

Episode 8

“A Twisted Tale”

The next day detective Lane and the entire 23rd Precinct gathered in the conference room. They were all flustered from the turn of events surrounding Jake Fisher’s death and Matthews’ sudden escape.

“God damn it!” said Lane as she banged her fists upon the office desk.

“Calm down, Lane. It happens to the best of us,” said Captain Gordon.

“You do realize that this is entirely my fault right?” she said. “This would have never happened if I would have cornered the bastard.”

“Deborah, you did the best you could. There is no reason for you to be so hard on yourself,” said Williams, who sat directly across from her.

“No! You guys don’t understand! I had him! I had him right where I wanted him and he couldn’t deny it. I can’t believe how stupid I was! I should have never let him go,” she said.

“Matthews is a nut for sure. There’s no telling what could have happened had you told him he was at fault. To be honest, I think that I can speak on the behalf of everyone here by saying: I’m just glad you’re okay,” said Fisher.

Detective Fisher seemed to be in a daze. Although it seemed as if an eternity had passed, it was only a few hours ago that Gordon had called him and sent his world crashing down.

“I should have stayed on top of him,” said Gordon with both hands clasped and folded together.

“It truly is my fault. I had you all keeping tabs on him and providing me with updates regarding his contribution to the case and for that I will say I am truly sorry. That right there pertains to supervision which is the captain’s job, not detectives. Your job is to investigate and solve crimes. End of story,” he said as he examined the faces of each and every one of his officers.

“No one in this precinct has worked with Frank more closely than me,” said detective Alvin who stood the entire time and had been standing near the blinds of the conference room window.

Up until that moment he had been extremely quiet as he silently reflected and meditated upon his thoughts and the opinions of everyone else.

“I mean, there were instances of his brutality and cruel nature. But I overlooked them as being mere components of his personality,” said Alvin in a small voice.

“Look, all of you, stop blaming yourselves. What has transpired right before our very eyes isn’t the fault of anyone but Frank Matthews, himself. None of us knew that he’d actually be sadistic enough to go through with the things he’s done,” said Gordon.

“Well where did it all start?” said Williams.

“Back in my office, actually. We were working on leads for the 59th and Columbus case at the time,” said Lane as she still looked deeply ashamed of herself.

“And it wasn’t as if we weren’t aware of it at the time. We were just focused on the case at hand while digesting the captain’s every word,” said Fisher.

“Yeah, it hadn’t occurred to me in that moment that Ron Mercer was closely tied to his nephew, Chauncey Matthews,” said Gordon.

“He used to work for him along with my brother,” added Fisher.

The detectives threw their thoughts across the room continuously as if it were a U.S. Open Tennis match.

“And because of that bit you just said right there, I wish I had been on the case,” said Alvin.

“What do you mean?” asked Fisher.

Detective Alvin turned his head towards Gordon before speaking once again.

“Evan Wright, found dead in a city dumpster, 1993,” he said.

Captain Gordon, who had been slouching in his seat suddenly fixed his posture and sat upright.

“Yes, that’s where it all began!” he said.

“What am I missing?” asked Williams.

“He worked with Jake, Chauncey and was extremely loyal to Mercer before it all went bad,” said Lane.

“Absolutely,” said Alvin as he nodded his head in agreement.

“Do you remember interrogating me at my apartment back in Canarsie?” asked Fisher as he stared at Alvin.

“Yes, how did I ever forget that? You used to be a drug runner too if I recall. It makes total sense!” said Alvin.

Fisher shook his head roughly in disagreement.

“My time on the streets was completely juvenile. Besides a little bit of weed and some crack-cocaine, I really wasn’t heavily involved in it like that, nor was I really interested,” said Fisher.

“It’s true, checking my records, I don’t ever recall your name popping up anywhere. And lucky enough for you, it played to your advantage. Had it did, you never would have gotten this far and into the academy. As much as we try not to penalize a citizen on their past, it’s against our policy to hire any individual with an “official” record or rap sheet to their name,” said Gordon.

“Where is Matthews now?” said Alvin sharply.

“We don’t have the slightest clue. We tagged along with the FBA to raid his apartment at two in the morning and there was no sign of him at all,” said Fisher.

“He couldn’t have gotten that far, could he?” asked Williams.

“We’ve already done a search as early as five a.m. at every port and tunnel within the goddamn city and he’s nowhere to be found,” said Gordon.

“So, he just disappeared without a trace? I find that very hard to believe,” said Lane.

“Well, no, he was last officially documented at JFK,” said Gordon.

“Shit, what happened?” said Alvin.

“He left approximately at midnight. That’s the time his flight took off,” said Gordon.

“Where’d he go?” asked Williams.

“Canada,” replied Gordon.

“We’ll just take him off of their hands then. It shouldn’t be that hard,” said Alvin.

“And then, he caught another flight,” said Fisher.

“Where?!?!” yelled Lane.

The anticipation and longing was too much for her.

“Havana, Cuba,” replied Fisher.

“Damn Cuba!” said Williams.

“Is it really going to be a problem?” asked Alvin.

“The embargo,” said Gordon.

“Damn, you’re right,” he replied.

“So, you mean, he just stays there?” asked Williams.

“It’s out of our hands now, there’s nothing we can do about it at this point,” said Gordon with defeat in his voice.

The entire conference room went silent for a few minutes before Gordon again spoke.

“I’m throwing in the towel this June. I’m just about tired of all this shit,” said Gordon.

All of the detectives looked at him in disbelief.

Sensing what they were all thinking, he added: “And none of you will talk me out of it. I’ve been thinking long and hard about this. I’ve been thinking about this so much that I’ve decided to promote Alvin to captain of the precinct, effective, July 1st. As for my lieutenant position, I will be handing over those duties to Lane.”

“Oh, no cap, I couldn’t even handle—”

“Nonsense. I’ll hear none of it,” he said.

“You see, I’ve done just about all I could during my time serving this precinct and something still slipped during my tenure. You all are the future of this precinct and with everyone playing their roles, I am sure that something unfortunate and of this magnitude will never happen again,” he finished.

“I’m calling it quits too Gordon. I’d love to do another nine years but this bad knee I have will hear none of it,” said Williams as he massaged his right knee as he spoke.

“Then, it’s settled. With soon-to-be Captain Alvin, Lieutenant Lane and detective Fisher, we are now in a new era,” said Gordon.

As Gordon spoke Fisher wondered where he fit into the mold of Parkside Avenue’s 23rd precinct. Although unsure, he was certain that he had to step up his efforts as a detective within the unit. Besides, the forthcoming summer would make seven years since his induction as a first grade detective. He was no longer a rookie, not even by a longshot...

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