

TRUE DETECTIVE

EP 101

"Chapter One: The Long Bright Dark"

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"Chapter One: The Long Bright Dark"

CAST LIST

MARTIN HART
RUSTIN COHLE
MAGGIE HART
AUDREY HART
MACIE HART
SHERIFF TATE
GORDON DICILLLO
LARGE WOMAN
GAUNT MAN
MINISTER
MAJOR KEN QUESADA
REGION 2 COMMANDER BILL SPEECE
DEMA
LUTZ
STEVE GERACI
PENDARVIS
JACK STOFIRA
HORNSBY
LUCY
ANETTE
REPORTER 1
REPORTER 2
REPORTER 3
CHARLEY LANGE
FAVRE
BILLY LEE TUTTLE
JANET FONTENOT
DANNY FONTENOT

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SET LIST

INTERIORS

INTERROGATION ROOM (2012)
HART HOME (1995)
COHLE'S APARTMENT (1995)
SON OF LIFE CHURCH (1995)
SHERIFF TATE'S OFFICE (1995)
CID CAR (1995)
HOMICIDE, CID HQ (1995)
MAJ. QUESADA'S OFFICE (1995)
COHLE'S TRUCK (1995)
MARSH ELK LODGE (1995)
JENNY O'S TAVERN (1995)
KITCHEN, HART HOME (1995)
HALLWAY, HART HOME (1995)
LIVING ROOM, HART HOME (1995)
MORGUE, CORONER'S OFFICE (1995)
LOBBY, LOUISIANA STATE POLICE HQ (1995)
COMMON ROOM, AVOYELLES (1995)
DINING ROOM, HART HOME (1995)
BEDROOM, HART HOME (1995)
HOMICIDE, STATE CID (1995)
DANNY FONTENOT'S HOUSE

EXTERIORS

WOODS NEAR ERATH, LA (1995)
RAINBOW APARTMENTS (1995)
FIELD OUTSIDE FOREST (1995)
NEIGHBORHOOD, ERATH (1995)
HOUSE, ERATH (1995)
TRAILER, ERATH (1995)
SON OF LIFE CHURCH (1995)
LOUISIANA STATE POLICE CID HQ (1995)
JET-24 TRUCK STOP (1995)
CORNER'S OFFICE (1995)
AVOYELLES CORRECTIONAL FACILITY (1995)
BACK PORCH, HART HOME (1995)

TRUE DETECTIVE
Chapter One: 'The Long Bright Dark'

TITLE CREDITS.

FADE IN:

1 INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 1

OPEN ON MARTIN HART, 52, staring across table at unseen interviewers. He's suited, well groomed, and a kind of physical intensity simmers in his bearing--

Cigarette burns, gouges pock the table's surface. Behind Hart is a green cinderblock wall, its upper right side shows part of a bulletin board, half of a *WANTED POSTER* visible-- As Hart stares, chyron appears in *courier typeface* to sound of keys punching--

**CHYRON: 'Louisiana State Police CID, Region 2, Troop I /
Statement of Hart, Martin Eric. / Present: Sgt. Thomas F.
Papania, Sgt. Maynard Gilbough / May 12th, 2012'**

(unheard 'What'd you think, pairing up with him?')

HART

What'd I think? You know they called him 'The Tax Man' for awhile? ...Department opened some new positions in CID that year. Coke on the rise, meth getting big. So I partnered up--

He shrugs, as though unsure of the subject's relevance--

HART (CONT'D)

He'd transferred out of Texas, so nobody knew him... Seemed a bit raw-boned to me. Edgy. Took *three months* till we got him to the house for dinner. Around our big 419.

(beat)

...That's what you want to hear about, right? The Dora Lange case. Those kids in the woods...

(unheard 'Right, sure. But talk about Cohle a second.')

HART (CONT'D)

...Alright. Rust. Well, as a for instance.

(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

When I finally got him over for dinner. That case was hot, and it was maybe like a Tuesday?

2 INT. HART HOME - NIGHT

2

Martin Hart, 35 in 1995, answers his front door. It opens onto RUSTIN COHLE, 32, handsome but hard-worn, shirt disheveled. Meek, bleary-eyed, he stands on porch with a cheap BOUQUET in hand--

HART 2012 (V.O.)

Poor bastard looked like he was on his way to a firing squad. Then I get it.

Dark hair mussed, Rust shakily holds out the flowers. His eyes wet, red--

HART 2012 (V.O.)

He's blind drunk.

In the foyer of a modest, well-kept middle-class home with small children-- The voice of Hart's WIFE adds another layer of dull panic--

MAGGIE (O.S.)

Bring him in, Marty! Let's get a look at him!

Hart and Cohle face each other, Cohle apologetic and helpless. Both understand he's in *no shape* to have dinner. Hart puts a hand on his shoulder, takes the flowers and leads him in--

HART

Just smile for a bit. I'll put coffee on, get somebody to call up here. Excuse for you to leave.

Cohle looks like he might cry, either from gratitude or terror--

Then two little GIRLS hop into the room, AUDREY and MACIE, 9 and 7. They leap around the two men, giddy at a visitor. For a moment, the men appear absolutely baffled by the *little girls jumping at their knees*, the wilted bouquet between them--

3A INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

3A

Same room as opening, but the chair across the table is *empty*. A MAN sits down. Recognize RUSTIN COHLE, 49, seventeen years older, facing unseen interviewers wearing rumpled clothes. Long hair streaked steel gray, he's leaner, cheeks sunken.

Unshaven with a handlebar mustache, he looks lupine, wild-- An old *tattoo* covers Cohle's left inner forearm, colorful but faded: a comet of fire with two dice at its apex--

CHYRON: 'Louisiana State Police CID, Region 2, Troop I / Statement of Cohle, Rustin Spencer. / Present: Sgt. Thomas F. Papania, Sgt. Maynard Gilbough / May 10th, 2012'

(unheard 'We're hoping you'd talk about the Dora Lange case. What you remember...') Cohle waits, finally responds--

COHLE

...Yeah. Sure. '*Occult Ritual Murder.*' Thank the Advertiser for that.

Cohle stops to light a cigarette. Pauses as he's admonished by interviewer (unheard: '*No smoking*')-- He keeps smoking--

COHLE (CONT'D)

Don't be assholes. You want to hear this or not?

(smokes)

...Vermillion Sheriff requested assistance with a 419 in some woods around Erath. I'd been around about three months. Just observed Marty, till then.

Cohle ashes on the table--

4A EXT. WOODS NEAR ERATH, LOUISIANA - MORNING

4A

Red clouds and a red morning over a wooded valley surrounded by denser forest. Clammy, oversaturated light--

Follow THREE MEN across this valley: a uniformed SHERIFF'S DEPUTY walking point, leading Rust Cohle and Martin Hart, c. 1995. Clean-cut, Cohle carries a crime scene kit and a legal-sized portfolio. The deputy leads them toward deeper forest--

COHLE 2012 (V.O.)

Humid, steamy. It was March 3rd, 1995. My daughter's birthday, I remember...

Walking with the detectives, ANGLE AHEAD where the tree line thickens. SHERIFF'S DEPUTIES stand a couple dozen yards from a *shadowed shape* at the base of a large pine tree-- A *boundary crossed* as the deputy leads Hart and Cohle to the slumped form, joins the other deputies who've backed away--

Hart looks disturbed, angry, as details cohere-- Cohle's calm, eyes sharpening--

ON BODY (depicted as mercifully as possible)- a white FEMALE, naked, posed kneeling over a *large tree root*, hands folded as if in prayer, wrists *bound* by white fabric. She wears a *blindfold* of the same white fabric and a *crown* of roots and thorns is set on her scalp, her hair decorated with leaves and twigs. From the crown stretch TWO LARGE ANTLERS, buck horns. Her back is painted with *crude symbols*, most predominantly, a SPIRAL between her shoulder-blades, a multi-limbed *snake* running up her spine--

The detectives don latex gloves, Cohle scanning the area-- Notice around the body's perimeter, THREE STICK LATTICEWORK sculptures are positioned at various points-- The sculptures appear without purpose, three-dimensional cross-hatches tied with twine, odd shapes in pointless configurations-- Two small, one *large*--

HART

Jesus wept...

Cohle crouches to examine her. Studies the *antlers*, hands sift lightly through the leaves and twigs in her hair, across the *painted symbology* covering her skin-- *Multiple stab wounds* around the abdomen--

He gently lifts her face, starts to remove the blindfold, but doesn't-- To deputies--

COHLE

You guys touch anything?

SHERIFF TATE steps out of the group, 49, soft, booze-reddened--

TATE

They know all about crime scenes. You think anybody wants to touch this?

HART

Who found her?

TATE

Kids playing. Parents phoned us.

COHLE

M.E.?

TATE

Parish's on his way. Wade Davis.
Good man.

Cohle looks back at the body, the meticulous staging--

COHLE

Call state's. Tell them to send
Gordon DiCillo.

Tate shares a pissed-off glance with his deputies. Marty sighs on behalf of his partner--

Cohle goes back to examining the body, the shallow stab wounds and markings-- Bruising--

COHLE (CONT'D)

Lividity at her shoulders, thighs
and torso. She was on her stomach a
while before he moved her.

TATE

You ever see something like this?

HART

No. Eight years, CID.

TATE

Them symbols. It's satanic. They
had a 20/20 on it, few years back.

The sun has ascended, and now a *beam* comes down, lighting the tableau like a spotlight. All the men notice--

Cohle looks up, sees the killer positioned the body directly beneath a break in the trees, so that the sun would purposely light her figure-- It also pulls shadows from the stick latticeworks--

TATE (CONT'D)

She looks like some kind of
religious statue.

COHLE

I.D.?

Tate shakes his head. Cohle looks toward the valley beyond, flatness and overgrown scrub. A glance with Hart gives Rust permission to take lead. Cohle addresses the local lawmen--

COHLE (CONT'D)

We need more men for a grid search.
We'll get troopers, but we could
use more deputies. I need you guys
to set up a perimeter--

He motions to the valley at the far convergence of rural highways--

COHLE (CONT'D)

--Wide as possible on those three roads. Post up, take license plates of anything that passes, too.

Deputies don't respond until he eyes Sheriff Tate, who then nods to his men. They disperse to positions. Hart pulls a large RADIO from his trenchcoat--

HART

I-23. We need trooper assist on that 419. All you can spare for a canvass.

RADIO

...Roger, I-23.

He puts the radio away and kneels beside Cohle, who writes on the big legal pad he brought--

COHLE

Ligature marks at wrists and ankles.
Multiple shallow stab wounds.
Hemorrhaging around the throat--

Cohle studies the scene, writing details and sketches in his pad-- When he looks at things, he can sometimes acquire a deep focus that suggests a unique thought or perception which goes unsaid--

1B INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

1B

Martin Hart, 52--

HART

That's why they called him 'The Tax Man.' Most of us carried a little notepad or something, you know. He carried this big portfolio. His first couple months, he had to do a lot of canvassing. So it looked funny, him going door to door with that big ledger, like the tax man... Which ain't bad, far as nicknames go.

As Martin speaks, there is something stifled about his recollection, and he clearly has a complexity of feelings about Cohle, but respect is there--

HART (CONT'D)

I'd seen the different types. You know, we all fit a category. The bully. The charmer. The surrogate dad.

(MORE)

HART (CONT'D)

The man possessed by ungovernable rage. The brain... And any of those types can be a good detective. And any of those types can be an incompetent shitheel. You know?

Pauses, suggesting an appraisal of his interviewers--

HART (CONT'D)

...A lot of it has to do with how they manage authority. It's like a father's authority. It's too much for some people... You want a certain toughness. But not callousness. Because that's a dangerous road. Aggression is necessary. It is. So's compassion, fairness...

4B EXT. FOREST, LOUISIANA - DAY

4B

1995 crime scene. Cohle and Hart continue looking over the body, Cohle writing--

HART 2012 (V.O.)

You want them to be thorough. To have good eyes, ask the right questions. To have steady habits.

ON the STICK LATTICEWORKS-- Cohle's face as he draws them in his notes-- Hart watching him work, curious--

HART 2012 (V.O.)

Smart guy who's steady's hard to find. I mean, I was alright. Better than some. I knew how to talk to people. And I was steady.

ON Cohle's PAD-- *drawings*, the symbols, the latticeworks, the body, *elaborate notes*-- Hart watching over his shoulder--

HART 2012 (V.O.)

Rust would pick a fight with the sky, he didn't like its shade of blue. But he was *smart*.

The notebook starts becoming oddly *beautiful* as it fills with sketches and script--

5 EXT. 'RAINBOW APARTMENTS', SOUTH LOUISIANA - DAY 5

A seedy line of brick apartments the size of motel rooms, in the middle of desolate fields--

HART 2012 (V.O.)
Second week we were together I saw
where he was living. I kind of felt
for the guy.

An unmarked CID CAR parks, and Cohle and Hart step out. Hart follows his partner to his door--

6 INT. COHLE'S APARTMENT - DAY 6

Inside, the apartment is empty except for a couple boxes, a mattress on the floor. A *crucifix* above the mattress. No TV. STACKS of thick *books*--

ON BOOKS, their TITLES-- *Advanced Crime Analysis, Offender Profiling, Sex Crime Investigation, Advanced Homicide Investigation*--

Hart looks from the bleak apartment to Cohle, weirded out--

COHLE
I'd uh offer you a seat...

HART
Don't mention it. I can't stay.

Awkward--

1C INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 1C

Martin Hart, 52--

HART
You know the photos in those textbooks. Not the sort of things you'd leave lying around, at least if you ever expected anybody in your place... Made me thankful for the girls. Past a certain age, a man without a family can be a bad thing... On the whole? I didn't really mind he was quiet. Mainly nobody understood what he was doing *here*...

4C EXT. FOREST, LOUISIANA - DAY 4C

Back at the 1995 crime scene. Cohle and Hart are alone beside the body, waiting on the M.E. Cohle writes on his tablet while Hart watches--

HART 2012 (V.O.)
His Texas files were classified or redacted. And he wasn't interested in making buddies.

ON Cohle's pad-- his excellent sketches of the scene and small, neat script make it resemble *DaVinci's journals*--

HART 2012 (V.O.)
...I didn't know about all that undercover work till later...

Cohle *flips* the filled page--

3B INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 3B

Cohle, 49, smoking. Somebody brought him an old coffee mug to use as an ashtray--

COHLE
Yeah, I took a lot of notes. You never know what the thing's going to be, do you? That little detail, maybe way down the line, makes you say, *Ah*. Breaks the case.

He pauses, remembering, smokes--

COHLE (CONT'D)
We'd encountered a meta-psychotic. I had to explain to Marty what that was...

7 EXT. FOREST, LOUISIANA - DAY 7

Deputies and troopers spread out across the fields-- Hart and Cohle have stepped away from the body, watch the grid search--

COHLE
This is going to happen again. Or it's happened before. Both.

HART
What do you think you know?

COHLE

This is fantasy enactment. Ritual. Fetishization, iconography. It's a vision. Her body is a paraphilic lovemap.

HART

Say what?

COHLE

An attachment of physical lust to fantasies and practices forbidden by society.

HART

You learn that in your books?

COHLE

No. I just made it up.

(re body)

...Her knees are abraded. Rug burn on her back. Cold sores, gumline receding. Bad teeth. Decent odds she's a prost. He might not've known her, but this *idea*. It goes back, with him.

HART

Don't want us jumping to any conclusions.

COHLE

Wait and see on the ID.

As senior detective, Hart probes Cohle's judgment--

HART

...Alright. What else, you think?

COHLE

Missing persons, obviously. Any reports of unrelated sexual events, like flashing or fetish burglaries. Check all prior arrests going back the last several years, state-wide. Local complaints. Any B&E with a fetish component. Sex offenders paroled to the state... These things don't occur in a vacuum. I guarantee this isn't his first. It's too specific.

They both look to the body, and the stick latticeworks seem to watch them-- Without remarking on their unease, they turn away, quiet for several beats--

HART

...This is a stupid time to mention it. But you have to come over to the house for dinner. I can't put Maggie off any more. So you got to.

Cohle deliberates, uneasy, now watching deputies in the fields--

COHLE

...Alright...

Cohle's face assumes a subtle dread, disassociated from the grid search he's observing--

COHLE 2012 (V.O.)

I got a problem, see, because I'm thinking about Marty's wife and two girls. How it's my daughter's birthday, Sofia's birthday...

3C INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

3C

Cohle, 49, haunted--

COHLE

...And I know right then. Nothing I can do about it... I'm gonna have a drink.

8 EXT. FOREST, LOUISIANA - DAY

8

M.E. GORDON DICILLO, mid-40s, has arrived. He squats by the body while an ASSISTANT takes photos under his direction-- Hart observes as DiCillo delicately *removes* the ANTLER CROWN, bags it--

9 EXT. FIELD OUTSIDE FOREST, LOUISIANA - DAY

9

Elsewhere. ON snapped switchgrass, almost imperceptible, a narrow wave of swept grass leading out the forest-- Cohle crouches, studies the grass as a TROOPER observes him-- Looks toward the road--

COHLE

These're drag marks... There's gonna be some tire tracks on the shoulder up there. You know how to make tread casts?

TROOPER

Yessir.

COHLE

Alright. Get casts, and check the opposite shoulder too. I got mold kits in my bag, you need em.

Trooper nods, hustles off, and Cohle follows the nearly invisible drag trail, sees out to the road, the fields, another forest, a neighborhood behind it--

10 EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD, ERATH - DAY 10

Late afternoon. Wet sunshine. Police vehicles line the dirt roads outside. TRAILER and HOMES crowded in a patch of prairie. Virgin Marys in weedy gardens; a washing machine in a yard-- The homes are being questioned door-to-door by *deputies, troopers--*

11 EXT. HOUSE, ERATH - DAY 11

A large WOMAN squints behind thick glasses as she speaks to Cohle and Hart on her porch. Cohle writes on a field statement form--

WOMAN

...Sometimes you hear em dove hunting out there. *They found a woman?...*

They don't answer right away--

12 EXT. TRAILER, ERATH - DAY 12

A gaunt, jaundice-yellow MAN chews tobacco, stares from his doorstep toward the fields and forest beyond, talking to Cohle and Hart. Cohle filling out a form--

MAN

...Sayin they's a dead girl out there? S'it the Fontenot girl?

HART

Who?

COHLE

Why would you say that?

MAN

Dunno. Went missing round here,
years back. Last time something
happened... Just thought maybe it's
her.

HART

How old was she, this girl?

MAN

Dunno. Little...

HART

You know where her family lives?

MAN

Had a place a couple streets down.
They moved, after the little one
disappeared.

COHLE

What'd you say you do?

Beat, the man suspicious, insecure--

MAN

...I have a small manufacturing
enterprise.

HART

How's that?

MAN

Put together entertainment centers.
...I been sick.

13

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD, ERATH - DAY

13

Later. Cohle and Hart exit a trailer. They look back down the street; other homes with various *police* talking to *residents* on doorsteps-- Machinery of investigation and rumor spreading through the community--

14 EXT. SON OF LIFE CHURCH - DAY 14

A small, wooden CHURCH, old-time cottage-style, white-washed. The CID car out front--

15 INT. SON OF LIFE CHURCH - DAY 15

A MINISTER (60, black) talks to Cohle and Hart in the small meeting space, pews crammed together, a choir stand and altar up front. A single window unit A/C. Mid-conversation--

MINISTER

Now, we did file a noise ordinance for Sundays, but parish owns them woods. Lease out oil and gas fields, most of what's around here.

Hart notices that instead of filling out a form, Cohle is studying the church interior, intent on the altar and its crucifix--

MINISTER (CONT'D)

...I'm hearing y'all found a *dead girl* out there?

Beat, redirect--

COHLE

Did you know this Fontenot girl, went missing a while back?

MINISTER

Her? ...I think, family came to our services once or twice. Five, six years back. Oh Lord- is that the girl..?

HART

We don't think so.

MINISTER

Oh... I was gonna ask, you think maybe this has something to do with those cats.

COHLE

What cats?

MINISTER

Two of em. One, and a couple weeks later another. Somebody cut em up, strung their insides out. Nailed em to our front door. Twice.

Cohle and Hart glance at one another--

MINISTER (CONT'D)
I told the police. Now, our congregation is predominantly African-American-- I *asked* this to be *investigated*.

HART
We're not those type of police, sir.

MINISTER
Who is, then?

Cohle looks from the crucifix to the minister, doesn't answer. Shows him sketches of symbols--

COHLE
Any of these familiar to you? Seen them anywheres?

MINISTER
I don't... No. Maybe somethin you see, carved on a tree or somethin.

Shows him the drawings of the *latticework sculptures*--

MINISTER (CONT'D)
...Now, *that*. Look like something my auntie taught us to make, I was a tyke.

COHLE
What are they?

MINISTER
They bird traps... Ole auntie told us they were 'nets for the devil.' Leave them round your bed, they catch the devil fore he can get close to you.

COHLE
That's interesting.

MINISTER
She was a wonderful old lady. My mother's aunt. She loved Jesus, but had a bit of that ole Santeria, you know.

(re latticeworks)
I always thought it was something to do, keep children busy. Tell em a story why they're tying sticks together.

Cohle looks from minister to the wooden CRUCIFIX above the altar, another version of sticks tied together--

HART

You from Erath?

MINISTER

More or less. This actually used to be *Marais du Chien*, a township... Had maybe a thousand people, till the eighties. Economy, hurricanes. Banks mostly sold mineral rights to Southern Star, got incorporated into Erath... You got spots like this all over the coast. Used to be someplace. Now they're not.

The minister is watching Cohle study the crucifix--

16 INT. SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT, VERMILLION PARISH - DAY 16

In Sheriff Tate's office. He sits behind a big desk, with a DEPUTY to his right. Cohle and Hart sit before him, Cohle has a file in hand that is almost totally *empty*, except for a PHOTO of a ten year-old blonde GIRL, file labelled MARIE FONTENOT--

COHLE

There's nothing in here. Says
'Possible report made in error.'

TATE

That's five years ago. Ted Odum's sheriff back then. He's set up in Gulf Shores now, I think.

COHLE

A ten-year old girl? This doesn't go statewide?

TATE

Hold on. *My understanding*, the little girl went off with her birth daddy. You check her mom's record? *Possession. Solicitation.* I believe Ted knew the family, and the feeling was the little girl was better off with her daddy. Mom seemed to agree. She made the complaint, then never bothered with it again. Took off with her boyfriend.

HART

R&I said you had a complaint, these parts around January. A little girl got chased through the woods?

TATE

Oh yeah. Pulled that for you, too.

The Deputy hands Hart another slim file-- he opens it onto a *cartoonish police sketch* of a 'spaghetti face with green ears'-- Accompanying the sketch is a *brief statement and report*--

HART

What is this?

TATE

Little girl said a "green-eared spaghetti monster" chased her through some woods. We had her work with a sketch artist, and she told us *that* looked *exactly right*.

Cohle takes the sketch out the file-- Tate and the deputy smirk--

TATE (CONT'D)

You can keep that. You wanna call in the APB, go right ahead.

Bored stares from the two locals, glances between Hart and Cohle--

17 I/E. MOVING, CID CAR, HIGHWAY - DAY

17

Evening. Hart drives their unmarked CID SEDAN, as Cohle goes through a stack of *canvass reports* and *field statement forms*, filled with his small, meticulous script. They pass vacant prairie, thick forest and marshy breaks, isolated farmhouses--

COHLE

People out here. S'like they got no idea the outside world exists. Might as well live on the moon.

HART

...All kinds of ghettos in the world.

COHLE

It's all one ghetto, man. A gutter in outer space.

Hart glances to him, a little *piqued* by the comment--

HART

Ask you something... That crown,
the symbols and things. You're
Christian, yeah?

COHLE

What? Not on your life.

HART

Saw you looking around the church.
What about that crucifix in your
apartment?

COHLE

Eh, that's more like meditation.

HART

How's that?

COHLE

...I contemplate the moment in the
garden. The idea of allowing your
own crucifixion.

This knee-jerk offends Hart, Cohle's reduction of a miracle--

HART

But you don't believe He's the Lord
and Savior?

COHLE

Uh, *no*.

HART

...What *do* you believe?

Cohle gives Hart a tired expression-- He doesn't want to answer,
but Hart keeps looking at him expectantly--

COHLE

I believe people shouldn't talk
about this type of shit at work.

HART

Three months. I get nothing out of
you. And *today*? What we're into
now? Do me the simple courtesy. I'm
not trying to convert you.

COHLE

...In philosophical terms, I'm
what's called a pessimist.

HART
'Philosophical terms.' What's that
mean?

COHLE
I'm bad at parties.

OUTSIDE-- The car passes a faded, old BILLBOARD with a GIRL'S
PORTRAIT on it and the legend '10/11/87: DO YOU KNOW WHO
KILLED ME? CALL 800-976-5236 REWARD' -- Linger on billboard
as they pass--

INSIDE-- Hart scowls at Cohle, prodding until he reluctantly
continues--

COHLE (CONT'D)
...I think human consciousness is a
tragic misstep in evolution. We
became *too* self-aware. I think
nature created an aspect of nature
forever separate from it. A
creature that shouldn't exist by
natural law.

Hart is astonished at Cohle's answer, which perversely inspires
Cohle to expound--

COHLE (CONT'D)
We are *things* that labor under the
illusion of having a 'self.' This
accretion of sensory experience and
feeling. Programmed with total
assurance that we're each somebody.
But everybody's nobody.

HART
What? The fuck are you--

COHLE
We fabricate meaning to fabricate
purpose, in denial of what we are.
Which is shambling meat in cold
space, sending unborn generations
into suffering and death because
that's our programming.

HART
Hold on-

COHLE
A tribe in New Guinea, their word
for 'man' means 'the food that
talks.' That's about right.

HART
Jesus Christ--

COHLE
No thanks. ...What I think? The honorable thing for our species to do is *deny* our programming, *stop* reproducing. March hand-in-hand into extinction.

Hart's eyes wide in frustration, but Cohle is almost wistful now--

COHLE (CONT'D)
One last midnight. Brothers and sisters opting out of a raw deal.

HART
So what's the point of life, huh?

COHLE
There is no point. Nowhere to go, nothing to do. No one to see, no one to be.

HART
Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ. You bleeding asshole. Most you've said in three months and it's-- what's the matter with you? Why're you on the job, anyway?

COHLE
I tell myself I bear witness. But the real answer is that it's clearly my programming. And I lack the courage for suicide... I could lend you some books, you want. Cioran, maybe.

HART
Stop. Stop talking. Shit. *Shit.*

Hart grinds his teeth as Cohle stares out at the isolated fields, ramshackle homes, electrical lines and broken fences in tangles of barbed wire--

COHLE
I get a bad taste off this place...
Ash, aluminum. You can smell the psychosphere.

Hart doesn't reply, disturbed and hoping Cohle won't talk anymore... Long beats-- until--

COHLE (CONT'D)
Should I bring anything for dinner?

Hart's horrified to recall his dinner invitation--

HART
...Bottle of wine, be nice, I
guess.

COHLE
I don't really drink.

This a final straw of disappointment--

HART
Of course you don't, Rust. And
listen, at *my* house? Don't mention
any of that shit you just said to
me. You asshole... '*Extinction.*'

COHLE
'Course not, Marty. I'm not some
kind of maniac. Fuck's sake.

They drive in silence the rest of the way, the car passing
through the green wilderness and townships, sun red and low--

HART 2012 (V.O.)
I mean, most of us are pretty hard
right, yeah?

1D INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

1D

Martin Hart, 52--

HART
We had pictures of Reagan, Bush and
Nixon in the squad room... Saw y'all
took them down. That some PC thing?

Goes unanswered, shrugged off by his interviewers--

HART (CONT'D)
...Anyways, at this point, to be
honest-- I just really, really don't
like the guy.

18 EXT. LOUISIANA STATE POLICE CID HQ, LAFAYETTE - DAY 18

Evening. State Police CID HEADQUARTERS in Lafayette. Administrative building with flags out front, lots of patrol and unmarked sedans. Hart and Cohle's car enters lot as the sun finishes setting--

19 INT. HOMICIDE, CID HQ - NIGHT 19

The division is a large, open floor with cubicles, typewriters, a couple boxy computers, RECEPTIONIST, plainclothes DETECTIVES milling about, using phones. A FLAG, POSTER of a cute kitten hanging off a clothesline with the caption 'Eat Shit and Die'--

Cohle settles alone at his desk, wary, watching the closed door of Major Quesada's office-- The other detectives are all stealing glances at Cohle, but not speaking to him--

20 INT. MAJ. QUESADA'S OFFICE, CID - NIGHT 20

Hart sits facing the desk of MAJ. KEN QUESADA, 3rd Squad Homicide Commander, late 40s-50s, chubby--

HART

Mid-twenties to mid-thirties. Knife wounds. Strangulation. She had- I mean, you never even *heard* of anything like this-- She had *antlers*. A crown. Symbols painted on her. Prepared. Posed.

QUESADA

...Fuck.

HART

This is the real thing. Manson shit.

QUESADA

Explains why the AP woman asked me about a deer's head. And *satan worship*.

HART

Somebody nailed a couple cats to the local church too, recent.

QUESADA

We gotta do a press conference tomorrow.

(MORE)

QUESADA (CONT'D)
(re Cohle, outside)
What about him? What do you think?

HART
All I seen... He's real smart. He's arrogant and don't care about making friends, but he's already running with it. He's got a mind for it. Yeah.

QUESADA
You'd keep him on it?

HART
...Both of us. Yeah. I would.

QUESADA
...Alright. You're still lead.

HART
I was gonna get a board going. Not much to put up.

QUESADA
Yeah. But no, do it anyway.
Incident room's yours. You'll lead the briefing tomorrow.

Hart rises, opens the door: a suit, REGION 2 COMMANDER BILL SPEECE stands outside-- Quesada nods for Hart to leave-- He salutes Speece on the way out, ignored--

21 INT. HOMICIDE, CID HQ - NIGHT

21

Contrasting Cohle's isolation, four other DETECTIVES gather around Hart after he exits the office-- DEMMA, LUTZ, GERACI, PENDARVIS, late-30s to early 50s. Quesada closes his office blinds--

LUTZ
Said she had antlers?

COHLE
It was a crown.

They eyeball Cohle with no love, back to Hart--

DEMMA
So what is it?

HART
Murdered woman. We'll do the briefing tomorrow. Guys, really--

DEMMA

It got Speece here. You're gonna have his nose up your ass. Major said something about a press conference.

LUTZ

My guy does the AP wire, asked about *satanism*.

HART

I can count my blessings, fellas. Thanks for that.

All glance to Cohle, this comment perhaps including him--

22 INT. HOMICIDE, CID HQ - NIGHT

22

LATER. ON a large dry-erase BOARD at the head of the incident room. *JANE DOE*-- headings that read *CANVASS RPTS / TIMELINE / BACKGROUND*. All blank underneath-- Hart at his desk, typing--

COHLE 2012 (V.O.)

Marty got a board going. Started typing our DL. And like I said before. I'm feeling a lot of stuff hit me at once. My daughter's birthday. This dead woman. And wanting a drink, now. Figured I'd work the case, keep busy while we waited on DiCillo or an ID...

Cohle rises from his desk, grabs his coat, to Marty--

COHLE

You mind if I skate? I got some names from Vice, prost farms. Ask around about our DB.

HART

You want me to come?

COHLE

Nah. It's just something to do. Go be with your family.

Hart nods without warmth, returns to typing two-fingered-- Cohle exits the squad room--

3D INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 3D

Cohle, 49. His mood less belligerent, more confessional, as if recounting the memories contains a kind of release--

COHLE

At the time, I kind of struggled
with my nights. I mean I didn't
sleep.

By his eyes, their stare, we believe the broadness of the claim--

23 I/EXT. MOVING, COHLE'S TRUCK - NIGHT 23

Cohle drives an early 90s FORD RANGER extended cab east on I-10, toward Opelousas, Baton Rouge. Smokes as he drives. He opens a bottle of ROBITUSSIN and guzzles the whole thing, grimaces, tosses the bottle out the window--

AUDIO FX: SOUND of *brakes squealing*, a *muffled impact*-- *Fades*--
Cohle drives in pain--

COHLE 2012 (V.O.)

Locals we ran came up clean, some
petty stuff. State Vice gave me
some addresses to look at. So far
nobody'd talked to me.

24 EXT. JET-24 TRUCK STOP, LOUISIANA - NIGHT 24

Partially obscured by the interstate rise, in black country dark the TRUCK STOP shines out the night, a bright depression of heavy machinery surrounded by BIG RIGS, a mining outpost on a distant asteroid--

Cohle's truck pulls in, drives around-- Notice *Jenny O's*, a small BAR adjacent to the truck stop, in the same oasis. Cohle parks, watches the place. Finds Townes Van Zandt on his player, *'Two Girls'*--

Cohle watches a WOMAN climb out the cab of a parked RIG, *wiping* her mouth. He sees another WOMAN climb from another RIG, watches them both walk into *Jenny O's*--

25 INT. MARSH ELK LODGE - NIGHT 25

The MARSH ELK Lodge, private CLUB for cops, armed services (retired), in a kind of large cabin of corrugated metal and logs. Inside, booze-swollen middle-aged MEN; cops, vets. Rowdy, working class.

Pool, darts, sports on TV-- BANNERS on the walls display symbols for various POLICE DEPTS (highway, state, local PDs, etc.), MILITARY BRANCHES, STATE FLAG, AMERICAN FLAG-- A SIGN: FRATERNAL ORDER OF THE MARSH ELK--

Hart sits at the bar with Demma, Lutz and Geraci, drinking large beers. Hart talks to JACK STOFIRA, 65, an ex-cop who runs the place, bartending--

HART

You ever seen anything like that Jack? Ever heard of it?

JACK

Nearest I come something like that was hunting accidents.

The cops chuckle--

DEMMA

You ever notice, amount of hunting accidents take place in living rooms?

GERACI

Told Marty I didn't know it was beaver season. Do I need a license?

No laughs. Everybody immediately tired of the joke--

HART

...You guys ever hear anything about a little girl went missing around Erath, maybe five years ago? Marie Fontenot.

Everybody thinks, shakes their heads, return to drinking-- Someone slaps Hart's back, HORNSBY, (50s, retired) very drunk--

HORNSBY

All-Heart Mart, you hogdoggin' hound. You still nailin that broad, works the Hilton?

HART

(uneasy)
Naw, Horn.

GERACI

He got this little box, works the courthouse now.

JACK

You are fucking shameless, my son.
(beat, sign of cross)
God bless you and the work you do.

Hart withdraws a little at their jocular admiration, the laughs. Doesn't like that they know; unconsciously closes his fingers over his wedding ring--

HORNSBY

Hey. Hey, Marty. I gotta ask you a question. I heard *two different things*--

Hart rolls his eyes, *sick* of these older, infantile drunks--

HORNSBY (CONT'D)

You bagged, what-- was it stag or split-tail? Cus somebody tole me *both*.

Hornsby and Geraci crack up, twice as drunk as everybody else. Demma and Lutz shake their heads--

Hart's eyes casually drift to the *gigantic* ELK HORNS that hang over the bar, enormous, like great wings of bone-- Stands--

HART

Gotta get home.

26 INT. JENNY O'S TAVERN, LOUISIANA - NIGHT

26

Smoky, cramped BAR. TRUCKERS inside, watching basketball on television, scraps of neon, tinsel, Tiger and Ragin' Cajun football posters-- Notice the TWO WOMEN Cohle saw leaving the big rigs, now seated together in a back corner. A few other WOMEN, similarly rough, scattered inside--

ON Cohle, jacket and tie off, approaching the back corner table and the two women, one thin and blonde (LUCY, 20s), the other pear-shaped and brunette (ANETTE, 30s)--

COHLE

Hey, ladies.

LUCY

(*cop alert*)
Oh, come on, man.

COHLE

I was hoping I could ask y'all a few questions. I'll get the next round.

LUCY
You makin trouble for us, sir?

COHLE
No ma'am, I'm not. Looking for
information on a woman, might be
you know her.

ANETTE
Who's that?

LUCY
Hold on--

Lucy stops her-- Drains her beer, slides the empty pint to Cohle--

LUCY (CONT'D)
We'll take two large Long Island
Teas, please.

OFF Cohle taking empty glasses--

ON two *big drinks* landing on table, Cohle returned--

COHLE
My name's Rust, by the way.

ANNETTE
I'm Annette. She's Lucy.

Lucy shoots her daggers, disapproving-- They start drinking as
Cohle sits--

COHLE
Either of you know a woman, could
be around your ages. Work the same
places. About 5'5, longish hair,
blonde. Thin.

LUCY
What kind of tits she have?

COHLE
Just about medium, I guess. Maybe
on the small side.

ANETTE
Jeez. I dunno. I mean, I see a lot
of girls like that. Around.

COHLE
Any of them, you haven't seen
around lately? Missing, like?

ANETTE
People come and go.

LUCY
What you want them for?

COHLE
...I wouldn't bust somebody for
hooking. Or drugs.

At the word, Lucy's eyes dart to her purse, and Cohle catches it--

COHLE (CONT'D)
I'm murder police.

LUCY
Somebody got killed.

ANETTE
There's a girl named Liza. Another
called Destiny. But I seen Destiny
yesterday at McDonald's.

COHLE
How about Liza?

LUCY
She's here.

Lucy points across the bar to a thin, haggard BLONDE chatting
up a trucker-- Rust studies the *truckers* along the bar, faces,
pondering the possibility the killer is a hauler--

He hands Anette a ten spot--

COHLE
Grab a couple more drinks, huh,
Anette?

She glances to Lucy, who nods. She leaves them, and Cohle slides
toward Lucy--

COHLE (CONT'D)
You get pills pretty easy?

Panic sweeps her face--

COHLE (CONT'D)
Relax. I want some.

LUCY
...Speed?

COHLE
No. Quaalude. Anything-barbital.

LUCY
Uppers are easier to get. Last
longer, too.

COHLE
It's not like that.

LUCY
What's it like?

COHLE
I don't sleep.

- 27 INT. HART HOME - NIGHT 27
35, Martin Hart enters his darkened house, late. He shuffles to the KITCHEN tiredly--
- 28 INT. KITCHEN, HART HOME - NIGHT 28
Hart pours himself a tall glass of Jamesons, a sloppiness to his gestures--
- 29 INT. HALLWAY, HART HOME - NIGHT 29
Walks the hallway quietly with his drink, like a prowler. He pauses in the doorway of his GIRLS' ROOM; cracks the door open--
From the doorway, Hart sips drink and watches his two girls sleep in blue darkness. Something troubled in his gaze, perhaps connected to the dead woman, perhaps to the company he keeps--
- 30 INT. LIVING ROOM, HART HOME - NIGHT 30
Hart takes a large *History of The Korean War* from the bookshelf, brings it and his drink to an armchair. Starts reading under lamp light. A lonely image, a man drinking alone in the dark--

31 INT. LIVING ROOM, HART HOME - DAY

31

Early morning. Pale pink and blue light flushes the windows. Hart sleeps in T-shirt and slacks on the recliner, the WWII book open on his chest, his emptied *glass* beside him--

MAGGIE HART, 33, enters from the hallway wearing Marty's old baseball jersey, slept in. She looks him over a moment, goes to the kitchen and starts coffee--

As she waits for it to brew, she emerges from the kitchen with the nearly empty *bottle* of Jamesons, watches her husband with a certain melancholy-- She puts down the bottle, finally moves to him, nudges him awake--

MAGGIE
Hey. Hey, Sonny Crockett.

Hart's eyes flutter and he *shoots* up in the chair, mid-nightmare--

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Hey. Why're you out here? Why didn't you come to bed?

HART
...Didn't... I couldn't sleep. Caught a bad one yesterday... Fell asleep reading...

MAGGIE
You had that woman from Erath? It's on all the news.

He nods, wakes, maybe hungover--

MAGGIE (CONT'D)
Girls'll be up soon. Missed you the last couple days.

HART
Shit. I gotta shower. I'm debriefing today. We might have a press conference...

He jumps out the chair, pecks Maggie on the cheek and walks down the hallway--

Stay with Maggie, trying to understand her husband. Slowly, she bends and picks up the empty glass on the floor, replaces the Korean War book on the shelf--

32 INT. HOMICIDE, CID HQ - DAY 32

Hart enters CID, nods to receptionist. Three other detectives at work nod to him. BIG BOARD no longer says *Jane Doe*; now reads *DORA LANGE*-- Quesada steps out his office--

QUESADA

Press. Here. Noon. Your brief's at ten.

Hart reaches his cubicle-- Cohle's already arrived, bags under his eyes--

COHLE

R&I came back. Dora Kelly Lange, 28. Priors for shoplifting and, surprise, solicitation.

He hands the file to Hart, who peruses--

COHLE (CONT'D)

Address lists as St. Martinville. Landlord said she hadn't lived there in almost a year. An ex, Charley Lange, doing eight in Avoyelles for bad checks. Mother outside Breaux Bridge. DMV license expired. *And*. DiCillo called.

Hart puts down the file--

33 INT. MORGUE, CORONER'S OFFICE - MORNING 33

AUTOPSY ROOM. Tiled walls and floors, steel tables, equipment, sinks, etc. Cohle and Hart stand with Gordon DiCillo, facing two tables. On one lies Dora's body, cleaned, with Y-incision-- On the other sit the white blindfold and bindings, the *crown and antlers*... Also one of the stick *latticeworks*-- DiCillo reads from his papers as Cohle and Hart look over the body--

DICILLO

...Weather didn't treat us too bad. TOD between ten to midnight, 2nd and 3rd. COD was manual strangulation. Finger marks and hemorrhaging around the throat, fractured hyoid and presence of thyroid cartilage. Petechial hemorrhaging. Thirteen stab wounds spotting her abdomen, deepest less than half an inch... She was washed clean. Not a print.

(MORE)

DICILLO (CONT'D)

Ligature marks on her wrists and ankles, bound with half-inch rope, maybe ten to twenty hours...

Cohle circles the table--

DICILLO (CONT'D)

Evidence of vaginal intercourse. Appears consensual.

Each man has something like a moment of silence amid the intensity of the description, the room--

DICILLO (CONT'D)

She was bound upright. Hadn't eaten in a day, maybe more. Toxicology hit for cocaine, lysergic acid and methamphetamine.

COHLE

Crystal and LSD...

DICILLO

I'm sure you could imagine the effects, Detective Cohle...

(re Cohle's history)

I know Jim Kelp, Beaumont.

Hart doesn't understand the reference. Cohle bristles--

COHLE

Piss in my ear a little more. Let's kill some more time.

HART

How much LSD?

DICILLO

Hard to say. Maybe as much as a thousand micrograms.

COHLE

That's a lot.

HART

So she was drugged. Bound. Tortured with the knife. Strangled. Posed out there...

COHLE

What about the other stuff?

They turn their attention to the other table--

DICILLO

The crown, for lack of a better word.
Rose thorns, early cane, switchgrass
around quarter-inch PVC.
(re 'antlers')
Those're stag horns, mature male.
Held on the PVC with epoxy glue.

Cohle and Hart study the crown, the two antlers-- The stick
latticework and bindings, *photos* of painted symbols--

DICILLO (CONT'D)

No prints on anything. The blindfold
and bindings are torn linen sheets.
Symbols painted with acrylic, basic
blue, using a thick, gloved finger.

COHLE

Any ideas, what any of this could mean?

DICILLO

My first thought would be... I
don't know. The, primitive sort of-
It's almost like cave paintings...
I don't know. Maybe you want to
talk to an anthropologist.

HART

...Anything else?

DICILLO

Been an M.E. for nineteen years,
Marty...

He hands Hart his report, doesn't let go of it right away--

34

EXT. CORONER'S OFFICE, LAFAYETTE, LA - DAY

34

Cohle and Hart step out, needing fresh air. The building is old
brick, around it the tatters of an *abandoned commercial*
neighborhood-- Walk to their car--

HART

All the trouble this guy went to.
Seems real personal.

COHLE

I don't think so. This was an
enactment. Iconic. It was planned, but
in a way it was *impersonal*. Think of
the blindfold.

They pass a strip of stores with broken windows, cardboard patches, kudzu and ivy overrunning everything. High grass cracking the sidewalks--

COHLE (CONT'D)
(re surroundings)
It's like walking in somebody's memory of a neighborhood. And the memory's fading. Like there was never anything here but jungle...

Hart stops walking, *pissed*--

HART
I want you to stop saying shit like that. It's unprofessional.

COHLE
Oh, yeah? That's what I'm going for here?

HART
Stop saying odd shit. Like you smell a 'psycho-sphere.' Or you're walking in somebody's memory.

COHLE
Well, given how long it's taken for me to reconcile my nature, I can't figure I'd forgo it on your account, Marty.

The two stare at one another with potential violence in the air, placed there by the stress of the autopsy, transferred to one another-- They see in the other a reflection of the urge toward anger in moments of confusion--

And as if remembering their purpose, they deflate-- Reach the car and open the doors--

HART
...You get any sleep last night?

COHLE
I don't sleep. I just dream.

They get in, shut the doors--

Incident room-- Hart and Cohle stand in front ten other DETECTIVES, Lt. Quesada to their right, the large dry-erase board between them--

Quesada holds up a copy of the LAFAYETTE ADVERTISER, headline:
OCCULT MURDER OUTSIDE ERATH--

Cohle finishes tacking on the board several of the M.E. photos
from the scene--

QUESADA

'Occult.' ...I don't know if this
shit is anything but crazy. But
Speece and the Superintendent are
paying attention, papers making
hay. *Church groups.*

Groans-- He steps back, nods for Hart to take over--

HART

This is what we have right now--

1E INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

1E

Martin Hart, 52, answering (unheard '*You still keep busy,
yeah? Your business?*')--

HART

Yeah. I got the security firm now.
P.I. stuff. Employment checks.
Spousal. Routine... Joined up *here*,
I was 24. BA in criminal justice
from U of L. One semester of law
school.

Still wears an undergraduate ring, thumbs it--

HART (CONT'D)

Wasn't for me. Sitting around all
day, reading. I like the action. I
like going past the yellow tape, you
know? Same reason I opened the
agency after I took my pension... I
like to be out there. Running. It's
like you don't want to be stabled.
You know?

36 I/EXT. CID CAR, LA HIGHWAY - DAY

36

Car travels north on 180, through forest, strip-mall towns--

COHLE

So... dinner?

HART

...Yeah.

Ahead, the car passes a *little GIRL* standing by the side of the road-- She *waves* to the men; only Cohle sees her--

COHLE

...You believe in ghosts?

HART

That's it. Stop. Just stop. Please.
Don't talk anymore. Till we get
there. Turn on the radio or
something. It's all yours.

Cohle doesn't react to this, doesn't turn from the window. He has the deep focus that sometimes suggests a separate perception from the world around him-- Long beats in silence--

HART (CONT'D)

...Why'd you ask that?

COHLE

No reason.

Cohle keeps staring out the window as the car accelerates--

3E INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

3E

Rustin Cohle, 49, looking like he's ready to leave (*unheard 'We don't want to do that, okay?'*)--

COHLE

Why not? This isn't official. You
all asked to pick *my* brain. You
ever work a room? You buy a guy a
cheeseburger, coke?

He pauses for answer, looks between *two* interviewers--

COHLE (CONT'D)

Great. Take five bucks and have
somebody go grab me a sixer. Pabst
or Lone Star's fine. Nothing
snooty.

Another beat as he smokes. Unheard question (*'Why's this so important, all of a sudden?'*)--

COHLE (CONT'D)

Because it's *Thursday* and it's
past *noon*.

(MORE)

COHLE (CONT'D)

Thursday's one of my off days. My
off days I start *drinking at noon*.
...You don't get to interrupt
that.

This a very serious matter, and he folds his hands as if
waiting for acquiescence, his face between anger and panic--

37 INT. LOUISIANA STATE POLICE HQ, LAFAYETTE - DAY 37

PRESS CONFERENCE in the first floor lobby of the building, a
podium and REPORTERS filling seats. Troop Commander Speece is
turning the microphone over to Maj. Quesada, who reads a
prepared statement to maybe TEN reporters covering southern
Louisiana, a couple news cameras. Cohle and Hart stand at
back--

QUESADA

Yesterday at approximately six
a.m., civilians came across a
female body...

38 EXT. AVOYELLES CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY 38

A low prison spread out over cleared marshland, surrounded by
dark swamp. Follow the CID car entering, passing through the
gate--

CLOSE ON Cohle and Hart as they drive toward parking, directed
by guard--

39 INT. LOUISIANA STATE POLICE CID HQ, LAFAYETTE - DAY 39

Press conference. Reporters now asking questions--

REPORTER 1

Major, we have reports that
describe a, a kind of ritualistic
killing... Antlers?

Other reporters rumble agreement, hands up, voices-- '*messages
carved into the body?*', '*upside-down crosses on the trees?*'--

REPORTER 3

Is there a connection to the animal
mutilations at local churches? Anti-
Christian crimes?

REPORTER 1

What about so-called 'Death Metal' culture?

QUESADA

Hold it. Stop. The only details you have pertaining to this case come from our offices, here. Anything else should be taken as circumspect. Period.

REPORTER 2

Even if it's coming from cops?

Departmental leaks-- Quesada fumbles the question. Shit-eyes from Speece--

QUESADA

I've given you what I can for now, and I hope you'll all show restraint and responsibility in your reporting. Headlines like the Advertiser's don't do anything but scare folks... And sell papers, I guess.

More questions, hands, as Quesada, Speece and their attendants exit-- Quesada nods for Cohle and Hart to hustle out. He and Speece watch them with narrowed eyes--

40 INT. COMMON ROOM, AVOYELLES - DAY

40

A common room, GUARDS posted at door. Empty except for Cohle and Hart, at a table across from CHARLEY LANGE, 28, head-shaved, orange jumpsuit. ARYAN TATTOOS peak beyond his sleeve and neckline. He's thin, hollow-eyed--

LANGE

You wanna talk *Dori*? What she said I done now?

COHLE

You know what she's up to nowadays? Where she's living?

LANGE

Nope. Got our papers pushed through after I'd been here bout a year... I don't blame the bitch.

As they talk, the detectives scrutinize Lange's face for any cues or obfuscations. Notice echoes of Hart and Cohle's own interrogations, in the future--

COHLE
She got a habit?

LANGE
Got a few. Weed, meth, juice.

HART
How'd you meet?

LANGE
Grown up together. Dropped out same time... Hitched up too quick. You know how it is. You want a wife, but only half the time.

COHLE
...Why're you saying you haven't heard from her, when she called up here for you, not too long ago?

LANGE
That? Uh. I dunno. It was like weeks back. She couldn't help me. Sounded messed up.

COHLE
See, though, that *is* the sort of thing we'd like to know about.

LANGE
Uh, alright. I needed some scratch for my store. Dori don't have no phone. I had a number for her friend, Carla. Got her to call me back. And she didn't make no fuckin sense...

HART
(passing notepad)
Carla's full name and phone number.

COHLE
What do you mean she didn't make sense?

LANGE
Like she could duck hunt with a rake. High, yeah? Said she was going to go become a nun... Figure *that*.

COHLE
Why a nun?

LANGE

She was *hammered*... Said she'd met, uh,
'an apostle'?

Something about it pings between Cohle and Hart. Lange writes
down Carla's information on the pad--

LANGE (CONT'D)

(re info)

Don't need a snitch jacket up in
here.

HART

Give me a break. This is *Avoyelles*.
It's a goddamn day camp. Spend some
time in Angola. Surprised you even
got Aryan nation here.

COHLE

(re tattoos)

Or those your boyfriend's idea?

LANGE

...Look, whassup? What'd Dori do?

Hart and Cohle stare at Lange, whose expression reflects a
dawning understanding of why they're here--

LANGE (CONT'D)

...Dori..?

3F INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

3F

Cohle, 49, now has a six-pack of Pabst in front of him, along
with cigarettes and ash mug. He pops a beer, lights a new
smoke--

COHLE

Thank you, boys. ...Almost had a
moment there.

(beat, drinks)

So look, we talking through the
whole case? Or just *the end?*

A seriousness to his last clause. He studies his interviewers
(*unheard 'We'd like to hear the whole thing, front to back, if you
don't mind'*)--

COHLE (CONT'D)

Alright. None of my business, you
tell me you lost our old files in a
flood... Your dime...

He settles back, reading his questioners--

1F INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

1F

Hart, 52, listens-- (*unheard 'What about that dinner you mentioned, where he turned up drunk? Talk about that--'*)

HART

...That dinner? That was a bit later... Well, I thought the flowers were funny. I guess he'd read somewhere you should bring flowers when somebody invites you to dinner.

He pauses to remember, getting annoyed all over again--

HART (CONT'D)

I said he could bring wine. And him telling me he don't drink. Showing up like that. Eyeballs *floating*.

41 EXT. BACK PORCH, HART HOME - NIGHT

41

CONTINUING the opening dinner scene, Hart and Cohle now stand on Hart's back deck. Hart drinks a beer and Cohle smokes with a cup of coffee. Double doors provide sight into the *kitchen*, where Maggie and the two girls set the table--

HART

The hell? I invite you to dinner. *Once*. You can barely stand up. You don't drink with me or the boys, but you gotta get a load on before you visit my *family?*

Cohle slugs coffee, shakes his head. He's *shit-faced*--

COHLE

Wasn't like that, Marty. I didn't mean to... I don't drink... Because it's given me trouble before. Yeah? Nothing we need to discuss. I didn't mean to have one. Or the others... Checking on a CI. I ended up hanging around a bar. Sitting there. I couldn't really think of a good reason not to have one. Usually I can...

Hart looks him over. Slaps Cohle's shoulder, *relieved* at the show of fallible humanity--

HART

Don't worry about it. Have some more coffee. Try to make ten minutes of conversation. I'll call Chris or somebody to get you out of here.

COHLE

I'm sorry, man.

HART

Forget it. We'll try another time.

Cohle puts out his cigarette and Hart lets him walk in first. Hart watches him with apprehension--

42 INT. HART HOME - NIGHT

42

Dinner with the Hart family, everyone at the table now, Cohle ruffled and drinking coffee, looking at least a *little* more sober. The girls pick at their food and Hart eats his steak quietly; Maggie carries the conversation--

MAGGIE

I said, 'Your life's in this man's hands? Right?' Of course you should meet the family.

HART

You know it's not that dramatic.
(to Rust)
Never fired my gun.

AUDREY

(to Cohle)
Have you? Fired your gun?

MAGGIE

Audrey-

Cohle looks over the table, the girls who've turned their attention to him. Tells the truth--

COHLE

Yes.

MACIE

You shot people?!

MAGGIE

Macie!

AUDREY

Daddy's never shot anybody.

COHLE

That's good. You don't want to shoot people.

AUDREY

But you have?

MAGGIE

Marty says you're from Texas?

COHLE

...South Texas, yeah. Grew up in Alaska. But I's working Texas, last ten, twelve years.

MAGGIE

What kind of work?

COHLE

Uh. Narcotics, mostly. I was on robbery squad in Houston till '89.

This history is news to Hart-- He *notices* the *tattoo* visible past Cohle's rolled shirt cuff-- In the house, the *PHONE rings*--

HART

I'll get it. Keep eating.

He rises, goes to the back--

43 INT. BEDROOM, HART HOUSE - NIGHT

43

Hart stands beside the bed, talking into phone--

HART

Thanks for calling. He'll appreciate it... Then *I* appreciate it. This fuckin *guy*...

Hart sets the phone on the bed. FOLLOW as he walks down the short hallway, back to the dining table-- As he approaches, he can hear Cohle's hushed voice, speaking to Maggie--

COHLE
--in the street. I wasn't
watching... We didn't last long,
after that.

Cohle abruptly stops talking when Hart returns--

HART
...Chris Demma's on the phone for
you. Something about a CI of yours.

Cohle nods, excuses himself and walks to the back bedroom--
Hart notices that Maggie seems quieter, suddenly *sad*-- He eats
as--

HART (CONT'D)
What was that? What were you
talking about?

MAGGIE
How he got here... Marty, what do
you know about him?

HART
Not a lot. Could be a good
detective. Running with the new
one. Arrogant, though... What?

MAGGIE
You notice how sad that man looks?
You ever ask him about that?

HART
Baby, trust me. You *do not* want to
pick this guy's brain.

Cohle reappears. They stop talking, *smile*, watch him sit--
The girls at the table clock the cryptic collusions between
adults--

HART (CONT'D)
What was it? You need to go?

COHLE
Nah. It's nothing can't wait.

Hart is slightly *taken aback*. Cohle's not following the escape
plan, but instead serves himself more potatoes, starts eating--

COHLE (CONT'D)
I am *starved*. This's delicious, by
the way. Thank you.

MAGGIE
What you were saying. Before--

COHLE
Aw, we can find something nicer to
talk about. Marty- I saw your tying
table. You fly-fish?

HART
(annoyed)
Little bit.

Marty doesn't respond further, shovels food--

1G INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 1G

Hart, 52--

HART
...I don't know why I resented it.
Maybe I didn't like that he stayed,
when he could've left in all
politeness. Or I resented that
Maggie was getting him to talk so
much.

Some recollection strikes him, and he digresses slightly--

44 INT. HART HOME - NIGHT 44

Back to the dinner table, Cohle talking to Maggie and the
girls, friendly. Hart watches, finishes his meal in silence--

HART 2012 (V.O.)
She did love to talk. Sit around a
table and gab. Everybody in her
family did. I wasn't much for that.
Especially with the job...

Cohle says something that makes Maggie and the girls laugh...

HART 2012 (V.O.)
One of those consequences of the
detective, right? Silence, monotony.
These were the friends of my home.

1H INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY 1H

Hart, 52--

HART

I like remembering her like that.
Gets difficult... Burned all her
pictures one night. Brick-faced.
Wish I hadn't, now...

Long beat as he studies his interviewers, and his face contorts
as though they'd broached a sensitive topic (*unheard 'You and
him, went bad in '02, huh?'*)--

HART (CONT'D)

2002's none of your business. I
worked with Rust Cohle seven years.
People change. Relationships
change.

(*unheard 'You talk to him?'*)

...No. I haven't spoken to Rust in
ten years.

A beat, as Hart ponders an insoluble problem--

HART (CONT'D)

Look. However we-- he was a good
detective. Better than. I can say
those things, see.

(beat)

I try not to hold grudges. I believe
shit like that can lead to cancer.

(aggravated)

...And why'm I talking about
dinner? You want to walk through
the Lange case, fine. This other
stuff... What's going on?

(*unheard 'Sorry. We just heard stories. Weird guy, that's all.'*)--
This softens Hart, but he's deeply *suspicious*--

45 INT. HOMICIDE, CID HQ - NIGHT

45

Homicide division of State CID. Detectives (DEMMA, LUTZ,
GERACI, FAVRE), receptionist-- Major Quesada *talking* in his
office with Commander Speece and BILLY LEE TUTTLE, a polished,
soft TELEVANGELIST--

Hart and Cohle enter, walk through the room to where the other
detectives gather. Notice *bosses meeting*-- Favre and Geraci
approach Hart--

FAVRE

Other landlord said she left the
place trashed. Lost the deposit.
Neighbors check out.

(MORE)

FAVRE (CONT'D)

Only ones remembered her said she used to come home early in the morning. If they saw her at all.

Favre's eyes are a little glazed, and he and Geraci display the barest physical signs of inebriation--

HART

Thanks.

COHLE

(sniffs)

You two canvass the bars pretty good?

GERACI

Up your ass, Cohle. Do your own legwork, you rat-fuck.

Cohle *bitch-slaps* Steve, who's *stunned sober*--

COHLE

Say it again, rummy.

Everybody pauses, tense, as Steve backs down--

GERACI

You know what? I give a fuck. You'll be gone soon.

He walks away-- Everyone looks at Cohle until, eventually, Lutz debriefs--

LUTZ

Three hits from working girls. Nobody close to her, naturally. Few names recognized her as occasional.

DEMMA

Like she tricked now and then. Show up at a couple truck stops when she needed cash. Got some names, which ones.

LUTZ

But my AP guy came back, on that Marie Fontenot. Said her uncle was Darryl Fontenot. The pitcher, LSU--

HART

Really? I saw him play...

LUTZ

Lives close by.

The detectives back away as Quesada approaches Hart and Cohle with Speece and Tuttle--

HART
...Thanks, guys.

QUESADA
What about you two? You get anything today?

Cohle and Hart silently acknowledge failure--

QUESADA (CONT'D)
You might know the Reverend Tuttle.
Runs our state-wide charity drive.
Detective Hart, Detective Cohle.

Tuttle shakes their hands, a big man, skin plump and shiny as a baby's. He always makes direct eye contact--

TUTTLE
Very good to meet you, officers. Your case has a lot of people taking care. Doors locking where they used to not. Eddie's spoken to me about it. Concerned.

SPEECE
We've been discussing the viability of a task force to investigate crimes with anti-Christian connotations.

COHLE
(almost laughs)
What? ...Really?

SPEECE
Yes.

TUTTLE
I don't need to tell you. Men in your positions... There's a war happening. Behind things.
(shakes hands again)
Thank you for doing your part.
Eddie'll be pleased there's good men on this.

They watch as Tuttle joins Commander Speece and Quesada, who escort him out with deference-- Quesada glances back at Cohle and Hart in a way to emphasize the case's *pressure*--

COHLE
...Fuck is 'Eddie'?

DEMMA
(re Cohle)
This guy. Is he serious?

HART
He doesn't have a TV.
(to Cohle)
Edwin Tuttle. The governor. They're
first cousins.

Cohle's eyes convey the same taste of shit that Hart's have *had--*

DEMMA
That grinding sound? That's the Big
Machine, running night and day,
jackhammering your ass.

COHLE
(re bosses)
Gaggle of hens, man.

HART
You don't watch your mouth, they'll
peck your eyes out.

46 INT. DANNY FONTENOT'S HOUSE - DAY

46

Hart and Cohle are shown into a humble lower-class home by a woman, JANET FONTENOT, 28, frumpy-- *Baseball pennants* and old *trophies* on a wall, crucifixes-- Prescription medicine bottles--

JANET
...Sometimes he's more responsive.
I'd like to help...

DANNY FONTENOT, 30, lies on a large, old recliner, his head lolling down, hands twisted, blanket over him-- it appears he has some sort of *palsy*, lives on the chair-- Bedpan, water basin. Marty approaches him, Janet nearby--

HART
Mr. Fontenot... We met, maybe seven
years ago? I was visiting Skip
Hays. I'd played for ULL. Thing of
beauty, sir, watching you throw.

Danny's eyes crawl over Hart and Cohle, his head nods a little--

JANET

Danny? This man's a detective, with
the police.

Eyes dart to Janet, back to Hart and Cohle--

DANNY

...Tlks muh. Like, chld...

Beats of silence between them-- Cohle's eyes rove *family pictures* along a shelf. Old baseball photos of Danny-- None of Marie--

HART

I actually... I'm sorry. I wanted
to ask about your niece, Marie...

JANET

How much could You put on one
family, I ask the Lord. We try to
get by. Not to live in the past...

The contents of the house tell a different story--

COHLE

...Did you know Marie's birth-
father?

Danny's head sinks, turns away--

JANET

Len? Len Stroghe was her daddy.

HART

...I'm asking, because, we heard
Marie had gone off with him. Like
she wasn't missing...

Danny starts trembling, twitching-- Janet takes his wrist,
calms him, both bereaved--

JANET

That's what *Debbie* said...

HART

You ever heard from Len? Anybody
know where he's at?

They shake their heads sadly. Hart and Cohle feeling guilty
for dredging this all up--

HART (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... Last thing. Do you know where Debbie is, now?

A tear slides down Danny's cheek; Janet squeezes his hand--

JANET

She married another man, not the one she's living with, when Marie... She was in Vegas, last we heard.

Janet shakes her head; Danny has retreated, withdrawn into himself, *angry, sad...* He *jabs* a crooked finger to a closet near the shelf of photos, again and again-- confusing Hart and Janet--

DANNY

Ppshurrrs--

47 INT. KITCHEN, FONTENOT HOME - DAY

47

Janet stands with Hart in a cramped, *messy* kitchen. There's a SHOEBOX on the small table, full of *family photos--*

JANET

We put them away, couple years back. He didn't want to look at her anymore...

Hart and Cohle go through the snapshots-- *Christmases, holidays, summers--* MARIE FONTENOT (6-8), a small, deprived child, smiling and genuinely happy in the photos-- Many of them feature her Uncle Danny, who was still healthy then--

Detectives' eyes absorb the girl's pictures, her face-- Some correlative to his daughters in them, an integrity in children--

COHLE

...What was it, Dan has? You don't mind me asking?

JANET

...All they ever told us was 'a cerebral event'. Series of strokes, like.

ON the pictures, as Hart goes through them-- By age 10, Marie does not smile much...

JANET (CONT'D)

That was just before she went gone.
Her birthday. Danny put that
dollhouse together for her. Nobody
else would've...

ON PHOTO: Marie's small BEDROOM, a new *dollhouse* assembled by
her tiny bed, Danny kneeling with her, smiling--

ON Cohle's eyes tracking the picture; they *widen*-- He sees
something-- *We do not see what he does*--

COHLE

(re photo)

What is this? Right here? On her
window? Do you know what that is?

JANET

I... No... Wait. Um... I don't
know. I never noticed it.

ON PHOTO, as Cohle shows Marty-- On the windowsill in the
picture, clearly contrasted against the daylight, stands a
stick latticework. Once noticed, the figure stands out like
some kind of hazy, monstrous *mantis*--

JANET (CONT'D)

...What's it mean?

Hart and Cohle look at one another as though asking themselves the
exact same question--

3G INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

3G

Cohle, 49, drinking, smoking, bored--

COHLE

Look... This is dull. You wanna get
to the hero shot, right? *The shack
in the woods.*

A beat as dark, unknown correlatives to what he's said settle--
He checks the wall clock--

COHLE (CONT'D)

I have drinking to do, so let me hurry
us along. You've found something.

He puts out his cigarette. Then produces a FLASK, unmistakably
smartass as he made them bring him a six-pack--

COHLE (CONT'D)

You found something in an old forest
in Loreauville. Evidentiary
connections. Maybe some strange kind
of, like *latticeworks*, made of sticks?

(long beat)

It looks like our guy. From back
then. Doesn't it? ...But how can
that be, when we got the bastards in
'95? ...How can that be, detectives?

He hits the flask and finishes his beer-- *Lights* new cig, exhales--
Cohle *stares* at his questioners, face harrowed with experience--

BLACK.

EXIT MUSIC: 'Young Men Dead' by The Black Angels

END CHAPTER ONE