Save Us

Frank D. Wilson

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EXT. STREET - NIGHT

In the middle of the street, CONCRETE has been CRACKED, TRASH and DEBRIS are scattered everywhere. A CROWD of bewildered CITIZENS stands near the sidewalk watching as something unfolds in the newly demolished street.

NARRATOR (V.O)
A long time ago. Not really sure when, but a long time ago I heard this quote...

CRAWLING through the rubble is a MAN whose face is SCARRED. He is trying to get away from someone not yet seen.

NARRATOR (V.O)
It was simply this: "Death is certain. Life is not."

The pursuer is another MAN dressed in a FULL BODY TACTICAL SUIT. And a MASK.

On the sidewalk, a TEENAGE BOY DROPS his COMIC BOOK as he tries to catch a glimpse of the action.

The COVER reads: "PART ONE OF TWO: 'FOUR SHADOWS'"

The SCREEN fills with BLACK.

GUNSHOTS.

FEMALE BYSTANDER (V.O)
Oh my god! I think he’s dead. What now?

NARRATOR (V.O)
Then one day, I finally realized the relevance of such a statement.

INT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - DAY

SIX MONTHS EARLIER...

A massive swarm of various media entities surround a well-groomed, expressionless business man.

SAMSON CARMICHAEL, (35; distinguished; asshole) nonchalantly maneuvers through the sea of CAMERAS, MICROPHONES and bothersome REPORTERS.

He ignores all questions.

(CONTINUED)
FEMALE REPORTER
What now, Mister Carmichael? How are you planning to move forward with business matters for your company in light of recent allegations of you being involved in the plot to assassinate Mayor Winchester?

The pompous socialite continues to brush off the mob of inquisitors.

HAROLD STEIN, Samson Carmichael’s attorney (40’s; glorified sleaze bag) steps in front of his client, shielding him from the outrageous media blitz.

STEIN
Samson Carmichael has been and continues to be one of the most prominent, well-reputed figures in this city. He is completely appalled that such unfounded slander would even be entertained by the various manipulative news outlets looking to diminish his storied track record of excellence in service to his community.

Samson pastes on an empty, prepared smile for the cameras.

STEIN (CONT’D)
Obviously, Mr. Carmichael denies all notions that he is linked in any capacity to the unfortunate attempt on our mayor’s life. Like everyone else, he is shocked and disgusted by such a horrific act and wants nothing more than for justice to be served to the monsters responsible. That is all.

EXT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - DAY

Glass DOUBLE DOORS open as the reporters spill out onto the front steps.

Samson and Stein SHOVE passed the crowd and into a waiting LIMOUSINE.
INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Only the light from the old, analog TELEVISION set illuminates this otherwise pitch black room as a YOUNG WOMAN (20) locks her attention on the news report being broadcast.

On the screen is anchorman SULLIVAN JENKINS (40s; pudgy; balding) wrapping up the night’s biggest stories.

Alongside the shot of the newscaster is an imposed PHOTOGRAPH of Samson Carmichael.

SULLIVAN
Action News has learned that as of seven o’clock this evening, founder and CEO of Alpha-Prime Biotechnologies, Samson Carmichael has been officially indicted on charges of conspiracy to murder New Egypt mayor, Ryan Winchester.

The DOORBELL to the young lady’s apartment sounds. She breaks her concentration in order to tend to the situation.

YOUNG WOMAN
(still focused on the t.v)
Who in the hell?

She sits up from the bed and exits the room.

EXT. STREET CORNER/ALLEY - NIGHT

In this gritty, rundown section of town, some of the worst inhabitants linger about almost aimlessly. A DRUG DEALER meets up with his latest shady customer. A PROSTITUTE propositions a new john. POLICE SIRENS BLARE in the distance.

We bypass these eyesores until finally resting on a rugged LONER seated on an empty crate.

This loner draped in a tattered PULLOVER and faded, torn JEANS is ADAM LANGLEY (25; meek; carefree). He is completely bored out of his mind. As usual.

Another straggly, down-on-his-luck guy pulls up a seat next to Adam. He lights a HALF-SMOKED CIGARETTE. Meet Adam’s only close friend, WESLEY (22; passively pessimistic; nerd).

WESLEY
Adam, my man. Another exciting night of hopeless human existence
(MORE)
WESLEY (cont’d)
has once again been graciously
bestowed upon us. Ain’t it grand?

ADAM
(staring off into space)
Couldn’t get any better.

WESLEY
Yeah, you said it. So, what’s on
your agenda for tonight?

ADAM
I don’t know. Wandering this urban
cesspool until the crack of dawn
and trying not to get robbed or
arrested sounds like a decent way
to occupy my evening. Yourself?

Wesley removes a brown bag from pocket.

WESLEY
Recreational literature.

ADAM
What is that, another comic book?

WESLEY
(re: comic book cover)
*Dark Guardian* issue number
thirty-five to be exact, friend.
This one contains a surprise ending
which is actually a nod to an old
episode of the *Twilight Zone*, which
was the writer’s favorite show as a
kid.

An AMBULANCE RACES down the street, mere feet away from
where the two sit.

ADAM
(interested more in ambulance
than comic)
Why do you read that crap, Wesley?
Isn’t that something you’re
supposed to grow out of during
adolescence?

WESLEY
(somewhat insulted)
That is a very ignorant thing to
say, dude. Just because there are
illustrations, doesn’t make it any
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
WESLEY (cont’d)
less of a legitimate piece of
writing or mean it is solely for
snot-nosed juveniles. Some of our
times greatest authors and artists
have worked on "crap" like this.

ADAM
(indifferent)
Whatever. I just have a slight
problem separating fictional
nonsense about make-believe
entities with magic wands and
mystical flying carpets that
entertained me in preschool from
the make-believe entities with
magic powers and flying capes that
comprise your dignified funny
papers.

WESLEY
It’s an escape, asshole. In case
you haven’t noticed, we don’t live
in a fairy tale. This nonsense is
one of the things that keeps me
from jumping out in front of one
these cars and calling it a day.

ADAM
I surely hope your self-worth is
invested in more than your
vicarious relationships with
sociopaths that wear Halloween
outfits, otherwise you are in for a
harsh disappointment when it comes
to reality.

WESLEY
(ponders over the statement)
Look, I am not a goddamn idiot. I’m
not expecting some benevolent being
from a far away galaxy to swoop
down and change the world. It’s all
metaphoric, man. Good versus evil.
The never-ending struggle. Take
away the costumes and superpowers
and you have basic moral dilemmas.
"What would you do if you could do
the impossible?"

ADAM
Maybe use my gifts to turn a profit
and get the hell away from this

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ADAM (cont’d)
city. Who knows? I wouldn’t be
living this pathetic life
discussing modern folklore on a
Friday night, that’s for damn sure.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Same bedroom from earlier. A few changes. The television set remains tuned to the news, however PICTURES have been SMASHED and knocked off the wall; DRESSER DRAWERS have been ransacked, CLOTHING scattered about. This place is a total wreck.

The young woman from earlier is also there but in a very different physical condition. BLOOD DRIPS from her MOUTH and NOSE. She fearfully CRAWLS toward her CLOSET, obviously trying to escape someone not yet visible.

Sullivan Jenkins wraps up tonight’s news on the tube.

SULLIVAN
Lastly, tonight, the number of violent crimes in the city has almost double that of the previous year.

As her ASSAILANT approaches, the young woman grabs a nearby overturned LAMP and HURLS it at the attacker, but it is SWATTED away like a measly insect.

YOUNG WOMAN
(petrified; crying)
Get away from me!

EXT. STREET CORNER/ALLEY - NIGHT

Adam collects his belongings into a BACKPACK and prepares to leave the corner. Wesley stops him and hands him a COMIC BOOK. Not Dark Guardian # 35, of course.

Adam reluctantly accepts the magazine. He thumbs through its pages as he walks off into the night.

SULLIVAN (V.O) (CONT’D)
With the latest rash of car thefts, burglaries, armed robberies, and murders—including the attempted killing of Mayor Winchester, New Egypt looks prime to retain its dreadful title as "Most Dangerous City in America".
Wesley lights another cigarette then makes himself comfortable for his evening of reading.

INT. MAYOR’S OFFICE - NIGHT

A COFFEE MUG TIPS over spilling its content on a stack of scattered PAPERS atop a DESK.

The nameplate on the desk reads: MAYOR RYAN WINCHESTER.

WINCHESTER (40’s; mischievous) PUSHES an attractive, WOMAN (20’s) off of his lap and attempts to save the coffee-soaked documents.

    WINCHESTER
    Christ, Kelly! Watch it, would you?

    KELLY
    I’m sorry, sir. You didn’t have to overreact like that.

    WINCHESTER
    Don’t tell me how I should or shouldn’t behave. As a matter of fact, get the hell out of here. You’re no longer needed.

    KELLY
    But, Ryan--

    WINCHESTER
    You’re dismissed.

    KELLY
    (irate)
    You are unbelievable.

Kelly retrieves her PURSE and SHOES then storms out of the room.

    WINCHESTER
    (to self)
    Unbelievable. What an appropriate word.

After cleaning up the mess, Winchester picks up his office TELEPHONE and dials out.

    WINCHESTER
    (phone)
    I need you to pick me up from the office. We have urgent business to discuss.
INT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - LOBBY - NIGHT

A CLIPBOARD falls to the floor, startling bumbling security guard, CHARLES (30’s) out of his semi-conscious state.

He wipes the sleep from his eyes then picks up his clipboard. Bored, Charles tunes on the small TV SET positioned in front of him on his less-than-fancy work desk.

CHARLES
(to self)
Let’s see what’s going on in this God-forsaken town tonight.
Hopefully something involving a drunk driver, a mangled vehicle and that good-for-nothin’ slut of an ex-wife of mine. I swear to god, that bitch--

Charlie stops his rant once he notices his voice echoing through the nearly empty lobby. He turns his attention to the local news.

SULLIVAN
(re: television)
...reports of bizarre side effects have lead to a recall by the FDA of the anti-depressant manufactured right here in New Egypt. Amongst these startling claims are hallucinations, memory loss, and even dementia.

A METAL BRIEFCASE SLAMS down next to the television. Attached to it is the intimidating boss man.

Charles quickly straighten his posture in a pointless effort at impressing his employer.

CHARLES
(babbling)
Hey, how goes it, Mister Carmichael...sir?

Samson Carmichael glances at the chatter emitting from the moronic rent-a-cop’s idiot box.

SAMSON
(condescending)
This crap will rot your brain, you know. One minute you’re just kicking back and killing some time watching the old tube and the next

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
SAMSON (cont’d)
minute you’re wondering why you have a dead-end, minimum wage job and no ambition in life. You wouldn’t want that, now would you, pal?

CHARLES
Well, I suppose not. I mean, what are you trying to say?

SAMSON
Don’t worry about it. Just be content with your mediocre existence and be grateful you didn’t succeed at your goals as I did. Trust me, it’s not all it’s cut out to be.

CHARLES
(almost composed)
Yeah, I guess you’re right. I think.

SAMSON
(almost daydreaming)
Believe it or not, I envy people like you. While the weight of the world burdens those like myself who are without question destined to be leaders, your kind gets to piggy back off that very society that we help sustain. It’s just the way it is.

Samson collects his briefcase and proceeds towards the exit of the lobby.

SAMSON (CONT’D)
I wouldn’t expect someone of your diminished intellect to fully grasp anything I was just ranting about, though. I simply enjoy the sound of my own voice.

CHARLES
Uh...

SAMSON (CONT’D)
Anyway, I am off to drown my sorrows in expensive alcoholic beverages and engage in a bit of fornication with a newly acquired... 

(MORE)
CONTINUED:

LADY FRIEND. I SUGGEST YOU DO THE SAME.

CHARLES
(UNCOMFORTABLE)
I DON’T REALLY DO THAT WELL WITH THE CHICKS THESE DAYS.

SAMSON
OF COURSE YOU DON’T. LOOK AT YOU.

CHARLES DROPS HIS HEAD IN SHAME.

SAMSON
.UNAPOLOGETIC
HAVE A GOOD NIGHT.

INT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

INSIDE THE NEARLY DESOLATE DEPOT, ADAM SLEEPS UPRIGHT ON A BENCH. IN HIS HAND IS THE COMIC BOOK GIVEN TO HIM BY WESLEY. IT LOOKS AS IF HE TRIED TO READ IT.

A JANITOR STOPS HIS NORMAL CLEANING AND TURNS HIS ATTENTION TO ADAM.

JANITOR
HEY, KID, MOVE IT ALONG.

ADAM
(BARELY RESPONSIVE)
YEAH, I GOTCHA.

JANITOR
I’VE TOLD YOU BEFORE THAT YOU CAN’T CAMP OUT HERE.

THE JANITOR NUDGES ADAM WITH HIS PUSH BROOM.

JANITOR (CONT’D)
THIS AIN’T YOUR MOTEL SIX, BUM.
FIND A SHELTER OR SOMETHING---

WITH AN ALMOST LIGHTNING FAST REACTION, ADAM GRABS THE BROOM AND SNAPS THE END OFF OF IT.

ADAM
(PISSED)
I HEARD YOU THE FIRST TIME.

bewildered, the janitor remains speechless as adam shoves his comic book in his pocket and walks off.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JANITOR
(freaked out; re: broom)
Jesus H...

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Mayor Winchester pours himself a glass of WHISKEY. Next to him in the backseat of this vehicle is another PERSON whose face is obscured by SHADOWS.

WINCHESTER
As I mentioned, discretion concerning this particular matter is of the utmost importance to me. I don’t want this being traced back to me in any way, you understand?

Winchester takes a deep SIP of his drink.

WINCHESTER (CONT’D)
Good. Now, you may or may not be privy to this fact, but every since this whole assassination business arose, my approval ratings have skyrocketed. Nonetheless, being connected to something of this magnitude would surely destroy me politically and give all those talking heads the ammunition they need to hang me in the public eye.

The mystery person gives an unenthusiastic NOD of agreement.

WINCHESTER (CONT’D)
Not to mention, of course, there are those unsavory legal ramifications to deal with. I hope you get my point.

INT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Samson SLAMS the trunk to his car and unlocks the DRIVER’S SIDE DOOR.

WINCHESTER (V.O) (CONT’D)
It goes without saying—though I will say it anyway—that this must look like something random. Something completely out of anyone’s control...
Suddenly, THREE MASKED MEN approach Samson who notices them but is not startled.

**SAMSON**
(nonchalant)
Evening, gentlemen. I would love to be of some service to you, but business hours have concluded. You may want to see my receptionist and schedule an appointment tomorrow.

**MASKED MAN #1**
Shut up and hand over your wallet and the keys.

**SAMSON**
No.

**MASKED MAN #2**
What?

**SAMSON**
Are you deaf? I said no. My suggestion is that you three lovers scratch whatever dimwitted plan you may have had and get the hell out of my parking lot while I’m still in a compassionate mood.

**MASKED MAN #3**
This guy has got to be goddamn retarded.

The second masked man brandishes a PISTOL, while the third an ARMY KNIFE.

Samson is unshaken. He proceeds to open his car door, dismissing the hoodlums.

The BOOT from Masked Man #1 forces the door back SHUT.

**MASKED MAN #1**
We are not done.

**SAMSON**
You just kicked my brand new Bentley with your piece-of-shit department store work boot. I would definitely say somebody’s done.

Masked Man #3, having heard enough, CHARGES Samson with his KNIFE. Samson quickly evades the strike, causing the attacker to STAB his partner in the CHEST.

(CONTINUED)
WINCHESTER (V.O)
Were this delicate plan to go awry, there is no telling what repercussions would ensue. Failure, is without a doubt, not an option...

Samson notices Masked Man #2 aiming his pistol at him and before the first SHOTS EXPLODE from the barrel, he locks the now knife-less attacker in a REAR CHOKE HOLD, turns him towards the line of fire, uses him as SHIELD from BULLETS.

WINCHESTER (V.O)(CONT’D)
I can tell that you are growing tired of my self-indulgent monologue, so I will wrap this up...

The last masked man looks on dumbfounded as Samson tosses his accomplice’s lifeless body to the ground.

MASKED MAN #2
(terrified)
Impossible. How did you--? This shit was not part of the deal.

SAMSON
(smirking)
Sorry, you must be quite surprised. I know much surprises bother some people. How about we go ahead and end this. There are worse things than prison. I’m sure your buddies here would concur.

Masked Man #2 points his gun at Samson and squeezes the trigger. The SHOT goes wild into the air as something has obviously thrown off the shooter’s aim.

The ARMY KNIFE, before stuck in the chest of the first masked man, has been driven into the final attacker’s FOREHEAD like a dart.

Masked Man #2 crumples to the ground.

Samson calmly dusts off his clothes.

SAMSON
(to dead thugs)
You know what? Now that I think about it, why don’t you guys go ahead and take my money and car? As a gift...No, no, I insist.
Samson starts LAUGHING as he wipes BLOOD off of his shoes.

EXT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

Adam exits the depot, irritated and restless. As he pulls his hood over his head, he BUMPS into SOMEONE.

    ADAM
    Sorry about that.

After helping pick up the knocked over bags, Adam notices the person to be the young woman from the bedroom attack earlier.

    YOUNG WOMAN
    (rushed)
    It’s no problem.

Adam can now see FACIAL BRUISES and what appears to be a BROKEN NOSE.

    ADAM
    Your face? What happened?
    YOUNG WOMAN
    Nothing.

The young woman collects her belongings and brushes passed Adam.

    ADAM
    Hey, did someone do that to you?
    YOUNG WOMAN
    Not your concern, Sherlock. Leave me alone.

The young woman enters the bus depot. Adam contemplates forgetting the issue and moving along, but decides against it and follows her.

INT. BUS DEPOT - NIGHT

As the young woman walks into the lobby of the bus depot, Adam approaches her, undeterred.

    ADAM
    I know I am a complete stranger but maybe you need someone to talk to.

(CONTINUED)
YOUNG WOMAN
I don’t. And if I did, trust me, I wouldn’t talk to you. What are you, some kind of psycho?

ADAM
I’m nobody. I just want to help.

YOUNG WOMAN
I don’t need your help. I need to get the hell out of this crummy town. Away from all the sickos who inhabit it.

ADAM
I know the feeling. Come on, let me at least keep you company while you wait on the bus. What’s the worst that could happen?

YOUNG WOMAN
Well, you could be some deranged creep bent on lulling me into a false sense of security in order to drug me and do all types of sick and twisted things to me. For starters.

ADAM
I assure you I neither have the intent nor the resources to do such things. I’m simply a guy who’s down on his luck and could use some company for the next few minutes. Besides, we are in a public place. They have cameras here. People say those are supposed to make us feel safe.

YOUNG WOMAN
(loosening up)
I guess you have a point.

ADAM
So, would I be asking too much to know your name?

YOUNG WOMAN
(hesitant)
Jennifer.
ADAM
Pleased to meet you, Jennifer. I’m Adam.

JENNIFER
Well, Adam, don’t get familiar. I’m not looking to make a new friend.

ADAM
I kind of assumed as much. Let’s just shoot the shit until you have to leave. I will buy you a soda. This place has a great vending machine.

JENNIFER
(slightly amused)
Sure.

Adam takes Jennifer’s bags and the two sit down at a nearby bench.

WINCHESTER (V.O)
Rest assured that your interests in this project will not go unrewarded.

INT. CAR - NIGHT
Mayor Winchester finishes his drink.

WINCHESTER (CONT’D)
Big things are to come, my friend. Unbelievable things.

INT. CARMICHAEL RESIDENCE - BEDROOM - MORNING
A STREAK of SUNLIGHT breaks through the curtains, its brightness stirring Samson Carmichael from his slumber.

Samson groggily pulls himself out of bed and turns on his TELEVISION.

On the screen is an investigative reporting show focusing on Mayor Winchester.

Once again, Sullivan Jenkins.

SULLIVAN
Last week marked the five-year anniversary of Ryan Winchester’s election as New Egypt’s mayor.

(CONTINUED)
Samson takes a drink of WATER then stands to fully open the window curtains.

On the television, various CLIPS of Mayor Winchester during his mayoral run.

SULLIVAN (CONT’D)
As we all remember, Winchester was elected the city’s youngest mayor and vowed to bring an end to the corruption that had consumed previous administration.

SAMSON
Yeah, right.

SULLIVAN (CONT’D)
From day one, Winchester has dedicated his career and some say his life to changing the image of the city and thwarting crime and injustice wherever it may rear its ugly head.

SAMSON
Oh, give me a freaking break. How do people believe this garbage?

SULLIVAN (CONT’D)
The decorated mayor has recently faced stark opposition as he has focused his attention on harsher regulations for local businesses that threaten to endanger the city’s people or environment.

SAMSON
And here we go.

SULLIVAN (CONT’D)
Most notably coming under pressure has been Alpha-Prime Biotechnologies and its questionable ethics pertaining to the human testing being done for a number of the company’s popular pharmaceuticals.

Samson puts on a shirt then exits the room disgusted, leaving the television idle.

On the screen is footage of Samson being hassled by reporters.

(CONTINUED)
SULLIVAN (CONT’D)
Founder and CEO, Samson Carmichael has denounced any claims of criminal or unethical practices within Alpha-Prime and insists that all experiments conducted in its name were done following the strictest of government guidelines. Interesting to note, however, that the company has suspended further product testings for an indefinite period. As if this bit of bad press were not enough...

INT. DINER - MORNING

In the far rear of this quaint eatery sit Adam and Wesley, each enjoying a cup of COFFEE and TOAST. These meals are far cries from the plentiful plates that the other, more fortunate patrons have.

On a fixed TV SET, the investigative report plays. Sullivan Jenkins seems to be who everyone watches.

SULLIVAN (CONT’D)
Carmichael was recently indicted on federal corruption and conspiracy charges related to last week’s attempted slaying of Mayor Winchester. Carmichael’s reps have yet to make a statement regarding...

WESLEY
You worried?

ADAM
Not really. Why should I be?

WESLEY
You know why. I know, I know. None of my business but I just think you should go get checked out or something. Make sure those clowns didn’t screw you up.

ADAM
Eh, I feel fine. Probably better than fine. Anyway, I took those test like six months ago and I have yet to detect a single out-of-place mutation or anything.

(CONTINUED)
WESLEY
Okay, dude. Whatever you say, but
trust me, denial is the first step.
Do you even know what kind of shit
they injected into you?

ADAM
Some kind of growth hormone or
steroid. It was a trial so I only
went in for like two or three
treatments and I got paid. Seemed
like a waste of time, though.

WESLEY
Steroids? You trying to be a pro
wrestler or something?

ADAM
(laughs)
Hell no. I don’t know what I was
thinking. I was hungry and it was a
quick buck. I don’t have to tell
you how it is out here.

WESLEY
That’s true. Personally, however, I
choose to stay away from the evils
of foreign substances. I prefer to
keep the old temple pure.

ADAM
Bull. I just saw you smoke a joint
before we came in. You did that in
front of me. Only a few minutes
ago.

WESLEY
(ponders)
Damn, I forgot about that. Odd. The
point is, you don’t want to dabble
with unfamiliar chemicals and
whatnot. You don’t know what that
stuff does to you in the long run.
You might turn into some
radioactive giant mutant. Which,
might I add, would be quite
awesome.

ADAM
Why am I not surprised? Every
conversation I have with you
somehow always reverts back to
comic books. You should snap to
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ADAM (cont’d)

reality and go see a movie or something.

WESLEY
(disgusted)

Movies suck, man. Of course, that’s just my expert opinion. It’s all over-budgeted, over-hyped visceral masturbation catering to the lowest denomination of human intelligence. You know, that’s why Alan Moore, who is probably the greatest author in comic book history refuses to endorse any film adaptations of his work. I don’t blame him. Movies can go to hell.

ADAM
(a bit confused)

Hold up, allow me to stop you there for the sake of my own sanity. First off, I don’t who Alan Moore is and don’t really care to learn. Second, I happen to like movies so chill out. Third, why do you know so much useless information yet you haven’t had a steady job a day that I have known you?

WESLEY

I have a rebellious nature coupled with a remarkable lust for unconventional learning.

ADAM

Another thing. Can you please use normal layman’s English from time to time? I feel like I need a goddamn dictionary half the time I listen to you. You ever want to get a woman to have sex with you then lay off the nerd crap a bit.

WESLEY

I apologize if my mastery of vocabulary intimidates you, man. I’ll try to dumb it down as much as possible.

ADAM
(whatever)

I’m just going to watch t.v. and take a break from this

(MORE)
ADAM (cont’d)
little pointless dialog now that I’ve reminded myself that you are a grown man that fantasizes about adults in spandex. Anything you say should automatically register as irrelevant to me.

WESLEY
(thinks about it)
It’s always the truth that burns the nastiest.

ADAM
Always.

INT. CARMICHAEL RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - MORNING

A REFRIGERATOR DOOR CLOSES.

Samson pours himself a glass of ORANGE JUICE as he talks on the PHONE.

SAMSON
(irked)
...no, listen to me. I don’t want to hear your bullshit excuses anymore. I paid you to take care of a problem for me and that is what I goddamn well expected you to do. As if I didn’t already have enough bothersome issues to deal with, you mucking up a relatively simple assignment doesn’t help.

Samson picks up the day’s NEWSPAPER from the counter. The headline reads: EMBATTLED CEO SURVIVES ATTACK. It is accompanied by a PHOTO of Samson talking to police.

SAMSON (CONT’D)
I don’t want you to even think about calling me again until you have completed your assignment. Allow me to be crystal clear so that your minute mind can properly comprehend this time. I want the situation neutralized. Not partially, not mostly, but fully taken care of. Fail me again and you will find yourself being the one neutralized. Now, if you will excuse me, I have an impromptu

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
SAMSON (CONT’D) (cont’d)
meeting with our beloved mayor to prepare for.

Samson hangs up.

EXT. DINER/SIDEWALK - MORNING

Adam and Wesley have just stepped outside of the diner and into the relatively active business day of New Egypt. HORNS HONK, TIRES SCREECH, JACKHAMMERS BUZZ in the background as people pass to and fro.

WESLEY
I’m telling you, man, today’s society is headed closer and closer to complete and utter chaos. All this elaborate technology pacifying the masses of blissfully ignorant sheep in order to distract from the underlying atrocious truth that very soon a one-world government will arise and transform the globe into an Orwellian police state where the so-called freedoms and liberties we have so blindly endorsed will be simply a thing of the past. Like VHS.

ADAM
I do not understand, for the life of me, what I may have said or insinuated that would lead you believe that I give a ferret’s shit about any of this crap you force into my mind. Who are you supposed to be, Oliver Stone or someone? I am almost certain that the last topic that I actively participated in with you was about finding a place to live. How do you connect that with whatever nonsense you were talking about?

WESLEY
The economy. That how it starts. The powers-that-be are making sure that everyone loses faith in the current quality of living to the point that any new idea seems like a welcomed breath of fresh air. Then, BOOM, they hit us with the (MORE)
WESLEY (cont’d)
mandatory curfews and decide what
we can and can’t do in our personal
lives. Plain as day.

ADAM
I could care less. My immediate
concern is finding a means to
income and a roof over my head. I
hope you haven’t forgotten that no
matter what conspiracy theory you
may have going on, it really won’t
matter if you die of starvation in
a week. That would technically be
the end of the world for you,
right?

WESLEY
Point taken.

ADAM
Hey, I’m going to head over to the
soup kitchen and try to get a jump
on the lunch line.

WESLEY
Save me a spot. I have to go see a
man about a copy of Deadpool #1.

ADAM
Figures. I’ll see you soon.

Adam and Wesley part ways.

As Adam crosses the street at an intersection, an
out-of-control CAR CAREENS towards him.

It is not until the very last moment that Adam notices the
hunk of steel and almost as if springs were loaded in his
feet, he JUMPS into the air and onto the HOOD of the car,
then ROLLS off to safety before it SLAMS into a LIGHT POST.

A SMALL CROWD forms and watches in shock.

MALE BYSTANDER
(hysterical)
Did you see that? That guy
just---he freaking pulled a goddamn
gymnastics routine on that
Cadillac. What the hell was that
about?

(CONTINUED)
Adam, fairly shaken and surprised by his own reflexes, pulls his hood over his head and quickly ducks off into the busy day as POLICE and FIRE SIRENS BLARE.

Still in the immediate area, Wesley, having witnessed everything, displays a mixed look of amazement and disbelief. He looks at his Dark Guardian comic and slyly grins.

INT. MAYOR’S OFFICE – DAY

PHONES RING and ASSISTANTS scramble about, signifying another work day. Kelly, Mayor Winchester’s personal secretary prepares a STACK of DOCUMENTS as the mayor enters the office, fresh coffee in hand.

KELLY
(anxious)
Ryan---sir, I have prepared a summary of today’s agenda as well as an outline of the proposed budget just like you requested.

WINCHESTER
(barely interested)
Excellent.

KELLY
Mr. Donald "Prince" Townsend has once again filed a complaint about the new ordinance blocking him from displaying his...um, mural of exotic artwork on his lawn.

WINCHESTER
Artwork? That cluster of rubble is the furthest thing from art. Send him some kind of letter explaining everything and disregard any future communications from our dear Prince Donnie.

Winchester approaches the door to his office.

KELLY
One last thing, sir...

WINCHESTER
Give me a few minutes, Kelly. I barely slept last night.
KELLY
But, Mayor...

Winchester opens the door. Seated in front of his desk is...

KELLY (CONT’D)
Mr. Samson Carmichael is hear to see you...obviously.

On cue, Samson turns around to greet Winchester.

SAMSON
(more arrogant than usual)
The great and powerful Ryan Winchester. Indeed you are every bit as awe-inspiring as your beloved press makes you out to be. Well, almost.

WINCHESTER
(pestered)
I can only imagine to what honor I owe this rather unexpected visit.

Winchester SHOOS Kelly off and closes his door.

SAMSON
I assure you it is not to take your life. I’m unarmed, I swear.

WINCHESTER
I know that you are not stupid enough to do anything to draw attention to yourself, being in the sensitive situation you are in and all.

SAMSON
You would know all about that, wouldn’t you?

WINCHESTER
Let’s cut the shit, Carmichael. Why are you here interrupting my day? Don’t you have some Frankenstein-like experiments to oversee?

SAMSON
(not amused)
It’s not nice to judge people, Mr. Mayor. Especially when you yourself have a few skeletons in the closet. That’s hypocritical.
WINCHESTER
I don’t have time for your little riddles. Get to the point and get out or just get out.

Samson removes a FOLDER from his briefcase.

SAMSON
Recently, I procured a bit of controversial information pertaining to some of your less-than-legal business practices.

WINCHESTER
Choose your words carefully, Carmichael. Blackmail and/or extortion won’t look too good piled on top of your pending corruption and conspiracy raps.

SAMSON
Hey, I have not said nor done anything incriminating. I only want to remind you that you are not the only one who can manipulate circumstances to his will.

Samson removes a NEWSPAPER from the briefcase.

SAMSON (CONT’D)
I will assume that you have heard about my little run in with a group of thugs the other night.

WINCHESTER
(insincere)
I heard. Unfortunate.

SAMSON
Yes, very. Anyway, though the motley band of would-be "robbers" failed to succeed in their attempts, I couldn’t help but feel somewhat violated. Now, I am not one to conjure unwarranted speculation, but I happen to believe this incident to be more than just a case of wrong place at the wrong time. I mean, it could be mere coincidence that I was attacked on the same day that news broke of the trumped up charges you filed against me. Problem is this: I don’t believe in coincidences.
WINCHESTER
(fed up)
You come down to my office and try to intimidate me by intruding on my workspace and throwing around vale allegations after putting a hit out on me. You have some nerve. Perhaps the combination of all those millions of dollars and exposure to god-knows-what kind of chemicals your company brews up has finally disintegrated what common sense you once had. This conversation is over.

SAMSON
(calm)
I predicted you would react like this and it’s perfectly fine. You can take this as a threat or whatever you want, Ryan, but I guarantee you this is far from finished. It seems like you want a war with me and a war you will get. Suit up, friend and prepare for the body count.

Samson collects his articles and briefcase and begins to exit the office.

SAMSON (CONT’D)
Good day.

He exits.

Winchester slumps down into his desk chair and SIGHS.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

In this old high school GYM-turned-shelter, a handful of needy PEOPLE mingle amongst each other as VOLUNTEERS prepare foods for lunch.

Adam, notably exhausted, walks into the shelter and plops down in the first available chair.

Soon, a WHEELCHAIR BOUND MAN rolls up next to Adam. This is VIC LAMAR (60’s; laughably grumpy).

ADAM
(mildly panting)
How’s it going, Vic?
VIC
Apparently better that you. You look like you’re about to cough up a lung. What’s the matter?

ADAM
(catching breath)
Oh, I’m fine. I just...uh, almost got hit by a car. Nothing really.

VIC
Well, almost doesn’t count. You’re still sucking air and not a stain on the concrete so tough it out and move on. Don’t be a pussy.

ADAM
(sarcastic)
Gee, Vic, you always know the right things to say.

VIC
Hey, I’m not only good looks. So, where’s that socially challenged running mate of yours?

ADAM
Wasting his life as usual. He should be getting here soon.

VIC
(far from excited)
Fantastic. I’d better get my place in line before Boy Wonder shows up and bores me to suicide with his fantasy philosophies.

ADAM
Welcome to my world.

Vic heads to the lunch line.

Adam sits and observes his acquaintances. He soon recognizes a new face. It is Jennifer. Adam walks over to the lunch line where she is volunteering.

ADAM
Hey, stranger.

JENNIFER
(timid)
Hey, you.
ADAM
Didn’t think I would be seeing you again.

JENNIFER
Yeah, must really be a small world.

ADAM
Or maybe this means there’s some higher power willing us together.

JENNIFER
I seriously doubt that. Besides, you wouldn’t want to be willed towards me.

ADAM
Why is that?

JENNIFER
Long story. Just trust me.

ADAM
(joking)
Trust you? I don’t even really know you.

JENNIFER
Yet that does not seem to stop your persistence in trying to earn my attention.

ADAM
It’s sort of a problem of mine. I refuse to relent when related to things I feel passionately about.

JENNIFER
(flattered)
Passionate, huh? Look at you with your little infatuation. It’s kind of cute.

ADAM
Cute enough to maybe spend some time with?

JENNIFER
Are you trying to ask me out?

ADAM
(nervous)
Assuming I were...what do you say?

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

JENNIFER
I say...sure. One day.

ADAM
(disappointed)
Oh, I see. One day, not today, but one day. More like never.

JENNIFER
I’m sorry, Adam. It’s just that there are a lot of things going on with me right now. Complicated things. Perhaps if the situation were different...

ADAM
Perhaps. Don’t worry about it. Forget I said anything.

Adam drops his head and slowly makes his way back to his chair.

Not a good day so far for Adam.

INT. MAGIC MIKE’S COMICS - DAY

Standing beside a DISPLAY of newly-arrived COMIC BOOKS, two fan boys, RUDOLPH (19; stereotypical geek) and DEXTER (22; slightly more outgoing) are amidst a heated debate.

RUDOLPH
Man, I still say that when it comes down to a realistic depiction of the comic book hero, hands down Batman is far superior to Superman.

DEXTER
I’m sorry, but you are grossly incorrect. I respect the Caped Crusader as much as the next, but everyone knows Big Blue is what defines superhero.

RUDOLPH
Why? Because he possesses basically god-like abilities. Dude, it gets boring after a while. Barring the seemingly infinite clever combinations of Kryptonite usages and maybe a Doomsday attack, nothing can kill him. Bruce Wayne on the other hand is

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
RUDOLPH (cont’d)
just flesh and blood like the rest
of us. Subject to the same mortal
shortcomings.

A BELL RINGS to indicate that someone has entered the store.
It is Wesley. Nobody notices.

DEXTER
We’re talking science fiction. When
I take time to read through one of
these magnificent pieces of art and
literature, I want to suspend my
disbelief and get lost in a
larger-than-life world. No rational
person thinks that a man could
actually fly or survive bullets or
move at the speed of light but it’s
entertaining.

RUDOLPH
I agree, however for my taste, I
would rather see a hero who does
extraordinary things at the risk of
losing something. Ultimately, the
one thing that bonds all people is
the inevitability of losing life.
The more suffering a guy has to
endure the more the audience is
inclined to support and root for
him. In most cases, like with your
friend Clark, the danger of death
is merely a tease, but what if
Superman died? For real. What if
there were no happy ending?

Wesley interrupts the discussion.

WESLEY
(excited)
Top of the morning to you, lads.
Apologies on so brashly putting an
end to your conversation which I
have no doubt was nothing short of
thought-provoking, but I have
something really important to talk
to you about.

DEXTER
(rolls eyes)
Terrific. What is it today? You
finally find Area 51?
WESLEY
The jesting ends once you find yourself aboard some alien craft being rectally probed. Remember who warned you. Anyway, this is vastly more important. First thing’s first, though. Pay me what you owe, Rudolph, you bastard.

Rudolph reluctantly retrieves a BROWN PAPER BAG and hands it to Wesley.

WESLEY (CONT’D)
A pleasure doing business with you, sir.

RUDOLPH
You going to check it?

WESLEY
Should I? I trust that you know better than to try to swindle me out of what I’m entitled to. Deadpool issue number one. I can smell it.

RUDOLPH
(irritated)
Go to hell. My grandmother gave me that on her deathbed. Have you no shame?

WESLEY
Have you none? This should teach you a valuable lesson on what items you should and should not put up as collateral in drunken poker. Your grandma, God rest her soul, would be heartbroken to know that you squandered away her last earthly gift to you in such an irresponsible way. The only bright side is that you couldn’t have lost to a nobler gent.

RUDOLPH
You’re an ass.

DEXTER
So, go ahead and enlighten us on your latest baseless tale so that you may move on to your next unfortunate listener all the hastier.

(CONTINUED)
WESLEY
Ladies, I can’t go into details because I don’t have any but let’s just say that I suspect that an associate of mine may potentially be a physically enhanced human.

RUDOLPH
What the hell are you talking about?

WESLEY
Today I witnessed something that is pretty much unbelievable.

DEXTER
Yeah, what?

WESLEY
I saw said associate defy the laws of gravity, I believe. This person moved faster than a cheetah, boys. No bullshit.

RUDOLPH
Bullshit.

DEXTER
You full of it, Wesley. Stop daydreaming.

WESLEY
Why would I make something like this up?

RUDOLPH
Because you’re you. You enjoy trying to make everybody pay attention to you and your insane theories of the apocalypse or whatever disinformation you decide to share.

WESLEY
(insulted)

Wesley pockets the brown bag and exits the store, accidentally KNOCKING over a NEWSSTAND.
RUDOLPH
(chuckling)
What a tool.

INT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - RESEARCH DEPARTMENT - DAY

Several WHITE COATS work diligently inside an equally as white and bland office. Some tend to COMPUTERS, while others occupy time filling out various paperworks and so forth.

We focus on one of the scientists in particular, sitting at a desk, LAPTOP in front of him. His name tag reads: DR. BRADLEY REED. Dr. Reed (late 30’s) is talking to someone.

It is Samson Carmichael via VIDEO CONFERENCE.

SAMSON
(re:monitor)
Dr. Reed, I hope whatever you have to discuss with me is of the greatest importance. Your frantic and urgent message caused me to put my bi-daily archery training on hold. I never do that.

DR. REED
(surprised)
Archery? Are you serious?

SAMSON
Why wouldn’t I be? I’m expertly versed in a majority of the world’s weaponries and martial arts. You should know these things. They are well-documented.

DR. REED
Excuse me for asking, but why would you ever need to acquire such skills?

SAMSON
Preservation of life. Let me ask you something, doctor. Do you believe that you could reasonably defend yourself against an aggressor more than twice your size and strength using only your wits, a table spoon and a handful of dirt?

(CONTINUED)
DR. REED
(rightfully unsure)
Well...

SAMSON
(inpatient)
The answer is no, you would
definitely be killed. Now, on to
more pressing matters. Update me on
the situation.

DR. REED
Very well. It’s Serum D.
Unfortunately, the news is not what
we were hoping for.

SAMSON
Enlighten me.

DR. REED
Initial tests with primate subjects
wielded astonishing results
including enhanced sensory
perception, increased muscle
density and sustained levels of
elevated adrenaline with little or
no signs of molecular
deterioration.

Dr. Reed takes a DEEP GULP of his beverage before resuming.

DR. REED
(hesitant)
The same, however, can not be said
in regards to the human subjects.
There have been no reports of
extraordinary abilities and most
have displayed horrifying
complications as rejection to the
treatments continue. Unless
rectified, these findings pose
great setbacks for the project. And
even worse, maybe.

SAMSON
(concerned)
At this stage, what looks to be the
final diagnosis for those who have
been exposed to the serum?

DR. REED
Divine intervention not
withstanding, I would sadly have to

(MORE)
CONTINUED:

DR. REED (cont’d)
say expiration. Certain, inevitable
death.

SAMSON
(upset)
This has to be contained, Dr. Reed.
I want you to make damn sure that
no one other than you and I know
about this conversation. Destroy
any record of this video if
possible. I want a list of every
person who participated in Project
Eden faxed to my office within the
hour. Do I make myself clear?

DR. REED
(anxious)
Yes. Crystal clear, sir.

The monitor goes BLACK as Samson ends the conference.

DR. REED
(to himself; shamed)
Dear God.

INT. HOMELESS SHELTER - DAY

A few hours have passed since the end of lunch. Only a
handful of people still wander about the old gym, most
either resting on COTS or mingling with one another.

Adam lays reclined, with his pullover serving as a pillow,
on one of the cots.

Wesley approaches him.

ADAM
Where have you been? You missed the
award-winning cuisine of the day.

WESLEY
(serious)
Dude, I need you to be straight
with me.

ADAM
About?

WESLEY
(lowers voice)
Look, man, I saw what happened this
morning with the car.

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
So what? Some non-driving asshole almost hit me. Happens all the time.

WESLEY
Screw that. Ordinary people don’t have the kind of reflexes you displayed. You should be dead.

ADAM
But I’m not. Wesley, I have no idea what you are trying to infer. I got lucky. No big deal.

WESLEY
Yes, big deal. Very big deal. This is exactly what I was trying to tell you about. Something is up with you, bro. Whatever experiments they ran changed you. Probably turned you into some freak of nature.

ADAM
(annoyed)
Give it a rest. No matter how much you refuse to admit it, stuff like that doesn’t happen in the real world. Today was a chance happening. One-in-a-million type of deal.

WESLEY
You are way too close-minded. Try thinking outside of the box sometimes. There are big things going on, man, I’m telling you. I can feel it.

ADAM
It’s probably indigestion.

WESLEY
Shut up. Speaking of, did you claim any foods for your best bud?

ADAM
I shouldn’t have but I did.

Adam reaches under his cot and hands Wesley a PAPER PLATE with a HAM SANDWICH on it.
WESLEY
Awesome. I’m starving.

ADAM
Where were you, anyway?

WESLEY
(eating)
Well...after I took care of some business over at Magic Mike’s, I was headed over here for lunch but got sidetracked. The craziest shit...some cop was beating the holy hell out of some junkie over on 22nd Street. In front of everyone...for like ten minutes.

ADAM
Why?

WESLEY
No idea. The pig was yelling something about a secretary or some shit. Who knows, though. This city is a goddamn cesspool just waiting to be wiped out of existence completely. And I say good riddance.

ADAM
People just stood around and let a cop beat a man for that long?

WESLEY
That’s exactly what they did. Nobody cares anymore. I chalked it up to free entertainment and a case of "better him than me".

ADAM
(indifferent)
Oh well. Just another Tuesday in New Egypt, I suppose.

WESLEY
You said it. Wow, this is a pretty good sandwich.

ADAM
Enjoy.

Adam rolls over and resumes his nap.
INT. CONDEMNED APARTMENT BUILDING - DUSK

A barely hinged DOOR is KICKED IN.

SGT. GERALD ZANE (40; bulky; prick) SHOVES a HANDCUFFED, and noticeably smaller MAN (22; scrawny) through the door and onto the trash-covered floor. The man has obviously been roughed up.

MAN
(sobbing)
You can’t do this, man. You’re a goddamn cop!

ZANE
(amused)
That’s funny. That fact hasn’t seemed to stop me thus far. It’s unlikely it will now.

MAN
But I told you I don’t know what the hell you’re talking about.

ZANE
Well, you are a lying, pathetic excuse for a human. I don’t know how you pulled it off and I don’t really give a shit. I am more than sure it has something to do with that little whore friend of yours, but I will deal with her again later.

The man SPITS in Zane’s face. Not a good idea. Zane KICKS him in the MOUTH.

MAN
(in agony; rambling)
You are a psycho! I have no idea who you are or what any of this bullshit is about. I’m a damn software programmer. Not even that anymore. I’m broke, dude. I’m freaking hooked on meth. Just let me go.

ZANE
(deadpan)
Very touching biography. Well, it has become apparent that you are not going to supply me with the information I want. Whether you are

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ZANE (cont’d)
being less than honest with me or sincerely ignorant, I am not sure. Nonetheless, you are of no use to me and I have to move on to more important affairs.

MAN
(hopeful)
I’m ignorant. I’ve been trying to tell you that for the last hour. I don’t know shit! I am of no use to you.

ZANE
You’re right.

MAN
So, are you going to let me go?

ZANE
(smirks)
No. I thought you knew how this was going to end.

MAN
What?

Zane removes his PISTOL and SHOOTS the man point blank in the HEAD.

He takes out his CELL PHONE and makes a call.

ZANE
(phone)
He didn’t give me shit. I took care of him, but I still don’t know where the girl is. I’m sure she’s in the city still, though and I will find her.

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER/ALLEY - DUSK

A MUGGER CHASES a MAN down the alley behind the shelter, right passed Adam and Wesley, who step aside nonchalantly.

Wesley is in the middle of one of his usual rants.

WESLEY
So, basically, that’s why I believe time travel is possible. Only backwards into the past, though.

(MORE)
CONTINUED:

WESLEY (cont’d)
Too many complications with going into the future. It doesn’t exist if you think about it.

ADAM
But you’re not opposed to tampering with history?

WESLEY
Sure, there are chances of altering reality and all that but who really cares? Selfishly, wouldn’t we all want to go back and redo something that went wrong, or just experience events again from childhood?

ADAM
(beat)
Maybe. I don’t know. This is an annoying conversation.

WESLEY
I like it.

ADAM
You like anything that would have likely been a topic on the X-Files.

WESLEY
Hey, it is not my problem you can’t recognize and appreciate the greatest show of all time. Most time, at least.

ADAM
Sorry, that would be Gunsmoke.

WESLEY
Classy.

The BACK DOOR of the shelter OPENS and out steps Jennifer carrying her BACKPACK.

Adam immediately directs his attention to her. And just kind of stares.

WESLEY
You okay, you bloodhound?

ADAM
(anxious)
No. I mean, yeah. I know her...somewhat.

(CONTINUED)
WESLEY
(chuckling)
Well, go talk to her, you chicken shit.

ADAM
I think something bad happened to her recently. I don’t know what, though.

WESLEY
Go rescue her then. Whatever, man. Do your thing.

Wesley playfully SHOVES Adam in Jennifer’s direction. Adam, at first embarrassed, relents and walks towards her.

ADAM
(to Jennifer)
Hey! It’s me. Again.

Approaching.

ADAM
(mumbling to self)
Don’t say anything stupid.

There.

JENNIFER
Hello, Adam...again. I’m sorry if I hurt your feelings earlier. That was not my intent.

ADAM
(nervous)
It’s cool. Didn’t bother me at all.

JENNIFER
You sure?

ADAM
Yeah.

Awkward silence.

JENNIFER
(confused)
So, what did you want?

ADAM
(still nervous)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ADAM (cont’d)
Uh, well, I was hoping you would reconsider spending some time with me. Nothing too fancy, obviously.

JENNIFER
(snickers)
You don’t give up, do you?

ADAM
Apparently not.

JENNIFER
What about your friend over there? You planning on just ditching him.

ADAM
That’s exactly what I plan on doing. He understands.

JENNIFER
That’s horrible. I’m probably going to regret this, but why don’t you guys keep me company for tonight.

ADAM
(baffled)
Really?

JENNIFER
Sure. You never know, I might need some protection.

ADAM
(sarcastic)
You picked the perfect duo if that is the case.

The two look at Wesley who gives a comical "thumbs up".

JENNIFER
(laughing)
I figured.

INT. WINCHESTER RESIDENCE – NIGHT

Mayor Winchester, dressed down to only his undershirt and slacks, sits down on his SOFA with a GLASS in one hand, BOTTLE of BRANDY in the other.

After pouring himself a shot, Winchester picks up the REMOTE CONTROL and begins surfing through channels on the television.

(CONTINUED)
Nature. A LION stalks a GAZELLE.

NARRATOR (V.O)
...however, the cunning maneuvers of the gazelle are no match for the speed and power of the king of the jungle. Despite a valiant effort, it soon becomes evident that the world’s most dangerous predator will once again see victory, as well as a gratifying meal.

Sports. A BASKETBALL PLAYER DUNKS during a highlight reel.

SPORTSCASTER (V.O)
...and just like that, Dewayne Hudson’s illustrious career has come to an end after resigning from the New Egypt Pharaohs following his admission to using performance enhancing drugs to give himself the edge on the court. It’s a real shame that such a talented young man felt the need to tamper with his God-given abilities in order to earn an extra buck.

Politics. A middle-aged POLITICIAN stands at a podium in front of crowd. Some type of press conference.

ANCHOR (V.O)
Today, President Norman Handler announced plans to reform the current Patriot Act in order to restore more personal liberties to American citizens. While there are strong supporters of the president’s initiative to bring forth a more open and transparent administration, there are also opponents who insist that such actions will no doubt put the country in the line of more dangerous terror attacks...

Local news. An ELDERLY LADY is being interviewed.

ELDERLY LADY
Well, I for one, do not believe that the things they say he is responsible for are true. I once worked for Samson Carmichael’s father, Blair, and he was an

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
ELDERLY LADY (cont’d)
amazing man. Samson was raised by
good people and does everything he
can to continue in his family’s
legacy. There are folks all over
this city benefiting from the
medicines that his company
produces. Hell, if it weren’t for
Mr. Carmichael, I wouldn’t be able
to afford my diabetes pills. He
pays for a lot of the
underprivileged to keep health
care. Absolute saint, he is.

Winchester SWALLOWS his shot of brandy.

A WOMAN enters the living room from the kitchen. It is
Winchester’s wife, CHRISTINE (40’s; loving; naive). She
walks up to her husband and drapes her arms over his
shoulders from behind the couch.

CHRISTINE
Is everything okay, Ryan? You seem
distant. More so than usual.

WINCHESTER
(still fixed on t.v)
All is fine, honey. Just another
day.

CHRISTINE
You sure? I mean, the first thing
you did when you got home was head
straight for the liquor cabinet.
That’s not like you.

WINCHESTER
It’s just been a really hectic few
days. All this additional media
attention and whatnot. It’s all
somewhat overwhelming, but you know
me. I’ll manage.

CHRISTINE
Of course you will, sweetie. You’re
my big, strong hero. This city’s,
too. Don’t you forget that.

Christine gives Winchester a KISS on the cheek.

CHRISTINE (CONT’D)
I do wish you would open up to me
more often, though. You walk around
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
CHRISTINE (CONT’D) (cont’d)
with such burdens on yourself and
you insist on bottling your
emotions from me. From everyone.

WINCHESTER
(searching for response)
Maybe that is for the best. Some
things need not be discussed.
Besides, I don’t like bringing the
office home. There is a time for
that and right now isn’t that time.
It’s "me and my lovely wife" time.

CHRISTINE
(flattered)
You charming devil. Okay, you win.
This time. Dinner will be ready
soon. It’s your favorite, Chicken
Casserole.

WINCHESTER
I could already smell it. You’re
the best, Mrs. Winchester. You know
I love you, right?

CHRISTINE
Absolutely, Mr. Winchester. I love
you, too.

Christine exits the room, joyous smile painted on.
Winchester also has a smile on, a more uncomfortable one.

DOORBELL.

Winchester, surprised, gets up to answer the door. On the
other side is someone he obviously did not expect to see.

WINCHESTER
(lowers voice)
What the hell are you doing here?
You know goddamned well that my home
is off limits.

CHRISTINE (O.S)
Honey, who is that?

Winchester hesitates to answer.
INT. JOKER MAN’S BILLIARDS CLUB - NIGHT

A CUE BALL BREAKS a diamond of RACKED POOL BALLS. At the controlling end of the POOL STICK is Wesley.

At the bar nearby, Adam and Jennifer sit and watch. Both enjoying BEERS.

WESLEY
I haven’t played in years, but it is obvious that indeed gifted with a wooden stick.

JENNIFER
(chuckles)
I’m not going to even touch that.

WESLEY
You sure? I would love for you to touch my long, wooden stick.

JENNIFER
I’m sure you would.

ADAM
I apologize for my friend. He’s little more than an adolescent boy trapped in an adult frame. Not really accustomed to female companionship.

WESLEY
(to Adam)
Dude, I can totally hear you talk about me. Not cool, bro. And for your information, I was one of the most charismatic and popular kids in high school.

ADAM
Besides the fact that I highly doubt that, you graduated high school like four or five years ago. No longer relevant.

WESLEY
(slightly embarrassed)
Whatever, man. Nice way to put me on blast in front of my potentially new girlfriend, ass.

(CONTINUED)
JENNIFER
(trying not to laugh)
Oh, I wouldn’t worry too much about that.

Wesley cuts the two a sharp look.

WESLEY
(irritated)
So funny. I’m going outside to smoke a cigarette. Have fun ridiculing me, "buddy".

Wesley walks off.

JENNIFER
I think you really pissed him off.

ADAM
No way. He does that same little routine or some variation of it at least once a day. He always finds a reason to be in a bad mood. It’ll pass, trust me.

JENNIFER
Okay. Hey, I don’t mean to be rude but you two aren’t...you know?

ADAM
What?

JENNIFER
Gay?

ADAM
God no. Is that what you thought?

JENNIFER
Kind of. You guys have been bickering every since we got here. Like an old married couple or something.

ADAM
Believe me, even if I were, Wesley would be the very last choice. It may not seem like it, but he’s basically my only friend. As you can probably already gather, I am not the most social of people. Wesley is just a big geek and, well, I’m not. So in lies the constant conflict.

(CONTINUED)
JENNIFER
What’s wrong with being a geek?

ADAM
I don’t know. Just not my cup of tea, I guess. Are you a geek?

JENNIFER
Maybe I am.

ADAM
If so, then I apologize if I offended you and the geek squads worldwide.

JENNIFER
(laughing)
You’re adorable. Why would you assume that you are bad in social surroundings? You seem comfortable enough to me.

ADAM
Normally, I try to stay as far away from others as possible. I’ve been like that ever since I got to this town a few years ago. I suppose you bring out the better in me.

JENNIFER
Wow, that was such a line. You think I bring out the better in you after this, only our second conversation? You barely even know me.

ADAM
I have great intuition.

JENNIFER
I bet.

ADAM
Let’s talk about you. You still haven’t told me why you were in such a dire hurry to leave town the other night. Or why you returned.

JENNIFER
(uncomfortable)
It’s a very long story, Adam.

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
Look at me. I’m homeless. I have nothing but time to spare.

JENNIFER
Let’s just say, I have a sort of overly protective ex and I felt like leaving was the only option. I soon realized, though, that I have nowhere else to go, so I came back to give it another chance in this wretched city.

ADAM
Is that who did that to your face? Your ex.

JENNIFER
No. I haven’t actually seen him in over six months. He has other ways of monitoring and controlling my life, however.

ADAM
You don’t have to be afraid, anymore, Jennifer. As long as I’m around, I won’t let anything happen to you.

JENNIFER
(skeptic)
That’s very noble of you, Adam, but I doubt you understand the magnitude of the situation. I was only kidding about the protection thing. This guy is connected and dangerous. I wish I had never met him. I shouldn’t even be telling you any of this.

ADAM
Like I said, nothing will happen to you.

JENNIFER
(sighs)
Thanks anyway for being so concerned. About everything.

ADAM
I don’t mind at all.

Cutting Adam and Jennifer’s conversation short, is an intoxicated THUG (early 30’s; intimidatingly hefty).

(CONTINUED)
THUG
(belligerent)
Hey, loser, fancy seeing your pathetic ass in here again.

ADAM
(confused)
Sorry, do I know you?

THUG
Oh, you don’t recognize me, huh? I remember you. And your little weasel pal. You two shits hustled me and my brother out of two hundred dollars last Friday.

ADAM
That was you? Unfortunate, man. You know how the games goes, though. Better luck next time.

THUG
(pissed)
Luck, my ass! You’re going to hand over my loot right now or I’m going to force your goddamn teeth down your throat and charge you for a meal.

ADAM
(sarcastic)
This is when I’m supposed to be scared out of my socks, isn’t it?

JENNIFER
Calm down! I’ll pay you. Just leave him alone.

Jennifer reaches for her purse but Adam stops her.

ADAM
I don’t want you involved in my troubles.

THUG
And troubles they are. You know what, I like your lady friend here. If she wants to save you, I’m sure her and I can step into my office in the parking lot and work out an arrangement.

(CONTINUED)
ADAM
Very original there, big guy. And just so we are clear, I do not need saving. Can you say the same?

THUG
(laughs)
You got a few screws loose, I can see.

ADAM
Perhaps.

Adam stands up from his stool.

ADAM (CONT’D)
Sorry to spoil your drunken ego trip, but we were just leaving.

THUG
Correction: You were leaving. Me and "sweet thing" here have some business to conduct.

The thug GRABS Jennifer’s arm.

ADAM
Alright, it’s not funny anymore. Take your hands off of her.

JENNIFER
Adam, don’t do anything stupid.

ADAM
(to thug)
Seriously. Now!

At the sound of Adam’s elevated tone, a few of the patrons turn their attentions to the situation at hand.

THUG
You got it, man.

The thug releases his grip on Jennifer and wraps both large hands around Adam’s NECK, lifting him off the ground.

JENNIFER
(frightened)
Let him go! What the hell is your problem.

(continues)
THUG
Shut up, bitch!

ADAM
(choking)
Not cool...not at all.

THUG
You never shut that goddamn mouth of yours, do you?

ADAM
...sometimes.

Wesley returns and notices Adam in danger. He runs over, POOL STICK in hand and CRACKS it across the thug’s BACK.

The thug drops Adam and turns towards Wesley.

THUG
(even more pissed now)
You!

The thug BACKHAND SLAPS Wesley to the ground.

Adam rises from the ground and brushes himself off. By this time, a small crowd had formed to watch the fight.

ADAM
Shit, guy, you have serious anger issues.

THUG
You again with the wit.

The thug throws a PUNCH at Adam, but Adam DUCKS. The Thug SLAMS his fist into a GLASS PITCHES resting on the bar counter, SHATTERING it.

ADAM
Listen, I don’t want anymore problems, man. Just let us get out of here and this doesn’t have to go any further.

THUG
Too late, dip shit!

Again, the thug attempts to attack Adam. This time however, Adam catches his fist mid-punch. He SQUEEZES until the sound of BONES CRACKING can be heard. The thug is dumbfounded. So is everyone else watching.
THUG  
(wincing)  
Not happening!  

ADAM  
Seems it is.

The thug uses his free hand to try to strike Adam, but Adam catches that hand. The HEAD BUTTS the thug. BLOOD SPURTS from the thug’s nose as he stubbles backwards.

THUG  
(raging)  
You asshole! I’m going to kill you!

ADAM  
(to crowd)  
And you people would let that happen, wouldn’t you? Of course you would.

Obviously not learning, the thug CHARGES at Adam again. He is stopped when Adam lands a viscous UPPERCUT to his STERNUM. The thug drops to his knees.

WESLEY  
(disoriented)  
Holy shit, man. How the hell did you do that?

ADAM  
Not sure.

WESLEY  
Bullshit, dude. I know what’s up.

ADAM  
Shut up and get off the floor.  
We’re leaving.

The Thug draws a HANDGUN and points it at Adam. GASPS are heard almost in unison.

THUG  
Ain’t nobody going nowhere until I get my freaking money!

ADAM  
(finally rattled)  
Take it easy. This has already gone further than it should have. No need for this to escalate. Put that away.

(continuing)
THUG
I’m making the rules here. And since you don’t seem to be ready to pay me what’s owed. I think I will show you I mean business.

The thug takes his aim off Adam and focuses on Jennifer. He FIRES.

Using himself as a shield, Adam jumps in front of Jennifer, protecting her from the bullet.

BLOOD DRIPS from a HOLE in the back of Adam’s pullover.

Before he can even acknowledge what has happened, however, Adam turns around and RUSHES at the thug. He PUNCHES him unconscious within seconds.

Wesley, Jennifer, and the rest of the pool hall are in disbelief and shock. All eyes are on Adam, who is now PANTING as he comes down off his adrenaline high.

JENNIFER
(seriously shaken)
Adam...are you...are you alright?

ADAM
(panting)
Dandy.

JENNIFER
You’re bleeding. Adam, are you crazy? Why did you do that?

ADAM
(calming down)
What was I supposed to do? He was about to blow your head off.

WESLEY
(scrambling for words)
Uh, Adam, man...do you realize that there is freaking hole in your back?

ADAM
(somewhere else)
Let’s go.

Ramblings echo throughout the small crowd. POLICE SIRENS can be heard nearing the scene.

(CONTINUED)
JENNIFER
(near hysteria)
We have to get you to a hospital! I think the cops are on their way. Sit down and we will wait for them.

ADAM
No. I’m getting out of here. You guys can stay if you want, but there is nothing wrong with me and I don’t particularly like law enforcement.

Adam heads for the exit. He seems to show no effects to being shot. Wesley reluctantly follows suit. Followed by Jennifer, who is in tears.

WESLEY
Dude, did you hear me? You have a goddamn hole in the middle of you back. How are you even walking?

Adam doesn’t respond. The three exit the billiard hall.

The cowardly BARTENDER emerges from behind the counter.

BARTENDER
(scared shitless)
Okay, okay. Everybody relax. Mr. Joker Man is on the way. The cops, too. Please don’t allow this isolated incident deter you from returning to Joker Man’s Billiards.

INT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - LOBBY - NIGHT

Charles, the security guard, sits in his normal carefree position. He is talking on the phone.

CHARLES
(angry)
No, bitch, you heard what I said. You already get an ungodly amount of money from me every month. I refuse to fork over anymore so that you and whatever college student you have as a boy-toy this week can run around and do what every in God’s name it is you do these days.

The somberness of the lobby is disturbed as a group of BUSINESS TYPE MEN approach the security check in.

(CONTINUED)
CHARLES
(re: phone)
We’ll finish this later.

Charles hangs up the phone.

CHARLES (CONT’D)
to business men)
May I help you?

BUSINESS MAN
(deadpan)
Samson Carmichael.

CHARLES
Sorry, he’s done taking
appointments for the day. In fact,
I believe he is on his way out now.

BUSINESS MAN
Very well.

CHARLES
Is there anything else?

BUSINESS MAN
Just this.

The Business man pulls out a SILENCER-EQUIPPED PISTOL and
SHOOTS Charles TWICE in the FACE.

The business men continue on their way into the interior of
Alpha-Prime.

INT. MOTEL - NIGHT

The door opens and in walks Jennifer, Adam and Wesley.

JENNIFER
(still shaken)
You guys can stay here until we get
all of this figured out. Again,
Adam, I think you need a doctor.

WESLEY
Yeah, man, the time for your
stubborn nature is not now. You
could be seriously injured.

ADAM
(annoyed)
Goddamn it, I said I’m fine.

(CONTINUED)
JENNIFER
No, you’re not. Take off your shirt. Let’s see how bad it is.

ADAM
It’s probably a fresh wound of something.

Adam removes his shirt. To both Wesley’s and Jennifer’s shock, there is a BULLET lodged in Adam’s SPINE.

WESLEY
Holy shit!

ADAM
What?

JENNIFER
You were shot directly in the spine, Adam. You shouldn’t even be able to stand. Can’t you feel it?

ADAM
A little, I guess. It kind of stings.

WESLEY
(anxious)
This is unreal, dude. It’s like the damn thing just stopped. It’s only like halfway in.

ADAM
Well, pull it out already, dumb ass.

JENNIFER
I don’t know if that’s such a good idea. You should have someone with medical training messing with that.

ADAM
Screw that. Wesley, do you still have those pliers you stole from the pawn shop?

WESLEY
Indeed I do.

Wesley pulls out a pair of PLIERS.
As Jennifer GRIMACES, Wesley carefully removes the bullet from Adam’s back with the pliers.

Adam doesn’t even flinch before grabbing his shirt and putting it back on.

**ADAM**

You gotta cut out the melodrama, Wesley. You’re scaring the lady.

**WESLEY**

No way. There is something strange going on with you. You just don’t want to believe me. I mean, first the car leap frog and now this. You just beat that guy to a bloody pulp in the blink of an eye. You survived a point-blank gunshot. It’s those experiments, man. I warned you.

**JENNIFER**

What experiments?

**ADAM**

Nothing. Pay him no mind. He lives in a fantasy world filled with people in capes.

**WESLEY**

(ignoring Adam)

You know that Alpha-Prime place? The one that’s in all that trouble because of that rich prick of an owner and all it’s questionable testings. Well, Prince Charming over here was one of the lab rats. Now, he’s turning into this bionic Chuck Norris all of a sudden and inexplicably. Topped off (MORE)
WESLEY (cont’d)
with the fact that he’s now
obviously bulletproof.

ADAM
(frustrated)
Why don’t you just write a book
while you’re at it?

JENNIFER
(concerned)
How long ago did you take those
tests?

ADAM
Six months or so. What does it
matter?

JENNIFER
It matters. You remember the crazy
ex I told you about?

ADAM
Yeah.

JENNIFER
It was him. Samson Carmichael.

WESLEY
You’re shitting me.

ADAM
I still don’t understand what that
has to do with when I took some
stupid trial drugs.

JENNIFER
I broke up with Sam after I
accidentally stumbled upon his
plans to manufacture some kind of
terrible super drug. I threatened
to go to the authorities about it.
To warn people. He has been trying
to find and kill me every since.

ADAM
I’m sorry if this come off the
wrong way, but that is one
unbelievable story.

JENNIFER
I know it is, but if you were
involved in one of those
(MORE)
JENNIFER (cont’d)
experiments, then there is no
telling what kind of side effects
may develop.

WESLEY
Like becoming a super human.

ADAM
Shut up.

JENNIFER
Like death.

BOOM! The door is KICKED IN.

It is Sgt. Zane, SHOTGUN in hand.

ZANE
Took a while, but I found you,
sweetie. Daddy’s home.

Adam and Wesley stand confused. Jennifer, completely
mortified.

JENNIFER
(to Adam and Wesley)
You guys should run.

ZANE
That would be quite pointless. I
don’t know who you supporting
characters are, but bad timing must
be your specialties.

ADAM
More surprises? Who would you
happen to be, might I ask?

ZANE
None of your goddamn
business. That’s who I am. The young
lady and I have unfinished affairs
to tend to and you two are what I
call collateral damage.

WESLEY
Bullshit! I am done with craziness
for one night. Adam, let’s roll.
JENNIFER
(to Zane)
How did you find me?

ZANE
It’s what I do. Now, you know what
I’m here for. Hand it over
peacefully and things won’t have to
get unnecessarily messy and
tortuous.

Wesley has heard enough. He makes a break for the door,
passed Zane.

WESLEY
What you have against her is your
deal. I doubt it has anything to do
with me.

Zane SMASHES the BUTT of the shotgun into Wesley’s face,
sending him to the ground.

ZANE
Anymore sudden actions? Didn’t
think so.

JENNIFER
I’m not who you’re looking for. I
don’t have what you are after. I
told you that before.

ZANE
I have reason to believe otherwise.
I told you that before.

ADAM
Before?

JENNIFER
We’ve met.

ADAM
Your face?

ZANE
What about it? I am no chauvinist.
I have no hesitations about
slapping around some stupid bitch.
I’m sorry if you have a problem
with that. It doesn’t matter, just
so you know.

(Continued)
ADAM
(exhausted and angry)
Why do I have to run into the biggest assholes in the city? What did I ever do?

JENNIFER
(sobbing; to Adam)
I didn’t mean to get you wrapped up in this mess. I told you that you didn’t want to know me.

ZANE
(unsympathetic)
Blah, blah, blah. Enough of this emotional nonsense. Give me the package so I can kill you and get on with my day. I have things to do.

ADAM
Go to hell.

ZANE
I’ve already got reservations. Hold my seat.

Zane SHOOTS Adam in the CHEST. Adam is propelled violently against the wall. He crumples to the ground motionless.

Jennifer SCREAMS.

ZANE
That isn’t going to help you, whore.

Zane cracks a sinister grin as he approaches Jennifer.

INT. ALPHA-PRIME BIOTECHNOLOGIES - EXECUTIVE OFFICE - NIGHT

Samson Carmichael’s HEAD is SLAMMED through a GLASS COFFEE TABLE. BLOOD POURS from his face. The three business men from earlier surround him.

SAMSON
(chuckling)
Is that the best you bastards have? I’ve had rougher sex with your wives.

A KICK to the stomach sends Samson SLIDING through broken glass and other trash until he rests against a corner of the room.

(CONTINUED)
The attacking trio slowly stalks towards Samson. The speaker of the group steps forward.

BUSINESS MAN

Mr. Carmichael, your vain bravery even in the face of certain demise is admirable. It’s a shame we couldn’t have met under more pleasant circumstances.

SAMSON

(sarcastic)
What ever do you mean? I’m having a blast. My night was so mundane until you fine sirs showed up to brighten it.

The business man motions to his accomplices. They each grab nearby GASOLINE CONTAINERS.

SAMSON (CONT’D)

Isn’t this a wonderful city where at any given moment you can be unsuspectingly ambushed by random lunatics who want you dead for conveniently undisclosed reasons?

The two business men begin DOWSING the office WALLS and FURNITURE with gas.

BUSINESS MAN

It is quite simple. You happen to be a rather troublesome obstacle standing in the way of our client. You must be eliminated.

SAMSON

I’m sure. Did that son-on-a-bitch mayor send you?

BUSINESS MAN

You won’t be alive soon, Mr. Carmichael. Who sent us should not be important to you at this point.

SAMSON

So, you’re going to set fire to my building, huh? Somebody watches too many Batman movies. What does it prove?
BUSINESS MAN
Absolutely nothing. My associates here are a bit OCD about forensic evidence. They believe the flame to be the ultimate cleansing tool. I suggested just shooting you in the head.

SAMSON
(serious)
You should have done that. Now you’ve just infuriated me. I’m going to find you and find whoever hired you and I’m going to rip you apart limb by limb. Slowly and painfully.

BUSINESS MAN
(amused)
Cute. I do not believe you are in any condition to make idle threats. You are witnessing your final moments on this earth. Consider those your last words.

The business man LIGHTS a BUTANE LIGHTER and TOSSES it to the floor.

FLAMES ENGULF the room.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Drunken patrons are enjoying more drinks and discussing various things amongst themselves. On the television, as usual, is Sullivan Jenkins.

Harold Stein, Carmichael’s attorney, watches visibly intoxicated.

SULLIVAN
(re: television)
It has been nearly a month since the devastating arson attack that burned Alpha-Prime Technologies to the ground and police say there are still no leads in the case. It remains unknown if the pharmaceutical juggernaut’s head man, Samson Carmichael survived the fire as no body was ever recovered. The prominent playboy has been missing and presumed deceased every (MORE)
SULLIVAN (cont’d)
since disappearing the night of the fire. Skeptics, however, worry that this is just another ploy being implemented in order for Carmichael to dodge his recent legal woes.

INT. BAR RESTROOM - NIGHT

Stein STUMBLES into the restroom. He checks the mirror for a second before heading to the stall.

Once inside, Stein begins humming as he pisses. Soon, someone else enters the restroom. Stein finishes up and exits the stall.

Standing in front of him is a MAN in a TRENCH COAT with a HOOD over his head. He also wears a MASK.

STEIN
(startled; snickering)
What the hell? Nice mask, loser.

The person doesn’t respond. He GRABS Stein by the throat and LIFTS him a foot off the ground.

MAN
(intense yet cold)
Samson Carmichael. Tell me where he is.

STEIN
(scared)
I don’t know! News says he’s dead.

MAN
But you know better.

STEIN
No, I really don’t. I know nothing. Who are you?

MAN
Don’t worry about it.

The man reaches into Stein’s pocket and removes his WALLET. He takes out the DRIVER’S LICENSE.

STEIN
What are you doing?
MAN
I’m going to pay your home a visit and see if I can’t find the whereabouts of your client. Thanks.

The man throws Stein upwards and completely through the ceiling.

He takes off his mask and prepares to exit the restroom.

It is Adam.

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER - NIGHT

Standing in front of the old gym are Wesley and Vic Lamar. Vic idly toys around with his wheelchair as Wesley carries on with one of his abstract monologues.

WESLEY
In the end, though, it probably will be stupid monkeys that take over. Makes enough sense. I’m betting it won’t be long either. This is the future. All types of crazy shit is going on. I’m just waiting for the flying cars and cyborgs. On second thought, I believe the machines will inherit the land. Yeah, that’s it. How does it feel to be amidst such a changing world? You being so old and all.

VIC (inattentive)
Huh? What did you say? Eh, it doesn’t matter. Kid, you have got to stop with the mind-numbing banter. I’m about to take a goddamn circular saw to my temple.

WESLEY
You’re just grumpy. You’ll thank me for the knowledge I generously bestow upon you one day. All of you guys will.

VIC
Yeah, yeah. Sure thing. Anyway, where’s that Adam guy you’re usually with. Ain’t seen him in a while.

(CONTINUED)
WESLEY
I wish I could tell you. I rarely see him anymore. I’ll probably run into sooner or later, though.

EXT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Police and staff go about their busy night. Reports are being taken, dispatchers work relays, etc. Rushing passed all of this is Sgt. Zane, dressed in plain clothes and carrying an EVIDENCE BOX towards the exit.

VIC (V.O)
Life has a way of working in circles, kid. He’ll be back around.

He is abruptly stopped by a fellow OFFICER.

OFFICER
(surprised)
Sarge? What are you doing here? Thought you was on vacation.

ZANE
I am.

OFFICER
(smirks)
Hell, I guess you can’t stop hunting down the scum of this town even if you’re told to.

ZANE
Something like that.

INT. STEIN RESIDENCE- NIGHT

Above a FIREPLACE are various PHOTOS of Harold Stein with different family members. A survey of some of the main areas of the high-priced condo show Stein’s luxurious items. PLASMA TV mounted on the wall, expensive FURNITURE and decor.

WESLEY (V.O)
The last few times I talked to him, he was different, man. Don’t really know how to explain it, but...

The front DOORKNOB WIGGLES. Again. Then it is forcefully RIPPED off from the outside.

Adam has arrived.
WESLEY (V.O) (CONT’D)
He’s been going on and on about some chick he barely knows. Total Taxi Driver shit, man.

Adam begins ransacking through Stein’s belongings. Overturned BOOKSHELF here. Emptied DESK DRAWER there. Within moments, the once elegant living space has been turned upside-down.

VIC (V.O)
You mean that broad that used to come up here and serve lunch. I saw him getting shot down by her once. Ain’t she missing or something?

WESLEY (V.O)
Probably dead. Who knows? The point is that every since his little crush disappeared, all he ever worries about is finding out what happened.

Rifling through a closet, Adam comes across a COMPACT DISK hidden in a BOX of old VINYL RECORDS. The CD is labeled: "EDEN/JEN’S NOTES". He pockets the disk.

VIC (V.O)
So what? The kid finally seems to have an objective. Something to strive for.

Outside, RED and BLUE LIGHTS FLASH. As Adam hurries to stuff as many useful items into his coat, STREAKS from FLASHLIGHTS shine through the window and cut the darkness.

VIC (V.O) (CONT’D)
Sure it may be a waste of time but at least he’s decided to get off his ass and find a purpose in this hopeless world.

Two PATROL OFFICERS slowly move about the yard and towards the front door.

VIC (V.O) (CONT’D)
You should take some pointers.

Confusion washes over the faces of the officers as they notice the damaged space where the doorknob once was. They draw their GUNS.
INT. WINCHESTER RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A jovial Christine Winchester is hard at work preparing the night's supper as "Help" by The Beatles somberly plays from a small RADIO near the stove.

Christine softly bobs her head to the tune as she carries on a phone conversation.

CHRISTINE
(giggling)
Oh my god, Rachael, I love this song. Remember how I told you that that creep Walter Mitchell tried to put the moves on me senior year? This was the song that was playing!

"Help, I need somebody..."

CHRISTINE (CONT’D)
It was so funny. I don’t know how I ended up in a situation that warranted the two of us being alone but I thought it was so ironic that this very song was basically speaking what was on my mind.

"Help, not just anybody..."

CHRISTINE (CONT’D)
Thankfully, his overbearing mother busted up his pathetic attempts and yours truly was left unscathed--physically and emotionally.

A POT BOILS over startling Christine.

CHRISTINE (CONT’D)
(laughing)
Oh shit, Rachael, clumsy me just made a mess. I will call you after I’ve finished cooking.

Once off the phone, Christine begins to clean up the spill.

In the distance, the front door can be heard SLAMMING.

"Help, you know I need someone..."

CHRISTINE
Ryan, baby, you home early? I wasn’t expecting you for another (MORE)

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

CHRISTINE (cont’d)
hour or so. Well, it’s almost supper time and you are going to love what I made.

Christine finishes cleaning and walks off to greet her husband.

Focus remains on the COOKING FOOD.

CHRISTINE (O.S)
(scared)
What the hell are you doing here?!
Get out now!

"Help."

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER - NIGHT
A CAR passes by VIC and Wesley. It is loudly blaring a familiar tune. "Help"

WESLEY
(insulted)
What do you mean by that? Pointers.

VIC
What I mean is that unlike you, your buddy has actually taken some initiative. Albeit misguided perhaps. But he is goin’ out there and getting shit done. You stand around all day and spew your never-ending mambo jumbo about this, that and the other to anyone bored or stupid enough to listen. After a while you have to stop running off at the mouth and make things happen.

Wesley removes his comic book, Dark Guardian from his pocket.

EXT. STEIN RESIDENCE - NIGHT
The two patrol officers cautiously approach the front door.

PATROL OFFICER #1
This is the New Egypt police. If anyone is in there come out peacefully with your hands up.

(CONTINUED)
VIC (V.O) (CONT’D)
Life’s short. You gotta live like there is no tomorrow...

INT. WINCHESTER RESIDENCE – NIGHT

BLOOD has been SPLATTERED across PICTURES resting atop a COFFEE TABLE. Wedding photo. Vacation. Anniversary.

VIC (V.O) (CONT’D)
Because eventually, there won’t be.

EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER – NIGHT

Wesley thumbs through his book.

WESLEY
Now, old timer, I know you think that this is garbage that I read but you couldn’t be further from the truth. The reason I obsess over comics is because they are complex tales that relate to life.

VIC
(rolls eyes)
Oh, brother, here we go.

WESLEY
Take this one for instance. Dark Guardian number thirty-five. One of my particular favorites.

EXT. STEIN RESIDENCE – NIGHT

CRASH! Thousands of shards of GLASS fly out into the night and onto the lawn. With the glass lands a dark figure. Adam.

The patrol officers are shocked at what they have seen. Nonetheless they have a job to do.

PATROL OFFICER #2
Freeze!

PATROL OFFICER #1
(to partner)
Is he wearing a goddamn mask? What is that, leather?

They train their guns on Adam.

(CONTINUED)
WESLEY (V.O) (CONT’D)
I’ve read it more than thirty times. The story is loaded with layer upon layer of misdirection.

Adam quickly grabs a TRASHCAN TOP and HURLS it like a boomerang, STRIKING Officer #1 in the FACE and sending him to the ground.

WESLEY (V.O) (CONT’D)
I’m going through this blasted thing the first time thinking the story is taking me in one direction but in the end everything goes askew.

The second patrol officer FIRES at Adam, who DODGES it and LEAPS into the air towards the officer.

INT. UNDISCLOSED BASEMENT - NIGHT

FOOTSTEPS lead down a STAIRCASE until finally stopping at the concrete base.

WESLEY (V.O) (CONT’D)
The bad guys were actually the good guys and vice versa. What at first seemed obvious became uncertain. All around hysteria. Concentrated confusion.

Jennifer, SEVERELY BEATEN and nearly naked, lies CHAINED to a filthy bed.

INT. WINCHESTER RESIDENCE - NIGHT

Christine’s lifeless body is sprawled over the couch, soaked in her own BLOOD.

WESLEY (V.O) (CONT’D)
What bothered me was that these handful of small details in the beginning of the book that I had overlooked ended up serving as intricate pieces of the overall plot. That’s called foreshadowing, Vic.
EXT. HOMELESS SHELTER - NIGHT

Wesley ROLLS up his comic and sticks it back in his pocket.

WESLEY (CONT’D)
Once I went back and reread, I noticed that the writer had basically given away the ending throughout the entire book but disguised it using a bunch of extra information and subplots and whatnot.

VIC (irritated)
See, this is the shit I’m talking about. What does that have to do with anything I said?

WESLEY
Well, you implied that I have no drive or ambition because I absorb unusual facts. You assume I’m a type of person based on vain preconceptions, but other than what I allow you to perceive, you are clueless. Just like most people. Maybe I do just waste my life preaching to an inattentive audience. Or maybe that’s simply what I want you to believe.

VIC (confused)
Whatever you say, kid. I don’t think I can take too much more of your double talk. You could be some sort of teacher or something but you prefer to spend your nights on this corner. Loony, you are, I tell ya.

WESLEY
Don’t worry. It’ll make sense eventually. Take care of yourself, Vic. And take this. I think I have gotten all the use out of it I’m going to.

Wesley hands Vic his Dark Guardian comic.

(CONTINUED)
VIC
Yeah...sure.

Wesley walks off into the night.

Vic reluctantly opens the comic to the last page.

"END OF PART ONE."