



UNIVERSAL CABLE PRODUCTIONS

UNSOLVED

Written By:
Kyle Long

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Universal Cable Productions
10 Universal City Plaza
Bldg. 1440, 34th Floor
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This happened.



FADE IN

... on CHRISTOPHER WALLACE, AKA BIGGIE SMALLS, AKA THE NOTORIOUS B.I.G. He's only 21, just a kid, and we're tight on his face as he says:

BIGGIE

Cali?

And now we reveal SEAN "PUFFY" COMBS sitting across from Biggie. Puffy, 24, has style for days, but his office is small -- he's not a star yet and neither is Biggie.

PUFFY

Gotta get your name out.

BIGGIE

My name's already out, Puff. Now I just need to get paid.

PUFFY

Nigga, you got one song on a soundtrack. Yeah it's a start, and you know I'm putting in work for you, but it don't happen overnight.

BIGGIE

It's just I got responsibilities and shit. If I don't start making some paper --

PUFFY

You gonna what? Start hustlin' again?

Biggie doesn't answer. Puffy stands up and walks over to him.

PUFFY

Yo, we done been through this. You got the talent and I got the plan. You do what I tell you to do and nothing can stop us. Top of the world, you and me, *together*. You just gotta trust me, Big.

Puffy can sell a dream. Biggie nods.

BIGGIE

I feel you, Puff.
(beat, smiles)
Cali.

PUFFY

Cali.

And off Biggie and Puffy, ready to take over the world...

CUT TO:

THE OPENING CREDITS; THEY PLAY OVER NEWS FOOTAGE OF LA, 20 YEARS AGO... THE MENENDEZ BROTHERS ARE SENTENCED FOR KILLING THEIR PARENTS... OJ LOSES HIS CIVIL TRIAL; 30 MILLION BUCKS THE GOLDMAN FAMILY WILL NEVER SEE... THE NORTH HOLLYWOOD BANK ROBBERY; FUCKING PSYCHOS IN BODY ARMOR SHOOTING AT COPS... SO MUCH CRAZINESS AND INTERCUT AMONG IT ALL ARE STORIES ON THE EAST COAST-WEST COAST HIP HOP RIVALRY.

DEATH ROW RECORDS AND SUGE KNIGHT... BAD BOY RECORDS AND PUFFY... TUPAC AND BIGGIE... ALL OF THEM HUGE STARS... THEN TUPAC IS MURDERED IN VEGAS... AND SUGE GOES TO JAIL FOR A PROBATION VIOLATION.... FINALLY THERE'S A STORY ON BIGGIE'S MURDER, THE CREDITS ENDING AND TAKING US TO...

EXT. THE ORIGINAL PANTRY CAFE - MORNING

The downtown landmark.

Title: May 2006

INT. THE ORIGINAL PANTRY CAFE - MORNING

DETECTIVE GREG KADING sits in a booth with LIEUTENANT BRIAN TYNDALL. Kading, 43, is scruffy and fit in a t-shirt and Dodgers cap. He's quick with a joke, enjoys life; it can hide how serious he takes his job. Tyndall, late 50s, wears a suit, but has the relaxed demeanor of a man with money in the bank and the headaches of the LAPD mostly behind him.

TYNDALL

Thanks for dressing up.

KADING

Upside to working Narcotics. How are things in Robbery Homicide?

TYNDALL

That's what I wanted to talk to you about.

KADING

Yeah?

TYNDALL

Lots of people saying good things about you, Greg. The work you did with the Torres Task Force.

KADING

Three years of my life.

TYNDALL
It's a career case. Congratulations.

KADING
Still have to convict the asshole.

TYNDALL
That's not your job.
(then)
You know anything about the Biggie
Smalls murder?

KADING
I know it happened forever ago.

TYNDALL
Been almost ten years. RHD
investigated it, led by Russell
Poole. Know anything about him?

KADING
Only that he thought cops might
have been involved. I didn't do it
if that's why we're here.

TYNDALL
Wallace's mother filed a lawsuit
based on Poole's claims. Case has
gone back and forth in the courts,
but it's not going away.
(beat)
400 million dollars.

KADING
What?

TYNDALL
That's what some economist said
Smalls' lifetime earnings would
have been. Testified to it. And
it's what the city might have to
pay out if the department loses
the lawsuit.

KADING
400 million. I should have been a
rapper.

TYNDALL
I want you to help take another look
at things. Try to find out who
really killed *The Notorious B.I.G.*

KADING

With you?

TYNDALL

Department wants fresh eyes on this -- I was involved in the original investigation. Plus, technically I'm retired. So I'll just supervise and support.

KADING

While you collect a salary on top of your pension.

TYNDALL

It's good to be me, I know.

Kading smiles, then looks at Tyndall, serious.

KADING

One question: is my objective to solve the case or to cover the department's ass?

TYNDALL

You go where the case leads you.
Wherever it leads you.

KADING

(excited)

Okay. Then where do I start?

EXT. NORTH HOLLYWOOD - 1997 - DAY

A shitty 1991 Buick Regal slowly rumbles onto Ventura Boulevard. Its driver sports a tank top, a greasy ponytail, and a nasty fu manchu. A ratty baseball cap with a marijuana logo tops his look off. FU MANCHU screams scumbag.

Title: March 1997

As Fu Manchu stops at a light near Lankersheim, a green Mitsubishi Montero pulls up on his right, ICE CUBE'S "NO VASELINE" BLARING from its speakers. Fu Manchu looks over at the driver -- a handsome black guy in a TRACKSUIT.

They eyeball each other until Fu Manchu rolls down his window.

FU MANCHU

Can I help you?

TRACKSUIT

You looking at something? Roll that window up, motherfucker! I'll put a cap in your ass!

Fu Manchu isn't the least bit intimidated.

FU MANCHU

Keep talking.

Tracksuit doesn't settle down, starts throwing GANG SIGNS.

TRACKSUIT

Pull over, bitch! I'll kick your ass right now!

FU MANCHU

Let's do it.

The light turns green. Fu Manchu drives ahead and pulls over.

Tracksuit does the same, but as he gets out of his Montero, Fu Manchu PEELS OUT, laughing as he speeds away in his Regal.

But it isn't over. Fu Manchu continues on Ventura, then spots the Montero in his rearview, Tracksuit driving like a fucking maniac in order to catch up to him.

FU MANCHU

(now he's getting nervous)

Shit.

Fu Manchu stops at another light. Tracksuit pulls up on his right this time -- AND HE'S POINTING A GUN.

TRACKSUIT

BITCH, I SAID I WOULD CAP YOU!

AND THEN FU MANCHU SUDDENLY RAISES HIS OWN GUN AND FIRES TWO QUICK SHOTS. Tracksuit can't believe it, makes a crazy blind U-turn across traffic and into a GAS STATION.

Fu Manchu follows him, other drivers and pedestrians freaking out. *This kind of thing does not happen on Ventura Boulevard.*

Fu Manchu jumps out of his Regal, gun aimed at the Montero.

FU MANCHU

POLICE! THROW YOUR WEAPON OUT OF THE CAR!

Wait, Fu Manchu is a cop? No response from Tracksuit. A CUSTOMER comes out of the gas station's MINIMART.

FU MANCHU
 CALL 911!
 (flashes his BADGE)
 I'M LAPD, IT'S OKAY!

The customer runs back inside. Fu Manchu -- DETECTIVE FRANK LYGA -- slowly advances on the Montero.

Tracksuit is leaning against the steering wheel, breathing his last breaths. And off Lyga...

EXT. PARKER CENTER - DAY

"The Glass House." Former headquarters of the LAPD.

INT. PARKER CENTER - ROBBERY HOMICIDE - DAY

The department's elite division. But outside of the computers, its offices look like they haven't changed since Parker Center opened in 1954. Battered desks, wooden filing cabinets, black and white wanted posters on the walls, etc...

And in 1997, almost every detective in it was male and white.

Including RUSSELL POOLE, 40. Solid build, mustache, crisp white shirt and tie, Poole looks like a cop and loves being one. *It's who he is.* Not the most fun guy to be around by any stretch, but very good at his job.

There's a framed copy of the HOMICIDE INVESTIGATOR'S CREED on his desk, next to a FAMILY PHOTO (wife, three kids). He types up a report while his partner JOHN MURPHY -- seen it all and can't wait for it to end -- complains to no one in particular.

MURPHY
 Swear to God, I am not retiring
 until they fix the air in here.
 Too hot, too cold -- every day my
 balls are sweating or shriveling.
 (beat, to Poole)
 What are you doing?

POOLE
 Evidence report on the Kim case.

MURPHY
 I already did that.

POOLE
 Fixing some spelling mistakes so it
 doesn't get kicked back.

MURPHY
 Are you kidding me?

POOLE
(he's not)
Don't put anything past a good
defense lawyer.

New partners, Murphy isn't sure what to make of Poole, is tolerating him for now. He calls out to a passing detective: Tyndall, thinner than in 2006 and has yet to shave his head.

MURPHY
Hey, Tyndall. Newbie's fixing my
spelling.

TYNDALL
Too bad he can't fix your tie.

Murphy gives Tyndall the finger, then swings it over to Poole.

MURPHY
How's my sign language?

POOLE
Excellent.
(then)
Hey, who's working the Christopher
Wallace case?
(off Murphy)
Biggie Smalls? The rapper who got
shot outside the Peterson Museum?

MURPHY
Oh. Wilshire Division, I think. Why?

POOLE
Isn't it the exact kind of case
this division should be working?

MURPHY
(no)
It's just some gangster bullshit, a
drive-by.

Poole and Murphy are interrupted by LIEUTENANT PAUL LARSON. He's a LAPD lifer who knows how to navigate the politics of the department, but always tries to be fair.

LT. LARSON
Murphy, Poole. You're up.

POOLE
Yes sir.

MURPHY
What is it, Lieutenant?

LT. LARSON
Officer involved shooting. North
Hollywood.

EXT. GAS STATION - NORTH HOLLYWOOD - DAY

A crime scene now. Poole and Murphy get the scoop from a barrel-chested SERGEANT as they walk toward the Montero.

SERGEANT
Shooter was Detective Frank Lyga.
Undercover narco working out of
Hollywood Station -- talked to him
personally. Victim died on his way
to the hospital.

POOLE
We'll do our own interview with
Lyga.

SERGEANT
I'm sure he'll tell you what he
told me.

MURPHY
Which was?

SERGEANT
That some asshole gangster rolled
up on him. They had words, gangster
had a gun, Lyga was faster.

POOLE
How do we know the victim was a
gangster?

SERGEANT
(demonstrates)
Lyga said he flashed signs.

POOLE
Piru -- Bloods?

SERGEANT
That's what Lyga said.

They arrive at the Montero. Tracksuit's blood is all over the seat and his gun is on the floor -- Poole puts on some gloves and takes a closer look.

POOLE
Nine millimeter Beretta. No shell
casings.

SERGEANT

Like I said, Lyga was too fast for the piece of shit.

POOLE

Do we have a name?

SERGEANT

Of the victim? Just told you: Shit, Piece Of.

MURPHY

(can tell Poole's annoyed)
Sergeant --

SERGEANT

Waiting on it. But the car's registered to the office of a Sharitha Knight.

The name rings a bell, but Poole can't place it. He backs out of the passenger side. Murphy looks toward the mini mart.

MURPHY

What about the security cameras? Is the shooting on tape?

SERGEANT

They're not working.

MURPHY

Because why would they be? Jesus.

POOLE

And witnesses? Can anyone back up Detective Lyga's story?

SERGEANT

Haven't found one who saw the whole thing. But I mean, come on, Lyga's a cop.

POOLE

Who shot someone.

The sergeant doesn't like Poole, looks to Murphy, who smiles.

MURPHY

How's your spelling?

Poole starts to work the driver's side now. Finds two CDs (*Death Row's Greatest Hits* and the soundtrack to the Tupac starring *Gridlock'd*) then something else.

POOLE
Got a wallet.

MURPHY
Our victim's?

POOLE
Looks like it. Kevin Gaines. And
get this...
(holds up the wallet,
revealing a LAPD BADGE)
He was a cop too.

MURPHY
Oh fuck.

EXT. PARKER CENTER - 2006 - MORNING

Still LAPD headquarters. The new one wasn't built until 2009.

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE DIVISION - 2006 - MORNING

RHD has continued its slow evolution. Newer computers and some slightly more diverse faces, but everything else is the same.

Fresh from their breakfast, Tyndall leads Kading through the bullpen as a random DETECTIVE complains.

DETECTIVE
It's goddamn freezing in here. Will
someone call maintenance again?

TYNDALL
Yeah, good luck with that.
(to Kading)
Come on. I'll show you the case files.

INT. FILE ROOM - 2006 - MORNING

MORE THAN TWENTY FILES BOXES, EACH BULGING WITH DOCUMENTS, ARE
STACKED HIGH AGAINST A WALL.

KADING
You gotta be shitting me.

TYNDALL
And there's more coming.

KADING
How could there be more?

TYNDALL

From the FBI. They did their own investigation. Shut it down after 9/11. Needed the resources.

The enormity of what he signed up for starts to dawn on Kading.

KADING

I'm gonna need help. A team, a place to work.

TYNDALL

Figured as much. Truth is you can have whatever you want except for one thing.

KADING

What's that?

TYNDALL

You can't talk to anyone involved in the lawsuit against the department.

KADING

Meaning Russell Poole.

TYNDALL

Or Voletta Wallace.

KADING

You worked with Poole. Tell me about him.

TYNDALL

(beat)

Russell Poole was a good man, a good cop. He believed what he believed... and it's up to you to figure out if he was right.

Tyndall leaves. A moment, then Kading looks over at the huge stack of case files again as we again FLASHBACK TO...

EXT. ORIGINAL TOMMY'S - 1997 - NIGHT

The other famous California burger chain. Two young black men (ISIAH and WILL) shoot the shit as they eat.

ISIAH

Telling you, it was the FBI.

WILL

What?

ISIAH

Government always killing powerful
black men that speak the truth. Did
it to Pac and now they did it to
Biggie.

WILL

I heard Pac isn't even dead. Faked
that shit.

ISIAH

What?

WILL

(nods)

Is chilling in Cuba.

They keep debating for a bit, then we head inside....

INT. ORIGINAL TOMMY'S - 1997 - NIGHT

... and find Poole and Murphy in a booth.

MURPHY

Two cops. One black, one looks like
he's auditioning for the goddamn
Aryan Brotherhood. No good
witnesses and no surveillance
footage. This is a shitshow.

POOLE

Lyga's interview with us was solid.
No holes in his story. If it's a
good shooting, it's a good shooting.

MURPHY

You can't be this naive. Who
sponsored you into RHD anyway?

POOLE

I'm not naive.

MURPHY

So you do know what people think of
the department right now?

POOLE

They're wrong.

Poole truly believes this. Murphy keeps bitching.

MURPHY

You just wait: Gaines is going to be a victim, Lyga's going to be a racist, and we're going to be the two white cops who are trying to cover it up.

POOLE

(had enough of this conversation, stands)

We do everything by the book, we'll be okay. Come on.

MURPHY

Where we going?

POOLE

Lyga said Gaines flashed gang signs. And the car Gaines was driving was registered to Sharitha Knight. That mean anything to you?

MURPHY

No.

POOLE

She's married to Suge Knight. I checked.

MURPHY

Death Row Suge Knight?

POOLE

His real name's Marion. But what I really want to know is why Gaines would be driving Suge's wife's car?

It's a good question. Still...

MURPHY

Can I least finish my burger first?
(off Poole)
It's Tommy's.

EXT. SHARITHA KNIGHT'S HOUSE - 1997 - NIGHT

High in the Hollywood Hills.

INT. SHARITHA KNIGHT'S HOUSE - 1997 - NIGHT

GOLD RECORDS on the wall, but other than that it's very tasteful; nothing "gangster" about it. SHARITHA KNIGHT, 28, sits across from Poole and Murphy.

She's as pretty as you would expect, but also smart and composed -- a businesswoman. And there's no way she cries in front of a couple of cops.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
Kevin was my boyfriend.

MURPHY
Did you know he was married, had a family?

SHARITHA KNIGHT
Technically I'm married too. But Kevin and I weren't doing anything behind anyone's back if that's what you're asking.

POOLE
How did you meet?

Sharitha fixes on Poole.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
What does that have to do with anything?

POOLE
Just doing our job, ma'am.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
The only thing you're *doing* is trying to make this something it isn't. Questioning me because I'm married to Suge, looking for a way to protect one of your own.

POOLE
That is not the case, Mrs. Knight. I promise you that.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
You promise me?

Meaning give me a break. Then fuck it, she answers anyway.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
I met Kevin at a gas station. He was handsome, had style. Couldn't believe he was a cop.

MURPHY
We don't have style?

Sharitha looks at Murphy: you're making jokes?

SHARITHA KNIGHT
Anyway, I told Kevin who I was --

POOLE
Suge Knight's wife.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
Suge and I haven't been together
for a long time. Even before he went
to prison our marriage was just a
piece of paper. I have my own
business, manage my own artists.
(throwaway)
Kevin even worked for me once.

POOLE
What did he do?

SHARITHA KNIGHT
Security work for Snoop, at a
family reunion he had.

MURPHY
Snoop Dog?

SHARITHA KNIGHT
No -- *Snoopy*.

Murphy decides to shut up. Poole continues.

POOLE
Mrs. Knight, did Kevin and Suge
know each other?

SHARITHA KNIGHT
They met. Like I said, we weren't
hiding anything.

POOLE
Kevin wasn't worried about what
Suge would think? Your husband does
have a reputation.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
And that's why you're here. But
Kevin wasn't afraid of anybody. He
was a *man*. Like Suge.

POOLE
So they respected each other.

SHARITHA KNIGHT
(beat)
What are you trying to ask me?

Poole bites the bullet.

POOLE

Mrs. Knight, to the best of your
knowledge, was Kevin -- was Officer
Gaines -- a gang member?

SHARITHA KNIGHT

Thought you weren't trying to
protect anyone.

POOLE

We're not.

SHARITHA KNIGHT

Get the fuck out of my house.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO**EXT. WEST BUREAU HEADQUARTERS - 2006 - DAY**

We find Kading waiting in reception, a nearby TV showing cable news. Pundits talk third year of Iraq, George Bush... It holds Kading's interest until OFFICER DARYN DUPREE enters.

Dupree, 40, is black, handsome, the man. But he's got no swag with his uniform on. It restricts him in more ways than one.

DUPREE

Gregers.

KADING

Dupers.

They bro-shake, hug, the best of friends.

DUPREE

You just bored and in the neighborhood?

KADING

More like it's your lucky day.
(off Dupree)
Let's go somewhere we can talk.

INT. WEST BUREAU - BREAKROOM - 2006 - DAY

As depressing as any crappy office breakroom. Kading and Dupree sit with styrofoam cups of coffee.

DUPREE

So what's up?

KADING

I'm getting pulled onto another task force. This one out of Robbery Homicide. A cold case.

DUPREE

That's great. Good for you, man.

KADING

I want you to come with me.

DUPREE

Come on, you know the deal. I appreciate whatever it is you're trying to do, but I'm going to be in this uniform forever.

KADING

You don't understand. They're giving me whatever I need. And what I need is the best cop I know.

DUPREE

Don't do this, okay? Don't promise me something only to have my suspension get in the way.

KADING

Your suspension doesn't matter. If you want in, you're in.

Dupree just looks at Kading for a moment, so wants what he's saying to be true.

DUPREE

What's the case?

KADING

(smiles)
Biggie Smalls.

DUPREE

Now you're just messing with me.

KADING

No.

DUPREE

Because you know how I feel about that case.

KADING

I'm serious, Daryn.

DUPREE

Yeah?

KADING

Yeah.

Dupree can't fucking believe it. Has to lean back in his chair.

DUPREE

Shit. *Biggie*.

And we FLASHBACK TO...

EXT. SHERATON HOTEL - STUDIO CITY - 1993 - DAY

Biggie at 21 (like the opening scene). In sunny LA for the first time, he seems anxious as he waits outside this hotel lobby with DAN, an intern from Uptown Records.

BIGGIE
You best not be bullshittin'.

DAN
I'm telling you, Big, he's coming.

BIGGIE
Cuz I'll have Puff fire your ass.

DAN
What did you tell me you wanted to do when we got to LA? Get some chronic, go to Roscoe's --

BIGGIE
And meet Tupac.

DAN
Exactly. Done the first two already so stop doubtin'.

Biggie eventually nods, alright... and moments later a CONVERTIBLE pulls into the parking lot.

Riding in the passenger seat is TUPAC SHAKUR.

TUPAC
What's up, what's up, niggas?

At 23, he's already famous, a rising music and movie star. If he wasn't you'd still be drawn to him. Handsome, charismatic, and way more funny than people remember. The smile, the voice, the mind, *it's fucking Tupac.*

TUPAC
You must be Biggie.

Biggie hides how excited he is, acts cool as can be.

BIGGIE
How'd you guess?

Tupac laughs, likes Biggie right away.

TUPAC
In from New York?

BIGGIE
Yeah. Brooklyn.

TUPAC
Check it out. Doing this movie
right now -- and I cannot stop
playing your song on set!
(waves his hand back and
forth, having fun)
*Party and Bullshit, Party and
Bullshit...*

BIGGIE
Just trying to be like you, man.

TUPAC
Shit... Do your own thing.
(then)
We going to my house. You want to
come with?

BIGGIE
Definitely.

And off the first time Biggie and Tupac met...

CUT TO:

TUPAC'S PICTURE -- it's on the cover of the *Gridlock'd* CD
found in Kevin Gaines' car. We're back in 1997 and the CD is
on Poole's desk along with some other evidence: A PAGER, A
WALLET FULL OF CASH, ALMOST TEN CREDIT CARDS, A RECEIPT FROM
A STEAKHOUSE FOR \$952...

A different day, Poole's on his computer, digging into
Gaines even more... Now he's freshing up in the RHD locker
room, putting on a clean shirt... Finally Poole flips through
a file, keeps seeing entries marked *Referred to IA*.

As Poole looks up from the file, thinking...

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE - LT. LARSON'S OFFICE - 1997 - DAY

Larson sits across from Poole and Murphy, rubs his eyes.

LT. LARSON
This is a nightmare.

MURPHY
I know.

LT. LARSON
No, you don't. Gaines' family has
already hired Johnny Cochran.

Murphy looks at Larson: *seriously?* Gets a nod in return and turns to Poole.

MURPHY

What did I tell you? Shitshow.

POOLE

Lieutenant, we've done everything by the book and we will keep doing everything by the book.

MURPHY

Would you stop?

(to Lt. Larson)

He doesn't get it. Thinks this is about the truth.

POOLE

Kevin Gaines was a bad cop.

LT. LARSON

Because he stepped out on his wife? Half the department's guilty of that. And what Lyga said about Gaines, without proof, it doesn't matter. Cochran will destroy him.

MURPHY

And then he'll destroy us.

POOLE

It's not about what Lyga said... just hear me out, Lieutenant.

(takes out a notepad)

IA had a file on Gaines. He had been involved in three other road rage incidents while off-duty.

LT. LARSON

I take it none resulted in a homicide.

POOLE

(determined)

He was spending money like it was never going away. He had a receipt for a thousand dollar steak dinner in his wallet. He had a Mercedes in his name. He wore Versace shirts to work. You think he's doing all that on a cop's salary?

LT. LARSON

Poole --

POOLE

He was driving Suge Knight's wife's car when he was killed. She said Gaines knew Knight. What if Gaines was working for him off-duty? Lyga said Gaines flashed gang signs. Mob Piru. That's the same gang Knight is affiliated --

LT. LARSON

I don't care.

(beat)

And from now on, neither do you. We're not going to get a white cop off by dirtying up the black cop he killed. Do you understand?

POOLE

I'm not dirtying up anyone.

LT. LARSON

Detective. Do you understand?

Firm as can be. A beat, then Poole nods, a good soldier.

LT. LARSON

Good. Now both of you go home and get some sleep. Then put all your energy into finding a credible witness that backs Detective Lyga's story -- preferably a black one.

Off Larson's orders...

INT. POOLE'S CAR - 1997 - DAY

Poole heads away from work and to wherever home is. He stops at a light, Stevie Ray Vaughn playing on his radio.

The ramp for the freeway beckons. Poole's lost in thought.

As he pulls a u-turn instead...

EXT/INT. GAS STATION - NORTH HOLLYWOOD - 1997 - DAY

No longer a crime scene. Customers fill their tanks. We find Poole in the minimart, talking to the MANAGER.

MANAGER

Every credit card receipt?

POOLE

Yes sir. Up to, during, and after the shooting.

MANAGER

But you guys already talked to every customer that was here.

POOLE

I didn't.

Annoyed, the manager gets to work on the receipts. As Poole waits he notices some CDs for sale on the counter; the most prominently displayed is Biggie's *Ready to Die*, with a "R.I.P Biggie" sign taped above it. Poole looks at the CD for a beat, then notices something else: SECURITY MONITORS. They show the station, the street beyond and... well, they're working.

POOLE

(as the manager returns)
Got the cameras fixed, huh?

MANAGER

What? Oh, yeah.

The manager suddenly seems nervous. Poole smells bullshit.

POOLE

That was fast. Shooting just happened the other day.

MANAGER

I guess -- kinda overdue.

POOLE

They were never broken, were they?

The manager doesn't answer. Poole is furious.

POOLE

Sir, if you have video of the shooting you need to give it to me right now. It's evidence.

MANAGER

(stammers)

But... it's valuable. Someone should pay me for it. The media or Johnny Cochran -- I hear he just got involved.

POOLE

Right now. Or I arrest you for obstruction of justice. And not even Johnny Cochran will be able to defend you.

Poole STARES, waits. The manager finally digs beneath the counter and comes back with a TAPE. Hands it over.

POOLE

What does it show?

MANAGER

What the white cop said.

And off Lyga's ass being saved...

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE**EXT. KADING'S HOUSE - 2006 - NIGHT**

Rancho Cucamonga. Fifty miles outside of LA. It's peaceful here, quiet -- and a cop's salary goes a much longer way.

INT. KADING'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - 2006 - NIGHT

Kading sits across from his wife DONNA and their son DANE, 13. Has just filled them in on the day's news.

DANE

No way. Biggie Smalls? He's like a legend. Him and Tupac.

KADING

You listen to that stuff?

DANE

Duh.

KADING

(to Donna)

And you let him?

DONNA

I listen to it too.

KADING

What?

DONNA

(playful)

Biggie, Biggie, Biggie, can't you see... sometimes your words just hypnotize me.

Kading can't believe it. Dane gets up, excited.

DANE

I gotta go call all my friends.

Kading looks at Donna after Dane leaves. Knows what's coming.

KADING

Okay. I know I haven't been around much. At all really. But the Torres case --

DANE

Was a career case. And now this is another one.

KADING

This is even bigger, Donna. And
it's important to me.

Donna stares at her husband... then lets him off the hook.

DONNA

Cases don't get solved at home, Greg.

KADING

I knew there was a reason I married
a cop.

DONNA

And there's a reason I quit. All I
want you to tell me is *why* this is
so important to you.

KADING

I love rap. Like you and Dane
apparently.

DONNA

Greg.

KADING

Honestly? Biggie Smalls may or may
not be a legend, but his case is.
And I want to be the cop who solved
it -- who succeeded where so many
other cops failed.

Donna considers this, takes a sip of wine.

DONNA

Maybe they didn't.

And we FLASHBACK TO...

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE DIVISION - BULLPEN - 1997 - MORNING

Larson stands in front of the entire division, wrapping up
the morning briefing.

LT. LARSON

And last but certainly not least, I
think we all owe Detective Poole a
round of applause.

And Poole gets it, the room CLAPPING.

LT. LARSON

Through determination, solid police work, and a complete lack of sleep, it looks like he put an end to the Kevin Gaines Frank Lyga nightmare.

MURPHY

Didn't I tell you how much I loved this guy, Lieutenant? Best partner ever.

Larson laughs along with everyone else, then looks at Poole.

LT. LARSON

The department thanks you. The City of Los Angeles thanks you. *I* thank you.

Poole just nods, embarrassed by the attention.

LT. LARSON

Okay get to work, everyone. Poole and Murphy, in my office.

Larson leaves. Murphy turns to Poole.

MURPHY

Guess he wants to blow you in private.

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE - LT. LARSON'S OFFICE - 1997 - DAY

Moments later, as Poole and Murphy sit --

POOLE

So what now, Lieutenant?

LT. LARSON

Out of our hands. But the tape clears Lyga.

POOLE

And Gaines?

LT. LARSON

What about Gaines? He's dead.

POOLE

I know, but --

LT. LARSON

Poole, if Gaines was as shady as you think, it's up to IA to do something about it. But they probably won't because again, *he's dead*.

It doesn't sit entirely right with Poole, but he goes along anyway. Once again, chain of command. It matters to him.

POOLE

So we're back in the rotation?

LT. LARSON

No. You're up again.

MURPHY

What?

LT. LARSON

Biggie Smalls. Just got the word.

MURPHY

You're shitting me. This is the reward we get?

LT. LARSON

I know, it's just some stupid gangster thing. But it's been over a month since the murder and the media is making more noise by the day.

MURPHY

So give it to whoever's up next.

LT. LARSON

Poole has more gang experience than anyone else in the division. We need to solve this thing.

MURPHY

I don't care what experience he has, Lieutenant. If Wilshire hasn't solved it by now... You really can't give it to anyone else?

LT. LARSON

It's done.

INT. MURPHY'S CAR - 1997 - DAY

On their way to Wilshire Division, Murphy stewing behind the wheel. They stop at a light and he turns to Poole.

MURPHY

Happy?

POOLE

(said it before)

It's the kind of case we should be working.

MURPHY

And now we are. *Hooray.*
(beat, might as well ask)
So what's your take on it?

POOLE

Need to know more. Maybe it really is just a gang murder. But it could also be something bigger.

MURPHY

What do you mean bigger?

POOLE

This whole East Coast West Coast thing. LA rap artists hating New York rap artists.

MURPHY

Jesus Christ. I should be playing golf right now, you know that? And don't call these rap guys *artists*.

Poole just lets Murphy be mad for a bit, then --

POOLE

Always preferred baseball to golf.

MURPHY

What?

POOLE

When I was in high school I thought I'd go pro.

MURPHY

What happened?

POOLE

Wasn't good enough. So I did the next best thing and became a cop like my dad.

MURPHY

Well I'm sorry for us both.

A beat, then Poole cracks up. They both do.

MURPHY

How much gang experience do you have anyway?

POOLE

More than you.

As they laugh some more, bonding...

INT. WILSHIRE DIVISION - 1997 - DAY

DETECTIVE KELLY COOPER (40s, black) greets Poole and Miller in an interview or conference room. Cooper's an affable guy and the conversation starts off pleasant enough.

COOPER

Kelly Cooper. I've been leading the Smalls Investigation.

He flashes a big smile. They shake hands.

POOLE

Poole and Murphy, RHD. What do you have so far?

COOPER

Me first. Guess you guys had a change of heart of, huh?

MURPHY

What?

COOPER

Almost makes you wonder: what if it was a white celebrity who got shot?

MURPHY

Okay --

COOPER

Bruce Springsteen, one of the Backstreet Boys... How long would it take *Robbery Fucking Homicide* to take over then? A minute, maybe two?

Cooper's smile is gone. Murphy turns to Poole.

MURPHY

You were the one who wanted this case. Enjoy.

POOLE

(to Cooper)

Look, we get it. Should have been working this from day one. But we're here now.

(punching back)

So why don't you tell us what you have so we can do what Wilshire Division hasn't? After all, you've had a month.

Murphy likes this side of Poole. Cooper just gets more pissed.

COOPER

You don't know what the hell you're talking about.

POOLE

So tell us.
(sincere as ever)
Because we want the same thing.

A long beat, then Cooper sits down. And as he opens up the murder book and starts to read, we FLASHBACK TO...

INT. PETERSEN AUTO MUSEUM - MARCH 9TH, 1997 - NIGHT

A HELLUVA PARTY. We see what Detective Cooper describes.

COOPER (O.S.)

The victim is one Christopher Wallace, aka Biggie Smalls, aka The Notorious B-I-G. On March 9th he was at a party for Vibe Magazine at the Petersen Auto Museum. It was supposed to be a private event for music and movie types, but others found their way in. It was overcrowded, there was barely any security, and there were definitely gang members in attendance -- both Crips and Bloods.

We move through the party to find Biggie sitting with Puffy. Both wear sunglasses and big smiles. They nod their head to the music, drink Cristal, the air thick with weed smoke...

COOPER (O.S.)

Smalls was the man of the hour. In from New York, he held court at a table with Sean "Puffy" Combs, president of Bad Boys records.

"HYPNOTIZE" blares. Puffy puts his arm around Biggie. The entire party revolves around them, dances to their music.

PUFFY

Yo, what did I tell you when we were getting started? Top of the world, you and me. We did it, Big!

BIGGIE

I can't wait till they hear "Goin' Back to Cali" so they know I got nothing but love for them!

PUFFY
Everyone got love for you! Top of
the world!

Puffy dances in his chair. Biggie can't stop smiling.

INT. WILSHIRE DIVISION - INTERVIEW ROOM - 1997 - DAY

COOPER (O.S.)
The whole event might as well have
been an album release party for
Smalls. *Life After Death* -- it just
came out.

POOLE
Smalls' new album is called *Life
After Death*?

COOPER
Crazy, right?
(then)
Heard any of it?

Nothing from Poole and Murphy. Cooper shakes his head.

COOPER
It's the number one album in the
country.

INT. PETERSEN AUTO MUSEUM - MARCH 9TH, 1997 - NIGHT

Back to the party. Some GUESTS approach Biggie and Puffy.

COOPER (O.S.)
Smalls and Combs were surrounded by
friends and bodyguards. People
stopped by the table all night to
pay tribute.

One of the guests wears ALL BLUE, DOWN TO HIS JORDANS. The
bodyguards let him pass. AS HE WHISPERS SOMETHING TO PUFFY...

COOPER (O.S.)
Make no mistake: Tupac Shakur was
murdered in September, and Suge
Knight was in jail, but the East
Coast West Coast bullshit was not
over...

INT. WILSHIRE DIVISION - INTERVIEW ROOM - 1997 - DAY

COOPER
*It was a bold move for Puffy and
Biggie to come to LA.*

Poole and Murphy nod. Cooper reads on.

COOPER
The fire marshal shut down the
party around midnight...

EXT. PETERSEN PARKING GARAGE - MARCH 9TH, 1997 - NIGHT

COOPER (O.S.)
... but it was so crowded it took
Smalls and Combs another half hour
before they got down to the parking
garage with their people.

Fans surround Biggie and Puffy. They pose for a PICTURE, arms
around each other, Biggie pointing at the camera. (*Note: this
is the last photo taken of Biggie Smalls*).

COOPER (O.S.)
They traveled in a three car caravan.
Two Suburbans and one Blazer.

As the valets arrive with the SUVS, one of Biggie's
bodyguards -- EUGENE DEAL -- is looking toward the sidewalk
outside the museum. He's staring at a MAN. We don't get a good
look at his face, but he's wearing a SUIT AND A BOW TIE.

ANOTHER BODYGUARD
Yo, let's go!

Deal snaps to it, gets in one of Suburbans.

COOPER (O.S.)
Combs got in the first Suburban
with his bodyguards. Smalls and his
guys got in the second.

BIGGIE
(out the passenger seat
window, his last words)
We'll see ya at the next party.

COOPER (O.S.)
The third car, the Blazer, was driven
by Reggie Blaylock, Inglewood PD.

INT. WILSHIRE DIVISION - INTERVIEW ROOM - 1997 - DAY

Poole speaks up.

POOLE
A cop was in the caravan?

COOPER
 Moonlighting. Was riding with Paul
 Offord, head of Bad Boy Security.
 (moving on)
 They pulled out of the parking
 garage and headed North on Fairfax.

EXT. PETERSEN AUTO MUSEUM - MARCH 9TH, 1997 - NIGHT

Party guests jaywalk, slowing the flow of traffic. The caravan turns onto Fairfax, approaches the light at Wilshire, all three vehicles in the left lane. The light turns yellow and the driver of Suburban One guns it.

COOPER (O.S.)
 The first Suburban made the light on
 Wilshire. The second one -- the one
 with Smalls riding shotgun -- didn't.

Suburban Two stops at the light. Biggie yawns.

COOPER (O.S.)
 Car number three, the Blazer driven
 by Officer Blaylock, was pulling up
 the rear when a white SUV tried to
 pass it and get behind the second
 Suburban.

WE'RE IN THE BLAZER NOW, WITH BLAYLOCK AND OFFORD. The WHITE SUV tries to get ahead of them and Blaylock speeds forward, temporarily going into the Southbound lane to cut the SUV off.

COOPER (O.S.)
 As Blaylock cut off the white SUV,
 he saw a black or possibly green
 Chevy Impala pull up on the
 passenger side of the Suburban.

STILL THE BLAZER'S POINT OF VIEW. WE SEE THE IMPALA -- AN ARM EXTENDS FROM THE IMPALA'S DRIVER SIDE, HOLDING A GUN.

COOPER (O.S.)
 The driver of the Impala fired six
 shots into the Suburban.

Blaylock and Offord are stunned.

BLAYLOCK
 SHIT!

OFFORD
 SOMEONE'S SHOOTING!

The Impala peels out.

COOPER (O.S.)
 The shooter took off and headed east
 on Wilshire in the Impala. Blaylock
 gave chase in the Blazer...

Blaylock floors it, flying past LACMA as he pursues the Impala.

COOPER (O.S.)
 ... but he couldn't catch up.

INT. WILSHIRE DIVISION - INTERVIEW ROOM - 1997 - DAY

Cooper nears the end.

COOPER
 Combs and everyone else in the
 first Suburban had heard the shots
 and made a U-turn.

EXT. PETERSEN AUTO MUSEUM - MARCH 9TH, 1997 - NIGHT

Puffy jumps out of his Suburban and runs to Biggie's. Has to
 make his way through Biggie's bodyguards and bystanders, all
 of them trying to get Biggie to say something, *to breathe...*

PUFFY
 Big! BIG!

INT. WILSHIRE DIVISION - INTERVIEW ROOM - 1997 - DAY

COOPER
 But Smalls never regained
 consciousness. Was pronounced dead
 at Cedars at 1:15 am.
 (beat, done reading)
 Okay. Fire away.

POOLE
 Smalls was the only target. There's
 no question about that?

COOPER
 (nods)
 Shooter stopped, looked right at
 him, and fired.

POOLE
 The Impala --

COOPER
 Late model Super Sport. Witnesses
 saw it parked on Fairfax before the
 shooting, right outside the garage.

POOLE

But they weren't sure of the color?

COOPER

Conflicting reports. Some said black, some say green. All we know for sure is that it was dark.

POOLE

And the white SUV? What's the story there?

COOPER

We don't know.

(beat)

For physical evidence, we got slugs, casings, Gecko nine millimeter.

POOLE

What about the composite?

COOPER

We actually have *two* composites.

Cooper takes out TWO COMPOSITE DRAWINGS of a black man in his early 30s wearing a BOW TIE. The faces don't look similar.

MURPHY

(can't resist)

Farakhan shot Smalls?

COOPER

(it's not)

That's funny.

POOLE

These don't look like the same guy.

COOPER

At least we got *something* to work with. Most of the witnesses we talked to were either uncooperative or suddenly developed memory loss. You know how it goes on the street. Especially when Suge Knight might be involved.

MURPHY

How could Knight be involved? He's in jail, you said it yourself.

POOLE

That doesn't mean anything.

Cooper clearly agrees with Poole. Murphy scoffs.

MURPHY

Give me a break. Knight's a thug
who got lucky, not the Godfather.

POOLE

(ignoring Murphy, to
Cooper)

That your theory? Knight had Smalls
killed by a member of the Bloods to
get revenge for Tupac?

COOPER

It's the most obvious one, but we
don't have any leads that back it up.
Latest tip we're working actually
points to a Crip being the shooter.

POOLE

A Crip?

COOPER

(takes out a MUG SHOT)
Duane Keith Davis, aka Keffe D.

IT'S THE GUY IN THE BLUE JORDANS WE SAW WHISPER TO PUFFY AT
THE PARTY. Poole compares the mug shot to the two composites.

POOLE

I don't know...

MURPHY

I could see it.

COOPER

But you probably think we all look
alike, right?

Murphy lets the remark go. Poole scans Keffe D's record.

POOLE

Drugs, assault... Doesn't fit the
profile of a murderer. What's the
motive?

COOPER

Hard to say. Might have had beef
with Smalls.

POOLE

Over what?

COOPER
Unpaid security work.

POOLE
And this tip came from...

COOPER
A confidential source.

Poole takes this better than Murphy.

MURPHY
Unbelievable. You've been working
this a month and the best you got
is some bullshit tip?

COOPER
Keffe D was at the party and was
seen at Smalls table, we know that.
And he's lawyered up -- Edi M.O.
Faal, represented the Crip who took
a brick to Reginald Denny.

POOLE
(defusing)
We'll run with it.

MURPHY
(smirks)
Yeah. Nice work.

Meeting over. Poole and Murphy stand to go.

COOPER
Best of the best. Only the high
profile cases. How many murders do
you guys work a month? One?

MURPHY
Your point?

COOPER
I worked six *last week*. And I sure
as hell didn't fuck up OJ. So good
luck, close this case. Because your
reputation ain't what you think.

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR**EXT. PARKER CENTER - 2006 - MORNING**

Dupree parks his shiny BMW in the lot and gets out. He wears a killer leather jacket, has a bounce in his step; a new man.

Kading's waiting for him out front.

KADING

Nice jacket. Steal it from the same place as the car?

DUPREE

Don't hate 'cause I look good.
(smiles, hands Kading a bag)
Here. Token of my appreciation.

KADING

Cash? Tell me it's cash.

Kading opens the bag. Finds *Ready to Die* and *Life After Death*.

KADING

Thanks, Daryn. These will make great coasters.

DUPREE

No one had flow like Biggie. Gonna educate you, brother.

KADING

Or we could just get to work.

INT. FILE ROOM - 2006 - MOMENTS LATER

Dupree stares at the same massive stack of Biggie case files that Lieutenant Tyndall showed Kading earlier.

DUPREE

Holy...

KADING

And there's more coming.

DUPREE

That's not possible.

KADING

Ten years leads to a lot of paper.
(grabs a box)
(MORE)

KADING (CONT'D)
And just wait until you see how
shitty our office is.

DUPREE
Hold up.
(means it)
We can't do this on our own.

KADING
I know. Only went to you first so
your feelings wouldn't get hurt.

Kading with another joke. Dupree gives him a look.

DUPREE
You're an asshole.

KADING
Come on. We can move these boxes
while we don't listen to Biggie.

DUPREE
Oh, we gonna listen to Biggie.

And as Dupree grabs a box, we FLASHBACK TO...

EXT. TUPAC'S HOUSE - 1993 - DAY

A rental in the Valley; the convertible we first saw Tupac in
sits in the driveway with some other cool rides.

BIGGIE (O.S.)
*Biggie Smalls the mansion, the
yacht...*

INT. TUPAC'S HOUSE - 1993 - DAY

Biggie freestyles in the kitchen, Tupac and some friends
watching, everybody high as fuck.

BIGGIE
*The two weed spots, the two hot
Glocks, that's how I got the weed
spot... Little Gotti got the shotty
to your body, so don't resist or
you might miss Christmas...*

Tupac loves it, big ass grin on his face as Biggie continues.

BIGGIE
*Oh my God, I'm dropping shit like
a pigeon, I hope you're listenin',
smackin' babies at their
Christenin'...*

And then Tupac suddenly joins in.

TUPAC

*Yo, we gonna do shit like this... I
thank the Lord for my many blessings
though I'm stressin', keep a vest for
protection... Born in the ghetto as a
hustler, older, a straight soldier...
No matter how you try, niggas never
die... We just retaliate with hate,
then we multiply.*

It is *amazing*, Biggie and Tupac flowing back and forth. And when it's over the new friends slap hands as we RETURN TO...

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE - LT. LARSON'S OFFICE - 1997 - DAY

Poole and Murphy bring Larson up to speed.

POOLE

Wilshire is looking at somebody.

LT. LARSON

So they have a suspect? That's good.

MURPHY

Maybe. Came from a tip and Wilshire is being tight-lipped about their source.

Murphy hands over Keffe D's mugshot and record.

LT. LARSON

(reads)

Duane "Keffe D" Davis.

POOLE

He's from Compton. Southside Crip.

LT. LARSON

Well that makes him guilty of something.

POOLE

I don't like him for this, Lieutenant.

LT. LARSON

Why not?

POOLE

How much do you know about the East Coast West Coast rivalry?

LT. LARSON

Enlighten me.

POOLE

The Crips are Team Bad Boy -- Team Biggie Smalls. More importantly Davis was seen at Smalls' table. Who talks to someone in front of hundreds of people before they shoot them? It doesn't make any sense.

LT. LARSON

Since when does a gang-related shooting have to make sense?

POOLE

Maybe it wasn't gang-related. For all we know, it could have been a professional hit.

LT. LARSON

Come on.

(to Murphy)

You agree with that?

MURPHY

Gotta admit, there are some things that bother me about the shooting.

LT. LARSON

Such as?

MURPHY

There was possibly a diversion car involved.

LT. LARSON

A what?

POOLE

(plowing ahead)

We need to have key people brought back to LA, Lieutenant. Puffy Combs, everybody that was with Smalls that night -- they are our best witnesses and they were barely even questioned.

LT. LARSON

I'll look into it. But right now you have a suspect.

POOLE

Who's lawyered up. Even if we did like him as a suspect, we don't have anything to go at him with.

LT. LARSON

Then *find* something. And if this guy is such a shit suspect, why did he lawyer up?

POOLE

Because he's a gangster. Doesn't mean he did it.

LT. LARSON

You're right.

(meeting over)

But we won't know for sure until you clear him.

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE DIVISION - 1997 - MOMENTS LATER

Poole and Murphy return to the bullpen.

POOLE

It's already been a month. We need more than a suspect based on a tip.

MURPHY

Never know. Maybe he'll just confess.

POOLE

(no mood for jokes)

We have to work this like it's day one, see if there's anything Wilshire missed. Talk to everyone who was at the Petersen Museum that night -- we're talking hundreds of people. The entire division should be working this case.

MURPHY

That's not gonna happen.

POOLE

It did when Cosby's kid was killed.

MURPHY

That was different.

POOLE

How was it different?

MURPHY

Russ, you're growing on me, but do you really want to compare some rapper to Bill Fucking Cosby?

Before Poole can answer, young Tyndall calls out to him.

TYNDALL

Poole!

He hurries over, documents in hand.

TYNDALL

Ran that DMV check on your suspect.

POOLE

I know, you already told me. He doesn't have an Impala.

TYNDALL

I dug a little deeper. March of last year, *Keffe D* got a speeding ticket. Check out what he was driving.

POOLE

(reads)

A 1996 Chevrolet Impala... black.

TYNDALL

It's just not registered to him.

Son of a bitch. As Poole looks at Murphy...

SMASH TO:

A LAPD HELICOPTER flying high over Compton, zeroing in on a house with a CARPORT in the back.

Now we're down on the street, moving with POLICE VEHICLES as they race toward the house.

Then we're on foot as COPS IN TACTICAL GEAR approach the front door with Poole and Murphy.

THE COPS RAM OPEN THE DOOR, startling the PRETTY WOMAN on the couch. It's chaos, everybody but Poole yells throughout.

COP

LAPD, SHOW YOUR HANDS!

PRETTY WOMAN

DON'T SHOOT!

POOLE

Calm down. Where's Keffe?

PRETTY WOMAN

THIS AIN'T HIS HOUSE!

MURPHY
WE KNOW THAT! WHERE IS HE?!

PRETTY WOMAN
I DON'T KNOW!

The woman (Keffe D's girlfriend) is restrained by some of the cops. We stay with Poole as he helps clear every room with the others.

And then Poole heads out back... walks toward the carport.

Underneath it sits a CAR COVERED BY A TARP.

Poole slowly pulls the tarp off... revealing a BLACK IMPALA.

MURPHY (O.S.)
I'd say we have something to go
at him with now.

Poole looks back at Murphy. Still not sold that Keffe D is their guy.

POOLE
Yeah.

EXT. COMPTON STREET - 1997 - LATER

Evidence, the Impala now sits on the bed of a police truck. More detectives have shown up -- Murphy talks to Tyndall.

MURPHY
Girlfriend hasn't seen him since
yesterday -- lawyer is trying to
track him down.

TYNDALL
Track him down or tip him off?

No one knows. They're all just standing around, waiting to clear out when Poole sees a DARK BLUE SUV coming their way.

The driver parks and gets out... it's Blue Jordans, aka DUANE "KEFFE D" DAVIS.

Burly, gold tooth, has a bit of a drawl and is calm as can fucking be.

KEFFE D
Y'all looking for me?

It takes a moment for the cops to recognize him from his mugshot... and then they don't take any chances.

POOLE
ON THE GROUND!

MURPHY
RIGHT NOW!

TYNDALL
DO IT!

Off Keffe D, doing as told with a sigh...

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE - INTERVIEW ROOM - 1997 - DAY

A TAPE RECORDER separates Poole and Murphy from Keffe D and his nattily dressed lawyer, EDI M.O. FAAL.

FAAL
The vehicle in question has not been driven by my client for more than six months. Other than it being the same model, there is nothing about the vehicle that connects it to the shooting of Biggie Smalls. My client has not been charged with a crime and is cooperating voluntarily.

MURPHY
(to Keffe D)
It's smart to cooperate. Come clean and we'll do everything we can for you.

KEFFE D
Y'all barking up the wrong tree. Wasting a lot of taxpayer money.

MURPHY
Yeah? I hate wasteful spending.

POOLE
Me too. So why don't you point us in the right direction, Keffe?

KEFFE D
Ask and I'll answer.

POOLE
Did you kill Biggie Smalls?

KEFFE D
Fuck no. Wasn't me.

POOLE

Were you at the Petersen Auto Museum, attending the Vibe Party the night he was killed?

KEFFE D

Everybody was. Shit was crazy.

POOLE

Did you drive your Impala there?

FAAL

My client already told you -- the vehicle in question has not been driven by him for more than six months.

MURPHY

(to Keffe D)

You sure about that? Forensics is going to run all kinds of tests.

KEFFE D

I drove a 95 Cutlas, a rental. Was waiting on it when Biggie got shot.

POOLE

Waiting on the street?

KEFFE D

Naw, in the garage. Check the surveillance cameras. Got on a blue jumpsuit and blue Jordans. Standing with my friends Wonder Mike and Wendall.

MURPHY

(sarcastic)

What color were their Jordans?

Keffe D doesn't answer. Poole continues.

POOLE

Let's back up. Did you see Biggie Smalls or Puffy Combs at the party?

KEFFE D

Yeah. Talked to them.

POOLE

For the first time or did you already know them?

KEFFE D

We go back. Did work for Bad Boy.

POOLE

Bad Boy Records? What kind of work?

KEFFE D

Security. Me and my crew made sure no one would fuck with Biggie and Puffy while they were in LA.

MURPHY

Guess you didn't do a good job that night, huh?

Keffe D looks at Murphy, no longer smiling.

KEFFE D

Wasn't doing security that night. That's what I was talking to Puffy about at the party. Asked if he needed protection. He said the FBI was all over him and he didn't want us to catch his heat.

MURPHY

Why was the FBI all over him?

KEFFE D

I don't know. Cuz he's black?

POOLE

Who would want to mess with Puffy and Biggie?

KEFFE D

Shit, come on. Death Row -- Suge.

POOLE

You think that's what happened, Keffe? Suge had Biggie killed?

KEFFE D

It ain't snitching if everybody knows it's true.

MURPHY

It ain't anything without evidence.

POOLE

So there was nothing between you and Puffy or Biggie at all? They didn't owe you money?

And Keffe D *hesitates*. For just a moment, but still. It's enough to make Faal rise to his feet.

FAAL
This interview is over.

MURPHY
Bullshit it is.

FAAL
Are you going to charge him with something?

Murphy looks to Poole. The answer's no, they don't have enough. Keffe D and Faal head for the door.

POOLE
Just one more thing, Keffe. Why would someone as successful as Puffy Combs have to hire Crips to provide security?

FAAL
My client is not a gang member.

MURPHY
Please, that's all you represent.

KEFFE D
(answering Poole)
Who else Puff gonna hire when he comes out here?

POOLE
I don't know, professionals?

KEFFE D
Like the police? They all run with Death Row.

With that, Faal ushers Keffe D out. And off Poole...

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE**INT. TASK FORCE OFFICE - 2006 - DAY**

A total dump. It was used for storage before. Scattered desks, stacked chairs, etc... Kading and Dupree have moved all the Biggie files in, are sweating as they take a break.

DUPREE

400 million dollars at stake and
we're working out of a basement.
Probably asbestos up in here.

KADING

You can breathe clean air in your
uniform if you want.

DUPREE

(smiles)
I'm fine.

The door opens and Tyndall enters, pushing a cart stacked high with more case files.

TYNDALL

Special delivery. From the FBI.

DUPREE

Jesus.

TYNDALL

You must be Dupree.

DUPREE

(shakes his hand)
Good to meet you, Lieutenant.

TYNDALL

Call me Brian.
(to Kading)
Who else you want to bring in?

KADING

Actually, I was thinking we should
turn this into a federal task force.

TYNDALL

Yeah, that's not gonna happen.

KADING

You told me I could have whatever I
want -- *whoever* I want.

TYNDALL

And I gave you this guy.

(to Dupree)

Still using an illegally cloned
cell phone, Officer?

DUPREE

That was five years ago. Stupid
mistake I more than paid a price for.

TYNDALL

(waves Dupree off)

We all got our crosses.

(to Kading)

Why federal?

KADING

You know why. Resources, reach. We
don't go big on this it's not going
to work. The Torres task force was
federal and that's why I'm here.

TYNDALL

This is different.

KADING

You're right. This is a murder that
happened ten years ago and the
victim was famous. There aren't
going to be any new players.

TYNDALL

You're losing me.

KADING

I'm saying we are going to have to
lean on people like they have never
been leaned on before. Stronger
sentencing guidelines -- the
federal kind -- can only help.

TYNDALL

Even if I agreed with you --

DUPREE

How it's going to look?

Tyndall turns to Dupree.

TYNDALL

How's *what* going to look?

DUPREE

Voletta Wallace thinks the LAPD played a direct part in her son's murder. And now only members of the LAPD are going to help prove her right or wrong?

A beat. Tyndall knows Dupree is right.

TYNDALL

I'll work on it.

KADING

Thanks.

Tyndall doesn't answer, just leaves as...

INT. ROBBERY HOMICIDE DIVISION - 1997 - DAY

Poole works at his desk, looks up to see Murphy holding two reports.

MURPHY

Got good news and bad news. Which do you want first?

POOLE

Up to you.

MURPHY

The shell casings found at the scene. They're rare.

POOLE

How rare?

MURPHY

Only two distributors in the entire country.

POOLE

Which will make matching the casings to a suspect that much easier. What's the bad news?

MURPHY

Keffe D's Impala. Nothing inside it that ties it to the shooting -- and it's impossible to determine the last time it was driven.

POOLE

So we can't catch him in a lie.

MURPHY

He's hiding something. And if we can connect him to the type of ammo --

POOLE

(snaps)

How the hell are we supposed to do that when we can't even connect him to a weapon?

MURPHY

Easy, I'm just talking.

Poole takes a breath. Something's clearly eating at him.

POOLE

I think we should start showing Kevin Gaines picture to witnesses.

He holds up Gaines' photo. Murphy shakes his head.

MURPHY

This shit again...

POOLE

Keffe D said the LAPD ran with Death Row.

MURPHY

That could mean anything.

POOLE

Let's find out *what* it means. We know for a fact that Gaines knew Knight.

MURPHY

So now Gaines was banging Suge Knight's ex while also acting as some kind of hitman for him?

POOLE

I didn't say that.

MURPHY

But it sounds like you are. With no evidence to back it up. You go down that road and it leaks...

(listen to me)

Russ, the press won't care that you don't have any evidence. It would be a nightmare for the department.

A beat. Poole hears him.

POOLE
We at least need to go to Vegas.

MURPHY
Vegas?

POOLE
Smalls was killed because Tupac Shakur was. Their murders are connected. You know, I know it, everyone knows it.

MURPHY
No. I don't know that.
(beat)
But hey, anything to keep you away from your sad apartment, right?

POOLE
What?

MURPHY
Give me some credit, partner.
(points at it)
Got that nice family photo on your desk but I've never heard you talk to your wife once.

Poole says nothing, busted. Murphy walks away and moments later another DETECTIVE walks over.

DETECTIVE
Poole, you have a visitor.

POOLE
Who?

INT. PARKER CENTER - VISITORS ROOM - 1997 - DAY

VOLETTA WALLACE turns from the window when Poole enters. She's 44, wears glasses, has a slight Jamaican accent. An unbelievably strong and intelligent woman -- so many of her years have been hard, but nothing like the past two months. Biggie was her only son, her world.

POOLE
Miss Wallace?

VOLETTA
Yes. You are Detective Russell Poole? The one now in charge of investigating my son's murder?

POOLE

I am.

VOLETTA

Why haven't you called me?

Poole searches for the right words.

POOLE

I'm sorry for your loss. But I
wasn't the first detective on...

(beat)

No, you're right. I should have
called you. But I promise this
department is going to do whatever
it takes to find out who killed
your son.

VOLETTA

Listen to yourself. Trying to
convince me the LAPD cares about
the murder of a young black man.

POOLE

I care about it very much, ma'am.

VOLETTA

Then why did I have to come see you?

Poole knows there's no excuse or answer that would satisfy
Violetta. She's in such pain.

POOLE

Do you have any information that
could help with the investigation?

VOLETTA

The investigation...

(beat)

I knew nothing about The Notorious
B.I.G... Biggie Smalls. I only knew
about Christopher. So no, I'm
afraid I can not help you. I just
wanted to meet the man in charge.

And Violetta starts to leave.

POOLE

Tell me about him. Tell me about
Christopher.

Violetta stops, looks at Poole. Doesn't know what to make of
him. *This cop*. But the words just pour out. They need to.

VOLETTA

He was my only son. His father abandoned us when he was two. But I raised Christopher to be a positive person, to cherish life every single day. They say he dealt drugs when he was younger -- I didn't want to believe it. "Not my Christopher" I would say. I knew nothing of that side of him -- I knew nothing of so many things they say about him. I didn't even listen to his music until after he died. And when I did... the profanity, it made me cry. His songs were grotesque stories about the stink of the world... but they also read so beautifully to me.

(beat, strong)

Christopher was loyal. Christopher was a giver. All this stuff about him and Tupac. They used to be friends. Do you hear me? *Friends*.

Poole can only listen. Off Voletta...

INT. TUPAC'S HOUSE - 1993 - DAY

The same day as the freestyle session. Biggie and Tupac chill in private.

BIGGIE

What's Janet Jackson like?

TUPAC

Shit, wanted me to take an AIDS test.

BIGGIE

What? For a movie?

TUPAC

No lie. Everybody came at me. Producer, director... Told them if I'm really gonna lay with her, then I'll take *four* tests. Otherwise hell no -- shit's disrespectful.

BIGGIE

Least you doing movies though. Selling mad records.

TUPAC

You will too.

BIGGIE
Sound like Puff.
(beat, serious)
My girl's pregnant.

TUPAC
Yeah?

BIGGIE
For real.

Tupac considers this... then flashes his killer smile.

TUPAC
Well your people ain't gotta worry
bout nothin' because daddy gonna be
a star. Not as big as this nigga
Tupac I know, but...

They both laugh.

TUPAC
Yo. Want to see something?

CUT TO:

Tupac unzipping a LARGE DUFFEL BAG FULL OF GUNS. Machine
guns, pistols... it's crazy.

BIGGIE
Damn, Pac.

Tupac picks up a machine gun, does his best Tony Montana.

TUPAC
Say hello to my little friend.

Biggie ducks out of the way. Tupac laughs.

TUPAC
Nigga, they ain't loaded.
(beat)
Go ahead.

As Biggie sorts through the guns...

INT. TASK FORCE OFFICE - 2006 - NIGHT

A TIMELINE is under construction. It's heavy in detail, with
lines of association showing connections between every player
in the case. There are photos of people we have met (Biggie
and Tupac at the top) and more that we will. Judging by the
timeline's size and the state of the office, it's taken weeks.

Dupree is staring at the timeline when Kading enters.

KADING

Tyndall came through. Got the greenlight to go outside the LAPD for the task force. Feds, Compton, whoever we want.

Dupree just nods. Kading looks at him.

KADING

What's up?

DUPREE

Biggie was 24 when he was killed. Tupac was 25. Kids, man.

A beat.

KADING

I just want to solve this thing.

DUPREE

No matter where it leads.

KADING

No matter where it leads.

And as they get back to work...

EXT. TUPAC'S HOUSE - 1993 - DAY

Biggie, Tupac, and Tupac's friends run around the backyard with unloaded guns. It's like their playing army, cops and robbers, totally innocent fun.

Off Biggie and Tupac "shooting" each other and laughing...

END OF PILOT