

SON OF A LICH

Written by

Peter Binswanger

Gotham Group
1041 N Formosa Ave
Formosa West Building, Suite 200
West Hollywood, CA, 90046
424.288.5414

INT. MORGALA'S KEEP - THRONE ROOM - DAY

An UNDEAD ARMY gathers inside a crypt-like palace. Remember the beginning to the Lion King? Well it's like that but no animals, just HORRIFIC ARMOR-CLAD CORPSES.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)
Prepare yourselves my army of the
dead, for our time is nigh!

CHOIR MUSIC intensifies as we land on **MOR'GALA**, seated on a throne constructed entirely out of HUMAN BONES. Imagine the Night King from *Game of Thrones* if the Night King was also an overbearing mother.

Swaddled in Mor'Gala's arms is a crying new born human **BABY**.

MOR'GALA
So begins a plague unto the realms
of man. At long last, all is as
prophesied. A human babe, born of
the Bone Queen's womb.

Standing next to the throne is a twenty-something human HIPSTER. This is the baby's father, **GUS MITCHELL**.

GUS
Ha. *BONE* queen's womb.

MOR'GALA
Yes... As I said, a human babe,
born of the Bone Queen's womb.

GUS
You're welcome.

Gus throws a pair of finger guns in Mor'Gala's direction. She glares back.

GUS (CONT'D)
Sorry.

Moving on, Mor'Gala thrusts their baby into the air for all to see. Her undead army bows in reverence.

MOR'GALA
Now, witness my child in all of his
evil glory! Devourer of flesh. Flayer
of souls. Wherever he goes, death and
suffering will follow. The living
will tremble before their new dar--

SKELETON (O.S.)
-- SO SORRY, BUT CAN YOU SPEAK UP?

ANGLE ON a SKELETON shouting from the distant crowd.

MOR'GALA
 Seriously?

SKELETON
 WE CAN'T HEAR YOU IN THE BACK.

MOR'GALA
 You insolent bonehead, how dare you
 question the volume of your queen's
 voice!

SKELETON
 IT'S JUST THAT SOME OF US DON'T
 HAVE EARS.

Mor'Gala scowls, and with a snap of her fingers the skeleton
 bursts into FLAMES. A beat as he dies SCREAMING.

MOR'GALA
 Anybody else want to interrupt my big
 prophetic speech?

The army collectively shake their heads.

MOR'GALA (CONT'D)
 Okay, good. Now, where was I?
 (speaking louder)
 ... TREMBLE BEFORE YOUR NEW DARK
 LORD, BECAUSE IT'S A BOY! AND HIS
 NAME IS...

SMASH TO:

EXT. MENTAL HEALTH CENTER - ESTABLISHING

A voice echoes out of an open window...

DEATH-MONGER (O.S.)
 DANTE MITCHELL!

SUPER: Thirty years later.

For a mental health center, this building looks oddly CASTLE-
 LIKE. In contrast to a regular looking parking lot, it also has a
 DRAW BRIDGE, BATTLEMENTS, and a GRAFFITI TAG in ELVISH.

This is an anachronistic world, steeped in fantasy tropes, but
 set in a year approximating the current day.

A HOMELESS BARBARIAN sits on the curb holding a cardboard sign
 that reads "WARRIOR NEEDS FOOD BADLY."

INT. MENTAL HEALTH CENTER - DAY

A massive HUMANOID MONSTER crowds a tiny hallway, wearing the skulls of its vanquished enemies. WEAPONS dripping blood. Opposite the monster, a green skinned, sweater vest wearing, ORC named **MR. DEATH-MONGER** looks on.

DEATH-MONGER

There you are!

But Death-Monger's not talking to the monster. **DANTE MITCHELL**, a regular looking human man with a SOCIAL WORKER ID CARD pinned to his button down shirt squeezes by...

DANTE

Pardon me. So sorry Mr. Death-Monger, I had some car trouble.

DEATH-MONGER

Thank the Orc gods you're here! You do realize that if you missed your support group, I was going to have to impale your severed head on the bike rack, right?

(Off Dante's look)

... We can't use spikes anymore. Safety hazards.

DANTE

You'd really do that to a fellow mental health professional?

DEATH-MONGER

Dante, I hate violence more than anybody but I don't make the rules, *THEY* do.

Death-Monger pulls Dante over to a nearby room. Together they peer through a window in the door. Inside, an official looking human CLERIC is holding a CLIPBOARD. Dante gasps, a bit starstruck.

DANTE

What's a cleric doing here?

DEATH-MONGER

The Citadel just sent us a new client. Reggie Feldmoore. His dad donates a ton of money to the Holy Order, so she came to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

DANTE

Really? That's great! This is the opportunity that I've been waiting for! A chance to finally prove myself to the higher ups!

DEATH-MONGER

Right... just maybe don't overdo it? Especially after what happened at the Pyromancer/Ice Golem meet-up last week.

Dante throws a look towards a MOP and a MASSIVE PUDDLE that's leaking out of a nearby door. There's SCORCH MARKS everywhere.

DANTE

Okay, but in my defense both sides learned a lot from each other. And I learned a lot from my mistakes.

DEATH-MONGER

Good, because if that cleric doesn't like what she sees, she could pull our funding.

Dante's cell phone RINGS. It's a call from Mor'Gala. Dante sends the call to voice mail.

DANTE

Sorry.

DEATH-MONGER

Oh gods, she's checking her watch! Quick, get in there!

Death-Monger pushes Dante into...

INT. MENTAL HEALTH CENTER - GROUP ROOM - DAY

It's your typical looking support group setup, except everyone looks like they just came from a D&D campaign. A WIZARD sits next to a DEMON HUNTER, who sits next to a TROLL, etc.

Dante stumbles in, trying to act normal. He greets the Cleric.

DANTE

Hi. Dante Mitchell. I really appreciate you coming all the way from the citadel. Helping people the way Clerics do, it really inspires me...

But the Cleric barely pays attention as Dante bares his soul.

DANTE (CONT'D)

To be honest, I've always dreamed
of being inducted into the Holy
Order myself. And not just for the
health plan. I want to help people.

(channeling Mor'Gala)

I want to rip depression's skull
out of the back of it's head and
feast on it's still beating heart!

CLERIC

Look kid, I'm just here to observe.
Act as if I'm not even in the room.

DANTE

You got it.

Dante takes his seat as the Cleric hovers awkwardly close. She writes down everything Dante does on her clipboard.

DANTE (CONT'D)

Sorry I'm late, everybody. As you
can see, we have somebody new
joining us today. Reggie Feldmoore.

REGGIE FELDMOORE is a snobby human BARD wearing sunglasses inside.

REGGIE

I'm only attending this gathering
because it's legally required.

Reggie pulls a FLASK out of his LUTE and takes a swig.

DANTE

Actually, you can't drink here.

REGGIE

On the contrary, I'm a well endowed
high-born. I can do as I please.

DANTE

That's definitely not true, but
I'll let it slide since this is
your first session. Reggie, can I
call you Reggie?

REGGIE

No.

DANTE

Okay. Well, Reg, why don't you tell
us a little about yourself?

REGGIE
Do I have to?

DANTE
It's what we're all here for. Group
therapy's all about sharing.

The group nods in agreement. All eyes are on Reggie. A beat of awkward silence, then...

REGGIE
Ugh. Fine. You say you want to be a
Cleric? Well, all I've ever wanted
was to be a famous musician...

INT. IMAGINE DRAGONS CONCERT - FLASHBACK

A very expensive looking concert, but with very few fans. Aside from Reggie, the other three band members are ACTUAL DRAGONS.

REGGIE
WE ARE THE IMAGINE DRAGONS!

Reggie looks into the mostly empty audience to find his father, **MAXIMUS FELDMOORE**. An overweight human business type, Maximus sticks out from the crowd (or lack there of). He doesn't want to be there.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
This song's for you, father!
(singing)
Ooooooh Whoooooooooooo!

But in trying to hit the high note, Reggie causes the Dragons to go COMPLETELY BERSERK. As all hell breaks loose...

INT. MENTAL HEALTH CENTER - GROUP ROOM - END FLASHBACK

Back on Reggie, finally allowing himself to be vulnerable. He takes a big swig from his flask.

REGGIE
And that was the end of my music
career. Those infernal beasts ate
everyone. As far as I know, the
village is still in flames. And my
father...
(wiping away a tear)
... he cut off my trust fund.

The gray skinned TROLL points at Reggie and laughs.

DANTE
Don't mind Sven, he's a troll.

REGGIE

Let him laugh, I'm used to it.

Reggie is really hurting. Feeling the Cleric watching him, Dante tries to be as empathetic as possible.

DANTE

Maybe you could start a new band without the dragons?

REGGIE

Start over? Now?

DANTE

Sure, why not? Cleric Clapton wrote his best music after going solo.

REGGIE

By the time my father was my age, he was already CEO of Feldmoore Bard supply, the kingdom's largest manufacturer of lutes and harps.

DANTE

And you feel like you need to live up to that standard?

REGGIE

My father certainly thinks so.

DANTE

Well if therapy has taught me anything, it's that you can't define success by your parents' expectations.

REGGIE

I don't need therapy, what I need is a wizard who can magic my career back to life.

The WIZARD in the group, ZALADBAR, takes offense. He's wearing a pointy hat and a Hawaiian shirt.

WIZARD

What? You think wizards can't get depressed because we have magic?

REGGIE

Yes. Exactly that.

WIZARD
 Okay, well *HYPOTHETICALLY*, lets say
MY dream is to run a fast casual
 salad franchise?

The wizard waves his hands and says the magic words...

WIZARD (CONT'D)
 ZOLOFT!

Suddenly the counter of a SWEETGREEN-esque restaurant named
 "Zaladbar's Saladbar" appears in the back of the room. There's a
 SQUEAKY-VOICED TEEN at the register.

TEEN
 Um, can I help you?

WIZARD
 No. Because you know what magic
 can't conjure? *Happiness*.
 (to Reggie)
 I'm sure your dad can buy you
 anything you want, but it won't be
 fulfilling unless you earn it
 yourself. Happiness takes hard work
 and a positive attitude. And I
 would know, they don't call me
 Zaladbar the Zealous for nothing.

REGGIE
 But I worked for years on those
 songs.

WIZARD
 Oh. Yikes.

TROLL
 Maybe you need talent too?

In the background, the teen at the register looks completely
 bewildered. He has no idea where he is, or how he got there.

TEEN
 Um, who are you people? I am
 extremely confused.

REGGIE
 And I am extremely depressed...

Reggie tries to take another swig from his flask, but it's empty.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
 ... and drunk.

The session is getting completely out of hand. Dante tries his best to rein it back in.

DANTE

And all of this is okay. The important thing is that you're here and that you're seeking help.

REGGIE

Sure. If by help you mean the lavatory.

DANTE

It's down the --

REVERSE to REVEAL Reggie already peeing on the wall.

TROLL

Ha! So much for being well endowed.

REGGIE

Avert your eyes, troll!

Finished, Reggie zips his pants and stumbles for the exit.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

I appreciate thine effort, but I'm a lost cause. Wizard, conjure these people a new wall...

(to Dante)

... I hope your dream job works out better than mine did.

Reggie leaves and Dante watches anxiously as the Cleric writes on her clipboard, shaking her head.

DANTE

You guys don't think he'd try to drive home, right?

No response. Worried, Dante heads out to...

EXT. MENTAL HEALTH CENTER - DAY

But as Dante looks around the parking lot, Reggie isn't there. Dante's phone rings. It's Mor'Gala again. This time he picks up.

DANTE

Mom, now is really not a good time.

INT. MOR'GALA'S KEEP - THRONE ROOM - INTERCUT

Mor'Gala stares wistfully at a framed picture of herself and a teenage Dante. He's dressed like the GRIM REAPER but with BRACES.

MOR'GALA

It's bad enough you never come to visit, now you're screening my calls too?

DANTE

I'm at work.

MOR'GALA

Please, empathizing with those meat bags hardly counts as work.

DANTE

I'm a social worker, work is literally in the job description.

MOR'GALA

Yes, well, if you ask me listening to these mortals' problems is a total waste of your time. You're my son, you should be slaughtering them and ruling their corpses for all of eternity.

DANTE

I'm not slaughtering anybody.

MOR'GALA

What about just a few people?

DANTE

No. No slaughtering.

MOR'GALA

But you'd be really good at it!

DANTE

I'm really good at *HELPING* people.

Then, Reggie's body SPLATS onto the sidewalk right next to Dante. He must have jumped off the roof several floors above. Dante panics.

MOR'GALA

(totally unaware)

Sure you are. And I'm extremely proud that you want to make a difference in the world, I just think that you'd be a lot more effective with an undead army at your beck and call.

Dante checks for a pulse but accidentally rips Reggie's mangled arm off of his body.

DANTE
 (reattaching the arm)
 NOOO! NO! NO! NO!

MOR'GALA
 Oh, calm down. It was just a
 suggestion.

Dante can see that the Cleric is heading his way.

DANTE
 Mom, I gotta go.

END INTERCUT as Dante hangs up. Scrambling for a place to hide the body, Dante looks around at:

A DUMPSTER...

A WOOD CHIPPER...

A BARREL OF ACID...

Still unsure what to do, Dante makes awkward eye contact with a CYCLOPS wearing a GIANT FLORAL MUUMUU.

Before the Cleric can see the body, off Dante, TIME RUNNING OUT...

EXT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - ESTABLISHING

A very medieval looking apartment building.

A police officer writes a parking ticket for a GRIFFIN parked next to an expired meeter. The griffin just eats the ticket.

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Gus (the dad from the teaser) sits on a couch wearing a GAMER HEADSET and LIVE-STREAMING himself playing a fantasy VIDEO GAME. He's surrounded on all sides by cases of ENERGY DRINKS and energy drink SWAG. Although Gus is Dante's father, he is also UNDEAD. Because of this he looks and acts 10 years younger than Dante.

Dante BURSTS into the apartment like a crazy person, causing PIXIES (half bug, half Tinkerbell) to scatter like cockroaches. Dante has the muumuu rolled up like a rug and slung over his shoulder.

GUS
 Woah! Chill, dude. You almost got
 me killed...
 (to the web-cam)
 ... Luckily the undead can't die,
 am I right?!

DANTE

What is all of this stuff?

GUS

I told you, I'm a sponsored Lich streamer now.

(to the web-cam)

Oh, him? This is my roomie Dante.

DANTE

I'm your son.

GUS

(to the web-cam)

Roommie slash son. It's a long story, but the point is I don't blame him for living with his dad. Rent prices are crazy.

DANTE

You don't pay rent.

Dante grabs the webcam and hurls it out the window.

GUS

HEY! I bought that with your money.

DANTE

Dad, would you listen to me for a second! I've got a big problem!

Dante unravels the muumuu to reveal Reggie's mangled body. Gus pokes at the body as Dante paces.

GUS

Oh snap! You killed a guy?! Okay, well, don't worry. I've already got a locker at the airport with gold, fake passports, and an enchanted cloak of inconspicuousness. It's everything you'll need. Go! I'll keep the plants watered.

DANTE

I didn't kill him.

GUS

I don't wanna argue with you, but I am kinda an expert on the subject and this dude is extremely dead.

DANTE

Yes, but I didn't kill him. He killed himself.

GUS

Got it.
 (air quotes)
 "He killed himself."

DANTE

I DIDN'T KILL HIM!

GUS

(wink)
 Exactly.

DANTE

Nevermind. It doesn't matter who killed him. Because if the Holy Order finds out he's dead, they'll pull the health center's funding and I'll never get to be a cleric.

Gus considers this for a beat, then...

GUS

Okay, fine. After you're gone I'll eat the body. But only because you're my son.

DANTE

What?

GUS

That's why you brought him here, right? Feed him to your undead dad?

DANTE

No. Clerics are the good guys. And the good guys don't eat people.

GUS

(disappointed)
 ... You sure?

DANTE

I gotta bring him back to life.

GUS

Can you do that?

DANTE

Are you kidding?

GUS

No, I mean can *YOU* do that?

DANTE

Theoretically. I just need to borrow the Necronomicon from Mom.

GUS

Well if you're going to visit Mor'Gala, I'm coming with you.

DANTE

I'm not so sure that's a great idea.

GUS

Says the dude trying to reanimate a stranger's corpse with the Bone Queen's evil undead spell book? And besides, I'm totally over her breaking up with me if that's what you're implying.

DANTE

That's what you said last time and it didn't go so well...

INT. MOR'GALA'S KEEP - FLASHBACK

Mor'Gala dramatically thrusts her hand into Gus's chest and rips out his still beating heart.

GUS

Noooooo! Mor'Gala, I love you!
PLEASE, DON'T LEAVE ME!

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - END FLASHBACK

No longer wearing a shirt, Gus longingly feels the GAPING HOLE in his chest where his heart used to be. Then, totally undeterred, he throws on a DRESS SHIRT and wrinkly BLAZER.

GUS

... Who needs a heart anyway?
C'mon, let's go before our apartment starts to smell like the public bathroom at an OrcDonalds.

Dante shoos pixies off of Reggie's body.

DANTE

Dad, our apartment ALWAYS smells like that.

GUS

Oh. Good thing I can't smell.

As Gus dashes out the door, Off Dante, skeptical...

EXT. UNDERWORLD - MOR'GALA'S KEEP - NIGHT

Dante and Gus arrive at what looks like the SURFACE OF MARS. They look up at a massive RAMPART WALL. The jet-black architecture of Mor'Gala's keep looms ominous in the distance. Dante knocks on a gate using a skull shaped door knocker and...

A GIANT FLAMING EYEBALL suddenly ignites over the gate (imagine *The Eye of Sauron*). It glares a beam of light down at them like a spotlight as Mor'Gala's voice BOOMS.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)

Who dares seek entrance to the Bone Queens keep?

DANTE

Hi Mom. It's me.

Pleasantly surprised, Mor'Gala's tone shifts completely.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)

Dante? Why didn't you tell me you were coming?! I would have baked something.

DANTE

That's okay. It was kinda a last minute thing.

The eye switches its gaze onto Gus.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)

And you brought a friend?

DANTE

No. That's, um... my Dad?

An awkward moment as Mor'Gala's eye BLINK BLINKS at Gus.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)

Who?

GUS

Gus Mitchell? I used to be less pale... before you murdered me?

Gus throws finger guns to jog Mor'Gala's memory, but still nothing. She has no idea who he is.

DANTE

He's the guy that you had sex with to create me.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)
 Dante, I'm thousands of years old.
 I've had intercourse with more
 people than are currently alive.
 (Off Gus)
 ... but still, ick.

Mor'Gala's eye shudders at the thought of having slept with Gus.
 Slowly, the gate creaks open.

MOR'GALA (V.O.)
 Well don't just stand there, come
 inside! I'll order a pizza.

INT. MOR'GALA'S KEEP - BANQUET HALL - NIGHT

Mor'Gala and Dante awkwardly eat pizza at an extremely long H.R.
 GIGER looking BANQUET TABLE.

MOR'GALA
 Soooo...

DANTE
 So.

MOR'GALA
 ... I realize that I may have been a
 little pushy this morning about you
 becoming a dark lord, and I'm sorry.

DANTE
 That's okay.

MOR'GALA
 I just want what's best for you.
 And if that's helping those
 wastrels with their... emotions...
 (struggling)
 Then I'm glad you're doing it.

GUS (O.S.)
 Me too!

REVEAL Gus, all the way at the other end of the table, he has to
 yell to be heard. Mor'Gala glares, annoyed that he's speaking.

GUS (CONT'D)
 Can I get a slice of pepperoni?

Mor'Gala just ignores Gus.

MOR'GALA

After all, I have nobody to blame but myself. I should have conceived you with someone more... *ambitious*.

DANTE

Actually that's kinda what I wanted to talk to you about? Undead stuff?

Mor'Gala leans in, curious.

MOR'GALA

It is?

DANTE

I have this problem at work, but it's a little hard to explain...

GUS

(still yelling)
Dante killed a guy!

MOR'GALA

Really?!

DANTE

Not exactly...

MOR'GALA

Why didn't you tell me? I'm so proud of you!

DANTE

I DIDN'T kill him. But I do need to bring him back to life.

MOR'GALA

So you've come for the Necronomicon?
(practically squealing)
I thought you'd never ask! MY
BABY'S GONNA BE A DARK LORD!

DANTE

Mom, please don't make a big deal out of this.

MOR'GALA

Of course I'm gonna make a big deal out of this! It's your birthright! By taking the book of the dead, you'll be setting thousands of years of unholy prophecy into motion!

DANTE

And that's a good thing?

MOR'GALA

It's your destiny!

Mor'Gala gestures to a MOSAIC of said PROPHECY on a nearby wall.

In the FIRST PANEL: Mor'Gala is seen holding a baby.

MOR'GALA (CONT'D)

Behold!

In the SECOND PANEL: A super handsome muscular WARRIOR with SPIKY BLACK ARMOR and long BLONDE HAIR holds the NECRONOMICON skyward as FIRE and DARKNESS blast out of it, gruesomely killing all who stand in his way.

MOR'GALA (CONT'D)

You will bring death unto the realms of man...

In the THIRD PANEL: the blonde warrior sits on the throne with Mor'Gala by his side, a MASSIVE army of the dead before them.

MOR'GALA (CONT'D)

And become the all powerful tyrant that I've always known you would be!

DANTE

Wait, I'm the beefy blonde guy?

MOR'GALA

Well... Yes, but that's just one artist's interpretation.

DANTE

Why can't I just borrow the book and *NOT* destroy all of humanity?

MOR'GALA

Because once a prophecy is set in motion it cannot be undone.

A beat as Dante anxiously takes this in...

Then, Gus steps into frame chomping on a slice of pepperoni pizza.

GUS

(sotto to Dante)

Dude, don't worry, she's just making it up.

(MORE)

GUS (CONT'D)
Trust me, I know your Mom better
than anyone. You'll be *fiiiiiiiine*.

Off Dante, unsure...

INT. MOR'GALLA'S KEEP - CRYPT - NIGHT

Echoing the teaser, GOTHIC CHOIR MUSIC crescendos as Dante slowly approaches the Necronomicon's DEMONIC ALTER. Candles and skulls are everywhere. Dante hesitates, unsure if he should take the book or not, and...

turns to REVEAL Mor'Gala, Gus, and an UNDEAD CHOIR.

DANTE
Is the choir really necessary?

MOR'GALA
I just wanted your big moment to
feel special.

DANTE
Well they're stressing me out.

MOR'GALA
What is this word, *stress*?

DANTE
Like... emotional strain?

MOR'GALA
That sounds ridiculous. Stop
feeling that.

DANTE
Mom!

MOR'GALA
Okay. Fine.

Mor'Gala SHOOS the choir away as Dante turns back to the book.

DANTE
Here goes nothing.

Dante takes a deep breath. He grabs the book and...

Nothing happens. Regardless, Mor'Gala seems extremely proud.

MOR'GALA
That's my boy! Do you want me to
show you how to use it?

DANTE

No thanks. I can figure it out on my own. I'll bring it back when I'm done.

Dante hurries away. There's an extended beat of awkward silence as Gus looks lovingly at Mor'Gala.

GUS

Finally, we're alone.

Gus pulls a small MONSTER ENERGY POTION bag out of his pocket, and presents Mor'Gala with it's contents.

GUS (CONT'D)

I brought you this swag bag. It's got a lanyard, and a koozie...

(RE: green wristband)

... and whatever this thing is, and I was thinking that maybe the two of us could --

MOR'GALA

-- Get out of my necropolis.

GUS

Right. How about a goodbye hand-job? For old time's sake?

But Mor'Gala just walks away.

GUS (CONT'D)

Okay. Byeeeeeeee!

EXT. BALD MOORE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER - DAY

The Cleric checks her watch as Mr. Death-Monger paces anxiously.

DEATH-MONGER

... I'm sure Dante will be back any second.

Death-Monger tries calling Dante but gets his voice mail.

DANTE (V.O.)

Hi, you've reached Dante's voicemail, leave a message... And Mom, if this is you, stop calling while I'm at work! I need the space on my voicemail for client emergencies.

Death-Monger waits for a beep, but instead...

ROBO-OPERATOR
 <I'm sorry, this voicemail box is
 full. Goodbye.>

The line goes dead.

DEATH-MONGER
 Argh. Dante, where are you?!

But as Death-Monger starts to head inside he's approached by a human woman wearing a "people for the ethical treatment of monsters" T-shirt and a TIARA. This is **PRINCESS KOMBUCHA**. She's the social justice version of a Disney princess.

KOMBUCHA
 Hi, I'm looking for Reginald
 Feldmoore. Do you know if he's
 here?

DEATH-MONGER
 That depends, is this part of the
 Holy Order's inspection?

KOMBUCHA
 No. Just a concerned royal.
 Princess Kombucha.

DEATH-MONGER
 A princess?! Oh gods, that's worse.

KOMBUCHA
 It is?

DEATH-MONGER
 Look, I know the crown is still
 upset about me drinking blood at
 work, but it only happened once and
 it was for religious reasons.

KOMBUCHA
 I'm confused. What does this have
 to do with Reggie? Wait, you didn't
 drink *HIS* blood did you!?

DEATH-MONGER
 No, of course not. We care very
 deeply about our clients... And for
 the record, it wasn't even real
 blood. It was oat blood. I have a
 sensitive digestive system.

KOMBUCHA
 But Reggie was here?

DEATH-MONGER

I can't discuss any of our clients.
Even with royalty.

KOMBUCHA

What about his girlfriend?

DEATH-MONGER

You're his girlfriend?

KOMBUCHA

I know, I'm technically only
supposed to date princes, but
they're all so superficial.
Reggie's different. Deep down, he's
sweet, and caring, and sensitive.
But he can also be...

(choosing her words)

... self destructive. I just want
to make sure he's okay.

DEATH-MONGER

Well, don't worry too much. If he
is here, he's in very good hands.

SMASH TO:

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Reggie's decaying corpse. Candles burn sitting atop cans of
energy potion as Dante carves DEMONIC SYMBOLS into the floor.
Across the room, Gus tries to read from the Necronomicon but it's
not going well...

GUS

Paaa zuwl bal ejl apih?

(giving up)

Dude, I can't tell if this book is
demonic or just somebody banging on
a keyboard.

DANTE

Probably both. Demons have fat
fingers.

Finished with the carving, Dante takes the book from Gus and
flips through.

DANTE (CONT'D)

Okay, get the robes.

Gus hands Dante a DARK PLAID BATHROBE.

GUS

What? You said dark robes and this was the best I could do on short notice.

They both put on the bathrobes.

GUS (CONT'D)

Now what?

DANTE

I'm not sure. It says here that in order to give life to the dead...

(dejected)

... One must first take a life from the living.

GUS

So you've gotta kill a dude to bring back the dude that you already killed?

DANTE

I guess so.

GUS

Damn. That's messed up.

(Over it)

... What about Mrs Rodriguez?

DANTE

Our landlord? We can't kill her.

GUS

Well, not with that attitude we can't. I mean she'd probably put up a good fight, but it's the two of us versus one extremely old lady. And besides, it's not like we're getting our security deposit back after what we just did to the floor.

DANTE

She has grandkids.

GUS

So? They'll get over it. She's like a thousand years old. How much time could she possibly have left?

DANTE

For the last time, I'M NOT KILLING ANYBODY! I feel like this shouldn't be such a controversial stance.

GUS

Well somebody's got to do something, because this building is infested with pixies. I told her last week that I'm not paying rent until she calls a fumigator.

DANTE

You don't pay rent!

GUS

Hey, don't make this about me. I'm just trying to get rid of the pixie problem.

DANTE

Dad, would you just shut up about the pixies for a second!

Frustrated, Dante stomps on a pixie AND...

... REGGIE GASPS BACK TO LIFE!

DANTE (CONT'D)

Nevermind.

Reggie looks around the crappy energy drink laden apartment as Dante and Gus both stare.

REGGIE

So this is hell.

DANTE

Actually, this is my apartment.

REGGIE

Wait, aren't you the man from earlier? I don't understand. I'm alive?

DANTE

Yeah. Sorta. I guess it depends on your definition.

REGGIE

What did you do to me?

DANTE

I think the more important question is what did you do to yourself?

REGGIE

I... I didn't know what else to do. What's the point of being alive if living brings me no joy.

DANTE

Trust me, I've been there. But things get better. They did for me.

REGGIE

I wish I had your optimism, but I'm tired of trying. At this point all I'm good for is being a burden on the people I care about the most.

A moment of genuine emotion from Reggie.

DANTE

C'mon, I don't believe that.

REGGIE

Then you don't know Maximus Feldmoore.

DANTE

No, I don't. But I do know what it's like to be screwed up by really crappy parenting, and if you'll let me, I think that I can help you.

Dante puts a comforting hand on Reggie's shoulder. And it seems to be helping... until Gus inserts himself into the conversation.

GUS

Wait, are you talking about me or your mom?

REGGIE

This knave is your father?

DANTE

It's hard to explain.

GUS

Well, it sounds to me like Reggie could use some fatherly advice.

Dante throws Gus a look, unsure where he's going with this.

GUS (CONT'D)

Sure, I don't know a lot about being a dad, but when you really think about it, isn't that what being a dad is all about?

REGGIE

You lost me.

GUS

Right. So just imagine how your dad must feel... Which brings me to the second most important part of being a Dad -- never letting yourself be emotionally vulnerable. Because it's awkward. So it's not that your dad doesn't love you, it's that he can never tell you that he loves you because it'd be weird. And killing yourself would probably make things even more weird, so he definitely doesn't want that.

DANTE

I can't believe I'm saying this, but he's kinda right?

GUS

I bet your dad won't even care that you're a horrific undead nightmare, because he loves you *THAT* much.

REGGIE

I'm a what?

GUS

Oops.

Reggie takes this in, finally realizing that he's undead. It's too much to take.

REGGIE

You necromanced me?! HOW DARE YOU! Dying was my decision. Now, as if being a disgrace wasn't bad enough, you turned me into a night creature?! Father was right, I'll never be anything but a stain on my family's good name!

DANTE

Wait! REGGIE!

REGGIE
FOR THE HONOR OF HOUSE FELDMOORE!

Reggie throws himself out the window AND...

EXT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - INTERCUT

PLUMMETS six stories into traffic with a CRUNCH.

But he's NOT DEAD. As Reggie gets to his feet, a SEMI-TRUCK full of BATTLE AXES honks, SCREECHING towards him.

DANTE
Oh no...

Dante and Gus watch from the window as a series of SOUNDS can be heard from below, played entirely on Dante and Gus's reactions:

Reggie SCREAMING. The truck CRASHING. An EXPLOSION. Another CRASH.

Dante is horrified, but Gus just shrugs it off.

Then, REVERSE to REVEAL the AFTERMATH: A fifteen car pileup covered in battle axes. Buildings and people on fire. A satellite has somehow crashed out of orbit.

A LOOTER smashes the window to a store front and swipes the CROSSBOW on display. But as he turns to escape, Reggie is in his way.

LOOTER
You saw my face!

He shoots Reggie with the crossbow and takes off.

But no matter how much physical pain Reggie endures, he's now incapable of dying. As he runs through the carnage, arms flailing in the air...

GUS
Don't worry, I went through the same thing. He'll get over it.

Off the sound of ANOTHER EXPLOSION and REGGIE YELLING WILDLY...

GUS (CONT'D)
... Probably.

SMASH TO:

INT. KOMBUCHA'S CASTLE - DAY

Reggie's decaying corpse. Again.

But this time Reggie is SKEWERED on a LARGE SWORD. Pinned to the floor, he looks totally dead. Tongue out.

Princess Kombucha returns home and rushes to Reggie's side as soon as she sees him.

KOMBUCHA

Reggie?!

But as she gets close, she realizes that Reggie's just sleeping. He startles awake.

REGGIE

Ugh, what?! Oh, Kombucha. I just had the most terrible dream. The Imagine Dragons ate everyone, and I ended up with a court appointed necromancer therapist, and I impaled myself with your...

(realizing)

... oh.

KOMBUCHA

Are you okay?!

REGGIE

No. And your ancestors lied about this sword slaying the undead.

KOMBUCHA

I don't understand. What's going on?

REGGIE

My father banished me.

KOMBUCHA

I mean with the sword. Did you just say that you're undead?!

REGGIE

Oh, yes. That too.

Kombucha carefully pulls the sword out of Reggie's chest, and dramatically places it back in its stone (reverse King Arthur).

REGGIE (CONT'D)

... Don't worry, I'll understand if you want to start courting different suitors.

KOMBUCHA

Why would I wanna do that?

REGGIE

It's certainly what I would do if I were in your position. Honestly, just the thought of you making love to my stiff talentless corpse makes me --

KOMBUCHA

-- Okay, I get it.

REGGIE

Face it, I'll never make it as a musician. I'm an undead nobody.

KOMBUCHA

I don't care. I still love you.

REGGIE

Really?

KOMBUCHA

C'mon, What kind of princess would I be if I cared about money and status?

They kiss. A tender moment, then...

KOMBUCHA (CONT'D)

All that matters is that you're a good person. And if your dad was a good person, he'd be able to see that.

But this just doesn't sit right with Reggie.

REGGIE

... My father *IS* a good person.

KOMBUCHA

Sure. For a heartless self-serving plutocrat.

REGGIE

Who is also extremely philanthropic.

KOMBUCHA

Whatever. I'm just glad that he's out of your life.

REGGIE

But what about the Feldmoore Fund for underprivileged elves?

KOMBUCHA

Reggie, I really don't want to have this argument right now.

REGGIE

... Or the Feldmoore Orc-hestera, where his Orc employees are able to receive free music education!

KOMBUCHA

If your dad really cared about his Orc employees, he'd pay them a living wage and provide healthcare.

REGGIE

Oh come on. Don't be ridiculous, it's still a *BUSINESS*!

KOMBUCHA

Reggie, you don't have to defend him anymore.

REGGIE

No. You know what? I do. And you clearly don't understand me at all. This was a mistake.

KOMBUCHA

Wait, Reggie. You gotta let this go. It's the only thing that's going to make you happy.

REGGIE

You really think abdicating my family is gonna make me happy? No, you're the one making me unhappy. I should leave. And don't worry, you won't have to hear from me or my terrible father ever again!

Reggie attempts to slam the thick metal door on his way out, but can't get it to budge. He stomps off anyway.

INT. FELDMOORE BARD SUPPLY - MAXIMUS'S OFFICE - DAY

Maximus watches a wall of TVs in his swanky skyscraper office. The office is covered with all sorts of newspaper clippings, magazine covers, and royal decrees, extolling Maximus's business acumen and various philanthropic endeavors.

His elf SECRETARY steps in.

SECRETARY

Mr. Feldmoore. There's somebody here to see you?

MAXIMUS

I'm busy.

SECRETARY

Yes, but they said that it's important?

MAXIMUS

Fine. Let them in, but it better not be that god damned wannabe alchemist again. What's his name? The one who claimed he could transform my lutes into gold?

SECRETARY

Witches' Brew-no Mars.

MAXIMUS

That's the one. 24 karat magic my ass!

The Secretary exits as Dante and Gus step inside.

DANTE

Mr. Felmoore?

MAXIMUS

Call me Max. Something tells me you boys aren't here to buy lutes?

DANTE

Actually, we were hoping to talk to you about your son, Reginald? He is your son, right? Because I kinda expected you to talk more... *like him?*

MAXIMUS

He gets it from his mother. Why? What's he done this time?

DANTE

You might want to sit down.

MAXIMUS

I am sitting down.

Dante steels himself. This isn't going to be easy.

DANTE

Right, well, the truth is...

(deep breath)

... He jumped off of a building this morning. But don't worry, he's fine. I mean technically he's dead, but he's fine. I reanimated his corpse.

MAXIMUS

Where is he now?

DANTE

That's kinda the thing. I don't know... because he jumped off another building.

Maximus is gutted, but copes by covering sadness with resentment.

DANTE (CONT'D)

I was hoping you might help us find him?

MAXIMUS

I... I can't. I've got business to attend to, but thanks for letting me know about my son. You can see yourselves out.

Hiding his pain as best he can, Maximus goes back to what he was doing. Gus turns to leave, but Dante just stands there, dumbstruck.

MAXIMUS (CONT'D)

We don't validate parking.

DANTE

You're not gonna help him?

MAXIMUS

I spent my entire life trying to help that boy. The best music schools. The best rehab facilities. I gave him everything gold can buy and how does he pay me back? By killing himself and coming back as some kind of flesh eating zombie?

GUS

What's so bad about eating flesh? You don't exactly look like a vegetarian.

MAXIMUS

Reginald could be a max level wish granting unicorn for all I care. He'd still be a screw-up.

DANTE

So that's it? You're just giving up
on your own son?

MAXIMUS

He's dead, and he's been dead to me
for a long time. I tried to help
him, but you can't help people if
they won't help themselves.

DANTE

No, but you *CAN* help people who
help people who need help helping
themselves... which is us.

MAXIMUS

My answer is no.

As Dante and Gus exit we hold on Maximus alone, his heart heavy.

MAXIMUS (CONT'D)

... Good luck.

EXT. SNOWY MOUNTAINS - DAY

Wispy clouds roll through an EPIC MOUNTAIN RANGE as Reggie clings
to an ICY CLIFF FACE. Determined, he climbs upwards towards an
ABANDONED LAIR and...

INT. ABANDONED LAIR - DAY

Double doors KICK open as Reggie makes his way inside. The lair
is cavernous and filled with Scrooge McDuck levels of treasure.
Piles of gold and musical instruments are everywhere.

REGGIE

YOU!

Reggie stares down the THREE DRAGONS from his band.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

This is all YOUR fault!

Although Reggie talks to them like they're smart, they're actually
just dumb dragons. They lumber forward, licking their chops.

REGGIE (CONT'D)

All you had to do was keep it
together for one concert and we could
have been rock stars! Imagine *THAT*,
dragons. My father would have been so
proud of me!

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)
 But instead you just devoured my
 dreams, like you devour everything!
 Well, I hope that you saved room for
 dessert because...

All three Dragons LUNGE FORWARD, an instant from sinking their
 teeth into Reggie when -- He POOFS away in a PUFF OF SMOKE.

INT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Reggie POOFS back into the apartment, where he finds himself face
 to face with Mor'Gala. Dante and Gus watch from nearby.

REGGIE
 ... YOU SHOULD HAVE EATEN ME, TOO?

MOR'GALA
 Eh, you're not really my type.

Mor'Gala throws Dante a self-satisfied look, expectant...

DANTE
 Thank you, mom.

MOR'GALA
 Was that really so hard? You should
 have just let me help you in the
 first place.

Finally, Reggie realizes what must have happened.

REGGIE
 No! Not this place again!

DANTE
 Reggie, hear me out. I know how
 bleak things must seem to you right
 now, but all I want is to help you
 get through this.

REGGIE
 And you've *HELPED* me quite enough.
 Thanks to you, I'm now doomed to
 wander this miserable plane of
 existence for all of eternity.

MOR'GALA
 How dare you speak back to the Bone
 Queen's son! He is your dark lord!

DANTE
 Nope. Just his therapist.

REGGIE
Did you say Bone Queen?

MOR'GALA
No. I said *THE* Bone Queen.

Reggie gasps as he realizes who Mor'Gala really is.

REGGIE
You! You are Mor'Gala the detested?
If your magic is truly as powerful
as they say, than you can make my
father love me... er, I mean,
revive my music career.

DANTE
Reggie, I'm not so sure that's the
best idea.

MOR'GALA
What? You're allowed to help
people, but I'm not?

REGGIE
Please, I'll pay any price.

MOR'GALA
Aww. That's sweet. I wish my son
cared that much about me.

Dante throws Mor'Gala a dubious look. Sighs.

DANTE
... Fine. As long as you agree not
to murder anybody in the process.

Mor'Gala snaps her fingers and Reggie is instantly transformed
into a SAD PUPPY.

MOR'GALA
See? My powers aren't all death and
torture. Looks like I can help the
meat bags with their emotions too!

DANTE
What'd you do to him?

MOR'GALA
I did what he said. There's no way
his dad can hate him now!

GUS
Awww, his little puppy eyes are so
sad. It's ADORABLE!
(MORE)

GUS (CONT'D)
 (scratching Reggie's head)
 Who's a good boy?

DANTE
 Turn him back!

MOR'GALA
 Why?

DANTE
 Because look at him! You're just
 making things worse!

MOR'GALA
 Sheesh. I bring you into this world,
 and this is the appreciation I get?

Mor'Gala starts to do as Dante asks, but Gus stops her.

GUS
 Wait!

Gus snaps a pic and uploads it to his PENTAGRAM ACCOUNT. This makes puppy Reggie simultaneously more sad and more adorable.

GUS (CONT'D)
 Okay, now you can turn him back.

MOR'GALA
 (to Dante)
 You're sure?

DANTE
 YES!

Mor'Gala rolls her eyes. She snaps her fingers and Reggie returns to his undead self. Dante glares at her.

MOR'GALA
 Well, despite my centuries of
 infinite wisdom, it's clear that I
 am no longer wanted here. I'll just
 let myself out.

Mor'Gala WISPS into a SWARM of BATS that begin to dart wildly around the room, scaring everybody. Gus opens a WINDOW to let them out. He watches longingly as they fly away...

GUS
 Call me!

Totally out of ideas, Reggie just slumps against the wall, head in hands. Dante joins him.

REGGIE

Oh, what's the point. I give up.

DANTE

Don't give up... unless you're giving up on killing yourself. Then I support your decision.

REGGIE

Despite my best efforts, it seems that I can't kill what's already dead. I guess this is just who I am now.

DANTE

I'm sorry. I should have asked your permission before bringing you back.
(off Reggie's look)
There's ways.

REGGIE

Well, I still don't forgive you.

DANTE

That's okay. I want to help anyway.

REGGIE

Why can't you just leave me alone?

DANTE

Because I know what it's like to feel like a failure.

GUS

And I know what it's like to feel undead... AND be a failure.

DANTE

See? So you're not alone in this.

A poignant moment, then...

REGGIE

Fine. If you are truly determined to leave me with no other alternative, I will accept your help. But only on one condition...

DANTE

Name it.

REGGIE

How do you feel about adding a third lord to House Mitchell?

DANTE
You want to live here?

REGGIE
No. I'd rather kill myself, but
since that is clearly impossible, I
have nowhere else to go.

GUS
Hold on. House Mitchell is a one
bedroom apartment.

DANTE
I guess he can sleep on the couch?

PULL BACK out of a window to...

EXT. DANTE'S APARTMENT - SUNSET

Although the mayhem has settled down, the street is still destroyed
from earlier -- crashed cars, battle axes, buildings on fire, etc.

GUS (V.O.)
*But I sleep on the couch. Can he
even pay rent?*

DANTE (V.O.)
It'll be fine. We'll figure it out.

REGGIE (V.O.)
Then it's settled. To House Mitchell!

MOR'GALA (V.O.)
... And so begins the twilight of man.

As the SUN SETS, PULL BACK further to...

INT. MOR'GALLA'S KEEP - THRONE ROOM

Mor'Gala watches via crystal ball. She checks "start undead army"
off of a prophetic checklist, and strikes up her undead choir.

MOR'GALA
As my son grows his infernal army,
so too grows his power! Behold, a
Dark Lord rises! BWA-HA-HA-HA-
HAAAAAAH!

Off Mor'Gala, laughing maniacally...

END OF PILOT