

FIND SQUIRREL 'S NUTCASE

10 PAGE EXCERPT

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Based on true events... Some.

OVER BLACK...

SUPER: "Some of this shit actually happened... Which version of the truth do want?"

FADE IN:

INT. POST OFFICE - MORNING

A red handheld icebox sealed shut by a steel padlock.
Stamped: *RETURN TO SENDER. UNABLE TO FORWARD.*

EXT. SQUIRREL'S HOUSE - MORNING

SUPER: SOMEWHERE NEAR GRASS VALLEY, CA

Ranch style home tucked away in the pine trees.

A beatdown pickup parked in the driveway next to a green compact.

INT. SQUIRREL'S HOUSE - SAME

Cozy with a coat of second hand cancer.

Walls gussied up with portraits of 40's pin-up girls.

SQUIRREL (50), a skinny Cherokee-Mexican mix, with an acorn tattoo on his right hand, lights a cigarette and falls into a chair next to a graveyard of cigarette butts. Years of gang banging and drug abuse result in a 'no fucks given' attitude.

Seated across, studying a photo of a middle aged woman, is HUNTER CHASE aka Hound Dog (30's). Pretentious with a solemn expression, sarcastic inflection and secondhand three piece suit. He's a pompous asshole. But don't blame him, blame his surroundings. Some call him a hero, a life saver. Others call him... well other things. He's the seeker of secrets. The bearer of bad news. He's a Private Investigator, and this is his story...

SQUIRREL

So why they call you 'Hound Dog?'

HUNTER

Why do they call you 'Squirrel?'

SQUIRREL

Man, that's what the po-po use to call me back in the hood 'cause I use to jump from rooftop to rooftop runnin' from they ass. 'Course that was back in the day when Squirrel was all sorts of fucked up. I'm talking 'bout on the corner with the homies, cracked out on PCP back in the day. Check this out, dog. Squirrel would wake up, smoke some dust, drink a forty, smoke some weed, sip a flask then post up and represent. Man, one time our house was on the six o'clock news. Drug raid. Got one of my girls on the couch, homies hangin' 'round, gettin' lit, then all of a sudden a fuckin' tank busts through the front door, dog. I shit you not. A fuckin' tank. Everybody's already out the fuckin' back door and Squirrel's just sittin' there thinkin', 'My momma's gonna kill me.' I was always pissin' off my momma, dog. I know she regrets ever having me. But anyways, no, dog, they hardly ever caught Squirrel, but they caught Squirrel a few times.

Hunter's deadpan.

SQUIRREL (CONT'D)

So why they call you Hound Dog, dog?

A beat.

HUNTER

Squirrel, when's the last time you saw your wife?

Hunter pulls out a pen and pad.

SQUIRREL

Let's see. I moved into this house three years ago. I put in that koi pond out front -- You see the koi pond when you walked in? I put that out there a year and a half ago, 'cause, check this, dog, a raccoon.

(MORE)

SQUIRREL (CONT'D)

A fuckin' raccoon came walkin' up, and I'm talkin' 'bout walkin' up on two feet like he owned the joint. He stepped up to my sliding door over there and tried to open it, dog. Like a fuckin' human being. I shit you not, that fool cupped his hands on the glass and stared in at me, dog. Next morning I went outside and there were no more fish in the pond. So, I guess it'll be a year and seven months exactly tomorrow.

HUNTER

Exactly, huh?

Hunter jots down notes and realizes he's down to his last page. It's been a busy year.

SQUIRREL

Yeah, 'cause, check this out, dog, the last time she was here she brought the motherfuckin' Sheriff with her, talkin' 'bout how scared she was that I might do something to her as she's walkin' out of my fuckin' house with shit I fuckin' bought. Then she's talkin' bout --

HUNTER

Last time you talked to her?

SQUIRREL

Check this out, dog.

Hunter rolls his eyes.

SQUIRREL (CONT'D)

She won't answer my calls ever since I mentioned divorce. I mean, she left me. She wanted out. Then when I try and make it official she disappears into thin air. So, I had Wren call her work--

HUNTER

Where does she work?

SQUIRREL

The hospital, but check this out--

HUNTER

Frankly, Squirrel, time is of the essence. Now, you need me to find your wife so you can get divorced. I can do that. I'm very good at what I do. But in order for me to be good at what I do I need to stay focused. I need to stay on track. I don't need the whole the story. Just give me the facts.

SQUIRREL

Okay, okay. I'm startin' to see why they call you 'Hound Dog.' All you need is the scent.

HUNTER

All I need is the scent. So, your wife -- Carrie? Carol?

SQUIRREL

Carla.

HUNTER

Carla. Your wife, Carla, left a year ago, won't return your calls and works at the hospital?

SQUIRREL

That's right. In the ER.

HUNTER

All right. Well, that's a start. Anything else?

SQUIRREL

Between you and me, I think she was seeing somebody else.

HUNTER

Well, I think we need to prepare ourselves for that reality.

Hunter pushes himself out of the chair.

SQUIRREL

So, is it true what they say? Forty-eight hours?

HUNTER

So far.

Time to go.

SQUIRREL

Hold up, dog. I know you're only doing this 'cause Wren is a good friend of yours, but good lookin' out.

HUNTER

Not a problem.

SQUIRREL

Promise me you'll find her.

HUNTER

I don't make promises. Making a promise is like taunting the universe.

SQUIRREL

What the fuck you talkin' bout, dog? Come on. It'll make me feel better. Please. I wanna know my steak money was well spent.

HUNTER

Sorry, but no. I can't guarantee it. So, I can't promise it.

Squirrel holds out his pinky. A pinky promise...

SQUIRREL

Come on, dog. Pinky promise.

Regret has already settled. Hunter, reluctant...

SQUIRREL (CONT'D)

Make it official.

A surge of anxiety flows through Hunter as he stares at Squirrel's outstretched pinky with resent.

HUNTER

I can't.

SQUIRREL

Boy, you better gimme that motherfuckin' pinky 'fore I chop it off and do it myself.

A threat not to be taken lightly. There's something rather terrifying about Squirrel.

After serious thought and hesitation...

HUNTER

Fuck me.

Hunter locks pinkies with Squirrel. Contractually bound, not by the laws of man, but by the laws of the universe.

SQUIRREL

This shit is legit now.

HUNTER

Have mercy.

SQUIRREL

Good luck. I know you won't let me down, Hound Dog.

Like a man who just sold his soul to the devil, Hunter exits with a premonition of imminent disaster.

INT. LIQUOR STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Booze, chews and shoes. Anything you might need you'd find here.

The proprietor of this establishment is DONO, an old-timer with a majestic Fu Manchu and a stone-cold gaze that would make Medusa blush. He guards the register. Shotgun close by.

DING-DONG! Hunter enters.

DONO

Howdy there, Hound Dog.

HUNTER

Dono.

No time wasted. Hunter makes a bee-line for office supplies, grabs a fresh notepad and heads for the counter.

DONO

Work?

HUNTER

Yeah. That reminds me.

Hunter flashes Dono the picture of Carla.

HUNTER (CONT'D)

Seen her?

Dono shakes his head.

DONO

No. I don't think so.

HUNTER

Well, which is it? No or I don't think so?

DONO

It's no.

HUNTER

Oh, okay. Thanks, because it was so unclear... Hey, are you sure you've never seen this woman before?

DONO

I said I ain't seen her.

HUNTER

You didn't say that. You may have suggested it, but you didn't say it. Had you said that I would have gone straight to the 'where do you think she might be' bit because I know you're lying.

Dono breaks character.

DONO

You are good, but I gotta say, you seem a bit off today.

HUNTER

Yeah?

DONO

Yeah. You getting sleep?

HUNTER

I'm fine. So where's she's at?

DONO

No clue and I seriously have never seen her in person. Squirrel's just shown me pictures from time to time. Anything else?

HUNTER

Some charge for my magic wand.

A baton stun gun on Hunter's hip.

Dono sets a pack of batteries on the counter.

DONO

You know, your dad would be proud of you. Serving up karma. He sure did rub off on you kids. How's your sister doing?

HUNTER

Still crazy.

DONO

Hey now. That's not fair. Craziness is a perspective. She probably thinks you're crazy.

HUNTER

Come on, Dono. Ring me up. I have to get to the hospital.

DONO

Why on Earth would you go to a hospital if you ain't dying?

HUNTER

I'm on the job.

DONO

You better grab some OJ then. You're gonna be sick as a dog when you walk out of there.

HUNTER

Got some at home.

Hunter pays and darts for the door.

DONO

Hey, Hound Dog. Bought you a scratcher.

HUNTER

You didn't have to do that.

DONO

No shit. I chose to. Scratch it up.

Hunter shreds the lotto ticket with a coin: *INSTANT WINNER: \$100!*

DONO (CONT'D)

Holy shit.

HUNTER

Cash me out.

DONO
This must be your lucky day.

HUNTER
That's my cue.

Five twenties into Hunter's pocket as he exits. DING DONG!

DONO
Lucky son of a bitch.

Dono still can't believe it.

INT. ER WAITING ROOM - DAY

Crowded.

Amongst the assemblage of AILING PATIENTS is a CRYING BABY, a BEE STING VICTIM (40's), swollen like a balloon, and a FLUISH WOMAN (60's), with regard for no one as she hacks up a lung.

Hunter, wound up rather tight, pushes his way to the front desk.

The sassy DESK CLERK (20's), rolls her eyes as Hunter approaches.

DESK CLERK
Fill out the form then come back.

HUNTER
No, I'm actually not sick. I'm looking for someone.

DESK CLERK
Sir, this is the Emergency Room, not the lost and found.

Hunter removes a \$20 bill and baits the desk clerk. She snatches the cash and hands him a clip board with a form.

DESK CLERK (CONT'D)
Fill out the form then come back.
(to line)
Next.

One seat available. Hunter sits next to the bee sting victim.

Hunter looks at the form then scans the room. The crying baby and horrendous coughs of the fluish woman add aggravation.

BEE STING VICTIM
They need to have an 'Emergency
Emergency Room.'

HUNTER
I couldn't agree more.

BEE STING VICTIM
Like don't get me wrong, I feel bad
for everybody in here, but I'm
about to fucking die.

A CUTE NURSE (30's), steps out from the back.

CUTE NURSE
Jeremiah Graft --

The crying baby is rushed into the back.

CUTE NURSE (CONT'D)
Susan Dillinger.

The fluish woman sprays Hunter as she hobbles towards the
cute nurse.

Hunter is agape as he wipes the saliva off his face. The bee
sting victim is fumed.

BEE STING VICTIM
I came in here twenty minutes
before both of them. I mean unless
that whining sack of piss and shit
is running a one-oh-five fever and
that bitch's got TB then, okay,
fine, let them go, but come on.

HUNTER
You think she had TB?

BEE STING VICTIM
She fucking better have.

Fear, but why? Hunter taunted the universe. No, worse, he
waged war against it. Nothing promised ever comes easy.

CUTE NURSE
Kory Simons?

BEE STING VICTIM
It's about fucking time.

The bee sting victim jumps up, takes two steps and falls to
the ground unconscious.