

THE CLOCK STRIKES 103 - "Race Relations" UNFINISHED

By

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Based on the comic by George Brenner. This is a work of  
transformative fiction... aren't they all?

INT. COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Commissioner Joseph Spence sits behind his desk. On the other side of the desk sits Detective Robert Savage. Spence is business-like, but always nice. Savage is a little rough around the edges, but a trustworthy man.

SAVAGE

May I say, Commissioner, that I think you've done an excellent job so far. I followed your career when you were in Springfield.

SPENCE

Thank you, Detective. They were sorry to let me go, but I'm needed here. Your city has become quite riddled with crime.

SAVAGE

I wish I could contradict you, but you're quite right. As soon as we take down one enterprise two seem to spring up in its place. And as though that's not bad enough I'm unsure if we can even trust those who have vowed to protect and serve. As I'm sure you're aware both previous Commissioners have met with scandals, and at least one other officer was involved.

SPENCE

That is precisely why I have called you here. From all accounts you are an exemplary detective. Loyal, by-the-book, effective.

SAVAGE

Thank you, Commissioner.

SPENCE

You I think I can trust. Detective Charles is frankly incapable of performing the job my predecessor appointed him to.

SAVAGE

He's a good man, sir, but not that great a detective.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCE

I have relieved him of his new position. As of now, you are the new head of the Vigilante Task Force. If you're interested.

SAVAGE

Of course. It will be an honor to serve the city in that capacity.

SPENCE

You'll be expected to brief the rest of the Task Force at eight A.M. tomorrow. My suggestion is that you study up today.

Savage stands up and shakes Spence's hand.

SAVAGE

Thank you, Commissioner.

Savage walks to and opens the door. Kane is on the other side about to knock, holding a folder in his arm..

KANE

Hey, Bobby.

SAVAGE

Ted.

Savage walks past him. Kane enters the office.

KANE

Commissioner Spence. May I come in?

SPENCE

Of course, Captain. You always have my ear.

KANE

Well it's about-

SPENCE

(interrupting)

Oh, before I forget. Charles wasn't doing the job. Frankly he's incompetent. I replaced him with Savage.

KANE

Bobby will do a great job, sir. He and I were partners an eternity ago.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCE

I trust your judgment on the matter, of course. Now what was it you came to talk to me about?

KANE

The Dunham Heights murders. They-

SPENCE

(interrupting)

Oh, you can't be serious, Kane! Negroes die in Dunham Heights all the time. This economy has only made it worse.

KANE

That doesn't mean we should turn a Blind eye to series killings-

SPENCE

(interrupting)

Series killings? You've been reading too many of those pulp magazines. It's just Dunham Heights, being Dunham Heights. Drug deals gone bad, petty thefts that deteriorated, I'm sure of it.

Kane throws down his folder, open to a black and white crime scene photo. A deceased black man lies on the asphalt, having been splayed open, with innards leaking out, as if something internal had been taken.

KANE

This is not a mugging gone awry.

SPENCE

You know how those people are. They're violent and savage. They care nothing for their own kind.

KANE

Well don't you think we should have a show of force there? I could put together some men-

SPENCE

(interrupting)

I can't spare them, Captain. I've got a dangerous vigilante on the streets and you better believe this

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SPENCE (cont'd)  
department is about to go through a complete overhaul. In two or three weeks come back to me again, and we'll go in and show those negroes who's boss.

Kane is trying to hide his frustration, wondering what the hell he can say.

KANE  
I'm sorry I took up your time, Commissioner Spence.

SPENCE  
It's not a problem. The department only works if we communicate. Come back any time.

Kane leaves.

The Opening Credits play here.

EXT. A DUNHAM HEIGHTS STREET - MORNING

Otis, a black man in his mid twenties, shines another negro's shoes on the sidewalk using a small portable case/shoe stand.

NEGRO  
Excellent as always, Otis.

The negro hands Otis a bill.

NEGRO (CONT'D)  
Keep the change.

OTIS  
Thanks.

Otis looks back at his box, goes to put his brush away, but another shoe appears on the box. As Otis looks up he sees that it is Snowy Winters, another alter-ego of our hero Brian O'Brian. Otis takes his box, stands up, and puts it under his arm.

OTIS  
I don't shine the shoes of a white man.

Otis starts to walk away. Snowy follows him.

(CONTINUED)

SNOWY

You've got it all wrong, mac. I just want to talk to you, but I didn't want to cut into your business.

OTIS

I just shine shoes, I don't "talk."

Otis walks away.

EXT. THE STEPS OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

Kane exits the double doors and is, as has happened more than he would prefer, greeted quickly by Town Crier reporter Joey Gilman, his trusty camera around his neck. They walk to Kane's squad car.

KANE

I'm just a Captain now Gilman, you can leave me alone.

GILMAN

Well, Captain, once you've been in the news a few times people start wondering about you. I'm here to satisfy their curiosity.

KANE

I'm not a celebrity.

GILMAN

Like it or not we've made you one. Why were you demoted, Captain? Was it because of your wife's scandalous affair? Because you didn't catch that jewel-thief last month?

KANE

Now hold on just a minute...

GILMAN

I think the Crier has it right, though, don't we? It's because of the mysterious happenings at your home involving one officer Thomas Overholser. Happenings which left the young officer dead. Why is it no charges have been brought?

Kane reaches his car.

(CONTINUED)

KANE

You want a story? People are being  
brutally murdered in Dunham  
Heights, several a week.

Kane opens his car door.

GILMAN

That's not a story. People want to  
hear about larger than life  
characters, people with power.

KANE

(despondent)

Then you've got the wrong man.

Kane gets in his car, starts it, and drives away.

INT. RENDEZVOUS GAMMA

Snowy Winters pulls out the hidden box with a suit and  
facekerchief.

EXT. AN ALLEY OUTSIDE RENDEZVOUS GAMMA

The Clock exits rendezvous gamma in full get-up, mask and  
all, and clutching his cane.

INT. KANE'S LIVING ROOM

There are no lights on, the curtains are drawn, but some  
daylight creeps in. Kane lies on the couch, apparently  
sleeping. An open bottle of whiskey with a half-empty glass  
beside it sit on the endtable next to his head. There is a  
knock on the door. Kane stirs a little but does not wake  
up. There is a much louder knock. Kane snorts and his eyes  
open a little.

EXT. KANE'S PORCH

Graham Charles stands at Kane's door, waiting. Eventually  
the door opens with a disheveled and groggy Kane behind it.

KANE

Charles?

CHARLES

Captain. Did I... wake you?

(CONTINUED)

KANE  
I was... I was just napping. Come  
in.

INT. KANE'S LIVING ROOM

Kane walks Charles to the couch.

CHARLES  
Commissioner Spence informed me I'd  
been demoted. He's really taking  
charge isn't he?

They sit down.

KANE  
It's his department to run. He  
can't do much worse than I did.

Kane downs the rest of his glass, then starts pouring a new  
one.

KANE (CONT'D)  
Whiskey?

CHARLES  
No. Thank you. I've actually come  
on business.

Kane takes a small sip of his newly filled glass and  
then sets it on the endtable. He sits back and puts on his  
serious face.

KANE  
What can I do for you?

CHARLES  
It's these Dunham Heights murders.

KANE  
(aside)  
Oh, Charles.

CHARLES  
I want to help.

KANE  
How did you even hear about it?

CHARLES  
I was looking into it in my  
capacity as head of the Vigilante  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHARLES (cont'd)  
Task Force. Plus, I was talking to  
Babs, and she said your wife said-

KANE  
I get the picture. Spence doesn't  
want any manpower on this.

CHARLES  
I know. But just because they're  
colored doesn't mean they're not  
people. I can't let this go on in  
my city.

KANE  
What you're suggesting...

CHARLES  
I know it sounds like I want to  
take the law into my own hands, but  
that's not the case.

KANE  
Then what do you suggest?

CHARLES  
It wouldn't be a crime if we did  
some independent investigation...  
in our off-time.

KANE  
To what end?

CHARLES  
If we collect enough evidence. If  
we can get a firsthand account, a  
repeated fingerprint...

KANE  
You'll take it to Spence? No. No  
way.

CHARLES  
Captain, my understanding was that  
this was a pet project of yours. I  
thought you'd want to do something  
about it.

Kane picks up his glass.

KANE  
Charles...

Kane takes a small gulp from his glass.

(CONTINUED)

KANE (CONT'D)  
...nowadays, if it's not sanctioned  
by the Commssioner...

Kane downs the rest of his drink quickly, then stares at the empty glass.

KANE (CONT'D)  
...then I'm not interested.

CHARLES  
I see.

Charles stands up.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
Will you be coming back to work  
today?

KANE  
Expect me tomorrow. I don't feel  
too well today.

CHARLES  
I see.

Charles turns to go, then stops and turns back.

CHARLES (CONT'D)  
I wanted to thank you, sir, for  
having enough faith in me enough to  
put me in charge of the Task  
Force. Even if it didn't end up  
being permanent. Not a lot of  
people believe in me anymore.

KANE  
Of course. I... wouldn't have  
given you the job of taking down  
The Clock if I didn't think you  
could do it.

EXT. A DUNHAM HEIGHTS STREET - MIDDAY

Otis's customer's foot leaves and another, already shiny black dress-shoe takes it's place. Otis looks up. It is The Clock, in full gear, standing before him. Otis backs up cautiously.

OTIS  
You've got the wrong guy. I just  
shine shoes.

(CONTINUED)

THE CLOCK

From what I understand that's not entirely true. I hear you're a font of information.

OTIS

I gossip, but I'm no snitch.

THE CLOCK

Otis, I'm investigating some particularly brutal murders here-

OTIS

Since when do you care about the people of Dunham Heights? Word among the rest of the city is that you help out the little guy. If that's true how come you've never been in Dunham Heights in all this time?

THE CLOCK

It took something this bad to draw my attention here, and for that I apologize. But right now the police aren't interested, so I'm all you've got.

OTIS

Better late than never, I suppose.

THE CLOCK

So you'll assist me?

OTIS

No.

THE CLOCK

No?

OTIS

No. But I'll be your partner.

THE CLOCK

I could use one. What can you tell me about the killings?

OTIS

Probably no more than you already know. But I think I know someone who might have some information.

INT. COMMISSIONER'S OFFICE

Spence sits behinds his desk. Joey Gilman, standing on the other side of the desk, takes his picture. Gilman starts replacing the bulb in his flash dish.

SPENCE

You don't need another one, do you?

GILMAN

No, that was the one.

Gilman sits down.

SPENCE

Excellent. I don't mean to rush you, but I am a busy man, and if you are to conduct an informative interview we'd better start now.

GILMAN

Alright, let's start with something I'm personally curious about. Why did you set up this interview?

SPENCE

Is it really that hard to believe a public figure would wish to help create his own public record?

GILMAN

Or public image. The previous Commissioners wouldn't give us the time of day.

SPENCE

Well expect things to be different between us. The press is the fourth branch of government. I keep an open line to Mayor Kozer's office, and I plan on continuing to communicate with the papers as well. There might even be something to this radio.

GILMAN

I wouldn't count on it. Then I have just one more question along these lines before we get to the real interview: Why the Crier? The Herlad would have been the safer choice.

(CONTINUED)

SPENCE

You have a larger readership, so I'll reach more eyes. But it's more than that. I have nothing to hide. I'm not afraid to face the tough questions.

GILMAN

In that case, here's tough question number one. Is it true you replaced former Commissioner Kane's appointee Graham Charles as head of the Vigilante Task Force?

SPENCE

You're very quick. That happened only this morning.

GILMAN

First of all, how does this reflect on Captain Kane, and secondly, is this part of a larger shake-up on the horizon?

SPENCE

I'll answer your second question first. Yes, this department is in for some spring cleaning. It's our job to keep out the filth, and if we haven't been doing our job, we must change our methods. However, I must say that Captain Kane has been with this department for two decades, and the force in general for even longer. It would be foolish of me to throw away such a valuable resource. That said, he will have to adjust to more modern policing methods and a slight restructuring of his workplace. I have only spoken with him a couple of times, but I think he's up to the task.

GILMAN

Tell me a little about Detective Charles's replacement.

SPENCE

He is a veteran Detective named Robert Savage-

(CONTINUED)

GILMAN

(interrupting)

He caught "Deacon" Danny Drew,  
didn't he?

SPENCE

That was one of the considerations  
I had for putting him in charge of  
the Vigilante Task Force. The  
Deacon was very popular in his  
native area of Dunham Heights. It  
was a delicate situation and  
Detective Savage handled it  
well. With The Clock we face a  
similar situation, the lower  
classes see him as some sort of  
champion.

GILMAN

Is that the real danger of The  
Clock?

SPENCE

It's bad, but I'd say what really  
worries me is that now someone has  
done it, copycats will  
follow. When Savage took down The  
Deacon it wasn't three weeks before  
the cracks in the Dunham Heights  
underworld were filled by Barnaby  
Mezzrow.

EXT. OUTSIDE DUNHAM HEIGHTS CHURCH

Establishing shot of the church. Two negroes (Tyson and  
Phillip) walk up the steps and open the doors to enter.

INT. DUNHAM HEIGHTS CHURCH

Tyson pokes his head in the church.

TYSON

Mezzrow? You there?

Mezzrow is standing at the pulpit, three other negroes (Al,  
Bill, and Cyrus) in suits flanking him.

MEZZROW

No need to be timid, boys. We're  
all friends here.

Tyson and Phillip enter the church.

(CONTINUED)

TYSON

It's just that this used to be the  
Deacon's place, I'm not sure he'd-

MEZZROW

(interrupting)

He's on death row. I don't think  
he'll be bothering us.

Tyson and Phillip walk up the aisle.

TYSON

You said you had an offer for us?

MEZZROW

You've been pushing my vipe, right?

PHILLIP

Yes, sir, Mezzrow. It's been going  
well. Looks like vipe is recession  
proof.

MEZZROW

Well I've got the next big thing.

Mezzrow brings a large bag of white powder out from under  
the pulpit and places it on top.

TYSON

Is that... cocaine?

MEZZROW

Brilliant, isn't it? In a few  
years this will have completely  
replaced-

Another negro in a suit (Dave) explodes through the doorway  
with a tale to tell.

DAVE

Mezzrow!

MEZZROW

I'm conducting business,  
Dave. Perhaps this can wait?

DAVE

I don't think so. He just pulled  
up out front.

MEZZROW

Who did?

(CONTINUED)

A shoe cracks Dave in the back of the skull and he goes down, revealing The Clock behind him. Also, Otis is there.

MEZZROW (CONT'D)

You. You ruined one of my biggest deals. You blew me up!

Tyson and Phillip run out of the church.

THE CLOCK

That's in the past. Right now we can work together-

MEZZROW

(interrupting)

You must be crazy.

Mezzrow starts taking off his coat and rolling up his sleeves.

MEZZROW (CONT'D)

You took out two of us last time. Let's see how you do against four. Boys?

Al, Bill, and Cyrus don't bother with any disrobing. Instead, they immediately but deliberately start making their way down the aisle to The Clock.

OTIS

I see you've met.

The Clock places his cane on the nearest pew.

THE CLOCK

Give us some room.

OTIS

I can help.

THE CLOCK

Just get back.

Al, Bill, and Cyrus have made it to The Clock. They each throw a punch in turn, but The Clock sidesteps every one. They try to surround him but the Clock keeps them back with multiple spinning high-kicks. For a moment they are at a stand still, Al in front of The Clock, Bill to the side, and Cyrus behind. The Clock swings his leg as though he is going to kick Al, but intentionally misses and uses the kick to gain momentum for a backflip. Three-quarters of the way through the flip he kicks Cyrus in the top of the head (momentarily taking him out of the equation), then lands on one knee.

(CONTINUED)

Al and Bill, and The Clock, evade eachother's blows for a while. Eventually, with Bill in front of him, and Al behind him, The Clock thrust-kicks Bill and backflips off his chest, this time grabbing around Al's neck in mid-air and landing on his feet behind Al, holding him in "inverted chancery" position, bent back with his head under The Clock's arm. The Clock uses his free arm to hammer him in the sternum a couple times. Bill charges the Clock with a "yakuza" thrust kick to his head, but The Clock ducks, keeping the hold on Al and going down to a knee, simultaneously slamming the back of Al's neck down on that knee. Al is temporarily out of service, unfortunately, Cyrus is back for more and Mezzrow is ready to join in.

Mezzrow runs up full speed. The Clock tries to clothesline Mezzrow, but Mezzrow front flips over the arm, and lands in the splits on the other side. He spins up on to his hand and kicks The Clock in the face while upside-down, almost a Capoiiera move. Mezzrow lands on his feet. The Clock gets up and rolls under several attacks to get to and grab his cane, he then leads the thugs on a chase toward the pulpit end of the aisle.

The Clock turns around and swings his cane at the nearest thug, who happens to be Mezzrow. Mezzrow, running full speed at him, goes down into the splits and slides under the blow while in that position, sliding back up to his feet on the other side. Bill and Cyrus grind to a halt to avoid the cane. They pull out their guns and start shooting at The Clock, who dives behind the front pew for cover, setting down his cane.

MEZZROW

(yelling)

Stop! No guns! Not in my church!

The thugs stop shooting. As soon as they do The Clock leaps out from behind the pew and grabs Bill from behind. He puts his hand on Bill's gunhand and uses it to shoot Cyrus in the leg. Cyrus is now out of commission. He spins around with Bill in tow and tries to shoot Mezzrow in his leg, but the gun clicks an empty sound, so the Clock steps through to in front of Bill, still holding his gunhand, and hip-tosses him into Mezzrow, both go down.

The Clock uses this oppurtunity to grab his cane and swing it at Bill as he gets up, connecting with his temple and taking him out of the equation. Thinking Mezzrow is knocked out. The Clock walks nonchalantly down the aisle toward the front door.

(CONTINUED)

OTIS

Watch out!

The Clock spins around to see that Mezzrow is running at him full bore. He takes a few steps and attempts to "Yakuza" thrust-kick Mezzrow in the head, but Mezzrow does his patented splits-slide... right into Otis's thrusting knee. Mezzrow is knocked out. The Clock tries to wake him for a second, and then gives up.

THE CLOCK

We'll have to wait for him to wake up.

INT. KANE'S LIVING ROOM

Kane lies on the couch. The phone rings in the kitchen. Eventually it wakes him.

INT. KANE'S KITCHEN

Kane enters the kitchen groggily and answers the phone.

KANE

Hello?... No, Babs, I'm not feeling well, I'll be in tomorrow... What about him?... What do you mean he's missing?... No. No unfortunately I have no idea where he might be... It's no problem at all... Alright, I'll see you tomorrow.

Kane hangs up the phone.

KANE (CONT'D)

(as an aside)

Goddamn you, Charles.

Kane starts buttoning up the top buttons of his shirt and straightening his tie as he walks to the other room.

INT. DUNHAM HEIGHTS CHURCH

Mezzrow, bleeding from the nose, wakes up, tied to the leg of the organ, with The Clock squatting down, his face inches from Mezzrow's.

THE CLOCK

You've stepped up your game.

(CONTINUED)

MEZZROW

What're you talkin' about?

THE CLOCK

It used to be business with you. Supply and demand. You were a real Laissez Faire kinda guy.

MEZZROW

You're not makin' any sense.

THE CLOCK

So why are you killing all these people? Residents of your own territory?

MEZZROW

Wait, I didn't-

THE CLOCK

Someone's paying you, is that it?

MEZZROW

No, man, no, I don't do stuff like that! And I wouldn't let it go on in my neighborhood if I knew who was doin' it! The cat's a ghost! I've been intimidatin' people all over town and nobody's seen a thing.

EXT. KANE'S PORCH

Kane exits his house fully clothed and walks down his driveway to his squad car parked on the street. As he passes his gate he notices Joey Gilman's trusty camera, broken on the ground. He picks it up, examines it a moment, then gets in his car and throws it on the passenger seat.

MEZZROW (V.O.)

I get the feelin' if he doesn't wanna be found, he won't be.

INT. AN ABANDONED BUILDING IN DUNHAM HEIGHTS

Joey Gilman wakes up with a black eye in a dark room. He looks to his left, there are organs in jars. He looks to his right. There is a figure facing the other direction, obscured in the darkness.

(CONTINUED)

FIGURE

I understand you have a knack for stirring up a public fervor.

GILMAN

Who are-

FIGURE

I'm the Dunham Heights Murderer, of course.

The figure turns around. It is a handsome white man in his late twenties.

FIGURE (CONT'D)

At least, that's what they're all going to be calling me.

EXT. KANE'S PORCH

Jennifer parks in front of her house in the Kane automobile. She gets out, walks up to the porch, and goes inside.

INT. KANE'S LIVING ROOM

Jennifer walks through her living room and notices the couch in disarray and the half-empty bottle and used glass on the end table. Next to it is a note. It reads: DETECTIVE CHARLES GONE MISSING. BE BACK LATE.

INT. OFFICE OF THE VTF HEAD

Savage has paperwork spread all across his desk. There are a few stacks of folders filled with paperwork he presumably has yet to go through. He cross-references a couple of pages. Suddenly, Joey Gilman, scared witless and still without his camera, barges into the room.

SAVAGE

What the hell do you think you're doing?

GILMAN

The Commissioner refused to see me. Someone has to know.

SAVAGE

Know what?

(CONTINUED)

GILMAN

I can describe him. One of your boys can do the sketch.

SAVAGE

Goddamnit, Gilman, start from the beginning, will you? Who can you describe?

GILMAN

The Dunham Heights Murderer.

SAVAGE

There's no such thing, newsman. Random violence in that area is nothing new.

GILMAN

You don't understand. He kidnapped me. He explained his whole twisted philosophy. He left the room for a while, but he hadn't fully closed the door...

SAVAGE

You want me to believe he just left the door open. On accident.

GILMAN

He's not right, obviously!

SAVAGE

Even if I didn't have strict orders from Commissioner Spence to leave the Dunham Heights situation alone for now, I still wouldn't believe you.

GILMAN

Why would I lie?

SAVAGE

You're a newsman. You never speak but to lie.

GILMAN

If I were just being... sensationalist... wouldn't I just publish it tomorrow for the scoop? Why come to you?

(CONTINUED)

SAVAGE

So next week your headline can read  
"Idiot Police Still Haven't Caught  
IMAGINARY GODDAMN MURDERER."

GILMAN

Detective, I assure you-

SAVAGE

(interrupting)

I've got a lot on my plate right  
now Gilman. Why don't you get the  
hell out of my office?

At first, Gilman sits there, silently, unsure of what to do, but within a few seconds he is standing up and walking reluctantly out of the office.

INT. OUTSIDE THE JUNGLE CLUB

Eli works the door. The Clock and Otis walk up.

ELI

Otis, what are you doing bringing  
this cat here?

OTIS

He's cool, Eli.

ELI

I don't care if he's cooler than  
Satchmo he brings trouble with  
him. I don't want to give the  
police one more reason to mess with  
us.

OTIS

He's looking for the guy that  
killed Loraine.

Eli takes a beat.

ELI

What are you planning on doing in-  
no. No, I don't want to  
know. Just get in there before I  
change my mind. And if you cause  
trouble it wasn't me that let you  
in, understand?

(CONTINUED)

OTIS  
Completely.

Otis and The Clock enter the Jungle Club