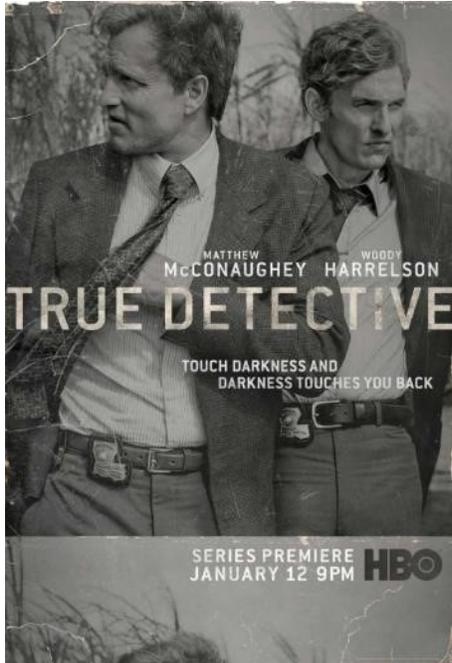


TRUE DETECTIVE Story Map

WRITTEN BY
NIC PIZZOLATTO



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TRUE DETECTIVE

PILOT "The Long Bright Dark" (2014)

Written by Nic Pizzolatto / Directed by Cary Fukunaga

ACT ONE

1 [OPENING TITLES SEQUENCE]

2-4 **FRAMING DEVICE (Interviews in 2012)** established as we watch two men being interviewed by the same duo of police officers ("A" STORY: Hart and Cohle's partnership):

MARTIN HART talks about his former partner, Rustin Cohle, who was known as an odd sort, from Texas; they called him the "Tax Man." They'd only worked together for four months before they caught the case of Dora Lange and the kids in the woods, in 1995.

RUSTIN COHLE looks worse for wear. Refuses to stop smoking in the interview room. They caught the case on January 3, 1995, his daughter's birthday...

5-8 **INCITING INCIDENT (1995)**: Cohle and Hart show up to the crime scene, the ritualistic slaying of a young woman. Naked corpse is tied to a tree, wearing antlers, with tattoos, possibly Satanic. Cohle takes meticulous notes and makes drawings in his big ledger, which is how he got the nickname Tax Man. ("B" STORY: The Dora Lange murder.)

(2012): Back to the interviews, Hart expounds on the different kinds of cops (**THEME**: What makes a "true detective"). Cohle was very smart, quiet, but "past a certain age, a man without a family can be a bad thing." Cohle lives alone in a tiny bare apartment, sleeps on a mattress on the floor, surrounded by stacks of books on serial killers and police work.

[Note: From this point, all action takes place in 1995 unless labeled as 2012.]

10 Cohle studies sculptures left at the crime scene: bundles of sticks tied together in a triangular pattern, hanging from the tree. He comes up with a theory on the killer, a "metapsychotic" who preys on prostitutes and will kill again. Hart thinks Cohle is jumping to conclusions, warns against bending the narrative to support an assumption.

12 Hart awkwardly invites Cohle to his home for dinner. Hart's wife has been insisting on the invitation.

14 **TURN**: Cohle shows up at Hart's house that night, drunk. **CENTRAL CONFLICT**: The "family man" forced to team up with the "unstable single guy."

ACT TWO

14-18 In the car after the crime scene, Hart and Rust clash over religion and the nature of humanity. Hart regrets his attempt to get Rust to open up.

18-21 At police HQ, Hart vouches for Cohle to his CAPTAIN. Hart will remain the lead on the case, and is to lead a debriefing at a press conference tomorrow.

22-26 Cohle on his own at night, questioning hookers about the victim. Cohle asks a PROSTITUTE [**Dynamic Ally**] to get him pills so he can sleep. He's a mess.

28 **FIRST TRIAL:** The victim is ID'd: Dora Kelly Lange, a former prostitute (as Cohle predicted).

30 At morgue looking at the corpse with the M.E. No prints were found at the scene. After, the guys argue once again when Rust won't let up on the philosophical musings, which drive Marty nuts. Rust tells Marty, "I don't sleep, I just dream."

32-34 Cohle and Hart interview locals in a poor part of town near the crime scene. **FIRST CASUALTY:** They are told about a little girl that went missing years ago named Marie Fonteneau.

34-35 **TURN:** At a black church, Cohle shows his ledger to the PASTOR, who recognizes the stick sculptures. His grandma used to call them "Devil's Nets." Occult items.

ACT THREE



35-36 Talk to SHERIFF TATE about Fonteneau case and another case of a girl who was chased through the forest by a man she called the "green-eared spaghetti monster." (setup for later episodes: the killer's facial scars) Tate is a pompous jerk.

38 Hart and Cohle talk to Dora Lange's ex-husband CHARLIE in jail. The last time he saw her, she was high and talking nonsense, like she "met a King." (setup for later episodes: the killer known as the "Yellow King")

40 **ASSUMPTION OF POWER (2012):** Rust surprises the cops when he tells them he knows that they're on the case of the recent murder in Lake Charles.

41 Dinner at Martin Hart's home with his wife MAGGIE and two young girls. Hart takes pity on drunk Cohle and offers to create a reason for him to duck out after ten minutes.

43-47 **SHADOW SHOWDOWN:** Dinner table with the family and Cohle. Cohle reveals to Maggie that he had a daughter that died, which led to the breakup of his marriage. Hart gives Cohle the opportunity to duck out as they had planned, but Cohle stays. Hart steams.

49 **TURN (2012):** Hart reveals that he stopped talking to Rust in 2002. The reasons for their falling-out were private, not related to the Dora Lange case. (setup for later episodes: the incident that led to their breakup) Even so, he makes it clear to the cops that Cohle was a good cop.

ACT FOUR

49-52 At Police HQ, Rust fights with a fellow cop. Rust is not popular in the squad; they think he's a former Internal Affairs rat.

The detectives meet REVEREND TUTTLE, who pisses off Cohle when he mentions the creation of a special division to focus on anti-Christian crimes. Cohle doesn't realize that he's pissed off the wrong guy—Tuttle is first cousin of Louisiana Governor Tuttle! Hart warns him to watch his ass.

53 They visit Marie Fonteneau's AUNT and UNCLE, who looked after Marie when her parents dropped out of the picture.

56 **CLIMAX "B" STORY (1995)**: Cohle finds a discovery in the shed: a Devil's Net! The Aunt claims she's never seen it before.

57 **CLIMAX "A" STORY (2012)**: Cohle gets the cops to show him a photo of the Lake Charles murder scene: a blonde woman is strung up naked under a bridge with antlers on her head. Almost identical to the Dora Lange crime scene in 1995.



58 **CLIFFHANGER**: Rust Cohle asks the big question: "How could this new murder be the work of the same killer when they caught him back in 1995?"

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