

SWEENEY CREEK

Created & Written by

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SWEENEY CREEK - BY RAY MATSEN - S01 - PILOT - DRAFT 01

--FIRST 10 PAGES ONLY--

OVER BLACK

TITLE: SOUTHERN VICTORIA 1851

EXT. BUSHLAND - NIGHT

It's pouring with rain. Thunder cracks and lightning illuminates thick Australian scrubland.

Something large and dark tears through the bush. It's moving fast and lets out a TERRIFYING HOWL.

JOSEPH SWEENEY, a bearded, hard looking man around 29, in torn 19th century gold miner's clothing, runs through the bush giving chase. He's carrying a LARGE SWORD.

He stops a moment. His wet face is lit by the lightning. There is a mix of terror and determination in his eyes. The thing HOWLS again and Joseph continues his pursuit.

HARRY an older man (late 50s) dressed in similar clothing, pushes his way through the bush, struggling to keep up. He calls out in a COCKNEY ACCENT.

HARRY

Joseph!

He gets stuck on some branches and clumsily tries to pull himself free.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Bollocks...

The beast bursts through into a CLEARING near a rushing RIVER then stops and turns.

The MONSTER is around 4 meters high, scaly with small, yellow eyes and a drooling mouth full of razor sharp teeth. The six fingers on the end of its two long arms have jagged claws. From its side spring four tentacles, with SPIKES on the tips, that move quickly back and forth.

It ROARS as Joseph runs into the clearing and stands before it.

One of its tentacles whips out to strike him, but Joseph does a superhuman back flip and slashes it with his sword as he goes.

Blood gushes out as the monster recoils, letting out an agonised SQUEAL.

It slashes at Joseph with its claws, but again he spins out of its reach.

Ducking and weaving, he runs towards the beast and cuts its leg wide open.

The monster roars in pain again and begins to fall.

Harry pushes his way into the clearing just as the monster collapses and writhes on the ground.

Joseph faces the monster, but behind him another tentacle swings his way. Harry sees it and yells.

HARRY (CONT'D)

Look out!

Joseph spins out of the way just in time and tries to cut the tentacle as he goes, but misses.

The tentacle keeps moving and its sharp end PIERCES HARRY'S CHEST and shoots out of his back. He GROANS.

HARRY (CONT'D)

AAAGH!

Harry falls to his knees as the spike withdraws. Joseph screams out in a thick, IRISH ACCENT.

JOSEPH

Harry!!

The monster rolls over and starts desperately crawling for the river. Joseph leaps on top of it.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

(Screaming with rage)

Go back to hell you bastard!

He holds up the sword as lightning illuminates the engraving of a BLACK SNAKE with a GREEN STRIPE down its spine.

Joseph drives the sword into the monster's back, piercing its heart. It SCREAMS in pain and Joseph is thrown clear as the beast is engulfed in a WEIRD GLOWING LIGHT that seems to suck it into the ground as it HOWLS.

In a flash it is gone and Joseph runs to his friend.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Harry!

He holds the old man in his arms.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

Harry.

Harry smiles at Joseph as his life drains away.

HARRY

Good job. You gave that fucker what
for.

JOSEPH

Is that the end of it?

HARRY

They'll rise again.
(He coughs and gasps)
The sword?

Joseph looks over to the edge of the river where the sword is lying in the mud. He holds his hand out towards it. It begins to move and suddenly flies towards him. In a flash it is in his hand.

JOSEPH

I have it.

HARRY

Guard that bugger with your life.

Joseph nods.

HARRY (CONT'D)

(Smiling)

You did alright you little twat.

Harry dies. Joseph gently lays his head down and looks at the sword in the pouring rain.

JOSEPH

The sword of Ur will always be safe
with us.

The snake emblem shines as the lightning cracks again.

Dissolve to.

TITLE: 2011

EXT. CITY STREET - NIGHT

It's raining. Lightning flashes as we slowly track in on a DODGY LOOKING PUB called 'The Old Melbourne'.

Over this we hear some music from 2011. Eg. 'Reflections by Bliss n Esso'.

A dark figure steps out of the door, his face unseen. He pauses and we get a glimpse of the sword with the snake engraving as he quickly hides it under his coat, then hurries up the street.

INT. THE OLD MELBOURNE PUB - NIGHT

The music continues as NED O'CONNOR, a scruffy bearded man of 53 sits at a table with his head face down on it. A shot glass full of whiskey sits loosely in his hand. Other than Ned, the pub is empty.

A BARMAN shakes him.

BARMAN

Hey dickhead, get up. Time to go.

Ned slowly stirs.

NED

What?

BARMAN

We're closing.

Ned sits up. He looks terrible and blinks as he tries to focus.

He sees the whisky shot, downs it, then looks around.

NED

That bloke I was with. Where'd he go?

BARMAN

I didn't see no one.

Ned's eyes widen in alarm. He starts to look around for something and feels inside his long, worn out coat.

He jumps up and searches the place in a frenzy, tipping over chairs and tables before grabbing the startled barman by his shirt collars.

NED
Where'd he go?!

BARMAN
(Worried)
I didn't see no one!

Ned pushes him away and runs to the door.

EXT. THE OLD MELBOURNE PUB - CONTINUOUS

Ned bursts out of the pub and stands in the pouring rain. He desperately looks up and down the empty street. He's furious at himself.

NED
Fuck!

BLACKOUT.

--OPENING TITLES--

OVER BLACK

TITLE: TODAY

EXT. SWEENEY CREEK - MAIN STREET - DAY

Ariel shot of SWEENEY CREEK a typical outer suburb.

We follow a shiny SUV, as it moves through the main street past a FISH-N-CHIP SHOP, a ST VINNIE'S, a DRIVE THRU BOTTLE-O etc. It's a very normal, kind of boring looking place.

EXT. GRASSLAND - DAY

A BLACK SNAKE with A GREEN STRIPE down its back slowly slithers through the grass towards a SUBURBAN HOUSE.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE - DAY

The SUV pulls up in front of a basic, two story suburban house that backs onto grassland. There is a 'FOR SALE' sign out the front and a 'SOLD' sticker over it.

INT. SUV - CONTINUOUS

Inside the car is TOM FRASER (39), dressed in clean polo-shirt and jeans. He is slightly overweight and has a tired look in his eyes.

TOM
Here we are.

In the passenger seat is Tom's wife JEAN (37) pretty, casually dressed with an equally tired look. She forces a smile, trying to remain upbeat.

JEAN
Yep.

Jean gets out of the car as Tom looks in the rearview mirror.

Seated behind him, staring intently at their phones, are two kids RUBY (7) and HAMISH (9)

TOM
We're here guys.

The kids don't look up.

TOM (CONT'D)
(Flatly, to himself)
Yay, cool Dad.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Jean stands on the front lawn, staring at the plain house. Tom moves up and stands next to her. Tom's bitter and it shows in his voice.

JEAN
I guess it's bigger than our old place.

TOM
But not as close to our jobs. Well, your job.

Jean doesn't react. Tom looks at his expensive watch.

TOM (CONT'D)
Probably take you about forty-five minutes in peak hour.

JEAN
We had to do it.

TOM

Did we?

She turns to the kids still sitting in the car on their devices.

JEAN

At least it'll be good for them.
You'll get to hang out more... they
can breath some country air...

TOM

We're in the outer suburbs not on a
nature reserve.

JEAN

We'll be closer to my parents.

TOM

Are you listing the "cons" now?

JEAN

(Annoyed)

Just trying to be positive here.

A MAN'S VOICE calls out.

PETE (OOS)

(Upbeat)

G'day!

They turn as PETE CARROL (30s) approaches holding a beer can, and two others strung together with plastic packaging. He's a little rough looking in shorts, thongs and a flannel shirt but very friendly and outgoing.

PETE (CONT'D)

Hey, Tom and...?

JEAN

Jean.

PETE

Jean, that's it. So close! Pete. I
said "g'day" at the auction.

He shakes their hands.

JEAN

You're next door.

PETE

Yep. Sorry about that.
(Smiles)

(MORE)

PETE (CONT'D)
I'm not gonna do much for your
house value.

Jean smiles, Tom gives a weak grin.

PETE (CONT'D)
Welcome to sunny Sweeney Creek. You
all good? Need a hand with
anything?

JEAN
Fine, thanks. The movers aren't far
behind. Hopefully they've got it
covered.

PETE
Cool. Beer?

He offers them the beers.

JEAN
Sure.

TOM
No thanks.

Jean takes one and opens it.

PETE
You guys had a house in the city,
yeah?

JEAN
Huh-huh.

PETE
Just wanted a change of pace or...?

JEAN
Sort of.

HAMISH (OOS)
Mum!

JEAN
(To Pete)
Oh, sorry...

Jean goes over to the car.

Tom continues to stare quietly at the house as Pete speaks.

PETE

It's a good spot. You got the creek, lots of caves for the kids to check out, the old mine of course, a pretty good footy club, not a bad pub. Clive the owner can be a bit testy sometimes but he's all right -

Tom cuts Pete off.

TOM

Our mortgage was getting a bit much.

PETE

Sorry?

TOM

I've been out of work for awhile, with the virus and all, so we decided to sell up and get somewhere a bit cheaper.

Pete nods.

PETE

Right. Clever.

TOM

Jean's working, so I'm mister "daddy daycare" at the moment.

PETE

What did you do?

TOM

Advertising.

PETE

Well the butcher's here could do with a decent slogan. "Come in and chop around" is gettin' a bit old.

The kids are heading towards the front door, still looking at their phones. Jean walks back to Tom holding a small box of food and some utensils.

JEAN

(Flatly)

They're hungry. Keys?

Tom hands some keys to her without a word.

JEAN (CONT'D)
(To Pete)
Thanks for the beer Pete.

PETE
No worries.

She exits without looking at Tom. Pete notices their terse exchange.

PETE (CONT'D)
Not easy.

Tom gives another weak grin.

PETE (CONT'D)
I go to this club if you're interested. We get together once a week. We make things, have a couple of beers and a chat-

TOM
You make things?

PETE
Yeah, woodwork. Chairs, bookshelves, I made a cutting board to start off with. That was pretty easy. It's basically just a square bit of wood.

Tom is NOT into this idea.

TOM
Right.

The moving van pulls up behind them

PETE
We're meeting up tomorrow night if you're interested...

Tom begins to walk towards the van.

TOM
Ahh, yeah, sounds good. Jean's off to Sydney for work tomorrow, so I might struggle with the kids. Maybe next time?

Pete smiles.

PETE
Yeah, no worries. Always welcome.