

Jack Howard

Treatment written by
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Format Description: A one-hour crime drama following different stories per episode (Limited Series or Multi-Season Potential)

Logline: With a mind used to working outside of the box, DCI Jack Howard, leads his team as they face a series of unusual and macabre murder mysteries.

Setting: Wirral Peninsular, UK early 2000's. Sweeping coastal cinematography emphasizing the juxtaposition to urban landscapes, chocolate box villages and restaurants frequented by footballers and WAGS.

Premise: Gritty, Atmospheric, Character-Driven. (In the vein of Dalglish, Luther, Vera). Episode 1, Pilot; When a serial killer begins staging victims as grotesque imitations of Botero paintings across the Wirral, time served Detective Inspector Trevor 'Jack' Howard, alongside his friend and colleague Detective Sergeant Joan Frazer are pulled into a case that unearths the hidden rot in politics, the ease of access to the drug trade, and Jack's stance as an outsider in his own community. The murders are stylized to the point of sensationalism, each a disturbing work of art.

Main Characters:

Detective Inspector Jack Howard (40): A time served detective working for Merseyside Police, Jack is intuitive, outwardly easy going, and deeply moral. He lives alone in West Wirral but regularly shares Sunday dinners with his ex-wife Gemma and their son Matthew, a soon to be graduating university student. Jack is a plodder. He moved to the area from Liverpool when he was 10 and went to secondary school there. That makes him a 'Blow In' and still seen as an outsider by the locals who like to see themselves as upper class. He got to his position through hard work and intuition but is not afraid to listen to guidance from the people he trusts most.

Detective Sergeant Joan Frazer (30): Promoted quickly through the ranks, Joan is determined, methodical and Jack's moral sounding board. A mother of two, the family breadwinner, she sees policing as a career and aims high. She is unafraid to go off on her own direction whilst understanding who's the boss.

The Killer (25): A physical brute of a man. An amateur rugby player and son of a local builder, he chose to go into the family building firm rather than be a professional sportsman. He has had an incestual relationship with his younger sister since she was 14 and he 19. He has always been tolerated by his contemporaries rather than befriended by them.

Derek Goddard (40): A product of some of the best free local schools in the country. A family with money and an Oxbridge degree, created snobbery and entitlement that saw him through to the Palace of Westminster and a short-lived time as a minister without portfolio. His ability to bully other MPs made him a chief whips dream. Derek's family money was, however built on debt and this created a need to keep up the façade at any cost... and after all it's only illegal if you get caught.

Barbara Goddard (39): Derek's long-suffering wife. They have been together since they were 15 and it was always assumed the golden couple would go on to great things and live 'Happily Ever After'. She is more than aware that the gilt edging has been wearing off for some time.

Gemma Howard (39): Jack's ex-wife and mother of his only son. She remains a constant in Jack's life, but her wealthy background and his working-class beliefs drove them apart. Lifelong friend to Barbara Goddard and arm's length friend to Derek Goddard, she is able to schmooze with the best of them and also be a true friend to those in need.

Felix Leache (45): A journalist and photojournalist of the old school. He would rather be working for a national tabloid but only ever got to regional level. His paper does have a big readership however and this gives him local power and a certain amount of celebrity. He grew up in this area and doesn't see nepotism as a problem, just other people's bad luck that their family wasn't as well placed as his own.

Synopsis:

A **series** of 6 episodes.

Episode 1, Pilot – “Botero” ‘Botero’ explores the intersecting of emotional trauma, perceived justice and the subliminal impact of art. When the bodies of local figures begin to appear posed in the exaggerated vein of Botero portraits, Jack Howard, a 40-year-old detective with a keen instinct for empathy and the need for professionalism turns to his sergeant, his ex-wife and his son for support in solving this bizarre killing spree. Impeded by the closeness of community and family that only comes from generations of life, schooling and business that a blow-in (even if that was thirty years ago) like Howard will struggle to by-pass, will his ingenuity, perseverance and wits win out before there's no-one left to save? Jack relies on the doggedness and brains of his sergeant, Joan Frazer, 30, a no-nonsense officer who respects and supports Jack as a superior but knows when to be a friend, not a colleague. She is modern and progressive, a mother, the family breadwinner and not to be dismissed. The killings have been triggered by a single tragedy: the death of a young woman from an accidental overdose. Her brother, with whom she shared an incestuous relationship blames the local MP- a morally compromised narcissist- for importing the drugs when on his regular sailing trips to Ireland and the continent and then distributing them through his family run taxi business. Each murder scene is a message. Each tableau, an accusation. The deeper Jack Digs, the more he uncovers, the more he is pulled into a world where art is vengeance, politics is rotten, and justice is doled out by a psychopathic vigilante.

Episode 2 – Death in the Round

A man is slumped in a seat by the train doors of the local underground service. Assumed to be drunk by the train's commuters, he has gone round and round the loop for most of the day. Two kids get on with their bikes and, concerned, try to wake the man up but they can't. He is dead.

Episode 3 – Liberty

The summer school holidays have started and a group of 6th formers are enjoying a warm afternoon on a boat. As the boat reaches a sandbank, an arm can be seen sticking out. Reaching to the sky. A shredded piece of rope is held in a vice like grip.

Episode 4 – Sporked to Death

Howard and his team are called to the home of a local councilor. His wife has been found face down, skewered to the dishwasher door by the cutlery tray.

Episode 5 – Last Orders

A local pub is being renovated, a wall is hammered into, and a body is found.

Episode 6 – Touchdown!

It is a misty dawn, a dog walker strides across the local rugby pitch chasing after their barking dog. They come across a naked body staked out between the goal posts.