

Objection?

An Honors Thesis

By

Addison Kuhn

Thesis Advisor

Professor Tina Edwards-Willey

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tina Edwards-Willey M.A.". The signature is written in black ink and features a large, decorative flourish at the end of the word "Willey".

Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

April, 2010

May 8, 2010

SpCall
Undergrad,
Thesis
LD
2009
2011
2010
2011

Abstract

Inspiration can come from all sorts of things. I am not ashamed to say that the lawyers I saw on television when I was a child helped push me in the direction I have taken in life: becoming a criminal attorney. This thesis is a way to say "Thank you!" to that world of television lawyers. This thesis is a screenplay I have written for a thirty minute sitcom following a fresh out of law school lawyer as he tries his first case and shoots a reality show about the whole process. The lawyer's name is Owen, and he is a self employed attorney defending a man accused of murdering his wife. Although the case seems simple, a look into the defendant's past reveals a deadly pattern that Owen was not bargaining for. Faced with problems from the judge, the prosecutor, and the television network shooting the reality show, Owen must juggle everything to fight for his client in *Objection?*

Acknowledgements

-I want to thank Professor Tina Edwards-Willey for advising me through this project. She was very helpful in both the legal and creative side of the project. I really appreciate all the time and work she put into to helping me create this crazy legal world. I could not have done this without her.

-I want to thank the members of Something Else. They really have given me the tools necessary to be able to complete a screenplay that is both funny and technically accurate.

-I want to thank the employees at the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office for showing me that attorneys can have fun. Knowing how that office worked really inspired me to create the environment I did in the finished screenplay.

-Finally, I want to thank Lisa Kudrow. I realize she has no idea who I am, or that I am completing an Honors Thesis. However, without her and the character of Valerie Cherish she created, this screenplay would have never been written. "I don't want to see that!"

Artist's Statement

As a child the only lawyers I knew were the ones I saw on television. There were the fictional lawyers from some of my favorite scripted television dramas, and also the real nonfictional lawyers who had larger than life personalities and made weekly appearances on *Dateline* and *20/20*. It may sound foolish, but watching all of the lawyers on television first peaked my interest in law and the criminal justice system. True, over the course of my life, I have come to realize that nothing is really quite as it seems on television, but still I believe the those lawyers are somewhat responsible for getting me where I am today. So, when thinking about what to do for my Honors Thesis the first thing that came to my mind was paying homage to the world of television lawyers. By drawing upon both my experiences from the extracurricular activities I am apart of as well as my coursework at Ball State, I believe I have found the perfect way to honor that world: writing the screenplay for a television pilot that would unleash my own fictional group of lawyers and judges on the world.

Today the television airwaves seem to be dominated by three things: procedural dramas, reality shows, and sitcoms. My thesis, the screenplay, really is a combination of all three of those types of shows. It is a thirty minute scripted comedy about a reality show that deals with themes covered in most run of the mill criminal procedural drama. The plot of my show is simple. The audience follows the protagonist, a young, fresh out of law school lawyer, as he tries his first case and shoots a reality show about that case. The first episode sets up the scenario. The audience learns that what they will be watching is non-edited or raw footage. Meaning they see everything from the network the protagonist Owen's personal life to the trial and everything that goes on behind the scenes to prepare for it. Because the network feels most of that is very uneventful, the network tries to spice things up by setting Owen up on dates,

giving him a makeover, and withholding information about the case. As the series would progress the network's involvement would increase in several different ways: paying for cosmetic procedures for the judge, redecorating Owen's apartment, and possibly even bribing the jury to guarantee a second season, the appeal process.

The case the first season revolves around is murder case. The defendant is accused of murdering his wife after what appears to be a car crash. Because committing the act of murder requires the defendant to have both actus reus (guilty act) and mens rea (guilty mind), our protagonist Owen believes the defendant is not guilty. In Owen's mind since the defendant did not intend to kill his wife he cannot be found guilty of murder. However, a look into the defendant's past shows that he has a pattern of getting into car crashes that kill his wife at the time and then moving to another city, changing his name, and repeating the whole process. Because of his past the prosecutor is convinced that he is a murderer and wants him to get the punishment he deserves. The pilot episode focuses on a hearing on the defense's motion to dismiss the case, and the rest of the season would be preparing for the trial and then eventually the murder trial itself.

The legal knowledge and terminology I have put into the finished screenplay all came directly from my Criminal Justice courses. The course that was most influential was probably Criminal Law. In that class I learned the basics of the legal system, the process of a trial, and the terminology used in the courtroom. It was very important to me that the legal side of the script be accurate. Too often I believe television shows use terms incorrectly and create unbelievable events just to get ratings or make things more interesting. For instance, in many shows a murder trial happens in four or five days. However, in the real world lawyers could prepare for a trial for six months to a year before the jury is selected. Then the trial could last anywhere from a

few days to several weeks depending on how many witnesses are needed for both the prosecution and the defense to prove their case. That is why I made the decision the show would feature only one case and really go through the entire process. It is something that has not really been done on television, especially with a sitcom, and I believe it would open the public's eyes on what the criminal justice system is really like.

I believe something else that is unique about the television show I have created is the interactions between the characters. During the spring 2010 semester I was given the opportunity to intern in the Delaware County Prosecutor's Office. Working with attorneys really opened my eyes to how attorneys interact with one another. In most T.V. shows either past or present lawyers are portrayed as very hard characters who are concerned about either getting their client out of prison or getting the criminal behind bars. Rarely does an audience see a prosecutor and defense attorney having a conversation that is not solely focused on the legal task at hand. However, in the real world, or at least what I experienced, lawyers are not really like that. They do care about their job, but they are civil toward one another, discuss their lives outside of the courtroom, and often joke around with one another. I really wanted that side of the justice system to come out in the screenplay. I wanted to show that although lawyers do often have someone's future in their hands, it does not mean they do not have fun.

As well as being factually accurate I wanted the script to look and read like a screenplay, and to get the format correct I used the program Celtx. It is a program available on the internet that assists in formatting all different types of scripts. As a general rule for scripts for film, each written page in Celtx is about a minute of actual screen time. So, for a thirty minute sitcom with commercial breaks a script of 21-24 pages is needed. As well as being correctly formatted, I wanted the screenplay to be something that could easily be produced. I did not want to over

reach and create something that would not be possible in the real world. During my three years at Ball State I have been apart of a sketch comedy group that writes, produces, and acts in various sketches and movies. Being in that group taught me a lot about the behind the scenes work that goes into creating both movies and television shows. I have learned how to write a script as well as what goes into producing and filming a script once it has been written. I have been on set during a large number of sketches and movies. The majority of them went well. However, there are instances where on set the crew realizes that what was written in the script cannot be done. So, changes must be made last minute that often hurt the finished product. It is those experiences that have both helped me come up with the idea to write a television screenplay as well as finish it in a way that filming and producing it would be possible.

The sketch comedy group also has given me the tools to really work on my sense of humor and be able to put that in my writing. That is why I felt so strongly about making sure whatever script I wrote was a comedy. I consider myself a funny person and want the world to see that side of myself. Plus, comedy has been a large part of my college life, and a final capstone project would truly not be complete with some sort of humor. I also feel that in the television market today there is a place for a comedy like the one I have written. Although there have been a countless number of shows both past and present that revolve around lawyers or the legal world, there has rarely or never been a straight forward comedy sitcom about that world. The only real successful comedy that took place in a courtroom was *Night Court*, which went off the air in 1992. Right now, for example, there are at least ten procedural dramas on network television about some aspect of the criminal justice system. However, there are no comedies. Since the dramas about the justice system are some of the most popular on television there is no reason a comedy about the same topic could not be as successful if not more successful. Also,

“mockumentary” type sitcoms are really doing well in today’s television market because it combines both a sitcom and reality show. Two things many audience members love to watch. So, I wanted to use that type of style, but make it unique by using just raw footage. I believe, it makes the show seem more like a reality show than a scripted comedy. It also makes this script different than many of the sitcoms being produced on television today.

Another significant aspect of the screenplay is the protagonist. When I was writing the screenplay I thought it was very important that the main character be a defense attorney. Just by learning about the justice system it has become very apparent to me that defense attorneys really have a bad reputation. At their worst and sometimes their best defense attorneys are seen as money hungry individuals who will do anything to get their clients, criminals, back on the street. I want to show audiences a different side of defense attorneys. I did not want to portray the protagonist as someone who would do anything to get a murderer back on the streets. Instead, he is a lawyer trying to ensure that his client is getting fair treatment by the legal system, the true task of any defense attorney. In my mind, later in the season Owen would go through some sort of evaluation of his conscience and have to make a decision whether or not he wants to represent someone who he believes could be guilty and how to go about doing that while still being honest to the court.

As a future student in law school, writing this screenplay was sort of like writing my future. Although I do not have hopes of being a reality show star one day, I do hope to be a criminal defense attorney. I also know that I want to tackle tough cases that really push me to stand up for what I believe in, that everyone has a right to a fair trial. I know in the future I will have to go up against some really tough and extremely serious prosecuting attorneys. And though I hope to stand up for myself more than Owen does in the script, I realize that I may not

be able to right away. With my experiences both in my classes as well as extracurricular activities I believe I have written a screenplay that is truly a glimpse into a future that seems like an absolute nightmare for any law student. No lawyer wants to be self employed and working on a case that seems impossible to win three months after graduation. However, I think Owen and the situation he is in could really send a message to all lawyers and people for that matter, that even though you are down, you are never really out.

Objection?

By

Addison Kuhn

TITLE CARD: OBJECTION? RAW FOOTAGE

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING

The camera pans up and down a closed door. It is apartment 102. The door opens.

OWEN
Well, hey.....Cut.

Owen gestures as if slitting a throat.

OWEN
No. No. No. I didn't like that one.
No. It felt a lot like CRIBS. I
don't want to be CRIBS. I want to
be LAW AND ORDER.

The door closes. Again the camera pans up and down the apartment door. The door opens.

OWEN
Welcome, to my office.

Owen gestures as if slitting a throat.

OWEN
How was that? Good. It definitely
felt better. More serious. What
did you think?

Owen stares into the camera waiting for some type of response. He does not get one.

OWEN
Right. Right. I just wanted to make
sure...you know what, I am sure,
I'm sure it's fine. What's next?
The tour. Well, this is my law
office.

The camera pans around the living room of the apartment. There is a couch and a computer set up on a coffee table. There is also a T.V. It is clear Owen is working out of his home. As the camera pans around the room he tries to avoid being in the shot. Eventually Owen and the camera collide.

OWEN
Sorry, I know I need to act
natural. I am just so nervous. What
is natural about six people being
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

OWEN (cont'd)
in my apartment? Well, six people when it is not, you know, a party. (Laughs) This one time in law school I threw a huge party. There were like fifteen no maybe, yes, it was sixteen. There were sixteen people there. I think we went through three boxes of wine.

Owen just stares at the camera. His face is covered in sweat.

OWEN
Through there is the kitchen.

Owen walks to the kitchen the camera follows.

OWEN
I may be one of the few lawyers with a fully functional stove. I don't use it a lot, but every once in a while it's nice to have a cake. Plus, if I ever have a client I don't like I can just shove them right in.

Owen realizes what he just said and makes the gesture of slitting his throat.

OWEN
No. No. No one is going to want to hire me if I threaten to kill potential clients. That cannot be in the show. Delete it.

Owen stares into the camera waiting for a response.

OWEN
Delete it.

Owen is still staring when it becomes clear to him that he is not going to get a response.

OWEN
Uh, so the bathroom is down that hallway, and behind that door is my bedroom.

The camera looks down the hallway and back to Owen. There is a loud knock on the door. Owen begins walking to the door. He opens it. Standing in the door frame is a very stylish tall slender woman.

CHARLI

Alright, are you ready to go. I know I am a little late, but my meeting with the other client ran late.

OWEN

Who are you?

CHARLI

Your stylist. The network hired me to lift up your wardrobe, and frankly by looking at you now you should be glad they did. Come on.

OWEN

Alright, let me grab my keys.

CHARLI

Forget it, we'll take my car.

Owen shrugs into the camera and starts exiting the apartment. The camera follows them to Charli's car. Charli and Owen get in the car and drive off.

FADE

INT. CLOTHING STORE

Owen and Charli are looking through racks of suits. She has several suits, shirts, and ties in her hand, and Owen only has one black suit, a white shirt, and a red tie.

CHARLI

Alright, I think we've got plenty here. Go try them on.

Owen walks to the dressing room. The camera follows and tries to go inside the room with him.

OWEN

No, I've got this.

The camera goes into the dressing room next to Owen's and tries to peer over the wall. While, the camera does this Owen opens his door and steps out in the suit he chose. The camera tries to quickly get down and get Owen in the shot. The cameraman falls over taking the camera with him.

OWEN

Jesus.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLI
Owen, turn around.

Owen does. The camera pans to Charli's face which is showing signs of disgust.

CHARLI
What is that?

OWEN
A suit. I like it. It looks professional.

CHARLI
No. I did not pick that out.

OWEN
I know, it's the one I grabbed. I thought it looked like a lawyer suit. You know like a lawyer from THE PRACTICE. When I was a kid I loved that show. In fact, watching it every...

CHARLI
Shh. No. It doesn't. It looks like the cheap suit high school kids buy for their first dance. Take it off.

Charli goes into the dressing room and pulls out a light blue suit with white and orange pinstripes.

CHARLI
Put this on.

Owen takes the suit and goes back into the dressing room. A minute later he comes out.

CHARLI
Perfect

The suit is tight on Owen. It also has shorts instead of pants.

OWEN
What is this?

CHARLI
It's a suit Owen. The short look is all the rage in Europe. I think you will start the trend in America.

CONTINUED:

5.

Owen tries to flap his arm. He cannot lift his arms at all.

OWEN

But I can't move.

Charli is not paying attention. She is on her Blackberry.

CHARLI

You'll get used to it. Grab the rest of those and let's check out. I've got a waxing in fifteen.

OWEN

I CAN'T MOVE! How can I try a case if I can't even lift my arms over my head.

CHARLI

If I miss my waxing there are going to be a lot more parts of you that will never move again.

Owen grabs the pile of suits and follows Charli to the check out counter. She pulls out a credit card and pays. The cashier bags all the suits, hands them to Owen, and Charli and Owen start to walk toward the exit. The camera follows.

CHARLI

Tomorrow the network and I want you to wear that blue suit. We think it will send a message to everyone else in the courtroom.

OWEN

What's that?

CHARLI

That you know what you're doing.

FADE

EXT. OUTSIDE OWEN'S APARTMENT

It is night now. A car speeds into the parking lot, and Owen quickly exits. He is holding several bags of clothes.

OWEN

Thank God that's over. Well tomorrow is the big day, I should probably get some sleep. Uh...goodnight. This is awkward. I feel like I should kiss you now.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

6.

Owen moves toward the camera with puckered lips. The camera backs away.

OWEN
Come on, it was a joke.

FADE

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING

The camera is focused on Apartment 102. The door opens. Owen is in the blue suit. He is carrying a briefcase.

OWEN
Well, are we ready to go?

He looks at the camera waiting for a response.

OWEN
Are you ever going to talk?

Owen walks out of the apartment and shuts and locks his door. He walks outside and notices a limo. On the limo in huge letters it reads "Owen Johnson, Attorney at Law. HIRE ME!". He looks into the camera.

OWEN
You've got to be kidding me.

INT. LIMO

He gets in. The camera follows him. There is a mimosa waiting for him with a note. He reads it

OWEN
To Owen, We thought you could use a ride in style before your big day in court. Plus alcohol never hurts either. The staff of NBC. Sweet.

Owen downs the mimosa.

OWEN
That was good. I'll just have one more before court.

Owen makes another drink. When he tries to take a drink, the car turns. Owen spills his mimosa all over his shirt.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

Damn it.

Owen tries to clean himself up while talking to the camera.

OWEN

Well, damn, so much for looking like I know what I am doing. Now, I just look like I forgot to wear a bib this morning.

The cameraman extends an arm holding a Tide-To-Go Pen. Owen takes it, smiles, and begins to furiously rub his shirt.

OWEN

So, I thought on this car ride I would give you some background on the case. My client is Matthew Farrow. He is 35 years old and he is charged with murder. The state has no case. He didn't do anything. The way Matthew tells the story is that he was driving his wife Linda to a romantic picnic. On the way a deer ran onto the road, and he swerved to avoid hitting it. While swerving, he went off the road and ran into a tree. The crash killed Linda. He did not do it. In legal terms because there was just actus reus and no mens rea, he is innocent. Plus there was certainly no concurrence between the two. I guess, if you really wanted to the family could sue Bambi for wrongful death. So, today we are trying to get the case dismissed. Even if it isn't thrown out, the case is in the bag. Plus, even if he did kill her, from what he said she was a total B. star star H.

Owen stares into the camera confused.

OWEN

B star star star star. Bitch. She was a bitch. So who can blame him. From what I heard, she made Mike quit his fantasy football league to go to church with her. If a woman ever pulled something like that with me, you would probably find her body in a garbage can.

Owen realizes what he said was not good.

OWEN
Still alive of course. Just covered
in trash. Like old noodles.

Owen makes the slitting the throat gesture.

OWEN
You can't use that. No. No. You
can't use that. I just said I would
kill slash throw a woman in a
dumpster if she made me quit
fantasy football. I don't even
have a team. Really, I don't even
understand it.

Owen just stares into the camera. He is sweating profusely.

OWEN
God, it is hot in here.

Owen takes off his suit coat. He lifts up his arm. His
shirt is covered in sweat. He is trying everything he can
think of to cool off. He looks out the window.

OWEN
Good, we are here.

Owen quickly throws his suit back on. The car comes to a
stop and the door opens. Owen steps out.

EXT. OUTSIDE COURTHOUSE

Owen starts walking toward the entrance. The camera
follows.

OWEN
Everything has been cleared
right. You are allowed to film in
the courthouse.

He looks at the camera for an answer.

OWEN
Damn it.

They arrive at the doors. Owen enters.

INT. COURTHOUSE

The camera follows Owen inside. Owen makes it through security. It seems the camera is having some problems.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #1

Sir, no cameras.

Owen runs back to help them.

OWEN

No, it's fine. We are filming a realty show. NBC was supposed to get it cleared.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #1

They sure didn't tell me. I'm gonna have to call my supervisor.

OWEN

Are you sure you just can't let them through. I am running late for court as it is, and really don't have time to wait...

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #1

Oh, you don't have time. You don't have time. All you lawyers think you are so important. Well guess what, I ain't never seen you walk on water. And I know that you have never been up on a cross. So, you and I are equal. So, I am going to call my supervisor. And if you want the camera to get through you are going to wait.

Owen looks into the camera and rolls his eyes.

OWEN

Your right we'll wait.

The security guard walks away from her post to make the call and another guard steps in.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #2

She's had a rough week.

OWEN

Oh.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

10.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #2
Normally, she is a ball of fun.

OWEN
Great.

Owen takes out his phone and starts dialing a number.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #2
Sir, phones are supposed to be off
in the courthouse.

OWEN
Oh, you're going to start with me
too. All I am trying to do is get
to court. DAMMIT.

Everyone standing around goes quiet.

OWEN
Sorry, it's been a difficult
morning.

The Courthouse Security Guard #1 comes back.

COURTHOUSE SECURITY GUARD #1
You are free to go, and please sir,
watch your language.

Owen rushes to the courtroom. The camera follows. He turns
around and talks to the camera.

OWEN
This is great. I am calling NBC as
soon as I get out of here.

Owen gets to the doors. He opens them and enters.

INT. COURTROOM

The camera follows

JUDGE HOBLEY
Ah, really. Mr. Johnson how nice of
you to join us. I was just
speaking with Ms. Kellogg, she was
telling me about your time in law
school together.

OWEN
I am sorry your honor. We had some
problems.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE HOBLEY

I see you brought the circus with you.

OWEN

Yes your honor.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Kathy, can we go off the record for a moment.

Kathy, the court reporter, switches the recording device off.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Mr. Johnson, I have several things to say. First, I do not tolerate tardiness in my court. Next time be prompt. Second, what the hell are you wearing. This is a courtroom not a beach. I expect pants next time. Shorts are for toddlers and elderly women, and I am assuming you do not fall into one of those categories. Third, you wreak of champagne. Next time you come before this court shower or I will find you in contempt. Actually, I think the orange jumpsuit you would have to wear the next time you come to court will look ten times better than your ridiculous suit.

The camera pans to Ms. Meredith Kellogg, the prosecuting attorney. She is trying to cover her laughter.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Alright Kathy, we can start again.

Kathy switches the recording device back on.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Mr. Farrow, you can join your attorney.

Mike walks from the jury box where he was being held to Owen, who is seated at the defendant's table. He sits down.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Alright, we are meeting today in Cause Number 18C05-1001-MR-1. The state is represented by Deputy Prosecutor Meredith Kellogg, and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE HOBLEY (cont'd)
the defendant Mike Farrow appears
in person and with counsel Mr. Owen
Johnson. Mr. Johnson

OWEN
Thank you your honor. I take it
the court has received my motion to
dismiss.

JUDGE HOBLEY
Yes, the court has received it and
reviewed it.

OWEN
I think the motion is pretty
clear. My client, Mr. Farrow, did
not kill his wife. It is very
simple. There was a car
crash. There was no mens rea, so
Mr. Farrow cannot be charged with
murder.

JUDGE HOBLEY
I see that Mr. Johnson and after
reading your motion have been
wondering the same thing. Ms.
Kellogg why is the state going
forward with these charges.

MEREDITH
Your honor, the state has received
word that the defendant, Mr.
Farrow, may have some sort of
history with this type of crime.

JUDGE HOBLEY
What do you mean?

MEREDITH
This morning we got a phone call
explaining that Mr. Farrow has gone
by two other names in U.S. cities
in the past ten years. In both of
these cities Mr. Farrow's wife or
significant other has died in a car
accident while he was driving.

OWEN
Your honor, I am going to object to
this. I was never given this
information.

MEREDITH

Your honor, the state was just given this information today, and I had assumed Mr. Johnson had been made aware.

JUDGE HOBLEY

And why is that Ms. Kellogg?

MEREDITH

The call came from an NBC Lawyer.

The camera focuses on Owen's face which is stunned and pale.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Mr. Johnson, do you have anything to say?

OWEN

Can I have just a minute.

Judge Hobley nods. Owen turns to Mike. They whisper to each other.

OWEN

Why didn't you tell me about this?

MIKE

You didn't ask.

OWEN

Is it true?

MIKE

It's true that I am not a very good driver, but did I mean to kill those women? Of course not.

OWEN

Alright. (Speaking in normal voice to the court) Your honor this changes nothing. They still have no case against my client in this instance.

MEREDITH

I have to disagree. With two other deaths in the past ten years, it seems your client has a history of murdering women he grows tired of.

OWEN

Objection. There is no proof my client killed any of these women. Throwing around accusations like that Ms. Kellogg can be dangerous.

MEREDITH

Is that a threat.

JUDGE HOBLEY

That is enough. I think there is enough there for the state to hold him until they get more evidence about his past. So, Mr. Johnson your motion is denied. Is there anything else?

MEREDITH

No your honor.

OWEN

Yes. Since this case has not been resolved today, I feel we need to address the issue of bail.

MEREDITH

Your honor, it seems fairly obvious that Mr. Johnson has not done his homework. Murder is not bailable.

OWEN

When the proof is evident or the presumption is strong. See, I have done my homework.

MEREDITH

But do you know what it means. A person charged with murder has the burden of proof that he should be admitted to bail. You have not done that. Your client stays in jail. Period.

JUDGE HOBLEY

I tend to agree with the State. Your request is denied. Is there anything else

MEREDITH

No, your honor.

OWEN

No.

JUDGE HOBLEY

Alright, then I will see you both back here on July 27 for a pre-trial conference.

OWEN

Thank you your honor.

Owen turns to Mike and whispers.

OWEN

We are going to have to talk about this. I will be up to see you soon.

Owen starts walking out of the courtroom.

MEREDITH

Owen.

Owen stops and turns to see Meredith walking toward him.

MEREDITH

You made quite the entrance today.

OWEN

Alright.

MEREDITH

Really your whole performance today was impressive. It was like a baby duck swimming for the first time, but instead of succeeding it just drowns

OWEN

Meredith, I am pretty sure I held my own.

MEREDITH

Held your own, that must be why the judge agreed to nothing you said.

OWEN

I can see you have not changed at all since law school.

MEREDITH

And I see all you got from law school was some strings.

OWEN

Huh?

MEREDITH

Strings for the puppet show.

Meredith does some sort of puppet while pointing into the camera.

OWEN

Goodbye.

Owen tries to walk out of the courtroom, but it stopped again.

MEREDITH

Don't you want to discuss you're murderous client.

OWEN

Yes.

MEREDITH

Well, I am busy now, lunch tomorrow? Pick a place and let me know.

Meredith walks out of the courtroom.

OWEN

Damn it.

Owen walks out of the courtroom.

FADE

INT. LIMO

Owen is sitting in the back of the limo. At this point in time his suit coat is off. His shirt is untucked and the sleeves are rolled up. He speaks into the camera.

OWEN

Did you know about this?

Owen gets no response.

OWEN

I swear to God, if you don't talk...

Owen's phone rings.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

Hello.

The phone is on speaker.

JEFF ZUCKER V.O.

Mr. Johnson, this is Jeff Zucker, head of NBC Programming. How are you doing?

OWEN

Not to well, Jeff. Thanks for screwing me.

JEFF ZUCKER V.O.

To do that I would need to see what you looked like first. (He laughs)

Owen looks into the camera and rolls his eyes.

JEFF ZUCKER V.O.

But seriously, Owen, I was just calling to let you know that we have seen some of the footage...

OWEN

Let me stop you. Why did you tell the prosecutor about my client's past and not me.

JEFF ZUCKER V.O.

Simple. We wanted an honest reaction shot. If I had called you to tell you we couldn't have used it in the show. Now we can.

OWEN

Great. That's wonderful. How long have you known about this.

JEFF ZUCKER V.O.

Listen Owen, I don't have a lot of time, I wanted to call and let you know that we really like what we have so far, but the network wants to see your social life. So, we have set up a date for you.

OWEN

Excuse me?

JEFF ZUCKER V.O.
A date. She'll be at your
apartment around 7. We will let
you decide what to do. Other than
that keep doing what your
doing. It's gold.

OWEN
Jeff listen, this show I need to
know I am in contr...

Jeff hangs up.

OWEN
Great, a date. After a day like
this, I want nothing more.

The limo door opens. Owen steps out and goes into his
apartment complex.

FADE

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING

The camera is outside Apartment 102. This time a woman
wearing a dress is standing in front of the door as well.
The door opens.

OWEN
Hi.

CANDICE
Hi, my name is Candice , but you
can call me Candy. Can I come in?

OWEN
Sure, I thought we could order in
and watch a movie. Have you seen
Precious?

CANDICE
I don't know.

OWEN
You don't know.

CANDICE
No, but I thought we were going
dancing.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN
Who told you that?

CANDICE
Well, the ad...

OWEN
What ad?

CANDICE
Well there was an ad on Craigslist.

OWEN
Really?

CANDICE
Ya, the ad said actress needed for
a fun and sexy date. Dinner,
dancing, and a night on the town.
When I answered it they gave me the
job.

Owen makes the slitting the throat gesture. He speaks to the
cameras.

OWEN
Really, guys. I am supposed to go
on a date with an actress who...Are
you getting paid?

CANDICE
Yes.

OWEN
An actress who is getting paid?
Nice try. Candice it has been fun,
but please leave.

CANDICE
But...

OWEN
No, you have to go...I am sure your
check is in the mail.

Owen opens and stands at the door. Candice leaves.

OWEN
You too, camera crew. I am
tired. I am gong to bed.

The camera leaves but turns back to Owen.

OWEN

I am meeting with Meredith. Meet me at Mangiamo's at 1:30.

FADE

INT. APARTMENT BUILDING

The camera is outside Apartment 102. Owen opens the door.

OWEN

What are you doing here, I said Mangiamo's at 1:30.

The cameraman's hand extends into the shot. He gives Owen a note. Owen reads it

OWEN

We can't film inside restaurants. Choose a restaurant with a patio. Really? What restaurants around here have patios?

FADE

EXT. LA BAMBA RESTAURANT

Owen and Meredith are sitting at a patio table eating their burritos.

MEREDITH

Well, this is certainly a step down from Mangiamo's. If your that poor Owen, I could have paid.

OWEN

Meredith, the camera can only film outside restaurants, I can afford lunch at the Mangiamo's.

MEREDITH

Just making sure Owen, but you know this leash your on seems pretty tight. You better be careful of bruises around your neck. You don't want the judge to think you are going to be the next David Carradine.

(CONTINUED)

OWEN

Nice, Meredith that seems really appropriate.

MS. KELLOGG

Save it Owen. You really haven't changed since law school. Have you?

OWEN

What's that supposed to mean?

MEREDITH

Just that you are the same suck-up prude you have always been.

OWEN

I am not. Remember that party?

MEREDITH

Please "that party." It was like ten people and boxed wine. You didn't even play music.

OWEN

It was sixteen people, and you know what I heard a lot of those people were having fun. Who needs music when you have great conversation.

MEREDITH

It doesn't matter now. What did all of your studying and kiss ass behavior get you. Nothing. You are working for yourself with a case you have no chance winning.

OWEN

First of all no.

MEREDITH

What are you saying no to?

OWEN

No to you, you're a bully.

MEREDITH

Wow, second grade name calling. It cuts deep.

OWEN

There is no proof Meredith.

MEREDITH

We can argue about that for hours,
but what I can do is offer your
client reckless homicide. If he
pleas he can be out of jail
before...

OWEN

He didn't do it. There is no mens
rea.

MEREDITH

This is the real world Owen, not
law school. It doesn't work that
way.

OWEN

It has to.

MEREDITH

Listen finish your burrito and talk
to your clent. Get him to take the
plea. You don't want to lose your
first trial. Because then not only
will you be the star of what is
destined to be a horrid TV show,
you will also be a lawyer no one
wants to hire.

OWEN

This is why no one liked you in
school.

MEREDITH

And you are why I didn't care. By
the way nice billboard.

Meredith gets up from her table and starts walking toward
her car. Owen stands up and yells after her.

OWEN

What?

MEREDITH

Your billboard on Riverside and
4th. It's cute and really screams
HIRE ME.

Meredith gets in her car and drives away.

OWEN

What a bitch.

The camera crew starts to walk away.

OWEN

No. You guys are not going anywhere. I didn't put up any billboards, so you are going to want to get this.

Owen gets in his car. The camera gets into the front seat.

INT. OWEN'S CAR

As Owen drives, he talks into the camera

OWEN

I hate that woman. Honestly, that party was a highlight of a lot of people's law school experience. Who says you need music to make a party. Seriously, isn't boxed wine enough. And I want to set on thing straight. I am not a prude or kiss ass. I did my work that was it. I mean, do I seem like a prude to you? Right, no answer. You've got to be kidding me.

The car stops. The camera pans up to the billboard. On it is a picture of Owen in the blue short suit. The type says "He got away with murder, so can YOU. Hire O. J. Attorney at Law." The camera pans to Owen, whose face is in shock. He pulls out his cell phone and dials.

OWEN

Hi, I need to talk to Jeff Zucker

FADE

END CREDITS