

BLUE SKY

Written by

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FADE IN:

EXT. PLAYGROUND/PARK - DAY

As picture perfect as a dream. Clouds float across a clear blue sky. In a newly renovated playground, happy CHILDREN play underneath.

SAMMIE (6), scrambles up a ladder. Cute and tan - all arms and legs - her pigtails fly behind her like contrails.

Twenty feet away:

KIRK (21) slouches at a bench. Stained army coat, smoking a vape. Clearly not a dues paying member of the "parent" crowd.

Someone sits down next to him. No words, just the soft rustle of fabric. 'Til a butt drops to the wooden bench - hard.

Kirk turns, annoyed.

KIRK
Where the fuck were you, Rodney?
Jerking off?

Who he sees in Rodney's place sparks a frown.

CRAIG. Late thirties, but looks 50s. Unshaven, sallow skin. Dark circles under red eyes.

KIRK
Woah. Not Rodney. My bad.

Craig holds out a hand, instantly all business.

CRAIG
Pleased to meet you. My name's
Craig.

Kirk eyeballs the offering. Not his style.

KIRK
Um, yeah. Enjoy the day n' all.

He subtly inches away from Craig.

The two men sit feet apart. Staring at the playground, they ignore each other's presence; elephants in each other's room.

Craig's eyes stayed glued to Sammie. Kirk shivers, skeeved out. Craig breaks the awkward silence first.

CRAIG

I've seen you in this park a lot.

Kirk shoots the disheveled stranger a "no thanks" look.

KIRK

If you're cruising, this store
ain't open, pal. I got a girl. Hit
on someone else!

CRAIG

You think I'm...? Oh Lord, no. No
offense, but you're not my type.

His eyes follow Sammie further. Kirk jumps to a conclusion.

KIRK

Kids? Gross. I'll call the cops!

Kirk whips out a cell, pretends to dial. Craig just smiles.

CRAIG

We both know you're faking it. From
your proclivities these last few
weeks, I'm betting you and the
police aren't BFFs on speed dial.

Kirk pales. His arm drops.

KIRK

What are you talkin' about?

CRAIG

Some subtle, innocent things I've
seen you do - which add up to more
than the sum of their parts.
Handshakes with something in them.
Money left between bench slots.

KIRK

Holy fuck! You a narc?

CRAIG

Do I look like one?

KIRK

Undercover? I've seen worse.

CRAIG

If I was, you think our
conversation would have gotten this
far?

Sammie scampers over to LINDA (30s) - a willowy blonde, she's wholesome beauty personified.

Craig watches carefully. Kirk screws his face up in disgust.

KIRK

Undercover or not, you're a perv.
How's about I go tell Ms. Becky
there how interested you are in her
little girl?

CRAIG

Her? What do think that would
accomplish?

KIRK

It'll get you outta my face and off
this bench. Maybe in a jail cell.
That'd be a start.

Craig waves to Linda. Glancing up, she smiles, waves back.
Kirk strangles on his next words, shocked.

KIRK

You know her?

CRAIG

We've been married seven years. So
"know her"? Yeah, I do. Though she
still surprises me. Now and then.

KIRK

And that's -

CRAIG

My daughter. Her name's Sammie.

Craig's voice cracks. He hides it with a smile.

CRAIG

She just turned six last month.
Maybe I'm biased, but I swear she
gets cuter every year. Linda's my
soul mate. But Sammie? She's the
light of...well, my life.

Kirk stares at Craig's clothes and face - and compares them
to Linda and Sammie. It's like the old child's game: which of
these things doesn't fit?

KIRK

She waved back. So you ain't splits-
ville?

Craig looks baffled by the question. Until..

CRAIG

Oh. We don't seem to be in the same league, right? Ever since I've been sick, dressing isn't the priority I once made it out to be. Hey, at least I wore jeans today and ditched the sweats. You should see me in my bathrobe...

(beat)

Or not. Like I said, this is no pickup line. I'm a happily married hetero.

(points to Linda)

Who in their right mind would cheat on that?

KIRK

So - you're sick?

CRAIG

Stage 4 cancer. It all started benign enough. The back pain had me subsidizing my chiropractor's vacations for a year. By the time they realized it was something more, it'd metastasized to my brain. Four secondary tumors. Inoperable areas, of course.

KIRK

Oh. Shit, man. I'm sorry, that sucks. And I'm sorry I thought...

CRAIG

I know I look like crap these days. And I *feel* like shit, even more.

KIRK

You sure they're inoperable?

CRAIG

Without ending up a vegetable? According to 2nd and 3rd opinions, cutting them out's a no-go.

KIRK

So what about, y'know - chemo?

CRAIG

Been there. Done that. It doesn't work.

(sarcastic)

Though it's helped innovate the
fabulous the Adams Family vibe I'm
rocking now.

Kirk stops to think. Puffs his vape.

CRAIG

I know we just met formally. But
take it from this cancer patient:
even if the evidence isn't all in
yet, smoking that's probably not
worth the risk.

KIRK

Lemme guess: you're hitting me up
for pain relief?

CRAIG

Smart guy. I wish that were true.
They gave me a stash of CBD oil
with THC. Which was fun for awhile.
But now?

Craig beams; a ghoulish look on that pale face. He scootches
close to Kirk on the bench, voice pitched low.

KIRK

I figure, you probably have access
to the strongest stuff imaginable.
The kind if taken all at once -

Kirk stops vaping. Coughs.

CRAIG

See? That stuff's bad news.

KIRK

You wanna OD on purpose? Christ!

CRAIG

Christ has nothing to do with this.
But that's my point.

Craig shoots a longing look towards Sammie and Linda, now on
the teeter-totter. Mother-daughter bonding time.

KIRK

They look mad happy. Do they know
why you're here?

CRAIG

Sammie? Of course not! Linda doesn't suspect why I'm chatting with you. But we've discussed our future options. Several times.

KIRK

She's cool with you offing yourself?

CRAIG

No, but she respects my wishes. And doesn't think I'd really go through with it. So, is that something you could procure? I was a financial analyst before the diagnosis. Bring me something guaranteed to be pleasant and quick -

KIRK

But if you test it out, and find it "lacking"? You won't be around for refund time.

CRAIG

I'm a good reader of people. Let's just say I trust you to do right. And I'll compensate you well up front. Maybe enough you could start a legal weed business somewhere? A venture you're already expert in, but with a lot less legal risk.

KIRK

I dig that. When do you need it by?

CRAIG

Take your time. It's not like I've got a dead line.

(chuckles darkly)

Oops. Lousy choice of words. I'll just stash it in a safe, where it can't be reached, and no-one knows. Not Sammie. Or Linda. It'll just be my peace of mind, waiting for when the time's right. Does that mean we've got a deal?

Kirk stares up at the clear blue sky.

KIRK

To help you commit suicide? Dunno. According to my moms, that's a sin.

Craig's face twists in a sarcastic smile.

CRAIG

I'm sure your "mom's" objects to other things you do, drug business man. But look at it from my vantage point: you think it's right to arrest people for using your - uh - goods?

KIRK

Fuck no! If they ain't hurtin' no-one, it's their god-damned body. They've got a right...

CRAIG

(soft)

That's my point, too.

KIRK

Yeah, but your family's gonna hurt for years. You'll be gone and buried - so more than you.

Craig gazes soberly after Sammie. So young, and full of life.

CRAIG

I'll be dead soon, either way. But if I get to the point where all I am is a bundle of pain in a bed, and stripped of dignity: what child should be forced to remember their parent that way? If that happened to *your* father, how would you feel?

KIRK

Him?!? That asshole skipped when I was two. Alive or dead - who fucking cares?

CRAIG

I care about Sammie, more than she'll ever know. Though I'm making a few video recordings of me for her to watch, for those special moments in her life I'll miss. Her first prom. First day at college. Every time I think it over, another milestone comes to mind. And better I do this while I look somewhat presentable, and not quite a zombie... yet. I want her to remember me only in *good* ways.

He turns a wan face to Kirk.

CRAIG
Mr. Business Man - we got a deal?

KIRK
Yeah. I guess we do.

CRAIG
How much? And when do we meet?

KIRK
(shrugs)
Gimme a week to get the primo
stuff. And dude? No charge. This
one's on me.

The two lock eyes. Craig holds out his hand one more time.

CRAIG
I'm Craig.

KIRK
I'm Kirk.

CRAIG
(chuckles)
You mean like the Captain?

KIRK
Say what?

CRAIG
In Star Trek? Hey, it's better than
being named after "Kevorkian."
(off Kirk's look)
Never mind. I'll meet you right
here, in one week. Same bench. Same
time.

Craig stands; it takes more effort than one might think.

CRAIG
I won't bring the girls then, of
course. I'll be going solo.

KIRK
Good call. They don't gotta know.

Kirk watches Craig approach the playground. The sick man's
almost bowled over by Sammie's over zealous knee hug.

SAMMIE
Daddy!

Kisses from Linda follow.

Coming up for breath, Craig glances at Kirk and nods.

He walks off between Linda and Sammie, holding their hands; both affectionately, and for support.

Watching the family's departure, Kirk sniffles. Wipes a tear.

Suddenly revolted by his vape, he shoves it in a pocket.

He stuffs a dime bag of weed between bench slots. Then gets up and walks off.

Suddenly, he stops. Hesitates. Turning, Kirk gazes towards where Craig and his girls have gone.

KIRK

See you next week. Lucky bastard.

FINAL FADE OUT: