

HOLIDAY MAN

Written by

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FADE IN

INT. HIGH SCHOOL GYM - NIGHT

Graduation. Floor is covered with rows of seniors in cap and gown. Bleachers are full of parents and family. It's time for speeches.

Across the stage limps SAM, using crutches and dragging one leg. Glasses, goofy grin, his twisted body says he's really sick. He reaches the podium and raises a crutch. The STUDENTS cheer.

SAM
(lisps)
We made it!

More CHEERS.

SAM
Mom, dad, thank you!

In the bleachers, MOM and DAD smile through tears.

Sam grins crookedly.

SAM
All of you will be going on without
me.

No cheers. This is a sad acknowledgement of approaching death.

SAM
But I want you to know that this
has been the best year of my life!

He waves the crutch, and everyone CHEERS.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Sam stands between Mom and Dad as STUDENTS stream past, hugging and high-fiving, the GIRLS kissing Sam. Sam is a hit.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Sam stands with Mom and Dad by a van in the vacant lot. Everyone is gone. Sam hands the crutches to Dad, and Mom cries. Mom hugs Sam, not wanting to let go. Dad fights back tears.

DAD

We...we can't thank you enough,
Michael.

SAM

(no lisp)

It was my pleasure, and I'm Sam
now.

Mom doesn't want to let go, and Dad gently pries her away, holding her as Sam smiles, nods, and walks away, not limping at all.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Small, old, second-hand furniture, the place of someone who doesn't make a lot of money. In walks Sam, still dressed in gown.

He removes the gown and tosses it aside as he grabs a beer from the fridge. He swigs beer and settles in a chair. From his pocket, he pulls out an envelope and slides it across the table. Out spills cash.

INT. UPSCALE RESTAURANT - DAY

Sam, 20s, delivers a tray of drinks to a table of FASHIONISTAS. They pay no attention to another wannabe actor waiting tables. As he heads for the kitchen, he pulls out his phone, notes the message, and frowns.

INT. MIMI'S OFFICE - DAY

MIMI, 50s, overweight, given to fads, chews gum as she taps keys on her computer.

MIMI

It's an afternoon gig.

Across from her, still in waiter's uniform, sits Sam.

SAM

I'm looking for roles, Mimi, roles.

MIMI

Those are coming, Sam. But until
they do...

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - DAY

A 5-piece band plays on the stage. Tables of well-dressed COUPLES eat and drink, the perfect Bar Mitzvah.

On the dance floor, Sam in yulmaka, dances with a skinny WOMAN, who slips an envelope into the pocket of his suit, a pocket already stuffed with envelopes.

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - LATER

The stage empty, the tables being cleaned by hotel STAFF, except for the table where Sam sits with a middle-aged MAN and WOMAN.

MAN

We want to thank you for giving us
our son for one more day.

WOMAN

It was beautiful.

Sam pulls envelopes from his pockets.

SAM

These are yours.

WOMAN

No, no, Benjamin, you keep it.

MAN

You earned it.

SAM

Thank you, and it's Sam.

INT. CLAIRE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

CLAIRE, 30, professional, designer clothes on a class-A body. Sitting at her makeup table, she applies blood-red lip gloss.

CLAIRE

Give it up.

Sitting on the bed is Sam. This is an upscale apartment, just right for a professional.

SAM

Give up what?

CLAIRE

The acting, the waiting tables,
those holiday gigs. You don't need
them.

SAM

I like to eat—and drink.

CLAIRE

I can get you a job, a real job.

SAM

I'm not ready for a real job.

CLAIRE

Real jobs for real families, Sam.

She stands and turns around for him.

CLAIRE

Anything out of place?

SAM

Just me.

EXT. YARD PICNIC - DAY

A wide expanse of grass and flowers behind a mansion. The tent, flags, and banners proclaim the Fourth of July under a glorious sun.

Sam sips lemonade by a table laden with chicken, potato salad, picnic staples. Dressed in white, he's a preppy, the pride of the family.

STACY (O.S.)

This is sick you know.

STACY, 30, pretty, in a summer dress that shouts money, walks up to Sam.

STACY

I told her it was sick, but she doesn't care. It's his birthday, and she wants it just like it used to be. But it can't be like that because you're not him. You may look like him, and you might talk like him, but it's all fake. Hollis is dead. She can't accept that.

SAM

I'm only here to make the day go faster, perhaps bring a bit of joy.

STACY

If you do that, you won't earn your money. My brother was a total asshole. Think you can play that?

She spins and walks away, Sam watching her all the way.

EXT. YARD PICNIC - NIGHT

Sam stands next to ADELE, 60, the rich widow she is. They watch the sky fill with fireworks. Adele slips her arm under Sam's, and they smile as if they are truly mom and son.

To one side, Stacy sips a drink and watches.

EXT. STREET - NIGHT

Sam approaches his older car.

STACY (O.S.)

I need to apologize.

He turns as Stacy emerges from the dark.

STACY

I thought you were just some parasite bleeding old women like my mom. Then, I saw her face during the fireworks. Well, you did good, Hollis.

SAM

Thank you, and it's Sam.

STACY

She wants you to come for Christmas.

SAM

I'll have to check my schedule.

STACY

I'd like to hire you too.

He shoots her a questioning look.

STACY
My brother and I had some
unfinished Halloween business.

INT. CLAIRE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sam sips beer. Claire has a glass of wine.

CLAIRE
Don't be a fool. I'm offering you
the chance for a complete change.

SAM
I don't know anyone out there, and
no one knows me. How will I find
work?

CLAIRE
You won't need to work, don't you
see that? At least, not at first.
I'm sure you'll find outlets for
your hobby.

SAM
Hobby? You think acting is a
hobby?

CLAIRE
You know what I mean. It's not as
if you're making any money at it.

He stands and sets down his half-full beer.

CLAIRE
Where are you going?

SAM
I have to prepare for my...hobby.

He heads for the door.

CLAIRE
Don't be that way. Sam!

And he's gone. She starts to go after him but stops. She
sinks into a chair and sips.

INT. MIMI'S OFFICE - DAY

Mimi leafs through an appointment book.

MIMI
I have one for Halloween.

SAM
Stacy?

MIMI
Who's Stacy?

SAM
That Fourth gig. She said she had
a job for Halloween. I gave her
your number.

MIMI
She never called. You need to
verify.

SAM
I'll have her call.

INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sam, dressed as Dracula in cape and dress shirt, checks his image in a mirror as he talks on the phone.

SAM
(on phone)
I miss you too, but I can't come
out right now. This is my busy
season. Maybe after New Year's.
(beat)
Dracula. I like the look.

He laughs.

EXT. ADELE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Sam stands before a totally dark house. He takes out his phone and dials. Listens.

SAM
Hi, yes, I'm here. You're inside?

He listens, kills the connection, and starts toward the house.

INT. ADELE'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Red lights, blazing candles, black curtains, black bed, something from a horror movie. Sam enters and looks around.

SAM

Stacy?

From the closet comes Stacy, and she's dressed in red silk, as fetching as a siren.

STACY

Hello, Hollis, I've missed you.

SAM

And I missed you. I thought the party was here.

STACY

It is here. It is now. We are the party.

She moves closer, alluring, sexy.

STACY

Remember that night? Remember the party? You were so handsome, and I, well, I was so young. Remember?

Sam watches, not sure what he's supposed to do.

STACY

I remember. It was a room just like this.

She picks up a goblet of red wine and hands it to him.

STACY

Even the wine is the same.

She takes his hand and leads him to a table covered with a black cloth. On the cloth, a deck of tarot cards. They sit and face each other.

STACY

Same cards.

SAM

It was a night of magic.

She deals a card—THE MAGICIAN

STACY

The Magician. That was you.

She deals a second card—FOOL

STACY

Fool. That was me.

She deals another card--

STACY

Sex.

She stands, steps around, and grabs his hand which she places on her breast.

SAM

Stacy--

She places a finger on his lips and kneads his fingers into her breast.

STACY

Unfinished business.

INT. ADELE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Dark except for some ambient light from outside. Across the room sweeps Sam, cloak flying. He reaches the front door.

ADELE (O.S.)

Hollis.

In the shadows stands Adele, half hidden.

SAM

Mrs. Haversham--

ADELE

Mother you call me mother.

She moves out of the shadows and stands very close. She's an alluring witch, fetching.

SAM

I can't do this.

She runs one hand over his chest.

ADELE

Of course, you can. Just like before.

He grabs her hand and moves it away.

SAM

I can't.

She leans in to kiss him, and he pushes her away. She stumbles and lands on the couch.

Without a word, he spins and heads for the door.

EXT. ADELE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Sam steps out of the house. Standing in his way is Stacy, her hands behind her back.

SAM
Stacy, please.

STACY
You can't leave, Hollis. It's not over.

From behind her back she produces a tarot card.

STACY
Death.

They stare at each other. Then, Sam slowly collapses.

Behind him stands Adele, and in her hand is a long, wicked knife.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. ADELE HOUSE - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Adele and Stacy, still in costume, sit across from each other, wine goblets in front of them. They merely look at each other.

Into the room bounds Sam, all grins, with a beer in hand. The women smile as he sits.

ADELE
(toasting)
To the best Halloween ever.

They click and sip.

STACY
That was perfect.

Adele pushes a bulging envelope to Sam.

ADELE
From both of us.

SAM
Thank you very much.

EXT. CAFÉ - DAY

Sam sits at a small table that supports his cup of coffee as he reads his tablet.

REGAN (O.S.)
I know you.

He looks up as a REGAN, 40, well dressed and attractive, smiles.

REGAN
You were at the Bar Mitzvah. May
I?

He smiles and motions to a chair, and she sits.

REGAN
I'm Regan.

He shakes her hand.

SAM
S..Hollis, I'm Hollis.

FADE OUT