

TALES OF THE DAMNED:

Episode 1 - "THE WRITER"

By

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Based on the concept by Christine Gillam

SECOND DRAFT (REVISED)

AUGUST 2005

"THE WRITER"TEASER

FADE IN:

INT. THE WRITER'S APARTMENT - DAY (1981)

JEROME STEARN sits at an antique oak desk pondering over a classic 1930's UNDERWOOD typewriter. A selection of dust covered ENCYCLOPAEDIA'S and DICTIONARIES as well as numerous food wrappers cover the remainder of the desk.

The apartment consists of a cluttered, disorderly lounge area in front of the desk. A neglected Victorian fireplace acts as the centrepiece to the lounge. To the rear of the desk is the kitchen. Next to the kitchen is a bathroom and bedroom. Next to them a front door, which leads to the 3rd floor landing of Jerome's apartment building. Rain lashes against a set of large windows on the left side of the apartment.

In despair Jerome reaches for a glass of whiskey next to the typewriter.

Jerome takes a swig of his drink. He looks at the near empty glass then proceeds to finish the drink. He places the glass back on the desk then leans back in his chair sighing as he runs his hands through his unkempt hair.

Suddenly there's a knock at the door, which at first startles Jerome. He gets up from his chair and heads for the door.

JEROME

(to himself)

Couldn't have come at a better
time.

Jerome reaches the door and glances through the peep hole.

MANDRAKE stands a few feet from the door with his back to the peep hole. He is wearing a FEDORA and TRENCH COAT.

Mandrake suddenly turns to face the door. Most of his face is covered by the peak of his hat. His mouth and clean shaven chin are the only visible features. His wet trench coat hangs from his tall thin frame. He looks directly at the peep hole startling Jerome once again.

JEROME
(through the door)
Can I help you?

Mandrake replies in a low husky voice.

MANDRAKE (O.S.)
Grocery delivery!

Mandrake holds two paper bags up to the peep hole.

Jerome reaches to unlock a chain from the top of the door followed by a double latch. He then turns the handle opening the door just enough to retrieve the grocery bags.

JEROME
Thanks.

Mandrake hands Jerome the bags. Jerome takes care not to look at the delivery man.

MANDRAKE
A little paranoid, sir? I guess
you can't be too sure these days.

Jerome starts to shut the door ignoring mandrake's comments.

MANDRAKE (O.S.)
The receipt's in the bag, sir.

Jerome is already locking the door. As he slides the chain back onto its latch a cold shiver runs through his body. He stops for a second to gather his composure, he then turns and heads into the kitchen.

Jerome places one bag on the work surface and the other he puts away in a cupboard above the sink. He then returns to his desk.

He sits back down at the typewriter and prepares to type.

There's a pause as he struggles to find inspiration.

JEROME
Come on Jerome, think!

He stares at a blank piece of paper in the typewriter, still nothing.

In frustration he rips the piece of paper out from the typewriter, crushes the paper into a small ball and throws it across the room into the lounge. Unintentionally the paper ball hits a framed certificate on the fireplace knocking it to the floor.

JEROME

Damn it.

Jerome gets up and heads into the lounge to pick up the frame. He reads the certificate aloud..

JEROME

Writer's Guild - Writer of the
Year 1973' - awarded to 'Jerome
Stearn' for outstanding
achievement and excellence in
writing.

Jerome looks away from the certificate.

JEROME (CONT'D)

(to himself)

Received for one book, written
nine years ago, stolen from his
best friend, Murray Starke, after
he died.

MANDRAKE (V.O.)

Damned: The souls of those
condemned to eternal punishment.

FADE OUT.

END TEASER

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. COLLEGE - DAY (1971)

Jerome Stearn approaches campus. He carries a large packed duffel bag in one hand and a rucksack, fit to burst, over his shoulder. He stops at the steps to the main entrance to look up at the large and daunting building.

INT. COLLEGE. STUDENT ROOM - DAY

Murray Starke is seated at a desk in front of a window, which overlooks the campus grounds. He types on his classic 1930's UNDERWOOD typewriter.

A knock can be heard from the door decorated by a large poster of Jim Morrison.

MURRAY

Come in.

The door opens slowly as Jerome enters the room with his heavy bags in tow.

Murray turns and gets up to greet his new roommate.

MURRAY

Hey, Jerome right?

JEROME

Yeah, it's nice to meet you.

They shake hands.

MURRAY

The name's Murray. Nice to finally meet someone around here with some damn manners, everyone's so up their own ass it makes my eyes water.

Both boys smile at the ice breaker. Murray points at a bed on the far side of the room.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

That's yours. I hope you don't mind but I've already slept in mine. I got here yesterday.

Jerome moves over to his bed and takes a seat.

JEROME

No bother, as long as I've got a pillow and a mattress I'll sleep anywhere.

Jerome notions towards the typewriter...

JEROME (CONT'D)

That's a classy tool you have there. Is it an antique?

MURRAY

Yeah, my Grandpa used to write and he left it for me in his will. Said I had potential or something.

JEROME

What do you write?

MURRAY

Poetry, lyrics but mostly stories. My dream is to be a published writer. Even if I only sell one copy the fact my work was deemed good enough to publish would put me to my grave a happy man. Do you write?

JEROME

I do yeah but it's something that doesn't really come easy to me. I'm not really good with deadlines because I struggle to get my imagination on paper. I know what I want to say I just don't know how I want to say it. You know?

MURRAY

I kinda seem to churn out good work after good work fortunately. I don't wish to blow my own trumpet but every English teacher I've had since 5th grade has told me that I have potential to be a writer so I've kinda made it my goal. I'd like to make my Grandpa proud too. I know he's watching. I suppose he's my muse.

Murray notions towards the poster of Jim Morrison...

MURRAY (CONT'D)

He's no good anymore.

Jerome chuckles at his roommates humour.

JEROME

That's cool. Maybe one day you could give me some tips, I could do with the help.

Murray heads for the fridge and opens it.

MURRAY

No problem buddy but first there's some serious drinking to do before my friend Dan's party tonight.

Murray throws Jerome a can of beer. They both crack the cans and hold them up.

MURRAY

Cheers

JEROME

Cheers

INT. COLLEGE. HALLWAY - NIGHT

Both Murray and Jerome stagger along the hallway towards their room. They are both laughing and shouting.

VOICE (O.S.)

Keep the noise down!

MURRAY

Hey, up yours asshole!

Jerome and Murray laugh. A STUDENT emerges from a room.

STUDENT

Got something to say?

Jerome looks at Murray and Murray looks at Jerome. They both laugh out loud.

STUDENT (CONT'D)

Hey how about I beat your ass and see if you're laughing then? It's 4am dick weed I want some sleep.

MURRAY

Suck my fat one.

The student lunges at Murray but before he makes contact Jerome has already struck him on the chin knocking him down to the floor.

Jerome takes Murray by the arm and quickly they manage to find, unlock and enter their room.

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - NIGHT

Both boys enter laughing. Murray holds up Jerome's arm like a referee would hold aloft the arm of a victorious boxer.

MURRAY

The new lightweight champion of
the world... Jerome Stearn!!

Murray then makes his way over to the fridge to retrieve two beers. He throws one at Jerome who manages to catch it.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

There you go buddy, some material
for you to write about. You say
that you're struggling for
inspiration, well write about
that!

JEROME

Not quite what I had in mind.

MURRAY

Be positive my friend. All good
things come to those who... who...
drink excessively.

They both laugh again.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - DAY

Jerome is sitting on his bed. In his lap is a large a-4 pad. At the top of the page is the title to a story, the date and his name. He taps the end of a pencil on his pad.

Murray is at his typewriter. He is typing like a maniac. The sound of the keys seems to be getting louder and louder.

Jerome looks up at Murray who is unaware of his roommates struggle. The sound of the keys gets louder and louder.

In a sudden burst of rage Jerome snaps his pencil in half.

JEROME

Damn, son of a bitch!

Murray's flow is interrupted by Jerome's outburst. He stops and turns around.

MURRAY

You OK buddy?

JEROME

How do you do it? Are you sure you're writing in English and not gibberish?

MURRAY

(smiles)

I can't help it. Once I have the plot in my head I'm off. What's the problem? Anything I can help you with?

JEROME

I doubt it. This assignment has to be in next week and I can't even get the first line down.

MURRAY

Well, what's it about?

JEROME

It's about a love triangle, two girls and a guy.

MURRAY

OK, so you have a back story for each character right?

JEROME

Yeah

MURRAY

So start it with the back story of the girl who ends up with the guy. Hit the reader with her story at the beginning. Attract the reader to her, that way they'll want to read more to see if she gets her man, right?

JEROME

In theory it sounds perfect.

MURRAY

Try it. It's a winning formula I
tell ya.

Murray winks at his roommate turns around and immediately
gets back into his flow once again.

Jerome looks on in disbelief.

INT. COLLEGE. LECTURE ROOM - DAY

Mr Coton walks down an aisle of students. At each student
he drops a marked paper down in front of them. He stops at
Jerome.

COTON

Well, well. What to say about Mr
Stearn.

Jerome looks up at Coton.

COTON (CONT'D)

You have potential to be a darn
good writer boy, but you lack the
intelligence to build your stories
on a distinctive structure. Your
characterisations are excellent
but you miss the three simple
stages of storytelling.

JEROME

Three stages, sir?

Coton sighs at Jerome.

COTON

Beginning, middle and end, Stearn.
Every story should have them.

A few students snicker at Stearn's expense. Coton moves
onto Murray who's sitting next to Jerome.

COTON (CONT'D)

Go ahead and laugh. But you could
all do with a lesson or two from
Mr Starke here.

Coton drops Murray's paper in front of him.

COTON (CONT'D)
Characterisations brilliant,
structure excellent, plot
wonderful. Pass.

Jerome looks at Murray who shrugs his shoulders a little embarrassed at the complements.

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - NIGHT

The lights are out. Jerome lies awake in bed. He looks over to Murray who is fast asleep his covers pulled up over his head.

JEROME
Murray, you awake?

There's no reply from Murray. Jerome slowly gets out of bed and starts pacing the room.

He looks on edge, desperate. He walks over to Murray's desk and switches on his lamp. He checks to make sure Murray is still asleep.

Jerome's now sweating.

JEROME
(to himself)
I need a story. There's got to be
something here I can use. There's
got to be.

He wipes at the sweat on his forehead as he pulls a notepad from a folder next to the typewriter. He scans Murray's notes.

JEROME (CONT'D)
Give me a damn story.

He starts to panic. He's now sweating profusely.

Suddenly he pushes all the paper work off the desk and turns to Murray.

He starts to shout at him.

JEROME (CONT'D)
Where do they come from man?!!
Tell me!! They can't possibly all
come from you!!

There's no movement from Murray, which angers Jerome even more.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Hey Murray I'm talking to you!

In frustration Jerome pulls back Murray's covers.

Jerome gasps in horror at his friend who is lying in a pool of blood. He stumbles back in fear. Murray's face is cut to ribbons. Piece's of glass protrude from his face. His features are UNRECOGNISABLE.

JEROME

Jesus Christ, Murray!

As he leans back in on Murray, Murray suddenly opens his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - NIGHT

In a sudden thrust of energy Jerome sits bolt upright in bed, his covers are saturated with sweat.

He looks over at Murray who is fast asleep in bed.

Jerome jumps out of bed and dashes over to where his friend is sleeping. He pulls back the covers. Murray stirs there is nothing wrong with his face. He looks perfectly fine.

MURRAY

(half asleep)

Hey I told you I'm not that way inclined.

Murray pulls the covers back over himself and rolls over falling back to sleep.

EXT. COLLEGE GROUNDS - DAY

Jerome walks towards one of the other sites on campus. Murray appears in the background and runs to catch up with Jerome.

MURRAY

Jerome! Hold up!

Jerome stops and turns to see Murray.

JEROME

What's up?

Murray stops and catches a breath.

MURRAY

(panting)

Where you been?

JEROME

Just got out of class, was just going to grab something to eat.

MURRAY

I've got some news, exciting news.

JEROME

What?

MURRAY

I'm out of here.

JEROME

(shocked)

What? Why? Where are you going?

MURRAY

I'm going to war buddy. I signed up for the marines this morning.

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Jerome pulls the covers off Murray's bed to reveal his friend's lifeless body. His face covered in blood and shards of glass.

EXT. COLLEGE GROUNDS - DAY

Jerome is daydreaming. Murray snaps him out of it by waving his hand in front of his face.

MURRAY

You alright man?

Jerome focuses back to his friend.

JEROME

I don't think that's a good idea.

MURRAY

Why?

Jerome goes into a daydream again, remembering the dream from the night before.

Murray waves his hand in front of Jerome's face once again.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Hello...

Jerome snaps back out of his daydream.

JEROME

Er... I don't think... I mean... are you up for that kind of thing? You never expressed your eagerness to support your country in Asia before, so why now?

MURRAY

You don't understand. This is a writer's dream. Vietnam, just think of all the inspiration I could take from this.

JEROME

If you make it back.

MURRAY

Look, it's near the end of the semester so they won't put anyone else in our room. You'll have the place to yourself. It also means I can leave my stuff here. I'll be back to collect my things just as soon as I get leave.

JEROME

Well when, when do you go? You're not even finishing the semester?

MURRAY

Not a chance buddy I'm outta here in the morning.

JEROME

You're kidding?

MURRAY

Don't worry there will be a bit of a get together tonight at Dan's then I'm off.

JEROME

Who's going to help me with my final paper? It's has to be in next week.

MURRAY

You've still got those notes I gave you?

JEROME

Yeah.

MURRAY

Just follow those and you'll walk it. It's a great story Jerome. Anyway I have to go I have a party to help arrange.

Jerome watches his friend disappear up the steps and into the building.

EXT. COLLEGE. CAR PARK - DAY

Jerome and Murray head towards a blue Oldsmobile parked in one of the short stay bays.

JEROME

This yours?

MURRAY

Yeah, well it's my old man's. He arranged for it to be driven up here so I could drive to boot camp. Did I tell you my dad's kinda happy about me joining the Marines?

JEROME

(sarcastically)

You don't say.

The car is in mint condition. Jerome strokes his hand along the rear fender.

JEROME (CONT'D)

It's a beauty.

MURRAY

That it is my friend. That it is.

Murray looks at Jerome who seems a little upset.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Come on man chin up, it's not the
end of the world. I'll write. You
think you can muster together
enough words on your own to reply?

Jerome smiles at his friend's wit. Murray opens the boot of
the trunk and puts his bags in.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Take it easy buddy.

JEROME

You too.

The two friends embrace.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. COLLEGE. LECTURE HALL - DAY.

Mr Coton is again passing around papers. He reaches Jerome.

COTON

Mr Stearn, what are we going to do
with you?

JEROME

Hey look I did my best.

COTON

Then maybe your best isn't good
enough. Maybe it should've been
you who went to war.

Jerome doesn't take the bait. He just delivers a dirty look
then turns away.

The bell sounds ending class all the students get up and
begin filing out of the hall.

On Jerome's way out he is met by Murray's friend DAN.

DAN

Jerome, can I have a word?

Straight away Jerome senses something is wrong as Dan moves
him aside to a quiet part of the room.

JEROME

What is it?

DAN

It's Murray.

JEROME

What's wrong? Has he arrived yet?

DAN

He didn't even make it to boot
camp. His Oldsmobile skidded off a
road 10 miles from camp, he died
instantly.

EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

The blue Oldsmobile is on its roof, stationery. Inside the car lies the dead body of Murray Starke pieces of glass protrude from his face. His features are UNRECOGNISABLE.

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - DAY

Jerome is packing Murray's belongings into boxes in preparation for its collection. He opens the top drawer on Murray's desk and notices a manuscript. He removes it and looks over the title page. It reads:

"Stained Glass by Murray Starke"

He flips through it noticing Murray's edits in the margins. He then puts the manuscript to one side to continue packing.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE. MURRAY/JEROME'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jerome sits alone on his bed. Packed boxes cover Murray's bed. On the side of Murray's desk is the manuscript, which Jerome had forgotten to pack.

Jerome retrieves the manuscript and turns to the first page. He begins to read. He then turns another page and then another.

Time passes by as Jerome turns over page after page. He shakes his head in disbelief at what he is reading.

With every passing moment more pages turn. Jerome begins to make the revisions from Murray's notes.

Suddenly he gets up and moves over to one of Murray's packed boxes. He is shaking his head in disbelief, he is excited. He opens the box up and removes the UNDERWOOD typewriter.

He places it on the desk and grabs a fresh piece of paper. He sits in the seat and puts the paper in the typewriter. He types:

"Stained Glass by Jerome Stearn"

Suddenly the sound of someone clapping loudly can be heard. Jerome turns around to see his friend, Murray.

Straggly bits of hair matted together by dry blood hang over his friends cut face. His body has begun to decompose.

Jerome jumps up from his seat and stumbles backwards on to his bed.

JEROME
(shocked)
Jesus Christ!!

MURRAY
(still clapping)
Yeah! Yeah! That's your best story to date Jerome. Anyone would've thought someone else had written it.

Jerome leans back on his arms. He is visibly shaken.

JEROME
This is a dream, you're not real.

MURRAY
Maybe I am, maybe I ain't but your conscience is real buddy.

Jerome puts his hands to his face.

JEROME
You're not real. You're not real.

Suddenly Murray is lying on the bed next to Jerome.

MURRAY
Don't do it Jerome.

Jerome jumps out of his skin falling to the floor in the process. He immediately jumps to his feet shaking and sweating profusely.

MURRAY (CONT'D)
Don't let your pride and greed get in the way of loyalty to a friend.

JEROME
Jesus...

Jerome falls back onto his chair.

JEROME (CONT'D)
Look at you.

MURRAY

(retorts)

Erm... I'd rather not if it's all
the same.

Jerome starts to gather a little composure still uncertain
of what is going on.

JEROME

Haven't lost your sense of humour
then?

MURRAY

So you've come to accept that
you're talking to your dead
friend. You know, the friend whose
story you're thinking of stealing.

JEROME

Hey I've done nothing with that
story.

MURRAY

No, but you're thinking about it
aren't you. Thinking about getting
it published? Thinking about your
first million dollars, Jerome?

Murray gets up from the bed and starts to edge toward
Jerome, flesh hanging from his face.

JEROME

Get out you freak!! Get out!!

Jerome covers his eyes with his hands, crying in fear.

There's suddenly a deathly silence. Jerome removes his
hands, tears stream from his eyes. Murray is gone.

CUT TO:

INT. COLLEGE. JEROME'S ROOM - DAY

Jerome enters and throws his school bag across the room in
anger. He drops down on his bed. He then turns over and
looks up at the ceiling.

A few seconds pass...

Jerome gets up and moves over to Murray's desk. He opens the top draw and pulls out a folder. From the folder he removes the manuscript of Murray's story but with his own name on the cover. He flicks through the pages. All Murray's edits now rectified.

INT. OFFICES OF L.A. PUBLISHING - DAY

Jerome sits on a leather sofa in reception. The phone rings, the RECEPTIONIST answers.

RECEPTIONIST

Hello..

(pause)

Of course Mr Trumble I'll send him right in.

She hangs up the phone and turns to Jerome.

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Mr Stearn, Mr Trumble will see you now, it's the 3rd door on the left.

INT. L.A. PUBLISHING. MR TRUMBLES OFFICE - DAY

MR TRUMBLE is seated at his desk when Jerome knocks on the door. Trumble gets up, approaches the door and opens it.

TRUMBLE

Mr Stearn, it's wonderful to meet you finally. Please, please come in.

JEROME

Good afternoon, sir.

TRUMBLE

Please call me Mike.

Jerome follows Trumble into the office, Trumble motions to a seat at his desk.

TRUMBLE (CONT'D)

Please sit down Mr Stearn.

JEROME

Jerome, please.

Jerome takes a seat as does Trumble across the desk from him.

TRUMBLE

Well Jerome I must begin by saying that we here at L.A. Publishing are extremely excited about 'Stained Glass'.

JEROME

Why thank you, sir.

TRUMBLE

It's been read by most of my team and also the MD and he hardly ever gets to read potential material until I buy it.

JEROME

I'm honoured.

TRUMBLE

The one thing that blew me away was how a story could be created from someone so young. I mean the whole thing with the sick boy and his brother's wife just blew me away.

Jerome felt a little uneasy with the compliments but managed to push them aside.

TRUMBE (CONT'D)

I think I should just get straight to the point here Jerome. We want to offer you a publishing contract with us. Basically we are prepared to offer you a 5 book deal including 'Stained Glass'.

Jerome is elated but manages to keep his composure to a respectable level.

JEROME

That's excellent news.

TRUMBLE

May I ask how many publishers you've been to so far?

JEROME

Just three including you, I've yet to hear from the others but I like what I see here.

TRUMBLE

We have one of the best promotion teams in America here. We'll have the cover of your book on billboards on every street corner within a couple of months. We have extremely high hopes for this story Jerome.

Jerome smiles as the words flow from Trumble's lips.

INT. STEARN HOUSE. JEROME'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jerome sits at his desk. The UNDERWOOD typewriter is in front of him with a blank piece of paper in it.

Jerome is suddenly startled when he hears a familiar voice behind him.

MURRAY

So you did it then.

Jerome gasps as he turns around to see Murray. This time Murray's appearance has worsened to the point of parts of his skull showing through what's left of his flesh.

JEROME

Son of a bitch, you scared the crap outta me.

(beat)

Damn you look like shit.

MURRAY

It's been a while. I thought I'd pop back and visit the new master of fiction.

Jerome shows more confidence this time, now used to Murray's visits.

JEROME

Show yourself out.

MURRAY

What, and let you off lightly?

Murray looks to a shelf on Jerome's wall. A certificate from the Writer's Guild takes centre stage.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Tut, tut, tut. How could you live with yourself, Jerome? More importantly where will your other stories come from? Or will you be happy with a 'one hit wonder' status?

JEROME

(irritated)

That story was no good to you. If anything I helped prove to you how good that story was.

MURRAY

I already knew how good that story was.

Murray notices the typewriter.

MURRAY (CONT'D)

Ah I wondered what happened to that. I bet my old man's looking for it.

JEROME

I doubt it. When he came to collect your stuff I told him it was stolen from our room. He wasn't happy.

MURRAY

I see your guilt hasn't kicked in yet then. So how much are you getting for my story? A million dollars? Two million?

Jerome turns back to the typewriter ignoring Murray's comments.

JEROME

It's just one story. All I have to do is come up with four more then hopefully I'll have enough money to retire on.

MURRAY

But who's gonna help you kid? Me?

Jerome gets angry and turns to his old friend.

JEROME

I can do this!

Murray is gone again.

INT. THE WRITER'S APARTMENT - DAY (1981)

Jerome stands at the window the certificate still in hand. The rain continues to lash against the windows of the apartment. He wipes a tear from his face and returns the certificate to the fireplace.

JEROME

(to himself)

You almost had it all, Jerome.

Jerome returns to the desk and his typewriter. He has another shot of whiskey. He rubs his fingers on his stubble and starts to type.

He types out a few words then suddenly the words begin to appear in gibberish as Jerome just hits the keys over and over again.

He starts to type faster and faster. The words don't make sense. Jerome doesn't seem to care. He is now building himself up into a FRENZY.

Suddenly he grabs the side of the typewriter and with one push shoves it and all the other items on the desk off the side onto the floor.

JEROME

To hell with it!!

He gets up and heads for the kitchen. He takes the bag he left on the side and begins to remove the groceries from it placing them down on the work surface. He ACCIDENTALLY knocks the bag onto the floor. He bends down to pick it up.

As he does he notices a pencil lying half inside the bag. Not one of his own used pencils but a BLACK BEAUTY freshly sharpened, the eraser unused.

A sudden surge comes over him and he leaves the groceries in the kitchen and walks over to his desk. He opens the top drawer and removes a large A-4 pad. Jerome then sits down at the desk and begins to write frantically.

A clock on the wall says 1 o'clock.

Six hours later and Jerome is still writing. He has hardly come up for air in those six hours. Finally he stops after writing the word:

"Epilogue"

His hands suddenly begin to cramp up. He puts the pencil down and starts to rub them. He smiles at his achievement then picks up the wad of paper and begins to read.

As he moves further into the story he realises with horror that he has just written the whole story of the manuscript he had stolen from Murray. From the day they met at college to Murray's last visit.

He slowly stands up from his chair and begins to walk backwards towards the door. He is now sweating profusely. His complexion turns a pale white.

Suddenly he hits the door and immediately turns to unlock it.

He swings the door open and runs out of the apartment not bothering to close the door behind him.

EXT. THE WRITER'S APARTMENT. SIDEWALK - DAY

He doesn't stop running until he is on the sidewalk. He tries to breathe. He can feel his lungs closing in on him. Stumbling to the crosswalk, he doesn't bother to wait for the sign to change to "WALK" before he starts across the street. He reaches the middle of the intersection when he suddenly looks up. His eyes become wide with fear, just before he is hit by an oncoming car.

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

'Sympathy for the Devil' is playing on the radio. In the distance lies Jerome's lifeless body. We don't see the driver.

INT. THE WRITER'S APARTMENT - DAY

On Jerome's desk lies the wad of pages to Jerome's final story. The last page is visible with the BLACK BEAUTY pencil lying across the word:

"Epilogue"

INT. CAR (MOVING) - DAY

A hand reaches for the radio tuner. Static can be heard. Finally a news broadcast sounds out.

NEWS READER

Witnesses to the incident stated that Jerome Stearn had walked out in front of a blue Oldsmobile. The car had no time to stop, and didn't stop after hitting him. There were reportedly 2 men in the car, an older gentleman wearing a black Fedora and a young man dressed in a military uniform. One witness even got a license plate, but it was concluded that this was incorrect, as it was registered to a Private Murray Starke, who died in a crash in 1971, totalling the car and killing him instantly.

We see Mandrake at the wheel of the car.

EXT. BLUE OLDSMOBILE - DAY

Murray's blue Oldsmobile drives off into the sunset.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE