

# Changed, Episode 1

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Summary: This is a Mystery/Horror sample written for the Florida Disability Access and Awareness Foundation. The following episode showcases the player character, JESSE, looking for clues at the scene of a gruesome murder. The ending showcases JESSE'S paralyzing car accident and gives players the opportunity to develop empathy for people with disabilities while engaging in a gritty thriller game.

FADE IN:

EXT. EVERGLADES - DAY

A dead woman's body lies face-up on the ground. She's naked, dirty, and pale. The phrase, "Change me" has been scratched into her stomach. Her head is missing. In its place is the head of an alligator. Its jaws are wide open, teeth gleaming in the sun. Dried blood coats the area where stitches connect scales and skin. Birds circle the body and pierce her flesh with their beaks, swallowing tiny morsels of fat and muscle. But the birds scatter when HOFFMAN and PALMER approach. The camera focuses on HOFFMAN, the Gainsville sheriff. She is grimacing at the displayed body.

HOFFMAN

Christ almighty. You ever seen a  
body staged like this?

PALMER, a young officer under HOFFMAN's command, is staring at the body with open fascination. He's not repulsed. Only curious.

PALMER

Not in ten years on the force,  
Sheriff.

HOFFMAN

How in the hell did he get the  
head stitched on?

PALMER

Dunno. Maybe we should talk to a taxidermist. Or a tailor.

HOFFMAN

Let's keep it on the DL for the time being.

PALMER

Are you sure? I'm not saying we should cause a panic, but the public should know.

HOFFMAN

This is a college town, Palmer. In Florida. Half the people here are students. They're soft. Ask them what's the worst crime they've ever seen in their neighborhood, and they'll tell you about the time a meth-head wandered into their family's backyard and tore up their mama's hydrangeas.

HOFFMAN kneels down and studies the stitching on the woman's neck.

HOFFMAN

Tell 'em there's a killer on the loose, and kids will start pulling out of classes.

The camera pans toward an approaching truck. Our protagonist, JESSE, steps out of the car. They are a clean-cut young woman, man, or nonbinary person of any race. They have a lean build and perfect posture--remnants of their recent military tour. They glance over at HOFFMAN.

TASK

Press WASD to walk up to Hoffman.

FADE OUT.

(Player walks over to the crime scene.)

FADE IN:

EXT. EVERGLADES

JESSE walks over to HOFFMAN and PALMER. HOFFMAN rises up when JESSE approaches and cocks her head.

HOFFMAN

Jesse White? I didn't expect to see you here.

JESSE

I stopped by your office. The dispatcher said you were in the field. I saw sirens and figured you'd be here.

HOFFMAN

Yeah. I had us scheduled to finalize the paperwork today when this mess happened.

JESSE grimaces when they see the body.

JESSE

Mess is exactly right.

HOFFMAN

Hmph. You're not planning to stick around and gawk, are you? I expect better conduct from my officers.

TASK

Answer wisely. Your choices have consequences.

**PLAYER CHOICE:**

- A. I'm not here to cause trouble.**
- B. You need my help.**

**DIALOG FOR OPTION A**

JESSE

I don't want to contaminate your crime scene, ma'am. If I'd known how serious things were, I would have waited for you to get back to your office.

FEEDBACK

Hoffman liked that.

HOFFMAN

I appreciate that. I can sign that last page now. But until you finish your orientation, only uniformed officers can cross the yellow tape.

JESSE

I understand, ma'am.

JESSE hands over their paperwork. HOFFMAN signs her name in sharp, pointed letters.

FEEDBACK

You got Hoffman to sign your paperwork.

**End of Option A.**

#### **DIALOG FOR OPTION B**

JESSE

Respectfully ma'am, this is ugly. You need all hands on deck in a crisis. The military taught me that.

FEEDBACK

Hoffman did not like that.

HOFFMAN

I hope the military taught you something about the chain of command too. Until tomorrow, you're still a civilian. We can't

have just anyone trampling over  
our scene.

FEEDBACK

You did not get Hoffman to sign  
your paperwork.

**End of Option B.**

**\*ALL DIALOG CONVERGES HERE:\***

HOFFMAN

Now then, I need you to get back  
in your truck and-

NADINE

Victoria!

An older woman suddenly rushes over to the scene. She is  
frazzled and frantic, trying to push past the caution tape  
and surrounding officers.

NADINE

Please, I have to see my daughter!

PALMER

Ma'am, you need to step back!

The woman catches sight of the body and gasps. JESSE rushes  
to catch Nadine before she collapses.

JESSE

I've got you.

JESSE helps NADINE steady herself. She clutches JESSE,  
tears pricking the corner of her eyes.

NADINE

That birthmark on her arm...I know  
it's her. That's my little girl.  
Please. Find out who did this to  
her.

JESSE

I'll do everything I can, ma'am.

NADINE  
Promise me.

JESSE frowns. They don't take promises lightly.

JESSE  
I promise.

HOFFMAN  
I'll take it from here, White.

As HOFFMAN walks away with NADINE, she stumbles over something near the body. She grimaces at the sight of it and kicks it into a nearby ditch. NADINE is too distraught to notice and PALMER is still staring at the body. But JESSE sees her and raises an eyebrow.

HOFFMAN  
Palmer!

PALMER  
Ma'am?

HOFFMAN  
See White out, will you?

As PALMER leads JESSE away, he stares back at the body.

PALMER  
You know what this is, right?

JESSE  
A serial killer, if the staging of the body is anything to judge by.

PALMER  
You bet your ass it is, rookie. We struck oil!

PALMER gleefully rubs his hands together.

PALMER

Listen up, White. Cops who bring in murders like this? They can work anywhere they like in the whole goddamn country. Sergeant, lieutenant, chief... there's no ranks they can't climb. This shit is plain beautiful.

JESSE is visibly disgusted by PALMER's excitement.

JESSE

We might have some different definitions of that.

PALMER

If you can't stomach it, you might need another career.

JESSE and PALMER'S conversation is interrupted by the lead technician, SHANNON, approaching.

SHANNON

Palmer, take a walk with me. I think I saw something near the stream.

SHANNON turns to another technician, BEATRIZ.

SHANNON

Get some more photos of the phrasing, would you? I want to run a handwriting analysis.

BEATRIZ

I'm on it.

JESSE looks at the body as SHANNON, PALMER, and BEATRIZ walk away.

JESSE

The sheriff kicked something into that ditch. So much for not contaminating the crime scene. What's she hiding? I should check it out.



JESSE glances in the direction Hoffman went.

JESSE

On the other hand, I don't want to piss off the boss on day one.

**\*PLAYER CHOICE:**

**A. Sneak in after them.**

**B. Leave.**

**DIALOG FOR OPTION A**

JESSE steps closer to the body. BEATRIZ snaps a few photos of the "Change Me" phrase, then cocks her head at JESSE as they approach. She walks up to the yellow tape.

BEATRIZ

Hold on. Only cops are allowed past this point.

JESSE

I'm Officer White. I need to examine the body.

BEATRIZ

Yeah? I'll need to see a badge.

**Conditional 1: Hoffman did not sign the paperwork.**

JESSE

Listen, I'm gonna be in uniform tomorrow. Just let me through.

BEATRIZ

No can do, rookie. You need a badge or Hoffman's signature to get back here.

FEEDBACK

Failure. You do not get to investigate the body.

**Go to \*ALL OPTIONS CONVERGE HERE\***

**Conditional 2: Hoffman signed the paperwork.**

JESSE holds up their signed paperwork.

JESSE

I'm getting my badge tomorrow. But my paperwork's all signed. See?

BEATRIZ

Guess it's all hands on deck if even the rookies are lining up to investigate. Go ahead.

FEEDBACK

Success. You can investigate the body.

BEATRIZ walks off to click through her photos. JESSE walks over to the body and crouches down.

TASK

Select an option.

**\*PLAYER SUB CHOICE:**

- A. Examine her head.**
- B. Examine her arms.**
- C. Examine the area around her.**

**DIALOG FOR SUB-OPTION A**

JESSE

She's missing her head. That's a feat of strength. Jesus.

JESSE stares at the stitching. It's a full circle and neatly done. The only visible mess is the bloodstain.

JESSE

How much time would he have needed to take off her head and sew on a gator's? There's blood around the edges. He's neat enough that he

could have wiped it up. Was he in a rush at the end?

JESSE shakes their head.

JESSE  
Regardless, this can't have been the original crime scene. Just a dumping ground.

**End of Option A.**

**DIALOG FOR SUB-OPTION B**

JESSE  
No bite marks. Damn, that would have been useful.

JESSE spots red, circular marks on VICTORIA's wrists. They're raw and recent.

JESSE  
But there's ligature marks and some bruising. Looks like she fought back hard enough that he needed to tie her down.

JESSE examines VICTORIA's arms further.

JESSE  
No visible clues about who the UNSUB is. Let's hope fingerprints show up in the analysis.

**End of Option B.**

**DIALOG FOR SUB-OPTION C**

JESSE  
Let's find out what Hoffman stumbled over.

JESSE glances down at an errant matchbox.

JESSE

Lowlights. That's a bar downtown.  
Nothing happens there other than  
the occasional fistfight between  
drunks.

JESSE glances off in HOFFMAN's direction. HOFFMAN is a good  
distance away and taking NADINE's statement as she sits on  
an ambulance gurney.

JESSE  
So why did Hoffman try to hide it?  
Something's not right about this.

**End of Option C.**

**\*SUB-OPTIONS CONVERGE HERE ONCE JESSE HAS SELECTED ALL  
SUB-OPTIONS:\***

JESSE stares at the body.

JESSE  
Let's put this all together. The  
suspect clearly planned this. That  
shows cunning and organization.

JESSE looks at the gator head.

JESSE  
But this kind of mutilation looks  
like a disorganized killer. Sloppy  
and unhinged.

JESSE glances at VICTORIA's arms.

JESSE  
If he's both organized and  
disorganized in his methods, my  
teachers back at the academy would  
say he's probably going through a  
psychological transformation.

JESSE focuses on the 'Change Me' message.

JESSE

Seems like he knows it, too.

**DIALOG FOR OPTION B**

JESSE

I shouldn't interfere. I'll see  
the sheriff tomorrow.

**End of Option B.**

**\*ALL OPTIONS CONVERGE HERE:\***

JESSE hears SHANNON and PALMER's voices as they draw near.

JESSE

I should get out of here.

JESSE steps over the nearby caution tape and exits the  
crime scene.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT.

JESSE is in their truck and driving home. The sun has set  
and rain has started drizzling.

TASK

Press WASD to drive home.

(Player starts driving)

JESSE's phone rings.

JESSE

I should grab that.

TASK

Press E to answer the phone.

(Player answers the  
phone.)

MEGAN

Hey. Are you heading home soon?

JESSE

I'm on my way now. Just had to run a few errands.

MEGAN

Well, there's shrimp pasta waiting for you when you get back.

JESSE

My favorite. How did I get so lucky?

MEGAN

Well, Officer White, your soon-to-be Mrs. White knows how to treat you well.

JESSE

Don't I know it?

The rain starts picking up.

TASK

Press E to turn on the windshield.

(Player turns on the windshield)

MEGAN

Did you hear the news this morning? They found a body out in the swamps. They're saying it's Victoria Evans.

JESSE

Did you know her?

MEGAN

Not really. We worked together for a time, but we always had different shifts. I just remember seeing her name on the schedule.

JESSE

Yeah. The scene was a nightmare. Her mom showed up in the middle of it. I'm not sure how she knew Victoria would be there, but she ID'd the body.

FEEDBACK

Question for later: How did Nadine know Victoria's body would be at the crime scene?

MEGAN

Her poor mom. She shouldn't have had to see that. Ugh. And the crime scene photos will be all over the news within a week. Guaranteed. You know what I hate about this?

JESSE

The fact that a woman is dead?

MEGAN

It's more than that. Every time a woman is killed, she's a perfect angel. Or troubled. Or a runaway. She did this to herself. And that's if she's white and pretty enough to be noticed. But every time they find the killer, she just...fades. No one remembers her name. Only his. And he's all people talk about.

JESSE

Victoria.

MEGAN

Hmm?

JESSE

Just showing you that I remember her name.

MEGAN

Sweet talker. You know I love you,  
right? Have I said that to you  
lately?

JESSE

I love you too.

MEGAN

I better get off the phone.  
Jennifer is gonna stop by soon  
with--Hello?

It starts storming outside the truck. Static sounds on the  
end of the line.

JESSE

Megan?

MEGAN

...shouldn't be here...NO!

JESSE

Megan!

There's nothing but static on the end of the line. The rain  
is pouring down and the edges of the road are beginning to  
flood. JESSE drops their phone and puts both hands on the  
wheel, pressing hard on the pedal.

TASK

Go home now.

FADE OUT.

(Player drives the car at  
unsafe speeds. Other cars  
honk at JESSE when cut  
off.)

FADE IN.

EXT. - RAINY ROAD - NIGHT

JESSE



Come on. Come on. Almost there.

JESSE turns a sharp corner. The rain is blocking out all sound. A bright light flashes. JESSE is about to hit another car head-on. A horn pierces through the deafening sound of rain.

JESSE

Fuck!

JESSE swerves. But it's too late. The other car swipes them. JESSE's car spins, rolls over into a ditch, and hits a tree. They go careening through the window and hit the ground with bloody friction. Glass tears through their skin and dirt gathers in the cuts. Bones snap, including a nasty crack in their spine. JESSE goes into shock. They're lying in a ditch and bleeding. Wood snaps above JESSE's head. They look up and see a large branch is going to hit them at any minute.

QUICKTIME EVENT

Get out of the way.

(Player gets JESSE to move out of the way. If the player succeeds, JESSE grabs the edge of the car and pulls themselves out of the way. If the player fails, the tree branch falls on JESSE and crushes their ribs.)

TASK

Use WASD to get up.

(Player tries to get up. But JESSE cannot move. They can only rise up onto their elbows.)

JESSE

Fuck. Fuck, my legs.

TASK

Crawl.

(Player makes Jesse army  
crawl out of the ditch and  
onto the pavement.)

JESSE collapses. They're soaked, dirty, and bleeding. The edges of their vision darken. The camera pans to the other car. It has stopped. A man gets out. Jesse can't see his face. Only his legs as he approaches. He's wearing jeans and muddy work boots. In one hand, he carries a duffel bag of tools. A hacksaw, sewing thread, and rope peek out of the zipper.

JESSE

Help me.

The words are drowned out by the storm. The man stands in front of JESSE and stares down at their battered body. But then, a siren sounds in the distance. The man turns and gets back into his car. He drives away. JESSE tries to get up again, but collapses once more. This time, they pass out. The camera zooms out as rain pours around their mangled body.

FADE OUT.