

“SUNRISE, SUNSET”

Sadie Hickman

SETTINGS

Time period is mid- to late-70's, early 80's, in an older metropolitan police station. Costuming and set design should reflect this.

LOCKER ROOM

The locker room: two toilet stalls set a little further back, long mirror over two sinks, benches, and a bank of lockers next to that. Two doors, one in the back near the stalls, the other on the Stage Right. On the outside of the Stage Right door is a crudely inked sign that says “Unisex Locker Room, Knock Before Entering!”

SQUAD ROOM

Four desks are arraigned in pairs, facing each other, with the door in the back of the stage remaining. Another door has been added to Stage Left. Contents of the desks consist of desk lamps, in and out boxes, desk organizers, and personal items. From Stage Left to Right, the desks are: Rossetti, Pritchard, Hughes, and Martinez. Filing cabinets line the back wall, with wire baskets and a coffee maker set on top. Stage Left door leads to Locker room/Restroom, Stage Right is the squad room exit. Upstage is Wapsi's Office.

CHARACTERS

Lieutenant Jonathan Wapsi	(M) Head of the shift
Detective Angelo Martinez	(M) Energetic, second oldest detective
Detective Robert Hughes	(M) Typically very loud, belligerent, youngest detective
Detective David Pritchard	(M) Stoic, talks with his hands, the oldest detective on the squad
Detective Temperance Rossetti	(F) Quiet, friendly, second youngest and only female

COMMON SLANG

Lieu (loo) – abbreviation for ‘lieutenant,’ a more comfortable, familiar term
Skell – slang for a homeless person or small-time criminal

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

Lights rise on a precinct locker room, ambient noise is that of a few people talking and phones ringing occasionally, over cars and honking. For the most part, the background noise is fairly quiet, save for when the STAGE RIGHT door is open. HUGHES is sitting on the STAGE FRONT bench, head in his hands, looking disheveled, and dressed in his suit slacks and a white undershirt. His jacket is on the bench in a pile, along with his white button-up and tie. MARTINEZ enters from STAGE RIGHT door.

MARTINEZ

Hughes! There you are, where the hell have you been?

HUGHES

(rubbing his face with a sigh)

Out.

MARTINEZ

You've got the lieutenant scouring the halls for you. He even checked the women's bathroom on third.

HUGHES

What's so damned important?

MARTINEZ

Jesus Christ, you really have been under a rock.

(rubs his head, pausing)

Concord got capped.

HUGHES

The girl lawyer, huh.

MARTINEZ

Yeah, the one that keeps getting these assholes off the hook.

(pauses, waiting for a response)

I don't even know how she managed to keep Gorbachev out of jail.

(pauses again)

We had him nailed on three murder for hires!

(frowns)

You sure don't sound surprised.

HUGHES

Eh, I'm not.

MARTINEZ

Whatever, man, get your ass in gear. The lieutenant is still looking for you, and he'll find you eventually.

(MARTINEZ moves out of the way as WAPSI pushes open the door and enters. WAPSI motions for MARTINEZ to leave, and he does.)

WAPSI

Detective, Mister Concord has been sitting patiently in Interview One for about two hours now, waiting for a detective to interview him. And where were you?

HUGHES

Lieutenant. I got busy. Had to run an errand.

WAPSI

Ah, well, I got left standing at the door looking like I can't keep reigns on my detectives. That is not somewhere I enjoy being.

HUGHES

Sorry, Lieu.

WAPSI

So are you going to tell me where you were?

HUGHES

(sighing) I'd rather not, if it's all the same.

WAPSI

Detective. I am not one to keep secrets from. If you are drinking again—

HUGHES

(cutting him off)

Lieu, I'm not drinking. I've even got my six month ribbon in my wallet. Honest, Lieutenant, I'm not drinking.

(groans)

Though I wish I was.

WASPI

So what happened today?

HUGHES

(stands and picks up his pile of clothes,
moving to the lockers)

Just had a bad run-in with traffic, that's all. Some car stalled in the tunnel.

WAPSI

Are you sure that's all it was?

HUGHES

(dresses in his backup clothing, tossing
the pile into the locker)

Positive.

WAPSI

Fine. Now relieve that poor man of his misery in Interview One, or give it to Pritchard.

(HUGHES slams the locker shut, pointedly locking it/testing the handle to ensure that it is locked. WAPSI watches him leave, then sighs and sits on the bench where HUGHES had been earlier. After a moment, he sniffs, frowning, then stands. He goes to the door and opens it, motioning to someone outside. MARTINEZ enters.)

MARTINEZ

Yeah, Lieu?

WAPSI

Come in here, close the door.

MARTINEZ

(enters)

What's up?

WAPSI

Come over here. Smell.

MARTINEZ

(sniffs)

Yeah?

WAPSI

What do you smell?

MARTINEZ

Uhm...(sniffs again) A locker room.

WAPSI

Such an observant young man.

MARTINEZ

Oh. I'm just kidding with you, lieutenant. Smells like burnt gunpowder.

WAPSI

Now, why would this locker smell like burnt gunpowder?

MARTINEZ

This is Rob's locker. Probably went to the range.

WAPSI

Is Hughes up for his firearms test?

MARTINEZ

Not sure. (pause) I think I'm ahead of him in line for it. I'm not up for it 'til next month. Want me to ask him?

WAPSI

No, no, don't bother. I doubt it's really a problem.

MARTINEZ

All right, lieutenant. I'm gonna get back to the Concord case. We just had a reporter try to sneak past the desk sergeant.

WAPSI

(distracted) Mmm. I have already assigned Pritchard and Rossetti to you, since you're the primary on the Concord case. Believe me, you will need the extra help.

MARTINEZ

Sure thing, lieu. And thanks!

WAPSI

Mhmm. Get to work, and watch Hughes. Closely. He should be in with Mister Concord at the moment, make sure he doesn't badger the poor man.

MARTINEZ

Ah, c'mon, lieu, Hughes knows how to treat a grieving husband.

WAPSI

That is reassuring.

(MARTINEZ leaves the room confidently, leaving WASPI behind. The lights fade halfway, but not completely out. WAPSI goes back to the locker and pulls at it slightly, trying to open the lock, grows frustrated. He paces for a moment, as a ruckus/yelling starts from the squad room. He strides across the locker room and EXITS STAGE LEFT, through the door. A few seconds later, HUGHES bursts in with MARTINEZ hot on his heels.)

MARTINEZ

Rob, don't you walk away from me! Now what the hell did you just do in there!

HUGHES

Shut the hell up, Martinez.

MARTINEZ

You poor, dumb bastard, you know what Wapsi is gonna do to you when he gets a hold of this? Concord is going to file harassment charges!

HUGHES

Let him! He had no idea what his wife was doing.

MARTINEZ

She was a lawyer, Rob! It was her job to defend those bastards.

HUGHES

Her last case, she got a serial rapist off with a not guilty. That guy killed fourteen girls, Martinez! I was on that case.

MARTINEZ

She's dead. We're gonna give her case the same respect we give any murder. We're gonna figure out who killed her, why, an' we aren't gonna beat the hell out of her husband to make a point!

(As the argument heats up, the two men get into each others' faces, never touching, but threatening to come to physical blows.)

HUGHES

(yelling) He was married to a monster!

MARTINEZ

(yelling) And she's *dead*!

HUGHES

You know what? I'm glad. She deserved the bullet.

MARTINEZ

Rob, I can't believe you! You're a good cop, what's gotten into you all of a sudden? She's a victim.

HUGHES

Sure as hell ain't an innocent one.

MARTINEZ

Since when did that matter? We've put away pimps who murder their girls, drug-head skulls who pick off their friends for a hit.

HUGHES

That's different!

MARTINEZ

Different? You tell me how. How are they different? One dresses in sequins and stilettos and walks a corner while the other one sits in a courtroom and—

HUGHES

(cutting him off) And puts those assholes right back on the street!

(MARTINEZ has HUGHES by the shirt, and HUGHES is grabbing his arms. PRITCHARD pushes open the door to the locker room just as the altercation seems to be coming to physical blows, his tie loose around his neck. He is followed closely by ROSSETTI, who stays by the open door.)

PRITCHARD

What the hell is going on it here?

HUGHES

Get out of here, Pritchard.

PRITCHARD

Why don't you two just aim for the throat and save us the trouble of listening to you? Rossetti, close the door, for God's sake.

(ROSSETTI does so, leaning against it with her arms crossed)

HUGHES

This is none of your damned business!

MARTINEZ

(instead of grabbing him now, MARTINEZ is holding him back)

Rob, calm the hell down! Just...shut up.

HUGHES

No! I want that bastard to hear me! I want him to know what a monster his wife was!

MARTINEZ

Why does it matter if he knows or not? It isn't our job.

PRITCHARD

(stands defensively between the two men and the door)

He knows, Hughes. (pause) He knows. That man is bawling his eyes out in Interview One, probably because right now, he doesn't know if the pain in his chest is from his wife being brutally murdered, shot in the face, or because he never realize how much she was hated.

HUGHES

She was shot in the throat.

MARTINEZ

What?

HUGHES

She was shot in the throat, not in the face.

MARTINEZ

As soon as Wapsi is out of that interview room, apologizing for *you*, I'm taking you off this case. You're gonna be lucky to not get suspension, you prick.

(stalks off STAGE RIGHT, slams door)

PRITCHARD

Robert, you seem to have gotten in trouble. Again.

HUGHES

I don't need your comments right now, Pritchard.

PRITCHARD

Probably not. But Robert—

HUGHES

Get out of here, old man.

(PRITCHARD leaves, and
ROSSETTI moves to leave as well)

Hey. Rossetti.

ROSSETTI

Yeah?

HUGHES

Come here a sec.

ROSSETTI

If you think I'm gonna baby you and make you feel better, forget it. I agree with you, and I think the guy has got to be blind, dumb, and stupid not to realize what was going on. I'm just sorry Martinez didn't let me in the room.

HUGHES

You keep talking like that, you're gonna end up in the dog house like me.

ROSSETTI

You aren't in *that* much trouble, they're just blustering. Media's got everyone worked up.

HUGHES

Wapsi is gonna have my head on a damned plate.

ROSSETTI

What the hell has gotten into you? Are you drinking again?

HUGHES

Nah, Rossetti, that isn't it.

(opens locker, pulls out clothes)

You know how to get stains out, right?

ROSSETTI

Are you kidding me? You're worried about your shirt?

HUGHES

C'mon, Rossetti, you're always dressed nice. Can you help me out or what?

ROSSETTI

What did you get on these anyway? (sniffs the clothes) Gunpowder? Did you misfire at the range or something?

HUGHES

Yeah, at the range.

ROSSETTI

What aren't you telling me, Hughes?

HUGHES

Jesus, Rossetti, don't ask me that.

ROSSETTI

Consider it asked.

HUGHES

Rossetti... (trails off, then sighs)

ROSSETTI

What? Did you shoot Concord or something?

HUGHES

Why the hell did you guess that?

ROSSETTI

Am I right?

HUGHES

Can you get the smell out of this shirt, or what?

ROSSETTI

Wash your hands a bunch. And I'll get rid of the damned shirt, gunpowder burns into the fabric.

HUGHES

Dammit, there goes my jacket too.

ROSSETTI

You shot her, didn't you?

HUGHES

Stop asking me that!

ROSSETTI

You want me to cover your ass, Hughes? Do you? Then keep your voice down and tell me.

HUGHES

She was just standing there. I had the gun in my car, some piece I pulled off a jackass in my building a few weeks before. She saw it coming too, just couldn't believe that a cop would be the one to take her out.

(sits on the bench)

She saw the gun and started looking around, ducking, thinking there was someone else. Dumb broad thought I was coming to protect her. Can you believe it

ROSSETTI

Jesus Christ, Hughes.

HUGHES

And then I grabbed her purse. Make it look like a robbery, I guess.

ROSSETTI

Jesus Christ!

HUGHES

What? What was I supposed to do?

ROSSETTI

How long have you been thinking about this?

HUGHES

You remember that serial rapist-murderer? Biggest spree in the New England area.

ROSSETTI

Yeah, I remember.

HUGHES

And that bitch got him off scott-free! Ripped me apart to do it.

ROSSETTI

So you planned this, you have motive, you had opportunity. All they need is to look in your direction and you're *toast*, Hughes.

HUGHES

(stands)

You're going to turn me in?

ROSSETTI

Don't be a moron. Shut up and don't say a damned word about this to anyone else.

HUGHES

You aren't going to tell Wapsi? Or Martinez?

ROSSETTI

Just shut up. Just...shut up and let me think.

(HUGHES watches ROSSETTI gather up the clothes and EXIT through the back door. He rubs his face and rests his head in his hands. PRITCHARD enters, holding a manila folder and small stack of papers.)

PRITCHARD

Where's Rossetti?

HUGHES

Don't you get tired of messing around in other peoples' business, Pritchard?

PRITCHARD

Don't be rude. I need to pass this case off to her. People don't stop killing people just because a lawyer gets herself shot.

HUGHES

Give it to me.

PRITCHARD

(pulls it away) Say again?

HUGHES

Give me the case. I don't want anything more to do with the Concord business.

PRITCHARD

A smart choice, I think. It's better than getting kicked off.

(PRITCHARD holds out the folder and HUGHES snatches it away sharply. He starts flipping through the pages while PRITCHARD watches for a moment)

Are you drinking again?

HUGHES

Pritchard, what?

PRITCHARD

Simple enough question.

HUGHES

Is it any of your business?

PRITCHARD

Look, Robert. I've been on the wagon for almost 22 years. If you want to talk about what you're going through, I can help.

HUGHES

(laughs weakly) You have no idea.

PRITCHARD

I do, Robert. I've been where you are. I've felt that frustration. Taking that one drink and thinking, "Hey, I'm all right. I can have another." Then another turns into picking up a bottle, and forty ounces later, you're either crying your eyes out, passed out in a corner, or tearing up an interview room.

HUGHES

Yeah. Yeah, right. Booze, that's it.

PRITCHARD

Here, Robert, the easiest thing to do is just talk about it.

(sits on the bench next to him)

HUGHES

Pritchard, I really don't need to hear this. You're going to end up making me want to drink more.

PRITCHARD

Fine, all right. I'll tell Wapsi that you're taking the Swanson case. We'll get through this fine, Robert. You have a problem, come talk to me.

HUGHES

Sure thing, Pritchard. Thanks, buddy.

(watches as PRITCHARD leaves, then stands and goes to the mirror. He starts laughing as the LIGHTS FADE.)

SCENE TWO

LIGHTS RISE on the detectives' squad room, HUGHES and MARTINEZ are sitting at their desks. MARTINEZ's phone keeps ringing off the hook. PRITCHARD is at the back, doing general busywork, filing Polaroids.

MARTINEZ

Damned reporters, givin' me grey hairs.

(phone rings again, he picks it up and hangs it up again immediately)

HUGHES

How's the case coming?

MARTINEZ

I can't give you details on an on-going investigation.

HUGHES

What, are you practicing for the paparazzi?

MARTINEZ

(sighs) I don't know, Rob. None of the facts make sense. I just got the new ballistics report. The bullet recovered didn't match anything in the system, so I had it retested. Same results. We know it was a Colt .45, a revolver, so we didn't get a shell casing. For some reason, there were no witnesses.

HUGHES

Maybe it was random.

MARTINEZ

Random? One of the most infamous criminal defense lawyers in the city is gunned down, and you think it might'a been for her purse?

HUGHES

Well, did you *find* her purse?

MARTINEZ

No...

HUGHES

Oh. You, uh, went to the bathroom, I picked through the reports.

MARTINEZ

Why the hell do you even ask then?

(starts picking through his folders when
ROSSETTI enters from STAGE RIGHT)

ROSSETTI

Hey, Hughes.

HUGHES

Yeah? What's up?

ROSSETTI

Get over here. I have some information for you on your case.

HUGHES

The school shooting?

ROSSETTI

Yeah, the Brooklyn High incident. Where are you at on that?

HUGHES

Witnesses all describe the same kid, didn't come home last night. We're tracking down his friends, but we're hitting a brick wall with parents and lawyers claiming emotional distress.

ROSSETTI

Remember that uh, little favor I did for you a couple weeks ago?

HUGHES

(slowly) Yes...really think we should talk about this here?

ROSSETTI

I need the gun.

HUGHES

Come again?

ROSSETTI

The gun you used. The one we can't trace. I need it.

HUGHES

(hesitates) All right...yeah, I can get it.

ROSSETTI

(distracted) Good. Good, thanks.

HUGHES

Mind if I ask what you plan on using it for?

ROSSETTI

Yeah, I do mind. When can I get it?

HUGHES

It's in my desk.

ROSSETTI

In your *desk*?

HUGHES

Yeah. In my file drawer.

ROSSETTI

You keep a murder weapon in your desk? With the guy that's looking for it sitting across from you?

HUGHES

Safest place, he won't look there.

ROSSETTI

You've got some balls, Hughes.

HUGHES

Yeah right, keeps me in trouble.

ROSSETTI

Well, get it to me sometime today, if you could.

HUGHES

I'm trusting you, Rossetti.

(returns to desk, drops into his chair)

MARTINEZ

What was that all about?

HUGHES

She wanted to know about the cases I have on my desk right now, was wondering if a couple are related.

MARTINEZ

She's like me then, sick of this Concord case.

HUGHES

When do you think they'll give up on it?

MARTINEZ

Rob, this is a high profile case. We can't just backlog it and move on, Wapsi would have my ass in a sling if I tried declaring this cold.

HUGHES

Why don't you let Pritchard and Rossetti move on to something else anyway? Not like throwing manpower at it will solve it any faster.

MARTINEZ

If you know something you aren't telling me, spill it so I can get on with my miserable life.

HUGHES

(laughs) Nah, I don't know nothing. Nothing.

MARTINEZ

(chuckles) Why do I have the strangest feeling that you're lyin' to me?

PRITCHARD

Martinez, may I have a word with you?

MARTINEZ

(moves to back)

Sure thing, Pritch. What's up?

PRITCHARD

Don't call me that. I was looking through witness reports again on the Concord case.

(While PRITCHARD and MARTINEZ are talking onstage, HUGHES reaches into his desk, pulling out a holstered gun, a Colt 45 revolver. He discreetly carries it over to ROSSETTI, who opens her briefcase. HUGHES sets it inside. ROSSETTI, without touching the gun, closes and locks the clasps. This occurs in the meantime.)

MARTINEZ

There were no witnesses. What reports are you talking about?

PRITCHARD

People who heard the shooting, first responders. No one reported a suspicious character.

MARTINEZ

We interviewed everyone possible at the scene. No one came up with gunshot residue on their hands, and no one had motive. It's a dead end.

PRITCHARD

What about the still images from the news reporter?

MARTINEZ

Nothing usable came out of that.

PRITCHARD

Not even the car?

MARTINEZ

(pauses, rubs forehead)

What car, Pritch?

PRITCHARD

Tech found a car that was pulling away from the curb when the photographer snapped shots of the victim.

MARTINEZ

Right. The one that they couldn't see its plates or the driver. Two door sedan, dark in color, black or blue.
Try tracking that down in a city this size.

PRITCHARD

(pauses) We really don't have anything on this, do we?

MARTINEZ

Less than nothing. A blurry car.

PRITCHARD

Hmm. Did you ever think...nah, that's ridiculous.

MARTINEZ

What? Shit, first Hughes, now you. Somebody tell me something!

PRITCHARD

What if a cop did this?

MARTINEZ

Pritch, what? Serious?

PRITCHARD

It's a theory.

MARTINEZ

Yeah, one that's gonna get your ass in trouble. What evidence do you have?

PRITCHARD

That's just it! A lack of evidence. Who else would be smart enough to use a weapon not on file, to clean up after themselves, take the purse to make it look like a robbery?

MARTINEZ

A lucky purse-snatcher?

PRITCHARD

Work with me on this idea. With no physical evidence, we need to go with motive. Who hated her?

MARTINEZ

Half the city.

PRITCHARD

Well, then.

MARTINEZ

You aren't helping.

(WAPSI enters through the UPSTAGE door, paging through a folder)

WAPSI

Are you two gentlemen busy or is the coffee maker broken again?

MARTINEZ

The Concord case, sir.

WAPSI

Any news?

MARTINEZ

No, sir.

WAPSI

(sigh) We'll see what the Chief of Detectives says, he's coming down from One Police Plaza tomorrow to review our findings.

PRITCHARD

Chief of Detectives?

MARTINEZ

(grumble) Scumbag.

WAPSI

What was that, Martinez?

MARTINEZ

Nothing, sir.

WAPSI

I hope so. Chief Kelly was a close friend of the Concord couple. He has a vested interest in the outcome of this case.

MARTINEZ

Outcome? Lieu, we've got nothing but a blurry car and a bullet we can't match to a gun. Unless this guy gets stupid and tosses the gun, and we get lucky enough to find it, there's really nothing we can do.

WAPSI

We'll see what Chief Kelly says.

(The focus shifts from the lieutenant and the two detectives to HUGHES and ROSSETTI, who appear to have been listening)

ROSSETTI

Chief Kelly is slime.

HUGHES

No comment.

ROSSETTI

Not a fan either, I take it?

HUGHES

He was almost busted for statutory rape if Wapsi hadn't lost the paperwork. "Lost." Christ, she was fourteen.

ROSSETTI

A thirteen-year-old girl was selling herself and got knifed by a john. We had evidence it was Chief Kelly, but hell knows we couldn't prove it beyond a shadow of a doubt.

HUGHES

Didn't get beyond the grand jury?

ROSSETTI

Didn't even make it to the District Attorney.

HUGHES

Wapsi stomped on it, did he?

ROSSETTI

He didn't want to "ruin a good cop's reputation" for "no reason."

HUGHES

Are you sure it was him?

ROSSETTI

His car picked her up, had witness statements to prove that. Her blood in his garage. His bullet in her body, his gun nowhere to be found. Supposedly stolen, with a police report that I swear didn't exist the day before we went to talk to him.

HUGHES

Could you have just missed it?

ROSSETTI

(shrug) Anything is possible.

HUGHES

Did you?

ROSSETTI

Bet you a month's pay I didn't.

HUGHES

Well, he'll be here tomorrow. I'll hold him, you punch him.

(pause)

Rossetti?

ROSSETTI

What?

HUGHES

Where did you go just then? La-la land?

ROSSETTI

Something like that.

HUGHES

What are you thinking?

ROSSETTI

Nothing. Never mind.

HUGHES

Rossetti, if you're planning something, you've got to tell me. Trust me, do not do this on your own.

ROSSETTI

Relax, Hughes. I've got this handled.

HUGHES

You need something, tell me.

ROSSETTI

What are you, my sidekick now?

HUGHES

Don't be a smartass. Keep your head down. I am not kidding.

ROSSETTI

Relax, Hughes, you're going to draw attention to us.

HUGHES

Right. (sigh) Be prepared for a lot of sleepless nights.

ROSSETTI

Bet you wish you were drinking again.

HUGHES

(to himself) Like you've no damned idea.

WAPSI

All right, everyone, listen up. (raises his hands for attention) If Chief Kelly does end up coming tomorrow, I want this squad room spic-n-span, cleaned from top to bottom. The cleaning crew can only do so much, so! Let's look better than Burglary on third.

(A chorus of agreement and even some knowing grins are passed between the detectives. PRITCHARD does not join in, he is too busy looking through the Concord case file)

Pritchard. You and Rossetti go over the canvass reports again, tell me if anything new pops up that you didn't see before. Martinez, let's get fresh on this case. Mrs. Concord was a friend of the Chief, I want something to offer him when he walks through that door.

MARTINEZ

I don't think that is going to happen, lieu...we haven't had any developments in almost two weeks.

WAPSI

(pulls him aside) What am I hearing, Martinez? Are you calling this case cold?

MARTINEZ

Yeah. I'm getting to the point where I'm gonna call it cold.

WASPI

Hrm. Well...we'll talk to Chief Kelly tomorrow. He'll have something to say about that.

MARTINEZ

Lieutenant, unless he's got evidence for us, I don't see how he can change anything about this case.

WASPI

Go get your desk cleaned up, Detective, and have something to show tomorrow. Or I'll have you clean that desk out.

(WASPI stalks back through his office door, MARTINEZ looks at each of his companions in turn, stunned. HUGHES and ROSSETTI exchange looks.)

MARTINEZ

What a piece of work...

ROSSETTI

Did he just threaten your job? Over a cold case?

MARTINEZ

Don't say that. It isn't cold yet. I...I've got a day or so to figure something out.

HUGHES

(aside to ROSSETTI)

Son of a bitch.

ROSSETTI

Wapsi is just antsy over the case, he wants to look good for Chief Kelly. Probably bucking for a promotion.

HUGHES

What a mess, huh?

ROSSETTI

Come again?

HUGHES

All I wanted to do was make our job easier. Take out Concord, that's it. Then we wouldn't have to fight our own system along with the skulls on the street.

ROSSETTI

And Martinez might lose his job over this.

HUGHES

That is not what I wanted.

ROSSETTI

It's what you got.

HUGHES

I'm going to have to live with that, I guess.

(The room goes quiet with simple ambient noise for a few moments until HUGHES' phone rings. He talks for a bit in the background, while ROSSETTI and MARTINEZ speak.)

ROSSETTI

That's probably his call to court.

MARTINEZ

Yeah right. You going with him?

ROSSETTI

Was planning on it. I've got some arraignment paperwork I need to pass off to the desk jockeys there.

MARTINEZ

Wanna grab some Chinese take-out for me on your way back? I think I'll be here all night.

HUGHES

Court time.

MARTINEZ

About what time do you think you're gonna be done over there?

HUGHES

Pretty quick case, I think. Probably shouldn't take me out past dinner.

ROSSETTI

I don't have to stay the whole time. Hughes can take the bus back to the precinct.

HUGHES

Thanks a ton, Rossetti. Maybe it'll take a while and I won't even have to come back.

(pulls on his coat)

Besides, Martinez, you pull enough weight on that Concord case, Wapsi might treat you to steak.

PRITCHARD

Why don't you count me in as well, Rossetti?

ROSSETTI

Sure thing. Good luck, don't die before I get back!

(ROSSETTI and HUGHES exit STAGE RIGHT)

PRITCHARD

He has a crass way of putting it, Martinez, but he is right. If you manage to pull something out of this mess, you'll deserve the break.

MARTINEZ

As far as Wapsi is concerned, what I deserve is a boot up my ass.

PRITCHARD

Let me worry about Wapsi, you have enough on your plate as it is. I have been on this squad longer than he has been in charge, and you are a good detective. I have seen quite a few come and go.

MARTINEZ

Thanks, Pritch.

PRITCHARD

(with a sigh) You're welcome, Martinez. Now, why don't we share the burden? Show me what you have. Perhaps fresh eyes will help a bit.

(The lights fade halfway, not completely out. While they go through papers and folders and photographs and the general mess of evidence on MARTINEZ's desk. The lights come back up as ROSSETTI enters from STAGE LEFT with paper bags of Chinese takeout.)

ROSSETTI

Who's starving?

MARTINEZ

Rossetti, you're a queen.

PRITCHARD

A goddess.

ROSSETTI

Feh, I'm a god-damned saint. You all owe me for this.

MARTINEZ

Figures there's a hitch.

ROSSETTI

You know me too well.

PRITCHARD

Is this crab?

ROSSETTI

Shrimp.

PRITCHARD

Aah...I see. Poor little buggers.

(While PRITCHARD picks at his carton carefully with chopsticks, ROSSETTI sits on the edge of MARTINEZ's desk)

ROSSETTI

Finding anything new?

MARTINEZ

Yeah, sort of. The canvass may or may not have covered the park nearby.

ROSSETTI

Now what does that mean? They just glazed over it or didn't look at all?

MARTINEZ

According to the uniform in charge of the canvass, the two guys that took that quadrant ended up getting distracted. A couple of kids had been toking up under a pedestrian bridge.

ROSSETTI

Let me guess. They didn't finish the sweep.

MARTINEZ

Looks that way.

ROSSETTI

How the hell did you figure that out from all these reports?

PRITCHARD

Ah, that would have been my fumble, I'm afraid.

MARTINEZ

Fumble nothing. Pritch was bored so he did a timeline account of all personnel involved. He caught the missing minutes.

ROSSETTI

Nice catch, Pritch.

PRITCHARD

I really wish you would stop calling me that.

MARTINEZ

So anyway, after the Chief's visit tomorrow, we should be able to go back out and re-check that area.

ROSSETTI

Waiting until after, you sure that's smart?

MARTINEZ

The way I figure it is, we go out now and find nothing, then I'm really knee deep with the lieutenant and the Chief. We offer the promise of evidence, and go out later, worst that can happen is the lieu yells at me for not doing it earlier, and the Chief thinks there's a chance.

PRITCHARD

And then we declare it cold should nothing turn up.

MARTINEZ

By that time, Chief Kelly is back up at One Police Plaza.

ROSSETTI

Where he can't rip off arms and legs.

MARTINEZ

Exactly.

ROSSETTI

Seems ballsy enough to work. Worst case scenario, you lose your job.

MARTINEZ

I'm half-way there already. I'm hoping Wapsi is just antsy, and not serious.

PRITCHARD

Speaking of Wapsi, did you happen to—

ROSSETTI

(hands him a smaller bag) Peace offering. Say it's from Martinez.

PRITCHARD

Oh, so no credit for me I suppose. I was the one that discovered his tastes.

ROSSETTI

Pritchard, that was Chinese on a stakeout, and almost four years ago. You're still taking credit for that?

PRITCHARD

I take what I can get around here.

MARTINEZ

What did you get him?

ROSSETTI

Egg rolls and chicken lo mein. Next best thing to a Valium.

PRITCHARD

At least for the lieutenant. Calms him right down, especially on stakeouts.

(PRITCHARD and ROSSETTI share a laugh)

MARTINEZ

Hey, Pritch, let me take that in to him, eh?

PRITCHARD

If you so desire.

(MARTINEZ takes the bag and exits through the UPSTAGE door. ROSSETTI sits at her desk and starts cleaning, while PRITCHARD eats, then sets his food down)

PRITCHARD

If my phone rings, would you answer it?

ROSSETTI

Take your time. Dead people don't go anywhere.

(PRITCHARD exits STAGE LEFT, to the locker room/bathroom. As soon as he leaves, ROSSETTI reaches into the last paper bag with her sleeve and removes a large bottle of hard liquor, half-empty. Holding it carefully and without touching it, she nudges open HUGHES' desk's bottom drawer and sets it inside. She kicks it closed and returns to her desk to continue eating as MARTINEZ returns from WAPSI's office.)

MARTINEZ

Thank God, it really did the trick I think.

ROSSETTI

What did I tell you? I'm a damned saint.

MARTINEZ

Heh, where's Pritchard?

ROSSETTI

Taking his old-man time in the bathroom. I've been dancing the outhouse two-step.

MARTINEZ

Must be a wild dance with all that banging out here. Could hear it through his door.

ROSSETTI

An energetic polka.

MARTINEZ

Yeah right.

ROSSETTI

Speaking of energy, I'm about ready to call it a night.

MARTINEZ

Already? It's only...wow. Okay, it's a little later than I thought.

ROSSETTI

I'll clean my desk now and head out. Hughes can't be the only one cutting class.

MARTINEZ

I'm probably gonna stick it out until at least the night shift janitor gets here. Or Wapsi leaves.

ROSSETTI

Make sure every inch is glittering. You never know where the Chief is going to look.

(The lights fade halfway as they both return to work. ROSSETTI cleans her desk as PRITCHARD returns. The two clean off their desks and gather their belongings, leaving MARTINEZ alone in the squad room. He takes a pointedly long look at his watch, then sighs. Lights fade completely.)

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

LIGHTS come up on the detective's squad room again, the detectives are present, minus HUGHES. MARTINEZ, PRITCHARD, and ROSSETTI's desks are all cleaned off or the contents are at least neatly arranged. HUGHES' desk is conspicuously messy, in the same state as it was last night.

HUGHES

(enters STAGE LEFT)

Morning, everyone. You'll be happy to know that the scumbag will be getting twenty-five to life, thanks to yours truly.

MARTINEZ

Did you forget something, Hughes?

HUGHES

Forget something?

ROSSETTI

Your desk looks like a hurricane hit it.

HUGHES

Chief Kelly, right.

(pulls open a top drawer, takes all his papers and shoves them inside)

Fixed.

ROSSETTI

I swear, Hughes, you are something else.

HUGHES

Why, thank you. How did the whole squeezing water from a stone thing go?

MARTINEZ

You mean blood from a stone? And it went fine, we actually have some new information. A new lead.

HUGHES

Oh. (pause) Really? How's that?

MARTINEZ

I'm afraid I can't discuss an on-going investigation.

HUGHES

Smart, thanks for that.

ROSSETTI

So does anyone know when the Chief is supposed to show up?

PRITCHARD

Wapsi himself left for One Police Plaza about an hour ago.

HUGHES

Tch. I'll be in the can, trying to figure out how to tie a damned tie. Someone let me know when this guy shows up.

(exits STAGE LEFT)

PRITCHARD

Was it just me or did he seem a little less cheerful all of a sudden?

MARTINEZ

He's just mad that I actually got work done last night. And managed to fit in cleaning my desk.

ROSSETTI

Yeah, that's it. Did you need help with that re-canvass later?

MARTINEZ

Nah, I'm gonna take a bunch of cadets from the academy.

ROSSETTI

It'll be good practice for them.

(WAPSI enters from STAGE RIGHT, looking rather harried. He nods to the present detectives, looking a bit pleased with the overall appearance of the squad room. HUGHES walks into the room from STAGE LEFT, his tie half undone and shirt untucked.)

HUGHES

What the hell's the difference between a Windsor and a half-Windsor...

WAPSI

Hughes, the Chief is going to be arriving any minute!

HUGHES

Why the hell do you think I'm trying to put on a tie?

(WAPSI patrols the room, pulling out chairs and drawers at random, while HUGHES gives up on the tie. He turns a wide berth through the desks, and the detectives eventually gather on the sides of the room. The commentary is generally positive in the form of nods, non-verbal. He finally reaches HUGHES' desk and pulls open the top drawer, revealing the thick mess of papers)

WAPSI

Hughes!

HUGHES

Aw, hell...

WAPSI

These are crime reports! Paperwork that needs to be done, half finished...

(picks through the pile, tosses on desk)

Official paperwork and you tossed it all into a drawer?

HUGHES

I came in late and—

WAPSI

(pulls other drawers open)

Your desk is a mess! And liquor?!

HUGHES

What? No! Lieutenant, that isn't mine!

WAPSI

Hughes, you and I are going to have a conversation, in my office, in one minute. You have that long to walk across this room and through that door.

HUGHES

Lieu, I swear to God, that isn't my booze.

WAPSI

Thirty seconds.

(stalks across, holding open door)

HUGHES

Right...

(looks around, then EXITS with WAPSI
UPSTAGE)

MARTINEZ

What the hell was that?

PRITCHARD

I don't understand. He told me he stopped drinking, he's been sober for over six months.

ROSSETTI

What, he's never lied before?

PRITCHARD

He wasn't lying, I could tell in his voice.

MARTINEZ

I've never seen Wapsi lose it like that before.

PRITCHARD

Neither have I. It's a bit intimidating, isn't it.

ROSSETTI

Damned walls aren't thin enough, I wish I could hear what they were saying.

MARTINEZ

I think it'd be a smart idea to vacate for a bit. I'm gonna go grab those cadets and start that re-canvassing.

PRITCHARD

I thought you had chosen to wait, until after speaking to the Chief.

MARTINEZ

Probably smarter to make him chase me down in the field, you know? Besides...

(jerks his thumb UPSTAGE)

I don't want to be near that storm. Still want to come, Pritch?

PRITCHARD

Yes, certainly. Rossetti?

ROSSETTI

I can't, it'd look like we're fleeing.

MARTINEZ

C'mon, Rossetti, we aren't rats on a ship.

PRITCHARD

Though, I will admit, Hughes' boat looks like it may be sinking.

ROSSETTI

I'll stick around, let you guys know what happens.

MARTINEZ

Watch out for splatter when it hits the fan.

ROSSETTI

Heh. Don't let the door hit your ass on the way out.

(MARTINEZ and PRITCHARD exit)

(to herself) See, I can make a funny damned joke too.

(ROSSETTI is left alone in the squad room. She stands and goes over to the bottle of liquor left on HUGHES' desk. After a moment's contemplation, she shakes her head and uncorks it, taking a long drink. Lights fade out.)

SCENE TWO

Lights up on the precinct locker room. ROSSETTI is pacing back and forth, stealing glances at the door as she does, keeping herself occupied by washing her hands, washing her face, etc., until HUGHES bursts in the STAGE RIGHT door, angry.

HUGHES

God dammit!

ROSSETTI

What happened in there?

HUGHES

He's writing me up!

ROSSETTI

He is?

HUGHES

Sending my ass over to Internal Affairs! I might as well walk out.

ROSSETTI

What's he nailing you on?

HUGHES

Irresponsible behavior, drinking on the job, abusing a victim, he's hitting me with everything. Son of a bitch!

ROSSETTI

All sound legitimate to me.

HUGHES

Oh, come off it, Rossetti. Suspension without pay? I could lose my job over this!

ROSSETTI

You killed someone, for God's sake.

HUGHES

I don't believe in karma.

ROSSETTI

Maybe you should start.

HUGHES

What are you saying, Rossetti? (pause) Do you know how that liquor got in my desk?

ROSSETTI

You put it there?

HUGHES

No, no way. I haven't touched that stuff for six months. I'm sober!

ROSSETTI

I don't know then.

HUGHES

Do you think Wapsi did? To try to get rid of me? Or maybe Martinez, that rat bastard is probably putting the heat on me to get Wapsi off his back!

ROSSETTI

Listen to yourself, Rob, blaming everyone else but yourself.

HUGHES

I'm not drinking, for God's sake! Why don't you believe me?

ROSSETTI

I think you need to leave.

HUGHES

I can't, some suit from the Internal Affairs Bureau is coming over soon to get me.

ROSSETTI

That isn't what I meant.

HUGHES

What do you mean then, Rossetti?

ROSSETTI

I think you need to leave the squad. Avoid suspension, and avoid getting fired.

HUGHES

I'm not quitting. I worked hard to get here, dammit.

ROSSETTI

And look what you did with it. You shot an innocent woman, Hughes!

HUGHES

We've been over this, she wasn't innocent! You even said you agreed with me.

ROSSETTI

That was before I knew you were the one who killed her.

HUGHES

Does it make a difference?

ROSSETTI

Yeah, Hughes, it does. Some skell off the street who has a grudge, that's one thing. You're a cop, for chrissake, you've got a badge and a gun. She was expecting you to protect her, dammit!

HUGHES

They can't prove anything. They can't prove I did it. All I have to do is ride out this bullshit and we can forget it.

ROSSETTI

That's not going to happen.

HUGHES

Why not? Wapsi has a temper, yeah, but it'll pass. It has before.

ROSSETTI

Rob, I can't let you stay on this job. You can't keep that badge.

HUGHES

Martinez still has his job, the lieu is on a hair-trigger, that's all—what? *You* can't?

ROSSETTI

Yeah. You heard me, Hughes.

HUGHES

What the hell can you—

(trails off)

You wouldn't dare.

ROSSETTI

I've still got your shirt. And jacket. And the gun too, all the evidence I need to put you away.

HUGHES

You wouldn't do that to me, I trusted you!

ROSSETTI

That canvass the uniforms screwed up? That park? I can put your clothes and that gun in exactly the right places for them to find them. The gunpowder stains, the fingerprints on the gun, it all points to you.

HUGHES

You can't possibly be serious. Rossetti, c'mon, you're joking.

ROSSETTI

Do I look like I'm joking?

HUGHES

None of that will stand up in court.

ROSSETTI

Do you really want to take that risk?

HUGHES

You're really using this against me.

ROSSETTI

I've got home field advantage, Rob.

HUGHES

What do you want, Rossetti? Money?

ROSSETTI

You can give me your gun, and your badge.

HUGHES

I worked hard to get this job. I've put years of my life into this!

ROSSETTI

Was the Concord woman worth it?

HUGHES

Son of a bitch...

ROSSETTI

Was she, Rob? Was she?

HUGHES

Shut up...

ROSSETTI

You didn't kill her to keep scum off the street, you shot her because she embarrassed you on the stand.

HUGHES

How the hell would you know? Are you in my head now?

ROSSETTI

Don't be a moron, Rob, we all know how you felt about it. Hell, the entire building knows. You made sure of that!

HUGHES

So what, huh? What now? You want me to—to quit my job, quit the force? And do what? How long are you going to lord this over me?

ROSSETTI

I just want you out from behind the badge. You don't deserve it.

HUGHES

She deserved it!

ROSSETTI

And so do *you*!

(They stand off for a few moments, staring each other down. ROSSETTI sticks her hand out)

ROSSETTI

Give me your gun and badge.

HUGHES

No.

ROSSETTI

You really want to be in the middle of a stand-off in the locker room when IAB comes to pick you up? What if Wapsi walks through that door right now? Or Pritchard? How are you going to explain this to them?

HUGHES

You really thought this through, didn't you?

ROSSETTI

Since you handed me your shirt.

HUGHES

A good lawyer could get that thrown out in a heartbeat.

ROSSETTI

Oh yeah? A lawyer? A criminal defense lawyer, like Concord was? Getting murderers back on the street?

HUGHES

Oh ho, god dammit, Rossetti. Don't turn me into one of them.

ROSSETTI

You don't need me to do that.

HUGHES

You just love pushing my buttons, don't you?

ROSSETTI

It's too bad she's dead, she might have been the one to get you off.

HUGHES

I'm not some mindless hobo, or some druggie in need of a fix. I wanted to take out a corrupt lawyer!

ROSSETTI

What are you then? A cop with a grudge is one thing. You went way, way beyond that.

(HUGHES is silent)

How does it feel, Rob? Huh? Knowing that you dropped to the same level as a 'mindless hobo' or a 'druggie.'

HUGHES

I can take you down for blackmail. You can come down of your high and mighty perch just as fast.

ROSSETTI

Go ahead. Go ahead and try it. They're going to find your clothes tossed off in a park.

HUGHES

You touched them.

ROSSETTI

We work together, our lockers are right by each other. I'm pretty sure a hair or a handful would get passed on.

HUGHES

The gun, you touched it too, your fingerprints would be on it.

ROSSETTI

You put it in my briefcase. My prints are nowhere on it.

HUGHES

Clever, you really did think this through.

ROSSETTI

What's it going to be, Hughes?

(There is a long pause as HUGHES stares at her for a long, long moment before finally reaching behind himself. ROSSETTI is jumpy, and reaches for her own gun, training it on him as he undoes his belt, pulls his gun, still holstered, off his belt and sets it on the floor, kicking it over to her. He reaches into his jacket pocket and pulls out his badge wallet. After running his thumb over the gold shield, he drops it to the floor and kicks it over as well. ROSSETTI reaches down to pick them up, holstering her own gun once she's holding them both.)

ROSSETTI

I'll let Wapsi know.

HUGHES

You gonna give me my shirt and gun back?

ROSSETTI

You'll get them when your paperwork is through.

HUGHES

So what the hell am I going to do now?

ROSSETTI

You should have thought of doing your job when Concord expected it. You should have protected her.

HUGHES

'To protect and to serve,' hey, Rossetti?

Lights fade down and out, leaving the stage black and the play finished.