

Strangekind Studio

presents

KIND

Chapter One: The Killer
TRANSCRIPT

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ACRONYMS

SFX - SPECIAL EFFECTS
VO - VOICE OVER
VD - VOICE DESCRIPTION
TN - TRANSCRIBER NOTE

SHOW NOTES

KIND is a cinematic audio drama best experienced with headphones. For adult audiences only.

Sujin Baek is a happily married cook and caretaker for the children at Eden Orphanage. He is also the Kind Killer, Silver City's most prolific and terrifying serial killer. When his secret is forced to the surface, the city's dark underbelly threatens the very heart and humanity of all Silverians.

StrangeKind Studio presents stories that subvert tropes and challenge genre conventions. We spotlight characters who are part of the intersection, including characters who are LGBTQ+, disabled, neurodiverse, and BIPOC. Questions? Comments? Contact us at strangekindstudio@gmail.com or at linktr.ee/strangekindstudio

CONTENT WARNING

KIND has potentially triggering content. This Chapter has content warnings for emetophobia, gun violence, explicit violence & gore, graphic depictions of panic attacks, and self harm. Please check the description of this episode for a full list of content warnings.

This show is for adult audiences only. Listener discretion is advised.

SCENE ONE: THE KIND KILLER

AMBIENT: Mid-winter. Forest. The howling wind and flurry of snow.

SFX: An axe striking a tree. Over and over again. It echoes through the desolate forest. A splintering strike. The groan of the tree falling over. **BOOM!** It lands in the snow and we transition to...

AMBIENT: The Ophid District. Silver City. Night. Sirens and sleepy cars. Cicadas. A constant, droning rumble. It's gritty, neon, the grime of a battered metropolis. The deep, incessant bass of club music pulses in the background.

SFX: The door to a club slams open. High heels click against the pavement. We pass by drunken laughter. A man calling for his friend. The high heels pause. A handbag is rummaged through. A phone pulled out and turned on. A few taps later, a video plays. The high heels continue on their trek.

VD: The Silver City Metropolitan News Anchor has a femme tone and an exaggerated newscaster cadence.

NEWS ANCHOR: Wanted by the Silver City Police Department, the Kind Killer, as they are colloquially called, is Silver City's most prolific serial killer to date, with an assumed victim count of thirty-three. Although, the number could be significantly higher, due to the Kind Killer's atypical modus operandi. Detective Dana Liu of the SCPD states that the Kind Killer chooses their victim indiscriminately, and they range from children to the elderly. Their latest victim was Sylvia Dilstern, the twenty-nine year old heiress to the Dilstern Beverage Company-

SFX: A call interrupts the video. The footsteps falter.

VD: Olivia Ciesla has a femme, clear, and youthful voice.

OLIVIA: (Sighs) What?

VD: On the other end of the phone, Ema Ciesla's voice is mature and femme. She sounds cool, stern, and a tad exasperated.

EMA (PHONE): Olivia, are you coming home?

OLIVIA: Yeah. I'm on my way now.

SFX: Olivia continues walking.

EMA (PHONE): I can send a car to pick you up.

OLIVIA: No, I-I don't need a car. I'm almost at Main. I can flag a cab there.

EMA (PHONE): Your father is concerned. He wants to send Joah to get you.

OLIVIA: No, mom, it's fine. He's overreacting.

SFX: Someone kicks a glass bottle in the distance. A couple argues nearby.

EMA (PHONE): Well, hurry home. It's getting very late.

OLIVIA: Yeah, I'll be home soon.

EMA (PHONE): Be mindful of how you present yourself in public.

OLIVIA: (Scoffs) Don't worry. I didn't embarrass His Governorship.

EMA (PHONE): Remember - your behaviour can affect your father's campaign.

OLIVIA: (Sighs) It was just a drink with friends, mom.

EMA (PHONE): Very well. Come home soon. We have an early start tomorrow.

SFX/VD: The club music fades into the distance. We're in a more desolate part of the district. Nearby, an aged, masculine voice whimpers and cries. It gets louder the further Olivia walks.

OLIVIA: (Exasperated) Yeah, yeah I know, mom. I know.

EMA (PHONE): We can't have you look like you've been out partying all night! It's not a good look for your father.

SFX: Olivia stops walking. She's listening intently to the cries.

EMA (PHONE): (Annoyed) Olivia? Are you listening to me? What's going on?

OLIVIA: (Overlapping) Mom? I-I gotta go.

EMA (PHONE): Answer me this instant-!

SFX: Olivia hangs up on Ema. She approaches the old man's voice, which is coming from an alleyway. Another voice joins the old man's.

VD: The second voice is masculine, smooth, and has a threatening tone. He has a tinge of a confident, youthful drawl. His voice is slightly muffled by a mask.

SFX: With every step she takes, the voices and scuffle gets louder.

OLIVIA: (Breathing sharpens. Quickens)

OLD MAN: (Sobs and whimpers)

YOUNG MAN: (Grunts as he struggles to keep the Old Man pinned)

OLD MAN: Please! Please! Don't!

OLIVIA: (Under her breath. Shaken) What the fuck...?

SFX: Young Man slams the Old Man against the alleyway wall.

YOUNG MAN: (Coldly) Quiet. Or I'll rip your fucking tongue out.

SFX: Olivia's footsteps quicken as she hurries to the corner of the alleyway. She stops and slides down the brick wall into a crouch as she peers around the corner.

The Old Man falls silent.

YOUNG MAN: Thank you. This doesn't have to come to violence. All you have to do is answer my questions to the best of your ability.

SFX: There's a long pause.

YOUNG MAN: You can speak.

OLD MAN: (Frightened, meek) I...I understand.

YOUNG MAN: Who is your master?

SFX: A long pause.

OLD MAN: (Defensive) I don't know what you're talking about.

YOUNG MAN: (Interjecting) Your master. The one who sent you. Who is it?

OLD MAN: I don't work for no-one but myself.

YOUNG MAN: (Coldly) You said you understood.

OLD MAN: (Raising his voice) I ain't got no damn master!

SFX: A long pause.

YOUNG MAN: Convince me.

SFX: Young Man pulls out a zippo lighter from his pocket. Flicks it open.

OLD MAN: (Sobs in renewed terror)

SFX: Young Man flicks the spark wheel and a small flame erupts into life. The scene is suddenly centred. We're right there in the alleyway with them. The flame flickers and spits, sounding larger than it actually is.

MUSIC: 'Black Sunrise' by ELFL. Urgent, moody electronic synth.

YOUNG MAN: Snuff out this flame with your bare hand. And I will let you go.

OLD MAN: (Crying, hysterical) Please, no! Have mercy! MERCY!!

YOUNG MAN: It's a simple task, Mister Hurste. Just snuff out the flame with your *hand!*

SFX: Upon the word 'hand', Young Man slams his palm against the wall, beside Old Man's head.

OLD MAN: (Sobs then tries to blow out the flame)

SFX: Young Man grabs Old Man by the collar and slams him against the wall.

OLD MAN: (Cries out in pain. Sobs)

YOUNG MAN: (Snarling) Use your hand I said! *No cheating.*

OLD MAN: (Hysterical) I can't do it, I can't do it, I can't do it! (Breaks down, blubbering and sobbing incoherently)

YOUNG MAN: A shame. I will show you one last mercy.

SFX: Young Man flicks close the zippo. Stows it away. And pulls out a pistol instead. Chk-chk. He slides the rack.

OLD MAN: Don't shoot! Please-please don't shoot! (Panicked screams)

SFX: Another scuffle. This time it's more violent, louder, desperate. WHAM! The hard strike of fist against skull. Old Man crumples to the ground.

OLD MAN: (Wheezes and groans, stunned)

SFX: Old Man drags himself across the ground, desperate to escape. Young Man stalks after him. His shoes clipping menacingly against the concrete.

YOUNG MAN: (Sincerely) I am sorry for this.

MUSIC: Crescendos to an urgent, anxious climax.

SFX: A singular shot. Muted. The pistol has a silencer. The bullet strikes true. Skull shattering. Blood and gore splattering against the concrete. Old Man collapses, dead.

MUSIC: Cuts out.

AMBIENT/SFX: All background ambience falls silent. There's nothing.

OLIVIA: (Gasps and sobs, in shock)

SFX: Whoosh. We're back in the present. Silver City ambience returns. We've returned to Olivia's POV. Young Man walks around the body, his footsteps echoing a few metres away. He kneels down and taps Old Man's cheek.

YOUNG MAN: Hey.

SFX: A hard slap.

YOUNG MAN: (Louder) Hey!

SFX: Nothing.

YOUNG MAN: (Clicks his tongue. Sighs)
(Whispers) Damn.

SFX: Young Man stands up.

YOUNG MAN: (Low voice) I hope you find freedom in death, Mister Hurste. I'm sorry it has to be this way.

OLIVIA: (Retches and coughs quietly)

SFX: Young Man swivels around.

YOUNG MAN: (Alarmed) Who's there?

SFX: Silence.

Young Man approaches slowly. He draws closer and closer.

OLIVIA: (Breaths increasingly shaky and quickened the closer the Young Man gets)

SFX: Young Man walks past Olivia's hiding spot. She's about to be discovered-

A phone vibrates.

Young Man pauses. Pulls his phone out of his pocket. He waits for the ringing to stop, then sends a text message.

Sirens rapidly approach.

Young Man puts away his phone.

YOUNG MAN: (Sighs)

SFX: He turns and walks back through the alleyway, footsteps brisk and confident. A few steps splash as he walks through the Old Man's pooling blood. Eventually, Olivia is alone.

OLIVIA: (Shaky, shocked) Oh, fuck!

SFX: The sirens howl.

AMBIENT/SFX: We slam cut to the main opening song.

MUSIC: The chorus of 'Black Sunrise' plays to the end of the song.

SFX: A zippo flips open. The flick of the spark wheel. Flame catches. Burns.

OLIVIA (VO): KIND. Chapter One. The Killer.

SFX: The flame flickers. The zippo flips close.

SCENE TWO: EDEN

MUSIC: 'Shady Neighborhood' by Ludvig Moulin. A relaxed, quiet jazz piece.

AMBIENT: Silver City. Dawn. Birds chirp. The white noise of morning traffic in the distance.

SFX: Kind walks briskly down the road, shoes clicking against the pavement.

VD: Kind's voice is that of the Young Man's. Only his tone is now lighter, friendlier. He gives the impression of an articulate, well-considered, and very average young man.

KIND (VO): Dawn peeks through the towering buildings of Silver City as I wind my way through the grimy streets.

When I turn the corner, I see the orphanage, faded canary yellow with verdant grounds.

Eden Orphanage is the hidden heart of Silver City, but the city does everything it can to crush the life out of it.

VD: The Panhandler has an aged, masculine voice. Wheezy. Weathered.

SFX: The Panhandler shakes his cup of meagre coins.

PANHANDLER: Hey! You! C-Could you spare some spare change? Please?

SFX: Kind pauses and puts a handful of coins into the cup. He continues walking.

KIND (VO): There's no funding for a state orphanage like this. The Director has to butter up fat cats with fatter wallets for extra resources, and if it weren't for their efforts, the orphanage would have closed decades ago. Ugly as it is - Eden has been my home for the past ten years. But right now, battered by the summer heat, I feel no affection - just a painful awareness of my current state.

SFX: Kind's voice becomes distorted. A heavy static emphasises his words. The city's ambience mutes, as though a dark cloud is passing over the sun. The music reverberates, becomes hazy. It feels like a fever dream.

KIND (VO): The foul stench of piss and blood rising from my boots. Itchy, sweat-sticky skin. Damp breath soaking into my mask. And the gun, tucked into my belt, like a hot brand against my side.

SFX: Kind stops walking. He becomes lost in the darkness. The memories. The dark drone gets louder and louder-

BEEEEEP!!

A flock of spooked pigeons takes off into the air.

BEEP BEEP BEEP!

A squabble breaks out between two drivers. One of them curses the other out.

Kind continues walking and climbs over a chain link gate which rattles.

KIND (VO): No-one notices me climbing over the gate. That's the good thing about living in a megalopolis. When millions of lives coincide with yours, there's little time to spare for others.

SFX: Footsteps continue on. They pad over grass, then the wooden back porch.

Kind pauses and types in a code for the door lock.

Number-pad beeping. Wrong code.

He tries again. More beeping. Wrong code.

BAM!

Kind strikes the wall in anger.

KIND: (Shaky breath) Come on. Get your shit together.

SFX: Types in the code again. This time it's correct.

KIND: (Relieved sigh)

SFX: He opens the door and steps inside.

We cut to the vestibule in Eden Orphanage. The hum of the air conditioner. Silver City is muted.

Kind takes off his boots and pads quietly down the carpeted hallway.

KIND (VO): It's quiet. Dark. The kids must still be asleep. Good. It means I have time.

MUSIC: 'Soma Theatre of Distorted Love' by pär. Eerie, dark, droning music begins playing.

SFX: Bathroom. Shower curtains are drawn. The squeak of a tap turning. The rush of hot water. Furious scrubbing.

KIND (VO): The shower is as hot as I can bear it, scalding me to the bone. The relief is worth the pain. I scrub at myself for several minutes, meticulously cleaning every inch of my skin.

SFX: Screams of all of Kind's victims of all ages and genders, including the Old Man, crescendo and warp and distort. They take over the scene, filling every inch of space with their torment, pain, terror, and rage. A baby wails.

BANG!

The silenced pistol fires.

The screams dissipate like smoke in a sudden gust of wind.

All that's left is Kind scrubbing his skin raw.

KIND: (His breath becomes ragged, strained. He audibly seethes.)

KIND (VO): Thirty-four hunts have gone the same way with the same actors and the same choreography. I know what to expect. I know how I should be. There's only one way of returning to myself after all, even if there are multiple ways to shed my skin.

As usual, the night drains away with the filth, until I'm Sujin Baek once more.

SFX: The squeak of the faucet as the shower is turned off. Kind gets out. Grabs a towel to wrap around himself. He stumbles to the sink and leans against the counter. Wipes the fogged up mirror clear.

KIND (VO): And then it hits me. Hard.

SFX: A low, tense rumbling - like blood rushing in the ears - and the anxious high-pitched ring of tinnitus crescendos, until Kind explodes like a cracked pressure cooker.

SMACK!!!

Kind slaps himself across the face.

KIND: (Grunts)

MUSIC/AMBIENT/SFX: The rumbling, ringing, and music disappears. We're back in the bathroom with the whir of the ventilation.

The door creaks open.

VD: Giv's voice is warm, bassy, and deep. It's rounded, golden, like honey.

GIV: Sujin?

SFX: Kind turns to glance at Giv.

KIND: Hey.

SFX: Giv walks into the bathroom, his bare feet slapping against the tiles.

GIV: Are you okay?

SFX: Kind doesn't immediately answer. Instead, he sinks into Giv's embrace.

KIND: (Sighs and hums, relieved)

GIV: (Hums a small laugh)

SFX: The two kiss.

GIV: (Smiling) How was your walk? Do you feel any better?

KIND: (Hums in affirmation) Mm-hmm.

GIV: (Slightly amused and incredulous chuckle)

SFX: Giv pecks Sujin's cheek.

GIV: Why don't you come and lie down? Rest your eyes before the kids wake up?

SFX: Kind pulls away. Steps back.

KIND: I...I better get breakfast started.

GIV: (Confused) It's only five.

KIND: We have dishes from last night-

GIV: Sujin.

SFX: Giv catches Kind's hand. There's a hesitant pause.

KIND: (Sighs) Only for a bit.

AMBIENT/SFX: They leave the bathroom. Footsteps become muted by carpet. The bed creaks and sheets shift as they get into bed. The whirl of the ventilator is replaced by the low hum of the air conditioner. Outside, we can hear the birds chirping.

MUSIC: 'Squaric' by Martin Gauffin plays. Just the quiet, tinkling piano melody. It drifts up and down the scale a few times, before going into the chorus which is wistful, sentimental, and comforting.

SFX: Giv raises his head.

GIV: (Quietly) Is today a bad day?

KIND: (Whispers) Yeah.

GIV: (Gently) Okay. It's okay.

SFX: Giv pulls Kind into his arms; embraces him.

KIND (VO): I don't need to say anything else. Giv just wraps his arms around me and pulls me into his chest. His body is like a cradle, keeping me secure. Grounded. If it weren't for the lingering sweetness in my mouth, I might have been able to fall asleep.

SCENE THREE: MORNING NEWS

AMBIENT: Exterior Eden Orphanage. Day. It's a busy, bright morning in Silver City - the hum of traffic, beeps and sirens, birds chirping in susurrating trees.

SFX: A school bus idles as the Eden children rush on board. Tiny energetic footsteps and excitable chatting and laughing.

SAMIR: Aya, wait for me! I don't wanna miss the bus!

AYA: (Laughing) Wait for me!

NORA: I wanna sit next to the window this time!

AYA: Nuh-uh!

NORA: It's not fair! You always get to sit next to the window.

AYA: Well, maybe you should run faster next time.

SAMIR: I never get the window seat!

NORA: But I have stubby legs! You're taller. Wanna rock paper scissors for it?
(Whining) Aya! C'mon!

SFX: Their voices disappear into the bus. The doors close and the bus rumbles off down the road.

MUSIC: 'News To Me 2' by Jon Bjork - the SCM News jingle - plays.

SFX: The report is tinny, as though playing on a television screen.

NEWS ANCHOR: In breaking news, the SCPD has confirmed the thirty-fourth victim of the Kind Killer. Last night, a witness reported an attack in the Ophid District - the victim, a 73-year-old confectioner, who was described by the local community as a 'warm and generous soul'. SCM News' Eugene Nam has this exclusive interview with the witness.

SFX: Whoosh. Cut to Eugene Nam doing a voice-over.

VD: Eugene has a youthful, masculine voice with a typical newscaster cadence.

EUGENE: 21-year-old Olivia Ciesla was walking home last evening in the Ophid District, when she witnessed the Kind Killer's latest attack.

SFX: We cut to Eugene Nam who is reporting from the business district in Silver City. Traffic here is more uniform. Distant.

OLIVIA: (Hassled. Caught off guard) I-yeah, I saw him.

SFX: The microphone rustles as it's placed closer to Olivia. Her voice is markedly louder.

OLIVIA: He was...attacking this old guy in an alleyway. They were talking about some kinda master...or something. It was really weird...

EUGENE: Can you describe what the Kind Killer looks like?

OLIVIA: He was wearing a mask, so I...I couldn't see anything. No.

EUGENE: Kind and his victim - did they say anything to each other?

OLIVIA: Yeah...the old guy was scared. Really scared. Like he knew who Kind was. And they talked about fire. I don't know. It's all a bit blurry-

EUGENE: That's understandable. What does your father think about all of this?

OLIVIA: (Curtly) I don't know. Maybe try calling his office.

SFX: Olivia bats away the microphone and briskly walks away, her high heels clicking loudly against the pavement.

Cut to Eugene's voice over.

EUGENE: Olivia Ciesla is also the daughter of incumbent Governor Bakula Ciesla, who is currently ahead in the polls during this summer's gubernatorial campaign trail.

MUSIC: 'News To Me 2' by Jon Bjork plays.

SFX: We zoom out from the television as we transition to...

AMBIENT: Eden Orphanage. Interior. Day. The dining table. In the background, the television plays advertisements for a K-Drama, a cultish dumpling enjoyment group, and Hermon Motels. Somewhere, the washing machine chugs.

SFX: Plates and cutlery clink as the Eden staff enjoy their breakfast.

MUSIC: 'Dark Moment' by Pollyanna Maxim. Subtle, sad, and wistful piano music.

VD: Kind's voice in this scene is noticeably warm, relaxed, and more Sujin-like. It's clear he's very fond of the people he's describing.

KIND (VO): After we sent the kids off to school, all the Eden staff gathered in the dining room for a late breakfast. By all the staff, I mean me, Kimia, Maeve, and Owen. The director doesn't usually come by so early in the morning, so it's usually just us until they come stumbling through the doors well past noon.

VD: Maeve's voice is femme, aged, and high pitched. It's a voice that demands attention when stern and comforts whenever she's in her doting Matriarch mode. Maeve's accent is an articulate and precise transatlantic - leaning more so on the English pronunciations.

MAEVE: Oh, I can't stand that man. Always harping on about progress and profit and such and such. It's all vapid rhetoric. Never trust a man who promises you the world, Kimia dear.

KIND (VO): Despite her kind face, Maeve is concrete and steel beneath the skin. Her word is law in Eden.

VD: Kimia's voice is femme, youthful, and warm. She sounds very friendly and inviting, but there's also a sardonic edge to her tone.

KIMIA: (Amused) You don't have to worry about me, Maeve.

MAEVE: No, you did very well for yourself. If I could enjoy women, I would have lured myself a catch just like your Daru.

KIND (VO): Kimia is our newest hire. She's the kind of warmth that has you lowering your guard instantly around her. The kids entrust all their secrets to her, and she clings on to them, no matter how much we wheedle her.

VD: Owen's voice is masculine, deep, and bassy. He has an animated, higher-pitched tone whenever he's joking around or in a light mood, and a deliberate, centred cadence whenever he's serious.

OWEN: Daru's got nothing on me! You ladies can't recognise quality.

KIMIA: (Incredulous) Uh-huh.

This? (Indicates himself with put-upon cockiness) This is Louis Vuitton. This is Hermès. Balenciaga. Dolce and fucking Gabbana.

KIMIA: (Scoffs) Oh, wow.

MAEVE: (Chuckles quietly)

KIND (VO): And finally, there's Owen. Uh. Owen is...
(Trails off. Then, strained) Owen is...Owen.

OWEN: Daru's just another fish in the sea. I'm a goddamn Poseiden.

MAEVE: (Scoffs) Eurgh.

KIMIA: (Scoffs) I'm not sure who you're trying to impress.

OWEN: Owen Reed doesn't try. He just does.

MAEVE: (Laughs. Teasing) Weren't you hemming and hawing about calling a lad yesterday? You came to me in nearly in tears-

OWEN: (Interrupting. Spluttering in mock outrage) I resent that. That is slander. Blatant slander!

MUSIC: 'News To Me 2' by Jon Bjork plays.

SFX: Everyone falls silent to watch the news. Wood creaks as Maeve turns in her seat.

NEWS ANCHOR: Mayor Linden has made a statement in regards to the latest murder, reminding all Silver City citizens to stay alert and aware of their surroundings. Citizens should also avoid travelling alone and keep regular contact with family and friends-

KIMIA: (Scoffs) Eurgh.

SFX: Kimia picks up the remote and turns the television off. She tosses the remote down.

Maeve turns back around and the Eden staff continue eating. For a quiet moment, there's nothing but the sound of cutlery clinking against plates.

Maeve pours herself a fresh cup of tea.

MAEVE: I can't believe they haven't caught that monster already. The SCPD are beyond incompetent!

KIMIA: (Hums in agreement) Mm-hmm.

OWEN: You would have already caught him by now, right Maeve?

MAEVE: Give me cheek, child, and I'll give you one less to worry about.

KIMIA: (Laughs)

OWEN: No cheek! Just stating the obvious.

MAEVE: Which is?

OWEN: You're terrifying.

MAEVE: (Satisfied) Hmf! I should hope so!

KIMIA: Sujin? Are you alright?

SFX: No response. Maeve loudly sips her tea.

KIMIA: Sujin?

KIND: (Distracted) Hm?

MAEVE: You're looking a little peaky, dear.

KIND: Oh...I'm... (Sighs) I'm tired.

OWEN: (Teasing) Nurse Muscles keeping you up all night?

KIMIA: Urgh.

OWEN: (Laughs)

KIND: (Hums a nervous laugh) Something like that.

MAEVE: It feels like I haven't seen Giv for days.

SFX: Kimia butters toast and eats it. Maeve takes another sip of tea.

KIND: Yeah. Things are a bit crazy at the hospital. They've been keeping him overtime.

SFX: Maeve sets down her cup.

MAEVE: You both need to come round for dinner. I'll cook that chicken curry you like so much.

OWEN: And where's my invite?

MAEVE: It goes without saying, you silly boy. Kimia, you too, dear. And bring along your wife. It's about time we had a night off. Let the subs earn some extra dosh for the summer.

OWEN: (Grinning) Getting lonely in that big old house of yours?

MAEVE: Hmph. You keep giving me cheek and I'll take the other one too.

KIMIA: (Worried) Owen has a good point, Maeve. With the Kind Killer out there, it's not safe for you to be alone. Maybe you should stay at Eden for a while? Or you can come and use our spare room?

MAEVE: Absolutely not.

KIMIA: (Dismayed) Maeve—

MAEVE: In all my years I have never once allowed a man to dictate my decisions. Killer or not!

OWEN: (Seriously) I don't even think he's human.

SFX: Everyone sets down their cutlery as they fall into a grim silence.

KIMIA: (Savagely) I can't stand that moniker they gave him. Kind Killer. Like there's anything kind about murder!

SFX: Kimia bangs the table with her fist. The tableware clink as the table shudders.

Owen puts ice into his glass and fills it up with water.

OWEN: It's because of how he leaves the bodies. Always cleans 'em. Straightens out their clothes. If it's a slow night, he burns incense for them. It's unhinged.

KIMIA: Sujin? You've been really quiet. Are you sure you're alright?

KIND: I.... (He falters, struggling to find the right words)

SFX: A high pitched ringing, like tinnitus, starts in the background. It's at first too quiet to be very noticeable.

Owen sets down his glass.

OWEN: (Dismayed) Don't tell me you're Kindred!

KIND: (Stutters) Th-a what?

OWEN: You know! Those Kind Killer fanatics–

KIND: (Overlapping. Forcefully) No! No, I'm not...one of them. I don't think...
(Deflated) I...I don't think he's human either.

SFX: Kind's chair scrapes across the ground as he abruptly stands.
The ringing gets louder, incessant, harder to ignore.

KIMIA: (Worried) Sujin...?

KIND: (Strained) I need some air.

AMBIENT/SFX: The back door slams open as we cut to the backyard. Sujin runs unsteadily across the grass and comes to a stop.

MUSIC: A section of 'From Hell' by Christoffer Moe Ditlevsen plays. String instruments swoop down in scale, giving the illusion of falling from a great height. The whining strings then morph into the opening instrumentals of 'Blame Game' by GEMINII. Pulsing orchestral strings with electronic effects reminiscent of cold water droplets or breaking thin panes of ice, accompanied by breathy high pitched vocalisations. The vibe of the music is gloomy, urgent, and a little dreamy.

SFX: The ringing gets louder.

KIND: (Panting loudly, shakily, as he tries to ward off a severe panic attack)

KIND (VO): (Grim. Serious) Everytime the Kind Killer strikes, it feels like every Silverian is watching me. I can't outrun them. I can't hide from the collective scrutiny and outrage. I'm up on the stand with a gag in place and a noose hanging over my head. But what can I do? I want to live and the only way I can is to be Kind.

KIND: (Panicked, fast, whispered. He's reciting symptoms like a mantra)
Sense of impending doom. Fear of death. Fear of loss of control. Increased heart rate. Sweat. Trembling or shaking. Shortening of breath. Tightness in your throat. Chills, hot flashes, nausea. Abdominal cramping. Chest pain. Headache. Dizziness, lightheadedness or faintness. Numbness or tingling sensation. Feeling of unreality or detachment.
(Slows down as he gets more in control of himself) Sense of impending doom.

Fear of death. Fear of loss of control. Increased heart rate. Trembling or shaking. Shortening of breath.
(Takes a few deep breaths)

SFX: The song ends as he releases a long breath, finally calm.

A long silence.

MUSIC: 'Miyabi' by Sayuri Hayashi Egnell plays. It's just the melody - so quiet and ghostly, it's like a memory just out of your reach. A kokyū plays a mournful melody, accompanied by the delicate pluckings of what sounds like a koto. But it's soon interrupted by....

VD: Bosch's voice is masculine, bassy, and guttural. He has a slow, tired cadence that rouses the image of a long-suffering school administrator who is severely underpaid.

PRINCIPAL BOSCH (VO -SFX): (Echoing, increasing in volume) Mister Baek? Are you with us, Mister Baek?

MUSIC: Cuts out.

PRINCIPAL BOSCH (VO - SFX): (An echoing, dragging effect. Then he's suddenly loud and crystal clear - like he's right in front of us) Are you with us, Mister Baek?

SFX: Kind's chair judders as he slams back to reality.

KIND: (Intakes sharply, surprised)

AMBIENT: We're suddenly in Principal Bosch's office. Day. The crickety whir of the ceiling fan. The muffled office bustle on the other side of the door - phones constantly ringing, overworked staff calling to each other, etc. An open window lets in the summer breeze and the lively sounds of children doing physical education outside in the field. Distant Silver City traffic - the gritty entity that haunts every scene.

GIV: Sujin? Honey?

KIND: (Dazed) Yeah. S-Sorry. Um.

SFX: Kind leans back in his seat. The chair creaks.

KIND: Can you please-?

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: Yes, of course.

SFX: Bosch shifts awkwardly in his seat.

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: I was just saying that while Aya might have been defending her friend, responding with violence was completely unacceptable. Now we here at Higanbana Elementary do not tolerate-

SFX: Kind lurches forward in his chair.

VD: Kind's voice is more the Kind Killer-like in this scene. The cold drawl tinges his words.

KIND: (Interrupting. Irritated) Aya was standing up to a bully. A situation that we have been aware of for months, by the way. This isn't new to us. Dean Pewter has been bullying the Eden kids and nothing has been done about it. Have you contacted his guardians? Looked into his home life?

SFX: Giv quickly leans forward in his chair.

GIV: (Gently interrupting. Trying to be diplomatic and friendly) Uh-what-what we are concerned about, Principal Bosch, is that this isn't the first time this has happened. Aya has never acted violently until today - so clearly the bullying is escalating. We aren't trying to point fingers here. We know better than anyone that children lash out at their peers for many reasons. And it's those reasons that should, perhaps, take precedence.

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: (Disgruntled by conceding) I hear you, gentlemen. We will speak with Dean and his guardians about his behaviour, and investigate further if necessary. However, I must emphasise - violence will not be tolerated at this school. Aya is our brightest student, so we must nip this kind of behaviour in the bud, while we can.

GIV: We understand.

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: Three days suspension, I believe will suffice.

SFX: Kind's chair judders.

KIND: (Outraged, yelling) Three days?! Are you kidding me?

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: Excuse me?

GIV: (Raises his voice, trying to salvage the situation) Three days seems very fair. Thank you, Principal Bosch.

(Lowers his voice) Sujin, we're leaving.

SFX: Giv stands up to leave. He walks a few steps towards the door.

KIND: (Heatedly) But-!

GIV: (Stern) Sujin!

KIND: (Startled intake)

SFX: A pause. And Kind reluctantly stands up.

KIND: (Sighs and grumbles as he caves)

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: Mister Baek?

KIND: (Irritably) Yeah?

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: (Kindly) Thank you. For caring. I understand your frustration, however Dean's situation is...ongoing. And complex. We are working on finding a solution.

KIND: (Beat. Then, coolly) If you need any help, Eden has some useful resources. Good contacts in the CPS. Short-term stays. Social workers that give a shit.

PRINCIPAL BOSCH: (Sincerely) I will keep that in mind.

SFX: An awkward pause. Then, Kind and Giv leave the office. The door opens and closes. We transition to...

AMBIENT: Hallway. Kind and Giv walk down the school hallway, passing by classrooms that are currently in session. Outside, we can hear children playing in the field.

Two pairs of footsteps click against linoleum. As they speak, their voices echo.

KIND: What the hell, Giv?

GIV: There's no point getting angry at him. He's trying his best too.

KIND: He's punishing Aya for standing up to a bully!

GIV: He's punishing Aya for punching her classmate.

KIND: (Pause) Isn't that what I said?

GIV: What do we teach the kids about violence?

KIND: (Caustic) That it's justified in self defense?

GIV: There are other ways to protect yourself.

KIND: (Irritated) Sometimes, there aren't.

GIV: (Hesitates) You've been really wired since last night. Did something happen?

KIND: (Sharply) No.

(Hesitates)

(Softens his tone. He sounds more Sujin-like) No. Sorry. You're right. It's just...you know where these kids come from, Giv.

GIV: (Gently) I know.

KIND: Sometimes violence is justified.

GIV: (Pause) Not this time.

KIND: (Tiredly) Yeah.

SFX: They open the door.

AMBIENT: And step outside into the parking lot. We've jumped forward in time. Aya races ahead of them and runs back. Giv and Kind's shoes crunch against the concrete as they walk to the car. Traffic roars. We can still hear the children in the field.

KIND (VO): We pick up Aya from her classroom and head out of the school. As expected, she's pissed off about the suspension, and not for the usual reasons.

VD: Aya's voice is femme and childish. She has a slight lisp and a warm tone - despite her sharp tongue.

AYA: But we've got our local history presentations tomorrow and I've been working on mine for literal weeks! How can Bosch do this to me?!

GIV: Principal Bosch, Aya. And if you didn't punch Dean, you wouldn't be suspended right now. It's called taking responsibility for your actions.

AYA: (Overlapping) It's called sticking it to a knuckle-dragging asshole like Dean Puker!

KIND: (Calmly) You can't just hit people because they piss you off.

AYA: Susu! I thought at least you'd understand.

GIV: (Gently, dad-mode) Look, I understand why you did it. But it takes nothing to change everything. You went through that anatomy phase last month - remember what I taught you? You might have been standing up to a bully, but what if that punch did more damage you intended? How would you feel, then?

AYA: That dickwad kept teasing Sadira about her sick mom! I mean, how low can you stoop?

GIV: (Exasperated, overlapping) Aya! Language!

AYA: I hear you and Susu swearing all the time!

GIV: And that is a privilege you'll be rewarded when you become an adult. Until then, no swearing.

SFX: They arrive at the car. Aya runs to the back passenger door and impatiently pulls at the handle. Giv walks around to the front passenger door. Kind approaches the driver's side and pulls out his keys. He pauses.

The high pitched ringing returns. A low rumble also accompanies the ringing.

GIV: Sujin? What are you looking at?

KIND (VO): When we reach the car, I notice him standing across the road at a bus stop, staring at us. Joah. I know that face better than my own.

SFX: Kind quickly unlocks the car and opens the door.

KIND: (Stiffly) Get in the car.

GIV: What's wrong?

KIND: (Sharply) Get in the goddamn car, Giv. Aya, you too!

SFX: All three doors slam shut. The ringing and rumbling stops. We cut to...

AMBIENT/SFX: Interior. Kind's car. We're racing down the road. We can hear the other cars whipping past. Beeps and angry yells. The engine roars and wheels squeal for every turn.

MUSIC: 'For Show' by Schemantics plays. It's got a beat like a racing pulse and fervent piano chords. Subtle strings accompany the melody.

AYA: Woooohooo!!!! Who are we racing? Are we winning?!!

GIV: Sujin! Slow down!

KIND: Put on your seatbelts!

SFX: Wheels squeal.

KIND (VO): I get us out of there as fast as I can. But I know it's pointless. He knows where I live. He knows where the kids go to school. He knows everything about me and I can't stop him. I'm powerless. Except when I'm Kind.

GIV: (Yelling) Red light! Red light!!!!

SFX: Kind slams on the brakes. The car screeches to a sudden stop. The car engine idles. Outside, angry, impatient drivers yell and beep at each other.

MUSIC/SFX: The music suddenly becomes diegetic - playing on the car radio instead. A vocalist sings a moody 80's pop like tune. Similar to David Bowie's singing style.

KIND & GIV: (Panting, shaken by what happened)

KIND: (Panting) Sorry. I'm sorry. Is everyone okay?

AYA: (Excited) That. Was. AWESOME!

GIV: (Faintly, shaken) Sujin - what is going on?

KIND: (Hesitating) I...I panicked. (Pause) I don't know. Okay? I... (Sighs) I can't explain it.

GIV: (Releases a breath)

(Beat)

Bad day?

KIND: (Irate) Yeah.

GIV: Okay. Did you want me to drive?

KIND: No. I got it.

(Pause)

(Guiltily) Sorry.

GIV: (Trying to lighten the mood) I think I know what might help.

AYA: (Dramatic gasp) ICE-CREAM?!

GIV: (Overlapping, grinning) Ice-cream!

SFX: Aya lurches forward in her seat.

AYA: Giuseppe's Gelato?!

GIV: (Brightly) Where else?

AYA: (Screeches excitedly)

SFX: Aya flails, her legs kicking Kind's seat in her fit of excitement.

GIV: Sujin?

KIND: (Weakly. Smiling) Yeah. Yeah, that actually sounds good.

SFX: The light turns green. Car shifts into drive and the traffic continues on - calmer now.

MUSIC: 'The Stars Remain' by Martin Gauffin plays on the radio. It's a triumphant, optimistic, sweeping orchestral piece.

AYA: Did you know that gelato means ice-cream in Italian? So in Italy, every ice-cream is gelato! Do you think they get confused when they come to America? They're all like, 'Che cazzo!!! Why does my gelato taste like egg?!' (Cackles loudly)

GIV: Language.

AYA: (Shrieking) IT'S IN ITALIAN! IT DOESN'T COUNT!

KIND: (Confused) What does 'che cazzo' mean?

GIV & AYA: (Laugh loudly)

KIND (VO): But sometimes, I don't need Kind. Sometimes, I think I might never need him again.

MUSIC: The song transitions from diegetic to non-diegetic as the scene fades away and the music takes to the forefront. And then it slowly fades out.

SCENE FOUR: LIU & STONE

AMBIENT: The Silver City Police Department. Lieutenant Cassie Alder's office. There's a clock ticking on the wall. Through the ajar window, we can hear the rush of the Silver City CBD. The muffled sounds of a chaotic station (phones ringing, footsteps rushing about, voices) can be heard through the door.

VD: Dana's voice is femme, but has an androgynous/masc feel to it. She speaks sharply, unapologetically. Her tone can range from guttural to tender, depending on her mood.

Cassie's voice is a slightly more deep, smooth, and femme voice. She has a commanding, stern tone to her words. It's clear that she's had to reign Dana in on more than one occasion.

DANA: (Pissed) What the fuck, Lieutenant!

SFX: Dana slams her hand down on Alder's desk.

DANA: Why was Olivia Ciesla on the morning news?!

SFX: Alder leans back in her office chair.

ALDER: (Coolly) It's out of my control, Detective. Eugene Nam got to her before we could get to him. Now take your goddamn hand off my desk.

DANA: (Clicks her tongue and sighs)

SFX: Dana removes her hand and begins pacing, her boots stomping from the door to Alder's desk and back again.

DANA: (Disgruntled) So when are we putting her into WitSec?

ALDER: We're not.

SFX: Dana pauses mid-step and spins around to stare at Alder.

DANA: (Incredulous laughter) Woaah.
(Pissed) What?

SFX: No response. Alder shuffles the papers on her desk instead.

DANA: Why the hell not?!

ALDER: (Temper rising) Because, Detective, the Governor has already declined putting his daughter into protection.

DANA: (Scoffs angrily)

SFX: Dana continues pacing.

DANA: (Ranting) Is he insane? We have a serial killer out there - the worst in Silver City history, and his daughter is target numero fucking uno!

SFX: Dana comes to a stop before Alder's desk.

DANA: The Kind Killer knows her name. Her face. Her home address is public knowledge. She won't make it through the night!

ALDER: The best we can do is keep her under surveillance. Assign plain clothes to her as protective detail-

DANA: (Scoffs) Hamm and Almas are hardly protection, Cassie.

SFX: Dana continues pacing.

ALDER: (Bristles at the sudden familiarity) Dana. Please. We talked about this.

DANA: (Exasperated) Eurgh. 'Lieutenant Alder'.

ALDER: Thank you.

SFX: Dana stops before Alder's desk. Her voice is noticeably closer.

DANA: (Less pissed, more serious; sincere) Lieutenant - all I'm asking is to be more conscientious about how we handle this case. We're closer than ever to catching this asshole, but if we keep throwing him a bone, he's always gonna be one step ahead of us.

ALDER: Nam's interviewed witnesses before and Kind has never gone after them. And the Governor's got his own security tailing his daughter. Olivia Ciesla might be the safest person in this city.

DANA: No-one but Olivia has ever witnessed Kind killing his victims. She's the first one, Lieutenant. She's the only one.

ALDER: (Sighs)

SFX: Chair creaks as Alder leans back. The click of a pen tapping against the desk. It's a steady metronome to accompany the Lieutenant's racing thoughts. At first, the clicking is off-beat to the clock ticking on the wall. But soon, the clicking is in tandem to the ticking and Alder leans forward in her seat. She tosses the pen down onto her desk.

ALDER: You and Detective Stone, then. Delegate your current workload. I'm giving you seventy-two hours.

SFX: Alder jabs a finger into her desk three times for 'seventy-two hours'.

ALDER: After that, you're back to your regular duties.

DANA: (Satisfied) Three days. Got it.

ALDER: And you gotta stop breaking my balls, Dana. It's been three years-

DANA: (Tense) You don't get to decide when I'm over it. I do.

ALDER: (Curtly) Then make sure you park it outside this department before you muddy up my floors.

SFX: The judder of Alder's office chair. She sweeps the papers on her desk together and straightens them out.

ALDER: I'm trying to keep this goddamn place together. Do you know where the Captain is right now?

(Pissed) He's out playing golf, schmoozing with Dodder Leach.

SFX: Alder slams the neat pile of papers onto the desk.

DANA: (Confused) The Big Oil guy? Why the hell is Eaton playing golf with him?

ALDER: You don't become Captain in your thirties without a bit of help. My point is, while the Captain is busy 'networking', I am trying to keep this city safe with an active serial killer on the loose. So you need to work with me, Detective. We started at the same starting line and no-one is going to help us to the end, but us. Do you understand?

DANA: (Begrudging) Yeah, yeah. I get it. I'll stop breaking your balls.

ALDER: (Coolly) I appreciate it.

DANA: (Wry amusement) Ilana's not gonna like this.

ALDER: (Dryly) Since when has that ever stopped you?

DANA: (Sarcastic) Ha-ha.

(Pause)

(Prickly tone - both a joke and a jab) How is Miss Silver City anyway?

ALDER: Out.

SFX: Dana stomps out of the office. Slams the door shut harder than necessary. A pile of folders fall to the ground, scatter.

ALDER: Goddamnit, Dana.

AMBIENT: We cut to the main station floor. Ilana and Dana's desks. The chaos is closer and clearer here, but the detectives seem to exist in their own little world. Untouched and unfazed by everything around them.

MUSIC: As It Is by Oakwood Station. A chill, upbeat jazz piece.

SFX: Dana sits on Ilana's desk.

DANA: You eating that breakfast bagel?

VD: Ilana's voice is smooth, femme, and monotone. She has a very clear and precise enunciation, and can be compared to a still, icy lake. She doesn't

Speak with much colour or emotion in her tone, but at times, emotion does bleed through especially when the unexpected or frustrating happens.

ILANA: You're sitting on my report. Do you mind?

SFX: Dana grabs Ilana's bagel.

DANA: Not at all.

SFX: Unwraps the foil and bites into it with relish.

DANA: (Groaning appreciatively through a full mouth) Oh my god, this is amazing.

SFX: Foil crinkles as Dana chews and bites into the bagel again.

ILANA: Didn't you already have breakfast?

DANA: (Mouth full) Nah.

SFX: Another big bite.

ILANA: I saw you consume two stacks of pancakes at your desk.

DANA: (Swallows food) That was an appetiser.

SFX: Dana balls up the empty wrapper and tosses it over her shoulder. It hits a co-worker in the head.

COWORKER: (In the distance) Hey! What the fuck?!

DANA: What are you working on anyway?

ILANA: Oh. Ah - just the report for the Lieutenant about our interview with the witness.

SFX: Ilana opens her folder and flips through it.

ILANA: I've been cross-checking with other witness statements and-

DANA: (Tiredly) Eh. Give it to the Two Stooges.

ILANA: The Two—you mean, Officer Hamm and Officer Almas?

DANA: (Chuckles) The Lieutenant's put us on security detail.

ILANA: Who are we...securing?

DANA: Olivia's not going into WitSec, so we need to babysit her. And who knows, maybe Kind will do us a favour and pay her a little visit.

ILANA: (Impassive) You want to use her as bait?

DANA: It's an afterthought. Look - she'll be safe since it's us watching her. (Chuckles) If you imagine, Hamm and Almas would-

ILANA: (Amused) -accidentally shoot her. Yes, I understand.

DANA: Just for the next couple of days.

ILANA: Wouldn't our time be better spent focusing on the victim? We still have yet to make a connection between the victims, aside from the murder locations being within the same locale. The victims have addresses in more than eight districts.

DANA: (Sighs, troubled) I got a feeling, Stone.

ILANA: (Incredulous) A feeling?

DANA: The Governor knows more about this case than he's letting on.

ILANA: We had already established that it was a coincidence-

DANA: (Interrupting. Impatient) Look, e-every victim can be traced back to Ciesla, one way or another.

ILANA: Every victim can be traced back to you if we look hard enough. It's Milgram's small-world experiment - or six degrees of separation-

DANA: Just give me this, Stone. Please? I'll do all your goddamn paperwork for-for (mumbles incoherently) I dunno - an entire week!

ILANA: You're sitting on my paperwork, Dana.

DANA: (Yell bursts out of her) Dinner!

SFX: A stunned pause.

ILANA: (Confused) What about it?

DANA: I'll buy you dinner! A real lavish one. Like lobsters and shit.
(Sing-song) I mean, you do like lobsteers, don'chya?
(The vocal equivalent of waggling her brows) Eh? Eh?? EH???

SFX: Pause.

ILANA: (Hesitating) It...doesn't have to be lobsters.

DANA: (Relieved laugh) Phew! Great! 'Cus I am flat broke until payday-

ILANA: You can cook for me.

DANA: (Dumbly) Huh?

ILANA: (Smiling) Cook for me. A dish we can both enjoy together at your home-

DANA: Oh! I mean-yeah! O-Of course I can cook! (Babbles incoherently) I can cook, are you crazy? I make my own pasta and everything.

ILANA: It's a date then.

DANA: (Long pause as her brain struggles to keep up. When she realises, she's dumbstruck)
...A-A da-date. Yeah. I uh...I like that. Sure. Date. Why not?
(Babbles and laughs incoherently, nervously)

SFX: A long, awkward pause.

ILANA: (Impassively) You've got cream cheese on your face.

SFX: Somewhere in the station, a bell rings. Ding!

SCENE SIX: SONG'S ANOMALY

AMBIENT: Higanbana General Hospital. Night. It's quiet but busy. Doctors, patients, nurses, visitors, they bustle through the clean hallways. Wheelchairs squeak past. Gurneys are pushed past nurses stations where phones ring and nurses consult with each other. Ventilation machines whir and heart monitors beep. The PA calls for all nurses to the nurse's station.

SFX: Two footsteps hurry down a hallway. Dana's gait is heavier, more begrudging. Ilana's is lighter, quicker.

ILANA: Why are we here, Dana? We have to get to the Ciesla Estate before Officer Hamm and Officer Almas finish their shift.

DANA: Cool it, Stone. I just want to check in with Song first. She should be done with the body by now.

ILANA: What do you expect to find?

DANA: Fuck if I know. Something different? Something...more.

ILANA: Shouldn't we wait for the report.

DANA: Not this time.

SFX: They arrive at the nurse's station. Dana raps the counter in a quick rhythm with her hands.

DANA: 'Scuse me! Nurse?

GIV: Yes? How can I help you?

DANA: Sorry to interrupt. Can you let us into the morgue?

GIV: (Sympathetic) Oh! I'm very sorry for your loss.

DANA: (Chuckles)

SFX: Dana pulls out her badge. Flips it open to show Giv.

DANA: I'm Detective Dana Liu. This is my partner, Detective Ilana Stone. We're investigating the Kind Killer case.

SFX: Dana stows away her badge.

GIV: Ah. Detectives. Yes. My apologies - I can take you down there, of course.

ILANA: Thank you. We appreciate your help, Nurse...?

GIV: You can call me Giv.

DANA: (Coyly) How very apropos.

GIV: (Coughs awkwardly) This way...please. Detectives.

SFX: Giv leads them down the hall.

ILANA: (Murmuring to Dana) 'How very apropos?'

DANA: You gotta learn to give a little sugar now and then, Stone.

ILANA: (Perplexed) Why?

DANA: So people go sweet on ya!

ILANA: (Confused) He'd already agreed to take us to the morgue.

DANA: Yeah but..Jesus, Stone. You ever seen the movie A.I.?

GIV: (Interrupting) How is the investigation going, Detectives? Any progress?

DANA: I'll give it to you straight, Giv. It kinda feels like we're on a hamster wheel.

GIV: (Dismayed) Ah. That is...unfortunate.

ILANA: That's why we're here. To progress the investigation.

GIV: You're here to see Mister Hurste?

DANA: Thomas Hurste. Yeah.

GIV: He was very well regarded, Mister Hurste. He had no family, but every stall-owner and worker from the Ophid Market showed up to say their goodbyes.

ILANA: He seems like quite an individual.

GIV: Indeed. He didn't deserve a death like this.

DANA: None of them did.

GIV: (Pause)

(Sombre) Yes. I do hope you catch him soon, Detectives.

DANA: (Grim determination) We will.

SFX: The beep of a card reader. Giv opens the door and steps to the side.

GIV: Doctor Song should be in there.

ILANA: Thank you, Giv.

GIV: You're welcome.

(Beat)

Good luck, Detectives.

SFX: The detectives walk through the door and Giv closes it behind them. They continue on into the morgue. Inside, there's a gory splatter and the clinking of a scalpel being tossed into a metal bowl.

AMBIENT: The morgue is quiet, cold, and echoing. There's the constant hum of the refrigeration unit in the background.

VD: Ashley Song's voice is femme, high pitched, and sing-song. She's very animated and seems to have a constant, amused tinge to her words - unless she's being serious (which is a rare occurrence).

SONG: (Grinning) Detective Stone. Detective Liu. What has it been? A month?

SFX: The detectives come to a stop before Song.

DANA: (Begrudging) Way too soon to see your ugly fucking mug.

SONG: (Amused) Right back atchya, bitch!

ILANA: How have you been, Ashley?

SFX: Song tidies up her tools.

SONG: Working overtime, like everyone else. You're here to see Willy Wonka?

DANA: (Cringing) Oof. Grasping at straws there, Song.

SONG: I'm running on two of sleep. I'd like to see you do better.

SFX: Song peels off her latex gloves as she walks to the cold lockers. She opens the hatch, and pulls out Mister Hurste's drawer. The detectives follow her and stand around the body.

SONG: Victim number thirty-four.

SFX: Song unzips the body bag and peels it back, revealing the body.

MUSIC: 'Once Upon a Road' by Bladverk Band. A smoky, noir jazz piece with prominent saxophone.

SONG: Willy Wonka. AKA Thomas Hurste. 73 years old. Male. He was in surprisingly good condition for his age. Seems like his confectionary business was keeping him active.

ILANA: (Disturbed) Why does he look like that?

DANA: (Perplexed) Yeah. His skin is...weird.

SONG: That is a common feature for Kind's victims. You've never seen the bodies so close to T.O.D, have you?

DANA: (Impatient) Just tell me what you found, Song.

SONG: It's the usual. Unremarkably remarkable. The skin was too tough to cut with a scalpel so I had to resort to the bone-saw. Even then, it took me a good five minutes to make it to the subcutaneous tissue. And...when I finally opened him up, his flesh just...disintegrated.

DANA: What?

SONG: Here.

SFX: Song strides to her desk, pulls out a drawer. She grabs a glass jar and passes it to Dana. We hear what sounds like sand shifting around inside as Dana shakes it.

DANA: What is this? Sand?

ILANA: It looks like sawdust...

SFX: Dana continues shaking it.

SONG: That is Thomas Hurste.

DANA: (Grossed out) Eurgh. What the fuck, Song?!

SFX: Dana passes the jar back to Song. Song walks over the slab and sets the jar down.

SONG: His insides weren't any better. They were hard. As though they've been embalmed.

ILANA: Embalmed? According to the witness, Kind left seconds after murdering Mister Hurste.

SONG: Not only that, but I've consulted with my peers and no-one has seen an embalming technique like this. It's...impossible.

ILANA: And all the bodies were like this?

SONG: Every single one.

DANA: (Sighs) C.O.D.?

SONG: Same as the others. Single shot to the forehead. Entry point between the eyes. Cracked skull and extensive, targeted trauma to the ventromedial prefrontal cortex.

ILANA: The weapon?

SONG: The bullet's a 9mm.

DANA: What kind gun?

SONG: That ain't my job.

DANA: Anything else, Song? Or are you gonna keep shitting on my already shit day?

SONG: Nothing you don't already know.
(Amused) Did Cassie yell at you again?

DANA: She thinks I'm breaking her balls.

SONG: That's nothing new.

DANA: She wants me to get over it.

SONG: Again. Nothing new.

DANA: (Accusing) You think she's right. You think I should move on.

SONG: Kinda. Yeah. You're not the first lesbian to be cheated on, Liu.
(Joking) It's like. A rite of passage!

DANA: Go fuck yourself, Song.

SONG: (Teasing) I think you're doing enough of that for the both of us.

DANA: (Tired) Eurgh. Call me if you actually find anything useful.

SFX: Dana stomps out of the morgue. Slams the door shut.

ILANA: (Confused) Were Dana and the Lieutenant...?

SONG: That's ancient history, babe.

(Sincerely) Look, you're new. You've only been here for like what, a couple of months now? I'll give you some advice about Dana Liu. Don't piss her off. And I don't mean ribbing her or being an ass. She can take that stuff. I mean, really piss her off. The Brutus backstabby kind. Keep on her good side and she'll make you one of her people. And that's a very useful thing to be.

ILANA: (Contemplative) Hm. She asked me out on a date.

SONG: Let me guess. Red Lobster?

ILANA: (Smiling) She's cooking me pasta.

SONG: (Impressed whistling) Home-made pasta from the get go? You're halfway there already.

ILANA: Halfway where?

SONG: (Amused) Ever seen 'Lady and the Tramp'?

ILANA: Oh, yes! That one I have seen. The two sentient dogs-

SONG: Yeah, that's the one. Dana picked up the whole pasta date thing from the spaghetti scene. Her entire repertoire of woo is stolen from Disney films and shitty love advice columns.

ILANA: (Raising a brow) Dana's 'wooing' me with pasta?

SONG: (Coyly) You might as well start picking out a wedding dress!

SFX: A long, long pause.

ILANA: (Impassive. Rushed) Thank you for your time, Doctor Song.

SFX: Ilana rushes out of the morgue. Song's alone with the body.

SONG: What do you reckon, Willy? Think she bought it?
(Cackles)

SFX: Ashley zips up the body bag, which transitions to...

SCENE SEVEN: PATIENCE

AMBIENT: Eden Orphanage. Night. Dinner-time. The kids are watching a cartoon in the lounge, laughing and giggling. Kind is in the kitchen, chopping vegetables. A large pot is bubbling on the stove. It's cosy. Chaotic. And homey.

SFX: The front door opens and closes. The pitter-patter of tiny feet racing down the hall and into the lounge.

MUSIC: 'Eliot Ness' by Bladverk Band. It's a chill, relaxed jazz piece. A little wistful but only adds to the cosy scene.

VD: Samir has the voice of a very young child (perhaps five or six). He's got a high pitched voice that's excitable and he clearly has no control over his volume yet.

SAMIR: (Screaming excitedly) GIV'S HOOOOOOOOME! GIV'S HOME!
EVERYONE! GIV'S HOOOOME!

SFX: Maeve runs after Samir, her footsteps sluggish and heavier.

MAEVE: (Panting, yelling) Young man! You will sit at the table with the others! Samir! Come back here, you fast little bugger-!

SFX: Giv enters the kitchen.

GIV: (Chuckles)

SFX: He embraces Kind from behind and kisses him.

VD: Kind's voice is more Sujin-like in this scene. Softer, warmer, and relaxed.

GIV: Well, it looks like I made it for dinner. What's cooking?

KIND: (Breathless, flustered) Hi, yeah, we're having cream stew.

SFX: Maeve and Samir converse loudly in the lounge. Samir's talking to her about what he's learned at school and recites the alphabet. Maeve is encouraging.

GIV: Need a hand?

KIND: Can you dish up the stew? Bread's already on the table.

GIV: Of course.

SFX: Giv steps over to the stove and starts ladling the stew into bowls.

KIND: How was work? They let you off early?

GIV: It was pretty standard. Actually, I met that Detective - the one from the news.

KIND: (Beat) Dana Liu?

GIV: That's the one.

KIND: (Tense) What did she want?

GIV: She wanted to see the body. Ashley wasn't too pleased. I didn't know forensic pathologists could be so territorial-

KIND: (Cautiously) Did Ashley find anything?

GIV: She wouldn't divulge. Despite her...strong personality, she does take her work very seriously.

KIND: What was the cop like?

GIV: Rough around the edges. But determined. Confident.

SFX: Giv sets down the ladle and walks back to Kind. He embraces him from behind.

KIND: (Half-hearted scolding) Get off me. I'm holding a knife!

GIV: (Smiling, wheedling) I missed you. Let's talk about you for a change. How was the rest of your day?

KIND: (Relenting sigh) Busy. Aya was in a mood so I volunteered myself to be captive audience for her presentation.

GIV: (Amused) Oh? What was it about?

KIND: Gold panning...or...something. I'm not sure actually. It was really complicated and the presentation was over an hour long. I had the little ones hanging off me the entire time.

GIV: Maybe we should think about enrolling her into that program Kimia was talking about?

KIND: Oh. Um...the special school?

SFX: The front door opens and closes.

GIV: There'll be other kids just like her. (Half-joking) They can all compare notes and present their hour-long lectures to each other. (Chuckles) It would be perfect.

SFX: Heeled footsteps walk through the carpeted hall.

KIND: (Amused) It's expensive, Giv. More than the Director can come up with.

SFX: The high heels clack against the kitchen tiles as the Director enters. They seem to be wearing something with a lot of beads or jewellery as they seem to shimmer and jangle with every motion.

VD: The Director's voice is androgynous and airy. They have a floaty, sing-song, and flirtatious quality to their tone. Their accent is RP English.

DIRECTOR: Oh, have a bit of faith, Susu~

KIND: (Surprised) Director! You're back shockingly early.

DIRECTOR: My date cancelled on me. You'd think the mayor has better things to do than having wine coolers with yours truly.

KIND: (Wry amusement) Like running an entire city?

DIRECTOR: (Blows a raspberry)

GIV: (Concerned) Director. Have you been drinking?

DIRECTOR: Oh, I'm just a little dizzy, that's all. I had a late liquid lunch with Dodder Leach's PA.

SFX: Director steps over to the counter and moves bowls out of the way.

KIND: The Big Oil guy?

DIRECTOR: Turns out his PA is very chatty.

SFX: Director drops their elbow down to lean against the counter. Something goes splat.

DIRECTOR: And very open to slipping me in during his very busy schedule next Monday.

GIV: (Perplexed) Is it wise to associate ourselves with Dodder Leach?

KIND: If it means Aya gets to go to her special school, then it might be worth it.

SFX: Kind stops chopping.

KIND: Director - your elbow is in the stew.

DIRECTOR: Oh! Oops! (Laughs)

MUSIC: The music fades out.

SFX: Kind continues chopping. The Director straightens up, removing their elbow from the stew. The bowl rattles. They walk towards the exit and pause.

DIRECTOR: Well, it all smells delightful, but I must run. I have a shit ton of paperwork I've let pile up for the past week hehe. Oh, Susu? Your friend is incredibly handsome, by the by~

SFX: Kind stop chopping.

KIND: Friend...?

DIRECTOR: Mm. The one lurking outside the gate.

KIND: (Shaky breath)

AMBIENT/SFX: The ambience of Eden mutes as a dark, anxious rumble takes over.

MUSIC: 'Rotting Circuit' by Joseph Beg plays. It's dark, droning music that's eerie and experimental. It has an off-tune quality that unsettles and conveys immense anxiety.

DIRECTOR: He told me he'd just been in to see you?

GIV: (Surprised) You had a visitor?

KIND: (Tense) Was he wearing a black cap?

DIRECTOR: Oh, yes. He was very mysterious. And the blackest black eyes! A girl could fall right into them~

SFX: Beads jangle as the Director fans themselves.
Kind tosses the knife down. It clatters in the sink.

GIV: Sujin?

DIRECTOR: Oops. Did I say something wrong?

KIND: (Tiredly) No. You should eat dinner, Director. Get something substantial in your stomach.

SFX: Kind takes off his apron. Sets it down on the counter.

GIV: (Alarmed) Where are you going?

KIND: I need to go for a walk.

GIV: (Heatedly) Sujin. Are you-

KIND: (Shortly) I'm okay, Giv. Please.

GIV: (Uneasy pause) Be safe. Kind's still out there.

SFX: Kind walks out of the kitchen.

KIND: (Quietly) Yeah. I know.

SFX: Kind stalks down the hall and leaves through the front door.

MUSIC: Crescendos. Then suddenly stops as the front door slams shut.

AMBIENT/SFX: We're suddenly back in the scene. The cartoon plays in the lounge. Children laugh. The stew bubbles away on the stove. An uneasy silence follows.

DIRECTOR: He isn't cheating on you.

SFX: Director saunters over to Giv. Pushes another bowl out of the way.

GIV: That's not what I was-

DIRECTOR: It's written all over your pretty face, husband.

GIV: (Sighs) He's been so tense lately and acting all paranoid.

SFX: Giv walks over to the chopping board. He picks up the discarded apron and folds it neatly.

GIV: And no matter how hard I try, he won't talk to me.

SFX: Giv tosses the apron down, frustrated.

DIRECTOR: When is Susu ever ready to talk when you are?

GIV: (Sighs) Never.

DIRECTOR: Everyone walks at a different pace.

SFX: Director taps the counter with their manicured nails to emphasise their words.

DIRECTOR: You need to wait for him to catch up.

GIV: (Wry chuckle) You're right. I'll be patient.

DIRECTOR: You're a good man, Giv Hasan.

SFX: Director reaches over and pats Giv on the shoulder.

DIRECTOR: And an even better husband.

SFX: Director leans on the counter. Splat.

GIV: (Pause) Director. Your elbow is in the stew again.

SFX: Director pulls their elbow out of the stew. The bowl rattles.

DIRECTOR: Oops!! Hahahahaha!!

SFX: Thunder. As we transition to...

SCENE EIGHT: THE CIESLA ESTATE

AMBIENT: Uptown Silver City. Night. An affluent, suburban area of the city. It's quiet here. We can barely hear any traffic. A storm rages, pelts rain down on the road. Thunder rumbles.

SFX: Kind's boots pound the rain battered sidewalk as he stalks through the district.

VD: Kind's voice is colder in this scene. Disaffected. He is also muffled by his mask.

MUSIC: 'Covert Affairs' by Christoffer Moe Ditlevsen. A tense, suspenseful orchestral piece. The bass pulses like a heartbeat beneath the moody piano.

KIND (VO): Joah hasn't bothered to get this close until I fucked up my process. The hunt was supposed to be clean. Easy. The body wasn't supposed to be found for hours.

But Olivia Ciesla was stumbling home from the club - and she happened to stumble into my alleyway.

SFX: Thunder rumbles.

KIND (VO): I need to learn what I can about the Cieslas. Joah's probably antsy about the fact Olivia's the Governor's daughter. It's too high profile. Too exposed. Either I need to act now, or Joah will act for me later.

AMBIENT/SFX: As Kind nears the Ciesla Estate, we hear owls hooting in the trees and crickets chirping.

Slow, steady footsteps approach. Kind pauses, then quickly runs into the bushes. Hides.

The approaching footsteps pause.

VD: Gary the Guard's voice is masc, exasperated, youthful. He sounds like he could be from his mid 20s to early 30s. He'd rather be anywhere but here.

GARY: (To his walkie talkie) Yeah, everything's quiet here. Just trees and bushes and fucking birds.

SFX: Gary kicks at a puddle, splashing water.

GARY: Game's on tonight and the boss has us working double shifts all night-

SFX: Kind bursts from the bushes. Bullrushes Gary and strikes him over the head.

GARY: (Choked cry as he's hit. Then grunts as he collapses)

SFX: Gary collapses into the puddle. His radio bounces across the concrete.

VD: The Voice on the Radio is femme. Disgruntled. Stern. Nasally.

VOICE ON RADIO: Gary? Gary, you there? What's going on?

SFX: Kind walks over to the radio and picks it up. Static.

KIND: (Muffled by his mask) Yeah. Just a possum. I'll check in later.

VOICE ON RADIO: Roger that. Don't fall asleep - and make sure to check in on the hour.

KIND: Roger.

VOICE ON RADIO: Wide eyes, Gary.

SFX: Kind chucks the radio, shattering it against the concrete. He crouches down and searches Gary's pockets. Pulls out a bunch of keys. He tosses it into the air and catches it before straightening up.

KIND: (Hesitating) Sorry, Gary.

SFX: Kind walks over to the back entrance and beeps himself in. He slips inside.

AMBIENT/SFX: Storehouse. Interior. The rain drums against the ceiling. Machinery or ventilation hums in the background. It's wide, sparse, echoey. Kind's footsteps steadily make their way through the storehouse.

KIND (VO): I head into the estate via the supply entrance, straight through what looks like a giant storehouse. There's a noticeably high security presence - so I have to be quick. I stick to the shadows, keeping out of sight until I reach the other side of the storehouse - an exit to the main grounds.

AMBIENT/SFX: Kind exits the storehouse and he's on the Estate grounds. Rain pelts the soil. Thunder rumbles. Kind continues walking, his footsteps now crunching upon the gravelled path.

KIND (VO): It's easily five times the size of the orphanage - vast emerald lawn, exotic trees and flora, an outdoor pool, and a fountain at the centre of a knee-high hedge maze.

(With a little jeer) It certainly puts things into perspective.

SFX: As he nears the main house, we can hear the muffled voices of Ema and Bakula Ciesla. They are chatting, laughing, and playing pool.

VD: Ema Ciesla has a mature, cool femme voice. She has a slightly transatlantic accent. She has a drawling, coy edge to her tone, one that might belong to a femme fatale in a classic noir film.

Bakula Ciesla has a deep, masculine voice. He has a friendly, approachable, and constantly amused tone. But there's also an uncanny, disingenuity to the way he speaks. As though he's always putting on an act. He sounds as he looks - charming, white-toothed, and dangerously disarming.

SFX: Kind steps into the garden bed to sneak a look through the window.

KIND (VO): Although the grounds are awash in light, it's the glowing windows of the main house that draw my attention.

When I reach one of the windows, I peer through a gap in the curtains. It's a games room or a parlour of some kind. There are guards everywhere - all burly and grim-faced - but their oppressive presence doesn't seem to bother the Cieslas.

Governor Bakula Ciesla's got a cue in hand, leaned against a pool table. And Ema Ciesla, First Lady of Elysium, is conversing with a dark haired man. A man with the 'blackest black eyes'...

SFX: Thunder rumbles.

KIND: (Intakes sharply)

(Whispers to himself) What the fuck? Joah?!

MUSIC: Another song takes over. 'Triptych III: Desolation' by Anders Schill Paulsen. It's electronic droning, like an unsettling grating cry. There's no real form or melody. Just long, gloomy, eerie notes that generate a sense of suffocating sadness or - as the title suggests - desolation.

KIND (VO): My mind's racing. What does Bakula Ciesla have to do with Joah? Is this about Olivia? Am I too late?

Why the fuck is Joah acting so...familiar with the Cieslas? They almost look like a family. Like...he's happy to be there. It's uncanny.

SFX: Kind steps away from the window and continues down the gravel path.

KIND (VO): I know there's a good chance that this is a trap, but I've proven myself against Joah time and time again. He might be bigger than me, but he's too clumsy. Too restrained. He doesn't have my desperation - and desperation is my biggest edge.

AMBIENT/SFX: Kind walks back into the storehouse. Perhaps to find another route into the main house. He drips water on the ground as he quietly makes his way inside.

KIND (VO): But things rarely ever go as planned.

SFX: Someone bullrushes Kind. Knocks him into metal shelving.

KIND: (Choked cry)

SFX: He falls with the shelves. Breaks them. Stunned, he slowly drags himself to his feet.

KIND: (Panting, groaning, disoriented)

SFX: Footsteps rush at Kind. Kind's grabbed by the throat and slammed against the wall.

KIND: (Choked gasps) Nice...to see...you too...Joah...!

VD: Joah's voice is masculine. Monotone. He sounds young, maybe early twenties, and disaffected. There's a callous, flippant quality to the way he speaks. As though he considers everything at arms length. He articulates clearly, deliberately.

JOAH: What the fuck are you playing at?

KIND: (Strained, choking) I...could ask you...the same question!

JOAH: They call you the Kind Killer. They know who you are. Are you trying to attract attention?

KIND: (Anger spikes) I'm trying to survive!

SFX: Thunder rumbles. Kind slams his fist into the wall.

MUSIC: Incessant ticking starts. The opening of 'Me, My Brother, the Sunset' by pär. It's an odd, quirky song with a clock ticking as the motif. It's urgent, melodic, and sad. It generates the feeling of being in an unsettling dream. Nothing is ever really in focus.

KIND: This wouldn't be such a shitshow if you'd just leave me alone.

JOAH: You know that's not how it works.

KIND: (Sneering) Well, I guess we're both victims of circumstance!

SFX: Joah slams Kind against the wall. Something breaks.

KIND: (Pained cry)

(Gasps, pants)

How do you know the Cieslas, Joah? Why are you here?

JOAH: There's a lot you don't know. And you lost the privilege of knowing once you left.

KIND: It's damning. I could unravel it all.

JOAH: (Coldly, taunting) Do it. And let's see what your dear husband has to say about it. All the lies, the subterfuge, the murder. How will he react when he realises that the love of his life is the boogeyman of Silver City?

KIND: I'm doing this to protect him!

JOAH: (Sneering) If that helps you sleep at night.

KIND: (Inhuman Voice) **They're not people!**

VD: At this line 'They're not people!', Kind's voice takes on a supernatural effect. There's a second layer to his voice, one that's deeper, has more bass. There's also distortion and reverb. It sounds inhuman. Vicious.

(TN: Note that this specific vocal effect will make more appearances in the future. Whenever this happens, it will be noted as Kind's 'Inhuman Voice'.)

JOAH: They're as much people as you are, Sujin.

KIND: (Seething) Fuck you.

SFX: Kind lurches forward and headbutts Joah. Joah goes sprawling. Slides across the ground.

KIND: (Laughs deliriously - his nerves are frayed)

SFX: Joah stands up.

JOAH: Enough! Enough with this...stupid domesticity. It's pathetic. And pointless.

(Pleading) Come home and end this masquerade.

KIND: (Coldly) How many more years do we have to play this game?

JOAH: (Sincerely) Until the very end, if I have to.

KIND: (Spiteful) You're willing to fail, continuously, spectacularly, for what - pride? Cowardice? Jealousy?

SFX: Joah rushes forward. Punches Kind. Kind hits the wall. Slides down.

JOAH: Jealousy? Keep this up, Kind, and your bauble of a life will crumble into ash. And you'll be the one to set it alight!

SFX: Kind rights himself.

KIND: (Panting, catching his breath) Three hits.

JOAH: What?

KIND: I let you have three hits.

JOAH: (Scoffs) Let me? You're getting weak, old man.

KIND: Is that why you're here? To prove your worth?

JOAH: I came here to warn you. Kind has to die. And you have to come home.

KIND: You know my answer.

JOAH: (Coldly) It's courtesy to give a final warning.

KIND: Is that supposed to be a threat?

JOAH: It's a kindness.

(Pause)

He's not happy, Sujin.

KIND: (Frustrated) Why won't you just tell me who he is?

JOAH: I can't do that. Not until you come back with me.

MUSIC: Pauses. Silence falls.

KIND: (Voice cracking. Frustrated, upset) I wish it didn't have to be like this.

SFX: Joah walks towards Kind. His footsteps are slow, deliberate. They echo ominously. He eventually comes to a stop.

JOAH: (Quietly; deflated) Me too.

SFX: WHAM!

Joah punches Kind.

MUSIC: The music comes back in full force. The bass is sped up, reminiscent of a train picking up speed.

AMBIENT/SFX: A brutal, violent fight breaks out. Joah is overwhelming Kind. He kicks him through the door and it shatters.

Kind lands in the mud, rolling a few feet before coming to a stop. The rain beats down on him. Thunder rumbles and lightning cracks.

KIND: (Panting, groaning, coughing)

SFX: Joah bullrushes Kind. Kicks him over and over again.

JOAH: Stay! Down! Old! Man!

SFX: Kind manages to block a few blows. Finds his footing. He fights back. Brutal. Fast. Clean. Once he gets the upper hand, he's a deadly force. His blows are clearly far more powerful than Joah's, as it takes significantly less to beat him down. One well placed strike sends Joah flying. It's a testament to Kind's inhuman strength. Joah lands in the mud, stunned.

Kind walks towards Joah, predatory, steady.

Joah hurriedly pulls his silenced pistol out. Shoots erratically at Kind. But he misses each and every time.

KIND: (Catching his breath)

JOAH: (Shaken, pissed) Fuck!

SFX: Kind grabs Joah's pistol. Crushes it in one hand and tosses it aside.

KIND: (Growls)

JOAH: (Freaked out gasps)

SFX: Kind grabs Joah by the collar and starts punching him. Mercilessly. Over and over again. If Joah was human, he would have been dead by the first punch.

KIND: (Panting, snarling, for every punch)

JOAH: (Panting, groaning)

SFX: Kind screams as he lands the last bloody punch. Joah collapses into the mud, coughing, groaning.

MUSIC: 'Triptych III: Desolation' by Anders Schill Paulsen takes over again.

KIND: (Catches his breath. He's shaken. Upset)

KIND (VO): I hurt him bad this time. Bad enough that he won't come after me for a while. And even though I know it had to be done, the blood on my knuckles scare me more than the idea of giving up; of submitting to Joah and killing Kind.

SFX: A guard dog barks in the distance.

GUARD: (Yelling) Over there! There's an intruder!

SFX: Kind makes a run for it. He races back into the storehouse, over the broken door, through the expansive building.

KIND (VO): I run out of there, as fast as I can. Leaving behind Joah.

KIND: (Panting, panicked)

JOAH: (Screaming, half-mad with rage) Stop running! Stop running and face me, you coward!!!!

SFX: Kind's footsteps stumble in his haste. Joah's screams fade in the distance.

KIND (VO): Poor, broken Joah. My bloodhound. My ghost.

SFX: Kind slams through the door.

AMBIENT/SFX: Everything goes silent.

SCENE NINE: SIX DEGREES

SFX: A radio tuning. Static. It lands on a song.

MUSIC: Just Like in the Movies by Particle House plays on the radio. It sounds like a classic 80s jazzy-synth-pop song with a colourful saxophone.

AMBIENT: We fade into the scene as the radio plays. We're in Dana's car. A few minutes back in time. The rain drums against the car. The driver's window is open, letting in the sounds of the storm, the owls, and the crickets.

SFX: Dana pulls out a cigarette and lights it up, smoking out the window. Every now and then she taps the ash from the cigarette. The crinkle of leather informs us that she is wearing a leather jacket.

Ilana reads her notes in the passenger seat, flipping pages occasionally.

ILANA: You really should quit those.

DANA: I'm halfway to my grave. No point giving up now.

ILANA: You're barely an adult.

DANA

Speak for yourself. How old are you?

ILANA: Twenty-eight, actually.

DANA: Jesus fucking Christ.

ILANA: Is that bad?

DANA: Nonono, it's not bad at all.

ILANA: Oh.

DANA: But you are the oldest fucking twenty-eight year old I've ever known.

ILANA: (Primly) I'll choose to take that as a compliment.

DANA: (Chuckles) You have your moments though.

ILANA: Such as?

DANA: Like thinking the condom advertisement was a newfangled water balloon. What was it you said? "To achieve better air velocity"?

ILANA: (Slightly flustered) I don't see how that is relevant.

DANA: Yeah but. It's common knowledge, ain't it? Didn't you learn about all that stuff in senior high?

SFX: Dana flicks the cigarette butt out the window.
(TN: littering is bad)

ILANA: ...I must have missed the module.

DANA: Jesus, Stone.

ILANA: You're distracting us from the job. Keep your eyes on the estate, not me.

DANA: (Grinning) Oh, I dunno. I kinda like this view.

SFX: Ilana bats Dana with the folder.

DANA: (Exaggerated) Ow!

ILANA: Eyes front, Detective.

DANA: Alright, alright. Keep your dentures on, Stone. Change the damn radio, why dontcha? It's grating on my nerves.

SFX: Ilana leans forward and changes the station.

MUSIC: 'Interim' by Bladverk Band plays. It's a slow, dreamy, romantic jazz song featuring a saxophone.

SFX: The detectives listen attentively for a moment.

DANA: You like jazz?

ILANA: Is that so surprising?

DANA: You seem like more of a Bach girl.

ILANA: (Blankly) A bark girl?

DANA: Bach - you know, Johann Sebastian-nevermind. What's your favourite musician?

ILANA: Was I supposed to have one?

DANA: ...Uh. No. I suppose not. But most people do.

ILANA: I like it all.

DANA: (Incredulous laughter) You like it all? You like all jazz?

ILANA: Yes. It's unpredictable. Feverish. Bad, and also good.

DANA: Bad and good?

(Chuckles)

Yeah, I guess it's an acquired taste.

ILANA: I think jazz is what our thoughts must sound like, if they were ever transcribed into musical notation. It's human, and that's what I like about it.

DANA: (Thoughtful pause)

Hmph. I like that. You know, my dad used to take me to jazz clubs when I was kid. Wasn't really supposed to since they sold booze, but no-one cared. You don't go there for the fireballs anyway. It's all about the music.

Well, at least for me, it was partly about the music. Have you ever been to a jazz club, Stone?

ILANA: Can't say that I have.

DANA: During the prohibition, most of the clubs had to go underground to keep the scene alive, so when you go down there, it feels like you're stepping into a void.

AMBIENT/SFX: As Dana speaks, the ambient fades away until we're just left with the music. It becomes centred, clear, as though a live band is playing right before us.

DANA (VO): It's so insulated. So isolated from the rest of the world. And when that music starts playing, it's like you're in a different dimension altogether. You start seeing colours and shapes that you've never seen, feel shit you've never felt, and the ride don't stop until the music does.

SFX: The music crescendos. Then slowly it eases back down. We're slowly pulled back to reality. Into Dana's car. The rain. The owls and crickets. The music is playing on the radio again.

DANA: And when you climb those stairs back into the real world, the portal closes behind you. It's a door you can never step through twice. But each time - man - each time, it's a fucking experience.

SFX: The detectives are quiet. Just listening. Lingering in that warm memory.

DANA: (Embarrassed) Sorry. Kinda ran my mouth there.

ILANA: (Quickly) No! No, I...I enjoy listening to you. You should talk more.

DANA: (Chuckles) Seriously? Most people can't wait to tell me to shut up and-

ILANA: I want to know more about jazz and your dad.

(Beat)

(Shyly) I want to know more about you.

DANA: (Stunned silence. She coughs lightly)

Uh. Hm. (Awkward, nervous chuckle) Let's drive around the block. Change the scenery.

SFX: Dana turns off the radio. Puts up the window. She starts the car and the engine rumbles. Windshield wipers whir. The car slowly drives around the block.

ILANA: (Urgent) Dana.

SFX: Screech! The car comes to a sudden stop.

DANA: Oh, shit! Oh, shit!

ILANA: Is that-?

DANA: (Urgent, excited) Short stature, black hood, black mask, black fucking everything?! That's him! That's Kind! Stone, get your gun out!

AMBIENT/SFX: BOOM! Lighting cracks. Thunder rumbles. The detectives run through the rain, their footsteps splashing in puddles.

MUSIC: 'Shaking Hands' by Ava Low. It begins with bass/drums that sound like a heartbeat. Dun-dun. Dun-dun.

DANA: (Yelling) Freeze! Freeze, this is the SCPD!

SFX: Kind's distant footsteps pause.

KIND: (Straining from panic, exertion) Nonononono!

ILANA: Freeze or we will shoot!

DANA: Kind! It's over! It's done! Put your hands in the air and get down on your knees!

SFX: Kind slowly backs away.

ILANA: Stop moving! This is your final warning - we will shoot!

SFX: Kind takes off running.

DANA: Kind! You stupid fucking-Stone, he's making a run for it!

SFX: The detectives chase after him.

MUSIC: An electronic melody joins the heartbeat. It's a synth that goes up and down in scale. Suspenseful. Anxious.

ILANA: FREEZE!

DANA: KIND! THIS IS YOUR LAST CHANCE!

ILANA: He's not stopping!

DANA: (Exasperated) Eurgh! Goddamnit!

SFX: Dana cocks her gun.

ILANA: (Anxious) Dana, I-

SFX: Dana skids to a stop, her boot sliding through a puddle. Ilana bullrushes and knocks into her, throwing her aim off.

DANA: (Grunt as she's knocked into)

SFX: A single gunshot. We follow the bullet to Kind as it hits his arm.

KIND: (A sharp, gasping cry)

SFX: He staggers. Continues running.

KIND (VO): (Inhuman Voice) It burns like the end.

SFX: His footsteps become increasingly staggered as he loses blood. His panicked panting becomes strained.

KIND (VO): (Normal Voice) Mortality of the worst kind. Blood soaks. Drenches. Splatter the ground with every step. The cops - one with hate streaming from her eyes. The other like ice, eyes wide and confused. (Breathless, weak) I'm losing feeling. My legs are too weak. I-I can't breathe, I can't breathe, I-

VD: Kind's voice echoes as he weakens.

KIND: (Strained gasps)

SFX: Footsteps slow to dragging steps as he struggles to stay upright.

MUSIC: The heartbeat is more prominent. Louder.

KIND: (Gasps, desperate) Giv!

SFX: Kind collapses. BOOM! Thunder and lightning shake the earth.

MUSIC: A drifting tide of what sounds like sand pulses in time with the heartbeat.

KIND (VO): (Lightly, very Sujin-like) My name is Sujin Baek. I'm thirty-five years old. I work at the Eden Orphanage in Higanbana District. I have a husband, Giv Hasan. He asked me to marry him on Christmas Eve. He gives me every piece of himself with no expectation. And I take him all.

I take him as I took the others.

(Inhuman Voice) **And I will take endless more.**

(Normal Voice) Until there's nothing left but scraps and bones. Because I am Kind.

(Inhuman Voice - like an echo) **Because I am Kind.**

In the only way I know how.

MUSIC: The chorus plays. A guttural, metallic, moody synth. The sand drifts like cresting waves as the heartbeat continues. Dun-dun. Dun-dun. Dun-dun.

VD: The Narrator's voice is by the same voice actor as the Director. It is masculine with an Rp English accent, that is smooth and slightly airy.

NARRATOR (VO):

Chapter One stars...

KoreHan as the Kind Killer

GM Hakim as Giv Hasan

Skye Redden as Detective Dana Liu

Bree Frankel as Detective Ilana Stone

Athena Lee as Olivia Ciesla

Elias McDonald as Joah Birch

Jeremy Tucker as Governor Bakula Ciesla

Shykodah-Khi McGrath or Vyxenah as Ema Ciesla

Sneha Kumar as Maeve Kelly

Patrick J. delva as Owen Reed

Vanessa Benoit as Kimia Azar

Jay Roussouw or Jay33721 as the Director and the Narrator

Mystic Waterz as Lieutenant Cassie Alder

Willa Julius as Doctor Ashley Song

Hannah Elizabeth as Aya and Samir

Ransoms as Principal Bosch

Maxwell Anthony as Eugene Nam

Sub1optimal or Harrison Chow as Thomas Hurste and Gary the Guard

The Hermon Motels Jingle is by Jaidenazakai.

KIND is produced by Madison Diaz

The script editor is Matt Doherty

The show consultant is Austin Sharp.

The Strangekind Studio artists are Elias McDonald and Eva Monique.

KIND is written, directed, and sound designed by Jae-in Hwan.

The sound effects and music for this show is sourced from Epidemic Sound. You can find the link to the full music credits in the description of this episode. Please follow, rate, and review to support our show.

This has been presented by Strangekind Studio.

MUSIC: And as the music fades away, only the sand and the heartbeat remain. Until those too, disappear.

END CHAPTER ONE