

**Sam's New World
an episode of "Sam"**

by
Michael Bertrand

Draft # 4

Michael Bertrand
#601 6611 Cooney Road, Richmond, BC, Canada
wr52michael@vfs.com

SAM's(10, a bit smaller for his age at 4'2", blonde) birthday party. The house teems with kids around Sam's age. They are the children of ANN (40, straitlaced, serious) and LEON (41, heavy brows, tweed)'s colleagues. Anne and Leon are worriedly watching Sam's reactions from a distance.

MONTAGE

- A group of children are playing tag. Sam sits off to the side, reading. A child runs up to him and tags him. He looks at the child blankly.

SAM

Is there something I can help you with?

The child looks at Sam like he's from Mars, and runs back to the game. Sam shrugs and returns to his reading. Cut to ANNE and LEON sharing a concerned look. *

- A group of children are gathered around a pinata as one of them, blindfolded, swings at it with a stick. Sam sits nearby, still reading. The child connects and the pinata breaks open, releasing a shower of confetti, streamers, candies, and little toys. The kids all scream with delight and scramble for the goodies. Sam merely brushes some confetti off his book irritatedly. Ann and Leon witness this and share an even more concerned look.

- The kids are sitting at the table before the birthday dinner. Ann is watching over them. *

ANN *

(cheerful with a tingle of desperation) *

Well, children, seeing as you are the children of colleagues of Sam's father and me, why don't we go around the table and have everyone say what their mommy or daddy studies. *

KID 1 *

My mommy's a marine biologist! *

KID 2 *

My daddy is an anthropomopolis! *

KID 3 *

Both my parents are physicists! *

It's Sam's turn, but he's gone back to his reading. The sudden silence makes him look up from his book. *

ANN *
 (prompting Sam) *
 And your daddy is.... *

SAM *
upstairs? *

Ann sighs, and the turn goes to the next child. *

- Sam's birthday dinner. Sam, to his credit, is not reading his book. He's still holding it, though. As the scene begins, the kids are just finishing singing Happy Birthday to Sam. A fancy birthday cake with ten candles sits in front of Sam.

Silence as all eyes turn to Sam, who has opened his book and is about to start reading again. He stops and looks at the kids with no idea of what is expected of him. He clears his throat.

SAM (CONT'D)
 Um.... thank you for all the gifts?

Awkward silence, then the kids return to talking amongst themselves. Anne sighs and blows out the candles herself. She looks to Leon, and nods sadly. He nods back.

- Sam alone, still at the head of the table, still reading. All the kids are gone. Sam looks around at all the empty place settings, and sighs. Then, as he is about to go back to reading, his mother enters the room. *

ANN
 Sam, your father and I want to talk to you. Please meet us in the Upper West library in five minutes.

Sam nods absently, still reading. Ann sighs and leaves.

A few moments later, Sam bookmarks his place and leaves.

2 INT. HALLWAYS OF SAM'S HOUSE - DAY

2

We track Sam through his home, which is filled with books on bookshelves. We see, in passing, an old-fashioned brass telescope pointed out a window, a medieval style globe, a coat rack with nothing but tweed jackets on it (including some in Sam's size) and a stuffed and mounted platypus. At no point do we see any sign that a child lives there.

3 INT. SAM'S HOUSE, UPPER WEST LIBRARY - DAY

3

Sam then arrives at the Upper Library, and there sit his parents, ANN and LEON, two rumped-tweed academic types who look like their idea of fun is to dissect a joke. They are seated together on one side of a library-style table. Sam takes a seat on the other side.

LEON

We asked you to come here, Sam, to inform you of our decision to enroll you in the public education system, starting tomorrow.

SAM

But Father, you said the public education system is a cesspool of idiocy and stagnation!

LEON

Well, yes, but... um...

ANN

But your father and I have read some very upsetting studies that indicate that homeschooled children have a substantially higher risk of developing significant social and psychological issues later in life, and we have decided that it is in your best interests for you to join the rest of the... um...

LEON

...young persons...

ANN

Thank you dear. Join the other young persons in the traditional school system, effectively immediately.

SAM

I see. May I see the studies upon which you based this conclusion?

LEON

Of course.

Leon hands Sam three thick ring-bound binders, entitled "HOMESCHOOLING AND CHILDREN", "CHILDREN AND HOMESCHOOLING", and "A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY OF THE LONG TERM EFFECTS OF HOMESCHOOLING ON CHILDREN AGES 6-12 IN STATISTICAL COMPARISON WITH CHILDREN RANDOMLY SELECTED FROM A POPULATION OF CHILDREN" and at this point, the title page runs out of room. Sam flips

through these tomes, reading them rapidly.

SAM

These seem sound. May I examine the raw data for these studies?

ANN

Naturally.

Ann drops three binders so massive they make the previous binders look like mere pamphlets by comparison in front of Sam. They make a loud impressive hollow THUNK sound. Sam looks at the three binders with dismay. He tries to open one but the cover itself is too heavy for him to turn.

SAM

It seems I am forced to accept your conclusions. *

ANN *

What's more, Sam, we watched you at the party today, and you didn't connect with any of the other children. *

LEON *

You didn't even try, Sam. *

SAM *

I know, I just... *

Sam trails off helplessly. *

ANN *

That's why we are sending you to public school, Sam. *

LEON *

We want you to make friends. *

SAM

But you two don't have any friends.

ANN

Exactly. >

4 EXT. OCEAN HEIGHTS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL - DAY

4

Sam arrives at school and pauses to take a look at it. For a moment, we see the school through Sam's eyes, and it looks like a huge horror-movie castle to him. He gulps, but goes in anyway.

5 INT. SAM'S HOMEROOM - DAY

5

Sam looks at the other students and for another brief moment, the class looks like a jungle to Sam, and all the students animals. He finds an unoccupied desk, and sits just as class begins.

MISS YEARLING

Good morning class! Today, our first order of business is to welcome our newest student, Sam Appelbaum. Stand up, Sam!

Sam reluctantly stands. Instantly all the students turns to look at him.

MISS YEARLING (CONT'D)

Now let's all give a big Ocean Heights welcome to Sam! >

The students clap, including Sam. But as they clap, they stare at Sam. Sam does not notice. Miss Yearling tells the students to open their textbooks

MISS YEARLING (CONT'D) *

Now class, let's see who remembers last week's biology lesson. *

A few students groan. *

MISS YEARLING (CONT'D) *

Everybody ready? Good. Now who remembers what this microscopic creature is- *

As she says this, she pulls up a picture of a germ on the big screen monitor at the head of the class. *

SAM *

Staphylococcus aureae. *

MISS YEARLING *

That's right! Well done, Sam. *

Students around Sam look at him uneasily. *

MISS YEARLING (CONT'D) *

And who can tell me what this germ d- *

SAM *

(interrupting) *

Causes infections in cuts and scrapes. *

The students gawk openly at Sam's rudeness. *

MISS YEARLING *

...correct. I'm glad to see you're so
eager to learn, Sam. Now what is the
best way to keep this nasty little
fellow from spreading? *

STUDENT 1 *

Washing your h- *

SAM *

Washing your hands with soap and hot
water. *

The students are mad now, and grumblings can be heard. *

Sam is happily oblivious to the growing resentment **until** the
students **start glaring** at **him**. He looks behind him to see what
people are glaring at. The lunch bell rings.

6 INT. SCHOOL CAFETERIA - DAY

6

Sam gets his tray of food from the lunch lady, and stares down
at the food in blank incomprehension.

SAM

What... on Earth... is THIS?

LUNCH LADY

It's lunch.

SAM

You mean to tell me this is FOOD?
Then what... is **THIS**? *

Sam points to a chicken nugget.

LUNCH LADY

It's a chicken nugget.

SAM

And what, **pray tell**, is a chicken
nugget? *

LUNCH LADY

It's a nugget. Of chicken.

SAM

And where on a chicken would I find
this "nugget"? *

LUNCH LADY

C'mon kid, you're holding up the >
line. You're not the only one who is
hungry, okay?

Sam looks at the students behind him in line. They all glare at
Sam. Sam shrinks back. *

7 EXT. SOCCER FIELD - DAY

7

Sam is at the head of a long line of students waiting to kick
the soccer ball.

COACH STERN

...and that's what the ball is for.
So NOW do you get it?

SAM

I think so. You want us to propel
this black and white spheroid into
one of the netted cages at each end
of the field using every part of our
body EXCEPT out hands?

COACH STERN

Yes! That's it exactly.

SAM

Why?

Coach Stern growls in frustration.

COACH STERN

Just kick the ball, kid. >

MONTAGE

Sam's attempts to kick the ball.

-Sam trips over the ball

-Sam kicks the ball and it rolls two inches

-Sam misses the ball entirely and accidentally kicks himself in
the head

-Sam accidentally steps on the ball causing it to squirt out
from under his foot and hit a student

And so forth and so on.

After the montage, Sam smiles at everyone sheepishly.

SAM

How about we play chess next. *

Everyone groans and glares at Sam. Sam cowers.

8 EXT. OCEAN HEIGHTS PLAYGROUND

8

It's recess, and Sam is trying to make friends.

SAM

Hi, my name is Sam, and-

TOUGH KID

Beat it, shrimp.

SAM

I'm Sam, and I'd like to-

MEAN GIRLS

As if! Hmph.

SAM

Sam's the name, and I'd like to-

RICH KID

Whatever it is, I don't want it.

SAM

Hi! Would you like to be-

NERD

Um, I'd rather not, thank you.

SAM

My friendship is offered to-

KID WITH HUGE BACKPACK

Anyone but me! Bye

SAM

(frustrated)

SAM FRIEND YOU WANT?

VOLUNTEER PLAYGROUND MONITOR

I beg your pardon young man?

SAM

(sigh)

Never mind. >

9 INT. HISTORY CLASS - DAY

>

9

Sam approaches the teacher's desk. Behind it sits Mister Pettifour, a plump and pompous man, who is going over his lesson plan.

SAM

Hi! My name is Sam, and I have just started....

MISTER PETITFOUR

(without looking up)

Sit down and shut up.

SAM

(crushed)

Um.... okay.

Mister Petitfour then gets up and begins class.

MISTER PETITFOUR

Long before the Europeans had progressed past sod huts, the Chinese had invented gun powder, crop rotation, and of course had built the only man-made object visible from space, the Great Wall of China...

SAM

That's not true.

MISTER PETITFOUR

I beg your pardon?

SAM

The Great Wall of China is not visible from space. At least, not any more visible than anything else as seen from orbit.

MISTER PETITFOUR

Young man, I have been teaching this course since before you were born, and I say that the Great Wall of China is visible from space. Everyone knows that.

SAM

Then everyone is wrong.

MISTER PETITFOUR

Listen, you little... listen, I am the teacher here, and I say the Great Wall is visible from space.

SAM

Well I'm a person with common sense enough to know that **fifteen meter thick wall** is no more **or less** visible from space than **a backyard tool shed**, and I say it isn't!

*
*
*

MISTER PETITFOUR

I will not be contradicted in my own class! Now say that the Great Wall is visible from space!

SAM

So you want me to lie?

MISTER PETITFOUR

That's it! You're going to the principal's office!

SAM

No I'm not, I'm sitting right here.

MISTER PETITFOUR

No, I am ORDERING you to go to the principal's office!

SAM

On whose authority?

MISTER PETITFOUR

On my authority!

SAM

Then I authorize myself to refuse to go.

MISTER PETITFOUR

Do you want me to call your parents?

SAM

Sure. They enjoy a good laugh.

MISTER PETITFOUR

Listen, you little brat, you better get your little hiney to the principal's office or you will be in big, big trouble!

SAM

Fine. I will GO to the principal's office. But whatever happens to me there... whether they slap me on the wrist, hold me after class, or boil me in oil... YOU WILL STILL BE WRONG. Good day, sir!

MISTER PETITFOUR

Why you little...

SAM

I SAID GOOD DAY!

10 INT. SCHOOL OFFICE - DAY

10

Sam enters, still mad but beginning to calm down and realizing he may have made a big mistake.

He slumps into one of two chairs that sit facing the secretary's desk.

Sam sits there, sullen and cranky, for a few moments before the sound of a page being turned alerts him to the fact that he's not alone, the other chair is also occupied. By Edgar.

Edgar is a thin boy with black hair, black clothing, and a black outlook on life. His clothes are made of lace and look like something from the late 19th century. Sam regards him curiously for a few moments, during which we see Edgar limply turn another page, and sigh.

SAM

So what did you... um... do?

EDGAR

In what sense?

SAM

To get sent here. To the principal's office.

EDGAR

Ah. My terrible crime was to refusing to sing a song entitled "We Are All Happy Tweeting Birds".

Sam starts to laugh.

EDGAR (CONT'D)

As we clearly... are not.

They both laugh heartily at this.

FINAL MONTAGE

Sam and Edgar getting along very well.

(NOTE : The following is sans dialogue.)

(Sorry this is still here, but I have not figured out another way to show two boys becoming friends without making the episode WAY too long) *

- Edgar laughing at something Sam just said. *

- Both boys enjoying reading Edgar's book

- Sam doing an impression of Mister Petitfour getting super angry at Sam. Edgar falls over with laughter.

- Edgar finishing a dramatic performance. Sam claps.

- Sam showing Edgar some scientific diagrams he has drawn and Edgar nodding as Sam explains them.

At the end of the montage, Sam and Edgar are smiling at one another and it is clear they have become fast friends. When the secretary calls Edgar's name, it's clear they are reluctant to part.

SAM

Do you want to meet up at lunch tomorrow? *

EDGARR *

Of course! Isn't that what friends usually do?

Both boys smile, then Edgar disappears into the principal's office. Sam is still smiling.

11 INT. SAM'S HOUSE, UPPER WEST LIBRARY - EVENING

11

Sam walks is sitting where he sat the day before. His parents are there.

SAM

...and that's how I ended up in the principal's office.

ANN

Just for pointing out the teacher's error? You'd think he would be grateful for the correction!

LEON

And then what happened?

SAM

Not much. He lectured me about
respecting my elders for a while.
Then he sent me home.

>

ANN

I suppose that makes sense.

*

*

SAM

The good news is that I made a
friend!

*

*

*

N

You did? Excellent! What's his name?

>

SAM

His name is Edgar and he's a very
interesting person to talk to. We're
going to meet again tomorrow at
lunch.

ANN

Wonderful, Sam. Your father and I are
very proud of you.

SAM

Thank you, mother. There's just one
thing that I need to ask you.

LEON

What's that, Sam?

SAM

Now that I've made a friend, do I
still have to go back tomorrow?

Everyone laughs.

THE END