

CHALK

By

Eric Whitten

Eric Whitten
ericwhitten.actor@gmail.com

FADE IN:

INT. CHALK RESIDENCE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Thunder can be heard in the darkness.

A saxophone breaks the rhythm as flashes of light from an old camera briefly illuminate the interior. An upscale living room, but different. Paintings, lamps, tables, chairs and a fully stocked bar are drawn in **CHALK** revealing a world outside our own. The lights stir once more shining onto the floor, a **CHALK OUTLINE OF A BODY. FOOTSTEPS** are heard then stop. We pan up to reveal the silhouette of a man standing in a chalk lined doorway.

ECU: Lights flash revealing a pair of tired eyes.

COLE

I'll take it from here boys.

In from the doorway he steps, but trips and falls suddenly. A **LOUD CRASH**. Back into frame pops up **DETECTIVE COLE**, a shell of a man nursing a ten year hangover.

COLE CONT.

Can we turn on some lights please?

LIGHTS COME UP.

COLE CONT.

What are we, mole people? And what were you two doing over there in the dark anyway?

A **UNIFORMED POLICE OFFICER** and a **FORENSIC PHOTOGRAPHER** cough and scoot quickly past and through the doorway bumping into **DETECTIVE RACER** - a young man with a tightly buttoned trench coat and fedora - as they exit the room.

RACER

(observing)

Someone had fun.

COLE

Don't touch anything rook. I don't need any inadmissible evidence on my hands.

COLE VO

(kneeling before the outline)

It's the latest in the worst string of murders this town has seen in

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COLE VO (cont'd)

years. None of the other detectives would touch it, so naturally it finds its way to my desk. The Chalk Killer is what they're calling him. It's only been eight months, but he's already working his way up the ladder to serial hall of fame. Right alongside Coco Puff and The Lucky Charm. I didn't like it. It was like a bottle of bad whiskey or an oversized burrito. It just didn't sit right in my gut. It felt, too..toooo..toooooooooo

RACER

Familiar?

COLE

I was getting to that. Stay outta my head rook if you know what's good for ya.

RACER

(referring to the outline)
Bad news for Chalk City.

COLE VO

Unfortunately, the rook was right. Mr. Chalk was Chalk City's most influential politician. This town had flourished under his leadership. So much so that he was elected mayor four consecutive times.

CUT TO

MONTAGE

Cole's rant continues over a **VISUAL ANIMATION**.

COLE VO CONT.

Chalk City never saw better days. Unemployment was at an all time low and politicians were lining their pockets with more dust than they could keep track of. That was until recent, dryer times. Everyone had heard of the new dry erase boards, but to see them in person - gleaming high against the skyline,

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COLE VO CONT. (cont'd)
sleek, colorful and perfect - gave everyone, especially Mr. Chalk an eerie look at our inevitable future replacements.

We see a blank chalkboard that comes alive as a piece of chalk wildly draws a spectacular white skyline of a once prosperous city. Underneath is drawn a round table encircled by chalk politicians in suits toasting success. The city above begins to shake and crumble as the politicians look on helpless. Chalk dust whirls into every crevice, billowing out toward the edges of the chalkboard. The edge of the chalkboard is cracked and shattered, making way for a dry erase board forcing itself into place. A line from the dust escapes the chalk side and turns into spectacular colors of green and blue, rebuilding the skyline on the new dry erase board with straight and narrow marker lines. One chalk man watches from the broken edge of the chalkboard as his livelihood is replaced by a new round table and new dry erase politicians toasting to their futures.

CUT TO

INT. CHALK RESIDENCE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

After Cole's rant Racer kneels down in front of the outline, but violently jerks away coughing.

RACER
(coughing)
I never could stomach the sight of chalk dust. If you only knew the irony in that.

COLE
(suspicious)
I'll be the only one being ironic around here rook.

RACER
There does appear to be a clean smudge to the right temple. Elegant, perfect. Whoever did this, was a true professional.

COLE
Keep your pants on. We don't know anything for sure yet. The only chalk I see is what's right in front of *me*.

We close in on COLE as he furrows his brow.

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COLE VO

I hate rhyming. Even more than that was rhyming without trying. I didn't like it. It was like an old retainer or a double ended dildo. It just didn't fit right in my mouth.

RACER

(sarcastic)

Maybe he slipped and fell from a heart attack.

COLE acknowledges RACER with contempt.

MS. CHALK OC

He had to have a heart first.

COLE and RACER spin to see standing in the doorway, **MS. CHALK**, perfectly drawn and scandalously dressed. She looks at COLE with a searching familiarity.

COLE VO

I've seen a lot of chalk over the years, but when she walked through that door she broke them all. With an outline like that, one could only think of one thing, "Why the hell didn't I pay attention in geometry class?"

MS. CHALK

Does he always do these voice overs?

RACER

You get used to it. You must be Mrs. Chalk.

MS. CHALK

(winks)

That's Ms. Chalk to you now. You boys seem a little parched. Scotch?

COLE

Rocks. Don't you think it's a little too soon to be dusting your husband under the rug?

MS. CHALK crosses to the bar, takes out two chalkboards and begins drawing two glasses of scotch with her finger.

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MS.CHALK

Not soon enough I'm afraid.

COLE

Sounds like you weren't too fond of your husband.

MS. CHALK

It's no secret we didn't line up.

COLE

Anyone ever threaten your husband Ms. Chalk?

MS. CHALK

Unfortunately, not everything is so black and white.

COLE

Perhaps you would like fill in the blanks?

MS. CHALK

My husband wasn't ready to accept our changing world and to protect against that he started lying, cheating and stealing from those less fortunate. Money became his master and he the slave.

RACER

What does someone who can draw anything they desire want with money?

MS. CHALK

Power detective. Power over those not spawned from limestone and silt. You see, if my husband had his way, chalk would be the only thing marking through this city. He thought he could bribe the humans into abandoning these new dry erase boards. When that didn't work, well, lets just say, good thing for you, genocide doesn't sit comfortably with me.

MS. CHALK hands each detective a chalkboard with drawn glasses of scotch. RACER coughs and quickly discards his.

(CONTINUED)

COLE

Genocide?

MS. CHALK

Look around you detective. This city's changing. The old blackboards are being torn down and replaced by shiny white ones. The age of chalk is ending, making way for the dryer times. My husband was worried of being outdated, discarded, thrown out like yesterday's garbage.

COLE looks at the chalkboard of drawn scotch.

RACER

(under his breath)

Here we go again.

COLE VO

Chalk. Messy, fragile and always rubbing off on people. Even if I couldn't get the thought of her rubbing me off out of my head, I knew I couldn't let her draw circles around me.

MS. CHALK

I heard that.

COLE

(changing the subject)

You mean to tell me your husband was a jealous racist so you erased him for it?

MS. CHALK

(laughs)

Me? Oh come now, I don't have the stomach for making dust detective, but I know one who does.

Revealing music plays. RACER coughs.

COLE

The Chalk Killer

MS. CHALK

He's closer than you think.

RACER

How do you know this for sure?

COLE

Easy there rook. Wouldn't want you to go popping your buttons too soon.

COLE VO

Rookies. Hot headed and impatient. Like a bag of jiffy pop. I'm not really sure what that means, but it made sense in my head. Jiffy pop. I didn't like it. It always smelled like burnt socks or an old fart filtered through a pair of pants. It just didn't-

MS. CHALK

(irritated)

-You gonna arrest me stud or play twenty questions with yourself?

COLE

Twenty questions. Would you prefer hop-scotch?

MS. CHALK

Sidewalk chalk never fit right with me hunnie. Some things are just too thick for keeping between these lines.

RACER leans against a bookshelf and falls, but catches himself, leaving only half of the bookshelf. No one notices.

COLE

Is there any proof of your husband's plot?

MS. CHALK

My husband wasn't stupid detective. He knew I was a threat to his plans. It became dangerous for me. That's why I needed a professional. Someone willing to get his hands dusty.

COLE

You're speaking of the Chalk Killer?

(CONTINUED)

MS. CHALK

That's right. You see, our little friend had a special gift.

COLE

What's this gift?

MS. CHALK

Making chalk disappear.

Revealing music plays a little too long. Eventually, all three look to each other then directly to camera. Silence is broken by a violent cough coming from RACER.

COLE

(annoyed with Racer)

Get that under control for Christ sakes.

(addresses Ms. Chalk)

So you helped someone erase chalk to stop someone from erasing chalk? Makes complete sense.

MS. CHALK

Oh, come on now Detective, you are so narrow minded. Those murder cases you've been trying to solve for these past eight months? They're all connected. Those chalk were working for my husband. Breaking off the head isn't always the answer. Sometimes, you need to chop up the body to see what else is inside, then, and only then, will you know if it's safe to tear off the crown.

COLE

You're a clever and poetical little chalk, I'll give you that, but I'd never let that stand in the way of justice. No one takes the law into their own hands. I'm afraid it's the end of the line for you sweet cheeks. Not only are you going downtown, but your gonna spill some dust about your connections with this Chalk Killer and your husband's little circus of Nazis. It's time to draw those cuffs.

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COLE steps toward MS. CHALK. RACER finally loses the battle with his cough. He doubles over, fedora slipping off his head, an eraser where his hair should be, still white with chalk dust. Revealing music plays.

COLE

You're an eraser! I knew it!

RACER

That's right detective and the only line being drawn here tonight, is yours.

COLE VO

I'd been duped, hoodwinked, bamboozled. Like a rat in a trap or a cat on a hot tin roof.

RACER

Cut it out will ya? We can hear you!

COLE

(changing the subject)

So, an eraser who can't stomach a little chalk dust? You were right. That's about as ironic as a drowned fish.

RACER

Imagine the disappointment of my parents. It's a shame this all went down, really. What Mr. Chalk and the rest never understood is that we will always have a place. Whether through classrooms, sidewalks, coffee shops, hipster bars, or OFF-OFF Broadway theaters.

COLE

I understand what it means to be uncertain about your own existence. I had a wife, kids, a dog, cousins, uncles, second cousins, step-cousins twice removed. But, I lost all that ten years ago when they were erased from the boards of life.

MS. CHALK

(stepping toward COLE)

I recognized something in your face the moment I saw you, but it's

(MORE)

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MS. CHALK (cont'd)
different. The Chalk Duster case.
Ten years ago. That was your
family. But that means you're chal-

COLE
(turning to RACER)
The years of chalk dust have
finally taken its toll. I'm betting
you don't have long, huh, Racer? Or
should I say, Chalk Duster? Chalk
Killer? Chalklate...Milk?

RACER
(coughing)
Good try Cole, but we both know I
never used that last name. I should
have wiped you from the boards ten
years ago. Your family however,
screached like little shards as I
dusted them from history.

MS. CHALK
You both knew each other this whole
time? But how?

COLE removes his **HUMAN MASK**, revealing his hidden chalk
outline.

Revealing music plays.

COLE
That's not important. Truth is we
all hide from something. Whether
our families, responsibilities or
even ourselves. Well, Racer, looks
like you and I have unfinished
business.

A moment of tension. Then COLE and RACER charge each other.
A cloud of white dust fills the air. The dust finally
settles leaving MS. CHALK alone. She circles the pile of
chalk dust and pieces of felt.

MS. CHALK
I knew I'd get you boys to hug it
out in the end.

Ms. Chalk laughs as she saunters out of the room.

WHITEOUT