

MISTER CLAWS

Written by

CHRISTOPHER BLAIR HARMON

EMAIL - DARKMARKTWAIN@YAHOO.COM

EXT. BUFFALO, NEW YORK SKYLINE - NIGHT

Plump snowflakes tumble through the dark sky. Lights of the city below, twinkle.

SUPER - BUFFALO, NEW YORK

INT. HALLOWEEN STORE - NIGHT

Many items seem to be sold out, but there are still plenty of scary masks that line the walls.

Classic monsters from film are prominent, but so are hideous, disfigured faces that make the skin crawl.

At the counter is, ORLANDO CRAWFORD, a bearded, middle-aged African American, with streaks of gray in his hair and streaks of a joker in his personality.

He sports a Buffalo Bills letter-man jacket and seems a bit uneasy as he looks at some of the more gruesome masks.

A curious soul, he takes in all the displays of gore and makes humorous facial expressions as some masks actually shock him.

Orlando's eyes lock onto a particularly frightening werewolf mask. Huge fangs drip with blood as it's eyes glow red.

Tugs on his arm, cause him to look down. His son, ten year old version of himself, shakes him away from the decorations.

BENNY CRAWFORD, has his pirate costume in his other hand and they are next in line to get rung up.

BENNY

Earth to dad. We're next.

Orlando peers down at the excited kid, then looks at the outfit he wants to buy.

ORLANDO

Sure you want a pirate? They were criminals, you know. Why not an astronaut or a superhero?

BENNY

Some folks say, all cops are bad. That's not true, is it? I'm sure there was cool pirates, right?

The look on Orlando's face shows he is proud of that flow of logic and smiles.

ORLANDO

Point taken.

Dad hands the costume to the cashier.

INT. SHOPPING MALL - NIGHT

People of all kinds in heavy coats mull around. Orlando carries the bag from the store, as he walks to the exit with an exhilarated Benny.

A display of Santa's workshop, gets the final touches put on it. A guy in St. Nick gear inspects the throne he'll sit in.

ORLANDO

Christmas stuff already? That makes me sick. We didn't even get through Halloween yet. How ridiculous.

BENNY

I like Christmas. My friend Marshawn said Santa is fake. Is that true?

ORLANDO

I don't wanna talk about Santa now. We're about to go outside, bundle up, young man.

People entering the mall, brush snow off of themselves.

BENNY

Sure, Dad. But it bugs me ... If he's not real, why do we do all these decorations and stuff.

They get closer to the exit. Orlando rolls his eyes to the heavens as he searches for the right answer.

The boy searches his father's face for a response, none comes. Just as they reach the door, Benny pulls back. Stops.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Really, Dad. I wanna know. Got to know. Is he real or not?

A deep breath is sucked in by Orlando. He looks around himself, then whispers in his son's ear.

ORLANDO

Yes, he WAS real. Then ... I had
to blow his brains out.

Stunned, Benny's eyes are wide and full of questions. Tears begin to form. Orlando regrets his response immediately.

BENNY

Huh? What -- why?

ORLANDO

Come on, boy. Don't cry. Look,
I'll explain on the way home.

The dazed boy is lead out of the mall ... By his father. The killer of Santa Claus?

FLASHBACK

SUPER - BUFFALO, NEW YORK - ELEVEN YEARS AGO

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

A TEEN emerges from his car and sneaks over to a building with a backpack on. A canister is extracted and he tags a building with spray paint.

He looks around to make sure he's not seen. The snow covered ground crunches under him. Now done ... He stands back to view his creation.

The 'bad boy' hears a sound of branches snapping from the nearby woods. He freezes in place. Then hears ... GRRRR!

Teen eyes show fright. He stuffs the canister back into the backpack ... Then his face reflects panic as he peers back at the woods. A full sprint to his vehicle ensues.

He must cross the snow drift that rings the plowed parking lot before he can reach the car. His feet get stuck in the snow bank. A shoe comes off. He leaves it.

Terrified, he sprints to the car. The ... GRRR, behind him seems louder - closer.

Abruptly, he is yanked out of view. Screams are heard. Blood squirts on the white snow.

EXT. WOODS - DAY

Pine tree branches, covered in white, greet the morning sun, near a stream. A pine cone falls, then rolls and stops on a section of non-white snow.

A post is next to it. Upon the pole -- the decapitated head of the mischievous teen.

INT. ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION - NIGHT

Snow falls hard, as seen through a window. Around the room are remnants of a potluck party. Pumpkins and Halloween decorations are on display, alongside Buffalo Bills items.

Peering at the weather is a younger Orlando, clean-shaven and in his Deputy Sheriff uniform. A donut with orange frosting is bitten into by him. His lips are comically covered in orange goo as he chews.

ORLANDO

Looks like the shit is starting early this year. Ain't even November yet. Somebody get me to Florida, pronto.

His co-worker, EVELYN, a plus-sized Native American from the Seneca nation with graying hair - hands him a napkin.

EVELYN

Look at you, Orlando. That's why they call us -- pigs.

The other deputies near the food table chuckle. DONNELLY, a lumberjack looking Irishman of Orlando's age adds ...

DONNELLY

Evelyn ... Don't pick on the little fella. He's trying to eat without a bib, like a big boy.

Orlando wipes off the frosting and tosses the donut in the trash can.

ORLANDO

Ha ha. Funny. I don't know about you losers, but I'm going to party tonight. It's Halloween.

EVELYN

Party? You better stay home and give out candy. Your place got egged last year, remember?

DONNELLY

Yeah, and my arm is still sore from that, a year later.

He winks at Orlando.

ORLANDO

Clown all you want to, but I'm gonna to do it up tonight. Costume and everything. The only candy I'm interested in is eye-candy. A new strip club just opened up.

DONNELLY

That means he'll be looking to borrow money tomorrow, because he spent his whole paycheck there.

ORLANDO

And look at that, I'm off the clock. Dress-up time.

EVELYN

Drag isn't considered a costume if you wear it every night.

He gives her - the eye. Others laugh.

ORLANDO

I don't do drag, sorry.

DONNELLY

Come on, Ru Paul is cool. A slinky gown, a big wig ... Evelyn can do your make-up.

ORLANDO

Evelyn ain't wore make-up since they landed on the moon. I got the shit. Wait and see.

Orlando snatches up his bag containing his secret wardrobe and heads to the bathroom.

EVELYN

So you going out tonight too?

DONNELLY

If this snow lets up, I'll shuffle my brats around for a minute, then watch a horror flick with wifey.

EVELYN

I hear you. I might just--

Orlando emerges from the bathroom in full regalia.

DONNELLY

Oh my God. What the ... Who are you supposed to be?

The transformed Deputy does a 360 degree spin.

ORLANDO

Buffalo Bill Cody, at your service.

His co-workers get a laugh out of his fashion show. The fringed leather jacket, fake handle-bar moustache and goatee looks crazy on him. Orlando plops the cowboy hat on his head as the final touch.

DONNELLY

More like Buffalo Bill, scrotum-ly.

ORLANDO

I know you're jealous, but don't hate. Makes your face look uglier than it already is.

Sheriff QUEZADA, old enough to retire but too stubborn to follow through, stops in his tracks at the sight of Orlando.

QUEZADA

Hey, it's the guy from the beef jerky commercials. You bring samples or what?

ORLANDO

Hey Boss. It's my costume. Buffalo Bill Cody.

QUEZADA

You're going in the public like that? My God. Please tell me you're off duty.

ORLANDO

Off duty and about to see some booty -- at that new strip club by the stadium. Can't remember the name of--

Quezada strolls closer, looks him up and down.

QUEZADA

The RAZZLE DAZZLE. Church folks and old ladies are complaining about it already. Be low-key, please. I don't need a scandal.

EXT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - NIGHT

In the parking lot, Orlando emerges from his Mustang that sports a large Buffalo Bills bumper sticker. He speaks under his breath.

ORLANDO

I will not fall in love with a
stripper. I will not fall in love
with a stripper.

He confidently strides up to the entrance as snow falls, The building is decorated for Halloween and football season. A 'GRAND OPENING' banner is over the door. Orlando enters.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Snow flurries dance in the wind as the tire tracks behind an old truck start to disappear. The trailer looks old and need of some repairs.

INT. TRAILER - NIGHT

A rerun of COPS, blares in the background as criminals are chased and tackled by policemen. A laugh is heard. The laugh is followed past Buffalo Bills memorabilia to a corner

On a recliner, an older guy with white beard and beer belly RONNIE SCHWARTZ, chuckles as he munches popcorn. Retired, alone, messy, cop awards on walls ... Amused by the episode.

RONNIE

Got 'em. Little punk.

Through his window, he spots other trailers decorated for Halloween. He picks up his phone and sees the date.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Oh shit. I have to play dead or
get hit with brats wanting candy.

Off goes the TV and lamp. In semi-darkness, he scrolls through his phone.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

This sucks, maybe I'll just go out
for the night instead.

INSERT PHONE SCREEN

A sexy ad for a new strip club near the stadium shows a dancer in a cheerleader outfit. It reads, "The Razzle Dazzle has free admission on Halloween if you wear a costume."

END INSERT

A big smile breaks out and his eyes liven up.

RONNIE

Hmm. Naked girls? Hell yeah.
Costume? ... Only got one.

He struggles to get off the chair. When he stretches, it seems painful. Ronnie goes to the closet, smiles, pulls out an outfit that seems red.

EXT. TRAILER PARK - NIGHT

Ronnie, as Santa Claus, treks carefully over snow and ice, to his truck. As he approaches the driver's side, costumed kids converge on the driveway. Ronnie rolls his eyes.

KIDS

Trick or treat!

He adjusts his Santa hat - bends down to their level.

RONNIE

Look kids, Santa has an emergency
at the North Pole. No candy
tonight but I'll make up for it on
Christmas. Okay?

The kids look dejected and stroll away. Ronnie hears them complain about it.

KIDS

Liar ... Cheapo ... Forget that
loser ... Let's go.

Ronnie watches them scatter with a scowl on his face.

RONNIE

Damn spoiled brats. Wish I was
still a cop, I'd show 'em. Get me
outta here before more of them
rodents show up here.

He opens his truck door.

EXT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Ronnie parks near the edge of the woods, since most spaces are already taken. He gets out and looks around.

RONNIE

Wow. This place is gonna rake it
in tonight.

He proceeds to the entrance, as the jolly old elf.

INT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - NIGHT

Ronnie enters and is overwhelmed. Walls are lined with posters of Buffalo Bills all-stars amid Halloween stuff. A dancer on stage makes his eyes bulge.

Dancers wear sexy outfits inspired by Bills uniforms. Patrons wear various costumes, some humorous.

A waitress in a sexy referee outfit passes him with a pitcher of beer and full shot glasses. His face reflects that he's found heaven. An older blonde comes up to him.

MARVALETTE LEVY

Welcome Santa, I'm Marvalette Levy,
head honcho. Would you like a
table - or close to the stage? We
call that Pole Position.

RONNIE

Close as possible, young lady.

MARVALETTE LEVY

Happy Halloween, we aim to please.
Follow me.

He sees dancers in mid-drift jerseys bump and grind with a diverse crowd of customers.

RONNIE

If heaven don't look like this,
I'll be seriously disappointed.

A funky **RICK JAMES** song plays on the sound system.

He's sat next to a smiling Orlando on one side, and a guy in a Roman soldier outfit on the other.

Orlando has an attractive Black dancer with long hair. Her jersey reads, 'THURMAN TOPLESS' as she does a sensuous lap dance. Her bottom is a sheer mini skirt and go-go boots.

MARVALETTE LEVY
Whatcha drinking, St. Nick?

RONNIE
Genesee beer. A pitcher, sweetie.

On stage is a young, tall dancer, big breasted - with blue hair. Her jersey reads, BIG JARS METZELAARS.

Orlando's interaction with his stripper, seems to be breaking his rule of not falling in love.

ORLANDO
Girl, you are HOT. You got a boyfriend?

THURMAN TOPLESS
Why? You like this, big daddy?

ORLANDO
I may dress like Buffalo Bill Cody but that's not beef jerky in my pocket. Okay to see you outside of the bar?

THURMAN TOPLESS
Maybe.
(beat)
Where do you live and where is your wife at?

ORLANDO
Me? Looky here, little mama. I'm single, good job and my crib is right here in Orchard Park. Not too far.

She smiles and her 'grindage' intensifies.

THURMAN TOPLESS
What you driving?

ORLANDO
Mustang baby, what else could a legendary cowboy ride?

Drinks arrive for Ronnie. He pours out a beer and dives deeper into the stage show. The Roman soldier next to him, PRIMO PILETTI (40's) watches his movements. He motions to get the attention of two dancers strolling by.

They come over to the Roman. He whispers to them. Then he taps Ronnie on the shoulder.

PRIMO PILETTI

Hey bud, these two ladies want to give us a table dance.

RONNIE

Uh, sure. Really? Hell yeah.

PRIMO PILETTI

I'll have to leave soon, but I'll try number twelve. My favorite QB of all time.

(to dancer)

What's your name, pretty lady?

SLIM-JIM KELLY

I'm Slim-Jim Kelly. This is my friend. Do-Me Beebe.

PRIMO PILETTI

Well, hello. Love the stage names. I'm Primo Piletti.

DO-ME BEEBE

Santa here would like a dance?

Ronnie stops mid-chug and looks over, He wipes his beer mustache and smiles.

RONNIE

Yeah, yes, for sure, thanks.

All three patrons are grinded-on by dancers. The guys seem to love it.

Ronnie is almost in shock, Piletti is a bit too 'handsy'. Slim-Jim pushes stray paws away and her eyes give a stern warning. Orlando tries to kiss his dancer - but she only gives him her cheek.

ORLANDO

You're doing things I could get used to, baby girl. Trying my best not to fall in love with you but damn, you got what I need.

THURMAN TOPLESS

Is that right? You're kinda cute yourself.

Do-Me Beebe whips her long red hair around wildly as she gives Santa an energetic dance -- complete with intense facial expressions.

RONNIE

I haven't had this kind of
treatment in a long time. Too damn
long.

DO-ME BEEBE

I'll be here Santa, stop by
anytime. I always loved sitting on
Santa's lap.

RONNIE

Have you been good or naughty?

DO-ME BEEBE

Naughty and proud of it. That okay
with you St. Nick?

RONNIE

This year, naughty girls get
presents too.

The song ends, Written on the DJ booth is the name BRUCELLA SMITH. Tall and dark, she swings long braids. Applause for the dancer, as she scoops up bills from stage.

BRUCELLA SMITH

Let's hear it again for Big Jars
Metzelaars. She'll be available
for a wild table dance in a minute.

The blue haired dancer waves to those who applaud.

BRUCELLA SMITH (CONT'D)

That song was Buffalo's own
superstar, Rick James. Let's keep
it local with some Grover
Washington. Let's keep it generous
with the tips too.

An athletic, lean dancer makes her way to the stage.

BRUCELLA SMITH (CONT'D)

Up next, is the amazing, 'Dirty
Deed' Andrea Reed. Give her some
love. Come on.

A light-skinned black lady, 'DIRTY DEED' ANDREA REED comes out in Andre's jersey. She commands attention as the upbeat GROVER WASHINGTON JR song starts.

SLIM-JIM KELLY

She has a wild act that I have to
assist with. Check it out.

PRIMO PILETTI

Have to work early. Teaching gig.
But I'll watch a little bit.

Orlando's dancer opens the top buttons on his shirt and rubs his bare chest.

THURMAN TOPLESS

Let's go to the VIP ROOM. We can
really, get wild there.

ORLANDO

Uh. Aren't lap dances double price
in there?

Her eyes penetrate his skull.

THURMAN TOPLESS

If you want to be my boyfriend, you
can't be cheap.

ORLANDO

Cheap? Who me? Naw, babe. Not a
problem. Just making an
observation.

THURMAN TOPLESS

Cool. I'll freshen up and meet you
in that room over there in about
ten minutes.

She leaves him smiling ear to ear.

DO-ME BEEBE

How about you and me in the VIP
too, Santa?

RONNIE

Wish I could, but fixed income.
Can afford a few more dances
though.

DO-ME BEEBE

Okay, I'll step outside, have a
smoke and be right back.

She pecks him on the cheek. He melts. The men are alone
now. Ronnie turns to Piletti.

RONNIE

Thanks for sharing the wealth.
Best time I had in years. I owe
you, buddy.

(MORE)

RONNIE (CONT'D)

(to waitress)

Two shots of Jack.

PRIMO PILETTI

Thanks, amigo.

RONNIE

What do you teach?

PRIMO PILETTI

History, plus wrestling and
football coach.

RONNIE

I'm a retired city cop. Glad I got
out before all the body camera
bullshit. Had to retire or get
fired by the department. Wrong
joke to wrong lady cop.

Andrea 'Dirty Deed' Reed dominates the pole, heavy on the
sexy. At one point, Slim-Jim Kelly throws footballs at her.
She makes amazing catches while spinning on the pole, even
one handed. The crowd applauds.

ORLANDO

Wow, Santa, you see that? Make
sure you hook her up right, under
the tree this year.

They laugh.

RONNIE

I'd rather hook her up behind a
tree, or next to it, or ...

Slim-Jim glances back at Piletti after a great catch.
Piletti gives thumbs up.

PRIMO PILETTI

I could use them both on my team.
Bet we'd sell out every game.

ORLANDO

Yeah, razzle dazzle plays would
have a whole new meaning.

RONNIE

As the team's, number one fan, I
fully approve.

Orlando peers at him sideways.

ORLANDO

Number one fan? Sorry, bro, that's my title. Look at me, Buffalo Bill Cody, yo.

PRIMO PILETTI

Technically, they did name the team after that guy. I'm headed out. Nice to meet you both.

They wave good-bye as they spar over title of top fan.

RONNIE

Okay, cool costume, granted, -- but I'm older and know more about them.

ORLANDO

I know all the old guys too. Cookie Gilchrist, James Harris, Marlon Briscoe, Pat Maguire, Jack Kemp, Joe Cribs ...

RONNIE

Impressive. Do you know OJ Simpson's favorite drink?

The fake Buffalo Bill Cody looks to the heavens.

ORLANDO

OJ jokes? Okay, what is it?

RONNIE

Bloody Mary. What's his favorite movie?

Orlando waits for the answer.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Blade Runner.

ORLANDO

Yeah, yeah. And his favorite baseball team is the Red Sox.

They have a chuckle. To the side, Thurman Topless impatiently waits for Orlando with raised eyebrow.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Duty calls. See you around.

EXT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - NIGHT

A bloated beer belly precedes Ronnie through the exit. Red cheeked and smiling, he staggers towards his truck as snowflakes continue to pile up.

Only two other trucks and a Mustang are left in the parking lot. As Ronnie drunkenly stumbles forward, the snow crunches under his Santa boots.

With his next step, he hears another step, not his own. He looks around, nothing. Another step taken, brings the same sound. He tries to shake the cobwebs from his head. Now with each stomp, he hears a follow-up.

RONNIE

Somebody there? Don't fuck with me
buddy, I'm Santa Claus. I'll shove
a lump of coal up your ass.

This time as he steps, two footfalls are heard. Cold sweat starts to form on his face.

After that sound of someone approaching happens again, Ronnie walks faster. Eyes wide he scans the area. Nothing seen.

Not taking chances, Ronnie tries to sprint to his vehicle. He hears the steps coming faster.

When he turns to look this time, his drunk ass slips on an ice patch and sprawls on his face in the snow.

He struggles to his feet, wiping the white stuff from his face. His breath, seen as steam, bellows from him.

Nothing but silence. He looks to the side - then his eyes get big.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Oh shit.

Lunging himself towards the car, pure terror in his eyes, he's almost there. The steps he hears are at full gallop. The sound seems to be coming from the nearby woods.

Just as his fingers reach the truck's door -- he is yanked backwards. A loud growl penetrates the quiet night.

In the struggle, Ronnie gets to his feet. As he swings the door open, he sees his shotgun in the backseat.

Another ROAR. He is pulled backwards, but hangs onto the door. The other arm reaches for the weapon.

Something sharp rips into his wrist. Glass breaks. Blood squirts everywhere.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

No ... NOOO...

Finally, he is wrenched off the door. His screams end abruptly. More blood trickles onto the white snow.

INT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - NIGHT

Thurman Topless walks a grinning Orlando to the door.

THURMAN TOPLESS

It's so late, wow. You have a good time, cowboy?

ORLANDO

Let me tell you something, sister. Told myself I wouldn't fall in love today. Then YOU showed up.

She hugs on him, just enough.

THURMAN TOPLESS

Aww, Big Daddy, that's so sweet. When you coming by to see me again?

ORLANDO

Uh, were you serious about the, you know, boyfriend stuff?

A chest rub is followed by adults-only eye contact.

THURMAN TOPLESS

I wouldn't clown you on that, daddy. The more I get to know you, the safer I feel. Tomorrow good for you?

Orlando's smile is miles wide.

ORLANDO

Hell yeah, love to. Do I have to pay? I kinda went overboard tonight.

She pouts and tries to look disappointed. Backs away from him a little bit.

THURMAN TOPLESS

Oh baby. This is how I pay for college.

(MORE)

THURMAN TOPLESS (CONT'D)

If you don't come, I'll have to dance with some stranger. Come on, find some money, spend it on your honey.

ORLANDO

So if I see you more here, you'd be willing to, you know ... Come to my crib. Be my girl?

Her arms hug his neck and pulls him forward and plants a sexy kiss on his lips.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Damn, Ma. How do I say no to that? I'll be here at the same time and dare anyone to stop me.

THURMAN TOPLESS

That's my hero. Come, I'll walk you out.

They stroll to the exit door, arm in arm.

EXT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - NIGHT

Thurman Topless braces herself from the cold as Orlando flashes a toothy smile as he waves goodbye.

He is so smitten, he barely notices the frigid cold or snow. Orlando trudges towards the Mustang with a pep in his step and a giggle more appropriate for a teenager.

ORLANDO

Whew. Can't wait to get her to my crib, yo. She's fine and ...

(beat)

Damn, I forgot to get her real name. Shit!

Orlando flails his arms, mad at himself. Probably due to numb fingers, his car keys fly from his grip. They make no sound as they land in the soft snow.

Eyes dart around looking for them, He hangs his head in frustration and despair.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

You gotta be KIDDING ME. I won't find them keys till Spring, the way this snow is.

The search is on. Nothing. He tries to recreate the scene and calculate the trajectory. Eyes follow.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

What kinda cop doesn't get the name
of his girlfriend then loses keys
in the snow? A sorry ass cop.
That's who.

As he scopes out anomalies in the snow pack, a small hole with strange shape is seen. Orlando smiles.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Got you.

Already cold fingers dig through the frozen snow. He yanks them out and holds them to his face.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Why you gotta do that shit for?
You know it's too cold to play.

Now trudging back to his car, he stops again. Blood droplets stand out against the snow.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Huh?

His eyes follow the droplets. They lead to a truck. A puddle of the red stuff has accumulated by the driver's side door. The window is broken and more blood stains are spotted. Instinctively he grabs for his weapon - not there.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Shit. What the hell?

Momentarily dazed, he gathers himself and goes to the Mustang. He unlocks it and grabs his phone ... And his gun.

Orlando looks around himself as he dials.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Hey, Evelyn. Get dispatch to send
a car over to the Razzle Dazzle. I
think we might have a crime scene.
Okay ... I'll be careful.

With gun in hand, ready to fire, he creeps closer to the truck. Eyes on alert for danger.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Who's in the truck? Come out, with
hands up.

No response. He peeks inside from a distance. Sees no one.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

HOOT HOOT. An owl in a tree blinks his big eyes. It's focus in on a man on the ground below, still in his Santa suit. As snowflakes fall on his face, it awakens Ronnie.

RONNIE

Whoa. How the hell did I get here?

He sits up quickly, he grabs his head in pain.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Easy does it, old man.

Ronnie looks around himself and brushes new fallen snow off his body. He notices blood stains.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Oh shit. That's right.

Now fear pumps through his veins and reflects on his face. His wound ... It's not bleeding - even looks healed.

As he looks into the deep forest, he's amazed by his clear sight, almost like high noon. Rabbits scamper in the distance over a log. A raccoon eats nuts by a frozen stream.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Where the hell am I?

Smoke swirls above the treeline. His eyes follow it to a campfire below. A small tent is next to it.

Ronnie doesn't struggle to his feet - he springs up like a twenty year old. It surprises him.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

That sleep did me good. Maybe that camper knows how to get outta here.

A branch of a tree is grabbed by Ronnie as he tries to make his way through the deep snow. It snaps off in his hand. He looks confused.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Huh? I ain't THAT strong.

Another branch is now used as a walking stick. He makes a beeline to the campsite. He doesn't know it, but his eyes are glowing.

EXT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - NIGHT

Several cop cars are now at the parking lot. Teams take photos of the truck. Yellow tape is already in place.

Next to Orlando are Evelyn, in uniform and Quezada, his boss. Orlando's Buffalo Bill Cody mustache comically hangs uneven.

QUEZADA

Lots of blood, but no body. What's that about?

EVELYN

We're running the plates. Should have answer to whose truck that is.

ORLANDO

I was having the time of my life, then I run into this crap.

A whistle is heard from the club entrance. Still in her outfit, Thurman Topless gets Orlando's attention, then blows a kiss at him.

EVELYN

Time of your life, huh? How much money did that one get you for?

ORLANDO

Money? That's not the point. She's kind and sweet and --

QUEZADA

In other words, she cleaned you out. Dude ...

ORLANDO

It was love at first sight. Just look at her. She needed my help.

Quezada and Evelyn peer at each other and shake their heads in disbelief.

QUEZADA

Okay, Romeo. Go home and get outta them silly clothes. We'll take it from here.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

Ronnie seems cramped in the small shelter. Blood runs down his fingers to his wrist. His fingertips hold a chunk of raw meat, He studies it.

RONNIE

Nope. Don't think so. Raw meat?
I don't care WHAT I am now. I
never ...

The dripping flesh is moved closer to Santa's nose. He sniffs it several times.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

It does have a sweet smell I didn't
notice before. Hmm.

With closed eyes, he stuffs it into the pie hole, then chews. His eyes spring open. They glow ever brighter than before. He smiles through bloody teeth, marked by enlarged canines.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Wow, no shit. It's delicious! Got
more?

A basin holding various cuts of meat is pushed in front of him. This time Ronnie snatches up a much larger piece. He starts gnawing on one side of it, not seeing the tattoo on the section not facing him.

EXT. TENT - NIGHT

An owl blinks it's eyes a few times from it's treetop perch, Roaring through the woods is a mighty GROWL. The owl flies off, with haste as the moon above shines down.

INT. SHERIFF VEHICLE - DAY

Orlando, now in uniform, is next to Evelyn as she drives.

ORLANDO

Yeah, that's my spot now. Wonder
why nobody thought to build it
earlier? Buffalo loves them some
Bills. All day.

EVELYN

After your bride-to-be cleans you
out, don't come to me for money.

ORLANDO

I know. Others did that to me ...
But she's different.

The vehicle slows down. Evelyn points through the windshield to a weather-worn trailer.

EVELYN

Whatever, playboy. The location is that trailer there.

They park on the side of the road, nearby. Then get out.

EXT. TRAILER - DAY

The car with Donnelly pulls up behind them and also parks. He and his partner join Orlando and Evelyn.

EVELYN

So this is the address from vehicle registration. Truck belongs to a Ronald Heinrick Schwartz.

DONNELLY

If he lost that much blood, we may need the EMTs.

They march closer to the dwelling.

ORLANDO

Look at that. Dude got egged last night. Easier just to buy Halloween candy sometimes.

They step up to the yolk covered door. They ring the doorbell, then wait. No answer.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Allow me.

EVELYN

Don't blow out my eardrum this time.

Orlando takes out his flashlight and bangs on the door hard.

ORLANDO

ERIE COUNTY SHERIFFS. OPEN UP.

Silence. He knocks again.

DONNELLY

Could be a medical emergency. Can't we just bust in?

ORLANDO

Right. All it takes is one of Donnelly's farts to knock the door off its hinges.

EVELYN

Let's go by the book and get a warrant. We're being watched.

She nods to the side. Neighbors seem to be taping them with their cellphones.

ORLANDO

Good idea. Shouldn't take long. Just look at them trying to catch us screwing up. Let's go.

The Deputy Sheriffs return to their cars.

INT. TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

Ronnie peeks through the curtains as the visitors enter their vehicles. He turns away from the window and it's seen he wears a blood-stained wife-beater. Disheveled hair.

RONNIE

How dare they disturb my breakfast like that.

At his feet are several mouse traps with captured vermin with blank eyes. He looks down at his beard. A tail of one of the creatures is stuck in his facial hair. He scoops it out and puts it in his mouth.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

We can't be wasteful, can we?

He chews it up as he takes another out of it's trap and squirts it with the Buffalo wing sauce nearby.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Cheers.

Ronnie gobbles it down, whole.

INT. ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Orlando pours himself some coffee as other deputies type at their computers.

ORLANDO

Almost done with my report. We should be getting the warrant approval right quick too.

Going back to his desk, he's waved over by Evelyn.

EVELYN

Check out the crime scene photos. Seems the farther from the truck, the blood gets less. Then it just disappears.

ORLANDO

Yeah, you figure he'd bleed out more. Maybe he found a loose band-aid and slapped it on.

EVELYN

Funny. More likely, abducted.

DONNELLY

Snow covered any footprints by the time we got there. Definitely a struggle though.

Quezada cruises into the room with a guy who seems like he wants people to kiss his ring before they know his name. DET. TANINSKI (40's) gives the deputies a once over and is not impressed.

QUEZADA

Hey everybody. Over here.

(beat)

This is Detective Taninski from Buffalo PD. We need to help him with a case.

TANINSKI

Listen up. Hikers found a body this morning. Ugly stuff. Son of one of the mayor's rich friends.

He pulls a photo from a folder in his hand. He holds it up so all can see.

It is an enlarged picture of a punkish looking teen with a Billy Idol sneer.

TANINSKI (CONT'D)

Bennett Davis. Had a missing person on him. Hikers found him this morning.

FLASHBACK - FINDING BENNETT DAVIS

EXT. WOODS - DAY

THREE HIKERS, a man and two women trudge along the side of a frozen creek. Steam from their breath is thick.

HIKER #1
Come on ladies, this is too much.
I'm freezing and hungry.

The more rotund hiker claps back.

HIKER #2
What a baby. You agreed to help me
and your sister, lose weight.

HIKER #1
Yeah, but you two, have more
insulation for stuff like this.
Just push away the pizza once in a
while. That would help.

HIKER #2
How dare you. That's it. I'm ...
(beat - then screams)
I'M OUTTA HERE. RUN!

He turns to see the two hauling ass back where they came from. Eyes widen, he scans around, then he sees it.

A decapitated head. Frozen. With icicles of snot and blood hanging from it.

He leaps backwards. Lands backside first, on the frozen creek. His butt breaks through and ice cold water soaks him.

HIKER #1
Help! Help!

He wiggles out of the hole and struggles to get to his feet. Eyes focused on the frozen head.

HIKER #2 (O.S.)
If you make it back, we'll save you
some pizza. Fucker.

END OF FLASHBACK

Taninski holds up a different photo.

TANINSKI
And this is what Bennett Davis
looks like today.

Snapped at the crime scene with snow in the background, is the frozen head of the missing teen. Impaled on a stick.

ORLANDO

Damn. And I mean ... Daaamn.

TANINSKI

Yeah, exactly. Waiting to see what forensics gets. Might take a while. Not my jurisdiction. Need your help on this.

EVELYN

Where's the rest of him?

TANINSKI

Good question. We have no fucking idea. Zip.

DONNELLY

Anything in his background?

TANINSKI

Yeah, kid was a spoiled brat and a bully. Got kicked out of three private schools. Last week he tagged a teacher's car.

ORLANDO

Daddy must be proud.

QUEZADA

Looks like he tagged a wall at the same school last night. A spray can was found at the crime scene, we're running tests for a match.

Another deputy strolls over and hands Orlando some paperwork.

ORLANDO

Thanks. Looks like the warrant we were waiting for is ready.

DEPUTY #1

I don't think you need it. The guy on the warrant is here to pick up his truck.

ORLANDO

Really? That sounds fishy.

TANINSKI

I'm done for now. Go check it out.

INT. SHERIFF OFFICE - PUBLIC AREA - DAY

Now wearing a tie and sweater jacket, Ronnie waits in the lobby. As the deputy escorts the others into the room, she points out Ronnie. Orlando recognizes him.

ORLANDO

You? Santa?

Ronnie looks up, studies Orlando, then smiles.

RONNIE

Wild Bill Hickok? Never thought you'd be an officer.

Other deputies watch the interaction.

ORLANDO

Not Wild Bill. Buffalo Bill Cody. That's why you are only the team's number two fan.

QUEZADA

You two know each other?

ORLANDO

Saw him in the club last night pretending to be a Buffalo Bills fan. And Santa. Neither was very convincing.

Ronnie smiles at the jab.

RONNIE

Had a rough night after I left.

The deputies stroll closer to him. He holds up a heavily bandaged wrist.

ORLANDO

Looks bad. Were you assaulted?

RONNIE

Nope. Just drunk. Slipped on ice, broke window and slit my wrist. Blood everywhere.

EVELYN

That's terrible. Then what?

RONNIE

Was going to drive away, but didn't need DUI and might pass out from blood loss. Used first aid kit in truck, wrapped it.

Ronnie notices Taninski staring at him intently.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Walked home gave myself stitches.

TANINSKI

You're telling me Grandpa here did surgery on himself? Please.

Taninski smirks. Ronnie takes offense.

RONNIE

I learned a little in the service. Gonna go to ER right after I get my truck back.

ORLANDO

We stopped by your trailer earlier. Nobody was home.

RONNIE

Yeah, the neighbors told me. I had taken pain pills and was fast asleep I guess.

TANINSKI

Got them Bill Cosby, knock out pills, huh? You gotta script for that, buddy?

Ronnie cuts his eyes at the Buffalo detective.

RONNIE

Yes sir.

QUEZADA

Okay. Case closed. Give him the keys. We got a mystery of our own to solve.

A member of the staff digs out the keys and gives Ronnie a form to sign.

TANINSKI

Lay off the booze, old man.

The comment lands as an insult, which is seen in Ronnie's face. Orlando diffuses the tension.

ORLANDO

Hey, I got one more question.
 (beat)
 Who's gonna win the game this
 Sunday?

A smile comes to Ronnie's face.

RONNIE

The Bills, baby. All the way.

ORLANDO

Damn right. Drive safe. Watch
 that ice.

The officers return to the back room. Ronnie's eyes are
 glued on Taninski until he exits.

EXT. ADJACENT PARKING NEAR STADIUM - DAY

From above, through a flurry of snowflakes, the land below
 comes into view. People, flags and a stadium become clearer.

EXT. BILLS MAFIA PARTY - DAY

BELOW THE FUNK {PASS THE J} BY RICK JAMES, blasts from
 speakers. Smoke from grills, billow into the air. An ocean
 of red white and blue ... On banners, customized vehicles and
 peoples clothes -- are paraded by a diverse crowd.

Painted faces - and bellies, match the BILLS MAFIA motif.
 Furry hats with bison horns on the side, makes it look like a
 Flintstone's convention of Grand Poo-bahs.

Beer is part of everything and is everywhere, It is slurped
 out of every container ... Bongs, shotgunned, straight from
 the keg or poured by girls into guys mouths.

Self-appointed cheerleaders, just from the community - from
 old grannies to young grinders -- jump lively with homemade
 pom-poms and various outfits they invented. Even the drag
 community is repped.

They lead chants of ... LET'S GO BUFFALO. As one. Even a
 few guys dressed in mariachi outfits (team colors) joins.

Orlando wears a big smile as people admire his 'Bills'
 Onesy', outfit. He looks like a toddler.

They are at a merchandise stand. His date stands slightly
 behind him as she takes in the atmosphere with wide eyes.

He buys Francine a Bills Mafia jacket - he's bought a furry hat with horns for himself.

The Rick James song ends.

ORLANDO

Good doing business with you.

He hands the jacket to his shivering date, as he gets change back from the transaction.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Naw, you guys keep it. You do good work, especially charities and stuff. Go Bills!

Campers and tents have been set-up all weekend, to party with strangers that share the passion. The couple walks by them.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

You like the jacket, baby?

She pulls him close and whispers in his ear, sternly.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Look, not into the whole ... Baby, this and that. My real name is Francine. That'll work.

ORLANDO

Gotcha. Okay, Francine. Game-day. Orchard Park, New York. Is this awesome, or what?

Guys run around with shirts off in the snow, some are painted. Snowballs fly.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

This shit is crazy. I never seen nothing like it.

A fat Spiderman, with gut hanging -- chugs down a beer with an even fatter Batman ... Both outfits in team colors.

ORLANDO

Even DC and Marvel get along in this world.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

I'm from Arkansas, spent time in Texas. I thought they was nuts about football there, but ...

ORLANDO

But nothing compares to this.

Orlando puts on his horned hat. Francine distances herself a bit, but Orlando doesn't notice.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Uh, you ain't gonna wear that all day, is you?

ORLANDO

Whenever you need to borrow it, just let me know.

She rolls her eyes without him seeing it.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Sure thing.

Orlando expands his arms theatrically so Francine can take in the entire panorama of the circus atmosphere.

ORLANDO

You can't find a place like this, no where else. You know why, Francine?

(beat)

Pain! No city in America has been shit on like this place. But we don't give up. We don't give in.

As they walk further, they pass fans doing shots of liquor from the holes of a bowling ball.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

What you saying?

ORLANDO

The Bills have been in the DNA of the people, since 1960 when they started. This place was once a shining jewel of America, then the losing started.

ANIMATION

The shining city, decays in slo-mo. Citizens scatter away in all directions.

ORLANDO (V.O.)

So many factories, here for decades, shut down.

(MORE)

ORLANDO (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Half the population moved away.
 Some parts of the city, were left
 to rot.

SERIES OF SHOTS - BUFFALO HISTORY

- Disappointed football fans, several frames ...

ORLANDO (V.O.)
 We lost four Superbowls - IN A ROW.
 In a row?

- Murder trial of O.J. Simpson ...

ORLANDO (V.O.)
 Then ... OJ Simpson ...

- Rick James in prison ...

ORLANDO (V.O.)
 The crash and burn of our own Rick
 James didn't help our image.

- Ice cold eyes of cold-blooded mass killers whose faces
 reflect the ugliness inside.

ORLANDO (V.O.)
 Then we get Tim McViegh, the
 Oklahoma Bomber and Payton with the
 AR-15 in a supermarket.

- Unflattering images of the city and citizens.

ORLANDO (V.O.)
 Seen as a national joke. Losers --
 from a land of misery.

- A blizzard batters people as they struggle through intense
 winds and white-out conditions. Worn faces, show the spark
 of life.

ORLANDO (V.O.)
 But we see ourselves as ultimate
 underdogs. Resiliency in the face
 of the worst that this world can
 throw at you.

END OF ANIMATION

The couple looks over the sea of diverse faces that surround
 them, immersed in Game-day joy. Fully united.

ORLANDO

We have something here. Something great. A sense of community - brought together by, a common pain.

A families of all backgrounds, even international, celebrate.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

A need to keep pushing, despite the odds. Despite what anyone says about you. In a way, we've become our own champions.

An older man with a long beard, stands with a hot dog in one hand and a hamburger in the other. Several feet away, the crowd squirts mustard and ketchup in his direction. More ends up on his face than on the buns.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Champions? Okay, but of what? I'm not sure.

ORLANDO

What's that up ahead? Never seen that before.

A large tent is set up. Huge signs that announce - ONLY 21 AND OLDER CAN ENTER. They divert to see more.

A sign out front declares - THE SECRET RAZZLED RUMP ROOM. Francine perks up.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

They were talking about this at work. I took a pass, but can we go check it out?

ORLANDO

Sure, babe, I mean, Francine.

The bouncer at the door points to the entry fee. Twenty bucks. Orlando reluctantly dishes it out and enters with his excited date.

INT. SECRET RAZZLED RUMP ROOM - DAY

Orlando seems shocked to see a mobile strip club at the game. A full bar lines one wall, heaters keep the temp warm and girls work the poles in the middle.

ORLANDO

Now this is what I call team spirit. Wow. Look at this.

An excited scream is heard. They turn to see Slim-Jim Kelly in a skimpy cheerleader outfit dashing over and giving Francine a big hug.

SLIM-JIM KELLY
 Girl, I'm so glad you made it.
 We're killing it in here.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 Right. It sure is packed.

ORLANDO
 Hi. What's the name mean?

SLIM-JIM KELLY
 Three clubs got together for this.
 Ours, Sylvia's Secret and the
 Rumper Room.

ORLANDO
 Okay, makes sense.

SLIM-JIM KELLY
 The line for dances are pretty
 long. I can give you a CRACK SHOT
 or BABY BIRD while you wait.

ORLANDO
 Come again?

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 Don't worry, I'll hook you up,
 myself. How much y'all charging?

SLIM-JIM KELLY
 Twenty each.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 Pay her, Orlando.

He obediently peels off some bills for her. She puts up two fingers to the bartender. Two shots arrive. Francine pulls down her yoga pants in the back so her crack is exposed.

ORLANDO
 (shocked)
 Girl, what the hell ...

Francine bends over. Orlando is speechless. Slim-Jim pours the shot onto the small of her back, just above the cheeks.

SLIM-JIM KELLY
 Okay, start slurping.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Hurry up.

After a minor hesitation, he stoops over and the suction begins. Funny look on his face? No doubt. Other patrons watch and applaud as he finishes.

SLIM-JIM KELLY

Was that the best shot of whiskey, ever?

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

You better say, yes!

Francine pulls her pants back up. Orlando sees the same done to other customers.

ORLANDO

Hell yeah. Whew. That was ... Different, but I love it.

SLIM-JIM KELLY

And now the BABY BIRD.

Slim Jim slams the other shot, grabs Francine by the back of the head and seem to kiss. Actually the booze dribbles from the dancer's mouth, into Francine's. Orlando can't believe his eyes.

Francine takes Orlando head in both hands and goes in for a loaded kiss. He swallows down the previously orally-housed shot, as he kisses his date.

SLIM-JIM KELLY (CONT'D)

You likey?

It takes a moment for Orlando to recover. He digs out forty more and hands it over.

ORLANDO

I need another round to prove I didn't just dream this shit.

SUPER - 30 MINUTES LATER

EXT. SECRET RAZZLED RUMP ROOM - DAY

Orlando stumbles outside with Francine. He sticks out his tongue to catch snowflakes. She is about to scold him ...

CRUNCH! They look over to see a fan pulling himself up from a crushed banquet table.

Another guy, on the back of a truck, slams a beer, then takes the plunge. The XXL diver flattens another table.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Y'all crazy.

ORLANDO

This is REAL MAN shit. Check it out, sugar.

He rushes to the back of the truck and climbs up. A fresh beer is passed to him, which he chugs. Francine rolls her eyes when he toasts her. Orlando takes flight and lands on the table. Its knees buckle, but still stands.

RONNIE (O.C.)

I'll show you how it's done.

Orlando looks over to see Santa. Ronnie wears his favorite outfit and flexes, already intoxicated. Orlando scoots out of the way as Ronnie climbs from the truck, to the top of a taller, port-a-potty. He screams, chugs ... Then jumps.

BOOM. The table is now a metal pancakes. Ronnie rolls off of it, laughing hard.

ORLANDO

Oh shit. Santa? Should have known you'd be here. Nice job.

RONNIE

Told you I'm the number one Bills fan, what did you expect?

ORLANDO

Just because you smash a table? Come on, dude. Keep dreaming.

RONNIE

A round of DIZZY BATS can settle it, whatcha say?

A collective, 'wooo' his heard from the crowd. Orlando's eyes search for an excuse.

ORLANDO

I would, but the game is starting soon and ...

Booing comes from the crowd. Slim-Jim, wearing a coat, steps outside to smoke a cig. Francine goes to her as the men square off.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Hey girl. What the hell is Dizzy
Bats?

SLIM-JIM KELLY

It's fun to watch, but if your man
is doing it, get his car keys.

Orlando stomps up to Ronnie and picks up a bat that leans on
the back of a truck. He holds it high.

ORLANDO

Challenge accepted.

The crowd roars approval and makes room for them.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

They gonna fight?

SLIM-JIM KELLY

Nope. Dumber than that.

The bat is a Whiffle-Ball bat, plastic and hollow. The
bottom of it has a hole and a girl in a referee outfit pours
the bat full of beer. Orlando chugs it down.

RONNIE

Now, twelve spins for Jim Kelly.

Holding the bat, Orlando spins in place twelve times. When
he stops, the empty can is thrown at him. He hits it with
the bat and it goes flying, Onlookers applaud.

Ronnie takes his turn. He slams down the brew in half of
Orlando's time and crushes the empty can further. More
applause. Orlando smiles.

ORLANDO

Again.

A GOO-GOO DOLLS song plays as they continue. Orlando chugs
again but is sloppier. As he spins, his furry hat falls off.
He puts it back on crooked. He hits the can as folk cheer.

This time Ronnie downs two baseball bats full, then burps.
The spins are comical but he nails the can.

Orlando, staggering, volunteers for another. Francine rolls
her eyes and Slim-Jim looks to her compassionately.

Beer rolls down Orlando's pajama outfit as he tries to stuff
the brew into his already full body. At spin number seven,
he loses balance and runs into Francine.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Look at you. Gimme them car keys
before you take another step.

Smiling the grin of a drunkard, he hands them over. His words are slurred.

ORLANDO

That's my-my baby. Love you too.

He goes back and finishes his spins, but can't stand still. He weaves as the empty can is tossed. He hits it, but it barely goes anywhere.

RONNIE

Sure you want more, little elf?

ORLANDO

Ha. Come on. Bring it.

The bat is drained again, but followed by a shot of booze this time. As Ronnie spins, his Santa pants start to fall and he yanks them up, laughing.

RONNIE

Don't want y'all to see the wrong
bat. Get it?

The can is pitched. It pops into the air. It lands on a guy already passed out on a snow pile. Med-Techs take him out on a stretcher. Ronnie hands the bat to the referee and puts his arm on Orlando's shoulder.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

If you don't want to end up like
that guy, you should quit, now.

ORLANDO

Me? Me ... Quit? Please.

The beer foam oozes down the side of the bat as Orlando studies it. Stumbling back and forth, he empties it, but looks ill. After the fourth spin, centrifugal force sends him flailing to the side, like a knock-out punch.

On all fours, he tries to get up, but his full stomach must dump it's cargo first. Hurl after hurl turns the white snow a different color. Francine turns away and shakes her head.

Ronnie does a touchdown dance as the sound of guts being emptied is heard in the background. The GOO-GOO DOLLS song ends, abruptly.

RONNIE
 Let's go watch the game. The KING
 ... Has spoken.

The crowd follows Ronnie towards the stadium as the beer, Crack Shots and Baby Birds - pass Orlando's lips in reverse. He looks up to see Francine's disapproving eyes.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 Pitiful.

He closes his eyes and starts to snore.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Sad fans walk to their cars. Ronnie looks back at the scoreboard. Buffalo 17 - Washington 30. He scowls.

Boastful Washington fans, wearing jerseys, high-five each other in the parking lot. Ronnie's eyes burn into them.

INT. MEDICAL TENT - NIGHT

Sound asleep, Orlando is shaken awake. His eyes flutter open. A MED-TECH in scrubs smiles to him.

MED-TECH
 Sir, the game is over and we have
 to close down for the night. Are
 you okay?

It takes a moment for the disorientation to dissolve.

ORLANDO
 Yeah. Thanks. I'm okay. Where's
 Francine.

MED-TECH
 The lady you were with said to call
 and she'll pick you up.

The Med-Tech starts to pack equipment as Orlando takes out his phone and dials. It rings many times.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION

INT. JEWELRY STORE - NIGHT

A sparkling bracelet lights up Francine's wrist as she speaks. Behind her seems to be an upscale boutique.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

Oh, hi baby. You okay? Had me worried. I just came home and waited for your call.

ORLANDO

Cool. Pick me up. I'll be at gate three. Hurry please.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

You bet.

They hang up. Orlando struggles to his feet and exits the medical tent.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The Tesla with Virginia plates is approached by a middle aged, WASHINGTON FAN as snow flutters down. He wipes the windshield with his arm to remove the accumulation. He then gets in.

INT. TESLA - NIGHT

After he brushes the snow off himself, he looks around the empty parking lot. The glove compartment is opened and he pulls out a syringe and a small container.

WASHINGTON FAN

Long drive back to DC. Need a shot of vitamin meth.

He melts the powder and prepares his arm. The needle hits the sweet spot and produces a big smile. He puts his rig and stash back in it's place and is ready to drive. He looks in the mirror. Two eyes from the backseat stare back at him.

EXT. GATE THREE - NIGHT

Orlando sits on a curb as snowflakes pile up. He puts on his furry hat, but it is ripped. He tosses it. Frustration is apparent. His phone is glanced at.

ORLANDO

Forty minutes? Really? What the hell, woman?

The Mustang pulls up. Francine gets out and helps him to his feet. She seems ... Nice?

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 You poor baby. Traffic was bad,
 sorry. Feel better?

ORLANDO
 I'll be better when I get home.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 I'll make sure of that.

She winks at him. Then ... A loud SCREAM penetrates the night air. Orlando spins around, trying to locate the source. It seems relatively distant.

ORLANDO
 You hear that? Sounded like
 trouble, didn't it?

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 One of these crazy fans. Would you
 rather investigate, or come home
 with me?

He jumps up, still wobbly and hugs her.

ORLANDO
 You know that answer.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE
 Back up, boo. That breath, whew.
 You need a shower and some
 mouthwash. Quick.

He strolls up to the passenger side.

ORLANDO
 Serve it up as another Crack-Shot.
 I'm in a slurping mood.

She rolls her eyes and they both get in. In the distance, a man in a Santa suit walks away from a Tesla.

INT. ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

Orlando strides into the office. His grin, ear to ear. Deputies stand around a young PARKING LOT ATTENDANT who seems shaken up.

ORLANDO
 Hey guys. What's up?

QUEZADA

This gentleman found a body at the stadium. Foul play. He's about to tell what he saw.

ORLANDO

Really? Dead? Wow, I was at the game. Continue.

The college age Black man looks uncomfortable as he's surrounded by lawmen.

PARKING LOT ATTENDANT

So there is a car still in the parking lot. Not uncommon. Drunks get rides home with someone else quite often.

Orlando looks away for a second.

ORLANDO

So I heard.

FLASHBACK - THE WASHINGTON FAN

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Well-bundled up, the Parking Lot Attendant trods over fresh snow towards the lonely Tesla with Virginia plates. He speaks into a Walkie-Talkie.

PARKING LOT ATTENDANT

It's too early in the morning for this shit. I'll tag it. Get some coffee brewing, please.

Snow has blurred away any footprints. He uses a small brush from his utility belt to brush away enough room to put his bright orange tag. As he leans in with the sticker, he peers in - then jumps back and lands on his ass.

Behind the steering wheel, a face blue from the cold. Eyes wide in fright.

END OF FLASHBACK

Quezada steps closer to the young man as Orlando leans in.

PARKING LOT ATTENDANT

Yo, my man's face. Frozen like this ...

The Parking Lot guy tries to imitate the twisted face.
Evelyn tries not to laugh.

PARKING LOT ATTENDANT (CONT'D)
I'll be seeing that shit in my
dreams. Damn. And blood, frozen.

He shivers at the thought of it.

QUEZADA
We got some work to do.

INT. ORLANDO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A take-out bag from THE ANCHOR BAR plops down on a table.
Orlando sheds his uniform top and pulls out his dinner.
Buffalo Wings and Slaw. He inhales the wings and smiles.

ORLANDO
Aw, I'm gonna tear all your asses
up tonight.

He flicks on the TV. The News is on. A female correspondent
is live at the Stadium parking lot. In the corner of the
screen, the name, CARMEN ELLISON, is superimposed.

Orlando seems more enchanted by the cute and frightfully
intelligent, African American reporter, than the murder scene
itself. He turns up the volume and leans forward.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)
Damn, ma. Cold as shit out there,
but you're hotter than these wings
could ever be.

He sucks sauce off his fingers and focuses on the screen.

INSERT - TV

Carmen braves strong winds and blustering snow as she stands
in the empty parking lot.

CARMEN
We are told the victim was a
resident of the DC area and drove
here for the game.

A photo of the Washington fan in happier days is shown. Then
it goes back to the live shot.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

This is the second gruesome murder,
just a few days apart. It is not
known if the killings are related,
but both bodies were gored and
frozen.

END INSERT

Saucy lips take another bite of the dead bird and chew with
vigor. Eyes fixated on the screen ... Especially Carmen.

ORLANDO

Damn, why can't I fall in love with
a girl like that? I keep falling
for them hootchie-mommas.

He switches the channel to a sports game.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Leave work at the office. I need
to unwind.

Beer is pulled from another bag and he cracks it open as the
muddled audio of a football game is heard. He takes another
chomp and is about to lose himself in the action, when ...
Beep, his phone alert goes off.

He picks up his phone. His eyes shows he is upset.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

My account is low on funds? How?

He wipes chicken grease off his hands and fiddles with phone.
His eyes narrow when he finds his answer.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Francine. Jewelry? Really?

Orlando slams the wing back in the container and hangs his
head in despair. He stomps his foot.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Crazy bitch. Gotta cut her loose.
But that's some good lovin.

(beat)

Again? ... I hate this.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

From the kitchen, the hall is seen. Ronnie, in blood stained, wife beater and camo shorts, runs from one room, to another. Sweat drips from him and he breathes heavy as he dashes by.

RONNIE

I hate this.

Going to the fridge, he gets water and chugs it. He goes to a mirror in the hall and scolds himself.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Never bite a meth junkie again.
Understand? I'm 'Breaking Bad', --
when I should have just broke his
neck. Dammit!

He pulls his hair, screams, does a maniac dance and disappears into a different room. Items hit the floor.

INT. ERIE COUNTY SHERIFF'S STATION - DAY

A serious look is given by Orlando as Quezada and Taninski have inquisitive postures.

ORLANDO

Absolutely, boss. I'm ready.

QUEZADA

Good. You work with Taninski and find this asshole. Represent the department well, understand?

ORLANDO

I got this.

TANINSKI

Press conference in thirty. Don't be late.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

A podium with mics attached, is positioned in front of a wall that displays the logos for Erie County Sheriffs and the Buffalo police department.

The media pours into to room and gets seated. Taninski steps to the podium, flanked by Orlando and Evelyn.

Arriving just a little late is Carmen. Her silvery jacket makes her stand out. Orlando notices her right away. She smiles at him. He diverts his eyes and hides his grin.

TANINSKI

Here's what we know. The teen, Bennett Davis, was found decapitated by the edge of Smoke Creek. His body has not been recovered yet.

A audible sound of repulsion is heard from the reporters.

REPORTER #1

And the search revealed no trace?

TANINSKI

Not at this point. We don't believe the murder happen there.

Carmen looks for an empty seat. Orlando subtly points her to one in the front row. She settles in.

TANINSKI (CONT'D)

As you know, the other victim, Blake Harrington, from Virginia - was killed in his car. Mutilated and frozen solid.

CARMEN

Can you elaborate on the mutilation of Mr. Harrington?

TANINSKI

Yes. He was found missing his arm ... And his liver.

Moans of disgust emit from the media. Taninski seems to like grossing them out.

TANINSKI (CONT'D)

Neither the arm or liver has been recovered yet. An illegal substance was found at the scene but we doubt it was a drug deal that went bad.

REPORTER #1

These bodies were found outside city limits. Yet it seems Buffalo PD is running the case.

Motioning towards Orlando, he continues ...

TANINSKI
 We're working in conjunction.
 Orenthal here represents the Deputy
 Sheriff's Office.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Laughing hard, Ronnie rocks back and forth on his couch as the press conference unfolds on his TV screen.

RONNIE
 Orenthal? What a dick.
 (beat)
 Run Juice, run ...

More laughing as he grabs a beer and takes a long chug.

RONNIE (CONT'D)
 Putting my Dizzy Bat bro in charge
 of catching me? That's even
 funnier. Sorry dude, you lose
 again. You're still a lightweight.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

Orlando cuts his eyes at the detective. Evelyn whispers in Taninski's ear.

TANINSKI
 Excuse me, his name's Orlando.

Carmen stands to be called next.

CARMEN
 Greetings, Orlando. Could this be
 a case of ... Cannibalism?

Taninski picks a strange time to smile. Just as Orlando steps to the podium, Taninski brushes him back. The effect of being overridden is seen on the deputy's face.

TANINSKI
 Allow me. I guess that would
 explain the missing body parts,
 huh? But no, nothing yet.
 (beat)
 If no further questions, let's get
 back to work.

Orlando keeps his cool. As he leaves the meeting, his eyes meet with Carmen's.

EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

Light flurries swirl as Orlando stomps over to his Mustang.

ORLANDO

It's gonna be shitty as an out-house, working with that asshole.

He does a double-take at the back bumper. There is a scratch in the paint. He hangs his head.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Thanks again, Francine. Damn.

The remote unlocks the door. From behind, he hears ...

CARMEN (O.C.)

Hey, Orenthal. Got a minute?

His eyes furl as he turns to the side, but brighten when he sees Carmen strolling towards him with a smile. He straightens his posture and uniform.

ORLANDO

Yeah. That was hilarious, wasn't it? Ha-ha.

CARMEN

Big ego, small brain. I see it all the time. I'm Carmen Ellison for News Channel Nine. I'd like to talk to you more about the murders.

He hands her his business card. She returns the favor.

ORLANDO

Not a problem. Hit me up and we can do coffee ... And talk.

CARMEN

I look forward to it. Orlando.

Fondling her card, he is mesmerized as he watches her stroll.

INT. ORLANDO'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

A football game grumbles in the background as the shrill ringer on the cell phone fills the room. Orlando rubs his face as the name 'FRANCINE' displays on the screen.

ORLANDO

Woman, I told you it's over. Find somebody else to leech from.

After the next ring, Orlando flips it over and turns up the TV louder. Scowling, he pulls out Carmen's card and studies it. A quick smile, vanishes.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Naw. Who you fooling? Only women
I get are grifters, hoes and
thieves. Got to change my vibe.

EXT. STREETS OF BUFFALO - NIGHT

A steady flow of snowflakes is illuminated under the street lights. Below, a lonely snow plow moves several feet of snow to the side of the road. A seven foot mountain of the white stuff, now lines the city street.

A uniformed Buffalo COP emerges from a greasy-spoon diner with a steaming coffee in his hand. On foot patrol, he lightly inspects the closed businesses along the avenue.

Chilly breezes blow through and the cop bundles himself tighter. He pulls out a pack of smokes with his free hand and pops one in his mouth. The lighter comes out, but the wind stifles the flame.

He goes over to a high snow drift, crouches down and finally gets it lit. He inhales joyously and sips his coffee as his attention is turned to the flurries that fall from the sky.

SPLAT. The coffee hits the ground. The cop barely utters a sound as he is yanked off of his feet - backwards, into the seven-foot snow drift. His whole body disappears from sight.

On the ground, the hot coffee melts the packed snow and turns it brown. Higher on the snow drift, warm blood melts snow. The white mountain now has a red belly.

EXT. STREETS OF BUFFALO - DAY

Orlando and Evelyn emerge from the Sheriff's vehicle and join Taninski by the crime tape. Although the cop's body was removed and more snow has fallen, the red spot on the white landscape is still visible.

EVELYN

Evelyn and Orenthal reporting for
duty, sir.

The joke goes over Taninski's head but Orlando gives her a disapproving smirk.

TANINSKI

Now the killer's after Buffalo PD.
Look at the this. Ambushed.

ORLANDO

Damn. Any body parts missing?

TANINSKI

Sick fuck. Took the cop's heart.
Since he already stole a liver,
maybe we should check churches for
shady - 'organists'. Get it?

EVELYN

Not funny.

TANINSKI

I'll check the cameras and get any
footage. Meet you back at HQ.

They go separate ways.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Ronnie stands in kitchen, tears in his eyes. A closer look shows he is chopping onions, as '**SANTA CLAUS IS COMING TO TOWN**', BY LOUIS ARMSTRONG plays.

He wears the concert T-shirt of OZZY OSBOURNE - BARK AT THE MOON. Ronnie hums to the melody.

Done chopping the ingredients, he adds it to what's frying in the skillet. A human heart.

RONNIE

Forget the caveman diet, I'm going
one step beyond.

EXT. TIM HORTON'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Another chilly day. Traffic is light in front of the establishment. Through the picture window, Orlando and Carmen are seen enjoying coffee. They smile and laugh.

INT. TIM HORTON'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Carmen, in a red dress, jiggles her empty container.

CARMEN

That coffee hit the spot. So did your corny jokes. Let's do it again some time.

ORLANDO

Sorry I didn't have any new information for you. But we'll get him. And ... I like the idea of meeting up again.

She leans in.

CARMEN

Really? How about Sunday morning? Join me for church service.

Stunned, Orlando takes a second to respond.

ORLANDO

This Sunday? Got tickets to the Bills-Giants game. Wanna go?

CARMEN

Thanksgiving service. Don't you have things to be thankful for?

ORLANDO

I do ... Really. I'm not actually a church guy. Seen too much in the field. I'd rather watch football on Sunday. But I--

CARMEN

How about this? Go to church with me, I'll TIVO it, and we can watch the game at my place later.

He uncorks a wide smile.

ORLANDO

Okay bet.

EXT. KLIENHANS MUSIC HALL - NIGHT

A banner for the NUTCRACKER performance hangs near the entrance, as a line of people, many festively dressed, wait to go inside. A cloud of steam from people's breath lingers above them.

So do some very large icicles that hang menacingly from the roof. Buffalo cops do security outside.

Ronnie wears a Santa suit as do several other patrons. His eyes focus on one cop in particular. A female with short hair and glasses.

RONNIE

What luck. The bitch who made me lose my job. I owe you one for that, sweetie.

As the cop directs foot traffic, Ronnie moves into the darkness, checks the camera angles, then removes his glove.

RONNIE (CONT'D)

Nutcracker? Yeah, I'll crack that nut, real pretty.

His eyes change briefly and a nail on his finger grows long. He bites off an inch of the nail and holds it in his mouth. As the cop bends to pick up trash, he spits the nail.

It hits the icicles that hangs above her head. It comes loose, falls and pierces her head. Eyes blank, she falls over as the crowd and other cops look on with horror.

The fingernail zips through the air and returns to reattach itself to his hand. Ronnie slinks deeper into the shadows.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Carmen waves to the suit wearing, Orlando. She looks stunning in her dress and matching hat. A man stands next to her in PASTOR clothes, about the same age.

CARMEN

Welcome to the church, Orlando. This is my brother, Roberto. He's the pastor here.

ORLANDO

The Pastor? That's great. Glad to meet you.

They shake hands and seem chill. The large church seems like it has seen many generations through. Old but sturdy.

PASTOR

Good to meet you too. You're early so we can give you a short tour, if you like. It has history.

ORLANDO

I love history. Show me.

They stroll through the corridors.

PASTOR

This AME ZION church was built before the Civil War by free men and escaped slaves. Frederick Douglass and Harriet Tubman had attended at one time.

A door lies ahead, They enter.

INT. HIDDEN ROOM - DAY

The space seems large enough to hold thirty people. It has been restored to how it looked in the 1850's.

PASTOR

This place ... Was used during the Underground Railroad years.

CARMEN

Holy ground. My family helped build it, back in the day, and now my brother is the pastor, wild.

ORLANDO

Yeah, that's a mind blower.

PASTOR

I better get back to the pulpit, starting soon. Bless you out there in the streets. Good to meet you.

They follow the pastor out.

INT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - DAY

It's game-day morning and the bar is pretty full. A few customers are entertained by dancers including a bald black dude in Giants gear. Ronnie watches in his Santa suit as Francine bumps and grinds lustfully with BALDY.

RONNIE

Poor Orenthal, his chick is a slut, just like mine were. That just ain't right.

EXT. RAZZLE DAZZLE CLUB - DAY

A large, party bus is parked outside with the vehicle wrapped to colorfully advertise the club. The bus is boarded by Francine, the lusty Baldy and a mischievous looking Ronnie.

EXT. BILLS MAFIA PARTY - DAY

Ronnie in Santa gear, watches Baldy closely as he parades through the fans, shouting ...

BALDY
WIDE RIGHT ... WIDE RIGHT ...
LOSERS ...

... To the passionate Bills Mafia fans. The painful memory of the Superbowl loss to the Giants dampers some spirits. Ronnie growls under his breath.

INT. SECRET RAZZLED RUMP ROOM - DAY

Steaming mad, Ronnie watches Baldy do crack shots and lap dances with Francine.

EXT. SECRET RAZZLED RUMP ROOM - DAY

Baldy stumbles outside into the frigid weather. Ronnie steps up to him.

RONNIE
A Giants fan, huh? I challenge you
to a duel of Dizzy Bats.

The crowd cheers for Santa. Baldy looks at his watch.

BALDY
I heard of that shit. You can't
take me old man. Fifty bucks say I
win ... Or you a Sissy Claus -
instead of Santa Claus?

Moans are heard in the crowd.

RONNIE
That's an easy fifty, tenderfoot.
Let's do it.

The game begins. Ronnie is in championship form as he chugs, spins and smacks the empty can with power.

Baldy starts strong, but a few rounds in, the spins bring him to his knees.

BALDY
Game. Start soon. Gotta go.

RONNIE
Guess you owe me fifty, loud-mouth.

Now on his feet, but swaying, he points to Santa.

BALDY
Ain't missing the game. It's a draw. Got it?

He points to the Bills Mafia.

BALDY (CONT'D)
Ain't none of you worth shit. I ain't paying and your shitty team is gonna lose. You watch.

Baldy walks to the stadium as he is pelted by a payload of snowballs and a chorus of - boos. Ronnie's eyes burn with rage as the out-of-towner stiffes him.

BALDY (CONT'D)
You people in Buffalo are crazy and assholes.

He flicks his middle finger to anyone looking.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Now in the pulpit, the Pastor preaches to his flock. Orlando and Carmen sit together in the front row.

PASTOR
In conclusion, let us give thanks for all that we have. Open yourself up to new blessings.

Carmen clasps Orlando's hand. They smile at each other.

PASTOR (CONT'D)
Blessings are real. Some come from a place of goodness, others do not. Many are a mixture of both.
(beat)
Look to the positive side of all blessings ... But always - prepare for anything.

EXT. STADIUM STANDS - DAY

The scoreboard read 'GIANTS 24 - BILLS 22'. The clock shows '0:03' seconds left in the game.

Below on the gridiron, the Bills special teams unit prepares to kick a long field goal.

Ronnie glances at the scoreboard, takes a sip from his cup and wipes off the beer moustache. He yells ...

RONNIE

Come on guy! We make this field goal, we win.

Baldy, a few rows in front, sits tense, awaiting the kick.

INT. CARMEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Orlando and Carmen seem comfortable with each other as they sit on the couch.

CARMEN

I love how we skip through commercials and huddles to get to the meat of the game.

ORLANDO

(excited)

Me too. Here comes the game winner.

They watch the kick on the TV screen. It sails wide right.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Godammit. Oh ... Sorry church lady.

The couple laughs, but Orlando is heart broken.

EXT. BILLS MAFIA PARTY - DAY

Baldy skips through the snow covered clearing that leads to the Buffalo Mafia area, drunk and obnoxious. He screams ...

BALDY

WIDE RIGHT AGAIN, WIDE RIGHT AGAIN!

From behind, him he hears a gravelly voice ...

RONNIE (O.S.)

Hey, Bud ...

INT. SECRET RAZZLED RUMP ROOM - DAY

Francine works the pole for the few sad fans before they go home. An uninspired performance.

BOOM. The pole vibrates hard, as if struck. Francine jumps away from it. She then jiggles it to make sure its steady. Suddenly gallons of blood spill over her.

Ripping through the roof and down the tent-pole is Baldy's impaled body. It slides all the way down, face up. Francine screams and runs away as the tent patrons - flee.

EXT. STREETS OF BUFFALO - NIGHT

SWAT team vehicles are lined up in a residential neighborhood. Red and blue lights reflect off houses.

INT. TANINSKI'S VEHICLE - NIGHT

The detective watches the police operations from his car. A cell phone is to his ear.

TANINSKI

Yes, Mr. Mayor, SWAT is deployed
... The report states there may be
hostages inside. We're about to
breach the target.

Men in tactical gear, march up to the residence. A SNIPER sits ready on a roof across from house reported.

Police knock down the door of the house and enter. Ready to defend themselves. Taninski stares intently as they proceed to search the house.

After a while, the captain comes out and signals to Taninski. No one is inside. He signals to the rooftop sniper too.

TANINSKI (CONT'D)

Looks like a false alarm, Mr. Mayor
.. Okay, you have a good night too.

Taninski hangs up and drives away from the area.

EXT. ROOF - NIGHT

The sniper packs up his gear, getting ready to leave. He hears snow crunch behind him.

END INSERT

EXT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

MAYOR NATE BAYLOR, (60's) steps to the podium, flanked by Orlando and Taninski. Ronnie slides into the crowd, unnoticed. Hoodie over his head.

Mayor Baylor looks stressed as light snow lands on his short afro. Although cold - he feels the heat of the city, bearing down on him.

NICK BAYLOR

Citizens of Buffalo and surrounding areas ... We are under attack. An individual, or group, has left a gruesome trail of bodies in their wake. It must end and will end.

The masses applaud with gloved hands.

NICK BAYLOR (CONT'D)

The NFL has threatened to cancel home games unless we get this under control. Detective Taninski will give you the few facts we have.

Taninski strides to the microphone, full of himself.

TANINSKI

This killer seems to think he's quite the clever. He's eluded us so far, but an idiot like that has got to slip up. Then he's mine.

Striking a Mussolini pose, Taninski bathes in the crowd's admiration. Ronnie sneers.

TANINSKI (CONT'D)

The nerve to kill cops? Cops?

(beat)

We can't have that. Members of the force have been calling out sick, so they aren't the next ones. Turn yourself in, dirtbag. If I find you, it won't be pretty.

With crowd's attention on Taninski, Ronnie pulls his glove off. His nail grows long, then he bites off the tip.

TANINSKI (CONT'D)

You're lucky I'm a professional and
I hold back what I really want to
say to you.

As the crowd applauds the bluster, Ronnie inconspicuously spits the sharp tooth at the detective. It slices into the jugular of Taninski so fast it is barely seen by the naked eye. It zips through the air and returns to the finger.

Taninski reacts to the sharp pain by putting his hand on his neck. He looks down at the blood squirting through his fingers. Eyes wide, he spins to face the mayor. His body collapses onto the cold steps of City Hall.

Orlando first reaction is to cover the mayor with his own body. He screams ...

ORLANDO

Medic! We need a medic ... Now!

Other cops help Orlando cover the mayor as he is whisked to safety. A few police rush to try to aid the now fallen and bloody, Taninski. Carmen and camera crew rush around frantically. Ronnie disappears into the mass of people.

INT. QUEZADA'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Orlando squeezes through two uniformed Buffalo cops who stand by the door. Quezada and Mayor Nick wave him inside. The deputy closes the door and motioned to have a seat. The executives nurse spirited drinks.

QUEZADA

What a day, huh? Tequila, rum or
schnapps?

ORLANDO

Rum, sir.
(beat)
We need to find this asshole and
shut his ass down. I don't know if
he's using magic or what. But
we'll find him. I promise.

The rum is given to Orlando and a large gulp is taken.

NICK BAYLOR

It's got to be soon. Cops are
scared to go to work. We can't
have that. We're putting you in
charge of the entire operation.

ORLANDO
I'm ready, sir.

QUEZADA
We're in deep shit. You better get results, quick, or I'll have to call in the Feds.

Orlando casts his eyes to the floor.

ORLANDO
I understand. Fully. I will not fail you.

NICK BAYLOR
Since this investigation, is so - unique, I'm trying to get some scientists I worked with before to help you out. Problem?

ORLANDO
No sir. All help is welcome.

EXT. NIAGARA FALLS VIEWING AREA - NIGHT

Majestic, powerful - and now colorful with spotlights, the raging falls captivates Orlando's eyes. Clouds of mist hover above the partially frozen national treasure.

As Orlando stands there, PROFESSOR INDIGO, middle aged, brown beard and seems to hate the cold, from the many layers of clothes he wears, strides closer. He nods to Orlando.

INDIGO
Hey, you the guy the mayor sent?

ORLANDO
Sure am. You know I lived in this area all my life and never saw the falls at night in Winter.

INDIGO
Gorgeous ain't it. I fucking hate the cold, but living near this miracle of nature - it's worth it. I'm Professor Indigo.

They shake hands.

ORLANDO
Deputy Sheriff Orlando Crawford.
Let's go find a killer.

INDIGO

I'm from the Middle East.
Freezing balls right now. Follow
me, I own a bed and breakfast, not
far away.

As Orlando proceeds forward, he glances back at the falls,
still in awe.

INT. INDIGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Indigo enters, followed by Orlando. It is spacious. Filled
hi-tech gadgets and a futuristic design.

INDIGO

The squad I like to work with just
happens to be in town, we're lucky.

ORLANDO

What is it that you do, exactly?

INDIGO

We find the shit nobody else can.
Kinda our signature.

Orlando is impressed by the house and follows him to a door
that leads to the ...

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

They descend stairs that lead to what seems to be an
underground lab. Well-lit, computers are everywhere. They
stroll over to two men in lab coats.

Both are mid thirties and bearded, but GOLDIE is Black and
HABOOB appears Arab.

INDIGO

Hey guys, this here is Deputy
Sheriff Orlando Crawford. He's the
one investigating the serial
killer. Figured we'd help out.

Goldie seems moved. A slight African accent flowers his
words as he shakes hands.

GOLDIE

Brother, to see your partner killed
right beside you ... How painful.

ORLANDO

I'll make him pay for that, trust
and believe.

Haboob shakes hand next.

INDIGO

That was Goldie. This is Haboob.

A minor Arab accent is detected in his speech.

HABOOB

Welcome, Officer. Yes, we'd be
honored to help you solve this.

INDIGO

Where's Tiger? In the observatory?

HABOOB

Too cold up there for us. Glad we
have a guy from Tibet in the crew.

INT. OBSERVATORY ROOM - NIGHT

On the roof of the house, another hi-tech set-up that
features a huge telescope that protrudes through the ceiling.
Peering through the scope into the heavens is TIGER. An
Asian man, same age as the others, with long hair.

He glides over to his computer and enters data, wearing a ski
jacket. His breath, seen in the cold. The cell phone rings.
Hating to be pulled from his work, he answers ...

TIGER

Yeah ... Really? ... Alright, I'll
be right down.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Orlando pulls a USB drive from his pocket.

ORLANDO

What we have so far is in here.
Ain't much. Taninski was killed on
camera, but whatever cut his throat
is just a blur.

A door on the far side slides open. Tiger steps out and
removes his jacket.

TIGER

I'm Tiger, you must be the monster hunter, huh?

They shake, but Orlando looks curious.

ORLANDO

That's me. You guys can call me Orlando. Um, why did you say it's a monster?

TIGER

Seems certain phenomena in this case don't seem logical. Seems like paranormal issues may be present here.

Orlando smiles. Looks at them suspiciously.

ORLANDO

Like a ghost or some shit?

INDIGO

We don't know what's up but impaling a dude on a tent-pole ain't fucking easy. Keep your mind open for all possibilities.

ORLANDO

Paranormal? Good thing I started going to church.

INDIGO

All of us in my crew know there is a higher power, based in goodness. It is real. We experienced it.

A quick skeptical look is flashed by Orlando.

ORLANDO

Cool. Well I better get rolling. Call me when you find something.

INDIGO

You bet, brother. We'll start right away. I'll walk you out.

INSERT - TV SCREEN

An interview between Orlando and Carmen is already in progress, from the Sheriff's office.

CARMEN

The City is terrified to go out during holidays. Cops are jumpy, not showing up for duty. Football tourism has almost stopped. Bills threaten to play home games in Toronto.

ORLANDO

These are terrible things and we need the public's help to find the killer. This predator is clever.

CARMEN

How so?

ORLANDO

City is full of cameras but the murders are never at a location where one is stationed.

CARMEN

Some in the public think there is a paranormal aspect.

ORLANDO

I won't say it's paranormal.

He laughs it off.

CARMEN

There seems to be info pointing that way, including claw marks on the body.

ORLANDO

Lots of weapons can mimic those wounds. We're starting to think its an ex-con mad at Buffalo PD. No Troopers or Sheriffs have been targeted.

CARMEN

One person suspected or several?

ORLANDO

We're not sure any of the killings are related, but we'll catch whoever it is. Public safety - it's what we do.

END INSERT

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

The weather is given and the map shows more snow. As more of the room is seen, it appears to be a psyche ward, day-room. People with visible problems mill about.

Francine watches the TV in a straightjacket. Wild hair, wilder eyes.

THURMAN TOPLESS/FRANCINE

You! You didn't keep me safe, did you? Did you?

NURSE (O.S.)

Calm Down Francine. Time for your happy pills.

EXT. STREETS OF BUFFALO - NIGHT

Cold, snowy evening in warehouse district. A HOOKER, who looks weathered herself, is not dressed properly for the temperature, tries to keep herself warm on the corner.

Ronnie, as Santa, approaches her on foot. She's astonished. He speaks in the strongest Southern accent he can muster.

RONNIE

Merry Christmas my little ho-ho-ho.
Have you been a good little girl
this year?

HOOKER

Depends how you define good girls
and bad girls. Wanna find out?

Ronnie quickly pulls out a \$100 bill.

RONNIE

You can have this, and another just
like it if you do me one lil' old
favor, darling.

LATER

A squad car cruises by. She yells at it and flips them off. They get out, chase her.

The foot race goes into alley. On the wall ahead, is a C-note taped to the far wall of the tight space. She runs to it, just as Santa silently lowers himself down behind cops.

The hooker grabs the bill and turns around. The cops have stopped and stand there looking blankly past her. She looks at them curiously, nothing.

HOOKER
Hey, you alright?

She nudges one. His severed head falls off, as does the other. Blood squirts. She screams into the winter night.

INT. CARMEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Orlando and Carmen have dinner at the table as light jazz plays in the background, Through the window, the snow falls down hard. The plates are near empty.

ORLANDO
Shrimp and grits. Perfect thing to warm the tummy. Thanks, Carmen.

CARMEN
Old family recipe. Hope it's not too spicy for you.

He looks to her.

ORLANDO
It ain't. But you are.

CARMEN
Spicy? I'm just a church girl with an interesting job.

She gets up and motions for him to join her on the couch. He eagerly complies.

ORLANDO
And I like that. Love that. Just spicy enough. Too much can burn out your taste-buds.

CARMEN
Has a bad girl burned your taste-buds before?

FLASHBACK - SERIES OF SHOTS

- Francine stripping with the extreme sexiness.
- In bed with Francine riding him like a Brahma bull.
- Blind-sided by receipt from jewelry store

END OF FLASHBACK

Orlando clasps her hands and stares into Carmen's eyes.

ORLANDO

Taste-buds burnt? I'm lucky to have a mouth left at all. You kidding me?

They both laugh.

CARMEN

Yeah, I haven't had much luck either. But, it's Christmas time. The season of miracles.

He brings her hand towards him and kisses it.

ORLANDO

Long live miracles.

They both smile.

CARMEN

Snow might make it dangerous to drive tonight. Would you like to stay over? Safer.

Orlando's eyes light up, then he tries to play it cool.

ORLANDO

Oh, absolutely. Safety first.

CARMEN

You don't mind the couch, right? I'll bring out pillows and a blanket for you.

ORLANDO

Uh, the couch? Yes, sure. Of course. Thank you.

CARMEN

Excellent. Be right back.

She goes to another room as Orlando rolls his eyes.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Convicts in smudged, orange jumpsuits shiver as they sneak around an icy parking lot. FRITO (30's) and JANKOVIC (40's) try to find a vehicle with easy entry.

JANKOVIC

Damn, they're all locked.

FRITO

We'll die out here. Should have stayed with the transport bus, Jankovic. This is stupid.

JANKOVIC

You nuts, Frito? Half Of them are dead already from the crash. This is our chance. Look, clothes donation box. Cover me.

Jankovic climbs in. Frito keeps his eyes shifting around for any signs of trouble as he shivers.

JANKOVIC (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Not much here to help. Oh found something for myself. Here's one for you.

A puffy, full length coat is thrown to Frito. It's pink.

FRITO

This is a lady's coat, clown.

The dumpster diver sticks his head out.

JANKOVIC

A fat lady. Put it on till we find something else, you damn diva.

Seconds later Jankovic pops up in a TED'S HOT DOGS coat, that is stained, but looks warm.

JANKOVIC (CONT'D)

Okay, let's scoot.

INT. CARMEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Orlando loosens his tie as he looks out the window at the steady snow. He smiles as he mumbles to himself.

ORLANDO

Church girl. What did you expect?

He returns to the couch and takes off his shoes. Carmen enters with her arms full of blankets, sheets and pillows. She peeks over the bundle that covers her whole body and smiles to him.

CARMEN

Hope that didn't take too long.

She dumps the load on the chair near the couch. When she faces Orlando, it's seen that she is wearing a pink gown with a slit on the side. Orlando blinks a few times.

ORLANDO

That's very kind of you, I appreciate that.

CARMEN

Public safety is the utmost, right?

ORLANDO

Never been more right in my life.

Carmen leans closer until she leans gently on him. She then begins to rub his chest.

CARMEN

I like to feel safe.

The couple slides into a kiss as the snowfall through the window behind them, quickens.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

The two cons stumble through deep snow and tangled brush, with only moonlight to guide them. Sounds of the forest make Frito visibly jumpy and he looks funny in the coat.

Frito taps his fellow escapee on the shoulder and points to the side. They see a tent and campfire.

JANKOVIC

What the hell is someone doing out here on a night like this?

FRITO

Must be on the run - like us.

Jankovic picks up a hearty branch and holds it like a weapon.

JANKOVIC

Looks like we found a nice cozy spot tonight. With or without permission.

Frito nods, does the same but the branch is hard to pull out. He falls on his ass in the struggle. Jankovic sighs, then motions him to move forward, quietly. They try to creep up to the tent.

Now close, Jankovic charges the tent with club raised. Looks inside, nobody found.

JANKOVIC (CONT'D)

Looks like our lucky day.

WOLF

Grrrr ...

A total change of facial expression. He slowly straightens up and peeks over the side of the tent as steam rolls skyward from his breath.

He looks over to his partner, red has splattered the pink. His head rocks back and forth, then falls forward and makes a thud on the snow in front of fear-paralyzed Jankovic.

A huge, bloody paw waves to Jankovic from where Frito's head used to be. He screams and runs through the dark, snow filled woods.

Growling seems to come from every direction. He whips his head around, looking for any way out. He trips on a shrub. Falls. Face full of snow ... And sweat. Gets up, runs more.

Petrified and exhausted ... Catches his breath under a tree. He holds his 'battle branch' - ready for combat, from any angle - except from above.

As Jankovic feverishly checks his flanks ... A large, hairy, clawed hand - reaches down from the thick branches, out of his sight line. Closer and closer they come. Then stop.

In a split second, the long nails strike and penetrate the crown of Jankovic's skull. Eyes wide. He is snatched skyward as the club falls from his grip. His whole body disappears. Blood drips on snow.

EXT. HIGHWAY OFF RAMP - DAY

Snow squalls blow across the exit near the wooded area and piles up near some road signs in the early morning hours. Through the flakes something comes into view.

The escaped convicts' heads are on posts next to each other. Faces frozen in horror. Nearby is a road marker, ATTICA CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - 30 MILES'.

An arm covered in a pink sleeve pokes through the snow. It's frost-bitten finger points to the direction of the prison ... As do the severed heads.

INT. CARMEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Now in a robe, Carmen pours out a coffee. She looks over to see Orlando, shirtless, still asleep. She glowingly smiles.

Orlando's phone goes off. He awakens, disoriented. Finds the ringing phone in his pants near the couch. Carmen steps into his view.

CARMEN
Good morning, Sheriff.

ORLANDO
Hey there, babe. Just a sec.
Crap, it's work.

He answers the phone just as Carmen's starts ringing. She goes to it.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)
Yeah, Evelyn, what's ... Say what?
... Oh, God ... I'll be right
there, hold tight.

After a deep breath, he hangs his head. Sadness and frustration show on his face. Orlando snatches his clothes and starts to put them on. Carmen returns, hurried.

CARMEN
I guess you heard. Four in one
night? You kidding me? I gotta
get a shower and go. You mind
shoveling me out?

ORLANDO
Huh? How bad was the snow?

EXT. CARMEN'S APARTMENT - DAY

In dress shoes, bundled in his woman's scarf and knit hat, Orlando huffs and puffs as he chops away at the snow drifts.

INT. QUEZADA'S OFFICE - DAY

Orlando studies a tablet's screen, sitting across from his boss. Both look frustrated.

QUEZADA
Cops got killed around 8PM.
Coroner says escaped felons died
around 2AM.

(MORE)

QUEZADA (CONT'D)

Even with the snow, it's possible
for one - to have done both crimes.

ORLANDO

Wow. Did we get any description
from the hooker?

QUEZADA

Nope, she's in bad shape. Just
mutters about Santa Claus.

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Hooker is in the nut-house with Francine. Both look wild
eyed. The hooker rocks back and forth with another patient
as Francine tries to wipe off invisible blood.

INT. QUEZADA'S OFFICE - DAY

The criminal records for each deceased inmate and photo is
projected on the wall.

ORLANDO

Looks like these fugitives were
some bad guys, long records. How
can he be a cop hater if he's
killing criminals?

QUEZADA

Murder scene left no traces. Guy
has to have military training.
(beat)
Or maybe even - a cop.

INT. HIGHWAY OFF RAMP - DAY

Orlando parks his County vehicle near the many other cop
cars. He shakes his head, grossed out by the killer's
display of heads.

ORLANDO

Cute. Our guy thinks he's an
impressionist artist now.

Quezada watches as the crime lab staff struggle to remove the
frozen head from the post.

QUEZADA

I wonder why the head is on a post
sometimes, but not others.

Jaws of life are brought on the thick metal post, which they hope to slice through. The machine's claws, slip on the icy surface of the pole. SPLAT!

It crushes Frito's skull by accident. Goo from the squashed noggin flies everywhere and gets on everyone. Screams of disgust as they try to wipe it off.

INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

Professor Indigo escorts Orlando into the lab. The three scientists greet him warmly. Charts and maps are setup.

ORLANDO

Hey crew. Please tell me you got something good. Things are getting worse. I got to stop it.

He sits at a round table with the others.

INDIGO

That's the key question here. What is ... IT? One psycho or what?

GOLDIE

Might be several killers.

HABOOB

Even copycat murders. Now that the media has dubbed him, MISTER CLAWS, he's become a cult hero to all of the crazies.

Orlando is shown an online article with that title.

ORLANDO

Mister Claws? I hadn't heard that one yet. Kinda festive. But he - sure the hell ain't.

TIGER

The victims had nothing in common, from what we found. He seems to love killing cops, especially.

Photos of all the victims are laid on the table.

GOLDIE

You need to be very cautious, my friend. Torsos of convicts found?

ORLANDO

Not yet. With this snow, they could be buried till Springtime.

HABOOB

If we could just get a sample of blood, hair or even birthdate, this could be much easier.

INDIGO

Our specialty is tracking. We use unconventional systems but we get fucking results. Dude, we need something to work with.

ORLANDO

Damn. Okay, My people will check files to see what violent criminals are out with a stated grudge against police. Possible military background.

TIGER

I would not rule out supernatural explanations.

The deputy's face contorts in skepticism.

INDIGO

We've seen unexplainable things before. We can handle that shit too. Just need a lead.

ORLANDO

We'll get him. Mister Claws, huh? I'll hunt him down, Just like he hunts us down. Shit is personal.

EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

An older Buffalo cop, in uniform ... Terror in his eyes. Peers behind himself as he runs towards a parking lot. Something large crunches through snow and tree limbs.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The cop slips and falls hard on the icy pavement. Breathing heavy, he struggles to his feet. Finally gets to his car, shaking, he opens the door.

INT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Totally spooked, he quickly looks around the outside of the vehicle, nothing. Tries to start car, No sound.

Wires from the engine are tossed onto the windshield. He then hears his tires punctured and go flat.

RONNIE (O.C.)

HO HO HO ...

The attacker seems to hide around car, just out of the driver's view. Occasionally a claw strikes the window. The cop - terrified.

Pulls his gun. Shoots from inside vehicle to get him. Tries radio, doesn't work.

As cop reloads, the floorboards are ripped wide open. The cop is paralyzed with fear.

The cop is snatched by a huge hairy claw, then pulled through floorboards to underneath the squad car.

EXT. SQUAD CAR - NIGHT

Growling sounds mix with screams. Blood pours from beneath the vehicle, onto the snowy pavement.

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

Carmen gets ready to go on-air with Orlando. He looks nervous as he wipes his sweaty palms.

CARMEN

(whispers)

Hey, handsome. Just be yourself.
Give the facts - with a dash of
hope and compassion. You good?

ORLANDO

Right. Yeah, I got this.

She flirts back with a wink. The red light comes on.

CARMEN

We're here with Deputy Sheriff
Orlando Crawford with the latest
updates on the Mister Claws killing
spree, plaguing our city.

ORLANDO

Last night, another tragic scene. A veteran Buffalo policeman was ambushed in his squad car near the Waterfront. We are examining body cam and forensics right now.

CARMEN

With another football game tonight, can you assure the public that it will be safe?

ORLANDO

As always, take precautions, but I guarantee that the area will be saturated with cops in the stadium and parking lots. He'd be a fool to try anything.

CARMEN

That's good news. Anything else that might help?

ORLANDO

Seems he strikes after a Bills loss. So ... Go Bills. No turnovers unless you're talking baked goods.

EXT. STREETS OF ORCHARD PARK - NIGHT

A shuttle bus of Cowboy fans celebrate after a victory and are loud. They hang flags from the windows and yell ...

COWBOY FANS

'How 'bout them Cowboys. Yeee-ha!

... To passing vehicles along the way. No snow is falling and is built up on the sidewalks.

At a stop light, Santa steps in front of the vehicle, waves, then spits something towards the windshield. It cracks the glass in front of the driver. He slumps over.

Blood trickles from a fingernail stuck in his forehead. The shuttle bus rolls forward, without a driver, as riders panic.

The vehicle hits a tree on the side of the road and stops. Suddenly, the back doors are ripped open.

INT. SHUTTLE BUS - NIGHT

The enraged wolf in Santa gear enters the transport, jowls dripping with saliva. Passengers try the doors, but it is blocked by the tree. Lots of frantic shrieking.

EXT. SHUTTLE BUS - NIGHT

Growls from the beast mix with the crying-out of the Cowboy fans. Windows splotch with squirts of bright, red blood, until they are all covered. Then ... The screaming stops.

INT. PRESS CONFERENCE - DAY

Mayor Nick is joined on stage with Orlando and another man who appears to be a Fed.

NICK BAYLOR

First. Our hearts go out to the recent victims of this serial killer. Buffalo PD is on high alert. The patrols will travel in pairs from now on.

ORLANDO

Sheriffs and troopers will carry some shifts due to metro cops understandably calling off.

NICK BAYLOR

I'm happy to announce that we are now joined by FBI agent LEWISTON.

The Fed steps forward, haircut high and tight (40's), not a thread out of place.

LEWISTON

Greetings to the brave citizens of Buffalo. We have started a joint task force and are confident they have sealed off the possibility of attacks happening again. We'll find the killer and will bring him to justice.

INT. TRAILER - DAY

Ronnie munches on ribs as he watches the press conference.

RONNIE

Yeah, thoughts and prayers. And
some barbecue sauce too.

(chuckles to himself)

How 'bout them Cowboys?

(beat)

They're delicious.

He grabs another rib from a pile and chomps down.

INT. INDIGO'S HOUSE - DAY

In the living room, Orlando removes his coat, as Indigo beckons an immigrant couple to come closer. The woman is very pregnant. Indigo speaks to her in Spanish ...

INDIGO

(Spanish)

See, he's too goofy looking to be
an immigration agent. Please,
relax. You're safe.

They laugh and leave the room. Orlando looks confused.

ORLANDO

All okay?

INDIGO

The uniform had them shook. This
time of year I open my bed and
breakfast to homeless, immigrant
families. I make sure I have room.
You never know who might stop by.

ORLANDO

That's cool of you. True holiday
spirit. I'm surprised you didn't
decorate too.

INDIGO

All that stuff distracts from the
original meaning of Bethlehem
blessing. Hope!

(beat)

Not decorations, materialism or a
jolly old fucking elf.

ORLANDO

I hear you. We need to talk.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Orlando meets with the crew in the lab. He looks uneasy.

ORLANDO

Yeah, if this continues, I'm worried I may lose this job. I got to stop the killings - and soon.

TIGER

Have any new info?

ORLANDO

This is top secret. Just got it from the lab.

He takes out his tablet. Positions it so all can see.

INSERT - TABLET SCREEN

Shows the body-cam footage of the cop ambushed in his car. It's shaky and blurred ... But the Santa clothes and sharp claws are seen in flashes.

END INSERT

Astonishment are in the eyes of Indigo and the scientists.

ORLANDO

Dog hair was found at the scene. When did Santa trade-in reindeers for Cujo?

Indigo and the three look among each other, then smiles break out. They hi-five each other in glee. Orlando's face shows he's puzzled by the response.

INDIGO

We found him. Great job.

ORLANDO

Found who? What's the deal?

GOLDIE

The three of us are astronomers. We've been tracking a cosmic occurrence in the Dogstar system.

HABOOB

A long, long - long time.

TIGER

We calculated it would happen in Buffalo, but weren't sure.

ORLANDO

What occurrence? What do you mean?

GOLDIE

Come, have a seat. I'll show you what I can, at this point.

Orlando sits in front of a computer, skeptical.

INT. CARMEN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Carmen opens the door and Orlando rushes into the heavily, holiday decorated apartment ... Mind blown.

ORLANDO

Thanks for seeing me, babe. This is crazy, I need to talk it out so it makes sense.

CARMEN

What's wrong? Talk.

They go to the couch. Orlando takes out his tablet with shaky hands.

ORLANDO

Got any bourbon?

CARMEN

I'm a church girl, remember?

ORLANDO

Wine is fine, but we'll need something.

She pours drinks and sits next to him. Concern on her face.

CARMEN

So what you stressing on?

ORLANDO

This is strictly off the record. Not ready for prime-time, understand?

Carmen looks him directly in the eyes and nods.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

So the Mayor hooked me up with these scientists to help crack the case. You won't believe what they told me.

FLASHBACK - SCIENTISTS

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

Orlando sits in front of a computer screen as Indigo and the others try to explain their exuberance.

INDIGO

You found the killer! It's Krampus. You know who that is?

ORLANDO

Uh ... Some kinda European myth, right? What's that got to do with a serial killer? He thinks he's Krampus?

On the computer screen, they pull up clips from Krampus. The pictures span many centuries.

GOLDIE

Claws, hair like a dog, vicious, kills with no mercy.

ORLANDO

Assuming this was real ... Doesn't he just go after bad kids?

HABOOB

Another lie. He and his helpers kill for the thrill of it.

ORLANDO

Looks like an ugly ass werewolf to me. But they don't exist, so ...

TIGER

Call him what you want. Due to the alignment in the Dogstar, he could double his power when it happens.

ORLANDO

When ... Is that?

TIGER

Two days from now.

Orlando furls his brow. Squints his eyes.

ORLANDO
That's Christmas eve!

GOLDIE
Correct and if he gets that power,
there will be a bloodbath against
humanity that's never been seen
before.

Pushing away from the computer, Orlando looks them all in the eye, befuddled.

ORLANDO
Wait, this is just a myth, a fairy
tale, just like Santa, right?

INDIGO
Krampus invented Santa and the
other bullshit to divert us from
the actual reason for the holiday.
He's an evil genius who's been
around a long, long time.

Orlando looks to the heavens, shakes his head in disbelief.

ORLANDO
Suppose ... This is true. How do
we stop him?

INDIGO
We developed a little something-
something for his ass. Will take
him out for good.

GOLDIE
We have a plan to draw him out, but
it could be dangerous.

ORLANDO
To the city?

Indigo puts his hand on the deputy's shoulder.

INDIGO
No, my man. To you.

Shock is painted across the lawman's face.

END OF FLASHBACK

Carmen stares at her guy a moment, then slams down the rest of her wine.

CARMEN

Why is it dangerous for you? This sounds scary. You sure these guys aren't crazy?

ORLANDO

Not sure at all. That's another problem. But they were dead serious. In my gut ... I think they could be right.

A cynical expression emits from Carmen's eyes.

CARMEN

Krampus invented Santa? But he's just a jolly old elf who brings joy, right?

ORLANDO

Naw, they showed me he's a tool used for marketing products and to maximize profits.

SERIES OF SHOTS - SANTA

Images of Santa evolving over time. From Euro roots, up till present day.

ORLANDO (V.O.)

The idea has been around for centuries. The image we now revere was started by Coca-Cola. Just a PR campaign. We made a God in our own image. Which has grown so large it overshadows the whole Bethlehem thing. Total fiction. But a proven money-maker.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

Carmen struggles to accept what he's dishing out.

CARMEN

Okay ... Assume all that is true. How do we stop the killings?

Orlando hangs his head as a hefty exhale is released.

ORLANDO

Yeah, right - the dangerous plan they cooked up, just for me. You won't believe this ...

INT. QUEZADA'S OFFICE - DAY

Sheriff Quezada and Lewiston stare back at Orlando like he's lost his mind.

QUEZADA

What? No, I don't - and won't believe it's a werewolf, Krampus or any other crazy shit.

LEWISTON

Yeah, that's pretty far-fetched, deputy.

QUEZADA

Look. This case is very stressful. I understand. Clearly has been too much for you. We've got a good therapist for the department. Want you to see her.

A pained look is on Orlando's face.

ORLANDO

No. Don't take me off the case. I'll solve it and I'm not crazy. Check this out.

Orlando shows the video and they see glimpses of Santa and the claws in the clip. Eyebrows raise as it plays.

QUEZADA

Interesting, but it's probably just a meth head in costume.

LEWISTON

Yeah. Santa and Freddie Krueger mash-up, using blade weapons.

QUEZADA

I really don't think you can handle this anymore. A complete FBI team is on the way to handle it now.

The deputy hangs his head.

ORLANDO

I'm begging for more time. Just until after Christmas. I know I'm close. I can feel it.

QUEZADA

Fine, they won't arrive until the morning after Christmas, anyway. That gives you a little over 24 hours to solve it. I want the killer. Not the monster from a horror movie. Comprende?

ORLANDO

Thanks. Boss. I have plan. A great plan.

Orlando, smiling ... Nods to both, then leaves.

SUPER - CHRISTMAS EVE

INT. INDIGO'S SUV - NIGHT

In the passenger seat, Orlando wears a Buffalo PD uniform and looks upset.

ORLANDO

This plan sucks.

Driving, Indigo turns to him.

INDIGO

Dude, it's all we could come up with. Good chance it'll work.

ORLANDO

A good chance? What are the chances that I die behind this bullshit?

GOLDIE

We got your back, bro.

In the back seat, three scientists show concern.

TIGER

The mathematical probability is pretty high for success. I can break it down for you if you want.

ORLANDO

Break down how you save my ass if something goes wrong.

(beat)

Tell me more about the thing you're tracking, up there.

GOLDIE

There's an alignment of the masculine planets Mercury, Mars and Jupiter. Will be super bright tonight. It also gives energy to Krampus. He'll become more powerful and more evil.

HABOOB

But he only gets the power if he can get a kill tonight

Worried, Orlando cracks his neck. It's heard by all.

TIGER

On the flip side ... If - I mean, when - we kill him tonight, he'll be banished from this dimension forever. Right?

INDIGO

Yep. The only big event tonight is Mass at Our Lady of Victory. The security will be Lackawanna PD and State Troopers. Seems he likes to kill Buffalo PD the most.

ORLANDO

That would be me. Nice. How'd you get the uniform?

INDIGO

The Mayor.

Orlando covers his eyes, lets out a big exhale, fighting back the tension of the moment.

ORLANDO

Not wild about being used as bait. You got something to stop him with? It could get outta hand, quick.

INDIGO

Lots of years of wisdom in these noggins. He won't stand a chance.

Now Orlando rolls his eyes and then looks to the heavens.

EXT. PARKING LOT, CHURCH - NIGHT

The SUV pulls into an open space. They see Carmen waiting, as parishioners go into the old church. She waves, then strolls over the snow towards them. Orlando gives her a hug.

INDIGO

Who's this?

ORLANDO

My Girl, Carmen, she's a reporter. Carmen, these are the scientists who better save my life tonight.

They wave back, sheepishly.

INDIGO

So she ... Knows?

ORLANDO

Everything. I'll let her film whatever happens so she can get a big break. Especially if she catches Krampus on a clip.

INDIGO

Dangerous out here. Don't think so. Sorry.

CARMEN

I'll totally be out of the way and hidden. Please. I'll be okay.

Although Indigo seems unhappy about it, he relents.

INDIGO

Fine, but done under protest. If something bad happens, you were warned. No photos of the scientists - or of me. Got it?

She nods in agreement.

EXT. OLD CEMETERY - NIGHT

Indigo hauls a backpack as they walk through the spooky old headstones, to a spot, not too distance from the church, but close enough to be a valid patrol area.

INDIGO

Take this and put it in your ear. I'll be your extra set of eyes.

ORLANDO

Bet. Any advise if it comes out?

INDIGO

Yeah. Run like hell.

Orlando doesn't seem comforted by that, but puts in the ear piece. Scientists and Indigo hide one place. Carmen hides in another place so she can film.

Light snow falls in huge flakes as Orlando starts his patrol with Indigo in his ear piece.

He looks skyward. Three bright objects are in the blackness of space. They seem to be relatively close together.

In the distance, closest to the church, a figure limps out of the darkness. It seems to be ... Santa. Or is it?

SANTA/RONNIE

Help, help! I've been mugged.

Father Christmas, collapses in the snow. Orlando watches it go down.

INDIGO (O.S.)

Proceed with caution. Probably a trap. We're ready if it is.

Orlando takes out his weapon and slinks closer to Santa.

As Ronnie hears the footsteps get closer, his eyes change and through a smile, fangs grow.

Above them ... The alignment in the sky happens. Suddenly it's as bright as a full moon. The bright light twinkles and gives the earth below, a red glow. All look at it.

As Ronnie turns to look, his face is seen by Orlando. He hears ...

ORLANDO (O.C.)

Ronnie? Hey Ronnie, is that you?

Ronnie's eyes and teeth go back to normal. He looks puzzled as he spins around and sees Orlando. Hangs his head. Whispers to himself ...

SANTA/RONNIE

Shit.

Orlando rushes up to him.

ORLANDO
 Hey, you alright, man. You got
 mugged? Where'd it happen?

Ronnie gets to his feet.

SANTA/RONNIE
 I'm okay. I guess. Hey, look at
 that fucking star. Ever seen
 anything like it?

ORLANDO
 Mind blowing, dude. Incredible.
 It's not really a star, though.
 It's an alignment of planets.
 (beat)
 You need medical attention? I can
 call for help.

Ronnie looks him up and down.

SANTA/RONNIE
 I thought you were a deputy. Why
 you wearing that?

INDIGO (O.S.)
 Lose him, he might be keeping
 Krampus from coming.

The deputy puts his weapon back in the policeman's holster.

ORLANDO
 It's complicated. It's cold,
 you're hurt and there's a serial
 killer running around. A cemetery
 ain't no place to play Dizzy Bats.
 Let me call you an Uber. See you
 at the strip club.

The supposedly wounded Santa, spins around in frustration. He
 seems extremely conflicted.

SANTA/RONNIE
 Fuck, man, this sucks. I kinda
 like you.

ORLANDO
 Hell, dude, I like you too. Even
 though we both know you're the -
 number two Bills fan out there.

Ronnie has a hearty chuckle.

SANTA/RONNIE

We settled all that with the Dizzy
Bats. I won.

ORLANDO

Yeah, first round. Wait till the
next home game. Look, my man. You
gotta go. Its dangerous here.

SANTA/RONNIE

Sure is. Wish it wasn't - but we
all have a job to do, huh? Look,
I'm an alpha male like you. Love
the competition aspect of life.

(deep breath)

You're a nice guy. This is nothing
personal. I'll give you a ten
second head start.

INDIGO (O.S.)

Dude. Watch out. I think he's
fucking Krampus.

Orlando looks confused. Tries to laugh it off.

ORLANDO

Uh, Ronnie. What exactly do you
mean by that?

SANTA/RONNIE

Like I said, nothing personal.

Ronnie-slash-Santa ... Starts to morph in front of him.

INDIGO (O.S.)

Run! Run!

ORLANDO

Holy shit!

Orlando sprints away, terrified.

INDIGO (O.S.)

Run to the tomb with the big angel
in front.

Eyes wide from fright, Orlando sprints over to the spot, then
freezes. The three scientists now wear outfits that seem to
be regal robes from ancient times. Orlando blinks, can't
believe it.

ORLANDO

What the ...?

The three pull out three different looking batons weapons from the same era.

Indigo pulls several gadgets from his backpack and starts to assemble a strange looking gun.

INDIGO

Their real names are Gaspar,
Balthazaar and I'm Melchior. We
got it from here.

Ronnie, full werewolf now, charges after Orlando. He is paralyzed by the sight.

Before he can duck behind the tomb, Orlando is snatched from the back, picked up and tossed several yards into the snow.

The three scientist, now THE THREE KINGS, do a back flip from their hidden spot and land so they surround Ronnie. He growls. The beast swipes at them as they circle him.

Seems they have supernatural powers of agility as they do acrobatic moves to elude the creature - while they pop him with the batons in the red light from overhead.

Wolfie Santa growls and looks to the red light. He grows taller. The three kings are surprised. Now as he fights, he gets a few good licks in, here and there, and sends them tumbling in the snow.

They regroup, nod to each other and hold the batons high. The fighting sticks turn into spears.

The silver tips sparkle in the crimson light. They swing the staffs around their bodies like martial artists.

Now they use even tighter teamwork and speed to attack and retreat, just as a different one strikes. The Santa suit gets ripped, wounds bleed - but Ronnie keeps fighting.

Orlando pulls his service weapon and aims. He shoots the beast in the head and knocks him backwards. His hat flies off ... But he's still standing. He pops the hot slug from near his ear, into his hand. Growls at Orlando.

ORLANDO

Hey, we all have a job to do.

As Santa is about to lunge at Orlando, Tiger and Goldie do a cartwheel in front of him and drive their silver spear-tips into the chest of the werewolf. Another spear rips through his back and protrudes through his chest. Blood flows.

Lifeless, the Santa clad monster, falls down dead and impaled. Slowly the huge body morphs back into Ronnie. Orlando looks relieved but a bit sad.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Got him. But ...How do I explain that? A retired cop?

GOLDIE

Not the first werewolf we killed. Have killed all kinds of demons, a long time.

TIGER

What happened to the gun?

Still in hiding behind the tomb, a pissed off voice ...

INDIGO (O.S.)

Damn thing jammed.

Orlando looks his wise men up and down.

ORLANDO

So you're the three kings
From the Bible? Come on, for real?
I don't believe it, but I know
y'all are something - different.

HABOOB

We never liked the Jingle Bells
bullshit anyway. Kinda cool
killing Santa.

Orlando looks at them with admiration.

TIGER

I feel you. Krampus had it coming
a long time.

GOLDIE

Yeah, satisfying. His bullshit
overshadows the real reason for
celebration.

HABOOB

We know because we were there. A
true miracle.

The kings give high-fives.

GOLDIE

You should have seen THAT star,
bro. Makes this crap look like a
cheap dollar store flashlight.

TIGER

Angels singing. Hope in the air.
Beyond words.

ORLANDO

My girl Carmen needs to hear this.
She's a church girl and top notch
reporter. I know she has
questions.

He smiles and turns towards Carmen's hiding spot. Yells ...

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Hey babe. Did you get all of that?
Come over.

As they wait for Carmen, A flurry of sound comes from that
area. A bigger werewolf jumps out.

The guys react in shock. The half man, half wolf, carries
the reporter as she struggles. Still alive, so far.

His torso and arms are werewolf but his head and legs are
human. He dumps her on the ground, growls, then puts on
Ronnie's Santa hat.

PRIMO PILETTI

I should have known it was you
three idiots from Bethlehem.
You've kills several of my best men
over the years. Krampus is on a
different continent, dummies.

The four men and Carmen look confused - and afraid. He turns
towards Orlando.

PRIMO PILETTI (CONT'D)

And you, I know you. From the--

Panic on Orlando's face.

ORLANDO

From the football game. Right?
Yeah, sure.

Primo looks at him, puzzled, then at Carmen. He laughs.

PRIMO PILETTI

Funny. You're gonna die and your worried your girl will find out you went to a titty bar. Hilarious.

Carmen's gaze burns into Orlando. His tone, apologetic.

ORLANDO

It was before we met, babe.
Honest.

PRIMO PILETTI

Enough. You killed my protege,
Ronnie. Fellas ... That really
pisses me the fuck off.

Huge growl showing big teeth. Saliva flies.

PRIMO PILETTI (CONT'D)

You're all lucky enough to be my
sacrifice, so I can get even more
power ... And you can't stop me.
Especially without your toys.

His eyes show pity and he stares at his punctured pal.

PRIMO PILETTI (CONT'D)

Sorry Ronnie.

He picks up the body impaled with silver tip spears and tosses it behind him. The body splatters on a headstone, quite a distance away.

Indigo looks on from hiding as he tries to put the special gun together, but it's still stuck.

They try to attack the beast without weapons. The acrobatics don't work this time. Primo snatches them one by one and injures them badly. Each are bloodied.

The kings are flung around until each, including Orlando and Carmen are heaped together in the snow.

Orlando takes out his gun with shaky hands. He shoots. Primo is knocked back a step, then smiles.

He pulls the slug out of his chest. The hot lead steams in the cold night air. He pops it in his mouth and chews it up, staring at Orlando.

ORLANDO

Sorry, dude. Had to try, right?
Hope it was tasty.

PRIMO PILETTI
A little spicy. But thanks. I'll
kill you first.

Primo growls loudly and looks to the red sky above.

PRIMO PILETTI (CONT'D)
Five souls to be sacrificed. It my
lucky day. I'll be 50 times as
strong.

ORLANDO
I thought you were a school
teacher. Who are you? What in
God's name are you?

A sneer is returned to the lawman.

PRIMO PILETTI
God? I don't want to hear that
name again. I go by Primo Pilletti
in this era, but my real name is ...
Pontius Pilate.

FLASHBACK - JERUSALEM, FIRST EASTER

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Pontius Pilate in full Roman gear, goes to inspect the burial
cave that's now empty. He's furious. Yells at his soldiers.

PRIMO PILETTI
Where's the damn body? Get in
there and find me some answers.
Now. Am I clear?

A CENTURION steps forward, sheepishly.

CENTURION
Sir, the soldiers said they may
have saw something, bizarre,
supernatural in there. They refuse
to get close.

Exasperated, Pilate/Primo - goes into a rage.

PRIMO PILETTI
Ghosts? Angels? We executed a
pauper and a madman. Not some king
or wizard. This is not some holy
site. I'll show you.

INT. CAVE - DAY

Pilate enters the earthen womb and looks around as soldiers peer in from the entrance.

PRIMO PILETTI

See? Nothing here. As a matter of fact, this is what I think of that little trouble-maker.

He adjusts his garments, then takes a piss in the cave. Enamored with his own decadence, he glances back at his troops with a demonic grin.

Now finished defiling the tomb, Pilate straightens himself. A voice is heard in his head, no one else hears.

GOD (O.S.)

(reverberating voice)

Since you act like a dog, you will be a dog ... For all eternity.

The procurator of Palestine seems shocked. Maybe frightened. He rushes to the exit.

EXT. CAVE - DAY

Total confusion mixed with denial in his voice. He confronts the centurion.

PRIMO PILETTI

How dare you. What did you just say to me?

CENTURION

Say? Nothing, sir. I didn't utter a word.

Paranoia sinks in and it is seen in his actions and in his eyes. He turns from his troops. Bewildered beyond reproach. Pilate spins back to face them.

PRIMO PILETTI

Did any of you just speak when I was in there?

All soldiers shake their heads, no. He runs his fingers through his hair. Sweat beads on his forehead. Wild eyed, he nods to the centurion, then starts to stumble away.

His departure, turns into a sprint as his troops take in the sight of their spooked leader.

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Pilate steps onto the patio, sweating heavily. Doubled over in pain. He peers up from his anguish to see a full moon.

A tear falls, then he starts to morph. Falling to his knees, the torment of his physical change makes him cry out. First the eyes, - then the fangs, the fur and the claws.

The cursed soul, now a full werewolf - howls at the moon with awesome fury. He jumps from the balcony and runs into the wooded area a short distance away.

EXT. ROMAN ALLEY - NIGHT

Eyes that seem to glow are seen in the darkness. An unsuspecting citizen of the empire strolls by. He is snatched backwards into the alley by sharp claws. Short screams are heard, then gnawing.

PRIMO PILETTI (V.O.)

In Palestine, they thought I'd gone mad. Shipped me back to Rome. I hated killing fellow Romans.

The citizen's body, motionless. Toga covered in blood. Severed head at Pilate's feet. The wolf looks sad.

INT. ROMAN BATHROOM - DAY

Pilate, in a tub, full uniform, splashes his face with water. He then picks up a dagger. He slits his wrists and the clear water turns red quickly.

PRIMO PILETTI (V.O.)

I let them think I had died, After that - I just travelled the world, spreading this disease and feasting on mortal flesh.

SERIES OF SHOTS - WEREWOLF KILLS

- Night. An African shepherd, flock near him, hears a sound. Runs to it with staff as a weapon. The wolf, bloodied, devours a sheep, then casts his eyes on the shepherd. He attacks, shredding the African's head off, with one swipe.

- Night. In an Asian forest, a monk meditates. A growl is heard. He opens one eye. The wolf, frothing, growls again. Just inches in front of him. Before the monk can react, half his head is bitten off.

- Night. Three British pirates stumble from a pub, booze in hand, laughing. They see a man in fetal position near the woods. They go over, laugh at him as they poke him with swords. Pilate faces them, fangs glistening. Screams, growls and the sound of bone ripped from flesh. Three heads roll into the road.

END OF FLASHBACK

EXT. OLD CEMETERY - NIGHT

The red haze continues as the half-monster stares down his sacrificial human offerings.

PRIMO PILETTI

After many centuries, I realized how stupid humans truly were. I decided to change the whole narrative about your so-called, Christmas.

GOLDIE

You don't deserve to speak on Christmas. You killed him.

Goldie struggles to get up, but is pushed back down by Pilette, then laughed at.

PRIMO PILETTI

It was my influence that made Santa, reindeers, decorated trees and gift giving - the new focus.

HABOOB

Can't face what you did to him, huh? Got to cover it up?

PRIMO PILETTI

Santa kicks ass. Lot more fun and glamorous than thinking about some smelly old barn, in a smelly old desert.

(beat)

It spread across Europe, then the world. Now it's like ...Forget the baby, where's MY GIFTS? My tree? My big feast and my special booze.

CARMEN

Why did you do that? You're immortal What do you care what we think?

PRIMO PILETTI

It's not about you chew toys, it's about me - what I think. Yes. Makes me feel guilty about killing him later. But hey. Who knew he was - all that?

He straightens Ronnie's Santa cap on his head.

PRIMO PILETTI (CONT'D)

Fairy tales are more fun, right? Ho ho ho.

The middle finger of Orlando sticks up.

ORLANDO

Have fun with this, Fido.

His demeanor changes. A growl from deep in his chest is heard. He grins.

PRIMO PILETTI

Time for payback and sacrifice. That finger will be the first to go, my friend.

INDIGO (O.C.)

Finally.

Shielded a bit by a huge tombstone, Indigo points his futuristic gun at Primo.

INDIGO (CONT'D)

You ain't the only one who fucked up. I should have given up my bed - rather than have him born in a barn like some donkey.

PRIMO PILETTI

The Bethlehem Innkeeper? Ha, yeah, you suck too. Killing me would remove your guilt?

INDIGO

Let's try.

PRIMO PILETTI

Fool. Guns don't work on me.

INDIGO

This will. I'll blow your fucking head off.

He fires. It is a buzz sound, rather than a gun-blast. The projectile hits Primo on the side of his head. Blood squirts from where his ear was.

INDIGO (CONT'D)
Stand still, would ya?

Primo growls so loud it knocks snow from branches of trees. He quickly morphs into full wolfman. Now he's taller and more buff. Canine spit drips from fangs.

Carmen clings to Orlando as Indigo reloads as fast as possible. The gun jams ... Again.

The wolf attacks with incredible speed. It swipes the gun away and breaks Indigo's arm in the process. It hangs awkwardly as Primo picks him up.

INDIGO (CONT'D)
Nooo!

His special gun lands a few yards from Orlando. The deputy touches Carmen's face gently.

ORLANDO
Pray for me.

The creature's claws grow as long as switchblades - he winds-up for the decapitation of Indigo. Then ... All hear a noise that doesn't belong there. A baby cooing.

Both of their eyes show puzzlement. Primo prepares for the death blow - again. Now they hear a baby laughing.

They turn to the side and see a baby, in a cradle, near a snow drift. A bright light shines from beneath it.

While distracted, Orlando lunges towards Indigo's gun. He snatches it and rolls into prone firing position.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)
God please ... Let this work.
Please.

It fires. He hits the beast in the chest. The slug leaves a visible hole the size of a softball.

Through the hole, the bullet is seen as it sails through the air and settles in Ronnie's corpse, which jolts it.

The red sky starts to fade as the alignment is obscured by thick clouds.

The beast looks down at the hole in it's chest. Behind him, Ronnie dead body starts to flake apart and drift skyward.

Indigo tosses Orlando another shell. He loads it, shoots the wolf in the head. BOOM.

The Santa hat lands on his torso, but the head is ... Gone. The wolf body turns back into human, Primo. It then free-falls backwards, dead.

Just like Ronnie, Primo disintergrates into particles, which float into the now black sky.

ORLANDO (CONT'D)

Get lost, puppy.

Indigo gets up. He tries to shake off the shock as the others observe him.

CARMEN

Your arm. Is it--

INDIGO

Hey, you're right. It was all fucked up. Now look. I'm good.

The kings check themselves. No more injuries.

GOLDIE

All wounds are healed. You think that's ... Him?

Indigo takes off his jacket and rushes over and puts it on the baby. The others join him. They all gaze into the cradle of the infant.

HABOOB

Yes, I'll remember that baby's face for all eternity. This is beyond explanation.

He falls to his knees, in prayer mode.

CARMEN

I thought the world would end when he comes back.

INDIGO

I dunno. Maybe he's gotta be drinking age first.

TIGER

It must be him.

Now all three kings kneel in the snow next to the strangely glowing cradle.

INDIGO

Hey, Little buddy, I'm really sorry you had to be born in a barn. I should've gave your mom my bed. I'm an asshole. Please, forgive me.

GOLDIE

And also us. We could have given more gold so you didn't suffer poverty.

HABOOB

Please forgive us.

The light from the cradle expands. It begins to swirl around Indigo and crew. Indigo looks to Orlando with a smile.

INDIGO

Merry Christmas, you get my truck under your tree. Also, dude, being a cop sucks. Ever think of running a bed and breakfast?

Before Orlando can respond, the retiring innkeeper tosses him a wad of keys.

INDIGO (CONT'D)

I won't need it anymore.

The light around the cradle becomes blinding. Orlando and Carmen must shield their eyes and finally turn away. A large whoosh sound is heard.

They turn back and the area is dark and empty. They hug each other tight. Tears flow. The bells on the church start to chime through the night sky.

CARMEN

It's midnight. Merry Christmas!

ORLANDO

Hell yeah, I mean, heck yeah. This is one Christmas I'll never forget.

CARMEN

Let's get outta here, it's creepy.

He grabs Indigo's gun, looks around for any other evidence.

ORLANDO

Were we here tonight? Nope. Don't think so. Follow me, young lady.

They stroll hand in hand from the burial site.

END OF FLASHBACK - BACK TO PRESENT DAY

EXT. DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Orlando and Benny park alongside the house. Dad gets out with the bags and his son joins him.

ORLANDO

Remember, don't tell momma we talked about this.

The boy nods back. They both walk to the large house painted red, white and blue. It is the bed and breakfast that Indigo had ran - but spruced up and decorated with Buffalo Bills items, all over.

Over the door is a large hi-gloss banner that reads, "BILLS MAFIA - BED AND BREAKFAST".

EXT. BED AND BREAKFAST - NIGHT

Carmen, older, opens the door for her boys. Benny is excited and runs to her.

BENNY

Hi, momma. At the store we saw Santa. I never want to see him again, please.

He goes in for a tight hug, shaken. She gives Orlando a piercing, side-eye. He looks apologetic.

CARMEN

Big mouth.

THE END