

THE LINE-UP

by

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(Based on his original short story)

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FADE IN

INT. POLICE IDENTITY LINE-UP ROOM - DAY

Whitewashed walls, floor, and ceiling. A glass partition, framing one wall.

Four men - all mid-twenties to early 30s - stand front to back, facing a side wall.

JOHN DOE. Average height, weight, and build.

RAMIREZ, a squat Hispanic.

WASHINGTON, a lanky black man.

FLETCHER, a pudgy Caucasian.

Ramirez babbles, nervously.

RAMIREZ

So. What? You think it's The
Grinder? Or... no. The Reaper.

JOHN DOE

Cops'll never find them.

RAMIREZ

Smokin' Joe. Or that freak, from
the projects. What was his name?

JOHN DOE

The Hammer of Zion.

RAMIREZ

That's right. The Hammer. It's
gotta be The Grinder, yeah? I
mean--

FLETCHER

Would you shut up, already?

DETECTIVE (O.S.)

Gentlemen. Face front.

The voice comes, tinny, over a speaker mounted on one wall.

The four men turn to face the glass partition.

The fluorescents are bothering John Doe. He squints, nostrils flaring, looking nauseous.

Washington speaks up, his lips barely moving.

WASHINGTON

The suspect. Was he a male human being? Is what the detective must've asked.

INT. OBSERVATION ROOM - DAY

A DETECTIVE, mid-thirties, and a cut, bruised, and shaken FEMALE WITNESS / AMY, twenties, sit facing the line-up's glass screen.

The detective turns toward the witness.

DETECTIVE

Take your time, Amy. Have a good, close look. If anyone--

AMY

It was...
(shakes her head)
No. I'm sorry.

DETECTIVE

That's... That's all right, Amy. It's okay. Fine.

Deflated, the detective clicks on the speaker mike, again.

DETECTIVE

All right, gentlemen. You're free to go. Sign out with the duty sergeant, on your way out.

INT. PRECINCT RECEPTION LOBBY - DAY

On the desk sergeant's blotter, John Doe scribbles his name,

in a near-illegible hand.

At the exit, he stands, peering intently at the streets beyond.

He breathes in deep, nostrils flaring.

EXT. STREET, TWO BLOCKS FROM PRECINCT - DAY

Amy walks hurriedly from the station.

She flicks her head from side to side, taking in the walkers on the street around her. Still shaken.

EXT. AUTO GARAGE FORECOURT - DAY (24 HOURS EARLIER)

But not half as distressed as she looks, now.

Bruises and cuts fresh and dripping, clothes torn, she stagger-sprints across the forecourt. Fleeing, for her life.

In the open doorway of the mechanic's workshop, THE GRINDER - age unknown, face obscured by welding goggles, overalls slimed with blood and entrails - bursts out in pursuit.

But the doorway's as far as he gets, because

ZZZIP! From nowhere, John Doe super-speeds up to The Grinder, blocking his path.

He shoves a hand to The Grinder's chest. And the big guy blows back into the garage interior, like a throw pillow.

Strolling now, John Doe follows him in.

INT. AUTO GARAGE WORKSHOP - DAY

Vises and tools on the workshop benches are clamped over blood-dripping masses of gristle, and God knows what. The Grinder's been up to some nasty business.

But not now.

Mangled and impaled on the equipment he was thrown into, The Grinder struggles to regain his feet.

As John Doe shuts the garage door, behind him. And turns toward The Grinder, with a massive smile. Displaying rows of extremely sharp, non-human-looking teeth.

He advances.

An incoherent shriek, from The Grinder.

Sounds, like the chewing and gobbling of a ravenous beast.

Game over.

EXT. OUTSIDE THE GARAGE - DAY

Amy continues her run, throwing occasional glances at the receding garage, behind her.

EXT. STREET, TWO BLOCKS FROM PRECINCT - DAY (THE PRESENT)

Here's Amy, still glancing back. More relaxed, now.

EXT. PRECINCT BUILDING EXIT - DAY

Not so, John Doe.

He wears a worried frown, as he follows Amy's progress. A grim set, to his mouth.

JOHN DOE

Hmph. Loose end.

Coming down the precinct building steps, Washington bumps him.

WASHINGTON

Sorry.

(sniffs the
air)

Mmmm. Steak sandwich. French
fries. Coke.

That settled, he continues down the stairs, and on, up the street.

A moment of clarity, for John Doe. He brightens.

JOHN DOE

Loose end. Snack. Matter of
interpretation.

That chilling, toothy smile, as he sets off, after Amy.

FADE TO BLACK.