

FADE IN

EXT. HOUSING ESTATE - STREET - TWILIGHT

In the fading light, what would have been a beautiful, red-bricked housing estate if anyone bothered to keep it up stands behind a flickering street light.

The council house is quickly bathed in blue as a police GENERAL DUTIES (GD) VEHICLE, of 1990s vintage, pulls to a stop out front.

The car's headlights flood the front door, hanging funny on a broken hinge, swinging slowly back to partially closed as though someone may have just burst through it.

INT. POLICE GD CAR - TWILIGHT

In the rear of the car is blonde, girl-next-door looking Probationary Constable STEPHANIE PARKER. She shows her nerves as she looks at the house.

In the front seat sit Constable JIM KINGSFIELD, lanky, 22, his head almost touching the roof in the driver's seat, and Constable JAKE JORDAN, 20, his solid frame filling the passenger seat.

Kingsfield looks to Parker in the rear view.

KINGSFIELD

Well, Steph, domestic disturbance for your first call. These have usually de-escalated by the time we arrive.

Jordan grabs the door handle.

JORDAN

Still, we'll take lead, you be the eyes and ears. Good practice for scanning the room and noting details.

PARKER

Will do.

KINGSFIELD

And away we go.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE HOUSE - NIGHT

Kingsfield and Jordan glance at each other as they approach the neglected semi-detached house. Jordan pushes the gate open. It sticks against a broken piece of the path. He lifts it slightly it and falls off the one rusty hinge holding it. The gate falls. They step in.

JORDAN

Shit!

Parker jerks, on guard --

PARKER

What is it?

JORDAN

Shit!

Jordan indicates the bottom of his boot. Kingsfield laughs.

JORDAN (CONT'D)

There's piles of it. Watch your step.

PARKER

Okay, but where's the dog?

Jordan cleans his boot on the overgrown grass, swearing under his breath before he scans the concrete path leading to the front door. They note the garbage and unkempt garden.

KINGSFIELD

I'll check the rear.

Jordan motions to Parker and they move to the partially open front door. It's eerily quiet, with no signs of other residents around. Jordan then notices something on the door frame -- BLOOD.

He leans in with his torch -- the blood slowly runs down the frame -- FRESH.

*

Jordan whistles.

Kingsfield turns to see Jordan waving him over. Kingsfield approaches to see Jordan pointing at the blood. They share a serious look and Kingsfield leads the way in, Parker taking up the rear.

INT. COUNCIL HOUSE - HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

*

Kingsfield steps in, eyes scanning every detail --

KINGSFIELD
Hello? Police! Anyone here?

No answer.

KINGSFIELD (CONT'D)
(louder)
Hello?

Still no answer. Parker stays close behind Jordan.

JORDAN
Steph, you want to go back and wait in
the car? First shift and all that? *

PARKER
I'm--I'm OK. *

Parker nods as she looks around, clearly nervous. But she holds it together. Focuses. But as she moves further into the house, she covers her nose --

PARKER (CONT'D)
What's that smell? Is it... a dead body?

JORDAN
I haven't been lucky enough to find one of those myself, but this is the classic aroma of a dirty, filthy council house. Most of the time, it's a case of wiping your feet when you leave, not the other way around--

KINGSFIELD
PSST - focus.

Kingsfield waves them ahead as they move to the next room. Parker and Jordan focus and follow --

INT. COUNCIL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

They step into a living room to the right and stairs going up to the bedrooms on the left. No carpet on the stairs or the hallway floor. A red-bricked, square tile hallway leads onto the kitchen.

A battered old moped without a number plate leans against the under-stairs cupboard door. Oil has leaked from the moped and congealed in a thick, black, viscous pool underneath the engine.

Kingsfield stoops to the oil and checks it. Wrinkles his nose as he smells the air around him.