

"GUILT BY ASSOCIATION"

A.D.A. RACHEL KNIGHT
SC 1

ACT ONE

INT. ROOM - NIGHT

A SERIES OF CLOSE SHOTS:

CARTRIDGES are laid out on a table, gleaming even in the dimly lit room. A SMITH & WESSON 686, cylinder released. THROUGH ITS EMPTY CHAMBERS, we glimpse tasteful wallpaper. CLOSE ON EYES, intense and focused on the task at hand. ROUNDS are carefully loaded one by one. CYLINDER snapped into place. CURTAINS yanked shut. DO NOT DISTURB SIGN hung from a doorknob. DEADBOLT set from inside. SECURITY LOCK flipped.

It's only now that we see the agent of these actions, or rather, this ritual -- RACHEL KNIGHT, who's somehow managed to make it to her 30's. In sweats and a tee shirt, gun in hand, she sits on the side of her bed. Sets the gun down on the night stand. Kills a tiny bottle of honor bar Scotch. Steels herself for what's to come.

RACHEL (O.S.; PRELAP)
Some people deserve to die...

INT. LOS ANGELES CRIMINAL COURTS BUILDING - COURTROOM - DAY

Rachel, now in an elegant skirt suit, faces a Male Defendant. The gallery's full but CAMERA FINDS DETECTIVE BAILEY KELLER (30's) on the prosecution side, watching with fond respect. Behind the bench, JUDGE J.D. MORGAN, 40, stern but handsome.

STAFF

RACHEL
Michelle Lassen didn't. And guess what? Neither does her killer.
(turns to jury)
Now it may surprise you to hear me say that. But it's true. Death would be too fast for this defendant. What he deserves... is to be locked in a cage for 28,470 days -- the length of the average human life. What he deserves... is to suffocate in its stale air for 683,280 hours. To be aware that his life is over for every one of those 40,996,800 minutes. You have that power. Use it. Find him guilty of murder in the first degree. Damn him to life without the possibility of parole. And pray he stays healthy... for a very long time.

Rachel nods to a quietly impressed Morgan: I'm done.

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JUDGE MORGAN
Ladies and gentlemen of the jury,
that concludes closing arguments...

BAILEY (O.S.; PRELAP)
Think you'll get the conviction?

~~END~~

~~INT. CORRIDOR BEHIND COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER - DAY~~

A busy hallway between judge's chambers and courtrooms.
Rachel walks with a chip-eating Bailey.

RACHEL
Wouldn't have brought the case if I
didn't, but there's this crazy
little thing called a jury --

BAILEY
And cross contaminated DNA --
surprised you even filed it at all.

RACHEL
Evidence is for pussies.

Rachel snags Bailey's bag of chips, helps herself.

RACHEL (CONT'D)
By the way, I never tell you how
much I hate your metabolism?

BAILEY
Daily.

TONI (O.S.)
A hundred calories worth of chips
now or a refreshing cocktail later?

They turn to see 30-something TONI LACSELLETTE, looking more
private practice than county prosecutor.

BAILEY
Drinks at the Biltmore?

RACHEL
Nah, need to get out of the house.

TONI
And I need to medicate.
(to Bailey)
J.D. asked me to move in again.

As the women go, they clock J.D. chatting with and lowering
over KARL PROVOST, both men in judicial robes.

BAILEY
What an awful, awful man.

2/9

RACHEL Sc 2^{14.}

ERIC

Because it's more fun to stay here
and run interference for you.

(then)

You doing okay with all this?

RACHEL

If you're talking about Jake, no.

ERIC

Me either. But... the F.B.I. has
its job to do and we have ours.

RACHEL

Which I'd be okay with if they ever
lived up to their last letter, but
this crazy murder/suicide theory --

ERIC

I know it's hard for you, but this
time, Rach? Stay in your lane.

(hands her file)

Frank Densmore, Jr.

Meaning steer clear of Jake's case. She opens the file to a
CRIME SCENE PHOTO of a man sprawled on the street.

RACHEL

Just so you know, I'm gonna try and
pull my own I.O. on this.

ERIC

(grins; then)

Tell Detective Keller I said hello.

INT. BAILEY'S SERVICE VEHICLE - MOVING - DAY

Bailey behind the wheel. Rachel riding shotgun, case file in
her lap, but that's not what's on her mind.

RACHEL

So the F.B.I. just running with the
murder/suicide theory, I assume.

BAILEY

Leave it alone, okay?

RACHEL

Meaning what?

BAILEY

Meaning don't dig. Or at least
don't get caught.

~~STAG~~

3/9

RACHEL
Why does everyone think they know
me so damn well?

BAILEY
Because we do, Rach.

RACHEL
Trust me, you don't.
(opens file)
Frank Densmore, Jr. Male, 24, shot
outside his car, couple of GSW's to
the chest in Locos territory. Gang
Unit believes Luis Revelo of the
Echo Park Eight's was the trigger
man in a drive-by meant for some
other folks who managed to not get
hit.

The file's open to a mug shot of suspect Luis Revelo, but
Rachel gets out her phone, scrolls through her contacts.

BAILEY
So this rich kid just happens to be
in East L.A. -- doing what?

RACHEL
According to dad, Junior was
recently sober and on his way to
volunteer at an risk youth center.
(into phone)
Scott Ferrier please.

BAILEY
And that organization's legit?

RACHEL
Densmore Senior's on its board of
directors -- and Vanderhorn's pal.

BAILEY
No pressure there.

RACHEL
But Junior was no angel -- autopsy
report showed traces of heroin in
his urine, but not in his blood.

BAILEY
So he used a few days prior --

RACHEL
Which qualifies as recently sober
if you're from Beverly Hills.
Junior may not have been in East
L.A. to volunteer after all.
(MORE)

4/9

RACHEL (CONT'D)
 (still holding on phone)
 Nearest Michelin star restaurant.

BAILEY
 Water Grill. And why're you calling
 the Coroner's Office if you already
 have Densmore's autopsy report?

RACHEL
 To get Jake's.
 (into phone)
 Scottie. How's my favorite foodie?
 Think you'll be hungry later?
 (off Bailey's look)
 After work, of course.

Bailey shakes her head, amused by Rachel in spite of herself.

END

~~INT. EAST L.A. NEIGHBORHOOD - DAY~~

~~Bus stop, graffiti, cracked sidewalks. Rachel and Bailey
 watch as LAPD Gang Unit Detective, RICK WELKY exits his car,
 Starbucks in hand.~~

~~WELKY
 Sorry I'm late, ladies.~~

~~And yet he's sipping a piping hot latte. Rachel and Bailey
 hate him already.~~

~~RACHEL
 Detective Welky, Detective Keller.
 I'm Rachel Knight.~~

~~WELKY
 Always interesting when you Special
 Trials types come out to play,
 though I don't get why you wouldn't
 leave the field work to us.~~

~~RACHEL
 Because we don't have to.~~

~~Welky nods, taking the hit. Walks them to the crime scene.~~

~~WELKY
 So you're the one they gave
 Pahlmeyer's case to, huh?~~

~~RACHEL
 Yep.~~

~~WELKY
 Sure didn't see that coming.~~

5/9

RACHEL SC.3 53.

SCOTT

He had two bullets in his chest.

RACHEL

But three shots were fired.

SCOTT

Grazed on the wrist first, likely defensive posturing.

RACHEL

Which wrist?

SCOTT

Right, as I recall.

RACHEL

The one holding the gun?

Scott considers this, hmmm... maybe he needed to be a little more thorough.

SCOTT

Yeah.

RACHEL

Hard to hang onto a gun when your wrist gets clipped by a bullet.

Scott can't deny it.

RACHEL (CONT'D)

And if he had a gun in hand, why did he take a defensive position instead of firing first?

SCOTT

I'm a coroner's investigator, not a psychologist, okay?

Scott closes this car door, but rolls his window down.

SCOTT (CONT'D)

I'm never eating with you again.

He drives off. On Rachel, wheels turning.

RACHEL (O.S.; PRELAP)

It's starting to make sense.

START INR. SPECIAL TRIALS UNIT - RACHEL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Rachel has gathered her troops: Bailey and Toni.

6/9

RACHEL

Jake was in the closet. That's why we never talked about his personal life. So he's probably not going to get naked with a female hooker, much less kill her.

Toni's stunned; Bailey confused.

BAILEY

Wait, wait, how do you know this?

RACHEL

I met his mom at his house. Not the sweetest woman on earth but she was going through his things. Mentioned that a Detective Welker or Welky had come by and taken Jake's laptop.

TONI

Badge number 4452.

RACHEL

(yes)

Here's the thing. Smoke was a shotcaller in that neighborhood, right? But he only got arrested once five years ago -- by Welky. And somehow miraculously stayed out of trouble since.

TONI

You saying Welky's on the take?

RACHEL

I'm saying maybe Densmore got killed not because he's a junkie who can't pay but because he threatens to blow the whole operation up if Smoke makes him. According to Jake's file, Junior threatened to use his dad's connections to get him out of trouble before.

BAILEY

I'm listening.

RACHEL

The weapon used to shoot Densmore gets planted on Smoke, who is also now dead --

7/9

BAILEY

Wait, you're saying the gun was a throw down?

RACHEL

(yep)

Because Welky, who's allowed Smoke to do business knows that if we nail Smoke, he gets nailed too. Smoke doesn't fire on Welky first because he thinks he's a friend. Welky kills him, sticks the gun in Smoke's hand and the Densmore murder is solved.

TONI

Okay, but what does any of it have to do with Jake dead with a hooker?

RACHEL

I don't know yet. But it does.

Rachel looks up, see Vanderhorn at the door with Eric.

ERIC

Rachel. Bill was just telling me how much he appreciated your work on the Densmore murder --

VANDERHORN

Realized I hadn't thanked you personally. Being able to close a high profile case like this will help repair our department's recently tainted image.

RACHEL

Actually, I'm not closing it. I'm not sure Guzman was the shooter, but I do think he was his dealer --

VANDERHORN

What are you talking about --

RACHEL

Which, understandably, neither you or his father would want being made public knowledge --

VANDERHORN

The gun used to shoot the man's son was found in the killer's hand. I've gone on record publicly saying we'll have closure on this in the next 48 hours.

8/9

RACHEL

Guess you better call for a press conference then. Or I'll have to.

ERIC

Rachel, what are you doing?

RACHEL

My job. Thoroughly.

VANDERHORN

Not anymore. You're suspended as of right now.

RACHEL

What?

VANDERHORN

(to Eric)

Get her badge.

Vanderhorn blows out of there. A beat, then --

ERIC

Right or not, you don't get to threaten the D.A.

RACHEL

Look, I'll just --

ERIC

I can't fix this one, Rachel. I'm sorry.

Instead, he holds out his hand for her badge. She hands it over to him. Toni and Bailey are stunned. Off Rachel, having stepped too far over the line this time...

END OF ACT FIVE

~~END~~

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