

The Pitch
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FADE IN:

INT OFFICE - DAY

A very white and barren office.

There is a desk at one end, where RICHARD, a man in a black suit, sits.

The desk is bare, save for a phone, clock, and a large stack of blank paper, which Richard writes on frantically. He is mumbling to himself.

RICHARD

Good. Good. Yes, yes, of course. It's almost genius.

Richard signs his name over and over... and over.

The phone on his desk rings. Richard stop writing and looks around.

RICHARD

There it is again.

The phone rings.

Rings.

RICHARD

I should see a doctor about this.

The phone goes silent.

RICHARD

Oh, wait... There it goes. I'm OK.

Richard signs his name over and over... and over.

A knock at the door. Richard screams and jumps out of his chair.

SHERYL

(O.C.)

Sir... Its me... Sheryl. Your 12 o'clock is here.

Richard clutches his chest and screams back.

RICHARD

Dammit woman. How many time do I have to tell you not to sneak up on me like that. How did I know you weren't a, a... Iceberg.

SHERYL

(O.C.)

Icebergs don't knock on doors sir. May we come in now? Is the gun put away?

Richard stands with elephant gun drawn.

RICHARD

How do I know you didn't knock so I'd open the door and let the iceberg that's WITH you, get in?

There is a long pause.

Yes, that long.

SHERYL

(O.C.)

Ok... I'll tell it to go away sir.

RICHARD

I knew it. Come in when you're ready, and iceberg free.

SHERYL opens the door to the office and steps in, but not too far.

SHERYL

Your 12 o'clock is here sir. Shall I send them in or...

RICHARD

Them?

Sheryl stands silent, then covers her face and shakes her head.

SHERYL

Yes sir... I hate my job sir... You'll see why.

Sheryl turns and exits the office. Richard darts over to the door.

RICHARD
Icebergs, close the door! Icebergs
woman!

Richard closes the door, turns toward his desk.

The door bursts open and in walk three secret service types.

They quickly take up strategic locations around the office. ignoring Richard as they search the room for danger.

RICHARD
Excuse me. Sorry, excuse me.

Richard flails his hands around, but they ignore him and proceed with their business.

OFFICER 1
Secure.

All three of them exit as abruptly as they entered.

Richard stares at the open door and winces.

RICHARD
Icebergs?

The three secret service types re-enter, surrounding HAROLD, a in his forties, wearing dark sunglasses and covering his face.

Richard hangs his head and rubs his face in disgust.

RICHARD
Oh God Harold. No, no, no, no.

Richard walks back and sits in his desk.

RICHARD
Please Harold sit down and call off
the troops. I'm really in no mood
to humor your little delusions of
this, unknown assassin on your
trail.

Harold waves the three men away. They leave, and close the door behind them. Harold is still standing, he starts to pace.

HAROLD
Look, I'm telling you it's no
delusion. There's a mad man out
there.

Richard grabs a file folder out of a desk drawer.

He flops it on the desk and leafs through it.

RICHARD

Harold, shut up. Now the reason I called you here is because I'm thinking of using you in my next picture.

Richard closes the file and looks up at Harold.

HAROLD

Go on?

RICHARD

Sit, please.

Richard directs Harold's attention to a chair that is now on the other side of the desk. Harold looks questioningly at the chair then quickly around the room. He shrugs his shoulders and sits down.

HAROLD

Well, what's my role.

Richard gets up and takes off his jacket. He walks to the wall and hangs his jacket on a hook that is not there. His jacket falls to the floor.

Richard spins back to Harold.

RICHARD

OK. Now I've just been hit by inspiration this morning, so details are still a little sketchy. Here goes. It's an epic, I'm thinking something like a three hour run time, we'll get an R-rating but of course we play up we were going to get an NC-17... Very mature, very adult... Many questions answered, blah, blah, blah. Now, I see a real character piece here. Are you visualizing?

Harold closes his eyes as Richard circles behind him, where he stops and rests his hands on Harold's shoulders.

RICHARD

Now, the way I sees it, the main character, whose name is something

(MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)
 really American like, Chuck, Joe,
 no, no, no... Ah Johnny.

Richard runs back to his seat and takes a mirror out of one of the desk drawers. He look into the mirror.

RICHARD
 Johnny, Johnny. You've got to make it. Think about mother. Who'll eat all her great home cooking what with dad off solids and Jenny in the free clinic.

Richard puts the mirror away.

RICHARD
 Yes, Johnny it is then. So Johnny comes home from the war... Not Vietnam though, something we won, so he comes home and...

Richard's brow furrows.

He leaps out of his chair. He paces back and forth behind Harold's chair.

Harold pulls out his blackberry and taps at the keypad.

RICHARD
 What do you think of this here... He has trouble adjusting to civilian life because of his...

He grabs Harold by the shouldersa spins his around and looks him in the face. Harold taps away on his keypad.

RICHARD
 ...And this is the part I love... very dramatic and slow-motion flashbacks. Think of the possibilities.

HAROLD
 Well that sounds...

Richard stares at Harold as if looks could kill. Harold stops tapping. He puts the blackberry away

RICHARD
 SHUT UP! I'll lose my train of thought. Now, think of the possibilities. He's in the
 (MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)
backyard when he hears a
lawnmower...

Richard eyes dart back and forth around the office.

RICHARD
He thinks it's an
airplane. INCOMING!

Richard pushes Harold back and leaps over the desk.

He crawls across the floor back to Harold.

RICHARD
He sees death and destruction, oh
god the horror. He sees his
friends getting blown up...

Richard stands quickly and flails his arms as he makes
explosion noises.

RICHARD
Body parts flying across the
screen, tanks rolling over bodies,
bullets whizzing. A big impressive
score will help drive home his
madness.

He makes some drum motions with his hands.

RICHARD
BOOM, boom, boom. BOOM, boom,
boom. Also he can maybe lose a
limb in the war, a leg
perhaps. fuck it make it both legs
put him in a chair, wait, no,
that's no good.

HAROLD
Why not? I kind of like that idea.

Richard stops.

He turns slowly toward Harold. Their eyes meet.

He walks over to Harold and sits on the desk in front of
him.

Richard lifts the glasses from Harold's eyes.

He leans over to Harold's ear.

RICHARD
You like it do you? You like it
eh? Like it as much as you liked
my wife, you home wrecker. I want
to eat you still beating heart.

Richard sits back up and claps his hands.

RICHARD
How is Maggie anyway?

HAROLD
Great, she's great. Kids are good
too.

RICHARD
Splendid, splendid. But now back
to business. No he has to have two
legs so when he fucks the
girlfriend he doesn't look weird.

Richard gets up and returns to his own seat. He removes his
tie.

HAROLD
Hmm, good point. Plus the last
time I cut off a limb for a film
role it took ages to grow back.

There is a knock at the door. Richard screams and ducks
behind his desk. He pokes his head up slowly.

RICHARD
Sheryl?

SHERYL
(OC)
Yes sir, I've brought the tea.

RICHARD
Come in then, it's open.

Richard sits back down.

Sheryl enters carrying a tea tray. She puts it down on the
desk.

RICHARD
Thank you Sheryl.

Ricahrd stares at Sheryl. Sheryl stares at the door.

Richard suddenly jumps from his seat and takes a fighting
stance.

RICHARD
Have at you then.

He lunges at her and trips over his chair.

He quickly gets back up and chases her around the room.

Harold pours himself a cup of tea and takes a sip.

Richard catches Sheryl by grabbing her arm. She spins around and kicks him square in the balls.

Richard slumps to the floor and writhes.

Sheryl exits quietly and closes the door behind her.

HAROLD
She's new.

RICHARD
Yup.

Richard crawls across the floor.

HAROLD
She seems to be holding up well though.

Richard climbs back in his chair.

RICHARD
Yes, well, those damn icebergs are very persistent. We have to have strong front office people.

HAROLD
Now a question about the film. When Johnny goes crazy how will I be playing that?

Richard suddenly sits straight up.

RICHARD
Ah ha, now you're talking. When the integral crazy parts come up you'll be playing them...

Richard smacks his hands together. Harold jumps.

RICHARD
...Over the top. I want to see wild eyes, I want to hear yelling and raving. I want to see spit
(MORE)

RICHARD (cont'd)
 flying and drool covering
 yourself. You will be going quite
 mad indeed.

HAROLD
 Not subtle... Surprise, surprise.

RICHARD
 Subtle? Subtle?! Fuck
 subtle! No, no, we're playing this
 up for all it's worth. This guy
 goes just fucking bonkers. By the
 end of the pic he'll be standing at
 the top of a mountain, overlooking
 his hometown...

Richard climbs up and stands on the desk, turns his back to
 Harold and takes off his shirt.

RICHARD
 He's screaming something to the
 effect of I am the angel of
 death. The time has come to end
 all suffering... All the while
 he's standing there completely and
 utterly...

Richard drops his pants.

RICHARD
 Naked... Not frontal of course.

HAROLD
 Of course.

Richard begins to put his clothes back on. He comes down
 and sits at his desk.

RICHARD
 Well what do you think?

HAROLD
 Well, I quite like the outline and
 it will probably be great for my
 career...

RICHARD
 Splendid. And here's the real
 kicker.

Richard looks around the empty office then waves Harold in
 across the desk.

RICHARD
I'm going to direct it
myself. Fuck the big names, fuck
the studios. This is my baby.

HAROLD
That's the spirit. It's about time
we artists take over the making of
films.

Richard pushes his chair back and stands up.

RICHARD
Oh fuck art. I just want to direct
something for a change. This
picture will be magnificent... Or
the biggest flop in
history... Either way I get myself
so much publicity I'm bound to get
another picture made.

HAROLD
Makes sense I suppose.

Harold notices the clock on the desk.

HAROLD
Oh shit I've got to go. I don't
like to stay in any one place too
long. It makes him easy for him to
track me.

Richard rubs his temples.

RICHARD
Look Harold. I'm going to tell you
this once and only once. There is
absolutely, beyond a shadow of a
doubt, completely, no one person,
in all of the universe trying to
kill you.

Harold slumps over onto the desk. An arrow sticks out of
his back.

RICHARD
OH. So there is. Good call
man. Well back at it then.

Richard pushes Harold by the head and slides him off the
desk. He begins to sign his name repeatedly. The three
secret service types run in and grab the body. They drag it
out of the office.

INT OFFICE LOBBY - DAY

Sheryl sits at her desk.

Three secret service types carry Harold's body from the office door, past her desk and out the front door.

Sheryl watches as they carry the body outside.

She picks up the phone and dials.

SHERYL

Hello... Yes it's done...
Everything according to
plan... Yes... Yes... I'll see
you later... I love you too...

INT APARTMENT - DAY

An iceberg sits on a couch with a phone to it's side.

FADE OUT: