

Previously on Black Badge: Devin Lamonte was a normal detective leading a normal life until she met Lance Parker. He wields a black badge and claims that it gives him the authority to do whatever it takes to bring down corrupt cops. As Devin continued her investigation into the serial killer known as the Sandpoint Slasher, Lance inserted himself into her life and used threats to force her to help him. When she goes to confront Lance he revealed to her that the Sandpoint Slasher is actually a cop and that he needs her help to catch them.

“So basically you’re just not going to answer any of my questions,” Devin said with a heavy sigh.

After spending thirty minutes with Lance and listening to his evidence she realized that he was almost certainly right. The serial killer that was terrorizing the city had to be a cop. Now that she knew she felt dumb for not realizing it sooner. Following that he asked her to take a ride with him and she was trying desperately to get him to divulge any information about himself and the Black Badge organization. So far she wasn’t having any luck.

“You realize that it makes it very hard to trust you if you won’t tell me anything,” she said.

“I don’t need you to trust me. I just need you to help me bring this monster to justice,” Lance replied.

Devin stared at him as he drove them deeper into the richest section of town known as The Palisades. After the things he had done already she knew this wasn’t a good person to get involved with. But she also knew that he was the only one even remotely going in the right direction with the Sandpoint Slasher investigation. She briefly considered talking to the Captain about this but without Lance’s evidence to back up her claims Forsythe would never believe that the Slasher was a cop. For now, at least, she felt like she had no choice other than to play along with Lance.

He pulled to the side of the street and came to a stop behind a Sandpoint Police Department cruiser. Devin leaned forward and read the identifying number on the back of the car.

“That’s Berkley’s cruiser. He's not supposed to be anywhere near this district,” Devin said.

“For the past six months Officer Berkley here has been seizing drugs from the projects and reselling them here. Token told me all about it.”

Lance got out of the car and went to his trunk and opened it. Devin stayed in the car and as he came back around she saw that he now had a brown paper bag. He went to the trunk of the police cruiser and used a tool to pick the lock and open it. He tossed the bag in and then closed the trunk. As soon as he got back into the car Devin yelled at him.

“What the hell, Lance? I can’t be around when you’re doing this shit!”

He ignored her and pulled out his cell phone and started typing on its keypad.

“Please tell me you’re not activating another bomb,” Devin said, worriedly looking at the trunk of the police car.

“I’m texting an anonymous tip to Sandpoint PD Internal Affairs. They know to take tips from this number seriously so they’ll search the car, find some damning evidence and that will be that. It’s not always about physical violence. Sometimes it’s as easy as just pointing the system in the right direction.”

Devin put her head in her hands. It had been almost twenty four hours since she had last slept and her ability to deal with Lance was wearing thin.

“So I just watched you frame a cop. Great.”

After thinking about it for a moment Devin opened the car door and stepped out.

“I can’t be a part of this. This is wrong.”

She slammed the door and started to walk away. Lance rolled down the car window and spoke.

“This neighborhood doesn’t normally see drugs like these. Five people have overdosed on this stuff in the past month, three of them teenagers. There have been two deaths and one victim has permanent brain damage,” he paused for a moment before adding, “Letting something like that go on, that’s what’s wrong.”

After hearing what he had to say Devin stopped walking and turned back towards the car.

“Get back in and I’ll take you home so you can get a few hours of sleep,” Lance said.

She hesitated for a moment and then did as he said. They drove in silence for several minutes before Lance spoke again.

“When you get to work tomorrow I need you to identify the dirtiest cop in the city. Use everything available to you, personnel files, one on one interviews, peer reviews, whatever it takes to find the worst of the bunch. Once you’ve got a name call me and tell me.”

“Oh, it's that easy? Find the dirtiest cop and you've found the Slasher?”

“It’s never that easy, but this is an important step in the right direction.”

Devin didn’t answer him. She laid her head against the window and tried not to think about just how screwed up her life had become.



Created and Written by A.C. Hall

Episode 2 – Art of Motion

The next morning at the station Devin had a tower of paperwork on her desk but wasn’t able to bring herself to even look through it. So far her day had been spent pacing her office and trying to figure out what to do. At times she almost sat down at her computer and started looking through personnel files like Lance had told her and at other times she looked over at the door to the Captain’s office and considered marching in there and telling him everything that was happening.

Hours passed like this until finally Devin made a decision. She left her office and went to Captain Forsythe's. She paused in front of his door and took several deep breaths. Finally she got up the courage and opened it and stepped inside. The towers of paperwork on the Captains desk dwarfed the one that was on her own desk and she could tell from the look on his face that he was in a foul mood.

"Make it quick," he snapped.

She could tell this wasn't the best day for this but had come too far to back out.

"Sir, one year ago..."

Forsythe slammed his hand on his desk, interrupting her.

"This damn well better not be about what I think it's about," he said angrily.

"Sir, that man, the Black Badge..."

"No!" Forsythe yelled as he jumped out of his chair. "You are not doing this Detective, do you hear me?"

Devin took a step back. She hadn't expected him to react well but this was much worse than what she had hoped for.

"Sir, he's..."

"Nuh uh, no. You shut up now Lamonte."

"There are things happening that..."

"SHUT! UP! NOW!" Forsythe screamed.

The force of his voice felt like it shook the windows of his office and it took all of her self control not to burst into tears. Without realizing she had done it Devin had backed all the way up until she was pressed against the door.

After staring at her for several moments Forsythe spoke.

"I should end your career for this."

He scratched at his beard.

"I really should," he added quietly.

She watched silently as the Captain went back to his desk and sat down. Minutes passed before he spoke again.

“I’m afraid I can’t do that. Lance has me taking care of something important.”

“I don’t give a shit about what Lance has you doing. I’m telling you to get out of the car.”

After he still refused to comply Devin pulled out her gun and pointed it at him.

“Get out of the car now!”

Toke raised his hands but didn’t get out.

“Whoa, what the hell?”

“Get out!” she repeated.

“Where do you think we are, Detective? You’re in my part of town right now, you realize that don’t you? Look at those guys over there by the building,” Token said.

Devin glanced over and saw three men staring at her intently. She could see that each of them had a gun stuck in their waistband.

“I could nod my head and they’d blow you away, no questions asked,” Token said. “Now you know I wouldn’t do that, but there’s only so long they’re going to stand there and watch you hold that gun on me before they decide to make a move on their own. You feel me?”

A bead of sweat trickled down Devin’s forehead as she nervously glanced at the men again.

“Now you want to talk, that’s fine, I’m fine with talking. Hop in and take a ride with me, I just gotta go do a few things around town real quick, it’s no big deal, nothing illegal.”

Devin was still unsure how much she should trust him but she found her resolve wavering.

“Come on. It’d be my pleasure to have a beautiful lady to chat with while I drive around,” Toke said with a smile. “What do you say?”

After another moment Devin put her gun back into its holster. She looked back at her own car and considered just leaving but then she would’ve come here for nothing. Finally she walked around Token’s vehicle and got in the passengers seat. The three men approached the car and Devin’s hand went

to her gun. Token grabbed her hand and squeezed to stop her from pulling it out.

“Everything cool over here Toke?” one of the men asked.

“Oh yeah, cool as ice, you know how I roll,” Token answered with a big smile.

“You sure?” the man asked, gesturing towards Devin.

Token laughed.

“Yeah, yeah, man, everything’s fine, just a little spat, you know how it goes sometimes.”

The three men exchanged a look and then began to walk away.

“Hey guys,” Toke called out to them. “Please watch after her car, make sure nobody messes with it.”

“Anything for you Toke.”

As they pulled away Token let out a sigh and released Devin’s hand.

“A lot of people around here grew up in violence. It’s all they know, it’s like the answer to every question that’s ever asked of them. I’ve seen good people, people I trusted and respected, just go off and shoot a man when even slightly provoked,” Token said.

After a moment of silence Token looked over at Devin and let out a long laugh, lightening the mood.

“You look way too much like a cop to be riding with me through the projects.”

He reached into his back seat and produced a white hoodie. He handed it to her.

“Put that on.”

She slid it on and Token gave a nod of approval.

“There ya go,” he said. “Now, what is it that you wanted to talk to me about that was so urgent you saw the need to put a gun to my head?”

“I need you to tell me everything you know about Lance. Who gives him the authority to do what he does? What’s his real name? Where does he get his intel from? I need you to tell me everything.”

“I hate to be the bearer of bad news but if you’re expecting a lot of big revelations about Lance Parker then you’re going to be disappointed.”

Sensing her unhappiness over his answer Token continued.

“Don’t get me wrong, I’ll tell you anything I can, but the fact is that I don’t know much.”

Devin was about to ask another question but Token held up his hand.

“Hold on a second.”

He pulled the car up to the curb where a member of the Reapers gang was standing.

“You hear about it yet?” Token asked the man.

“So it’s really going down?” the man asked.

“Yeah. Tell your boys. But I mean it when I say no weapons. Make sure you’re clear when you tell them all how serious I am about that.”

The man nodded.

“You got it Toke,” he said as he shook Token’s hand.

Before Devin could ask what that had been about Token started talking again.

“Lance Parker definitely isn’t his real name, I know that for sure,” Token said as he pulled back into traffic. “But I couldn’t tell you what his real one is. I’ve heard him use Matt Rodgers and he went by Landry Taylor when I first met him but I’m sure neither of those will pull back anything if you run them.”

Devin was surprised he was being so open with her.

“Why are you telling me all of this?”

Token laughed.

“So you put a gun to my head for information and now that you’re getting it you’re upset?” he asked with a smile. “Look, I just figure that if we’re all going to be working together to find this maniac cutting up innocent people in our city then maybe we need to establish a little trust. Plus, if I can help you understand a little bit more about Lance then maybe you can feel more comfortable being around him and accepting his... style of doing things.”

After taking a few moments to consider Token’s words Devin asked another question.

“Why is Lance your friend? I mean, a guy like that doing that sort of work, it makes no sense for him to make friends.”

“I don’t know, really. I’m the one person in the world that he trusts enough to let in just a little bit, you know? Not much, because that’s not his way, but a little. We had a run in once, a while back, that was how we met, and for some reason he just saw something in me and all of a sudden we were friends.”

“He saw your resources. He saw a person with control of half a city that he could manipulate and use to further his own goals. That’s what he saw.”

Devin immediately regretted the tone of her words. While she had meant them she hadn’t meant for it to sound so harsh. After a moment Token responded.

“You know, for a smart girl you sure do make yourself sound dumb sometimes,” he said. “I was just a lowly gang banger on a collision course with an early, meaningless death when I first met Lance. All of this other stuff came later. After we were already friends.”

After a pause he spoke again.

“I’m pretty sure I’m the only friend he has in the whole world.”

“He doesn't care that you're a criminal?" Devin asked, trying to lighten the mood a little.

“Alleged criminal,” Toke responded with a laugh. “Naw, Lance doesn't care about crime, not really. He cares about police stepping out of line and abusing their power. That's why this means so much to him. I'd imagine that a cop serial killer is the worst thing a Black Badge has ever seen.”

Token pulled up next to another gang member, this time from the Souljas.

“Is it on?” the gang member asked.

“Yes. No weapons though. You make sure everyone knows that they’re going to deal with me if I hear they break that rule,” Token said.

“Okay, what the hell is that all about?” Devin asked as they drove away.

“It’s just a thing,” he responded dismissively.

They drove for a while in silence before Devin asked her next question.

“Who gives Lance the power to come in and police cops?”

“Your guess is as good as mine. Nobody does the type of things that Lance does without some big people backing you up though,” he said. “Maybe government? I really don’t know.”

“I’m on it,” Toke answered as he sat down at another computer in the room.

While Token began scrolling through personnel files on the computer, trying to find the one whose picture matched up with the officer, Lance continued to observe the monitor. Devin and the officer went back into her office and she sat down at her desk.

“She’s nervous,” Lance said as he watched her. “She doesn’t know what angle to take to figure out if he’s dirty.”

Devin was questioning the man who at first seemed at ease but then quickly became uncomfortable. It was clear that she was probing for information on some subjects that he didn’t want to talk about.

“I’ve got him,” Token said.

He punched a few keys to forward the file to Lance’s computer and it popped up on his screen. After less than a minute he was nodding his approval. The officer’s name was Benjamin James and his file was full of disciplinary actions, warnings, lawsuits, civilian complaints and more. Lance continued to study the file, trying to learn as much about the man as he could.

“Oh yeah, this is the guy,” he said.

“Are we going to wait for her to tell us that?” Token asked.

On the other screen they saw that James had left Devin’s office. She sat there for a moment and then picked up the phone and started to dial. After punching in just a few numbers she paused, then hung it up. She sat back in her chair, appearing unsure and frustrated. After a moment she angrily looked up, directly at the camera.

“She just did,” Lance said.

After a few more minutes of reading about Officer James, Lance pulled open one of the desk drawers and pulled out a key. He tossed it to Token.

“Give that to one of your guys. It goes to a locker at the train station. Tell him to go there now, take the item out of the locker and then to get himself arrested with it in his possession.”

Token shook his head as he stared at the key.

“If you say so.”

“Civilian injuries?”

“None. Either we got really lucky or this was the most well planned rumble in the history of the ghetto.”

Devin turned away from him.

“Token,” she muttered under her breath.

“What was that, Detective?”

She turned back towards him and smiled.

“Nothing. If you’ll excuse me there’s someone I need to go see.”

She moved away and looked around the scene in the park one more time. It was well in hand now so she didn’t feel too guilty as she made her way back towards her car. She should’ve realized sooner that this gang rumble was what Token had been setting up earlier in the day but she’d been too busy trying to help bring it to an end to connect the dots. Once she reached her car she sped away towards Tokens house.

Her cell phone rang and she fished it out of her pocket and looked at the screen. It was Captain Forsythe calling. She answered it.

“Listen Devin, we've got a situation here.”

“I know Captain but we've finally got a handle on it.”

“No, I'm not talking about the gang rumble in the park,” Forsythe said, his voice taking on a very serious tone.

“What’s the matter Captain?”

“Do you know an officer named Benjamin James?” the Captain asked.

Devin’s blood went cold. That was the officer she had spoken to earlier in the day with the intention of telling Lance he was the dirtiest cop in the city.

“Barely,” she finally answered.

“He was murdered tonight.”

“Are you sure? I was just told there were no casualties as a result of the rumble.”

“He didn't go to the rumble, Detective. From what I gather he stayed back at the station and went to the evidence room. Some banger was arrested today with a rare World War two era pistol on him. James caught wind of it, apparently he's some sort of a collector. When he was leaving the evidence room, someone caught up to him in the locker rooms.”

Devin pulled the car over to the side of the road and stopped.

“This happened inside the station? How?”

“It's a ghost town up here, Devin, every available warm body is out helping with that rumble.”

The idea of someone being murdered inside the station was almost inconceivable to her.

“My God,” she said.

After a pause Captain Forsythe spoke again.

“It gets worse.”

A chill came over Devin. Deep down she knew what the Captain was about to tell her.

“James wasn't just killed...” Forsythe began.

“Don't say it...”

“He was killed by the Sandpoint Slasher. Forensics just confirmed it.”

Before Devin could respond the Captain spoke again.

“Son of a bitch, the press have it. Finish up at the park and then get back to the station,” he said before hanging up abruptly.

A rage came over Devin and she put her car back into gear and slammed down hard on the gas. She was only a short distance away from Tokens house and she got there fast as she sped the whole way. She skidded to a stop and got out, slamming the car door hard. She stormed up the front steps and at the last second decided to pull her gun. The door was unlocked and she flung it open as hard as she could.

“What have you done?” she yelled as she came inside.

Lance and Token were sitting on the couch in the living room watching news coverage of the murder on a large television.

“I didn't do anything, the Sandpoint Slasher did,” Lance answered without turning around to face her.

Devin walked around the couch and stood directly in front of him. His calmness made her even angrier than she already was.

“Get up,” she said, gesturing with her gun.

“Calm down Devin,” Lance said.

“Calm down? Are you kidding me? You orchestrated this whole thing and now a man has been murdered!”

“A bad man,” he responded.

She couldn’t believe what she was hearing.

“A bad man? That’s your defense, that it doesn’t matter because it was a…”

“Hold on, here he comes,” Token said, interrupting her.

Devin turned around to face the television. There standing next to the reporter talking about the Slasher murder inside the police station was a Sandpoint PD officer.

“I know him. That’s Leo Banks,” Devin said.

“Shhh,” Token commanded.

“I’m here now with a highly decorated member of the Sandpoint Police Department who has a shocking new development to reveal to us in this brutal new murder committed by the Sandpoint Slasher. Officer Banks, why don’t you share with our viewers what you just shared with me?” the reporter asked.

“I’ve been at this station for almost a year now and there’s no way someone could’ve gotten all the way into the locker rooms without being noticed. Therefore it’s my determination that the Sandpoint Slasher must be a member of the Sandpoint Police Department.”

Devin dropped down onto the couch between Lance and Token, her mouth open in disbelief over what she was hearing.

“But Officer Banks, many of the department’s resources were tied up dealing with the gang rumble in the park. Couldn’t the Slasher have used that opening to sneak into the station?”

“No, he couldn’t have. Even with just a minimum crew that station is still not susceptible to being penetrated that deeply by anyone who doesn’t have the proper access,” Leo responded.

“You’re certain about this sir?”

Leo nodded and looked directly into the camera.

“I am. I’m one hundred percent positive that this is proof that the Sandpoint Slasher is a police officer.”

Token muted the television. Devin leaned back and shook her head.

“All hell is going to break loose now. Why would he say that?”

Lance looked over at her.

“Because I asked him to.”

Devin had no response. After a moment of silence Token stood up and spoke.

“So, what happens now, Lance?”

“Now?” Lance replied. “Now things get interesting.”

END OF EPISODE TWO

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