THE LOTTERY

by Jason Earle Helgerson OVER BLACK:

Music plays.

JERRY (V.O.) I guess you could say tonight's festivities are for me. They seem to think I'm some sort of hero... their savior.

FADE IN:

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

This is the home of a modest man who lives a simple life. The only furniture is a table with matching chairs and a small bookcase with a vintage radio on one of the shelves.

> JERRY (V.O.) But I'm not. I didn't do it out of some loyalty to the greater good.

The same music plays in the background. Several PEOPLE mingle and sip their drinks.

JERRY (V.O.) It was all about revenge. But sometimes good comes from one man's selfish act.

One man stands apart from the rest. This is JERRY (26), a blood soaked bandage is taped to his neck. He would be considered handsome if it weren't for the ugly scar that stretches across one cheek.

JERRY (V.O.) But perhaps I should start at the beginning...

Jerry stands at the window staring out into nothingness.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

An ornate desk is framed by a large window.

SUPER: TWELVE YEARS EARLIER

Pacing behind the desk, a man with graying hair scribbles in a notebook. This is MAYOR FRANCIS ALLEN (50s), the only thing sharper than the crease of his slacks is the dagger with which he'll stab you in the back. JERRY (V.O.) It began in the offices of the Mayor of Eden, a small town in the middle of nowhere...

Allen pauses, chews on his pen, begins to write and pace again.

JERRY (V.O.) Where I can only imagine the mayor was dreaming up new ways to line his pockets at the townsfolk's expense....

The door suddenly bursts open and in strolls MIKHAIL (40s), his pitch black hair and smooth, pale skin disguise his true age, countless years are hidden behind his eyes.

JERRY (V.O.) A stranger bursts into the office unannounced. Even with the intrusion, there was a certain charm about this stranger.

Allen looks up, his startled look turns to anger; throws notebook on the desk. Mikhail casually strolls to the desk.

JERRY (V.O.) His name was Mikhail and he didn't mince words. He was a businessman and he loved power.

Allen throws his arm out, points to the door. Mikhail sits and crosses his legs.

JERRY (V.O.) The stranger had his sights set on Eden. Allen had no intentions of relinquishing his power.

Allen pushes a button on an intercom and leans into it.

Before he has the time to stand upright a hulk of a security guard storms the room. This is LEN. Despite his forty years he is built like an ox; about as smart too.

A smirk spreads across Allen's face as Len grabs Mikhail's shoulders. Like a flash, Mikhail spins behind Len, flashes a sharp set of fangs; sinks them into the soft flesh of Len's neck.

JERRY (V.O.) The stranger was nothing Allen had ever seen before, a force to be reckoned with. Allen's smirk changes to a look of horror as Mikhail and Len sink to the floor.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE - LATER (FLASHBACK)

Allen is on his knees; Mikhail towers above him, wipes the blood from the corner of his mouth.

JERRY (V.O.) Allen, like all spineless politicians, crumbled into a pile of blubbering mess. He caved.

Mikhail produces an ornate necklace from his pocket, Allen reaches for it; Mikhail pulls away, taunting him.

JERRY (V.O.) They struck a deal. In exchange for some trinkets and his life Allen agreed to turn over the town.

They move to the desk, this time Mikhail sits in the mayor's chair.

JERRY (V.O.) There was one more thing the stranger wanted. Something sinister... for he needed to feed. Allen didn't like the prospect of just offering up people to be sacrificed.

As they sit, discussing the terms of their relationship, Allen breaks down into tears.

JERRY (V.O.) Allen, the ever progressive, proposed a fair way to choose the victim.

They get into a heated discussion, hands flying everywhere.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jerry continues to stare out the window.

JERRY (V.O.) So they came up with the Lottery. Every adult is issued a number. Every six months a number is drawn.

Jerry fidgets with a small, metal tag imprinted with a number.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

The room has the same setup: table, chairs, bookcase and radio. A COUPLE in their late thirties sit at the table. A YOUNG JERRY (16) hugs his mother.

JERRY (V.O.) Ten years ago my father's number was called.

All three look to the door; it swings open. Mikhail steps in. A pale skinned Len follows him in, his eyes vacant.

> JERRY (V.O.) My father didn't put up a fight.

The HUSBAND rises from his chair, head hanging low he walks to the door.

JERRY (V.O.) The same couldn't be said of me...

Young Jerry snatches a knife from the table, charges Mikhail. Len blocks his way, knocks him to the floor.

Mikhail leans over the prone Young Jerry, reaches toward his face, runs a long fingernail across his cheek - producing a line of blood. He then sticks his finger in his mouth, savoring the taste.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jerry continues to look out the window.

JERRY (V.O.) From that day forward I plotted my revenge.

Jerry runs a finger along his scar.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

No one is around, the table bare.

JERRY (V.O.) Our neighbors rallied around us. They brought us food and other necessities.

As Jerry speaks, the table fills with boxes and bags of food.

JERRY (V.O.) The local Pastor took us under his wing and in exchange I helped out in the church.

A bottle of wine appears on the table. Young Jerry timidly approaches the table, grabs the bottle and steals away. INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT Jerry still hasn't moved from his post at the window. JERRY (V.O.) The years took their toll on my mother. When I turned eighteen I was issued my number. That same day she took her own life. He drops his chin. JERRY (V.O.) I waited patiently, until finally my chance came... INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - EARLIER (FLASHBACK) Jerry sits at the table. Music comes from the radio. JERRY (V.O.) My number was up. The music is interrupted by an announcement. ANNOUNCER (V.O.) We interrupt this selection to bring you... the Lottery. Jerry pulls the metal tag from his pocket. ANNOUNCER (V.O.) This month's numbers are... Jerry traces the numbers on his tag as they are read. ANNOUNCER (V.O.) Seventeen... thirty-seven... fortytwo, and the final number is... Jerry's finger covers the last number. ANNOUNCER (V.O.) Eighty-eight. Jerry lifts his finger to show the number: 88 The music kicks back in. Jerry lets out a long sigh, pushes his chair back, leaves the room. He returns with two glasses and the bottle of wine he swiped

tens years prior.

He sits and waits, until...

The door swings open, in walks Mikhail and Len, they haven't aged a day. Jerry doesn't look up.

JERRY So, we meet again.

MIKHAIL

Excuse me?

JERRY Ten years ago... you came for my father.

He looks up, exposing the scar on his cheek.

MIKHAIL

Ah yes. The young one with spunk. I trust you have become more reserved and have learned to accept the sacrifice you have been called to make.

Jerry makes no effort to stand.

JERRY I have. I welcome being reunited with my family.

MIKHAIL Then let's not waste anymore time --

JERRY A last request? Join me for a glass of wine?

Mikhail mulls it over.

MIKHAIL I've received many request over the years, but an invitation? That is a first. I must decline the offer.

Jerry pays him no mind, uncorks the bottle and pours a glass.

JERRY I'll indulge in a glass if you don't mind.

Mikhail moves around to sit across from Jerry. Len remains at the door.

MIKHAIL The night is young. Be my guest. Jerry quickly drains the glass. Mikhail chuckles.

MIKHAIL

That was quick.

He begins to push his chair out. Jerry holds up his hand, pours a fresh glass.

JERRY Waste not, want not.

He drinks the glass, not nearly as quickly as the first. Mikhail resettles into his chair.

MONTAGE

As Jerry pours and drains several glasses, Mikhail grows more and more impatient until...

BACK TO SCENE

Mikhail reaches across the table and grabs the near empty bottle.

MIKHAIL

Enough!

He slams the bottle down in front of him and leaps to his feet. He makes his way around the table.

MIKHAIL I don't know what you hope to gain. Drunk or not, your blood will be as sweet as it was when I first tasted it.

Jerry stumbles to his feet, drunk; tries to steady himself.

JERRY

(slurring) I'm ready.

Mikhail glides behind Jerry, sinks his teeth deep into his neck. Jerry's eyes roll back in his head - is it pain or is it ecstasy?

Had it not been for the blood, they would look like two lovers locked in an embrace. They slowly drop to the floor - out of frame.

Mikhail stands, wipes the blood from his lips.

MIKHAIL

(to Len) Ready the car. Without a word, Len turns on his heel and leaves.

Mikhail slides a finger between his neck and collar, coughs. He steadies himself on the chair, doubles over, coughs louder.

He stumbles, hits the table, drops to one knee; the bottle tips over and rolls toward him. He continues to cough and choke.

The bottle comes to a stop against Mikhail's hand, a small pool of wine forms on the table.

Mikhail tries to stand, puts his hand in the spilled wine; he quickly pulls his hand away - it burns! He lets out a yell.

> MIKHAIL What is the meaning of this?

He snatches up the bottle, looks at it.

MIKHAIL

Altar... wine?

The bottle falls from his hand.

Len enters just in time to see Mikhail collapse. He rushes over to his fallen master. Mikhail is non-responsive.

Len begins to hyperventilate; leaves his master's side, stomps over to Jerry's body, leans in close.

Jerry's eyes are closed, blood stains his shirt and neck.

Suddenly, Jerry's eyes open, his hand shoots out, grabs Len's throat.

INT. JERRY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Jerry is still at the window, the party continues around him.

JERRY (V.O.) My gamble paid off. The wine that

flowed through my blood was blessed.

Out of the mingling people comes ABBY (20s), attractive with an aura of innocence. She approaches Jerry, glass of wine in hand.

> ABBY Honey? Don't be such a party pooper. Have some wine.

Jerry turns away from the window, faces Abby. He reaches for the glass, but then pulls his hand back.

JERRY

No. I'm fine.

ABBY

So be it.

She downs the wine in a single gulp, sets the glass on the window sill.

ABBY

Let's give me a kiss...

She leans in for a kiss, Jerry dodges it and instead embraces her in a hug.

His head rests on her shoulder, eyes closed.

JERRY (V.O.) I wonder if my sacrifice was worth it...

Jerry snarls, exposing a new pair of fangs.

FADE OUT: