

Episode 5, *Stanton 2017*: “Serial San Francisco”— by Joey Madia

Scene 1. Outside a bar in San Francisco, California

[Sounds of street traffic, bell ringing as bar door opens.]

**PROSTITUTE:** [slightly inebriated] Oh yeah? A hooker’s money is suddenly no good in your crap-ass establishment just ‘cause she don’t let the bartender cop a feel for free? *Fine*—there’s plenty of other joints in which to lay my coin. And *they* don’t smell like *puke*!

[Sound of bar door closing]

**PROSTITUTE:** What the hell you lookin’ at? Oh—sorry there, ociffer. Didn’t see your uniform with you in the shadows like that. Saaay...is that a nightstick in your trousers? Might you be needin’ some top-notch relief? You the strong, silent type or what? Come around the corner, Johnny Law, and I’ll show you why Lucky Lola’s livin’ large.

[We hear them walking on pavement about 30 feet from the door]

**PROSTITUTE:** Here we go. No one’s gonna bother us here. It’s Lucky Lola’s own private hidey-hole. Hah—that’s a good one, huh? Hidey-hole? I got a few of those. Now, what’ll it be my big, strong Boy in Blue? Oh, now, look out—here he comes, all ready to go! That’s right, lean in here nice and tight against me. That’s right—Lucky Lola’s gonna—

[Sounds of slashing knife, and Lola choking on her blood from a throat gash. Sound of knife cutting her dress material. Fade...]

Scene 2. Police Headquarters, San Francisco, California

[Sounds of the policemen talking; phones ringing, busy police station]

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Alright. Alright. Settle down. [Pause] Listen up, people. As most of you know, I’m Detective Kevin Scorrus with the Special Crimes Unit here in San Francisco. For the past eight months I’ve been working a series of prostitute murders in the Bay area. Last night, at approximately 12:35 a.m., a young lady who goes by the name of Lucky Lola left Harry’s Bar with a few choice words after the bartender cut her off. Her body was found in the back alley 20 minutes later by a couple of college kids.

**POLICEMAN 1:** Was she cut up like the two vics from back in August?

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Her throat was slit like the August 31 vic, but this time he went a bit further with the abdomen. He didn’t just gash it this time. Her genitalia were on her shoulder. And he kept the uterus.

[Reactions from the police officers]

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Settle down! I don't know how many true crime aficionados we have here, but this is looking copycat to me.

**POLICEMAN 2:** You talkin' Zodiac, detective?

**POLICEMAN 3:** Or the Trailside Killer. Bastard's name was...

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** David Carpenter. But it's neither of them.

**POLICEMAN 2:** Who then?

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Jack the Ripper.

[Sounds of laughter and other, more straight-faced reactions]

**POLICEMAN 1:** Talk about some bullshit...

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** You think so? [room quiets down.] The dates match. August 7 and 31 and September 8. So do the wounds. The first vic was stabbed 39 times, corresponding to Martha Tabram.

**POLICEMAN 2:** Who may or may not have been a Ripper vic...

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Apparently our UNSUB thinks she was. I didn't know for sure before last night, but the genitalia on the shoulder, the missing uterus—it's too exact *not* to be Ripper.

**POLICEMAN 3:** So we have until September 30 to catch this guy.

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** If he stays true to form, yeah. And I'm guessing he will.

**POLICEMAN 1:** Aside from your theory, detective, we've got nothing to go on. No witnesses, no motive. And he's using the MO and signature of a guy long dead and gone. A guy they never caught.

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Officer Wallace is right. To a point. [sounds of papers being passed out.] I've put together a profile with the help of the Behavioral Science Unit at Quantico and a forensic scientist at Pinelands State in Jersey. Read it carefully. And then read it again. And again, until you've got it memorized. There's target age, probable job description, stressors... Get this guy burned into your brain. I'll be available for questions 24-7. Don't hesitate to call. My number's at the top there.

**POLICEMAN 2:** Wallace said MO and signature. What exactly is the difference?

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** Good question. The MO changes. The signature never will. It's what the UNSUB has to do to be fulfilled.

**POLICEMAN 1:** It's how he gets his rocks off.

**POLICEMAN 2:** So for this guy, it has to be whores.

**DET. KEVIN SCORRUS:** And he'll do his next two in exactly 3 weeks.

Scene 3. San Francisco, California, 3 weeks later.

[Sound of a knife being sharpened on a whetstone sporadically throughout]

**THE KILLER:** I'm going out again tonight. Going in search of blood to please the Beast. I know I have my reasons—the bitches need to die—but it is not my arm, my hand, my heart that does the hacking. Talk to me, you bastard. I see you past my eyes, the flick of your tail, the curve of your horn, laughing in my mirror. Urging me to kill. You talk about my mother—whore that she was—and that Jesus-loving bitch of an aunt, her pious sister—my constant tormentor—with her rants on cursed flesh and frothing loins. I am not my mother's child! I will be redeemed in the blood of the harlots. Give me your strength—teach me all I need to know as your English master once taught you. [Subtle change to his voice] *Two whores tonight. Slit one's throat but don't go no further. Do the other good. Carve that look of smug contentment right off her face. Cut out her insides—the chalice must be cleansed and the cleanser must be blood.* [his voice again] I shall be your servant and you will be my angel. I am not the stripper's son or the pastor's filthy nephew. I am the Passage. I am the Door. I am ready now, my angel. My knife is nice and sharp.

Scene 4. The Mayor's Office, San Francisco, California, the next morning.

**MAYOR:** ...I'm telling you, Scorrus. I'm tired of taking the heat on this one. Two murders in a single night, and you *knew* he was gonna do it!

**SCORRUS:** It's a lot of ground to cover, Mr. Mayor. And lots of girls walking the streets...

**MAYOR:** You mean to tell me that my public pleas last night asking—*demanding*—that they take the night off did absolutely nothing? I swear to God it's like they have a death wish. I've had the families of the victims protesting outside all damned day. Women's rights groups, Scorrus! Prevailing opinion says we haven't caught this nut because we don't *want* to catch him. Like I've hired him to kill these girls. Like he's some kind of avenging angel. A hero! You ever get a 2-a.m. call from the governor, Scorrus?

**SCORRUS:** No sir.

**MAYOR:** He's not half as nice as you'd think a guy who studied Buddhism would be. Not when his legacy—and my re-election—are on the line. You following me? Don't bother to answer. It's rhetorical. And this Ripper business. He did both those girls last night like Stride and Eddowes were done?

**SCORRUS:** Exactly. He must have spent weeks studying the autopsy photos. To work so precisely under those time constraints—the Ripper bloggers are talking like it's reincarnation.

**MAYOR:** Reincarnation? Of Jack the Flipping Ripper? How'd you like to finish your career as a desk jockey, Scorrus? You repeat that blogger crap to *anyone* and I'll sign the transfer papers myself. Take that as Gospel. [Pause.] You gotta *catch* this guy. He's got one to go, right? In 8 days, if I remember right.

**SCORRUS:** Mary Kelly was November 9. His last “official” kill.

**MAYOR:** If he kills again, our careers won't survive it. We have a crime like that one and they'll do the same to us. Do everything you have to. Call in whatever experts you need. It's 5 to zero, bottom of the ninth. I'm not gonna have a shutout. This twisted prick isn't gonna be my Zodiac, you read me?

**SCORRUS:** Perfectly, sir. I won't let him win.

Scene 5. Scorrus' Office, San Francisco, California, 8 days later (November 9).

[Sound of pencil on paper throughout]

**SCORRUS:** 11:50 pm. November 9. I started this diary the day after the double murder. With Dear Boss letters flooding the papers and news stations and chalked messages in half the city's alleyways this Ripper thing is more theatre than real life and I guess I'm Inspector Abberline. The city's filled with cops. We've got volunteers from all the surrounding counties in street clothes. We've got two dozen lady cops dressed like hookers. Last night's press conference seems to have succeeded better than October's. Anyone who's seen the Mary Kelly crime scene photos posted by the Mayor's office would have to be insane not to be afraid. I'm holding station here. Task Force Headquarters. A fancy name for a room with no windows and a hundred file boxes, four old computers, an antiquated fax machine, dozens of Ripper and serial killer books, and a board full of grisly photos. The Mayor thinks we've won. A group of university shrinks have convinced him if we get through tonight, the guy is finished. But he won't disappear. He'll kill himself, maybe, but he might just come forward. If he can't seal the deal and off his last victim, he won't be able to remain anonymous. Part of me wished he'd show himself tonight. Throw down like a man. The shrinks said he'd have to. So did the profile. So where did we go wrong?

[Sound of ringing phone]

**SCORRUS:** Scorrus. [Silence] No. No, I'm here. I'm just... A high priced escort... Of course... He did Kelly in her house. The Ripper, I mean. Is it... is it as bad as—yeah. I don't need to see the photos. I've been looking at 'em for a week. I'll be there soon.

[Sound of the other line beeping]

**SCORRUS:** I gotta take this. You keep the media out of there as long as you can. Yeah. Real close. But a million miles away from doing our jobs.

[Switches over the phone line]

**SCORRUS:** Mr. Mayor. Yes. I just heard. You'll have my resignation first thing tomorrow. I ... I understand. Politically prudent to act quickly. Of course. For what it's worth, sir.... Yes. I understand it's better if I put it all in writing.

[Hangs up phone. Breaks down.] That poor girl. All those poor girls...

**END**