

RISING STAR

Written by

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EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

1986.

A filthy, sun-bleached New York block. Steam hisses from a manhole. Boom boxes blast. Taxi horns scream.

DETECTIVE LOGAN FORD [37] barrels down the sidewalk - trench coat flapping, tie loose, sweat pouring. He's tough, but the years are catching up.

Ahead of him, DARREN [25] - wiry, fast - shoves pedestrians aside.

Darren cuts into the street-

-SCREECH!

A patrol car SLAMS the brakes too late. Darren hits the hood, rolls over the bonnet, and CRASHES onto the asphalt.

OFFICER CUNNINGHAM (29) jumps out, flips Darren onto his stomach, cuffs him.

OFFICER O'REILLY (31) leans casually against the squad car as Logan finally jogs up, bent over, catching his breath.

Passersby cheer at the arrest.

POLICE OFFICER O'REILLY
You're seriously outta shape,
Logan.

LOGAN FORD
I'd like to see you run five
blocks.

POLICE OFFICER CUNNINGHAM
Surprised you made it this far.

POLICE OFFICER O'REILLY
Too much sauce man.

POLICE OFFICER CUNNINGHAM
You're a fuckin' mess Logan.

LOGAN FORD
Speak for yourself O'Reilly

POLICE OFFICER O'REILLY
We'll take it from here.

POLICE OFFICER CUNNINGHAM
(to O'Reilly)
He couldn't catch a cold.

They laugh, shove Darren into the squad car, and drive off.

The cheering crowd lingers – staring.

Logan notices.

Beat.

LOGAN FORD
What you looking at?

INT. POLICE STATION OFFICE - LATER

A tired, nicotine-stained bullpen. Fluorescent lights buzz.
Phones ring. Typewriters CLACK. Cigarette smoke hangs low.

Detectives work in cliques.

The doors swing open – LOGAN FORD enters.

A few heads turn.

A few smirks.

On Logan's desk: a giant "GET WELL SOON" card.

The word "WELL" has been aggressively scratched out.

Above it, in thick marker: "GET FIT SOON."

Snickers from nearby desks.

Logan stares at it. Beat.

He drops his coat on the chair, unfazed – or pretending to be.

POLICE OFFICER JACKSON [34] approaches.

POLICE OFFICER JACKSON
You got the papers for that guy
they brought in?

Logan searches through his paperwork.

POLICE OFFICER JACKSON
Christ, you've not lost them?

LOGAN FORD
They're here somewhere.

POLICE OFFICER JACKSON
Jeez Logan. You need to get a
secretary for this place. It's like
a dump.

LOGAN FORD
You my mother?

Police Officer Jackson sniggers as he shuffles away.

POLICE OFFICER JACKSON
Interview Room 2 when you're ready.

Logan follows the officer.

A cassette recorder plays Spencer Davis Group's song 'Keep
On Running'.

LOGAN FORD
Yeah, very funny.

INT. POLICE STATION/INTERVIEW ROOM - DAY

A bare concrete box.

Metal table bolted to the floor. Two chairs.

A single overhead lamp casts a hard white cone. Everything
else in shadow.

Cold. Clinical.

Darren slouches bored in his chair, his wrists cuffed.

A UNIFORMED OFFICER leans against the wall, arms folded.
Silent. Watching.

The door opens.

He sets a thin file on the table.

An ashtray. A pack of cigarettes.

He sits.

Studies Darren.

Silence.

The perp reclines in his chair, uninterested.

LOGAN FORD
We got the stash you threw away.

Darren stares up blankly at the ceiling, yawning theatrically.

LOGAN FORD
There's enough to get you maybe
five years.

DARREN
Man...you've got nothin' on me.

The detective stares hard at him.

Beat.

LOGAN FORD
Darren, how's your mother keeping
these days?

Darren's jaw tightens.

LOGAN FORD
I hear her ticker's not quite
running like clockwork these days.
Not surprising with a kid like you
to keep her on her toes.

DARREN
I wanna speak to a lawyer.

LOGAN FORD
You think we'll find anything at
her place?

DARREN
I WANT A LAWYER!

Logan slams the table into the seated perp who flips backwards onto the floor.

Logan rises.

The officer in the background watches, unmoved.

DARREN
You fuckin' crazy.

Logan circles Darren.

LOGAN FORD
You reckon?

He sneers down at the perp.

Darren stiffens - wary.

The detective picks up the chair.

He returns and sits down, tense.

He watches Darren get back to his seat before sitting down.

Beat.

LOGAN FORD

If I were to find a similar bag in
her place - like in the kitchen. I
reckon she wouldn't see out the
year.

DARREN

You got no fuckin' right!

Logan slams his hand on the table.

Darren recoils.

LOGAN FORD

I make my own rights.

He leans forward.

LOGAN FORD

Now either you're gonna talk or
start thinking about a eulogy for
your old dear.

Darren mumbles.

The detective calmly leans back.

He pulls out a packet of cigarettes, lights one.

Darren watches.

Logan reaches over and offers it.

Beat.

Darren takes it.

LOGAN FORD

Good.

DARREN

You'll drop the charges?

LOGAN FORD

Let's just see what you have to
offer.

Logan lights a cigarette for himself.

He pulls out a cellophane bag from his pocket and lays it on the table.

The perp studies it dismissively.

LOGAN FORD
They're new.

Darren thinks.

The detective flicks ash on the floor.

DARREN
Rising Star. Folks are hitting on
it for parties. Makes them feel
good...like really fuckin' good.

Logan glances at the watching officer who shrugs his shoulders.

LOGAN FORD
Acid?

DARREN
Fuck no man. Like fuckin' Loving
Spoonful. Makes you wanna embrace
the world and dance till sunrise.

The perp stubs out his cigarette in the ashtray.

Logan studies the contents of the bag.

LOGAN FORD
So who's the source?

DARREN
Man, I don't know. I just get the
stuff delivered.

Logan glances around to the other officer.

LOGAN FORD
Tell the desk we'll be charging
him.

The officer makes for the door.

DARREN
C'mon man!

LOGAN FORD
Then spill it.

The perp slumps back in resignation.

DARREN
Giacomo Pulcinella runs the spot.
That's all I know, man. Some dude
just delivers. That's the god's
honest truth.

The detective stubs out his cigarette and rises.

He stares hard at Darren.

Silence.

LOGAN FORD
You'll get charged with possession.

DARREN
What!

LOGAN FORD
Hey. Consider yourself lucky. I
could push for intent to supply.

Logan picks up the folder and leaves.

DARREN
You're full of shit, man!

EXT. LOGAN'S HOME - LATER

A quiet Queens street. Kids playing. Lawns trimmed. A world
away from the city grit.

Logan's car rolls up outside his home. His son, CALLUM FORD
[9] cycles on his bike.

Next-door-neighbour PETER DENTON [36] mows his lawn.

CALLUM FORD
Dad! Look!

He lifts the bike slightly.

CALLUM FORD
Mr. Denton fixed it.

Peter Denton offers a friendly wave from the lawn.

LOGAN FORD
Good.

Logan heads for the house.

INT. LOGAN'S HOME/KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Warm but worn. Family photos on the fridge. Dinner cooking on the stove.

AUDREY FORD [35] chops vegetables with efficient irritation. She checks the clock.

AUDREY FORD
You're early.

He gets a beer from the fridge.

LOGAN FORD
Making up for lost time.

Audrey turns away.

AUDREY FORD
Why break the habits of a lifetime now?

Logan takes a sip.

LOGAN FORD
I'm trying.

Audrey finally turns.

AUDREY FORD
Trying?

She nods towards the bottle.

AUDREY FORD
Instead of reaching for a beer, like you always do...how about setting the table?

Beat.

AUDREY FORD
Now that'd be trying.

Logan studies the bottle then sets it on the counter.

He grabs some plates and starts setting the table.

LOGAN FORD
I'm working my ass off, Audrey.

AUDREY FORD
You're always working your ass off,
Logan.

She stirs a pot.

AUDREY FORD
Go get Callum.

Logan nods and heads for the door.

Audrey glances at the beer on the counter.

EXT. LOGAN'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

Logan steps out into the porch.

Across the open lawn, Denton shuts off the mower and wipes
his hands on a rag.

He raises a hand.

PETER DENTON
How's things?

LOGAN FORD
Hanging in there.

Denton approaches.

PETER DENTON
I'm Peter.

LOGAN FORD
Logan Ford...welcome to the
neighbourhood.

They shake hands.

PETER DENTON
You been here long?

LOGAN FORD
Ten years.

He gestures down the quiet street.

LOGAN FORD
Good spot. Quiet.

Down the block, Callum rides his bike toward the house.

Logan cups his hands.

LOGAN FORD
Callum! Inside!

Logan turnsback to Denton.

LOGAN FORD
You got family?

PETER DENTON
Nah. Just me.

Logan smirks.

LOGAN FORD
Don't let my wife know. She'll have
you fixed up before you can say
"blind date".

Denton laughs politely.

A small beat.

LOGAN FORD
Moved far?

PETER DENTON
Philly.

LOGAN FORD
Change of scenery?

Denton shrugs.

PETER DENTON
Yeah. You could say that.

Logan's cop instincts kick in as he studies him briefly.

Then he relaxes.

LOGAN FORD
Happy to share a few beers one
night. Get you up to speed on the
neighbourhood.

PETER DENTON
That'd be nice.

Callum reaches the driveway.

LOGAN FORD
Better go. See ya later.

Denton offers a small wave.