

CONSTANTINE

BY THE FIREPLACE

Gabriel sits in his chair, watches the fire with unblinking eyes. John approaches from behind and against the backdrop of flame, sees the nebulous shape of wings. The ghostly image is visible for only a heartbeat.

GABRIEL

(without looking back)

I know what you want, son.

(CONTINUED)

38.

CONTINUED:

John sits across from him.

JOHN

Been keeping your all-seeing eye on me, have you?

GABRIEL

I could offer how a shepherd leads even the most wayward of his flock but it might sound disingenuous.

JOHN

So you're going to make me beg?
Angela pauses on her way out, looks over.

GABRIEL

It wouldn't help. You've already wasted your chance at redemption.

JOHN

What about the minions I've sent back, the souls that I've saved -- that should guarantee my passage across --

GABRIEL

(keeping it private)
-- No -- passage requires faith
and faith by definition is belief
without proof. You have proof.
And that means you're not playing
by the same rules as everyone
else. Your work has mostly been
for selfish reasons. I'm sorry.

JOHN

This is bullshit -- bullshit!
Now he's really got Angela's attention.

JOHN

It's like you've got some cosmic
scale weighing everything we do --
help an old lady across the
street -- put in a nickel, kick a
dog, take out a dime -- you're
fucking nickel and diming us to
death down here!

GABRIEL

Keep your voice down.

(CONTINUED)

39.

CONTINUED:

John jumps up, leans into his face.

JOHN

And you know what, you're the ones
with the problem, not us -- You make
these impossible rules to decide who
goes up, who goes down and you don't
even understand us --
This more than anything gets under Gabriel's skin.

GABRIEL

Each of you is born with the
promise of salvation preordained.
The cost of your redemption is

simple belief. And yet you whine
about impossible rules. Sometimes
I imagine you hardly deserve the
gift you have been given.

JOHN

Gift?! More like a curse the way
you manage things.
Gabriel stands and towers over John.

GABRIEL

I am taking your situation into
account, John, but don't push me.

JOHN

Why me, Gabriel? It's personal,
isn't it? I didn't go to church
enough? I didn't pray enough? I
was five bucks short in the
collection plate? Why?
Gabriel moves right up to him, makes this very personal.

GABRIEL

You're going to die because you
smoked 30 cigarettes a day since
you were 15. And you're going to
Hell because of the life you took.
Or to put it in a way that your kind
would understand. You're fucked.