

BROTHER'S KEEPER

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INT. CHURCH - DAY

Mass has ended, the last few stragglers from the assembly are making their way out. HAL is cleaning up by the alter.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

KEENAN sits in the sanctuary, a small cross on the wall behind him. He finishes his drink, fills his goblet from a half empty pitcher, and takes multiple large gulps. He lifts the tabernacle and shakes it gently, before walking out.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Keenan approaches Hal.

KEENAN

Hal...I-

Hal stops tidying and clasps his hands together.

HAL

May the receiving of your Body and Blood, Lord Jesus Christ, not bring me to judgment and condemnation-
(looks at Keenan)
...May you give patience to a little brother, making amends on behalf of his family.

He releases his hands and resumes tidying.

KEENAN

What are y-

HAL

Thursdays Keenan...No one to help but you and you're just off in your own world doing what you always do.

KEENAN

I know, I'm sorry, just feeling a bit dow-

HAL

-a bit down this week? Yeah, I know Keenan. I know, thanks for reminding me.

Hal stops to collect himself.

KEENAN

Fucking listen to me Hal. I can't
keep living like this, we aren't-

Keenan, noticing his volume, lowers his voice.

KEENAN (CONT'D)

I just can't stay here. I have a
plan.

HAL

(sarcastic)

You have a plan? The genius Keenan
Harpo, my infallible and amazing
brother, has a *plan*?

Keenan sits on a pew defeated. Hal feigns shock.

(Beat.)

Hal realizes he pressed too hard and switches his tone.

HAL (CONT'D)

All right, what is your plan?

KEENAN

...Stop fucking with me man.

HAL

I really want to hear it, I swear.

Keenan stands up.

KEENAN

I need the key to the tabernacle.

HAL

What? Why would I have that? You
know we aren't allowed to open it.
What would you do that Gabriel
already isn't for us?

KEENAN

(a beat) What if we sell the
product ourselves?

HAL

And go behind the back of this
whole operation? Keenan, we don't
even know if it is here. That's the
whole point.

KEENAN

Yeah, sure, Gabriel comes and "moves" it between churches every week. You really believe that?

HAL

I have no reason not to. Product moves church to church. Money is washed through collections. It's simple Keenan. Why would it be better with you at the helm instead?

Keenan eyes his brother with suspicion which turns to frustration. He approaches the altar and tosses the money basket to Hal's feet, then retreats to the corner.

KEENAN

Yeah, guess you're right. Keep playing pretend then.

Hal smirks. He bends down to pick up the collection basket, before GABRIEL, mid 40s, enters the church. He is dressed well and holds himself with confidence. Hal and Keenan straighten up in surprise, not expecting the visit so soon.

INT. CHURCH - MOMENTS LATER

GABRIEL

Hal, my boy!

Gabriel launches himself to Hal in an instant, hugging him. Hal stands awkwardly in Gabriel's embrace.

HAL

The Right Reverend Bishop Dawes...

Gabriel releases Hal with a now threatening glare.

GABRIEL

What did I tell you Hal? No need to for the charade when it's just us.

HAL

How are you Gabriel?

Keenan leans forward in his chair as he listens to Gabriel and Hal conversing.

GABRIEL

Fat, rich, and happy to see you. Everything looks in order here. Anything I should know?

Gabriel looks around Hal's shoulder.

HAL
I have nothing to report.

GABRIEL
How's that brother of yours...your
deacon?

HAL
Oh, he's...well.

GABRIEL
What a shock! Troubled that one.

HAL
Well he's-

KEENAN
Doing fine.

Keenan is now standing amongst the three. Gabriel looks to Hal then back to Keenan. After a brief pause, Gabriel heartily laughs.

GABRIEL
You are, aren't you?

KEENAN
How are you boss?

Keenan launches himself to Gabriel, hugging him for a brief moment and releases him.

GABRIEL
I like you Keenan. The higher ups
really like you too...

Gabriel motions to the two and makes his way down to sit in a pew. The two join him.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Not just my usual pick-up today,
boys. I have two pieces of good
news and two of bad news. The bad
news is my doctor said I need to
stop smoking.

Gabriel heartily laughs, Keenan joins in. Hal joins in after a bit but not so heartily.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
And here I said, I only smoke when
I drink...which brings us to the
other bad news.

KEENAN
She said you need to stop drinking?

Gabriel laughs heartily. Hal sits stone-faced beside them.

HAL
And the good news, sir?

Gabriel continues to giggle, trying to get the words out.

GABRIEL
You're in Hal. You're moving up.
Which means you -

He points at Keenan.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Are taking Hal's spot.

Hal's brows narrow in surprise. His head slowly turns to a shocked Keenan.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Which means you need to get better
at playing your part. Understand?

Keenan avoids eye contact. His hands relay signs of underlying stress. Hal grows impatient.

HAL
Keenan? Brother? An answer for his
excellency, the Revered Bishop?

Keenan remains the same as Gabriel and Hal look to him for a response. Gabriel then smiles and turns to Hal.

GABRIEL
Could you give us a second, boy.

Gabriel escorts Keenan away with a hand on his shoulder. Hal turns to the altar, kneels down, and begins to pray.

Gabriel and Keenan approach the confessional booth. Gabriel opens the door for Keenan. As he gets inside he sees a cross necklace glisten around Gabriel's neck.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - DAY

Gabriel enters the confessional and opens the small window between. He looks at Keenan directly.

GABRIEL

Listen kid, you get it right? Hal is fucking good at this. He plays his part well, and runs a tight ship. Hell, the money he milks in collections alone is almost enough to make it worth it even without everything else.

Keenan nods. The cross necklace catches his eye once again.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

But you? You're a blunt tool. Useful in the field, but not the kind of tool you bring in the house.

KEENAN

I can't stay here forever, father. I have ways to help that aren't here. I can be useful, you need to call me up too.

GABRIEL

Look, someone has to be here to do what your brother is doing. If you want to take this seriously, we welcome you. Until then, you're staying in the shed.

KEENAN

(a beat) May I be excused, boss?

GABRIEL

You should pray Keenan. I've found that it really helps. Gets us into character.

Gabriel winks at Keenan as he gets up to leave in a flurry. He watches Keenan leave and his gaze turns sour.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

Keenan enters the sanctuary starting to freak out. He guzzles a drink, refills and downs it again.

His attention is grabbed by the tabernacle once again before rushing to a desk. He grabs a rag and a bottle, and puts it in his pocket.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Hal and Gabriel sits side by side in a pew drinking wine. Gabriel is the man to chase, downing his goblet quickly.

GABRIEL

Dying for a smoke right now...

He pats his outfit but comes up empty handed. Hal is deep in thought next to him. Gabriel notices.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

Your brother is a good man Hal,
he's just lost. Maybe one day when
he finds his way he'll join us.

HAL

I will have lost my belief in God
before believing that.

GABRIEL

Don't be so in character, Hal.

Hal looks over at Gabriel.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)

I think I can handle your brother.
He's a fun little fellow. You just
concentrate on your new job.

Gabriel is now fully drunk. Keenan enters with a smile.

KEENAN

Prayer did help your excellency!

GABRIEL

Already? So fast?

Gabriel leaves his goblet and leans in with an interested smile.

KEENAN

In fact, I think we should pray
together. Get's into character,
that's what you said right?

Keenan gets up and walks back towards the confessionals, as Gabriel gives a knowing smirk, glad he took his advice.

INT. CONFESSIONAL - DAY

They enter the confessional in reverse this time. Keenan enters swiftly, Gabriel struggles to enter the confessional, balancing his cup of wine as he stumbles in. Keenan opens the window between them.

KEENAN

Sorry, we should switch shouldn't we?

Gabriel shakes his head no as he pants. He repositions his face away from Keenan's side.

KEENAN (CONT'D)

Okay, I should start. Forgive me father for I have sinned. It's been, 14, no 15 years since my last confession.

GABRIEL

(Laughing)

And what sins have you committed my son?

KEENAN

I have lied, cheated, stolen, assaulted. You know, wrath, greed, pride, gluttony, sloth...what was the other one?

GABRIEL

Envy?

KEENAN

No... Not envy, LUST. Lots of lust father.

GABRIEL

Keenan, what's the point in this?

KEENAN

Right, the point is, it's not my bygone sins I want to confess...I want to confess an upcoming sin father.

GABRIEL

(Laughs)

What, you got a proposition or something?

In a swift movement, Keenan lurches towards Gabriel between the divider with the rag and holds it to his face. The drunk man quickly slumps down, as the chloroform runs course.

Keenan attempts to pluck the cross necklace from his neck but the chain is too thick and wrapped under Gabriel's uniform.

INT. CHURCH - DAY

Keenan exits the confessional from his side and looks around. It's empty. He casually opens the other door and starts dragging Gabriel's body towards the sanctuary clearly struggling.

Hal stands up shocked.

Keenan drags Gabriel past and stops to take a breath. He reaches down for his goblet and drinks every last drop.

INT. SANCTUARY - DAY

Keenan brings Gabriel as close as he can to the tabernacle and stops to take another breath. He brings the cross around his neck to the lock and tries to open it. It won't budge.

He punches the table and grasps his hand in pain. Hal watches him with a smug smile. Keenan lands a kick Gabriel in frustration. He then falls onto his knees, bringing his hands together. Hal looks on in amazement.

(Beat.)

HAL

You really fucking thought that would work, didn't you?

Hal takes a moment, almost gloating, before Keenan stands.

KEENAN

I need your help. And if you don't help me, I will kill and dispose of his body in the coming hour... You know I can Hal.

HAL

This was very stupid Keenan. You could have avoided all of this if you'd kept the virtue of patience. You could've become a priest and just left.

Hal reaches under his shirt, pulling out a key hanging on a necklace. He unlocks the tabernacle, surprising Keenan.

KEENAN

You fucking hypocrite.

The box unlocks, and inside is a crown of thorns surrounding an ordained grail.

HAL

This what you wanted, Keenan? This was your plan? Steal what - some fake relics? We haven't had product here in months.

Keenan walks towards the box in disgust.

HAL (CONT'D)

See this is why no one trusts you. The bosses doesn't trust you, Gabriel doesn't trust you, I don't trust you. But you know what else? Even if they did, it wouldn't matter. You're the same you have always been - a pawn. You'll never get the game like I do.

Keenan reaches down and picks up the grail, inspecting it. He notices behind it that there is a suspicious gap in the back.

KEENAN

Since we were children, Hal, I never understood you. Never understood your actions, the way you think, nothing. Until you got us caught up in this whole quasi-religion mess. Seeing you play into this charade, what its doing to you, I finally get you now.

HAL

Well then - what am I Keenan?

KEENAN

You're deluded Hal. Deluded with pride. You really think you're a holy man now?

HAL

I am-

KEENAN

A thief, and a liar. You can cheat all the way to the very top and become the king of kings. It won't change that you're the same pompous asshole you always were...

He reaches towards the gap in the back and pulls. A false door opens up, revealing a massive amount of drug baggies. Keenan stares at Hal in a moment of disbelief.

KEENAN (CONT'D)

You know when we die, you and I are going to the same place whether you care to admit it or not.

Keenan turns to face his brother and lunges at him, taking him down to the ground. THUMP. THUMP. THUMP. Then silence.

Keenan lifts the now bloodied grail before realizing the state he's in. His brother lies dead before him, and he drops the grail. Reaching towards Hal, he sits and holds him.

INT. CHURCH - AFTERNOON

Keenan sits on the steps of the altar, his hands together, mumbling something. He wears a clerical collar.

Gabriel appears unconscious by the Pews. A breath, and abruptly he wakes up. Keenan notices and approaches him promptly, helping him onto the pew. Gabriel looks around in a daze.

KEENAN

Are you all right, your excellency?

Keenan sits next to him.

GABRIEL

I-I think so.

KEENAN

It was scary - one moment we are doing confession and the next you are passed out in the booth. Too much to drink, sir?

GABRIEL

I guess... I guess so... Strange. I could've sworn-

Gabriel takes in his surroundings.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Where's your brother?

KEENAN
He's gone.

GABRIEL
Gone where?

(Beat.)

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
Did you make up your mind?

Keenan nods his head in affirmation.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
(Stands)
Excellent.

Gabriel takes a few steps away.

GABRIEL (CONT'D)
One more thing... If your brother
comes back...will it be a problem?

KEENAN
Am I my brothers keeper?

Gabriel laughs for a moment.

GABRIEL
You're fun Keenan.

Gabriel leaves. Keenan stands on his feet and approaches the altar. He uncovers a cloth revealing the grail and crown of thorns. He then he falls to his knees, towards the altar.

KEENAN
My God...I confess that I have
sinned against you and your
kingdom...