

GRUBBY MONEY

Written by
Simon K. Parker

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Simonkyleparker@hotmail.co.uk

Fade in:

INT. CITY OFFICE - NIGHT

The lights are off, but someone is searching with a flashlight. They know where they're going. The office is a jumbled mess—no organization at all.

Only one desk by the window, a collection of laptops, most of them clearly broken. Several cabinets are scattered around, all with padlocks keeping them closed.

If you had OCD and walked into this place, it would give you an instant panic attack.

The person searching checks the different cabinets before settling on the very last one, using the end of the heavy flashlight to bash the padlock open.

Then, pulling out lots of letters bound together with a piece of loose string, the person places the flashlight down next to them. Now we see their face: TOM, 38, scruffy beard and hair.

TOM

I knew you'd been hiding this shit
from me.

He flips through the many different letters. They've already been opened before, so he just slides them out and lays them across the table.

The letters cover everything—rent, electricity, gas, internet, delivery companies, and more—but they all have the same message: "Pay now. Past due. We'll see you in court."

Tom pockets a couple of these letters, stuffing them aggressively into his jeans.

TOM (CONT'D)

That bastard. I knew he was hiding
something, but this is a new low
even for him.

Tom is so mad, steam might as well be coming out of his ears.

INT. FRANK'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Frank sits on his leather sofa inside the spacious front room of his top-floor apartment. He's got great taste, but everything in here looks like it cost a fortune.

Frank (40), handsome, well-groomed, is making out with a very pretty woman in her mid-twenties.

Tom bursts in, out of breath and drenched, soaking wet. Hearing the door to the front room being kicked open causes Frank and the woman to pull apart.

FRANK

Tom, what are you doing here?

Tom throws the letters at Frank with a flick of his wrist. The letters slap Frank in the face.

FRANK (CONT'D)

(to the woman)

I think it's best if you left.

TOM

What the fuck, Frank?

The woman slowly rises from the sofa.

PRETTY WOMAN

I'll call you?

Frank shakes his head.

FRANK

I'll call you.

She leaves. Frank gathers up the letters. Tom moves closer.

TOM

I want to call it quits. The business is dead.

FRANK

I want one last go.

TOM

What does that even mean?

Frank taps a hand down on the sofa, on the empty seat beside him.

FRANK

Sit down.

TOM

Why, are you going to try and make out with me too?

FRANK
(forceful)
Sit down.

Tom sits.

TOM
I'm out, Frank. We tried something,
but it didn't work.

FRANK
But it will work. You just have to
stick it out, and it'll make us
billionaires.

TOM
We're broke, and the business is
dead.

FRANK
I want one more injection.

Tom's mouth hangs open.

TOM
Injection?

FRANK
This business can work. We've put
too much into it to simply give up.
Blood, sweat, and tears—we can't
walk away now.

TOM
It's bleeding cash, Frank.

FRANK
We're getting the orders in. We've
got everything where it needs to
be. We're growing.

TOM
We're getting nothing but winding-
up orders, that's what we're
getting.

FRANK
One more push. That's how close we
are to having an empire on our
hands. And the old man is going to
be the one who gives it to us.

Tom is utterly stunned—a slight gust of wind could knock him
over.

TOM

Dad? Dad isn't going to give you
shit. And you're even crazier than
I thought for saying that out loud.

FRANK

Do you know how much money Dad has
in that little safe of his?

TOM

No.

FRANK

Well, I do.
(whistles loudly)
And boy, oh boy, let me tell
you—it's a lot.

TOM

Yeah, right. You don't know
anything. You're just whistling
into the wind.

FRANK

One million dollars. Now tell me,
how does that grab you?

This is clearly shocking news to Tom.

TOM

I don't believe you.

FRANK

It doesn't matter. It's there
waiting. I know it's there because
I've seen it. I wasn't supposed to
see it, but I did.

TOM

(head shaking)
He's never going to let you have
it.

Frank nods, agreeing.

FRANK

And that's why I'm going to steal
it. I just need to wait for the
right time.

TOM

Why are you telling me any of this?

FRANK

Because you're my brother, and I love you. And I'm going to split it with you. Fifty-fifty. Five hundred grand for you, five hundred grand for me. All you've got to do is drive.

Tom opens his mouth to reply when suddenly all the power to the apartment cuts out.

Tom bursts out laughing.

TOM

Let me guess—you haven't been paying any bills for this place either?

Frank gives him a playful wink.

FRANK

You always were the smart one. Now don't be a dummy. Help me, and you're half a million richer. Do whatever you like with your half, but I know what I'm doing with mine—turning myself into a mogul.

Tom smiles. It's obvious that despite his doubts, he's very, very tempted.

EXT. OPEN GRASS FIELD - DAY

Daniel, 70s, grey hair, thick glasses, walking with the support of a cane, is guided by Warren, 60s, pale face, skinny, walking with a heavy limp but no cane.

Open lush grassland surrounds them. Warren gestures to some trees far off to the right.

WARREN

All the land you can see from those trees way over there...

Warren then turns a full 180°, gesturing to more trees in the distance.

WARREN (CONT'D)

To those trees all the way over there.

DANIEL

You've named your price, and I'm willing to pay it.

WARREN

And what, may I ask, are you planning to do with it?

DANIEL

I'm going to build a house—more of a mansion, I suppose. But its most important feature will be its walls. I don't know how long I have left, and I wish to spend my remaining years alone, to do with the day as I wish.

WARREN

Very well. But if it's a house you're going to build, I have one rule. And it's non-negotiable.

Daniel shakes his head, dismissive.

DANIEL

No rules. It's my land. I bought it, and I'll do as I wish.

Warren grins at him, almost menacingly.

WARREN

It's still mine. And I'll add any little clause I like. I haven't given you anything yet. You don't agree, then I'll find someone else who does.

DANIEL

But if you can't?

WARREN

If I can't, then I can't. You'll have to wait until I die and then try to buy it off my children. But I don't think you're in the mood for waiting.

Daniel lets out a long, deep breath.

DANIEL

What's the clause?

WARREN

You must get this land blessed by a true man of God. Before you build anything, you'll HAVE to do it. Once the land is blessed, I'll sell it to you for the price we agreed.

Daniel raises an eyebrow.

DANIEL

(a beat)

Very well. I agree.

The two men shake hands.

INT. STUDY - DAY

A roaring fireplace. Tall bookshelves line the back wall. A bearskin rug covers the floor. The study looks like something a rugged hunter living in the woods would have.

On his large oak desk, Daniel lays out a map, highlighting the land he now hopes to own.

Robert, 30s, dressed in Catholic priest's clothes, seems greatly on edge, scanning the study.

Daniel calls him closer with one hand while slapping the other down onto the map.

DANIEL

All of it. However you do it, it must be blessed—every stinking inch of it.

Robert comes over, looks at the map, but still has the air of a man who might jump headfirst out of the nearest window.

ROBERT

I've never been asked to bless grass before. Babies, weddings—even a car once, sure. But never dirt.

DANIEL

I don't particularly care about the details. You must do it.

Robert starts edging away.

ROBERT

I was hoping to be out of town by
now. Far, far away. Your phone call
sort of came out of the blue.

Daniel glances over his shoulder at Robert, frowning.

DANIEL

I want this sorted quickly. I'll
pay you now. You'll do it today.

Robert pulls a face.

ROBERT

Where is it? How long will it take
to get out there? I've got a train
I need to catch.

DANIEL

I'm perfectly capable of driving
you out there and taking you
wherever else you need to go. But I
must have this done today.

Daniel moves to a picture of two horses on the wall. He
slides it aside, revealing an impressive-looking safe.

Robert stops dead, eyes locked onto it.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

You'll be paid. Say your mumbo
jumbo, then go wherever the hell
you want. After that, I don't give
a damn.

Daniel enters the combination and opens the safe. It's
stuffed full of cash—maybe a million. From the looks of it,
not hard to believe.

Robert's eyes light up. He licks his lips.

ROBERT

(muttering)

Hallelujah.

Daniel removes a small amount of cash, then turns back to
Robert.

DANIEL

Here you are. Tax-free. The
religious like to be exempt from
actually contributing to society,
I've noticed.

Robert smiles. He clenches both fists, showing finger tattoos.

On his right hand: JESUS, each letter spaced from thumb to pinkie. On his left: SAVES.

ROBERT

You see this? Jesus saves.
Together, held tightly. I will
strike. I must do the Lord's work,
and Jesus WILL save.

Daniel looks at him suspiciously, becoming on edge.

Robert interlocks his fingers, creating a single block. He marches toward Daniel, teeth gritted, eyes burning.

DANIEL

Get back. Don't you dare come any
closer!

Robert is instantly on top of him. Daniel throws the money into Robert's face as a desperate defence.

THUD!

Robert strikes his hands down on Daniel's head, sending him crumpling to the floor.

THUD! THUD! THUD!

Robert keeps up the attack, giving it everything he's got. It's clear he wants Daniel dead.

Robert stops, breathing heavily, exhausted. He looks at the money in the safe and smiles.

Buzz!!!

The sound of a ringing doorbell rips through the house.

Robert's smile melts away, replaced by a horrified gasp.

INT. TOM'S CAR - SAME TIME

The engine still running, Tom sits in the driver's seat. He watches Frank at the front door of the large townhouse, repeatedly hitting the doorbell.

Tom winds down his window, sticks his head out.

TOM

What are you doing? You're giving
me a headache over here.

Frank switches from pressing the doorbell to pounding on the door.

FRANK

I know he's in, and I'm not leaving
empty-handed.

TOM

Jesus, this isn't a plan. We're
just acting on a whim.

FRANK

He's in, and I'm not leaving until
he opens this goddamn door.

Tom opens his car door and steps out.

TOM

This is such a waste of time. I
can't believe I'm helping you.

Tom approaches. Frank points him back to the car.

FRANK

All you've got to do is drive.
That's the deal. Leave the talking
to me. I'll do the heavy lifting.
You just play the role of my very
capable and handsome chauffeur.

TOM

Look under the mat.

Frank frowns, confused. Then he looks down, lifts the mat.
Underneath is a key.

FRANK

No way.

(picks up the key)

He could afford any kind of
security-eye scanner, fingerprint
checker, even a guard. But this is
where he leaves his spare key?

TOM

That's our dad. Cheapskate.

FRANK
You can say that again.

TOM
And you're about to go in there and
ask him for all his money?

FRANK
I never said ask.

INT. STUDY - DAY

Robert frantically stuffs money into his pockets.

Frank steps in, horrified and confused.

FRANK
(to Robert)
Who the hell are you?

Robert, face drenched in sweat, keeps his back to Frank,
focused on the cash.

Frank runs over. He doesn't stop Robert. In fact, he joins
him, stuffing his own pockets like they're in a mad
television game show.

EXT. DANIEL'S HOUSE - DAY

Tom waits outside, pacing. Suddenly, Robert exits, looking
like a man on the edge of a breakdown.

Tom stops, pulls his hands from his pockets, reaching toward
Robert.

TOM
Who the hell are you?

Then Frank walks out, holding a full trash bag. He steps
between Tom and Robert.

FRANK
(to Tom)
Relax.

TOM
Well, who is he?

FRANK
You remember our deal, Tom. Just drive.

TOM
(annoyed)
Only my end of the bargain. Where's yours?

Frank opens the trash bag, showing it's full of money. Tom can't believe what he's seeing.

FRANK
Split fifty-fifty, just like I said.

TOM
Where's Dad?

FRANK
He's not home right now, and we need to leave. Clock's ticking, Tom. Time to drive.

Tom points at the silent, dazed Robert.

TOM
And who the hell is he?

FRANK
Just a guy who needs a ride to the train station. And we're going to give it to him.

TOM
Why?

Frank grabs Tom's arm, forcefully pushing him back toward the car.

FRANK
Because we're nice guys. Helping people is what nice guys do.

Frank, Tom, and Robert move to the car. They drive away, leaving with the money—and leaving their murdered father behind.

One of them knowing. One of them ignorant.

FADE TO BLACK

THE END