

"The Egyptian"

Screenplay by

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FADE IN:

EXT. DENVER, COLORADO -- DAY

Skyscrapers huddle at the base of the Rocky Mountains.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD

Black birds perch wing-to-wing on power lines that dog a gravel road across the prairie. Tall grass grows in the gully. A bull snake lies nearby, coiled in the sunshine.

A SCUFFLING sound. Dusty sneakers on gravel. A nine-year-old boy shuffles along. He's wearing shorts and a t-shirt. Nice-looking kid, knobby knees, skinned elbow.

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK

A pickup truck barrels down the dirt road, kicking up dust. In the truck bed lies a small body wrapped in plastic, a pick and a shovel.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK CAB

Loud MUSIC plays on the radio. The driver, a scruffy man with Hippie hair, is wearing a flannel shirt and blue coveralls. LEROY DISSEL clutches the wheel with burly hands. His arms are heavily tattooed. There's white powder under his nose.

The digital clock on the dash reads: 3:04.

Leroy takes a sugar donut from an open box on the seat beside him and stuffs it in his mouth. More white powder.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD

The boy walks along without a care in the world. Behind him, the pickup truck draws near, churning dust from the tires.

The snake lifts its head, flicks its tongue, suddenly alert.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK CAB

Through the dirty windshield, Leroy spots the boy and slows the truck. The clock reads 3:05.

EXT. GRAVEL ROAD

The boy turns to the sound of the approaching pickup, grins wickedly, turns forward again, keeps walking.

Odd how the tall grass quivers as he passes.

Bearing down on the boy, the pickup skids on gravel. Stops.

Loud music.

Black birds take panicked flight. The snake slithers into the grass.

The boy stops walking, turns to the truck. Dust wafts by.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK CAB

Leroy's beefy hand turns the radio dial down, killing the loud music.

The clock reads 3:06.

LEROY
Need a ride, boy?

The boy approaches the open window, not the least bit afraid of the stranger, looks in at the box of donuts on the seat.

BOY
Can I have a donut?

LEROY
Sure.
(toothy grin)
Hop in.

BOY
Gee thanks, mister.

He gets in, SLAMS the door, grabs a donut, and starts eating. Leroy guns the engine. The pickup RUMBLES down the gravel road.

The clock reads 3:07.

Sweat beads on Leroy's forehead. He swipes it off with the palm of his right hand and then rubs it on his coveralls.

The boy, looking forward, chews the donut, unafraid.

Leroy licks his lips, slowly moves his right hand across the seat toward the boy's bare leg. He seems to not notice, and when Leroy's beefy fingers are close enough, he grabs the boy's thigh. The boy recoils, drops the donut.

BOY (CONT'D)
Let me go!

LEROY
Now don't be like that, boy.

BOY
Leave me alone!

Leroy is driving with his left hand, backhands the boy with his right. SMACK! The boy CRIES out, cowers by the door.

LEROY

Shut up or I'll hurt you worse than that.

Leroy LAUGHS, turns up the radio. Loud MUSIC again.

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK

The pickup turns off the gravel road and onto rutted dirt, careens around sharp bends, down steep inclines and into a ravine, far from the gravel road.

EXT. UNDER A SHADE TREE

It's breezy. Shady. Birds CHIRP. Peaceful. Until the pickup ROARS up CRUNCHING dirt. The engine stops.

There are four mounds of dirt under the tree. Shallow graves.

INT. PICKUP TRUCK CAB

Cowering, the boy glances at the clock. 3:14

Leroy turns to him, arm on the seat back, hand moving closer.

LEROY

Your momma know where you are, boy?

The boy sits up, smiles. Unexpected.

BOY

It's very nice here.

LEROY

A good place to die.

BOY

Yes. I believe I will kill you when the clock reaches 3:16.

LEROY

Ya smart-ass little bastard.

He grabs the back of the boy's neck. With his left arm, the boy easily swipes Leroy's hand away and grabs a handful of hair on the back of his head. An odd stone knife materializes in the boy's right hand. He presses the blade to Leroy's throat and speaks in a man's voice.

BOY

Get one thing straight, Leroy Dissel.

LEROY

You know my name?

BOY
Amun has condemned you to die.

LEROY
(struggling)
What the hell are you talkin' about?

The boy retracts the knife and shows Leroy the blade. It morphs into five Polaroid pictures fanned out like playing cards.

BOY
Remember these poor kids?

INSERT five pictures of wide-eyed children tied and gagged.

LEROY
Where did you get those?

BOY
Under your mattress.

LEROY
You know where I live?

The boy sets the pictures on the dashboard, nice and neat.

BOY
I'll leave them here for the cops.

Leroy tries to push the boy away, but can't.

LEROY
No cops. I ain't goin' to jail!

The stone knife reappears in the boy's hand.

BOY
You should be so lucky.

The clock reads 3:15.

BOY (CONT'D)
I'm going to pluck out your eyes and
claw out your heart.

LEROY
You're just a little kid.

BOY
I'm Horus, the Egyptian, and I'm
here to kill you.

LEROY
Go fuck yourself.

Again the boy presses the knife to Leroy's throat, this time drawing a thin line of blood.

BOY

Five thousand years I've been killing
bad guys for God, but guess what,
Leroy.

Leroy grits his teeth, hisses through spittle. Horus BANGS
Leroy's head against the pickup's back window.

BOY (CONT'D)

Guess what, Leroy.

LEROY

Let go of me, damn it!

BOY

I love my job.

The clock ticks over to 3:16.

BOY (CONT'D)

(smiles)

It's time to die, but first, how
about a cheering section to see you
off?

LEROY

Cheering section? What...?

Ghost kids rise from their shallow graves. Zombie-like
translucent bodies draped in shredded plastic approach the
truck, gather around the hood.

There's BANGING from behind the cab. The ghost child in the
pickup bed has shredded his plastic burial shroud and is now
POUNDING on the roof.

The ghost kids start BANGING clenched fists on the truck
hood. BANG. BANG. BANG. All around. Louder and louder.
Their black-rimmed eyes stare at Leroy.

Terror rakes across Leroy's face. He's squirming to get away.

LEROY (CONT'D)

No!

BANG. BANG. BANG.

BOY

Goodbye, Leroy.

Horus transforms into the Falcon God of Egypt, the body of a
man, the head of a falcon, sharp curved beak, raging red
eyes. He fills the entire truck cab. Strikes!

EXT. PICKUP TRUCK

A guttural SCREAM. The truck rocks on its springs. Then stillness. The ghost children dissolve into thin air. A falcon flies out the passenger window, pumps graceful wings up and away into the blinding sun.

EXT. MERCEDES SEDAN

Under the blinding sun, a Mercedes sedan is parked off the road. The falcon swoops in and transforms into a handsome man wearing a white shirt, black slacks, and expensive shoes. HORUS moves to the driver's door and gets in.

INT. MERCEDES SEDAN

In the passenger seat sits ELELETH, a small bald man with bug eyes and a fashionable two-day beard. He wears a green shirt and brown shorts.

ELELETH

Is it finished?

There's a sandy quality to his voice.

HORUS

I found Leroy's dumping ground, four graves, one body in the truck bed.

Eleleth sighs.

ELELETH

The parents will be relieved the bodies have been found.

HORUS

(chokes up)

Now the kids can rest in peace.

Horus busies himself by fastening his seat belt.

Confused, Eleleth examines Horus.

ELELETH

What's with you, Horus? Got a soft spot for kids these days?

He looks away from Eleleth.

HORUS

It's Isaac.

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM -- DAY

(OVER) the THUMP and HISS of a ventilator, a mobile of planets teeters above a crib where four-year-old ISAAC lies, a tube attached to his small throat, wires taped to a bony chest,

his eyes wide open in a blank stare. A yellow rubber duck lies next to him.

HORUS (V.O.)

Only four years on this earth and already the Eternal Amun is taking him from his family.

ELELETH (V.O.)

God must have a good reason.

INT. MERCEDES SEDAN

HORUS

Come on, Eleleth!

He bangs a fist on the steering wheel.

HORUS (CONT'D)

What reason could justify the killing of one so innocent? So Young? You tell me!

ELELETH

It's not for us to know.

INT. ISAAC'S BEDROOM

Standing at Isaac's crib, RUCHEL and her six-year-old granddaughter, SHAINA, look over him, their eyes shining with tears.

HORUS (V.O.)

All I know is the hopelessness I see in grandma Rachel's eyes. And his sister, Shaina, she's much too young to endure such senseless sorrow.

INT. MERCEDES SEDAN

ELELETH

Human suffering is nothing new to you. In five thousand years you've seen it all.

HORUS

But this time it's different.

He grips the steering wheel hard.

HORUS (CONT'D)

It's right next door. Fate or Amun's will, I'm not sure which, led me to them. To live close to them. And I sense there's something special about Isaac. I don't know what it is... but I'm drawn to protect him.

ELELETH

The same way you were drawn to Leroy Dissel?

HORUS

The Eternal doesn't speak to me, he touches my heart, and I know what to do. But I don't know how to save Isaac.

ELELETH

Can't you write the secret name of God in Heaven on his forehead?

HORUS

That'll only work if he's related to me. By blood. He's Jewish. I'm Egyptian. Besides, that would make him immortal, like me. I wouldn't do that to the poor kid.

ELELETH

Yeah, look at the mess it's made out of your life.

Horus starts the engine, all business now.

HORUS

Don't you have something better to do?

ELELETH

Okay, okay. Get the cops. I'm on it.

Eleleth dissolves into sand, and every grain is taken up by a gust of wind and hurled out the open window.

EXT. DENVER, COLORADO -- DAY

A cluster of downtown skyscrapers surrounded by city sprawl.

EXT. RED BRICK DUPLEX

Two porches with facing stoops. On the right-hand porch, the old woman, Ruchel, rocks in a wooden rocker. She's knitting. An electric menorah glimmers in the window behind her. Lying on her stomach on the floor beside her, Shaina wags her feet in the air as she colors in her coloring book. The SOUND of a car approaching causes them to look to the street.

The Mercedes sedan pulls up to the curb. Horus gets out. He's carrying a briefcase like a businessman. Shaina runs to greet him halfway up the sidewalk.

SHAINA
Horus, Horus, come see my picture.

She takes his hand and tugs him along.

HORUS
Okay, Shaina. Okay.

She leads him up the stoop. Ruchel sets aside her knitting.

RUCHEL
Hard day at work?

HORUS
(nods)
Hello, Ruchel.

SHAINA (O.S.)
See my picture, Horus.

Shaina holds up the coloring book for Horus's inspection.

HORUS
Very nice.

RUCHEL
Another Picasso.

HORUS
How's Isaac?

RUCHEL
It's time I check on him. Care to
join me?

Horus sets down his briefcase.

HORUS
Yes, of course.

She struggles up on stiff legs and leads the way inside,
Shaina trailing behind.

INT. RUCHEL'S LIVING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

They walk through a shadowy room, very neat. The TV is on a
news channel. Photographs line the fireplace mantel. Horus
stops, picks one up.

It's a picture of a young woman, dark hair, big nose.

HORUS
Attractive.

SHAINA
That's my mom.

HORUS
She should be here.

Ruchel snatches the picture from Horus's hand.

RUCHEL
We're better off without her. She abandoned us, her Jewish roots, took up with drugs and strange men, didn't care who. One carried the Tay-Sachs gene.

HORUS
And she's a carrier too.

RUCHEL
(looking at the picture)
Might have been what drove her away. We take precautions, you know, get tested, registered, to keep Tay-Sachs from spreading, keep Tay-Sachs from killing our children before the age of five.

SHAINA
I don't have Tay-Sachs.

Ruchel returns the picture to the mantel.

RUCHEL
Genetic roulette. Shaina got lucky. Isaac didn't.

Ruchel moves toward the hallway.

RUCHEL (CONT'D)
It's a curse on all of Israel.

Horus follows her down the hall with Shaina close behind.

HORUS
Why would God curse his chosen people?

RUCHEL
Goes way back, Horus, to the sins of the mother.

A SWISH. A dark form rushes past and dissolves into the shadows. Horus stops, shifts his eyes, shows his teeth.

SHAINA
What's wrong, Horus?

He takes Shaina's hand.

HORUS
Stay close to me.