

D E X T E R

Episode 112

"Born Free"

(formerly "Black Heart Optional")

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DEXTER

"Born Free"

1 BLACKNESS. 1

Slowly the blackness FADES. Something undulates beneath us. Rippling black oil. Shimmering lights. We don't know what.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I've lived in darkness a long time.
Over the years, my eyes adjusted.
Until the dark became my world, and I
could see.

The reflection of a HUMAN FIGURE in water takes shape.

DEXTER (V.O.)
But then Rudy turned on the light. He
flooded my memory and now I'm blind.

TILT UP from the water to reveal DEXTER standing on the edge of a pier, out of breath, staring desperately to sea. The glare of a LIGHT POST behind him nearly blinds us. We're --

2 EXT. MARINA - NIGHT 1 2

His options dwindling, Dexter turns away and runs back down the pier.

DEXTER (V.O.)
I don't have much time. Or to be more
accurate, my sister doesn't have much
time. He wants me to find them, but
where do I look? I can't think. It's
too bright.

As Dexter races past, STOP on a harsh marina LIGHT, and the screen FLARES TO WHITE --

3 EXT. YACHT - HELM - NIGHT 1 3

FLARE FROM WHITE to RUDY'S pleased face. The wind blows back his hair, his eyes bright with anticipation as he captains the yacht across open sea into the blackness of night. After a beat, he cuts the engine and hops down to --

THE DECK, where he nonchalantly steps around the unconscious body of DEBRA. Her hands are bound behind her with duct tape, her legs bound, as well. Rudy unzips a large DUFFLE BAG, his back to Debra.

CLOSE ON DEBRA'S FACE -- suddenly, her eyes open. A split second as she remembers where she is.

How she came to be here. Tears of humiliation, shame and, of course, terror spring to her eyes.

Struggling against her bonds, she looks around for a weapon. Rudy hears and looks over his shoulder, smiling pleasantly.

RUDY

Let me know if the tape's too tight.
No need to be uncomfortable.

DEBRA

(sitting up)
Why are you doing this?

RUDY

Oh, I wouldn't want to spoil the
surprise.

She strains to see what he's doing. He notices.

RUDY

Just checking supplies. Things moved
a little faster than I expected.

DEBRA'S POV - RUDY'S DUFFLE BAG

He digs through the bag, stuffed with clothes and personal belongings, and pulls out deadly knives, a hacksaw. Finds a roll of duct tape.

RUDY

Can never have enough of this.

He separates the items into a pile.

BACK ON DEBRA, trying desperately to calm her fears. To think rationally. A beat.

DEBRA

This isn't you.

RUDY

Pretty sure it is.

DEBRA

No. There's more. I've seen it.

He looks at her, sees her searching his face for the man she loved. Emotion, concern, begins to fill his expression.

RUDY

Don't. I don't want to talk about it.

She sees a shred of humanity in him, recognizes the man she fell in love with. Clings to it.

DEBRA
You don't have to do this. I know
part of you doesn't want to.

RUDY
I never wanted to hurt you...

DEBRA
I know...

RUDY
(subtle shift)
Does this make it easier for you? I
could keep going.

His tone isn't cruel, just observational, but she realizes he's acting. She gets exactly how sick he really is.

DEBRA
Jesus. Jesus Christ.

He shrugs, oh well, he tried. His sweet expression vanishes with sociopathic swiftness, and he turns back to his work.

RUDY
Nothing to be ashamed of, Deb. You're
not the only one who bought it.
You're just the only one who bought it
so completely. Lucky for me.

She fights tears, not wanting to give him the satisfaction of showing her hurt.

DEBRA
Rudy Cooper isn't even your fucking
name, is it?

RUDY
No, but he died for a good cause.

DEBRA
So will you.

He just laughs heartily.

DEBRA
You must want to get caught. You
kidnapped a cop this time. Not some
invisible hooker. A cop.

RUDY

(grins excitedly)

All part of the plan. Hard to believe it's about to come to fruition. Lotta years on this one. Only hours away now.

DEBRA

What fucking plan?

RUDY

Don't worry. You'll find out. Fact, you'll be right in the middle of all the fun.

Whistling, he climbs back to the helm. Off Debra's fear --

INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 1

Dexter enters and looks around. He walks into the kitchen --

DEXTER (V.O.)

He wouldn't have taken Deb unless he left me everything a clever monster would need in order to find him.

-- and opens the freezer door... no new Barbies.

DEXTER

(aloud)

Clues. Somewhere.

CUT TO: Dexter removes the air conditioner cover and peers inside. Nothing. CUT TO: Dexter, behind his computer, checks his Craigslist ad. "No New Messages." Damn. He rises from his desk, turns around, and surveys his place. Desperation mounting. And then Dexter seriously gets busy.

In a SERIES OF CUTS, he rips apart his apartment... flips through photo albums... pulls up cushions... yanks out drawers. Dexter turns his tidy home upside down searching for a clue from Rudy, when suddenly he hears something very odd. The golden voice of ANDY WILLIAMS, singing...

ANDY WILLIAMS

*Born free, as free as the wind blows.
As free as the grass grows. Born free
to follow your heart...*

Dexter stops cold and turns to the computer to see a SCREEN SAVER dissolving through images of LIONS ATTACKING PREY.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Seems I have a new screen saver. I
knew he wouldn't leave me stranded.
But "Born Free"?

Dexter picks up a CRIME SCENE PHOTO of the hotel bloodbath.

DEXTER (V.O.)
(realizing)
Of course. Thanks to Rudy, now I know
where dearly disturbed Dexter was
born.

QUICK FLASH:

A tearful LAURA MOSER begs her son, LITTLE DEXTER, 3, not to look. A COLOMBIAN MAN starts a chain saw.

ANDY WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
*Stay free, where no walls divide you.
You're free as the roaring tide, so
there's no need to hide...*

The sound of a chain saw hitting bone. Dexter's mother SCREAMING. Off Little Dexter, crying --

RESUME:

DEXTER (V.O.)
Born free... of all that's human.
That's where I'll find him.

He pulls out a NEWSPAPER STORY. The headline reads: "SHIPPING YARD MASSACRE," with a photo of a Miami shipping yard. As we PUSH INTO the overwhelming image of hundreds of cargo containers, until they FILL THE SCREEN --

EXT. YACHT - DECK - NIGHT 1

Rudy turns off the last lights on the boat. Off the bow, we see, in the very far distance, the twinkling LIGHTS of an INDUSTRIAL HARBOR. Rudy climbs over the rail onto --

A SMALL ZODIAC CRAFT

He looks back at the yacht, admiring it --

RUDY
My, she's yar.

-- and tosses the boat's keys into the water.

RUDY

Whatever that means. Saw it in a
movie once. Wait -- didn't we watch
that together?

He looks down at DEBRA, sitting in the Zodiac, still bound.

DEBRA

Fuck you.

Rudy just smiles, then pushes off, starts the Zodiac motor
and pilots it toward the harbor.

RUDY

Settle in, it's further away than it
looks.

Off the silhouette of the abandoned YACHT, a ghost --

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - DAY 2 - MORNING (DAWN)

BATISTA lies in his hospital bed. He has been moved to a
ward. Next to a wacky toothless INDIGENT MAN, who won't
stop babbling. Batista tries his best to ignore.

INDIGENT MAN

She knows! She knows!

LAGUERTA and DOAKES enter.

BATISTA

Oh, thank God.

(notices)

What -- no *pastelitos*? I'm starving
here. You promised, Boss.

LAGUERTA

Boss? Not anymore.

BATISTA

Sorry, forgot. Slumming with the rank
and file, huh?

LAGUERTA

Could be worse.

DOAKES

(all business)

Listen, we need your help.

INDIGENT MAN

She knows! God help us, she knows!

Batista indicates the crazy man the next bed over.

BATISTA

All fucking night with that. Stuck in a ward with a nutbag. So much for our goddamn police medical insurance.

DOAKES

(on point)

So. Masuka says you were following a lead on the Ice Truck Killer when you were attacked.

BATISTA

Yeah, a hooker with a prosthetic hand. Some john painted the nails different colors, but it didn't go nowhere.

LAGUERTA

Except yesterday she got cut up by the Ice Truck Killer.

BATISTA

(stunned)

Holy shit. Monique was a victim?

LAGUERTA

We're operating on the theory that he found out you were on his trail.

DOAKES

If we're right, you got stabbed for a reason. And it wasn't no carjacking.

BATISTA

How'd he find out about me? No one knew what I was doing 'cept Masuka.

LAGUERTA

There must have been someone else.

BATISTA

(shrugs)

I consulted Rudy. You know, Debra's boyfriend. He's a prosthetics guy.

Doakes and LaGuerta exchange a look. Batista catches it.

BATISTA

But that's crazy. Right?

DOAKES

She's been AWOL since heading out last night to see him. She was supposed to come back and help me canvass.

LAGUERTA

That's not like her. Angel, we have to --

BATISTA

Go. Fuck, just go!

Doakes and LaGuerta hustle out. Off Batista, frustrated he can't go with --

INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - DAY 2 - MORNING (DAWN)

PAN the messy apartment. Low orange light slices through the room, creating long shadows. FIND Dexter hunched over his desk, holding a magnifying glass over a newspaper. He looks like he's been up all night.

DEXTER (V.O.)

There are roughly five thousand cargo containers in the Port of Miami. Finding the one where my mother was butchered took a bit of magic.

THROUGH THE MAGNIFYING GLASS

We see a NEWSPAPER PHOTO of the cargo box where Dexter's mother was killed, police gathered around. The magnifying glass slides to the corner of the container -- to reveal a small IDENTIFICATION CODE painted on the side: "CBAN-348 9."

DEXTER

Presto.

Dexter smiles. As he jots down the number on a pad of paper, there's a KNOCK on the door. Dexter moves to the curtain and peers outside. What he sees makes him unhappy.

AT THE FRONT DOOR

Dexter opens the door. LaGuerta enters, followed by Doakes.

DOAKES

Told you he was here.

(to Dexter)

There a reason you're not answering your phone?

DEXTER

Ambien.

LaGuerta looks around the messy apartment.

LAGUERTA

What happened here, Dexter?

DEXTER

I was looking for the remote.

DOAKES

Where's your sister? She never came back to work last night, and she's not at her apartment.

DEXTER

I truly don't know, Sergeant.

LAGUERTA

(breaking the news)

We think her boyfriend Rudy might be connected to the Ice Truck Killer. We're working on a warrant right now to search his home.

Dexter tries to react like that's devastating news.

DEXTER

Oh my... no. Wow --

DOAKES

(not buying it)

Cut the crap. You know something, goddammit. What?

LAGUERTA

James --

DOAKES

I saw him last night. Skulking in the lab. Ordering secret blood tests.

LaGuerta, surprised, turns to Dexter.

LAGUERTA

What kind of tests?

DEXTER

I found a type match for the blood in Batista's collar.

LAGUERTA

Whose was it?

DEXTER

(shit)

Rudy's.

Hearing that, Doakes angrily takes a step toward Dexter --

DOAKES

Mother --

-- but LaGuerta immediately stops him.

LAGUERTA

Knock it off.

DOAKES

He fucking knew all along!

Dexter tries to explain.

DEXTER

Rudy lied about a cut on his lip,
Angel head-butted his attacker in the
face... it was just a wild hunch.

LAGUERTA

Why didn't you tell us?

DEXTER

I couldn't crush Deb's love life on a
hunch. I had to get the facts.

DOAKES

Well here's the fucking facts -- if he
kills her it's your fault. Now what
else do you know?

DEXTER

That's all.

DOAKES

He's lying.

LAGUERTA

Give him a break, James. This is his
sister, alright?

DOAKES

Yeah, and if he knows what's good for
her, he'll sit his ass home and answer
the goddamn phone when it rings.

Doakes angrily exits. LaGuerta puts a hand on Dexter.

LAGUERTA

Call us if you hear anything.

Dexter walks her to the front door. HOLD on Dexter, who watches her for a beat, then looks out at the sparkling bay.

DEXTER (V.O.)

The truth is I wish they could help.
But I prefer my sister alive, not in
small bloodless pieces. Rudy wants me
to find him alone.

As Dexter shuts the door on us --

INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 2 (MORNING)

CLOSE ON THE PHONE as it rings. RITA enters and picks it up. We HEAR the kids playing in the other room.

RITA

Hello?

PAUL (O.S.)

Don't hang up.

RITA

(lowering her voice)
Paul? The kids don't want to talk to
you right now. You have to give them
more time.

INTERCUT:

INT. PRISON - HALLWAY - DAY 2 - MORNING (CONTINUOUS)

PAUL, in an orange prison jumpsuit, talks on the pay phone.

PAUL

This isn't about them. I mean, it is,
but -- it's about how I was arrested.

RITA

With a needle in your arm. I know all
about it.

PAUL

Well I don't. Look... I accept
responsibility for all the shit I've
pulled. But Rita, I'm still in the
program. I kicked the hard stuff.

RITA

Apparently not.

PAUL

I was clean! Swear on my kids' lives. And it's been driving me crazy, how I got from your house one minute, to my motel room the next, outta my mind on junk.

RITA

It's called a black-out.

PAUL

It's called a set-up.

RITA

Oh, for the love of --

PAUL

The last thing I remember is standing in the kitchen, talking to Dexter. He coulda smacked me over the head and dragged me out of the house, probably through the back yard --

RITA

You really are a piece of work.

PAUL

I'm telling you, Dexter isn't who you think he --

She hangs up. Shakes her head. So happy he's locked up.

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - DAY 2 (MORNING)

CLOSE on a FACILITIES WORKER putting up a new plaque on LaGuerta's office door, which says: "Lt. Esmee Pascal."

LAGUERTA (O.C.)

...his name's Rudy Cooper. You might have met him -- he was dating Officer Morgan.

PAN to LaGuerta at a bullpen desk (which holds a couple unpacked boxes from her office), holding an employee ID PHOTO of Rudy Cooper, the new lead suspect for the Ice Truck murders. Concerned DETECTIVES and OFFICERS gather around.

LAGUERTA

She was last seen sixteen hours ago driving to meet him at the Miami Beach Marina. We need to canvass the entire area, check boat rentals, you know the drill. I already sent a team to his prosthetics lab at the hospital.

DETECTIVE SIMMS hangs up the phone.

DETECTIVE SIMMS

The judge just signed off on the warrant for Cooper's apartment.

LaGuerta grabs her bag, others grab their coats --

LAGUERTA

Let's take it apart. Gary, Sergio, Kim -- you're with me.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS (O.C.)

Your attention please!

They all stop, and turn to see --

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS enter the bullpen in the company of ESMEE PASCAL, 40s, Haitian-American. Dignified but no-bullshit. Observant as hell.

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Like to introduce our new lieutenant, Esmee Pascal. She agreed to put her vacation on hold to come in early and provide some much needed leadership at this time of crisis. Lieutenant, you're on.

Lt. Pascal steps forward.

LT. PASCAL

I understand we have a new suspect in the Ice Truck Killer case.

Everyone looks to LaGuerta, their leader.

LAGUERTA

We're on our way now to search his place.

LT. PASCAL

And you are...?

LAGUERTA

Maria LaGuerta. We have an officer missing, so we need to move fast --

LT. PASCAL

I thought Sgt. Doakes was running the investigation.

LAGUERTA

He's out following a lead.

LT. PASCAL

What lead?

LAGUERTA

He said he'd let me know if it came to anything. Now if you'll excuse me --

LT. PASCAL

I can handle it from here, Maria.
(to the squad)
Who here can bring me up to speed on the way over?

She's so commanding the squad is compelled to follow.

DETECTIVE SIMMS

I can, I guess.

She tosses him her keys, as she grabs her bag and coat --

LT. PASCAL

You're driving.
(to LaGuerta)
Feel free to join us when you track down your partner.
(to the squad)
Let's go, people.

As the squad mobilizes, Lt. Pascal turns to Matthews.

LT. PASCAL

Care to join us, Captain?

CAPTAIN MATTHEWS

Seems like you've got everything under control.

Lt. Pascal leads the squad out, leaving LaGuerta to smolder as she watches Matthews saunter away with a small smile --

11 EXT. OUTSIDE THE SHIPPING YARDS - DAY 2 (MORNING) 11

OVERHEAD SHOT - cargo cranes loom like abandoned Star Wars props, overlooking acres of metal cargo containers. Rows upon rows of them creating a giant maze.

DEXTER (V.O.)
It's in there somewhere. My
birthplace. Now what?

CRANE DOWN to find Dexter, next to his car, studying the shipping yard from the other side of a chain-link fence.

Dexter pops his trunk and pulls out a pair of BOLT CUTTERS. As he heads to a secluded section of fence, his eyes search the area for any sign of security.

DEXTER (V.O.)
No cameras, no patrols, no dogs. With
billions spent on homeland security,
it can't be as easy as a couple snips.

Dexter starts cutting. He pauses -- no alarms sound.

DEXTER (V.O.)
So much for the war on terror.

He resumes cutting an opening. A beat later, his CELL PHONE RINGS. Dexter quickly checks the caller I.D., which says: RITA. He presses IGNORE, puts his phone away, and continues cutting.

DEXTER'S VOICE
Hello...

12 EXT. RITA'S HOUSE - DAY 2 - MORNING (CONTINUOUS) 12

Rita, both annoyed and concerned, holds her phone to her ear, watching ASTOR and CODY run around the front lawn.

DEXTER'S VOICE
Please leave Dexter Morgan a message.

RITA
(after the BEEP)
Hi. We're waiting for you. Remember?
You said you'd take the kids to I-HOP?
You were supposed to be here half hour
ago.

Astor and Cody run over --

ASTOR
Is he almost here?

CODY
I want chocolate chip pancakes!

She shushes them and they run off.

RITA
Okay, well... I guess I'll take them.
This is so unlike you, Dexter. I hope
everything's alright.

And she hangs up. Off Rita, feeling something off --

13 EXT. SHIPPING YARD - DAY 2 13

On the perimeter of the cargo containers, a DOCK MANAGER
talks to a TRUCK DRIVER, drinking coffee, shooting the shit.

TRUCK DRIVER
I was supposed to pick up from plug 3-
6-3 but there's nothing there. What
the fuck?

DOCK MANAGER
New night manager's still learning the
ropes. Might'a put it in wrong.

A STACK OF PALLETS

Dexter peers out from behind the stack, eyeing a COMPUTER
that's mounted on a rolling stand, not far from the men.
Taking a chance, Dexter creeps out and rolls the computer
back behind the pallets.

Out of view now, Dexter quickly punches in the ID code he
jotted down: "CBAN-3489."

DEXTER (V.O.)
Finding a needle in a haystack isn't
hard when every straw's computerized.
(reading the screen)
"Reefer Yard, Plug 4-3-6."

He stealthily slips away.

14 EXT. SHIPPING YARD - CARGO CONTAINERS - DAY 2 14

FOLLOW Dexter as he hurries through a deep valley of cargo
boxes, searching for the plug number. They loom over him,
casting shadows, stirring fear.

DEXTER (V.O.)

I don't like this place. Something nameless was born here. Something that lives in the darkest hidey-hole of the thing called Dexter.

He rounds a corner. See numbers on the pavement in the low 400 range. He's getting closer. SLOW as we reach... 436. Dexter stops in front of a REFRIGERATED CARGO CONTAINER, with the same ID code, now faded and chipped, from the photo.

His heart hammering, his breath rapid, Dexter steps closer to the door and --

DEXTER'S POV -- THE CONTAINER DOOR

It BURSTS open in SLOW MOTION. Out steps --

HARRY, 30s, in uniform. He carries THREE-YEAR-OLD DEXTER, wrapped in a blanket, clinging to him. Harry walks toward Dexter, standing in the middle of a living memory. Harry's face is grim, having just witnessed the most horrific thing he's ever seen. Harry calls to someone behind Dexter.

HARRY

Get in there! Somebody else get the hell in there now!

Dexter turns... to see two parked patrol cars, circa 1973, with LIGHTS flashing. Three OFFICERS holding weapons have taken up defensive positions behind their open doors. On Harry's command, one of them splits off and races into the cargo box.

Harry stops to comfort Little Dexter, right in front of adult Dexter.

HARRY

It's alright, little guy. You're safe now. Nothing will hurt you -- I promise.

Little Dexter wraps his arms around Harry's neck and holds him tighter. Dexter watches them walk away -- and VANISH. Along with the patrol cars and officers.

Dexter turns back to face the door again. It's closed. We're back to REALITY. Dexter walks to the container door, takes a breath --

DEXTER

Okay Deb... don't be dead.

-- and pulls it open. What he sees shocks him.

DEXTER'S POV - INSIDE THE CONTAINER

It's stacked to the ceiling with BANANAS.

BACK ON DEXTER

His face falls at the sight of this completely dead end.

DEXTER

Shit.

Reeling, Dexter closes the container door, WIPING TO REVEAL Doakes standing on the other side.

DOAKES

Surprise motherfucker.

Doakes grabs Dexter and shoves him against a container.

DEXTER

(surprised)

You're following me now?

DOAKES

You better have a hell of a reason for being here.

DEXTER

I'm looking for my sister.

DOAKES

In a cargo box?

DEXTER

I'm kinda working on a theory.

DOAKES

You forget you work for the fucking cops? We like theories. Come on, asshole. Spin me a story.

Dexter stares at Doakes evenly, too focused on Debra to engage his usual disguise.

DEXTER

What I do on my time is my business.

DOAKES

(smiles)

Yeah, me too. And I'm on my time right now.

(MORE)

DOAKES (CONT'D)

There's no lieutenant here to save
your ass. It's just you and me,
Morgan. So don't fuck with me.

DEXTER

Okay, you got me. I ordered furniture
from Thailand and I couldn't wait for
delivery --

Abruptly, Doakes PUNCHES Dexter in the gut, knocking him
back. Doakes comes at him again, but Dexter dodges the blow
and displays some martial arts skill to strike Doakes, then
strikes him again. As Doakes climbs to his feet he sees the
dark truth in Dexter's eyes --

DOAKES

Fucking lab geek, my ass.

DOCK MANAGER

Hey!! Godammit --

The Dock Manager races over and gets between them.

DOCK MANAGER

What the hell is going on here?
(into radio)
Security! I got --

DOAKES

(flashes his badge)
Miami-Metro P.D.

DOCK MANAGER

(indicates Dexter)
Is this guy under arrest?

DEXTER

Good question.

DOAKES

(to Dexter)
You're connected to this. I don't
know how, but I'm going to find out.
And some of what I find is going to
stick to you.

Before Dexter can respond, Doakes' phone PAGES him. A beat
later, so does Dexter's. As they reach for their pagers --

Rudy, sitting alone, cruises a mid-90s Pontiac down a road,
listening to a perky BACH PARTITA on the tinny radio. His
duffle bag rests on the seat next to him.

15

CONTINUED:

15

After a beat, muffled SHOUTING interrupts the lovely music, then escalates to SCREAMING, all but drowning out Bach. With a frown, Rudy calmly pulls the car over to the curb. Stops. Grabs a roll of duct tape from the front seat.

16

EXT. PONTIAC - CLOSE ON TRUNK - DAY 2

16

Rudy pops open the trunk to REVEAL Debra inside, legs and hands bound tightly, but kicking and bucking like a feral animal -- and for good reason. She's lying next to A DEAD MAN. The side of his head bloody and beaten. The duct tape covering Debra's mouth has come loose and it looks as if she's vomited.

DEBRA

HELP! FUCKING HELP! CALL NINE-ONE-ONE!
GODAMMIT HEL --

But duct tape cuts her off, as Rudy seals her mouth and deftly wraps the duct tape around her entire head.

RUDY

Sorry.

(gestures to dead guy)

But you're drowning out Fred's radio.

As the trunk hood CLOSES on Debra's wide-eyed face --

A17

EXT. LOFT - DAY 2

A17

Dexter pulls up to a Miami-style loft and exits his car. A small group of police cars and emergency vehicles are parked outside.

17

INT. RUDY'S LOFT - DAY 2

17

Dexter enters a bustling CRIME SCENE. Flooded with UNIFORMS and FORENSICS. Scouring the loft for evidence.

As he moves through the space in SLOW MOTION, Dexter sees Doakes already there, standing beside LaGuerta. Lt. Pascal gives them orders. Doakes eyeballs Dexter as he passes.

A friendly UNIFORM OFFICER nods at Dexter and points to the closed silver door. Dexter reaches the silver door, pulls it open, and enters --

18

INT. RUDY'S LOFT - KILLING ROOM - DAY 2 (CONTINUOUS)

18

Once inside, Dexter stops to marvel at the chilly chamber of death. Stained blood containers line the shelves. The dried up blood of Monique (Episode 11) still covers the INVERSION TABLE. Blood has coagulated in the catch pan below and blood-stained tools are strewn about.

DEXTER (V.O.)

His happy place. Where he kills more
than time. This is where he'd leave
me a clue.

Across the room, a forensics guy wearing an Eskimo parka
turns to reveal MASUKA, his face framed by a fuzzy fur hood.

MASUKA

Hey Dexter. Better bundle up.

DEXTER

I like the cold.

MASUKA

You know, hypothermia can easily sneak up
on you.

DEXTER

So can hypochondria.

Dexter intently circles the room, looking for a clue left by
Rudy, but also fascinated by this peek into Rudy's mind.

DEXTER

A home setup like this takes years to
put together. He must have hated
leaving it behind.

MASUKA

(notices him searching)
What are you looking for?

DEXTER

A clue. A signature. Calling card.
Anything out of the ordinary that
might tell us where he went.

MASUKA

I'm not sure he was thinking about us
when he did this. Look at the mess.
You were right about the victim at
Santa's place -- he rushed his work.

DEXTER

He killed that girl to keep us busy.
So he could escape.
(convinced)
But he wouldn't go without leaving a
message. We just need to find it.

Masuka moves to the specially-designed inversion table, the
gravity boots still attached at the feet.

MASUKA

Check this out. It's where he plays
with his meat.

Masuka pushes a button to TILT UP the table.

MASUKA

I can think of a hundred and one uses
for this table, you know what I mean?

DEXTER

He has my sister, Vince.

MASUKA

Right -- I didn't mean... I'm sorry.

Dexter turns to an eager young Forensics Tech named KAREN.

DEXTER

Karen, right?

KAREN

That's right.

DEXTER

I'm putting you in charge of evidence.
This entire room? Evidence. Take
photos of every item in its original
position. Mark it, package it, and
show me the inventory list when you're
done.

Dexter pulls on his gloves and turns away to start his blood
work. Karen, unsure, steps over to Masuka and whispers --

KAREN

Is he in charge?

MASUKA

(impressed)
Guess he is now.

Off Dexter's intensity at the crime scene --

Rita weeds the base of the fruit tree Dexter planted for
her. A shadow moves over her. She looks up to find a man,
BOB HICKS, 40s, wearing khakis and a button-down shirt.
Respectable. Kind face. He smiles.

BOB HICKS

Rita? Hi, I'm Bob Hicks.

RITA

Can I help you?

BOB HICKS

Guess Paul never mentioned me. I'm his Narcotics Anonymous sponsor.

Rita flushes with anger. Rises.

RITA

Having your sponsor do your dirty work. Which step is that?

BOB HICKS

He's just concerned for his kids.

RITA

He's concerned for himself, so if you'll excuse me --

She takes off her gardening gloves and turns to go.

BOB HICKS

I thought he was lying, too. Until I saw the proof.

She stops. Curious.

RITA

What proof?

BOB HICKS

The x-rays that the prison doctor took of Paul's head. They showed a skull fracture.

RITA

Which I deservedly gave him.

BOB HICKS

No, you didn't. After you struck him, the hospital took x-rays. No fracture. But in prison, fracture.

RITA

If you really know Paul, you know he'd bash his own head against a wall to get what he wants.

BOB HICKS

I do know Paul. I know when he's lying. And I looked him in the eye --

Rita just shakes her head, disgusted. Starts for the front door. Bob follows.

BOB HICKS

Look, if Paul was attacked -- the way it happened? That takes experience. Skill. No first-timer can pull that off.

RITA

Which is why Paul's accusation is so ludicrous. Dexter spends all his time in a laboratory, for God's sake.

BOB HICKS

So you've been there?

Rita stops and faces Bob.

RITA

(no)

I know where he works.

BOB HICKS

But how much time do you spend in his world... with his friends... at his house?

RITA

Bob, you seem like a nice man but -- that's none of your goddamn business.

And with that, she continues to the front door. But we STAY ON HER FACE, which flickers ever-so-slightly with doubt.

A20 OMITTED

A20

20 INT. RUDY'S LOFT - KILLING ROOM - DAY 2

20

PAN the killing room -- the shelves and surfaces now empty.

DEXTER (O.C.)

This is everything?

KAREN (O.C.)

Everything that wasn't welded or bolted down.

We REACH Dexter, standing over stacks of evidence in plastic bags. He flips through the inventory list with Karen.

KAREN

We gutted the place.

DEXTER

Did he leave anything that might help us find him? A personal signature? A psychological marker? A handwritten note with his GPS coordinates?

KAREN

Sorry.

With a sigh, Dexter hands the inventory list back to Karen.

DEXTER

Thank you, Karen.

21 INT. RUDY'S LOFT - DAY 2

21

The scene still bustles. Forensics Techs swarm the loft. Doakes wraps up a cell phone call, writing on a notepad.

DOAKES

(into phone)

Okay... Got it, thanks.

He flips his phone closed and turns to LaGuerta.

DOAKES

They traced the name and social of Rudy Cooper to a New Jersey plumber who mysteriously died in '98.

LAGUERTA

You gotta be kidding. After all this, we still don't have an ID on this guy?

Dexter joins them from the kill room.

DEXTER

Rudy isn't his real name?

DOAKES

You trying to be smart?

DEXTER

Not trying, no.

DOAKES

If you know his fucking name --

LAGUERTA

Whatever's going on between you two? It ends. Now.

(to Dexter)

What'd you find in there?

DEXTER

Other than the obvious? Lots of trace blood stains. That's probably where he killed them all, but I'd like to check the rest of the apartment before I go.

LaGuerta nods. Dexter turns to explore the loft, heads to the living room -- and freezes. Wonder on his face. He steps forward slowly.

DEXTER (V.O.)

It's perfect. Right out in the open.

REVEAL a vintage BARBIE RECORD PLAYER, sitting on a shelf, with a blonde BARBIE HEAD painted on the closed lid. A FORENSIC TECH bags items on the shelf. Dexter steps over.

DEXTER

Mind if I -- uh?

TECH

Be my guest.

Dexter, wearing his gloves, lifts the cover of the record player. There's a .45 on the turntable. Again, it's "Born Free" by Andy Williams.

DEXTER (V.O.)

At least he's consistent.

DEXTER

(to Tech)

Was there anything else near this record player?

TECH

Fucking doll sitting on top.

The Tech hands him a plastic bag and keeps working. Dexter peers through the plastic -- and sees a '50s Barbie wearing an apron. She holds her hand up in a wave. PUSH INTO the apron. It says: "Home Sweet Home." Dexter smiles.

DEXTER (V.O.)

He's taking me back before the blood. To a place where a boy was born. A real boy. With a home. Home sweet home.

The Tech, still working, glances over.

TECH
Think the Barbie means something?

DEXTER
Clearly. He wasn't breast fed.

TECH
(deadpan)
That's funny.

Dexter hands the Barbie back to the Tech, trying to hide his excitement as he heads out.

INT. DARKENED ROOM - DAY 2

We have no idea where or what kind of room this is. The window is card-boarded. The room empty but for a single narrow table at its center. The walls are white plaster.

The door opens as Rudy pushes Debra inside, blindfolded and gagged, her hands duct-taped to her sides. He switches on the single, bare, overhead bulb.

RUDY
Down on the floor, please.

But Debra won't go quietly into the good night. She blindly tears free of him and runs but hits a wall -- spins and runs again, another wall. She's in a dark hell with no escape but keeps trying --

RUDY
This is kinda foolish, Deb.

But she keeps searching for an exit. Rudy simply kicks the back of her knees, she crumples to the ground. Hard.

He then holds her face-down on the ground with a knee on her back. As he talks, he pulls a syringe from his pocket...

RUDY
I don't usually work this way. But we're going to try something new.
(taps out the bubbles)
Call it an homage to a fellow traveler
I greatly admire...

And with that, he plunges the needle into Debra's neck --

INT. POLICE STATION - DEXTER'S INNER LABORATORY - DAY 2

CLOSE on a COMPUTER SCREEN -- a MUG SHOT of Dexter's mother. INCLUDE Dexter, who pours over it.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Laura Moser. Addict. Dealer. Mom.

He scrolls down.

DEXTER (V.O.)
Arrested in '69, again in '71. Same
address listed both times.
(as he writes it down)
1-2-3-5 Mangrove Drive. They say home
is where the heart is. Maybe this is
where I left mine.

He closes the screen, grabs his keys, and starts out -- but
Rita appears in front of him.

RITA
Surprise.

DEXTER
What are you doing here?

He's not being intentionally rude, he's just desperate to
get out of there. She's a little taken aback but sweetly
holds out a Starbucks coffee to him.

RITA
White chocolate mocha. Your favorite.

DEXTER
I'll have to drink it on the run.

RITA
You know, I've never even been here
before. I'd love a tour sometime.

DEXTER
Sometime that's not now.

He starts out. She stops him.

RITA
Dexter. What's going on?

DEXTER
(sharply, exasperated)
It's Deb, okay? She's in trouble.

RITA
Oh God. Is it serious?

DEXTER

Yes, actually. Very serious. But I just -- can't worry about you, too, right now.

She sees the panic in his eyes. As Dexter turns to go --

RITA

I understand.

-- and he's out the door. Rita stands there. Alone. Not sure what to feel.

INDIGENT MAN (PRELAP)

She knows!!!

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - DAY 2

Batista lies in bed, a file folder and notebook open. The TV is tuned to the news. Batista tries to work but his crazy indigent roommate is awake and driving him nuts.

INDIGENT MAN

She knows!!!

BATISTA

(calling to the hallway)
Will someone give this guy his goddamn meds?

Batista sees something on the TV and turns up the volume.

ANGLE ON THE TV -- A NEWSCASTER addresses camera, with an employee ID PHOTO of Rudy projected next to her.

NEWSCASTER

...Authorities launched a nationwide dragnet for the suspect, believed to be the notorious Ice Truck Killer...

INDIGENT MAN

She knows!!

BATISTA

(spinning on him)
If she knows, your yapping about it won't change anything. So shut the fuck up!

The guy takes to muttering.

ON THE TV -- At a crowded POLICE PRESS CONFERENCE, the new Lieutenant Pascal stands at the podium addressing reporters.

LT. PASCAL

The suspect was operating under the alias "Rudy Cooper." His fingerprints aren't in our criminal data base, so we still don't know his real identity.

A NURSE scurries in, attending to the Indigent Man.

NURSE

Sorry, Mr. Batista. We had to take the psych overflow from County. But this one's harmless.

BATISTA

(trying to hear the news)
Don't be so sure.

NURSE

Oh, we never take the violent ones. They got arsonists, rapists, psycho killers over there. I tell you, those people belong in prison.

Batista stops, looks at her. Something occurs to him.

BATISTA

Do they fingerprint psych patients at County?

NURSE

Of course. Half of them don't know their own names. Gotta I.D. them somehow.

She smiles and exits. Batista suddenly grabs the phone by his bed. Dials. As it RINGS, he pulls the I.V. tube from his arm and painfully, clutching his gut, climbs out of bed.

MAN'S VOICE

(filtered)
I.D. Tech.

BATISTA

Batista here. I need you to run Rudy Cooper's prints against state mental institution records...

As Batista shuffles to the closet and grabs his clothes --

25 EXT. BUNGALOW - DAY 2

25

Dexter pulls his car to a stop in front of a classic 1930s Florida bungalow, two bedrooms, simple but nostalgic. No other vehicles are in sight.

Dexter gets out of his car, staring at the house. Is this where he once lived? As Dexter slowly walks up the front lawn, distant CHILDREN'S LAUGHTER echoes hauntingly in his head, and Dexter transitions into another living memory.

WOMAN'S VOICE

Dexter!

Dexter stops in the middle of the grass and looks ahead to see LAURA MOSER, mid-20s, step out onto the porch. Wearing jeans and a Creedence concert T, she smiles playfully.

LAURA

I'm gonna find you!

Laura steps off the porch and walks toward Dexter, standing in the center of his own memory. As she moves closer, Dexter glances at her fingernails, glistening in the sun -- each one painted a different color.

LAURA

Let's see... where can he be?

Dexter turns to see, right beside him... Little Dexter. The 3-year-old gleefully crouches behind a tree. Dexter studies him for a beat, the joyful anticipation on his face.

LAURA

Dexter?

Laura walks right past our Dexter, not seeing him. When she gets close to the tree, Little Dexter jumps out --

LITTLE DEXTER

Boo!

LAURA

Oh my gosh, you surprised me! Sneaky Bear.

(hugs him)

Now where's your brother hiding?

Dexter reacts like he was gut punched, as he watches his mini doppelganger run across the yard and point at a bush.

LITTLE DEXTER

Biney's right here!

LITTLE BRIAN, a beautiful 5-year-old, stands up behind the bush.

LITTLE BRIAN
You're not supposed to tell her!

Little Brian chases Little Dexter, who lets out a squeal and runs away. Little Brian catches Little Dexter and tackles him.

LITTLE BRIAN
Eat grass, Gumby!

Little Brian grabs handfuls of grass and drops them on the head of Little Dexter, who's laughing and spitting out grass.

LAURA
Brian, don't hurt him.

RUDY'S VOICE
You remember now?

Instantly, the characters in the memory FADE. Dexter, his universe collapsing and folding into itself, turns to see Rudy standing on the porch.

DEXTER
(hesitant)
Biney...?

Rudy, who we'll now call BRIAN, nods happily.

BRIAN
You always had trouble saying Brian.

DEXTER
(more to himself)
I have a brother.

BRIAN
A real one. None of this "foster" bullshit. We're blood brothers... through birth and death.
(off Dexter's confusion)
Watching Mom die? Amazing we survived that, isn't it? The chain saw, the flying body parts, the... blood.

Off Dexter, surprised --

QUICK FLASH: Little Dexter, 3, sits in blood, crying. The chain saw GRINDS on bone. Offscreen, his mother SCREAMS. This time, the flashback continues, and Little Dexter turns to look over -- and see his 5-year-old brother Brian seated next to him, catatonic with horror.

RESUME Dexter, realizing --

DEXTER
You were there, too.

BRIAN
Two days sitting in blood before they found us. You were young enough to block it out. I was older, I never forgot the day we were...

DEXTER
Born.

BRIAN
Exactly. Born into what we are now. They call it a *reaction formation to a precipitating event*, if you've done any reading on "monsters" like us.

Dexter snaps out of his initial shock.

DEXTER
Where's Deb?

BRIAN
She's fine. I didn't want to begin without you.

Not so sure about that, Dexter strides onto the porch, pushing past Brian and entering --

26 INT. BUNGALOW - LIVING ROOM / HALLWAY - DAY 2 (CONTINUOUS) 26

The small house is perfectly kept, nicely painted in yellow, but barren of furniture, save for a simple dining room table and chairs. FOLLOW Dexter as he storms through the kitchen and main living area.

DEXTER
Debra!

BRIAN
(patiently watching)
She's not here. She's safe. Just slow down and I'll --

But Dexter pushes past Brian. FOLLOW him down the hallway. At the end of the hall, he opens a door --

DEXTER
Debra!

26

CONTINUED:

26

-- and charges into the master bedroom. STAY with Brian in the hallway.

BRIAN

Dexter, this really isn't how I envisioned our family reunion.

A beat later, Dexter returns to the hallway.

BRIAN

Let's sit down and have a beer.

DEXTER

(mind still working)
Our bedroom.

With that, Dexter pushes past Brian again, hurries back down the hallway and opens the door to --

27-28 OMITTED

27-28

29 INT. BUNGALOW - BOYS' BEDROOM - DAY 2 (CONTINUOUS)

29

Dexter races into the room -- and freezes. REVEAL that he's staring at the bedroom that he and Brian shared, exactly as it used to be -- bunk beds, race car wallpaper, a lizard aquarium, boy toys.

In the middle of the room, Little Brian sits on the floor, bandaging the scraped, bloody knee of Little Dexter, who's trying not to cry. There's a 70's era SKATEBOARD next to them. Dexter is back in a memory.

LITTLE BRIAN

That was the best wipeout. You didn't even cry. Next time you try my skateboard, keep your knees bent. Okay?

Little Dexter nods bravely. As Little Brian puts the bandage on his knee, Little Dexter looks up and sees Dexter.

LITTLE DEXTER

Hi.

DEXTER

(smiles)
Hi.

LITTLE DEXTER

Look out.

29

CONTINUED:

29

Before Dexter can react, Brian steps up behind him and plunges a SYRINGE into his neck. The boys, along with everything else in the room, VANISH. The room is now empty like the rest of the house.

BRIAN

I didn't want to do it this way.

As Dexter slips into unconsciousness in his brother's arms --

30

INT. POLICE STATION - BULLPEN - DAY 2

30

LaGuerta hovers behind a COMPUTER TECH telling him what to input, as Doakes talks on the phone. Both work the case, intensely focused, all too aware of the stakes.

LAGUERTA

...okay, now let's run his description against Interpol's fugitive list, in case he's not American.

BATISTA (O.C.)

Rudy Cooper's American all right. His real name is Brian Moser.

LaGuerta looks up, stunned. Doakes looks up, too. REVEAL Batista walking up to them, fighting pain with each step --

LAGUERTA

What the hell are you doing here?

Batista hands Doakes a print out.

BATISTA

Got a hit on his prints from a Tampa mental hospital, where he grew up. He was institutionalized for an anti-social personality disorder. At twenty-one, they decided he was "cured."

DOAKES

Meaning they ran out of beds.

Doakes turns to the Computer Tech.

DOAKES

Run the name Brian Moser for bank records, credit cards, utilities, real estate holdings, anything that'll tell us where he's got Morgan --

LT. PASCAL (O.C.)

Listen up!

Lt. Pascal enters the busy bullpen. Everyone gives her their attention.

LT. PASCAL

We've triangulated Officer Morgan's cell phone. Last known location was twenty miles off the coast. Which means he's got her on a boat --

LAGUERTA

Lieutenant, we have his real name. We're digging into his records now --

LT. PASCAL

His name won't help us find him on open water. Let's coordinate a search with the Coast Guard...

LAGUERTA

(sotto to Doakes)
Waste of time.

DOAKES

(sotto to Laguerta)
Chain of command.

LT. PASCAL

...I want helicopters, fly-overs, whatever it takes...

LaGuerta can't hold back --

LAGUERTA

Lieutenant, that signal died last night. By now he most likely moved her to his final location.

LT. PASCAL

(dismissive)
Noted. Now let's get busy, people!

Lt. Pascal returns to her office. LaGuerta could punch her. But then she sees Batista.

LAGUERTA

Jesus, Angel, you're bleeding. You pulled your stitches. Why didn't you just call this in?

BATISTA

I'm tired of that place.

(re: Pascal)

You tired too or you just lose your nerve?

LAGUERTA

Not a chance.

(to a COP)

Get this man back to the hospital before he bleeds out.

(to Batista)

Nice work.

She storms toward Pascal's office. Off Batista's smile --

INT. POLICE STATION - LT. PASCAL'S OFFICE - DAY 2

LaGuerta enters her old office, now occupied by Lt. Pascal, and shuts the door behind her.

LAGUERTA

Fly-overs look good to the press, but they're not going to find Morgan.

LT. PASCAL

You think the press matters to me?

LAGUERTA

It matters to Captain Matthews and he calls the shots.

(then)

Look, I know you need to define yourself here, and putting me in my place is one way to do that. But one of our own is missing and we shouldn't waste our time pissing on trees.

Lt. Pascal looks at LaGuerta, summing her up.

LT. PASCAL

I agree.

(off LaGuerta's surprise)

I also know why you were reassigned -- it had nothing to do with incompetence and everything to do with the Captain trying to save his job.

LAGUERTA

...o-kay...

LT. PASCAL

But he hired me with the directive not
to make your life easy.

LaGuerta shakes her head, knows what this means.

LAGUERTA

So you're going to ignore this lead.

LT. PASCAL

You don't know me very well. But,
lucky for Officer Morgan...

(small smile)

...neither does the captain.

Off LaGuerta, surprised but starting to like this woman --

INT. BUNGALOW - DINING ROOM - NIGHT 2

Dexter sits behind the table, head slumped down. Slowly, he awakens to find his arms duct-taped to the arms of the chair and Brian sitting across from him, drinking a cold beer. A KNIFE rests on the table. Brian nods to the restraints.

BRIAN

Nothing personal. I just wanted to
sit down with a beer before we got
started. You made that difficult.

Dexter fights his way through the fog of the tranquilizer.

DEXTER

...Sorry.

BRIAN

You never need to apologize to me,
Dexter. For who you are or anything
you do.

Dexter looks around the room, trying to orient himself.

BRIAN

Looks just like it used to, doesn't
it?

DEXTER

Who does it belong to?

BRIAN

Me. And no, I didn't kill the owners.
I bought it honestly. Good deal, too.
Interest rates were still low. I got
it for you, actually.

DEXTER

I'm really more an apartment person.

BRIAN

(smiles)

You're trapped in a lie, little brother. The same lie they tried forcing me into.

DEXTER

They?

BRIAN

You know -- doctors, therapists, group leaders. What a family they were.

DEXTER

You were never put up for adoption?

BRIAN

Afraid not. You were three. A little bird with a broken wing. That first cop on the scene... Harry Morgan? He wanted to make you better. But me?

(darkens)

I could see it in his eyes. All he saw was a fucked-up kid. They all saw that. So they locked me up.

Dexter registers this. Tries to reconcile it in his mind.

DEXTER

I didn't even know you existed.

BRIAN

Of course you didn't. Harry wanted you to himself. And while you were being raised by the Morgan...

(makes quotes sign)

..."family," all I had was the memory of a family.

DEXTER

Me.

BRIAN

Mom always told me to watch out for you.

(sits forward, emotional)

Imagine how I felt when I tracked you down and found out you were just like me.

DEXTER
(also with emotion)
I don't have to imagine.

Brian looks at his brother. It's a shared moment, honest, real. Brian nods. Then he picks up the knife, stands, and slowly moves around the table toward Dexter.

BRIAN
We've spent our lives playing a part. Reciting lines, pretending we belong in a world made for human beings, but never really human ourselves. All the while reaching for something, some way to... I don't know...

DEXTER
Connect.

Brian reaches out with the knife and slices the duct tape from one of Dexter's hands.

BRIAN
Yeah. Connect...

He cuts the other arm free. Brian holds out a hand and helps the still shaky Dexter up.

BRIAN
I know what it's been like for you all these years... the isolation... the other-ness... the hunger that's never satisfied. But you're not alone anymore, Dex. You can be yourself with me. Your real, genuine self. It takes your breath away, doesn't it?

Dexter's eyes drift over Brian's shoulder.

DOWN THE HALLWAY

He sees Little Brian and Little Dexter laughing, chasing each other. Dexter turns back to Brian.

DEXTER
(honestly)
Yes.

BRIAN
(smiles)
I think we're ready for Debra.

33 EXT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT 2

33

Dexter follows Brian, still carrying the knife, around the back of the house to the DETACHED GARAGE. Brian produces a set of keys and unlocks the side door. He throws his arm around Dexter's shoulder like the big brother that he is --

BRIAN

This is gonna be good.

-- and guides Dexter inside.

34 INT. BUNGALOW - GARAGE - NIGHT 2

34

The same darkened space we saw earlier. In the middle now, Debra lies unconscious on an operating table under a single-source light. Plastic wrap covers her naked body and holds her to the table. A strip of duct tape stretches across her lips and down to the table to lock her head still.

The two brothers walk up to Debra and stop.

BRIAN

I prepared her just the way you like.
This time we do it together.

DEXTER

Does it have to be her?

BRIAN

It's the only way.

DEXTER

She's my --

BRIAN

Fake sister, I know.

(then)

Tell me something... your victims, are they all killers?

DEXTER

Yes.

BRIAN

Harry teach you that?

DEXTER

He taught me a code. To survive.

BRIAN

As some kind of absurd avenger?

DEXTER

That's not why I kill.

BRIAN

Of course not. You kill because you have a craving. A need. But Harry had to rationalize your need -- make it nice. It's not nice.

DEXTER

I know.

BRIAN

Then stop pretending it is. You don't have to do that around me. What am I, Dex?

DEXTER

A killer without reason. Or regret.
(thinks further)
Free...

BRIAN

That's what you can be, too.

DEXTER

But -- the code.

BRIAN

Dammit, Dex! You don't have a code -- Harry did! And he's been dead ten years. You can't keep him sitting on your shoulder like Jiminy-fucking-Cricket. It's time to embrace who you are.

All the emotions that have been scratched in recent months boil to the surface. Dexter looks up at Brian, a lost soul.

DEXTER

I don't know who I am...

BRIAN

Of course not. You've been without your family since you were three. I can help you, Dex. Lean on me. We'll take the journey together... okay?

DEXTER

(long beat)
Okay.

He means it. And it's shocking even to Dexter. Brian takes Dexter's trembling hands and presses the knife into them.

BRIAN

The first step starts now. Come on, Dexter. Little brother. Take the knife. Showtime.

Brian turns Dexter's body to face Debra. Dexter looks down.

BRIAN

Are you ready?

DEXTER

Yes. I'm ready to join you.

(then)

But I won't kill Deb. I'm very fond of her.

BRIAN

(losing patience)

Don't do this. Not now. You can't be a killer and a hero. It doesn't work that way.

Dexter just stares at Brian, unable to move.

BRIAN

Fine. I'll choose for you.

Brian grabs the knife back. As he raises it upward, Debra's eyes flutter open... and meet Dexter's. Brian thrusts downward -- but Dexter catches his hands, stopping him.

BRIAN

Dexter!

The brothers struggle over the weapon. Dexter spins Brian into the wall. The impact makes him drop the knife. Debra, eyes wide with fear, watches as Brian goes for the knife, but Dexter stops him. Brian turns on Dexter, and the two exchange a combination of skillful STRIKES and BLOCKS.

The flurry ends with Brian knocking Dexter to the ground. Before Brian can make a move for the knife, however, we hear a car SCREECH to a stop outside and CAR DOORS SLAM.

Brian steps to the window and peers out through a crack, as Dexter climbs to his feet.

BRIAN

Fuck.

Dexter yells to draw attention to their location --

DEXTER
In the garage!

FOOTSTEPS and MUFFLED SHOUTS approach. Shooting Dexter a loaded look, Brian races to the back of the garage. He opens a DOOR on the back wall and bolts through as --

The side door BURSTS OPEN. Doakes and LaGuerta push into the garage, guns drawn. Dexter, who starts releasing Debra, points to the back door.

DEXTER
Back there...

Doakes reaches the door and pulls -- it's locked.

DOAKES
(to LaGuerta)
Secure this door!

Doakes races back out the side door.

EXT. BUNGALOW - GARAGE - NIGHT 2 (CONTINUOUS)

Doakes runs out and sees there's a TOOL SHED built against the back of the garage where the back door would be. He races to the shed door. It's padlocked from the outside. A WOOD PILE stacked in front of it. As Doakes rapidly clears the wood pile to gain access --

DOAKES
(into radio)
He's trapped in a tool shed. Stay on your door and call for backup. I'm breaking in from this side.

Once he has a free path, he picks up a RUSTY AXE off the ground -- and SWINGS, splintering the shed door. A couple blows and the latch with the lock falls away. Holding his gun, Doakes yanks open the door, goes in --

IN THE SHED

There's no sign of Brian. Just some lawn mowers and a piece of PLYWOOD on the dirt floor. Instinctively, Doakes lifts the plywood -- to reveal a DEEP HOLE in the dirt.

DOAKES
Fucking tunnel?

Doakes shines a FLASHLIGHT down the hole. No sign of Brian.

DOAKES
Motherfuck!

As the sound of a HELICOPTER rises --

EXT. BUNGALOW - NIGHT 2

Overhead, a HELICOPTER passes by, its SEARCHLIGHT probing the woods. TILT DOWN to find emergency vehicles and police cars parked outside the bungalow, now a crime scene. Debra, wearing a borrowed EMT jacket, sits with a PARAMEDIC, who flashes a penlight into her eyes.

PARAMEDIC
Any headache? Dizziness?

DEBRA
No, I'm fine. I just want to go home.

PARAMEDIC
Afraid we have to transport you to the hospital. Standard procedure.

NEARBY

LaGuerta and Doakes question Dexter. Their tone is firm.

LAGUERTA
You're saying Rudy called you? Why would he do that?

DEXTER
I think he wanted me to talk him down. He said he was having second thoughts about killing Debra. He seemed to think we have some kind of connection.

DOAKES
He's not the only one.

LAGUERTA
Why didn't you call us, Dexter?

DEXTER
He told me he'd kill Debra if I didn't show up alone.

DOAKES
You almost got her killed. I'm going to recommend immediate suspension when we get back to --

DEBRA (O.C.)
You're going to what?

They turn to see Debra, swimming in her large jacket, clutching it around her shoulders, standing behind them.

DOAKES
Morgan, you shouldn't be --

DEBRA
You're questioning Dexter? As what?
AS WHAT? A suspect? Back the fuck
off my brother! He just saved my
life. He's a fucking hero and I want
every one of you to treat him that
way, goddammit.

She can barely stand, she's shaking so much. Dexter steps over and puts an arm around her. As he silently leads her toward the flashing lights of the emergency vehicles --

37 INT. AMBULANCE - DRIVING - NIGHT 2

37

Dexter and Debra sit side by side on the cot.

DEXTER
Way to go, Deb. I thought you were
gonna burst a frontal lobe out there.

DEBRA
Assholes.
(notices her HAND)
Jesus --

She starts desperately wrenching the ENGAGEMENT RING around her finger.

DEXTER
Stop, you're gonna dislocate it --

DEBRA
Get it off me or I'm gonna be sick.

DEXTER
Relax.

She does. Dexter carefully removes the ring. He gives her a look. You okay? She nods.

DEBRA
He's still out there.

DEXTER

Yep.

DEBRA

And he didn't get what he wanted.

DEXTER

Nope.

DEBRA

Think he'll try again?

DEXTER

Maybe. I'll talk to Captain Matthews about putting officers by your door at the hospital tonight.

DEBRA

I'm not sleeping in any fucking hospital. There's nothing fucking wrong with me.

DEXTER

Well, you're not sleeping at home.

DEBRA

Then I'll crash at your place.

DEXTER

Let's just see what the doctor says, alright?

A beat.

DEBRA

(quietly)

Why me, Dex. Why'd he choose me?

He knows exactly why and feels miserable.

DEXTER

Just lucky, I guess.

She laughs softly but can no longer fight the tears. Dexter puts a tentative arm around her. Debra surprises him by hugging him, clinging to him like a lifeline. This time it's not awkward for Dexter. He just holds her closer as she starts to sob.

DEBRA

I was... so scared.

DEXTER

I know.

DEBRA

Thank you... thank God for you...

(then)

Dad would've been so proud...

Off Dexter, wondering if that's true --

EXT. RITA'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT 2

Rita cleans up the back yard, pulling the kids' toys off the lawn -- balls, bikes, etc. The phone RINGS. The cordless phone sits on a patio chair. She hurries to it, answers --

RITA

Dexter?

PAUL (O.S.)

It's me.

RITA

Paul, this is harassment.

INTERCUT:

INT. PRISON - HALLWAY - NIGHT 2 (CONTINUOUS)

Paul talks on the pay phone.

PAUL

Just tell me if he's acting weird.

RITA

Who?

PAUL

Dexter. He hasn't been himself lately, has he? How could he be? After what he did to me --

RITA

That's it! I am done. Call again and you can forget seeing the kids. Next weekend or ever. I won't subject them to your insanity --

PAUL

Fine! If that's what it takes to get you to listen to me. I just need to know they're safe.

She wasn't expecting that. Takes a deep breath.

RITA

Why are you doing this? So I'll be alone and miserable like you? Is that what you want?

PAUL

All I want... is for you to look for a shoe.

RITA

A shoe?

PAUL

Maybe in the kitchen -- or the back yard. It's missing. I checked and it wasn't on the list of items they took outta my motel when I was arrested.

RITA

Why would it be here?

PAUL

See, I was trying to figure out why my ankle's so bruised. Now I'm thinking it got banged when Dexter dragged me out. When my shoe was knocked off.

RITA

Good night, Paul.

She hangs up. Tries to shake him off. Turns to head into the house. But she pauses... and glances around a little. No shoe in sight. She even steps over and peers down the side yard --

-- then stops, hating Paul, and hating herself for doubting.

RITA

Screw you, Paul.

Rita returns inside, slamming the screen door behind her.

Dexter waits in a chair. The busy hospital swirls around him.

DEXTER (V.O.)

What did I just do? I drove away a brother who accepts me... sees me. For an adopted sister who'd reject me if she knew, and a foster father who betrayed me.

Agitated, Dexter rises and starts pacing.

DEXTER (V.O.)

That's what it was. A betrayal. The most important single fact about me -- I'm not alone -- and Harry kept it from me. What do I really owe him after that?

DOCTOR (O.C.)

Mr. Morgan?

Dexter snaps out of his thoughts as a DOCTOR approaches.

DEXTER

That's me.

DOCTOR

Your sister has a few bruises, but no major injuries. Still, you should keep an eye on her. I'll write a prescription for a mild sedative.

DEXTER

But she's okay?

DOCTOR

(as he writes out prescription)

She can go home with you tonight, far as I'm concerned. Or we can keep her here at the hospital. Your choice.

Off Dexter, debating --

42-43 OMITTED

42-43

44 INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 2

44

CLOSE on a pair of hands drawing curtains shut. FIND Dexter moving around his room, closing the curtains, turning off lights. Debra is crashed in bed, head on a pillow, bare arm and a leg poking out from the sheet she's sprawled under.

44

CONTINUED:

44

DEXTER

Don't worry, the sheets are clean. We aim to please at *Chez Dex*. I'll be sleeping on the couch with a spring poking in my side, just to make sure you feel safe tonight. But we're gonna have to talk about a long term plan tomorrow...

Dexter turns off the last light and sits on the bed.

DEXTER

After you get a good night's... Deb?

Debra's back is to Dexter, but she hasn't moved. He reaches out and gently strokes her hair.

DEXTER

Good night, sister.

MATCH CUT TO:

45

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

45

Through a small crack in the curtains, someone outside watches the sweet tableau playing inside Dexter's bedroom.

DISSOLVE TO:

46

INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 2

46

Dexter lies sleeping on the couch, which he's made a comfy bed. He fell asleep with the TV on. Some awful late-night plays.

47

EXT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - NIGHT 2

47

CLOSE on the doorknob. HANDS deftly pick the lock. TILT UP to Brian. He quietly opens the door and peers inside -- to find Dexter asleep on the couch.

48

INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT 2 (CONTINUOUS) 48

Brian enters and stealthily moves to the couch. He looks down at the sleeping Dexter. Threatening. Ominous. But this isn't his prey tonight. Assured that Dexter is asleep, Brian turns down the hallway. He reaches the bedroom and gently pushes open the door.

49 INT. DEXTER'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT 2 (CONTINUOUS) 49

Brian sees Debra still asleep, her naked leg and arm still protruding from under the sheets, sexy and vulnerable. With a smile, Brian steps to the bed and pulls out his KNIFE.

He glances out the door, where he has an eye-line to Dexter on the couch, still asleep. Satisfied, Brian raises the knife -- and PLUNGES it through Debra's heart. Strangely, Debra's leg rolls off the bed and THUDS to the floor. With a frown, Brian yanks back the covers to REVEAL --

-- prosthetic LEGS, ARMS, and a HEAD artfully laid out, with a pillow in the middle, to look like a woman asleep. Before Brian can react -- a GARROTE swiftly wraps around his neck. Dexter stands behind him pulling it tight.

DEXTER

Stopped by your prosthetics lab. Your work's so good you fooled yourself.

Brian tries to fight but can't shake Dexter's powerful hold. Losing air, Brian falls to his knees.

DEXTER

I know, it's not as elegant as your blood choke technique -- Deb told me about that at the hospital. Where she's sleeping tonight. But I can't afford any mistakes with you.

Dexter pulls tighter -- and Brian passes out.

50-51 OMITTED

50-51

52 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - KILLING ROOM - NIGHT 2

52

CLOSE ON two gravity boots, attached to the end of a table. MOVE UP them to a plastic-wrapped body. And FURTHER UP to reveal an unconscious Brian, dressed but plastic-wrapped to his own specially-designed killing table. The CATCH PAN for blood sits under the table. He stirs awake to see --

-- Dexter, wearing latex gloves, opening a little MAHOGANY CHEST, full of gold-plated antique baroque flatware. Dexter turns to see Brian awake.

DEXTER

Hey. You weren't supposed to wake up.

BRIAN

(assessing his situation)
I guess not.

DEXTER

Sorry. The police recorded all your knives as evidence. It took a while to find your dinner flatware.

BRIAN

Gold-plated. I keep it for special occasions.

DEXTER

(adjusting the catch pan)
Which you are. I can give you more tranquilizer, if you'd like. I don't normally offer that service.

BRIAN

So I'm one of your victims now? You going to collect a sample of Biney's blood for your slide collection?

A deep well of sadness rises up inside Dexter.

DEXTER

No, you're not a trophy. But you need to be put down.

BRIAN

Why? Because of your "code"?

DEXTER

And the safety of my sister.

Dexter selects a GOLD STEAK KNIFE from the flatware chest. Brian remains surprisingly calm. He knows Dexter can't do this.

BRIAN

She's not your real sister, Dexter. She's a stranger and always will be. I was trying to help you by killing her.

DEXTER

I know that. And you should know this isn't easy for me. You've done more to deserve my knife than anyone -- but you're the only one I've ever wanted to set free.

BRIAN

(comforting)
You're the one who needs setting free, little brother. Your life's a lie.
(MORE)

BRIAN (CONT'D)

You'll never be what you're pretending
to --

Dexter abruptly SLICES HIS THROAT along the garrotte line.
Brian, shocked by the suddenness, gasps for breath.

DEXTER

(barely a whisper)
I'm sorry. I can't hear any more...
because you're right.

With that, Dexter pushes the button to RAISE the inversion
table so Brian can bleed out into the catch pan. Brian,
eyes wide, wheezes for air through his slashed vocal chords.
Dexter painfully forces himself to watch his brother die.

53 INT. BRIAN'S LOFT - KILLING ROOM - DAY 3 (MORNING)

53

CLOSE on Brian's face, still upside down, only now bled out,
white, dead.

MASUKA (O.C.)

How'd you know he was here?

LAGUERTA (O.C.)

Neighbor saw the front door open.

PULL BACK to reveal Masuka poking around his slashed neck,
with LaGuerta watching. Brian's blood fills the catch pan.
The gold-plated knife lies on the floor.

MASUKA

Single incised wound to the neck.
Slight upward angle. Even a stigmata
of hesitation in the stroke. Looks
like a clear suicide.

The plastic wrap has been removed from Brian's body, so that
he hangs from the gravity boots. A FORENSIC TECH works in
the background.

LAGUERTA

He did himself the same way he did his
hookers. Poetic.

MASUKA

Retarded. Look at him, he's dead.

LAGUERTA

The Ice Truck Killer always flaunted
his kills. Like he was untouchable.
Taking his own life, he's preventing
us from ever catching him.

MASUKA

I don't care why he did it, I'm just glad he did. Guy was a dick.

LAGUERTA

It's been a long haul.

MASUKA

And a lot of blood. I'll call in Dexter.

INT. RITA'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY 3 (MORNING)

Rita cleans the kitchen, emptying the trash as Dexter enters carrying a Starbucks coffee.

DEXTER

Decaf mochachino, non-fat, no whip.
Your favorite.

She looks up, sees him, and drops the trash bag to hug him. He manages to set the coffee on the counter as --

RITA

I got your message. How's Debra?

DEXTER

Well, she's got all her limbs.

RITA

Thank God she's alive. Poor thing must be a mess. I mean, falling for a serial killer?

DEXTER

What are the odds.

Dexter casually finishes tying the trash bag for Rita.

RITA

And what about you?

DEXTER

What about me?

RITA

Are you alright?

DEXTER

Oh. Yeah.

(rethinks)

No. I've been through a lot lately.

(MORE)

DEXTER (CONT'D)

I could use a little time with you.
And the kids.

RITA

We could use that, too.

Dexter knows he hasn't been the greatest boyfriend lately.

DEXTER

I'm sorry I've been so --

RITA

Shhh.

Rita puts a finger on Dexter's lip. He kisses her finger.
Then he kisses her. Afterward...

RITA

Next time, just...let me know what's
going on, okay? When you forgot our
plans... didn't return my calls... I
was getting a little paranoid, you
know?

DEXTER

I can get better at that.

RITA

Good.

(kisses him again)

Who knows. You might even find I can
handle the truth.

Dexter smiles wistfully.

DEXTER (V.O.)

I wish that were true.

Dexter crosses the lawn toward his car.

DEXTER (V.O.)

The reality is there's nobody left
alive who can handle my truth.

Opening his car door, Dexter glances up the street to see a
sedan parked two houses away. A CLOSER LOOK reveals Doakes
inside, brazenly casing Dexter.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Doakes always sensed I was hiding
something, now he knows.

(MORE)

55

CONTINUED:

55

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

My devil danced with his demon, and
the fiddler's tune is far from over.

Dexter starts the car and drives OUT OF FRAME.

A56

OMITTED

A56

56

EXT. RITA'S HOUSE - SIDE YARD - DAY 3

56

Rita carries the plastic garbage bag out the back door to
the side yard.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Sometimes I wonder what it would be
like. For everything inside me that's
denied and unknown to be revealed.

When she reaches the open trash container, Rita dumps the
kitchen garbage inside. When she closes the lid, she sees
fallen behind the trash container... *PAUL'S SHOE*.

DEXTER (V.O.)

But I'll never know. I live my life
in hiding. My survival depends on it.

Off Rita's shock --

57

EXT. LOFT - DAY 3

57

A CRANE SHOT of a crowd scene. A much larger gathering of
police cars and emergency vehicles are outside, with more
MEDIA MEMBERS and satellite news trucks than we've ever seen
on this show. Off to the side, Lt. Pascal briefs a crowd of
reporters around her.

FIND Dexter pulling his blood kit from the trunk of his car.
He closes the trunk and turns to see... Debra pull up behind
him. Dexter stops and watches Debra, IN SLOW MOTION, exit
her car.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Dearly damaged Debra. She's here to
face what's left of the monster. Spit
on his carcass. Mourn him.

Debra sees Dexter, smiles bravely, and heads over to him.

DEXTER (V.O.)

She's in hiding too, now. Harry's
daughter will be damned if she lets
anyone see what she's suffering
inside. That's her tragedy.

When she reaches Dexter's side, they wordlessly fall in step and head toward the entrance of the loft.

DEXTER (V.O.)

My tragedy is that I killed the one
person I didn't have to hide from.
But I'm the only one who mourns him.

Dexter looks around at the press, the uniform officers, the forensic techs. A handful of them steal glances at the brother and sister.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Everyone else would probably thank me
if they knew I was the one who drained
him of his life.

A COP turns toward Dexter and calls out --

COP

Good job in there, Dex! You sliced
him up good.

The Cop starts clapping. An EMT starts clapping, too.

EMT

Way to take out the trash. Thanks,
buddy!

One by one, more officers and emergency personnel begin to clap.

DEXTER (V.O.)

In fact, deep down, I'm pretty sure
they'd appreciate a lot of my work.

Pedestrian bystanders join in the applause, including a SOCCER MOM who vigorously pumps her fist --

SOCCER MOM

Alright Dexter! Protecting our
children!

-- until everyone outside the loft, reporters included, are facing Dexter and Debra, applauding and cheering.

Debra flashes a smile and proudly raises Dexter's hand into the air like a prizefighter. CONFETTI and STREAMERS start to fall from the heavens. Dexter raises his head skyward in wonder to see a SMALL PLANE fly overhead dragging a "WE [HEART] DEXTER!" banner.

DEXTER (V.O.)

This is what it must feel like to walk
in full sunlight. My darkness
revealed. My shadow self embraced.

As they move down the gauntlet, Dexter looks around at the
cheering crowd that surrounds him.

DEXTER (V.O.)

Yes, they see me. I'm one of them.
(beat)
In their darkest dreams.

With Debra by his side, Dexter serenely enters the crime
scene to a ticker tape parade, and we --

FADE TO BLACK.

END OF SEASON ONE