

= Gone for Goode =

" Gone for Goode " is the first episode of the first season of the American police drama television series *Homicide : Life on the Street* . It originally aired on NBC in the United States on January 31 , 1993 , immediately following Super Bowl XXVII . The episode was written by series creator Paul Attanasio and directed by executive producer Barry Levinson . " Gone for Goode " introduced regular cast members Daniel Baldwin , Ned Beatty , Richard Belzer , Andre Braugher , Wendy Hughes , Clark Johnson , Yaphet Kotto , Melissa Leo , Jon Polito and Kyle Secor .

The episode connects several subplots involving the detectives of a Baltimore Police Department homicide unit and establishes story arcs that continued through the first season . Among them are an investigation by Meldrick Lewis (Johnson) and Steve Crosetti (Polito) into a widow killing husbands for insurance money , as well as rookie Tim Bayliss (Secor) being assigned the murder of an 11 @-@ year @-@ old girl for his first case . Both of those subplots were taken directly from *Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets* , the 1991 David Simon non @-@ fiction book from which the series was adapted .

" Gone for Goode " was seen by 18 @.@ 24 million viewers , the largest viewership of the first season , although NBC was initially disappointed with the ratings . The episode received generally positive reviews upon its original broadcast . Barry Levinson won an Emmy Award for his direction in " Gone for Goode " , and was nominated for a Directors Guild of America Award . Paul Attanasio received a Writers Guild of America Award nomination for the episode 's script .

= = Plot summary = =

The episode opens with Lewis (Clark Johnson) and Crosetti (Jon Polito) looking for a projectile a few yards away from the body of a man shot to death . The man 's girlfriend (Oni Faida Lampley) , who was shot in the head during the incident but survived , tells police during questioning that her aunt Calpurnia Church hired a hitman to kill her for insurance money . The detectives learn Church previously collected life insurance from five deceased husbands . Suspecting Church of murdering her husbands , Lewis and Crosetti have the body of her most recent husband exhumed for an autopsy , but reach a dead @-@ end when it turns out to be the wrong body in his grave .

Felton (Daniel Baldwin) hesitates to take a new murder case because he fears it will be too difficult to solve , so it is taken on by his partner Howard (Melissa Leo) , who has recently experienced a perfect streak of solving 11 consecutive cases . They investigate the body of a man dead in a basement , and much to Felton 's bewilderment , Howard solves the case easily . The owner of the house , Jerry Jempson (Jim Grollman) , literally calls her at the house while she is investigating and agrees to a police interview , during which he acts extremely nervous and is eventually charged with the murder .

Munch (Richard Belzer) is reluctant to follow up on the case of murdered drug addict Jenny Goode , who was run over by a car . The case has been cold for three months , but he is made to feel guilty by his partner Bolander (Ned Beatty) into reexamining it . Munch makes no progress after speaking with the family and reexamining notes . Based on witness accounts of a man with long blond hair and a black car , Munch spends all night looking through suspect photos until he finds a man with a black car with front end damage and long black hair , but blond eyebrows . Munch and Bolander question him , believing the suspect (Joe Hansard) to have dyed his hair to change his appearance after killing the woman . He quickly confesses to having hit her accidentally while driving drunk .

Gee (Yaphet Kotto) tells Pembleton (Andre Braugher) , an excellent detective but a lone wolf , that he must work with a partner . Pembleton ends up investigating the death of a 65 @-@ year @-@ old man with rookie detective Bayliss (Kyle Secor) . Bayliss initially believes the death to be a heart attack , but Pembleton correctly determines it is a murder because the man 's car is missing . Police later arrest a man named Johnny (Alexander Chaplin) who is found driving the dead man 's car . During an interrogation , Pembleton fools Johnny into waiving his Miranda Rights , then sneakily persuades him into confessing to the murder . Bayliss , although convinced of Johnny 's guilt , nevertheless questions the ethics of Pembleton 's approach , prompting Pembleton to yell

angrily at him in front of the other officers . The episode ends with Bayliss responding to his first homicide as the primary detective : the brutal murder of an 11 @-@ year @-@ old girl named Adena Watson .

= = Production = =

= = Development and writing = = =

" Gone for Goode " was written by series creator Paul Attanasio and directed by executive producer Barry Levinson . Levinson was seeking to create a television series based on *Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets* , a 1991 non @-@ fiction book by David Simon based on one year he spent with Baltimore Police Department homicide detectives . Levinson and fellow executive producer Tom Fontana hired Attanasio to adapt elements of the book into the teleplay for the first episode . It was first television script Attanasio ever wrote . The episode was shot by director of photography Wayne Ewing . Stan Warnow started out working as editor , but departed before the process was done due to creative differences with Levinson . Tony Black finished the editing for " Gone for Goode " , but did not return for the rest of the season , and Jay Rabinowitz worked as editor for the remaining episodes . The costumes for the episode were designed by Van Smith , but he also did not return to work on subsequent episodes . Although it was first episode of *Homicide : Life on the Street* , it was not technically a television pilot because the network had already ordered a full season of episodes before " Gone for Goode " was produced . The first episode was noted at the time for weaving four separate storylines into a single episode , the first in a trend of multiple subplots in each *Homicide* show . NBC executives indicated to Attanasio and Levinson they would have preferred the script to focus on a single homicide case rather than four , but ultimately allowed the script to be filmed with all subplots included . Additionally , despite intense advance promotion of the *Homicide* premiere , Attanasio deliberately sought to introduce the show with little fanfare , avoiding sensational gimmicks in favor of character @-@ driven plot , quirky dialogue and morbid dark humor .

" Gone for Goode " included several storylines , and even exact bits of dialogue , adapted straight from *Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets* . Among them were the investigation into Calpurnia Smith , an elderly woman suspected of murdering five husbands in order to collect their life insurance policies . This was based on the real @-@ life case of Geraldine Parrish , who was also accused of killing five husbands for insurance money , and was eventually convicted for three of their deaths . A scene involving a funeral director accidentally exhuming the wrong body while investigating the Church case mirrored a similar situation described in *Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets* from the Parrish case . The Adena Watson murder case , which is assigned to Bayliss in the final scene of " Gone for Goode " , was adapted from the unsolved 1988 slaying of Latonya Kim Wallace , which made up a major part of the book . The Watson case became an important story arc throughout the first season which ended without the case being solved . The hit @-@ and @-@ run murder of Jenny Goode was also based on Simon 's book , and the murder of the elderly man was inspired by a case featured in the book in which a young homosexual man killed his elderly lover and stole his car .

Attanasio also based the characters in *Homicide* on the detectives featured in Simon 's book . The difficulties Bayliss experienced with the case , as well as the extremely personal approach he took in attempting to solve it , were inspired by the real @-@ life Baltimore detective Tom Pellegrini , who was the primary detective in the Wallace case . Most of the detectives featured in the *Homicide* book said they were happy with their on @-@ screen counterparts , although Detective Harry Edgerton , the inspiration for Frank Pembleton , objected to a scene in " Gone for Goode " in which the character drinks milk in a bar , something Edgerton said he never does .

The episode opens with Crosetti and Lewis looking for clues in a dark alley . Levinson and Attanasio specifically wanted a dialogue @-@ driven prologue scene that did not immediately clarify the fact that the two men were detectives or what they were looking for . The dialogue and staging of the scene were imitated in the final scene of the last *Homicide* episode , " Forgive Us Our

Trespasses " , which aired on May 21 , 1999 . In that final scene , Detective Rene Sheppard (played by Michael Michele) says to Lewis , " Life is a mystery , just accept it " , a line spoken by Crosetti in the first episode . Lewis also said , " That 's what 's wrong with this job . It ain 't got nothin ' to do do with life " , a line also spoken by Crosetti in the first episode . Early scenes in " Gone for Goode " also involved Giardello introducing rookie detective Bayliss to the homicide unit . Attanasio sought to use Bayliss ' orientation as a way of introducing exposition and background about the show to the viewer as well .

In writing the script , Attanasio , Levinson and Fontana wanted the dialogue to reflect the kinds of things detectives would talk about when not discussing murders or cases , which led to the inclusion of several scenes in which detectives talk casually among themselves during lunch or around the office . Fontana , who compared the scenes to Levinson 's 1982 film Diner , said , " That really made the show different from other shows , because we had the room to have conversations that seemingly didn 't (storywise) connect anything , but they did reveal a lot about the characters . " Levinson specifically asked that the body by Howard and Felton be badly decomposing and attracting flies because he felt other police dramas did not portray corpses in a realistic way .

= = = Photography style = = =

Levinson and Fontana sought to establish many of the stylistic elements in the episode which would define the series for its entire run . Among them were near @-@ constant movement with hand @-@ held Super 16 cameras to give the episode a naturalistic documentary look and an editing style involving jump cuts that was unusual for television at the time . Levinson said this camera and editing style was partially inspired by Breathless , the 1960 Jean @-@ Luc Godard film . The scenes were shot on @-@ location in Baltimore , as would be the case throughout the duration of the series . The use of hand @-@ held cameras allowed the film to be shot more easily in the city , rather than on a sound @-@ stage in Los Angeles or New York City , where most shows are typically shot . Levinson said being on location at all times allowed Baltimore " to be a character in the show " .

While filming the episode , Levinson said he would simply allow the actors to perform while he switched back and forth between them with the hand @-@ held camera instead of filming carefully planned shots and individual scenes from multiple angles . This camera style largely persisted through the end of the series in 1999 . Some individual scenes involved a number of jump cuts repeated several times in fast succession . Another unusual stylistic element used in the episode involved sudden changes in jump @-@ screen direction ; a shot with an actor looking from left to right might immediately jump to another shot of the same actor looking from right to left . This process was born during the editing sessions for " Gone for Goode " , where Levinson insisted that the footage be edited to include the actor 's best performances . During editing , Tony Black cut together two shots that did not match and began looking for a cutaway shot he could use to disguise the edit . Levinson , however , liked the technique that came from cutting the two conflicting shots together and insisted it stay in .

In addition to stylistic touches , the episode established several narrative motifs that stayed with Homicide : Life on the Street throughout the duration of the series . Among them was the white board where detectives kept the names of their open cases in red and their closed cases in black . The names of NBC employees and friends of the Homicide crew were used on the white board . The episode was noted for its deliberate lack of gunplay and car chases in favor of dialogue and story . Levinson and Fontana also allowed humor to be incorporated into the show , particularly through the interactions between the detectives ; Levinson said of the first episode , " We have to inform the audience , but at the same time you want to do it with a sense of humor so you don 't seem too pretentious , in a way . " Several long @-@ standing character traits were established in " Gone for Goode " , including Kay Howard 's extraordinary streak of solved cases and the antagonism between Felton and Pembleton , which is demonstrated when the two argue loudly after being assigned to a case together . The animosity between Felton and Pembleton is based on the real @-@ life Detective Donald Kincaid , who was the inspiration behind Felton , and the strong dislike Kincaid had for Harry Edgerton , as chronicled in Homicide : A Year on the Killing Streets . Howard

's perfect streak is based on a similar (although shorter) lucky streak experienced by the real @-@ life Detective Rich Garvey , who is also featured in David Simon 's book .

= = = Filming = = =

The episode was filmed over the course of seven days in Baltimore . The scene in which Pembleton and Felton try to find the correct police car in a large garage was filmed in a rundown early 20th @-@ century ballroom . The scene features dozens of white unmarked Cavaliers . Shortly before " Gone for Goode " was filmed , the Baltimore Police Department stopped using Cavaliers as their regular brand of police car , and agreed to sell their collection of leftover Cavaliers to the Homicide show for \$ 1 . Although the cars were used as props in the episode , only two of the cars were actually drivable . The scenes set in the medical examiner 's office were filmed in the actual Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore . The actors , particularly Jon Polito , hated performing in the morgue because they found the atmosphere unsettling . Ned Beatty said of filming there , " The one thing you can 't get on camera is , oh boy , it smells . " The identification pictures of suspects that Munch looks through were all pictures of photos of members of the Homicide crew . One of the final scenes in the episode , featuring Polito , Johnson and Belzer speaking in an alley at night , was conceived , written and shot in one night simply because it was raining outside , and the Homicide crew wanted to take advantage of the location during a rainy night .

Levinson said he considered the interrogation scene in " Gone for Goode " between Braugher , Secor and Chaplin , to be the " defining scene " for Frank Pembleton 's character because it defined the character 's intelligence , quirkiness , sharp instincts and sneaky interrogation style . While filming that scene , Levinson commented to Tom Fontana that the acting was so effective , an entire episode could be filmed revolving strictly around an interrogation . The comments partially inspired Fontana to write the first @-@ season episode , " Three Men and Adena " , which became one of the most critically acclaimed Homicide episodes . The final scene of the episode features Bayliss responding to the murder scene of Adena Watson in a rainy alleyway . The body was wrapped in a red raincoat , and Levinson worked with colorists to bleed out all the colors except that red to give the film a stark look . " Gone for Goode " originally included a scene with Gee and Bayliss discussing detective work at the police station . The scene , which was cut from the final episode , featured Gee comparing the work to challenges faced by literary character Sherlock Holmes , as well as Gee mistakenly referring to Holmes ' antagonist Moriarty as " Murray " .

" Gone for Goode " marks the first performance of Richard Belzer as Detective John Munch , a character the actor has played in more than 300 television episodes in a number of shows , including Homicide and Law & Order : Special Victims Unit . Levinson said Belzer was a " lousy actor " during his first audition with the " Gone for Goode " script . Levinson asked Belzer to take some time to reread and practice the material , then come back and read it again . During his second reading , Levinson said Belzer was " still terrible " , but that the actor eventually found confidence in his performance . " Gone for Goode " included guest appearances by actors who later become much more widely known . Steve Harris , who later achieved fame playing Eugene Young on the ABC legal drama The Practice , played an uncooperative suspect who repeatedly lies to Munch during questioning . Alexander Chaplin , who later played speechwriter James Hobert on the ABC sitcom Spin City , portrayed the alleged murderer Johnny in " Gone for Goode " . The comedic confession scenes involving Jim Grollman as accused murderer Jerry Jempson were almost entirely improvised .

The editing process for " Gone for Goode " proved difficult due to audio problems that forced producers to re @-@ shoot several scenes . However , the cast and crew also found the atmosphere fun during editing , so much so that Barry Levinson 's mother brought in home @-@ baked snacks and the crew had to be asked to stop visiting because they were slowing down the edit sessions . When the cast finally watched the last cut of " Gone for Goode " , they hugged each other in celebration .

= = Cultural references = =

Throughout the episode , Crosetti discusses with Lewis various conspiracy theories about the assassination of Abraham Lincoln , the 16th president of the United States . Crosetti disputes the accepted theory that actor John Wilkes Booth killed Lincoln and instead theorizes that Jefferson Davis , the president of the Confederate States of America , organized the murder . Crosetti 's assassination theories about Lincoln would be a recurring theme throughout the rest of the first season . Crosetti 's fascination with the Lincoln assassination was based on Tom Fontana 's real @-@ life obsession with it . During an early scene in which a suspect tries lying to Munch , the detective berates the suspect for treating him as if he were Montel Williams instead of Larry King . King is a long @-@ time television journalist and host of CNN 's Larry King Live , whereas Williams is a more tabloid @-@ style television show host . Williams is also a Baltimore native , which becomes a point of discussion between Munch and Bolander . Munch tells a lying suspect that his false story has an " Elmore Leonard quality " , a reference to an American novelist and screenwriter .

When Munch wonders how Romans become Italians , he asks when " Friends , Romans , countrymen ; lend me your ears " turned into " Hey , yo ! " The former line is from the William Shakespeare play Julius Caesar . Munch says , " Great , let 's arrest Axl Rose " , a Guns N ' Roses musician , when he is told the suspect in a murder is blond . During one scene , the detectives eat steamed crabs . This was deliberately included in the episode to reflect the culinary culture of Baltimore , where eating crabs is extremely popular . During a discussion about Pembleton , Crosetti compares him to the lone wolf character played by actor Gary Cooper in the 1952 western film High Noon ; when trying to recall the title of the film , Crosetti said the character had a New York City type of attitude , prompting Lewis to believe he is referring to the 1942 baseball film The Pride of the Yankees , also starring Cooper .

= = Reception = =

= = = Original broadcast and ratings = = =

" Gone for Goode " was scheduled to premiere on January 31 , 1993 , in the time slot immediately following Super Bowl XXVII . Having consistently placed third in the Nielsen ratings during prime time since September 1992 , NBC hoped a large football audience coupled with an extensive advertising campaign would allow Homicide : Life on the Street to give the network a large ratings boost . The network ran numerous television commercials advertising the premiere episode , some of which focused on the involvement of Barry Levinson with the hope of capitalizing on the feature film director 's household name .

" Gone for Goode " was seen by 18 @.@ 24 million viewers . It earned an 18 rating , which represents the percentage of television @-@ equipped homes , and a 31 share , which represents percentage of sets in use . This marked the best ratings performance of a preview or premiere following a Super Bowl since The Wonder Years in 1988 . It was also the largest viewership of the first season , in large part due to its 10 : 25 p.m. time @-@ slot immediately following the Super Bowl . Nevertheless , NBC considered it a disappointing performance , based on the amount of advertising and press coverage the episode received . The episode received less than half the audience that the Super Bowl itself did . Levinson later said the Super Bowl crowd might not have been perfectly suited to Homicide : Life on the Street . In particular , regarding the episode 's complex story lines and distinctive visual style , he said , " I imagine anyone who has been drinking a lot at a Super Bowl party might have trouble following the show . "

= = = Reviews = = =

The debut episode received generally positive reviews . Kinney Littlefield of The Orange County Register said , " One word about ' Gone for Goode ' - wow . " Littlefield praised the episode for

dropping the viewer into the middle of an episode with complex characters and storylines without getting too confusing . People magazine reviewer David Hiltbrand called the episode " extraordinary " and gave it an A grade . He complimented the realism , the hand @-@ held camera work and the cast , particularly Belzer . Lon Grahne of the Chicago Sun @-@ Times complimented the cast and praised the show for not depending on car chases or action sequences . Grahne also said the show " has the spice , dry wit and ethnic diversity of the Hill Street Blues crew , with even more eccentricities and a heightened sense of realism " . John Goff of Daily Variety said the episode was well filmed and edited , and included a strong cast with performances " above normal level of series work " . Entertainment Weekly writer Bruce Fretts particularly praised Andre Braugher 's performance : " It 's not often you actually witness a TV star being born ... The moment the galvanic actor steps onto the screen , though , he owns it . " The New York Times television critic John J. O 'Connor praised the performance of Jon Polito , and said the role could be " the kind of career break Joe Pesci found in the Lethal Weapon movies " .

Mike Boone of The Gazette praised Belzer 's performance and the hand @-@ held camera style of photography , adding , " But if your picture tube blew Sunday night , you could still listen to an hour of the hippest , funniest dialogue on TV . " Not all reviews were positive . Some critics considered the photography style of jump cuts and hand @-@ held camera movement too jarring ; some said it made them feel seasick . James Endrst , television columnist for The Hartford Courant , felt the episode was over @-@ hyped and said " seen it , done it , been there before " of the filming techniques otherwise being praised as cutting edge . Endrst , however , praised the performances of Braugher , Belzer , Polito and Secor in particular . Time reviewer Richard Zoglin said the episode had a strong cast and that he appreciated the lack of two @-@ dimensional violence , but said , " the characters are too pat , their conflicts too predictable " , particularly the rookie character Bayliss .

" Gone for Goode " was identified by The Baltimore Sun as one of the ten best episodes of the series . Sun writer David Zurawik wrote : " ' Gone for Goode ' is not just a well @-@ crafted pilot , it is one of the best in the history of the medium . It introduced a sprawling cast of complicated characters and made us want to come back and visit this world again . " " Gone for Goode " was also among a 1999 Court TV marathon of the top 15 Homicide episodes , as voted on by 20 @,@ 000 visitors to the channel 's website .

= = = Awards and nominations = = =

Barry Levinson won an Emmy Award for Outstanding Directing for a Drama Series for his direction in " Gone for Goode " . It was one of two Emmys Homicide : Life on the Streets received during the 45th Primetime Emmy Awards season , with Tom Fontana also winning an Emmy for Outstanding Writing for a Drama Series for the episode " Three Men and Adena " . Levinson was also nominated for a Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Direction in a Drama Series for the episode , but lost to Gregory Hoblit for his direction of the pilot episode of the police drama NYPD Blue . Paul Attanasio was nominated for a Writers Guild of America Award for his " Gone for Goode " script . It competed in that same category with Fontana 's Homicide script " Night of the Dead Living " , which eventually won the award .

= = DVD release = =

" Gone for Goode " and the rest of the first and second season episodes were included in the four @-@ DVD box @-@ set " Homicide : Life on the Street : The Complete Seasons 1 & 2 " , which was released by A & E Home Video on May 27 , 2003 for \$ 69 @.@ 95 . The set included an audio commentary by Barry Levinson and Tom Fontana for the " Gone for Goode " episode , as well as a collection of the commercials that advertised the episode during the Super Bowl .