

ACT ONE

THE CLOSER

EPISODE 715.5

"Power Play"

INT. CLOSE ON - A BLACK GLOVED HAND REACHING INTO A BABY'S CRIB -- EARLY MORNING

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. CRIME SCENE -- MORNING - LATER

DEPUTY CHIEF BRENDA LEIGH JOHNSON's black latex-gloved hand reaches into a baby's crib. She stretches to pick up a teddy bear.

LADY HONEY B

(off screen)

My married name is Libby Best, but everyone calls me Lady Honey B

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - CRIME SCENE -BABY'S NURSERY/OFFICE/MINI-GYM -- MORNING - CONTINUOUS

Brenda bends to pick up the teddy bear which has fallen onto a mini barbell rack right beside the crib. As she picks it up she scans the room intently.

LADY HONEY B

(off screen)

...from before I was married, back when I was Miss Fijian Suntan oil.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM -- CONTINUOUS

The french doors open onto a pool and a huge backyard that stretches off into the hills as if the property were endless.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM -- CONTINUOUS

In the distance DETECTIVE SANCHEZ and LIEUTENANT TAO along with SEVERAL UNIFORMED OFFICERS move across the landscape, searching methodically.

LADY HONEY B
 (off screen)
 That Medger's last initial was B for
 Best just meant we were fated!

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM --
 CONTINUOUS

Now we see the exotically sexy woman talking, LADY HONEY B (21, a mysterious combination of races), she stands close to her African American, football player husband - MEDGER BEST (28), his giant physique is limp with grief, he remains silent.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL, LIEUTENANT PROVENZA, and LIEUTENANT FLYNN listen sympathetically to Lady Honey B, her beauty is not lost on them.

Her calm demeanor is not lost on Brenda

LADY HONEY B
 We wanted to get married even before
 I got pregnant...

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM --
 CONTINUOUS

BUZZ films as THE SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION DIVISION dusts the room for prints, etc.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM --
 MOMENTS LATER

Brenda watches from a slight distance, absorbing the scene.

The room looks more like an advertisement for the couple than their baby's nursery. Publicity shots of Medger in his Chargers uniform and product endorsement posters featuring "Medger Best Hands Ever" are framed on the walls.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM --
 MOMENTS LATER

Brenda looks at a life sized cut out of the FIJIAN TROPICS TAN GIRL - it is Lady Honey B, a bit younger and even sexier in a micro-bikini holding the product provocatively. Brenda turns to the real woman.

BRENDA

Mr. and Mrs. Best, I'm Deputy Chief Brenda Leigh Johnson. I want you to understand we're going to do all we can for your son!

LADY HONEY B

We're grateful...

BRENDA

What time did you first realize your son was missing?

LADY HONEY B

...About six am, I guess....

She looks to her husband, who nods "yes".

LADY HONEY B (CONT'D)

... the doors were wide open when Medger came down and found the note in the baby's crib this morning. We hadn't heard a thing. He was trying to give me a break with feeding.....

She squeezes Medger's hand as he looks down in despair.

BRENDA

(re: a bottle on the changing table)

You aren't breast feeding your infant Mrs. Best?

LADY HONEY B

Implants... I didn't want to risk it..

Brenda reacts to "didn't" with an almost imperceptible shudder.

LADY HONEY B (CONT'D)

We called the police right away.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE -- LATER

Brenda handles the type written note carefully.

BRENDA

(reading aloud)

"Now your little jungle baby belongs to the Brotherhood of White Power. He can be our team mascot, if we don't kill him!"

She hands the note to Gabriel, also gloved, who bags it immediately.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Vile words.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. NURSERY / OFFICE/ WORK OUT ROOM -- LATER

Brenda watches Medger Best; he stands amidst trophies and photos that celebrate his athleticism and his wife's beauty with a look of horror and shame. There is only one photo of the couple with THE BABY amidst so many photos of them. There are very few toys.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

You and your husband sleep upstairs?

LADY HONEY B

We moved the nursery down to my office because I'm in here all the time.

DIP TO BLACK:

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM -- CONTINUOUS -- MOMENTS LATER

Brenda looks at the desk which is covered with Lady Honey B products. They are distinctly packaged with a small, dripping beehive dotted with **black bees** as the bottle cap. Brenda touches it, inquisitively.

BRENDA

Pretty.

LADY HONEY B

I'm all about the packaging... Would you like one, Chief Johnson? They are selling like hot-cakes on the shopping channels.

BRENDA

I couldn't accept it....

LADY HONEY B

Please... I want mixed race women to have a product-line that caters to the variations in their skin tone and texture. It's a new concept in beauty. Honey Browns, Honey Bees, get it?... Please, I want you to have one. The lotion and fragrance are for everyone. I insist, please!

BRENDA

Well, if you insist....

Brenda smells the package as she places it in her **signature big black bag**. She reacts to the pungent perfume.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Oh, my! You can smell it right through the package.... Well thank you, thank you so much.

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - BABY'S NURSERY/ OFFICE/MINI-GYM -- CONTINUOUS

Detective Sanchez steps onto the patio, calls Brenda away from the couple.

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Chief...

Brenda excuses herself.

BRENDA

Did you find anything Detective Sanchez?

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Nothing so far, but thick bushes surround the property; no sign of any intruder at all, no broken branches. The grass doesn't even look walked on.

BRENDA

I wouldn't be surprised if the parents know exactly where that baby is. It's all just too staged.

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

Lieutenant Provenza's cell phone rings. He steps away from Detective Gabriel, Lieutenant Flynn and the Bests.

PROVENZA

(on the phone)

Lieutenant Provenza, Major Crimes....
Yes, we're at the residence now
...When did that call come in?...
Did the caller identify themselves?....

(his face registers concern)

Email a recording of it into Major Crimes, will ya'?

He joins Brenda and Detective Sanchez on the patio.

BRENDA

What is it Lieutenant?

PROVENZA

An anonymous call came in to 911 at 4:30 am saying someone saw a baby being dumped into the trash in an alley a few blocks from here, behind the house of another football player on the same team.

BRENDA

Another player.?

Sanchez looks upset.

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Which one?

Provenza looks at him meaningfully.

PROVENZA

You're not gonna like it Julio...
Jake Everhardt!

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

No way!?

BRENDA

I know that name...

PROVENZA

That's cause he's on television hawking every product known to man.

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

He's the best Linebacker in the NFL Lieutenant.

Brenda looks confused.

BRENDA

Wait a minute? Fritzy's always complaining that L.A. doesn't have a football team, so why am I suddenly inundated with football players?

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Lots of NFL players have homes in Los Angeles, even just for off season - our weather.

PROVENZA

Or to go on auditions. Those guys make millions playing the game, but if those greedy bastards parlay it right they can make billions selling gym shoes and jock straps.

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

You're just mad no one will pay you to walk around in your underwear on TV.

PROVENZA

Don't kid yourself, I've had offers.

BRENDA

That's enough you two! Lieutenant Provenza, you and Lieutenant Flynn take some officers and go to the alley behind Mr. Everhardt's. If you find anything, call me. I think it's time to invite our strangely calm parents to join me downtown.

INT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Brenda watches from a distance as The Bests talk to Detective Gabriel.

LADY HONEY B

The note says everything!

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

A type written note tells us nothing at all really, unless there are fingerprints on it that hit a known perpetrator in AFIS... which we are running now, so...please just...

LADY HONEY B

They're everywhere! You see them on Jerry Springer all the time. Those Grand Wizards or Grand Dragons, whatever those Ku Klucking crazies are calling themselves.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

We need specifics to get a lead on where your son is... Generalizations about the racists of this world aren't going to lead us to him, so just try to answer my questions.

Brenda approaches.

BRENDA

Detective Gabriel, would you please inform the Bests of their rights, Thank you so much.

Detective Gabriel looks a little confused.

MEDGER BEST
 (coming out of a stupor)
 Do I need to get a lawyer?

He looks to his wife then to Brenda with a lost quality.

BRENDA
 You have that right, absolutely!
 But finding your child alive is my
 priority here. We've issued an Amber
 alert for Medger Jr. using the one
 photo you provided. I'm going to
 ask that you not mention the race
 issue in your brief message to the
 reporters outside. Then I need you
 to come down to one of our family
 rooms at police headquarters, answer
 all our questions as frankly as you
 possibly can, and then wait patiently
 while we keep looking for anything
 that will help us find your son...
alive. Allowing us to read you your
 rights now just speeds that whole
 process up.

MEDGER BEST
 My agent always says - get a lawyer!

LADY HONEY B
 Yeah!? I mean what about protecting
 us?

BRENDA
 From what Lady Honey B? It's your
 baby that's in danger here, ... Isn't
 that right?

Medger and Lady Honey B look to one another, unsure.

Brenda and Gabriel exchange meaningful looks.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 I always like to remind frantic
 parents of what happened to the
 Ramseys...

DETECTIVE GABRIEL
 ...The Ramseys,..right....

Off the blank looks of the Bests, and the "where are you
 going with this" look on Gabriel's face.

BRENDA
 JonBenet's parents. You remember
 that little beauty queen who was
 murdered?.... Detective?

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

Oh, the Ramseys...yeah.. Terrible case!

BRENDA

Those poor parents! They lawyered-up so fast, it gave the Denver police the wrong idea. Sent the whole investigation in a false direction.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

(picking up on her tactic)

Right, threw it all outta whack!

BRENDA

Well, after years of suspicion ruining their lives and reputations, and that poor mother, Patsy, dying of cancer with everyone thinking she'd murdered her own precious baby girl, turns out they were innocent all along. Can you imagine?

The Bests shake their heads, traumatized by the picture Brenda has painted.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

If only they had just talked to the police - directly, honestly, in the first place, their names would not have been dragged through the mud!

Lady Honey B and Medger consider.

Medger nods.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

You have the right to remain silent....

BRENDA

Oh, and let's get traces on all cell phones and home phone activity please, so if the abductors try to make contact.... Thank you so much!

Walks off with a wave.

EXT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE -- LATER

Brenda and Detective Gabriel watch as Lady Honey B and Medger address a PRESS MOB.

LADY HONEY B
 (suddenly weepy)
 Please help us bring Medger Junior
 home. We love him so much!

Lady Honey B squeezes Medger, who barely lifts his head...

MEDGER BEST
 Please help us!

ONE REPORTER turns to her own CAMERA CREW....

REPORTER
 And there it is, good people of Los
 Angeles...a heartfelt plea from Medger
 Best Hands Ever and his gorgeous
 wife to get their baby home safe.
 The police ask for any help ordinary
 citizens can give, as tragedy befalls
 this once charmed couple...

EXT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - LATER

Lady Honey B and Medger follow Brenda and Detective Gabriel
 to the cars.

BRENDA
 Do either of you feel up to driving
 yourselves?

MEDGER BEST
 Is it allowed?

BRENDA
 You're not under arrest... of course
 you can, if you're up to it...?

LADY HONEY B
 I'm okay to drive, let's take my
 car, Medger, Baby... Just in case.

BRENDA
 Be sure to park in the visitors'
 section of the lot, you don't want
 to get towed. That could be
 expensive! See you downtown.

EXT. MEDGER BEST'S HOUSE -- MOMENTS LATER

Brenda, Detective Gabriel, Buzz, Detective Sanchez, and
 Lieutenant Tao watch them drive off.

BRENDA
 Now we can search at least one of
 their cars while we have it on police
 property.

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 Lieutenant Tao, call PAB and set it
 up so the minute they get on the
 elevator an SID squad searches their
 car. Buzz, have the break room wired
 and lipstick camera ready!

INT. BRENDA'S CAR -- LATER

Detective Gabriel drives.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL
 Which one of them do you think did
 it?

BRENDA
 Well, she's a creature, that's
 certain. Butter wouldn't melt in
 her mouth!

DETECTIVE GABRIEL
 I was impressed with the water works
 for the cameras, what with not a
 single tear in the hours we were
 there, then cameras and Bam, Niagara
 Falls!

BRENDA
 Her mother's heart does seem to have
 an on/off switch!

Brenda's phone rings, she finds it in her purse, squinting
 at the caller Id.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 (into the phone)
 Did you find anything, Lieutenant?

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND JAKE EVERHARDT'S -- CONTINUOUS

Provenza, Flynn, and BACK-UP COPS swarm this new crime scene.

THE BABY'S tiny cafe au lait feet are poking out of a plastic
 bag that is shoved on the top of the dumpster.

PROVENZA
 We found the body, Chief. Just where
 the caller said it would be.

INT. BRENDA'S CAR -- CONTINUOUS

BRENDA
 I felt that child was dead. Bring
 Jake Everhardt in and let Dr. Morales
 know we need that autopsy immediately.

Brenda hangs up with Provenza and makes another call.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 Lieutenant Tao, can you please trace
 the source of the 911 call implicating
 Mr. Everhardt? Thank you!

She hangs up.

GABRIEL
 So you think they're playing the
 race card?

BRENDA
 I think they're trying to use
 prejudice to blind us to murder!

INT. ELEVATOR BANK OF THE PAB -- LATER

COMMANDER TAYLOR waits for Brenda in the hallway of the
 elevator bank.

COMMANDER TAYLOR
 Pope wants to see you in his office
 right away.

BRENDA
 Hello Commander, just as soon as I
 get our "distraught" parents settled
 in the break room.

COMMANDER TAYLOR
 He said the minute you stepped off
 the elevator. I took that as an
 order, Chief.

Not her ideal, but...

BRENDA
 (to Gabriel)
 Please put the Bests in the break
 room as soon as Buzz says it's ready,
 and keep them talking. Also, I want
 to know the minute Flynn and Provenza
 get here with Jake Everhardt.

INT. POPE'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

INTERIM CHIEF OF POLICE WILL POPE, CAPTAIN SHARON RAYDOR,
 and SPECIAL AGENT FRITZ HOWARD (Brenda's Husband) await
 Brenda.

Brenda enters with Taylor, startled to see everyone assembled.

BRENDA
 Fritz, what are you doing here?

Fritz looks defensive.

POPE
I asked him here!

Brenda looks around, suspicious.

FRITZ
Will was worried that, what, with
your father's cancer diagnosis and
everything with the lawsuit
ending...with you so unhappy about
the Johnson Rule, that maybe this
case was all just too much for you.

She looks around, shocked and insulted.

Captain Raydor looks sympathetically back.

BRENDA
Well, thank you so much for your
concerns about my father Will, but
you should have thought of that before
you attached his name and mine to
the most ridiculous rule in the
history of the criminal justice
system. I can tell you that next to
having surgery, that was his worst
body blow yet!

FRITZ
Think about it Brenda. Illness can
be expensive.... We can't afford
another lawsuit .

POPE
And neither can the L.A.P.D. - Major
Crimes in particular needs to watch
its public image right now.

BRENDA
Really!? Well you made that trade
off not me. My public image for
yours.

POPE
This lawsuit has put a spotlight on
you Brenda and everything you do is
being scrutinized by the media.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR
I warned you Chief Pope that giving
in to Goldman had far reaching,
unforeseen implications, but you
wanted a quick fix!

POPE
Quick - this has all dragged on for
months!

(MORE)

POPE (CONT'D)
(addressing Captain
Raydor)

You haven't even found the leak
you're so convinced was the source
of all of Goldman's intelligence
about the death of Tyrell Baylor!

CAPTAIN RAYDOR
Knuckling under to the pressure has
only made my job that much harder!

POPE
So the nightmare continues.

BRENDA
(matter of fact)
It's my nightmare Will, to you it's
a publicity issue. I've become a
political liability in your pursuit
of being king of LA.

POPE
Really, you're making me the bad guy
here?

Pope looks at the others, who seem to feel Brenda's remark
is justified.

POPE (CONT'D)
(exasperated)
Look this case is a ticking time
bomb of racial hatreds in a city
with a tradition of violent race
riots. I am asking that you pass it
to Commander Taylor for all of our
sakes.

COMMANDER TAYLOR
It would put some people at ease to
see a Black man in charge of this
case, that's just a cold, hard fact
Chief Johnson.

BRENDA
That doesn't make it any better
Commander. Pandering to racism -
even reverse racism - just feeds the
problem. I know first hand how
dangerous that can be! I will handle
this case myself, unless you're
ordering that I be removed?

Brenda looks at Pope with defiance.

POPE

Of course not... I just... try not to rip LA open over this. That's all I'm asking.... this city is far more fragile than her reputation.

BRENDA

Aren't we all!?

She walks out. Fritz follows.

Captain Raydor stares daggers at Pope.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. MURDER ROOM - LATE MORNING

The Murder Board is set up with a hand drawn layout of the Best house with another drawing indicating the alley behind Jake Everhardt's house just blocks away.

Fritz has stayed. Lieutenant Tao is on the phone at his desk.

BRENDA

(pointing to the board)
So there are two extra bedrooms upstairs... Why would parents put their infant that far away?

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

They really like their beauty sleep.

BRENDA

She's obviously the boss in that marriage....but most new mothers want their baby close. My sister in law kept her daughter Charley in the bedroom, sometimes in the bed for more than a year... drove my brother to drink!

FRITZ

Your niece could drive anyone to drink!

BRENDA

I'm talking about when she was a baby!

FRITZ

Even then...

Brenda gives him the stink eye. Tao hangs up the phone.

TAO

(re: the call)

The only fingerprints on the note or anywhere else in that house belong to the family, except for the house keeper, whose prints are on everything but the note.

BRENDA

A gloved intruder would explain that away, but there is no sign of any intruder. What I need to know is would the Bests really be the target of a hate crime?

(to Tao)

No phone activity, threats, demands...?

TAO

None yet, but a high profile, interracial couple....some people are still sensitive about that.

FRITZ

And the fans are love/hate types in the football world. They're passionate...

BRENDA

What fans. Los Angeles doesn't even have a team!?

FRITZ

Not for lack of trying! Face it, three teams have abandoned us ... The Raiders, The Rams, and **The Chargers.**

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

More like L.A. let all of them down!

Brenda is startled by the instant heat the subject lights.

FRITZ

Hold on Sanchez, it was broadcasting blackouts that messed it up!

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

No way! No decent stadium, not enough fans to fill the stands, seems to me like the city didn't show the love teams need to....

FRITZ

We're still trying to make it happen!

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Not too hard though, right!?

BRENDA

Gentlemen, I can see this is a more emotional subject than I realized. Can we just stick to what we know about Jake Everhardt and Medger Best, please and not dissect whether LA has been good to her teams, or not! Thank you!

FRITZ

Well, they're both heroes in L.A. 'cause San Diego's team is as close as we get to one of our own.

BRENDA

Are they enemies?

FRITZ

Medger is a gentle giant, but Jake is a little in your face.

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Jake called Medger out in the press recently for being a selfish player.

BRENDA

Selfish in what way?

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

Grand standing when he should pass, blowing points, risking the game for hot-shotting.

BRENDA

Does he grand stand?

FRITZ

Yes. But the fans love Medger. They call him Medger Best Hands Ever -

BRENDA

I always thought nicknames were supposed to be shorter...

FRITZ

Kind of playing on his namesake...

TAO

Medger Evers: a great civil rights activist assassinated in front of his home...

BRENDA

(annoyed)

I am very familiar with Medger Evers, Lieutenant Tao, thank you very much! Mississippi isn't that far from Atlanta. Now **he** was a hero. But he was not crusading for the rights of athletes.

FRITZ

Well, Hands is a selfish player, so... in the clutch he might...

Fritz trails off.

BRENDA

He might what...oh great guru of football?

FRITZ

Maybe he will refuse to play her game!

INT. ELECTRONICS -- LATER

Brenda enters.

On the monitors Detective Gabriel interviews the Bests in the Break Room.

BRENDA

How is it going in there?

BUZZ

They've only been at it a few minutes.

Brenda watches.

INT. BREAK ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Detective Gabriel sits with the Bests at a small table.

LADY HONEY B

(fiddling with her cell)

So... don't you think the sponsors and press will be on our side?

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

Your side?

LADY HONEY B

You know, because we **are** the victims! it should be good press for us?

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

I'm sure the news reporters are helping to find Medger Jr.

(taking notes)

Have you seen any suspicious strangers around your neighborhood?

Shakes of "no" from Medger.

LADY HONEY B

There are always eager fans and paparazzi around, so it would be hard to know.

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

Were you or your husband ever threatened by any White Supremacist organizations at anytime?

MEDGER BEST

No...never...

LADY HONEY B

He doesn't read the blogs or follow twitter the way I do,

(to Medger)

I never want to upset you , Baby, but there are plenty of haters out there!

INT. ELECTRONICS - SIMULTANEOUS

Brenda watches The Break Room interview on the monitors.

BRENDA

Will you check on that for me Buzz, whether the Bests are the focus of any hate blogs or even mentioned at all....If they are, let's find out all we can about the bloggers.

(he nods)

Thank you!

She starts to exit through the backdoor when...

Lieutenant Flynn and Lieutenant Provenza enter from the murder Room.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Gentleman, back so soon?

FLYNN

We put Jake in interview two. He was pretty cool about the whole thing. Didn't ruffle his feathers that we wanted to question him downtown about

(MORE)

FLYNN (CONT'D)
a dead baby in his trash. He went
and put on a new outfit.

PROVENZA
This peacock thinks the law is beneath
him.

BRENDA
Buzz, can you play that 911 call for
me, please....

Buzz cues it up.

911 OPERATOR
(playing)
911! What's your emergency?

911 CALL
(playing, obviously
muffled on purpose)
I just saw Jake Everhardt - the
linebacker - stuffing a dead baby in
his trash behind his house - 2107
Laurel Terrace...you better do
something!

The line goes dead.

911 OPERATOR
(playing)
Hello Caller...?

Buzz shuts it off.

PROVENZA
That could have been a man or a woman,
Hell, in Hollywood - it could be
both!

BRENDA
Whoever they are, they definitely
wanted to make trouble for Jake.
Tell Detective Sanchez to wait for
me in two... If they get to talking
football maybe Jake will lose his
cool!

Brenda exits out the backdoor...

Just as Pope enters.

POPE
Where's she going?

PROVENZA
To talk to Jake in interview two...

POPE
 (pointing to the main
 door)
 But, that's this way.

Brenda suddenly appears **on the monitor** in the Break room.

INT. BREAK ROOM -- LATER

BRENDA
 I just wanted to come and assure you
 both that we are getting closer to
 what happened every minute.

MEDGER BEST
 What a relief...

BRENDA
 And I am so very sorry we have to
 ask so many questions, but
 Medger, are you fighting with your
 teammate Jake Everhardt?

Way out of left field to him.

MEDGER BEST
 No, Jake's a loud mouth, but that's
 what linebackers are like....Why..

BRENDA
 There has been some new information
 that implicates Mr. Everhardt... in
 little Medger's disappearance.

Medger looks panicked.

MEDGER BEST
 That's not possible!

A silencing touch from Lady Honey B

LADY HONEY B
 Jake!? He wouldn't,... But....

BRENDA
 But what Mrs. Best...?

Lady Honey B looks at her husband, hesitating.

LADY HONEY B
 I never wanted to make an issue of
 it, because you're teammates and
 all, but Jake, he was really angry
 at the time,...

BRENDA
 At what time?

LADY HONEY B

When he did it. Jake... He... called Medger the N-word when I told him we were getting married.

MEDGER BEST

What are you saying...?

BRENDA

Under what circumstances did Mr. Everhardt use that racial slur?

Lady Honey B really doesn't want to say.

LADY HONEY B

We had dated before I met Medger, nothing serious, but...

MEDGER BEST

What!!! What the hell??!!

He jumps up and pulls away from her. She goes to soothe him.

LADY HONEY B

He was just a fun guy to date. I never loved him, Baby... you gotta believe me!

He looks at her with open rage.

LADY HONEY B (CONT'D)

A lady doesn't talk about her ex-boyfriends with the man she loves! I'm gonna make it all better...

Brenda notes this exchange, making sure that Detective Gabriel does too.

LADY HONEY B (CONT'D)

(to Brenda)

He was pretty upset when I chose Medger over him...and he used that horrible word...when I told him Medger and I were having a baby!

MEDGER BEST

(looking at her in shock)

Oh no, Libby...

He collapses with his head in his hands, Lady Honey B comforts him, but he pulls away.

BRENDA

Well, thank you for that information
and I am sorry for all your pain,
truly!

LADY HONEY B

Thank you!

BRENDA

... You're welcome! Uh... Detective
Gabriel will continue to get more
details. I'm using all the resources
we have to find out what happened to
your son! Don't you doubt that for
one second!

She exits.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM TWO -- MOMENTS LATER

JAKE EVERHARDT is the NFL prototype from the 70's - think
Joe Namath - only blond.

JAKE EVERHARDT

No one was as surprised as me when I
intercepted it, but you gotta think
fast - I mean - it was an
opportunity...

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

So, were you crushed...?

JAKE EVERHARDT

Ribs bruised mostly, but I didn't
care 'cause I'd lateralled that ball
before the first man tackled me.

Detective Sanchez smiles almost chuckling.

Brenda enters, noting the chummy vibe.

BRENDA

Mr. Everhardt, I'm Deputy Chief Brenda
Leigh Johnson.

He stands, a bit chivalrous.

JAKE EVERHARDT

I've seen you in the papers lately...

BRENDA

I'm sure you are well aware of the
foibles of the press.

JAKE EVERHARDT

Hungry jackals to the last one.

They sit.

BRENDA
Mr. Everhardt...

JAKE EVERHARDT
Please, call me Jake.

BRENDA
If you prefer, Jake....

JAKE EVERHARDT
You have the cutest, little accent.
Pictures don't do you justice.

Brenda is dumbfounded: Does this guy have the nerve to be flirting with her during an interview?

Detective Sanchez is shocked, but impressed, if not jealous.

BRENDA
Mr. Everhardt, a dead infant was found in your trash this morning after an anonymous call to 911 lead police literally to your back door...

JAKE EVERHARDT
I know, very suspicious, right?

BRENDA
I don't like your attitude!

INT. ELECTRONICS - SIMULTANEOUS

Fritz, Raydor, and Taylor have joined the others.

FRITZ
I've never liked that guy!

FLYNN
His type hits on every pretty girl they meet...

He gets looks from everyone: the pot calling the kettle black.

FLYNN (CONT'D)
(oblivious)
Not that the Chief is just a pretty girl..

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM TWO - SIMULTANEOUS

JAKE EVERHARDT
I don't like the fact that you think I could kill a baby, so, not the greatest first impression on either
(MORE)

JAKE EVERHARDT (CONT'D)
side, but I've gotten beyond worse
when it's worth it.

BRENDA
We would like to search your home
for evidence, I can get a warrant...

JAKE EVERHARDT
Don't bother. Search every crevice.
I'm thirteen months sober, so for
the first time in my life I really
have nothing to hide. And if it
makes you like me any better, I didn't
kill anyone, much less some adorable
baby.

BRENDA
Did you find him adorable? Or was
he a "jungle baby" to you?

JAKE EVERHARDT
I just hate to hear ugly things come
out of a pretty woman's mouth. Makes
me think of Medger's wife.... She
use that phrase to describe junior...?

BRENDA
Why do you ask that?

JAKE EVERHARDT
Because she's a racist!

BRENDA
I hardly think a woman who is married
to a Black man and who is launching
a mixed race cosmetics line can be
called racist.

JAKE EVERHARDT
See how well PR works?

BRENDA
She took the name Lady Honey B to
celebrate being honey brown...

JAKE EVERHARDT
Is that her story!
(laughs cynically)
Honey bee like buzzing bees? That's
some spin doctoring! It's Honey
Badger 'cause honey badgers....

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ
... Don't give a shit!

Brenda, shocked by Sanchez's interjection.

BRENDA

Detective!?

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

'Scuse me Chief, but it's gone viral...

BRENDA

What's gone viral?

DETECTIVE SANCHEZ

The honey badger...

Brenda looks at them as if they are speaking Chinese.

JAKE EVERHARDT

Look, the honey badger is the most ferocious creature on earth. It wants what it wants and doesn't care who it hurts by taking it. When I dated Libby *I gave her* that nick name.

BRENDA

You thought she was the most vicious creature on earth and yet you dated her?

JAKE EVERHARDT

I thought she was ruthless in life and vicious in bed... An irresistible combination...

(off her look)

I was drinking and doing a lot of blow at the time, besides, she is beyond belief banging hot!

A subtle exchange of agreement passes between the men.

BRENDA

In what way was this banging hot woman so ruthless?

JAKE EVERHARDT

She forged some checks against my account, but I didn't care about that, I mean, you pay for it in the end with most chicks, present company excepted, I **am sure!**

INT. ELECTRONICS - SIMULTANEOUS

Fritz is a bit steamed.

FRITZ

The nerve of that guy!

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

You have to admit, he has a certain charm....

FRITZ

Yeah, just like a snake!

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM TWO - SIMULTANEOUS

JAKE EVERHARDT

But when it got so I didn't want to leave a used condom in the trash 'cause she was scheming to get herself knocked-up by someone in the NFL come hell or high water....

BRENDA

You sound like a scorned man....Mr. Everhardt. Maybe you don't like the idea of a Black man ending up with your trophy? Especially a "selfish" player like Medger Best.

JAKE EVERHARDT

All wide-outs are selfish. That's no big news. He just needs the fans love more than I do...

BRENDA

His wife said you called Medger a nigger, is that true.

The air goes out of the room.

INT. ELECTRONICS - SIMULTANEOUS

The air has been sucked out here too.

Shock, horror, discomfort...

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

Did she just say....?

COMMANDER TAYLOR

Yes she did!

FRITZ AND POPE

Oh My God!!!!

INT. BREAK ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

Brenda waits with a predatory gleam.

JAKE EVERHARDT

(unshaken)

Yeah, I used that word, but not to put **him** down, just saying I was sorry for the guy on account of knowing what his woman was like first hand. She is a conniver, is Lady Honey B. But Medger just loves to be loved, so if you make him feel loved you can make him a slave.... That's what she did and that's all I meant by that word. I truly feel sorry for the guy! **She's the racist.**

BRENDA

In what way exactly?

JAKE EVERHARDT

Always talking about her Black daddy being a dead beat dad and her mom wanting her to marry a white man to put the family back to "right". Her mother was Korean and White and married a Black man for like six months and that's what Libby came from.

This takes some of the righteous wind out of Brenda.

BRENDA

Well, the child was found at your residence...

JAKE EVERHARDT

In a trash can that everyone in the world had access to, but I bet only one person in the world would put that baby in there and call 911...

BRENDA

Lady Honey Badger....

JAKE EVERHARDT

So you search your adorable little heart out and when you're done, I can be reached at the W Hotel. I think I'm gonna want to move after all this anyway!

He gets up and heads to the door. Stops to fist bump Detective Sanchez.

BRENDA

Please, wait here for a bit more...

JAKE EVERHARDT

I can call my lawyer...

BRENDA

I want to protect you!

JAKE EVERHARDT

Lady, I'm a Linebacker! - you want to protect me?

BRENDA

Let me at least send a couple of officers to shadow you until this is all resolved.

JAKE EVERHARDT

I don't want that. But I am glad you care.

BRENDA

Please!

JAKE EVERHARDT

No! But I don't mind if you beg.

BRENDA

Well, I'm going to need you to sign a waiver to that effect before you leave the building.

JAKE EVERHARDT

I'd sign almost anything for you, Brown Eyes.

They walk out together.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. ELECTRONICS -- CONTINUOUS

Fritz is fuming.

FRITZ

Who does Jake Everhardt think he is....?

PROVENZA

A hero to millions of fans....

POPE

This whole thing is going to blow up in our faces.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

She was using that language to get at the truth. It's not just about being politically correct in a case like this.

COMMANDER TAYLOR

I, for one, am not offended...

POPE

The press is going to have a field day with this.

Buzz has been fiddling with his laptop.

BUZZ

I got it!

He has the You-tube of the National Geographic special on the honey badger up on his screen...

NARRATOR

(English accent)

The honey badger can kill a King Cobra without flinching and thinks nothing of the thousands of stings inflicted by bees in the hive from which he steals the precious larvae that is the colony's next generation....

They all watch in horror.

INT. MURDER ROOM - AFTERNOON -- MOMENTS LATER

Brenda is returning from escorting Jake out when she runs into Pope, Fritz, Taylor, and Raydor - all are in high dudgeon.

POPE

What are you doing?

BRENDA

It looks like she did it, but there is so little to go on... I need **them** to tell me what happened.

POPE

At least hold Jake.

BRENDA

Absolutely no evidence, we could be sued for false arrest. And he's signing the waiver declining protection right now...

POPE

.... Follow him anyway...

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

That could be construed as a violation of his civil rights, and therefore, misconduct...

POPE

Please Brenda, just pass it off to
Commander Taylor... let it go.

BRENDA

Is that a direct order, Chief Pope?

POPE

It's a direct request.

She stiffens her spine.

BRENDA

Then request denied, respectfully....

POPE

Then you have to hold him!

BRENDA

You want me to arrest him, on what
grounds? The publicity from a false
arrest could be very damaging to
this department.

POPE

Convince him, he seemed to *like you!*

She looks at him disgusted, as does Fritz, neither are happy.

Captain Raydor slips into Brenda's office, unnoticed.

POPE (CONT'D)

You managed to use the only word in
the English language that ends careers
in there - in an interview room! on
tape!

PROVENZA

I can think of some other career-
ending words...

Pope turns on Provenza with all his wrath.

POPE

You! Shut up, I can push you into
early retirement if you're not
careful!

PROVENZA

You tried that before, remember?
And look whose still here?

POPE

I wasn't Chief of Police then....

PROVENZA

I believe the title is *Interim Chief*,
.... little different.

Pope might belt him and Provenza might belt him back.

COMMANDER TAYLOR

Now let's not lose focus! Chief
Johnson is right and Mr. Everhardt
signed a waiver indemnifying us, so
she has done her due diligence.

BRENDA

Thank you Commander.

COMMANDER TAYLOR

And for the record, my mother always
told me *words* could never hurt me!

Brenda looks at him with appreciation.

BRENDA

And my mother always said if you
can't say something nice don't say
anything!

POPE

I wish you had used that advice in
there.

Fritz is fed up. Starts to go without a goodbye.

Brenda runs to him, leaving Pope and Taylor wrangling.

BRENDA

Where you going?

FRITZ

To my office to tie up some loose
ends and then to the bank to open a
lawsuit savings account!

BRENDA

Don't be like that, Fritzy... I have
to get to the truth!

FRITZ

Let someone else get to it for a
change!

BRENDA

That's not fair....

FRITZ

You know what's not fair? You!

(MORE)

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Always putting your case before anything - anyone else, especially me! It has robbed us of our savings, but worst of all it is stealing our lives! And I, for one, am sick of it Brenda!

He walks out, leaving her a bit dumbfounded.

Tao approaches her, excited.

TAO

I traced the call to a 24hrBuy located right between the two houses. When I called the shift manager to get a hold of the clerk who was on at around 12 - 6 am he said the guy had already come in to get the security video and was heading downtown saying how he knew who killed little Medger Jr. and was about to become a hero.

This news pulls Brenda from her shock, a bit.

BRENDA

... Good work, let me know the minute he gets here.

She returns to Pope and Taylor.

COMMANDER TAYLOR

No one is going to say that about her in the papers!

BRENDA

Say what?

POPE

It just sounds bad that you used the N-word, and if it got out....

BRENDA

A child has been murdered here, and whatever words get me to the killer, those are the words I will use!

COMMANDER TAYLOR

I agree!

BRENDA

I *think* that Lady Honey Badger may have killed her baby... And that she cooked up this whole race crime abduction ploy to cover up her crime!

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Framing Jake was just a bonus revenge on the guy who'd dumped her. I just need to prove it! So, if you will let me do my job!

POPE

Just try not to make things worse!

COMMANDER TAYLOR

How could they get worse? I mean...

Insulted, Brenda goes into her office as Pope and Taylor leave the Murder Room.

INT. BRENDA'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

Captain Raydor is waiting for her.

Brenda enters, jumps involuntarily, startled by Captain Raydor.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

I scared you?

BRENDA

I'm just on edge... How can I help you, Captain?

Brenda opens her candy drawer and begins rummaging through the selection of chocolates that are her comfort.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

You feel unsafe amongst your peers, I get it!

Picking one she wants, Brenda slams the drawer.

BRENDA

I know it is not your intention, but you are a big part of the feeling of un-safety that has cropped up for me at work lately, sorry!

Captain Raydor opens Brenda's candy drawer and gingerly picks one.

Brenda is startled, but doesn't stop her.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

Look, one of the reasons I went into Internal Affairs was that it's a division that allows women to advance - kind of like meter maids - if you're going to be hated for doing your job well, might as well give the job to a woman, right?

BRENDA
 (laughing, despite
 herself)
 I have felt a little like that lately,
 yes....but...

CAPTAIN RAYDOR
 But the bigger reason that I became
 what I am is because I experienced
 what it was to stand next to a fellow
 officer and know in my very bones
 that he was really a criminal, and I
 couldn't let that go once I knew it.
 So, I threw down the gauntlet to
 fight for justice no matter what.

BRENDA
 Did you prove it?

CAPTAIN RAYDOR
 Yes...

BRENDA
 (sincere)
 Good for you!

CAPTAIN RAYDOR
 And I am proud everyday to make sure
 that Los Angeles's cops don't use
 the authority of their badges in
 ways that undermine the justice
 system. To police the police...
 But in the process, I have made my
 peers hate and fear me for it, even
 you...

Brenda is struck.

BRENDA
 I never hated you Sharon...

Captain Raydor gives her an incredulous look.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
 Well maybe a little, but I'm over it
 now.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR
 I'm glad to hear it, because Brenda,
 I've always considered you one of
 the best cops in the field, but
 leading with your passions makes you
 a little short sighted.

BRENDA
 How so?

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

You have enemies all around you...

BRENDA

Don't you think that's a little melodramatic? Will isn't my enemy. We just have different priorities and agendas,

(she is floundering a bit, goes for more candy)

... Certainly than I thought at first, when we were together , or when he brought me out here... but he is my friend and ... my boss... and...

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

Who lied to you from the beginning about being married? When you were in love with him....

This hits hard.

BRENDA

.... That was personal... not about our careers...

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

And the personal is political! You have enemies, even in your own squad.....Never forget just a few months ago a suspect got into the interview room alone with you while still in possession of a gun...how does that happen, unless a cop or multiple cops let it happen!?

INT. MURDER ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

A WOMAN (40's) WITH A SMALL POTTED ROSE BUSH enters, she looks around a bit lost.

Lieutenant Provenza sees her, a look of recognition crosses his face.

PROVENZA

Mrs. Pillar, what can I do for you?

MRS. PILLAR

I can't believe you remember me, Lieutenant Provenza.

She is truly flattered.

PROVENZA

Are you kidding, besides being lovely, you gave a very moving victim's impact statement at the sentencing of your daughter's killers. Really showed the court who those hooligans were... Scum! How could I forget?

MRS. PILLAR

But you must hear so many sad stories, what with your work.... everyday....

PROVENZA

And I remember every one of them!... except when I'm drunk.

They both laugh, for her it is awkward.

MRS. PILLAR

(referencing the flower)

I brought this for Chief Johnson.

PROVENZA

Well, she's in her office, I'll take you there.

INT. BRENDA'S OFFICE -- CONTINUOUS

BRENDA

I can't come to work thinking like that!

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

You may have to...

There is a knock at the door. Provenza peeks in.

PROVENZA

You have a visitor Chief?

BRENDA

A visitor?

She and Raydor exchange looks...should she feel threatened?

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Bring them in.

The rose bush comes through the door first, followed by Mrs. Pillar. Provenza leaves, shutting the door.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Well, for heavens sake - flowers....

MRS. PILLAR

I didn't want to be a bother, but I wanted you to have this Chief Johnson as a belated thank you...

BRENDA

Well, come in! Isn't that gorgeous, you can put it right on the table here!

Mrs. Pillar does so.

MRS. PILLAR

I know how busy you are and everything...

BRENDA

I'm sorry, ... I know I recognize you, but I am not sure from where...

MRS. PILLAR

... Mary Pillar...

A look of full recognition crosses her face.

BRENDA

Of course, your daughter, Helen.... I remember you both...!

There is a ghost between them.

MRS. PILLAR

(tearing up)

I promised myself I wouldn't get emotional. I don't want to be any trouble...

BRENDA

Don't even think that....

MRS. PILLAR

(presentational)

I created this hybrid rose myself... and when I saw all that they were writing in the papers, all you're going through for what you've done for people like me and my baby girl... Well, I decided to name it after you and I wanted you to have one, since it is your namesake - it's registered with the horticultural society - so this is officially the Johnson Rose!

Brenda is truly moved.

BRENDA

Well, thank you... so very much!!
My father will be glad to have the
family name redeemed so beautifully!
I really am grateful to you for the
thought!

MRS. PILLAR

If you came to the victims' support
group I belong to you would see how
many people bless your name Chief
Johnson.

BRENDA

That's nice to hear...

MRS. PILLAR

... I thank God everyday that you
handled my daughter's murder. I
couldn't have lived if those boys
got away with how they treated her
little body.... couldn't 've survived
if I thought they were out in the
world free to do it again to some
other mother's child! It brings
peace of mind... somehow...it helps..
The good you do, it doesn't go unseen!

Mrs. Pillar is trembling almost imperceptibly. Brenda
embraces her. Raydor watches.

BRENDA

Thank you for this Mrs. Pillar.
From the bottom of my heart, I thank
you....

Provenza knocks on the door.

PROVENZA

Doctor Morales says he's ready to
see you, Chief!

MRS. PILLAR

Well, I won't take up anymore of
your time. Take care of yourself,
please!

BRENDA

Goodbye! And... Thank you again!

MRS. PILLAR

Thank you Chief Johnson!

PROVENZA

I'll walk you out.

They go.

CAPTAIN RAYDOR

Just remember, for every one to bless
you there are two who would curse
you. Watch your back!

Raydor leaves Brenda to deal with this truth.

INT. MORGUE - AFTERNOON

Brenda enters to find DR. MORALES analyzing an X-ray of a
small skull and an obviously broken neck. He turns back to
examine the tiny covered body.

BRENDA

What does it look like to you Doctor?

DR. MORALES

A tragedy!

BRENDA

Not a murder.... motivated by hate?

DR. MORALES

Well, I can't speak to the feelings
that lead up to it, but I can tell
you it happened between one and three
am this morning.

BRENDA

That early?

DR. MORALES

Uh Huh! ... The child's neck was
broken in a clean blow - no trauma
or bruising on the body....

As he speaks to her he tenderly lifts the sheet covering the
tiny body to show Brenda the details to which he refers.

DR. MORALES (CONT'D)

No old wounds of the type that would
indicate past abuse, no blows to the
face, or signs of shaken baby syndrome
in the back of the eyes....

BRENDA

Could the injury have come from a
fall from the crib onto a hard
surface?

DR. MORALES

Could be... There is isolated trauma
to the child's....

Brenda's phone RINGS in her purse.

BRENDA
Excuse me, please....sorry

She rummages around, pulling out some things including the LADY HONEY B sample packet, which she puts down on the gurney next to the covered body....

She looks at the phone and sees that it is WILLIE RAY.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
(to Dr. Morales)
...My mother....

She puts the phone back in her bag.

BRENDA (CONT'D)
I'll call her back....go on Doctor...

DR. MORALES
How is she handling your dad's cancer?

BRENDA
He's doing exactly what the doctors have ordered and we are hoping for the best! Thank you for asking!

DR. MORALES
Spoken like a practiced liar.

BRENDA
Oh, for heavens sake... It's been awful, but right now, this seems worse , so...

Doctor Morales braces himself to say it...

DR. MORALES
The infant was sodomized with a blunt object!

BRENDA
Good lord, poor baby!

Brenda looks at the covered form, deeply shaken and disgusted.

DR. MORALES
It happened postmortem, so there was no pain.

Brenda is confused by this fact.

BRENDA
So, the infant was sexually assaulted after its neck was broken? I don't understand... a necrophilic pedophile....?

DR. MORALES

There are no signs whatsoever of molestation... The strangest part is, as violating as this wound is, there is nothing violent or sexual about it, there are traces of diaper rash salve inside the infant's rectum, practically no abrasions, only this...

Dr. Morales lifts **a very small black semicircle of plastic** off a tray very carefully with a pair of long forensic tweezers.

He shows it to Brenda under a large illuminated magnifying glass.

Both of their faces appear huge in the background as they stare at this minuscule piece of evidence.

Brenda's face bursts with recognition.

BRENDA

Doctor, does that piece look like it came off of this bottle cap to you...

Brenda grabs the Lady Honey B packet off the gurney and takes out the perfume bottle. She pulls the cap off and puts it under the magnifying glass. Dr. Morales moves his tweezer held fragment next to the cap. It is definitely a broken bees' wing.

DR. MORALES

Perfect match!

BRENDA

Thank you Doctor! Can you please put a security hold on this autopsy until further notice?

DR. MORALES

Of course, but....

Brenda gathers up her purse's contents and begins shoving everything back into her purse as she races out of the morgue.

BRENDA

Thank you Doctor, so much!

INT. MORGUE HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Brenda drops her phone while struggling with her purse. She bends to grab it, accidentally hitting re-dial. The phone dials Willie Ray.

BRENDA
 (trying to hang up
 fast)
 Shoot!

WILLIE RAY
 (on the cell)
 Brenda Leigh, is that you? Thank
 heavens you called me back.

Brenda realizes she can't get out of this.

BRENDA
 Hi Momma... How are you and Daddy
 doin'?

WILLIE RAY
 (on the cell)
 Well, he has tried my patience to
 the bone! I tell you, I haven't
 been this sleep deprived since I was
 the mother of infants...

BRENDA
 (thoughtfully)
 That must have been hard... having a
 baby...

WILLIE RAY
 (on the cell)
 Well I had four! And all of you
 together weren't half as demanding
 as your father is... No matter how
 much I love him, I keep losing my
 patience!

Brenda is distracted.

BRENDA
 You lose your patience, well, of
 course you do! Don't worry Momma,
 Fritz and I will be there to help
 soon....Love you. Gotta go, bye-bye
 now!

She hangs up.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. MURDER ROOM -- LATER

Brenda races into the murder room.

BRENDA

Lieutenant Tao have the results from the search of Lady Honey B's car come back yet?

Tao pulls a couple of evidence bags off his desk.

TAO

Yes and one of the items was a baby wipe that had small traces of blood on it....

BRENDA

Were there also traces of diaper salve?

TAO

Yes... What do you know Chief?

BRENDA

That infants try your patience...

Brenda grabs the evidence bag and dumps it out on Provenza's desk.

PROVENZA

Hey...

She sifts through average car detritus that has been bagged in clear ziplocks and finds the perfume bottle with the broken bee's wing on the cap.

BRENDA

Have the lab analyze that cap for traces of DNA and see if that blood on the baby wipe is a match to our victim. I know it is ...that creature....

Lieutenant Flynn enters with a YOUNG CLERK his blue vest says 24hrBuy on it.

FLYNN

Chief, Danny here says he just solved the whole case for us, even has film.

DANNY

Yeah, and come tomorrow I'll probably be all over the news and stuff....

BRENDA

Well, Danny, show us what you've got.

INT. BRENDA'S CONFERENCE ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Tao has set up his laptop which is running the security footage in four boxes: the register, the aisles, and the parking lot in sequence. They look at it together.

DANNY

I recognized her right away, even
looking like a hot mess.

The Video shows Lady Honey B in a giant hooded sweatshirt and sunglasses buying a disposable phone, she seems to be in baby doll pajamas and flip flops under the sweatshirt.

BRENDA

(squinting)

How could you tell it was her?

DANNY

That ass... My cash register is right
across from the suntan oil display...
and she was on...

BRENDA

I know the one...

DANNY

She paid cash for the phone, which
plenty of hookers and dealers do
so... no big deal.

He pulls the phone out of his pocket.

BRENDA

How did you end up with her phone?

She hands it to Tao.

DANNY

I figured, maybe Best Hands Ever
would be out in the limo, so I
followed her out... We were
empty...so...

Tao opens the phone and checks the serial number.

BRENDA

(tantalized)

... Was Medger in the car...?

DANNY

No, just an SUV...

Tao nods to Brenda that it is the cell that made the 911 call.

BRENDA

So how did you end up with *this* phone?

DANNY

She made one call, then chucked it in the trash, so I took it out, prepaid minutes come with....

BRENDA

Is that all you saw?

DANNY

No, she got in the car and raced out of the lot and when she did, the sunroof was open so I could see in.

(shuddering with the memory)

The baby in the car seat, his head flopped like a rag doll and I thought to myself it looked dead. So when I heard the news....

BRENDA

You decided to do your duty as a citizen.

DANNY

I just knew she killed him!

BRENDA

Thank you Danny! Please give the rest of your statement to Lieutenant Tao...

DANNY

When do I get to give my story to reporters?

Brenda gives a look that makes Tao take over as she exits.

TAO

First let's get the facts....

INT. MURDER ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Brenda enters from the conference room.

Buzz comes in from the electronics room and rushes to her.

BUZZ

I started monitoring Lady Honey B's twitter account and she just tweeted that the LAPD thinks that Jake Everhardt killed her baby. She ended by asking for her fans to help her and Medger any way they can.

BRENDA

That's practically solicitation of murder. Send a protection team to pick up Jake immediately! This woman is making me furious.

Brenda stalks to the break room.

Provenza heads to electronics.

PROVENZA

You don't want to miss the Chief furious, do you?!

Everyone else races into electronics.

INT. BREAK ROOM -- MOMENTS LATER

Brenda enters to see Lady Honey B texting furiously as Medger sits silently in the corner. Gabriel stands...

DETECTIVE GABRIEL

No one's talking...

BRENDA

Someone is communicating loud and clear, though.

Brenda snatches the phone from Lady Honey B's grip.

LADY HONEY B

Hey!...

BRENDA

Any calls come in about your baby boy?

LADY HONEY B

No...

BRENDA

But you've been texting away haven't you? Building your campaign against your ex?

Medger checks in at this.

MEDGER BEST

What are you doing woman?

LADY HONEY B

Taking care of business, like always! Someone has to?

BRENDA

How is your missing baby about business?

Something passes between Medger and Lady Honey B.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

I am sick of your manipulations, so
this stops now!

(looking at Lady Honey
B)

Do you want to tell him or should I?

(off her non response,
she turns to Medger)

Your baby died between one and three
am this morning! Hours before you
found that disgusting note!

MEDGER BEST

Sweet Jesus...Please....

BRENDA

(to Lady Honey B)

Now, I know how hard it is to be
patient with a screaming baby. And
I get that Medger Junior was just a
tool you used to trap your husband
into marriage..., but what I am trying
to figure out is - was your husband
sound asleep when you broke your
baby's neck, then took his lifeless
little body and shoved it in the
garbage can behind your ex-boyfriend's
house... ?

MEDGER BEST

(freaking out)

What!?

BRENDA

Did you quietly slip into bed beside
him after doing all your evil deeds
and let him wake up to find your
little staged hate crime? Or are
you partners in *everything* you do?

LADY HONEY B

Don't say a word Medger, I am going
to fix everything!

BRENDA

Is that what you call it when you
frame a man for infanticide? Fixing
everything!? Jake had it right -
you are the most ruthless creature,
Lady Honey Badger! But even wild
animals don't sodomize their own
babies.

MEDGER BEST

(furious)

You did what to him!?

LADY HONEY B

(losing it)

I had to make it look like someone hated him!

BRENDA

Looks to me like someone did!

MEDGER BEST

I can't believe you could do that....

LADY HONEY B

What can't you believe. I wiped his butt a thousand times a day ` besides - he was already dead and I had to make it look like a hate crime!

MEDGER BEST

... How could you do that to him?

LADY HONEY B

How could I? **You're** the one who killed him, I was just protecting **you!**

INT. ELECTRONICS - SIMULTANEOUS

They all watch.

POPE

Did she just say...?

PROVENZA

That he killed the kid! Yes! What are you going deaf?

Tao takes a call.

INT. BREAK ROOM - SIMULTANEOUS

BRENDA

What did you just say!?

Lady Honey B waits for Medger to speak for himself but he is rocking himself and making moaning noises.

LADY HONEY B

Medger couldn't bear to let the baby cry, even if the doctor had said it was good for him, so... last night Medger decides to check him even though he's been fed and changed and

(MORE)

LADY HONEY B (CONT'D)
 is just fine! Next thing Medger is screaming that he's dropped the baby and it's dead... and we have to call the police! Well I couldn't let him ruin our lives with this... we have both worked so hard creating marketable images and then he goes and does this!

BRENDA
 It sounds like a tragic accident
Does what?

LADY HONEY B
Fumbles his own son.... whose gonna want to buy cereal with a picture of some loser who dropped his own baby on it?! NOBODY! He was petrified, shaking, catatonic! I had to think of something!

BRENDA
 Is this true, Medger?

MEDGER BEST
 I was sacred 'cause I thought there was no way you would believe it was an accident on account of me being famous for my hands and all.... He just slipped is all... I didn't know she was going to frame Jake... I swear!... Or do that sick thing to our baby's body... I just thought she'd dumped him someplace random. Which was bad enough...but now...

LADY HONEY B
 You killed him not me! I didn't do anything except try to protect my husband like a good wife! I didn't kill anyone!

Tao knocks on the door and opens it...

TAO
 Excuse me chief. I thought you should know Jake Everhardt was shot dead by an angry fan in the hotel lobby. His every move was clocked on twitter from the moment Lady Honey B tweeted about him being a suspect.

Shock and horror register on everyone's faces except for Lady Honey B

Brenda turns, fixing her cobra stare on Lady Honey B

BRENDA

So, you did kill someone after all.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. BRENDA'S OFFICE -- NIGHT

Brenda sits at her desk as the empty murder room and the deep dark night surround her. She regards the **rose** thoughtfully.

Fritz taps on the slightly open door, leading the way into her office with a bag of take-out.

FRITZ

I figured great Chinese is as easy to bring here as home and since you didn't come home....

(he notes her
fascination with the
flower)

Should I be jealous?

He plops the bag on the table.

Brenda looks up at him from her reverie.

BRENDA

Thank heavens! I'm starved! You're an angel of a husband...

She slips into his arms, standing on tippy-toe. They kiss tenderly.

FRITZ

I heard about Jake being killed... I can't help but say I warned you that football fans were just as fanatic in L.A., even without a team!

BRENDA

Apparently the shooter was a suntan oil fan.... Oh Fritzzy, I begged that man to take protection. Sent a team the minute we monitored that vicious woman's twitting...

FRITZ

...Tweeting...!

She disengages from him and starts opening the Chinese food.

BRENDA

Whatever it's called!...

(MORE)

BRENDA (CONT'D)

it's just another way to reach out and hate someone, isn't it? Cyber bullying, solicitation to murder via bird calls, where are these social networks taking us?!... Although, it leaves a great techno-trail to show a Grand Jury...

FRITZ

What's your plan?

BRENDA

I'm charging her with criminal solicitation to murder for the twitter feed... both of them with lying to the police - obstruction of justice... and I'm hoping the D.A. can find a charge that encompasses reckless endangerment of an entire city.

He rubs her shoulders lovingly as she digs into a container with chopsticks.

FRITZ

King Cobra has nothing on you....

Fritz looks at the **rose** again as if it is an obstruction.

FRITZ (CONT'D)

Did Will give you the flower?

BRENDA

Will!? I don't know that he'll be sending flowers to my funeral, much less bringing me a rosebush at work...

Fritz looks relieved and sits down to eat.

FRITZ

It's beautiful, we can plant it once we find a house.

BRENDA

Actually a victim's mother brought me that as a thank you. She named it the Johnson rose.

FRITZ

(giving it a sniff)
Smells really sweet.

They exchange comforting smiles as they dig into the food.

END OF ACT FIVE