

SWEENEY CREEK

A 6 x 1 Hour Comedy, Drama, Horror, Fantasy, Action Series by Ray Matsen

Series Synopsis

TOM FRASER, is a recently out of work ad exec who's about to turn 40. Due partly to a global pandemic, that the world is still recovering from, he and his family have been forced to move to a cheaper house in the (fictional) outer suburb of SWEENEY CREEK.

Tom's wife JEAN (late 30s) is still employed and while she commutes to the city or interstate, Tom must adjust to the unfamiliar job of raising their two young children. Like many couples with changing roles, money worries and kids, their marriage begins to falter.

Sweeney Creek is a seemingly boring suburb that, unbeknownst to anyone who lives there, is home to THE MORTEM, a terrifying creature from which emerge other beings that feed on people's fears and anxieties in order to give the Mortem enough power to one day rise and end humankind.

The Mortem was unknowingly "introduced" to Australia by the First Fleet, which carried it onboard. But also on board was OPHIDIAN, a mythical black and green snake whose bite transforms its recipient into THE SALVATOR, one in a long line of superheroes who have kept humanity safe for millennia by fighting the horde of evil creatures that the Mortem gives birth to.

After gaining their power the Salvator battles the creatures with the help of a powerful sword. The sword is passed on by the last Salvator who loses their power but becomes the new hero's mentor.

Upon arriving in Sweeney Creek, Tom is invited to a woodworking club by his friendly next-door neighbour PETE CAROLL (30s). The club is a place where men and women, who are struggling with their day to day lives, can learn a skill while talking with like-minded people. Here Tom meets SAM CLARK (30s) a single mother dealing with her own ups and downs.

Soon, Tom is visited by NED O'CONNER, (60). Ned's a drinker, a rogue and a wee bit crazy, but he's also the latest in a long line of 'Salvators' who must now prepare Tom for the dangers that lie ahead. The only problem is, Ned lost the sword several years ago, while drunk, and it's the only thing that can kill the Mortem.

When Ned gives Tom this news he naturally thinks the old man is mad. But after Ophidian bites him Tom finds he has powers that he doesn't understand and, not being one who normally helps others out, he doesn't really want. Despite his reluctance, Tom eventually teams up with Ned, Sam, and Pete who all go into battle against the monsters that now inhabit Sweeney Creek.

Each hour long episode is full of comedy, horror, action, fantasy, and drama (in the vein of *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* or films like *Shaun of the Dead*) as the team attempt to find the mythical sword and rid the world of evil, while at the same time dealing with the worst monster of all – their own midlife crisis.

Series Outline

Episode 1 - Pilot

Tom Fraser, a 39-year-old out of work advertising executive, is forced to move his family to the outer Melbourne suburb of Sweeney Creek and learn to become a full-time house husband and kid wrangler. To deal with his depressing situation Tom joins a woodworking club with his new friend Pete and meets single mum Sam. Meanwhile, people are going missing and when Ned O'Conner, a crazy old drunk, informs Tom that he is his new mentor and that Tom is actually "The Salvator" a superhero here to defend the world against monsters, Tom wants nothing to do with it. But will the disappearance of Sam's father prompt Tom to embrace who he really is?

Episode 2 – The Mortem

When Sam discovers that her father Roger is missing, she implores Tom to help her. Ned, informs them that the monster who took Roger only collects people for an even greater beast known as the Mortem and there's a small chance Roger is still alive. The only problem is, Ned lost the Salvator's main weapon, the mythic sword of Ur, several years ago on a drunken night out and it's the only thing that will kill the beast. Despite this Tom reluctantly agrees to help and begins his training with Ned. But, with an important school play coming up that his daughter does not want Tom to miss, will he even have time to battle the forces of evil?

Episode 3 – Win! Win! Win!

Without the mythic sword of Ur, saving Roger was a lot harder than it needed to be. Ned informs the group that finding it has to be their top priority. Meanwhile, the football coach who trains Sam's son is acting very weird. Most think it has something to do with his troubles at work but he's actually possessed by a demon and becomes even more obsessed with

winning than he normally is. Now Tom and the group must find a way to destroy the demon and stop the coach before he literally trains the kids to death.

Episode 4 – We’re All Tired, Ok?

The search for the sword of Ur is looking positive when Tom meets a local Real Estate agent who may know something about it. Meanwhile, everyone seems really, really tired. They all put it down to the usual stresses and strains of their busy lives but when it gets to the point where the entire town is bedridden and on the verge of an eternal sleep the team realise something’s not right. Soon Tom and Ned discover the estate agent is really a creature that sucks the energy from its victims to survive. It must be stopped - if they can all keep their eyes open long enough.

Episode 5 - The Cheater

Pete’s marriage is struggling. With three young kids their sex life has gone out the window and Pete is tempted by a young woman he meets in the local pub. Unfortunately, the young woman is really a creature who thrives on jealousy, suspicion, lies and unfaithfulness and the deeper Pete gets involved the more powerful she becomes.

Episode 6 – The Mythical Sword Of Ur

Using the information they gained from the real estate agent the group discovers the sword is in the possession of Walter Briggs, one of the richest men in the area. He has a huge house and Tom, jealous of how much Briggs has achieved in his life, reflects on his own failed position. An attempt to buy the sword from Briggs doesn’t work, so the team plans to steal it. But it isn’t as easy as they’d hoped when Briggs turns out to be one of the most powerful creatures they’ve yet encountered and uses all of Tom’s regrets and self-doubt against him.

Character Descriptions

TOM FRASER (39) was once a high flying advertising executive and is now a stay at home Dad living in the outer suburbs. His confidence and idea of himself have taken a big hit. He’s angry, frustrated, depressed and misses the cool parties and golfing weekends with his clients that were always an excuse for a booze fest. Discovering he’s a superhero hasn’t helped. All of his life Tom has looked after number one. Helping other people out just isn’t his thing. Little does he know that it’s the one thing that might finally make him happy.

SAM CLARK (30s) is a nurse and a single Mum. She's compassionate, smart, quick on her feet and, having done martial arts as a form of self-defence for several years, she's strong. But deep down Sam is quite insecure, concerned about what the future holds for her and her son and worried about dying alone. She likes Tom (as a friend for now) and is excited by this strange new world he's brought her way.

PETE CARROL (30s) is Tom's next-door neighbour. He's a happy go lucky suburban tradie with a wife and three kids. Outwardly nothing seems to get him down but inwardly he has the same insecurities as the rest of us. He just keeps them well hidden. He's not "book smart" but is practical and mechanical and, at times, a lot deeper than people give him credit for. He's brave and honest and quite enjoys battling monsters with his new superhero friend.

NED O'CONNOR (61) is a rogue, a drinker and as tough as nails, having spent much of his life alone on the streets fighting evil. He's the fourth Salvator born on Australian soil and was trained by the one before him. He still has some relevance as Tom's trainer and mentor but can feel his inevitable redundancy looming and is struggling with it. His biggest regret is being entrusted with the sword of Ur but then losing it several years back while in a drunken haze.

JEAN FRASER (Late 30s) is Tom's absent wife. She's always on business trips or at work in the city thirty minutes' drive away. She loves Tom but just wishes he'd see that she's not competing with him and is simply trying to get them back on top.

THE MORTEM (Latin for "Death") is a terrifying creature from which emerge other beings that come to feed on people's fears and anxieties in order to give the Mortem enough power to rise again and end humankind. The creature was unknowingly "introduced" to Australia by the First Fleet, which carried it on board. It came to settle in Sweeney Creek which is a magnet for evil, where it has been lying low, until now.

Tone and World

SWEENEY CREEK is set in a typical Australian outer suburban area full of "quirky characters" who never really notice the underlying darkness that exists and the war that rages between good and evil. It's unique in that it mixes the light-hearted feel of shows like THE DETECTORISTS, ROSEHAVEN or THE GILMOUR GIRLS (that all take place in towns full of "quirky characters") with the horror/fantasy genre seen in something like BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER or SHAUN OF THE DEAD.

It is most similar to BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER in story structure, but closer to films like SHAUN OF THE DEAD or HOT FUZZ in its mix of

comedy, drama, horror, and action. Ultimately I'd like to make an Australian TV series which is somewhere between these two.

Target Audience & Hooks

I believe the majority of the audience would be reasonably well educated middle-class men and women around 30 to 55, as they would probably connect most to the themes. But I hope the majority of people over 18, even if they don't fully understand what it's like to be a parent or middle-aged could still find something in the comedy, fantasy, action and horror elements of the show.

Other than THE INCREDIBLES I don't think I've seen an overweight and depressed middle-aged man fighting the forces of evil.

I think average middle-aged people who are living that life (and who spend a lot of time at home watching streaming services) might like to see a hero from their ranks do battle against their demons.