

GRIM

By:

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FADE IN:

1. INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

We see the floor of an abandoned warehouse. The facility is dilapidated and very dirty with machinery strewn about. The camera moves forward and lifts until we see TINO, male 46, dead on the ground with multiple gunshots to the chest.

We turn and see GRIM, male 30s, dressed in a dark gray suit appear from behind a pillar walking towards TINO, gazing at a clipboard. He wears a nametag.

ON NAMETAG

His name: GRIM is shown alongside a notation which reads: FIRST YEAR.

ON TINO

Tino sits up and pokes at his wounds. He is alarmed and attempts to stand. However, after strenuous effort and groaning, he crumples back to the floor, now on his back looking at the upside-down view of Grim.

TINO

(alarmed)

Hey, you! What the hell's goin' on here?!

GRIM looks up from his clipboard briefly, blinks twice, and returns to the papers.

TINO

Hey! You deaf or something?!

ON PAPERS

We see his name: TINO, his occupation: DRUG DEALER, and his CAUSE OF DEATH: GUNSHOT WOUNDS along with other miscellaneous personal information.

ON GRIM

Grim looks up at Tino who is now desperately scooting away on his stomach in an attempt to distance himself.

Grim quickly looks at his watch, sighs, and walks towards Tino.

Tino, upon hearing Grim's approaching footsteps, grabs an empty beer bottle and hurls it backward in Grim's general direction, but misses.

Grim continues walking unfazed.

Tino is now once more repeatedly attempting to get up and run, but he keeps stumbling back to the floor. After one last grand attempt, he collapses on the ground, exhausted.

Grim leans down and grabs Tino by the belt. Grim begins dragging him out of the warehouse without looking up from his clipboard.

Tino starts throwing weak kicks towards Grim, most missing.

TINO

(struggling to move correctly)

Hey, hey, hey- let me go, where're you taking me?!

GRIM

(disinterested)

Oh- Hell.

TINO

(defensively)

What? What are you talking about!?

Tino finally lands a kick to the groin, and Grim drops Tino in frustration but shows no sign of pain.

GRIM

(now fed up)

Look, I'm your reaper. I'm taking you to Hell, alright? And I've got a tight schedule, so cooperate with me here.

Grim begins to lean down to take Tino away, but he quickly draws his pistol and fires a bullet straight at Grim's chest.

Grim recoils back, but shows no sign of pain. We see a bullet hole in the front of his suit, but Grim calmly reaches in and produces the smashed bullet, which he then tosses it at Tino's feet.

TINO

(horrified and confused)

The hell?!

GRIM

You can't kill a reaper with-

Tino empties the rest of the clip on Grim who stumbles back once more. We see several more bullet holes in the suit, but Grim is unphased.

Grim sighs and shakes himself, sending all of the bullets falling to the floor.

GRIM (CONT.)

-bullets. Now, can we please get on with this?

TINO

(stunned)

Wh- how di-?

Grim leans down to grab Tino's belt once more.

TINO

(pleading)

Well, hold on now, Mr. Grim- what's all this about? I- I did some good, didn't I?

(unconfidently to himself)

Didn't I?

GRIM

Did you?

TINO

(thinking)

But I...

Grim interrupts.

GRIM

(annoyed)

Ok, time to go.

Grim grabs kicking and screaming Tino by the belt, and drags him away.

BOSS (V.O)

You're behind pace- again.

CUT TO:

2. INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - EVENING

We see Grim sitting in a chair behind a table with a single light trained on his face in a dark room. Across the table sits the backlit silhouette of BOSS, male 40-50s. He is looking at a file with Grim's recent job performance.

GRIM

I'm going as fast as I can, ok? This job's tou-

BOSS
(interrupts)
Look, the only reason you even have this job is because we're so short-staffed and people won't stop dying. Is it really too much to ask for you to do it right?!

GRIM
I'll try, ok? It's just, you know, these people don't exactly want to-

BOSS
(interrupts)
7,000. That's the number of jobs each hour. And we're only sitting just north of 100 reapers on payroll right now- so that only gives you around a minute per job, ok?

GRIM
(quietly)
That's impossible.

BOSS
(yelling)
Then tell me why all the other reapers are capable of staying on pace and picking up your slack!

GRIM
(to himself)
So we're doing fine.

The room goes silent, and Boss glares at Grim who knows he spoke out of place.

BOSS

You exist for one reason- to reap these damn souls. Now if I were you, I'd get back out there and start taking my job seriously.

GRIM

(quietly)

I'll try.

Silence.

BOSS

You want this job?

GRIM

I-

BOSS

(interrupts)

You want this job?

GRIM

Look-

BOSS

(interrupts)

Do you want this job?

Grim looks at Boss.

GRIM

(exhaustedly)

Yes.

BOSS

(escalating)

Then get. It. Together!

Boss slams the folder shut.

FADE OUT:

FADE IN:

3. INT. GRANDMA'S HOUSE - EVENING

Grim, dressed in a tan sweater, white button-up shirt underneath, khakis, and brown dress shoes, sits beside the dead body of BETHANY, female late 70s, on a sofa in a living room.

Bethany slowly wakes and sees Grim looking at his watch.

GRIM

Ready to go?

BETHANY

(confused)

Wha?- I-

GRIM

(obliviously)

Ok, great.

He grabs her arm and suddenly jerks her to her feet.

Bethany screams in discomfort.

BETHANY

(terrified)

What are you doing to me?!

GRIM

(frustrated shouting)

Please, I'm on a schedule!

BETHANY

(shouting)
And I was too before I died!

Grim releases his grip and looks at her. He starts to feel guilty for how he has treated her.

BETHANY
Besides- that's no way to treat an elder.

GRIM
Well, I'm actually ol-

BETHANY
(offended)
No way to treat someone with wrinkles.

Grim looks down at the floor.

BETHANY
I hoped my angel would at least have *some* decency.

GRIM
Would you- uh... Would you like me to make you some tea?

BETHANY
(mild sarcasm)
Chamomile if it's *no* trouble, please.

Grim makes his way to the kitchen and begins preparing the tea, anxiously looking at his watch.

CUT TO:

Bethany looks at the coffee table in front of her and focuses on a picture of her grandkids. She begins softly weeping.

CUT TO:

The tea kettle whistles and Grim pours a cup of tea. He then enters the livingroom and hands her the cup. He notices her crying.

GRIM

(concerned)

Is everything alright?

BETHANY

It's just- I'll never get to see what
they grow up to be.

GRIM

Yes, you will.

BETHANY

(Still crying)

I never had a life beyond my family.

GRIM

(confused)

I'm sorry?

BETHANY

I was never anything more than a
homemaker. But I look at those sweet
children; I see their faces light up
when they see me in the crowd at their
ball games or their school concerts and
I know that I wouldn't have done it any
other way. Children need their
grandparents in a special way. A way
they never need anything else. Will
they still need me?

Grim offers her his handkerchief and she wipes her eyes.

GRIM

Do you still need your grandmother?

Bethany smiles.

BETHANY

Every day.

Grim looks down at his watch one final time with a slight grimace and offers his hand to Bethany.

GRIM

(apologetically)

Now I'm sorry, but we really do have to go.

She nods.

BETHANY

(genuinely.)

Thank you.

Grim gives a subtle smile, takes her hand, and they exit the house.

They walk down the empty street at sunset.

FADE OUT:

4. INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - EVENING

Grim is back in the interrogation room. They both sit in dead silence.

BOSS

What don't you understand?

Grim stares at the table.

BOSS

Your job is not to comfort the deceased. You show up and you deliver them to processing- that's it. No pleasantries- no chit-chat.

GRIM

(defensively)

These people just died- I can't just... It won't happen again.

BOSS

If it does, you're done. The next time you slip up, it's all over.

GRIM

(concerned and nervous)

What- what would happen to me? Would I go to- Hell?

BOSS

(somberly)

You don't even have a soul. You were specifically created for the job and nothing more. Heaven and Hell are reserved for the souls we as a department deliver- we can't take up space with decommissioned employees. Look, should you be fired- everything you are, everything you were, everything you thought you could be, just-

CUT TO BLACK:

CUT TO:

Closeup of Grim's wide-open eyes.

BOSS

This work is our only purpose. Do you understand?

GRIM

(whispering)

Yes.

Grim closes his eyes.

CUT TO BLACK:

CUT TO:

5. INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Grim opens his eyes.

NOAH, male 12, rests in bed. Grim, dressed in a gray vest, dress pants, and brown dress shoes, stands at the doorway, anxiously flipping through his clipboard without looking up.

ON PAGE

We see NOAH at the top and CAUSE OF DEATH: TERMINAL ILLNESS.

ON GRIM

Grim takes a deep breath.

GRIM

(gently)

Come on, Noah. Time to go.

Noah slowly sits up and is startled by Grim's presence.

NOAH

(scared)

Who are you?

GRIM

I'm here to take you home. Are you ready?

NOAH

(confused)

Home? I *am* home.

GRIM

Bud, you're- you know... you're passed on.

Grim sees Noah is lost.

GRIM

(bluntly)

Noah, you're dead. Now can we please get going- I've got a schedule to keep.

NOAH

(distressed)

Dead?

Noah's eyes well up with tears.

Grim

Buddy, no, I-

NOAH

(crying)

I don't want to go. I don't want to leave my family. I-

GRIM

(comforting)

Hey, hey- you're going to Heaven. It's going to be ok.

NOAH

Heaven?

GRIM

(questioning himself)

It's a great place... It's um, I mean I haven't actually been there but I'd assume it's decent- at least?

NOAH

How can you say it's good if you haven't been there?

GRIM

(confused)

Well you know- heaven is generally thought of highly. Look, I just take people there- I don't get to visit.

Grim takes a look at his watch.

NOAH

Could you visit if you wanted to?

GRIM

(softly)

I really don't know... Are you ready to see for yourself?

NOAH

Are they gonna miss me?

GRIM

(startled)

Who-? Your parents?

NOAH

Yeah- how will they know I'm ok?

GRIM

(gently)

Noah, I think they know where you're headed. Plus, you're not sick anymore. They'll take comfort in that.

NOAH

I guess you're right. I'm really gonna miss them.

GRIM

(smiling)

That's the great thing about life- you'll all be reunited one day. No matter what happens, you can always know that.

NOAH

Do I have to go?

Grim closes his eyes.

CUT TO BLACK:

BOSS (V.O)

The next time you slip up, it's all over. Everything you are, everything you were, everything you thought you could be, just-

CUT TO:

Grim opens his eyes and looks at Noah.

GRIM

(clears throat)

Actually, is there... anywhere else
you'd like to go before I take you
home?

NOAH
(surprised)
Oh! well... Have you ever tried
fishing?

GRIM
(smiling)
I'd be willing to give it a go.

CUT TO:

5. EXT. POND - EVENING

Grim and Noah sit side by side on a bank, lines cast into a pond. They sit quietly. Noah focuses intensely on his line while Grim deeply ponders what he has just committed to.

GRIM
Noah, can I ask you something?

NOAH
(harshly whispers)
Shh! You're going to scare the fishes!

GRIM
(laughing)
You know we can't actually catch any,
right?

NOAH
(disappointedly)
Yeah, I know. I just haven't been here
in a while. This is nice, fish or no
fish.

GRIM

Why did you choose this place?

NOAH

It's my favorite thing to do. Dad
always brought me here when we could
get away from the hospital.

GRIM

That sounds really nice. It's so
peaceful here...

They listen to the calming waters and watch their lines bob up
and down in the tide.

NOAH

You sure I'm not going to Hell?

GRIM

Why would you think that otherwise?

NOAH

It's just- I'm not always good-
sometimes I get jealous.

GRIM

Jealous of what?

NOAH

The other kids. They get to live
normally- every day. They go to school,
play sports, you know, they get to do
stuff.

GRIM

And I bet none of them have the bond
you and your dad share. The truth is,
we're all dealt different hands- I

think life is about making the best of
what we're given.

NOAH

I'm glad I was given you.

Grim smiles.

GRIM

Me too.

Noah looks up at Grim and takes a deep breath.

NOAH

I think I'm ready.

GRIM

Ready? Are you sure?

NOAH

Yep.

GRIM

(stammering)

But, we could- fish some more or-

NOAH

(giggling)

We can't even catch the fishes.

Grim smiles and starts tearing up.

NOAH

What's wrong?

GRIM

Oh, it's- it's nothing. Just...

Grim takes a deep breath.

GRIM
(soaking it in)
Today is my last day.

NOAH
(confused)
Are you- retiring?

GRIM
(nodding)
Yeah- retiring.

NOAH
Well, I'm glad I got to meet you. You
should come see me in Heaven sometime.

GRIM
I'd love to, kid. I really would.

Noah gives Grim a tight hug.

NOAH
Thank you, Grim.

GRIM
Thank you, Noah.

They continue to embrace, then Grim offers Noah his hand.

GRIM
Shall we?

Noah takes it and they walk towards the sunset.

FADE OUT:

THE END.

