FADE IN:

INT. PETE`S APARTMENT - DAY

PETE
Ah, this is my comfort zone. I need to rest a little and forget my problems.

Pete is resting on his comfortable sofa with his eyes closing. A nap follows as he nods off.

I/E. PETE`S APARTMENT/COURTYARD - DAY (DREAM SEQUENCE)

CREDITOR ONE
Peter, Peter Rohan. Do you hear me? This is Horizon Digital, your cable and internet service provider.

PETE
What do you want?

There is a light shining through his upstairs window where Pete took a quick look to see a crowd below.

PETE
Come and get me you dirty rats, you rotten bill collectors. I am ready for your lies and lousy customer service.

Pete stood back as though he was ready for battle. He was ready to fight the establishment.

CREDITOR ONE
Pete, I know you hear me. This is Horizon Digital. One more
time, this is your final disconnect notice.

Pete looked down at the pile of bills scattered on the floor. He found the Horizon Digital invoice.

PETE
I have your bill right here. It`s only fourteen days past due. Don`t I get a month before you disconnect my service.

CREDITOR ONE
Not anymore Pete. You have a lousy payment record.

PETE (VOICE OVER)
(inner thoughts)
Don`t they know I am low on funds to pay bills at this time. My writing jobs are slow but I just got final approval for payment from Fortune magazine, a total of four thousand dollars. They will not believe me.

POLICEMAN
Hey Pete, this is the police. Come out with your hands up so we can resolve this or else.

PETE
Or else what, you dirty lousy copper.

POLICEMAN
Calm down Pete. We are here to help you.
CREDITOR ONE
I will say this Pete. We will stop your outgoing service. We will also stop your digital phone and your DSL plus cable TV.

PETE
No, no, anything but my DSL service. I am a magazine writer. If I can`t email my stories, I am finished. Don`t take away my livelihood. Can`t you people have a little compassion for the small guy. I`ve been a loyal customer for ten years.

CREDITOR ONE
Sorry Pete. We gotta go by the book of rules and your time is up.

The Edison Power bill collector took the bullhorn from the other collector and was next in line.

CREDITOR TWO
Peter Rohan, this is Edison Power. Your electric bill is way past due and your power will be cut off tomorrow if you don`t make a payment.

PETE
Past due, I`ll give you past due you inconsiderate bastard.

POLICEMAN
Watch it Pete. That`s indecent language and a threat. You could end up in jail.
PETE
You think I give a rat`s ass. At least in jail I won`t have to pay for room and board.

A lawyer next in line grabbed the bullhorn.

LAWYER
I am the lawyer for your landlord Pete. Your monthly rent payment is overdue. We need a payment.

PETE
Oh great, that too.

Pete rubbed his head in disbelief of all that has transpired.

LAWYER
You are over a month behind. I have an eviction notice right here with your name on it. The Sheriff will remove you if you don`t make a rent payment.

PETE
(shouting in anger)
An eviction notice. You lawyers suck.

The crowd cheered as Pete threw up his middle finger.

LAWYER
Yes Pete, an eviction notice. You gotta leave the premises. Move out if you can`t pay the rent.

CREDITOR TWO
This is Edison Power. This is your final notice Pete. Make a payment tomorrow or else your service will be shut off. That means lights out. You have not made a payment and there is no check in the mail.

PETE
But it's winter right now. February is the coldest month. If I go without electricity I could freeze to death.

CREDITOR TWO
We regret any inconvenience but we cannot continue with your service.

The lawyer reaches for the bullhorn.

LAWYER
Don't worry about your electric bill. You have to be out in twenty-four hours and then you can work it out with the power company.

PETE
(frantic)
I can't take all this pressure anymore. You will never take me alive. Never.

The policeman takes the bullhorn.

POLICEMAN
Pete, listen to me. This is officer Sullivan. Be reasonable. Nobody here believes the check is
in the mail. The crowd is leaving and it’s cold. You will be without power, no phone or cable, no internet or heat and homeless. So it’s up to you to come out and resolve your problems or you will not survive.

PETE
I need some time to think for a few minutes.

Pete retreats from window and sits at his kitchen table. He lights a cigarette to contemplate his next move. He drags on his cigarette and exhales with a sigh of relief. He smiles gently as he attempts his Bogart accent.

PETE (VOICE OVER)
(inner thoughts)
Of all the places in all the towns in all the world, they walk into mine. First Horizon Digital walks in, then Edison Power, a lawyer for my landlord and the police. I wonder what it is like to get out from under this rock.

Pete finished his cigarette with a quizzical look on his face and jumped up to declare his worth.

PETE
There is a payment check in the mail coming to me for four grand.

The leftover crowd and debt collectors laughed a little and shook their heads in disbelief about another sorry tale.

PETE
No, no, I mean it, a check is in the mail to me for four grand.

Everybody laughed even louder.

PETE
You don`t understand. This time I mean it. I am telling the truth. You have my sincere word.

LAWYER
Your word usually has some holes in it Pete.

CREDITOR ONE
We heard that one before Pete, heard it too many times.

CREDITOR TWO
What is the source of this check?

PETE
I finished five stories for Fortune magazine. They paid four thousand dollars and mailed me a check last week.

CREDITOR ONE
Did you say four thousand dollars is coming to you.

PETE
You heard me. It`s due anyday now and maybe coming today.

Just then a mail truck drove up to the scene beeping his horn and stopped. The leftover crowd turned toward the truck. The mailman jumped out with mail in hand.
MAILMAN
Never fear, the mail is here. I have a special delivery for Peter Rohan. I heard a man called Pete was holed up here.

PETE
Don`t tell me. You`ve got my check.

MAILMAN
I`ve got it right here, Mr. Peter Rohan.

PETE
Did you hear that you dirty rats. I got the check just like I said.

LAWYER
Mind if I take a look.

The mailman held the envelop up with a special delivery sticker to Peter Rohan from Fortune magazine. The lawyer looked at it and nodded.

LAWYER
It`s from Fortune magazine all right and I would say it`s definitely a check.

Everybody looked at each other in amazement as if their long lost friend had just won the lottery.

CREDITOR ONE
Did you hear that. He got the check. Amazing, simply amazing.

CREDITOR TWO
Did you hear that. He got the check. How could we have doubted him.

Pete walked down to the courtyard and made his way through the remaining crowd. He reached out and took the check from the mailman.

PETE
Thanks friend, you saved my day.

MAILMAN
I am glad to be of help in your time of need Pete, just doing my job.

Pete waved to the crowd with a smile as they cheered him on. The lawyer put his arm around Pete.

LAWYER
Problem is as good as solved Pete. Just pay up and you can stay.

CREDITOR ONE
I totally agree Pete. Horizon Digital is your phone company, cable and internet provider for life.

CREDITOR TWO
And you can count on Edison Power to provide the electric power you need.

PETE
What a relief it is to get you pests off my back after I deposit this check.
The policeman walked over to Pete

POLICEMAN
I am going to fill out my report Pete. I will give you a break
this time but shake out of your
mental clutter and face the
realities of life.

Pete nodded in agreement and smiled at the officer.

PETE
Officer Sullivan, thank you. This
could be the start of a beautiful
friendship.

END DREAM SEQUENCE

Pete awoke suddenly from his dream hearing a knocking and
bell ringing.

PETE
Who is it?

MAILMAN (OS)
Special delivery mail sir. I need
your signature.

Pete opened the door and signed the form and thanked the
mailman. It was a check from a company he wrote some
articles for.

PETE
I guess I can pay some bills now
before they come knocking on my
door. Maybe I will get a little
more sleep... no wait, I can`t go
through another dream like that
last one. I am going to take a
shower, make some dinner and watch an old Cagney or Bogart movie on DVD.

THE END