

= Born Free (Dexter) =

" Born Free " is the twelfth episode of season one and first season finale of the American television drama series Dexter , which aired on December 17 , 2006 on Showtime in the United States . The episode also aired on May 4 , 2008 on CTV in Canada ; on May 14 , 2008 on FX in the UK ; on September 28 , 2008 on Channel Ten in Australia ; and on March 21 , 2011 on STAR World in India . The episode was written by Daniel Cerone and executive producer Melissa Rosenberg , and was directed by Michael Cuesta . Based on the novel Darkly Dreaming Dexter by Jeff Lindsay , the season featured many differences to the original source , mainly in the lead @-@ up to and revelation of the identity of the " Ice Truck Killer " . The episode was very well received by critics .

The episode focuses on the final confrontation between Dexter and the " Ice Truck Killer " . After kidnapping Debra Morgan (Jennifer Carpenter) , Rudy Cooper (Christian Camargo) is in the final stages of his plan to reunite with his long @-@ lost brother . James Doakes (Erik King) and María LaGuerta (Lauren Vélez) investigate the case , and Doakes begins to suspect that Dexter is involved . Meanwhile , Paul Bennett (Mark Pellegrino) tries to convince Rita Bennett (Julie Benz) that Dexter is not who she thinks he is .

= = Plot = =

After uncovering the identity of the " Ice Truck Killer " , a serial killer who chops up the bodies of his victims and drains their blood , Dexter hurries to find his sister Debra . Since the murderer had always sent secret messages to Dexter , he searches his apartment for clues that Rudy could have left , and finds a picture of the shipping container where his mother was killed . When Dexter is about to leave , Doakes and LaGuerta arrive , telling him that they think Rudy Cooper was the one who stabbed Batista . Doakes insists that Dexter knows something , and he reveals that the blood on Angel 's collar matched Rudy 's . The pair leave , and Dexter goes to find the shipping container . At the station , LaGuerta orders a search for Rudy . Matthews walks in and introduces Esmee Pascal , the new lieutenant replacing LaGuerta .

At the shipping yard , Dexter breaks into the container in the picture , only to find it full of bananas . Doakes appears and asks him what he is doing , and after a fist fight , a foreman arrives and orders them to leave . Doakes tells Dexter that he knows that he is up to something , and says that he will be watching him . Meanwhile , Rita is contacted by an imprisoned Paul , who contends that Dexter knocked him out and set him up . Rita becomes annoyed as Paul persists that Dexter is dangerous and should not be around their children . Rita is visited by Paul 's Narcotics Anonymous sponsor , who attempts to convince Rita that Paul is telling the truth . In a final plea , Paul calls Rita and tells her to search their house for a shoe which he believes came off when Dexter knocked him out . Rita hangs up , but discovers the shoe while taking out the trash at the end of the episode .

After finding a clue at Rudy 's house , Dexter arrives at the house of his mother , Laura Moser . Flashbacks reveal that Rudy , whose real name is Brian Moser , is in fact Dexter 's biological brother . He also witnessed the murder of their mother , but did not repress the memory ; instead , he grew up in a mental institution being treated for antisocial personality disorder . Dexter meets Brian in their childhood home , where he is keeping Debra . He intends to kill Debra with Dexter as a sort of " family reunion " , but Dexter stops him . As Doakes and the rest of the homicide unit close in on the house , Brian escapes through a trap door and Dexter is left with Debra , appearing to have saved her .

Doakes tries to question Dexter about his involvement , but is stopped by an indignant Debra , who says that Dexter is a hero . Dexter accompanies her to the hospital and then returns home , apparently with Debra . In the middle of the night , Brian breaks into Dexter 's apartment and attempts to stab Debra , only to find a prosthetic body in her place ; Dexter then chokes him unconscious with a garrote . In the refrigeration unit in Brian 's apartment , Dexter ties him to the killing table with plastic wrap . After an emotionally charged conversation , Dexter slices his brother 's throat and leaves him upside down to drain , staging it as a suicide . Dexter and Debra arrive at a crime scene , and he imagines what it would be like if everyone knew and happily accepted the truth

about him .

= = Production = =

" Born Free " was written by Daniel Cerone and executive producer Melissa Rosenberg , and was directed by Michael Cuesta . Cerone and Rosenberg have written two previous episodes each , while this episode marked Cuesta 's fifth time returning as director . Guest stars in this episode include Geoff Pierson , C. S. Lee , Mark Pellegrino , Christian Camargo , Judith Scott and Scott Atkinson . Rudy 's apartment was set in Miami , Florida , however filming took place in Long Beach , California . The apartment was a brown , triangular apartment condo , so the producers altered its appearance ; a false brick wall was placed in front of the garage entrance and a door was created . The producers also concealed a narrow door of the garage entrance with a potted plant , and added false window panes to the windows , concealing the existing vertical blinds . The shipping yard shown in the episode was set in the Port of Miami , yet filming took place in a port dock at the Port of Los Angeles . The scene was filmed in San Pedro , California , in a waterfront lot of Harbor Boulevard .

The first season of Dexter is based on the novel *Darkly Dreaming Dexter* by Jeff Lindsay . However , there are numerous differences , ranging from extra subplots to rearrangements and modifications of elements from the source material . The biggest change is the lead @-@ up to and revelation of the identity of the " Ice Truck Killer " , called the " Tamiami Butcher " in the novel . In the novel , Dexter is led to believe that he might be the one committing the murders , due to a series of strange dreams that connect him to the murder . The final clue is a blurry photo , taken from surveillance footage , of a man who resembles Dexter at a crime scene . After the " Tamiami Killer " kidnaps Deborah , Dexter finds and confronts him . It is subsequently revealed that the killer is actually Dexter 's nearly identical long @-@ lost brother , Brian , who , like Dexter , witnessed their mother 's brutal murder . Dexter is followed by Detective LaGuerta , who is slain by Brian . Debra finds out her brother is a killer and Dexter helps Brian to escape . In the television series , Brian is introduced under the fake name Rudy , a prosthetist who becomes Debra 's boyfriend . Dexter hesitantly kills Brian instead of letting him escape , Debra does not discover her brother 's secret , and LaGuerta is not present at all in the confrontation . In the novel , Dexter and his brother are nearly identical , whereas the actors playing the two characters are distinct from each other in their looks .

= = Reception = =

" Born Free " was the most @-@ watched original series telecast on Showtime since 2004 , when the Nielsen ratings started separating the channel 's ratings from Showtime Plex , the package of Showtime channels offered by most cable and satellite systems . The finale drew an audience of 1 @.@ 1 million American viewers , a significant increase over the series premiere , which attracted slightly more than 600 @,@ 000 viewers . The first season attracted on average 1 @.@ 96 million American viewers , including live and DVR viewing off the premium channel 's main feed . " Born Free " brought in 589 @,@ 000 viewers on its first free @-@ to @-@ air broadcast in Australia . Hall submitted the episode for consideration for a Primetime Emmy Award for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Drama Series , but was not ultimately nominated .

Eric Goldman of IGN said that " Born Free " was " an intense episode that brought the Ice Truck Killer story to a satisfying conclusion . " He felt that the " biggest shock of all " was the reveal of Rudy as Dexter 's brother , and described their confrontation as " riveting " . Goldman gave the episode an " incredible " rating of 9 @.@ 5 out of 10 . Paula Paige of TV Guide was " impressed " by Michael Hall 's " incredible acting ability , " praising his ability to transform from a " stoic killer to overwrought brother in a matter of moments . " She said that the series went " from being a good show to a fantastic show in the course of one season , " and hoped that " the sophomore season will be just as terrific . " Jonathan Toomey of TV Squad felt that it would be a " shame " if Hall did not win a Golden Globe Award , saying that he " certainly deserves it . " He understood why Rudy wanted to make Debra the brothers ' first victim together ; Rudy was jealous of the life that Dexter

received and killing Debra was the symbol of that life dying . Although Toomey said that the episode was " really well written , " he was troubled that no one made the connection between Dexter and Rudy when all they had to do was read Rudy 's file , but Toomey speculated that it could be discovered the next season .