

"Sam" Episode 4
The Long Dark Lunchtime Of The Soul

by
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Draft # 1

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Once more, Sam and Mister Petitfour have locked horns. A red-faced Petitfour stands in front of his desk at the head of the class, and Sam is in front of him.

SAM

...so ignorant!

PETITFOUR

That's it! I've had enough of your...
your insubordination! You, young man,
have just sassed your way into a
detention!

Petitfour goes behind his desk and makes a show out of filling out a detention slip for Sam. He dashes it off then signs it with a flourish before triumphantly handing it to Sam.

SAM

That seems fair. I have only one
question.

PETITFOUR

And that is?

SAM

What's a detention?

Some of the kids laugh.

PETITFOUR

(under his breath)

How can you not know... oh right,
it's you.

Petitfour clears his throat noisily.

PETITFOUR (CONT'D)

(sarcastically sweet)

A detention, little boy, is a
wonderful, magical thing where you
have to go to a special room where
it's very quiet and **very** boring and
you have to stay there, making no
noise at all, for your entire lunch
break. Got it?

*
*

Sam takes a moment to absorb this.

SAM

So what you are saying is that this
piece of paper entitles me to a solid

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

hour of time someplace that is very quiet and thus ideal for reading a book?

PETITFOUR

Well... yes. Technically.

Sam looks at the detention slip then back at Petitfour.

SAM

Do you have **any** more of these? *

Petitfour groans in frustration. The school bell rings. It's time for lunch.

2 INT. O.H.E.S DETENTION ROOM - DAY

2

A small room, just barely big enough for a long conference table with chairs around it. At the head of the table sits Mister Petitfour, who is reading.

Shot of the room's clock. It reads 12:02 pm.

Sam enters, and is surprised to see Petitfour there. This makes Petitfour happy.

SAM

(blurting out)

What are YOU doing here?

PETITFOUR

(beaming)

I'm here to make sure that you are aware that you are being punished, young man.

Sam thinks for a moment.

SAM

Doesn't that mean that you have to stay here and be quiet too?

PETITFOUR

(wary)

Yes... I suppose so.

SAM

Then it's kind of like you got a detention too, isn't it?

Petitfour heaves a big, exasperated sigh.

PETITFOUR

Just... sit... down.

Sam shrugs and sits at the other end of the table. He pulls a massive tome entitled "Every Single Experiment Ever" out of his bag, and happily starts reading it.

Petitfour glares at him, and harumphs.

(NOTE : Each of the following sequences begins with a shot of the detention room clock displaying the time indicated at the beginning of the sequence.)

12:04 pm. The door opens and Principal Whethers (early 50's, stern, tough, impatient) enters, with a very confused looking boy, JACK (10, petite, sleepy-eyed, blonde), in tow.

WHETHERS

I guess this will have to do. Listen, Petitfour, Jack here has had a little too much cough medicine today.

Jack hiccups. And sways a little.

*

PETITFOUR

What, exactly, is "a little too much" in this case?

WHETHERS

About six times too much. Apparently there was a misunderstanding regarding teaspoons and tablespoons.

PETITFOUR

Oh my.

WHETHERS

Yes, well, someone has to look after this poor boy until his parents come to pick him up, and that someone is you.

PETITFOUR

Why me?

WHETHERS

Because nobody else can do it. They're all on their lunch break. And the school nurse called in sick.

*

*

Petitfour makes a small sound of outrage.

WHETHERS (CONT'D)

Besides, all you have to do is make sure he doesn't hurt himself. He'll probably fall asleep soon anyway.

Petitfour looks at Jack. He does seem very sleepy.

WHETHERS (CONT'D)

Anyhow, he's your problem now. I've got to go. My lunch is getting cold. Bye!

Whethers leaves the room as suddenly as he entered it, leaving Jack behind.

Jack looks up at Petitfour blearily.

JACK

I'll have two scoops of chocolate chip, Santa Claus!

Petitfour rests his elbow on the table and his forehead in his hand, and sighs.

12:07 pm. The door opens, and ROD (13, tall, muscular, very rough looking) enters. He sullenly hands Mister Petitfour his detention slip, and sits down near Sam.

He begins unpacking his large bag. In it is a full hot lunch, a stack of comic books, a two liter bottle of pop (in ice), a pillow for the chair, and a portable fan.

He glowers warningly at Sam, then settles in and makes himself comfortable. *

Clearly, this is not his first detention.

12:09 pm. Rod belches loudly and disgustingly. Petitfour goes to reprimand him, but a glare from Rod is enough to make Petitfour go pale and reconsider. *

12:12 pm. Sam sighs happily as he reads. >

PETITFOUR

Okay, that's it. No reading during detention!

Petitfour takes Sam's book away, leaving him speechless with outrage.

Rod looks down at his comic, then back up at Petitfour inquiringly. Petitfour ignores him. Rod shrugs, and goes back to reading his comic.

SAM

And just what am I supposed to do
now?

PETITFOUR

(levelly)

Absolutely. NOTHING.

Series of shots of Sam being incredibly bored. Sam kicking his feet, Sam counting the tiles on the ceiling, Sam doodling complex math equations in a notebook.

JACK

(to Sam)

When are we going to get to Grandma's
house? I really gotta...

Jack trails off, and goes back to sleep, drooling a little. Sam looks to Petitfour for what to do now. But Petitfour has fallen asleep, clutching Sam's book like a teddybear.

12:20 pm. Sam looks over at Rod. He looks angry and mean even when he's reading comics. Sam trembles a little, then steadies himself. He then clears his throat nervously, and speaks. *

SAM

So uh.... w-what is the detention
for?

Rod shrugs dismissively.

ROD

(without looking up from
his comic book)

I dunno. Probably fighting.

SAM

(incredulous)

You mean you don't KNOW? How did you
end up in a fight, anyway?

Rod shrugs again.

ROD

(still not looking up)

I dunno. Someone probably said
something that made me mad.

Sam is taken aback by what Rod has said.

SAM

(quietly, scared)

Could you please give me an example
of the sort of thing that=

*
*
*
*

ROD

(looking up at Sam for the first time)

So what did you do? How does a nerd like you end up in detention?

SAM

I pointed out a factual error in what Mister Petitfour was teaching.

Rod's lips move as he works his way through that sentence.

ROD

Wait.... you mean you told that guy (*points at Petitfour*) that he was wrong about something?

SAM

Yes.

ROD

Why'd you tell him he was wrong?

SAM

(with a shrug)

Because he was **wrong**. *

Rod chuckles, and looks at Sam with a new found respect.

12:24 pm. Rod nudges Sam.

ROD

I got comic books, if you want to read. What kind of comics do you like?

SAM

I don't know. I've never read a comic book.

Rod looks at Sam agog for a second. He rummages through his stack of comics and pulls out one with a very angry superhero covered in flames on the cover.

ROD

Then you gotta read this one! It's Atomic Man and he's the best superhero ever!

>

INSERT *

Pages of the Atomic Man comic that illustrate what Rod is talking about. These continue as he goes to V.O. *

ROD (V.O.) (CONT'D)

*
>

Most of the time, he is mild
mannered file clerk named Hugh
Tubner. But when he gets really mad,
he turns into Atomic Man! He can fly,
he has super strength, and he can
shoot heat beams from his eyes!

SAM

(intrigued)

Really?

ROD

Yup! And the madder he gets, the
hotter he gets. That's so awesome!

SAM

He sounds amazing! I have to know
more.

Rod slides the comic over to Sam happily, and Sam picks it up
and starts to read.

12:27 pm. Sam slides the comic back to Rod.

SAM (CONT'D)

That was... amazing.

ROD

I know, right?

SAM

It's the classic Zoroastrian struggle
between good and evil, but with a
strong dose of individualist dogma...

Sam stops as he sees Rod's eyes glaze over.

SAM (CONT'D)

I mean.... it's really cool.

ROD

Yeah! Atomic Man is AWESOME.

Rod laughs, and attempts to high-five Sam, but Sam just looks at
Rod's hand. Rod shrugs, and slides the next issue of Atomic Man
over to Sam. He takes it eagerly and starts to read.

12:41 pm. Sam slowly approaches Petitfour with an open Sharpie
in his hand. He looks back at Rod. *

ROD (CONT'D) *

(whispering) *

Go on, do it! I did my side, now you
do yours! *

A change of angle reveals that Petitfour already has one
surprised eyebrow drawn over his left eye. Sam approaches
Petitfour very, very slowly, then with a trembling hand draws
the other eyebrow on Petitfour's forehead. The eyebrow is a
little wobbly but is still hilarious. *

Just as Sam finishes and is looking back at Rod with a grin on
his face, Jack suddenly wakes up and starts singing at full
volume. *

JACK

(singing loudly)

Oh Jesus is a friend of mine, and he
can be yours too....

ROD

Holy crap, Jack!

Rod claps his hand over Jack's mouth, and Sam speaks to him
soothingly.

SAM

(softly)

No, Jack. Choir practice is over.
It's time to go home to your nice
soft bed.

JACK

(sleepily)

I don' wanna go 'bed!

He then goes back to sleep.

Sam and Rod heave a sigh of relief, then break down into the
kind of laughter you can only get from the relief of great
stress. Mister Petitfor snores. *

12:44 pm. Rod nudges Sam.

ROD

So how'd you get to be so smart,
anyway?

SAM

Same way you got so tall.

Rod is confused.

SAM (CONT'D)

What I mean is... I don't know. Some people are big. Some people are tall. Some people are fast. Some people are strong. And some people are smart. Nobody knows why.

Rod thinks about that for a couple of moments, then nods. This makes sense to him.

12:50 pm. Jack's parents JOANNA (45, corporate, severe, formidable) and RICHARD (49, affable, casual, charismatic) arrive to pick him up. *
*
*

SAM (CONT'D)

Is Jack doing to be okay?

JOANNA *
*

(smiling reassuringly and
stroking Jack's forehead) *
*

Don't worry, the doctor said he will >
be fine. He'll just sleep for a
while.

Jack's parents walk up to Petitfour, and Jack's Mom scowls *
witheringly at him. *

JOANNA (CONT'D) *
*

(lips pursed in
disapproval) *
*

And you can tell Sleeping Beauty here *
that we will be filing a complaint *
about him with the school board for *
falling asleep and abandoning our *
Jack when he needed an adult the *
most. *

She turns to Rod and Sam. *

JOANNA (CONT'D) *
*

Thank you for looking after our Jack, *
boys. I'm glad that there was SOMONE *
behaving like a responsible adult *
here. *

She casts one last ice-dagger look at Petitfour as Jack's Dad *
picks Jack up and carries him over his shoulder. They begin to *
leave, but then Jack's Dad stops and takes a long look at *
Petitfour. *

>

RICHARD *
*

Is it just me, or does it look like *
he's surprised by something? *

Both Rod and Sam smile innocently. *

Jack stirs in his father's arms. *

JACK *
 (sleepily, but a little *
 cranky as well) *
 I said I'm outta quarters, Superman. *
 Go home already. *

Jack's parents smile to each other, and leave. *

12:57 pm : It's quiet except for the sound of Petitfour's *
 snoring and the faint sound of kids playing outside. *

ROD *
 Well uh.... I guess this is it. *

SAM *
 We've got a few minutes left. *

ROD *
 Yeah but... the second that bell *
 rings, I'm outta here, so...uh... *

Rod struggles for words. *

ROD (CONT'D) *
 Um.... uh.... listen. I guess it *
 wasn't too bad having a detention *
 with you. You're pretty cool for a *
 nerd. *

SAM *
 Thanks, Rod. I enjoyed myself too. *
 You're pretty smart for a dumb kid. *

Rod flares up with anger, but notices Sam's grin and grins *
 himself, seeing that Sam was joking. *

ROD *
 Guess I had that coming for calling *
 you a nerd. I'll see you around, Sam. *

SAM *
 I look forward to it. And if you ever *
 need help with your homework, I'll *
 help you. *

ROD *
 Sounds good. And if... uh... *

Rod thinks for a couple of seconds, brow furrowed. *

ROD (CONT'D) *

Oh! And if that Trevor twerp ever *
 bugs you again, tell him I'll hit him *
 so hard his parents will feel it if *
 he doesn't leave you alone, okay? *

SAM *

Uh.. sure thing, Rod. *

All is once more quiet for a few seconds. *

1:00 pm. The bell rings and Rod is off like a shot. Sam tries to wake Mister Petitfour up, but he's sound asleep. Sam has to get to class, so he leaves after casting a last worried glance at Petitfour.

1:05 pm. Principal Whethers enters the detention room. He takes a big book off a shelf and drops it on the table directly in front of Petitfour. It lands with a loud BANG, waking Petitfour up. He looks up at Whethers blearily. Whethers scowls at him.

WHETHERS *

You and I need to TALK, Petitfour. *

Petitfour seems surprised. *