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ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

EXT. NORTH PHILADELPHIA - DAY (DAY 2)

Blocks of tattered apartment buildings, bulldozed lots, graffitied walls and weeds growing chest high out of the pavement. They call this area the "Badlands."

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY (DAY 2)

Peter leans against the hood of his car outside an apartment building. He watches as another car pulls up and Megan and Detectives Morris and Baker emerge. Peter hides a smile as they approach.

PETER

Hey, Bud. How's it going?

Det. Morris just scowls at him.

INT. HALLWAY - DAY (DAY 2)

Det. Morris knocks. The door opens on a chain. Staring out at them is CARL RIVERS, age 38. Det. Morris shows his badge.

DET. MORRIS

Carl Rivers, I'm Detective Morris.  
We need to talk to you, Sir.

START

INT. CARL RIVERS' APARTMENT - DAY (DAY 2)

Rivers sits at the kitchen table with Detectives Morris and Baker standing before him, Megan and Peter hanging by the door. Rivers' ADOLESCENT SON plays a video game on the tv in the living room. His back is to them.

DET. MORRIS

You filed a lawsuit a year and a half ago after a dog attacked your son in Fairmont park.

RIVERS

So what?

DET. MORRIS

You lost. And Angela Swanson was murdered yesterday morning.

Rivers stares at him, then notices Megan. She's staring into the living room at his son.

Body of Evidence - Carl Rivers  
ONE SCENE

RIVERS

He hasn't said a word since the trial. Bad enough getting attacked by a dog. But attacked by a human being? That bitch put him on the stand and blamed him for everything.

DET. MORRIS

And how did that make you feel?

RIVERS

Like killing her, how would it make you feel?

DET. MORRIS

Where were you yesterday morning at 7 a.m.?

RIVERS

At work. Alone. I'm a janitor at Community College of Philadelphia.

DET. BAKER

Did anyone see you there?

RIVERS

I said I was alone, didn't I?

DET. MORRIS

(beat)

Where was your son?

Rivers' face darkens. He rises to his feet.

RIVERS

Get the hell out of my house.

Before Det. Morris can respond, Megan interjects --

MEGAN

Mr. Rivers, did you know Angela was attacked by a pit bull when she was a teenager?

Rivers stares at her. So do the others. What does that matter?

MEGAN

I'm sure the trial was hard. I'm sure you hated Angela for how she treated your son. But what I don't understand is how she wound up on the other side of your lawsuit.

(MORE)

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MEGAN (CONT'D)

(beat)

Unless she wasn't on the other side.

More confused looks all around. Except for Rivers and Megan. They are locked in a stare. Rivers breaks it off with a nervous glance at the Detectives --

~~MEGAN~~

~~Don't worry about them, they're Homicide. They won't care.~~

~~DET. MORRIS~~

~~Care about what? What are you talking about?~~

Rivers stares at Megan for another beat. And his whole demeanor changes. Like she's broken through. He heads to a cabinet --

RIVERS

Angela came here the day after the trial. She told me about her dog. Showed me her scars. She said that's why she wanted on the case. Not to win it but to convince the Roberts family to settle out of court. Only she was overruled. If she wanted to make partner she had to win and that meant going after my kid. That's why she came. To apologize. And to give me this.

He removes an 8 x 12 envelope and hands it to Megan. She pulls out various documents.

DET. MORRIS

What are those?

RIVERS

My grounds for appeal. Information withheld by the firm. The dog that mauled my son was an attack dog trained to do exactly that.

MEGAN

Mr. Rivers, do you know who overruled Angela over settling out of court?

RIVERS

The lead counsel. Raymond Whitney.

Megan throws a look at Det. Morris.

STOP