

This is that script

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This
is that
CORP

SUPER

By

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BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)
I've had two perfect moments in my
life. The first was when I married
Sarah.

EXT. FRANK'S PARENTS' BACKYARD - DAY

SUPER: "#1" in bright lettering.

FRANK D'ARBO and SARAH HELGELAND's low-budget wedding day fills the screen. They kiss beneath a provisional gazebo. A MINISTER and FAMILY MEMBERS surround them, APPLAUDING. Large dogs fill breeding cages behind the gazebo, BARKING.

We see only glimpses of who the married couple are here -- Frank is a large man, socially and physically awkward; Sarah is pretty, but weathered: haunted. The moment doesn't last long before --

BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)
The other, I was downtown.

EXT. FRUIT STAND - DAY

Frank is buying plums at a fruit stand. He notices a panicked PURSE-SNATCHER rounding a corner.

The Snatcher darts into a bodega beside Frank. TWO COPS barrel the corner after him, looking around, lost.

SUPER: "#2"

Frank points inside the store, yells to the cops:

FRANK
Officers, he went in here!

The Cops run past Frank and into the store.

COP
Thanks, pal!

BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)
Two perfect moments which offset a
life of pain.

INT. FRANK'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - DAY

YOUNG FRANK is SOBBING on his bed as his father, FRANK SR., a dispassionate man with thick, eye-distorting glasses, beats him with a belt. On the floor are scattered pictures of pin-up girls from the '80's.

FRANK SR.
Would God hide pictures of Heather
Locklear in His closet, Frank?

BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)
A life of humiliation.

INT. BRICK WALL - DAY

Young Frank tries to cover himself, as LAUGHING BOYS stand on the edge of wall over him, urinating on him.

BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)
And rejection.

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

A happy TEENAGE FRANK poses with his homely PROM DATE for their prom photo. A middle-aged PHOTOGRAPHER FLASHES their photo.

INT. GYMNASIUM - LATER

Teenage Frank is picking up his date's wool-lined jean jacket from the coat check.

PROM DATE
I'll meet you outside.

EXT. GYMNASIUM PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Teenage Frank looks for his lost date. He turns to see the Photographer having sex with his Prom Date on the hood of an Impala. Frank's Prom Date GRUNTS with pleasure.

She spots Frank. Shoos him away with a flick of her wrist.

CUT TO:

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - CURRENT DAY - NIGHT

Frank wakes up with a start, as if he's had a vision. Sarah is asleep beside him, hoarding the covers.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frank grabs a pad of paper, some pens and colored pencils from his closet.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Frank is crouched over the kitchen table. He draws cartoons, intensely focused.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Frank tapes two drawings to the wall beside his chest of drawers. He steps back and stares at them: his two perfect moments. In one, he kisses Sarah on their wedding day. In the other, he points into the store while the cop says, "Thanks, pal!" in a word balloon.

Sarah appears behind him, wearing her robe, holding a cup of coffee.

SARAH

What are those?

FRANK

I'll wake up and see these first thing every morning. My perfect moments. They can inform my day. Set me in the right direction.

SARAH

Why are everybody's hands so big?

Frank stares, concerned.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - DAY

Frank covers the largely-rendered hands with Liquid Paper.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - LATER

Frank once more stares at the drawings, again taped to the wall. All the characters' hands have been whited-out and redrawn. Their hands are all now especially tiny. But Frank seems satisfied.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah is lying in bed, reading *InTouch* magazine. Frank is snuggled up to her, holding her.

Sarah wriggles her shoulder, pushing him away.

SARAH

Frank.

Frank flops onto his back. He stares at the ceiling.

FRANK (V.O.)

I knew I was losing her.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Frank enters the front door after a hard day of work. Sarah is on the rug doing bong hits and GIGGLING with a goofy burnout named TOBY and some GIRL. Frank is surprised.

SARAH

Frank, close the fucking door!
What if a cop drove by?!

She throws a sock at him.

TOBY

Doof.

Toby LAUGHS. Frank looks at Toby, then spots a fireplace poker on a rack near the fireplace.

FRANK (V.O.)

I should have done something about
it then.

FANTASY -- FAMILY ROOM

Frank grabs the fireplace poker and shoves it in Toby's neck. Blood spurts out across the room.

FRANK (V.O.)
Saved Sarah from what was about to
come.

BACK TO SCENE

FRANK (V.O.)
But I was weak.

Frank avoids Toby's gaze, and leaves the room.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Maybe it's Sunday morning. Frank is cooking breakfast on the stove. A screen door leads to the dew-drenched day.

A handsome man appears behind the screen. JACQUES. He's unshaven, and his hip, expensive clothes are disheveled as if he's been up all night. He peers inside.

JACQUES
Hey. Is this where Sarah lives?

Frank stares at him a moment.

FRANK
She's not here.

JACQUES
Oh. Okay.
(sniffs)
What are you cooking there, pal?
Eggs?

Frank nods.

JACQUES
Mmm... Eggs sound good right about
now.

Frank looks at him.

JACQUES
Think maybe I could have a couple
of those babies?

Frank looks at him.

MOMENTS LATER

Jacques is sitting at the table across from Frank, shoveling eggs into his piehole. Frank examines him.

JACQUES

Man! Are these some special kind of eggs? What are these, those brown eggs? I don't know what those are.

FRANK

No.

JACQUES

Well, damn, they're fantastic. My God. You, my friend, have a gift. God graced you with a Goddamn egg-cooking gift.

Jacques looks at his watch.

JACQUES

Holy shit. Horses at the gate. Got to go.

Jacques wipes his mouth, and stands. Fishes in his pocket.

JACQUES

Can I give you a couple bucks for the, uh...?

FRANK

That's okay.

Jacques smiles: he's a charming rascal and he knows it.

JACQUES

Thanks, buddy. Do me a favor and tell Sarah, Jacques stopped by. Okay?

Frank nods. Jacques winks good-bye, slaps the screen door on the way out, and is gone.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank and Sarah lie in bed. Frank's reading an inspirational book, Sarah an US Magazine. Frank looks at Sarah, thinks, considers saying nothing, but then --

FRANK

Somebody named... Jock stopped by today.

SARAH

Oh. Jacques. From the club.

Frank stares at her. Sarah goes back to reading her magazine. She can't quite suppress a smile, a touch of excitement.

BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)

She was gone five days later.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank opens Sarah's empty closet.

MOMENTS LATER

He finds a single hairpin in one of her empty drawers.

LATER

Frank is on his knees on the floor, SOBBING. The two perfect moments are on the wall beside him. He looks up at his own distorted face in a full-length mirror.

FRANK (V.O.)

People look stupid when they cry.

RUN THE CREDITS!

A DRIVING POP SONG plays over ANIMATED CREDITS: they're a version of Frank's colored-pencil cartoons on lined paper, featuring Frank in a superhero costume. He shoots beams out of his eyes. He picks up getaway cars, crunching them in his hands. He tears off criminals' heads. He stretches and flies and blows powerful winds that tear the flesh off villains, leaving them skeletons -- Ha! It's all very triumphant.

The credits culminate with the cartoon versions of Frank and the other characters all dancing. Then:

INT. BARE ASSETS - NIGHT

Frank, distressed, approaches a pretty HOSTESS in the doorway of this strip club. She once-overs Frank.

HOSTESS
May I help you, sir?

FRANK
I'm looking for Sarah D'arbo.

Frank peeks beyond dividers, where MEN hypnotized with lust stare at passionless STRIPPERS.

HOSTESS
Sarah doesn't work here anymore.

FRANK
Can I go in and look for her?

HOSTESS
I just said, she doesn't work here anymore, sir. If you'd like to leave a mess --
(to busboy)
Goddammit, Manuel. Not there. By the napkins.

Frank sees Jacques, LAUGHING, coming through the crowd. He's with three thugs: ABE, MIKE, and QUILL. They pass Frank as they exit the place.

EXT. BARE ASSETS - MOMENTS LATER

Frank approaches Jacques and his posse from behind.

FRANK
Jock?

JACQUES
Uh huh?

FRANK
Do you know where my wife is?

Jacques starts to get into his Aston Martin.

JACQUES
Depends on who your wife is --

FRANK
Sarah. Sarah.

JACQUES

Oh, yeah. Right. The guy who cooks eggs. The brown kind.

FRANK

They weren't brown. You just --

JACQUES

That's right. They weren't brown.

FRANK

Have you seen my wife?

Jacques takes a deep breath.

JACQUES

Shit. Man. Yes, I have. And I know this is hard. But I don't think -- Man. Man, I don't think she wants to see you anymore?

Frank is silent, about to cry.

JACQUES

Oh, dude... look... sometimes people just change, right?... I mean, I'm sure she still loves you. She'll always love you, right?

Frank is not consoled.

JACQUES

And I know she feels bad about it. Just the other day she was saying something, and I couldn't believe, it was so touching -- She looked at me and said... I can't remember exactly how it went, but everyone in the room, even these cunts here, were like, 'Oh my God. That's --' You know, it moved them. And it was about you. So, anyway, I'm sorry, buddy.

Jacques nods to his men. They get into their cars.

Frank stands impotently in the lot as they drive away.

FADE TO:

EXT. BARE ASSETS - NIGHT

Frank is in his car down the street from the club, looking obsessed.

Empty soda cans and candy wrappers are on the seat beside him. He's been there for hours.

He sees Jacques, with his men, come out of the club. A POOR WOMAN is selling roses. Jacques buys one.

Jacques gets into his Aston Martin and takes off.

Frank tails the Aston in his beat-up boat of a car.

EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

Frank tails Jacques down the highway. Jacques switches lanes, and gets onto the off-ramp.

Frank follows Jacques' car up the off ramp.

EXT. BEDLINGTON ROAD - LATER

Two cars head onto a dark, rural road, full of greenery. Frank looks up at the street name -- BEDLINGTON.

EXT. JACQUES' GATE - LATER

Jacques pulls up to a sprawling ranch, surrounded by high metal gates. The gates swing open.

Frank parks. He watches through the bars as the Aston pulls up the driveway and to the front door.

Jacques gets out of his car and walks to the front doors. The door opens before he gets there.

Inside, it's Sarah. Her eyes are bloodshot and puffy; she's obviously stoned. She smiles, greeting Jacques. Jacques hands her the rose. She smells it. They giggle.

And kiss. Jacques closes the door behind them.

INT. DMITRI'S DINER KITCHEN - NIGHT

Frank stands lifelessly by the grill, watching blackened burgers smoke. HAMILTON, his fellow cook, a thirtyish black man, sees this.

HAMILTON

Yo, Frank, you're burning 'em.

Frank continues staring.

HAMILTON

That's how people get cancer, from eatin' burnt burgers, man. Frank, you got to forget that bitch. She's sucked more cock than my brother Victor, and you saw that faggot come in that once with a cum-worm on his beard, didn't even know it was there.

FRANK

Don't talk about her like that. You're lazy. I'm the only one who ever cooks around here.

HAMILTON

So? I know. That dog what's banging her, that Jacques? Quintel say he bad fucking bad news. You want to fuck with a guy like that? You?

Hamilton laughs at Frank.

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

CLOSEUP: A photograph of Jacques leaving the strip club. A red marker has been used to circle Jacques' face, and scrawl "Jock" above it in big letters.

FELKNER (O.S.)

What's this?

Frank is sitting at a table in an interrogation room with the fifty-ish, gruff DETECTIVE JOHN FELKNER.

FRANK

Jock. The one I told you. Who stole my wife.

FELKNER

Kidnapped her?

FRANK

Yes. And he gave her drugs.

Detective Felkner stares at him.

FRANK

Can you arrest him?

FELKNER

What proof do you have that this man kidnapped your wife?

FRANK

I asked him where she was, and he was evasive.

FELKNER

Uh huh.

FRANK

He wouldn't answer my questions.

FELKNER

That doesn't sound like proof, Mr. D'arbo. How long has she been missing?

FRANK

Three days.

FELKNER

How'd you discover she was gone?

FRANK

Her closet was empty.

FELKNER

So Jock kidnaped her and took all her clothes out of her closet?

FRANK

The drugs. My wife was a recovering alcoholic and drug addict. She had turned her life around. And this jerk gave her drugs.

FELKNER

And then she kidnaped herself and took her own clothes out of the closet?

Frank doesn't answer.

FELKNER

Jock is like one of these Vegas hypnotists?

Frank looks at the floor.

FELKNER

So, Mr. D'arbo, what you're saying is your wife left you for this Jock guy and now you want us to arrest him?

FRANK

Yes.

FELKNER

We can't do that, Mr. D'arbo.

MOMENTS LATER

Felkner walks Frank to the door. Puts his hand on his back.

FELKNER

Listen, pal, sometimes you just got to accept these things. Sometimes the best thing you can do to forget about someone you care about is to fill that hole with someone you don't quite so much.

EXT. PET STORE - DAY

Frank stands outside the pet store, staring at an ad of a happy man having his face licked by a dog. A caption reads:

"This female will never leave you high and dry."

INT. PET STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Frank approaches an enthusiastic teenager wearing a blue pet store apron.

FRANK

Do you have any rabbits?

PET STORE KID

Rabbits? Sure.

FRANK

I hear they make good... companion animals.

PET STORE KID

Absolutely! A lot of people don't know rabbits can be trained to use a litter box!

MOMENTS LATER

The kid shows Frank stacks of cages with the various types of rabbits in them.

PET STORE KID

Angora, lop-eared, Dutch, Dwarf, Martin, Vienna White, one missing a leg -- that one's free. Himalayan. New Zealand. Now, a lot of people don't know rabbits can be trained to use a little box. Which makes them better than cats, because their faces aren't as flat and freakish looking. Cats sometimes look a little too much like a human, which makes you want to punch them in the face.

Frank hones in on an adorable lop-eared BUNNY.

PET STORE KID

Oh, she's a real cutie.

The kid opens the cage, pulls out the rabbit, and hands her to Frank. Frank reacts as if the kid just set a b.m. in his hands.

PET STORE KID

So, what do you think? Is this the pet for you?

Frank looks down at the rabbit, soft and breathing in his huge hands. Its little heart thumping.

FRANK

I better not. 'Cause if I screw it up.

Frank hands the rabbit back to the kid. And leaves.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Frank watches TV, the only light in the room.

TV - INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA KITCHEN - DAY

A superhero, the HOLY AVENGER, bursts through the door. He has huge, fake foam muscles, and wears a mask and cape. A white cross insignia covers his chest and torso. Two young, attractive teenagers, JIM and HOLLY, are by his side. They confront the monstrous villain, DEMONSWILL. He's using a large Cronenbergian machine to bathe cafeteria trays with a devilish light.

HOLY AVENGER

Demonswill, are you the one behind
the laziness of these boys and
girls here at Valley High?

The Holy Avenger gestures toward the cafeteria. There,
students are sleeping on the tables, lazily playing jacks,
etc.

DEMONSWILL

That's right, Holy Avenger! I've
been bathing their apple crisp and
tater tots in the beam of sloth.

HOLLY

I don't like apple crisp or tater
tots, Holy Avenger!

JIM

And I pack a lunch!

HOLLY

That's why the two of us haven't
been affected, and are the only
ones who have continued to do our
schoolwork and chores.

HOLY AVENGER

And even more importantly, you're
the only ones who haven't forgotten
that it's important to fight evil
in all its forms instead of just
giving into Satan because it's
easier that way!

BACK TO FAMILY ROOM

Frank gazes intently at the screen. The Holy Avenger's
words cut deep.

BACK TO TV

HOLY AVENGER

Get away from that food, Demonswill!

Demonswill LAUGHS. He pulls out a strange gun and points
it at them.

DEMONSWILL

You'll never stop me!

HOLY AVENGER

That's right. I won't. But the power of Jesus Christ our savior will.

The Holy Avenger holds his hand up toward the heavens.

HOLY AVENGER

Sweet Jesus, bathe my hand with the power of God!

The Holy Avenger's hand glows a bright white. Demonswill cowers.

The Holy Avenger shoots rays from his glowing hand at Demonswill. Demonswill SCREAMS in agony, writhing. As he does, Jim and Holly smile and high-five.

BACK TO SCENE

Frank stares at the scene, transfixed.

EXT. JACQUES' GATE - NIGHT

Jacques, Sarah, and the rest of their merry gang (Abe, Quill, Mike, and Toby) emerge from the house, LAUGHING and drinking. Sarah is drunk and high on ecstasy. She brushes her hair back and forth over her arm, GIGGLING at its sensation, and then brushes it on Toby, who GIGGLES too.

Sarah starts to wander over the lawn, but Jacques grabs her, pulling her back, kissing her. They get into his Aston. Abe and the others get into a tricked-out SUV.

The large gates open electronically. The two vehicles pull out toward Bedlington Road.

Suddenly, Frank's car zooms up in front of the Aston, blocking it. He jumps out of the car. He runs toward Sarah in the passenger side door.

FRANK

Sarah!

Frank throws open her door. Sarah looks up at him with glassy eyes, smiling.

SARAH

Frank? Everybody, this is Fr--

He pulls Sarah out.

FRANK

Sarah, come with me.

SARAH

What? Where are we going?

FRANK

They've turned your mind against you. Get into the car.

SARAH

No, I have to -- Frank, let go.

FRANK

Look at your eyes, Sarah. Your pupils. Look what's happened. Please. Get into the car.

SARAH

No, Frank. Ow.

Jacques steps out, looking over the car roof at Frank.

JACQUES

Oh, man. Dude. That isn't right. Come on --

SARAH

Ow. Let go. You're hurting me.

Frank lets her go. Sarah gets back into the car and shuts the door on him. Locks it. Jacques gets back into the car too. Frank looks up and sees Abe and the other thugs stepping out of the SUV.

Frank sees Jacques saying something to Sarah inside the car. Frank starts slapping the passenger side window.

FRANK

Sarah! Sarah, don't listen to him! Sarah!

Jacques gets out again.

JACQUES

Why are you hitting my car? Come on. That's fucked up. Seriously --

FRANK

Give her back!

SARAH

Jacques. It's okay. That's Frank.

JACQUES

Sarah. Shut up.

FRANK

You shut up!

Frank slaps his car again.

JACQUES

Listen, man. I've been nice to you. Haven't I been nice? I complimented your cooking. You don't know who I am. So now I'm warning you, just this one more time, out of the fucking kindness of my fucking heart: Don't fucking touch my car again.

Frank pokes Jacques' car with his finger.

JACQUES

That's the last time.

Frank pokes Jacques' car a little harder.

JACQUES

All right. I'm going. That's not the kind of touching I meant.

Jacques gets back in his car. He tries to back up and maneuver around Franks's car. Frank watches a moment --

Then he jumps onto Jacques' hood and slaps it as hard as he can. Sarah YELPS.

ABE

What are you, bro, some sort of stalker?!

Abe, Quill, Mike, and Toby push Frank to the ground. He starts to get up, but they push him down again.

Jacques gets around Frank's car.

SARAH

No. Jacques. Stop them. They're hitting someone.

Jacques drives off while the thugs beat the shit out of Frank.

INT. DMITRI'S DINER - MORNING

A breakfast crowd of businessmen and students fill the diner.

Outside the window, behind these happy eaters, Frank stumbles from his car. One eye is swollen shut. His lips are bashed in and bleeding. His hair is caked in blood and gravel. His clothes are torn.

Frank tucks in his shirt. And limps toward the front door.

One YOUNG WOMAN sees him through the window and YELPS. Frank drags himself inside. The patrons start to notice him.

In the kitchen, Hamilton is furiously trying to keep pace with the orders stuffed on the order wheel. He glances up to see Frank hobbling toward him like death.

INT. DMITRI'S DINER KITCHEN - MORNING

Hamilton gawks as Frank enters and clocks in. He walks toward the closet.

HAMILTON

Frank. What the fuck?

FRANK

I'm late. Sorry.

Frank opens the closet, puts on an apron and his little cook's hat.

HAMILTON

You're getting blood on -- What happened?!

FRANK

I tried to get Sarah and --

HAMILTON

Oh, shit! Nigger fucked you up --

FRANK

I was unconscious. Didn't know what time...

Frank takes an order off the wheel. He's dizzy and it's hard to read.

HAMILTON
Frank, ain't I tell you that
motherfucker's bad news?

Frank starts to cook his order.

HAMILTON
What are you doing?!

FRANK
A twenty-seven.

HAMILTON
You're getting AIDS all over
people's food.

The customers are staring at all this through the order/
pick-up window. Hamilton sees an older woman with a big
hairdo staring.

HAMILTON
Yo, bigwig, turn the fuck around!
Can't you see the man's having a
nervous breakdown!?

Hamilton pulls Frank aside, and takes off Frank's apron
and hat.

HAMILTON
Now, come on, Frank. Go home.
Dmitri comes in and sees you like
this he'll fire your guinea ass.

Hamilton pushes Frank toward the diner door, then changes
his mind and guides him toward the back.

HAMILTON
Here, take the back way.

Frank is about to go out the back door, when he breaks
down crying. This makes Hamilton uncomfortable.

HAMILTON
Oh, shit. Oh no. Shit, Frank.
You just need to pull yourself
together and shit.

Frank just looks at the floor shaking with sobs.

HAMILTON
When you get down, you just need
to pick yourself up and remind
yourself -- it's your own fault
for being so retarded as to fall
(MORE)

HAMILTON (CONT'D)
in love with a piece a trash like
that. All right? Now, go home.
Please.

He pushes Frank out the rear door.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank sits on the edge of the bed, his mashed-up face clean now, staring at his perfect moments. They aren't helping.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank prays on his knees beside his bed.

FRANK
God, please guide me. Let me know what to do next. God, please let me have Sarah back. Show me how. I hate you, God! I'm sorry I said that. I don't mean that. Just sometimes. This doesn't seem fair, God. Other people have good things. Other people have goodness. They have love, and tenderness. They have people who care about their lives. Other people aren't humiliated at every turn. Other people have things, God. Even starving children in Africa. Even their parents love them. But why, God? Why was I unlucky enough to have my soul born in this disgusting me, with this ugly face and this hair, this hair that doesn't comb, and this dumb, idiotic personality. People stare at me, God, and I can tell, they're amazed that something so stupid and awkward could even exist. Why am I that? Why? Please, God. Please. I know it's selfish. But I'm just asking for one thing, just this one time, and then I swear I'll never ask for anything again. I just want Sarah back. Please let Sarah be my Sarah again. Amen.

Frank gets into bed. Turns off the light --

LATER

Frank tosses and turns in bed, unable to sleep, his mind on fire with the events of the past few days.

He HEARS something at the window.

He jerks himself upward in bed. The curtains are slightly parted. And between them, out in the street, he sees:

The Holy Avenger, staring in at him. Frank jumps to the window. The Holy Avenger jogs into some nearby bushes.

Frank hears RUMBLING above him. He looks up to see:

His bedroom wall and ceiling cracking open in front of him. A blinding light seeps through.

Frank plops back onto his bed, in awe and fear.

FRANK (V.O.)
I have been plagued by visions
throughout my life.

FLASHBACK - INT. FRANK'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Frank looks up in shock as Jesus is crawling around Frank's wall like a spider. He seems to be having fun.

FRANK (V.O.)
At the age of eight, I saw Jesus
climbing on my trophy shelf.

Jesus catches Frank looking.

JESUS
Don't worry about it. It's not a
big deal. Why does everybody take
everything so seriously all the
time?

FLASHBACK - INT. JOHNNY STOCKWELL'S BEDROOM - DAY

JOHNNY STOCKWELL and his BROTHER have tied their LITTLE SISTER to a chair. She is crying.

FRANK (V.O.)
At twelve, I discovered my friend
Johnny Stockwell wasn't all he
appeared to be.

Johnny turns toward Young Frank. His face mutates into that of a grinning devil.

FLASHBACK - INT. DMITRI'S DINER KITCHEN - DAY

Hamilton shakes hands with new employee Sarah.

FRANK (V.O.)
And when I first met Sarah, I heard
the words of God.

Sarah smiles at Frank.

GOD (O.S.)
Marry her.

Frank looks around, wondering where the voice came from.

FRANK (V.O.)
I have never known if these visions
were divinely implanted or something
else.

BACK TO SCENE

Frank's bedroom wall and ceiling crack open further, and more blinding light bursts forth. There are no angels singing, only the RUMBLING and the SCREAMS of the damned.

FRANK (V.O.)
But I had never experienced anything
like this.

Frank looks down to see his comforter has wrapped around his arms and legs like shackles. He tries to pull away, but is trapped.

Numerous tendrils, a mix of organics and electronics, are growing out of the walls. The tendrils grab Frank's head, centering it, keeping it still.

Two additional tendrils, ending in knives, move toward him. The knives slice down the sides of his skull. Frank YELPS -- out of fear, not pain. When the knives are finished, grabber attachments jut out to Frank's scalp. They pull back the top of Frank's skull like a flip-top box, so that his brain is exposed.

A tube-like tendril squirts a sick orange liquid on Frank's exposed brain; another tendril swipes a squeegee-type sponge back and forth over his brain, preparing it.

And then the colossal FINGER OF GOD, composed of purple, red, and blue light, comes down from the Heavens. It heads through the crack in the ceiling and toward Frank's exposed brain.

Frank struggles harder to get away, but he still can't move. He SCREAMS. Tears roll down his face.

And, then, just barely, the Finger of God grazes Frank's brain.

Frank freezes. Everything becomes silent.

PUSH IN on his brain alighting in a pulsing glow -- seemingly, for the moment, the only part of Frank alive.

FRANK'S VISION - INT. WHITE ROOM

Frank sits on a rusty folding chair in a hazy room of white nothing. He looks around. The Holy Avenger is standing there.

HOLY AVENGER

The Finger of God.

FRANK

What?

HOLY AVENGER

Touching your brain. The smallest tip of the tip of the Finger of God. Even that's too much for a human being's peanut mind to comprehend.

Frank is speechless.

HOLY AVENGER

There is a plan for you, Frank. Some of his children are chosen. Okay?

FRANK

Okay.

The Holy Avenger focuses on something behind Frank, and SNICKERS. Frank turns.

On the wall, there is a large insignia of a crimson hooded-mask -- like Batman's, only without the ears. It is backed by a bright yellow bomb blast over a sky blue wall.

BACK TO SCENE (BEDROOM)

Frank opens his eyes. Everything is back to normal. The air-conditioner, clock, birds, and other dim sounds of the night surround him.

Frank breathes heavily, freaked out.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - MORNING

Frank eats cereal. On a lined notebook beside him, he doodles the hooded-mask he saw in his vision the night before. He stares at it, turns it in different ways, trying to decipher its secret.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Frank tapes notebook pages to the top of his wall. Frank stares at the pages. Each one has a different handwritten word on it:

SOME OF HIS CHILDREN ARE CHOSEN

Frank considers the words. He looks below them, at a little sketch he's done of the Holy Avenger. He thinks.

EXT. ALPHA COMICS - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A comic book store in the city.

INT. ALPHA COMICS - DAY

Frank looks over the shelves. A pretty girl in her late teens/early twenties, LIBBY, is behind the counter, playing an old electronic hand-held football game. She notices Frank.

LIBBY

Can I help you with anything in particular?

FRANK

(mumbling)
Holy Avenger.

LIBBY

What? The Avengers?

FRANK

Holy Avenger.

LIBBY

Oh. Holy Avenger. Do you always
mumble like that?

(imitating him)

Blebble rumrum bluh.

A few other customers turn to look at Frank. He's
embarrassed.

LIBBY

Back issues. Under H.

As Frank moves to the back issues, Libby stares at him,
trying to figure something out. Frank finds the Holy
Avenger section, and flips through them, grabbing some.
He notices Libby staring at him, from the corner of his
eye, but tries to ignore it.

He carries the comics to the counter.

LIBBY

The cook.

Frank stares at her.

LIBBY

At Dmitri's! Right?

FRANK

Oh. Yeah.

LIBBY

I eat lunch there sometimes. The
tuna avocado salad? Remember me?

FRANK

No.

LIBBY

Sometimes I pretend that window
where you work -- you know that
one?

FRANK

Uh huh.

LIBBY

That it's like a wide-screen TV,
with great reception, and the only
movie they ever show is a guy
flipping burgers. You!

Libby flips through one of the comics he grabbed.

LIBBY

So, you like this Christ-y stuff,
huh?

FRANK

I've never read it.

LIBBY

Well, I have to warn you. Holy
Avenger is really fucking stupid.
Unless you're laughing at how gay
it is. Then it's awesome.

Libby shows him the book.

LIBBY

Look, see the art. Everyone's
drawn like a mongoloid.

Frank stares at it.

LIBBY

Like in the eyes? Like how
mongoloids are like that?

Frank nods. Libby reads one of the panels, where the
Holy Avenger is saying:

LIBBY

'I'm no different from you or anyone
else, Holly. All it takes to be a
superhero is the choice to fight
evil.'

(flips through pages)

Well, that's true. You have to
admit he has a point.

Libby's words ECHO OUT, growing LOUDER:

LIBBY

I mean, I wonder that all the time --
why hasn't anybody ever been a
real one? A superhero? You would
of thought one guy in all the world
would of stood up and done it?

Frank stares at her in awe, as her words sink in.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - LATER

Frank bursts through the door.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN

Frank snatches up the doodle of the hooded mask from his vision. He looks around, and sees a framed 8 x 10 wedding photograph of himself and Sarah.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank yanks the photograph out of the frame. He tears the photo in half, so that only he is in the photo.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank cuts the doodle of the hooded-mask out with a scissors.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank has Scotch-taped the photo of himself to the wall. He then tapes the mask over his face in the photo.

Frank gapes at the combined picture, with himself wearing a mask. Frank mumbles Libby's words:

FRANK

Why hasn't anybody ever been a
real one?

FRANK (V.O.)

It was all so clear.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Frank pulls books on sewing from the shelves.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - DAY

The sewing books are spread over the table. Frank cuts a sewing pattern from brown parchment paper. Various sketches of a costume are on the table.

FRANK (V.O.)

Maybe I couldn't shoot beams out
of my eyes, or fly.

INT. FABRIC STORE - DAY

Frank unrolls a few yards of dark red cloth. He looks at a MAN WITH SCISSORS and nods -- that's how much he wants.

FRANK (V.O.)

But the Finger of God had touched
me --

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - KITCHEN WINDOW - NIGHT

Through the window we see Frank sitting at the table using a sewing machine on his costume.

FRANK (V.O.)

And who's to say what kind of powers
that gives a person?

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - DAY

Frank irons something to the front of his red costume. He removes the iron, revealing the cowl and mask insignia surrounded by a yellow burst on the chest of the costume.

FRANK (V.O.)

Jock had stolen Sarah, propelling
me into the depths of Hell itself.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Frank wriggles into the red pants of his costume. They're a bit tight. A VIOLENT SCENE is on the TV behind him.

FRANK (V.O.)

But in those depths I became myself
for the first time ever.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank steps in front of a mirror; his entire Crimson Bolt costume is revealed.

FRANK (V.O.)

I found my skin.

It's a mostly red mask and cowl and body suit. The costume is ill-fitting, patchy, and poorly sewn. But Frank seems to like it. He tries out various voices and heroic poses for his new persona. They're all basically the same.

FRANK
 I'm the Crimson Bolt.
 (pause)
 The Crimson Bolt, that's who.
 (pause)
 Everyone give up. It's the Crimson Bolt -- me.
 (pause)
 What gives? The Crimson Bolt is here.

CLOSEUP: FRANK

FRANK
Shut up, crime. Here's the Crimson Bolt.

WIPE TO:

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

The Crimson Bolt is crouched behind a large trash bin, peeking out at a barren street. The Bolt whispers into a mini-tape recorder he has painted red to match his costume:

FRANK
 The Crimson Bolt's journal, night one... Waiting to protect innocents from the dark forces of evil...

The Crimson Bolt waits, looking around for evil.

We HOLD ON HIM for a long time.

No evil seems to be appearing.

EXT. ALLEYWAY - NIGHT

Once again, the Crimson Bolt is hiding behind the trash bin. He whispers into the tape recorder:

FRANK
 Crimson Bolt's journal, night two... no crime last night... But I did see a couple of suspicious people, who might have been planning something for toni --

The Crimson Bolt HEARS a FLAPPING SOUND.

FRANK
Hold on!

The Crimson Bolt drops his tape-recorder and runs around the trash can, ready for action. He looks both ways down the street, and runs one way, DISAPPEARING behind the trash can.

A moment passes. He ambles back to his hiding spot. He crouches. Picks up the tape-recorder again. Speaks into it.

FRANK

It was just a box. The wind was pushing it down the street.

The Crimson Bolt turns off his tape recorder. Waits a moment. Then thinks of something and turns it back on.

FRANK

I'm not going to just leave it there. I'll clean it up later. But I just don't want to expose my position at this time.

The Crimson Bolt turns off his tape recorder. And waits.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Frank approaches a LIBRARIAN. He has chosen to wear a disguise, a black beard, to cover his identity. He is a terrible liar:

FRANK

I'm in college. And I'm doing a report on where to buy drugs here in Detroit -- what street where the drug dealers are.

LIBRARIAN

You're writing a report on that?

FRANK

Yes.

LIBRARIAN

Why are you wearing a fake beard?

FRANK

It's real.

Pause.

LIBRARIAN

Well, I guess we can start by checking the Internet for old news stories.

FRANK

A lot of people think it's fake,
but it's not, it's real.

LATER

Frank peers over the Librarian's shoulder as she calls up old newspaper stories on the Detroit News web site.

We FLASH THROUGH different stories about drug busts and prostitution. EUCLID AVE is mentioned in many of them.

EXT. EUCLID AVE - NIGHT

TILT DOWN from the Euclid Ave street sign to the Crimson Bolt hiding behind parked cars. This time the street beyond him is filled with dealers, pushers, and whores.

NATHANIEL, a drug dealer, thin and scurvy-esque with gold teeth, argues with a WHORE across the street.

NATHANIEL

Get your ass down to fitty, bitch.

WHORE

I'll tell Elroy, Nathaniel.

NATHANIEL

Tell Elroy. Tell Elroy. Elroy
and me in agreeance you stand down
on fitty!

WHORE

Elroy ain't said no such --

Nathaniel throws a can at her. The Whore gives in, wobbling sadly away in her high heel shoes. Nathaniel mumbles to himself:

NATHANIEL

Ain't listen to no motherfucker
named after no Jetson no how.

The Crimson Bolt, peeking around a fender, hides as two TEENAGERS drive up beside Nathaniel.

Nathaniel struts up to their car, leans on the open window, flashing his gold smile.

NATHANIEL

Yo, playas, what I do you for?
Smoke?

DRIVING TEEN

You have any weed?

NATHANIEL

Fuck, dog. Only motherfucking Thai stick.

The dealer flashes what looks like Thai stick (for the uninitiated: seedless marijuana buds skewered on pot stems and tied on with strings.)

NATHANIEL

Yee-ah! What two good-lookin' brothers like yo'selves need for a party!

The teens smile and SNICKER, flattered.

DRIVING TEEN

How much?

NATHANIEL

For you? Eighty.

DRIVING TEEN

Eighty bucks?

NATHANIEL

For two. For two. For one, sixty.

Nathaniel swipes the stick under his nose.

NATHANIEL

Pussy come from miles around they smell this stinky weed, yo! I bet you two get a lot of pussy! Am I right?

The teens SNICKER again.

DRIVING TEEN

Yeah.

PASSENGER TEEN

Our share.

NATHANIEL

I knowed it!

DRIVING TEEN

(to his friend)

Thai stick, dude. We got to.

The Passenger Teen grudgingly agrees. They compile their monies, and hand them to the dealer.

Nathaniel slips the Driver the Thai stick.

The Passenger Teen looks up and sees something.

PASSENGER TEEN

Dude.

Through the window they see what appears to be an insane man wearing a red superhero costume running across the street.

The Crimson Bolt tackles Nathaniel. They go down hard.

FRANK

Dope pushing scum!

The Passenger Teen looks at his buddy.

PASSENGER TEEN

Get out of here, man!

The Driver stares at the Thai Stick in his lap.

DRIVING TEEN

Dude, I think this is just, like, sunflower seeds glued to a Popsicle stick... It is.

PASSENGER TEEN

It was right under your nose!
Shit! Fuck!

The Driver sees the fight beside him, and, not knowing what to do, drives off.

Nathaniel and the Crimson Bolt roll around the sidewalk like grade school kids in a particularly awkward and violent recess brawl. They stretch each others' shirts, get their backs all scratched up, that sort of thing.

Nathaniel gets his hands on the Crimson Bolt's mask, and twists it so that the eyeholes are on the side of Frank's head. The dealer worms his way out from under him.

NATHANIEL

Why you doing this to me!?

The Crimson Bolt stumbles toward him, blinded, swinging with one arm while putting his mask back in place with the other.

Nathaniel grabs a lid from a trash can and starts slamming the Crimson Bolt with it. The Bolt tries to protect himself from the blows. He stumbles back, toppling into the trash cans.

The Crimson Bolt looks up to see two large GANG BANGERS running to join Nathaniel.

The Bolt rolls up and runs away as quickly as he can. A dirty diaper is stuck to his costume. The Gang Bangers stop beside Nathaniel, watching him run. They CHUCKLE.

INT. ALPHA COMICS - DAY

Frank approaches Libby at the counter.

FRANK

I'm looking for comic books of superheroes without powers.

LIBBY

Superheroes without powers?

FRANK

Yeah. Ones that have... weapons to defend themselves with.

LIBBY

Cool. All right.

Libby walks to the racks of comic books, slapping the sections she refers to. Frank takes a couple comics from each of the sections.

LIBBY

We have Batman -- he has a batarang, utility belt, smoke bombs and stuff.

FRANK

Utility belt.

LIBBY

Green Arrow -- his weapon's a bow and arrows.

FRANK

Uh huh.

LIBBY

Captain America -- he has a shield.
(remembering)

Wait a minute! He has powers. He's a super soldier. Don't take those.

Frank puts back Captain America.

LIBBY

Catwoman -- whip. Nightwing -- same shit as Batman. Punisher - guns. Iron Man -- no super powers, but inside of a superpowered suit? Does that count?

FRANK

I think this is enough.

LIBBY

It doesn't count. I thought so. I almost didn't say it but then I did.

Libby walks back behind the counter to ring Frank up.

LIBBY

Why do you need all these?

FRANK

Research. I'm making up my own superhero. And he needs a weapon.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - DAY

Frank holds a lead pipe. A mannequin head is on the table in front of him. Frank smashes the pipe down into the head, decimating it.

Frank holds up the pipe, looking at it.

FRANK

That'll do.

EXT. EUCLID AVE - NIGHT

Nathaniel the drug dealer leans into a car, making an exchange with a dude. As the car drives away, Nathaniel steps back onto the sidewalk, counting his money.

That's when he looks up and sees the Crimson Bolt standing there with his lead pipe, now painted red.

NATHANIEL

Oh no.

The Crimson Bolt strikes him with the lead pipe. He goes down.

CRIMSON BOLT MONTAGE

MONTAGE - EXT. EUCLID AVENUE - NIGHT

The Crimson Bolt walks toward us, dramatically, in SLOW-MOTION. A couple of WHORES are in the background, LAUGHING at him. The Bolt walks up beside a telephone pole. He uses a stapler to staple a piece of paper to the pole:

It's a photocopy. It reads, "BEWARE CRIME. THE CRIMSON BOLT IS IN YOUR HOOD," and has a drawing of his mask-and-sunblast insignia.

The Crimson Bolt moves onto the next telephone pole with his stack of copies. We PULL BACK and see all the telephone poles on both sides of the street are plastered with the flyers.

MONTAGE - EXT. OLD WOMAN STREET - NIGHT

A PURSE-SNATCHER runs up to an OLD WOMAN, and grabs her purse off her arm. It takes him a moment to get it untangled. By the time it's free, he sees the Crimson Bolt running at him out of the shadows.

The Crimson Bolt tackles the man. He accidentally knocks over the Old Woman as well. The Old Woman CRIES in agony.

OLD WOMAN

My hip!

The Crimson Bolt beats the Purse-Snatcher with his pipe.

MONTAGE - INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Frank does pull-ups in his doorway. The words "SOME OF HIS CHILDREN ARE CHOSEN" pasted above him.

MONTAGE - EXT. CHICKENHAWK STREET - NIGHT

A shadowy man in a car -- a CHICKENHAWK -- pulls up alongside a bus stop with some young Latin boys wearing makeup and garish outfits. One of the boys -- a CHICKEN -- gets into the car.

The car pulls around the corner into a dark alley.

MONTAGE - EXT. CHICKENHAWK ALLEY/INT. C-HAWK CAR - NIGHT

The Chickenhawk -- a graying, middle aged man -- looks at the Chicken with zoned-out lust. He undoes his pants, when --

His WINDOW SHATTERS beside him.

The Crimson Bolt throws open the Chickenhawk's car door and yanks him out onto the street. There, the Bolt beats him a couple times with the lead pipe, then runs away.

The Latin boy crawls out of the car and peers down at the unconscious Chickenhawk.

He fumbles through the man's pockets, and finds a wallet with several hundred dollars. He sees the Crimson Bolt running away in the distance. The young boy smiles brightly, holding the money.

CHICKEN

Thanks, Meesta!

(re: Frank, subtitled
in Spanish)

What a great and sick faggot!

MONTAGE - INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Frank punches a punching bag.

MONTAGE - EXT. EUCLID AVENUE - NIGHT

The Crimson Bolt strikes a CRACK DEALER in the side with his lead pipe. The Dealer SCREAMS.

MONTAGE - LATER

The Crimson Bolt, crouched on a fire escape, drops a cement block onto a DEALING TRANSVESTITE. It strikes the Transvestite in the shoulder. He WAILS.

MONTAGE - BACK TO OLD WOMAN STREET

The Crimson Bolt finishes his work on the bloody purse-snatcher, and stands over him.

FRANK

Don't steal!

MONTAGE - EXT. CHICKENHAWK STREET - NIGHT

The Bolt looks down at a SOBBING OLD MAN, spitting up blood. A YOUNG CHICKEN watches from inside the car.

FRANK

Don't molest kids!

MONTAGE - BACK TO EUCLID AVE

The Crimson Bolt yells at the cowering Crack Dealer.

FRANK

Don't deal drugs!

The Crimson Bolt looks up to see some GANG MEMBERS peering at him from behind a car. OTHERS look at him from down the street, or in their windows.

The Crimson Bolt, spattered in blood, holds up his bolt-rod in a majestic pose.

FRANK

Shut up, crime!

The Gang Members, gaining courage, creep toward him.

The Crimson Bolt pulls a smoke bomb and Bic lighter from his utility bolt. He lights the smoke bomb, and throws it at them.

The smoke bomb lands between the three men. It sizzles off a little red smoke, but hardly anything. The guys look at the Crimson Bolt, confused. What the hell is that supposed to do?

The Crimson Bolt runs down the street as quickly as he can.

He gets into his car, and screeches away.

END MONTAGE**EXT. JACQUES' GATE - LATER**

Frank, in his costume but not his mask, sits in his car outside the ranch gates. Through one of the distant windows, he's able to make out Jacques' thug Abe trying to sober up a drugged out Sarah, giving her coffee.

Frank watches, remembering...

FLASHBACK -- INT. DINER KITCHEN - DAY

Frank grills food, while looking through the kitchen window into the diner. Sarah is there, beautiful in a waitress uniform, wiping off a table.

FLASHBACK -- INT. DINER PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Frank is getting into his car, when Sarah approaches him:

SARAH

Hey, Frank, think you can do me a favor and give me a ride to my meeting? My p.o.'s gonna kill me if I miss again.

FLASHBACK -- EXT. CHURCH PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Frank drops Sarah off. She looks at him.

SARAH

You can come in if you want? It's open.

FLASHBACK -- INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - LATER

A bunch of RECOVERING DRUNKS and DRUGGIES sit around the table, clamoring for a better life.

SPEAKER

That's when I need to give myself a little KISS -- Keep It Simple, Stupid.

Sarah and the Drunks LAUGH. Frank watches from outside the circle. Sarah sees him, gives him a little wave.

FLASHBACK -- EXT. DMITRI'S DINER TRASH AREA - NIGHT

It's cold back here. Sarah is wearing a thick coat over her waitress uniform, on a cigarette break. Frank is with her, no coat, trying to stay warm.

SARAH

And after spending that week in jail, I just -- man, I never want to go back to any place like that again. It's been two months now, and I'm gonna stay sober this time, swear to God. Happy, joyous, and free all the way. You know what I mean, Frank?

Frank nods.

SARAH

I've never been happy. Never.
Not when I was a little girl, not --
You?

FRANK

No... But maybe it's overrated.

Sarah listens, which is almost startling to Frank. No one has listened to him much.

FRANK

Happiness. Everyone runs around trying to be happy all the time. Like it's all that matters. Why is happiness so much better than sadness, or anger? Happy people they're kind of... arrogant.

Sarah stares at him.

SARAH

Do people tell you you're weird, Frank?

FRANK

Yes.

SARAH

I guess you are. But, you know, also, you're different from other guys I've known. You're... good.

Frank thinks about this.

SARAH

Come here.

FRANK

What?

SARAH

I want to try something.

FRANK

What?

Sarah stands up.

SARAH

Come here!

Frank steps closer. Sarah kisses him. Frank is stiff, still, but Sarah starts to cry. She kisses him longer.

FLASHBACK -- INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah is on top of Frank, having sex on the couch. Sarah is weeping. Frank watches her like he'd watch a sick zoo animal, concerned and confused.

FLASHBACK -- EXT. OUTDOOR CAFE - DAY

Sarah sits with her SISTER and Frank at an outdoor Cafe. Sarah's sister looks upper middle-class. Sarah is nervously happy. She's holding Frank's hand, almost defiantly.

SARAH

You can't be happy for me?

SARAH'S SISTER

I'm happy for you, Sarah, I --

SARAH

Fucking you've always been like this. Even when we were kids. That disapproving --

SARAH'S SISTER

No. Sarah. It's just fast. You just got sober, after how long? What's that they say about not making any major decisions for a year? Nothing against Frank. Nothing against you, Frank.

FRANK

Okay.

SARAH

Why can't you just be happy for me?

SARAH'S SISTER

God, that's something they say on TV! See? That's what I mean. You need to find yourself, before you -- You just cull together all these things you hear other people say, and put them together into something you think is a personality, but --

Sarah starts to cry, and gets up to leave.

SARAH'S SISTER

Sarah.

SARAH

What if I know it's right, Jennifer?
What if I know? You want me to
get my life together. You want me
to change.

SARAH'S SISTER

Sarah.

SARAH

What if this is the only thing
that will save me? What then?

EXT. JACQUES' RANCH - NIGHT

Frank watches as Abe comes out with the drunken Sarah,
guiding her to his SUV.

FLASHBACK -- INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Frank and Sarah talk.

FRANK

Naked women?

SARAH

Not me. They just want me to be a
hostess.

FRANK

Those places, though.

SARAH

Come on, Frank. I'm going to make
so much more money than I can at
Dmitri's. Look at this furniture.
People can see it through the window
when they walk by, we look like
white trash.

FLASHBACK -- EXT. BARE ASSETS - NIGHT

Frank waits in his car. He's uneasy. The MUSIC'S
thumping. Sarah exits the front door in her hostess
uniform, and waves farewell to her new fellow employees.

Sarah gets in the passenger seat.

SARAH

Hey, baby.

She leans over and kisses Frank. Frank moves back in revulsion.

SARAH

What?

FRANK

You've been drinking.

SARAH

No, I haven't.

Frank stares at her.

SARAH

One beer, Frank. Fuck. You know that wasn't my problem. Come on. I never had a problem with beer. It was the meth, the --

FRANK

It's all one disease. I read it.

SARAH

My probation's over in a month. It's not like they're going to do another urine test.

FRANK

It's not about --

SARAH

Everybody was toasting my first day and everything. It would of been rude. It would of been very fucking rude, Frank.

BACK TO SCENE

Frank watches sadly as Abe takes off with Sarah in the SUV.

Frank makes a u-turn and heads in the opposite direction.

INT. DMITRI'S DINER KITCHEN - DAY

Frank and Hamilton are cooking. A small TV is on beside them. A REPORTER sits at a newsdesk.

NEWSCASTER (on TV)

The brutal assaults by the costumed man calling himself the Crimson

(MORE)

NEWSCASTER (on TV; CONT'D)
 Bolt continued last night when he
 sent forty-two year old Gerard
 Mavin to the hospital with a
 fractured collarbone.

HAMILTON
 Fuck -- check this shit out.

Hamilton turns up the TV. Frank watches from the corner
 of his eye, pretending not to care.

NEWSCASTER (on TV)
 Witnesses say this unusual criminal
 who wears a superhero costume
 attacked Mavin without provocation.

ON TV

SUPER: "SGT. LAWRENCE FITZGIBBON, DPD."

FITZGIBBON is interviewed beside the crime scene.

FITZGIBBON (on TV)
 A lot of people around the city
 are finding this situation amusing.
 But it's not a big leap for a
 psychopath to go from serial
 beatings to serial murders.

Police sketches of the Crimson Bolt appear on screen.

NEWSCASTER (on TV)
 The DPD has asked for your help in
 finding the Crimson Bolt. He is
 described as a muscular Caucasian
 about six foot five with dark eyes
 and dark hair. Anyone with
 information please call 1-800-KLJ-
 CRIME.

BACK TO SCENE

HAMILTON
 Fuuuuck! Must be some sort of sex
 thing for this motherfucker, huh?

FRANK
 What? No. I don't know. I have
 no interest in that. I've never
 even heard of it.

HAMILTON

What?

FRANK

News to me.

HAMILTON

How could you not hear of it, Frank?
It's all they been talking about.
This crazy motherfucker dressed
like superman's whacking people
with a lead pipe all over the city --
(acting it out)
Wham! You down!

FRANK

Maybe they deserve to get whacked.

HAMILTON

Deserve it?

FRANK

I heard those people he hit, they're
the ones who are criminals.

HAMILTON

You just said you never heard of
him, Frank.

FRANK

I didn't. I haven't...
(points at TV)
They just said it now.

HAMILTON

They did not! I just watched the
whole thing with you.

Frank is caught in a lie.

FRANK

Thought they did.

HAMILTON

You're like a monkey.

FRANK

No, I'm not.

HAMILTON

Hey, so -- me and Tisha are going
to the movies tomorrow. You want
to meet us there?

FRANK

I have some stuff to do.

HAMILTON

What, Frank? What do you got to do?

FRANK

Nothing.

HAMILTON

Good then. You can get there early and hold a place in line for us, okay?

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - DAY

Frank buys three tickets from the CASHIER.

He turns to see a huge line curling around the building.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank waits in the long line. Not so far ahead of him, a RUDE MAN and his GIRLFRIEND butt into line. People GRUMBLE, but don't do anything about it. The GUY behind Frank is peeved.

GUY

Why do people have to do that?
We've been waiting here for an hour.

Frank looks back at the Guy, then down at the guy's KID.

Frank takes a step out of line, and looks up at the RUDE MAN.

FRANK

Hey.

The Rude Man ignores him, chats with his Girlfriend.

FRANK

Hey. Hey you.

The Rude Man looks at him.

FRANK

No butts.

RUDE MAN

What difference does it make to you?

FRANK

You butted in line. Go to the back of the line. Now.

RUDE MAN

Go fuck yourself.

The man goes back to talking to his girlfriend. Frank stares at him. Then steps back in line.

Frank fumes for a moment, trying to contain himself. But he can't stand it. He steps out of line, and heads toward the parking lot.

EXT. MOVIE PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Frank walks to his car.

He opens his trunk. His Crimson Bolt costume is folded neatly there.

He grabs it. Walks around to the driver's seat.

Opens his car door. Gets inside.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank clumsily changes into his costume in the front seat. Accidentally HONKS the horn.

A LITTLE GIRL and her MOM cross the lot. The Little Girl spots Frank's tightie-whitied butt sticking up through the rear window, as he slips on his Crimson Bolt trousers.

MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt, looking determined, walks across the lot, holding his red lead pipe.

EXT. MOVIE THEATER - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt steps onto the sidewalk. Various PEDESTRIANS stop to look at him. The movie line is now moving.

The Rude Man sees the Crimson Bolt.

FRANK

Don't butt.

RUDE MAN

Who do you think you're fooling?
You're that guy I was just talking
to --

The Crimson Bolt smacks the man in the face with the lead pipe. The man's face splits open. He stumbles backwards. Blood pulses from his head.

The Crimson Bolt hits him again, knocking him down. People around him SHRIEK.

The Rude Man's Girlfriend grabs onto the Crimson Bolt, trying to pull him back.

GIRLFRIEND

Get off him!

The Crimson Bolt turns toward her.

FRANK

You butted too.

He smacks her with the lead pipe. She goes down.

The Crimson Bolt hears SIRENS. He hastily departs.

Hamilton and his GIRLFRIEND approach the theater, looking around for Frank. They have just missed seeing the Crimson Bolt.

INT. DMITRI'S DINER - DAY

Libby, the girl from the comic book store, enters the mostly empty diner, excited, and stops beside an OLD MAN slurping soup. She has a newspaper. She sees Frank, through the pickup window, cleaning the grill.

LIBBY

Hey! Did you see this?!

She opens up the newspaper.

The headline reads: "COSTUMED MAN SENDS TWO TO ICU."

Frank looks around, nervously. An older WAITRESS is watching with interest. Frank shakes his head, no.

LIBBY

It's weird, right?

FRANK

Weird?

LIBBY

It's just what we were talking
about last week! You have to admit!
Remember?

FRANK

No.

LIBBY

No? About a guy being a real
superhero? Can I come back there?

FRANK

What?

LIBBY

Back there with you.

(to Waitress)

We're friends.

(to Frank)

Can I? I'll wear plastic gloves.

WAITRESS

Kitchen door's there, sweetheart.

Libby runs to the door. The Waitress leans over to Frank,
whispers:

WAITRESS

Maybe she's fixing to ask you to
prom, Frank.

FRANK

No. I just. I don't know her.

IN THE KITCHEN

Libby runs up to Frank, puts the paper down on the counter.

LIBBY

Remember?

FRANK

No.

LIBBY

He's called the Crimson Bolt. His
weapon is a lead pipe. Somebody
finally did it. He become a real
one.

FRANK

He's some sort of... crazy man.

LIBBY

I'm Libby, by the way.

FRANK

Libby.

LIBBY

Don't make a joke about Libby's on your label. That bums my world. What's your name?

FRANK

Frank.

LIBBY

Ha! Well, I hope you'll be Frank with me. Ha ha! I hope you'll continue to be Frank during our discussions. Ha!

FRANK

I have to get back to work.

LIBBY

I brought this for you.

Libby hands Frank a sheet. In bubbly lettering it reads "LIBBY'S NEW APARTMENT BASH!!"

LIBBY

You should come.

FRANK

I...

LIBBY

It'll be fun.

Frank stares at her. Libby can't hold back any longer; she whispers.

LIBBY

Are you him?

FRANK

What?

She points to the paper.

LIBBY

The guy? Are you this guy?

FRANK

No.

LIBBY

It's okay if you are.

FRANK

I'm not.

LIBBY

I think it's cool. I hate when
people butt.

FRANK

I have to get back to work. We're
real busy.

Again, there are only, like, two people in the diner.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - LATER

Frank runs into his family room. He's worried. He starts to open his coat closet, when he stops himself. He turns and sees the large open window behind him.

He looks outside to make sure no one's watching.

He closes the blind.

He opens the closet door.

The Crimson Bolt costume hangs there, limp. Frank snatches it off the hanger, and stares at it as if it's cursed.

Frank hears a KNOCK at the front door. He tosses the costume back into the closet, and shuts the door.

Frank walks to the front door. Peers out the peephole.

POV: The fish-eyed image of Detective Felkner -- the cop he met with at the police precinct -- on the porch!

As we ANGLE ON Frank's profile looking through the peephole, we see FRANK'S IMAGINATION SUPERIMPOSED in the shape of his brain on Frank's head:

BRAIN - INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM

Frank opens the door. Felkner slams inside, shoving him to the floor at gunpoint.

FELKNER

Hands on your head, you freak!

BRAIN - INT. INTERROGATION ROOM

Frank sits alone. Through the window, he can see Felkner holding up the Crimson Bolt costume to show other COPS. Everyone points and LAUGHS at it.

BRAIN - INT. COURTROOM

Frank stands before the JUDGE. The judge smacks down his gavel.

BRAIN - INT. CELL

GUARDS toss Frank onto the floor beside a toilet in this small cell. They slam the bars shut behind him.

Frank peers down into the toilet. An enormous turd is curled the circumference of the bowl. Frank turns. A FAT ARYAN covered in tattoos stands behind him, grinning.

BRAIN - INT. CELL

Frank SOBS as the Aryan fucks him in the ass.

BACK TO SCENE --

Frank, terrified, can't decide on whether to open the door or not.

Felkner KNOCKS again. Frank opens the door just a little, peeking out. He winces.

FRANK

Hello?

FELKNER

Frank D'Arbo? Detective John Felkner.

Frank stares at him.

FELKNER

You filed a report with me a couple weeks ago.

Frank kind of nods.

FELKNER

You mind if I come in for a second?

FRANK
Inside the house?

FELKNER
Just a little chilly, yeah.

Frank, unsure, opens the door.

Felkner enters. Frank is preoccupied with the closet door, glancing at it, as if Felkner's going to open it and find his costume.

FELKNER
So you filed that report. Now you and I came together to the conclusion that your wife wasn't kidnapped, uh...

Felkner notices Frank looking at the door.

FELKNER
That she left you, but... There something in there?

FRANK
What?

FELKNER
That a basement?

FRANK
Closet.

FELKNER
You just keep looking over there.

FRANK
No. There's nothing in there.

FELKNER
All right.

FRANK
There's a dog in there.

FELKNER
A dog?

Frank nods.

FELKNER
You keep him in a closet?

Frank nods, but doesn't seem sure himself.

FRANK

Because I don't want him to bite.

FELKNER

You don't have to worry about that with me. I'm a dog person.

FRANK

That's who he likes to bite most.

FELKNER

Uh huh.

FRANK

Dog people.

Pause.

FELKNER

Okay. So you filed that kidnapping charge.

Frank notices behind Felkner's head that his photo is on the wall with the superhero mask over it.

FELKNER

My captain got wind of the report -- pretty serious charge --

Frank stares at Felkner with wide-eyed intensity, not looking away for even a second or even blinking, so Felkner can't follow his eyes to the photo. This makes Frank look more than a little freaky.

FELKNER

And she wanted me to come by and make sure that you still agreed -- like you did that day -- that your wife actually left of her own volition, and --

Felkner GIGGLES at Frank's staring.

FELKNER

She wasn't actually kidnapped.

Felkner LAUGHS again.

FELKNER

You're quite an intense fellow there, Frank.

Frank fumbles, embarrassed. Felkner sets a piece of paper on the table. He hands him a pen.

FELKNER

So if you wouldn't mind signing this. Basically cancels out your charges. I forgot to do it last time. Cap'n, she's going through the change of life. Had a conniption fit.

Frank signs the sheet.

FELKNER

Thanks, Frank. I'll let you get back to whatever you were doing.

INT. FRANK'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Frank closes every single blind in his house.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frank tears the photo of him with the superhero mask stuck onto it off the wall. He tears the evidence into many, many little pieces, and stuffs the pieces into a trash bag.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank stuffs the costume and bolt rod into the trash bag as well.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Frank stuffs all his drawings and sewing patterns into the bag.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frank kneels praying beside the couch in this darkened room.

FRANK

God, did you really call me to be the Crimson Bolt or was that in my head? I don't want to go to jail and be raped in my butt and work at a library, rolling around carts and handing out magazines for the rest of my life. Isn't violence against the Bible?

(MORE)

FRANK (CONT'D)

Please give me a sign, let me know if I should keep being the Crimson Bolt or if I should throw it all away before it's too late. I'll even turn myself in, if that's what you want me to do. But please don't want me to do that.

Frank concentrates.

FRANK

Did you just say 'throw it all away'? Or was that me thinking 'throw it all away'?

Frank concentrates a moment longer.

FRANK

All right. I'm going to throw it away. If I shouldn't, please give me a sign. Maybe you can make something... float.

Frank snaps open his eyes and looks around -- nothing's floating.

He grabs the trash bag, moves out.

EXT. TRASH BIN - NIGHT

Frank pulls his car up to this huge bin behind a fast food place after hours. He leaps out of his car, looks around to make sure no one's looking, and tosses the trash bag inside the trash can.

He jumps back into his car and takes off.

INT. FRANK'S BATHROOM - LATER

Frank takes a shower, leaning against the wall and letting the water run down over him, cleansing himself.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - LATER

Frank, in his robe, decompresses by watching TV. He flicks through the channels and comes to another episode of the Holy Avenger. He's fearful, but he can't look away.

TV - INT. FACTORY - DAY

The Holy Avenger stands with his teenage compatriots Holly and Jim. Holly is dressed like a slut, in heavy makeup and hot pants. Jim is in some lurid West-Hollywood-esque tight jean shorts. The trio walks along an enormous futuristic powder-gun pointing out a window.

HOLY AVENGER

That's right, Holly. This gun is what Demonswill used to spray his Lust Dust over the city, the very dust that caused you and Jimmy to dress in those revealing outfits and download those pornographic images onto your computer.

They walk in front of Demonswill, who is tied up with rope and struggling to get free.

HOLLY

I'm so stupid! Sex is a sacred act which should only take place within a loving marriage.

The CAMERA TILTS DOWN, revealing a pair of large, fake nipple rings on Jim.

JIM

No doubt! My virginity is something to be proud of. I'm going to get these nipple rings taken out tomorrow!

HOLLY

And to think I missed the field hockey tournament, all because Jim and I were heavy petting! Thank goodness we didn't do more!

DEMONSWILL

If only the two of you would have had premarital sexual intercourse, I would have won -- and you would have been damned to hell forever!

HOLY AVENGER

But they didn't have intercourse, Demonswill!

CLOSEUP - Holy Avenger looks at the CAMERA, almost as if he's speaking directly to Frank.

HOLY AVENGER

Because it didn't matter how much peer pressure Jim and Holly were under to do what society said was right -- in their hearts they knew they couldn't throw away what Jesus had called them to do!

BACK TO SCENE

Frank stares at the TV, a bit disappointed by what this means.

EXT. TRASH BIN - LATER

Frank is in the bin. He finds his trash bag. He opens it -- the costume, bolt-rod, etc, are all still there.

INT. FRANK'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Frank drives home. The trash bag is beside him.

MOMENTS LATER

Frank's car stops at an intersection. Frank glances up at the street sign -- BEDLINGTON AVE.

He stares at it, torn.

Hesitantly, he flips on his blinker. He turns down the street.

EXT. JACQUES' GATE - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt, in full costume, stands at the giant gates, peering between the rails, trying to get a glimpse of Sarah. His car is parked at the curb behind him.

He can't see anything. He walks along the gates, and can see, up over the hill, a window with light and LOUD MUSIC coming through. But he can't see what's inside.

The Crimson Bolt snaps a short rope with a metal hook-latch on it from his utility belt.

He swings it like a lasso, then tosses it toward the top of the gate. The metal latch doesn't hook onto it, and falls back down.

He tries again, tossing the hook latch toward the top of the gate. This time it bounces off, and snaps back into his eye.

FRANK

Ow!

The Crimson Bolt puts his special rope away, which, let's admit it, wasn't really necessary in the first place, and just climbs the gate.

ATOP THE GATE

The Crimson Bolt surveys the landscape. The grounds are covered with thick bushes and places to hide.

He jumps off the gate.

EXT. JACQUES' GROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt runs from bush to bush, getting closer to the ranch house.

JACQUES' RANCH - WINDOW - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt arrives at the ranch itself. The MUSIC is louder. The Bolt sneaks up to the window and peers inside --

Toby is walking past the window, holding a stack of tightly-wound packets. He stumbles a bit, and drops the packets. He starts picking them up and setting them on the window sill. Because of the darkness and glare on the window, Toby can't see the Crimson Bolt, even though he's only a couple feet away. Abe approaches Toby.

ABE

Toby, be fucking careful. I don't want nothing missing.

Toby smiles, playing the clown, how a little guy like him copes in this macho environment.

TOBY

So you want something missing?

ABE

What?

TOBY

You just said a double-negative, Abe. You 'don't want nothing missing.' That means you want something missing.

Abe grabs Toby's head and grinds his fist into Toby's eye.

TOBY

Ow!

ABE

These people, this guy Range, he ain't gonna fuck around.

TOBY

I know.

ABE

You realize how hard we worked getting this into the country?

TOBY

That hurt, Abe.

Abe walks away. Toby picks up his stack and moves to a table in the back of the room. On the table are stacks of heroin in packets. Other THUGS enter from the garage, loading the table with packets. Mike is keeping track of the packets, weighing them, and writing it all down.

Sarah is sitting in a small recliner, barefoot, waiting. At her feet another thug, Quill, is preparing a syringe. Jacques watches, worried and impatient.

JACQUES

All right. You ready?

QUILL

Almost.

MIKE

Hey, Jacques, what if this stuff ends up being crap?

JACQUES

Hey, Mikey, no offense, but do me a favor and shut the fuck up.

Sarah gazes with lust at the syringe. The Thugs stop what they're doing, and watch in anticipation.

QUILL

Okay. This is kind of like hitting
the champagne bottle against the
side of the boat, huh?

The Crimson Bolt watches in horror as Mike slides the
needle between Sarah's toes, injecting her with heroin.
Sarah tilts her head back, in euphoria.

JACQUES

How is it?

SARAH

Oh God.

JACQUES

That's good?

SARAH

Oh God.

Sarah is barely able to nod.

Jacques HOOTS in triumph. He picks the dazed Sarah up by
the shoulders, and kisses her, hard.

And, as the Crimson Bolt watches, he has a VISION of
JACQUES' FACE TRANSFORMING INTO A GOAT-LIKE SATAN'S.

The Crimson Bolt looks at the happy THUGS around them.
All their faces have transformed into the rotting faces
of the damned.

Only Sarah remains pure, glowing like the Virgin.

The Crimson Bolt HOLLERS, and throws his lead pipe at the
window.

The glass SHATTERS. The men SHOUT, and cover themselves.
Faces return to normal.

ABE

Fuck!

TOBY

There's a guy there.

FRANK

Face the wrath of the Crimson Bolt!

Abe pulls a pistol from inside his coat. He aims it at
the Crimson Bolt.

The Bolt sees this and dashes away.

TOBY

That's Sarah's husband, man. That's him.

JACQUES

He just saw everything. Get him.

Abe shoots out the window at the disappearing figure. He misses.

Quill uses a coat to wipe the sharp fragments from the bottom of the window pane.

Quill jumps out, followed by Abe, Mike, and Toby.

ON THE GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt darts around the bushes. Behind him he can see the four men chasing him.

Quill sees the Crimson Bolt dash from one bush to another.

QUILL

There!

Abe and Mike shoot at him.

The Crimson Bolt crouches, his hands over his head, and waddles toward the fence

The men lose track of him again. They fan out.

MIKE

Where'd he go?

The Crimson Bolt runs behind shrubbery along the gate. When he can't see the men anymore, he climbs the fence.

Abe spots him atop the fence, a fair distance away. He aims, taking his time.

And shoots.

The Crimson Bolt is clipped in the leg. He falls off the fence and to the sidewalk on the other side with a HOLLER.

But, despite the pain, he keeps moving. He crawls to his car. He flings open his passenger door. He pushes himself inside, staying crouched down.

Mike appears, inside the gate, and blasts at the car.

The passenger window shatters over the Crimson Bolt. He gets the keys in the ignition.

The Crimson Bolt gets the car started. Peels away.
The men run out the opening gate after him, shooting.

INT. FRANK'S CAR

The Crimson Bolt drives, woozily. He holds tightly to his leg, stopping the flow of blood.

Something is on the floor, stuck to his boot.

It's Libby's pink neon party flyer, getting soaked in his blood.

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

DISCO MUSIC PLAYS. A few PARTIERS are gathered, geeky guys and gals in their late teens/early twenties. A couple people dance. Some others drink beers in moderation. There's a KNOCK at the door.

BLONDE

Libby! Somebody's here!

Libby doesn't come, so the blonde goes to answer the door herself.

INT. LIBBY'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Libby is putting together a tray full of Cheez Whiz hors d'oeuvres. CHRISTIAN, a pimply-faced guy she's dating, is behind her, grabbing her waist, kissing her neck. Libby enjoys it, GIGGLING.

The blonde enters.

BLONDE

Libby, some guy who looks like a bum is at the door. His name is Frank.

LIBBY

Frank?

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM

Frank waits, wearing an outfit made of garbage bags and duct tape, covering his costume. He's leaning against the doorway, taking the pressure off his leg. He's sweating, in agony. The DISCO MUSIC BLASTS around him. The kids in the room pretend they're not staring at him.

Libby comes in from the other room.

LIBBY
Frank! Hey! Why are you wearing
 garbage bags?

FRANK
 I need to talk to you.

LIBBY
 Okay. Everybody, this is Frank!
 (re: blonde)
 This is Molly!

BLONDE
 Hi.

Frank nods at her.

LIBBY
 This is Christian.

CHRISTIAN
 What's up?

LIBBY
 That's Melissa, and Ryan, Grant.

Assorted nods and GRUNTS are exchanged. Frank is about to faint with the pain. He's sweating profusely.

LIBBY
 Ty, Ellen, Ellen Jr, Bob --

FRANK
 I really need to talk now. It's
 important.

LIBBY
 Oh. Okay. Come on back to my
 room.

Libby moves toward her room. Frank limps after her. One of the kids looks down and notices Frank's red boots with lightning bolts on them. Christian follows Libby.

LIBBY
 No, Christian, you wait here.

Christian stops following. He's embarrassed.

PARTY BOY
 Brother's moving in on your poon,
 bro.

CHRISTIAN
Bullshit. It's like her uncle or something.

INT. LIBBY'S BEDROOM

Libby closes the door behind them.

LIBBY
What?

FRANK
They're after me. And I was shot.

Frank tears away his garbage bags, revealing his Crimson Bolt costume. A oily towel wrapped around his knee is soaked with blood.

Libby SHRIEKS, more excited than anything else.

LIBBY
Oh my God!

Libby SHRIEKS again. There's KNOCKING at the door.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)
Libby, are you all right?

LIBBY
Yes.
(to Frank)
You are him! I knew it! That's so cool! I can't believe it! That's so cool! Are you going to die or -- ?

FRANK
I don't think so.

LIBBY
Oh my God! We have to clean it up, right?

Frank nods.

LIBBY
Because you can't go to the hospital! The hospital has to call the police if there's a gunshot wound, Frank! It's the law!

FRANK
I know.

LIBBY

All right. All right. Okay.
Take off your pants.

FRANK

I'd be in my underwear.

LIBBY

Just do it! I'll get people out
of here! I won't tell them
anything, Frank! Look at my hand,
it's trembling!

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Libby pushes her friends out the door.

LIBBY

'Night... 'Night.

BLONDE

Libby, you're gonna be here alone
with that guy?

LIBBY

It's okay. It's okay. Something
important came up. Bye. See you
later. Good-bye.

Christian is the only one left standing there. He looks
like he's about to cry.

LIBBY

Christian, go!

CHRISTIAN

Who's that? Is that your 'sugar
daddy'?!

LIBBY

I don't have to tell you anything.
Just go!

CHRISTIAN

You don't have to tell me anything?!

LIBBY

No!

Christian slaps the wall in fury.

CHRISTIAN

Enjoy your candy! That your sugar
daddy buys you!

Christian rushes out the door. Libby closes the door. Darts back to her bedroom.

INT. LIBBY'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frank is on the bed in his underwear. His leg is up, the wound exposed. Libby sits beside him. She has a tray with supplies on it -- rubbing alcohol, cotton, gauze, etc. Libby holds up an enormous pliers.

FRANK

What are you doing?

LIBBY

We have to get the bullet out, Frank.

FRANK

It passed through! It's not in there!

LIBBY

What if there's fragments?!

Frank shoves her hand with the pliers down.

LIBBY

All right.

Libby looks at the tray. She picks up the open bottle of rubbing alcohol and some gauze. She holds them over Frank's leg, not really knowing what to do. And then she pours the whole bottle on his leg.

Frank SCREAMS, slapping the bottle across the room. This hurts worse than being shot.

LIBBY

I'm sorry! I didn't know! I should have given you ibuprofens! I was going to give you ibuprofens!

Frank waits for the tremendous pain to die down.

FRANK

It's okay.

Frank grabs the gauze to wrap the wound.

LIBBY

I'll wrap it.

FRANK

That's okay. I got it.

Libby watches Frank as he wraps it. She waits a few moments.

LIBBY

Am I the only one to know? About you being him?

FRANK

Yeah. No. The guys that did this. I guess they...

LIBBY

They know your secret identity? Fuck.

FRANK

And where I live.

LIBBY

Well, you can sleep here tonight. If you want.

FRANK

Thanks.

INT. POLICE STATION - NIGHT

Felkner sits at his desk, typing a report, bored. He picks up his 'I Love My Cat' mug of coffee. He glances down at the newspaper beneath it. The mug left a ring around the police sketch of the Crimson Bolt.

Felkner stares at it, trying to remember who the sketch reminds him of. Then he does.

FELKNER

Holy crap.

Felkner stands and grabs his coat from his chair. He turns to his CAPTAIN, a heavyset woman in a glass office beside him. She's flush, mopping sweat off her brow.

FELKNER

Cap'n, I'll be right back. I may have something. But I want to check it out first.

CAPTAIN

That's fine, John.

Felkner nods, leaves.

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Felkner pulls up in front of Frank's house.

EXT. FRANK'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

As Felkner approaches, he notices that the door is cracked open, though all the lights are turned off. Felkner pushes lightly on the door.

FELKNER

Hello? 'Lo?

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Felkner enters Frank's house. He looks around. It seems like nobody's home. Felkner, not the greatest detective in the world, doesn't notice that all of Frank's stuff has been rummaged through. Instead, he focuses on the closet of which Frank had been so protective.

He moves toward it. Opens it.

It's empty.

ABE

Welcome home, Frank.

Felkner turns to see three men pointing guns at him. Felkner himself is in silhouette.

They shoot. Felkner's body is riddled with bullets. He falls back, dead.

Abe, Quill, and Mike move forward. Felkner's face has fallen into a beam of light. Mike crouches.

MIKE

Is this the guy? This don't look like the guy. Is this him?

Mike pulls out Felkner's badge.

MIKE

It's a cop.

ABE

Oh, fuck. Fuck.

QUILL

The cops are looking for D'arbo.
(MORE)

QUILL (CONT'D)

If they find him and he tells what he saw --

ABE

I know. Just get the body out of here.

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM - DAY

Frank sits on the couch. His leg is well wrapped. He wears Libby's oversized pajama T-shirt, which is far too small on him. He's on the phone.

FRANK

Thanks, Hamilton... I will... Bye.

Franks hangs up. Libby peeks around the hall doorway.

LIBBY

Hey, Frank.

FRANK

I told the diner I had pneumonia. You sure it's okay to stay here?

LIBBY

Yuh huh. Hey, I want you to see something. Okay?

FRANK

What?

Libby enters, wearing gym clothes.

She does some cart wheels around the room.

For a while. She's not so great at them, but not bad either.

Then she stops. She beams at Frank, smiling broadly. He doesn't say anything.

LIBBY

So?

FRANK

Cartwheels.

LIBBY

You see what I'm getting at?!

Frank shakes his head.

LIBBY

Batman had Robin. The original Human Torch had Toro. The Flash had Kid Flash! I could be your kid sidekick.

FRANK

How old are you?

LIBBY

Twenty-two. But compared to you I am a one. A kid. Right?

FRANK

I guess.

LIBBY

But the important thing is, what would my name be?

She pulls out a list.

LIBBY

Now, when you hear the name, imagine what it would sound like next to 'The Crimson Bolt.' Okay? Like, 'The Crimson Bolt, and... Bolt Girl.

Frank stares at her.

LIBBY

'The Crimson Bolt and Kid Crimson.'

Frank stares at her.

LIBBY

'The Crimson Bolt and Creeping - Bam.'

FRANK

What's a creeping bam?

LIBBY

What the fuck is a toro? -- What the fuck is a robin?!

FRANK

A robin's a bird.

LIBBY

Why's he named after a bird?

FRANK

I don't know.

LIBBY

Creeping Bam is a fantastic phrase, Frank. I didn't want to tell you before, but it's my favorite.

FRANK

It's good.

LIBBY

You're totally lying.

FRANK

I don't really need a kid sidekick.

LIBBY

You're kidding, right?!

FRANK

No.

LIBBY

Look what happens to you when you don't have a kid sidekick, Frank! You get shot by people! Together, me and you could take down those cocksuckers that stole your wife! Right?

Frank is unsure.

INT. LIBBY'S BEDROOM - DAY

Frank is walking around the room, trying out his leg. It is healing nicely, and in much better shape.

LIBBY (O.S.)

You ready?

Frank nods toward the bathroom door. Then realizes she can't see this.

FRANK

Yeah.

Libby flings open the door. She's wearing a formfitting bright yellow and green Spandex costume. It's better tailored than Frank's costume, but also more garish and costumey.

LIBBY

Tah dah! Boltie! How do I look?

Boltie does some poses for Frank. She sticks her butt out to the side and rests her hand on it, etc. The poses are provocative and sexy. They embarrass Frank.

FRANK

Good.

LIBBY

Come on. Let's go get Jock.

FRANK

They have guns. We're not ready for that yet.

LIBBY

Then let's go fight some other crime. Show me how you do it.

FRANK

My leg's not all the way better.

LIBBY

Don't be a pussy. Come on.

INT. EUCLID AVE - LATER

The Crimson Bolt and Boltie are crouching behind a trash can. She whispers:

LIBBY

This is what you do?

FRANK

Uh huh.

LIBBY

You wait here for crime to happen?

FRANK

Yeah.

Beat.

LIBBY

This is boring. Why don't we go find someone who's a criminal, and then teach him a lesson he'll never forget?

FRANK

Like who?

LIBBY

I know this guy Jerry. He keyed my friend's new car. Totally fucked up the side of it.

FRANK

That's not cool.

LIBBY

I know. It's totally illegal. And he never paid the price!

EXT. JERRY'S PARENTS' HOUSE - LATER

JERRY, a mellow, long-haired dude, answers the door. The TV's on in the background of this well-to-do home. Jerry, eating a bowl of Fruit Loops, looks at the Crimson Bolt and Boltie.

FRANK

Jerry?

JERRY

Halloween was a month ago, bro.

LIBBY

That's him!

The Crimson Bolt tackles him. Jerry falls back.

INT. JERRY'S PARENTS' HOUSE - DAY

JERRY

Hey!

LIBBY

Fucking cocksucker!

Boltie kicks him as he's on the floor. Jerry grabs her leg, pushing her away from him. She tumbles back, and hits her elbow on a coffee table. She SCREAMS.

LIBBY

My arm! Ow! It's just like when you got shot, Frank!

The Crimson Bolt grabs Jerry from behind, pulling him away from Boltie.

Boltie, furious, grabs a Waterford vase and swings it into Jerry's face. It SMASHES.

LIBBY

Fucking asshole! Fucking son-of-a-bitch!

Jerry falls to the floor, clutching his glass-imbedded face. Libby stomps on his neck with her heel. Jerry gasps for breath.

The Crimson Bolt is confused. He puts out his hand to calm her. Jerry is WAILING in agony.

FRANK

Boltie, stop it.

Libby SCREAMS with rage. She picks up an enormous bronze western statue of a man on wild horseback and is about to bring it down into Jerry's head. It will clearly kill him. The Crimson Bolt stops her.

FRANK

Stop it!!

Jerry is rolling on the floor, clutching his injured head and neck, GASPING and MOANING. Libby looks around, excited, breathing heavily and smiling.

LIBBY

We stopped him. We totally stopped evil.

FRANK

You're not supposed to kill them.

LIBBY

Then he'd never key anybody's car again, would he?

(to Jerry)

A brand new fucking Jetta! Melissa loved that car!

(to Frank)

People like this, Frank, you can't teach them any other way!

FRANK

(whispering)

Don't call me -- !

LIBBY

What, Frank?

The Bolt waves his hands, trying to get her to shut up. Jerry MOANS again in agony. The Bolt looks down at him, about to cry.

FRANK

He keyed your friend's car?

LIBBY

I'm pretty sure it was him.

EXT. JERRY'S PARENTS' HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt stomps angrily out of the home. Boltie runs out after him. She's scared.

LIBBY

I didn't know I wasn't supposed to kill him, Frank! I'm just learning! How am I supposed to know things if you don't teach me?

FRANK

I can't tell crime to shut up if I have to shut up!

LIBBY

I know! I just wanted to help you, Frank! That's what it's all about for me, being a kid sidekick! Helping people.

(crying)

He was evil! He was so fucking evil and you don't believe me!

INT. FRANK'S CAR - LATER

Frank, still upset, finishes buttoning up his civilian duds as he drives down the road. Libby is in the back seat CRYING as she changes into her street clothes.

LIBBY

Does this mean I'm fired?

Frank doesn't answer. They come to a stoplight.

LIBBY

Frank, does it mean I'm fired then?

FRANK

Yes.

LIBBY

Who are you going to get to be Boltie?

FRANK

I don't need a Boltie.

LIBBY

That's so shallow, Frank!

Frank looks at his dashboard. Car's on empty. He pulls into --

EXT. GAS STATION

Frank gets out of the car. Libby ducks down to finish getting dressed.

LIBBY (O.S.)

I'm in my bra!

As Frank pumps gas, he doesn't see an SUV pull in behind him.

Toby and Quill step out of the SUV.

QUILL

My grandmother or a corpse?

TOBY

Right. Who would you rather fuck?
If somebody pointed a gun at your
head, and you had to choose?

Quill starts to fill their car with gas.

QUILL

Who would do that?

TOBY

That's not the point. See, like,
I'd do my grandma, 'cause at least
she's got a working pussy. You
want smokes?

Quill shakes his head. Toby goes to the cashier.

TOBY

A pack of Marl --

Toby spots Frank pumping gas. He swirls toward Quill.

TOBY

Psst!

Quill sees Frank.

As Frank finishes pumping gas and turns to put his nozzle back, he sees Quill and Toby lunging towards him. He drops the nozzle. He opens the car door.

But Toby and Quill grab him before he gets inside. Frank falls. He reaches inside his car, coming away with only the Crimson Bolt mask in his hand.

Libby sits up in the back seat. She looks around, but Frank is hidden from view.

LIBBY

Frank?

Frank sees a gun in Toby's jacket. He untangles himself from the pair, and runs down the street.

QUILL

(to Toby)

Get the car!

Quill chases Frank. Toby jumps into the SUV.

Libby sees Quill chasing Frank down the street. She spots Toby driving off after them.

LIBBY

Shit!

She crawls into the driver's seat.

STOREFRONT STREET

Frank, trying to ignore his sore leg, runs past shops and pedestrians as Quill chases him.

Toby pulls the SUV in front of Frank, and gets out, running toward him.

Frank stops, trapped between the two men. He runs across the busy street, barely avoiding HONKING cars, and into

AN ALLEY

Frank stops for a moment. He looks down at his leg, which is sore and bleeding again. Frank pulls the Crimson Bolt mask onto his face.

He sees Quill and Toby making their way across the street behind him. He moves again.

LIBBY

Drives Frank's car after Quill and Toby and toward the alley. But the alley's too narrow for the car. She looks for another way. And drives off in a different direction.

BACK TO ALLEY

The Crimson Bolt, wearing his mask but in regular clothes, hobble-runs out of the alley and to --

A STREET

Quill catches up to the Crimson Bolt. He grabs his shirt. The shirt rips as both of them fall to the sidewalk. Quill and Toby jump on the Crimson Bolt, punching him.

A couple PASSERSBY stop across the street, watching the scene. One MAN calls 911 on his cell phone.

The Crimson Bolt gets in one good blow to Toby's face, sending him careening backwards. Toby puts his fingers to his lips, and looks at the blood. He pulls his gun from his jacket. He aims it at the Crimson Bolt.

TOBY

Fuck you, Frank.

Toby HEARS SOMETHING. He turns.

Boltie is driving Frank's car, fast, straight toward him. The car SLAMS into Toby, shattering and pinning his legs back against a brick wall. Toby SCREAMS.

He drops his gun. The Crimson Bolt grabs it, and swings it towards Quill.

QUILL

Uh...

The Bolt shuts his eyes tight, turns his head, and shoots.

Quill, surprised, looks down at his abdomen. A large blood-flower blossoms there. And he falls over.

Boltie hops out of the car, half in her costume, half in her bra, with her mask on. She points at the dying Toby and LAUGHS loud and fake.

LIBBY

Ha ha ha ha! Ha ha ha! That's what you get for fucking with the Crimson Bolt and Boltie, you stupid cocksucker! Your legs are gone now! Ha ha ha ha!

The Crimson Bolt looks around at a crowd forming. He grabs Boltie, ushering her back toward the car.

FRANK

Come on.

LIBBY

(to Quill)

You too! It's called internal bleeding, fucker! And then you die! Whoooo!

The Crimson Bolt pushes Boltie into the back seat, closing the door on her. He gets into the driver's seat.

He tries to start the engine, but it won't turn over. The crowd around continues staring. Boltie rolls down her car window.

LIBBY

Tell everyone you know that anytime some stupid fucking bastard wants to commit some gay-ass crime, that the Crimson Bolt and Boltie will be there, crushing their stupid fucking evil heads, forever!

One WOMAN claps. A LITTLE KID waves at Boltie.

LIBBY

Hi!

The Crimson Bolt gets the car started. He scrapes away from Toby, who topples over.

The car chugs away.

EXT. LIBBY'S GARAGE - EVENING

Frank pulls the car into Libby's small apartment garage.

MOMENTS LATER

Libby looks around and closes the garage door behind them.

INT. LIBBY'S GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

It's very dark. We can only see parts of Frank and Libby in the light coming through the garage-door windows and other cracks. They look at the battered car.

LIBBY

Wow. The Boltmobile is fucked up.

FRANK

People could have seen the license plate.

LIBBY

Oh no.
(pause)
Hey, Frank.

FRANK

What?

LIBBY

I saved your life.

FRANK

I could have handled it.

LIBBY

Ha! I bet you could! You're fucking awesome, Frank.

FRANK

If you're gonna be my sidekick, you can't cuss.

LIBBY

I know. I agree. Does that mean I'm not fired anymore?

FRANK

We need to get ready for Jock. We need better weapons.

LIBBY

How about some claws? Like Wolverine?

FRANK

Okay.

LIBBY

That I can cut people's faces open with.

FRANK

Only people who have actually broken the law.

LIBBY

Of course! That Jerry thing will only happen that one time! It was a total mistake. I wasn't thinking.

(MORE)

LIBBY (CONT'D)

My head ran away with my mind, and things got out of control. There I was, throwing a rodeo thing on him. It wasn't my fault.

FRANK

All right.

LIBBY

I was just so bored behind that trash can.

FRANK

Maybe you have to be bored sometimes.

LIBBY

You never see them being bored in comic books, Frank.

FRANK

It happens in-between the panels.

LIBBY

Whoa. That's where we are now, right? We're in-between the panels.

Frank looks at Libby there. She's somewhat beautiful and innocent in the darkness. He nods.

LIBBY

So we can do anything here.

(beat)

Hey, Frank.

FRANK

What?

LIBBY

Want to make out?

FRANK

What?

LIBBY

With me?

FRANK

I'm married, Libby. It's a sacred bond. And you're my kid sidekick.

LIBBY

Okay. All right. I guess.

(MORE)

LIBBY (CONT'D)

I just wanted to, like, celebrate somehow.

FRANK

Bake a cake.

Frank leaves.

LIBBY

You don't have to be mean about it.

EXT. CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

A banner reads "NORTHINGTON GUN & KNIFE SHOW."

PULL BACK to reveal the convention center across which the banner is draped. Hicks and pick-up trucks fill the parking lot. People crowd into the auditorium.

TILT DOWN to Frank and Libby looking up.

MONTAGE -- FRANK AND LIBBY HAVE FUN AT THE GUN SHOW

-- Libby checks out the pump-action on a rifle. She pretends to shoot Frank. But she gets in trouble from the DEALER, because she's not supposed to point it at people.

-- Frank and Libby try on Kevlar vests and bulletproof helmets. Libby wavers because it's so heavy.

-- Frank leafs through the pages of a black munitions book. He reads a page: "How to make a pipe bomb." He grins.

-- Frank and Libby, LAUGHING, roll around a shopping cart with loads of dangerous items. They're both wearing mesh baseball caps with pro-gun slogans on them.

-- A GUY, not looking where he's going, almost knocks over Libby. Libby, pissed, picks up a hunting knife and starts after him. Frank stops her.

-- In the PARKING LOT, they load the items into their trunk. And close it.

NEWSCASTER (O.S.)

Public opinion has turned of late in regard to the costumed man known as the Crimson Bolt.

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM - DAY

An old TV sits on a shaky stand.

NEWSCASTER (on TV)
The Tribune this morning revealed
that at least five of the Crimson
Bolt's assault victims had felony
arrest records ranging from
soliciting drugs to child
molestation to homicide.

Libby, watching the TV, YELLS to the other room. Behind
her, a workbench is set up with knives, gunpowder, etc.

LIBBY
Frank! Frank!

NEWSCASTER (on TV)
Was the law enforcement community
rash in naming the Crimson Bolt a
menace?

ON TV -- EXT. POLICE HQ

Loud REPORTERS surround Sergeant Fitzgibbon.

FITZGIBBON
We're talking about a severely
disturbed individual running around
wearing a mask and assaulting
people.

NEARBY WOMAN
Bad people.

ON TV -- INT. HOSPITAL ROOM

The Old Woman Frank "protected" from the purse snatcher
sits on a bed.

OLD WOMAN
The man tried to steal my purse,
and then he forced himself on me,
sexually. If the Crimson Bolt
hadn't arrived, who knows what
would have happened?

ON TV -- EXT. STREET

Behind the Man who called 911, police clean up the deadly mess left by the Crimson Bolt and Boltie.

911 MAN

I don't know about the other situations, but this time the guy in the mask was clearly defending himself.

BACK TO NEWSROOM

NEWSCASTER (on TV)

Helping the Crimson Bolt is his new partner, a young woman known only as 'Boltie.'

Libby SHRIEKS with excitement. A police sketch of her in costume comes up on the TV.

LIBBY

Oh my God oh my God oh my God oh my God oh my God! Frank, it's me!

She SHRIEKS again.

NEWSCASTER (on TV)

Police are still offering a reward for the capture of the two would-be crimefighters. And speaking of crimefighters, here's Dirk Kirkpatrick with the weather [*and so on*] --

LIBBY

Ha! I always had a feeling I'd be on TV someday!

Libby approaches Frank. He's welding metal cuffs with a blade attached. He aims the cuff at a board across the room, and pushes a button on his elbow. The blade flies out, projected through the air, and lands in a wooden board across the room.

LIBBY

Hey, cool, Frank! How'd you learn how to make a projectile thing?

Libby points to piping and gunpowders beside him.

LIBBY

What're those?

FRANK
 I'm not sure I'm doing them right,
 but if I am... bombs.

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM - NIGHT

PAN across the knives, bombs, and other weapons; across paint cans and the emblems and colors they've painted onto the Kevlar vests and helmets; and PAN TO Frank, who is asleep on the couch.

LIBBY (O.S.)
 (whisper)
 Hey Frank.
 (beat)
 Hey, Frank, are you awake?

Frank opens his eyes a little. Libby is wearing her Boltie costume, and holding Frank's mask.

FRANK
 What?

LIBBY
 Are you awake?

Frank stares at her.

LIBBY
 Hi.

FRANK
 Why are you in your costume?

LIBBY
 Can we go out and find some crime?

FRANK
 I'm sleeping.

LIBBY
 Pleeeeeeease.

FRANK
 No.

LIBBY
 Frank.

FRANK
 What?

LIBBY
 Do I look good in this costume?

Libby does one of her weird, sort-of sexy poses. Frank turns away from her.

LIBBY

Do I?

FRANK

Yeah. I need sleep, Libby.

LIBBY

Frank.

He doesn't answer. Libby turns on the stereo. Frank is confused.

LIBBY

You can't make out with me, but can the Crimson Bolt make out with Boltie?

FRANK

What?

LIBBY

The Crimson Bolt isn't married to Sarah, Frank is. Right? Come on.

Frank turns to see Libby rubbing her crotch.

FRANK

What are you doing?

LIBBY

Come on, Frank. Since you've been here I can't do it with other guys. And when's the last time you did anything, huh? Can't we just this once?

FRANK

No. Get out of here.

LIBBY

You like to look at me in my costume, Frank. I can tell. Don't be a fucking liar.

Libby pulls down her waistband.

FRANK

What are you doing?

LIBBY

Frank, just look at it for a second. Please, Frank.

FRANK
Libby. Stop it.

LIBBY
It's all gushy!

Frank looks away.

LIBBY
Here. Put this on.

Frank blocks Libby, but she pushes through. She stretches the mask awkwardly over Frank's head. Frank starts to remove it, but Libby grabs his hand and guides it between her legs

LIBBY
Here. Just for a second.

Frank is sweating, tugged between desire and disgust. For just a moment, he stills, giving into his lust. Libby moves his hand on her.

LIBBY
Oh... oh yes. Aaah.

Libby pulls Frank's pants down a little.

FRANK
No. Libby.

But he doesn't stop her. Libby grits her teeth and begins jerking on his penis.

LIBBY
Oh.

She jerks too hard.

FRANK
Ow!

LIBBY
Okay, sorry. Stay there, Frank.
Okay? Just a second.

Libby crawls on top of him.

FRANK
Libby, no. No.

LIBBY
Hold on. Be quiet.

FRANK

No.

Frank goes to push her away, but she pushes his arms down, hard. She pushes him inside of her as she MOANS. Frank throws his arm over his face.

LIBBY

Don't cover your face. I want to see your mask. I want to see...

Libby pulls his arm away from his face. Libby breathes heavily, moving faster on top of him.

FRANK

No. I... Libby... No.

LIBBY

I'm coming. Fuck. I'm --

Frank, despite himself, also climaxes.

Libby collapses, holding onto him, heaving.

Frank lies there a moment. Then he SHOUTS. He throws Libby off him.

LIBBY

Ow. Hey!

Frank runs into the bathroom.

INT. LIBBY'S BATHROOM - NIGHT

Frank falls to his knees and vomits in the toilet.

He SOBS.

FRANK

God, why? Why? I'm sorry. I'm...

Frank slams his fist on the toilet.

He throws a trash can against the wall.

And rampages further, kicking and slapping the cabinets.

FRANK

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

Frank stares at his vomit in the toilet. The little specks are dispersing.

And his vomit forms the shape of Sarah's face.

Frank, as you might imagine, is in awe.

INT. LIBBY'S FRONT ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Frank busts into the room. He starts gathering up their weapons and supplies.

FRANK

We need to go get Sarah.

LIBBY

I'm sorry, Frank. I was sleepwalking. I didn't know what --

FRANK

It doesn't matter. We need to go.

LIBBY

But you said we weren't ready to take on Jock.

FRANK

We'll never be ready. That's the point. That's the -- No one's ever ready for anything. They just either do it or not. And up until now I've only been not doing it.

LIBBY

But what if they kill you?

FRANK

That's their business.

CUT TO:

EXT. JACQUES' RANCH - NIGHT

Two large SUV's roll in toward the gate. Abe's waiting inside the bars.

A tinted window on the SUV rolls down. A DRIVER nods at Abe. Abe nods back.

Abe slips his card into the gate opener. The doors open.

The SUV passes through.

Abe whispers into a walkie-talkie while following them on foot.

ABE
They're coming up.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Mike's kicking back in a Lay-Z-Boy, on the other walkie-talkie.

MIKE
Gotcha.

He looks to Jacques, who's adjusting his suit in the mirror.

MIKE
They're coming up.

Eastern European hookers in their Sunday best are assembled around them. Sarah's on a couch, nodding out. The tightly-wrapped packets of heroin are stacked on a table.

JACQUES
This is the big one.

Jacques uses antibacterial lotion on his hands, claps.

EXT. JACQUES' GATE

The Crimson Bolt and Boltie are perched atop the gate, gazing down at the grounds. They're wearing colorful Kevlar vests with their insignias over their regular uniforms. The Crimson Bolt has an elaborate Rambo-esque ammunitions belt across his chest, and a gas can strapped to his back. Boltie has long, sharp Wolverine-type claws sprouting from her forearms. Our heroes watch as the SUVs pull in front of the ranch.

LIBBY
Who are those guys?

Frank shakes his head. He doesn't know.

LIBBY
Maybe we picked the wrong night to be here? Do you think?

EXT. JACQUES' RANCH

Jacques comes out to greet MR. RANGE, a large, ugly man, as he steps out of an SUV. Range's sizable POSSE emerge from the SUVs as well, including a BODYGUARD carrying a titanium briefcase.

JACQUES

Mr. Range, so good to see you,
sir.

Mr. Range's handshake is limp and gross.

MR. RANGE

I'd like to post a couple of my
men out here.

JACQUES

We have a few guys out here already,
sir.

MR. RANGE

Couple more, son.

Mr. Range nods to his men, directing them where to go.

JACQUES

Sure. That's... not a problem.

Jacques smiles his charming-bastard smile, and opens the
door for Range.

EXT. GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt and Boltie move through the bushes.
Boltie stops, out of breath.

LIBBY

This shit is heavy.

She falls onto her side with the weight of the Kevlar and
other equipment.

LIBBY

Just let me lie here for a second.

FRANK

No. Come on.

INT. JACQUES' FOYER

A couple of Mr. Range's men, SCIENTIST-TYPES, adeptly set
up scales and a mini-lab next to the packets of heroin.
Mr. Range looks at the heroin.

MR. RANGE

Show him.

Mr. Range's Bodyguard opens the briefcase for Jacques:
inside are stacks of hundred dollar bills.

Jacques catches his breath, nods. Mr. Range notices all the hookers.

MR. RANGE

And who are these young ladies, Jacques?

JACQUES

You know me -- I'm always one for facilitating friendships. I thought you could use a little company while your men did their job.

Mr. Range peruses the whores. He spots Sarah, in the corner. He stares at her.

MR. RANGE

What's your name, sweetheart?

Jacques CHUCKLES a little.

JACQUES

Well, that's Sarah, she's, uh...
heh.

MR. RANGE

You're a very pretty girl, Sarah. A very pretty girl. Maybe you want to go upstairs, have a little party with Mr. Range?

Sarah looks to Jacques.

SARAH

Jacques?

Jacques CHUCKLES again.

JACQUES

Sarah, baby. Mr. Range, he's a nice man. Just for a little while, baby.

Mr. Range takes Sarah's hand and leads her toward the stairs. Abe gives Jacques a disapproving look.

JACQUES

Fuck. When guys start thinking your girlfriend's a whore, it's time to move on, right?

EXT. GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt and Boltie dart behind a bush. They spot a HOOD, standing, reading a paperback novel in the light of a bug zapper. The Crimson Bolt nods toward a tree a few feet away.

Boltie moves toward it.

The Crimson Bolt peeks his head up over a bush. He does a fake voice:

FRANK

You're a jerk.

HOOD

Mike?

The Hood moves, looks around for the voice. He comes upon the Crimson Bolt in the bushes.

HOOD

Oh, Jesus.

He reaches for his gun. Boltie jumps down from the tree above him, knocking him over.

She raises her claws, and slices into him.

LIBBY

Ha ha!

The Crimson Bolt puts his fingers to his lips -- shhh! Boltie makes the "whoops" face, covers her mouth.

INT. RANCH BEDROOM

Mr. Range undresses Sarah, as she stares at the ground, trying to keep her mind on other things.

EXT. POOLSIDE

One of Mr. Range's thugs is pacing by the POOL. He hears the Crimson Bolt's fake voice:

FRANK (O.S.)

Hey, over here. I'm a little bird.

The confused thug walks toward the voice, and on the way he trips over fishing wire strung across the pavement. He falls into a large puddle of liquid. He sees an empty gas can on its side beside him.

He looks up to see the Crimson Bolt, dropping a match.

The flame zig-zags up to him. The thug bursts into flames.
He SCREAMS.

NEARBY

Three THUGS hear the SCREAMS.

INT. RANCH FOYER

It's quiet here. Mike gently rocks himself in the Lay-Z-Boy, watching the scientist-types take a chemical read on the heroin. He doesn't look out the window beside him, where the flames' light flickers against the trees.

EXT. GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt rushes in toward the flaming man. He stabs him with a hunting knife until he shuts up.

But it's too late. The thugs descend the hill toward the Crimson Bolt and Boltie. Our heroes move into some shrubs.

INT. RANCH BEDROOM

Mr. Range is crawling on top of Sarah in the bed.

SARAH

No.

MR. RANGE

Yes, dear.

SARAH

Noooo!

Mr. Range pushes her down, violently, as he forces himself onto her. Sarah SCREAMS.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Jacques, Abe, Mike, and the others hear Sarah's SCREAM. They ignore it.

EXT. GROUNDS

The three thugs come upon the Crimson Bolt, in the shadows, lighting something on fire.

THUG 1

This dipshit again?

THUG 2

What're you holding, retard?

The Crimson Bolt tosses the lit object at the thugs. It lands at Thug 1's feet. A pipe bomb.

It EXPLODES. Thug 1 is blown to pieces. The other two are thrown backwards.

INTERCUT:

-- Boltie SHOUTS LOUDLY, the giddy war cry of a drunken sorority girl.

-- IN THE BEDROOM, Mr. Range hears the blast; he scrambles off Sarah, avoiding the window. He reaches for his jacket to grab his gun.

-- IN THE FOYER, everyone, the hookers, Jacques, Abe, and Mike, are standing up now.

JACQUES

What the fuck is that?!

Abe runs toward a balcony door.

EXT. GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt and Boltie approach Thug 2 on the ground. He's missing an arm, gulping for air, blowing a blood bubble.

LIBBY

The bombs totally work, Frank!

Libby falls upon the man, slicing into him with glee.

RANGE'S MEN come running toward the explosion. The Crimson Bolt turns to see the men.

They shoot. The Crimson Bolt is struck in the Kevlar vest, and falls. He's HEAVING.

Libby stops, turning back toward him.

LIBBY

Frank! Are you -- ?

A bullet strikes Boltie. She falls over, and is quiet.

The Crimson Bolt rolls to his side. He can't see Boltie. He crawls through the bushes, looking for her.

He sees her bright yellow and red costume between the leaves. He moves toward where she's lying. He grabs her. But, as he pulls her into his arms, Libby's head turns to face him: part of it is missing. Her one dead eye stares up at nothing. The Crimson Bolt turns white.

Meanwhile, Range's Men fan out a bit. They can't see where the Crimson Bolt went.

RANGE'S MAN

Where'd they go? Did you get them?

The Crimson Bolt stands up from the bushes, directly in front of them. He doesn't even try to hide, as if his own fury will protect him. He glares at the men, and SCREAMS at the top of his lungs.

They shoot at him, but miss.

The Crimson Bolt walks forward. He lights a bomb. And another. He tosses the bombs at the men.

They try to run, but the EXPLOSIONS throw them backwards.

FREEZE FRAME on the men exploding.

SUPER: BLAM! in cartoon letters, like in the old Batman show.

EXT. BALCONY

Abe spots the Crimson Bolt tossing bombs. He runs back into the --

INT. RANCH FOYER

ABE

It's him.

JACQUES

'Him?!' Who's 'him'?

ABE

D'Arbo.

EXT. GROUNDS

More MEN run toward the Crimson Bolt from his other side. The Bolt grabs a gun from one of the fallen men.

He swings it toward them, and takes them down:

FREEZE FRAME on the first man, getting shot in the stomach.

SUPER: SPLAT!

FREEZE FRAME on the second man, stumbling back and starting to fall after being shot in the neck.

SUPER: WHAM!

FREEZE FRAME on the third thug, his head wrenching back as he's shot in the head, blood spurting out.

SUPER: KA-POW!!

And the Crimson Bolt moves toward the ranch looming in front of him.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Jacques stares at Abe. Mr. Range hurtles down the stairs, half-dressed, holding onto his gun.

JACQUES

Mr. Range, listen, go back upstairs.
Everything's fine. We've got it
under control.

MR. RANGE

What is it?!

JACQUES

It's just this guy. He's a -- a
fruitcake. He's this joker running
around calling himself the Crimson
Bolt.

MR. RANGE

You're siccing the fucking Crimson
Bolt on me?! What the fuck's wrong
with you?! Pack up, boys.

Mr. Range's men start packing up the equipment.

JACQUES

No, listen, you don't get it.
He's just this crazy guy. I mean,
it's funny. Right, Abe?

ABE

(not convinced)

Yeah.

EXT. GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt walks between the flames and the fallen men writhing on the ground, approaching the ranch house. This is a not the bumbling costumed man from his early escapades, but a demon straight from hell. Frank has given himself over completely to whatever this ugly calling might be. As he passes the prostrate men, he shoots them each again, making sure they're dead.

One THUG pleads:

THUG 2

I don't want to die.

The Crimson Bolt blasts him twice.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Mr. Range and his boys move toward the door.

JACQUES

He's just some guy who's wife I boned! You can't do this. I took a lot of fucking time setting this up. Mr. Range. 'Sir.' Fucking asshole, are you listening or what?!

Mr. Range ignores this whelp while he opens the door for his boys.

MR. RANGE

Move.

Jacques grabs Abe's gun.

ABE

Jacques...

Jacques aims at Range and pulls the trigger, but the gun doesn't fire. He fiddles with it.

JACQUES

Where's the fucking safety?!

Jacques finds it. Mr. Range turns toward him. Jacques pulls the trigger again, shooting him. He falls over, dead. Jacques then shoots Range's Bodyguard, who is holding the briefcase full of money.

ABE

Oh, fuck.

JACQUES

We had a fucking deal. Nobody can blame me for this. I'm just doing what's fair.

Jacques grabs the briefcase, and heads upstairs.

JACQUES

If that motherfucker gets up here, Abe, I swear to God, you're fired.

Abe and Mike are left alone.

Through one of the windows they see the Scientist-Types getting into a SUV and taking off. They watch as the SUV screeches down the driveway.

Something lands on the SUV's roof. And the SUV EXPLODES.

Abe and Mike stare in shock.

EXT. GROUNDS

The Crimson Bolt climbs a tree: a hood's dead body is tied to his back.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Mike and Abe hide behind pieces of furniture, and point their guns at the open front door, waiting.

EXT. RANCH ROOF

The Crimson Bolt takes a small leap off the tree and to the roof of the ranch.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Abe and Mike hear something CREAKING. It's the roof.

MIKE

He's up there. Oh God, man. This is fucked up.

ABE

Shut up, Mike.

EXT. RANCH ROOF

The Crimson Bolt ties his bolt-rope to a chimney -- the other end is tied to the dead body.

INT. RANCH FOYER

Abe and Mike hear more CREAKING. They're sweating, nervous, waiting.

Suddenly, GLASS SHATTERS beside them, as a body comes swinging through.

Mike and Abe swirl toward it. They blast at it wildly...

Until they realize it's just a dead body, dangling outside the window.

Abe sees a note tied around the dead man's neck. He approaches it, grabs it. It's written in blood.

"BEHIND YOU."

Abe and Mike wheel around to see the Crimson Bolt, who has swung down to a window frame on the other side of the house. He shoots Mike in the neck. Mike falls over, blood spurting like a fountain.

The Crimson Bolt leaps inside. He and Abe move toward each other, SHOUTING and shooting at each other.

They hit each other in the arms. But they continue shooting until they both run out of bullets.

The Crimson Bolt lunges toward Abe, grabbing him.

The two men grapple on the floor. They tear at each others' eyes and faces like animals.

The Crimson Bolt gets a hold of Abe's head. He slams it against a heavy piece of furniture until Abe's body falls limp, and dead.

The Crimson Bolt looks around.

FRANK

Sarah!

He sees the stairs. He grabs the rail and starts up them.

INT. JACQUES' UPSTAIRS HALLWAY

The Crimson Bolt wanders down the hallway.

FRANK

Sarah!... Sarah!

Jacques appears out of the bedroom, holding Sarah. He throws her onto the floor.

JACQUES

Here, man. Here you go. You want her? Here. You win.

The Crimson Bolt looks at Jacques, then at Sarah. Her mouth is swollen, bleeding.

JACQUES

I didn't do that. That was that fat nigger downstairs. I took care of him, all right? Guess that sort of makes me like your assistant now, huh? Ha. All right. Take her.

The Crimson Bolt walks to Sarah. He offers her his hand. She glances up at him, and starts WEEPING.

SARAH

Frank. I'm sorry.

She takes his hand.

FRANK

You're okay, pumpkin.

Jacques pulls a gun from the back of his belt and he shoots The Crimson Bolt in the side. The Crimson Bolt falls to the floor. Sarah SCREAMS, covering her face, crying.

JACQUES

What do you think you are, some fucking hero?!

Jacques shoots him again. The Bolt SHOUTS in pain.

SARAH

No!!

JACQUES

Keep kidding yourself, you stupid son-of-a-bitch! This isn't about good and evil. This is about I had her and you didn't.

Jacques walks directly over the Crimson Bolt, and presses his gun to the Bolt's skull.

JACQUES

This is about she loved me more,
you cocksucker, because I'm fucking
interesting.

FRANK

Shut up, crime.

The Crimson Bolt hits a button on his elbow. A blade flies up from his forearm -- he's been wearing the projectile blade device all along -- and imbeds itself between Jacques' legs.

Jacques SCREAMS. He topples backward.

JACQUES

Oh, fuck! Oh, fuck! Oh, Jesus!
Oh no no no no no.

The Crimson Bolt pulls a hunting knife from his belt. He grabs Jacques under the chin, pinning him against the wall, and aims the knife at him. Sarah watches, hyperventilating and half-covering her eyes. Jacques SOBS.

JACQUES

What are you going to do?! Fucking execute me for my sins?! Don't think you're fucking better than me, you fucking psycho! You almost killed people for butting in line!

FRANK

You don't butt in line! You don't sell drugs! You don't have sex with little children! You don't profit from the misery of others! The rules were set a long time ago! They don't change! People don't have any responsibility!!

JACQUES

Just take her then! You stabbing me to death isn't going to change the world!

FRANK

I can't know that... for sure... unless I try.

We PULL BACK as the Crimson Bolt stabs Jacques again.
And again. And again.

FADE TO:

INT. RANCH FOYER - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt comes down the stairwell, carrying Sarah in his arms, falling against the wall for support.

EXT. GROUNDS - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt walks out of the house cradling Sarah. The fires are dying out around them.

Sarah looks up at the Crimson Bolt. Her eyes are filled with tears.

SARAH

I knew you'd save me.

Sarah falls back to sleep.

The Crimson Bolt sets her into the passenger seat of the remaining SUV.

The Crimson Bolt picks up Libby's body. He sets her in the rear of the SUV. He uses a newspaper to wipe blood off her forehead. He leans against the car, and weeps.

INT. SUV - MOMENTS LATER

The Crimson Bolt, spattered with blood, drives while Sarah sleeps.

FRANK (V.O.)

So maybe you think there's something wrong with me. Maybe you thought I was going to learn what Jacques said was true. That I was deluded. That I was as evil as the rest of them.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - MORNING

The Crimson Bolt lies Sarah down on the bed. He pulls the covers up around her.

FRANK (V.O.)
But maybe you're the one that needs
to learn something. I know how it
looks.

INT. FRANK'S BATHROOM - LATER

Frank washes the blood from his face.

FRANK (V.O.)
But sometimes how it looks and how
it is are two different things.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - DAY

Sarah stitches up Frank.

FRANK (V.O.)
The truth was in my heart. I
followed it. And I saved Sarah.

BLACK

FRANK (V.O.)
She stayed with me a couple months.

EXT. FRANK'S BACKYARD - DAY

Frank and Sarah garden a small, crappy garden together.

FRANK (V.O.)
They were not bad times.

INT. FRANK'S FAMILY ROOM - NIGHT

Sarah sits on the couch, holding Frank's head in her lap.

FRANK (V.O.)
Though they were most likely out
of Sarah's sense of obligation.

INT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - DAY

Frank reads a "Dear Frank" letter from Sarah, without
tears or histrionics.

FRANK (V.O.)
But one morning, she moved on.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Frank looks up at the pages on his wall, reading, "*SOME OF GOD'S CHILDREN ARE CHOSEN.*"

FRANK (V.O.)

I thought it was me at the time,
that I was the chosen one.

FLASHBACK -- INT. DINER KITCHEN - DAY

Frank looks through the kitchen window into the diner. Sarah is there, in a waitress uniform, wiping off a table.

FRANK (V.O.)

But it was Sarah all along. And
that's why I needed to save her.

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Sarah pays attention in class as a PROFESSOR puts notes on the board.

FRANK (V.O.)

She needed to finish school, to
study anthropology, because Sarah
knows something about people.

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sarah is a speaker at an AA meeting, shy and humble. The other members look at her, listening intently.

FRANK (V.O.)

She needed to go back to her
meetings, where she had insights
that struck others uniquely.

INT. SARAH'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sarah shifts in her sleep, sweating.

FRANK (V.O.)

And sometimes she needed to have
nightmares of those ugly times at
Jacques' ranch.

PAN TO SARAH'S NEW HUSBAND beside her. He tentatively reaches out his hand, and places it on her head.

FRANK (V.O.)

Because a kind man, a man who was good and didn't know it, needed to learn how to comfort someone.

Sarah wakes. Her husband strokes her hair.

EXT. SARAH'S BACKYARD - DAY

FOUR CUTE KIDS GIGGLE and hop through a sprinkler. Sarah and her husband splash and play along.

FRANK (V.O.)

And maybe most of all Sarah needed to have Patrick, and Trevor, and Laura, and Joy. Four children who probably wouldn't be at all if Libby and I hadn't gone to Jacques' ranch that night.

EXT. FRANK'S KITCHEN - DAY

Frank finds a postcard from Sarah in his mail. On the postcard are drawings from Sarah's kids, including one of "Uncle Frank," and an earth with the words "World Peace."

FRANK (V.O.)

Maybe, if all of us are lucky, they're the ones who are going to change the world.

INT. FRANK'S BEDROOM - DAY

Frank sits on the edge of his bed, staring forward.

FRANK (V.O.)

And me?

The lop-eared Bunny walks up on the bed, nuzzling Frank's hip.

FRANK (V.O.)

Well, I got that rabbit after all.

Frank pets him while still staring forward.

FRANK (V.O.)

That, and something much more.

REVEAL the bedroom wall in front of Frank. It is now completely covered with cartoons of perfect moments from Frank's life:

The Crimson Bolt carrying Sarah, and she's saying, "I knew you'd save me."

Frank and Libby laughing as they ride shopping carts at the gun show.

Frank purchasing the bunny.

Frank and Hamilton watching a movie.

And dozens more.

Frank stares at the wall. His eyes are wet with tears. He smiles.

FADE OUT.

END