

HOLY ORDERS
EPISODE ONE: BUCKET OF STONES

Written by

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TRIGGER WARNING

This series contains
references to child abuse,
molestation, and rape.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

A small hunting cabin sits in a clearing in the woods.

The trees are barren, the cabin in disrepair.

A RED BIKE lays in the dirt, carelessly dropped.

GFX: "1998"

INT. CABIN - NIGHT

HEATHER MONTFORD (18) stands shivering. A streak of moonlight reveals her round face.

A tear leaks from her eye to her chapped lips.

She is lost in thought, in memory.

She sparks a lighter, lights a candle on a small table.

The room is dirty and disheveled with trash strewn about, graffitied walls.

A WOODEN CHAIR sits in the middle of the room.

She wipes her eyes on her Carhartt jacket.

CREAK.

A noise on the porch startles her, she darts her eyes to the door when--

SOMEONE opens the door.

The night and the porch are dark, Heather can't see outside.

HEATHER
Father?

A PERSON STEPS IN FROM THE DARK.

The PERSON wears black heavy winter clothing, a ski mask.

Heather backs away slowly.

The PERSON approaches, pulls a PISTOL from the jacket pocket.

Heather knocks over the chair as she backs away quicker.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
(frantic)
What do you want?

She looks around and grabs a LARGE STONE from the ground.

THE PERSON APPROACHES QUICKER.

HEATHER HURLS THE STONE, SCREAMING. IT MISSES.

THE PERSON RUSHES HER.

They grab each other, grappling.

Heather fights for her life, kicking, screaming.

THE GUN GOES OFF, HITTING THE CEILING.

The person pushes and SLAMS her against the wall.

They fall together, the assailant landing on top of Heather.

Heather reaches up and grabs the ski mask, ripping it off.

CLOSE ON: Heather's face. Realizing.

She pants, bleeding from her nose, horrified

The gun is pressed against her temple.

HEATHER (CONT'D)
(hysterical)
Why?

ANGLE ON: A GRAFFITIED PICTURE ON THE WALL.

A PENTAGRAM spray painted in red.

The gun fires. CRACK!

We hear the sounds of the killer standing up.

ANGLE ON: THE WOODEN CHAIR ON IT'S SIDE.

We hear walking.

ANGLE ON: THE STONE LAYING ON THE GROUND.

We hear the door close. Then silence.

ANGLE ON: THE CANDLE BURNS OUT.

Heather lies dead on the floor.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

CUE MUSIC: "Holy Orders Theme."

SLOW MOTION.

CLOSE ON: POLICE LIGHTS FLASHING.

Several cop cars are lined up, headlights trained on the cabin.

In the distance, a NEIGHBORING HOUSE has it's porch lights on.

EXT. NEIGHBORING HOUSE - NIGHT

Through a side window we see YOUNG AMY (7) watching the police activity.

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

A PRIEST who we will come to know as FATHER GARVEY (30s) is escorted out of the cabin in handcuffs.

Garvey stares at his feet as he's dragged forward.

He's shoved into a COP CAR.

EXT. NEIGHBORING HOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: YOUNG AMY SQUINTING

EXT. CABIN - NIGHT

Father Garvey stares out the window sullen, bewildered.

The car drives off, revealing the RED BIKE in the dirt.

EXT. NEWARK - MORNING

An aerial view of the sun rising on the city of Newark.

GFX: "2018"

INT. LEO'S CHURCH - MORNING

A man's hands gently tap the keys of a piano.

He plays "Berceuse" by Alexandra Streliski.

We see his face. He is Deacon LEO (46), hard jawed with his brow furrowed in concentration, or stuck like that from years of contemplation. He wears dress robes, and glances up at--

The altar of a historic church. The body of crucified christ hangs above the altar, watching over the congregation.

At the center of the aisle sits a coffin with flowers on it. On a stand, a large printed photo of an old man in a bishop's hat, ARCHBISHOP JENKINS (80s). It reads "IN MEMORIAM."

EXT. LEO'S CHURCH - MORNING

The music continues as we go outside the church.

A stoic black woman in a peacoat holds the hands of two children, BRAELIN and WARREN. She pulls them along the sidewalk.

She is SHELBY LONG (38), her hair slicked back and tight, her hands in leather gloves.

SHELBY

Come on, come on.

Shelby stops by the road in front of the church where another woman in a green jacket, JESSICA (39), waits with her daughter GABBY.

JESSICA

Just in time!

SHELBY

Thought we missed it again.

A yellow bus pulls up and opens it's doors.

BRAELIN

Mom don't forget we're staying after, you have to pick us up.

SHELBY
I know, Brae.

The women kiss their kids and send them off.

We hear an old man's voice as the bus pulls away:

FR. MCCABE (V.O.)
He will wipe away every tear from
their eyes. There will be no more
death. Or mourning. Or crying. Or
pain.

The women wave as the bus pulls away. They start to walk
together.

INT. LEO'S CHURCH - MORNING

FR. MCCABE (65), a white haired priest in robes, stands at
the pulpit. He is matter of fact as he reads the passage
through his glasses, low on his nose.

FR. MCCABE
For the old order of things has
passed away. He who was seated on
the throne said, "I am making
everything new!" Then he said,
"Write this down, for these words
are trustworthy and true.

BETTY (72) sits in a pew toward the back of the church,
listening intently. She's short, she wears an old church
dress and a veil.

FR. MCCABE (CONT'D)
I am the Alpha and the Omega, the
Beginning and the End.

At the back of the church, a BALD priest in a grey sweater
enters. He is BISHOP MORRIS (76).

Fr. McCabe looks up and notices Morris. He pauses, ever so
slightly.

FR. MCCABE (CONT'D)
To the thirsty I will give water
without cost from the spring of the
water of life.

Leo, still sitting at the piano, glances over to Morris.

EXT. NEWARK STREET - DAY

Shelby and Jessica walk together.

JESSICA

I heard they're letting that
monster out of prison.

Shelby nods.

SHELBY

Heard that.

JESSICA

How? I don't understand.

SHELBY

His lawyers have been appealing for
years, and.

(trailing off)

I don't know. He's exonerated by
DNA.

JESSICA

But how does that work, how can
they know he didn't do it.

SHELBY

I guess I'm not allowed to talk
about it now.

JESSICA

So are they reopening Heather's
case?

Shelby looks off, contemplating. She tilts her head, "I
suppose so."

INT. LEO'S CHURCH - MORNING

Leo stands at the pulpit and speaks to the congregation.

Leo is reserved, he speaks low and deliberate.

LEO

Bishop Jenkins will be remembered
as a man who knew everyone. A man
for the people, a man for Newark. I
remember the day he welcomed me to
the priesthood. And I remember the
day I told him I was leaving the
priesthood.

The congregation chuckles quietly. They know Leo, his story.

Father McCabe glares, teeth clenched at--

Bishop Morris. Morris locks his glare back.

LEO (CONT'D)

I never thought I'd be back here in this church all these years later, speaking about the man who took me back not as a priest but as your Deacon. But he did, because that's who he was.

Betty nods from her pew. She wipes a tear from her eye with a handkerchief.

LEO (CONT'D)

He wouldn't turn anyone away, he knew everyone, and he remembered everything about everyone. Today the Church mourns the loss of a great figure, but we celebrate his life, and we welcome a new future in Newark. Our very own Father Morris appointed and anointed by Pope Francis, to Bishop Morris.

Bishop Morris nods to Leo from the back of the church.

LATER - Leo hands out the communion wine.

LEO (CONT'D)

Blood of Christ.

He glances to the corner of the Church where Fr. McCabe approaches Bishop Morris.

ASIDE.

The men whisper.

FR. MCCABE

Your friend is getting out of prison.

BISHOP MORRIS

Good to see you Fr. McCabe.

FR. MCCABE

This doesn't make him innocent.

BISHOP MORRIS
It does make him innocent of one
thing.

FR. MCCABE
Garvey can never come back to the
church.

BISHOP MORRIS
That's not my decision. Definitely
not yours.

FR. MCCABE
Well he won't come back to my
church.

McCabe turns to leave.

BISHOP MORRIS
Go with God, Fr. McCabe.

McCabe nods.

FR. MCCABE
Bishop.

Leo continues to watch them as he hands out communion.

LEO
Blood of Christ.

Leo glances down to see he is handing the chalice to Betty.

BETTY
Amen.

Betty drinks the wine. As she leaves she pats Leo's arm
gently.

EXT. ESSEX COUNTY CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

The gates open outside a federal prison.

Fr. Garvey, twenty years older, walks out onto the sidewalk.

POV - ACROSS THE STREET - LONG LENS

We are watching Garvey from afar.

He looks around, starts to walk toward a bus stop.

AN OLD BUICK ROLLS DOWN THE STREET IN HIS DIRECTION.

EXT. NEWARK STREETS - DAY

Garvey continues walking, but glances backward.

The Buick continues to follow.

Garvey picks up his step.

The Buick drives faster.

Garvey looks back, then quickly turns down an alley between some houses.

THE BUICK PEELS FORWARD.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

GARVEY RUNS, LOOKING BACKWARD.

EXT. NEWARK STREETS - DAY

The Buick parks, and a MAN jumps out.

EXT. ALLEY - DAY

GARVEY RUNS, KNOCKING OVER A TRASH CAN.

THE MAN CHASES HIM.

We now see his face, he is DYLAN (40), gaunt and angry, hauling ass toward Garvey.

Garvey looks backward as he exits the alley.

DYLAN CONTINUES RUNNING.

EXT. NEWARK STREETS - DAY

Dylan explodes out of the alley, stopping short on -

A BUSY STREET.

He looks around. Garvey is nowhere to be found.

INT. LAUNDROMAT - DAY

Garvey cowers in the corner of a laundromat, panting.

He can see the alley across the street where--

POV GARVEY - Dylan breaths heavily, looking around for him.

INT. BRIEFING ROOM/POLICE STATION - DAY

A busy briefing room, before the meeting starts.

POLICE OFFICERS mill about and chat indistinctly.

Shelby sits lost in thought, staring at a picture hanging on the front cork board:

It's HEATHER. Our victim.

ROBIN GARCIA (30s) plops down next to her.

ROBIN

I swear to God if I have to piss
one more time today I'm just
getting adult diapers.

SHELBY

(chuckling)

That's not stopping.

Robin rubs her pregnant stomach.

ROBIN

I'm gonna push this little asshole
out a month early.

Shelby nods to the photo of Heather.

SHELBY

What do you think about this case.

ROBIN

The nineties one?

SHELBY

The Montford case.

ROBIN

Priest kills a little girl, big
news story. Even bigger now. Lots
of press, lots of angry people, the
Catholic Church, lawyers. Could be
a career case, but I wouldn't touch
it.

SHELBY

I knew her.

ROBIN
The Montford girl?

SHELBY
Heather.

CAPTAIN DAVIS enters, the room quiets and the officers find seats. Davis walks to the front.

DAVIS
I'm gonna keep it short, because
I've got stuff to do today.

OFFICER GARCIA (40s), a wiseass, yells from the back of the room.

OFFICER GARCIA
You havin' a party, Cap?

The other officers laugh.

DAVIS
Yeah, you're not invited.
(more laughter)
You all know about the Montford case. This is important for a lot of people, the mayor is very eager for some movement, new suspects. We've probably got weeks until this is a big podcast that questions everything this department has ever done.
(some chuckles)
Here's the bottom line, we've got just as much to go on as we had twenty years ago. Which is nothing. The case is a loser. It's a time suck, a money suck, and it's ice cold. We've just gotta get our hands dirty on the case files again. Who wants lead on this?

No one says anything.

DAVIS (CONT'D)
That's what I figured.

ROBIN
We'll take it, Captain.

Shelby looks at Robin.

DAVIS

No I need you to stay on the Valdez case, we're closing soon.

ROBIN

We'll split up. Shelby will take the Montford case for a few weeks, I'll stay on Valdez.

Davis looks at Shelby.

DAVIS

You just got volunteered by your partner for the worst case of the decade.

The officers chuckle.

Shelby nods.

SHELBY

I know the case a bit, I can take it.

DAVIS

Alright, everyone else get to it.

The officers start to leave, Shelby approaches Davis.

SHELBY

Excited for your party?

DAVIS

What do you think?

Shelby smirks.

SHELBY

Anything you can give me on Montford?

DAVIS

Media shitstorm. I remember that night, we got the call, anonymous, someone killed in an abandoned cabin. First uniforms there go in, find Garvey standing over the victim.

SHELBY

Murder weapon?

DAVIS

They never found the gun.

SHELBY
What did the defense say?

DAVIS
Garvey never spoke. Never denied anything, Church lawyers came in to fight it but it was so sensational that the jury bought the story before it went to court. Then the other Garvey news broke and he was done.

SHELBY
Other news?

DAVIS
The Three Priests story. Garvey was accused of rape. Victims started coming out of the woodwork.

EXT. NEWARK/BROAD STREET TRAIN STATION - DAY

Leo stands on the train platform smoking a cigarette.

INT. TRAIN - DAY

Leo rides the train.

A LITTLE BOY leans against his MOTHER'S leg, staring at Leo.

Leo smiles at him.

The boy buries his face in his mom's leg.

EXT. FRY'S CHURCH - DAY

A gothic Catholic Church on a Newark street.

INT. FRY'S CHURCH/BASEMENT - DAY

A support group meeting in a musty church basement.

A circle of GRIZZLED MEN AND WOMEN sit facing each other, listening.

DURAM (55), burly, bearded, and angry, takes his turn to speak.

DURAM

And these kids think they know it all. They think they have hard lives, they ain't shit. My girl's kid, he's sixteen- he ain't even got fuzz on his balls--bitching about getting a job to pay for a car.

We dolly past the others listening to his tirade.

DURAM (O.C.) (CONT'D)

When I was your age boy- tssh. My old man woulda whooped my ass if I looked sideways. No choice. I went to work, and I went to war, no bitchin'. I took a gook bullet for this country, what the fuck have you done?

We land on Leo, listening, but holding back a smile.

Duram pauses.

DURAM (CONT'D)

Sum' funny?

Leo shakes his head.

Everyone is smiling now. One breaks and lets out a laugh.

DURAM (CONT'D)

What the fuck is funny?

LEO

It's just...There's a running tally on how many times you say that.

DURAM

Say what?

They all respond.

ALL

I took a bullet for this country.

DURAM

Well I did. It's my badge of honor.

They snicker, but it's tense.

LEO

I just can't help but think there's some poor bastard out there sitting in some sad circle, telling the same story- and neither of you are getting past it.

DURAM

Well fuck you, Padre, what have you done? You never share a war story, maybe cause you never been in a real war. You never seen combat. I took a bullet for this country.

They all crack up, Leo breaks and laughs with them.

CUT TO LATER.

The meeting is over, Leo smiles and laughs with Duram by the exit. They embrace in a brother hug and Duram walks out.

FATHER FRY (40s) stacks chairs, cleaning up from the meeting.

Fry is handsome, charming, well groomed. He looks young for a priest.

Leo grabs the last two chairs to help.

FRY

They love you, man.

LEO

It's a good group.

FRY

Duram seems a little troubled.

LEO

He has swings. I think we all do. We try to keep him grounded.

INT. FRY'S CHURCH/STAIR WELL - CONTINUOUS

The men walk up the stairs.

FRY

You hear about Garvey?

LEO

I heard.

FRY
It's crazy. They're talking about
giving him his collar back.

LEO
Really?

INT. FRY'S CHURCH/CATHEDRAL - DAY

They keep chatting as Fry walks to the altar, Leo sits in the first pew.

FRY
When Heather Montford died he was
on his way up. He was respected,
had a great parish. I mean if he
didn't do it it makes sense for the
Church to take him back. Makes a
big statement.

Fry prepares for mass, changing the tablecloth on the altar.

Leo stares up at a carved hanging of the stations of the cross, "Jesus falls a second time."

FRY (CONT'D)
I think if Jenkins was alive he'd
take him back. Make a big press
release about how the Church has
been wrongfully persecuted for
millennia and Father Garvey is
another victim. We'll see what
Bishop Morris decides to do.

LEO
I saw Morris talking to Fr. McCabe
at the funeral. Must have been
this.

FRY
McCabe always hated Garvey. But
McCabe hates everyone in his
generation.

Leo looks at another station, "Jesus is nailed to the cross."

LEO
What about the other accusations?

FRY
You mean against Garvey?

LEO

Yeah. Didn't victims come forward?

Fry turns his back, lighting candles against the wall.

FRY

I guess the church dealt with that.

LEO

How?

A door at the back of the church opens, Leo looks back.

DYLAN enters breathing heavily.

Fry doesn't notice, he lights a candle with a match.

Dylan starts walking up the aisle, staring at Fry.

Leo watches Dylan.

Dylan notices Leo.

Dylan stops in his tracks, he turns and walks into--

A CONFSSIONAL BOOTH.

Leo watches as the door closes.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

The cabin where Heather was murdered, but twenty years later.

It is dilapidated. The front porch awning broken and sagging to the ground, heavily graffitied, greening with moss.

A large yellow backhoe rolls into frame. We pull back to see:

Several construction vehicles.

A WELL DRILLING TRUCK is parked, and WORKERS drive a stake into the ground.

A forewoman, JACKLYN (40s) sits in the drivers seat of a closed dump truck, speaking on her cell.

Shelby ducks around the dump truck and stands in front of the cabin.

She looks around, taking it in.

She approaches the cabin when the forewoman stops her.

JACKLYN
Hey, can I help you.

Shelby pulls her badge out.

SHELBY
I'm detective Shelby Long.

JACKLYN
They must be opening that priest case again.

SHELBY
Just looking around. What's the project here?

JACKLYN
A developer is putting some storage units, we're just clearing the land and doing the remediation.

SHELBY
The cabin is coming down?

JACKLYN
The Satan House? Coming down sometime next week.

They stare at it a moment.

JACKLYN (CONT'D)
Freaky as hell in there. People say devil worshipers gathered here, that's why that girl got killed.

SHELBY
Is there anything inside?

JACKLYN
I'll get you a hard hat.

INT. CABIN - DAY

Shelby enters the cabin wearing a white hard hat.

She takes stock of the scene. Dust and cobwebs cover everything.

The walls are covered with satanic looking graffiti.

The wooden chair still lays on it's side.

Broken liquor and beer bottles.

Shelby kneels by a dirty cardboard box and opens it.

Penthouse magazines. They are ratty and water weathered. She picks up the top and looks at the date: "JULY 1997"

She picks up the one under it: "JUNE 1997"

And the next: "MAY 1997"

She thumbs through the stack and makes a note on a notepad.

She sees the wax dried and puddled where the candle burned.

EXT. CABIN - DAY

Shelby approaches Jacklyn outside the cabin. She's carrying a Penthouse magazine.

SHELBY

Did you find anything in there?

JACKLYN

Nothing much. Broken bottles,
trash, a bucket of stones.

Shelby holds up the magazine.

SHELBY

Were there any more of these?

Jacklyn lets out a small grunt.

She yells to a MAN on the backhoe.

JACKLYN

CHARLIE!

CLOSE ON: A stack of Penthouse on the floor of a pickup truck.

Shelby flips through the dates to the newest one:

"SEPTEMBER 1997"

"OCTOBER 1997"

"NOVEMBER 1997"

INT. FRY'S CHURCH/CONFESSIONAL - DAY

Fr. Fry sits down in the confessional booth.

We jump between sides of the confessional, showing Fry and Dylan who can't see each other.

On the other side of the wall, Dylan leans his head back.

It's a long moment, Fry looks confused.

FRY

Hello?

DYLAN

Bless me father for I have sinned.

Fry waits a moment.

FRY

When was your last confession, son?

DYLAN

Is Deacon Leo still here?

FRY

I'm not sure. He can't hear your confession though.

DYLAN

I don't want him to see me.

FRY

Oh.

DYLAN

My mother goes to his church. I don't want her to find out.

FRY

That you're going to confession?
What you say here stays between us,
I don't speak a word of it.

We see that Dylan is clutching a gun.

DYLAN

There's a lot you don't say.

Fry ponders on this.

FRY

Did you want to confess your sins?

Fry hears a stirring.

Fry steps out of the confessional and checks the other side.