

## RISING STAR II

### Film Bible

**Format:** Feature Film

**Genre:** Crime Thriller / Domestic Terror Thriller

**Written by:** Stephen Hall

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### Logline

After discovering that the original serial killer he never caught was living next door, Detective Logan Ford hunts Peter Denton into a widening campaign of bombings, political violence and radicalised youth terror, only to realise that even Denton's death may not be enough to save Logan's family.

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### Short Pitch

*Rising Star II* takes the final sting of the first film — Peter Denton revealed as the real Philadelphia killer — and explodes it into a larger, more volatile thriller. Denton escapes, reinvents himself as a recruiter of radicalised young followers, and transforms from hidden serial predator into the architect of a domestic terror campaign. Logan Ford and Malik Edwards must track him through protest movements, copycat violence, bombings and federal targets, only to discover that killing the mastermind does not necessarily kill the threat.

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### Project Overview

If the first *Rising Star* was about a city where corruption hid behind respectability, *Rising Star II* is about what happens when one of those monsters stops hiding and starts recruiting. Peter Denton is no longer simply the secret killer next door. He becomes a manipulator of grievance, rage and idealism, building a small but lethal cell from damaged, disaffected young people who mistake his certainty for revolutionary truth.

At the same time, the sequel deepens the mythology of the first film. Logan and Malik discover that Richard Evans — the killer from the first movie's present-day revenge plot — was not the source of the puppet murders, but the **copycat younger brother** of Denton, linked by their mother but carrying a different father's name. That revelation reframes the series mythology as a bloodline of imitation, escalation and inherited violence.

This gives the sequel two engines at once:

- a **propulsive pursuit thriller** about catching Denton before his terror campaign expands
  - a **character-driven continuation** of Logan and Malik's partnership under greater pressure and higher stakes
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### Why This Film

*Rising Star II* offers:

- a strong sequel hook grounded in the first film's final reveal
- a credible escalation from serial murder to domestic terrorism
- a rich detective pairing with real emotional momentum
- a timely story about radicalisation and ideological grooming
- a franchise-ending or franchise-extending final image that leaves a chill

It feels bigger without abandoning what made the original compelling: bruised cops, sharp procedure, moral rot, and an evil that always knows how to look ordinary until it is too late.

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## Story Engine

### Core Premise

Peter Denton survives exposure and turns himself from a lone hidden killer into a recruiter and organiser. His new violence is not only intimate or symbolic — it is political, public and coordinated. Logan and Malik must stop him before he turns his ideology of grievance and control into a sustained campaign of terror.

### Narrative Shape

The film works in four interlocking movements:

#### 1. Aftershock

The raid on Denton's house fails, the home explodes, and Denton escapes.

#### 2. Revelation

Logan and Malik discover Denton and Evans were brothers with the same mother but different fathers, confirming Evans as the copycat and Denton as the original source.

#### 3. Radicalisation

Denton infiltrates activist circles, recruits followers, and binds them through murder and terror planning.

#### 4. Expansion and Continuation

The plot scales into bombings and a Pittsburgh federal-building attack. Denton dies, but the final image reveals Tilly carrying the threat onward toward Logan's family.

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## Main Characters

### Logan Ford

Logan returns more vindicated and more frayed. He was right about Denton, but being right has only deepened the wound. Denton's house exploding beside Logan's home turns the case into something painfully personal, and Logan becomes obsessed with ending the threat before it reaches his family again. He remains instinctive, volatile and dangerously willing to ignore orders when he believes the system is failing. In this sequel, Logan's challenge is not only to catch Denton, but to avoid becoming so consumed by him that he loses control altogether.

### Malik Edwards

Malik is now Logan's true partner, not his probationary opposite. He is still strategic, composed and morally grounded, but tougher and more assured than in the first film. He understands Denton's violence as a networked problem rather than only a personal ghost haunting Logan. Malik's strength in the sequel is that he sees people clearly: Larry Drake's ambition, Denton's manipulative charisma, Aiden's weakness, Emily and Cheryl's waste, Logan's unraveling. He becomes the film's emotional intelligence and procedural stabiliser.

### Peter Denton

Denton evolves from concealed serial killer into ideological groomer and terror strategist. He remains calm, theatrical and eerily ordinary on the surface, but the sequel lets him weaponise rhetoric as effectively as murder. He recruits by making young people feel selected, morally awakened and bound to a cause larger than themselves. He is not a political thinker in any real sense; he is a predator using politics as a stage. What makes him frightening is that he understands how to turn alienation into obedience.

### Richard Evans

Though dead before this film begins, Evans remains crucial to the mythology. He is revealed as Denton's half-brother and the copycat younger killer who adapted Denton's original murder language to his own revenge campaign in the first film. His role in the sequel is structural: he is the proof that Denton's violence can be inherited, echoed and repurposed.

### Emily Wishaw

Emily is the first and most visible of Denton's recruits: politically angry, emotionally susceptible, thrilled by confrontation, and eager to matter. She becomes Denton's most fervent disciple, carrying out seduction, murder and bombing tasks with increasing confidence. Her arc is tragic because it is not rooted in innate monstrosity, but in the hunger to feel part of something urgent and meaningful. By the end, she is dead in an alley because Denton gave her a purpose shaped like doom.

### **Cheryl Underwood**

Cheryl is sharper, more controlled and less impulsive than Emily, which makes her especially dangerous. She kills Mitchell Hemmings under false pretences, helps bury Terry Bridges, and participates fully in the bombing plot. She represents the follower who does not just get swept up emotionally, but chooses repeatedly to go deeper. Her death at Malik's hands is one of the sequel's hardest moments because it underlines how far Denton has dragged her.

### **Tilly Foster**

Tilly begins as the softest-looking member of the group, but ends as the sequel's most important surviving figure. She participates in Terry's execution, handles the precinct bombing delivery, and is the one recruit who survives the Pittsburgh climax. The final image reveals that she has inherited Denton's threat directly: she drives past Logan's house with a marked map and a family photo. Tilly is the franchise's closing warning that Denton's method outlives Denton himself.

### **Aiden Rourke**

Aiden is the weak link in Denton's cell: more drawn to the performance of rebellion than the reality of blood. Denton pressures him into killing Terry, but Aiden never fully belongs to the violence in the way Emily, Cheryl and Tilly do. He becomes crucial because he is the first one who can still be pulled back toward fear, guilt and usefulness. Through him, Logan and Malik break the group open.

### **Larry Drake**

Drake remains an ambiguous institutional presence. He is useful, informed, occasionally cooperative, but always self-positioning. Logan distrusts him on instinct; Malik is more willing to work with him. Drake's death in the sequel widens the sense that Denton is now taking on federal structures directly and that no one, however confident, is safe.

### **Captain Hanley**

Hanley functions as the pressure valve between street policing and institutional caution. He is furious, weary and increasingly unable to contain the scale of what Denton is becoming. His hospital-bed scenes in the back half of the film give the story an exhausted but human authority: even the old hard men know this has become a war zone.

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## **Supporting Characters of Note**

### **Mitchell Hemmings**

Leader of the Free Democratic Movement, committed to non-violence and democratic process. His murder marks the death of any moral centre in the activist circle Denton infiltrates.

### **Terry Bridges**

The group's skeptic and eventual sacrificial victim. His execution in the Adirondacks seals the transformation of Denton's recruits into a true cell.

### **Carey Robards**

The first visible victim of Denton's female recruits. His death signals that Denton's network is active, armed and already willing to kill for the cause.

### **John P. Lazinger / the U.S. Marshals**

Their presence in Pittsburgh raises the scale and gives the climax federal stakes. Denton is no longer haunting local streets; he is attacking national institutions.

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## Story Summary

### Act One

Federal agents raid Peter Denton's house next door to Logan Ford's home, only for the house to explode in a booby-trapped fireball. Denton escapes. Logan and Malik push against federal efforts to keep them out of the manhunt and, through Philadelphia registry records, discover that Denton and Richard Evans were half-brothers sharing the same mother but different fathers. This confirms Denton as the original Philadelphia killer and Evans as the copycat younger brother. Meanwhile, Denton begins recruiting Emily Wishaw and embedding himself inside the orbit of the Free Democratic Movement.

### Act Two

Denton radicalises Emily, Cheryl, Tilly, Aiden and Terry, reframing protest politics as revolutionary struggle. Emily murders Officer Robards and steals his gun. Cheryl murders Mitchell Hemmings and frames Terry Bridges. Logan and Malik work the murders through witnesses, names, prints and activist contacts, slowly identifying Denton's growing cell. In the Adirondacks, Denton turns the group into full accomplices by orchestrating Terry's execution around a campfire, forcing each of them to participate. The detectives later discover Terry's buried body and realise Denton has escalated far beyond serial violence into organised terror.

### Act Three

Denton's cell executes coordinated bombings at City Hall, the New York Supreme Court and Logan's precinct, proving Denton can now hit multiple public targets and make the violence personal at the same time. Logan and Malik follow the surviving threads through Aiden and a search of Denton's house, discovering clues leading to Pittsburgh. There, Denton targets the William S. Moorhead Building and the U.S. Marshals building in a diversionary federal attack. Emily and Cheryl ignite fires inside the Moorhead Building to draw federal personnel away, while Denton moves on the Marshals building. Malik intercepts Emily and Cheryl and kills them both. Logan confronts Denton inside the Marshals building, fights him through a shattered office and ultimately lets him fall to his death after a sniper's bullet tears through him. Denton dies. Then the film turns once more: Tilly, who has survived, drives past Logan's home with a marked map and a family photo, proving the threat has not truly ended.

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## Tone

### What It Feels Like

The tone is:

- tense
- bruised
- politically combustible
- intimate even when large-scale
- emotionally adult
- sinister in its final aftertaste

This is not an action sequel in the empty sense. It expands the scale, but the emotional texture remains grounded in detective work, manipulation, moral erosion and private fear.

### Humour

The humour stays dry and character-based:

- Logan's abrasiveness
- Malik's restraint and deadpan responses

- Hanley's exhausted profanity
- institutional friction and masculine sparring

It should never puncture danger, only humanise the people inside it.

### Visual Language

The sequel keeps some of the original's puppet-logic and theatricality, but broadens it into event design:

- blown suburban houses
- protest clashes
- cult-like living rooms
- campfire ritual execution
- smoke-choked federal corridors
- empty government foyers
- a man hanging from a window high above the street

The final image should be quiet rather than explosive: Tilly driving past Logan's house, the map and photo inside the car. That restraint makes it more chilling.

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### Comps

#### Comparable Films / Lanes

**The Parallax View** for political paranoia and hidden radicalisation.

**Manhunter** for the sense of a killer's psychology expanding beyond the crime scene.

**The French Connection II** for escalation from personal pursuit into broader instability.

**Patriot Games** for domestic terror and personal targeting.

**Arlington Road** for ideological grooming and suburban menace.

**Zodiac** and **Se7en** remain tonal ancestors from the first film, but here the scale widens toward a conspiracy/terror lane.

#### Positioning Statement

*Rising Star II* is a **prestige domestic-terror thriller built on the bones of a noir serial-killer franchise** — a sequel that turns private monstrousness into public ideological violence while keeping the emotional engine of its detective partnership intact.

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### World of the Film

#### 1980s America Under Strain

The world is wider now:

- New York protests and riot police
- activist meeting spaces
- federal distrust
- bomb threats and mass evacuations
- interstate pursuit
- Pittsburgh federal architecture

This is still recognisably the same universe as the first film, but the rot has spread from municipal vice and precinct corruption into national anxiety and anti-state violence. Denton exploits that atmosphere expertly.

### **Key Settings**

**Logan's suburban street** — now permanently contaminated by Denton's escape.

**Denton's house** — transformed from hidden lair into radicalising hub.

**The Free Democratic Movement spaces** — where idealism becomes vulnerability.

**Adirondack Park** — where rhetoric becomes blood pact.

**New York civic buildings** — bombed symbols of public authority.

**Pittsburgh federal district** — the sequel's war-zone climax.

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### **Thematic Positioning**

#### **Radicalisation as Seduction**

Denton does not win followers with doctrine alone. He wins them by making them feel chosen, seen and necessary. The sequel's core insight is that violent ideology often enters through emotional hunger before it declares itself politically. Emily, Cheryl and Tilly are not merely "bad seeds." They are people Denton learns how to use.

#### **Inheritance of Violence**

The Denton/Evans revelation matters because it shows violence moving through family structures and then outward into ideology. Evans copied Denton. Tilly survives Denton and appears poised to copy him in turn. The sequel's bleakest idea is that evil is not only committed; it is taught, mirrored and passed on.

#### **Partnership Under Pressure**

Logan and Malik are now a functioning team, but their methods remain different. Logan is instinct, rage and unfinished personal reckoning. Malik is patience, perception and moral control. Denton is only stoppable because both men evolve enough to trust the other's strengths. The sequel deepens the partnership by making disagreement part of their success instead of a threat to it.

#### **Public Terror, Private Target**

Denton's campaign looks political and public — bombings, federal buildings, protest cells — but the ending insists the danger is still intimate. Logan's family is marked again. The sequel begins and ends at Logan's home, proving that even the largest acts of terror in this story circle back to one personal war.

#### **The Monster Outliving His Body**

Denton dies, but the film refuses catharsis. Tilly's final drive past Logan's home tells us Denton's most successful creation was not any bomb or murder, but the reproduction of his method inside another person. That is the sequel's final dread: Denton has become transmissible.

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### **Audience and Market Positioning**

#### **Who It's For**

This is for audiences who want:

- adult thrillers with real stakes
- serial-killer mythology that evolves rather than repeats
- 1980s crime atmosphere with political edge
- detective partnerships with emotional depth
- domestic-terror escalation grounded in character

- endings that satisfy while leaving a threat alive

### Commercial Hook

The hook is strong and sequel-clean:

**The killer next door escaped — and now he is building an army.**

A second, even sharper line:

**Logan finally catches the original monster, only to realise the monster has already taught someone else where his family lives.**

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### Ending / Franchise Potential

The film fully resolves Denton's arc: he is identified as the original Philadelphia killer, pursued, cornered and killed. Emily and Cheryl also die, and the terror cell is seemingly dismantled. But the final image of Tilly driving past Logan's house with the marked map and family photo keeps the franchise alive with a precise, chilling handoff.

This ending supports two equally strong readings:

- as a dark, unresolved franchise continuation
  - or as a bleak final warning that some forms of evil are never fully containable
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### Closing Statement

*Rising Star II* is a larger, angrier and more politically charged continuation of the first film, but it stays true to the franchise's real strengths: intimate menace, procedural rigor, bruised character dynamics and endings that leave a mark. By correcting the mythology around Evans and Denton, and by letting Denton evolve from hidden serial killer into radicalising terror architect, the sequel becomes not just "more" but *deeper*. And by ending on Tilly's quiet surveillance of Logan's family, it delivers the exact kind of final chill that makes a thriller linger.