

REAPER

"Pilot"

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&

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REAPER

"PILOT"

TEASER

FADE IN

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We're creeping through the room in the dark. Ripped band and movie posters hang crookedly from the walls, piles of dirty dishes and clothes cover every available surface. A digital clock, hanging by its cord off a table, reads 3:33 am.

CLOSE on the profile of a young man's face -- he's sitting in a chair, head dropped back, sound asleep and drooling slightly. This is SAM. He's turning 21 today.

A noise from somewhere in the room jerks Sam awake. In his hands, a video game controller. Before him, a monitor blinking GAME OVER and a video ZOMBIE repeatedly swiping at the words. The volume is low, and the Zombie taunts us.

VIDEO ZOMBIE

(on monitor)

We're coming for youuuu! We're coming
for youuuu!

Sam blinks, looks around the room, wipes away drool. Then, presses start on his controller and the game begins again -- it's a Resident Evil-type game, where the player walks through a haunted house as various monsters jump out at him.

Sam is a killing machine, dispatching each attacker with ease and with an Uzi. But there's not a lot of evidence he's enjoying this particularly -- mostly he just looks zoned.

PUSH in on Sam's rather bored face -- we hear that noise in the room again. Only it's louder. It sounds like a floorboard creaking. Sam looks around. The video game casts long, creepy shadows across the room, but no one is there.

Sam turns back to his game. The monsters come faster and faster. We hear a distinct GROWLING -- but it's not coming from the game. Sam turns slowly -- and standing between him and the open door to his room -- two huge, black PITBULLS.

Sam tries to speak, or scream.

SAM

Hhhhh...

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

He clutches at his throat -- he has no voice. The dogs bare their teeth and growl louder. Then, one of them turns away and exits into the hallway.

Sam tries to stand, but instantly CRASHES to the floor. He looks at his feet -- the cords from the game console are tangled around his legs. The dog starts barking at him.

Then, from down the hallway, a new sound -- that of a woman SCREAMING. Sam's eyes go WIDE. But still he can't speak.

SAM (CONT'D)

M...mmmmh..!

Sam kicks at the cords, which seem to have a life of their own, winding and strangling around his ankles, up his legs. The screaming and barking continues.

He finally rips free, stands and starts to move -- only to be YANKED backwards by the game controller in his hand. He shakes his arm -- but the controller refuses to be dropped.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

(yelling)

Sam! Help me, Sam!

Now the controller seems to be fusing with Sam, merging with his hand -- the black plastic bleeding onto his skin, traveling up his arm. The other arm is wrapped up in the cord again, which twists and squeezes hard.

Sam strains, face red, sweating. The black plastic is now crawling over his torso, up his neck, down his back. The dog suddenly leaves the room -- there is something else in the hallway.

SAM'S POV

Of a LARGE and DARK figure passing by the door. The woman's screaming gets louder, more urgent. The figure steps closer, moving into the light from the video game, and Sam gets the briefest glimpse of a horrifying, evil-looking, winged DEMON.

Sam opens his mouth -- and just as he is finally able to belt out a serious SCREAM, we're --

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Where Sam's face crashes onto the carpet as he tumbles out of his chair. Sunlight streams in through the windows. There is no demon. It was all a dream.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The door opens, revealing Sam's FATHER. Bespectacled and in a sweater vest, there is a falseness in his demeanor, as if he learned how to be a dad by watching 50s TV.

DAD

Son! You okay?

Sam tries to sit up, but the chair falls on top of him. He keeps his face buried in the carpet, gives the thumbs up.

SAM (O.S.)

(muffled)

I'm awesome.

DAD

Did you fall asleep playing your game again? That's not good for you, Sammy.

SAM

Uh... sorry.

DAD

No problem! Happy birthday, tiger!

Dad goes down the hall as Sam sits up, sweating, hair all over the place. He holds up his hand, which still clasps the game controller. He glares at it.

SAM

(to the controller)

Not cool, man. Not cool.

He drops the controller, wiggles his fingers as he stands and shuffles out of the room. But we stay for a moment. PUSH IN on the monitor, which shows the GAME OVER screen, the zombie still mocking us.

VIDEO ZOMBIE

(on monitor)

We're coming for youuuu! We're coming for youuuu!

PUSH PAST the monitor then, toward the closet door, which is slightly open. Inside, pitch black. PUSH in a bit more. We can't see anything. But we can hear it -- an unmistakable, guttural GROWL.

CUT TO BLACK

END OF TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN

INT. UPSTAIRS BATHROOM/SAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

In a series of shots, we see Sam's morning routine. He is never hurried or rushed.

Sam in the shower scrubbing under his armpits.

Sam at the bathroom mirror applying hair product, trying to make his hair stick up in a cool way. It just looks sticky.

Sam foraging through clothes on his floor, picking up shirts and sniffing. He chooses the least offensive one.

Finally, Sam dons a bright orange work apron, emblazoned with The Home Depot logo.

He clips on a nametag, upside down. It reads: Sam Oliver. He checks himself out in the mirror. Sticky hair. Wrinkly clothes. An apron. It's depressing. Sam's face falls.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Sam comes down the stairs and enters, but stops when he sees his father huddled with his MOM, a sweet woman who spends a lot of time avoiding conflict. We can't hear them. But Dad is mad, jabbing his finger in the air. Mom is crying.

SAM

Hey... uh, hey.

They jump apart. Mom wipes her eyes and turns away as Dad straightens his tie. Dad is able to change his demeanor instantaneously -- he's back to his super-fake-happy self.

DAD

Tiger! Grrr! Up early!

SAM

Got a meeting. You, uh, okay?

DAD

Never better!

Dad sits and buries his nose in the paper. Sam joins his mom at the counter, pours himself coffee.

SAM

(sotto)

What's going on?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Without warning, Mom throws her arms around Sam.

MOM

Happy birthday. I love you so much. And I want you to have a wonderful day. No matter what happens.

SAM

Uh... thanks.

Sam sits as his 17-year-old brother KEITH enters, an angry bundle of nerves.

DAD

Wish your brother a happy birthday.

KEITH

That why you're up before noon?

SAM

Actually, your girlfriend woke me up. With her tongue.

MOM

Sam has a very important meeting!

KEITH

He's gonna learn how to use a hammer.

SAM

(casually)

What was that envelope from Stanford I saw yesterday?

Keith eyefucks Sam. Dad drops his paper.

DAD

You heard from Stanford?

KEITH

(reluctantly)

Rejected.

Dad's demeanor with Keith is markedly different than how he speaks to Sam -- with Keith, he's stern, demanding.

DAD

Keith. How is that possible?

KEITH

Sam didn't even go to college!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM

I did so!

KEITH

You dropped out after a month!

DAD

Keith, I told you to retake the SATs and you refused. I'm disappointed.

KEITH

This is amazing. He plays video games all day and wears a nametag for a living, but I'm disappointing.

Through the open back door walks a slightly overweight 26-year-old in a Home Depot apron, scratching his belly and yawning -- this is Bert Wysocki, but most people call him --

MOM

Sock! Good morning, dear!

SOCK

Mrs. O. Mr. O. Birthday Boy.

Sock takes a seat. He has done this hundreds of times.

SOCK (CONT'D)

Keith. Too stupid for Stanford, huh?

Keith jumps away from the table.

KEITH

You suck!

Keith leaves the room, irate.

SOCK

It's too easy. Seriously. I feel bad sometimes.

DAD

You boys have big birthday plans?

SAM

Nothing too crazy.

DAD

You should cut loose, Sam. Do what you want. You're only this age once.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

SOCK

Well, alright. Let's get some smack and kill a hooker in Vegas. Why do you look like crap?

SAM

I had a nightmare. My game ate me.

Mom and Dad both react to this.

MOM

What else did you dream --

DAD

Enough, Linda.

Mom and Dad glare at each other. Something is really wrong.

SOCK

Awkward. Yet I can't turn away.

SAM

(getting up)

We're going.

MOM

(urgent)

Sam --

DAD

NO, Linda.

Everybody looks at Dad.

DAD (CONT'D)

No. Sam is going to have a great day. A great day!

A beat of total weirdness. Mom turns away. Sam and Sock exchange a look.

SAM

Will somebody tell me what the HELL is going on here?

MOM

Happy birthday, darling.

She smiles. But there are tears in her eyes.

EXT. SAM'S HOUSE - MORNING

Sam and Sock exit the house, head toward Sam's Mini Cooper.

SAM

Weird.

SOCK

They're always weird, dude.

SAM

Weird-er. Than usual. I wonder if they're gonna split up.

SOCK

Sweet. I'm gonna rock Linda's world. I'll be the rebound guy.

SAM

Why do you make me vomit?

A low GROWL stops Sam in his tracks. He looks around.

SAM (CONT'D)

Where is it? Do you see it?

SOCK

(pointing)

You mean that little rat right there?

Sam looks down at a tiny, black Chihuahua, bearing its teeth, just as it CHARGES, yipping maniacally. It launches itself right at Sam and clamps onto his pantleg.

SAM

Whoa --

SOCK

Holy crap. Look at him go.

SAM

Dude, help me.

SOCK

(mesmerized)

This dog rocks. This is the best dog ever.

Sam reaches down and YANKS the Chihuahua off. Then leans back and tosses the animal like a quarterback. It sails over the fence into the neighbor's yard -- we hear a soft BUMP and SQUEAL as it hits the lawn.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK (CONT'D)

Nice spiral.

SAM

Thanks.

But Sam is troubled. They get in the car and go.

INT. SAM'S CAR - DRIVING - MORNING

Sam's car winds through pretty, sunny San Diego suburbs. Sock tries to find a radio station.

SOCK

Listen, I think we should just establish now that by this time tomorrow, you'll probably have a little alcohol poisoning. Probably not hospital-grade or anything. But we are tearin' it up, bro, we are --

SAM

-- going to a crappy bar and drinking?

SOCK

Yes. Yes we are. And you are gonna love it because you are SO LEGAL now it's insane.

SAM

Sounds awesome.

Sam's not exactly enthusiastic -- in fact, he's a bit of a buzzkill. Sock turns to him, folding his arms.

SOCK

I am totally about to kick your ass right now. What is your problem?

SAM

It's like, I'm 21. It's the last important birthday until forty.

SOCK

So? It's the most awesome one.

SAM

I don't know. My life is pretty much the same as it was in high school. And I'm fine with that. But now... I just feel like something's changing. I guess that dream just messed me up.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK

I know what you can change.

SAM

No --

SOCK

Yes. Ask her out. Ask Andi out. She's coming with us tonight. You get her wasted and ask her to a MOVIE, man.

SAM

The window is closed. We're friends. She wants to be friends.

SOCK

You don't know that. You never tried.

SAM

I was going to. But then her dad died.

SOCK

So?

(off Sam's look)

I mean, that's sad. But so?

SAM

You don't do that... jump in after something like that. You look like a dick.

SOCK

And that was what, two years ago?

SAM

Look, she'll never be interested anyway. She's in college, super smart, really nice. Half the time I don't even know why she hangs out with us. Compared to her, we're losers.

Sam shakes his head. He's clearly thought a lot about this.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'd rather be her friend than ask her out and make it all weird and awkward.

(sighs)

No. Window's closed.

Sock looks away, contemplative.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SOCK

Well, I just want to congratulate you on coming out of the closet, man.

SAM

Screw you.

SOCK

No, seriously. It's really brave. I totally support you. I love the gays.

EXT. THE HOME DEPOT - PARKING LOT - DAY

HIGH over the vast, mostly empty parking lot. Sam's car pulls in and parks at the far end, where the employees park. He and Sock start the long, slow walk to the front doors.

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - MEETING ROOM - DAY

Sam and Sock enter. About two dozen employees fill the room. The meeting has already started, but no one pays much attention. TED, the manager, addresses them.

TED

... complaints about the bathrooms. May I remind you they're separated by gender for a reason.

Sam's eyes find ANDI. Short for Andrea. Lovely in a completely effortless sort of way. She waves Sam over to the empty seat next to her. And we see Sam melt, just a little.

Sam takes his seat between Andi and their friend BEN, who writes in the margins of an accounting textbook.

ANDI

Your nametag's upside down.

Sam looks, then shrugs.

SAM

Yeah, it is.

ANDI

Happy birthday.

Sam is clearly pleased she remembered. But he's a little stupid around her, and can only say --

SAM

Oh. Thanks. Thanks a lot.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ANDI

Might want to think about getting on the liver transplant list now.

Sam laughs as Andi stretches and yawns. It's an innocent gesture, but Sam's jaw locks. He turns to Ben.

SAM

What's the deal?

BEN

Accounting exam. I'm flunking.

Sam cocks his head to see what Ben is writing.

SAM

But you're drawing a super muscular frog with an afro. Nice.

BEN

I'm gonna study right after.

ANDI

(sympathetic)

Ben, why don't you just switch to an art major?

BEN

Reverend Dad will pay for seminary school or accounting school. I'm not so much about the holiness, so...

SAM

That is an awesome frog. Can I have that?

Ben considers his drawing, then rips the page right out of the textbook and hands it to Sam.

BEN

I don't understand this chapter anyway.

(then)

I wish my parents were more like yours, Sam. They don't care what you do.

Sam nods, but you can tell he doesn't think it's that great.

SAM

Yeah. I'm pretty lucky.

At the front of the room, Ted has produced a sales chart.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

TED

... everybody still has a great chance of winning our sales contest.

Sam and Sock fill out the bottom of the list. Sock has \$53 in sales.

TED (CONT'D)

Mostly everybody.

SOCK

I've been biding my time. I'm a snake ready to pounce!

TED

Don't forget, the winner receives a twenty pound spiral cut ham!

ANDI

(to Sam)

I hope you have tomorrow off.

SAM

Not 'til Saturday. What about you?

ANDI

No, my day off's Saturday too.

Sam glances at Andi -- is she just sharing information? Or is she giving him an opening?

SAM

(cautiously)

Oh, well... uh... do you have any... plans? On Saturday? Your day off?

ANDI

Sitting in the library working on a huge psych paper. Lame.

Andi seems clueless to Sam's intentions. He tries to switch gears smoothly. It doesn't quite happen that way. Mostly he's just unintelligible. People are starting to rise -- meeting's over.

SAM

Right... yeah, I've got plans also. You know. Sleeping. More sleeping.

ANDI

See you on the floor.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

SAM
(trails off)
Probably some X-Box...

She waves and moves off. Sam turns to Ben, who has started another drawing.

SAM (CONT'D)
I need you to punch me in the face.
Right now.

BEN
(not looking up)
Okay.

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - MAJOR APPLIANCES - DAY

Sam is approached by a customer.

CUSTOMER
Tell me everything you know about your
refrigerators.

Sam blinks. Then points to the row of refrigerators.

SAM
They're right there.
(beat)
They're... cold.

CUSTOMER
That's it? That's the extent of your
knowledge?

SAM
Pretty much.

Sam's not being an asshole -- that actually is all he knows.

CUSTOMER
You're an idiot.

The customer walks away as Ted approaches.

TED
You were late today, Sam. And your
nametag's upside down.

SAM
I heard.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

TED

Sam, I'm gonna have to talk to you about your attitude again.

SAM

Uh...

TED

You don't care about anything. You don't care about the sales contest. I did this contest for people like you. And it's not just about ham -- it's about self-respect. Now I'm docking you for being late. And you're gonna have to work a double tonight because Mandy has a doctor's appointment.

SAM

I can't work tonight --

TED

Well that's just tough tacks. You need to learn responsibility, Sam. You need to learn that you can't just skate by anymore. Because that's what you've been doing since you were sixteen, and that's just not going to cut it at the Home Depot. And this nametag --

Ted reaches down in an attempt to adjust Sam's tag. Sam SLAPS his hand away.

SAM

Ted. Don't touch me.

TED

Excuse me?

And Sam is suddenly IRATE. And SHOUTING. It's a completely disproportionate reaction.

SAM

I SAID DON'T TOUCH ME! You are not allowed to touch me. Ever.

Sam starts backing Ted up into the shelves. Ted is terrified.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'm not working a double! I don't care about ham! And I don't care what you think of my attitude!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

A small crowd has gathered, including Andi and Sock. Ted can't back up any more.

TED

You need to calm down --

SAM

WHAT DID YOU SAY TO ME? Say that again, Ted. Say it again!

Just as we think Sam might kick the shit out of Ted, we hear a low RUMBLE. Then EVERYTHING STARTS SHAKING.

TERRIFIED SHOPPER (O.S.)

Earthquake!

The tall shelves around them start to sway, small items fall to the floor. Customers cry out, some take off running.

Then it's over. Sock and Andi right themselves. Sam is just breathing hard, looking at the floor.

TED

I'll get somebody else to work the double...

And Ted rushes off. Sam finally looks up at Sock and Andi -- All anger is gone. Now he's just as surprised as everyone.

SOCK

You... are disgruntled. And I love that.

From O.C., we hear a woman's scream.

WOMAN (O.S.)

Look out!

Sam looks up in time to catch sight of a huge, industrial-sized A/C unit on a wooden palette, high on the shelf. It teeters on the edge, about to fall -- directly onto Andi.

The unit slips. Sam doesn't think. He dives, arms outstretched, and pushes the unit clear of Andi. It lands next to her with a huge CRASH. Sam hits the floor hard.

A big reaction from the crowd -- he saved her! How did he do that? Andi is too shocked to say anything. Sock is amazed.

SOCK

Did you see that? Did you SEE THAT??

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

Sam just sits there, an odd expression on his face. Then gets up and pushes his way through the crowd. Sock follows.

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - EMPLOYEE BREAKROOM - DAY

Sam bursts through the door and starts pacing. Sock enters soon afterwards -- he is elated.

SOCK

THAT WAS AWESOME! It's like that thing, where a car or whatever falls on a kid and the mom gets all pumped with adrenaline and lifts it? You just totally Bruce Bannered it, dude!

SAM

No...

Sock plops down on the ratty couch.

SOCK

Yes! You saved Andi! How much will she go out with you now?

SAM

(quietly)
I didn't touch it.

SOCK

What do you mean?

SAM

I didn't touch it. It was too far. It's like I moved it... with my mind.

A beat as this sinks in. Sam hardly believes it himself. Then, without a word, Sock reaches for the ceramic table lamp next to him and FIRES IT with all his might. It CRACKS Sam right in the skull and he drops instantly to the ground.

SAM (CONT'D)

OWWW!

Sam writhes on the floor, cradling his head. Sock just looks at him, disappointed.

SOCK

What happened?

SAM

WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK

You were supposed to move it with your mind!

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - FRONT REGISTERS - DAY

Andi rings out a customer. She spots Sam, ambling by in a stupor, a nice purple welt springing from his forehead.

ANDI

Oh my god, Sam! What happened?

Sam blinks, trying to shake the cobwebs.

SAM

There was a lamp... something...

Andi pulls him over, rips open a small first aid kit hanging next to the registers, punches the ice pack, over --

ANDI

I don't even know how to thank you. You saved my life. How did you do it?

SAM

Uh... I think probably one of those weird adrenaline car mom things?

ANDI

I don't know what that means.

SAM

Okay...

She places the icepack over Sam's goose egg.

ANDI

Well, thank you. It was really brave.

Sam realizes Andi's face is quite close. He's suddenly feeling a lot better. He takes the icepack from Andi's hand.

SAM

Listen, Andi...

Sam doesn't notice the growing commotion behind him -- customers point, back away. Andi looks -- and her jaw drops.

SAM (CONT'D)

What?

Then he hears the LOW GROWL. He turns, annoyed.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM'S POV

Of the black Chihuahua. It brought friends. Including two very familiar PIT BULLS. Behind them, other BLACK DOGS of various breeds and sizes. All growling. All looking right at Sam.

SAM (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Andi... don't move.

And Sam takes off. Every single dog gives chase. They run around the registers, then out to --

EXT. THE HOME DEPOT - ENTRANCE - DAY

-- where Sock is waiting. Plastic eye goggles on. And wielding a big, LOUD, gas-powered leaf blower.

SOCK
COME ON YOU BASTARDS!

Sock revs it and runs directly at the dogs. It works. They run away. Sam bends over, gasping for breath.

SAM
I'm sick. I'm going home.

Sam limps off into the parking lot.

INT. SAM'S CAR - DRIVING - DAY

Sam grips the wheel. There are a few moments of silence, allowing him to relax, just a little. Then --

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)
This car is really nice.

Sam jumps, looks in the rearview -- and there is a MAN sitting in his back seat. Middle aged, nice hair, nice suit.

SAM
WHO ARE YOU??

MAN
(looking around)
They're much bigger on the inside.

And that's about the end of Sam's sanity. He FREAKS, speeding up and driving all over the road.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM
Is this a carjacking? Are you carjacking
me?

MAN
Sam... Sam... take it easy --

Sam narrowly misses several accidents, but hardly notices.

SAM
You can have it! Please don't kill me!

MAN
I'm not a carjacker! I'm the Devil!
Didn't they tell you I was coming?

SAM
WHAT??

With that, the car SMASHES into a tree. The airbags deploy.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

Sam's Mini is accordioned against a large tree. Smoke rises from the hood. Other motorists pull over, approach the car. Inside, Sam raises his head, dazed.

MOTORIST (O.S.)
Hey, are you okay?

Sam suddenly remembers his passenger -- he spins around. But the back seat is empty. Off Sam, feeling truly crazy --

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

INT. SAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

The only light comes from the large television set, where Sam is once again playing his video game. He stares mindlessly at the screen, the only noise being the click-click-click of the controller buttons.

We hear the front door OPEN, and Dad appears. He points in the direction of the street.

DAD

Sam, what happened to your car?

Sam doesn't look away from the game. He is numb, speaks without affect.

SAM

There was an accident.

DAD

Are you okay?

SAM

Kind of.

DAD

Weren't you going out with your friends tonight?

SAM

I decided to stay home and go insane. You might want to call a cop or something.

Dad watches Sam as he slays zombies and werewolves. We see evidence of real concern on Dad's part -- he sits down.

DAD

What happened?

On screen, the monsters pile up on Sam's player, who dies a horrible death. Sam tosses the controller. He's profoundly worried, his responses mechanical.

SAM

I caused an earthquake. I moved an air conditioner with my mind. And the devil tried to carjack me.

Dad takes on that.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

DAD

Seriously?

SAM

No, Dad. I'm hallucinating. None of it was real. That's why you should just call the cops, because I don't know what I'm capable of now.

A beat. Sam is in real torment. Dad considers him.

DAD

It was all real.

SAM

This isn't a joke.

DAD

I know it's not, Sam. There's something I have to tell you... maybe I should've told you a long time ago. I just didn't know how. Now, I don't have a choice.

(beat)

Your mother and I sold your soul to the devil.

SAM

Oh. Well it makes sense now. Thanks, Dad. That really helped.

But Dad is dead serious. This is more emotion than Sam has ever seen from him.

DAD

Before you were born... there was something wrong with me. Something that there was no cure for. And the Devil came to us and offered us a cure.

(beat)

It seemed so simple, because we planned on never having kids. But I should've realized you can't cheat the Devil. After a few years, your mom started to regret...

Dad trails off, not finishing the thought. This is now making Sam angry. He rises to his feet.

SAM

Stop screwing around.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

DAD

Your mother wanted to tell you this morning. But I thought you'd rather have one more normal day.

SAM

That wasn't normal!

DAD

I know. But at least you're not going crazy, right? You know the truth.

SAM

What TRUTH?

DAD

See any black dogs today?

The question stops Sam dead -- he stares at his father, incredulous.

DAD (CONT'D)

They're the hounds of hell. They pursue the souls of the damned. We were allowed to have you for the first twenty-one years. Now... you belong to him.

SAM

Belong. To. Who.

DAD

Isaiah calls him the 'son of the morning.'

(beat)

I'd apologize. But I don't really know how you apologize for something like this. You won't forgive me anyway.

Off Sam, his head about to explode --

INT. BAR - ENTRANCE - NIGHT

A few steps above shithole. Sam walks in the front entrance. He has to IMMEDIATELY hit the deck as a beer bottle CRASHES into the door.

SOCK (O.S.)

Come on! Why can't you do it?

Sam picks himself up, trudges over to the booth where Sock, Andi and Ben wait.

INT. BAR - BOOTH - CONTINUOUS

Sock joins the trio, who are well on their way to getting wrecked. The table is strewn with beer bottles and shot glasses. Sam is preoccupied.

SOCK
Dude, you're late.

ANDI
We started without you. Happy birthday!

BEN
Where were you, Sam?

SAM
I got hung up.

He sits and Andi leans on him.

ANDI
We started without you.

SAM
I can see that.

Andi digs in her purse, producing a small gift bag.

ANDI
Happy birthday!

Even in his current mental state, Sam is touched by this. He starts to open the bag.

SAM
You didn't have to do that...

ANDI
No! Don't open in front of me! I'm too nervous.

SAM
Okay...

Sock sloshes a couple shot glasses in front of Sam.

SOCK
I got you that.

SAM
Thanks, man.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Sam knocks the drinks back.

BEN

I didn't get anything.

ANDI

Yes you did! You gave him the super frog drawing!

BEN

Oh. Right. See? Happy birthday.

Sam smiles and leans back, stares at the table, lost in thought. Sock narrows his eyes.

SOCK

Can I speak to you in my office please?

Sock doesn't wait for an answer, instead climbs out of the booth and drags Sam with him.

INT. MEN'S ROOM - NIGHT

Sock shoves Sam inside the cramped space. Another GUY is at the urinal. Sock rants as he unzips his fly and stands at the other urinal.

SOCK

Dude, I am so close to pummeling you right now. What is wrong with you?

SAM

I've got a lot on my mind.

SOCK

I don't care! The girl of your dreams is falling all over you and giving you presents and you're thinking about flowers or fairies or whatever? Snap out of it!

SAM

Something happened. Bad.

SOCK

What?

Sam shakes his head, indicates the guy at the urinal next to Sock, who is staring at them. Sock turns to him.

SOCK (CONT'D)

Dude, seriously, stop staring at my junk.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GUY AT URINAL
(zipping up)
I'm not!

He hurries away and out the door. As the door shuts --

SOCK
(yelling)
Didn't wash his hands!
(then, to Sam)
Speak.

Sam considers his reflection in the mirror. It's almost as if saying this aloud makes it real.

SAM
All day... I've had this feeling like something's off. Different. And then the dogs. And the dude in my car. And the moving things with my mind...

SOCK
Still need more proof of that, bro.

SAM
(beat)
My parents sold my soul to the devil. Dad told me tonight. Either I'm a lunatic. Or it's all true. Sock... I think it's true.

There is a long pause as Sam waits for Sock's reaction. Sock's face is inscrutable as he zips up his pants. Then, softly --

SOCK
Sam. Buddy. That is...

He PUNCHES Sam in the arm happily, knocking him into the sink.

SOCK (CONT'D)
SO AWESOME! That's the best thing ever!

SAM
Sock -- no. This sucks.

SOCK
What are you talking about? You wanted a change? Check it out! Wish granted!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM

Do you know what that means? I don't even know what that means.

SOCK

It means you are Magic Devil Guy with the kung-fu mind grip.

(then)

You gonna tell Andi?

Sam hadn't thought of that. He pulls the still-unopened gift bag from Andi out of his pocket.

SAM

No. She can't ever know.

SOCK

You gonna use your evil powers to bang her?

Sam doesn't laugh. In fact, he's more depressed than before.

SAM

I think I'm just gonna go home.

Off Sock, watching as Sam exits --

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sam enters, shuts the door. He reaches into his pocket, pulls out the gift from Andi. Sits on the bed and opens it.

Inside is a bracelet -- a thin, black cord and a silver bead with a Sanskrit symbol carved into it. It's beautiful. Sam looks at it for a moment, then fastens the bracelet around his wrist and lies back on the bed.

The door to his closet immediately opens. Out walks the guy from Sam's car -- The Devil. He's wrinkling up his nose and waving his hand in front of his face.

THE DEVIL

I don't want to bum you out, but something took a dump in there.

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

CLOSE on a frying pan, where a thick slab of some kind of breaded meat sizzles. Sam sits at the counter, watching as the Devil flips the meat onto a plate.

THE DEVIL

Look, I get it. This is a big deal and you didn't choose it. Not fair. Nobody's blaming you for freaking out.

The Devil takes a fork and samples his creation.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

Oh, yeah. Chicken fried steak. I am so glad I don't have arteries.

(to Sam)

Try? Just a bite.

Sam can only shake his head. The Devil pulls his plate over and sits next to him. He seems genuinely sympathetic.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

Sam. This doesn't have to be so bad.

Sam finally finds his voice.

SAM

So, uh... what happens? Do I have to go to hell now?

THE DEVIL

Now? No. No, no, no. Not now. You're gonna work for me here, in the earthly realm.

SAM

(feeling sick)

Like, kill people and stuff?

The Devil frowns, practically aghast at the notion.

THE DEVIL

Wow. You're a real pessimist. Of course you won't be murdering people. You have a much better gig -- find souls that escaped from hell and bring them back.

(then)

Got any root beer?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

The Devil goes to the fridge and rummages around.

SAM

I don't get it. Find souls?

THE DEVIL

You know. Like a bounty hunter.

SAM

People can get out of hell?

The Devil pulls out some OJ and drinks from the container.

THE DEVIL

Yeah... that's kind of a problem we've been having. Overcrowding and so forth. Honestly, we were underprepared for the influx. I blame myself.

There's a cageyness in how the Devil describes this. You get the sense he's not telling the whole truth.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

But that's not your problem. All you need to do is track down fugitives and haul their asses to the portal. Easy.

SAM

What portal?

THE DEVIL

(thinks)

Let's see, in this sector, closest portal to hell is the DMV on Mission Street. Turn in a fugitive, get your license renewed. I'm all about the perks.

(looks)

Hey, Frank.

Sam looks up -- his father stands at the entryway to the kitchen, in his P.J.s, holding an empty water glass.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

I'm giving Sam the lowdown. You hungry?

Dad shakes his head. He looks at Sam for a beat, opens his mouth to speak, but can't. He simply drops his eyes and walks away. Sam holds his head in his hands.

SAM

Why did they do this?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

THE DEVIL

I just draw up the contract. I don't ask for personal motivations. Tends to be a deal killer.

Sam looks depressed. The Devil pats his shoulder.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

Kiddo, it's okay. I've seen how this all ends. Don't worry, God wins. You'll be doing humanity a favor by putting bad guys where they belong.

Sam sighs. He's tired of fighting it.

SAM

What do I have to do?

And suddenly, we're --

EXT. FIREHOUSE - BROAD DAYLIGHT

To Sam's utter confusion he and the Devil are now standing in front of a fire station and it's daytime. The Devil holds his plate of chicken fried steak. Sam is briefly dizzy.

SAM

Where are we?

THE DEVIL

Seat of all that is good and pretty in suburbia. Also known as Escondido -- about 10 miles away from your house.

(points)

There's your fugitive.

SAM'S POV

Of a shirtless, muscled, tanned and incredibly gorgeous FIREMAN, washing a firetruck. It's like a calendar spread.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

Broke out of hell after doing fifty years. Wanna guess why he was damned?

SAM

Not really.

THE DEVIL

Get this -- arson. In life he was a big time pyro. Hello ironic.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

So he's a good guy now?

THE DEVIL

(shakes his head)

Even worse than before. He's still an arsonist, but now he can see the results of his work up close. It's pretty ingenious, I'll give him that.

SAM

Then why do you want to take him back to hell? If he's being evil, isn't that what you want?

THE DEVIL

The truth is, I'm a very misunderstood guy. I don't advocate these huge, showy, evil acts. People blowing up buildings or killing twenty-five prostitutes -- while I can appreciate the sentiment -- is actually bad for me. It scares people, and when they're scared they tend to seek out God or Buddha or Vishnu or whoever. My job is to get people to embrace me.

(points)

Guys like this make me look bad.

The Fireman arches his back and sprays water from the hose all over himself. The Devil shakes his head.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

Look at this tool. Could he have chosen a more obvious human form?

SAM

He doesn't look like that?

THE DEVIL

He does now. When he was alive -- huge dork. Ninety pound weakling. But once you're dead, your earthly appearance dies with you.

The Fireman goes inside, and the Devil and Sam walk.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

There it is. Your first assignment.

SAM

You want me to kill a fireman.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

THE DEVIL

What is this obsession with murder? The
guy's already dead.

Sam stops walking.

SAM

I'm not doing it.

THE DEVIL

Not getting the fireman?

SAM

Not doing any of it. I'm not gonna be
your stupid bounty hunter. Period.

The Devil stares at Sam. It's unnerving, and scary. But
then, he just starts laughing.

THE DEVIL

You're hilarious!

SAM

I'm not kidding. This is my decision.

That only makes the Devil laugh harder.

THE DEVIL

Sure it is, Sam. Whatever you say...

And then, the Devil is gone. And Sam is --

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Sitting at the counter. It's dark out once more. The
chicken fried steak is back in the pan, burned black as coal.
Sam looks around. That might have been a little too easy.

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - SALES FLOOR - DAY

Sock is winding yards and yards of duct tape around his left
hand. Sam approaches, urgent.

SAM

(pointed)

Had a visitor last night.

SOCK

Nice.

SAM

No, it's not nice. It bites my ass.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK
(shows Sam)
Tape hand.
(then)
We should tell Ben. He knows all about
this garbage.

Sam thinks, then relents.

SAM
Fine. But nobody else can know.

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - STOCKROOM - DAY

Sock, Sam and Ben sit at an industrial desk in a relatively remote area. Ben idly sketches superheroes on the side of a box. Sock's still working on the tape hand, which now has the circumference of a good-sized melon.

BEN
I don't believe this...

SOCK
So you need proof.

Sock picks up a stapler and throws it. It plugs Sam right in the chest. Sam's so used to it now he hardly reacts.

SAM
Yeah, we're already past the not believing it part. We've moved on to the part where it's true and it sucks.

BEN
I believe you're telling the truth. I just don't understand how your parents sold your soul out from under you.

SAM
What do you mean?

BEN
God's greatest gift to humanity is Free Will. It's what separates us from the heavenly hosts.

Sam just blinks. Sock shakes out his left hand.

SOCK
Pins and needles now.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BEN

Think about it -- your soul, your essence, is the only thing that makes you you. How can your parents give it away?

SAM

I don't know, but I told him no way.

Ben and Sock exchange a look.

BEN

You said no to the Devil? What'd he do?

SAM

Nothing.

(beat)

Laughed at me. But then nothing.

SOCK

I like you, Sam. I like you because you're crazy.

SAM

Look, I don't care. Dude will just have to find escaped souls himself.

BEN

Actually, the Devil and his minions don't have physical power on earth. They can lure, lie, compel. But think about the Bible story -- the Devil meets Jesus, and what does he do? Talk, talk, talk.

SOCK

Pussy.

Sam is considering Ben, impressed.

SAM

Thought you hated all the religious stuff. You're like the expert now.

BEN

No. My father's just drummed it into my skull for so many years I can regurgitate it at will.

Sock is trying to rip the roll of duct tape off with his teeth. It's getting all in his hair.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SOCK

There's a guy who can swallow a quarter,
a dime, and a penny and regurgitate them
in order. You should work on that.

Andi appears around a corner, carrying a box. The guys all snap to attention, but she doesn't seem to notice anything's weird.

ANDI

Hey.
(to Sock)
Nice tape hand.

SOCK

Thank you, Andi.

Andi walks along the shelves, looking for the place to restock the box. Sam follows her, holds up his wrist, showing Andi the bracelet.

SAM

Hey... I just wanted to thank you for
this. I really love it.

ANDI

Great! You never know with guys and
jewelry.

SAM

Also... I'm sorry I was so lame last
night.

Andi finds the proper place for the box, sets it on the shelf.

ANDI

It's cool. You seemed down about your
birthday. I get it. Last important one
before forty.

SAM

(surprised)
Yeah...

ANDI

Then I'm really glad you like your
present. You've been such a good friend
to me, Sam. I appreciate it.

She gives Sam a friendly pat on the arm and goes back out toward the sales floor. Sam's shoulder slump.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

SAM

Such a good friend. Really good friends.

Sock and Ben watch from the desk.

SOCK

(whispers)

Use your powers of evil... use them...

Sam shakes his head and walks away.

INT. SAM'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

CLOSE on Sam's face -- we can almost see the reflection of the video game in his eyes. He slumps on the couch, numb, trying to shut everything else out.

We hear the sound of someone entering the house, walking towards us. A figure passes behind Sam -- we get a glimpse of a RED HUED body, a flutter of wings. The figure sits down O.S. at the end of the couch.

Sam finally turns his head -- and his eyes BUG.

SAM'S POV

Of a DEMON -- winged, horned much like the demon from his dream. Only this one -- named BUD -- just sits quietly, wearing reading glasses, consulting a clipboard. Sam drops his controller and slowly gets up from the couch.

SAM

Wh... what..?

Bud looks up from his paperwork.

BUD

It's okay, you can play your game.
Doesn't bother me.

SAM

Who are you?

BUD

I'm Bud. Here for a pick-up.

SAM

Pick up what?

BUD

(reads)

Linda Oliver.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Sam reacts.

SAM
That's my mom.

BUD
Oh. She here?

SAM
No.

BUD
I'll wait.

SAM
What do you want with her?

Bud flips through the pages of his clipboard.

BUD
Looks like she's the collateral on a
breached contract.

SAM
What does that mean?

BUD
She didn't fulfill her end of the deal.
She's gotta go to hell.
(re: the TV)
You're dead.

Sam looks -- indeed, his player is being sucked by a vampire.

SAM
Wait. Wait, wait, wait.
(thinking)
You can't do that, you can't take her.
You don't have powers on earth. You can
only like lure and propel and stuff.

Bud considers Sam for a beat.

BUD
Wow, you're a real theologian, Sam.
(then)
All those rules get thrown out the window
when you enter a deal with the Devil.

ON SCREEN, the video game goes into demo mode -- it plays itself. Only this time, it seems darker, scarier.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

Monsters prowl about, chasing humans. And, there is a woman screaming -- it sounds familiar. Sam can't tear his eyes away.

SAM

What will happen to her?

BUD

You know. The usual. Dismemberment. Burning. Various things inserted into various orifices.

The screaming on the game continues -- it shows a woman being chased by demons. Sam sinks onto the couch, devastated. Bud sighs, seems to take pity on him.

BUD (CONT'D)

Look, I don't care one way or another. This is just my job -- either the contract is settled or I have to collect payment -- your mom's soul.

SAM

(beat)

So if I agree to do the bounty hunter thing, my mom is safe.

BUD

Pretty much.

SAM

I don't even know what to do... I don't know how to catch souls.

Bud points to the coffee table in front of them -- where there now rests an ancient-looking, wooden box.

BUD

That's a vessel. It'll help.

Sam just looks at the box, but doesn't touch it. Bud rises from the couch, stretches.

BUD (CONT'D)

Look, I've got a couple other pick-ups to make, so I'll come back tomorrow. You think about it.

Bud points to the screen.

BUD (CONT'D)

Or, you can just play your game. That's how you deal, right? Things get hard.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

BUD (CONT'D)

Sam checks out.

(shrugs)

Like I said, doesn't really make a
difference to me either way.

Sam hardly reacts as Bud exits. He's fixated on the screen,
where demons pile on the woman and tear her apart. As the
screaming grows to a crescendo --

CUT TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - EMPLOYEE BREAKROOM - DAY

CLOSE on the wooden box as it is placed on a table. The wood is worn smooth and distressed. There is a hinged lid on top, latched shut, the iron fastenings ancient. The three guys stand around it.

SOCK
What is it?

SAM
A vessel.

SOCK
You open it?

SAM
Too chicken.

BEN
It's a tool of the Devil. Could be something unspeakably evil.

SOCK
Or unspeakably awesome. I'll open it.

SAM
No... this is my deal. I'll do it.

Sam touches the latch -- it takes a moment to force the metal free. He grips the lid and pulls. Finally, it pops open. We hear air get sucked inside, a small puff of dust escaping.

Ben and Sock step backwards. Sam opens the creaking lid the rest of the way. He looks down. Then cocks his head.

SAM (CONT'D)
Huh.

BEN
What? What is it?

Sam reaches, pulls out a plastic lunchbox thermos. Pictured on the side -- a black Pontiac Trans Am and the words --

SAM
Knight Rider. A Knight Rider thermos.

A beat as the guys consider it.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BEN

Is that the only thing in there?

Sam checks again.

SAM

Yeah.

SOCK

Give it.

Sam tosses the thermos to Sock. Sock removes the little plastic cup on the top.

BEN

Are they just messing with you?

SAM

Possibly. They're all kind of dicks --

Sock barely touches the screw top -- and EVERYTHING IN THE ROOM gets sucked toward it about two inches -- before Sock twists it shut again. They all sit there, wide-eyed.

SAM (CONT'D)

Whoa.

SOCK

That'll work.

EXT. FIREHOUSE - DAY

The guys exit Sock's car, parked up the street. They walk. The Fireman loading equipment onto the truck.

SAM

There he is.

They stop, assessing the situation.

SOCK

What's the plan?

Ben and Sock both look to Sam -- clearly he hasn't got one.

SAM

Oh, uh... walk over there. Open the thermos. See how that works out.

He shrugs.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK
I love this plan.

WIDE as they walk, three abreast. Sam pulls off the little plastic cup. Heat waves rise from the ground. Sock spits, squints. The Fireman looks up, sees them and their thermos. He does a weird thing. He smiles. The guys slow a little.

FIREMAN
You think you can take me?

SOCK
Sam... open it, Sam.

The Fireman steps forward, arms outstretched, and begins to GLOW. The surface of his skin BLISTERS and CRACKS, and in the cracks we see what looks like MOLTEN STEEL pulsing beneath. The guys' eyes bug out of their heads.

SAM
(struggling with the
lid)
I'm trying...

The Fireman bursts into flames.

FIREMAN
I'm not going back!

BEN
Sam!

SAM
It's stuck!

The Fireman now looks like a burning ember with arms and legs -- it winds up, and hurls a FIREBALL directly at the guys.

SOCK
Heads up!

They dive as the fireball EXPLODES on the street right in front of them. They exchange a terrified look.

SAM
RUN!

They run hard. Sam is still trying to get the thermos open -- he does briefly -- and SUCKS IN a parked car. The force of it throws him to the ground. Another fireball EXPLODES.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SOCK (O.S.)

SAM!

Sam looks. Sock is trying to pick up an unconscious Ben from the ground. Ben's head and face are red with burns.

SOCK (CONT'D)

Ben's hurt! Help!

Sam races over and helps drag Ben to the car. Sock unlocks the door, they throw Ben in the back, pile in.

SAM

Go go go go go!

Sock revs the engine hard and peels away, narrowly escaping the volley of fireballs that pound the street behind them.

INT. HOSPITAL - CORRIDOR - NIGHT

We're looking through an observation window into an exam room, where doctors work on a still-unconscious Ben. His head is bandaged, skin red and slick with burn gel. Some of his hair and all of his eyebrows are totally burned off.

Ben's parents stand near his bed, worried. REVEAL Sam, watching all of this through the window. The guilt is overwhelming.

Sock joins Sam at the window. They watch in silence for a moment. Then, Sock holds up a black Sharpie.

SOCK

Ben would want eyebrows.

SAM

Stop.

SOCK

He would want eyebrows, and he would want us to give them to him.

SAM

You know what? Not helping.

SOCK

What? Are we gonna sit here and mope?

SAM

Our friend is in the hospital. He might die. And that's my fault. It isn't funny, Sock.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK
Well that part's not funny.

Sam shakes his head, looks away from Ben.

SAM
I should've gone alone.

Behind them, Andi gets off the elevator. She's upset.

ANDI
Guys... are you okay?

Sam is surprised, but not happy to see her. She rushes up and gives him a hug, then Sock.

ANDI (CONT'D)
(to Sock)
I'm glad you called. What happened?

SAM
We had an incident... an M-80 incident.

ANDI
What?

SAM
(snaps)
We were being stupid. Okay?

ANDI
Sam -- I was just worried --

But Sam's a runaway train now -- all the guilt and stress and anger is coming out, directed right at Andi.

SAM
Why are you even here, Andi? To make us feel even stupider than we already do? Yeah, I'm a loser and so are my friends. Feel better about yourself?

Andi just stares at him. Then, tears well up in her eyes.

ANDI
You're such an asshole.

She turns and runs back to the elevator. Sock looks at Sam like he's ready to punch him. His voice is quiet.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SOCK

Why don't you go out and kick a puppy now, Sam? Club a baby seal. She has only ever been nice to you.

(shakes his head)

You know what? Whatever. You got it all under control, right? All by yourself. Have fun.

He leaves Sam shellshocked. Sam watches Ben for another beat. Then turns away. It's too much.

INT. SAM'S HOUSE - FRONT ENTRY - NIGHT

Sam enters quietly. The house is dark, save for the blue flicker from the TV in the living room. He walks in --

INT. SAM'S LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The TV is on mute, the local news covering an arson. Sprawled on the couch is his mother. A glass dangles from her hand, a vodka bottle is tipped over on the floor.

SAM

My life is screwed, but you're drunk.
Perfect.

Mom just murmurs in her sleep. Sam sits, picks up the video game controller. But then reconsiders, throws it down.

SAM (CONT'D)

You don't even know what I did for you.

(beat)

Why did you do this? Why?

He puts his head in his hands. This is the bottom for Sam.

MOM

Have a nice birthday, sweetie?

Sam looks up. Mom is in the same position, eyes closed.

SAM

That was yesterday, mom.

MOM

Oh. Nice?

SAM

Not really. No.

She rolls over a little, but her eyes are still closed.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM (CONT'D)

Are you awake, mom?

She doesn't answer. Sam starts to get up.

MOM

We love you.

SAM

Yeah.

MOM

I just wanted a baby... I couldn't help it...

Sam seems surprised at this revelation. As she speaks, he looks around the room. There are photos of his parents when they were as young as Sam is now.

MOM (CONT'D)

Dad said not to have you... too dangerous... but I wanted you so much.

In each photo, mom and dad are smiling. Totally in love. Totally different than they are now.

SAM

You weren't always like this. You used to be happy.

MOM

My decision... my fault. I'm so sorry...

A tear slides out of the corner of her eye.

MOM (CONT'D)

Maybe it would've been better for you if you were never...

She trails off. Sam considers her a moment.

SAM

You guys always pushed Keith so hard, nothing he did was good enough. With me... you acted like there was something wrong. And I believed that.

(beat)

But maybe you were just giving me a break. Because you knew what was gonna happen. So, I guess that's kind of cool.

Mom sighs shakily. Sam rises.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM (CONT'D)
(gently)

Come on.

Sam pulls her to a wobbly standing position. She opens her eyes, focuses with difficulty on Sam. Tears fill her eyes.

MOM

We ruined your life... I'm so sorry.

A beat. Sam smiles at her. And then lies.

SAM

Actually, you didn't. It's over. I had to do one thing for the guy, and now I'm done. Everything's back to normal.

MOM

You mean... your soul..?

SAM

All mine. So you don't have to feel bad anymore. I'm okay.

Mom smiles widely.

MOM

Really? I'm so happy, dear... I'm so happy.

Sam starts guiding her toward the stairs.

SAM

Me too. Let's get you to bed. I've got something to do.

EXT. FIREHOUSE - NIGHT

Sam's still-thrashed Mini pulls up to the curb. Sam exits. He's holding the thermos. But he can't get any closer.

SAM'S POV

A news crew is on the scene. The light from their camera partially illuminates. Yellow POLICE LINE tape surrounds the property. And, where the fire station used to be -- nothing but a smoking BLACK CRATER. It's just gone.

Sam rips through the tape, walks toward the crater, clenching his fists. He starts yelling at the hole in the ground --

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM
WHAT DO I DO? WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO
NOW?!

Of course, there is no answer. Off Sam, at the end of his
rope --

FADE OUT

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Creeping through the room once more. Clothes and crap still everywhere. FIND Sam, in bed, wide awake. The closet door opens, and Bud ambles out, plops down on a chair. A cigarette dangles from his lip.

BUD

You wanted to see me?

Sam flicks on the light, sits up.

SAM

What are you talking about?

Bud sighs, then goes into an unenthusiastic imitation of Sam.

BUD

(high voice)

What do I do now? What do I do now?

(normal voice)

That. It's my job to guide you now.

SAM

Why?

BUD

(beat)

I'm your guide.

SAM

Great. Where's the fireman?

BUD

I don't find souls. That's your job.

SAM

So pretty much I'm on my own and you do nothing. Awesome. You're a great guide.

Bud lights a new cigarette off the old.

BUD

Let me explain how Hell works. Imagine the worst bureaucracy ever...

(thinks)

Imagine your federal government. And then multiply that by like infinity.

SAM

So?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

BUD

The only way for me to find a fugitive is to get buried in red tape. Fill out forms. Stand in lines. And you know what? I don't want to. I'm not interested.

SAM

Then why even bother showing up tonight?

BUD

I'm your guide. I show up. Whether I want to or not.

There's something deeper to that statement, a real resentment of Bud's current situation. He considers Sam, takes pity.

BUD (CONT'D)

Fine. Helping.

(sighs)

Did you look at the fire station?

SAM

Yes, Captain Obvious. Dude blew it up.

BUD

That seems excessive. How?

SAM

He can turn into some burny fire monster. Thanks for the heads-up on that, by the way.

BUD

Didn't know. Every fugitive's different.

SAM

Do they all turn into monsters?

BUD

In a way. He was in hell 50 years. His sin was arson, which means he was burned every day he was down there. Evil like that transforms you.

SAM

But what is he doing? The Devil said he burned down other places -- where?

BUD

Don't know.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

Sam gets out of bed. He's on a roll now.

SAM

And why would he burn down the place where he works? He had the perfect job and he just wrecked it.

BUD

All good questions.

SAM

Who was he when he was alive?

BUD

That is the biggest question. You should find that out.

(checks his watch)

And I'm off the clock. See ya.

Bud goes back to the closet.

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - PLUMBING DEPARTMENT - DAY

Sock walks quickly, followed by two young guys, who avidly write down every word Sock utters. It's all very serious.

SOCK

I recommend the All-Pro silicone for its resistance temperature extremes and its water sealant properties. Are you getting all this?

YOUNG GUY

(writing)

Wait... no...

SOCK

Too slow. Let's talk pipe.

Sock picks up three feet of plumbing pipe. Down the aisle, Sam appears, listens in awe to Sock's expertise.

SOCK (CONT'D)

Get the 3/8th inch toilet pipe.

(points)

I have no idea what this part is, but I typically rip it off. Pack the weed of your choice in the wide end and enjoy.

YOUNG GUY

You are my idol, man.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK
I know. I know.

The guys move off. Sock sees Sam, nods to him.

SAM
Did you just sell them a bong?

SOCK
I sold them individual parts that can be assembled into a smoking accessory.

SAM
I am an asshat.

SOCK
True.

A beat. They both relax.

SAM
So we're cool?

SOCK
Totally. When do we throw down with Fireboy?

SAM
I have to find out who he was when he was alive fifty years ago first.

SOCK
(deadly serious)
We need someone who is an expert at the dark arts. I know exactly who to ask.

EXT. JOSIE'S HOUSE OF THE FUTURE - DAY

Establishing shot of a small, one-story bungalow, with a giant neon sign reading JOSIE'S HOUSE OF THE FUTURE -- READ YOUR PALMS, SEE YOUR FUTURE!

SAM (V.O.)
This is stupid.

INT. JOSIE'S HOUSE OF THE FUTURE - PARLOR - CONTINUOUS

Sock and Sam sit in fancy Victorian armchairs.

SOCK
This is great. Josie is a genius.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

JOSIE is in her thirties, dressed in a quasi-gypsy/Stevie Nicks way. She crosses her arms.

JOSIE

How's your brother, Sock?

SOCK

Let's not go there now, Josie. Let me spell it out to you in a language you can understand -- cold, hard, cash.

JOSIE

Aren't you violating the restraining order by being here?

SOCK

No, no, no. The restraining order is against my brother, not me.

SAM

I think this is a bad idea. I think we should leave.

SOCK

We need the identity of a man. An undead man. And for that information you will be well-compensated.

JOSIE

Um... I read palms.

Sam pulls out a bill from his pocket and lays it on his palm.

SOCK

Read that.

JOSIE

That's ten dollars. I charge twenty-five for the first five minutes.

SOCK

You drive a hard bargain, sorceress.

(to Sam)

Give her fifteen bucks.

Sam digs out the money and hands it over.

SAM

I don't think this is gonna work.

He gives Josie his hand. She grasps it and peers close.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

JOSIE

Well, your lifeline is straight... you're cautious about relationships, love.

SAM

That's so amazing, because no one else on the planet is like that.

(off Josie's glare)

Sorry. Go ahead.

JOSIE

(points)

Your fate line joins with your lifeline here. That means your life isn't really in your control. But here they separate again. You might get the control back.

Sam perks up at this a little.

SAM

Seriously? When?

JOSIE

Depends. It could go either way.

(then)

Huh.

SAM

What?

JOSIE

This line fades here. You lost something. Or, it was taken from you. Something really important.

Josie looks up and locks eyes with Sam. It's like she can see something deeper.

JOSIE (CONT'D)

What did they do to you?

Sam's mouth drops open, but Sock jumps to his feet.

SOCK

This is boring. I want my money back.

JOSIE

Bite me.

SOCK

Who burned down the firehouse?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

Josie suddenly registers recognition -- she turns to a table next to her, picks up the newspaper.

JOSIE

You mean this firehouse?

She holds up the paper. The headline reads FIREHOUSE BURNS TO GROUND, ARSON SUSPECTED. The sub-header:

SAM

(reading)

'Second time jinxed station set fire.'
When was the first time?

JOSIE

Five bucks, you get the whole paper.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sam and Sock walk as Sam reads the article.

SAM

'Police in 1950 said Ned Shmecker was responsible for the devastating blaze.'

Sam shows Sock the black and white photo of Ned Shmecker -- balding, scrawny, nothing like the fireman we know.

SOCK

He's pretty.

SAM

(reading)

Shmecker applied to be a fireman back in the day but failed the physical exam. After that, looks like he just lost it. Burned the fire station down, then torched his own apartment building. Got trapped inside and died.

SOCK

So he comes back to life and burns the station down again?

SAM

(getting it)

Yeah. Because they rebuilt it. And it's like everything he did, didn't matter. So he's gonna do it again.

SOCK

What about his old apartment building?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Sam hadn't thought of that -- he reads more.

SAM

The address is over by the mall.

They exchange a look. Sam starts walking fast.

SAM (CONT'D)

I'll get Knight Rider. Let's go.

Sock stops him.

SOCK

Wait. This time we're gonna be ready.

EXT. THE HOME DEPOT - DAY

LOW ANGLE on Sam and Sock standing before the entrance.

SOCK

We will be made gods.

As MUSIC comes up, Anthrax screaming "*I've got thunder in my hands/I'm metal-thrashing mad!*" --

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - DAY

A series of shots of Sam and Sock gearing up, in a cool and badass way. Like Sigourney Weaver in *Aliens*. But even more awesome.

CLOSE on a fire-retardant jumpsuit ZIPPING up.

A FIRE EXTINGUISHER slung over a shoulder

A tool belt STRAPPED to a waist.

A spray nozzle SCREWED onto a garden hose. The hose ATTACHED to the belt.

The Knight Rider thermos SNAPPED onto a spring clip.

CLOSE on a smoke detector. The backing RIPPED from the adhesive sticker. The detector SLAPPED onto a bicep.

Finally, CLOSE on Sock and Sam's faces. They each don plastic SAFETY GOGGLES.

WIDER now on the two of them. They look ridiculous.

SOCK

We look awesome.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

Let's roll.

EXT. STREET - DAY

Sam's car pulls up to the curb in front of an office building. Sam and Sock exit. They're perplexed.

SOCK

This is the address.

SAM

It was fifty years ago. Maybe they turned the building into offices.

Sock looks at the parking lot next to the building.

SOCK

He's here.

Sock points. A gleaming firetruck is parked in the lot.

INT. OFFICE BUILDING - LOBBY - DAY

The guys enter as people stare. Sam approaches reception.

SAM

Where's the fireman?

RECEPTIONIST

Who are you?

Sock is in the middle of the lobby, shouting.

SOCK

People, I'm going to need everybody to evacuate the building. If we keep our heads on straight we can all get out of this without serious death or maiming.

The people around him just look at him like he's nuts.

RECEPTIONIST

(to Sam)

He can't do that.

SOCK

Folks, take the rest of the day off, your job is not worth your life.

RECEPTIONIST

What is this about?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

Ma'am, all I can tell you is the fireman
is not a fireman.

Then the FIRE ALARM goes off. Sam and the receptionist turn
to see Sock at the wall, by the alarm panel, grinning.

RECEPTIONIST

I'm calling the police.

The alarm has the desired effect -- office workers start
streaming into the lobby and out of the building.

SAM

Call them! Just tell me where he is
before he blows this place off the map!

The receptionist has the phone in her hand, but something in
Sam's tone tells her this is for real.

RECEPTIONIST

The roof.

Sam turns to Sock.

SAM

Let's go.

They run to the elevator, Sam presses the button. The alarm
still SQUAWKS loudly.

SAM (CONT'D)

(re: alarm)

Thanks for letting him know we're here.

Sock just adjusts his tool belt.

SOCK

Good. It'll be a fair fight.

They enter the elevator, turn to face us. As the doors
close, Sock starts to sing quietly.

SOCK (CONT'D)

(singing)

*Hair doo of death... hair doo of
destruction!*

EXT. ROOF - DAY

Sam and Sock reach the roof. The Fireman is busy taking a
sledgehammer to a large piece of equipment.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SOCK
 (calling)
 Hey. Ned Shmecker.

The Fireman turns. The name outrages him.

SOCK (CONT'D)
 That's right, pencilneck. Got your
 number now. Get beat up in high school a
 lot?

FIREMAN
 You're dead!

The Fireman stalks toward them.

SOCK
 Here we go. I'm gonna put that head
 right in the toilet and flush, Shmecker.

The Fireman begins to GLOW once more -- and is then BLASTED
 with heavy streams from Sam and Sock's fire extinguishers.
 The Fireman stops, looks at the white foam on his body.

SAM
 He can't flame up. It worked!

SOCK
 THAT JUST HAPPENED, Ned-o!

But he starts moving again, right toward Sam. Up close, the
 Fireman is a big guy. He picks up Sam and THROWS him across
 the roof. Sam lands hard, skids to a stop at the wall.

FIREMAN
 If I have to go back to hell, I'm taking
 all of you with me...

The Fireman faces off with Sock. And evidently the effects
 of the fire repellent are short-lived -- he's starting to
 glow again. Sock tries to blast him with the fire
 extinguisher -- it bubbles and fizzes. So Sock just throws
 the extinguisher at him. It bounces off his chest.

SOCK
 So... what do you, work out?

The Fireman FLAMES UP in full force. Sock tries to run. He
 trips over his garden hose. Rolls to his back. The Fireman
 winds up, throws a fireball. Sock holds up his hands,
 squeezes his eyes shut.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

And nothing. Sock opens his eyes. The fireball is SUSPENDED IN MID-AIR, not two feet away from him. REVEAL Sam, walking toward them, holding his hand out. He's doing this.

SOCK (CONT'D)

That is what I'm talking about!
Booyacah!

The Fireman and Sam lock eyes. Sam flicks his wrist and the fireball reverses direction, BLASTING right into the Fireman, carrying him all the way to the edge of the roof -- and then over the side. We hear the explosion as he and the fireball land below.

Sock jumps up and runs to Sam, who is a little shaken.

SOCK (CONT'D)

I have never been so attracted to a man before. I just want to be honest.

SAM

Thanks, man.
(re: Fireman)
Still gotta Knight Rider him.

They both creep to the edge of the roof, lean over the wall.

And in a BLAZE OF FIRE the Fireman leaps through the air toward them. He's so close, there's nothing they can do -- except Sam opens the thermos on his belt. And instantly the Flaming Fireman is SUCKED into the container. Sam screws it shut. The guys exchange a look.

SOCK

That worked very well.

SAM

I think I'm controlling it with my mind now.

Sock taps the thermos, a little charred around the edges.

SAM (CONT'D)

Let's get rid of it.

INT. DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR VEHICLES - DAY

Sam and Sock enter. Bad fluorescent lighting, endless lines of impatient people, incompetent public servants.

SAM

Hell on earth.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

But Sam sees a DEMON beckoning him over.

SAM (CONT'D)

Do you see that?

SOCK

Old chick waving at us? Yeah. What do you see?

SAM

A demon.

SOCK

Sweet.

They head to the front, earning glares and muttered obscenities from the other people in line. Sam and Sock approach the plexi. In the reflection, we see the demon is a middle-aged woman.

DMV DEMON

Fugitive transfer?

SAM

Yeah, I guess.

DMV DEMON

Place the vessel in the drawer.

The demon pushes out one of those double-sided drawers, Sam places the thermos inside. It is pulled to the other side and the Demon picks it up, raises an eyebrow.

DMV DEMON (CONT'D)

Never saw one of these before.

The DMV Demon writes something down, then puts the thermos in an old pneumatic mail tube. It is instantly sucked DOWN.

DMV DEMON (CONT'D)

Have a nice day.

And that's it. Sam and Sock exchange a look.

SAM

Uh, so they're not all Knight Rider thermoses?

DMV DEMON

The Boss gives you whatever vessel he thinks you can handle.

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

DMV DEMON (CONT'D)
 (considers Sam)
 You must be a real moron.

Off Sam and Sock --

INT. SAM'S HOUSE - FRONT ENTRY - NIGHT

Sam enters, trying to be quiet, not let anyone know he's home. But as he shuts the door, he JUMPS -- behind the door is his father. Who doesn't look happy.

SAM
 Dad! Hey... Dad. Hey.

DAD
 Where were you?

SAM
 (evasive)
 Out. Partying.

DAD
 Why did you tell your mother the Devil let you out of the contract?

SAM
 Because I'm done. No problem.

DAD
 That isn't true. You can't get out of a deal with Him.

Sam considers telling Dad the real story. But then, he gets a better idea.

SAM
 Dad, I'm telling the truth. I'm free and clear. So you're off the hook -- you don't have to feel guilty about me anymore. You can just... be my dad. Ride my ass, tell me I'm a no-good, lazy whatever. Because I'm just like everybody else now. I'm normal.

Sam heads upstairs. Off Dad, who narrows his eyes, highly skeptical of all of this --

INT. THE HOME DEPOT - FRONT REGISTERS - DAY

Sam enters, sees Andi at one of the registers and approaches. She won't look at him.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM
You're still mad.

Andi says nothing.

SAM (CONT'D)
Of course you are. Because I was a total jerk. I'm really sorry, Andi. And I understand if you don't want to talk to me anymore. But I really hope you will. Because my life would suck even more if we weren't friends.

Andi regards him for a moment. And then relaxes.

ANDI
It's okay. I forgive you. I know it was a horrible day.

She smiles, and Sam is immeasurably relieved. He holds up his wrist, showing her the bracelet.

SAM
Haven't wrecked it yet. What does the symbol mean?

ANDI
It's Sanskrit for *Dharma*. It means 'awakened one.' For some reason I thought of you.
(beat)
I don't think you're a loser, Sam. I like you. I love working with you guys. After my dad died... my job is the best thing in my life.

Sam smiles, melting all over again. Another customer gets in Andi's line. Neither of them look at him.

SAM
I really am sorry.

ANDI
I know. It's okay.

CUSTOMER'S VOICE
Andi, that's very nice of you. I'd tell him to go jump in a lake.

Sam finally looks at the customer -- who is, in fact, the Devil. Sam grabs the Devil's arm, furious.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM

Excuse me. Can I talk to you a minute?
Can I just talk to you?

He pulls the Devil away and out the front doors to --

EXT. THE HOME DEPOT - FRONT ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Sam gets right in the Devil's face. The Devil thinks it's funny.

SAM

What is wrong with you?

THE DEVIL

She is adorable! So sweet.

SAM

Stay away from her. I'm not kidding.

THE DEVIL

Please, like I'm gonna get in the kiddie pool.

(then)

Just wanted to congratulate you, Sam.
Great job with the arsonist. You'll be
happy to learn he's back where he
belongs, getting his nuts burned off for
eternity.

Sam sighs, rubs his eyes. He's becoming resigned to this.

SAM

So how exactly am I supposed to find all
these fugitives?

THE DEVIL

Bud will help you.

SAM

Yeah. No.

THE DEVIL

You'll know them when you see them.
Trust me. I am so not worried.

SAM

And how long do I have to do this for?

The Devil seems to not understand the question.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

THE DEVIL

Well... forever.

That's not what Sam expected to hear. He's crestfallen.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

I mean, technically not forever. You're done when you die, right?

(off Sam's look)

Hey, don't be so glum. I just bought a bunch of crap and gave you the sale. You're gonna win your contest.

Sam walks away. The Devil calls after him.

THE DEVIL (CONT'D)

That was nice. I can be nice.

EXT. THE HOME DEPOT - LOADING DOCK - NIGHT

Sam and Sock sit on the edge of the high loading dock, legs dangling over the side, drinking beer. Between them, the spiral cut ham, which they snack on. They're introspective.

SAM

I guess this is my life now. I work for the Devil. How messed up is that?

SOCK

Dude. Just blow it off. You don't have to do anything.

Sam thinks, then shakes his head.

SAM

No... I think I do. I think I want to. It's like... there's a mission. And it's my mission. I'm the only one who can do it.

(beat)

I'm responsible now.

A beat, as that sinks in. WIDEN to reveal Ben sitting with them. His head is bandaged. And where his eyebrows used to be, thick, black, Mr. Spock Sharpie eyebrows.

BEN

We'll help you, Sam.

SAM

Thanks.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

VERY WIDE now, as below their feet, the Hounds of Hell beg for ham. Sock rips off a piece and throws it down to them.

FADE OUT

END OF PILOT