

THE BONE COLLECTOR

“Pilot”

Written by:

Mark Bianculli and VJ Boyd

Based on the novel and characters

By

Jeffrey Deavers



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TEASER

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

We open with a pulse. ONE CONTINUOUS SHOT, kinetic and carefully choreographed. MUSIC beneath, building.

DETECTIVE LINCOLN RHYME (Tony Stark's bravado, Holmes's intuition, Young Brando's rebelliousness) pulls out his GUN and brazenly enters an industrial warehouse, alone. It's dark, foreboding. An empty space bordered by balconies above.

Through Lincoln's earpiece, we hear the voice of his partner, DETECTIVE RICK SELLITTO (old school, but shrewd -- we'll meet him face-to-face in a moment).

SELLITTO (V.O.)

Lincoln, we're five minutes out. *Don't* go in there alone.

Lincoln navigates the space, gun raised, ready...

SELLITTO (V.O.)

(goddammit)

You're already inside, aren't you?

LINCOLN

We've chased him for five years.

SELLITTO (V.O.)

And you can wait five minutes. Check your badge, Lincoln, it says forensic detective not SWAT. Get out of there.

A SOUND - a *MAN'S MUFFLED SCREAM?* From an upstairs balcony.

LINCOLN

Sounds of distress from upstairs. He's got a victim here with him.

SELLITTO (V.O.)

He's up there ready to jump you, Lincoln. Wait for backup.

Lincoln ascends a METAL STAIRCASE, nearing the screams.

LINCOLN

I don't wait.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
 You don't listen, either. Ever
 consider the possibility that someone
 out there might be smarter than you?

LINCOLN
 I suppose anything's possible.

UP ANOTHER LEVEL NOW, Lincoln stops in his tracks.

The shot (still unbroken) spins to find a MALE VICTIM (20s),
 bound to a CHAIR at the edge of a platform. Eyes wide, trying
 to scream. DUCT TAPE OVER HIS MOUTH with the word "SSSHHHH"
 scrawled across. Three colored wires LEAD FROM THE TAPE ON
 HIS MOUTH TO A LARGE DEVICE WITH A TICKING DIGITAL CLOCK:
1 min 58 seconds.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
 Male victim. Alive. Wired to a device
 with a timer.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
 A "device?" You mean like a bomb?

LINCOLN
 Yeah, exactly like a bomb. How do I
 defuse it?

SELLITTO
 ("are you joking?")
 How do you...? You don't. You wait for
 backup. We're three minutes out!

LINCOLN
 I don't have three minutes.
 (kneeling, to the Victim)
 My name's Detective Lincoln Rhyme. I'm
 going to get you out of this, but I
 need your help.

The Victim nods, panicked. Lincoln checks the clock: **1:25...**

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
 (to Victim)
 The wiring on this tape makes me think
 I shouldn't pull it off, so we'll
 stick to yes or no questions, okay?
 (off his nod)
 Did you see the face of the man who
 did this to you?
 (a nod, YES)
 Great. Did he know we were coming?
 (a nod, YES)
 Not so great. Is he still here?

YES. Really not great.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
Lincoln, I've got Marasco from Bomb Squad on with us. Tell us what the hell you're looking at.

Lincoln looks down the long balcony. Are those FOOTSTEPS? Aims his gun, adrenaline surging... The Victim MOANS, desperate. Commanding himself to refocus, Lincoln turns back.

LINCOLN
Three wires. Red. White. Green. Connecting the victim to some serious-looking canisters.

MARASCO (V.O.)
Okay, Detective, what else?

LINCOLN
A clock that says I've got forty seconds to solve this.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
Lincoln, get out of there, *now*.

But Lincoln, as always, isn't listening. He leans to inspect the CANISTERS, reading, in small print: TITANIUM DIOXIDE.

LINCOLN
Everything *means something* with this guy.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
Yeah, and bomb means "not welcome." Make the right choice, Lincoln.

Lincoln pulls out a POCKET KNIFE. Closes his eyes for a quick prayer. The Victim does the same, praying ten times as hard.

LINCOLN
That's the idea.

6... 5... 4... LINCOLN CUTS THE WHITE WIRE... THE CLOCK STOPS. No explosion. It's hard to tell who exhales more audibly, Lincoln or the Victim.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
Lincoln?! Talk to me.

LINCOLN
We're okay. He used an old Titanium Dioxide canister to make the bomb. It's a pigment used to make ink.

SELLITTO (V.O.)
That's a great fun fact, but --

LINCOLN
Specifically: *White* ink. So I cut the
white wire.
(then)
Everything means something with The
Bone Collector.

Lincoln carefully reaches to the TAPE on the Victim's mouth and removes it. The Victim blurts with urgency:

VICTIM
The floor!

LINCOLN
What? --

SNAP. The floor of the balcony where Lincoln is kneeling springs open, bottoming out, like a reverse bear trap.

The (STILL unbroken) shot FALLS WITH LINCOLN, as he drops TWO STORIES onto his back. Hans Gruber in Die Hard. He lands so hard, dust spreads. SOUND CUTS OUT. Until a sharp INHALE lets us know he's still alive.

His DISLODGED EARPIECE buzzes with Sellitto's MUFFLED VOICE.

A pair of BOOTS (covered in crime scene booties) approaches behind Lincoln. Tilt up to see the face of the man we're going to spend a lot of time hunting: THE BONE COLLECTOR (think Willem Dafoe). He kneels next to Lincoln, amused.

Lincoln on his back: head to the side. Concussed, in shock, unable to turn his neck to get a glimpse of his white whale, so agonizingly close.

BONE COLLECTOR
Still alive? You always were a
stubborn one, Lincoln.
(leaning closer)
While you lay here dying, I want you
to listen to the sound of you being
just not smart enough -- *just* too late
-- to stop this.

We stay with Lincoln as the Bone Collector exits frame. We HEAR him ascend the stairs, then, two stories above...

VICTIM (O.S.)
No, wait! *No-no-no, please!*

...STABBING. KNIFE CRUNCHING INTO BONE AND FLESH. Lincoln shuts his eyes in helpless anger. Then... SILENCE.

FOOTSTEPS rush away on the upper balcony and exit some distant door as entrance doors burst open in the b.g.

SELLITTO (O.S.)

Lincoln!

STILL with Lincoln, as SELLITTO rushes into frame. COPS spread throughout the space. Lincoln struggles to speak -- to tell them the Bone Collector JUST left -- but he's too stunned and too injured to get a word out.

SELLITTO (CONT'D)

Somebody get a medic!

FADE OUT on Lincoln's visage. Prone. Helpless. Defeated.

SELLITTO (V.O.) (CONT'D)

(OVER BLACK)

You're gonna be okay, buddy. You're gonna be fine...

INT. AMELIA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

Chyron: Three Years Later.

Pan down a row of PRESCRIPTION BOTTLES. We might think they're for Lincoln, but they're actually being set on a breakfast counter by OFFICER AMELIA SACHS (30, think Emily Blunt in SICARIO, with an even bigger chip on her shoulder).

She's tired. Late. Hair still wet. Adjusting her POLICE UNIFORM as she joylessly pours out her cocktail of pills.

Her sister RAE (16 going on 30, Rory Gilmore type) slides a glass of DARK GREEN PULPY JUICE in her direction.

AMELIA

Is that to clean the sink or something?

RAE

It's a kale ginger smoothie.

AMELIA

Kale's the one that's like spinach? But with more fur?

RAE

It really wouldn't hurt to put one natural thing in your body.

AMELIA

Coffee comes from nature.

Rae hands Amelia a pre-poured TRAVEL MUG of coffee, in routine lockstep, like making a child's lunch. Amelia GUZZLES a handful of PILLS and washes it down with the coffee.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Shit, I'm so late.

RAE

Oversleeping is a sign of malnutrition.

AMELIA

No, it's a sign of studying all night and working doubles to provide for my precocious, kale-drinking sister. But alas, someone has to be the responsible adult.

(patting herself down)

What am I forgetting?

Rae hands Amelia her GUN off the table. *Whoops*. Who's raising who around here? Rae extends a tin-foil wrapped BAGEL.

RAE

Here. Extra cream cheese.

AMELIA

There's my girl.

RAE

Oh, and I got the mail.

Amelia picks up and opens a LETTER marked "OFFICIAL: FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION." We catch the important words: "REGRET TO INFORM..." "APPLICATION REJECTED..."

Amelia puts on her proudest face, but she's wounded. Badly. A dream of hers just died. (More on this later.)

RAE (CONT'D)

You okay?

AMELIA

Fine. Yeah.

(pockets the letter)

Make good choices, okay?

Rae nods and forces a half-smile, concerned. Amelia exits.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL - UNDERGROUND PLATFORM - MORNING

AMELIA joylessly patrols the platform of a near-abandoned, unglamorous section of Grand Central Terminal.

She approaches a HOMELESS MAN sleeping, curled in the corner. After a beat, she gives him a sturdy SHOVE with her boot.

AMELIA

What do you think you're doing?
 (as he awakens)
 You missed our breakfast date.

They share a smile. She halves her bagel for him.

HOMELESS MAN

Sorry, Amelia. Long night.

AMELIA

I feel you.

STATION WORKER (O.S.)

Officer!

Amelia turns to find a distraught STATION WORKER, out of breath, at the edge of the platform.

STATION WORKER (CONT'D)

There's someone on the tracks.

INT. TRAIN TUNNEL - DAY

A FLASHLIGHT clicks on as Amelia's boots crunch through the dark train tunnel. Station Worker remains on the platform.

STATION WORKER

I'm trying to raise the next train but
 the conductor's not answering!

Amelia treading carefully, head on a swivel -- another train could come at any moment -- then her flashlight finds:

A MAN'S DEAD BODY. Clothed, but without shoes. PROPPED IN A SEATED POSITION, tied to a hook in the wall beside the tracks. A NOOSE-LIKE CONTRAPTION around his neck, a rope connecting to his WRISTS. Arms together and semi-outstretched like a churchgoer awaiting a sacrament. Head hung forward.

Creepy as fuck. And whoever did this could still be around. Amelia puts her hand on her gun, just in case.

AMELIA

Go to the control office. Stop ALL the trains on this line. Go now.

The panicky Station Worker scrambles away.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

(into her WALKIE)

I got a 10-54 in the 6-line tunnel, request additional officers and tell metro to hold off any trains.

(STATIC in response)

Damn it.

She waves her light around the debris-scattered tracks until it lands on a PILE OF POWDER -- a MIX of TWO substances -- atop a STRIP OF FABRIC, lying neatly on the rail.

As she kneels down to examine it, she feels a RUMBLING. The powder slightly shifts. Oh shit. A TRAIN IS COMING.

AMELIA (INTO WALKIE) (CONT'D)

Stop all trains NOW, do you copy?

HEADLIGHTS turn the corner, barreling towards Amelia. She looks to the platform she *should* be running to and leaping on, then looks back to the powder on the rail that will be destroyed if that train doesn't stop, and --

AMELIA STANDS HER GROUND

Desperately waves her flashlight to get the conductor's attention. Nothing. The train still coming at her full-speed.

Amelia throws down her flashlight, pulls her gun and FIRES TWO ROUNDS into the roof of the tunnel.

THE TRAIN SCREECHES TO A STOP. SPARKS FLYING. Amelia shields her face, but stands in place as the train STOPS INCHES AWAY FROM HER with a final burst of brake steam. Holy fuck. She looks down at the evidence -- still intact.

INT. GRAND CENTRAL TERMINAL - PLATFORM - DAY

Bustling crime scene now. BYSTANDERS, COPS, CSI. Amelia is back on the platform getting chewed out by a POLICE SERGEANT.

POLICE SERGEANT

You know the difference between delusional and crazy? Delusional is thinking you have the authority to shut down the busiest train station in Manhattan with your walkie talkie.

(MORE)

POLICE SERGEANT (CONT'D)
Crazy is realizing you don't, then
 jumping in front of a train anyway.

AMELIA
 I was trying to preserve the integrity
 of the crime scene, Sir.

POLICE SERGEANT
 You know what ruins the integrity of a
 crime scene? A cop splattered all over
 the tracks.

As Amelia gets reamed out, DETECTIVE SELLITTO, Lincoln's
 partner from the opening scene, examines the crime scene in
 the b.g. along with his new partner, ERIC ORTIZ (30, fresh-
 faced boy scout, but don't underestimate him). Sellitto's
 asking a UNI something, and the Uni points to Amelia.

SELLITTO
 Excuse me, Sergeant.
 (to Amelia)
 You're the one who stopped the train?

AMELIA
 That's right.

SELLITTO
 Good work. I'm Detective Sellitto.
 This is my partner, Detective Ortiz.
 Think you can come with us uptown? You
 just won yourself a ticket to meet the
 great Lincoln Rhyme.

POLICE SERGEANT
 What? You serious?

Walk and talk as Amelia goes with Sellitto and Eric.

AMELIA
 Lincoln Rhyme. *The Lincoln Rhyme*?

SELLITTO
 Father, Son, and Holy Ghost of
 forensic criminalistics.

ERIC
 If he does say so himself.

AMELIA
 I thought he was... *retired*.

SELLITTO
 The crime scene you found in that
 tunnel might just change that.

(MORE)

SELLITTO (CONT'D)

You were first on the scene, so he'll want to talk to you.

ERIC

If you love getting berated by a condescending prick, it's a real treat.

As they EXIT and approach Sellitto's UNMARKED CRUISER --

SELLITTO

Lincoln's a good man. And a genius. He's just... intense.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

TIGHT ON Lincoln's face. Gravely serious look in his eyes.

LINCOLN

I promise you. If you do what you're about to do, it'll be the biggest mistake of your life.

REVEAL he's talking into a headset - playing a shoot-em-up MULTIPLAYER GAME on an impressive MULTI SCREEN SETUP (we'll use these later), reclined in his hospital bed.

The room itself is really a combination of two rooms, with giant double doors at the center that can be closed to provide Lincoln with a more intimate space.

Lincoln is a PARAPLEGIC NOW, and can only move his neck, head, and right arm. The game features a video chat, and Lincoln is shit-talking the TEENAGE BOY he's playing against.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Ooh, that's - that's a lotta blood. Sorry, kid, it's never easy watching someone realize I'm the greatest.

TEENAGE BOY

Is it embarrassing being an old man playing against teenagers?

LINCOLN

Is it embarrassing being a teenager getting murderized by an old man?

Lincoln's live-in health-care assistant, CLAIRE (40, kind but strong), interrupts.

CLAIRE

Lincoln - you have visitors.

LINCOLN

Visitors? Plural? Please tell them, in your enchantingly polite style, that I'd rather saw off my one good hand than talk to whoever it is.

CLAIRE

They're standing right behind you.

LINCOLN

You know that's something you should lead with when a person can't turn around, right?

(to the Teen)

Sorry young buck, go to school or something.

He closes out the game, as Sellitto, Eric, Amelia, and a HALF DOZEN UNIS and CSI come over from the far side of the room.

Amelia studies the room: Tasteful and modern, but cluttered. It's half museum -- a valentine to New York City's history. Books, antique guns, statues, framed maps and schematics.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Sellitto.

SELLITTO

Place looks different. You move your bed?

LINCOLN

The light's better on this side, plus, redecorating helps with the stultifying descent into insanity that comes from being bedridden.

He's fine, don't worry. This is just how he speaks to people.

SELLITTO

You remember my partner.

LINCOLN

Darren.

ERIC

Eric.

LINCOLN

Right. Sorry. My memory, it's...

ERIC

Flawless? Photographic?

Touché. Lincoln grins. Eric's in no mood for a pissing match.

LINCOLN

Claire. Didn't we talk about how Sellitto, much like a vampire, can only enter if you invite him in?

CLAIRE

We did.

LINCOLN

And how even if he charms you and tells you it's vitally important...

CLAIRE

Nothing's as important as your privacy.

LINCOLN

And even if I didn't employ you to do what I say, you'd have the respect and decency to show our guests out when you realized they weren't welcome?

A beat - Claire and Sellitto share a knowing, allied glance.

CLAIRE

I think I'll put on some coffee.

Claire might be the only person Lincoln could never get truly mad at, but he shoots her a hell of a look on her way out.

LINCOLN

(to Sellitto)

Is this where I remind you how very, very retired I am?

SELLITTO

You're gonna want to see this one.

LINCOLN

That's what you said last time.

Sellitto tries unsuccessfully to hand an iPad to Lincoln.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

And the time before.

Fine. Sellitto holds it in front of Lincoln and swipes through the CRIME SCENE PHOTOS himself. Lincoln barely glances at it, until suddenly --

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Wait --

Lincoln takes the iPad, SWIPING and ZOOMING with gusto, now.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
Well, kiss my crippled ass...

SELLITTO
Yeah.

LINCOLN
Victim was put into this alive?

SELLITTO
A noose tied to his wrists. Soon as he
couldn't hold his arms up any longer,
he choked himself.

LINCOLN
Displayed in public?

SELLITTO
Doesn't get much more public than
Grand Central.

LINCOLN
Evidence left behind?

SELLITTO
Three pieces.
(the number three *means*
something, here)
You can thank Officer Sachs here for
saving that evidence, by the way.
Jumped in front of a train.

LINCOLN
(to Amelia)
Really? You know that's crazy, right?

That's the second time someone's said that. Amelia bristles:

AMELIA
I'm not crazy.

LINCOLN
Take it as a compliment.

AMELIA
"Crazy" is never a compliment

A look between Sellitto and Eric. Amelia can hold her own.

LINCOLN
What's your career track, Officer
Sachs? Detective? CSI?

AMELIA

No interest in either one.

LINCOLN

Going to patrol the train station for the rest of your career, then?

AMELIA

There's worse jobs.

LINCOLN

So then what EXACTLY, in your railway expertise, made you think this evidence was worth risking your life to save?

AMELIA

It looked important. Everything *posed*. Like whoever did this is playing a game, and I wanted to have all the pieces.

A beat as Lincoln studies her. She does not blink.

LINCOLN

Well... You were right.

AMELIA

It's him, isn't it? *The Bone Collector*.

Says it like you'd say "*The Zodiac*." It's a big fucking deal.

LINCOLN

The one and only. Which means the body you found is only the first. Always three with him. Three bodies in a day. Three pieces of evidence leading to the next location. He's already got *someone else* out there awaiting a similar fate.

A FLASH OF MEMORY: *The bound Victim from the opening sequence.*

SELLITTO

Commissioner's given me operational control of the task force, Lincoln, and she's already okayed your involvement, so... What do you say?

LINCOLN

I'd say I'm ready for another shot at the bastard who put me in this bed.

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

INT. CRIME SCENE - DAY - *FLASHBACK*

CHYRON: Ten Years Ago

A DIM CRIME SCENE. Violent and messy, but there is no body. Photos being taken. YOUNGER LINCOLN and a few other DETECTIVES mill about and examine, when --

The sound of a HEAVY SWITCH being flipped and Lights flood the crime scene - like a theater. This is a SIMULATION. A class. Their teacher, CAPTAIN ELODIE OLSEN (50s, think Sigourney Weaver), suffers no fools.

CAPTAIN OLSEN

A crime scene. There's been a murder, that much you know. But the body's not here. What *is* here is more evidence than you'll ever get in the real world, and yet, with the answer right under your noses, I have a feeling every one of you is hopelessly oblivious.

Lincoln sizes up the others, cocky. Maverick in Top Gun.

CAPTAIN OLSEN (CONT'D)

Welcome to the most elite forensics academy in the country. Built on the bedrock of this city. Being a good detective barely got you in the door, and most of you are going to walk right back out. Method is a half-measure. Intelligence is nothing. You think Sherlock Holmes was a superhero? No. He was a British nerd who studied every book, every map, every chemical - **every pigeon in London**. For fun.

(then)

Who in here is cursed with that kind of obsession?

Singling out Lincoln:

CAPTAIN OLSEN (CONT'D)

How about you? You want to be a great detective?

LINCOLN

I want to be the best.

Looks from the others. Captain Olsen scoffs.

CAPTAIN OLSEN
 (to the whole class)
 All the evidence you need to find the
 body is right here. Let's see if any
 of you are tenacious enough to piece
 it together.

Off the look of pure confidence on Lincoln's face --

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY - *PRESENT DAY*

-- To a Lincoln whose confidence has taken some hits. A paralyzed, bedridden Lincoln. But despite it all, he's *STILL WORKING TO PIECE IT ALL TOGETHER.*

The *DOUBLE DOORS* are *CLOSED* to give Lincoln privacy. Claire shifts Lincoln's position in bed -- something that must be done several times a day for quadriplegics.

Lincoln focuses intently on crime-scene photos and information on his iPad and on his screens even as Claire does this. No verbal communication needed between them.

Finished, Claire opens the double doors to reveal:

The other half of Lincoln's space has become Bone Collector Hunt HQ. Folding tables filled with COPS on their laptops and cell-phones, crime-scene photos pinned to rolling bulletin boards, and now some TECHS are assembling a *MOBILE CRIME LAB* (which are very real, and very cool) in one corner.

WITH AMELIA

At one of those folding tables, just finishing the tenth handwritten page of her report. She hands it to Eric.

AMELIA
 Every detail I can remember.

ERIC
 You hand-wrote the whole thing?

AMELIA
 Writing by hand triggers conceptual understanding more than typing does. Makes it more likely you'll find a new connection or get that "Eureka" moment. It's why when you journal you should always do it by hand.

Amelia leaves Eric to think on that and crosses the room to Lincoln, who's analyzing crime scene photos on his screens.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Still need me for anything, Detective Rhyme?

LINCOLN

Call me Lincoln.

AMELIA

Still need me for anything, Lincoln?

LINCOLN

What do you know about the Bone Collector?

AMELIA

Purposely left evidence for police to find. Expertly cleaned up crime scenes. Put his victims into situations that wouldn't kill them right away.

LINCOLN

Fifteen victims in five years. Sometimes we'd find them only minutes after they died.

AMELIA

Hasn't been heard from since--

LINCOLN

Since he paralyzed me. Three years, two months, and sixteen days ago... Do you know how he got his name?

AMELIA

He chose it himself. Sent a letter to reporters and the department saying most people are nothing but piles of bones. Signed it "The Bone Collector."

LINCOLN

He didn't send that letter to the department, he sent it to me. He'd watch the crime scenes, becoming obsessed with the detectives on the case. He also mailed me a human bone, once. The radius from a victim's arm. But *that* much we kept out of the news.

AMELIA

Why are you telling me this?

LINCOLN

You asked if I still needed you for something. I do.

Lincoln clocks Sellitto approaching with KATE (30s, tightly wound but brilliant), and FELIX (27, manic energy and goofy confidence). Felix carries a DUFFEL BAG.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

I just want you to know how personal it can get.

As Sellitto, Kate, and Felix arrive at Lincoln's bedside --

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Kate. Felix. Good of you to come.

Kate is stone-faced and Felix just looks at the floor.

SELLITTO

...I'll leave you to it.

More than happy to slip away from this strained reunion.

LINCOLN

I don't do apologies well.

KATE

You don't do them at all.

LINCOLN

What if I promise you things are going to be different this time?

KATE

They don't have to be. And you don't have to be sorry. Felix and I want to close the chapter on the Bone Collector just as much as you do.

FELIX

Kate's less confrontational than I am. I don't think even an injury like this could give you a drop of humility. I was bringing *real* advancements to crime scene data collection, and your ego couldn't handle it--

LINCOLN

You're a meteor, Felix. You going to get mad at the dinosaurs for being afraid of you?

(then, to both of them)

(MORE)

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

And I am, by the way. *Sorry*. For what it's worth.

A long beat. Neither Kate nor Felix buying the apology.

KATE

Ground rules. No rushing me. No berating me. No assuming I'm going to be two steps further than anyone else in my job would be simply because I'm an obsessive over-achiever.

LINCOLN

You analyzed the evidence already, didn't you?

KATE

(guilty)

I'm almost finished. Plus I asked them to bring me some mobile equipment.

LINCOLN

(re: LAB in the next room)

So I see.

KATE

And I don't accept your apology yet.

Lincoln smiles. Kate doesn't. She heads for the mobile crime lab as Lincoln turns his attention to Felix:

LINCOLN

How about you?

FELIX

Oh, I definitely don't accept your apology. I think you're terrible.

LINCOLN

Well, thank you, but I was just gonna ask if you brought what I requested?

Felix could stay petulant, but he's too professional for that. After a beat, he decides to drop the anger -- *for now*. He reaches into the DUFFEL BAG by his feet...

FELIX

The experience of being at a crime scene without getting out of bed.

... producing a BODYCAM RIG - a KEVLAR-STYLE VEST outfitted with small ORB-LIKE CAMERAS.

FELIX (CONT'D)

Took a regular flak jacket, added two
8K cameras with a 360-degree view. Two-
way voice comm through an earpiece.
Zoom aperture that can read a fortune
cookie from across the Hudson.

(proud of himself)

Am I putting this on Sellitto?

LINCOLN

No. You're putting it on Officer
Amelia Sachs.

FELIX

Who?

AMELIA

What?

LINCOLN

I need someone to be my eyes and ears
at the next crime scene.

AMELIA

As we previously established, I'm not
a detective - or a CSI.

LINCOLN

Which means you don't have to UNLEARN
bad habits. You're a blank slate with
great instincts.

AMELIA

Is that another "compliment?"

LINCOLN

Feel free to say no and get back to
your fulfilling adventures patrolling
the train station.

AMELIA

-- For another three months, at which
point I'll have my three service years
and put my two degrees in criminal
psychology to use.

LINCOLN

Three years service?

(putting it together)

Ah...You're trying to be a profiler at
the FBI. Criminal psych's about as
useful as a Tarot deck when it comes
to catching killers, but I guess there
are worse ways to waste two diplomas.

Amelia about to respond when Sellitto comes over with Kate.

KATE

Still working on the cloth, but the powder is a mix of potassium nitrate and finely ground shale. Specifically, medium-grade metamorphic schist interleaved with quartz.

LINCOLN

Potassium nitrate, that's the compound for saltpeter, right?

SELLITTO

Wait, *what*-Peter?

KATE

Gunpowder.

LINCOLN

Gunpowder.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Or, to be precise, an old-fashioned accelerant used in gunpowder.

(wheels spinning)

Central Park.

(off everyone's looks)

When Central Park was first built, it was littered with boulders which had to be blown up by gunpowder and carried out. The next victim is at Central Park.

(to Amelia)

Ready to take Felix's vest for a spin? If the train station can spare you...

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY

A SMALL ARMY OF COPS descends on Central Park, spreading out like soldiers. As Amelia exits Sellitto's unmarked cruiser, we get our first look at her in the BODYCAM RIG Felix set her up with. As she enters:

AMELIA

(to Lincoln)

The park is too big. We'd need every cop in the city for this.

INTERCUT LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE AND CENTRAL PARK

LINCOLN

We can narrow it down soon as Kate gets us that info on the fiber --

KATE

(from across the room)
No rushing, Lincoln. Ground Rule One.

LINCOLN

(to Amelia)
Until we can narrow down the area, I need you to look over every object. Every tree, every bench. Look for something out of place. Just like at the train station.
(oh!)
And look at the people. Remember, he's been known to watch crime scenes.

AMELIA

Am I looking at people or objects?

LINCOLN

Both! *Everything*.
(suddenly)
Wait, what's that?

AMELIA

What's what? I don't know which direction you're looking.

Lincoln maddened at having to rely on someone else this way.

LINCOLN

Left. No, harder left.

AMELIA

Sorry, I'm not some horse in stirrups!

LINCOLN

You're right, horses *listen*.

An exasperated SIGH from Amelia.

IN THE BROWNSTONE:

An exasperated SIGH from Lincoln.

CLAIRE

Give her a moment. She's never had to do this before.

LINCOLN

(shooting a look)
Neither have I.

KATE

Wool!

(as she comes over)

From Canadian Arcott sheep to be exact.

Lincoln's eyes glaze over as he thinks, his mind moving a million miles a second.

AMELIA

Are there sheep in Central Park?

LINCOLN

There used to be. Sheep's Meadow.
Middle of the park.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - SHEEP'S MEADOW - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Amelia, Sellitto, Eric, and THE OTHER COPS comb the meadow.

AMELIA

It's an open field in Central Park.
Nowhere he could hide the victim.

AT THE BROWNSTONE -- Lincoln thinking, then it hits him:

LINCOLN

He'd had to have come at night.
Look for an access road of some kind.
Tire tracks on the grass. Anything.

Amelia scans the field. Rushes toward a dirt road that leads behind a small patch of trees.

AMELIA

Like this?

No tire tracks, but there IS A FRESHLY LAID PLOT OF MULCH.

LINCOLN

Exactly like that. How do you hide
someone in a park? Bury them alive.

As Amelia WAVES OVER the others --

CUT TO:

SHOVELS slicing into the earth. Sellitto, Eric, and Amelia all doing their part as they desperately dig to save a life. Finally they hit something. A WOODEN SHIPPING CRATE the size of a coffin, buried in the shallow grave.

SELLITTO

Get it open! Come on!

Lincoln watches in silence, helpless to contribute any longer. Claire next to the bed, watches the screens with him.

LINCOLN

(aside, to Claire)

16 victims, now. We never saved even one. Why would this be the first?

It's clear how much he truly cares. He's just steeling himself against disappointment.

A few pries and the crate OPENS. Inside, a disheveled YOUNG WOMAN, TASHA JOHNSON, still as a corpse. They're too late.

TASHA GASPS FOR AIR. She's in bad shape, but --

AMELIA

She's alive! Lincoln, she's alive!

And Lincoln finally allows himself to smile.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

EXT. NEW YORK CITY STREETS - DAY - *FLASHBACK*

CHYRON: Ten Years Ago.

Younger Lincoln walks the streets alone. He stops under a UNIQUE BRIDGE. Jots down a quick sketch and some notes in a pocket-sized leather-bound black journal. QUICK CUTS as Lincoln walks, jotting notes in the journal at every spot:

- A hole-in-the-wall authentic Chinese restaurant. Lincoln chips off a sample of the crumbling brick facade and runs it between his fingers before taking notes on the texture.

- Washington Square Park, where he stands at the center of the park and takes in a panoramic view before taking notes. Glancing to the PIGEONS by the chess tables.

- An ANTIQUE SHOP in the Lower East Side. Accompanied by a woman, NICOLE (30, Michelle Obama type). As Nicole browses, Lincoln finds a display case of DOZENS OF ANTIQUE MAPS OF NEW YORK CITY. He runs a finger across them like they're ancient scripture. This is a real find.

NICOLE

You're not here, are you? With me.
Right now.

LINCOLN

What? I'm here. We're... I'm here.

NICOLE

No. You're somewhere deep in your mind, just like you always are. I might as well not even be here.

LINCOLN

Nicole, come on, don't be like --

NICOLE

I'll text you later.

And she's out the door. Clearly not the first time they've had this argument. Lincoln watches her through the front window, but only for a beat. Like flipping a switch, he's back in "work mode," and turns to The SHOPKEEPER.

LINCOLN

(Re: the antique maps)
I'll take them. All of them.

We're seeing the origins of Lincoln's knowledge. The tenacity with which he developed encyclopedic knowledge of this city... At any cost.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY - *PRESENT DAY*

ANGLE ON a COLLECTION of antique maps, some framed, some rolled and bound in the corner. And a stack of those little black notebooks on a desk. HUNDREDS of them. As we MOVE TO:

Lincoln, headset on. The feed from Amelia's bodycam rig on screens: Amelia's POV as she walks alongside the PARAMEDICS wheeling an UNCONSCIOUS Tasha into a waiting ambulance.

LINCOLN

How is she?

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY - CONTINUOUS

AMELIA

Unconscious, but stable.
(a bit amazed)
We saved her.

INTERCUT LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE AND CENTRAL PARK

LINCOLN (O.S.)

And hopefully she can be an asset, but
I need you back at the crime scene.

Amelia's taken a back by his icy matter-of-factness.

AMELIA

An asset...?

LINCOLN

Always threes with the Bone Collector, remember? Three victims. Three pieces of evidence left at each scene. One last victim is out there somewhere. We need to see what he left us.

Amelia watches the ambulance drive off, then turns back to the scene - UNIs surrounding the area with police tape, now.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

The LID FROM THE CRATE lies on the ground, where the officers left it during the rescue. Nailed to the underbelly, a PLASTIC EVIDENCE BAG - not "official," but same dimensions.

Amelia (very) carefully peels it off: Three clues, courtesy of the killer. A tiny VIAL OF MURKY WATER, a SPLINTER OF WOOD, and a TINY BIT OF WET BROWN LEAF.

AMELIA

One, two, three. Just like before.
 (studying the bag)
 Opaque liquid in a glass vial. Some kind of splinter. And... a leaf? With some kind of dark viscous coating?

LINCOLN

Get them to Kate. There's a thousand types of liquid, a thousand types of wood, and a thousand types of leaf. We're in the dark until labs come in.

She hands off the bag to a UNI at the perimeter.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Now... the fun part. Let's find the evidence he didn't mean to leave.

EXT. CENTRAL PARK - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Amelia crouches next to THE CRATE, an EVIDENCE KIT by her side. Something awkward about even the way she pulls on the latex gloves -- she's never done anything like this before.

AMELIA

(to Lincoln)
 Sure you don't want real CSI doing this? They're chomping at the bit.

A CSI TEAM stares her down from the other side of the crime scene tape. Next to them, a wildly gesticulating CSI BOSS (45, stylish, in another kind of forensic procedural, he'd be the star) argues with Sellitto and Eric.

LINCOLN

(with a grin)
 So I see... Just remember, every crime scene is absolutely crawling with forensic evidence: fingerprints, fibers, and shoe impressions from a thousand people sometimes. It's figuring out which evidence MATTERS -- that's what makes this as much art as it is science.
 (then)
 Shall we?

CUT TO:

Amelia pours MULCH from the fresh grave into an EVIDENCE BAG.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
The topsoil's new. That we know. Bag
it and we'll test its composition.

CUT TO:

Amelia scrapes off a sample of the ink from a printed "This Side Up" arrow on the crate.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
Probably the same ink used on every
crate on the Eastern seaboard, but
sometimes you get lucky.

CUT TO:

Amelia guides a BLACKLIGHT WAND with her gloved hand along the bottom rear area of the crate.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
Right there... Yes, THERE. You see it?

The two of them starting to get a handle on this partnership. Amelia squints to see a GOLDEN FIBER (HAIR? THREAD?).

AMELIA
Yeah. What is it?

LINCOLN
The evidence he didn't mean to leave.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

MICROSCOPE POV of the HAIR. Then Kate, eyeing the microscope.

KATE
Human hair. Bleached with peroxide.
Our guy's not a natural blonde.

AMELIA
A hair? So we've got DNA, then?

LINCOLN
Only if it's pulled from the root.

KATE
But... we can still determine a lot.
Drugs. Chemicals. Mitochondrial DNA.
(for Amelia's sake:)
The other DNA. More vague, less fun.

SELLITTO

Even with the bleach?

KATE

Give me two hours in my *real lab* and I'll restore this thing like the Sistine Chapel.

LINCOLN

What about the evidence in the box?

Kate displays each item as she talks: THE VIAL, SPLINTER, and SMALL LEAF FRAGMENT.

KATE

First impressions? Under-concentrated saltwater. A splinter of deciduous timber. Very old, very weathered. The leaf fragment is damaged, hard to tell right now. But again - a deep dive in my lab and Oz turns into color.

Off Lincoln, happy he insisted on Kate.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY - LATER

Lincoln and Amelia alone on this side of the room.

LINCOLN

Locard's exchange principle. No one can come into contact with another person without leaving something behind or taking something with them. There's always an exchange. No matter how smart this guy is, eventually...

AMELIA

He'll get caught by a hair?

LINCOLN

That's the beauty. Evidence can be misinterpreted, but it never lies. Order in a world of complicated chaos.

AMELIA

...Find yourself someone who loves you like Lincoln Rhyme loves forensics.

LINCOLN

So... What leads a bright young mind to choose criminal psychology?

AMELIA

I guess you could say it chose me.
Against my will. And I just tried to
do some good with it.

(then)

But it doesn't matter anymore. The FBI
rejected me. I found out this morning.

LINCOLN

Two masters degrees don't cut it any
more?

AMELIA

I lied on my application. A bit.

LINCOLN

What's "a bit?"

AMELIA

Concealing a series of debilitating
mental conditions.

LINCOLN

That'll do it.

AMELIA

A lovely blend of PTSD, various
anxiety disorders. Don't worry, I'm
properly medicated, and most of the
time I'm fine. Better than fine. And
by the way, mental disability does NOT
disqualify you from the FBI.

LINCOLN

So why lie?

AMELIA

I don't care what the law says about
discriminating against mental illness -
- they compare my application to one
from someone with fully-functioning,
trauma-free neural pathways... Which
one would you choose?

LINCOLN

The broken one.

A beat. Amelia can't quite figure this guy out yet.

AMELIA

Why didn't you do this before today?
Partner with someone, I mean.

(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I've known you for five hours and I can already see how much you love this stuff. How could you just turn off that part of your brain?

LINCOLN

Not *part* of my brain, it was the whole thing. And it cost me everything. It's a hard horse to climb back on.

Amelia's phone buzzes and she glances at it. A TEXT FROM RAE: "Dinner?" accompanied by that GIF of Jennifer Lawrence saying "I'm Starving" on the Oscars red carpet.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Kate's going to be a while at the lab, if you need to make a call...

AMELIA

It's just my sister. She's 16. I take care of her. Or maybe she takes care of me, I'm not sure... You have family? Wife? Kids?

LINCOLN

Me? No. Nothing like that.
(slight tinge of regret)
Just me... And Claire.

AMELIA

She the only nurse you've had?

LINCOLN

The only one who lasted. I fired six before I found her.
(then)
Turns out the broken are better at caring for the broken.

AMELIA

What do you mean? Did something happen to her, or...?

But Lincoln's said too much already --

LINCOLN

That's Claire's story to tell.

Sellitto comes running over.

SELLITTO

Tasha Johnson, the girl from the park--
She's awake! We gotta get over there.

INT. SELBITTO'S CRUISER - DRIVING - DAY

Sellitto driving, Eric in the passenger seat, and Amelia in the back, SANS BODYCAM RIG, which sits next to her. SIRENS BLARING and Amelia rocking from the turns -- they're in a rush -- but Amelia still manages to steal a moment to call Rae. She dials.

AMELIA

Hey. I'm gonna be late tonight. Just want to make sure you're okay alone.

INT. AMELIA'S APARTMENT - DAY - CONTINUOUS

RAE

I *might* be able to manage on my own for a few hours, even at the tender young age of basically a legal adult.

(Amelia rolls her eyes)

Oh, and I used your Postmates to order Thai food. Love you!

INT. SELBITTO'S CRUISER - DRIVING - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Amelia smiles and hangs up. Notices Eric looking at her.

AMELIA

Is "helicopter *sister*" a thing?

ERIC

I raised my siblings, too. I get it.

AMELIA

What's your story anyway? Are you exactly what you seem? Quiet, polite, boy scout type?

ERIC

Boring, you mean?

AMELIA

(trying again)
Composed.

ERIC

Lincoln does enough talking for all of us. I'm of the Sellitto school of thought. Stay quiet and let them underestimate you.

Sellitto, pretending not to listen, smirks with approval. The SIRENS WAIL, THE VAN ACCELERATES, louder, LOUDER, until --

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Silence. Tasha in a hospital bed, upright but nearly catatonic. Her MOTHER, SHIRLEY (50s), sits next to the bed with a comforting hand on Tasha's shoulder.

Sellitto and Eric in the middle of questioning Tasha, while Amelia hangs back, staying just close enough to catch the conversation on her bodycam rig for Lincoln's benefit.

SELLITTO

Were you already in the crate or did he put you inside when you got there?

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Lincoln watching and listening to the feed from Amelia's bodycam rig through his SCREENS instead of his HEADSEAT, as Claire methodically undresses various parts of his body to do a skin-check for pressure sores.

INTERCUT LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE AND HOSPITAL ROOM:

LINCOLN

Give it a rest, Sellitto. She hasn't said a word and she's not going to.

ON LINCOLN'S SCREENS:

SELLITTO

Anything at all about him? His face? His voice? His clothes?

IN THE HOSPITAL ROOM:

LINCOLN (V.O.)

(through Amelia's earwig)

Witness descriptions are almost always inaccurate and unhelpful. Crime scenes are all that matter. If she can't tell us the spot she was taken from, we're wasting time.

Amelia is growing annoyed at Lincoln's negativity.

And, growing stressed. Tense. She looks down to her SHAKING HAND, trying to calm it. Something about this setting is giving her an ANXIETY ATTACK... or maybe she can quell it.

A look between Sellitto and Eric: this interrogation is going nowhere. Shirley wraps a protective arm around her daughter.

SHIRLEY

I think that's enough for now.

LINCOLN

See, Mom gets it.

SILLETTO

Understood, ma'am. It's just that we think someone else might be in danger, just like Tasha...

LINCOLN

Someone *is* in danger. And even if you do get this poor girl talking, you're asking the wrong questions. Crime scene, crime scene, cr--

Amelia pulls out her earwig. Lincoln can still see and hear through Amelia's bodycams, but she no longer has to listen to *him* and his griping. "OFFICER SACHS EARBUD: DISCONNECTED" flashes on the upper right of Lincoln's screen.

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Did she just...?

Claire stifles a smile.

ERIC

If we could just ask one more question.

Amelia stares at Tasha, a thought rising as the others argue. By sheer willpower she tempers her anxiety, takes control...

SHIRLEY

No, I think it's best you--

AMELIA (O.S.)

I watched my parents die.

Lincoln and Claire freeze, eyes on the screens.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY - CONTINUOUS

A hush over the room. All eyes on Amelia, now.

AMELIA

I was thirteen. We were eating dinner at my favorite restaurant. Angelo's in Astoria.

Looks of recognition from everyone in the room -- the name Angelo's means something to them.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Our waitress's name was Julie. A name I only remember because Julie's ex-boyfriend, Paul, wasn't taking their recent breakup very well, and he showed up that evening with a Glock 17 he'd bought in Pennsylvania that afternoon.

(then)

You know the rest. Paul Vincent Whitehead shot 14 people at Angelo's Restaurant before killing himself. Seven of those people died. Two of them were my parents.

A beat for everyone to take this in. Tasha still motionless.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

I don't remember much from that time. If I'm being honest, I barely remember my parents' funeral. But I can place myself right back in that corner booth that night. The red leather, the dishes waiting to be cleared from the table. The smell of my mother's perfume as she leaned over to shield me. As tangible as this room we're sitting in. You can place yourself in the spot he attacked you, can't you?

Still nothing. She places her hand on Tasha's.

AMELIA (CONT'D)

Take your time. I'm right here with you. Everything after is a blur, I know, but that one moment, when you knew something was wrong --

TASHA

The alley.

Lincoln looks to Claire. Sellitto looks to Eric. *Holy shit.*

TASHA (CONT'D)

(finally, eye contact)

Behind the grocery... three blocks South of my place...

Sellitto and Eric watch Amelia work. Impressed as hell and scared to say a damn thing lest they break the spell.

TASHA (CONT'D)
 (nodding, tears welling)
 He was on the other side of a
 dumpster. He reached out and grabbed
 me...
 (crying, stuttering)
 Like a nightmare.

Shirley removes Amelia's hand from Tasha's and rises:

SHIRLEY
 Okay, I said that's enough!

Amelia feels for Tasha. Empathy from experience. She could
 spend all day consoling and comforting her, but alas --

SELLITTO
 (moving everyone out)
 Come on, let's go.

-- there's a mission at hand. Amelia exits with Sellitto and
 Eric, putting back in her earwig and whispering to Lincoln:

AMELIA
 There. You got your crime scene.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

CLAIRE
 I like her.

LINCOLN
 ...Me too.

The look on Claire's face tells us that's not something
 Lincoln says very often.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Lincoln with Amelia, Felix, Sellitto, and Eric.

SURVEILLANCE VIDEO from the alley where Tasha was taken showing on one of his screens.

SELLITTO

Nothing.

LINCOLN

Watch again.

ERIC

It's useless. We barely get a glimpse.

LINCOLN

Exactly. Watch closely. Tasha falls into view, and our friendly neighborhood Bone Collector seems to shield his face from the camera as he pulls her back into the alley. Like he knows *exactly* where the city surveillance camera is.

ON HIS SCREEN: the action plays out as he describes.

SELLITTO

We're one of the most surveilled cities in the world, he knew there'd be a camera somewhere.

LINCOLN

How lucky for him, then, that the alley he kidnapped Tasha from, as well as both the areas he chose to leave bodies at, were also accessible via rare blind spots in the city's surveillance system.

AMELIA

You're saying the Bone Collector has access to that system?

LINCOLN

I'm surprised I never put it together before.

SELLITTO

So, okay. We get a subpoena for the employee database --

FELIX

I can get you that a lot faster.

ERIC

Legally?

FELIX

...ish?

Eric, the boy scout, looks to Sellitto, who nods. Just do it. Felix begins typing as Lincoln slips Sellitto a grin.

SELLITTO

Then, as soon as we get something concrete on this guy, we cross reference. Narrow it down.

KATE (O.S.)

Something like this?

They turn to find Kate in the doorway holding a lab report.

LINCOLN

How long have you been there?

KATE

A while now, but I thought that was a cool time to jump in. No?

Amelia smiles. Lincoln rolls his eyes and grabs the report.

KATE (CONT'D)

Intro to hair forensics, week one, day one: no amount of washing or chemicals - even bleach - can cover up drug metabolites. Our guy has Fabry Disease. An enzyme deficiency in the kidneys treated with a rare and specific medication... found in our unsub's hair.

A COMPLETION TONE from Felix's laptop.

FELIX

Ladies and gentlemen, meet every surveillance employee in New York.

AMELIA

Wait, so, how does this guy's disease help us?

KATE

There's only one medicine to treat it:
Galafold. City employees are on city
healthcare. Scan the insurance records
for anyone on Galafold...

ERIC

Now that *can't be* legal.

A look between Lincoln and Sellitto. This is personal. Felix starts typing. Sellitto literally looks the other way for a beat. After a tense moment: DING.

FELIX

Whatdya say, guys. You ready to see
the Bone Collector?

Felix transfers an EMPLOYEE PHOTO onto Lincoln's screen. BUT WE DON'T SEE IT YET. Just Lincoln and Sellitto's reaction.

AMELIA

Robert O. Sturm.

LINCOLN

...Thought he'd have a cooler name.

REVEAL the picture, but -- it's not him. Not the Bone Collector we saw earlier. But Lincoln doesn't know that yet. Felix furiously typing. Reads off information on Sturm:

FELIX

Multiple arrests for animal cruelty
and attempted arson as a teen.
Attempted sexual assault as an adult.

AMELIA

Checks all the right boxes for a
serial killer.

FELIX

Hold up... He was in a mental
institution for four years.
(looks at Lincoln)
2013 to 2017.

Lincoln knows what that means. Can't hide his disappointment.

AMELIA

What? What's that mean?

LINCOLN

It means he was locked up when I was
put in this bed.

FELIX

Sturm's patient files say he was
obsessed with serial killers.
Especially --

SELLITTO

Let me guess. The Bone Collector.

A look of understanding on Amelia's face.

LINCOLN

Yes, you get it now.

(then)

Robert Sturm is the man we're looking
for -- the killer who put Tasha in a
crate in Central Park. But **he's NOT**
the Bone Collector. Just a copycat.

A faraway look in Lincoln's eyes, like he's wondering if the
real Bone Collector is even still out there, anymore.

EXT. SUBURBAN PATIO - NIGHT

A gorgeous POOLSIDE DECK area surrounded by SOUTHWESTERN
DESERT-type landscaping. This is NOT New York.

DANIELLE, 40s, prepares the long wooden table for a dinner
party. Flowers, place settings, everything just so.

The glass door behind her slides open silently, and when we
PAN TO REVEAL the man coming through the door, we see a face
etched in our memory: The Bone Collector.

Bone Collector approaches Danielle from behind, grasps her
shoulder. She jolts. But when she turns, she smiles.

DANIELLE

God, do you have to sneak up on me
like that?

BONE COLLECTOR

Party's tomorrow, you know...

DANIELLE

I just want it to be perfect. Let me
be neurotic. Oh, and the Morgans are
coming, so that makes eight.

Bone Collector's phone BUZZES. A customized GOOGLE ALERT.
News headlines pop up: "BONE COLLECTOR BACK?" "NYPD: MURDERS
MIRROR THOSE OF BONE COLLECTOR," etc. Bone Collector looks at
the articles with interest, but no apparent emotion.

DANIELLE (CONT'D)

What is it?

BONE COLLECTOR

Just work. I may have to go to the office for a couple of hours.

Danielle goes back to Martha Stewart-ing, oblivious to the perturbed look on The Bone Collector's face as he skulks off.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Sellitto and Eric each on the phone with different branches of the NYPD, Felix using an iPad to show them the information on Sturm.

SELLITTO

(into phone)

Sturm. S-T-U-R-M. White Male, thirty seven years old. Victim possibly on the premises.

ERIC

(into phone)

Requesting SWAT. Two teams. Block off a half mile around his neighborhood. This guy got bodies into Grand Central Terminal and Central Park without anybody seeing him.

Still on their phones, Sellitto and Eric rush out the door to join the raid on Sturm's place. Amelia's engrossed in an iPad, reading PSYCHIATRIC FILES ON ROBERT STURM -- the profiler in her loving this.

SELLITTO

(shouts over his shoulder)

You guys stay here. We'll call you!

LINCOLN

(muted)

You do that.

Felix retreats to the next room with his equipment. Just Amelia and Lincoln, now. Amelia, reading STURM'S FILES:

AMELIA

This guy's like Single White Female meets Ted Bundy. Sturm told doctors the Bone Collector was superior to other serial killers because none of his victims ever survived or escaped. Prior to being heavily medicated, Sturm claimed to be the Bone Collector's disciple, who would complete the Bone Collector's work once he was gone.

(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

...The Bone Collector hasn't killed in over three years. Sturm must have decided he's "gone."

She looks to Lincoln for a response, but he's just staring into space. His disappointment, palpable:

LINCOLN

Maybe he is... I should have known it wasn't him. I wanted it to be him.

AMELIA

We saved a woman's life. Tracked down a serial killer. In a day. I'm sorry it's not the guy you wanted but...

LINCOLN

It's funny, really. The Bone Collector can still win even when he's not playing.

AMELIA

There's no winning, here. Just preventing losses. Or is that really not good enough for you?

A beat of silence. Felix pokes his head in sheepishly.

FELIX

Sorry but I think you should see this.

Felix enters with his iPad. Amelia is still looking at Lincoln who won't respond. Dejected. Fuck this, then...

AMELIA

Well. It really was an honor working with you.

Lincoln looks up but doesn't stop her. Amelia turns to leave--

FELIX

No, wait. *Amelia.* You're definitely going to want to see this.

FELIX (CONT'D)

I tapped into Sturm's PC and found a bunch of screen shots from the city's surveillance system. Check it out.

Felix takes control of Lincoln's screens with his iPad. MULTIPLE STILLs FROM SURVEILLANCE CAMS fill Lincoln's screens. **All of them of Amelia. All of them from today. Amelia at the train station (outside the blind spot), Amelia at the park, Amelia outside Lincoln's brownstone.**

FELIX (CONT'D)
 He's, um... He's watching you.

Amelia's response far more measured than we'd expect.

AMELIA
 It makes sense. The real Bone
 Collector watched the police --
 interfered in their lives. Sturm is
 still following his playbook to a "T."

NEW CLIPS pop up on screen. Clips near Amelia's apartment
 building. CLIPS OF HER SISTER, RAE. Amelia's world stops.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
 It's Rae. Damn it damn it it's Rae.

Amelia her hands are shaking as she goes for her phone.

FELIX
 Who's Rae?

LINCOLN
 (to Felix)
 Get Sellitto -- get police to Amelia's
 apartment NOW.

AMELIA
 (phone to her ear)
 Come on, come on, come on...

INT. AMELIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE ON Rae's phone lying on the floor, RINGING.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL a shattered glass coffee table, spilt
 food, and other signs of a struggle.

As Rae's phone continues to RING --

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. AMELIA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

TIGHT on Amelia's face -- a shell-shocked look. The sound of voices an INAUDIBLE JUMBLE in the deep background.

PULL BACK to see she's in the doorway of her TRASHED apartment.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
(through earwig)
Amelia? Can you hear me?

The first CLEAR SOUND. Suddenly all SOUND RETURNS and we can hear the CHATTER of the UNIS behind Amelia in the hallway, waiting for her to go in.

AMELIA
Yes.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

Lincoln with headset on, Felix and Claire watching as well.

LINCOLN (O.S.)
The evidence he didn't mean to leave.
Just like before.
(then)
I'm right here with you.

INTERCUT AMELIA'S APARTMENT AND LINCOLN'S ROOM

As Amelia finally steps inside. The place she called home transformed into something terrifying and alien.

EXT. ROBERT STURM'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT

A SWAT TEAM covertly prepares to breach the door. COPS all over, but keeping a low profile -- no lights or sirens. Sellitto and Eric among them, watching.

INT. AMELIA'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM / KITCHEN - NIGHT

Amelia steps through, carefully as she can, but her knees are like jelly. BREATH HEAVY. She races into the kitchen --

LINCOLN
Amelia. Breathe. Don't disturb the --

-- and rips open the cabinet, desperately grabbing her RX BOTTLES. Ripping lids off. Dry swallowing a handful of pills.

INT. ROBERT STURM'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT

BOOM! The SWAT Team breaches the door and pours inside with cries of "Police! NYPD!" No sign of Sturm, yet, but it's dark as hell in here. As the team spreads out to clear the loft, the LIGHTS on their rifles illuminate a place that's equal parts house of horrors and evidential treasure-trove.

Walls plastered with newspaper and unreadable handwritten screeds. Shelves packed with defaced and dismembered dolls. Thousands of pieces of electronics, from VCRs to tablet computers, in varying states of disrepair. Their wires entwined like snakes along the floor.

INT. ROBERT STURM'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT

SWAT LEADER shines his light on a WORKDESK covered in maps and what look to be handwritten plans and lists of supplies.

SWAT LEADER
(into radio)
Clear for entrance, Detective. He's
not here. But you need to see this.

EXT. ROBERT STURM'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sellitto hears this and he and Eric head for the loft.

INT. ROBERT STURM'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

SWAT Leader walks to the other side of the desk to check out one of the maps and steps on one of the thousands of snarled electrical wires snaking across this side of the loft.

A CLICK and a HISSING and the SWAT Team all freeze.

FLAMES ERUPT in the kitchen area. They just triggered a trap.

SWAT LEADER
RUN!

The flames SHOOTING ALONG THE WALLS AND THE CEILING.

EXT. ROBERT STURM'S INDUSTRIAL LOFT - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sellitto and Eric approaching, along with UNIs, when the SWAT Team comes BURSTING out the doors.

SWAT LEADER

Go, go, go!

Sellitto and Eric barely have time to turn around before the loft BLOWS, sending FLAMES SHOOTING OUT. No casualties, but a mountain of evidence up in smoke.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Lincoln's PHONE RINGS: "SELLITTO." He MUTES his connection with Amelia and answers the phone.

LINCOLN

Tell me you have Rae.

SELLITTO (O.S.)

(over the phone)

Negative. No Rae and no Sturm. His place was booby-trapped. It's an ash-heap. We're on our way to Amelia's. How's that going?

LINCOLN

...Swimmingly.

INTERCUT LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE AND OUTSIDE AMELIA'S APARTMENT

Where Amelia rushes out, full PTSD meltdown, holding the railing of the front stoop for support.

Lincoln switches his headset back on.

LINCOLN

Amelia, listen to me --

AMELIA

I didn't protect her. I'm supposed to protect her...

LINCOLN

I understand --

AMELIA

(flood gates opening)

No you don't! You don't have a family.

(MORE)

AMELIA (CONT'D)

You spend your time playing video games with teenagers and rejecting anyone who ever tried to help you. This is just another game to you. You don't care about people. You care about winning.

This stabs Lincoln. He looks to Claire, both of them knowing he could refute this. Instead --

LINCOLN

So let's win. Be the person who jumped in front of a moving train and I'll be the detective who can find Rae.

AMELIA

Lincoln... *Lincoln*...

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

But don't give up now --

*

Amelia looks out at the crowd of GAWKERS behind the police tape. And fucking recognizes one of them.

AMELIA

Look. In the crowd.

Lincoln studies the crowd through Amelia's bodycam rig. Then he sees him: ROBERT STURM. In the flesh.

LINCOLN

I'll be damned...

Amelia trying to be cool, but a spooked Sturm turns and starts working his way out of the crowd at a brisk pace.

Amelia takes off after him. Zero hesitation. She breaks through the tape and shoves the gawkers out of the way to reveal Sturm RUNNING down the street. As she gives chase --

LINCOLN (CONT'D)

Amelia no! Wait for backup!

A MEMORY FLASH of Lincoln falling through the trap door three years ago, when he went in without backup.

Amelia's pulls her gun and turns into --

EXT. DARK ALLEY - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Sturm nowhere in sight. Amelia running as hard as she can, blind with purpose, about to pass the --

LINCOLN (V.O.)
 (through Amelia's headset)
 Dumpster!!!

Amelia puts on the brakes. Backs away, gun extended. He's waiting behind the dumpster -- just like he was for Tasha.

AMELIA
 Step out! Hands behind your head!

A beat, then Sturm emerges, ever so slowly. His hands at his side. And a GUN in one of them.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
 Drop the gun!

Sturm stands, studying her.

AMELIA (CONT'D)
 I don't want to shoot you. I just want to know where my sister is.

No words. No emotion on his face. Sturm looks her up and down, but never looks her in the eyes. Like she's not even a person to him. Slowly, carefully, he raises his gun.

INTERCUT LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE AND DARK ALLEY

LINCOLN
 Shoot him. He's not going to tell you anything, shoot him now.

AMELIA
 Tell me where she is!

Sturm points his gun at Amelia.

LINCOLN
 Shoot him!

BANG!BANG! Sturm falls to the ground.

AMELIA
 No!

ERIC runs up from behind Amelia. Checks Sturm. He's dead. Sellitto catches up as well, realizing how fucked this is.

ERIC
 Are you okay?

Eric goes to console her, but the hopelessness in Amelia's eyes turns to FURY. She storms back toward the apartment --

LINCOLN (V.O.)
Amelia? Amelia, what are you doing?

AMELIA
Not giving up.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

A BOX-FULL OF EVIDENCE BAGS DROPS ONTO A TABLE. Maybe two dozen altogether - fibers, swabs, vials, etc. Amelia, Sellitto, Eric, Kate and Felix all here with Lincoln.

AMELIA
There it is. Everything I could find.
Since we killed the only person who
knows where Rae is.

SELLITTO
Because he was about to *shoot* you.

LINCOLN
We have the evidence he left us. That
was enough to find Tasha. It'll be
enough to find Rae.

AMELIA
We barely found Tasha in time.

LINCOLN
So there's no time to make mistakes.
Kate, what do you have so far?

KATE
The splinter is southern pine. Treated
with Chromated Copper Arsenate, used
to preserve commercial lumber. Popular
across the whole Northeast.

AMELIA
The water?

KATE
Mixture of salt and fresh water. Local
pollutants, still testing. And there's
no litmus test for plant life, so the
only way to identify the leaf is a
visual search. Felix is helping.

FELIX
I'm searching every database I can -
nothing so far.

LINCOLN
 ...The docks.

ERIC
 Which docks? We're on an island.

LINCOLN
 Freshwater mixed with saltwater. The
 mouth of the Hudson.

SELLITTO
 Port Authority docks.

AMELIA
 Great. Let's go.

LINCOLN
 Without the leaf it's just a guess.

AMELIA
 A guess from Lincoln Rhyme is good
 enough for me.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY DOCKS - NIGHT

PORT AUTHORITY POLICE already combing the expansive dock
 area. BOATS in the harbor assisting with GIANT SPOTLIGHTS.
 Sellitto, Eric, and Amelia rush over to PORT AUTHORITY POLICE
 COMMANDER RANKIN.

RANKIN
 You're Officer Sachs?
 (off her desperate nod)
 We're doing everything we can. It's a
 lot of area to cover.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

The feed from Amelia's bodycam rig displayed on one screen
 while on the others, Lincoln looks for matches for the leaf.
 Closeup views of leaves, swiping left like Tinder pics. Felix
 does the same on a laptop and two iPads simultaneously.

FELIX
 I'm on with the top botanist at New
 York Botanical Garden. He says
 whatever this plant is, its either
 crazy rare, or highly decomposed.

Lincoln types furiously with his good hand.

LINCOLN
It's not decomposed. It's sweating.

FELIX
Sweating?

LINCOLN
And they don't recognize it because no
one cures it that way anymore.

Felix goes over to see Lincoln has pulled up an AGRICULTURE
DATABASE - an OLD ILLUSTRATION of a ROW OF GREEN PLANTS.

FELIX
Tobacco?

LINCOLN
Claire, get me the old maps from the
closet in the den. *All of them.*
(into headset)
Amelia! You're at the wrong docks.

EXT. PORT AUTHORITY DOCKS - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The spiderwebs of searchlights-- all searching in the wrong
location -- illuminate the shock and fear on Amelia's face.

EXT. PIER 17 - NIGHT

Rae, barely visible in the darkness, gag in her mouth,
secured to a dock piling (*one of the POSTS that hold up the
pier*). The water at her neck already and the TIDE RISING.

No searchlights or boats or police, here. Just Rae, shivering
in the icy water --

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT

Claire hovers over Lincoln's bed, nervously flipping through the pile of antique maps as Lincoln commands, calm and cool.

LINCOLN

(as each Map flips)

No... No... Keep going...

(nice as he can)

The land north of Freedom Tower was tobacco plantations in colonial times. If I'm not mistaken, there's only one wharf still standing from that era... THERE.

(into headset)

Amelia -- Pier 17!

EXT. DOCKS - NIGHT

Sellitto's Cruiser SCREECHES up to the pier and he, Eric, and Amelia fan out with flashlights, ALL CALLING OUT for Rae.

AMELIA

RAE! RAE CAN YOU HEAR US?!

WITH RAE, AT THE PILING:

The tide up to her chin now. Contorting her neck as the water climbs. She can FAINTLY hear Amelia's voice calling out for her, but it's so far away, she'll never make it in time.

WITH AMELIA:

She turns her flashlight on every SHIPPING CRATE, every VEHICLE, every STRUCTURE. The docks are unnervingly quiet.

AMELIA

(calling)

RAE?!

(losing her shit)

Lincoln, there's too much ground to cover. I need something else!

Lincoln as close to rattled as we'll ever see him.

LINCOLN

That's all we've got right now.

Kate runs over from the Mobile Lab area --

KATE

Has she been on a boat? Ask her if she or Rae have been on a boat recently!

AMELIA

I can hear you, Kate. No. No boats.

LINCOLN

(to Kate)

What is it? What did you find?

KATE

One of the scrapings Amelia got off her carpet is petrol-only boat fuel, probably from Sturm's shoe.

AMELIA

There are boats everywhere, here...

Lincoln's mind racing like Secretariat on coke --

LINCOLN

No... She's not... Not on a boat. He used a boat to take her. She's --

AMELIA

In the water.

Amelia races toward the water.

WITH RAE: As she gulps one last breath through her nose and holds it as the water wins its fight and submerges her. The only SOUND is what Rae hears. That dense, echo-y underwater sound. She struggles in the black water until --

A LIGHT PIERCES THROUGH. A FLASHLIGHT BEAM. Then SPLASH.
Amelia jumps into the water beside Rae.

WITH LINCOLN:

The MONITORS GO BLACK. Lincoln grabs the POLICE RADIO.

LINCOLN

Sellitto, we lost the feed! She's in the water!

WITH RAE: As Amelia drops her flashlight, submerged as well. Holding her breath, trying to untie Rae like Houdini with an anxiety disorder. FINALLY, she yanks the right knot loose...

WITH LINCOLN:

LINCOLN (CONT'D)
Tell me she's okay, boys! Come on.

AT THE WATER: Sellitto and Eric run up, just as Amelia and Rae SURFACE, hugging the piling and gulping air.

SELLITTO
(into radio)
She's okay. They're both okay.

AT THE BROWNSTONE: It's more a giant sigh of relief than a NASA victory applause, but the day has been won. They did it.

AT THE DOCKS: Moments later. The guys have pulled Rae and Amelia to safety on the dock. Amelia embraces Rae with every muscle in her body, inspecting her for injury.

AMELIA
Rae... Oh god, Rae.

RAE
I'm okay. I'm okay, now.

BACKUP arrives, AMBULANCES and a sea of RED & BLUE lights illuminate the waterfront as we FADE OUT. MUSIC STARTS OVER:

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - DAY

The next day. ROOMFUL OF COPS. VICTORY PARTY at Lincoln's place. A SERIES OF SHOTS as MUSIC CONTINUES OVER:

-- Rae hugs Lincoln. Amelia standing beside. LAUGHTER and eye-rolls at whatever caustic joke Lincoln's making.

-- Kate and Felix talking to Lincoln. Hesitant smiles, but smiles all the same. Maybe their relationship with Lincoln is truly on the mend.

-- Eric and Lincoln shaking hands.

-- LATER, only Amelia, Rae, and Sellitto still here.

CLAIRE
Lincoln, you have another visitor.
(before he can gripe)
Warning, she's right behind you.

Police Commissioner (previously Captain) Elodie Olsen, Lincoln's old instructor from the Forensic Academy.

LINCOLN
Commissioner...

COMMISSIONER OLSEN
It's been a long time.

A beat. More history here than we've seen in the flashbacks.

AMELIA
(extends her hand)
Officer Amelia Sachs, ma'am.

COMMISSIONER OLSEN
Pleasure. Impressive work, yesterday.

LINCOLN
Didn't even have to get out of bed.

COMMISSIONER OLSEN
I'll cut to the chase.

LINCOLN
You always do.

COMMISSIONER OLSEN
There are a lot of people in high
places who don't like you.

LINCOLN
Don't forget the people in low places.

COMMISSIONER OLSEN
But you're still the best I've ever
seen. What'll it take to get you back?
In an advisory capacity? Just to help
us out every now and then when we're
not seeing things as clearly as you.
(off his silence)
I know you're pissed it wasn't *him*,
but look me in the eye and tell me it
didn't feel good to be back.

LINCOLN
...Well, I didn't exactly do it alone.

COMMISSIONER OLSEN
Naturally, as a civilian, you'd need a
point-person in the department. I see
no reason why it can't be Officer
Sachs.

Amelia and Lincoln look to each other.

LINCOLN
(to Commissioner Olsen)
That's a lot to ask right now.
Amelia's been through a lot--

AMELIA

I'm in.

(to Lincoln)

What else do I have going on? My "fulfilling adventures at the train station?"

LINCOLN

I've been told I'm not the easiest person to work with.

AMELIA

I think we'll work it out. "The broken take better care of the broken."

A smile between them. To Commissioner Olsen, good as a contract.

COMMISSIONER OLSEN

Alright then. It's a deal.

CLAIRE

Sorry everyone, but, "Civilian Consultant" Rhyme hasn't exerted himself this much in a long time. He needs to rest.

LINCOLN

Who's in charge here, Claire?

CLAIRE

You really want them all to stay?

LINCOLN

No, I want you to be the bad guy and kick them out while I make myself look better by insisting they stay.

Olsen, Amelia, and Rae prepare to go.

AMELIA

I look forward to working with you, Civilian Consultant Rhyme.

LINCOLN

And I you, Police Liaison Sachs.

RAE

Can I ask you something before we go?
(off his curious nod)

How do you think of all this stuff? The tobacco farms and the sheep's meadow and all that? Amelia said it's like you memorized Wikipedia.

A knowing smile between Lincoln and Olsen takes us --

INT. CRIME SCENE - NIGHT - *FLASHBACK*

Back at the fake crime scene in the forensics academy, **ten years ago**. LINCOLN storms in with bravado.

LINCOLN

The body's underneath us. In a colonial access tunnel built in 1784. Sealed off by the city in 1904 - right below this building.

All eyes on Captain Olsen, who slightly raises an eyebrow.

CAPTAIN OLSEN

How'd you figure it out?

LINCOLN

You told us day one. "Right below our noses." "Built on the bedrock of this city." All the evidence pointed right back here. So I did my homework. Bought every map of every old street, tunnel, and dock in the city. "Every pigeon in London," right? The body's here, like you said. "Here" is just bigger than we thought.

Olsen is impressed, but isn't one for doling out praise.

CAPTAIN OLSEN

Well, despite my having to spoon feed it to you, I'm glad *someone's* using their head around here.

(then)

Well done. *This time*. Keep learning.

This is a room full of competitive alpha detectives who can't wait for their chance to dethrone this hotshot. But there's something about the begrudging nature of their APPLAUSE that makes it all the more intoxicating for Lincoln.

EXT. FORENSIC ACADEMY - NIGHT - *FLASHBACK*

Moments later, outside the building, Lincoln walks outside to smoke a well-earned cigarette.

MALE VOICE (O.S.)

Can I bum one?

Lincoln turns to find one of the detectives from class.
Unassuming. Unremarkable. Only WE recognize him instantly:
THE BONE COLLECTOR.

NOTE: this is NOT some revelatory moment in Lincoln's memory. This is for the audience alone. Lincoln has no idea that he once KNEW the Bone Collector, years ago, before The Bone Collector began killing. What turns them into Hamilton and Burr isn't something we'll discover for some time.

Lincoln hands him a cigarette.

BONE COLLECTOR

Nice job in there.

LINCOLN

Yeah, I know. Thanks.

...And that's it. Lincoln walks away without thinking twice, not here to make friends. But this is when it all started. The first beat of a story that will span a decade and reveal how this seemingly average man became the menacing villain we know, and what Lincoln unwittingly did to become his enemy.

INT. LINCOLN'S BROWNSTONE - NIGHT - *PRESENT DAY*

Everyone finally gone. Lincoln loads the video game he was playing earlier. A VIDEO CHAT POPS UP ON SCREEN: The same TEENAGE BOY from before.

LINCOLN

You don't know when to quit, do you, kid?

TEENAGE BOY

Landing a cheap shot on the champ makes you *lucky*, not the new champ.

LINCOLN

(switching gears)

Hey, Camden. Put your mom on real quick, would you?

TEENAGE BOY

But Dad --

LINCOLN

Just for a second.

Wait, *WHAT?* This kid, *CAMDEN*, is Lincoln's son? Why did he tell Amelia he had no family?

Nicole, who we saw earlier in flashback, comes on screen.

NICOLE

Well he loves the new gaming setup,
but you're aware he has that pesky
homework thing now and then, right?

LINCOLN

...I thought he came back.

NICOLE

What? Who?

LINCOLN

The Bone Collector.
(off her concern)
Something happened yesterday, and...
Well, it wasn't him, but I just
thought, you know. I thought about you
and Camden.

NICOLE

We moved a thousand miles away from
him. We couldn't be any safer.

LINCOLN

Right. Well. I love you.

NICOLE

...I love you, too. I'm glad
everything's okay, Lincoln.

Off Lincoln, as his son re-joins, back in gaming mode:

CAMDEN (O.S.)

Alright, you ready to die?

The video game's BACKGROUND MUSIC transitions into --

EXT. SUBURBAN PATIO - NIGHT

-- Something hip and jazzy. A dinner party with THREE YUPPIE
COUPLES, including LAUREN and ANDREW (40s), hosted by
Danielle and The Bone Collector, who sniffs a glass of Cab.

BONE COLLECTOR

Full-bodied. Spice. Graphite... Black
cherry fruit... Sultanas.

LAUREN

You can't really smell graphite.

BONE COLLECTOR

You can detect everything, because it
is there, at the molecular level.

DANIELLE

Please don't talk about "*terroir*."

BONE COLLECTOR

The French call it *terroir*. "The specificity of a place." The region, the climate, the minerals in the soil - all leaving their subtle, but detectable fingerprint.

ANDREW

What's a *sultana*?

DANIELLE

I swear he wasn't this insufferable in New York. I think it's the proximity to all the vineyards.

BONE COLLECTOR

I'll prove it. I've got just the bottle for you.

INT. WINE CELLAR - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The BEEPING of KEYPAD LOCK, then the door opens and the Bone Collector descends into the basement wine cellar. As he passes by rows of bottles we see A MAN WRAPPED IN A COCOON OF PLASTIC. Arms above him, tied to a shepherd's hook. WTF? His mouth is bound and he WRITHES and PLEADS helplessly.

The Bone Collector pays his victim zero attention, calmly picking out the perfect wine. Then, on his way out, he goes to his victim and we notice his arm wrapped tight at the elbow, cutting off his circulation. The man's forearm is pale and ashen -- not a drop of blood in it. Must hurt like hell.

BONE COLLECTOR

It's okay. It'll all be over soon.

The Bone Collector gently prods the drained portion of the arm, running his finger along the bone.

BONE COLLECTOR (CONT'D)

There's nothing like the perfect gift for an old friend.

As The Bone Collector heads upstairs, he passes an EMPTY BOX on a shelf, SHIPPING LABEL addressed to LINCOLN RHYME. MUSIC from the party leaking in briefly as the cellar door opens. Then the LIGHTS SHUT OFF and the DOOR CLOSES. DARKNESS. The only sound the MUFFLED MOANS of the Victim awaiting his fate.

END OF PILOT