

DEXTER

Episode 110
"Seeing Red"

Written By
Kevin R. Maynard

Directed By
Michael Cuesta

Showtime Pictures Development Company
10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1600
Los Angeles, CA 90024
310 234-5200

Shooting Script
9/12/06
9/15/06 (Full Blue)
9/19/06 (Pink Pages)

This Teleplay is the sole property of Showtime Pictures Development Company. No portion may be distributed, published, reformatted, reproduced, sold, used by any means, quoted, communicated or otherwise disseminated or publicized in any form or media, including without limitation by an written article, television and/or radio interview or on the Internet without the prior written consent of Showtime Pictures Development Company. No one is authorized to dispose of same. If lost or destroyed, please notify the story department at Showtime Networks Inc., 10880 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 1600, Los Angeles, CA 90024. Tel. (310)234-5200 ©2006.

DEXTER

"Seeing Red"

FADE IN:

1 INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 1 (MORNING) 1

CLOSE on a LOCKSMITH changing out the locks in the kitchen. Nearby, DEXTER stuffs lunch boxes into backpacks. Behind him, CODY and ASTOR finish bowls of cereal at the table.

DEXTER (V.O.)

I'm very good at problem solving. I take ugly messes and find permanent, albeit bloody, solutions.

Dexter turns toward the table and claps his hands.

DEXTER

C'mon buckaroos, it's Monday. Can't be late on Monday. Throws the whole week off.

DEXTER (V.O.)

But when it comes to other people's problems, I go with a lighter touch.

As the kids rise from the table and take their backpacks from Dexter, RITA barrels into the kitchen, half-dressed in a blouse and slip.

RITA

Wait -- what about breakfast?

DEXTER

Made and eaten.

RITA

And the kids' lunches?

DEXTER

Packed and ready to go.

RITA

Did you tell the locksmith --

DEXTER

New locks on every door. Reinforced strike plates. Seven-pin keyways.

Rita exhales and leans against a counter, still shaken from last night's violent encounter with Paul. Dexter turns to Astor and Cody.

DEXTER

Why don't you kids wait in the car? I wanna talk to your mom for a sec'.

ASTOR

Are you gonna make-out?

DEXTER

None of your business.

ASTOR

Are you?

RITA

(cautioning)

Astor.

Astor whispers something to Cody making him giggle and they run for the door. Rita busily starts clearing the table.

DEXTER

You don't have to do this, you know? Getting attacked by your ex-husband merits a day off.

RITA

I'm fine. I'm not going to let Paul control my life. Those days are over.

Dexter gently takes her hands.

DEXTER

Everything's going to be okay. The police have been notified. They'll find Paul.

RITA

What if they don't?

DEXTER

Then aim for the eyes.

He pulls a can of PEPPER SPRAY from his jacket. Rita takes the can and gives Dexter a grateful hug.

DEBRA wolfs down leftover birthday cake and coffee. DOAKES enters. Debra holds up the chocolaty-looking cake.

DEBRA

Want some? It's Kirk Blylock's cake.

DOAKES

Had some. At Kirk's birthday, ten days ago.

Debra looks down at the cake with suspicion.

DOAKES

See? You have lunch every day with your boyfriend, you miss a thing or two around here.

DEBRA

(smiling)
We're going for sushi today.
(takes another bite)
The cake's still good. It's mocha, I think.

DOAKES

It started out vanilla.

A nearby YOUNG CLERK calls out --

YOUNG CLERK

Hey, somebody get over here!

Debra and Doakes walk to the rattled clerk, who stands over a half-opened SHIPPING BOX, holding up a MASON JAR filled with what looks like BLOOD.

DOAKES

For God's sake, Park. Put that down.

YOUNG CLERK

It was addressed to "Homicide."

DOAKES

Put it down!

The clerk sets down the bottle.

DEBRA

Jesus. Is that blood?

Curious DETECTIVES walk over for a look. Doakes spots Dexter working in his lab, wearing latex gloves.

DOAKES

Morgan, get your ass over here.

DEXTER

Ass en route.

DOAKES

You're the blood expert. What is this
shit?

Dexter lifts the jar and examines it, intrigued.

DEXTER

Little watery for jam.

YOUNG CLERK

Maybe you should open it.

DEXTER

But what if there's an air-born toxin
waiting to be released?

YOUNG CLERK

I gotta wash my hands.

The clerk hurries away.

DEXTER

So gullible.

LAGUERTA pushes to the front.

LAGUERTA

All right people, settle down.

(turns)

Dexter, what can you tell me?

DEXTER

It's blood, all right. Wait.
There's something inside here.

Dexter has turned the bottle onto its side and holds it over a desk lamp. He peers under the bottle to see an old-style HOTEL KEY pressed against the glass. It has the name of a hotel, MARINA VIEW HOTEL, and a room number, 103, etched on the plastic emblem.

DEXTER

The Marina View Hotel. Maybe it's
some kind of promotional gag. Y'know,
cups, T-shirts... that sort of thing.

LAGUERTA

Show and tell's over. Let's find out
who sent this mystery jar of joy.

(MORE)

LAGUERTA (CONT'D)

Doakes. Grab Batista and get out to that hotel.

DEBRA

Batista's covering the explosion at the smack lab.

DOAKES

Put the cake down, Morgan. You're with me.

She takes one last hungry bite, sets down the cake, and follows Doakes out. Dexter peers into the Mason jar.

DEXTER (V.O.)

A jar of blood. Somebody sure knows how to get my attention. Dramatic. Cryptic. Playful. Could it be him?

Off the trace of a smile forming on Dexter's lips...

3 EXT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - ESTABLISHING - DAY 1 3

An elaborate beach-themed HOTEL -- cheesy, touristy and borderline unsanitary. Doakes' sedan is parked out front.

4 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY 1 4

Debra stands by the elevator, eyes searching the ceiling. The elevator opens and Doakes exits, holding a key. They head down the hallway together.

DOAKES

Got an extra key from the manager. He said the same thing as the front desk clerk. The guy who checked into 103 is white and normal-looking.

DEBRA

His credit card said Alberto Krasnoff. How white and normal-looking can he be?

DOAKES

Probably a stolen credit card.

DEBRA

I haven't seen a single security camera since we've been here.

DOAKES

It's likely this guy scouted hotels and chose one with lax security. Better be ready to cancel your lunch.

They reach Room 103 and find a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door. Doakes steps forward. KNOCKS HARD. No response. Doakes KNOCKS HARDER.

DOAKES
Police. Open up.

Still nothing. With a nod, they take out their HANDGUNS. Doakes uses the extra key to unlock the door. He makes a move to push inside -- and stops at the threshold. Debra steps behind him to see what he's looking at.

DEBRA
Jesus --

Fighting a gag impulse, Debra raises her gun to secure the crime scene. Doakes grabs his radio.

DOAKES
Metro dispatch. This is 3H88 out at
the Marina View Hotel. Need uniform
backup, forensics...
(looks back inside)
...fuck, just get everyone over here.

Off Debra, rattled, securing the scene...

EXT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - SIDE ENTRANCE - LATER

A side entrance to the hotel has been sealed off as a crime scene, with emergency vehicles, UNIFORM COPS and FORENSIC TECHS. Dexter and MASUKA slip into white-hooded, Level B, HazMat gear -- aka "bunny suits."

DEXTER
Been a while since we went
prophylactic.

MASUKA
Not me. Last night I met this chick --

DEXTER
Vince, I'll stop you right there.
(changing the subject)
So, they tell you anything? You know,
about what's inside?

MASUKA
Nobody's been inside. Too much blood.

DEBRA (O.S.)
Dexter!

Dexter glances up to see Debra, looking a little shaky, making her way toward him.

DEBRA
Just a heads up. It's bad in there.

DEXTER
Okay.

DEBRA
I'm serious.

DEXTER
O-kay.

Doakes walks up.

DOAKES
She's not kidding. That's your wet dream in there.

DEXTER
Okay.

DOAKES
You're going in first. Alone. Get a sense of what we're dealing with and give me a report. Don't fuck it up.

As Dexter wonders what could warrant so much concern...

INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY 1

The elevator door opens and Dexter, full HazMat suit now, steps out past TWO COPS standing guard. Dexter trudges alone down the long hallway toward Room 103, blood kit in hand.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Now I'm really curious. He's been gone so long, he had to be planning a splashy return. But a crime scene just for me?

Dexter puts on his face shield and pulls up his hood.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Houston, Tranquility Base here, the Eagle has landed.

Dexter reaches the closed door to Room 103. He opens the door and steps into --

7 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - ROOM 103 - DAY 1 (CONTINUOUS) 7

A nightmare. BLOOD is streaked and smeared everywhere -- on the walls, the ceiling. The carpet is a glistening SEA OF RED. It looks like a massacre happened here, but there are no bodies in sight.

Dexter barely registers this, before his body stiffens in an epic anxiety attack. Gasping, his legs go weak and he falls forward, landing with a splash in the blood. On his hands and knees, he slips. Can't stand. Panics. As he lifts his head, the bloody room DARKENS, and we --

FLASHBACK TO:

8 INT. DARK ENCLOSED SPACE 8

The same THREE-YEAR-OLD from Episode 8 wails, his eyes wide. Only this time, we WIDEN to reveal that he's sitting in a pool of blood. The boy looks around, frightened, no help coming... just eerie shadows and glistening pools of blood, shimmering, then fading into black --

SMASH BACK TO:

9 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY 1 9

Dexter, on his feet now, stumbles backwards out of Room 103. His heart pounds and he gasps for breath, his white HazMat suit streaked in blood.

DEXTER (V.O.)
He's in my in my head...

Dexter whips off his hood and shield, so he can breathe.

DEXTER (V.O.)
My memory... the boy in the blood...
he recreated it.

Dexter starts wobbling back up the hallway, frantic to get away from this nightmare.

10 EXT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - SIDE ENTRANCE - DAY 1 10

Doakes and LaGuerta confer near the side entrance. Debra approaches.

LAGUERTA
Tell me you got something, Morgan.

DEBRA

I talked to the guests in Room 105.
They didn't see anyone go in or out.

DOAKES

What about across the hall?

DEBRA

German tourists. Got their heads up
their lederhosen. They heard a
whirring sound but thought someone was
mixing margaritas or -- oh my God.

Over LaGuerta's shoulder, Debra sees her blood-soaked
brother flounder out of the hotel. She rushes to him.
Dexter sucks in the fresh air like a Hoover upright.

DEBRA

Hey hey. Are you okay?

DEXTER

Just a little queasy. Never should've
skipped breakfast. I see now why they
call it the most important meal of the
day.

Debra sees Dexter's in real distress, takes his arm gently.

DEBRA

Bullshit. You're shaking. What the
hell happened in there?

DEXTER

I'm okay, I just need a little air.

Doakes and LaGuerta walk up to Dexter.

DOAKES

Crime scene's inside.

DEBRA

Cut him some slack, all right?

DOAKES

(to Dexter, realizing)
Something finally got to you? Maybe
you're human after all.

DEXTER

Sorry to disappoint you all, but I
think it's just low blood sugar.

LAGUERTA

Just tell us what you saw, Dexter.
How many dead?

DEXTER

(trying to focus)
A lot. But no bodies... just blood.
Fifty, sixty liters... maybe half a
dozen dead... I don't know.

LAGUERTA

So wait -- you're saying a mass murder
happened in there but they took the
bodies?

DOAKES

How's that possible? One elevator.
Emergency stairs with alarms. Someone
would've seen corpses coming out.

Masuka lumbers up in his HazMat suit.

MASUKA

Hey bro', ready to get started?

DEXTER

(honest)
I can't go back in there.

DEBRA

You don't have to.

DOAKES

(beat, showing sympathy)
Fine. Just get your bearings and... I
don't know, work from the hallway.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Back down the rabbit hole.

Debra watches with concern, as Dexter takes a deep breath
and trudges back inside wearing his bunny suit.

Rita hands a BUSINESSMAN a folder with room keys. A long
line of GUESTS stand behind him.

RITA

You're in 422. Elevator is to the
right. Bobby will see to your bags.

The businessman heads off. Before the next guest can step up, TWO SHERIFF'S DETECTIVES approach. One hangs back while the other walks up to the counter and flashes his badge.

SHERIFF

Dade County Sheriff's Department. I'm looking for Rita Bennet?

RITA

That's me. Did you find Paul?

SHERIFF

(confused)
I'm sorry...?

RITA

(softly)
Paul Bennet? My ex-husband attacked me last night. My boyfriend filed a report.

SHERIFF

Only report we have is the one Mr. Bennet filed.

Now it's Rita's turn to be confused.

RITA

Wait -- Paul filed a police report? For what?

SHERIFF

Assault. Your ex-husband was just released from Baptist Memorial Hospital. He's pressing charges against you.

RITA

(floored)
But *he* attacked *me*.

Across the room, Rita's MANAGER turns to look. The guests in line are already curiously watching.

SHERIFF

Not according to him.

RITA

Can we talk about this later?

SHERIFF

I'm afraid we need a formal statement now. Can you come with us please?

Off Rita, trying to hold it together...

12 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - ROOM 103 - DAY 1 12

A FORENSIC TECH in a bunny suit cuts out a SWATCH OF BLOOD-SOAKED CARPET and seals it into a bag for later analysis. Another TECH uses a WET-VAC to suck up excess blood, so a similarly-attired PHOTOGRAPHER can snap a photo of bloody FOOTPRINT impressions left under the swatch.

SEVERAL FEET AWAY

A TECH fills a syringe with blood from under a night stand. He packs the vial into an IGLOO COOLER with dozens of other vials. Masuka treads by in his bunny suit, giving orders.

MASUKA

Make sure you label the section of the grid each blood sample came from.

Masuka moves over to the area by the TV and stares at a blood-drenched wall in fascination. A closer look reveals the bloody smears are composed of tiny MIST-LIKE DROPS.

MASUKA

You should really get in here, Dex.
I've never seen anything like this.

A disembodied voice comes back to him.

DEXTER (O.C.)

Wait 'til you've worked a few more Colombian drug cases.

MASUKA

I got misting up the walls, across the ceiling... but no tissue. Come see.

DEXTER (O.C.)

Just get photos. Lots of photos.

PAN THROUGH THE WALL TO --

13 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - HALLWAY - DAY 1 13

Dexter sits on the floor in his bunny suit, back against the other side of the wall, deep breathing to keep it together.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Sometimes you can get too close to a problem. And only distance will bring the answer into focus.

(MORE)

DEXTER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
(looks around hallway)
So far the answer's not in the hall.

Masuka leans outside into the hallway.

MASUKA
And how come the blood isn't clotting?

DEXTER
The blood's not clotting?

Masuka shakes his head, no.

DEXTER
A genuine medical mystery. Keep
taking samples, I'll test it at the
lab.

Dexter's cell phone RINGS. He stands up, awkwardly tries to fish it out of his cumbersome bunny suit, nearly dropping it into the suit's foot cavity before managing to answer.

DEXTER
Don't hang up, I'm here... hello?
Hello?

INTERCUT:

An angry Rita sits on a chair as COPS bustle past.

RITA
Dexter? I'm at the sheriff's station.
Paul is pressing assault charges
against me. How is that even
possible? I was defending myself.

DEXTER
Just stay calm. I know a lawyer, I'll
get this straightened out.

RITA
I am calm. They're the hysterical
ones. They're charging me with a
class-two felony.

As Dexter listens, he hazards a glance into Room 103. Instantly, his head starts swimming again.

RITA
Hello? Dexter are you there?

Overwhelmed, Dexter pulls back into the hallway.

DEXTER

Right here.

RITA

This is ridiculous. How is there no law against this? I could lose my job, I could lose my kids...

DEXTER

I won't let that happen.

RITA

I'm glad you're so confident, but --

DEXTER

Rita, trust me on this. I know how the system works. Right now I'm at a crime scene and I need to go. But I'll call my lawyer friend right away. You okay?

RITA

Yeah yeah, I'm okay. Thanks, Dexter.

Dexter hangs up, then exhales. He calls out to Masuka, without looking into Room 103.

DEXTER

Vince, check out the wall socket. On the far wall. Something looks off.

Masuka walks to a section of wall so red it looks PAINTED WITH BLOOD. He squats and peers closer. REVEAL a VOID OF BLOOD around the socket.

MASUKA

Hey, you're right. He had something plugged in here. Probably a power tool to cut 'em up. Come take a look.

DEXTER

Photos, Vince. Lots and lots of photos.

As Dexter closes his eyes to keep it together...

BATISTA drops a brick of HEROIN on the evidence counter.

BATISTA

Log it and weep, baby.

An EVIDENCE ROOM COP slips the heroin into a plastic bag.

EVIDENCE ROOM COP
No cooking equipment?

BATISTA
Just that and a couple extra-crispy
cuerpos were all that was left.

EVIDENCE ROOM COP
Must'a been a hell of an explosion.

The cop slides him a receipt. Batista unzips a SATCHEL to slip in the receipt. As he stares at something inside, Masuka enters and sets a COOLER on the evidence counter.

MASUKA
Blood samples for the freezer. And
you better make room. There's gonna
be a lot more coming.
(to Batista)
Shooters at Bel Canto tonight. You
in?

BATISTA
Not in the mood.

MASUKA
Angel. You're on the market. And the
Bel Canto is hottie central.

Batista wistfully pulls a pair of Neil Diamond tickets from the satchel.

BATISTA
Backstage passes to Neil Diamond.
They were for Nina's birthday.

MASUKA
Forever in Blue Jeans? You're in
worse shape than I thought.

The evidence room cop slides Masuka a receipt. As Masuka slaps Batista on the back and they head out together...

Dexter waits for the elevator. Debra joins his side.

DEXTER
Oh, hi.

DEBRA

Hi.

DEXTER

Masuka was looking for you. Something about drinks at the Bel Canto.

DEBRA

I told him I had a yeast infection.

DEXTER

Bit of an over-share.

The elevator DINGS and opens. Dexter and Debra enter --

INT. POLICE STATION - ELEVATOR - DAY 1 (CONTINUOUS)

When the doors close, Debra gingerly broaches the subject.

DEBRA

You want to talk about what happened today?

DEXTER

Already did.

DEBRA

Dexter. The last time I saw you like that was when Dad died. You can talk to me, you know? You just gotta... open your mouth and move it. I can call Rudy and tell him I'll be late.

DEXTER

Deb, seriously. I puked, I'm fine. I know you want to help, but unless you've got breath mints, there's nothing to do.

DEBRA

(miffed)

Why do you always do this?

DEXTER

Do what?

DEBRA

Shut me out. Like your birth father who lived up the highway your whole life and never tried to contact you. I still don't know how that makes you feel.

The elevator stops. The doors open. Two COPS enter. As the doors close, Dexter turns to Debra and speaks softly.

DEXTER

I'll tell you what. If some random emotion strikes me in the middle of the night, you'll be my first call.

DEBRA

Fine. Whatever.

Off them riding the rest of the way in silence...

INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 1

Rita, defiant and firm, sits with a sympathetic LAWYER at the table.

LAWYER

...did Paul force his way into the house?

RITA

No.

LAWYER

Did you ask him to leave?

RITA

Oh yeah. And he refused.

The lawyer checks the police report.

LAWYER

But in your statement, you invited your ex-husband... into your bedroom?

RITA

He was drunk. The kids were asleep. And I knew where things were heading. Cracked ribs and a broken jaw.

LAWYER

You didn't want it to escalate, I get that. But we can't prove intent and your ex-husband has the injury here, not you.

RITA

Paul has a record of spousal abuse.

LAWYER

Spousal abuse can be mutual.

RITA

It was never mutual.

LAWYER

Okay. But the man's a model parolee. His drug tests are clean. Glowing reports from the court-appointed supervisor. Corrections will want to see this guy transition.

Rita finally loses her temper.

RITA

I don't care! I'm not letting him near my children. Do you understand?

LAWYER

Rita... if you deny him visitation -- you'll lose your children. Now you've got a deposition in two days. Do not give him any more ammunition than he already has.

Rita looks away angrily. Did she even hear him?

19 INT. DEBRA'S BEDROOM - NIGHT 1

19

Debra and Rudy curl up in bed with glasses of wine.

RUDY

Damn. Just blood? Where'd the bodies go?

DEBRA

Hell if I know. I don't even want to know. The blood was bad enough.

RUDY

No wonder you're so uptight. Poor thing. Bet your brother had a field day though.

DEBRA

(nervous laugh)
Oh. Fuck no. Try freaked.

Rudy perks up, fascinated.

RUDY

Really? I thought, you know, blood was his thing. What happened?

DEBRA

Who knows. Like usual, he shut me out.

RUDY

Did he say anything?

DEBRA

Can we not talk about Dex right now?

She drains her wine, nuzzles up to Rudy, and starts kissing his neck. He looks up and moans, pretending to enjoy her kisses.

RUDY

Was it like a panic attack?

DEBRA

I don't know. He's not big on sharing his feelings, case you hadn't noticed. Kiss me...

Rudy kisses Debra back. The kissing becomes more urgent. Debra slides her hand down Rudy's pants -- and frowns.

DEBRA

What's the matter? You don't even have wood.

RUDY

(defensive)
You're the one who said you wanted to talk.

DEBRA

Yeah, but not now, I'm horny.

She passionately kisses Rudy, grinding her body against his. Suddenly, Rudy pulls away.

RUDY

Maybe I should call him.

DEBRA

Are you fucking kidding me?

RUDY

What, we bonded last weekend. Isn't that what a boyfriend's supposed to do? Show some interest in the family.

Debra slides back to her side of the bed.

DEBRA

Not when his girlfriend's trying to
get into his pants.

RUDY

Debra, that's not fair. You take me
on a couples weekend to get to know
your brother, and now you punish me
for giving a damn? Your issues with
him don't have to be mine.

DEBRA

You know what? Forget it. Let's just
go to sleep.

Debra rolls over and shuts off her bedside table light.

RUDY

Go right ahead. I'm gonna watch TV.

Rudy gets up and walks out. Off Debra, pissed, even more
pissed because Rudy might be right...

INT. HOTEL BEL CANTO - BAR - NIGHT 1

CLOSE on a PROSTHETIC HAND resting on a bar, each fingernail
painted a DIFFERENT COLOR. TILT UP to a beautiful lady
escort, MONIQUE, laughing with a distinguished CLIENT.
Behind them, a DJ mixes and the dance floor rocks.

MOVE down the packed bar to FIND Masuka, making time with a
PIERCED CHICK. KEEP MOVING until we LAND on a sad, drunken
Batista, who's dangling his Neil Diamond passes in front of
a BORED WOMAN like they're the Holy Grail.

BATISTA

Nina loved Neil Diamond. *Song Sung*
Blue. September Morn. Oh my God,
Kentucky Woman? You gotta love that
shit.

The Bored Woman tries to get the bartender's attention.

BATISTA

Nina loved him so goddamn much she
took every one of his CDs in the
separation. Wouldn't even give me
Greatest Hits.

Batista downs the last of his drink.

BATISTA

So you wanna go to this concert or
what?

Finally, the Bored Woman just tosses some money on the bar
and hurries away. Batista looks like he could cry. Masuka
approaches with the Pierced Chick in tow.

MASUKA

That's like the fourth chick you've
driven off.

Batista tries to order another drink from the bartender.
Masuka gets the bartender's attention, shakes his head, no.

MASUKA

This was a mistake.

BATISTA

(slurring)
Que dices? Estoy chido.

MASUKA

Bro'. You're a train wreck. You
gotta stop talking about the divorce.

BATISTA

I ain't ashamed.

MASUKA

Yeah that's clear. But it's pathetic.
Don't talk about your divorce unless
they ask. Then you're just being
honest. Oh, and eighty-six the ring.

PIERCED CHICK

I have to take a squirt.

The Pierced Chick kisses Masuka and stomps off.

MASUKA

She's gonna fuck me silly.

Batista is lost in his own thoughts.

BATISTA

I really loved her.

MASUKA

I know.

(beat)
We all know.

A handful of DRINKERS turn and nod, like they've heard enough, too. Masuka pats Batista on the shoulder. It's awkward but it's from a place of genuine friendship.

INT. RITA'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT 1

Dexter lies in bed with Rita. Eyes wide open. Staring at the ceiling.

DEXTER (V.O.)

My sister's right. I don't share my problems with her. Or with anybody. Harry taught me that. Secrecy, self-reliance, and a well-stocked cupboard of Hefty bags.

He looks at the clock -- it's 2 AM. Back up to the ceiling.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Fortunately, I've never met a problem I can't manage. Until that boy in the blood. He frightens me. I just want him to go away.

RITA (O.C.)

Dexter, you awake?

DEXTER

(pretends he's asleep)
Hmmm? Wha...?

Rita rolls over, revealing that she's awake, too.

RITA

Are you sure you locked the door?

DEXTER

Positive. Bolt and chain.

RITA

Thanks.

There's a long beat and Dexter sees the fear in her eyes.

RITA

What am I going to do?

DEXTER

Don't worry. I'll figure it out.

Rita rolls over and Dexter spoons her.

DEXTER (V.O.)

And I will. I can always see other
people's problems more clearly than my
own. Fortunately, Rita's has a name.

As Dexter imagines killing Paul, he gently closes his eyes
and starts drifting off to sleep...

INT. POLICE STATION - DEXTER'S LAB - DAY 2

LaGuerta, Doakes, Debra and Masuka hover over Dexter, who
works behind his computer.

ON DEXTER'S COMPUTER MONITOR

A computer-rendered IMAGE of the floor in Room 103. A
confusing pattern of multi-colored FOOTPRINTS.

DEXTER

Everyone who set foot on the bloody
carpet in Room 103 left a footprint.
Since we have shoe molds of all our
personnel, that leaves only one set of
footprints unaccounted for...

One by one, the footprints from police personnel begin to
DISAPPEAR, leaving only one set.

DEXTER

...the killer's. They show everywhere
he went in the room. Question is why?

LAGUERTA

Hold on. Aren't we missing something.
Where are the victims' footprints?

DEXTER

Give the lady a lollipop.

There's a pregnant pause as everyone digests this news.

DEBRA

Are you suggesting there were never
any bodies in Room 103? Why would a
guy fake a massacre with no bodies?

DOAKES

And where'd he get the blood?

Masuka produces a REPORT.

MASUKA

I just got a preliminary blood report.
The blood in that room came from at
least five different bodies, possibly
more.

DEXTER (V.O.)

My fellow traveler had five victims.

DEBRA

The Ice Truck Killer had five victims.

LAGUERTA

(catching on)

Five bloodless victims.

DEXTER (V.O.)

I always wondered what he did with the
blood.

They grasp the immensity of what this means. Except Doakes.

DOAKES

Wait, wait. The Ice Truck Killer did
not horde his victims' blood just to
throw a party at the mother-fucking
Marina View Hotel. Why would he do
that?

DEXTER (V.O.)

To chase me down the rabbit hole.

DOAKES

What was that, Morgan?

DEXTER

(spooked)

I didn't say anything.

DOAKES

(to the rest)

I'll remind you people that we already
arrested the Ice Truck Killer. His
name's Neil Perry and he's awaiting
trial in county.

LAGUERTA

Bullshit. Perry recanted his
confession. He's a fraud.

DOAKES

Try telling the Captain that.

LAGUERTA

I did. And he blew me off.

DEBRA

(to Dexter and Masuka)

Do we have any other evidence to support this theory?

DEXTER

When Masuka noticed the blood wasn't clotting, I ran some tests. It was loaded with Coumadin and Heparin.

MASUKA

One's an anti-coagulant, the other's a preservative. Means the blood's old.

Dexter hands them crime scene photos of the bloody walls.

DEXTER

Plus, the blood spatter was all impact and cast-off. No hand transfers or swipe patterns to indicate the presence of actual victims.

DOAKES

If this is the Ice Truck Killer, it's gonna be another giant shit-stain for the department.

LAGUERTA

That's why this stays between us until I say otherwise.

LaGuerta hesitates, but we can see her wheels turning.

LAGUERTA

Masuka. Run the DNA on all five vics and see if it matches the Ice Truck Killer's victims.

(to Doakes and Debra)

You two get out to the Marina View. Retrace his footprints. Maybe his movements will tell us something.

(then)

And remember, low profile. Not a word about the Ice Truck Killer to anyone.

Off her conviction...

23 INT. RITA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 2

23

Cody and Astor wait by the front door. Rita fusses with Astor's clothes. She's agitated, feigning calm.

RITA

Stand up straight, Astor. Do you have your emergency phone number list?

ASTOR

It's in my backpack. Do I have to show it to you again?

RITA

No. Just promise me you won't let your brother out of your sight.

DEXTER

Rita...

RITA

And you remember what you do if you get lost?

Dexter pulls Rita aside, out of the children's earshot.

DEXTER

You're scaring them.

RITA

They should be scared. I didn't tell them what Paul did the other night.

DEXTER

What did you say when you dragged them to the neighbors?

RITA

I said I smelled gas.

(then)

I should've just piled them in the car and left the state. Went home to Michigan. It would've been so easy.

DEXTER

Remember what the lawyer said. You don't want to do anything rash.

There's a KNOCK at the door.

DEXTER

Now just relax. The court supervisor will be there the entire time.

Dexter opens the door, revealing PAUL, with a BANDAGE on his head, and the COURT SUPERVISOR. Cody instantly rushes over.

CODY

Daddy, what happened?

PAUL

Nothing, little man. Just a small bump. C'mon kids, pile in. Circus Vargas awaits. I told you, Daddy always keeps his promises.

Paul herds the kids outside. Rita nervously watches them through the window, as Dexter watches Rita with concern.

INT. DEXTER'S CAR - DRIVING (MIAMI FOOTAGE) - DAY 2

Dexter drives through the city.

DEXTER (V.O.)

I prefer the enchanting Rita over the worried one. If I can figure out a way to make her ex-husband my problem, I could help her sleep much easier tonight.

EXT. MOTOR COURT LODGE - DAY 2

Dexter parks and walks through the parking lot. He skirts a couple ratty lawn chairs beside a plastic footstool, with an overflowing ashtray and empty beer cans.

DEXTER (V.O.)

All I need is a little proof of his inner monster. Harry would have insisted on that.

As Dexter approaches Paul's room, he hears INFANT CRIES from one of the units. Dexter ignores the "DO NOT DISTURB" sign on the door, makes sure no one is watching, then picks the lock.

INT. MOTOR COURT LODGE - PAUL'S ROOM - DAY 2

Dexter enters to snoop, reacting again to an INFANT CRYING, which is louder now. He sees PHOTOS of Cody and Astor on a bedside table. Dexter pulls open the drawer underneath and finds a HANDGUN, some BULLETS, and a BAG OF WEED.

DEXTER (V.O.)

The trifecta -- weapon, ammo and impaired judgment.
(MORE)

DEXTER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Throw in a little domestic violence,
and you have the perfect recipe for a
family slaughter.

Dexter hooks a finger into the gun, picks it up, and checks
the muzzle to see if it's been fired recently.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Harry didn't believe in preemptive
killing. But maybe I can bend the
rules just this once. After all,
Harry wasn't perfect. He lied about
my birth father.

As Dexter puts down the gun, the INFANT'S CRIES grow louder.

DEXTER (V.O.)
(distracted)
Would somebody get that kid a bottle?

Without warning, Dexter is seized by another memory, as the
infant's cries next door transform into --

FLASHBACK TO:

27 INT. DARK ENCLOSED SPACE

27

*The same THREE-YEAR-OLD wails inconsolably, sitting in a sea
of blood. But this time the memory goes further. PAN TO a
fallen MAN -- or part of a man -- it's hard to tell. He
lies face down in the thick liquid. A WOMAN'S VOICE rings
out from the blackness --*

WOMAN'S VOICE
Honey, don't cry. Please don't cry...

SMASH BACK TO:

28 EXT. MOTOR COURT LODGE - DAY 2 (CONTINUOUS)

28

The door to Paul's room bursts open and Dexter stumbles out,
freaked, panting, soaked in sweat. He fights for breath,
looking around desperately. *What the hell is happening?*

29 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - ROOM 103 - DAY 2

29

WOOD PLANKS lay a foot above the ground on a SCAFFOLDING
system. The blood has congealed and dried. Square patches
of carpet are missing. Doakes and Debra walk the planks,
using Dexter's MAP to retrace the killer's footsteps.

DOAKES
So after he soaked the room in blood,
he walked to the desk...

They pass a blood-spattered desk with a lamp and a Bible.

DOAKES

And then the bedside table. Why?

Debra looks over the bedside table, where they stand now.

DEBRA

There's a clock radio. Some smeared
blood here. Maybe he turned it on.

She turns on the radio. A POP SONG plays.

DOAKES

We're missing something. Let's go
over it again.

DEBRA

We've been over it three times.

DOAKES

Maybe the map is wrong. Call your
brother.

Debra GROANS.

DOAKES

What?

DEBRA

Why is everyone's first move calling
Dexter? You don't even like Dexter.

DOAKES

All right, I'll bite. What did the
freak do now -- boil your goldfish?

DEBRA

No, it's not... it's Rudy. We had our
first fight, tiff, I dunno, whatever
you wanna call it.

DOAKES

(confused)

I thought we were talking about
Dexter?

DEBRA

We were...

(realizing)

Oh, shit.

Debra realizes that she did take her problem with Dexter out on Rudy.

DOAKES
What?

DEBRA
Nothing.

Doakes looks thoroughly baffled. In the b.g., the song ends and a DJ comes on the radio.

DJ'S VOICE
...and we'll be back with Billy Idol,
The Eurythmics and Devo on 103 FM,
hits from the eighties...

Doakes switches off the clock radio.

DEBRA
Wait! I wanna hear that!

DOAKES
It's Devo.

DEBRA
No, he said 103 FM.

DOAKES
Yeah, so?

DEBRA
This room is 103.

Doakes walks to the desk. Sees a page marker in the Bible. Flips it open...to LEVITICUS 10:3.

DOAKES
Leviticus 10:3. Son of a bitch.

DEBRA
Think he's trying to tell us something?

DOAKES
(reading Bible)
"I will be sanctified in them that come nigh me, and before all the people I will be glorified."

Off Debra and Doakes, mystified...

30 EXT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 2

30

Dark. Forboding. The moon hides in the black sky. Dexter trudges along his exterior balcony, rattled from his latest memory. He freezes at the sight of a SHADOWED FIGURE outside his door. The person steps into the light. It's Rudy waiting with a brown paper bag in hand.

RUDY

Hey.

DEXTER

Hey.

RUDY

Deb's pissed at me. I need advice.

DEXTER

So you came here?

RUDY

You know her better than anyone.
C'mon, I got two porterhouses and a
sixer of microbrew.

Rudy holds up the bag. Off Dexter, without an excuse...

31 INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - KITCHEN - NIGHT 2

31

Two porterhouse steaks sizzle in a pan. Rudy, holding a beer, rummages through drawers, searching through various sharp utensils. Dexter painfully watches.

RUDY

Well... one minute we're talking about
her day, y'know that whole bloodbath
thing.

DEXTER

Right, right.

Rudy slams closed one drawer and opens another to search.

RUDY

The next, she wants to jump my bones.
I mean, Deb's hot and all but sprinkle
in some conversation once in awhile,
y'know?

DEXTER

I don't know. She's my sister.
(then)
Can I help you find something?

RUDY

You wouldn't happen to have a good
meat knife?

Dexter opens a drawer, pulls out a MEAT KNIFE, and hands it
to Rudy. As he talks, Rudy casually waves the knife for
emphasis.

RUDY

Anyway, the other part of the argument
was about you.

DEXTER

Me?

RUDY

Yeah, it was already tense, but when I
brought your name up, she lost it.

Dexter considers this for a moment.

DEXTER

Deb doesn't like to feel left out.
It's kinda her issue.

RUDY

So what do I do?

DEXTER

Tell her it was all your fault.

RUDY

Seriously?

DEXTER

You will eventually. Deb has a way of
wearing you down. So just start from
that place. It saves time.

Rudy's cell phone RINGS. He looks at the caller ID.

RUDY

Sorry, gotta take this.

Rudy puts down the knife and steps outside to take the call.

RUDY

Hey. Where are you?

DEBRA (O.S.)
Still at work...

INTERCUT:

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - NIGHT 2

Debra sits behind her desk, glumly going over files.

DEBRA
... chasing a lead.

RUDY
Lemme guess. The bloodbath case?

DEBRA
Let's not talk shop, okay?
(beat)
Baby, I'm so sorry. You were totally right. I was mad at Dexter and took it all out on you. My shift's almost done. Can you come over and talk?

RUDY
I'd love to, Babe, but I'm about to eat dinner with Dexter.

There's an uncomfortable pause, as Debra bites her tongue.

DEBRA
Well, then after. I'll wait up.

RUDY
That's the thing. I was going to sleep at my place tonight.
(off her silence)
It's closer and I'm drinking. You understand, right?

DEBRA
(covering)
Sure, okay.

RUDY
I'll give you a call tomorrow.

Rudy turns off his cell and heads back inside.

RUDY
So how those steaks comin'?

Off the door closing behind him...

34 INT. HOTEL BEL CANTO - BAR - NIGHT 2

34

The DJ plays slow and seductive music. Batista sits alone, dressed in a crisp suit and tie. He spots a SEXY WOMAN and they exchange a glance. He takes a deep breath, pockets his WEDDING RING, and approaches her.

BATISTA

Care to dance?

SEXY WOMAN

You salsa?

BATISTA

A bit.

The Sexy Woman sizes him up.

SEXY WOMAN

What about your wife?

(explains)

Tan line. On your ring finger.

BATISTA

Well... um, actually I'm --

(beat)

I'm not gonna talk about that tonight.

SEXY WOMAN

Divorced, I get it. Mine was just finalized. Let's not talk about it together on the dance floor.

Batista smiles, takes her hand, and leads her onto the --

DANCE FLOOR

Where Batista starts out cold, his nervous energy making their chemistry awkward. But as the music builds, he becomes smoother, more expert, and soon he's twirling her around the room effortlessly, smiling ear to ear.

The Sexy Woman can't believe it. *Who's this guy?* She gasps as the moves become more intricate. Batista literally sweeps her off her feet and into a dramatic clench. A kiss seems imminent, until --

OVER THE SEXY WOMAN'S SHOULDER

Batista spots an OLDER GUY dancing with the beautiful woman, MONIQUE, who we established earlier. Something seems off. It's her hand on the shoulder of her date. He peers closer and sees that Monique has a --

PROSTHETIC HAND

The fingernails SPARKLING in different colors.

BATISTA
(to the Sexy Woman)
Excuse me.

He steps over to the other couple, flashes his badge.

BATISTA
Police officer. I need to --

They instantly separate.

MONIQUE
I'm not a hooker. I work for a
legitimate escort service now.

BATISTA
Whoa, whoa... I'm not here to bust
anyone. I just need to know why you
paint your nails like that.
(turns to the Sexy Woman)
One sec', honey.

She smiles but seems a bit put off. As Batista pulls
Monique aside, the Older Guy with her slips away.

MONIQUE
Thanks. That was a major client.

BATISTA
Hey. You wanna spend the night in a
holding cell?

MONIQUE
(weighs her options)
About a year ago, there was this
guy...

BATISTA
Guy or client?

MONIQUE
A john, okay? Back then I worked
Calle Ocho. Anyway, he was getting
kind'a rough until he saw this --

She flashes her prosthetic.

BATISTA
Then what?

MONIQUE

Then he changed his tune. Got all turned on. Told me to take off the fake hand. He started doing all this weird kinky shit with my arm, like he was worshipping it. To cap it off, he takes all my polish and paints each nail a different color. Looked pretty good, so I kept doing it.

BATISTA

You watch the news?

MONIQUE

A little.

BATISTA

The guy they arrested for the Ice Truck killings. Was it the same guy?

MONIQUE

The one who stuffs road kill? No way. This trick was sexy. A freak, but sexy.

Batista can't believe he might have just stumbled onto a major lead. Batista looks over. The Sexy Woman he was dancing with has left. Batista sighs.

BATISTA

All right. From the beginning. But this time with more detail.

As Batista takes out a pad and pen...

Rita tucks Cody and Astor into bed.

RITA

G'night Pumpkin.

Rita leans in to kiss Cody but he turns away.

RITA

Hey... who's pouting?

She tickles him, but he won't respond. Rita turns to Astor.

ASTOR

Daddy told us you hit him.

RITA

(aghast)

What *exactly* did he tell you?

ASTOR

He said you hit him and you're sorry
and you promised it wouldn't happen
again.

Rita bites her tongue. She wants to scream, she's so mad.

ASTOR

It's okay, Mommy. I know you're not
like Daddy. You'd never hit Cody or
me.

Astor smiles and snuggles under the covers. Off Rita, just
devastated...

EXT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - BALCONY - NIGHT 2

Several hours and beers later, Dexter and Rudy say goodbye.

RUDY

Thanks for the hospitality.

DEXTER

Thanks for the steaks.

Rudy sticks out his hand. As Dexter awkwardly shakes --

RUDY

Hey, I never even got a chance to ask.
Debra mentioned that you had a little
incident at the crime scene.

DEXTER

Did she?

RUDY

Most of my prosthetics clients are
pretty traumatized by the time they
get to me. Anyway, I'm a good
listener. If you ever need to talk.

Feeling oddly comfortable, Dexter speaks before he thinks.

DEXTER

Thanks, but unless you know an expert
in repressed memories...

Rudy stares at him.

RUDY

For real?

DEXTER

You know something about it?

RUDY

More than I ever want to.

(beat)

When I was in high school I started
having these dreams of a woman hit by
a truck.

DEXTER

Who was she?

RUDY

No idea. Till one day I stopped by a
mail box -- and it all came crashing
back. My Mom... getting out to mail a
letter... me in the car. I watched
her die.

DEXTER

How old were you?

RUDY

Four. But I didn't remember it till I
mailed a letter. Walked right into
the belly of the beast without
knowing.

(then)

So, what kind of memories you having?

DEXTER

They're still a little vague.

RUDY

Right. Well, you gotta face 'em
eventually. Maybe next time.

Dexter appreciates the advice -- and Rudy not prying.

DEXTER

When you talk to Deb, go with white
roses. They're her favorite.

RUDY

Good tip.

(turns to go, then stops)

Funny how life brings people together,
huh?

36

36

Rudy walks away. After a beat, Dexter turns back into --

37

INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 2 (CONTINUOUS)

37

-- still a little unsettled. He automatically starts clearing beer bottles.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Rudy misunderstands my problem. I want the boy in blood to go away, not come crashing back. Fortunately, I have other people's problems to focus on right now.

(noticing)

Like forgotten cell phones.

Dexter grabs Rudy's CELL PHONE and runs outside --

38

EXT. DEXTER'S BALCONY - NIGHT 2 (CONTINUOUS)

38

-- just in time to hear a CAR ENGINE drive away. Rudy's gone. Oh well. As Dexter heads back inside --

39

INT. POLICE STATION - LAGUERTA'S OFFICE - DAY 3 (MORNING)

39

LaGuerta briefs CAPTAIN MATTHEWS.

LAGUERTA

So far we're chasing a ghost.

LaGuerta shows Matthews a POLICE SKETCH -- white male, dark hair, regular features, sun glasses. It could be Rudy. It could be anybody.

LAGUERTA

Couple hotel employees helped with a sketch, but it's pretty generic. Only real lead we have is a set of numbers at the crime scene.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Screw the numbers. Who was killed? Where are the bodies? I heard some wild theories out there.

LAGUERTA

Just theories. We're still waiting on full blood results.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Dammit Maria, you're stalling. Why?

LAGUERTA

I'm just trying to avoid speculation.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Well you gotta give me something soon.
This department can't afford another
public relations disaster.

LaGuerta sees her opportunity. She takes a chance.

LAGUERTA

Then tell the D.A. to let Neil Perry
go. He's not the Ice Truck Killer.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

(surprised)

Are you still hung up on... Jesus,
Maria. That's not going to happen.

LAGUERTA

The D.A. takes his cues from us. If
you just tell him you made a mistake --

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Not going to happen. Now let it go.

Matthews heads to the door, then stops and turns back.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

First break in this case, you come
straight to me.

Matthews exits. LaGuerta, holding an ace up her sleeve,
calmly returns to the work on her desk.

Masuka looks through a microscope when Batista enters.

BATISTA

This may be a total shot in the dark,
but I met this hooker last night --

MASUKA

Goin' with the pro. Now that's how
you get over the ex.

BATISTA

No, that's not what I mean.

MASUKA

Okay, so you didn't fuck her. She
blew you though, right?

BATISTA
(impatient)
Would you shut up. It was a lead.

MASUKA
On what?

BATISTA
I'll let you know if it pans out. But first, I need to know what you can tell me about amputee fetishes.

MASUKA
It's called acrotomophilia. But don't let any of them hear you call it that. Sounds like a disease. They prefer to be known as devotees.

Batista jots it down in his pad.

BATISTA
I knew you were the man to ask.

MASUKA
Not really. I prefer a girl with a Kung Fu grip. Who you should talk to is what's-his-face, Deb's boyfriend. Prosthetics guys deal with devotees all the time.

Off the WHINE of a tile saw...

41 INT. POLICE STATION - DEMO ROOM - DAY 3

41

PAN a collection of POWER TOOLS dripping viscous red liquid. Like the devil's workshop. We reach Dexter, wearing plastic coveralls and clear goggles. He dips a TILE SAW into a tray of RED PAINT and lets the blade rip, spraying the walls and ceiling with red.

After a beat, Dexter stops the blade, removes the goggles, and looks around. The walls are covered by rolls of white paper, with red spatter remarkably similar to Room 103.

DEXTER (V.O.)
No memory flashes here. No little lost boy in blood. Maybe he went back to hiding in the dormant reaches of my cerebral cortex. Here's to hoping.

RUDY
Dex!... YO', DEX!...

Dexter wheels around startled. It's a UNIFORM COP letting Rudy inside. Rudy looks around.

RUDY

So this is what you do for a living?

Dexter sets down the tile saw beside a DRUM of THEATRICAL BLOOD. The Uniform Cop leaves.

DEXTER

I'm trying to match cast-off patterns from a crime scene. A power tool was involved.

Dexter pulls off a glove, reaches into his pocket, and hands Rudy his cell phone.

RUDY

Thanks.

Rudy looks at the tile saw curiously. Several other disturbing and lethal SAWS are nearby on a table.

RUDY

A tile saw? Seems like there'd be easier ways to make a mess like this.

DEXTER

Trust me, there are. I've been here for hours.

RUDY

You know, my line of work you hear all the horror stories. Boat propellers, garbage disposals... this seems like something you'd see with a chainsaw.

DEXTER

I hear that. Problem is, this power tool was plugged into a socket.

RUDY

Guess you never used an electric chainsaw.

Off an intrigued Dexter, who clearly hasn't...

Doakes holds a briefing with a crowd of uniforms and detectives, including Debra.

DOAKES

...we're coming up empty, people.
Those numbers mean something. One.
Zero. Three.

(MORE)

DOAKES (CONT'D)

We need to find the connection and until we do, you're going to go over every page of every police report you wrote in the last six months.

A GROAN goes through the bullpen. Debra sighs, then sees --
THROUGH THE GLASS INTO THE HALLWAY

Dexter walks Rudy toward the elevator, laughing and joking. Her jaw tightens in anger.

DOAKES

That's right, that's right. I need you to burn those numbers in your brain and get moving...

INT. POLICE STATION - DEMO ROOM - DAY 3

Dexter returns from walking Rudy out. He enters his lab to find Debra waiting for him, more than a little pissed off.

DEBRA

How do you always do it?

DEXTER

(perplexed)
Do what?

Dexter begins cleaning up the area.

DEBRA

Make me feel like I'm six years old. All the time.

DEXTER

Is this about Rudy? Because, he was just picking up his cell phone.

DEBRA

Oh yeah? And where'd he leave it?

DEXTER

At my apartment.

DEBRA

What was he doing there?

DEXTER

Eating steaks?

DEBRA

And?

Dexter stops picking up, knows he's in an argument now.

DEXTER
I don't know. Drinking beer.

DEBRA
And?

DEXTER
Debra --

DEBRA
And?

DEXTER
Talking?

DEBRA
Talking! You talked. Your mouth moved and sounds came out. On the same night that I wanted to talk to you -- but you shut me out.

DEXTER
(getting it, finally)
Oh.

DEBRA
Yeah. "Oh." You don't talk to me, Dex. You've spent our entire lives keeping me at a distance. Even after you practically pass out at a crime scene. But my boyfriend shows up on your doorstep with a couple T-bones --

DEXTER
They were porterhouses.

DEBRA
Porterhouses -- and you're suddenly tossing back beers into the middle of the night.

Dexter stops arguing. He sees that Debra is really upset.

DEBRA
You're the only family I have and I barely know you. So y'know, if you're gonna eat "porterhouses" with somebody after a tough day, if somebody's gonna break through your fucking walls, Dex. I think it should be me. I think I've earned it.

Debra fights back her tears. The ball is clearly in Dexter's court. He glances at the clock on the wall.

DEXTER

I'm late to Rita's deposition.

Debra is too hurt to even respond.

DEXTER

Deb, it's hard for me, you know that.

Debra has heard it all before. But this time, it's just not good enough. She simply shakes her head and walks out. Off Dexter, realizing this won't be an easy solve...

INT. LAW OFFICE - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY 3

CLOSE on a FEMALE PROSECUTOR in the middle of a deposition.

FEMALE PROSECUTOR

Last question. According to your ex-husband, you left town with your boyfriend last weekend.

REVEAL Rita and Lawyer sitting in a conference room.

RITA

That's right. His father died.

As she glances over, PAN to Dexter sitting beside Rita for support. Dexter smiles bravely for effect.

FEMALE PROSECUTOR

Did your ex-husband have a scheduled visitation with his children during that time?

RITA

I told Paul I'd make it up to him.

FEMALE PROSECUTOR

So then he gave you permission?

RITA

No, but... I'm the one who gave Paul visitation in the first place. I'm the custodial parent. I didn't have to do that.

LAWYER

Can we have a second?
(pulls Rita aside)
(MORE)

LAWYER (CONT'D)

Why didn't you tell me you broke your visitation agreement?

RITA

I didn't know it was a big deal.

His reproachful look tells her it is a very big deal. He turns to the prosecutor.

LAWYER

I think she's answered that question, so unless there's something else.

The Female Prosecutor starts packing up.

FEMALE PROSECUTOR

That's fine. If I missed anything, we'll get to it at the psychiatric evaluation next Wednesday.

The prosecutor exits. Worried, Rita turns to her lawyer.

RITA

What? I wasn't told anything about a psychiatric evaluation.

LAWYER

It's mandatory in these cases. The psyche test determines if there's a competency hearing.

RITA

(outraged)

For me? He's the ex-con.

LAWYER

It's standard. You should be fine.

DEXTER

"Should be?" Is there a chance she could actually lose this?

LAWYER

(straight with them)

Guys, I'm handcuffed here. You violated a custody agreement. You struck your ex-husband inside your bedroom. He's got a case. Now, in order to proceed, I'm afraid I need some kind of retainer.

A besieged Rita turns to Dexter. Help!

45 INT. RUDY'S PROSTHETICS LAB - DAY 3

45

Rudy works on an artificial foot. Surrounded by prosthetic tools, partial limbs and paraphernalia. Batista steps through the open door and extends his hand.

BATISTA

You Rudy Cooper? Angel Batista. I work with your girlfriend, Deb.

RUDY

(shakes)

Oh hey. Nice to meet you.

BATISTA

I'd like to ask you a few questions, if you don't mind.

RUDY

Sure. Let me just shut the door.

Rudy walks to the door, covertly glances down the hall to see if anyone saw Batista enter, then closes the door.

RUDY

Would this be related to a case?

BATISTA

You could say that.

RUDY

Wow. Okay, so fire away.

Rudy casually returns to his work on the artificial foot, his back to Batista.

BATISTA

I ran into this lady with a prosthetic hand, a call-girl actually. Said she had a very unique client... an amputee devotee.

As Batista talks, Rudy's hand finds a heavy METAL ROD among the junk on his work counter. He slowly wraps his fingers around the metal, ready to strike.

RUDY

You have a lead on this client?

BATISTA

That's the bitch of it. Not a goddamn clue. Except the freaky sex stuff.

(MORE)

BATISTA (CONT'D)

I thought you might be able to steer
me toward some of those weirdos.

Relieved, Rudy releases his grip on the metal rod. He turns
to Batista and smiles, warm and gracious as can be.

RUDY

Afraid I got into this business to
help people get better. Not help 'em
get off.

BATISTA

I'm sure Debra will be glad to hear
that.

RUDY

But I'd be happy to talk to a few
colleagues, come up with a contact
list for you.

BATISTA

Oh, that'd be great.

RUDY

Hey, how often you get a chance to
help catch a bad guy, right?
(feeling him out)
You in a rush for this information?

BATISTA

No no, I'm good. I'm chasing a long
shot really. Just give me a call at
the station when you got something.

Batista hands Rudy a BUSINESS CARD.

RUDY

Will do.

Batista glances around in genuine wonder at the menagerie of
prosthetics gear and walks out. When he's gone, Rudy opens
a drawer -- revealing bottles of multi-colored FINGERNAIL
POLISH -- drops the card inside, and closes the drawer.

CLOSE on the front door. It bursts open and Astor charges
into the house, followed by Paul, with a sleepy Cody in his
arms, and the Court Supervisor. Rita joins them from the
kitchen area. Dexter watches from the sink.

ASTOR

Mommy, look at my Henna tattoo!

RITA

Wow.

(concerned)

How much candy have you had?

ASTOR

Lots!

She bolts off to the bedroom. Rita turns to Paul.

RITA

Thanks. She'll never get to bed now.

PAUL

She'll come down soon. This one already crashed.

CODY

(from Paul's arms)

Mom? Can my Dad read me a story tonight?

RITA

I don't think so, honey.

CODY

Please?

Rita glances at the Court Supervisor, watching intently. Is Rita being judged right now? She has no idea how it works.

RITA

Okay. One story. But pajamas on and brush teeth first.

PAUL

Get your duds on, bud. The Spiderman ones I bought you.

COURT SUPERVISOR

(to Paul)

I'll get him ready. You've still got twenty minutes.

Paul sets Cody down and he sleepily trudges to his bedroom, followed by the Court Supervisor. Rita notes the exchange. Paul pulls Rita aside.

PAUL

It doesn't have to be this way, Rita. We can make it easy on each other. I'm willing to drop the charges. If you agree to unsupervised visitation.

RITA

Fuck you.

Rita heads into the bedroom. Paul shakes his head. Women.
Spotting Dexter in the kitchen, Paul meanders over.

IN THE KITCHEN

Dexter dries dishes at the counter. Paul walks up.

PAUL

Y'know, Dexy, I don't believe your girlfriend appreciates the gravity of her situation. If she loses this case, she could lose the kids.

DEXTER

That won't happen.

PAUL

Never say won't. We live in a world full of wills. Wills and wonders, that's what I'm teaching my children. They are my children, too. Something Rita seems to forget.

Dexter just stands there slowly drying. He unconsciously snaps the stem of a wine glass in the towel.

PAUL

Okay, I'll be the first to admit, I've made some mistakes. But I've learned from them. Hey, I'm sober...

(holds out a forearm)

No needle marks. I got the fucking Alaskan pipeline running through these veins. All thanks to those two little glow sticks of love in the other room. My heart beats for those kids...

(leans in menacingly)

And if you or that skinny bitch try to screw with what's mine... I swear to God, I don't care who I have to hurt --

Without warning, Dexter rears back and drives his elbow into Paul's BANDAGED HEAD WOUND. It's a savage blow Paul didn't see coming, and he drops like a brick. Dexter stares down.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Harry's first rule was don't get emotionally involved. I think this is why.

RITA (O.C.)

Astor, brush your teeth, now!

The voice snaps Dexter out of it. Dexter thinks quick, turns and sees the back door...

47 EXT. RITA'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT 3 47

Dexter runs across the grass, with Paul hoisted over his shoulder. He labors under Paul's weight.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Someone once said it's easier dealing with other people's problems than your own. They were wrong.

48 EXT. RITA'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT 3 48

In a SERIES OF CUTS, Dexter fishes Paul's car keys from his pocket, pops Paul's trunk, and dumps Paul inside. Climbing into the car, he puts the gear in neutral and lets it roll into the street. Next, Dexter starts the engine and screeches around the corner.

49 EXT. RITA'S HOUSE - BACKYARD - NIGHT 3 49

Dexter runs back the opposite way across the yard.

50 INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT 3 50

Rita looks around the kitchen.

RITA

(calling)

Paul? Dexter?

The back door opens and Dexter enters, carrying the empty kitchen garbage can. If he's a little sweaty and out of breath, Rita doesn't notice.

RITA

Where were you?

DEXTER

Taking out the trash.

RITA

Did you see Paul?

DEXTER

When I was in the side yard, I thought I heard the front door open.

Dexter looks down at the kitchen floor and spots a DROP OF BLOOD. Uh oh. From the living room, Cody looks out the window.

CODY

Hey, my Dad's car is gone!

Rita heads to the living room. Dexter quickly slips his foot out of his shoe and sops up the offending blood with his sock. In the living room, Rita stares out the window.

RITA
Well where did he go?

INT. MOTOR COURT LODGE - PAUL'S ROOM - NIGHT 3

REVEAL Paul lying unconscious on a white sheet, naked from the waist up, arms restrained by his side. TILT UP to find Dexter staring down, savagely contemplating him.

DEXTER
Let's face it, Paul. You are a problem.

For a moment Dexter considers the fun he could have with Paul. He slips on latex gloves. Is he going for a saw...?

DEXTER
And like most problems, you need to go away...

Dexter adjusts a bedside lamp for light, then reaches into a satchel of killing saws and knives and pulls out a SYRINGE. He taps syringe and clears the air bubbles.

DEXTER
Permanently.

As Dexter leans over Paul with the syringe...

OMITTED

EXT. MIAMI (STOCK) - DAY 4 (MORNING)

To establish.

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - DAY 4 (MORNING)

A gathering of officers and detectives -- including, Debra, Doakes and Batista -- cluster around a TV monitor.

ON TELEVISION

LaGuerta talks to reporters in front of the station.

LAGUERTA
...the Ice Truck Killer case has been re-opened. Officially. We have new forensic evidence that shows the DNA from the blood at the Marina View Hotel matches DNA from his victims.

BACK IN THE BULLPEN

The detectives start buzzing over the news.

BATISTA

Shit. I hope she told the Captain.

BACK ON TELEVISION

A reporter calls out a question.

REPORTER

What about Neil Perry? Wasn't he supposed to be the Ice Truck Killer?

LAGUERTA

Those questions should be directed to Captain Matthews. He's been personally handling the Perry case.

BACK IN THE BULLPEN

More buzzing. A steely voice cuts through the chatter --

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS (O.S.)

Who knew?

REVEAL Captain Matthews standing behind the detectives now, watching the news on the TV screen.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Who knew about this?

DOAKES

This is the first we're hearing about it, Captain.

Everyone in the room quiets. Tries to avoid the Captain's withering stare. Off Matthews, doing a slow burn...

INT. POLICE STATION - LAGUERTA'S OFFICE - DAY 4 (MORNING)

LaGuerta sits at her desk, quietly filling out paperwork. Captain Matthews enters and closes the door. For a moment, the two just stare at each other. Matthews stays calm.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Maria, you overplayed your hand.

LAGUERTA

I gave you a chance to make this right. I told you --

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

You. Don't tell me. Shit. This is my department. I made you lieutenant.

(MORE)

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS (CONT'D)

Me. You were just another spic
detective.

LAGUERTA

Nice, Tom. That's real nice. The
true colors come out.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Oh, I got colors you've never seen in
any Crayola box, Maria. But you're
about to.

(scary calm smile)

Enjoy this office. While it's still
yours.

Matthews turns and exits. Off LaGuerta, suddenly unsure of
what she just unleashed...

INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 4

Dexter sets down dinner plates around the table. He warily
keeps his eye on the front door.

DEXTER'S POV

Rita talks with her Lawyer in the foyer. After a beat, the
Lawyer smiles, shakes her hand and exits. Rita closes the
door then slumps against it, sobbing.

Dexter approaches worried.

DEXTER

What happened? What's wrong?

For a beat, Rita can't find the words.

RITA

It's Paul...

And then, her tears turn into a weird, wonderful laughter.

RITA

I don't know all the details, but he
violated Florida's Three Strike Law.
He's back in jail.

Astor and Cody run out from their room, drawn by the noise.

CODY

What's so funny, Mom?

ASTOR

Yeah, why are you laughing?

RITA

I don't know. I'm just so... get over here.

She pulls her children into a tightly wound ball of hugs.

DEXTER (V.O.)

It is truly amazing, the things you can do when you put your mind to it. No problem is insurmountable.

Off Dexter, watching proudly...

FLASHBACK TO:

A57 INT. MOTOR COURT LODGE - PAUL'S ROOM - NIGHT 3

A57

Paul lies on the bed, looking stoned. His arm is TIED OFF. A SYRINGE OF HEROIN hangs from his vein. A GUN, a BAG OF HEROIN, RUBBER TUBING, a BLACKENED SPOON, and a LIGHTER TORCH are sprawled on a bedside table. There's a POUNDING on the door.

COP'S VOICE

Police! Open up!

Paul stirs awake, blurry, incoherent. The TV BLARES and RED POLICE LIGHTS flash through the curtained window.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Paul did need to go away. But death wasn't the answer. Life in prison will do just fine, thanks to Batista's heroin bust. For now at least, the Code of Harry remains unbroken.

Paul looks around in confusion, his mind still mired in a heroin fog. The silhouettes of two cops are at the door...

RESUME:

B57 INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 4

B57

Smiling, Dexter watches Rita. She turns toward him.

RITA

C'mere you. You're part of this family, too.

With a humble grin, Dexter joins the hug-fest.

57 INT. BATISTA'S APARTMENT - PARKING GARAGE - NIGHT 4 57

Batista pulls into his parking space and gets out. He opens the back seat and grabs a couple bags of groceries. As he stands, Batista sees a reflection in the glass behind him --

REVEAL

An eerie FIGURE -- face hidden by a flesh-toned stocking and cap over his head -- raises a WICKED KNIFE to cut Batista's throat.

With no time to think, Batista instinctively THRUSTS his head backward into the face of his attacker, knocking him off balance -- but not before the attacker DRIVES his knife deep into the side of Batista, who drops his groceries.

The attacker falls into an SUV, setting off the CAR ALARM. Batista, bleeding heavily and collapsing, fumbles for his gun.

TWO YOUNG MEN

Horsing around and laughing, emerge from a stairwell and see the attacker climbing to his feet and reaching for a knife.

THE ATTACKER

Blood soaks through the stocking, where Batista head-butted his mouth. The attacker sees the young men running his way. He needs to finish the job with Batista, but realizes he doesn't have time. With no options, he takes off running.

As the two young men reach Batista, who lies on the ground in a fast-spreading pool of blood...

58 INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - NIGHT 4 58

Debra and Doakes gather their things to head out.

DEBRA

I heard they're dropping the Ice Truck murder charges on Neil Perry.

DOAKES

Yeah, I'm sure he'll be filing a law suit any minute. More shit for us to deal with.

DEBRA

Speaking of which, look out for the reporters on your way out. They're still waiting for a comment from the Captain.

Doakes glances over at the way the shadow hits her face in the darkened bullpen. Beautiful.

DOAKES

So... things still rocky at home?

DEBRA

Oh, you mean Rudy? I'm not calling until he apologizes. I'm done being second choice.

DOAKES

Good for you, Morgan.

(hesitant beat)

Look, if you're not doing anything tonight, Masuka invited us to the Bel Canto.

Debra looks up and smiles. For a moment, Doakes thinks the smile is for him. Then he looks over his shoulder to see --

RUDY

standing in the hallway with a bouquet of WHITE ROSES, waiting for Debra. She stares at him. He stares back. Rudy enters the bullpen, and Doakes quietly slips away.

RUDY

For you.

He hold out the roses.

DEBRA

Too late. You blew me off.

RUDY

I didn't blow you off. This is the first chance I've had to come talk.

Rudy sets the roses on her desk.

DEBRA

I'm too tired to talk.

RUDY

So let's just go home. Fall into bed.

DEBRA

Why, Rudy? I mean... fucking why? You didn't wanna "fall into bed" the other night. After I laid my heart out on the phone. You wanted to hang out with my brother.

RUDY

I was confused.

DEBRA

Yeah, well I'm not confused. That's the problem. I know what I want.

RUDY

I was confused because I love you.

DEBRA

(still rolling)

What I want is very simple and -- what did you just say?

RUDY

I love you.

DEBRA

Don't even try to --

Rudy steps close and kisses her. Debra gives in to it. The kiss grows in passion. Suddenly, Debra pulls away.

DEBRA

Oh fuck...

RUDY

What?

DEBRA

I love you, too.

They kiss again, harder, more passionately. Rudy winces.

RUDY

Ow.

DEBRA

What happened to your lip?

REVEAL a trickle of blood from the corner of Rudy's lip.

RUDY

It's nothing. Mishap with a tool at the workshop.

DEBRA

Well, let's get you home and take care of it.

She wraps her arm around his waist and they head out.

A59 INT. ELEVATOR - NIGHT 4

A59

CLOSE on Dexter, sweating.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Rita's ex-husband taught me something.
Problems don't go away by themselves.
Sometimes they require... creative
solutions. I found one for Paul. Now
it's my turn.

The elevator DINGS and the door opens. With dread, Dexter
stares out at --

59 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT 4

59

Dexter nervously steps off the elevator and walks down the
long hallway. His heart pounds.

DEXTER (V.O.)

So this is doom. I've been the
architect of so much of it, it's only
fair I should know what all the fuss
is about.

He reaches the door and stares at the room number: 103.

DEXTER (V.O.)

He left me this room for a reason.
Five women gave their blood, their
lives, for this moment. There's only
one way to find out why.

He ducks under the YELLOW POLICE TAPE and opens the door.

60 INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - ROOM 103 - NIGHT 4 (CONTINUOUS)

60

Dexter stands at the threshold.

DEXTER (V.O.)

The belly of the beast.

Dexter takes a deep breath and enters, eyes cast downward.
He maneuvers through the scaffolding and sits on the floor
as the boy in his memory sat. Dexter raises his head to
look at the bloody walls. Instantly, the room SWIRLS --

FLASHBACK TO:

61 INT. DARK ENCLOSED SPACE

61

*The boy sitting in blood wails. We see the whole picture
this time.*

The images are clearer, the details in sharper focus. A DEAD MAN lies nearby, face down in inch-deep blood. Around him are more DEAD BODIES. And BODY PARTS.

THREE-YEAR-OLD DEXTER'S POV

A WOMAN, sprayed in blood, is held by a LARGE COLUMBIAN MAN.

WOMAN

Honey, don't cry. Please don't cry.

Another MAN steps into view and strikes the woman. She collapses into the blood. Three-year-old Dexter wails.

WOMAN

Don't kill me. Please. I'll give it back. I swear...

A THIRD MAN pulls the cord on a CHAINSAW. Over and over.

WOMAN

*No! No no! Not in front of my baby!
(desperate to Dexter)
Don't look! Don't look, honey! Cover
you eyes!*

Finally the engine catches and the blade ROARS.

THREE-YEAR-OLD DEXTER

Mommy! Mommy...!

We hear her SCREAMS. The chainsaw hits bone and GRINDS. As the blood SPRAYS THE WALLS around the helpless boy...

RESUME:

INT. MARINA VIEW HOTEL - ROOM 103 - NIGHT 4 (CONTINUOUS)

An OVERHEAD SHOT of Dexter. Lying on his back. Looking up at us. With tears streaming down his cheeks --

SLAM TO BLACK.

THE END