

DIAGNOSIS MURDER  
"Must Kill TV"  
TEASER

FADE IN:

1 INT. NETWORK - BOARD ROOM - DAY

1

This is a scheduling meeting of the top programming executives at the Monumental Broadcasting Company (MBC). They sit around a conference table, all eyes on RACHEL WOODRELL, late 20s, and not just because she is the president of the entertainment division - she is also a strikingly beautiful woman. On the wall behind her is a board depicting the schedules of the five major networks (ABC, CBS, NBC, FOX, and MBC). She is listening to a pitch from her vp of drama development, PAIGE JENNINGS, 30s.

PAIGE

"Sexual Surrogate" is cutting-edge drama about a dedicated therapist who uses her body and soul to help families in crisis.

RACHEL

You want me to buy a series about a hooker?

PAIGE

(defensively)

She's a licensed, health-care professional. It's a perfectly legal, compelling side of the medical profession we've never seen on television before.

RACHEL

We're the "family values" network, remember? Our viewers want people to go to angels, not hookers, to solve their problems. MBC is the fifth-ranked network and an industry joke. I was brought here to change that.

PAIGE

What about "Big Mann On Campus?"

RACHEL

The theology student with a bible and a badge.

PAIGE

Think Brad Pitt.

RACHEL

But we don't have Brad Pitt.

PAIGE

Brad Pitt wasn't always Brad Pitt. For a long time, he was just Brad Pitt.

(then)

"Big Mann on Campus" is "Hunter" meets "Wiseguy" on "21 Jump Street." And we've got Jackson Burley running the show.

RACHEL

Burley hasn't had a hit in ten years - anthropologists should freeze him now so people in the future can see what the 1980s were like.

PAIGE

This is his comeback. He's just delivered the pilot. It won't kill you to see it.

Rachel gathers up her papers and starts to rise.

RACHEL

Anything else?

Paige hits a button on the intercom.

PAIGE

(into intercom)

Send Harry in.

The door opens and HARRY FELLOWS, 50s, the head of the mailroom, carries in a HUGE MAILBAG and EMPTIES it onto the conference table. HUNDREDS OF LETTERS pour out.

HARRY

We've got three more bags of this in the mailroom.

RACHEL

Imagine that - mail in the mailroom. What's the point?

PAIGE

They're all from fans of "Space Cops."

RACHEL

You mean fat women with unicorn jewelry and elf statuettes who dream of finding men as affectionate as their cats.

PAIGE

The Spacies are very devoted viewers. In fact, research shows most are baby-boomers and their children, all of whom fall comfortably into the 18-49 demographic.

(then)

Given time and patience, "Space Cops" could become a multi-media phenomenon.

RACHEL

Not even if it had Brad Pitt.

Rachel gets up and leaves. And on Paige, glowering after her:

2 INT. NETWORK - CORRIDOR - DAY

2

Rachel emerges from the board room to find KAREN DININO, also in her late 20s, efficient and business-like, waiting for her.

KAREN

We have things to discuss.

RACHEL

Outside - I need some air.

3 EXT. NETWORK - DAY

3

As Rachel and Karen emerge from the building.

RACHEL

Each day, that office seems to get smaller and smaller. I have this nightmare that the walls are going to crush me.

KAREN

You don't have to be a shrink to understand where that is coming from. You're a beautiful woman in her 20s who replaced a balding man in his 60s. And you have to announce your first primetime schedule in just four weeks.

RACHEL

Everyone hates me. Everyone expects me to fail.

KAREN

You're under enormous pressure, no doubt about it. But you don't help yourself by doing this.

She pulls a MAGAZINE out of her briefcase. Rachel is on the cover, in her Gucci best, under the headline: "They Hate Me Because I'm So Damn Good."

RACHEL

You're my lawyer, not my publicist.

Rachel starts to cross the street, Karen alongside her.

KAREN

I'm your oldest friend and your sorority sister, which makes me one of the few people who can say: What the hell were you thinking?

RACHEL

I can't just sit and let the entire TV industry trash me in the press.

KAREN

Yes, you can. You can't lose. The only way you'll go is if they fire you - and if they do, they still have to pay you the balance of your \$15 million contract.

RACHEL

It's not the money I care about, it's the respect.

KAREN

Money is respect in this business.

And that's when they hear the SCREECH of TIRES on asphalt. They turn to see:

4 AN OLD LTD 4

Bearing down on them, a WOMAN in a SPACE COPS UNIFORM and SOLAR VISOR behind the wheel.

5 WIDE ANGLE ON 5

Rachel and Karen as they barely dive out of the way in time.

6 TIGHT ON RACHEL

6

As she sits up, clutching her chest, grimacing in pain. She searches frantically for her purse, but it's nowhere to be found. The panic and pain increase. She can't move. Karen rushes up to her and immediately realizes what's happening.

KAREN

Oh my God -- where are your pills?

Rachel is in too much pain to talk. Karen scrambles around, looking for the purse, finally finding it under a parked car. She grabs the purse, empties it on the ground, scoops up the BOTTLE OF PILLS and rushes to Rachel, who takes a PILL and jams it under her tongue. The relief is almost immediate.

KAREN

Someone call 911. Hurry!

And on Karen comforting Rachel, we FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

7 EXT. COMMUNITY GENERAL HOSPITAL - ESTABLISHING - DAY 7

8 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - DAY 8

DR. JESSE TRAVIS is at the nurse's station, talking on the phone, as DR. AMANDA BENTLEY comes up. Jesse seems uncomfortable.

JESSE

The salmon are running? That's great, Dad. What from?

(then)

If I can remove a spleen, I think I can handle baiting a hook with a live worm.

Amanda smiles. Jesse turns away from her.

JESSE

Look, we can talk about this when I get there. Yeah, I can't wait either. Bye, Dad.

Jesse hangs up. Amanda looks at him.

AMANDA

You're visiting your father?

JESSE

My vacation is coming up in a couple days. I made the mistake of telling him. Now he wants to go fishing with me for a week in Oregon.

AMANDA

That's wonderful.  
(off his look)  
Isn't it?

JESSE

I haven't seen him since my parents got divorced and he remarried. I was in high school. He's got a new family now, a couple stepsons, a big dog.

AMANDA

But he's not calling them, he's calling you. This is an opportunity to get to know him.

8 CONTINUED:

8

JESSE

What's the point now?

AMANDA

You once told me you envied the father-son relationship that Mark and Steve have.

JESSE

I do.

AMANDA

Then this is your chance to build that same relationship with your father.

JESSE

But I don't want it with my father. I want it with Steve's father.

She gives him a supportive squeeze.

AMANDA

I'm sure your Dad wants the same thing you do. But neither one of you can get it alone.

She walks away, and on Jesse's worried look, we CUT TO:

9 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - DIFFERENT FLOOR - DAY

9

Mark is emerging from the elevator, dogged by PHIL ZARKIN, 30s who clearly has been chasing him through the hospital for some time.

PHIL

The two most enduring genres on TV are cop shows and medical dramas. You are a franchise.

MARK

A what?

PHIL

A series. I call it "Dr. Danger." He heals the sick and nails the scumbags. His weapons are a stethoscope and a gun.

MARK

I don't have a gun.

9 CONTINUED:

9

PHIL

Nuns don't fly, cars don't talk,  
and angels don't look like Della  
Reese. So what? I need you for the  
pitch. To ground the concept in  
reality.

MARK

That's what I'm talking about.

PHIL

Good - I'm glad you're on board.

Mark stops, not far from a hospital room door.

MARK

This sudden interest in my life  
wouldn't have anything to do with  
Rachel Woodrell being my patient,  
would it?

Phil looks shocked... and hurt.

PHIL

A year ago, you exposed my wife as  
a sick, twisted, money-hungry  
murderer and sent her to prison.  
The revelation tore my life apart,  
it rocked my very soul. By doing  
this project maybe I can finally  
make the pain go away.

MARK

I'm sorry. I had no idea.

PHIL

I keep it locked inside.

(then)

But you know, a good pitch would  
probably lift Rachel's spirits.

Phil heads for the room, but Mark stops him.

MARK

Not today. I'll help you with your  
show on the condition that you  
leave Rachel alone until she's  
healthy and back at work.

PHIL

(nods)

You protect your patients because  
you're a doctor who cares.

Phil turns to go, taking out a microcassette recorder to add:

PHIL

Fighting germs with medical  
science and injustice with his  
fists.

Mark shakes his head and goes into:

10 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - RACHEL'S ROOM - DAY

10

Mark is stunned to see the room has been transformed. A FAX MACHINE, FIVE TVS, A VCR, and THREE PHONES have been installed. All the TVs are on, muted, tuned in to the inexpensive stock footage on the five networks. LT. STEVE SLOAN and Karen Dinino are at Rachel's bedside, where she is hooked up to heart-monitoring equipment. Her bed is covered with SCRIPTS. As Steve takes notes, Mark starts unplugging the phones and picking them up.

STEVE

Did you recognize the driver?

KAREN

It was a Spacie.

STEVE

Excuse me?

RACHEL

One of those obsessed "Space Cops"  
fans in a Star Command uniform. I  
canceled the show.

STEVE

They want to kill you over a TV  
show?

RACHEL

Television is an intimate medium.  
You let the characters into your  
home every week. For some people,  
the characters are almost real.

(then)

I didn't cancel their favorite  
show, I killed their closest  
friends.

STEVE

I'll look into it.

Steve closes his notebook. Mark stops him and dumps the three phones in his arms.

MARK

Take these with you.



RACHEL

Wait - I need those phones to keep in touch with the office.

MARK

I know. The fax machine and the TVs go next.

RACHEL

Dr. Sloan, you're killing me.

MARK

No, they are. You've got to relax and cut down on your stress.

RACHEL

I thought you said my condition had stabilized.

MARK

It has, but you've still got high blood pressure, hypertension, and a family history of coronary disease. You need some rest.

RACHEL

It's pilot season, Dr. Sloan. I need to stay on top of the business or I'm dead anyway.

MARK

That's the mindset that's driving you to a heart attack.

Mark yanks the plug out of the wall and the FIVE TVs go dark. Rachel shoots a pleading look at Karen.

RACHEL

Karen, explain it to him.

KAREN

Dr. Sloan, Rachel's ambition her entire life has been to become the top program executive at a major network. She's hasn't slowed down for one second getting there.

(then)

It's time she did.

RACHEL

Traitor.

Karen and Mark share a smile.

KAREN

I'll be back later.

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11.□

Mark follows her out.

11 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

11

Mark and Karen pause outside the door.

MARK

It's a good thing you knew about  
her nitroglycerin pills.

KAREN

We were in the same sorority in  
college, Dr. Sloan. We didn't have  
any secrets from each other.

MARK

I'll share one with you: her  
angina attack was a warning. She  
has to slow down. Do you think she  
will?

KAREN

Only if the next guy who tries to  
run her over doesn't miss.

Karen walks away. And on Mark looking after her, we CUT TO:

12 INT. "SAVE SPACE COPS" STORE FRONT - DAY

12

This low-rent storefront is the world headquarters of the  
"Save Space Cops" campaign. Several people in SPACE COPS  
uniforms and BADGES work the telephones, prepare fliers, etc.  
ERNIE COOLEY, 20s, their paunchy leader, wearing a high-  
ranking Space Cop uniform and badge, formally addresses Steve.

ERNIE

I'm always glad to assist a fellow  
officer.

STEVE

And you are?

ERNIE

High Admiral of the U.E.O.  
(off Steve's look)  
United Extraterrestrial Operations.

STEVE

I meant here on earth.  
(off his blank look)  
In the real world.  
(frustrated)  
What's it say on your driver's

license?

ERNIE

Ernie Cooley.

Steve motions to the activity going on in the room.

STEVE

What's all this, Ernie?

ERNIE

We're mounting an international campaign throughout fandom to save "Space Cops." We're spamming the Internet, leafletting the SF conventions--

STEVE

--running over network executives.

ERNIE

Who do you think we are - "Babylon 5" fans? Each of us has sworn to uphold the Space Cop creed.

He holds up his hands, palms out, like one of the Supremes saying "stop in the name of love."

ERNIE

"To protect those of other races, other places, other faces. To take justice and peace to the furthest edges of space... and beyond... and beyond... and--"

STEVE

I get the point. But whoever tried to kill Rachel Woodrell was in one of those uniforms.

ERNIE

Clearly, this is an attempt to besmirch the Spacies. Anyone can wear the uniform, not everyone can embody it and the ideals it represents.

Suddenly a woman behind them starts to sob, rips the badge off her chest, and hands it to Ernie.

JENNIFER

You're right. I don't deserve to wear the badge.

ERNIE

(shocked)

Jennifer?



JENNIFER

(to Steve)

Someone had to stop her from  
destroying the universe. I'm just  
sorry I failed.

Steve takes her by the arm and leads her to the door. He turns  
back to Ernie and his startled followers.

STEVE

You do know it's just a TV show,  
right?

They look at him like he's nuts and we

CUT TO:

13 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - RACHEL'S ROOM - DAY

13

CARLETON EVEREST, 50s, at Rachel's bedside as Mark comes in.

EVEREST

Don't leave here one minute  
earlier than necessary. Relax,  
regroup, center yourself. Your  
health is more important to us  
than any network schedule.

RACHEL

Thank you, Carl. I appreciate that.

EVEREST

We're behind you 1000%.

He leaves. Mark turns to Rachel.

MARK

You're very lucky to have such an  
understanding boss.

RACHEL

He's a viper.

(off Mark's look)

Relax, regroup, center yourself.  
Those are code words for "don't  
bother looking over your shoulder,  
the knives are already in your  
back."

MARK

I had no idea the television  
business was so brutal.

RACHEL

It's dog eat dog and all the dog's puppies.

MARK

Have you ever thought of doing something else?

RACHEL

I've saved every issue of TV Guide since the day I learned to read. This is the only thing I've ever wanted to do. Now that I have it, I'm not going to let a little heart problem get in the way.

MARK

Your little heart problem could kill you.

RACHEL

When can I get out of here?

MARK

I'm releasing you today but--.

She whips back the sheets to reveal she's already wearing HER PANTS. Mark is stunned.

RACHEL

Good, because I was going to leave in two minutes any way.

She pulls off her hospital gown and puts on her shirt.

MARK

Rachel, you have got to slow down and reduce your stress.

She slips into her shoes.

RACHEL

I'm the first woman to run a network. If I suddenly slow down, I confirm what they already think - that I can't take the pressure, that I'm too weak and fragile for the job.

MARK

I'm afraid you are.

She's not listening, or doesn't want to.

RACHEL

I'll send a messenger for the rest  
of my stuff. Thanks for  
everything, Dr. Sloan.

She hurries out. Mark stands there for a moment, soaking this  
all in, when Jesse passes by, carrying some files.

JESSE

There you are.

MARK

What's up?

Mark joins him in the hall.

14 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - CORRIDOR - DAY

14

Mark walks with Jesse.

JESSE

I'm supposed to go on vacation  
tomorrow.

MARK

Have a wonderful time. You deserve  
it.

JESSE

The thing is, I picked the worst  
possible month to go. The  
statistics clearly show that more  
patients come in now than any  
other time of year.

MARK

I think we'll manage.

JESSE

Maybe you should take a look at  
the statistics yourself.

Jesse hands Mark the files.

JESSE

While you do that, I'll call my  
travel agent and cancel my flight.

MARK

You're that eager to avoid seeing  
your father?

Jesse stops, caught.

JESSE  
I'd rather spend a week in  
proctology.

Mark hands the files back to Jesse. That's when a VOICE calls out:

PHIL (O.S.)  
Calling Dr. Danger...

Mark and Jesse turn to see Phil bounding up to them.

PHIL (CON'T)  
And his trusty assistant Derek.

JESSE  
Jesse.

PHIL  
Derek is better, trust me.  
(to Mark)  
We got a pitch with Rachel. Meet  
you at her office today at three.

MARK  
Today? She just left here.

PHIL  
Shows you how eager she is to snap  
this up before CBS gets it.

Phil claps Mark on the back, then says to Jesse:

PHIL  
Troy works, too. Walk with it,  
roll with it, see how it plays.

Phil leaves. And on Mark's look, we DISSOLVE TO:

15 EXT. MBC NETWORK BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - DAY 15

16 INT. NETWORK - RACHEL'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY 16

Mark and Phil come in to find writer/producer JACKSON BURLEY, 50s, pacing outside her door. Burley is as rugged and intense as one of his TV action heroes... decked out in expensive boots, tight pants, and a t-shirt that shows his professionally sculpted pecs. And he talks as tough as he looks. An ASSISTANT sits at a DESK near her door.

PHIL  
(low, to Mark)  
That's Jackson Burley.  
(off Mark's look)  
Writer/producer of "My Gun Has  
Bullets" and "The Young Barnaby  
Jones Chronicles?"

MARK  
Never saw them.

Phil gives Mark a chastizing look.

PHIL  
Even if you live in a cave, you  
can get cable. Join our culture,  
it's fun.  
(to Burley)  
Jack! How's it going?

JACK  
I've chewed the fat on the  
swallowed bullet and that's  
straight.

Jack turns his back on them. Mark looks confused.

MARK  
(low, to Phil)  
What did he just say?

PHIL  
(low, to Mark)  
I have no idea, but I agree with  
him wholeheartedly.  
(then, to Jack)  
Same goes triple for me. Here to  
pitch Rachel?

JACK  
She's screening my pilot - "Big  
Mann on Campus." That's with two  
"Ns." He's a theology student who  
carries a 4.0 average and a .357  
magnum.

PHIL  
I heard the buzz on that is so  
high you can get altitude sickness  
just talking about it.

JACK  
Used to be I didn't have to wait  
for anyone. I got a 22 episode  
commitment for my grocery list.



PHIL

I think I saw that show.

Jack turns back to the door, looking at it with worry. And on Phil's hurt look and Mark's amusement, we CUT TO:

17 INT. NETWORK - RACHEL'S OFFICE - DAY 17

Rachel is sitting in her big, overstuffed chair, knees drawn up against her, a script and a mineral water nearby, as she watches:

18 HER POV - THE TELEVISION 18

The pilot for "Big Mann on Campus" is well under way. Theology student TJ MANN, 20s, (CAMEO STAR #1) is walking with a SORORITY GIRL, 20s, down a hallway in her sorority house.

MANN

This is our third date, Cindy. I need more from you.

CINDY

I'm not that kind of girl.

MANN

And I'm not that kind of guy.

CINDY

Then what is it you want?

MANN

To know you. To understand you. To touch your soul before I touch your body.

She stares at him with admiration bordering on lust.

CINDY

You are different from all the other boys. Maybe I can show you who I really am. What I truly believe in.

19 RACHEL 19

groans and makes a note on her script. And we go

20 BACK TO THE TV 20

Cindy opens a door at the end of the hall, revealing SEVERAL SORORITY GIRLS in diaphanous robes dancing around a FIERY PENTAGRAM and a GOAT'S SKULL on an alter. Cindy beckons Mann in with a demonic smile.

CINDY

Satan!

21 RACHEL 21

Tears through her script IN A RAGE as we HEAR CHANTING from the TV.

RACHEL

What is this?!

MANN'S VOICE (ON TV)

This isn't a sorority. It's a satanic cult!

RACHEL

No!

Rachel RIPS out the pages and throws them at the television. Suddenly, she's gripped by a TREMENDOUS PAIN in her chest and falls against her desk, knocking things down.

22 INT. NETWORK - RACHEL'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY 22

Mark, Phil, and Jack react to the commotion. Phil smiles encouragingly at Jack.

PHIL

I think you moved her.

23 BACK TO SCENE 23

She gropes for her pills, finds them, and jams them in her mouth. But nothing happens!

CINDY'S VOICE (ON TV)

It's not a cult, it's an alternative lifestyle. Open your black heart to Satan, TJ. We have.

Another PAIN hits her, worse than the one before. She falls into a bookcase, causing the whole thing to fall with a tremendous crash.

24 INT. NETWORK - RACHEL'S OUTER OFFICE - DAY

24

Mark goes to the door. It's locked. He turns to her ASSISTANT.

MARK

I'm her doctor. We have to get in there.

JACK

Allow me.

Jack raises his booted foot and expertly KICKS THE DOOR OPEN. Mark rushes in, followed by the others.

25 INT. NETWORK - RACHEL'S OFFICE - DAY

25

to find Rachel sprawled on the floor. Mark and Jack rush to her.

MARK

(to assistant)

Call an ambulance!

Mark and Jack begin CPR together. Phil goes to the TV.

26 HIS POV - THE TV

26

TJ Mann pulls out his gun and a badge.

MANN

Blow out the candles on your pentagram, baby. You're all under arrest.

27 BACK TO SCENE

27

Phil shakes his head.

PHIL

This sucks.

Behind him, Mark gives up, shakes his head sadly at Jack.

MARK

She's dead.

Phil stares down at her, then back at the TV.

PHIL

It's worse than I thought.

And on everyone's shock, we..FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

28 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - PATHOLOGY - DAY

28

Amanda is standing over the body with Mark.

AMANDA

It's pretty clear-cut, Mark. She died of a heart attack.

MARK

Rachel knew she was high-risk for cardiac problems. This was a death that didn't have to happen.

In the background, we see Jesse walking by with his suitcases.

AMANDA

In more ways than one. I found glucose under her tongue.

MARK

Glucose?

AMANDA

Her nitroglycerin tablets were replaced with sugar pills. This was murder.

Jesse drops his bags and rushes in.

JESSE

Did someone say "murder?"  
(sees body)  
Isn't that Rachel Woodrell?

MARK

Don't worry - we can handle it.

JESSE

Not without me. You'll need help negotiating the labyrinthian corridors of power at MBC.

MARK

(to Jesse)

You haven't had a vacation in over a year, and you don't want to let your father down.

Mark leads him to the door.

JESSE

But Mark, the investigation.



AMANDA

We'll tell you all about it when  
you get back.

Amanda closes the door on him. Jesse reluctantly picks up his  
suitcases and trudges away. And on Mark's smile, we CUT TO:

29 INT. NETWORK - RACHEL'S OFFICE - DAY

29

The last of Rachel's things are being moved out and Paige's  
moved in as she finishes a conversation with Carleton Everest.

CARLETON

We know you're the best person for  
the job.

PAIGE

I really appreciate the support,  
Carl.

CARLETON

Rest assured, we are behind you  
1000%.

Carleton leaves as Jackson Burley arrives, carrying AN  
ENORMOUS BOUQUET OF FLOWERS.

PAIGE

What's this?

JACK

It's my way of saying you've  
cracked the wall without shaving  
the glitter off the cake, baby.

It's okay, Paige doesn't know what he just said, either. He  
sets the flowers on her desk.

PAIGE

Thanks. I just wish it happened  
differently. Rachel was like a  
sister to me.

JACK

She was the glory and the hope,  
the fire that burns in the  
flowering rose that stings the  
least.

Jack nods grimly, then takes a seat in front of her desk.

JACK

The best way to honor her memory  
is to deliver a kick-ass schedule.



PAIGE

That's my commitment to her and to this network.

JACK

So where are you putting "Big Mann on Campus?"

PAIGE

Sorry, Jack, it's passe.

JACK

It wasn't passe yesterday.

PAIGE

Nothing is passe yesterday. This is today. The show just isn't hip any more. I need fresh ideas.

JACK

I leveraged my studio to produce that pilot. If I don't get something going to off-set the deficits, I'm finished.

She starts to flip through some papers on her desk.

JACK

Okay, you want hip, I've got something for you so cutting edge, it draws blood.

(then)

"The New Peter Pan" - he's a fairy with an attitude, and a badge.

PAIGE

It's too early to be developing for midseason. Come back in a couple months.

JACK

I don't have a couple months.

PAIGE

Try the WB. Thanks for the flowers, Jack.

He glares at her and storms out.

Jack passes Phil, who's on a couch outside. He bolts up to intercept him when he spots Mark and Steve approaching. He goes to them instead.



PHIL

You got my message. I was beginning to wonder.

MARK

What message?

PHIL

But I forgive you for being late. Bringing Steve was a master stroke.

(to Steve: )

You got your badge and gun with you?

MARK

What are you doing here?

PHIL

You don't think you could pitch this alone, do you? Pitching is a gift, and you just don't have it.

(then)

Paige is waiting. Let me do the talking, you just fill in the gaps.

STEVE

We're here to investigate a murder.

PHIL

Not bad. Try to be more convincing in the room.

MARK

Rachel Woodrell was killed.

Phil is stunned, but recovers fast.

PHIL

No problem. That will give our pitch immediacy and verisimilitude.

Phil leads them into:

31 INT. NETWORK - PAIGE'S OFFICE - DAY

31

Paige steps around the desk to greet them. She offers Mark a smile.

PAIGE

You must be Dr. Danger.

MARK

Dr. Mark Sloan. I'm a consultant to the police.



STEVE

That's me.

Steve flashes his badge.

PHIL

That's his son. They live together, too, which brings the adventure home.

STEVE

We're investigating Rachel Woodrell's murder. Someone switched her heart medicine with sugar pills.

PHIL

"A Sweet Way to Die." That could be our pilot.

Mark admires the new furniture, plants, and artwork.

STEVE

We'll need all of Rachel appointment books and belongings.

PAIGE

Help yourself. They're boxed up in the hallway.

MARK

You've really decorated the office nicely.

PAIGE

Is that your way of saying it didn't take me long to move in?

PHIL

Friendly as Santa but cunning as a ferret, isn't he?

PAIGE

It's pilot season, Dr. Sloan. I don't have time to mourn. I have to create a primetime schedule.

STEVE

Sounds like Rachel's murder was a career opportunity for you.

She looks him right in the eye.

PAIGE

Yes, it was.



PHIL

Ouch. Feel the heat? It will radiate off the screen.

MARK

Did Rachel have any enemies?

PAIGE

She made careers and broke them. Of course she had enemies. If I'm any good at this, I will, too.

STEVE

What about death threats?

Paige goes to her INTERCOM and hits a button.

PAIGE

Lance, have the mailroom prepare Rachel's hate mail for Detective Sloan.

She turns back to Steve.

PAIGE

You can pick it up on your way out. The executive mail room is the last door before the elevators.

Mark and Steve share a look. They can take a hint.

MARK

Thanks for your time.

STEVE

We'll be back.

They leave. Phil stays behind, points where the Sloans stood, and turns to Paige.

PHIL

Now that's a series.

32 INT. NETWORK - MAIL ROOM - DAY

32

Harry Fellows, who we met in the teaser, and his YOUNG MAILROOM ASSOCIATES briefly sort the mail and faxes and file it all in special carts. MESSENGERS come in and out to pick up and deliver packages. Harry and his staff all wear tailored jackets and ties. They look like lawyers, not mail men. Several have their BACKS TO US as Mark and Steve enter.

MARK

Excuse me, is this the mailroom?



HARRY

The heart of the network.

(offers his hand)

Harry Fellows. Manager of  
Information Services and  
Operations.

(then)

Which is a fancy way of saying  
"the mail guy."

STEVE

You're awfully well-dressed for  
mail men.

HARRY

We have to be presentable at all  
times -- we deliver mail, faxes,  
and packages to every office in  
this building, from the CEO to the  
lowest development executive.

(then)

That, and if you want any of those  
jobs, you start here. They all did.

MARK

But the executives all seem so...

HARRY

Young?

(off Mark's nod)

Youth is much more important in TV  
than experience. Rachel went from  
here to running the network in  
three years. Fastest rise and fall  
I've seen in my three decades here.

STEVE

She didn't fall - she was pushed.

Steve flashes his badge.

STEVE

Steve Sloan. Homicide. We've come  
for Rachel's hate mail.

HARRY

Saves us the trouble of shredding  
it.

Harry motions to THREE LARGE, BULGING SACKS in the corner.

STEVE

That's all for Rachel?

HARRY

For the month. You need some help  
down with it?

Mark and Steve share an incredulous look.

MARK

That would be nice.

Harry taps one of the mail boys. The man turns and it's JESSE.  
And on Mark and Steve's surprise:

33 EXT. NETWORK PARKING LOT - DAY

33

As they toss the mailbags into Steve's trunk, Steve gives  
Jesse a harsh glare.

MARK

What are you doing here? You're  
supposed to be fishing with your  
Dad.

JESSE

I've gone undercover to help you  
explore the --

MARK

(interrupts)

Labrynthian corridors of power at  
MBC.

STEVE

You're not an undercover cop,  
Jesse. This is fraud.

JESSE

I got this job honestly, based on  
my qualifications.

STEVE

You told them you were a surgical  
resident at Community General?

JESSE

You bet I did. You need a masters  
or better just to get an  
interview. The competition is  
brutal.

MARK

(to Steve)

We don't know anything about the  
politics of network television. It  
couldn't hurt to have a man on the

inside.

JESSE

"Jesse Travis: Man on the Inside."  
Sounds like a series.

(off Steve's look)

See, I'm picking up the attitude  
already.

STEVE

You have enough attitude. Pick up  
anything else?

JESSE

Harry told you Rachel rose faster  
than anybody. Well, Paige just  
beat that record, thanks to  
Rachel's death. It fits a  
pattern - whoever is in her way  
either quits or gets fired. One  
way or another, they're gone.

MARK

You think she'd resort to murder?

JESSE

Like I said, it's brutal. And you  
know Jackson Burley, the guy who  
did "Big Mann on Campus?" He was  
supposed to write the movie "Jack  
Bludd: Actionfist."

STEVE

Great movie.

Steve does the action fist "fist shake."

JESSE

It made \$150 million... and  
counting. But Rachel wouldn't let  
Burley out of his exclusive  
contract to write the last three  
episodes of "The Young Barnaby  
Jones Chronicles."

(then)

And when he was done, she canceled  
it.

MARK

(to Steve)

Sounds to me like Jesse did us a  
favor.

DIRECTOR'S CHAIR between shots.

He has BOLTS in his NECK, and a BADGE on his chest. Steve stands in front of him.

CAMEO STAR #2

"Frankencop" isn't just another basic cable action show. We're re-writing the grammar of television.

STEVE

I had no idea.

CAMEO STAR #2

That's why Rachel Woodrell didn't buy it - she didn't have the guts to revolutionize the medium. Now that she's gone, network TV will have more shows with an edge.

Jackson Burley steps up, a head-set around his neck.

JACK

"The best pieces of a dozen dead cops brought together to make one great crime fighter: Frankencop."  
(then)

They're ready for your shot, CAMEO STAR #2.

The star goes off. Burley turns to Steve.

JACK

Twenty years from now you'll say "Frankencop" in the same breath with "Police Story," "Hill Street Blues"--

STEVE

"Airwolf."

Jack nods in agreement.

JACK

Rachel could have had it but she lacked the vision.

STEVE

Rachel could have had a lot of things, but she lacked nitroglycerin pills.

(off Jack's look)

Someone switched them with sugar pills and killed her.

JACK

And you think I look good for it.

STEVE

You were the last one to see her alive. You could have switched the pills during your meeting.

JACK

Why would I do that?

STEVE

She cost you a movie career and then canceled your show.

JACK

Let me rephrase that - why would I do that before she decided whether to pick up my pilot? She was watching "Big Mann on Campus" before she died.

STEVE

Revenge?

Jack motions to the scene being shot in front of them.

JACK

They got guts in basic cable. What they don't have is money. I'm deficit financing this whole thing. But without a network show to generate some cash flow, well, it's like they say on the street: "You can walk the talk, but don't run the gun if you can't stand the hand."

Steve stares at him.

STEVE

That's what I always say.

And on Steve's look, we CUT TO:

35 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

35

The table is covered with mail, scripts, and memos. Steve, Jesse, and Amanda plow through the pile.

JESSE

(reading)

"I swear by Ghu that the anthrobile mebocite who cancelled the greatest show in the universe will feel my wrath and tremble before my righteous fury."



STEVE

Unbelievable.

JESSE

I know. A fan base that devoted is something most showrunners can only dream about.

AMANDA

What kind of person would write this?

STEVE

Clearly, someone who doesn't live by the Space Cops creed.

AMANDA

The what?

JESSE

"To protect those of other races, other faces --"

(off Steve's look)

Three thousand people write in to save the show, I figure it's worth a look.

AMANDA

The question is, is it worth a life?

JESSE

The outer space law enforcement theme specifically targets the key young, urban males advertisers crave, while the rugged authority of the Captain Hudson character is tremendously appealing to women 25-49.

STEVE

Whoever did it had to have access to her office to switch the pills.

Mark pulls Rachel's appointment book out of the box of papers.

MARK

According to her calendar, that was just about everyone in the TV business.

JESSE

During pilot season, a network president is the most popular person in the world - and the

loneliest.

They all turn to look at him.

JESSE

Hey, you want the inside perspective, I'm giving it to you.

STEVE

We're still waiting for something useful.

JESSE

Rachel's first development season was going to be her last.

MARK

Rachel was on her way out? Who told you that?

JESSE

No one had to. I saw the pilots she ordered.

(off their looks)

Okay, you tell me what you think of this. It's the pilot she was watching just before she died.

Jesse digs through the pile of papers and comes up with a couple of crumpled script pages.

JESSE

It's TJ Mann's first date, okay? He takes the girl back to her sorority and says, "I need to know you. To touch your soul before I touch your body."

Amanda, not quite believing how bad this is, takes the pages from Jesse, who points to the place on the page.

AMANDA

(reading)

"I need that, too. But I can't have sex for free anymore. It's \$250 an hour. And if you're paying by check, I'll need two forms of ID."

Mark takes the pages, suddenly intrigued.

MARK

Let me see that.

(then)

I don't believe it.

(CONTINUED)

"Must Kill TV" Blue 9/8/97

34.□

35 CONTINUED: (3)

35

MARK

You just found the murder weapon.  
Rachel Woodrell was killed by this  
pilot.

And as they stare, astonished, we...

FADE OUT:

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

36 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

36

Mark slaps a tape into the VCR as Steve, Amanda, and Jesse wait breathlessly for him to explain.

STEVE

Okay, you've got me. How can a television pilot be a murder weapon?

MARK

It gave her a heart attack. The sugar pills ensured that it would be fatal.

AMANDA

But how could the killer know she would be alone when she reached for the pills?

JESSE

Everyone knew that Rachel insisted on watching tapes by herself.

(then)

But Rachel saw bad pilots all the time. If "Slim and the Nun" didn't kill her, why would "Big Mann on Campus?"

MARK

Because this one was designed especially for her. Look at these pages.

They glance at the script pages.

AMANDA

Sorority call girls. Sure, it's tasteless, but it's nothing they haven't done on Melrose Place.

MARK

But that's not what was on film.

He picks up the remote and starts the tape.

37 ON THE TV

37

Cindy stands in front of the fiery pentagram, unbuttoning her dress.

CINDY

It's not a cult, it's an  
alternative lifestyle. Open your  
black heart to Satan, TJ. We have.

She lets her dress drop.

38 BACK TO SCENE

38

As our people watch, intrigued. Mark flips off the TV.

MARK

Whoever killed Rachel knew that  
what she saw had to be something  
so dark, so damaging, it would be  
stressful enough to cause an  
angina attack.

STEVE

I can think of one way to find out.

And on their looks:

39 INT. POLICE PRECINCT - DAY

39

A very annoyed Karen Dinino blasts into the precinct, stopping  
at the desk.

KAREN

Where's Lieutenant Sloan.

The desk sergeant is about to point him out, but Steve appears  
at the other side of the swinging doors.

STEVE

Thank you for coming, Ms. Dinino.

She whirls around to face him, wielding a message slip like a  
sword.

KAREN

It would be in my best interest to  
come to the police station? What  
the hell is that supposed to mean?

STEVE

I figured you wouldn't want to be  
in your office when we  
discussed... Satan.

Karen freezes.

KAREN

I have no idea what you're talking about.

STEVE

Then it's my mistake, and I'm terribly sorry to have inconvenienced you.

(then)

I'll come to your office if I have any more questions about... Satan.

She tightens, then marches past him into the station.

KAREN

If one word of this conversation leaks out, my lawsuit will bankrupt your department.

He leads her over to his desk.

STEVE

Your religious practices are your own business, Ms. Dinino. My only interest is Rachel Woodrell's murder.

KAREN

Rachel was murdered? By whom?

STEVE

Someone who knows your college sorority was full of devil worshippers.

Karen quickly assesses the situation, calculates the damages, chooses to cooperate.

KAREN

We weren't a cult. Sure, we roasted the occasional goat in the moonlight, but aside from the Latin chants and naked dancing, it was just like any other barbecue.

STEVE

A bunch of wholesome co-eds looking for clean fun on a Saturday night?

KAREN

We were 18 and away from home for the first time, looking for a way to rebel against our parents.

39 CONTINUED: (2)

39

STEVE

By worshipping the devil.

KAREN

No one took it seriously at the time. Once we got into the real world, we realized just how stupid we had been - and how damaging it would be if anyone ever found out.

STEVE

To a lawyer in a prestigious firm, I can understand. But the entertainment industry seems to be a little more tolerant of alternative lifestyles.

KAREN

Sure, do drugs, forge checks, sleep with your sister, no one in Hollywood cares. But light one lousy black candle.

STEVE

(getting it)

And you confirm what TV's harshest critics have been saying all along.

KAREN

Don't think Rachel and I didn't joke about it in the privacy of her office.

(then)

There are people in the fly-over states who believe that shows like "Married, But Available" and "His and Hers and Hers" are deliberate attempts to undermine the nation's moral values.

STEVE

And if they found out that the woman who was putting those shows on the air worshipped the devil.

KAREN

Even the USA network wouldn't touch her. She'd never work in TV again.

Steve stands impatiently as Jackson Burley tries to overcome his hysterical laughter.

JACK

A Satanist!

STEVE

In her college sorority. Does that mean anything to you?

JACK

Sure. Rachel Woodrell sold her soul to the devil - and she still couldn't pick a hit show.

He lapses back into laughter.

STEVE

I'm glad you find death so amusing. Especially since your pilot may have killed her.

JACK

Now that's writing.

STEVE

No, it's murder - if we find out the script was deliberately changed to trigger that heart attack.

JACK

You can floor both pedals, but that won't jam the rooster if he's staring down a speculum.

STEVE

I'm going to assume that wasn't a confession.

JACK

Only one thing I'm guilty of - taking the worst notes I've ever heard. You think the Satan angle was my idea?

STEVE

The script had your name on it.

JACK

My script was a tone poem about fragile innocence meeting the brutal reality of the cold streets.

STEVE

So why did you change hookers to Satan worship?

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

JACK

Because you don't ignore a note from the head of the network and expect her to pick up your show.

STEVE

Rachel Woodrell told you to add the Satanists?

JACK

She didn't have the guts to tell me.

Burley digs in the side pocket of his director's chair and comes up with a folder of memos. He pulls one out and hands it to Steve.

41 THE MEMO

41

is from Rachel Woodrell and the subject line is NEW ENDING FOR BIG MANN.

42 BACK TO SCENE

42

Steve studies the memo.

STEVE

And you just happened to keep the memo all this time.

JACK

You saw the pilot. Wouldn't you?

And on Steve considering that:

43 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

43

Steve watches as Mark and Jesse study the memo.

MARK

It never bothered Burley that Rachel sent a memo instead of calling him directly?

JESSE

Rachel always faxed her notes. She felt it eliminated a lot of potential for confusion.

STEVE

Not to mention leaving her a paper trail.

MARK

Unfortunately, this trail isn't leading us anywhere. Because we know Rachel wouldn't have sent this fax.

STEVE

Not if she wanted to keep working in the business.

MARK

And she did, more than she cared about her health, or even her life.

Mark puts the memo aside and Jesse snatches it up.

STEVE

So we're right back where we started.

Jesse puts the memo down, grinning.

JESSE

It's times like these that really make you wish you had a man on the inside. Oh, wait a minute, you do.

STEVE

And that's why we've closed this case so quickly.

JESSE

Maybe we have.

(then)

This memo wasn't sent from Rachel's fax.

And on their looks:

44 INT. PAIGE'S OFFICE - DAY

44

Paige sits behind her desk as CAMEO STAR #3, wearing a Space Cops uniform, pitches to her.

CAMEO STAR #3

"Space Cops" looks like any sci-fi action show because it has men in space suits firing weapons. But in reality, it's a mirror, reflecting the social issues of our day as seen through the prism of 29th century law enforcement.



44 CONTINUED:

44

PAIGE

Thank you for making that clear at last.

CAMEO STAR #3

So now you understand what an important voice this show has in the socio-political dialogue of our country?

PAIGE

No, I understand why only six people watch it.

Cameo Star #3 immediately adjusts his pitch.

CAMEO STAR #3

That's why I've come up with a way to completely revamp the show. Man's abandoned Earth, but still can't lose his primal urges. That's where I come in: Captain Hudson, Galactic Vice.

PAIGE

You mean, space strip clubs, alien hookers, the gritty side of the cosmos.

(then)

I like it. Let me think on it.

Cameo Star #3 gets up, shakes her hand, and leaves, just Mark and Steve march in.

PAIGE

Why do people think storming into a network executive's office will get their show get picked up?

MARK

You'd think they could figure out they were alienating the one person who can...

(realizing:)

You mean us, don't you?

PAIGE

Unless Dr. Danger is here to give me a power-packed pap smear.

STEVE

Actually, Detective Danger has some questions.



PAIGE

About Rachel Woodrell spending her  
leisure time bowling down before  
Beelzebub?

MARK

You knew all along?

PAIGE

When I worked for her, I thought  
she was the devil. I just found  
out the truth when reporters  
started calling about three hours  
ago.

STEVE

Fifteen minutes after I told  
Jackson Burley.

PAIGE

This is a small town, Detective.  
Nothing stays secret for long.

Mark shares a look with Steve, then wanders across the room.  
Steve bores into Paige.

STEVE

Especially if it's faxed in the  
form of script notes.

She doesn't get it. He hands her the faxed pages.

STEVE

That is your fax number, isn't it?  
The show based on these notes  
caused Rachel's fatal heart attack.

Rachel tries to stare Steve down. It doesn't work. Across the  
room, Mark is studying the items on Paige's shelves. Finally:

PAIGE

If I'd known Rachel was a  
Satanist, I wouldn't have had to  
kill her to get this job. I  
could've called Entertainment  
Tonight.

STEVE

Unless you really hated her.

44 CONTINUED: (3)

44

PAIGE

Especially if I really hated her.

(then)

You can give me that steely cop stare all you want, but it's not going to change the fact that I didn't know. Rachel barely trusted me with the ratings, let alone her deepest secret.

MARK

She didn't have to.

Steve and Paige turn to see Mark standing by a lamp. He lifts off the shade and reveals a tiny MICROPHONE.

MARK

This room is bugged.

PAIGE

You mean, everything I've said since I took this job has been recorded?

(then)

I've got to make a couple hundred phone calls, right away.

And as she dives for the phone:

45 INT. NETWORK HALLWAY - DAY

45

Steve works to open the UTILITY BOX as Mark looks on.

MARK

What makes you so sure we'll find a tape recorder up here?

STEVE

The bug was a short-range unit. This is the most logical place for the recorder. If I'm right, this should answer a lot of questions.

He pulls the door off, and stares at

46 IN THE UTILITY BOX

46

Are twelve microcassette recorders.

47 BACK TO SCENE

47

Steve shakes his head in disbelief.

47 CONTINUED:

47

MARK

Or raise a lot more.

They share a look as a punchy TV MAGAZINE THEME starts to play and we're

48 INT. TV MAGAZINE SHOW SET - DAY

48

As the host turns to face the camera.

HOST

The hottest story in primetime is full of bizarre twists, mysterious betrayals, and Satanic rituals. But don't turn on your TV looking for it - this isn't fiction. It's what's happening behind-the-scenes of network television.

HOST (CON'T)

Everyone in Hollywood is talking about fifth-place network MBC, which is reeling from the revelation that net's late president Rachel Woodrell was a Satan-worshipper. and may have been murdered.

As we go into out MONTAGE OF CAMEO STARS.

CAMEO STAR #4

All the times I met with Rachel, she never once mentioned Satan. But she did date Christian Slater for a while.

CAMEO STAR #5

I'm appalled that someone with such demented beliefs could rise to such a high position at the network.

(then)

I'm not surprised, just appalled.

DR. JOYCE BROTHERS

The urge towards Satanism is much like any other anti-social behavior, a rebellion against the status quo. A way to say, "look at me, I'm different."

PHIL ZARKIN

It explains how "The Anson  
Williams Show" got on the air.

48 CONTINUED:

48

CAMEO STAR #6

A network president is a Satanist.  
Someone murders her with a pilot.  
Sounds like a great TV movie.

(then)

You know, people say I look just  
like her.

ERNIE COOLEY

It all makes sense to me. Only  
someone Godless could cancel  
"Space Cops."

49 INT. MAIL ROOM - NIGHT

49

Jesse and the other MAILROOM ASSISTANTS are watching the  
magazine show on a small portable TV as Harry comes in.

JESSE

How bad is it out there?

HARRY

Let's just say there are some  
times I'm really glad I'm not in  
the executive suites.

JESSE

That's one nice thing about this  
job - no one ever blames the guy  
in the mail room.

HARRY

You think so?

Harry gestures to a cart full of mail.

HARRY

That the 6:30 delivery?  
(off Jesse's nod)

It's a quarter after seven now.  
Wait another ten minutes before  
you deliver it - and then see if  
no one ever blames the guy in the  
mail room.

Harry snaps off the TV. Jesse gets the message. He goes to the  
cart and pushes it out the door.

50 INT. ANOTHER NETWORK CORRIDOR - NIGHT

50

As Jesse stops outside a closed office door and knocks.

JESSE

Mail.

50 CONTINUED:

50

There's no answer, so he goes in with a pile of mail and comes back out empty handed and pushes the cart down to the next door. He knocks on the door.

JESSE

Mail.

Again, there's no answer. He opens the door and goes in. Then freezes as he sees:

51 INT. PAIGE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

51

Paige hangs from the rafters by a cord around her neck. Dead. And on Jesse's shock, we FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

52 EXT. NETWORK BUILDING - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT 52

53 INT. NETWORK - PAIGE'S OFFICE - NIGHT 53

It's a crime scene. Paige's body has been taken down and now lies on the floor, where Amanda is examining it. Across the room, Steve talks to Carlton Everest as Jesse stands by.

EVEREST

If I'd had any idea she was so troubled, I never would have offered her the job.

STEVE

Did Paige ever mention suicide?

EVEREST

She once said she'd rather die than work with Tom Arnold again, but aside from that I can't think of anything.

STEVE

So you have no idea why she would have killed herself?

Everest looks blank. Jesse steps in.

JESSE

Job stress.  
(off Steve's look)  
Programming a network may be the most stressful job in the world.

Everest studies Jesse appreciatively. This IS a bright young man.

STEVE

I can see how watching TV all day would be tougher than police work or emergency medicine.

Everest shares a bonding look with Jesse, then turns to Steve.

EVEREST

Just because the product is entertainment doesn't mean the stakes aren't high. Every decision can mean millions of dollars.

53 CONTINUED:

53

JESSE

And since there are no objective measures of quality in this business, you never know if you've still got the touch.

STEVE

Did Paige?

EVEREST

We'll never know.

JESSE

But personally, I'm not so sure.

As Steve and Everest watch, Jesse goes over to the schedule board and switches a couple of strips.

JESSE

I mean, if you're going to pick up "Sexual Surrogate," isn't it better to put it up against "Touched By an Angel" and give the audience a clear choice?

Everest nods, suddenly intrigued. Jesse yanks off a few more strips, then, on a roll, moves around Paige's desk, sits in her chair, and puts his feet up.

JESSE

Her Saturday night shows were hopelessly incompatible, and she didn't have a clue what to do against the other networks' sitcoms.

EVEREST

And what would you have done in her place?

STEVE

Maybe we could rearrange the schedule after we determine why Paige Jennings killed herself.

AMANDA

She didn't.

They all turn to see a grim-visaged Amanda coming up to them.

AMANDA

Not unless she could tie a computer cable around her neck and

jump off the desk after knocking  
herself out with a blunt object.

53 CONTINUED: (2)

53

EVEREST

But that means.

STEVE

That she was murdered.

That's when Jess speaks up from across the desk.

JESSE

And this may be why.

He gestures into the drawer, which is full of MICROCASSETTES.  
And on their looks, we DISSOLVE TO:

54 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

54

Steve drags himself up the stairs, still yawning, and is surprised to find Mark in the living room, still in his bathrobe, HEADPHONES ON, listening to the TAPES.

STEVE

How long have you been listening to those tapes?

MARK

All night. To be honest, I couldn't stop... it's compelling stuff. There's drama, intrigue, and sex.

STEVE

Sex?

MARK

Lots of it, mostly in Paige's office, mostly with Jackson Burley.

STEVE

Why would she bug her own office?

MARK

Why did Nixon?

STEVE

I bet his tapes weren't nearly as entertaining.

MARK

But as full of conspiracies, cover-ups and secrets. Paige had the dirt on every executive in the building.



54 CONTINUED:

54

STEVE

Now we know how she rose from the mailroom so fast.

MARK

Unfortunately, it doesn't help us narrow down the suspects - in fact, there are easily a dozen people with motives to kill her... and I haven't even finished listening to all the tapes yet.

And on their shared frustration, we CUT TO:

55 INT. BURLEY'S OFFICE - DAY

55

Jackson Burley and his writers are cracking a story for "Frankencop" as Steve enters. The story beats are scribbled all over a dry-erase board. Jack is addressing his staff.

JACK

Lt. Frankencop comes to arrest the psycho-killer - and discovers that this guy's brother's spleen is smoldering in his gut. The arc becomes: how does a cop deal with having a homicidal maniac's brother's internal organs?

STEVE

I can't tell you how many times that's happened to me.

JACK

We don't need another story consultant.

STEVE

You may need a legal one. You were sleeping with Paige Jennings.

All the writers turn to look at Jack. He shrugs.

JACK

Who wouldn't? She was gorgeous and she could greenlight projects for development.

STEVE

And when Paige moved into Rachel's place, she had the power to pick up your show and save your

studio - but she didn't.

Jack looks uncomfortably at his writers.

55 CONTINUED:

55

JACK  
Keep cracking. I'll be right back.

Jack pulls Steve outside into:

56 INT. BURLEY'S OFFICE - CORRIDOR

56

Jack speaks low to Steve.

JACK  
Look, don't upset the natives. If they think the trees are out of coconuts, they'll move to a different village.

STEVE  
Losing your studio is a powerful motive for murder.

JACK  
Don't talk to me about motives. I've written more cop shows than anybody. Fact is, I couldn't have hung Paige - I've got carpal tunnel syndrome.

He holds up his hands.

JACK  
Every word I type has a price in pain. Check my medical records.

And on Steve digesting this, we CUT TO:

57 INT. BEACH HOUSE - DAY

57

Mark is still listening to tapes as Steve comes in.

MARK  
What do you think of Dr. Doolittle as a private eye who drafts animals as his operatives?

STEVE  
It's horrible.

MARK  
Rachel Woodrell ordered 13 episodes if they could get Chad Everett.

STEVE

Maybe she was killed by Viewers  
for Quality Television.

57 CONTINUED:

57

Mark turns off the recorder.

MARK

That was the last tape. I've heard them all.

STEVE

And?

MARK

There's one tape missing.

STEVE

How do you know?

MARK

Karen Dinino told you she talked to Rachel in her office about their "satanic" past... but that tape isn't here.

STEVE

Why would Paige have kept the tapes on everyone - including her own love-making with Jackson Burley - and not the one that matters most?

MARK

Something else bothers me. As Paige said, if she knew about Rachel's secret, she'd leak it to the press, why go to the trouble of scaring her to death?

STEVE

Paige always used what she knew against people - that's how she rose so fast at MBC.

MARK

Which brings me back to the missing tape.

(then)

What if she never had it?

STEVE

I don't follow you.

MARK

What if she wasn't the one who bugged the offices... what if someone else gave her the tapes?



57 CONTINUED: (2)

57

STEVE

Someone with his or her own agenda for wanting Rachel dead and Paige in her place.

MARK

And then Paige reneged on the deal somehow.

STEVE

But who? We're no closer to the killer than we were before.

MARK

I'm not so sure. What do these two murders have in common?

STEVE

Two beautiful women who started at the bottom and ended up running the network.

MARK

(smiles)

And that's how we'll flush out the killer.

And on Steve's confusion, we CUT TO:

58 INT. MAIL ROOM - DAY

58

Harry looks up as Jesse wheels in his empty cart.

JESSE

All done.

HARRY

See you tomorrow, then.

But Jesse doesn't go.

HARRY

What?

JESSE

I don't know, I hate to leave this place.

HARRY

Is your home life that troubled, son?

58 CONTINUED:

58

JESSE

No, it's just that I'm learning so much every day I'm here. Even a minute away feels like wasted time.

Harry chuckles paternally.

HARRY

The network is a vast and complex creature, Jesse. It takes years just to realize how much you have to learn. Mastering it is the work of a lifetime.

That's when Carleton Everest comes in. Harry straightens up.

HARRY

Mr. Everest, is everything all right?

EVEREST

I hope so. As you know, we need a new vice president of development.

HARRY

And you've come to warn us to expect a flood of resumes.

(to Jesse:)

Last time a job like this opened up, two mailboys got hernias.

EVEREST

I'm not looking at resumes this time, Harry. I need someone who has his finger on the pulse of the youth culture, and yet has an instinctive understanding of the medium.

HARRY

I'll do anything I can to help, sir.

EVEREST

Good, because I really feel bad about taking such a bright assistant away from you.

(to Jesse)

How would you like to be the new vice president of development?

And on Jesse's shocked surprise, DISSOLVE TO:



59 INT. NETWORK - JESSE'S OFFICE - DAY

59

Jesse is in Paige's old office, the one she had before she replaced Rachel. He's on the phone as Amanda peeks her head in. Jesse waves her inside as he continues talking.

JESSE

"Mansect?" What's that?

(then)

I don't think being half-man, half-moth gives him that many special powers.

Amanda sits down.

JESSE

Even if he is Greg Evigan.

(then)

Lunch at Le Guerre, you got it.

(hangs up)

So, Amanda. How's the medical game?

AMANDA

We can talk while we eat. I'm starving.

JESSE

Sorry, can't make it. No time. Didn't my girl call your girl?

AMANDA

I don't have a girl.

JESSE

You got to get one. They're great.

(then)

I've got Bochco at one, Spelling at two, and Pauly Shore at three.

AMANDA

Aren't you forgetting someone?

JESSE

Oh yeah, Chad Everett at 2:30.

AMANDA

I'm talking about your father. You're supposed to be with him today.

JESSE

I can catch salmon any time, how often do I get to spend my vacation programming a network?

AMANDA

Like father, like son.

59 CONTINUED:

59

JESSE

My Dad never programmed a network.

AMANDA

But he always had a good excuse for not seeing you. And I bet you promised yourself you'd never be the same way.

JESSE

This is different.

Amanda gets up and leaves.

JESSE

Amanda.

Jesse rises to follow, but Phil Zarkin bounds into the office, intercepting him.

PHIL

Derek, my buddy.

JESSE

It's Jesse.

Phil continues, undeterred.

PHIL

Have I got a series for you: "Dr. Danger." He listens to their hearts with a stethoscope and answers their cry for vengeance with his .357.

JESSE

Needs work.

PHIL

What kind of work?

JESSE

I see Dr. Danger as a young resident -- witty, cunning, irresistible to women.

PHIL

What about the doctor and his son the cop?

JESSE

What about them?

That's when Harry comes in, pushing his mail cart.

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

JESSE

Just stick the scripts on the floor and the mail in the basket.

HARRY

I'd like to talk with you.

JESSE

Love to, Harry, but I'm in middle of a pitch. I have a five minute window at four.

HARRY

That's it.

Harry reaches into the cart, pulls out a SAWED OFF SHOTGUN, COCKS IT, and AIMS IT AT JESSE. Phil hits the floor.

PHIL

What is it with mailmen?

HARRY

(to Jesse: )

You're just like the rest. You all start in my mailroom. You all go to the top. And did any of you ever bring me with you?

JESSE

I've only been in the job three hours. Give me a chance.

HARRY

I've been here 30 years, waiting to be noticed, stuck in that windowless pit. You've been here two days - two days - and you get vp stripes and a corner office.

MARK'S VOICE

That's what I thought.

Harry looks over his shoulder to see Mark, Steve and Carleton Everest coming into the room behind him. Steve has his gun drawn.

MARK

You taught Rachel everything you knew - thinking she would take you out of the mailroom. When she didn't, you pinned your hopes on Paige.

HARRY

I did everything I could for her.

59 CONTINUED: (3)

59

STEVE

You bugged all the offices and gave her the dirt she needed to get ahead. You even removed Rachel for her - by faking the faxes to Jackson Burley so he'd dramatize her secret.

HARRY

So his promotion - it was just a trick.

MARK

I'm afraid so. I knew promoting someone with no experience and no talent would break you.

JESSE

Thanks a lot.

STEVE

Put down the gun, Harry.

Harry wavers for a moment, then drops the shotgun in the mail cart. Steve rushes forward and cuffs him.

HARRY

I hate television.

Steve takes Harry away. Phil gets to his feet.

PHIL

How did you know it was him?

MARK

Whoever bugged the executive suite, and intercepted Rachel's faxes, had to have free access to all the offices. The only one who did was Harry... and working with him in the mailroom was the only thing Rachel and Paige had in common.

EVEREST

Brilliant.

PHIL

If you think this was good, wait until you see the next episode.

Phil puts his arm around Everest and leads him out of the room.

PHIL  
I call it "Dr. Danger".

59 CONTINUED: (4)

59

And on Mark's smile we DISSOLVE TO:

60 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - DOCTOR'S LOUNGE - DAY

60

Jesse and Amanda are on break.

JESSE

I don't know if I'd call it a vacation, but it was an experience I'll never forget.

AMANDA

I don't think it could have beat a reunion with your father.

JESSE

He probably didn't want to see me anyway.

AMANDA

He invited you, remember?

JESSE

He has two stepsons. He probably didn't even notice I wasn't there.

MARK

Then what's he doing in our lobby?

Jesse turns to see Mark entering, a big smile on his face.

JESSE

Dad is here?

MARK

Your father said if you won't come to him, he'd come to you.

JESSE

He said that?

Despite himself, Jesse breaks into a broad, happy smile and rushes out. Mark shares a look with Amanda, then glances at his watch.

MARK

I've got a patient to see.

Mark leaves. And we CUT TO:

61 INT. COMMUNITY GENERAL - HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

61

A WOMAN lies in a hospital bed, making a tearful confession.

61 CONTINUED:

61

WOMAN

He knew about my secret past as a  
call girl, my affair with his  
brother, and the forged checks. I  
had to kill him, doctor.

We PULL BACK and see she's talking to a FAMILIAR WHITE-HAIRED  
DOCTOR and FAMILIAR YOUNG DETECTIVE, both of whom have their  
backs to us.

DOCTOR

And you would have gotten away  
with it, too, if only you hadn't  
polished your nails.

That's when he turns around. It's PETER GRAVES. (or other TBD  
CAMEO)

DOCTOR

You can arrest her, son.

And that's when his son turns around. It's JOHN STAMOS. (or  
other TBD CAMEO)

SON

With pleasure, Dad.

And WE PULL BACK to see all of this is:

62 INT. NETWORK OFFICE - DAY

62

...on the TV, being watched by Carleton Everest and a bunch of  
executives. Everest shakes his head.

EVEREST

It will never work.

And we FADE OUT.

THE END