

FRASIER: ICARUS

"PILOT"

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, PRESENT DAY - DAY

NILES CRANE is sat at a plain, linoleum-topped table in an unassuming interview room. He's in his early 60s, with less hair and more lines than when we last saw him. He still comes across as very tightly wound.

NILES

What did I think about being paired with him? What did Claudius think about being paired with Hamlet? What did Cain think about being paired with Abel? What did--

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)

You can just say you weren't a fan.

NILES

No, please, I have more examples!

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)

So, why were you made partners?

NILES

I think perhaps the precinct was jealous of our intellect? Or intimidated by our wit? Our barbs could be a scathing. And we preferred to relax with a glass of Armagnac than a can of Miller Lite.

(Beat)

Which is to say, no one wanted to work with us.

INTERVIEWER #2 (O.C.)

And you feel confident making the same claim about him?

NILES

Have you met him?

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, PRESENT DAY, SEPARATE TIME - DAY

In the same interview room, we now see FRASIER CRANE sat in the chair. He looks unstable. Where Niles seems to have kept up his appearance, Frasier looks as though he's spent years in the wilderness. His hair is Season Two curly, but longer and untamed. His eyes are wild as he monologues.

FRASIER

You think every fan of Tosca can speak Italian?

(MORE)

FRASIER (CONT'D)

You think any of them care about Vissi D'arte's delicately precise sentence structure? No, the common man watches opera to marvel at the way the voices onstage resonate with them; understanding the emotion without ever knowing the language. Opera is something you feel. And this is precisely why the works of Sondheim should never be considered opera - the density of his lyrics is at total odds with the pacing of a traditional opera. He never lets music get the upper hand, it's always consistently balanced by his intense verbiage. Melodic phrases are the underscores to his conceits, used to accentuate the artistry of his wordplay. To argue otherwise is lunacy. This pathetic need for taxonomy--

(Mocking voice)

If you perform Company in an opera house, Company would be an opera!

(Regular voice)

Please. You could perform La Traviata in a honky tonk and I'm sure it wouldn't take long for the patrons to realize they're not listening to Hank Williams--

HARD CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - BACK TO

NILES

Oh, he is still so predictable! If Sondheim becomes opera, it means opera will transcend class, and he's terrified that anyone would consider him a pop music fan. If I had a dollar every time--

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)

So, the Jennifer Moncrief murder.

Niles looks a little put out at the interruption of what was sure to be a pent-up rant, but collects himself, and nods.

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.) (CONT'D)

Walk us through what you remember from that day.

INT. CID CAR, 1995 - DAY

Frasier is driving an unmarked CID sedan, with Niles in the passenger seat. Both look younger and healthier, with full but tame heads of hair and sane looks in their eyes.

Under the V.O., Frasier talks on a radio handset, then holsters it.

NILES (V.O.)

April 12th, 1995. The county sheriff requested assistance with a 419 in Discovery Park. Frasier and I were on patrol in the area. I don't remember the specifics of our conversation, but I'm sure it had to do with current investigations, or the politics of the day.

NILES

It was my turn to use the radio.

FRASIER

Oh, please, by the time you'd finished sanitizing the handset, the case would be solved.

NILES

It's a communal car! You've seen the way Sergeant Brooks sprays saliva when he talks, it's like a Niagara Falls of bacteria!

FRASIER

So you watch it safely from inside the boat's sick bay?

NILES

You know about the curvature of my inner ears!

FRASIER

Everybody knows about the curvature of your inner ears!

Frasier parks the car, the two of them get out, and walk towards a barrier of police tape.

FRASIER (V.O.)

Thinking about it now, I can still feel the anticipation in the air, the sense of wading into the unknown, not sure if you'd come out again on the other side.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - BACK TO

FRASIER

And of course, because it ran without intermission, Follies felt like a whirlwind. During that first performance, I know I certainly felt that I was witnessing a landmark moment in musical theater--

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)

Okay, Crane, we really want to focus on the Moncrief case now.

Frasier's face sours, his reply drips with contempt.

FRASIER

Ah, yes. Jennifer Moncrief. Much like L'elisir d'amore, or La Femme Adultère, she was given a title befitting her mystique.

HARD CUT TO:

EXT. DISCOVERY PARK, 1995 - DAY

Frasier and Niles are met by OFFICER "BULLDOG" BRISCOE.

BULLDOG

Ay, you two come to check out the broad in the bedsheet?

FRASIER

Morning, Bulldog. I see we're going due for an HR seminar on acceptable language in the workplace.

BULLDOG

We're not in the workplace!

FRASIER

If you're wearing plastic gloves, consider it a workplace!

BULLDOG

Oh, then I know a few women that owe me backpay!

He barks like a dog, freak that he is.

BULLDOG (CONT'D)

Body's this way. You might want to warn your brother he's about to see a naked woman for the first time.

NILES

Wh-- I have a wife!

The three of them approach a small clearing. The body of a young woman is lying serenely on the ground, supine, a bedsheet loosely wrapped around her, akin to a toga. Next to her lies a dead sea hawk, which looks equally at peace.

Niles gently lays a handkerchief down on the ground and kneels on it, taking a closer look. He produces a second handkerchief and holds it over his nose and mouth.

BULLDOG

Freaky shit, right?

FRASIER

Bulldog, why don't you call the Captain and request investigative assistance. From over there.

Frasier gestures for Bulldog to walk away, which he does. Frasier joins Niles in inspecting the body.

NILES (V.O.)

Without obvious signs of major trauma or hemorrhaging, the cause of death wasn't immediately apparent. What complicated the issue was the way she seemed deliberately placed in that clearing with the sea hawk.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - BACK TO

NILES

Look, it was all Frasier's idea. He got one of those silly notions in his head and he ran away with it.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - BACK TO

FRASIER

Ran away with it?! Believe me, I wouldn't have moved an inch if Niles hadn't have whipped my leg braces off and stood behind me screaming "run, Frasier, run"!

EXT. DISCOVERY PARK - CONTINUOUS

Frasier stands up from his crouched position, surveying the body from above. Niles inspects Jennifer's hands.

FRASIER

Niles... Do you see what I see.

NILES

That I, alone, appear to be keeping manicure industry afloat?

FRASIER

And what a burden that must be! No, we've encountered a meta-psychotic.

NILES

Oh, not more of this Freudian nonsense, the bedsheet looks nothing like Mother's.

FRASIER

No, I mean the whole scene. It's a fantasy enactment. We're looking at the work of someone that will do this again. Or has done it before. It's purposeful. Careful. A vision.

Niles stands.

NILES

What are you saying? You think this is a satanist piece?

FRASIER

(Sarcastic)

Yes, Niles, I think a satanist jumped from scrawling geometric shapes to constructing paraphilic tributes to forbidden fantasy.

(Snapping back)

Use your head! Her purity, her clothing? Her body is an clearly ode... to **Scylla**.

NILES

The mythological Greek princess?

FRASIER

The daughter of Nisus herself. It's all so obvious!

Niles looks from Frasier, to the body, and back again.

NILES

Is it?

FRASIER

Oh, for god's sake, Niles! After Scylla tried to win Minos's affections by betraying her father, he scorned her advances in disgust. Undeterred, she swam after his boat. Don't you think this young woman displays signs of having drowned?

NILES

She's at least a mile away from the nearest body of water.

FRASIER

And everybody knows the first rule of murder is you have to leave the victim exactly where you kill them!

NILES

You know, considering you're trying to get me on your side, I can't say I care for your tone.

Frasier gathers himself, then begins his pitch.

FRASIER

Our murderer, currently without a clear motive, drowns our victim, wraps her in a sheet, brings her here, and carefully creates a tribute to mythology, to a princess.

NILES

But Frasier, as I recall, Scylla wasn't killed by Minos himself, she was drowned by her father after he metamorphosed into a--

FRASIER AND NILES

Sea eagle!

They look, far too giddily, at the bird then at each other.

NILES

We'll have to wait for the autopsy.

FRASIER

I'm sure we can get an ID off her prints in the mean time.

Bulldog returns.

BULLDOG

Back-up's on the way. And the Cap says to make sure you two don't jump to any conclusions in the mean time. Told him not to worry, the only thing that could make you two jump is your wine club integrating.

FRASIER

Yes, thank you, Bulldog. For the record, our wine club is wonderfully diverse.

NILES

Although we do like to keep the Europeans separated from the South Americans.

Frasier and Niles laugh. Bulldog frowns.

BULLDOG

A woman died, show some respect.

Frasier and Niles are caught off guard. Beat.

BULLDOG (CONT'D)

HA, got ya! I'm gonna go see if any of those female journalists want any "special access". Remember, no jumping to conclusions.

NILES

Rest assured, we won't do anything to tarnish your high opinion of us.

INT. CID CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Frasier and Niles immediately jump to conclusions.

FRASIER

Whoever did this has been thinking about it for a long time. And it's so lustful! We need to establish whether the victim likely knew her killer, but we should also look into reports of similar sexual offenses.

NILES

And we can cross reference with those who have proven knowledge about mythology - history majors, professors, even art scholars.

FRASIER
 Good thinking.
 (Sinisterly)
 We'll get this art-loving zealot.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - SOON AFTER

Frasier and Niles enter the bullpen and head towards their desks. They get settled as DETECTIVE ROZ DOYLE approaches.

ROZ
 Hey, Frasier, Niles. Heard you saw
 a grisly one today.

FRASIER
 Hi, Roz. Yes, a young woman found
 in the park. We're waiting on ID.

ROZ
 Do you think she's a prostitute? If
 she is, we need to warn the rest of
 them. They're doing dangerous work!

NILES
 I'm sure you could just tell them
 at the next meeting.

ROZ
 Hah hah. I've never charged for sex.

NILES
 Oh, Roz, think of the money you
 would make!

Roz rolls her eyes good-naturedly at his comment.

ROZ
 Captain wants to talk, Niles.

FRASIER
 Wh- Just Niles? Niles alone?

ROZ
 Mnhmm. Something about falsified
 results on his strength tests?

Niles laughs in a deeply panicked way at Roz's joke. Frasier looks aghast at the idea of the Captain ignoring him.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

CAPTAIN KENNY DALY is sat behind his desk, looking sweaty. Niles sits opposite. Frasier can be seen at his desk through a large window to the side of them, paying close attention.

NILES

The scene did look somewhat ritualistic, either way, it seems like the sort of story that will spark rumors in the community if we don't get it under control.

KENNY

Aw, jeez. We're gonna need to do a press conference, make sure to get the facts out there. Is your brother good working this case too?

Kenny and Niles both look over at Frasier, who immediately looks away and pretends to type on his typewriter.

NILES

Yes, he's got a great mind for the case, good instincts, I can't think of any reason not to trust him.

Frasier starts moving his desk closer to the window.

KENNY

Okay. And making you two co-lead detectives isn't gonna cause any problems? It's not gonna hinder finding whoever did this?

NILES

No. We know how to work together. And the case comes first.

Niles glances at Frasier, who is now inches from the window.

KENNY

Alright, good. Keep me updated. And send Frasier in, please.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Niles leaves the office and walks towards his desk, which used to abut Frasier's, but is now several feet away.

NILES

Feng shui?

FRASIER

Hm? Oh, this? Change of scenery.

NILES

Well, I hope the time difference doesn't slow our productivity down. Captain wants to see you.

FRASIER

He does?

NILES

Preferably in his office, rather than pressed up against the window.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Frasier sits across from Kenny.

KENNY

Fraze, I'll cut to the chase. If I make you and your brother co-leads, will you be able to work together?

Niles can be seen trying/failing to push Frasier's desk back.

FRASIER

Oh, well, yes, of course! I thought- Never mind, yes, we can co-lead this case. We're professionals.

Niles' feet slide out from under him, he falls out of sight. The desk is unmoved.

FRASIER (CONT'D)

We won't let you down.

EXT. SEATTLE POLICE PARKING LOT - HOURS LATER

Frasier and Niles stand by their cars.

FRASIER

Give my best to Daphne.

NILES

I will. You'll have to come for dinner one of these days.

FRASIER

Hm, going from a murder inquiry to English cooking. I wonder which turns the stomach more.

INT. FRASIER'S CAR - SOON AFTER

Frasier drives, but looks deep in thought.

FRASIER (V.O.)

I started to drive home, but I couldn't stop myself from thinking about this case. The body we found, the ties to mythology. There's a theory that's been around since antiquity, that everything will recur again and again, indefinitely. Eternal return. And it dawned on me that if the concept is true, that time is a flat circle, and these finite events are going to repeat themselves over and over, beyond all of our control--

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - BACK TO

FRASIER

Then I had to make the most of every precious second I had before I wound up married to Lillith again.

INT. FRASIER'S CAR - BACK TO

Frasier whips a U-turn, and speeds back the way he came.

INT. CAFE NERVOSA, 1995 - DAY

Niles and DAPHNE sit at a table, drinking coffee.

DAPHNE

You'll be sure and call the children before the press conference? They're so excited.

NILES

I will, but please don't let them watch it, it's an awful case.

DAPHNE

Of course not. Especially after the last time they saw you on the news, when you got stuck in the tree trying to rescue that cat.

NILES

Those teens stole my ladder!

DAPHNE

"And finally; an officer and a fireman".

NILES

I still don't see why he couldn't have given me a traditional fireman's lift!

Daphne laughs. The WAITRESS comes to collect their empty mugs.

NILES (CONT'D)

I'm surprised we haven't seen Frasier this morning.

WAITRESS

Your brother? He's been and gone.

NILES

Already? Are you sure it was him?

WAITRESS

Pretty sure. When I asked him why he was here so early, he said "I'm a detective with Seattle's C.I.D."

NILES

That sounds like Frasier!

DAPHNE

Sounds like you.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - HALF HOUR LATER

Niles enters. He's met again by Roz, who looks unimpressed.

NILES

Morning, Roz. Frasier here already?

ROZ

Mhm. Said he's trying to understand the mind of the killer, what would drive them to a murder like this.

NILES

Is he close to finding out?

ROZ

No, but I sure am!

Frasier is scribbling on a whiteboard, but stops when he sees Niles coming towards him, and picks up a file from his desk.

FRASIER

Oh, good, you're finally here. Our victim is Jennifer Moncrief. Twenty-two, no priors; her parents live in Ohio, Kenny's contacted them; she had no relationship history that her parents knew of, but Roz is going to see what her friends say; and, the pièce de résistance, she was studying classics at the University of Washington.

NILES

It's a little early in the day for your self-satisfaction parade.

FRASIER

Is it early? I've been up for hours.

NILES

And the floats keep rolling!

Niles takes the file from Frasier, and looks through it.

FRASIER

And when you're ready, the coroner called, we need to go and see him.

NILES

He can't come to us? Frasier, you know I don't like the morgue!

FRASIER

Niles, you see dead people all the time, I don't see why the ones in the morgue should upset you.

NILES

It's not the dead people in the morgue that upset me.

HARD CUT TO:

INT. MORGUE, AUTOPSY ROOM - LATER

Coroner NOEL SHEMPSKY is leaning far too close to Jennifer's body, which is between him and the Cranes, covered by a sheet. The dead sea hawk is lying on a table behind them.

NOEL

Have you heard back from R&I yet?

FRASIER

Yes, Jennifer Moncrief, twenty-two.

NOEL

Mmm, I would have guessed.

The Cranes look repulsed at Noel's general demeanor.

NOEL (CONT'D)

Her lungs were filled with salt water, and she has light hemorrhaging suggesting a struggle. I'm still waiting on the toxicology report, but I'm otherwise prepared to rule her cause of death as drowning with foul play.

Frasier makes a performatively smug little noise.

NILES

Can you say how long between her time of death and her being found?

NOEL

Around eight hours, maybe nine.

NILES

So, she was drowned, then wrapped in a sheet and taken to the woods within an eight hour window?

FRASIER

For god's sake, Niles, are you going to ask him to hold your hand too?

NOEL

Actually, Roz said it's against county policy for technicians to hold hands with anyone at work.

Moving swiftly on, Frasier gestures at the dead sea hawk.

FRASIER

What can you tell us about this?

NOEL

It's a dead sea hawk.

NILES

Well, they clearly made the wrong one of you detective!

Niles, thrilled by his roast, leans on a door handle to show nonchalance.

The handle gives way, opening a fridge, from which a dead body on a tray rolls out. Frasier and Noel watch as Niles shoves the tray back in so hurriedly that it rebounds out again. This repeats until he manages to close the door.

Frasier stares at Niles with contempt for a moment longer, then returns to Noel.

FRASIER

How did it die? Is it stuffed? Do you think our suspect killed it himself, or do you think he might have bought it elsewhere?

NOEL

I can tell you it isn't stuffed, but I can't answer your other questions. I'm only intimately familiar with human anatomy.

FRASIER

How comforting.

NOEL

You'll have to talk to an veterinarian. Could've been a heart attack for all I know.

FRASIER

Thank you, Noel. We'll take your findings under advisement.

EXT. MORGUE - MOMENTS LATER

Frasier and Niles walk to the CID car.

FRASIER

A heart attack?! I suppose he also thinks a group of kindly mice took Jennifer's body to the woods!

NILES

Now, now, Frasier, I don't expect Noel to have your powers of deductive reasoning. Just like I don't expect you to have his intimate familiarity with human--

FRASIER

Oh, yes, very big talk from a man who just tried to perform an amateur resurrection!

(MORE)

FRASIER (CONT'D)

Before you rest in peace, enjoy one last ride on Niles Crane's earthquake simulator!

(Sighs)

Come on, Kenny wants us to brief the department.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - LATER

Kenny is visibly dripping with sweat. He holds up a copy of the local newspaper, and addresses all the detectives.

KENNY

"Occult"!

FRASIER

Occult?!

KENNY

Right there in the headline. That's a word that gets attention. Everyone's got eyes on us now, so listen up. Frasier, Niles.

He gestures for them to begin their briefing.

FRASIER

Occult?!

Frasier snatches the paper from Kenny. Niles, realizing Frasier is a lost cause, steps forward.

NILES

Well, our deceased's name is Jennifer Moncrief, she was twenty two years old, a student at the University of Washington. Let's ask--

Frasier loudly rifles through the paper, indignant.

NILES (CONT'D)

(Projecting over Frasier)

Ask around at the campus, speak to the students and professors. She was found in Discovery Park, so canvas around there, see if there's been any other unusual activity.

FRASIER

Occult.

NILES

Any questions?

ROZ

Yes, does Jennifer's death have anything to do with the occult?

Niles intercepts Frasier before he can start his rampage.

NILES

No more questions, good luck, team!

Niles forces Frasier into a nearby conference room.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

FRASIER

Occult?! This is the work of a measured and precise serial killer! The only connection to the occult is the bedsheet - the halloween costume of a society with no respect for thread counts!

NILES

Frasier, you have to calm down.

FRASIER

Calm down?! We look like fools!

NILES

A perception I'm surprised to learn you suddenly care about! Look, let's just go over what we know. Noel told us she was drowned.

FRASIER

As I predicted.

Niles tuts his indignation, but continues.

NILES

So leaving her body in the woods was a deliberate act. If we're right in thinking that this was based on Scylla, did someone spurn her advances with rage? Or was it the other way around? She rejected his advances, and he snapped? "If I can't have you, no one can?"

FRASIER

No, no, no. It's too... Staged. This wasn't a flash of rage on his behalf, the disposal of her body wasn't rushed or panicked.

(MORE)

FRASIER (CONT'D)

He displayed her in the open, for all to see. It's almost impersonal. And the sea hawk, Niles! He crafted a scene, a recreation of greek mythology, for his own amusement.

NILES

He's taunting us. He wants to show how much smarter than us he is.

FRASIER

Or thinks he is.

They smugly acknowledge how smart they are, then Niles gasps.

NILES

Frasier, if this is a serial killer we're dealing with, there must have been other murders! What better way to prove our theory than to show Kenny similar unsolved cases and how they link to this one!

FRASIER

Niles! Of course! Let it never again be said that you aren't smarter than a serial killer!

NILES

I don't recall that ever being said.

FRASIER

No, of course not, no. And certainly not out loud.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - BACK TO

INTERVIEWER #2 (O.C.)

Heard you two aren't close anymore.

NILES

It's... People change. Relationships change. We became detectives to try and impress our father, who died before seeing us really succeed, long before this case. And, not long after, Frasier moved to Chicago. The distance made it easier for us to drift apart. I'm sure he had friends from his time in Boston who didn't even know I existed. Frasier's complicated.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - BACK TO

FRASIER

Freud states that individuals formed tribes in order to satisfy the compulsion to work and to love. Which is to say, family represents a primitive need for social inclusion and assistance, to lessen one's burdens. This isn't specific to blood relatives, but support from those to whom you're closest at a given moment in time--

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - BACK TO

NILES

We were good detectives. I wouldn't say this case was the beginning of the end. Time is relative at large. Jung hypothesizes that in order to appreciate our experience, we have to reach beyond causality and--

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)

No, no, no. Sorry, Captain says we can't keep burning through memory cards like this. Why don't we just skip ahead to your visit to the King County Sheriff's office?

INT. KING COUNTY P.D. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Frasier and Niles sit at a table. As the SHERIFF gives them a handful of files, a DETECTIVE wheels in a much larger stack.

SHERIFF

Here are our unsolved murders.
(Regarding the stack)
And all our solved murders for the past twenty years, like you asked.

FRASIER

Thank you, just leave them there.

SHERIFF

So we're clear, these are murders that have been solved. Our officers did their due diligence, obtained arrests, and the suspects were convicted by a jury of their peers.

NILES

Thank you. As it happens, we are familiar with the judicial system.

SHERIFF

Then why do you need to look at these files?

NILES

No reason.

SHERIFF

You think we got them wrong.

NILES

I would never suggest such a thing!

(Beat)

But it is convenient that you would--

FRASIER

We're simply checking for any inconsistencies that might pertain to our ongoing investigation.

(Off their reaction)

Look, we are detectives with Seattle's C.I.D--

The Sheriff and the detective exit.

FRASIER (CONT'D)

People do not like hearing that!

They being to pore over the files.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - LATER

Frasier and Niles enter, carrying a small stack of folders. Roz stops them.

ROZ

I spoke to Jennifer's friends.

FRASIER

Oh good, someone's doing the hard-hitting detective work.

ROZ

Really? You think you two could've survived a conversation with four women in their early twenties?

Frasier and Niles laugh to each other.

NILES
 (Seriously)
 No.

ROZ
 Good, because they would have been
 after your sideburns in a heartbeat.

NILES
 Wh- I agreed with you!

FRASIER
 What did her friends say?

ROZ
 They're all stunned by this.
 Jennifer had no known issues with
 drink or drugs; she liked to party,
 but not to excess; and, as far as
 they know, she wasn't seeing anyone
 and rarely went on dates. You know
 the type. No offense, Frasier.

(Before he can react)

They said she was concentrating on
 her schoolwork. She loved
 mythology. I gave them my number in
 case they want to get in touch.

FRASIER
 Thanks, Roz. Keep us updated.

Roz exits.

FRASIER (CONT'D)
 Niles, we have to talk to Kenny.

NILES
 Yes, immediately.

FRASIER
 About the serial killer, not what
 Roz said about your sideburns.

NILES
 If we're quick we can do both.

INT. CAPTAIN'S OFFICE - SOON AFTER

Frasier and Niles sit across from Kenny, who is flustered.

KENNY

Press is waiting outside for us,
and the Governor is demanding
updates now too. I sure hope you've
brought me some good news, guys.

NILES

Well... Frasier?

Niles invites Frasier to begin.

FRASIER

Niles.

NILES

Frasier.

FRASIER

Niles.

NILES

Frasier.

KENNY

Guys!

FRASIER

We think this could be the work of
a serial killer.

KENNY

Aw, jeez! Aw, christ, you guys!

FRASIER

We're not stating it definitively,
but we believe it could be possible.

KENNY

Aw, but you believe a lot of things!
We once had a conversation about the
Mariners and you thought I was
talking about sailors the whole time.

FRASIER

But I do wish mariners could get
home more often!

NILES

And I don't think they'd fare well
against pirates! Or tigers!

KENNY

Guys...

NILES

Can we at least show you what we've found so far?

Kenny concedes. Frasier hands him a file.

FRASIER

Firstly, our victim, Jennifer. Died from drowning, found wrapped in a bedsheet, like a toga, next to a dead sea hawk. Much like the mythological princess, Scylla, who was herself drowned by a sea eagle.

NILES

Important to note here that Jennifer was studying classics.

Frasier hands Kenny a second file.

FRASIER

So, assuming that's a sign, or a taunt from the killer, we worked backwards. These two women were found in the Cascades next to a dead wolf.

NILES

Now, what supposedly happened was that they died from eating poisonous mushrooms they thought were hallucinogenic. A small bag of remnants was found next to them.

FRASIER

But consider the possibility that you're actually looking at a tableau of Romulus and Remus, two Roman brothers who were partially raised by wolves, and that these women actually died... from murder.

(Off Kenny's silence)

The wolf, already rare in this part of the country, died from the same poison. But if the wolf came across these women in the wild, why would it choose to eat the mushrooms?

(Off Kenny's silence)

Surely its animal instinct would have deterred it?

(Off Kenny's silence)

Surely--

Niles hands Kenny another file.

NILES

We also have this case. Another young woman of a similar type, found dead in her bathtub. The autopsy found that she died from scalding water, but her super was shocked that the water could be hot enough to cause such damage.

KENNY

He was trying to save his own ass!

FRASIER

Possibly. But consider that he was telling the truth, and much like Minos, the ruler of Crete, she actually died... from murder.

Silence ensues. Niles moves on, handing over another file.

NILES

And here, a home invasion, culminating in a young woman dying from a stab wound to the stomach.

FRASIER

But consider that she actually died-

NILES

I think he gets it.

Kenny writhes in anguish.

KENNY

Guys, I think you're reaching.

FRASIER

Captain, you know we rarely reach for anything.

NILES

Yes, I have a fragile wingspan!

KENNY

We have the press conference in an hour, all I want to do is get the facts out there.

FRASIER

But these are the facts!

KENNY

You want to tell everyone all this?

FRASIER
Yes.

NILES
No.

They look taken aback at each other's answer.

FRASIER (CONT'D)
We need the killer to know that he's not going to outsmart us, he needs to know that we're onto him.

NILES
No, we shouldn't give away our hand. We'll let the killer think this case is a one-off.

FRASIER
Captain, I insist--

Kenny raises his hand for silence, exhausted from this.

KENNY
Give me a minute to think.

Frasier and Niles leave the office.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Kenny's blind is down. They huddle around Frasier's desk.

FRASIER
What was that?! We need the killer to know what we know. If he's scared, he'll make mistakes.

NILES
No, if he assumes we're incompetent we can work quietly and can get a step ahead of him.

FRASIER
It's ego, Niles! We have to get in his head and shake his confidence.

NILES
No, we should feed his ego! Let him think we're not onto him, he'll get more daring and less precise.

FRASIER
You're scared.

NILES
I am not!

Roz appears, Niles jumps.

ROZ
Can I help?

NILES
Yes, Frasier, why don't you see
what Roz makes of your theory. I
need call my kids.

Niles picks up his files and desk phone, and walks a few feet
away for privacy. Frasier wheels his whiteboard closer to him
and Roz, then begins to turn it, about to reveal his theory.

FRASIER
We're exploring an idea that
Jennifer Moncrief's murder is
connected to a series of--

He's interrupted by Kenny leaving his office. From where he
stands, Frasier and Niles are in a straight line of sight,
though they can't see each other because of the whiteboard.

KENNY
Alright, Crane. You're running the
press conference. Do it your way.

Kenny points at one of them, failing to notice the other one
standing in the same line. They both assume he means them.

KENNY (CONT'D)
Don't fuck this up!

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - BACK TO

FRASIER
I'm sorry, may I have a glass of
sherry before we go on?

He pauses, looking between the interviewers.

FRASIER (CONT'D)
It's Thursday and it's past noon!
I'm not asking for Valdespino, just
some Harvey's Bristol--

HARD CUT TO:

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - SOON AFTER

Frasier is sipping from a small glass of Sherry, relaxed.

FRASIER
 You know, it's the Pedro Ximenez
 grape that really--

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)
 Crane. The press conference.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - BACK TO

Frasier turns to Roz urgently, abandoning the whiteboard.

FRASIER
 I need a mirror, Roz!

ROZ
 Wait, tell me about your theory!

FRASIER
 You'll hear it with everyone else
 in a second. Mirror, Roz, a mirror!

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER - MEANWHILE

Niles enters through a set of doors, approaches the
 microphones and clears his throat.

NILES
 Good evening, everyone. I'm
 detective Niles Crane, an
 investigator with Seattle Police's
 Criminal Investigation Department.
 Due to the scope of this case,
 Captain Kenny Daly made the
 decision to appoint two lead
 detectives, myself and my brother,
 detective Frasier Crane. I will be
 conducting today's press
 conference, please save all
 questions until the end.

(Beat)

Yesterday, at approximately eleven
 A.M., two civilians came across the
 body of a deceased female in
 Discovery Park. We believe this
 woman was murdered. We are not yet
 in a position to release the
 identity of the victim, or to offer
 any details of the crime--

A secretary quietly approaches Niles, then shows him a post-
 it note with a message. Niles reads, then reacts.

NILES (CONT'D)

I'm terribly sorry, I have to attend to this. Please, give me one minute.

Niles briskly follows the secretary into an office.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - MEANWHILE

Roz is holding up a mirror for Frasier, who is preening.

ROZ

You can't tell me while we do this?

FRASIER

Roz, please, trust my judgement.

He straightens up, apparently having achieved perfection.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER - SECONDS LATER

Frasier enters from a different set of doors than Niles, and approaches the podium.

FRASIER

Oh, good, you're all here. Well. I'm detective Frasier Crane, I'm one of the two detectives leading this investigation, alongside my brother detective Niles Crane.

REPORTER #1

Detective Crane, your brother--

FRASIER

Please, let me get through my preliminary information, there'll be time for questions at the end. The victim is a young woman named Jennifer Moncrief. Twenty two years old. A student at Washington University, studying classics.

INT. SECRETARY'S OFFICE - MEANWHILE

Niles is talking on a landline phone, sheepishly trying to avoid the gaze of the women around him.

NILES

I know you're excited for the press conference my love, Daddy is too.

(MORE)

NILES (CONT'D)
 Yes, I'm sorry I didn't call
 before, but work got very busy--

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER - MEANWHILE

FRASIER
 --I understand there's a rumor that
 this case has links to the occult,
 that could not be further from the
 truth. I will be extremely
 forthcoming with information so as
 to dissuade any fears.

Roz pops out of the same doors Frasier entered from.

ROZ
 Detective Crane? A call just came
 in regarding the case, it's urgent.

Frasier hesitates, but agrees. He addresses the reporters.

FRASIER
 I beg my apologies, I'll be back.

Frasier hurries out after Roz.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - SECONDS LATER

FRASIER
 What's the call, who's it from?

ROZ
 It's a wake up call from ME-
 (furious)
 Are you out of your mind?!

Frasier gasps.

FRASIER
 This isn't trusting my judgement!

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Niles approaches the empty podium, and lays out his
 information again.

NILES
 Again, I'm very sorry for the
 interruption.
 (MORE)

NILES (CONT'D)

As I was saying, we will only be going public with select information about the victim and the circumstances of her death. Our priority is justice. We will not impede our own investigation's success. What we can say at this point is that we believe this murder to be a one-off case. We have not ruled any possibility off the table, but rest assured there is no evidence to suggest this is the work of a serial killer, nor anything of that nature.

The secretary enters the foyer again. Niles sees her, and has a moment of visible frustration.

NILES (CONT'D)

Apologies, another urgent matter.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - MEANWHILE

Frasier and Roz continue arguing.

ROZ

You can't tell everyone this information, it's just a theory! It could make everything much worse!

FRASIER

Oh, Roz, you have no idea how to deal with a super ego!

ROZ

I'm getting a pretty good idea!

Frasier exits again.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Frasier bustles back to the podium.

FRASIER

Sorry, everybody. The matter has been dealt with. Now where was I? - Yes. This murder is unrelated to the occult in its entirety. Unfortunately, what I have to say may cause panic, but we believe the public has a right to know so they can take proper precautions.

(MORE)

FRASIER (CONT'D)

Our evidence suggests Jennifer's killing was not a one-off. It was the work of a serial killer.

The press immediately start chattering.

INT. SECRETARY'S OFFICE - MEANWHILE

Niles is now crouching behind a desk to avoid the secretaries as he talks into the phone.

NILES

(Gritted teeth)

I know, darling, I just wish you'd wanted to talk earlier when I was talking to your brother. So, you be good and brush your teeth- Yes, I want to see me do the press conference too--

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER - BACK TO

Frasier continues, enjoying his captive audience.

FRASIER

--Male, anywhere between 20 to 70 years old, with a love of classics. Not necessarily a loner, but a rueful character, with what would politely be described as certain "oddities". Intelligent, perhaps excessively so. Well presenting, but with a potential for cruelty.

Roz calmly but purposefully enters the foyer and approaches Frasier. She mouths an apology.

FRASIER (CONT'D)

One moment, I'm sorry.

Roz turns Frasier away from the microphone.

FRASIER (CONT'D)

What now?

ROZ

I'm sorry, But there's a caller waiting that you need to talk to. He claims he's the killer, you have his attention.

Frasier's eyes light up. He turns back to the press.

FRASIER

Again, I can only apologize for the interruption but I have to take another call. Talk amongst yourselves, do you all know who each other works for?

He gestures for conversation to ensue and follows Roz out.

Niles enters the foyer again, strides quickly to the podium and lays out his papers. He seems surprised by the volume and effort of the press trying to get his attention.

NILES

Sorry, please, settle down. I promise that will be the last interruption.

REPORTER #2

Is this a serial killer?!

Niles signals for calm.

NILES

No. As I stated previously, this murder was not the work of a serial killer. We are not ready to announce the cause of death, nor can we say definitively anything regarding a profile of the killer. When we have this information we will disseminate it as we see relevant. We are taking this crime seriously and will be investigating it with caution and consideration.

INT. SEATTLE POLICE BULLPEN - MEANWHILE

Roz picks up her desk phone and covers the mouthpiece, then points Frasier to his desk phone.

ROZ

Line one.

Frasier sits, composes himself, and picks up the receiver.

FRASIER

This is detective Frasier Crane.
I'm listening.

ROZ

Are you?!

Frasier jumps up from his chair, startled, and stares at Roz across the room. She waves her receiver at him, making clear it was always her on the line, and slams it down.

ROZ (CONT'D)

Even if it is a serial killer,
which it isn't, you're going about
this all wrong!

FRASIER

Stop tricking me! Niles said the
same thing when we presented our
findings to Kenny, and still I was
the one asked to talk to the press!

Beat.

ROZ

Where is Niles?

INT. SEATTLE POLICE DEPT. FOYER

The press is restless as Niles concludes his statements.

NILES

Once again, justice is our
priority. Are there any questions?

An explosion of noise. Niles points to a reporter.

REPORTER #3

Detective Crane, your brother was
just out here saying Jennifer was
murdered by a serial killer.

NILES

My brother?

REPORTER #3

Frasier.

Frasier bursts into the foyer, screaming.

FRASIER

Niles!!

NILES

Frasier?!

Frasier tackles Niles.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM - BACK TO

Niles looks somewhat ashamed as he finishes his story.

NILES

Which signified the end of mine and my brother's involvement in the Jennifer Moncrief case.

INTERVIEWER #1 (O.C.)

And Roz went on to solve it?

NILES

Yes. The friends she interviewed eventually confessed they had all been doing ecstasy at the beach, which led to an unfortunate sequence in which Jennifer kept trying to drink the sea and the well intentioned attempts to stop her led to a confused scuffle and Jennifer's accidental drowning. They then dealt with it as competently as they could given the circumstances; wrapped her up in a sheet and laid her to rest in the woods. Roz went back to interview them after our removal, they confessed without much probing.

INTERVIEWER #2 (O.C.)

And remind us, the sea hawk...

NILES

There's a curious thing about birds classified as raptors - they have a marginally higher propensity than other birds to dyspnea, dropsy, and, crucially, dilated ventricles.

(Put plainly)

Heart attack. Entirely unrelated.

INT. INTERVIEW ROOM, SEPARATE TIME - DAY

Frasier has his feet up on the table, clearly relaxed.

FRASIER

Given his crimes, I don't generally like to mention any association with Noel Shempsky, but god damn, he was right about that heart attack.

He has a fond smile as he sips his sherry. He looks to the interviewers off camera, and responds to their expressions.

FRASIER (CONT'D)
You'll grow to love reclining.

He sits correctly in his chair, puts his glass down just so, and addresses the interviewers.

FRASIER (CONT'D)
Now maybe we can get to brass
tacks. Cause I know why I'm here.
We were right about the Classics
Killer. Not about Jennifer, but the
others. We were right all along.

Frasier reads their reactions, and sits back in his chair.

FRASIER (CONT'D)
He's back, isn't he?

Frasier smiles again, the game is afoot.

CUT TO BLACK