

ECHOES OF THE ZODIAC

Written by

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FADE IN

We open in an alley next to the Riverside City College library. We focus on newer model Volkswagen Beetle. Inside the car its ignition system has been deliberately disabled. A college-aged student is lying on the ground between two abandoned houses near the library.

FADE OUT

The early morning fog enveloped Riverside, California. Detective Tom Callahan, 50-something, slumped in his undercover car, catching a few moments of rest.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)
Unit 7, we've got a 10-55 at the
Riverside City College library
parking lot. Coroner is on the way.
Over.

TOM CALLAHAN
Copy that.

He glances at his watch—6:15 AM. The call had pulled him from sleep earlier than he'd hoped. As he turns onto Terracina Drive, he sees the flashing lights of other units cutting through the fog. The area was dimly lit.

TOM CALLAHAN (CONT'D)
(To self)
Likely used the dimly lit area and
fog to provide some cover.

He exits his vehicle and walks towards the scene where a yellow police tape cordons off the scene. The first officer on the scene, a young woman with short-cropped hair, greets him with a nod.

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER
Morning, Detective Callahan. You're
the first detective to arrive. The
scene is just past the library, in
the parking lot.

TOM CALLAHAN
(Half joking) You don't happen to
have any coffee, do you?

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER
No, sorry sir. No coffee.

Tom follows her, his eyes scan the area. The library's parking lot is deserted, the surrounding buildings dark and silent.

As they approach the scene, Tom see a small Volkswagen parked under a streetlight, its hood up, casting long shadows across the pavement.

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER (CONT'D)

The body is over there.

She points to an area approximately 100 feet from her vehicle in a dark, remote alley on the Riverside City College campus. Her car was parked on Terracina Drive, near the college library.

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER (CONT'D)

Her body was discovered between two abandoned houses not far from where her car is located. It appears to us that she had been lured or forced away from her car before the attack occurred.

Tom walks up the body while pulling on latex gloves and booties over his shoes. She had been brutally beaten, stabbed multiple times, and her throat was slashed. There were defensive wounds on her hands, suggesting she had fought back against her attacker.

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER (CONT'D)

Over there is where we found her broken wristwatch.

Tom looks at the wristwatch and sees the time frozen between 10:15 and 10:30 p.m.

TOM CALLAHAN

While, that and the defensive wounds might indicate a struggle between those times.

He continues to look at the victim and the surrounding area looking back at the Volkswagen.

TOM CALLAHAN (CONT'D)

The killer might have staged the disabling of her car as a ploy to lure her out of it and into a vulnerable position. It's unclear if she knew her killer or if it was a random attack.

Tom crouches beside the body, documenting every detail with his camera. He stands and looks at the female uniformed officer.

TOM CALLAHAN (CONT'D)

The scene s disturbingly
reminiscent of a murder that still
haunts us decades ago—the unsolved
case of Cheri Jo Bates, who had
been found in a similar state not
far from here, also near the
library.

(Pause)

TOM CALLAHAN (CONT'D)

Who found her?

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER

Campus security. They were doing a
routine patrol when they saw the
car with the hood up and came to
investigate. They found her like
this and called it in immediately.

TOM CALLAHAN

Get their statements and find out
if they saw anything else unusual.
Also, start canvassing the area for
any additional witnesses.

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER

Will do.

(Pause)

TOM CALLAHAN

The way the body is positioned, the
deliberate slashing of the throat,
the staged appearance of the
car—all of it is too familiar. I
reviewed the Bates case in depth
during my early years as a
detective. That case has never been
solved and is believed by some to
be the Zodiac's first killing.

FEMALE UNIFORMED OFFICER

I didn't know that. Way before me
time.

He took one last look at the scene before heading back to his
vehicle. Tom pulls out his phone and places a call to his
supervisor, his voice steady but tinged with urgency.

UNKNOWN MALE (V.O.)

What's up Tom?

TOM CALLAHAN

We've got a situation. I need the team here, now. This one's different—it's something we've seen before. The homicide scene is staged just like the Zodiac case back in the 60s.

FADE OUT

INT. JEANNIE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

JEANNIE LOOMIS, MID-40s, long blond hair, attractive, lays on her bed in the dark, staring at the ceiling. Frustrated not being able to sleep, she kicks the sheets off. Climbing out of bed, Jeannie turns the alarm clock back around to face her, the harsh red digits glaring at her: 1:47 AM.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Ugh.

She opts to head downstairs in just her $\frac{3}{4}$ inch-sleeve San Francisco Giants t-shirt and shorts.

INT. DINING ROOM -NIGHT

She enters her dining room and turns on the lamp to her aquarium greeting her koi.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Good morning guys and gals. So for waking you so early but now we can enjoy a longer day.

She sprinkles pellets into the tank watching them eat.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

What's on my agenda you ask? Well, I plan on treating today as a lazy Saturday. After breakfast, I'll indulge in a long, hot shower, followed by a quick trip to the grocery store to pick up cold cuts, rolls, and the ingredients for my grandmother's famous potato salad. Then I plan to lounge by my outdoor Japanese garden and getting some sun.

INT. KITCHEN -NIGHT

On the kitchen counter she sees the congratulations card from her former supervisor (SAC) Lomax on her promotion to SAC of the San Francisco FBI. There are also flowers and other cards from her staff.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(To self) Not bad for a 45-year-old
if I say so myself. Note to self.
Need to buy a card for my buddy
Ismail and his promotion taking
over my position as Assistant
Special Agent in Charge.

EXT.LAKE HERMAN RD, VALLEJO, CA - NIGHT

Two teenagers, JESSICA PARKER, and RYAN BLAKE, are sitting in a car on a deserted road, listening to music and talking. The car engine is humming to keep them warm. Jessica leans back in the passenger seat, laughing at something Ryan has said, their breath fogging up the windows.

RYAN BLAKE

Do you hear that?

JESSICA PARKER

Hear what?

Her laughter fades as she senses the tension. There is a faint sound, like the crunching of gravel underfoot. Ryan glances in the rearview mirror and sees nothing but darkness. He shakes his head, dismissing it as his imagination. But then, the sound comes again—closer this time.

Before he can react, the car's headlights catches the silhouette of a figure approaching from the shadows. The man is dressed in dark clothing, his face obscured by the collar of his jacket and a low-brimmed hat.

RYAN BLAKE

Oh shit! We need to get out of
here.

The man suddenly raises a gun, its cold metal glinting in the dim light. Ryan barely has time to shout a warning before the first shot rings out, shattering the night. The bullet tears through the car's window, striking Ryan in the head. He slumps forward, his body limp against the steering wheel.

Jessica screams, her voice piercing the silence. She fumbles with the door handle, desperate to escape, but her hands are trembling too violently. She finally manages to push the door open and stumbles out into the cold night air.

The man is faster and steps around the car. His movements calm and deliberate, as if he were following a script. He raises the gun again and fires twice. Jessica falls to the ground. She lays still, her lifeblood pooling around her.

The killer stands over her for a moment. Then, as if satisfied with his work, he turns and walks back into the darkness from where he came.

INT. DET. LAWSON'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

DETECTIVE MARK LAWSON, 50-something, is awoken by his cellphone ring on his nightstand.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Lawson.

FEMALE DISPATCHER (V.O.)

Detective, we've got a situation. It's bad. Two bodies, young couple, out on Lake Herman Road. Looks like an execution.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

I'm on my way.

Lawson's wife is now awake as her husband dresses.

DETECTIVE LAWSON'S WIFE

Homicide?

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Yeah, and get this....it's out on Lake Herman Road.

Lawson could see his wife does not know the connection.

DETECTIVE LAWSON (CONT'D)

Back in the 60s, this was one of the Zodiac killing sites.

DETECTIVE LAWSON'S WIFE

Sorry. Before my time.

She rolls over to go back to sleep.

DETECTIVE LAWSON'S WIFE (CONT'D)

Be careful.

Det. Lawson puts his service weapon in his holster, grabs his jacket and leaves.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

(To self) Must just be a coincident. I mean, the Zodiac has to be in his eighties right?

EXT. CRIME SCENE - DAWN

When Lawson arrives at the scene, it is already swarming with officers. The yellow tape cordons off the area. He approaches the car slowly, his eyes taking in every detail. The shattered window, the blood on the seats, the bodies lying just as they had in the old crime scene photos he'd studied years ago as a rookie detective. It was all too familiar.

OFFICER ROB PARKER, twenty-something, lifts the tape to allow Det. Lawson to enter.

OFFICER ROB PARKER

(Excited) Detective, this is bad. Real bad. It's like he's back. The Zodiac. We studied his case while I was in the academy and my FTO took me out here doing my training.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Relax rookie. (Pause) You did a good job of securing the scene. I need to get the forensics team here ASAP. I want every inch of this place combed for evidence. And keep the press out of this—for now.

OFFICER ROB PARKER

There is no press here Detective.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Give them time. They are like vultures and will sweep in soon.

OFFICER ROB PARKER

Yes Sir!

As Lawson surveys the scene, he knew this was bigger than just a local investigation. The FBI would need to be involved, and soon. This was no longer just a copycat—this was something far more sinister, and he feared it was only the beginning. He takes out his cellphone and dials. He connects to voice message.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Hello Jeannie, it's Detective Lawson. We've got a situation here in Vallejo. I think the Zodiac is back. We need your help. I will contact my supervisor and go through the hoops, but I thought I would give you a heads-up.

As Detective Mark Lawson waits to hear back from Jeannie, he had barely returned to his office after the grisly discovery on Lake Herman Road when his phone buzzes with an incoming text. He glances at the screen and sees a message from the department's media liaison.

INT. VALLEJO POLICE DEPARTMENT-DAY

TEXT MESSAGE

Urgent. You need to see this.

Lawson frowns and immediately makes his way to the communications room, where a group of officers huddled around a monitor, their faces a mix of confusion and concern. As he approached, the liaison, Officer NANCY TAYLOR, forty-something, turned to him, her expression grim.

NANCY TAYLOR

Mark, this just came in. The Vallejo Times-Herald received an email about an hour ago. It's... disturbing...

She clicks a few keys, and the message appears on the screen:

Subject: The Game Continues

From: [redacted email address]

To: editor@vallejotimesherald.com

I am the shadow that moves in the night, the one who cannot be caught. The game is not over, it's only just begun. Fifty-six years ago, I struck on Lake Herman Road. Two lovers, silenced forever. And now, once again, the night claims its own.

Do you remember me, Vallejo? Have you forgotten the fear, the thrill, the chase? I have not. I have returned to finish what was started. The game is the same, only the players have changed.

You will find them where you found the others. Look carefully. Do not make me wait. I am watching.

- The Zodiac 2024.

DETECTIVE LAWSON
Son-of-a bitch.

Lawson stares at the screen, the words sending a chill down his spine. The message is eerily similar to the letters the original Zodiac had sent decades ago, taunting the police and the media. But this time, it is different—more modern, yet no less sinister.

DETECTIVE LAWSON (CONT'D)
The killer is not only mimicking the Zodiac's methods but is also using modern technology to spread fear. It was a deliberate, calculated move, meant to bring the terror of the past into the present.

NANCY TAYLOR
We've traced the email but it was sent through a series of proxies and anonymizers. It's going to be tough to track down the origin if ever.

Lawson nods, already thinking ahead.

DETECTIVE LAWSON
I need to call the boss. We need to treat this seriously. Get the FBI involved immediately. This isn't just a copycat; it's someone who knows exactly what they're doing.

INT. JEANNIE'S SAC OFFICE -DAY

Jeannie enters her office with a cup of coffee with ISMAIL FLORES, 50-something, on her heels. Her cellphone is vibrating on her desk. She looks at phone ID and see Tom Lawson's name. She answers.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Mark Lawson... it's been what, six or seven years? I just found your voicemail and was about to call you back. What's going on?

There is a brief pause on the other end, as if Lawson is collecting his thoughts.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Jeannie, we've got a situation down here in Vallejo. It's bad—really bad. We've had a double homicide that's almost a perfect reenactment of the Zodiac killings from the 60s. The victims were found on Lake Herman Road, just like the original case. And to top it off, the Vallejo Times-Herald received an email this morning from someone claiming to be the Zodiac 2024. It's all too familiar, Jeannie.

Jeannie's breath catches as she processes the information.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The Zodiac 2024? You're sure it's legit?

DETECTIVE LAWSON

As sure as we can be right now. The email matches the style and tone of the original letters, but with a modern twist. Whoever this is, they know what they're doing—and they're taunting us just like before. I don't need to tell you what this means.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

No, you don't.

She reaches for her purse and motions to Ismail to follow her down the hallway.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

This isn't just a copycat. This is someone who's studied the Zodiac inside and out. You need me on this, Mark. I'll head to Vallejo immediately. Make sure your chief submits his request for us to join the investigation so I don't get heat down the road. See you soon.

Jeannie puts her cellphone in her pocket and briskly walks down the hallway with Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Okay Ace. We're heading to Vallejo PD.

Ismail looks at Jeannie, his brow furrowing in confusion.

ISMAIL FLORES

Vallejo? Why in the world do you want to go to Vallejo?

He pauses, tapping his chin theatrically.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

I mean, sure, it does have Six Flags Discovery Kingdom—a thrill-seeker's paradise with all those high-speed roller coasters. And let's not forget the Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum, a riveting deep dive into the city's history and the naval base at Mare Island. Fascinating stuff, really.

He leans in, lowering his voice to a mock whisper.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

But aside from that, I'm pretty sure the most exciting thing going on there is trying to figure out why anyone would willingly choose to visit Vallejo.

Jeannie chuckles at his sarcastic tone.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Well, brace yourself, Ismail. We're not going for the roller coasters or the naval history. We've got a case—a serious one. So, pack up and save your enthusiasm for the museums. You might just need it.

Ismail sighs dramatically but flashes her a grin.

ISMAIL FLORES

Fine, but if we're not riding roller coasters, you owe me a coffee at least. And maybe a souvenir from the gift shop.

INT. FBI CAR - DAY

Ismail is driving and turns to Jeannie who had filled him in about the double homicides.

ISMAIL FLORES

So, Vallejo PD believes they either have another killing by the Zodiac killer of the 1960s or a very knowledgeable copycat.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yes, and I know what you're thinking—how old would the actual Zodiac killer be if he were alive today?

ISMAIL FLORES

Gee, the boss lady is not only cute but very smart.

Jeannie smiles.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We're talking mid-80s, maybe even older, if he's still out there. But that's not what worries me. It's the details, Ismail. This copycat—if that's what he is—knows too much. The way the bodies were found, the location, even the timing... It's all meticulously planned, almost like he's following a script.

ISMAIL FLORES

So, we're dealing with someone who's not just mimicking the Zodiac's methods, but someone who's studied him in depth—maybe even obsessively.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Exactly. The original Zodiac was a master of psychological warfare, playing games with law enforcement and the media. If this guy is picking up where the original left off, he's going to try to outsmart us at every turn. That's why we need to stay one step ahead.

As they pull up to the scene, Ismail parks the car and turns to Jeannie.

ISMAIL FLORES

So, what's the plan, boss? How do we catch someone who's trying to be a ghost from the past?

Jeannie's eyes narrows with determination.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

First, we figure out who this guy really is—whether he's the original Zodiac, unlikely as that may be, or a new player trying to revive an old nightmare. We dig into every detail, every piece of evidence, and we use what we know about the Zodiac's psychology to predict his next move. And we do it fast, because if this is anything like the original, he won't stop until he's made his mark.

Ismail nods, his usual light-hearted demeanor giving way to a focused seriousness. With their plan set, they step out of the car and approach the crime scene.

As they near the tape marking the entrance to the scene, Jeannie immediately spots Detective Mark Lawson standing near the patrol officers. She and Ismail flash their IDs to the officer at the tape zone, who lifts it to let them pass.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Jeannie! God, I'm so glad you're here... and I see you've brought the new Assistant Special Agent in Charge, Ismail Flores.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Hey, Mark. It's been a long time. Wasn't it the last time we worked together when we were chasing down the urban terrorist group, the Sons of Liberty?

DETECTIVE LAWSON

That's the one. Congratulations to both of you. It's about time the FBI started promoting agents who actually have their act together.

Ismail grins and extends a hand.

ISMAIL FLORES

Thanks, Mark. We're here to help in any way we can.

Lawson shakes his hand firmly before turning his attention back to Jeannie.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

Let me take you to the scene. The bodies have been removed, but once you see the crime scene, I'm sure you'll come to the same conclusion we have. Either it's a geriatric Zodiac come back to haunt us, or it's one hell of an intelligent copycat.

As they walk towards the site, Lawson fills them in on the details they hadn't yet heard.

DETECTIVE LAWSON (CONT'D)

The positioning of the bodies, the location, even the time of night—it's all almost identical to the original Zodiac murders. But what really got us was the email sent to the Vallejo Times-Herald, claiming responsibility in a way that mimics the Zodiac's style but with a modern twist. This guy knows his history, and he's using it to play with us.

Jeannie's expression grows more serious with each word.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

If this is a copycat, he's not just imitating the Zodiac—he's trying to outdo him, to make a name for himself by perfecting the original's methods. We need to treat this as a highly intelligent and dangerous suspect, possibly even more so than the Zodiac himself.

Lawson nods grimly.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

That's exactly what we're thinking. The forensics team is combing through everything, but we need your team's expertise on this. This guy is playing a very calculated game, and we can't afford to let him get ahead of us.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

How did you come to the conclusion that this was a reenactment of the Zodiac's second killings?

DETECTIVE LAWSON

(Smiling) Actually, it was you, Jeannie. Years ago, I had the opportunity to attend the FBI Academy for law enforcement officers in Quantico. One of the courses I took was a lecture you conducted on serial killers. You had me—and the entire room—completely captivated. The photos of the crime scenes you showed really stuck with me.

Jeannie chuckles softly, a hint of nostalgia in her eyes.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Ah, those days at Quantico. That was a fun time in my life. Not only was I an agent, but I also loved taking on the role of an instructor. It was a chance to share my knowledge and passion with others. Unfortunately, it didn't last long before I was transferred out here. I'm glad to know that someone was paying attention to my lectures.

DETECTIVE LAWSON

More than you know. The details you shared, the insights you provided—it all came rushing back when I saw the scene here. It was like stepping into one of those old photographs.

As they reach the scene, the gravity of the situation becomes even more apparent. The faint outlines of where the bodies had been were still visible, marked by evidence flags and a lingering sense of dread. The air seems to grow colder as they took in the eeriness of the surroundings.

Jeannie turns to Ismail and Lawson, her voice taking on a steely resolve.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Let's get to work. The sooner we start, the sooner we catch this guy before he strikes again.

They began taking numerous photographs of the scene that Ismail send via email to Darcy and Burk with a request to pull everything they could find of the Zodiac killings of the 1960s.

ISMAIL FLORES

Darcy, it's Ismail. I just sent you and Burk a text. Drop whatever else you are doing, and focus on this case. Thanks.

INT. BUREAU CAR-DAY

Jeannie and Ismail are heading back to the bureau in San Francisco. Both of their cellphones continue to ring without them answering.

ISMAIL FLORES

Well, the media is alive and well. And it looks like they've already done their homework on this one--Zodiac or copycat, they've latched onto the story like vultures

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah, I'm formulating something to feed them once we get back to the bureau.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

The Zodiac is one of those cases that's never really left the public's imagination. Any hint that he might be back--or that someone's trying to bring him back--was bound to set off a media frenzy. If you think about it, the Zodiac killer is like America's Jack the Ripper.

ISMAIL FLORES

It's like they're more interested in the spectacle than the reality. This isn't just some cold case being dredged up for entertainment; it's a real investigation with real lives at stake.

Jeannie looks at him, her expression thoughtful.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

That's exactly why we need to be careful about what we say--and when we say it.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

The last thing we need is to fan the flames of panic or give this killer the attention he's clearly craving. We'll craft a statement, but it's going to be measured and precise. We need to control the narrative, not let the narrative control us.

ISMAIL FLORES

Understood. I'll coordinate with the PR team to make sure everything goes through the proper channels. We'll keep it focused on the facts and avoid any speculation.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Good. I need you to act as my gatekeeper on this, And let's get ahead of this. I want to set up a press conference once we have more information to share. It'll give us a chance to address the public directly and put some of these rumors to rest.

ISMAIL FLORES

So, basically say nothing.

Ismail remarks, with a wry smile on his face.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

But make it look like we're asking for their help.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Exactly.

Her cellphone rings again. Frustrated she gets ready to answer.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Might as well jump into the fray.

She looks at caller ID.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Ah shit! This can't be good. It's an urgent request to call Deputy Director Shields.

Ismail shoots her a sideways glance, his expression darkening.

ISMAIL FLORES

You're right. This can't be good. He's the only asshole we both knew was involved in the Civil War gold investigation, but we couldn't convince the director to take action against him. You think this is retaliation time?

Jeannie sighs, her mind racing.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Anything coming from Washington these days has to be considered a trap. Shields is the kind of guy who doesn't forget, and he certainly doesn't forgive. We need to tread carefully here.

ISMAIL FLORES

So, how do you want to play this?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We don't take the bait. I'll make the call, but we keep everything above board. If this is retaliation, we document everything. And if it's something else—well, we'll cross that bridge when we come to it.

Ismail nods.

ISMAIL FLORES

We've handled worse before. Whatever Shields is up to, we'll deal with it.

INT. CELLAR - DAY

The dim light from a single, flickering bulb casts long shadows across the walls of the cellar, illuminating the chaotic collage that covered every inch of space. The walls are a macabre mosaic, plastered with yellowed newspaper clippings, grainy black-and-white crime scene photos, and photocopies of the infamous Zodiac letters.

In the center of the room stands a man, his figure silhouetted against the wall of madness. His eyes, dark and intense, trace the lines of each letter, every photograph, as if drawing power from them.

He walks over to a small table in the corner of the room, where a laptop sat open, the screen glowing faintly in the darkness. On it, an email draft was displayed, ready to be sent to the Vallejo Times-Herald. He begins to type reading out loud.

ZODIAC COPYCAT

The Game Begins Anew.
I am not just a shadow in the night. I am the one who finishes what others cannot. I am not a copy. I am evolution.

With a slow, deliberate movement, he clicks "Send." The email vanishes from the screen, now on its way to the inboxes of journalists who would soon scramble to decipher its meaning.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

This time, they'll never catch me.

He stands and looks at a picture on the wall with a R.I.P. initially written across the photo. It is scratched out and in block letters, it has been replaced with Rest In Hell.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

(Sarcastically) What do you think Dad? You are worm meat and the man who killed you has resurrected.

And with that, he disappears back into the shadows of his cellar, leaving the flickering light to cast its eerie glow over the shrine he has built to his dark inspiration.

INT. JEANNIE'S SAC OFFICE -DAY

Jeannie sits at her desk, staring at the email on her screen. The subject line -The Game Begins Anew stares back at her.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(To self)
This is nearly identical to the taunting messages the original Zodiac had sent to the media and police over fifty years ago, but this one has a modern twist.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Okay, asshole. What are you trying to say here? I am not just a shadow in the night.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

I am the one who finishes what others cannot. I am not a copy. I am evolution.

She leaned back in her chair, feeling the weight of the words.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

(To self) This isn't just a copycat. This is someone who believes they could surpass the original Zodiac, someone who sees themselves as an improvement—a perfect predator. You sent this message to both us and the San Francisco Chronicle, exactly as the original Zodiac had done. But there is something about this email that feels wrong, more than just a mimicry of old crimes. There is a detail buried in this last sentence - something only the original killer would have known.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Think Jeannie, think. Is the answer in my original lecture notes on the Zodiac I used at Quantico?

There is a knock on her door. Ismail enters.

ISMAIL FLORES

Talking to yourself huh? Getting any brilliant answers?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Take a look at this.

She turns her computer screen towards Ismail. Ismail leans in and reads the message.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

What do you make of the phrasing?

ISMAIL FLORES

It's like he's mocking us. 'I am evolution'—what's he trying to prove?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I don't know yet. But look at the way he talks about the original Zodiac.

Jeannie leans forward, tapping her finger on the sentence.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

It's subtle, but there's something here. He's referencing things that were never released to the public.

Ismail's eyes widened as the realization hits him.

ISMAIL FLORES

You think this guy has access to the original case files? Or worse—could he have been involved back then?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It's possible, but I'm not ready to jump to conclusions. There are only a handful of people who know these details—the original investigators, forensic experts, and anyone who worked closely on the case. And most of them are either dead or retired.

The room falls silent for a moment as the weight of the situation presses down on them.

ISMAIL FLORES

We need to figure out how he got his hands on this information. If he knows what was kept hidden all these years, we're in deeper trouble than we thought.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Get Darcy and Burk on this. I want them to pull every file related to the Zodiac case—official and otherwise. We need to cross-reference everything, figure out what's leaked and what's stayed under wraps. And start digging into anyone who had access to those files. If there's a mole, we need to know.

Ismail give a sharp nod and heads out to rally the team.

ISMAIL FLORES
Yes, boss lady. I'm on it.

Before Ismail got very far, Jeannie calls out to him.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Hey, Ace! Wait a minute.

Ismail returns and enters her office.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
What if this isn't just about
continuing the Zodiac's legacy?
What if he's trying to finish
something the original never did?

ISMAIL FLORES
(Pause) Wow. Something we need to
consider.

INT. CELLAR-NIGHT

The copycat sits in his dimly lit cellar, his eyes scan the newest article in the San Francisco Chronicle.

ZODIAC COPYCAT
It's working. The email has stirred
the pot, reigniting the fear and
fascination with the Zodiac. The
media is already scrambling, the
headlines buzzing with speculation.

He leans back in his chair, letting the thrill of it wash over him. His fingers trace the edges of a worn, yellowed file sitting on his desk—an original Zodiac case file. It has taken him years to get his hands on it, but now, the information inside is his weapon.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)
(Whispering) They'll never see it
coming.

His eyes move to a faded photograph pinned to the wall—a crime scene photo from 1969, one of the original Zodiac's killings. The public had never seen this photo, nor the small detail it contained. But the investigators had.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)
(To self)The game wasn't just
beginning—it is already well
underway.

(MORE)

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

And this time, there would be no mistakes. The police will chase shadows, just as they had with the original Zodiac, but they would never find him. Not until it was too late.

He turns his attention to the photo of his father.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

And yet the police never revealed your dark secrets, did they? Maybe once they found out what a piece of shit you were to me, they decided that you did not deserve recognition as a Zodiac victim.

(Pause)

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

Oh! Almost forgot.

He pulls out a photograph and pins it to the wall. The photograph shows Ismail and Jeannie.

INT. FBI BRIEFING ROOM -DAY

Jeannie sat with DARCY, thirty-something, academic look and BURK, overweight, academic look, reviewing the original case files from the Zodiac murders.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

So what have my two highly talented IT staff come up with?

Darcy points to an old photograph in the file.

DARCY

Look at this. This image was never made public. The press never saw it, and it's not in any of the archived reports. Only law enforcement had access to this.

Jeannie stares at the photograph—a seemingly insignificant snapshot of a crime scene. But there, in the corner, is something that only the investigators had noticed all those years ago. A small marking on the ground, barely visible but unmistakable.

BURK

Do you think he's seen this?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

If he has, we're dealing with someone who's either deeply connected to law enforcement or... someone who's been studying this case longer than we thought.

Her phone buzzes, pulling her from her thoughts. It is another email. Jeannie reads the heading to Burk and Darcy.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

They Missed It Then, and They'll Miss It Again.

She got both of their attention before continuing.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

You can't catch what you don't see. You overlooked it once. You'll overlook it again. Some things are better left buried. If only you knew what I do...

DARCY

What does that mean?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

There is no signature, no indication of where the email came from. But the meaning is clear. The killer is taunting us again, and this time, he is dropping a clue. He is daring us to figure it out, to dig deeper.

Jeannie leans back in her chair, her mind whirling.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

The email is a direct reference to the photograph Darcy just showed us—the one with the barely visible marking on the ground. But what is it that they had missed? What had the original investigators overlooked?

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We need to go back over every piece of evidence from that night.

She turns to Darcy and Burk.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

He's telling us we missed something, something critical. I want fresh eyes on everything—the photos, the reports, the autopsy records. Everything.

Darcy and Burk exchange a glance before nodding in agreement. Burk is already pulling up the files on his laptop, his fingers moving quickly over the keys.

DARCY

Do you think he's going to strike again soon?

Jeannie's jaw tightens.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

If he's following the Zodiac's pattern, it's only a matter of time. He's playing with us, just like the original killer did. And he won't stop until he gets the attention he craves.

Burk looks up from his laptop.

BURK

I've cross-referenced all the files with the FBI's database of known Zodiac details. There's nothing in here that should have been public knowledge. This guy has access to something we don't.

Jeannie sighs, rubbing her temples.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Then we're dealing with someone on the inside, or someone who's connected to law enforcement. The original Zodiac was careful, meticulous—but even he didn't have this kind of reach.

Darcy stands up, pacing the room as her thoughts race.

DARCY

What if he's not just connected to law enforcement? What if he's been preparing for this his entire life? A true fanatic, someone who's been obsessed with the Zodiac for decades?

Jeannie nods slowly.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It's possible. He's studied every move, every mistake the original Zodiac made. He's learned from it. But the question is, why now? Why wait all these years to pick up the mantle?

Jeannie's phone buzzes again. Darcy and Burk stare at her.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Another email.

She reads it aloud.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

The clock is ticking. You won't see the next one coming. But don't worry—there's a message in the stars for you.

BURK

What does that mean?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The Zodiac had always had an obsession with the astrological symbol that had inspired his name. But this is different. This killer is more direct, more calculated. And he is promising another killing. He's toying with us and he's escalating. We need to get ahead of him.

Burk looks up from his laptop, his face pale.

BURK

Jeannie, we just got a hit on the email. It's been routed through multiple proxies, but we managed to trace it back to an internet cafe in San Francisco. We're pulling the security footage now.

Jeannie's eyes lit up with a glimmer of hope.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Finally, something we can work with. Let's get that footage and see if we can get a visual on this guy.

As Burk works to access the footage, Jeannie's mind races.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

The killer had been careful so far, leaving no physical traces, no DNA, no fingerprints. But now we have a location—a place he had been. It not much, but it is something.

INT. COPYCAT'S CAR - NIGHT

The copycat sits in his car, watching the night sky. The city lights blurred together in the distance. He takes a deep breath.

ZODIAC COPYCAT

(To self) I know the emails have rattled them. They are chasing shadows now, just as they did fifty years ago. The police and the FBI—they thought they could outsmart me, but they are wrong. I will always be one step ahead, just like the original Zodiac had been.

(Pause)

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

(To self) But unlike the Zodiac, I won't make the same mistakes. I wouldn't slip up. I wouldn't leave behind careless clues. Nope, I'm smarter than that. I have spent years preparing for this, years studying every detail of the original cases. Now it is time to take things to the next level.

He reaches into his jacket and pulls out a folded piece of paper. It is an old newspaper clipping from 1969, detailing the Zodiac's second attack at Blue Rock Springs. He begins to read the article.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

This is good stuff. It describes the victims in gruesome detail, but I really like this. A small footnote by one of the original investigators.

(MORE)

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

He had noted a strange marking on the ground near the victims—a symbol carved into the dirt, just like the ones the Zodiac had used in his letters. But it has never been released to the public. It was a detail known only to a handful of people, and now it was his weapon. I love it. The police will blow their minds.

The man folded the paper slowly, savoring the feel of it in his hands, his eyes scanning the faded, yellowed lines. His lips curled into a sneer as the familiar words danced before him—taunting, teasing, and luring him deeper into his obsession.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

Time to have some fun.

He typed furiously, his fingers flying across the keyboard, each keystroke a venomous promise. When he finished, he leans back, admiring the sickening beauty of his words before pressing 'send'.

INT. JEANNIE'S SAC OFFICE -NIGHT

Jeannie's computer chirps softly, the sound cutting through the quiet room like a knife. She opens the new email. The subject line was chilling in its simplicity. She read out loud.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Hello, Jeannie. I have to say, you are a very beautiful woman. I've been watching you. I imagine you'd be quite the fun project. Maybe I'll pay you a visit someday. Maybe we'll have our own little moment, just you and me—before I send your soul off to meet my other victims. Sweet dreams, Jeannie. Z."

Ismail walks in and sees Jeannie looking at her computer screen. She looks up.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Take a look at this.

Ismail reads the message.

ISMAIL FLORES

Well, this guy's getting bold.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Let's go grab a late dinner and figure this out.

ISMAIL FLORES

Sounds good.

They make their way down hallway from Jeannie's office. Ismail stops in his tracks.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

You know, this asshole might've just screwed up.

Jeannie presses the elevator button, glancing sideways at him.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

How so?

Jeannie and Ismail step into the elevator. Ismail crosses his arms as the doors closes behind them. He turns towards Jeannie.

ISMAIL FLORES

Think about it. In the original Zodiac investigations, he wrote to multiple media outlets, law enforcement, but eventually...

Jeannie's eyes flicker with recognition.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Right... eventually, he wrote directly to one specific investigator at the SFPD. That was Inspector Dave Toschi, wasn't it?

ISMAIL FLORES

Exactly. But the thing is, the Zodiac never asked to meet Toschi. He taunted him, sure, but there was never any mention of a face-to-face or anything remotely personal like what we just saw in your email.

Jeannie's brow furrows.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

So, what are you getting at?

ISMAIL FLORES

I think this guy--this copycat--he's fixated on you, Jeannie.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

This isn't just about recreating the Zodiac's crimes anymore. He's made it personal, and from the way he's talking, it sounds like he's physically attracted to you.

Jeannie processes his words.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

You're right. The original Zodiac never expressed any desire for personal, physical encounters. This copycat, however, has done just that—intimating that he wanted to meet me, to draw me into his twisted game.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Maybe we can use that to draw him out.

ISMAIL FLORES

It might be a way to flush him out of hiding. He's arrogant, he wants control, but that attraction—it's a vulnerability. If we play it right, we might be able to get him to expose himself.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We'll talk to the team tomorrow morning. If he's made this personal, then we're going to turn that to our advantage.

INT. FBI BRIEFING ROOM -DAY

The next morning, Ismail and Jeannie arrive at the bureau at the same time. Upon entering the FBI field office, the atmosphere is thick with tension. The team has gathered around Burk's laptop, watching the grainy security footage pulled from the internet café.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Anything?

Burk continues to make adjustments.

BURK

The angle isn't the greatest. We only have a limited view of the man at the computer terminal. His hood is pulled over his head, concealing his face. Wait a minute. That's him.

Burk points to the screen as everyone gathers around him.

BURK (CONT'D)

He logged in around the same time the email was sent, but facial recognition isn't picking anything up yet. He's got his face turned away just enough to avoid a clear hit.

Jeannie leans in closer, her eyes narrow as she studies the footage. The figure's hoodie is drawn low over his face, shielding any identifiable features. A flicker of frustration crosses her face.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Whoever this was, he knows how to avoid being identified. The grainy quality only makes matters worse.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Zoom in, see if we can get anything—anything at all.

Burk complies, zooming in on the footage, but the result is disappointing. Even at full zoom, the man's face is shadowed, his head slightly tilted down, further obscuring any details.

BURK

No facial recognition is going to work on this. He knows exactly what he's doing.

Jeannie sighs, running a hand through her hair.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Keep this footage on file. Maybe we'll get lucky later.

She turns to Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Send over a forensic team to dust the computer he used, etc.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

I doubt they will find anything,
but at least we've covered our
bases.

As Burk works to store the footage, Jeannie's phone buzzes. She glances down at the screen. It is a missed call from Deputy Director Shields. Jeannie turns to Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Hold down the fort for a bit. I've
got to return this call.

Ismail shoots her a knowing look, understanding immediately.

ISMAIL FLORES

Good luck with Shields. Make sure
you record the conversation.

Jeannie steps out into the hallway, her heels click softly on the polished floor as she moves toward an empty conference room which she enters. She closes the door behind her and dials Shields back. When the line is finally picked up, Shields' voice is as cold and clipped as she expected.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS (V.O.)

Agent Loomis.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Deputy Director.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS (V.O.)

I see you've been making some
headway on this Zodiac case. That's
good. The bureau's got enough bad
press these days. The last thing we
need is more embarrassment over a
decades-old case we never solved.

Jeannie stiffens. There it is—the thinly veiled threat.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I'm doing everything in my power to
handle this investigation properly.
But I'm sure you understand, this
is not a simple case.

Shields chuckles, but there was no humor in it.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS (V.O.)

I don't care if it's simple or not,
Loomis. What I care about is
results—and I expect them soon. We
can't afford to let this drag on.

(MORE)

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS (V.O.)

I trust you're not going to make the bureau look incompetent. You know what's at stake here.

Jeannie's jaw tightens.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Understood, sir.

There was a pause, a lingering moment between the two.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS (V.O.)

Good. Because I wouldn't want to see this turn into another... incident, like the Civil War gold heist. You managed to scrape by on any internal investigation on that one, but don't think I've forgotten.

Jeannie's grip on the phone tightens. She'd been expecting this, but it didn't make it any easier to hear.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

This case will be handled with the utmost professionalism. I'm not in the business of letting killers walk free.

Shields' response is softer but no less menacing.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS (V.O.)

See that it's done. And remember, Loomis—I've got my eye on you.

The line goes dead, leaving Jeannie standing in the empty conference room.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(Mutters under her breath) Fuck you, asshole.

Jeannie, clenches her hands into fists at her sides.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Relax girl. We have to play the game. Keep Shields at bay, unravel the mystery behind this Zodiac copycat, and most importantly—stay in control. Shields will get his.

INT. FBI BRIEFING ROOM -DAY

As Jeannie leaves the conference room the scent of freshly made sandwiches fills the briefing room of the San Francisco FBI bureau as agents gather around the long table, stacks of files spread out before them. The noise of papers rustling, muted conversations, and the clinking of drink bottles made for a casual atmosphere, but the tension of the case was palpable.

ISMAIL FLORES

How the phone call go with Shields?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

As expected. The underlying threats were there.

ISMAIL FLORES

Think we should call the President? Remember, he said to notify his office if any retributions come our way.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

No, not yet. Let's keep that Ace in the hole until we absolutely need it. Good job on setting up a working lunch.

ISMAIL FLORES

Yeah, about that. Time to kick some ass.

Ismail bangs his pen against a water glass to get everyone's attention. The agents scurry to their seats.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Everyone good? Grab whatever you want. We've got a lot to cover today, but we'll start off with some good food. That's one of Jeannie's rules, after all.

Jeannie, sits across from him, giving him a small, appreciative smile but kept her eyes on the case files spread before her. The room quiets

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Alright, folks, thanks for taking the time to come together. I know it's been a rough few weeks.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

The Zodiac copycat case has been haunting all of us, and frankly, this is starting to look like one of those once-in-a-career cases. That said, we're calling this a brainstorming session.

He lets the words hang in the air for a moment, glancing at Jeannie, who nods in silent agreement.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

This isn't going to be a standard meeting with one-way orders. Today, we're going to piece together everything we can and dig deeper than we've ever gone. Everyone's ideas and thoughts are valuable here, no matter how small they seem.

Ismail pausex, glancing around the room to establish eye contact with each agent, his expression more serious than before.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Before we dive into assignments, it's important that we remind ourselves of exactly what we're up against. Some of us weren't even teenagers when the last Zodiac killing happened, so to bring us all up to speed, I've asked Burk and Darcy to put together a presentation on the original Zodiac killings.

He turns towards the two agents seated at the far end of the table and nods.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Burk, Darcy, take it away.

Burk stands first, adjusting his laptop. The screen flickers to life, projecting a haunting image of the Zodiac's infamous hooded costume, the stark black fabric and the crosshair symbol instantly recognizable to those familiar with the case. The room quiets as the image looms over them, a reminder of the killer's theatrics and the terror that had gripped Northern California all those decades ago.

Darcy steps forward to begin the presentation.

DARCY

The Zodiac case is one of the most infamous unsolved murder sprees in American history. It officially began in December 1968, though some believe his first killing may have occurred earlier.

A slide shifts to show a black-and-white photo of the first confirmed crime scene.

DARCY (CONT'D)

On the night of December 20, 1968, two high school students, Betty Lou Jensen and David Faraday, were parked on Lake Herman Road in Benicia, California. They were on a date, parked in a remote lovers' lane, when they were ambushed. David was shot in the head while still seated in the car. Betty Lou tried to run but was gunned down with multiple shots to the back. Their deaths marked the beginning of what would become a series of vicious murders.

Burk clicks to the next slide, which displays crime scene photos of a bullet-riddled car and the chalk outlines of the bodies on the cold asphalt.

DARCY (CONT'D)

This was the first of five confirmed murders attributed to the Zodiac. But what really set this case apart wasn't just the killings—it was the way the killer taunted authorities. He began sending letters to local newspapers, taking responsibility for the crimes and calling himself 'Zodiac.' He promised more deaths and included cryptograms—puzzles meant to reveal his identity if decoded.

The next slide shifts to one of the Zodiac's infamous ciphers, hundreds of cryptic symbols arranged in neat rows. Some agents leaned forward, their curiosity piqued.

DARCY (CONT'D)

The first cipher was solved in 1969, but it didn't reveal his identity.

(MORE)

DARCY (CONT'D)

Instead, it was a disturbing message that seemed to mock law enforcement: 'I like killing people because it is so much fun.' The taunting became part of his twisted game, adding layers of fear to the investigation.

Burk takes over, transitioning to the next slide, which shows another crime scene photo—this time of the Blue Rock Springs parking lot, taken in July 1969.

BURK

His second attack came on July 4th, 1969. Darlene Ferrin and Michael Mageau were parked at Blue Rock Springs Park, also in Vallejo. A man approached their car and opened fire. Darlene died from multiple gunshot wounds, but Michael miraculously survived, despite being critically injured. He later described the attacker as a heavysset man in his late twenties to early thirties, with a round face and a soft voice.

A slide advance revealed another ciphered letter sent to newspapers shortly after the Blue Rock Springs attack.

BURK (CONT'D)

The Zodiac took credit for this attack in another letter. He seemed to relish the attention, writing to the San Francisco Chronicle, the Vallejo Times-Herald, and other papers, demanding that they print his letters—or he'd kill again. This was when the Zodiac truly stepped into the spotlight, taunting the media and police, knowing they couldn't catch him.

The next image displayed the scene from Lake Berryessa, one of the most terrifying incidents in the Zodiac case.

BURK (CONT'D)

In September 1969, Bryan Hartnell and Cecelia Shepard were picnicking by Lake Berryessa when the Zodiac approached them wearing the hood you see in this image.

Darcy pointed to the hooded figure on the screen.

BURK (CONT'D)

He tied them up, then stabbed them repeatedly. Bryan survived, but Cecelia died from her injuries. The Zodiac left his symbol—a crosshair—on their car door, along with a message marking the date and time of the attack. This was the first time the Zodiac showed himself in costume.

The agents in the room shifted uncomfortably in their seats, some glancing around uneasily. Darcy moves to the next slide, showing a handwritten note scrawled on a car door, the chilling Zodiac symbol prominently displayed.

DARCY

His next killing would occur on October 11, 1969, when he gunned down Paul Stine, a San Francisco cab driver, in the Presidio Heights neighborhood. This was different from his previous attacks—Stine was shot in the head at close range, and the Zodiac stole his wallet and car keys before ripping off part of Stine's shirt. He mailed that bloody piece of clothing to the San Francisco Chronicle in yet another taunting letter.

Burk switches to a slide that shows a grainy police sketch of the Zodiac from the Presidio Heights scene, based on eyewitness accounts from teenagers who had seen the killer flee the scene. Darcy looks up at the agents, her expression grim.

DARCY (CONT'D)

To this day, no one knows exactly why the Zodiac's pattern shifted with Stine. Some theorize that he wanted to prove he could kill in an urban area, right under the police's noses. Or perhaps it was simply for shock value. Either way, Stine's murder left investigators with one of the most famous sketches of the Zodiac—but still, no arrest was ever made.

She pauses, scanning the faces of the agents in the quiet room.

DARCY (CONT'D)

From 1969 onward, the Zodiac sent more letters, each one filled with taunts and demands, but his activity seemed to taper off after Stine's murder. He never struck again, at least not under the same name.

Burk flips to the final slide showing a map of Northern California dotted with markers indicating the Zodiac's confirmed and suspected crime scenes.

BURK

And that brings us to today. No one has been able to conclusively identify the Zodiac. He left behind a trail of fear, mystery, and a cold case that's haunted this region for over fifty years. Until now.

Ismail nods as Darcy finishes the presentation. He stands, the room falling into a deeper hushed silence.

ISMAIL FLORES

There's one more thing. Riverside PD has recently been re-examining one of their cold cases from 1966, the murder of Cheri Jo Bates. They now believe she might have been Zodiac's first victim. If that's true, it would push Zodiac's timeline back by two years, meaning we're dealing with a much longer, more complex history than we thought.

The image on the screen switches to a photo of Cheri Jo Bates—a young woman, her life brutally cut short.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

If this is connected, then it changes everything we know about the Zodiac. And if our copycat knows even more than we do... we're in serious trouble.

Ismail gestures for Burk to bring up the next slide.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

There is one more thing you should be aware of.

He nods to Burk who advances a slide.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

This is a chilling excerpt from one of the Zodiac's letters, sent to the San Francisco Chronicle on October 13, 1969—just two days after Paul Stine's murder. He threatened the kidnapping and execution of children on a school bus.

Small talk breaks out among the agents. Ismail waits for the small talk to end before continuing.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

In this letter, the Zodiac wrote about his next potential target: a school bus full of children. He described in detail how he would attack the bus, shooting out its tires and 'picking off the kiddies as they come bouncing out.

A collective hush falls over the room as the agents absorb the gravity of the threat. The image on the screen shows the handwritten letter in Zodiac's scrawled handwriting, with that chilling passage highlighted in red. Ismail continues

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

At the time, this letter sent waves of fear across the region. Parents were terrified, schools were on high alert, and the police had to station patrols around school buses for weeks. School buses were equipped with monitors so their location was always known, plus numbers were painted on the roofs of the buses so helicopters could spot them from above.

(Pause)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

The Zodiac never followed through on the threat, but the psychological impact was undeniable. He knew exactly how to strike fear, not just through violence, but through the terror of what could happen.

DARCY

What made this threat particularly terrifying was the random, impersonal nature of it. He wasn't targeting specific individuals anymore—he was threatening an entire community. And the Zodiac knew the power of fear; the threat alone was enough to send the city into panic.

Jeannie stands and all eyes are on her.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Very thorough presentation. Zodiac didn't need to kill to cause chaos. He understood the psychology of fear better than anyone. And if our copycat has taken notes on this, we could be facing threats even more insidious than the killings themselves. Everyone in this room could be a potential target. Please use extreme caution when you leave the bureau.

She nods to Ismail who takes over again.

ISMAIL FLORES

Now, I've got some assignments for all of you, and I'm going to need everyone firing on all cylinders for this. We're going back to square one on this case, starting from the original Zodiac killings. I want each of you to reach out to everyone who had a hand in those investigations. That includes retired detectives, forensic experts, criminal profilers—hell, even the journalists who covered it. We're going to find every loose thread, every missing piece, and see what shakes loose.

The agents exchange looks, some nodding in agreement, others furrowing their brows as they scribble notes. Ismail takes a sip of iced tea before continuing.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

I'm assigning pairs of agents to contact and interview all the detectives who worked the original Zodiac killings.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Some of these folks are retired, some might be hard to track down, but I don't care. Find them. Get them to talk. Some of them may have memories or theories they never shared. We need everything.

He pauses, his tone sharpening.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

And don't just limit it to the police. I want all forensic experts involved in the original cases on our radar. Anything that didn't match up back then, any evidence they thought wasn't important, could be a key now. Same goes for the criminal profilers who worked the case—or who have since studied it. We can't leave any stone unturned.

Jeannie and Ismail establish eye contact.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I'll handle the profilers personally. I've already made a few calls. Some of the best in the field are willing to lend their expertise. This copycat has learned things about the original killings that were never shared with the public. He's playing a dangerous game, and we need psychological insight into how far he's willing to take it.

Ismail nods and continues looking at the agents.

ISMAIL FLORES

Next, I need agents to start tracking down family members of the original victims. I know that's a sensitive area, and it might stir up a lot of old wounds, but we have to go there. Sometimes, trauma causes people to remember things they buried long ago. Even the smallest detail could give us a lead.

AGENT JIM PARSONS

What about the media? There were reporters back then who had access to a lot of inside information. Should we bring them into this?

ISMAIL FLORES

Absolutely. The journalists who covered the case back then probably know things we don't. We'll need to look at every old article, every piece of editorial content. Maybe they left something out, or maybe the killer reached out to them personally. It's not beyond the Zodiac to taunt the press.

(Pause)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

I want all of this to happen fast. This copycat isn't going to wait for us. He's already made his next move by sending that email to Jeannie. We're dealing with someone who craves attention, and it's only a matter of time before he strikes again. Jeannie, do you have anything else to add?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We need to beat him to his next move. We're dealing with a mind that's calculating, intelligent, and familiar with both the original Zodiac and modern technology. This isn't just about catching a killer. This is about ending a legacy of terror.

ISMAIL FLORES

Alright, let's hit the ground running. We've got retired cops, journalists, and family members to talk to. Every single one of them might have something we need. And I don't care how small it seems—bring it back to us.

INT. CELLAR -AFTERNOON

The copycat sat alone in the dim glow of his computer screen, his fingers absentmindedly tracing the Zodiac symbol carved into the corner of his desk. The outline of the circle and cross had become an obsession.

Closing his eyes, he leans back in his chair, letting his mind drift into the darkness as he envisions his next kill.

ZODIAC COPYCAT

(To self) I won't rush this one. The fear is the most crucial part. I want to savor the panic, the pleading, the final moments of control. This is about more than the kill—it is about complete domination. I will bind them, just as Zodiac had done, and watch them struggle helplessly against the restraints. But this time, unlike Lake Berryessa, there will be no chance of survival. The original had let one victim live. Not me. He wouldn't make that mistake.

His fingers hover over the keyboard. He begins typing, drafting the letter that would come after his next kill.

"This is only the beginning."

INT. JEANNIE'S OFFICE -DAY

Ismail enters the room, a steaming cup of coffee in hand. The fatigue etched on his face mirrored her own.

ISMAIL FLORES

Morning, boss.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Morning. I've been thinking about our next move. I want to interview the team of codebreakers who worked on the Zodiac's original ciphers.

Ismail raises an eyebrow, intrigued.

ISMAIL FLORES

You think this copycat is planning to send us a cipher?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

He's mimicking everything the original Zodiac did—and more. If we're going to stay ahead of him, I want to be prepared. There's a strong possibility he's been planning this for years. Those codebreakers might offer insights we haven't considered, or even identify patterns we've missed.

Ismail sat his coffee down and leans forward.

ISMAIL FLORES

I can make some calls today. Most of them are still around—retired, but very active in the community.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Good. We need to understand how they cracked the Zodiac's ciphers, what they might have missed, and whether there's a possibility this guy is preparing something even more complex. We need every possible advantage.

ISMAIL FLORES

There's one more thing—we've had a potential sighting near Lake Berryessa. It's not confirmed yet, but the description matches movements similar to the original Zodiac's attack there.

Jeannie's eyes narrow.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Damn it. He's moving faster than we thought.

ISMAIL FLORES

Much faster. But we've still got time. If we can get ahead of him, maybe we can stop his next attack before it happens.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

There's another issue we need to address. This guy has access to information that was never made public. Classified information. It's disturbing.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

He either had access before, or worse, still does. I have a working theory that we may be looking at a link to law enforcement. Someone inside. I'm not sure how to proceed with this, so I'm planning on giving our former SAC a call to pick his brain.

Ismail's eyes darkens.

ISMAIL FLORES

If there's someone on the inside....

Jeannie cuts him off.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I know. We'll need to tread carefully.

Ismail sighs and shifts in his seat.

ISMAIL FLORES

I've got a profiler coming in at ten this morning—Sandy Barnes. I thought you'd want to sit in on the interview.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I will. What's her take?

ISMAIL FLORES

I spoke with her on the phone yesterday. She's convinced that this new Zodiac isn't just mimicking the original killings—he's driven by the need to surpass them. He wants to prove that he's superior to the legend. She thinks he's escalating, planning more elaborate and public murders to not only humiliate law enforcement but to terrorize the city on a much larger scale.

Jeannie leans back.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

That makes sense. He's not just playing games—he wants to cement himself as something more than just a copycat. He wants to outdo the Zodiac.

ISMAIL FLORES

Barnes is convinced of it. If she's right, then his next move won't be like anything we've seen before. He's not just replaying old crimes—he's writing his own chapter.

Jeannie scans through the latest reports that had come across her desk. Ismail sees she is examining the Lake Berryessa sighting.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

I made the call to the Napa Sheriff's Office. They're aware of the potential threat. Their Marine Patrol services cover Lake Berryessa year-round, and they've confirmed they'll be on standby for any emergencies.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

What kind of resources are they putting into this?

Ismail pulls a small notepad from his pocket and flips through it.

ISMAIL FLORES

Their deputies assigned to Marine Patrol drive a range of specially equipped vessels. Some are prepared to handle calls in the worst kinds of weather—heavy rain, storms, even high winds. They'll respond at night on a call-out basis for life-threatening emergencies.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We'll need them, especially if this guy decides to strike at night. Lake Berryessa is secluded, and in the dark, it'll be like hunting a ghost. Visibility will be next to nothing.

Ismail crosses his arms and leans against the edge of the desk.

ISMAIL FLORES

The sheriff's office has a few teams they're willing to rotate in shifts.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

But even with their vessels, we're talking about a vast area. It's not like the original Zodiac attack, which happened in broad daylight. If this guy plans to move under the cover of night, we could be walking into a trap.

Jeannie exhales, the weight of the situation settling over her like a thick fog.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We need to be prepared for anything. I want our agents stationed at key access points—near the docks, at the main road leading in and out, and especially around the campsites. He'll be looking for vulnerable spots.

ISMAIL FLORES

Already in motion. I've got teams coordinating with the local deputies. They're setting up roadblocks and will be ready for a full sweep if necessary. We've also asked them to quietly patrol the hiking trails around the lake—places the Zodiac might have targeted if he were planning an ambush.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We have to assume this guy is studying us as much as we're studying him. He's already shown he knows details from the original case that were never made public. That tells me he's meticulous, and he's planning every move down to the last detail. We can't afford to let anything slip through the cracks.

ISMAIL FLORES

Agreed. This isn't just about catching a killer anymore. He's trying to make us look like fools—taunting us.

Jeannie stand up and walks to the large wall map of Lake Berryessa that had been pinned in the operations room.

The map is marked with circles and annotations, areas of interest, and possible access points where the killer might strike. Her finger traces the perimeter of the lake, her mind running through the possibilities.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

If he's going for maximum impact,
he'll want to strike somewhere
crowded, where people are
relaxed—where their guard is down.

She turns back to Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We need eyes on everything. Let's
station plainclothes officers at
the most frequented spots—picnic
areas, campsites, even fishing
docks. I don't want to tip him off,
but we need to be prepared.

ISMAIL FLORES

I'll make sure it's done
discreetly. We've got surveillance
drones on standby as well. If he's
out there, we'll find him.

Jeannie pauses, her thoughts shifting.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

But what if he's not planning to
strike right away? What if this
sighting was just a test—him
checking to see how fast we'd
react?

ISMAIL FLORES

That's a possibility. But the Napa
Sheriff's Office is ready to
respond if he does anything, even
if it's just a false alarm. Their
deputies have been briefed to treat
any call from the lake area with
the highest priority.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Good, because if he moves tonight,
we won't have time for second-
guessing.

INT. CELLAR-DAY

The killer sits back in his dimly lit room, a slow smile curling across his lips as he watches the news feed on his laptop. The image on the screen shows the flurry of activity around Lake Berryessa—police cars, patrol boats, and law enforcement officers scouring the area, all bracing for his next move. He chuckled softly to himself.

ZODIAC COPYCAT

(To self) They think they're ready.
How adorable.

His eyes glint in the dark as he clicks through the images stored on his computer, each one a snapshot from his own private surveillance.

He pauses on the photo of Jeannie Loomis. Taken just days ago, it showed her in a conference room, clearly in the middle of a tense discussion. Beside her stood Ismail Flores, always at her side. The killer leaned closer, examining every detail of her face.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

Hey, Agent Flores. Here I was,
right in front of you. The Zodiac.
Do you remember? I helped you
select your sandwich.

She turned back to the photo of Jeannie.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

(To self)
Jeannie, you're smart— I give her
that. Smarter than most of the
others. But this only makes the
game more interesting. You are so
focused, determined. You are
everything the Zodiac wants in an
adversary.

(Pause)

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

Ph.D. in social psychology.
Criminal profiler at the FBI
Academy in Quantico. Rose through
the ranks and is now the top person
in the San Francisco FBI bureau.
Highly decorated. Yes, you will be
a challenge and I loved it.

He reaches for a red dry erase marker on his desk, his movements slow and deliberate.

With practiced ease, he draws a thick, red circle around Jeannie's face. He leans back in his chair, studying the image now, the bold red ring around her face like a target.

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

(To self) You've been working so hard, Jeannie. Running around, trying to figure out my next move. But you've missed the most important detail.

He stands up and approaches the wall where dozens of photos are pinned—snapshots of the FBI team, crime scenes, maps, news clippings, and old Zodiac letters. But his eyes are always drawn back to the picture of Jeannie.

With the red marker still in hand, he scribbles on the wall beneath her photo. Two words. "It's time."

ZODIAC COPYCAT (CONT'D)

(To self) Jeannie, it is time that I creepy crawl through you home. I can't wait to see where you live. But not tonight. Tonight, I need to continue watching. Studying. Planning.

INT EXT-JEANNIE'S HOME-NIGHT

Jeannie pulls into her driveway and quickly parks her sports car in the garage, hit the button to close the door behind her, sealing herself off from the world outside.

Grabbing the Subway sandwich bag and her drink from the passenger seat, she enters through the kitchen side door. As soon as she steps inside, she kicks off her shoes with a sigh of relief.

She places her food on the table before moving to the large aquarium in the corner of the room. Her koi fish swim lazily through the water, but as soon as they spot her, they darted toward the surface, mouths opening and closing eagerly.

With a soft smile, Jeannie drops a few pellets into the tank, watching the koi devour the food as if they hadn't eaten in days.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

So, you guys missed me huh? How was my day you ask? Well, let me get my food and a notepad and I'll fill you in.

She brings the items to the dining room table and sits, placing her handgun on the seat next to her. As she takes her first bite, there is a knock on her front door. She places her handgun back in her holster and slowly approaches the door. She looks through her safe view and see SEAN DELANEY, fifty-something, handsome, British. Jeannie freezes and then finally opens her door.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

(To self)

It couldn't be him. Sean was dead—or at least, that's what she had been led to believe for years. He'd vanished without a trace, leaving behind nothing but questions and a hollow ache in her chest. They had been in love once, deeply, but he had always kept parts of himself hidden. And then, during the Civil War gold investigation, he had reappeared alive, but different. He was no longer the man she once knew. He was darker now, working for a shadow organization that operated outside the law. After that investigation, they had promised to talk, to finally address everything that had been left unsaid. But life had pulled them in different directions, and that conversation never happened. Until now.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Sean....

(Pause)

SEAN DELANEY

Jeannie...

They stand there in the doorway, two people with so much history, so much unfinished business, but no idea where to start. Jeannie's eyes dart over his face, searching for something—an explanation, an apology, anything.

SEAN DELANEY (CONT'D)

Can I come in?

For a moment, Jeannie hesitates.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Come in.

Sean crosses the threshold, and pauses just inside, glancing around briefly before his eyes settled on her again, his expression a mix of uncertainty and something deeper—something he wasn't ready to reveal yet. Jeannie closes the door behind him.

SEAN DELANEY

I didn't mean to scare you,
Jeannie. I probably should've
called, but...I wasn't sure if
you'd even pick up.

Jeannie crosses her arms over her chest, her defenses coming up even though part of her wants to let them down.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Showing up unannounced this late
tends to have that effect.

Sean nods, his expression softening.

SEAN DELANEY

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to make
you feel on edge. It's just... I
didn't know where else to go.

His words hang in the air between them, heavy with meaning.

She gestures toward the couch in the living room.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Please. Have a seat.

She moves to the chair opposite him, folding her legs beneath her as she sits down. For a moment, neither of them speak.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Why now, Sean? Why show up after
all this time?

Jeannie leans back slightly in her chair, waiting for Sean to speak. His silence stretches for a moment too long, and she could tell he is struggling to find the right words.

SEAN DELANEY

You'd think, after everything—the
dirty FBI agents, the Civil War
gold investigation—that I would've
had plenty of time to figure out
exactly what I wanted to say to
you.

Jeannie tilts her head, studying him, sensing there is more he is holding back.

He pauses, glancing away briefly, then back at her, his eyes fill with something she hadn't seen in a long time—vulnerability.

SEAN DELANEY (CONT'D)

But instead, I found myself
standing at your front door
tonight, with my heart pounding so
hard I thought your neighbor
Delores would hear it and come over
with her gun.

That earns him a laugh from Jeannie, her defenses easing just a fraction.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I wouldn't put it past her. She'd
probably come over just for the
thrill.

Sean grins, but it doesn't quite reach his eyes. His expression sobers as he leans forward, his voice growing quieter.

SEAN DELANEY

Jeannie, I came here tonight
because there's something I need
you to hear—something I've been
carrying with me since I
disappeared. I know I hurt you... I
staged my death, vanished without a
trace, only to show up in your life
again as part of some shadow
organization that shouldn't even
exist.

Sean's eyes are locked on hers, filled with a sincerity she hadn't seen in him in years.

SEAN DELANEY (CONT'D)

I've always loved you. That hasn't
changed, not for a second. But I
also know what I did—how I
disappeared without telling you the
truth about who I really was. I
didn't want to drag you into that
darkness... and in doing so, I hurt
you in ways I never meant to.

Jeannie swallows hard, the weight of his words sink in.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

You don't just get to come back into my life like this, Sean. It's not that easy.

SEAN DELANEY

I know it's not. I don't expect it to be. But if there's even a chance—just the smallest possibility—that we can start again, I'm willing to do whatever it takes. I'm not asking for forgiveness. I'm asking for a chance.

Jeannie's gaze softens, her defenses weakening.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We'll take this one step at a time, Sean. No promises.

Sean's expression softs with something like relief.

SEAN DELANEY

That's more than I could've hoped for.

Jeannie glances toward the kitchen, her mind still swirling with Sean's words, and suddenly realizes how little she'd eaten.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I've got most of a Subway hot roast beef sandwich and some chips, although I'm not sure how hot it is," she said, her voice softer now, as though the weight of the past few minutes had tempered the tension. We could share if you're hungry.

SEAN DELANEY

Thank you, Jeannie. I'd like that.

They begin eating in silence until Sean breaks the silence, his voice softer than before.

SEAN DELANEY (CONT'D)

It's strange, isn't it? Sitting here like this. After everything.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah... It is. But maybe it's a start.

After seeing Sean off with a promise to go slow, Jeannie decides a quick shower might help her relax. The hot water cascades over her, washing away the physical tension but not the mental exhaustion. Afterward, she climbs into bed, her damp hair fanning across the pillow as she glanced at the alarm clock. 10:30 PM. She picks up her phone and calls the former SAC Lomax.

INT. JEANNIE'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

How's the new Special Agent in Charge?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(Smiling) Hello, boss. How are you?

SAC LOMAX

Ten pounds heavier after our recent cruise. I tried to keep an eye on what I ate, but my wife had other plans. Walked the deck a few times, but I guess now it's back to diet TV dinners.

He sighs, and then his voice turns more serious.

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

Been following the Zodiac case. Seems you're doing a good job keeping the media vultures at bay.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah, well, that's why I'm calling. There's something off about all this, and I need your gut feeling on it. My instincts tell me this guy—whoever he is—has access to classified details about the original Zodiac case. He knows things that never made it to the public.

There is a pause on the other end before Lomax speak.

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

Go on.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The case... it's taken a personal turn. The suspect has started sending me untraceable emails. Addressed to me by name.

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

That's a first. If I remember right, the Zodiac did target the press, but not like this. Has he threatened you directly?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Not directly, but the undertone is there. It's personal now, and he's playing games. I've beefed up security around me, but I don't know how he's getting this inside information. There could be someone feeding him details from within.

The line is silent for a moment, and Jeannie glances at her phone to make sure the call hadn't dropped.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Boss, are you still there?

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

I'm here. Do you remember the Neo-Nazi case? The one where we found out one of our agents was a mole?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah, I remember. You were the one who figured it out. We bugged his room, but he died in the takedown. Still, you were right about the mole.

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

I'm telling you, Jeannie, this guy's smart. And if he has a mole feeding him information, you need to stay ahead of him. Here's what I'm thinking—start putting out fake details, misinformation that seems legitimate. Spread it through different channels and keep track of who gets what. When he acts on it, you'll know where the leak is.

Jeannie processes the idea.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

You mean bait him with false leads?
Like breadcrumbs?

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

Exactly. But be careful. This guy's cunning. He's playing a long game, and he'll pick up on anything too obvious. Keep it subtle, feed him just enough to make him bite. And when he does, you'll have a trail.

Jeannie leans back against her headboard, considering the implications.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It's risky, but it might be our only shot at finding out who's giving him the inside information. I'll talk to Ismail about it.

Lomax chuckles.

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

Glad to see you haven't lost your edge. Just be sure to stay on your toes. I don't want to hear you're taking any unnecessary risks.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I'm being careful. Trust me. I'll keep you in the loop. But I have to ask—how are you holding up in retirement? You miss the chase?

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

"Every damn day. It's hard watching from the sidelines. I miss being in the hunt.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Well, you're still helping. And that counts for something.

SAC LOMAX (V.O.)

I appreciate that, Jeannie. Take care of yourself out there.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I will, boss. Thanks.

She looks at her alarm clock. Still not 11 p.m. yet.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
One more call.

She dials Ismail's number.

ISMAIL FLORES
(Groggy) Hello, boss. Do you know what time it is? Some of us highly trained FBI agents need our beauty sleep, you know. I use this charm to interrogate the bad guys.

Jeannie couldn't help but burst into laughter.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
God, you're on a roll, aren't you?

ISMAIL FLORES
Always. Seriously though, what's up? You calling me at this hour means something's either on fire or someone's just pissed you off.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Neither. But I've got something important. Something Lomax suggested. It's risky, but I think it might be our only shot at staying ahead of this guy.

Ismail groans, but she could hear the shift in his tone—alert now, curious.

ISMAIL FLORES
I'm listening.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Lomax thinks we should set a trap. Feed the Zodiac copycat false information and see what he does with it. It's a way to figure out if someone inside is leaking details to him, or if he's just really good at digging up information. We plant a few misleading clues, spread them through various channels, and track who gets what.

Ismail is quiet for a moment.

ISMAIL FLORES
So, we throw out breadcrumbs and see if he bites?
(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

But what kind of false information
are we talking about?

Jeannie leans back on her pillows, feeling her mind clear as
the plan begins to take shape.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

That's what we need to figure out.
We can't make it too obvious, but
it needs to be juicy enough to
tempt him. Here's a few ideas I've
been thinking about.

ISMAIL FLORES

Like what?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The Zodiac's first Attack in San
Francisco: We could leak a story
that claims we've uncovered an old
journal entry from a witness who
saw someone near the scene of one
of the original Zodiac murders,
right here in San Francisco. It
could suggest a connection between
this witness and the current
killings, giving him the idea that
we're closing in on something
significant.

ISMAIL FLORES

OKAY.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Or, what if we leak that we've
found DNA on one of the letters he
sent? Make him think we're closer
than we really are. We could drop
hints that we're running it through
advanced databases, but keep it
vague. Maybe he'll panic and change
his methods—or better yet, try to
destroy evidence we're watching.

ISMAIL FLORES

I like it. Go on.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We could release a false story
about cracking a new Zodiac cipher
that supposedly points to his next
victim or location.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Something cryptic, but detailed enough that it gives him a nudge in the wrong direction. If he moves toward any of the locations we hint at, we'll know we've got him.

ISMAIL FLORES

That's some crafty stuff, boss. Risky, but smart. You'd have to be careful about who you tell what, though. If the copycat's getting this intel from someone inside, it's going to take precision to figure out who's feeding him.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Exactly. I'll set up different versions of the false information, then distribute it selectively. Different agents, different agencies, different sources, and I'll track each one. Whoever he gets his next piece of intel from, that'll be our mole.

ISMAIL FLORES

We'll need to be careful with this. The wrong move and he could either catch on, or worse—he could get more dangerous.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I know. But it might be our only way forward.

ISMAIL FLORES

You really think this guy has an inside track?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

He knows too much. Things no one should know unless they've got access to classified records. This isn't just a game for him anymore—it's personal. And now he's targeting me.

Ismail is silent for a beat.

ISMAIL FLORES

We'll make sure he doesn't get close. You're too valuable, Jeannie. But let's play this smart.
(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

I'll help you figure out who to feed the information to. We'll track every detail, and once he makes a move, we'll know exactly where it's coming from.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Thanks, Ace. I knew you'd be on board.

ISMAIL FLORES

Always. But you owe me coffee in the morning. And maybe a donut.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Deal. Now get some sleep. We've got a long day ahead.

EXT. ACROSS FROM SCHOOL - DAY

The school bus arrived on time. A loud bell rang and before long the façade of the school was filling with running elementary students, yelling and shouting. Some looked for their parents while others ran towards the waiting bus. No one noticed across the street, a brown Ford pickup with a man wearing a hoodie.

ZODIAC COPYCAT

(To self) Run little boys and girls. Soon you will be my masterpiece.

INT. FBI BREAK-ROOM-DAY

Jeannie entered the break room finding Ismail already nursing a cup of coffee. Jeannie grabs a cup and fills it.

ISMAIL FLORES

Rough night? I told you that at your age, you need to send your date home early so you can get some beauty sleep.

Jeannie takes a sip of her coffee and nods.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Very funny and thank you for caring so much about my health and sex life. Actually, I couldn't sleep. Too much going on in my head.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

I talked to Lomax last night—he had a suggestion about how we could flush out this leak.

Jeannie glances around the break room and leans closer to Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

I was thinking we could leak details that would make him think we're on to something big. Something that would make him feel like he's losing control. A couple of breadcrumbs that could lure him into making a mistake.

ISMAIL FLORES

Like what? Your ideas last night were pretty good ones.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

What if we hold a press briefing? We'll announce that we've found new DNA evidence at one of the crime scenes. And we could also mention that a long-lost diary was uncovered, something that points to the original Zodiac killer's identity—a diary supposedly kept by the daughter of a man who claimed to be the Zodiac.

Ismail's eyes widen slightly.

ISMAIL FLORES

A fake diary? That's bold. You think it'll be enough to get him to bite?

Jeannie shrugs, her mind racing through the possibilities.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It's worth a shot. If we make it convincing enough, he might get nervous, think we're closer than we are. If he tries to change his methods or reach out to someone for help, we'll know he's taking the bait.

Ismail considers it, taking another sip of his coffee.

ISMAIL FLORES

We can't tell anyone else in the office. Not yet. If there's really a leak, we need to control the flow of information.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Exactly. We'll keep it between us for now. I'll run the idea by the SAC later this morning and get the press conference set up.

Ismail leans forward, his voice drops even lower.

ISMAIL FLORES

You sure you're ready for this? If he's as smart as we think he is, this could push him over the edge.

Jeannie stares down at her coffee for a moment, feeling the weight of his words.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I know. But we can't just sit back and wait for him to strike again. We need to take control of this.

ISMAIL FLORES

Alright, then. Let's do this. I'll have your back every step of the way.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Let's see if this guy's as smart as he thinks he is.

INT. FBI MEDIA ROOM -DAY

The room is packed with reporters, their notepads and cameras poised, ready to capture every word Jeannie is about to say. The lights were harsh, bouncing off the shiny black podium at the front of the room, but Jeannie stood tall, her heart racing with anticipation. She glanced at Ismail, who stood off to the side, giving her a nod of support. As she approaches the podium, the murmurs in the room fall to silence as all eyes turn toward her.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Thank you all for coming. As many of you are aware, the recent murders in the San Francisco bay area have drawn disturbing parallels to the infamous Zodiac killer case. We have been working tirelessly to gather evidence and track down this copycat killer.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Today, I'm here to announce that we've made some significant breakthroughs in the case.

The reporters lean in, their pens poised, cameras click as they wait for the bombshell.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We have recently uncovered DNA evidence at one of the crime scenes, which we believe may help us identify the killer. We are currently running it through advanced databases, and we expect results soon.

There was a murmur of excitement among the reporters, but Jeannie wasn't done.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Additionally, a long-lost diary has come to light. This diary was kept by a woman who claims that her father was the original Zodiac killer. While we are still verifying the authenticity of this information, the diary contains several details that were never made public and align with our investigation.

She let that sink in for a moment, watching the reaction. The press is eating it up.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We will continue to update you as the investigation progresses. Thank you.

Media members began throwing out questions but Ismail has the other agents in the room clear them out as he approached Jeannie.

ISMAIL FLORES
(Whispering) Good job. Now we wait.

As the crowd begins to disperse, Ismail catches sight of a man moving through the audience, headed toward him. The man looks familiar—tall, neatly dressed, with an air of confidence. 30-something, dark hair. He approaches Ismail with a casual smile.

DYLAN
Agent Flores. You may not remember me, but I catered the lunch for your briefing a few days ago. My name's Dylan.

Ismail hesitates for a moment, then shakes the man's hand.

ISMAIL FLORES
Right, I do remember. Good food.

DYLAN
I heard you might have more briefings coming up, with all this breaking news. Just wanted to check if you'll need any catering services again soon?

Ismail chuckles.

ISMAIL FLORES
Yeah, actually, we might be having an all-hands-on-deck meeting soon. I'll definitely keep you in mind. Good to know you're around.

DYLAN
Thanks. I'll be waiting for your call. See yah.

Dylan turns and leaves with the last of the media personnel.

As Dylan turns and walks away, Ismail watches him go, a strange feeling settling in his gut. Something about the encounter didn't sit right, but he shook it off. Maybe it was just the stress of the case weighing on him.

He rejoins Jeannie, who is waiting by the elevator.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Ready to go back upstairs?

ISMAIL FLORES
 (Distracted) Yeah. Something's
 just... off.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
 Off how?

Ismail hesitates, glancing back toward the door where Dylan
 had exited.

ISMAIL FLORES
 That guy who just talked to
 me—Dylan. He catered the last
 briefing we had. Now he's offering
 to do it again, but something about
 the way he approached me just
 didn't feel right.

Jeannie's eyes narrow.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
 You think he's more than just a
 caterer?

ISMAIL FLORES
 I don't know.

He rubs the back of his neck.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)
 It's probably nothing. But I'll
 keep an eye on him.

Jeannie nods, her mind already moving a mile a minute as the
 two enter the elevator.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
 Let's not dismiss it too quickly.
 We're playing a dangerous game now,
 and we can't afford to overlook
 anything—no matter how small.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
 I think the press briefing went
 well, but now the real waiting game
 begins. Will he take the bait? Will
 he make a mistake?

Ismail does not answer, but shrugs his shoulders.

EXT.FBI BUREAU-DAY

Dylan slips through the crowd as easily as a shadow fading in the early morning light.

DYLAN

(To self) Nice try Jeannie. The press briefing had gone exactly as I expected—another futile attempt to throw me off my game. I was impressed, though. The DNA story? Clever. The diary? A nice touch. But nothing more than breadcrumbs scattered by amateurs.

He allows himself a small, tight-lipped smile as he navigates his way down a passage way between two tall buildings, his steps quick but unhurried.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

(To self) Jeannie Loomis. Her beauty is undeniable, but it was the quiet, understated kind that made people turn their heads without fully understanding why. She has an air of confidence that wasn't forced, and the way she carries herself leaves an impression long after she left the room. It wasn't just her appearance, though. There is something far deeper—something about her mind. Her intelligence radiates in every move, in every calculated word she speaks, in the precision of her gaze when she locks onto someone in a conversation. It wasn't just surface-level smart—Jeannie had the kind of mind that dissected every detail, missing nothing, no matter how small. I like the challenge. They want me to panic. To slip up. But they won't get that satisfaction. Not today.

INT. JEANNIE'S RESIDENCE-NIGHT

The house is quiet. Shadows stretched across the floor as the copycat killer—Dylan—slips through Jeannie Loomis's back door with practiced ease. He looks at his wristwatch—10:10 p.m.

DYLAN

Well, Jeannie. I must admit I love
your decor. Looks like I have at
least an hour before I must leave.

His gaze catches on the large aquarium in the dining room as he passed back through. The koi inside swim lazily in the dim light, their graceful movements almost hypnotic. He crouches down, fascinated by the creatures. After watching the fish a moment longer, he stands, feeling the pull of curiosity leading him upstairs. But first he begins to move objects around. To toy with her.

He climbs to the second floor.

INT. JEANNIE'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Dylan enters and explores her bedroom. . He pulls open a drawer and smiles as his fingers sifts through her delicate underwear, the lace slipping between his fingers like silk. He sniffs it, picking up her scent. He lets the lingerie drop and moves on, sliding a few objects just slightly.

He enters her third bedroom. Her home office

INT. HOME OFFICE-NIGHT

A wall full of photographs, diagrams, case files are pinned in a careful display of Jeannie's work. Old pictures of the original Zodiac killings were aligned next to the fresh crime scenes from her current investigation. Strings of connection stretched from photo to photo, like the inside of a spider's web.

DYLAN

(Whispering) I'm impressed Jeannie.
You have really done your homework.

Dylan moves closer, scanning the pictures with a critical eye. He pulls a chair from the corner and sits down, staring at her work, studying it as if he could pull meaning from the chaos. But the longer he stares, the more frustrated he became. Jeannie wasn't showing her hand here.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Sadly, Jeannie. You are not showing
your hand. Touch'e.

He moves a few objects and then leaves the house returning to his parked car. As he is sitting staring back at the house. A woman approaches wearing curlers (DELORES-seventy-something, busybody -Jeannie's next door neighbor).

She marches right up to his car window, her arms crossed as she taps her foot impatiently. Dylan rolls the window down, plastering on a smile.

DELORES

(Demanding) Can I ask what you're doing here?

Dylan didn't miss a beat. He reaches into the passenger seat and grabs a pizza box he'd stashed there earlier.

DYLAN

Sorry, ma'am.

He holds up the pizza box.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

I was trying to deliver this pizza. Had an address, but I must've written it down wrong. I've been driving around trying to find it.

Delores frowns, clearly skeptical.

DELORES

You sure you're not lost?

Dylan glances at his wristwatch, feigning surprise.

DYLAN

Oh, wow, you're right. It's way to late to make the delivery on our promised time. I'll just have to head back and let my boss know I couldn't make the delivery. Must've been a prank call.

Delores softens slightly at the mention of a prank. She eyes the pizza box again.

DELORES

Well, no sense in wasting a good pizza. I'll take it off your hands.

Dylan chuckles, handing the box to her.

DYLAN

Sure, why not? It's all yours.

She snatches the box with a satisfied nod.

DELORES

I'm the president of the HOA here. Next time, double-check your address, son. This isn't the kind of neighborhood you want to be wandering around in late at night.

DYLAN

Good advice. Have a good night.

As Delores walks away, he rolls up the window and starts the car, driving calmly out of the neighborhood.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE BERRYESSA-NIGHT

The sun had dipped behind the hills surrounding Lake Berryessa, casting long shadows across the still waters. It is quiet now.

With no recent signs of the Zodiac copycat, the Napa County Sheriff's Department is relaxing its patrols.

Twenty-two-year-old Maya Collins and her boyfriend, Brandon Holt, were hiking along the lakeside trail, hand-in-hand, laughing as they watch the last flickers of sunlight dance across the water.

MAYA COLLINS

It's getting late. Maybe we should head back to the campsite?

BRANDON HOLT

Yeah, sure. Let's grab a spot by the lake and watch the stars for a bit before heading back.

Maya hesitates but nods. They find a secluded area by the water's edge, the perfect spot for a quiet moment. Brandon spreads out a blanket, and they sit down together, shoulders touching as they look out at the darkening lake.

BRANDON HOLT (CONT'D)

This is perfect.

He puts his arm about Maya who places her head on his shoulder.

Out of the woods, moving silently, Dylan-wearing a black executioner's hood just as the original Zodiac had on that fateful night-emerges from the shadows. He approaches them silently from behind, the sounds of nature masking his steps. His gloved hand grips a long hunting knife he had brought specifically for this.

BRANDON HOLT (CONT'D)

It's so nice and calm out here. The lake is like glass.

As Dylan got closer, Maya feels a shift in the atmosphere. Her smile falters, and she turns slightly, sensing something is wrong. Her eyes widen when she sees him—an imposing figure dressed in black, his face obscured by the eerie executioner's hood.

MAYA COLLINS

Oh my God, Brandon.

She pulls at his shirt sleeve. Brandon looks up and freezes. The knife glints in the fading light, and before they could react, Dylan has closed the distance between them.

DYLAN

Don't move.

His voice distorted through the hood. His eyes flicker between the two of them. He keeps his grip steady on the knife as his free hand reaches into his pocket, pulling out a gun.

MAYA COLLINS

(Stammering) Please, we don't have any money.

Dylan lets out a slow, chilling laugh.

DYLAN

It's not about the money.

He orders them to lie face down on the ground, just as the original Zodiac had done. Maya and Brandon lay on the blanket, trembling as they cling to each other, praying for a way out. Tears slip down Maya's cheeks as she realizes the terror of their situation.

Dylan kneels beside them, tying their hands together with pre-cut lengths of plastic zip ties. He moves slowly, methodically, savoring every second of their fear.

BRANDON HOLT

Why are you doing this?

Dylan doesn't answer.

He plunges the knife into Brandon's back, the blade cutting deep into flesh. Maya screams, her voice echoing off the still water as Brandon gasped in pain, his body convulsing under the force of the attack. Dylan didn't stop—he stabs again and again, his movements precise, calculated.

When Brandon stops moving, Dylan turns his attention to Maya.

MAYA COLLINS

Please... no!

He leans down, his face inches from hers, his gloved hand grips her hair as he lifts her head slightly.

DYLAN

You should feel honored. You're part of something bigger than yourself now. Just like the others.

He raises the knife, and before Maya could scream again, he brings it down, silencing her forever.

Dylan stands by the lakeside, the bodies of Maya and Brandon lying lifeless behind him. He wipes the blade clean on a rag, then carefully folds it and slipped it back into his jacket.

INT. JEANNIE'S RESIDENCE-NIGHT

Jeannie arrives home and parks her car in the garage lowering the garage door. She drops her briefcase near the door, her heels click on the hardwood floor as she headed straight for the kitchen.

INT. JEANNIE'S KITCHEN-NIGHT

Her stomach growls. She puts her service weapon on the kitchen counter and opens the refrigerator, hoping something halfway decent might be waiting for her. A quick glance revealed a couple of condiments, and an old carton of eggs. She grabs the eggs.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Well, it's better than nothing.

She kicks off her shoes, and takes a few eggs from the carton. She starts cracking them into a bowl, scrambling them up, deciding to make French toast. As the French toast cooks, she wanders into the dining room to feed her koi. The gentle swishing of water greets her as she flicks some food into the tank.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Hey, guys. Guess who's had one hell of a day.

She stands there for a moment, watching them swim peacefully, seemingly without a care in the world.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

No insight as to what I should do next?

Only silence.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Well, gee. You guys aren't much help. I will tell you however, small pieces of the puzzle aren't quite fitting together yet, but my gut feeling is that we're getting close. Very close.

She grabs her French toast and sits in the dining table glancing at her fish. After finishing her meal, she sighs and pushes her plate aside. It is time for bed. She rinses off her plate, leaving it in the sink, and makes her way upstairs.

INT. JEANNIE'S BEDROOM-NIGHT

Jeannie changes into her usual night clothes, but something feels off. Her fingers hover over her chest of drawers where she keeps her underwear. The folded garments are slightly out of place, not the way she usually leaves them.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Maybe I'm just tired.

Climbing into bed, she pulls the covers up and lets the comfort of sleep start to creep in.

At 6:30 a.m., her phone rings, startling her awake. She groggily grabs it, rubbing the sleep from her eyes.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Loomis.

ISMAIL FLORES

Jeannie, it's Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

What is it?

ISMAIL FLORES

There's been a development. Two bodies were found by a hiker at Lake Berryessa. It's bad, Jeannie... really bad.

She bolts upright in bed.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I'll pick you up in 30 minutes.

She swinging her legs over the side of the bed.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Lake Berryessa. The son-of-a bitch waited for complacency to set in and he strikes.

EXT. SHORE OF LAKE BERRYESSA-DAY

Jeannie and Ismail arrive at the scene of the Lake Berryessa killings. The familiar crime scene to the original Zodiac in Jeannie's head. As Jeannie and Ismail approach, the lead detective on site, Detective AARON VICKERS, fifty-something, waves them over. His brown hair is disheveled from the wind off the lake.

DET. AARON VICKERS

Special Agent Loomis, Flores. You're not going to like this. It's a damn near perfect reenactment of the original Zodiac killings out here.

ISMAIL FLORES

Hi Arron. Long time, no see.

Jeannie studies the crime scene. Two victims—a young couple, bound, stabbed multiple times, and left side by side on the ground. Their clothes were cut and bloodied, eerily reminiscent of the original Zodiac killing that had taken place in this very spot in 1969.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yes. The killer has perfectly stages the scene down to the last detail. The male victim, his chest and abdomen stained with blood, was positioned flat on his back. The female victim is lying on her side, her hands still tied behind her back with a rough cord. Look at the knife wounds, which match the frenzied attack of the original Zodiac's victims at Lake Berryessa.

DET. AARON VICKERS

They were found by a couple of hikers just after dawn. We believe the killer struck sometime late last night, maybe around sunset.

ISMAIL FLORES

It's almost like he's toying with us, trying to outdo the original.

Jeannie kneels beside the bodies, her trained eye scanning every detail. The killer had taken his time. Her eyes fall on something else—something chillingly familiar. On the side of the male victim's chest, in black marker, was the Zodiac symbol. A crude crosshair, drawn in shaky lines, but unmistakable.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

He marked them. He's leaving his signature, just like the original Zodiac.

Vickers points toward a nearby rock, where the killer had left another message scrawled in marker: the date of the killings, today's date, and beneath it, the Zodiac symbol once again.

DET. AARON VICKERS

He left this for us. He wanted us to find them like this.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The copycat had gone to extraordinary lengths to mimic the original crime. The same location, the same method, even the same eerie calling card. But why? Was he trying to prove something? Was this about legacy, or was it personal?

As Jeannie stands, taking a deep breath, Ismail joins her, his face grim.

ISMAIL FLORES

This is getting worse. He's upping the stakes every time.

Jeannie nods.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We need to talk to the victim's families, see if there's any connection to the previous killings. There has to be something we're missing.

ISMAIL FLORES

I'll start running backgrounds on them as soon as we get back to the office. There's got to be a pattern.

Before they can move away from the scene, Jeannie's phone buzzed in her pocket. She glances at the screen—a new email. She reads it to Ismail.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Do you like my work?
You're getting closer, but you'll never catch me. I have more planned, and you'll never know when I'll strike next. See you soon,
Special Agent Loomis.

ISMAIL FLORES

The fucker's watching us. He knows we're here.

Jeannie, Ismail, and Detective Vickers scan the hillside, seeing nothing. Jeannie, frustrated, shouts out.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yes, look at me you prick. Your days will come to an end soon. I promise you.

She looks at Ismail and Vickers.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We have to get ahead of him, before he kills again.

Jeannie and Ismail leave the crime scene and return to the bureau.

INT. FBI BREAK-ROOM-DAY

Ismail leans heavily against the counter as he pours himself a cup of coffee, his eyes half-lidded with fatigue. He glances at Jeannie and, seeing the dark circles under her eyes, pours her a cup as well. He slides it across the counter toward her with a sigh.

ISMAIL FLORES

I guess the son-of-a-bitch saw through our charade of false information.

Jeannie stares into her own cup, swirling the black liquid as if the answers might rise from the depths. Her eyes were distant, lost in thought.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I guess so.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

There has to be something we've missed. Some thread that could tie it all together. This copycat isn't just mimicking the Zodiac—he was playing with them, taunting us, and it feels personal. But how? Why?

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We need to regroup. Let's plan another meeting with all of our staff. Someone has to have a fresh perspective, an idea we haven't explored yet.

Ismail nods, though the same frustration still hangs over him.

ISMAIL FLORES

Yeah, maybe there's something we overlooked. But damn, Jeannie, this guy... he's a step ahead of us.

Jeannie opens her mouth to respond, but before she could say anything, her cellphone buzzes on the table. She glances down at the screen.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Shit! It's Deputy Director Shields. Time for another ass-chewing.

ISMAIL FLORES

Figures. Just what we need after the night we've had.

Jeannie stares at the screen for a moment longer, taking a breath before answering.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Shields.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS
Special Agent Loomis. Would you care to explain to me how, despite the press briefing, the false leads, and the supposed increased surveillance, your killer managed to slip through and stage another Zodiac reenactment at Lake Berryessa?

Jeannie feels the familiar surge of irritation rising in her chest, but she forces herself to keep calm.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
We're still working through the details. We didn't expect him to mimic the Zodiac's Berryessa killings so soon. He's shifting his tactics faster than we can predict.

There was a pause on the other end of the line.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS
Loomis, the media is already buzzing with this story. I've got the higher-ups breathing down my neck, and they're asking me why our task force can't get a step ahead of a copycat killer.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
We're doing everything we can. We're meeting again with the team. We'll regroup and come up with a new strategy.

DEPUTY DIRECTOR SHIELDS
(Snapping) You better. Because if this guy strikes again on our watch, we're all going to look like idiots. And Loomis, I expect results. Fast. No more excuses.

Before Jeannie can respond, the line goes dead. She lowers the phone, letting out a slow breath.

ISMAIL FLORES
Let me guess. That was constructive and not at all infuriating.

Jeannie shakes her head, placing the phone down on the counter with a bit more force than necessary.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

He wants results. Doesn't matter that we're dealing with a psychopath who's using us like pawns in some twisted game. We're supposed to have all the answers.

Ismail raised his mug in a mock toast.

ISMAIL FLORES

To results, then.

Jeannie sighs, rubbing her temples.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We're running out of time, Ismail. We need to turn this around before the copycat makes another move. Let's gather the team, brainstorm, and see if anyone has a fresh angle.

Ismail finishes the last of his coffee.

ISMAIL FLORES

Yeah. We'll figure it out. We always do.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I'm heading home early, Ismail. I have a headache that won't quit. Get everyone in here by 10 tomorrow morning. Another working lunch.

ISMAIL FLORES

You okay? I hope you are not letting that asshole Shields get to you.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

No, I'll be fine. Just need to rest. But call me if anything comes up.

On the drive home, Jeannie's mind drifts to the case.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

(To self) The copycat killer had managed to pull off another perfect re-enactment. How could he be so precise? So accurate?

When Jeannie arrives home, she unlocks the door and steps inside, breathing in the familiar scent of her home.

She kicks off her shoes and walks into the kitchen, automatically heading to the fridge. There she finds a half-eaten Subway sandwich and a can of Diet Dr. Pepper.

With food in hand, she makes her way to the dining room. Her koi fish swim lazily in the large aquarium as she sprinkles some food into the tank, watching them swim to the surface.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Kinda feels like we're all swimming in circles, huh? You guys have it easy.

After finishing her dinner, Jeannie sighs and climbs the stairs to her bedroom stripping off her clothes down to her underwear as she goes.

That's when she feels it—a feeling that something was off. She couldn't put her finger on it at first. She stands at the foot of her bed, staring at the neatly arranged pillows, trying to pinpoint the source of her discomfort.

Then it hit her. She opens the chest at the foot of her bed, where she kept her nightgowns. Her underwear drawer has been disturbed. Nothing dramatic, but just enough for her to notice. Someone had been inside her home. She grabs her gun and searches the whole house.

It wasn't just a random break-in—it had to be the copycat killer. He had been in her house, probably searching for something related to the case. But how long ago? She thought about calling Ismail and arranging a forensic team to respond, but she knew the copycat would never leave a clue behind. She makes sure the house is locked and tries to go to sleep.

EXT. OUTSIDE JEANNIE'S HOME-DAY

The next morning, Jeannie decides to get some fresh air and goes for a short jog. As she steps outside, she runs into Delores, her ever-watchful neighbor. Still dressed in her bathrobe and still wearing her signature curlers, while watering her front lawn.

DELORES

Morning, Jeannie! How're things going?

Jeannie offers a polite smile.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Oh, you know, work's been busy.

Delores leans into Jeannie and whispers.

DELORES

I meant to tell you, a few nights ago, I caught some guy lurking around the neighborhood. Said he was a pizza delivery driver, but I've lived here long enough to know all the usual delivery people. This guy was a little shady if you ask me.

Jeannie's heart skips a beat.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

What do you mean? When was this?

Delores puffs out her chest.

DELORES

Oh, about two nights ago. Walter and I were up late, at least late for us, and we saw him sitting in his car near your house. I went out to give him a piece of my mind, and he claimed he was delivering pizza to an address that doesn't even exist! Can you believe it?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

What did he look like?

Delores squints, clearly trying to recall the details.

DELORES

It was dark, and he had on a cap. He wasn't too tall, maybe six feet? Slim. Oh! And he offered me the pizza since he couldn't find the address. I took it—wouldn't let good pizza go to waste.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Delores, that's really important. Did you notice anything else about him? His car?

DELORES

No, not much else. Sorry, Jeannie. I actually was more focused on the pizza. The car was dark colored I think.

Jeannie thanks her and quickly calls Ismail as soon as she is out of earshot.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(Excited) Ismail, I need a forensic team at my place ASAP. I think the copycat has been in my house and maybe talked to my neighbor.

ISMAIL FLORES

What? How do you know?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Delores—my nosy neighbor—said she confronted a pizza delivery guy near my house a few nights ago. But here's the thing: no one ordered pizza, and she gave a vague description that matches the guy. I also noticed someone went through my stuff.

ISMAIL FLORES

Alright. I'll get a team over there, but you know it's a long shot. He's careful.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I know. But we have to try.

INT. FBI BRIEFING ROOM -DAY

The room quickly filled with agents. Jeannie walked in and met Ismail by the refreshments in the back of the room.

ISMAIL FLORES

I'm afraid your neighbor didn't really get a good look at the pizza delivery guy. The forensic artist said the drawing after interviewing her is generic. The same with the search of your home.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I figured as much.

ISMAIL FLORES

Darcy will make a presentation about the original Zodiac killing here in the city and also an overview of the killings at Lake Berryessa a few nights ago.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Then I want to open it up to brainstorming.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Sounds good to me.

As all the other agents settled in, Darcy and Burk enter the briefing room, ready to present the details of the original Zodiac's next murder. Darcy clears her throat and begins.

DARCY

The next confirmed Zodiac killing took place in San Francisco, on October 11, 1969. His victim was a cab driver named Paul Stine. Zodiac shot Stine in the head while he was driving in the Presidio Heights neighborhood.

With Burk's help, she display crime scene photos, pointing out the similarities between the cabbie murder and the earlier Lake Berryessa killings.

DARCY (CONT'D)

The method of attack changed here—he used a gun instead of a knife. But the real clincher was a piece of Stine's shirt the Zodiac mailed to the San Francisco Chronicle, taunting the police.

BURK

This is when things escalated. Zodiac sent several letters following this, mocking law enforcement and offering cryptic clues about future killings.

Jeannie listens closely, her mind whirring. But just as Darcy and Burk finished their briefing, the catering crew arrived.

Ismail glanced up, spotting Dylan in the group. His gut twists as he sees the man approach with a friendly smile.

ISMAIL FLORES

Dylan.

He watches as Dylan casually begins preparing sandwiches. Jeannie catches the exchange and walks over. Ismail introduces her to Dylan.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Jeannie. This is the best sandwich maker I've ever had. Dylan, this is my boss, Agent Loomis.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Hi, Dylan, mind making me one of those too?

DYLAN

Sure thing, Agent Loomis. Oil and vinegar?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The works.

DYLAN

Sure thing. Sub or wrap?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Sub on wheat if you have it.

Jeannie eyes lock on Dylan as he works. She exchanges a quick glance with Ismail, both of them feeling the same gut instinct—something wasn't right about him.

As they sit down to eat, Ismail and Jeannie keep an eye on Dylan as he finishes up, pulled off his gloves, tossing them in the garbage before leaving with the catering crew.

Ismail walks back into the room, holding the gloves in an evidence bag. Jeannie sits at the table, picking at her sandwich. They both knew something wasn't right with Dylan—the way he had casually prepared their sandwiches, the fleeting glances exchanged, and the air of something darker lurking beneath his calm demeanor.

ISMAIL FLORES

Let's see if we can get prints off these.

He passes the bag along to one of the forensic agents, who promises to run the tests immediately.

The presentation continues with more questions asked by the agents present. Jeannie and Ismail keep glancing at their watches. Finally a forensic tech walks up to the two of them.

FORENSIC TECH

Ismail! You got a hit.

The tech has the documents to Ismail.

FORENSIC TECH (CONT'D)

The prints belong to a Dylan Summers.

Ismail's brow furrows as he looks at Jeannie.

ISMAIL FLORES

Dylan Summers... that name isn't ringing a bell.

Jeannie reads the documents.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I think we got him Ace. It says here... son of one of the original Zodiac victims?

ISMAIL FLORES

You've got to be kidding me.

Jeannie skims further down the report, piecing it together.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

The victim was never officially tied to the Zodiac. But the details... the killing was almost identical to the other confirmed Zodiac murders. Stabbed, just like at Lake Berryessa. Maybe that's why it was disregarded.

Ismail lets out a slow breath, rubbing his temple.

ISMAIL FLORES

So, this kid's dad was killed in a Zodiac-style attack, and it wasn't even credited to the Zodiac. Maybe that's what triggered this whole thing—he's trying to finish what the Zodiac started, or at least get revenge for his father's death being overlooked.

Jeannie nods, her mind already racing ahead.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It's a plausible motive. He grows up obsessing over his father's murder, the unsolved mystery of the Zodiac, and the lack of closure. It's personal.

Ismail looks over the document again, this time more carefully.

ISMAIL FLORES

Burk and Darcy are gonna want to take a look at this.

He picks up the phone and dials Burk's extension.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

We've got a potential lead. Meet me in the conference room. Bring Darcy

Minutes later, Burk and Darcy walk in, looking exhausted but alert. Ismail wastes no time.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

We've just had a hit on a set of prints we collected. They belong to Dylan Summers. He's the son of one of the original Zodiac victims never credited.

Darcy's eyes widen.

DARCY

Wait, what? How is that possible? I thought all the confirmed victims were accounted for.

Jeannie slides the report across the table.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Turns out there was a victim who was killed in a Zodiac-style attack, but it was never officially attributed to the Zodiac. The case was handled quietly, probably due to the similarities, but it didn't make the same headlines. This Summers kid—his dad—was the victim. Now we think that could've been the trigger.

Burk scratches his head.

BURK

You mean he's copying the Zodiac because the original investigation didn't give his dad's murder the recognition it deserved?

ISMAIL FLORES

Something like that. We don't have all the answers yet, but it fits the profile.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

This kid's been simmering for years, and now he's acting on it.

Darcy furrows her brow.

DARCY

So, what's the next move? If this is the guy, he's already killed several people that we know of. And if he's really this deep into the Zodiac playbook, he's not done.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We need to dig deeper into Dylan Summers—find out what he's been up to. We'll have to track his every move for the past few years, see if there's anything to link him to these new killings. Where does he live? Friends?

BURK

I'll start a workup on him—background, known associates, places of employment. We'll see if we can trace any other connections. Maybe there are more victims or planned targets that we haven't uncovered yet.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We're also going to need to do another press briefing soon. But this time, we need to be even more careful with the information we release. He saw through our false leads at Lake Berryessa. He's not falling for simple breadcrumbs anymore.

Burk and Darcy leave. Once alone, Jeannie and Ismail share a quiet moment, the gravity of the situation settling over them.

ISMAIL FLORES

You think this kid has been planning this for years?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It sure looks like it. The thing is, he's clever—smarter than we gave him credit for. He's not just mimicking the Zodiac; he's adapting.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We need to be one step ahead of him, or the next victims could be worse. The case is far from over, but at least now, we had a name.

He cellphone buzzes. Caller ID show Deputy Director Shields.

Ismail sees it.

ISMAIL FLORES

Fuck him. We have things to do.

INT.JEANNIE'S OFFICE -DAY

Jeannie returns to her office, her mind racing with the details of the case. She closes the door behind her and leans back in her chair, closing her eyes. Her cellphone rings, the shrill sound cutting through the quiet of her office.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(To self) Probably that asshole Shields again.

She glances at the caller ID, expecting his number, but instead, saw an unknown number flashing on the screen.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

(To self) Could it be the Zodiac?

With a quick breath, she grabs a phone recorder adapter from her desk drawer and attaches it to her cell. She answers cautiously.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Loomis.

SEAN DELANEY

Hello, Jeannie. Bad time?

She quickly removes the phone recorder, letting it fall back onto her desk.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

No. Actually, you called me at a great time.

SEAN DELANEY

Oh? How so?

Jeannie hesitates for a second, but the weight of everything she has been dealing with suddenly feels too heavy to carry alone.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Do you have a few minutes? I need to talk to someone. I need a fresh perspective on a case we're working.

Sean's tone shifts instantly, concern lacing his words.

SEAN DELANEY

I have all the time you need. You're talking about the Zodiac killings?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah. It's the Zodiac case... but it's more than that.

Sean was silent on the other end, waiting for her to continue.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

We're dealing with a copycat killer—someone who's recreating the original Zodiac's murders, down to the smallest detail. But this one's different. He's targeting me, Sean. He's sending me emails, taunting me. It's personal.

She hears Sean's sharp intake of breath.

SEAN DELANEY

Targeting you? Jeannie, that's dangerous. Has he threatened you directly?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Not explicitly, but he's making it clear that I'm in his sights. And to make matters worse, I'm dealing with Deputy Director Shields breathing down my neck.

SEAN DELANEY

Shields? What's that slimy bastard doing now?

Jeannie realizes she has a smile on her face from Sean's British accent.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

God, how I miss your British accent.

SEAN DELANEY

I'm glad you do. Now fill me in.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

It's retaliation, plain and simple. He's been holding a grudge ever since I named him in the investigation into the rogue agents and the Civil War gold case. He's pissed that his name was dragged through the mud, and now he's making it his mission to make my life hell. Every time I make progress on the case, he's there, undermining me, questioning my every move.

SEAN DELANEY

That man's a snake. You need to be careful with him, Jeannie. He's dangerous in his own way.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I know. But it's not just him. There's more.

She hesitates for a moment.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Sean, the copycat... he was in my house.

The line went silent.

SEAN DELANEY

(Alarmed) In your house? Jeannie, that's... Jesus, that's terrifying. Are you okay? What did he do?

Jeannie closes her eyes, the image of her disheveled underwear drawer flashing in her mind.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

He didn't hurt me. I wasn't home, but he went through my things. I think he was looking for information about the case, maybe trying to get inside my head. He didn't take anything, at least not that I've noticed. But the fact that he was there...

SEAN DELANEY

Jeannie, that's beyond disturbing.
You need to get out of there.
You're not safe in that house.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

"I'm not running. I won't let him
chase me out of my own home. But I
did call Ismail. He's got a
forensic team checking for any
signs he left behind, though I
doubt they'll find anything.

Sean exhales sharply.

SEAN DELANEY

Still, Jeannie, this is escalating.
This guy is crossing lines. You
need to take extra precautions.
Shields or no Shields, you can't
face this alone.

Jeannie's resolve softens at Sean's words.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I know. But right now, I need to
keep my head in the game. The
copycat is playing with us, and I
need to figure out his next move.

Sean is silent for a moment, then when he speaks, his voice
is steady and filled with determination.

SEAN DELANEY

Jeannie, I'm here. Whatever you
need, I'll help you. We'll figure
this out together.

For the first time that day, Jeannie feels a small sense of
relief.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Thank you, Sean. I really needed to
hear that.

SEAN DELANEY

Just promise me you'll be careful,
okay? I can't lose you.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I promise.

There is a knock on Jeannie's door before Ismail enters.

ISMAIL FLORES
Lost in thought boss lady?

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Yeah. Have a seat.

Ismail takes a seat across from Jeannie.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
If Dylan Summers is indeed the copycat killer and we think, he must have spent years nurturing an obsession with the Zodiac case. He would have grown up immersed in the legacy of violence and fear, absorbing every detail, every theory, until it became part of him. He wouldn't just know the case—he would breathe it, live it. And eventually, that twisted fascination has morphed into something more. A sense of destiny. A thirst for revenge, not just on behalf of his father, but on some perverse belief that he was finishing what the original Zodiac started.

Ismail processes what Jeannie just said.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
But there is another layer to this. Dylan isn't just some armchair detective obsessing over an unsolved mystery. He has access to things no ordinary person should have—classified details, pieces of evidence long buried in the vaults of law enforcement. That's when it clicked for me. A family connection to law enforcement. It was the only explanation that made sense. Dylan must have used those ties to infiltrate the most sensitive parts of the case. There's a dangerous breach in our system. That is something we needed to address immediately.

Before Ismail could chime in, there is another knock on the door followed by Burk and Darcy entering.

DARCY

We wanted to share the workup on
Dylan Summers.

Burk opens a folder in his hands, glances over at Jeannie,
and then begins.

BURK

Dylan Summers was born in San
Francisco in 1985. His father was
one of the Zodiac's potential
victims, though never officially
tied to the case. After his
father's death, his mother
struggled to raise him alone. It
seems she moved them around a lot.
No real stability.

DARCY

His school records show trouble
early on. He had issues with
authority. Multiple suspensions for
fighting, insubordination, and
general anger management problems.
He was smart, though—scored well on
tests when he applied himself. But,
he lacked direction. But it gets
worse.

Everyone turns towards Darcy.

DARCY (CONT'D)

His father was a work of art.
Numerous arrests for spousal and
child abuse, but his mother never
continued to press charges. It
wasn't just your average family.

Jeannie leans in, scanning the report, her expression
darkening.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

So his father was abusive. No
wonder Dylan's been so screwed up.
But why idolize the Zodiac? Why
follow in his footsteps?

Ismail shakes his head, flipping to another page.

ISMAIL FLORES

Maybe it wasn't just idolization.
Maybe it was revenge.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

The Zodiac took out the one person Dylan hated the most—his father. He didn't just kill his dad, he freed him.

Jeannie sits back, processing the new information.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

So, Dylan didn't just want to copy the Zodiac. He worshiped him because he thought the Zodiac did him a favor—by killing his father.

ISMAIL FLORES

Works for me.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

That would be a twisted but solid motivation.

Ismail is looking at the documents over Burk's shoulder.

ISMAIL FLORES

Looks like he barely graduated high school but enlisted in the Army right after. He wanted out of San Francisco and thought the Army might straighten him out.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

But it didn't, did it?

BURK

No, it didn't. He was court-martialed after three years. Insubordination. Refused orders during a deployment. Some of the reports say he had a chip on his shoulder, thinking he knew better than his commanding officers.

Darcy taps the screen on her tablet.

DARCY

He was discharged dishonorably. After that, he bounced between jobs—construction, security, deliveryman. But the pattern was always the same. He couldn't get along with anyone. He'd be fired after a few months for clashing with coworkers or supervisors. He never stayed anywhere long.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Any significant relationships?
Friends? Family?

Darcy shakes her head.

DARCY
No marriages. No long-term relationships that we could find. No close friends either, aside from a few of his father's old buddies. Most of those connections dwindled after his dishonorable discharge. By the way Ismail. We contacted the catering service. Dylan has failed to show up for work following the last time the company catered us. The address he listed on his employment application is bogus.

BURK
But then we found one relationship that stands out. There was a man—Sergeant William 'Bill' Harmon, retired SFPD. He worked homicide back in the day, including on the Zodiac case. He was friends with Dylan's father and became something of a mentor to Dylan after his father's death.

Jeannie leans forward, her mind clicking into gear.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Harmon? And he was on the SFPD?

Burk nods.

BURK
Yeah, but he's been dead for about a decade now. Passed away from cancer. But while he was alive, he spent a lot of time with Dylan. They fished together, went on camping trips, that sort of thing. Seems like Harmon felt sorry for him and acted like a big brother or step-father.

Jeannie's eyes widen.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

That's it. That's where Dylan was getting his information. Harmon must have shared details from the Zodiac case with Dylan—either knowingly or unknowingly. He gave Dylan the background he needed to obsess over the case.

DARCY

It makes sense. Harmon would have had access to information that wasn't public. He might have mentioned it casually, not realizing Dylan would take it and run with it.

Ismail crosses his arms, deep in thought.

ISMAIL FLORES

But Harmon died years ago. Dylan's been acting on this for some time, probably ever since. He had everything he needed to start the killings—knowledge of the original case, a twisted connection to it through his father's murder, and now, the perfect opportunity to finish what the Zodiac started.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Dylan had the perfect storm—a childhood marked by trauma, a mentor who unwittingly fed his obsession, and years of festering anger. All that was missing was a trigger. Something to push him over the edge.

We need to figure out what that trigger was. Something set him off, something that made him go from studying the case to re-enacting it.

BURK

We're still digging into that. But whatever it was, it brought him out of hiding and straight into our crosshairs.

Jeannie stares at the file, her mind piecing together the puzzle.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

So, we've got motive, and we've got access to information. Now we just need find him and bring him in.

DARCY

He must know we're on to him. That's why he quit the catering gig.

ISMAIL FLORES

We need to get the team together ASAP. Darcy, you and Burk can make a presentation about what we now know about Dylan.

Everyone leaves Jeannie's office with Ismail closing the door after himself.

She rubs her temples, trying to chase away the dull headache that had been hovering all day. Her cellphone vibrates on her desk. Caller ID showed it was Darcy. She looks at the text.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

(To self) You've got mail.

Jeannie leave her office and walks down to the IT department where she finds Darcy and Burk.

INT. FBI IT DEPARTMENT OFFICE-DAY

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Mail?

DARCY

Not the fun kind.

Darcy points towards her computer screen. Jeannie leans in, her breath catching as she sees the subject line of an anonymous email. It is marked URGENT, sent to both Jeannie and the local news outlets. Jeannie reads it out loud.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I'm bored. Time to change the game. Hello, Special Agent Loomis. I've grown tired of watching you scramble. Your little tricks and traps are laughable at best. You think you're closing in, but you're not even in the same game. You're just another puppet dancing to my tune.

(MORE)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

So, let's make things more interesting, shall we? I've been thinking about the children. Such innocence, such fragility. Imagine them stepping off a school bus, one by one... and as each little foot hits the ground, I'll be there, picking them off.

Pop. Pop. Pop.

Their tiny bodies falling like dominoes. The chaos, the screams, the confusion... it's almost too perfect to resist. Don't you think? Maybe tomorrow. Maybe the next day. But soon. I'll be there.

And you? You'll be watching helplessly, just like always. Tick tock, Jeannie. Time is running out. By the way, I really liked your black silk panties. Classy. I'll enjoy seeing them again... but I digress.

Yours truly,
Zodiac

Ismail enters the IT office.

ISMAIL FLORES

Did I miss something?

JEANNIE LOOMIS

That prick sent another email. He is threatening kids on a school bus.

ISMAIL FLORES

Is this... the same threat Zodiac made back in 1969?

Jeannie shakes her head, trying to steady her thoughts.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Not exactly. The original Zodiac didn't make the school bus threat until after the Paul Stine murder. This copycat has broken his pattern. He's skipping ahead.

ISMAIL FLORES

This isn't just about re-enacting the Zodiac anymore. He's going off-script.

(MORE)

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

We're dealing with someone who wants more than just a replication of the original crimes. He wants to outdo him

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Or maybe he isn't jumping ahead. He wants us to look ahead and concentrate all our efforts protecting the kids on school buses.

No one spoke. Everyone's attention was on Jeannie. She snaps her fingers.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

First, we notify all local law enforcement to increase patrols near schools. We have to treat this threat as credible, even if it might be a means to throw us off. And we'll need to get ahead of the media response. This could cause a panic.

BURK

I'll get in touch with the school districts and alert the local authorities. They need to put an officer in each bus until further notice.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Correct. If anyone give you static, let me know and I will contact them directly.

Jeannie turns to Darcy.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Track down the source of this email. I don't care how many proxies he used. We need to know where this came from.

DARCY

And what about the media?

Jeannie bit her lip.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

We're going to have to handle this delicately. If we don't get ahead of it, the public will. But first..

She looks at Ismail and motions him to go outside with her.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
I have a plan....

EXT. INT CAB ON SAN FRANCISCO STREET-NIGHT

The moon hangs low over San Francisco, casting eerie shadows across the Presidio. The streets are unusually quiet, as Jeannie pulls her cab into position near the location of the infamous Paul Stine murder site.

She looks in the rear view mirror adjusting a SF 49ers hat atop her long black wig. Her fingers grip the steering wheel a little too tightly as she tries to shake the growing tension in her chest. Her radio crackles.

ISMAIL FLORES
How you doing, boss lady?

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Freezing my ass off. How about you.

ISMAIL FLORES
I'm just day-dreaming about laying on the sand outside you house in Myrtle Beach checking out the bikinis.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Dream on. This is night number two. I'm starting to second guess myself.

(Pause)

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)
Wait. I got movement coming up behind me. I'll get back to you.

She turns off her radio and watches. A man, tall and lanky, steps into the street and raises his hand. Her heart skips a beat. It was him. Dylan.

She glances into her rearview mirror, adjusts her hat again, and pulls the cab forward to the curb. The streetlight flickers above as Dylan approaches. Jeannie had turned off the cab's interior lamp. Dylan hesitates for a moment, peering into the cab. Jeannie keeps her head low, her voice calm and neutral.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

Where to?

Dylan climbs into the back seat, the door closing with a soft thud. He leaned forward, giving her a paper with an address on the outskirts of the city, a place that raised every red flag in Jeannie's mind. The Stein murder location.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

This place you are going is pretty desolate this time of night.

Dylan did not reply. The cab is silent, the hum of the engine and the occasional bump in the road the only sounds between them. Jeannie's heart races, her mind spins with thoughts of how to play this out. She knows she has to keep Dylan talking, buy time for Ismail to get into position.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (CONT'D)

You hear about that Zodiac copycat? Everyone's been talking about it.

DYLAN

Yeah. Heard about it. People always get worked up about stuff like that.

Jeannie keeps her gaze on the road and Dylan.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah, well, seems like they're getting closer to catching him. Gotta be hard to keep up with all those killings. Gotta slip up sometime.

Dylan leans back in his seat, crossing his arms.

DYLAN

Maybe. Or maybe the people trying to catch him aren't as smart as they think they are.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

You think they'll catch him?

Dylan laughs softly.

DYLAN

Doubt it. People like that... they don't get caught. They control the game. They never caught the original Zodiac.

The cab rolls through the quiet streets, the city slips into deeper darkness as they drive. Jeannie feels the seconds ticking by like hours. Every word exchanged felt like a dance on a razor's edge. Dylan shifts in his seat, his tone grows darker.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

You ever think about fear? How easy it is to control people with it? You can break them down, make them do anything... all with a little fear.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I guess some people are more afraid than others.

Dylan leans forward again, his face just inches from the rearview mirror now. The dim light casting half of his features in shadow.

DYLAN

You sound like you're speaking from experience.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

I've seen a lot in this city. People get scared over all kinds of things. Hell, I've been scared just driving this cab.

DYLAN

Have you know?

The air in the cab grows heavy, the tension thick. Dylan was making his move as he shifts in his seat again, his hand moving inside his coat.

In one swift motion, Jeannie pulls her Glock from under her jacket and whips around, the gun trained directly on Dylan's chest. His eyes widen for a fraction of a second before his lips curled into a twisted smile.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

Too late, sweetheart.

His hand darts inside his coat, but Jeannie is faster. The crack of the gunshot echoes through the cab, a single flash of light illuminating the darkness. Dylan slumps back against the seat, a look of shock frozen on his face as his body goes limp. Blood trickles from the corner of his mouth, and his hand falls lifelessly to his side. Jeannie sits there, the gun still raised. She lowers the Glock slowly, her breathing ragged as the reality of the situation washes over her.

A tap on the window snaps her back to the present. Ismail stands outside, his face pale as he glances at Dylan's lifeless body in the back seat.

ISMAIL FLORES

You okay?

Jeannie nods, still gripping the gun.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yeah. I'm okay.

Ismail opens the door, his gaze flicks to Dylan's body before meeting Jeannie's eyes.

ISMAIL FLORES

It's over.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Yes. It's over.

Sirens echoed in the distance.

INT. FBI BREAK-ROOM-DAY

After the scene at the Presidio, Jeannie and Ismail return to the bureau, both worn out from the night's events. Ismail had stepped out briefly to grab some food, returning with Taco Bell bags that now sit open on the break rooms table between them.

Ismail picks up a burrito and looks at Jeannie.

ISMAIL FLORES

You need to eat something. You've had a long night.

Her phone, lying face up on the table, buzzes constantly, notifications lighting up the screen. Some are from media outlets vying for an exclusive, but most are from Shields demanding explanations and updates.

ISMAIL FLORES (CONT'D)

Fuck him. You've been involved in a violent shooting incident. You need to calm yourself down, not stress over that asshole. The shooting investigation will rule it was a clean shoot, then you need to go home and relax.

Jeannie lets out a tired laugh, grateful for his presence. Jeannie looks at her wristwatch.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

Are you kidding me? It already 7:30
a.m.?

ISMAIL FLORES

We've been here all night.

As if on cue, the door to the break room opens, and Darcy and Burk hurry in, their expressions urgent.

DARCY

You two are definitely going to
want to see this.

Darcy gestures for them to follow.

INT. FBI BRIEFING ROOM -DAY

As they enter the large briefing room. Burk has already turned on the TV with morning news flickering on the screen. They huddled around, eyes fixed on the broadcast as the Newsmax anchor's voice fills the room.

NEWSMAX FEMALE ANCHOR

Breaking news out of Washington
this morning. Deputy Director
Joseph Shields has been taken into
custody after several bars of what
is being reported as Civil War gold
were found in a rented storage
unit. Shields, if you recall, was
named as a co-conspirator in the
initial investigation into rogue
FBI agents over a year ago, but had
thus far avoided arrest. This new
discovery links him directly to the
stolen gold from that infamous
case. This case is ongoing and we
will update you when we have more
information.

The room goes silent as the news sinks in. Jeannie feels a mixture of disbelief and satisfaction.

ISMAIL FLORES

(Laughing) Guess you won't need to
return those calls from Shields.

JEANNIE LOOMIS

No. I don't think I will.

Her phone buzzes again, but this time she doesn't brush it aside. She reads the text to herself.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (V.O.)
Looks like Shields has bigger
problems than harassing you about
your Zodiac investigation.
Congratulations. You owe me. LOL.

Jeannie texts back.

JEANNIE LOOMIS (V.O.)
Yes, I do. When do you want to meet
for dinner?

Jeannie realizes too late that Ismail was reading the texts
over her shoulder.

ISMAIL FLORES
(Teasing) Dinner with Sean, huh?
Mr. 007. That should be
interesting.

Jeannie shoots him a playful glare.

JEANNIE LOOMIS
Don't start, Ismail. You've got
your tacos to focus on.

The two break out in laughter.

END