

## **Busterman – First Meeting (1 Page Scene Sample)**

Humans rely so much on sight for our main means of navigation, to the point where we sometimes forget there's more than the view to give a city its feeling. The ambient sounds, the lurking smells and the taste of the very air were all key. For me, Zenith City tasted like home, its air crisp and clean. Of course, a city suspended in the air above the ocean, out of the reach of basically all but the most epic of waves, and with the latest on green technologies, was going to taste unusually healthy. Now, however, it tasted dirtier than a sewer.

As I stumbled away from the park, heading for the mall, a rich aroma of smells filled the air. Broken pipes had erupted from the streets, spilling wastewater into the streets. Cars had crashed, and while most were electric there was plenty of wiper fluid and coolant to seep onto the ground and thus linger in the air as well. The human element, that was present too, but the virus was airborne. I still didn't have a grasp on what exactly the virus was, or even if the term was accurate, but it left a hint of chlorine in the air. The resulting smell made me envision camping in a dump by a pool, something I wasn't sure I wanted to ever actually be an option in real life.

Even discounting the smells though, the people were just unnerving. The virus was apparently a paralytic, as dozens of people around me were fixed in place. Many had been running from the park, which was a given since that's where the meteor had become a meteorite, so as a result men, women and even some children were mainly standing in various stages of running away from the impact point. A quick check for a pulse didn't reveal one, but body temperatures still felt about right. They didn't appear to be dead, but proper medical expertise isn't something one usually learns while becoming a bartender.

Finally after what felt like ages I managed to get up the entrance stairs to the mall and pass through the broken automatic doors, helpfully stuck in the open position. My blood feels like it's boiling. Each muscle aches to the point where I just want to find a bathtub, fill it with hot water and fall asleep inside, possible drowning be damned. Even as I staggered to the nearest store, apparently a glasses shop, I made a mental note to use any insurance money I would be lucky enough to get from the disaster to buy a bathtub designed to allow for sleeping. "Meteor strike payouts have to be amazing, no one expects one this bad," I mumbled to myself, self-narrating to, if nothing else, just hear a human voice.

"Hey, stop!" came another voice, surprising me. A clicking sound made it clear that the person who'd spoken wanted me to know they have a gun, and as I turned the first thing I saw was the silver shine of a nice-looking revolver. The woman holding it was wearing a dirty pants suit, the expected heels on her feet instead what looked like brand-new running shoes. While the gun was intimidating I couldn't help but swear I knew the woman from somewhere, though beyond even that I was just glad to see another human being who was able to move. I was so happy in fact I immediately wanted to kiss something, though I knew if I tried that with her all I'd taste is a bullet.

"Hi, my name's Blake, Blake McManus," I rasped, waving. "So, um... I think this might all be my fault." The woman blinked incredulously at my words. "Please don't shoot me."