

“Where The Hell Is John?”

## **TITLE CARD: THE ZODIAC SYMBOL**

In the 1960s over the course of several months, people died in the most gruesome ways imaginable.

Shot. Stabbed. Left for dead. Across makeout spots in the Bay Area.

There was no mystery about who did it. In fact, the man who did it admitted he did it. Bragged to the press he did.

And named himself The Zodiac Killer.

He handpicked his victims and told people where he'd be next. At the scene of the crime he left his signature: a circle with a cross.

He was never caught.

And in 40 years, his legend only grew.

People still wonder what happened to the man who killed so many people and lived to laugh about it.

## **TITLE CARD: JOHN BOROWSKI**

A self-professed serial killer analyst, John Borowski has made a career out of deconstructing the serial killer mind. He's made books and films about serial killers, and gets letters from ones who want to be in them.

For his latest documentary, John hints at a discovery so big it will change everything we know about the Zodiac.

But several weeks before it's unveiled at DocFest in San Francisco, John Borowski vanishes.

## **BLACK SCREEN**

*VOICEMAIL: Hey Couch Detectives. We need your help. But it's gonna be tough. Only the very brave will make it to the end. Good luck.*

## **TITLE CARD: WHAT'S A COUCH DETECTIVE?**

The couch detective is fascinated by crime and wants to solve crime.

He talks so much about grisly murder scenes, friends usually end up nodding and smiling while slowly backing away.

So he goes online.

There, no one judges him or thinks he's weird. In fact, the people there share his fascination with the most interesting serial killer who's ever been a serial killer – the Zodiac.

We decided to bring all of these people together.

Over the course of three months, we led people on a hunt using clues in New York, Chicago and San Francisco, as well online clues that called on the expertise of avid puzzle-solvers and crime enthusiasts worldwide.

Guided by a mysterious group who called themselves Modus Operandi, or M.O., the couch detectives had to decode a new set of cryptograms left by the Zodiac – or at least someone who sounded like him – hoping each solved clue brought them closer to John.

The hunt brought together more than 5 million people.

It got people talking.

*(The background is all the news outlets' logos).*

*(Text onscreen over the blurred background).*

“Many would say this was either the sickest thing ever or the most brilliant marketing ploy. I'd say it's both.” – Gawker

“Enchanting.” – The New York Times

“It was scary enough to make us wonder what happened to John. And did we really want to know?” – The Huffington Post

On Twitter, John got a million new followers who spawned the rallying cry: *(text onscreen)* #wherethehellisjohn.

Fan sites sprouted. People shared new clues, rehashed old ones, and debated some very important issues *(Screenshot of tweet: @notanotherguy I knew something was off the first time I saw John's last tweet. He used an emoticon. #wherethehellisjohn).*

The movement even gained traction among some familiar faces.

***Screenshot of tweets:***

*@nerdist (The Nerdist Chris Hardwick <https://twitter.com/nerdist>): Yo Imma let you finish, but Blossom pulled off the best disappearing act of all time. #wherethehellisjohn*

@josswhedon (Joss Whedon <https://twitter.com/josswhedon>): John, remember that time we hung out at PaleyFest? Yeah, your shoulder grazed mine and it was glorious. #wherethehellisjohn

@britneyspears (Britney Spears <https://twitter.com/britneyspears>):  
@johnborowski I'm thinking of you. I hope you're ok. Hugs. <3<3<3  
#wherethehellisjohn

Completed missions and unlocked features led the couch detectives to more guides on MO, and more clues and prizes. The more they participated, the better couch detectives they became. The best got their very own couch detective kit.

Yet every time they thought they found John, the Zodiac had gotten there before they did (*a picture of John's car with the Zodiac symbol. A picture of the bookstore in Chicago with the symbol. Some other location with the Zodiac symbol*).

It all culminated in one final, time-sensitive mission at DocFest in San Francisco – within miles of where it all began.

They gathered outside the Castro Theater one Saturday morning, and got their last message from the Zodiac in the form of a taunting letter warning them of his latest and greatest crime.

In it, they were told they had until the end of DocFest to solve the puzzle.

Or John would be curtains.

On the ground and online, the couch detectives worked together, running all over San Francisco, finding dead ends and leads, until they ended up in a dark, abandoned building.

On the door was the Zodiac symbol, an ominous sign that cast doubt on whether they would ever find John.

Some turned back without entering, but a few intrepid couch detectives went inside anyway.

And there, in the darkest corner of the darkest room, was John.

The couch detectives were heroes.

Back at DocFest, the M.O.  
staff revealed themselves.

There was no documentary.

But there *was* a new digital experience made for people just like them as well as a vast online community celebrating the tribe they'd just created.

All was right in the world.

## **BLACK SCREEN**

Except for one small thing.

## **END BLACK SCREEN**

A couple of weeks after DocFest emerged one last letter.

*That was child's play.*

*For my next trick, I'll make you all disappear.*