

~~BLACK SCREEN~~

~~FADE IN:~~

~~EXT. CRIME SCENE -- ALLEYWAY -- NIGHT~~

~~Beyond the alley we see a CHURCH -- VICTORY BETHEL CHURCH. Much closer, in the ally, at "our feet," lies the body of a DEAD BLACK MAN, covered in BLOOD. Gunshot wounds? Beaten to death? We can't tell. But there is no mistaking his clothes -- this was a Christian minister.~~

~~The camera slowly examines the body it appears to be a priest.~~

~~He died carrying a BRIEFCASE. It lies open to the wind which ruffles some nondescript papers... and a blood-spattered, open BIBLE.~~

~~Between the mouth of the alley and the church beyond stands a CROWD of horrified gawkers~~

~~A unmarked COP CAR pulls to a stop behind the crowd. One young KID in the crowd and watches the car park.~~

~~KID
Where the fuck all the police at?
His body been out here way too
fucking long!~~

~~Crowd agrees, grumbling discontent.~~

~~CUT TO:~~

~~INT. UNMARKED CAR~~

~~DETECTIVE TIMOTHY MCDONALD, mid-fifties, stocky frame but with athletic bearing, turns down his police radio so he can hear the crowd. He zeroes in on the yelling kid whose words are muffled through the car's window. A WHITE MAN's hand taps McDonald's window. He lowers it.~~

~~The hand belongs to CHIEF EDDIE COTTER, mid-sixties with a lean frame. Cotter leans in the window.~~

~~COTTER
Didn't I hear you say there is no
God?~~

~~MCDONALD
Yeah?~~

COTTER
Times like this I think you may be
on to something.

MCDONALD
Never seen a murdered priest
before?

COTTER
"Pastor," detective. No, this is
ain't my first. Back in ninety
eight two young girls strangled a
perv "Man of God" who couldn't keep
his hands to himself.

MCDONALD
Test your faith?

COTTER
No. People are people, and pervs
are pervs. You know that, Mac. This
one seems more like usual shit. A
disagreement -- shouting back
forth. And I guess the "other
party" lost patience with the
"debate." The caller called in the
dispute -- then shouting stopped.

MCDONALD
A dispute?

McDonald exits the car and joins Cotter walking over to the
body scene where uniformed police and EMTs converge on the
scene.

MCDONALD (CONT'D)
I'll get the call from dispatch.

McDonald looks at the crowd across from the crime scene.

COTTER
Good luck with a witness. This is
STILL Big Earl's turf. Either he's
going take care of this for us or
else he pushed the button.

MCDONALD
I'm not so sure, Chief. Big Earl's
been losing his grip around here
for a few years, now. Can't control
the pups like he used to. And he's
one man who's big enough to avoid
the shit show rubbing out a pastor
means.

Start

End