

1. INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

EST. SHOT: DOOR - PLAQUE: HOROWITZ, FEINBERG, & MCCORMICK

A HAND grips the handle on a briefcase sitting on a chair.
A CLOCK on the wall reads one-thirty.

A FEMALE SECRETARY sits at her desk, typing, sipping a can of soda. A radio from her desk plays an old 60's pop song. This is a waiting room with elegant decorum, the walls covered in PLAQUES of commendation - 45 Years of Service, etc.

A YOUNG MAN, mid 20's, in a dark suit and tie sits at a chair. He opens up his briefcase. He looks through paperwork in a folder. He pulls a little at his collar. He looks determined. This is MEL KLEIN.

SECRETARY

Would you like some water,
sir?

MEL

Oh, me? Oh, no, that's fine,
thank you, miss.

SECRETARY

Ma'am.

MEL

Oh, Ma'am, gotcha, say no
more.

SECRETARY

Yes... It's always a big day.
Plenty of applicants so far.

MEL

Hmm. How many would you say,
like, stadium-size?

SECRETARY

(frowns)

I'm sorry?

MEL

(snaps fingers)

What's the phrase, uh,
stadium, rink, uh... track...

SECRETARY

Ballpark?

MEL

(snaps fingers)

Ballpark, there you go!
Ballpark figure.

SECRETARY

(nervous laugh)

Yes. About 100, maybe more.
I'm not in all week.

MEL

Right... Right.

A DOOR opens just adjacent to the waiting room. An OLDER MAN, late 40s, big build, very clean cut, shakes hands with a WOMAN, late 30s, sharply dressed, good hair. The man is MR. CUKOR. He walks her to the door.

WOMAN

Thank you again.

MR. CUKOR

We'll call soon to let you
know.

WOMAN

(to secretary)

Have a great day.

SECRETARY

You too.

MEL gives a nod - and a wink - and the woman raises an eyebrow as she exits - not good raise.

MR. CUKOR

(to Mel)

And, you are next?

MEL KLEIN

Mel Klein, so pleased to
finally meet you, Mr. Cukor.
An honor.

They shake hands. Mel fumbles for a second picking up his
briefcase.

2. INT. MR. CUKOR'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Mr. CUKOR'S office has PLAQUES on the walls. Pictures of
family. Mel looks briefly at a picture of Mr. Cukor and
MIKE BLOOMBERG.

MEL

Wow, is that?

MR. CUKOR

Oh, it was nothing.
Fundraiser for special
prosecutors. Lots of *fine*
guests as well, very good man.

MEL

(distracted)

Oh, oh yeah, best mayor in a
real long while.

MR. CUKOR

Of course, you wouldn't be
old enough to really remember
some of the real greats.
He's no Koch, I can tell you.

Mel nods. Mr. Cukor sits at his desk.

MR. CUKOR

Please.

MEL

Oh, sure, right here. So...

Mel sits in the seat. He starts to open his briefcase.

MR. CUKOR

No, don't bother with that.
Not yet, at least.

MEL

Very... nice office, by the way, sir.

MR. CUKOR

Just tell me a little about yourself, how you got here.

MEL

Well, my mother is- was- a lawyer, retired two years ago. I would, you know, sit in as a kid, I mean, on her depositions and trials and such-

MR. CUKOR

Wait - you sat in on depositions? I would think they would usually be private sessions.

MEL

That usually would be, but even when I was four years old, just me in a corner with a toy or book, and I never acted up, you know, acted bad or got upset. And so, all that time, I listened in and understood pretty much all of the main points. Some things she'd explain, but what really involved me, what just completely sucked me in was the argument, being able to just take your eyes and stare head on into, you know, whatever freaky scenario she was up against.

MR. CUKOR

Uh, yes... *freaky*.

MEL

Yeah... So, at any rate, she encouraged me, and I did debate team, the junior uh, God, I'm sorry, it's not a trial but it is, in high school -

MR. CUKOR

Mock trial.

MEL

(snaps fingers)

Mock trial, that's it. And from there, I went first to Rutgers university, and -

MR. CUKOR

- and New York Law from there, I-I have the file in front of me, Mr. Klein, it was very detailed, very *thorough*. Now, according to this, you are preparing to take the bar exam? You haven't passed it yet?

MEL

Two weeks.

MR. CUKOR

Your first time?

MEL

Mr. Cukor, between you and me, it really is something I have been preparing for all of my life. It's practically passed.

MR. CUKOR

Uh-huh... Well, as you may know, this firm takes on some fairly large cases - sometimes representing companies in rather large suits against them, libel,

etc - and we need some people just right for it, ready to sink their teeth into the thick of things.

MEL

Understand, hundred percent.

MR. CUKOR

Now, here's what it is - I can see what is here on paper. Impressive GPA, good LSAT'S, recommendation from your internship. But what I want to hear from you, no nonsense: what do you basically, essentially think about the law.

Mel's eyes light up. He's been waiting for this.

MEL

The law? All of it?

MR. CUKOR

Yes, your own impression. From the gut, as they say.

MEL

(slight beat, clears throat)
Well, sir... I think that, as a, uh, a Greek philosopher once said... The name escapes me, maybe uh Socrates or Aristotle, that knowledge is real power. And knowledge is what a lawyer needs more than anything else in his world. But therein is a significant problem with our field that I, you, we are in. Now, if I can be completely frank with you... knowing the law, and this is, you know, with all vulgarity aside - is like knowing a vagina. I can

explain, I'll explain
further.

Mr. Cukor's face turns white. We see a CLOSE-UP of his finger pressing a button underneath his desk.

3. INT. WAITING ROOM - CONT'D

The Secretary's head perks up - Mel's rant is being overheard on the speaker.

4. INT. CUKOR'S OFFICE - CONT'D

MEL

Now, if you look at a vagina - I mean, really if you're a guy, which you clearly are, for most men, some, uh, women perhaps too - you think you know all there is on a first glance, 'seen one, seen them all' sort of deal. You inspect a little bit, you maybe take a, uh, finger or some device to see what there is... But then you hit all of those little folds. Massive, it's a labyrinth of flesh and blood and hair - it's hairy, very hairy. But, when you look further, when you know what it is, truly, little by little, the, uh, vagina - that is knowing the law, knowing all of the ins and outs - every crevice, every angle, every single last line that folds upon itself, then, then Mr. Cukor, you will have the knowledge to take on any case, any client, any witness, just any detail or example that there is to offer. When you know the vagina- er, law, better than anyone, that is power. And I want to be a complete law,

uh, sponge for this firm,
 being the most powerful there
 can be for any clientele.
 Mr. Cukor is, simply, in a kind of shock. Dumbfounded.
 His jaw hangs open, trying to find itself to close.

MEL
 (closes briefcase)
 So, uh - here are some more
 references. I don't know if
 they were included in the
 original packet there.

MR. CUKOR
 (under breath)
 Wow.

MEL
 (stands up)
 I guess that's it then?

Mel hands out his hand. Mr. Cukor gives a weak shake,
 almost on impulse. He stares off into space.

MEL
 Thank you for your time sir.

MR. CUKOR
 We'll uh... Uh...

MEL
 I'll just see my way out
 then...

5. INT. WAITING ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

ME walks out. He gives a thumbs-up sign to the secretary,
 her mouth agape.

6. INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

A DOOR opens. MEL KLEIN walks in. He swings his briefcase
 from side to side with pride. COMEDY TV plays in the BG.

MEL'S MOM
 (turns head, smiles)
 Hi, hon.

MEL

Hey guys.

MEL'S MOM, fifty something, and ROSY, twenty-something, girlfriend of Mel, are both sitting at the kitchen table. Rosy is laughing about something on TV. Rosy stays seated, Mel's Mom gives a quick hug.

ROSY

Hi, I-I just heard the line
from the other night I missed.

MEL

At the end? I didn't see it.

ROSY

(frowns)

Oh... You weren't there?
Hmm... You fell asleep?

MEL

Um, studying.

ROSY

I missed you today, too.

MEL'S MOM

Yes, how did it go?

MEL

(puts away trench coat)
I think... pretty well.

MEL'S MOM

How do you mean?

ROSY

Come on. Details, Bub.

MEL

Well, he didn't say no. Very
easygoing, very professional
place. At the end he said
'wow'.

ROSY

Same explanation as last time?

MEL
(off-guard)

What?

ROSY
The internship, you mentioned
it this time? I told you,
you should have-

MEL
No, no, he totally got on the
boat for that. Really great
guy, just, fantastic.

MEL'S MOM
Well, I'm very happy for you.
You could get it this time.

ROSY
Yup, you'll get it in no
time. And later in the week
you got another interview,
right?

MEL
(clearing throat)
Yup, the Schmurmer house...
(to self) Schmiel?

MEL'S MOM
Schmel? What are you saying?

MEL
So, what's for eats?

MEL'S MOM
That's more like it. Picking
up or are we ordering out?

Mel looks at the women, Rosy mouths something, smiles.

MEL

Oh, I... Ah, yup, back off to
the car then.

Mel walks back out. Before he leaves Rosy gives a big hug to Mel. Rosy and Mrs. Klein go back to talking.

7. INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

ROSY, with headphones on, sits at the computer at Mel and ROSY'S desk. MEL is on the other side of the room reading a law book. Rosy keeps stopping and rewinding an AUDIO CASSETTE and typing again fast. Mel looks over at Rosy, glances back to his book, then Rosy again. He puts the book down and quietly walks out of the room.

8. INT. BASEMENT STAIRS - MOMENTS LATER

MEL flicks on the light for the BASEMENT, and they flicker on slowly. It is mostly EMPTY, save for two shelves with hardware and a FEW CHESTS at the far side from Mel.

Mel fingers and flips through a set of KEYS. He goes to one chest and opens the lock on it.

(CU - DROP DOWN - INSIDE CHEST) We see Mel grinning.

9. INT. BASEMENT - MOMENTS LATER

(Low angle) MEL paces back and forth.

MEL

When it came down to it, to
the brass tax and everything
- it did go well. But I've
got to try harder. The man
could taste my fear, the guy
might have had one of those
detectors that is like
attached to the side of his
head, a lawyer from the
future sent to terminate
young lawyers like myself -
you understand that. I can
stay firm, unmovable,
syncopated... yeah, I don't
know what that fucking means.

I shouldn't ask myself this
or to you, I mean -

We see what Mel is looking at - ACTION FIGURES and the like
all lined up in front of the open chest. Many varieties,
shapes, mostly COMIC-BOOK flavored.

MEL (contd)

Anyway, next up is... (cell
phone rings)... next up is
the Wine-Shermer & Krantz
branch or office... branch.
Trailed off, damn pansy-ass
(looks at phone). OK, so...
If I had you up on the stand,
against him, would that be...
now, my client is, uh, not
reprimanded from his right to
proper bail. The State of
New York would find for you
that the... uh...

Mel trailed off, looking at a SMALLER CHEST. He flips
around another key across his fingers.

MEL

(to himself)

Control... patience...
control of this, you got it
Mel, man Mel... Control.

Mel closes eyes, then looks at one action figure on the
ground. It moves as if in a two-second attack formation.
Mel blinks, gone. He rubs his eyes.

10. INT. BASEMENT - LATER

MEL throws the last action figure inside the chest. He
closes the chest closed.

11. EXT. STREET-CORNER CAFE - NYC - DAY

MEL KLEIN is sitting at a table, busy lunch hour. He is in
business attire. He has his resume laid out on the table
and is checking everything with a pencil.

MEL

(to self)

OK, mention A, C, D... K,
yeah, that's good.

He glances up at a VERY TALL BUILDING in the middle of a street of buildings.

MEL

(contd)

Hi, I'm very proud of my time
at NY Law... No, no, I'm
overwhelmed by what I... No,
other word for overwhelmed...
Ah, I became a total seeker
of the law, seeking my
name... No, not good.

A group of MEN AND WOMEN, total six, enter the cafe,
sitting at a table close by to Mel's. They set down their
jackets and sit. They talk fast. Mel goes on writing,
scribbling, erasing.

BUSY-MAN 1

You gotta be shitting me!

WOMAN 1

I don't 'shit' anything.

BUSY MAN 3

Oh, I was wondering how you
get around.

WOMAN 1

Dunce.

BUSY MAN 1

No, I was at the meeting.
They're narrowing it down.

BUSY MAN 2

No, no, I was at the meeting.
They're narrowing it down now.

BUSY MAN 4

No s-

WOMAN 2

Oh, not again.

BUSYMAN 1
(to waitress)
Five coffees and an orange
juice.

WOMAN 1
No coffee today?

WOMAN 2
I don't drink coffee.

BUSY MAN 1
All the more for me. And
bread, lots of bread. Now,
where were you?

BUSY MAN 2
Yeah, they just flat out
stopped interviewing.

BUSY MAN 3
No shit, that quickly?

WOMAN 1
He probably couldn't take it
anymore.

BUSY MAN 2
Who was this?

WOMAN 1
Oh, you know... Damn, I'm
blinking on his name.

MAN 1
Of course.

WOMAN 1
Oh! Mr. Cukor, that was it.

Mel's ears perk up. We see the rest of this scene on him -
limited cuts to the other table.

WOMAN 2

He's with HF&M, right?

BUSY MAN 3

Can't forget the McCormick.

BUSY MAN 1

I wondered if Cukor couldn't get out of the Pleasance case in time to hear it. Guy's got a head thicker than a shit-brick.

MAN 3

You're one to talk - Barney's is so out of style right now.

MAN 1

Cough, Calvin Klein sucks, cough.

WOMAN 1

Enough, boys. So, what did Cukor decide?

MAN 2

Don't know. We're supposed to hear Monday.

MAN 1

That fast?

MAN 2

As far as I know.

MAN 3

Oh, shit. I forgot to fucking tell Amy the story.

MAN 1 & 2

Oh wow.

WOMAN 1

Did I hear this?

WOMAN 2

I don't know what you-

MAN 1

Me and Mark got this from the secretary, right out of Cukor's office. You want to tell it?

MAN 2

By all means. OK, so this guy, some intern comes in for an interview - super goddamn obnoxious guy-

MAN 1

-Way you used to be-

MAN 2

Yeah, God, what was his name?

WOMAN 1

(snaps fingers)

Mel Klein - that was it.

MAN 2

Yes, yes - he's some puissant out of NY Law, goes into the meeting with Cukor. Want to know what he said?

WOMAN 2

He said, and I quote, "the law is like a pussy."

MAN 2

Cra-zy mother-fucker rattles off, totally incoherently in front of the old man, comparing something like "the folds" to "the law and power" or something.

Table laughs. Mel is frozen.

MAN 1

The fucking guy said *that*?

MAN 2

The guy was out of his
goddamn monkey mind, I'm
telling ya.

WOMAN 1

Sure would've like see the
old man's face during that.

MAN 1

Oh, it gets better. I have
not seen this in years - so,
after this douche-bag bombs
out, Cukor gets on the phone
to everyone - Krantz,
Goldman, Pruitt, Jaremko,
even the old woman down at
City Hall - and tells them to
put this Mel Klein on the
blacklist.

MAN 2/WOMAN 1

What?

MAN 1

The guy is barred until
whenever it is from
practicing law in the whole
city.

MAN 2

What I heard was if Cukor saw
the bastard again he'd *choke*
him himself.

Mel's tears up.

MAN 1

Yeah, no, the guy might not
have his license gone or
anything, maybe he doesn't
even got it yet. But like,
none of these places will
hire the guy.

WOMAN 1

Wow.

MAN 1/MAN 3

Cukor's got a lot of gall.
 Yeah, almost makes you feel
 sorry. Dumb son of a bitch.
 What was he thinking?

MAN 3

Whatever. Means more for us.

MAN 1

To Mel Klein!

Table raises up cups to CHEER. MEL gets up from his table, sobbing uncontrollably, runs out of the cafe. The table pauses at this, then goes right on with the toast, laughing.

12. EXT. SIDEWALK - MOMENTS LATER

MEL leans against a concrete wall. He loosens his tie. Still looking upset, he looks through his pockets and finds a BUSINESS CARD. He opens up his phone and dials a number.

MEL

Hi, yes, uh, I am just
 calling to confirm an
 interview at 1:30 today with
 Mr. Schmill... Yes... Yes, it
 is scheduled for 1:30 today.
 My name is Mel Klein, that's
 M-E-L, K-L-E-I-N with a K...
 I'll hold... OK, I'm still
 here... What? He's not in?
 FOR THE WEEK?!

Mel hangs up. He walks down the street. He has another card and dials.

MEL

Hi, I was calling to check on
 the time of an interview...

Mel flips phone down, dials another number, back and forth.

MEL

Hi, yes. I'm calling because
 I am scheduled for over a
 week... Yes, I made schedule
 for it Monday at 9 AM. No,

no, no, no, no, no, are you kidding me? This is fucking, are you shitting me? Please tell me you didn't shit down my throat! Why not just take some ice cream, dip all this shit in it, jam it all the way down my goddamn throat, then when I shit again I'll have some caramel-nut-fucking-shit-flavored shit? You'd like that, shit!

Mel throws his cell at a parking meter. Mel is crying again, and runs through traffic.

13. EXT. CAFE - DAY

MEL walks into the cafe he was at before, head down. He gets his coat and papers from the front area and walks away.

14. INT. BUS - LATER DAY

MEL sits with a book in his lap. He slowly highlights a section. His cell phone, slightly broken, is on one side. He looks through the rest of the cars scattered in his coat pocket. He tears them up.

MEL

I'll show him. Him too.

Mel's broke-ass phone rings again. He picks it up.

MEL

Yeah?

LASZLO (VO)

Melvy, my man, what's up?

MEL (VO)

Hey... Laz, I'm... I guess I could be better.

LASZLO

Why you say that, man? Rosy got you by the balls.

MEL
No, it's just... Could we hang out later this week?

LASZLO (VO)
Sure, no sweat. Bring over any stuff.

MEL (VO)
Yeah, no, that hippie crap can stay with you.

LASZLO
OK, I'll give you a buzz.

Mel hangs up.

15. INT. MEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

ROSY is flipping through the pages of a LAW BOOK. MEL has his head in her lap on the bed. They're in pajamas.

ROSY
OK, here's one - What is the Standard Tort?

MEL
Torts... tarts... I don't know. I can't concentrate.

ROSY
I'll take that.

Rosy grabs a rubrics cube out of Mel's hands.

ROSY
If you focus on this, you'll feel better. Studying today keeps the bugs away.

MEL
Yeah... Mel don't like bugs... Bugs bite... Big bugs, like on the wall...

Rosy shuts the book.

ROSY

You can focus on this, I know you can. The test is locked-in. Then you just get another job.

MEL

(turns to her)

Did you listen to a word I said earlier?

ROSY

Yeah, the Horowitz guy said you didn't get the job.

MEL

More like I didn't get the job and then a 100-mile long mushroom cloud fell. Whole city's a mushroom now for me.

Mel does a mushroom cloud motion with his hands and voice.

ROSY

What? You're not making any-

MEL

Fungus, all fungal. All of them, all the firms have that thing, like that yeast infection. And I'm the... nevermind.

ROSY

Well, if they're so rotten, why not just get your own clients.

MEL

(eyes move)

My own clients? What do you mean?

ROSY

You find like a bunch of people who need a lawyer, and just go from there I guess. You know better how this stuff works.

MEL

(scratches head)

Hmm.... Yeah...

ROSY

(leans up, looks up at ceiling)
Just think - you get your own place, make a ton of dough, move out of your Mom's, get that house over on River Road, maybe buy that puppy I saw the other day at Roxanne's.. You'll do alright.

MEL

Maybe... maybe...

16. INT. BEDROOM - LATER NIGHT

MEL is at the computer on a website. He is looking at postings done by LAWYERS, blogging, looking for clients.

He sees a posting titled: SAVE NOW! SAVE NOW! BEST DEAL OF YOUR LIFE! Mel clicks it open, continues: SCHEFFIELD INC: WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU THROUGH DEFAMATION, DIVORCE, LIBEL, HIT & RUN, RUN.

Mel clicks it off. He opens a new window to type. He speaks out loud as he writes.

MEL

Mel Klein Firm - Junior Associate. Serving all over New Jersey... Change to italics, bold, quoting, quoting, Putting the Law in Lawyer, the "er" in Tiger... No, the Legal Professional. Yeah, LE-GA-L professional.

Mel takes a slight beat. He looks in his desk drawer. He looks around to see if ROSY is asleep. She is. He reaches a hand in the drawer. He pulls out a SHE-HULK action figure. He looks *lovingly*, rubs his finger over its arms.

MEL

Yeah... That's right...

Rosy murmurs something and we RUSH up to Mel's face as he CHUCKS the action figure back in the drawer, closing it shut. He twiddles his thumbs.

17. INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

MEL is finishing up his BAR EXAM. He closes his notebook shut, whistles up to the teacher at the desk.

18. INT. BEDROOM - DAY

MEL types out a BUSINESS CARD. He prints it out. HE copies and pasts the text and creates a posting on CRAIGSLIST.

PRINTER prints a FULL PAGE of cards

19. INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Mel cuts up some business cards. He scats to himself (*i.e. dee-doo, da-da*). Knock at the door. Mel goes to answer. LASZLO, early 30s, white t-shirt and trench coat and fedora.

LASZLO

Mr. K, how goes it?

MEL

Hey, Laz.

They go into the living room. Laszlo takes off his coat.

LASZLO

Looks like you're keeping busy.

MEL

Man, I'm inspired. This whole table here is all set for me, planned out.

LASZLO

All like a painter or something.

MEL

Y'know, I was looking for an analogy like that. I have to use that, forever. Thanks.

LASZLO

It's what I do... and sometimes sell a house.

MEL

Yeah, how's that going?

LASZLO

Like everything else, ups, downs. One day I get calls up my balls, my desk is covered top to bottom, contacts from this place and that. Next day I see a tumbleweed going by my desk.

MEL

(laughs)

Like, 'rollin', rollin', rollin'!

Laszlo doesn't get it. Mel shrugs.

MEL

So, you said you got something for me.

ROSY

Hey Mel.

ROSY appears behind Mel. He is a little startled.

MEL

Oh, uh, yeah, um...

LASZLO

Hey Roz.

Rosy gives a *look*.

ROSY

Yeah, uh, take my clothes to the cleaners, when you can, I mean.

MEL

Sure, later, thingies.

ROSY

Uh-huh.

She leaves the room. Mel rolls his eyes. Laszlo grins.

MEL

Whatever. So, the thing?

LASZLO

(pulls piece of paper from coat)
Yeah... It's a guy that I've talked to once or twice. Real good friends with this guy Paco at work. He'll give you the space you'll need to get all this started up.

Mel looks at an advertisement in a cut-out page from a local newspaper.

20. INT. BASEMENT - MONTAGE

A 20-something man, very short hair, lifts weights on a bench. *Tough, big, strong*, various poses. We also see him jump rope and meditate in a folded leg position, repeating a mantra.

LASZLO (VO)

Guy is hungry, frigging Jaws, man. Insurance broker, used to work for some big company. Something happened, not sure

what. He's out in some town
in Passaic county. I forget
which. He set up his own
insurance brokerage:
business, home, auto, you
name it, he hunts it.

21. EXT. CAFE - DAY

20-SOMETHING GUY walks out of a CAFE with coffee and bagel
in hand. Suit super clean cut, earpiece on. He walks by
two homeless people in succession. He drinks some coffee
and throws the cup to one of them.

20-SOMETHING GUY
Catch, my man.

LASZLO (VO)
Phone on all the time, two
lines, two secretaries, and
the guy is on, damn charming,
good talker, sharp dresser.
Fuckin' player. Best thing
is he's got this extra little
spot in his office for a
renter since he just moved in
- someone, say, a lawyer
perhaps.

20-SOMETHING Insurance Agent gets in car - nice car - and
drives off.

22. EXT. STREET - DAY

CU - PULLBACK - Newspaper cut-out: BOLTIN' BROKERAGE,
BALTHAZAR JANOWITZ - AGENT (details on address and phone
number in smaller print) - AUTO - HOME - BUSINESS - FREE
QUOTES!

MEL pulls down the article to see the building in front of
him - a STOREFRONT. Mel is dressed relatively sharp,
briefcase in hand.

23. INT. BOLTIN' BROKERAGE - MOMENTS LATER

MEL opens the front door. Two SECRETARIES are at desks,

both on the phone. One, CARMEN, is speaking Spanish very fast, frenzied even. The other, MAY, is twirling her hand and chewing bubble gum, giving name and basic info to someone on the other line. Both are early 20s, professional dressed, one perhaps with a low-cut blouse. May glances at Mel standing by the door looking like a kid at a new elementary school.

MAY

Hold on, Kevin, hold on. (to Mel) Can I help you?

MEL

Here to see Mr. Janowitz, ma'am.

MAY

Miss.

MEL

I'm sorry?

MAY

Miss. I'm not a ma'am.

MEL

Oh?

MAY

Not old enough to be ma'am.

MEL

No, right. OK then...

MAY

He'll be out one minute.

May goes back on the phone. Mel looks to the adjacent wall and sees a LOCAL NEWSPAPER CLIPPING with the line: YOUNG "BOLT" OF INSURANCE HITS NORTH JERSEY, with a picture of BALTHAZAR JANOWITZ, 20s, big grin, well kept profile.

The office space is spaced off into another room with a closed door to the left and to the right a fairly large cubicle. The two secretaries desks are in front with these other two spots in the back.

Balthazar Janowitz steps out of his office with a blue-tooth on. He walks to Mel while talking. He has his hand out already to be shook by the insurance agent.

BALTHAZAR
(to phone)

No, no, we can refund you the money for the two months, but... are you sure-(shakes hand)- that company wont be any better, you know... Well, sir, there's not much else I can do past twisting your arm off to beck back in here, if you did then I'd explain...

Mel stands not eying anything. *Bolt* senses his distance.

BALTHAZAR (contd)
OK, OK, listen, I'll call you back after I look over the revised policy. I guarantee it will be less. OK, OK, thanks, bye.

Balthazar taps his ear to turn the call off.

MEL
I Hope that wasn't too important a call.

BALTHAZAR
Nah, nah, these... people, man, they don't pay up on time, and then they wonder why I can't get them the better price. Sad, really, sad. But yeah, glad to see you found the place.

MEL
Oh, no problem at all.

BALTHAZAR
Good handshake, too. Oh, these are my secretaries, May and Carmen.

May feigns a smile. Carmen glances as she is on the phone.

BALTHAZAR

Well, instead of the usual
meet and talk, let's go for a
walk.

MEL

A walk - uh, sure OK, stretch
the legs.

BALTHAZAR

Yeah, leave your jacket, it's
hotter than a baboon's ass,
you know.

MEL

Ass, right, very good office,
very...

BALTHAZAR

You can say it - it's small.

MEL

No, I was going to say it has
space, character, good uh...
space?

BALTHAZAR

You sure you want to-

MEL

No, let's walk. Nice day out.

BALTHAZAR

Right. Hold my calls.

24. EXT. STEET - DAY

MEL and BALTHAZAR walk on a SMALL TOWN SREET, fairly
rundown, something like Paterson, only not.

BALTHAZAR

So, Mel. Let's not bullshit
the bullshitter. What are
your goals with this?

MEL

Long term- full time lawyer.
Right now, it's nothing
getting to it. No blocks,
but getting a bite and
sticking with it.

BALTHAZAR

Right... But, say, the cases
you're after, how big you
shooting for? You harpoon
whales?

MEL

Whales?

BALTHAZAR

That's the big grab, far as
anyone knows. It's all in
Darwin. The species of
clients you go after, say
people up in Rockland county
in New York or maybe the
nicer parts in Bergen, no?
Cats willing to put up their
Cadillacs, their 401K's.
Beaches whales, flopping
tales, blow-holes.

MEL

Yeah... But I like whales.

BALTHAZAR

I'll break it down - whatever
happens with what you're
doing, it's going to be five
hundred a month to rent the
cubicle in the corner. We'll
probably break it up at some
point, fresh air.

MEL

You know... I can make that.
Definitely. Sure 'nuff.

BALTHAZAR

Nuff? Enough, you mean, not *nuff*.

MEL

- Did I say that? It's just a reference-

BALTHAZAR

I don't do references or bad puns. Only *good* jokes. Now, shit's rough out there, but-

MEL

Yeah?

BALTHAZAR (contd)

Mr. Klein, it's the best time ever, right now, *today*, to get hungry. Look at all of this - this, just *kill it* out there and drag it in. The amount of business that'll flood in here is just... *pretty*.

MEL

Oh?

BALTHAZAR

Whatever - look, this neighborhood doesn't look it, but believe you-me, goldmine. The two girls go fast, *fast*.

MEL

Yeah.

BALTHAZAR

Fast, hey, yeah, and... where the hell was I? Let's go back.

MEL

Sounds good. So, mind if I move some stuff in now?

BALTHAZAR

Just finish by four, we close up then. You go to NY Law?

MEL

... How did you know?

BALTHAZAR

I know a guy who knows a guy who dropped your name once. Random thing, talking about something else entirely, said, "Some guy wrote an insane paper how to filet a jury, eat Jambalaya with their brains, play tennis with the judge."

MEL

Uh... yeah, wait, uh... What?

25. INT. OFFICE - LATER IN DAY

MEL puts down his computer onto his desk. A giggly-sounding pop song plays low volume by one of the girl's desks. Balthazar leans by a desk, headset line on hold. He paces back and forth.

BALTHAZAR

(to Mel)

No phone line yet.

MEL

Oh. Well, internet then.

BALTHAZAR

Good for that. But yeah, don't care about what I said before. That paper, hell, I didn't even finish at FDU. You're good for rent, that's all I need for now.

MEL

Gotcha.

BALTHAZAR

(to girls)

One texts, one playing
solitaire. Can I play?

MAY

Waiting on a call.

BALTHAZAR

Wait and bake, girls, wait
and bake. (to phone) Oh yes,
sir, no sir, I was not
holding long.

May gives a look like 'yeah, whatever'.

We PULL IN on Mel as he plugs in his computer... Monitor to
Desk... Files in drawer.

26. INT. OFFICE - DAY

Mel looks around for a moment to see if anyone is looking.
He pulls something out one of the boxes he brought in. He
puts it at the far end of his desk. We don't see what it
is, only his face. He cracks his knuckles, like he's
getting away with something.

27. INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A TRIAL is going on in the courtroom. Two dozen or so sit
in seats in attendance.

MEL, sitting in the back, looks on. The LAWYER, 40-
something, bald, pasty, on the left is wiping his brow.
Mel takes a note to himself and we see him write down:
Wipes brow... need to look pasty? Must get vampire.

The OTHER LAWYER, a woman, early 30s, sharp-dressed and
prissy, is questioning the witness, an OLD MAN fumbling
with his teeth.

LAWYER

Mr. Forman, can you describe
for the court what the young
woman said to you at the
diner?

OLD MAN

She, uh, the woman, miss?

LAWYER

Yes, Mrs. Scott, defendant.

Mel POV: eyes dart to defendant. Mel writes down: *Eyes darting, she knows this man... cutesy too, prrr.*

OLD MAN

I said to her, "would you pay for your bill?"

LAWYER

And could you describe how she reacted to that sensible question?

The Old Man's teeth are hanging off the roof of his jowl.

OLD MAN

I, uh, I vood fay gee was fe.

LAWYER

I-I'm, sorry, your honor.

JUDGE

Mr. Forman, will you be able to speak coherently for the court today without that?

MR. FORMAN

I'm forry.

The OTHER LAWYER stands up abruptly.

MALE LAWYER

Your honor, please, may I approach the bench?

JUDGE

Please.

Mel's cell phone suddenly goes off, vibrating, and his concentration is broken. He flips it open.

MEL

Mel Klein, junior associate.

28. INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

ROSY

Hun, you sitting down?

MEL (VO)

I can't talk much now, I'm in court.

ROSY

How are you in court?

27. INT. COURTROOM - CONT'D

MEL

No, I'm watching a case, taking note, cracking down.

28. INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

ROSY

Mel, listen - I have an envelope here from the Bar association or something. Is this what I think it is?

27. INT. COURTROOM - CONT'D

Mel's eyes ZING up.

MEL

Open it!

28. INT. KITCHEN - CONT'D

ROSY

Are you sure that's alright, you know-

27. INT. COURTROOM - CONT'D

MEL

(quiet)

Go, for God sakes, open!

Wait, what? Mel, we got to
do something spe-

MEL
No time, no time.

ROSY (VO)
Me-

Rosy is cut off as Mel hangs up the phone.

MEL
No time except for a dime.

Mel does a little dance out of the courthouse.

30. INT. OFFICE - DAY

Mel prints out a business card. Pages print out in furious succession... Scissors cut down... Mel cuts his finger, still bops away with excitement... finger in mouth, humming to a non-existent song only playing in his head.

CU: FLYER pops into view:

MEL KLEIN AGENCY - "THE LEGAL PROFESSIONALS" - Libel -
Divorce - Assault - Personal Injury - Criminal.

Below these words is a picture, a drawing, as if clipped from Google, of a silhouette of a lawyer giving a speech to a jury. Mel gives a satisfied nod.

31. EXT. STREET - DAY

MEL goes up to cars slipping flyers under windshield wipers.

32. EXT. SUPERMARKET DOOR - DAY

MEL hands out fliers to anyone coming out.

33. EXT. PARKING LOT - DAY

An OLD LADY pushing a cart is coming up to MEL. Mel smiles and hands out a flier. The Old Lady HITS Mel over and over with an umbrella in her car and waddles to her car.

34. EXT. STREET - DAY

MEL tapes up two fliers to a pole - a *ridiculous* amount.

35. EXT. STREET - DAY

MEL sees a CUTE DOG tied to a parking meter. He goes to put a flier in its mouth. It takes the flier gingerly.

36. EXT. DOOR - DAY

MEL splashes a whole bottle of POWER DRINK over his head.

DISSOLVE TO:

37. INT. OFFICE - AFTERNOON

MEL sits at his desk. He snaps his fingers and does a chant to wake himself up.

BALTHAZAR is talking on his blue-tooth, walks over to Mel.

BALTHAZAR

(to phone)

That's terrible man,
terrible. Tell Luiz to
notarize it, and just sent it
to me... No, it's fine, they
are paying two hundred more
there. I'll cut it in half
with Jersey Valley. Trust
me... Ok, you too, you too,
buh-bye.

He clicks off.

BALTHAZAR (contd)

Clients - buy the policy or
don't, it's that goddamn
simple.

MEL

Right on.

BALTHAZAR

Gearing up, it looks like.

MEL

Oh yeah - mind if I put some of my cards up front?

BALTHAZAR

Cool as ice. Let me see one.

CU: Mel hands Balthazar a business card.

BALTHAZAR

Mhm. *The Legal Professionals*; isn't it just *professional*?

MEL

Not necessarily. I'm a professional in more ways than one, after all.

BALTHAZAR

Yeah. Look, I don't want to make you feel like you're not getting far, but fliers, no.

MEL

No?

BALTHAZAR

Fuck and No. No Capital Fuck No, jumbo ice cream sized.

MEL

You... don't make sense, Bolt. Not at all.

BALTHAZAR

Look, see, I'm not an old-timer, but I know the way to put your business out there is not this and the - *this*. Nobody looks at fliers. Let me guess, you were strolling around like one of those dunces putting 'em under windshield wipers?

MEL

I-

BALTHAZAR

(looks at flier)

Business cards are good, but you got to get better ones than, fucking... is that a *courtroom*?

MEL

I think showing the process right there should be the thing.

BALTHAZAR

OK... You ever heard of the story of the lion with the thorn in his paw?

MEL

Um, yeah, I think so...

MAY

Bolt, you got a call on-

BALTHAZAR

Message! OK, paw, story... So, the lion gets a thorn stuck in its paw, lying there - lion there, but anyway, it's in total agony, doesn't know what to do. A mouse strolls by, sees the lion with the paw, crying out, most vulnerable it's ever been since it was a cub. What does the mouse do?

MEL

He gets the thorn out?

BALTHAZAR

No! I mean, yes. Here's what the mouse does - it leaves. Little piece of shit comes back with a gigantic tractor, a long cable, and a mountain of pain meds, makes the lion chug it down. The

mouse hires a whole crew out on contract, whole fucking mice squad, gathers the Rodent news, and then takes that tractor and ties it up to the thorn on the paw, and WHAM, paw is gone, doctor stitches him up, whole place erupts in applause, and you know what? The fucking lion is *ecstatic*.

MEL

Um... cause the paw is gone?

BALTHAZAR

ARGH! Jesus, man, the mouse is the goddamn Godfather! He's built himself up as the fucking man - mouse. He's not just cool with the lion: he's got it made through the whole jungle. *Be the mouse* - start on Craigslist, websites. You got it in you, man. You're the mouse for the job.

MEL

Yeah... You know, you are right.

BALTHAZAR

I know I am. Pistachio?

MEL

Oh, sure.

Balthazar gets a handful of pistachios and walks away.

Mel shrugs and clicks on to Craigslist on his monitor. He copies and pastes his business card.

38. INT. OFFICE - AFTERNOON (LATER)

MEL looks at the clock, quietly scating to himself. He looks over as MAY and CARMEN are putting on their jackets

to leave. He picks up his coat. His eyes catch onto what's on his desk. He takes a beat and sighs.

We see a SHE-HULK action figure. He brushes a finger across her/its face. He has a determined look.

39. EXT. ROAD - DUSK

MEL'S CAR, a small compact car, drives by, little to no traffic on a quiet road.

40. INT. MEL'S CAR - MOVING - CONT'D

Mel is driving his car, tapping his fingers to some upbeat pop jingle. We see his POV outside.

A FIGURE has a thumb out - hitchhiking - on the opposite side of the road.

Mel is driving by this figure. It's a BEARDED YOUNG MAN in a military-style uniform.

MEL

Paw... mouse... paw.

41. EXT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL'S CAR does a 180 on the road and drives up to BEARDED YOUNG MAN. Mel opens up the door.

MEL

Where you headed?

MAN

Montclair, I guess.

MEL

Guess? Come on, getting dark out there.

MAN

OK.

Bearded Young Man gets in on passenger side - drives off.

42. INT. CAR - CONT'D

There is some silence where neither MEL or BEARDED YOUNG MAN says anything Mel glances, scans down at the man's uniform: little dirty, dark stain on a sleeve of one side.

MEL
Like music? Pass the time a
little...

Mel turns up the volume a little, tapping his fingers on the wheel, oblivious. The Bearded Man, sulking, starts to tear up, trying to hold back his sobbing.

MEL
What, what did I do? Song
making you sad? I can do
better.

MAN
I'm sorry, I... I'm an
Admiral.

MEL
(slight beat)
Yeah... ah, there's tissues
in the uh, there.

ADMIRAL
Thanks.

Admiral takes tissues out of glove compartment, blows nose.

MEL
So, mind if I ask, what's got
you down?

ADMIRAL
I just got out of jail.

MEL
(concerned)
... Uh, say what?

ADMIRAL
I would still be there if I
hadn't followed the nautical
meter to six and three

quarters. I watch the machine and it tells me what to do, but this time I just... I couldn't stop...

MEL

I see... uh, you sure I can't-

ADMIRAL

I told her about it, I told her about the compass carrying the venereal disease with turtle spots, she didn't listen! I didn't do a thing. Threw me in, cop messed my suit up. I don't know what I'll do...

Mel's mind is turning - the wheels in head are *spinning*.

MEL

Tell me, just curious - what was the official charge?

ADMIRAL

Oh, I don't know... stuff, sodomy, assault something. I don't know, remember anything either. That's the crazy thing. I see too many butterflies too on the deck.

MEL

I see...

ADMIRAL

(crying)

I'm just an Admiral! I was there to get Private Richter over to the sick-bay. There's no jubilation anymore. I need some, be, in jubilation! JUBILANT! I need cheesecake.

MEL

It's ok, hey, hey, it's ok.

43. EXT. ROADSIDE - CONT'D

MEL pulls his car to the side of the road.

44. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL

Can I ask you something?

ADMIRAL

If it's sodomy, I already had today, so-

MEL

What, no, Jesus. Look, did they appoint you an attorney, or do you have one yet?

ADMIRAL

No. My mother posted me out but she didn't stick around. She yelled at me, cursed the Sgt. Stevens.

MEL

I'll tell you what - I'm Mel Klein, associate at the Mel Klein Agency. Card... card.

Mel fumbles in the back for a card. He gives Admiral a flyer. It flips in the Admiral's hand. His eyes light up at the sight of the COURTROOM design. They shake hands

ADMIRAL

Admiral Yan Von Sternberg.

45. EXT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

MEL'S CAR pulls up to an apartment building. ADMIRAL opens up the passenger side door.

ADMIRAL

This is where. Ok, meet you um, later this week, I guess.

MEL

Can you do Friday?

ADMIRAL

Friday it be. Mr. Mel, this
is written!

MEL

You know, I like that.

The Admiral closes the door.

MEL

It is written...

Mel opens up the car door and closes it again from the
inside. He nods his head in contemplation.

46. EXT. APARTMENT - CONT'D

MEL'S CAR drives off. We PULL BACK to see the ADMIRAL is
facing the door, not moving, head moving around.

47. INT. OFFICE - DAY

MEL sits at his desk. He clicks his mouse - MONITOR: Email
opens, 35 NEW MESSAGES IN INBOX.

MEL

Si, si, si!

CARMEN, getting water out of the nearby cooler, glances
over with a raised eyebrow.

Mel looks at emails - we see them scroll by - Nigerian scam
emails, Penis Enhancements, Bookstore coupons, complete
gibberish, Drawings of midgets. Finger double-clicks.

MEL

Here's one.

48. INT. OFFICE - DAY (LATER)

The following appears in JUMP CUTS:

MEL

(phone receiver picks up)
 Hi, may I speak to Mrs.
 Barbara Harry, please? Hi, I
 saw your email... 2:30,
 sounds great, um... AM?
 Isn't that kind of late? ...
 Hi, I'm calling Mr. Jenn...
 uh, no, I didn't, um... Is
 this a property dispute or,
 yeah, you want Boltin'... no,
 that's the name of it,
 really... no, I'm not
 ordering Chinese food,
 sorry... Hi, I'm calling for,
 yes, your Mommy is home? Is
 she cutting Daddy? You may
 need to call 911 with that?
 Oh, she's smiling? No
 problem, drink your milk...
 Yes, I'll hold... Hi, is this
 Tara Satana? I got your
 email about... me? Um, well,
 if you must know, I'm six
 foot two inches, and I love
 the law and comic books and
 uh my music and just living
 life, what about you? Yeah,
 that's great... Well, I know
 what you're wearing, is it
 something that glows in the
 dark or... what, who's this?

Mel SLAMS phone down.

MEL
 (to self)
 ... I love your voice, mister
 sexy?

Mel glances over at SHE-HULK on his desk. He relaxes for a moment. His CELL PHONE rings and he jumps a little.

MEL
 Uh, hello, Mel Klein Agency?

ROSY (VO)

Hon, what's up?

MEL

Oh, Rosy, hi, uh, yeah, good to hear you there.

ROSY (VO)

Mel? Everything good? You sound kind of weird.

MEL

Oh, no-no, just a-a little, tiny busy at work. Keeping busy, building forts and stuff. I am keepin' it cool.

ROSY (VO)

... Yeah. When will you be home? Your mother wants to know to cook or not.

Mel looks over across the office. CARMEN, MAY and BALTHAZAR are chatting, quite audibly from across the room.

ROSY (VO)

Melvy?

MEL

Yeah, not till lat, I got a lot of work to catch up on. Lots of reeling em' in.

ROSY (VO)

Right, you keep it up.

MEL

Yeah... you too.

ROSY (VO)

What?

MEL

No, nothing. Later.

Mel closes his cell phone. A conversation across the room clearer to hear. We move in slowly on this.

MAY

I tried on the phone for an hour, she's totally unmovable.

BALTHAZAR

Shit, I'll give *her* an unmovable, right like, you-know-what.

MAY

Please. Don't talk about "the sack" today.

CARMEN

Oh, yo, I gotta tell you two. You know that crazy roommate I got last month?

BALTHAZAR

Salvadorian? *Pancho Villa*?

CARMEN

What? No - it's a *she*.

BALTHAZAR

Hey, I'm not dumb.

MAY

(phone at ear)

Pancho who? Yes, I'll hold. That coffee guy, right?

CARMEN

I'm trying to tell something here. So, she's got this guy over, I don't know who, didn't see him. I'm like in my room trying to read my *Vogue* that's all, just reading it. Now, this is the first time she's had anyone in her room, so-

MAY

I see where this is going.

CARMEN

I hear a lot of kissing, lot
of talk like (says dirty line
in Spanish), *ay Papi*.

MEL

(laughs)

That's great.

They all glance at Mel like "huh?"

CARMEN

Now, I try and block them
out, but it starts to get
totally crazy - ass slapping,
they turn on this like crazy
club music, I turn on my
music on my player. Then,
about five minutes go by...
through my headphones I hear
the loudest fucking
screeching ever. She's
wailing and cackling - it
ain't human, know what I mean?

BALTHAZAR

Seriously?

CARMEN

I'm serious, fucking bitch
was, I swear. You seen those
dinosaur movies, with those
uh, shit, not like a T-Rex.

MAY

Triceratops, Stegosaurus,
Pterodactyl?

CARMEN

No, no...

BALTHAZAR

Raptor?

CARMEN

That's it, that's it-

Mel is *glowing*.

CARMEN (contd)
-bitch was wailing out like
(weak raptor imitation).

MEL
No, no, no, no! That's not a
raptor! Let me show you how
it's done!

Mel goes into his "impression" of a raptor. Balthazar, May, Carmen look more than a little stunned at his contortions. Carmen starts laughing out loud. May laughs a little as if not sure what else to do and goes back on the phone. Balthazar stares like a dog at an empty bowl.

MEL
If she was, uh, like *that*,
then that's raptor.

BALTHAZAR
That was - *that*... Huh?

MEL
I just went with it. You've
got to feed your inner raptor.

CARMEN
Wow, you crazy, man.

MEL
So, off to grab the lion!

Mel grabs his jacket and briefcase and exits. Balthazar puts up a faint nod.

BALTHAZAR
Anything else to that story?

CARMEN
No, not really.

He almost says something, shakes his head and walks away.

49. INT. MEL'S CAR - MOVING - DAY

Mel opens up a CD FOLDER. He pulls out a disc with a label - FUN TIMES - in magic marker. He pops it in the player. A FUN SONG pops on.

50. EXT. ROAD - DAY

MEL'S CAR drives along blow an overpass.

51. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL keeps his eyes darting: ROAD, ROADSIDE, ROAD, ROADSIDE.

MEL
Soda. Soda first.

JUMP CUT:

52. INT. CAR - DAY

MEL has a GIGANTIC 7-11 style soda in one hand while steering with the other. His eyes catch something out of the window: A LITTLE OLD LADY is walking along with LARGE BAGS OF GROCERIES.

Mel turns the steering wheel - fast, almost too fast.

53. EXT. ROADSIDE - CONT'D

Mel's car comes close to LITTLE OLD LADY, enough to startle her. The front tire comes right up against her grocery bag. The side window rolls down. Mel is all smiles.

MEL
Hi! Need a lift?

OLD LADY
Oh, I'm just walking to my grandson's. He's not well.

MEL
Not well, right, right.
Well, I'm going that way.
Need a lift?

OLD LADY
Why that would be so gracious of you, I can't-

MEL

Think nothing of it.

Mel gets out of the car. He picks up the groceries and CHUCKS then in the back seat. He fixes the groceries that have fallen out back in the bags. Still smiling.

54. INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

OLD LADY

It's so hot out. All day
just, this heat.

MEL

It's unbearable. Abnormal.

OLD LADY

But, you know, when you're my
age, you put your children
first, your grandchildren.

MEL

They are our future. Well,
maybe not yours, but well...
in general.

OLD LADY

I love Jakey to death. But
my son, he's such a bastard.

MEL

I see. He, uh, you don't
mind telling me this?

OLD LADY

If only all men were like you
we would have a nation of
princes. I have never had
this happen. But my son, he
is such a, oh God, he comes
home at night, and he is
always drunk, the bastard.

MEL

Oh really?

OLD LADY

I have given that man every chance, but I just can't, I mean my body... it isn't what it used to be.

MEL

Yeah, sure. Is your house-

OLD LADY

If only I could throw that bastard out. But that kid, you know, he is - it is the house on Maple, 3rd - he is such a darling.

MEL

(perks up)

I might be able to help you.

OLD LADY

With my grandson? He's got just terrible digestion, he has trouble swallowing and then with his gall bladder and the tremors I get-

MEL

I'm a lawyer. I'm with uh...

Mel takes a beat, snaps his fingers.

OLD LADY

You're a lawyer? You're so young!

MEL

I'm with the law firm of Horowitz, Feinberg and McCormick. Take a card.

He opens the glove compartment and hands her a card.

OLD LADY

Mel Klein - Why do I need a lawyer?

MEL

Let me pull over here, I'll explain.

55. EXT. ROAD - CONT'D

MEL'S CAR pulls over to the side.

56. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL

Here's what I can do. A restraining order...

57. EXT. HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

The OLD LADY waves to her house. MEL puts the groceries up on the porch. He's sweating a storm.

OLD LADY

Thank you so much. You know what you are?

MEL

What's that, ma'am?

OLD LADY

A *Mensch*. A pure *Mensch*.

MEL

Naw, nah.

OLD LADY

So you will call me soon about this?

MEL

I can pick you up. My office is just ten miles away.

58. INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

MEL closes the door and looks in the rear-view mirror.

MEL

You... you're awesome.

59. EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

MEL'S CAR drives along on the highway.

60. EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

MEL'S CAR pulls up alongside a MALE HIPPIE, 40-something, with a LITTLE KID, about eight.

61. INT. CAR - DAY

HIPPIE sits in passenger seat. KID HIPPIE in back.

HIPPIE

So, the cop pulls us over. I tell him right off, "I don't know any of the 'you-know-what.'", so-

KID

Dad, that's not how it went!

HIPPIE

Like, "Hey, Mr. Officer-man -ser...vant, you respect my space," I tell him next.

MEL

Respecting space, right, privacy. Your right, totally.

KID

Dad, you had a pound of pot, deal with it!

HIPPIE

Little man, you know, this whole thing you're saying here, you can cut it out. It's not cool. I teach him a cool streak every day, teach you to respect the man, me, him, men, everyone, and this is what I get back.

KID

It was a pound.

HIPPIE
Dime.

KID
Pound.

HIPPIE
Twenty.

KID
POUND!

HIPPIE
QUARTER, like, MOST!

KID
... Pound.

MEL
Smart kid there.

HIPPIE
OK, like, pull over, man-

62. EXT. ROADSIDE - AFTERNOON

MEL is in some heavy traffic. A HEFTY WOMAN is waiting for a bus nearby.

JUMP CUT TO:

MEL opens CAR DOOR. Smile.

63. INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

MEL
And what did he do then?

HEFTY WOMAN
I-I don't know if I can say.

MEL
It's OK, really. It stays in this car.

Mel taps a window, as if to emphasize.

HEFTY WOMAN

It was... It was in the break room. And he, Mark, he was just his usual, chatty, nothing important. I lean for my coffee, and...

MEL

Yes?

HEFTY WOMAN

Oh, do I have to spell it out for you?! He had his hands groping my breasts!

MEL

... Oh! I see. Wow...

64. EXT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

The passenger-side door SLAMS shut. Mel drives slowly along. Other cars HONK their horns behind him.

MEL

Come on, I didn't mean it - of course it was just one hand!

HEFTY WOMAN

That's TWICE in one day!

MEL

Oh, really! I had my hands here, whole time - (puts hands on wheel) - see, no touch, nothing! Please, miss, you have a strong case!

HEFTY WOMAN

(pauses)

Fine, give it to me.

Mel hands her a card. She SWIPES it away from his hand.

65. INT. CAR - NIGHT

MEL is still driving along. His phone rings. He keeps

eyes mostly on side of the road, only glancing to front.

MEL

Mel Klein, the legal
professionals, err,
professional.

ROSY (VO)

Hey.

MEL

Hey, what's shaking?

ROSY (VO)

Just checking in.

MEL

Yeah, busy - busy, busy.

ROSY (VO)

Oh, so you think you finally
have some clients?

MEL

Maybe, could be, who knows.

ROSY (VO)

Good... Good...

MEL

So, anything else up?

ROSY (VO)

Well, I was just checking the
charge account, and there was
a really big payment made to
something-

Mel sees something out of the side window.

ROSY (VO) (CONT'D)

Something called Forbidden
Pla-

MEL

No time, gotta go, later!

ROSY (VO)

Wait, hun!

Mel closes then phone. He pulls over.

65. EXT. ROADSIDE - CONT'D

A SINGLE YELLOW LIGHT looms above as a GAUNT MAN, early 30s, unshaven, is leaning against a pole.

MEL

Hi? Need a lift?

66. INT. CAR - MOMENTS LATER

MEL and GAUNT MAN share an uncomfortable silence. Mel offers the man a stick of gum. He accepts one, carefully, even methodically unwrapping it.

MEL

So, pretty cold out.

GAUNT MAN

What?

MEL

Weather, the uh, temperature, is it cold out?

GAUNT MAN

Not particularly. Two blocks down, make a left.

MEL

Yeah... So, live around here?

GAUNT MAN

Huh?

MEL

Live, around *here*?

GAUNT MAN

I heard you. I don't like

small talk.

MEL
Uh-huh. So, uh-

GAUNT MAN
Single price is twenty.

MEL
I'm sorry?

GAUNT MAN
Pull up here. Twenty to
suck, ten plus to cum. Fuck
is thirty-five, anal forty.
Hot Carl runs for fifty. No
cum up the ass, only back.

Mel is frozen. He lets out a tiny guttural sound.

MEL
Hot, ho- what?

GAUNT MAN
Just five for a jerk, extra
dime if you need the reach-
around.

MEL
Ok, yeah, good, swell, uh,
I'm not gay.

GAUNT MAN
(turns head)
Really?

MEL
Y-Yeah.

Gaunt Man stares *hard* at Mel.

GAUNT MAN
Alright.

67. EXT. ROADSIDE - CONT'D

GAUNT MAN exits out of the car.

GAUNT MAN

Thanks.

Gaunt Man stands up against a light. Mel drives away FAST.

68. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL

Bye, uh... Carl...

69. INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

MEL walks down the stairs to the basement. He loosens his tie like he's just come back from battle.

Mel goes over to the chest in the corner and opens it up.

70. INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

MEL paces back and forth, his action figures assembled.

MEL

I am so ready for it, you have no idea. I ask you guys, what chance do I have with these clients? It's like a crap-shoot, just lining them up there and having the judge knock them down with a peg. Or uh, not a peg, what was it, a slammer, that's it, I got the goddamn slammer in my fist. Thoughts?

CU shots: Action figures lack of response.

MEL

Oh, I see, silent treatment now. Let's see, let's see... for the pot guy, no contest, he'll just drop it. Shit, hope he's not high when he gets there, guy might bed for some incense or something.

Liberals... OK, then, uh,
that fat lady, a... yeah, no-
no, *husky*, that's the word,
'Your honor, my client, this
ravishing husky woman before
you, has-

ROSY (OS)

Mel?

ROSY is at the foot of the stairs. Mel SCRAMBLES, figure
after figure (seen in quick cuts) chucked back into the
chest as Rosy comes down the stairs.

ROSY

Mel?

MEL

Oh, uh, uh, Rosy, hi,
goodnight, uh, good morning!
Nice hair.

Mel has a figurine of an ELEPHANT in his hand.

ROSY

What's that? I heard voices.

MEL

Oh, this? This is an
elephant. Why do you ask?

ROSY

Why are you talking with an
elephant in the middle of the
night - in your underwear?

MEL

Oh, this? This is just -
see, my little cousin Davy
called and asked for
elephant, and I told him I-

ROSY

Davy? The one in Vermont?

MEL

Yeah, he needed an elephant
and I happened to have one
down here, uh, somewhere, you
know. Never know when you
might need it.

Mel rubs the elephant trunk with his fingers. Rosy frowns.

ROSY

Now what are you doing?

MEL

Well, you know, we're down
here, late at night, want to,
you know...

ROSY

(shakes her head)

One, it's too late, and two,
I'm just not in the...
whatever, just come to bed.

MEL

Of course, yeah, my clothes.

Rosy walks back up the stairs. She looks BACK DOWN as Mel
rubs the temple of his forehead. She finds the whole thing
plain *odd*.

Mel taps the trunk of the elephant.

71. INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The GAVEL is hit down twice by the JUDGE'S hand. The Judge
is old, white, authoritative, no bullshit. We PULL BACK
from the Judge, see the rest of the New Jersey courtroom,
nearly packed with a mixed crowd racially.

JUDGE

Alright. Cases will be heard
by priority, that means if
you're here with a violation,
your name will be called, but
you can speak with the
prosecutor. If you would
like the plead your case, and
if you have a lawyer...

We see MEL KLEIN listening to voice messages on his cell phone through a one-ear earpiece.

JUDGE (contd)

We will also have at 5:30 a live person on this television right on the side of the wall. If I'm correct, no other today on there, so... First on my list, all traffic cases, if I call your name, you can step out into the hall.

As the judge calls out an assortment of names, we see sitting next to Mel is HIPPIE, his KID, both picking their ears to some extent. The HEFTY WOMAN is walking up the aisle. Mel gives a look, big smile and a finger point as if 'hey, you're here!' They speak softly as possible.

HEFTY WOMAN

I brought my file, in case you needed-

MEL

No problem, no problem, Miss.

HEFTY WOMAN

Misses - Janice Day.

MEL

Janice Day, Janice Day. I'm sorry, I'm listening to my messages, I - is the other guy coming?

JANICE

(taken aback)

You don't know? I called you with the information. Weren't we going to sit down to talk about a settlement, and then you said to come here?

MEL

Yes, but - but, the judge
might see it another way,
could throw it out.

JANICE

Throw it out? Are you nuts?
Why would I want it thrown
out? This was sexual
harassment!

MEL

Y-Yes, but, the guy isn't - I
don't know why he's not here,
and I'm also waiting on
another client to show, and-

JUDGE

Wallace, Daniel P.

The HIPPIE, Daniel, stands up.

DANIEL

Yes, your honor.

MEL

Excuse me, one second.

Janice sits down.

DANIEL

I have uh, er, legal
representing and things here,
the like.

JUDGE

And, you are?

MEL

Mel Klein, your honor.

JUDGE

Don't believe we have been
introduced.

MEL

Well, no, but-

JUDGE

Your client has been charged
with marijuana possession.
Arresting officer is here?

A OFFICER

Yes, your honor

JUDGE

In the amount of... I see a
pound it says here. How do
you plead?

DANIEL

Look, like, law, sir like-

MEL

Please, Mr. Wallace. Your
honor, my client has a
witness who can state
undeniably that it was not in
the amount that was put down
by the officer.

JUDGE

That being?

MEL

The defendant's son.

JUDGE

I would like, Mr. Klein, a
simple guilty or not guilty
by you or the defendant. I
would hope it would be you,
since you are his counsel.

MEL

Oh, absolutely. Counsel
says, well, not guilty.

JUDGE

(to officer)

Intent to distribute? I
don't see it here.

A OFFICER

He had it well hidden, but because of the factor of the child I took him away out to safety.

DANIEL

A *dime*, man, it was a goddamn dime the size of a thumbtack!

DANIEL'S KID

Papa-

JUDGE

(gavel)

Mr. Klein, please keep your client calm, this is a courtroom.

MEL

(turning pale)

Yes, your honor.

JUDGE

I hear two stories here, and I have to make a decision on the facts. The difference between a pound of marijuana and a much smaller amount of narcotics is the difference between distribution and possession. But because of the child the situation is far more delicate. Where is the mother?

DANIEL

Divorced. Split custody and such.

JUDGE

Can you offer anything to counter the officer, Mr. Klein?

MEL

Why, yes, your honor. I have a medical record of a urinary

test given to Mr. Wallace by his employer two days after the arrest. He was put on bail as it says in the-

JUDGE

Yes, yes, but I do not see it in front of me.

MEL

Right, OK.

Mel shuffles through his paperwork, quickly.

JUDGE

That too, Mr. Klein, as you should know is irrelevant. Your client's charge by the officer in Paterson was "possession with intent to distribute." A fine can be given as a misdemeanor, but it's moot whether or not the marijuana was in Mr. Wallace's system. Does the child have a medical record? It still stands as I see it, that there is no evidence to the contrary by you or your client of intent to distribute, is that correct? No other witnesses?

MEL

I-I have the boy as-

JUDGE

I won't allow it - the boy has a *bias*.

MEL

But, your honor.

JUDGE

No buts. If you change the verdict to guilty I can reduce the penalty. Otherwise, we'll need more evidence.

Daniel gives a look to Mel. Mel closes his eyes for a long beat, or what seems like it to him. Opens. Soft voice.

MEL

Guilty.

JUDGE

What was that?

MEL

Guilty, your honor.

KID

What? No! This is bullshit!

Judge hits gavel.

MEL

Please, please.

Daniel hangs his head low.

JUDGE

Sentence will be six weeks in the Passaic county correctional facility, with a fine of three thousand dollars. I assume Mr. Wallace's son will be in the care of the mother?

DANIEL

(meekly)

Yes, your honor.

Judge hits gavel. Daniel is taken away by two officers.

JUDGE

OK then, next on-

JANICE
(stands up)
Your honor.

JUDGE
Are you next?

MEL
(quietly)
What are you doing?

JANICE
Janice Day, sexual harassment
suit. I was wondering if I
could just go right now to
the prosecutor in the hall to
talk.

JUDGE
With your lawy-

JANICE
No. I need to switch
counsel, if possible.

MEL
Um... huh?

JUDGE
That's fine. I'll make a
note here. Next up, Mr...

The Judge talks on.

Janice picks up her things and walks out. Others look on at her as she leaves. Some eyes are on Mel Klein. He tries to keep his composure.

72. EXT. COURTHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

MEL loosens his tie. He needs to catch his breath on the steps of the building. He opens his cell phone.

CU: Missed Call - Number. He puts the phone to his ear.

MEL
Yes, yes, today don't suck,

today don't suck.

There is a TUG on his jacket. Mel looks down. The HIPPIE KID is standing there, wiping away tears.

KID

Can I w-wait with you till my
mom comes?

Mel gives a look as if 'really?'

73. INT. BOLTIN' BROKERAGE - DAY

MEL goes to his desk and PLOPS in the chair. He rubs his eyes, takes off his tie. He notices a BLINKING RED LIGHT on his answering machine. Sigh of relief. He hits play.

OLD LADY (VO)

This is to Mel Klein of
Horowitz, F... can't read
this name. I couldn't get
out of the house, I had to go
to the hospital. I was going
outside of my house, and, and
I was so dizzy, I saw spots
and, oh God, that son of
mine, that bastard. When I
get home my grandson can help
me, because my mind is still
sharp, it's just that my
hands can't hold the knife-

BALTHAZAR taps the top of Mel's desk with his cell phone.

BALTHAZAR

Got a dead fish there, Mel?

Mel turns down the volume on the machine.

MEL

Reschedule, I guess.

OLD LADY (VO)

-If I walk again I'll drag by
the goddamn nipples...

BALTHAZAR

Things going well though,
right? I'll get my due for
the month, I mean?

MEL

(distracted)

Oh, of course. I have it
now, actually.

Mel opens his wallet, pulls out some bills. Balthazar counts as he talks - again after he finishes.

BALTHAZAR

I mean, though, you're
building up clients? You look
busy, that's a good start.

MEL

Keeping busy, man, keeping a
move on... I don't know.
It's rocky.

BALTHAZAR

Rocky times, sure. But you
got to be hungry, man. Bite
the beast, just bite that
fucking *lion* in the *balls*,
tear its lungs out just kill
it, kill it all.

MEL

Um, didn't you say to pull
the thorn out with the
bulldozer, or-

BALTHAZAR

Look, I see you going out
there, driving, picking up
whatever's out there. It's
bold. Keep it up, you're
going to be the next hero,
like Lincoln or the, uh, Two-
Face, whatever his name.

MEL

(proud)

Oh, I don't know about that.

BALTHAZAR

See, that's it - I see you got *it* in you. Knock on doors, step over people. Get the *power* going.

MEL

You're so right.

BALTHAZAR

Power's good.

MEL

Got to have the power. All of it.

BALTHAZAR

That's the spirit, you bold son of a bitch! Go out, **swarm!** Kill some fucking pandas if you gotta!

MEL

They're so *cute*.

BALTHAZAR

(snaps fingers)

Hold it, wait - May!

We SNAP to her. She turns her head.

MAY

Keep it down, please!

BALTHAZAR

I am going to do something I never do - help a brother out. Need some help?

MEL

Bolt, my man, lay it on me.

BALTHAZAR

(puts arm around shoulder)

I throw something your way, you throw something mine?

MEL

Like fly to paper.

Balthazar doesn't get it.

MEL

Whatever. So, what it be,
what it be? I'm pumped!

MAY

Uh... what is this about?

74. EXT. SIDEWALK - DAWN

Mel is walking through a CROWD OF PEOPLE near a BUS STOP.
He is trying to spot somebody.

BALTHAZAR (VO)

I was called about this guy,
young guy, getting him a
fantastic deal on some
insurance - auto, new
apartment, great deal - and
he has a gripe I think with
another guy, some kind of
accident, malpractice. Meet
up with him in Paramus?

MEL (VO)

What does he look like?

BALTHAZAR (VO)

Not really sure, never met
him. Young guy, long hair I
guess, maybe. Name Thomas
Mandy.

We see what Mel Sees - standing against a flagpole, long
hair, a hat, trench coat, fairly young. Mel walks up.

MEL

Excuse me, are you Thomas
Mandy, by any chance?

MANDY

(smiles)

Lawyer?

MEL
(shakes hands)
Mel Klein, at your service.

75. INT. CAR - MORNING

Mel's hands grip the steering wheel. His cell phone starts ringing. He takes a glance - (INSERT) Rosy - he looks over at Thomas Mandy. Mandy is flicking his fingers lightly against the window. He may very quietly mumbling to himself. Mel puts the phone away.

MEL
Mr. Mandy, I wasn't told very much by Mr. Janowitz about your, er, case. Just an accident, he said.

Mandy takes out a notepad and starts to write something.

MEL
Are those your records, notes of the accident?

MANDY
No, just my victims.

MEL
(faint chuckle)
Victims? Got clients, too?

MANDY
You might call them that. I call them slices of feathery flesh strewn all over my window and peeling down my sperm. It's very pretty, my little ducklings. They waddle and play outside my father's church... I love my church. You a God-loving fella, mister law?

MEL
... Church. Yeah, you know, that was not where I was going to ask-

MANDY

-Sometimes-

Mandy flips out a KNIFE - A BIG ONE. Mel's jaw drops and he nearly loses the grip of the car. We see this from the outside of the car, on a busy highway.

Mandy takes out a black and rotten PEAR. He cuts into it.

MANDY

-Sometimes, I have to write it all down. I wrote it in the Museum of Natural History years ago but things I put in mosquitoes in honor of my friend Joe who loved bugs no matter how little and the cosmos no matter how big. (sigh). Pear?

MEL

(meek)

Mr. Mandy, I-I-I don't want any trouble, I'm only a legal counsel for which you can retain, um, something?

MANDY

(chuckles)

I've got an answer for you, mister. I have it ready for all my customers-

MEL

Uh, look-

MANDY

-I'm tempted to just take it out wherever, but God's will says it not to be... but you...

Mandy starts to unzip the fly of his shorts.

MEL

No, No, NO! NO! FUCK NO! NO!

76. EXT. HIGHWAY - CONT'D

MEL'S CAR suddenly SWERVES OFF nearly falling into an embankment. It stops just in time.

77. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL tries to breathe in and out.

MEL

Please, don't kill me. No, I'll do anything, I-I have twenty bucks - twenty, no thirty, thirty-one. It's all yours, just don't touch me down there, please!

MANDY

WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM? You could've killed me like that! I was pulling out my little-

MEL

NO, NO GOD NO!

Mandy reaches into his pants. He pulls out a YELLOW RUBBER DUCKY. Mandy squeezes it a few times. It squeaks. Mandy smiles without a trace of irony.

MANDY

I sell these things at my congregation! I mean, what kind of salesman do you think I'd be if I just kept it out for someone to just take-

MEL

GET OUT!

MANDY

Don't be mad, it's just a gift! You don't have to pay!

Mel STORMS out of his car.

78. EXT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL whips around to the passenger side. He is freaking out, repeating 'Get out, get out!' at a sincerely stunned THOMAS MANDY. He opens the car door and picks him up by his trench-coat, FLINGIN G him as if with unknown strength out onto the grass of the roadside.

MANDY

Wait, WAIT! I said it's yours for FREE! At least have some pear!

The tires of Mel's car SCREECH away. He cuts off a car, it honking at Mel as gets back on the road.

79. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL

It's OK, Mel-man, it's OK. Happy place, safe, happy, happy, safe, uh, very happy-power, you got the power, crush, CRUSH, happy, fucking duck, duck... duck.... WHAT?!

80. INT. BOLTIN' BROKERAGE - DAY

BALTHAZAR has the phone to his ear, his face frozen, his eyes shifty.

BALTHAZAR

... Alright then... super... see you Monday.

Balthazar hands up the phone. He tries to hold it back, but laughs, howls even.

81. INT. MEL'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MEL is slumped on the recliner. We move in on his face. He rubs the temple of his forehead. He tries to do an "OMM" chant.

ROSY comes up behind him. She starts to rub his shoulders.

ROSY

Where have you been?

MEL

Me?

ROSY

No, the Pope, of course you.
I tried to call you today.
I've tried calling you a
number of days. You must be
reeling them in.

MEL

(quietly)

Oh... if you knew... if you
knew...

ROSY

You got tell me about things
you're doing.

Mel's eyes open and star at a GREEN WOOL SWEATER on the cabinet across the room. He is really *looking* at it, zoned to it - it starts to change color from dark green to BRIGHT, RADIOACTIVE hue. This happens as Rosy goes on, the sound of her voice dropping slowly.

ROSY

I know you don't think I have
any interest in your law
stuff. Your brain is so cute
some days, I just want to
have it all to my own. Hear
what I'm saying? ... Melvin?

Mel snaps up.

MEL

I've got to see something on
the computer.

Mel gets up and DASHES up the stairs.

ROSY

(shrugs)

Huh?

82. INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ROSY is pacing around, flipping through a magazine quickly, distracted. She looks up the stairs.

83. INT. UPSTAIRS HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

ROSY goes up to the door to the bedroom. Soft but audible music is heard - romantic, lovey-dovey stuff. She opens the door.

84. INT. BEDROOM - CONT'D

The room is DARK except for light coming from the COMPUTER MONITOR. There is soft moaning coming from MEL at the chair. ROSY squints - a SLIDESHOW of pictures scroll by on the monitor of SHE-HULK. She looks to see Mel is masturbating, unhurriedly, lovingly.

ROSY

What the **fuck** is that?

Mel freezes and then slowly spins around. Sheepish grin.

MEL

Hon, this is, err-a,
Research, nothing, it's,
she's nothing, she-

Mel scrambles to pull up his shorts. Rosy **stomps** over.

ROSY

Who-what! The hell is this?
Why do you have your cock out
to this? What are you,
twelve?

MEL

Please, Rosy, I-I can
explain. She's just a-

ROSY

What else is there?! Let's
look, shall we?

Rosy pulls out a drawer in the desk: SHE-HULK COMICS, lewd drawings (some hand-drawn and so amateur we can tell Mel

drew them). She's aghast at one that is crusty. Mel puts his hand over his face.

85. INT. STAIRWAY - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

ROSY is lugging a GARBAGE BAG full of clothes down the stairs. MEL is at the bottom.

ROSY

I can't get out if you're standing there.

MEL

Rosy, understand, it's not about you, per-say, it's-

Rosy pushes past him without much effort. She grabs her purse and a couple of other essentials laying around.

MEL (CONT'D)

It's just a simple crush, that's all! I can stop anytime.

ROSY

Mel, a picture might be a crush - might - you have got a fucking *nerd* fetish; it's sick! For Christ sake, you have got She-Hulk LIP GLOSS!

MEL

Only *Spectacular* She-Hulk, it's a collector's item!

ROSY

Mel... You can stop this, these secrets, this obsession, whatever in the basement. But I'm going to ask you once, honey: Is it me, or her?

Mel pauses. He looks away, a slight "well" starts to come out. She smacks him.

ROSY

ARGH!

Rosy SMASHES a glass and storms out of the house. From OUTSIDE we can hear her:

ROSY

YOU WANT FUCKING POWER, YOU
IDIOT?! GET FUCKING POWER!
GO TO YOUR WHORE! YOU HEAR
ME!!

We hear outside an engine start and drive off. Mel stands befuddled.

Mel's MOTHER comes down the stairs.

MEL'S MOM

Mel, what's going on? I
heard shouting.

MEL

(nodding head)

It's the way it had to be,
Mom. It's the way it had to
be.

MEL'S MOM

Oh... Well, good night.

She goes back up the stairs.

86. INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

MEL enters. The ROMANTIC MUSIC still plays softly. The music SWELLS as Mel stares at the monitor, the SHE-HULK images still scrolling by. He takes off his shirt and walks out of frame towards the computer.

87. INT. OFFICE - DAY

MEL clicks a few times on his mouse-pad. He speaks into the phone crouched in his shoulder. He sounds drained.

MEL

SO, three months, and you
will be ready to go to

court... Right, right, well,
 you can sue him for that,
 too. Right, the son of a
 bitch should have never been
 born, yes, I'll write that
 down... OK, talk to you soon,
 Misses, take care.

Mel hangs up. He looks at his desk. He picks up a picture
 of himself and ROSY.

MEL
 Old news. Old, old news.
 That's what you are.

He rips the picture apart. His eyes turn to the action
 figure, SHE-HULK, at the corner of his desk. We see the
 figure held by Mel tenderly, as tenderly as can be.

MEL
 I can have you. That works.

We pull around: MAY and CARMEN stand next to Mel.

MAY
 You OK, Mel?

MEL
 Me? Never better. No,
 that's not true. I have been
 "better". But, I can't see
 it getting any better.

MAY
 Why is that?

MEL
 She-Hulk.

MAY
 (laughs)
 What *is* a She-Hulk?

CARMEN
 I've seen my little cousin
 with these. Why do you have
 one?

MEL

Why? Why-why-why... Carmen, would you ask why you wake up in the morning, or why you eat? She-Hulk is everything a lawyer needs... Yes.

MAY

I don't get it. A chick version of the Hulk?

MEL

It goes like this: Jennifer Walters, she is this lawyer, and Bruce Banner, who is the Hulk, of course, they are cousins. Used to be tight, close-knit, like this (fingers crossed). But while Bruce went his way, went the way of turning into the Hulk and all that jazz, Jennifer Walters became a lawyer - a really great one, too, works right under the DA - you know, like 'under', desk and, uh, under his wear and... That's how I saw it.

By now TWO CLIENTS waiting at the front of the office are privy to this scene. Mel is gesticulating, standing up. It is *epic*.

MEL (Contd)

And Jennifer, one day is in the car with Bruce, talking, catching up on Hulk things - and a car comes SWOOSHING in, and there's a crash. Bruce is fine, somehow keeps his cool, doesn't Hulk-out - but Jennifer, she's not so good, she needs medical attention, bleeding all to shit all over the place, real blood-fuck-bath, excuse the language. And, of course, Bruce is a

doctor, Dr. Banner, and can help her out. But it turns out, not enough blood at the hospital-

MAY

That makes sense.

MEL (Contd)

Lemme finish, could you lemme finish? So, not enough blood. What does Bruce do? The most completely heroic and at the same time potentially backwards-ass thing possible - he does an emergency blood transfusion of his own Hulk blood into her bloodstream. She's got God's know how many pints of Bruce, the Hulk, in her now... hence, She-Hulk!

May is stunned, but intrigued. Carmen suddenly realized there are other people waiting.

CARMEN

OK, I got real things to do.

She and the clients go back to her desk. May stays.

MAY

But I still don't get it, so, is it because she's a lawyer, and that-

MEL

No, not just any lawyer - THE lawyer, the one who fights for anyone - superhero, little man, fights against corruption, she does it all, everything you could imagine. She even once had to contend with Spider-Man suing J. Jonah Jameson.

MAY

J-Jo, who, huh?

MEL

Point is, She-Hulk, or Jennifer Walters, she is the most powerful, intelligent incarnation of a lawyer ever put to popular press. She is almost *too* good, to the point that all she has to do is join up with the Avengers once in a while to tear the fucking heart out of any super alien or goddamn hippie out to tear up the constitution into pieces! She's got it all. And, if I do say so myself, a true beauty. Law plus power. That's it.

CUSTOMER 1

What about Daredevil?

MEL

Eh, big friggin' whoop. "Oh, I'm blind, I go to court, ah, I have a red cape and fight bald dudes!"

CUSTOMER 1

Uh, he does, like, other stuff-

MEL

OK, you, you've killed my buzz. You know what that is? I should just... just...

CUSTOMER 2

Tim, you're making him angry!

Office laughs, save for Mel. He calms himself.

MEL

You know what? I'll step

aside. I'm too good for it.
I'm off to work.

Mel gets his briefcase and jacket. He puts SHE-HULK in his pocket, even though it barely fits. He walks out the back of the office, still muttering to himself.

MAY
OK, so, payments?

88. INT. CAR - DAY

MEL pulls up to a stoplight. CU: He shuts his eyes and attempts to try a mantra

MEL
It's not the end... you can
still dig it, Mel, I can dig
it, she can fig it, she...

89. EXT. ROADSIDE - DAY

Mel's car drives along, slowly.

90. EXT. SIDEWALK - CONT'D

People walk along. Talking. Young guys.

91. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL rolls down his window.

MEL
Hey guys!

A MILKSHAKE is thrown at Mel's face.

92. EXT. CAR - CONT'D

YOUNG PEOPLE run away, fast, laughing.

93. INT. CAR - CONT'D

MEL wipes off mess. PEDAL pushes down.

94. EXT. SIDEWALK - CONT'D

KIDS run down corner.

95. INT. CAR - CONT'D

We see Mel's look on his face - MAD.

96. EXT. STREET - CONT'D - MOVING

MEL'S car nearly hits a pole - STOPS before it connects.

97. INT. CAR - CONT'D

Mel stares out the window.

INSERT: KIDS run fast down the road, out of sight.

CU: MEL puts his vanilla face against the steering wheel. He starts to sob softly. He stops right away.

MEL

No! This is not it! There
is more, Mr. Klein, there is
more, more to keep score.

He wipes his face with a napkin. His foot hits the gas.

98. EXT. STREET - DAY

CAR bumps head-on into pole. We see the first few moments of a meltdown from Mel inside the car.

99. EXT. GAS STATION - AFTERNOON

Near empty gas station. Mel's car pulls up to a pump. Mel steps out. The top half of an otherwise good suit is drenched. Mel is walking in quasi-zombie mode. He walks over to the side of the gas station where a hose is set up. Behind him his gas tank is being filled.

Mel turns the nozzle on and sprays down his head. The water trickles through his jacket. He sighs in relief, first time in a while.

MEL

Shit.

He fumbles through his jacket for his phone. He flips it open.

MEL

No, come on, work!

As Mel drips he tries to make the cell phone to work in the BACKGROUND, in he foreground TWO THUGS, late teens, sneak into MEL'S CAR. The GAS STATION ATTENDANT is not in sight.

MEL

OK, maybe now it'll work...
Ring, ring yeah... No,
battery, fuck - you, fucking
cunty fucking bitch of a
phone, I'll kill you, kill
you with my fucking lawyer
Gamma ray! Fuck!

The car turns ON and DRIVES OFF in a BLAZE! The GAS STATION ATTENDANT runs out. Mel's head SPINS like a prairie dog on alert.

GAS-MAN

Hey! Come back and pay!

Mel's jaw is hanging off his head. He runs up.

MEL

Wha-huh-huh, ne-ah, What
happened? Where's my car?!

GAS MAN

That was.. you?

Mel is about to punch something. He takes a deep breath instead. Breathing slower.

MEL

OK... OK, I'll just sit here
a moment... Sir, if you don't
mind, my phone seems to be
dying on me. May I use your
telephone to, let, say, the
authorities, know that my car
has been, you know, stolen?

GAS MAN

Sorry, man. Our phone's

broke. Way back to town is
another four or so miles.

Mel starts to laugh. It becomes nearly maniacal.

GAS MAN

But uh, really, I need money
for the gas. It was filled.

Mel continues to laugh, punctuated by "JESUS CHRISTS" and
"YAHWEH". He walks away from the gas station up the road.

100. EXT. ROADSIDE - DUSK

Mel walks along, thumb out. He is out in a fairly rural
part of the New Jersey roads. Some cars pass. None stop.

101. EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

CU to WIDE: Mel cracks the knuckle of his thumb. He rubs
his eyes. He says a quiet "yes" to himself.

A BENCH is at the corner. He sits down. He leans back and
sighs...

102. INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

A SMALL but PRICEY eating establishment. Several tables
with an assortment of well-dressed COUPLES of various ages
sit and eat. A few WAITERS move about or take orders.
We move across this sight to a table with MEL and ROSY
sitting across from one another. They are looking,
flipping, through pages of a menu.

MEL

You decided?

ROSY

They all look the same to me.
Why don't you pick one?

MEL

You let me pick your meal for
you? That never happens.

ROSY

Today is your lucky day.

MEL
The tits look good.

ROSY
Tits?

MEL
Yeah.

Mel points to APPETIZERS on the menu: TITS in bright font.

ROSY
Any good?

MEL
Better than anyone else.

ROSY
Their prices are better.

MEL
Yes. They are.

A LITTLE KID is singing to himself at a table right next to Mel and Rosy. Mel looks over. The two make eye contact.

WAITER
Are you ready?

ROSY
Are we ready, Mel?

MEL
OK, yes. We will have two Hot Carls, the oregano and olives, and five pints of the Banana Bomb.

WAITER
And how do you want the Hot Carl's? Steamy or dried?

MEL
Good question. Let's do one and the other. Variety.

Mel hands the waiter the menu. He exits.

ROSY
Have you had that before?

 MEL
What?

 ROSY
Hot Carl.

 MEL
I'm going to say... maybe?

 ROSY
You have no idea, do you.

 MEL
No. But it has a good name.

 ROSY
Do you want me to tell you?

 MEL
Sure. Hit me.

As Rosy talks we hear BLEEPs, WHISTLES, TRAINS.

Mel looks around. Rosy's sound drops out. He stares at his glass of water.

An OLD BEARDED RABBI is looking at Mel. Mel looks away. Rosy is still talking. A version of MEL as a VELOCIRAPTOR licks her face, acting happy.

Mel gets up and goes over to the Rabbi's table.

 MEL
Hi, Rabbi.

 OLD RABBI
What's time, my son?

 MEL
I don't know.

 RABBI
Good. Do you want to talk longer? I can get you

something?

MEL

Hot Carl?

RABBI

(shrugs)

I do not think you know my request. When Abraham spoke to God, did he use a tone of voice that was kid, demanding, or desperate?

MEL

Could it be all three?

RABBI

No... NO!

MEL RAPTORS surround the RABBI as he speaks. They are a variety of raptors - happy, angry, sad, mopey, stupid, crippled, Richard Nixon.

RABBI

I wish we had more time. Do you have more time?

MEL

I think so. I have cards.

RABBI

That's fine. I'll take a few. You would work well in services. We need more like you. Come by with you're, uh...

CU: Mel-Raptors are devouring a CORPSE.

MEL

Nah, she's fine, too.

RABBI

We can make this deal. I'll just get out a...phone... Where is - do you have it?

MEL

No... I don't think so.

RABBI

You should think, my son. Do you remember Moses? Think of his conversation with the flame. Demeanor is key. Now, what do we eat?

MEL

Is that a question?

RABBI

It is the ultimate question.

The Mel-Raptors are turning *BIGGER - GREENER*. Mel stares. He is smiling.

103. EXT. ROADSIDE - DAWN

MEL SNAPS AWAKE. He smells something. He whips around. Some feet away from him a SKUNK waddles around, its head is caught in a container of yogurt.

Mel stumbles up. He's curious for a second, wonders if he is actually awake.

104. EXT. BOLTIN' INSURANCE - DAY

MEL staggers up to the front door of the office.

The door is LOCKED. He tries to pull it again. CARMEN walks up to the door window. She unlocks and walks away.

105. INT. OFFICE - CONT'D

CARMEN

It's just *him*.

MAY is chucking objects from her desk to a box.

MAY

(sarcastic)

And not a moment too soon...
You got some schmutz on your cheeks.

MEL

What's going on? You're leaving?

MAY

Sure, say it like I'm off on vacation.

CARMEN

Bolt's booted.

MEL

Booted? With a boot?

MAY

Fired, let go, terminated. Are you still standing there?

CARMEN

Needs a Kleenex.

Mel walks over to his desk.

MEL

I don't get it, why was he fired?

MAY

"With cause", that's all the email said. The guy's a crook, he kept taking off the top from the deposits, made up numbers.

CARMEN

Bendejo. One word: Be-nde-jo.

MAY

So, he's gone, we're gone, and so are you since, well, you can't pay rent at all.

MEL

(nods head)

OK, yeah, terrific.

Mel slumps in desk.

MEL (contd)
 What's next for Mr. Klein?

Mel presses the button for his answering machine to play.

ADMIRAL (VO)
 Yello, this Yan, the
 Admiral... It slipped my mind
 to call and talk stuff, guess
 you's too. I have a court
 date coming up on the 21st,
 and if you would still want
 to court, the sub clicked
 five beats till the shark ate
 the cookies and... OK, number
 is 201-555-0199. K. Signing
 off, matey.

Phone clicks off. Mel taps his fingers.

CARMEN
 (to Mel)
 Need any boxes?

MAY
 Don't encourage him, he'll
perform.

MEL
 (jumps up)
 Oh? I'll perform - you want
 me to perform? I've got
 POWER - more power than any
 of you can imagine!

CARMEN
 Maybe a little O.J. might-

Mel digs through his desk for papers. He YANKS out the
 entire drawer. He puts it under his arm. He goes to exit.

MEL
 Miss - I mean, *Ma'am.*

MAY
 MISS! Can you get it through
 your big, bald-

Mel plants a big, fat KISS on May's lips. May gives a big slap in return.

MEL
That's more like it!

Mel exits.

MAY
... Once again - *Huh?*

106. EXT. PAYPHONE - DAY

Mel dials on the phone. It rings.

WOMAN VOICE (VO)
Hello.

MEL
Hi. Mr. Von Sternberg?

WOMAN VOICE (VO)
Who?

MEL
... *Yan?*

WOMAN VOICE (VO)
(sighs)
One second.

ADMIRAL (VO)
(slight beat)
Yello?

MEL
Admiral, it's Mel Klein.

ADMIRAL (VO)
Salutations!

107. INT. MEL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

We see Mel, as if an athlete preparing for the big game or title fight, preparing for his court case: He flips through a book - we see it says Sex Crimes on the front... Clicking through websites on INSANITY... Printing out of documents,

bold letters on pages like SODOMY LAWS... He flips through a YEARBOOK, finds a picture of YAN. Mel's face frowns.

MEL (contd)

Wait a minute... Not an Admiral at all!

108. INT. BASEMENT - NIGHT

MEL addresses his whole squad of action figures. We see him speak boldly, as if practicing his speech.

MEL

Ladies and gentlemen, it is true that my client, in his universe, appears to have done this to... No, not *universe*, better word, need something more direct. You guys have anything? Didn't think so... universe, universal, cosmos, Cosmo... general... physical did this... Not a pretty sight, it's a vagina, and we know it every day, it's so rubbery and shifty and full of all these hairs that... No Mel, no, no good, stay on point. Jury needs to see your A-game, Mr. A Team, Mr. T...

109. INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

MEL lifts books up and down, as if doing weights... He reads, highlights... MEL'S MOTHER walks in, mug in one hand a pot of hot coffee in other. Mel takes the pot and chugs. He makes a "HOT!" face/reaction. Mel's mother shrugs... Mel tears a piece of paper with his teeth... Reading, his eyes light up.

MEL

Yes, yes, yes, YES!

110. INT. COURTROOM - DAY

A nearly PACKED New Jersey courtroom. We PUSH FORWARD from

the people seated to see the PROSECUTION TABLE on the left and MEL KLEIN seated with YAN VON STERNBERG on the right. A man not much older than Mel sits with a YOUNG WOMAN, early 20's, blonde, striking features. This is KIM JANSEN, her attorney JACK WINSTON. We also see a jury, a mixed bunch.

Mel is flipping through some documents, checking his cell phone, doing both at the same time. Yan stares off into the front in a daze. We see behind Yan to his left an older woman, his MOTHER, clutching her handkerchief. Mel looks back. MEL'S MOTHER and LASZLO sit in the last row and smile.

COURT GUARD

All rise!

Courtroom rises. It takes a moment for Yan to rise. Mel nearly sits back down before standing up.

A JUDGE, late 60's, distinguished, Hispanic, walks forward.

GUARD

The honorable Manuel Baez
presiding.

Judge Baez motions for everyone to sit.

JUDGE BAEZ

Now then, the court today is
hearing Ms. Kimberly Jansen
versus Yan Lutz. Mister -
uh, Mel Klein, is it?

MEL

Yes, sir.

JUDGE

I haven't seen you before.
Good to see young blood here.

MEL

Oh, it's-

JUDGE

How does your client plead?

MEL

Your honor, on behalf of my
client, we plead insanity.

The courtroom murmurs. Jack Winston makes a face.

WINSTON

Your honor, may we approach
the bench?

JUDGE

You may.

Winston and Mel walk up to the bench. Mel brings a file.

WINSTON

Your honor, this defense
shouldn't be used for this
case. We have had little
time to prepare for this -
had we been informed by Mr.
Klein or his office-

MEL

It's just me.

WINSTON

UH-huh.

JUDGE

I take it you intend to show
me this file?

MEL

Yes, your honor. Mr. Winston
was informed by me last week
that we were going with this,
and I had faxed a list of
witnesses-

WINSTON

-You mean that rambling
message about, I quote, "My
client has been in a Cuckoo's
Nest for some time and needs
his Wa-Wa," give me a break.

JUDGE

I believe I was informed of this as well. Perhaps something occurred in that message that Mr. Klein sent you. It does not come as a shock to myself or this court.

MEL

See?

Winston makes a face.

JUDGE

Let's get on with this, gentlemen. There is only so much time in the day.

They return to their respective seats.

DISSOLVE:

111. INT. COURTROOM - DAY

JACK WINSTON is speaking to the jury, mid-opening.

WINSTON

... He, Mr. Lutz, is a man with a violent past, and a sad family status, no one will deny that. But we will show, simply, what occurred. Rape, battery, assault, call it what you will.

Winston sits back down to his seat. Mel Klein stands up.

MEL

There is truth in what Mr. Winston has told you. Ms. Jansen was raped and beaten, and is a, uh, a nurse. It is even true that my client, in physical form, did this to her. It was not a pretty sight. But what we will show, what Mr. Winston has

left out oh-so conveniently,
is that my client is, in all
rational terms, nuts. A
wacko, a Screwball, Coo-Coo
for Cocoa puffs.

Two people in the jury chuckle, the rest stone-faced.

MEL (Contd)

For years now, as we will
show you, my client has had
delusions of grandeur so
strong that they have
completely altered his
perception of reality. When
I met him, he was on the side
of the road, in tears,
sobbing, and in the costume
of an Admiral. Not a word he
said made any sense, not a
word. But I knew two things
- one, he is not an Admiral,
as far as anyone can tell by
his age or history, and two,
he had been posted bail by
his Mother who left him out
in the street to hitchhike.
Today, ladies and gentlemen,
it is about state of mind.
That at the moment of the
crime, Yan Lutz was in his
subjective frame of mind,
Admiral Yan Von Sternberg of
the USS Enterprise. This
case shall use as its
precedence the M'Naughten
Rule, which, and I quote, "at
the time of committing such
an act, the ACCUSED was
laboring such a defect of
reason, from disease of mind,
as not to know the nature and
quality of the act he was
doing."

MEL

(stands up)

I call Dr. Ivan Krantz to the stand.

113. INT. COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Hand goes off bible: nerdy, 30-something sits at stand.

MEL

Dr. Krantz, you once treated Mr. Lutz, is that correct?

DR. KRANTZ

Yes, he was my patient for four sessions in 2002.

MEL

What was your impression of him at first and on-going in the session?

DR. KRANTZ

He was bright, at first, talked about sports a good deal. And then he would snap away. His eyes would gleam over and he would stare off, talking as though he had an entire history as an Admiral in the US Navy. An uncanny history.

MEL

Would you tell the court what some of this history was?

WINSTON

Objection, relevance?

JUDGE

Overrules. I'll see where it goes and stop if need be.

DR. KRANTZ

He would talk about a ship,
the USS Enterprise, and, may
I glance at my notes?

MEL

Your honor, exhibit D.

Mel hands the notes to Dr. Krantz.

DR. KRANTZ

"And then he talked about his
trips to Europe, how he was
almost coroneted had it not
been for having to chop off
the heads of the Kings and
Queens of Romania for
accusing him of being short
in height and bereft of his
Indian accent. Then he
manned his squad to Kuwait
where they pillaged the
villages, and then he...
caught a 'venereal disease.'"
As he put it.

The court RUMBLES. KIMBERLY shrugs in her seat. The Judge
puts down the gavel once.

JUDGE

Order. Where is this going,
Mr. Klein?

MEL

Dr. Krantz, what then
happened in your sessions
with Mr. Lutz?

DR. KRANTZ

I attempted to put him on
anti-schizophrenic
medication. He brought the
pills to meetings, and
proceed to stuff them in the
seat cushions. I terminated
our meetings soon after.

MEL

There was no helping him,
then, even as a trained
psychiatrist?

DR. KRANTZ

I told him to go see a fellow
doctor in my field I knew.
But I never heard of him
again afterward.

MEL

You examined him shortly
after his arrest. What would
you say his mental status is
today?

DR. KRANTZ

Advanced schizophrenia,
needing immediate treatment.

YAN takes off his tie.

MEL

Thank you. No more questions.

Mel looks pleased with himself. Winston stands up with one
note as reference.

WINSTON

Dr. Krantz, you lost your
medical license officially in
1999, is that correct?

DR. KRANTZ

I was temporarily disbarred.

WINSTON

Until *when*, exactly?

DR. KRANTZ

Um, I'll say, early 2003.

WINSTON

Is that a question? You're
under oath here.

MEL

Objection, badgering.

JUDGE
Overruled, Mr. Klein, please.

MEL
Your honor?

Yan is tearing off the cloth of his tie. He rips more of it off. The jury gawks as Yan is mumbling to himself in *graphic* gibberish. Murmuring among those in court.

MEL
(quietly)
Yan, please, give me that.

ADMIRAL
NO! I need the flag! My prophecy awaits the charted sign of the Damascus! It's right there, you twit, TWITS!

JUDGE
(gavel down)
Order, ORDER, Mr. Klein.

Mel YANKS the tie away from Yan, tears in his eyes.

MEL
Yes?

JUDGE
Does your client need a moment?

MEL
No, your honor, we're fine.

Mel hands the Admiral a napkin.

JUDGE
(to Winston)
Go on.

WINSTON
So, at the time of Mr. Lutz's

appointment in your office,
what sort of consult was it?

DR. KRANTZ

It was not under direct
session. I also treated his
mother and did this as a
favor for her.

WINSTON

So, you admit that you could
not, by your own practical
application as a physician,
prescribe him medication.

DR. KRANTZ

It was filled through another
doctor. I only saw him as a
favor.

Mel is squirming in his seat. Admiral blows spit bubbles.

WINSTON

And so, you could not give
any practical therapy for Mr.
Lutz since he was not even
your own patient, by just
handing him off to the next
doctor?

Admiral is SOBBING, blowing his nose.

JUDGE

(gavel)

Order, ORDER!

MEL

(quietly)

Take it easy, Yan.

DR. KRANTZ

(to Winston)

To answer you, no.

WINSTON

No further questions. Your
honor, I ask that Dr.

Krantz's remarks be stricken
from the record.

MEL

What? Wait, your honor, I-

JUDGE

Indeed. Mr. Klein, do you
need a break for your client
to compose himself?

MEL

Uh... Yes, your honor.

JUDGE

Five minute recess.

Gavel down. Courtroom rubles with murmurs.

MEL

Take it easy, Yan, it's ok.

Kimberly and Winston talk briefly to each other. Winston
gets up and walks over to Mel.

WINSTON

Can I see you outside for a
second?

114. INT. COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

They walk out the doors. Much quieter, echoes of voices.

WINSTON

Alright, what ballgame is
this?

MEL

I don't know what you mean.

WINSTON

Between that blubbering
"admiral" and the quack, I'm
wondering what you're really
fucking here for. Your guy's
nearly goddamn broke, and you

got no one else. You do know his mother will not testify.

MEL

You know what, it is a ballgame, *Winsty* boy! I'm swinging so far you don't want to know. Like, you see that window out there (points), it's gone in two seconds, and so is the Empire State building, and the moon, and the Milky Way and your whole case, God, and-

WINSTON

Just, quiet... What do you want? We'll lower it to battery, would that do it? Or... actually, no, you want some tears, I got tears for you, *clown*.

MEL

Bring it, just bring the stuff, man. I see you tap dancing in there. I can fucking dance, baby. I'm Fred Astaire with no hair.

Winston turns in contempt and goes back inside. Mel stands muttering to himself.

MEL

Paw, paw, thorn in paw, thorn-in-paw.

115. INT. COURTROOM - MOMENTS LATER

WINSTON

Your honor, I call Kimberly Jansen to the stand.

Courtroom murmuring.

MEL

Your honor, objection, no

time to prepare for-

JUDGE
Overruled. Mr. Winston?

WINSTON
This is my only witness to
call, unless Mr. Klein
objects or has another he
must call at this time?

MEL
(looks through papers)
I... I could have another
witness tomorrow, but he
didn't show today, and my
client is unable to testify
at this time due to, um...

JUDGE
Mr. Winston, if you feel it
is necessary, you may proceed.

WINSTON
Thank you, your honor.

KIMBERLY JANSEN stands, takes the oath, sits at the stand.

WINSTON
Ms. Jansen, can you please
tell the court where you were
on the night of July the 22nd?

KIM
I went to Tent's Bar in
Totowa. I was meaning to
meet with some friends, for a
few drinks.

WINSTON
And then a man came up to you
as you were waiting?

KIM
Yes.

WINSTON

Can you identify this man?

Kim points to the tie-less ADMIRAL, his jaw clicking back and forth. Mel leans in and TAPS his jaw shut with his hand, his eyes still locked on the stand. He also tries to write with his other hand, taking notes.

WINSTON

What took place then?

KIM

There was some simple chit-chat, he bought me a couple of drinks, and then he went into this shtick as this Admiral or something.

WINSTON

You knew it was a character?

KIM

I just knew it. I have seen guys pretending they were all sorts of things.

WINSTON

And Mr. Lutz was not insane to you?

KIM

Definitely not.

WINSTON

After your drinks, what then?

KIM

He offered me a ride home, and I accepted since I live only a short distance from the bar in Wayne.

WINSTON

Took you to the parking lot?

KIM

Yes.

WINSTON

And then what did he do?

KIM

Well, we were near the back where no one else could see since it was a packed lot at night. He couldn't get in his car, started cursing a lot. I tried to help him and just hit me with both fists.

WINSTON

Both fists - and what else did he do? Punch you again?

MEL

Objection, leading.

JUDGE

Sustained. Keep it on point, Mr. Winston.

WINSTON

And was he of sound mind to you? Did he look insane or psychotic during the rape?

KIM

Well, like, inasmuch he looked angry and out of his mind with rage only.

WINSTON

No further questions. Your witness, Mr. Klein.

Mel stands up and approaches slowly, like a snake.

MEL

Ms. Jansen, what was the appearance of Mr. Lutz when you saw him at the bar?

KIM

Appearance?

MEL

In the simplest of terms, can you recall what he was wearing?

KIM

He, he had on this uniform, like dark blue, buttons, flaps, a military hat. It looked fake to me.

MEL

Whether it was fake is immaterial. You admit he was wearing an Admiral's suit?

KIM

Yes, that is correct.

MEL

And what did he sound like to you? Did he sound young or old?

KIM

He tried to change his voice. I was all an act.

MEL

Your honor, my client's vocal patterns distinctly change in tempo, pitch, and inflection when he is not in a proper medicated state.

MCU to CU: Mel picks up tape recorder.

MEL (Contd)

This tape, exhibit B, provided by the sheriff's department, points out before and after he was put on immediate medical treatment. If I may?

Judge Baez nods. Mel presses play.

MEL (VO)

This is 9:25 AM, with Yan Lutz.

ADMIRAL

(fast)

I-ARGH! I told you-you-you-varmints! What the fuck are you doing over there with that board? Sgt. Stevens have shit on their hands! They wipes their decks and kill all of your mosquitoes with wings! Or is it so? Do you know what wings taste like? My Steve is the key - My opponent, Admiral Yokowahanaranobu will kill all life on this planet and then they kill you with my goat cheese... Mmm, God Goat Cheese, I need my goat cheese, God, inches, God, be a cheese-man. You know what all this venereal disease is? It's me in a goat God fucking your momma! Fuck your Momma with my goat-cheese fuck stick! Fuck-Stick, Fuck-stick-FU-

MEL

I'll fast-forward to after this, an hour later...

MEL (VO)

10:28 AM, with Yan Lutz.

YAN

I'm still waiting. Mister, where is my coffee? Thank you, what were you saying before? I'm kind of tired but that's about all.

Mel hits stop.

MEL

So, Ms. Jansen, which of those voices was Mr. Lutz that night?

KIM

The... w-well, that first one, I guess. He didn't ramble like that, though.

MEL

When he took you to the parking lot, was he drunk?

KIM

No, he was sober *enough*.

MEL

If you could please tell the court, what did he say to you outside of the car before he struck?

KIM

I... I don't remember, it happened so fast.

MEL

Did he sound as he did on that tape?

Kim takes a beat.

JUDGE

Ms. Jansen?

KIM

Something like that. I don't know, it was all a blur, you understand, I was hit.

MEL

Ms. Jansen, did you know he sobbed and rambled as he did before in the courtroom, during the "act" as it were?

KIM

I-I don't remember.

MEL

No? I have testimony here from Mr. Warren, who was a dishwasher at the bar, saying he heard a "mumbling, sobbing freak" and rushed to phone police. Ms. Jansen, do you expect the court to believe that Mr. Lutz **was** Mr. Lutz?

KIM

I-I-

MEL

You say he was in his "character", and never broke out of it?

KIM

Yes

MEL

That he was in a suit?

KIM

Yes.

WINSTON

Objection, repeating, uh, leading witness.

JUDGE

Overruled.

MEL

Ms. Jansen, why did you keep talking to Mr. Lutz at the bar if you knew he was a fake, as you say, putting on a show at the bar?

KIM

I-I don't know, I thought it

was funny, I guess.

MEL

You thought his *illness* was funny, then?

KIM

Oh, come on, I didn't know-

MEL

Why would you *think* to let him drive you home?

KIM

It was late, I didn't know what I was do-

MEL

What knowledge did you have?

KIM

It was one of those things...

MEL

Back to your place.

KIM

Yes, I mean, no, I mean... God! What do you want me to say? Yes, I thought he was *cute*, at first. No, I didn't think the motherfucker would ramble about his fleet and ships and tanks and then punch me! Is that it?

Court rumbles. Winston slumps in his seat, face going red.

MEL

You thought he was *cute*?

KIM

Maybe, I don't know. It was a couple of drinks, and-

MEL

No, no, you did **know**, that's why you wanted to go home with him!

KIM

He raped me, Jesus Christ!

WINSTON

Objection, your honor!
Badgering!

JUDGE

Mr. Klein, are you done?

MEL

(taken aback by himself)
No, uh, no further questions.

WINSTON

Ms. Jansen, you did not want to sleep with Mr. Lutz?

KIM

No.

WINSTON

That's all, your honor. No further questions.

MEL

Your honor, I did not mean to imply-

JUDGE

That's enough. You may step down, miss.

Bewildered, though not in tears, Kim sits next to the beet-red Winston. They whisper things to each other, angry.

DISSOLVE TO:

116. INT. COURTROOM - DAY

The JURY files in to the courtroom.

JUDGE

Has the jury reached a
verdict?

JUROR #1

We have, your honor.

JUDGE

Mr. Lutz, will you please
rise? You too, Mr. Klein.

We move UP with Mel and Yan as both stand. Yan has drool
down his mouth, Mel with totally wide eyes.

JUROR #1

We find the defendant, Yan
Lutz, not guilty for reasons
of insanity.

Some RUMBLINGS in audience, some groans, a couple cheer.
Mel looks on, dumbfounded. A big SMILE grows on his face.
JACK WINSTON looks forlorn, slaps table, Kim devastated.

JUDGE

Mr. Lutz, under New Jersey
state law, you shall be
committed to St. Joseph's
Medical Center, where you
will be under psychiatric
care for a time that shall be
determined when a doctor has
been appointed. Court is
adjourned.

Judge Baez slams gavel down. People start filing out. Mel
runs down the aisle, picks up his Mother for a BIG HUG. He
then high-fives LASZLO. Mel doesn't look on as the ADMIRAL
is taken away. Winston walks by with his briefcase staring
at Mel.

MEL

That's right, buddy. I
danced away!

Mel does a little dance in the aisle.

MRS. LUTZ comes up to Mel.

MRS. LUTZ

Mr. Klein.

MEL

Mrs. Lutz.

MRS. LUTZ

Are you proud of yourself?

MEL

I don't know, a little bit.

MRS. LUTZ

I think you *know*. You know a lot, don't you? You *know* my son?

MEL

Well, uh, not Biblically, if that's what.

MRS. LUTZ

That boy... Damn him.

She walks away. Mel is confused a second, but then is wrapped up in his mother and Laszlo too much to care.

117. INT. COURTHALL - MOMENTS LATER

People converse in the hallway.

118. INT. COURTROOM - CONT'D

Someone exits the courtroom. We PULL BACK from a Medium to the back of the courtroom from MEL, the last one standing in the room. He closes his briefcase. He stares off. He puts his hands down on the table in front of him.

119. CU: A TELEVISION turns on.

MEL (VO)

Ok, it's in one, two three, uh, four... is it on yet? It's right after the Golden Days or some rinky-dinky, yeah, here it is.

120. EXT. BUILDING - DAY

MEL walks in on the TV SCREEN. He is in front of a big brick BUILDING. It's a COMMERCIAL.

MEL

Have you been accused or need to accuse, have you been wronged and beat to the ground with no way out? You need to get some justice! Call the Legal Professionals at Horowitz, Feinberg and McCormick!

121. INT. KITCHEN - DAY

The shot WIPES over to a scene KITCHEN - a couple is ARGUING at the top of their lungs. MEL appears in the foreground, couple in background. They get crazier in arguing as Mel goes on.

MEL

Have you been struggling with that divorce, need to take it to court?

122. EXT. STREET CORNER - NIGHT

The shot WIPES again - We're on a STREET CORNER with a CAR ACCIDENT, TWO CARS bumper to bumper. Smoke rises from one of them. TWO MEN argue fiercely, MEL appears looking on.

MEL

Do you need to take that road rage elsewhere?

123. INT. OFFICE - DAY

The shot WIPES again - We're in a room of an office - a WOMAN is crying in her chair. MEL comes up out of nowhere and puts a hand on her shoulder.

MEL

Do you have feelings of dread from the very people you call *co-workers*?

124. EXT. BUILDING - DAY

We MOVE IN on Mel FAST.

MEL

Then say YES to the Legal
Professionals. Call
222-555-8220 today!

The TV screen FREEZES.

125. INT. OFFICE - DAY

We're suddenly inside a fairly nice OFFICE ROOM. A FINGER presses on a RECORDER. We move up to see MEL, leaning back at the chair on his desk, adorned with various ACTION FIGURES - and SHE-HULK.

MEL

Note to editors: make sure to edit the section with the road rage, too much smoke, not enough action, *more action!* Furthermore, I want to ask if we can re-shoot the section with the robot. Yeah, that would work well.

IMMEDIATE CUT TO:

126. INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Mel still has his hands on the table. Suddenly, building from deep inside, he JUMPS UP in excitement.

MEL

(triumphant)

YEEEAHHH!!

127. EXT. STREET - DAY

MEL walks out of the COURTHOUSE. He does a little dance as he walks down the street, lost in himself.

FADE TO BLACK - END OF FILM