

A Hill To Die On
an original screenplay by
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1 INT. VAN HAMN RESIDENCE BEDROOM - NIGHT

At the center of the room, atop a CALIFORNIA KING MATTRESS, a mass of SILK SHEETS lifts up and down. Moaning.

VOICE

Oh Jacob, i'll make you a star.

A poster featuring a masked superhero hangs on display. It reads: "THUNDERHEAD, starring Jacob Bell as Storm-Boy, Directed by Jamie Van Hamn"

The flash of headlights flood through a window on to the bed.

Jamie Van Hamn, 45, rolls out from under the sheets. He throws on a pair of boxers and slams the bedroom door shut.

Jacob, 35, athletic, wearing just a SUPER HERO MASK pokes his head from the sheets.

JACOB

What's happening?

A car door claps shut. The headlights shut off.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

You have to go!

2 INT. VAN HAMN RESIDENCE LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

WEDGE HEELS click across a luxurious living room toward a door. A DIAMOND RING rests on a Woman's finger.

3 INT. VAN HAMN RESIDENCE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jacob throws on SWEATS, and hops to the bedroom door.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Not that way!

Jamie leaps to the window and hoists it half open.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)

WINDOW! JACOB! WINDOW! NOW!

Jacob barely fits his upper body through the small window.

JACOB (O.S.)

I can't fit!

Jamie pushes against Jacob's rear, face cheek to butt cheek.

4 INT. VAN HAMN RESIDENCE LIVINGROOM - CONTINUOUS

A woman, 45, business casual, opens the door to the:

5 INT. VAN HAMN RESIDENCE BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jamie stands in the center of the room.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Hey babe!

LINDSAY VAN HAMN sits on the bed and kicks off her heels.

LINDSAY

Oh, you wouldn't believe my day! I
have the coolest surprise for you.

Jacob clings to the ceiling like a super spy. His grip wobbles.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

The make-a-wish foundation called.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Oh, do you have cancer?

LINDSAY

There's this kid. He used his wish
to see you. He's your biggest fan.

Lindsay hands Jamie a brochure with a child's picture.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

What's he dying of? Nothing I could
catch right?

LINDSAY

Don't say that when you meet him.
You have a flight tomorrow.

Lindsay kisses Jamie on the cheek.

Jacob falls from the ceiling on to the bed. Lindsay screams!

JACOB

Hi, Lindsay.

LINDSAY

Hello Jacob.

Jamie is a statue. Lindsay looks to Jamie, then to Jacob.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

This isn't what it looks like?

JACOB

I'm sorry. I'll see myself out.

Jacob retreats out of the room.

LINDSAY
You promised that this would stop
when we got married.

Lindsay holds her head in her hands.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
What time is the flight?

6 INT. LIAM'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

BALLOONS litter the ceiling. Jamie pushes them out of his way. He lumbers toward a HOSPITAL BED.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Hey buddy. I heard a lot about you.

LIAM, 10, chubby, wearing a SHIRT with a giraffe on it. He sits still under GREY BEDSHEETS.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
You're a fan of my movies?

LIAM
Yea. Storm-boy is my favorite.

Jamie eyes an assortment of different Storm-Boy MERCH.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Yea, I like him too.

LIAM
My Doctor says I don't have a lot of
time. You know the real Storm-boy?

Jamie leans in.

LIAM (CONT'D)
I want to be in his next movie. I
want to have super powers.

Liam hands Jamie a CRAYON DRAWING of Liam as a superhero.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Can I be a hero too? Before I die.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Um.. No.

LIAM
What?

JAMIE VAN HAMN
I don't think it would work out with
your vibe.

Liam's eyes flood with tears. He is on the verge of screaming.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)

Hey, hey, don't cry. Lets talk about
you: what kind of cancer do you have?

7 INT. WONDER-MAX STUDIOS HALLWAY - DAY

Jamie Van Hamn, fierce, sporting a CANADIAN TUXIDO, marches down a long hallway. He pulls out Liam's drawing and examines it. He tosses it in to a small TRASH CAN on the way.

8 INT. WONDER-MAX CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jamie bursts through the door. Lindsay sits at the end of a LONG TABLE beside . MOVIE POSTERS decorate the walls.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

You're tanking my sequel!?

LINDSAY

Good morning to you, and no we are
not "tanking your sequel". Were
weighing new options.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

I know what that means Lindsay!

LINDSAY

We think Thunderhead may benefit
from a fresh slate.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

A new director you mean! A reboot?
The Thunder-head franchise is mine!
You.. You spineless hag! You promised
that our home life wouldn't bleed in
to my work!

LINDSAY

Jamie, this is not about the affair.
Thunderhead doesn't make money like
it used to so the suits want somebody
who can shift to a younger, family
friendly audience.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

So you want to make a cash grab? I
can make this a cash grab! I can be
fucking family friendly!

LINDSAY

Not with whats left of the budget
and not on short notice. Best of
luck Jamie.

9 INT. WONDER-MAX STUDIOS HALLWAY - DAY

Jamie storms down the hall. Jamie kicks over a trash can. Jamie slides his back down the wall and sits down in the PILE OF TRASH.

At Jamie's feet, Liam's drawing lays crumpled. Jamie inspects it.

10 INT. WONDER-MAX STUDIO SOUND STAGE - DAY

Jacob, dressed as "Storm Boy" stands at the foot of STAIRS in front of a GREEN SCREEN, a FILM CREW works silently in observation. Jamie wearing a BLACK TURTLE NECK, sips COFFEE.

JACOB
Brainestro! Your tower of doom will
fall. And if I fail.

Jacob nocks an ARROW and draws his BOW back.

JACOB (CONT'D)
That burden is mine to bear alone.

Jacob marches up the steps.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
HOLD!

The crew adjusts various EQUIPMENT. Lindsay speaks to a group of MEN IN SUITS. Lindsay glances to Jamie and the Men nod.

Jamie feels a frog in his throat. He rises from his director CHAIR. He raises a BULLHORN to his lips.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
HEEEY EVERYBODY!

Lindsay turns from her discussion with the suits.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
There is someone I want you to meet.
Say hello to a very special addition
to the Thunderhead family. Liam!

A PA pushes Liam in a WHEELCHAIR. Light applause. Jamie crouches beside Liam.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
Are you excited to be a superhero?

LIAM
Yea.

Jamie gives Liam a hug. He whispers in his ear.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Say "thank you Mr Jamie".

LIAM
Thank you Mr Jamie.

Scattered applause. Jamie gives Lindsay a smug look. Men in suits step away from set, Lindsay stands alone.

11 INT. WONDER-MAX STUDIO SOUND STAGE - LATER

Jacob, dressed as Storm Boy stands at the foot of stairs in front of a green screen.

JACOB
Brainestro! You're tower of doom
will fall. And if I fail.

Jacob nocks an arrow and draws his bow back.

JACOB (CONT'D)
That burden is mine to bear alone.

Liam rolls in with his wheelchair wearing a mud themed SUPERHERO OUTFIT. Liam's chair has been decorated with a decal which reads "Mud-Mobile"

LIAM
Don't forget Mudslide. I'm here to
help too.

Jacob marches up the steps. Liam's wheelchair bumps in to the bottom step. Liam sits alone. He looks at the camera.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Liam? Can you walk up the steps?

LIAM
No. My legs. I can't walk.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Can you try?

Liam tries to lift himself from the wheelchair to no avail. members of the crew cringe.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
CUT!

Jacob, lifts up his mask and steps down the stairs to Jamie

JACOB
Jamie, who is this child?
(MORE)

JACOB (CONT'D)

I thought Storm-boy was more of the lone wolf type, "the eye of the storm in a fog of the unknown"

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Yeah, all that and now you have a nice handicapped kid to tag along.

JACOB

Jamie I've been meaning to ask, what is our relationship?

JAMIE VAN HAMN

I just said, he is like a "fun sidekick" for the kids.

Jamie glances at Liam chatting up with Lindsay and the men in suits. Jacob switches to a whisper.

JACOB

No, I mean OUR relationship. After the other night.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Can we talk about this off set?

JACOB

This is the only chance I get to see you face to face.

Jacob brushes Jamie's face with the back of his hand. Jamie swats him away.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

This isn't about you!

Jamie turns to the FILM CREW, he lifts up a bullhorn.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)

Can we get something done about these stairs?!

12 INT. WONDER-MAX STUDIO SOUND STAGE - LATER

Jacob, stands at the foot of stairs in front of a green screen

JACOB

Brainestro! You're tower of doom will fall. And if I fail.

Jacob nocks an arrow and draws his bow back.

JACOB (CONT'D)

That burden is mine to bear alone.

Liam rolls in with his wheelchair.

LIAM

Don't forget Mudslide. Let's do this!

The heroes make their way up the stairs. A wheelchair assessable RAMP now lays adjacent to the steps. Storm-Boy pushes Liam up the ramp.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

CUT! Liam, that delivery. Chefs kiss.

Jamie approaches Liam and crouches beside him.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)

You did great buddy! Say make a wish!

Jamie poses beside Liam and smiles. CAMERAS flash.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)

Oh, you want one with just him?

Jamie steps aside, perplexed. Liam smiles for the picture.

Lindsay glares at Jamie. Cameras flash.

13 INT. WONDER-MAX MEN'S BATHROOM - DAY

Gaudy BOOTS are visible beneath a bathroom stall door.

Jamie Van Hamn, sitting on a porcelain throne, flips through a script with a RED SHARPIE. He scribbles in the margins.

The sound of a door slamming open. A pair of wedge heels step in to view under the stall door. She knocks.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

Don't think I don't know what you're doing out there.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Occupied.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

You are using that poor boy to pull at the heart-strings of the suits so that you can keep your crappy sequel.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

You sound like you have a problem with little dying boys having big movie dreams.

A wheelchair is visible beneath the handicapped stall.

LIAM (O.S.)
Are you guys talking about me?

JAMIE VAN HAMN
I'm getting my god damn sequel
Lindsay! I'm Jamie Van Hamn!

LIAM (O.S.)
Mr Van Hamn? Is Mrs lindsay going
to take away our movie?

JAMIE VAN HAMN
I don't know Lindsay, are you?

Jamie flushes the toilet and exits the stall. Lindsay follows Jamie to the sink as he washes his hands.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
The studio execs are gonna be eating
out of my hand after the screening.
You better count your days.

LINDSAY
Dare to dream, Jamie.

Jamie follows Lindsay out of the bathroom. A wheelchair is visible beneath a bathroom stall.

LIAM
Hello? I think my chair is stuck.

14 INT. WONDER-MAX AUDITORIUM - NIGHT

A RED CARPET leads to a dimly lit auditorium. A large screen displays the Thunderhead movie. Rows of well dressed CELEBRITIES observe. Jamie, wearing a suit, sits front row.

On the screen, a bloodied Jacob stumbles his way on to a set of snow covered stairs. He holds a wound on his stomach.

He lays down on the steps. Blood stains the snow. He exhales. The camera pans to show Liam in a wheelchair, dressed as Mudslide.

LIAM
Don't go Storm-boy!

JACOB
Hush now Mudslide. It's my time.

Storm boy's eyes shut. A sad yet hopeful reprise of the Storm-boy theme song plays. Credits roll. The audience erupts in to applause and laughter. Jamie smiles.

A microphone whines. Lindsay, wearing a BLACK DRESS stands behind a PODIUM.

LINDSAY

Thunderhead isn't just a story that has touched millions. It's an ever-changing legacy. I would like to bring someone to the stage who was not only the lifeblood of this project but also represents a bright future for Thunderhead.

Jamie stands from his chair.

LINDSAY (CONT'D)

Liam!

Liam, wearing his giraffe shirt is wheeled to the podium. The audience stands to their feet.

Jamie's nose flares. His eyes well with tears.

LIAM

This is the best day of my life!

Jamie exits the auditorium, he wipes his eyes.

15 INT. WONDER-MAX STUDIO SOUND STAGE - NIGHT

A soundstage full of GEAR and PROPS. At its center, the same snow covered steps from the screening glow under spotlight.

Jamie pushes a RACK OF CLOTHES on its side.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

That little fucker!

Jamie lifts an APPLE BOX and throws it in to a stack of WATER JUGS. Jamie lifts his head to face a shining spotlight.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)

What about me?! What do I get? Am I destined to go out with a bang or a whimper?

JACOB (O.S.)

I remember banging and whimpering.

From the shadows enters Jacob; bloodshot eyes, unshaven face, dressed as Storm-boy brandishing his signature bow and arrow.

JACOB (CONT'D)

We had something good Jamie. You and I. And You just Jamie-ed it up.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Jacob, I'm sorry. You're right.

Jacob freezes.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
This whole thing with the kid. It
got out of hand. The studio, they
wanted something fresh. I compromised.

JACOB
This is exactly what I am talking
about! All you care about is your
stupid movie. I loved you Jamie.

Jacob nocks an arrow and draws back his bow. Jamie furrows
his brows.

JACOB (CONT'D)
But you loved Storm-boy.

Jacob releases the arrow. It flies through the air, finding
its target in Jamie's groin. Jamie Screams.

Jacob takes off his mask and backs in to the shadows.

A bloodied Jamie stumbles his way on to a set of snow covered
stairs. He holds the arrow protruding from his groin.

He lays down on the steps. Blood stains the snow. Jamie sleeps.

16 INT. JAMIE'S HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Jamie, wearing a HOSPITAL GOWN, jolts upright in bed.

Jamie's groin is covered by a thick CAST. Lindsay sleeps
under a BLANKET in a CHAIR.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Lindsay. Lindsay!

Lindsay comes to. She stretches.

LINDSAY
Oh, you're awake.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
What happened?

LINDSAY
You've been comatose all week. Also,
you're fired. Word on the street is
the suits plan on making a mudslide
spinoff.. Without you.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
A *Mudslide* spinoff?

Lindsay tosses a copy of TIME MAGAZINE on Jamie's bed. Liam is on the cover sitting in a wheel chair. Below in text: "Mudslide rolls over the box office."

LINDSAY
Every studio is begging for him.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Where is he?

LINDSAY
He's downstairs.

17 INT. DARK HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY

Jamie, wearing a hospital gown and his diaper cast rolls in on a wheelchair. Jamie pulls back a hospital curtain. A SMALL BODY concealed in a WHITE SHEET lays on a metal TABLE.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
Oh, Liam. No! No! NO!

Jamie peeks under the sheet. A child's pale blue HAND.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
The brightest stars burn the fastest.
Why do bad things happen to good people?

Lindsay rolls in Liam, now wearing a GUCCI SHIRT.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (CONT'D)
Liam! I thought you were dead!

LINDSAY
When I said downstairs I meant the lobby jackass.

LIAM
My cancer is in remission. Its a miracle! I guess two of my wishes came true.

JAMIE VAN HAMN
I.. Am so so happy for you.

LIAM
Is that person sleeping?

Jamie pulls a CURTAIN to divide the group from the dead body.

JAMIE VAN HAMN

Liam, we make a great team, right?
What if we make a new movie! It can
be about anything you want. We can
stick it to those mean studios.
What do you say? For me?

LIAM

Um, No. I don't think it would work
out with your vibe.

Liam gives Jamie a pat on the arm and rolls out of the room.
Lindsay puts a hand on Jamie's shoulder.

Lindsay and Jamie stroll out of the room, down the hall.

LINDSAY (O.S.)

Look on the bright side: I guess
your fanbase isn't dying after-all.

JAMIE VAN HAMN (O.S.)

I think we should go back to couple's
counseling.

LINDSAY VAN HAMN (O.S.)

Dare to dream, Jamie. Dare to dream.

On the wall above the dead body, a POSTER with a kitten on a
branch: "Hang in there".