

= Monique Jeffries =

Detective Monique Jeffries is a fictional character played by Michelle Hurd in the American crime drama television series *Law & Order : Special Victims Unit* on NBC . A regular character during the first season , Jeffries is a tough and street @-@ wise detective with the New York City Police Department 's Special Victims Unit , and briefly the partner of John Munch (Richard Belzer) . After getting traumatized by a near @-@ death experience , Jeffries is relieved of active duty when she admits to having sex with a suspect in a previous rape case .

Hurd was cast after having appeared in other television shows by *Law & Order* creator Dick Wolf . Although Wolf promised her Jeffries would develop more over time , Hurd grew frustrated with the lack of material for her character . The show 's producers hesitated to keep her as Munch 's full @-@ time partner and considered eliminating the character from the show altogether . Hurd eventually departed herself to join the drama television series *Leap Years* . The actress earned some critical praise for her performance as Jeffries , but several commentators said the character was never properly fleshed out .

= = Character biography = =

Monique Jeffries is a tough and street @-@ wise detective with the Special Victims Unit of the New York City Police Department . After briefly partnering with Ken Briscoe (Chris Orbach) , she becomes the permanent partner of John Munch (Richard Belzer) after his previous partner , Brian Cassidy (Dean Winters) , leaves the unit . The two occasionally clash personalities and have a sarcastic rapport with each other . While chasing a rape suspect during one case , Jeffries is nearly killed when the suspect gets into a car that explodes . She initially appears traumatized by the incident , but later feels exhilarated over having survived and starts behaving recklessly . She begins having several one @-@ night stands and takes greater and greater risks at work , becoming something of a loose cannon at the Special Victims Unit . One night at a bar , she meets a man who had been a suspect in a previous rape case and has sex with him . When she reveals the incident during a session with a police therapist , she is taken out of active duty per One Police Plaza and works a desk job . She objects to the transfer and threatens to sue the department . Instead , she is transferred to the Vice department , and her old job in the Special Victims Unit is taken by Fin Tutuola (Ice @-@ T) .

= = Development = =

Michelle Hurd had appeared on the television series *Law & Order* , making a guest appearance on the seventh season episode " Entrapment " in 1997 . Hurd also previously appeared in the television shows *New York Undercover* and *Players* , both of which were produced by *Law & Order* creator Dick Wolf . When Wolf approached Hurd to play the part of Monique Jeffries , he warned her that the part was small at first but had the potential to develop , telling her , " Think of her as a flower , she 'll bloom later , but for the pilot she 's just got a scene . " The character also had less screen @-@ time than others in the series , in part so that Hurd could accept theater roles . However , Hurd felt the Jeffries character never received the development promised , claiming she " just read instructions " while playing the part . While she liked being part of the cast , Hurd said she was frustrated with the lack of material for her character , particularly when guest stars had more developed roles than Jeffries herself .

When Dean Winters departed from the show and a permanent replacement for the Brian Cassidy character was needed , Hurd had trouble convincing network officials she was correct for the part . Ted Kotcheff , the show 's co @-@ executive producer , said it was too redundant to have two man @-@ woman sets of partners , with protagonists Elliot Stabler and Olivia Benson already partnered together . Kotcheff felt Munch and Jeffries pairing diluted the relationship of Stabler and Benson because it was a " mirror image " of their partnership . Although Hurd felt more female characters should be part of a sex crimes unit , she said , " I understand the industry , and what networks want ,

and they wanted someone to have an impact , a rating . " The producers had discussions about removing Jeffries from the show so that Benson would be the only woman in the squad room , but no decisions were ever made .

Hurd ultimately departed from the series during the second season to join the Showtime drama series Leap Years . After her departure from the show , Hurd said , " I think it 's just sad they didn 't have faith to stick around with me . " However , she said she bore no ill feelings about her time on Law & Order : Special Victims Unit , but felt the casting on Leap Years was a " rare opportunity " . Roger Friedman , an entertainment journalist for Fox News , reported that Richard Belzer arranged for Hurd to be fired because her character was receiving too many story @-@ lines and distracting attention from him , but that report was never confirmed . Although Jeffries departed from the Special Victims Unit during the episode " Asunder " , her character was still present in the episode " Runaway " , which marked the character 's final appearance . " Runaway " was originally intended to air before " Asunder " but was broadcast out of order .

= = Reception = =

Gail Pennington of the St. Louis Post @-@ Dispatch said of the character , " her role was so marginal that her absence hardly registered " after she departed the series . Ken Parish Perkins of the Fort Worth Star @-@ Telegram called Michelle Hurd a strong member of a " solid cast " . The South Florida Sun @-@ Sentinel said the character had " untapped potential " that appeared ready to be tapped after Dean Winters left the show , and the paper expressed disappointment it was never achieved . In an interview with Orlando Sentinel about the series , New York Police Department Detective Ted Sica said Jeffries ' wardrobe was too revealing for a detective , and that the real @-@ life department would not allow her tank tops and tight vests : " We don 't tolerate that , especially in a sex crimes unit . We 're trying to be a little dignified . "