**TOM PATRICK (Man 3)**

I always wanted to be a fireman. A lot of guys want to be firemen. It’s like kids. Everybody’s still a kid. Guys forty years old still feel like kids inside except they’re starting to lose their hair and don’t screw much. I used to be a cop. Know why I switched to fireman? I liked people. And sometimes, when I was a cop, I would feel the hate coming into me.

I remember one time, I went to the roof of this project, and there’s this big black buy about six-seven at the top of the stairs. He had his back to me. I said, “Hey, fella, turn around.” He said, “Yeah, wait a minute.” His elbows were movin’ around his belt. I said, “Turn around a minute.” It dawned on me that he had a gun caught in his belt and he was trying to get it out. I said, “Holy shit.” So I took out my gun and I said, “You fucker! I’m gonna shoot!” He threw his hands up against the wall.

He had his dick out and he was tryin’ to zip up his fly, and there was a girl standin’ in the corner, which I couldn’t see. So here was this guy gettin’ a hand job and maybe a lotta guys would’ve killed him. I said, “Holy shit, I coulda killed you.” He started shakin’ and the gun in my hand was shakin’ like a bastard, and I said...I said, “Just get the hell outta here...”

So I took the fire department test in ’98 and got called in ’99. You know, the fuckin’ world’s so fucked up, the country’s fucked up. But the firemen, you actually see them produce. You see them put out a fire. You see them come out with babies in their hands. You see them give mouth-to-mouth when a guy’s dying. You can’t get around that shit. That’s real. I worked in a bank once—you know, it’s just paper, you’re lookin’ at numbers. It’s not real. But I can look back and say, “I helped put out a fire. I helped save somebody.” Someone could be born, someone could grow old because of me. It shows I did something on this earth.