

BRIMSTONE
"Ice Age"
By Derek Saul

TEASER

FADE IN:

1 EXT. STREET - NIGHT 1

It's dark and deserted, and it's RAINING hard. A clap of THUNDER roars across the sky just as STONE comes jogging into frame, trying to avoid the downpour and making his way quickly toward a nearby Chinese restaurant. The sign on the front reads BUFFET KIM WONG.

CUT TO:

2 INT. KIM WONG - NIGHT 2

Stone enters, shaking some water out of his hair. He takes a look around. It's sparsely populated. A customer scattered here and there.

Stone sits at a table, and is almost immediately approached by a young Chinese WAITRESS, who hands him a menu.

STONE
Thank you.

The waitress disappears as quickly as she appeared, and Stone opens his menu and starts to look it through.

DEVIL (O.S.)
What'll it be tonight, Detective?

Stone looks up. The DEVIL is seated across from him.

DEVIL (CONT'D)
Chicken chow mein or General Tao?
You know how tough these decisions
can be.

Stone returns to his menu.

DEVIL (CONT'D)
You know, you really shouldn't eat
too much of that chicken fried
rice. It's hell on the arteries...
or so I've heard.

More silence. Stone continues to peruse the menu.

DEVIL (CONT'D)

The silent treatment, eh? Well that's a new one.

(beat)

You really think you don't need me anymore, don't you. You think you've got me beat.

More silence.

DEVIL (CONT'D)

You know, I never pegged you as the arrogant kind.

STONE

(cold)

Get the hell out of here.

DEVIL

I don't care what you think you know or don't know. You are still under contract, Mr. Stone, and as I last recall, "eating late night snacks" was not covered under our agreement.

STONE

Yeah, and so wasn't lying to me and trying to get me killed.

DEVIL

That's not a contract dispute, Mr. Stone. That's just my nature.

STONE

(holds up his menu)

Yeah, and this is mine.

DEVIL

Whether you believe what that crazy old battleaxe Booth told you or not, the fact remains that you are still mine, Detective. A hundred and thirteen souls escaped from Hell, and you are the one being offered a second chance at life by hunting them all down -- one by one -- and sending them back into my loving embrace. Keystone theories and Pandora lists aside, your mission still stands.

STONE
(looks at his menu)
Whatever.

DEVIL
What do you think, Mr. Stone? That if you avoid the inevitable long enough, you'll suddenly waltz right up to Ash unsuspectingly and shatter the windows to her soul? Just like that? Don't be so cocky, Detective. And who's to say that Booth woman was telling you the truth in the first place, hmm? How do you know she wasn't setting you up, leading you right into a trap?

STONE
What does she have to gain by lying to me?

DEVIL
Life. Returning to Earth. Her and every other damned soul in the netherworld. If you were to be dispatched, it could give Ash a window of opportunity long enough to orchestrate another breakout.

STONE
What are you talking about?

DEVIL
Your return could cause an uprising in Hell. Ash was right about one thing: your birthday. August 9th, 1945. Your soul is endowed with tremendous power, with the life force of tens of thousands of other souls. Your return to Hell could significantly disturb the underworld, packing enough of a wallop to send the inferno into chaos again. Her supposed "love" for you has probably kept her from gouging your eyes out thus far, but you know that can't last forever.

Stone absorbs this for a moment, then scoffs dismissively.

STONE
You're the Prince of Lies.

DEVIL

A title I regard with the utmost pride, but not in this case, Detective. Heed my words.

STONE

Can I order my meal now?

DEVIL

Just keep that in mind, Mr. Stone. Your ordeal is far from over. In fact, it's just beginning. There's no easy way out for you, as you'll soon see.

(grins)

Save up that energy. It's going to be a long day.

And POOF, the Devil vanishes into thin air.

Stone shakes his head, returns his focus on the menu again, when suddenly --

AN EAR-PIERCING SHRIEK IS HEARD OUTSIDE!

The other patrons become alarmed, gasping and jumping in fright.

Stone bolts from the table, straight toward the back door.

CUT TO:

3 EXT. ALLEY BEHIND KIM WONG - NIGHT 3

Stone slams through the door out into the alley. He hears the chilling shriek again, cocking his head toward the sound and running in its direction.

4 DOWN THE ALLEY 4

The young Chinese waitress we saw earlier is pressed up against the wall, pointing and screaming at something O.S.

Stone sprints up beside her, grips her by the shoulders, trying to calm her down. He follows her frightened gaze offscreen and we see --

A DEAD MAN

dressed in a suit and tie, thrown carelessly among some trash cans, but we've never seen a corpse like this. It's paralyzed in some odd rigor mortis position, its arms curled up against its body, tiny ICICLES dripping from its

fingertips, his face frozen in terror, his eyeballs a pale white.

The Chinese waitress buries her head into Stone's chest and weeps in fear. OFF STONE'S awed look, we

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER