

LONG DECADE  
CUTSCENE

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EXT. VILLAGE - MARKETPLACE - DUSK

The shadows on the sun clock move to the sixth hour. The clouds emerge into the sun as toxic dust surrounds the air.

The TOWNSFOLKS, wearing gas masks, close up shop, and return home. A few runs off, others struggle to pull their cows.

MAX, 12 with a gas mask, looks at his small pouch of money. A bag of flour sits next to him.

MAX

Not enough...

Max sighs, then look at the dying sun.

He puts the pouch inside of his left pocket, then pulls out a small, worn-out journal. He opens the journal to an image of the Gods: OZ, giant blue god, and CECIL, giant red god. Scribble notes appear on the side of the illustration, but they're not clear.

Max examines the image, closes the book, then places it in his back pocket. He struggles to pick up the bag with both of his hands. He repositions himself to get a better grip.

SAM (O.S.)

Do you need some help, child?

SAM, mid-60s with a teared-up gas mask, stands near a cart.

Max turns around and spots him. He struggles with his words.

MAX

It's fine. I can...

Max drops the bag of flour again. He flops onto the bag.

Sam walks towards Max, then helps him get up. He goes over to receive the flour.

Max tries to stop him by carrying the flour first.

MAX (CONT'D)

It's okay, sir. I can do this my --

Max and Sam lift the bag of flour with ease. Max's eyes widen as Sam guides him to a cart.

SAM

-- Here, you can place it in my cart.

They drop the bag of flour in a cart with logs of wood. The cart bounces from the heavyweight.

SAM (CONT'D)

Phew. That's a lot of flour for one boy to carry.

MAX

I could've carried it with or without your help.

SAM

Regardless, no boy your age should be out here this late at night. The air is terrible.

Sam scans the area. No one, but Sam and Max are outside. He looks back at Max.

SAM (CONT'D)

Where are your parents?

MAX

My mother is at home. Waiting for me, in fact. So, can I please have my flour back?

Max tries to reach for his flour. Sam guides Max's hand down with a small piece of log.

SAM

Not in these conditions you won't.

Sam picks up the handles from his cart. He carries the cart of wood and flour with ease.

SAM (CONT'D)

Just tell me where to go and we'll reach your home in no time.

Max looks at his hands. Red markings and splinters pierce his palms. He looks back at Sam.

Max buries his hands into his pockets.

MAX

Fine, but it'll cost ya.

Sam chuckles, then gestures Max to the back of the cart.

SAM

There's some space back there. Why don't ya take a seat?

Max looks at the empty spot in the cart. He hesitates. He looks at the sun again.

EXT. VILLAGE - FOREST - NIGHT

The moon's crescent rises as cold air roams in the dark woods. Specks of toxic dust floats in the air.

A lamp bright up their path as Sam carries the cart with Max and the flour home.

Max starts to shiver as he warms up near the lamp.

Sam lifts his mask down.

SAM  
You okay back there?

MAX  
Y-Yeah.

SAM  
Good. It's beautiful out here, no?

Max turns to Sam. He notices that Sam was missing his mask.

MAX  
Hey! Why aren't you wearing your mask?!

SAM  
Oz is out tonight.

MAX  
Oz?

Max pulls out the journal. He opens up to the page about Oz.

SAM (O.S.)  
Yup. The God of the Moon, Oz. Much more merciful than his brother, Cecil, no doubt.

Max tugs against his mask. He hesitates, then places his hands down to the journal. He crawls closer to Sam.

MAX  
You know about the Deadly Curse?

SAM  
Everyone and their dead mothers know about it. It's been here for many years.

MAX

Then surely you must know if anyone tried to delay this curse!

SAM

Nope, but I had heard stories about a lad who did good deeds to please these Gods.

Max sits down with his arms against the bag of flour.

MAX

So is it really possible? Can we really stop this curse?

Sam stops moving. He turns his head to Max while carrying the cart in his hands.

SAM

I'm afraid I'm too old to really stop a curse. Still, I can do what I can do to make a single deed count.

MAX

Is that why you're helping me?

SAM

I'm helping you because you're a kid that needs help. Besides, they don't call me "Sweet Knight, Sam" for nothing.

Max leans closer with wider eyes.

MAX

You're a knight?

SAM

Was a knight. Now, I'm just a retired, old man looking for...  
(beats)

Actually, never mind. I wouldn't want to bore you with my story.

MAX

I want to hear it!

Sam smiles, puts out the candle from the lamp, then he continues to move the cart into the forest.

SAM (O.S.)

Years ago, I worked as a knight for the King.

The stars from the sky brighten up. They form different shapes as Sam narrates.

SAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
I've fought many battles for this country and I've helped many people in the process.

The stars in the sky show a young knight fighting other knights and beasts. He remains the victor.

Max relaxes near the bag of flour as he looks at the stars.

SAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Of course, as time went on, things became harsher for us and I was eventually kicked from my service.

The KING, mid-30s, enters through the illustrations from the star. He points at Sam, which causes him to turn into a commoner. He exits.

The Sam in the stars sighs then stands up as he helps different people with firewood.

SAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Despite that, I still continue to help by offering free firewood. Sometimes, I would even get money on the side.

MAX  
And you would continue to do that despite getting anything in return?

SAM  
Sometimes the most rewarding gift is giving others. Although, I can do more for these people.

Max rolls over and looks at Sam.

Sam looks down and frowns as he continues to carry the cart.

SAM (CONT'D)  
Seeing people like you work in these harsh conditions makes me wish I could've done more.

MAX  
Like what?

Sam pauses.

SAM

Like a bakery. A place where I can make some hot meals for everyone regardless of whether they have gold pieces or not.

Sam breathes in from his nose.

SAM (CONT'D)

I think that might do some good, but sadly I lack the materials for it.

Sam stops as he spots a house in the middle of the forest. The lights are still on.

SAM (CONT'D)

Well, I guess this is our stop. Thanks for listening, child.

Max looks at Sam, the flour, then his pouch of money. He sighs, then hops off.

MAX

You can take the flour. You need it more than me.

SAM

Are you sure, child?

MAX

It's Max. I hope you can make your bakery dream a reality.

Sam almost wrinkles out a tear. He sniffs, puts his cart down, then hugs Max.

Max freezes.

SAM

Thank you, Max. It's not every day we have kind souls like you. I'll be sure to remember this.

Sam lets go of Max, picks up his cart, then exits.

Max watches Sam leave until he couldn't see him anymore. He turns to his house, then takes a deep breath.

INT. MAX'S COTTAGE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

PAMELA, mid-30s in a black dress and white apron, sits on a stool near the fireplace. Her eyes look baggy.

Max enters with his father's journal in hand. He gulps and slowly removes his gas mask. He avoids eye contact as he shallows his words.

MAX

I'm home.

PAMELA

You're late.

MAX

But home.

Pamela walks over to Max and grabs his small pouch of money. She counts two gold pieces.

PAMELA

That's it? You've spent all day  
only to get two gold pieces?

MAX

Well, yeah, but --

Pamela throws the coins to the side. She walks closer to Max as she starts to poke his chest.

PAMELA

-- I told you to sell that flour  
for five gold pieces. Not one, not  
three, but five!

MAX

I know it looks bad mother, but  
trust me. This is just a small bump  
in the road.

Pamela scoffs.

PAMELA

A small bump?! We have nothing,  
Max!

MAX

We have hope. Father talked about  
it.

Max pulls up his father's journal. He opens the page to the two gods: Cecil and Oz. He points at the two illustrations on the page.

MAX (CONT'D)

See? Father said that if we show  
kindness and help others in need,  
then the curse might end.

Pamela grabs the journal and reads the page.

Max paces around the room.

MAX (CONT'D)

I think that's why we didn't see  
Father as much. He worked hard  
until his last breath to please  
these Gods so then...

Max pauses. He stops his tracks, then turns to Pamela.

MAX (CONT'D)

So then, we can live.

Pamela looks at the journal, then at Max. She starts to tear up, but then wipes it off. She closes the journal.

PAMELA

Kindness can only get you so far  
until you're kicked by a boot and  
your father kicked us hard.

Pamela squeezes the journal in her hand and walks towards the fireplace. She looks at Max with the fire glistening in her eyes, then throws the journal into the fire.

MAX

No!

Max runs towards the fire. Pamela pushes him back.

PAMELA

Enough Max! I don't want to hear  
any more of this nonsense!

MAX

You don't understand, mother. If we  
don't stop this then --

PAMELA

-- Then nothing! I will not let  
this family suffer another day  
because of an act of kindness.

Pamela picks up a small log and throws in fire, causing it to grow. She stares at the fire, then at Max.

Max watches the journal slowly burn into ash. He gets up and runs upstairs.

Pamela frowns and drops to her knees as she stares at the crunching flames.

INT. MAX'S COTTAGE - ATTIC - NIGHT

Max runs into the attic and shuts the door. He falls into his bed, planting his face onto the pillow. He turns his body as he starts to tear up.

He spots some sheets of paper with a quill pen on the ground. He gets up and sniffs.

EXT. MAX'S COTTAGE - ATTIC - MIDNIGHT

Max writes down an entry log with the quill pen. He has his windows open, allowing the moonlight to be his light source. His gas mask hangs on the side of his bed.

MAX (V.O.)

Entry Log One: My mother destroyed  
my father's journal, so I've  
decided to continue one for him.

Max writes out Sam's story and how he gave away his flour for free. He smiles as he writes.

MAX (V.O.)

This time, I'll be saving this  
world for good.

INT. MAX'S COTTAGE - ATTIC - MORNING - NEXT DAY

Max stays in his room, writing up a new journal. He stacks up some paper. He tries to get another piece of paper but ran out. He tries to find something to write on.

He grabs his mask, then exits.

INT. MAX'S COTTAGE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Max goes downstairs and tries to locate the two gold pieces. They're missing. So is Pamela. He sighs, then looks at leftover flour on the counter table.

EXT. VILLAGE - MARKETPLACE - MORNING

Max holds up a small pouch of flour in the middle of the streets. The Townsfolks pass by him.

MAX

Flour! Get you're flour for the  
price of 2 gold pieces!

They all ignore him.

Max sighs. He walks away from the street until...

SAM (O.S.)  
Still selling flour, Max?

Max turns around. His eyes brights up and walks towards Sam.

MAX  
Sam! I need to buy a new journal.  
My mother --  
(beats)  
I mean, I accidentally dropped it  
in our fireplace.

SAM  
Sorry to hear that, but I got  
something even better than a new  
journal.

Sam motions his hands for Max to follow him. He exits.

Max looks around, then slowly follows Sam.

EXT. VILLAGE - SAMMIE'S BAKERY - MORNING

Sam leads Max further in the marketplace. They stop to see a small bakery shop. A couple of loaf of bread stands on top of a wooden counter. A few customers stand in line.

MAX  
Is this...

SAM  
Yup.

Sam smiles and looks at Max.

SAM (CONT'D)  
And I owe it all to you, Max.

Sam walks over to the counter. He takes out five gold pieces and hands them over to Max.

SAM (CONT'D)  
If ever need any help, just come to  
me. I may not offer much, but it's  
the least I can do.

Max stands with his mouth open. He hesitates, then smiles and takes the money.