not really. She's --

LYLE

(softly)

Home-spun psychology. Nobody does anything because he *wants* to do it anymore. You go to bed with a couple of tarts but it's not your fault. It's your wife's fault. You weren't tempted. You didn't fall. You were pushed. That's supposed to make it okay?

HEARST

It's an alibi. It proves I wasn't--

LYLE

(wearily, sitting)

Their names, please?

HEARST

Who?

LYLE

The whores. The one at Milford. The one at Layton Beach. Their names and addresses.

HEARST

I don't know them.

LYLE

You called them *something*, surely?

HEARST

No.

LYLE

Nice. The mind boggles. Non-identifiable fornication. Copulation on a "Hey, you" basis.

HEARST

I never asked.

LYLE

You propositioned them, surely?

HEARST

I use taxi drivers. I tell them I'm looking for a woman. One of them always knows somebody.

LYLE

And?

HEARST

They drive me to a house. I never ask where it is. I pay them, ask them to come back for me in two hours.

LYLE

(mockingly)

Good Lord!

HEARST

That's what happened! At Milford. And at Layton Beach.

LYLE

But you don't know the names of these "ladies" nor where they live?

HEARST

No.

LYLE

The names of the taxi drivers?

HEARST

No. There was no need.

LYLE

The license numbers of the taxis?

HEARST

No.

(a sigh of defeat)

No. I don't have any of the names. Or the addresses. But it's the truth. It's something I dare not tell you before. My reputation. Can't you see that?

Lyle rises.

LYLE

What do I see? I see three children sexually assaulted, then murdered. That is what I see, Hearst. That is all I am allowed to see. Indeed, all I want to see. However, criminal law requires I identify "means", "motive", and "opportunity". You were in the vicinity of each crime on the day and time that crime was committed. Opportunity. You have hands. Means. The motive? Well, now, the sexual assault in each case is motive enough for the murder. Self-preservation...the assurance that your petty "respectability" remains untarnished. But motive for child-rape over and above that? Shall we call it "Cindy"?

Hearst reacts physically to the name.

LYLE

Yes. I know *exactly* what happened. Men like you don't change. They hold themselves in check for just so long, then the madness touches them once more, and a "Cindy" situation suddenly presents itself. They lose control. And that periodic loss of control is all the "motive" needed.

A silence falls on the room.  
Lyle and Hearst face one another, motionless. The silence of defeat gazing at the silence of victory.

HEARST

(very softly)

Cindy...she told you?

Lyle nods, sits.

LYLE

(quietly)

Your wife, too, knows how to hate.

Utter silence. Then Hearst breaks away from Lyle's gaze. He rises, walks to and faces the wall.

HEARST

My God. I never dreamed she'd take it to such lengths...to take it to this point. It's...it's surreal.

A long moment of silence. Then Hearst, staring at the wall, speaks, his voice suddenly different...broken, somehow.

HEARST

You know, when I arrived here, I had one thing left. My dignity. By your yardstick -- by Susan's yardstick -- a dignity I had no right to claim, and yet, a dignity. The dignity which comes only with continual humiliation. *My* dignity. And you -- the both of you -- are stripping me of even that. How dare you?

Lyle looks at her watch. She then reaches for the last file.

LYLE

I think it's time we talked about the last killing again...Gwendolyn Roberts.

Hearst whirls.

HEARST  
*What do you want?!*

Lyle rises.

LYLE  
I want you to sit, please.

Hearst regards Lyle a moment, then sighs, and moves to his chair and sits. Lyle begins to pace around the room slowly, deliberately, head down.

LYLE  
A quick question: about your clothes.

HEARST  
What's that got to do with--?

LYLE  
Humor me. You have your suits dry-cleaned, so I'm told?

HEARST  
I like to look smart.

LYLE  
Regularly?

HEARST  
Don't you?

LYLE  
How regularly?

HEARST  
Every two weeks. Every alternate Friday.

LYLE  
Good. Good. Now...the question you didn't get around to answering: Just exactly what were you doing on the ridge?

HEARST  
The ridge?

LYLE  
We established...remember? You found Roberts's body in the ditch. You had to *be* in the ditch to find it. Crossing the ditch...that's what you said. Coming from the ridge, you said. What were you doing on that ridge?

Hearst is quiet.

LYLE

The ridge, sir?

HEARST

(beat)

I have a hobby. Bird-watching. I take every opportunity possible. Most evenings, in fact.

Lyle begins circling again.

LYLE

You had your binoculars with you?

HEARST

You can't really pursue the hobby without--

LYLE

You were on the ridge? With your binoculars?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

Enjoying the peepshow.

HEARST

I beg your pardon?

LYLE

The peepshow. Couples. In their bedrooms.

HEARST

Inspector, if you seriously think--

LYLE

Yes, I "seriously think", Hearst. Your wife's seen you at it.

HEARST

She told you...?!?

LYLE

Binoculars come in useful for that particular hobby. So do ridges along groves of trees where you can hide as you look into private bedrooms.

(laughing)

Birdwatching.

HEARST

This is a nightmare.

LYLE

So, you were the only one on that ridge that night?

HEARST

I can't see how--

LYLE

And the murder was committed in the grove by the ridge.

HEARST

That's taking a lot for granted. That's--

LYLE

That's taking *nothing* for granted, Hearst. You were on the ridge by the grove. You admit it. And the times tally. Tell me. What am I taking for granted?

HEARST

That I killed her.

LYLE

Did you?

HEARST

Of course I didn't.

LYLE

The "of course" prefix doesn't follow.

HEARST

All right, I *didn't*. Does that satisfy you?

LYLE

As a denial. But not necessarily as the truth. You've had a problem with the truth tonight.

HEARST

You can't prove I was the only one on the ridge that evening.

LYLE

I can't imagine you doing what you were doing with a crowd around.

HEARST

Fuck you.

LYLE

Roberts was there.

HEARST

Obviously.

LYLE

And *if* you were the only other person there...what then? Maybe she stumbled on you, saw what you were doing with your binoculars.

Speculation.  
HEARST

Lyle leans over the table,  
looks directly at Hearst.

LYLE  
It's not speculation that Gwendolyn Roberts was raped and  
strangled in that grove.

HEARST  
Dammit! I didn't--

LYLE  
Somebody did! Somebody killed her! Somebody dragged her  
into the grove, killed her, and made an effort to hide it.  
*Somebody* did.

Hearst rises, moves DS, where  
he looks and gestures to a  
spot in front of him, as if  
looking into the ditch.

HEARST  
I keep telling you. I *found* her in the ditch.

Lyle joins him, looking into  
the "ditch".

LYLE  
Yes, you keep telling me. That you found her. That you  
recognized her.

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Face downwards.

HEARST  
Her clothes. I recognized her--

LYLE  
School uniform. You recognized her school uniform.

HEARST  
(nods)  
Yes.

LYLE  
Don't be a damn fool! A school uniform. Filthy. Torn.  
Bloodstained. And the wearer is face downwards in a ditch.  
Half-covered in muck and leaves. Wearing what?  
(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

A uniform worn by hundreds of other kids. And you "recognized" *her*. Without even touching her.

HEARST

I didn't touch her.

LYLE

But you recognized her...so you claim?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

How? Exactly *how* did you recognize her? Unless you personally dumped her there, how in God's name did you recognize her as Gwendolyn Roberts?

HEARST

(hands up, backing away)

No...No...No...

Lyle begins circling again.

LYLE

Okay. Forget that lie a moment. You found her.

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

And you didn't call anyone, or shout out. You just ran home?

HEARST

I told you. I was panic-stricken. I'd just found a murdered child. I wasn't thinking clearly.

LYLE

When you arrived home, you didn't immediately call the police.

HEARST

Not immediately.

LYLE

Why?

HEARST

I've already told you.

LYLE

Tell me again.

HEARST

I wanted to vomit.

LYLE

You didn't vomit at the scene.

HEARST

No, I didn't vomit at the scene.

LYLE

Why not?

HEARST

I don't know. One doesn't control these things. They just happen.

LYLE

But you were sick when you arrived home?

HEARST

Yes. Violently sick.

LYLE

Your wife didn't help you?

HEARST

No.

LYLE

Why not?

HEARST

(sitting)

How do I know? She doesn't care. We live under the same roof...that's all.

Lyle begins circling now, in ever tighter circles, more aggressive with each question.

LYLE

All right. You were sick, then you telephoned the police?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

And arranged to meet them at the scene?

HEARST

They asked me to go back and meet them there.

LYLE

And you agreed?

HEARST  
Yes. Naturally.

LYLE  
Earlier this evening -- last night now -- I showed you a photograph.

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
You didn't want to look. Remember?

HEARST  
Yes, I remember.

LYLE  
Clothes ripped to hell. Blood everywhere. You implied that's how you left her. When you went for the police.

HEARST  
Did I? I can't--

LYLE  
A specific implication. "That's how I left her." Remember?

HEARST  
I think so...I don't--

LYLE  
A statement likely to be made by a murderer.

HEARST  
For God's sake! It was how I left her. How the police found her when--

LYLE  
Nevertheless, the kind of statement likely made by a murderer.

HEARST  
You're twisting my words. You're--

LYLE  
If you killed Roberts, you killed Standish and Wallace.

HEARST  
But I never--

LYLE  
Carbon copies, Hearst. Perfect replicas. One man, three murders.

HEARST  
I didn't kill Roberts.

LYLE  
Standish?

HEARST  
No.

LYLE  
Wallace?

HEARST  
No! How many more times? I was--

LYLE  
I know. You were with a woman...or you were gazing out to sea. You were with a woman...or you were enjoying a quiet drink. Anything but killing children.

HEARST  
Look, if I lied, it was because--

LYLE  
You lied. You're still lying.

HEARST  
You've no right...no proof...

LYLE  
You reported the murder of Roberts to the police and met them at the scene?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Cooperated with the police as much as possible?

HEARST  
Of course.

LYLE  
Statements, for example?

HEARST  
Yes. Three statements. One about each murder.

LYLE  
Statements containing lies?

HEARST  
I...Look, it's not that I--

LYLE  
Statements containing lies?

HEARST

Yes. All right. At least, not *all* the truth.

LYLE

At the Roberts killing, you handed in your clothes?

HEARST

Yes.

LYLE

Normal procedure. Clothes. Shoes. All of it. For forensic examination.

HEARST

Yes.

Lyle points at the files on the table.

LYLE

It's in there. The report from the forensic science lab.

HEARST

I expect it is.

LYLE

They're very thorough, the forensic scientists. Very thorough. They examine every inch microscopically.

HEARST

I suppose they do.

LYLE

No mention of leaves, Hearst. No mention of muck from the ditch or traces of vomit, or anything at all of the kinds of things expected from the story you tell were on one square centimeter of your clothes.

Lyle lunges into Hearst, leaning over him.

LYLE

You changed clothes, Mr. Hearst! You weren't sick. When you arrived home, you changed clothes *before* you telephoned the police.

HEARST

I-I...

LYLE

Identical suit. Identical shirt. Identical shoes. So easy for you because it's all you own.

Hearst appears more and more desperate.

LYLE

Blood. Semen. Vomit. That's why you *had* to change clothes before you called the police. Destroy the evidence.

HEARST

It wasn't like that...!

LYLE

Thursday rape and kill! Friday, dry-cleaning! The murder one day, evidence-free clothes the next!

HEARST

It's not like that! It's just that-just that...!

LYLE

'Just that' what?!

A sudden and profound silence, then both speak quietly.

HEARST

(beat)

I'm sorry.

LYLE

About?

HEARST

Truly sorry.

LYLE

Yes?

HEARST

I seem to be...

LYLE

What?

HEARST

(long beat)

There's no way out...is there?

LYLE

You've lied too much, Hearst. A lot too much.

HEARST

So many lies.

LYLE

No more, though...eh?

HEARST  
No. No more lies.

LYLE  
The truth? Just for a change?

HEARST  
I can't...do this anymore.

Lyle crosses her arms across  
her chest.

LYLE  
You killed Roberts?

Another long beat.

HEARST  
(almost whispered,  
with a nod)  
Yes.

LYLE  
After sexually assaulting her?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
And Standish?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
And Wallace?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
All three?

HEARST  
Yes.

LYLE  
Sexual assault...then murder?

HEARST  
(tortured, tormented)  
Yes. Yes. YES!!

Then there is abject silence.  
Deep, pregnant silence.

Hearst rests his elbows on the table, lowers his head and places his palms over his temples and ears.

Lyle stands, breathes deeply. She moves to the small mirror, observes herself, smiles slightly. She pumps hand sanitizer into her palm, rubs it into her hands.

LYLE

(into the mirror)

It's done with. It's out. From here on, it gets easier.

Nothing from Hearst. Lyle moves to him.

LYLE

I know what I'm talking about, Mr. Hearst. I've gotten confessions too many times to have any doubt.

Hearst still doesn't move.

LYLE

A statement now. It's the usual thing.

Hearst finally drops his hands flat on the table, staring straight forward at nothing.

HEARST

Why not?

LYLE

I'm not pressing. It's your decision.

HEARST

Will it help?

LYLE

It gets your side down in black and white. Keeps things clean.

HEARST

All right. I'll give you your precious statement. Just tell me how you need me to say it.

Lyle looks at Adams.

LYLE  
Statement forms, please, Sergeant.

Adams rises from the chair.

ADAMS  
Yes, ma'am.

Adams opens the door, exits  
into the hall.

LYLE  
Your wife's still here.

HEARST  
I don't want to see her.

LYLE  
Why not?

HEARST  
She'd no right to tell you...to give you--

LYLE  
In her defense, she didn't give it as much as I took it.  
Cindy. Standish. Wallace. Roberts. It's a pattern. I  
needed that pattern. Cindy was the key only your wife could  
give me. I needed it to unlock you.

HEARST  
Your key. Your pattern.

LYLE  
Try to be grateful--it's over. It stopped at Roberts.

HEARST  
(disgusted)  
Jesus!

Adams returns, carrying tablet  
and cheap ballpoint pen. He  
places them on the table in  
front of Hearst.

LYLE  
Your statement, Hearst. Your own words. Write it yourself  
or dictate it to Sergeant Adams.

HEARST  
I'll dictate it.

LYLE  
Fine.

Lyle looks to Adams, who takes Lyle's chair, sits down, takes the tablet and pen in hand.

HEARST

One thing, Inspector. May I ask Sergeant Adams questions?

LYLE

What sort of questions?

HEARST

Exact locations? Specific times? I don't remember every...you understand.

LYLE

Yes. But he'll only help you jog your memory. He won't put words into your mouth.

HEARST

All right.

LYLE

Good. I'll be back presently.

Hearst looks at Adams, who readies to copy. Lyle moves to the door, opens it, looks back at Hearst a moment, then exits the room.

LIGHTS TO ONE-QUARTER IN MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

Lyle enters, flops wearily into the vacant chair. Neither she nor Susan speaks for a moment.

SUSAN

(quietly)

He's confessed.

LYLE

Yes.

SUSAN

It's taken longer than I expected.

LYLE

He'd a lot to lose.

SUSAN

What...exactly?

Lyle lets her eyes fall directly onto Susan.

LYLE

His life. In this state, he'll get life. There'll be recommendations attached to limit parole. He'll be lucky if it's less than twenty-five-thirty years.

SUSAN

He'll be an old man.

LYLE

(harshly, pitilessly)

Lady, he won't live it out. The other prisoners will know what he's done, will make his life hell. Given the chance, they'll cripple him in some way. Given a free hand, they'll kill him.

SUSAN

Oh, my God!

Lyle stands, towering over her.

LYLE

It's what you wanted, madam. It's what *I* wanted. This so-called civilized community demands it. We must not, now, cry in our beer.

SUSAN

We mustn't forget...

LYLE

The children. Oh, no. We must not forget the children. Cindy, for example.

SUSAN

Cindy?

LYLE

Your husband. Men like him. They're twisted. But they hide it. And they're *helped* to hide it, Mrs. Hearst. Their families. Their wives. Their brothers, sisters...everybody. This damned "respectability". It's the family's as much as the guilty man's. It's like having an alcoholic in the family. It's a skeleton in the closet...so let's close the door and keep it locked. Let no one know. So--eventually--something like this happens. They rape. They kill. Because "respectability" needed to be protected. But who the devil wants "respectability" at *that* price?

Lyle leans into her, her fingers on the table.

LYLE

You do, madame. You and thousands like you. Cindy was the tip of the iceberg. You knew it, but you chose to ignore it. "For Cindy's sake" you said. The hell it was. Three children had to die "*for Cindy's sake*". It's disgusting.

Lyle moves to the door, turns back to her.

LYLE

He needed treatment five years ago. You knew it, you're not a fool, but you chose to punish him instead. How did you put it? "Played properly a woman can make her husband feel unclean." You played it well, madam. But you played the wrong game -- you could have forced him to seek treatment, but you played the wrong game...and you played it very skillfully.

Lyle opens the door.

LYLE

For the record, madam. I'm undecided. I don't know who I despise more -- you, or your husband.

Lyle exits the room. Susan stares at the closed door for several moments, then her shoulders begin to shake, and sobs boil up from her throat. She explodes into tears and bolts from the room.

LIGHTS DOWN ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS TO FULL ON BULLPEN.

Lyle enters. She notices Bell, who sits on the desk as in the first scene. The Uniformed Officer is standing at a FAX machine, which is printing out a bulletin page.

As Lyle moves to the coffee stand, begins to pour herself a cup of coffee:

LYLE

Thought you were going to go home, do whatever it is morons do.

BELL

Still my case.

LYLE

Not any more.

BELL

What do you mean?

LYLE

In the court's hands now.

BELL

(surprised)

He *confessed*?

LYLE

Of course he did. I told you I know how to handle these things.

BELL

Everything? Rapes *and* murders?

LYLE

All of it. All three.

(pointedly, proudly)

And I didn't lay a hand on him.

The Uniform picks up the printed FAX and reads it.

BELL

(just as pointedly)

No. You left that to me.

(stands)

You counted on me making a move, didn't you, Inspector? You saw it coming, right? Knew that if you gave me an opportunity, that if I had a little dance with him, it would soften him up for you. A "little talk" my ass. You needed me to remind him he's in America, where we don't care so much about being polite. You just didn't want to get your hands dirty.

Lyle smiles.

LYLE

Perhaps. But it's like shedding tears for them, Bell, the rough stuff is. Different end of the spectrum, that's all. And I'll never give them the satisfaction of my doing either.

(MORE)

LYLE (CONT'D)

Never met one of them worth it.

(beat)

You'll get there. It's an art. Just takes a little time.

UNIFORM

(under her breath)

Jesus.

BELL

Yeah, well...Never considered myself an artist. Hope I never do.

(a two-finger salute)

Cheerio.

Bell exits.

The Uniform looks up at Lyle.

UNIFORM

Ma'am.

Lyle continues with her coffee, doesn't look up.

LYLE

Yes?

UNIFORM

I think you should see this, ma'am.

Lyle looks up at the Uniform, who holds out the FAX.

Lyle sets her coffee down, takes the FAX, rubs her eyes, puts on her glasses and reads. When she's finished, she looks up at the Uniform.

LYLE

This is confirmed?

UNIFORM

Yes, ma'am. They wouldn't put it on the wire unless it was.

LYLE

Christ.

LIGHTS DOWN ON THE BULLPEN.  
LIGHTS UP TO FULL ON THE MAIN  
INTERROGATION ROOM.

Hearst and Adams are still at the table.

ADAMS  
That's it, then? That's everything?

HEARST  
Yes.

ADAMS  
Nothing you want to add?

HEARST  
I don't think so, no.

ADAMS  
Sign it, then, make it official. At the bottom there.

Hearst does so.

The door opens. Lyle enters, carrying the FAX.

Adams stands, tablet in hand. He moves to Lyle.

ADAMS  
Just in time, ma'am. Signed, sealed, and delivered.

LYLE  
A full statement?

ADAMS  
Yes, ma'am.

LYLE  
All three murders?

ADAMS  
Yes, ma'am.

LYLE  
How much help from you, Sergeant?

ADAMS  
Not much. Names and dates. Addresses. Odd bits and pieces he'd forgotten.

Lyle closes the door gently, walks slowly and deliberately to the table, stands looking down at Hearst.

LYLE  
(softly)

Why?

HEARST  
The explanations you wanted -- they're all in the statement.  
As you said.

LYLE  
No. I don't mean that. I mean *why*?

Hearst frowns, puzzled.

HEARST  
I don't understand. It's what you--

LYLE  
This...

Lyle holds up the FAX.

LYLE  
From the Southport police, just north of here. It came in moments ago. Double-checked and confirmed. Eleven o'clock last night. An eight-year-old girl was attacked...dragged into a wood. Two men -- passersby -- heard her screams. They got there too late to save the girl, but grabbed the man. A long-distance truck driver. The Southport detectives interviewed him most of the night. He confessed an hour ago. Knows things about the Standish killing, the Wallace killing, the Roberts killing...things only the murderer can know. Things I haven't even told you.

ADAMS  
My God.

Lyle taps the statement from Hearst.

LYLE  
*Why?* In God's name, why *this*?

Hearst is silent. Lyle, obviously completely stunned, lowers herself into the chair across from Hearst.

LYLE  
(gently, steadily)  
Mr. Hearst. Will you please tell me *why*?

Hearst pauses, then speaks to the table, quietly.

HEARST

Why not? I know what I am. It *could* have been me. In other circumstances it might of been. Susan will never believe it was someone else. Not after...Cindy. She'll always believe it was me.

(beat)

I'm just so fucking tired of it all.

Hearst stands, looks directly at Lyle. His voice steels.

HEARST

And you. You painted me so tightly into your little picture, hell-bent, all because of some stupid lies about sordid infidelities that *any* man would wish to keep private. The sad details of my life were just puzzle pieces to you. Who cares about the agonies they represented. It had to be me. You were so damned cocksure. Well, it *could* have been me, so *let* it be me. You'd left me nothing. It just didn't matter anymore.

(beat)

That's why, Inspector.

Hearst begins gathering his belongings from the table.

HEARST

I assume I'm free to go.

LYLE

(standing)

Yes. Yes, you are. With our apologies.

Hearst turns to Lyle as he prepares to leave, faces her.

HEARST

You know what you did tonight, Inspector? You and your 'art of interrogation'? You simply proved that sometimes it's easier to confess to a lie than lie about the truth.

Lyle sinks into her chair.

LYLE

All while another girl died.

HEARST

(twisting the knife)

Yes. Tragic. How do you feel about that?

Hearst turns toward the door, then stops and turns back.

HEARST

I'm curious. Did you tell Susan about the prostitutes?

A devastated Lyle shakes her head "no".

HEARST

But you would have.

Lyle nods "yes".

HEARST

I thought so.

Hearst turns to go.

LYLE

You must love your wife very much, Mr. Hearst.

HEARST

That's none of your business anymore, is it? If you don't mind, tell her I'll meet her at home. I don't want to see her in...

(looks around)

...this place. I assume you understand.

Hearst exits. Lyle sits a moment, frozen and in shock, then rises, moves to the door.

LYLE

I'll speak with Mrs. Hearst.

ADAMS

Yes, sir.

Lyle exits. Adams turns out the light and follows.

LIGHTS DOWN ON MAIN INTERROGATION ROOM. LIGHTS UP ON SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM.

The room is empty as Lyle enters. She's surprised. She turns to go back out when the Uniformed Officer rushes in, breathless, distraught.

UNIFORM

Ma'am...Mrs. Hearst. Outside. Just now. She-she stepped off the sidewalk...straight into the path of a moving bus. Deliberately. Dozens of witnesses. The driver had no chance to...She's...she's...

LYLE

(like a 2x4 across  
the forehead)

Not...*Dead*...?!

The Uniform nods. Lyle's body seems to implode on itself. Sobs well up from her chest. Tears explode from her eyes. She runs from the room.

SLOWLY CROSSFADE LIGHTS,  
DROPPING SLOWLY TO BLACK ON  
SMALL INTERROGATION ROOM, AS  
THEY RISE SLOWLY TO FULL ON  
BULLPEN.

Adams stands at the coffee table, pouring himself a cup of coffee. A moment later, Grimes enters the room in a huff.

GRIMES

What the hell's going on?

ADAMS

Sir?

GRIMES

I just passed Lyle in the hall. She looked -- I don't know -- she looked like a damned corpse!

ADAMS

Sir?

GRIMES

And for God's sake, she was *crying*!

BLACKOUT.

CURTAIN.

THE END.