

After entering the information, you are both surprised and relieved to see the screen flash:

"One (1) Result Found." Clicking the result brings up a single personnel file. "Kevin Russell Mott."

You call in the Valley Falls PD detective who hired you in the first place and read him the name. His face drains of color. "That can't be right..." he mutters.

He explains that Mott was a police academy trainee with aspirations of becoming a detective. Smart. Methodical. Obsessive. Before he could graduate, a stalking complaint surfaced. Then another. Internal Affairs opened a case, and although nothing ever stuck long enough to go to trial, the department cut him loose.

"He always said we didn't give him a fair shot," the detective adds. "Said we were protecting the wrong people." The address in the file is still active. Within the hour, you're riding along with Valley Falls PD.

The cruiser pulls to a stop in front of a modest house on a quiet street. No lights. No movement. The door is kicked in.

Inside, Kevin Mott sits calmly at his kitchen table, a whetstone in one hand and a long knife in the other.

Scrape. Scrape.

He doesn't look surprised. He looks pleased. "Took you long enough," he says with a smile. He finally looks up, not at the officers, but at you.

"I knew they'd need help. They always do." Scrape.

"You know what they called me?" he continues. "Obsessive. Unstable. A liability."

He lets out a quiet laugh.

"Funny thing is, every technique I used... I learned from them. Surveillance. Pattern recognition. Victimology. All the things they pretend to be good at."

He leans back in his chair, completely at ease, hands resting on the table. "So tell me...how did I do?" For a long moment, no one speaks. Then the detective steps forward.

"You did fine," he says evenly. "You followed procedure. You planned ahead. You left just enough behind to feel clever." Kevin smiles, waiting. "But that's where you went wrong," the detective continues. "You thought this was a test."

He gestures toward you. "It wasn't. It was a pattern. And patterns break when someone new looks at them."

Kevin's smile tightens. "You didn't outsmart the department," the detective says. "You proved why you were never fit to wear the badge." Kevin's hand shifts toward the knife.

"That's enough," the detective snaps.

Before Kevin can react, officers flood the room. One pins his arm to the table while another kicks the chair back. The knife is knocked from his grasp, clattering across the tile. Kevin struggles for half a second then stops. As the cuffs are locked around his wrists, he exhales slowly. "So that's it?" he asks. "This is how it ends?"

The detective nods. "This is how it ends."

Kevin Russell Mott is led out of the house in silence. Outside, the detective turns to you. "Good work," he says. "We don't close this case without you."

With the Alleyway Slasher in custody, the killings stop. The streets of Valley Falls are safe. For now.

CASE CLOSED