

RISING STAR II

Treatment

Format: Feature

Genre: Crime Thriller / Domestic Terror Thriller

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Logline

After learning 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 discover that even Denton's death may not be enough to protect the people Logan loves most.

Overview

Rising Star II picks up in the immediate aftermath of the first film's final revelation and expands the story from intimate serial horror into organised ideological violence. Peter Denton, exposed at last as the original Philadelphia killer, escapes capture and reinvents himself as something more dangerous than a hidden murderer: a recruiter, manipulator and strategist who learns to convert political grievance and youthful disillusionment into obedient violence. If the first *Rising Star* was about corruption hidden behind respectable faces, the sequel is about what happens when a monster stops hiding and starts teaching others how to carry his war forward.

At the centre once again are **Logan Ford** and **Malik Edwards**, now a genuine partnership forged by blood and survival. Logan begins the sequel furious, vindicated and unsteady, convinced that Denton must be stopped at all costs and unable to tolerate the federal containment of a threat he knows more intimately than anyone else. Malik, calmer and more strategic, understands that Denton's danger has changed. This is no longer simply a hunt for one man. It is a pursuit of a growing pattern: a killer turning himself into a political idea. Together they move from bombed suburban streets and federal protests to activist circles, seduction murders, shallow woodland graves and a final strike against the U.S. Marshals in Pittsburgh.

The key revelation driving the sequel is genealogical as much as criminal. Logan and Malik discover in Philadelphia records that Denton and Richard Evans shared a mother but had different fathers. That means Evans — the present-day avenger from the first film — was not the originator of the puppet murders, but the **copycat younger brother**, inheriting and repurposing an older pattern first created by Denton. This turns *Rising Star II* into more than a manhunt. It becomes a story about contamination across bloodlines, the inheritance of violence, and the way private evil mutates when given new language and new followers.

Tone and Style

The tone is harder, faster and more overtly political than the first film while retaining its noir-detective spine. The urban grime remains, but the sequel widens its field into domestic terror territory: protests, federal buildings, activist groups, bomb scares, institutional rivalry and public panic. Denton's old theatricality is still present, but it now lives inside larger events rather than only private tableaux. He stages distractions, recruits performers and orchestrates terror like spectacle. Logan and Malik remain the film's grounding force, carrying the story through procedure, argument, loyalty and shared danger.

Treatment

At dawn, Logan Ford wakes in his Queens home beside Audrey and steps outside with coffee and a cigarette to find his street transformed into an armed federal operation. SWAT officers, FBI vehicles and police units are converging on Peter Denton's house next door. It should feel like vindication — confirmation that the final horror of the first film is finally being acted on. Instead, it becomes the first act of terror in the sequel. Inside the house, the raiding team discovers hanging marionettes and a crude cylindrical device. The moment they trigger the trap, Denton's home erupts in a fireball. The blast tears across the street, flings Logan to the ground and nearly takes his family with it. Denton is gone. The killer has anticipated the raid and turned his own home into a final joke at law enforcement's expense.

The FBI response only sharpens Logan's rage. Larry Drake tries to contain the damage, insisting the operation was federal and warning Logan not to interfere. Worse, the early language around the case treats Denton as an extension of the first film's murders, muddying the distinction Logan now understands with painful clarity: **Evans was the copycat**, Denton the original source. Logan knows he was right about Denton all along, but being right brings him no peace. Instead, it leaves him with a bomb crater next door and the knowledge that his family was collateral in a federal failure. Malik, calmer but no less committed, understands that Denton's escape means they must rethink the threat entirely. They are not chasing a fugitive trying to disappear. They are chasing a man who has just announced escalation.

At the precinct, Logan and Malik immediately begin reconnecting the first film's case to Denton's broader history. Their key discovery comes in Philadelphia, where records show that Peter Denton was born to **Lesley Veronica Denton** and **George Denton**, while their mother later remarried **Arthur Evans**. The detectives realise that Richard Evans and Peter Denton were brothers by their mother but had different fathers. The impact of this revelation is huge. Evans' killings in the first film are redefined not as an unrelated revenge spree borrowing a style by coincidence, but as the echo of an older family violence. Denton was the original architect of the missing eyes, the throat cuts, the puppet logic. Evans was the damaged younger brother who copied the form and redirected it into Lucia Blinky's revenge. Denton is not a side ghost to the first story. He is its buried source.

While Logan and Malik uncover Denton's bloodline, Denton is already building his new one. At a protest outside the Jacob Javits Federal Building, amid placards and anti-government slogans, Denton surfaces inside a crowd angry at federal overreach and police force. There he makes contact with **Emily Wishaw**, an idealistic young woman inflamed by state violence and responsive to certainty. When riot police attack the protest, Denton helps her escape, tends her injury, and begins doing what he does best: turning attention into control. In his house, surrounded by books on politics and economics and the dead-eyed marionettes that remain his silent signature, Denton speaks to Emily about revolution, hidden agendas and the coming war between "the people" and government. He is no longer simply rehearsing private violence. He is learning how to politicise his pathology.

His entry point into a broader network is the **Free Democratic Movement**, a modest activist organisation built around protest, petitions and non-violent pressure. Its leader, **Mitchell Hemmings**, believes in institutional challenge, not armed struggle. Denton sees immediately that this sort of movement offers exactly what he needs: young people with anger, purpose and an incomplete relationship to power. Around him gather Emily, **Cheryl Underwood**, **Tilly Foster**, **Aiden Rourke** and **Terry Bridges**. Some are sincere, some performative, some simply hungry for belonging. Denton reads each one like material. He does not ask them to become killers. He invites them to become serious. He reframes violence as courage, secrecy as trust, and obedience as revolutionary discipline.

Back in the police world, Logan and Malik face institutional resistance at every turn. Hanley wants them off Denton. The FBI wants cooperation on federal terms only. Larry Drake oscillates between useful ally and opportunistic climber. Logan pushes constantly, certain that Denton will act again and frustrated by what he sees as cowardice dressed as jurisdiction. Malik argues for subtlety, information sharing and long-view strategy. Their conflict is no longer about trust, as it was in the first film, but about tempo. Logan wants Denton in cuffs yesterday. Malik understands that Denton is widening his reach and that the detectives need to follow the structure, not just the man. Both instincts matter, and the sequel works because each man repeatedly supplies what the other lacks.

Denton's first acts with the cell are intimate enough to feel like echoes of his old life, but already different in method. Emily seduces Officer **Carey Robards** in a bar, goes home with him, steals his service gun and slices his throat in his apartment. She is no longer just a political recruit. She has become an initiate. Meanwhile Cheryl visits Mitchell Hemmings under the pretence of concern about Denton's influence, shoots him in his apartment, plants Terry Bridges' gloves at the scene and steals the movement's ledgers. Denton is teaching his followers that murder is not transgression but commitment. At the same time, he is removing moderating figures and creating investigative confusion. Mitchell's death fractures the activist group. Robards' death arms the cell. Both crimes shift the story from ideological talk to operational terror.

Logan and Malik work these killings with precise, grounded police craft. From Robards' scene they identify a female attacker who took his gun. From the barmaid they get a vague but workable description. From Moira Bloomberg, another member of the Free Democratic Movement, they get names, a photograph of Emily and Cheryl, and confirmation that Denton had already started influencing the group. From prints on the planted gloves they link Terry Bridges to the frame-up around Mitchell's murder. From Terry's neighbour they learn that Denton, Emily, Cheryl, Tilly,

Aiden and Terry all departed together in an orange VW camper. The investigation remains tactile and cumulative, one witness and one object at a time, which gives the sequel weight even as Denton's ambitions scale upward.

The Adirondack Park campfire sequence marks the point of no return. Around the fire, with beer, weed and revolutionary rhetoric creating a false intimacy, Denton turns the group inward on itself. He presses them about trust, duty and what really keeps them awake at night. Terry Bridges, the most skeptical and least ideologically intoxicated of the group, becomes the chosen sacrifice. Cheryl shoots him in the knee. Emily shoots him in the chest. Tilly adds another shot. Aiden, panicking and horrified, is pressured into firing too. Denton's lesson is chilling: violence is easy, and now that they have all done it, they belong to him and to one another. This is the moment the group ceases to be radical youth and becomes a cell.

When Logan and Malik later recover Terry's body from a shallow grave in the Adirondacks, the nature of the threat is undeniable even to those who wanted to minimise Denton as an FBI headache. Denton has evolved from solitary killer to organiser of murder. Hanley, laid up in hospital after being caught in one of Denton's later waves of violence, tells them plainly to get him. Logan, who always pursued Denton as a personal ghost from Philadelphia, now sees the larger truth: Denton's war is no longer about a single detective or old case. It is public, mobile and growing. Malik sees something else too — that Denton is not just commanding followers, but testing them, selecting survivors who can carry the mission beyond him. That insight becomes crucial by the end.

The first truly city-wide expression of Denton's new method comes in New York with a coordinated bombing campaign. Denton splits his women across symbolic targets. One bomb goes into **City Hall**, another into the **New York Supreme Court**, and a third — more intimate and vindictive — is planted in a waste bin at Logan's own precinct. Tilly delivers the personal bomb under a false name and leaves Logan an envelope. When Logan opens the note outside the station, it reads: **"THIS IS FOR YOU. DENTON."** The explosion follows immediately, hurling him to the ground just as City Hall and the Supreme Court are rocked by their own blasts. Denton has moved from hidden murders to public terror, and he has done it in a way that makes political symbolism and personal torment indistinguishable. Government is the stage, but Logan is still the audience Denton most wants to wound.

In the aftermath, Logan is bruised, cut and briefly stunned by the scale of the damage, but he also understands something new: Denton no longer needs the intimacy of a murder scene to feel in control. He has learned the power of simultaneity, panic and message. Malik arrives with one more potential lever — **Aiden Rourke**, whose partial withdrawal from Denton's influence suggests he may crack. Following that lead takes the detectives to Aiden's house, where Denton is already present, working on the weak link before the police can. The scene erupts in violence. A shot rings out inside. Denton bolts through the back. Logan and Malik pursue through gardens, streets and a park, with Emily crashing her car into Logan's to pull Denton clear. The pursuit makes the dynamic plain: Denton still fights like a killer, but he now has loyal movers around him willing to take hits and improvise rescue.

Aiden is finally taken alive, shaken enough to help. Through him, and through the chain of evidence already built, the detectives recover Terry's grave and learn enough to understand that Denton is preparing a second-stage attack. A search of Denton's house reveals blood, flyers and two key clues: a U-Hire rental business card and a U.S. Marshals Service leaflet for **Pittsburgh**. Security footage from the rental desk confirms Emily and Cheryl picked up a vehicle only hours earlier. Denton is moving again, and this time he is going after federal power in a more ambitious way. Logan and Malik realise they are no longer dealing with a New York campaign. The hunt is moving interstate.

Pittsburgh becomes the climax because it lets Denton scale his theatre into a federal event. The target is the **U.S. Marshals Service** building, but Denton's entry strategy depends on distraction from the nearby **William S. Moorhead Building**, which houses multiple federal agencies including the IRS. Denton, Emily, Cheryl and Tilly arrive in a rental car, settle into an underground garage and split the operation with chilling calm. Emily and Cheryl enter the Moorhead Building disguised as ordinary office traffic. Tilly remains in the getaway vehicle. Denton heads toward the Marshals side of the operation. The women move through different corridors, igniting fires in bins and creating rolling smoke and panic. Emily even shoots a worker who stumbles on her sabotage. The fires trigger evacuation and strip federal attention toward the wrong building. Denton's old theatricality is now fused to tactical sophistication. He stages confusion like a director staging exits.

Inside the U.S. Marshals office, Logan and Malik meet with Chief Deputy **John P. Lazinger** and his team, believing they are positioned for a direct strike on the federal side of the block. Malik's instincts tell him something is off, and he moves away to check the streets just as the fires begin. Logan, remaining inside, sees smoke and evacuees spilling from the

Moorhead Building and understands the same truth a moment later: this is the feint. The real strike is coming through the vacuum across the street. He breaks from the Marshals team and heads back up alone, driven by the same combination of instinct and stubbornness that has made him both dangerous and correct throughout the franchise.

At the same time, Malik intercepts Emily and Cheryl in a side street as they withdraw from the burning federal building. Cheryl reaches for a weapon and Malik shoots her before she can raise it. Emily drops behind Cheryl's body for cover, pulls the gun and screams at Malik in rage. He shoots her too. The sequence is clean, brutal and sad rather than triumphant. Malik stands over Emily and says, "What a waste." The line crystallises the sequel's tragedy: these women are guilty, violent and committed, but they are also the casualties of Denton's deeper crime — his ability to convert grievance and desire for purpose into obedience and bloodshed. Malik sees them as both threat and ruin.

Inside the U.S. Marshals building, Denton's plan begins to fail. He reaches the target room, but when he unpacks his bomb, it will not arm. The grand revolutionary image collapses in his hands. Logan arrives and the climax strips away all public rhetoric, returning the story to the relationship that has haunted two films: detective and monster, both older now, both carrying the damage of the years between Philadelphia and this room. Logan smashes Denton with his gun, cuffs him and tries to take him alive through sheer hatred and exhaustion. Denton, even then, is still dangerous. He buries a knife in Logan's thigh, and the two men crash through desks and into a close-quarters struggle that ends against a glass window high above the street. A sniper's bullet tears through Denton's back and sends him over the edge, but Logan is dragged with him, the cuff linking them wrist to wrist. Hanging above the drop, Denton smiles and invites him to join him. Logan unlocks the cuff, lets Denton fall to his death, hauls himself back inside and spits the final answer: "**Kiss my ass.**" The original Philadelphia killer is finally dead.

That should be the ending. It is not. The film pivots, quietly and crucially, to **Tilly Foster**. She is not in the side street with Emily and Cheryl when they fall. She is in the car, witnessing from a distance the collapse of Denton's operation. The cell has been broken. Denton is dead. Emily and Cheryl are dead. But the story understands what Logan and Malik do not yet fully grasp: Denton's true method was never only violence. It was transmission. In the final movement, Tilly drives past Logan's home. In the car with her are a **map marked with Logan's house** and a **photograph of Logan with Audrey, Callum and Christina**. This one image completely changes the emotional ending of the sequel. Denton is gone, but he has succeeded in one last sense: he has passed the threat on. Tilly is no longer merely the frightened youngest member of the group. She is the surviving vessel of Denton's unfinished war.

That ending gives *Rising Star II* its true final shape. Logan wins the immediate battle. Denton falls. The federal strike is stopped. Malik prevents Emily and Cheryl from escaping. But Logan's family remains in the crosshairs. The sequel begins with Denton nearly destroying Logan's home through the explosion next door and ends with Denton's surviving disciple re-targeting that same home with intent and preparation. Public terror collapses back into intimate menace. The franchise returns, in its last image, to the thing that makes it most unsettling: evil is not just systemic, theatrical or political. It is personal. It remembers addresses.

Themes

At its core, *Rising Star II* is about **radicalisation as grooming**. Denton does not recruit by argument alone. He recruits by making damaged, angry people feel chosen, necessary and seen. He turns ideology into intimacy and then into obedience. The sequel understands that violent extremism often enters through emotional need before it ever declares itself as politics.

It is also about **inheritance and mutation**. Evans was the copycat brother, not the source. Denton was always the original. But the deeper point is that violence does not stay fixed. It mutates across bloodlines, across institutions and across generations of followers. By the end, Tilly becomes the newest carrier of Denton's method, proving that stopping the architect does not necessarily stop the architecture.

Finally, the sequel deepens the franchise's central human relationship: **Logan and Malik as two complementary modes of pursuit**. Logan is instinct, fury and unfinished personal reckoning. Malik is method, patience and moral clarity. Denton is only stopped because they function together. But the ending also suggests that even a successful partnership may not be enough to end a threat that knows how to reproduce itself through others.

Closing Statement

Rising Star II is a bigger, more combustible sequel that takes the final chill of the first film and explodes it outward into a domestic terror thriller without losing the emotional spine of the Logan/Malik partnership. It clarifies the mythology by establishing Evans as the copycat younger brother and Denton as the original Philadelphia source, then raises the stakes by showing what happens when that original monster stops hiding and starts recruiting. Most importantly, it refuses easy closure. Denton dies, but the last image makes clear that his violence has already found its next home.