

This first excerpt is from Adam's opening monologue.

Disregard the action lines and the dialogue from the other characters, that's been left in to provide you with the necessary context for Adam and the situation he finds himself in. What we want to see is how well you deliver his internal monologue.

Also, I understand that this is a fair amount to read and memorise, so feel free to go line-by-line and cut the space in between in an editing software.

Good luck!

EXT. PARK - SUNRISE

It's a beautiful morning at a local park.

A swing-set creaks as it sways gently in the morning breeze.

Birds flutter in the trees, their calls breaking the quiet hush of dawn.

Dew-covered grass glistens as the first golden rays of sunlight stretch across the park, casting long, soft shadows.

A pond ripples as ducks glide across the surface.

Nearby, a sweet OLD LADY shuffles along the path with her walking frame while humming an old tune.

It's a new day, and everything seems right in the world, until -

EXT. PARK, ADAM'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

BZZ! BZZ! BZZ! A phone alarm rings.

We see a makeshift, cardboard gravestone which reads:

HERE LIES ADAM.

DEAD ~~PHYSICALLY~~, MENTALLY, EMOTIONALLY & SPIRITUALLY.

In front of the gravestone, a hand emerges from a shallow grave (in classic, zombie-trope style), scrambling to turn the alarm off. The hand belongs to ADAM, a zombie in his late 20s, wearing a filthy singlet and boxers. Adam is a squatter, living in a park that's everything he's not - tranquil, uplifting and picturesque.

Adam digs himself out of his shoddily-constructed grave, sits up, and stares straight at the camera while he waits for his bloodshot eyes to adjust. We take in his undead beauty.

ADAM

(to camera)

I might look a little different than you, but we've got a lot more in common than you think...

The Old Lady sees Adam in the distance.

OLD LADY

(shouting)

Hey!

(MORE)

OLD LADY (CONT'D)

Get your rotting ass out of that hole before I call the council!

That's as close to a 'good morning' as Adam gets these days. He shrugs it off and decides to get up and start his day.

He walks over to a bucket of water to wash his face.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

I died a while back. I had a few too many drinks and fell into my pool.

As the water hits his face we are transported to...

EXT. ADAM'S POOL (FLASHBACK) - NIGHT

HUMAN ADAM is lying at the bottom of his pool, beer bottle in hand.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

When I landed at the bottom I just decided to stay there, it wasn't a planned thing. Even if I wanted to swim up to the surface, the weight of my mortgage would've kept me under.

EXT. PARK, CLOSET - CONTINUOUS

Adam fetches his work clothes and briefcase from a nearby tree branch and gets dressed.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

When I died it was pretty sweet. I hadn't rested like that in years. If I were alive, I think my eye bags would've finally went away. My sleep debt and financial debt completely disappeared.

EXT. PARK, MAIN ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Breakfast time. Adam heats a brain-flavoured hot pocket in a microwave which is situated on the ground and plugged into a lemon. He doesn't get much power so he settles for lukewarm.

He heads over to his chair and takes a seat. Then, he starts on his breakfast, chewing slowly and painfully.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

But then it came back, 10 times harder, when I became a zombie. I didn't become a zombie from a virus, nuclear radiation or an ancient curse, it was something far worse - the passing of a new state law.

Adam spits out the hot pocket in disgust, and then orders an Uber on his phone.

INT. UBER - CONTINUOUS

Adam sits in the middle-backseat of a cramped Uber pool, with his briefcase on his lap. The HUMAN PASSENGERS to his sides look extremely uncomfortable - holding their noses, side-eyeing and leaning as far away from him as possible.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

You see, banks, credit card companies and loan sharks were sick of estates in our area being declared insolvent. If you don't know what that means, it's basically when a person dies and the assets they leave behind can't cover their outstanding debts. This means a lot of write-offs and a lot of lost money for the vultures - I mean creditors.

The passenger to Adam's right can't contain his disgust any longer.

RIGHT PASSENGER

I can't take this any more!

He jumps out of the moving car as the other passenger looks back in horror. Adam reaches over and closes the door, unfazed by the interruption. He continues his monologue.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

Now the creditors went to the local government and wanted them to pay for it. When the government wouldn't budge, the creditors threatened to move their business elsewhere. The government really didn't want this, so what was their big solution?

SCREECH! The car brakes hard.

DRIVER
 (angry)
 Hey!

WHIP PAN to the DRIVER, a short, scrawny man.

DRIVER (CONT'D)
 Can you shut the fuck up?

ADAM
 I didn't say anything.

DRIVER
 I could hear your neurosis before I
 picked you up. Get out of here!

Adam sizes up the driver.

ADAM
 Come back here and make me.

EXT. ROAD - MOMENTS LATER

Adam is on the ground, withering in pain with a half-torn tie and one shoe missing.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)
 He made me.

Adam's briefcase is thrown from the Uber as it speeds off. He picks himself up and dusts himself off, and then goes to retrieve his briefcase and shoe.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O) (CONT'D)
 Where was I? The big solution to
 the debt problem, that's right.

INT. THE GRIM REAPER'S OFFICE - PERPETUAL NIGHT

Adam, still wet from the pool, sits across from the GRIM REAPER, a supernatural bureaucrat - part collector of souls, part collector of signatures.

The Reaper slides a death certificate across the desk. It doubles as a contract.

We see the most important details listed:

-Name: "ADAM SMITH"

-Outstanding Debt: "\$126,357" - bolded and in red.

-Clause 3.1 - Obligation of the Recipient: "As per the Eternal Repayments Act, the recipient shall not be granted permanent death until all outstanding debts have been repaid in full."

Adam stares at the contract in disbelief, and signs with a shaky hand.

GRIM REAPER

The Eternal Repayments Act.
Sections 1.1 and 1.2 dictate that upon the declaration of an estate as insolvent, all debts and liabilities shall become binding upon the deceased individual in the afterlife.

EXT. PATH - DAY

Adam walks past a wall covered in posters advertising a variety of disturbing things:

-An organ selling service with the slogan "Selling a Kidney is easier than you think!". It pictures a cartoon kidney with a speech bubble coming out of its mouth that says "you only need one of me!".

-Slaver, a recruitment agency that provides businesses with cheap zombie labour.

-A sleazy looking politician promising to keep zombies out of your neighbourhood.

-Lastly, an ad for 'LoopFinance™', a company that offers debt refinancing - basically, they offer loans to pay off your other loans. Adam sees this one and stops. He looks at it with contempt before ripping it off the wall, scrunching it up and throwing it on the ground behind him. We see the LoopFinance™ logo on the page as Adam continues walking off.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

Translation: If you die broke, you come back to life as a zombie and have to keep working until you pay off your debts.

BLACK SCREEN

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O.)

So this is what I'm working for - sweet nothingness, peaceful oblivion.

INT. OFFICE LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

Adam walks into the lobby of LoopFinance.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

Life in a newly-established
minority group isn't fun. We have
no rights, our human family members
think we want to eat them, and
there aren't too many job openings
that are suitable for our kind.

In the corner, FREYA and VICTOR - two zombies we'll get to know later - talk intently with another zombie. Their tone is low, focused. We can't make out what they're saying, but whatever it is, it matters.

He labours up the stairs towards the entrance.

INT. OFFICE RECEPTION - CONTINUOUS

Adam walks into reception.

The zombie RECEPTIONIST stands at the photocopier, blank-faced, feeding sheet after sheet into the machine with robotic monotony.

Adam musters up a smile.

ADAM

Morning.

She just stares at him, unblinking.

Adam rolls his eyes and continues walking through the hallway, past a sign that says "LOVE YOUR WORK".

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

Thankfully some exploitative,
sadistic fucks were willing to lend
a hand, and here I am, working as a
Sales and Customer Service rep for
LoopFinance, a debt refinancing
company. I earn a base salary of
\$10,000 annually, with no
commission and no incentives.

INT. THE OFFICE'S PIT - CONTINUOUS

Adam walks into the pit, a soulless, colourless place with an open-plan layout - designed for minimal privacy, efficient surveillance, and frequent public humiliation.

It's mid-morning, and the office is surrounded by windows, yet no sunlight makes its way through. The blinds are all drawn down, leaving the office to be solely lit by clinical overhead fluorescents and the blue light of computer screens.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O)

Look at this place. State-of-the-art suffering...

Adam stops for a second to take it all in, he sees:

-A keyboard missing several keys.

-A dying office plant.

-A zombie office worker, drooling as he mindlessly enters data into a spreadsheet.

-A cork bulletin board covered in passive-aggressive notes, corporate propaganda, and a poster entitled "Family", where the zombies look miserable. The human manager is in front with his arms outstretched, blocking some of his so called 'family'.

JIM, the same manager from the poster, patrols the office like a hawk. He's short, pencil-necked and in his late 30s, with a weak combover that barely hides the bald spot on his crown.

He folds his arms, spots Adam in the distance, then fixes his gaze right on him... and into the camera.

Adam is a part of the Sales and Customer Service Department, with two other undead employees - EARL, a heavy-set, middle-aged man who's recently become a zombie, and MIKE, an average-zombie-Joe and the closest thing Adam has to an ally in this divided workplace.

Due to a recent downsizing the office is half empty, but aside from Adam's department, there's Loan Refinancing with six zombies, Debt Recovery with two, and Tech Support with one. It's a small business, but one of many zombie-fuelled companies under LoopFinance's parent company.

The rest of Adam's zombie coworkers are already there, calling or typing away. He's the last to arrive.

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O) (CONT'D)

Some say you can't survive on \$10,000 a year in Australia. But you can, if you rarely eat, have absolutely no desires or passions in life, and want to die as quickly as possible.

Adam sits down at his desk. The backing of it is plastered in yellow sticky notes that keep a long, long tally. He takes a deep breath, and then etches another marking onto the newest sticky note.

Adam then opens up a spreadsheet on his computer entitled "Cost of Dying".

The spreadsheet is neat, colour-coded and clinically organised. An itemised budget contains cells for 'Housing', 'Brains', 'Ubers' and his 'Mobile Plan'. His 'Current Debt Balance' sits at the bottom of the page in big, red, bolded writing: '\$119,875.37'

ADAM'S THOUGHTS (V.O) (CONT'D)

At this rate, I have 21 years, 5 months and 27 days left. If I take out sick days and holidays, I only have... 21 years, 5 months and 27 days left.

Jumping ahead a little bit to the third act...

Adam and Zed have taken their bosses hostage, and have pried the code to the company safe from them. In the safe they hope to find money that they can use to pay off their debts and buy their freedom.

Adam leaves Zed alone with the hostages while he goes to rob the safe, only to find out the safe is empty. To make matters worse, when he returns he sees that Zed has executed two of the three hostages...

INT. HOSTAGE ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Adam rushes in and sees Charles and Preston, slumped over, dead. The bags over their heads are blood-soaked. Adam turns to Zed.

ADAM
(screaming)
What the FUCK did you do?!

ZED
Did you get the loot?

ADAM
No, and getting ransom money was the backup plan, but you've just executed the fucking rich guys!

Adam rips the bag off Jim's head. Jim is sobbing uncontrollably.

ADAM (CONT'D)
Where's the money?!

JIM
What money?

ADAM
The money in the safe. The money you used to pay Victor and Freya. Where is it?!

JIM
There was never anything in there. We wired the money to the Grim Reaper.

ADAM
Then why'd you point to the fucking safe during the meeting?!

JIM
It... it was a prop. For dramatic tension!

Adam turns away in anguish. He puts his hands on a desk and screams into the void.

Zed puts a consoling arm around him, much to his displeasure.

ZED
So... Can I off him?

Jim's eyes widen. He gets up and backs away towards the door.

ADAM

No, you can't "off him"! You shouldn't have offed anyone! That wasn't the fucking plan!

ZED

So what now?

ADAM

We'll make Jim transfer us money from his personal account and hope he has enough.

Adam turns.

ADAM (CONT'D)

Wait. Where is he?