Screenplay

"The Five Legends, Episode Three: Betrayal"

Logline

Father unhinges hell on those who betrayed him, sent him to prison and tore his daughter away. Running time: 119 minutes.
Nutshell Summary: *Inspired by real events.* Father of adopted Asian orphan girl moves heaven and earth to identify and unhang hell on those who betrayed him, sent him to prison and tore his daughter away. A powerful leader is born from the misery and grief of an average man. He trains an elite, covert force of urban warriors led, at the pinnacle of incredible skills, by THE FIVE LEGENDS, battling evil, righting wrongs and delivering justice through novel, stunning, enigmatic martial arts combat rituals never before seen onscreen.

Time / Place Reference: Chicago Area, Present Day. Begins in airspace over Chicago on clear spring day at dawn. Numerous flashbacks and one flash forward from present day to final scene in 2035, as protagonist’s jet rolls for takeoff from rural airfield in Wisconsin. Incorporates flashbacks to Toronto, Seoul, Guangzhou PRC, Hunan PRC, India, Lago Maggiore Italy, Alexandria Egypt. Principal Photography Location Alternatives: Toronto, Chicago, Milwaukee, New York or Cleveland. Asian and African locations can be represented with stock footage and images, in-studio sets and post-production, including Alexandria, India, Seoul, American Consulate in Guangzhou, PRC. Remote location shooting required in two locations: luxury villa at Lago Maggiore on Italy/Switzerland border at foot of Alps; and orphanage in Hunan Province, PRC. Both can be shot in 2-3 days each with advance team set-up of 10 days pre, 3 days post each.


Prequels and Sequels:

- **Episode One:** "Origins": Legend of the Red Thread of Fate begins at remote mountaintop monastery, Northern China, 7th Century A.D. The monk Bodhidharma arrives from India to form world federation of highly trained warrior monks. Group eventually splits in two: one group devoted to benevolent works and the other a crime syndicate dedicated to domination and profit - each a mirror image of the other.

- **Episode Two:** "Legendary Generals": Two generals, one benevolent and one evil, born hundreds of years apart, linked by the Red Thread, conduct identical battles against opposing forces in both time frames, the only differences being styles of dress, architecture and weapons technology advancement. Even then, final outcome is the same.

- **Episode Four:** "Four Horsemen": Hyper-egotistical U.S. president whose business failures are about to explode before the world, starts borrowing money from the secret Asian crime syndicate to keep himself afloat. To cover up misdeeds he brings about apocalyptic war in which Red Thread-linked families on both sides of world experience the same devastating consequences simultaneously. Earth’s environment made toxic and nearly uninhabitable.

- **Episode Five:** "First Contact, 2064 A.D": First contact with civilization from distant planet, interceding to reboot and repair Earth’s biosphere. DNA analysis reveals that they too are linked across time and the vast expanses of space - to humans - by the Red Thread of Fate, which is revealed to be composed of something completely unexpected.
SCENE 1

FADE IN
EXT. ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG
SUPER: 1799, Egyptian desert near Alexandria

C.U. of booted feet trudging through desert sands on a brightly sun-lit day, as the narration below is spoken. When opening narration pauses, camera pans up to reveal archeological dig inside of cave.

BRUCE AT 601 NARRATING OFF CAMERA

My great, great, great, great uncle was an Oxford University Archeology Professor named DR. HY ALINSKY. NAPOLEON, Emperor of France, commissioned him to investigate the secrets of the lost Library of Alexandria in Egypt. In so doing, buried in a puddle of mud, Alinsky made a discovery which altered the course of modern civilization, even to this day.

The Emperor, upon hearing tales of Alinsky's incredible, unbelievable discovery, boarded his swiftest seagoing vessel, bound for Cairo. Napoleon wanted to see the stories verified before his own eyes.

(NARRATION PAUSES HERE)

CASTING NOTE: Bruce Allen is played at ten different ages and physical conditions by four different actors.
SCENE DESCRIPTION: Alinsky, a young man in his mid-20s wearing safari-type khaki clothing, enters the cave, followed by the Emperor. Both men are carrying oil lamps. The Emperor's pretentious regal bearing is repeatedly disturbed by scorpions, bats, snakes and lizards popping out in his direction, comically. Calm, cool and collected Alinsky wears a red kerchief tied around his neck. Napoleon is oddly wearing his full dress military uniform, including bright red cloth riding jodhpurs. (Narration continues here, as they make ingress to the cave's mud puddle) ...

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA

Alinsky was a child prodigy, born in what is now the Kiev region of Ukraine. At that time, it was Russia. He was so far ahead of his classmates and teachers as a young boy, that by his 14th birthday he was shipped off to England and enrolled at Oxford.

Cut to brief stock footage of late 1700s-era masted ship departing Odessa or Odessa-like port. Then cut to stock footage of Oxford (without modern tech visible).

At university my uncle studied linguistics, ancient languages, hieroglyphics and symbology. With a quill pen, inkwell and sheaf of paper, he could duplicate the texts of dozens of cultures around the world so well that the originators would think them originals. He'd have made a great forger (ahem ... pause. ... speaker clears throat). Instead he became a world-renowned university professor - a man of his time.

Alinsky discovered a stone upon which were carved ancient symbols from the time of Ptolemy, King of Egypt. After decoding the carvings he dispatched an urgent message to the Emperor, suggesting that Napoleon might want to see the tablet with his own eyes, where it was found, observe the translation and witness the stone's transformation, which Alinsky described as "Magical. Something of the Gods."

Tablet is standing under guard in the same place as it was discovered. A number of languages inscribed: Ancient Chinese, Aramaic, Hebrew, Sanskrit and Latin. As Alinsky grasps the tablet with bare hands, a red neon-glowing wave washes over the Latin script in the lower half of the tablet. The script dissolves from Latin to Russian Cyrillic. While still in contact with Alinsky's hands, the wave passes again and text transforms into English.
Alinsky places Napoleon’s hands on tablet. Nothing happens. Alinsky gingerly removes one of Napoleon’s red velvet gloves and replaces the Emperor’s bare hand on the tablet. Red neon wave again washes over the English script, which dissolves into French.

**NAPOLEON**

Mon dieu!

The stunned Emperor jumps backward as glow passes over his hand. He motions for Alinsky to touch the tablet again. Again, the tablet’s lower portion is enveloped in translucent neon red as its text again transforms, first to Russian and then to English. Alinsky steadies himself and the tablet to read the text aloud. A French military translator speaks the French translation softly into Napoleon’s ear.

**DR. ALINSKY**

The Five Legends of the Red Thread of Fate are common to ancient Asian and Semitic cultures. They tell the story of a mystical red thread which binds the souls and spirits of loved ones together, without regard to time or space. These legends are spoken of in three ancient texts: Torah, Buddhist Sanghas and the Code of Hammurabi. Some say the Hammurabi code was endowed upon the Mesopotamians by visitors thought to be Gods, from an alien world. These travelers appeared here, arriving from the sky on winged horses, during the rule of Ptolemy V Epiphanes, King of Egypt, 199 years before the birth of Jesus Christ.

**NAPOLEON**

Mon dieu, mon dieu, mon dieu. (Napoleon then speaks in broken English): Monsieur Le Doctor Alinsky, you, how you say ... vindicate your people well. We shall go far with this my friend. We shall go far!

Those Americans – we should not have helped them win their war against the British. I fear we have given them too much of a head start. I fear they will prevail over us now, in everything. Alore my good doctor ... now this stone and its secrets will keep us ahead.
BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA

Napoleon was correct as it happened ... sort of. The stone was studied extensively in academic circles, to decode a wide range of ancient languages. It was not for another 50 years however, that knowledge of these languages amounted to anything.

And what did it amount to? A new ability to read ancient maps and directions for travel about the Middle East - which led, in the 1850s - to what was perhaps the most financially valuable archeological discovery of all time.

Stock or original footage here of oil spouting from newly drilled well, sands of Arabia, workers wearing garb of the mid-1800s w/no modern tech in background.

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA

Napoleon, although his prediction was true, would not live long enough to harvest its fruits. But he did not know it at the time ...

NAPOLEON

Monsieur le doctor, I am so grateful to you, I cannot say. Please, I must reward you grandly. How may I do this?

DR. ALINSKY

Merci beaucoup Your Majesty, merci beaucoup. So happy to be of service. You have paid me well and I want for nothing - although I would love to visit our American friends before I die. Let us speak now though of writing history. Because these writings discuss a red thread, if it pleases Your Majesty, I suggest a name which means "red" in Latin.

NAPOLEON

Ah oui monsieur. Your word is Rosetta, no? (Alinsky nods agreement). I hereby decree that from this day forward this tablet shall be called Rosetta Stone.

FADE TO BLACK
SCENE 2

FADE IN

EXT. RURAL FIELD, NIGHTTIME, INDIA

SUPER: Mid-1980s, Goa, India

Mid-teens East Indian male, digging oblong hole in rural rice paddy surrounded by reeds. It’s dark, no other people in view. When finished digging, he picks up heavy, floppy sack cloth bag, possibly containing a body, tied at neck and ankles with red rope. Deposits bag in shallow pit and hurriedly back-shovels dirt, frantically looking out in every direction to verify nobody watching. When finished he scurries off, nervously looking from side-to-side and then disappears into the reed field.

FADE TO BLACK

SCENE 3

FADE IN

EXT. POV AIRPLANE PILOT

SUPER: Present Day

Fade in from black to first rays of sunlight before dawn, view over nearly dark horizon of water. Initially, total silence. Slowly, music rises, wistful, hopeful. Camera zooms slowly back to reveal windshield frame, then top of glowing instrument panel of Cirrus SR22 single engine propeller airplane, as sun rises above horizon.

SFX: Faint image, face of kindergarten age Asian girl with black hair and pigtails tied with red ribbon, superimposed in front of sun. Slightly blurred aura effect. Sun and girl grow larger until almost filling frame.

AUDIO FX: Low level audio garbled, tinny voices rise in background, not yet intelligible.

SFX: Suddenly twin engine Beechcraft King Air appears, obliterates image of girl and sun, filling frame on collision course. Plane dives and banks right, revealing “DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE” insignia painted on fuselage. Background voices come up to intelligible level.
AIR TRAFFIC CONTROLLER
(Yelling into radio mic)
Repeat, repeat, repeat! Cirrus November 5461
Mike! Are you asleep?! You are on a direct
collision course with King Air Turbo, 12 o’clock,
same altitude, opposite direction, closing speed
300 knots. Divert, divert, divert! Bank right, I
repeat, bank right!

INT. XCU PILOT’S FACE, STARTLED
Pilot BRUCE ALLEN, wearing white shirt and red
necktie (“BRUCE AT 60,” one of four actors playing same
character at different ages) banks hard right. Wingtip of
King Air strikes propeller of Cirrus SR22. XCU on Bruce’s
dumbstruck, anguished face, inaudibly mouthing exclamation.

BRUCE AT 60
H-o-l-y s-h-i-t!

(ABRUPT) CUT TO BLACK

SCENE 4
DO NOT FADE IN YET

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA
Dr Hy Alinsky never made it to the United States,
but he spoke of it so often, with such admiration
and wonder that his children and their
descendants eventually were drawn there. We ended
up in a place named oddly, by nomadic American
Indians of Alinsky’s time:

SUPER: Skokie Illinois, mid-1960s

Screen stays black. Off-screen, middle-aged motherly-voiced
woman speaks:

BRUCE’S MOM
Brucie, bring up my mah jong set will ya please?
I’m having the girls over tonight.
FADE IN HERE

Young boy's POV running up basement stairs, holding mah jong set case in his hand. He trips mid-stride. Set spills open and out on the stairs. Mah jong tiles fall out of red velvet pouch. As Bruce reaches to re-pack tiles, he notices the Chinese characters. He grasps one of the tiles to examine it more closely and a red neon glow washes over first the tile, then his fingers, his arm. Glow envelopes entire body. He stands almost motionless, mouth agape until red glow fades a moment later. Off camera voice refocuses his attention:

BRUCE'S MOM

Brucie, where are you!?

BRUCE AT 9

Coming Mommy

Bruce composes himself, finishes repacking tiles, disappears momentarily at top of stairs, reappears, heads back downstairs into basement workshop.

SCENE 5

INT. HOME BASEMENT WORKSHOP

XCU on man, UNCLE DAVIE, age 50-ish, in process of donning WWII era U.S. Marine dress uniform and red ribbon battle decorations, while talking to his great nephew in workshop, nine year old boy, BRUCE AT 9. Bruce, visibly overweight in red t-shirt, sits before Heathkit shortwave radio kit box on bench, soldering components onto circuit board. On wall is Amateur Radio Map of the World. In background is old b&w cathode ray tube TV of the day, replaying newsreel of speech by Dr Martin Luther King Jr. ("MLK") at the Lincoln Memorial of two years earlier, August 1963. Audio of King is at low level in background, not yet loud enough to be intelligible.

BRUCE AT 9

Uncle Davie, why are you putting on that stinky old uniform?
UNCLE DAVIE
I’m going to Alabama pal.

BRUCE AT 9
Where’s that?

UNCLE DAVIE
It’s about three quarters of the way to Florida from here.

Uncle Davie puts his finger on Selma, Alabama on wall map.

UNCLE DAVIE
Right here’s where it’s at little buddy.

BRUCE AT 9
Why are you goin’ there?

UNCLE DAVIE
Ya know where I last wore this uniform kid?

Audio level of King’s speech is now raised to the point that words can be understood, but still lower in background than Uncle Davie and Bruce at 9 talking in foreground. Camera cuts back and forth between Uncle Davie and King speech clip on TV as each are speaking.

MLK
I say to you today my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow ... 

UNCLE DAVIE
It was in Germany. I went there because they needed me. Me especially.

BRUCE AT 9
Who needed you?
UNCLE DAVIE

All of them. All six million.

BRUCE AT 9

Six million what?

UNCLE DAVIE

Six million of our people.

BRUCE AT 9

What are you talking about?

MLK

I have a dream today.

UNCLE DAVIE

For years they were ignored. We ignored them; we of all people. We went about our business, went to the movies, played baseball, counted our blessings and ignored them. They suffered. They called for us and we went deaf. We didn’t help them until it was almost too late. So many ... so many were killed ... (PAUSE) ...

Davie removes handkerchief from pocket and dries his eyes.

MLK

It is a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal. I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character. And this will be the day.

This will be the day when all God’s children will sing with new meaning “My country tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where
my fathers died. Land of the Pilgrim’s pride. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.”

UNCLE DAVIE

Brucie, we freed what was left of them, but it was almost too late. We were too lazy. Their pain didn’t affect us every day like it affected them. We ... us ... it is our responsibility to say NEVER AGAIN!

You must never forget this Brucie. This is why I am trying on my uniform in front of you. This is why I’m going to Alabama. This is why I will be on that bridge with Dr King in a few days. It is because He told us to do it. We just weren’t listening.

BRUCE AT 9

He? Who’s He?

UNCLE DAVIE

It’s all right here.

Davie pulls a well-worn, US Dept. of Defense-issue copy of Torah (Old Testament) out of his pocket.

UNCLE DAVIE

It’s all right here. In six verses out of here, the whole thing is clear. I put them in the order most applicable now and I plan to stand with Dr King on that bridge in Alabama and recite this prayer with him. Do you understand?

BRUCE AT 9

I, I think so.

UNCLE DAVIE

Okay, grab that pen over there.

BRUCE AT 9

Why?
UNCLE DAVIE

I'm gonna read you the prayer, slow enough so's you can write it down. Get some paper.

Bruce picks up pen, poised over paper, ready to write.

BRUCE AT 9

Why are we doing this again?

UNCLE DAVIE

Because little buddy, I want you to write it once, write it ten times, write it a thousand times - so you never forget as long as you live. If there is anything you get from us - from me, your parents, grandparents, all of your aunts, uncles and cousins - remember this: Geldt ist gefehlacht. Ist fehr nicht! Fehrshtey? Money is nothing, it's just dirty paper. It comes and goes. This prayer? You keep this prayer and you live by it every minute of your life and everything else will take care of itself.

This prayer is that one thing you may never lose. You may lose property. You may lose objects, money, houses, cars or your liberty - but you will never lose this. I have no children to give this to, so I'm giving it to you. You, meine kindt, are the one; the special one. I can feel it ... I can see it in you. You are the one whose duty it will be to pass this forward to every generation that comes after you. You must never lose this and you must never forget - we will NEVER AGAIN let such things happen ... to ourselves ... or to anyone else! Are you ready pal?

BRUCE AT 9

Yup.

Davie puts down his prayerbook and picks up his diary, opening to a marked page.

UNCLE DAVIE

Our mothers and fathers taught us that nothing is more important ... than family. At Ellis Island the Immigration Agent said "Alinsky, if you want the American Dream ..."

Brief flashback to King speech segment
MLK

It is a dream deeply rooted in the American Dream.

Back to Davie

UNCLE DAVIE

"If you want the American Dream, you need an American name." Some of us were reluctant but a short time after we arrived in Chicago, all our mailboxes said A-L-L-E-N. Then as if by magic, that immigration agent was right. Slowly at first, but surely, we got the American Dream.

In loving gratitude to them, our parents, our community, to our tradition, we must pledge our new American Dream, inspired by the word of the Lord and our collective mothers and fathers long past, who said:

My People Israel shall be a light unto the world, that they may give light over against evil. This is why we were chosen. We were chosen. So that these things worked by God often with Man, to bring back mans' souls from Hell and be enlightened by the light of the living ...

... with our help! ... do you hear me Brucie?!

For the Lord shall judge his people ... let them rise up and help you ...

Now pal, this is the really important part, okay?

Bruce looks up from paper covered in ink now and nods yes.

UNCLE DAVIE

... be your protection, strengthening weak hands. Thusly, the light of the wicked shall be struck out!

Now say it!

BRUCE AT 9

Say what, the whole thing?

UNCLE DAVIE

Say: The light of the wicked shall be struck out.
BRUCE AT 9

The light of the wicked shall be struck out.

UNCLE DAVIE

Louder!

BRUCE AT 9

The light of the wicked shall be struck out!

UNCLE DAVIE

One more time and really mean it!

BRUCE AT 9

The light of the wicked shall be struck out!!!

UNCLE DAVIE

That's it kid. Never again. Never forget. This is why you are here on Earth. Fehrshhtey?

BRUCE AT 9

I understand Uncle Davie.

FADE OUT

SCENE 6

FADE IN

EXT. PETTIS BRIDGE SELMA ALABAMA

SUPER: Edmond Pettis Bridge, Selma, Alabama, 1965

Stock footage of King March across bridge in Selma. SFX: Stock footage is colorized. Uncle Davie is CGI'd into scene, Tom Hanks/Forest Gump style. Davie wearing his Marine dress uniform and red ribbons, standing next to Dr King, who is wearing red tie. Davie removes diary from pocket, shows prayer to King, asks if they may recite together. King nods yes. Davie removes his military cover (hat), replaces with skullcap. They recite the prayer together.

Back to colorized stock footage of the remainder of King's speech, except SFX: this portion of speech is viewed
through lens of rifle scope. Scope is momentarily off target from time to time as shooter fidgets …

MLK
And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and hamlet, from every state and city, we will speed up that day when all of God’s children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of that old Negro spiritual … “Free at last …

Sound of rifle bolt cocking

MLK
Free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are …

Scope centers on King’s head, sound of rifle shot.

MLK
free …”

Sound of rifle shot.

(ABRUPT) CUT TO BLACK

AUDIO FX: Prolonged echo of rifle shot, followed by background screams, audio fades slowly to zero.

SCENE 7
FADE IN

EXT. POV: LOOKING DOWN ON OAK STREET BEACH FROM JOHN HANCOCK BUILDING OBSERVATORY.

Bruce at 60’s Cirrus SR22 has deployed its structural parachute. Camera follows plane falling from about 20 degrees above level with observatory deck, to relatively soft but abrupt landing on Oak Street Beach (CGI? Sikorsky heli-crane suspension?). Cars stop on Lake Shore Drive, drivers exit their vehicles and observe, jaws agape. Plane is somewhat crumpled upon impact and Bruce is mildly stunned but not unconscious. Door is jammed as Bruce works to extricate himself. His hand appears, forcing its way out
of obstructed door. C.U. on Bruce’s hand: He is wearing a red cloth knit ring.

EMS, fire and police cars and tricycle beach motorcycles arrive at crash site in moments. Bruce stands up, brushes himself off and refuses medical treatment. He climbs over guard rail, crosses Lake Shore Drive, dodging traffic. As he walks west on Erie Street, limping, the rising sun illuminates him from behind.

SCENE 8
EXT. CITY SIDEWALK

As Bruce at 60 walks west past Northwestern Memorial Hospital he thinks better of refusing treatment and diverts into ER. There he is greeted and triaged by NURSE MONICA, 40-ish, tall, willowy blond nurse wearing red t-shirt w/screened graphic visible: “Kiss me I’m Polish” under white lab coat.

NURSE MONICA
Okay wait a minute. Say that again? You crashed in an airplane on Oak Street Beach a few minutes ago and just lollygagged over here? Is that what you’re telling me? Listen you need to be straight with me. Were you partying last night or what?

BRUCE AT 60
No ma’am. I’m too old for partying. My airplane has ... er that is it had ... a parachute that pops out in an emergency. My plane has seen better days now and so have I, but this is normal.

NURSE MONICA
Normal? Yeah right. If you say so. I still think you were partying. But I gotta take your word for it now. So let’s get you into X-ray and see if you’re b.s.ing me or what.

Bruce is taken into X-ray department, seen by an emergency physician and discharged with pain pills an hour later. Bruce walks out from revolving ER door, hails cab.
SCENE 9

EXT. INSIDE TAXICAB
Cab is driven by AHMAD, a Pakistani taxi driver wearing red knit Polo shirt. Ahmad is yelling into phone in Urdu, interspersed with broken English, as Bruce boards car.

(Driver is agitated, yelling in Urdu, w/subtitles)

AHMAD

What in bloody hell! They blocked my bank account? What are these people trying to do to me, these mother f-ers?

Ahmad slams clamshell phone shut then chucks it out taxi window.

BRUCE AT 60

Something wrong there my friend?

AHMAD

Nothing. No.

Brief silence as Ahmad chews on his teeth then hits steering wheel with fist. (Pregnant pause) Well!? 

BRUCE AT 60

Well what?

AHMAD

What do you mean well what? You got into my cab mister. Are you going somewhere or are you just up my ass like everybody else?

Bruce looks taken aback. Pauses before responding.

BRUCE AT 60

Ummm ... sorry. Shall I grab a different cab?
AHMAD

What? ... No, no, no. It is I who am sorry. Where may I take you today sir?

BRUCE AT 60

Corner of Dearborn and Jackson across from Dirksen Federal building. Okay? (Cab starts rolling. No verbal response from Ahmad).

BRUCE AT 60

Listen, I’m having kind of an f’d up day myself. I just crash landed on Oak Street Beach an hour ago.

AHMAD

What means this? You have boat?

BRUCE AT 60

No I’m a pilot. I crashed my airplane on the beach. Fortunately it’s a Cirrus SR22 and has ... or at least it had ... a parachute.

AHMAD

Are you high man? I don’t give ride to people with drugs on them.

BRUCE AT 60

Well as a matter of fact, I was given some pain meds in the ER back there, but I’m not high. Highest I ever get is about 10,000 feet. But that’s not happening for a while now I suppose. I need to call my insurance agent.

Bruce places call very briefly, without audible sound except background noises. Ends call.

BRUCE AT 60

He didn’t sound too happy. Sheesh, I’m the one who just rained aluminum on a beach... pause ...

Anyway my friend, tell me if it’s none of my affair but it looks to me like something’s up with you. Why don’t you spill? Maybe I can help. That’s sort of my business.
AHMAD
What do you mean “business?”

BRUCE AT 60
I help people with unusual problems.

AHMAD
Are you lawyer? I need good lawyer bad.

BRUCE AT 60
God forbid! I may look like a lawyer but I only play one on TV.

AHMAD
You’re on TV!?

BRUCE AT 60
No, no, no. I help people with legal problems many times, but I’m not a lawyer. We take a sort of ... different approach.

Camera view switches from interior of cab to exterior view of street as they roll up to Bruce’s combo self-help legal clinic and martial arts studio:

(concept illustration)
BRUCE AT 60

Listen my fried ... by the way, what's your name?

AHMAD

Can't you read?

BRUCE AT 60

What?

Bruce's gaze raises up to car's dashboard

BRUCE AT 60

Oh ... I see ... it's on your license up there. Sorry I'm a bit distracted. Are you a tea drinker or is that a silly question?

AHMAD

Right now I'd like to forget I am Muslim and drink down whole bottle Scotch. But yes, I am tea drinker, unfortunately.

BRUCE AT 60

Great! I have fifty different flavors of tea inside. Sri Lankan, Ceylon, Bombay, you name it I got it. Come on inside and talk to me for a few minutes. I'm a sucker for people in trouble. Waddya say?

AHMAD

OK I guess it can't get any worse than it is. Let's go.

Bruce hops out and Ahmad follows, except he neglects to put car into park or turn off ignition. Vehicle slowly rolls away. Ahmad realizes what's happening and jumps inside, re-taking control.
AHMAD

Oops! Hey, gimme few minutes to park this heap of shit somewhere free. I'll be right back.

SCENE 10

INT. CHEAPLY FURNISHED OFFICE
Inside street clinic. Old desks, newest cutting edge technology computers, fiber routers and equipment racks.

BRUCE AT 60
Follow me.
Ahmad follows Bruce to desk.

BRUCE AT 60
I'm betting Ceylon tea?

AHMAD
Yes, please. Perfect.

BRUCE AT 60
Sugar?

AHMAD
Are you serious? What do you think I am, baby? No self-respecting human being puts sugar. Bee's honey only please.

Bruce walks out of frame. Reappears, hands cup to Ahmad.

BRUCE AT 60
Okay friend, lay it on me.

AHMAD
Lay what?
BRUCE AT 60

Tell me your story. All of it.

AHMAD

Ah yes, very funny. I understand... They caught me with a pound of ganja and credit card skimmer. The Feds. Now they froze my bank account. Check to lawyer bounced. I’m out on, what you call? Recog-something bond?

BRUCE AT 60

Recognizance bond.

AHMAD

Whatever who gives a shit. They’re gonna hit me with a bad check charge and tax evasion now too. I don’t make nothing driving this cab. Can’t pay tuition for daughter school. I don’t know what they want from me. Something about fish, whatever that means.

BRUCE AT 60

Fish? You mean bigger fish?

AHMAD

Yes! That’s it. How you know? Big fish. Small fish. I don’t know what they’re talking about...

Ahmad starts welling up with tears. Bruce hands him box of Kleenex.

BRUCE AT 60

They want you to give them names of whoever supplied your weed and card skimmer. Surely you did not grow the plant and build the skimmer yourself, right?

AHMAD

What!? They’ll kill me. Those are Afghani Taliban. They’ll cut off my kids’ heads and send to me in shopping bag, then they’ll kill me. Anyway, how do you know about this? You are not lawyer. You’ve obviously never been mixed up in anything like this kind monkey business. How can you help me?
BRUCE AT 60
You're quite mistaken.

AHMAD
Yes I know. I am mistaken about a great many things. What am I mistaken about now?

BRUCE AT 60
I have been mixed up in this kind of thing, although it had nothing to do with drugs. Spent three years in federal prison. And ... make no mistake about this my friend ... I most certainly can help you. That’s what we do here. That “self-help” thing on the sign outside? That’s just for show and to pay the bills.

C.U. on Ahmad’s face. First shock, then disbelieving smile.

AHMAD
So sorry sir. You fly your own airplane, or at least you crashed it on the beach, as you say, right? What did you do to go into a prison?

BRUCE AT 60
Well, it goes something like this ...

SCENE 11

EXT. OUTSIDE ESTABLISHING SHOT OF SNOWBOUND, NONDESCRIPT CHICAGO WAREHOUSE - WINTER, EARLY 80s
Super: Early 1980s, Chicago

INT. INSIDE WAREHOUSE EXEC OFFICE

BRUCE AT 23 pitches prototype super-durable video game joystick (awkwardly made of scrounged parts) to billiard table mogul BART SUGARMAN, for investment. Sugarman stares at Bruce with perfect deadpan poker face. After painful silence, Sugarman walks Bruce into rear of warehouse, to pile of boxes on skids.
SUGARMAN

Pick any box and open it up

Bruce singles out a carton and tears it open. Inside are dozens of defective flimsy video game joysticks. Bruce turns around quizzically to see Sugarman smiling broadly. Sugarman takes out checkbook, writes check for $200,000, shows it to Bruce and says

SUGARMAN

50/50, OK?

BRUCE AT 23

Hell yes!

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA

The deal was sealed on a five word contract.

SCENE 12

INT. INSIDE LARGE EXHIBITION HALL
SUPER: 1985 Consumer Electronics Show, Chicago.

Establishing shot, long shot of hall, many booths including period shots of Apple Computer, Atari, Sony Betamax, Philco TV, Magnavox etc. (Electronics Industries Association may have access to stock footage).

INT. LONG SHOT OF SINGLE BOOTH
Bruce’s joystick company: “Joycom.”

INT. SHOT INSIDE BOOTH
Sears Buyer JOE McGrath enters booth conference room, wearing Sears logo (of the era) name badge. The title “Merchandise Manager” under Joe’s name.

BRUCE AT 23

Great meeting you Joe. May I show you the packaging artboards?

Bruce produces large 30” x 40” packaging artboards.
JOE McGrath

Very nice for a startup. I don’t see UPC codes though. Do you have bar code art?

BRUCE AT 23

Thanks for bringing that up. May I stop by your office next week and show you the proofs with UPC codes?

JOE McGrath

Sure kid. You know where we are, right?

BRUCE AT 23

Doesn’t everybody?

JOE McGrath

Call me day before.

McGrath hands business card to Bruce.

SCENE 13

EXT. BRUCE AT 23 WALKING UP TO FRONT ENTRANCE OF SEARS TOWER, STREET LEVEL

Note: No silly “Willis Tower” signs must be visible, as building was renamed long after this period. Bruce enters lobby, approaches security desk, shows McGrath’s card.

GUARD

I’ve seen that look before.

GUARD

Do you see that Walgreens across the street?

Cut to quick shot of corner Walgreens on busy urban street, out window of urban office building.

BRUCE AT 23

Yeah ... ummm ... why?
GUARD
You're calling on a Sears buyer, correct?

BRUCE AT 23
Yup.

GUARD
In that case my bet is you'll make a better impression with socks on your feet.

Bruce looks down and realizes he's wearing a dark business suit, tie and wingtip shoes, with no socks.

BRUCE AT 23
Holy sh ... eesh! I see what you mean, thanks!

SCENE 14
EXT. LONG ESTABLISHING SHOT OF SEARS STORE AT CHRISTMAS, MID-1980s
Bruce at 23 enters store, walks to Electronics Dept., up to end cap, starts whooping, jumping and does back flip. What was the flat artwork and handmade prototype at CES is now a 6 sided retail box containing his product, on a Sears endcap. No dialogue. He calms down and just stares.

SCENE 15
INT. INSIDE OFFICE
Present day, back to Bruce office interior.

BRUCE AT 60
By six months later those joysticks were everywhere. Sears, Target, Walgreens, overseas.
At 23 years old I was on top of the world. I had everything I could possibly want. Except one thing...

AHMAD
What was that?

BRUCE AT 60
It started as a dream. Long, long ago...

SCENE 16

INT. MARTIAL ARTS STUDIO
Super: North side of Chicago Mid-1970s

BRUCE at 18, is still visibly overweight, wearing white karate uniform and red belt with black stripe. He is before testing panel of three old Korean Taekwondo masters. Three boards placed atop two vertical cinder blocks. Bruce executes knife-hand technique through boards successfully. Next he squares off with mock attackers and dispatches them easily.

Bruce rests as the testing panel looks him up and down, scrutinizing him inscrutably. Pregnant pause as masters converse inaudibly, then: OLD KOREAN #1 stands up with difficulty, limps over to Bruce and whispers into Bruce’s ear

OLD KOREAN #1
You are too fat. We cannot have someone who looks like you representing us. You are very skilled. Lose some weight and re-test. You will not be promoted to blackbelt with your friends today.

XCU ON BRUCE’S FACE, tears welling up. Camera pulls back from Bruce’s face. New blackbelts changing into street clothes, preparing to go out celebrating. Bruce does not change clothes.

FRIEND #1
I don’t think they’ll let you into the kimchee place dressed like that pal.

BRUCE AT 18
I’m not much in the mood. I’ll see you guys tomorrow, have fun.
Even though his friends try convincing him to join them, Bruce heads out to parking lot, still sweaty in his uniform. He backs out of his space (in vehicle of the period). Frustrated, he slams accelerator pedal to floor, kicking up gravel. He glances out the window as he passes the young Asian girl standing alone, with hands clasped in front of her, posed as if waiting to receive communion at Catholic Church. He jams on brakes, stops and backs up.

In that instant, she’s gone.

Bruce stares for a moment, bewildered and now even more frustrated. He drives home and empties pantry into his mouth.

SCENE 17

EXT. ESTABLISHING LONG SHOT BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Super: Seoul South Korea, Six Months Later

Bruce, now 19, has lost 100 pounds of fat and replaced it with 30 pounds of ripped muscle. He appears in all respects to be at the very peak of human physical condition for an adult military-age male.

INT. ANTEROOM OF BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Bruce at 19 bows to seated panel of old TKD masters, including Old Korean #1 from Chicago. Bruce removes uniform top, revealing glistening, muscled body. He then kicks, chops and punches through forest of boards and stacks of bricks and roofing tiles (SFX: alternating slow-mo/hyper-fast imagery of breaking techniques).

He performs the Mas Oyama-signature front stance punch technique, six inches from lit candle, extinguishing candle’s flame. Then Bruce performs the (original Mr Miyagi-at-beach scene, Karate Kid movie-style) knife-hand through unsupported beer bottle. Top of bottle separates cleanly from bottom, leaving no cuts on Bruce’s hand.

In final portion of test, matched against massive Korean black belt attackers, Bruce mops floor with them.

Testing ends as Old Korean #1 from Chicago limps over to Bruce, removes red belt and ties black belt onto Bruce’s waist, close-up on red thread embroidery: “BRUCE ALLEN I DAN” in Korean and English. No dialogue.
SCENE 18

EXT. CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT FIELDHOUSE
Super: A few months later, Chicago Park Dist. Fieldhouse.

Bruce at 19, wearing uniform of International Taekwondo Federation-style first degree black belt, walks out onto matted floor. About 30 K-3rd grade kids (extras) and six parents (extras) go from loud chatter to silence. C.U. on Bruce’s blackbelt, embroidered with “Bruce Allen” on one tip and “ITF I DAN” on opposite tip, in red embroidering thread.

BRUCE AT 19

Good morning everybody, my name is Mr. Allen. I’m here to teach you the art of Taekwondo. Everybody line up please, five across.

Kids scurry across floor to line up. SFX: At back of room is Asian girl, around 5 yrs, not moving. She is the only student already wearing the white uniform and white belt. Hair is jet black with pigtails, which are tied in wide red ribbon. Below brow, face is blurry so that features are non-descript.

Kids finish lining up using Asian girl as a marker. Bruce squints to see the 5 year-old’s face ... now she is obscured by other kids in front of her.

BRUCE AT 19

Okay, face me. Put your feet together, like this. Now I will give you a command in Korean. Two commands actually. The first means “attention.” The second word means “bow.” Are you ready?

GROUP OF KIDS

(Many kids’ voices) Yes sir!

BRUCE AT 19


Kids stumble through this in amusing chaos. Every kid comes to attention, except the little Asian girl.
BRUCE AT 19

Let's try that once more. I think some of us may not have heard me. Chulyet! Kyungyet!

Bruce looks for the little girl. She's gone.

SCENE 19

INT SHOT OFFICE
Back to Bruce's office

BRUCE AT 60

First she was there, then she was gone. Damdest thing. The class was real but the version of the story with the little Asian girl was a dream. I've had that dream every night since.

AHMAD

How long is that?

BRUCE AT 60

Oh not long ... about 40 years.

AHMAD

Who's the girl? Do you know her?

BRUCE AT 60

I should say. She's my daughter.

AHMAD

Asian you said? Does she look like your wife?

BRUCE AT 60

Not at all, thank God. It's complicated.
AHMAD

Please, continue. At least you are take my troubles off my mind ... er ... mind off my troubles, whatever the bloody f-k.

SCENE 20

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM DANCE FLOOR
Super: Late '80s
Bruce at 34 and JULIA ALLEN dancing together at wedding of friends BRENDA FISHER and BRYCE FISHER. Julia starts dancing backward, away from Bruce. Loses balance, falls backward. Bruce dives to catch her, but fails.

BRUCE AT 34

Julia! Julia! What’s wrong?

Crowd of guests gather. Someone calls 911. EMTs enter room, load Julia into ambulance and transport her to ER.

SCENE 21

INT. INSIDE ER

Doctor emerges exam room to find Bruce, Brenda and Bryce all still wearing formalwear, disheveled, sweaty, still affected by alcohol and exhausted.

ER DOCTOR

She’s ready to see you now. Seems fine. I really can’t figure out what happened ... some kind of nervous issue but it’s unclear to me. According to her, she felt weak in the knees and then just lost balance. Maybe she had a bump on the noggin, but I didn’t see anything there either. Just to be safe I’m giving her a referral to a neurologist - but she’s going home tonight, assuming of course one of you is not too drunk to drive.

Doctor waves hand in front of his own face to push alcohol fumes away.
BRENDA

Thank God! Any chance we can go on our honeymoon now?

BRUCE AT 34

Sure, you guys have been great, thank you. And Bryce, my brother ... try not to think of me tonight.

SCENE 22

EXT. - ESTABLISHING - AERIAL SHOT OF MAYO CLINIC
Bruce at 34 and Julia in front seat of small airplane, low pass over Mayo campus, then direct to landing at Rochester, MN airport. No dialogue except low din of ATC in background. Looks of poorly hidden anxiety on their faces.

SCENE 23

INT. INSIDE PHYSICIAN OFFICE SUITE
Mayo insignia on walls. Neurologist sitting at desk, Bruce and Julia in guest chairs facing doctor.

NEUROLOGIST

What it looks like, I'm sorry to say, is ALS, Lou Gherig's Disease. I'm very sorry.

DOCTOR'S POV

Shocked and shattered look on couple's faces. Both overwhelmed with emotion.

BRUCE AT 34

So ... what's the prognosis and course of treatment? What do we do now?

NEUROLOGIST

Not much to do except try to adapt. If you're asking about life expectancy, there is great variation. In your hometown there is a great physicist who has lived with ALS for decades.
BRUCE AT 34

Collins?

NEUROLOGIST

Yes, Dr. Collins.

BRUCE AT 34

How do I get ahold of him?

NEUROLOGIST

What do you mean?

BRUCE AT 34

I mean I want to meet the guy pal. Are you deaf or just stupid?

Neurologist displays stunned, off-put facial expression. Then looks up contact info and hands note to Bruce.

SCENE 24

EXT. ESTABLISHING - AERIAL DRONE SHOT, UNIV CHICAGO CAMPUS

INT. BIOMED LAB INSIDE MEDICAL SCHOOL

Bruce at 34, Dr Collins and Julia together in lab, testing high tech wheelchair prototype, built by Bruce. Dr Collins speaks by typing into voice synthesizer with mouth stick. He speaks with synthesized, mono-tonal, machine-generated voice, as earliest voice synthesizers.

DR. COLLINS

Wow this is great what do I owe you?

BRUCE AT 34

Owe me? You don’t owe me anything Doc. However, if you learn of anything on the cutting edge of a cure, you’ll let me know, right?

DR. COLLINS

(synthesized, monotonal, machine voice)

Bet on it.
BRUCE AT 34

Great, then I owe you my friend. Here's a little deposit on my debt.

Bruce puts a cashier's check in front of Collins, whose eyes go wide. Then Bruce places check on lab table.

SCENE 25

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT OUTSIDE RURAL ORPHANAGE
SUPER: Late 1990s, Hunan Province, China

Bruce at 40 pushes Julia, now in wheelchair, into front door of gov't-run orphanage in China, along with nine other "expectant" families. Infant girl stands up in group crib, wearing pigtails tied with thick red ribbon. Big wide smile, picks Bruce and Julia out of crowd. They are escorted by a group of "ayis" or aunties. Asian middle aged women speaking with heavy Chinese accent, all struggling to speak in broken English.

AYI

That your daughter! You can tell by that "dimple of doom" on her forehead.

SCENE 26

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT - AMERICAN CONSULATE
SUPER: U.S. Consulate, Guangzhou

INT. AT DESK OF CONSULAR OFFICIAL

BRUCE at 40 pushes stroller carrying newly adopted Chinese baby wearing red "onesie," inside American Consulate in China, alongside his wife Julia, in wheelchair. Together they raise their right hands and speak the Naturalization Oath for their daughter:

BRUCE & JULIA

I hereby declare on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state or sovereignty of whom or which I have heretofore been a citizen:

Flashback: Stock footage of a congested Chinese city.
That I will support and defend the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic;

Flashback: Stock footage, Oklahoma City bombing.

that I will bear true faith and allegiance to same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law;

Flashback: Stock footage, war battle scene.

that I will perform noncombatant services in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law;

Flashback: Stock footage, Army nurses tending to wounded.

that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by law;

Flashback: Stock footage, Peace Corps scenes

and that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God.

Camera shifts to baby in stroller playing with American flag.

EXT. SIDEWALK OUTSIDE CONSULATE
As Bruce and Julia depart consulate with new tiny new American citizen on display in stroller, dozens of envious Chinese lined up for travel visas on other side of sidewalk fence, break into cacophony of applause, chanting rhythmically in Chinese (subtitled):

CROWD

Lucky baby, lucky lucky baby! Lucky baby, lucky lucky baby!
SCENE 27

INT. INSIDE ALLEN HOME
Upon return to Chicago, it becomes apparent that Julia cannot take care of baby by herself. She becomes more and more disabled and requires a duplicate of Dr Collins' wheelchair now. Bruce and Julia interview series of live-in caregivers. They select AUDREY, early middle-aged woman.

SCENE 28

INT. INSIDE LUXE MANSION, CHICAGO GOLD COAST
Naming party inside opulent home of wealthy relative. About 60 guests, people of multiple races and ethnicities. Bruce is holding baby and gives the invocation.

BRUCE AT 40

Today we join here with those we love of many faiths, to name her Amelia, from ancient Aramaic, the root language of both Arabic and Hebrew ... the language of Jesus ... who surely in his time spoke the words al maliya, meaning ... 'born by God.'

As we have tried this name out on her, so far she cannot pronounce it. So - she calls herself Mimi. It’s her name, she cannot pronounce it as she wishes.

Mimi is also named for the legendary pioneering female pilot Amelia Earhart. Not only because I love to fly. But also because ... we want it tattooed on her consciousness forever, every time she sees her name, that in America, her new home

Choking back tears

BRUCE AT 40

a woman can be ... Amelia can be ... anything she decides to be.

Audrey accompanies them to party but she is not paying attention to ceremony. Instead she walks about the hosts’ lavish home, examining the silverware and looking behind the wall-mounted paintings while nobody is watching. Her eyes go wide when she looks inside a desk drawer. She does the "happy dance" around the room, then composes herself, rejoins the guests and downs a glass of champagne.

FADE OUT
Act II

SCENE 1

FADE IN

INT. DINGY APARTMENT

Audrey’s mother LUCRETIA is a bitter busybody, around 70 years old. Audrey and her husband SQUIRREL are visiting. Audrey and Lucretia talking over dimly lit flimsy kitchen table, as Squirrel, a short, fat, bald slob wearing too-tight t-shirt, screened with graphic “The Only Good Squirrel is a Dead Squirrel,” sits obliviously on sofa, organizing his Pez dispenser collection and shoveling down pizza, while dripping cheese on clothing. Audrey shows Lucretia a covertly-made copy of Bruce’s bank statement. Lucretia’s eyes go wide. She pauses in thought for a moment...

LUCRETIA

All that money’s evaporating for nothing. That bitch should be in a state home and he should let them pay for it.

Lucretia pauses contemplatively for a moment

LUCRETIA

You know that low cut slinky outfit you have?

SCENE 2

INT. ALLEN HOME

AUDREY appears at Allen home to care for child in clothes which are unusually revealing. Bruce at 50 takes notice for a moment, looks away and heads out to garage, on way to visit Julia in nursing home.

SCENE 3

INT. NURSING HOME

Julia now even more disabled, laying in nursing home bed, smiling. Bruce at 50 holding ukulele, playing Hawaiian version of Somewhere Over the Rainbow and lip-synching:
BRUCE AT 50

...Somewhere over the rainbow, way up high ...

(Edit here time duration of song, to adjust for total
screen time as necessary). After song ends:

BRUCE AT 50

I’m working on getting you out of here kid; as
hard as I can. Keep smiling. I love you.

Bruce puts down ukulele, stands up and kisses Julia on
forehead.

BRUCE AT 50

I’m heading out to see our friends in Lugano and
Milan tomorrow. I’ll call you when I get there.

Julia struggles to grasp his hand and kiss him goodbye on
top of hand.

JULIA

I love you too, my hero.

SCENE 4

EXT. - ESTABLISHING - INT’L TERMINAL O’HARE AIRPORT

INT. CHECK-IN FOR BUSINESS CLASS ON ALITALIA

Departure display shows Alitalia flight departing from
Chicago O’Hare to Milan Malpensa Airport in Northwest
Italy.

EXT. STOCK FOOTAGE, ALITALIA PLANE FLYING EASTBOUND OVER
ATLANTIC, HEADED INTO SUNRISE.

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF-CAMERA

After watching my bank balances head toward
empty, I was paralyzed with fear. Fear about what
would happen to Julia. How far the disease would
go and I was terrified about my daughter’s
future. I had developed a new tech product but I
was so distracted trying to fix my wife ... I just
couldn’t focus on anything else. I knew these
guys in Italy and Switzerland ...
SCENE 5

EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT - LONG SHOT OF LUXE VILLA ON WATER, LAGO MAGGIORE, ITALY

Camera circumnavigates idyllic home, from POV of boat on water, as Bruce continues narration.

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF-CAMERA

So I went to the Lakes Region in Switzerland and Italy to pitch investors on my new gizmo. When I get there, there's a text on my phone from my sister:

C.U. on phone screen: Dad cancer metastasized get home

I realized right then, I was going to have to pay for a big funeral, pay for Julia’s nursing home & medical care, my engineering team’s payroll, Audrey’s salary, Mimi’s school and everything else. After a quarter century of supporting my parents and taking care of everybody except for myself, my cupboards were bare, my pockets were empty and my spirit was crushed.

I made the fateful decision right there - to lie to those Europeans about sales which had not actually happened yet, in order to close the deal and get to their money post haste.

SCENE 6

INT./EXT. SHOT, LONG GLASS TABLE ON VERANDA OF VILLA OVERLOOKING LAGO MAGGIORE

Veranda is open on left to louvered doors into home; open over railing at right to Lago Maggiore. Swiss/Italian Alps in distant background, opposite side of lake. Bruce at 50 sits at table with assembled Italian and Swiss investors. All are drinking wine at light lunch. Bruce removes forged contracts from briefcase and hands to the Swiss and Italians listening to his pitch:

BRUCE AT 50

We already have more than $10 million in sales to these people but I cannot borrow enough money from bank to build and ship the goods. If you kind sirs can see your way clear, I will share profits with you. The equivalent interest will be something like 65% on annualized basis.
Italians review papers, pregnant pause and then shake their heads affirmatively, smiling. One of the investors, Massimiliano, inquires

MASSIMILIANO

We have faith in you Bruce, don’t let us down. How’s that cute little bambini of yours?

Bruce shudders, looks away momentarily, has difficulty looking investor in the eye. He forces himself into full on acting mode, brightens his expression and looks Maxi in the face

BRUCE AT 50

She is everything I live for Maxi. There is nothing I would not do for her.

MASSIMILIANO

Nothing? Be careful my friend.

BRUCE AT 50

I’m sure you know what I mean.

MASSIMILIANO

Yes, unfortunately I know exactly what you mean. Please at least be careful with my money, okay?

BRUCE AT 50

Count on it.

Bruce looks away again for a moment. Again he is having difficulty looking man in the eye. Then he looks back.

MASSIMILIANO

Ciao bella my friend. Ciao bella. Get home and kiss that little bambini for me. Si?

BRUCE AT 50

You know I will. Ciao.

SCENE 7

EXT. - ESTABLISHING - LONG SHOT OF ROAD BETWEEN MILAN, ITALY AND LUGANO, SWITZERLAND, PASSING THROUGH TUNNEL

Drone shot of cars driving through tunnel from Switzerland to Italy.
SCENE 8

INT. CHECK-IN FOR BUSINESS CLASS ON ALITALIA AT MILAN MALPENSA AIRPORT

Departure display shows Alitalia flight departing from Milan Malpensa Airport to Chicago O'Hare.

SCENE 9

INT COMM'L AIRLINE AIRCRAFT CABIN

Bruce at 50 boards plane for home. Once seated he opens briefcase to make sure he still has investor funds, revealing $5 million check drawn on Italian bank. He appears disheveled and worn out. Stunningly beautiful Italian cabin attendant approaches, speaks English in thick Italian accent:

CABIN ATTENDANT

May I a offer you a some a thing, sir?

BRUCE AT 50

(Flirting) I wish.

CABIN ATTENDANT

Sorry?

BRUCE AT 50

No, it is I who am sorry. Do you know how to make a good Martini young lady?

CABIN ATTENDANT

Si, si, sir. This is a my a specialty

BRUCE AT 50

Good, good then I will have a double please.

CABIN ATTENDANT

Very a well a sir.

Bruce downs double Martini rapidly and drifts off to sleep. Cabin attendant covers him with blanket.
SCENE 10
EXT. STOCK FOOTAGE, ALITALIA PLANE FLYING WESTBOUND OVER ATLANTIC, HEADED INTO SUNSET.

SCENE 11
EXT. ROAD OUTSIDE INT’L ARRIVALS AT O’HARE AIRPORT
Bruce is picked up at O’Hare at dawn, by his regular driver in black Mercedes and driven home to Sauganash neighborhood on Chicago northwest side.

SCENE 12
INT. ALLEN HOME
Audrey returns after driving child to school. Walks into master bedroom where Bruce at 50 is jet-lagged and sleeping. Dog runs into room, jumps on Bruce’s chest, waking him up to see Audrey standing naked before him. Bruce finally gives in to temptation. No dialogue.

Bruce arises from bed a short time later. It is mid-morning. He walks to his well-stocked bar and makes himself another double Martini.

SCENE 13
INT. ALLEN HOME - LATER SAME DAY
Later, dinner time same day, Bruce at 50, still on 12 hour-ahead body clock, goes to office. Squirrel and Lucretia are visiting for dinner. Audrey retrieves business bank statements from office and shows big numbers to her wide-eyed relatives.

AUDREY
Don’t worry, I got this.

SCENE 14
INT. FBI OFFICE
Audrey, dressed demurely, meets with FBI carrying Bruce’s private diary in hand, which reveals that he defrauded Euro investors for $5 million. She agrees to be confidential witness, then asks FBI agents:
AUDREY

How can I take care of the kid and keep things together if you confiscate the money?

Agent winks

FBI AGENT #1

Get him to put you on the bank account "just in case"-like. Then do what you want. We couldn’t give a shit where the money goes after that. Screw those Euro-trash pieces of shit.

Agents look at each other after Audrey departs, rubbing hands together.

FBI AGENT #1

This is going to make headlines everywhere! It’s a global goddamn conspiracy!

Camera pans to prosecutor, CHURCHILL "CHURCHIE" SHARMA, sitting quietly in corner of room taking notes and plotting out strategy. SHARMA puts down his notes, picks up ledger "TRIAD SOURCES & USES OF FUNDS."

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA

The Department of Justice was paying $1.4 billion a year to this Asian crime syndicate. They used the money to fund narcotics trafficking in exchange for steady stream of spectacular arrests. Sharma regularly received personal kickbacks, in gratitude from Asian gangs, for directing these payments to them.
SCENE 15
INT. ALLEN HOME
Audrey puts child to bed. Slips into master bedroom again and interrupts Bruce at 50, who is working on laptop. They have sex. Afterward, Audrey says:

AUDREY

Bruce, what would happen to Julia and the baby if you had a heart attack or something?

SCENE 16
EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT OUTSIDE EXCLUSIVE PRIVATE BANK.

INT. PRIVATE BANK CONFERENCE ROOM
Next morning, Bruce at 50 escorts Audrey into Private Bank to sign amended signature cards. PRIVATE BANK OFFICER looks at Audrey with look of possible recognition.

PRIVATE BANK OFFICER

Good morning Mr Allen. And who do we have here?

BRUCE AT 50

This is Audrey. We’ll be adding her as a signing officer on the business accounts.

PRIVATE BANK OFFICER

Ma’am, you seem familiar. Have we met before?

AUDREY

No. No sir... Bruce, I, I, um ... need to get Mimi’s homework stuff ready. Can we get this over with and head back?

Bruce waves hand and the bank officer proceeds with executing new signature cards. The three shake hands and officer escorts Bruce and Audrey out of building.

After Bruce and Audrey are seen driving safely away, the officer goes to Facebook and looks up his high school graduating class in Wisconsin. Audrey is a schoolmate of the officer’s. He performs a Google search on her, only to discover an old newspaper story about Audrey’s arrest,
several husbands ago, with her husband of the time, in a
drug trafficking conspiracy.
The officer pauses to consider what to do next and then is
distracted by another customer walking in to see him.

SCENE 17
EXT. ESTABLISHING SHOT OUTSIDE HIGH END CHICAGO STEAKHOUSE.
INT. MEN’S ROOM
Squirrel sits grunting on toilet in luxurious restaurant
bathroom. Gets up and attendant offers him soap and towel.

SQUIRREL
What do you want, a tip!?
Squirrel stomps out of bathroom without washing hands,
rejoins Audrey and Lucretia. Squirrel digs back into huge
plate of ribs, with his hands. Audrey raises glass of cheap
sparkling wine and asks nobody in particular:

AUDREY
I told you I got that. Am I good or what?

SCENE 18
INT. BACK TO BRUCE AT 60’s STREET CLINIC OFFICE

AHMAD
Man, you sure thought with the wrong head on that
one, eh?

BRUCE AT 60
No shit! But this wasn’t enough because I had to
keep it all going, so I went for a long car trip
one day.

AHMAD
Car trip? To where?
BRUCE AT 60
Toronto.

**SCENE 19**
EXT. LONG SHOT OF BRUCE’S CAR APPROACHING THE U.S./CANADA BORDER FROM MICHIGAN

**SCENE 20**
EXT ESTABLISHING SHOT - TD BANK BUILDING TORONTO²

Bruce at 50 meets with female bank officer SADDIQI at TD Bank.

SADDIQI
So you have a contract with these government people, is that correct?

BRUCE AT 50
Yes.

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF CAMERA
This was a flat out lie. Nonetheless I went ahead and demonstrated my prototype, a functioning, Star Trek Tricorder-like medical sensor. I measured several bio-marker readings from bank officer and then ...

BRUCE AT 50
Could everybody except Ms. Saddiqi step out of here for a moment?

Others exit conference room and close door behind them.

---

² TD Bank HQ building in Toronto and the Chicago Federal Courthouse, in real life, are identical architecturally inside and out. Shooting can be done for both at either location.
BRUCE AT 50
Did you know you are six weeks pregnant?
Woman blushes deep red and sheds tears of happiness.

SADDIQI
I wasn’t sure. Thank you, that little gizmo’s amazing! The loan is yours!
Banker takes a moment to compose herself, pulls out document and signs loan commitment for $3 million.

SCENE 21
INT ALLEN RESIDENCE – UPON RETURN FROM TORONTO
After long drive back from Toronto to Chicago, Bruce at 50 goes to bed. Audrey checks on him to make sure he’s sleeping, then goes into his home office and looks inside briefcase. There she sees the $3 million loan commitment from TD Bank. She runs downstairs with document, pulls out phone, takes phone-cam pic, retrieves FBI Agent’s card and places call.

SCENE 22
INT PRIVATE BANK
Private Bank Officer, sitting at his desk early in day. All of the sudden he is jolted with the memory that he needs to call Bruce Allen to warn him about his employee. Banker places call ...

SCENE 23
INT ALLEN RESIDENCE
... Phone rings. Bruce at 50 feeding breakfast to Mimi at 10. As Bruce reaches for phone, a breach team of FBI agents break down door. Startled, Bruce assumes intense fighting stance in front of his little girl – roaring like wild animal.

A faint rose-colored glow appears around the daughter. Spoon on table moves ... on its own. Bruce and the agents notice the spoon moving as it inches toward end of table.
Then suddenly spoon flies from table to Bruce’s steel belt buckle.

FBI agents tense up, aim laser sights at Bruce’s head and Bruce comes back to reality. Bruce realizes he is surrounded in front of Mimi by ten armed, flak-jacketed federal agents. Bruce stands down. Spoon drops to the floor while glow around child subsides then vanishes.

Agents grab Bruce and throw him to floor, cuffing, shackling him and taking him away in front of his horrified child. Audrey, the caregiver, is in background. Audrey looks terrified then turns away and breaks into big wide grin. Puts grim face back on and yells to Bruce, reassuring about care for child, as he is taken away....

AUDREY
I got this! Don’t worry.

SCENE 24
EXT. CEMETARY
Bruce’s father and Julia both pass away during the same week while he is in pre-trial custody. He cries inconsolably upon receiving the news.

US Marshals escort him to double funeral. Mimi sits next to Audrey and Lucretia. Bruce at 50 not allowed by Marshals to hug Mimi, embrace relatives or shake hands with mourners. Both caskets lowered into ground while Bruce driven away in rundown black Government sedan. Bruce strains to turn and look out back window as Mimi tearfully waves goodbye.

SCENE 25
INT. BACK TO BRUCE AND AHMAD AT OFFICE

BRUCE AT 60
Audrey took control right here, not only of my money but of my daughter too. Remember that naming party I told you about, when she disappeared?

She went through papers in my cousin’s desk and discovered something even I didn’t know. My daughter was the sole beneficiary of a huge fortune from - those people who owned the mansion where we had the party. This is the last time I saw my Mimi in person. Of course, I keep
overwatch on her electronically and from a distance, as much as I can.

SCENE 26
EXT. HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL GAME
Bruce, in disguise, observes his daughter with friends, from a distance at high school sports field.

SCENE 27
INT. FEDERAL COURTROOM TRIAL CLOSING
Prosecutor Churchill SHARMA in closing statements, demonizes Bruce at 50, who observes in prison orange jumpsuit.

SHARMA
This man abandoned his deathly ill wife and adopted orphan daughter to have a sexual affair, victimizing a servant. He’s a greedy, devious fraudster.

JUDGE
Does either side have anything more to say? ... Mr. Souvlaki? (no response) ... Mr Souvlaki!

Bruce’s lawyer STAVROS SOUVLAKI is shown with heavily greying, balding, reddish-brown hair, playing game on his phone and paying no attention to court proceedings. Judge yells at him:

JUDGE
Mr Souvlaki, I’m talking to you! Do you have anything more to say?

Souvlaki rises, drops phone on floor, bends over to pick it up, bangs forehead on counsel table. Recovers then stands up straight and says

SOUVLAKI
Yes ... er I mean no Your Honor. The Defense rests.
JUDGE

I’ve received a letter here from a confidential source. The letter says: “He should go to prison for as long as possible.”

I’ve considered all factors in aggravation and mitigation here and I am at the point where I am free now to say what I think. What I think Mr Allen, is that you are a devious, foul-mouthed, diabolical narcissist fraudster.

In most circumstances where there’s a first time defendant without violence involved, I go toward the lower side. In your case, Mr Sharma here has done a laudable job of showing that frankly, you deserve no mercy at all – and I agree with him.

The sentence is ten years. Get him out of my sight!

Bruce is handcuffed, shackled and removed from courtroom side door. Sharma and Souvlaki give each other knowing glances of approval as they exit courtroom. Sharma walks into hallway with self-satisfied smile and enters men’s bathroom stall where male reporter waits. They kiss deeply as Sharma fondles reporter through clothing, just long enough to be as creepy as possible.

Reporter takes a breath, sits down on toilet, goes over notes. A few days later Sharma hangs framed newspaper article in his office. Headline says “SHERIFF OF WALL STREET SLAMS PRISON DOOR ON FRAUDSTER.” Huge photograph C.U. of Sharma’s face heads newspaper article.

SCENE 28

INT. JAIL CELLBLOCK

Bruce at 50 is brought to maximum security holding unit in MCC Chicago prison. Now wearing brown jumpsuit, he is released into cellblock where, as he walks into unit, three Hispanic MS13 gang members line up behind three unaware black inmates sitting at computer desks. The black inmates are sending emails, not paying attention. Suddenly, all three MS13s drop padlocks into socks and start swinging the improvised weapons over their heads. FIRST MS13 slams his weapon into head of one seated prisoner, without warning. Blood and brain matter splatter all over wall. Bruce is paralyzed in shock.

GUARD 1 retreats into “The Bubble,” locks door, sits down, feet on desk, picks up coffee cup and starts rubbing his crotch absent-mindedly while watching fight unfold.
Bruce recovers from astonishment as the SECOND MS13 cocks arm to swing weapon toward another seated inmate. Bruce leaps into air, disarms SECOND MS13, lands, pivots and launches devastating, lightning fast reverse spin kick into head of THIRD MS13 - who drops instantly to floor, out cold.

Guards 2 and 3 joke with each other as injured black inmate lays on floor unattended, struggling for final breath. Guard 1 orders dead inmate to stand up. When there is no response from inmate, Guard 1 wails away at him, kicking him with steel toed boots, desecrating dead body.

Bruce - and only Bruce - is thrown into solitary confinement.

SCENE 29

INT. COUNTY COURTROOM
Audrey shows forged document to child indicating that her father has relinquished parental rights. Girl sits on bench alone, swinging her legs anxiously and crying, repeating softly

MIMI AT 10
My Daddy, my Daddy.

Audrey approaches bench and gets court order granting control of child's inheritance, home and family assets. All is kept concealed from Bruce, unaware in federal prison camp hundreds of miles away. He calls child's phone many dozens of times but she will not take his call.

SCENE 30

EXT. PRISON CAMP OUTDOOR REC GROUNDS
Bruce at 50 training inmates (including a few women who sneak over the wall from adjacent female camp) in qi gong (chi gong) exercises during pre-dawn hours on outside prison handball court. Guard monitoring CCTV security cameras in predawn hours can be seen sleeping in chair, drooling on his shirt, as always.

Bruce at 50 and senior students demonstrate qi energy-focusing exercises. Five students in front row hold small steel barbells in their hands, junior students are empty-handed. Bruce at 50 is having an especially intense day. As he "pushes his qi" out to end of his arms, the barbells in his hands get warm. In moments they are red hot. He can no
longer hold on. Bruce’s barbells drop to the ground, burning pattern in the weeds emerging from asphalt. Bruce, never having experienced this before, looks down in astonishment. Bruce sits down on asphalt, holds his head and cries, visualizing Mimi and remembering:

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF SCREEN

Nothing mattered to me while I had not seen or spoken to my daughter in years. I was mad as hell and it showed.

SCENE 31

INT. HANDBALL COURT IN JAIL’S GYM

Bruce engages in no holds barred sparring match with a senior student. Bruce breaks out the student’s front teeth with devastating reverse spinning kick. He and student both handcuffed by guards and sent to solitary confinement.

SCENE 32

INT. PRISON CAMP DORM UNIT, AFTER BRUCE RELEASED FROM SOLITARY, TO UNLOCKED DORMITORY ROOM

Sadistic guard VALDEZ is summoned to dorm, late at night. Middle-aged black inmate is writhing on floor in agony, semi-conscious. Awakened inmates in the area implore Valdez:

DORM INMATE

Valdez, call 911 for God sakes. What’s wrong with you man?

Valdez looks down at stricken man, laughs and says

VALDEZ

Got a smart mouth on ya now, do ya boy?

Fallen inmate’s eyes cloud with blood. One of Bruce’s students gets Bruce out of bed. Bruce takes one look at fallen man and demands:

BRUCE AT 50

Valdez! Are you out of your mind? Call 911.

VALDEZ

Make me, old man.
BRUCE AT 50

As you wish.

Bruce dispatches Valdez to the ground by jumping into air from stationary position and performing roundhouse kick into side of Valdez’s head. Valdez sees it coming and able to react in no way except to press radio “HELP” button before hitting floor and passing out. Bruce rips phone from unconscious officer’s hand and dials 911.

In brief moment, SWAT Team appears, breaks down door of dorm building (discovering it was unlocked only after breaking door off hinges) enters and shoots TASERS at everyone, including Bruce and the stricken, motionless inmate on floor.

Ambulance arrives, EMTs check vital signs of originally stricken inmate – and shake their heads.

HALFWIT GUARD

Remember what we discussed? He dies on way to hospital, not inside here.

EMT acknowledges and loads corpse into ambulance. Bruce is taken to solitary confinement, again.

SCENE 33

INT. BACK TO BRUCE’S STREET CLINIC OFFICE

BRUCE AT 60

Those sons of bitches wouldn’t let me call my mother for six months … Listen here my friend, all I’ve been doing is talking about myself. It’s your turn.

AHMAD

Okay, okay.

I came here from Pakistan with my wife Lila and kids, to escape extremists. I saved for a long time, for all for them. I get shot, I don’t care. For them I had to protect.

Our plane arrive in New York. I was told to pay money in paper bag, during entry at New York JFK
Airport, to a specific ICE Agent. He then waives me through.

We take train New York to Chicago, where we were greeted by Pakistani community and brought from Union Station to new home in Rogers Park, you know, on north side of city.

BRUCE

Yes, I know it well. I was born there.

AHMAD

I open travel agency just in time for online agencies like Travelocity and Expedia to put me out of business, right as my kids enter private school.

First I drive cab to, how you say, make meat?

BRUCE

Make ends meet?

AHMAD

Whatever, who gives a shit.

Then taxi company controlled by the President’s lawyer is bankrupted by Uber, those mother f’ers. I had to pay kids’ tuition with money borrowed from people at mosque. Then I went to work as Uber driver but;

Uber lowers prices to point I can’t make living at all. I got desperate.

Ahmad chokes up and pauses.

AHMAD

I borrow money from the people who took us in here, for the sake of Allah, peace be upon him! I had to do something ... so I start capturing passenger credit card numbers with what you call “skimmer.” I brought bag of cash to kids’ school at the last minute before expel them for not pay tuition.

Then everything seems fine for a while. I got skimmer and bags of weed once in a while from two guys at mosque. Very scary guys these guys.
One day, two federal agents flag me down at Devon and California Ave. intersection. One takes apart my credit card swiper while the other one distracts me in conversation about Taliban. Then they tell me pull over.

They drag me out of car, throw me on hood and slap on handcuffs. They take me downtown to appear before judge, then they let me go same day. I do not understand this. So I didn’t yet even tell Lila what happened yet.

BRUCE AT 60

Been there, done that. It’s part of the game. At some point they will lay a trap for you - catch you doing something that violates your bail conditions of release. Then they’ll bring you before the judge, tell him you’re not such a nice family man like you told him, and the judge will get pissed off, lock you up and throw away the key, until your sentence is done. And your sentence then my friend, will be a long one indeed because, according to your FBI friends, you betrayed the judge’s trust and you cannot be trusted at all.

AHMAD

Holy shit! Why do these mother f’er do this?

BRUCE AT 60

Very simple. Statistics. It’s all about statistics and their bonus plan. Have you read about those huge fines the Feds collect from big banks? Millions upon hundreds of millions and billions of dollars?

AHMAD

Yes I think so.

BRUCE AT 60

That money goes into a black hole in the Department of Justice which is unaccounted-for and hidden from view of Congress. They use it for anything they want. They call it the “Three Percent Fund,” because it’s supposedly only three percent of the fines they collect. But it’s nothing of the sort, it’s the whole enchilada. One hundred percent of the fines. And you know what they do next?
AHMAD

I’m afraid to know but sure you will tell me anyway.

BRUCE AT 60

They pay bonuses to each other for long sentences. So like in your case, if the Minimum Mandatory sentence is 2 years and the agents and prosecutors bullshit your judge into a longer sentence – these bastards get cash bonuses out of the “Three Percent Fund.”

This is why they will go through all the trouble of putting you on a short leash and entrapping you into some kind of bad behavior. They get paid for it. They pay their kids’ goddamn private school tuition, country club memberships and hookers with unaccountable cash they’ll get for putting you away as long as possible. The Three Percent Fund. Remember that name.

Ahmad leans back in chair, terrified look on his face.

AHMAD

What the holy bloody f--k man?! What can I do about any of this? I am just bloody f--ked.

BRUCE AT 60

Nosirree. I told you. We provide a special kind of help here. Exactly that special kind of help you need right now. You need to hear the rest of my story first though.

Ahmad’s face relaxes a bit, but not completely.
SCENE 34

INT. PRISON CAMP WORKSHOP FLOOR
Bruce at 50 goes to bench in empty prison machine shop. There he finishes work forging a branding iron bearing biblical phrase “The light of the wicked shall be struck out.”

Bruce picks up finished branding iron, repeats qi-focusing exercise. Iron heats up and glows. BRUCE burns brand into scrap of wood, slim smoke plume rises. Soon, after many hours of practice, he can summon qi and heat the brand in less than a minute. Anger fester and builds as he plans his life upon release from prison.

SCENE 35

EXT. 1ST DAY RELEASE FROM PRISON
Day of release, Bruce at 60 exits gate, expecting somebody to show up and drive him home.
No body arrives.

He walks hours to highway and hitches ride with trucker headed to Chicago. Door opens to truck and Bruce looks up with recognition. As he slides into front seat, CHUCK NORRIS wearing cowboy hat starts up conversation. After a short period, Norris’ wife reveals herself from sleeping compartment, appearing exactly like AMELIA EARHART, asking to drive for a while.

Bruce falls asleep, wakes up and BODDIDHARMA, the Indian monk who brought Buddhism from India to China is driving, in saffron robe, speaking of the Buddha.

Bruce falls asleep again and the mighty GENERAL SUN TZU, writer of “Art of War” appears in driver’s seat, quoting his immortal treatise on warfare. Another nap and diminutive Korean Army General CHOI HONG HI, the late Great Grandmaster and founder of modern Taekwondo, is at the wheel. By this time they are in Chicago suburbs. Bruce exits truck, bows deeply to General Choi and walks miles from highway to his 93 year old mother’s apartment. Astonished, she has not seen him in years. Mother and son embrace in tears of joy.
SCENE 36
INT BACK TO BRUCE AND AHMAD

BRUCE AT 60

This was the day The Five Legends revealed themselves to me, on the day I finally hugged and kissed my mother after so, so long.

AHMAD
The five what?

BRUCE AT 60

The Five Legends. You will meet them.

AHMAD
You have Legends working here? Must cost a lot.

BRUCE AT 60

I had an uncle. Actually a great uncle. Uncle Davie. He once told me never to forget that money is nothing. It’s just dirty paper. There are much more important things in life than money.

AHMAD
Yes, I know. But my kids’ school accounts receivable manager doesn’t see it that way. So what is this legend thing you talk about?

BRUCE AT 60

The Five Legends are named CHUCK, AMELIA, BODDI\(^3\), SUN AND CHOI. They are burned into my consciousness forever. These are the “noms de guerre” (war names) I have given to my top 5 disciples. When they go out on missions I planned over all those many days. A thousand days behind bars.

AHMAD

My friend, your eyes are kind of glazing over now. Are you sure that you are okay?

---

\(^3\) Pronounced “boh-dee.” “O” is pronounced like “o” in “boat.”
BRUCE AT 60

Yes, I am fine. But you still have not heard the rest of the story. It seems that my quote-unquote defense lawyer - and the prosecutor in my case, had a deal, a sort of partnership. My lawyer would make the appearance of providing a zealous defense - but what he was actually doing was passing all my secrets, strategies and tactics to the prosecutor.

AHMAD

Holy shit. Why would any lawyer do this?

BRUCE AT 60

Some things I know and some are only speculation. I think the prosecutor had some dirt on him for one thing. Maybe tax evasion. Maybe he was taking cash from nasty people and not reporting it as income. I don’t know.

SCENE 37

INT. AIRLINE FREQUENT FLYER LOUNGE IN AIRPORT TERMINAL

Attorney Souvlaki sits in lounge chair, nursing club soda. In walks three middle eastern men with heavy facial hair. They are wearing dark business suits with white shirts closed at the collar but no neckties. Iranian Man #1 places locked case on table, then opens slightly, turns it toward Souvlaki, so only Souvlaki can see the gold coins inside.

IRANIAN MAN #1

Mr Souvlaki, can you see in this case here?

SOUVLAKI

Yes my friend. Appears to be in order.

IRANIAN MAN #1

Don’t you want to count it?

SOUVLAKI

No. I trust you.

Middle Eastern Man looks at Souvlaki like he is being sold the Brooklyn Bridge.
IRANIAN MAN #1

Mr Souvlaki, what do they say here? Do not shit a shitter? I know you don’t trust me. What I don’t know is why you would lie to me less than a minute after I first meet you.

SOUVLAKI

So sorry. It is a professional hazard I suppose.

IRANIAN MAN #1

Mr Souvlaki, we are forced to trust you, you who are cheating your own government out of taxes right now - to defend our brother. I must tell you sir that this makes me very uncomfortable. I do not like being uncomfortable. Do you understand?

SOUVLAKI

I believe so.

IRANIAN MAN #1

Mr Souvlaki, what this trust means to us, is that our brother will be released from prison. We are not paying you for your time. We are not idiots like all your other clients. We are helping you to cheat your government for results, so our brother will be released from your jail and then he will come home to kiss his mother, his children and his wife. Do you understand?

SOUVLAKI

I understand your expectations, yes.

IRANIAN MAN #1

No Mr Souvlaki, I do not believe that you understand our expectations, so I will be crystal clear here.

Souvlaki leans over, pushing the lapel of his suit jacket closer to the Iranian Man.

IRANIAN MAN #1

Mr Souvlaki, if you do not get my brother out of prison, I will treat this payment as a theft. Do you know what we do to thieves in our country Mr Souvlaki?
SOUVLAKI

What would that be sir?

Iranian Man’s face is turning red as he becomes more and more agitated.

IRANIAN MAN #1

What we do is either cut off the hand which committed the theft, or if the theft is large enough, we cut off the head which conceived the theft. Do you understand?

SOUVLAKI

So what you are saying is that if I fail to get your brother out of prison, you will cut off my head.

IRANIAN MAN #1

Now sir, you understand.

SOUVLAKI

This will not be necessary.

IRANIAN MAN #1

And why is that?

Souvlaki motions for the Iranians to look over at the TV mounted above the bar, where a “Breaking News” bulletin shows their brother being escorted out of the courthouse.

SOUVLAKI

Now I will explain a few things to you sir. Those people who just released your brother? They were listening to our entire conversation here. They heard you threaten to cut off my head and they know about the case you just handed me.

Iranians’ faces transform from threatening to astonishment.

SOUVLAKI

Now if you go get your brother and put him on a plane out of this country by 11:59pm tonight, you will not hear from them or from me, ever again. If they or I ever hear from you or your brother again however, you, your buddies here and your brother will be going back into that shithole he just came out of, never to be seen again. Do you understand sir?
SCENE 38
INT. BACK TO BRUCE AND AHMAD

BRUCE AT 60

This asshole, my lawyer, gave some of the coins to his favorite prosecutor and the prosecutor gave some to his partner, a federal judge. Appointed by the President, for chrissakes.

When they weren't shaking down middle-eastern warlords, they had a regular deal for less exciting people like me. The Department of Justice would funnel defense clients, through the judges, to my lawyer. Guarantee him hundreds of thousands of dollars in income, in exchange for cooperation.

AHMAD

What do you mean cooperation?

BRUCE AT 60

You'll never believe this part.

SCENE 39
INT. HOTEL BAR ROOM, EMPTY EXCEPT SOUVLAKI AND BRUCE AT 50, OUT ON BAIL, PREPARING FOR SENTENCING

SOUVLAKI

So how did you do that?

Souvlaki casually adjusts position of his laptop, so that its microphone is pointed directly at Bruce's mouth.

BRUCE AT 50

Oh, that was easy. I created a phony website and email accounts associated with it. When they sent emails to verify those contracts? They were emailing me, but they thought I was the customer.

SCREEN GOES SPLIT DIAGONAL HERE

Sharma at distant location, a computer lab, where the conversation between Souvlaki and Bruce is being recorded through the microphone on Souvlaki’s laptop, by FBI agents in lab coats.
SCENE 40
INT BACK TO BRUCE AND AHMAD

BRUCE AT 60

So this bastard lawyer has a deal with the Government about recording my conversations with him. He allowed them to install some software on his laptop for remote monitoring. He texted them with his phone, which they were also monitoring, when we were ready to sit down and talk. They got it all - every sneaky thing I did. Every last bit of it. Then this Sharma demon brought all of it up in court but neglected to mention how he came upon the information. I thought I had lost my mind because for the life of me, I could not figure out how they figured this stuff out. I really thought I had lost my marbles completely.

AHMAD

Holy shit man. Holy shit is all I can say. I had no idea these mother f-ers worked this way.

BRUCE AT 60

Wait, there’s more. After the judge buries me with the longest conceivable sentence, this Sharma character puts it in his resume and goes job hunting.

He gets a job. The job starts at a million a year. Who’s he working for?

AHMAD

What do they say on TV? Ya got me? Is that the right way to say it?

BRUCE AT 60

Yes that’s the right way, but it was me they got. This douchebag lawyer Souvlaki. That’s Sharma’s new boss. This mother f-er prosecutor went to work for my mother f-er lawyer. At my expense! How do you f-ing like that?!

AHMAD

So what are you going to do with this mother f-er? Sue him? Get him disbarred?
BRUCE AT 60
Which mother f-er are we talking about now?

AHMAD

Either one. Both.

BRUCE AT 60
I have plans for both of them. Sue them though? Fuggetaboudit! You can’t beat another man, or men, at their own game.

AHMAD

What then? I have some friends from Afghanistan you know.

BRUCE AT 60
I told you my friend. We give special kinds of help here. I have special plans for both of these bastards, and it’s not the kind of help anybody from Afghanistan knows how to give. I’m letting these sons of bitches get good and comfortable.

You know what they say about revenge in Russia, don’t you?

AHMAD
Not really.

BRUCE AT 60
Revenge is a dish best served cold.

AHMAD

You people here do funny things with food. In my country we just eat.

BRUCE AT 60
Eat, yes. That’s what I plan to do. Eat them alive, all legal-like though. Just as lawyers do. Just as lawyers do. They’re all corrupt my friend. All these bastards are corrupt.
SCENE 41

INT. WHITE SHOE LAW OFFICE, CONF ROOM

Attorney Souvlaki reappears here as Chairman of law firm at which Sharma goes to work upon exiting government employ. Souvlaki has painful comb-over of heavily dyed bright red hair, ridiculous painted-on suntan and platform shoes; addresses assembly of partners:

SOUVLAKI

Today we welcome Churchill “Churchie” Sharma as our newest partner. They called him “The Sheriff of Wall Street” on my reality TV show.

There was a break in shooting ya know. Client ran out of money. I had to cancel my trip to Greece to train the replacement lawyer from Legal Aid, so this busted out bastard client can get ready for prison. Lost the deposit on my hotel too. I hope he gets ten years, this son of a bitch.

Anyway, despite this loss of expected revenues, I’m happy to be able to join you all here today.

Souvlaki pauses anticipating applause. None comes so he raises his hands palm up. Polite yet uncomfortable applause from crowd follows.

SOUVLAKI

As a federal prosecutor, Churchie Sharma never lost a case. Never. His specialty was crucifying white collar criminals in small to medium size businesses. In other words, the majority of our obscenely wealthy clients.

Obscene, greedy laughter.

SOUVLAKI

We must all keep this secret among us: Every one of our clients is likely to need a junkyard dog criminal law attorney like Churchie here one day. They’re all crooks, for God’s sake

Nervous laughter.

SOUVLAKI

We expect Churchie’s help transferring a big hunk of their assets to us when they inevitably get in
criminal trouble. Put your hands together and let's all welcome Churchill Sharma as our new law partner!

Thunderous applause as Sharma slurps up all the adulation gluttonously.

**SCENE 42**

INT. SHARMA'S PRIVATE OFFICE

When Sharma’s had his fill of glad-handing and backslapping, he retreats to his new office, loosens tie, removes handkerchief from breast pocket and places it on his desk. Gets up from chair, locks door. Double-checks lock and starts up ... child porn video (obviously this must be dealt with gingerly and cautiously in terms of images viewable on screen).

Sharma sits back while rubbing himself through his Armani suit. He picks up handkerchief ... then sound of zipper ...

FADE TO BLACK

**SCENE 43**

EXT. CLINIC OUTSIDE PRE-OPENING

POV of person walking through the clinic/studio. Camera moves through facility, revealing its computer equipment, exercise gear, martial arts weapons, instructor certificates, showers and training floor.

BRUCE AT 60 NARRATING OFF SCREEN

I hired my top five students from the prison yard to work for me teaching martial arts and assisting clients with serious personal problems like spousal abuse, and legal issues.

BRUCE AT 60

My dear friends, I want you to remember that I enabled you to get jobs here and feed your families on Day One out of prison. I will make absolutely certain that you are employed and your families are cared-for, forever.
For this I ask you one thing only and you must decide right here and right now. If your answer is no, I will still love you always, but I will have no contact with you again. Here is my request: As equals we will decide who needs our really special skills ... and then we will help them and commit to them - as if they are our own flesh. Whatever it takes. Do you agree?"

All five stand 5 across. Senior student commands “chulyet kyungyet” in Korean, meaning “come to attention and bow.”

BRUCE AT 60

To do this and live normal lives as well, we will all need anonymity. For this reason I give you the noms de guerre, or war names, of our Five Legends: Chuck, Amelia, Boddi, Sun and Choi. While we carry out our missions, you will refer to me as Sabumnim. We all, including me, will have these names until a junior student defeats us in battle. Then we will relinquish these names to the one who prevails. That student will then take our name and we will be retired. On that day you will receive enough of these ...

Bruce opens box of gold Krugerrand coins.

BRUCE AT 60

... to never worry about money again. Outside of here, off duty, you will use your birth names. Inside, on duty, only the names I’ve given you today. Do you understand the fundamental rules here? How about you Amelia, do you understand?

AMELIA

Yes Bruce ... I, I mean Sabumnin. I understand. I think.
BRUCE AT 60

How about everybody else? Do you all understand?

CHOI

Yes we all understand and agree. Our word is our bond. It is sealed.

All of THE FIVE stand again, bow deeply to their master, this time right fist in open left palm.

SCENE 44

EXT. CLINIC, VIEW FROM ACROSS STREET

Camera pans right to left from street POV in front of storefront. On right side, camera pierces window to observe advanced students in series of intense combat drills. Camera pulls back, pans left, zooms in ...

INT. INSIDE CLINIC

... to numerous clients at desks being counseled by CHUCK, AMELIA, BODDI, SUN and CHOI in their normal, everyday guises. A young woman, seated across from Amelia, sobs:

YOUNG WOMAN

L, l, listen please. I have three kids. I need this job but my boss keeps pushing my into the storage room. Do you know what I mean?

AMELIA

Yes I’m afraid I do.

YOUNG WOMAN

He wants me to ... you know ... touch it. I don’t want to touch it ...

Woman begins to cry softly. Amelia moves around to young woman’s side of table and puts her arm around the upset victim.
AMELIA

Listen to me carefully, okay? We know what we’re doing here. I need you to trust me.

Next time this jerk tries anything, you asked to be excused to “freshen up.” Got me so far?

YOUNG WOMAN

Um ... yeah.

AMELIA

Then you go outside, somewhere hidden and text me or call me. Here’s my business card. Understand?

YOUNG WOMAN

Then what?

AMELIA

Then I may tell you to go where he tells you to go, right then. Or I may tell you to make up an excuse and set up “some real alone time” with him, for a few days later.

YOUNG WOMAN

What the hell are you saying? You want me to go with him and do what he wants? Are you out of your freakin’ mind lady? (voice raised)

AMELIA

Calm yourself, that’s not what I said. I want you to make him think he’s going to get what he wants. And then lead him into a dark room. Then we’ll take it from there and believe me, that will be the end of it.

Amelia hands red cloth ring to woman, like Bruce’s

AMELIA

Put this on and don’t take it off. Our team needs to be able to identify you from a distance.

YOUNG WOMAN

Your team? Wow. Are you sure this is a good idea? I cannot afford to piss this guy off. I can’t afford to lose my job. I’m scared.
AMELIA

Don't worry. This is what we do. By the time we are done with this guy, he'll be eating out of your hand instead of whatever else he wanted to do.

Young Woman’s panic subsides. She pulls shoulders back, straightens up and says

YOUNG WOMAN

Okay, I see little choice. For my kids’ sake I’ll just have to give this a try.

SCENE 45

INT. OFFICE STORAGE ROOM, SEVERAL DAYS LATER

BOSS MAN opens door and backs into the darkened room, pulling on his young employee’s hand, convinced he is finally going to get what he wants. Five figures lurk in darkness, barely visible to young woman, but not to boss. They are wearing full coverage ninja garb, carrying swords and odd tool in an strange holster. They seize and muzzle BOSS MAN out of the gloom in an instant, then motion to woman to leave room. Silence surrounds BOSS MAN as he quakes in fear, reviewing images in his mind of what brought him to this position.

Two of THE LEGENDS place boss in restraining hold. Three LEGENDS retrieve odd tool ... the branding iron. They remove their gloves, grasp the brand and commence silent meditation. BOSS MAN is frozen with fear, babbling to himself.

CHOI

Shut the hell up!

A few moments pass as CHOI regains his concentration. Brand begins to glow softly. Then as the three retreat into deepest meditation, the brand glows white hot, illuminating...
the small room. BOSS MAN is shaking and quivering as the three bring themselves out of trance. One rips open BOSS MAN shirt and holds red hot brand up to his stomach closely enough that he can feel the heat.

CHUCK

Touch that woman again. Abuse her in any way. Prevent her from doing her job. Fire her without cause. Do any of these things again, even once, even by mistake ... and we will appear here again. Must we explain this any further?

BOSS MAN

N, n, n, no ... I’ll give her a raise for God’s sake!

AMELIA

Now that’s what we like to hear! Break that glass ceiling pal.

BODDI

Great, now get the hell out of here.

BOSS MAN feels their hands being pulled off of him. He turns around slowly and nobody is there.

SCENE 46

INT. BACK AT BRUCE’S OFFICE WITH AHMAD

AHMAD

Now I understand what you mean by “special help,” but how can you help me?

BRUCE AT 60

Plead guilty.
AHMAD
What? What kind of help is that? They want to put me away for 7½ year. Are you crazy?

BRUCE AT 60
Listen, once you are in these bastards' sights, there is almost no possibility of total escape. You did the crime, right?

AHMAD looks down and nods sadly.

BRUCE AT 60
Can you do, let’s say 30 days in prison and three years' probation?

AHMAD
Well yes I suppose I can. It sure beats 7½ year.

BRUCE AT 60
Okay, now you’re thinking right. We have a special connection with your prosecutor's friends. We’ll negotiate a plea deal for you. Negotiating. That’s our specialty.

Ahmad breathes deep sigh of relief.

SCENE 47
INT. SHARMA OFC
Sharma sits behind enormous desk, way too big because he’s 5’2”. Terrified law firm client MR JONES hands Sharma hard-sided brushed aluminum case full of gold coins. Sharma opens case and counts one hundred coins.

SHARMA
Ah perfect. Thank you. You can go now. I’ll let you know what the Government has to say. I used to be your prosecutor’s boss you know?
MR JONES
Yes I know. That’s why I just brought you a box full of gold coins.

SHARMA
Get out of here so I can work.

MR JONES opens office door and departs. Sharma then powers off lights, double locks door and boots up child porn again. He holds coins in one hand and ... in the other. Lights and computer go dark. Sharma stumbles around in darkness until he bumps into tall, strong figure holding perfectly still. Sharma backs up and yells

SHARMA
Mr Jones! I told you to go home!

CHUCK
I’m Mr Smith, not Mr Jones.

CHUCK speaks in deep country music southern twang coming out of a voice-changer mask⁴. Startled, Sharma demands

SHARMA
Who the hell are you? Do you know who I am?

CHUCK
Why, did you forget? ... No, we have not forgotten Churchie. We know exactly who you are. What you are.

SHARMA
Go f--- yourself! I’m calling 911.

Phone is plucked out of SHARMA’s grasp by a gloved hand from the shadows. Returned in moments after grinding audio FX, phone is crushed to dust.

AMELIA
Might be a little rough dialing now, so good luck with that.

⁴ Like Darth Vader in Star Wars or the Bain criminal character in Batman movie.
SHARMA
What's going on here?!

BODDI
We know who you are, what you are and where you came from. We know all your secrets.

SHARMA
What secrets? What in hell are you nutcases talking about?!

Chuck activates voice changer box. He's mumbles something inaudible into it and becomes irritated by the way it sounds. Throws device into his bag. Now he speaks in normal voice, almost same as synth voice.

CHUCK
Sheeeyoot, I hate that thing. Who the hell's idea was this anyway? Phooey! Now ... what was I gonna say again?

AMELIA
Listen cowboy, you were gonna tell Mr Fancy Pants here how we know him.

CHUCK
Oh yeah, that's right. Do I need to say them all out loud? You know what we're talking about.

SHARMA
No, I do not follow. What do you want?

As Sharma says this, the branding iron begins to glow. Sharma can make out three figures in black, standing in a triangle, holding the branding iron, which is heating up quickly as they focus more intently. Soon the iron is glowing brightly enough that the whole office is illuminated.

SHARMA looks around, terrified, realizing he is surrounded by five masked vigilantes who mean him no good whatsoever. He begins sweating profusely.

SHARMA
Again ... please I am asking you. What do you want?
BODDI

First of all, we want half those gold coins. You were stealing them from your partners anyway right? They won’t miss ‘em and neither will you.

SHARMA

Go f--- yourself!

AMELIA

Sure no problem. Let’s start f---ing ourselves then, shall we?

Two Legends grab Sharma, strip off his jacket and shirt. The Three Legends charging the branding iron open their eyes, breaking concentration.

CHOI

Hey, that’s about the hottest we’ve ever made it yet. Let’s see how it works.

One Legend pushes black-booted foot into back of Sharma’s knee. With almost zero effort, Sharma collapses helplessly to floor. All of THE FIVE hold him there with their booted feet.

CHUCK

Where do you think?

AMELIA

I’m thinking all the way up his thigh. All the way. Pull his pants off too and throw them out the window.

SHARMA

Stop, stop, okay. You’re robbers, I get it. Take the f-ing Kruggerands and get out of here.

CHOI

No! You don’t get it douchebag. We’re not robbers; you’re the robber. We’re your new business partners.

SHARMA

What? What do you mean? Just tell me what you want and get out of here. You must want something
that’s not in this room, or I’d be dead already. Right?

BODDI

You’re a smart little pervert, pal. We want to share clients with you for a referral fee. That would be ... let’s see ... exactly 50%. Well bring you certain special clients too. For these folks you’ll go to your old friends at the Fed and get them out of trouble. That’s it. In exchange for this, you’ll go home with your nuts un-barbequed today and you’ll keep half the money. Nobody will ever know... that is unless you fail to help our special clients. Then everybody will know. Understand? Got it, jerk?

SHARMA

Yeah, I got it. Anything else?

CHUCK

Yes. We are happy to advise of your first ... oops I mean our first client today. His name is Ahmad. While we’ve been getting to know you better, you got an email from a server in Russia, with our instructions about Ahmad.

By the way, our Russian friends know you, very well as it happens, almost as well as we do. If anything unpleasant happens to any of us, they’ll drop in here for a visit. They’re in the gardening business. Got it?

SHARMA

Gardening? What the hell does that mean?

CHUCK

Just a means of identification. What we want should be very easy for a bright young degenerate like you. And nobody will ever know ... unless. Are you sure you understand these instructions?

SHARMA

Yes, I understand. How shall I contact you?

While they are talking, one of THE FIVE retrieves used handkerchiefs out of Sharma’s desk drawer, unseen by Sharma.
CHOI
You won't need to contact us Twinkle Toes. We'll be watching you, always. Every day. Every way. Everywhere. We'll be watching you take a dump, pal. We even know exactly how you ... entertain yourself in here, with the lights off. Understand?

SHARMA
Yes I understand. Anything else?

By this time, glow of the branding iron has subsided completely and room is dark.

SHARMA
Is there anything else you people want? ... Where the hell are you?

Sharma tiptoes over to light switch, flips it on. Nobody and nothing in room, except faint smell of paint and solvent which burnt off shaft of branding iron. He sniffs, sits down, visibly, seriously shaken and blurts out

SHARMA
What in hell have I done?

SCENE 48
INT. BRUCE’S CLINIC OFC – LATE IN DAY

AHMAD
How was that drive to Canada? I’ve always wanted to do that.

BRUCE AT 60
It was great for the most part, except one thing. Upon driving through Customs both ways, I was detained without explanation for quite a while. US Customs and Canadian Customs, both ways. They made up a story about random checks. It didn’t occur to me at the time that the FBI would know what I was doing - because I had no idea they were in business together with Audrey. Apparently the Mounties were involved too.
AHMAD

Mounties? You mean like Dudley Doright? We have old American TV shows in Pakistan too my friend.

BRUCE AT 60

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police: Canada’s answer to the FBI. Listen, it’s late already. What don’t you go home to ... what is your wife’s name again?

AHMAD

Lila.

BRUCE AT 60

Beautiful name. It means nighttime in Aramaic. That’s the root language of both Hebrew and Arabic you know. A real famous guy, an Aramean, spoke this language.

AHMAD

Yes, Jesus. I know. I may look stupid but I’m not.

BRUCE AT 60

It’s nighttime. Go home to Lila. Come back tomorrow after your shift.

Ahmad agrees and departs. Bruce stays at his desk working late. As clock approaches midnight, he hears sounds coming from the freight entrance to his storefront. As he stands up, the huge steel door is blasted off its hinges. MS13 Number 3 (quick flashback to lock-in-sock attack at jail. Closeup on MS13 Number 3’s face) jumps through burning door jamb, followed by another eleven gang members, all carrying baseball bats, billyclubs and machetes.

An epic battle ensues. BRUCE dispatches seven attackers into dreamland, but 12:1 is just too much. Bruce is subdued, shackled, bound and gagged - his head covered in a black hood.

SCENE 49

EXT. ALLEY BEHIND OFC, NIGHTTIME

Bruce is thrown into back of what appears to be a GOYA Foods delivery truck, and then driven away. Continuous
shoot from inside truck, of driving from Loop to south side Hispanic enclave.

**SCENE 50**

**EXT. CRACKHOUSE AT NIGHT**

Bruce is dragged bound, gagged and hooded into gang crackhouse while young neighborhood children look out for police.

**INT INSIDE BUNGALOW**

Dragged into basement, Bruce is seated on chair. Hood is snatched from his head, revealing another hooded figure before him. Kidnapper slowly removes hood to reveal ... BRUCE’S DAUGHTER MIMI at age 20.
Act III

SCENE 1

INT. CLINIC MORNING AFTER

STREET CLINIC - THE MORNING AFTER
The Five arrive at work to discover chaotic scene. Police are investigating explosion and minor fire. The Five rip through crime scene tape. One grossly overweight cop with stomach hanging over gun belt tries to stop Amelia - who sends cop flying. At this point, nobody is aware of kidnapping. Choi boots up his computer, finds overnight email with three attachments: Images are of Bruce, his daughter Mimi at 20 years of age and a handwritten poster.

CHOI

Where the hell is Bruce? Does anybody know where in the bloody hell Bruce is? And who is this woman?

As all four of the other Legends crowd around Choi’s screen, they adopt grim, nauseated facial expressions. Silently, Choi prints out first of the three images to reveal this image:

$1 milions dollar in gold coins you have 72 hour

SCENE 2

INT. SHARMA READING NEWSPAPER

CU of newspaper article with headline “STREET CLINIC BLOWN UP.” Camera zooms out to reveal Sharma reading the article with a big grin. Sharma’s mobile phone chirps to signal
incoming text message from RAMOS. Image appears of Bruce’s Mimi being fed McDonalds breakfast burrito. Grin on Sharma’s face blossoms into deranged, evil laugh; then he mutters to himself

SHARMA

F--k with me, will ya!

SCENE 3
INT MS13 CRACKHOUSE BASEMENT

BRUCE AT 60

I’m so sorry Sweetie Pie. When I swore we would get together again, I, I, I...

Bruce, overwhelmed and at a loss for words, pauses ...

BRUCE AT 60

I love you

MIMI

I know Daddy

SCENE 4
INT. BODDI’S APARTMENT HIGH ABOVE LAKESHORE DRIVE

The Five, normally jocular, upbeat and serene, meet in a state of high agitation at Boddi’s family’s apartment in Lake Point Towers, a cloverleaf shaped building overlooking Lake Michigan and Chicago Loop.

CHUCK

Where the bloody f--- are we gonna get a million dollars in gold coins in three days?

SUN

We’re not.

AMELIA

What the hell does that mean, Mr Strategy Man?
(asks AMELIA of the Legend named after Sun Tzu, author of the Art of War).

SUN

We fight ... without fighting. Who do we know does business every day in gold coins?

Every face in room lights up

BODDI

Are we going to ask him for a loan?

SUN

Nope.

Faces turn quizzical.

SCENE 5

INT. MS13 CRACKHOUSE BASEMENT

MIMI AT 20

Daddy! Daddy Daddy!"

awakes Bruce from sleep as Mimi at 20 is dragged on chair she is strapped-to, into different room. At first Bruce becomes enraged, struggling against his bonds and the gag in his mouth. After a moment, he closes his eyes, breathes deeply thru nose and meditates. Projecting qi through his arms, he hopes to weaken handcuffs enough to free himself. Handcuffs begin slowly glowing. Brighter and brighter the handcuffs glow as as Bruce strains against them. Skin on his wrists first turn red, bright red, then start burning, charring, bleeding and turning black. He sniffs and registers smell of his own flesh broiling. On and on it goes but cuffs will not be weakened.

SCENE 6

EXT - AUDREY’S NEW LUXURY HOME - ESTABLISHING

INT - AUDREY’S INTERIOR SPACE

Audrey checks her phone. Image appears of Bruce and Mimi in captivity. Audrey breaks into evil grin, then ...

(Fast cut to)
SCENE 7
INT - BACK AT "WAR ROOM" IN BODDI'S APARTMENT

AMELIA

I knew it!
exclaims Amelia. She is monitoring Audrey's phone traffic from a cloning device. Amelia is the group's techno-geek.

AMELIA

I knew this bitch was wrong the first instant I laid eyes on her! Let's pay her a visit, right now!

SUN

And then what? Tip these bastards off that they're not getting paid? Then the only place we go from here is a funeral home, assuming we ever recover all the scattered pieces of the bodies. This is MS13. Have you heard of these hombres? Do you have any idea how they operate? Flaming truck tires jammed over people they burn alive.

AMELIA

I see your point ... by the way, you've been ruminating all day. We're ninjas, not jedis. Can't read your mind pal.

Sun draws The Five together and articulates his plan. (Actors mouths seen C.U. talking silently, muted soundtrack. Viewer hears nothing but mood music).

SCENE 8

INT. MS13 CRACKHOUSE BASEMENT

RAMOS enters basement to check on captives. Detects odd odor, like burning meat.

RAMOS

Somethin' burnin' in here? Oh wait a minute, you can't talk right now.

Ramos laughs at Bruce, who is concealing his burnt wrists and writhing in pain.
RAMOS

I'm gonna check on your kid ... hey that's one cute little Chiquita mi amigo!

Bruce, unable to speak because he's gagged, glares hatefully as kidnapper walks into adjacent room where Mimi is held now. Sound of slamming door then muffled sounds of unclear, uninformative motion and impacts. C.U. of pain and rage on Bruce's face.

SCENE 9

INT. "WAR ROOM" IN BODDI'S APARTMENT

Amelia has hacked into Audrey's text history, which appears on large flatscreen dominating room. Reference is made to encrypted text messaging app. She locates app and its message history - but all the messages appear onscreen in gibberish.

BODDI

How's it going?

AMELIA

I got this.

Slowly she decrypts and reconstructs messages. The name "CHURCHIE" is revealed onscreen.

SCENE 10

INT. SHARMA's LAW OFFICE - SHORT TIME LATER

Sharma sits at desk projecting voice into speakerphone

SHARMA

Show them in.

In walks three burly Russians in too-tight Italian suits.

SHARMA

What can I do for you ... um ... Mr Petrovich? (No response)
SHARMA

Sorry, I have not had the pleasure of being introduced to your associates, sir.

PETROVICH

Thees von name Arma. Dat von name Geddon.

SHARMA

Sounds Israeli. How do you spell? inquires SHARMA.

PETROVICH

A-R-M-A ... G-E-D-D-O-N.

Sharma looks up while wave of fright and recognition crosses his face, as he recalls original conversation with The Five.

PETROVICH

Vee neet to know vere day are.

SHARMA

What are you talking about? Who are you?

PETROVICH

Gardener

SHARMA

Gardener?! What do you mean gardener?

PETROVICH

Boris ... show our dear friend Mr Sharma your favorite gardening tool.

BORIS pulls pruning shears out of suit breast pocket. SHARMA reaches for phone. VLAD, the third Russian, snatches phone off desk

VLAD

Oh, you vant phone? Vy dint you say?

Vlad then smashes phone to bits on Sharma’s forehead.

PETROVICH

I think maybe we are not explaining ourselves correctly. My English not so good. (in Russian): Boris, will you kindly lock door please?
Boris turns, walks to door and throws deadbolt.

PETROVICH

Mr Gardener ... vy dun you let Mr Sharma see your ... tool ... close-up?

Boris walks up to Sharma as Vlad immobilizes Sharma’s arm. Boris pulls Sharma’s fingers apart, grasps Sharma’s middle finger, pulling up.

BORIS

You like showing this finger to everybody, right?

Sharma, quaking with fear and wimpering, does not respond. Boris forces Sharma’s middle finger into jaws of pruning shears.

PETROVICH

Vere are day?

SHARMA

I don’t know who you’re talking about.

Petrovich nods. Boris cuts off Sharma’s finger as Vladimir stuffs one of Sharma’s wadded-up, soiled handkerchiefs into Sharma’s mouth, cutting off (otherwise) blood-curdling scream as it begins.

PETROVICH

Anything pop into your head yet Mr Lawyer?

SCENE 11

EXT. 90 MINUTES LATER, MS13 CRACKHOUSE

Long shot of sentry patrolling outside house carrying Uzi-like machine gun. Whistling sound precedes shuriken (throwing star) strike, which pierces front of sentry’s skull, almost totally burying the throwing star in victim’s head. NEIGHBOR WOMAN views incident, does not understand what she sees until blood spews out and sentry falls over. Neighbor woman screams.
SCENE 12
INT. MS13 CRACKHOUSE - INSTANT LATER

Other gang members inside house hear woman outside screaming. They come to state of high vigilance, grab arsenal of firearms from steamer chests, china cabinet and closet. They take up cover positions behind heavy furniture. Two head downstairs, position themselves behind Bruce and Mimi.

Epic battle ensues upstairs as The Five appear, seemingly out of nowhere, positioning themselves in nunchuk range of every upstairs gang member.

FIGHT CHOREOGRAPHER NOTES: Here the time duration of fight choreography can be varied from under one minute to as much as ten minutes of furious close combat with machetes, nunchuks, swords, knives, machine guns and shotguns firing in all directions, never mortally wounding any of The Five. However ... two of The Five are moderately injured: Chuck and Amelia - though their wounds are not life-threatening. All upstairs gang members are eventually neutralized. Two of Five remain downstairs with hostages.

Two of The Five leap downstairs, taking strides of many stairs at once, dodging fire and seeking cover. The two downstairs hostage takers are positioned in separate rooms, each behind one of the hostages, gripping themselves fast to their captives, holding knife to Bruce’s throat and gun to Mimi’s head. Brief pause. Faint whisp of smoke rises from between pant legs of gang member holding Bruce.

RAMOS

Madre de Dios?! (Mother of God)

Ramos lurches backward as flames shoot up from his crotch. Bruches lurches himself and chair up from floor, pulling anchor bolts out of concrete floor, then striking Ramos in head with chair leg. Just then, creaking then cracking then crashing sound as two Legends crash through burning holes in basement ceiling, directly on top of gang member holding Mimi.

BRUCE straightens himself fully upright and his chair disintegrates, partially freeing his bonds. As he frees himself, Ramos, the MS13 from years ago, manages to escape and run outside.
BRUCE AT 60

I got this!

Bruce runs upstairs while still wearing handcuffs and shackles, although chains are now partially, but not fully, broken. Bruce chases Ramos, who seems to fly over fences effortlessly, while Bruce gets winded and stumbles.

Finally, Ramos is cornered in backyard with high, un-climbable fence. Turns slowly and says

RAMOS

Chinca tu madre old man! Come and get it!

BRUCE AT 60

I’d just sit down here and take a rest if I were you Amigo

Bruce appears to relax, then closes his eyes and breathes deeply. Ramos charges toward BRUCE, who opens his eyes and leaps into the air, wrapping leg chain around Ramos’ neck, while in flight. Bruce twists hard just before Ramos lands. OFF CAMERA AUDIO FX: Sickening bone crunch/snap/pop sounds.

SCENE 13

EXT - AUDREY’S HOUSE

Audrey checks her huge bank balance on computer. In background, blurred outside rear window, FBI Breach Team positions itself, soft focus in distance. Squirrel is directly above, leaning out of upstairs window casing, oblivious to FBI raid below. Squirrel is looking through a rifle sight, scanning huge backyard for his favorite obsession - squirrels.

FBI Breach Team does not see Squirrel, until Squirrel squeezes off a round after catching a glimpse of those little four-legged demon rodents in his scope. A squirrel is nearly vaporized with by an explosive round.

BREACH TEAM LEADER

We’re under fire!

FBI Breach Team Leader screams into his radio, as every team member drops flat to finely trimmed lawn.
Squirrel gets big self-satisfied smile on his face just as one of the FBI Breach Team looks up, locating echo of rifle shot.

BREACH TEAM MEMBER

Upstairs window upstairs window upstairs window!!!

Officer’s urgent warning reverberates across all the officers’ radios. Squirrel finishes congratulating himself for successfully wasting a squirrel, looks down upon hearing commotion from below.

BREACH TEAM LEADER

Freeze asshole!

Squirrel, in a delusional state after his moment of glory, puts rifle scope to his eye and aims downward. Split second later Squirrel is cut to ribbons in hail of devastating automatic assault weapon fire.

SCENE 14

INT. FBI BLOWS OPEN AUDREY’S DOOR

BREACH TEAM LEADER

Breach, breach, breach!

Audrey rises from chair as she hears gunfire and commotion. Door blasts inward, sending her flying. She sails backward past Lucretia in SLO MO, as Lucretia grabs for anything she can keep, which happens to be Squirrel’s Pez dispenser collection laid out on coffee table front of her, next to huge bowl of caramel corn, which is also blown into air in SLO MO as Audrey passes, sailing through the air. Lucretia clutches the candy dispensers to her enormous bosom as Audrey hits the back wall and is knocked out cold.

SCENE 15

EXT. BRUCE ENTERING AMBULANCE

Bruce is transported in ambulance, back again to Northwestern Memorial ER and again, he is triaged by Nurse Monica.

NURSE MONICA

What in hell happened to your wrists Mr Allen?
BRUCE AT 60
You won’t believe me this time either.

NURSE MONICA
Somebody needs to take care of you. You sure
don’t take care of yourself!

SCENE 16
EXT - CHICAGO FEDERAL COURTHOUSE - ESTABLISHING
INT - COURTROOM - ARRAIGNMENT OF SHARMA, AUDREY & MS13s
Establishing shot of courtroom. Camera pans across faces of
MS13 members, Sharma with huge bandage on his head and
hand. Audrey with head bandage.

NEW PROSECUTOR
Your Honor, I think we had better conduct the
trial of Mr Sharma separately from the other
defendants.

JUDGE
Why is that?

NEW PROSECUTOR
I’ve just been handed a superseding indictment
from authorities in the Eastern District of New
York. It seems that when Mr Sharma here
immigrated to this country through JFK Airport,
he neglected to mention an outstanding arrest
warrant against him from India.

JUDGE
What is he accused of?

NEW PROSECUTOR
He is accused of sexually molesting and then
murdering an 8 year old girl, a number of years
ago, and there is DNA sampling that establishes
the connection. It appears we received the DNA
sample from an … um … a confidential source. May
I approach the bench and share the source of this
DNA sample with Your Honor, off the record?
JUDGE

You may. The courtroom deputy will turn on the water noise please.

Courtroom deputy flips switch. Loud sound of rushing water fills courtroom. New Prosecutor walks up to bench. (Record/edit in such way that it is obvious only judge can hear).

NEW PROSECUTOR

(Whispering) Your Honor, the DNA source is from numerous samples of soiled handkerchiefs which were kept in Mr. Sharma's desk in his office, right next to the computer where he stored and watched an enormous library of child pornography. It is unclear as to whether or not he produced this material or merely possessed it. Either one is a federal felony Your Honor.

Judge gets disgusted, nauseated expression on his face.

JUDGE

And who discovered this material? Oh by the way, the deputy may shut off the water sound as soon as the attorney for the Government answers this question.

NEW PROSECUTOR

The material was discovered by amicus curia. That is the limit of how we wish to describe them at this point Your Honor, if it pleases the court.

JUDGE

Friends of the Court? I see ... yes well then, I agree, we will deal with Mr Sharma separately. NOW GET HIM OUT OF MY SIGHT!

Judge angrily pounds gavel on bench.
SCENE 17
INT. JAIL
Sharma is brought to Chicago Federal lockup. As he walks past camera, lettering is revealed on back of his t-shirt: "EX-FED PROSECUTOR." Then he is released into general population. Screen fades slowly as crowd of inmates move as blur in background. Muffled sounds, suggesting beating, off camera.

SCENE 18
INT. NURSE MONICA’S APARTMENT IN HI-RISE OVERLOOKING CHICAGO LOOP, AT SUNRISE - THE MORNING AFTER ARRAIGNMENT
Bruce at 60 and Nurse Monica are seated at kitchen table, adjacent to high floor window overlooking city, in their underwear, having breakfast. Sun is breaking horizon rising above Lake Michigan. Muffled sound outside door. Bruce walks to door, opens, sees newspaper on hallway floor. Headline says "SHERIFF OF WALL STREET RAPED IN PRISON."

BRUCE AT 60
Ya gotta see this!

Bruce stoops over, picks up paper, walks to table and places paper in front of Nurse Monica.

NURSE MONICA
Gotta bring that guy some Preparation H, waddya think?

SCENE 19
INT. DOJO SIDE OF BRUCE’S STREET CLINIC, ONE WEEK AFTER SHARMA ARRAIGNMENT
Close-up on eyes of young man wearing a sweatband. Camera pulls back to reveal a group of low red belts lined up in ready stance, preparing to test for high red belt, the final rank before black belt. They perform before a seated panel of five senior masters.

First the candidates perform Chung Mu, the most advanced pattern of predetermined movements for their current rank, in unison, with perfect synchronization. Next, a variety of
qi-focusing exercises including board and brick breaking. Then it is time for combat.

Chuck and Amelia, both high red belts, bandaged and bruised, enter the room. They will engage in fierce combat with the two most-senior students being tested this day. Both perform valiantly despite their injuries. At times the wounded practitioners appear to be prevailing, despite their injuries. Ultimately, both Chuck and Amelia are defeated by junior students.

Bruce orders all to attention. Every practitioner bows deeply to the seated panel of masters. Then everybody leaves the room except Bruce, Amelia and Chuck.

When alone with his two most-beloved disciples, Bruce removes their red belts and replaces with black belts embroidered in red thread with Chuck and Amelia’s names and rank in English and Korean. Both new black belts bow deeply to their instructor.

Bruce retrieves two heavy lacquered chests, sliding them out of the dojo’s back room. He pushes the chests in front of Chuck and Amelia, unlocks and opens the heavy containers. Chuck and Amelia’s faces are then illuminated with the reflection of gold emanating from their lifetime supply of gold coins.

SCENE 20
EXT. - ESTABLISHING SHOT OF “HECKER TRUCKS” DEALERSHIP
EXT. - Chuck and Amelia, holding hands, walk together through the outside lot of a heavy truck dealership named Hecker Trucks. Salesman walks them up to a bright red unit (this is the same vehicle which picked up Bruce on the day he was released from prison). Salesman walks them around the outside of the truck.

TRUCK SALESMAN
This little baby’s got it all. Recaro seats, CB radio, GPS, refrigerator, chrome plated shifter, the whole nine yards. But that ain’t nothing my friends. Check out that sleepin cabin.

INT INSIDE TRUCK SLEEPER COMPARTMENT
Salesman shows incredibly outfitted sleeping quarters. Big flat screen TV, microwave, fridge, dresser - all upholstered in thick red carpeting.
INT - INSIDE TRUCK SHOWROOM

Chuck and Amelia sitting at desk opposite Truck Salesman.

AMELIA

We’ll take the red one.

Salesman pulls up information on his computer terminal regarding the red truck.

TRUCK SALESMAN

Wow, this is interesting. This truck just came in on trade the other day. It wasn’t traded for another truck though, it was traded for a used red Corvette. I guess the guy retired. But anyway, here’s the price.

Salesman rotates monitor so Chuck and Amelia can see price. They look at each other, suppressing giggles.

CHUCK

Would’ja take say, 5% off that price?

AMELIA

5%! Are you nuts? Ten percent or we walk.

TRUCK SALESMAN

Wow that’s one tough little lady there.

AMELIA

Watch it pal, I’ll give you little lady.

TRUCK SALESMAN

Yes ma’am, so sorry. I apologize. Please give me a moment to see if my manager will accept this price.

Chuck and Amelia look at each other again, suppressing giggles. Salesman is gone very briefly then returns.

TRUCK SALESMAN

Okay, you drive a hard bargain but my kid’s got to eat this week. You got a deal folks!
Cut to Chuck/Amelia smiling at each other, then they face salesman again.

CHUCK
Okay great. Done.

TRUCK SALESMAN
Glad to hear it. Shall I walk you over to the finance manager folks?

CHUCK
That won’t be necessary.

TRUCK SALESMAN
Well, a cash deal for a change. Very nice. When would you like to return with a check?

AMELIA
(Looking at Chuck) Your case or mine?

CHUCK
You’re the big talker kid. Open yours.

Amelia lifts heavy purse from floor, opens it and starts counting out gold coin after gold coin, as salesman watches mouth agape.

AMELIA
I think that will cover it.

CHUCK
Give him one more.

AMELIA
For what? Do you have a fever today my dear?

CHUCK
So his kids can eat next week too.

Amelia flips gold coin toward salesman. SFX: Close-up slow mo of coin moving from viewer’s left to viewer’s right. As coin approaches right side of screen ...

FADE OUT
FADE IN

SCENE 21

INT. JET COCKPIT - SPRING MID-2030s, GOOD WEATHER DAY

Pilot's POV out windshield of Cirrus SR50 single engine jet airplane pointed east as sun begins breaking horizon. Closeup on petite young female hand confidently grasping single throttle lever. Camera pans from closeup of instrument panel to face of early teen Asian female wearing red headband under pilot's headset. From outside of frame, crinkly deep voice of much older Bruce says

BRUCE AT 80

Let's go see your mom.

BRUCE'S GRANDDAUGHTER

Okay Grandpa

BRUCE AT 80

Punch it

Bruce at 80 years old, is still wearing same red cloth ring. His aged and wrinkled hand gently covers young girl's. They push throttle to firewall together.

BRUCE'S GRANDDAUGHTER

Airspeed indicator is alive.

SCENE 22

EXT. JET ROLLS FOR TAKEOFF INTO SUNRISE, C.A.V.U. DAY

Camera view switches to outside view of fuselage of Cirrus SR50 VisionJet airplane, emblazoned with "Mad as Hell Ninja Rescue Team" logo (this graphic is critical to continuity of story, as it carries through to sequel, Episode Four), surges forward upon brake release, then accelerates powerfully.

BRUCE AT 80, OFF CAMERA

V.R.! Rotate Sweetie Pie.
Bruce commands his granddaughter to pull back on yoke. The jet’s nose rotates off runway in seconds. High performance aircraft climbs rapidly above treetops at end of runway, then crosses Lake Michigan shoreline and continues climbing over water, as sun rises in the east. They turn right, head south and shortly disappear into new morning sky.

ROLL CREDITS OVER SUN RISING ABOVE LAKESHORE
FADE TO BLACK
------------------------- THE END -------------------------