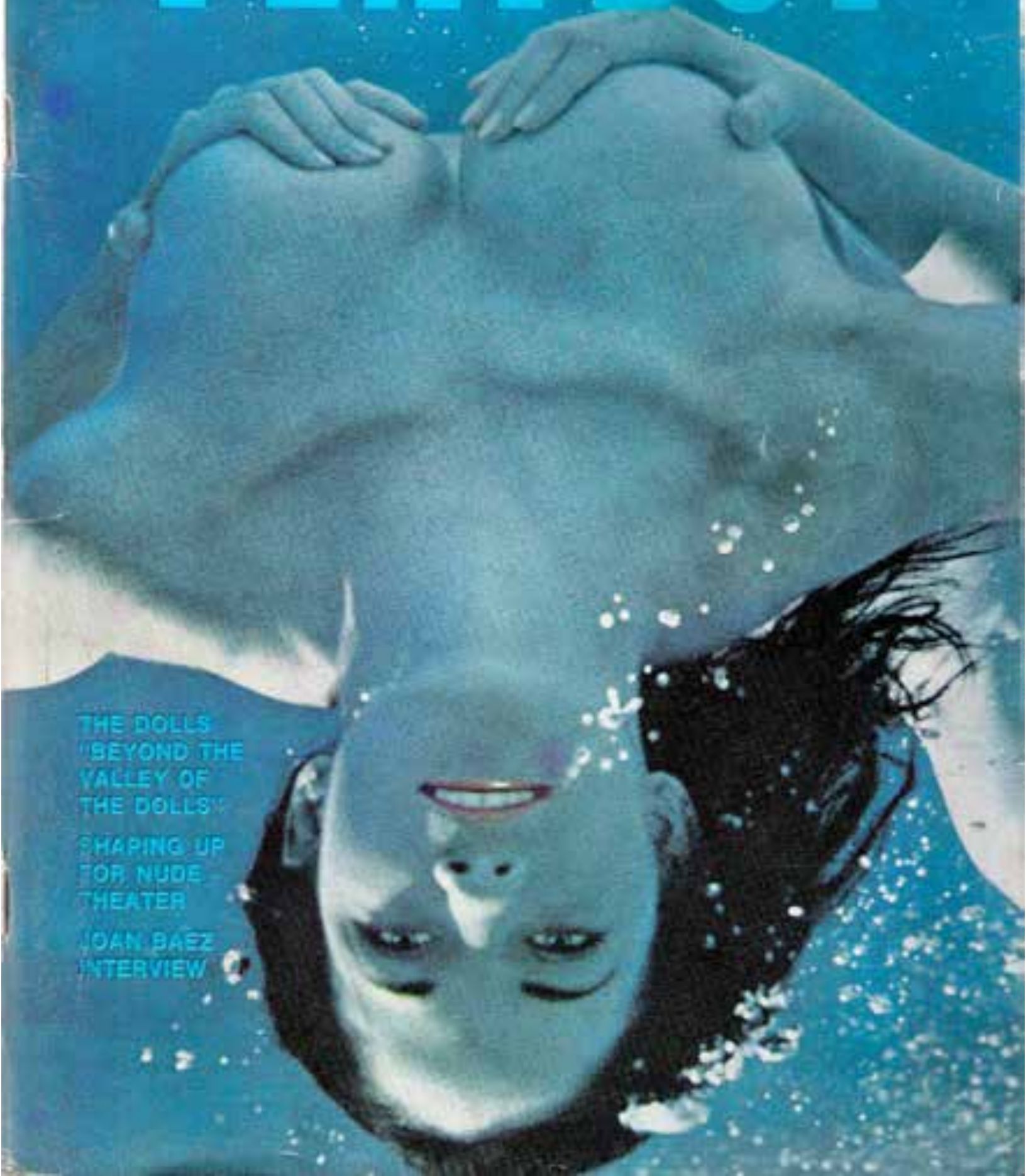


ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

JULY, 1975 • ONE DOLLAR

PLAYBOY



THE DOLLS
"BEYOND THE
VALLEY OF
THE DOLLS"

SHAPING UP
FOR NUDE
THEATER

JOAN BAEZ
INTERVIEW

Under the Silver Lake

by

David Robert Mitchell

Version 7

6.29.2016

Registration Number : 1603341

UNDER THE SILVER LAKE

No One Will Ever
be happy here
until all the
dogs are dead

ONLY I KNOW THE SECRETS OF SILVERLAKE.
IN TIME I WILL REVEAL THE TRUTH
BEHIND THE MYSTERIOUS CRIMES,
MURDERS AND DISAPPEARANCES WITHIN
THIS CURSED COMMUNITY.
I HAVE THE ANSWERS... I WILL REVEAL ALL...
UNDER THE SILVER LAKE

The front window of the coffee shop is covered in black Sharpie writing. A sweaty, but very cute lesbian in an apron scrubs a wet sponge over the writing. It's not going away.

SAM, 33, and trying not to appear so, wipes sweat from his face and neck as he turns toward the bright sun. His hair is uncombed and his clothes don't match in the appropriate ways.

He stands in a long line, waiting for coffee, behind beautiful hipsters and a few old people - all in various stages of perspiration.

"Never My Love" by the Association plays over the house speakers. No one sings along.

Sam glances over at the front window, looking at the backwards and inverted text across the glass. Poor penmanship, even for graffiti. It says:

BEWARE THE DOG KILLER

The room is filled with chatter - potentially exciting but probably inane talk of movies, music, art and crime. It's impossible for us to decipher under the music.

Sam stares at one of the shop's many attractive, tattooed bakery girls as she smiles to another customer. He glances over and spies two other bakery girls in a private conversation near the espresso machine.

Chatter. Chatter. Chatter. Chatter. Chatter. Chatter.

So many unknowable things wrapped in beauty.

Sam sips his coffee and walks casually down the sidewalk, passing sad kittens in a pet shop window.

A street fruit vendor watches Sam from behind his glass fruit case - oddly suspicious and grim.

Sam stops and looks up at a giant billboard across the street. On it, a beautiful young Indian woman smiles - staring outward through sparkling eyes.

A contact lens logo stretches below her face. The ad reads:

I Can See Clearly Now

Sam sighs and shakes his head, moving on.

3 EXT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ APARTMENTS - LATE MORNING

3

Sam walks alone, carrying his iced latte and LA Weekly through the lush garden paths of his modest apartment complex.

We see his POV as he steps along a concrete trail surrounded by carefully manicured shrubs, giant trees and a man-made stream which flows alongside the walkway.

Sam passes a blue vested worker cleaning leaves from the pond in a somnolent state. The man stares, as if in a heat-trance.

Turning a corner, Sam takes a sip of coffee through the straw.

He hears a terrible rattle in the tree above him. Sam looks up as the branches shake.

SAM

Ah!

Suddenly something with mass falls from the tree.

THUD!

A squirrel lands hard across the concrete walkway - on all four paws - right before him.

Sam steps back, his breath leaving him for a second. The momentary primal fear of seeing flesh impact with stone.

The animal looks at Sam then darts away into the bushes.

Sam smiles for a second, feeling stupid about displaying shock publicly, especially over a squirrel. Looking around, there are no obvious witnesses.

But there are so many apartments... so many windows... so many balconies.

SAM

(laughing to himself)

Is that squirrel even ok?

4 EXT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - LATE MORNING

4

Sam reaches for his keys as he steps up to the door. There's a note taped below his apartment number. He pulls it down and reads it covertly.

It says:

"Your Rent is Seriously Overdue. You have 7 Days to PAY or be EVICTED."

(CONTINUED)

SAM
 (under his breath)
 Fuck. Fuck. Fuck you.

Sam crumples the paper in hand, fumbling to unlock the door. Hitting it open, he bangs his shoulder into the wood - the way some people punch walls.

Ext. Sam'S APARTMENT balcony - late MORNING

Sam sits on a patio chair smoking a cigarette and finishing his latte. A pair of binoculars hang from his neck.

Smoke drifts through the sliding screen door - a dim apartment within. The cartoon thermometer suction-cupped to the glass reads: 94 Degrees.

This little patio enclave is hidden by railing, low hanging branches and thick shrubbery. It offers wonderful views of the surrounding apartments and the community pool below.

Sam looks at the cover of the LA Weekly. It features a studio photo of some local indie band. The headline reads:

East LA Resurrected... or Never Dead?

Who are Jesus and the Brides of Dracula?

According to the pic, Jesus is an emaciated hipster. His brides are gorgeous but unique women in 1920's hand-stitched gowns.

An unseen bird CAWS loudly.

Sam lifts and focuses his binoculars through the green foliage of the neighboring balconies.

A beautiful middle-aged woman walks topless along her third story patio. She feeds her caged birds as she struts to a tinny-sounding jazz tune.

Sam's cell phone rings. Peeking through the binoculars, he answers.

SAM
 Hi mom.

MOM
 Hi honey. How are you?

The half-naked bird woman pets her parrot lovingly. Sam cradles his cell phone against his ear - watching.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

I'm ok.

MOM

Good. Good. Are you at work?

The bird woman scratches her ass - unaware that she's being checked out.

SAM

Yeah. It's kind of a busy day.

Sam rubs the stubble on his face - his eyes are tired.

MOM

Ok. Well I don't wanna keep you but I hadn't heard from you in a bit...

SAM

I'm fine, mom.

MOM

Ok. I'm *glad* to hear that.

SAM

Yeah things are...

MOM

Oh, I wanted to tell you... *Seventh Heaven* is playing on TCM tonight.

SAM

Mom, I don't have cable.

The topless woman walks inside - half visible through a shaded window.

MOM

Oh shoot, that's too bad. It's a *great* Janet Gaynor movie from 1927.

SAM

She's your favorite right?

Sam lowers his binoculars and takes another drag.

MOM

Janet Gaynor? Yes, since I was a little girl. I've always admired her. So talented and beautiful.

Sam sighs staring out at the empty balconies and windows.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Well I should get back to work.

MOM

Ok. I'm giving you a big hug over the phone.

SAM

Thanks. I love you.

The parrot caws again - something resembling words.

MOM

I love you. Have a good week.

SAM

Bye.

MOM

Bye.

Sam coughs and drops his cigarette into a cloudy yellow Evian bottle.

Reflections of music draw near...

Common, but catchy indie-rock music approaches... growing louder and louder.

A voice echoes through the surrounding courtyard. A tiny bell rings.

SARAH

(O.S.)

Coca-Cola! Come on, you little soda pop. It's *swimming* time.

Sam leans forward and looks down through the trees. He sees a young woman in a bikini, SARAH, walking along the garden path - a portable sound system in hand.

The music is louder and clearer now. It's the latest hit song "Tongue & Teeth" by the indie-rock band Jesus and the Brides of Dracula.

Holding the gate open, Sarah waits as her little dog, COCA-COLA, follows her inside. A small bell on its collar rings and dings as it scampers along the hot concrete.

Sarah's face is half covered by a white and frilly Easter-style hat. Colored straw and soft pink ribbons.

(CONTINUED)

The white, toy-like Bichon Frise barks and runs in circles around the woman's legs. She smiles and nods at the animal, finding a place for herself in the sun near the pool.

Sam looks through his binoculars at the girl as she removes her hat.

Big stoned eyes.

Light freckled cheeks.

White skin on a California body.

She looks like a mid-western Monica Vitti with a hint of Sharon Tate. A sex that induces an almost guttural reaction in any man or woman within proximity. But the girl seems unaware of her power.

SARAH

(in a girlish voice)

Coca-Cola. I knowwww. You *liiiiike the sun. Gooooood boy.*

Sam watches her coddling the animal... stretching her long body across a lounge chair in the sun.

He leans closer, peeping over the rim of the balcony - a gentle grin forming on his face.

The song's chorus repeats loudly from the portable speaker:

You and I...

turning like teeth...

loving beneath...

the surface.

A neighboring balcony door slides open with a bang - reverberating over the pool courtyard. Sam sees the topless bird woman emerge from her apartment. A scowl on her face.

TOPLESS BIRD WOMAN

Can you please turn that down?!

Sarah nods, leans over and acts like she's turning the stereo down - twisting her hand inches from the volume knob.

The song remains at its irritating volume.

Sarah looks up towards the topless woman's balcony and shrugs her shoulders with a grin.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

That's as quiet as it gets!

TOPLESS BIRD WOMAN

Oh thanks a lot!

The topless bird woman shakes her head, waves her hand in disgust and slams her sliding patio door closed. The bikini girl laughs and giggles as she stands, lifting her toy dog into the air - bell rattling.

The caged bird shouts once more. Some unrecognizable words.

Sarah smiles and bobs her shoulders to the beat - staring into her dog's eyes.

SARAH

You loooooove this song don't you?!

As she sways, Sam aims his binoculars at the young woman's ass.

Bang! Bang! Bang! Someone pounds on Sam's front door.

Sarah hears it, turns her head and looks straight into Sam's viewfinder.

Sam lowers the binoculars and scoots back from the balcony's edge - out of view.

Mouth slightly agape, Sarah stares up through the over-growth, turning her head and squinting for another glimpse of the phantom face and lens.

Sam crawls inside his apartment, staying low to the carpet.

Bang! Bang! The mystery visitor continues to pound on Sam's front door.

From a stooped position on the floor, Sam pulls the blinds closed.

5 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - MOMENTS LATER

5

Sam opens the front door...

Standing in the hallway is a pockmarked brunette in a German dirndl. The ACTRESS holds a bag of carry-out over her otherwise exposed cleavage.

The thirty-something actress is pretty from the right angle - the physical traits of someone who's had a brief bout with meth addiction. Something is just a bit off.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Hey.

ACTRESS

Hi.

Sam makes a puzzled face - trying to figure out why the actress is wearing a German servant-girl outfit.

SAM

Good to see you. Uh...

The actress points down at her dress. She stands awkwardly - body gangly - terrible posture.

ACTRESS

It's for a role...

SAM

Ah ok. Come on in.

Sam lets the young woman into his living room, closing the door behind her.

Old wallpaper covers the walls... lined with movie posters, pop culture paraphernalia, and 30-something-male crap.

We can still hear the rock song from outside.

The girl spins around and faces Sam with an overly excited grin. The imperfections on her skin are more visible against the sunlight.

ACTRESS

So... *weirdly*, I have an audition around the corner... and thought you might wanna have lunch together. You like sushi, right?

The actress lifts up a large bag of restaurant food.

SAM

Yeah. Wow. Thank you.

The actress lowers her smile, sniffing the air.

ACTRESS

What's that smell?

SAM

Oh... there's a lotta skunks around here. In the woods by the golf course.

Sam points toward the side of the building.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

They're always spraying. Not much you can do about it.

ACTRESS

Eckkh.

6 INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - LATE MORNING

6

Sam fucks the actress doggy-style on the bed. He slaps her ass as hard as he can, keeping an eye on the bedroom television. He's watching the Wimbledon Finals. A women's match between an Eastern European and some Swedish model.

Hitting her stride, the actress grunts louder and with more force than the tennis queens on tv.

A framed and signed poster of Kurt Cobain hangs over Sam's bed. It's the famous black and white close up from his Rolling Stone cover.

ACTRESS

I love your poster.

Still grinding her ass against Sam, the actress stares up at Kurt Cobain.

SAM

Thanks. I actually saw them in concert. Believe it or not. I'm one of the few.

ACTRESS

Wow. Is that *signed*?

SAM

Uh, *recently*, actually... I know a girl who knows his daughter. It's *her* signature.

ACTRESS

That's still really cool.

Sam leans forward and grabs the actress' jaw in his hand, twisting her face towards his. They kiss and make-out on the bed. Connected like insects.

Suddenly, the tennis match is interrupted by a news break... a stylish woman stands with her microphone below some enormous gated mansion in the hills of Los Angeles.

The graphic chyron below her reads: "Billionaire Mogul Missing!"

(CONTINUED)

Sam watches the television.

BOTOX REPORTER

(on tv)

Reporting live from outside the Hollywood estate of billionaire mogul Jefferson Sevence... we have confirmation that Sevence has apparently gone missing after a late night fishing trip off the coast of Catalina Island. Witnesses claim to have seen him returning to the main land, and his car, a 1935 Deussenberg, has yet to be located.

The actress turns her head and looks back at the tv, still taking it from Sam.

A picture of JEFFERSON SEVENCE appears on screen. He's an older man, though handsome, and with still blond hair.

The television cuts to a shot of MRS. SEVENCE, a thirty-something woman more than suitable for providing progeny and affection to a wealthy man.

MRS. SEVENCE

(on tv)

Jeff, I love you, your family loves you...

Standing behind the woman are the Sevence's FIVE CHILDREN, ranging in age between 8 and 24. The oldest daughter, MILLICENT SEVENCE, stares ahead coldly - covered in piercings and giant yellow sunglasses.

THE SEVENCE KIDS CHOIR

(on tv)

We love you dad.

Mrs. Sevence breaks down and begins to cry. Her teenage SON steps forward, putting his arm around her shoulder. His own face shakes and contorts as he weeps.

MRS. SEVENCE

(on tv)

I know we're gonna see you again soon.
I know you're alive. I feel it.

We watch the tv and the fucking from the periphery of Sam's room.

Porn, Playboys, notebooks, "Lady from Shanghai" lobby cards and bags of Doritos litter Sam's dresser.

(CONTINUED)

A 70's OUI magazine sits on his guitar amp - the cover model's bush hidden beneath an old can of spray paint. Red circle marks dot the cover like coasters under cups of cranberry juice.

MRS. SEVENCE

(on tv)

We're offering a 2 million dollar reward for any information that helps us find my husband. I beg you for your help. Please bring daddy home.

The woman covers her face - weeping uncontrollably.

7 INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - LATE MORNING

7

Sam and the actress lay naked in bed next to each other, cooling off.

The neighbor's parrot shouts loudly.

ACTRESS

What is that?

The actress fans herself, blowing cool air onto her chest and neck. She's still in her German dirndl tights.

SAM

It's the neighbor's parrot.

ACTRESS

Oh.

ACTRESS

What's it saying?

SAM

I'm not sure.

They listen to the parrot as it continues to caw and shout.

PARROT

(O.S.)

Rrrrottafendnnndddd!

ACTRESS

Not a friend?

SAM

Maybe. It's hard to say.

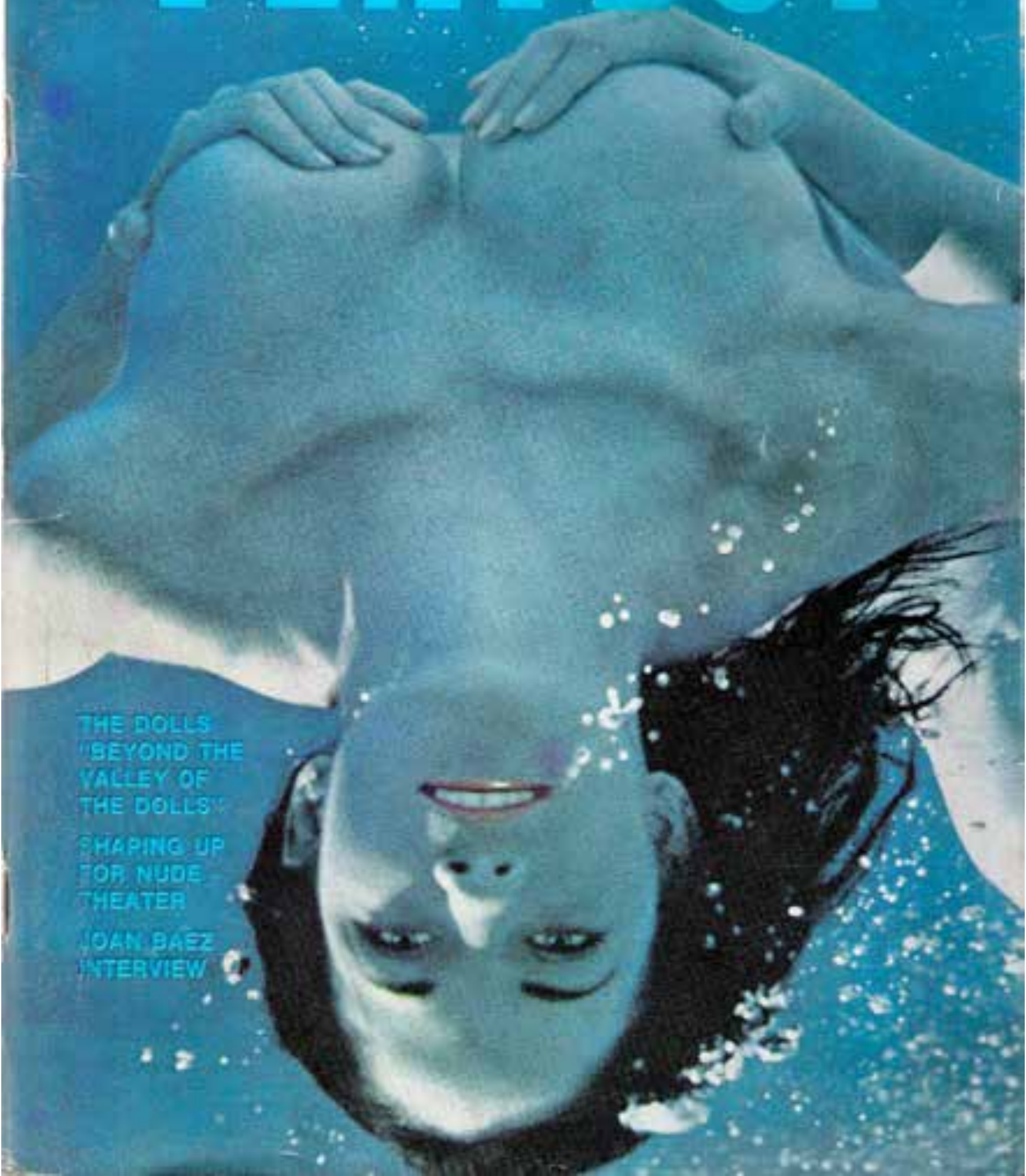
The actress shrugs as she grabs an old 1970's Playboy from the stack of magazines next to the bed. She flips through it.

(CONTINUED)

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INTERVIEW

7 CONTINUED:

The artsy cover shows a naked woman floating upside down through the bluest of water.

SAM

That's my favorite issue.

ACTRESS

Why this one?

SAM

I found it in my dad's tool drawer in the garage when I was really young.

ACTRESS

Oh. Did you steal it?

SAM

Yeah. The cover with the girl. That was the first thing I ever masturbated to.

The actress laughs, spinning the magazine around to examine the submerged playmate on the front cover.

ACTRESS

She's pretty.

SAM

I know.

ACTRESS

The first thing I ever masturbated to was probably a rerun of Charles in Charge.

Sam chuckles. A big grin. The actress laughs along with him.

SAM

That's awesome.

ACTRESS

Yeah.

The actress looks over and sees some papers, previously covered by the pornography. She grabs the handwritten sheets and stares at the complicated lines of text and numbers.

ACTRESS

What is this?

Sam grabs the papers from her... very embarrassed to share it.

SAM

Oh don't look at that.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

ACTRESS

What is it?

SAM

Eh - it's nothing.

ACTRESS

Ok.

Sam stuffs the papers underneath an old Playboy from the 1980's. He stands and puts on his underwear.

Rock music is heard. Sam peeks outside through the cheap white blinds. Looking for the source.

He sees Sarah walking away down the garden path with her dog - her stereo blasting. A trail of wet footsteps behind her.

The bird shouts again.

PARROT

(O.S.)

Rrrobbefennntdmm!

ACTRESS

Rotterdam?

SAM

I don't think so.

Sam keeps peeping through the blinds, ignoring the naked actress behind him. She doesn't notice or care as she reapplies her lipstick - using the video screen of her "iPhone 4" like a mirror compact.

Sarah unlocks her apartment door and goes inside. Sam watches as the little poodle dog follows her in.

ACTRESS

What are you looking at?

SAM

That damn bird.

The door closes as the parrot cackles and yells the same unknowable phrase once more.

8 INT. SAM'S FORD MUSTANG - DAY

8

Sam drives his black Mustang down Sunset Boulevard. He passes Sunset Junction.

The shops. The restaurants. The beautiful and blessed people of the neighborhood.

9 INT. SECRET HEADQUARTERS COMIC SHOP - DAY

9

Sam browses the aisles of comics. He grabs an issue of Spider Man and adds it to the small stack in his arms.

Two nearby patrons chat loudly while looking at some Jimmy Corrigan anthologies.

CUTE ART WOMAN
Someday I really want to swim with
wild dolphins.

UGLY ART MAN
I have a friend who does that.

CUTE ART WOMAN
Oh you'll have to introduce me.

UGLY ART MAN
I will.

Sam scans the local press, comics and zines - hanging separately on a rotating wire shelf. He notices one in particular.

Rough and xeroxed in an underground art style, Sam picks up a small, handmade and hand-drawn zine. Its title is:

Under the Silver Lake

On the cover are several strange drawings. The local Silverlake Junction sign, the Elliott Smith wall, a naked woman in a mask, a man holding a sign, and some tiny text at the bottom of the page.

Sam flips through the zine. He sees an article titled:

Beware the Dog Killer

Sam stares at the headline then scans the page. He closes the zine and adds it to his pile.

Standing at the register, the CLERK examines Sam's purchases like a curator - nodding approval or staying condescendingly silent. He punches numbers into the register.

Lifting up the handmade zine, the clerk grins and stares down at the small text on the cover page.

CLERK
(reading aloud)
Only I know the secrets of Silverlake.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CLERK (cont'd)

In time I will reveal the truth behind the mysterious crimes, murders and disappearances within this cursed community. I have the answers... I will reveal all... Under the Silver Lake.

The clerk laughs and Sam smiles back at him. Politely.

CLERK

Jesus.

SAM

Do you know who writes this?

CLERK

Yeah. A local guy. Uh, strange, but nice.

SAM

Does he come in here much?

CLERK

Sure. I see him.

SAM

If I gave you like five bucks, would you give him my number and ask him to call me?

CLERK

I don't know.

Sam grabs a pen and writes his name and number down on a comic store business card.

SAM

Come on. I like his work. I'd like to meet him. You're just... passing on a number.

CLERK

(condescending)

Ok. Sure. But I don't need your five dollars.

Sam takes the money and puts it back in his wallet.

10 EXT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ APARTMENTS - NIGHT

10

Sam walks down the dark garden path. The night is quiet except for crickets, the trickle of water, and the occasional siren.

(CONTINUED)

Sam notices movement. A small skunk walks along the hedges - seeming to trail the young man. Sam stops and waits, watching the tail of the smelly animal move further into the darkness.

Turning beyond the shrubs, toward a first level patio, Sam sees the white Bichon Frise from the pool. The dog is tied to the railing, pooping on an open newspaper. Music pours from inside the apartment through the screen door.

Sam steps through the grass toward the dog. He pulls a colorful dog biscuit from his pocket and places it on the ground.

Coca Cola nibbles at the biscuit. Enjoying his treat.

SAM

Good dog.

The door slides open and Sarah stands before Sam. She's wearing her white bonnet and a casual, but beautiful dress. Black reading glasses sit atop her nose.

SARAH

Hello.

SAM

Hi.

Sam leans closer, watching the dog eat. Sarah kneels near her pet and rubs his back.

SARAH

Wow. Look at that, Coca-Cola. This nice man gave you a treat. Can you say thank you?

The dog just continues to eat - chewing small and fast bites.

SAM

His name's Coca-Cola?

SARAH

Yeah. *Dependable as sunshine.*

Sam doesn't follow, but he plays along, watching Sarah's chest through her low hanging dress.

SAM

Was that a coke slogan?

Sam rubs the dog's ear. Coca-Cola doesn't look up from his food.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

An old one... I think. My great
grandma used to say it. She was a
pretty smart lady.

Sam just nods along, looking from Sarah's grinning face to her
hanging chest - as she leans far forward.

SARAH

What kind of dog do you have?

SAM

My dog died recently.

SARAH

Oh my God, I'm so sorry.

SAM

Thanks.

Sarah looks at Sam's eyes. He tries to smile a bit, but it
comes off a little sad.

SARAH

Well it's nice to meet you.

SAM

Yeah, you too.

SARAH

Uhh... You wanna come in for a minute?
Have a drink?

11 INT. SARAH'S APARTMENT LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

11

Sarah hands Sam a cocktail. He stands in the middle of her
cluttered living room. Women's things.

Sarah falls back and stretches across her recliner. Sam sits
next to her on the couch.

Sarah giggles to herself. Uncontrollably.

SAM

What is it?

She shakes her head and smiles. Laughing a bit more.

SARAH

I saw you spying on me. Earlier.

SAM

No I wasn't.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

She cackles silently - having to turn her head away.

SARAH

At the pool. I saw you.

SAM

I don't know what you're talking about.

The girl makes a face - waiting for him to tell the truth.

SARAH

Fine. You weren't spying, but I saw you on your balcony. Will you at least admit to that?

SAM

Sure.

Sarah smiles to herself, bunching her legs up on the chair, and gulping her drink.

SARAH

Were you masturbating?

SAM

No.

SARAH

Well it's not that strange. I masturbate...

SAM

Me too. But I wasn't trying to...

Sarah seems stuck on the thought. A mixture of odd innocence and naivete. She interrupts...

SARAH

(simple and sincere)
Doesn't everybody?

SAM

Sure. Listen, I'd tell you if I was, but I was just... *looking*. That's it.

SARAH

Ok. I believe you.

Sarah reaches over and lifts up a large bong from the floor. It's a glass ice bong, filled with pink spiral percolators. Top of the line.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: (2)

SARAH
Wanna get stoned?

SAM
Uh, yeah, sure.

12 INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

12

The pair are fucked up. Stoned and eating snacks on Sarah's white, old-lady, flower-quilted bed.

Antique furniture, almost girlish in nature, fills the room. White silk hangs from the tall bed posts.

They are watching a scene from "How to Marry a Millionaire" on the little bedroom tv. Marilyn flirts and glows onscreen.

Coca Cola lays in the bed next to Sarah.

Three collectible Barbie dolls sit on top of the television. They are modeled after Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable, and Lauren Bacall. A perfect match for the movie playing below them.

Sam notices a simple silver bracelet around Sarah's wrist. He touches it, moving his fingers over it and onto the back of her hand. He gently caresses her skin.

Playful. Flirting.

SAM
That's pretty. Is it engraved?

SARAH
Yeah. From an old boyfriend.

SAM
An *old* boyfriend.

SARAH
Yup.

Sarah stretches her leg out and turns her ankle in Sam's direction. On it, is a tattoo of a cartoon zebra hang gliding.

SARAH
What do you think of my tattoo?

SAM
Is it real?

SARAH
No. Temporary. From a pack of gum.

(CONTINUED)



SAM

Thank God for temporary.

Sarah giggles and smiles as she grabs two saltine crackers in one hand and a glass of orange juice in another.

SARAH

Okayyyy. Here we go.

Sarah puts the crackers in her mouth and immediately takes a big sip of OJ. She chews and swallows it all as she talks.

Sam stares at the freckles on her chest.

SARAH

(with her mouth full)

I know you think it's gross... but this one time when I was sick in grade school, I started eating saltines, instead of my chicken noodle... then I took a sip of oj *and... it was delicious.*

Sam holds his grin.

SARAH

It's one of those undiscovered unknown combinations that no one should die without trying once.

SAM

Ok.

SARAH

Now you gotta try it.

Sarah picks up two more saltines and holds them up before Sam's mouth. She leans very close, studying and guiding the the wafers like a jeweler focused on a diamond.

Sam moves his head past the crackers and kisses Sarah's parted lips.

They make out for a moment on the bed.

Sam pulls away, and Sarah continues to chew a bit of the cracker in her mouth - staring into Sam's eyes.

She smiles and laughs. Just the sound of air through her nose.

The front door opens. Voices and shuffling interrupt the game.

(CONTINUED)

BLONDE

Sarah, we're home. We brought
somebody.

Sam and Sarah look through the bedroom door to the living room. Sarah's pretty roommates, a 22 year old BLONDE and a 24 year old BRUNETTE place new bags of clothes and boxes of shoes all over the floor and couch.

Behind the girls is a 40-something man with a large beard, an earring and a brown leather vest. Some bad HIPSTER PIRATE.

SARAH

Ok.

Sarah watches as her roommates swarm the space. Noise. She looks around, trying to decide what to do. Sam leans towards her on the bed.

SAM

You wanna grab a drink at the bar?

SARAH

No. I should probably call it a night.

SAM

Really? Come on. One drink. I really don't feel like going home right now.

SARAH

Not tonight, ok?

SAM

Alright.

Sarah climbs off the bed.

SARAH

Come over tomorrow afternoon. We can hang out then.

SAM

Ok.

Walking toward the door, Sam passes Sarah's roommates. They don't pay any attention to him, moving around like bees with their boxes of designer shoes. Not even a smile or a nod.

They are probably models... or aspiring to be.

The pirate dude sits on the couch with his legs crossed - staring the other way. Aloof.

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

A flash of light.

Through the patio door, Sam sees fireworks exploding in the sky beyond the rooftops.

SAM
Weird. Kinda late in the month for fireworks, isn't it?

The girls say nothing. Awkward silence. Sam shrugs.

SAM
Leftovers, I guess.

Sarah seems troubled as she turns away from the fireworks and faces Sam. She tries to grin, but it reads false.

SAM
Okayyy. Well goodnight.

SARAH
Goodnight.

SAM
Ok. I'll see you tomorrow.

SARAH
Good.

Sam walks outside as Sarah closes the door.

14 EXT. VESELICH AVENUE - NIGHT

14

Sam walks along the lamp-lit sidewalk, passing the houses and decrepit apartments of his east side neighborhood. He spins his key chain in his hand.

Sam steps into the street, reaching his car, a late model black Mustang.

He stares in shock.

The whole side of the car has been keyed. Scratch marks cover it from fender to rear panel.

A very large cartoon penis is scratched into the hood. Deep in the paint.

Enraged, Sam grabs the door handle, but quickly pulls his hand back. Chewed gum sticks to his fingertips, stretching over his palm in elongated wet strands.

SAM
Fuck.

(CONTINUED)

Sam wipes the gum onto the concrete and sits there, staring at the scratch marks up and down his car. Overwhelmed.

He breathes slowly but deeply.

Sam hears a noise. Distant. He looks down the street and sees a few teenage boys crossing by some parked cars - creeping suspiciously.

Standing up, Sam sneaks closer, using the cover of trees, garbage cans and a parked van. He gets within sight of the kids.

Three boys. Probably thirteen to fifteen years old. Stupid grins on their faces. Keys in hand. One of them has a carton of eggs.

The boys chuckle as the smallest of the three kids drops his pants and starts to pee on the passenger side door of some old BMW.

Near silent laughter. Open mouths shaking in vandal's delight.

The boy finishes then plays with his fly - zipping up.

Sam walks up to the boy casually from the darkness. The kid turns. Sam grabs his t-shirt under the collar and pulls him toward a heavy punch - to the face.

The boy grunts - exhaling his pain.

STUPID BOY #1

Uhhhh.

STUPID BOY #2

What the hell, man?

The kid drops the carton onto the grass. Sam grabs an egg from the carton and pushes it into the boys mouth. He chokes and screams as the egg mixes with the blood in his teeth.

SAM

You little fuck!

One of the boys tries to help, but Sam punches him in the balls. He rolls over onto the grass. Moaning in agony.

Small fireworks crackle in the distance.

Sam punches the first kid again - blood flies out of his mouth.

Jumping up, Sam kicks the other boy in the stomach. The kid coughs and rolls in pain.

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

Sam turns to head home.

All we hear are the footsteps of the third boy as he races down the center of the street.

Running away. Running away from Sam.

15 EXT. SAM'S BALCONY - NIGHT

15

Inside, the television is on...

A news program highlights the life of missing billionaire Jefferson Sevence.

STILL MISSING!

The program shows archival news footage of Sevence performing Evel Knievel style stunts and Howard Hughes-esque exploits.

Sam sits alone on his balcony drinking several beers - a six pack resting on the spare patio chair.

Sweat on his face. A sad look in his eyes.

He's reading a page from the local zine "Under the Silver Lake" - holding it delicately with his sticky fingers.

The headline reads:

Beware the Dog Killer

On the page is a drawing of a hooded man lifting an impaled dog into the air with his bowie knife.

We see xeroxed pics of 20's era Edendale, and silent film photographs, as Sam reads quietly to himself.

SAM

(reading)

Silverlake and the east side of Los Angeles were originally built around the silent film studios. Back then the area was known as Edendale. In 1978 a Silverlake resident discovered a can of film in his basement. In the movie, a young man holds a note in front of the camera. It reads: "No one will ever be happy here until all the dogs are dead". He then shoots himself in the head with a pistol. The man was an aspiring actor who saw himself as the next Douglas Fairbanks.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

SAM (cont'd)

He was said to have been jealous of animals, specifically citing a deep contempt for Teddy the Wonder Dog. He resented the dog's success and blamed *all dogs* for his failed life. The man who found the film cannister claims that his house was originally used for training stunt dogs for early Mack Sennett shorts. This author believes the suicide of this obscure and failed actor might be the origin or impetus for the modern day dog killer. Is Edendale cursed? For now the answers remain hidden, deep below the surface... Under The Silver Lake.

16 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK TUNNEL - NIGHT 16

Sam walks through a long tunnel. He hears dogs barking ahead.

17 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK ROAD - NIGHT 17

Reaching the end of the tunnel, Sam emerges onto a dark and wooded street.

More barking - just out of sight in the trees. He steps off the road onto a wooded path.

18 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK TRAIL - NIGHT 18

Sam walks slowly along the tree-lined dirt trail. Moonlit.

Dogs continue to bark in the distance. Sam follows their sound.

He notices a dog biscuit on the ground below his feet. Picking it up, he examines it, twisting it in his fingers. He knows this brand.

Sam sees another - just ahead.

He follows the dark trail of multi-colored dog treats, deeper into the woods.

Flies buzz over a small dark mass alongside the path. Sam stops and looks down.

Partially covered by leaves, he sees the rib cage and half-buried head of a dog in the dirt. A Bichon Frise.

Strange sounds... up ahead.

Sam hears the odd noises and walks closer to them - further down the trail.

(CONTINUED)



18 CONTINUED:

The sound of chewing?

Entering a clearing, Sam sees the back of a woman - Sarah's dress, white bonnet and slippers.

Is that Sarah?

She's hunched down over a man's body. Eating something.

As Sam steps closer, he sees the dead man's face in the moonlight. It's the missing billionaire, Jefferson Sevence.

The chewing intensifies. Lips smacking.

Sam hears a dog bark behind him. He doesn't look. It barks again.

The woman turns around and faces him... it's not Sarah.

It's an UNKNOWN MAN with blood on his mouth and face. Flesh in his teeth. He stares at Sam, beneath the white bonnet.

Curious and innocent like a dog.

Jefferson Sevence's body is in two pieces. Clearly severed at the waist.

The strange man barks. It sounds like the little dog, Coca Cola, yapping.

Sam stares as some unseen force pulls the body's two halves in opposite directions. Each dragged across the grass into the woods - as though pulled away by fishing line.

Gone in a flash.

19 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - MORNING

19

Sam opens his eyes into the bright sun.

He's curled up and drooling on the couch. The TV is still on. Beer cans nearby.

Sam rolls over and grabs a Spider Man comic from the floor. It sticks to his fingertips. He shakes his hand, but the comic is stuck.

Sam peels it off, then looks at the chewed gum, still covering parts of his hand.

He exhales and shakes his head.

20 EXT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ APARTMENTS - DAY

20

Sam walks along the garden path towards Sarah's apartment.

He knocks on her front door. No one answers.

Sam walks around back and steps onto Sarah's patio. Coca Cola isn't there. The patio chairs are missing. The old newspapers and dog poop are gone.

The young man peeks in through the patio door. The blinds are open.

There's no furniture inside. The apartment is completely empty.

21 INT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ MANAGER'S OFFICE - DAY

21

Inside the glass-walled, log-cabin office, Sam leans against one of the desks.

A greasy haired MANAGER with a puckered face, looks up from behind his monitor. His contempt is obvious. He stares at Sam as though he's looking into an unflushed toilet.

MANAGER

They moved out. How does that *not* makes sense?

SAM

Who moves out in the middle of the night?

MANAGER

They wanted to leave. They forfeited their deposit, paid the lease. *They... moved... out.* Nothing strange about it.

SAM

I don't know why she wouldn't have told me?

MANAGER

I don't know. Maybe she didn't like you. Maybe she knows you're poor and you haven't paid your rent. Maybe she doesn't want to date a homeless man?

Sam says nothing. He stares at the smug manager - anger brewing.

(CONTINUED)

MANAGER

Speaking of rent... this isn't personal, but I want you to know that you'll be forcibly removed if you can't pay in the next seven days.

SAM

I got it.

MANAGER

Ok. Great.

22 INT. DRAWING ROOM - DAY

22

Sam drinks whiskey in the dark bar. Sunlight occasionally cuts across the shadows, as patrons enter or exit.

A heavy man, with a half-bald head, shifts on his stool. Sam's 43-year-old BAR BUDDY gulps his beer and rubs his ear in contemplation.

SAM

I couldn't even find her online.

BAR BUDDY

Yeah. It's kinda weird. I don't know. What do ya do?

SAM

Not sure.

Two drunk women, behind tall beers, carry on their own conversation at the bar. We hear pieces of it...

BAR BUDDY

Have you heard about these dog killers?

OLD DRUNK WOMAN

The only thing I hate more than *getting patted on the head* is loooooove on a schedule.

SAM

There's more than one?

YOUNG DRUNK WOMAN

They always say to me "you're too pretty to be this nice" or "you don't look like you've had a child." God I just want to find somebody with a little financial security. I can dream, right?

BAR BUDDY

Who knows. Creeps me out. It's one thing to get mugged, but to have some dude stab your dog right before your eyes... that would traumatize a person... fuckin' horrible.

SAM

Totally.

Sam takes a sip from his glass.

(CONTINUED)

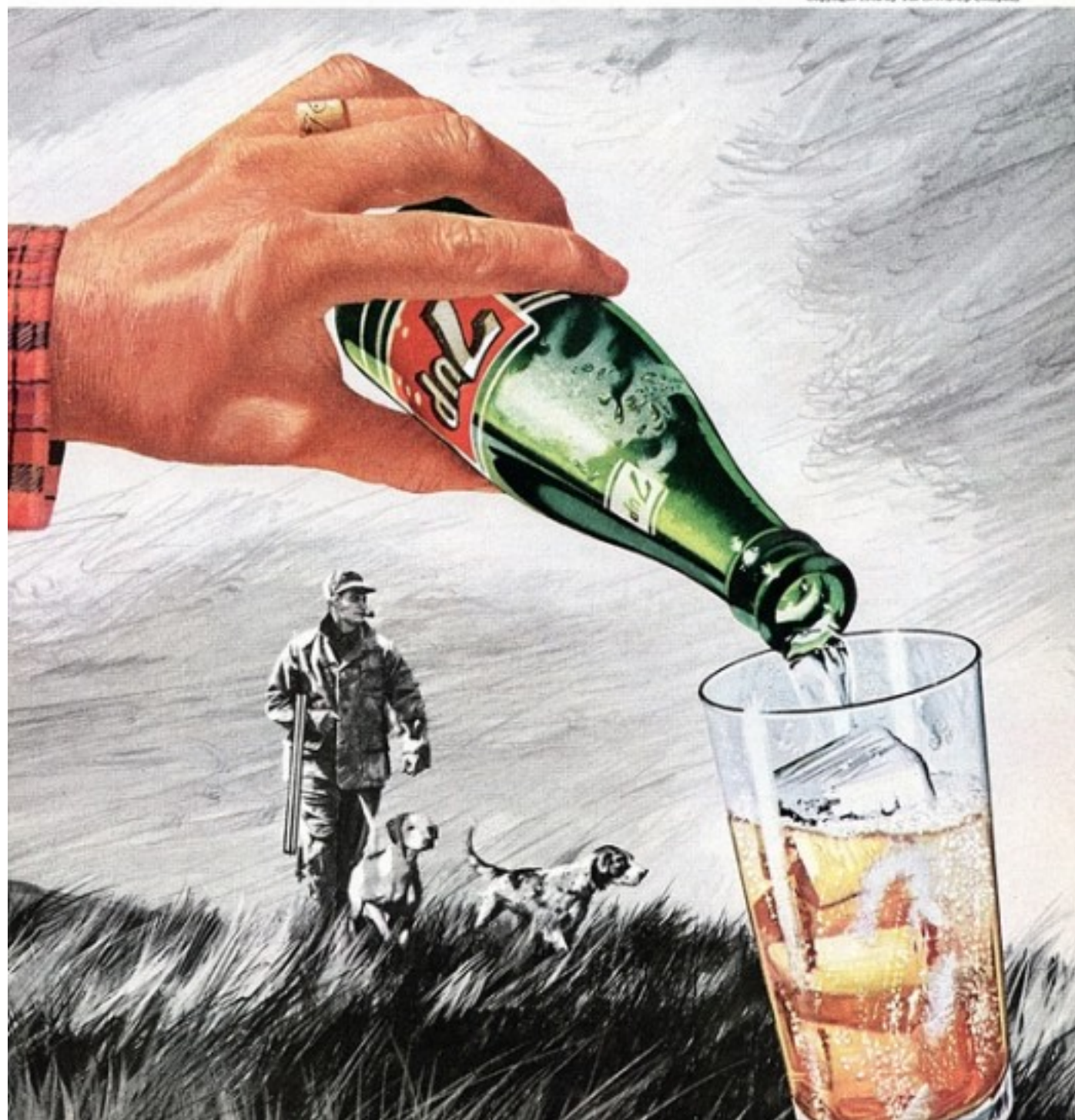


the man's mixer

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22 CONTINUED:

BAR BUDDY
Maybe she left a clue?

SAM
What?

BAR BUDDY
The girl. If something bad happened,
there might be... *evidence.* Blood on
the carpet. I don't know.

Sam shrugs... *Sure, evidence. Why not?* He takes a big swig of
whiskey.

23 EXT. NEAR SARAH'S PATIO - DAY

23

Sam steps behind some shrubs, locating Sarah's bedroom window.
He's sweaty. A bit drunk.

He looks back and scans the neighboring balconies. Seems
clear. No one's around.

The young man slides a screwdriver behind the window screen
and pops it out. Quickly, he climbs inside with a thud.

24 INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

24

Sam twists the blinds closed - covering the open window.

He turns and faces the empty room. Dust sits along the carpet
edges where furniture once stood.

Sam looks down the hallway into the vacant living room. He
casually spins back and sees the closed closet door.

He walks over and opens it. The clothes and shoes are gone.
But at the top of the shelf is a box. Sam pulls it down and
looks inside.

He sees some music CDs, a dance trophy, three collectible
Barbie dolls from the "How to Marry a Millionaire" series, an
open pack of Fruit Stripes gum, a pink vibrator and a
photograph of Sarah. Sam grabs the picture of Sarah smiling in
her white hat, and puts it in his pocket.

He hears a sound. Keys rattling. The front door begins to
unlock.

Sam puts the box back on the shelf, steps out and closes the
closet door. He hears the front door click as it starts to
open.

Thinking fast, Sam climbs back out the bedroom window. He
reaches in and settles the shaking blinds.



25 EXT. NEAR SARAH'S PATIO - CONTINUOUS

25

Sam remains there, behind the bushes, peeking into the bedroom. Waiting to see who's arrived.

A young woman, TROY, in jean shorts and a Joan Jett and the Blackhearts t-shirt, steps into the bedroom. Her hair is thin and "dirty white". Her face is pretty, but a little masculine.

A tomboy, sex-pot and scenester combined.

Sam watches the girl open the closet and go inside - a cloth Trader Joe shopping bag in her hand.

After a moment, she emerges with the box in her arms.

Setting it down in the middle of the empty room, Troy dumps the contents of the box into the bag. She reaches in, grabs a stick of gum and puts it in her mouth.

Troy picks up the bag and walks into the hallway.

As she leaves, the girl closes the bedroom door - revealing a marking on the wall - previously hidden.

<><>

Through the blinds, Sam stares at the strange symbol.

Drawn in pink nail polish...

Two diamond shapes, joined at the tip...

<><>

Sam stares at the symbol for a moment. Clearly puzzled.

A storm door closes.

Footsteps.

Sam ducks and watches Troy cross by, swinging her bag of goodies along the garden path.

26 EXT. VESELICH AVENUE - DAY

26

Trailing the girl from the opposite side of the street, Sam walks slowly, stepping behind trees and parked cars.

Troy strolls along the sidewalk.

A car pulls up in the intersection before her. It's a 1984 Volkswagon Rabbit Wolfsburg convertible.

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

Two other hipster girls are inside. A black haired girl is driving. A freckled redhead in back.

Familiar indie-rock pours from the speakers.

Troy races up and hops into the passenger seat. The car takes off towards Los Feliz Boulevard.

Sam sprints to his car.

27 INT. SAM'S FORD MUSTANG - DAY

27

Sam drives along Los Feliz keeping the Rabbit convertible in his sights - just a few cars ahead.

He follows the girls, turning left onto Griffith Park Boulevard.

Sam watches their car slow down and stop in front of John Marshall High School. He pulls over and waits.

Troy and her friends sit still - engine running - across from the football field.

Some local teens pass by Sam's car. They point and laugh at the penis drawing covering his hood. He ignores them.

From his center console, Sam pulls out a pen and an LA County parking ticket. He draws the secret shape on the ticket.

<><>

Looking up, Sam notices the girls staring over at the high school scoreboard. Some numbers flash on the visitor's side.

The number 7... then the number 5... and finally the number 1.

Sam writes them on his ticket.

7 5 1

The white rabbit convertible pulls back onto the road and heads towards Rowena. Sam stays in pursuit.

28 INT. SAM'S FORD MUSTANG - DAY

28

Traveling down Sunset Boulevard...

Sam follows, trailing the car toward Echo Park.

29 EXT. ECHO PARK LAKE - DUSK

29

The sun begins to set over the lake as Sam idles along Echo Park Avenue.

(CONTINUED)

He watches the girls walk up to the nearby boat house.

Leaving his car, Sam follows the threesome.

He looks around the boat house and sees a PARK EMPLOYEE helping the girls into two red paddle boats. Troy climbs in with the brunette - the Trader Joe bag over her shoulder.

They start to pedal away from the dock. The handsome Park Employee eyes them as they float off.

Sam hops in his own blue paddle boat and starts to pedal - churning water and gaining momentum. Paddling out, he follows the two red boats from a distance as they round the bend.

Swishing water.

Shwwww. Shwwww. Shwwww.

Moving under the bridge, Sam turns the corner into the open water. The lake is calm. The orange sky reflects over the park, mixing with palm trees, flowers and the gentle gaze of the Lady of the Lake statue.

The girls stop pedaling. Their boats slow down and begin to simply drift. The redhead waves at her friends in the first boat. They makes faces back at her. A few splashes of water.

Sam stays still, letting his boat float sideways within the lake. He casually turns and watches the girls.

Waiting.

Troy and her friend start to paddle together once more. Faster than before. Their boat reaches the opposite shore line.

Sam watches as a man appears over the hilltop. He runs down over the grass and meets Troy as her paddle boat bumps against the concrete rim of the lake.

Sam recognizes the man. It's the middle-aged hipster pirate he saw at Sarah's.

Troy passes the cloth bag to the pirate. He takes it and runs back up the hill.

He's gone.

SAM
(whispering)
Fuck.

Sam looks around, and starts to turn his paddle boat toward the dock.

30 INT. SAM'S FORD MUSTANG - EVENING

30

A few lengths behind the convertible Rabbit, Sam drives his car down 2nd Street towards the city.

Homeless people look up from their shopping carts and cardboard beds as the black Mustang passes by.

Sam enters the tunnel under Bunker Hill. He stares ahead - the girls sit calmly together.

Turning onto 6th Street, the Rabbit drives up in front of the Standard Hotel. Sam trails behind, watching as Troy and her friends hop out - pulling beach towels and pool rafts from the car. The brunette passes the keys off to the SHADY VALET.

The redhead pulls her t-shirt off, revealing a bikini top. She swings the shirt over her shoulder and smiles to the brunette.

Sam drives closer, watching the three pretty hipsters go into the back door of the hotel. Troy laughs as she blows air into an inner tube - disappearing through the doorway.

Pulling into a blue-lined parking space, Sam takes out a handicap-parking permit and hangs it from his mirror.

31 INT. STANDARD HOTEL ELEVATOR - EVENING

31

Sam rides up alone. The elevator doors open. Live music pours in from the rooftop patio.

32 EXT. DOWNTOWN STANDARD ROOFTOP BAR - EVENING

32

Standing before Sam is a leggy woman in a bikini and black top hat. Her extended leg in the doorway forces Sam to face her - although he would have done so regardless.

BIKINI TOP HAT GIRL
Welcome to purgatory.

SAM
Uh... good to be here. I needed some
time to think about things.

The bikini girl smiles. She pulls a small sewing needle from a plush, cherry-shaped, pin cushion and presents it to Sam.

BIKINI TOP HAT GIRL
Use it wisely.

Sam smirks and slides the pin through the pocket of his shirt as he walks on.

(CONTINUED)

He passes an identical girl, performing an identical greeting to a small crowd exiting the adjacent elevator.

A POET dressed like a 1940's housewife marches by, stepping across the furniture and tables while reading poetry against the loud music. She tears little pieces of paper from her page and drops them to the ground like rose petals.

HOUSEWIFE POET

All these... holy trinities of
women... thriving like plants... under
the heat... of the city's male
gaze....three three three... three
three three... three three three...

Sam scans the area for Troy and the girls. He sees them sitting down on a big couch near the stage. A live band is playing before a crowd.

Stepping closer, Sam sees the understated singer and his gorgeous female band. It's Jesus and the Brides of Dracula - made clear by the accompanying signage and drum logo.

The THREE BRIDES are all in white 1920's gowns with pale skin and sad eyes. JESUS is in old blue jeans - bare chested with a cross around his neck.

Sam moves closer as the band kicks into a prolonged music jam.

Faster and faster, the tempo rises.

The crowd parts as a dancer emerges from behind the stage. She draws all attention - including Sam's.

A teenage girl in a green unitard dances provocatively wearing an enormous mass of multi-colored balloons. BALLOON GIRL smiles and gyrates. Her arms wave in the air as her shoulders sway.

Suddenly she begins to scream over the pounding drums. All part of the act, but strange nevertheless.

Balloon girl dances through the crowd screaming as everyone pokes and pops the balloons with their sewing needles.

Pop. Pop. Pop. Pop. Pop.

The music reaches a crescendo and ends with a final roar.

Sam watches as balloon girl emerges from the mob - she's covered in deflated rubber over her nylon suit. She stares up at the sky, as though healed by Pentecostal powers.

The crowd cheers as the band disappears behind a curtain.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED: (2)

TROY

I love you Jesus!

Sam pulls the sewing needle from his shirt and tosses it over the edge of the roof - without thinking twice.

33 EXT. DOWNTOWN STANDARD ROOFTOP - EVENING

33

Loud music everywhere.

Sam sits down along the edge of the pool - jeans rolled up - feet in the water. He sips his fruity cocktail and watches Troy and her girlfriends strip into their bathing suits.

Troy kicks off her sandals and dives into the water.

Sam watches Troy swim to the far edge of the pool. The young woman climbs onto a raft and lays back - she pulls a flask from her waist-band and takes a swig.

The redhead, FANNIE, a freckled and slightly plump beauty, stretches and yawns at the edge of the pool. Her teeth are oddly spaced - a missed opportunity for braces - but even this mistake contributes to her appeal.

The black haired girl, MAE, steps cautiously into the pool. She's slim with dark features - girlish compared with her friends - a bob haircut more at home in the 1970's than the millennial teens.

MAE

Is Jesus still here or did he leave already?

Sam fixes his sights on Troy. She is calmly spinning slow circles on her raft.

TROY

I'm not sure.

FANNIE

He's with one of the brides I think.

Fannie climbs down the ladder into the blue tank. She starts to swim.

MAE

Romantically?

FANNIE

Probably.

Sam drinks and eavesdrops - trying to look like he belongs.

(CONTINUED)

MAE

Seems like he's making his way through
all of 'em.

TROY

One bride at a time.

FANNIE

He's a romantic.

Fannie and Mae laugh together as Troy grins. She takes another
gulp from her flask.

TROY

You don't become a bride without
fucking Jesus.

MAE

If he wasn't so good looking he'd
never get away with it.

Troy climbs out of the water, looking back at her friends.

TROY

Blessed by his holy father I guess.

Sam watches as Troy heads to the bathroom. He stands up and
follows.

34 INT. WOMEN'S BATHROOM - EVENING

34

The toilet flushes and Troy opens her stall. Sam is standing
between her and the sink. Troy gives him a dirty look and
tries to walk around him. Sam blocks her path, holding up the
photo of Sarah.

SAM

Do you know this girl?

The girl looks at the photograph, but says nothing. She stares
at Sam - looking him up and down.

SAM

Do you know where she is?

Troy spits her gum in Sam's face. It hits his nose and falls
to the floor. Sam grabs her arm and yanks her closer.

SAM

Fuck you. Seriously. Is she ok?

Troy knees Sam in the balls. She pulls away from his grip as
he falls to the floor.

(CONTINUED)

She runs out.

A fresh group of drunk hipster girls walk into the bathroom and see Sam on the floor. They make ugly faces at him and bark - strong and very aggressive - flashing gang signs from places they've never visited.

BATHROOM GIRL

Get the fuck outta here. It's the
ladies room.

ANOTHER BATHROOM GIRL

Piece of shit. Asshole.

As the girls shout and curse, their barking becomes *literal*. From their sweet mouths come deep and disturbing *dog barks*.

AND ANOTHER BATHROOM GIRL

Fuckin' *toilet licker.*

The girls cackle and laugh at their explosion of expletives. Sam tries to sit up.

35 EXT. DOWNTOWN STANDARD HOTEL ROOFTOP - CONTINUOUS

35

Sam hobbles, hunched over, through the beautiful crowd. It's even louder than before.

One of the Brides of Dracula, a green-eyed beauty in oversized reading glasses and grey lipstick, chats energetically with a gentle giant.

Sam passes by the READING GLASSES BRIDE, moving toward the pool.

READING GLASSES BRIDE

We thought about naming ourselves
Jesus and the Brides of Frankenstein.
Cause there's just so much vampirism
in pop culture, we were worried the
Dracula thing might be a little
tiresome.

GIANT HIPSTER WITH GIANT BEARD

I think it works for you.

This conversation, and others like it, plays out in the background - overlapping with the primary story. Altman-esque.

READING GLASSES BRIDE

Yeah. There's something liberating
about 1920's fashion. Obviously
there's the whole "*undead flapper*
girl" thing. Ya know...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

READING GLASSES BRIDE (cont'd)

all women are condemned as monsters
the moment they start doing the
Charleston. Fuck society, right?

GIANT HIPSTER WITH GIANT BEARD

I agree...

Moving past the crowd, Sam finally gets a clear view of the pool area. Troy and the girls are gone.

A HAND lands hard on Sam's shoulder. He jumps.

FAUX ANGRY VOICE

What are you doing here?!

Sam spins around and sees ALLEN, a grinning guy with floppy hair and a chiseled jaw - laughing and patting Sam's back.

SAM

Hey, Allen. Good to see you.

Allen gives Sam a hug. Sam looks down at Allen's attire.

Though very masculine, Allen wears a few pieces of women's clothing - slightly repurposed for irony or comfort's sake.

SAM

Is that a woman's blouse?

ALLEN

I guess so.

SAM

Ok.

ALLEN

What are you doing? Keepin' busy with work?

SAM

Of course. How 'bout you?

Allen drifts through the conversation. Floating in both words and gestures.

ALLEN

Yeah you know... workin'. Mostly, thinkin' about things. How does the world work? Why are we swimming on rooftops when there's an ocean right over there.

(CONTINUED)

Sam stands more still than the others - less at ease in this world of artists and secret socialites. Also, he was just kneed in the balls.

SAM

Well I don't have any answers.

ALLEN

Nobody does.

Allen grins, nodding and patting Sam on the shoulder a few more times.

SAM

Hey, do you know a blond, a redhead and a brunette that drive a Rabbit convertible?

ALLEN

No, but I'm looking forward to meeting 'em.

SAM

Well... I'm... trying...

A beautiful black girl in a sparkling emerald evening gown walks up to Allen. He smiles to the EMERALD BEAUTY and points to her dress.

ALLEN

Hey! I like the dress.

The girl smiles and tips her chin in flirtatious recognition.

EMERALD BEAUTY

Thanks, Allen.

Emerald Beauty stares over Allen's shoulder.

EMERALD BEAUTY

Oh my God. Take a look.

Both Allen and Sam turn and see a leggy brunette in gold shorts.

It's Millicent Sevence.

She's drinking, laughing and flirting with another girl.

EMERALD BEAUTY

Isn't that Millicent Sevence?

ALLEN

I think so.

(CONTINUED)

EMERALD BEAUTY

What is she doing here? Isn't her dad
kidnapped or something?

ALLEN

Not a very classy move.

SAM

(feeling his groin)
It's hard to say what a person might
do when they're in pain.

The pair ignore Sam, as they scoff and stare.

Emerging from the crowd in her white gothic gown, one of the
Brides of Dracula edges into the circle. A fragile doll.

The MEEK BRIDE waves at the group like a shy schoolgirl - a
wicker basket filled with cookies in her hand.

MEEK BRIDE

I'm doing a secret solo show tomorrow
night at Hollywood Forever if you
wanna come.

ALLEN

Yeah. I'd love to.

MEEK BRIDE

These are your tickets.

The girl delicately hands both Allen and Emerald Beauty a
homemade cookie. The Meek Bride looks at Sam, pauses and gives
him one too - like Valentine's day in grade school. Everyone
gets a card if you show up.

BRIDE

Don't eat it or break it. If it's
missing anything, even a crumb, they
won't let you in.

Sam looks at the cookie in his hand - frosted with green
piping - the number 76.

ALLEN

Thanks.

The Meek Bride offers a half-grin then turns to deliver more
VIP treats to the crowd. She repeats her pitch.

(CONTINUED)

MEEK BRIDE
(moving into the crowd)
I'm doing a secret solo show tomorrow
night at Hollywood Forever if you
wanna come...

Emerald Beauty looks down at her iphone, reading her twitter
feed.

EMERALD BEAUTY
Oh my God.

ALLEN
What?

EMERALD BEAUTY
It looks like they found Millicent's
dad.

SAM
Really?

EMERALD BEAUTY
His body was *burned* or something.

ALLEN
He's dead?

EMERALD BEAUTY
Yeah.

SAM
Does *she* know?

All eyes turn towards Millicent Sevence. The billionaire's
daughter pulls away from a sapphic kiss, and makes a funny
face as she reaches for her drink.

Emerald Beauty whispers something to a MALE MODEL. A few
people around Millicent start to look up from their smart
phones, reacting to some terrible news. More and more people
within the crowd turn their attention toward the young woman.

Millicent sways and laughs.

A chain reaction of hushed whispers. Elbowing between friends.
Faces looking up from iphones. Chatter and gossip.

Sam watches this from the edge. Everyone waits for Millicent
to hear what they already know.

A girl runs through the crowd and whispers into Millicent's
ear.

(CONTINUED)

35 CONTINUED: (5)

Sam watches the young woman's face. She's devastated, but holds it in.

Millicent walks slowly through the hipsters to the elevator. She's gone.

36 EXT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ APARTMENTS - NIGHT

36

Sam opens the outer security gate.

Fog drifts across the garden walkways of Sam's complex. A foreboding quality in the night air.

Sam walks alone.

It's quiet except for crickets and the sound of water rippling in the stream.

Sam hears footsteps behind him. He turns and looks back.

No one is there. Darkness.

We move with Sam, tracking through the foggy walkway. The young man steps nervously - alert.

Sam's cell phone rings. He answers.

SAM

Hello?

COMIC MAN

(on phone)

Hi, um... one of the guys at Secret Headquarters, the comic store, gave me your number. They said you wanted to talk to me.

SAM

Oh shit, yeah. I read your zine. I wanted to ask you more about it. Is there a time we could meet up?

COMIC MAN

(on phone)

Sure. I'll be drawing all day tomorrow. You're welcome to stop by the house.

Sam hears something again. He spins back as a dark figure crosses the path - into the shadows.

SAM

Cool. Could you text me your address?

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

Sam stares back. Concerned.

COMIC MAN
(on phone)
Yeah I can do that.

Still watching - no movement.

SAM
Great. I'll see ya then.

COMIC MAN
(on phone)
Yeah. See you tomorrow.

Sam hangs up his phone and stares into the darkness.
Listening.

He sees a shadow lean out from behind a distant building. Gone again.

Sam turns and starts to jog ahead. He looks around anxiously.
Through the dark garden path. In and out of the lamp light.

Reaching an intersection of paths, Sam slows down and looks to his right. He notices a man standing in the center of the walkway.

The man is not moving. His body and face are shrouded in darkness.

Sam turns left and starts to run. He doesn't look back.
Turning another corner, Sam scrambles and climbs behind a large tree.

Loud rustling - behind him. A strange cry.

Sam turns and sees black fur rising from the brush within the tall grass. It's the rear end of a skunk.

The animal shakes and sprays. Sam covers his head and closes his eyes as the skunk bathes him in its odor.

Sam staggers out of his hiding place, wiping the fluid from his face. His eyes water. He hunches over on the sidewalk and begins to heave.

Sam vomits on the walkway.

Cough. Choke.

Sitting there, he tries to open his eyes. Slow and painful.
The fluid stings.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

Sam opens his eyelids - just enough. He looks up the garden path and sees no one. The shadow man is gone.

37 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

37

Standing on his kitchen tile, Sam strips off his clothes into a garbage bag. The television is on nearby.

A beautifully decorated cookie sits on his counter-top next to Sarah's photo and a parking ticket covered in symbols and scribbles.

MALE REPORTER

(on tv)

Yes. I agree. The city is in shock at the loss of such a *cultural landmark*. This man has literally been the face of Los Angeles for decades through his charity work, his Hollywood production company, the New Year's Eve telecast, his public appearances at Awards shows, the *Rose Parade*... the list just goes on and on...

Leaning over in his underwear, Sam watches the news report. We see helicopter footage of a burned up Deussenberg near Silver Lake Boulevard and the 101.

Sam pulls his briefs down and tosses them into the bag.

FEMALE REPORTER

(on tv)

It's hard to believe, but the Los Angeles Police Commissioner has confirmed that the remains are those of Jefferson Sevence. As we reported earlier, Sevence was found dead in his car with the bodies of three women believed to be prostitutes.

This catches Sam's attention.

He runs across the room and stands before the television, buck naked. He watches intensely.

FEMALE REPORTER

(on tv)

In addition, some unnamed sources have leaked a very odd detail about the case. Apparently the remains of a *dog*, a breed known as Bichon Frise, were found in the purse of one of the victims.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

FEMALE REPORTER (cont'd)

This has officially become a very
grisly and puzzling murder
investigation.

Sam watches the crime scene footage. A detective carries an
evidence bag into a police van. Reporters and cops everywhere.

Sam tilts his head, and presses a button on his cable box. The
screen pauses.

He zooms in with the remote - focusing on the grainy image of
the crime scene bag. It's white and charred.

Concerned with neither his odor nor his nudity, Sam grabs
Sarah's photo from the counter.

He holds the picture up, examining the details of Sarah's
white bonnet - the pink ribbon hanging near her ear.

He compares it against the tv screen, zooming-in once more.

Though it's a fuzzy blur, the burnt white cloth and pink
ribbon are clearly visible within the evidence bag.

It's Sarah's hat.

SAM

Fuck.

38 INT. SAM'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

38

Open tin cans sit on the bathroom sink. Inside the tub is Sam,
soaking in tomato juice - scrubbing the skunk scent from his
body.

The actress is on the floor, wearing a slutty nurse outfit,
and plugging her nose.

She reads out loud to Sam - a page from "Under the Silver
Lake".

ACTRESS

(reading)

Who is the Owl's Kiss?

The actress turns the zine around and shows Sam the picture
accompanying the typewriter essay. It's a cartoon depiction of
a naked woman in an owl skin mask with a large tuft of pubic
hair between her legs.

ACTRESS

According to this picture it's a naked
lady with an unshaven bush.

(CONTINUED)

Sam shakes his head and smiles.

SAM
Just read it.

The actress makes a face and returns to her duty.

ACTRESS
(reading)
The Owl's Kiss is a lost legend of folklore. Just as terrifying as the Wolfman or Frankenstein's Monster. She is a woman who arrives in the night, through windows and locked doors, naked except for her mask of taxidermied owl skin. She seduces men and women alike, killing them in their sleep. This beautiful spectre is responsible for dozens of deaths within the Los Angeles basin, though she has yet to be mentioned by mainstream media. Theories abound as to her motives. *This author* believes she may be a member of a longstanding American cult with origins in trade and finance. It's the unlucky soul who finds himself the recipient of an owl's kiss.

The actress raises her brow and tosses the zine on top of the toilet.

ACTRESS
What a bunch'a horse shit.

Sam nods out of respect as the young woman rests her back against the sink. White nylon legs sprawled unshyly over the floor.

ACTRESS
I can't believe Jefferson Sevence is dead.

Sam listens, scrubbing his face with soap and tomato juice. He dunks his head into the bath once or twice. Rinsing his hair.

ACTRESS
Every year more and more celebrities and people I grew up with keep dying. Dick Clark... Elizabeth Taylor... Johnny Carson.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Everybody dies... even the people we think will be here forever.

With her nose still plugged, the actress's voice sounds extra strange and nasally.

ACTRESS

I remember hearing my aunt talking about that *feeling* - realizing how quick it all goes. It's one of those things you don't understand until you're in it.

SAM

Have you lost anybody? Anybody close?

The actress just nods. She looks at Sam.

ACTRESS

You?

Sam shakes his head. Not yet.

SAM

I think about it though. A lot more than I should.

The actress pets the top of Sam's head. He looks like a big child in the tub... an old baby covered in his food.

ACTRESS

Hey, what were those pages on your nightstand? The ones with all the scribbles?

SAM

Ehhhhh. That's nothing.

ACTRESS

No. Tell me. I wanna know.

SAM

You'll get all weirded out.

ACTRESS

No I won't. You've seen me doing my chants and my prep work. I don't care if it's weird.

SAM

Ok. Have you ever heard about old record albums having satanic messages in them if ya play 'em backwards?

(CONTINUED)

ACTRESS

Sure.

SAM

Ok... so I was watching Wheel of Fortune and I noticed that Vanna White did this little pattern of glances every so often. She looked forward then right then left and then back again. And I started wondering... is that random or is there a reason for it? Is there a pattern behind it? And if there is, maybe there's something meaningful in that pattern.

The actress stares and listens as Sam continues explaining his strange theory.

SAM

So I started taking note of when it happened... and for the past 7 months I have a complete record of it. It doesn't happen everyday... it's literally every three episodes except for *one* time. Also, it seems to happen most Wednesdays except for last Wednesday which happened to be a holiday. So I graphed it out and I got some old code books from the library and I've been digging through them, trying to see if it translates to anything... like a word or a message... *something*.

The actress smiles nervously, making a slight sound from her throat as she adjusts her legs. Sam speaks faster and faster.

SAM

I mean, I've just been thinking, why do we assume that all of this infrastructure and entertainment and open information beaming all over the place into every home on the planet is exactly what people tell us it is? Maybe there are people more important, more powerful or wealthier than us that communicate things or see things in the world that are meant for them and not for us. I think it's fucking ridiculous to assume that media only has one purpose... right?

The actress stares at Sam - frozen. She's freaked out, but she tries to hide it.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED: (4)

SAM
You think that's weird?

ACTRESS
A little.

SAM
It's not weird. Don't you ever feel
like rich people know something that
you and I don't?

ACTRESS
Like good restaurants, maybe.

Frustrated, Sam splashes tomato juice over his chest. He exhales deeply.

ACTRESS
Don't take this the wrong way, but you
smell so bad. I think I'm gonna get
going.

The actress starts to stand up. Stretching.

SAM
Ok. Um... thanks for the juice.

ACTRESS
I'll be back when the smell goes away.

The young woman walks out of the bathroom, leaving Sam alone.

39 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

39

Sam sits on his couch watching Wheel of Fortune - a notebook and pen in his hand.

He hears squeals of laughter and water splashing outside his window.

Sam walks out to his balcony.

40 EXT. SAM'S APARTMENT BALCONY - NIGHT

40

Looking down at the pool, Sam sees Sarah swimming alone in the blue water.

Sarah splashes... laughing like Marilyn Monroe.

She swims closer, looking up at Sam. He realizes that she's naked.

(CONTINUED)



SARAH

Come on in. The water is so refreshing.

Sam watches as Sarah reaches the nearest edge of the pool. She props herself on her elbows and lifts a single leg up onto the deck - mimicking Marilyn. She giggles and laughs with a giant grin.

Sam stares. More laughter.

Sarah climbs out and sits on the edge of the pool. With her back to us, she turns and smiles over her shoulder... teasing her body.

She begins to bark at us - the sound of a large dog - something vicious.

Her face is beautiful but her barks are horrific.

Sam watches as she playfully hops back into the pool and dives underwater.

Splash.

It's quiet now. Sam leans over the railing and looks down.

The water settles... no one is in the pool.

41 INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - MORNING

41

Sam opens his eyes, rolls out of bed and looks straight out the window. He sees police stringing crime-scene tape over Sarah's apartment door.

42 EXT. VESELICH AVENUE - DAY

42

Sam exits his apartment gate and walks up the street. He notices a leggy woman in a short red dress climbing out of her Prius.

RED MINISKIRT walks daintily ahead of him on the sidewalk - passing a drunk homeless man in the grass.

Sam watches her ass and legs as she prances along.

On the opposite sidewalk, there are more beautiful women, staggered down the block, but marching forward.

A Fellini-esque parade of mini-skirt models moving down the street in Sam's direction.

Sam tilts his head - trying to understand it all.

(CONTINUED)

Red Miniskirt cuts across the road - pulling out her headshots. She slows down in front of an old duplex.

Inside the dirty garage are several gorgeous models standing around, smiling and chatting with a heavy-set man. He sits behind a folding card table like a king. A makeshift sign reads: Movie Auditions!

Sam passes the garage audition, staring at the odd circus.

Now behind him, Red Miniskirt paces, staring up at the trees - wondering if she should leave.

Sam turns a corner.

Several models stand in the center of the street looking down at the pavement. A look of disgust on their faces.

Red spray paint covers the ground. Some sort of graffiti.

Sam approaches them and the strange markings.

YELLOW MINISKIRT makes a few involuntary, hushed sounds - publically advertising her horror at the message below her.

YELLOW MINISKIRT
Uhhhhhhhe.

Each grunt is accompanied by a body shiver and a little, involuntary two-step dance on her yellow heels.

Sam keeps walking closer.

BLUE MINISKIRT
Gehhh.

Below their high-heeled feet are four giant words - written in red spray paint.

Beware the Dog Killer

GREEN MINISKIRT flips her foot and grimaces, shaking her face with tongue half extended. This really bothers her.

GREEN MINISKIRT
Lllehhhhhehhhaaah.

Sam stares at the painted message as he passes the models. Yellow Miniskirt looks up at him.

YELLOW MINISKIRT
Really creepy, huh?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

SAM

Yeah.

BLUE MINISKIRT

I don't even walk my dog anymore.

GREEN MINISKIRT

We use a litter box.

Yellow Miniskirt waves her hand in front of her nose.

YELLOW MINISKIRT

What's that smell?

BLUE MINISKIRT

I don't know.

Sam sniffs himself and makes a face.

A loud MECHANICAL SOUND!

Sam looks ahead and sees a tow truck lifting his Black Mustang onto its flatbed.

SAM

What the fuuuuckkk?

He starts to sprint, leaving the circle of runway models behind him.

43 EXT. BRUNSWICK AVENUE - MOMENTS LATER

43

Sam pounds on the tow truck driver's window.

The TOW MAN rolls it down and looks at Sam with a wide and angry mouth.

SAM

That's my car! You can't take my
fucking car!

TOW MAN

This is my *job*, man. You can't keep it
if you don't make the payments.

The tow man throws his truck in gear and drives off toward Los Feliz.

Sam watches his car disappear.

A homeless woman stares, wheeling a shopping cart along the sidewalk.

Squeak! Squeak! Go the wheels.

44 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK BOULEVARD - DAY 44

Sam walks down Griffith Park Boulevard, covered in sweat.

He stares at the blank scoreboard near John Marshall High School as he passes.

A car full of teenagers zips down the road. Sam hears a familiar tune approach and recede with their passing.

You and I...

turning like teeth...

loving beneath...

the surface.

Sam listens, wiping sweat from his face. The sun covers all.

45 INT. COMIC MAN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY 45

Knock. Knock. Knock.

COMIC MAN opens his front door and greets Sam - now soaked from the heat.

COMIC MAN
Come on in. You want a beer?

He waves Sam inside. Closing the door.

SAM
Yes, please.

COMIC MAN
Hot day and a cold beer.

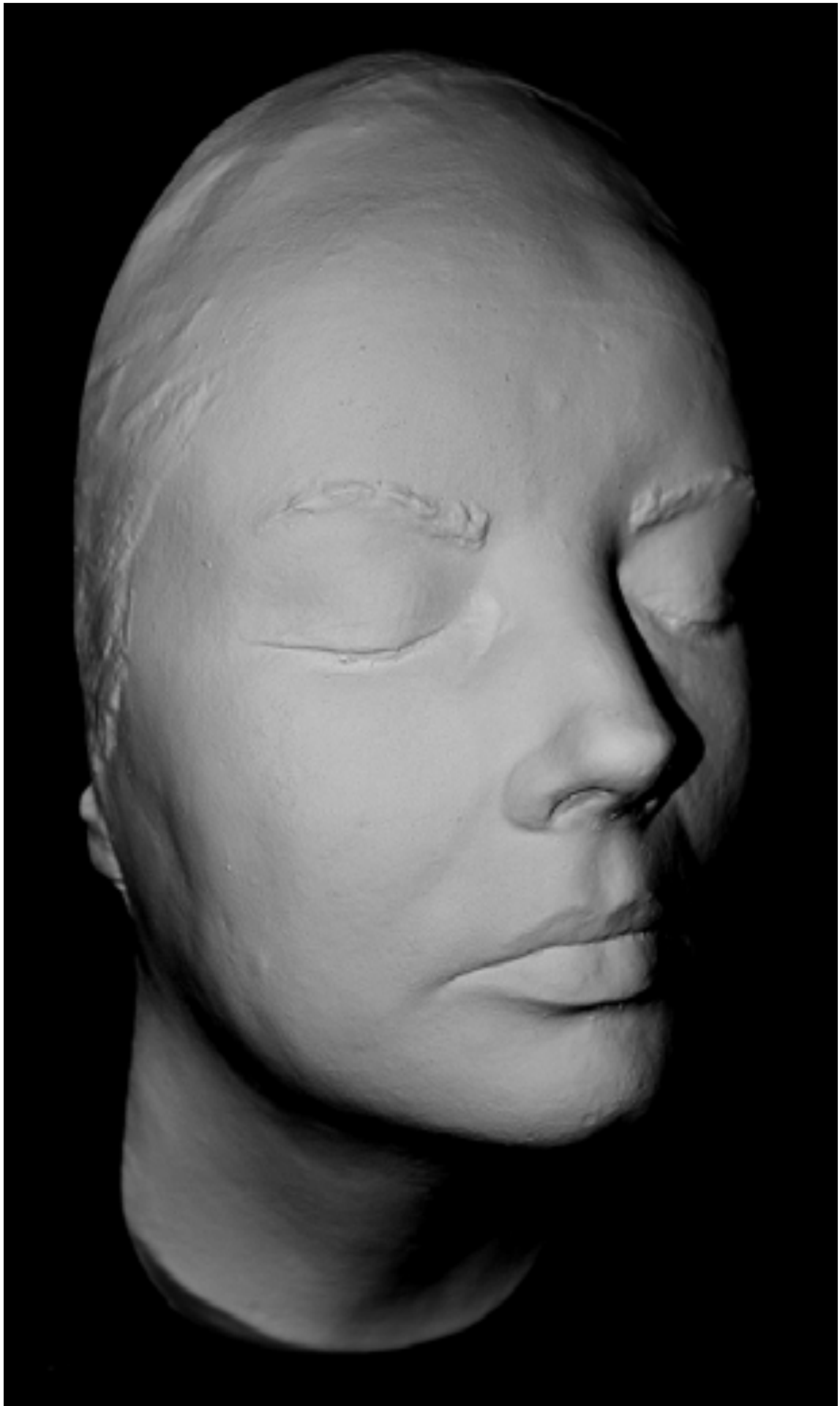
Sam smiles and looks around, fanning himself. It's a mess of a house. Sketches, papers and books litter the room.

Dust balls collect in corners.

From the dim living room into the far hallway, the walls are covered in LIFE MASKS.

Sam fixates on the dozens of solid-white faces hanging everywhere. Their eyes are closed. Their expressions are frozen in time.

(CONTINUED)



He sees... Basil Rathbone, Debbie Reynolds, Angelina Jolie, Bela Lugosi, Katherine Hepburn, Christopher Reeve, Ashton Kutcher, Linda Blair, Charles Laughton, Patricia Arquette, Lou Costello and Robert Redford.

SAM

What are these masks?

COMIC MAN

They're life masks.

Comic Man hands Sam a beer. He cracks it open and takes a drink.

SAM

What's a life mask?

COMIC MAN

They're resin castings of famous people's faces. They're *all real* and they are true to life representations of these amazing people.

SAM

Hm.

COMIC MAN

Most of 'em are from film productions, but some were cast by sculptors for statue construction. Like Lincoln's...

Comic Man points to the chalk-white face of Abraham Lincoln hanging from the wall. His eyelids are closed.

COMIC MAN

That's his real face... and that's Grace Kelly's right next to Johnny Depp.

SAM

Huh.

MAN

I really need to have a family so I have someone to pass these on to. Right? These people need to be remembered.

SAM

I understand.

46 INT. COMIC MAN'S LIVING ROOM - DAY

46

Sitting on the couch, surrounded by books, odd tchotchkes and "Under the Silver Lake" zines, Sam draws the double diamond shape on paper.

<><>

Sam's photograph of Sarah sits on the paper next to the drawing.

Comic Man leans in and looks at the symbol.

COMIC MAN

Stay quiet.

SAM

What?

COMIC MAN

It means "stay quiet". It's a hobo code.

SAM

Really?

COMIC MAN

Yeah. Hobos and rail-riders from the 1930's used it. Here look...

Comic Man grabs a book from his giant shelf. He opens it and shows Sam a graph of common hobo symbols.

O -- || X r <><> ///

Sam lifts a piece of scrap paper from within the book. It's filled with handwritten translations. A simple KEY for the mysterious hobo code.

COMIC MAN














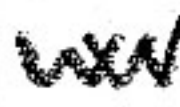

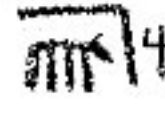
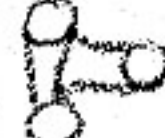
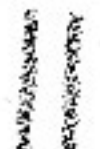






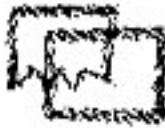










They used it to let other people know who was cool, who wasn't, what houses might offer food, if there's a doctor in that town who might be sympathetic to travelers. That sort of thing.

Sam stares at the symbols, keeping the code-filled book mark in his hand.

SAM

Well why is it in Sarah's room and who are they telling to be quiet?

(CONTINUED)

 <p>KIND LADY LIVES HERE</p>	 <p>KIND WOMAN, tell pitiful story</p>	 <p>OR</p>  <p>FOOD HERE if you WORK</p>	 <p>RELIGIOUS TALK gets FREE MEAL</p>		
 <p>IF YOU ARE SICK, they'll care for you</p>	 <p>DOCTOR HERE, WON'T CHARGE</p>	 <p>FREE TELEPHONE</p>	 <p>ALCOHOL IN THIS TOWN</p>	 <p>OR</p>  <p>YOU CAN SLEEP in HAYLOFT</p>	
 <p>KEEP QUIET</p>	 <p>HOLD YOUR TONGUE</p>	 <p>BARKING DOG HERE</p>	 <p>VICIOUS DOG HERE</p>	 <p>BEWARE of FOUR DOGS</p>	 <p>EASY MARK, SUCKER</p>
 <p>THE SKY is the LIMIT</p>	 <p>TROLLEY STOP</p>	 <p>GOOD PLACE to CATCH a TRAIN</p>	 <p>THIS IS NOT A SAFE PLACE</p>	 <p>MAN with a GUN LIVES HERE</p>	 <p>BE PREPARED to DEFEND YOURSELF</p>
 <p>DISHONEST PERSON LIVES HERE</p>	 <p>COWARDS, will give, to get rid of you</p>	 <p>YOU'LL BE CURSED OUT</p>	 <p>A BEATING AWAITS YOU HERE</p>	 <p>POLICE HERE, FROWN on HOBOS</p>	 <p>AUTHORITIES HERE ARE ALERT</p>
 <p>THERE ARE THIEVES ABOUT</p>	 <p>CRIME COMMITTED, not safe for strangers</p>	 <p>JUDGE LIVES HERE</p>	 <p>COURTHOUSE; PRECINCT STATION</p>	 <p>OFFICER of LAW LIVES HERE</p>	 <p>JAIL</p>

COMIC MAN

I don't know. Maybe you?

Sam takes a deep breath.

Comic man opens an issue of "Under the Silver Lake", sitting amongst the clutter. Inside it's filled with snapshots of "lost and found" signs from all over the east side of Los Angeles.

Page after page...

COMIC MAN

There's been a rash of "Lost and Found" signs for dogs, humans, and musical equipment in the past two years. Something big is going on. I know it.

SAM

Do you think any of it could be connected to Sarah?

COMIC MAN

Of course.

Sam listens... wanting to believe, but troubled by it all. He looks at the life masks covering the walls.

Is this man sane? Am I?

Comic Man begins sorting through various issues of "Under the Silver Lake" as he talks.

COMIC MAN

It could be a lot of things. Sex or drug trafficking. The Dog Killer. Cult of the Whale. I don't know... lately I just assume the Owl's Kiss has something to do with everything.

SAM

I'm not so sure about that.

Comic Man stares Sam down - a little offended by his dismissal.

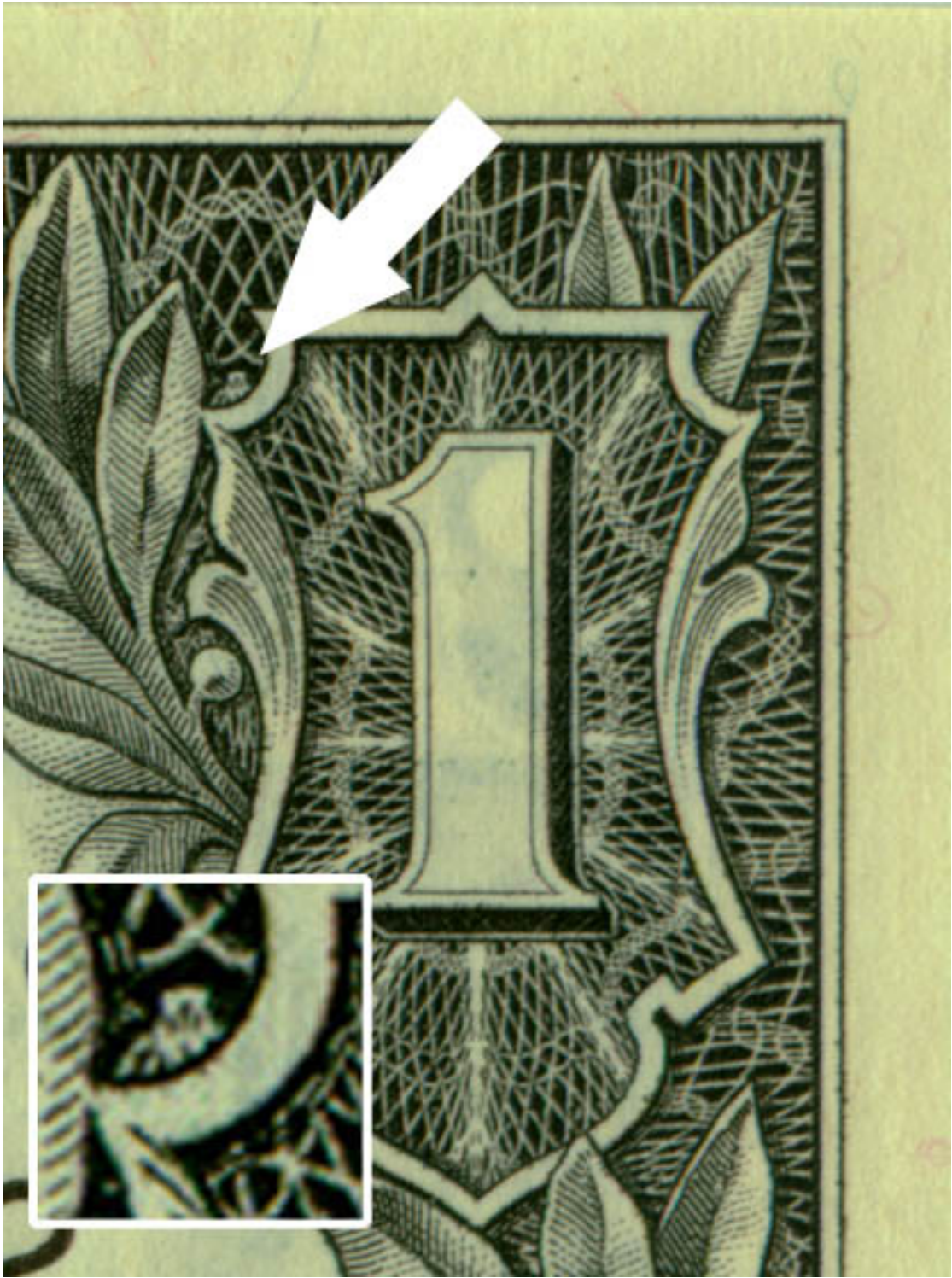
COMIC MAN

Do you have a dollar bill on you?

SAM

I might...

(CONTINUED)



Sam digs through his wallet and pulls out a dollar. Comic Man takes it, producing a magnifying glass from the drawer.

He holds the glass over the dollar bill, steadying it on the coffee table.

COMIC MAN

Take a look... that's the sign of the Owl's Kiss.

Sam leans in and looks through the magnifying glass. He sees it. A tiny owl is visible, peeking up from behind the crest of the top-right corner's numeral one.

COMIC MAN

Right there. On every dollar bill in this country. With every transaction we enter a pact to live by her law... any household that eats, lives and trades under her eyes is subject to her jurisdiction.

Comic Man hands the dollar back to Sam. He stares at the little bird, previously hidden in his wallet.

COMIC MAN

Our world is filled with codes, pacts, user agreements and subliminal messages.

More enthusiastic, Comic Man grabs piles of torn magazine pages and ads from old Playboys... waving them in Sam's face.

COMIC MAN

Here... and here... and here... symbols and words hidden in print advertising...

Sam sees advertisements with concealed words circled in red magic marker...

POWER... LOVE... SEX... FREEDOM!

Naked women in the ice cubes of soda pop ads...

Women's mouths nearly fellating cheeseburgers...

Mae West in the Camel cigarette logo...

Dollar Bills hidden in the lettuce...

On and on...

(CONTINUED)



Blow in her face and she'll follow you anywhere.

Hit her with tangy Tipalet Cherry. Or rich, grape-y Tipalet Burgundy. Or luscious Tipalet Blueberry. It's Wild! Tipalet. It's new. Different. Delicious in taste and in aroma. A puff in her direction and she'll follow you, anywhere. Oh yes... you get smoking satisfaction without inhaling smoke.



New from Muriel.

About 5 for 25¢.

Smokers of America,
do yourself a flavor.
Make your next
cigarette a

Tipalet®

COMIC MAN

Sexual innuendo connected with corporations... and ideologies that you assume you adopted through free will but are actually the result of hidden messages.

SAM

What if there are messages that aren't subliminal, but are meant only for certain people?

COMIC MAN

Of course. That's as common as tits and hamburgers.

SAM

Really?

COMIC MAN

Yes.

47 INT. COMIC MAN'S BEDROOM - DAY

47

Comic man pulls a wooden panel away from the wall, revealing a dark crawl space.

Dusty boxes are visible at the head of the narrow passageway.

On one of the boxes, sits a surveillance monitor connected to an old VCR.

Comic Man leans over and crawls into the secret opening, disappearing into the darkness.

Sam looks at the surveillance monitor and VCR. He sees a LIVE VIEW of the living room, the backdoor and the side of the house nearest the garage.

SAM

What's with the cameras?

COMIC MAN

I'm trying to protect myself. Do you know how many people have died from the Owl's Kiss?

SAM

No. I don't.

Sam looks around at Comic Man's bedroom. He glances at the ACTION FIGURES and the SKETCHES charting the stages of the moon.

(CONTINUED)

COMIC MAN

I got the place wired up... nobody
gets in here without me knowin'.
Right?

Sam says nothing. He waits - looking into the dark crawl
space.

COMIC MAN

(O.S.)

Ahhh. Here it is.

Comic Man crawls back into the light, waving a CEREAL BOX,
triumphantly.

COMIC MAN

Got it. Got it. Got it.

Comic Man climbs out and shows Sam the box of MOONSTONES
cereal from the mid 70's. He spins it around and points at the
East Los Angeles map on the back of the box.

Giant letters announce:

Treasure Hunt! Fun Prizes!

Sam studies the colorful map. Cartoon characters poke their
heads out of famous east side locations. Griffith Park
Observatory, etc...

COMIC MAN

I bought this from another collector
five years ago. I'm convinced that
this map is the key to everything I've
been searching for my whole life.

SAM

Seriously?

COMIC MAN

Seriously.

Sam points to the Contest Card on the side of the box - loaded
with fine print.

SAM

I think all you had to do was mark
down where the characters are hiding
and send in your contest card. Here.

Comic Man sighs.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED: (2)

COMIC MAN

It's not about Moonstone toys. This map is geographically to scale. From Silverlake to the Hollywood Hills. It's guiding me *somewhere* important and one of these days I'll crack it.

Comic Man stares at Sam with a sweaty and strained face.

Sam avoids eye contact.

48 EXT. SUNSET BOULEVARD - DAY

48

Sam passes scooter girls and fedora men as he soaks through his shirt - melting in the heat.

He glances back, looking at the hipsters and homeless men on the sidewalk behind him. They are all wearing similar hats.

HOMELESS MAN

Anybody spare some change? Please?

Sam divides and steps through an enormous line extending out from the local Intelligentsia Coffee - all parties standing on a long red carpet that ends at the Sunset gutter.

Everyone seems to know each other. A long line of feigned surprise and big smiles.

PRETTY WOMAN

Oh my gosh, honey, what are you doing here?

ANOTHER PRETTY WOMAN

Just grabbing an afternoon coffee.

SMUG MAN

Hey! Good to see you...

And on and on. Sam keeps walking.

Everyone is beautiful... or at least very, very interesting.

49 EXT. SHAKESPEARE BRIDGE - DUSK

49

Griffith Park Observatory is visible high above on the hillside.

Sam crosses a picturesque bridge, staring at the pretty houses.

He looks around, glancing back at the empty street.

50 EXT. BAR BUDDY'S HOUSE - DUSK

50

Sam walks up the sidewalk and sees Bar Buddy smoking and drinking on his porch. Seeing Sam, he waves and approaches, meeting in the driveway.

BAR BUDDY
Where's your car?

SAM
Oh. It's in the shop. Getting repainted from all that graffiti.

BAR BUDDY
That's what you get for driving that cockmobile.

SAM
I like my car.

BAR BUDDY
I like my cock. I don't have to compensate for it.

Sam ignores his friend, shaking his head.

SAM
Did you hear about Jefferson Sevence?

BAR BUDDY
Yeah they found him dead in his car last night. With three prostitutes and a dog.

SAM
Yeah I think Sarah was one of the prostitutes. The dog was the same breed as hers and I saw her hat in a crime scene bag on the news.

BAR BUDDY
Fuck. I'm sorry, man.

SAM
Thanks. I feel weird accepting condolences. I barely knew her.

BAR BUDDY
You liked her though.

SAM
Mm hm. A little bit.

(CONTINUED)

BAR BUDDY

So what are you gonna do now?

SAM

I kinda wanna find out who killed her.

BAR BUDDY

Isn't that a little... *serious*?

SAM

I guess so. What else am I gonna do?

BAR BUDDY

I don't know.

The two men chuckle to one another. Bar Buddy changes the subject.

BAR BUDDY

Wanna see something cool?

SAM

Yeah. What is it?

BAR BUDDY

You gotta check out my drone.

Bar Buddy points his thumb towards the backyard.

SAM

Your what?

51 EXT. BAR BUDDY'S BACKYARD - NIGHT

51

A medium-sized DRONE rises up from the center of the backyard. Silent like some future monster. Its rotors spin.

The black quadcopter houses a state of the art camera system.

The two men sit on the grass, in front of a laptop - which rests on a cheap folding chair. Their heads are tilted close. Beers in hand.

Sam watches the drone hover and soar through the neighborhood. Disappearing into the black sky.

Bar Buddy operates the controls from his laptop - piloting the drone.

SAM

Shit. Where do you get something like this?

(CONTINUED)



BAR BUDDY
I got it on amazon.

SAM
Hm.

POGO, Bar Buddy's golden retriever walks up to Sam through the grass.

The dog licks his hand and arm. Sam pulls away - a fake smile forming. Bar Buddy notices and tugs gently on his dog's collar.

BAR BUDDY
Leave him alone, Pogo. Come here.

Pogo steps away. Bar Buddy rubs the dog's head, petting him fondly. Sam relaxes.

BAR BUDDY
Look at that. Silverlake from above.

The drone soars over Los Angeles. Transmitting a blur of lights, houses, cars and streets.

Bar Buddy sniffs the air. Something is afoul. He smells Pogo's fur.

BAR BUDDY
Jesus, what's that smell?

SAM
It's me.

BAR BUDDY
Oh.

Bar Buddy accepts the fact with a casual nod.

He taps some buttons, watching the drone's camera-relay next to the computer's mapping system.

The drone settles in place.

Bar Buddy focuses the camera on a large window overlooking a canyon - some modern home in the hills.

BAR BUDDY
Ok. This is a good one. I've been scouting houses and I think this chick used to be in lingerie commercials. Amazing body.

51 CONTINUED: (2)

The drone's camera shows an empty, but bright living room. Well decorated.

BAR BUDDY
Gotta be patient.

Bar Buddy taps the edge of the chair in anticipation.

SAM
You ever feel like you fucked up somewhere a long time ago and you're living the wrong life? Or a bad version of the life you were supposed to have?

BAR BUDDY
You're fine.

SAM
No. I used to think I was gonna be someone that other people cared about. Maybe do something important...

BAR BUDDY
Shit. Everybody thinks that, but the world can't support it. Somebody has to sweep the floor. This fucked up idea that life owes us a god damn good story is a bunch of crap. We're not all special and we're certainly not equal. That's the biggest lie ever.

Bar Buddy looks at Sam - sees his beaten expression. Understands it. He puts his hand on Sam's shoulder.

BAR BUDDY
Everyone thinks they're going to be famous. *Narcissism and entitlement.*

SAM
Look where we live.

Bar Buddy and Sam look out into the night air. The crickets chirp. The wind blows through the trees.

BAR BUDDY
It feels like there's something darker under the surface. Waiting to come out. Do you ever feel like that?

SAM
Yeah... I think somebody's following me.

(CONTINUED)

BAR BUDDY

Probably.

Bar Buddy smiles and starts to laugh.

BAR BUDDY

Who isn't being followed nowadays?

Sam laughs along with his friend.

SAM

No, but I feel like that a lot. Even before all this craziness.

BAR BUDDY

It's the modern persecution complex. Who needs witches and werewolves anymore, now that we have computers? Everyone is suffering from mild paranoia. I don't think our fuckin' monkey brains are comfortable knowing that they're interlinked and routed together like some all knowing human brain. This shit causes delusion and fear, but we don't see it because we're too busy playing "Angry Birds".

SAM

I don't know.

BAR BUDDY

Persecution Complex is just the opposite side of the spectrum from the *Privilege Complex*. It's basically the dark mirror of our dreams and aspirations. You think you're special and that secrets and blessings have been planted in the world for you. The *schizophrenic* thinks that people are out to get them and that there's a hidden and dangerous world below the surface. These two paths are more similar than anyone wants to admit. Persecution complex is the modern plague. It's the universe balancing things out.

Two nearly middle-aged men in undersized t-shirts sitting on the grass in a dark backyard drinking beer and huddling before a small monitor...

Sam leans in towards the screen - taking note of the empty room.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Doesn't seem like she's home.

BAR BUDDY

Everyone on the planet thinks that they're somehow the "chosen one". But they're also afraid the world might be out to get 'em. It's the nature of things anymore. It's modern technology, it's saturation of pop culture, it's living in a world where ten years olds can become singing superstars from their bedrooms.

SAM

Yeah, but those kids have real success. *Real money*. It is possible to get lucky and achieve a dream. Doesn't that go against your whole thesis?

BAR BUDDY

No way. Who cares if five or ten people catch a break? That's like winning a golden ticket into Wonka-land. It's appeasement. It's fantasy. It's the *stuff dreams are made of*.

On the screen, they see a CHESTY WOMAN walk into the room. She takes her shirt off, revealing her bra. They watch in silence as she sits down in a chair and starts to cry.

Bar Buddy moves the controller, turning the drone's camera away from the sad woman's window.

SAM

I'm gonna take off. I'll see ya soon.

BAR BUDDY

Be careful out there.

Sam leaves.

52 EXT. HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY GATE - NIGHT

52

Sam walks toward the cemetery entrance.

Hipsters carry cheese plates, blankets and wine through the iron gate.

53 EXT. HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY - NIGHT

53

Sam walks alone down a grave-lined path.

The air has cooled...

(CONTINUED)

Pretty young women walk through the cemetery in their summer clothes.

Orchestral score echoes - as though performed through a loudspeaker.

Dialogue from a film soundtrack carries across the graveyard. Source unseen.

We hear reverb-filled voices. Much like the hollow sounds heard when stepping into the back of a large movie theater, mid-screening.

As Sam steps over the hill, he sees hundreds of people sitting on the grass before a make-shift movie screen. A film is being projected onto the back wall of a mausoleum.

Picnic blankets and lawn chairs fill the space.

Sam steps to the rear of the crowd, and watches the film.

A quiet scene in some suburban backyard. A young mid-western girl smokes a cigarette and flirts with a teenage boy. Her friend watches from a lawn chair opposite her. The pixie girl with the Seberg-haircut flashes a star-making smile.

Sam looks through the crowd. No one familiar.

He makes his way toward a tree-lined path, glancing back at the film.

Onscreen, a pig-tailed teen girl frowns while talking to her boyfriend. Sad but photogenic eyes. Her soft voice echos across the graveyard.

Sam notices a man with a diamond grill smoking pot with two pretty young women. He has his arms around them like trophies. They lean together against a thick-stump tombstone.

DIAMOND GRILL
(laughing in distance)
Two for one month, right?

Walking closer along the path, Sam recognizes them.

It's the two girls from the movie. Older now, but recognizably the same. A regular pair of SHOOTING STARS.

Their hair is styled exactly as it is in the film being shown tonight. Their attire is nearly inappropriate - like some bad hipster variations on Jodie Foster's wardrobe from Taxi Driver.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Hey. You're the girls. In the movie.

SHOOTING STAR #2 flips a pig tail over her shoulder and takes a puff from the joint.

SHOOTING STAR #1

Yeah.

SHOOTING STAR #2

That's us.

The girls smile and stare at Sam through stoned eyes.

DIAMOND GRILL ignores him, smoking his joint and touching the girls' faces.

SAM

Nice to meet you.

SHOOTING STAR #2

Thank you.

SHOOTING STAR #1 smiles and nods, looking down at the ground with a shy shuffle. Her short Seberg-hair catches the light.

SHOOTING STAR #1

Do you like the movie?

SAM

Um... yeah... I just got here, but I'm sure it's...

Shooting Star #2 notices a scent wafting by. She sniffs the air - interrupting.

SHOOTING STAR #2

Gosh, do ya smell that?

Sam takes a deep breath.

SHOOTING STAR #1

Smells like skunks and... *pot*.

The Seberg-girl displays an exaggerated grimace. Too pouty for a grown woman.

SAM

Los Angeles is filled with skunks. Especially the east side.

DIAMOND GRILL

We should get going.

(CONTINUED)

SHOOTING STAR #1

Ok.

Diamond Grill leads them toward a limousine, parked along the inner drive. They stumble in their heels, under the influence.

Sam watches them climb inside, slumping together across leather seats. Light music emanates.

A man's head peeks out from within the dark limo.

It's the Hipster Pirate. Sam reacts - taking a step closer.

The door shuts.

Slam!

The limousine accelerates down the cemetery road, disappearing around the corner.

Behind Sam, on the mausoleum wall, the short haired girl smiles and flirts with a small town boy.

54 EXT. CEMETERY MAUSOLEUM - NIGHT

54

Sam walks up to a TUXEDO BOUNCER standing before a roped-off doorway. Potted plants and Saint statues flank the edges of this marble entrance.

An elegantly designed cardboard floor-sign announces:

Summertime Secret Show!

The rumble of music can be heard from inside.

Sam holds up his cookie invitation. Tuxedo Bouncer examines it and nods his head.

He eyes Sam with displeasure.

TUXEDO BOUNCER

You gotta take a bite before I can let you in.

Sam looks at the bouncer's face. He's quite serious.

Sam shrugs and shoves the entire cookie in his mouth.

55 INT. MAUSOLEUM PARTY - NIGHT

55

Sam makes his way through a deep crowd, milling about within the large mausoleum hall. Waitresses carry drinks and hors d'oeuvres to the young and fashionable crowd.

(CONTINUED)

Looking over heads and shoulders, Sam sees the small stage near a row of shrines. Spotlights illuminate the main attraction.

Meek Bride stands on the stage, dressed in her 20's gown and 80's tennis shoes.

She leans forward and speaks quietly into the microphone like a cute mouse - nervously pressing her dress down onto her knees.

MEEK BRIDE

Thank you everybody for being here. I want to dedicate this first song to the man who taught me everything I know. This song is for Jesus.

The small piece orchestra sitting in the shadows of the stage begin to play. A sad and slow version of a famous tune.

To Sir With Love...

MEEK BRIDE

(singing)

Those schoolgirl days of telling tales and biting nails are gone. But in my mind I know they will still live on and on...

The men in the room watch with wistful eyes and deep longing. Sam watches the Bride perform, simultaneously eyeing the crowd.

MEEK BRIDE

(singing)

But how do you thank someone who has taken you from crayons to perfume? It isn't easy, but I'll try...

Sam hears a woman's voice behind him...

RECORD GIRL

Records?... Records?... Records?

Sam turns and sees RECORD GIRL handing out sample albums to the party-goers. Record Girl wears a 1930's cigarette girl outfit - carrying a wooden tray filled with double stacked 45s of the newest Jesus and the Brides of Dracula single. She's straight out of Coconut Grove.

The girl holds her tray of records out before Sam - offering him one.

(CONTINUED)

RECORD GIRL

Records?

Sam takes one and looks at the cover, smiling quickly to the girl.

SAM

Thank you.

On stage, Meek Bride continues to sing like a sad angel.

MEEK BRIDE

(singing)

If you wanted the sky, I would write
across the sky in *letters* that would
soar a thousand feet high.... to sir
with *loooooove*...

Making his way to the bar, Sam notices his friend Allen chatting with a cute bartender. He walks up and shakes the man's hand.

SAM

How's it going?

ALLEN

Work is good. Floatin' along. You
know.

SAM

Yeah. I get it.

Sam signals the bartender. She leans in.

SAM

(to bartender)

Jack on the rocks, please.

ALLEN

You find those girls you were lookin'
for?

SAM

No. Not yet.

ALLEN

I'll keep an eye out. Three hot girls
in a rabbit.

Sam smiles and nods. He passes some cash to the bartender and sips his drink.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Um... have you noticed anything strange going on in this whole circle of friends? Anything out of the ordinary?

ALLEN

That's kind of everyday, right?

SAM

No. I know. I mean... *extra* strange.

ALLEN

Last week, this girl I hooked up with... she was fucked up out of her mind... said some weird stuff about Jesus and the Brides.

SAM

Like what?

Allen looks around, then leans in close to Sam.

ALLEN

That there's a message in the music.

Allen grins, tapping his finger on the record in Sam's hand.

Sam glances at the sleeve. Jesus and the Brides pose together like a post-modern perfume ad.

SAM

Like a *secret* message?

Allen smiles, laughing about the idea.

ALLEN

Uh huh.

SAM

What's it say?

ALLEN

I don't have a clue, man.

SAM

Who's this girl?

ALLEN

Just one of the many. You know.

SAM

Right.

(CONTINUED)

ALLEN

Crazy makes for good sex. Remember that.

Allen looks Sam in the eye, smiles and pats him on the shoulder.

He notices a group of mustachioed muscular men in mesh shirts passing by. Allen waves and smiles, stepping away from Sam to engage his friends in a series of complicated hand shakes and man hugs.

Sam watches Allen disappear into the crowd.

MEEK BRIDE

(singing)

I would rather you let me give my heart... to sir with loooooove...

Balloon Girl bumps against Sam, wearing an Italian-chic summer dress with sandals - looking like an object of infatuation from an old Rohmer film from the mid 70's.

She leans against the bar - her bare shoulder touching Sam's arm. He looks at her face.

SAM

I hardly recognized you without your balloons.

Balloon girl shakes her head with a small grin.

BALLOON GIRL

You saw that?

SAM

Uh huh.

The pretty girl points at the drink in Sam's hand.

BALLOON GIRL

Would you buy me one?

SAM

Sure.

Sam looks to the bartender.

SAM

One more.

BALLOON GIRL

Thanks.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (5)

Sam pulls the final twenty dollar bill from his wallet and pays for the drink.

Balloon Girl smells something funny, but says nothing.

SAM
Can I ask you a question?

BALLOON GIRL
Yeah.

Sam shows Balloon Girl his photo of Sarah, setting it down on the bar.

SAM
Did you ever see her around?

Balloon Girl nods her head. Yup.

BALLOON GIRL
Sarah.

SAM
You know what happened to her?

Sam hands Balloon Girl her whiskey. She takes a drink.

BALLOON GIRL
Come with me.

Balloon Girl grabs Sam's hand and pulls him through the crowd.

SAM
Where are we going?

BALLOON GIRL
The basement.

56 INT. MAUSOLEUM STAIRWELL - NIGHT

56

Balloon Girl hops down the stone steps, dragging Sam behind her.

BALLOON GIRL
It's "old music night" at the crypt club.

She reaches a thick wooden door and knocks hard against it. A tiny slot opens, revealing a peering eye.

DOOR GUARD
What's the password?

(CONTINUED)

BALLOON GIRL
Tricycle Bicycle.

The door opens and Balloon Girl pulls Sam into the dark room.

57 INT. CRYPT CLUB - NIGHT

57

Cigarette smoke fills the cavernous crypt club. Rough stone walls, curtained booths, and tombstone tables surround the dance floor.

Music thumps as the crowd hops and sways to a classic pop tune. Something recognizable from the 1990's.

Sam and Balloon Girl are sitting together at one of the tables - their drinks and elbows resting on a perfect replica of Jayne Mansfield's tombstone.

The pair share a cigarette - taking turns with their drags. They shout over the painfully loud music. Conversing!

BALLOON GIRL
(looking at Sarah's
photo)

I didn't know her very well, but she was around! I saw her at parties and shows and stuff! I don't know what happened to her, but I can tell you it didn't have anything to do with *my* friends! We're just enjoying our world, enjoying our bodies, enjoying our music... !

Sam holds up his 45 record, displaying the cover of Jesus and the Brides. He points to it as he talks.

SAM
I heard people saying that there's some kind of code or secret message in their music!

Balloon Girl laughs.

BALLOON GIRL
I'm pretty sure that's not true! Jesus wouldn't hide a message in a message!

Sam says nothing as he nods. He takes a drag of his cigarette. Balloon girl slides the photo across the table to him.

BALLOON GIRL
There's nothing to solve, you know?! It's silly to put so much energy into something that doesn't matter!

(CONTINUED)

Balloon Girl reaches into her dress and pulls out a piece of flaccid red rubber. She holds the balloon up to her mouth and blows into it.

BALLOON GIRL

We have this tiny window where we can
have fun and fuck and and be
free... !

Tying it off with her fingers, the girl raises up the inflated balloon and moves her cigarette closer and closer to it.

BALLOON GIRL

Life is too short, right?!

Balloon Girl presses the cigarette against the rubber, popping the balloon in her hand. She smiles to Sam.

Sam takes a gulp of his drink, eyeing Balloon Girl with curiosity.

A powerful and loud power chord blasts from the club's speakers.

It's REM's "What's the Frequency Kenneth".

SAM

Come on! I wanna dance to this!

BALLOON GIRL

I don't know this song!

SAM

Come on!

On the dance floor, under the strobing lights, the pair begin to feel the music. The energy of it.

SAM

(singing along!)
I'd studied your cartoons, radio,
music, TV, movies, *magazines*...
Richard said, "Withdrawal in disgust
is not the same as apathy"...

Sam dances wildly to the song - a giant grin rarely seen in the context of this story. He dances, jumps and swings his arms like a whirling and mad Michael Stipe. The girl laughs joyfully along with Sam.

SAM

(singing along)
"What's the frequency, Kenneth?" is
your Benzedrine, uh-huh...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED: (2)

SAM (cont'd)

Butterfly decal, rear-view mirror,
dogging the scene... You smile like
the cartoon, tooth for a tooth... You
said that irony was the shackles of
youth...

Sam dances and stares into the girl's beautiful but young
face. She moves to the beat... though clearly unfamiliar with
the tune or the lyrics he's chanting. Sam is the only one
singing along, but he doesn't care.

They are separated by age and the ever shifting tectonic
plates of pop culture.

The dance floor is half full. Most of the crowd sways casual
and cool. Sam and Balloon Girl smile and jump, shaking along
with the heavily tremoloed chords - using their power to
remain unique and alive.

BALLOON GIRL

We should fuck!

SAM

Yes!

Sam's world grows large. The crowd twists and transforms.
Color stretches into unbelievable hues.

Sam grabs his face. Rubs his eyes. His legs grow weak.

He turns and staggers off the dance floor. Balloon Girl
follows.

BALLOON GIRL

What's wrong?!

SAM

I feel *really strange!*

BALLOON GIRL

How much of the cookie did you eat?!

SAM

The whole thing!

BALLOON GIRL

Shit!

58 INT. CLUB BATHROOM - NIGHT

58

Sam vomits into the toilet. Loud and terrible.

59 INT. CRYPT CLUB - NIGHT

59

Sam walks out of the bathroom - dizzy. He holds his head - nauseous and pale - as he scans the crowd. His table is empty.

Balloon Girl is gone.

SAM

Fuck me.

Near the entrance, he sees Troy, one of the Rabbit convertible girls.

As he steps closer, focusing his eyes, Troy spots him and pushes through the crowd - rushing out the door. Sam follows - picking up the pace.

60 EXT. HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY - NIGHT

60

Sam chases the girl through the dark cemetery.

SAM

Hey! Wait!

Troy is quick. She darts between the graves and trees. Sam dodges and leaps in pursuit.

A long stretch of open grass separates them. Sam kicks into high gear. His breathing intensifies. Sweat everywhere.

He gets closer and closer, staring ahead at the girl sprinting along in her jean shorts.

Everything starts to slow down... turning purple... then black...

Sam falls to the ground - holding his head.

Darkness.

61 EXT. HOLLYWOOD FOREVER CEMETERY - MORNING

61

Morning birds chirp.

Ring. Ring. Buzz. Buzz.

Sam opens his eyes and lifts his cell phone to his face. He's laying in the grass, just below a tombstone. Beer and wine bottles litter the ground.

Sam answers, rubbing his head. Pain.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Hi, mom.

MOM

Hello! I'm so glad you picked up. I have good news. Remember I told you about that Janet Gaynor movie?

SAM

Uh huh.

MOM

Well... I taped it for you, and I'm gonna send it in the mail, but I wanted to make sure you had a VCR.

SAM

It's not hooked up, but I have one. If you send the tape, I can watch it.

Old women and old men walk through the cemetery with somber expressions. Their clothes and outfits are identical matches to several of the outfits worn by the young women and men in this same place the night before.

All these old hats and colorful slacks... utility over fashion... fashion over utility... utility over fashion...

MOM

Oh good. I just thought it would be something nice to share. She's soooo lovely. I feel connected to her. Is that silly?

SAM

No, mom.

Sam watches the seniors go about their business delivering flowers to distant graves.

MOM

Well I won't keep you. I know how busy you are. But I love you.

SAM

I love you too.

MOM

Bye.

SAM

Bye.



61 CONTINUED: (2)

61

Sam hangs up the phone. He lifts his head and looks at the tombstone before him...

Janet Gaynor

1906-1984

Sam sees an empty beer bottle sitting atop the gravestone. He stares at it, shaking his head.

Sam pulls himself up, grabs the bottle and throws it angrily into the far-off trees.

Wait for it...

A tiny and soft sound - the crush of glass in the distance.

62 EXT. LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD - MORNING

62

Sam passes by the Contact Lens Billboard. He stares up at the beautiful Indian woman with sparkling eyes.

She watches over the road and smiles.

I Can See Clearly Now

63 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

63

Warping sounds and scrambled music surround us...

Sam sits on the floor, listening. A bag of Trader Joe's frozen veggies on his head. An old hardcover version of "The Code-Breakers" sits nearby.

The turntable plays the Jesus and the Brides of Dracula 45 record backwards. Strange sounds emanate from the speakers. Demonic? Certainly odd. No words or messages.

Sam listens. Staring at the speakers across from him.

SAM

There's nothing in here.

Lifting the needle on the turntable, Sam adjusts the rotation. He lowers the arm and plays the record properly.

A familiar tune bathes the room in hi-fi glory and well designed indie-rock.

You and I...

turning like teeth...

loving beneath...

(CONTINUED)

the surface...

Sam scribbles the lyrics down on an empty tomato-stained pizza box with a black sharpie marker.

64 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DUSK

64

Sam and Bar Buddy sit in front of the television playing Super Mario Bros on the 8-bit Nintendo. Sam is flipping through a stack of old Nintendo Power Magazines - reading about cheats and tips. They are eating a fresh pizza from Tomato Pie.

BAR BUDDY

I know that book.

Bar Buddy points at Sam's "Code-Breakers" book sitting next to the old lyric-covered pizza box.

SAM

Yeah. I stole that from the library when I was ten years old. I thought it was the coolest thing ever.

Bar Buddy listens, guiding his Luigi across the side-scrolling world.

SAM

I just remember sitting in my room, and making up my own weird little codes and secret language... it felt like there was so much *mystery* in the world... things to be figured out and solved...

The friend nods. He understands and relates.

BAR BUDDY

An entire generation of men obsessed with video games, secret codes, and space aliens.

Bar Buddy's Luigi is hit by a twirling hammer.

SAM

I couldn't tell you how many nights I spent walking around the woods waiting for some magical alien to follow me home and be my friend.

Bar Buddy smiles and laughs. Sam grins back, concentrating now on the game. He guides Mario along a dangerous path.

BAR BUDDY

We crave mystery, because there isn't any left.

(CONTINUED)

The neighbor's parrot screams something unintelligible in the distance. Neither Sam nor Bar Buddy notice.

BAR BUDDY

There's nothing that hasn't been explained away or solved by people and machines smarter than we'll ever be.

Sam continues playing, making a complicated series of jumps.

BAR BUDDY

Listen, a hundred years ago, any idiot could wander into the woods and look behind a rock and find something new... but not now.

Mario hits a hidden block. A fire flower grows from within it.

BAR BUDDY

Where is the thing that's never been seen? The mystery that makes it all worth while?

Sam controls his character, destroying several Goombas and a Piranha Plant with his fireballs.

BAR BUDDY

Why do you think so many of us are out looking for the fucking Loch Ness monster? *Aliens? Bigfoot?* We don't want to accept that we're useless. Even though we are. Modern Man needs mystery. We need to believe that there's something worth finding.

On screen, Sam's Mario sinks down into a secret green sewer pipe - accompanied by a sound effect - the sound of discovery.

SAM

Twist the candelabra and the bookcase opens.

BAR BUDDY

Yup. Up-up-down-down-left-right-left-right-B-A. That's our mantra. How do we get ahead? What's the cheat code? Where's my monogrammed secret treasure?

Bar Buddy chuckles to himself. Sam smiles.

BAR BUDDY

Any luck finding out who killed Sarah?

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: (2)

64

SAM
Not yet, but I'm gettin' there.

65 INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

65

Sam lays out a Playboy centerfold, a Victoria's Secret catalogue, an Urban Outfitters catalogue, Sarah's photo, a People magazine, and an open Hustler on the bed around him.

He starts to masturbate, flipping through the newest LA Weekly.

Sam stares at an image of the Brides of Dracula. Their eyes appear to stare back at him. A sexual understanding between a photograph and a man.

Sam strokes himself, glancing at the other images...

A naked Penny Baker from 1984...

A submerged and nude Carol Willis from 1970...

A modern supermodel in a purple bra...

A sardonic hippy chick in tight red jeans...

Sarah in her white hat...

Mrs. Sevence and Millicent, crying on the cover of People...

A giant breasted porn star...

Continuing to pleasure himself, Sam flips the pages of the LA Weekly to the smut section in the back of the paper.

Strippers and whores. Phone numbers for escorts and sex chat.

Sam notices a quarter page advertisement featuring the smiling faces of several pretty young women. Different than the average stripper or sex ad. Sam looks down at the girls' faces. He's seen these girls before.

Very short hair on one. Pigtails on the other.

It's the two Shooting Star girls from the cemetery movie.

Sam stops jerking off and examines the ad more closely. It reads:

Shooting Star Escorts

Enjoy the Company of Hollywood's Up and Coming Ingenues

Grab Hold of a Shooting Star Tonight!

(CONTINUED)



MISS JANUARY
RICHARD EISENBERG ON THE COVER

65 CONTINUED:

65

Call Now

Sam grabs his cellphone.

66 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

66

Sam presses play on his CD player. "Modern Love" by David Bowie plays loudly. Sam sways along with the beat.

SAM

(singing along)

I know when to go out... and when to
stay in... get things done...

Sam dances to his door. He opens it and leans outside. No one's there.

Leaving the door ajar, Sam steps back into his apartment. He grabs a beer from the fridge while dancing to the tune.

SAM

(singing along)

I catch a paper boy, but things don't
really change. I'm standing in the
wind, but I never wave bye-bye... *but*
I try... I try...

Sipping from the can, Sam dances back to the doorway. He peeks out again and sees Shooting Star #1, the short-haired ingenue, walking delicately into the lamp light towards his front door.

Shooting Star #1 sees Sam and smiles with a little wave. She's dressed provocatively in a white dress.

SHOOTING STAR #1

Hey! It's you.

67 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

67

"Modern Love" is still playing. Sam sits on the couch watching the young woman wander around his living room. Shooting Star #1 looks at the knick knacks and posters, running her hand over things.... examining and admiring the oddities. Sam stares at her as she stands on tiptoes to see the books on his shelf.

SAM

(singing along quietly)

God and Man, no confessions...
God and Man, no religion...
God and Man, don't believe in...
Modern Love...

(CONTINUED)

SHOOTING STAR #1
What do you do?

SAM
Nothing.

SHOOTING STAR #1
I mean for work.

SAM
Oh God... that's all I ever hear.
How's work? Workin' hard? *Works good?*

Shooting Star #1 rolls her eyes.

SHOOTING STAR #1
People have to work.

Sam nods, turning down the music with the remote.

SAM
Aren't you in movies though? Why are
you doing this?

SHOOTING STAR #1
You know, I made one little indie
movie - didn't make a penny off it. I
moved out and here and I was
waitressing. I could barely pay rent.
You know how expensive it is here?

SAM
I do.

The young woman begins to unbutton her dress with a grin...

SHOOTING STAR #1
(putting on a show)
You want a blow job from the
supporting actress Academy Award
nominee from last year? *Call Shooting
Star.*

She starts to shift and pull down on her cotton dress.

SHOOTING STAR #1
(putting on a show)
You wanna go down on the girlfriend of
the lead character from your favorite
sitcom? *Call Shooting Star.*

Shooting Star #1 takes a step closer to Sam, still undressing.

(CONTINUED)

SHOOTING STAR #1
(putting on a show)
You wanna fuck an IT girl? *It's not
that hard.*

With her her bra strap revealed, the girl points at Sam.

SHOOTING STAR #1
Youuuu are a patron of the arts... and
I can pay my bills.

Sam laughs. The Shooting Star smiles and laughs along. She pulls her dress down, stepping over it with her heels.

SHOOTING STAR #1
You gave them your credit card, right?

The young woman stands before Sam in her bra and panties.

SAM
Uh huh.

Shooting Star #1 walks over to Sam. She leans forward and rubs her hands through his hair - her chest close to his face.

SAM
Can I ask you something?

SHOOTING STAR #1
(whispering)
Shhhhhhhh.

Shooting Star #1 rubs her hands down Sam's head to his back and shoulders. The young woman sways a bit to the music.

SAM
It's nothing bad... I was wondering...
last night at the cemetery... who was
the pirate-looking guy in the limo?

SHOOTING STAR #1
I have no idea.

The girl lowers herself down against Sam. Brushing her leg against his crotch. She moves slowly, shifting into some form of a lap dance.

SAM
You don't know his name?

The short haired beauty continues to rotate her body in minor circles - slightly seductive pivots.

SHOOTING STAR #1
No. He was... anonymous.

SAM
You don't know anything about him?

SHOOTING STAR #1
Eh eh.

Shooting Star #1 stares directly at Sam, offering him a sweet and innocent look of naivete. A shoulder shrug and a pout.

SHOOTING STAR #1
You have any food?

SAM
There's pizza in the fridge.

The girl opens the fridge and pulls a slice from the cardboard box inside. She scans the photos and pictures hanging from magnets along the door of the icebox.

Taking a bite of pizza, Shooting Star #1 looks at a production photo from "Something's Got to Give". In it, Marilyn Monroe swims nude in a very blue pool - staring back at the camera with seductive eyes.

Sam watches the girl from across the room as she notices something else on the counter. Shooting Star #1 lifts up the photo of Sarah, holding it out toward Sam.

SHOOTING STAR #1
I know this girl.

SAM
Really? How do you know her?

SHOOTING STAR #1
She was at this party I went to a couple years ago.

Shooting Star #1 walks over, bringing the picture with her. She sits down next to Sam, gobbling her food.

SAM
Did you talk to her?

SHOOTING STAR #1
No. That would've been impossible.

The girl laughs and continues.

SHOOTING STAR #1

She was in this glass cube in the middle of a living room. Some kind of bad performance art I guess. She was just sitting on a stool in a dalmation fur bathing suit. Not moving or making eye contact. These drunk old men kept tapping the glass but she wouldn't budge.

SAM

How did you end up there?

Shooting Star runs her hand over Sam's lap. She flirts and teases as she talks.

SHOOTING STAR #1

This asshole producer. He brought me and a few other girls as his dates.

SAM

What's his name?

SHOOTING STAR #1

I don't remember... he makes those big action movies based on household cleaning products.

SAM

Ok. I know who you're talking about.

Shooting Star #1 lays back, putting her head in Sam's lap.

SHOOTING STAR #1

So we get to this place and they let us in the gate. They check our ID's, we just wander the streets of this luxury neighborhood... walking into whatever house we want, whatever room we want. There's food everywhere. Music. Dancers. Craziiness. It was this big open party, like straight outta Gatsby.

SAM

Wow. Who's place was it?

SHOOTING STAR #1

No one ever said. It was really weird. But at the end of the block, *the biggest house on the block*, this grey stone mansion...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

67 CONTINUED: (5)

SHOOTING STAR #1 (cont'd)
 we weren't allowed to go near it. It
 was the only place off limits.

SAM
 Fuck.

Shooting Star presses her head back against Sam's crotch with
 a knowing grin. She rolls her head in place.

SHOOTING STAR #1
 When I was cleaning up in the
 bathroom, I heard some girls gossiping
 about the place. One of 'em said she'd
 heard it was owned by some songwriter.

SAM
 Must've been some song.

SHOOTING STAR #1
 No shit.

The pair begin to kiss.

68 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - MORNING

68

Sam sits on his balcony with his Martin acoustic guitar. He
 strums a few familiar chords, then glances down at the lyric-
 covered pizza box.

Sam takes his sharpie and scribbles the chord-names above the
 lyrics.

It's the music for "Turning Teeth" by Jesus and the Brides of
 Dracula.

Across the courtyard, Topless Bird Woman washes her patio door
 with windex. Her parrot caws loudly.

PARROT
 Luddafemmmmbbbbb!

Sam moves his fingers over the fret board. He strums lightly -
 bringing the song to life.

Sam begins to sing or half-sing the words...

SAM
 You and I... turning like *teeth*...
 loving *beneath*... *the surface*...

Stopping again, Sam stares down at his fingers - stretched
 across the frets. He repeats the pattern, arpeggiating the
 chords, and watching his finger placement.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

68

Sam jumps up and moves inside his apartment.

69 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - MORNING

69

Sitting on the floor, and using another pizza box as a sketch pad, Sam writes out the chords as tablature. He simply writes out the chord formations in a numeric form in reference to their place on the fret board.

Sam counts off the numbers as he moves through the various parts of the song - jotting each down on the box.

70 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

70

Sam lays on the couch. Holding the tablature-filled pizza box over his head. He stares up at the numbers, turning the box in a circle. Looking for a way in.

71 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

71

Sam sits near the window reading "The Code-Breakers". The turntable is on, playing the 45 once more. He flips a page and looks down at the Chapter Heading:

The Anatomy of Cryptology

Sam continues to read.

72 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - LATE DAY

72

Sitting on the carpet, with the guitar in his lap, Sam lifts up the 45 record sleeve. He looks at Jesus and the Brides, then turns it over, examining the track listing and liner notes.

Sam looks at the first number on his box. It's the number 3.

He looks back at the liner notes. Starting from the first letter of the first word, Sam counts forward three letters. He ends up on the letter R. Sam writes this down on the box.

R

Looking to the next number, he repeats the process, moving through the chords and the words on the record sleeve. A message begins to form.

RUB D

Faster and faster, Sam moves through the words, counting in. He's deeper and closer than before.

As he works, Jesus and the Brides sing their beautiful melody.

(CONTINUED)

72 CONTINUED:

The neighbor's parrot screeches and calls out for something indistinguishable.

Sam scratches his marker across the cardboard...

Finally...

He stops. Sam looks down at the pizza box... at the message below him...

RUB DEANS HEAD AND WAIT UNDER NEWTON

Sam stares at the message scribbled in sharpie. A mix of print and cursive.

SAM
(to himself)
Rub deans head and wait under newton?
What the fuck does that mean?

Sam stands up and rubs his head. He walks to the glass patio door and looks out. He stares at the Topless Bird Woman as she cleans one of the many cages.

Sam leans close and breathes against the glass. A small circle of moisture forms near his nose and mouth.

SAM
*Dean... Dean Martin. Dean Koontz.
Harry Dean Stanton. Richard Dean
Anderson. Dean Stockwell. James Dean..*

Sam ponders his thoughts. Considers the possibilities. Tapping his fingers against the glass.

An idea forms. Sam looks up past the trees to the blue sky above.

SAM
James Dean's head. Hah!

Sam grins to himself, nodding.

73 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK TRAIL - LATE DAY

73

The landscape is wide and bright under the late afternoon sun. Sam walks alone up a dusty trail surrounded by wild grass.

Here in the hills, the city is below him. So much blue sky overhead.

Sam looks up toward the gleaming white structure at the hill's peak. The Griffith Observatory.

(CONTINUED)



73 CONTINUED:

Sam trudges higher and higher.

74 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK OBSERVATORY COURTYARD - LATE DAY

74

Emerging from the steep bank along the front of the Observatory, Sam looks across the serene courtyard filled with tourists and day trippers.

He approaches the James Dean statue along the side wall, facing the Hollywood sign. Sam stands before the bust commemorating "Rebel Without a Cause". He looks from side to side. Is anyone watching?

SAM
(whispering to himself)
Rub Dean's head...

Sam reaches out and places his hand on James Dean's head. He rubs the statue, looking around for some kind of reaction. Nothing seems to happen. Sam rubs it once more for luck.

Turning around, Sam steps up to the Astronomer's Monument across from the main entrance. He circles the stone pillar, reading the name's around the base.

Copernicus... Galileo... Kepler...

Newton...

Sam stop and stares at the marble figure representing Newton.

SAM
(whispering to himself)
Rub Dean's head and sit under Newton.

Sam smiles to himself and shrugs as he sits down on the grass, leaning his back against the base of the monument.

He sits and watches the tourists and local visitors pass. Families and young people. The sun shines brightly.

75 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK OBSERVATORY COURTYARD - DUSK

75

Sam rests against the statue. His head is slumped to the side.

The horizon is now a purple and orange swathe of cotton.

The courtyard is nearly empty.

From the hillside, Sam notices a dirty old homeless man walking toward him. The HOMELESS KING stops in front of Sam and looks down.

(CONTINUED)

75 CONTINUED:

HOMELESS KING

I saw you rubbing the statue's head.

SAM

Uh huh.

The homeless man tosses a dirty handkerchief down onto Sam's lap.

HOMELESS KING

Put that over your eyes and I'll bring you where you're looking to go.

SAM

Who are you?

HOMELESS KING

I'm the Homeless King.

SAM

Really?

HOMELESS KING

Yes.

We watch from a distance as Sam ties the blindfold over his eyes. The Homeless King offers an arm, helping him stand. The two men make their way slowly toward the trails, arm in arm.

76 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK TRAIL - DUSK

76

The Homeless King leads Sam down the hillside. Sam walks tentatively, still blindfolded by the dirty rag.

SAM

Where are we going?

Sam's feet slip on the loose dirt. The old man keeps him steady.

HOMELESS KING

Just concentrate on walking, ok?

SAM

Ok.

A woman jogger passes the men without a second glance. Music blasts from her headphones.

77 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK WOODS - DUSK

77

Moving through a patch of large trees, the Homeless King guides Sam over the grass.

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED:

They step very slowly - the gentle snapping of twigs and the crunching of leaves under the darkening sky.

HOMELESS KING

Some people don't realize this about themselves, but... you don't have a good smell about you. Did you know that?

SAM

I did know that. But thank you.

They shuffle along - deeper into the forest.

78 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK CLEARING - DUSK

78

A family wraps up their food from a nearby picnic table. The site of a child's birthday party.

A few balloons, tied to a bucket, drift in the evening breeze.

No one pays any attention to the blindfolded man and his flea-bitten guide.

The Homeless King leads Sam past a tipped-over trash can. A small coyote digs through the waste - his nose sifting through old hot dog buns and Zesty Taco Doritos.

Sam hears the animal howling nearby.

SAM

Is that a dog?

HOMELESS KING

It's a coyote.

SAM

It's not gonna bite me, right?

HOMELESS KING

No. Coyotes are *blessed creatures*. If you ever find yourself alone with a coyote, you don't run away... you follow it and see where it takes you.

Sam says nothing. They continue to walk.

79 EXT. GRIFFITH PARK WOODS - NIGHT

79

The Homeless King turns a lever, opening a rusty metal hatch.

(CONTINUED)

HOMELESS KING

People think that we own this land.
The streets, and yards and hills and
the houses and the caves...

He guides Sam into the dark passage.

80 INT. TUNNEL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

80

The Homeless King stands behind Sam, leading him deeper.

HOMELESS KING

Everything belongs to the coyotes.
They're just letting us use it.

The Homeless King pulls the blindfold off of Sam's face.

Sam looks around. He's standing inside a dim stone corridor. A narrow tunnel descends deep into darkness.

Behind the homeless guide, Sam sees a patch of evening light pouring in from the small hatch. The forest is beyond.

SAM

Where are we?

The Homeless King exhales.

HOMELESS KING

You know I can't tell you that.

SAM

Sure. Of course.

HOMELESS KING

Ok. Well...

The Homeless King extends his arm out, suggesting that Sam begin his descent.

SAM

This way?

The old man nods his head as Sam walks down the sloping stone tunnel. He runs his hands along the wall as he moves further from the entrance.

Intermittent floor-lights, cemented into the wall, illuminate his path.

The hatch closes with a clang. Sam glances back. The Homeless King is gone.

Sam turns and continues deeper into the tunnel.

81 INT. TUNNEL - NIGHT 81

Sam follows the chiseled path. The stone walls open up a bit - continuing to descend.

82 INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT 82

Sam turns a corner and sees a long expanse of branching tunnels. Each dropping lower into darkness. Sam chooses one and walks deeper.

He begins to reach additional pathways and optional turns.

It resembles a maze.

Looking to his sides, Sam sees long expanses of square-cut tunnels sweeping into the earth.

Concrete corridors similar to those found at a sports stadium.

He turns a corner... and then another...

All sense of direction is lost. Earthen walls and sloping floors.

Finally... Sam sees a large stone doorway ahead.

83 INT. LARGE TUNNEL ROOM - NIGHT 83

Entering the enormous room, Sam is surrounded by roughly painted dry wall, exposed rebar, construction markings, and nail-filled wooden beams.

In the center of the room is a long dining table with no chairs. It's covered in the dust of concrete.

Thick wooden crates line the inner wall. They are labeled as such...

Food. Water. Batteries. Towels. Liquor.

Walking further into the giant space, Sam passes a roughed-out kitchen area with a massive refrigerator.

A generator is visible behind an unfinished wall.

Inside the bathroom is a tub with gold fixtures, a shower and a dead-end pipe - plumbing for an eventual toilet.

Stepping into a third concrete-walled room, Sam sees a spray-painted mark on the floor, designating the location for a bed. A giant recess in the wall suggests the inclusion of some large format television.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED:

Sam looks around at the odd living quarters...

SAM
It's a fuckin' bomb shelter.

84 INT. TUNNELS - NIGHT 84

Sam follows a long corridor upwards. Each tired step brings him closer to some sort of imagined surface.

Higher and higher he walks through the stone tunnels. His face is weary.

85 INT. TIGHT CRAWL SPACE - NIGHT 85

Sam inches his way through a dark shaft. His arms are pinned close to the narrow side walls. Sharp-cut stone rubs against his shoulders.

A tiny speck of light is visible ahead.

He hears music. Muzak?

86 INT. GELSON'S DAIRY COOLER - MORNING 86

Sam's hand rises up from between the metal floor grates. Milk cartons and frosted dairy racks litter the chilled cooler.

Sam lifts the grate up and sets it aside on the tile. He climbs out of the tight crawl-space and looks around.

It's a supermarket. Fucking Gelson's. Sam laughs to himself.

Muzak plays from the store speakers: a softened, instrumental version of Jesus and the Bride's of Dracula's hit single.

Sam puts the floor grate back in place, and snatches a bottle of milk. Exhausted and thirsty, he takes a big drink.

87 INT. GELSON'S SUPERMARKET - MORNING 87

Sam wipes off his milk mustache as he stumbles through a bright aisle of food - milk bottle in hand.

88 EXT. COMIC MAN'S STREET - MORNING 88

Sam sees a police car parked in Comic Man's driveway. He stares at it, while approaching the front porch.

A COP steps out of the backyard, waving Sam away from the house.

COP
Hey... um... you can't go in there.

(CONTINUED)

SAM
What's going on?

COP
Are you a friend or family?

SAM
I just know the guy... not very
well...

COP
The neighbor found him. He committed
suicide.

SAM
Oh my God. He didn't seem suicidal.

The cop debates answering....

COP
Ahhhh... I've been in the man's house
for two hours. There was something
wrong with him.

Sam nods. What else can he say?

89 EXT. COMIC MAN'S STREET - MORNING 89

Further down the street, Sam hides behind some bushes - spying on the police. He watches the cop car pull out of the driveway and cruise off.

Sam cuts behind some hedges, sneaking into the nearest backyard.

90 EXT. COMIC MAN'S BACKYARD - MORNING 90

Sam pries open Comic Man's kitchen window.

91 INT. COMIC MAN'S BEDROOM - MORNING 91

Sam stands in the doorway of the bedroom. The sheets are covered in blood stains. The bed appears wet.

Removing the secret panel from the wall, Sam crouches before the security monitors and VCR.

He starts to rewind the tape.

Waiting, Sam notices the Moonstones cereal box sitting near the monitor. He glances at the East Los Angeles map on back.

Treasure Hunt! Fun Prizes!

The tape whirls and spins. Sam presses PLAY and watches the security camera footage.

An onscreen clock reads:

3:00 AM

Dull shots of dim and empty rooms. Nothing happening.

Something catches Sam's eye. There's movement on the screen.

A woman climbs through the side window of the living room - feet and legs first. The movement of a dancer.

SAM

Ohhhh fuck.

Sam watches the monitor - transfixed and disturbed by the odd image.

Onscreen is a beautiful woman - naked except for her owl-skin cap, red lipstick and overgrown bush.

The OWL'S KISS walks carefully, nearly creeping across the living room. She steps out of frame on her way to the bedroom.

Sam stares in surprise and a bit of horror.

He rewinds the tape, watching the Owl's Kiss enter one more time. A dangling foot connected to a face of taxidermied bird skin.

Sam presses PAUSE - freezing the naked figure mid-step - in all her disturbing glory.

92 EXT. COMIC MAN'S STREET - MORNING

92

Gripping the old Moonstones cereal box in his hand, Sam rushes down the street - frightened. He appears more mad than usual by the light of day.

Sam holds his cell phone up to his ear.

SAM

Allen!

ALLEN

(over the phone)

Hey sir. How are you?

SAM

I'm fine. Mostly fine. Um... I was wondering if you might know how I can get in touch with Jesus?

(CONTINUED)

ALLEN
(over the phone)
I'm the wrong guy to ask.

SAM
The lead singer from the band.

ALLEN
(over the phone)
No, I know. I'm just fucking with you.
What are you doing right now?

SAM
Walking home.

ALLEN
(over the phone)
You play chess?

SAM
Not well.

ALLEN
(over the phone)
That'll work. I'll be outside your
place in ten minutes.

A dog BARKS loudly from behind a fence.

Sam steps quickly - eyes darting around the serene neighborhood.

93 INT. ALLEN'S CAR - MORNING

93

Still in the same clothes, looking sweaty and terrible, Sam sits in the passenger seat of Allen's beat-up Ford Focus. Allen turns the car, driving into a rich neighborhood off Hillhurst.

ALLEN
He's just some cable tv actor who likes to have people around... throws these chess parties... with hot chicks and guys who like to play chess.

Allen pulls up in front of a modest white mansion near the Greek Theater.

94 EXT. BACKYARD POOL - MORNING

94

A BATHING BEAUTY leads Sam and Allen through the large backyard to a small chess table near the pool.

(CONTINUED)

Everyone sits poolside at small tables with chess boards. Pretty girls and handsome guys. Moving Pawns and Pieces.

Old school bathing beauties deliver drinks to the players. Mimosas and other fun late morning cocktails.

A few girls swim in the pool. Aware of their beauty and not concerned with privacy or modesty, they talk and laugh freely.

Allen moves his Pawn forward. King's Pawn to E4. Sam glances at the board and moves his pawn to A6.

ALLEN

That's a terrible move.

Sam grabs a mimosa from a passing waitress. He sips the drink as he scans the yard. Allen stares down at the board, debating and analyzing.

Sam sees the Shooting Star girls, both #1 and #2, seated alongside a chess table with two handsome young men.

Looking further, he sees Meek Bride and Reading Glasses Bride sitting Indian-style on the grass - a checkered board and cheese plate between them. In their lace gowns, they are polished bohemian perfection.

Then... Sam spots Jesus at a small chess table, engaged in a game with the third and last of the Brides - Clara Bow Bride.

Jesus is ever-shirtless. Eternally handsome and miraculously thin.

Sam stares for a moment. Debating his next move.

Sam notices a RED BALLOON floating over the pool past his view. It's connected to a long ribbon tied to the wrist of Balloon Girl. She's sitting on the far side of the pool, playing a game of chess with Emerald Beauty.

Sam waves to Balloon Girl and she smiles in his direction, but quickly turns her attention back to the game.

Allen moves his Knight to F3, nodding to himself, but still debating his choice.

Sam watches as Jesus stands from his chair and walks toward the main house. A lanky and sexual strut.

Sam takes a gulp from his mimosa and sets it on the table, moving his Knight forward to C6.

SAM

I'll be right back.

(CONTINUED)

Allen doesn't look up. He remains fixated on the chess board - particularly Sam's advanced Knight.

ALLEN

You sure you wanna do that?

SAM

Yup.

Sam follows Jesus, walking toward the back door of the mansion. Allen stares at the Pieces and Pawns shaking his head.

95 INT. MODEST MANSION - MORNING

95

Sam watches Jesus step into the rear bathroom. He closes the old mahogany door.

Sam walks straight down the hall, opens the door and steps inside.

96 INT. MANSION BATHROOM - CONTINUOUS

96

Jesus is on the toilet with his pants around his ankles. He looks up at Sam.

JESUS

What the fuck man?! I'm takin' a shit!

Sam says nothing. He closes the door and grabs the skinny man by the neck, pushing him onto the floor.

JESUS

Get the *fuck off me!*

Sam punches Jesus in the stomach, silencing him quickly. The man gasps for air as Sam hovers over him - fists shaking.

SAM

Why did you put a code in the song?

JESUS

What are you talking about?

Two men in a strange position on the bathroom rug.

SAM

What are those tunnels for?

JESUS

What?

Sam punches Jesus in the face. Jesus almost starts to cry, exhaling in rough shakes and fits.

(CONTINUED)

JESUS

Why are you hitting me?

Sam pushes his finger in the emaciated rock star's face.

SAM

Your song, "Turning Teeth".... there's a fucking code in it. I wanna know why you put it there and what it means.

Jesus says nothing, turning his head away, trying to avoid the situation.

JESUS

Help.

Sam grabs his thin arm and bends it backwards, twisting it at the elbow.

SAM

Fucking tell me!

Jesus sobs and writhes in pain.

JESUS

I don't know anything about a code.

Sam twists harder.

JESUS

Ahhhhhhh.

SAM

How could you not know? You wrote the fucking song.

JESUS

No. I didn't. I wrote most of the songs, but not that one.

SAM

Bullshit.

JESUS

Honestly. My label gave me a few songs to record... the rest are all mine.

SAM

Which songs did they give you?

JESUS

Turning Teeth... Wire Mountains... and Waltz of the Christian Shit Farmers.

(CONTINUED)



Real life calls for real taste.
For the taste of your life—Coca-Cola.
When you ask for it, be sure you get it.



**It's the real thing.
Coke.** 

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SAM

So all the hits?

Jesus looks back - pissed.

JESUS

There's no reason to *belittle me*, man.

Sam ignores his reply, twisting him arm back a bit more.

JESUS

Ahhhhhhh.

SAM

So who wrote the songs?

JESUS

They were delivered anonymously. I got a call from somebody at the label. They weren't bullshitting. They knew everybody and everything that mattered. They said not to ask anyone about it, but that I needed to record the songs or I'd lose my contract. I believed him.

SAM

You have no idea who wrote your own *hit song*? They didn't say anything?

JESUS

He never gave me a name. No. He just said that it was an important piece of music by the songwriter.

SAM

Thee songwriter?

JESUS

Yeah. The songwriter.

Sam considers this for a moment. Jesus stares up at him with tears on his face - his mascara streaking down over his cheek.

97 EXT. BACKYARD POOL - MORNING

97

Near the bath house, Balloon Girl is chatting with Shooting Stars #1 and #2 - all dressed in their cute bathing suits and matching shawls. The girls notice Sam approaching fast. He appears hyper-focused and disheveled.

Sam grabs Shooting Star #1 by the arm and pulls her aside. Balloon Girl and Shooting Star #2 hover nearby - concerned.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Hey...

SHOOTING STAR #1

What is it?

SAM

Remember the party you told me about?
The gated neighborhood owned by some
songwriter? Could you take me there?

SHOOTING STAR #1

Uh huh.

98 EXT. ABERDEEN AVENUE - MORNING

98

Sam walks with the girls, passing by another beautiful mansion - a long stretch of perfect green grass. The girls wear their bathing suits and matching shawls. Clickety clacking in their heels.

Sam is in yesterday's clothes - sweat stained and soiled.

SAM

So how do you all know each other?

BALLOON GIRL

We're roommates...

SHOOTING STAR #1

And we work together.

SAM

Oh.

SHOOTING STAR #2

We're all Shooting Stars.

Sam looks over at Balloon Girl. She strides down the sidewalk with young confidence.

SAM

(to Balloon Girl)
You too?

BALLOON GIRL

Yeah.

SAM

I didn't know you were an actress.

BALLOON GIRL

I was on a soap opera between the ages
of 5 and 6 months.

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED:

98

Sam nods - accepting this as common. The gang walks a bit further down the sidewalk.

SAM
Are we getting close?

SHOOTING STAR #1
It's not far from here.

99 EXT. CANYON ROAD - DAY

99

Sam and the girls stand before a giant stone wall lining a long stretch of some unmarked canyon road. They hug and say their goodbyes.

Walking away, Balloon Girl waves to Sam as he begins to climb the wall.

100 EXT. GATED CANYON SUBURB - DAY

100

Peeking out of the trees, Sam sees a wide and perfect suburban street. Several giant houses dot the road. No people or cars in sight.

Sam walks through the neighborhood. It's like a ghost town. He passes deserted estate houses moving through the canyon valley... tarp and plastic over furniture and empty parlor rooms.

Rounding the bend, Sam sees a large stone mansion at the base of the hill - reminiscent of Hearst Castle.

Sam sneaks closer.

101 EXT. STONE MANSION - CONTINUOUS

101

Sam walks around back through the trees discovering a Greek pillared pool and grotto.

Towering and enormous windows span the rear of the mansion. Looking through the glass, Sam sees a giant vaulted ceiling. Sweeping arches. An enormous and ornate music hall.

In the center of the room is a grand piano. Behind it, sits a very old and ugly white man. He is the SONGWRITER.

The songwriter tilts his head, seeing Sam in the bushes. He waves the young man inside.

Sam hesitates, but the Songwriter continues to wave him closer.

Sam steps out of the grass onto the marble patio near the sparkling blue pool.

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

He opens the glass doors, and pokes his head into the grand hall.

SONGWRITER

Come inside.

102 INT. MUSIC ROOM - CONTINUOUS

102

Keeping his distance, Sam stands near the doorway looking across the room at the old man on the piano bench.

The Songwriter has wild grey hair. His skin is cracked and brittle. Old beyond belief.

The hall is filled with mirrors, gold and vintage music art - like some warped version of Versailles.

An oversized poster of a vintage 50's album hangs above the piano: "Julie is her Name".

SAM

You wrote "Turning Teeth" for Jesus and the Brides of Dracula. I know it was you.

SONGWRITER

Uh huh.

SAM

And the code in the music. I found the tunnels... and the bomb shelter.

SONGWRITER

Ok.

SAM

What does it all mean?

The Songwriter beckons Sam closer. Directing him to a small stool facing the piano.

SONGWRITER

Come and sit down. Here.

Sam steps closer, looking at the musical instruments lining the walls and floor. Guitars, a harpsichord, violins, ukuleles, etcetera.

Sam notices a Sonic Blue Fender Mustang guitar propped on a floor stand. He points to it, staring in awe.

SAM

Is that *Kurt Cobain's* Fender Mustang guitar?

(CONTINUED)

SONGWRITER

Oh I'm not sure. Probably. I don't remember. I have so many things.

SAM

Can I pick it up?

The Songwriter doesn't care. He shrugs his shoulders. Sure.

Sam carefully lifts the guitar and sits with it on the stool.

Running his hand along the finish, Sam mumbles and takes note of the guitar's neck and bridge. He strums a G chord and looks up at the old man behind the giant and ornate grand piano.

SONGWRITER

I don't always worry what the message is. I just pass it along... I slip it between the notes... and hide it away for the people who know it's there.

SAM

You've done this before? The codes?

The Songwriter laughs. He starts to play "Stairway to Heaven" but transitions into "Macarena".

SONGWRITER

I wrote most of the music your dad grew up on, *half* of what you sang along to as a kid, and I'm still doin' it. These teenagers are dancing to *myyyy* music.

Sam sees clear tubes running into the old man's nostrils - connected to a silver canister marked with Japanese letters.

SAM

You're telling me that there are messages hidden in old pop songs?

SONGWRITER

Movies and television shows... *everything you know.*

SAM

Why?

The songwriter ignores Sam. Humming along to a few random chords. Is that the theme song to "The Facts of Life"?

SONGWRITER

Pop culture. Ugh. It floats away like tissue paper. I blow my nose.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED: (2)

SONGWRITER (cont'd)

I find an old Kleenex, I recycle it.
It becomes your wedding song.

The old man taps a few notes from "I Want to Know What Love Is".

SAM

What are the tunnels for? Is there
gonna be a war?

The Songwriter looks away, playing "In-A-Gadda-Da-Vida" across the piano keys.

SONGWRITER

I don't know. I'm just trying to make
a living. Earn a few dollars.

Sam looks around at the luxurious space.

SAM

But you have everything.

The Songwriter is quiet for a moment. He looks out at the trees against the hillside.

SONGWRITER

No.

Sam pulls out the photo of Sarah. He holds it up for the Songwriter to see.

SAM

Did you know this girl?

The old man leans forward and looks at the picture. He shakes his head.

SONGWRITER

She's pretty.

SAM

She was killed along with Jefferson
Sevence. But I think you knew that.

SONGWRITER

I didn't.

The Songwriter slams his hands down forming a low and resonating chord - letting it ring out. He plays another chord, slowly beginning to sing something resembling a funeral dirge.

(CONTINUED)

SONGWRITER

(singing)

*Mulattoooo. Albinoooo. Mosquitoooo.
Libidoooo.*

Sam stares at the man in horror. He glances down at the priceless guitar in his own hands.

SONGWRITER

I don't care what's fashionable or cool. It's all silly and meaningless. I've created so many of the things that you care about... the songs that give your life purpose and joy. When you were fifteen and rebelling... you did that to *my* music.

The Songwriter holds up his fingers and moves them like spider legs - simultaneously playing the notes to Nirvana's "Smells Like Teen Spirit" with his other hand.

Plink plink. Plink Plink plink.

SONGWRITER

It wasn't written on a distorted guitar... *I* wrote it... on a piano...here... in between a blowjob and an omelette. There's no rebellion. There's only me... earning a paycheck.

SAM

I don't believe you.

SONGWRITER

Good. The real message was never intended for you. It's better if you just smile and dance. Enjoy the melody.

The man plays more music, pointing to his chest.

SONGWRITER

This ugly old man, *me*, I'm the voice of your generation, your grandparent's, your parent's and the young people who follow you.

Sam stares in horror. He doesn't want to believe.

SONGWRITER

It's funny... all the things you hope for, and *dreeeeam* about being a part of... they're all a fabrication.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SONGWRITER (cont'd)

Your art, your writing, your culture
is the shell of other men's ambitions.
Ambitions beyond what you will ever
understand.

SAM

That's funny to you?

SONGWRITER

A little.

The old man coughs and wheezes - dancing his fingers merrily
across the keyboard - performing a quick mad mixture of Bach,
Jesus and the Brides, Buddy Holly, N.W.A. and The Rolling
Stones.

SONGWRITER

I wrote this... and this... *that...*
and this too...

SAM

Stop it.

The Songwriter laughs. His cackling along with the plinking
keys of the grand piano echoes through the gigantic hall.

SAM

Who paid you to write these songs?

The Songwriter smiles and nods as he reaches into his pocket.
He lifts up a small HANDGUN, aiming it at Sam's head.

BANG!

The bullet misses Sam as he tumbles sideways to the
floor. Cobain's guitar falling on his lap.

With a single hand, the Songwriter begins to play "What's the
Frequency Kenneth". He laughs and hums the melody.

BANG!

Sam dodges a second shot, ducking down below the piano.

SAM

What are the tunnels for?!

BANG! Another bullet flies by his head. The music still plays.

SAM

Tell me what happened to Sarah!

Sam charges the old man, raising the guitar over his head like
an axe. We hear the roar of guitar feedback. Warped notes.

(CONTINUED)

BANG!

The bullet zips past Sam's ear as he swings the faded turquoise guitar down onto the Songwriter's head.

SMASH !

Bone cracks under the weight of maple and basswood. The songwriter's skull crumbles. Brain matter lands on the ivory keys. Distortion rumbles.

Sam swings it again, breaking the neck of the guitar from the body... wire strings messily join the two pieces. The wooden base hangs down like some holy instrument destroyed before a crowd by Townshend, Hendrix or Cobain.

Sam stands over the old man. He drops the broken guitar, breathing deeply.

The music room is quiet.

Frightened, Sam picks up the gun from the floor and stuffs it into his jeans. He runs out the back door, leaving the room empty and still.

The Songwriter lays motionless near the piano.

103 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DUSK

103

Sam leans out his patio door, drinking a beer - visibly shaken. The wind blows through his hair.

A dark pink sky is visible over the rooftops.

Rain clouds approach. Lightning snaps across the horizon, followed by the low rumble of thunder.

The neighbor's bird CAWS loudly.

On the television, an old movie plays. It's the 1956 version of "Invasion of the Body Snatchers". Kevin McCarthy runs across the I-5 overpass screaming. Cars cruise along, ignoring his crazed warning.

KEVIN MCCARTHY

(on television)

You fools! You're in danger! Can't you see?! They're after you! They're after all of us! Our wives, our children, everyone! They're here already! You're next! You're next! You're next!

104 EXT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ APARTMENTS - NIGHT

104

The gas lamps that line the garden walkway offer dim pools of orange light. Sam walks slowly through the apartment complex's twisting paths.

The trickle of running water through the stream follows his footsteps.

Sam sips an iced latte, carrying an LA Weekly under his arm. Jesus and the Brides of Dracula pose on the cover. The partially obscured headline reads:

JESUS PREDICTS... BAD TIMES AHEAD

A DIRTY HUMAN FACE peers out from within a bush - disturbingly low to the ground like a cat or possum. Eyes watch Sam as he passes - he doesn't notice.

Leaves and branches rattle above.

A squirrel falls from the tree in front of Sam. It hits the concrete, and partially splatters on the ground.

The squirrel tries to move but it's mortally injured. Sam stares in horror at the small animal.

Is it trying to say something?

Sam backs away from it and rushes down the path. He turns a corner.

Before him stands a shadowy figure in the center of the garden walkway.

Stepping closer, Sam sees more clearly.

It is a two-dimensional black cardboard figure of a man stabbing a cardboard dog. Sam approaches the cut-out stand and tips it over with his finger.

It lands on the ground with a soft tap - like a leaf coming to rest on the forest floor.

Glass shatters!

105 INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

105

Sam lifts his head from the damp pillow. Rain pours against the bedroom window. Thunder rumbles - long and steady.

A cascade of lightning illuminates the messy bedroom - the Playboys on the floor. Issue July 1970.

(CONTINUED)

105 CONTINUED:

105

Sam hears glass breaking.

106 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

106

Sam steps into the living room with pistol in hand. He sees a hole in the glass of the sliding door... it's now half open.

The storm breeze moves across the blinds, blowing his paperwork across the carpet. The pages of "Code Breakers" and "Spider Man" flip wildly.

He moves closer to the patio. A careful step. Then another.

Behind Sam, a small cabinet door opens quietly. Long bare legs fold out from within - like the appendages of an insect - bare flesh stretches.

Now fully emerged from the tight space, the OWL'S KISS stands behind Sam with a kitchen knife in her hand.

Sam turns and sees the naked woman in her owl-skin mask. He jumps back as she silently sprints down the hall into his bedroom. The door closes.

Sam stares in shock at the closed bedroom door.

107 INT. SAM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

107

Sam enters the room carefully, peeking inside with the gun.

He turns on the bedroom light. She's not here.

Sam checks under the bed... in the closet... nothing.

Lightning flashes. A coyote HOWLS in the distance.

Tense. Sam opens his dresser drawer. The gun angled down toward his socks and underwear.

Knock! Knock! Knock!

Sam turns toward the sound...

108 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

108

Knock! Knock! Knock! Knock!

Sam looks through the peep hole and sees a Los Angeles Sheriff on the other side.

SAM
(whispers to himself)
Fuck.

(CONTINUED)

He holds his dizzy head as the air leaves his lungs in exodus.

Sam tries to breathe as he opens the door. Resigned to whatever happens. His shoulders slump.

In the hallway, alongside the SHERIFF, stands the greasy haired apartment Manager. His face is puckered and sour.

SAM

Hello.

SHERIFF

Hi, I'm here to inform you that you have to evacuate the premises immediately.

SAM

Oh... This is about my *rent*?

Sam seems relieved for a moment. It could be worse.

SHERIFF

Yes. You haven't paid. It's...

MANAGER

Criminally overdue.

Sam takes a step closer to the Sheriff.

SAM

Is there any way I could have a couple more days?

SHERIFF

No. I don't think so.

SAM

Please. I don't have anywhere to go. I'm close to getting the money. I promise I am.

SHERIFF

Listen... I don't like this either. Worst part of my job, ok?

SAM

I understand.

SHERIFF

I can give you two more days... but that's it. If you can't pay I will not be the nice guy you see right now.

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED: (2)

108

The Manager wears a heavy scowl - irritated by the officer's leniency.

MANAGER

I want him out today.

The Sheriff turns to the angry Manager.

SHERIFF

Hey! I'm taking care of this. Don't be greedy.

The Manager nods his head as the Sheriff looks back at Sam.

SHERIFF

Two days.

He holds up two fingers in front of his nose.

109 EXT. SAM'S APARTMENT BALCONY - NIGHT

109

The rain has stopped. Water drips from the eaves.

Sam smokes on the patio listening to the parrot caw.

A garbage can falls over.

RATTLE CLANG!

Sam looks down toward the pool and sees a small COYOTE digging through the trash. It stares up at him.

The animal turns and walks down the sidewalk. Sam watches - intensely.

110 EXT. SILVERLAKE NEIGHBORHOOD - NIGHT

110

Wearing his white undershirt and pajama pants, Sam follows the coyote down the street.

The coyote glances back at him, then scampers along.

Down Griffith Park Boulevard...

Past apartments and condos...

Into the hillside neighborhood...

Expensive homes... Beautiful cars...

Things you can't possess...

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

Sam follows the wild animal through the streets. He stares up at the world around him. Voices and laughter within the homes. Families together in front of giant televisions.

111 EXT. SILVERLAKE HOME - NIGHT

111

The coyote runs up the DRIVEWAY of a LARGE SILVERLAKE HOME. It disappears into the trees.

Sam stands in front of the house and looks through the front window. People are everywhere. A big party is taking place. Music pours from inside.

Sam notices a familiar face in profile through the picture window.

It is Millicent Sevence.

She disappears into the crowd.

112 INT. LARGE SILVERLAKE HOME - NIGHT

112

Sam walks through the party in his damp white undershirt. He scans the crowd for Millicent.

He passes a myriad of conversations. We hear only pieces of them.

Sam moves deeper, bumping shoulders as he cranes his neck - trying to look above it all.

FACELESS PARTY GOER

It's such a cliché! Being special isn't special anymore. It's just so *obvious*. The real trick is to find a way to be unimportant but still get noticed.

Sam passes through the swarming patches of conversation and networking. A COMPLIMENTING WOMAN notices Sam's shirt as she walks by.

COMPLIMENTING WOMAN

Oh I like your shirt.

Sam looks down at his lightly stained, old, Hanes sleep shirt. He tugs at the cotton.

Moving deeper, Sam walks by the PARTY HOST. She's engaged in conversation with a pretty woman. Sam recognizes her... it's Chesty Woman... the girl he spied via the drone's video feed.

(CONTINUED)

PARTY HOST

I really want to become a professional vagabond. Travel the entiiiiire world.

CHESTY WOMAN

Pleeeeeease... bring me along.

PARTY HOST

I'd love to. You can be my photographer.

The aspiring travelers laugh together. Sam turns and spins, looking for Millicent.

Nearby, GOSSIPING MAN engages in conversation with GOSSIPING WOMAN.

GOSSIPING MAN

(pointing at girl)

That girl is the youngest woman to ever write, produce, direct and sound design her own network sitcom.

Gossiping Man casually points to a twelve-year-old girl eating cake, surrounded by young adults and two security men in suits. She's the ADOLESCENT PRODIGY.

GOSSIPING WOMAN

How old is she?

GOSSIPING MAN

Twelve, but she's clearly an old soul.

The Gossiping Woman nods her head, glancing back at the Adolescent Prodigy as the young girl giggles and rudely stuffs her finger in her nose.

GOSSIPING MAN

Honestly... she's really captured the zeitgeist. I don't think any adult could ever express the kind of deep understanding that she has over her material.

GOSSIPING WOMAN

I'm embarrassed I haven't seen it yet.

GOSSIPING MAN

You should be.

A beautiful Indian woman bumps into Sam. He turns and looks into her eyes. It's the girl from the Contact Lens Billboard.

(CONTINUED)

She looks back at Sam - holding hands with a very HANDSOME MAN in a tailored suit. Her name, for the sake of this story, is EX.

EX

Um. Hey. How are you?

SAM

I'm good.

EX

I'm really glad to hear that.

The beautiful woman offers Sam an honest and heartfelt look. He's silenced by her sincerity.

EX

Uh... this is my fiance.

Sam looks over, fumbles, then shakes hands with the Handsome Man.

SAM

Oh. Hello. Congratulations.

HANDSOME MAN

Thank you.

Ex nervously twirls her finger through her hair.

EX

Yes, thank you.

Sam nods and smiles, waiting for it to end.

EX

So... how's... work?

SAM

Oh. It's ok.

His face doesn't sell the lie. The beautiful woman plays along anyway.

EX

Good.

SAM

I saw your... billboard.

EX

Oh *cool*. Which one?

112 CONTINUED: (3)

SAM

There's more than one?

The girl grins and nods her head - a long and awkward moment.

SAM

On Los Feliz near Bigfoot.

EX

Cool. Cool. I'm glad it's gettin' out there. You know... always workin' hard. *Gotta keep tryin'.*

SAM

Yup. Same here.

Handsome Man squeezes her hand gently. Ex glances over, then steps towards Sam to offer a quick goodbye hug.

EX

Well... it was great seeing you.

SAM

Yeah. Yeah. You too.

Sam watches Ex walk away with Handsome Man.

In the distance, he sees Millicent stepping into a nearby room.

113 INT. SILVERLAKE HOUSE ART ROOM - NIGHT

113

Millicent stands before a beautiful flower painting. She focuses on it.

Sam steps alongside her and admires the petunia painting in tandem.

MILLICENT

It's beautiful, right?

SAM

It is.

MILLICENT

Do you know who painted it?

SAM

No.

MILLICENT

Gaynor. Janet Gaynor. The actress.

Sam looks back at Millicent with a bright expression.

(CONTINUED)

SAM
Oh. My mom likes her.

MILLICENT
I like her too.

Sam nods and smiles.

MILLICENT
You know who I am?

SAM
Yeah.

There's a sadness about Millicent that Sam suddenly recognizes. A soft tone guides their encounter.

SAM
I was friends with one of the girls
that was with your dad. She was a nice
person.

MILLICENT
Oh.

SAM
I've been trying to find out what
happened to her.

MILLICENT
Really?

SAM
Yeah.

MILLICENT
Do you know anything?

114 EXT. SILVERLAKE RESERVOIR - NIGHT

114

The WATER within the RESERVOIR is calm, reflecting the moon's glow. A few ducks quack and drift along as herons fly overhead.

Sam and Millicent walk together along the outer fence that surrounds the giant water reserve.

MILLICENT
What do you think it all means?

SAM
I don't know. I can't see it yet. But
I'm close... I think.

(CONTINUED)

They step together in unison over the remaining puddles from the evening rain storm.

Near the fence, Sam and Millicent pass a DOG MEMORIAL complete with a BRONZE DOG STATUE and a plaque.

Photos of deceased dogs and puppies are taped to the fence. Victims of the Dog Killer.

Flowers cover the ground around it.

Paper signs with handwritten messages surround the photos:

We miss you Fluffy

Benny was the best dog a man ever had

Mr. Spot R.I.P.

God will judge you, dog killer!

Sam and the young woman slow down before the odd little memorial. Millicent reacts with pain at the discovery of each dog's expression. Pictures of the dead.

MILLICENT

I don't know if we should be walking around here at night.

SAM

I think we're safe. We don't have a dog with us.

MILLICENT

Yeah, but anybody who could kill a dog wouldn't think twice about killing a person.

SAM

I'm not sure that's true.

They walk a bit further. Sam reaches over and takes Millicent's hand in his own.

MILLICENT

Are you a dog or a cat person?

SAM

Eh... It's hard to say. I got bit by my grandparents' terrier when I was a kid. I guess they kinda scare me a little bit.

MILLICENT

That's terrible. I like dogs... but
cats are good too.

SAM

Yeah.

They walk further, looking out at the water across the reservoir. Moonlight and stars reflect against the mirrored surface of the man-made lake.

Sam look at Millicent's gentle and beautiful face. She looks back at him with a nearly imperceptible grin. They share a moment of connection. Unspoken, and stronger for it.

Two small figures under a dark sky - rounding the giant lake.

Up ahead, a LONG HAIREW WINO sits against the fence. As Sam and Millicent approach, he leans forward and shouts.

LONG HAIREW WINO

Haaahh!!

Sam glares at the man, moving Millicent to the outer edge of the sidewalk. Street chivalry.

LONG HAIREW WINO

Got a little change?

Sam looks down. Irritated by the question. Disgusted by the man.

SAM

(resentful)

Nope. *Sorry.*

Sam avoids the man's feet, extended onto the walkway - an intentional obstacle.

LONG HAIREW WINO

No money to spare, huh? Does the lady know you're cheap?

SAM

Fuck you.

LONG HAIREW WINO

Ugly ass piece of shit worthless trash motherfucker. You're more broke than I am. Fuck you! I'll kill you, cock sucker. Come back here and sit down next to poppa. I'll shit in your mouth. Asshole fuckin' dickwad, piece o' shit, son of a bitch....

(CONTINUED)

Sam and the pretty girl walk away from the homeless man - hand in hand. A beautiful evening stroll.

Long Haired Wino continues to curse in the distance. Shouting like an animal.

SAM

(speaking softly)

I know it's not ok to say this, but I really *fuckin*g hate the homeless. Everyone says they need our help but I think they're bullies. They're like... poltergeists.

MILLICENT

You mean *ghosts*?

SAM

Yeah... all they do is float around on the periphery... watching people eat tasty food, drink beer and be in love... and they can't participate... so they get jealous and harass us.

Millicent raises her brow.

MILLICENT

Maybe just give 'em a dollar next time?

Sam takes a breath and looks back - still angry about the encounter.

Millicent says nothing, smiling in response to Sam's overreaction. She looks towards the reservoir.

MILLICENT

Have you ever been in there?

Millicent points to the serene water beyond the fence.

SAM

In the *reservoir*?

MILLICENT

Yeah.

SAM

Eh eh.

Millicent starts to climb the fence. Designer shoes scuffed through the chain links. Delicate hands pulling her higher.

(CONTINUED)

Sam stands there, watching. She looks down at him - a giant grin on her face. A pretty girl hanging from a fence like a cat.

MILLICENT

Come on.

115 EXT. SILVERLAKE INNER RESERVOIR - NIGHT

115

Standing at the edge of the concrete water basin, Millicent and Sam take off their clothes.

Now in the water, the pair swim toward the center of the reservoir. Quietly. Knowing glances between them. Naked bodies just below the surface.

House lights are visible against the hillside landscape around them. A dark sea in the backyards of people's homes.

This is sacred territory and they both feel it.

Treading water in the middle of the reservoir, Sam and Millicent face each other - occasionally looking up and over at the dark hills which cup them like hands holding bath water.

The night sky, the stars and the moon settle along the surface of the lake.

Millicent moves in. Closer to Sam. She nuzzles her cheek against his neck. Hands touching skin under the water.

She kisses his ear. Whispering very close and quiet...

MILLICENT

(whispering)

I think someone is following me.

SAM

(whispering)

Are you kidding?

MILLICENT

(whispering)

I wanted it to look like we're here to screw.

SAM

(whispering)

We're not?

(CONTINUED)

MILLICENT

(whsipering)

I found something hidden in my dad's office.

Under the water, Millicent pulls a silver bracelet off her wrist and slips it onto Sam's arm.

He raises his forearm along the surface of the water and stares at the circular band. It looks like Sarah's bracelet - inscriptions of small letters and numbers etched within the silver.

NPM 1 35 to 37 - C3 to E6

Sam focuses on the inscription.

SAM

C3 to E6. Sounds like a chess move.
Did your dad play chess?

MILLICENT

He did.

Pop!

Water splashes in front of them. A bullet hitting the water. A silenced shot from the dark shore.

SAM

What the...

Tiny splashes appear along the surface of the lake over Millicent's shoulder. Quiet gunfire.

Pop! Pop!

SAM

Get under the water.

Sam takes a giant breath and dives down beneath the surface. He pulls on Millicent's arm, but they're separated in the chaos.

Deeper he goes.

Bubbles and swirling liquid blur Sam's vision. He swims under the water as bullets spread around him - diving like penguins.

Sam sees her...

Dropping...

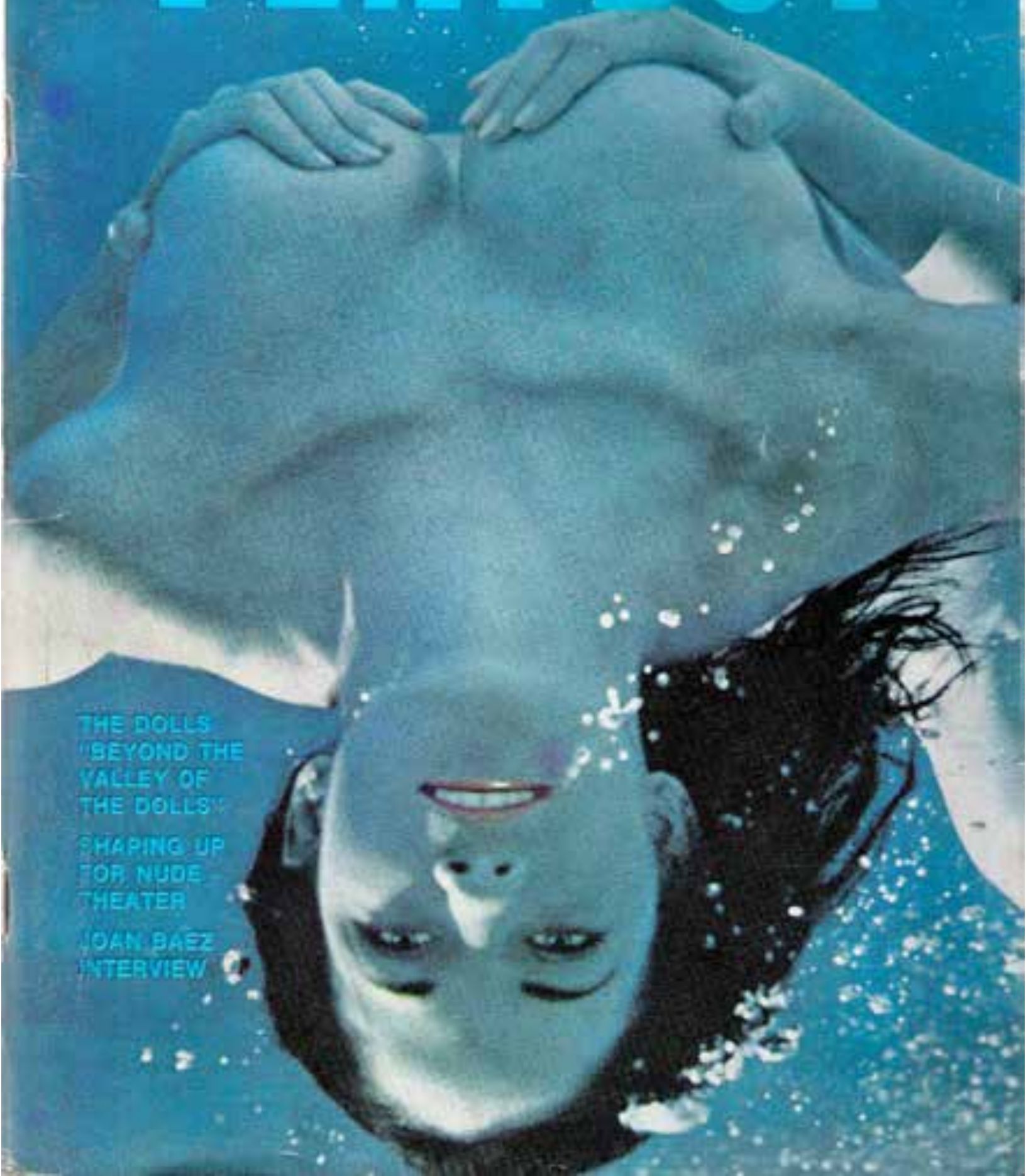
Through the blue water...

(CONTINUED)

ENTERTAINMENT FOR MEN

JULY, 1975 • ONE DOLLAR

PLAYBOY



THE DOLLS
"BEYOND THE
VALLEY OF
THE DOLLS"

SHAPING UP
FOR NUDE
THEATER

JOAN BAEZ
INTERVIEW

115 CONTINUED: (2)

115

Millicent sinks down past Sam - on her back - blood streaming up from a small hole in her naked chest. Bubbles pour from her red lips. She appears to stare at us, but it's hard to say.

Her hands cover her breasts, unknowingly mirroring Sam's most treasured Playboy cover. July 1970.

A beautiful woman. His earliest fantasy. Dropping into the depths of the reservoir.

Sam is overwhelmed by the terrible sight.

Water pours off his body as he climbs up the concrete embankment along the edge of the lake.

Naked and frantic, Sam reaches the fence and climbs.

116 EXT. RANCHO LOS FELIZ APARTMENTS - NIGHT

116

Sam walks quickly down the garden path - still naked and wet.

117 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - MORNING

117

Sam wakes up. Naked on his living room carpet. The silver bracelet around his wrist.

He stares at the inscription around the band, twisting it with his hand. The sun is bright through the open patio door.

SAM

C3 to E6. C3 to E6?

The neighbor's parrot CAWS from across the way.

PARROT

(O.S.)

Nawwwwddduumeennndd

Sam stares at the bracelet.

SAM

(under his breath)

What the fuck are you saying?

118 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DAY

118

Sam opens an old Milton Bradley chess box. He flips the board out and grabs his black Sharpie marker.

SAM

C3... to...

Sam circles the square C3 on the chess board - drawing an arrow towards E6 across the checkered boxes.

(CONTINUED)

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	
8	a8	b8	c8	d8	e8	f8	g8	h8	8
7	a7	b7	c7	d7	e7	f7	g7	h7	7
6	a6	b6	c6	d6	e6	f6	g6	h6	6
5	a5	b5	c5	d5	e5	f5	g5	h5	5
4	a4	b4	c4	d4	e4	f4	g4	h4	4
3	a3	b3	c3	d3	e3	f3	g3	h3	3
2	a2	b2	c2	d2	e2	f2	g2	h2	2
1	a1	b1	c1	d1	e1	f1	g1	h1	1
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	

SAM

E6.

Sam circles the E6 square with his marker.

He stares at the board, spinning it around on the carpet. What does it means?

SAM

Hm.

Sam looks back at the bracelet.

SAM

NPM 1 35 to 37. NPM. NPM. What the fuck is NPM?

Sam sits with his laptop, typing the letters NPM into Google Search.

He scans the resulting page... nothing makes sense.

SAM

N. P. M.

Sam runs his hands through his messy hair in frustration. He looks across the carpet and sees the old Nintendo Entertainment System.

An idea sparks.

Reaching across the floor, Sam grabs a stack of Nintendo Power Magazines.

He sorts through the covers, finding the first issue. Mario smiles, leaping from a mushroom - a carrot in his hand.

SAM

NPM issue number one. *Fuck.*

The pages fly past us like a piece of animation, flipped across Sam's thumb.

He settles on pages 35, 36 and 37.

It's a subdivided map from "The Legend of Zelda". Sam smiles as he notices the alphanumeric grids that cover the map. He circles the squares corresponding to C3 and E6.

SAM

What the fuck do I do with this?

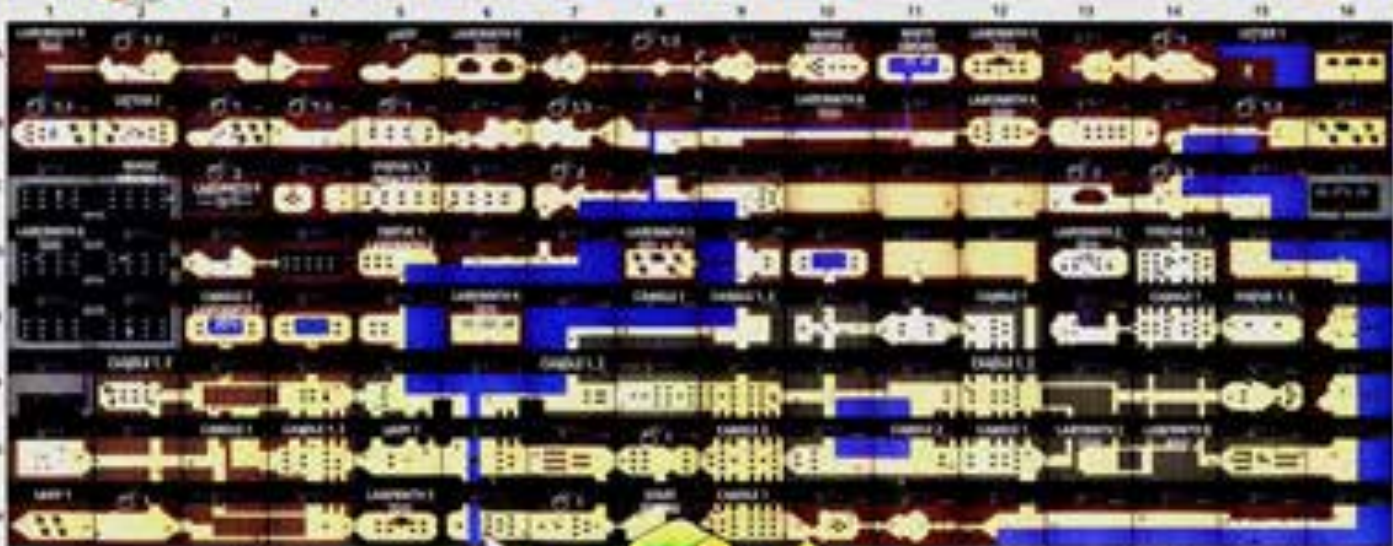
Outside, the parrot CACKLES. Children splash in the pool.

(CONTINUED)



The Legend of ZELDA

Link's first adventure takes him far and wide across Hyrule, leading him to the most sacred and mysterious of places. However, there are few of these in Hyrule that truly, absolutely may have existed, while there may be others only one man in the game who will benefit from knowing about all the legends. Welcome to Hyrule, an exciting life. The following map will have the answer!



KEY

Legend of Zelda: The Great Pyramid of Giza (The Great Pyramid of Giza)



- Blue Circle: Temple of Time
- Red Circle: Temple of Light
- Green Circle: Temple of Fire
- Yellow Circle: Temple of Earth



- Blue Square: Temple of Time
- Red Square: Temple of Light
- Green Square: Temple of Fire
- Yellow Square: Temple of Earth



THE LABYRINTHS

Legend of Zelda: The Great Pyramid of Giza (The Great Pyramid of Giza)

- Blue Circle: Temple of Time
- Red Circle: Temple of Light
- Green Circle: Temple of Fire
- Yellow Circle: Temple of Earth

- Blue Square: Temple of Time
- Red Square: Temple of Light
- Green Square: Temple of Fire
- Yellow Square: Temple of Earth

Sam looks across the room and notices the Moonstones cereal box sitting on the counter. He runs to it.

Tearing it open, he tastes one of the cereal bites. Repulsed by the ancient stale food, he spits it onto the floor as he digs deeper into the box with a single hand.

From the bottom, he pulls out a prize. A plastic-wrapped transparency-map of Los Angeles covered with Moonstone characters and bright colors.

He opens the wrapper and pulls out the map...

Holding the cartoon map of LA over the Zelda map, Sam realizes that they line up perfectly.

E6 corresponds to the Silverlake reservoir.

SAM

So that's the reservoir. And...

C3 is a wooded section of Mt. Hollywood.

SAM

Mt. Hollywood?

Sam opens google maps and brings up the Los Angeles overhead map. He zooms in. Tighter and tighter on the rear section of Mt. Hollywood.

A small square of forest is BLACKED OUT. A solid graphic marked with text:

Satellite Image Unavailable

Sam stares at the small hidden square. He hits his hand down against the couch.

SAM

What the fuck is in there?

119 EXT. LOS ANGELES RIVER TRAIL - DAY

119

Sam races up the path along the LA river on an old BMX bike. He's wearing a red hoodie over his head, looking like a man-child from a Steven Spielberg movie.

He stands on the pedals and lifts his head into the wind - looking toward the tall green hills beyond the river.

He pedals faster. A man on a bicycle heading toward adventure.

120 EXT. MOUNT HOLLYWOOD FOREST - DAY 120

Sam hikes through the woods, trudging up the hillside.

121 EXT. MOUNT HOLLYWOOD FOREST - DAY 121

Sam reaches the tall wooden fence. He notices several painted marks along the wall.

///

Three parallel lines - diagonal from the top to the bottom of the wall.

What does that mean?

Sam opens his wallet and pulls out a piece of scrap paper filled with handwritten translations of Hobo Code.

It's the paper "key" created by Comic Man.

Sam runs his finger over the symbols, stopping alongside the three parallel lines. The hobo translations is:

 this is not a safe place

122 EXT. MOUNT HOLLYWOOD FOREST - DAY 122

Reaching a clearing, Sam steps through the trees and looks ahead.

He sees a single straw hut in the middle of an overgrown field.

A few Alberto Giacometti human-figure sculptures stand like scarecrows within the grass. An eerie expression of the emaciated human form. Tall or short... all with appendages like twigs.

Sam walks toward the straw hut, checking the gun tucked into his waist band.

He hears water splashing from inside. Delicately.

123 INT. STRAW HUT - DAY 123

Arriving at the doorway of the hut, Sam looks inside. He see a fifty-nine-year-old man in a white gown, crouched on the floor.

This man, the FINAL MAN, is washing the feet of three young women in white rags. Sam recognizes their faces as they look up from their seated positions along the wood floor.

(CONTINUED)

It's Troy, Fannie, and Mae. The girls in the White Rabbit.

SAM

Hello?

The Final Man turns and faces Sam. He remains sitting Indian-style in the center of the straw hut. The three beautiful young women sitting in a row along the wall.

FINAL MAN

Hello.

Silence. Sam waits for something to happen.

FINAL MAN

Can I help you?

SAM

Um... yeah.

The girls cock their inquisitive heads as Sam clears his throat.

SAM

My friend Sarah was killed. These girls know something about it.

FINAL MAN

Why do you assume that?

SAM

I saw *her* taking things from Sarah's apartment.

Sam points at Troy. She smiles as his finger singles her out.

SAM

I found a code in their friend's song.
I've been in the tunnels.

FINAL MAN

Alright.

The Final Man calmly pours several cups of tea into tiny porcelain containers. He passes them out to the girls - taking one for himself.

FINAL MAN

Please sit down. Drink with us.

Sam sits against the wall, staring at the man and his triad harem.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

I found a bunker down there. Some kind of shelter in case of a nuclear war.

TROY

It's not a shelter.

SAM

What is it then?

The Final Man places a small cup of tea on the floor in front of Sam.

FINAL MAN

A tomb.

SAM

What?

Mae's face brightens with excitement. She looks to the Final Man.

MAE

Was it ours?

The Man pats Mae on the leg - a comforting "I'll be with you in a moment" gesture.

FINAL MAN

They're tombs. For kings... like me. Like Jefferson Sevence.

The girls begin to drink their tea.

SAM

Why would Jefferson Sevence need a tomb underneath the city?

The Final Man glances over at his Ascension Brides. He makes a face to them - suggesting that Sam doesn't "get it". Troy grins back in adoration.

SAM

A cemetery isn't good enough?

Sam glares at them all - growing more irritated with their smug and holy demeanor.

FINAL MAN

It's not about burial. It's about *ascension*. We're not *dying*, we're being transported to another world. Somewhere better than this.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

Are you talking about *heaven*?

FINAL MAN

You'd have to be a fool to think that poverty in this life equals wealth in the next. I'm talking about something *exclusive* and *real*. Our souls will be pulled from our bodies and carried through the unfathomable amniotic sac that holds us here and prevents us from true connection.

As the Final Man describes the birth-like barrier separating him from his bliss, he tugs at his cheeks - the skin on his face.

FINAL MAN

We will be beyond this universe and living together as kings without limitation. The pharaohs did it... great men throughout history have done the same.

Sam stares at the man, trying to make sense of it.

SAM

Are you dying?

The man shakes his head, smiling at the course of Sam's ignorant interrogation.

FINAL MAN

I'm about to be sealed inside a tomb with my beautiful brides...

The Final Man waves his hand, presenting his future wives.

FINAL MAN

... and all my worldly treasures. We'll have delicious meals and wine and television and sex. Enough to last us for six months.

SAM

And then you die?

The Final Man gulps his tea in a single shot - setting the cup back on the tray.

FINAL MAN

No. We wait to be ascended. Our souls and all the gold I've managed to collect will be transported.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FINAL MAN (cont'd)

Enough to buy ourselves a position of royalty in a world of perfection and beauty.

Sam stares in disbelief. This is madness of course.

FINAL MAN

Only the richest of men can afford this ceremony. I'm not even gonna tell you how many people you have to kill for just *one* man... and *three* women...

He glances back at his grateful brides.

FINAL MAN

... to reach the afterlife. The requirements for sacrifice are so specific... hair color, age, sex, tooth alignment, dietary habits, cancer formations... it takes a fortune and an army to catalog these people and kill them according to ritual.

SAM

Who did you kill?

FINAL MAN

It's expensive to build a tunnel system and keep it hidden, but it costs even more to murder people and not be harassed about it. The infrastructure, the management, the bribery... all in the name of something holy and pure.

SAM

Did you kill Sarah?

The Final Man pulls a bamboo framed photo off the wall near the doorway. He offers it up to Sam.

FINAL MAN

No one will find our chambers for a thousand years. Future men will understand that we were the modern kings. Rulers without statues or effigies.

Looking at the photo, Sam sees Jefferson Sevence in a white gown - his arms around Sarah and her two roommates in white rags. All sitting together within this very same straw shack.

Wide smiles across their faces. No fear or terror.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

They were here?

Looking closer, Sam notices that Sarah's "How to Marry a Millionaire" dolls are visible on the floor behind her.

SAM

Is Sarah alive?

FINAL MAN

She may have ascended already. I don't know.

Sam points downward - growing more disgusted and horrified with each revelation.

SAM

She's in one of those tombs?

Fannie nods her head - a big smile of anticipation across her face.

SAM

With Sevence?

FINAL MAN

Yes.

SAM

But they found his body.

FINAL MAN

They found another man's bones mixed with... most of Jefferson's teeth, some of his skin, and all the organs that he's able to live without.

Sam is taken aback - horrified by it all - a swirling sickness in his head.

The white robed host and hostesses observe Sam as his breathing changes - sweat forms on his skin.

FINAL MAN

(signaling quotation marks with his hands)

Did you think "heaven" was easy?

Sam looks down at his lap. He's unable to focus.

SAM

I never gave it much thought.

(CONTINUED)

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CINEMASCOPE
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MONROE · GRABLE · BACALL**



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a Millionaire**

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DAVID WAYNE · RORY CALHOUN · CAMERON MITCHELL ... ALSO HURCH
FIELD CLARK

AND
WILLIAM POWELL



PRODUCED BY **NUNNALLY JOHNSON** · DIRECTED BY **JEAN NEGULESCO** · SCREEN PLAY BY **NUNNALLY JOHNSON** · BASED ON PLAYS BY
JOE ARMS AND DALE LONSON AND **MATHERINE ROBERT**

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FINAL MAN

And what do you think now?

SAM

I think you're gonna bury yourself alive. You're gonna run out of food and you're gonna fucking eat each other and die. After that... I have no idea.

FINAL MAN

I doubt that it will be so grim, but even if it is... it'll be worth it.

The Final man looks around the room in disgust.

FINAL MAN

All this *ugliness* is just a cocoon.

Sam's eyes flare with anger. He's had enough.

SMASH!!

He pounds his fist into the wall, knocking several photos and ceremonial statues to the floor.

The Final Man and his Brides are momentarily startled. They watch Sam as he exhales deeply, regaining his composure.

MAE

(whispering to herself)

That's such an angry thing to do.

FINAL MAN

(calm)

What are you upset about?

SAM

I just... want to see Sarah.

FINAL MAN

Ok. Well... let's see if we can get her on the phone.

Spinning around in his seat, the Final Man opens up a bamboo panel, revealing a flat-screen monitor and corded telephone receiver. He presses some buttons and waits - listening into to the earpiece.

SAM

They have a phone?

(CONTINUED)

FINAL MAN

Incoming calls only. We've had problems in the past. People getting scared... trying to get out.

SAM

They're trapped?

The phone continues to ring - very quietly from the receiver. Static on the screen.

FINAL MAN

(speaking in a half-whisper as one does when on the phone)

We wouldn't want to lose out on eternal life just because we might have a normal physical aversion to being buried underneath the earth. We're only human.

There's a light click - a voice on the line - unheard by us.

FINAL MAN

Hello, how are you?

(beat)

Uh huh. Ok good.

(beat)

Do you mind if I put you on video phone? A friend of yours is here. He wants to see you.

(beat)

Ok. Great.

The Final Man presses another button and the television flickers on, revealing a beautiful young woman's face.

It is Sarah - looking straight at us through the video screen.

She appears calm, comfortably covered in a simple summer dress, holding the telephone up to her cheek.

Behind her is a cavernous, brightly-lit living room. Rock formations hang from the ceiling, alongside a diamond encrusted chandelier.

One of Sarah's roommates, the Brunette, is sitting naked on a lazy-boy chair - her legs propped up before a giant television screen. She's brushing her teeth - spitting into a small golden chalice.

Jefferson Sevence is sitting on the couch, nestled up against Sarah's blond roommate.

(CONTINUED)

They're watching an old episode of The Andy Griffith Show on TV Land - sharing a bowl of popcorn.

A mountain of gold bars lines the far wall.

The Final Man hands Sam the telephone. He holds it up to his ear.

SARAH

Hello?

SAM

Sarah? Can you hear me?

SARAH

Yeah. Hellooo.

SAM

I've been looking for you.

SARAH

Really?

SAM

Yeah.

SARAH

You hardly know me.

SAM

I know.

SARAH

Are you annoyed with me? You angry?

SAM

Do I sound angry?

SARAH

Kinda.

SAM

I just wanted to know what happened to you.

SARAH

Oh.

SAM

Do you really want to stay down there?

SARAH

Yeah.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

You're gonna die down there. Is that what you want?

Sarah stares into the television screen - deep in thought. Her face displays a range of feelings. Joy. Fear. Doubt.

Sarah looks back at Jefferson and her roommates - all laughing before the giant television.

SARAH

I'm gonna take this in the bedroom.

She holds the phone out towards her Brunette Roommate.

SARAH

Will you hang it up when I get in there?

BRUNETTE ROOMMATE

Sure.

The Brunette gets out of her chair and takes the phone as Sarah exits our view.

The naked Brunette stands there. She half-listens into the ear piece - bored - with her hand on her waist. A finger twists the curly chord.

The Final Man looks over at Sam. He leans close and whispers.

FINAL MAN

(whispering to Sam)

Their chamber was covered with a *mountain* of concrete. It can't be opened. There's no point in upsetting the girl. Please be kind.

CLICK.

The screen switches to a view of an ornate underground bedroom. Sarah sits on the floor staring at the camera with the phone to her ear.

SARAH

I got it!

BRUNETTE ROOMMATE

Ok.

There's another CLICK as the Brunette hangs up the line.

Sarah looks up at the screen into Sam's eyes. Her voice is softer now - an unsure whisper.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH
(meek and quiet)
Do you think I made a mistake? Coming
down here?

Sam looks at the Final Man before responding.

SAM
Maybe.

Sarah exhales with a vocal sigh, stretching her arm out in
frustration.

SARAH
Ehhhhhhh.

She shakes off the bad feelings.

SARAH
Well there's no getting out, so I may
as well make the best of things, huh?

SAM
Yeah...

Sam looks away from the tv monitor and stares through the
doorway into the outside world.

SAM
Same here.

Sarah nods at the screen, fidgeting with her dress. Taking a
moment to herself.

SARAH
So... how are you doing?

SAM
Not great.

SARAH
Have you thought about getting another
dog?

SAM
No.

SARAH
It might be good for you. A little
unconditional love.

SAM
I'll think about it.

(CONTINUED)

SARAH

Um... I should probably get going. I said I'd make dinner tonight. I have a million things to do.

SAM

Ok. Well enjoy your dinner.

SARAH

Thanks. Take care.

SAM

Bye.

Sarah places her receiver down as the Final Man turns off the monitor. He takes the phone away from Sam.

FINAL MAN

Ok?

Sam nods. His face is pale. He picks up his cup of tea and takes a sip.

Mae reaches out and holds hands with the other Ascension Brides. She looks between them and the Final Man - now ignoring Sam.

MAE

Last night... I had a vision of us making love beneath the earth, then swimming together naked in a dark pool. And that's when it happens... our bodies dissolve into light and every beautiful thought we've ever had forms around us and carries our souls through space to another world... and we're just laughing the whole time because we know that nothing can ever be wrong again.

Mae turns to Sam.

MAE

I wish you were coming with us.

Sam gulps the rest of his tea. He sets the cup onto the floor. The Final Man looks over at Sam.

FINAL MAN

This isn't a world that anybody with any sense stays in or spends much time worrying about.

(CONTINUED)

Sam watches as Fannie falls over into the lap of her nearby friend.

FINAL MAN

Your goals... your dreams... the things that eat away your life before your eyes... you're living in a *carnival*, throwing plastic rings at oversized pop bottles hoping to win a prize...

Troy lays back against the wall and closes her eyes. Mae folds into a little ball on the floor.

FINAL MAN

What do you win? A *2 week vacation*? A new car? Maybe a *little money to retire on*? It's all a shitty, sawdust filled rabbit. The things you care about are useless where we're going.

Sam stares ahead as the Final Man slumps over, landing on the girls' slack bodies. His head rests on Mae's thigh.

Sam tries to stand. He touches his face and stumbles to the side. Falling down. His head on the wooden floor. Mouth agape.

Sam watches the orange sun cross the skyline beyond the trees.

It's beautiful outside.

Through the open doorway, Sam sees a grass-covered hatch open in the middle of the field.

The Homeless King emerges from under the ground.

Calmly, he walks to the hut and stops at the entrance, looking down at Sam.

The Homeless King leans on the door frame, back-lit against the LA sun, posing like a mock-John-Wayne. Waiting. Patient.

Sam tries to lift his face.

SAM

How did you you know I was here?

HOMELESS KING

We smelled you.

SAM

Oh.

Sam rests his head on the cool wooden tile.

(CONTINUED)

123 CONTINUED: (13)

123

Everything goes black once more.

124 INT. CONCRETE ROOM - DARK

124

Sam opens his eyes. He's chained to a chair in a small concrete room. No windows. Very dark.

The homeless king stands before him - blocking the stone doorway.

Sam takes a breath.

SAM

What happened to that man? And those girls?

HOMELESS KING

They're waking up right now. In their ascension chamber.

SAM

And so now you're gonna kill me?

HOMELESS KING

Do you know what you did wrong?

Sam opens his eyes completely, looking up at his accuser.

SAM

(nervous)

No.

The Homeless King lifts up his hand, revealing a few dog biscuits in his palm.

HOMELESS KING

We found these in your pocket.

Sam says nothing.

The Homeless King shuffles the biscuits in his hand and considers their importance.

HOMELESS KING

Why do you have dog biscuits in your pocket?

Sam stares at the dirty man with deep anger.

SAM

I used to like a girl who had a dog.

(CONTINUED)

The Homeless King thinks about this for a moment, narrowing his eyes. He shakes his head - a tiny grin of skepticism on his face.

HOMELESS KING

When was that?

SAM

A long time ago.

The Homeless King considers the response - debates a reply.

HOMELESS KING

Did she stop loving you?

SAM

Uh huh.

The Homeless King stares into Sam's eyes - waiting for more. He repeats his question like a mantra.

HOMELESS KING

Why do you have dog biscuits in your pocket?

Sam doesn't answer. He stares back defiantly - angry - resentful.

SAM

I was waiting for her to take me back.
I wanted to give the dog a treat and
rub its ears - like the way I used to.
And everything would be good again.

The Homeless King moves closer, looking down at his prisoner with Christ-like eyes. He unlocks Sam's chains and steps to the side - offering a clear path towards the doorway.

HOMELESS KING

You can go now.

SAM

Really?

HOMELESS KING

Yeah.

SAM

You're not gonna kill me?

HOMELESS KING

I don't think so... we might. I'm not
sure yet. Obviously don't mention any
of this to anyone.

(CONTINUED)

SAM

I won't.

Sam stands up and begins to cross the room - hesitantly.

HOMELESS KING

Ok. Well... Goodbye.

SAM

Goodbye.

Sam walks to the doorway. He reaches a tall staircase.

Sam begins to climb up the very long and very narrow row of stone steps.

Where does this staircase go?

Sam lifts a metal door. Bright light pours down into the passageway.

125 EXT. LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD - LATE DAY

125

Sam emerges in the parking lot of the 76 gas station near Hillhurst and Los Feliz.

The street is bustling. The sun peeks through the clouds.

Music zips past Sam as cars race by in both directions. Lady Gaga. Neil Diamond. David Bowie. Cher. Jesus and the Brides of Dracula.

Just pieces. Fragmented and warped together by the doppler effect. All songs become one singular melody...

I'm pickin' up *good vibrations*

She givin' me *excitations*

Good good *good goooooood*

Vibraazzzgwuqghewuwjhhajasodasdkasdasda!!!!

Sam walks along the busy road of Los Feliz. Cars race by. Loudly. Sam is in a daze.

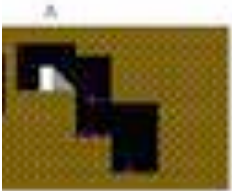
126 EXT. LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD - LATE DAY

126

Sam stares up at the hills above the trees.

He squints and strains, imagining 8-bit Egyptian mazes and tombs from Super Mario Bros. 2 - superimposed over the hillside.

(CONTINUED)



A sort of X-Ray Vision... sweeping slowly across the horizon.

Sam imagines level after level of Mario-esque tunnels within the majestic green hillside.

Is this what's underneath?

127 EXT. LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD - LATE DAY

127

Sam passes some Latino teenagers picnicking near the Mulholland Memorial fountain. The kids are listening to music as they eat their food.

Madonna's "Express Yourself" plays loudly from the cheap portable speakers on their blanket...

You don't need *diamond rings*

Or eighteen karat *gold*

Fancy cars that go very fast

You know they never last, *no, no*

What you need is a big strong hand

To lift you to your higher *ground*

Make you feel like a queen on a throne

Make him love you till you can't *come down*

You'll never come down

Sam crosses the I-5 overpass. Traffic is thick. The cars move slowly now - bumper to bumper down Los Feliz. Sam looks at them as he walks along.

Below him, cars idle along the I-5 freeway.

Here is the site of Kevin McCarthy's dramatic plea for help at the conclusion of "Invasion of the Body Snatchers".

Should Sam scream a warning? Yell out to the passing cars?

He says nothing. Watching them pass. Remaining silent.

128 EXT. LOS FELIZ BOULEVARD - LATE DAY

128

Sam walks along the sidewalk, passing by the Contact Lens Billboard.

Workers are switching out the signage. The contact lens ad is being replaced with a McDonalds advertisement.

(CONTINUED)

128 CONTINUED:

128

Sam' ex-girlfriend's face is cut in half - partially covered by Ronald McDonald's grin.

The oddly divided girl looks down at Sam and the passing cars of Los Feliz Boulevard. Her subtle expression is supplanted by Ronald's enormous and disturbing smile.

129 EXT. VILLAGE BAKERY - LATE DAY

129

Sam passes by the coffee shop. He looks inside at the pretty bakery girls. They laugh and chatter as they clean the counter and flip chairs onto tables.

He sees them through the window's faded sharpie handwriting - still visible across the glass.

BEWARE THE DOG KILLER

130 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DUSK

130

Sam enters his apartment with a bag of groceries.

He ignores the large, spray-painted mark across his dining room wall.

<><>

Sam unloads the bag: A 2-quart container of Tropicana Original Orange Juice and a box of Nabisco Original Premium Saltine Crackers.

He sets the groceries on the counter alongside an opened priority envelope.

131 INT. SAM'S APARTMENT - DUSK

131

Sam is sitting on the couch, staring at the July 1970 Playboy cover.

In the background, the groceries remain along the counter - though opened. Crackers spread like dominos out of their plastic bag. A pulp covered glass of orange juice - half drunk.

Sarah's picture rests on Sam's lap.

The gun sits neatly on the white CB2 tv tray before him.

His dusty VCR is on the carpet - cables and plugs running from it to the back of the tv.

A shaky VHS recording plays on the television. It is "Seventh Heaven". Janet Gaynor cries and emotes with grand perfection and beauty.

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED:

131

Sam's Nintendo lies on the carpet next to the VCR. A tangled mess of chords and old entertainment technology.

The upside down Playmate stares at Sam... from under the blue water.

He hears the parrot cawing.

PARROT
(O.S.)
Rrrrottafendnnndddd!

Sam looks towards the window. Breathing slowly. Debating. Eyes unblinking.

132 EXT. APARTMENT HALLWAY - DUSK

132

Sam stands in the hallway, knocking on an apartment door.

The Bird Woman opens the door, wearing a t-shirt and no bra. She looks at Sam with a suspicious expression. The look of a housewife greeting a door-to-door salesman.

Sam smiles to her.

133 INT. BIRD WOMAN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

133

Sam and the Bird Woman lie naked on the living room floor - sweaty and tired.

A throw-rug under their bodies. A couch cushion under their heads.

The Topless Bird Woman nuzzles close to Sam. Affectionate. She smells his chest and shoulder.

TOPLESS BIRD WOMAN
Is that patchouli?

SAM
No.

The parrot caws from outside on the woman's balcony. Sam looks towards it - perched in its cage.

PARROT
Nawwwwddduumeennndd

SAM
What's the bird saying?

The Bird Woman looks back toward the patio. She shakes her head.

(CONTINUED)

BIRD WOMAN

I don't know. Honestly, I've always wondered, but I have no idea.

Sam nods his head and stares at the bird. It shouts once more.

He takes it in.

134 EXT. TOPLESS BIRD WOMAN'S BALCONY - NIGHT

134

Sam stands alone on the woman's balcony. The birds are quiet in their cages.

Gentle rustling.

Lighting a cigarette, Sam looks across the courtyard to his own apartment - hidden in the trees and foliage.

He looks through the open window into his home.

It's quiet and still.

Finally...

Sam's front door opens, and the Apartment Manager steps into the dimly lit living room. The Sheriff follows him inside.

Sam watches the men, from his hidden perch, as they sift through his things, pointing at the walls and shaking their heads.

Sam exhales smoke...

The End Credits Roll.

We hear REM's "Strange Currencies"...

SINCERE VOICE

(singing)

I don't know why you're mean to me
when I call on the telephone... and I
don't know what you mean to me, but I
want to turn you on, turn you up,
figure you out... I want to take you
on... these words "you will be mine",
these words "you will be mine"... all
the time...

