

FUTURE TENSE

"Thinning The Herd"

Pilot Episode

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FINAL SHOOTING DRAFT

In the near future, crimes involving advanced technology have become a serious threat. When conventional law enforcement fails, the investigation and prosecution of these crimes falls to an elite Federal unit known as Techno Crimes Division...

...this is Future Tense.

FUTURE TENSE

"Thinning The Herd"

TEASER

A BURST OF STATIC RESOLVES INTO

VIDEO: GLOBAL NEWS EXCHANGE (GNX) NEWSCAST

An ominous graphic resolves on the screen:

HOUSTON CHILD KILLER BODY COUNT: 7

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: GNX Newsreader CINDY NEWLAND.

CINDY NEWLAND

Another manhunt ended in tragedy today with the discovery of the body of a missing boy - bringing the death toll to seven in the most shocking serial murder case of the 21st century.

The screen fills with images of the murdered children - family snapshots, grade school yearbook pictures, screen-grabs from videos of birthdays past...

Every image is a tragic memento of innocence lost.

PULL OUT OF VIDEO TO REVEAL

EXT. HOUSTON CITY STREET - DAY

The video display wraps around the side of a building.

CINDY NEWLAND

The suspect, nicknamed "The Cattle Brand Killer" rapes and tortures his victims before dumping the bodies.

A Houston Police cruiser drives by the building.

INT. HOUSTON PD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Techno Crimes Division SPECIAL AGENTS EMMA BISHOP (late 20's, a professional with an all business-attitude) and PHILIP KINDRED (mid 30's, comfortably rumped, devil-may-care demeanor) ride as **the car drives itself.**

Kindred watches the GNX report on his PDA:

(CONTINUED)

CINDY NEWLAND (PDA SCREEN)
Today, Houston Chief of Detectives Henry
Renshaw had the following statement:

A WINDOW OPENS ON THE PDA SCREEN

To reveal the harried, blustering Chief of Houston Detectives
(HENRY RENSHAW, 50's), attempting to evade the press outside his
Station House.

RENSHAW
I want the people to know that we are
pursuing several leads. There will be no
eighth victim.

RESUME ON BISHOP AND KINDRED

KINDRED
Can you believe this? A hundred years of
television and local 5-0s still don't
know how to lie to the press.

BISHOP
Isn't there an online casino open
somewhere in the world?

KINDRED
I'm sure there is, but as long as I gotta
share jurisdiction with Houston PD and
ride one of their crap-mobiles, I might
as well bone up on their tactics.

AUTOMATED CAR VOICE
Final destination in two minutes.

BISHOP
Switch to undercover mode.

AUTOMATED CAR VOICE
Undercover mode engaged.

EXT. HOUSTON PD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

The car **automatically changes colors:** from conspicuously labeled
Police car to unmarked in the blink of an eye.

INT. HOUSTON PD CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

KINDRED
Like a color change is gonna fool
anybody. This car stinks like bacon.

(CONTINUED)

Bishop looks up from her PDA. Stares.

KINDRED (CONT'D)
Don't give me the stare.

BISHOP
What stare?

KINDRED
The stare.

Bishop doesn't change a thing she's doing. Kindred just goes back to his rant:

KINDRED (CONT'D)
You know what? I'm glad they're tied up with this serial killer. We can serve this idiotic warrant in peace and get the hell out of beeflover's paradise.

BISHOP
Idiotic. A scientist buying black market genetic equipment doesn't bother you?

Bishop holds up her PDA. On the screen is the warrant - **including an animated picture of DR. DEAN MENLO (60's):**

KINDRED
Allegedly buying.

BISHOP
He could read anyone's DNA like a book.

KINDRED
The guy could be making himself a sex droid for all we know.

Kindred switches his PDA over to an **online poker game.**

BISHOP
Would you be joking if he violated your Privacy? Knew every secret inside of you?

KINDRED
Who gives a rat's ass? We're the ones violating someone's privacy today.

BISHOP
I hear there's a genetic marker for compulsive gambling.

Bishop pushes a button: **both her and Kindred's seat automatically move** to the standard driver/passenger position.

AUTOMATED CAR VOICE
Self-drive disengaged.

KINDRED
My genetic data's sitting in the government census computer. The only way it gets out is with my consent.

BISHOP
Did you just express faith in the government?

KINDRED
I expressed faith in my ability to end this conversation.

BISHOP
You're not a nice man.

KINDRED
I'm not insulted.

BISHOP
Mull it over, it'll kick your ass on the way home.

Kindred shoots Bishop a glare as she brings the car to a stop...

EXT DR MENLO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

...and the two Agents continue their argument as they step out into a cruddy neighborhood where every house looks like something from *Silence of the Lambs*.

KINDRED
Beautiful. If I heard a scream of human agony I wouldn't know which house to hit first.

Bishop opens the trunk to reveal a cache of weapons. Kindred reaches in for the biggest gun of the lot:

BISHOP
Put down the hand cannon, Philip.

KINDRED
Screw the orders, Emma. I am not going non-lethal. No way.

(CONTINUED)

Bishop stares him down. Kindred grudgingly drops the hand cannon and grabs a much less threatening non-lethal weapon.

Bishop closes the trunk. The two move toward the house.

INT. DR. MENLO'S HOUSE- MOMENTS LATER

Bishop kicks in the door, letting in a shaft of light:

KINDRED
Can't we just once investigate a
psychopath who likes the sun?

The two take opposite paths to search this dark, garbage strewn, pack-rat's maze.

Bishop navigates past piles of taped-together newspapers and science journals, all towering up to the ceiling. Windows are blacked-out with newspaper and duct tape.

Seeing an electronic glow in one of the rooms, Bishop enters to find a wall of **sophisticated equipment**: a jury-rig of computers, flat panel displays and genetic lab gear.

BISHOP
(calling out to Kindred)
I think I found your sex droid.

Kindred makes his way into the room and finds a lab bench - on it is a rack holding arranged set of vials, all numbered.

KINDRED
(looking at the vials)
Hair, blood, fluids. Menlo's been taking
DNA samples. But whose, and why?

In answer, Bishop holds up a **data crystal** - a flat rectangle of polished glass - which she slides into a slot. The screens come to life with pictures of people and DNA strands.

BISHOP
He's doing more than taking samples...
he's having a look inside.

Kindred steps up, intrigued in looking at the faces of strangers yet reading their most intimate secrets... he takes up a light pen and scrolls through the data:

KINDRED
Damn... the things you can tell from
someone's DNA...
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

KINDRED (CONT'D)
this guy's a total pedophile - and this lady here's got the nympho gene - nice - and this guy - ouch - talk about having issues.

Bishop's discomfort grows along with Kindred's almost voyeuristic amusement:

BISHOP
These people might as well be standing naked in front of us. Turn it off.

But Kindred keeps looking. Getting pissed, Bishop reaches past him and pulls the data crystal from the slot.

KINDRED
You're no fun.

Bishop doesn't respond - instead, she notices the barest hint of a reflection on the dead video screen: someone just moved across the hallway behind them. Bishop and Kindred make a swift run out of the room -

FOLLOW BISHOP AND KINDRED

- chasing after Menlo, who pushes piles of debris in their way as they struggle to negotiate the narrow corridors.

Menlo rushes into a room. The sound of CRASHING glass ECHOES from inside. Bishop enters -

- and sees DR. MENLO, using a stool to climb out of the window he just shattered. Surprised, Menlo turns -

- there's something in his hand!

KINDRED (CONT'D)
Gun!

Kindred fires his weapon - a blob of **green goo** POPS! out the barrel. **The stuff expands - becoming a sheet of sticky green ooze that knocks Menlo off his stool and pins him to the wall about a foot off the ground.**

Menlo kicks and SCREAMS uncontrollably, the sound muffled by the ooze covering his mouth, his eyes dart to the object in his hand. Bishop and Kindred rush over.

ON MENLO'S HAND

The flashing object BEEPS-BEEPS-BEEPS. Faster and faster.

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP
Detonator.

KINDRED
Disarm it.

Kindred and Bishop reach down - desperately trying to pry the detonator from Menlo's clutched hand -

- but because Menlo's hand is pinned to the wall by the green goo and Menlo is kicking savagely at the two Agents. The more Bishop and Kindred reach the more it becomes clear that the detonator isn't going anywhere.

The BEEP-BEEP-BEEP turns into one continuous BEEEEEEEEEP.

Menlo's eyes bug. He screams even louder. Bishop grabs at Menlo, trying to pry him off the wall.

KINDRED (CONT'D)
Leave him! Go! Go!

Kindred pulls Bishop away - the two haul out of the place as the BEEEEEP of the detonator hangs in the air behind them.

EXT. DR. MENLO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Bishop and Kindred burst out the front door and... BOOM!

Fire. Smoke. A shockwave knocks them off their feet.

Kindred's eyes snap open - just in time to see one of the **video screens from the lab** drop from the sky and impale itself on the soft earth mere inches from his face.

The video screen sputters a brief burst of static, then expires with a pop of electricity.

Off Kindred's startled expression -

STATIC BURST TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

STATIC BURST TRANSITION INTO

EXT. DR. MENLO'S HOUSE - DAY

FIREFIGHTERS exit the smouldering hulk. Bishop and Kindred rush to the entrance as two EMTs pull Doctor Menlo's charred body out on a gurney laden with **high-tech diagnostic devices**.

Several more EMTs join the struggle to save Menlo, placing **patches of a flesh-like substance** over the burns.

KINDRED

Think he's gonna pull through?

BISHOP

If they can replace the skin and muscle he may have a shot at a lifetime of pain.

KINDRED

Good to me.

An EMT gives Kindred a sour look as Bishop goes in the house:

KINDRED (CONT'D)

SOB tried to blow me up. What?

An unmarked car pulls up. Out of it barrels an annoyed Houston Chief Detective Henry Renshaw, flanked by a younger, soft-spoken subordinate, DETECTIVE JOHN MEANS (40's).

Kindred sees them and beelines back toward the house:

RENSHAW

Agent Kindred! What in sam-hell happened here? You said this Menlo character was stealing people's DNA - you didn't mention an exploding house.

KINDRED

(still walking)
Chief Renshaw. Hi. I was just admiring your work in television.

RENSHAW

The way I hear, they're gonna cancel the ceremony and just mail me the freakin' Emmy.

(then)

This is Detective Means.

(CONTINUED)

MEANS

What the Chief is trying to say is that while we fully respect your Federal jurisdiction, we don't enjoy surprises when we have a serial child killer tying up our resources.

Renshaw gets in front of Kindred, stopping him:

RENSHAW

So will you do me a courtesy? Will you do me a kindness? Make your report and get the hell out of Houston without blowing anything else up.

KINDRED

I can't make any guarantees.

As Kindred sidesteps Renshaw and enters the house -

INT. DR. MENLO'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

- Renshaw's frustration grows as he follows Kindred through the wet, sooty labyrinth that is Menlo's house:

RENSHAW

Well... try, 'cause my ulcer's about to file for workman's comp.

The three quickly enter the lab, where Bishop collects the shattered fragments of Menlo's data crystal:

MEANS

Excuse me - Agent Bishop - that's evidence you're handling there -

Kindred steps between Means and Bishop:

KINDRED

Evidence. Really? Hot damn, Bishop, you'd better put that in a bag and keep it or something.

Bishop bags it, then walks out past the detectives to the front door. As Kindred turns to follow:

RENSHAW

Am I gonna get some answers?

KINDRED

Gentlemen, everything will be explained in our report...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

KINDRED (CONT'D)
(catching up to Bishop)
...after we figure out how to explain it
to our boss.

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - BULLPEN - DAY

The Boss - DOCTOR ALEXANDER CHASE (early 40's) - walks beneath a large display showing the Techno Crimes Division name and logo, and crosses to the Bullpen, flanked by his right-hand man, a sixteen year-old girl named ALICE WONG.

Wong walks and talks like a trained professional, even as she fiddles with a Rubik's cube.

CHASE
Cybercrimes unit?

WONG
Checking out bank fraud in the northwest.

CHASE
Biotech?

WONG
There's Mynock fever in the Everglades
and they're all over it.

CHASE
Did you eat a healthy breakfast today?

WONG
You're not my father.

CHASE
I always walk into that.

WONG
Adults are so predictable.

CHASE
So are sixteen year old girls with
genetically enhanced I.Q.s.

WONG
I knew you were going to say that.
(off Chase's look)
What?

CHASE
For a second there I thought I was in a
schoolyard and not the corridors of a
Federal law-enforcement agency.

(CONTINUED)

WONG
I always walk into that.

They are intercepted by MILES GUPTA (30's), the only man in the building wearing a necktie.

GUPTA
Doctor Chase -

WONG
Yo, Miles, I stole this off your desk.
What is it?

Annoyed, Gupta holds out his hand:

GUPTA
An antique. In my family for decades.

WONG
And no one's solved it yet?

Wong solves and hands it over. Gupta steps past Wong, but before he can speak:

CHASE
You're gonna say that as my chief counsel
you strongly discourage me from going
into my meeting -

The three now stand outside Chase's glass-walled office, a nervous man waits inside - this is FLETCHER BURNETT.

CHASE (CONT'D)
- that the man waiting in there knows I'm
a medical doctor and a flaming liberal
and this meeting is a cynical play on my
sympathies.

As Gupta and Chase talk, Wong hears a CHIRP from her PDA, unfolds the **screen** and reads the message:

GUPTA
- and that being a political appointee
who's never worked in law-enforcement
puts you at a disadvantage.
(then, with disdain)
And I would never use a word like
"flaming."

(CONTINUED)

WONG

Sorry to interrupt the marriage
counseling, but Bishop and Kindred just
blew up a house, you wanna talk to them?

Chase looks through the glass at Burnett, turns to Wong:

CHASE

Put him on hold.

Chase then takes the PDA from Wong's hand - holds it up:

CHASE (CONT'D)

(to the PDA)

People. You were supposed to serve the
man not blow him up.

INTERCUT WITH

EXT. HOUSTON HOSPITAL ER - CONTINUOUS

Kindred argues with Chase on his own PDA as he steps out of the
cruiser and into the hospital:

KINDRED

Menlo blew himself up - and damn near
turned us into tortilla soup. If you'd
let us carry real guns -

INT. HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

Bishop catches up, listening in as Chase cuts Kindred off:

CHASE

You go non-lethal unless there's a clear
and present danger. You don't like it,
you can always resign in protest.

(beat)

Any idea why Menlo destroyed his lab?

KINDRED

Other than being a high-tech-DNA-peeping
tom nutjob?

CHASE

Put Bishop on.

Kindred grimaces, hands over the PDA:

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP

We recovered Menlo's data crystal. It's smashed, but we're sending it to you for analysis.

CHASE

Can Menlo talk?

INT. HOSPITAL OR - CONTINUOUS

Bishop and Kindred reach a glass wall. Beyond is a **highly advanced OR** where **Menlo floats in a tank of luminescent goo.**

A **TECHNICIAN** adds fluid to the tank by inserting a **long, capsule-shaped receptacle.** A set of **robotic arms** track back over the tank, sewing skin grafts onto Menlo's charred body.

A young Houston PD Officer (WHEELER) stands by the wall:

BISHOP

Not 'til tomorrow. They're sewing him a new skin.

CHASE

When he's out I want to know who paid for all that black market equipment and why he blew it up.

Chase clicks off. Bishop lowers the PDA, Kindred is left staring at Wheeler as he steps to make an impression:

KINDRED

You must be our Houston PD escort.

WHEELER

Officer Wheeler. Ready to protect and serve, sir.

Kindred turns away, looks at Menlo, dusts himself off:

KINDRED

I am so getting a drop gun.

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - CHASE'S OFFICE - LATER

Chase, Wong and Gupta enter the empty office. Chase reaches for the phone, hitting the **holo-conference** button.

A **ceiling-mounted projector** comes to life, and Burnett re-appears in the room:

(CONTINUED)

CHASE

Sorry to put you on hold, Mr. Burnett.
My chief counsel here tells me you run a
victims advocacy group.

BURNETT

I represent three hundred people who were
maimed during body enhancement.

GUPTA

Illegal body enhancement. Like super
strength, night vision, extra limbs.

BURNETT

I hear you are a compassionate man,
Chase. Will I be seeing that today?

Chase gives Gupta a look. Gupta backs down:

CHASE

I'm listening.

BURNETT

The doctors who do this butchery know
their victims can't come out against them
without going to jail. All we want is
amnesty - if the victims could speak out,
you could put a lot of unethical doctors
away.

Gupta moves up to speak, Chase holds up his hand:

CHASE

My lawyer's about to give the example
that the law doesn't let people off the
hook for buying drugs if they turn in
their dealer. How am I supposed to
convince the Attorney General to grant
you amnesty?

Burnett cuts Chase off, taking another tack:

BURNETT

Your assistant is very young. A designer
baby, right? A genetically engineered
superbrain?

WONG

You got a problem with superbrains? My
parents had my DNA tweaked before I was
born. That's legal - by the FDA book.

(CONTINUED)

BURNETT

Right. By the FDA book... my son Lionel was born before you could design your kids. But even without that, he was the youngest letterman at his school - already had NBA, GBA and WBL scouts coming to look at him play.

Burnett hits a switch, **triggering a holo-projection of his son LIONEL** (18), in a wheelchair, his back turned to the room. Lionel stares out, says nothing.

BURNETT (CONT'D)

When he broke his arm, a doctor came to me and said he could make his bones harder, faster healing...

(to his son, gently)

Lionel, why don't you show Doctor Chase?
It's OK, son, show him.

Lionel turns the chair around, exposing his torso.

Lionel's bones have grown uncontrollably, protruding through his skin. Lionel's ribs are a twisted constellation of white arcs breaking through his torso. Fat bone spurs branch from Lionel's fingertips. His joints are horribly swollen: the skin is broken everywhere, exposing hideous masses of bone.

The shock of Lionel's hideous condition registers on everyone's face as Burnett finishes his story.

BURNETT (CONT'D)

When the bones get too long, they have to be sawed off. He has to endure that at least twice a year. I'll rot in hell for this, but if anyone deserves to rot in jail it's that doctor, not my son.

(beat)

Tell that to the Attorney General.

Burnett clicks himself and his son off. As Chase, Wong and Gupta process what they have seen...

SMASH CUT TO

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR TO THE OR - DAY

ALARMS and a chaos of human bustle sound in the distance.
Bishop and Kindred rush to the OR behind a team of DOCTORS and NURSES -

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

- inside is a catastrophe. Menlo's vat is ruptured. The floor is drenched in fluid. The equipment surrounding the vat is in flames. An ORDERLY sprays the fire with an extinguisher.

KINDRED
(to a doctor)
What happened?

DOCTOR
His pain management system exploded. I've never seen anything like it.

The doctor runs in to help revive Menlo. **The vital signs display above Menlo glows red:** Menlo's a goner.

Wheeler approaches, looking like a doe in the headlights:

WHEELER
What in the -

KINDRED
You were supposed to be watching him!

WHEELER
I just went out for a - how was I supposed to know that thing would go haywire? Must have been a glitch or something -

BISHOP
Did you see anyone come in or out?

WHEELER
I told you I wasn't here... I think I'd better go tell the Chief.

BISHOP
(looking down)
What's that on your hand?

Bishop grabs Wheeler's hand, lifts it to eye level - he has a large welt on his palm:

WHEELER
I don't know what you're -

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP
(tightening her grip)
Maybe Menlo's pain management system
didn't just go haywire... maybe someone
sabotaged it. Burned his hand doing it.

Bishop *squeezes*. Wheeler winces.

WHEELER
OW!

Wheeler retracts his hand. Kindred breaks out the cuffs:

KINDRED
Why'd you do it, Wheeler?

Bishop and Kindred close in - just as a TECHNICIAN rushes toward
the OR carrying a **receptacle of fluid** for Menlo's vat -

- Wheeler grabs the receptacle and SMASHES Kindred across the
face, sending him straight into Bishop. Bishop shakes Kindred
off and gives chase.

INT. HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Wheeler hightails it down the corridor. Dodging NURSES,
ORDERLIES and PATIENTS. Within seconds the entire hallway is a
chaos of frightened, screaming humanity.

Bishop dodges through as she takes out her sidearm, trying to
get a clear shot - she finally gets a bead on Wheeler and **fires**.

A dart WHOOSHES from Bishop's sidearm and buries itself in
Wheeler's back.

Bishop pushes a button on her weapon. The dart **lights up and
makes an electric shock sound** - Wheeler's body **spasms as he
falls to the floor and vomits**.

Kindred approaches - a nasty cut on his forehead where Wheeler
smashed him. Wheeler writhes as **awful gurgling, flatulent
sounds erupt from his out-of-control body**.

KINDRED
(slapping on the cuffs)
I hate non-lethal weapons. I'd almost
rather bag a corpse than cuff some
jackass who lost control of his bodily
functions.
(to the cuffs)
Extra tight please.

(CONTINUED)

The cuffs **automatically wind around Wheeler's wrists.**

KINDRED (CONT'D)

You want to tell us why you killed Doctor Menlo? No?

(savoring it)

Sick him again Bishop.

Off the look of horror on Wheeler's face...

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - CORRIDOR - DAY

Chase races toward a lab, in the middle of a heated discussion with Gupta:

CHASE

My mind's made up. Call the Attorney General and negotiate the amnesty.

GUPTA

I cannot believe you are falling for this. The people Fletcher Burnett represents - what happened to them may be tragic, but they asked for illegal body modification.

CHASE

May be tragic? Were we in the same room?

GUPTA

Burnett doesn't want to go to jail for maiming his son. And lest we forget, they did it to cheat at basketball. Maybe the other victims did it to commit crimes, conceal their identity - defraud the government.

CHASE

Have you ever heard the expression "help or at least do no harm?"

GUPTA

I knew you would drag Hippocrates into this eventually.

CHASE

So you think it's OK for someone who maims his patients to be out there practicing medicine?

(CONTINUED)

GUPTA

Granting this amnesty sets a dangerous precedent, even if we do arrest some unethical doctors. The only way the laws have any teeth is if body enhancement is illegal across the board.

CHASE

Why are you being such a bureaucrat?

GUPTA

Somebody has to, or else this place will be crawling with drug addicts and johns, demanding leniency for turning in their suppliers.

CHASE

A doctor deliberately turned that boy into a freak. A doctor, Miles. Get the amnesty.

They reach a door to the Data Recovery Lab. Chase enters. Gupta is left arguing with a closing door:

GUPTA

You're not thinking like a government official.

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - DATA RECOVERY LAB - CONTINUOUS

The crystal fragment from Menlo's lab is mounted on a stand.
Wong uses a **blue laser** to scan the crystal:

CHASE

Time to use that big brain of yours.

WONG

How's that different from all the time?

CHASE

The game's connect the dots: dot#1: Bishop and Kindred try to serve a scientist who's using illegal equipment to profile people's DNA. Dot#2: the scientist blows up his own lab -

WONG

- presumably to hide something -

CHASE

- that's dot#3. Dot#4: the scientist then gets killed by a Houston cop.

(CONTINUED)

Wong waves her hand in front of a monitor - scrambled pictures and chunks of text clutter the screen -

WONG
Let me throw in a couple more dots for your connecting enjoyment. I'm recovering Menlo's files, see these people?

Wong waves her hand again, reorganizing the data into a number of files, each with a name and a photograph.

A word flashes under each picture: **DECEASED.**

WONG (CONT'D)
At least a dozen of them died after Menlo profiled their DNA. Coincidence?

The causes of death appear: **Drive-By Shooting, Hunting Fatality, Hit-and-Run, Boating Accident -**

CHASE
Accidental deaths.

WONG
Or maybe only meant to look accidental.

CHASE
It doesn't make sense. Our profile says Menlo was paranoid, not violent.

WONG
Time to revise the profile. Menlo wasn't just invading people's privacy.

Chase watches as the computer spits out images and bios of Doctor Menlo's victims. One word appears over and over again...

DECEASED

... the implication is clear:

CHASE
He was picking out targets.

As the awful realization sinks in...

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

STATIC BURST TRANSITION INTO

EXT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - PRESS AREA - DAY

Chase stands before the gathered press, giving a statement. Fletcher and Lionel Burnett (his torso covered), stand by the podium, adding to the photo opportunity -

CHASE

President Santiago appointed me to the Techno Crimes Division to put a human face on those victimized by technology. That's why we are offering this amnesty to people maimed during illegal body enhancement if they report the doctor who performed the procedure.

PULL OUT TO REVEAL

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - BULLPEN - CONTINUOUS

Where Chase passes by his own image on one of the **wall monitors** as he rushes to his office, flanked by Gupta:

GUPTA

The press conference is barely over and we're already getting thousands of calls about the amnesty.

CHASE

Victims?

GUPTA

Try every physician's lobby in the country. They're calling you the 21st Century's answer to Joe McCarthy.

CHASE

This is not a witch hunt. You have to make sure the doctors who get turned in get a fair shot to clear their name.

GUPTA

After their reputations have been tainted? Will I be using a wand or pixie dust for that?

CHASE

Whatever it takes.

(CONTINUED)

Chase enters his office, once again leaving Gupta talking to a closing door...

GUPTA
I'm in hell. I've entered hell.

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - CHASE'S OFFICE - DAY

Where Chase squares off against **holographic projections** of Detectives Renshaw and Means.

RENSHAW
I've got a perv murdering kids, the whole city's in lockdown, and every crank in town is jamming my switchboard.

CHASE
And I have one of your cops killing a murder suspect. Doesn't that give you pause?

RENSHAW
It gives me pause all over the damn place.

MEANS
What the Chief's trying to say is that your agents arresting our officers... it's just plain disruptive.
(then)
This might all go a lot smoother if we just agreed to hand it over to our IA division.

CHASE
This may be the first time in recorded history that a detective has requested intervention from Internal Affairs.

RENSHAW
I want this out of the hands of your egghead police.

CHASE
You want to dispense your own brand of home-fried Texas justice on Officer Wheeler - be my guest - after I get the information I need.

Chase hits a switch. The detectives **vanish**.

INT. HOUSTON PD - INTERROGATION CHAMBER - DAY

Bishop and Kindred (the cut on his face bandaged) grill a cleaned-up and defiant Officer Wheeler.

WHEELER

For the last time. I did not kill Doctor Menlo. I burned my hand on the exhaust pipe on my Hog.

Bishop looks at her watch -

ON THE WATCH

- is a lie detector. The display reads:

VOICE STRESS ANALYSIS

CONFIDENCE 10%.

Bishop looks up at Wheeler:

BISHOP

You're lying.

WHEELER

That lie detector thingee's illegal.

KINDRED

So's the internal combustion engine on your Harley and beating up suspects with a pillowcase full of baseballs.

WHEELER

So you read my service record, so what? When I'm done suing you for wrongful prosecution, brutality, coercion -

Bishop trains the stare at Wheeler. Kindred leans in, as if warning him about not pissing her off:

KINDRED

It's the stare.

Bishop walks toward Wheeler, getting close:

BISHOP

You know what I think? I think you knew what Menlo was doing and it pissed you off.

Wheeler looks to Kindred, as if for guidance:

(CONTINUED)

KINDRED

Hey. Wouldn't be the first time an angry cop got himself some back-room justice.

Bishop gets even closer:

BISHOP

I know I hate the thought. Of someone stealing my DNA - looking at my profile, knowing every secret I have inside.

Wheeler flashes Bishop a crap-eating grin:

WHEELER

Lady, you got yourself some serious issues running around that pretty little head of yours.

BISHOP

It's your pretty little ass you'd better worry about.

Bishop turns and walks away from Wheeler. Kindred leans in on him again -

KINDRED

(re: Bishop)
Oh. The brush-off.

WHEELER

Unless you dig up a witness or find the missing images from the hospital security cameras, I'm done talking.

KINDRED

I liked you better when you were smeared in your own feces.

WHEELER

And I'd like to acquaint you with a little piece of criminal law known as "the right to remain silent."

Wheeler sits back. Bishop looks at her watch:

VOICE STRESS ANALYSIS

100% CONFIDENCE

Off Bishop's frustrated look...

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - BULLPEN - DAY

Wong holds up a **large, transparent, flexible video screen:**

WONG

Good news and bad news. Screen on.

The screen comes to life, showing the DNA profiles previously seen in Menlo's lab.

WONG (CONT'D)

Doctor Menlo's DNA profiles - see anything peculiar?

Chase and Gupta step into scene, watching the display:

CHASE

Every one of these people has a genetic propensity to violent crime, anti-social behavior, sexual deviance -

GUPTA

So Menlo was collecting genetic samples from criminals.

WONG

Kind of. They all had misdemeanors on their record but none of them had traded up to the really nasty stuff.

GUPTA

Vigilante justice?

WONG

More like "pre-gilante" justice. Menlo identified the ones with the really evil DNA and iced them before they had a chance to act on it.

CHASE

What's the good news?

WONG

That was the good news.

(off the looks)

Menlo was profiling lots of people. Only fifteen got killed, but he had Houston's entire petty underworld in his hard drive. Connect the dots anyone?

(CONTINUED)

CHASE

Menlo has no motive, no record - but he got a list of criminals, ran DNA tests, rooted out the dangerous ones, and they wound up dead. Who could commit and cover up fifteen murders, and then kill Menlo to keep it a secret?

GUPTA

Someone who'd benefit from snuffing out criminals before they strike.

WONG

Houston PD.

As the terrible realization sinks in...

INT. HOUSTON PD - INTERROGATION - DAY

Kindred leans in on Wheeler. Renshaw and Means enter, flanked by RON GUERIN, a Police attorney:

MEANS

This gentleman is Ron Guerin, attorney for the Police Union.

GUERIN

Either charge my client or let him the hell out of that box.

KINDRED

(with a grin)

Assaulting a Federal Officer is ten years mandatory. Why don't we get him started on that 'til he decides to talk?

RENSHAW

Wipe that smirk off your face, you smug son of a bitch.

KINDRED

Well, now that you've decided to bring my mother into this -

Bishop enters, carrying a **portable holographic projector**:

BISHOP

Doctor Chase has a few questions he'd like to ask Officer Wheeler. After that we'll be happy to let him go.

Guerin glances at Renshaw. Renshaw and Means step out into:

INT. HOUSTON PD - INTERROGATION - ANTECHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Renshaw and Means enter and look through the glass as Bishop places the holo-emitter on the table and pushes a button. Chase appears - **a one foot tall hologram on the tabletop.**

CHASE
You know who I am?

WHEELER
You look taller on TV.

INT. HOUSTON PD - INTERROGATION - CONTINUOUS

CHASE
We looked at Dr. Menlo's computer. We know he was DNA-profiling potential criminals... and that someone was executing them.

WHEELER
I'm not a Ph.D. All these words are clicks and pings to me.

CHASE
See, here's the thing. Menlo wasn't just profiling criminals. Turns out he also had a whole file on Police officers considered genetically unfit to serve.

Wheeler's bravado vanishes as Chase speaks.

CHASE (CONT'D)
You know the kind: prone to violence, sub-par intelligence. Maybe they were just bad apples to be ripped off the tree - or maybe they were the kind of cops who'd take an assignment like murdering innocent people.
(then)
Anyway, I thought you might want to know you're on the list.

Wheeler's face quivers, with fear and betrayal:

GUERIN
Don't say anything. We're gonna do our own investigation.

(CONTINUED)

CHASE

Someone murdered fifteen innocent people.
Now they're trying to cover it up by
killing Menlo. Who do you think is going
to die next?

Wheeler looks down - **the small image on the tabletop actually
stares him down** - Wheeler is genuinely afraid.

GUERIN

Wheeler, I am instructing you to exercise
your right to remain silent -

But Chase has broken Wheeler:

WHEELER

I was the trigger man.

Guerin grabs Wheeler - trying to shake some sense into him:

GUERIN

Shut up you dumb son of a bitch!

Kindred pushes Guerin against the wall, shutting him out -
Wheeler is now free to spill his guts:

WHEELER

I killed five of the pre-criminals.
(off Chase's look)
I saw their profiles - they were psychos,
we had to stop them before they did real
damage.

CHASE

Who ordered the executions?

Guerin throws up his arms - this is a meltdown. Wheeler sweats.
Holds his head, then points to the one-way glass:

WHEELER

Means. Detective Means.

Bishop and Kindred run out of the room.

INT. HOUSTON PD - INTERROGATION - ANTECHAMBER - CONTINUOUS

Renshaw and Means are gone. Gunshots ECHO from outside -

INT. HOUSTON PD - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

The station is in chaos - OFFICERS point their guns, other PERSONNEL hit the deck - and beyond, Renshaw stands, his gun drawn, holding Means down on the floor with his boot.

Renshaw's bleeds from a fresh gunshot wound to his side.

RENSHAW

I believe I owe your mother an apology
Detective Kindred.

KINDRED

She's a battle-ax. She can take it.

RENSHAW

Good. I, on the other hand, may just be
bleeding to death here. You mind holding
down my piece-of-crap trigger happy
former partner while I get me some
medical attention?

KINDRED

My pleasure.

RENSHAW

You're a gentleman.

Renshaw lowers his gun and goes, but not before kicking Means in the ribs for good measure.

As Kindred ignores Means' pained GRUNT...

INT. TECHNO CRIMES DIVISION - CHASE'S OFFICE - LATER

Chase confers with a Bishop via **hologram**:

BISHOP

We just collared Detective Means.

CHASE

Call Houston IA and get any cop who might
be part of this off the streets.

Bishop terminates the link and **vanishes**. **Chase** turns to look at Wong and Gupta, sitting behind him.

WONG

How do you think Wheeler's going to feel
when he finds out he wasn't on the list?

(CONTINUED)

CHASE
He'll cut a deal, rat out his brethren
and be paranoid the rest of his life.

WONG
Fair enough.

GUPTA
I didn't think you had it in you.

CHASE
To lie to a cop?

GUPTA
To start two political firestorms in the
same week. Vigilante cops, dirty
doctors, who's next?

CHASE
Maybe I'm finally thinking like a
government official.

GUPTA
(shaking his head)
Government officials think about self-
preservation.

Off the glances exchanged by Chase and Wong as Gupta walks out
of the office...

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

STATIC BURST TRANSITION INTO

VIDEO IMAGE: GNX - CINDY NEWLAND

An ominous graphic: HOUSTON CHILD KILLER: DEATH WATCH # 8

CINDY NEWLAND

A grim and all too familiar countdown began today as an eighth boy was abducted by the Cattle Brand Killer.

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: a MONTAGE of IA AGENTS, led by BISHOP and KINDRED - chasing a POLICE OFFICER down a set of steps - collaring TWO DETECTIVES on a busy street - pulling two OFFICERS out of a fast-food joint.

CINDY NEWLAND (CONT'D)

The kidnapping couldn't come at a worse time for the Houston Police as Agents of the Federal Government's Techno Crimes Division arrested five of their officers. The charge: fifteen murders - carried out in the name of "pre-gilante" justice.

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: Chase addressing the press:

CHASE

These cops invaded the privacy of the citizens they swore to protect. They formed a death squad and hunted down innocent people for the crime of having unacceptable DNA.

CINDY NEWLAND

But not everyone agrees:

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: Means, on his way to court, a jacket over his cuffed hands, speaking with his usual calm resolve:

MEANS

A child is being raped and brutalized as we speak and Doctor Chase's science Gestapo is taking good cops off the streets. DNA profiling saves lives. We saved lives.

(CONTINUED)

NEWLAND

In other Techno Crime News, the number of Doctors reported in conjunction with Dr. Chase's body enhancement amnesty continues to rise, as have protests from the medical community...

PULL OUT OF VIDEO TO REVEAL

INT. HOUSTON LOCKUP - CORRIDOR - DAY

- that the image is displayed on one of the **lenses of the video-eyeglasses** worn by CLARENCE JOHNSON (50's) - the 21st century's most aggressive and notorious defense attorney.

Johnson takes long, confident strides down a hallway toward:

INT. HOUSTON PD LOCKUP - INTERVIEW CAGES - DAY

Johnson enters to find himself face to face with the Houston Five: all dressed in orange prison jumpsuits.

Johnson snaps his fingers by the temple on his glasses: the video shuts off. He stares at the cops for a beat, then.

JOHNSON

Gentlemen I'll dispense with the getting-to-know-you chit-chat. I know you fired your counsel, rejected all plea bargains and asked for me by name. I'd also like to add that you're a bunch of crypto-fascist pigs and you're not fooling anyone. I know the majority of the people you murdered were black.

The assembled cops exchange dubious glances. Means responds with his usual soft-spoken conviction.

MEANS

Will you hear us out or not?

JOHNSON

It's your nickel.

MEANS

The entire state's in a panic over violent crime. The Cattle Brand Killer is just abducted another kid. People are scared, and they look up to us as heroes.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

Dr. Chase's prosecutor won't let a single one of those people get on the jury.

MEANS

This is Texas. All you have to do is prove that we took ticking time bombs off the streets.

JOHNSON

That's a joke, right? Arguing that in open court is about as safe as me driving my brand-new solar-powered Maserati outside of this southern metropolis.

MEANS

You think we're a bunch of crackers lynching innocents. Fine. But we picked the worst of the worst - and we got Dr. Menlo to verify that the men we hit were incorrigible. These people were about to commit atrocities that would turn you white. We cut out a cancer.

JOHNSON

Whether you truly believe that or not is none of my business... but you folks killed fifteen innocent people. That's bad. Even in Texas. Now, these are interesting times. Juries are open to interesting ideas - and there just happens to be a twenty-first century version of the insanity defense that I've been itching to take for a test drive.

MEANS

That's not gonna happen.

Johnson gets up to go - letting out one final barb as he heads for the gate:

JOHNSON

Are they still hanging people in Texas or have they finally upgraded to laser decapitation?

Silence. Pondering. Johnson knows he's got them.

MEANS

What do you have in mind?

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

I want you to let me see your profiles
from the Genetic Census. It's time we
saw what's hidden in your DNA.

Off the looks exchanged by the Houston Five...

SMASH CUT TO

THE COURTROOM NETWORK

A Monday Night Football-type fanfare plays as the brassy logo
for **The Courtroom Network** erupts onscreen.

Commentators KELLY NASH and LAIRD GRANGER appear behind a desk:

GRANGER

For those just joining us, the trial of
the Houston Five kicked off today with
some explosive courtroom drama.

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: a profile of Gupta, complete with a bio
and courtroom stats.

NASH

Miles Gupta, Chief Prosecutor of Techno
Crimes Division was definitely at the top
of his game today.

GRANGER

Let's go to the court for all the action.

A FLASHY COURTROOM NETWORK TRANSITION leads into:

INT. FEDERAL COURTROOM - DAY

Presided by the stentorian JUDGE HELEN CONSTANTINE (67). Chase
watches Gupta as he gives his opening remarks:

GUPTA

Fifteen innocent people murdered, with a
list of hundreds more who might have been
killed had the law not intervened. Why?
Genetic profiling. These jaded and
cynical cops used stolen DNA information
to make themselves judge, Jury and
executioner. If you don't put these men
away, the next innocent they come after
might be you.

COURTROOM NETWORK TRANSITION TO

GRANGER AND NASH

GRANGER

Gupta is a fine prosecutor, but you need more than a good game when you're facing an opponent like Clarence Johnson.

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: Clarence Johnson's stats and bio.

NASH

You may be right, if Johnson's opening is any indication, this one's gonna be a street fight to the finish. Let's have a look:

COURTROOM NETWORK TRANSITION TO

INT. FEDERAL COURTROOM - DAY

Gupta takes his seat, watching as Johnson steps up to the plate:

JOHNSON

These are proud men. They don't like what I'm about to say - but they've put their dignity aside that I may present you undeniable facts. In their DNA, the Houston Five have the same violence, brutality and mental illness as the criminals they murdered. What they did was stamped on their DNA. That leads to only one conclusion: not guilty by reason of genetic predisposition.

THE IMAGE OF JOHNSON FREEZES

RESUME ON GRANGER AND NASH

Re-entering to comment on the scene:

GRANGER

Using genetic predisposition to defend not one but five men: that's the kind of audacity that wins cases -

Granger draws a "John Madden" telestrator circle over Gupta's face.

GRANGER (CONT'D)

- and you can see that Miles Gupta is genuinely surprised by this turn.

(CONTINUED)

NASH
Let's watch Johnson's explosive follow-up:

THE IMAGE OF JOHNSON UNFREEZES BEHIND NASH AND GRANGER

JOHNSON
That officers with such violence in their DNA were let out on the street is the fault of the Houston Police Department. That society failed to detect the sickness in these men and offer treatment is the real crime.

THE IMAGE OF JOHNSON FREEZES

GRANGER
No doubt about it. Clarence Johnson just took control of this trial.

NASH
We'll return to our coverage of the Houston Five trial after these words from Onconix - the world's first and only over-the-counter cure for cancer.

STATIC BURST TRANSITION

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Chase exits the courtroom to find Johnson giving his comments to the media. As Johnson disengages, Chase buttons him into an empty part of the corridor:

CHASE
Why are you doing this?

JOHNSON
Defending my clients?

CHASE
Opening a floodgate. If the Houston PD starts demanding DNA profiles from people, how long until insurance companies start doing it, and hospitals, and schools?

JOHNSON
It's evolution.

CHASE
It's discrimination.

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

As long as it's finally done right.

CHASE

If your argument leads the government to open the Genetic Census, it's all over: freedom, privacy, the chance to make something of yourself without being labeled -

JOHNSON

I want people to be labeled - for what they really are. Maybe then blacks won't land in jail for the color of their skin - and whites won't get leniency for theirs.

CHASE

And the ones judged unfit? Maybe they'll be denied health care. Or they won't be allowed to have kids. Or what the hell - just round them up and put them in concentration camps.

JOHNSON

Spoken like someone who's never known oppression. This could be the start of a truly fair society.

CHASE

I hope that "truly fair society" doesn't judge you unfit.

JOHNSON

I've had my DNA tested. Maybe you ought to do the same.

Johnson smiles and exits into the arms of the waiting, and adoring media. Off Chase's frustration...

INT. FEDERAL COURTROOM - DAY

GUPTA

You kept extensive DNA profiles of the people you murdered - why?

MEANS

As Mr. Johnson has already established, I'm borderline obsessive compulsive -

(CONTINUED)

GUPTA

Oh really - so when you were designing your conspiracy, you said to yourself, "hey, I'm borderline obsessive compulsive, I'd better over-document everything."

MEANS

Something like that, yes.

GUPTA

Do you make laundry lists?

MEANS

Excuse me?

GUPTA

Laundry lists, you know - pick up the mail, wash the dishes, buy some Alpo -

MEANS

Sure I guess.

GUPTA

That doesn't sound particularly obsessive-compulsive to me. Do you make lists of any kind?

MEANS

Well - no.

GUPTA

Work with me. Can you name two things you're obsessive-compulsive about?

MEANS

I - uh -

GUPTA

Oh come on. Don't you think a true obsessive-compulsive would be able to just rattle that off - wash my hands three times before lunch, never step on the same tile twice, never kiss a baby on a tuesday?

MEANS

I'll tell you what I obsess about - putting criminals away.

As Gupta speaks, Wong enters and beelines for Chase:

(CONTINUED)

GUPTA

And look where that got you. I think you knew your actions were wrong, and you were trying to rationalize them.

MEANS

That doesn't make what we did rational, does it?

Gupta looks at the jury - almost asking them: "can you believe this idiot?"

GUPTA

No further questions.

As Gupta takes his seat Wong leans into Chase:

WONG

You need to go to the county lock-up right now.

(off Chase's look)

There's a doctor there, just got arrested for doing illegal body enhancement. He wants a deal but he'll only talk to you.

CHASE

What kind of a deal?

STATIC BURST TRANSITION TO

VIDEO IMAGE: GNX

Two pundits, NED BURGE (Chairman, Citizens for Aggressive Law Enforcement) and ADRIENNE GRIGGS (Victims' Rights Advocate) wage a soundbite debate on GNX.

A chyron beneath the pundits reads:

"PRE-GILANTE JUSTICE: AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME?"

BURGE

The Houston Five made surgical strikes against evil. They deserve a medal. Let's face it, every once in a while you just gotta thin the herd.

PULL OUT OF VIDEO TO REVEAL

INT. HOUSTON PD LOCKUP - INTERVIEW CAGES - DAY

A DUTY SERGEANT watches GNX as Chase clears security and enters.

(CONTINUED)

GRIGGS (ON SCREEN)

At the turn of the century they called it "racial profiling." Now it's "DNA profiling." It's an excuse for racism. This is the exact reason the government keeps the Genetic Census private.

Chase steps to one of the cages - a man in civilian clothes sits inside, shrouded in darkness. This is DR. ELIAS KITTRIDGE.

CHASE

My people tell me you know the identity of the Cattle Brand Killer.

Kittridge steps into the light, saying nothing:

CHASE (CONT'D)

This had better be real.

KITTRIDGE

I'm talking to you without a lawyer. What's more real than that?

CHASE

Who are you?

KITTRIDGE

A doctor who just got thrown in here thanks to your amnesty for my so-called victims. I'm not a butcher. I gave my clients what they wanted. I made a lot of people very happy.

CHASE

And I'm not one of them, yet.

KITTRIDGE

I've seen what happens to the doctors you've prosecuted - and I'm not going to go down like them.

(beat)

You want the Cattle Brand Killer - I'll give him to you - but not until I get full immunity.

CHASE

How do you know his identity?

Kittridge shoots Chase an annoyed glare, then goes on:

(CONTINUED)

KITTRIDGE

A man came to me eighteen months ago. Wanted a few after-market tweaks. Night vision. Fingerprint removal - and a couple of pretty nasty sex things I'd rather not discuss. Let's just say the genital mutilations on the victims line up with the work I did.

CHASE

Why didn't you come forward before?

KITTRIDGE

I didn't know.

(off Chase's withering look)

The police didn't get desperate enough to release the details until this last victim, and I didn't want to violate my patient's confidence.

CHASE

Confidence? Seven children are dead -

KITTRIDGE

And another one's in the hands of that sicko right now. Time's running out. You can lecture me or cut a deal.

Off Chase, knowing he has no choice but to cut a deal:

SMASH CUT TO

EXT. HOUSTON STREETS - NIGHT

Three black SUVs - windows blacked out, unmarked but for the police lights SCREAM down the streets - sirens BLARING.

INT. STRIKE TEAM SUV - NIGHT

Kindred drives. Behind him are several STRIKE TEAM MEMBERS. Bishop sits at a tactical station, speaks into a mic:

BISHOP

Target in sight. Take your positions.

EXT. AN UPPER MIDDLE CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

The strike team SUVs glide toward a large home at the end of a cul-de-sac -

(CONTINUED)

ON BISHOP

BISHOP
Deploying tactical drones.

THE ROOF OF THE SUV

Slides open and three small hovercraft fly soundlessly into the night -

- the drones divide and take strategic positions around the house.

ON BISHOP

BISHOP (CONT'D)
LIDAR, magnetic resonance and heat
imaging are online -

Bishop's console lights up, receiving **data from each of the drones to triangulate a three-dimensional image of the house.**

The distinct figure of a human being can be seen in the second story of the house -

BISHOP (CONT'D)
I have one occupant in the second story -
(Looking closer)
- and faint life signs in the basement -
the boy is in the basement, he's still
alive.

EXT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOUSE - NIGHT

The SUVs take positions. Bishop and Kindred rush out with several other officers, heading for the front door:

BISHOP
The perimeter is sealed.

Kindred gives a signal. One of the strike team members pulls out a **high-tech battering ram**, pushes a button and WHAM! The door blasts clean off its hinges.

KINDRED
Bishop, you're on basement detail.

As Kindred leads the way.

INT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Kindred and Bishop split up: his team goes up the main stairs, hers into the house.

INT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Kindred and his team rush up the steps - the CATTLE BRAND KILLER steps out of a bedroom - brandishing a gun.

The Killer squeezes out a shot - the cops grab some floor. Kindred fires his weapon before hitting the deck.

Then silence. Kindred looks up to see a trace of green goo on the bannister. The uncertainty plays across Kindred's face - did he hit or miss?

But there's no time to think. Kindred signals the team to cover him before rushing up to -

INT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Empty. Kindred follows a smear of the green goo into -

INT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

- and finds The Killer writhing on the floor, enveloped in the sticky stuff. Kindred didn't miss.

KINDRED

Target is down, repeat, target is down -
Bishop, do you copy?

INTERCUT WITH

INT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - BASEMENT STAIRS - CONTINUOUS

As Bishop makes her way down the steps toward an iron door -

BISHOP

Copy. I'm entering the basement.

- and opens it: a look of shock and horror takes over her face and those of the agents behind her.

BISHOP (CONT'D)

Oh god. No.

RESUME ON KINDRED

Listening to Bishop's horrified response:

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The boy - it's horrible - he's barely
alive, Kindred.

Kindred kneels to face the Cattle Brand Killer. The Killer's
gun lies on the floor by his feet.

Kindred looks at the weapon... and swats it away.

KINDRED
You thank god all I have is a non-lethal
weapon.

EXT. UPPER MIDDLE CLASS HOME - NIGHT

Flanked by several Armed Officers, Bishop and Kindred exit the
house. She carries a shaking, weeping BOY bundled in a blanket.
As an ambulance pulls up to the house...

INT. HOUSTON PD - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

Wong rushes in and almost slams into Chase as he congratulates
Bishop and Kindred -

CHASE
Alice. What's the matter?

WONG
He's in Doctor Menlo's files.
(off the looks)
The Cattle Brand Killer was on the list.
He was the next one up for execution.

Chase, Bishop and Kindred react to this disturbing surprise -
the moment hangs over them for a second, then:

KINDRED
Those bastards could have stopped the
murder spree long before we did.

Off Chase, hating the fact that Kindred is right...

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

STATIC BURST TRANSITION TO

EXT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - SIDE STREET - DAY

Chase, Wong and Gupta rush toward the courthouse entrance -

WONG

The word's been out less than five hours
and the media's treating the Houston Five
like folk heroes.

CHASE

They still murdered fifteen people in
cold blood.

GUPTA

And now that the world knows the Cattle
Brand killer was next, that number's
starting to sound like both quantity and
quality.

The three then turn a corner to see:

EXT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - STEPS - DAY

Where a mob of protestors has gathered. Ned Burge stands on a
platform, whipping the crowd into a frenzy:

BURGE

This is a vindication. The Houston Five
could have eighty-sixed that despicable
child molesting creep. God knows how
many more serial killers they'd be taking
off the streets if they weren't on trial!

The crowd goes wild, chanting "FREE THE HOUSTON FIVE." Chase
shakes his head. Wong taps him on the shoulder.

WONG

You OK, boss? How do you feel?

CHASE

Like the head lemming.

Chase turns toward the courthouse with Wong and Gupta.

ON THE COURTROOM STEPS

Clarence Johnson talks to GNX Reporter Kelly Nash:

(CONTINUED)

JOHNSON

This does not change my strategy - I will prove these cops had genetic defects that led them to violence. If the capture of the Cattle Brand Killer causes people to think about opening up the Genetic Census maybe this will never happen again.

NASH

And if all this public sympathy results in a hung jury or an acquittal?

JOHNSON

Kelly, I never turn my back on a collateral benefit.

JUDGE CONSTANTINE (O.S.)

Television freeze, please.

CLARENCE JOHNSON'S (GRINNING) IMAGE FREEZES

PULL OUT TO REVEAL

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - JUDGE'S CHAMBERS - DAY

Where a very crabby Judge Constantine turns from her video display to face off against Johnson and Gupta.

GUPTA

That interview is the definition of jury contamination.

JOHNSON

That's a load of bull. Just because I'm talking about the Cattle Brand killer on TV doesn't mean I'm gonna talk about it in court. It doesn't support my case.

JUDGE CONSTANTINE

No cigar, Mr. Johnson. The knowledge that the Houston Five might have taken out the killer could guarantee an acquittal no matter what defense you mount. I'm ordering the jury sequestered - and Mr. Johnson, the rules regarding your talking about this case in the media may have been shamefully relaxed since I was a young Judge, but if you want to stay in my good graces, you'll kindly shut the hell up.

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - CORRIDOR - DAY

Gupta, Chase and Wong step into the corridor from the Judge's chambers, holding a war council. Kindred and Bishop stand at the opposite end of the corridor - waiting.

GUPTA
Sequestering the jury is barely a victory. We did ourselves in the moment we caught the Cattle Brand Killer.

CHASE
That's why I want you to listen to Agent Bishop.

BISHOP
(stepping up)
You need to bring me into the trial.

GUPTA
In what capacity?

BISHOP
Expert witness.

Gupta shoots Chase a quizzical look. As Chase replies with a knowing nod...

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

Gupta questions Bishop on the stand. Kindred, Wong and Chase watch intently.

GUPTA
How did your DNA profile become public?

BISHOP
I was shot in the head during assignment.
(beat)
They put an experimental chip in brain to compensate for the damage... and by law they had to release my profile. I gave up my privacy to save my life.

GUPTA
So let's say I went to the government and asked for your DNA profile, what would I find?

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP

That I'm a risk for clinical depression, poor impulse control, obsessive-compulsive, addictive and anti-social behavior.

GUPTA

But have you ever committed a crime? Been cited for excessive force? Been addicted to alcohol or drugs?

BISHOP

No.

GUPTA

In fact, you have several commendations for distinguished service and courage above and beyond the call of duty.

BISHOP

Yes.

GUPTA

No further questions.

Johnson starts swinging before he even gets to his feet:

JOHNSON

Is it true that until your division went non-lethal you fired your gun three times more than any other agent?

(before she can answer)

That you destroyed six service vehicles in the past five years and put several men in the hospital?

BISHOP

Every one of those incidents was investigated and justified.

JOHNSON

But you just told Mr. Gupta that you're a violent, anti-social depressive.

BISHOP

That's not what I said.

JOHNSON

Isn't it true that even before your DNA went public, you received psychiatric treatment in the form of drugs and counseling?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BISHOP

I don't see the relevance.

JOHNSON

You don't have a higher moral authority,
you're not a good cop -

GUPTA

Objection!

JOHNSON

- what separates you from the Houston
Five is you knew you had defective DNA
and they didn't.

GUPTA

Objection, your Honor - will a question
be forthcoming?

JUDGE CONSTANTINE

Mr. Johnson?

JOHNSON

Aren't you just proving my point, Agent
Bishop?

Bishop leans forward in her chair, getting mad:

BISHOP

The only point I see is that no matter
how much good I've done in my life, your
clients would still want me dead.

JOHNSON

You can't have it both ways Agent Bishop.
You're either living proof that the
Houston Five should have been genetically
screened, or you're just a menace to
society.

Johnson cuts Bishop off before she can reply:

JOHNSON (CONT'D)

No further.

Gupta shoots to his feet:

GUPTA

Agent Bishop - what did you do three
nights ago?

Bishop processes this out-of-left-field question, then:

(CONTINUED)

BISHOP

I was on the team that collared the
Cattle Brand Killer.

GUPTA

In fact, you rescued a child from the
basement of the killer's home. Can you
tell us what you saw there?

Bishop is clearly uncomfortable with what she has been asked to
reveal. She exchanges a look with Gupta, who waits for her
answer.

Bishop then looks out beyond Gupta to see her partner. Kindred
nods his head - a look of trust that tells her that now, as with
every danger they have ever faced, he's got her back.

Bishop turns back to look at Gupta, barely holding back her rage
as she revisits the memory:

BISHOP

The boy couldn't have been older than
five. He was naked. Emaciated. The
place was like a dungeon. Dark. Humid.
Child pornography everywhere...

(beat)

... and cattle brands hanging from iron
hooks. One of the brands was in a
bucket, still smoking. The child had a
fresh burn on his chest -

GUPTA

And minutes after, you sat next to the
killer in a police van. Did it occur to
you to just pull out your gun and shoot
the bastard?

The anger Bishop experienced during the capture is just as raw
on the stand as it was on the field.

BISHOP

You don't want to know what occurred to
me....

(then)

...but the law forbids the use of lethal
force without a clear and present danger.

Bishop throws a grim, determined glare at the Houston Five:

BISHOP (CONT'D)

And I swore an oath to uphold the law.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

Gupta looks around the courtroom, letting Bishop's words sink in. He looks at her - and a triumphant grin forms on his lips as he turns back to his station.

STATIC BURST TRANSITION TO

EXT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE STEPS - DAY

The place teems with demonstrators and media. As Ned Burge leads the crowd in their chant to free the Houston Five:

PAN OVER THE CROWD TO REVEAL

Bishop, sitting on the base of a column, looking away from the mob, shaken by her experience on the stand. Kindred steps up from inside the courthouse and sits next to her.

Kindred then reaches into his jacket and pulls out a shiny steel flask. He takes a pull and hands it over to Bishop, who regards the offering and finally allows herself a smile.

As the chanting of the crowd grows louder:

SMASH CUT TO

VIDEO IMAGE: GNX NEWSCAST

Showing Ned Burge on the courthouse steps - continuing his ranting and raving...

BURGE

- protecting the citizens of this country from dangerous predators is not a new thing. The government's been forcing sex offenders to disclose their records for decades - so what's wrong with opening up the genetic census? Why shouldn't we spot the criminals before they spot us?

PULL OUT OF VIDEO TO REVEAL

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Wong, Gupta, Bishop and a pacing Chase watch the report:

CHASE

Television, mute.

The TV complies.

(CONTINUED)

CHASE (CONT'D)
Well folks, we may just have ourselves a
ringside seat for the death of common
sense in this country.

WONG
How long has the jury been in there?

GUPTA
Five minutes longer than the last time
you asked.

WONG
Three days they've been there, this can't
be good.

BISHOP
Don't say that.

Chase takes a seat next to Bishop. As he speaks, Wong steps up
to the television, concern growing on her face:

CHASE
Those men are murderers - whatever
happens you're living proof they have no
excuse for what they did.

WONG
I think we have bigger problems than this
jury.
(to the TV)
Television - rewind and unmute:

ON THE SCREEN

CINDY NEWLAND
- and so, as Houston waits for a verdict,
the controversy has reached the halls of
the Senate -

A WINDOW OPENS TO SHOW: SENATOR REBECCA BENSON (R) NORTH
CAROLINA appears in a GNX window:

SENATOR BENSON
I will initiate immediate hearings to
open the government's Genetic Census.
The American people are more than willing
to sacrifice a little privacy to insure
the safety of their children.

(CONTINUED)

RESUME ON CHASE

CHASE

Great.

(beat)

I need to be at those hearings. When's that verdict coming in?

Kindred opens the door, peeks inside:

KINDRED

Now.

Off the tentative looks exchanged in the room...

INT. FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - COURTROOM - DAY

The FOREPERSON hands the verdict to the BAILIFF, who hands it to the Judge, who reads it and passes it back.

Johnson shoots Chase his most confident smile. Gupta looks at Chase - unable to keep the uncertainty at bay.

JUDGE CONSTANTINE

In the matter of the people versus Officers Means, Kane, Thornton, Jones and Briggs, what say you?

JURY FOREPERSON

On fifteen counts of first degree murder assisted by controlled technology, we find the defendants guilty.

Chase squeezes Bishop's shoulder... but there is no time to celebrate - several members of the trial audience shoot to their feet, chanting "Free the Houston Five!"

The Judge shouts for order, but chaos reigns. Chase turns to Wong -

CHASE

Thank god for common sense.

(then)

Get me on a plane to DC, now.

As Chase turns to go, he sees Johnson, talking to the press:

JOHNSON

This is not an end but a beginning. The genie will never go back in the bottle. The people support the use of the Genetic Census to stop future criminals.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

JOHNSON (CONT'D)
Safety is their right as taxpayers. The
Houston Five are heroes.

Off Chase, heading off to fight the tide...

INT. SENATE HEARING CHAMBER - DAY

Press everywhere. Wong and Gupta sit behind their boss. A panel of avuncular Senators headed by Rebecca Benson, listens to Chase's testimony.

CHASE
Opening the Genetic Census would spell
the end of freedom and privacy in
America.
(producing a file)
Let me give you an example. I got these
records through the Freedom of
Information Act and I found out some very
interesting things.
(staring down the Senators)
Imagine if the people knew that in the
Senate, where their fates are decided,
twenty members are clinical depressives
at risk of suicide.

The Senators look at each other. The press scans their faces,
trying to figure out who. The room quiets, the atmosphere of
discomfort grows more palpable with every word -

CHASE (CONT'D)
Imagine if the people knew that two
thirds of their representatives are
potential alcoholics and drug or sex
addicts - that seventy-five are high-risk
for degenerative brain disease, and at
least twenty are pathological liars -

Benson leans into her microphone, cutting him off:

SENATOR BENSON
Doctor Chase, where exactly did you get
this information?

CHASE
I requisitioned medical records from all
the Senators in office...
(letting them sweat)
...at the dawn of the Second World War.
(then)
Of course, this is all based on hundred
year-old records. Information from DNA
would be far, far more accurate.

(CONTINUED)

Benson leans forward on her mic, clearly annoyed by the example Chase has chosen to make his point:

SENATOR BENSON

This stunt of yours notwithstanding, the Genetic Census could have been used to stop the murder of seven children. How can you live with yourself knowing such knowledge is available but unused? Would you really prefer questions to answers?

CHASE

For freedom, for a world without genetic haves and have-nots, to be judged by my actions and character... I'd be happy to learn to love the questions.

Off the tense stare between Benson and Chase...

EXT. CAPITOL STEPS - DAY

Chase meets the waiting Bishop, Kindred and Gupta. The media is cordoned off - but the moment Chase steps out, the questions fly. Chase moves away. His team follows...

KINDRED

What d'you say, chief? They buy it or not?

But Chase just looks out at the screaming press - and the crush of demonstrators holding placards such as "DNA = DESTINY," "GENETIC PROFILING NOW" and "OPEN THE GENETIC CENSUS - FOR OUR CHILDREN."

CHASE

I hope so... or the world's gonna become a much more dangerous place.

Wong rushes up from the building entrance, PDA in hand -

WONG

We got a code red from cybercrimes - someone hacked the space grid and knocked down a satellite.

(beat)

It's raining tin.

Chase regards Wong's report, then turns to look at his team - no rest for the wicked.

CHASE

Let's go.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As Chase leads the members of the Techno Crimes Division down the Capitol steps and into action...

TILT UP TO REVEAL

A beautiful blue sky - streaked by the vapor trail of a lone satellite burning up in the upper atmosphere....

FADE TO BLACK

END OF EPISODE