

SAWGRASS WARS

"Sorry, Charlie"
Episode 6 - Season One

Written by

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Based on the Sawgrass Wars novella series
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FADE IN:

EXT. DANTES MARINE SERVICES HOUSE - MIAMI - MORNING

SUPER: THE NEXT MORNING

A black FIREBIRD rockets around the corner too fast.

Its rear tires break loose, SHRIEKING across the pavement before catching. The car fishtails once and stops sideways outside a barricade.

Beyond it: the smoking remains of the Spanish Colonial house where Johnny Malone lived as ED DANTES.

Isolated flames flicker among shattered walls. Yellow crime-scene tape snaps in the warm breeze.

INT. FIREBIRD - CONTINUOUS

MACK DONNELLY kills the engine.

His phone vibrates against his hip.

AREA CODE 775. NEVADA.

Mack silences the call and studies the ruins.

He removes a silver flask from beneath his coat and turns it over in his hand.

Then puts it away unopened.

He lights a stale cigarette instead.

EXT. DANTES MARINE SERVICES HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Mack steps from the Firebird.

His DEA badge hangs from a thick leather belt. A pistol rides opposite it. Faded jeans. Wrinkled shirt. Snakeskin boots scarred by bad weather and worse decisions.

Mack still looks more comfortable among smugglers than federal agents. The clothes once made him invisible inside criminal organizations. Now they make him unmistakable.

Mack approaches the barricade.

A UNIFORMED OFFICER hurries toward him.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
Sir, you can't go in there.

Mack keeps walking.

The officer reaches for his arm, sees the DEA badge, and stops.

UNIFORMED OFFICER (CONT'D)
Sorry, Agent.

MACK
Who found the bodies?

The officer looks toward the ruins.

UNIFORMED OFFICER
Fire department. Four so far.

MACK
Identification?

UNIFORMED OFFICER
Nothing official.

MACK
Then it isn't four. It's four so far.

Mack ducks beneath the tape.

The explosion tore off the roof and hurled stucco across the lawn. Palm trees stand stripped. Furniture lies among broken tiles, shattered glass, and blackened timber.

The remains of an iron balcony rest near the street.

Mack stops where the entrance once stood.

The blast originated inside. He reads it in the outward-folded walls and the debris field widening toward the road.

Someone wanted to destroy more than the house.

They wanted to destroy the evidence inside.

BARBARA (O.S.)
I'm surprised you came.

Mack knows the voice before he turns.

BARBARA ROLAND stands beside a black SUBURBAN, an open laptop on its hood. Her tailored pantsuit conceals a shoulder holster without quite hiding it. The years have sharpened rather than softened her.

She was beautiful when they were married.

Now she looks powerful.

Mack drags on his cigarette.

MACK

I'm surprised Homeland Security is wasting time down here.

BARBARA

A house explodes in broad daylight after September eleventh, DHS gets called.

MACK

And what? Homeland Security stops bombs now?

Barbara lowers the laptop halfway.

BARBARA

If we'd been around before September eleventh--

MACK

The towers still would've come down, Barb.

Her expression hardens.

BARBARA

Says the career DEA agent.

MACK

Exactly.

Barbara eyes the cigarette.

BARBARA

You're contaminating my crime scene.

MACK

Your crime scene?

BARBARA

My people arrived before yours.

MACK

My people don't know I'm here.

BARBARA

That doesn't surprise me.

Mack reaches the Suburban.

MACK

What kind of explosive?

BARBARA

We're still determining that.

MACK

You brought me here before
determining what blew up?

BARBARA

I didn't bring you anywhere.

MACK

You knew I'd come.

BARBARA

I knew the name on the property
records would eventually reach you.

Mack glances back at the house.

The property file identifies the owner as ED DANTES. Mack
looks from the alias to the ruins. He never believed Johnny's
performance.

Barbara opens crime-scene photographs on the laptop.

A burned body beneath a collapsed roof.

Another near what had been the kitchen.

A third barely recognizable as human.

Barbara watches Mack's face.

BARBARA (CONT'D)

Recognize any of them?

MACK

Only if they were jack-o'-lanterns
on my mother's porch.

BARBARA

For God's sake, Mack. Be an agent
for once.

MACK

Barb--

BARBARA

Director Roland.

Mack smiles.

MACK

How's Tucker?

The question lands exactly where he aimed it.

Barbara's shoulders stiffen.

BARBARA

Better than ever. He just bought a third home in the Hamptons.

MACK

I bet he still cries over his court-appointed clients.

BARBARA

He's one of the most respected attorneys in Washington.

MACK

That wasn't what I asked.

BARBARA

Say what you want about him. He never slept with a stripper connected to one of his cases.

MACK

That you know of.

Barbara stares.

BARBARA

What's that supposed to mean?

MACK

High-profile litigator. Young interns following him everywhere. Private jets. Foreign conferences. Rich clients with interesting appetites.

Mack flicks ash onto the pavement.

MACK (CONT'D)

You sure he's not worse than me?

BARBARA

He isn't a degenerate.

MACK

You used to like that about me.

BARBARA

Not the part where you slept with a
Reno stripper.

Mack studies her.

The same vein appears along her neck. It always surfaced when
she was angry and trying not to show it.

Some things survive a divorce.

MACK

Why can't we just get along?

Barbara gives a short laugh.

BARBARA

I wasn't going to show you this.

She lifts a clear evidence bag.

Inside: a scorched metal lighter bearing a SKULL AND
CROSSBONES.

Mack stops smiling.

He holds the bag to the sunlight. The blackened metal is
partially melted, but the emblem remains.

He knows that lighter.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT - FLASHBACK (1991)

JOHNNY MALONE rolls the lighter over his knuckles. Flicks it
open. Lights a cigarette.

His eyes decide how much truth the federal government
deserves.

BACK TO SCENE

MACK

Malone's.

BARBARA

According to your old reports.

MACK

Where did you find it?

BARBARA

In the rubble. Near one of the bodies.

MACK

Which one?

Barbara displays another photograph.

A corpse lies facedown beneath burned timber. Approximately Malone's height and build, but too damaged for identification.

Mack studies it.

MACK (CONT'D)

That isn't him.

BARBARA

You determined that from a picture?

MACK

I determined it before I got out of my car.

BARBARA

Who else would carry Malone's lighter?

MACK

One of the men who came here to kill him.

BARBARA

You know who they were?

MACK

No.

BARBARA

Then how do you know they came to kill him?

MACK

Because Johnny blew up the house.

Barbara stares at him.

Mack points toward the ruins.

MACK (CONT'D)

Look at the debris. Whoever set the charge knew exactly where to put it. Johnny spent twelve years waiting for somebody to come through that door. He wouldn't let himself get trapped inside his own house.

BARBARA

People get old.

MACK

Not him.

BARBARA

People get careless.

MACK

Not him.

BARBARA

People die, Mack.

MACK

Johnny Malone makes other people die.

Barbara takes the evidence bag.

BARBARA

You sound almost impressed.

MACK

I know what he is.

BARBARA

Do you?

MACK

Better than anybody.

BARBARA

You said that in Reno too.

MACK

This isn't Reno.

BARBARA

No. In Reno, you were only destroying yourself.

Mack's phone VIBRATES again. He ignores it.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Aren't you going to answer?

MACK
No.

BARBARA
Who keeps calling?

MACK
Someone who doesn't understand the word no.

BARBARA
That narrows it down to everyone you've ever met.

The phone stops.

Barbara closes the laptop.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Dental comparisons are being run. Until we get the results, that body is presumed to be the owner of this house.

MACK
Then your presumption is wrong.

BARBARA
You always were at your most confident when you had the least evidence.

MACK
I had enough evidence to destroy the Dawber organization.

BARBARA
You had evidence because you lived with those people for years.

MACK
I did what I had to do.

BARBARA
You always say that.

Mack looks at the ruins.

For a moment, the fire reflects in Mack's eyes. Dawber County left him with memories that never appeared in any report.

Barbara steps closer.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
How long have you continued
investigating Malone?

MACK
I haven't.

BARBARA
Don't lie to me.

MACK
You haven't been my wife for a long
time. You don't get to decide when
I'm lying.

BARBARA
I knew when you were lying before I
was your wife.

Mack drops the cigarette and crushes it under his boot.

MACK
I kept my files.

BARBARA
That wasn't my question.

MACK
I reviewed them occasionally.

BARBARA
How occasionally?

MACK
Whenever I had trouble sleeping.

BARBARA
So every night.

Mack does not answer.

BARBARA (CONT'D)
Oscar knows?

MACK
He knows I never liked the way the
case ended.

BARBARA
That isn't the same thing.

MACK

No.

BARBARA

You used agency resources?

MACK

Nothing anyone was using.

BARBARA

That means yes.

MACK

I talked to informants.

BARBARA

DEA informants?

MACK

People talk to me because they trust me.

BARBARA

People talk to you because they're frightened of you, indebted to you, sleeping with you, or hoping you'll eventually disappear.

MACK

Still counts.

Barbara gathers the photographs.

BARBARA

I want every Malone file you have.

MACK

Why?

BARBARA

Because DHS is opening a domestic-threat investigation.

MACK

Based on one exploded house?

BARBARA

Four bodies, military-grade demolition work, and a former federal informant connected to one of the largest narcotics organizations in Florida history.

MACK

He wasn't a federal informant.

BARBARA

What was he?

Mack looks at her.

MACK

Protected.

Barbara catches the distinction.

BARBARA

By whom?

MACK

Ask the FBI.

BARBARA

I'm asking you.

MACK

The Bureau made a separate arrangement with Johnny before the Dawber County raid. They kept him off our arrest list and refused to tell us where they put him.

BARBARA

And you've been angry about it ever since.

MACK

I'm angry because they protected the man who designed the operation.

BARBARA

Bo Dawber ran it.

MACK

Bo owned the county. Johnny built the machine.

Barbara opens the Suburban's driver door.

BARBARA

Get in.

MACK

Where are we going?

BARBARA

To see Oscar.

MACK
He'll be thrilled.

BARBARA
I'm not asking him to be thrilled.

MACK
You're asking him to surrender
jurisdiction.

BARBARA
I'm giving him concurrent
jurisdiction.

Mack smiles.

MACK
You always did know how to make
theft sound constitutional.

Barbara climbs behind the wheel.

Mack looks back at the smoking house.

Mack studies the lighter, the bodies, and the widening debris
field one final time.

Whatever happened here, Johnny planned to survive it.

He walks toward the Suburban.

CUT TO:

INT. DEA MIAMI FIELD OFFICE - OSCAR'S OFFICE - DAY

OSCAR FUENTES slams a manila folder onto his desk hard enough
to rattle the nameplate.

The wiry Cuban-American Special Agent in Charge is in his
fifties and incapable of sitting still when angry.

Mack sits across from him, arms folded. Barbara stands beside
the window.

OSCAR
This is some real bullshit.

BARBARA
Isn't this what you wanted?

OSCAR
What?

BARBARA

For a year, you've been demanding more resources. Congratulations.

OSCAR

How is Homeland Security going to get me more resources when your shiny new department is vacuuming up every nickel in Washington?

BARBARA

Work with us.

Oscar throws up his hands.

OSCAR

What the hell does that mean?

BARBARA

It means DHS supplies forensic personnel and federal funding. DEA supplies its institutional knowledge of the Dawber organization.

Oscar looks at Mack.

OSCAR

Did she always talk in riddles when you two were married?

MACK

Barbara has always taken pride in being a professional ball-buster.

BARBARA

Excuse me?

Oscar points at her.

OSCAR

She talks like a government fortune cookie.

BARBARA

DEA and DHS have concurrent jurisdiction.

OSCAR

That's bureaucratic horse shit and you know it.

Oscar drops into his chair and rubs his temples.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

The War on Terror is consuming everything. I've got six cartel killings on Calle Ocho and a witness in Hialeah too frightened to testify. My agents are chasing murderers with broken radios, but Homeland Security finds money because some retired accountant blew up his kitchen.

BARBARA

That retired accountant helped finance one of the largest narcotics pipelines in the southeastern United States.

Oscar looks at Mack.

OSCAR

You told her.

MACK

I didn't tell her anything she couldn't find in the records.

OSCAR

Those records were sealed.

MACK

Apparently not well enough.

Barbara places both hands on Oscar's desk.

BARBARA

A house exploded in broad daylight in Miami. Four unidentified bodies were recovered. The homeowner has documented connections to cartels, organized crime, corrupt law enforcement, and federal intelligence agencies. Post-September eleventh, that qualifies as a potential domestic threat.

OSCAR

And you conveniently dump it on me when you've got a flight to Washington in two hours.

BARBARA

Help us close this and I'll be your best advocate in Washington.

OSCAR

Bullshit. You don't want the explosion blowing back on DHS.

Mack leans forward.

MACK

We didn't finish it the first time, Oz. Malone is still out there.

Oscar closes his eyes.

OSCAR

Dios mio. Not this ghost story again.

BARBARA

We found Malone's lighter. He was at the house.

Oscar examines the evidence photograph.

OSCAR

A lighter? You want me to redirect federal agents because of a goddamn Zippo?

MACK

It's custom. He carried it in Vietnam. Skull and crossbones etched into the casing.

Oscar lowers the photograph.

OSCAR

You're not helping yourself. You're making it sound like you've continued investigating him.

Mack says nothing.

Oscar stares. Barbara stares.

Mack shrugs.

MACK

On my own time.

Oscar rises slowly.

OSCAR

How much of your own time?

MACK

Some.

OSCAR

How much agency time?

MACK

Depends how you define agency time.

OSCAR

I define it as any moment when I'm paying you.

MACK

Then very little.

Oscar laughs without humor.

OSCAR

You disobeyed a direct order.

MACK

I kept up with old sources.

OSCAR

You used DEA informants?

MACK

They were already registered.

OSCAR

Vehicles?

MACK

Occasionally.

OSCAR

Databases?

MACK

Only when necessary.

Oscar looks to the ceiling.

OSCAR

Jesus Christ.

MACK

I was right. He's alive.

OSCAR

You don't know that.

MACK

I know Johnny Malone.

Oscar stabs a finger toward him.

OSCAR

No, you knew him. Twelve years ago.
Before Dawber County ate whatever
good judgment you had left.

MACK

Johnny tipped the FBI.

OSCAR

We don't know that.

MACK

You knew the night of the raid that
he had a deal.

OSCAR

I knew someone above me ordered his
name removed from our target list.

MACK

And you never asked why?

OSCAR

Of course I asked. Then I followed
the order because that is what
federal agents do.

MACK

That's what bureaucrats do.

Oscar leans across the desk.

OSCAR

No one wanted you after Reno. No
one. I brought you into this office
because we started together and
because I believed there was still
an agent underneath all that
whiskey and self-pity.

MACK

I don't drink whiskey at work.

OSCAR

You drink before work. Apparently
that satisfies your code of ethics.

Barbara checks her watch.

BARBARA

Are you accepting the joint investigation?

OSCAR

You planned this.

BARBARA

I responded to an explosion.

OSCAR

You used Mack's obsession to create a task force.

BARBARA

I used the agent most familiar with Johnny Malone.

OSCAR

That isn't the same thing?

BARBARA

No.

Mack smiles faintly. Oscar catches it.

OSCAR

And you. Wipe that look off your face. You went around me.

MACK

I didn't go to Barbara.

OSCAR

The end result is the same.

Barbara picks up her briefcase.

BARBARA

I need an answer.

Oscar sinks into his chair.

OSCAR

Fine. I'll babysit your bag of shit. But remember something while everyone in Washington is waving flags and chasing terrorists -- drugs are killing more Americans than al-Qaeda ever did.

Barbara offers her hand. Oscar stares at it before reluctantly shaking.

BARBARA

My office prepares the operational agreement. DHS retains authority over the explosion. DEA handles the narcotics and organized-crime components.

MACK

And if Malone is alive?

Barbara looks at him.

BARBARA

Then we find him.

MACK

We arrest him.

BARBARA

If the evidence supports it.

MACK

The evidence has supported it since 1991.

BARBARA

You don't get to retry your old case because you dislike the outcome.

Mack leans back.

MACK

Say hello to Tucker for me.

Barbara stops at the door.

BARBARA

Still jealous?

MACK

Concerned. Those Hamptons winters can destroy a man's character.

BARBARA

He'll be touched.

She leaves without looking back.

Oscar watches the door close.

OSCAR

She's something.

MACK

She always was.

OSCAR

That woman could castrate a bull
with a look.

MACK

Tucker probably considers it
foreplay.

Oscar laughs despite himself.

Through the glass wall, a YOUNG AGENT passes carrying three
files. Late twenties, Latina, sharply dressed, moving with
the confidence of someone who already knows where she is
going.

MACK (CONT'D)

Who's that?

Oscar follows his gaze and raises his voice.

OSCAR

Reyes.

The agent stops.

AISHA REYES

Yeah, Chief?

OSCAR

Get in here. Welcome to the circus.

SPECIAL AGENT AISHA REYES enters and closes the door. Badge
and pistol on her hip.

AISHA

What's up?

Oscar gestures toward Mack. Aisha examines him without
enthusiasm.

Mack stands and offers his hand.

MACK

Mack Donnelly.

AISHA

I know.

MACK

Have we met?

AISHA

You gave a lecture at the academy.

MACK

I've given a lot of lectures.

AISHA

You tried to take me back to your hotel afterward.

Mack's hand hangs between them.

MACK

I think I'd remember that.

AISHA

You were drinking heavily.

Oscar covers his mouth to hide a smile.

Aisha looks at Mack's hand until he lowers it.

AISHA (CONT'D)

You don't remember me. That's the part I remember.

Oscar sits.

OSCAR

Mack, Agent Reyes is your new partner.

Mack turns to him.

MACK

No.

OSCAR

I wasn't asking.

MACK

I don't work with partners.

OSCAR

Your last partner is now flying to Washington after taking jurisdiction over my office.

MACK

Barbara was my wife.

OSCAR

That explains the anger. It doesn't explain the paperwork.

Aisha looks between them.

AISHA
What investigation?

Oscar taps the folder.

OSCAR
Explosion at the residence of
Johnny Malone.

Her expression changes.

AISHA
The Johnny Malone?

MACK
You know the name?

AISHA
Everyone at the academy knows the
name. Dawber County was required
reading.

Mack nods toward Oscar.

MACK
Then she knows who brought it down.

AISHA
She also knows who escaped.

Mack studies her more closely. Oscar smiles.

OSCAR
Not only is Reyes your partner, she
is the ranking agent on the
investigation.

Aisha smiles immediately.

AISHA
Thanks, Chief.

MACK
You can't be serious.

OSCAR
I have never been more serious.

MACK
She was in high school when we took
down Dawber County.

AISHA
Middle school.

Oscar points at her.

OSCAR
She follows orders. She writes complete reports. She hasn't assaulted a prisoner in federal custody, compromised an undercover operation in Reno, or spent twelve years using government resources to chase a man she was ordered to leave alone.

MACK
You left out my commendations.

OSCAR
I ran out of breath.

Oscar hands the folder to Aisha.

OSCAR (CONT'D)
Read everything. The explosion is now a joint DEA-DHS investigation. You report directly to me. Mack reports to you.

Mack's jaw tightens. Aisha accepts the folder.

AISHA
What's our first move?

OSCAR
We locate everyone from the old organization who might know where Malone went.

MACK
Bo Dawber.

AISHA
He's still at Reform Prison.

MACK
So is Kenny Gregory.

Oscar nods.

OSCAR
Start there.

Mack stands.

Oscar raises one finger.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

I don't want this becoming a Mack
Donnelly shit show.

Mack shrugs.

OSCAR (CONT'D)

Don't give me that look. I saved
your ass after Reno, and you've
been repaying me by breaking every
rule I put in front of you.

MACK

We're friends.

OSCAR

Then try not to get us indicted. We
may be friends, but I'll fire you
myself.

Mack heads for the door.

MACK

Reyes, get a car.

She does not move.

Mack looks back. Aisha holds up the folder.

AISHA

You report to me.

MACK

For administrative purposes.

AISHA

For every purpose.

Oscar leans back, enjoying himself now.

Aisha tosses Mack a set of government keys.

AISHA (CONT'D)

You drive. I read.

Mack catches them.

His phone vibrates again. The Nevada number fills the screen.

Aisha notices.

AISHA (CONT'D)

You answering that?

MACK

No.

AISHA

Girlfriend?

MACK

Not unless my luck has gotten considerably worse.

He silences the call and follows Aisha out.

INT. DEA MIAMI FIELD OFFICE - ELEVATOR HALL - MOMENTS LATER

Mack's phone vibrates one final time as they approach the elevator.

This time, the caller leaves a message.

Aisha steps inside. Mack remains in the hall and raises the phone to his ear.

NEVADA MAN (RECORDED)

Mister Donnelly, time has not improved your position. We are finished waiting.

The message ends.

Mack deletes it.

The elevator doors begin to close. Aisha stops them with her hand.

AISHA

You coming?

Mack looks at the blank screen.

Reno has followed him to Miami.

He clips the phone onto his belt and enters the elevator.

MACK

Let's go find Johnny Malone.

The doors close.

EXT. REFORM PRISON - MORNING

Reform Prison rises from the flat South Florida landscape like a concrete ship run aground.

Razor wire surrounds the walls in shining coils. Guard towers stand at each corner. Beyond the perimeter: drainage canals, scrub pine, and enough empty land to discourage anyone foolish enough to climb the fence.

A government sedan parks beneath a sign:

FEDERAL AND STATE VISITORS.

INT. GOVERNMENT SEDAN - CONTINUOUS

AISHA REYES closes the Johnny Malone file she has been reading since Miami.

AISHA

You drove ninety miles an hour.

MACK

We got here, didn't we?

AISHA

That isn't how federal travel regulations work.

MACK

You going to put it in your report?

AISHA

I'm deciding whether it deserves its own section.

EXT. REFORM PRISON - PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Mack exits.

His phone has stayed silent since Miami. It should relieve him. Instead, he checks it again.

Aisha notices.

AISHA

Expecting a call?

MACK

No.

AISHA

You've checked that telephone
fourteen times.

MACK

You counted?

AISHA

I investigate things.

MACK

That's adorable.

She locks the car.

AISHA

Keep talking. Oscar gave me
authority to send you home.

MACK

Oscar gave you a folder and an
inflated sense of importance.

AISHA

He also gave me ranking authority.

MACK

Those words mean less every time
you say them.

They cross toward the administration building.

INT. REFORM PRISON - SECURITY CHECKPOINT - MORNING

A CORRECTIONS OFFICER inspects their badges and directs them
through a metal detector.

Mack unloads his pistol, spare magazine, pocketknife,
lighter, flask, and the keys to the Firebird he is not
driving.

The officer studies the collection.

CORRECTIONS OFFICER

You carry all that every day?

MACK

I left the shotgun at home.

Aisha stores her pistol in a lockbox.

AISHA

Please don't encourage him.

The officer issues visitor passes.

INT. REFORM PRISON - CORRIDORS - MOMENTS LATER

A SECOND GUARD escorts Mack and Aisha through a series of steel doors. Each opens only after the previous one SLAMS shut.

Cool administration air gives way to heat, disinfectant, and the human odor of too many men in too little space.

INMATES watch from behind reinforced windows.

Some recognize the badges.

Others recognize Mack.

His name once traveled through federal prisons ahead of him. Dawber County made him famous among agents and infamous among the men he arrested.

Reno added another kind of reputation.

At the end of the corridor, WARDEN VERNON KINDER waits beneath a security camera.

Kinder wears a charcoal suit and a broad smile. Thick silver hair. Pink cheeks. The soft appearance of a man whose meals are prepared by people he can punish.

Sweat glistens above his lip despite the air-conditioning.

KINDER

Mack Donnelly. As I live and breathe.

He offers his hand. Mack shakes it.

MACK

How've you been, Vern?

KINDER

Better than the men in my custody.

Kinder laughs at his own joke and turns to Aisha.

KINDER (CONT'D)

And who might you be?

MACK

Special Agent Aisha Reyes.

Kinder's smile widens.

KINDER

Oh, my. What an exotic name.

Aisha withdraws her hand before he can take it.

AISHA

It's a name.

She looks at Mack.

AISHA (CONT'D)

What is it with you old-timers?

MACK

Who are you calling old?

Kinder dabs his forehead with a folded handkerchief.

KINDER

Well, Agent Reyes, welcome to Reform. How can we assist the Drug Enforcement Administration?

AISHA

We're here to speak with two prisoners. Bocephus Dawber and Kenny Gregory.

Kinder's smile remains, but something behind it shifts.

KINDER

I can help you with one.

Mack watches him fold the handkerchief and pocket it.

MACK

What does that mean?

KINDER

Kenny Gregory hanged himself last night.

The corridor seems to grow quieter.

Mack looks at Aisha. She already has her notebook open.

AISHA

Where?

KINDER

In his cell.

AISHA

What time?

KINDER

Shortly before midnight.

AISHA

Who found him?

KINDER

Officer Daly.

AISHA

Was Gregory in general population?

KINDER

He had recently been moved to
administrative segregation.

AISHA

Why?

KINDER

Disciplinary reasons.

AISHA

What disciplinary reasons?

Kinder's smile thins.

KINDER

I don't have the complete report in
front of me.

AISHA

Get it.

The warden studies her.

Mack almost smiles.

AISHA (CONT'D)

Gregory was due for release in less
than a month. Why would a man who
served nearly twelve years kill
himself days before going home?

KINDER

For that, you'd need a seance.

AISHA

That isn't an answer.

KINDER

It is the only answer Mr. Gregory
left us.

AISHA

Why wasn't a death notice or
coroner's report sent to the DEA?

KINDER

This facility filed all required
reports with the Department of
Corrections.

AISHA

Gregory was convicted in a federal
narcotics prosecution.

KINDER

He was serving his sentence in a
state-managed facility under an
interstate placement agreement.

AISHA

That doesn't remove federal
notification requirements.

Kinder looks at Mack.

KINDER

Is she always like this?

MACK

We've been partners for two hours.

AISHA

And he's already tired of me.
Imagine how you'll feel by
lunchtime.

Kinder's handkerchief returns. Mack watches him blot his lip.

MACK

Where's the body?

KINDER

Transferred for examination.

MACK

To whom?

KINDER

The state medical examiner.

MACK

Which office?

KINDER

I'd have to check.

MACK

Check.

Kinder pockets the handkerchief.

KINDER

I was under the impression you came
to discuss Johnny Malone.

Mack and Aisha exchange a look.

Neither of them mentioned Johnny.

Aisha closes her notebook.

AISHA

What makes you think that?

Kinder hesitates for a fraction of a second.

KINDER

You requested two inmates from the
Dawber County organization. Malone
was associated with them.

AISHA

So were fifty other people.

KINDER

Malone's house exploded yesterday.
It has been on the news.

AISHA

The owner of the house hasn't been
identified publicly.

Kinder's smile disappears.

Mack moves closer.

MACK

You expecting Johnny, Vern?

KINDER

Why would Johnny Malone come here?

MACK

To see Bo. To see Kenny. To find
out which one of them talked.

KINDER

No one talked.

MACK

You seem certain.

KINDER

I run a secure institution.

MACK

Kenny Gregory died inside that secure institution.

Kinder's jaw tightens.

KINDER

We take every death seriously.

MACK

Then you won't mind giving Agent Reyes the housing logs, surveillance recordings, disciplinary reports, visitor records, medical records, and names of every officer working Gregory's unit during the forty-eight hours before his death.

KINDER

I will need a formal request.

Aisha produces a folded document.

AISHA

Here.

Kinder does not take it.

AISHA (CONT'D)

This authorizes access to information connected with a joint DEA and Homeland Security investigation. If you obstruct that investigation, I'll telephone Director Barbara Roland from your office. She can explain the consequences personally.

Kinder looks at the document, then Mack.

KINDER

Homeland Security?

MACK

A house exploded in Miami. Patriot Act-type thing.

KINDER

I admit I don't understand all the particulars of the Patriot Act.

Aisha smiles.

AISHA

It means we can make your day considerably worse.

Kinder studies them.

KINDER

How ominous.

MACK

And Bo? Are you bringing him out?

KINDER

I can't permit an interrogation without notifying his attorney.

AISHA

We're not questioning him about his conviction. We're investigating a current national-security matter.

KINDER

That phrase seems to open an impressive number of doors.

AISHA

You're learning.

Kinder removes a walkie-talkie.

KINDER

Looks like I don't have much choice.

MACK

You have choices. You're just running out of good ones.

Kinder presses the button.

KINDER

Bring Bocephus Dawber to Interview Room Three. Federal agents are waiting.

RADIO VOICE (RADIO)

Copy that.

Kinder pockets the radio.

KINDER

This way.

They follow.

Aisha leans toward Mack.

AISHA

He knew why we came.

MACK

Yep.

AISHA

He's lying about Gregory.

MACK

Probably.

AISHA

Does everyone you know lie?

MACK

Everyone worth knowing.

INT. REFORM PRISON - INTERVIEW ROOM THREE - LATER

BOCEPHUS DAWBER sits with his hands cuffed to a steel ring in the table.

Prison has taken weight from him without making him smaller. Silver at the temples, deeper lines around the mouth, still broad-shouldered and imposing.

He sits in orange as though the prison belongs to him.

Mack stops in the doorway.

For twelve years, he has imagined this reunion. Bo defeated. Bo begging.

He should have known better.

Bo smiles.

BO

Well, well. If it ain't Captain Ahab and his babysitter.

Kinder holds the door.

KINDER
You play nice, Bo.

BO
Always do, Vern.

The familiarity is subtle, but Mack hears it.

Kinder gives Bo an oily smile and exits.

The door closes.

Bo looks at Aisha.

BO (CONT'D)
Who's the pretty young thing? She
looks a hell of a lot better than
Oscar.

Mack sits across from him.

MACK
She could kick your ass in ways
Oscar only dreams about.

Aisha remains standing.

AISHA
Special Agent Aisha Reyes.

BO
Another exotic name.

AISHA
It's still just a name.

Bo chuckles.

BO
You two rehearsing that?

AISHA
We're here to discuss Johnny
Malone.

The humor leaves Bo's eyes, but not his mouth.

BO
Twelve years, Mack. Twelve years
you leave me sitting in here, and
now you show up when I'm less than
a month from freedom.

MACK

You make it sound like I forgot about you.

BO

You forgot to visit.

MACK

I sent a Christmas card.

BO

Must've gotten lost.

MACK

How tragic.

Bo leans back as far as the cuffs allow.

BO

I don't have to talk without my lawyer.

AISHA

You can call him.

BO

That right?

AISHA

Yes. While you wait, we can request a federal hold based on an active narco-terrorism investigation. Your attorney can spend the next month arguing about whether your release date still applies.

Bo's gaze sharpens.

BO

Narco-terrorism?

AISHA

A Miami house exploded in broad daylight. Four bodies were recovered. The dead appear connected to a Haitian criminal organization.

BO

What does that have to do with me?

MACK

Maybe nothing. Maybe everything.

Mack places an evidence bag on the table.

Johnny Malone's lighter rests inside. The skull and crossbones remains visible beneath the scorch marks. The reverse still reads:

SORRY, CHARLIE.

Bo stops moving.

Mack watches his eyes.

MACK (CONT'D)
Recognize it?

Bo studies the lighter.

BO
Johnny's.

MACK
We found it inside the house.

BO
Then maybe the Haitians finally got him.

MACK
You and I both know Johnny has nine lives. He's not even halfway through them.

Bo pushes the bag back with one finger.

BO
Congratulations. You found your white whale.

MACK
Johnny's alive.

BO
You sound happy about it.

MACK
I'm going to finish what I started.

Bo laughs low.

BO
That's what you said in 1991.

Mack feels Aisha watching him. He ignores her.

MACK

Word is, if you hadn't killed Sanchez, you and Johnny would still be making money.

BO

I didn't kill Sanchez.

MACK

You gave the order.

BO

The cartel killed him.

MACK

That story wasn't believable twelve years ago.

BO

It convinced everyone but Johnny.

MACK

And me.

Bo's smile returns.

BO

You believed a lot of things back then.

MACK

I believed you were a drug trafficker.

BO

You were right.

MACK

I believed you were a murderer.

BO

Couldn't prove it.

MACK

I believed Johnny Malone was the brains of your organization.

Bo looks at the lighter.

BO

That one still bothers you, doesn't it? All those medals, all those newspaper stories, and the accountant walked away.

MACK

He turned on you.

BO

He turned on everybody.

MACK

He tipped the FBI.

BO

Maybe.

MACK

He traded the organization for protection.

Bo lifts his cuffed hands.

BO

And yet here you sit, asking me where he went. Doesn't sound like the Bureau protected him very well.

Mack leans closer.

MACK

Johnny didn't leave that lighter accidentally. He put it beside a body so we'd think he died in the explosion. That means he needs time.

BO

For what?

MACK

To get back to Dawber County.

Bo stays controlled.

BO

He hated Dawber County.

MACK

He left something behind.

BO

Bad memories.

MACK

Five million dollars.

The silence lasts one beat too long.

Aisha notices.

Mack does too.

MACK (CONT'D)

You know where he hid it.

BO

If I knew where five million dollars was buried, do you think I'd still be eating state-issued meat loaf?

MACK

You couldn't reach it from prison.

BO

I've got friends.

MACK

You've got Kinder.

Bo's eyes flick toward the black glass dome overhead.

Mack follows his glance.

A RED LIGHT glows beside the camera lens.

Someone is watching.

Someone is listening.

Bo looks back.

BO

You always did see more than was healthy.

MACK

And you always lied when the truth was cheaper.

BO

Truth never came cheap in Dawber County.

Aisha opens the file.

AISHA

Johnny and Kenny Gregory controlled the emergency cash reserve. Gregory is dead. Johnny's house was destroyed, and Johnny has disappeared.

(MORE)

AISHA (CONT'D)

If he's coming back for that money,
who does he contact?

Bo studies her with renewed interest.

BO

You're smarter than you look.

AISHA

And you're less charming than you
think.

Mack almost smiles.

BO

Johnny and Kenny hid the money in
the swamp. Kenny remembered pieces
of the route. Markers. Turns.
Islands that disappear when the
water rises.

AISHA

Who knew the complete route?

BO

Pastor Bubs.

MACK

Bubs has the money?

Bo pauses.

BO

Bubs has the way to it.

MACK

That isn't the same thing.

BO

It's close enough.

MACK

How did a Baptist preacher get
involved in drug money?

BO

Johnny trusted him.

MACK

Why?

BO

Because Bubs was the one man in
Dawber County nobody owned.

Mack remembers the preacher from 1991 -- a large man with a larger voice, standing before grieving families after federal vans carried their fathers away.

BO (CONT'D)

Johnny gave Bubs access to the money after the arrests. Told him to use it for the families.

AISHA

Did he?

BO

Bubs considered it blood money.

AISHA

So he left five million dollars in the swamp for twelve years?

BO

A better man than you or me might.

Mack looks at the camera again.

Bo delivered that answer loudly and clearly.

Too clearly.

MACK

You want us to go to Bubs.

BO

I want you to find Johnny.

MACK

Why?

BO

So I can thank him for the memories.

MACK

You're planning something.

BO

I'm planning to walk out of this prison next month.

MACK

And Kinder?

BO

What about him?

MACK

You tell me.

Bo's face reveals nothing.

Mack slides the lighter closer.

MACK (CONT'D)

Johnny blew up his house because someone came for him. If he returns to Dawber County, the people who want that money will follow.

BO

Then you better find him first.

MACK

You expecting trouble?

Bo smiles.

BO

In Dawber County? Always.

Aisha closes the file.

AISHA

We'll need a complete statement concerning Bubs and the route.

BO

No.

AISHA

You were happy to talk a moment ago.

BO

I gave you a hunch. I'm not signing anything.

AISHA

You understand we can interfere with your release.

BO

You understand my lawyer will have you reassigned to counting aspirin at the Veterans Administration.

Aisha plants both hands on the table.

AISHA

You don't frighten me.

BO
I'm not trying to.

Bo looks at Mack.

BO (CONT'D)
You frighten easily enough for both
of you.

Mack holds his gaze. Bo's smile shrinks.

BO (CONT'D)
Atticus knew that.

The room tightens.

Aisha looks from Bo to Mack.

AISHA
What does Atticus Shelton have to
do with this?

MACK
Nothing.

Bo leans toward her.

BO
Your partner ever tell you what he
did to prove himself to us?

Mack's chair SCRAPES back as he stands.

MACK
We're done.

Aisha does not move.

Bo keeps his eyes on Mack.

BO
Did you put all of it in those
legendary reports?

Mack takes the lighter.

MACK
Enjoy your remaining weeks.

BO
You should visit more often.

Mack heads for the door.

BO (CONT'D)

Bubs knows the way. But if Johnny's really back, that money is the least dangerous thing he came home for.

INT. REFORM PRISON - INTERVIEW CORRIDOR - CONTINUOUS

Mack opens the door.

Kinder stands down the corridor, pretending to read paperwork.

Mack looks at the camera, then the warden.

Kinder smiles.

KINDER

Productive conversation?

MACK

Turn off the recording.

KINDER

I'm afraid security recordings are automatic.

MACK

Preserve every second.

KINDER

Of course.

MACK

If any part disappears, I'll come back with a warrant and enough agents to take this prison apart one brick at a time.

Kinder's smile weakens.

Aisha enters the corridor and closes the interview-room door.

AISHA

We also want Gregory's complete file.

KINDER

I'll have my staff assemble it.

AISHA

Now.

KINDER

That could take several hours.

AISHA

We'll wait.

Kinder wipes his upper lip.

KINDER

I was told you had an urgent investigation.

AISHA

We do. A suspicious prison death just became part of it.

Kinder glances at Mack. Mack offers no help.

Kinder motions toward a waiting area.

KINDER

I'll see what can be done.

He walks away.

Aisha waits until he disappears through a steel door.

AISHA

Bo was telling the truth about Bubs.

MACK

Part of it.

AISHA

He wanted us to hear it.

MACK

He wanted Kinder to hear it.

AISHA

You think the warden is looking for the money?

MACK

I think everyone is looking for the money.

AISHA

And Atticus?

Mack starts down the corridor.

MACK

Dead.

AISHA

That wasn't what I asked.

MACK

It's the only answer you're getting.

Aisha catches up.

AISHA

What did you leave out of your reports?

MACK

Nothing that matters now.

AISHA

That usually means it matters more than anything.

Mack stops beside a security door.

Through its reinforced window, prisoners move in the opposite corridor.

One stops and stares at him.

INT. DAWBER COUNTY BUILDING - CORRIDOR - NIGHT - FLASHBACK
(1991)

ATTICUS SHELTON stands between Mack and the only exit.

The memory hits like a fist.

BACK TO SCENE

Mack pushes it down.

MACK

Kinder is lying about Kenny.

AISHA

I know.

MACK

We get the file, then we visit Pastor Bubs.

AISHA

And after that?

MACK

We find Johnny before everyone else
does.

The steel door opens. Mack steps through.

INT. REFORM CORRECTIONAL - INTERVIEW ROOM THREE - SAME TIME

Bo remains alone beneath the recording camera.

Outside, an INMATE whispers Johnny's name through a food
slot. Another inmate carries it to the next cell.

The name moves down the tier.

Johnny Malone.

Bo leans back and smiles.

CUT TO BLACK.

END OF EPISODE SIX