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D.C. Sniper: 23 Days of Fear

By Dave Erickson

Although this movie is based upon actual events, | certain characters and scenes have been fictionalized.

SEPTEMBER 21, 2002

Freeze!

MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

There he is! There!

Where are you, boy? | Come on, son.

I said freeze!

TWO WEEKS LATER:

OCTOBER 3, 2002

And a good morning, and | our top stories around the world today-- Assistant Secretary of State James Kelly | continues his talks in Korea... this time with North Korean officials.

This is the first mission to the country | by a senior American official... since the Clinton administration.

Checking business news-- | A rally by the stock market... may boost investor confidence, | but are more criminal charges... in the works for Enron executives?

In local news, Montgomery County police are investigating... a shooting last night | in a Wheaton shopping--

DAY ONE:

- Come on, Sandy. We gotta go. | - I'm up. I'm up.

What time did you | come to bed last night?

I don't know. 2.00 or so.

You need to get more sleep, Charles.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY POLICE CHIEF CHARLES MOOSE | We had a murder last night in Wheaton.

I told Jacobs to check in.

- A domestic dispute? | - We don't know.

How will that affect our weather?

All on our forecast after our look | at Thursday morning traffic.

A lot of traffic out there, | especially if you're on the Outer Loop... leaving I-95 College Park | headed toward Silver Spring.

The Beltway out of Oxon Hill | is gridlocked...

with everyone leaving | for the Wilson Bridge.

Did Lieutenant Jacobs have something he | needed to tell you at 2.00 in the morning...

that he couldn't have told you at 8.00?

I've gotta drop you at the airport, | stop by the headquarters...

go to Officer Murphy's funeral, | get back to the airport for my flight.

You know, I might miss | Jacobs altogether.

Chesapeake | Bridge and a lot of slow traffic left...

however, on the 95 and 395 | between Springfield and Bridge Street.
If you're on your way to work, allow a lot | of extra time and patience
this morning.

That's the shape of things | at the moment, Jim. Back to you.
Thanks, Christine. In the Middle East--

Do you realise that | since we moved here, you haven't--
you haven't lost one officer | in the line of duty?
Yeah, that's one thing | I don't miss about Portland.
Yeah.

The almanac says | the record high in Montgomery County...
for October 3 | was way back in 1954.
So how hot can it get?

WHITE FLINT, MARYLAND

- Hey. Yeah. Yeah. | - Yeah.
Good morning, Chief.
Good morning, sir. | I'll call you back.
I typed up the notes for your talk with | a couple Post-Its where it reads
awkwardly.
Don't worry, Silvia. | My vernacular endears me to people.
Yeah. Paulson.
- Paulson. | - Yes, sir.
You want to talk | about the sergeant's exam?
Ah, no. It can wait, Chief. | I mean--
You got five minutes. | Come into the sanctum.
A man's gotta know his limitations.
I'm not saying don't take the test. | I'm saying give yourself--
Chief, we have a problem.

ASPEN HILL, MARYLAND

DOUG DUNCAN | MONTGOMERY COUNTY EXECUTIVE

- Good morning, Mayor Duncan. | - Good morning.
- You're gonna miss the bus. | - What?
- You're gonna miss the bus. | - That's okay. I'll ride my bike.
- Ride fast. | - Milk, honey.
So I miss homeroom, maybe. | It's not a big deal.
- All right? | - Kiss.
- Sandwich? Thank you. | - Phone?
Come on, Jack.
- It's here. It's here. | - Thank you.
- See you later. | - Are you in front of the TV?
Is it on? See it?
Witnesses are saying they heard one shot.
- One report from a rifle or a handgun. | - Yeah, I see it.
A shooting last night. | A second one earlier this morning.
I'm at the third. | I don't know what's going on.

- Declared dead by paramedics. | - Yeah, I'll meet you downtown.
His name has not been released.
Again, if you are just joining us...
there has been a shooting | at a local Rockville Mobil station.
Yeah, this is Doug Duncan. | I need to talk to the governor.

SILVER SPRING, MARYLAND

Three witnesses heard a shot.
It was a single shot.
One says he saw a white box truck | fleeing the scene, white male driver.
The guy was just filling his taxi.
Okay. Here's what happens.
Every cop on the street wears a vest. | Mandatory!
I want autopsies on the bodies-- | Wheaton, White Flint, Aspen Hill--
done this morning.
I want an officer | to hand-deliver the slugs...
from the M.E. | to the ballistics lab.
I want results | from the ballistics lab today!
Chief, we've got another one! | Post office in Silver Spring. That's three.
- Four! Four, you count last night. | - Damn it!
Wheaton, White Flint, | Aspen Hill, Silver Spring.
- What time, Foster? | - What?
- The Silver Spring shooting. What time? | - I don't know. Five minutes
ago.
That'd be 8.37. | And our guy here?
- 8.1 2. | - Twenty-five minutes.
Look, we need the state police chopper | up over the interstate now.
We need an all-points out | for the box truck!
- Chief? | - He's using the Beltway.
Put it on AM, John.
The super sale will be on for two days...
so you don 't want to miss out.
- Slashing prices in every department.
- The cockpit voice recorder was recovered yesterday-- | - Change it again.
If you've just joined | us, there's been a series of shootings.
We're not sure if they're related | or not at this point.
- At 7.40 this morning.
Police are still processing | the crime scenes, and we expect--

KENSINGTON, MARYLAND

We're outside Montgomery County | police headquarters...
in Rockville, Maryland...
just moments outside Washington, D.C., | awaiting some news on these
murders.
County executive Doug Duncan | and Chief Charles Moose...
are set to make a statement | in a few moments.

I'm getting 1 50 state troopers to fill in | the blanks. Two hundred tomorrow.

Governor Glendening has committed | emergency funds. Don't worry about O.T. I wasn't going to.

What are we looking at? | Hate crimes?

- The guy's a world-class misanthrope. | - What do you mean?

He shoots men and women, | minority and white. Hates everybody.

Charles, we're not talking | about terrorism?

I don't want to cry terrorist | if this is just some asshole with a scope.

A little panic might make people cautious. | It might save some lives.

There's no such thing as a little panic. | Not any more.

- The chief looks nervous. | - Can you blame him?

The whole nation's watching.

Nothing like this has ever happened | in Montgomery County.

Our homicide rate just increased...

by 25% in one day.

To the people | in the D.C. metropolitan area...

be advised to be alert, | be vigilant.

There's been no consistency | in the people that have been targeted.

We are not able to assure anyone...

their safety at this time.

Chief, are you exploring | connections to terrorism?

Sir, we are a large...

suburban community, | adjacent to our nation's capital.

We're not gonna rule out | any avenue at this time.

Chief, are we dealing with a professional | of some kind? A trained sniper?

We do have someone that, so far...

has been very accurate | at what they're attempting to do.

Thank you.

Children! Supper!

This murder spree | began yesterday evening in Maryland...

and continued today | with four more shooting deaths.

Police have launched | a statewide manhunt.

Last night the victim was a 55-year-old | man shot dead at a local market.

At 8. 00 this morning, a second man | was shot while mowing a lawn.

A short time later, a cab driver was killed | while filling his taxi at a Rockville gas station.

Then a woman sitting at a post office...

and then a second woman shot down | while cleaning her car.

Police are urging the public | to remain vigilant and alert.

There seems to be only one correlation | in these shootings:

Every victim was doing the things | each one of us does every day.

- Good eveni ng. | - Hey. How are y'all doing?

Good, good, good. I was wondering | if we can get a-- get a locker.

Would that be a family membership?

Sure. You have month-to-month?

- Mm-hmm. | - Okay, that'll work.

- This your boy? | - Yes.

- What's your name, baby? | - You can tell her.

My name's John, | ma'am, just like my father.

Where's your island accent?

- His mother's Jamaican. | - Oh.

My blood's all red, white and blue.

Uh, why don't you come on over here? | I'll take your picture.

Come on. | Stand right there.

Oh, come on, baby. | Smile for the camera.

- Do you want mine? | - Most definitely.

Now, why don't you give me | one of them smiles?

Okay.

- Okay, let me run some things by you. | - Right, right, right.

Do you remember seeing the box truck | before or after Chief Moose announced it?

I'm sorry, but the chief | won't be giving interviews.

All questions can be addressed | through our public information office.

I'll know better within an hour. | Thank you.

My office is getting calls.

Scared people asking questions | I can't answer.

- What do they want to know? | - They want to know how to be safe.

Asking about instituting curfews.

They've killed at night. | They've killed during the day.

We can't ask a million people | to hide indoors.

We have to define this, Charles.

Chief, I've got Sandy.

- We have to give it a name. | - There is no name for it.

- Sandy? | - Hey, baby. I'm back. I'm home.

- You okay? | - Yeah, yeah.

- I'll be there as soon as I can. | - All right.

Chief! Special Agent Tremain | from the F.B.I.

Baltimore field office.

Chief, we open the door to the Feds, | they are gonna ask us to step out.

Don't worry, Jacobs. | I reached out for the Bureau.

This suburban Beltway | community normally offers safe haven...

from the crime and violence | of the District.

But since the last shot rang out | at 9.58 this morning...

Montgomery County police | have announced neither leads...

nor suspects in this series | of random murders.

There are more questions tonight | than there are answers.

Paralysis has set in | across this quiet suburban county.

Citizens are behind locked doors, | wondering if the horror has ended...
as abruptly as it started, | wondering if this is all over--
if it's safe to walk the street, | buy gas or go shopping.
Has some sleeper cell awakened...
in the shadow of our nation 's capital?
Authorities will neither confirm nor deny | that the shootings are
terrorist-related.
Terror--
You said one shot, Chief.
Are we dealing with a professional | of some kind? A trained sniper?
We do have... someone...
that so far has been very accurate...
at what they're attempting to do.
The spectre of terrorism | looms large in the mind of Americans...
and it cannot be ignored.
This is Connie Kingston reporting live | from Rockville, Maryland...
a city under siege.
Oh! Oh!
Chief Ramsey had a shooting | in the District last night.
DAY TWO 6.15 A.M.
If it's connected, that's six.
Six people in 24 hours.
AI FAGENT RUSSELL STONE D.C. Metro | turned the bullet fragments over to us
this morning.
The fragments you've recovered | so far have all been.223s.
It's a common bullet. Several companies | make it. Several weapons fire it.
- We can't trace it? | - You haven't found any shell casings.
- We assumed he was collecting them. | - Or he's using a bolt-action
rifle...
and ejecting the shell casings later, | or he's firing from inside his
vehicle.
The shooting in D.C. | does match the MO.
Long range, one shot, no casings.
D.C. Metro has a witness...
who saw a burgundy-coloured | Chevy Caprice leaving the scene.
African-American driver.
F.B.I. SPECIAL AGENT JACK TREMAIN | I don't think so. Spree killers skew
white.
Our profile says he's late 20s, | early 30s, educated, divorced.
That matches yesterday's description-- | white box truck, white driver.
We're putting together | a geographic profile.
Most likely, | he lives near where he kills.
He or they? If this is a serial killer, | okay, that's one thing.
But the press has chained this | to anthrax and 9/1 1.

Long-range assassination is a page | out of Al-Qaeda's playbook.
What if it's not Osama Bin Laden? | What if it's Timothy McVeigh?
We're looking into militia groups | up and down the Seaboard.
We're referencing that | against weapons purchases--
Wait-- Wait a minute.

Referencing that against any members | with weapons training.
Lieutenant?

This guy, these guys, | whatever the hell they are...
they haven't targeted government | institutions or employees.
They haven't made any demands. | Nobody's claimed any responsibility.
So if this is terrorism, | what's the point?
What's the message?

Fear.

- Okay, listen. Like I said-- | - Honey--

- Stay inside.

- You missed the bus. | - Oh, yeah. I'll just ride my bike.

- You got all your gear. I'll drive you. | - But I--

I don't want you to miss homeroom. | I'll call you.

Come on, guys. I'm driving. | Come on.

Come on! Come on, come on. | Push it! Push it!

Push! Get it off of you! Push! | Drive, drive, drive, drive, drive it.

Drive it! | Get it off you!

Get it off you! | Look at me, John.

John, look at me.

Allah Akbar.

Bring it. Bring it. | Come on! Come on!

Allah Akbar. Bring it.

Bring it! Get it off! | Get it off of you!

Yeah!

Good job! | That's what I'm talking about.

John, that's what I'm talking about.

Allah Akbar.

Allah Akbar.

If something | should happen and a child gets hurt...

MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL | I couldn't live with myself...

knowing that we might have | done something and did not.

We have done something. | The schools are under lockdown.

It's like living in a bunker | eight hours a day.

Kids are safer in school than out.

- Your kids too? | - Yes, my kids too. Absolutely.

How do we make an informed | decision about the schools...

without something concrete | from law enforcement?

- The chief is giving us everything he can. | - Which ain't much.

I propose we shut 'em down. | Close the schools until this is over.

And tell the kids what? | Give up? Hide under your bed?
- I'd rather see them scared than dead! | - No one wants our children hurt.
It would only be as long as it takes | to catch the bastard.
And how long will that be?
- We don't know. | - What if we don't catch him?
I guess we'll be looking | for a new police chief.
The sheriff's department has verified...
that Montgomery County schools | remained...
under a code blue | lockdown status today.
And there's talk of opening | military bases so local school children...
can carry on with sporting events.
Barri ng the apprehension of a suspect, | they plan on keeping their
children in this Halloween.
Theyjust don't want to take a chance.
We will release a composite image...
of a white box truck...
seen fleeing | one of the crime scenes.
A white male was seen | driving this vehicle.
That was Chief Charles Moose...
speaking to reporters earlier today on | some recent developments in the
D.C. --
- We want you to start wearing a vest. | - You gonna put a million vests on
a million people in Montgomery?
- No. | - Then you're not putting one on me.
I want to assign a security detail | in case-- in case--
I'm telling people | to go on with their lives.
- Doug, the Feds have intel-- | - I'm going out in public. My family's--
Al-Qaeda's trained snipers | to hit U.S. government officials.
You're the highest elected | officer in the county.
- They're killing civilians! | - Now! You're a rung up the ladder.
- So are you. | - I carry a gun.
I'm surrounded | by people carrying guns.
I'm talking about two cops | in street clothes.
Rapid Start collects the tips, | tracks who's working the lead.
F.B.I. BALTIMORE FIELD OFFICE
Most of the operators are trainees, but we | have experienced agents
overseeing them.
Did you take any flak | opening the door to the Feds?
Murders in the District go Federal. | You would have come in anyway.
- We don't know D.C.'s connected yet. | - Yes, we do. We just can't say it.
Sniper tip line. | Please state your name.
"Don't talk. Just listen. | I want to talk to the policeman."
I need you to state your name, sir, | before I take your information.
My name? No, no. | You don't get that.

I-- I do-- | "I have something for you.

You're looking for the wrong people."

I can't take any information | unless you state your name first.

- You're not listening. | - Please, just start with your name, okay?

Okay. Call me God.

We got a possible. George Lenehan.

He's one of the sniper school rejects | that Fort Bragg spat out of the computer.

What's he done since the army?

- He's tied to a militia group-- | Brothers of the Cross. | - The rifle?

Purchased a Bushmaster in 200 1, | semi-auto. It shoots.223s.

He was cited yesterday for speeding | outside of Thornburg, Virginia.

That's Spotsylvania County. | He's in the neighbourhood.

FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

What's that?

Oh, my God! I need help!

Help me! Please!

Chief, shooting in Fredericksburg.

That's 20 minutes | from Thornburg on I-95.

That's 20 minutes from Rockville. | Jacobs! We're going for a ride!

Go, go, go!

SPOTSYLVANIA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

- Look at the goosebumps. | - Look how cold that water is.

Just teasing. | She lookss good, doesn't she?

- The way she grabbed hold | of that dorsal fin. | - Nice.

- What's going on?

- Go on down that way. | - Right. Right.

Tina hasn't been | this wet since the spring break show.

You remember that one.

Go, go! That's it! Hurry! Let's go!

Let's go!

We interrupt | this programme to bring you | a fast-breaking live exclusive...

on the D.C. sniper case.

Our news team | has learned federal law enforcement | has converged on a hotel--

What the hell?

It's not one of ours.

What you are seeing now | is a live feed from our aerial camera.

Go! Make your breach! Now!

Well, there is a significant amount | of police activity outside the hotel--

Now! On the ground!

George Lenehan, this is the F.B.I.! | Come out with your hands up!

Get down! Get down!

Yes,yes! It looks like they have him. | The suspect has been apprehended.
We are holding the man on a warrant...
unrelated to the crimes | we've been discussing.
We have yet to make any connection...
between this man and the shootings.

DAY FIVE:

If and when we do...
we will provide you | with that information.
For now...
we have to stay vigilant.
- Live your lives...
but be aware.
Don't let your anxiety control you.
Go to work.
Go to school.
Your children are safe at their schools.
That was Chief Moose now confirming | that they do have a suspect in
custody.
Checkmate.
You didn't see that, did you? | You gotta see it, John.
You gotta see that. You gotta focus. | Free your mind.
Free your mind.
I told you this 1 0 times already.
I returned that gun months ago.
Yeah, I guess a Bushmaster...
would be too much gun | for a skinhead rednecks like yourself.
I can handle any weapon you name.
- You're a regular shit-head. | - Have we found it?
No.
He could have dumped the rifle | in the Potomac, Chief.
I guess that's what they told you, huh?
Why would he do that? | He didn't know we were coming.
We haven't had a shooting | since we apprehended him.
Yeah.
Quiet weekend.
You can think | about that a little bit longer...
then we'll come right back in here, or | you can tell me where you set the
gun!
- Hello? | - It's me.
Hey, you. | Get any sleep last ni ght?
Mm, yeah, yeah. I'm good.
- You coming home tonight? | - You'll be in bed before I do.

I'll wait up.

Charles, keep calling, even if it's | just to say you can't make it home.
I will.

And tell your troops | to do the same thing.

They need to call home...

even if it's just to say, | "I can't talk."

Charles?

Charles?

I'm sorry, Sandy. | I can't talk.

BOWIE, MARYLAND

Out of the building, please.

Help!

The boy's aunt | was just dropping him off.

A few people heard the shot. | No one saw the shooter.

Thirteen. | He was 13 years old.

What the hell kind of sick bastard | shoots a kid?

- Is he alive? | - They took him to Children's Hospital.

Here's what we know so far:

Police have closed down Route 197, | which fronts the school.

Traffic is crawling throughout the area. | It's total chaos here.

We've got parents trying to get | into the area to get their kids...
home safe and sound.

Police won't comment on any | connection to the sniper shootings...
but the MO looks to be the same: | one shot, fired at a distance.

We may not have Bin Laden | or Timothy McVeigh.

No. Maybe David Berkowitz.

"Dear Mr Policeman. | Call me God.

Do not release to the press."

Get a fingerprint | off that shell casing.

I doubt he'd plant clues | and forget to wipe them clean.

It's the first time | he's got out of his vehicle.

Why, do you suppose?

I said they were safe.

I said the schools were safe.

He went outside his comfort range | with the boy.

He went out of range | on October 4 too, Hasbro.

But I redesigned the profile for Virginia, | and then he comes back.

I don't know what variables | are defining his kill zone.

It becomes more accurate | the more samples it gets.

How many more samples you want?

October in the D.C. area is | supposed to be a time for the outdoors.

The heat of the summer | has melted away...

but this season a state of siege | has paralysed the community.

Its citizens are staying in, | afraid to venture out.

Student sporting events have been | rescheduled or cancelled altogether.
High school teams | are practising in their gyms...
uncertain when activities will resume...
uncertain when their lives | will return to normal.
Well, what makes this not just an | American story but an international
story--
Somebody like this | could hold London to hostage...
or Rome or Paris or Berlin.
The random shootings | are especially shocking here in England...
where strict gun control | limits gun ownership...
to a small minority | of the population, usually farmers.
But gun-related violence | is on the rise here...
and there is much empathy | for those in the D.C. area.
I'm from San Diego, and even though | we're all the way on the other
coast...
we're-- we're nervous around here too.
I have two kids, and I don't even want to leave the house any more.
I live in Phoenix, | Arizona, and I'm afraid to buy gas.
Calls are coming in | from not only the East Coast...
but the West Coast, the Southern | States, the Pacific Northwest.
The Towers, | then the anthrax and now this...
and you wonder, | is there a line they won't cross?
I.D., ma'am.
Mildred Muhammad. Okay.
I'll get you to pull ahead. | I'll radio in for 'em.
Red dots represent the victims.
Red, orange, yellow and green | should be where he lives.
- Correct. | - The cable cops say he lives in the vicinity of his crimes.
And then he leaves it. | Hits Virginia.
- You say the schools are safe-- | - Then he proves us wrong.
We're defining his kill zone.
Our victims have all been innocent.
They have all been blameless | and defenceless.
But today...
a line was crossed.
Today...
it got down to the children.
And whether it was | the person we're looking for...
or someone else--
someone so cruel...
so mean-spirited...
to shoot a child...
they've given our community | a level of fear that we're not used to.
Now, come on.

That's crossing the line.

Our children don't deserve this.

I guess it's getting to be | really, really personal now.

So, parents, please engage | your children tonight.

Be there for them. | Tell them that they're safe.

They're gonna need that. | They've got to hear that from you.

And tell them that we're gonna...

carry on.

We will carry on...

because that's what we do | in this country.

That is what we do.

That, of course, was Chief Moose...

of the Montgomery County | Police Department...

speaking earlier today, emotional...

clearly upset over the shooting of | a 13-year-old boy in suburban Maryland.

Law enforcement officials are--

I'm supposed to be | all facts and evidence.

I go out there, I shed a tear.

He sees that.

He sees--

He sees he got to me.

He goes out and he does it again.

Detective Paulson...

my sources in Prince George say | that the sniper left a calling card.

You enjoying this?

Bad news is good news, | and good news is bad for business.

The message was on a tarot card. | The death card?

Mmm. What'd it say?

Are there any more cards?

Happy hunting.

DAY SEVEN:

As we last reported, | the child shot yesterday in Maryland...

at the Benjamin Tasker Middle School | was undergoing surgery...

- at Children's Hospital. | - Hey, you up?

I'm told he's out of the operating room | after several hours of intense work...

by the county's top surgeons.

But there's been no information | as to his status.

We will continue to track this story | and bring you updates as we get them.

And if you've just joined us...

there's been a very unsettling | update on the sniper case.

A calling card was left | with the haunting message...
- "Hello, Mr Policeman. I am God." | - Oh, no.
Sources say that the message | then went on...
to warn the police not to release | the card or its contents to the press.
- The card, the tarot death card... | - What have they done?
represents the sniper's first attempt | to communicate with police.
King George Four. King George Four.
King George Four.
King George Four, | concerned that your contact--
Chevy Chase Village, | you can phone him on two.
- Chevy Chase Village-- | - You all ri ght, sir?
Uh, sorry, Officer. | Y eah, I'm okay.
Can I see your licence | and registration, please?
Oh, sure.
Been up all night. | Drove down from Jersey to see my wife.
Took a wrong turn about 3.00 a.m. | I just needed 40 wink.
- Where does she live, sir? Your wife? | - Clinton.
All right.
Two-one-zebra. Registration current.
Registered to John Allen Williams.
Bang!
Get in, Sniper.
The tragedies continue | to mount in Maryland and Virginia.
The sniper or snipers have taken | the life of yet another victim.
This is the ninth shooting | and seventh murder since October 2.
Police collected evidence | at a Manassas, Virginia, Sunoco station...
where the man was shot down | while filling his tanks...
but have come away | with no leads to follow.
This is the third shooting | at a gas station.
Meanwhile, developments | continue to come in...
on Monday's shooting | at Benjamin Tasker Middle School.
The tarot card, the death card, | which may have been left by the sniper...
is said to have included | a warning to police.
Task force sources say the message | explicitly told law enforcement...
not to release the card to media outlets.
You have to blame the press | before the sniper blames us.
He's the only constant | the community has.
He's the face of this investigation.
The face of the investigation | can't go off half-cocked.
He has every right to give them hell. | It's an issue of trust.
You can do this, Chief. | You have a passionate history.
I'll see you all down there.
You attack the press today...
tomorrow all the stories | are gonna be about your temper...

and your problems in Portland.

Did you talk to the county heads | about running a dragnet?

- Charles, let me do this. | - Is everyone on board?

- Let me do this conference. | - Is everyone on board?

County, state and federal.

You know it has to come from me.

I'm the policeman.

As far as I know, | the people in my community...

have asked the police department | to work this case.

So I beg of the media, | let us do our job!

if the community wants you to do it...

they will call today | and we will have a vote.

And if it's decided...

Washington Post...

is going to investigate this case, | so be it.

You need to fill your airtime | and write your columns...

so you make up news | where there is none.

Each one of you is so hell-bent | on beating the competition...

that you make public information...

that could, at best, | jeopardize the investigation...

or, at worst...

jeopardize lives.

FREDERICKSBURG, VIRGINIA

Okay, we are...

set.

Sit tight.

Got it.

All right, look. | Traffic's clear. All clear.

Take your time.

Free your mind.

Free your mind, John.

- Say it again.

- Free my mind. | - Say it again.

Free my mind.

Allah akbar.

We are conducting | a police investigation.

If you are driving a white van | or white truck--

There's a dragnet going on | up and down the Beltway here.

They've got all the off-ramps | and the on-ramps closed off...

and they are checking | all white box trucks.

- Uh, white vans.

There was a report that it | might be a light-coloured Chevy Astro.

Well, today they're taking | no chances whatsoever.

They're stopping any vehicle that even | closely resembles that

description...

and they're, of course, asking for | all the identifying paperwork...
for anybody in that vehicle.

I repeat, you want to stay clear | of the Beltway.

The traffic here | is at a complete standstill...

as state and local authorities | are searching vehicle to vehicle...
in pursuit, of course, | of these killers or killer.

And, as I repeat, there are now | 1 0 victims in a week's time.

Hand me the map, John.

Let's go!

If you are driving | a white van or a white truck--

We had another shooting | death on the ninth in Manassas...
another today in Frederickssburg.

We locked down the Interstate.

We backed up traffic for 50 miles.

MARYLAND | LAW ENFORCEMENT BRIEFING

As of this moment, | we've come up empty-handed.

DAY TEN:

Well, what if-- what if we're | talking about more than one here?

- Snipers work in two-man teams. A spotter and a shooter. | - We've covered
that.

That's not what I'm saying. | Multiple teams.

Maryland has one cell. | One in Virginia.

But you're not answering | the dragnet question.

- Multiple teams, multiple vehicles.

So we could be wrong on the truck.

Maybe it's a white van or maybe | it's one of the other vehicles.

We don 't really know.

With each | passing day and with each murder...

the sniper or snipers become bolder | and more ruthless...

but law enforcement | is also upping the stakes.

A tally shows that 390 F.B.I. agents, | 1 55 A.T.F. agents...

and other government agencies | have now joined the task force...

which has also reached out | to the Pentagon...

requesting access | to a military surveillance plane...

with high-tech equipment capable | of tracking gunfire on the ground.

In an interview, | Senator McCain offered...

supportive words for those terrorized | by the recent spree...

of sniper murders.

He was less supportive | of Chief Charles Moose, saying...

"I've come to the conclusion that we | need to have somebody in charge."

He went on to say that | with over 1, 000 federal agents...

already on the task force...

the person to be in charge, | the person to look to--
We've learned that | back in Portland, Moose was criticized...
when protests outside his home over the | closure of the city park turned
violent.
As a patrolman, Moose was disciplined | four times for outbursts.
He was ordered to attend | anger-management classes...
to stem his rage.
Despite these incidents, | county executive Doug Duncan...
hired the chief back in 1 999.
The latest sniper victim | was a 53-year-old man, Kenneth Bridges.
Police are said to be working | on a second composite sketch...
of a white van witnesses saw leaving | the scene of this most recent
shooting.
Police are also going through hours | of business surveillance cameras...
to find something, anything, | that might lead to a break in the case.
The serial sniper has left eight dead | and two wounded.
The most recent victims | were shot at gas stations...
while filling their cars, | going about their daily lives.
FALLS CHURCH, VIRGINIA

DAY TWELVE:

Did you see him? | Did you see his vehicle?
- Was he alone? | - What does the guy look like?
- Was it the white van? | - I saw the sniper, man.
I saw the whole thing go down. | It was a Chevy Astro I saw him driving.
Light-coloured, like beige-ish.
- I got a good look at the driver. | - You said you cut him off.
I cut him off, yeah, yeah, | and he just glared at me, man.
Pissed off. | He was in a hurry, and that--
What did he look like?
He was Arab-lookin', | like one of the hijackers.
- Like one of the 9/1 1 hijackers? | - Uh-huh. Yeah.
We've come full circle.
Has the witness identified | the type of vehicle driven?
Sir, I cannot go into any details specific | to what the witness did or did
not see.
Did he see the vehicle?
When I have more information, | I will release it.
I would like nothing more | than to provide you with a name...
an address and a phone number.
Are you withholding more information | since the tarot card leak?
We withhold what would interfere | with the investigation.
Or are you just learning less?

DAY SEVENTEEN:

There's no gear by the door. | Don't you have practice today?

No, the, uh, soccer team | has the gym today.

We have the, uh, weight room.

I'll be outside with the bodyguards.

Come on, guys. | You're gonna be late.

Are--

Are you going | to another funeral today, Dad?

Yeah, honey, yeah. I am.

Come here. | Have a good day, huh? Okay.

Are we all goin' out for dinner tonight? | Is that still the plan?

"I am God. I am in control.

I am God. I am in control."

You're very welcome.

Rockville City Police. | Your call is being recorded.

"Good morning. | Don't say anything. Just listen.

We are the people | causing the killings in your area.

Look on the tarot card.

It says, 'Call me God. | Do not release to press.'

- Sir, you have to call-- | - We have called you three times before...
trying to set up negotiations.

We have gotten no response. | People have died."

Sir, anything to do with that | is Montgomery County Police hot line.

Rockville is not investigating the crime. | Would you like the phone
number?

What did he say? What?

I couldn't really see his eyes, | but, uh--

but his jaw was, like, sharp, | you know, angled.

And he had a beard. Yeah.

Yeah, like that. And real, real, | like, heavy, heavy eyebrows.

You know what I mean? | Yeah.

- Chief? Foster. | - Yeah, like that.

Fairfax County just finished | with the mall security tapes.

Now, this is just seconds | before the shot was heard.

And... bang.

He was inside. | He was inside the whole time.

Yeah. I'm gonna do a tap dance | on this asshole...

Fred Astaire would be proud of.

Th-Th-That looks like him a lot.

That's him. | That's him, man.

For you, Mr Police.

ASHLAND, VIRGINIA

Call me God.

Do not release to the press.

We have tried to contact you...
to start negotiations...
but the incompetence | of your forces--
- What? | - Incompetence?
I-N-C-O-M...
P-I-T-E-N-C-E.
These people... took our call...
for a hoax or a joke.
Your failure to respond | has cost you five lives.
if trying to catch us...
is now more important...
then prepare your body bags.

DAY EIGHTEEN:

The Ponderosa victim's not dead. | F.B.I. HQ - BALTIMORE FIELD OFFICE
- He's gut-shot, but he's stable. | - What did the letter say?
Don't know yet. | It just cleared processing.
"If stopping the killing...
is more important | than catching us now...
then you will accept our demand... | 7.05 AM
which are non-negotiable."
"Us." "Our." | There's at least two of them.
"We will contact you at 6.00 a.m."
Son of a bitch.
- Had to process the note, Lieutenant. | - Son of a bitch!
We open at the scene, | we compromise prints, fibre evidence.
I know how to work a crime scene, | you arrogant prick!
- It happened. It's over. Move on. | - They have demands.
They're asking that 1 0 million | be placed in a bank account.
They want to start withdrawing money | from A.T.M.'s on a stolen card.
What do we do with that?
That's how we catch 'em. | We start a dialogue with them now.
It looks like we could have | started a dialogue days ago.
They say they've contacted | the Montgomery Police...
the F.B.I. task force, | the priest in Ashland.
- Uh, priest in Ashland? | - The Ponderosa was in Ashland.
- Yeah, I can run with that. | - There is a postscript.
- Chief! | - Chief!
You got any more, Chief?
Chief, what is the current | status of the victim in Ashland?
Do you plan to press charges | against the false witness?
I want to read a statement...
to the person | who left the letter in Ashland.
We've received your instructions.

Please phone again | at the number you left.

We want to talk to you.

ASHLAND, VIRGINIA

Not endured for our salvation.

His glorious resurrection and ascension | into heaven, and ready to greet him--

- Hello. | - You're late.

- I apologize. | - Have you transferred the money?

We're working on it, | but we're gonna need more time.

You don't have more time.

To the person who just called...

the transaction you requested...

is not possible electronically.

Please call us...

at the same number | you used before.

Hello.

They got the trace.

- Down on the ground, now! | - Hey! Qu pasa?

Get down! Get down! | Get down!

- Father Sullivan. | - Bill.

Lieutenant Jacobs, | Montgomery County.

Have you received any strange | phone calls in the last couple of days?

A man called me. | It was difficult to understand him...

- but I thought he said he was-- | - God.

- Yeah. I thought it was a prank. | - What else did he say?

He said to look into a liquor store | shooting in Montgomery.

- County? | - No, Alabama.

Chief. Detective Brooks | in Alabama.

Detective, Chief Moose.

I checked what you said, and yeah...

we had a robbery and homicide | on the 2 1st of September.

Two women were shot, one fatal...

but it don't sound like your guy.

- Tell us why. | - There were two perpetrators...

both male African-American.

What were they driving?

Uh, they fled the scene | in a late-model Chevy Caprice.

Chief?

You, uh, recover anything | at the scene?

We got a partial print | off a gun magazine.

Yeah, we ran it, | but our system's only statewide.

Uh, y'all wanna take a look?

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND

All right. We gotta go find it.

DAY TWENTY:

- Quit smoking? | - Yeah, I'm tryin' to.

- How you doin', Elaine? | - Hi!

Get down!

Oh, my God!

The print belongs to Lee Boyd Malvo.

He's a kid, 17, Jamaican by birth. Held | by the I.N.S. on immigration charges.

Last known address puts him at | a homeless shelter in Washington state. Jacobs.

- Chief, we have another shooting. | - Where?

Aspen Hill.

They left another note.

For you, Mr Police. Call me God.

"Can you hear us now?

Do not play these childish games.

Your incompetence has cost you...

another life."

They repeat the same threat | they made in the Ponderosa letter.

We should release it. | We owe it to the community.

We release, it rewards them, incites them. | They haven't acted on it yet.

No, they've acted on it. Of course. | On the seventh, they acted on it.

We can't incite them to do something | they've already done.

Put it out?

It's your call.

Today President Bush | addressed the nation's fear and anxiety.

It makes me sick to my stomach.

Uh, to think that there is a...

cold-blooded killer at home, | taking innocent life--

Uh, I-- I weep for those | who've lost their loved ones.

I have said before that | public safety is the priority.

We will not withhold information...

that might endanger the citizens...

of this community.

There was a postscript...

attached to the letter left | at the Ponderosa...

which I will now read.

"Your children...

are not safe...

anywhere...

at any time."

Goddam it.

Is there any reason why | you waited so long to tell us this?

I don't know.

Just keep 'em in the backyard and don't | let them ride their bikes on the street.

Yeah. Yeah, yeah.

I love you too, baby.

I'll call you later? Bye.

Yeah?

Say that again.

What the hell's | in Washington state?

BELLINGHAM, WASHINGTON

LIGHTHOUSE MISSION | HOMELESS SHELTER

I remember the boy. | He had a gentle manner.

Does this have something to do | with his I.N.S. hearing?

Or does this have something to do | with John Muhammad?

We might be looking | at a two-man team.

I met John and John at the "Y."

We used to work out together.

His kid was nice, quiet.

He didn't say squat | without John's permission.

I personally found it refreshing-- | a kid today showing his old man respect.

John claimed Malvo was his son-- | or stepson.

It depended on who | he was talking to.

But that boy, | he never acted like a son.

He followed John like a zealot, | took orders like a soldier.

John Allen Williams, | also known as John Allen Muhammad.

Two years ago he was splitting with | his second wife, kidnapped his kids...

took them to Antigua.

We think that's where he met Malvo.

The boy followed him back | to the States?

- Followed him clear across the country. | - And back again.

John called the kid "Sniper," | like a nickname.

I mean, he was teaching him | how to shoot, and I thought--

He taught the kid how to do everything-- | how to work out, how to eat right.

The guy's a serial loser.

Two failed marriages, | two failed businesses we know about.

Only time he's distinguished himself | was in the army.

What did he do?

Qualified as an expert | on the rifle range.

He had these crazy ideas--

talked about blowing up oil tankers | on the highway...

killing cops | who showed up at the scene...

and blowing up the churches | during the cops' funerals.
Sick stuff. Crazy, right?
We got a hit.
Yeah, we got a-- It's a Chevy Caprice. | The colour's blue.
Sweet Mary.
That car's been red-flagged | in area one, two, three, four--
No less than 10 times.
Okay. Okay.
We gotta cast a wide net, | but we've gotta do it quiet.
We need every county, state and fed cop | looking for this car.
The team in Washington-- | where are they headed next?
After the shelter, they stayed with a friend | from Muhammad's Gulf War
company.
- Where? | - Tacoma.
With an update on the sniper | story from Tacoma, Washington...
here is John Demeeta.
Authorities will | neither deny nor confirm...
that this recent activity here in Tacoma | has some connection...
to the rash of murders | on the other side of the country.
Local F.B.I. locked down | this Tacoma home...
and have proceeded to perform a grid | search of the yard with metal
detectors...
as though they're looking | for bullet fragments.
Firefighters are also working to remove | a pockmarked tree trunk...
which looks like it might have | been used for target practice.
Chief, if the press has Tacoma, | they have the names too.
Screw the names. If the snipers | see this, they're in old Mexico.
F.B.I. will load this trunk | along with wood pile and rock debris...
and will ship it back to their lab | in Maryland.
Would you tell my son | I'm out at the car? Bad toothache.
- Ah, sure, baby. I'll do that for you. | - Thank you. Appreciate it.
Earlier today, | metal detectors were used...
to sweep the yard | of this Tacoma, Washington address.
Sources close to the sniper investigation | have stated that there is
something--
a suspect, a witness--
something that links these two | seemingly unrelated locations.
John! It's okay. He's just outside. | Your daddy went to sit in the car.
TACOMA FAMILY COURT | TACOMA, WASHINGTON
- Beatrice Jaffe? | - Uh, yes?
We're looking for information | on a John Allen Muhammad.
- He's the ex of one of my clients. | - Mildred Muhammad.
Yes, that's right.
Did he find her?

Chief?

I know why he came here.

John? John. | Watch your sisters.

- All right. | - I gotta run to the store.

Aaah!

God.

Play nice, babies.

Aaah!

- They get to her in time? | - Yeah.

House is secure, | the wife and kids are safe.

Oh, my God.

I told Sandy about the Wheaton shooting | when all this started.

She asked me...

"Was it a domestic dispute?"

Is this just some guy gone around the bend | because his wife got custody?

- Maybe that's how it started. | - Why'd he keep going?

Why didn't he stop?

It's hard when you're made to feel | you're the Almighty.

John Allen Williams.

John Allen Williams is said to be travelling | with his stepson, John Lee Malvo.

John Allen Williams--

We go out with the make and model now, | they're gonna dump that car.

You put the car out, | it's easier for a citizen to spot.

Tip line might get us there faster.

Wouldn't we have to worry about | a citizen taking the law into his own hands?

They are travelling in not | a white box truck, not a white van...
but a blue 1990 Chevrolet Caprice.

We do now.

Dad?

Yeah.

What do we do now?

Uh, let's just--

Let's just close our eyes | for a while.

A federal arrest | warrant has been issued...

for John Allen Muhammad...

also known as John Allen Williams.

Muhammad should be considered | armed and dangerous.

He may be in the company of a juvenile.

Do not approach them.

Call 9 1 1.

Here's one with a wild hair. | Call somebody else, all right?

All right, let's get back | to our top story.

The sniper car's finally been I.D.'d | by the Montgomery Police Department.
It's a blue Chevy Caprice, | New Jersey tags.
That'd be NDA 2 1Z.
Nora-David-Alpha 2 1Z.
You see it out there, would appreciate | it if you called 9 1 1 and let 'em know.
With your help, | we can put a stop to this madness...
that's been terrorizing the area | for the last few weeks.
Any of you eagle-eyes spot this car, | please call 9 1 1 right away.
Yeah.
It's happening.
Out of the car! Come on!
Get out!
Lay down! On the ground! | Get down!
- Duncan. | - No shots fired.
We found them in their car, asleep.
- They get the weapon? | - Yeah.
- A.T.F. will have ballistics this afternoon. | - That's great, Charles.
Get some sleep.
- Okay. | - Talk to you this afternoon.
I'll talk to you then.
Congratulations.
They matched your rifle.
Today you graduate | to capital murder, John.
What a waste.
Hey, John.
Death penalty's not a question | any more.
Are you hot?
You want a soda?
You pathetic piece of shit.
- Damn! | - Careful!
- I got it! | - Get out of there!
- Get him down! | - Get off me! Get off me!
Get off me!
Okay. Okay! Okay, okay!
Okay. Okay.
I wanted to express to you...
who have lost loved ones...
that...
a case like this...
a case of this nature...
there is no protocol...
no textbook to follow.
We did everything--

everything we could.

But it wasn't enough for...

the ones you lost.

And I'm sorry.

I'm really sorry.

Chief Moose, | my brother was the last--

He was the last victim.

Don't you blame yourself.

We don't blame you.

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26th

Yeah. Okay.

Fine.

They're no-shows. | They forfeit.

Aw, come on!

- What's the problem? | - People are still scared.

Hello.

Yes.

Yeah, thank you.

What?

They say he's gonna be all right.

The boy they shot--

He's gonna be okay.

So, what do you guys wanna do?

- What you wanna do? | - Let's play ourselves!

Come on, come on, come on, come on!

Jeffrey!

Although this movie is based upon actual events, | certain characters and scenes have been fictionalized.