

SV - CHAPTER IX.

We hear the sound of splashing oars. Gently drifting currents. It's peaceful.

Then - a strange, almost calming slithering sound.

HAYWARD:

(Mildly)

It's nice out here.

Good to get away from people.

The slithering continues in the silence.

HAYWARD is rowing STANTON - now transformed into a hideous crustacean creature, as from Episode 6 - upriver.

HAYWARD:

(Continuing to talk)

They'll take care of the hotel, too. You don't need to worry about that. They've got these police auctions when there's no clear line of inheritance.

They fix the place up, clean up the, uh, bloodstains and whatnot. Looks like a different place, you'd never believe it.

Slithering in the silence.

HAYWARD:

Matter of fact, perhaps I'll put in a bid for her myself. I could give up this line of work, move out here permanent.

Convert the old place into a gourmet fish restaurant. One of those places that does experimental flavours, the kind of dishes that shouldn't make sense but they do anyway.

(Casting about for inspiration)

Trout and pineapple.

Prawn and...liquorice.

Slightly heightened slithering.

HAYWARD:

(As if Stanton has responded to him)

No, you're right.

I wouldn't eat that.

The sound of splashing oars.

HAYWARD:

(Narrating)

The hotelier doesn't talk, but that's okay.

He just watches me, through swollen black-button eyes, his tendrilled mouth smelling and searching at the air, emitting some kind of pungent black ink into the bottom of the rowboat, apparently quite contented with our situation.

He doesn't seem to want to attack me. He barely seems to register me.

Once the hotelier was no longer able to draw - and he drew relentlessly, inscrutable swirls and patterns of that same ink across the walls until I was finally able to lure him with heaps of maggot-bait up out of the basement where he'd been imprisoned - he seemed to forget his own purpose. He's been dormant ever since.

There might be prawn in the origins of him. Perhaps that's why he doesn't like my cooking ideas. A little crawfish in the maw of his mouth, too. A little crab in the stalks of his glistening eyes.

A little of his past life, too, in the shrunken human arms that hang limply from the front of his carapaced chest.

'Just get rid of the evidence,' the higher-ups told me, on the morning after the fishing boat came drifting into town and everyone in Marcel's Crossing started screaming like the old churches were rolling back into town and sacrificing firstborns without the proper paperwork.

They said,

'Take pictures if you need to, but get rid of what's been made, and do it quietly. We can't afford further panic in this territory, and these local coppers, they can't be trusted.'

'Maybe some of them are worshipping this podunk river god, in secret. Maybe **they** are part of the problem. Did you ever stop to think about that, Hayward?'

Hardly seems fair, but I do as I'm told.

The oars stop splashing.

HAYWARD:

(Aloud, to STANTON)

You know the best god I ever met - they called him Henge. He haunted a village up north.

He didn't ask much of you. He liked keepsakes. Things that were no longer useful.

Maybe you had a ring you didn't want to wear any more because it hurt too much. Or you had a key that you weren't going to use for a very long time, but you wanted to be able to find it again when you did.

Or maybe your kid would be born with their eyes and throat shut tight and you didn't know how to move on.

You'd wrap your keepsake in green cotton, and you'd bury under a pile of pebbles in a place only you knew. And you'd make the prayer-marks so that Henge would know just what was being offered.

And then one day, years later, when you were ready to pick up whatever you'd left behind but perhaps you didn't even know it yet yourself, you'd turn and look outside your window, and the ring would be hanging from a tree-branch outside. The key would be resting on your sill.

There'd be a newborn child, wrapped in green cotton, resting upon your doorstep.

I never understood what Henge wanted with that stuff, but I understood the appeal of going through it. How nice it was to feel that someone had stopped to pick up the things you needed to drop.

I don't think I understand the people who did this to you.

Not convinced they understand it themselves.

STANTON continues to merrily slither about on the other side of the boat.

HAYWARD:

Can you tell me where those two were headed, at least?

What they were hoping to find?

Slithering.

We hear HAYWARD, quietly, cocking his revolver.

HAYWARD:

Uh-huh.

You think the humane thing to do would be to find you a glass tank somewhere, see if we can do some tests and figure this whole thing out?

Slithering.

HAYWARD sighs.

HAYWARD:
(*Again, as if STANTON has spoken*)
Agreed.

We hear the boat creak as he stands upright and aims.

HAYWARD:
(*Having a thought*)
Tuna and peaches. That's something I could eat.

We hear a gunshot.

Suddenly STANTON's slithering becomes an enraged shriek, and the boat rocks violently as he lurches forward-

Another gunshot. And another.

STANTON's shriek degrades into something plaintive and complaining as he slumps down and dies.

HAYWARD:
(*A little sad, hating the noise*)
Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know.

The boat rocks - and a heavy splash as the body hits the water.

HAYWARD sits back down, after a moment, and begins to row again. We hear the oars splash.

All is peaceful.

HAYWARD:
(*Softly, to himself*)
These are the Silt Verses. And these are our disciples, in order of their arrival.

Jimmie Yamaguchi.
Mintaka Angell.
Calder Dougherty.
And Jonah Knight.

Written by Jon Ware and produced by Muna Hussen.
Audio production by Sammy Holden.

POLICE CAR, INT

We hear the car door open.

A crackle as HAYWARD picks up the tannoy and turns it on.

HAYWARD:
Felix, Felix, receiving Iris 9. You have been mustered.

FELIX:
(Over tannoy, audibly angry and worried)
Hayward? Where have you been?

FELIX's voice is distant and keeps cutting out.

HAYWARD:
Doing as I was told. Disposing of the hotelier.

FELIX:
(Over tannoy)
We're in trouble, Hayward. The Lieutenant-Colonel heard there'd been a second miracle.

They're worried you might not be able to close this one. They're-

She cuts out.

HAYWARD:
Felix? You're cutting out.

FELIX:
(Over tannoy)
-did you hear me? I said they're sending someone else.

A real tough customer, Hayward. You need to-

She cuts out again.

HAYWARD:
(Annoyed)
I don't need them to send anyone. I've barely begun. I already have my suspects. I can close a case as well as anybody.

Did you load the two profiles into the system like I asked? What came back, huh? Do we, we even have a proper file on this river-god?

Because if Criminal Records have lost the file, that's not my **fault**. I'm not responsible.

The tannoy just faintly buzzes.

HAYWARD:
(Increasingly panicked)
Who, uh, are they sending, anyhow?

Felix?

Felix?

He clicks the tannoy off. A moment of silence.

And then he begins to audibly smack the tannoy against his own radio, harder and harder, venting his fury.

HAYWARD:
Godsdamned hick signal in this godsdamned hick town-

Damn it!

DAMN THEM!

He sits in the car, in silence.

HOTEL ROOM, INT.

We hear the hotel door open and close.

A lamp clicks on.

A creak as HAYWARD lies on the bed.

HAYWARD:
(Narrating)
You're nineteen years old.

You've completed your seven weeks of training. You've been assigned your corner desk in the Furnace District station in Southern Glottage. But when you're not out on patrol, you don't really know what you're

supposed to be doing, and nobody is willing to give you any genuine casework, so you spend a lot of time doing what you're doing now.

Typing out your grocery list for this evening, frowning formidably as you examine it, then deleting the entire thing and beginning again.

And then, quite suddenly, a bell begins to ring. And everyone, all around the bullpen, gets to their feet, jostling and laughing amongst themselves.

You don't know yet how things work.

You don't know that when the Stink begins to gather around an Investigating Officer, when others begin to whisper that they're no longer capable of closing cases, it tends to only get worse.

The Stink.

It lingers in the corridors, in the stares and hisses of those watching the unhappy failure trudge by. It builds, and it worsens.

They're handed the unsolvable cases, the absurd cases, the situations that defy all logic and which nobody else wants to even think about.

Nobody stops to help them. Old friends begin to avoid them. Because the smell - pungent, and florid, and foul - is simply too much to bear.

They can scrub themselves clean for hours at a time. Spray torrents of expensive scent across themselves. The Stink leaks through all the same.

Gradually, the Stink's chosen sacrifice begins to understand the inevitability of what they're becoming.

They find that their desk has been moved out of the bullpen, into the stairwell, and chained up with a thick padlock against the pipes there, so they can complain and struggle and yank all they want, but eventually they have no choice if they want to finish the day's work other than to grumblingly take their seat in the stairwell and accept their place.

But the sacrifice doesn't run; they don't try and flee their contract. They stick around.

And that's how it gets them.

Because the sacrifice wants to believe that if they just close that one case, if they just put the pieces together in the right way, they can turn back the tide of who they've become.

And so you're standing there, as the bell rings and a slovenly, white mutton-chopped officer is dragged forth from the interrogation room. A collar has been fixed around his neck, on the end of a long restraining rod, and he dances and struggles unhappily as he's led through the bullpen.

One of us happily grabs a casefile and stuffs it down his shirt.

"Kerling, **you**'re the one who couldn't close the Silver Avenue burglaries."

And he follows up with a swift kick to Kerling's thigh.

Someone else stuffs a wad of paper into Kerling's open, slobbering mouth.

"Kerling, **you**'re the one who couldn't catch the Willington slasher in time, you bungler."

"You couldn't save them, Kerling. Why couldn't you?"

He's sobbing, flailing frantically and ineffectually, as they chase him through the bullpen and out into the yard, and the rest of us gather at the windows while they continue striking at him with their fists and their boots and their batons, and the crumpled casefile paper spills forth from every crack of his gross and shamefully untidy uniform as he stumbles to the ground, bruised and bloody, and finally the participating officers of Furnace District gather around him in a circle, draw their service revolvers, and fire a ten-gun salute down into his trembling body.

It's like breathing out.

You feel the tension across the bullpen dissipating as the echoes of the gunshots fade. The Stink has been driven back for another day, everyone is thinking.

But you, you don't understand why any of this is happening yet.

You're just so relieved...that it isn't you.

A long, thoughtful silence.

CAR, INT, DAY

The roar of a car - drawing to a halt. The engine idles.

HAYWARD is coming to pick up his new partner.

We hear his horn sound as he watches someone approaching.

HAYWARD:
(Calling jovially through the glass, mouthing)
Yes - yes, over here! I'm...I'm your ride!
(Under his breath)
Asshole doesn't look so tough.

We hear the car door open - and slam shut as DAGGLER takes his seat next to HAYWARD.

DAGGLER is deeply intimidating and highly self-confident. His every word is a growl.

In another show, he'd be the hard-boiled detective protagonist.

HAYWARD:
(Faux-chummily)
How you doing. I'm...I'm Hayward.

DAGGLER:
(Curtly)
Daggler.

Let's get going, huh.

HAYWARD starts the car up again, and begins to drive.

DAGGLER:
(Grunting)
Your radio there looks busted. Tannoy's in bad shape as well.

HAYWARD:
Yes. I know.
(Explaining himself)
The, uh, tannoy damage is largely superficial. Just broke the radio dial, that's all.

DAGGLER:
(Uncaring)
So what's the report?

HAYWARD hastens to make a good impression.

HAYWARD:

Uh, well. I arrived here a couple of nights ago.

Reports of false-faith activity in the area, and there was this fishing boat that had gone missing, the crew lost.

This place used to be sacred to some old forbidden river-god before the Purges, so there's a lot of sensitivity here.

Then...in the course of my investigations, I encountered a local hotelier who'd been hallowed. Transfigured.

There's no licence or contract left behind, and no approved faith has claimed responsibility - so I'm guessing it was the same culprits, the disciples of this river-god.

I called it in, and then the very next morning - the fishing boat came back, as well. The crew, again, transfigured. Some kind of miracle.

So whatever old faith used to be active around here, it looks like it's come back swinging.

Silence. It's deeply uncomfortable.

HAYWARD:

(Pressing on)

The good news is, we already have an idea of who's responsible.

I met this pair of out-of-towners who came into Marcel's Crossing just before it all kicked off, and we've raised their descriptions in the system and we're just waiting to hear back, and uh, it's only a matter of time before we track them down.

DAGGLER:

(Sounding scornful)

You found your suspects. And then you let them go?

HAYWARD:

(Getting wound up)

Well, I didn't know at the time that they, uh - I've told my story out of order. I think I've probably confused things unnecessarily.

Anyway.

My point is, we're on the case, and we'll find them.

DAGGLER:

(Sarcastically)

Glad to hear everything's in hand.

HAYWARD:
(Unconvincingly)
Oh, it's in hand.

They drive for a moment in silence.

Then there's a sudden, unpleasant sound.

DAGGLER is sniffing the air, slowly and deliberately.

HAYWARD:
(Hesitantly)
You...all right there, Dagglar?

DAGGLER:
Could be nothing.

Just thought for a second there was a nasty stink in the air.

HAYWARD:
(Trying to joke)
Probably the exhaust.

DAGGLER:
(Chuckling unpleasantly to himself)
Hnh.

They continue to drive in silence.

MOTEL, INT

The sound of the motel door opening.

DAGGLER rings the reception bell once, almost thoughtfully, as he enters.

Then he rings it again, more insistently.

HAYWARD:
Whole place is empty. The hotelier was the only one working here,
and he, well...you know what happened to him.

Felix says we can stay here as long as the investigation needs it.

DAGGLER:
Won't need long.

What room are you?

HAYWARD:
Uh, 203.

But like I say, the place is empty, so plenty of space for b-

DAGGLER:
I'll take 204.

Get your radio fixed before we head out. I like to listen to a show when I'm driving.

HAYWARD:
You're driv...?
(Trying to take it all in his stride)
Sure thing, partner. Sure.

Just, uh...let me know if you need anything else, won't you?

DAGGLER:
(Scoffing)
Hnh.

He departs. We hear his footfalls leaving.

CAR, INT, DAY

The sound of HAYWARD attempting to fix his radio with a screwdriver.

HAYWARD:
(Muttering under his breath)
Come on, come on, son of a-

Beside him, the tannoy buzzes.

FELIX:
-Hayward? Come in?

HAYWARD lifts the tannoy.

HAYWARD:
Hey, Felix.
(With an unhappy sigh)
Just, uh, trying to fix the radio.

FELIX:
Did you pick up Dagglar?

HAYWARD:
(Sarcastically)
Yes, and we're firm friends.

Who is this asshole, Felix?

FELIX:
He's from the north country. Closed a big case in the past, connected to this god.

Do you remember the Drowning Song?

HAYWARD:
Should I?

FELIX:
Outbreak of ritual self-sacrifice in schools up and down the Peninsula, maybe a decade ago now.

Nobody could figure out how it was happening. But Dagglar, he brought the suspects to trial. Got a full confession.

HAYWARD:
And that was **this** god, that did all of that? This podunk river-god?

FELIX:
These people have been looking for a fight since the time of Devlin. They've got a lot of grudges to bear.

Hayward. Watch out for Dagglar.

HAYWARD:
Why?

FELIX:
He's got one of those rhetorical gods, for personal worship.

HAYWARD:
(A little shocked)
They banned those from general use.

FELIX:
He's an exception. Officially licenced by his station and everything.

According to his personnel file, he's had it since a child and it's a 'necessity for his working health'. He gets nervous at trial and it helps him concentrate.

Lot of complaints stacking up about him over the years. None of them ever go anywhere. Some of the officers who raise them find themselves in trouble shortly afterwards.

If he thinks closing this case is a competition-

HAYWARD:

(Grimly)

-it'll be my word against his.

All right. I'd better go, Felix.

Thanks for the heads-up.

A click as HAYWARD replaces the tannoy.

Then he gets back to fiddling with the radio.

HAYWARD:

(Narrating)

Not much you can do to avoid getting the Stink on you - if you're insistent on doing things by the book.

But once upon the time, there was a roaring trade in personal worship across the Peninsulan police force.

It's unreliable, but it can be done; you buy a fragment of some old broken-down shrine on the black market, a chipped finger or tendril from the reliquaries of a forgotten or outlawed god.

And you worship it, hanging from your neck or stitched into your chest, day after day, in the hope that you can tease something out of it generate some kind of grace for yourself.

A god of bullets so you'll never miss. A bureaucratic god to help get you through the paperwork.

And - formed from the smashed-up statuary and scriptures of the great propaganda deities that helped to turn the tide of the last war - a rhetorical god to help your truth find sympathetic ears.

Just in case that witness turns against you, or your evidence might not hold up to the closest of scrutiny.

Not a liar's god. You can't call it a liar's god. The Union were very clear on that. Even when they were banned.

'We can't open ourselves up to be counter-sued. Get things wrong and every successful case across the past twenty years could be thrown out! The official line is - we have reconsidered the use of rhetorical worship in courtroom scenarios. Nothing more.'

Somehow, Dagglar has managed to hold onto his own little piece of history. I wonder if he-

HAYWARD breaks off. He is startled by the sight of DAGGLER standing over him.

HAYWARD:
(Exclaiming violently)
Sainted current!

DAGGLER:
Time's up.

Let's go see your bookseller.

And, uh, Hayward. It's better if you don't refer to me as 'partner' while we're interviewing him.

Gives the impression that we're on an equal footing.

CAR, INT, DAY

The roar of the car engine.

The radio crackles faintly, now apparently fixed.

SID WRIGHT:
(On the radio, increasingly manic and afraid)
And that is six o'clock, faithful listeners.

Another beautiful morning. I've lasted longer than any of them thought I would.

(Beginning to giggle)
I can see them on the other side of the glass, staring in at me and then arguing and then staring at me again. My producer doesn't know what to make of this. He can't tell if I'm a miracle or a threat.

My predecessor - may she never know rest - lasted less than ten days before she gave out.

Let them stare. I've passed beyond their understanding.

I can bear witness to the miracle of myself, even if nobody else is willing to bear the weight.

(With a heavy sigh)

Next up, it's time for the latest track from-

DAGGLER reaches over and changes the station.

We hear him try various stations.

DAGGLER:

Ugh.

Nothing out here worth listening to.

HAYWARD:

(Trying to strike up a conversation)

My handler said you'd encountered this faith before.

DAGGLER:

Once.

HAYWARD:

I don't suppose you could brief me? The records that came through were patchy, lots of retractions-

DAGGLER:

(Carelessly)

Don't worry about it, Hayward. These people are criminals. That's all that matters.

It's not what they believe. It's how they use it.

Ah!

He's reached a station he likes.

The radio is playing a jaunty, old-style serial adventure show.

It sounds horrendously bad.

RADIO ANNOUNCER:

(Very dramatically)

Last week, on the Adventures of Carlie Cape and Pipsqueak - our heroes found themselves trapped in the lair of the Phantom Faithless.

But Carlie has one trick up his sleeve, when he dons the sacred earplugs...the power of the Warbler!

DAGGLER:
(Genuinely cheerful for perhaps the first time)
Heh-heh-heh!

Now this is my *show*!

DAGGLER begins to cheerfully bark along to the show's introduction, hamming it up along with the RADIO ANNOUNCER.

RADIO ANNOUNCER/DAGGLER:
(Very dramatically)
In brightest day, in darkest night
I loose the Warbler's mighty cry
My god comes to me in times of woe,
With a voice that makes villains' heads explode.

HAYWARD:
I, er, I don't think I know this one.

DAGGLER ignores him. Just keeps going.

RADIO ANNOUNCER/DAGGLER:
(Very dramatically)
Evildoers, everywhere, must fear,
For they cannot flee the truth they hear.
Come to wreck each horrid crew,
It's Carlie Cape-
(In a much more high-pitched voice)
-and Pipsqueak, too!

HAYWARD:
(Immensely disturbed, muttering)
Glad you're...enjoying yourself.

The roar of the car engine sweeps us away.

BOOKSELLER, INT, DAY

We hear the shop bell ringing, just like in Episode 2.

It rings twice as both detectives enter the bookshop.

PETERSON comes out to meet HAYWARD and DAGGLER.

PETERSON:
(Gentle and absent-minded)
Hello, there.

They ignore him, inspecting the shelves.

DAGGLER:
(To HAYWARD)
Make a note of this one. 'Wind Deities Of The Lower Delta, Volume Four.' Contraband. There's gods in here that shouldn't exist.

HAYWARD:
Got it.

PETERSON:
(Trying to get their intention)
Are you gentlemen in search of something particular, or...?

HAYWARD:
Peterson, isn't it? We heard you were the expert on local history in these parts.

DAGGLER:
(Menacingly)
That's not all they told us.

HAYWARD:
We're looking to learn more about the Trawler-man's faith. The Parish, they call it, don't they?

PETERSON:
They certainly used to. I...don't think I have any books on that.

HAYWARD:
We're looking to find out more about the recent events at Marcel's Crossing.

We believe we may be looking at an outbreak of crimes connected to this god.

As an expert on the subject, would you agree with that view?

PETERSON:
Recent events...gentlemen, you'll have to excuse me.

I don't get out much. I can't say I fully understand what you're referring to.

But DAGGLER has already lost patience.

DAGGLER:

We can't expect cooperation from him, Hayward.

One cruel old faith protects another.

(To PETERSON)

You still keeping your brother upstairs, Peterson? Has he hatched into a moth yet? Or is he just spewing ink all over your floorboards and eating garbage, your sainted maggot?

Bug-worshipping freak.

PETERSON:

Gentlemen, I'm trying my best to cooperate. Please, just - be patient with me. You don't need to- aah!

A thud and a crash of falling books. DAGGLER has knocked him down.

DAGGLER:

You don't seem to understand, old man. Investigating Officer Hayward and I are servants of the Cloak. We don't make mistakes.

We find criminals. And if we say that our criminal is you, then it's you, and you have a responsibility to inform us if there are any more likely suspects we should be looking for.

Hey, if I stepped on your sainted brother's head, what do you think would come out?

PETERSON:

(Terrified)

I...I...wait. I'll tell you the same thing I told the ones who came before.

Just...wait...

HAYWARD:

(Intervening, to DAGGLER)

Get off him for a second. Just...get off him.

(To PETERSON)

What did you say? Who came before?

PETERSON is breathing heavily and unhappily.

PETERSON:

Your fellow detectives.

DAGGLER:

(Growling)

There haven't **been** any fellow detectives.

PETERSON:

I know what I saw.

They said they were the Scrivener's acolytes, but they weren't anything of the kind. And their eyes lit up the first second I spoke about your Parish.

HAYWARD:

Can you tell us anything about them?

PETERSON:

A nice young man and an older woman. I didn't get his name, but she called herself Sandra. Seemed angry about something, I don't know what.

HAYWARD:

It's them, Dagglar.

(To PETERSON)

What did you tell them?

PETERSON, terrified, has now begun to mutter a prayer to himself.

PETERSON:

(To himself, desperately-)

Upon black ink and rotten parchment, truth shall be revealed.

DAGGLER:

Answer him, old man!

Answer him, damn it!

PETERSON:

(To himself)

Upon black ink and rotten parchment, truth shall be revealed!

DAGGLER:

That's it.

We hear the sound of a thump. PETERSON cries out.

And, gradually, we hear the rising roar of the car again.

WOODS, EXT, DAY

HAYWARD and DAGGLER are standing in front of the old church from Episode 4, in the woods.

HAYWARD:

(Narrating)

And then we're standing in front of a burnt-out house in the old woods. The long grass around it is blooming happily with splendid white birch.

The house itself is blackened ruins. Shattered windows.

Almost nothing left of it.

Whatever happened here looks recent.

And there are tyre tracks in the bracken, as well.

A crunch of feet on leaves as DAGGLER walks over to HAYWARD.

DAGGLER:

Likely this was one of their old churches, just like the bookseller said.

I'm thinking they came across it, took what they could plunder, and then burnt it to make sure we couldn't find anything in the wreckage.

HAYWARD:

You're certain?

DAGGLER:

Like I said, I know these people. They've been building up their spite for three generations. They'd do anything to cover their tracks.

Let's ask Central if they have any news yet from upriver. That's the way they'll be headed.

He turns to go. HAYWARD is hesitant to intervene.

HAYWARD:

The bookseller...things went too far back there.

DAGGLER:

The Cloak understands that a small blood sacrifice may be required in pursuit of an investigation.

He's alive, isn't he?

HAYWARD:
He could press charges.

DAGGLER:
Wouldn't serve him.

You want to see something special, Hayward?

HAYWARD:
(Narrating)
He reaches under his shirt. Produces something, dangling from a string.

It's a tongue.

No, that should be - a succession of tongues. Dried and withered, sliced and stitched together into something long and ungainly with multiple lopping fingers that unrolls as he unclasps the iron hook that holds the entire thing together, hanging down over his chest like a necktie.

DAGGLER:
This is Coiling Speaks. Personal god of mine. I've had him since I was a boy. Grandpa stole him from the wreckage of Nesh, the temples of their high propagandists when we beat back the Straits. Passed him down to Daddy, who passed him on to me.

I love him more than anything.

Nobody's ever caught me in a lie, Hayward. They can't make it stick to me.

When I take a perp to court, he goes down. And when someone tries to screw with me, well, it's amazing how quickly that can turn around on them.

The rest of you boys can whisper to the Cloak as much as you like. I abide by my Speaks, and he abides by me.

HAYWARD:
(Unnerved)
And what does he take from you in return?

DAGGLER:
(Kindly, for the first time)
Want to find out?

Oh, I don't mind sharing, Hayward. Not with my partner, so long as he's looking out for me like I look out for him.

What do you say?

HAYWARD says nothing.

DAGGLER:

That's right. Stick with me, kid. I'll make this case. Maybe we'll even get that Stink off you.

HAYWARD:

What do you...

(Panicking)

I can't smell anything.

DAGGLER:

You will.

We hear the car roaring, one final time...

MOTEL, INT

...which becomes the noise of a roaring shower.

HAYWARD:

(Narrating, with increasing intensity)

There's no smell on me.

I know that.

This entire territory reeks already, of fish, of stagnant and polluted waters from the great factories upriver. The foul aromas linger in the dilapidated places everywhere around us.

But I, I don't smell. This is a simple case, and I know who I'm looking for. My pair of birdwatchers in their van.

I don't need Dagglar. I'm going to close it, just like I've closed so many others.

I've proven myself to all of them, time and time again.

The Stink hasn't found me. It's not going to find me. I have no intention of ever becoming a victim.

And yet, tonight, I stand in the shower, and I scrub.

I scrub until the tiny motel bottle of shower gel is emptied. Next, the conditioner. Then the shampoo.

And when it's all gone, I slip down to the abandoned motel back rooms in my towel and I root around until I find the bucket that's labelled 'cleaning supplies'.

I take soap, and chemical wipes, and a rough scouring cloth.

I scrub until the skin comes off, red and raw, and the scouring cloth is swimming in the blood that pools around my feet-

(The pain coming through into his voice)

I scrub.

I scrub.

OUTRO.

END OF EPISODE.