

"THE 12 MILLION DOLLAR MOVIE ON PAPER"

By

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FADE IN:

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

JAMES DAVIS, 40, is sitting in an armchair as he watches a movie.

SCREEN ON:

The movie is about 20 years old. YOLANDA ALDRICH, shapely figure and gorgeous looks, is scantily clad.

YOLANDA

Let us go on to victory!

SCREEN OFF:

NANCY DAVIS, 38, steps into the living room.

NANCY

This movie again?

JAMES

Hey, your cousin is in it.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James is sitting in an armchair. The television show's movie credits rolling. The doorbell rings.

There's the sound of footsteps and a door opening.

NANCY (OC)

Yolanda?

YOLANDA (OC)

Hi Nancy!

James stands and steps towards the front door. Nancy and Yolanda meet James as they enter the living room. Yolanda doesn't appear much older than she did in the movie. Nancy is holding a bottle of wine.

JAMES

Yolanda, what a surprise! What brings you here?

NANCY

That's my question.

YOLANDA

I don't know what to do. I'm in big trouble.

JAMES

Tell us about it. Maybe we can help.

YOLANDA

I hope so because there is no one else I can think of.

NANCY

Tell us about your trouble Yolanda.

YOLANDA

There was this guy. He was going to produce this movie. He got me to talk a bunch of people into investing in the movie.

(Beat)

I invested in it too. I put up 40,000 dollars.

(Beat)

We were supposed to start filming a week ago.

(Beat)

On the day of the filming I showed up where we were supposed to film. Nobody was there. I went to his office, tried to call his cell phone.

(Beat)

He's gone! I called the police and reported him as a missing person.

(Beat)

They told me there never was such a person.

NANCY

So, you got swindled, you have no money and you need some money.

YOLANDA

I wish it was that simple. My name is on everything. The money is all gone. Not just mine but everyone who invested in the movie.

NANCY

That is too bad for them as well. You and they shouldn't have fallen for such a scheme.

YOLANDA

You don't understand. These investors will eventually find out there is no movie and I will go to jail.

JAMES

You already reported it to the police. You and they are victims so hopefully they'll find this guy and he goes to jail and you might even get some money back.

(Beat)

If not then you're out the money but you are just one of the victims.

YOLANDA

James, you don't understand. I didn't tell the police anything about the money. I reported a missing person.

NANCY

A missing person who doesn't exist.

YOLANDA

That's right. They'll just think I invented this person and hid the money somewhere.

NANCY

You have a point. You still have to go to the police about this.

YOLANDA

Nancy, you know I'm not a thief. I'm foolish, impulsive, and a lot of other things but I am not a thief.

NANCY

You should have told them about the money when you reported him missing. Still you have to report this to the police.

JAMES

How much money is involved?

YOLANDA

Counting my money its 12,045,000.

NANCY

You better call the police right now.

YOLANDA

They'll arrest me!

NANCY

You have no other choice.

JAMES

Wait a minute the money is gone. Yolanda going to jail isn't going to get the people their money back.

(Pause)

You got the money to make a movie. Movies lose money all the time. Most movies don't get distributed.

YOLANDA

I know that but sooner or later somebody is going to ask to see the move.

JAMES

We can do some scenes put something together.

NANCY

James, what do you mean we?

JAMES

Nancy, we have to help her out. With 12 million and a week head start this guy could be anywhere.

(Beat)

He no doubt planned his getaway long ago.

YOLANDA

What do you mean throw some scenes together?

JAMES

Well what kind of a movie was it?

YOLANDA

He never really said. He said it was going to be a mixture of genres and he believed it would be my chance to jump start my career.

NANCY

You heard comeback and what little sense you had went right out the window.

YOLANDA

Yes.

JAMES

If we pool together our resources I'm sure we could come up with something that could pass for a valid effort.

NANCY

You're crazy!

JAMES

We can try.

YOLANDA

I'm willing to try.

JAMES

We've got nothing to lose.

NANCY

Do what you want?

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda is wearing a negligee. James has on pajamas. Nancy holds a video camera.

JAMES

Okay let's get started.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - NIGHT

Closeup of Yolanda. She loses her balance.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda rolls off the bed,

JAMES

Are you alright?

YOLANDA

I think so. Maybe we should put down pillows.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda rolls onto a stack of pillows.

YOLANDA

At least that was less painful.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - NIGHT

JAMES

I think we got a scene.

YOLANDA

What time is it anyway?

NANCY

It's 5:35. It's a good think we don't have to go to work.

INT: AT THE FRONT DOOR - DAY

Nancy opens the door and Yolanda steps inside. Yolanda has a box in her arms. James reaches for the box.

JAMES

Let me get that.

YOLANDA

I did some editing. I got some other things we might be able to use.

JAMES

Great let's have a look.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James puts a CD into his laptop, which is connected to the television.

ON SCREEN:

Yolanda is sitting up in the bed. James is lying next to her. His face isn't visible to the camera. They speak with faux European accents.

YOLANDA

I have another surprise for you.

JAMES

I don't think I could live through another one of your surprises.

YOLANDA

You won't.

Yolanda jumps on top of James, pinning his arms with her shins. She puts a pillow over James's face.

Yolanda acts as if she is thrilled. James pretends to struggle. The mock smothering continues for about 30 seconds then James goes limp.

An elated Yolanda climbs out of the bed and saunters to a dresser. She picks up a lipstick case and talks into it.

YOLANDA

Target will sing no more. I took his breath away.

OFF SCREEN:

NANCY

All that time and trouble to get 30 seconds worth of film.

(Pause)

Now multiply that by 180.

JAMES

That gives us six months to put something together.

YOLANDA

That's what I like about you James. You have that 'can do' attitude.

JAMES

Let me show you what I came up with.

James makes a few mouse clicks on his laptop.

ON SCREEN:

An image of a satellite crawls across the dark background. A flashing red line seems to bombard the satellite. The satellite explodes.

OFF SCREEN:

NANCY

ILM is going to be scared of this competition.

YOLANDA

I think that's great. You can add the sound of an explosion?

JAMES

Yes, but there's no sound in space.

YOLANDA

That's right.

NANCY

Sound realism 100. Visual realism 2.

JAMES

Now let's look at your pics for something we can use for foreign venues.

YOLANDA

Maybe we should work on a daytime scene. We don't want to lose light.

EXT: THE YARD - DAY

Yolanda, wearing a bikini and a long red hair wig, lies on a lawn chair. James rubs lotion on her back.

YOLANDA

Ok now the grease paint.

EXT: THE YARD - LATER

Yolanda is covered in grease paint. James videos Yolanda as she lies on the lawn chair.

JAMES

I'm going to take some stills now.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - DAY

James takes some video footage of the sun. There is the sound of an aircraft. James videotapes the aircraft.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

There is a picture of Paris on the screen. James steps parallel to the screen as he videotapes the image.

YOLANDA

I took this picture from the Eiffel Tower.

NANCY

James what are you doing?

JAMES

I want to see if I can get the sensation of an image taken from a plane.

NANCY

You know you can get aerial footage online?

JAMES

Yes, but then we'll get into copyright issues.

NANCY

You're perpetrating a fraud and you're worried about copyright issues?

JAMES

So far, we're doing what the investors put up their money for.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James has a video camera in his hand.

NANCY

Where are you going?

JAMES

I'm going to take some footage of planes landing.

NANCY

Don't you think it's time to end this foolishness now that you've lived your fantasy of going to bed with her?

JAMES

I hate it when you talk like this. It wouldn't be so bad if you actually were jealous.

NANCY

Who are you kidding? If I were jealous you'd be flattered.

EXT: NEAR AN AIRPORT - DAY

James films a jetliner taking off.

EXT: AN AIRFIELD - DAY

James films a small plane landing.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

There is a mounted camera in the room.

James moves the furniture to one side of the room. He rolls up the rug exposing the wooden floor.

Nancy watches with disgust.

Yolanda enters. She is dressed as a belly dancer. She has a long black wig with bangs and a veil covers most of her face.

YOLANDA

I'm ready. How do I look.

JAMES

You look great.

(Pause)

Here is your stage.

Yolanda steps to the area James cleared. James has his computer play some Arabic music. He takes his position behind the camera.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Ready, action.

Yolanda's dancing is a combination of belly, Hawaiian, and contemporary.

Nancy watches in disbelief.

Yolanda bumps into the furniture. James rushes to her aide.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Are you alright.

YOLANDA

I'm alright.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Yolanda dances. She twirls a couple of revolutions. She wobbles. James rushes to her aide.

YOLANDA

I feel dizzy.

Nancy watches. She is annoyed.

James helps Yolanda to the couch.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

I'll be alright in a minute.

JAMES

Okay. You relax. I'll get the prop ready. Then we can finish this part of the scene.

Nancy turns off the camera.

NANCY

Cut.

JAMES

Thanks. That's the spirit.

INT: A GARAGE - NIGHT

James grabs a tackle box.

He rummages for a pair of plyers.

He opens the tackle box and takes out s fly lure.

He straightens the hook with the plyers. He pricks himself in the process.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda is on the couch. Nancy sits in a chair.

James enters. He has the hook, tape, and a thin block of plywood.

JAMES

Ok here it is. Nancy, could you help Yolanda with this?

NANCY

You mean you're not going to do that?

JAMES

Nancy, a little cooperation please.

NANCY

First patience, now cooperation. I wonder what next. Come on Yolanda, let's get this over with.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - LATER - NIGHT

Yolanda and Nancy return. Yolanda is enthusiastic and Nancy is stoic.

YOLANDA

How do I look?

Yolanda turns around so James can see the fly lure on her back.

NANCY

Like you have a fishing lure in your back.

JAMES

It looks great! Good job Nancy.

(Pause)

Now let me get a few seconds of this.

James turns on the Arabic music. Yolanda positions her back in front of the camera. James gets behind the camera and films for a few seconds.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Now let's do the death scene. Nancy, when I point to you, you scream.

(beat)

I guess that's the "what's next".

Nancy looks annoyed.

NANCY

That's one thing I want to do.

JAMES

Action!

Yolanda shakes her hips. James points at her. Yolanda dies on camera. James points at Nancy. Nancy SCREAMS.

JAMES

Cut!

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

Nancy is making sandwiches. Yolanda approaches her.

YOLANDA

You're not jealous, are you?

NANCY

Of what?

YOLANDA

That bedroom scene we did. It was all PG, it didn't mean anything.

NANCY

That is as ridiculous as trying to get out of this mess by making a movie.

YOLANDA

You always look so angry.

NANCY

I haven't seen you in five years. Then you blow in here and true to form you have a problem and need help. Then James comes up with this childish idea and you are both off to the races.

A toilet FLUSHES.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Speak of the devil.

JAMES

I came up with another idea for a scene.

NANCY

Nothing like a brain massage to spit out an idea.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James, shirtless, lies on his stomach on an exercise mat. A couple of feet in front of his head is a parabolic space heater.

Yolanda is dressed in a kimono and is made up as a geisha.

She steps on James's back.

James SCREAMS in pain.

YOLANDA

I'm sorry.

JAMES

It's alright. Give me a minute then we'll give it another try.

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

Nancy is preparing dinner as she watches a video on a tablet.

James SCREAMS in pain. Nancy is annoyed with James's antics and has no interest in learning what is going on in the living room.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James is in pain from Yolanda's attempts to walk on his back.

JAMES

This is not going to work.

(Pause)

I've got an idea.

James runs out of the room.

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

Nancy is preparing dinner as she watches a video on a tablet.

There are RUNNING FOOTSTEPS.

Nancy is annoyed with James's antics and has no interest in learning what he is doing.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James runs in with a piggy bank in his hands. He kneels on the floor and opens the piggy bank.

JAMES

We'll use pennies. You put them on my back.

James feverishly separates out pennies.

YOLANDA

We should use stones.

JAMES

Yea, but we don't have any stones.

YOLANDA

I think I have some that might work.

JAMES

Here?

YOLANDA

No, at home.

JAMES

No sense spending the time to get them.

YOLANDA

Pennies, why not quarters?

JAMES

Copper, good conductors of electricity.

YOLANDA

Quarters are almost all copper.

JAMES

That's right.

(Pause)

We'll film both and go with whatever looks better. We'll start with the quarters.

YOLANDA

Any lines?

JAMES

Let me think about that. In the meantime, I think I know what we can do about the special effects.

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

The oven timer shows 4 minutes.

Nancy watches a video on a tablet.

James runs into the kitchen. He grabs the fire extinguisher and runs out.

NANCY

What did you idiots do!

Nancy runs out of the kitchen.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

NANCY

What is going on!

JAMES

Nothing, I just came up with an idea for a special effect.

NANCY

What!

JAMES

Trust me. I'm not going to start a fire.

(Pause)

Stand back.

James checks the camera's alignment and turns it on. He discharges the fire extinguisher so the spray goes on the exercise mat.

James opens a window.

He realigns the camera so it faces a bare wall. He turns on the camera and discharges the extinguisher so the spray goes up the wall.

EXT: THE BACK YARD - DAY

James, Nancy, and Yolanda eat dinner.

NANCY

I don't believe I let you do that.

JAMES

Don't worry, I'll clean it all up.

NANCY

You better or you're going to eat that fire extinguisher.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James, wearing a face mask and gloves, cleans the living room.

He stops and writes on a pad.

EXT: THE BACK YARD - DAY

Nancy and Yolanda drink wine.

YOLANDA

This is a nice clear night. All the stars are out.

(Pause)

Remember when the family use to get together and we would sit on grandma's back porch?

(Pause)

Those were good times.

James comes out of the house with the pad in hand.

JAMES

I wrote some lines.

YOLANDA

That's great.

NANCY

No, it would be great if he cleaned up the living room.

JAMES

I did that too. Yes, I very through.

NANCY

I'll be the judge of that.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James, shirtless, lies on his stomach on an exercise mat. A couple of feet in front of his head is a parabolic space heater.

Nancy looks over the bare wall and floor.

JAMES

Nancy, could you make sure the camera is lined up right and turn it on?

NANCY

Alright.

Nancy gives the camera a quick look and turns it on.

NANCY (CONT'D)

It's on.

Yolanda, with her back to the camera methodically places quarters down James's spine. She speaks in a faux Japanese accent.

YOLANDA

The metal in the coins are good conductors  
of heat. This helps loosen the joints.

Yolanda stands and steps away.

JAMES

Cut.

James moves the camera and tripod to another part of the  
room. He lines the camera up.

JAMES (CONT'D)

You got the sunglasses and device?

YOLANDA

Yes, I have them.

Yolanda holds up a pair of sunglasses and a flip-phone.

NANCY

A flip-phone?

JAMES

Yea, and you wanted me to throw it away.

NANCY

If this wins an Oscar we could auction it  
off for a fortune.

JAMES

That's the spirit.

Nancy is disgusted her sarcasm apparently went over James's  
head.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Action!

Yolanda has her back to the camera as she approaches the  
bare wall. She puts on the sunglasses. She spins around  
and squeezes the flip-phone.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Cut!

(Pause)

Great! Now second shot.

Yolanda removes her sunglasses and returns to her start position.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Ready?

(Beat)

Action!

Yolanda has her back to the camera as she approaches the bare wall. She puts on the sunglasses. She spins around and squeezes the flip-phone. She SCREAMS in horror.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Cut!

(Beat)

Great, now let's do this a couple more times for insurance.

Nancy is annoyed James isn't finished.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James types on his laptop, which is connected to the television.

JAMES

Nancy, take a look at this.

ON SCREEN:

James, shirtless with his arms obscuring his face, lies on his stomach on an exercise mat. A couple of feet in front of his head is a parabolic space heater.

Yolanda, with her back to the camera methodically places quarters down James's spine. She speaks in a faux Japanese accent.

YOLANDA

The metal in the coins are good conductors of heat. This helps loosen the joints.

Yolanda stands and steps away.

There is a closeup of the parabolic space heater's cone.

Yolanda has her back to the camera. She puts on a pair of sunglasses. She spins around and squeezes a small device.

There is a closeup of the parabolic space heater's cone as it turns red.

An animated line goes from the space heater to James.

There is a cloud of smoke.

There is an ash gray image that looks like a body silhouette overlaid on the exercise mat.

OFF SCREEN:

JAMES

What do you think?

NANCY

I think if you put this much effort into your job you wouldn't have lost it.

JAMES

That's a cheap shot. You know the contract I was on got cancelled. It could happen to anyone.

NANCY

It didn't happen to anyone it happened to you. If they thought you were worth it they could have found you another job.

JAMES

I found another job. I'm working. Full time.

NANCY

At half the pay.

JAMES

It's the best I could do after 6 months of looking.

NANCY

I didn't see you put anywhere near this much effort into job searching as you do in this stupid idea.

JAMES

Stupid idea?

NANCY

Oh, did I say "stupid", I meant "ridiculous".

JAMES

Ridiculous?

NANCY

Oh, did I say "ridiculous", I meant "insane".

JAMES

You know how I know I'm doing the right thing?

NANCY

This is going to be good. How?

JAMES

You're the smart one. You're the CPA. The only thing you came up with was Yolanda going to the police to face arrest, jail, and a string of lawsuits.

NANCY

Dinner will be ready in 10 minutes.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James is sitting in an armchair. He has a pen and pad. He alternates between being deep in thought and writing on the pad.

The doorbell rings.

James hurries to the door.

INT: FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

James opens the door. Yolanda, with a box in her hands, is at the door.

JAMES

Yolanda, let me take that from you.

James takes the box from Yolanda.

YOLANDA

Thank you.

Nancy comes to the door.

NANCY

Did you bring the account information?

YOLANDA

Yes, it's in the box.

JAMES

Account information?

NANCY

Yes, I want to see if I can find something that'll keep Yolanda out of an orange jump suit.

YOLANDA

Thank you. I appreciate what you are doing. I wish you would have put it another way.

NANCY

Ok, if I don't find something you will get a felony conviction and spend some years in jail.

YOLANDA

The first way was better.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James and Yolanda are working with PowerPoint on a laptop.

INT: A DEN - NIGHT

Nancy prints out a sheet of paper. She takes the sheet from the printer and tacks it on a cork board.

She looks at some papers.

The paper she put on the cork board reads: "Help someone when they are in trouble and they will remember you, the next time they are in trouble."

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James and Yolanda are working with a laptop.

JAMES

Tomorrow, after work, I'll take some footage of an office building.

Nancy enters.

NANCY

I looked over the records.

YOLANDA

And?

NANCY

I hope you look good in orange.

YOLANDA

Nancy, that's not funny.

NANCY

This swindler's MO was amazingly simple.  
The checks were deposited by cell phone.  
The withdrawals were made with checks made  
out to cash.

(Beat)

There are in your handwriting.

YOLANDA

Of course, I wrote them.

NANCY

You made out the checks and gave it to  
him.

YOLANDA

No, I withdrew the money.

NANCY

These checks were just below the amount  
that would raise alarm bells at the bank.

(Beat)

There were enough and often enough they  
should have raised alarm bells with you.

(Pause)

Didn't you think something might be wrong?

YOLANDA

Not the way he explained it. He said it  
was best if we paid some people up front  
in cash.

NANCY

Over \$14 million?

YOLANDA

I didn't think it was that much. I didn't  
keep track. I never was good in math.

NANCY

I'm sure they have some remedial math classes in prison.

YOLANDA

Could you not say prison or orange?

NANCY

Well they don't wear black and white stripes in the penitentiary these days.

JAMES

We still have this card to play.

He points at the laptop.

NANCY

Well that card is a joker.

JAMES

The joke is a wild card.

(Pause)

Nancy, you've done enough for one night. Maybe you'll think of something tomorrow.

(Pause)

Let's finish the PowerPoint slides and call it a night. We will work on the narration tomorrow.

INT: AN ELEVATOR - DAY

James is alone. He takes out his cell phone as the elevator door closes. He records his hand pressing a floor button.

When the elevator stops at a floor he films the door as it opens.

EXT: A NONDESCRIPT OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

James records the office building with his cell phone.

INT: A CAR DRIVING - DAY

James drives by a manmade lake. There is an island in the middle of the lake. James gets an idea.

He pulls the car to the side of the road.

EXT: THE CAR - CONTINUOUS

James takes out his cell phone and records the island.

INT: A BATHROOM - NIGHT

James feverishly cleans the bathtub tiles.

EXT: FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

Yolanda rings the front door.

INT: FRONT DOOR - CONTINUOUS

Nancy answers the door.

YOLANDA

Hi Nancy.

Nancy steps aside to let Yolanda enter.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Where's James. I've got some stuff in the car.

NANCY

I'll help you with it. James is cleaning the bathroom.

(Pause)

The one advantage of his crazy plan is it has gotten him to do some cleaning. If I'm luck He'll end up cleaning the whole house before this is all over.

INT: THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Yolanda is sitting. Nancy pours 2 cups of coffee.

Nancy writes on a yellow pad: "Coffee Cups Catering - \$20."

INT: THE BATHROOM - NIGHT

The bathroom tub and tiles are spotless.

A satisfied James steps out of the bathroom.

INT: THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Yolanda and Nancy are drinking coffee as James enters.

JAMES

Hi Yolanda. Why didn't you tell me  
Yolanda was here?

NANCY

What and interrupt you while you are  
scrubbing the bathroom?

JAMES

The set is ready. It may cost you a  
shower curtain.

NANCY

Good we can use a new one.

James takes some dry ice out of the freezer.

JAMES

Just give me a minute to change and then  
we can start shooting.

James rushes out of the kitchen.

NANCY

You may want to remind him dry ice should  
only be used in a well-ventilated area.

YOLANDA

I'm sure he knows that.

NANCY

One thing I've learned being married to  
him for three years is he usually doesn't  
know what I'm sure he knows.

INT: A BATHROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda and James are in the bathroom. James is wearing a  
bathing suit. He is holding a pair of winter gloves.

JAMES

OK, you film the reflection in the mirror.  
I think it will have a great effect.

Yolanda focuses the camera on the mirror as James steps  
into the shower.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Just say the word.

YOLANDA

Ready. Action.

James turns on the shower.

James acts as if taking a shower.

He hums *Santa Luchia*.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - NIGHT

Nancy is writing on the same page on the yellow pad.

JAMES (OC)

Humming *Santa Luchia*.

Written on the paper is "Cold Things Materials - \$100"

Nancy, in disbelief, notices the humming.

She scribbles on the paper.

Written on the paper is "Singing Mummy Sound Effects -  
\$1,000"

INT: A BATHROOM - NIGHT

James, wet and wearing his bathing suit and a pair of  
winter gloves, opens the bag of dry ice and puts it by the  
mirror.

He hurries into the shower.

YOLANDA

Be careful.

Nancy steps to the bathroom door to watch the foolishness.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Ready. Action!

James makes a Schwarzenegger type YELL as he "dies" in the shower. He pulls on the shower curtain. The shower curtain bar falls. James makes a girlish SCREAM when the bar lands on him.

Nancy GIGGLES.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

Are you alright!

JAMES

Yea, I'm alright. Tell me you got that.

YOLANDA

I think so. It happened so fast.

James turns the shower off.

JAMES

Take a couple of stills.

NANCY

You might want to turn the fan on.

JAMES

Yea, I think we can do that.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda and James watch the television set.

ON SCREEN:

A laptop inside a briefcase. The laptop has a PowerPoint demonstration. James narrates.

There is a picture of James, with a pillow over his face, playing dead on his bed.

JAMES (V.O)

Last month we received word of a major conspiracy from an informant. The

informant was found smothered to death in his apartment in Paris.

A picture of Yolanda, lying on her stomach with her arms and red hair wig covering her face, wearing the grease paint.

JAMES (V.O.)

Helga Heine, part owner of Grosse Chemikalien, was found dead outside her summer villa on the Riviera. Our technical department tells us a combination of a chemical and sunlight caused her body to carbonize.

A photograph of the exercise mat with a PaintShopped silhouette of a man on it.

JAMES (V.O.)

Kendo Nakamura, part owner of GRG, Ltd., a concern specializing in laser technology is technically listed as missing but we have reason to believe this is the remains of Mr. Nakamura.

A photograph of Yolanda, wearing her belly dancer costume, lying face down.

JAMES (V.O.)

Another informer was murdered on stage in an Istanbul nightclub.

A photograph of James, wearing a suit.

JAMES (V.O.)

Each of these victims had a connection to this man. Ivan Romanov, a billionaire industrialist. He now has the controlling interests in Grosse Chemikalie and GRG, Ltd.

A photograph of Yolanda, wearing an evening dress.

JAMES (V.O.)

His chief assistant and mistress is  
Francesca Fatale. She is an expert in  
chemistry, physics, and robotics.

(Pause)

You are to uncover Romanov's plot and take  
appropriate action.

OFF SCREEN:

YOLANDA

This is great.

JAMES

We've got about 30-35 minutes of film  
time. Not bad considering.

INT: THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Nancy snickers as she writes on her yellow pad:

"Cast:

Helga Heine - Marie A. Ritter

Kendo Nakamura -

Stunts:

Joao Plano

Dancers:

Acme Dance Troupe"

She types on her cell phone: "Godzilla 1954 Cast"

INT: THE KITCHEN - NIGHT

Yolanda and James sit next to each other as they drink  
coffee. Nancy stands as she drinks coffee. She writes on  
her yellow pad: "Coffee Cups Catering - \$30"

JAMES

I'll tell you what we're going to need.

NANCY

A plot?

JAMES

We need someone to be the hero.

NANCY

Ok, since I'm in this far I may as well.  
I'll do it.

JAMES

We could certainly use another character  
but, you don't have the look of an  
action/adventure heroine.

NANCY

What? You're supposed to be a  
billionaire, supervillain with her as a  
mistress and she is supposed to be a  
criminal mastermind and I don't have the  
look of an action/adventure heroine?  
Since when have you become choosy about  
casting?

JAMES

You just don't have the look.

NANCY

I have the perfect look for this script,  
dollar store special effects and overall  
production value.

YOLANDA

I think I could get some people from the  
acting class I teach who would be just  
right for the part.

NANCY

You, teach acting?

YOLANDA

Yes, yes, I do.

NANCY

Did anyone in your class ever get a job acting?

YOLANDA

Yes, I was in a local commercial and two got casted as extras.

NANCY

Impressive.

JAMES

The important thing is you can get them.

YOLANDA

Yes, and more important I'll talk them into working for free.

NANCY

No, you have to pay them.

YOLANDA

What, why?

NANCY

For two reasons. If someone asks where the money went free acting is a good indicator we're running a scam.

YOLANDA

Oh, how much?

NANCY

What's the scale for a \$12 million film?

YOLANDA

Scale for a \$12 million film?

NANCY

That's how much we say the budget is?

YOLANDA

That'll soon be more than they paid me for lessons.

NANCY

Whatever you charged them you overcharged them. Now you get to overpay them.

YOLANDA

Is that your second reason?

NANCY

No, actually it's a third reason. By doing this we are helping in a swindle. Enough people, including me and James, are getting swindled without adding more to the list.

YOLANDA

Should we hold a casting call?

JAMES

For the people in your class?

YOLANDA

Yes, it would give my acting classes more credibility.

NANCY

One local commercial, two extra jobs, and a phony casting call. Great credentials.

INT: A KITCHEN ROOM - DAY

Nancy is drinking coffee and reading an article on her tablet.

EXT: THE YARD - DAY

James has a large bucket of red colored water and dirt. He has a video camera on a tripod about 20 feet from the bucket. He lines up the camera. He puts on a pair of gloves and walks towards the bucket.

INT: A KITCHEN ROOM - DAY

Nancy is drinking coffee and reading an article on her tablet.

EXT: THE YARD - DAY

There is an empty plastic soda bottle taped to a rock. James has a cylinder marked nitrous oxide and a funnel.

INT: A KITCHEN ROOM - DAY

There is a loud SPASH from outside.

JAMES (OC)

(YELLS)

Nancy looks out the window and sees James running. She rushes out.

EXT: THE YARD - DAY

The bucket is cracked and water is oozing out.

James looks over his failed effort.

Nancy storms up to him.

NANCY

What are you doing screaming this time of morning?

(Beat)

And what stupidity are you attempting?

JAMES

I was making a volcano. I think it would make a good effect for an ending.

Nancy scans the yard.

NANCY

Nitrous oxide. You tried to do this yourself?

(Beat)

Didn't you read where it takes at least two people to do this?

(Beat)

And didn't you read where it said it shouldn't be done without adult supervision?

JAMES

I guess I should get ready for the auditions.

NANCY

Aren't you forgetting something?

JAMES

Right after I clean this mess up?

NANCY

That's right.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James, Yolanda, & Nancy watch recordings of the auditions. There are pictures of Yolanda's students on the coffee table. Nancy appears disinterested in the selection process. She writes on a yellow pad "CCC Casting, Ltd. \$10,779".

ON SCREEN:

Stanley Snickerdoodle, 25, a tall muscular man with a handsome face and limited acting talent.

STANLEY

Let us go on to victory!

OFF SCREEN:

JAMES

The look, perfect. The acting, passable.

YOLANDA

The best one acting wise is 5'4" with a face only a mother would pay to see.

NANCY

Did you tell him that before you took his money?

YOLANDA

You know just because someone doesn't have the look of an action hero doesn't mean they can't have a successful acting career.

NANCY

Did he get the local commercial or one of the extra jobs?

YOLANDA

An extra job.

JAMES

Let's take a look at the front runner for our leading lady.

ON SCREEN:

Ruth Finkelstein, 21, average height, voluptuous figure, and a beautiful face.

RUTH

Let's go, line please.

JAMES (O.C.)

Let us go on to victory!

RUTH

Let's go on to victory!

OFF SCREEN:

JAMES

We may want to limit her lines.

YOLANDA

Good idea since I'm paying her in real money.

NANCY

Hey, you either pay for actors or pay for a lawyer. This is the way you chose to keep you out of jail.

INT: A GARAGE - NIGHT

On the floor in the middle of the garage there is a clay model that looks somewhat like the island in the manmade lake.

James watches as Nancy mixes vinegar, red food coloring, and dish soap in a jar. She pours the mixture into a jar inside the clay model.

NANCY

Now for the baking soda.

James steps to a video camera on a tripod. He zooms in on the clay mold.

Nancy spreads a paper towel on the floor. She pours some baking soda onto the paper towel. She folds the paper towel and wraps it in rubber bands. She hangs the paper towel over the clay mold.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Ready.

JAMES

Ready.

NANCY

5-4-3-2-1, drop.

She drops the paper towel into the jar in the mold and steps away.

Moments later the red mixture oozes out of the clay mold.

JAMES

This is great. Great going.

NANCY

The secret ingredient is, reading the directions.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - DAY

James leads Yolanda into the living room. Nancy steps in behind them.

JAMES

I filmed the ending to the climax.

YOLANDA

That's great. I put the movie in the International Movies Database.

JAMES

That's a good idea. This way if any of the investors get suspicious you can show them something.

YOLANDA

I gave it the working title The Redress Agency.

NANCY

You've got the title, the actors, and I use that term loosely, 45 minutes of film, and the end of the climax. When are you going to get a story?

JAMES

Let me show you the end of the climax. We have Nancy's expertise to thank for it.

YOLANDA

Really, take a bow.

NANCY

I'd prefer to put a bag over my head.

James turns on the television.

ON SCREEN:

There is a short clip of the island on the manmade lake. The screen shows the clay model oozing the red mixture. There are a few seconds of closeups of the oozing mixture from different angles. There is a canned EXPLOSION and short clip James' volcano debacle.

OFF SCREEN:

YOLANDA

That's very good.

NANCY

For a 3<sup>rd</sup> grader.

Nancy has a pad list of items, written in pencil, used for the volcano effects and their prices. She erases the decimal points and puts in commas. She writes at the bottom Technical advisor, \$10,000.

JAMES

OK now we need a bad guy army.

YOLANDA

With just the two of us.

James turns to Nancy.

JAMES

We could use your help.

NANCY

You need an army. There are the two of you and adding me will make a difference?

YOLANDA

Clones, we could be clones.

JAMES

That would solve the problems of numbers and keep it our real budget. The problem is it won't make it look like a \$12 million cast.

NANCY

Maybe you could have an invisible bad guy army.

JAMES

An invisible army. Let's think about that.

YOLANDA

Wouldn't that give the same doesn't look like \$12 million issue.

NANCY

Hey, you two. I was being snarky.

JAMES

Constructive would be better but I think we have to take what we can get.

YOLANDA

What about a masked army?

JAMES

A ninja army.

YOLANDA

That's a wonderful idea.

NANCY

You know Ruth and Stanley might not be as stupid as you two.

YOLANDA

What do you mean by that?

NANCY

If they have more brains than acting talent they will know this is a phony movie that took pocket change to make.

YOLANDA

Hey, I am not paying them pocket change.

JAMES

While it's your usual tactlessness you do have a point. Let's throw together three Ninja costumes.

NANCY

Three?

JAMES

Yes, three. In the process we might be able to figure something out.

NANCY

Maybe you'll figure out a semblance of a story.

INT: A CAR - DRIVING - DAY

James is driving and Yolanda is in the front passenger seat. Nancy is in the back. They are all dressed in black robes.

Nancy doesn't think much of James and Yolanda's planning. Nancy is annoyed at herself for going along with them.

JAMES

We'll tell them we have different crews filming in different countries.

(Pause)

We'll say it's a cost saving measure.

Nancy LAUGHS.

YOLANDA

You're a genius.

Nancy LAUGHS and mutters under her breath.

NANCY

He's the smartest one in the class of those that got an "F".

EXT: A WOODED AREA - DAY

James is at a camera on a tripod. He points the camera to Yolanda and Nancy, who are a few feet apart from each other. They all have on black hoods and masks and have toy guns.

JAMES

Ok good.

James rushes between Yolanda and Nancy.

JAMES

Ready. Action!

They pretend they are shot dead.

EXT: A WOODED AREA - TWILIGHT

The camera is set at a different part of the woods. Yolanda, Nancy, and James are facing the camera.

JAMES

Ok, everybody knows what we're going to do?

NANCY

We run five steps, pretend to shoot our five and dime toy guns, then we pretend we're shot.

JAMES

Exactly! Ready. Action!

They run James stumbles and SCREAMS as he falls.

Nancy and Yolanda finish the scene.

James is in pain.

JAMES

Cut.

NANCY

You know running and falling is the oldest cliché in the movies?

JAMES

I fell for real.

YOLANDA

Are you alright!

NANCY

Klutz.

JAMES

I'm ok.

(hisses)

I'm ok.

YOLANDA

Maybe we should call it a day? We're running out of light.

NANCY

Finally, something that makes sense.

JAMES

No, I want to get some scenes in the dark.

NANCY

We don't even have a flashlight.

JAMES

Yes, we do.

NANCY

Where, in the car?

JAMES

No, right here.

James takes out a penlight.

NANCY

Could you find one any smaller?

EXT: A WOODED AREA - NIGHT

The camera is on a tripod next to the car.

JAMES

Ready. Action.

Yolanda, James, and Nancy, pretend they are shot dead.

JAMES

Cut.

NANCY

Good let's get out of here before somebody sees us.

(Pause)

If that happens I'd die for real of embarrassment.

EXT: A NONDESCRIPT OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Stanley, wearing a business suit, is with James across the street from the office building.

JAMES

Just walk across the street and step inside that office building.

STANLEY

Then what?

JAMES

Then you step out.

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

Nancy and Yolanda finish making sandwiches. The front door UNLOCKS and OPENS. Yolanda picks up her cell phone and puts it to her ear. Nancy heads for the front door.

YOLANDA

Yes Luigi.

NANCY (OC)

Congratulations on getting the part.

STANLEY (OC)

Thank you.

NANCY (OC)

How did the shooting go?

JAMES (OC)

It went very well.

YOLANDA

Molto bene!

STANLEY (OC)

I didn't have any lines.

JAMES (OC)

We have lines for you here.

James, Nancy, & Stanley enter the kitchen.

YOLANDA

We're getting ready to do some filming here.

Yolanda gestures to acknowledge James, Nancy, and Stanley.

JAMES

Good the caterers delivered.

YOLANDA

I'll review your footage tomorrow. Ciao Luigi!

JAMES

We'll have some lunch then we'll start filming.

YOLANDA

I was just talking to Luigi. The filming in Italy is on schedule.

JAMES

That's good news.

STANLEY

For this movie?

YOLANDA

Yes, we're filming in a few places.

JAMES

It's cheaper this way. Instead of us all traveling to different places we have local crews do the on-location shooting.

STANLEY

So, we won't be going to Europe?

YOLANDA

Not for this film, but I'm sure you will for other films.

Nancy doesn't believe Stanley's talent will take him anywhere.

JAMES

Our setup here is spartan because the complicated sets are at the on-location sites.

STANLEY

It would be nice if it was the other way around.

NANCY

This way draws more on your acting talent.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

JAMES

While Yolanda gets into costume we will do some filming.

STANLEY

Shouldn't I study my lines?

JAMES

We have the set ready. The scene we will be filming doesn't have any lines.

YOLANDA

We feel it would seem more spontaneous if you get these lines at the last minute.

Nancy knows Yolanda is making up this explanation.

Nancy and Yolanda leave the living room. James leads Stanley to a tray table that has a briefcase on top of it. There is a wheeled chair, facing the drapes, at the table.

JAMES

The combination is 1-2-3, 3-2-1.

STANLEY

1-2-3 on the left 3-2-1 on the right.

JAMES

Very good. There is a laptop in the briefcase. Sit down, open the briefcase and then the laptop. Got it?

STANLEY

Yes, I got it, 1-2-3, 3-2-1.

JAMES

Ready! Action!

Stanley films Stanley from behind. Stanley sits down, opens the briefcase, and opens the laptop.

JAMES

Cut! Great!

Stanley doesn't understand what James thinks is great.

James powers on the laptop. He turns the briefcase around and wheels the chair to the other side of the tray table.

JAMES

Ok, sit here.

James makes a couple of keystrokes as Stanley sits in the chair.

JAMES

Action starts as soon as there is audio.

STANLEY

What are my lines?

JAMES

No lines.

STANLEY

What do I do?

JAMES

Watch the presentation.

STANLEY

That's it?

JAMES

I'll film you as you watch. It will also give you a feel for your character's mission.

STANLEY

Who is my character?

JAMES

Quiet on the set.

James notices the drape behind Stanley. James WHISPERS.

JAMES

Drapes, drapery, draper.

YOLANDA (V.O.)

Face and pheromone identification  
verified.

JAMES (V.O.)

Last month we received word of a major  
conspiracy from an informant. The  
informant was found smothered to death in  
his apartment in Paris.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

JAMES (V.O.)

His chief assistant and mistress is  
Francesca Fatale. She is an expert in  
chemistry, physics, and robotics.

(Pause)

You are to uncover Romanov's plot and take  
appropriate action.

Stanley seems bored.

JAMES

Cut! Great!

STANLEY

Great, I didn't do anything.

JAMES

That's what makes it great. A stoic  
action hero who finds dangerous and  
exciting missions mundane.

STANLEY

You never told me my character's name.

James scans the rooms and notices the drapes.

JAMES

Draper!

STANLEY

Just Draper?

JAMES

(Yells)

You ready in there?

(Whispers)

Stanley, Stan, Dan.

STANLEY

What?

JAMES

Dan! Dan Draper!

Yolanda makes a grand entrance into the living room. She is dressed in the kimono she wore in the earlier "shoot" and is made up as a geisha.

YOLANDA

I'm ready!

Nancy enters. She hands some coins to Yolanda.

NANCY

Here's your change.

James lays out the exercise mat and positions the parabolic space heater.

JAMES

Stanley, you take off your jacket, shirt, and undershirt, and lie on your stomach on the exercise mat.

Stanley takes off his jacket and unbuttons his shirt.

YOLANDA

Should I walk on his back?

JAMES

Let's not repeat that debacle. We'll just do the penny routine.

(Pause)

Stanley, Yolanda is not going to walk on your back. She is going to put some coins on your back as she says her lines.

STANLEY

Do I get a line?

JAMES

Yes, you do. When she walks away you point the space heater at the camera. Wait until I point to you then you say, "She was smoking hot."

STANLEY

"She was smoking hot." Is that it?

JAMES

Yes, that's exactly right.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

JAMES

This time don't get up. Just casually change its position with one hand.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

JAMES

Try not to knock it over.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - NIGHT

Stanley and Yolanda step from the front door.

STANLEY

James gives the impression he doesn't know what he's doing.

YOLANDA

That's James. The reason we got him was for this innovative filmmaking method we didn't want to get someone who had preconceived notions as to how to make a movie.

STANLEY

You want to make a film with a director who doesn't know how to direct.

YOLANDA

You can say that.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James is talking to Ruth on the phone. Nancy and Yolanda drink iced tea.

NANCY

He did a great job of cleaning up the lawn furniture today.

JAMES

Bring one of your bathing suits.

(Pause)

It's your first scene in your first movie. We want you wearing something you'll be comfortable in.

(Pause)

Well we appreciate that, but we are shooting for a PG movie.

(Pause)

Yes, we will keep that in mind. See you tomorrow.

(Pause)

That's right. Good-bye.

NANCY

You look embarrassed.

JAMES

Ruth may have some acting problems,  
modesty isn't one of them.

NANCY

Speaking of problems maybe you can come up  
with a name for her character that you  
don't get by looking at the décor.

JAMES

Maybe you can come up with a name for her  
character.

NANCY

I will if you come up with more lines for  
her than a silly 4-word pun.

YOLANDA

Did you put that scene together?

JAMES

Have a look.

James turns on the television.

ON SCREEN:

Yolanda, with her back to the camera methodically places  
quarters down Stanley's spine. She speaks in a faux  
Japanese accent.

YOLANDA

The metal in the coins are good conductors  
of heat. This helps loosen the joints.

Yolanda stands and steps away.

Stanley looks at the parabolic space heater and with on  
hand turns it so it faces the camera.

Yolanda has her back to the camera as she approaches the bare wall. She puts on the sunglasses. She spins around and squeezes the flip-phone. She SCREAMS in horror.

There is a closeup of the glowing space heater.

There is the bare wall and some smoke.

Stanley looking at the camera.

STANLEY

She was smoking hot.

OFF SCREEN:

JAMES

What do you think?

YOLANDA

Not bad considering what you have to work with.

NANCY

It was fortunate you had to have so many takes with Stanley. It makes the lighting consistent.

JAMES

Good point.

EXT: OUTSIDE THE HOUSE - DAY

Ruth, wearing a bathing suit, sits on a lawn chair. She has on earbuds that are connected to a tablet.

James plays up-tempo music as he films Ruth.

Yolanda is holding a set of cue cards.

James switches the music to a slow classical piece.

James switches off the music and points to Ruth.

RUTH

Yes.

(Pause)

I presume I'm to leave immediately?

(Pause)

Why should this be different from the other critical missions?

(Pause)

Who is my partner?

(Pause)

It makes sense it would be him. He is the-

(Beat)

Second best.

JAMES

Cut! Beautiful!

RUTH

Why am I saying "second best"? Wouldn't they get the best for this mission?

JAMES

You see your character, Dawn Striker, thinks she's the best. Of course, Stanley's character, Dan Draper, thinks he's the best.

RUTH

Oh, I get it.

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

There is a tray of sandwiches and a salad tray. There is an assortment of beverage cans and bottles. Nancy is sitting on a chair. James, Ruth, and Yolanda enter.

NANCY

The caterer just left.

RUTH

This is great. I'm so hungry.

NANCY

Yolanda, Christophe called. He asked you to call him back.

YOLANDA

Christophe, I don't know any Christophe?

NANCY

Monsieur Christophe Despeaux, our French unit.

YOLANDA

Oh Christophe!

(Pause)

Excuse me, I'd better call him right now.

Yolanda takes out her cell phone. She taps it a couple of times and puts it to her ear.

James whispers to Nancy.

JAMES

Nice save.

NANCY

You make me an expert at that.

YOLANDA

Bonjour Christophe.

(Pause)

We were filming. It was the first scene we shot with our leading Mademoiselle.

INT: THE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

James, Nancy, Ruth, and Yolanda are at the door.

JAMES

I think we did good. We filmed two scenes.

YOLANDA

You did very well for your first day of filming.

RUTH

Thank you.

James opens the door.

JAMES

We'll work out the time for your next filming. We're going to see when you and Stanley are both available.

RUTH

Sounds great.

YOLANDA

Good-bye.

RUTH

Bye.

JAMES

Good night.

Nancy waves.

Ruth steps out of the house and James closes the door behind her.

JAMES

Nancy, that was a good idea of yours to use cue cards.

NANCY

We're lucky she at least knows how to read.

YOLANDA

She's untalented, not stupid.

NANCY

You'd better be wrong on that last count.

(Beat)

Bonjour means "good morning". It's night over in France. Mademoiselle means "Miss". The word for "Lady" is "Dame".

JAMES

From now on we'd better put a little planning into these fake international phone calls.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - DAY

Nancy wakes. There are low RUSTLING sounds from outside the room.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

Aluminum foil covers the walls and windows. James is moving furniture.

A groggy Nancy enters.

NANCY

What are you doing?

JAMES

I made the set for Romanov's headquarters.

NANCY

He made his fortune by selling aluminum foil?

JAMES

Let's put on our Ninja Army costumes. We can get in a couple of shots before the rest of the gang shows up.

NANCY

I think we'd better do our catering routine instead. Defrost the Danishes and the bagels.

INT: THE KITCHEN - DAY

There are a couple of bagels and Danishes on trays with a lot of crumbs. There are papers with the logo of a phony company.

JAMES (OC)

Ok everybody, let's do some filming.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James, Nancy, and Yolanda, are have black ninja like clothing, without the hoods and masks. Ruth and Stanley have toy pistols. James gets the camera ready.

JAMES

Ready, action!

Ruth and Stanley take three quick steps stop and pretend to shoot their toy guns. The aluminum foil on the walls shake. They run, off camera, and the aluminum foil shakes more.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Cut!

NANCY

The wall is still flapping.

James stares at the wall.

JAMES

You're right.

(Pause)

That's nothing that can't be solved with more tape.

(Pause)

Before I do the upgrade Let's get some footage of you standing still and shooting the opposite way.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

James finishes securing the aluminum foil to the walls with tape.

JAMES

Ok, let's try that again.

James gets behind the camera.

JAMES (CON'D)

Ready, action!

Ruth and Stanley take three quick steps stop and pretend to shoot their toy guns. The aluminum foil on the walls shake. They run, off camera.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Cut.

(Pause)

We got it. Now let's do the fight scenes. Ruth, you're up first. Yolanda, will be Ninja One, will attack you then Nancy and I will join in.

James readies the camera. Ruth gets on her mark. Yolanda and Nancy put on their hoods and masks. James puts on his mask.

JAMES (CONT'D)

Ready, action!

Yolanda attacks Ruth from behind. Ruth grabs Yolanda's arm. They struggle briefly then Ruth gives Yolanda a light push. Yolanda pretends to stagger into the wall. Nancy comes into camera view as much of the aluminum foil falls off the wall.

NANCY

Are you going to say 'cut'?

JAMES

Cut.

James stares at the wall.

NANCY

More tape?

JAMES

Ok, I'll fix this up. Nancy, you go on a sandwich run. Yolanda, why don't you go over some scenes, maybe do some filming, with Stanley and Ruth.

INT: CAR - DRIVING - DAY

Nancy is alone. She MUTTERS as she drives.

NANCY

Why did I let them attempt this? All the time I've known him his ideas range from stupid to ridiculous. This idea raises the ridiculous bar way up there.

She pulls the car to the curve and screeches it to a halt. She takes a DEEP BREATH. She takes out her cell phone, picks up a pad in the passenger's seat, and calls to Yolanda. Written on the pad is:

<moshi moshi>

Akira Kochi here.

<Yes Akira>

We are getting ready to start filming now.

<That's good, are there any issues?>

Should the Ninja's wear blue headbands or Rising Sun headbands?>

<It doesn't really matter, use what you think works best and text me with what you decide.>

Thank you.

<Thank you, Sayonara>

INT: THE FRONT DOOR - DAY

Yolanda is filming Ruth and Stanley. Her ring tone sounds. She sees who is calling then puts the phone to her hear.

YOLANDA

Moshi, moshi.

(Pause)

Yes Amira

(Pause)

That's good, are there any issues?

(Pause)

It doesn't really matter, use what you think works best and text me with what you decide.

(Pause)

Thank you, Sayonara.

Yolanda ends the call and puts her phone away.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

That was our Japanese director. They're getting ready to film.

INT: CAR - DAY

Nancy puts her phone away. She puts the car in gear then pauses.

NANCY

Yes, that'll end this craziness. That's it Nancy. This ends tonight.

EXT: CAR - DAY

Nancy makes a U-turn and drives towards her home.

EXT: CAR - DAY

Nancy drives up to the house. The vehicle's rear pops open. Nancy steps out of the car and walks to the vehicle's rear. She takes out a cooler with a phony logo sticker on it.

INT: LIVING ROOM - DAY

The "damage" has been repaired. James is behind the camera. Yolanda, Nancy, and James have on their ninja hoods and masks. Ruth, Yolanda, and Nancy are on their marks.

JAMES

OK, remember, don't touch the wall.

(Pause)

Ready, action!

Yolanda attacks Ruth from behind. Ruth grabs Yolanda's arm. They struggle briefly then Ruth gives Yolanda a light push. Yolanda pretends to stagger back and is careful not to touch the aluminum foil. Nancy enters the scene. Ruth gives two karate chops, which obviously don't connect, and Nancy pretends to fall. James grabs Ruth from behind and Yolanda charges at her. Ruth pretends to elbow James. Ruth makes a combination of unconvincing karate chops. Yolanda and James pretend to be subdued.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda, wearing a ninja hood and mask, is behind the camera. Stanley is in front of the camera. James and Nancy, both wearing ninja masks and hoods, are on their marks just out of the camera's view.

YOLANDA

Ready, action!

James sneaks up behind Stanley. Stanley grabs James's arm and fakes a punch. They exchange punches, Stanley blocks James's punches, James pretends to fall. Nancy enters the scene. Stanley gives a one two punch and Nancy pretends to fall. Yolanda jumps on Stanley's back. Stanley staggers. Yolanda puts her arm around his neck. Stanley regains his footing and spins around as Yolanda jumps off him. Stanley throws two punches and Yolanda pretends to fall.

INT: THE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

James, Nancy, Yolanda, Ruth and Stanley are at the door. James and Yolanda are smiling.

JAMES

Remember tomorrow we'll meet here at 6.

RUTH

Is that 6 AM?

JAMES

No, 6PM. We're going to do some filming here then we are going on "location" for a night shoot.

STANLEY

Location?

JAMES

Well, a local location.

Everyone except Nancy laughs.

RUTH

Six PM it is.

James opens the door.

JAMES

It was a great shoot and let's have a better one tomorrow.

STANLEY

Good night.

YOLANDA

Good-bye.

RUTH

Bye.

JAMES

Good night.

Ruth and Stanley leave and James closes the door behind them. James and Yolanda lose their smiles.

JAMES

I'm glad he doesn't know how to throw a punch.

YOLANDA

I didn't realize I could hurt in so many places.

JAMES

Yea, I know I'm going to feel this filming in the morning.

YOLANDA

All this for what 2 minutes, 3 minutes tops.

JAMES

I think I can stretch it out to five minutes. It'll help ease the pain.

NANCY

It looks like my timing is perfect. I figured it out. We can stop this insanity.

JAMES

What do you mean?

NANCY

I thought of it right after I made that phony baloney phone call to you.

YOLANDA

You mean when you were making that faux catering run?

NANCY

Yes. It's obvious from what we got on film it cost spit to make this movie.

JAMES

It also cost a lot of aches, pains, house cleaning and nagging from you.

NANCY

All well deserved. The party line is this swindler, instead of producing, was paid to do the special effects. He took the money and disappeared.

YOLANDA

That's great. That's really great.

JAMES

That's no good.

NANCY

You, who never came up with a rational idea all the time I've known you, think an idea of mine is no good. That's a ringing endorsement.

JAMES

All it does is let the investors know their money is gone and there is no movie. This story won't hold up any better than Yolanda's original story. The only difference is Yolanda's original story is the truth.

YOLANDA

He's right.

JAMES

A few more scenes and we have what can pass for a movie, at least length wise.

(Beat)

The idea is for people not to get suspicious.

NANCY

What should we order from "Sanders Sandwiches Plus"?

INT: THE FRONT DOOR - DAY

James, Nancy, and Yolanda struggle to move a desk so it faces the front door.

They position the desk then they all struggle to catch their breath.

NANCY

What are you going to have us do tomorrow?  
Dig a whole to China?

JAMES

Thanks for reminding me. Could you call  
Miss Utility tomorrow?

(Pause)

That's a joke.

NANCY

If you're looking for my sense of humor I  
left it with your senses.

INT: THE FRONT DOOR - DAY

The area is decorated with some plants and ornamentations. Aluminum foil is used on the walls and the door. There is a paper-mâché ornament above the door.

James sits behind the desk. On his desk there is a cookie sheet that is part of a fake console that includes a tablet, some miscellaneous knobs and buttons, and aluminum foil.

Stanley, with a toy gun in hand, stands in front of the screen.

Yolanda is behind the camera.

YOLANDA

Ready. Action.

JAMES

Very impressive Mr. Draper. Perhaps you  
would like to join my organization.

STANLEY

I would like for you and your men to  
surrender right now.

JAMES

It seems I have little choice.

Stanley slides to the side. James SCREAMS and shakes.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - DAY

Nancy and Ruth are in the room. Ruth finishes changing.

JAMES (O.C.)

Ahh!

Nancy shows disgust.

RUTH

Do you want to go to bed with James?

Nancy is puzzled by the question.

RUTH (CONT'D)

It's all right, I was just wondering about  
your passive-aggressive attitude towards  
him.

NANCY

You think when a woman is passive-  
aggressive towards a man she wants to go  
to bed with him?

(Pause)

That is only the case in hackneyed romance  
plots.

(Pause)

What has Yolanda told you about me and  
James?

RUTH

She didn't tell me anything. Do you have  
a history?

NANCY

We're married. To answer your original question, I don't want to go to bed with him.

EXT: A WOODED AREA - NIGHT

James, Nancy, Ruth, Stanley, & Yolanda are dressed in ninja costumes.

James is behind the camera the others are in front of the camera.

JAMES

Ok, sound off.

NANCY

One.

YOLANDA

Two.

JAMES

Three.

STANLEY

Four.

RUTH

Five.

JAMES

Ready. Action!

James runs towards the other, outside the camera's view. The others take three quick steps and pretend to fire their toy guns.

James joins them. The "die" in their sound off number order. Ruth's death is overly dramatic.

RUTH

Oh, cut.

James jumps up and rushes to the camera. The others stand.

NANCY

Could you die a little quicker? The ground is wet.

James stops the camera and turns it around and points.

JAMES

Ok now we're going to do it from there. We'll reverse the death order.

The others step towards their marks. Yolanda moves close to Ruth.

YOLANDA

Definitely tone down the dramatics. Your ninja character is an extra and you don't want to upstage the lead villainous' demise, me.

Yolanda moves close to Nancy.

YOLANDA (CONT'D)

What are you complaining about? The longer it takes her to die the more film time we eat.

James is behind the camera. The others are on their marks.

JAMES

Ok, now we're going to die in the reverse order.

YOLANDA

Very diplomatic.

INT: THE BEDROOM - NIGHT

James is lying on his stomach with the sheet over him. Nancy is sitting up in the bed looking at a tablet. She puts the tablet down. She picks up a pen. She cocks her arm as she looks at where James's head is. She looks towards James's buttocks. She pokes James's buttocks with the pen. James SCREAMS and squirms. Yolanda is filming the scene. James stops screaming and goes limp.

YOLANDA

Cut!

JAMES

You were supposed to tap me in the head  
not ram it into my butt!

NANCY

I adlibbed.

JAMES

Adlibbed that hurt.

NANCY

It's the same kind of pain you've been to  
me.

YOLANDA

It's good you stayed in character James.  
I think it's a really good take.

EXT: THE YARD - NIGHT

James has a long beard and is dressed in faux Bedouin  
attire. Yolanda films as Nancy sneaks up behind James and  
pretends to garrote James.

INT: A DEN - NIGHT

James sits behind the desk and films. Nancy and Yolanda,  
dressed in faux burqas and veils, approach the desk.

YOLANDA

What must we do?

JAMES

Cut.

(Pause)

Ready for the next scene.

NANCY

I suppose.

JAMES

Think of something scary.

NANCY

Think of prison Yolanda.

JAMES

Ready. Action.

Nancy and Yolanda attempt to put fear in their eyes. They pretend they are shot then fall dead.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - DAY

The laptop is hooked up to the television set. James is at the laptop.

Nancy and Yolanda are in the room.

JAMES

I got your big scenes together.

James clicks on his mouse.

ON SCREEN:

INT: A BEDROOM - DAY

James is lying on his stomach with the sheet over him. Nancy is sitting up in the bed looking at a tablet.

The tablet fills the screen. It as a series of alphanumeric characters in groups of 5. The screen morphs into a screen that reads, "Close down the Cairo Office."

She picks up a pen. She cocks her arm as she looks at where James's head is. She looks towards James's buttocks. She pokes James's buttocks with the pen. James SCREAMS and squirms.

Nancy has a big smile.

James stops screaming and goes limp.

Nancy picks up her tablet and types.

The tablet fills the screen. The screen reads, "Close down in progress." The words morph into a screen that has a series of alphanumeric characters in groups of 5.

EXT: OUTSIDE - NIGHT

Nancy sneaks up behind James and pretends to garrote him.

INT: AN OFFICE - NIGHT

Nancy and Yolanda, faux burqas and veils, approach the camera. Yolanda speaks in a faux Middle Eastern accent.

YOLANDA

What are our orders?

The scene shifts to Nancy behind the desk. She takes out a handgun.

NANCY

Your orders are to die.

Scene shifts to the eyes of Nancy and Yolanda.

Scene shifts to Nancy behind the desk.

Nancy fires two shots.

Scene shifts to faux burqas clad Nancy and Yolanda. They are shot and die.

EXT: A MIDDLE EASTERN STREET - DAY

A still picture of an empty street.

EXT: OUTSIDE - DAY

There's a closeup of Nancy. She taps the pendant she is wearing.

EXT: A MIDDLE EASTERN STREET - DAY

A still picture of an empty street. There is an animated explosion.

INT: AN EXECUTIVE OFFICE - DAY

Nancy stands in front of the desk. James is sitting behind the desk. Yolanda sits on the desk.

NANCY

What is my next assignment?

JAMES

You will find out in due course.

Nancy turns around and walks. Yolanda reaches presses a button on the desk console.

Jagged animated lines seem to travel from the fixture to Nancy. Nancy screams and convulses. The animation stops and Nancy collapses.

YOLANDA

I'll see to it her next assignment will be with the fishes.

OFF SCREEN:

JAMES

Well what do you think?

YOLANDA

I think it's wonderful.

NANCY

For a grammar school project.

JAMES

Just a couple of more scenes and it's a wrap.

NANCY

Yes, wrap it, tie a bow around it, and throw it in the trash.

INT: A BEDROOM ROOM - DAY

Nancy is in bed. There is RUSTLING outside.

Nancy is tired. She looks at the clock. It is 7:17 AM.

There is the sound of RUSHING WATER from a garden hose.

She looks out the window. James is by a large inflatable pool.

NANCY

He hasn't set that think up in two years.

EXT: THE YARD - DAY

Yolanda sits on a lawn chair and applies a paste to the exposed parts of her body. James dumps dry ice bricks into the pool. Nancy paces around the yard.

James positions a camera poolside.

YOLANDA

I'm ready.

JAMES

Ok, Nancy you are camera operator one.

NANCY

And where will you be?

James picks up a tablet.

JAMES

I will be filming from the top of the ladder.

NANCY

Oh no. She is going to jump into the pool, make a splash. You take the splash zone.

JAMES

OK, but you will have to call action.

NANCY

Oh gee, what a big responsibility. I'll try my best to rise to the challenge.

The dry ice causes mist around the pool.

Yolanda steps up the ladder. When Yolanda reaches her mark on the ladder's downside she turns around so her back faces the pool. Nancy steps to the top of the ladder.

JAMES

Yolanda, be careful you don't want to touch the dry ice.

YOLANDA

OK.

NANCY

Are you ready?

YOLANDA

I'm ready.

JAMES

Camera two, ready.

NANCY

Go.

James and Yolanda are confused.

NANCY

OK, action.

Yolanda SCREAMS and throws herself backwards into the pool. She thrashes and SCREAMS as her exposed parts fizz. Yolanda's touches a dry ice brick and her SCREAM changes to one of real pain.

YOLANDA

I touched the ice!

NANCY

Cut.

JAMES

No, stay in character! Action! Action!

Yolanda resumes her animated SCREAMS in between HISSES of pain. She goes underwater. She stays under water for a few moments then stands up.

JAMES

Cut!

NANCY

Wasn't that my job?

JAMES

Sorry.

(Pause)

Are you alright Yolanda?

YOLANDA

I'm alright. It still hurts though.

INT: LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Yolanda is sitting. James finishes connecting his laptop to the television. He takes the channel changer and takes a seat.

JAMES

Nancy, we're ready to start.

NANCY (OC)

Start without me I'll be right in.

James presses the channel changer.

ON SCREEN:

Yolanda and Ruth point guns at each other. Two CLICKS, their guns are empty. They charge at each other and scuffle.

There is an overhead view of a pool of boiling liquid.

The unconvincing scuffle continues. Yolanda gives Ruth a light push and Ruth falls to the floor. Yolanda moves in on Ruth. Ruth pushes Yolanda with her legs. Yolanda staggers back off camera and SCREAMS.

Yolanda SCREAMS as she falls into the pool of boiling liquid. She continues SCREAMING and her pitch changes.

There is a closeup of Ruth.

Yolanda thrashes and SCREAMS as her exposed parts fizz.  
She sinks below the liquid.

Ruth watches.

RUTH

Plop, plop, fizz, fizz.

OFF SCREEN:

NANCY

Plop, plop, fizz, fizz. Talk about a  
cheap pun.

JAMES

It is within our budget.

YOLANDA

It was a good idea to have me stay in  
character.

ON SCREEN:

James sits behind a desk that has also has a console.  
Stanley has a gun pointed at James.

JAMES

Very impressive Mr. Draper. Perhaps you  
would like to join my organization.

STANLEY

I would like for you and your men to  
surrender right now.

JAMES

It seems I have little choice.

The metal front of the console reflects a fixture behind  
Stanley.

Stanley slides to the side as James presses a button on the  
console.

Animated lines seem to travel from the fixture to James.

James SCREAMS and shakes. His upper body falls face down over the console.

STANLEY

That was an electrifying meeting.

Ruth and Stanley rush to each other in a corridor.

RUTH

Did you find Romanov?

STANLEY

Yes, I gave him quite a shock.

(Pause)

Have you seen Francesca?

RUTH

Yes, we met. Last I saw of her she was smoking hot.

STANLEY

Good, now the only thing left to do is make it to the airstrip and find a plane that flies so we can get off this island before it becomes smoking hot.

OFF SCREEN:

JAMES

Well we got it all on film.

YOLANDA

I didn't think we'd be able to do it. I have to hand it to you James, you really pulled it off.

JAMES

I'm really surprised we did it. All along I was expecting something to just fall apart.

NANCY

When you have nothing there is nothing to fall apart.

JAMES

Now I'll have to put on the editor's hat and tweak this so we have what can pass for a film.

(Pause)

I'd say you're off the hook.

YOLANDA

Thank you so much.

NANCY

You intend to tweak it until it's the best you could make it then bury it?

JAMES

No, that would be dishonest.

NANCY

We've made a film for spit and she is going to pretend it cost 12 million to make and you have a problem with honesty?

JAMES

Yolanda, you have to at least try to sell this.

YOLANDA

I'll talk to some people, at least go through the motions.

NANCY

That's what we've been doing all along.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nancy is doing her yoga exercises as James, with a shirt and tie, walks through the room.

JAMES

I probably won't have to work the whole day.

NANCY

Call me when you leave.

JAMES

On the plus side I get paid overtime.

NANCY

Yes, overtime pay. The mark of a low paying job.

JAMES

Some people who get overtime have good paying jobs

NANCY

You're not one of them.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nancy is holding yoga position when she takes notice of the curtain. She walks over to the curtains and puts her hand behind the curtain and she can see her hand.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - DAY

Nancy has the curtain hanging from the middle of the living room. She turns the camera on then gets behind the curtain.

INT: A LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Nancy, James, and Yolanda enter. Nancy enters from a different direction than James and Yolanda. Nancy has a thumb drive in her hand.

YOLANDA

Hi, Nancy.

NANCY

Hello Yolanda. I have a surprise for you two. I filmed closing credits.

JAMES

That is a surprise. Let's see it!

Nancy puts the thumb drive into the laptop connected to the television screen and brings the scene on the screen.

ON SCREEN:

Nancy's silhouette appears. She credibly dances to up tempo music as the credits roll. There is a long list of fictitious credits.

OFF SCREEN:

YOLANDA

Where did you learn to dance like that?

NANCY

High school dance.

JAMES

The dancing is great. So are the effects. You've been holding out on us.

YOLANDA

Why are the credits so long?

NANCY

To show your investors where the 12 million went.

JAMES

How much money went to Guido Salami?

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

There is a Christmas tree in the living room. James is sitting in an armchair and watching television. The doorbell RINGS.

JAMES (TRACKING)

I'll get it!

James makes his way to the front door.

INT: AT THE FRONT DOOR - NIGHT

James opens the door and lets Yolanda come in. Yolanda has a gift-wrapped box.

YOLANDA

Happy Holidays!

JAMES

Season's Greetings.

(Pause)

Yolanda is here!

James takes the box from Yolanda.

JAMES (CONT'D) (TRACKING)

Thank you.

INT: THE LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

James and Yolanda come into the living room. James puts the box under the tree.

Nancy enters the living room.

YOLANDA

Hi Nancy!

NANCY

I've got a Christmas present for you Yolanda.

JAMES

It's right under the tree.

James reaches for a box under the tree.

NANCY

Not that one. The movie's share of the profits from video sales have gone over 12 million. You've paid back the people that were swindled.

YOLANDA

That's wonderful!

NANCY

Yes, they have even made some money on the venture so far.

JAMES

We really did it!

NANCY

Yolanda, your share of the profit is \$3.57.

YOLANDA

Is that all?

JAMES

It's a start.

NANCY

Our share is 36 cents.

JAMES

Is that 36 cents each?

NANCY

You can have my 18 cents.

YOLANDA

While we're on the subject. One of the investors said he would be interested in financing another of our movie projects.

JAMES

You mean we'd have a real budget?

NANCY

James, don't even think about it.

JAMES

A real budget, with real paychecks.

NANCY

No.

YOLANDA

Come on.

NANCY

No.

James moves to speak.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Pas.

James moves to speak.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Nein.

James moves to speak.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Laam.

James moves to speak.

NANCY (CONT'D)

Iie!

Nancy stands firm.

FADE OUT:

THE END