

PROTECT & SERVE

Pilot

"First Knight / Two Funerals"

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TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. 1999 HONDA CIVIC - NIGHT

Parked on a rain-slick street corner.

Petite, sassy firebrand with a heart of gold, MISSY STRICKLAND (24), rifles through a stack of documents. Tucks them neatly back into a manila envelope. Fishes around for her purse.

Beside the plastic sheet-covered driver's side window, NEVILLE (19), leans over the steering wheel to look around.

NEVILLE
Christ. This neighborhood's
shittier than ours.

She hits him.

NEVILLE
Ow! What the hell, sis?

MISSY
(hits him again)
Don't swear.

NEVILLE
I dint. Juss sayin.

MISSY
Just sayin what? Missy, don't go?
Ima get a second night job? I'm
nervous enough as it is, you know.

NEVILLE
You don't gotta be like that. I'm
worried about ya, that's all.

MISSY
As usual.

NEVILLE
(still looking out)
What kinda bar you said this is
again?

MISSY
I dunno. Just some bar. They all
pretty much the same.

NEVILLE
No. They ain't.

MISSY
(sigh)
A tavern. Pub. I dunno -- one of
those places where it's always dark
inside even when it's sunny out.

NEVILLE
Does it even have a name?

Title Card

MISSY
Not sure.

She suddenly reaches for the rear car seat. Tickles the BABY.

NEVILLE
Stop playin. What time you wanna
get picked up?

MISSY
Ima stay at Uncle Titus's tonight
and take the bus back in the
morning.

NEVILLE
You best stay outta trouble, Missy.

MISSY
Whateva, man -- I'm a big girl, you
know that.

NEVILLE
I know you can take care of
yourself, it's just... Watch out in
there. It's late. Dudes drink, they
get frisky --

She opens the passenger side door and gets out.

MISSY
O-K, O-K. Enough wit' the big
brother stuff, you just worry about
my niece, that's what you're good
at -- I'm out. Love you both. Drive
safe getting home. And don't swear!

EXT. CALICO BUILDING - STREET - NIGHT

Outside the vehicle, Missy seems less sure. Nervous. Views the old building exterior with her brother's trepidation.

SUPER: "Kensington - Philadelphia, PA"

No lights glow in any window. At ground level they're blacked out. The three-story building is a dark, quiet beast.

Is there really a bar inside? With patrons?

She paces toward it, the envelope tucked under her arm.

Missy takes a deep breath. Hauls the heavy door open.

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - NIGHT

Appearances are deceiving: inside, the bar is wall-to-wall packed with PATRONS with whom she has little in common.

The whole joint is tall. White. Male.

At her diminutive size, she tries looking through and around them but sees no one resembling an employee.

Trying to get past, she's forced to the outer wall.

The decor catches her eye. Memorabilia covers the walls: plaques, shields, commendations, patches, department photos, academy certificates, old school batons, decommissioned service revolvers, and more.

A cop bar?

MISSY

Oh, hell no.

She has no trouble finding her way back out. In a hurry.

EXT. PROTECT & SERVE - NIGHT

But her brother's car is gone!

Missy unlocks her phone. Pulls up Neville's number.

Before the call connects, the battery dies.

MISSY

You gotta be kidding me. Ugh!

Rain starts to fall.

Missy raises her coat's hood -- to go back inside.

END TEASER

ACT I**INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BAR - NIGHT**

Meet LEONARDO MONTALVO (60), proprietor of Protect & Serve. Lineman's build. Rolled-up sleeves tight on massive forearms.

Just don't let his age -- or suspenders -- fool you: dormant beneath his jovial, grandfatherly disposition lies raw, volcanic power and a notoriously monumental dark side.

He's working the entire bar by himself. One PATRON at a time.

Leo grabs a pint glass, flips it around in his hand, places it under the line of taps.

LEO
Supermoon Pale Ale. Coming right up.

(opens tap)
I'm surprised you're not over at Dunleavy's.

PATRON #1
I wasn't invited.

LEO
He couldn't find it in his heart to invite decorated officers?

PATRON #1
Nope. Brass and muckety-mucks only. Hey, you're former brass. How come you're not there?

LEO
Nah!
(closes tap)
Building bridges sometimes requires burning bridges.

PATRON #1
What the hell does that mean?

LEO
(placing beer)
If I hadn't snubbed him I wouldn't be here to offer you this cold, hoppy, delicious brew, now would I, officer?

PATRON #1
Just glad retirement hasn't sapped
your sense of humor, Leo.

LEO
What "sense of humor"?

PATRON #2
And what "retirement"? Need another
pint over here, stat!

PATRON #3
Yeah, Leo!

PATRON #4
Me, too! I mean, three.

PATRON #5
Make that four. Me, four!

After that, the voices and orders overwhelm him.

BAR ENTRANCE

Keeping a low profile, Missy pushes through the crowd.
Angling. Apologizing. Awkwardly pinballing between bodies.

Her head down, she plows right into someone on his way out.

The collision knocks her hood back.

DETECTIVE KARL WEISS (40s). Black hair. Slicked.
Plainclothes. A real hardass. For whatever reason he's there,
it certainly isn't to enjoy a night out.

WEISS
(snaps)
Hey! Watch where you're...

She's clearly not someone he expects to bump into.

MISSY
Sorry, mister. I --

WEISS
Officer.

MISSY
Officer.

WEISS
Let's make that "Detective Weiss."

MISSY

White?

WEISS

Weiss.

(sneering)

With S-S on the end.

He punctuates the esses with two fingers into her arm.

WEISS

Now what do you have to say for
yourself?

She swallows the wrong words so the right ones can come out.

MISSY

I apologize for bumping into you,
Detective Weiss.

He scans her from head to toe.

WEISS

Something else on your mind,
homegirl?

Missy shakes her head. Secures the envelope under her arm.

WEISS

I didn't think so. Now, in the
future --

He bumps shoulders with her in passing hard enough to knock
her into another PATRON who also seems none too pleased.

WEISS

(growls in her ear)
-- watch where you're going.

BAR

Leo draws beers and slings drinks. Works with expert skill.
But he's outnumbered literally a hundred to one. More.

He opens three taps at once. Runs a credit card. Whiskey Sour.
Tom Collins. Makes change. Black and Tan. Jack and Coke.

Everyone's shouting. Arguing. Swapping stories. They surround
the long bar like a hot Vegas craps table.

Leo. Frenetic. Fighting the tide of thirsty patrons. Until --

He leans over the bar toward someone standing between the server station and partition.

LEO
You lost?

MISSY
Hi, I'm Missy. I'm looking for
Leonardo Montalvo?

She fusses the envelope open.

LEO
Look around you. I got zero time
for -- whatever this is.

PATRONS slam the bar with their palms, demanding service.
Leo's nightmare worsens by the second.

MISSY
Sorry. I know this isn't the best
time but --

LEO
Listen, honey. My barback quit
tonight and the other two are out
sick, so I don't care if you're
with Sierra Club or selling candy
bars. If you're drinking, back of
the line. Wherever that is. If
you're not drinking, go find the
door. It looks just like the one
you entered.

Missy slips several documents out of the envelope.

MISSY
You see, my uncle...

But when she looks up, Leo is long gone. Already placing a
drink at the other end of the bar, eschewing Missy and the
more demanding guests.

Someone chucks a football to him. Somehow he catches it and
returns the pass without missing a step or losing a drop.

PATRON #3
(gets his attention)
Hey, Leo. I didn't know you hired a
new employee.

Leo shoots him a confused look.

The patron nods beyond his side.

Leo turns to see Missy -- behind the bar at the opposite end, taking orders and making drinks.

LEO
What the...?

The bartender storms over to her.

LEO
(incensed)
Hey! You can't be back here.

MISSY
(fixing cocktails)
I disagree.

LEO
It's not open for discussion. Let's go.

He starts to lead her out. She tears her arm from his grasp.

MISSY
I ain't leaving.

Indeed. Already adept at Leo's POS system, she closes out three checks before he finishes talking.

LEO
Now see here, miss. I don't --

MISSY
Missy.

LEO
Missy. I don't wanna be like those Internet assholes always siccing police on black folk. But look around you. It's not like I have a choice.

MISSY
Or maybe I throw you out instead?

LEO
I beg your pardon?

MISSY
How 'bout I toss you and all the rest of these mofos out in the street. That sound good?

PATRON #5

Is there a problem, Leo?

LEO

Nah. The little lady's confused.
Thinks she owns the joint.

MISSY

No, I don't. But I do own the
building it's in. That has to count
for something.

She distributes a line of coasters like a Vegas dealer.

LEO

(reverses demeanor)

You're --? You can't be Titus
Strickland's daughter, he didn't
have one.

MISSY

I'm his niece.

LEO

Yeah. O-K yes, I remember you from
the funeral.

QUICK FLASH - TITUS STRICKLAND'S FUNERAL

Missy eyes Leo -- the only white man among the few attendees
-- then down the hill at the much more crowded service
occurring simultaneously.

BACK TO BAR

MISSY

I thought you went to the wrong
service. The cemetery double-booked
us.

LEO

Yeah, with the D-A's. I almost
didn't make either one. Parking was
a nightmare.

(refocusing)

Your uncle was an amazing man,
Missy. He deserved better. We were
at loggerheads more than once over
the years, but he was my closest
friend and few will ever know how
important he was to the community.
Regardless, I can't have you --

MISSY

I could really use a job, Leo. And it seems like you could use some help. More than some. I mean, look around you.

LEO

Why would you wanna work here?

She actually hasn't stopped. Line of rocks glasses on the rail in a flash. Ice.

MISSY

It kills two birds wit' one stone. I have to be here lookin after the building anyway, so I might as well make some extra money doing what I'm already good at.

LEO

I mean, don't you know what kind of bar this is?

MISSY

(citing decor)
I got eyes, don't I?

LEO

So you know it's a cop bar and you still wanna work here? That's even worse!

The patrons are pounding on his side of the bar now.

MISSY

It's them or me.

LEO

It's too unpredictable. I don't like unpredictable.

Conversely, every patron on her side is happily drinking. Somehow she served them even faster than he could.

LEO

Fine. Just for tonight.

MISSY

We'll talk more on the other side of this mess?

LEO

I suppose. Let me know if you need anything.

She has two bottles upended in one hand, sour mix upended in the other. Her drinks come up and go out fast. Really fast.

Damn.

END ACT I

ACT II**INT. POLICE COMMISSIONER DUNLEAVY'S HOME - NIGHT**

Memorial reception for District Attorney Dan Jung.

The grand foyer inside the Society Hill manor house is crowded. All GUESTS wear black but the mood isn't somber.

Somewhere a utensil clinks crystal.

POLICE COMMISSIONER FRANKLIN DUNLEAVY (50s) -- a brash oil baron in another life -- speaks over them from the staircase.

Considering his sanctimonious bluster, his mood isn't exactly somber either.

DUNLEAVY

Welcome one and all. As many of you know, District Attorney Daniel S. Jung wasn't just my friend of many years. He was also my first partner...

EXT./INT. TIOGA-NICETOWN - POLICE CRUISER - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Roaring engine. Screaming siren. The cop car banks a hard right. Races down a narrow alley.

YOUNGER DUNLEAVY (20s) drives. His partner, DAN JUNG (20s), rides shotgun with the actual shotgun unlocked and ready.

JUNG

(pointing right)
That way!

YOUNGER DUNLEAVY

(to dispatch)
Officers in pursuit. Westbound on Tioga... No -- north on Sixteenth. Suspect is black male on foot.

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)

He was a man of unimpeachable integrity.

YOUNGER DUNLEAVY

(to Jung)
Are we sure that's our guy?

JUNG

You saw the hoodie, dintcha? He's
cutting across. Hit the next left
-- there! There he is!

The individual mistaken for the suspect is honor student
KESHON TAYLOR (15). He clumsily vaults into the alley.
Pinwheeling arms. Backward glance.

YOUNGER DUNLEAVY

Go! Go! Go!

Still moving, the cruiser closes in as their suspect loses
steam running along a high wooden fence. Nowhere to turn.

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)

...a man who engaged the community,
first with his heart, then his
mind...

Jung bursts out from the moving patrol car.

JUNG

GET DOWN ON THE GROUND!

He fires the shotgun, blasting a ragged hole in the fence.

Younger Dunleavy nudges the wheel. Knocks Keshon down.

YOUNGER DUNLEAVY

Whoops!

Jung ditches the shotgun. Jumps on him. Beats him senseless.

KESHON

I ain't done nothing! I ain't done
nothing!

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)

...always commanded respect...

JUNG

STOP RESISTING!

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)

...answered the call when the
citizenry needed him...

KESHON

HELP! SOMEBODY! HELP ME!

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)

...beat the odds when the chips
were down...

Jung. Punching down on the suspect. Smashes his head and face.

JUNG
STOP RESISTING!

KESHON
It HURTS! My chest, Mama --
somethin's broke -- Mama hep me,
help me, MOMMM-AAHHH!

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)
...and extended friendship without
hesitation...

JUNG
Shut the fuck up and gimme your
arm! Roll over! ROLL OVER,
GODDAMMIT!

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - GRAND FOYER - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Dunleavy raises his champagne flute. As do those below him.

DUNLEAVY
A man who sacrificed any sense of
self in his commitment to
brotherhood and service. Here's to
District Attorney Dan Jung!

CROWD
Here, here!

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BAR - NIGHT

Another glass is raised. It belongs to slovenly retired drunk
PHIL BAXTER (50s) -- retired from the force, not drinking.

BAXTER
(signals Missy)
Over here!

MISSY
Yes, sir?

BAXTER
Somethin's wrong with this drink.

MISSY
I'm sorry about that, sir. Let me
fix you another. What would you
like?

BAXTER
Same thing.

MISSY
(confused)
But... Wasn't it just Crown on the
rocks?

BAXTER
Yep-yep.

MISSY
Sorry again... Less ice then? More?

BAXTER
(unsteady)
You know I think I just figured it
out.

MISSY
Sir?

BAXTER
Seems like anything you make just
won't stay in the glass.

Baxter slowly dumps his drink out onto the bar.

BAXTER
(giggling)
Oops.

Missy's momentarily stunned but not surprised.

BAXTER
(deadpan)
Get Leo.

Missy turns but finds herself alone behind the bar.

MISSY
Um, sir, I --

When she turns back Leo is standing behind Baxter's stool.

Leo grabs Baxter's head with one meaty paw. Slams it onto the
bartop puddle he created and holds it there.

LEO
What's-a matter, Bax? Aren'tcha
thirsty? Hell, I might hafta close
down if you're not thirsty.

BAXTER
Rrrgh... Leo...

Leo gathers Baxter's greasy hair into his fist. Dragging him toward the exit attracts the guests' attention.

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - GRAND FOYER - NIGHT

Dunleavy dabs the corner of his eye with a hanky.

DUNLEAVY
Dan Jung's deeply felt sense of
duty and honor was a tradition he
carried with him when he became the
D-A.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY JUNG'S CAREER MONTAGE - VARIOUS

A) INT. ELECTION HEADQUARTERS - NIGHT

Jung celebrates his win onstage with his picture-perfect FAMILY. Smiles and waves. Patriotic balloons and confetti.

A REPORTER broadcasts live just outside the activity.

REPORTER
Again, just to clarify, the newly-
minted District Attorney has
pledged to drop all charges against
the four officers involved in the
fatal shooting of two African-
American teens...

B) EXT. TIOGA-NICETOWN - MOTEL - ROOM 24 - DAY

A contingent of COPS bust down the door. They're still hustling inside when gunfire rings out.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...Commissioner Dunleavy announced
they will be placed on
administrative duty...

C) EXT. MALCOLM X PARK - DAY

A police SUV plows into a crowd of BLM PROTESTERS.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...the officer driving the vehicle
was acquitted...

D) EXT. TIOGA-NICETOWN - ALLEY - NIGHT

Multiple OFFICERS beat a SUSPECT into submission with batons.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...found that police actions did
not constitute criminal conduct...

E) EXT. OLD CITY - STREET FESTIVAL - DAY

COP recklessly discharges his firearm in a crowded area.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...despite the fatality, no charges
will be filed at this time...

F) EXT. KENSINGTON - STREET CORNER - NIGHT

COP puts a HISPANIC YOUTH in a dangerous chokehold.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...the officers will not face
charges...

G) EXT. PHILADELPHIA MUNICIPAL COURT - CRIMINAL DIVISION - DAY

Press briefing photo op. D.A. Jung and Police Commissioner
Dunleavy shake hands.

REPORTER (V.O.)
...no charges...

BACK TO GRAND FOYER

DUNLEAVY
There's so much more that wasn't
said at the service. But I'll leave
you with this: tonight we're safe,
thanks in part to the efforts of
the Philadelphia Police Department
and my own. Yet, my career could
not have existed without this
great, great man. So take care
getting home, be well, and tonight
-- when you're sleeping safe and
sound -- just remember: criminals,
gangbangers, and thugs are only
kept at bay because of men like us.
(small bow)
Thank you all for coming and
goodnight.

The grateful crowd bursts into glorious, inappropriate
applause.

PRE-LAP: Tavern applause.

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - NIGHT

Baxter can hardly keep his balance on the way out the front door, but under Leo's grip and momentum, he doesn't have to.

Glad to be rid of Baxter for the night, the patrons clap encouragingly and clear a path to the --

ENTRANCE

Leo briefly pulls him back.

LEO
Hey -- where ya goin?

Baxter looks up at the owner.

LEO
You're not gonna leave without
tipping your server, are you?

He digs out his wallet and passes him a twenty.

LEO
She's a really hard worker, you
know.

Baxter hands Leo another fifty.

LEO
That's better. Anything else?

BAXTER
Have a good night, miss.

LEO
She can't hear you.

BAXTER
(louder)
Have a good night, miss!

MISSY
(calls back)
You -- too?

BAXTER
Thank you.

He crosses the threshold and disappears into the rain.

Leo returns to the --

BAR

Hands Missy the crumpled bills.

MISSY

What did you say to him?

LEO

Baxter? Ah! Nothing. We go way back, me and him.

MISSY

You go way back with him? You didn't have to do that.

LEO

Do what, throw him out?

MISSY

No, burn a bridge. Ain't nobody hafta do that on my account -- you don't even know me.

LEO

He was outta pocket. I don't allow disrespect in this bar. Period.

(pause)

Come to think of it...

Leo yanks the clapper lanyard on his "Last Call!" bell. CLANG! Goes a few rungs up a stepladder until he's above the crowd.

LEO

LISTEN UP, YOU SONSABITCHES! SHE WORKS HERE NOW! ANYONE WHO HAS A PROBLEM WITH THAT, HAS A PROBLEM WITH ME! GOT IT? GOOD.

He finds Missy stunned into silence when he comes down.

LEO

We better get back to work. Orders piling up.

The bar's atmosphere begins to normalize.

A detective bearing a striking resemblance to Louis DeJoy scowls at the whole affair. This is BURT GREAVES (mid-50s). He takes a drink. Turns back to his pub table colleagues.

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Dunleavy ushers the remaining guests out. Bids them goodnight.

EXT. SECURITY GATE - NIGHT

After the last guest vehicle departs, a CLEANING CREW rolls up in an extended van.

But when the DRIVER reaches out to interact with the speaker box --

-- an armed AGENT emerges from the shadows. Black tactical fatigues. Ski mask. He places a fat stack of cash in the driver's hand.

AGENT #1
Take the night off.

The van backs out. Departs.

An alternate van passes through. Approaches the manor house.

INT. GRAND FOYER - NIGHT

Dunleavy. Alone. Calls up the stairs.

DUNLEAVY
Elliot?

He pokes his head into a few other rooms to no avail.

DUNLEAVY
Son? You still here somewhere?

Must've gone out for the night.

Dunleavy retires to the expansive --

LIVING ROOM

Pours himself another whiskey.

Behind him, four AGENTS silently filter into the b.g.

Dunleavy raises his glass to the handshake photo of himself with his deceased friend and confidant, Dan Jung.

DUNLEAVY
Here's to --

His toast is cut off by a length of piano wire throttling his neck. Dragging him backwards onto the sofa.

END ACT II

ACT III**INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BAR - NIGHT**

Leo and Missy achieve their first rhythm.

They work in tandem with great synchronicity though Missy is clearly the stronger, faster bartender. She's also winning them over by incorporating flair: bottle flipping, juggling, even flaming liquor manipulation.

Not that she doesn't encounter her share of difficulties.

Like when two intoxicated OFFICERS (20s) belly up to the bar.

OFFICER #1

Yeah, hi. I'll take a Black-yard
Barbecue.

The second officer elbows him. Stifles laughter.

All the wind vanishes from Missy's sails.

MISSY

Sorry, sir. I'm not sure what's in
that.

OFFICER #1

Oh, it's super easy! You take a
pint of Schlitz Malt Liquor and top
it off with splashes of barbecue
sauce and grape soda.

The second officer feigns outrage. Pretends to chastise his partner.

OFFICER #1

(laughing)

Then you hafta garnish it with a
handful of collard greens...

MISSY

You know what? I'll ask Leo to make
it for you.

OFFICER #1

Uh, wait...

MISSY

No-no. It's my first night and I
want the cocktail to be correct for
you, sir. Just a moment.

OFFICER #1
Please, no. Actually, I'll take a
Guinness instead.

MISSY
A Guinness?

OFFICER #1
Yes.

MISSY
You're sure.

OFFICER #1
Yes.

MISSY
One Guinness, extra black. Coming
right up.

She turns away. Sighs opening the tap.

MISSY
(to self)
I don't know about this.

On Leo's side, a serious-looking MAN (late 30s) without a
beverage leans over the bar toward Leo. By the size of him,
he looks like a candidate for a bouncer position.

SERIOUS MAN
We're ready for you, Leo.

Washing glasses, Leo nods. Dries his hands approaching Missy.

LEO
I need to step into the back for a
few minutes. Is it slow enough to
handle on your own?

MISSY
You kiddin me?

LEO
(smiles)
A little. And hey, could you please
return these top shelf bottles to
their rightful place when you have
a chance? My back screams bloody
murder when I reach up like that.

MISSY
You got it.

LEO
Thanks. Back in a flash.

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

AGENT #2. Behind the sofa. Restrains Dunleavy against it by keeping the piano wire taut, strangling.

Agent #1 looms over him. Gestures for his partner to ease just enough tension so their captive can speak.

DUNLEAVY
Don't you bastards know who the
fuck I am?

The tension returns.

AGENT #1
What's the safe combination?

DUNLEAVY
(spitting)
F-ffuck. Yew...

Agent #1 nods to another. The drapes scroll back, revealing the dimly lit pool area on the other side.

The floodlights activate.

ELLIOT DUNLEAVY (15). Blindfolded. His wrists and ankles bound with duct tape. Sits on the end of the diving board.

AGENT #3 stands behind him. Aims a handgun with a suppressor at the young man's spine. He rips the tape off his mouth.

ELLIOT
Dad? DAD! HELP M -- MM!

Agent #3 replaces the tape. Awaits the signal.

DUNLEAVY
ELLIOT!

AGENT #1
Need me to repeat the question?

DUNLEAVY
Thirty-four, twenty-three, fifteen.
Let him go. LET HIM GO, YOU
MOTHERFUCKERS!

The floodlights extinguish. An agent leaves the room.

Agent #1 raises the lift-top coffee table to eye level with the commissioner. Opens a laptop on it.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BACK ROOM - SAME TIME

Leo and half a dozen MEN stand around the small conference room once used for private dining. Most resemble Serious Man -- equally passable for mobsters or tough cops.

A video feed begins on a large-screened TV/monitor.

LEO
Hey, it works!

DUNLEAVY
(onscreen)
It can't be. Leo?

LEO
Surprised?

DUNLEAVY
How is this possible?

LEO
I have more friends than you,
that's how.

DUNLEAVY
Oh yeah, who?

LEO
The Taylors for starters. Did you know striking Keshon with your vehicle broke three of his ribs? That's right, three. Then, Jung kneeled on his back for five minutes. But for some reason the report only mentioned drugs in his system. As if that's what caused his death and not the two assholes flattening him in the street, amirite?

DUNLEAVY
That was thirty goddamned years ago! Nobody remembers that shit!

LEO
 Lucinda Taylor remembers.
 (leans in, knuckles on
 tabletop)
 I remember.

BAR

Missy. Atop the ladder. A bottle of Glenlivet in hand.

It's extremely loud. Rising voices engaged in arguments and conversation. Music blares from overhead speakers.

Still, when the gunshot shatters an expensive shelved bottle not five feet from her, the report is heard by all.

Frozen in shock, Missy watches liquor spill down the bar mirror.

Patrons look around for the source, who remains hidden.

MISSY
 (starting down ladder)
 Oh, hell no.

She takes her knapsack from behind the bar. Goes off in the direction Leo went.

BACK ROOM

The muffled shot catches Leo's attention.

He turns to Serious Man.

LEO
 Go make sure that wasn't what I
 think it was.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Back to Dunleavy.

DUNLEAVY
 (fights for air)
 How do you know all this?

LEO
 A corrupt little birdie told me
 before he flew the coop.

DUNLEAVY
Dan? He had a heart attack!

LEO
(grins)
Maybe someone was really stressing
him out.

QUICK FLASH -- PAYING JUNG A VISIT

Leo stands by as two men hang Jung from the rooftop of a ten-story building by his ankles.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM

DUNLEAVY
You son of a bitch! I'll --

LEO
You'll what? Sic the cops on me?
Like who, Weiss? Ridley? How about
Carmichael and Vinman? Show him,
boys.

Weiss and the other officers lift their ski masks.

WEISS
(vicious grin)
Hey, boss.

DUNLEAVY
What in the holy hell...?

LEO
What do ya know about that? Told ya
I had more friends. I even have
yours.

DUNLEAVY
I have money. Much more than what's
in the safe.

LEO
No, you don't. Besides, this isn't
about money.
(pause)
Do you remember when Lucinda Taylor
asked you to imagine what it would
be like to lose a son at the civil
trial?
(pause)
No? Oh, that's right. You weren't
there.

You've always hid from the
consequences of your deeds the way
a coward hides. The way a criminal
hides. So I thought to myself: hey,
Leo! Why not give him a little
first-hand experience?

The floodlights activate.

DUNLEAVY

NO!

Agent #3 fires two silenced rounds into the boy's back.

He slumps off the diving board and into the pool.

The floodlights extinguish. Drapes roll closed.

DUNLEAVY

(wailing grief)

ELLIOT! Son? Son! NOOO!

EXT. DUNLEAVY HOME - POOL - NIGHT

Agent #3 steps off the diving board toward the cabana
wrapping a blue armband around his bicep.

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BILLIARDS SECTION - NIGHT

Missy. Anger matching her terror. Weaves through the crowd.
Blots her eyes with her sleeve to conceal forming tears.

BACK ROOM

Everyone turns from the police chief bawling onscreen when
Serious Man gets back.

SERIOUS MAN

Someone took a shot at Missy.

LEO

Are you shitting me?

Serious Man shakes his head.

Leo takes him aside.

LEO

Who was it?

SERIOUS MAN
Greaves. Forty-second Precinct.

LEO
(grins past fury)
Help him find his way home, willya?
But make sure he learns some
manners on the way.

Finally lumbering past him, Leo barges out of the room.

BILLIARDS SECTION

Missy runs headlong into the unwelcome Baxter, who's returned.

BAXTER
(drunkenly)
Whoa, there! Not so fasss, young
lady.

MISSY
Excuse me, sir.

He shoves her. Pins her against the wall.

BAXTER
Don't gimme that shit, bitch.
(pause)
Uh-oh! What now? No big, white
savior around to bail your black
ass out?

Missy grabs an empty beer bottle from the rail beside her.
Shatters it against Baxter's head. Knees him in the groin.

MISSY
No big, white savior required,
jerkoff.

Before she can resume her search, she finds Leo standing
reliably there.

He drops a bar rag onto the doubled-over Baxter.

LEO
You're bleeding on my floor.
(pause)
Now tell the young lady what's
really on your mind.

He looks up holding the bloody rag to his temple.

BAXTER
I'm sorry.

LEO
Sorry for what?

BAXTER
I'm sorry my head got in your
bottle's way.

LEO
And...?

BAXTER
Same thing with my crotch.

LEO
Atta boy.

Baxter tries to walk off.

LEO
Where ya goin now?

He turns back.

LEO
You're leaving without tipping your
server?

BAXTER
Again? Really? I didn't even get
another drink, I --

Leo. Glowering over him.

Baxter digs his wallet back out and hands her a twenty.

LEO
C'mon. Really hard worker and all
that.

He hands her another fifty.

LEO
There we go. And what else?

BAXTER
Have a good night, miss.

LEO
(patronizing)
See? What a swell guy! Now off you
go.

Baxter limps into the crowd.

MISSY

Leo --

LEO

I heard what happened and you have my deepest apologies. For all of it.

MISSY

It's not your fault. But it was a mistake coming here.

LEO

Missy, wait.

MISSY

I can't do this, Leo. I'm sorry.

She takes off her small, white apron. Hands it to him.

LEO

Missy?

She pauses.

LEO

Good people come here, too. Lots of 'em.

She offers an acknowledging grin. Nods politely.

Missy leaves the bar to the patrons barking orders at Leo.

MAIN LOUNGE

Serious Man and a TOUGHGUY (late 30s) push through the crowd with the other four from the back room.

SERIOUS MAN

He also destroyed a twelve hundred dollar bottle of Scotch.

TOUGHGUY

Not the MacUsraig.

Serious Man gives him a look like, yes, the MacUsraig.

TOUGHGUY

Motherfucker. You sure Leo doesn't want us to kill 'im?

They approach Greaves' hightop.

GREAVES

What do you fucktards want?

Serious Man. Stone-faced. Reaches into Greaves' jacket and pulls his gun from its shoulder holster.

GREAVES

The fuck?

Serious touches the barrel. Still warm. The breech reeks of gunpowder.

SERIOUS MAN

Let's go.

His cohorts don't put up much fight as the others strip him away. Hustle him through the bar to the --

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

And proceed to deliver a beating he'll never forget. He only keeps his feet under him for the first few strikes -- takes the rest from the garbage-strewn alley pavement.

INT. CALICO BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Quiet hallway leading to the lobby and rest of the building.

Missy. Alone. Leans against the wall taking deep breaths.

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

DETECTIVE GABE VINMAN (early 30s) returns with two large duffel bags.

VINMAN

There was more in the safe than we thought.

WEISS

How much more?

VINMAN

A shitload.

DETECTIVE DEAN CARMICHAEL (mid-30s) releases the piano wire.

Behind Dunleavy, OFFICER PETE RIDLEY (late 20s) throws a thick rope over an interior ceiling rafter.

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Leo. Alone in the room watching the live feed.

DUNLEAVY (V.O.)
I always knew you were double-
dealing, Leo. Working some kinda
angle.

Leo's white knuckles. Wringing his bar rag so tightly it
trembles in his hands. Darker clouds than those outside
gather.

LEO
Then you really had no idea.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - LIVING ROOM - SAME TIME

Dunleavy doesn't let up. Even as they cinch the noose tight.

DUNLEAVY
I trusted you, Leo. And you
betrayed me. Not only that, you
betrayed the entire department and
yourself.

And that's all Leo can stand. The storm begins.

LEO
(voice booms)
How dare you! I AM the entire
department! Throughout your
pathetic career I've seen you throw
innocent officers and personnel
under the bus time and again just
to protect your corrupt ass! Every
filthy fucking word that ever
spilled from your filthy fucking
mouth during every press briefing
was a filthy fucking lie! And the
only thing I find more laughable
than your attempt at policing is
your inability to see just how
OVERDUE this is!
(grave)
I'm going to spend the rest of my
days exposing the rot you inflicted
on this town, Commissioner, and it
starts with your head!
(takes breath)

Fuck it. I've had my blood pressure raised enough for one day.

They whip a black pillowcase over Dunleavy's head.

The rope hums over the wooden rafter as Officers Ridley, Weiss, and Carmichael hoist him up.

The pillowcase falls off. Vinman, filming, reaches for it.

LEO

Leave it. Leave it! They should see his face. I want everyone to see this rat's pathetic, guilty FACE!

Vinman zooms in to make certain.

Dunleavy claws at the ligature under his jowls. His legs kick and flail wildly.

LEO

You know, the other way to do this is drop you. Breaks your neck --
(snaps fingers)
-- like that! And it's over. But I thought, why not let you spend your last few minutes thinking about Keshon Taylor and what his last few minutes were like.

(warmer)

Look at the bright side: at least you don't have bones in your lungs.

DUNLEAVY

I...can't...brrr...

LEO

Sorry, what's that, sir?

DUNLEAVY

I -- c-can't --!

LEO

Aww. I think he's trying to say he can't breathe. That's a good one, eh, boys?

They laugh.

The living room doors close as Dunleavy hangs.

The transmission cuts out.

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Leo takes out his cell phone. Dials.

EXT. DUNLEAVY HOME - POOLSIDE CABANA - NIGHT

Agent #3 answers on his earpiece. His real name is CARTER KNOWLES -- a lieutenant in the PPD and SWAT team leader.

LEO (V.O.)
Clean house.

KNOWLES
Ten-four.

He flicks his submachine gun safety OFF.

Advances on the domicile.

ESTATE GROUNDS

Three more AGENTS with blue armbands converge on the mansion.

A SHARPSHOOTER takes up a position. His scope follows a second van rolling up the driveway -- the extraction vehicle.

Why is a second team arriving and who are they?

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - GRAND FOYER - NIGHT

Cranked up party music blasts throughout the house.

Ridley slides down the staircase banister dumping fuel from a red gas can.

INT. DUNLEAVY HOME - VARIOUS - NIGHT

Vinman runs throughout the first floor also pouring and splashing gasoline on everything he sees. In the --

GRAND FOYER

Weiss and Carmichael examine the duffels of cash, celebrating.

It's too loud to hear the breaking window glass.

But not the tear-gas grenades and flash bangs going off.

Double-cross!

Choking, Ridley and Carmichael run outside with the duffels -- directly into the sharpshooter's crosshairs -- and are immediately executed.

The final flash bang exploding in a pool of gas sends flames racing through the house, engulfing the mansion interior.

LIBRARY

Clogged with tear gas.

Weiss. Breathing into his elbow with his firearm aimed and ready. Seeks an escape.

An agent clearing the ground floor narrowly misses him.

Taking advantage, Weiss fires. Drops the agent.

Deducing the scheme, Weiss eyes the agent's blue arm band.

He removes and dons it himself.

Pulls the balaclava back down over his face.

DINING ROOM

Vinman gets the drop on Knowles, but Knowles is faster.

Vinman falls across the dining table when shot. Drags the tablecloth until silver, dishes, and stemware crash onto him.

The smoke and raging fire disallow any further clearing.

Knowles finds his way out through the garage.

His team regroups outside the house and loads up.

EXT./INT. NONDESCRIPT VAN - NIGHT

Leo's second group drives off in both vans.

Weiss. His team dead. Occupies the seat in back belonging to the man he just killed.

He keeps the ski mask on.

Waits.

END ACT III

ACT IV**EXT. DUNLEAVY HOME - JACUZZI - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)**

Elliot Dunleavy. Enjoying a relaxing soak in the hot tub.

Playing with social media. Rotates his phone for a selfie.

ON PHONE DISPLAY - A gun barrel points down at his head.

Elliot jumps at the sight.

A suppressed round from Knowles' gun splashes beside Elliot.
The act says, no, don't get out.

Knowles drops a flak jacket into the hot, bubbling liquid.

Floats it across to him -- as if to say, put this on instead.

EXT. DUNLEAVY HOME - POOL - NIGHT (PRESENT)

Elliot. Alive. Neck deep in water. Watching as his home burns to the ground.

He hauls himself out of the pool. Onto a chair. Doubles over with his face in his hands.

Sirens wail in the distance.

INT. CALICO BUILDING - 2ND FLOOR - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Titus Strickland's upstairs apartment.

Opening the door, Missy enters the --

BEDROOM

The single room is spartan, immaculate. Sparse furnishings. Worthless art. A drab wool blanket on the twin bed, taut.

Everything is old but spotless -- as though no one's lived here since the 1950s.

Missy takes her toothbrush and toothpaste from her knapsack.

Turns the light on in the adjoining --

BATHROOM

As she brushes, Missy notices two doors.

One leads to a small broom closet. Cleaning supplies, etc.

But the other opens to a dark room she doesn't expect.

She fumbles around for the light switch. Finds it. Gazes inside with wonder, curiosity, and uncertainty.

Missy spits. Rinses. Dries her mouth. Then takes the first step into her uncle's unusual world.

INT. PROTECT & SERVE - NIGHT

The bar is blissfully empty. All closed up for the night.

Leo's cell phone rings. He answers.

KNOWLES (V.O.)
House is clean.

LEO
(into phone)
And the boy?

KNOWLES (V.O.)
He'll make it. Leo, there's something I have to know going forward.

LEO
Let's hear it.

KNOWLES (V.O.)
At the end of the day, we're still the good guys, right?

LEO
(soberly)
Yes.

Leo terminates the call.

He gathers up two Santa-sized trash bags.

Hauls them out to the --

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Chucks the bags into the dumpster. Stretches his ailing back.

The rain has stopped.

A disheveled figure ambles out of the shadows.

BAXTER
(slurring)
Hey, Leo. Dontcha know it ain't
nice throwin yer bess customer out
in the cold?

Another man. Beaten and bruised. Appears beside him.

GREAVES
Or sendin a buncha punks to fight
your battles...

They attack before Leo can respond -- two against one.

INT. TITUS'S APARTMENT - ADJOINING ROOM - NIGHT

It looks like a cartoon spider went crazy weaving an intricate web of red yarn across the entire ceiling.

Wallet-sized portrait pics dangle from intersecting points. Dunleavy's hangs beside Jung's. Both crossed out with big X's.

When Missy reaches the far wall, she discovers the network is a necessary extension of everything two large bulletin boards could not contain -- eventually it had to be built outward.

And whom does she find in the middle of the bulletin boards?

One photo of Titus Strickland beside another captioned:

"Fmr. Chief Inspector Leonardo Montalvo (ret.)"

Though none of the other faces seem familiar, the whole room is like a 3-D evidence board in a detective story, except it includes police personnel and government officials as well.

MISSY
What were you mixed up in, Uncle T?

Lost in thought, Missy starts at the loud, sudden crash of --

EXT. BACK ALLEY - NIGHT

Leo's broad frame colliding with the dumpster.

He goes back for more despite predominantly losing.

INT. TITUS'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Missy discovers the attack from the --

FIRE ESCAPE

Rushes back down to the --

BAR

Desperately searches around her. There has to be something...

Ah!

INT. NONDESCRIPT VAN - NIGHT

Driving away, agents from Leo's second team lift their black ski masks.

Except Weiss. He maintains his Trojan Horse tactic instead.

Seated facing one another, three of the four in back celebrate their success.

Knowles twists around in the front seat.

KNOWLES

(at Weiss)

Hey, Jones. Sorry about getting between you and Vinman -- I had to take the shot.

(pause)

Jones?

From Jones' seat, Weiss pulls his gun. Unloads.

Two of the agents are dead before a third finally gets a hold of Weiss's gun. Tries wresting it from his grasp.

The firearm discharges in the struggle, killing the driver.

EXT. INTERSTATE 95 - NONDESCRIPT VAN - NIGHT

Flashing brake lights. Swerving across several northbound I-95 lanes until --

The vehicle flips, rolls over, stops on its side.

EXT. PROTECT & SERVE - BACK ALLEY ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Between their intoxication and Leo's bad back -- not to mention age and excess poundage -- the brawl is both clumsy and brutal.

Yet their advantage is clear: Baxter holds Leo while Greaves delivers savage blows to his head and body.

Leo staggers away. Falls halfway across the open threshold. Torn clothes. Battered face.

GREAVES
Gimme your piece.

BAXTER
Ain't got it with me.

GREAVES
Seriously?

BAXTER
Leo never lets me carry in the bar.

GREAVES
Fuckin seriously?

Leo sees a pair of slip-on sneakers just inside. Looks up.
It's Missy. With a commemorative baton from the bar wall.

MISSY
(extends club)
Looks like you got a couple more
bridges to burn, Leo. Need any help
closing up?

LEO
No, thanks. Just gotta finish takin
out the trash, that's all. See you
tomorrow?

MISSY
I'll think about it. Goodnight.

The door falls shut.

Leo rises.

The old truncheon is heavy in his hand. Practically petrified.

And when he beats them with it, he does so with the force of a new storm coming to eradicate injustices building for decades.

EXT. INTERSTATE 95 - NONDESCRIPT VAN - NIGHT

Knowles. All busted up from the crash. Climbs out of the passenger side window. Shattered glass falling from him.

Rear doors. Twisted open. What's left of his team inside.
He reaches in. Drags Weiss's broken body out by his collar.
Drops him on the moonlit macadam.
He circles the traitor. Then descends on him.
ON SPLIT SCREEN - Leo over Greaves. Knowles over Weiss.

KNOWLES	LEO
Fuck, I hate dirty cops.	You know I hate dirty cops.
Leo and Knowles' fists finish it.	

BLACK.

EXT./INT. TIOGA-NICETOWN - TAYLOR HOME - DAY

LUCINDA TAYLOR (80s) watches the morning news.

REPORTER (ONSCREEN)
In a bizarre new twist concerning
that three-alarm Society Hill house
fire, a viral video apparently
taken just moments before it began
included revelations regarding the
late Commissioner's ties to --

A UPS DRIVER (mid-20s) rings Lucinda's doorbell.

She rises from a paisley Barcalounger. Paces to the door of her modest home at a rate commensurate with her age.

DRIVER
U-P-S!

Lucinda opens the door. Stands behind the screen.

DRIVER
Morning, ma'am. Delivery for
Lucinda Taylor?

LUCINDA
Yes, that's me.

DRIVER
Would you like me to bring it
inside for you? It's awful heavy.

She nods uncertainly. Holds the screen door open for him.

The driver wheels the large box in on a hand truck. Stops in the middle of the room. Records her signature on his device.

DRIVER

All set. You have a great day now,
ma'am.

He's out the door and on his way before she can look up.

LUCINDA

Thank you.

She uses a letter opener to separate the box flaps.

Banded together and perfectly stacked to the top, it's full of money from Dunleavy's safe.

Lucinda retrieves a note on top of the bills.

Only two words are printed in bold type: "Peace & Shield"

INT. TITUS'S APARTMENT - ADJOINING ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Missy ducks red yarn trying to close the door.

But another pic she finds on the floor steals her breath away: a high school wallet photo of her brother.

Also crossed out with a big X.

MISSY

Neville...?

EXT./INT. TIOGA-NICETOWN - UPS TRUCK - DAY (PRESENT)

About to turn, the driver slams on the brakes, avoiding --

Four police cruisers charging through the residential area at high speed.

Are they going to the house he just left?

No -- to the house across the street.

INT. STRICKLAND HOME - NURSERY - DAY

Neville leaves his infant daughter, DAPHNE (4 mo.) for the --

KITCHEN

Just long enough to turn the stove off downstairs but becomes sidetracked by sirens blaring outside.

EXT./INT. STRICKLAND HOME - LIVING ROOM - DAY

OFFICERS in full tactical gear converge on the domicile.

Smash the door in with a battering ram.

They enter the residence. Guns drawn. Shout confusing orders.

Terrified, Neville raises his hands, but several guns go off.

He breaks for the nursery only to be tackled a few steps up.

Once they manhandle the young father out through the wide-open, broken entryway and depart the scene, the stove Neville failed to turn off activates a piercing smoke alarm.

Meanwhile, upstairs on the --

NURSERY

Changing table.

Happy, oblivious baby, Daphne. Giggles and gurgles.

Claps her tiny hands.

Title Card

FADE OUT.

THE END