



SILENT WITNESS 28

BLOCK 3
EPISODE 5

BROKEN

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Blue Revisions

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1 **EXT. THE ROYAL COURTS OF JUSTICE. FLASHBACK - SEPTEMBER 2022 - 1 DAY A - 13:25**

CAPTION: 2022 *

A picket line. A large, diverse CROWD of BARRISTERS, SOLICITORS and LEGAL STAFF are gathered outside the Royal Courts of Justice. Some hold placards - 'STRIKE TOGETHER, WIN TOGETHER'; 'SAVE BRITISH JUSTICE'; 'FUND LEGAL AID'; 'DON'T LOWER THE BAR'.

Up on a box, in wig and gown, stands Junior Barrister FAITH OSCOTT, addressing the MEDIA.

FAITH

We are here today outside one of the most famous courts in the world, united in our determination to defend the rule of law. It is our duty - on behalf of victims and defendants up and down this country - to make a stand because our justice system is *broken*.

LAWYERS clap and cheer. PHOTOGRAPHERS snap away.

INTERCUT WITH:

2 **INT. CROWN COURT - DAY 1 - 10:35**

2

CAPTION: 2024. *

A tatty, damp court room.

Faith Oscott is prosecuting a domestic homicide. A wrung-out shadow of the 2022 vibrant protestor.

The JUDGE - THE HON. MR JUSTICE RILEY - sits.

From the POV of the defendant (unseen Liam Green), we see Faith anxiously waiting for her witness to appear.

COURT TANNOY
Ms. Blair to court 4 please.

Faith's heart pounds. Months of preparation on the line.

COURT TANNOY (CONT'D)
Jessica Blair to court 4.

The COURT USHER returns. Shakes her head.

Faith thinks on her feet. Won't give up.

(CONTINUED)

FAITH

M'lord, may I ask for a 30 minute adjournment to locate the witness?

JUDGE (O.S.)

No, Ms. Oscott.

FAITH

With respect, M'lord, Jessica Blair was the deceased's best friend. She is a key witness to the defendant's physical and emotional abuse.

JUDGE (O.S.)

Move on, Counsel.

Faith flounders, crestfallen.

3

INT. CROWN COURT. CORRIDOR - DAY 1 - 10:45

3

Nikki is heading to the exit.

Faith hurries past, dragging her legal trolley case.

NIKKI

Faith?

Faith brightens. Paints on a smile.

FAITH

Nikki, how are you?

NIKKI

Trial's postponed. No judge available.

Faith raises an eye. Knows that feeling.

FAITH

I've got to shoot now. But we must grab a drink.

Faith strides on, smile swiftly fading.

4

EXT. INNS OF COURT - DAY 1 - 11:20

4

Drone shot of the Inns of Court, London.

The Inns are a group of ancient professional associations for barristers, housed in beautifully ornate buildings with elegant gardens.

Faith's chambers is located in an immaculate courtyard off the main thoroughfare.

5

INT. FAITH'S CHAMBERS. MAIN OFFICE - DAY 1 - 11:25

5

A small, cramped office.

Symbolically, in stark contrast to the exterior, the décor is neglected, dated, an old civil service feel.

Faith goes to her desk. Looks across at her junior clerk, DYLAN CARTER.

FAITH

Jessica Blair was a no-show.

Dylan gets the gravity.

DYLAN

CPS didn't expect a problem.

Senior Clerk SALLY ALDEN, Essex matriarch, strides in. Sally's the power base at the chambers bringing in court work from solicitors and managing the business for the self-employed barristers.

SALLY

What's the problem?

FAITH

It's happened again, Sally. My witness has gone AWOL.

Sally shows concern.

FAITH (CONT'D)

The case falls apart without her.

Sally reassures, mother hen.

SALLY

You'll turn it around, Faith.

(Bustles out)

You always do, my darling.

Faith reflects for a moment.

Then gets a USB memory stick out of her bag and plugs it into her desktop.

6

EXT. SNARESBROOK CROWN COURT - DAY 2 -19:15

6

CAPTION: Present day.

The splendour of Snaresbrook.

Faith hurries out, dragging her case, checking her phone - missed calls from 'Home', missed calls from 'Chambers'.

(CONTINUED)

She hunts for her car. Then she sees it - a scruffy Peugeot estate parked askew in a bay. A yellow penalty charge stuffed under the wiper. Shit.

7

INT/EXT. FAITH'S CAR/EPPING FOREST - DAY 2 - 19:35

7

A super hero toy swings from the mirror.

Faith is speeding through Epping Forest, scoffing cold pizza - tailgated by a moped.

She calls her wife on speakerphone.

FAITH

Lucy, sorry, I know I'm late -

LUCY (O.S.)

- Where are you?

FAITH

I'll be there as soon as I can.

Faith hears Josh screaming in the background.

LUCY (O.S.)

He's having a total meltdown
waiting for you.

FAITH

The video link to a witness broke.
Took them an hour to fix -

LUCY (O.S.)

- You can't keep doing this to
Josh. He's only five. He doesn't
get it.

FAITH

I'm half an hour away, max.

LUCY (O.S.)

Forget it. Don't bother. I'm
putting him to bed.

FAITH

Lucy!

CLICK. Lucy's hung up.

Faith goes to call back. But is cut up by the moped. And forced to brake hard.

FAITH (CONT'D)

Christ sake.

(CONTINUED)

Faith zips on to overtake.

The moped catches up.

And shoots past again. Cat and mouse. Mouse and cat.

Then the moped skids to a halt and blocks Faith's way.

She slams on her brakes and skids to a halt.

Faith shoots out of the car to confront the (unseen) rider.

FAITH (CONT'D)
What is wrong with you? Are you
trying to kill us both?!

Faith's fury turns to terror.

We stay on Faith's face as she backs away, the (unseen) rider striding towards her.

TITLES.

8

EXT. LONDON'S EAST END WATERWAYS - DAWN 3 - 04:55

8

Three days later.

Drone shot of the East End canal system.

9

EXT. CANAL - DAWN 3 - 04:55

9

A baby fox runs along the canal bank.

A woman's left hand floats in the water towards Victoria Park.

PIT, PAT in a puddle. The rain begins to fall.

10

INT. CROWN COURT - DAY 3 - 09:40

10

A cold, shabby court room.

The JURY sits in spring coats.

NIKKI is in the witness box being questioned by defence barrister DEV SHAH KC.

In the dock sits the defendant, KENNETH ROSE, elderly, frail.

His burly son, GAVIN, is with his SISTERS directly above in the public gallery.

DRIP, DRIP. Rain trickles from the roof into a bucket.

Nikki has to work hard not to be distracted.

SHAH

Dr Alexander, your report makes reference to multiple focal areas of myelin loss within the brain of the deceased. Please explain to the court what that means.

Nikki looks to the JUDGE - THE HON. MRS JUSTICE GIBB.

NIKKI

It confirms the deceased, Glenda Rose, was suffering from multiple sclerosis.

SHAH

And how might that show itself?

NIKKI

Typically, fatigue, blurred vision, problems with co-ordination and balance -

SHAH

- Ah, balance. Which would make Mrs Rose prone to falls?

NIKKI

Yes.

Shah glances at the Judge.

SHAH

If we could turn to exhibits NA5 and NA6, M'lady. Photographs which show bruising on the deceased's leg and arm.

Shah turns back to Nikki.

SHAH (CONT'D)

Most likely the result of a fall...
Wouldn't you say?

Nikki keeps her focus on the jury.

NIKKI

The discoid contusions to Glenda's arms indicate fingertip bruising. This is commonly associated with intentional rather than accidental trauma.

(CONTINUED)

*
*
*
*

SHAH

Kenneth - Glenda's beloved husband of 45 years **and father of her three children** - was her carer. He'd lift her in and out of a wheelchair several times a day. Would that not cause the arms to bruise?

NIKKI

The pattern of this bruising is gripping from pinning down. Not from lifting under the armpits.

Nikki demonstrates with her hands.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

In my view, this, along with the contusions to Glenda's neck and the fracture to her hyoid bone, indicate force was used.

SHAH

Are you familiar with the 2019 paper by Dr Charles Hawton on hyoid fractures in fatal non-homicidal falls?

NIKKI

I'm aware of it.

SHAH

In his study of over 100 cases, Dr Hawton concluded that a percentage of hyoid fractures occurred as a direct result of a fall. So it's possible, isn't it, that Glenda's fracture was accidental?

NIKKI

I'd need to review the paper.

SHAH

You mean to tell this court you aren't acquainted with the findings of this well-regarded expert?

NIKKI

I examined Glenda Rose's body. Dr Hawton did not.

Counsel for the Crown rises to address the Judge.

PROSECUTION BARRISTER

M'lady, this study was not disclosed to the Crown. May I ask for an adjournment so Dr. Alexander has time to review the paper?

(CONTINUED)

As the legal teams debate, Kenneth, the defendant, catches Nikki's eye. A hint of malice.

Nikki shivers. Then forces herself to shake it off.

11

EXT/INT. CANAL BANK/CROWN COURT. CORRIDOR - DAY 3 - 09:45

11

The severed hand - now caught in mesh on top of the water - is drawing a CROWD.

UNIFORM OFFICERS keep everyone behind a cordon.

JACK strides through the gloom towards DS MARCIE BLAKE.

JACK

Peach of a day for it.

Blake turns to him.

BLAKE

You must be Jack.

Jack's focus is already on the hand in the mesh.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

I'm DS Blake - Marcie.

Jack nods to be polite. Then sets up his camera before the rain starts again.

JACK

This all we've got?

BLAKE

So far.

Blake looks to an UNDERWATER SEARCH UNIT trawling a section of the canal.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

With the rain, the search gaffer thinks the hand might have travelled some distance.

Jack takes photos of the hand in situ.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Any idea how long it's been in the water?

JACK

Pathologists have way better ideas than me.

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE

The coroner won't instruct one
until there's enough body parts to
confirm death.

Jack's phone rings. He sees it's Nikki.

JACK

Maybe I can pull a string or two
there.

BLAKE

(Cheeky)
Handy.

Jack likes her spark. They'll get on.

JACK

I see what you did there, Marcie.
(Into phone)
Perfect timing. You're needed.

JUMP CUT TO: Nikki, in full PPE, heads to Jack.

NIKKI

Nice to be needed.

JACK

Always.

Jack leads her to the severed hand caught in the mesh.

JACK (CONT'D)

What happened to the trial?

NIKKI

Came to a rather abrupt halt.

JACK

Don't tell me, no judge.

NIKKI

More of an admin malfunction.

JACK

Why does that not surprise me?

Further along the canal, a secluded homeless pitch.

PERRY LORNE, 50s, kitted up for the wet weather in hat and
gloves, strolls away from his pitch. Carrying a small parcel.

13

EXT. INNS OF COURT - DAY 3 - 10:20

13

Drone shot of the Inns of Court, London.

14

INT. FAITH'S CHAMBERS. FAITH'S OFFICE/ MAIN OFFICE - DAY 3 - 10:20

14

Senior Clerk, Sally Alden sticks her head round the door. Faith's desk is empty.

A busy team of diverse CLERKS are on calls, at their keyboards, riffling through paperwork.

SALLY

Anyone heard from Faith?

Most are under too much pressure to look up.

Sally barks at her young junior.

SALLY (CONT'D)

Dylan?!

Dylan Carter sits upright.

DYLAN

I've messaged and called but keep getting voicemail.

SALLY

She and David are due in court.

DYLAN

Maybe she's ill. Or something's happened.

Head of Chambers, DAVID WHITLEY, strides in, laden with case files.

DAVID

Any sign of Faith?

SALLY

You go on ahead to court.

DAVID

She's up first, Sally. You need to find her.

SALLY

(Calming)

I'll try her at home.

15

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. KITCHEN/FAITH'S CHAMBERS. MAIN OFFICE - DAY 3 - 10:25

15

Close on a phone video:

Story day B - Faith is wrestling and laughing with her son JOSH in the garden. *

FAITH

You've got me, Joshy. You've got me. I give up. I give up!

Josh is watching the video on a phone.

LUCY

Time for nursery, sweetie.

As Josh protests, the phone rings.

LUCY KHAN takes the phone from him. Doesn't recognise the number.

LUCY (CONT'D)

(Into phone)

Hello?

SALLY (O.S.)

Lucy, it's Sally Alden from chambers. Is Faith there?

LUCY

(Into phone)

No.

(Lying)

She's left for court.

SALLY (O.S.)

(Relieved)

Really? What time?

Lucy returns to her work top - full of produce in preparation for a catering event.

LUCY

(Into phone)

Not sure. Early.

SALLY (O.S.)

Well, she's not there yet or answering our calls.

LUCY

(Into phone)

Sorry, Sally. Got to go. Josh is late for nursery.

(CONTINUED)

Lucy abruptly ends the call. Rattled by Sally's intrusion.

16

EXT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE - DAY 3 - 10:35

16

A modest end of terrace.

STEFAN CHIRKOV in an old cagoule and gloves, checks out the house number from the street.

Lucy hurries out of the front door struggling with a screaming Josh.

Stefan darts out of sight.

17

EXT. CANAL BANK - DAY 3 - 10:45

17

Nikki is examining the hand - now on a plastic sheet.

Jack gets an update from the Underwater Search Team.

BLAKE

Any joy?

JACK

Change of strategy. They'll now focus the search underneath where the hand was found. Could be more body parts are in a bag under the water and just the hand's floated up.

NIKKI

Or could be the person's still alive.

Blake is shocked. This is a turnaround.

BLAKE

Seriously?

NIKKI

The amputation may have been surgical.

Nikki indicates the wound.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Severed through the skin and then dismembered with a perfectly executed cut through the joint space between the carpal bones and the radius and ulna.

Jack inspects more closely.

(CONTINUED)

Blake would rather not lose her breakfast.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

An amateur is more likely to try sawing or hacking into the bone. The person who did this really knows their anatomy.

BLAKE

I'll put a call out to hospitals.

Blake moves away with urgency.

JACK

If not a surgeon, who else might have dismemberment skills?

NIKKI

A vet.

JACK

A pathologist.

NIKKI

A butcher.

18

EXT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY 3 - 11:05

18

CHOP! A cleaver cuts through a beef shoulder.

Lucy, in butcher's apron, is preparing food for her catering event.

KNOCK, KNOCK on glass.

Lucy jumps. She looks up to see...

Faith's clerk, Sally Alden, waving through the bifolds.

Irritated, Lucy goes to let her in.

SALLY

I tried the front.

LUCY

I told you, Faith's not here.

SALLY

She's definitely not at court so where is she?

LUCY

I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

SALLY

Right, well, I've had to call in a favour to get a replacement junior for David.

Sally pulls out a wodge of files from her case.

SALLY (CONT'D)

In exchange, Faith will have to take a GBH starting Friday at Kingston.

Lucy bristles, annoyed.

LUCY

You've always got her working.

SALLY

I know you need the money.

Sore point.

LUCY

Faith only really cares about the crusade.

Sally senses a bitterness.

SALLY

True.

LUCY

Anyway, no point leaving your files here.

Deep breath.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Faith's moved out.

Sally's taken aback.

LUCY (CONT'D)

We needed some space.

SALLY

Where has she gone?

LUCY

Not sure exactly. Staying with friends.

SALLY

I hope you can patch things up.

Lucy doesn't want to discuss it. Retreats back to her prep.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

I'll have to get on. I've got a big catering event tomorrow.

SALLY

As soon as you hear from Faith, tell her to call me. Immediately.

19

EXT. CANAL - DAY 3 - 11:07

19

A DIVER hands Jack a large plastic box of debris and vegetation recovered from the water.

Jack combs through discarded rubbish, animal and bird bones. Then spots a human bone.

Nikki sees from his face he's found something.

NIKKI

What have you got?

Jack goes to her. Hands over the bone.

JACK

Looks human.

NIKKI

(Nods)

An adult femur.

JACK

Could it have gone in the water recently?

Nikki checks it over.

NIKKI

It's certainly older than the hand... I'll need to run tests at the mortuary to determine age.

Jack looks ominously back at the canal.

JACK

Wonder what else is in there?

20

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. HALL - DAY 3 - 12:05

20

The front door letter box clatters open.

A small parcel (that Perry was carrying) tumbles to the floor.

Close on scrawled handwriting: 'Faith Oscott family'.

21

INT. LYELL CENTRE. MORTUARY/VIEWING GALLERY - DAY 3 - 12:20

21

The severed hand has been removed from the exhibits bag. It shows signs of degloving from the maceration of the water.

Nikki completes photographs with a scale.

In the viewing gallery with Kit, Blake checks a message on her phone.

BLAKE
No hospital reports of hand amputations.

Harriet switches on the camera link to give Blake a closer view of the hand on the mortuary table.

KIT
Bit of luck, we'll get a DNA match.

Nikki and Harriet begin the examination.

NIKKI
Fingers are long and slender.

BLAKE
Is it female?

Nikki's reluctant to commit herself.

NIKKI
DNA tests will confirm biological sex even if we can't match to a profile.

Nikki scrutinises the nails.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
No sign of nail polish.

HARRIET
Can't have been in the canal long.
No bloating and still a slight indentation on the wedding ring finger.

BLAKE
The ring could have slipped off in the water?

Jack joins them with a mobile biometric scanner.

JACK
Or was stolen before the hand was thrown in.

Nikki turns over the hand. Spots something on the palm.

(CONTINUED)

NIKKI

There's a faint pen mark on the palm.

Harriet takes a closer look. The mark is barely visible.

HARRIET

Can't tell what it is.

Nikki examines the mark. Jack uses a crimelight to identify the detail of the ink.

NIKKI

Think it might be the shape of a heart.

Blake makes a note on her phone.

BLAKE

Any chance you can get a clear set of fingerprints?

NIKKI

Yep. But I'll have to remove the degloved skin from the fingers first.

Blake recoils. No stomach for gore.

Nikki looks to Harriet.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

I'll start with the index finger to get an ID. Would you remove the fingernail?

HARRIET

Yup.

Harriet carefully removes the index nail with forceps and places it in a pot. She then holds the hand as Nikki degloves the skin from the index finger.

It slips off like a glove but could easily tear.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Easy does it.

Jack connects the scanner to an app on an iPad.

And clocks Blake looking away.

Nikki puts the de-gloved skin over her own latex gloved hand.

NIKKI

At least the fingerprints haven't been deliberately damaged.

(CONTINUED)

Blake forces herself to engage.

BLAKE

Maybe whoever dumped the hand
thought it would sink and never
have to be ID-ed.

Jack holds the scanner.

Nikki places a finger on the screen. Gets a good hit.

JACK

Done.

Nikki moves off to clean up.

Jack can't resist teasing Blake.

JACK (CONT'D)

You can look now, sergeant.

Blake breathes more easily.

BLAKE

Any joy?

Jack checks the results.

JACK

No match on IDENT1 or IABS.

BLAKE

So they aren't already known to us.

KIT

I'll load up the prints in case
they're still to be reported
missing.

Blake's phone buzzes with a message.

BLAKE

Oh God... There's another.

Close on a human right ear.

CLICK, CLICK of a camera.

Nikki photographs the ear on the floor where it fell. Then
the parcel with the scrawled handwriting.

In front of her, Jack examines the front door and letterbox.

JACK

Took a risk, delivering in person.

NIKKI

No CCTV. Unlike at a post office.

JACK

They could've bunged a few stamps
on the parcel and slung it in a
post box.

Nikki picks up the ear with forceps. Places it in a plastic box.

NIKKI

Severed cleanly and expertly with a
sharp blade.

JACK

Like our hand?

Nikki looks back at Jack, concern escalating.

NIKKI

Exactly like our hand.

23

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. LIVING ROOM - DAY 3 - 13:10

23

DS Blake is with Lucy. They sit together on a sofa.

Blake's much more in her comfort zone dealing with tough, emotional situations.

BLAKE

Any idea who could've sent the
package?

Lucy shakes her head, trembling with shock.

LUCY

It's horrific, sick.

Blake nods, feeling for her.

LUCY (CONT'D)

What if my little boy had seen it?

Nikki appears at the door and nods to Blake.

BLAKE

Lucy, Dr Alexander needs to take a
DNA swab and scan your
fingerprints.

(CONTINUED)

Lucy looks at Nikki, anxious.

NIKKI

Just for elimination as you handled
the parcel.

Blake moves aside for Nikki. Checks out the photos around the room and instantly gets the (queer) family set up.

BLAKE

Is there anyone who might have a
problem with you or your family?

LUCY

No. Well, my partner...

Blake gives her a knowing nod. Lucy feels safe to be open.

LUCY (CONT'D)

My wife. She's a criminal
barrister. I guess she's upset
people. Maybe someone's trying to
scare her.

Jack can be seen checking the small patio and path to the front door.

NIKKI

Could you open your mouth?

Lucy does as she's told. Nikki takes a swab.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

That's it. Thank you.

BLAKE

What's your wife's name?

LUCY

Faith Oscott.

Nikki's taken aback.

NIKKI

I know Faith. Through work. She's
formidable in court.

Lucy nods, flat, no pride.

LUCY

She loves her job.

Nikki prepares the biometric scanner.

NIKKI

Let's start with your right hand.

(CONTINUED)

Lucy places each finger on the scanner - fighting a gnawing feeling that something's wrong.

LUCY

Faith's clerk said she didn't turn up at court this morning. I've been calling her too but it just goes straight to voicemail.

Jack appears in the doorway, ready to take prints from around the house.

Lucy switches hands.

Nikki spots a heart-shaped scribble on her wrist. Similar to the one on the severed hand.

NIKKI

Is that a heart?

LUCY

My son. He draws them all the time.

NIKKI

Does he draw on Faith's hand too?

LUCY

Sometimes.

Lucy clocks Nikki share a glance of alarm with Blake.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Why?

Blake stalls for a moment. How to explain.

LUCY (CONT'D)

The hand in the canal... the one on the news...

Lucy's overwhelmed with panic.

LUCY (CONT'D)

You think it's Faith? Is this her?

Blake tries to reassure.

BLAKE

There's no identification yet.

NIKKI

Lucy, I know this must be absolutely terrifying. But that's one of the reasons we're here.

Nikki looks to Jack.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

We just need to find some
fingerprints from around the house.

Lucy reels. World turned upside down.

24

EXT. CANAL SIDE. PERRY'S PITCH - DAY 3 - 13:15

24

Homeless Perry Lorne returns to his pitch.

A JUNKIE, 40s, white, has moved his stuff to cook up.

Perry turns on her, paranoid, furious.

PERRY

Get out.

The junkie's too focussed on her fix to move.

Perry hauls her up. She fights back with surprising force.

Perry whips out a chef's knife from an inside jacket. Holds it to her throat.

PERRY (CONT'D)

Hear this then.

Still the junkie struggles.

Perry pushes the blade closer to her throat.

Terrified, the junkie surrenders.

JUNKIE

Okay, okay.

Perry lets go and she scarpers.

Perry swiftly checks his stuff.

Nothing's been nicked. Good.

He puts the blade back inside his jacket.

25

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. OFFICE - DAY 3 - 13:17

25

A wall of certificates, awards, press photos of Faith at the barrister protests, and snaps with volunteers at a law centre.

Jack's examining surfaces for fingerprints.

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

Faith took her laptop and work
stuff when she moved out.

News to Jack.

LUCY (CONT'D)

We... needed some time apart.

JACK

Hopefully I can still get a print
from the surfaces.

LUCY

(Apologetic)
I did a big clean after she left.
Like a sort of therapy.

Jack opens a desk drawer. Digs out a toy mobile phone.

Lucy chokes at the sight.

LUCY (CONT'D)

Josh and Faith... they love to play
phones.

26

INT. BEV'S HOUSE. GARAGE - DAY 3 - 13:20

26

Close on a super hero toy dangling from a car mirror.

We go wider to see...

Faith's Peugeot hidden in an old, dingy garage.

27

INT. LYELL CENTRE. VIEWING GALLERY - DAY 3 - 14:30

27

Nikki, Jack, Harriet and Kit update DS Blake and her boss, DI AVRIL FISHER.

Nikki projects an image of the severed ear on to the screen.

NIKKI

There's closed-up piercings through
the left upper pinna and the lower
lobule. No other distinctive
features.

Fisher looks to Blake, overworked, irritated.

FISHER

Are we any closer to a positive ID?

Nikki and Jack see Blake tense. On her guard.

BLAKE

Not yet, boss.

(CONTINUED)

JACK

Faith moved out of the family home a month ago. No clean fingerprints there.

BLAKE

We've yet to locate where Faith was last staying. Her wife isn't sure so we're checking with friends.

JACK

To speed things up, I'll try and get a print from the ear.

FISHER

But there's no ear database.

JACK

Still worth a try if I can compare to Faith's. Ears are as unique as fingerprints.

FISHER

What about DNA?

NIKKI

Nothing from the ear yet and there's a delay with the hand.

HARRIET

Because of the decomposition, we've had to provide a bone marrow sample to get a usable profile.

FISHER

Anything helpful from the canal?

Harriet looks to the mortuary...

An N/S MORTUARY ASSISTANT is carefully separating bones recovered from the canal.

HARRIET

Amongst animal and bird bones, we've found an adult femur.

BLAKE

How old?

Harriet looks to Nikki for confirmation.

(CONTINUED)

NIKKI

I'd say it's been in the water a little while. Perhaps up to a year or so.

Fisher looks back at Faith's image on the screen.

FISHER

So the last sighting of Faith's vehicle was after she left court on Friday.

Jack projects a map. It highlights Snaresbrook Crown Court, Epping Forest and the two body part deposition sites.

JACK

Number plate recognition picked it up here between Snaresbrook and Epping Forest. Nothing since.

FISHER

The car can't have vanished into thin air.

JACK

It could be parked up. We won't know unless we get an ANPR ping that it's on the move.

FISHER

What about her phone?

KIT

Dead since she took that journey.

BLAKE

Boss, we need to search the forest.

FISHER

But the body parts turned up 20-odd miles away.

BLAKE

It's the last place we know Faith was alive -

Fisher cuts across.

FISHER

- Dr. Alexander, the hand amputation must have severed a major artery.

NIKKI

Yes.

(CONTINUED)

FISHER

So she's unlikely to be alive?

NIKKI

She could be. With medical help.

FISHER

What's the evidence telling you?

NIKKI

Nothing definite, unfortunately. When someone living suffers this type of amputation, you can see bleeding under the skin. That isn't so obvious with an ear.

HARRIET

Or when the hand's been submerged in water.

BLAKE

Boss, Dr. Alexander thinks the hand could've been surgically removed.

Fisher looks to Nikki.

NIKKI

With the skill involved, yes.

BLAKE

So if Faith is still alive, we need to find her.

FISHER

It's getting late to mobilise a search team in daylight.

Fisher's just the sort of hard-nose cop Jack hates. He tries to help Blake out.

JACK

You could make a start with a drone to try and locate the vehicle on one of the forest tracks.

FISHER

Good idea.

Blake raises an eye at Jack. She listens to him but not her.

Jack feels bad his good intentions backfired.

Fisher looks to Blake.

FISHER (CONT'D)

Let's find her.

28

EXT. STEFAN'S TOWER BLOCK - DAY 3 - 15:10

28

BOOM, BOOM, BOOM.

TECHNO/HOUSE blasts from an upper floor flat.

Stefan Chirkov heads home - passing old garages - scruffy rucksack over his shoulder.

He glances up, enraged by the noise. Lets nothing show.

29

INT. STEFAN'S TOWER BLOCK. STAIRS/CORRIDOR - DAY 3 - 15:15

29

Stefan comes up a long flight of stairs to the upper floor.

The techno blares louder.

He continues along a corridor. Gets closer to the pounding music... And hears YELLING.

Stefan reaches the flat. Knocks on the door.

His NEIGHBOUR, 20s, in boxers, opens up.

STEFAN

Turn that down.

NEIGHBOUR

What you on about?

Stefan stares at him. A quiet, unnerving menace.

STEFAN

You want me to come in and sort it?

NEIGHBOUR

Alright.

(Under breath)

Nutter.

Stefan goes to the adjoining flat.

Puts his key in the lock.

30

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT - DAY 3 - 15:16

30

A grim, bare bedsit. Basic furniture. Minimal possessions.

The thumping BASS goes off.

Stefan comes in and heads for the kitchen area.

He pulls a plastic supermarket bag out of his rucksack. Dumps it into the sink.

(CONTINUED)

Inside the plastic, red blood oozes out of raw flesh.

31

INT. LYELL CENTRE. MORTUARY - DAY 3 - 15:35

31

Nikki is helping Jack make prints of the severed ear.

She paints the ear with aluminium powder.

Jack then tape lifts the prints and presses on to clear acetate.

JACK

Thank you, Mr Hirschi.

NIKKI

Who?

JACK

In 1965, he discovered a burglary suspect had an ear print similar to an ear mark found on a window at the scene.

NIKKI

You can be on my pub quiz team.

JACK

Since when did you do pub quizzes?

NIKKI

Might start. Now I've bagged myself a nerd.

She sees he's completed the prints.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

What will you compare the print to?

Jack produces the toy mobile phone taken from Faith's office.

Ouf. Nikki takes in Josh's toy. So out of place in a mortuary.

32

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. OFFICE. JACK'S VISUALISATION - 2024 - DAY B - SIX WEEKS AGO - 10:30

32

Faith and Josh are playing phones.

Faith sits on the floor. Josh's toy phone pressed to her ear.

Josh is at Faith's desk, chattering to her through her phone.

33

INT. LYELL CENTRE. MORTUARY - DAY 3 - 15:35

33

Jack feels Nikki's sadness.

JACK

Tough when you know them.

NIKKI

She never really mentioned her family.

Jack finds the prints he previously took from the toy phone.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

If she wasn't battling in court, she was fronting a campaign.

Jack compares the ear print to the print on the toy phone.

JACK

(Soft)

Not 100% but the antihelix is identical.

34

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT - DAY 3 - 16:05

34

Close on a laptop screen.

A YouTube news clip from September 2022 is playing:

Outside the Royal Courts of Justice, Faith, in wig and gown, stands on a box addressing the media.

FAITH

Criminal justice is crumbling around us. All we want is justice for our clients. But barristers are leaving the profession in droves. Because we have nothing left to give.

Stefan is lying on his bed, obsessively watching old footage of Faith.

He rewinds a section to hear it again. Over and over.

FAITH (CONT'D)

All we want is justice for our clients.

35

INT. LYELL CENTRE. SCIENCE ROOM - DAY 3 - 16:20

35

Nikki is studying images of the serration marks on the severed hand and ear.

(CONTINUED)

At another table, Jack and Kit are examining the parcel.

JACK

Only Lucy Khan's prints on the packaging.

KIT

The sender's forensically aware then.

Kit takes the address part of the package. Photographs the handwriting.

Jack examines the adhesive side of the tape under a low power microscope.

BLEEP. Kit gets a dating app alert on her phone. Takes a sneaky peep. Smiles approvingly. Swipes right.

Jack takes forceps to remove fibres onto a wide sticky tape to record the fibre population. He clocks Kit's app.

KIT (CONT'D)

My mum. I keep telling her not to message me at work.

JACK

Your mum looks like she could use a shave.

Kit squirms. Busted. Gets back to work.

KIT

What have you got?

JACK

Light blue fibres on the underside. Take a look.

Jack moves aside so she can see through the microscope.

KIT

Cotton? Could be from a towel.

Jack nods - good shout.

Harriet comes in to see if Nikki's made progress.

HARRIET

What's the verdict? Same knife on our hand and ear?

Nikki shows her the serration images.

(CONTINUED)

NIKKI

Consistent with the same type of
blade. I think there's a defect in
one of the teeth.

Harriet looks closer.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIET

Helpful - if the knife's ever found.

KIT

Say someone is keeping Faith alive.
What do they want?

NIKKI

It is odd they haven't sent some sort of message.

JACK

Not yet anyway.

36

EXT. HIGH STREET - DAY 3 - 16:25

36

Perry Lorne heads along a street, carrying a heavy bag for life. Inside is a box.

37

EXT. NAIL SALON - DAY 3 - 16:35

37

A scruffy East End nail salon.

Perry waits by the door. The bag for life at his feet.

Perry's daughter, AMBER (23), mixed-race, heavily pregnant, glam nail artist, comes out to see him. He lights up.

PERRY

Amber.

Amber loves her dad but is embarrassed by him.

AMBER

Can't talk, dad. It's dead busy in there.

Perry feels the rejection.

PERRY

You feeling okay?
(Of her belly)
Not long to go now.

AMBER

What do you want?

Perry gets out cash from his pocket.

PERRY

For the baby.

Amber doesn't take it. Instantly cynical.

(CONTINUED)

AMBER
Where's it come from?

LIAM GREEN, 20s, unassuming, forgettable, comes to the door.

LIAM
Amber! Customer.

Perry bristles, protective.

AMBER
Two minutes, yeah?

Liam goes back in, raising an eye at Perry.

Amber cringes. Assumes Liam's judging him.

PERRY
They shouldn't still be making you work.

AMBER
Calm down. It's fine.

Perry keeps it together. Wants this to go well.

PERRY
I hear you're having a party shower thing at Patrizio's.

Amber's surprised he knows.

PERRY (CONT'D)
Your nan still talks to me.

Amber nods - good.

PERRY (CONT'D)
So do I get an invite?

AMBER
Not sure it's your thing, Dad.

Perry forces the cash on her.

PERRY
Put that towards it. I'll be getting more.

Amber has a sinking feeling.

AMBER
You end up back inside. We're done.

PERRY
All I want is a chance.

(CONTINUED)

We go to:

The box. Ominously at his feet.

38

INT. LYELL CENTRE. SCIENCE ROOM - DAY 3 - 16:45

38

Nikki finds Jack helping Harriet get samples from the old femur recovered from the canal.

NIKKI

Cryogenic milling?

HARRIET

We're preparing the sample for DNA extraction.

Harriet goes to assist Jack break a small cross section of the femur. Then looks to Nikki.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Want a go?

*

NIKKI

Sure.

Nikki jumps in. Helps Jack break a cross-section of the femur.

Then, wearing special gloves, Jack puts the sample in a milling chamber to reduce it to a fine powder.

Jack sees Nikki checking the cut end of the femur.

JACK

I kept the bone end intact for scanning.

HARRIET

Again it's cut cleanly with similar markings to the severed carpals in our hand.

Nikki compares the femur bone end with her images of the cut points on the severed hand.

NIKKI

We'll need scans to see if the defect on the blade's the same.

JACK

It could take weeks for a result.

NIKKI

We might not have weeks.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIET

**It's completely ridiculous we
haven't got our own scanner here.
Do they think we are school boys?**

*
*
*

Jack scoffs - you'll be lucky.

JACK

Pricey piece of kit.

Harriet notes Jack's scepticism.

HARRIET

When Sibelius was rejected by the Vienna Philharmonic, **did he give up? No he pushed on and** became a rather famous composer.

*
*

Jack looks at her - WTF?

Nikki's iPad pings with an email.

NIKKI

Toxicology's back -

Nikki reads, stunned.

HARRIET

What is it?

NIKKI

Faith's nails contain traces of buspirone.

Nikki checks the report.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

High levels of metabolites in the tissue.

HARRIET

Suggests chronic use.

*

JACK

For what? Anxiety?

HARRIET

Extreme anxiety.

NIKKI

And severe panic attacks.

Nikki is shocked. It's not the Faith she knew.

39

EXT. INNS OF COURT - DAY 3 - 17:20

39

Drone shot of the Inns of Court.

We go to:

Nikki and DS Blake striding through the Inns.

A diverse stream of BARRISTERS and CLERKS with trolleys piled high with case files hurry past.

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE

Why buspirone? Why not propranolol
or something milder?

NIKKI

You know your meds.

Blake hesitates, awkward. Nikki susses why.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

Sorry. I didn't mean to pry -

BLAKE

- Takes the edge off.

Nikki nods sympathetically.

Blake would rather focus on Faith.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

There's no antidepressants on
Faith's medical records.

NIKKI

She could be seeing a psychiatrist
privately.

Blake shakes her head - poor Faith.

BLAKE

She gave it everything. And for
what?

40

EXT. INNS OF COURT. INNER TEMPLE GARDEN - DAY 3 - 17:20

40

Sally greets Nikki and DS Blake.

SALLY

Good to see you, Nikki. So glad
they've got you on the case.

David Whitley, documents under his arm, joins them. David was once considered a radical lawyer. Now he's what he once despised - a company man.

SALLY (CONT'D)

This is David Whitley, our head of
chambers.

David grips their hands.

DAVID

Thanks for everything you're doing.
We're all horrified by what's
happened.

(CONTINUED)

They continue on at pace to Faith's chambers.

BLAKE

Has Faith ever received any threats through her work?

DAVID

Threats come with the territory but they rarely amount to anything.

40A

INT. FAITH'S CHAMBERS - DAY 3 - 17:20

40A

They come into the chambers building.

BLAKE

Could I get a list of clients?

DAVID

Sally?

SALLY

Of course.

BLAKE

Especially those with a history of violence.

SALLY

Faith's also a volunteer at a law centre. My clerk, Dylan, says she's had trouble with a client there. I'll get you a name.

David glances at his watch. Late for a meeting.

DAVID

Anything else we can help with?

NIKKI

Was Faith under any particular pressure?

DAVID

Well, for the past few years she's gone from murders to rape cases without any sort of break.

BLAKE

Why's that?

DAVID

She's had to. For the money.

(CONTINUED)

SALLY

Barristers are self-employed. Paid per case. With the hours juniors have to work, they can end up earning less than minimum wage.

DAVID

When I was a junior, there was no student debt and legal aid was your bread and butter. You could afford to take a break between tough cases. Not now.

NIKKI

How did Faith cope with that?

DAVID

Not well. She's an outstanding defence junior but to boost her income, she began taking prosecution briefs as well.

NIKKI

Really? But she was such a passionate exponent of defence.

DAVID

Frankly, combining both was too much.

SALLY

If you don't already know, she and Lucy have separated.

BLAKE

We're aware of that.

DAVID

Odd thing is only a few weeks ago, Lucy got in touch to ask about Faith's earnings and diary of cases.

BLAKE

What for?

DAVID

To obtain life insurance.

BLAKE

Did she get it?

SALLY

We told her the enquiry would have to come via Faith.

DAVID

But Lucy was quite insistent -
Faith's life had to be insured.

41

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. OFFICE - EVENING 3 - 20:06

41

Lucy hovers at the door of Faith's home office.

She goes to sit in Faith's chair. To be where Faith sat.

She looks up at the photos of the barrister strike - Faith beaming with pride.

She hears:

FAITH (V.O.)

The Government made £200M from
selling off crown courts and yet to
save more money it then cut the
number of days judges sit. This is
a key cause of backlogs. We're
fighting not just for ourselves but
for the very survival of the
justice system.

Lucy looks at the snaps of Faith with volunteers at the law centre. Something in Faith's spirit galvanises Lucy into action. She reaches for her phone.

LUCY

(Into phone)

Mum? Could you come over?

42

INT. LYELL CENTRE. BREAKOUT AREA - EVENING 3 - 20:07

42

Nikki's studying the Charles Lawton paper - '*Hyoid fractures in fatal non-homicidal falls*' - for the MS murder trial.

Jack presents her with a takeaway pizza.

NIKKI

You are...

Nikki grabs a slice. Eats hungrily.

JACK

Husband material?

Nikki nods - absolutely - mouth full.

Jack sees what she's reading.

JACK (CONT'D)

"*Hyoid fractures in fatal non-homicidal falls*".

NIKKI

The trial's been rescheduled.

JACK

All set?

Nikki wishes she was.

NIKKI

This is an obscure study using a relatively small sample but it does back up the defence claim.

JACK

And all the silk has to do is plant enough doubt in the jury's mind.

Nikki nods - exactly.

JACK (CONT'D)

But then they'll hear from you.

Nikki smiles, rallied by his belief.

42A

EXT. NAIL SALON - EVENING 3 - 20:30

42A

Lucy, hat and scarf disguising her face, watches the salon as:

Amber Lorne and Liam Green leave for the night going in opposite directions.

(CONTINUED)

But Lucy's attention is caught by TRAVIS TAIT and his HENCHMAN who follow them out.

As Travis heads for his plush SUV, Lucy goes to him.

LUCY

Travis!

Travis stops, surprised to see her. Then, irritated, he beckons her back inside the salon.

Through the window, we see but don't hear their conversation.

(Lucy asks Travis to tell her where he's keeping Faith, promising to pay him back the rest of what she owes. Travis is confused. No idea what she's on about. Insists she doesn't tell the police about their loan arrangement.)

43

EXT. EPPING FOREST - DAY 4 - 08:05

43

Next day.

Drone shot of the forest.

On the ground, POLSA OFFICERS and a DOG UNIT search the woods.

44

INT. LYELL CENTRE. CORRIDOR - DAY 4 - 08:05

44

Kit slopes into work, hungover.

A BLAST of Rachmaninoff from speakers in Harriet's office.

Kit jumps.

KIT

Shit.

Jack comes alongside. Susses what's up.

JACK

Quiet night in? With Mum and the scrabble?

KIT

Date with a random. I had to keep drinking to blot out his chat.

An exhausted Nikki hurries past, hauling on her coat.

NIKKI

DNA's back on our hand and ear.
It's a match to Faith.

Kit instantly sobers.

KIT

At least we know for sure.

NIKKI

Other unattributed DNA's been found under a fingernail.

JACK

Defensive? From a scratch?

Nikki shrugs, continuing out.

NIKKI

Don't know yet.

45

EXT. CITY ALLOTMENT. PLOTS - DAY 4 - 08:40

45

Drone shot of a large city allotment.

(CONTINUED)

Sound of RUNNING WATER.

We go to:

A water butt.

Stefan Chirkov is washing blood from his hands.

46

INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - DAY 4 - 09:35

46

Nikki, DI Fisher and DS Blake update Lucy.

Outside, Josh is playing on the trampoline in the garden.

NIKKI

I'm afraid there's no doubt that
it's Faith.

Lucy looks out at Josh, frantically trying not to break down.

LUCY

D'you think she's still alive?

NIKKI

I hope so.

Lucy reels. Could be shock. Could be guilt.

FISHER

Have you had any unusual
communication since the parcel?
Calls from unknown numbers?

LUCY

No... nothing.

Blake shows Lucy a police mugshot of Stefan Chirkov.

BLAKE

Do you recognise this man?

LUCY

(Shakes her head)
Who is he?

BLAKE

His name's Stefan Chirkov. We
believe he's been harassing Faith
for the past few months.

LUCY

Faith never said anything.

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE

She's advising him via the law centre.

Lucy shakes her head, bitter.

LUCY

She works 60 hour weeks and still finds time for that place.

FISHER

We haven't been able to trace Stefan yet. If you do see him or if he makes contact, let us know immediately.

Fisher looks to Nikki.

NIKKI

Lucy, did you know Faith's been taking medication to treat anxiety?

LUCY

(Nods)

She had a string of tough cases and started seeing a shrink. Only a few sessions. We couldn't afford more.

FISHER

We heard from the chambers that you recently tried to arrange life insurance for Faith.

Lucy buries her panic.

LUCY

Faith is the main earner. We both want to protect Josh. It was Faith's idea but she never finds time to arrange it.

FISHER

What about Josh's father?

Both Nikki and Blake squirm at Fisher's tone.

FISHER (CONT'D)

Doesn't he contribute financially?

Lucy can't believe it.

LUCY

Josh was conceived via donors.

FISHER

Are you in contact?

(CONTINUED)

LUCY

No! We had to go private. Check with the clinic if you like.

Blake shoots Lucy a look of apology.

BLAKE

That won't be necessary.

FISHER

Would you be up to taking part in a press appeal?

Last thing Lucy wants is to be exposed.

LUCY

No, I couldn't... Everybody looking, making judgements.

Blake assumes she means their family set-up.

BLAKE

I get that. I do. But it can help if the public sees the impact on the family - you and Josh. Think about it, yeah?

LUCY

Okay.

Fisher looks back to Nikki.

NIKKI

I found some DNA on Faith's hand that belongs to someone else. It could be a match to Josh. Can I take a swab to eliminate him?

LUCY

Course.

Nikki follows her out into the garden.

Blake turns to Fisher, bursting to have her say.

BLAKE

Did you have to be so insensitive?

FISHER

What?

BLAKE

There's no way you'd ask a straight couple how their kid was conceived.

(CONTINUED)

FISHER

This is no time for treading on
eggshells. I want to find Faith.
And I'm leaving no bloody stone
unturned.

47

EXT. FAITH & LUCY'S BACK GARDEN - DAY 4 - 09:40

47

Nikki prepares to swab Josh's mouth.

LUCY

Josh, this is Dr Alexander.

NIKKI

Nikki.

LUCY

She knows mama.

JOSH

Mama's at work.

LUCY

Yes, sweetie.

Lucy scrambles to hide her stress.

Nikki gets down to Josh's level.

NIKKI

See this little stick? Is it okay
if I put it inside your mouth to
give your cheek a tickle?

Josh nods and obediently opens his mouth.

Nikki swabs. Josh giggles as if being tickled.

He then runs back to his trampoline. Not a care in the world.

Lucy's swamped with grief. Or is it guilt?

LUCY

What do I tell him? How on earth do
I tell him?

Nikki stalls. Not sure how to respond.

NIKKI

I promise we're doing everything we
can to find Faith.

48

EXT. CITY ALLOTMENT. SHED - DAY 4 - 09:45

48

Wide-shot of an allotment plot.

From inside a shed, the sound of a BANG... BANG... BANG.

49

INT. LYELL CENTRE. MORTUARY/VIEWING GALLERY - DAY 4 - 10:33

49

Sound of RACHMANINOFF through the speakers.

Harriet is scanning the end of the severed hand joint with a micro CT scanner.

Jack enters the viewing gallery and does a double-take.

JACK

Is that a micro CT scanner?

Harriet can't hear him above the music.

HARRIET

Sorry?

Jack indicates the music.

Reluctantly, Harriet turns it down on her phone - inside a plastic bag.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Rachmaninoff. The last of the Russian romantics.

JACK

Can't think why.

He checks out the scanner.

HARRIET

On loan. With a little arm-twisting.

Jack whistles, impressed.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Oh ye of little faith, Mr Hodgson.

He gives her that one.

HARRIET (CONT'D)

Now we have the best possible view of the striation marks on the hand left by the blade.

Harriet puts images of the old femur bone on the screen.

(CONTINUED)

HARRIET (CONT'D)
 Which are identical to those on the femur found in the canal.

JACK
 You're kidding?

HARRIET
 Exactly the same defect on the teeth of the blade.

JACK
 So they dumped body parts in the same stretch of canal maybe a year apart.

Nikki comes into the viewing gallery with an update.

NIKKI
 The DNA under Faith's nail has generated a match.

Jack and Harriet turn to her.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
 Faith's client from the law centre - Stefan Chirkov.

50

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT - DAY 4 - 10:35

50

Shopping on a table...

Snack bars, bottled water. And cable ties.

TV news is playing on Stefan's laptop.

NEWS ANCHOR
 ...We'll be following events in the enquiry very closely throughout the day... To other news now. Greater London Police are appealing to the public for information regarding missing barrister, Faith Oscott.

Hearing Faith's name, Stefan hurries over from the kitchen.

He watches transfixed as the screen fills with Faith's image.

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)
 Police want to speak to this man -

Then to Stefan's alarm, his mugshot comes up alongside Faith.

(CONTINUED)

NEWS ANCHOR (CONT'D)

- Stefan Chirkov - in relation to Faith's disappearance... We can now go live to where Faith's wife, Lucy Khan, is making a statement.

51

INT. POLICE STATION. PRESS BRIEFING ROOM - DAY 4 - 13:10

51

A room packed with JOURNALISTS, PHOTOGRAPHERS and NEWS CREWS.

Behind a table, a terrified Lucy sits between DS Blake and DI Fisher. An N/S COMMANDER sits alongside.

Below the table is a banner highlighting the incident room phone number.

LUCY

Faith is a devoted mum to our son, Josh. She'd never not be in touch for this long. And Faith loves her job. She wouldn't let people down by not turning up to court... We are all desperately worried...

Lucy cracks, unable to continue.

52

INT. FAITH'S CHAMBERS. DAVID'S OFFICE - DAY 4 - 13:10

52

Sally is watching the appeal on TV NEWS with David.

Blake takes over from Lucy.

BLAKE

We want to appeal directly to anyone who may be holding Faith or to anyone who knows what's happened to her. Please call the incident room if you have information. No matter how small.

DAVID

Ironic really. Now Faith has all the media fuss and attention she could ever want.

Sally hides her shock at his callousness.

53

INT. POLICE STATION. PRESS ROOM CORRIDOR - DAY 4 - 13:20

53

DS Blake heads away from the briefing. Takes a call from a colleague in the incident room.

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE
(Into phone)
DS Blake...

Blake listens. Adrenaline surges.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
(Into phone)
What address did they give?

Blake leans a scrap of paper against the wall. Scribbles down the address.

54

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT - DAY 4 - 14:15

54

Stefan is getting ready to head out. He puts on a cap to try and hide his identity.

BANG! A knock on the front door.

BLAKE (O.S.)
Police! Open up!

BANG! BANG!

Stefan freezes in panic.

BLAKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Police!

THUD! THUD!

On the other side of the door, OFFICERS are using a battering ram to gain access.

The door flies open.

Blake sees Stefan cowering, terrified.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Stefan Chirkov?

She shows him her warrant card.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
I have a magistrate's warrant to search this address.

Jack steps aside as officers haul Stefan out into the corridor.

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Stefan Chirkov, I'm arresting you
 on suspicion of kidnap. You do not
 have to say anything...

We go with the other officers who head inside to check for signs of Faith.

OFFICER

Clear!

Jack then follows them in.

First he heads for the kitchen.

Spots bloody knives in the sink.

55

INT. POLICE STATION. CELL - DAY 4 - 14:50

55

A CUSTODY SERGEANT shows Stefan into a cold, neglected cell.

CLANG! The cell door closes behind him.

Stefan gasps for air in shock and absolute panic.

INTERCUT WITH:

56

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT - DAY 4 - 14:50

56

Kit has joined Jack. In the kitchen, she packs knives into weapon tubes. Then pots, pans and crockery into boxes.

In the bedroom area, Jack takes photographs. Under the bed, he finds a torn bag of cable ties.

INTERCUT WITH:

57

INT. CITY ALLOTMENT. SHED - DAY 4 - 14:50

57

A shadow swings in the light.

DRIP, DRIP, DRIP.

Close on a bucket...

Collecting blood.

58

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT - DAY 4 - 14:55

58

Jack comes to Kit. Hands her a laptop.

(CONTINUED)

Kit takes it from him. Puts it with the rest of Stefan's belongings.

59

INT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT. BATHROOM - DAY 4 - 15:05

59

A white light seeks out the taps, the grouting.

Darkness.

Then a spray of luminescence... But there's no blue fluorescent light.

JACK

No sign of blood anywhere.

But they keep going.

Jack switches on the light to reveal suspiciously clean surfaces.

Jack looks to Kit out in the corridor.

JACK (CONT'D)

Most common place for a
dismemberment.

He then lies on the floor. Takes apart the bath panel and dismantles the U-bend.

He pulls out hair and scum from the U-bend.

Decants the contents into a sealed plastic pot.

Hands the pot and U-bend to Kit for her to bag.

Then hauls up the old lino flooring.

60

INT. POLICE STATION. CELL/CORRIDOR - DAY 4 - 15:25

60

Stefan looks at Nikki frozen with fear. Reluctantly, opens his mouth for her to swab.

NIKKI

Thank you.

Stefan folds his arms, rocking himself.

Nikki spots a healing scratch on his forearm.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

What happened here?

(CONTINUED)

Stefan recoils. Doesn't want Nikki to see.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
I'll need to examine it.

Reluctantly, Stefan unfolds his arm.

Nikki picks up her camera to photograph the wound.

61

EXT. STEFAN'S BEDSIT. CORRIDOR - DAY 4 - 15:35

61

Kit heads out with a box of Stefan's belongings.

The yelling NEIGHBOUR from next door opens his door.

NEIGHBOUR
What's he done?

KIT
Nothing you need to worry about.

NEIGHBOUR
Do us a favour and keep the freak locked up. The smells that come out of there.

He screws up his face.

KIT
What smells?

NEIGHBOUR
Cooking type. But not like anything I've ever eaten.

Kit hurries back into the bedsit. Calls to the bathroom.

KIT
Jack?

Jack turns to her.

Kit can't believe she's saying this but -

KIT (CONT'D)
We need to check the oven and the drain.

62

INT. LYELL CENTRE. SCIENCE ROOM - DAY 4 - 16:05

62

DI Fisher and DS Blake observe Nikki and Harriet test a knife taken from Stefan's bedsit.

(CONTINUED)

Jack is taking trace DNA from Stefan's other knives. Then returns them to sealed weapon tubes.

HARRIET

Now Jack's taken trace DNA, we'll start with the serrated blade.

JACK

The closest match to the cut marks on Faith's hand.

FISHER

How does it work, this gel?

NIKKI

We draw the blade through it to produce a range of test cuts.

Nikki saws a blade through the ballistic gel.

NIKKI (CONT'D)

This creates marks that are striated.

HARRIET

Then we take the striated gel to our scanner to get a digital image of each test cut.

Jack helps Harriet scan the gel on the micro CT scanner.

NIKKI

Which we compare with the striations in the articular surface cartilages of the hand.

BLAKE

Smart.

JACK

If Stefan Chirkov is responsible, how does he have the dismemberment skills?

FISHER

He worked as a veterinary nurse.

BLAKE

Before he was sacked for assaulting a client he claims racially abused him.

NIKKI

Might be unrelated but on his forearm he has what could be a defence scratch.

(CONTINUED)

Nikki hands Blake images of the scratch.

NIKKI (CONT'D)
The rest of his upper body is
clear.

BLAKE
We'll check it out.

Kit hurries in with an update.

KIT
I've got the data on Stefan's
laptop.

FISHER
Any good news?

Kit hands Fisher her iPad showing the download.

KIT
His deleted history shows visits to
a 'Long pig' forum.

Nikki looks to Jack in shock.

KIT (CONT'D)
Where members share fantasies about
cooking and eating human flesh.

HARRIET
Oh my God. *

FISHER
The sick bastard.

63

INT. POLICE STATION. INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY 4 - 16:10

63

An agitated Stefan, dressed in white PPE, sits alongside his
N/S SOLICITOR.

DS Blake and DI Fisher sit opposite. Recording in progress.

FISHER
Why is your DNA under Faith
Oscott's fingernail?

Stefan scrambles to hide his panic.

Fisher looks to the scratch on his arm.

(CONTINUED)

FISHER (CONT'D)
Did she scratch you?

STEFAN
No comment.

BLAKE
We believe Faith has been kidnapped and suffered a very serious, life-threatening injury. Do you know where she is?

Stefan's too stressed to respond.

Fisher's losing patience.

FISHER
Does anyone other than you have access to the laptop recovered from your bedsit?

STEFAN
No?

Blake lays out printed screenshots of the 'Long Pig' forum.

BLAKE
Showing Mr Chirkov, exhibits KB21, KB22 and KB23. Screenshots taken from the deleted web history of his laptop.

Stefan stares at the screenshots in horror.

FISHER
Look familiar?

STEFAN
Yes... it looks bad.

The solicitor tries to interject.

Stefan brushes him aside. Appeals to Blake.

STEFAN (CONT'D)
I was looking into butchery. For animals. This site came up. I was curious. Just curious. That's all!

Blake tries to lower the temperature.

BLAKE
We know how frustrated you've been at the delays to your trial.

(CONTINUED)

STEFAN

Over and over. I did nothing then.
I've done nothing now.

BLAKE

We heard from the law centre that
Faith tried her best to help people
who had no other access to lawyers.

But Stefan's still hurt that Faith abandoned him.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

There's still a chance that she
could be alive. But time is running
out. If you know anything at all
that could help us find her, you
need to tell us now.

64

INT. LYELL CENTRE. SCIENCE ROOM - DAY 4 - 16:15

64

Jack is examining Stefan's things.

In a small inside pocket of Stefan's rucksack, he digs out
two keys for high security padlocks.

Jack looks over at Kit.

JACK

Any reference to a lock-up on
Stefan's laptop?

Kit checks her notes.

KIT

No, I would've picked that up.

JACK

What about his emails? Maybe he's
rented storage somewhere?

Jack joins her as she scrolls through the download.

JACK (CONT'D)

A renewal notice. What's that from?

Kit opens up the email.

KIT

Quayside allotments.

65

EXT. CITY ALLOTMENT - EVENING 4 - 17:15

65

Drone shot of allotments.

(CONTINUED)

We go to:

UNIFORM OFFICERS swarming the area.

66

EXT. CITY ALLOTMENT. PLOTS - EVENING 4 - 17:20

66

Jack opens the allotment main gate with Stefan's key.

DS Blake and her back-up team follow him in.

JACK

Plot 31. This way.

They stride through the gloom to Stefan's plot.

JACK (CONT'D)

That's it.

Blake sees a large shed on the plot.

BLAKE

A shed. Shit. We never asked him about a shed.

At the bottom of the door, they see what looks like congealing blood.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Is that blood?

Jack crouches down to check.

Then a faint KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK.

JACK

Something's in there.

Jack doesn't wait to unlock the padlock. Looks to an OFFICER.

BANG! The officer kicks down the door.

Jack shines his phone torch. Tentatively peers inside.

BLAKE

What is it?

Jack steps aside to show her...

An upturned bucket of blood soaking the floor.

And trussed up with cable ties, a young dead fox.

67 OMITTED

67

68 OMITTED

68

69 OMITTED

69

69A INT. FAITH & LUCY'S HOUSE. KITCHEN - EVENING 4 - 17:25

69A

Lucy looks out into the garden.

FLASHBACK: A wedding reception - story day C - six years ago. *

Faith and Lucy are dancing together in the twilight. Faith holds Lucy close.

FAITH

I love you. It's forever now.

Lucy beams, never happier.

Heartbroken, Lucy reaches for her phone. She calls Faith for the umpteenth time.

Again, she gets voicemail:

FAITH (O.S.) (CONT'D)

**This is Faith Oscott. Please leave a brief message after the tone.
Thank you!**

LUCY

(Into phone)

**I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Sorry...
sorry...**

70

INT. FAITH'S CHAMBERS. MAIN OFFICE - EVENING 4 - 17:35

70

The clerks are packing up, heading for home.

Sally's still at her desk, engrossed in emails and paperwork.

Dylan brings over a box.

DYLAN

Delivery for you, Sally.

Sally doesn't look up.

SALLY

If it's case files, you know what to do, put them in the in-tray.

DYLAN

Think this is more like a gift.

(cheeky)

Maybe from an admirer?

Dylan checks the label again.

DYLAN (CONT'D)

It says 'personal'.

We see the label is handwritten - the same scrawled writing as on the parcel sent to Lucy.

SALLY

You get off home now, Dylan.

DYLAN

Want help opening it?

SALLY

(not rising to it)

See you in the morning. Bright and early, my darling.

The buzz of hometime chatter filling the air, Sally absent-mindedly rips open the tape with a letter knife.

Inside, swaddled in a blood-stained light blue towel, is (the suggestion of) Faith's head.

END OF PART ONE