

BACK ON THE BEAT

Written by

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TITLE OVER  
BLACK: BACK ON  
THE BEAT

EPISODE ONE: "HARMONY INTERRUPTED"

COLD OPEN

(FADE IN)

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - MAIN STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK (2005)

Small-town America (Norman Rockwell look) at its best. Kids ride bikes. Storefronts shine. Flags wave. A police cruiser rolls slowly down the block.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - MOVING - DAY

SGT. FRANK "STONEWALL" WELLER (50s) drives. Aviator shades. Ironed uniform. He nods at neighbors like a sheriff from a Western.

WELLER  
(raising coffee cup)  
Mornin', Ted. That lawn lookin'  
tighter than a Marine haircut.

TED (60s) waves back from his porch.

EXT. STREET CORNER - MOMENTS LATER

LT. DAISY "BOOM-BOOM" RIVAS (40s) helps an elderly woman cross the street. Kids swarm her with admiration. She high-fives them.

KID  
Are you a superhero?

BOOM-BOOM  
Only on Thursdays, kid.

INT. DINER - DAY

OFFICER REGGIE "RADAR" CHU (50s) is having pie. The waitress tops off his coffee.

WAITRESS

Hurry up, Radar. Someone might  
commit a crime while you're hogging  
the booth.

RADAR

Then I'll finish this pie before  
justice is served.

Laughter all around. A feeling of trust. Respect.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - NIGHT - FLASHBACK ENDS

The image fades and the sound distorts.

TITLE OVER  
BLACK:

FIFTEEN YEARS LATER

INT. CONVENIENCE STORE - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

Grainy livestream footage. Screaming. A MAN in a hoodie  
pummels a CLERK. Customers film on phones but no one  
intervenes.

EXT. STREET - SAME

A squad car sits empty. No officers inside. The radio  
crackles: "Unit 42, respond—" No answer. Cop on the ground  
being beat it.

CUT TO:

INT. NEWSROOM - NIGHT - B-ROLL FOOTAGE MONTAGE

Quick cuts:

Protests in front of City Hall.

DEFUND NOW banners waving.

Angry residents yelling in council chambers.

Local anchors reporting rising crime stats.

A headline: POLICE CHIEF RESIGNS.

INT. MAYOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

The outgoing mayor, frazzled, watches news coverage showing another store looting gone viral. He turns off the TV.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - CITY HALL - DAY

ELECTION DAY signs blanket the streets.

Quick montage:

Voters lining up.

Campaign ads: "TAKE BACK HARMONY - ELECT HAL MCDERMOTT."

Victory party. Confetti. Cheers. Flashbulbs.

INT. NEWLY ELECTED MAYOR'S OFFICE - NIGHT

MAYOR HAL MCDERMOTT (50s) stands at the window, arms crossed, looking out at the broken city.

Behind him, the new council is arguing.

COUNCILWOMAN BLAKE

We don't have the budget or  
manpower to restore order.

MAYOR HAL

Then we need a shortcut.

(beat)

MAYOR HAL (CONT'D)

What if we bring back the guys who  
used to know how?

The room falls silent.

FADE TO BLACK.

TITLE CARD:

BACK ON THE BEAT - "HARMONY, INTERRUPTED"

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - MAIN STREET - DAY - FLASHBACK (2008)

(A banner reads: "Harmony Falls: Safest City in the State - 5  
Years Running")

ON SCREEN: FIFTEEN YEARS LATER PRESENT DAY

ACT ONE

INT. MAYOR'S CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

A stale municipal building. Beige walls. A burnt coffee smell that predates the Bush administration.

MAYOR HAL MCDERMOTT (50s) stands at the head of a long, cluttered table. A whiteboard reads: "First 100 Days - Restore Order".

Around him are a mix of weary professionals: CITY MANAGER ROGERS, COUNCILWOMAN BLAKE, NEW POLICE CHIEF JORDAN LENNOX (30s), and two junior aides.

MAYOR HAL

We need boots on the ground. Yesterday. I want a cop on every corner and an end to that street circus on Eastbrook.

CHIEF LENNOX

I've got twenty-two active officers. Four of them are still in training. Half are on leave for stress or injury. And our budget can't cover a full academy class until Q4.

CITY MANAGER ROGERS

Even if we did, they wouldn't hit the street for nine months.

MAYOR HAL

Then we need a shortcut.

The room goes silent. Lennox raises an eyebrow.

COUNCILWOMAN BLAKE

(short laugh)

Unless you've got a time machine that brings back 2005 Harmony Falls.

MAYOR HAL

(grins)

What if we bring back the guys who used to keep it that way?

Beat. Lennox blinks.

CHIEF LENNOX  
You mean... retirees?

MAYOR HAL  
We've got a whole generation of cops who left when the last council tied their hands. What if we offered them a limited return?

ROGERS  
Liability would be a nightmare.

MAYOR HAL  
Not if we structure it as a "public safety stabilization program." Short-term reappointment, narrow authority, no pensions touched.

COUNCILWOMAN BLAKE  
(recovering)  
You think they'll even say yes?

MAYOR HAL  
They bled for this town. Some of them would die to fix it. And the rest? They'll at least take a paycheck.

CHIEF LENNOX  
(skeptical)  
And what happens when one of them uses a chokehold, or tells a TikTok kid to go pound sand?

MAYOR HAL  
Then we deal with it. After order is restored.

Beat. Blake slowly nods. Lennox exhales through his nose.

CHIEF LENNOX  
I'll need a list.

MAYOR HAL  
Rogers, pull the files. Find out who's still local—and healthy enough to walk upright.

CITY MANAGER ROGERS  
(on laptop)  
Should I include disciplinary records?

MAYOR HAL

Hell yes. Start with the worst.  
They're probably still mad enough  
to want back in.

CHIEF LENNOX

God help me...and God help Harmony.

INT. FILE STORAGE ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Rows of dusty cabinets. Rogers opens a drawer labeled  
"PERSONNEL - RETIRED." The files are thick. Worn.

He pulls one labeled:

"SGT. FRANKLIN WELLER - FORCED RETIREMENT / 2011"

He opens another:

"LT. DAISY RIVAS - EARLY MEDICAL / 2012"

And another:

"OFF. REGGIE CHU - NO PHONE LISTED"

The camera lingers on the faded ID photos—hardened faces from  
a different era.

INT. FILE STORAGE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

CITY MANAGER ROGERS flips through the files, pulling several.

MATCH CUT TO:

EXT. SHOOTING RANGE - DAY

A desert backdrop. Target silhouettes riddled with holes.

SGT. FRANK "STONEWALL" WELLER (late 60s), in jeans and  
mirrored shades, fires his sidearm with military precision.

He reloads with ease. The range officer behind him looks  
impressed.

RANGE OFFICER

You ever think about getting back  
in the game?

WELLER

Only every time I see a mugshot  
with a man bun.

His burner phone buzzes. Unknown number. He answers.

WELLER (CONT'D)

You're kidding.

(beat)

No, I ain't dead. But I'm flattered  
you checked.

INT. STRIP CLUB - SECURITY OFFICE - NIGHT

Thumping bass. Flashing lights.

LT. DAISY "BOOM-BOOM" RIVAS (60s) watches security monitors  
with dead eyes. She drinks black coffee from a chipped mug  
that says "BOMB SQUAD - DON'T TICK ME OFF."

A drunk patron is escorted out by bouncers on camera.

RIVAS

(to herself)

Nobody even screams anymore.

Her phone vibrates. She squints at the screen.

Smirks.

RIVAS (CONT'D)

Tell Mayor Hal I'm in. But I want  
my old locker... and my dog tags.

EXT. DOCK - EARLY MORNING

A foggy lake. Birds caw.

OFFICER REGGIE "RADAR" CHU (late 60s) sits at the end of a  
weathered dock, fishing. No pole—just a line wrapped around  
his gloved hand.

Behind him, a BOY (10) holds a cheap radio scanner.

BOY

Mr. Radar, they said you were a cop  
who could tell if someone lied just  
by breathing.

RADAR  
 That's false.  
 (beat)  
 I listen to their silences.

A local DEPUTY pulls up in a squad SUV.

DEPUTY  
 Chu! City's calling. They want you  
 back.

RADAR  
 (huffs)  
 Tell them I'll come in when the  
 fish stop biting or I die,  
 whichever's first.

He stands.

Grabs a duffel bag already packed.

INT. VA HOSPITAL - PHYSICAL THERAPY GYM - DAY

A retired K-9 OFFICER uses resistance bands with a gritted  
 jaw. He's got a scar over one eye, tattoos from three tours,  
 and a limp. An orderly wheels in a cart.

ORDERLY  
 Says here you used to clear blocks  
 by yourself.

K-9 OFFICER  
 (smirking)  
 Still could, if you give me my  
 leash and a partner with fangs.

The orderly hands him a sealed envelope.

ORDERLY  
 City wants you back.

K-9 OFFICER  
 So does my ex-wife. Doesn't mean  
 it's a good idea.  
 (beat)  
 You got a pen?

EXT. POLICE HQ - MORNING

The sun rises over Harmony Falls.

A ragtag group of former officers walk toward the glass doors of the department like aging gunslingers arriving for one last ride.

Slow motion. Coffee cups. A few limps. One guy lights a cigar.

Inside the building, a Gen Z officer drops his vape and stares.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING

The newly returned retired officers sit on one side of the room like a reunion of grizzled ghosts. Across from them, the younger officers—inked up, tech-addicted, sipping protein shakes and matcha.

Tension crackles.

CHIEF LENNOX enters, clipboard in hand.

CHIEF LENNOX

Welcome to Harmony Falls' most desperate idea since installing traffic cameras. Here's how it's gonna work—

He starts assigning ride-along pairs.

WELLER

(under his breath)

If they pair me with TikTok, I'm walking.

RIVAS

If they pair me with you, I'm walking.

From the back, a voice scoffs.

RETIRED OFFICER MIKE "SMITTY" SMITH

(LATE 60S)

Still wearing stripes, Weller?  
Thought IA bled those off you  
before you left.

Gasps. A couple younger officers smirk.

WELLER

(standing up)

Keep talking, Smitty. You'll get  
your 15 minutes—and a dental bill.

CHIEF LENNOX

Gentlemen. And I use that term  
loosely.

(beat)

Pairings stand. You don't like it?  
There's the door—and no pension top-  
off.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM (PRIVATE) - LATER THAT DAY

A long table filled with ten retired officers. A few sit upright like it's roll call 2003. Others slouch, arms crossed, scanning the room like old prizefighters back in the ring.

Stonewall Weller, Boom-Boom Rivas, and Radar Chu are among them. Around the table are:

"Smitty" Smith - old rival of Weller, still bitter.

Rosa Alvarez - ex-homicide, sarcastic, smokes cloves.

Donny "Duck" Duquette - PTSD tics, wears two watches, both wrong.

"Junkyard" Jenkins - ex-K-9 handler, constantly talks to a dog that isn't there.

Rick "Numbers" Nunez - former narcotics turned accountant, quotes crime stats like baseball cards.

Marybeth Powell - traffic division vet, now drives Lyft and critiques everyone's pursuit form.

Big Lester Tate - heavy, retired early for health, now in better shape than the rookies.

At the front: CITY MANAGER ROGERS and CHIEF JORDAN LENNOX.

ROGERS

Gentlemen. Ladies. And whatever  
Lester identifies as this week—

LESTER

(full mouth)

Still human.

ROGERS

Harmony Falls is falling apart. You  
already know that. What you don't  
know is how thin the department is.  
Half our current force couldn't  
pass your old driving exam.

(MORE)

ROGERS (CONT'D)

The other half thinks a "hot call" means trending on TikTok.

CHIEF LENNOX

We're not just asking you to show up and play mascot. You're being given provisional command status.

(beat)

You'll be acting Field Training Officers. Every one of you will be assigned a junior partner. You'll guide them, teach them, and back them when shit hits the fan.

RIVAS

You mean babysit?

LENNOX

Only if they cry. Otherwise, train them up or scare them straight. Either way, we win.

WELLER

What about rank?

ROGERS

You'll be on top of the shift hierarchy. Seniority stands. You answer only to Chief Lennox.

SMITTY

So I'm taking orders from him again?

(gestures to Weller)

WELLER

Just like the old days, Smitty. Only now I'm more patient... and less accurate.

Laughter from half the table. Tension from the other.

CHIEF LENNOX

Make no mistake: this is temporary. It's controversial. And the press is sniffing already. But if you can do what you used to do—cut crime, keep order—we'll cover your backs.

ROGERS

You'll be called dinosaurs. Relics. Maybe even lawsuits waiting to happen.

(beat)

(MORE)

ROGERS (CONT'D)

But I'll call you something else:  
necessary.

Beat. Most of the retirees exchange looks. Some doubtful.  
Some fired up.

LENNOX

Three shifts. I've posted them on  
the board after reviewing which  
shifts in the past you worked the  
most. Welcome back.

RIVAS

(to Weller, under her  
breath)

Just like old times—except with  
weaker coffee and more fuckin  
cameras.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOCKER ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

Metal lockers clang open. Gear bags hit benches. The retired  
officers, all ten of them, are suiting up—some in vintage  
boots, others trying to figure out how to clip on their new  
body cams.

WELLER

(grunting as he laces  
boots)

I forgot how bad these things  
smelled... or maybe that's just me.

RIVAS

It's you. And the 2005 chili stain  
still on your vest.

CHU

(squinting at a new  
taser)

What the hell is this—Star Trek?

DUQUETTE

(pointing to two  
smartphones taped  
together)

Mine's better. Dual angles.

Laughter. Then quiet.

SMITTY SMITH lingers at the far end, watching Weller like a  
hawk.

SMITTY

Hard to believe they gave you stripes again, Frank. After what happened in '09.

WELLER

(straightening)

Hard to believe you're still breathing, Smitty. After all the donuts you ate in '05.

Tension. A few chuckles. Rosa Alvarez whistles to cut the mood.

ALVAREZ

Boys, boys. Don't make me break out the taser. Again.

MARYBETH POWELL

(snapping her latex gloves)

I miss ticketing speeders. They never talked back.

BIG LESTER TATE

You only liked writing tickets because they always flirted with you.

POWELL

(flashing a grin)

Well, now they flirt with Uber drivers instead.

They all pause as a young, wide-eyed Gen Z officer pokes his head in the door.

GEN Z OFFICER

Hey... uh... I'm supposed to partner with "Boom-Boom"?

RIVAS

(grinning)

That's me, sweetheart. Don't worry—I only blow up on Tuesdays.

The rook scurries out.

RADAR CHU

(to everyone)

You realize most of them think we're racist, sexist, and about one sandwich away from a stroke?

WELLER

They're not wrong. But they've never had to clear a hallway with nothing but instinct and a bad attitude.

ALVAREZ

They've never seen what happens when the job turns personal. They'll learn.

SMITTY

Or they'll run.

Beat.

RIVAS

Either way... we'll be there when the real shit hits.

The locker room goes quiet. Tension fades to purpose. These aren't just old cops—they're battle-tested survivors.

A bell sounds. First assignments go out over the intercom.

WELLER

Time to show 'em how it used to be done.

They rise, gear up, and head toward the garage like aging warriors headed back to war.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A few of the young officers are now in the locker room, trying not to make eye contact with the retired vets.

One ROOKIE COP, Officer Kyle, stares at himself in the mirror—adjusting his hair just so, smoothing his uniform like he's prepping for Instagram.

WELLER

(staring deadpan at Kyle)  
Is this roll call or a boy band reunion?

RIVAS

Give him a break, Frank. You didn't always look like a baked leather boot.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT - DRIVING

RET. OFFICER DON "DUKE" HANLAN (60s, all bark and no apologies) rides shotgun. Behind the wheel is OFFICER NICK BRADY (24), sharp fade, law school dropout energy.

BRADY

Domestic call on Meyer Street.  
Neighbors say they fight all the  
time—booze and bullshit.

DUKE

Yeah, well... tonight they're lucky  
I already ate.

EXT. MEYER STREET - NIGHT

A tired single-story house. Overgrown bushes. The front screen door is ajar. From inside: shouting—slurred and spiteful.

DUKE

I hate walking into second acts.

They approach the door.

BRADY

(taps doorframe)  
Police! Open the door!

Inside: more yelling, louder now. No movement.

BRADY (CONT'D)

(knocking harder)  
Police department!

Nothing. The shouting continues.

DUKE

Screw this.

He pushes the screen open, stepping inside.

BRADY

Hold up! You can't just enter—it's  
an illegal entry.

DUKE

(grins)  
Kid, can't you hear? They're both  
calling for help.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

A grizzled man in his 60s slouches in a ripped recliner, barking at his equally sloshed wife, who's throwing insults like ashtrays.

They both glance at the officers--then keep yelling at each other.

HUSBAND

I told you not to microwave the goddamn steak!

WIFE

Screw your steak. You wanna call 911 over a steak?

BRADY

Ma'am--sir--let's all take a breath.

They ignore him.

DUKE

(offscreen)

Goddamn!

BRADY turns to see Duke in the kitchen, newspaper spread open, squinting at the classifieds.

DUKE (CONT'D)

A '63 split-window Corvette. Fifty-nine grand.

BRADY

Are you serious right now?

DUKE

Dead serious. This is a once-in-a-decade opportunity.

(to the couple)

Hey--can I use your phone?

WIFE

(shouting)

No you can't use our fuckin' phone!

DUKE

Well, shit. If you two keep this up, my partner and I'll be tied up here all night--and I'll lose the deal of the century.

HUSBAND

Screw you. We're just having a conversation.

DUKE

Sure you are. But here's how this goes down:

(beat)

You two shut it down long enough for us to get back in the car and drive off. (BEAT)

Then, you ramp it up again.

Then the neighbors call.

And we come back.

And there goes my Corvette.

WIFE

(beat... softens)

That's okay, officer. My husband and I... maybe had too much to drink.

She reaches out, grabs her husband's hand.

WIFE (CONT'D)

We'll be fine. Won't we, honey?

HUSBAND

(grumbling)

Sure. We're peachy.

The officers nod.

EXT. MEYER STREET - MOMENTS LATER

The screen door closes behind them. Silence.

DUKE

All quiet on the western front.

They get back in the cruiser. Duke buckles in, still holding the paper.

BRADY

You ever think of writing a de-escalation manual?

DUKE

Already did. It's called common goddamn sense.

ALVAREZ

Kid spends more time on that fade than I did solving homicides.

CHU

(in passing)

The mirror won't shoot back, Kyle. Get your head in the game.

Kyle chuckles nervously and walks off, embarrassed.

At the opposite end, Officer Ashlyn—early 20s, rainbow sleeve tattoo—scrolls through her phone, laughing at something.

"JUNKYARD" JENKINS

(pointing)

Tattoo says "Strength," right? You know what mine says? Pain is temporary, but IA lasts forever.

ASHLYN

It's my body, my choice.

SMITTY

(grumbling)

It's a uniform, not a runway.

RIVAS

Hey now—most of us got ink. We just had the good sense to put it where the public couldn't read our autobiography.

POWELL

And phones? Christ, you people act like you need permission to piss without a group chat.

Beat.

WELLER

We swore the same oath. We just swore it back when people meant it.

That lands hard. One or two young officers look up, unsure how to respond.

RADAR CHU

(calmly)

You'll learn soon enough. Out there, it's not about apps or hashtags. It's about instinct—and who you want watching your six.

The bell rings for deployment.

Everyone starts clearing out. The tension lingers, but there's a mutual awareness now: this is happening. They're all in it together, ready or not.

INT. POLICE HQ - MOTOR POOL LOT - MORNING

A long row of squad cars gleam under a weak morning sun. Officers—old and new—gather with clipboards, radios, and confusion.

CHIEF LENNOX walks the line, reading pairings.

CHIEF LENNOX

Weller with Officer Diaz. Rivas  
with Laine. Chu with Carter.

(beat)

And let's see... Nunez, you're with  
Officer Brady.

OFFICER BRADY (24)—fit, cocky, hair gelled like he's reporting for a dating app commercial—nods and heads toward the car.

Waiting beside it is RETIRED OFFICER "DUKE" HANLAN (60s)—thick mustache, old-school mirrored aviators, arms crossed like he's guarding the Alamo.

Brady makes a beeline for the driver's seat.

DUKE

Where the hell do you think you're  
going?

BRADY

Uh... driving. You don't have  
clearance for city vehicles, right?

DUKE

I got 28 years of clearance and  
three pins in my hip that outrank  
your peach fuzz, rookie.

BRADY

(disbelieving)

Rookie? I've been on the job almost  
two years.

DUKE

Then you almost qualify to shut the  
hell up. Get in the passenger seat.

Brady clenches his jaw, annoyed, but moves around the car. Before getting in, he opens the shotgun mount and inspects the weapon.

BRADY  
Standard protocol—check the  
shotgun. Make sure chamber's clear.

DUKE  
I know how to check a goddamn  
shotgun, son.

Brady closes it up. Duke yanks it right back out of the mount.

DUKE (CONT'D)  
Watch and learn.

He holds it vertically, shoulder-high, aiming up—

KA-BOOM!

The shotgun BLASTS through the roof of the patrol car. A clean, smoking hole tears through the aluminum like a cannonball just exited.

For a beat, nobody moves.

Officers nearby dive behind cars, then slowly peek out.

DUKE  
...Who the hell left a shell in the  
chamber?

BRADY  
(stunned, deadpan)  
Pretty sure it wasn't me, sir.

DUKE  
When I find the son-of-a-bitch who  
loaded this—

Laughter erupts from down the line. Rookies and vets alike hoot as smoke pours out of the cruiser.

CHU (O.S.)  
Hope the city budget includes roof  
patches!

RIVAS (O.S.)  
That's one way to clear out the air  
conditioning.

WELLER (O.S.)

This is why we don't give Duke keys  
to anything that breathes or  
explodes.

Duke glares at Brady, who smirks and shrugs.

BRADY

Guess I passed my field safety  
test.

DUKE

Just shut up and get in the goddamn  
car.

EXT. WENDY'S PARKING LOT - LUNCH RUSH

Officer Rosa Alvarez and her rookie Officer Ashlyn respond to  
a 911 call: "disturbance between two men on scooters."

They arrive to find two adult men in a shoving match next to  
spilled Frostys and overturned e-scooters. One wears a neck  
brace. The other is shirtless, sunburned, and jacked on  
energy drinks.

ALVAREZ

Let me guess--this started over a  
parking spot?

SUNBURN GUY

He tried to kill me! Swerved right  
into my lane!

NECK BRACE GUY

He cut me off at the drive-thru!  
Nearly tipped my Baja Blast!

ASHLYN

Baja Blast is from Taco Bell.

NECK BRACE GUY

IT WAS IN MY CUP HOLDER!

ALVAREZ

Ashlyn, cuff the half-naked one.  
He's sweating and unmedicated.

As Ashlyn pulls cuffs, shirtless guy swings.

ASHLYN

Whoa!

ALVAREZ

Time to dance.

Alvarez deftly sidesteps and sweeps his legs, dropping him with a soft grunt. Crowd gasps. Phones out.

NECK BRACE GUY

Oh shit! That lady just Mortal Kombat-ed his ass!

ALVAREZ

(to the crowd)

Someone order fries? This clown needs ice.

Cut to Ashlyn, wide-eyed.

ASHLYN

You just assaulted him on camera.

ALVAREZ

Nope. I saved you on camera.

INT. POLICE HQ - SQUAD ROOM - LATER

Footage already circulating. Rookie officers gather around Ashlyn's phone, watching the slow-motion leg sweep on repeat.

ROOKIE #1

She didn't even flinch.

ROOKIE #2

That guy could sue.

ASHLYN

He should sue. And lose. Because she was right.

RIVAS

(overhearing)

Welcome to your first gray-area conversion, rookie.

INT. CITY HALL - CONFERENCE ROOM - EVENING

Chief Lennox, Mayor Hal, and Councilwoman Blake sit with a local reporter from the Harmony Herald, mid-interview.

REPORTER

Your critics call this a  
regression-swapping reform for  
retribution.

MAYOR HAL

Our critics aren't the ones getting  
mugged walking their kids home.

CHIEF LENNOX

We're not bringing back the past.  
We're bringing back what worked.

BLAKE

And hoping it doesn't kill us in  
litigation.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Night shift clocking in. The retirees sit in silence,  
watching Ashlyn show a few other rookies a proper takedown  
stance.

Weller nods, almost imperceptibly.

WELLER

(toward Chu)

One of them's gonna make it.

CHU

You thinking about staying past 90  
days?

WELLER

Let's see if anyone survives 30.

EXT. POLICE HQ - NIGHT - MONTAGE

A rookie and a retiree ride side-by-side in silence.

A patrol car passes kids playing basketball.

A retiree gets a silent nod from a shop owner locking up.

A donut sits quietly on a cruiser's hood.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. MINI-MART - EVENING

A patrol car screeches to a halt. Donny "Duck" Duquette and his rookie partner Officer Malik (22) jump out.

A customer called in a "possible robbery in progress."  
Inside: a sweaty guy in a ski mask holding a banana like a pistol.

DUQUETTE

Let me handle this, rookie. Banana-boy might be packing potassium.

INT. MINI-MART - CONTINUOUS

The suspect panics as they enter.

BANANA GUY

Back off! I got hostages!

DUQUETTE

No, you got produce. Let's not ruin your day over fruit.

MALIK

Sir, drop the banana!

BANANA GUY

You think I'm bluffing?!

DUQUETTE

Only if it's organic.

Duck lunges, slapping the banana from his hand and tackling him. The rookie stands frozen.

MALIK

Uh... code four?

DUQUETTE

(still pinning him)  
Code four and a smoothie, rookie.

INT. POLICE HQ - INTERVIEW ROOM - NIGHT

Internal Affairs Officer VAN DYKE (buttoned-up, smirking) plays clips from recent calls.

VAN DYKE

You body-slammed a guy with a potassium deficiency.

DUQUETTE

I neutralized a threat. Slippery peel situation.

VAN DYKE

You're lucky the camera missed that tackle.

DUQUETTE

No. You're lucky I missed that tackle.

INT. POLICE HQ - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Chief Lennox exits a tense meeting room, approaches Mayor Hal and City Manager Rogers.

CHIEF LENNOX

IA's circling. And Van Dyke's already suggesting we limit the retirees to support roles.

MAYOR HAL

Not a chance. The streets are cleaner. The people feel safer.

ROGERS

And the lawyers are hungrier.

CHIEF LENNOX

We're walking a tightrope with a lit cigar. You sure you want to keep going?

MAYOR HAL

Only one direction left. Forward.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOCKER ROOM - LATE NIGHT

The end of shift. Quiet. Heavy breathing. Gear clanks as it's removed.

WELLER sits on a bench. Rivas drops next to him, pulls off her vest.

RIVAS

You remember when shift end meant a pitcher and a jukebox?

WELLER

Now it's caffeine pills and probable cause.

RIVAS  
You think we're doing any good?

WELLER  
Depends who edits the footage.

They share a tired look. Radar Chu steps in, still holding a confiscated vape.

CHU  
Any of you rookies want their lungs  
back?

The locker room chuckles.

EXT. POLICE HQ - PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Pairs break off. A couple of rookies nod to their older partners—not quite friends, but something shifting.

WELLER stands by his cruiser, watching as a civilian walks by with her kid. She gives a slight, respectful nod.

Weller nods back—gruff, but affected.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Brady and Duke ride in silence.

DUKE  
You handled that call earlier...  
better than I expected.

BRADY  
You handled the shotgun... worse than  
I expected.

Beat.

DUKE  
Fair.

They drive off into the night.

FADE OUT.

EXT. PARKED CRUISER - OVERLOOK POINT - NIGHT

Squad car idles. The city glows below. BOOM-BOOM RIVAS and OFFICER KENDALL "KENNY" VALEZ (23, pierced eyebrow, rainbow cuffs on her duty gloves) sit in awkward silence.

VALEZ  
So... Boom-Boom?

RIVAS  
Yeah?

VALEZ  
Nickname or confession?

RIVAS  
(pulls from her coffee)  
Nickname from a confession.

VALEZ  
Oh please don't stop there.

RIVAS  
Got married right out of high school. Too young. Too dumb. But damn, the sex?  
(pauses)  
Let's just say he started calling me Boom-Boom before we hit our first anniversary.

VALEZ  
(snickers)  
That's either inspiring or a cautionary tale.

RIVAS  
Both.  
(beat)  
Didn't last. Turned out he was more in love with the bottle than the boom.

VALEZ  
(relaxing a little)  
My ex was more in love with her guitar. I got dumped for a Taylor Swift cover band.

RIVAS  
Ouch. Which era?

VALEZ  
Folklore.

RIVAS  
Damn. That's personal.

They both laugh.

VALEZ

You cool with riding with me?

RIVAS

Kid, I've cleared buildings with guys who wore swastika tattoos. You think I care who you sleep with?

VALEZ

I mean... sometimes it feels like the dinosaurs don't want to evolve.

RIVAS

I'm a dinosaur who still shoots straight and hits what I aim at.

(beat)

Just don't try to fix me. I'm already functional enough to scare half this department.

VALEZ

Deal. Just don't try to convert me with tequila stories.

RIVAS

No promises.

They sip coffee, watching the city lights shimmer.

EXT. DOLLAR VALUE MART - NIGHT

A call comes in: two juveniles shoplifting, possibly armed. Boom-Boom and Velez are first on scene.

They pull up beside the entrance. Two teens-hoods up, hands in pockets-stand by the door.

VALEZ

Dispatch said possible weapon?

RIVAS

Most likely a phone case. But we treat it like it's not.

They approach slowly.

RIVAS (CONT'D)

Hey! Gentlemen-hands where we can see 'em.

The boys hesitate. One fidgets like he's reaching for something.

VALEZ  
 (sharp)  
 Hands up! Now!

Boom-Boom instinctively steps in front of Velez—hand on holster.

RIVAS  
 Kid. You so much as blink wrong,  
 and your prom night's gonna be  
 through plexiglass.

The teen freezes—then slowly raises his hands. No weapon—just a vape pen.

Rivas lowers her hand. Breathing tight.

RIVAS (CONT'D)  
 (to Velez)  
 You alright?

VALEZ  
 Yeah. I'm good.

RIVAS  
 You did fine. Just  
 remember—hesitation gets you  
 killed. But panic gets someone else  
 killed.

VALEZ  
 You just stepped in front of a gun  
 for me.

RIVAS  
 No. I stepped in front of a  
 decision you weren't ready to make.  
 (beat)  
 Let's go write it up before IA  
 calls and asks if we smiled too  
 hard.

They head back to the cruiser. A small nod between them.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING

The room buzzes. Old and young officers take seats—a little less divided than before.

CHIEF LENNOX steps up to the front, holding a clicker and remote.

Slides appear on a screen behind him:

"CRIME REDUCTION ZONES: WEEK ONE"

"PATROL RESPONSE TIMES"

"CITIZEN FEEDBACK (ANONYMOUS)"

CHIEF LENNOX

Morning. I'll start with something we haven't had in months—good news.

(beat)

Response times are down 22%. Arrests are up. Citizen complaints... unchanged, but they've shifted from 'Where are the cops?' to 'Why are they yelling?' That's progress.

Muted chuckles.

CHIEF LENNOX (CONT'D)

Council is still watching. Internal Affairs is... let's say engaged.

(beat)

But we've earned another week. So let's not blow it.

He clicks again.

CHIEF LENNOX (CONT'D)

Today we expand patrol zones. You're not just riding—you're anchoring sectors.

RIVAS

So we're babysitting entire neighborhoods now?

LENNOX

No. You're leading. Until this city remembers what "order" looked like.

(beat)

Squad assignments are on the board. Everyone be safe. Everyone be smart.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - PUBLIC PARK - LATE MORNING

A report of "suspicious behavior near a playground." Multiple units respond, but Officer Diaz (Weller's rookie) and Officer Powell (retired traffic cop turned beat patrol) arrive first.

They approach a man—late 30s, hoodie, pacing near a bench. He's talking to himself and looking agitated.

DIAZ  
 (to dispatch)  
 Unit 14 on scene. Visual on  
 suspect. Noncompliant so far.

POWELL  
 (eyeing him)  
 Not a suspect. That's PTSD posture.  
 Watch his hands.

DIAZ  
 He's near a playground, Marybeth.

POWELL  
 So are we. Doesn't mean we're  
 predators.

Diaz steps forward, too fast.

DIAZ  
 Sir! Stop moving and show me your  
 hands!

HOODIE GUY  
 What?! I'm waiting for my kid!

Kids on a nearby jungle gym freeze. Parents turn and begin  
 filming. The man reaches in his jacket—

DIAZ  
 Hands! Hands now!

He draws.

POWELL  
 (snarling)  
 Holster that sidearm, Rookie!

DIAZ  
 He's reaching!

POWELL  
 He's reaching for a phone!

She steps between them.

POWELL (CONT'D)  
 (to Hoodie Guy)  
 Sir. Slowly. What's in your hand?

The man shows a cracked Android and starts to cry.

HOODIE GUY  
I'm just trying to call my wife. I  
can't find my daughter.

Beat.

Powell lowers Diaz's arm with authority.

POWELL  
(to Diaz)  
You just pointed a Glock at a  
father with anxiety. Welcome to  
policing in real life.

INT. POLICE HQ - SQUAD ROOM - LUNCH HOUR

The phone footage is already on social media.

Headline: "Cop Pulls Gun on Father at Playground"

CHU  
(to Powell)  
You handled it right.

POWELL  
Yeah? Tell that to the algorithm.

RIVAS  
Where's Weller?

CHU  
Took Diaz out for coffee. Probably  
to teach him how not to piss his  
pants next time.

DUQUETTE  
Or to write his retirement speech.

RIVAS  
Nah. He won't quit. But he'll never  
be the same again.

INT. COFFEE SHOP - SMALL TABLE - SAME TIME

Weller and Diaz sit across from each other. Diaz looks  
shattered.

DIAZ  
I thought he was reaching.

WELLER

You always think that. Until the day he is—and you're right. But by then, it's too late.

(beat)

You gotta know the difference. Fast. Or this job will kill you—or someone else.

DIAZ

Maybe I'm not cut out for this.

WELLER

Then quit now. Save a life. Maybe even your own.

Diaz doesn't respond. Weller watches him for a beat.

WELLER (CONT'D)

But if you do come back tomorrow... don't ever hesitate. And don't ever lie about why you didn't pull the trigger—or why you did.

EXT. POLICE HQ - LATE AFTERNOON

The officers file back in. No jokes. No banter. The squad's starting to understand this isn't about nostalgia—it's about survival.

INT. CITY HALL - COUNCIL CHAMBER - AFTERNOON

Tense energy. Councilwoman Blake at the dais. Mayor Hal, City Manager Rogers, and Chief Lennox at the long table facing reporters and a handful of residents.

A projector screen shows a still image from the playground incident—frozen frame of Diaz mid-draw.

REPORTER (30S, SHARP)

Councilwoman, what's your message to parents who now fear both criminals and officers at their local parks?

BLAKE

(smoothly)

Our officers responded to a suspicious call. What followed was a breakdown in judgment, not policy.

REPORTER  
So who's responsible?

MAYOR HAL  
(stepping in)  
The rookie officer was under stress. That's why we paired them with seasoned field leaders—to prevent mistakes.

REPORTER  
But the public didn't vote to bring back cops forced into retirement for use-of-force complaints. Or am I wrong?

ROGERS  
You're wrong. No one was reinstated with an active IA case. And every one of these officers took the same oath this city begged for.

CHIEF LENNOX  
You want honesty? Here it is: you can't fight chaos with kid gloves and hashtags. We're restoring order. It's gonna get loud before it gets quiet.

(beat)

You want clean streets, or a clean feed?

Murmurs ripple. Reporters scribble. Blake gives Lennox a sharp side glance.

EXT. CITY STREETS - NIGHT - MONTAGE

A gang tag is spray-painted over a police cruiser's rear window.

A Molotov cocktail explodes near the base of a boarded-up storefront—no injuries, just a message.

A flyer circulates anonymously online:

"Bring back the old ways, get the old war."

Signed: Red 8.

INT. POLICE HQ - INTELLIGENCE DIVISION - LATE NIGHT

Burk, the tech guy, drops a tablet on the table in front of Chief Lennox.

BURK

Red 8 is resurfacing. They used to be just a click-up from a local street crew. But this? This is organized.

CHIEF LENNOX

I thought we dismantled that crew five years ago.

BURK

Yeah, well... someone rebuilt it. New leader. Online recruiting.

And they're pissed you brought the cowboys back.

CHIEF LENNOX

So they want a war.

BURK

They're not the only ones.

EXT. BEHIND THE PRECINCT - NIGHT

A run-down alley tucked behind the police station. Rusted fencing, a dumpster, and a weathered picnic table.

Six retired officers are sitting on milk crates and folding chairs, sipping beers. Someone brought a Bluetooth speaker playing Skynyrd.

RIVAS, WELLER, CHU, DUQUETTE, ALVAREZ, and POWELL are mid-banter laughter.

CHU

Back then, we didn't have mental health days. We had bourbon and denial.

DUQUETTE

Speak for yourself. I had a dog and three ex-wives. The dog stayed loyal.

POWELL

(shaking head)

This is why therapy never returned your calls.

They all laugh. Alvarez raises her beer.

ALVAREZ

To the ones who didn't make it  
back—and to the rookies who don't  
know what the hell they've stepped  
into.

WELLER

Speaking of which... you all remember  
Dirty Gary?

Silence. Then:

RIVAS

Shit. Dirty Gary?

CHU

Last time I saw him, he was chain-  
smoking Camels and quoting Clint  
Eastwood mid-raid.

DUQUETTE

Didn't IA almost crucify him?

WELLER

Three times. Still retired with a  
full pension.

POWELL

Didn't he shoot out a perp's tires  
during a parade?

WELLER

He says he was aiming for the  
radiator.

(beat)

This gang stuff? He'd have buried  
it by now. No press, no hashtags.  
Just bodies.

RIVAS

You think he's still alive?

WELLER

I think it's time we find out.

INT. CHIEF LENNOX'S OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

Weller and Rivas sit across from Chief Lennox, who's  
skeptical but intrigued.

CHIEF LENNOX  
You're seriously asking me to dig  
up Dirty Gary Santoro?

WELLER  
We don't need ten of him. We just  
need the original.

RIVAS  
No one could infiltrate better. He  
didn't go undercover—he became  
someone else.

LENNOX  
And if he says no?

WELLER  
Then he'll miss a hell of a  
comeback story.

Lennox sighs, picks up the phone.

CHIEF LENNOX  
Marnie? Put Burk on tracking duty.  
We're looking for a maniac with a  
badge, a mustache, and probably a  
bonsai collection.

EXT. RURAL PROPERTY - NEXT DAY

A gravel driveway leads to a modest country house, tucked  
between pine trees and overgrown brush.

Wind chimes tinkle. A Japanese maple waves gently.

DIRTY GARY SANTORO (60s) is kneeling in the dirt, carefully  
grafting a small branch onto a sapling.

He wears an old flannel, faded jeans, mirrored sunglasses,  
and a revolver holstered in plain sight.

His phone rings. He checks the screen. Smiles.

DIRTY GARY  
(taps to answer)  
Tell me this is trouble.

CHIEF LENNOX (V.O.)  
It's Harmony Falls.

DIRTY GARY  
(grinning)  
You son of a bitch.

He stands. Walks to a covered garage. Pulls off the tarp—revealing a red 2024 Corvette Stingray.

DIRTY GARY (CONT'D)  
Boom. Still dirty.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - CITY STREET - MORNING

Sunlight bounces off the red Corvette as it cruises slowly through a residential neighborhood.

Dirty Gary wears mirrored shades, a sleeveless flannel, and an unlit cigar. Blasting "Dirty Harry" soundtrack from his stereo.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - MOVING - SAME

Officer Malik (rookie) drives. His partner? Duquette, sipping coffee, smirking like he knows something.

DISPATCH (V.O.)  
Possible 10-66 in progress—red sports car weaving near school zone. Unconfirmed erratic behavior. Plate flagged unknown.

DUQUETTE  
Well, rookie. Looks like we got ourselves a shiny problem.

Malik tenses as he spots the Corvette ahead.

MALIK  
Got eyes. Red Stingray. 55 in a 25. What kind of idiot does that?

DUQUETTE  
The fun kind.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Lights flash. Malik and Duquette pull up behind the Corvette.

Dirty Gary doesn't move. Keeps the engine idling.

MALIK  
Why isn't he stopping?

DUQUETTE  
He's testing you. You gonna whimper, or you gonna work?

Malik exits. Approaches carefully.

MALIK

Sir, I need you to turn off the engine and place your hands on the wheel.

DIRTY GARY

(sunglasses on)

I need you to back off, Barbie. You're blocking my sunlight.

MALIK

License and registration.

DIRTY GARY

Which one you want first—the part that proves I'm innocent, or the part where I sue your city for harassment?

Duquette leans on the cruiser, arms crossed, grinning.

MALIK

Sir, last chance. Turn off the vehicle.

DIRTY GARY

(coolly)

Last chance, huh?

Just like Clint said—"Do you feel lucky, punk?"

Malik hesitates. Then:

DUQUETTE (O.S.)

Okay, okay... time out before you actually shoot the guy.

Duquette walks up, slaps Gary's window.

DUQUETTE (CONT'D)

Pop the door, Gary. You're freaking out the rookie.

Gary opens the door and steps out, all swagger.

DUQUETTE (CONT'D)

Malik, meet Dirty Gary Santoro—Harmony PD legend, ex-undercover, full-time pain in the ass.

Malik's face drops.

MALIK  
That was a setup?

DIRTY GARY  
Kid, if you can survive me, a  
gangbanger with a real gun's gonna  
be easy.

MALIK  
You're insane.

DIRTY GARY  
Correction: I'm back.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM - LATER

The squad watches Malik retell the story—badly. The retirees  
are howling. Even the rookies are cracking up.

WELLER  
(to Chief)  
You brought back Dirty Gary?

CHIEF LENNOX  
I didn't bring him back. I released  
him.

INT. POLICE HQ - CHIEF'S OFFICE - AFTERNOON

Chief Lennox sips cold coffee. The blinds are half shut. In  
walks Dirty Gary, flanked by Weller and Rivas.

CHIEF LENNOX  
I didn't authorize a rodeo.

GARY  
You did now.

He drops a USB drive on the desk.

GARY (CONT'D)  
Intel. Gang graffiti on the north  
side is doubling. Kids with 3D-  
printed receivers. Your Red 8  
problem is growing legs.

RIVAS  
He was already watching them?

WELLER  
He's never stopped watching.

CHIEF LENNOX  
Why come back?

GARY  
Because I want to meet the idiot  
who thinks they're tougher than me.  
(beat)  
Let me inside. I'll find the  
kingpin. Quietly.

CHIEF LENNOX  
You sure you can still blend?

GARY  
I just passed for a felony suspect  
in a \$90,000 Corvette. You tell me.

CHIEF LENNOX  
You blow this? You're out. No  
pension sweeteners, no backup, and  
no funeral honor guard.

GARY  
I'd prefer cremation anyway.

He exits.

INT. INTELLIGENCE OFFICE - LATER

Burk pulls up known Red 8 profiles on a wall of screens.

BURK  
Leader goes by "Jetz." Former  
runner for MS-13 offshoot in the  
valley. Went ghost in '18. Popped  
back up last month recruiting off  
encrypted boards.

GARY  
He flashy?

BURK  
No socials. Old-school. Black  
gloves, gold cross, baseball bat  
with nails.

CHU  
Real subtle.

BURK  
Best guess? They're gearing up for  
a cop hit. Something splashy.

Everyone goes quiet.

CHIEF LENNOX

Set him up. Low-level drug contact.  
Pawn shop or pool hall—somewhere  
old enough to smell like Gary.

GARY

(grinning)  
Make it a dive bar. I work better  
surrounded by disappointment.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOCKER ROOM - EVENING

Dirty Gary enters the locker room carrying a duffel bag. It's quiet—until he turns the corner.

A sea of tattoos. Young officers—both male and female—are gearing up. Rainbow ink, barbed wire sleeves, facial piercings, side shaves, nose rings.

Gary pauses. Like he just stepped into a punk rock concert in uniform.

DIRTY GARY

(mutters)  
Jesus. Did I walk into a tattoo  
convention or the People's Police?

One rookie—OFFICER LANEY, 20s, pink mohawk, septum ring—looks up.

LANEY

Can I help you, sir?

DIRTY GARY

Nope. Just checking if anyone left  
room on their skin for a badge.

She smirks. Brady walks by, patting Gary on the shoulder.

BRADY

Don't mind the art gallery. They're  
good cops under all that graffiti.

GARY

We'll see. I came from a time when  
we covered our scars, not inked 'em  
in neon.

LANEY

And we came from a time when  
emotions weren't called "weakness."

GARY  
(tips his head)  
Touché.

INT. GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Gary lifts free weights—one arm, slow reps. On the treadmill, rookies run with earbuds in.

He watches them. Not with scorn—but with something resembling doubt.

Gary's POV: A row of young faces, laughing, swiping phones, tapping screens.

DUQUETTE (O.S.)  
You're not wrong for thinking it,  
Gary. They are soft.

Gary exhales, sets the weight down.

GARY  
They're not soft. Just... wired  
different.

DUQUETTE  
You worried they'll fold?

GARY  
No.  
(beat)  
I'm worried I will.

EXT. DERELICT WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Smash cut to graffiti-tagged metal doors creaking open.

Inside: five Red 8 gang members gathered around a folding table. Dim light. Handguns. Open tablet playing body cam footage of a cop scuffle.

JETZ (30s) — lean, cold, scar over one eye — watches silently.

RED 8 THUG  
That's the one. The lady cop. She  
dropped my cousin like a dog.

JETZ  
And what did your cousin do?

THUG  
Mouthed off. Reached for his  
waistband.

JETZ  
(quietly)  
Then he died like a dumbass.

The table goes quiet.

JETZ (CONT'D)  
They brought the old ones back. The  
legends.  
Time we make legends bleed.

(beat)  
Tomorrow night. We test 'em.

INT. RED 8 SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

Dim light. Concrete floor. Cables taped to walls. Makeshift  
weapon bench in the corner.

JETZ, Red 8's leader, stands over a printed sheet of officer  
photos-headshots of the retirees.

"WELLER." "RIVAS." "CHU." "ALVAREZ."

JETZ  
These are the geriatrics they  
brought back to save the city?  
(holds up a file)  
This one? Walks with a limp. That  
one? Got a pacemaker. That guy? He  
thinks TikTok is a breath mint.

Laughter from the gang.

JETZ (CONT'D)  
They think legends scare us. But  
legends bleed like anyone else.

THUG #1  
One of 'em dropped my cousin on his  
ass.

JETZ  
Then maybe your cousin should've  
hit the gym instead of tagging bus  
stops.

(beat-serious now)  
(MORE)

JETZ (CONT'D)

This town replaced its fear with  
hashtags. Now they want it back.  
Guess what?

(leans in)

Let's give it to 'em.

THUG #2

You want a hit?

JETZ

No. I want a message.  
One they can't spin. One the  
dinosaurs can't outrun.

(beat)

Tomorrow night. Two cars. High  
beams on. Fast and loud. Find a  
cruiser parked. Doesn't matter  
who's in it.  
Just make it clear—Red 8 runs this  
city now.

(beat)

Time to shove the fossil force back  
into the Stone Age.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - INDUSTRIAL BLOCK - NIGHT

Later that night. A patrol car idles near an abandoned  
warehouse. Inside: Chu and his rookie Carter, eating lukewarm  
gas station burritos.

CARTER

You ever shoot someone?

CHU

I ever blink?

They laugh.

Suddenly—headlights appear in the rearview. Two vehicles.  
Blacked-out. No plates.

CHU (CONT'D)

We got company.

CARTER

Gang?

CHU

Or worse—drunk influencers.

The two vehicles peel toward them. Engines ROAR. One swerves right. The other—

BAM!!

—slams full force into the rear of the cruiser. Glass explodes.

CARTER

Shit!

CHU

Stay down!

Gunshots. Not at the cruiser—but into the air. A warning. A statement.

The gang vehicles speed off into the night, tires screeching.

INT. CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Chu checks Carter—bleeding from a cut above the eye but alert.

CHU

Rookies used to be hazed with shaving cream.  
Now it's blunt force trauma.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM - MORNING

Officers file in, subdued. Carter wears a bandage over his temple. Chu sits stiffly, back wrapped.

Chief Lennox steps to the front, jaw tight, flanked by Councilwoman Blake and a tight-lipped Rogers.

CHIEF LENNOX

Two suspects. One hit, one support vehicle. Zero arrests. No usable plate.  
That wasn't a random attack. That was a statement.

(beat)

A warning.

BLAKE

We've got press waiting in the hallway and the mayor on line one.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

They want reassurance. They want progress.

WELLER

What they want is to put us back in the box and say it was a bad idea from the start.

RIVAS

We're making things worse by doing things right. Gotta love 2025.

CHIEF LENNOX

We hold the line. But from here on out, you ride armored in pairs. Retirees stick close to command routes. Until we know what Red 8's endgame is—we treat them like insurgents.

CHU

Copy that.

(beat)

And someone owe me a new bumper and a warm burrito.

Half the room chuckles. The other half just stares at the wall.

EXT. BEHIND THE PRECINCT - NIGHT

Same alley. Folded chairs. Whiskey instead of beer tonight. The retirees sit in a loose ring: Weller, Rivas, Chu, Powell, Alvarez, Duquette, Big Lester, Smitty, Junkyard, and Dirty Gary in the middle, working a cigar.

WELLER

Used to be, a drive-by meant someone wanted to hit you. Now it's just PR.

POWELL

They weren't aiming for us. They were aiming for TikTok.

ALVAREZ

Gang's not dumb. Red 8 wants to provoke a crackdown they can play victim to.

JUNKYARD

Only crack I wanna see is  
theirs—split open on the hood of a  
cruiser.

DUQUETTE

Did we ever think we'd become the  
reasonable ones?  
(beat)

CHU

So what now, Dirty?

Gary taps ash off his cigar.

DIRTY GARY

We stop reacting. And we start  
infiltrating.

SMITTY

You volunteering?

GARY

Already in motion. Meeting a  
contact tomorrow. He's nervous, but  
he talks when you press him with  
bourbon and baseball stats.

RIVAS

You think you can still pull it  
off?

GARY

I don't need to be 30 again. I just  
need to smell like I never left.

WELLER

And what if they're smarter than  
before?

GARY

Then I'll die smarter than I was  
the first time around.

A quiet settles. The old squad looks at each other—not with  
fear, but a shared look that says: Here we go again.

BIG LESTER

I got a feeling this ain't gonna  
end with a pension.

GARY

It never did.

INT. POLICE HQ - ADMIN OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

Dimmed lights. Most staff gone. The glow of dual monitors reflects off a framed "Employee of the Month" plaque.

MEGAN SHELTON (30s)—smart, sharp-eyed, stylish in a low-key librarian way—types rapidly at her desk. She hears the door creak.

DIRTY GARY stands in the doorway with a half-eaten apple and a smug grin.

GARY

They tell me you're the  
department's digital wizard.

MEGAN

And you're the myth in mirrored  
shades who still types with two  
fingers.

GARY

Three, when I'm drinking.

He steps in. She swivels to face him, eyebrow raised.

MEGAN

Let me guess—you need a favor.

GARY

I need a legend.

He tosses a yellow legal pad on her desk.

GARY (CONT'D)

I want to exist online the way  
ghosts do—half-truth, full threat.  
Prison stints. Dead partners.  
Photos from riots I never started.  
Maybe a tribal neck tat I don't  
have.

She scrolls open a blank database template.

MEGAN

So you want to catfish a gang with  
a digital rap sheet.

GARY

Exactly. This generation doesn't  
fear what they can't Google.

She types rapidly. Pulls a few AI mugshots and begins tweaking captions.

MEGAN

"Served four years in Pelican Bay.  
Alleged shot-caller for Aryan  
Peacemakers—"

(pauses)

Wait, too white-supremacist?

GARY

Nah. Keep it vague. Prison's the  
only place colorblind alliances  
actually happen.

She glances up at him—smirking now.

MEGAN

You're kind of terrifying, you know  
that?

GARY

That's the idea.

MEGAN

(flirting)

And yet... oddly appealing. Like  
dating a bar fight.

GARY

And here I thought you were the  
department's only sane one.

She clicks "Save."

MEGAN

Your legend's live. If Red 8 goes  
sniffing, they'll find a digital  
paper trail so mean, it makes  
Charles Manson look like a  
kindergarten principal.

(beat)

You're welcome.

GARY

Buy you a drink once I come back?

MEGAN

If you come back.

She holds his stare for a moment too long.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Gear clanks. Rain outside. Everyone's tense—shift change  
before the rumored Red 8 assault.

WELLER leans against a bench. Rookies try to look tough.

WELLER

I know some of you think we're  
fossils.  
That we're here for nostalgia and  
lawsuits.

(chuckles)

But here's the thing—every scar  
I've got, I earned backing someone  
like you.

CHU

He means it. He once broke his  
ankle tackling a guy just to cover  
my six.  
And I had already tripped over a  
mailbox.

LAINE

So... this is normal?

POWELL

Fear's normal. Fear means you show  
up anyway.

BRAXTON

Don't try to be heroes. Be  
partners. Be ghosts. Be smart.

WELLER

We may be old... but tonight, we're  
not dying for a news cycle.  
We're walking out together. Got it?

The rookies nod. The room settles.

EXT. THE SHOVELHEAD BAR - SUNSET

A busted neon sign flickers over the entryway. Three Red 8  
lookouts linger out front—shaved heads, broken knuckles, and  
thousand-yard stares.

Then—the low RUMBLE of a Harley.

DIRTY GARY rolls up slow, riding a confiscated DOJ-issue  
Harley, matte black, mean as hell. Engine snarling.  
Sunglasses on. Leather cut-off vest rippling with wind.

He kills the motor. Silence.

Steps off. No words.

The biggest lookout—FREAK, tatted from temple to wrist—squares up.

FREAK

Yo. Who the hell are you?

Gary doesn't answer. He calmly pulls off his vest—revealing a faded but unmistakable inked symbol on his right bicep: a coiled centipede circling a bleeding eye.

The gang freezes.

FREAK (CONT'D)

No way. That's—

SECOND LOOKOUT

—that's Sombra Norte. That crew got swallowed by Pelican Bay years ago.

DIRTY GARY

Some of us crawled out.

(beat)

Tell Jetz a ghost's looking for him.

He walks inside without waiting for permission.

THIRD LOOKOUT

That ink means double digits. At least ten kills.

FREAK

(quietly)

Yeah. But the way he walks? He might be pushing twenty.

They don't follow.

INT. THE SHOVELHEAD BAR - NIGHT

Dim, smoky, and damp. A jukebox plays old Tupac tracks. Pool tables with duct-taped legs. Two gang members play dominoes in the back. Everyone glances up when Dirty Gary enters.

He scans the room like he owns the lease.

At the bar, a mid-level Red 8 associate, TONTO (30s, bald, neck tat of a butcher's knife), looks up from his drink.

TONTO

You lost, OG?

GARY

Only thing I ever lost was  
patience.

(beat)

I heard Harmony Falls grew a new  
set of teeth.

TONTO

Maybe. Who's asking?

Gary doesn't answer. He sits. Loudly. Drops a crisp hundred  
on the counter.

GARY

Whiskey. Dirty. No fruit.

The bartender pours. Everyone keeps glancing over.

TONTO

You flash that ink like it still  
means something.  
Sombra Norte got chewed and  
flushed.

GARY

(flashes a crooked smile)

Only the soft ones.  
The rest of us? We adapted.

He lifts his sleeve, revealing a scar over part of the  
tattoo, like he earned the ink the hard way—then bled to  
prove it.

TONTO

What do you want?

GARY

To earn.

(beat)

Or to remind some little boys why  
men used to run this town.

A long pause. Tonto leans back. Studying him now.

TONTO

Maybe you meet the right people.  
Maybe you don't.

GARY

Maybe I already did.

Gary downs the whiskey in one gulp. Stands.

GARY (CONT'D)

Tell Jetz... the dinosaurs are back.

He walks out.

Eyes track him all the way to the door.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

Swing shift officers file in. Dayshift lingers. Coffee gets poured into cups that still smell like bourbon.

DIRTY GARY stands at the front with Chief Lennox, flipping through printouts of gang activity and fence locations.

GARY

Name's "Pogo." Real name's Brent Dorringer. Used to run meth through biker channels, now he moves stolen tech, jewelry, power tools—hell, probably a few catalytic converters too.

(holds up a photo)

This house? Looks like a Craigslist graveyard. Intel says he's got no fewer than 15 hot items inside at any given time.

CHIEF LENNOX

You planning to knock and ask politely?

GARY

Nope. I'm bringing a gift.  
(beat)  
From our evidence locker.

The room murmurs. Officers perk up.

GARY (CONT'D)

One very pricey, never-returned custom Rolex—confiscated from a hedge fund sleazeball in '21. I sell it cheap, I get a peek. If he's dumb enough to flaunt inventory, we build a case. If he's not—we pull back and wait.

RIVAS

You going solo?

GARY

Hell no. I'm bringing someone he  
can't stop looking at while I do  
the real work.

CUT TO:

INT. ADMIN OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

MEGAN SHELTON (Chief's secretary) leans back in her chair as  
Gary leans on her desk.

GARY

You busy tonight?

MEGAN

You asking if I'm free or if I'm  
bait?

GARY

Both. You'd be going undercover...  
but over-dressed.

She smiles wickedly.

MEGAN

I'll pick the dress. You bring the  
engine.

EXT. SEEDY SIDE OF TOWN - NIGHT

The red Corvette rolls slow down a crumbling street lit by  
flickering halogen poles.

Gary drives. Megan sits beside him in a tight black dress,  
heels, hair done, dark lipstick. She looks straight out of  
trouble.

GARY

You sure you're ready?

MEGAN

I'm in heels in East Harmony. I've  
never been more ready.

They share a smirk.

EXT. POGO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The house is a mess of rusted bikes, chain-link fences, and  
taped-over windows.

Pogo (50s, sunburnt and twitchy) opens the door wearing no shirt and a bandana.

POGO

Yeah?

Gary flashes the Rolex. The gang tattoo on his bicep. Megan shifts her weight, chest out, lips parted.

GARY

Heard you're the man to talk to if I'm looking to offload without paperwork.

POGO

(deep stare at Megan)  
Well damn. Come on in.

INT. POGO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Stacks of boxes. Shelves of power tools. Stereo equipment. Necklaces dangling off a deer skull.

Gary lets Pogo drool over Megan while he eyes the inventory: dozens of stolen items.

POGO

Where'd you find this piece?

GARY

Ex-wife's divorce lawyer. Bastard skipped town. Rolex had his initials on the back—I sanded 'em off.

POGO

What you want for it?

GARY

Four bills and a six-pack. Let's call it a gentleman's discount.

Pogo cackles and digs into a cash drawer.

While he's distracted, Megan pretends to fix her heel—leaning over in a way that keeps Pogo fixated. Gary snaps a hidden photo of the living room inventory with a micro camera in his cufflink.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

The Corvette peels away. Megan lights a cigarette.

MEGAN

That guy's eyes never left my cleavage.

GARY

Exactly as planned.

MEGAN

What happens now?

GARY

Now we build a case.

(beat)

And I owe you dinner.

She blows smoke out the window, grinning.

INT. POLICE HQ - DETECTIVE BULLPEN - NIGHT

Gary enters with Megan, both still dressed from the op. Every male officer in sight does a double-take. One rookie nearly walks into a filing cabinet.

CHU (TO RIVAS)

Remind me again why I retired before secretaries looked like Bond girls?

RIVAS

Because no one would've believed you could talk to one.

Gary drops the wristwatch baggie and photo evidence onto a desk in front of Burk, who's waiting with an open laptop.

GARY

I need a judge. Now.

(holds up his cufflink camera)

That house is full of enough stolen goods to reopen Circuit City.

MEGAN

And the fence made a straight cash buy. No hesitation. He thinks we were just passing through.

BURK

Lucky timing. Night judge is logged in already.

INT. INTERROGATION PREP ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Gary, Megan, and Officer Darcey (Burk's tech-wiz girlfriend) are on speakerphone with the on-call judge.

Gary speaks with calm authority, citing affidavit facts, while Megan preps the search warrant draft at record speed.

GARY (INTO PHONE)  
...based on direct visual  
confirmation, unsolicited criminal  
offer, and a digitally recorded  
environment with unpermitted  
commercial goods...

JUDGE (V.O.)  
Your affidavit is clear. Warrant  
granted. You've got two hours.

MEGAN  
Already printed. And PDF'd.

EXT. POGO'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Three black-and-whites roll up in formation. Lights off. Shadows moving fast.

Chu, Powell, Brady, and Laine move in with flashlights and rifles up.

BACK DOOR - One hard RAM and it's in.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Pogo is mid-sale to two sweaty customers. Boxes of tools and a coffee maker on the floor.

CHU  
Police! Hands up!

CUSTOMER #1  
What the hell-!?

CUSTOMER #2  
I didn't buy anything yet!

POWELL  
Good. Then you still have a chance  
not to be dumb.

They cuff all three. Pogo looks stunned.

POGO

Wha--? Is this about that Rolex?  
Dude left twenty minutes ago!

CHU

Should've checked for glitter under  
the boot. You got played, Pogo.

Pogo's eyes go wide... and he starts to laugh.

POGO

(laughing, cuffed)  
Damn... I got played by a dinosaur  
and a dime piece.

INT. RED 8 SAFEHOUSE - NIGHT

JETZ stands at the window, staring out at the dark city. His  
phone buzzes.

He answers. No greeting.

VOICE (V.O.)

They raided Pogo. Took his gear.  
Three buyers in cuffs.

JETZ

Pogo?

VOICE

He said a biker sold him the Rolex.  
Big guy. Aviators. Red Stingray.  
Had a chick with him.

Jetz doesn't move. His jaw tightens.

JETZ

Tell the crew... someone's feeding  
the cops.

(beat)

Time to cut out the cancer.

FADE OUT:

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

A beat-up Harley roars through a commercial district, weaving  
through sparse traffic. Red 8 colors on the back of the  
rider's vest.

Behind him: black-and-white cruiser with lights flashing,  
siren SCREAMING.

Inside the cruiser:

ROOKIE OFFICER BARNES (23, nervous, tight grip) at the wheel.

Beside him: RET. OFFICER "BULLDOG" BRAXTON (68, thick forearms, chews a cigar with no lighter).

BARNES

He's too fast—every time we close,  
he vanishes.

BRAXTON

He's not fast. You're just slow.

BARNES

He's headed for the parkway—we lose  
him there.

BRAXTON

Only if you keep driving like a  
librarian.

EXT. CITY INTERSECTION - CONTINUOUS

The biker swerves between two delivery trucks—nearly clips a fire hydrant.

BRAAPPPPP— The Harley roars ahead.

The cruiser closes in. The biker suddenly cuts across the front of the unit, heading back perpendicular—panicked move.

BARNES

He's coming right! What do I—?!

Before Barnes can finish, Braxton yanks the wheel hard—

SCREEEEEECH—CRUNCH!!

The cruiser slams side-first into the motorcycle.

The biker is launched through the air, helmetless.

SMASH!

He hits a cast-iron fire hydrant, neck snapping on impact.

Water erupts. Geyser.

INT. CRUISER - SILENCE

Barnes stares, shaken. Braxton calmly pulls the cruiser into park. Sirens still echoing in the distance.

BRAXTON  
(to himself)  
Gravity's still undefeated.

EXT. CRASH SITE - NIGHT

The Red 8 biker's body lies twisted against the sheared-off fire hydrant. Water sprays into the air like a busted geyser.

The cruiser's hood steams. Sirens wail in the distance.

OFFICER BARNES stumbles out of the driver's seat, white as a ghost. He leans over the curb and throws up into the gutter.

BRAXTON calmly steps out, chewing his unlit cigar.

CHU and RIVAS pull up fast with the rest of the swing shift retirees in a second unit.

CHU  
Holy hell—he launched that clown  
like a bottle rocket.

DUQUETTE (O.S.)  
You think that fire hydrant gives  
combat pay?

RIVAS  
I haven't seen a biker fly that far  
since Altamont.

They gather around, smirking. A few younger officers arrive, shaken by the scene.

Barnes is doubled over vomiting.

BARNES  
(hoarse)  
I'm screwed. I'm gonna get fired,  
charged—Jesus, he's dead. I killed  
him—

BRAXTON  
(snarling)  
Shut it.  
(beat)  
What are you barfing about?

He reaches into Barnes' belt, pulls out the cruiser keys, and jangles them.

BRAXTON (CONT'D)

I drove. Not you.

BARNES

But you—

BRAXTON

(pats his chest)

Seniority.

(shrugs)

And that piece of shit had it coming.

He winks at the kid and walks off toward the sidewalk to wait for the coroner.

The squad stares in silence for a beat. Barnes wipes his mouth.

RIVAS

Welcome to the job, kid. Day One's over. The next fifty years start now.

Barnes gives a shaky nod, still processing.

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

A press conference already in progress. Mayor Hal at the podium. Chief Lennox stands beside him, flanked by Councilwoman Blake and grim-faced officers.

Flashes from cameras. Reporters barking questions.

MAYOR HAL

...At this time, we ask for patience from the public. The department is reviewing bodycam footage and cruiser telemetry. A full investigation is underway.

REPORTER 1

Was the officer who struck the gang member one of the returning retirees?

CHIEF LENNOX

The officer in question was operating under active patrol authority.

(MORE)

CHIEF LENNOX (CONT'D)

We cannot comment further on tactical decisions until internal review concludes.

REPORTER 2

Is it true the suspect was unarmed?

MAYOR HAL

We're not commenting on details that could compromise the case. We do extend our condolences to the deceased's family—whatever his criminal background may have been.

The crowd rumbles with murmurs. Mayor Hal pushes on.

MAYOR HAL (CONT'D)

We will not retreat from our mission to restore public safety. But we will continue to hold every officer—rookie or veteran—accountable to the law.

LENNOX

And if anyone thinks they can intimidate this department through violence?

(beat)

They'll learn they've mistaken mercy for weakness.

Flashes go off. Cut to:

INT. RED 8 FUNERAL SPACE - NIGHT

A warehouse has been converted into a crude funeral hall. Black curtains, candles, and the biker's wrecked Harley sits beside a casket adorned in gang colors.

Dozens of Red 8 members, male and female, gather in silence. They wear leather. Some cry. Most seethe.

JETZ walks to the front. Silence parts like a wave.

He looks down at the casket. The biker's patch lies folded atop his chest.

JETZ

They didn't shoot him. They didn't even warn him.

(beat)

They ran him down like a dog. In their streets.

Our streets.

A murmur of agreement.

JETZ (CONT'D)

They want to bring the past back?

Good.

Because we've got a past too.

He turns to the group.

JETZ (CONT'D)

Tomorrow, we bury him.

Day after that?

We dig someone else a grave.

Roars of approval. Fists pump. Leather creaks.

Jetz lights a match, drops it into a steel oil drum. The fire surges.

INT. RED 8 WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Low light. Metal drums. Gun-cleaning kits. Gang lieutenants gather around a blueprint of the Southview strip mall. DIRTY GARY stands off to the side, sipping from a can of cheap beer, eyes scanning everything.

JETZ

Forget the precinct. Too locked down.

We hit their mobile command post—where they stage the dinosaur shifts.

He slaps the map with a gloved hand.

JETZ (CONT'D)

Southview. No backup. No armored response time.

We drag 'em out, humiliate 'em, livestream the whole thing.

GANG MEMBER 1

What if they fight back?

JETZ

Then they bleed. Just like we did.

(beat)

But first—they watch a legend fall.

He nods toward Gary.

JETZ (CONT'D)

Speaking of...  
You say you're "Dirty G." From  
Sombra Norte?

GARY

Not something I brag about.

TONTO

But we googled you anyway.

All eyes turn.

TONTO (CONT'D)

You do come up...  
Old mugshots. Two bodies pinned but  
never charged. Pelican Bay roster.  
And this blog post from 2014 titled  
"The Devil's Cop."

(he smirks)

You're either the real thing, or  
someone really wanted you to be.

GARY

I let the myth build itself.  
Makes people hesitate before  
testing my reflexes.

JETZ

(smiling)

You're in.

(beat)

But just know—if this op goes  
sideways, you're the first we  
assume flipped.

GARY

Wouldn't want it any other way.

Tension breaks with low chuckles.

But behind Gary's eyes—we see the gears turning fast.

He just got the intel he needs... if he can get out.

EXT. SUBSTATION BULLPEN - NIGHT

Gary walks with Lennox along the hallway. Rain patters on the  
roof.

LENNOX

You know this place used to have a plaque?

GARY

I remember. Martinez. Twenty-four. Shot in the back on a traffic stop.

LENNOX

That was my first year in command.

GARY

Kid knew the streets. Knew the people. Still didn't see it coming.

(beat)

You never forget the ones who don't walk out.

LENNOX

Let's make sure everyone walks out tonight.

They exchange a firm look. Gary nods.

INT. RED 8 WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Jetz circles a map of the Harmony Falls substation on a stained table. Red Xs mark the main entrance, rear parking, and break room window.

JETZ

Forget livestreams. Forget symbolism. We hit them where they sleep. The actual PD. No warning.

THUG #1

Cameras? Dispatch?

JETZ

We hit during shift crossover. Half the cops inside, half outside, all confused.

TONTO

They'll fire back.

JETZ

So what? The city's scared of lawsuits. We drop a few warning shots. Wound one, maybe.

(MORE)

JETZ (CONT'D)

They'll fold. Public'll crucify  
them for brutality.

(beat)

It's Thursday. We go Monday night.  
Weather's supposed to rain. Less  
visibility. Less press.

All nod. Except Gary, standing in the shadows, silent.

EXT. POLICE SUBSTATION - ALLEY WALL - NIGHT BEFORE THE RAID

Rain pours. Red 8 gang members huddle under a tarp.

One of them, "INK", finishes spray-painting a mural in full  
color:

A cartoonish drawing of "the Fossil Squad" as walking  
skeletons with badges. Above it: "TIME TO GO EXTINCT."

They laugh.

JETZ

Let 'em see it in the morning.  
Right before we burn the place  
down.

They disappear into the night.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NEXT NIGHT

A black sedan idles across the street with tinted windows.  
Red 8 crew inside with binoculars and burner phones.

Inside the substation: officers laugh, drink coffee, read  
reports. Completely normal. Almost too normal.

RED 8 SPOTTER

Boring. Like clockwork.

Cop car rolls in every 15 minutes. Guy with the limp is  
always five late. Big guy always takes front stairwell.

BACK SEAT THUG

Place looks soft.

SPOTTER

That's what they want us to think.

INT. POLICE HQ - CHIEF'S OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

Chief Lennox stands by the window, shades drawn.

Gary stands across from him, wearing a jacket over his gang vest.

GARY

Monday night. Shift change. They're bringing pipe guns and distraction fires.

LENNOX

You sure?

GARY

They've got maps. Timetables.

You play it straight, you get rolled. You play it smart, we bury 'em.

LENNOX

You wired for Monday?

GARY

Wired, armed, and out for blood.

LENNOX

Then we'll give them exactly what they want.

(beat)

A false sense of victory.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

Roll call. Everyone's cool. Calm. But there's a quiet energy.

Body armor being fitted under uniforms. Civilian cars being assigned.

Rookies and retirees checking weapons—silently, professionally.

WELLER

They think we're soft. They're about to meet the real Harmony Falls.

RIVAS

I just hope their insurance is up to date.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS - MONDAY NIGHT - RAIN FALLING

Sheets of rain soak the dark streets. A single black van cruises slowly past the darkened Harmony Falls Substation.

Inside the van: JETZ, Tonto, and six armed Red 8 members—including Gary, silent, unreadable.

They're dressed in dark layers, Red 8 patches hidden under jackets. Gary wears a hood over his face, body tense.

JETZ

Lights are low. Just one car parked. Two rookies always do report drop at this hour.

THUG

And they don't look out windows.

TONTO

Front, side, and utility entrance. Fan out, get inside, drag one out if you can.

JETZ

We hit, we film, we bounce.

(beat)

Let's make 'em wish they'd stayed retired.

Doors slide open.

EXT. POLICE SUBSTATION - MOMENTS LATER

Three groups of gang members split off, approaching the station from different sides.

Gary walks with Tonto, toward the side door. Rain drips off his hood.

He discreetly fingers the mini-comm taped under his collar, clicks once.

INT. UNDERCOVER VAN - BLOCKS AWAY

Burk, watching drone and bodycam feeds.

BURK

(soft into mic)

We're live. Package in motion.

INT. POLICE SUBSTATION - FRONT DESK

Only two visible officers—Barnes and Alvarez—play acting calm.

ALVAREZ  
(clock glancing)  
Here we go.

BARNES  
I don't hear anything.

ALVAREZ  
Exactly.

EXT. PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Red 8 moves into position. Two thugs crouch behind a dumpster, one holding a flare.

JETZ  
On my mark.

He lights it.

Tosses it hard toward the front steps.

FLASH OF RED LIGHT—

CRASH!

Another thug swings a bat into the side window.

BLAM!

First shot is fired—a round shatters the glass above the entrance.

INT. POLICE SUBSTATION - SAME TIME

The glass explodes inward. Officers dive.

ALVAREZ  
Showtime!

She flips the emergency switch—interior lights drop to red, locking into emergency lockdown mode.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - BEHIND THE STATION

Three unmarked civilian SUVs peel around the corner. Doors burst open.

WELLER, BRAXTON, RIVAS, CHU, and others in body armor and civvies fan out.

RIVAS

Circle right. Cut off the exit route.

CHU

Wait for the ghost to drop the hammer.

EXT. SIDE ENTRANCE - SAME TIME

Gary slows behind Tonto.

TONTO

Go go go-

Suddenly-Gary yanks Tonto back by the collar, and slams him against the wall.

GARY

I lied.

TONTO

What-?

BLAM!

Gary shoots him point-blank in the leg.

GARY

I'm the real extinction event.

He swings out, firing into the rear flanking group.

Behind him, the undercover units emerge from shadows-

RETIREES OPEN FIRE, fanning out behind the attackers.

WELLER

Surprise, assholes!

JETZ turns-panicked-tries to flee-

BLAM!

Gary drops him with a shot to the chest.

INT. UNDERCOVER VAN - CONTINUOUS

Burk watches heart rate monitor spikes.

BURK  
(softly)  
Target neutralized.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS SUBSTATION - NIGHT

Gunfire echoes in all directions. Rain pounds the pavement as Red 8 gang members dive for cover—but the trap has closed.

BRAXTON and CHU move in from the south flank, pinning two thugs behind a generator.

CHU  
Toss the guns and your hands go  
home attached!

One thug drops his weapon. The other runs.

BRAXTON  
(takes aim)  
You don't outrun your past, kid.

POP!

Shoots the gangbanger in the leg—he drops screaming.

INT. POLICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Alvarez and Barnes rush out the front, now in tactical gear, clearing the entry path. The flare smoke is still rising.

ALVAREZ  
Two by the door. Down and cuffed.

BARNES  
This is... this is insane.

ALVAREZ  
Nope. This is old-school Harmony  
Falls.

EXT. BACK LOT - MOMENTS LATER

RIVAS pins a guy against a dumpster, cuffing him as Duquette covers her.

RIVAS  
Next time you wanna storm a  
precinct, bring snacks.

DUQUETTE  
And better aim.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Gary stands over Jetz's body, soaked in rain. He holsters his weapon as Chief Lennox and Mayor Hal arrive behind him.

MAYOR HAL  
Jesus Christ...

LENNOX  
They came to start a war.

We gave them a history lesson.

MAYOR HAL  
Did we win?

Gary lights a cigarette.

GARY  
We survived.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOBBY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Medics patch up minor wounds. The retirees are seated, exhausted but alive.

WELLER wipes blood off his forearm.

WELLER  
You know, I kinda missed this.

POWELL  
You miss getting shot at?

WELLER  
No. I miss winning.

CHU  
We didn't win. We bought ourselves  
some breathing room.

RIVAS  
Same thing in this job.

Barnes walks by, still shaky. Braxton slaps a water bottle into his hand.

BRAXTON  
You didn't puke this time. That's growth.

INT. MEGAN'S OFFICE - SAME NIGHT

Megan closes a laptop—news headlines stream in:

"Failed Gang Ambush Ends in Bloodshed"

"Harmony Falls PD Defies Odds"

Gary stands behind her, silently.

MEGAN  
You're gonna be a myth again.  
They'll make you into a movie.

GARY  
Only if it ends before the sequel.

They lock eyes. For the first time, he actually smiles.

EXT. HARMONY FALLS SUBSTATION - NIGHT

Gunfire echoes in all directions. Rain pounds the pavement as Red 8 gang members dive for cover—but the trap has closed.

BRAXTON and CHU move in from the south flank, pinning two thugs behind a generator.

CHU  
Toss the guns and your hands go  
home attached!

One thug drops his weapon. The other runs.

BRAXTON  
(takes aim)  
You don't outrun your past, kid.

POP!

Shoots the gangbanger in the leg—he drops screaming.

INT. POLICE STATION - MOMENTS LATER

Alvarez and Barnes rush out the front, now in tactical gear, clearing the entry path. The flare smoke is still rising.

ALVAREZ

Two by the door. Down and cuffed.

BARNES

This is... this is insane.

ALVAREZ

Nope. This is old-school Harmony Falls.

EXT. BACK LOT - MOMENTS LATER

RIVAS pins a guy against a dumpster, cuffing him as Duquette covers her.

RIVAS

Next time you wanna storm a precinct, bring snacks.

DUQUETTE

And better aim.

EXT. SIDEWALK - NIGHT

Gary stands over Jetz's body, soaked in rain. He holsters his weapon as Chief Lennox and Mayor Hal arrive behind him.

MAYOR HAL

Jesus Christ...

LENNOX

They came to start a war.  
We gave them a history lesson.

MAYOR HAL

Did we win?

Gary lights a cigarette.

GARY

We survived.

INT. POLICE HQ - LOBBY - LATER THAT NIGHT

Medics patch up minor wounds. The retirees are seated, exhausted but alive.

WELLER wipes blood off his forearm.

WELLER  
You know, I kinda missed this.

POWELL  
You miss getting shot at?

WELLER  
No. I miss winning.

CHU  
We didn't win. We bought ourselves  
some breathing room.

RIVAS  
Same thing in this job.

Barnes walks by, still shaky. Braxton slaps a water bottle  
into his hand.

BRAXTON  
You didn't puke this time. That's  
growth.

INT. MEGAN'S OFFICE - SAME NIGHT

Megan closes a laptop—news headlines stream in:

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Gary stands behind her, silently.

MEGAN  
You're gonna be a myth again.  
They'll make you into a movie.

GARY  
Only if it ends before the sequel.

They lock eyes. For the first time, he actually smiles.

INT. CITY HALL PRESS ROOM - DAY

Cameras flash. Mayor Hal stands at the podium. Councilwoman  
Blake and Chief Lennox flank him.

MAYOR HAL  
Harmony Falls faced a violent  
assault.

(MORE)

MAYOR HAL (CONT'D)

Thanks to swift coordination and the dedication of our law enforcement—both active and retired—that assault failed.

REPORTER

Will the "retiree program" continue?

LENNOX

We'll be reviewing its effectiveness. But I can say this much: no one regrets those extra boots on the ground last night.

BLAKE

Just don't ask us to pay them what they're worth. We can't afford that.

Laughter. Sort of.

INT. CHIEF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Lennox stands at the window, watching streetlights flicker in the mist. Gary enters, limping slightly.

LENNOX

You look like a guy who went twelve rounds with Father Time and only won on points.

GARY

I've looked worse. Hell, I've smelled worse too.

LENNOX

We processed eleven Red 8s. Three wounded. Two dead. One bullet away from a shitshow.

GARY

What's the saying? Close only counts in horseshoes and departmental reviews.

LENNOX

IA's gonna want your report by Friday.

GARY

Better give me till Monday.  
Friday's for bourbon.

EXT. BACK ALLEY - SAME NIGHT

"Choir practice."

The old folding table. Paper cups. A dented cooler.

All ten retirees are there—Weller, Rivas, Braxton, Chu, Alvarez, Smitty, Powell, Junkyard, Duquette, and Big Lester.

WELLER

I say we get jackets. Leather ones.  
Maybe with oxygen tank holsters.

RIVAS

Mine better come with heated lining  
and lumbar support.

SMITTY

You all joke now, but I'm gonna  
miss this.

ALVAREZ

Even the gunfire?

SMITTY

Especially the gunfire. I've been  
married 30 years.  
Y'all shoot straighter.

JUNKYARD

Dog still says you're full of crap.

LESTER

Dog's the smartest one here.

They toast with Styrofoam cups.

CHU

To the ones who didn't come back.

ALL

(softly)

To the ones who didn't come back.

INT. MEGAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Low light. Jazz hums softly from the speaker.

Megan opens her front door—Gary stands there, freshly showered, stiff, holding a bottle of decent wine.

MEGAN

Did you come for the drink or the apology?

GARY

Apology. The drink's just courage.

They sit on the couch. He winces slightly.

GARY (CONT'D)

Don't be offended if I creak when I turn.

Last time I moved like that, I tore a hamstring putting on socks.

MEGAN

(chuckling)

So take it slow.

She straddles him gently, brushing his shirt off one shoulder.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

Oldies but goodies... still get airplay.

GARY

Just don't blow out my hip. That'll ruin the mood.

MEGAN

You get me to the bedroom, and I'll forgive you if you snore.

She kisses him deeply.

MEGAN (CONT'D)

But just so you know?  
I've got a thing for oldies but goodies.

GARY

You sure?

MEGAN

Absolutely.  
Now shut up and follow me... while you still can.

She stands, walks toward the bedroom.

Gary rises slowly, already loosening his collar.

GARY

If I pull something getting these boots off, we're rescheduling.

MEGAN (O.S.)

No refunds.

INT. POLICE HQ - BRIEFING ROOM - DAY

The usual suspects: Weller, Rivas, Braxton, Powell, Chu, Smitty, Duquette, Barnes, Alvarez. All seated, bandaged, bruised, sipping stale coffee.

Chief Lennox enters with a yellow envelope.

CHIEF LENNOX

Mail came in.

(holds up the envelope)

Certified letter—from a law firm.

He reads the letter aloud.

CHIEF LENNOX (CONT'D)

"On behalf of Mr. Kyle Jennings, a.k.a. 'Shiv,' we are pursuing damages related to trauma suffered when your officers ambushed our client during a peaceful nighttime stroll."

Groans around the room.

WELLER

He had a Molotov cocktail and a prison tattoo that said "I eat cops."

CHU

Peaceful stroll my ass.

DUQUETTE

This is why I miss the '80s. Nobody sued you—they just ran.

RIVAS

I need bourbon just to read that letter.

SMITTY

What are the damages?

LENNOX  
Emotional distress. Two teeth. And  
a broken Instagram following.

POWELL  
Tragedy.

BARNES  
So... are we in trouble?

LENNOX  
We're always in trouble. That's  
what makes this home.

Laughter breaks the tension.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER THAT DAY

The retirees suit down, slower than usual.

WELLER  
So... we doing this again next month?

RIVAS  
You mean the part where we almost  
die, get sued, and drink shitty  
coffee?

WELLER  
Exactly.

SMITTY  
I'd be lying if I said I didn't  
miss it already.

POWELL  
Speak for yourself. I'm going back  
to Lyft. At least backseat drivers  
don't carry knives.

JUNKYARD  
Ghost Dog says we should  
renegotiate hazard pay.

CHU  
Ghost Dog also told me you were  
full of crap.

DUQUETTE  
He's not wrong.

They chuckle. Smitty stares at his locker.

SMITTY

We may be old. But for a minute...  
it felt like we were twenty again.

BRAXTON

Only louder. And with more back  
pain.

FADE OUT.

INT. POLICE HQ - ROLL CALL ROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

A bit cleaner than usual. A chalkboard reads in sloppy  
handwriting:

"Officially Unofficial Debrief - Fossil Unit"

Officer BARNES stands awkwardly in front of the room.  
Retirees lounge in folding chairs, munching on vending  
machine snacks. Chief Lennox leans against the wall.

BARNES

I-I just wanted to say something.

They glance up. Barnes clears his throat.

BARNES (CONT'D)

When I started here, I thought I  
knew everything.  
Then Braxton yelled at me...  
twice... and a shotgun blew a hole  
in my soul.

Laughter.

BARNES (CONT'D)

But you guys taught me more in two  
weeks than the academy did in six  
months.  
Like... what real backup means.  
What guts look like.  
And how sometimes the only  
difference between dumb and brave  
is who's writing the report.

BRAXTON

(gruffly)

You're still a punk. But you're our  
punk now.

Everyone raises whatever they're holding—coffee, bottled  
water, a Slim Jim.

WELLER

To surviving the good old days...  
again.

INT. HIGH-END RESTAURANT - NIGHT

A swanky private room. White tablecloths. Crystal glasses.  
Brass nameplates. A banner reads:

"THANK YOU: FOSSIL SQUAD"

Civilians, active-duty cops, press, and politicians mill  
about. Soft jazz plays.

Rivas sips champagne. Duquette is staring at both forks,  
confused.

CHU

(whispering)

Outside fork's salad. Inside fork's  
riot gear.

Mayor Hal steps up to the mic. Flashbulbs pop.

MAYOR HAL

This town owes you dinosaurs a debt  
it can never repay.  
And also... several legal  
settlements.  
But mostly gratitude.

Applause.

MAYOR HAL (CONT'D)

We honor courage, history... and  
whatever this next moment is.

He gestures to the entrance.

All heads turn.

Officer LAINE enters in a striking floor-length crimson  
dress, hair blown out, earrings flashing.

It takes a few seconds for anyone to recognize her.

WELLER

(stunned)

Is that...?

POWELL

Okay. I'm either confused... or  
officially old.

RIVAS

Both, sweetheart.

LAINE

(smiling, owning it)

Don't get used to it. Tomorrow I'm  
back to boots and sarcasm.

INT. HIGH-END RESTAURANT - LATER THAT NIGHT

Tables are filled. Plates are mostly cleared. Coffee's being  
poured. A small table of "recognition awards" sits beside the  
podium.

Chief Lennox steps to the mic, flanked by Mayor Hal and  
Councilwoman Blake.

LENNOX

Most of you know I don't do  
speeches.  
But after last week, I've been  
reminded of something important:  
Old school still works.

(applause)

Tonight isn't just about  
medals—it's about moments. So we've  
prepared a few... personalized  
tokens of appreciation.

He turns toward the retirees. One by one:

DUQUETTE

For wearing two watches, both  
wrong, and still arriving early—

"Master of Bad Timing."

POWELL

For highest ratio of citations to  
flirtations—

"Queen of the Stop-and-Sass."

CHU

For locating four suspects using  
only scanner static—

"Human Radio Award."

JUNKYARD

(straight-faced)

If Ghost Dog doesn't get a badge,  
I'm walking.

LENNOX

Fine. Ghost Dog is now honorary K-9  
unit. Unpaid.

Laughter.

Then Lennox gestures toward WELLER, who stands slowly, taking  
the mic with surprising calm.

WELLER

Y'know, a lot of you call us the  
"Fossil Squad."  
We've been called worse. Trust me.

(chuckles)

But there's one thing you may not  
know. Many years ago, all of  
us—every last one of us "old  
farts"—took an oath.  
And speaking for the crew behind  
me...  
We took that oath until the day we  
die.

Silence. Then a long, deep wave of applause. Even Megan, in  
the back, wipes a corner of her eye.

INT. HIGH-END RESTAURANT - LATER THAT NIGHT

The applause winds down. Lennox returns to the mic with one  
last plaque in hand.

LENNOX

And finally...  
For service above and beyond  
reason, retirement, and possibly  
sanity— we present this to Sergeant  
Gary "Dirty Gary" Hardin.

Cheers erupt. Gary rises, groaning dramatically like his  
spine gave out. He limps to the podium, plaque in hand.

GARY

If I knew all it took to get  
applause like this was to get shot  
at and sued in the same week, I'd  
have skipped retirement the first  
time.

(MORE)

GARY (CONT'D)

(laughter)

Truth is, the Chief and I talked  
about me sticking around.  
But the truthier truth?

(beat)

It's time to hang it up again. For  
real this time.

A quiet hush as he scans the room—locking briefly on Megan,  
who's teary-eyed, smiling proudly.

GARY (CONT'D)

Harmony Falls gave me something no  
pension could.  
A second shot to do what I love...  
with the people I trust.  
I got to be a cop again.  
And I got to walk out on my own  
damn terms.

(beat)

That's more than most get. Thank  
you for that.

He raises the plaque and gives a small, respectful nod.

GARY (CONT'D)

Now someone hit the music before I  
get sentimental and start hugging  
people.

INT. HIGH-END RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

A vintage slow tune rolls in—think Otis Redding or Sam Cooke.

The lights dim. Glasses clink. A space clears.

Boom-Boom Rivas struts across the floor in a low-cut,  
glittering dress. She dramatically fans her cleavage with her  
citation.

RIVAS

I may be bomb squad, but tonight,  
I'm strictly dangerous curves.

Laughter and whistles follow.

Across the room, Officer Laine—formerly the butch rookie  
lesbian—glides in wearing a backless sequined gown, hair  
curled, lips red. She gives Rivas a wink and mock curtsy.

LAINÉ  
Move over, Grandma Glitterbomb.

RIVAS  
You wish, sweetheart.

They meet mid-floor, then grab a couple of rookie boys and start to dance.

Chu and Powell sway nearby, laughing at the sight.

Smitty sips bourbon while a wide-eyed rookie cop nervously offers him a dance—he shrugs and accepts.

Duquette taps the beat on his wrong-watch wrist while Junkyard slow-dances with invisible Ghost Dog.

INT. DANCE FLOOR - SAME TIME

Gary stands by the edge of the floor. Megan approaches, stunning in black silk.

She extends her hand.

MEGAN  
You coming, Dirty?

GARY  
Only if you promise not to spin me.  
I pull a hamstring and it's your  
fault.

She pulls him in close.

MEGAN  
No spins. Just rhythm. And maybe a  
little heat.

They dance slowly. Close. At peace.

Gary leans in, quiet.

GARY  
You ever think maybe... this was  
the real endgame?

MEGAN  
What, dancing with a creaky fossil  
in orthopedic shoes?

GARY  
Exactly.

They smile. The music plays. The camera pulls back— a sea of old warriors and fresh rookies, swaying under soft lights.

Different generations. Same rhythm.

FADE OUT.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - NIGHT

Now Officer Brady sits in the driver's seat. Wiser. Sharper. Still cocky—but experienced. Beside him: a green new rookie, nervous, scrolling through the CAD report.

ROOKIE

Domestic disturbance. Meyer Street.  
Neighbors say it's the usual—they  
fight when they drink.

BRADY

Yeah. I know the house.

They pull up. Same porch. Same open screen door. Yelling inside.

The rookie starts tapping on a tablet.

BRADY (CONT'D)

Just follow my lead.

INT. LIVING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Chaos inside. Verbal barbs flying. The rookie looks overwhelmed.

ROOKIE

Should we separate them?

BRADY

Nah.

He walks into the kitchen, sees a newspaper on the table.

BRADY (CONT'D)

(shouting)

No way. A '71 Challenger R/T.  
Thirty-two grand. Christ, we're in  
the wrong line of work.

The yelling stops.

WIFE

No, you cannot use our phone!

BRADY

Figures. But just so you know—if we're stuck here all night, I'm missing out on a classic muscle car.

HUSBAND

We're good, officer. Just talkin' things out.

BRADY

Appreciate it. And hey... keep it quiet for the neighbors, alright?

They nod.

EXT. POLICE TRAINING YARD - DAY - THREE MONTHS LATER

A new class of cadets jogs in formation. BOOM-BOOM RIVAS stands in front, now in full instructor gear.

BOOM-BOOM

You! With the eyebrow ring!  
You think that'll deflect a bullet?

Cadet freezes.

BOOM-BOOM (CONT'D)

Rule number one: This job isn't about you.  
It's about who you're willing to bleed for.

Cadets nod. Respectfully terrified.

EXT. MEYER STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Brady and the rookie walk to the car.

ROOKIE

Did that really just work?

BRADY

It always works... if you learned from the right teacher.

(beat)

Get in the car, rookie.

INT. GARY'S BACKYARD - DAY

A quiet garden. Wind chimes. A bonsai tree sits half-pruned.

GARY, in jeans and a soft flannel, carefully trims the next branch. Behind him on a shelf: his badge, framed in glass, next to the phrase:

"STILL ON THE BEAT. JUST MOVED THE BLOCK."

MEGAN (O.S.)

Dinner in ten. You coming, warrior?

GARY

(quiet smile)

Just clearing one last corner.

FADE OUT.

FADE OUT.