

TITLE CARD - "We cannot do great things in this world, only small things with great love" - Mother Teresa

Under this card, and in sharp contrast, the sounds of a myriad of media voices creep forward, all talking about the world's stock markets.

Then, the first shot: a money counter, with hundred dollar bills flying through it. We hear the warm buzz of bills hurling through a machine, watch the sweet greenbacks stack up higher and higher. Fade through to:

An unmistakable landmark that tells us just where we are: The Golden Gate Bridge. Welcome to San Francisco. Various landmark building flash past.

JOHN (V.O.)

This is the city of Silicon Dreams.

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

ANNA SIMMONS, 50, immaculately dressed, makes a call on her cell. She has the slight shakes of a person suffering from Parkinson's Disease, so dialing is difficult.

JOHN (V.O.)

And this is the story of one of those dreams, its birth, its life, and its death.

Outside the tinted windows of Anna's limo, dot.com billboards advertise the latest Internet hotspot. In the limo, Anna has the TV tuned to MSNBC, and even as she starts to speak, her eyes never leave the screen as market numbers scroll past.

EXT. ROOF OF DIGITAL DREAMS - DAY

ROBERT JENNINGS, 28, good looks in an expensive suit, flashes his pearly whites and gazes out on the Bay. Behind him, a huge billboard reads 'DIGITALDREAMS.COM; YOUR TOTAL BANDWIDTH SOLUTION.

He is on the phone with Anna, but we cannot make out their conversation. He grins and laughs; is he actually flirting with her?

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

In an opulent boardroom, CATERERS carry trays of food back and forth. Well dressed older BOARD MEMBERS enter, greet each other, shake hands. There is an air of great anticipation in the room. TV screens around the room carry more market news.

JOHN (V.O.)

It's hard to believe that just a few short years ago, American youth thought they would be the first generation ever to not live as well as their parents. Now, the slacker living over the garage is the entrepreneur CEO.

Robert Jennings goes from Board Member to Board Member pressing the flesh like an old fashioned pol. When Anna enters, he greets her warmly. In fact, all the board members seem to stiffen and take notice when she enters. She is the Grande Dame of their world.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

At a desk, see the back of a huge leather swivel chair. It rocks back and forth. The door to the office opens, and CLAIRE, an assistant, enters.

CLAIRE

Mr. Elias?

The chair turns around, revealing JOHN ELIAS, CEO of Digital Dreams. John is 26, handsome, and intense. But he is pensive today, clearly lost in his own thoughts.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

Can I get you some coffee or something?

JOHN

No, thank you.

CLAIRE

The board members are here. Anna Simmons just arrived. They'll be ready to begin soon.

John just nods with his eyes.

CLAIRE (cont'd)

So... Today's the big day, huh? We're going to get rich.

He forces a grin, barely masks his sarcasm.

JOHN
Today's the big day.

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

Everyone has seated, eaten, and are now chit chatting. Robert looks at his watch, then picks up the phone.

INT. CLAIRE'S DESK - DAY

Her phone rings.

CLAIRE
John Elias' office.

ROBERT (O.C.)
Where is he?

CLAIRE
(whispers)
In his office. He's just sitting there.
It's so weird. I think he's losing it.

ROBERT (O.C.)
Tell him we're ready. And Claire, don't worry. I'm going to take care of you. You've been great.

CLAIRE
With, like... shares?

ROBERT (O.C.)
Big shares. Mondo shares. You'll see.

Claire smiles subtly.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Claire sticks her head in again. John is still sitting at his desk, concentrating.

CLAIRE
They're ready.

John nods.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES - DAY

John heads for the boardroom. The walls are covered with lots of freaky, cold modern artwork. YOUNG PEOPLE of pop in and out of each door. The place has a frantic, edgy energy about it. They whisper to each other as he passes.

JOHN (V.O.)

For most of America's industrial history people worked for a simple salary. Now, it's about ownership. Stocks, funds, options, calls, puts... Everyone, and I mean everyone, is in for a big piece of the pie. Grandpa had a 3% savings bond. Mom and Dad, an 8% 401K mutual fund. Today, we want the big enchilada, the IPO.

John turns a corner and heads for the conference room. The board members are seen at the table, preparing for the meeting. John reaches the door, enters and slowly pulls the door closed behind him.

JOHN (V.O.)

Now, no one dreams of making his or her first million before 40. It's the first billion before 30.

Tick Tock, Tick Tock.... A long moment goes by when...

BAM! The conference room door is slammed open. Seems like seconds have passed, but we know that a whole showdown occurred behind those doors.

John comes storming out. Whatever happened in the meeting was not to his liking. Robert appears at the conference room door.

ROBERT

John, come on! Come back.

Not a chance. Robert chases John until he catches up.

ROBERT (cont'd)

It had to be this way. You had to have known this would happen. It's for the best, believe me.

JOHN

Get away from me.

John continues on.

ROBERT

Don't be a sore loser, John.

John turns and clocks Robert good, right in the face.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

A blue Ferrari speeds down the freeway. John is behind the wheel, driving like a madman. He checks his mirror and sees blood pouring from a puffy lip.

JOHN

Aww, shit!

His cell phone starts to ring.

JOHN (cont'd)

What??!!

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Claire is sitting at John's desk, Robert is beside her, listening in. He holds an ice bag to his cheek.

CLAIRE

Mr. Elias? Are you OK?

INT. CAR - MORNING

JOHN

Claire, you're fired! Now get out of my office.

John throws the cell phone out the window of the car.

EXT. INTERSTATE 5 - DAY

Roll credits over music...

What follows is a series of images tracking John as he drives away from San Francisco.

From high above, the Ferrari is seen speeding down the freeway, through the San Jose Area. His is the fastest car on the road, passing other cars and trucks like they are standing still.

Exit signs pass by in a succession of quick cuts; Palo Alto, Gorman, Big Sur..., and Los Angeles, 270 miles.

The Ferrari heads up the Grapevine, through Frazier pass, and into Southern California. Signs read Los Angeles, 40 miles, and San Diego, 210 miles. John, blood dried to his face lights a cigarette, and takes a deep pull.

The Ferrari weaves through LA freeway traffic. A CHiP sees him, but does nothing. LA landmarks fly passed...

EXT. US - MEXICAN BORDER - DAY

There are a long line of cars waiting to cross over. He reaches the border control station, and holds his driver's license out for the BORDER PATROL AGENT to inspect.

BORDER PATROL AGENT
Business or pleasure today?

JOHN
(grim, blood caked face)
Pleasure.

He is waved through.

EXT. STREETS OF TIJUANA - DAY

John cruises the streets of Tijuana in his Ferrari, which draws stares from the CROWDS of poor people. Here is a world far removed from the one he has been living in. He spots a STREET VENDOR, and pulls over to the curb.

JOHN (cont'd)
Hey, Tequila? Do you sell Tequila?

INT. CAR - DAY

John is on another street, nearer the water, drinking from the Tequila bottle. He lifts the bottle to his lips, leans his head back to drink. BAM! He clips a POLICE CAR at the intersection and drops the bottle in his lap.

JOHN
Oh, that's just great.

In a moment of sheer reckless bad judgement, John hits the accelerator. Now the chase is on.

John drives down narrow streets at top speed, trying to evade the Federales. He looks in his rear view and sees the COPS, both

with heavy fu-man-chu mustaches and mirrored shades; a portrait of Third World law enforcement.

JOHN (cont'd)

Oh, God. I'm dead.

He side swipes two more cars and smashes into a street vendor. A right turn, a left turn, down a narrow alley, but he cannot shake the car on his tail.

John turns onto a street, and sees the ocean at the end of it. He steps on the gas harder!

John accelerates down the street, the Ferrari putting distance between itself and the cops, when a bus crosses in front of him. He swerves again, this time loses control. People dash about, getting out of his way as he careens into things, then finally comes to rest at the mouth of an alley.

John lifts his head up to find FEDERALES all around him, guns drawn, yelling in Spanish. This is the end of the line. John's head falls forward as he passes out.

JOHN (V.O.)

A great man once said you are what you pretend to be. Pretending is dreaming, and dreaming is wishing. You know what they say about wishing. These are my wishes and dreams, and how I got more than what I asked for.

INT. JOB FAIR - DAY

John's head pops back up, but he is younger looking. We have stepped back a few months. This John is looks younger, and is much more cocky. He is in an auditorium set up as a recruitment arena for hot new programming talent. Plush booths have been set up by the Who's Who of computer software and hardware makers.

John sits across from a RECRUITER for a major company, scanning their offer.

RECRUITER

So, what do you say, John. We're here to sign talent, and you are very talented. If you're ready to sign, you can sit back, enjoy the rest of your year at Stanford, and not worry about what you're going to

do when you graduate. What do you think?
Ready to land that big first job?

John hands the offer back.

JOHN

No. What I want to know is if your company
funds start ups.

The recruiter sighs. He's heard this before.

RECRUITER

No, we don't. Doesn't anyone want a simple
job anymore?

JOHN

No one I know. Thanks for your time.

John quickly leaves.

EXT. STANFORD CAMPUS - TWILIGHT

John strolls across the East Campus Blvd., past the other Ken
and Barbie doll elites. The Hoover Tower bells toll in the
distance.

John suddenly hears a horn honking. He turns around to see Robert
Jennings in a convertible Mustang creeping along behind him.
Busty KIM rides shotgun.

ROBERT

Yo, hey, Einstein. What's happening, my
man? Einstein, this is Kim, Kim, this one
of my fraternity brothers, Johnny
'Einstein' Elias.

JOHN

Ex-fraternity brothers. (to Kim) Nice to
meet you.

KIM

Why do they call you Einstein?

ROBERT

He's a genius. Hey, you got a lot
of calls at the house from
recruiters, you know. Big time
companies, my man.

JOHN

Hmmm. Any call backs from VCs?

ROBERT

Maybe. Still looking for your golden start up money?

JOHN

Maybe.

One can feel the intense competition between these guys. Robert breaks the tension with a charming smile.

ROBERT

Yeah, right. Hey, we're going out for a drink. Come with us. I'll be fun.

JOHN

No, thanks. Gotta work.

ROBERT

Of course. You're still welcome over at the house, you know.

JOHN

OK. Thanks.

ROBERT

I mean it.

Robert winks and pulls away.

KIM

Nice to meet you!!

INT. PROGRAMMING LAB - NIGHT

John sits at a desk in the Stanford programming lab. Above him, a TV carrying more stock market news. A sign on his desk reads 'John Elias, Lab Manager'. Printed below, John has added 'There Are No Dumb Questions! Please Ask Some' OTHER STUDENTS work quietly at terminals.

On several sheets of graph paper, John has mapped out an elaborate flow chart. Snippets of higher math are scribbled off to the sides. (Close up on John's face will reveal when he has gone into the 'zone' of higher abstract thinking. It is clear how he got the Einstein tag.)

Suddenly, he starts adding to the equations and charts. He erases a portion, and adds in new stuff. Clearly, the wheels are turning rapidly.

JOHN

Yes. Oh, yes.

A few people look up when they hear his muttering, and smile. Just then, his pager beeps. He picks it up, looks at the screen. Next to an animated beating heart, it reads 'See you Tonight????'.

A FRESHMAN approaches his desk, clearly confused and afraid to ask John, upperclassman and genius, for help. John looks up and sees him, sees his timid approach. He smiles disarmingly, and points to the sign. The Freshman let's out his breath.

FRESHMAN

I'm sorry. I'm just so lost.

JOHN

Don't be sorry. This stuff is complicated. Have a seat here and we'll figure things out.

The Freshman sits, relieved that someone kind will help.

INT. B.A.R.T. TRAIN - NIGHT

John rides the BART, cell phone to his ear.

INT. DORMS - EVENING

VICTOR, John's overweight best friend, is hunched over a computer arguing with KIKO, Asian, bright, and shy. Their argument is over several lines of computer code seen on the screen. The phone starts ringing, but they ignore it. Finally, the answering machine picks up.

JOHN (O.C.)

Hey, it's me.

Vic and Kiko instantly stop arguing.

JOHN (O.C.)

I've had a huge break through. You're not going to believe it. Gotta meet my parents for dinner, then Lisa is playing at the

Elbo Room, so meet me there. You gotta see this. Out.

Vic and Kiko look at each other for a beat, then launch right back into the jargon laden argument.

INT. B.A.R.T. TRAIN - NIGHT

John hangs up as the B.A.R.T. train comes out of a tunnel. He looks out at the beautiful SF skyline, which sparkles in the night.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

John sits in a trendy SF restaurant with his father, BERNARD Elias, and his mother LILY. Bernard is a gruff but handsome man, Lily a sweet, well dressed Mom.

BERNARD

This is outrageous. A \$200 steak. Let's go somewhere else.

LILY

You can't have the steak anyway.

BERNARD

The hell I can't.

JOHN

Why can't he have the steak?

LILY

His doctor says his heart...

Bernard cuts Lily off with a look.

BERNARD

My doctor says my heart can't stand paying \$200 for a steak. What, do they gold plate them here?

JOHN

Just relax, don't look at the prices. Mom, what's he not telling me?

Lily looks at John, looks at Bernard. Finally, Bernard relents with his eyes, and lets out a sigh.

LILY

He had a mild heart incident when he was out of the country last month.

BERNARD

I was an American Jew in an Iraqi prison. What do you expect?

JOHN

You had a heart attack in an Iraqi prison? Dad, you're pushing 60. Are you nuts?

BERNARD

I didn't have a heart attack. (To Lily) See what you started? I had a heart incident. And I was there to meet with my clients. I'm a lawyer, that's what I do. I saw a doctor, he said to take it easy for a few weeks, don't worry about it.

LILY

And lay off the fatty foods, and get some exercise, and no more smoking, and...

Bernard raises a hand, cutting off further talk.

BERNARD

Enough. No more talk about it. (muttering, goes back to his menu) Pushing 60... Whenever you're ready to step outside, Kid, and tangle with the Old Man, you let me know. I'll smack you down like a dog.

John smiles at his Old Man.

LILY

So, how's school? How's your new classes?

JOHN

Well... Actually... I was thinking again about leaving, starting my own company.

Bernard suddenly grabs his chest, faking a heart attack.

BERNARD

Oh, my God!

LILY

That isn't funny.

Bernard drops his attack heart routine.

BERNARD

John, you know what Mark Twain said once? He said "When I was a boy of fourteen, my father was so ignorant. I could hardly stand to have the old man around. But when I got to be twenty-one, I was astonished at how much he had learned in seven years." We went over this at Christmas. You're not dropping out. End of story.

Bernard goes back to his menu, and John stews at his father's dismissal. Lily, ever the peacemaker, tries to sooth things.

LILY

Honey, we know that you're very bright. But I think your father just wants you to have the degree as a back up, in case this doesn't work out.

JOHN

I don't need a back up. I want a company. I want to run my own business.

BERNARD

I run a business. Everything that happens at the firm falls to me. Every move I make, every decision, affects the lives of the people who work for me and with me. It sounds glamorous, but it isn't. It's hard work. You're not ready for it, believe me. Finish school and get a job. You'll be happier.

JOHN

But, Dad...

Again, Bernard's trademark hand gesture, cutting off further talk.

BERNARD

No more talk about it.

John looks to his mother, who shrugs.

BERNARD (cont'd)

Fifty dollars for a Cobb salad. Get real.

INT. B.A.R.T. TRAIN - NIGHT

John is back on the B.A.R.T., back on his cell.

INT. BACKSTAGE AT THE ELBO ROOM - NIGHT

A pay phone is ringing in the dark, loud backstage area. A boozy MUSICIAN walking by picks it up.

MUSICIAN

Uh, hello?

INTERCUT WITH JOHN:

JOHN

I'm looking for Lisa Forrester!

MUSICIAN

Who?

JOHN

Lisa Forrester! In the band.

MUSICIAN

Wrong number, dude.

The musician hangs up just as LISA FORRESTER, John's girlfriend, and the lead singer in IronGem, walks by. Lisa is beautiful, long shining brown hair, girl next door good looks. But dolled up for the show, and stuffed into black leather pants, she is still a siren.

LISA

Who was that?

MUSICIAN

I don't know. Some guy who.. Oh, wait! Is your last name Forrester?

LISA

I knew it! That was my boyfriend, dingbat!
Go get ready! Just go!

Lisa pats her pants, but these things don't even have pockets, much less change in them.

LISA (cont'd)

Hey, who has 35 cents I can borrow?

INT. ELBO ROOM - NIGHT

Crowded, sweaty, smoky, loud, full of rowdy youth.

John is standing at the bar with his charts laid out in front of him. On stage, the MC is warming up the crowd, who have grown restless and are ready for the show.

CROWD

(chanting)

Get off! Get off! Get off!

MC

Yeah, yeah. OK, you want them, you got them. Here is the Bay Area's own....
IronGemmmmmmmmmmmmm.

Lisa and her BANDMATES take the stage and in no time have launched into a rock solid alternative groove that is begging to be on a hit soundtrack. Lisa grabs the mic, and starts to sing. God, what a voice!

John watches for a moment, then turns back to his equations. He goes back into the zone. On bar napkins he starts frantically scribbling lines of code.

Victor and Kiko reach the bar, and Victor purposefully knocks over a beer, which runs towards John's bar napkin notebook.

JOHN (cont'd)

Watch it! Idiot.

John scoops his work up, and with his sleeve, pushes the beer back, clearing off a space. Then he sees that it is Victor, and smiles.

LATER:

John is busy explaining more of his code napkins and charts to Kiko and Victor when Lisa finishes a rocking number.

LISA

This is for the egghead at the bar who hasn't looked at me all evening.

John looks up from his notes, and sees her staring straight at him. She starts into a 'Love Ballad', just her and her guitar. These are Lisa's equations. She is a master of the mathematics of the heart. John is riveted.

LISA (cont'd)

(lyrics)

Work like you don't need the money, love
like you've never been hurt before, dance
like no one is watching...

LATER:

John is standing at the bar talking to Vic and Kiko. It is at the end of the night, and the crowd has thinned.

JOHN

It's a software solution, basically. It uses motion vector compression to make video truly on-demand. No waiting, no downloading, no nothing. You hit the button, and you're connected.

Just then, Lisa reaches the bar, still covered in a sheen from the show.

LISA

Oh, I love it when you talk dirty.

She gives him sweet, sexy kiss on the mouth.

KIKO

Wow. This is some radical shit, man.

VICTOR

You're like the Rain Man of compression algorithms. Can you, like, step-by-step it for me?

JOHN

It'll work, trust me. This is it. We take this, write the code, start a company.

LISA

Hey, hey, hey. Attention me!

JOHN

You were fantastic tonight. Better than ever. I'd sign you if I could.

LISA

(breathless)

Will you settle for taking me home?

JOHN
OK, guys. Got to go.

John gathers up his charts.

VICTOR
Oh. Now we see where the priorities are.

JOHN
See you in the morning.

Lisa winks at Vic and Kiko.

LISA
Goodnight, boys.

VICTOR
That is not even right.

INT. B.A.R.T. TRAIN - NIGHT

Lisa and John make out on the B.A.R.T. as the city passes behind them. They engage in a languid kiss.

LISA
Mmmmmmm, I love you.

Lisa suddenly pulls her head back. It is clear this slipped out, and has never been said before. She starts laughing.

LISA (cont'd)
Wow. Where did that come from?

JOHN
It's OK. It's... good. I love you, too.

LISA
You don't have to say that. Don't say it if you don't feel it.

JOHN
I do. We make a good team. And I do. I love you very much.

LISA
Really?

JOHN
Yes, really.

Lisa melts and kisses him harder than ever.

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lisa and John enter. They are all over each other, kissing, touching. Lisa's cat runs to the door and rubs on Lisa's leg, but she doesn't notice. They fall into the bedroom...

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - MORNING

John is quietly getting dressed, but Lisa is awake and watching him. He has to step gingerly around all her various pieces of musical gear. Her hair is a mess, which only adds to her charm.

LISA
Hey, beautiful.

JOHN
Oh, hey. I didn't mean to wake you. I have to go to class.

LISA
I know. It was great last night. And I meant what I said.

JOHN
Me too.

He leans over and picks up her leather pants.

JOHN (cont'd)
Will you wear these every day?

LISA
Sure. I'll take them off every day, too.

JOHN
You are so bad!

His leans over, kisses her, starts to leave, but she drags him back down into the bed.

INT. LECTURE THEATER - DAY

On the black board written large 'Imagination is more important than knowledge - Albert Einstein'.

A packed auditorium of students. Victor, Kiko, and John are seated by each other. John is on his cellphone.

JOHN

John Elias for Mr. Barber. (Beat) OK, let him know I called.. again. It's about a start up. Thanks.

VICTOR

Still no luck?

JOHN

How can these people tell if they'll like my idea if they don't return calls? Everyone quietens down as BEN FISHER enters. He's about 45, longish dark hair, and a scruffy beard. His manner is sardonic, and one can see a lot of humor and a twinkle of sadness behind his eyes. His classes are part lecture, part performance art, part theater.

BEN

So, college punks. How was your weekend?

Little response.

BEN (cont'd)

Let's try again. How was your weekend?

Roars and cheers.

BEN (cont'd)

Much better. Another weekend of binge drinking and casual sex past, and here you are. Back for more punishment and humiliation. Excellent. I won't disappoint. Now, here's a warm up to see who really has their thinking caps on.

The noisy door to the lecture theater opens, and Robert Jennings enters. As Robert makes his way to a seat, Ben writes this on the board: FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.

BEN (cont'd)

Mr. Jennings, how many F's in this sentence?

Robert glances up. He clearly doesn't like Ben.

ROBERT

Three.

With a flourish, Ben circles the six F's in the sentence.

BEN

Don't worry, Mr. Jennings. Most people don't get it right, because they fail to see the little things, like three F's in the three uses of the word 'of'. You can rest in the knowledge that you are typical. We have to see beyond the obvious, people. The truth won't walk up and smack you in your smug, fat, arrogant, young faces. It tickles you for a few days, before you can catch it.

John looks over to see Robert's response. Robert circles his hands around his ears, in the 'loco' gesture, then points to Ben. John suppresses a laugh.

BEN (cont'd)

You're going to have a chance to demonstrate that you've learned from Mr. Jennings' pain. You will notice that scattered across the hall today are glasses full of standard six penny nails. We're going to perform the Great Nail Experiment. The rules are as follows: you must find a way to balance ALL the nails in a standing position without any outside assistance. Those are the rules, no more, no less. If I win, and you cannot accomplish this simple balancing act, you will treat my words as if they were the words of God Almighty. If you win....well, I will be very impressed with you. Begin.

The students pick up the glasses and start trying to work out a solution.

JOHN

(under his breath)

This is bullshit. What a showboat.

The students are trying all manner of stacking and balancing tricks. All their attempts come crashing down. Some students

bicker while they work with each other, others sit back and do nothing.

Ben walks around, watching each experiment. Some people are trying to use the glass as part of the balancing act.

BEN

Good! Thank you for using the glass - I put it there to see if you would use it. Ben observes John, Victor and Kiko working together.

BEN (cont'd)

You may have already discovered that BALANCE, in business, and much more importantly, in life, is very difficult to achieve. Each nail, equal in importance, each has to be standing... Privileging one element over others, forgetting that everything needs to be integrated as a whole, can eventually result in a meltdown....

John suddenly backs away, displaying a completed and fully balanced Great Nail Experiment on the table. Ben comes up the aisle to their table, eyeballs the structure.

BEN (cont'd)

Excellent work. As promised, I'm impressed. What do you think the solution to the Great Nail Experiment tells us about business, Mr.Elias?

JOHN

That a professor's words don't come from God Almighty.

Class goes 'oooooooooh'! Ben grins. This is the interesting part of teaching. He enjoys the repartee'.

BEN

Oh, I'll send a lightning bolt your way in good time, my friend. What else, anyone? What about this particular type of structure here? Come on, people, it's a metaphor! Use your head. Look at it.

Everyone is riveted to John's structure of nails.

BEN (cont'd)
I'll spell it out for you. A company is strong, and a life is strong, when it is bound together around a central, unchanging core of values and beliefs, a central PURPOSE!! If you have that, nothing can knock you down!

Ben nudges the table ever so slightly, and the Great Nail Experiment collapses.

BEN (cont'd)
One other thing. You need more than nails to build a good house.

Ben turns and heads back towards his podium.

EXT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Robert catches up to John, Kiko, and Victor as they leave the lecture hall.

ROBERT
Yo! Einstein! Wait up.

John stops.

ROBERT (cont'd)
Slick move in there with Prof. Wackoff.

JOHN
Thanks.

ROBERT
What a pretentious windbag. Could I talk to you for a minute?

He obviously means alone.

JOHN
(to Vic and Kiko)
I'll catch you later.

Victor and Kiko leave.

ROBERT
Those your new roomies?

JOHN

Yeah. Hey, let's drop the 'Einstein' thing, OK? It's in the past.

ROBERT

Sure. Didn't mean to offend.

JOHN

It's OK.

ROBERT

I'm going to a party tonight. It's in the city, and it's being thrown by a friend of mine who just went public, made a bundle. Come with me.

John hesitates, shrugs.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Come on, John, let's make our peace. You're with Lisa now, fine. Who cares? We can still be friends, can't we?

JOHN

I don't know. Can we?

ROBERT

I've known Lisa since we were in High School. We had our time, and it's probably better that we broke up. I didn't like losing her to one of my fraternity brothers, but fair's fair. I'm over her. You saw Kim, right? Total freak. Come to the party with me. It's a great chance to meet people. Like you say, let's forget the past.

John smiles, happy to resolve a past grievance, and regain a friend.

JOHN

OK. OK. Sounds good!

ROBERT

All right! Oh!

EXT. THE 101 - NIGHT

John and Robert head into town in Robert's Mustang. They are smiling and talking, like old friends.

ROBERT

Take the wheel a sec.

John reaches over and takes the wheel of the car. Robert fishes around in his pocket and pulls out a joint, already rolled and ready to smoke. He lights it and takes a huge hit.

ROBERT (cont'd)

(holding his breath)

'ere.

John hesitates. This is part of why he left the Frat. But, he is having fun, letting loose, so what the hell? He takes a huge toke. Both exhale at the same time.

JOHN

Whew!

ROBERT

My Uncle gave me this. He's the D.A., can you believe it? Smokes pot in his bathroom at work. (Imitates very stoned person)
'Your Honor, this is a bad man. He must be punished'.

John giggles. The pot is starting to take hold already.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

John and Robert arrive outside a warehouse. There are CROWDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE, some dressed in outrageous costumes.

ROBERT

Oh, yes. This is going to rock.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

Crazy costume ball on a superhero theme. Tech heads run around in giant overstuffed superhero costumes. John, as Batman, stands at the bar, bleary from the pot and beers. Robert, as Robin, walks up with JIM, very young and cocky, dressed in a overstuffed Superman costume.

ROBERT

John, this is Jimbo! He's the one that just went public. This is his party! I've known this little dipshit since he was in diapers, which was, oh, yesterday, and now he's a multimillionaire. Jimmy, this is

John, the guy I was telling you about. Top programmer at Stanford. Best of the best. He can hack your shit to pieces.

Jim and John eye each other. Like prizefighters, the two programmers seek dominance with the eyes. John, as Batman, Jim, currently Superman for the night, nod slightly to each other. The booze has unhinged John's tongue.

JOHN

Nice costume.

JIMBO

You can have it after the party. I'll be at WORK at my COMPANY.

Robert catches on to the tension.

ROBERT

Oh, for Christ's sake. What is this? Programmer envy? You two are like dogs! Lighten up!

JIMBO

Catch you later.

ROBERT

OK. Hey, congratulations! You deserve it!

Jimbo stalks off.

ROBERT

Oh, that was nice. I can't take you anywhere.

JOHN

That guy is a dick.

ROBERT

Yeah, a rich dick with his own company.

JOHN

I'll have my own company soon.

ROBERT

Of course you will! No question about it. Hey, remember when we used to talk about going into business together? You were the

ideas guy, I was the business guy? What happened to that?

JOHN

Fell by the wayside, I guess. Female fallout.

ROBERT

That's what happens when you let women come between friends. It's total bullshit. So, you working on anything?

John just smiles.

ROBERT (cont'd)

I knew it! OK, spill.

JOHN

Real time video over the net. A software solution. I know how to do it. I'm talking TV quality over an IP network. A total breakthrough.

ROBERT

Great. Works for me. Got any money?

JOHN

No. Do you?

ROBERT

It's out there

JOHN

I can't even get anyone to return my calls. I might go to Professor Fisher next, see if he can help.

ROBERT

Prof. Wackoff? Trust me, you don't want his money. My Dad knows him, and he's completely nuts. Lost his company when his own board had to throw him out. John, we should be working together. We'd make a good team. You have the engineering skills, but I got the 'juice'. I can get calls returned. I have connections, and my Dad is CFO at ProductPlacement. You're smart, you always have been, but I'm a

closer. What do you say, brother? Let's make a move.

JOHN

I thought you would have big plans after graduation.

For a flicker of an instant, Robert looks vulnerable.

ROBERT

No, not really.

Just then, a particularly hip song rolls over the room.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Come one! Let's get wild!

He drags John towards the moshing, roiling dance floor, and they join the crowd of hipsters dancing the night away.

INT. UNIVERSITY OFFICES - DAY

John knocks at an office door marked 'Ben Fisher'.

BEN (O.C.)

It's open.

INT. BEN FISHER'S OFFICE - DAY

John enters Fisher's offices and sees Fisher gathering his things. Fisher glances up at John, speaks in a harried tone.

BEN

Mr. Elias. Quite a surprise.

JOHN

Is this a bad time?

BEN

I have a minute. What is it?

JOHN

It'll take more than a minute to explain. I'll come back later.

BEN

No, no. What is it?

JOHN

I want to talk to you about my idea for a business. I have the plan here.

Ben takes the plan, looks at the first page, and throws it on his desk.

BEN

Why me? I'm just a lowly professor.

JOHN

I thought you might be able to help me. I've called all the major VC firms, but they won't return my calls. I don't know anyone, I was hoping you would make some introductions, if you like the idea.

BEN

Hmmmm. Let me ask you this. Do you like to get high?

JOHN

Excuse me?

EXT. SKY OVER SAN FRANCISCO BAY - DAY

Red Cessna flies across the sky.

INT. CESSNA - DAY

Ben is the pilot, John sits next to him, looking uneasy. Ben swoops and dips the aircraft wildly to get the best views of the Bay.

JOHN

Can we fly level for a while?

BEN

Sure. Get scared much? OK, who said this? 'We think too small, like the frog at the bottom of the well. If he surfaced he would have an entirely different view.'

JOHN

Mao Tse Tung.

BEN

Very impressive. For that, you get to drive for a while, and tell me all about your business plans.

Nervously, John places his hands on the wheel in front of him. Ben reaches under his seat and takes out a bottle of scotch, which John eyes with even greater unease.

BEN (cont'd)

OK, rock my world. Let's here it.

JOHN

My idea can change the Internet. It's a software solution to the bandwidth problem. You click - and real time video happens. It's scalable, and it works, at least in theory. It uses...

BEN

Stop, stop. Please no, not the old saw of infinite bandwidth. A sort of urban legend by now, isn't it? I think you're out of your little mind.

JOHN

What?

BEN

You heard what I said. You're out of your mind, like every other gold bricking internet wannabe. You're dreaming.

Ben pours himself a scotch into a highball glass. John is dumbfounded by Ben's bluntness, and disappointed. By mistake, John shifts the wheel forward, and the plane flies downward. Ben grabs reaches over and pulls back, leveling the plane out.

BEN

Please watch what you're doing. If you do this, do you accept responsibility for the friends you're gonna take along with you? You little start up punks understand the rewards, the glory. But what about the negative consequences? What if something goes wrong, and it will. Are you ready to be at the wheel, so to speak, of a company with other people's futures riding on your every move?

JOHN

You sound just like my father. He just wants me to go get a job.

BEN

Sounds like a wise man. What does he do?

JOHN

He's a human rights attorney, but he knows nothing about technology.

BEN

Yes, but he knows people. He fears for you. He's seen the worst of human nature, and wants you to be safe.

JOHN

I don't want to be safe.

BEN

Fair enough. Let's have some fun, shall we?

Ben hands John his drink and takes the wheel, then sends the plane into a new dive.

JOHN

Ahhhhh!!

INT. DORM - NIGHT

John is at his computer, writing code. We see his face, deep in the zone. The room is small but clean. Vic and Kiko are at their computers as well. The phone rings.

KIKO

Hello? John, for you.

John picks up the phone.

JOHN

Yeah.

BEN (O.C.)

(sounds drunk)

You're going to go see a man named Tom Walker. He's expecting you.

JOHN

Fisher?

BEN

Tom Walker. Ever heard of him?

JOHN

Of course. He's big time. But I read he was crazy.

BEN

People says he's crazy because he 'knows'. He's a friend of mine. He's not a VC vulture. He's an angel investor. Do you know what that means?

JOHN

Yes.

BEN

I've talked to him about you. Won't make you Microsoft, but you can open your doors, get started. He's expecting you. 89900 Skyline.

John quickly writes down the address.

JOHN

Got it. Thanks. I really appreciate...

BEN

Yeah, yeah, yeah. You're on your own now. This is all I can do for you.

Click. Ben is gone. John pauses for a moment, thinking about what Ben said, then goes back to coding.

EXT. FARM ROAD NEAR PETALUMA - DAY

John drives slowly down a two lane highway. Lisa is in the passenger seat. The fertile valleys of Petaluma stretch out in front of them.

LISA

None of these mailboxes have numbers.

JOHN

No one up here wants to be found.

BANG! He hears a gunshot, and up ahead, he sees several RANCH HANDS standing by a fence.

JOHN (cont'd)
Let's ask these guys.

LISA
Hey, a man that can ask for directions. I
knew you were special.

John pulls over and sees one of them coming from the brush
carrying a dead fox.

JOHN
Hi. How you doing?

The men nod, not overly friendly.

JOHN (cont'd)
Do you know where Tom Walker's house is?
I think he's close by.

RANCH HAND
What you want him for?

JOHN
Ben Fisher sent me.

The man carrying the dead fox steps forward.

TOM WALKER
I'm Tom Walker.

EXT. RODEO PEN, TOM'S RANCH - DAY

TOM WALKER sits on the edge of the fence, surrounded by THREE
TOUGH FARMHANDS. John has a laptop with some computer graphics
charts on display, which he holds for a better view, but it's
basically a ridiculous situation. Lisa watches from a few yards
away while feeding grain to a horse in a stall.

JOHN
These charts will show you how we think we
can speed things up. It uses motion vector
compression, and it's IP based. I'm
working on the demo now, and we could have
a prototype in a few months if we worked
on it full time.

TOM WALKER
Those are just some little pictures. You
want me to invest in that?

JOHN

I can show you some of the code I've written so far.

TOM WALKER

No, thanks. (sighs) You like horses?

JOHN

I guess.

TOM WALKER

That one right there seems to have taken a liking to your woman. Tell you what. If you can stay on that horse for, say, 60 seconds, I'll give you the money. Deal?

This gets a chuckle from the other ranch hands.

JOHN

You got to be kidding me.

TOM WALKER

Do I look like I'm kidding you?

JOHN

I'm an engineering student at Stanford, Mr. Walker.

TOM WALKER

So? You got your way of assigning value, I got mine. If you can stay on that horse, I'll know you're a fighter. Otherwise, forget it. Get off my ranch.

JOHN

Excuse me a minute.

John walks over to Lisa, and speaks in a low voice.

JOHN (cont'd)

This guy isn't serious. Let's get out of here.

LISA

What did he say?

JOHN

He says he'll give me the money if I can stay on this horse for 60 seconds. Let's go.

LISA

So stay on it for 60 seconds.

JOHN

I'm from New York. I don't know the first thing about horses. And besides, what kind of investor makes his decision on a horse ride?

LISA

Who cares how he makes his decisions? Starting your own business is your dream, John. Sometimes you have to do things on faith. And if you have to ride a horse, you ride the horse. Besides, I grew up around horses, and I can tell you, this one isn't so bad, (to the horse) are you sweet pea?

John thinks a minute, then turns to Tom, who has been watching with great amusement.

JOHN

You're on.

CUT TO:

John gets ready to mount the horse. The Hands hold it steady. Lisa sits on the fence next to Tom. John puts one foot in a stirrup and looks over at Tom.

TOM WALKER

Don't look at me. It's in your hands now.

John steps up onto the horse, and the Hands let it go at the same instant. Lisa looks at her watch.

LISA

OK, John! Just relax.

The horse starts to run around the ring. John holds on for dear life.

LISA (cont'd)

Lean forward! Lean into his turns! 20 seconds!

The horse runs, then makes several sharp turns, each nearly spilling John. But John hangs tough.

LISA (cont'd)
Good, good! Relax. Stand up off the saddle!
40 seconds.

Now the horse has gotten really agitated. It starts to buck, kicking with the hind legs.

LISA (cont'd)
Stay with him! You're doing good! Ten more
seconds to go!

The last ten seconds are the worst! The horse turns, pinwheels, and bucks upward.

LISA (cont'd)
1 minute! You did it!

JOHN
How do I get off this thing??!!

That question is answered when he is thrown off and lands with a thud. The horse circles away.

Lisa runs over and helps him up. Tom hops down off the fence and crosses as John brushes himself off.

TOM WALKER
Well, you're either a complete idiot, brave, or just damned lucky. So, I'm going to give you \$2 million to get your company going. \$33,000 a second, kid. In exchange, I want twenty five percent of company stock. And don't try to negotiate with me. Pisses me off.

JOHN
Thank you, Mr. Walker, thank you. I won't let you down.

TOM WALKER
But if your company isn't successful, I will hunt you down and kill you. This is the big time. Do not fuck with me.

He eyeballs John like he really means it!

QUOTE ON BLACK SCREEN "When you truly want something, all the universe conspires to help you achieve it" - The Alchemist

EXT. FREEWAY TO SAN FRANCISCO - MAGIC

John and Lisa cruise back to San Francisco, talking animatedly. The city in the distance is magnificent in the colors of sunset.

INT. PROGRAMMING LAB - NIGHT

Vic and Kiko are both helping OTHER STUDENTS. John and Lisa enter, screaming.

JOHN

I got it! I got it!

He is waving a check around in one hand, a bottle of champagne in the other.

VICTOR

Got what?

JOHN

Look at this. Look!

Victor looks at the check, and sees it is made out to John Elias for the amount of \$2 million.

VICTOR

Oh my God! You got it!

JOHN

I'm doing it. I'm starting my own company.
I want both of you as my partners. All I need to know is, are you in?

Vic looks at Kiko. All the other students are watching as well. Kiko gives the slightest of nods to Vic.

VICTOR

Are you kidding me? Of course we're in!!

JOHN

All right!!

John shakes the bottle and pops the cap, making champagne geyser into the air. They all chug from the bottle and celebrate.

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John and Lisa are cuddled in bed, post coital. She has her head on his chest.

LISA
I'm proud of you.

JOHN
For what?

LISA
I took a lot of courage to get up on that horse. I wouldn't have done it.

JOHN
You said that horse was OK.

LISA
Well, I had to get you up on it somehow.

John chuckles.

JOHN
Now if we can just get a big break through for you.

LISA
Shhh. Don't ruin it by moving on to the next thing yet. Just enjoy this.

JOHN
I want it for you. I want you to be successful.

LISA
It will happen in its own time. Besides, I love what I do. I'm successful now. It isn't the quantity of success that matters, it's the quality. That's why I want you to just savor this moment. You had a big day. Just enjoy it.

John looks down at her, realizing more now than ever why he fell for this woman. He kisses her, and they start to make love again.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

A perfect day - bright sunlight on the beautiful green course. Water shimmers in the distance.

John and Robert are at the 9th Hole, with two older CABBIES beside them. John hits the ball and it soars across the course straight to the putting green.

ROBERT
You are the man!

CADDY 1
Golf teaches that success and failure are temporary, man.

John and Robert turn and stare at the guy.

CADDY 1 (cont'd)
A priest told me that.

JOHN
On the golf course?

CADDY 2
Yeah. Used to play with a rabbi every Thursday afternoon.

Robert tees up, hits the ball, and watches as it lands in the rough.

CADDY 2 (cont'd)
Golf teaches that success is a lot more temporary.

CUT TO:

John and Robert walk down the fairway as the Caddies follow behind.

ROBERT
Only in California, huh? Philosophers who caddy as their day job.

JOHN
Yeah. Hysterical. So... I got an angel. I'm out of Stanford. I'm going into business.

Robert raises an eyebrow, tries not to give anything away.

ROBERT
Are you making me an offer?

JOHN

Just interested where you're at.

ROBERT

Well, I don't know. I've got some big offers already.

JOHN

What happened to all that 'We'd be great partners' stuff?

ROBERT

Just looking out for numero uno.

JOHN

Well, are you interested or not?

ROBERT

Oh, I'm interested. I just want to know that I'm going to have a real piece of this thing. That's all.

They reach the spot where Robert's ball has landed and wait for the Caddies to catch up.

JOHN

You would. But, you'd be working for me. I want to make that clear. You'd be the bizdev guy. The next step is to pull together a killer board, and I need a real deal maker to do it. I want the best VCs in the city for second round funding. We need cash to survive.

ROBERT

I was put on this planet to make deals, my friend. I'm Mr. Deal.

The Caddies arrive, and Robert searches for the best club.

ROBERT (cont'd)

OK, Cabbie Wan Kenobi. Any more advice?

CADDY 1

Golf teaches that although patience is a virtue, slow play is not.

He hands Robert a 5 iron.

ROBERT

Twenty percent of the company stock.
That's what I want. And a Exec title. You
want a deal maker, I'm your guy, but that's
what it'll cost.

John thinks a moment.

JOHN

Fifteen percent, and 2K a week. You can
call yourself whatever you want.

Robert sets himself in place, waggles. He is thinking. Then hits
a great chip shot. His ball lands on the green, actually knocking
John's ball aside.

ROBERT

I need 3K.

JOHN

Can't have it.

Robert grins.

ROBERT

Just checking. OK, you got yourself a deal.
Executive VP of Business Development.
That's what I want to be called.

JOHN

All right!

They shake hands while the caddies look on, dubiously.

EXT. OFFICES - DAY

Pan around an empty, small warehouse, and stop at a huge sign
that has been hung over the floor that reads 'Welcome to Digital
Dreams Technologies'.

There are boxes of new computers, cables, printers, scanners,
and other knick knacks scattered around. Several PEOPLE, new
hires, are outside busily setting up equipment and getting the
offices together. There is a real air of excitement around the
offices.

Vic, Kiko, and John are looking at a screen in John's new office.
It is a flash animation of a cowboy that is definitely Tom
Walker. The animated cowboy, hat and all, draws a huge Yosemite

Sam pistol, points it at the screen, scowls and fires. Then, a voice: .

ANIMATED TOM WALKER

Failure equals death. Hang 'um high, boys, hang 'um high.

It ends with an animated body hanging from a tree limb, twisting in the wind.

KIKO

What is that?

JOHN

Pretty freaky, huh? That's our angel. He emailed it to me this morning.

VICTOR

I heard he was crazy, but that's just fucking weird.

KIKO

Cool animation though.

Victor looks outside and sees Robert Jennings enter.

VICTOR (cont'd)

Hey, Robert Jennings is out there. How did he find us?

JOHN

I hired him. He's our new business development guy.

KIKO

I thought you got into a huge fight with him. That's why you left Frat World.

JOHN

I did, but it was over a girl and that's in the past. This is business. He has great contacts, he presents himself well, and he'll round out our team.

KIKO

How much stock does he get?

JOHN

Fifteen percent.

VICTOR

Whoa....that's as much as...

Before Vic can finish, Robert enters.

ROBERT

Hey! What's shaking, brainiacs??!!

JOHN

Great, you found us. We were just talking about you.

ROBERT

I love this space, man! It is going to look so awesome!

JOHN

This is Victor Greenfield and Kiko Matsuo, our co-CTOs.

ROBERT

Oh, yeah. We've met. You guys run the lab thingy at school, right?

KIKO

Actually, John used to, but now we run the 'lab thingy' here.

ROBERT

Right. Cool! I came to check out my new digs. My Dad is loaning my some art from his collection, so I need to measure the walls, see what fits!

JOHN

Great. Right this way.

John leaves with Robert, Vic and Kiko exchange concerned looks.

EXT. DELI - DAY

John is getting several bags of food, but has his phone to his ear.

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Lisa strums her guitar, hears the phone, picks up.

LISA
Yeah.

INTERCUT WITH JOHN:

JOHN
Hey, it's me.

LISA
(unenthusiastic)
Oh, hey.

JOHN
What's wrong?

LISA
Oh, nothing. I just haven't heard from you
in four days. That's all.

JOHN
I'm sorry. I've been busy. We've been
hiring people, setting up offices. We're
having a little office party this
afternoon and...

LISA
Wait a minute. Let's get something
straight. Busy is not an acceptable
excuse. Everyone is busy.

JOHN
You're right. I've been... preoccupied. It
really has been a big four days.

LISA
Fair enough. I forgive you. But here's the
rule; when you're in a relationship,
especially if it involves sex, you must
call at least every 24 hours. That's how
it works. Ask any girl.

JOHN
I'm very sorry. I really am.

Lisa sets the guitar aside, gets comfortable.

LISA
OK. Now tell me everything.

EXT. STREET - DAY

John exits, starts walking down the street passed more .com billboards and other internet advertising.

JOHN

Well, I hired Robert as my bizdev guy.

LISA

Really? That was an interesting choice.

JOHN

I thought you'd be happy, us burying the hatchet and all that.

LISA

I am, it's just... He's not like you. Robert's... Robert. Just be careful.

JOHN

I will. Don't worry. I'm just hiring his rolodex, basically. Come by the offices tonight. I want to show you everything.

LISA

I'll wear the leather pants then.

John just smiles.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES - DAY

The offices have totally come together. There are cubes, art hanging on the wall, and an overall funky vibe about the place. The 10-12 employees of Digital Dreams are scattered on couches, tables, cushions, ages 20-27, male and female, each eager and fresh faced.

This is the first company meeting, and John stands to speak. Everyone quiets down.

JOHN

Well, uh...

There is a silence as John searches for his words.

VICTOR

Breath, John.

Nervous laughter around the room.

JOHN

Sorry. I dreamed about what this moment would be like, to address the staff of a company I founded, but now that it's here, I'm all tongue-tied. Before I turn things over to Robert, I just want to say thank you. Thanks for taking this chance with us. In this company, we're gonna work on trust. We're gonna work on change. We're gonna put quality over quantity, and we're gonna make work fun and exciting, for ourselves and our customers.

There are smiles and light applause around the room.

JOHN (cont'd)

And now, before I make a complete ass of myself, I want to turn things over to Robert Jennings, our Executive VP of Business Development, who is going to lay out our goals for us. Robert?

All eyes shift to Robert, who steps forward. Where John is uncomfortable being stared at, Robert blooms.

ROBERT

Thanks, John. Well, folks, this is our moment. You've read about it, you've heard about it, and now, you're living it. This is a start up. This is what it's all about. Two things have to happen next. One, me and our fearless leader here have to go out and assemble a board of directors that can guide us through the rapids of taking a product to market and connect us at the right levels. And second, all of you have three months to create a kick ass beta version of the software that we can take in front of the internet press vultures and blow their little minds. Three months is all the time we have at our present burn rate. It will go by quickly, rest assured. But hey, no one said getting rich would be easy! This business is an up at dawn, round the clock, balls to the wall, take no prisoners, all out siege that doesn't stop until we list this puppy, cash in our chips, and go home millionaires!

There is a cheer all round, but John doesn't join in.

QUOTE ON BLACK SCREEN 'Even if you win the rat race, you're still a rat" - Cassi Goodman

INT. MUSTANG - DAY

Robert and John are in traffic. Robert has just lit a joint, holds it out to John, who declines.

ROBERT

What's wrong?

JOHN

I don't think we should be talking to our people about listing when we don't have a product yet. It's way to early.

ROBERT

Oh, don't worry about that. It's just to get the their blood pumping. Thinking about their share values is what keeps them working all night.

JOHN

I just don't want people thinking short term like that. Our product will take time to develop, time to integrate. I want people thinking long term.

ROBERT

It's just talk. Oh, here it is! Let's off-load some cash, buddy!

EXT. EXPENSIVE MEN'S STORE- DAY

John stands before a mirror in an expensive Hugo Boss suit. A SALESMAN stands nearby.

ROBERT

That suit is you!

JOHN

It's too expensive.

ROBERT

(to Salesman)

Excuse us a minute, OK?

The salesman nods and walks away.

ROBERT (cont'd)

John, this suit is part of your tools for business, OK? It's like the office space, the computers, the phones. You need a decent suit.

JOHN

I have a suit.

ROBERT

No offence, but no, you don't. I love you like a brother, but I've seen your suit. This is a real suit, and you need five of them.

JOHN

Five? That's \$10,000.

ROBERT

I can do the math. You want to be big time, you have to act big time, and you have to dress big time. This suit is part of it. You need it. I might need a couple as well. This is part of what seed capital is meant to buy. Come on, let's do it up right.

EXT. EXPENSIVE MEN'S STORE- DAY

John and Robert exit in new suits. They carry loads of boxes as well.

ROBERT

OK, be honest. Tell me that suit doesn't feel great on you.

JOHN

It does. Feels fantastic.

Some ATTRACTIVE WOMEN walk by, checking out John and Robert.

ROBERT

Did you see that? Huh? Good afternoon, ladies!! Hey, I got an idea!

JOHN

What?

ROBERT

It's a surprise. You're going to love this place.

EXT. DOOR - AFTERNOON

Robert pulls up to a nondescript doorway with no sign. A huge BOUNCER stands outside, and magically, a VALET appears at John's car door, ushering him out.

JOHN

What is this place?

ROBERT

You'll see. (To Bouncer) Johnson!

BOUNCER

Mr. Jennings. Welcome back.

INT. THE DOOR - AFTERNOON

John and Robert enter The Door, a top dollar men's club, complete with a long bar, couches, lot's of rich BUSINESS MEN. But most important, LEGGY, SEXY WOMEN in cocktail dresses walk around, being extra friendly.

JOHN

Oh my God.

ROBERT

This is members only, and this is where a lot of deals get done. The only reason we're in here is because my Dad is a member. If you throw a stick, you'll hit a CEO. Would you like to be in this place wearing your suit?

JOHN

I see what you mean.

ROBERT

This is our world now, John. We have to learn to act the part. It's not so bad, huh?

They reach the bar. The sexy BARTENDER, Marla, arrives.

MARLA

Mr. Jennings, good to see you.

ROBERT

Marla. Please call me Robert. This is John, and we're looking for a nice relaxed evening.

MARLA

You've come to the right place. Something to drink?

John sees Marla very subtly nod to two girls across the room, who start to make their way over.

ROBERT

Two Harvey Wallbangers, please. (to John)
Incoming, 4 O'clock.

John turns to see the two women arrive. They are DANA and LIZ. These girls are model beautiful, elegantly dressed, perfectly mannered.

DANA

Good evening, gentlemen. How are you doing?

ROBERT

Excellent. I'm Robert, this is my boss, CEO of our new Internet company, John.

DANA

My name is Dana, this is Liz. Might we join you?

ROBERT

Of course.

Robert catches John's eye as the two women take seats between them.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Marla, can we have a bottle of champagne as well?

Liz leans in to speak with John, getting close. She bats her big eyes at him as she speaks, working him with her charm.

LIZ

That must be exciting, being the CEO of an Internet company.

JOHN

It's exciting, but scary. Truth is, we haven't been in business for very long.

LIZ

You'll do great. I can tell. I used to work for Goldman Sachs, and I could pick the winners. Ah, here we are.

The champagne arrives, Marla pours, and Liz hands John a glass.

LIZ

To your company and your success.

She delicately clinks glasses with John, takes a tiny sip. Her every move is mannered and perfect.

JOHN

You used to work for Goldman Sachs?

LIZ

Yes, I did.

She cocks one eyebrow.

LIZ (cont'd)

You don't believe me?

JOHN

No, it's not that. Of course I believe you.

She leans in, her face just inches from his. He can feel her breath.

LIZ

This is a wonderful place to meet people. Important people. I did my time in the trenches, and now I'm just looking for the right connections. That's why I'm here. That's a lovely suit, by the way.

JOHN

Thank you. It's kind of new. Still not very comfortable.

LIZ

Oh? Let me check something.

She reaches behind John's neck to check the tags on his shirt, sees the stiff new tags are scratching him.

LIZ (cont'd)

Poor baby. These tags are digging into you.
We can fix that.

She reaches into her purse and takes out a tiny pair of scissors, and smiles.

LIZ (cont'd)

A girl has to be prepared for anything!

She reaches over, and cuts the tag out of his shirt.

LIZ (cont'd)

There. Is that better?

JOHN

Yes, thank you.

She sets in down in front of them, and cuts the 'Hugo' off, leaving the part that reads 'Boss'.

LIZ

See. That's you.

JOHN

Maybe you one day.

LIZ

You're very sweet.

She leans in and kisses him ever so lightly on the cheek. Her hand lands on his thigh.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John wakes, then the hangover hits him. He sits up when Kiko opens the door.

KIKO

There you are. What happened to you last night?

JOHN

Uh.. (thinks back) I had some meetings with Robert.

KIKO

Right. Lisa came by, but no one knew where you were. We tried the cell.

JOHN

I had it turned off.

KIKO

What's on your face?

John rubs his face, looks at his hand. It is remnant of Liz's lipstick.

JOHN

It's nothing.

KIKO

We have some new stuff to show you, but we can't go any further until you take a look. It's 11 O'clock, by the way.

JOHN

Yeah... OK, let me take a shower and I'll be there.

Suddenly, Robert walks by, alert and chipper and smiling.

ROBERT

Good morning! I need to see you, Johnny Boy!

KIKO

Oh, yeah. And your Dad called. He's in town.

Kiko leaves.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - DAY

Robert has already turned his office into a minimalist art masterpiece. Lots of surfaces. John enters and closes the door.

ROBERT

Did you sleep in your office?

JOHN

Yeah. I've been staying at Lisa's but after last night... I didn't want to go there.

ROBERT

Why not?

JOHN

What do you think? Remember those two girls we were swapping spit with last night? Lisa deserves better than that.

ROBERT

Well, you can stay at my place whenever you need to.

JOHN

OK, thanks.

ROBERT

You're going to be loving me when I tell you who we're meeting with today. Who's the hottest investment banker in town?

JOHN

Uh.. Anna Simmons.

ROBERT

Damn right it's Anna Simmons. You get her, and all the other investment toadies will line up to suck your dick. Her blessing on our business plan and we're set. We cannot fail. We have an appointment in an hour.

JOHN

You got an appointment that fast? I called for weeks, couldn't get past the assistant.

ROBERT

I told you I had the juice! And if I have to pimp myself out as her love slave, I'll do it. She's on our board if I have to munch that shaky bitch's carpet for the rest of the year..

John looks up to see his Dad standing with Kiko at the office door.

JOHN

Dad?

EXT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES - DAY

John steps outside with his Dad, after giving him a tour.

JOHN

Well, what do you think?

BERNARD

It's nice. I wish you the best of luck.

JOHN

Hmmm. I'm not sure what that means.

BERNARD

What more could I say? I don't know about any of this stuff. I'm just a dumb ol' country lawyer.

JOHN

You're the best lawyer in your field, and you know it. And you're from New York City. Hardly the country.

BERNARD

We live in New Jersey now. Son, this is your thing, and I'm happy for you. You know how I feel about school, but it's your life. Whatever you do, just do it with passion, and try to be happy. It doesn't really matter what you do, as long as you have those two things.

JOHN

Thanks.

Just then, Robert pulls up in the Mustang and honks the horn.

JOHN

I gotta go. Big meeting today.

John backs away towards the car.

JOHN (cont'd)

Say, what are you doing out here, anyway?

BERNARD

Hearing at San Quentin. They're about to execute a retarded person, can you believe? Barbarians.

JOHN

That seems like such a world away.

BERNARD

It is. It was good to see you.

JOHN

It was good to see you too, Dad!

BERNARD

I love you, son.

John gets into the car, hesitates to respond with Robert present, but then does.

JOHN

I love you, too, Dad.

Robert pulls away and John watches as Bernard blends into the other PEDESTRIANS.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Robert and John sit in a plush waiting room. Robert's leg bounces with nervousness.

ROBERT

Five more minutes, then I'm going in.

John take a deep breath and closes his eyes again.

INT. ANNA SIMMONS' OFFICE - DAY

The office is darkly lit, decorated with beautiful art-deco stuff. Mozart plays in the background.

Anna Simmons, seen earlier, paces the room slowly, lost in thought. She uses a wooden cane to steady herself as she walks, but her shaking is pronounced. She hums along slightly with the music as she makes her way to her giant desk.

She sits and picks up a pack of Virginia Slims. Her hands shake, but she is able to get a cigarette out of the pack. Her face shows the frustration of her helplessness. She picks up a lighter, gets it lit, but can't get her hand to hold still enough to light the cigarette.

ANNA

God damn it! Marcie!

VOICE ON THE SPEAKER PHONE

What's wrong?

ANNA

Oh. I forgot you were still there.

Just then, Anna's assistant MARCIE enters. She knows just what Anna wants, picks up the lighter, and lights her cigarette, then discreetly leaves.

ANNA

OK, this is what I want you to do. Move 200,000 shares of 3M from the Darcastle fund into Mirrorview. Then find out prices on all South East Asian securities in our funds, and whatever is under 20 percent, sell it. We've got to slash and burn here.

INT. WAITING ROOM - DAY

Marcie comes out to speak to Robert and John.

MARCIE

I'm terribly sorry, but Ms. Simmons can't see you today.

Robert snaps.

ROBERT

Oh, no. I booked this with you, and we're going to see her, today!

MARCIE

She's very busy, I'm sorry. Please leave.

ROBERT

No. What do you think about that, sweet pants?

JOHN

Hey, let's just take off, OK? We'll come back.

ROBERT

Fuck that. Let's go.

Robert grabs John, pushes past Marcie.

MARCIE

Hey! You can't ... Hey!

INT. ANNA SIMMONS' OFFICE - DAY

Robert rushes in, practically dragging John, and is momentarily stunned by the opulence of the place. Anna looks up from her desk to see strangers in her office.

ANNA

Who the hell are you?

ROBERT

Robert Jennings. I'm Doug Jennings' son.
I need to talk with you.

The sight of strangers in her sanctum upsets her badly.

ANNA

Marcie, god damn it!

MARCIE (O.C.)

I'm calling security!!!

Anna struggles to stand up, but can't. She grabs for her cane, but drops it, making her even more upset.

ROBERT

Just hear me out! My father is Doug
Jennings, and...

ANNA

(gasping)

I don't care who your father is! Now get
the fuck out of my office. You don't belong
in here, now get out!

JOHN

Hey, we're sorry, we just wanted to...

Anna slips and falls as she tries to stand. She catches herself on the edge of her desk, but has fallen to her knees. Robert rushes around to help her.

ROBERT

Hey, hey! Whoa! Are you OK?

He helps her back into her chair. She falls back into her chair, hard, never taking her eyes off Robert. Robert sees the look of vulnerability and fear in her eye.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Hey, it's OK. We were just here to tell you about our company. You're OK.

She seems to relax a tiny bit, but does not take her eyes off him. Robert continues to talk in a relaxing voice. He bends over, picks up her cane and hands it to her.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Just take a deep breath. Everything is A-OK. My favorite Aunt has Parkinsons, I know it can be frustrating.

Robert backs away slowly. He produces a copy of their business plan and sets it on her desk.

ROBERT

We're going to leave now, but when you have a chance, maybe you can take a look at this business plan. Just look at it. That's all I'm asking.

Anna starts to regain her composure.

ANNA

Is it for an Internet company, perhaps?

ROBERT

Not just any company. Digital Dreams has the most amazing product you've ever seen and we need you on our board.

Anna's manner returns even more to normal now that the conversation is about business.

ANNA

I don't do start ups. If your idea is that good, someone else will fund you, and I'll acquire you.

ROBERT

We don't want someone else. I know that it was you behind Blue Horseshoe Technologies IPO. You were pulling the strings the whole time.

Anna's eyebrow arches; this obviously isn't common knowledge.

ANNA

Oh, you're good.

Marcie ushers two SECURITY GUARDS in.

SECURITY

Both of you. Out, now!

ANNA

No, hold on.

Robert and John hold their breath. To their surprise, Anna reaches over and picks up the business plan sets it down in front of herself and glances at the first page. It appears Robert's manner has earned them a moment of her time.

ANNA (cont'd)

Did you write this?

ROBERT

Yes, ma'am.

ANNA

Your writing sucks. Who's John Elias?

JOHN

That's me.

ROBERT

John is the most talented engineering student Stanford ever had, and he's..

ANNA

Let's see what you got, John Elias, and spare me the geek-speak. Thank you, Marcie.

Robert and John exhale. They are getting their shot!

ROBERT

Thank you, Marcie. B'bye!

Marcie fumes, but exits with Security.

INT. LOBBY - DAY

Robert and John stop out of the elevator into the lobby of Anna's building. Robert is beaming, but John is less enthusiastic.

ROBERT

Unbelievable. Unreal!

JOHN

I'm glad that's over.

ROBERT

She was eating out of your hand, man. We got her. She's on, and everyone else will follow.

JOHN

I can't believe I just signed away such a huge chunk of the company.

ROBERT

(getting irritated)

Hey, you still own 25% of the company, compared to my lousy 15%, and I just delivered Anna Simmons, King Maker. So get over yourself.

JOHN

And I just cut Vic and Kiko down to 4 and a half percent each. She gets 5 for glancing at a business plan. Some board, made up of people we don't even know, will have 21%. Vic and Kiko are writing the source code. We're screwing them. And you practically promised we'd go public tomorrow.

Just then, BILL GATES enters the lobby. Robert and John see him at the same time, and wait reverently as he passes.

ROBERT (cont'd)

What more do you want, John? I give you Bill Gates, richest man in the world. Trust me, we're getting hotter by the minute. The money train is leaving the station, and we are on board. Now what we need to do is throw a huge party.

Robert puts John in a headlock.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Par-ty! Par-ty! Par-ty!!

JOHN

OK, OK, we'll have a party.

They exiting, laughing.

JOHN (cont'd)

Does your favorite Aunt have Parkinson's?

ROBERT

I'll never tell!

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES - NIGHT

The opening to KC and The Sunshine Band's 'Get Down Tonight' is heard. A huge stage has been set up at one end of the offices, and a giant disco ball splashes light everywhere.

The music kicks in and we see a party in full swing. All the Digital Dreams Internet staffers are there, plus hosts of NEW ONES. Robert is camped in the corner with Dana and Liz.

John works the room, shaking hands, laughing, joking. He looks like a million bucks in a new suit, great hair, and a huge smile. Vic and Kiko are happy as well, chatting with the hard-core programmer types. There's a line at the beer keg, a dance floor has formed, and everyone is getting down and letting loose. It is a full on par-taa.

Everyone except Lisa, that is. She hangs off to the side, sips her drink, looking pensive. John nervously cuts a look over at Liz, which Lisa notes.

LATER:

John comes on to the stage where a microphone has been set up. He calls for the music to be turned down.

JOHN

OK. Is everyone having fun??

Great cheers from the staffers.

JOHN (cont'd)

All right. Well, as you all know, we've closed a deal with a board of directors, and it is a who's who of the technology world. It really is a great endorsement for us, for our product, and for our ideas. None of it, and I mean none of it, would have happened without you, your hard work,

your dedication, and your talents. So, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you, I applaud you, and I look forward to telling you about the incredible second round funding that this board is going to bring in. We're going to get rich, people!!

Cheers, yells, and other noise making.

JOHN (cont'd)

Now get back to partying, and that's an order.

He signals for the music to begin again, which it does, at top volume.

INT. LADIES ROOM - NIGHT

Dana sniffs a tiny bit of coke from a coke spoon as Liz freshens her hair and make up.

DANA

At least these guys play good music. Remember last week when it was Beastie Boys all night long?

LIZ

Yeah. Mine's being awfully cautious tonight. I think that's his girlfriend in the crunchy granola outfit.

Just then, Lisa enters. Dana, high as a kite, thinks this is funny and starts to laugh. Liz cuts Lisa a cool look.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

John enters his office, sees Lisa gathering her things.

JOHN

Hey. There you are. I couldn't find you. Are you leaving?

LISA

Yeah. Time to go.

JOHN

What's wrong?

LISA

I'm not sure. But I want to leave.

JOHN

Well, thanks a lot. I go to see your band every time you play, but when it's my time in the sun, you leave halfway into the party.

Lisa pulls on her coat, and kisses John on the cheek.

LISA

I know. John, be careful. You're so smart, and so good... I don't want to see you lose that.

JOHN

What are you talking about?

LISA

This isn't what I thought it would be. I'm sorry.

Robert appears at the door.

ROBERT

Is this a bad time?

LISA

It's OK. I was just leaving.

Lisa rushes passed Robert.

ROBERT

Hey, it was good to see you.

Lisa smiles politely, but continues on.

ROBERT (cont'd)

What was that about?

JOHN

I have no idea.

LATER:

John is talking with staffers when Robert comes up and whispers something into his ear. John excuses himself, follows him away.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - NIGHT

John follows Robert into his office. Dana and Liz are waiting inside.

ROBERT

These young ladies are ready to leave and go back to my place. Shall we?

Before John can speak, Liz leans in, wraps and hand behind his head, and kisses him. John hesitates, but gives in to her smell, her touch, her lips.

JOHN

I can't.

ROBERT

Oh, come on. Let the kids party by themselves.

Liz looks up into John's eyes.

LIZ

Let's go. Please?

INT. OFFICES - NIGHT

Vic sees Robert and John with the girls, headed out the back door.

INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Robert snorts up a long line of cocaine from a mirror on his coffee table, then leans back. John, Dana, and Liz are curled up on the sofa with him. His apartment is huge.

ROBERT

Whew! Please don't make me do anymore.
Johnny Boy?

Robert passes the mirror to Liz, who holds it up for John. John leans forward and hoovers up a huge line.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Show off.

LIZ

My turn.

Liz sets the mirror on the coffee table and leans forward to do her line. She pushes her hips back into his lap as she does

it. When she is done, she rubs her finger in the dust, and leans back.

LIZ (cont'd)

Open up.

She rubs the coke dust onto John's gums, then kisses him deep on the mouth.

Both couples start to make out. Quickly, Robert is taking Dana's shirt off. Liz takes John by the hand, stands, and leads him off towards the bedrooms.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

Liz leads John into a bedroom. The trippy music can still be heard from the other room. She kisses him, and her hand slides down to his pants, which she starts to unzip.

JOHN

Wait. I shouldn't be doing this. This is wrong.

LIZ

Shhhhh. No. It isn't. You deserve this..

She is hard to resist.

JOHN

I have someone in my life. And I don't know you.

LIZ

Get to know me. Just for tonight.

She sets John down in a chair, and then, to the hall light, starts to slowly undress. First the shirt, then, slowly, slowly, the pants are wriggled off. Then, she kneels, unzips John's zipper, and lowers her head.

INT. ROBERT'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Out on the couch, Robert is struggling out of his clothes. He looks up and sees the bedroom door is open.

ROBERT

Hey, watch this.

Robert picks up a remote from his coffee table, and points it to the TV. When it comes on, he pushes more buttons until he is seeing what is happening in the bedroom. Liz is seen going down on John. Dana cracks up.

DANA

Oh my God. You have a camera back there?

ROBERT

Yep. It's our own private adult network.

DANA

Little pervert. You like that?

Dana proceeds to do what Liz is doing, while on the screen, we see John and Liz move to the bed.

A closer look at the VCR beneath the TV shows the action is being recorded on tape.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS PROGRAMMING LAB - NIGHT

Vic, Kiko, and John are hard at work on the demo. John yawns. He has bags under his eyes and is worn out.

KIKO

OK, let's see how this works. Ready?

VICTOR

Let her rip.

They wait for John to hit the button. He wakes up a bit, then hits enter. Up comes a clip from one of IronGem's shows. Lisa is seen on-stage, jamming. Instantly, the same clip starts playing on Vic's screen.

VICTOR (cont'd)

Houston, we have lift off!

The clip plays simultaneously for a few seconds, then Vic's starts to freeze a bit, then his computer crashes completely.

VICTOR (cont'd)

And, Houston, we have a problem.

JOHN

Elements get introduced in the network somewhere.

VICTOR

Ya think?

John looks over and Vic and Kiko, sees disapproval in their eyes.

JOHN

Look, I know I haven't been here to help much, but all the business stuff takes priority. I'm so tired all the time.

KIKO

It's a tough life being an internet playboy.

VICTOR

Yeah, new suits to buy, new friends to hang out with, new hoes to run.

John starts to get mad, but finally just laughs.

JOHN

OK, guys. Come on. Let's get out of here and get something to eat.

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - DAY

Lisa sits at her keyboard, working on a new song. She has her computer hooked up, and uses a sequencer to help her work out her harmonies.

A bleep lets her know she has email. It is from John, and the title of the email is 'Surprise!' She clicks on it, opening up the attachment.

Realplay comes up on the screen as her computer gets ready to play a streaming video file.

To her shock and amazement, what starts to play on her screen is the sex video of John and Liz! It has been editing out just as Liz goes down on John.

LIZ

(on screen)

Get to know me. Just for tonight.

She sets John down in a chair starts to slowly undress. Lisa's mouth hangs open as she watches. Liz kneels, unzips John's zipper, and lowers her head.

INT. INN AND OUT BURGER - DAY

John, Kiko, and Vic sit at a table with a mountain of food in front of them.

VICTOR

Now this, my friends, is food.

JOHN

I feel better already. This is what I needed; some red meat.

KIKO

That's what we'll be if we don't get this working before the press presentations.

JOHN

We'll get it. Don't worry. Listen, guys, I'm really sorry about all the things I've missed. Believe me, what I've been doing with Robert wasn't fun, but there are just things that have to be done to make this company a success. And don't worry about the code. It's coming along.

Unbeknownst to John, his nose starts to bleed.

JOHN (cont'd)

There's always some bug somewhere that likes to hide where you least expect it.

He looks up and sees Vic and Kiko staring at him.

JOHN (cont'd)

What?

VICTOR

You're about to bleed on your new suit.

John rubs his nose and looks at the blood on his hand.

KIKO

Are we going to have to do an intervention?

JOHN

It's not what you think.

VICTOR

What do we think?

JOHN

Everything is fine. I'll take care of everything.

John gets up and heads for the bathroom.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John has the phone to his ear.

LISA (O.C.)

Hello?

JOHN

Hey, it's me.

Click. No response. John knows that somehow she has found out.

Just then, Robert comes running in. He is very excited.

ROBERT

We did it! We did it!

JOHN

Sit down, I need to talk to you.

ROBERT

Wait, listen! I just got off the phone with Anna and we closed for the next round of funding.

JOHN

Oh, God. How much?

ROBERT

30 million dollars! 30 million dollars!

Robert leaves John's office and starts running up and down the rows of cubicles.

ROBERT (cont'd)

30 million dollars! 30 million dollars! 30 million dollars! 30 million dollars!

John sits back in his chair, stunned. Vic sticks his head in the door.

VICTOR

Is it true?

JOHN

I think so. (sudden realization) Vic, that demo has to be great.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

A dark blue Ferrari cruises along at high speed.

Inside, John drives. Robert rides, checking out all the electronic gadgets.

ROBERT

This is a real pussy wagon!

JOHN

It feels good.

ROBERT

Are you gonna get it?

JOHN

I don't know... No! Of course not. Robert, everything is getting out of hand. My fucking nose started bleeding today at lunch.

ROBERT

Amateur!! So what? You'll get over that.

JOHN

I don't want to get over it. And I want to ask you something. I keep calling Lisa, and she just hangs up on me. You didn't tell her anything, did you?

ROBERT

Man.. She's doing it again. Driving a wedge between friends. John, this day may never come again in your life. Today, right now, you are hot. You are winning. All you're doing is enjoying your success. It's what successful people do. Don't let Lisa spoil it. You need this car. You need to put forward an image that says 'I Am Somebody'. You work for the hottest Internet startup on the West Coast, so celebrate! Hey, let's go show this car to Lisa. Maybe that will cheer her up.

JOHN

OK.

EXT. LISA'S APARTMENT - DAY

John pulls up to Lisa's window and starts to honk the horn. The driver's side faces her window. Robert steps out of the passenger side door.

After a moment of honking, Lisa opens her window.

JOHN

Hey! Check it out!! We just closed on our second round for 30 million dollars!! I was thinking of giving myself an early birthday present.

LISA

Go away, John. I don't ever want to see you again.

Then, she closes the window and disappears.

JOHN

What was that?

ROBERT

I don't know. You'd think she's be a little excited. Hey, I bet I know two chicks at The Door who will get worked up over this car.

John just looks up at her window, perplexed and disappointed.

INT. HOTEL LOBBY, SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

Super: Two months later

Robert and John walk through a luxurious old hotel. A sign is being put up 'Digital Dreams Internet- LAUNCH'.

ROBERT

I'm so nervous I think I'm going to puke. Are you sure it's going to work?

JOHN

We stayed up all night, and checked it. It's going to blow people's socks off.

ROBERT

That's what I like to hear.

They enter...

INT. HOTEL BALLROOM - DAY

The ballroom is all ready for the Digital Dreams presentation. Logos everywhere, decorations, a huge video monitor. People turn and look at them, then start to whisper.

JOHN

This is great.

ROBERT

It better be. We paid out the ass for it. When you get up there, don't choke on me.

JOHN

I'll be fine. Piece of cake.

LATER:

The room is about half full of JOURNALISTS and EXECUTIVES waiting for the presentation.

JOURNALIST 1

You know Adam at PC World? After the launch of Yahoo!, he bought five thousand bucks of stock. That's why today he's not here, he's in the Bahamas.

JOURNALIST 2

Maybe this will be our Yahoo!

Another group.....

JOURNALIST 3

This better be good. I'm sick of these things. My nephew launched a business, and he's only 11 years old.

Music begins. Robert steps up to a mic on stage.

ROBERT

Ladies and Gentleman, the CEO of Digital Dreams Internet, John Elias.

John walks on stage. Loud applause from Digital Dreams staffers who are assembled.

JOHN

Thank you. I'd like to thank each member of the press that is here today. I think you'll like what you're about to see. We are here today to launch a product which we believe is gonna change the face of computing history. I'd like to ask you a question. Who here has all the speed they want? Who's happy with the way things are?

No hands are raised.

JOHN (CONT'D)

Well, today, that is all gonna change. We have developed software which will dramatically enhance your Internet experience. No installation charges, no monthly charges for an expensive high speed connection, just a one-off purchase, and then fast Internet for life. Yes, on-demand high quality video over the Net... for life! Lights please.

The lights go down.

JOHN

This terminal in front of me is connected to the video monitor you can all see.

There is a browser screen visible on the monitor.

JOHN (cont'd)

Please would someone in the audience come up and check that the computer is connected to the Internet via a standard modem.

Giggles, then a bloated, middle-aged, grubby COMPUTER TECH GUY ambles up. He checks the connection, gives thumbs up.

JOHN

We have installed our software onto this PC. Would someone please shout out the name of a website they would like to visit using our software?

JOURNALIST 2

How about
PRODUCTPLACEMENTOPPORTUNITY.com...

JOHN

That sounds good....

He types in 'PRODUCTPLACEMENTOPPORTUNITY' on the browser, and hits ENTER. But, to his horror, NOTHING HAPPENS!

John pauses, deeply flustered. Vic visibly shrivels in place. John hits the ENTER key again and again.

JOHN

This is a Windows error everybody. We can all safely blame Microsoft, right? Let's just reboot...

He resets the computer. Everyone starts chatting, shaking their heads.

Then SMOKE starts billowing forth out of the PC terminal.

JOHN (cont'd)

OK, not a good sign.

A flicker of FLAME reaches out of the computer.

JOHN (cont'd)

Uh, I need some help here!

HOTEL SECURITY runs up with a fire extinguisher and sprays it over the terminal.

There is a mix of laughter and incredulous hooting in the crowd. The lights come back up, and the world's Internet press begin to get up and leave in droves. Robert is long gone from the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

MONTAGE of small press articles in computer and business journals. Headlines like 'Digital Dreams GOES UP IN SMOKE', 'INTERNET ACCESS SO FAST IT'LL HEAT UP YOUR COMPUTER' and 'NEW INTERNET COMPANY FAILS TO IMPRESS'.

Visuals of CNN Business Minute.

BUSINESS ANCHOR

In San Francisco, newcomer Digital Dreams Internet was all set to demonstrate it's high-speed Internet access software, when its plans went up in smoke...literally.

Cut to video of John coughing amidst the smoke. He looks like a rank amateur.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - NIGHT

John enters hits the answering machine button and flops down on his sofa, lights up a smoke. As the messages play, the news get worse and worse.

ANSWERING MACHINE MESSAGES

John, this is your father. Please call me as soon as you get this message. I saw you on TV. We're really worried. (Beep) This is Tom Walker. Call me, shithead. I'm watching TV, and I see my money going up in smoke. Call me, you little asswipe. (Beep) Hey (Robert) meet me tomorrow at the links. We have to talk. Out.

John listens, his face a mask.

EXT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John stands at her door. He knocks again, loud. Her NEIGHBOR is coming out of her house, sees John.

NEIGHBOR

She's out of town.

JOHN

Where did she go?

NEIGHBOR

Her band got signed and she's out on tour. Isn't that great? She was so happy.

John tries to smile, he is disappointed that he didn't get to share her success.

EXT. THE DOOR - NIGHT

John arrives in his Ferrari, steps out, but is stopped from going in by the BOUNCER.

JOHN

I was just here two nights ago. Don't you remember me?

BOUNCER

Members only, sir.

JOHN

You let me in last time.

BOUNCER

You were with a member.

JOHN

Fine, whatever. I need to get a message to Liz. Could you do that, please?

BOUNCER

I can't do that, sir.

JOHN

Why not?

BOUNCER

Members only.

John loses his temper. He takes out a huge wad of cash.

JOHN

Here. Is this what you need? You think I'm not good enough to go in here?

BOUNCER

Put your money away, sir.

JOHN

Just get Liz to come out here. She and I are dating....

John almost says dating, but realizes the absurdity of that statement. He sees the Bouncer smirking at him.

BOUNCER

You and Liz are what, sir?

John snaps and takes a swing at the huge Bouncer. His blow glances off the man's chin, and the Bouncer counters with a forearm to John's nose that sends him sprawling. His cash starts to blow down the sidewalk.

JOHN

OK. OK, I deserved that.

Just then, Liz steps out of the club on the arm of a MAN. She sees him, trying to gather his money, just as he sees her. Before he can form words to speak to her, she turns her head away and starts to coo at the Man she is with.

John stops gathering money. He dabs at the blood trickling down his nose.

JOHN (cont'd)

Can I have my car, please?

BOUNCER

It's coming around, sir.

Liz and the Man are waiting just a few feet away for their car as well. John watches as she leans over and kisses him on the cheek, ever so lightly.

EXT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

John arrives, looks up at the darkened windows of Lisa's apartment. How he misses her! He leans back and goes to sleep.

EXT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

John tees up. The Two Caddies are close by, somehow sense his agitation. He hits the ball really hard, aggressively, and it flies into the rough.

CADDY 1

Golf teaches that we all have handicaps and that hardly anybody knows what they really are.

Robert arrives, cool as a cucumber.

ROBERT

Hey. Sorry I'm late. What happened to your nose?

JOHN

Long story. I had the worst night of my life last night. Where were you?

ROBERT

Hiding. It's a new day. Things are looking up. I just had lunch with Anna, and she says that when you're new, any publicity is good publicity. Everyone knows Digital Dreams now. Sets us up for a comeback of monumental proportions!

JOHN

That is such bullshit. We blew it. My life is going down the drain.

ROBERT

We've just got to move on. Play through, right Caddy-San?

The Caddies are not amused. Robert hits a clear, crisp shot all the way down the fairway.

ROBERT (cont'd)

I still got it!

LATER:

They walk, the Caddies behind them.

ROBERT

We still need to talk.

JOHN

Shoot.

ROBERT

I need to be co-CEO with you.

John is poker faced. Even the Caddies know this is not a good idea, but they say nothing.

ROBERT (cont'd)

You should focus on the creative stuff and leave the business to me. Vic and Kiko obviously needed more guidance from you the past few months. You're the master. Our whole company is based on your designs. If you had been in there more, working with them, maybe things would have been different. COMDEX is in a month. We need to commit ourselves to a relaunch of the product at that convention. It's our last

and best chance with this thing. I would like to take control of our strategies and action until then. You need to go back to what you know best.

John's mind is racing. Does he trust Robert?

JOHN

We have to focus, both of us. No more drugs, no more nothing. Both of us.

ROBERT

I couldn't agree more. Come on, man. Wipe that hang dog look off your face. We're not out of the game yet. Just lay back and watch Bobby J quarterback this thing on home. Cool?

John's brow furrows as he thinks through this next move.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS PROGRAMMING LAB - DAY

John paces back and forth as Vic and Kiko work at their screens. He has a feverish look about him, clearly in his element again, and thinking on the highest level.

KIKO

I don't see how in the world this is going to work.

JOHN

It'll work. I think.

VICTOR

OK, I'm locked and loaded. Ready?

John nods, starts chewing a finger nail.

KIKO

Let her rip.

Vic starts the program, and the same IronGem clip from before comes up on Kiko's screen, then after a split second, on Vic's. The play is smooth, clean, and clear.

VICTOR

10 seconds.

John watches Lisa on stage, singing, swaying, clearly loving what she is doing. She does a particularly sexy hip move.

VICTOR (cont'd)
That's our girl. 20 seconds.

But then, the image starts to jump, and there is another systems crash. Victor lays his head on his desk.

JOHN
Damn it!

KIKO
Hey, that was 20 seconds. At that rez, it's the best we've ever done.

JOHN
I got to take a break.

EXT. HALLWAYS - DAY

John comes down the hall to Robert's office, sees him entering with some BOARD MEMBERS. He looks right passed John, does not attempt to introduce him. As John walks away, he hears a board member speak.

BOARD MEMBER
When did you take over as CEO?

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS PROGRAMMING LAB - DAY

John comes back in, flops down in a chair.

KIKO
There you are. Call on one.

JOHN
Hello. Hey, mom...
(becomes more anxious)
Is it bad?... Okay. I'll get on the first flight out. See you soon.

He gets up and leaves in a hurry.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

John sits in the waiting room, numb. His mother arrives.

JOHN

How is he?

LILY

Finally asleep. Thank God. He doesn't ever stop thinking about his cases as long as he's awake.

JOHN

Mom, it wasn't...

LILY

What?

JOHN

It wasn't seeing me on TV that did it, was it?

LILY

Johnny, of course not. He was in court, where he loves to be. Oh, he wants you to do something for him. Go to his office and get some faxes from Bill. I tried to get him to wait, but he says it's very important.

JOHN

OK. Mom...

LILY

Don't worry. He's doing fine.

But John is worried...

INT. ELIAS AND CLARK LAW OFFICES - DAY

John enters the lobby of his father's law offices. He sees a reception desk, but no receptionist. It is strangely quiet as well.

Suddenly, the phone starts ringing. John looks into a hallway, expecting to see a receptionist come running out of the bathroom. But, nothing. He crosses behind the reception desk and reaches to answer it, when he hears someone (Bill Clark) deep into the offices pick up.

BILL

Elias and Clark. Oh, hey, yeah, thanks for getting back to me....

John heads down the hallway towards the sound of the voice.

INT. BILL CLARK'S OFFICE - DAY

John passes other empty, abandoned offices until he reaches BILL CLARK's office. Bill is a huge man, jocular, with a strong Southern accent. He motions for John to enter.

BILL

(on phone)

We're very happy with that. I'll tell my partners right away, and we'll get back to you. Thank you for calling. (hangs up) John Elias! Look at you! Come here!

Bill crosses from behind his desk and gives John a hug bear hug.

BILL (cont'd)

How in the hell are you, boy? Look at you! Just as ugly as your father. Good to see a familiar face around here.

JOHN

I imagine it's good to see any face around here.

BILL

You don't know the half of it, believe me. Look at that tan. Damn, I'm jealous. Probably got those California girls all over you, even with that mug. Whew! Sit down. Let me get you a cold one.

They sit. Bill reaches into a cooler behind him and pulls out a cold beer, and another for John, who takes it. This appears to be a familiar routine in this office.

JOHN

Still having beer for lunch, I see.

BILL (cont'd)

Breakfast and lunch of champions. So, how's your father today?

JOHN

He's good, I think. He was sleeping.

BILL

What does your mother say?

JOHN

The doctor's want him to stay for several more days. For tests.

BILL

Oh. Ah. It's just that we're at a critical stage right now with this case.

JOHN

Yeah, what is this case? And where is everyone? What happened to Janine and Stacy and everyone else?

BILL

We had to let them go. Months ago. This case has cleaned us out. We couldn't pay anyone anymore. Now it's just like we began. Just the two of us.

JOHN

What is it?

Bill points to a row of photos of several Arab men that are posted on the wall behind him.

BILL

All these men are Iraqi physics students that Saddam has on death row. They tried to defect to the French intelligence service last year, but got caught. The Iraqi government wants to trade them for permanent lifting of the sanctions, the US government says no, the French have walked away, the UN (makes dismissive gesture), so we're trying to broker a deal. That's it in a nutshell.

John looks at the line of smiling faces. Some are even younger than himself. Here is what the real world must deal with. Here are people with real problems.

JOHN

Wow. How did you get involved in this?

BILL

Your Dad went to Iraqi and met with them. He got to the prison, got in, and said 'I

want to represent you', and it was a done deal. And here we are.

JOHN

Are they going to go free?

BILL

(shrugs)

Don't know. Enough about that. Tell me about school. You know, your father watches Stanford football games now? Can you believe that? He has them on in his office on Saturdays. Swear to God.

JOHN

He hates football.

BILL

I know! Isn't that funny? He hates it. But he loves Stanford!

EXT. WALL STREET - DAY

It is 4 PM, and the market has just closed. John, folder under one arm, stands at the entrance to Wall Street and watches the traders pour off the floor of the NYSE. Here is the supreme alter of the cult of capital. SLO MO - the traders exit, some grim, some laughing, mostly men, each worn down by the frenzy of the capital marketplace.

INT. HOSPITAL - NIGHT

John steps off the elevator at the hospital, but there are no nurse at the station. He walks towards his father's room.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

John enters, and again sees Bernard with this eyes closed. He quietly pulls up a chair and sits at his father's side. As if through some telepathy, Bernard opens his eyes.

BERNARD

Did you get my faxes?

JOHN

I got them. Their right here.

BERNARD

Put them there. I'll look at them in the morning.

John puts the folder on the night stand.

JOHN

I guess you saw me on TV.

BERNARD

(Smiles) Best show I've seen on TV in a long time. Don't worry. Just stick with it. People forget stuff like that after a while.

JOHN

I just want you to know that I'm trying to do everything you taught me. I'm trying to do something good, not just make a pile of money.

BERNARD

Making money can be a pretty good thing, kid. You saw my office?

John nods.

BERNARD (cont'd)

We had to let everyone go. We have no other cases. Bill has hung in there, but he has kids to put through college. When this case is over, I have to start at the beginning again.

JOHN

But... You've done great things.

BERNARD

I did what I could. But after 30 years of practice, I thought I'd have more. There won't be much to pass down. Sorry.

JOHN

I don't care about that. Just get better.

BERNARD

I'll be fine. (joking) Maybe the rabbi was right, and I'll have some riches in heaven!

JOHN

If you get there.

BERNARD

Just remember who you are and where you come from, and don't worry about your old man.

John takes his father's hand and lays his head on the edge of the bed.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES - DAY

Robert stands with TREY STEVENS, an interior decorator. Victor eyes them from a few feet away, sips a Pepsi.

TREY

It is going to look absolutely fabulous. Cool shades of grey and turquoise blue, tinted with silver, and shrouded in aluminium. Cool, calm and confident, evocative of technology, it will speak of the new millennium in visual prose.

ROBERT

(clueless as to what Trey said)
Sounds great!

VICTOR

What are you doing? Get this fashion victim out of here.

ROBERT

Trey, I'll be with you in a minute.

Leads Vic a few paces away.

ROBERT (cont'd)

(low key anger)
You're out of line.

VICTOR

No, you're out of line. You wait until John is away, then you start changing everything. It's bullshit. A total power play, and you know it.

ROBERT

I'm going to do whatever is necessary to take our company to a new level. Now step back.

VICTOR

What the hell does wasting money on this.... this...

ROBERT

What? Faggot? Is that what you were going to say, Vic?

VICTOR

Of course not.

ROBERT

If we want to be big time, we have to look big time. Now get back to work. We need a demo that doesn't go up in flames. Can you handle that?

Lots of people in the office have witnessed this exchange. Robert smiles.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Everything's cool. Let's just all do our jobs, OK?

INT. SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT - DAY

John gets off the plane. He has shaved and gotten a new short haircut. He looks good, and determined.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

John walks down to baggage claim, fast, cell phone to his ear.

JOHN

What are you talking about? He wouldn't do all of that without my permission.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS PROGRAMMING LAB - DAY

Several construction workers are transforming the place.

VIC

You won't believe what he's been up to. You need to get here fast.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES, FRONT DESK - DAY

TREY directs WORKMEN - the offices are almost completely remodelled - very cold, clinical, and modern. John enters, and hardly knows where he is standing.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - DAY

John bursts in to Robert's office, which has been transformed into a modern art nightmare. Robert works at his computer. Not only have the offices been transformed, but Robert as well. The mask of friendship is completely removed.

JOHN

What were you thinking, man?

ROBERT

Sit down. There has been a little change of plans. We're not going to COMDEX. Instead, we're gonna be doing personalized demos for top journalists, right here in our offices. So, we did a little remodeling.

JOHN

A little? How much did this cost?

ROBERT

It doesn't matter. Now, we look like the world headquarters of an international Internet company. Trey, our designer, did Anna's offices too.

JOHN

So she's behind this.

ROBERT

It was my decision! Mine!

JOHN

It wasn't your decision to make.

ROBERT

(speaks slowly, as if to a child)
We needed to redecorate because we need the good press so we can go ahead and list this company on the NASDAQ. It's the only way.

Now go supervise those idiot friends of yours.

JOHN

Whoa. Back up. We're not listing any time soon.

ROBERT

Oh, yes we are. We're going to build up unbelievable hype, list this puppy and watch our stock go sky-high. Then it's boo yaa! Hello big money! We need to do it fast, too, while we still can.

JOHN

Robert, I've told you before. That's not my vision for this company.

ROBERT

Fuck your vision.

John is stunned.

ROBERT

That's right; fuck your vision. We are going to go public as fast as we can. Right or wrong it's The Way. If we don't get out soon, we'll never get out. Listing is a perfectly viable exit strategy.

JOHN

Who said anything about an exit strategy? I want a company. That's why I started it. That's why I hired you. We're in this for the long haul.

ROBERT

You're so naive! We need cash, douche bag. Listing is the way to get it. What part of that don't you understand?

John is utterly flabbergasted.

JOHN

Robert... This is me, remember? We're friends.

ROBERT

Oh, we're friends now that you want something from me. But what about way back when, back when you started fucking my girlfriend?

JOHN

That's ancient history now. I haven't even talked to her in weeks.

ROBERT

Yeah, and I can assure you, you won't talk to her again. Not now.

Robert picks up a remote on his desk and hits play. On the TV screen behind him, a tape starts to play. John is getting blown by Liz.

ROBERT (cont'd)

I emailed this to her, from your computer. You really should change your password, 'Einstein'.

John is destroyed, knowing what pain he has caused Lisa.

JOHN

Why are you doing this?

ROBERT

That's a complicated question. Let's just say that the Jennings' have long memories and hard hearts. John, don't interfere with my plans for this company. Just do what you do best and let the adults run the show. You'll end up rich. Now go see your new office. I hired you an assistant, thought it might be a nice surprise.

John is so angry, he can't speak. He stands and walks out like a zombie.

INT. OUTSIDE JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John tries to figure out which door is to his office now that everything has changed. There is a red hot supermodel type at a cube outside his door. This is Claire.

CLAIRE

Hello! Are you Mr. Elias?

JOHN

Yes. Who are you?

CLAIRE

I'm your new assistant, Claire. I've laid out fresh fruit and coffee for you. Can I get you anything else?

John enters his office.

INT. JOHN'S OFFICE - DAY

John's office has been transformed into a giant mish mash of faux opulence. It's a sort of 'Arabian Nights' meets 'Cats'. He has a new mahogany desk with a giant leather swivel chair.

JOHN

Oh-my-god.

INT. JOHN'S NEW OFFICE - DAY

John looks around his new desk, but he can't find anything.

JOHN

Hey, uh.. Claire!

Claire appears instantly.

CLAIRE

Yes, Mr. Elias?

JOHN

I can't find anything in here anymore. I need to call the board members today, but my list is missing.

CLAIRE

Oh, I have it. Why don't you let me place the calls from now on?

JOHN

Uh, OK. Let's start with Anna Simmons then.

CLAIRE

Sounds great! You look very nice in that suit, by the way.

JOHN

Thanks.

Claire leaves.

INT. CLAIRE'S DESK - DAY

Claire sits at her desk and dials a number. Robert picks up.

ROBERT (O.C.)

Yeah.

CLAIRE

(hushed tone)

He's calling the board, starting with Anna.

ROBERT

I fucking knew it. Great. Call me when he gets off with her. You're the best.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - DAY

Robert is on the phone.

MARCIE (O.C.)

Anna Simmon's office.

ROBERT

Hi, Marcie, you little sexpot! Bob Jennings for Anna.

Marcie doesn't say anything, just puts him on hold.

INT. ANNA SIMMONS' OFFICE - DAY

She picks up.

INTERCUT WITH ROBERT

ANNA

Speak.

ROBERT

So, what did he say?

ANNA

What do you think? He wants to keep the company private until we're all farting dust clouds. He's calling the board for their support.

ROBERT

Will he get it?

ANNA

Probably not. But he's a persuasive little fucker, and I don't trust him. We need to lock this thing up in a way he can't jerk us around.

ROBERT

That's going to be hard. We need a majority vote, and I don't see how we're going to get it.

ANNA

Because you're not using your pretty head. Look, the board controls 21 percent of the company, I have 5, you have 15. That's 41 percent. Let's assume we can hold that. John has 25 percent, and Tom Walker has 25. Walker is a wild card, so let's assume he would vote with John. That leaves 9 percent outstanding. Those votes are the swing, and we have to control them.

Cut to Robert and stay on him as Anna explains the rest of her plans.

ROBERT

Um Hmmm.

INT. JOHN'S NEW OFFICE - DAY

John is on the phone when he hears yelling. He gets up to investigate.

INT. DIGITAL DREAMS PROGRAMMING LAB - NIGHT

Vic and Robert are nose to nose, near to coming to blows.

VIC

This is not your area! I've asked you nice, and now I'm pissed. Get out of this lab, dick head!

ROBERT

Didn't you hear me? You're fired. Both of you. Now get out.

John runs in.

JOHN
What's going on here?

VIC
He thinks he can fire us!

ROBERT
I can. I'll go get the memo that makes me
co-CEO and show it to you if you like.

Vic looks to John, sees him blink.

ROBERT (cont'd)
The first showing is in ten days. I keep
coming in here, and I keep seeing people
fooling around, playing games, drinking
lattes, and not working. I'm going to get
some real talent in here. So get out.

JOHN
It takes both of us to fire anyone.

VIC
You know what, John? I'm tired of this
shit. This company started as a group of
friends trying to do something fun and
exciting, now it's something else.

ROBERT
Grow up, asshole. If it was fun, they
wouldn't call it work.

VIC
I quit. I'm so out of here. Are you coming,
Kiko?

Kiko betrays a flicker of emotion, and then gets up to join Vic.

JOHN
Wait. Don't go. Robert, get out of here.

ROBERT
Can't do that. You just don't seem to be
getting the work out of these people, and
I'm nervous as hell about it. If they don't
go, I go.

JOHN
You're bluffing.

ROBERT
Oh, I'll go, and I'll vote my 15% with the board every time. You can keep these losers and their 9%.

VIC
Wait a minute. We have 12 1/2% a piece. What's he talking about?

John is trapped. He has to answer truthfully.

JOHN
You had to be cut back to 4 1/2 a piece when we brought on the new board. It was the only way.

VIC
You asshole!!

KIKO
Were you ever going to tell us?

JOHN
Yes, but...

VIC
Just fuck off. We're out of here.

He and Kiko exit. Robert nearly smiles, not quite. John understands his plan now.

JOHN
It won't work. You will not take this company from me!

He storms out.

EXT. FREEWAY TO SAN FRANCISCO - DAY

John cruises up the 405, the roof of his car off, his hair blowing in the wind.

EXT. TOM WALKER'S RANCHHOUSE, PETALUMA - DAY

Four of Tom's COWBOYS are sitting around a stump, playing cards. John arrives, slides to a stop, kicking up a cloud of dust that settles on the Cowboys. They are not pleased.

JOHN

I need to see Tom Walker.

COWBOY 1

He ain't here.

JOHN

Well, can you reach him? It's an emergency.
Tell him it's John Elias.

One folds his hand and heads inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM, RANCH HOUSE - DAY

John scuffs back and forth across the wood floor of a grand old living room. The walls are lined with stuffed animal heads and furs. A grandfather clock ticks away in the corner.

John hears a door open and close somewhere else in the house. Then, Tom Walker enters.

TOM WALKER

What do you want, boy? I'm busy.

JOHN

I'm sorry for coming here without calling,
but I need to talk to you about the company.
There's an important vote coming up, and
I need your support.

TOM WALKER

Did you lose my money?

JOHN

No! It's not that, believe me. It's gone
way beyond just making money on your
investment. That's why I came here.

As John talks, Tom crosses to a huge leather couch and sits.

JOHN (cont'd)

There are elements in the company that want
to take it public right away. The software
is nowhere near ready for that. We don't
need that kind of pressure.

As John speaks, Tom pulls a snub nosed pistol from his jacket and sets it on the coffee table in front of him. He shoots a glare at John that causes John to pause.

TOM WALKER

Go on.

JOHN

That's basically it. They want to cash out.
We're not ready.

Tom has fished around in an ashtray on the coffee table and found a half smoked cigar. He puts it between his teeth and chomps down. He picks up the pistol and points it at John.

TOM WALKER

Now, the problem is, as you see it, that they want to make a pile of money and you want me to help you stop them. Is that what you're telling me, you little shit?

John holds his breath. The tension hangs in the air for an interminable moment. Tom closes his eyes, then dramatically brings the pistol to his cigar and pulls the trigger. A bright flame shoots out of the barrel, since his pistol is a cigar lighter.

John lets out a huge breath of air and plops down in a chair.

JOHN

That wasn't funny.

TOM WALKER

(laughing)

Yes it was. You should have seen your face!

Tom makes a frightened face.

TOM WALKER (cont'd)

Th th they want to tttttttake the co co
company pu public ttttttto ssssoon!

Tom starts to laugh even harder.

JOHN

For God's sake... You scared the shit out
of me! This is serious. I need your help!

TOM WALKER

Let me ask you something. Look around here.
What do see?

JOHN

What do you mean?

TOM WALKER

I mean look around this room and tell me
what you see.

JOHN

I see a couch, I see a fake pistol, I see
some chairs, some animals heads.. What?

TOM WALKER (cont'd)

Think! Tom Walker, big investor. What
don't you see in his house?

JOHN

A computer.

TOM WALKER

Bingo! Not a one of the things in the whole
damn house. Want to know why?

Tom starts laughing again.

TOM WALKER (cont'd)

Because I don't know the first thing about
them! Never used one in my life! Hate the
damn things!

JOHN

But.. You invest in these companies but you
don't know anything about them? That's
impossible.

TOM WALKER

Of course it's possible. Why would a man
invest money in companies he knew nothing
about?

Now John is getting it.

JOHN

Because it's not his money.

TOM WALKER

Bingo again.

JOHN

Then who is it? Who owns 25 percent of my company?

Tom grabs up a scrap of paper from the cluttered table and scribbles an address on it.

TOM WALKER

Here, smart guy. Go meet your investor.

John takes the paper and is out the door.

EXT. CAR - DAY

John speeds along in his car, flipping through the pages of his Thomas Guide as he drives.

EXT. HILLS OF BERKELEY - DAY

John's Ferrari creeps through a pleasant neighborhood full of houses overlooking the bay. He searches the addresses on the curb.

Finally, he finds the right one and stops the car. He is looking up at a beautiful, but modest home, immaculately landscaped and detailed. He looks at the paper again, double checks. This is it.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

John stands at the front door wondering who will answer. He screws up his nerve, reaches out, and knocks.

Moments tick by as he waits. In the window by the door, he sees a figure behind the lace curtains. Whoever it is, they have seen him, but he or she is not moving to answer the door. John knocks again.

JOHN

Hey, I see you in there. Open the door.

After another moment, the door knob turns... the door cracks open... further... further... and there stands Ben Fisher.

John's jaw drops.

JOHN (cont'd)

You. You were the angel investor.

BEN

Yep.

JOHN

I... I don't know if I should thank you or punch your lights out.

BEN

Well, come in to think about it.

Ben walks away, leaving the door open.

EXT. BEN'S GARDEN - DAY

Ben crosses to his sheers and starts trimming his roses. John enters and marvels at the intense detail of Ben's creation. John plops down in a wicker chair.

JOHN

I'm tired.

BEN

I bet you are.

JOHN

So is Tom Walker your bag man, or what?

BEN

He's my cousin, actually.

JOHN

And a front for your investments.

BEN

A front? You make it sound so sinister. We have a corporation together, he is the face, I am the mind. It's that simple.

JOHN

But nobody knows. You invest in secret.

BEN

It's not a secret. Most of the time, I meet with people, if I like their ideas, I instruct Tom to invest.

JOHN

Why didn't you tell me?

BEN

Oh... I guess not telling you appealed to the mischief maker in me. Beside, you didn't want to listen to anything I had to say. You were too proud. You're gifted, that's clear. You've got intellect to burn, but it's a handicap to you. I thought I might stay out of the way so you could learn a thing or two by yourself.

Ben gathers up some roses, comes to the chair beside John, and sits. He pours two glasses of lemonade.

BEN (cont'd)

Besides, if you had lost it all, I would have lived. I've been rich a long time. I tend to not worry so much. Investing is like planting a garden to me. You put the seeds out there, and see what grows up.

JOHN

So I was an experiment to you?

BEN (CONT'D)

If you choose to see it that way, sure. What I've been really hoping is you make a real success of your company, turn it into something that endures. And that isn't a function of the idea behind it. It's the heart. It's the person, the leader. Don't get me wrong, you've got a great idea. But I didn't invest in just an idea. I invested in you.

Ben hands John his lemonade.

BEN (cont'd)

So here's to ya.

Ben takes a long drink, savoring a simple pleasure.

JOHN

Things are messed up. Anna Simmons wants to go public now. We aren't ready.

BEN

Anna. What a gal. I had a thing with her once.

JOHN

So will you vote your shares with me to stop this?

BEN

Sure. But it won't be enough. You've got to find one more board member to switch sides. You've got to change one mind, just one.

JOHN

That won't be easy. Anna has them all convinced we'll be the Next Big Thing.

BEN

So, sell them on a better vision. That's your job. If you can't convince a few board members that you know a better way, you aren't ready to lead a whole company, my friend.

Just then, a beautiful WOMAN comes out wearing a bathrobe. She is much younger than Ben.

WOMAN

Honey, are you hungry? I'm about to start dinner.

BEN

Yeah, I'll be right in.

The woman smiles seductively at John, winks, and returns inside.

BEN

That's my housekeeper.

JOHN

Oh, you're housekeeper calls you honey, how sweet. Does she clean well?

Ben shrugs.

JOHN (cont'd)

Hey, I'm not judging you. Look, any woman that will actually cook...

Ben doesn't find this funny.

BEN
You got a girl?

JOHN
I did. I lost her, though.

BEN
What happened?

JOHN
I fucked a high end call girl.

BEN
Ouch.

JOHN
On video tape.

BEN
Wow. When you make a mistake, you do it up right. Well, I'll tell you a little secret. Money is a lot more fun to have when you have someone you love to spend it with.

John can see that this is a well of pain for Ben that runs deep.

BEN (cont'd)
Get the company back, John. It could be a great thing.

Their eyes meet, and the connection is strong....

INT. LIMOUSINE - DAY

We're back to the opening scenes. From a different angle - Anna closes her file with a faint grin on her face. She talks on her phone to Robert.

EXT. DIGITAL DREAMS OFFICES - DAY

Robert up on the roof, as in opening. He has his cell out, speaking with Anna.

ANNA (O.C.)
I'm going to bring up another piece of business today, so be ready.

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

BOARD MEMBERS are gathering at the conference table, each greeting each other. Robert has his arm around Anna's shoulder, the two chat, smiling.

INT. HALLWAYS - DAY

John comes down the hall, headed for the conference room. This is the same shot from at the opening sequence. We push in as John closes the conference room door just as before.

INT. BOARDROOM - DAY

But now, we see the meeting we missed before. John nods a stiff nod to everyone. People takes their seats and grow quiet.

JOHN

I hereby call this meeting to order. Since I know, and you know, why we're here, let's cut to the chase. Anna?

Anna is taken aback by his bluntness, but recovers quickly. She responds with a bluntness of her own.

ANNA

I move that we take this company public. Everyone knows what that means. I call for a vote of the full board, today. Now.

JOHN

Before we vote, I'd like to say a few words.

John stands to his full measure.

JOHN

What are we here for? Is it to make a profit? Of course. I want to make a profit. But is that the be all and end all of this company? It never was before. I started this thing, and it wasn't what motivated me. Profits can make a company last, but they aren't what makes it work. People make it work. Ideas make a company work. A company is not just where you make your money. It's where you make your friends. It's where you make your memories of your work life. A company has a purpose beyond

just making money. It's how we make a living. A living.

To John's surprise, Ben and Tom Walker enter the board room and take seats along the wall. The Board is in a titter about their presence. John makes eye contact with Ben, and continues.

JOHN

In the so-called New Economy, is any consideration for things beyond making a windfall profit an inefficiency that has to be stripped out? Is that what the Internet is about? Does Internet time have no time for building something that will last? That has value? That has purpose? If that's the case, then it's a sham. It won't make people's lives better. It won't make anyone happy, least of all the people in this room. It won't last, and as a consequence, it won't even make as much money. We have no business going public right now. We've got a few lines of code, some good ideas, and some damn good people. That, over time, will make something great. Let's build a quality company, not a casino. I'm voting against this listing. I need you to join me.

John sits. Surprisingly, Anna stands to speak. First, she nods to Ben.

ANNA

Ben Fisher, how nice to see you.

BEN

Likewise.

ANNA

Ben and I go way back. Many companies, many board meetings. So he knows that I don't mind being the bad guy. Hey, I was young once. And it was fun. It's fun to get one's righteous anger stirred up. It's fun to believe in things with such passion. But people's passions are generally unorganized, and they usually don't make money. Whether John wants to admit it or not, that is why we're here. It's the only

reason we're here. Businesses exist solely to maximize shareholder value. I know that, and you know that. It's not fun to say, no one will give you an award for saying it, you won't go down in history, it's not as popular as 'I Have A Dream', but, it's the truth. When people organize around making money, the tracks get greased, people are are more pliant, and things gets done. And that, friends, is good. You speak of quality, John. Quality is what this is about; the quality of our earnings. You speak of purpose? Making money is our purpose here. And if we have a way to make more money, such as listing this company, we not only have the right, we have the obligation to do so. We're not here to 'change the rules', we're here to make money the old fashioned way. If John wanted to run this company as a charity, he shouldn't have accepted any outside investment. But he did, and now it's showtime.

From the reactions around the table, we can see that this is their language. Even Ben can see that John, the young bull, has been overwhelmed by Anna, the old bull. Robert sees this too, and can barely contain himself.

JOHN

Thank you. Unless anyone has anything further to say, we'll vote. All opposed to listing of this company, please raise your hand.

John raises is hand. Ben nudges Tom Walker, who looks bored with the entire proceeding. Tom raises his hand. John looks into the eyes of the other board members, waiting for just one hand to go up. But after a long moment, he gives up.

JOHN (cont'd)

All in favor?

Around the table, every arm shoots up. The board has voted unanimously to list the company.

JOHN (cont'd)

(softly)

It's a tie. As per the by-laws of the company, a tie vote goes in favor of the board. So, looks like we'll list.

John hangs his head, avoiding Ben's eyes, while the other board members exhale and smile. Some reach over and shake hands.

ROBERT

Anna has requested time for one further item of business she'd like to take care of.

John looks up at Robert, quizzically, and then at Anna at the other end of the table.

ANNA

Obviously, there is a real disagreement over where this company is headed. I would like to suggest that there are irreconcilable differences between John Elias and the board. I propose the board vote to remove any executive power that John Elias has, and transfer such power to Robert Jennings, who has been acting CEO for the past few weeks anyway. Let's make it official.

John gulps. Time stands still for him.

JOHN

There is a proposal to remove me as CEO, replace me with Robert Jennings. All in favor?

The hands shoot up, this time with less hesitation. There is an interminable moment as John looks around the room.

INT. HALLWAYS - DAY

BAM! John bursts from the conference room. We are now back to the scenes in the beginning, but we see the action from a different perspective, but literary and figuratively.

John stalks down the hallway. His company has been stolen from him.

Robert appears at the conference room door.

ROBERT

John, come on! Come back.

Not a chance. Robert comes chasing down the hall after John until he catches up.

ROBERT (cont'd)

It had to be this way. You had to have known.

John turns on Robert.

JOHN

You screwed me. I brought you in, and you screwed me.

John continues on.

ROBERT

Don't be a sore loser, John.

John turns and lunges at Robert. Fists swing. John connects on a couple of hard punches, but Robert connects as well. When John and Robert are separated, John departs.

Ben arrives at the door and stands beside Anna. Both watch the melee, and see John leave.

BEN

Business as usual, huh, Anna?

ANNA

Don't start with me. When he gets rich, he'll come knocking on my door to thank me. They all do.

Ben just smiles his bemused, twinkling smile.

BEN

Maybe. But maybe not.

Ben and Tom go along their way.

QUOTE ON BLACK SCREEN - 'Making a living is not as important as making a life' - Tony Walt

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Back to John is his Ferrari, looking at his cut face.

JOHN

Aw, shit!

MONTAGE of shots recalling the opening:

John speeds down the freeway...

Crosses the border...

Drives through the streets of TJ...

Buys the Tequila...

Hits the police car...

The chase is on...

Looses control of his \$60,000 Ferrari and crashes.

FADE OUT.

INT. MEXICAN JAIL - DAY

John sits in a dingy, dank, filthy Mexican prison. Folks, it doesn't get any worse than this. He hears other prisoners calling out in Spanish.

A GUARD comes to his cell and yells at him.

GUARD

(in Spanish)

Get up!

John clues in, and stands. The Guard opens the door and roughly pulls him out.

INT. POLICE OFFICES - DAY

John is brought into the office of a MEXICAN POLICE OFFICIAL. He is wearing a suit, very professional looking.

OFFICIAL

You're John Elias?

JOHN

Yes.

The official looks down at some paperwork.

OFFICIAL

You're in a lot of trouble. Do you know that?

John nods.

JOHN
I'm sorry. I had... well, a really bad day.

OFFICIAL
It could get worse.

John hangs his head. Visions of a Mexican labor camp dance behind his eyes.

OFFICIAL
That's a very nice car you have. Ferrari.
Does it drive well?

John lifts his head. A glimmer of hope appears.

JOHN
Like a dream, my friend.

EXT. JAIL - EVENING

And like that, John is released from jail, less one Ferrari. He takes a deep breath, and starts walking towards the beach.

EXT. TIJUANA - NIGHT

John walks the streets of TJ. He stops at a little bodega that sells clothes and goes in. Moments later, he comes back out in comfortable local clothes.

John strolls the boulevards in his new peasant clothes. He hears happy music, and finds pleasure in simply blending in, being a part of the mass. For the first time in a while, he looks happy and content. As he walks, some of the weight lifts off of his shoulders....

INT. MOTEL - MORNING

John wakes in a cheap motel room. It is quiet for the first time in a long time. He hears the surf breaking outside.

EXT. SEAWALL - DAY

John walks along an old seawall, looking at the surf. He spots an elderly FISHERMAN who has several lines out.

JOHN

Buenos dias.

The Fisherman glances at him, pegs him for what he is.

FISHERMAN

Good morning.

John smiles, climbs up on the seawall and sits. The Fisherman has a tiny bag of crackers next to him. He takes one out and eats it. He sees John looking at him.

FISHERMAN

You want one?

JOHN

No, that's OK.

FISHERMAN

It's OK, take one.

JOHN

Great, thanks. So is this what you do all day long?

FISHERMAN

Not every day, no. But most days. I have a wife in Mexico City, and when I go there, I work.

There's a tug on his line, and reels a fish in, drops it in his bucket. John looks in his bucket and sees several fish.

FISHERMAN (cont'd)

Bueno.

JOHN

You should get some nets.

FISHERMAN

Why?

JOHN

Well, you can catch more fish....

FISHERMAN

I don't need more fish.

JOHN

You could sell the extra ones, buy a boat.

FISHERMAN

And what, catch even more fish?

JOHN

Sure.

FISHERMAN

Maybe I could get a fleet of fishing boats, sailing all over the world, and have employees catch fish for me.

JOHN

Sure, I guess you could.

FISHERMAN

What would I do then?

A pause...

JOHN

You could lie on the beach all day, catching fish, huh?

The Fisherman smiles. Then another line starts to tug.

FISHERMAN

Come up here. This one is for you.

John hops up and takes the line and starts to reel it in. He is like a kid, and for the first time in a long time, just having some fun.

EXT. SAN YSIDRO - DAY

John is at a pay phone at the border crossing.

INT. APARTMENT - DAY

Victor and Kiko are watching TV when they hear the answering machine click on. Vic mutes the TV so they can hear.

INTERCUT WITH JOHN:

JOHN

Hey, guys if you're there, pick up. Are you there? Come on, it's important.

Vic looks at Kiko, but neither of them move to pick up the phone.

JOHN (cont'd)

Look, I'm at the border in San Ysidro, and I don't have a ride. I lost my car.. It's a long story. You'll think it's funny, I'm sure. I was wondering if you could come pick me up. I know... you certainly don't owe me anything, but I was hoping we could talk.

Vic and Kiko both wait for the other to move to get the phone.

JOHN (cont'd)

Hmmm. Well, I guess you aren't in. I'm going to wait here for a few hours, if you get this message, come on down. I'm really sorry about what happened, and I think I know a way we can get the company back, on our terms. OK, guys. I'll just wait here for a while. Bye.

John hangs up. Kiko stares at Vic.

VICTOR

What? Let the guy wait.

Vic turns the volume back up on the TV. After a moment, the phone starts to ring again. Kiko looks back over to Vic.

VICTOR (cont'd)

OK, OK. Just stop looking at me like that.

Vic picks up the phone.

VICTOR (cont'd)

OK, we'll come get you, whining motherfucker.

LISA (O.C.)

Oh, I'm sorry. Is this Victor?

VICTOR

Who's this?

LISA (O.C.)

Lisa. You know, John's.. is he there?

EXT. THE BORDER - SUNSET

John sits calmly at the San Ysidro border crossing, smoking a cigarette. Suddenly, he hears his name called out.

LISA

John!

To his surprise, he sees Lisa at the curb, waving to him. John runs over to the car.

JOHN

Hey! How did you know I was here?

LISA

Victor told me what happened. Get in the car.

John gets in the car beside her.

JOHN

Lisa... I'm so sorry. I've screwed up everything. Robert sent you that video clip to hurt you.

She glares at him.

JOHN (cont'd)

I know it was my fault, and I'm not placing the blame off on Robert. What I did was horrible, and I'm really, really...

LISA

Stop. I don't even want to hear it. I didn't come down here to talk about that.

JOHN

Well, why did you come all the way down here?

LISA

I just.. John, I have to tell you something and it's hard.

JOHN

What? What is it?

LISA

You're mother called my house looking for you. I didn't know where you were, she couldn't get in touch with you. I promised

I'd be the one to tell you. I'm sorry, but
your father died.

John take a moment to absorb the news.

JOHN
Take me to the airport.

EXT. SAN DIEGO AIRPORT - DAY

Lisa car pulls up to the department flights terminal. She stops,
and they look at each other.

LISA
I'm sorry.

John looks over at her, his eyes full of sadness.

JOHN
Me, too.

Without further word, he gets out and heads inside.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

John stands at his mother's side as Bernard Elias is laid to
rest. There is a large crowd present. Bernard's years of service
to other people's well being is in evidence.

As John looks around, he sees four young Arab men standing
together, kind of away from the others. They stand out, these
Arab men at a Jewish funeral, but then John realizes where he
has seen these men before. They are the Iraqi students, now here,
safe in America. A huge tear rolls down his face.

INT. ELIAS HOME - DAY

A reception is under way. John speaks to some of Bernard's OLDEST
FRIENDS. Just then, he sees Bill Clark go into the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

John enters. Bill looks up from the sink, sees him.

BILL
John, how you holding up, partner?

JOHN
Good. You?

Bill shrugs.

BILL

We'll miss him. That's for certain.

JOHN

What happens to the firm now? Will you go on?

BILL

No. There are some bills to pay, then I'll move on.

JOHN

Do you have enough?

BILL

I don't know. We let our accountant go a while back. I haven't been keeping close track, frankly.

JOHN

I saw four Arab men at the funeral. Were they the Iraqis?

Bill smiles.

BILL

Yep. We got them. And their families.

JOHN

That's great. That's really great.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

John sits on the couch in front of a fire. He has his arm around his mother. They are alone now after the funeral. The both appear to be a bit numb.

JOHN

Are you going to keep the house?

LILY

I don't know. I haven't really thought about it.

The phone rings. John moves to get it but his mother stops him.

LILY (cont'd)

Let it ring. Just stay here.

After a couple of rings, the answering machine picks up. After a moment, it beeps.

JIMMY CARTER (O.C.)

Hi, this is Jimmy Carter calling for Mrs. Bernard Elias. Mrs. Elias, and I want you to know how sorry I am. Your husband was a great champion for human rights, and a real help and inspiration to me. We'll all miss him. Call me when you have a moment. Again, I'm very sorry. Bye bye.

JOHN

Wow. I didn't know Dad knew Jimmy Carter.

LILY

He was here once when he was the President, but you were little.

JOHN

I feel like I let him down, quitting school and all.

LILY

No, John, never. You were the light of his life.

INT. BEDROOM - NIGHT

John is sleeping in the bedroom that was his as he was growing up. Suddenly, he wakes at the sound of wind chimes.

He gets up and goes to the window. There are chimes in the back yard that sway back and forth, although it appears there is no wind.

INT. KITCHEN - MORNING

John is sitting at the kitchen table drinking coffee when his mother comes in. He is fully dressed.

LILY

You're up already. I was going to make breakfast for you.

JOHN

I've already eaten.

LILY

Are you going somewhere?

JOHN

I know it's soon, but I need to get back.
I... lost my company, and my girlfriend,
and I need to try and get them back.

LILY

Just like your father. Always go, go, go,
now, now, now.

JOHN

I'll be back in a few days. I promise. I
just need to go and do this.

LILY

It's OK. I'll be here. You do whatever you
have to do.

JOHN

Thanks, Mom.

INT. JFK - DAY

John waits for his flight in the airport. As he dials his cell,
he sees a New York Times article about another high on the stock
market.

INT. LISA'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Lisa is back at her keyboard, writing music, when the phone
rings. There are piles of flowers laying around.

LISA

Yeah?

INTERCUT WITH JOHN:

JOHN

Hey.

LISA

Hey.

There is an awkward moment, then they both start to speak at
the same time.

JOHN

Did you get...

LISA
I hope everything...

Both laugh nervously.

JOHN
You go first.

LISA
No, it's OK. I'm not sure how to ask about
a funeral anyway.

JOHN
It was fine. Lot's of people there. Did you
get the flowers?

LISA
Yes, John, everyday. You can stop sending
them now. My place isn't that big.

JOHN
Oh, OK. Look, I'm at the airport now, and
I'll be back tonight. Can we get together?

LISA
I don't think that's such a good idea.

JOHN
Oh, OK. I understand.

LISA
Look, I don't want to be hard on you, I know
you've had a rough time.. but what you did
was a big deal. I'm not going ot get over
it quick. I'm not saying I'll never forgive
you, but... It won't be anytime soon. When
I'm ready, I'll call you.

JOHN
I see.

LISA
I'm sorry about your father, John. Take
care of yourself.

JOHN
OK, bye.

He hangs up, the pain evident in his eyes.

INT. VIC AND KIKO'S APARTMENT - DAY

The three sit around the PC, nervous.

KIKO

Are we ready to go?

JOHN AND VIC

Ready!!

KIKO clicks with a mouse. A message appears on the screen - 'SERVER ONLINE'.

JOHN

(quietly)

Now let's wait and see what happens.

EXT. TIBET, ESTABLISHING - DAY

The beautiful landscape of mountains and sky. The CHANTING of monks in the distance....we move across the vista to reveal a monastery.

EXT. INSIDE THE MONASTERY WALLS - DAY

Hundreds of BUDDHIST MONKS doing their business.

INT. COMPUTER LAB, MONASTERY - DAY

YOUNG MONK types away at the PC. On his screen, he notices a link that says 'FOR SUPERFAST INTERNET ACCESS - CLICK HERE'.

Looks puzzled, but clicks on it. Engrossed he watches as a video appears on his screen - JOHN against the background of VIC's apartment....the video is very smooth, not like the normal jerky stuff you get on the Internet.

JOHN

Greetings, people of the world. My name is John Elias. A few months ago, I started a company with friends, Victor and Kiko. We had an idea for superfast access to the Internet, that would run on your computer without any major upgrade cost or hardware installation.

The YOUNG MONK nods, interested.

EXT. AUSTRALIAN BEACH - DAY

YOUNG BUSINESSMAN on his laptop watching JOHN, avidly....

JOHN

This video you're watching now is transmitted via our software, and you'll notice it's smooth as a whistle. Our software is installed on your computer now, and you can use it for a week for free.

BUSINESSMAN opens his eyes.

EXT. AFRICAN VILLAGE SQUARE - DAY

Crowds of people including the VILLAGE ELDERS, watching JOHN on their PC.

JOHN

You'll notice you can cruise the Internet at sixty to seventy times faster than what you're used to.....

Murmurs in the crowd.

EXT. GONDOLA IN VENICE - DAY

GONDOLIER watches his laptop as he rows a ROMANTIC COUPLE up the canals.

JOHN

We want to make this product available to the world at an affordable price, so that the Internet can do what it's meant to do. Bring people from all over the world together.

INT. US NAVY SUBMARINE - DAY/NIGHT

Young GI's huddled around the PC.

JOHN

Unfortunately, people within our company want to list it on the stock exchange to make a lot of money. In fact, the whole Internet industry is now overrun by people who wanna make a quick buck and get out

fast. We think if our business is taken away from us before it's mature, you'll end up paying much more for our software than you should, so that unrealistic earnings expectations for our company can be met. A bunch of shareholders are going to control the future development of our software, and we believe that's gonna make it mediocre. You can stop this happening by sending an e-mail to the board members listed after this message. Please help, and enjoy our software... this is the way the Internet should be. Help us preserve the last frontier.

INT. ANNA SIMMONS' OFFICE - DAY

Anna reviews her e-mail. As she scrolls down her list of e-mails there are hundreds and hundreds, all with similar themes - 'DON'T LIST Digital Dreams!'.

ANNA
Marcie, get me Otis.

INT. OTIS' OFFICE - DAY

OTIS, a paunchy board member, answers the phone.

OTIS
Hello.

INTERCUT WITH OTIS

ANNA
How many e-mails did you get?

OTIS
I don't know because all the mail crashed my system.

ANNA
This is brilliant. The idea works, and they just proved it to the world. This is the best demo they could possibly have done. We can bump the opening price for the IPO up at least \$10 a share now.

MR. OTIS

If we don't get acquired first. I'm getting calls like you wouldn't believe!

Anna has raised a glass of water to her lips, but her shaking keeps her from drinking from it. It sloshes out of the glass until she drops the whole thing in her lap.

ANNA

Marcie!

MR. OTIS

Did you hear me? I'm getting calls every hour about an acquisition. If we move now, we can sell it for 10 times our investment.

Anna's lap is covered with water. She stands, sending the glass to the floor, where it breaks.

ANNA

I heard you. (Emotional) You know, I just wanted a little sip of water, and now..

OTIS

Is this a bad time?

ANNA

Yes. Marcie...

Anna sits in the puddle of water, near to tears.

INT. ROBERT'S OFFICE - DAY

Robert is finishing a call when John bursts in. Vic and Kiko are right behind him.

ROBERT

Hey, it's the three stooges.

JOHN

Have you checked your e-mail today?

ROBERT

Stupid play, John. Very stupid. Now, which one of you is Curly? He was my favorite.

Kiko suddenly snaps. He has not been seen to lose his temper before, but now drops into a karate stance, smashes some wooden object in Robert's office, and starts to come around behind Robert's desk.

Robert steps back, shocked as much as fearful.

ROBERT (cont'd)
Hey, hey, hey! Let's just stay calm here.

John puts his arm on Kiko's shoulder, stopping him.

JOHN
The listing has been stopped.

ROBERT
Yeah, right.

JOHN
Two board members called me. They're going to vote with me and Tom Walker to stop the IPO.

ROBERT
Bullshit.

JOHN
Call them yourself and check.

ROBERT
It doesn't matter, now. It's too late.

JOHN
What are you talking about?

ROBERT
Haven't you been watching the news? We're getting acquired. Anna's negotiating now and we'll close a deal before the end of the day. All thanks to you, really. You proved your idea works. Now every major software and hardware maker in the world wants us. It's better than listing. We can cash out now. You're going to be very rich John. All of us are, except your friends here, who quit right before payday. Sorry, guys! Better luck next time.

John is stunned. Just then, Claire, who is Robert's assistant now, comes to the door.

CLAIRE
That's Lou Dobbs on one.

Robert sits and hits the speakerphone.

ROBERT

Lou, what's up my man?

LOU DOBBS (O.C)

Mr. Jennings. How are you today?

ROBERT

Great, Lou. What can I help you with today?

LOU DOBBS (O.C)

We're hearing a great deal of whispering on the street that there's an impending acquisition of your company. My question for you is, are these rumors true.

Robert locks eyes with John.

ROBERT

Well, Lou, I can't talk in specifics, but I will tell you that yes, we are in some serious talks with a major, major software maker about an acquisition. Can you hold on just a minute, Lou?

Robert puts Lou Dobbs on hold.

ROBERT (cont'd)

Guys, I'm a little busy here as you can see. Can you give me some space?

John shakes his head and walks out. After a moment, Kiko follows.

ROBERT (cont'd)

What Vic? What more is there to say?

VICTOR

The guy made you a millionaire. Yo should show some fucking gratitude.

Vic leaves as well.

EXT. DIGITAL DREAMS - DAY

Vic exits the front door and sees John and Kiko sitting on the sidewalk across the street, staring up at the huge digitaldreams.com billboard. He crosses and sits down as well. They sit in silence for a moment as traffic flies past.

VICTOR
Well, that's that.

JOHN
Yepper.

VICTOR
Looks like you'll get rich, too.

JOHN
Maybe. I wanted to make something great.
It wasn't about the money.

VICTOR
We believe it. Don't we Kiko?

KIKO
We'd believe it more if you shared some of
that wealth.

John laughs.

JOHN
I'll take care of you. Don't worry.

VICTOR
You better. Or Kiko will whup up on you.

JOHN
What now? This is what I always wanted to
do, and now it's over.

VICTOR
Start another company. Do it all over
again. That's the American Way.

JOHN
I don't have any more ideas.

VICTOR
You'll get another.

JOHN
If I do, will you two join me?

VIC AND KIKO
NO!

JOHN

Great. Thanks.

VICTOR

But, we will go get a Fat Burger with you.
If you'll pay. Come on, John. It's just
business, man.

They get up and walk away. Settle on the huge billboard; Digital Dreams.

QUOTE ON BLACK SCREEN "Money is the root of all evil. But then a man needs roots." - Leor Atie

The SOUND of the New York Stock Exchange beginning business - FRENZIED, CRAZY ACTIVITY.

FADE UP:

Ticker tapes roll.

INT. NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE - DAY

Traders rush about the floor in a MADHOUSE of MONEY-MAKING.

Wall Street journal headlines - 'INTERNET STARTUP ACQUIRED IN RECORD BREAKING DEAL'.

Back on CNN Business Minute.

BUSINESS ANCHOR

After a rocky start a few months ago, Digital Dreams Internet was acquired by Oracle for a record breaking 350 million dollars in an all stock swap. Oracle shares rose an 23% on the day. The company was a hot property after former CEO John Elias posted a version of the company's software on the Internet, with the stated aim of stopping the upcoming IPO. Elias' plan backfired when the Digital Dreams board refused to budge, and the publicity he had created for the software caught the attention of other Internet high fliers. Current CEO Robert Jennings spoke to Moneyline earlier today.

Shot of ROBERT being interviewed.

ROBERT

Our main aim remains to bring high quality, high speed Internet access software to the American public and the world. We're committed to building a great American company in the 21st century.

INTERVIEWER

And what about John Elias and his objections that this company wasn't ready to go public?

ROBERT

Well, he got his wish, kind of. John Elias became a multi millionaire today. He should take some comfort in that.

A LONG PAUSE.

TITLE - 'ONE YEAR LATER'.

INT. BACKSTAGE AT SOME HUGE CLUB - NIGHT

John is roadie for Lisa's band. She is on stage, tearing it up. He stops wrapping cable for a moment to watch her.

JOHN (V.O.)

Yeah, I lost the company. My dream came half true. I got the money, and in the eyes of most, I was a huge success. When Digital Dreams was bought, I vested in six months and cashed out. Total value, \$175 million.

CU on John shows the bitter sweet side of a rich guy who must sit on the sidelines, just like Ben.

EXT. STANFORD CAMPUS - TWILIGHT

Vic and Kiko walk across campus, talking excitedly.

JOHN (V.O.)

I gave Vic and Kiko their share of the money and the credit. They not only got into Stanford, they were offered professorships.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Anna is eating alone, pouring over some papers. She tries to raise a soup spoon to her mouth, but the shaking makes soup spill on her. Out of the corner of her eye, she sees some TEENAGERS stare, and snicker.

JOHN (V.O.)

Anna added to her fortune off the Digital Dreams deal, but her money couldn't stop the shaking...

This upsets her so much, she struggles to her feet, making an even greater scene, and rushes from the restaurant in tears. An OLDER MAN, also eating alone, has noted this, and he follows her out.

EXT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Anna stands outside the restaurant weeping. People pass by, barely taking notice. The Older Man approaches her, and offers some comforting words. Her eyes light up at whatever he has said.

JOHN (V.O.)

One day, she met a widower, who could see past her exterior.

He puts his arm around her, and she starts to cry even harder.

JOHN (V.O.)

She fell in love for the very first time in her life.

EXT. HOTEL RECEPTION AREA - DAY

Anna marries the Older Man. They kiss passionately.

JOHN (V.O.)

She didn't return to the business.

EXT. HORSE PEN, TOM WALKER'S RANCH - DAY

Tom rides the crazy RODEO HORSE, the COWBOYS around him delighted.

JOHN (V.O.)

Tom Walker, like the hills, never changes.

INT. BEN'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Ben eats dinner with his beautiful HOUSEKEEPER.

JOHN

Ben finally made a pass at his housekeeper.

He touches her on the arm, looks at her. She leans forward and they kiss. Passionately. Then hug.

EXT. NEWSSTAND - DAY

CU on the cover of Business Week shows Ben Fisher, smiling! The cover article reads 'Back From The Dead; The Guardian Angel Behind Digital Dreams'.

JOHN (V.O.)

After more than a decade of hiding in the shadows, Ben Fisher started a new company. Within weeks, it was profitable.

EXT. FREEWAY - DAY

Robert drives down the freeway in a huge MERCEDES smoking a cigar, talking on his cell phone.

JOHN (V.O.)

After Digital Dreams was acquired, Robert used his money to start a technology company, whose IPO opened and dropped like a stone. He lost it all.

ROBERT

A dollar a share? Are you fucking kidding me!!

INT. COMPUTER CONFERENCE - DAY

John speaks in front of a large crowd.

JOHN (V.O.)

I gave lectures occasionally. I guess I had become a kinda minor celebrity.

Close on FORTUNE MAGAZINE 'The Boy Wonder Who Refused To Take the Low Road'. TIME MAGAZINE, with a picture of John smiling, "Quality, not Quantity : John Elias and the Return to Business Fundamentals".

INT. UNITED NATIONS - DAY

A small ceremony is held to unveil a new wall plaque. John stands beside his mother and the four Arabs, and a host of other

once-persecuted PEOPLES. The plaque is unveiled by the SECRETARY GENERAL. It is a bronze of Bernard, champion of human rights. There is applause as all gaze at Bernard's compassionate face.

JOHN (V.O.)

But it was my father's work that will be remembered. It was he who taught me what riches are all about.

INT. CONCERT HALL, NEW YORK - NIGHT

Lisa performs to a LARGE CROWD of people at a big ROCK CONCERT.

JOHN (V.O.)

For a while, though, my primary occupation was being Lisa's groupie.

John watches from the wings while wrapping cable. He smiles.

EXT. GOLDEN GATE PARK - DAY

John and Lisa walk along, hand in hand, nuzzling each other.

JOHN (V.O.)

And it was strange how that felt like more than enough. And although it was going to take some time to get moving... I had this idea, you see, for the coolest piece of software.

John stops walking, stares into space, going into the zone... Lisa watches him, shakes her head.

LISA

John?

He just stares into space...

LISA (cont'd)

John ... hello... earth to John...

He snaps back, and kisses her on the lips. They walk on, as the camera pulls back, up into the sky, settling on the SF skyline.

FADE OUT.