

THE Z

by

WH Clark

THE Z

FADE IN:

INT. V.A. HOSPITAL - THERAPIST'S OFFICE - DAY

ZAJAX (45, longish-brown hair) sits opposite DR. SICILY (65, petite, buxom) in a sparsely furnished office.

Regression therapy via HYPNOSIS - swinging medallion.
Metronome. Subdued CLICK. CLICK.

Zajax resists.

DR. SICILY
Naval Academy dropout, decorated
Marine - scared of a little old
gold medallion?

Zajax stares at an ego frame on one wall - two silver
Colonel's eagles (blackened from tarnish). Marine Corps
combat mission photos. Sundry memorabilia.

ZAJAX
Locked up? Confronted with idiotic
rules - has-been tech. If you
wanted me to feel like I'm back in
the Corps. Well - it's working.

Zajax stares at the long, wide "US MARINE CORPS" ID Badge
Holder Lanyard around her neck.

Finally, his eyes focus on the swinging pendulum, and his
expression goes blank.

MINUTES LATER

Zajax stares blankly at the gold pendulum, swinging slowly in
sync with the metronome. He holds a Teddy Bear to his chest.

ZAJAX
Here I am, The Z, going out on
missions, to collect the damned, to
haul them back to Hell.

He's drenched in sweat, clutching the teddy bear fiercely.

DR. SICILY
Returning with your captive - to
where? Hell has many names.
(quiet, suggestive)
Maybe to the psych ward. Yes?

ZAJAX

No. No. NO. After years on the job -
years. I was a top gun. Satan's
left-hand man. Then. I escaped.
From Hell.

DR. SICILY

Every patient fantasizes about
escaping from the psych ward.
(gently)
I dream about escaping this place
myself sometimes. Normal people?

LATER STILL

Zajax is frantic. In a blind panic. Clothes disheveled. Belt
buckle undone.

ZAJAX

I'm public enemy number one. I'm
their whole thirteen most-wanted
list. They're coming for me.

Dr. Sicily snaps her fingers. No response. Claps her hands.

DR. SICILY

Eagle base to ground dog. Do you
read me? Report.

Dr. Sicily grabs Zajax by the shoulders. Shakes him, hard.
Slaps his face, again - harder.

ZAJAX

Cover blown. On the run. Satan -
they're hauling me back to Hell's
Kitchen for eternal K.P. duty.

With a scream of abject horror, Zajax snaps out of it. Sits
up straight. Eyes wide - terror on his face.

His eyes come to focus - on two burly nurses, pushing his
arms into a straitjacket.

INT. VA HOSPITAL - PADDED CELL - DAY

Dr. Sicily (hair tussled, shirt half unbuttoned) ZIPS Zajax
out of the straitjacket. Exits the room. Locks the door
behind her. THROWS A BOLT for double security.

Zajax looks down. A teddy bear in his lap: the head's ripped
off. There's stuffing all over his clothes. Zajax grabs the
head and tries to reattach it.

ZAJAX

Oh, God. I'm sorry, little buddy.

Zajax looks down. Sees his pants unbuckled. Slowly, does the buckle, a quizzical look on his face.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

What happened? Oh, no. Not again.
Enough already.

The padded cell is empty. He tries the door - locked. He tries the window - locked.

He looks out the window - he's four floors high. He slinks back into the room and sits down, depressed.

LIGHTNING and THUNDER rock the rafters.

The power goes out. THE WINDOW LOCK CLICKS. Zajax tiptoes over. Tries the window - it opens.

Zajax studies the curtains - yanks them - pulls the cord - tests it for strength.

MINUTES LATER

A psych nurse enters the room with a flashlight. The room's empty. The window's open. The curtain's removed.

The curtains were made into a makeshift rope. She looks out. Screams. Runs out of the room.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER BRIDGE - ESTABLISHING - DAY

A hawk perches high on the rugged bridge structure as a freight train zips through the steel trellis below.

On a parallel bridge two hundred feet away, CARS RIP BY a beat-up old yellow, 2-door Jeep Wrangler, cruising on the busy interstate. Zajax is driving.

An ominous wedge of dark clouds moves in with steady LIGHTNING and gale-force gusts. THUNDER ROLLS across the landscape in waves.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI - VICKSBURG - MONTAGE

- The yellow Jeep drives down a rural road along a levee, where workers pile sandbags along an embankment.

RADIO (V.O.)

A massive storm system just popped
up out of nowhere.

- Zajax surveys a sprawling Civil War cemetery. A front-end loader is exhuming graves in a low-lying section, moving the graves to higher ground.

RADIO (V.O.)

Severe thunderstorms are expected
throughout Warren County.

- Zajax's yellow Wrangler drives past the cemetery, down a steep hill, through deep water on a low spot in the road, and into a well-kept neighborhood.

RADIO (V.O.)

A red-flag hurricane warning is
posted for the Mississippi River.
All river traffic has been ordered
to port. Make it so, sailors.

- Zajax turns off onto a country lane leading up a hill.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - DAY

Zajax bustles across a small yard carved out of an ivy-covered hillside, fighting FIERCE GUSTS of STRONG WIND.

He walks with a peculiar gait. One arm is bent oddly at the elbow, as if from a broken bone badly set.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - DAY

Zajax steps through the front door. OSCAR the cat (one eye, chubby, black and white, crooked tail) is there. Flat on her back. Feet in the air. Tongue out.

(Cats are so dramatic.)

Zajax rushes to pick her up - hugs her for dear life, rocking her in his arms.

ZAJAX

Oh, man. The V.A. had me so drugged
up I plumb forgot.

Zajax holds Oscar out - studying her rigid torso.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

She's still warm. Just now croaked.

Tears gush down his cheeks. He hustles around, gets a small wicker basket. Fills it with scraps of warm cloth. Puts Osgat the cat gently inside. Heads for the front door.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
There's a big cemetery on the other
side of the river. Sob.

EXT. MISSISSIPPI RIVER DELTA - DAY

Zajax's yellow Jeep tools over the Mississippi River bridge. Turns onto a winding rural road. Heads toward a white Church down the road - giant cemetery - slows down.

EXT./INT. LOUISIANA - JAHOVAH'S TAXYDERMEE - DAY

Zajax steps out with the basket and heads into what's little more than a shed on a farm (pigs, chickens - a donkey). He knocks on the door and a BUBBA (VERY BIG) opens it.

ZAJAX
Excuse me, but. Did you know - to
name a business after the good Lord
is bad luck, much less to -
(seeing Bubba)
It spelt just fine. Honest.

Bubba is a huge feller, and not from body fat but pure, unadulterated muscle. Ex-professional tackle. But gentle as a pillow of down feathers - with a booming deep voice.

Bubba takes the basket and heads inside. He puts it down on a workbench (surrounded by stuffed deer, rabbits, raccoons - a bear.) Zajax makes himself comfortable on a ragged old sofa.

BUBBA
Say, mister. This feline's still
warm.

ZAJAX
Cranked up the heat in the Jeep.
She's always cold as - oh, man. I
forgot she was.

Bubba takes Oscar gently out of the basket. Sets her on a heavy wooden workbench, on all fours - standing straight.

Zajax slumps back on the sofa, fighting to stay awake - losing the battle.

Zajax is snoring in short order.

A giant gutting knife in his meaty hand, Bubba turns toward the bench. STARTS: Oscar's hair is stood up straight like she's scared half to death.

Bubba scratches his head. He washes his hands at a filthy-dirty sink - turns: Oscar's reeled back, teeth bared - still not moving - crooked tail up high and angry.

Bubba takes a step back. Turns away. Slowly, turns back: Oscar's one eye is squeezed shut. Same angry pose.

Bubba sets the knife down. Opens up a cabinet. Pours himself a stiff whiskey. He throws it back in one gulp. He turns: Oscar's gone.

Bubba drains the bottle. Looks - Oscar's curled up in Zajax's lap, the both of them appearing to be sound asleep.

Full fed-up and half-scared, Bubba RINGS A GIANT GONG. In steps an ornery DONKEY.

Bubba points. Said critter backs up toward Zajax, looking ready to kick the senses right out of Zajax's prone figure.

Bubba RINGS THE GONG again. Zajax startles awake and sees Oscar in his arms. He's elated.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Oh, my God. Thanks, dude. She looks
so realistic - still warm, too.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Out of my house, mister. Go.

Bubba points. Zajax sees where he's pointing, focuses on DONKEY HOOVES a short STRIKE from his groin.

Zajax backs out of the room, kow-towing repeatedly.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
God bless you, sir. God bless you.

Hugging Oscar, Zajax smiles big. Turns. Scurries out.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - COBBLESTONE DRIVEWAY - DAY

Zajax's yellow pickup pulls up the driveway, radio blaring.

RADIO (V.O.)
Funnel clouds have been sighted.
Four of them - it's a veritable
wall of terror. Four - horrors.

Zajax carries Oscar across the yard. Puts her on a picnic table, sitting so she can watch him work in the yard. He pauses to scratch her thick fur, studying the dark sky.

ZAJAX

There was always a tornado when I
dropped out of the fifth dimension
on a collection mission.

Oscar expression seems to change. Imperceptably.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

My mind says it never happened, but
the body ain't so sure.

Zajax looks up at a SHRILL SHRIEK from a HAWK, caught in a swirl of wind, spiraling upward into the menacing sky.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Always gave me extreme spatial
disorientation, the hyper-jumps. I
am so not going to upchuck. I'm
here, now, all is good and fine.

Zajax leans way back to follow the hawk. Suddenly, he winces from extreme pain in his lower back. Nursing the pull in his back, Zajax hobbles toward a two-story house dug into the hillside.

Zajax stops at the front door. Opens the mailbox. Rips open one envelope. He reads it, hands shaking violently.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Surrender yourself, Sergeant Zajax,
and it all stops. Signed, V.A.

Fighting back fury, Zajax steps inside. Slams the door behind him. Shortly, he hustles out and gets Oscar.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Yes, sir. I'll be right there.
Lickety-split. Bastards.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Zajax stands in the foyer - stares at Oscar, perched nearby on a sofa.

ZAJAX

Goddamned pencil-pushers at the
V.A., trying to sell me on
permanent residency on their psych
ward, room six six six. Ouch.

Zajax finds a wool throw, pucks Oscar up. Settles her down.

EXT. VICKSBURG - RIVER REGION MEDICAL CENTER - DAY

The hawk flies high above the Mississippi River, eyeing a large, raucous assembly of people on the eastern bank.

RADIO (V.O.)

El Ron Luzifer, the billionaire, is
in town to plug his health plan,
True Care, which is targeted at all
us poor and unwashed masses.

The crowd is at the "RIVER REGION MEDICAL COMPLEX," perched on chalk cliffs overlooking the Mississippi River. It starts raining. Umbrellas pop open like mushrooms.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Listening to the radio, Zajax cooks on a gas stove.

RADIO (V.O.)

True Care has a contract with the
Veterans Administration,
outsourcing work from the V.A.'s
overcrowded hospital network.

Zajax grabs a pill bottle. Pops a couple of ORANGE PILLS.

ZAJAX

If I had a plug nickel for every
time I hit the ground after a trans-
dimensional vortex jump. Boom.
Joints still feeling the pain. Talk
to me here, body.

Zajax pours steaming-hot veggies into a bowl. Grabs the bowl. Strolls into the next room. A baby grand piano sits quietly across the way.

DOWNSTAIRS DEN

The shadowy space has tall ceilings and floor-to-ceiling books. Oscar lounges in her favorite chair. The same pose.

ZAJAX

(toward Oscar)

Got you scared stiff, too?

Zajax glances out a nearby window. The neighborhood is spread out on rolling hills below. Rain pours down in buckets.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
 O.M.G. There I go again. All that
 Hell and mayhem. Ouch.
 (fierce determination)
 Shut the F up, body. Stop that.

Zajax steps over to feed tropical fish in a giant aquarium.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
 You guys are lucky. You can only
 remember the last thirty seconds.
 One trip around the aquarium and
 Shazam. It's a whole new world.

Zajax picks corn out of his bowl. Puts the kernels on a
 plate. Sets the plate in front of Oscar. Old habit.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
 Oscar? You remember anything from
 your missions in Hell? Anything at
 all? A little help here. All those
 bad cats you collared?

Zajax settles into a comfy sofa chair. He channel surfs on a
 large flat-screen TV.

ON TV - SERIES OF SHOTS

- Oscar's silhouette (having turned, a new pose now) stares
 at the TV monitor.

CAT CHANNEL ANNOUNCER
 A recent study reveals cats have
 seven levels of sleep.

- The channel changes. A local news program shows drug
 addicts languishing in rehab.

LOCAL NEWS ANNOUNCER
 V.A. psych wards are on high alert.
 Severe weather always awakens the
 most traumatic past memories.

- The Psychology Channel shows images of patients moping
 around a psych ward at various activities.

PSYCHOLOGY CHANNEL ANNOUNCER
 Inflation - high energy prices -
 high everything prices. Now severe
 weather knocks out the power.
 Wholesale acts of random violence
 ensue. Break-ins, robberies - of
 food, essentials, medical supplies.

- CNN shows a collage of "SIGN UP 4 TRU CARE" signs outside hospitals around the nation.

CNN ANNOUNCER

Riot police have to protect
hospitals from looters and wannabe
patients. Yay. Free food. Clean
sheets. It's on Uncle Sam, y'all.

- Riot police blocking looters from luxury downtown stores.

ZAJAX

The V.A. will be so busy, they'll
forget all about me. Theoretically.

BACK TO SCENE

Zajax opens a battered old Vietnam-era travel trunk (his
"coffee table"). Pulls out a bundle of military clothes.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Dr. Sicily says I'm just riddled
with guilt, all the past evils I
done. What does she know I don't?

Zajax puts on combat fatigues. Shiny black Airborne boots.
Dog tags. An ammo bandolier goes across his chest.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Communists in Vietnam? Laos?
Nothing but wannabe socialists. Get
with the program, Sergeant Zajax.

Zajax dons an orange beret at a rakish angle. He sits down
for supper. He shares tidbits with Oscar. Watching the news.

ON TV - BUSINESS NEWS NETWORK

A panoramic view of The Hill is followed by an inside shot of
members of Congress voting on a bill. Superimposed on the
live action is an image of LUZIFER (75, fat, shaggy blond).

CNN ANCHOR

Mr. Luzifer has been subpoenaed by
Congress. Disabled veterans claim
the high True Care surcharges are
killing them. Literally.

BACK TO SCENE

Zajax backs away from the TV, suddenly afraid and paranoid.

ZAJAX

Congress shouldn't have done that.
Don't you even get Luzifer angry.
(quietly)
If you think the weather is scary
now. Crank up the volume.

ON TV - A WEATHER CHANNEL

The "WEATHER LADY" (50, pregnant, shiny TV makeup) indicates an ominous hurricane over the Mississippi River delta region.

WEATHER LADY

We're in for a thousand-year
rainfall, ten inches per hour or
more. Head for the high ground
while you still can, people.

Live coverage zooms in on the storm front just south of Vicksburg, near a sprawling nuclear power plant.

WEATHER LADY (CONT'D)

FEMA has started an emergency
shutdown of the Grand Gulf Nuclear
Power Plant, twenty miles south of
Vicksburg. Chernobyl two point oh.

Zajax yanks out an M-60 Machine Gun. Throws it down on the coffee table. Tears down the M-60, pumped with adrenalin.

ZAJAX

I told you, people. Look how the
weather is escalating. It's
Satanimbus cumulobeelzebub.

ZERO DARK THIRTY

Zajax's head bobs up and down, half-asleep in an easy chair. The M-60 (fully assembled) rests in his lap.

Oscar is near her empty bowl, patiently waiting for food.

A light behind a NOISY CEILING FAN throws shadows across an authentic, battle-worn Confederate flag hanging on the wall.

Zajax, unshaven, has scruffy hair growth on his chin now.

ON TV - WEATHER CHANNEL

The screen shows a wavy shot of the Weather Lady, with heavy interference.

WEATHER LADY

A Category Four hurricane just hit the Gulf Coast. It'll be here in a day or so. Spawning tornadoes, tornadoes. tornadoes everywhere.

A baby grand piano waits quietly across the room.

WEATHER LADY (CONT'D)

A waterspout hit the nuclear reactor at Grand Gulf. sucked up some radioactivity into the atmosphere. evacuations. martial law until sunrise.

Zajax begins snoring.

EXT. RIVER REGION HOSPITAL - DAY

Luzifer steps toward a large, striped campaign-type tent. HAMLETT (60, Black, ex-linebacker, balding, deep Southern accent) walks beside Luzifer, working through the crowd.

LUZIFER

Does this place smell like crap or what?

HAMLETT

It's the clean air, sir. No pollution. No smoke. No raging fires of eternal damnation.

Luzifer shakes hands with PAPASITA (45, Hispanic).

PAPASITA

What about illegal immigrants? If we can enlist, vote, and serve on juries, we deserve free healthcare.

LUZIFER

Half of all new births in America are stupid, low-income deplorables - like you. I lose millions on those terrible births. Billions.

A SONIC BOOM THUNDERCLAPS in the distance, rolling slowly over the crowd. The crowd is briefly FROZEN IN PLACE.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

Trace that sonic boom. Quick.

BUTCH (53, flattop, white priest's collar) steps out of a black limo, drawing the freeze (very fast) on a steno pad.

Luzifer glances at the black limo. Hiding the pad, Butch darts back into the limo, ever the inconspicuous Witness.

The FREEZE ends. The crowd goes into motion again.

Bodyguards with "SSS" pins on their lapels form a phalanx and plow Luzifer and Hamlett through the crowd to Butch's limo.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
 Victory disease. Win the vote and
 now you expect everything on a
 silver platter. Fucking free.

Several people throw ROTTEN FRUIT. Cops grab them, handcuff them, and haul them away. Luzifer huddles close to Hamlett.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
 Tell me you got a read on that
 sonic boom.

A SQUALL LINE BLOWS toward the gathering from across the mile-wide river, spawning a SPATE of WATERSPOUTS.

HAMLETT
 Nothing definite, sir. This
 hellacious weather is interfering
 with our reception.

It starts to rain hard, a TORRENTIAL DOWNPOUR.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
 Sir? Can you tone it down a little?
 I mean we're all pissed off at this
 Zajax character - but weather
 extremes like this might tip him
 off.

LUZIFER
 You're right. I didn't realize.
 Haven't been on a mission in - wow,
 millennia.

HAMLETT
 At least we know he's not
 completely human yet. Otherwise, he
 wouldn't break the sound barrier
 when he falls asleep.

Everybody runs for their vehicles.

ALMOST EVERYBODY.

A clutch of well-dressed businessmen remains behind, huddling around Papasita.

PAPASITA

No Medicare prescription plan? Poor babies. Papasita has *el cheapo* Mexico drugs to make all your aches and pains go away. Cartel special.

Papasita passes out small Ziploc bags full of white powder in exchange for rolls of cash.

With no more customers, Papasita hurries away - toting a big camera case on a shoulder strap. He stops at the tree line. Turns. Unpacks a Single Lens Reflex camera.

Papasita screws on a giant telephoto lens. Focuses on Luzifer and his bodyguards leaving the rally.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - DEN - NIGHT

Zajax (scruffy beard growth, which grows steadily as the days roll on) snoozes before the TV. Oscar is asleep on his lap.

ON TV - THE WEATHER CHANNEL

The screen shows a live image of a hurricane spinning in the Gulf of Mexico, heading for the Mississippi-Louisiana border.

WEATHER LADY

Breaking news. Hurricane Fury is now a Cat Five. The National Guard is. First deaths. Batten down the hatches y'all.

BACK TO SCENE

A CUCKOO clock SQUAWKS - stops in mid-squawk.

Zajax wakes up. He can't move his body. He can roll his eyes: The aquarium fish are fixed in space.

Aquarium bubbles don't rise.

The RAGING STORM outside is quiet as a church mouse.

Just as suddenly, everything goes fluid again.

Zajax jumps up, and in one liquid motion, he sets Oscar gently aside and hoists the M-60 into a firing position.

ZAJAX

High-value targets like us? They'll send Team Zyklon. Bad news bears.

EXT./INT. RIVER REGION HOSPITAL - SECURITY DETAIL - DAY

Bodyguards hustle Luzifer toward a line of black Humvees. The vehicles are marked, "SHAITAN'S SECRET SERVICE."

LUZIFER

Status report.

They reach a black limo. Hamlett shoves Luzifer inside, then stands at the open door to take a quick survey of the area.

HAMLETT

Only a probable cause. Slippery read. But we knew that already.

(quietly)

He may even have rigged up some kind of early warning system.

Scanning the environs, Hamlett is deeply concerned. Still frowning, he ducks into the limo and pulls the door closed.

INT. EXECUTIVE LIMO - LATE AFTERNOON

They drive through the raging storm. A police motorcycle escort ahead. Several black Humvees behind.

Blinking lights and SIRENS everywhere.

HAILSTORMS pummel the vehicle, sounding like GUNFIRE.

Butch drives stiffly. His hands grip the wheel so hard his knuckles are white.

TUCSON (40, Asian, curvy, sensual) squirms in the passenger seat, massaging her boobs - groin - desperate for action.

TUCSON

Had zero sex since The Z escaped.
His Fucking Majesty has had me
locked up - hands tied.

In the back seat, Luzifer stares out at the desperately poor cityscape, visible in intermittent flashes of lightning.

HAMLETT

Tucson's a caged tiger waiting to
jump his bones. Brilliant plan.

LUZIFER

I'm kaking no chances. Nobody's
ever escaped from Hell before. Bad
for my reputation. Real bad.

HAMLETT

It's gonna be tricky, sir. With
God's Witness onboard.

LUZIFER

I turned Michael, didn't I? God's
most powerful Archangel. Star of
the heavens. Who's this - Z?

HAMLETT

Rumors flying on the Dark Web, Sir.
The old Leviathan erudition?
(quietly)
Fearsome ancient warrior haunting
all three time dimensions. Scary.

They stare out the window - as LIGHTNING STRIKES (shape of
GOD'S AVENGING HAND) nearby.

They both jump.

LUZIFER

Subtle reminder from the Almighty.
Every time you do the freeze thing
gives him another Wildcard to play.

Hamlett, deathly afraid, stares out the window.

EXT. - A STORMY VICKSBURG - RIVER ROAD - MONTAGE

- Different hotel/casinos on either side of the River Road
advertise "LUZIFER'S TRUE CARE IS HELL CARE," and "NO HEALTH
CARE DEATH PANELS."

LUZIFER (O.S.)

Did you read Succubus the riot act?

TUCSON

The only way to take The Z down is
if he dies by his own hand.

- The limo drives slowly around a broad curve in the River
Road and up onto the top of the levee.

LUZIFER (O.S.)

His only vulnerability is - you.
Two hundred Earth years watching
porno flicks? I'm assuming -

- The swollen river is mere feet away, whipped by gale-force
winds into whitecaps.

TUCSON

I was a sex therapist. Sir.

- Papasita stands at the curb as the Shaitan's Secret Service caravan of Humvees inches by. He stands next to a bright orange "Detour" sign, SNAPPING PHOTOS of the motorcade.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

It's not as if I didn't already
know all the tricks of my trade.

- There's a raggedly old black hound dog by Papasita's side.

INT. EXECUTIVE LIMO - FRONT SEAT - NIGHT

Butch turns, following a "DETOUR" sign (held by Papasita).

TUCSON

The V.A.'s report to True Care says
they had him on psychotic meds.
Mixed with a nitric oxide inhibitor
to cure his meat. Until he escaped.

The city lights go out. All is dark but for steady lightning.
Flashing lights on the convoy's police escort.

HAMLETT

His Jehovah will be waking up soon.
He's unlocked now - loaded with
spunk, girl. Game boy.

Up ahead is a major road construction site with giant earth-moving equipment milling around in the downpour, trying to control water runoff.

TUCSON

Just get him to bleeding. Knife
wound. Gunshot. Step on a rusty
nail. Cut his jugular shaving.
Hemorrhoids. Leave the rest to me.

The road is boxed in by railroad tracks to the east and the mile-wide river to the west. A RED PROXIMITY ALARM SOUND, flashing brightly on the dashboard.

They plow into muddy water. It rushes across the road. Crests over the hood. Butch HITS THE BRAKES.

HAMLETT

Don't stop - we'll drown. Punch it.

A FUNNEL CLOUD SWEEPS across the horizon, wiping out the levee. Unleashing a huge wall of water!

Their Humvee escort gets pushed off the road. They disappear in the raging Mississippi River. Which is - right there.

TUCSON

Left. Turn left - here. There's higher ground. Can you see it? There. F the collateral damages.

Butch steers like a racing car driver. Careens around debris in the road. BUMPS PEOPLE off the road. Animals. THUMP. THUMP. He swerves to miss - cars - piles of tree limbs.

Luzifer and Hamlett look out the rear window: A HUGE WAVE OF WATER washes away all the vehicles behind them.

HAMLETT

Higher - get to higher ground.

Butch spins the wheel. Leaves the road. Plows through RUSHING WATER. Down a gravel road.

They ease up to higher ground and roll through a grove of trees and into a clearing.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

Langley never did know how to navigate up country.

Butch turns the headlights on high: Neat rows of white Civil War-era grave markers stretch as far as the eye can see.

TUCSON

We just violated a national cemetery.

Butch (very upset) heads toward a wrought-iron gate, driving across hundreds of tombstones. THUMP. THUMP. THUMP.

EXT. VICKSBURG - RIVER ROAD SUBDIVISION - NIGHT

The limo's lights move down a narrow road. Most homes are deep in muddy river water. There's only one house, high on a hill, with the lights still on.

The limo pulls to a stop at the base of a steep driveway.

Tucson and Butch exit the limo. She finds the house on a GPS navigation map on her cellphone.

TUCSON

The Z makes his last stand. On the old Jeff Davis place? Priceless.

Luzifer and Hamlett exit the limo.

Butch (mortified) points toward a wall of water washing down the valley toward them (men and their machines tumbling in its turbulent crest).

Luzifer WAVES HIS HAND. Everything FREEZES in time, except for them.

Butch gawks at the SURREAL SPECTACLE: a giant tsunami frozen in place. Tucson PUNCHES Butch back to his senses.

They mosey through the field. Stepping over sundry critters frozen in time. Alligators. Armadillos. Raccoons. Possums. Butch sketches furiously on a pad.

HAMLETT

Listen up, you all. I'm sure The Z will recognize us subconsciously. But we play the True Care gig as long as we can.

LUZIFER

Take your lead from Tucson. This is her gig.

They walk up the driveway, slowly, pausing every few steps.

HAMLETT

Sir? Every time you use that Mister Freeze trick, God gets another Wild Card to play.

LUZIFER

Fuck that shit. Wildcards only count in overtime. We're gonna crush The Z and be back home long before the fat lady pukes.

Luzifer waves his hand and nature un-freezes.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Butch and Tucson ease past a "JEFF DAVIS PLANTATION - NO TRESPASSING sign.

Red SECURITY LASERS along the driveway TRIP one after the other, as they move up the hill.

TUCSON

Here we go, into the Red Light District. Slam my foot on the accelerator.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Butch and Tucson wait for the others to catch up, then lead them by a few paces up the long, steep driveway.

LUZIFER

Small southern towns aren't my
forte. Wide streets, clean air,
quiet neighborhoods. Yuck.

A rugged brick house stands out in the night, bright lights
burning in the windows.

HAMLETT

I grew up in the Delta. Folks are
eighty percent black hereabouts.
And the other twenty percent has
well-stocked gun cabinets.

Hamlett shines his flashlight at the driveway and a skull and
crossbones painted above a sign: "DANGER: KEEP OUT OR DIE."

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

Hunting rifles, night scopes,
shotguns, handguns.

Zajax stands at the top of the driveway, the M-60 balanced on
his shoulder, silhouetted by floodlights behind him.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

Good God - M-60 machine guns.

LUZIFER

Show time, people. We play this
drama by the book. Capiche?
Tucson's the lead Morticia.

Zajax aims the M-60 at Luzifer and his entourage.

ZAJAX

Stop. Right. There.

HAMLETT

Where's your southern hospitality,
mister? We're in the middle of a
raging hurricane, here.

ZAJAK

That's what fleabag hotels are for.

Zajax CHAMBERS a ROUND and takes a bold step forward.

Tucson steals out of the night to Zajax's side. Her weapon's
cold on his temple. Zajax slowly lowers his weapon.

ZAJAX

Well, if it's not mister surrender-
yourself-and-it-all-stops.

Hamlett pulls Luzifer aside. They whisper:

HAMLETT

He made us. Already.

ZAJAX

Of course, I made you. You're from
the V.A. Although. Since when does
anybody in the government work
overtime? .UNCLE. SAM?

LUZIFER

We're from True Care. We love
overtime. The government gives us
double pay and triple benefits.

ZAJAX

Yeah. Just like the Back Ops
merceneries-for-hire in the war
zone. They get ten times the pay -
none of the risk. Zero.

Tucson punches Zajax in the side with her fist. Real hard.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

What if I don't want to go?

TUCSON

Here's your warrant. Aiming at your
spleen, itching to blast away.

Tucson manhandles Zajax violently toward the front door.

ZAJAX

Who are you people? Do I know you?
(to himself)
Itching my memories. Talk about the
ghosts of Halloweens past.

Hamlett and Luzifer stare at a giant CONFEDERATE FLAG
FLAPPING, far above Zajax's house, lit by a spotlight.

HAMLETT

We'll leave a light on for 'ya.
Running on emergency power? Like,
maybe he was expecting us.

Luzifer and Hamlett watch the FLAG RUFFLE in brisk winds, as
Tucson, Butch, and Zajax disappear into the house.

LUZIFER

Makes you feel right at home,
doesn't it? Wasting precious
natural gas like that.

HAMLETT

They still don't celebrate the
Fourth of July in Vicksburg 'cause
that's the day the Rebels finally
surrendered to the damn Yankees.

Luzifer grabs Hamlett's elbow. Pulls him forward.

LUZIFER

We better get a move on and yank
him back down under before he goes
Total Recall.

HAMLETT

Sir, these things take time. If we
push the timeline we'll fail for
sure. Zajax's Rule Number One?

They head for the front door. Disappear inside.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zajax is in a straight-back chair across the room. Butch and
Tucson stand on either side of Zajax. Tucson is wary.

Luzifer and Hamlett collapse on the sofa. But. They've
stained the sofa with their wet, muddy clothes.

ZAJAX

Rude ain't sufficient. You gots to
go and ruin Grandma Davis's antique
sitting sofa. Shame on you.

Zajax pulls a wool blanket from a cedar chest. Opens the
blanket up as if to spread it on the sofa.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

You want me to go back to Alice's
Wonderland? Let's negotiate.

Zajax trips on a cat toy on the floor. Loses his balance.
Tumbles toward Luzifer.

The three agents jump into action.

AWKWARD MOMENTS LATER

Zajax sits in a straight-back chair, wearing a straitjacket. Tucson holds a CATTLE PROD an inch from Zajax's neck, SPITTING blue ELECTRIC SHOCKS, singeing Zajax's skin.

ZAJAX

Get me outta this thing. I'll press charges. File a class action lawsuit. Assault with battery.

The agents stand around Zajax, arms crossed defensively.

LUZIFER

Resisting arrest? Fighting a federal warrant? Book 'em, Dano.

HAMLETT

Give the good nurse a chance. That's me. Sir.

(squatting beside Zajax)

What's your name, Bobby Q? What's with the heavy artillery?

ZAJAX

It's the duty of every Prisoner of War to escape the V.A. psych ward.

Tucson flips through Zajax's mail. She rips open one envelope from "TRU CARE" marked "URGENT."

TUCSON

You didn't sign up for True Care? As wrong in the head as you are?

Zajax struggles in his bindings, in a blind panic.

ZAJAX

You can't commit me. Not without my approval. Or a judge's court order. I got the same rights as they do on T.V.

Hamlett whispers to Luzifer:

HAMLETT

It's working. This hoover is convinced we're from the V.A.

Hamlett hauls Luzifer aside. Luzifer fights him.

LUZIFER

Who can't but hate this jackleg?
His wretched poverty. Let me at
him. I'll put his ducks in a row.

ZAJAX

I said I'd negotiate. Give me
liberty call a couple days each
month to stay here - with. with

Zajax stares at Oscar - melancholy, defeated - distraught.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

You killed my only-est friend in
the world. Oscar. Murder one.

Tucson and Butch hold Luzifer back from strangling Zajax.

TUCSON

Back off. Sir. Show a little
respect for his - dearly departed.

Luzifer struts forward, voice booming:

LUZIFER

The - regional office - in Memphis
warned us about renegade Bogarts
like this one, lurking in the dark,
full of anti-authority venom.

ZAJAX

With Oscar gone. Dead. Stuffed. Got
no reason to come home no more. Go
ahead and taxidermy me, too.

Tears flow down Zajax's cheeks. Luzifer is furious.

LUZIFER

Blood-and-guts diseases I can
handle. Nightmare demons like to
possess this - hillbilly moron?

ZAJAX

Aren't I supposed to be angry?
Isn't that what normal would do?
Grieve for the - just deceased?

LUZIFER

I'll rip your beating heart out and
crush it with my bare teeth.

HAMLETT

(to Luzifer)

Heel, dawg. He's taunting you.

Luzifer SLAMS a fist into the GLASS DOORS on an antique armoire displaying blue china, CRUSHING its contents.

ZAJAX

Hey, Mr. Mephistopheles or whatever your name is - Luzifer. Seen you on the idiot box. What the HELL is a billionaire doing on a house call?

LUZIFER

Shelter from the storm. Cat Five?

ZAJAX

About that storm. I coulda swore the Big Horny was coming for me.

Livid with rage, Luzifer turns shades of red, STEAMING.

Hamlett holds Luzifer back, calmly talking toward Zajax.

HAMLETT

The V.A. normally keeps unsound libidos like yours so doped up on anti-psychotic meds they can't separate reality from delusion.

(oozing calm)

Don't let your sci-fi lusts interfere with your hard reality.

ZAJAX

Always experienced bad weather when we were on a collection mission.

Luzifer grabs Zajax by the neck and shakes him.

Luzifer's hand BURNS Zajax's arm, leaving a RED HAND MARK.

LUZIFER

All the face I lost when you - escaped. People laughed at me. Me. The Master of your Omniverse.

Zajax screams. Luzifer throws him across the room with a superhuman force.

ZAJAX

Boo-hoo. I'm scared. Take me home to the V.A. psych ward. Volleyball with the cute lady nurses. Custard dessert. Horror flicks. Yay.

Straitjacket and all, Zajax lunges toward Luzifer.

Tucson wrestles Zajax back.

TUCSON

Relax, jughead. We're healthcare bounty hunters. Haven't you seen our reality cable T.V. show?

ZAJAX

The folks who bleed you dry with surcharges? Go ahead - sell my house. Take it. I don't want it no more. Not with all the memories here. Of me and Oscar the cat.

Hamlett sits Luzifer down at a game chest with a playing-board surface on top.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Can you at least take me off the nitric oxide inhibitor? I wanna wake up with a boner. Guarantee that, and I'll go with you.

Luzifer opens the chest with a ham fist. They whisper:

LUZIFER

He's playing the psycho vet to the T. Best character actor I ever had on the payroll.

HAMLETT

Your emotions are coloring your reason blind. That's no act. That's bona fide insanity.

Hamlett pulls a pack of playing cards out of the game chest. They have a "HURRICANE FLAG" motif (black square in a bigger square of dark orange).

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

These look like the kill cards used by our Black Ops people in Vietnam - to mark their victims.

ZAJAX

I used them to warn people when was on a mission for - the, Hurricane Commandos. Say - I remember you now. Chopper pilot. First Cav.

LUZIFER

Hamlett's a nurse. Works. For. Me.
(steaming up)
Warn people? How dare you.

Hamlett whispers urgently to Luzifer:

HAMLETT

Will you calm the F down? They all misbehave like this. Throw everything but the farmer's sink at you to see how you react.

Zajax struggles. Tucson ZIPS him out of the STRAITJACKET - then boxes his ears, like a cat playing with a mouse.

TUCSON

Behave yourself, or we'll have to sedate you. And your Jehovah.

Butch sketches furiously, ever the inconspicuous Witness.

ZAJAX

(to Hamlett)

I'll be damned. L.T. Is that you? You haven't aged a day.

HAMLETT

Hurricanes always confuse the dickens out of everybody.

(oozing calm)

Buried a lot of good friends in 'Nam. Best people I've ever known.

ZAJAX

Who wants to kill unless they have to? Not me. Only - normal people. - do that. Murder two.

HAMLETT

Brings a body back, it does.

(quietly)

The killing. The regret. Doesn't that just rip your heart apart, Mr. Zajaz? Not to worry, though. Our meds can make all that go away.

Zajax grabs his head and scratches - deeply troubled.

ZAJAX

Get me out of this Houdini jacket and I'll think on it. About the death. The gore. Shit. It's all coming back. Stop it. Just stop it.

Luzifer pulls out an old leather backgammon set.

LUZIFER

I thought backgammon went out with flat chests and Dolly Parton inflatables.

ZAJAX

Miss Dolly Parton's jugs are real.

Tucson cozies up to Zajax, her hands lifting her breasts.

TUCSON

How could they NOT be real? As real
as any Playboy centerfold. Warm.
Luscious. Inviting. Just the thing
to get your mind off 'Nam. Yes?

Zajax reels back, crawling into a scared, fetal ball.

LUZIFER

Off the meds for a few days. How's
that erectile functioning for ya?

Luzifer throws Oscar off the couch and goes to stomp on her
with his foot.

Zajax wedges his foot behind a GRANDFATHER CLOCK and TUMBLES
it down toward Luzifer.

Defending himself, Luzifer WAVES HIS ARM. Everything slows to
a crawl so that Luzifer can shove the heavy clock aside.

While Zajax is FROZEN in place, Hamlett and Tucson confront
Luzifer: (Nobody notices Butch drawing rapidly on his pad.)

HAMLETT

Stop. That's just the inciting
event to jar his total recall.

TUCSON

We can't let that happen. Sir.

Time goes forward normally. The GRANDFATHER CLOCK CRASHES to
the floor.

Luzifer's foot - falls on - nothing. Confused, Luzifer looks
at his foot, at the floor - at Zajax.

Oscar, on top of a cabinet, watches from across the room.

ZAJAX

Okay. Shit, I give the fuck up. Go
ahead, take me home. Just let me
say goodbye to Oscar. Please.

Butch puts his steno pad away, ever the inconspicuous
Witness.

Zajax goes to where Oscar was on the floor before - startles -
she's not there.

He looks around and spots Oscar on top of the cabinet (her hair is standing on end now). He scratches his scruffy chin.

Zajax grabs Oscar in his arms. He scratches her thick fur until her hair isn't standing on end anymore:

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
(whispering)
Oscar, girl? You there? O.M.G.
You're still warm.

Luzifer confronts Tucson:

LUZIFER
Who said you could take his
restraints off? I will have no
insubordination on my watch.

Luzifer is in full-steam mode now. Small nubs of horns are growing on his forehead. Hamlett hauls him aside, whispering.

HAMLETT
Any more of these supernatural
events and his subconscious will
clue in - and it's game over.

Hamlett and Tucson exchange knowing looks: Hamlett motions his head toward Zajax.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
Damage control. How about a little
T.L.C. to make Mr. Zajax forget all
this Twilight Zone crap.

Tucson rushes over. Grabs Zajax by the hair so hard he winces. Bangs his head against the wall - falls to his knees.

TUCSON
Read my lips, Johnny Cash. We need
hot baths and dry clothes.

ZAJAX
I will not. Not now I won't. Not
after that assault - on Oscar.

TUCSON
Armed and dangerous? M-sixty.
(quietly, seductive)
Got any shots left in your banana
magazine, mister?

ZAJAX
You're. Not. The. Enemy.

Tucson grabs Zajax by the crotch. Haulks him onto his feet. Shoves him forward.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Who me? Afraid of three shrinks and
a steamed-up blow-hard?

TUCSON
I'm the shrink here - dammit - the
clinical - sex. - therapist.

Zajax slinks up a short flight of stairs, muttering:

ZAJAX
Usually, they just send the cops
with an arrest warrant. I sign up
for the judge's anger management
class, and all is forgiven.

Tucson pushes Zajax up the stairs, making him stumble.

UPSTAIRS WEST BEDROOM

Zajax clicks the overhead light on: a large table with a
fancy computer. Podcast equipment. Hundreds of tech books.

ZAJAX
Clean clothes are yonder. Dry.

Tucson hovers as the others search through piles of clothes.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Go ahead, see how the other half
lives... Mostly soft, faded cotton.

TUCSON
Are they the ones you warned with
the Hurricane flag kill cards? The
poor, innocent females?

Zajax studies Tucson carefully.

ZAJAX
Just now noticing how oriental you
are. Throws me back to Saigon town.

Tucson GRABS Zajax by the ear. Slaps his face.

TUCSON
Your file - says you never had the
gumption to be violent toward
females, even when you were out on
mission - I mean, meds.

ZAJAX

Poor ladies. Crying their little hearts out. Homeless. Destitute. Whoring on the streets to make a few lousy greenbacks.

The men find clean clothes and leave. Butch in all black. Hamlett in a loud Hawaiian shirt. Luzifer in blue jeans.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

We done shot dead all their fathers. Husbands. Lovers. Sons. Boom. Dead.

HAMLETT

Leaving poor street lady. She all desperate for hot American G.I. cash - between her legs.

Tucson holds up a sheer blouse to size it up. She glances tentatively at Zajax, her eyebrows raised.

ZAJAX

Don't look at me. I never laid them. Not a one. Bought 'em clothes, sure. Food. Shoes.

Tucson scowls at Zajax, as she slips her top off.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Just like you - all they wanted was sexy bed-y. All night-y.

Tucson slips the sheer blouse on over her sexy bra. A silent striptease for Zajax's benefit.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

I bet you don't scare as easy as that big guy with the red face.

Tucson scissors her legs into Zajax. Caresses his face.

TUCSON

Fear breaks my water.

ZAJAX

If this is some kind of new V.A. therapy, sign me up.

Tucson unlocks one of Zajax's wrists from the handcuffs. Locks it (seductive) around one of her own wrists.

TUCSON

All your flings - none of them got
insanely jealous and avenged on
you? Like they shoulda done?

ZAJAX (O.S.)

Just one, a floozy dame from HELL,
six hearts short of a full deck.

Tucson sorts through the clothes. She finds a tight leather
mini-skirt. Slips it up her long legs. Slow tease.

TUCSON

Ten years without getting laid. And
you people call this place HEAVEN?

ZAJAX (O.S.)

Hey, who said I never got past
second base?

TUCSON

Like, the V.A. sent over your
confidential file?

Tucson lets his hand go up inside her skirt.

ZAJAX

Crazy or not, that denizen dame
from HELL was a masterpiece in the
dark.

(quietly)

So damn exquisite. Right on down to
the bitter-sweet smell - taste. -
of raw, impulsive sex.

Tucson finds an old Marine Corps shirt. Dark green. Faded. n
Airborne insignia stitched on one shoulder. "ZAJAX" embossed
above the breast pocket.

TUCSON

Back home, with a Force Recon badge
on your shoulder, the - denizens -
would fall all over your tight ass.

Zajaz stares deep into her eyes, speaking quietly:

ZAJAX

It's not all women I want.

Tucson unfolds the shirt. The shoulder patch is a small black
square in a larger, dark-orange box.

ZAJAX (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 That's the Hurricane Commandos
 insignia. Psy Ops. We rescue the
 damned from HELL.
 (to himself)
 Thankless job, Psy Ops. People love
 HELL. No guilt. No consequences.

Tucson rips Zajax's shirt off. Makes him put the commando
 shirt on (slick twist to get it over the handcuffs). Briefly,
 her hand slips into his crotch.

TUCSON
 Military special-ops types just
 kill my G spot.

ZAJAX
 I never liked the easy ones.

Tucson spots a small, orange book on a side table. Curious,
 she picks it up. Reads the cover.

TUCSON
Zajax's Rules of Engagement by
 Master Sergeant Z. A. Jackson.
 U.S.M.C. Psy Ops Command.

Tucson slips the handcuff off her wrist and onto his.

She takes her sweet time pulling on a pair of sexy dark
 stockings, playing to her raptured audience.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
 I thought Psy Ops was futuristic
 sci-fi stuff.

ZAJAX (O.S.)
 That's exactly what we want you to
 think, sister. Stealth missions to
 HELL - to rescue the damned from -
 from. Celebrities like you?

Her hand dives into his pants - stays there... Smiling.

TUCSON
 Nix the scary, Sergeant, or I'll
 have to jump your boner right now.

ZAJAX
 Say again? Sex therapy? I hate
 therapy. Therapists. I'll kill you
 with my bare hands.

Desperate to get her, Zajax WRENCHES his hands in the cuffs with such violence that they dig into his flesh.

Blood gushes down his arms. Tucson licks the blood away.

TUCSON

I like my men to suffer. How much pain can you handle?

ZAJAX

I'm special forces, lady. Pain is my business.

LIVING ROOM

There's a ROARING FIRE in the wood-burning stove. Butch and Hamlett concentrate on a backgammon board. Tucson pads down the stairs, Zajax in tow.

ZAJAX

My ex, the hottie from HELL? Not even close, lady.

TUCSON

You're weak. Afraid. I'm your worst nightmare. Guilt incarnate, baby.

Tucson looks down at her desperate prostitute attire. Adjusts a gold cross caught in her cleavage.

ZAJAX

I forgot. Women still wear corsets, starched petticoats, and high-necked blouses in the Old South.

TUCSON

What red-blooded man doesn't go crazy for a proper, dignified dame?
(quietly)
The forbidden fruit.

Zajax whispers to Tucson:

ZAJAX

Standard search-and-recover op for a high-value target. Two-man team. A senior supervisor. A Witness.
(sotto voice)
Psy Ops manual, page fifty, paragraph six A.

TUCSON

So you wrote a best-selling
exorcism guide. Don't you just
adore sex in front of a - Witness?

Tucson nods to Luzifer, and he WAVES HIS ARM. Zajax FREEZES.

In the shadows, Butch SKETCHES the freeze FURIOUSLY on his
steno pad, ever the inconspicuous Witness.

They gather around Zajax. Tucson pulls her blouse down. Jams
her armpit into Zajax's face. Hamlett tests his pulse.

HAMLETT

Elevated pulse. Erratic, but -

Hamlett straps a blood pressure sleeve on Zajax. Pumps it up.
Hamlett nods to Tucson. She slaps Zajax, hard.

TUCSON

Beating like a kettle drum. Maximum
flow-through. Yes.

Tucson jams her hand down Zajax's pants. Beat. She smiles.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

His body remembers me after all.

LUZIFER

However. Is he remembering you - or
just reacting? To the Saigon whore,
haunting his Red Light District.

Luzifer WAVES HIS ARM and they go back to real-time. Slightly
disoriented, Zajax steps over to the backgammon game.

ZAJAX

I played my cards. Agreed to go
back. What's your end game?
(very loud)
Why don't you get it over with, and
haul me back to - Purgatory?

Hamlett stands up, one hand on his hip holster.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Where are your conflicting regs?
The dial-up-slow internet app? The
V.A. always has a boatload of
excuses not to pay you.

Zajax makes a frantic dash for the front door. Hamlett gets
there first - jams his PISTOL into Zajax's crotch. COCKS IT.

HAMLETT

Afraid of Tucson? The lay of the
century? Playboy centerfold sex?
(scared voice)
Boo-hoo. I'm afraid. Take me back
to the psych ward. Please, mister.

ZAJAX

Saint Valentine turns into Vlad the
Impaler - Count fucking Dracula.
(ominously)
What did you sell your soul for
L.T.? Was it a Napalm special?
Torch a whole village - women,
children - livestock. Who me? But I
was just following orders.

Zajax breaks loose and bolts out the front door. Tucson
blocks Hamlett from chasing after him.

TUCSON

Zajax's rule number two: You're
losing if the target runs away from
your guilt and not toward it.

Hamlett grabs Tucson. Hauls her out the front door.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Zajax rips out the front door. Across the cobblestone
driveway. Straight through a hedge.

Hamlett and Tucson are right on his heels. Butch (intense,
focused) follows at a discrete distance. Zajax flies out of a
thick hedge. Straight into the cemetery next door.

EXT. CIVIL WAR CEMETERY

Hamlett and Tucson search the area with powerful flashlights.

HAMLETT

He's onto us. Didn't you hear him?
All those references to Hell.
Purgatory. Damnation. Guilt.

TUCSON

Stop thinking with your brain.
They're just Freudian slips.
Subconscious nothings. Don't make a
little Napalm into a Nagasaki A-
bomb.

HAMLETT

All that sure is bleeding through.
What's going on, doc?

TUCSON

We've never been topside for this
long before. Best get used to the
harrowing torments.

HAMLETT

It's never easy.

Zajax tears across the cemetery, leaping over graves. He
fights for traction in thick, slippery mud.

ZAJAX

The Yankees are coming. The Yankees
are coming.

Tucson and Hamlett spot Zajax. They FIRE on him. Their ROUNDS
RICOCHET off grave markers as Zajax zigzags away.

LIGHTNING STRIKES nearby, lighting Zajax's way.

HAMLETT

Cemetery? Dead people? He's running
head-on toward his guilt. Yes.

TUCSON

This is The Z we're talking about
here. He wrote the book on
confabulating the enemy. Literally.
Zajax's Rules of Engagement?

HAMLETT

I keep forgetting he knows -
everything.

Zajax runs helter-skelter through the cemetery. Trips on a
tombstone. Falls flat on his face in the mud.

ZAJAX

It's the Four Horsemen of the
Apocalypse. The headless horseman.
The Whore of Babylon. Moses.

Hamlett and Tucson reach Zajax (covered in mud head to toe)
and haul him to his feet. Wrestle him back toward the house.

HAMLETT

We don't mean you any harm, Mr. Z.
Hey, you did kamikaze us with an M-
sixty machine gun.

ZAJAX

It's just single-shot. It's legal.
(quietly)
Drip, drip goes the intravenous
Zyklon B into his veins. Ahhh,
precious relief. Cyanide glory.

Butch stands in the shadows. Stops. Pensive - worried.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - COBBLESTONE TURNAROUND

Hamlett holds Zajax's neck in a Nelson lock while Tucson hoses the mud off Zajax.

HAMLETT

We can't let crazies like you roam
free, now can we, Mr. Z? What would
the taxpayers say?

Desperate, Zajax tries to get free. Hamlett muscles him into submission.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

Here you are, all alone, no
friends, totally isolated. You call
this life?

Tucson yanks Zajax's pants down: shines her light on his anatomy.

TUCSON

O.M.G. A strapping young stud like
you on a psych ward? You could have
a sexy lay, every-night-a-different-
flavor. Responsibility. Respect.

HAMLETT

You disappointed a lot of people
when you escaped - from the psych
ward. Whole place is on lockdown
now. Punishment - for your escape -
huh? Now you don't even have any
friends there no more.

TUCSON

Won't be a living soul at your
funeral. Sane or otherwise.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Hamlett WRENCHES Zajax through the front door.

Tucson puts the handcuffs back on him, then hauls him down the stairs to the lower level.

Sounds of BANGING POTS AND PANS in the kitchen float up from downstairs.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS DEN - DAY

Hamlett, Luzifer, and Butch (sketching) step down into a library with a tall ceiling and exotic rugs. There's an authentic Civil War Confederate flag on one wall.

To the right is a baby grand piano and to the left is a sofa. The walls are lined with bookshelves. Hamlett scans the titles.

HAMLETT

He's been boning up on all things
paranormal. Witchcraft. Satanism.
New Age. Voodoo. Kabbalah.
Christian mysticism. Bleeding
through, my fat ass. This guy's got
a proverbial hemorrhage.

Butch sketches the baby grand piano. Oscar sitting on top.

KITCHEN

Tucson is cooking. Zajax (clean, dry clothes) is cuffed to the stove next to her. Hamlett enters and Tucson hauls him aside. They whisper. Butch eavesdrops (inconspicuously).

TUCSON

What's your take?

HAMLETT

He ain't got no friends, not even
on the psych ward. He lives in
total, complete isolation.

TUCSON

Can I go for the jugular now?

HAMLETT

Heel, dog. He still thinks he has
friends in Hell - us, for one - we
have to sever all those illusions.

They gather around Zajax, who talks toward Tucson:

ZAJAX

My Mexican friend, Mamasita.
Sometimes she cooks for me. I just
love Tex-Mex vittles. She's hot.

Tucson grabs Zajax by the scruff of his collar.

TUCSON

You've got a steady girl now? How
dare you. You pledged yourself to
me for an eternity.

ZAJAX

Mamasita's father's a drug lord. *El*
patron - who wants a psycho son-in-
law? Boom. Dead Z. End of *senior*
gringo.

Tucson slides a stealthy hand around his waist. They look up
as the others cough. Wheeze. She pulls quickly away.

TUCSON

Voyeurs, waiting to see Tucson
seduce her mark. As if they haven't
seen it a hundred times before.

Zajax reaches aside and opens a whiskey cabinet. Tucson pulls
her gun. COCKS it. Holds it to Zajax's head.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

I should riddle you with bullets
and let you bleed out - make it so
the bleeding never stops. The pain
keeps escalating. Year after year.

Zajax gently closes the cabinet door.

ZAJAX

Sorry the cartel did that to you.
Although. I don't regret one bit,
helping all them widow ladies.

Zajax sneezes, violent and loud. He's catching double
pneumonia.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Every time I cached out a mission.
Got me some R and R. Couldn't bear
Saigon no more. Never left bivouac
after that. Volunteered guard duty.

Tucson gnashes her teeth, her fists clenched in fury.

TUCSON

That Mamasita cartel *seniorita* -
fling, she'll drink your blood by
the gallon. Squeeze you for more.
Mount you. Beat you. Run you
through with a dagger. variations
on a theme. Because nobody dies
peaceable - in the drug cartels.

ZAJAX

Ouch. *El Commandante* really took
his fury out on you. Sorry, Tucson.
Real sorry.

Hamlett smiles at Oscar, who's suddenly in the middle of the
kitchen table. Hamlett talks quietly to Butch.

HAMLETT

Just between us 'possums. All that
was before your time.
(deep breath)
Tucson never got over The Z. She
tried them all down there. None
compared. Apparently vice-versa
with Romeo up here.

Hamlett reaches out to scratch Oscar's thick fur. Draws his
hand back. Suddenly realizing Oscar is - stuffed.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

Dammit. I... that critter wasn't
here when I sat down. Where the Sam
Hell did it come from?
(quietly)
Shit. I'm going cataleptic, here.

Luzifer stands at the outside door. Staring out at the
VIOLENT STORM. Talking to his reflection in the glass.

LUZIFER

Kind of hard to escape thoughts of
the morbid past, isn't it? No
distractions, just nature going
berserk. Scary, real, awful scary.

HAMLETT

That stuffed cat - I think we may
have a problem with the damn
feline. You want scary? Sir. Think.
Wild. Card. Cat.

Butch is nervous. Fidgeting with his hands. Pacing. Anxious.
Sweating profusely. Hamlett whispers to him:

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
Although. Could be the shooter.
What do you think, Witness?

Flustered, Butch hurries out at a dead run. Luzifer YELLS:

LUZIFER
Forgot how effing hot it is up
here. Goddamn humidity. Had to beat
the wife to let me come. Some
vacation this is.

ZAJAX
Be careful what you wish for. The
Devil's in the details. Aren't you?

LUZIFER
Uncle Same never forgets. Anything.
The more you run off at the mouth,
the stronger your case file - to
institutionalize you for life.

Tucson stifles a smile. Hamlet roars with a deep, hearty
laugh. Luzifer glares at them all.

ZAJAX
I need to get the hearth fired up.

Very angry, Hamlett grabs Zajax by the hair.

HAMLETT
Nix the southern hospitality.
You'll never be anything to us but
a cold, limp, slab of slimy reptile
flesh in a padded cell. Spineless.

Hamlett bolts out of the room. Stomps up the stairs.

INT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Zajax, cuffed to the hearth, stirs the fire in the wood-
burning stove, PUMPING UP the flames with a BELLOWS.

ZAJAX
I'm back in-country. Sergeant Doom,
the terror of 'Nam. Just me and the
giant, man-eating mosquitoes, two
snakes - one striped tiger.

A huge CRACK of thunder sounds.

Everybody is suddenly in the living room.

Zajax is covered in soot from blow-back through the fireplace, grinning like the Batman's Joker.

Zajax sneezes. Then again. Tucson steps up quietly.

TUCSON
You'll catch triple pneumonia,
Sergeant G.I.. Come please, and
let's get you into some nice, warm
clothes.

Tucson wraps a blanket around Zajax's shoulders.

ZAJAX
Dress blues, shower shoes, and a
light coat of oil for me.

Tucson slides a seductive hand around Zajax's waist. And cozies him upstairs toward the hallway bathroom.

TUCSON
The handcuffs. How'd you Houdini
out of them?

ZAJAX
El Jefe will tear the truth out of
you if I tell you. You've already
laid enough guilt on my table.

TUCSON
Those things are locked to the
space-time continuum. Nobody -

Zajax and Tucson disappear upstairs.

Butch (very tired, dark), Luzifer, and Hamlett enter. Sit down. Stare blank-eyed at the CRACKLING FIRE in the HEARTH.

HAMLETT
Now she's his only friendly - in
this world or the next. Into the
batter's box, girl - go for the
triple-play, like you always do.

Butch (looking worried) throws some logs on the fire. PUMPS up the flames with the BELLOWS.

LUZIFER
Time to motivate The Z right on
into her hot and steamy legs. Sir?
Hot oasis in the frigid cold?

Luzifer pulls out a GIZMO, dials it up.

They all move over to stand at the window, watching: the rain turns to sleet. Then hail. Then, a heavy blizzard.

LIGHTNING STRIKES silhouette the graveyard below their elevation. The Confederate flag above is getting ragged.

HAMLETT

Felt like this the first time I
visited that Vietnam Memorial Wall
in D.C. Frigid. Desolate. Stark.

LUZIFER

That Black Wall gives me the
woolies. Afraid. Angry. Freezing
cold all over. American's darkest
hour. Darkest decade.

Butch (flustered) stomps his feet from the cold. Hustles back to stoke the fire.

HAMLETT

Guilty that you didn't serve?

LUZIFER

I served all right. I started it,
even. Tonkin Gulf. Lit the fuse -
boom. Fire in the whole - gulf.

Hamlett pulls out a giant cigar. Chews on it.

HAMLETT

Had good friends who went deep-six
like that feller upstairs. They
deserved better. He does, too.

LUZIFER

Those things will kill you.

HAMLETT

As if my diabetes won't already
cause me years of treatment,
doctors, therapy, drugs. Cost my
healthcare company a small fortune
if I live very much longer.

Luzifer grabs a burning stick of kindling from the fireplace and offers it to Hamlett.

LUZIFER

Here, allow me.

HAMLETT

Much obliged, kind sir.

Hamlett takes a long, careful pull on the cigar.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
Take a break, sir. You - well, your
impulsive use of Hell-tech is
making our job - difficult.

LUZIFER
Stop telling Saigon Jane how to run
her own damn show. Just - don't.

HAMLETT
The more proof of his delusions
that his subconscious witnesses,
the harder it is to drive him to
the depths of despair. Suicide?

Luzifer stares into the fire, his skin turning a very angry
red. Steam wafts off his neck.

Hamlett puffs anxiously on the stogie, watching the steam
rise into the still night air.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Butch dozes at the kitchen table, his head resting on folded
arms. Oscar is on the table, asleep at his elbow. Hamlett
takes a long, thoughtful pull on his stogie.

HAMLETT
To think I turned down a job with
the Swiss Guards in the Vatican for
this gig. I didn't want to have
anything to do with greedy, gutless
politicians. Poetic injustice.

TUCSON
You're behaving like an old lady in
a rocking chair.

HAMLETT
Three days without a wink of shut-
eye? Hush. You'll break my lullaby.

Tucson TAPS the KEYS at a LAPTOP on the kitchen table. She
turns the laptop around to face Luzifer.

TUCSON
I need some access here. All this
Earth tech - quaint, isn't it?

Luzifer enters a password to access the "U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
VETERANS AFFAIRS" website.

LUZIFER

This place is too damn quiet. Can't keep the past out of my mind. Sex with friends. Oh, wow. Sex with enemies. In Hanoi. Beijing. Yes.

HAMLETT

Best not to button things up. Sir.

LUZIFER

Oh, they were good, so good. Then I got married - cutest little gal, burning up the dance floor. Until I slipped the ring on her finger.

Zajax barges in through the glass outside door, coming in from the weather. They draw their weapons on instinct.

TUCSON

You got out of our super-reinforced handcuffs. Not possible.

ZAJAX

There's not a rope, tech, or gizmo known to man or demon that can hold The Z. Leave before it's too late.

Zajax opens the outside door and points yonder - down the street toward the neighborhood.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

My friend, Jimbo. He lives down the block. He owns a pontoon boat, the "Sweet Pea." He can float y'all to safety. I'll go get him.

Inch-size HAIL CAREENS into the kitchen. The agents back slowly away as a WINTER FREEZE slowly takes over the room.

LUZIFER

Nonsense. You don't have any friends, Popeye. You think we didn't do our due diligence? That Jimbo guy moved away years ago.

ZAJAX

You don't wanna leave. 'Cause you're not V.A. You're. huh.
(quietly)
Does *El Senor* know you're here?

Zajax sees the laptop and steps over to scan the screen.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

What the? Now you hacked into my private medical files? I can't even have virtual privacy? Virtual solitude? Virtual - anything?

Zajax storms out of the room. A DOOR SLAMS deep in the house.

TUCSON

I do believe he's rejecting the past. Finally, some good news. Make it stick. Understood?

The outside door is still open. Nobody notices as their hair and clothing frost over from the winter chill.

Butch (awake now) sees the handcuffs and gets thoughtful. He starts to speak but Tucson jams a sandwich in his mouth.

HAMLETT

Won't be long before he knows exactly who we are. Checkmate.

Lightning STRIKES outside. THUNDER follows, rattling dishes and glassware in the kitchen cabinets.

LUZIFER

Yeah, I'm worried, too. He was my best collection agent. Ever. A bona fide master of deceit.

TUCSON

Each time he comes at us it's to confirm his doubts.

(quietly)

The longer he takes to come back at us, the stronger his doubts are.

They stare at the laptop, which shows a mug shot of a YOUNG ZAJAX with his head shaved military-style.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Don't jump the gun, people. We wait - for his instincts to kick in.

(quietly)

Trust me, here. Tick. Tock. Tick.

Shivering, Butch (losing his cool) stomps his feet to warm up, then hurries over to ease the outside door closed.

Zajax storms back into the room. Grabs a butcher knife, and aims it at them. His hand shakes. His eyes blink rapidly.

ZAJAX

Get out of my house before I grease
you all.

Lightning fast, Tucson grabs Zajax by the arm and forces him
out the door, back into the RAGING STORM.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - DAY

Tucson hauls Zajax out the door and across the wood deck. The
snow escalates. The WIND'S HOWLING through the trees.

Hands cuffed in front of him now, Zajax struggles to keep his
balance on the slick, icy wood deck.

ZAJAX

A group of intelligent people,
under duress, highly motivated -
four days, nowhere to go. But
insane.

TUCSON

It's called cabin fever.

ZAJAX

The longer you stay here, the more
insufferable the memories, regrets,
the angst - four days. Already?

Tucson bullies Zajax with short-slaps to his back and
shoulders with the butt of her pistol.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Confusion, distrust, diarrhea of
the mouth, disorientation.

(quietly)

I've been there. Right after I
escaped - here. It gets worse.

TUCSON

As if nobody has ever tried to
disorient my seven senses before.

Tucson raises her gun, COCKS it.

ZAJAX

All cooped up inside, for days on
end - bad, bad, real bad.
Psychosis. Confinement psychosis.

Tucson hauls Zajax to the house by the scruff of his neck.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Zajax is curled into a scared, shivering ball on the floor, helpless, hands cuffed in his lap.

ZAJAX

Nobody ever told you that good nurse and bad nurse are supposed to be two different people? ...I thought you were my friend.

Tucson scrolls through Zajax's V.A. medical file.

TUCSON

Severe claustrophobia, anti-social psychosis, extreme narcolepsy.

(quietly)

And here I am, arms open - legs open. Talk about a crazy Q.

Outside the windows, the violent storm strengthens.

A flurry of GIANT BUGS SLAMS into the window, turning it into a collage of blood and guts, oozing down the windowpane.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Judas H. Christ. This guy's got broken bones all over his body.

(quietly)

He's using pain to stay off anti-psychotic drugs. The V.A. lets him do that?

HAMLETT

Look at his wrists, all the breaks - is that how he got out of our black-magic cuffs?

Tucson turns the laptop around to reveal a full-body x-ray with broken bones highlighted in bright red.

TUCSON

Memorize his breaks. Hit them. Hit them hard. Pain. Insufferable pain.

HAMLETT

We used to hobble all the ladies smitten with wanderlust, back home at the dairy farm. I'll show you. Action. Finally some action.

Hamlett grabs a knife. Steps out the back door. Cuts off a length of clothesline on the deck. Steps back inside.

ZAJAX

Excuse me, but you're talking about me as if I wasn't right fucking here.

TUCSON AND HAMLETT

Shut up.

Zajax watches numbly as Hamlett ties his legs together with a tight knot.

ZAJAX

Maybe I don't like raw sex with a total unknown, huh? Meaningless.

Hamlett hauls Zajax toward the next room, WRENCHING his rope bindings - SNAPPING a recent break in his leg.

Butch STARTLES with each CRACK, empathizing.

HAMLETT

You're just another cow to lasso and burn a brand into his buttocks.

ZAJAX

We used to be friends, L.T.

Every time Zajax SCREAMS, Hamlett SNAPS another leg bone.

HAMLETT

Nobody can corral American buffaloes; they're so bound and determined to run wild and free.

TUCSON

Never seen that kind of pain tolerance before. The V.A.'s been training him. But for what?

LUZIFER

Hush, Tucson. He's right here. You're losing your perspective. Compromising mission security.

TUCSON

Could the Hurricane Commandos - be. Have you heard any rumors, of topside doing Above Top Secret recon missions to Hell?

Hamlett pushes Tucson forcefully to one side. Grabs a sleepy Luzifer. Shoves him into Tucson's arms.

HAMLETT

You're all stressed out, sir.
Tucson's gonna give you a back rub.
Be good, and she'll lay you down in
the Rose Garden - just the way you
like it.

Hamlett pushes them both out the door.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

(quietly to Tucson)

Go ahead, darling, and plead your
case to the Supreme Horny.

Hamlett eases the door closed. Finally, peace and quiet.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tucson turns on a reading lamp. Makes the bed with clean
linens. Outside there's a strong, violent WHISTLING WIND.

TUCSON

The guy is immune to pain. All our
backup methods depend on pain. What
the F are we going to do now?

Luzifer snorts a lusty desire for her.

LUZIFER

Rolling in the hay after the big
game. Daisy Mae, Linda Boo, Lorna
Doom. Oh, she was so tight.

TUCSON

Stop that. You're - not here. We're
on a job. Chill your hormones.

Tucson slaps him - again. But he keeps coming onto her.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Snap out of it, Stanley. Nix the
horny, hell-raising wrath.

There's a huge BOOM of THUNDER outside.

Tucson reaches into her purse and slams two giant horse pills
on a side table.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Here are your anger management
meds. Take the whole goddamn
bottle. You need your ferocity
back. You - your fierce.

Luzifer, his eyes never leaving Tucson's generous breasts in her too-tight shirt, grabs the two pills - hand on the glass of water.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
Doctor's orders.

Tucson winds up to slap him again...

...as his hand slips between her legs, massaging her groin.

His other hand kneads her breasts - one pops out of her bra, nipple rock hard. She melts into his blissful sexuality.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
Ahhhhh. I want it. All of it.
Deeper. And deeper.

Luzifer throws her away. Her back slams against a wall, knocking the breath out of her.

LUZIFER
Seduce the mother fucker. Squeeze
him dry. Now.

Terrified, she gathers herself together and scurries out.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zajax is passed out on the carpet. He wakes up - crawls around. Finds a wooden cat brush. Puts it in his mouth, clenching his teeth on it.

Zajax rolls on one side. Braces one leg between the floor and the stone hearth - SNAPS the BROKEN BONE into place, SCREAMING into his wooden mouthpiece.

Then he rolls onto his other side to SNAP another BROKEN LEG BONE into position.

He rips a tablecloth into strips and binds the cloth around the legs as splinters. He looks up, to see Oscar watching him from an upholstered chair nearby.

ZAJAX
True Care? Outsourcing from the
V.A.? Not by a country mile. It's
Satan and Team Zyklon. Just like I -
but you already knew that.

Zajax kneels and scratches her briefly.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
 Roosevelt told you? Dr. Sicily's
 teddy bear? We have a friend. Yes.
 (morbid sadness)
 Oh, crap. I ripped his head off.

Painfully, Zajax stands up. Hobbles into the bedroom.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - FRONT YARD - DAY

Hamlett steps out into the yard, where Tucson is feeding
 BEVO, a neighborhood stray cat.

TUCSON
 I had to get away. If just for a
 few minutes. Judas, has it been
 five days already? Never felt this -
 discombobulated... on a mission.

They stand up and amble around the snowy landscape, circling
 around toward the driveway side of the property.

HAMLETT
 It's hard to set aside all our
 recollections of The Z. Our
 attachments. You more than most.

Above them, the CONFEDERATE FLAG FLUTTERS, ripped into strips
 of fluttering cloth. Butch (sad) stands nearby, unseen.

TUCSON
 Remember how, as soon as The Z got
 rank, Luzifer never - raped. - me
 again. What a blessed relief.
 (quietly)
 Never mind. That's not what's
 bothering me. It's just - don't -
 can't quite put it into words.

HAMLETT
 The Z represents hope. Hope that
 one day, some way, we too might
 escape.

TUCSON
 And taking him down would
 extinguish that hope. Forever.

Hamlett slams an angry fist into the side of the house, over
 and again.

HAMLETT

It's no different than coming up
here and seeing how our targets
live - in filth, despair, agony -
endless, pitiful emotional pain.

TUCSON

Purge the human emotions.

She gets up and strides away, full of new energy. Hamlett
follows her, deep in thought. Butch slips outside, too.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hobbling along in obvious, extreme pain with every wretched
step, Zajax crosses the threshold. Slips into the room. Oscar
is perched on a desk nearby. He whispers to her.

ZAJAX

They'll never leave, Oscar. But. We
got nowhere else to go. No friends.
No nobody. No where.

Zajax reaches for an Rx bottle of pills on the bedside table.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

There they are - relief, blessed
relief.

A huge CLAP of THUNDER wakes Luzifer, who rolls over and
turns on the bedside lamp.

LUZIFER

Judas, who can sleep with all this
weather going on?

Luzifer peers through slit eyes, squinting.

Luzifer fumbles with the Rx bottle of pills on the bedside
table. Gets it open. Takes a fistful of pills. Turns the
bedside light off.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

Give me city traffic, cop car
sirens, and random gunshots any
night of the week.

AT THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT

Zajax huddles in a corner of the dark room. He maneuvers over
to the bed - reaching out for the bottle of pills.

ZAJAX

I need those pain pills.

THUNDER RATTLES the rafters, waking Luzifer, who turns, in the middle of a fitful dream. Zajax whispers:

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

You're sleepy, tired. worn out by
stupid, smelly, disgusting humans.

Somnambulant, Luzifer - reaches out for a Rx bottle of pills on the bedside table. Opens it. Takes a fistful of tablets. Dives back under the covers.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Rest, sleep. That's it. Sleep,
monster, sleep.

Luzifer starts snoring. Zajax scoots over to the bedside table - grabs the bottle - shakes it. It's empty!

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Bastard ate all my pain pills.

Luzifer stirs, violently, thrashing around - and Zajax escapes his long arms, hugging the walls.

Zajax stands at the window: Snowflakes slowly turn into a soft drizzle as it gets warmer outside.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Did you see that strange gizmo
Luzifer had, Oscar? I wonder.

Zajax grabs Oscar and slips out of the room, as the sun rises outside the window.

LIVING ROOM

Zajax closes the bedroom door. He looks every which way, paranoid. He bends over, the leg pain is so bad - in agony.

Butch lurks in the shadows, arms crossed - tears welling in his eyes.

ZAJAX

Damnation - the pain, it's killing
me, here.

There's a small NOISE nearby. Zajax winds up, ready to strike the enemy. It's only Oscar, sitting on the floor nearby.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
My heart's thumping a million beats
a second. Shame on you, Oscar.

Outside the front window, behind the thin curtains, a shadow moves across the front yard, then out of sight.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
I'm remembering, we had some kind
of tech to control the weather.
(quietly)
Without their tech, maybe I can get
an edge on them.

Zajax hobbles around the living room and gathers up all the agents' electronic equipment: Blackberrys. Cell phones. The laptop. A couple of alien tech gizmos.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Hamlett and Butch play a lazy game of Uno at the kitchen table. At the stove, Tucson prepares breakfast.

TUCSON
Zajax's Rules warn us against the
lull of domestic tranquility.

Butch slams down a card. Triumphant smile.

HAMLETT
It's just the agony of defeat.

Hamlett throws his hand down on the table, disgusted.

TUCSON
They say Psy Ops commandos are
trained to twist your reality. Well
- it's working.

Butch (stress relief) does a "touchdown" dance. There's a SCRATCHING at the back door.

Hamlett stands up, aiming his pistol. Wired for action.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
We can't let him have any hope. Not
even a glimmer of hope. Except.
He's warming up to me, you know?

A critter gets a grip on the door screen outside and climbs up: two beady eyes peer into the window.

HAMLETT

Get that nutcase out of your pretty head, darling.

Zajax (orange Psy Ops beret, heavily-starched Hurricane Commandos shirt) heaves painfully into the kitchen from the den, feeling excruciating pain.

Zajax's hands shake in his cuffs. His face is covered in sweat. Deep lines etch his countenance. Eyes a black hollow.

ZAJAX

Or he just might drive you insane?

Zajax grabs a jug of cat food. Yanks the back door open. Six baby raccoons wait at the doorstep.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

At least somebody has the good manners to knock.

Zajax SHAKES some cat food out of the jug. The cute little coons dig in, CRUNCHING happily.

TUCSON

You've got an aggravating way of showing up, right when.

ZAJAX

I'm hungry? In my own house? When my - friends. - are terrified of the weather - hungry?

Zajax stumbles over to the whiskey cabinet and yanks it open - it's empty. Butch cranes his head to look into the cabinet.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Where's my hootch?

Zajax JAMS A FIST in Butch's face, drawing blood.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

I know the rules. Mr. Witness.

Butch hurries out of the room, stifling blood from his nose.

Hamlett eases his pistol back into its holster, studying the baby raccoons with a hunter's practiced eye.

HAMLETT

Vermin like them aren't fit for anything but Grandma's stew. She'd slaughter a sickly one, and have the neighbors over for victuals.

ZAJAX

Shut your trap, you monster.

Zajax HITS Hamlett in the face so hard that he gets whiplash.

Hamlett pulls out his weapon, COCKS IT. Itching to fire.

GRINDING METAL SOUNDS ECHO from deep inside in the house.
They stalk toward the noise.

In quiet desperation, Zajax rifles through all the cabinets
looking for alcohol.

INT. UTILITY ROOM - DAY

Hamlett steps carefully toward the washing machine, which is
just ending the SPIN cycle but still making a huge RACKET.

Tucson opens the top. Out POPS a mangled cell phone.

Hamlett catches the cell phone on reflex.

Butch sneaks into the room, tissue stuffed in his nostrils to
stop the blood.

They lean over and stare at the spinning tub, heads moving
round and round with the tub.

HAMLETT

He made us. Loud and clear. Then
destroyed our tech. All in one
swell fucking foop. Danger one.

Hamlett grabs his stomach. Turns aside to upchuck.

TUCSON

Stop that. The subconscious terrors
are supposed to stay there, hidden,
horrors. Nightmares.

HAMLETT

I feel a hillbilly rage building up
inside me. Haven't felt this kind
of angry since I was taken away.

They all look ragged, with bags under their bloodshot eyes.

Hamlett wipes vomit foaming his face with a handkerchief.

Butch sketches the scene with furious accuracy. Hamlett and
Tucson see him drawing for the first time - study his work.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

No tech? Now we ectoplasm him the
old-fashioned way. Gaslights, power
words, and proverbial terror.

(quietly)

Horror, fright, and intimidation.

They sort through the pile of dead electronics.

EXT. HILLSIDE GATE - NIGHT

An electric utility company's bucket truck backs up to a
power pole.

Papasita steps out of the cab with a sniper rifle on his
shoulder. Climbs into the bucket. Works the bucket controls.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Tucson CLANGS a DINNER TRIANGLE.

Butch (conspicuously amiable) and Hamlet hurry in and sit at
the table. Zajax struggles in and pulls up a chair.

ZAJAX

Lovely spring weather outside,
isn't it?

(to Tucson)

Makes me want to invite my hot
Latina friend over for some under-
the-covers work.

TUCSON

Shut up and eat, mister.

Tucson grabs Zajax by the ear and hauls him outside.

EXT. GAZEBO DECK - DAY

Tucson and Zajax struggle across the icy, slippery wood deck.

TUCSON

Spit it out, Gunny. Now.

ZAJAX

The bottle of little orange
nightmare pills by my bed? It's
empty. Oxycontin?

Tucson grabs Zajax by the shirt collar and shakes him.

TUCSON

What? Mr. Luzifer is zonked out on prescription heroin?

Zajax nods his head slowly. Rolls his eyes.

ZAJAX

Maximum-strength. Still not strong enough for my liking, but at least they take the sharp edge off the extreme bone pain.

TUCSON

All the fractures on your x-rays. They're all new since your - escape from - Los Angeles.

ZAJAX

Occupational risk, love. Going on recon missions to, to map out all your infrastructure? .Hurricane Commandos?

TUCSON

You did not.

Tucson spots a red targeting laser dot over Zajax's heart.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Hit the deck.

RIFLE ROUNDS RIP up the wood deck all around them.

They make a mad dash for the gazebo at the far end of the deck.

GAZEBO

Zajax and Tucson end up in a compromising position in a hammock. Swinging slowly.

Tucson is on top, and loving it.

ZAJAX

Just like old times, eh?

TUCSON

Yeah. Me saving your sorry ass.

Hamlett BURSTS into the gazebo with a pistol in each hand.

He helps Tucson to her feet. Butch spies from the doorway.

HAMLETT

You okay? I saw our - mark - get loose and.

(staring at Zajax)

Shouldn't you - Oh, crap. How can you even move?

Tucson is stunned. Butch (quizzical) steps out of the house, searching the horizon for signs of the shooter.

TUCSON

All the excitement. The danger. It was so hot - he. I - came.

Bashful, Tucson hurries inside.

Hamlett puts the pistols away. Grabs Zajax. Manhandles him inside.

Zajax utters a silent scream with each painful step.

HAMLETT

I still don't believe it. After what I did to your legs?

ZAJAX

Remember 'Nam? Helping the wounded back to the L.Z. after a firefight? Shot to hell, bleeding like a pig - but not SCREAMING, 'cause then the enemy will hear you. In agony, but dying in your arms - to save you?

Hamlett grabs Zajax and hauls him through the threshold.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS DEN - DAY

Butch stands at a tall bookshelf, reading a book - then watching from the shadows as Tucson and Hamlett manhandle Zajax through the kitchen door into the den.

TUCSON

Luzifer will be cognizant soon. Danger, danger, everywhere.

HAMLETT

Was that one of our people taking the potshots? Have they been there for the last - seven whole days? Watching? Like - a Witness?

ZAJAX

My Latina fiance', she comes from a
drug-lord family. *El patron?* Who
wants a five-star psycho in the
big, happy cartel family?

Tucson is suddenly furious:

TUCSON

Fiancé? How dare -

Zajax sits down at the grand piano. Plays quietly.

Oscar sits calmly on the bench beside Zajax. He mumbles to
Oscar.

ZAJAX

Shit. Fuck. Hell. Talk about PAIN.
Gotta get out of this agony. Just
got to. Cover me, will ya?

Luzifer calls out from the upstairs bedroom:

LUZIFER (O.S.)

Slave woman. Where's my breakfast?
Hot towels. Finger massage. S.E.X.

Tucson looks upstairs. Her face is a tragedy of terror.

KITCHEN

A sudden, violent gust of wind BLOWS the OUTSIDE DOOR open.

DOWNSTAIRS DEN

The agents aim their weapons toward the kitchen. A NOISE.

Tucson and Hamlett RIDDLE the kitchen with BULLETS. Butch
reels back, afraid of the violence - but still curious as a
cat.

TUCSON

Hold your fire.

The lights flicker briefly. Numbers on a digital clock blink.

LUZIFER (O.S.)

Wench? Where are you? I'll boil
your carcass in snake oil for this.

The lights flicker again, then go out altogether.

Dull yellow emergency lights kick in, casting a dark glow on everything.

Tucson huddles in a dark corner, full of a sudden terror.

TUCSON

Oh, fuck. Old Harry is all saddled
up and ready to gallop. Where did I
leave my stirrups?

Across the room, Zajax cracks open an outside door.

ZAJAX

Got to fill up the generator. No go-
juice. Fill 'er up, *seniorita*.
(to Tucson)
Adios amigos.

Limping badly, Zajax stands in the doorway, bracing himself
against the frigid weather. He steps out into the storm.

Tucson steps over to close the door, watching him go.

TUCSON

I'll rip that Mamasita character
limb from fucking limb. If only -
whoa, there's an idea.
(quietly)
Ripped right out of Zajax's Rules
of Engagement. If the target is
fixated on a female somebody.
Adopt. That. Persona. Yourself.

After a thoughtful pause, Tucson speaks with a BROKEN SPANISH
ACCENT from now on, with a whole new LATINA body language:

TUCSON (CONT'D)

I see it's high time for Zajax's
happy-days pills.

Everything is very dark and shadowy henceforth, with the
lights out. Tucson strides boldly up the stairs.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Don't worry, Zajax's main squeeze
knows the routine when he careens
off the deep end. Happens every
time a bad storm comes to town.

Coming from upstairs, there are sounds of a violent struggle.
SCREAMS. Hollers. SLAPS. More SCREAMS.

Then all is quiet.

EXT. GENERATOR PAD - DAY

Zajax shuts down the sputtering emergency generator.
Disconnects the power plug. Cleans the charred connections.

Oscar sits on the generator, staring at him.

ZAJAX

Don't look at me like that. I'm
doing everything I can, here.

Zajax stops, staring at Oscar, at the raw generator cables.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Give in to temptation? Can't do the
sex thing, not with all this pain.

Zajax stares at Oscar. Melancholy. Devoid of all hope.
Suddenly resolved! He sits down. Yanks his boots off.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Can't. Just can't. I don't have
meds anymore. Don't got nothing.
(gently to Oscar)
Sayonara, Oscar.

Zajax cranks up the generator. Closes his eyes . Jams the hot
electrodes into the tops of his feet - holds them there.

He falls. SPARKS FLY from his clothes, hair straight on end.

The generator GRINDS to a stop and SHUTS OFF in a cloud of
thick, black smoke.

Zajax climbs onto his feet, testing.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Huh. Pain's a little better. If
that's not the strangest damn
thing. Maybe I got enough demon
physiology left in me to.

Zajax plugs the receptacle back into the generator. Fills it
full of gas. AND CRANKS IT UP again.

Zajax THROWS the switch. He lights up the night GLOWING WITH
SPARKS.

The generator shuts off.

Zajax crawls to a sitting position and stares at his feet:
looks like there's a hole in them.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Oh, no. What have I done?

Zajax turns the feet over: they're okay. He scrapes the black soot off the top of his feet, pulls on his boots, and laces them up.

INT. DEN - DAY

Tucson steps calmly down the stairs (Latina persona).

TUCSON
Mr. Luzifer will be zoned out for quite some time now. We can now get on with the mission impossible.

Everybody turns at the sound of the kitchen door SLAMMING CLOSED. Tucson and Hamlett draw their weapons.

Hair wild from static electricity, Zajax steps into the room, and sees the weapons aimed at him - SCREAMS.

Tucson SCREAMS.

Butch starts to SCREAM - jams a hand over his mouth.

HAMLETT
What's going on here? Focus, people. I want answers.

Tucson points at Zajax.

TUCSON
You - are here? . Into whose mouth did I just stuff my discount psycho pills in-the-event-of-stormy-night emergency?

Tucson pulls a prescription bottle out of her purse. Zajax grabs the bottle, desperate, shaking it.

ZAJAX
It's empty. Now I'll never get my head out of this place.

Zajax collapses on the floor, defeated. Butch takes the R.X. bottle from Zajax. He reads the label - eyebrows going up.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Did I hear right? Lucifer is out for the count? I gotta see this.

Nobody moves. Butch copies the R.X. label on his pad.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Please? I'll give myself up after
that. Scout's honor.

HAMLETT
Not good enough.

ZAJAX
(yelling)
Okay. I'll kill myself. Satisfied?
Come on - before he wakes up.

Zajax hobbles painfully out.

Butch grabs a walking cane from an umbrella canister by the
door and puts it in his hand.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - NIGHT

Everybody stands mute, looking at Luzifer in the bed, talking
quietly like they were in a hospital room.

Tucson opens a black doctor's bag. Pulls out a stethoscope.
Gently turns Luzifer over. Holds the device to his back.

TUCSON
Somehow I thought life after death
would be a little more meaningful
than a cold metal prod in the folds
of Satan's - ugh, limpid flesh.

Tucson turns Luzifer back over. Loosens his shirt. Listens to
his chest.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
I thought my Zajax had put on
weight in all the wrong places. Now
I know the why.
(to Butch)
Are you taking the notes? Zajax's
girl, Mamasita by name - did this,
that, and the other.

Butch nods effusively and takes some rushed notes.

Tucson unbuttons Luzifer's pants. They stare at his anatomy.

HAMLETT
My pet rat has bigger testicles.
Does he even have a Jehovah? I sure
don't see one.

ZAJAX

It's the price you pay.

TUCSON

Look. He's got the man boobs.
Pretty nice ones, too. Maybe even
triple D's. Wow.

They poke, prod, pinch, fondle, and yank Luzifer's fleshy
parts from head to toe.

Butch SKETCHES THE SCENE - and they step wide to give Butch a
clear view.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Rock-hard nipples, breasts engorged
with blood, increased heart rate.

HAMLETT

That's what happens after too many
missions topside.

TUCSON

This sucker's an alias for all
that's wrong with America - sexual
confusion, breast envy, obesity.
Diabetes.

ZAJAX

I know who he reminds me of now.
Uncle. Fucking. Sam.
(quietly)
Tell that to the Marines. Uncle Sam
needs you. The few. The proud.

Zajax starts to up chug and hustles out of the room.

TUCSON

I sure hope he can't hear us
talking.

Tucson packs her bag and steps away from the bed.

Lightning STRIKES outside. THUNDER rattles the windows.

There's a HUGE CRACKING SOUND, then a very loud THUD.

Through the bedroom door, they see Zajax run through the
living room, and out the front door.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Hamlett? Butch? Did you see what I
just saw? With my own two eyes?

HAMLETT

He was running. Goddamn running.

They bolt out of the room after Zajax.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE - NIGHT

By the light of a full moon, it's calm outside. Trees are uprooted. Power lines have snapped and wrapped around cars.

A hawk drifts soundlessly in a vortex above.

EXT. A WAYS DOWN ZAJAX'S STREET - NIGHT

A "DUKE ENERGY" golf cart stops down the block.

Papasita, dressed as a lineman, steps out and climbs up a utility pole, a rifle slung on his back.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE

Zajax hauls debris off the "DANGER" logo in the driveway.

ZAJAX

The subconscious mind is full of
terrors, horrors, and vast,
unplumbed abominations.

Hamlett and Tucson walk down the steep driveway, past Zajax.

TUCSON

Sure it is. After seven day without
sleep.

Zajax hurries to catch up, then scurries on ahead.

ZAJAX

Hop to it, people. The eye of the
hurricane doesn't last but until *El*
Diablo gets back on cruise control.

Butch is fidgety, staring: A tree has crushed their limo.

TUCSON

It's like the Hand of God just
pushed over that giant tree.

They pick through the rubble of their limo.

HAMLETT

Hope is a terrible thing. Gots to
keep on watering it to keep 'er
blooming.

They look into the sky at the sound of a C-130 MILITARY CARGO
PLANE (moving across the full moon) just as a string of
special forces PARACHUTES JET out of a side door.

TUCSON

Our reinforcements. We won.

HAMLETT

Who knew that monster inside could
communicate with his minions from
inside a drugged-out sleep.

ZAJAX

Idiots. It's the eye of the
hurricane. When the eyewall hits -
the sheer force is going to rip
them to smithereens.

One by one, the parachutes are caught in the wind, and the
soldiers are SLAMMED into the ground, dead on impact.

TUCSON

It's a warning. He knows. He's sub-
texting us a message.

HAMLETT

He can hear us? Even now, out cold?

They watch as one last parachute drifts overhead. Disappears.

EXT. A WAYS DOWN ZAJAX'S STREET - NIGHT

Just outside of their peripheral vision, Papasita reaches the
top of a telephone pole.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE

Zajax squats down at a pile of dead bugs and picks at them.

ZAJAX

Can't take this no more. You guys
were my friends - still are. I know
what happens if you fail a mission.
Words can't describe that horror.

(quietly)

I'll give up if you want me to.

They all nod. Butch studies each face as they talk:

HAMLETT

He'll skin us alive if he knew we
cut a deal with our target.

TUCSON

Even if we all agreed -

Hamlett hauls a small ammo locker out of the trunk of their
smashed limo. Starts strapping on weapons. Combat gear.

ZAJAX

He can hear us. Sometimes he can
even hear your thoughts.

Butch steps between them - conspicuous, pointing to himself.

TUCSON

He can't hear what we don't say out
loud. Yes.

Butch grabs a weapon. Straps it on his back. Another.

EXT. A WAYS DOWN ZAJAX'S STREET

On top of the telephone pole, Papasita gets into position.

EXT. ZAJAX'S HOUSE

The WIND PICKS UP, blowing leaves and debris everywhere.

Hamlett surveys their environs.

Zajax collapses onto a bench nearby, exhausted. Tucson sits
down beside him, her hand slipping into his.

ZAJAX

You don't believe me, do you? That
I'm giving up.

TUCSON

You can forget about twisting
reality until - my hot juices flow.
You got something planned, don't
you? Something nefarious.

ZAJAX

I do not. I'd never promise myself
to a lady and renege on it.

Gently, Tucson puts his handcuffs back on.

Then she wrenches his wrists, so they bleed.

TUCSON

You trick me again. And I'll cut
you up and feed you alive to the
hogs. Over and over again, forever.

He smiles. She twists his wrists until the smile turns into a
grimace.

ZAJAX

I love it when you're rough like
that. Sweet and sour. Kills me
every time. Literally.

She takes his hand - gently, and eases him into a reclining
position on the bench, one arm sliding under his shirt.

She coaxes him, gentle. Soothing.

TUCSON

You're exhausted. You need to rest,
baby. Sleep. It will all look
better tomorrow. Honest, it will.
Mi amor.

ZAJAX

If I fall asleep, I can't go and
blurt out my promise to you guys in
a fit of agonizing delirium.

She massages his neck, melodious. Seductive.

TUCSON

Sleep, blessed sleep. Soft woman,
warm, fragrant, cuddly. crisp,
clean, hundred-percent-cotton
bedsheets. Ahh.

As Zajax drifts off, she carefully lowers his arm to keep the
blood flowing.

Papasita FIRES his RIFLE from a ways down the street.

Zajax and Tucson scramble for cover. They end up wound up
together under a giant oak tree.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Dammit. You were cold. Cold.
I guess - I'll just have to squeeze
you dry.

Tucson wraps her legs around him, tight.

ZAJAX

Go ahead, Nurse Ratchet. Bleed me
until I turn blue and go cold.

TUCSON

Like Luzifer did to me after he
found out I helped you escape?

She squeezes him with her legs until the trickle of blood
becomes a gush.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

He bled me out. Over and over
again, until I was a weak heartbeat
away from dying. For months, years -
decades.

ZAJAX

How did he even find out. Damn -
nobody knew he could hear us when
he was out cold. Until now.

TUCSON

You live and you learn. Or die.

ZAJAX

All the blood loss, my body is
shutting down nerve sensors. Can't
feel much bone pain now.

She spots a bulge in his crotch - yanks his pants down.

TUCSON

You still have plenty of blood for
your little *soldado*. Like always.
(leaning over his crotch)
Maybe I'll just bite down on the
hot dog when the shooter fires
again. But sir, it frightened me.

BULLETS RAIN DOWN all around them.

Dancing to avoid the lethal rounds, Tucson grabs Zajax's
hand, and they run for cover and the house.

Hamlett and Butch (excited) are right behind them.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Zajax grabs candles from a wooden box by the hearth. Lights
them from the fireplace fire. Hands them around.

Tucson stares at Zajax. His whole arm is a gruesome mass of festering, crusty blood from a gunshot.

She rips the tail off her shirt and goes to bandage his arm.

Zajax points to a "FIRST AID KIT" across the room. Butch hustles to get it and lends Tucson a hand.

TUCSON

Death by a shooter? Works for me.

ZAJAX

Not if the shooter is one of yours.

TUCSON

The injury isn't what counts, it's what you do with it.

ZAJAX

Regular death would be a blessing.
What Luzifer would do to me, now
that I know what he did to you.

STOMPING STEPS sound deep in the house - getting closer.

Zajax steps closer to them, whispering urgently:

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

All of you. Do your damn jobs. And.
Take. Me. Down.

Luzifer stumbles into the living room.

Butch quickly scoots into the shadows, ever the conspicuous Witness.

LUZIFER

Hello? Anybody home? Where the heck
is room service?

Tucson grabs Zajax aside, frantic, and they whisper urgently:

TUCSON

Do you have more meds? Anything to -
scramble his transmission.

ZAJAX

Does he still take anger management
meds?

Luzifer trips and almost falls.

Butch smiles (for the first time) as Tucson brushes off her Latina persona.

LUZIFER

I've had my fair share of Hollywood
hangovers in my day. Oh, God.

(looking around, afraid)

I dreamed I was back home in the
Oval Office. Sexing an intern.

Tucson grabs Luzifer by the ear. Hauls him back into the main
bedroom.

TUCSON

Where's your damnation, mister
Diablo? That fabled fury?

There's a brief SCUFFLE audible from the living room, SLAPS,
and finally, a man groaning.

TUCSON (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Can't even keep your hard-on up for
some vicious domestic violence?

Everybody stares toward the open bedroom door.

LUZIFER (O.S.)

I did not have sex with those
women.

Tucson steps out of the room. Gently closes the door behind
her.

TUCSON

Somebody has to make the adult
decisions around here.

Tucson strides up to Zajax. She pretends to spot his wound
for the first time. She gasps and goes to tend to it.

ZAJAX

It's not as if a little more -
pain. - is gonna keel me over here.

(whispering to her)

My hot Latina fiancé' loves rough
sex. No pain - no gain. Gimme more.
I'm a like'n it.

Tucson takes his arm and TWISTS it. Zajax SCREAMS in agony.

TUCSON

That's absolutely the last
discharge you have into that
Hispanic slut.

She TWISTS his arm again, then throws him away from her.

Tucson motions assertively toward Butch and Hamlett.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
You two. Find pliers and a sewing
kit. The bigger the needle the
better. Barbed wire for thread.

Hamlett and Butch scoot into the house, ransacking closets.

INT. DOWNSTAIRS DEN - NIGHT

A giant, oversized Risk board is spread out across the baby
grand piano.

Butch (jovial) has a huge stack of armies surrounding
Hamlett's last three players.

Tucson mopes in, taking gulps from a bottle of "GRAIN
ALCOHOL."

HAMLETT
Hey, Tucson. The Z said there was
no alcohol on these premises.

TUCSON
That was years ago in a far, far
away place. It's grain alcohol.
Found it in the tool shed. Won't do
squat to our - demon - physiology.

Zajax huddles in a corner, in a pool of blood. His arm is
bandaged - seeping fresh blood. He shivers, almost comatose.

Butch rolls the dice - three sixes.

Hamlett sweeps his last players off the board, not even
bothering to roll the dice.

HAMLETT
What's eating you, Tucson?

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
That bad, eh? Give me a hit.

Hamlett grabs the "GRAIN ALCOHOL" bottle from Tucson and
takes a long gulp.

A bird SLAMS into the window and SHATTERS the outside of the
double pane.

Hamlett stares at the dripping blood and guts, flowing in
grotesque, hellish patterns.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
We've been up here too damn long.
Idle. Time to soak up what it's
like to be alive. To fear death.

A large candle on the table flickers out.

TUCSON
I'd do anything to die right now.
To get this endless torment done
and over with. Constantly hauling
souls down to Hell. Hate it.

A lightning STRIKE SPARKS a RAGING FIRE in a neighbor's house.

Butch yanks his pad out and SKETCHES the scene.

The structure goes up in flames outside the windows.

Light from the blaze throws gruesome shadows into the room.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
Hasn't The Z paid his dues?

They watch the FLAMES outside LEAP to neighboring structures.

HAMLETT
When we're granted parole - will
they just come up here and haul us
back down for an eternity? Damn
depressing, that.

In the darkness, the furnishings loom like gruesome hallucinations.

TUCSON
Is there a God? Some higher power
to put order to this chaos?

Butch pulls out the WEATHER-TECH GIZMO. Dials it. And a thundering downpour douses the flames outside.

HAMLETT
A mute Witness is a sorry
substitute for the Divine. Never
was big on the whole faith thing,
personally.

Tucson grabs the "GRAIN ALCOHOL" bottle and takes a long swig.

She staggers and grabs Butch to keep her balance.

TUCSON

When Luzifer froze the living room,
right after we first got here - the
grandfather clock falling - how did
Oscar the cat get away?

HAMLETT

He was in a straitjacket. No way in
hell he could move that darn cat.

TUCSON

How the F did he get out of our
omni-dimensional handcuffs?

Tucson staggers away from him.

HAMLETT

Damn stuffed feline. Showing up
here, there, and everywhere?

They stare outside as the flames fight to stay alive in the
downpour. A single tear trickles down her face.

TUCSON

Maybe he's gaslighting us. All the
breaks in his hands. Later on, out
of the jacket. He could move the
cat around when we weren't looking.
Except. The legs - screaming with
every passing step? Not likely.

HAMLETT

Shades of the Leviathan erudition.
But. Shit. If Mr. Lucifer heard us
plotting against him? Ouch that.

Tucson hoists the "GRAIN ALCOHOL" bottle for another swig,
but it's empty. She throws it away. CRASH.

TUCSON

I lost all respect for Stanley eons
ago. Raped me on demand - whenever,
wherever, however - it's still
rape, even after a thousand times.

Tucson hurries out at a dead run. Butch looks up - horrified.
Hamlett talks quietly to Butch:

HAMLETT

How about we give them two a little
privacy, Mr. - Witness. This is
likely their last night on God's
green Earth. One precious memory to
last - for an eternity?

Gently, Hamlett takes Butch's arm and leads him away.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tucson eases up as she comes to the last step from the den below.

Zajax sits before the fire, stirring the coals.

He's wrapped a tourniquet on his arm to stop the blood flow.

TUCSON

Code name Z.

ZAJAX

I recollect standing fire watch in
boot camp, up until zero-dark-
thirty in them old, wood barracks.

(quietly)

One last chance to hightail it -
figured five years in-country and
I'd forget her. So not.

Tucson eases down next to him, cuddling real close.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Just got dumped by the love of my
life. Langley Brock by name. Had to
get away, just had to.

Tucson shakes Zajax like a Raggedy Anne doll.

TUCSON

We never forget our first love.
Although. If it's any consolation,
it's rarely our best love.

Tucson unbuttons her blouse, cooing softly.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

El Ron came to my clinic, begging
for help with a demonic possession
disorder. Fascinating case.

ZAJAX

Langley? Her name was Leslie.
Where'd Langley come from?

Tucson strips to her lingerie and gets close to the fire.

TUCSON

Eventually, you just say to hell with everything you ever believed in. You forget all the professional prohibitions. Open your legs, close your eyes, and scream. Oh, it was so good. So, so, so good.

Tucson loosens the belt tourniquet on his arm, and blood visibly gushes around the makeshift bandage.

ZAJAX

Oh, shit. That Witness character. He's the C.I.A. spook who I.D.'d all our targets.

TUCSON

He was huge back then. *Ole' Toro*. Barely fit. Tight as a virgin's vice grip. Ahhhh.

Tucson unbuttons Zajax's shirt and slips it off him.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

I was hoping to find the little boy locked inside of him.

ZAJAX

Villages. Underground bunkers. Ho Chi Minh Trail. Riverboat docks.

Zajax's pants come off next: Confederate flag boxers. They huddle close in the warmth of the fire.

TUCSON

All that blood you're losing, you must be getting weak, tired.

Tucson slips off her bra and tosses it into the fire.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

On the seventh day, God rested. Had comfort sex with the Goddess.

A gentle rain falls outside, lulling Zajax to sleep. They watch her bra go up in a blaze of glory.

Tucson turns to see his eyes flutter and then close, as he relaxes into her bare bosom.

She smiles - a dark, evil smile.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Sleep, brave soul. Sleep.

A huge CRACK of thunder SHATTERS the windows and shakes the rafters. Zajax jolts awake and scrambles out of her embrace.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
God damned lightning.

They look up. The full moon shines is visible in a window.

EXT. COBBLESTONE TURNAROUND - MOONLIGHT

Zajax and Tucson stand in the shadows, watching the storm raging, each one buttoning up their loose clothing.

ZAJAX
Brilliant checkmate, girl. HARD as
I tried, just plain couldn't resist
that Mexican whore act. Touché.

TUCSON
Only following the rules - your
rules.

A sudden bolt of LIGHTNING illuminates a stand-alone gazebo out in the yard.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
A gazebo in the rain. How romantic.
Come on. Third base.

Tucson grabs his hand and leads him through a light drizzle across the yard.

Fingers of LIGHTNING strobe-lights their pace across the lawn.

EXT. ZAJAX'S YARD/INT. GAZEBO

They reach the gazebo and climb into a hammock, arm in arm.

TUCSON
My God, he was good. When he came
into my garden, his hot sauce
exploding out of my groin.

Tucson turns, and Zajax of old habit starts massaging her neck and shoulders. She pulls her blouse off her shoulders.

TUCSON (CONT'D)
We had some good times, back in our
day. Didn't we? Out in the field on
dangerous ops. Under the covers
afterward.

ZAJAX

The best. *Primo eccellente.*

Tucson turns to face him. Zajax eases into her arms.

They kiss passionately and then ease into a more comfortable, reclining position.

Zajax rests his head on her chest. She massages his neck and shoulders, kissing him gently until his eyes flutter and close.

A CAT NAP LATER

Zajax is asleep in Tucson's arms.

Her dark eyes show a wicked gleam in the blustery night as she coos and caresses him into a desperately deep slumber.

Zajax turns to get more comfortable. He TWISTS his bad arm and literally SCREAMS awake - writhing in extreme pain.

Zajax scuttles away from her with one hand - grabs his clothes - staunching the flow of fresh blood from his arm.

He hurries inside, scared and hurt. Tucson curses herself, then hustles to dress - steps inside after him.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Tucson watches as Zajax field wraps his arm.

TUCSON

You fell asleep that time. You're losing your touch, Z.

ZAJAX

Who says I don't want to go back?
It's light-years better than
solitary confinement on the
criminally insane ward at the V.A.

Tucson dry heaves.

TUCSON

Judas, what kind of whiskey is that
in your kitchen. coming back up.

Tucson bolts into the upstairs bathroom and she upchucks violently. Zajax yells after her:

ZAJAX

White lightning from the Ozarks.
Stashed out in the tool shed. You
drank that junk? It still needs
years to distill - decades.

Zajax steps across the room and slips outside.

EXT. NORTH SIDE OF THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Zajax grabs work gloves on top of a woodpile. He hoists an ax
and starts chopping wood, venting enormous rage.

Tucson steps out of the door, wrapping a blanket around
herself.

TUCSON

You're already bleeding like a
stuck pig. All that exertion's
gonna finish the job.

Tucson steps over to wipe a tear off his face, then spreads
the moisture on her own cheek.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

He was so big. I couldn't let go -
my legs, to stop. They - my legs
just clamped on, my body.

Zajax keeps swinging. Cutting. Stacking the firewood.

ZAJAX

Didn't you see his horns?

TUCSON

I found out later that he can
hypnotize his. victims - for short
periods of time to hide them.

Tucson pulls out a weapon. Keeps up a wary search of the
area.

ZAJAX

They'll be coming for me soon, from
the V.A. What am I gonna tell them
this time? Lucifer's Witness I.D.'d
me. Uncle Sam himself came with
Saigon Jane and L.T. Apocalypse.

Tucson sees motion in the trees and UNLOADS her MAGAZINE in
that direction.

She yanks out another magazine, LOCKS and LOADS - scanning the environs.

TUCSON

When he unloaded inside of me.
never before, never since. what an
exquisite ecstasy.

ZAJAX

Say what? The C.I.A. trained you?
They sent you on a spiritual
mission to Hell to rescue the
damned? The Hurricane fucking
Commandos? Are. You. Kidding. Me?

Zajax takes one last swing, then stops. He looks hurt,
vulnerable, and confused.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Dr. Sicily said next time this
happens, they'll chemically
lobotomize me. Say *adios* to The Z.

Tucson steps over, braces one arm behind Zajax's back, and
kisses him deeply.

He hesitates at first and then relaxes into her. They ease
apart.

TUCSON

Serves you right, after all the
pain you caused me when you left.

ZAJAX

Feeling light-headed now. Carefree
even. It's a good feeling, almost
like being in love. No more pain.
Just numbness. Ahhhh.

Tucson wraps her blanket around the both of them, shivering
in their shared angst.

TUCSON

Women in a heavy period make that
mistake all the time. Falling in
love. You're conceding to me?

ZAJAX

I'm tired of being alone. Ten more
years of it, waiting for y'all to
return in force. being afraid night
and day, psychotic, fighting the
V.A. twenty-four-seven.

Zajax cuddles into her open arms. Closes his eyes. Relaxes into her - willing himself to sleep.

TUCSON

Come to Mama. She can make it all
go away. We'll be together again.

Behind Zajax, Papasita climbs onto a neighbor's roof, a rifle strapped to his back.

Papasita gets Zajax in his sights - FIRES. Rounds SPLINTER the wood, inches from Zajax's head.

Tucson aims her pistol and SHOOTS toward Papasita, as they bolt back into the house.

A violent gust of wind blows Papasita off his perch, and he falls into a tree.

INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT

Tucson and Hamlett sit opposite each other at the kitchen table in the candlelight, stirring their coffees.

They watch Zajax - outside the windows, fighting a rash of wildfires caused by lightning strikes.

HAMLETT

His feelings for alias Mamasita
have transferred to you. Kudos.

TUCSON

Look at that fool - showing off for
me. For the real me. For Tucson.

Outside the windows, a lightning bolt STRIKES the metal roof of the gazebo.

Tall, yellow flames dance in the darkness.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Mamasita. What a fool. Never locked
up his heart via no-holds sex.

HAMLETT

Sometimes I think the Virgin Mary
was the real Judas. Now, about that
cat.

Tucson and Hamlett smile companionably at each other, then pick up their coffee cups and step outside.

EXT. GAZEBO - NIGHT

Hamlett and Tucson stare at the gazebo, which blazes away in the dark. Tucson is back to her old, original self now.

TUCSON

Just to be sure, I'm gonna haul
Salome' down to Hell. Yes.

HAMLETT

Get him by the heart strings AND
the gonads? Double jeopardy.

Zajax hustles by them. Towing a garden hose. Running into the flames. He sings his clothes as he douses the flames.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

You swore on the Satanic Bible
before we came up here you'd never
fall for him - again.

TUCSON

He's desperate to end it, once and
for all, one way or the other.

HAMLETT

To willfully fall asleep?

TUCSON

To commit suicide by blood loss.

There's a pregnant silence between them, punctuated by
CHOPPING sounds from the WOODPILE.

HAMLETT

Somehow I figured defeating The Z
would feel better than this.

TUCSON

Makes me feel sick inside, too.

They stand quietly, listening to CHOPPING from the WOODPILE.

INT. MAIN BEDROOM - DAY

There's an EXPLOSION outside. Luzifer jumps up to a sitting
position in bed just as Butch steps into the room.

LUZIFER

It's an ambush. We're under attack.
The accountants are coming. The
I.R.S. I'll have to declare
bankruptcy to protect my fortune.

Luzifer sucks on his thumb, terrified.

Butch sketches Luzifer in this pose, drawing very fast - so fast he finishes the drawing and puts the pad away before Luzifer even notices... ever the inconspicuous Witness.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
Move everything offshore. Hurry.

Butch pulls the pillow away from Luzifer's terrified face.

While Luzifer's face is covered, Butch does a speed sketch of a tiny condom on the floor.

Luzifer gets out of bed and tries to pull his pants on.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
I don't care if you're the
Almighty's Witness or not, I still
got a right to privacy.

Luzifer struggles to get the pants onto his long legs
(farts).

Butch gets a pencil and picks up the tiny condom, shows it to Luzifer - inquisitive look on Butch's face:

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
Don't you dare tell no one. Doh.
You're just a mute Witness. Ain't
nobody in Hell gonna pay you no
heed anyway.

Butch starts laughing (silently), laughing so hard he cries.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
Stop that. I got bull genitals.
Giant hands. I walk tall. I swing a
big bat.

Butch rushes out and SLAMS the DOOR closed.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
(shouting)
It's the meds. My anger management
meds.

A huge branch CRASHES through the window and pins Luzifer down like the avenging Hand of God.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

Luzifer washes dishes in the sink.

Luzifer makes a big mess of it, breaking glasses, and overflowing the sink with suds.

LUZIFER

I'm *El Ron* Luzifer, THE *El Ron*
Luzifer. You can't do this to me.

The three agents, seated at the kitchen table behind Luzifer, sip coffee and nibble on fresh fruits.

They stare blindly out the broken door as Zajax works furiously in the backyard.

HAMLETT

What's that smell? Damn storm must
have backed up the swamp into the
sewer system.

Outside, Zajax rips up the burned fragments of the gazebo deck and CHAIN-SAWS away TREE LIMBS.

LUZIFER

I spent billions buying members of
Congress. Took me years - decades
to build out The Deep State. I
deserve a return on my investment.

They watch Luzifer scrubbing dishes with one eye and Zajax fighting down the flames with the other.

HAMLETT

There's hope, though. The Z
escaped, didn't he?

TUCSON

You call this escaped? The life of
misery he leads up here?

HAMLETT

He's free, isn't he?

As soon as Luzifer empties the sink, Butch piles on a new load of dirty dishes.

TUCSON

To live in total isolation, always
afraid, hunted down, drugged out?

Luzifer slips out of the room when nobody's looking.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

If The Z isn't alive and happy,
then there's no hope for any of us.
None whatsoever.

Terribly frustrated, Butch SLAMS his FISTS into the table.

The exertion causes the demonic tricorder to fall off the table and onto the floor.

Butch squats down to pick up the device, pensive. He looks at Tucson, questioning look:

TUCSON (CONT'D)
Won't hear crayola from me. To hell
with the consequences.

Butch looks at Hamleltt:

HAMLETT
Go for it, Mr. Witness. Been
hankering for the gods to get some
skin in this game for ages now.

Butch dials the gizmo, and the storm clouds move swiftly away.

SUNSHINE dawns bright and cheerful. Butch smiles.

TUCSON
If you can control the weather
without the Raging Bull knowing? Or
maybe he doesn't have five G
capability yet. Not a bad idea.

Tucson and Hamlett watch as Butch eases out the back door.

Butch starts to leave into the backyard, but Hamlett restrains him and sits him down at the table.

HAMLETT
What's eating you, old son?

Butch looks away and tries to get up - they hold him down.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
You found out Stanley walks tall
but carries a small stick.

TUCSON
I've had vaginal hemorrhoids bigger
than his intestate vulgarities.

Butch musters a weak smile.

HAMLETT
We can't live forever, Witness.

TUCSON

Living with all Luzifer's rapes in my memory - humping me twenty-four-seven for decades on end. death would be a blessed relief.

HAMLETT

Not me. I'm young. Hundreds of women ahead - thousands.

TUCSON

Everybody falls for that one. Lucifer has a better P.R. machine than the Nazis.

Butch (furious!) rolls up his sleeves and runs outside to help Zajax extinguish the fire.

Outside, Butch yanks his shirt off and spends all his angry energy, fighting back the fire.

Zajax struggles onto his feet, to help him.

TUCSON (CONT'D)

Luzifer told me he wants The Z to return, be his new understudy.

HAMLETT

Once the Big Gun's cock is gone - poof. - we'll need a new Commander in Thief.

TUCSON

But - The Z? I actually think he might do it, just so he can make things - better. For us. For me.

HAMLETT

The first thing he'd do would put Luzifer on ice and keep him there in an endless loop of torment. Watching romantic comedies.

They chuckle, then laugh, then bend over LAUGHING so hard they cry.

They dry their tears away.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

So, we're agreed? Do just what The Z said and take him down?

TUCSON

He's the boss. Or will be. Might as well get on his good side before he goes Dark Side on us. Like the Chief Executives always do.

HAMLETT

I'm thinking we bring that damn cat along to keep him company.

TUCSON

All for one and one for all.

They shake on it and hurry outside to urge Zajax on.

EXT. COBBLESTONE TURNAROUND - DAY

The three agents and Luzifer hover around a picnic table, nibbling on crackers.

TUCSON

Open sky, sunlight, fresh air -
voila, no more cabin fever.

Tucson cooks burgers on a barbecue pit while Hamlett and Butch prepare vegetables.

Suddenly the WIND PICKS UP.

The sky turns ominously dark.

FUNNEL CLOUDS ERUPT and eject toward the ground.

Butch pulls out his tech gizmo and tries to dial the weather down. He stares at them, tormented:

HAMLETT

That's not weather, Witness.
(pointing to the sky)
Those are reinforcements. Coming to support Luzifer. Lots of them.

TUCSON

We're doomed.

Luzifer comes striding around the corner, full of bluster.

LUZIFER

Yes, you are. Doomed.

Luzifer laughs, loud and raucous.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
 You think I didn't know exactly
 what was going on?

Luzifer points: they all look down the hill as armed reinforcements - men and their vehicles - assemble after their drop from the clouds, heading up the driveway in force.

HAMLETT
 Allow me to speak for Jehovah's
 Witness. He's fed up. Like we all
 are. Time to retire, Mr. Lucifer.

LUZIFER
 What the fuck? Witnesses can't
 participate. Much less sympathize
 against me. That violates every -

Luzifer ducks his head down and bulldozes into Butch, throwing him back against a giant oak tree.

HAMLETT
 Sir? I wouldn't be doing that.

Butch is dazed and disoriented: Luzifer pummels him with angry fists.

Hamlett hauls Luzifer away from a bloodied Butch.

HAMLETT (CONT'D)
 Sir? I don't think he's the Witness
 at all.

TUCSON
 If he were, God would have recalled
 him the second you attacked him.

Butch scribbles on his pad and shows it to Hamlett:

HAMLETT
 He says I'm the Witness, and this
 is my decision. God's decision.

Hamlett and Tucson step calmly back into the shade to watch the prizefight.

Butch grabs a crowbar and takes a long swing - raw iron is inches from Luzifer's head.

Luzifer raises an arm to protect himself: EVERYTHING FREEZES.

Luzifer steps away, studying Butch: The STENO PAD sticks out of his pocket.

Luzifer grabs the STENO PAD, flips through the drawings - RIPS them out of the pad.

LUZIFER

Every freeze-frame. Every other violation of The Great Convention. My private anatomy. Sucker's got a royal straight, aces high.

Luzifer RIPS UP THE DRAWINGS and tosses the shreds to the wind.

Butch's eyes roll in his frozen body, watching.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

I hereby declare The Great Fucking Convention null and void.

Luzifer turns around to face Hamlett and Tucson.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

Let you feel human again, didn't I? Now you'll know, when I drag you back in chains - you'll know just how much you lost.

Luzifer squares off to face Butch (terrified, hurting).

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

I'll haul you down, too. Witness. I'll wrap you in Chains From The Inquisition - feel their torment. Their abomination of desolation.

TUCSON

That's just plain twisted, even for the Devil.

HAMLETT

Excuse me, but without hope, we won't suffer near as much.

TUCSON

Hush. He used The Z to make us suffer that much more. God only knows what he'll do if -

Suddenly, behind Luzifer, Zajax stumbles around the corner, the whole left side of his body thick with blood from the festering wound on his arm.

Zajax carries a wooden box of fresh garden vegetables. The M-60 is strapped around his back.

ZAJAX

Home-grown veggies from my Victory
Garden. Perfect R.X. for your
spiritual constipation.

Zajax sizes up the situation with one quick glance and
FREEZES IN PLACE.

Luzifer sees Tucson and Hamlett focusing on something behind
him, turns - sees Zajax, and goes over to taunt his frozen
figure.

LUZIFER

You gave them hope so I could take
it away. Thank you, Z.

Luzifer SWIPES Zajax's face with long, sharp fingernails,
GASHING the flesh to the bone.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

You made them feel human emotions,
so I could torment them out of
their souls again.

(fury)

Hey, you. Pay attention.

Luzifer turns to Butch and SNAPS his fingers - Butch comes
back alive and runs over to stand near Hamlett and Tucson.

Luzifer grabs a 2x4 plank. Beats on Zajax's back, sides, and
legs. The three agents whisper:

HAMLETT

The Z broke the time-space barrier.

TUCSON

It's Carl Jung's hyper-
consciousness.

Butch yanks out his pad, writes something, and hands it to
Hamlett, who reads it to Tucson:

HAMLETT

Leviathan cometh.

TUCSON

It's the Hurricane Commando
training. The secret missions to
Hell to fine-tune his skill set.

HAMLETT

He did what?

Luzifer BREAKS the BOARD on Zajax's back and grabs another board. Red blood oozes from scratches on Zajax's face.

Tucson runs over to SLAP Zajax on the cheek, wiping the blood off his face in the same smooth motion.

TUCSON

How dare you seduce that - Latina
casino whore. You were promised to
me.

Luzifer steps back to watch Tucson SLAP Zajax a few more times, wiping away each drop of blood as it appears.

Hamlett and Butch hurry to get in Luzifer's line of sight.

HAMLETT

Nix the super-freeze, Luzifer. God
will see it for sure. You know the
penalties. I will not be complicit
to your crimes against the Divine.

Butch grabs Hamlett and points to himself. Hamlett - sudden realization... Yells at Luzifer:

HAMLETT (CONT'D)

Throttling a Witness? That's a
capital offense. One more freeze
and - God. Will. Avenge.

Butch motions toward the reinforcements (who weren't frozen in place) nearing the house.

LUZIFER

God can't do shit if I accomplish
this mission and take The Z back
down to Hell - of his own volition.
At which point. Poof. Reset button.

Luzifer WAVES HIS ARM, and everything goes back to normal. Luzifer bears down on the three agents. He glares at Butch:

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

My people will lock you in our
darkest dungeon for eternity.
(to Hamlett)
Knee deep in your own excrement
like a dairy cow.
(to Tucson)
Bleeding out, drip, drip, drip.
(to Zajax)
Killing babies. Women. Over
and over. Boom. Boom. The horror.
Apocalypse Now - and forever.

HAMLETT

Can't nobody stop you. Sir. Not even God Almighty. Not after you just broke The Great Convention.

They step back away from Luzifer, horrified.

Butch pulls out his STENO PAD, holding it like it was a security shield, terrified of Luzifer's fury.

Meanwhile, behind them, Zajax steps out of his freeze-frame: stares at a table nearby: Oscar sits there.

A hawk is pecking at Oscar. Specks of blood appear in her fur. Fixing to peck out one bright blue eye...

Zajax turns white with shock and horror. He SHOOS the hawk away.

Zajax backs away, weak from the blood loss, now flowing freely from his face wound.

Very gently, Zajax RIPS the tablecloth off the picnic table, makes a small cushion, and gently puts Oscar down.

Zajax turns, finally letting the fury inside him loose:

ZAJAX

Get the fuck off of my private property. I mean it this time.

Zajax yanks the M-60 off his back and levels it at them.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

I can't kill you, but I can sure as Sherlock cause a shitload of collateral damage.

Zajax throws a lever on the M-60 and SPRAYS the ground at their feet, in FULL-AUTOMATIC mode.

HAMLETT

You said it was single-shot.

ZAJAX

Y'all can go home in one piece, as flesh-and-bones, or as eighty-percent-fat ground beef. Your call.

Everybody freezes, waiting for the worst.

A CHAOS of sound and motion overwhelms them - storms the scene. Cop cars. National Guard vans. "Shaitan's Secret Service" agents.

Briefly, everybody looks up at the FLUTTERING CONFEDERATE FLAG, now little more than colored strips of cloth.

LUZIFER
Surrender yourself. I'll promote
Hamlett. Give Butch his voice back.
Free Tucson from her endless
torment. Otherwise - you're fired.

Zajax, struggling under the weight, throws the M-60 to the ground.

Security thugs usher Luzifer toward a black limo as Zajax gently picks up Oscar, chatting quietly to her.

ZAJAX
Relax, girl. We'll go by the vet
tomorrow and get you all fixed up.

Zajax stumbles back toward the house, cradling Oscar in his arms, barely able to put one foot in front of the other because he's so weak and feeble.

ZAJAX (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Let's go watch the fishies. We'll
forget all this real soon. Shazaam.
Gone.

Luzifer breaks away from his security people, yelling:

LUZIFER
Wait. Mr. Zajax. Please.
(the VOICE)
I command you.

Zajax freezes in place.

Luzifer walks slowly up to him, pulls out a fat money clip, peels off a few bills, and hands them to Zajax.

Zajax gets back control of his limbs.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
For your hospitality.

ZAJAX
For the damages. For the vet bills.
For the goddamn meds.

Luzifer pulls off a thick wad of bills. Zajax stares at the money. Biting his lips. Eyes big and black.

Zajax has trouble focusing now. He loses his balance and grabs Luzifer's shoulder to keep from falling down.

Zajax grabs one bill and holds it to the light.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Who carries thousand-dollar bills
for spending money?
(suddenly furious)
Hey. This has your - ugly face - on
it. It's counterfeit.

Luzifer grabs the bill from him and inspects it.

LUZIFER
What? Don't be absurd. That's
Grover Cleveland, just where he
should be.

Mustering his last iota of strength, Zajax swipes the bill back away from him.

ZAJAX
Psych. Devil got your tongue?

LUZIFER
How dare you.

Tucson, Butch, and Hamlett take a step back as Luzifer gets bright red in the face and starts to SMOKE from his ears.

With a motion from Luzifer, the SSS thugs surround Zajax.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
As God is my witness.
(pointing upward)
You screwed up. You took money from
the Devil. Then, you walked away.
You never walk away from Stanley.
Zajax's Rule number thirteen.
Sucker.
(waving all around)
Before witnesses, dozens of
witnesses. You're mine, Mr. Z. All
mine.

Throwing the money away, Zajax grabs Oscar desperately to his chest, horrified.

Tucson steps between Zajax and Luzifer.

TUCSON
I'm sorry, Your Ugliness. The rules
say you need real witnesses, human
witnesses.

Hamlett steps forward, standing beside her:

HAMLETT
 That's right, sir.
 (arms sweeping around)
 We're all minions from Hell here.
 The Z is still a free man.

With a motion from Luzifer, Security Guards draw their weapons and take aim at Tucson and Hamlett, surrounding them.

Luzifer is absolutely furious now. STEAM VENTS from every joint in his now dark-red body as he fumes at Tucson and Hamlett.

LUZIFER
 Who cares if they're fake
 witnesses? All that matters is that
 Zajax believes they're real and
 then gives up of his own free will.

HAMLETT AND TUCSON
 Leave The Z alone.

Luzifer motions toward his soldiers.

The soldiers COCK THEIR WEAPONS and get ready to riddle Hamlett and Tucson with bullets.

Butch steps between the weapons and the two other agents.

Butch holds out his STENO PAD for Luzifer to read:

LUZIFER
 (visibly weakening)
 You're not the Witness?

Everybody stares at Butch, who shakes his head emphatically. Luzifer is suddenly paranoid, looking every which way.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
 Who the fuck is the Witness? I can
 rough up a Witness so long as it's
mission accompli.
 (terrified)
 There are places a whole lot worse
 than Hell.

Butch, smiling - suddenly has Oscar in his arms.

HAMLETT
 Oh, shit. The fucking cat.

TUCSON
 Oh. My. God. Luzifer, you just beat
 the crap out of the Wild Card.

HAMLETT

That gives the Wild Card three
wishes that you goddamn mother
fucking have to grant..

Luzifer looks all around, at the sky. WWWWhhhhiirrrrrrrr.

Everybody looks up at the sound of a US POST OFFICE DRONE
that hovers over the house and drops a package into a giant
chute near the chimney.

The DRONE ZIPS away.

All eyes follow the PACKAGE as it RATTLES down a mail chute
at the side of the house.

The package POPS out of a small swing door at Zajax's feet.

ZAJAX

Somebody called the V.A. pharmacy
hotline. They sent my psycho meds,
same-day delivery.
(looking skyward)
Wow. By whirly-bird airmail.

Hamlett pulls Tucson into the shadows.

Weapons still at the ready, everybody stares at Zajax as he
grabs the package, rips it open, and grabs a fistful of
pills.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Except. I'll be no better than
Oscar here. Comatose, brain dead,
lifeless - stuck in hyperspace for
eternity.

Zajax is on the verge of swallowing the pills.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)

Although. Dr. Sicily. Eagle base to
ground dog.
(thinking hard)
I remember now. I've done this
before. Missions against Hell. Dr.
Sicily is my Psy Ops commander.

Luzifer is fire-engine red from head to horned toe. Full set
of horns. A bull nose. With a gold ring dripping bloody snot.

LUZIFER

Take the Goddamn pills.

Zajax (delirious, weak, fading) cuddles Oscar- hesitates - hands Oscar to Butch, and gets ready to take the pills.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)
You come back to Hell, and I'll
make you King and Dominion forever.
Come on, nobody has that kind of
power - not even God.

Butch (still has Oscar cradled in one arm) hands Zajax his steno pad, then shows three fingers, pointing at Zajax.

Immediately, Luzifer SNAPS his FINGERS, freezing Butch.

ZAJAX
I'm taking the three wishes. Sir.
Nice ring to it, don't you think? I
earned them - tricking you into
doing all those freezes.

Mustering one last resolve of courage, Zajax takes a long step toward Luzifer - right into Stanley's comfort zone.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Except. You're not stuck in
hyperspace, are you Oscar girl? Ha.
Only some of the time.

LUZIFER
Hyperspace? What kind of psychotic
delusion is that?

ZAJAX
Not psychotic. Science. Well,
almost.

Zajax throws the pills at Luzifer's feet.

ZAJAX (CONT'D)
Hah. Now that I know all my waking
nightmares are for real, what good
are your stupid psychoactive meds,
anyway?

LUZIFER
Take the pills, dammit. That's a
goddamn order. I command it.

Zajax steps into Luzifer's beet-red face.

ZAJAX

Out. Off my property. And don't you
even try beating me to a pulp
because you can be damn sure
Jehovah is gonna be my Witness.

Luzifer digs his heels into the ground like a bull going for
a red cape.

STEAM WHISTLES out of his horns.

Trembling with fear, Tucson and Hamlett step behind Luzifer,
each one grabbing one of Luzifer's arms and pulling him back.

HAMLETT

It's time to go, sir.

Flailing around, Luzifer throws them back.

LUZIFER

Get out of here. Curse you all. I
don't need people around me who
defy my orders. *Vamanos*. Or
spreading malicious rumors back
home about my prodigal erectile
function.

HAMLETT

You really should take that anger
management class, sir.

TUCSON

I recommend the graduate seminar.

Butch shivers free of the blue electric freeze spell.

BUTCH

I didn't know they had anger
management classes. Can I -

LUZIFER

Out. Get. Disappear. Before I burn
you all to ashes and regret it.

Luzifer bears down on Zajax.

LUZIFER (CONT'D)

A dark night, a bright morning,
lunch at the corner bistro, comfort
sex with your secretary. When you
least expect it. Boom. I'll be
there. I'll take you back down.

Luzifer STOMPS the ground with one cloven hoof, causing a small EARTHQUAKE.

DRY LIGHTNING strikes, in the shape of a giant HAND OF GOD, pulverizing the ground at his feet.

An alligator slides out of the brush, onto the driveway, then another - hissing, angry, and hungry as hell, lurching toward all the people thereabouts.

Everybody runs for their vehicles and POOF - they disappear.

Butch stumbles and falls.

Oscar tumbles out of his arms - ends up on all fours, hair straight up... ready to pounce.

Gently, Tucson helps Zajax onto his feet. Drapes his arm around her shoulder. Helps him inside.

Seconds later, Tucson runs out, grabs Oscar in her arms, and heads back to the house - eases the door behind her.

In the distance, Butch and Hamlett sneak onto a large pontoon boat, "THE ALLIGATOR GAR," push it off, and drift into the raging Mississippi River current.

They're soon out of sight.

FADE OUT.

THE END