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QUANTUM LEAP

Oct. 24, 1974

Written

by

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ACT ONE

FADE IN

INT. SMALL BOXING RING - NIGHT - SAM

in boxing trunks. Sam is in Just Arrived disorientation discovers he's in boxing trunks, gloves, a boxing ring -- POW -- he's getting hit by a big black fighter -- Sam holds his gloves up defensively, stepping back -- jab, jab, he's hit again -- bright lights -- clouds of cigar smoke -- crowd roars as one large animal -- (second rate) arena -- Sam dodges, weaves, trying to avoid:

A BLACK FIGHTER

Sweaty, angry, powerful, throwing punches, attacking ---

SCENE

Sam's in retreat -- crowd reacts, boos -- Sam glances around, wondering where he is, when he is -- then he's pinned against the ropes -- taking a beating -- meanwhile:

SAM (V.O.)

...I couldn't have popped in as a boxing fan, oh no, or even the ref -- nah, too easy...I have to suddenly be the punching bag! I'd better pretend I'm a fighter...throw a token punch at least....

That's all it is -- but it connects -- and Sam's opponent suddenly goes divergent on all three axes -- Sam stares, he can't believe it -- his opponent is flat on his back, unconscious -- the referee holds Sam's arm up in the air -- he won! The crowd now cheers him, the ring fills with people mainly from his corner where Sam's manager (Gomez, fifty, former fighter) appears putting a green satin robe on Sam that says "KID CODY", then Sam is ushered out of the ring -- a winner!

INT. LOCKER ROOM

The door explodes in with people: Gomez, then Chalky, an old gopher/assistant carrying bucket, seltzer bottle and towels, then Sam, hangers-on, reporters.

GOMEZ

Hey, everybody out! Let Kid Cody have some air! Chalky?

Chalky routinely ushers everyone out, shutting the door. Now it's just Sam, Gomez and Chalky. Gomez doctors Sam's cuts and bruises.

GOMEZ

What happened? You almost lost our last fight together.

But Sam doesn't answer. He is distracted by:

THE IMAGE IN THE MIRROR

of his new persona: Kid Cody. It's the face of a man who has been in thirty-seven fights, won most of them, but there's scar tissue on the face and soul. Cody's nose is not the one nature intended, and there are fresh cuts from this night's battle. Sam stares, touching his new face; you'd think he'd get used to different faces looking at him in the mirror -- but nothing is more disconcerting.

INT. LOCKER ROOM

Gomez drags Sam back from mirror. Meanwhile, Chalky unlaces, removes his gloves, then Chalky starts packing his own gym bag, emptying a locker, including photos, schedules, and a pint of Wild Turkey taped to the back.

GOMEZ

(daubing Sam's face)

New owners'll be here any second.
Hold still, it's just a small cut
-- Chalky, get the iodine...for the
last time. Cody, get outta those
trunks ---

CHALKY

Sorry it's over, Cody.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

(not too sorry)

All good things have to end.

(touches a cut,
winces, then)

It's funny, I hardly touched him
with that punch...I wonder why....

Gomez and Chalky react, exchange looks. Chalky glances at the closed door nervously. Gomez gestures for Sam to speak quietly, then goes back to work on his face.

GOMEZ

Shut up. You punch-drunk? You know
where you are and everything?

SAM

(fake laugh,
glances around)

Imagine me not knowing where I am!

Sam takes off his trunks, discovers he has some kind of jock and protective cup on.

SAM

A chastity belt...

(looks up)

So, uh, what's that make my record
now, with tonight's win?

Gomez and Chalky exchange another surprised look.

GOMEZ

Hey. Don't start thinkin', this
late in life. Jake Edwards will
tell you anything you need to know,
like always. Hit the shower.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Half naked, Sam reaches for a small towel. There's a knock at the locker room door, then two nuns sweep into the locker room, black capes flying -- Sam fumbles for the small towel, awkwardly wraps it around himself ---

GOMEZ

You're right on time.

One nun is Sister Sarah, sixty, stern, a human prune. The other is Sister Angela, twenty-five. She's pretty, cheerful, intense as a laser beam, beautiful as an angel; an inward glow. Her faith alone could move mountains. And oceans.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SISTER SARAH
Promptness is a virtue.
(glancing at Sam)
So is modesty.

Sam is at a loss; Sister Angela hides a small smile. Gomez gets his own gym bag and gathers up his equipment.

GOMEZ
(dryly)
Your new owners here are gonna be a lot of laughs, Cody. Me, I get to retire. Again. First as a fighter, now as a trainer.

CHALKY
(to the nuns)
You sure Duke Ludden left Cody to you?

Sister Sarah produces legal paperwork.

SISTER SARAH
The estate of R.L. Ludden was clearly settled in probate. Mr. Ludden did own the contract on Mr. Cody here -- congratulations on your victory this evening ---

SISTER ANGELA
(stepping forward,
beaming at Sam)
-- that surprise punch in the last inning? It was inspired.

Sam smiles at her, struggling to hold the towel up.

GOMEZ
(more to himself)
The last inning. Good.

SISTER SARAH
(moving right
along)
-- until Mr. Ludden's untimely recent demise ---

Chalky looks at Gomez.

GOMEZ
-- found him in the trunk of a '68 Plymouth at the airport -- the car wasn't air conditioned but he was.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

Gomez and Chalky chortle at this.

SISTER SARAH
(clears throat
loudly)

-- whatever the manner of his death,
or his associations in life, it has
now been legally determined that he
left some of his estate to Saint
Mary's Church, including Mr. Cody's
contract.

SAM
That's my contract?

SISTER SARAH
(nodding)
You are now legally in the hands
of....

SISTER ANGELA
(smiling)
The Lord.

SISTER SARAH
And Sister Angela has accepted the
responsibility within our order of
managing your career, Mr. Cody.

She hands the contract to Sister Angela.

SAM
What about...these guys?

CHALKY
Don't you remember? They're poor
as church mice.

GOMEZ
No money, no jobs. But that suits
us just fine. Right, Chalky?

CHALKY
Work for dames? Nah....

Gomez's head signals Chalky. As they grab their gym bags
and jackets and leave the locker room ---

GOMEZ
(to Sam)
Good luck, amigo. We'll get that
last beer another time, okay?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

CHALKY

See ya, Cody. Keep your left up.

Gomez and Chalky leave. Sam just stands there, still awkwardly holding up the small towel.

SISTER SARAH

And we must return to the church.
We expect new moral conduct from
you, as we've discussed. Sister?

ANGELA

I would like a word with Mr. Cody.

Sister Sarah hesitates, then heads out the door, purposely and pointedly leaving it open, waiting just outside.

Sam is still just standing there, awkwardly holding the too-small towel, Sister Angela is oblivious to his problem.

ANGELA

I suppose things are happening
rather abruptly for you.

SAM

I'm used to it.

ANGELA

Well, Mr. Cody ---

SAM

Uh, call me Cody. Everyone else
seems to.

ANGELA

And I am Angela.

(excitedly)

I am very excited about working with
you on behalf of our cause!

SAM

Yeah, say, I'm not sure of one thing
exactly. Just who am I fighting for
now?

ANGELA

(smiling)

Why...for God, of course!

This startles Sam -- he reacts ---

ANGLE ON SAM'S BARE FEET

as the towel hits the floor.

CUT TO

EXT. LONG STICK - DAY - SAME

Making marks in dirt of vacant lot . Pan with a stick making a long line, right angles, doorway, etc. in the dirt of a vacant lot, which includes occasional trash.

ANGELA (V.O.)

...and this is the north wall, where the stained-glass window will go...the poor box here...this room for counseling, this one for meditation....

Stick continues, crudely sketching a small building.

SAM (V.O.)

Over by the tire?

ANGELA (V.O.)

No, I think by the rusty can. And finally, this area...here....

Pull back to reveal Sister Angela holding the long stick, excitedly walking along through a vacant lot, in a seedy part of town. Old newspapers. Discarded sofa. Cardboard boxes. Some trash.

And Sam, dressed in a rough fighter's street clothes, holding a gym bag, watching Sister Angela draw huge lines in the dirt.

(In the b.g., 100 feet away, watching impatiently at the edge of the vacant lot, glancing at her watch, is Sister Sarah.)

But it's Sister Angela who always captures our attention, her spirit and energy are infectious -- she has an excited, visionary tone in her voice as she makes us -- and Sam -- see what she is describing.

ANGELA

This will be the main chapel area! Open to the poor, here, twenty-four hours a day -- the way God is available to anyone, anytime!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

She runs along, happily, a spring in her step, drawing a huge square in the dirt with the stick, then hurling it aside happily, and faces Sam, her hands upraised, in rapture and pride of accomplishment, as though she had just built something.

ANGELA

It will be beautiful, the evening sun streaming through the reds and golds and blues of the stained-glass window, and the polished cherrywood pews and the gold tassels on the hymnals...can't you just see it?

Sam smiles, takes out a half dollar, bends over in the dirt, draws a small rectangle, then gently places the half dollar in the center, then stands.

SAM

First contribution to the poor box.

ANGELA

We'll leave it right there. Whoever finds your coin will need it -- making it the first true contribution. See what can happen with faith?

SAM

Faith's terrific. And your chapel here someday sounds nice. But what does it have to do with me?

ANGELA

Why...you're providing it.

SAM

Beg pardon?

ANGELA

You, and...
(head motions to sky)

Sam looks up, then at her, then back up, smiles an exaggerated smile at the sky in case anyone's watching, then looks at the nun.

SAM

Why do I think you're about to use the phrase...'moves in mysterious ways?'

Sister Angela laughs, delighted.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

ANGELA
Well, now I won't!

SAM
That's a wonderful laugh.

ANGELA
This is a wonderful day! I feel
such joy! My dream will now finally
come true, after years of praying
and waiting, once this chapel is
finally built.

ANOTHER ANGLE INCLUDING OBSERVER

who stands near the old ripped-up sofa.

SAM
(seeing Observer)
It's about time.

ANGELA
Yes! I certainly think so! We'll
have the money for the chapel, once
you win your next prizefight!

Sam gulps. He's starting to get it and it's not good. Al
looks over at Sam.

OBSERVER
You're a prizefighter? Jeez...do
you even know how to box? At all?

SAM
I'm not too good.

ANGELA
Don't be so modest, Cody!

Sister Angela continues to walk around her
chapel-drawing-in-the-dirt, never crossing inside unless
it's through a "drawn" doorway.

OBSERVER
What's with Ingrid Bergman?

SAM
Sister Angela, since you own my
contract....

OBSERVER
Aha, I see.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

Why not sell it and raise money that way?

ANGELA

Because we can make more money when you win! And because I have faith in you.

SAM

You don't know me.

ANGELA

God does. He sent you to us!

AL

She's like Ziggy -- she has an answer for everything.

ANGELA

The timing is too perfect! This is Providence! We've needed over \$20,000 for our chapel building fund -- then we get you -- and your next fight has a \$20,000 purse! Do you think that's just coincidence?

AL

Do you think nuns wear underwear?

SAM

(to both)
Probably.

ANGELA

And I say the answer's no!

AL

Good. It's a weird fantasy, but I've had worse.

(stares off into
space)

I'm having a worse one now....

SAM

Don't count so much on my winning.

ANGELA

I am counting on it! All the sisters at Saint Mary's are! Once

(MORE)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

ANGELA (Cont'd)
you beat Tiger Joe Jackson for the
Regional Middle weight Championship,
we'll have enough to get a
contractor, supplies, and finally
have our ground-breaking ceremony!

OBSERVER
With Sam fighting, the closest
you'll get is a wind-breaking
ceremony.

Sam gives Al a dirty look.

SAM
Sister Angela, I would strongly
suggest you...hedge your bet.

ANGELA
Have faith, Cody! It's all going
according to God's plan.

OBSERVER
It's not going according to Ziggy's.

SAM
(to both)
Tell me more.

ANGELA
Until you win, funds are scarce....

OBSERVER
Ziggy is confused -- for a
computer....

ANGELA
...so we'd appreciate it if you
could stay with us, to save on food,
training and lodging expenses.

SAM
I'm supposed to...change places?

AL
It's more like: why are you here
to start with?

ANGELA
Cody, we don't insist, but we're
already fixing up our basement as
a workout gym.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

OBSERVER

Ziggy says this is a particularly 'unscheduled stop', even for a guy with no itinerary.

ANGELA

Live with us. You'll train your body -- and we'll help; we're always in training -- for our souls! Okay?

SAM

(sighs, to both)

Well, I guess I'll do my best, wherever I am.

ANGELA

Good! I have to hurry off now. Why don't you get your things and join us at dinnertime? The sisters are excited to meet you, as well as Father Muldooney. He boxed a bit as a boy, fancies himself an expert...so we humor him.

(shakes Sam's hand)

Thank you, Cody, for helping us finally build this chapel.

Sister Angela starts to walk off, then pauses, close to Al, makes a big happy gesture.

ANGELA

Have faith! I'm sure that you and I -- and a guardian angel or two -- can get the job done!

Al suddenly does a comic turn: looks around, slaps his chest in mock surprise.

OBSERVER

Moi?

With a smile and a wave, Sister Angela hurries towards Sister Sarah, then they leave. Sam goes over near Al, slumps down on the old torn sofa.

SAM AND OBSERVER

Sam picks up an old newspaper.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

Stockton, California. October, 1974. And I'm scheduled to get my brains knocked out -- and disappoint that young woman ---

OBSERVER

--- the one without underwear ---

SAM

-- and you're saying I'm probably not even supposed to be here to start with?

OBSERVER

We're just less sure than usual.

SAM

But you're usually not very sure about anything anyway!

OBSERVER

Sam, baby, booby, sweetheart... we're doing all this on the fly anyway, right?

SAM

Yeah, but sometimes you've got some hard data that helps.

OBSERVER

We got the same moist, glistening variables, but this time, the data's flaccid, instead of turgid. Okay?

SAM

But why? What's different about this time and place?

OBSERVER

If I knew that, I'd know the problem. Ziggy's responding as if there's something involved here the computer...can't compute.

SAM

thinks a moment, then slowly, without Al noticing, looks up at the sky above his head.

SKY AND CLOUDS - STOCK FOOTAGE

with a golden shaft of sunlight piercing through, a heavenly, celestial light from above.

SAM AND OBSERVER

as Sam sighs to himself, confused, stands up, then he and Al stroll out of the lot, towards the street. Al yawns.

OBSERVER

I overslept. I got this neighbor, works the night shift, comes home at two AM, always revs up his engine a lot before he shuts it off!

SAM

Al ---

OBSERVER

Va-room! Va-room! He's next door, twenty-seven feet from my bed! Two AM! Detroit iron is roaring inside my head! Muffler's got more holes in it than your memory! I complain, the guy -- big guy -- says too bad.
(yawns)

I gotta figure out what to do.

Sam is giving him a look.

OBSERVER

Hey, you think I'm not concerned about you! I'm here! Sam, I'm tellin' ya, I even like Sister Angela! She cares! Tough little cookie too! Besides, she gets going on her chapel kick, you know who she reminds me of?

SAM

Who?

OBSERVER

You! You and me both, actually, in the old days, hoping we'd get funding for the Imaging Chamber. You and I stared at the blueprints and that model...it was our dream...our chapel. Remember?

Sam tries, but shakes his head, no.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

OBSERVER

Well, I'm here! Trying to help!
You just figure out how to avoid
stepping into a boxing ring, okay?

SAM

Yeah...but what if that's the good
thing I'm supposed to do? And if
I don't win them their chapel, what
if I have to stay here, living the
life of an aging boxer?

OBSERVER

You call that a life?

SAM

(sighs, looks in
gym bag)

Let's see... 'C. Cody, 145 Elm
Street, Apt. 4'. Guess I'd better
go by, get my things and....

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sam looks up. Al is gone now.

SAM

Al! Dammit! Come back....

But Al doesn't return. Sam is left alone, holding the bag.

Sam takes two steps when a big black 1974 Cadillac El
Dorado screeches up to the curb, blocking Sam's way. A big
man, Link, suit and tie, sunglasses, gets out, opens the
door for Sam, gesturing to dark interior.

LINK

Mr. Edwards wants to talk to you,
Cody.

Sam is hesitant, but climbs on in the big backseat.

INT. EL DORADO

Sam sits down next to Jake Edwards. Fifty-five. Beefy.
Mean eyes. Suit and tie. Pseudo-hip sideburns and
mustache of the era. He enjoys a friendly cat-and-mouse
rapport with employees. (The news is on the car radio, a
little too loud.)

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

EDWARDS

Hey, Cody, good fight, babe. Had me worried there at the end, whadcha do, fall asleep?

SAM

Uppercut stunned me.

Edwards nods, Link gets in the front seat, next to a tough, silent driver. Edwards tosses Sam a thick envelope. (Radio news goes on, ignored, about Nixon, Patty Hearst, whatever.)

EDWARDS

Here's your \$300. Jeez, in my day, only the fighter who went in the tank got paid. You punks today ---

Suddenly, a gesture for silence:

RADIO ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

On the sports scene, Muhammad Ali is in Zaire, to try to become the second man in boxing history to regain the world heavyweight championship. The thirty-two-year-old Ali will fight twenty-five-year-old George Foreman in a fifteen-round bout with 60,000 fans watching. On the political front ---

Edwards gestures, the radio is now ignored again.

EDWARDS

That'll be some fight. Link, where the hell is it?

LINK

Zaire. In Africa. At four AM their time.

EDWARDS

Makes the usual amount of sense...

(notices how Sam
is just holding
the envelope)

Got a problem?

Then Edwards notices how Sam awkwardly holds envelope. Glares. Sam puts the money away.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM
Say...I've, uh, been thinking of
retiring.

Edwards looks at Sam -- and bursts out laughing. So Link
and the driver laugh.

SAM
Actually...I'm serious.
(does Brando)
Cholly, I coulda been a contendah.

Edwards growls -- Link has a .45 out of his shoulder
holster, aimed at Sam, who gulps.

EDWARDS
Nobody quits Jake Edwards, ever.

Sam is slow to answer.

EDWARDS
First the right kneecap, Link, then
the left -- ever see a man limp on
both legs?

SAM
Sorry. Bad idea. Forget it.

Link puts the gun away. Edwards cools off, just as fast.

EDWARDS
Damn it, Cody, now you got me in a
bad mood. I was lookin' forward to
laughin' with you about this church
business! I heard nuns own you!
(glares at him)
Holy Water in your seltzer spray,
lots of jokes, but now I'm too
annoyed. You're taking a dive
against Tiger Joe in the regional
fight. I'll let you know which
round. Now beat it.

Link instantly has Sam's door open, Sam gets out ---

EXT. STREET IN FRONT OF VACANT LOT

The big El Dorado roars away, leaving Sam there, eating its
dust. Sam looks back at the vacant lot.

SAM'S POINT OF VIEW - THE VACANT LOT

He sees trash, a sofa, and the outline in dirt of a dream.

SAM

Then slowly looks up at the sky as music continues.
(Religious music begins.)

SAM (V.O.)
I doubt I could last one round in
a real fight anyway. But as for
winning or losing....

EXT. RAY OF GOLDEN SUNLIGHT - STOCK FOOTAGE

A golden shaft of sunlight pierces celestial clouds; pastel colors.

SAM (V.O.)
I'll either disappoint Joan of
Arc...or Al Capone.
(pause)
God help me.

Off that quiet request and religious music in b.g.:

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN

INT. CODY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Using unfamiliar keys, Sam unlocks the door then hesitantly peeks in: enters. Cheap furnished room. Punching bag in the corner. Pull-up bar in a doorway. A faded fight poster of "Kid Cody" vs. Juan "Amarillo" Sanchez.

SAM

Hello?

DIXIE (V.O.)

Hi honey!

Sam reacts, mouthing the word "honey?" to himself. Into the small living room bounces a peroxide blonde with a dynamite figure barely hidden in a sheer robe. She's all smiles and hugs for Sam.

DIXIE

That creep I work for wouldn't let me off early to watch the fight -- a bunch of soldiers came in, he had me dance an extra forty-five minutes -- but I heard you won, as planned. Hungry? I just made your favorite for dinner.

SAM

Uh, yeah, thanks. I really like my favorite. My favorite is one of my...favorites.

Dixie laughs, takes his jacket off for him, discovers the envelope in his pocket that Edwards gave him.

DIXIE

I see Mr. Edwards came through. Want me to put this in our secret hidey-hole?

SAM

Uh, yeah, that's a good idea...
(glances, notices)

A CUTE EMBROIDERED PILLOW

on the sofa with a heart that says "Cody & Dixie."

SCENE

SAM
...thanks, Dixie.

She smiles, then goes to a loose floorboard, lifts it up, takes a small bag, opens it, dumps the envelope's twenties into the bag, adds a roll of fives and ones from her cleavage, smiling.

DIXIE
The soldiers tipped pretty good!

She replaces the small bag, puts floorboard back in place.

DIXIE
Want a beer?

SAM
Sure. Say, looks like we're ready for a rainy day.

DIXIE
You serious? We need almost \$10,000 for that doughnut shop, next year! You can't fight forever -- and I sure can't stay a topless go-go dancer all my life!
(gestures to her chest, then stomach)

The mountains are starting to come to Mohammed, you know?

SAM
You look...great to me.

DIXIE
(kisses Sam)
I love you, Cody. You're the first man to trust me with his money...and his future.

Doorbell rings. Dixie answers the door, sees a guy there you wouldn't trust with your garbage. Slams the door in his face. She glares at Sam.

DIXIE
It's Roscoe! Damn it, Cody! You said no more bookies!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ROSCOE (V.O.)

(through door)

I just need \$540, Dixie, that's not so much. After all, the Detroit Tigers might have won today...hey, hi Cody. Payday.

Angrily, she walks away. Sam opens the door. Roscoe, a sleazeball, steps inside. He's friendly; used to abuse.

ROSCOE

\$540. Say, I just connected with a heavy dude with a big bankroll. You want to increase your action, I can lay it off easy, anytime.

SAM

Roscoe, wait in the hall a second, okay? I'll get your money.

Roscoe thinks, nods, steps outside, closes the door. Sam gets into the secret money stash.

DIXIE

(sulking)

Cody, you keep letting Roscoe get between us and jelly-filled, sugar, glazed and sprinkles-on-top doughnuts!

SAM

Sorry. Say, I got some news. My contract is now owned by St. Mary's Church. The nuns there want me to move in there and train for the Regional fight, to save money.

Dixie looks amazed at this, while Sam closes up the secret bag, opens the apartment door, hands Roscoe his money, then closes it in his face before he can speak, and continues talking to Dixie.

SAM

So I guess I'll get my things together and go over there. Now.

DIXIE

(low and sultry)

Hold it. You rather go live with nuns tonight...than stay here? With me? On a cold night like this?

Her back to us, she slowly drops her robe. Off Sam's reaction:

CUT TO

INT. CHURCH RECTORY - NIGHT

A Spartan little dining room, wooden benches. Two priests and a dozen nuns -- and Sam -- are eating dinner. There's a certain nervous buzz among the nuns: whispering, pointing, as if a rock star is eating in a high school cafeteria.

ANGLE FAVORING SAM AND SISTER ANGELA

as they eat dinner. A nun brings out another big piece of sirloin steak, baked potato and fresh biscuits for Sam, but Sam indicates he's full, pointing to his unfinished big steak still on his plate.

ANGELA

We know you're in training. Please eat up.

Sam shrugs, then he sees his plate is full, but:

THE NUNS' PLATES

all just have beans, day-old bread and glasses of water.

SAM

realizing this and getting depressed.

CUT TO

INT CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sam is being shown the downstairs by Sister Angela and Father Muldooney (fifty-five, in good shape). Sam sees a reasonable facsimile of a boxing ring, plus homemade but effective workout equipment: a slant bar for sit-ups, a jump rope, a punching bag, weights, etc. (In one corner is a curtained-off cot and chest of drawers, Sam's new sparse living quarters.)

FATHER MULDOONEY

...and over there is where you sleep.

ANGELA

We've been working on it all for days! Will it be good enough?

SAM

Yes, it's fine. All of it. I'm moved by...how much you care.

CLOSER ANGLE ON SAM AND ANGELA

ANGELA

That's what we do for a living,
Cody. We care. And what you do is
fight. How could anyone beat that
combination?

Father Muldooney and Angela smile, then go upstairs. Sam can hear religious singing from the church upstairs. He turns, walks over, and sits on the simple cot and looks around.

SAM

(sings softly to
himself)

'Oh...I wish I was in
Dixie...hooray...hooray....'

CUT TO

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT "GYM" - DAY

Sam is in training, hitting away at the old body bag. Al steps into view from behind it, grinning, startling Sam a little.

OBSERVER

Hi. I'll hold the body bag for you.

Al "holds" the side, Sam takes a particularly hard hit at it, the body bag swings away again, as usual -- through Al's holographic hand images. Al laughs.

OBSERVER

Gotcha!

Sam is not amused.

OBSERVER

Don't look at me like that. I got problems too! Denise and I are cuddled up, it's two AM, then suddenly, VA-ROOM! It's the Muffler From Hell. After I scrape Denise off the ceiling, she splits. I gotta stop this guy!

SAM

Al, I'm in kind of a spot here. I don't know how to fight, I'm not in shape, no trainer, no ---

OBSERVER

I can train you!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

If I'm getting into a real ring, I need a real trainer, not a hologram.

OBSERVER

When I was sixteen, and dinosaurs ruled the earth, I was a Golden Gloves fighter. I can do it!

SAM

Just tell me what Ziggy says.

OBSERVER

He says there isn't enough data on the jerk next door to help me yet so ---

Sam stops dancing around and glares at Al.

OBSERVER

Sorry, you meant for you. Well, Ziggy thinks that yes, winning this prizefight and getting them their chapel is probably the odds-on best shot at quantum leaping out of here.

SAM

What's all the 'probably' and 'best shot' from Ziggy? He's usually precise.

OBSERVER

Well, there's still this other variable. Ziggy's stumped. It's as if somebody else is calling all the shots this time.

SAM

Al, stay on it, you gotta help!

OBSERVER

I will! I'm on it. My main advice is to worry about the gangster. He can hurt you.

SAM

Lord knows, he'd enjoy it too....

ANGELA (V.O.)

See? You do believe!

ANOTHER ANGLE

Sister Angela comes down the stairs, smiling. Sam turns.

ANGELA

You're praying! See? Admit it.

OBSERVER

Yo, Adrian.

SAM

Praying?

ANGELA

My grandmother used to say praying was talking to God -- or the angel in charge of your life.

Al preens, reacting with personal pride.

SAM

Angela, listen, we have to talk. This isn't going to work.

ANGELA

(indicates gym)

Do you need better equipment?

OBSERVER

I think so. I've seen him in the shower.

SAM

(glares at Al,
then)

No. I just mean...I could easily let you down. Fighting ---

ANGELA

Cody, this is preordained! It's Providence! Samson was a fighter! He picked up the jawbone of an ass and slew the Philistines. You're our Samson!

(smiling)

The only way this could be any more clearly God's work...was if your name was Sam!

Sam and Al exchange looks. Off Al's reaction:

CUT TO

EXT. VACANT LOT - DAY - CLOSEUP ON FEET

jump roping. A teenage boy's high-top sneakers raise dust in the vacant lot as a jump rope blurs under his feet, faster and faster. Pull back to reveal Gomez sitting on the torn sofa in the vacant lot, coaching a black teenager who is jumping rope, and a Chicano one who is shadowboxing over to one side. Gomez holds a beer and looks comfortable. Sam walks up to him.

SAM

Father Muldooney said I'd find you here.

GOMEZ

Yeah, I hang out here.
(affectionately,
so the kids can
hear him)

Some of these bad street dudes think they're tough enough to get in a ring someday. I say they're too busy rollin' drunks and fightin' each other to go fifteen rounds in a real man's game ---

FIRST TEENAGER

Hey, Gomez, you tell me what to do, I'll do it, man, you just ---

GOMEZ

Okay, hot shot, trainin's self-discipline. You think I got out off the streets and into a ring when I was a kid without ---

SECOND TEENAGER

Come on, man, name it! We can do anything!

The two teenagers exchange cocky looks and low-fives.

GOMEZ

Okay, run ten laps, around the lot.

The two teenagers look stunned and disappointed. Sam sits down on the sofa next to Gomez.

GOMEZ

Hey, smoke a joint, joy ride in a hot car, I don't care. But don't go tellin' me you got what it takes to go pro.

The two teenagers exchange looks -- then start jogging. Gomez grins.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

They wouldn't do that for just anybody.

GOMEZ

I'm the poor man's neighborhood hero. I used to be like them -- gangs, dope. Then I was up on fight posters. Won a few too.

SAM

They should look up to you.

GOMEZ

I ain't flashy or rich like the pimps or dealers. Still, a few of them...

(wistful pause)

...listen to me. A few I can help...maybe.

(looks st Sam)

What's up Cody?

SAM

I need a trainer.

GOMEZ

(pause)

I need a beer.

CUT TO

INT. BAR - DAY

A brightly lit brown neon glove sign is part of the name of the bar: "Road Work." It's the hang-out of the local boxing community. Not very crowded. A big burly Bartender, obviously a former fighter, serves drinks in front of framed pictures of fighters, awards, trophies. Sam and Gomez sit down at the bar. Seeing them coming, the Bartender has a beer ready for Gomez.

BARTENDER

Hey, Cody. Your usual?

SAM

No...make it...designer water, lime twist.

BARTENDER

What?

Gomez and the Bartender just stare at him.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

SAM

Just kidding. The usual.

BARTENDER

One Giant-Killer, coming up.

The bored Bartender begins routinely creating the most outrageous drink ever seen: tequila, rum, a shot of bourbon poured through a slice of orange, a teaspoon of sugar, then he lights the top of it, it flames up briefly. Sam is distracted throughout scene by progress of this creation. But to everyone else: no big deal.

SAM

Listen, Gomez, I need a trainer.
I need your help.

GOMEZ

Why? You don't listen to me.

This puzzles Sam, who is distracted by the Bartender, who now dumps the drink, still burning, into a blender, mixes it up, dumps part of the beer he's drinking into it, then a couple of toothpicks, blends it some more (grinding sound of toothpicks). Roscoe the bookie cruises by, pausing at Sam.

ROSCOE

Hey, Cody, want the line on the
Chiefs-Bronco game?

SAM

Another time, Roscoe.

Roscoe slithers away. Sam starts to talk to Gomez again, but notices that the Bartender pours the drink into a big glass, dips three cherries into it for exactly four seconds which he times on his wristwatch, still holding them by the stems, removes the cherries, eats them while he pours half the drink down a sink, then tosses in a shot of whatever bottle on the shelf above him he now happens to grab, without looking.

SAM

Gomez, I'll get killed if ---

GOMEZ

Cody, I don't want to be your
trainer again. And you know why.

(pause)

Don't you?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

Sam looks at him, then nods, admitting that he knows the whole involved backstory, whatever the hell it is. Sam then sneaks an eye towards the progress of Cody's usual drink: The Bartender has now removed a small drain pan from his sink, then takes the small pan of whatever he's spilled all day, pours it in Cody's drink, then, from under the bar, adds a wiggling worm.

SAM

Yeah, sure, but you'd be helping the church, you know, Catholics....

GOMEZ

I'm Jewish. You know that.

Sam shrugs, nods. The Bartender takes one ice cube, tosses it to a guy at the end of the bar, he automatically hands it down as each of six guys pass it along, until Gomez hands it to a wary Sam. The Bartender takes it from Sam, drops it in the drink, adds a pink paper umbrella, sets it in front of Sam, with a coaster under it.

BARTENDER

(same bored manner)

That'll be forty-nine cents.

Sam finds a dollar in his pocket, hands it over.

SAM

Keep the change.

Sam hesitates, then takes a sip, controls his reaction, stays cool, then carefully removes half of a toothpick.

SAM

Next time, let it breathe a little.

(to Gomez)

I'll pay you myself, whatever ---

GOMEZ

Cody. How long have we known each other? Huh?

SAM

(fumbling)

A long time? A long time.

GOMEZ

And what advice do I give you, over and over? Huh?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

SAM

(nods, as if
remembering)

Yeah...and you put it so well each
time.

GOMEZ

Then stop takin' dives! Period.
He'll chew you up and spit you out
like he did me. I had a future once
too. Now...I've misplaced my
past...but there's still time for
you and Dixie, though.

SAM

Make you a deal. If you'll train
me, I won't take a dive.

Gomez looks amazed. Then into the place strolls Jake
Edwards, and his two henchmen, Link and the Driver. Jake
waves to many people, then as he goes by the bar, sees Sam
and Gomez.

EDWARDS

Hey, there's my boys --
(distracted, looks
up)

Look at that! Streaking! College
kids today! They're breaking the
law!

TV OVER BAR

(Sound is off.) A newscaster is chuckling at hand-held
footage of two college kids running naked (except for
sneakers) onto a football game somewhere, by a "streaking"
logo. The screen changes to a sports image, and we see
Muhammad Ali and George Foreman and a boxing logo.

SCENE

Edwards waves away the TV, then smiles at Cody and Gomez.

EDWARDS

Two guys, dukin' it out, what else
makes sense anymore, huh?

(to Bartender)

Give Gomez another beer. And give
Cody his usual again. On me.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Sam reacts. Edwards slaps them on the back, then he and his entourage move on. The Bartender starts to pour Gomez another beer, but Gomez pointedly covers his glass, then looks at Sam and slowly nods, "yes."

CUT TO

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - DAY

Sam is wearing boxing practice gear, the headgear, etc. And so is Father Muldooney, the fiftyish priest, who wears jeans and is shadowboxing in the other corner of the makeshift gym. Sam in his corner, talking with Gomez, who looks like a trainer now, with gray sweat clothes, towel over his shoulder, and sour expression. Next to him is Sister Angela, who is even more excited than usual. The gym is full of a dozen excited nuns.

CLOSER ANGLE ON SAM, GOMEZ AND SISTER ANGELA

GOMEZ

This ain't right. A pro shouldn't spar with an amateur. Let me in there.

ANGELA

Please! Let Father Muldooney fight for just five minutes with Cody. It'll make him happy, he'll talk about it for years.

GOMEZ

Waltz him around, Cody. Go easy.

Just then, down the stairs, comes Dixie, overdressed and nervous. She spots Sam, waves. Everyone stares: she has the kind of figure that changes the subject. She walks toward Sam's corner.

SAM

Hi, Dixie.

DIXIE

Hi, honey. Okay if I watch?

As Dixie walks up to Sam, she leans over the ropes for a kiss. Sam, very aware of Sister Angela three feet away, kisses Dixie, only she puts a little something into it.

SISTER ANGELA

looks down, briefly, a mass of confused emotions.

SCENE

DIXIE
(teasing him)
Gomez, what'll your mother say,
helping Cody fight a priest?

GOMEZ
He wins this, it's a title bout with
the Pope.

Dixie and Sister Angela are very aware of each other.

SAM
Uh, Dixie, I'd like you to meet
Sister Angela. Angela, this is
Dixie, my...friend.

They start to shake hands, hesitate, don't, then do.

ANGELA
How do you do.

DIXIE
Pleased to make your
acquaintance-ship, I'm sure.

ANGLE INCLUDING RING AND ALL THE NUNS

who are staring at Dixie. Father Muldooney is a cheerful,
ready opponent, who keeps bobbing around.

FATHER MULDOONEY
Cody, I think you have enough people
in your corner! Ready?

Sam stands, nods, goes into boxing position.

FATHER MULDOONEY
Go easy on me...but not too easy!

A nun clangs a bell; the sparring match is on! Sam dances
around, gloves up, but right away he doesn't look as
experienced as Father Muldooney, who begins jabbing away,
with expert footwork. (Sister Sarah frowns at all of it.)

ANGLE ON GOMEZ AND SISTER ANGELA

Gomez studies Sam, seeing something is funny. But Sister Angela is animated, shadowboxing with her own fists!

ANGELA

That's it Cody! Sisters! Cheer for our champion!

(to Gomez)

I'm excited to be working with you, Mr. Gomez. I've never been an assistant trainer before.

GOMEZ

(preoccupied)

Why did Cody change his style?

THE FIGHT

Sam throws some ineffective punches at Father Muldooney, who grins, loving all this, and finally throws a medium-size punch at Sam -- who is suddenly knocked flat on his back by it.

GOMEZ

shakes his head to himself.

ALL THE NUNS

are amazed.

SISTER ANGELA

looks very surprised.

SAM

their champion, is out cold. Glass jaw? We're talking Waterford crystal. Off surprised reactions of Muldooney and everyone else,

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN

INT. CHURCH BOXING RING - NIGHT - ONE MINUTE LATER

Sam is waking up, groggy, seeing stars, then seeing:

SAM'S POINT OF VIEW - ANGELA AND DIXIE

Both are bending over him, with wet cloths and nurturing instincts.

ANGELA

Cody, are you all right?

DIXIE

You okay, honey?

Then they slowly look at each other, realizing how much the other seems to care. So does:

SISTER SARAH

She is an unsmiling sphinx. She misses exactly nothing.

SCENE

The other nuns, however, look concerned about the easy way Sam was knocked out. Father Muldooney walks over to Sam.

FATHER MULDOONEY

(sternly, to Sam)

I know a little about boxing, young man, and that wasn't what you were doing. What's the problem?

Sister Sarah walks up with a bucket of cold water, gestures for Dixie and Angela to get back, she throws it ---

GOMEZ (V.O.)

I know the problem ---

Sam is hit in the face with a bucket of cold water -- splash! He's awake now, sputtering -- Sister Sarah looks very self-satisfied. Gomez hauls Sam away from the others, speaks quietly, but intensely.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

GOMEZ

Cody, I just realized: You haven't had a straight fight in a year! You need road work -- or a miracle!

CUT TO

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - DAY

Sam is jogging, really sweating, doing road work. Sister Angela is riding a bicycle alongside him, glancing at a stopwatch she wears around her neck.

ANGELA

Your friend Dixie seemed nice.

No comment from Sam.

ANGELA

How did you two meet?

SAM

Look, I'd rather talk about...training.

ANGELA

Father Muldooney said all you lacked was heart.

SAM

Yes, I lack heart. And skill. And breath.

ANGELA

I thought prizefighters had to stay in shape.

SAM

They do -- I do -- but the shape I'm in is...doo-doo.

Sister Angela laughs, then coasts to a stop. Sam stops too. He stands there, panting. They smile.

ANGELA

How did you get to be a prizefighter, Cody?

SAM

Oh...I just sort of fell into it.

(smiles)

And you? Why become a nun?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ANGELA

Gomez made me swear I'd push you,
hard. So off we go ---

She starts bicycling -- but Sam grabs back part of the bicycle and holds her in place. She laughs, looks.

SAM

Come on. Tell me. While I rest?

She gets off the bicycle, walks it, as they talk.

ANGELA

I don't tell many people...When I was eleven, my parents and two brothers and I lived in a nice little home in Bakersfield. There was a tree house in the front yard, with pennants flying from it. My...pretend castle. My brothers said I could be the queen. I went to sleep one night, like every night, quite happily. When I woke up I was coughing into a fireman's face, lights were flashing, there was smoke and...it turned out that a fire killed my entire family and for absolutely no reason...completely spared me.

(pause)

You've got to promise to do an extra mile, after this break?

Sam nods.

ANGELA

I was shuttled around then, a small queen with no castle, from some cousins to a step-uncle. When I was fourteen, some bad things happened, so I ended up out on the street...doing anything to survive, day to day, hating life, God, myself, everyone. I stumbled into a Skid Row chapel in San Francisco...it saved my life. A nun found me and helped me. Soon, I had a home and...I loved God. I promised God that for sparing me I would create a chapel someday, to honor Him. And, as a special memorial, that only God and I would know about, to my family.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM
(quietly)
A new castle.

She looks at him, smiles, and nods.

SAM
God is lucky to have you on His
side, Sister Angela.

ANGELA
And what of your own faith, Cody?

SAM
My own faith...was something I
didn't used to think much
about...but now I need it...more
than ever. You see, the life I've
led recently means...I've been
traveling, I've seen lots of new
faces...touched some new souls....

ANGELA
Fighters are on the road a lot.

SAM
Also, my memory...has been playing
tricks on me at times....

ANGELA
Oh, Cody, please quit before you get
punchy...really.

SAM
With only partial memory, it's
harder to have faith...since you
can't remember who you are. In
fact, if I ever seem really
different and can't remember things
we've talked about, well....

ANGELA
I understand. But what do you
believe in now, Cody?

SAM
I used to just trust my rational
mind. But since...hitting the road
so much...it's like I don't know the
plan anymore...

(pause)
I lost the map. But I help people.
So I feel better than ever. Does
that make sense?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

ANGELA
Why would it have to?

Off Sam's reaction to that good question:

CUT TO

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - LATER - CLOSE ANGLE ON SAM JOGGING

Sam is jogging along, pulling something with a rope across his chest, really exerting. Pan back as we hear:

ANGELA (V.O.)
You're discovering a truth, Cody.

Now we see it is Sister Angela sitting on a bicycle, steering, but not peddling, as Sam pulls her along, up a slight hill.

ANGELA
People think with God, they won't feel alone and afraid anymore. But once you have faith, in yourself, God or anything else, you'll still feel scared at times. Just not so alone.

SAM
(panting)
Yeah...like right now...I'm running along by myself...I look around...no one is there...but it seems like there's someone behind me...always talking...she never shuts up....

Sister Angela playfully begins to slowly put on the brakes. Sam starts to laugh as he realizes it.

SAM
No...not the brakes...come on!

Laughing, they come to a stop.

SOMEONE'S POINT OF VIEW - LONG SHOT - SAM AND SISTER ANGELA

They pause, talking, then Sam starts jogging hard again, uphill.

REVERSE ANGLE

It is Link, Jake Edwards' muscle, watching from a distance. He does not look happy with what he sees.

CUT TO

INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

Sam enters, sits. Soft lighting. It is a quiet, contemplative place. Several nuns are praying on one side; a few other people have come in for a quiet moment. Sam just sits there, not entirely sure why he is there. But it feels good. He looks down, thinking.

SAM (V.O.)

Lord...I haven't made a person-to-person call in a long time. But I believe in you...I think. Or rather, I want to. Help me get through this...the right way.

(smiles)

That's the prayer, that's it, it's everything: Lord, help me get through this the right way. Amen.

Sam, amused and a little more at peace, gets up, quietly leaves.

CUT TO

INT. CHURCH BASEMENT - NIGHT

Sam wanders down into the empty big basement, sees:

OBSERVER

standing, posed, wearing all white clothes, and an angelic expression, bathed in a soft light from above.

SCENE

Al smiles, pleased with himself. Sam climbs in the ring.

OBSERVER

I'm an angel, my son....

SAM

No, you're the world's first guardian devil.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

OBSERVER

Just thought I'd get in the spirit
of the thing. But I got news!

(indicates wrist
computer)

Ziggy's hit his stride. What do you
want to know?

SAM

The big fight in a few days. In
actual history already, who won?

OBSERVER

(tapping computer
keys)

October 29, 1974, Kid Cody was
knocked out by Tiger Joe Jackson.
Cody retired, married one Dixie
Everetts, moved away, they opened
a doughnut shop, it went bust after
a while, then they made a fortune,
switching from doughnuts to
videotapes.

SAM

So the real Kid Cody lost....

OBSERVER

Yeah. But you ain't him. You can
change that. You know our motto:
that was then, this is then.

(pause)

On the other hand, you're a
scientist, not a prizefighter.

SAM

The chapel? Did Sister Angela get
to build her chapel?

OBSERVER

(means it)

I'm sorry...but no. Sam, no chapel
was ever built on that vacant lot.
Sister Angela never got that last
\$20,000. Instead, today, there's
a mini-mall, with a tanning salon,
a convenience store that's been
robbed five times this year, a ---

SAM

(quietly)

She never got...her castle....

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

OBSERVER

Excuse me?

SAM

I've got to raise the \$20,000 for her...I have to win this fight!

OBSERVER

Yeah. But how can you?

(big yawn)

Sorry, the muffler from hell still keeps me up all night. Any ideas?

SAM

Well, I'm training hard, but ---

OBSERVER

I meant about the muffler.

SAM

Al....

OBSERVER

Relax. Knowledge is power. Ziggy says you've got a seventy-two point three percent chance of losing against Tiger Joe, a twenty-one point four percent chance of staying on your feet at least one round, and a six point two percent chance of getting...killed.

SAM

Winning, Al! I'm not hearing winning!

OBSERVER

There's three-trillionths of a chance a meteor could hit him during the fight.

(yawn)

I gotta get back. I'm tired.

Sam is pacing, unhappy, preoccupied. Al knows it.

OBSERVER

Hey? I'll be there, cheering for you. No matter what.

Sam pauses, smiles, nods.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (3)

SAM

Thanks, Al. Oh, say, if the jerk next door to you works nights, he has to sleep days. Try something: you've got a garage, right?

Sam begins to idly hit a punching bag as Al leans closer, eagerly. But the sound of the punching bag obscures whatever Sam tells him. But Al seems to like it, grinning, nodding. Then Sam wanders around, pausing under a dark naked light bulb.

OBSERVER

It might just work!

SAM

I just wish I could solve my own problem....

OBSERVER

Don't forget. You're a genius.

Sam gives him a look, thinks, turns on light bulb over his head. Then suddenly:

SAM

I've got an idea!

Excitedly, Sam turns, races up the stairs, leaving Al behind.

CUT TO

INT. DIXIE AND CODY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Sam is quickly transferring the cash from the floorboard to a small gym bag, while talking rapid-fire to a flustered Dixie.

SAM

-- this will work, Dixie, if we time it exactly right ---

DIXIE

I don't know, Cody, gambling all our savings ---

SAM

-- it's our chance to make one big win, all at once ---

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

DIXIE

-- and that other thing, Cody, I don't like it ---

SAM

-- Dixie, please, I've explained it twice, you're the key to it. We can open up the doughnut shop, then the videotape place ---

DIXIE

The what?

SAM

I mean, we can have our place with what we'll win -- and help these nuns too with what's left over!

DIXIE

Suddenly, you want something, you're here, it's Dixie this, Dixie that, but until now, you've been with that cute nun.

Sam rolls his eyes, this is not what he needs right now.

SAM

Dixie. This is my one chance to knock out Tiger Joe Jackson. But our timing has to be perfect. Will you do it?

Dixie isn't sure. Sam stands there, holding a bag of cash. Off this question:

CUT TO

INT. "ROAD WORK" BAR - NIGHT

Sam shows up, looks around, usual crowd, spots Roscoe the bookie. Sam gestures for Roscoe to head for one end of the bar. Then he sees Gomez having a beer, speaks to him quietly, Gomez follows.

INT. BAR - DARK END OF BAR

There's no one nearby. Sam and Roscoe lean in, then Gomez appears beside the bookie, pinning him in.

ROSCOE

What's happening, Cody? Hey, Gomez, you in on this?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

BARTENDER

-- and lots of people wouldn't mind an excuse to stomp his face.

ROSCOE

No, really! I can cover it, if I like the deal. What is it?

ANGLE ON LINK

entering bar, sees Sam, leaves unnoticed.

CORNER OF THE BAR

Sam is concluding the deal. Gomez and the Bartender crowd in, shield the transaction from view. Roscoe picks up the small bag.

SAM

-- don't forget, a knockout in the eighth round -- number eight. Got that?

ROSCOE

Yeah, but anything else happens, any other round, I keep the money.

SAM

Right. Now repeat the payment system.

ROSCOE

Four thousand dollars at ten-to-one odds. If you win, I owe you \$40,000. I pay half, \$20,000, to Dixie, not to you directly. The other \$20,000 I donate to the New Chapel Fund at St. Mary's church, in care of Sister Angela. Right?

Sam nods. Sticks out his hand. They shake.

SAM

Goes without saying, I personally rip your head off too, anything goes hinky.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ROSCOE

Hey, I've lived here all my life.
I won't foul my nest, I'll pay!

(grinning)

But I love this bet! Want to double
it?

Gomez gives him a little shove, and Roscoe disappears. The
Bartender shakes his head, and goes back to work.

GOMEZ

You having fun, are you?

SAM

The time of my life.

Sam heads out the door ---

CUT TO

EXT. SIDE DOOR OF CHURCH - NIGHT

Sam approaches the night door of the rectory. It's quiet,
peaceful. Then Sister Angela, who has been sitting on a
nearby bench, stands, walks forward.

ANGELA

Cody?

SAM

Oh, hi. Everything okay?

ANGELA

I'm not sure. You were with
your...friend, Dixie, weren't you?

SAM

What's wrong?

ANGELA

Some men were waiting for you,
parked in a car. Father Muldooney
said they looked like...gangsters.
Cody, do you have business with
them?

SAM

Me? Business? With gangsters?
Angela. Trust me!

#05002 47
ANOTHER ANGLE

Jake Edwards and Link now stroll between the church door and Sam and Angela. Edwards plays the smiling cobra, amusing himself.

EDWARDS

Sister, anytime someone says 'trust me,' check your wallet.

SAM

What do you want?

EDWARDS

Notice, Sister, he didn't say 'Who are you?' I don't care if you take these moonlit walks with a nun -- as long as you don't get in the habit!

Link guffaws on cue -- until Sam faces both of them squarely, unafraid.

EDWARDS

Cody, Cody, Cody...don't do this.

SAM

What?

EDWARD

Get religion. Go against me like this. I know you're trainin' hard. I'd rather have a rum-dum fighter turn drunk on me than religious. Had one guy, no matter what round I said take a dive in, he'd do it different. Finally had to slam his knuckles in the door of my Eldorado.

(pause)

This time, you take your dive in the first round, Cody. Number one, not number two. Got that? And stay a nice little team player.

Jake Edwards and Link walk away.

ANGELA

Cody...taking a dive...this time?

SAM

Angela, listen ---

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED

ANGELA

That means cheating...you're a team
player...with thugs. You've
been...using us...me...
(voice cracks)

CLOSER ANGLE

Angela turns away from Sam a few moments. He feels
helpless. Then she whirls around, staring -- eyes wet,
cheeks glistening, offering a face raped of all innocence
and trust. It is a devastating look on her face. Then she
flees inside, leaving Sam with his sadness and anger.

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN

INT. CHURCH - DAY - CLOSE ANGLE ON CANDLES

Simple tall candles create a soft glow. (Religious music in b.g.)

A STAINED-GLASS WINDOW

illuminates bold colors.

CLOSE ANGLE - SISTER ANGELA

as she kneels and softly prays. She is upset, trying for strength. Sam moves into frame, slowly, gently. (Music continues.)

SAM

(in a near whisper)

Please, Angela, listen to me. What I did before I met you, why does that matter?

Angela ignores him, trying to listen to a different voice.

SAM

Yes, I took dives, I was on a gangster's payroll. That is my past. But the Cody you know is one you can count on.

She stares at him.

SAM

Isn't real faith when you think a person or God has let you down -- and you continue to believe?

She doesn't answer, and returns to her prayers. Sam sighs, gives up, turns to leave. But Angela touches his arm, stopping him. She isn't sure. Of anything.

SAM

You heard those men tell me to get hit and stay down in the first round, right?

She nods.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED

SAM

It's simple. Come to the fight.
If I'm still on my feet at the end
of round one, you can believe
in...me.

(pause)

If I get knocked down and stay down,
for any reason, in the first round,
suspect the worst. Fair enough?

she just looks at him.

SAM

Then in round two...that's when I'm
going to try to make an extra
contribution to your chapel fund.

Sam smiles and hands her a ticket to a prizefight. She
looks at it, and takes it, wary. Sam gets up, quietly
leaves frame. Sister Angela returns to her prayers,
holding the ticket tightly, very tightly. She looks up at:

A GOLD CROSS

which reflects the flickering candles, then

MATCH CUT TO

VERTICAL MICROPHONE

which reflects the flashbulbs as it is slowly lowered into
hands of a sweaty, overdressed Announcer.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen...Welcome to
the 1974 Regional Middleweight
Championship Bout.

SCENE

The big fight. Bright lights illuminate the ring and the
crowd in the good seats; we can hear the rest. The two
fighters are bobbing around, wearing colorful robes, the
ring is full of trainers and different people.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

In this corner, weighing 194, from
Hawthorne, California, the
challenger...Tiger Joe Jackson!!

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Tiger Joe, who makes Mike Tyson look like an interior decorator, lets his tiger-striped orange robe be removed, crowd cheers, he waves his gloves in the air.

JAKE EDWARDS AND LINK

watch Sam carefully.

SAM

is in the ring, looking like a real prizefighter: gloves, satin trunks, robe; shadowboxing. Gomez is in his corner.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...and in this corner, weighing 191,
from Sacramento, California, the
champion, Clarence 'Kid' Cody!

Sam raises his gloves in the air -- cheers -- looks at:

DIXIE

who sits in front, wearing a long coat, applauding.

SAM

then goes over to his corner and looks at:

SISTER ANGELA

in the first row, who looks back. No expression.

SAM'S CORNER

where Gomez gets him ready. Sam looks over and sees Al, standing in the ring a few feet away.

SAM

(to Al)

Got a good enough seat?

GOMEZ

Just a wooden stool, man, don't
worry about it.

CONTINUED

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CONTINUED

OBSERVER

Rock 'n' roll, forever, Sam! I found a garage band who needed a place to practice during the afternoon, while Muffler Head was trying to sleep! They had speakers the size of Stonehenge! He and I quickly came to an agreement! Great idea!

GOMEZ

Now fake some left jabs before trying for a solid right cross.

SAM

(to Al)

I always try reason and good will first, then behavior modification.

GOMEZ

Well, I guess that's one way to put it....

OBSERVER

What round are you supposed to take your dive in?

Sam mouths the word "one" -- as Gomez shoves in his teeth guard. Ding Ding! The fight is on!

CUT TO

THE FIGHT

Sam moves in, gloves up, wary, very wary ---

Tiger Joe snarls -- throws a punch, another ---

Sam's head is jerked back one, twice, taking the punches on the side of the head -- he's already dazed ---

Tiger Joe advances -- suddenly slams an uppercut into Sam's stomach ---

Sam half crumples, grabbing at a rope for support -- Pow -- Tiger Joe slams a hard right into Sam's head -- Sam falls ---

Tiger Joe dances back, moved away by the Ref, who starts the count for Sam ---

REF

One...Two...Three....

CLOSE ANGLE - SAM

dazed, on the mat -- Al suddenly leans in close ---

OBSERVER

Sam, stay on your feet through the first round!

SAM

Easy for you to say!

REF (V.O.)

Four...Five...Six...Seven....

But Sam is now on his feet, gloves up ---

THE FIGHT

only this time Al is dancing around beside Tiger Joe, holding his hands out near Tiger Joe, creating targets for Sam ---

OBSERVER

Sam! Two high jabs here -- then a fast punch here -- come on ---

Sam tries -- but Tiger Joe is ready -- still, Sam suddenly throws a right cross, comes out of nowhere, connects ---

OBSERVER

(amazed)

Where did that come from?

SAM

God knows....

SISTER ANGELA

starts to cheer, then notices:

DIXIE

twenty feet away, who looks at her, then looks at:

SAM

who is suddenly taking a beating again -- Tiger Joe is pounding away at him -- Sam can't even stay on his feet -- Sam is down!

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SISTER SARAH

sits, watching, sternly, without emotion. Then she jumps to her feet, yelling, arms waving ---

SISTER SARAH
Get up, Cody! Kill the bum!

SAM

As the Ref is counting away, he squints at Angela through puffy eyes, a trickle of blood on his cheek.

ANGELA

watches him, then is surprised to see:

SAM

grin. He's in pain, but he gets to his feet -- then proceeds to endure the beating of his life.

THE FIGHT

Al is now a defensive coach, moving with Sam, showing him how to duck and bob and weave, how to hold his gloves up for protection.

OBSERVER
-- gloves up! Move right -- now
left -- that's it -- your feet, keep
your feet moving -- throw a jab,
keep him honest ---

The crowd is roaring at this beating Sam is taking ---

A ROW OF NUNS

who genuflect exactly together, like the Rockettes.

SAM

finally falls face forward, collapsing, caving in ---

THE CROWD

is on their feet -- surely this is a knockout -- but then they start screaming even louder at the brave man in front of them who is struggling to his feet ---

SAM

grabs at a rope and slowly, steadily, pulls himself up to his feet, just as the ref is saying:

REF

Seven...Eight...Nine....

But Sam is back on his feet -- Tiger Joe moves in, slamming away -- but then ding ding!

SCENE

The first round is over - Sam is still on his feet and staggers back to his corner!

SISTER ANGELA

smiles, closes her eyes, and thanks someone she knows.

THE RING

Sister Sarah angrily climbs in ring, red-faced, angry at Ref, going nose-to-nose with him like Tommy Lasorda -- he winds up and throws her out of the arena.

SAM

is hurt. Gomez is washing him down, letting him spit into a bucket. Sam looks absolutely awful, bloody, cut, bruised, sweaty. Al gently pulls at his own arm.

OBSERVER

Rough round...I think I may have pulled a tiny muscle in my arm...gotta take it easier....

Sam just looks up at Al.

OBSERVER

That was fun. What next?

SAM

Watch Dixie...at the start of the round...she's the only chance I have....

GOMEZ

Huh? Yeah. Good lady, Cody, but worry about Tiger Joe!

Sam looks over at:

DIXIE

who looks uncomfortable but looks at him and nods.

THE FIGHT

Ding ding -- Round Two. Tiger Joe runs out, straight for an exhausted Sam and begins a jackhammer assault -- Sam holds his gloves up, but keeps one eye over on:

DIXIE

who now stands up, begins to unbutton her coat ---

TIGER JOE

is focused on Sam, jabbing, punching -- but then a strange cry goes up from the crowd ---

CROWD

Hey! Look! A streaker!

-- a blur of flesh catches the corner of Tiger Joe's eye -- for one split second, he is distracted, glancing over at:

DIXIE

who races up the aisle for the exit, stark naked!

SAM

throws the mightiest punch he'll ever throw! Distracted, Tiger Joe catches the punch hard!

THE FIGHT

Rocked back, seeing stars, Tiger Joe leans back -- then Sam steps out of his way -- and Tiger Joe falls like a condemned building. And remains totally still. Crowd goes crazy. Ref begins to count Tiger Joe out. Sam leans on the ropes, exhausted, all the fight gone out of him.

THE REF AND TIGER JOE

as the Ref throws his arm down towards the fallen man.

REF

...Six...Seven....

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

But a flicker of life comes into Tiger Joe's eyes; not for nothing is he a pro. Then he gets up on one elbow....

REF

Eight...Nine....

Then a knee...then...Tiger Joe is on his feet! He's back up.

SCENE

Sam can't believe it. He turns to Al.

OBSERVER

I think you just made him angry.

SAM

(gloves up)

What do I do now?

OBSERVER

Do you have a gun?

But that wouldn't even stop Tiger Joe -- he goes at Sam now with every punch, jab, swing, body blow and uppercut he owns -- no finesse, just pure rage. Sam falls, hard.

SAM

peering up, through blurred vision at:

SAM'S POINT OF VIEW - THE REF

who counts him out in slow motion.

REF

...Eight...Nine...Ten! You're out!

SCENE

Tiger Joe wins! His manager rushes out, holds up his glove, flashbulbs, crowd cheering, people rush in ring, the whole enchilada. Sam is carried, semiconscious, off the mat by Gomez and Father Muldooney.

INT. SAM'S LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Sam is awake now, lying on the table, partially doctored up, but he holds a bloody towel next to his face.

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

Gomez sits down nearby, drinking a beer, near a newspaper. There's a knock on the door, then the big Bartender comes, roughly escorting Roscoe, who carries a bag.

GOMEZ

Roscoe, right on time.

(to Sam)

I sent my main man out to make sure Roscoe does the right thing.

ROSCOE

I'm making good! But how the hell did you know, Cody? You picked the eighth round! Incredible!

Gomez holds up a sports page -- with a big headline and photo: "Muhammad Ali K.O.'s Foreman! Zaire Fight Goes 8 rounds!"

ROSCOE

Now I owe you \$40,000! Here's half now....

SAM

I'll give it to the church. You give the other \$20,000 to Dixie.

GOMEZ

We'll see that you pay too.

Roscoe is now roughly escorted out by the big Bartender, leaving the bag behind.

GOMEZ

How come you knew Ali would win in the eighth round, Cody?

SAM

The Lord moves in mysterious ways, his knock-outs to perform.

The locker room door bangs open. Jake Edwards and Link step in, wearing overcoats, hands in their pockets. Gomez backs up. Sam gulps. Edwards walks over to Sam.

EDWARDS

It's all that stained glass...the stains won't wash out. You think I'm the bad guy and you're the good guy these days, right, Cody? 'Stead of two guys in business? So I say, 'Cody, hit the deck in the first round, not the second.' Do I think you will?

CONTINUED

CONTINUED (2)

SAM

Yes?

EDWARDS

Noo-o-o-o...I do not. So what did
I bet the house on?

(happily)

That you'd go down in the second!
I knew you'd spite me, you crazy
rum-dum! And you did! I cleaned
up, Cody! Oh, you and I are
finished, Cody. But I made so much
money tonight, I'm not going to turn
your knuckles into mashed potatoes.

(turns, leaves)

Just wanted you to know...nobody
gets the best of Jake Edwards.

At the locker room door, Link opens it for Edwards -- just as Sister Angela enters. She and Edwards stare at each other a long moment; he gallantly steps aside, she enters, he and Link leave. Sam and Gomez exchange looks and slowly exhale. That was lucky....

ANGLE ON ANGELA AND SAM

Gomez discreetly steps back. She walks over to Sam, beaming.

ANGELA

I'm very proud of you.

SAM

Thanks, but I'm feeling punchy,
Angela...I may not remember....

Angela covers his cut lips and smiles.

ANGELA

(softly)

Then I'll remember for both of us.

She bends forward and kisses him on the forehead. She turns to go, but Sam takes her hand, causing her to pause.

SAM

Angela, if you weren't who you
are...and I wasn't who I am...if
things were different....

CONTINUED

CONTINUED

ANGELA

(low and sexy)

...then things would be different.
I know.

Sam smiles. Then he shows her the open bag of money. She stares; she can't believe it. She starts to ask a thousand questions, but it is now Sam who covers her lips.

SAM

This is \$20,000. For you. You wouldn't think \$20,000 would be enough to finally get a chapel built, would you? But if you've got faith....

ANGELA

looks at him, her look intense, her eyes starting to water. She nods; she does have the faith. She kisses Sam on the forehead, takes the bag of money, turns, leaves. With her chapel.

SAM

(to himself)

That's nice...but I'm still here.
No quantum leap....

Gomez walks over, sits down.

GOMEZ

Since you get chapels built, maybe you'll listen to a confession too.

(pause)

I bet against you, amigo. And I cleaned up. I saw how bad you were fighting...and you didn't let me down.

(pause)

How mad are you?

SAM

(waves it away)

Glad you won.

(more to himself)

Because I lost...Angela got her chapel, Dixie gets her doughnuts, and you make money too.

(laughs to himself)

I was here to lose all the time!

Gomez is looking at him strangely.

CONTINUED

SAM

What are you going to do with the money?

GOMEZ

Hell, I'm not sure what I'm going to do with myself! Time to retire again!

(pause, wistful)

Guess I'll check in with my young gangsters, see if any of 'em really want to get into fighting....

SAM

You enjoy that, don't you?

GOMEZ

Yeah, never thought I'd like helping people.

SAM

(quietly)

I didn't either.

GOMEZ

Wish I could do it full time....

SAM

(leans forward,
intensely)

Why couldn't you?

Gomez realizes he's serious. Thinks.

GOMEZ

Come on...how? Where would they train? What would I live on?

SAM

I don't know. Community support? Live off your winnings a while until it gets going?

(pause)

I know of a church basement with a ring and work-out room....

They look at each other. And grin.

GOMEZ

Maybe I could at that....

In a manner of celebration, Gomez offers Sam a beer -- Sam reaches for it ---

THE TWO HANDS

handing off the beer which, through a seamless match cut turns into:

TWO HANDS

handing off a pair of binoculars on a sunny day outside.

EXT. LIFEGUARD STATION

Sam finds himself in swimming trunks, sunglasses, a whistle around his neck, being handed binoculars, then a clipboard by a young tanned Lifeguard. The station overlooks a popular beach on a sunny day, full of sunbathers and swimmers.

LIFEGUARD

Okay, Mark, it's all yours. Got two-foot swells out there, and not much riptide.

(points, grins)

And massive hooters in the lime-green bikini, to your left. Have a good shift.

The Lifeguard hurries away, leaving Sam standing there, enjoying a beautiful day at the beach...his beach. There's an ice cold drink nearby, Sam sits down, puts his feet up, sips the drink, leans back, looks around, grins, surprised, but contented. Sam's favorite color is lime green.

FADE TO BLACK

END OF ACT FOUR