

# THE NIGHT STALKER

THE KOLCHAK TAPES  
("THE NIGHT STALKER")

Teleplay

by

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Based on the Novel

by

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THE KOLCHAK TAPES

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

- 1 EXT. DESERT - SERIES OF MOVING SHOTS - DAY  
Kolchak's sedan being driven along the desert highway.
- 2 INT. CAR - KOLCHAK  
He reaches into the glove compartment, removes several cassettes and slips one into a small recorder, picks it up.

KOLCHAK

This is the true story behind the greatest manhunt in the history of Las Vegas.

(beat)

Maybe you read about it - or, rather, what they let you read about it; some minor item on a back page probably. Well, take it from me, that wasn't it. What really happened was so bizarre, so totally insane, the facts were hidden from the public.

- 3 EXT. HIGHWAY - KOLCHAK'S CAR  
moving away FROM CAMERA.

KOLCHAK'S VOICE

Hear them now. And when you have... try to tell yourself, wherever you may be -

(beat)

- it couldn't happen here.

- 4 EXT. DOWNTOWN LAS VEGAS - CORNER AT SECOND AND FREMONT - CHERYL HUGHES - NIGHT

standing on the corner, angrily impatient.

KOLCHAK'S VOICE

Sunday, May 16. At approximately 2:30 a.m., Cheryl Hughes was standing at the intersection of Second and Fremont Streets waiting for a girl friend to give her a lift home.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED:

Cheryl checks her wristwatch, grits her teeth. Abruptly, she starts to walk.

5 ANGLE ON COFFEE STAND - LATER

Three MALE CUSTOMERS giving Cheryl the eye as she passes. One of them whistles softly, another calls, "Hey, baby!" Cheryl ignores them and continues.

KOLCHAK'S VOICE

Cheryl Hughes was 23, 5'5 1/2" tall, 118 pounds, blonde hair, light brown eyes; swing shift change at the Gold Dust Saloon.

6 PAN SHOT - CHERYL - LATER

CAMERA IN the yard of Las Vegas High School, SHOOTING THROUGH the chain link fence. Cheryl walks along the sidewalk across the street. The area is residential; darkened, quiet.

KOLCHAK'S VOICE

Cheryl Hughes. Tired and hungry but just mad enough to walk the eight blocks to her small frame house off the corner of Ninth and Bridger.

7 MOVING SHOT - CLOSE ON CHERYL

CAMERA DRAWING AHEAD of her.

KOLCHAK'S VOICE

Cheryl Hughes.  
(pause)  
Enroute to her doom.

As she passes an alley, CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON her neck. There is an o.s. NOISE and, suddenly, a dark-sleeved arm clamps around her neck. She makes a startled sound and CAMERA DOWNPANS QUICKLY TO REVEAL her driving her elbow into her attacker's side, then DOWNPANS TO her feet to show her jamming her shoe heel against the attacker's instep to no apparent effect.

8 LONG SHOT - ALONG ALLEY

Cheryl Hughes and her assailant struggling in the distance.

9 LONG SHOT - ALLEY - GARBAGE TRUCK AND MAN - EARLY MORNING

The same CAMERA ANGLE as in SHOT #8. The garbage truck moves slowly along the alley, the man behind it dumping cans into its rear.

10 MOVING SHOT - MAN

He dumps two cans into the truck and bangs them down; moves, yawning, to the next group of cans, starts to reach for one, then jerks back, shocked. CAMERA WHIP PANS TO one of the cans. Cheryl Hughes' dead hand dangles limply from its edge.

11 INT. COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL PATHOLOGY THEATRE - HIGH DOWN ANGLE SHOT - EXAMINATION TABLE

THREE DOCTORS wait as the CLEAN-UP MAN rolls in Cheryl Hughes' corpse. TITLES BEGIN. The clean-up man wrestles the body onto the table and slips the wooden block under the head as the doctors begin to note the condition of the body. It is silent except for the slight noises the doctors makes as they work.

12 UP ANGLE ON DOCTORS

County Coroner MOKURJI, (A young East Indian) Staff Pathologist JOHN MCMANUS and DR. REGENHAUS. They work in silence for awhile. Then Mokurji's eyes narrow.

MOKURJI

Odd.

He picks up a scalpel and makes two long incisions  
BELOW FRAME.

MCMANUS

(after checking)

No evidence of dependent lividity  
either.

Mokurji grunts, then, in a moment, glances at Regenhaus.

MOKURJI

Peel back the chest flap, please.

He picks up a power saw and begins to use it BELOW FRAME.  
Done, he puts it down, picks up a scalpel.

MOKURJI

This should do it.

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED:

He makes an incision BELOW FRAME. The three doctors stare down in amazement.

REGENHAUS  
(softly)  
Incredible.

They stand motionless for several more seconds, then Mokurji turns abruptly from the table and moves toward a b.g. door.

MOKURJI  
(as he walks)  
Begin the gross work on internal organs. I am going to phone the District Attorney.

He peels off his face mask as he moves to the door. There, he turns and CAMERA MOVES IN QUICKLY ON his grave expression.

MOKURJI  
And do not talk of this.  
(beat)  
To anyone.

PICTURE FREEZES. TITLES END.

13 INT. VINCENZO'S OFFICE - ANGLE TOWARD PRESS ROOM - DAY

In the b.g., seen through the glass partition, Kolchak approaches wearing vacation clothes and looking disgusted. Various WORKERS greet him and he raises his hand in wordless greeting. CAMERA WITHDRAWS as he enters the office without knocking, INCLUDING VINCENZO, City Editor of The Daily News, a short tempered, humorless, man-in-the-middle type. Kolchak eyes him balefully.

KOLCHAK  
You had me drive back ninety-seven miles from the first vacation I've had in two and a half years because the story's so big no one else can handle it. Right?

Vincenzo tosses a fact sheet across his desk and Kolchak picks it up. A glance suffices.

KOLCHAK  
(continuing)  
We are not amused.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

VINCENZO

You're on it.

KOLCHAK

A two-day old third-rate murder  
and you call me back -- ?

VINCENZO

You're on it.Kolchak jerks his thumb across his shoulder, pointing  
toward the press room

KOLCHAK

What about them?

VINCENZO

They have other assignments.

KOLCHAK

(tensely)

You're beautiful when you're angry.

Vincenzo jabs his finger toward the door.

VINCENZO

Out.14 INT. GOLD DUST SALOON - CLOSE ON HANDLE OF SLOT MACHINE -  
LATERas it is yanked down. CAMERA LIFTS AND PANS BEHIND the line  
of slot machines, past standing, blank-faced MEN and  
WOMEN working the machines. In the b.g. Kolchak ENTERS,  
looks around, then starts toward the rear of the saloon  
CAMERA PANNING WITH his movement until he reaches GAIL  
FOSTER sitting at the rear end of the bar.

KOLCHAK'S VOICE

My first stop had been at County  
General Hospital where I'd asked  
an intern friend of mine if he knew  
why the entry under Cause Of Death  
read Officially Undetermined. All  
he could do for me was pass along a  
rumor he'd heard that Cheryl Hughes  
had lost a lot of blood.

(beat)

Second stop: The Gold Dust Saloon and  
a chat with Gail Foster, one of Cheryl  
Hughes' fellow workers... and a rather  
close friend of mine.