

I/E. BLACK

A line fades up center screen:

In 2030 the Law came to be -

"No harm shall come to the human body unless by a natural cause."

WE HEAR RAIN FALLING.

CUT TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

DETECTIVE JOHN LOKINSON (50, hardboiled) cautiously walks down a dark alley. His badge hangs around his neck and his pistol is drawn.

Heavy rain pours from the sky.

The end of the alley is cut off by a large fence and a MAN stands there with his back to LOKINSON.

Lokinson
Turn around right now or I'll blow
your head off!

The MAN doesn't move.

Lokinson (CONT'D)
I'm not gonna tell you again
asshole! Raise your hands and turn
around slowly!

LOKINSON continues stepping forward as the MAN remains still.

Lokinson (CONT'D)
Turn the fuck around!

The MAN finally does as he asks, his yellow teeth show as he smiles widely.

MAN
You finally got me cornered
detective. But you forgot one
thing.

Lokinson
Yeah? What's that?

MAN
To check your corners.

Suddenly, a LARGE MAN with a crowbar SWINGS from the side of Lokinson. It connects with his hand, forcing him to drop the gun.

LOKINSON grabs the LARGE MAN and disarms him. They engage in a ruthless fight for survival. The LARGE MAN HEADBUTTS LOKINSON, causing him to fall to the ground.

LOKINSON is dazed as the LARGE MAN laughs and begins approaching him. When he's within distance, LOKINSON swiftly KICKS THE LARGE MAN directly below the knee, causing his leg to BEND GROTESQUELY with a LOUD SNAP.

The LARGE MAN falls to the ground SCREAMING and holding his leg. LOKINSON rises back to his feet.

The FIRST MAN'S voice comes from behind Lokinson.

MAN (CONT'D)
Detective.

LOKINSON spins around and the MAN is standing there holding his gun. It's a tense, silent standoff as the rain continues to fall.

After a few moments the MAN pulls the trigger, hitting Lokinson directly in the chest. BLOOD SEEPS from the wound. The man flashes his yellow grin again.

Words suddenly fill the screen/world: DEMO COMPLETE, VISIT CIN-SIM FOR A COMPLETE EXPERIENCE

INT. LOKINSON'S OFFICE. POLICE DEPT - DAY

LOKINSON sits in his lightly decorated office. He has a small black headset on which is covering his eyes and ears. The engraved nameplate on his desk reveals his name.

He removes the headset and tosses it on the desk. He looks down and feels his chest where the bullet hit him.

Lokinson
(to himself)
Jesus, felt like the old days. Back
when there was actual danger.

He smiles with a warm feeling of nostalgia.

RING! RING! RING!

LOKINSON (CONT'D)
(picking up the phone)

Ya.

We hear inaudible dialoge through the phone.

SEVERAL BOXES LABELED PRE-LAW INVESTIGATIONS line the wall in stacks. The ACTIVE INVESTIGATION tray on his desk is empty.

LOKINSON takes a very deep breath.

LOKINSON (CONT'D)
Christ, another one? When will
these people realize that it's
impossible now?

More inaudible dialog through the phone.

CUT TO FAMILY PORTRAIT (Lokinson, wife, and young daughter)
on his desk.

LOKINSON (CONT'D)
.. I'll be right over.

LOKINSON grabs his sleek, bright blue trench coat (issued to
all police officers) and leaves his office.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN. PETER'S APARTMENT - DAY [FLASHBACK]

Rays of sunshine penetrate all of the kitchen windows.

LOWER THIRD: 15 MINUTES AGO.

PETER (30, lean and unkempt) presses his forehead against the
window with BAGS under his eyes. He watches the busy city.

CLOSE ON- PETER. Depressed. He looks like a mess.

PETER opens a drawer and removes a bottle of whiskey.

CLOSE ON - Whiskey bottle reads: CONTENTS HAVE NO EFFECT POST-
LAW.

He takes a swig directly from the bottle.

Peter
(muttering to himself)
Can't even get drunk anymore.

PETER then looks at his wrist, tracing his veins with his
finger. He opens another drawer and removes a sharp knife.

PETER presses it against his skin but it doesn't cut him. He PUSHES DOWN HARD and tries slicing up his wrist but there is still no blood forming.

Peter (CONT'D)
COME ON!

Angry tears form in his eyes.

He pushes down WITH ALL OF HIS MIGHT but to no avail. He throws the knife across the room in frustration, shattering a window in the process.

PETER looks at the open window and we hear the sounds of the city 10 stories below. He stands up and walks towards the window. He smiles.

Peter (CONT'D)
Please work.

He approaches the window and steps out.

EXT. STREET. PETER'S APARTMENT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON- PETER with tears in his eyes.

PETER'S body lay face-up on the CAVED AND CRACKED PAVEMENT. He's staring up at the heavenly sky.

IN A WIDE FRAME WE SEE ADVERTISEMENT PREVIEWS FOR A CINEMA SIMULATION THEATER RELEASE.

CENOBY DERELICT (60) leans over PETER:

CENOBY DERELICT
Are you okay?

PETER stares into the sky.

SUITED PEDESTRIAN
Don't bother. He's just another
psycho who thinks he can cheat the
law.

SUITED PEDESTRIAN retrieves CELL PHONE.

A LONG RANGE SHOT MAKES DIALOG INAUDIBLE.

CENOBY DERELICT
(extends hands to Peter)
Here. Let me help you.

PETER slowly stands to his feet, staring up at clouds. He brushes dust off his clothes. CENOBY DERELICT finds Peter's open window several floors up.

CENOBY DERELICT (CONT'D)
That was quite a fall. Are you sure
you're okay?

Peter's shame shows on his face.

SIREN WAILS! AMBULANCE approaches.

A PARAMEDIC takes Peter's blood pressure in the back of the ambulance. The CENOBY DERELICT watches nearby.

A sleek, futuristic looking police car approaches. The door rises upwards and LOKINSON steps out.

CENOBY DERELICT (CONT'D)
(to LOKINSON)
Everything is fine now, Officer.

CLOSE ON- LOKINSON staring up at the OPEN WINDOW.

LOKINSON
I'll have some questions for you.

PARAMEDIC
This is a code 10-31, he's going to
the hospital.

LOKINSON
(to PARAMEDIC)
Okay.
(to DERELICT pointedly)
But you're coming with me.

CLOSE ON- LOKINSON with a stern look.

CUT TO:

EXT. DEAN'S STUDIO - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

An establishing view of the old building between housing complexes. The building features shuttered windows and a plain signboard above the entrance: DEAN'S STUDIO.

INT. STAGE. DEAN'S STUDIO - DAY

Five projectors bathe a motel room set in bright light center sound stage.

The CAMERAMAN rides a fixed track cart alongside action of a young ACTRESS in a white wig undressing to her bare skin.

The gray-haired director stands by, this is DEAN (noble, 60).

CAMERAMAN (31) moves closer to the ACTRESS' (28) shower curtain silhouette.

CLOSE ON- An ominous HAND SHADOW falls on shower.. THE CURTAIN RIPS OPEN!

CLOSE ON- ACTRESS SCREAMS! Covers her breasts.

KNIFE SILHOUETTE. MAN SILHOUETTE on bathroom wall.

Knife strikes the actress. And again. Screams!

CLOSE ON- ACTRESS turns ashen. Fainting.

Thick crimson liquid flows into the bathtub drain.

DEAN (O.C.)

Cut! That's good.. Enough for today.

MAN'S SILHOUETTE becomes OLIVER, (30, handsome) with dramatic eyes, bloodied coat, and knife.

OLIVER

How was it?

DEAN

(exaggerates)
Great, Oliver!

CAMERAMAN

(mumbles)
Bullshit.

DEAN

Hey!
(to OLIVER)
Everything is fine. You did great.

DEAN pats his shoulder then walks away.

DEAN gives CAMERAMAN a suspicious look. CAMERAMAN grins a cold one.

OLIVER

(after DEAN)
I think it needs a bit more realism.

OLIVER enters corridor.

CUT TO:

EXT. POLICE DEPT - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

A view of the building with signage- POLICE from a low angle to appear quite tall.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM. POLICE DEPT - DAY

Empty room with a LARGE TABLE- CENOBY DERELICT is nervous across from LOKINSON.

LOKINSON is writing onto a LEGAL NOTEPAD:

LOKINSON

You're saying you showed up after he jumped?

(assertively asks)

You had absolutely nothing to do with it?

The CENOBY DERELICT quickly nods - then cuts a look up at the SURVEILLANCE CAMERAS in the ceiling corners.

DERELICT

Yes, I swear. What would I have done, thrown him out the window? He wouldn't be injured from that regardless.

LOKINSON

And you felt the need to stick around because-

(cuts DERELICT a look)

CENOBY DERELICT'S eyes go back and forth in search of a legitimate answer.

CENOBY DERELICT

(staring off)

I'm just somebody who understands what that young man is going through. Wanting to end things...but not being able to.

CLOSE ON- LOKINSON studying the DERELICT intensely.

LOKINSON opens another file record.

LOKINSON
Your file says you attempted
suicide..
(reads SECOND PAGE)
.. A number of times.

CENOBY DERELICT
(near tears)
I hate.. *this Law shit*.. Truly, I
do but I promise I had nothing to
do with the guy this morning.

LOKINSON studies the DERELICT for a bit.

LOKINSON
Alright, you're free to go.

INT. LOKINSON'S OFFICE. POLICE DEPT - DAY

LOKINSON enters the office and plops into his chair. He
massages his temples with his fingers.

BUZZ! BUZZ!

LOKINSON looks down at a small band around his wrist. He
swipes over it with his finger and a hologram appears- NEW
MESSAGE:

(SENT BY) CHRISTIAN: Hey Dad, we still meeting in 30?

LOKINSON check the clock in his office:

LOKINSON
Shit!

He jumps up and beelines for the door.

CUT TO:

INT. OFFICE. DEAN'S STUDIO - DAY

DEAN enters and drops several SCRIPTS on his desk and
collapses into his chair. OLIVER is just a few steps behind
him.

DEAN
Times are tough Oliver. It's almost
impossible to compete with Cin-Sim.

OLIVER
There's gotta be a way to get
people interested in film again
somehow.

Dean
I think there is.
(based off his look)
I'll explain when the time comes.

DEAN smiles. OLIVER sits.

OLIVER
Are you hiding something?

DEAN
I am protecting myself...and you.

OLIVER looks confused.

DEAN rolls a tumbler in his palms methodically.

DEAN (CONT'D)
(continues)
We started an unequal battle from
the very beginning. Everywhere you
go... people are forced to find
substitutes for their natural
attraction to violence. So they pay
top dollar for computer generated
blood and gore.

OLIVER
But our acting is no more real than
the simulations.

DEAN
Sure. It's not about murder, it's
about feeling...
(accentuates)
...*feeling.. Passion!*

DEAN is smiling. OLIVER'S intrigued, he senses something in
DEAN.

DEAN (CONT'D)
(staring off)
We make true art! What kind of
passion is there in a fucking
computer? We possess a precious
commodity that can never be
replicated by machines.

We notice DEAN is staring at a BOX on floor.

OLIVER

And what should we do about the fact that no one bothered to see our last movie?

KNOCK AT THE DOOR. CAMERAMAN peaks his head into the office.

CAMERAMAN

Excuse me, Dean. Can I talk to you for a minute?

DEAN

Sure. I'll be back in a moment Oliver.

DEAN stands, exits the OFFICE.

INT. HALLWAY. DEAN'S STUDIO - DAY (CONTINUOUS)

DEAN enters the hallway with CAMERAMAN.

CLOSE ON- DEAN NOTICES CAMERAMAN BALLS HIS FISTS.

DEAN

(carefully)
Everything okay?

CAMERAMAN

I want my money. NOW!

DEAN

Ok, just calm down. I'm sorry it's a little late, you know how it's been.

DEAN retrieves a CASH WAD from his POCKET. He removes a FEW BILLS. DEAN gives the LARGE CASH WAD to CAMERAMAN.

CAMERAMAN counts the CASH WAD.

CAMERAMAN

Still paying with green. You always have been old school.

CAMERAMAN finishes counting.

CAMERAMAN (CONT'D)

There's extra. Why?

DEAN smiles. Pats CAMERAMAN on the shoulder.

DEAN

Use it well.