

Boston Legal
Legal Deficits
Season 2, Episode 10
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Melissa Hughes is standing behind bars. In the jail cell with her are about half a dozen other people. Melissa looks forlorn as the others with her are laughing and giggling. Alan Shore comes in and peruses the cell.

Alan Shore: **To an officer standing next to him.** I'll take the blonde. **He walks up to Melissa.** Melissa. What are we doing in jail?

Melissa Hughes: They're saying I tried to rob a bank. I didn't. I just smashed a window.

Alan Shore: Ah!

Liz: And they say I'm a prostitute. Ha. Which is ridiculous.

Melissa Hughes: Back off, Ho.

Liz: What did you say? Come on.

Alan Shore: Liz?

Liz: Alan? **Alan laughs heartily.** Oh my God! You just dropped off the side of the earth

Alan Shore: I was in a relationship. But now I'm not. You still at 1 800- LIZZIE?

Melissa Hughes: Whoa, whoa, whoa. Whoa. Hey! Remember me? I'm in trouble here. They arrested me?

At Crane, Poole and Schmidt Brad Chase is being handcuffed.

Brad Chase: You're arresting me?

Detective Perry Vale: Please put your hands behind your back, sir.

Brad Chase: You gotta be kidding.

Detective Perry Vale: You have the right to remain silent.

Brad Chase: I know my rights.

Denny Crane: **He comes up.** What's going on?

Brad Chase: They're arresting me for assaulting the priest.

Detective Perry Vale: And kidnapping and false imprisonment. Now you have the right to an attorney...

Denny Crane: Son. Son. This is the United States of America. We don't really believe in Miranda anymore.

Detective Perry Vale: Let's go.

Denny Crane: Hey, hey, hey, hey! Ah, Denny Crane. I'll handle this internally.

Detective Perry Vale: Sir? This man's being charged with three felonies.

Denny Crane: Understood, but... Denny Crane.

Detective Perry Vale: Come on.

Denny Crane: Hey, hey, hey, hey. Come on! With all that's going on in the world today, who among us hasn't at least once wanted to take an axe to a priest?

Detective Perry Vale: Come on.

The detective leads Brad away.

Paul Lewiston: **He comes up.** They're arresting him?

Denny Crane: And I gave it my best shot.

Alan holds the door as Melissa comes into his office.

Alan Shore: So. They're not pressing charges.

Melissa Hughes: They're not pressing charges?

Alan Shore: If you make restitution for the window, they've agreed not pursue an...

Melissa Hughes: No.

Alan Shore: I'm sorry. Did you say, "No?"

Melissa Hughes: I'm not paying for their stupid window. Forget it.

Alan motions for her to sit down.

Alan Shore: Melissa you smashed it.

Melissa Hughes: After what they've done to me!

Alan Shore: Perhaps you should tell me exactly what they've done to you.

Melissa Hughes: **She sighs.** My credit card bills. You're aware I have some ah, fiscal issues?

Alan Shore: It's come up.

Melissa Hughes: So a few months ago, I owe one amount. The next month it, it like triples. So I stop buying stuff and the next month, bam, it's even higher. So I call the eight hundred number. Not Lizzie. And who answers? But Ms Jones! Yes. From New Delhi. India. Not bright and not Melrose India. I mean, surprised she's not terribly helpful. Right?

Alan Shore: So far I'm on her side.

Melissa Hughes: And I talked to her supervisor who says that I owe this money, plus more. This doesn't make any sense! I need to talk to someone in America. Hello? So all I can get is an address for Prominence's main office in Wilmington, Delaware. Like I can afford to go there. So I call them, I get a local office, I go there and it's basically just a store front.

Alan Shore: With a big window.

Melissa Hughes: **She sighs.** I'm not paying for it.

Alan Shore: You are paying for it. And I wanna see those credit card bills.

Melissa Hughes: What? Suddenly you're my father now? **Alan doesn't answer.** Yes, sir.

In Judge Clark Brown's courtroom.

Clerk: Three-two-one-one-one-three. Commonwealth versus Bradley Chase. Assault with a deadly weapon...

Denny Crane: Waive reading Judge. And ask that these ridiculous charges be dismissed on the grounds of ridiculousness.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: These charges are anything but ridiculous, Your Honor. The defendant abducted one innocent man, threatened him with torture. Then assaulted clergy with a deadly weapon!

Denny Crane: Pick, pick, pick, pick, pick.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: You think this is funny?

Denny Crane: Your Honor. My client saved the innocent life of a little kidnapped child who was innocent and utterly... kidnapped.

Judge Clark Brown: I watch the news like everyone else, Mr Crane. And your client's conduct was shocking.

Brad Chase: Your Honor. I'd like to move for an immediate trial.

Judge Clark Brown: Hold on!

Brad Chase: The facts are not in dispute. The District Attorney clearly wants his fifteen minutes. Why should we make him wait?

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: If you think this is about me grabbing a spotlight.

Brad Chase: It's always about that with you, Frank. You've been running for office since you got out of law school

Judge Clark Brown: Hold on! You two will refrain from personal exchanges.

Brad Chase: But it is personal Your Honor. We have a history and the opportunity for him to saddle me up as a cause.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: You attacked a man! Cutting off his fingers! As someone who took an oath to uphold the law, yes, I take that personally.

Brad Chase: It's a sound bite, Frank. Might wanna save it for the cameras. Which they'll be asking you to allow in court. My consent.

Judge Clark Brown: Hey! I will make the rules in this courtroom. Are you ready to proceed to trial?

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Assuming he's not alleging any diminished capacity.

Brad Chase: I will plead, "Not guilty" on the grounds of necessity.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Necessity?

Brad Chase: Yes. You probably skipped over it in law school. Necessity. Look it up. Hack.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: The Commonwealth is ready to proceed.

Judge Clark Brown: I must caution you both. These are serious criminal charges here. I'm not sure you should want to rush to judgment.

Denny Crane: Judge. You're old. I'm old. Lock and load. Before we're dead.

Shirley Schmidt, Brad, Denise Bauer, Paul Lewiston, and Denny are in the conference room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Shirley Schmidt: Why in God's name did you press for an immediate trial?

Brad Chase: Because I want to trade on the currency of being a hero. I've been featured all over the news and the jury pool is watching.

Shirley Schmidt: Even so, a conviction here means prison.

Brad Chase: I won't be convicted.

Shirley Schmidt: How can you be sure of that? Especially since you're guilty?

Denny Crane: Denny Crane.

Brad Chase: Look. I know this Assistant D.A. He wants to be the D.A. He's using this as a publicity...

Shirley Schmidt: He's also good. I've seen him try cases.

Denny Crane: Denny Crane.

Shirley Schmidt: **To Denny.** That is not a legal defense. **She sighs and looks at Brad and Denise.** Are we happy? Did I not warn both of you?

Denise Bauer: You know what Shirley? Don't start. I changed that little boy's diaper. I will do anything to get him back.

Shirley Schmidt: Clearly.

Denise Bauer: Including going to jail!

Shirley Schmidt: Which it come to for Brad.

Paul Lewiston: All right. We're all on the same side here.

Denise Bauer: Really? I'm not so sure.

Shirley Schmidt: Denise. If I were against you, I'd leave no doubt. **Softly to Brad.** You're really planning to have Denny handle your defense?

Brad Chase: Well...

Shirley Schmidt: Denny? Given the exposure of this case, not only to Brad but the firm, how about you and I team up on this?

Denny Crane: I'd love it. I'll pitch.

Shirley Schmidt: I'll call balls and strikes. We'll all need to sign waivers and Denise I'm gonna need to call you as a witness, but before you say yes you need consider the liability.

Denise Bauer: Yes.

Shirley Schmidt: Not so fast. They could charge you with conspiracy, or aiding and abetting...

Denise Bauer: I said, "Yes." I'll testify.

Alan and Melissa are in Alan's office sitting across a desk strewn with credit card invoices.

Alan Shore: Melissa you're fifty thousand dollars in debt.

Melissa Hughes: I know.

Alan Shore: How did this happen?

Melissa Hughes: I don't know. I swear. It's these people. They've ruined me.

Denny Crane: **He comes in.** Going to trial. I'm swelling up just thinking about it. Trials make me swell with adrenalin. Do I look swollen?

Alan Shore: Somewhat. Denny, we're a little busy here.

Denny Crane: What are you doing? Taxes? Don't you have an accountant?

Alan Shore: I'm helping Melissa who seems to have fallen into a black hole of debt.

Melissa Hughes: Very black.

Denny Crane: What is this sudden concern of yours for people without money? I need to know.

Alan Shore: You need to look at the big picture. If people don't have it, they might wanna steal ours.

Denny Crane: Right.

Alan Shore: Do we have anybody in corporate who understands this credit card world? Somebody...

Denny Crane: Hands.

Alan Shore: Sorry?

Denny Crane: Hands Espenson. Banking and finance genius. Only don't call him Hands.

Alan Shore: Why would I? Why do you?

Alan, Melissa and Jerry Espenson are in Alan's office. Alan and Melissa are sitting on a couch while Hands is pacing the floor with his hands on the front of his thighs.

Jerry Espenson: The contract was deliberately written to confuse you. Bait and switch. Bingo! Promise one thing, say, zero percent interest. Then they up it to thirty percent. Bingo!

Melissa Hughes: But, isn't that illegal?

Jerry Espenson: Used to be. Used to have usury laws but the States wanted the credit card business, so poof! Gone! Bingo! Ever inquire about a car loan?

Melissa Hughes: Actually, yes. Once.

Melissa Hughes: Bingo!

Melissa Hughes: But I didn't buy the car.

Jerry Espenson: Doesn't matter. It's called 'Universal Default'. Credit bureaus share your information. All of it. Your credit card company just heard about your asking for a car loan. Bingo! They raise your rates. Why? Because they can.

Melissa Hughes: **Under her breath to Alan.** Why doesn't he move his hands?

Jerry Espenson: The OCC is supposed to police. They don't. Bought off by the credit card lobbyists. **He walks out.**

Melissa Hughes: Is he coming back?

Alan Shore: I have no idea.

Shirley, Brad, Denny and Denise are in a lounge at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Shirley Schmidt: What's your history with this D.A.?

Brad Chase: We went to law school together. I beat his ass in moot court. I licked him several times in criminal cases since. Let's just say that we're rivals.

Shirley Schmidt: Denise, I'll take your testimony. Denny, can you take Brad's?

Denny Crane: You licked a man's ass?

Shirley Schmidt: Denny, if you can't focus here I'm not going to let you play. This trial is a threat to Brad's freedom. It is potentially an enormous blight on this firm. We need to win this trial

Denise Bauer: I'm sorry. But, tell me again why it is that we're rushing this so?

Brad Chase: It's a rush job Ginsberg plans to run for District Attorney in the primaries in March. He's using this as a showcase to...

Denise Bauer: That explains his urgency. What about ours?

Shirley Schmidt: At the moment Brad's a celebrity. His hero status can only run to our favor. But it is a risk. It's not too late to take a deep breath and say let's do this later.

Brad Chase: Let's do it now.

Shirley Schmidt: You're sure?

Denny Crane: I have an erection. It's a good sign. Let the trial begin. I'm ready.

Denny, Shirley, Brad and Denise are walking through a mob of reporters and photographers.

Denny Crane: Denny Crane.

Shirley Schmidt: Excuse us.

Denny Crane: Denny Crane.

Shirley Schmidt: Excuse us, please.

Denny Crane: ???

Shirley Schmidt: We have no comment.

Denny Crane: Comes out in pretty colors. Pastels. Denny Crane. Denny Crane.

In Judge Clark Brown's courtroom Father Michael Ryan is in the witness chair.

Father Michael Ryan: ... and suddenly he's swinging the axe. I, I put my hand out and he chopped it. He cut three of my fingers right off, the, they just fell to the floor.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: And then what happened, sir?

Father Michael Ryan: Well I was rushed to the hospital. Two of my fingers were recovered and reattached, and then his colleague, that woman, came in brandishing my third finger. She wouldn't give it back unless I revealed privileged information about one of my parishioners. He cut it off, and she extorted me with it.

Shirley Schmidt: My first question would be, if someone is swinging an axe, why stick your hand out?

Father Michael Ryan: I didn't think he'd actually try it.

Shirley Schmidt: And to be clear when you speak of your parishioner you refer to the man charged with kidnapping the child?

Father Michael Ryan: Well, yes.

Shirley Schmidt: And also to be clear, you knew your parishioner was a pedophile?

Father Michael Ryan: I am not going to reveal privileged information to you, just like I wouldn't to him.

Shirley Schmidt: But you did reveal information to Ms Bauer? You told her where your parishioner's hide-away was. You'll reveal privileged information to get your fingers back but not to save the life of a child.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection.

Judge Clark Brown: Sustained.

Shirley Schmidt: As a policy, if a pedophile killer confesses his crime you'll protect that secret?

Father Michael Ryan: I cannot break the confessional seal. It's canon law.

Shirley Schmidt: Is that stupid?

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection. ***The Judge lifts his hand.***

Shirley Schmidt: I'm sorry, but the laws in this country to protect against child-abuse supersede doctor-patient privilege, lawyer-client privilege, but not priest-parishioner privilege? Has the Catholic Church earned some special exemption when it comes to pedophiles?

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection! ***The Judge lifts his hand.***

Shirley Schmidt: Do we trust them more in this area?

Father Michael Ryan: That's a cheap shot.

Shirley Schmidt: I've been known to take them. Tell us about the Papal Blessings.

Father Michael Ryan: Well. On that matter I, I was, uh... I was wayward. I apologize.

Shirley Schmidt: The Vatican issues Papal Blessings at about thirty dollars a pop. You decided to print them yourself (***The Father nods his head.***) and sell them directly, bypassing the middleman, who in this case, happens to be the Pope.

Father Michael Ryan: Yes. As, as I said, I was wayward there.

Shirley Schmidt: I'm just having a hard time reconciling; you'll steal from the Pope, but cloak yourself in canon law when it comes to protecting a pedophile. Do you support pedophilia?

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection!

Shirley Schmidt: Do I dare ask where those three fingers had been prior to my client's chopping them off?

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection!

Judge Clark Brown: Ms Schmidt. You are way out of line.

Shirley Schmidt: I'm sorry, Judge. I have known many many wonderful priests in my lifetime. I am not adding Father Ryan to that list. Nothing further. **She waves her fingers at the Father, then goes to sit down.**

Alan, Melissa and Jerry are in Alan's office.

Alan Shore: Wait a second. So, the deadbeats are the ones who pay off their debt?

Jerry Espenson: Bingo! Within the credit card industry they're called deadbeats because they don't make any money off of them. The ones who don't pay off, they're the preferred customers because they're the ones they make money off of. They target people they know won't be able to pay. People like Melissa.

Alan Shore: Bingo!

Jerry Espenson: You making fun of me?

Alan Shore: No! Sir.

Jerry Espenson: You said what I say. That's making fun.

Alan Shore: No! It's just... I used to have a dog you see, and Bingo was his name oh. B. I... Never mind.

Melissa Hughes: **She comes in.** How we doing?

Alan Shore: We're suing them.

Melissa Hughes: Who?

Alan Shore: The company who gave you the credit card. Prominence Bank.

Melissa Hughes: We, we're suing them?

Jerry Espenson: Too big. Too big.

Alan Shore: The bigger they are, Jerry. We're suing them.

Melissa Hughes: Hm.

Shirley, Denny Brad and Denise are in the conference room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Denise Bauer: What do you mean I'm not testifying?

Shirley Schmidt: The problem is, if Brad testifies and you testify that gives the prosecution two more opportunities to play out this horrific chain of events. There's nothing you can say that Brad can't say.

Denise Bauer: I can support what he says.

Shirley Schmidt: True. But since you're the one that twiddled the severed finger using it for blackmail purposes, there's the outside chance you'll come off as less than adorable.

Denise Bauer: Shirley...

Shirley Schmidt: Denise, the D.A. will have a field day. **To Brad.** You ready?

Brad Chase: I am.

Shirley Schmidt: More importantly. **She walks over to Denny.** Are you ready?

Denny Crane: Lock and... **He seems at loss for words.**

Shirley Schmidt: Denny, maybe I should take this.

Denny Crane: Shirley, if the jury doesn't get to see me in action they'll feel cheated. They'll think we cheated them.

Shirley Schmidt: Walk them through what happened, giving Brad a chance to explain why he did what he did and...

Denny Crane: I know how to question a witness, Shirley.

Shirley Schmidt: Denny, our whole case is his testimony.

Denny Crane: Who's? **Shirley hangs her head. Brad looks at Denise.** Kidding. I'm ready.

Shirley Schmidt: Just for fun, show me how you plan to start off.

Denny Crane: **He sighs.** Brad, what occasioned you to even get involved, pretending to be an FBI officer? His response will occasion the jury to feel and experience the horror of a child being kidnapped. Like it was their child.

Shirley Schmidt: Good.

Denny Crane: There.

Shirley Schmidt: **To Brad.** You must show contrition. You must be apologetic. You did what you did to get the child back, but you feel compassion and sympathy for everybody you victimized.

Brad Chase: Got it.

Shirley Schmidt: **To Denny.** Do not make yourself the story. **She looks to Brad.** The jury needs to be focused on him.

Denny Crane: Did you just say don't make me the story?

Alan, Melissa and Jerry are in Alan's office.

Melissa Hughes: He's coming here? Tomorrow?

Alan Shore: Claiming he wants to work things out.

Jerry Espenson: Can't meet. Can't meet.

Alan Shore: What do you mean you can't meet?

Jerry Espenson: I don't do meetings! I'm background.

Alan Shore: You've got all the expertise, Jerry, and I need you to be around.

Jerry Espenson: I'll give you a memo.

Alan Shore: Just a whisper in my ear. You won't even have to talk out loud. And I'll do all the gesturing. **Jerry turns around from his pacing and gives Alan a look.** I'm sorry. That was an extremely poor joke and I apologize.

Melissa Hughes: Is he like the president of the company? Or...

Alan Shore: He's their general counsel, actually. Happens to be in Boston. Jerry, I'm sorry. I need you.

Jerry Espenson: **He nods his head.** I'll be present. I'll give feedback on my computer. You can read it off the screen.

Alan Shore: Deal!

Brad is sitting in the dark in his office at Crane, Poole and Schmidt. Denise comes in.

Denise Bauer: **She comes in.** I am so sorry. I'm the one who led you into all this.

Brad Chase: You have nothing to apologize for, Denise. I made my own decision.

Denise Bauer: But a week ago you were up for partner, and now you're up on trial.

Brad Chase: Denise. The little boy is alive.

Denise Bauer: Unfortunately that's not the issue.

Brad Chase: Well, it is for me.

Denise Bauer: Are you always like this?

Brad Chase: Like what?

Denise Bauer: Brad. You could be looking at jail. It's okay to show a little fear.

Brad Chase: Okay. Thanks.

Denise Bauer: Okay. Thanks. That's it?

Brad Chase: Denise, what do you want me to do? Cry? We got the kid back. If I had to do it all over again. I would do it again. I'll live with the consequences.

Denise Bauer: Okay. So I'll see you in court?

Brad Chase: Yep.

Alan, Melissa and Jerry are in the conference room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Melissa Hughes: How's my hair? Does my hair work?

Alan Shore: It does appear to grow each month.

Melissa Hughes: It's my first settlement conference. There is a lot of power in a woman's hair.

Alan Shore: Yes there is. I think we'll let my slightly less powerful hair run the meeting.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: **He comes in.** Good morning! Melvin Palmer. How are you?

Alan and Melvin shake hands.

Alan Shore: I'm grand, but I go by Alan Shore.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Ha. A pleasure.

Alan Shore: This is Melissa Hughes.

Melissa Hughes: I'm a would be your plaintiff.

Melissa and Melvin shake hands.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: And real honor to meet you, Melissa.

Melvin walks over to Jerry and holds out his hand. Jerry stands up but doesn't offer his hand.

Alan Shore: Jerry Espenson. He doesn't shake.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Excellent! Well then! Shall we get started?

Alan Shore: You're not gonna be cheerful about all this are you?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: You know, I've been told to keep my exuberance down until people have had their morning coffee. Ha. Let me tell you a little about me.

Alan Shore: Oh dear.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: I am a problem solver. It's what I love to do. Now I consider it a personal failure when one of my cases ends up in court. I also feel I haven't succeeded when people walk away from one of my tables unhappy.

Alan Shore: It's actually our table.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: What I do in matters like this? I set aside my whole day. Okay? Cause the goal is finding a solution. **He opens his cuffs and rolls up his sleeves.** One that works for you. And one that works for us. That's just the way I work. So. This doesn't have to be an acrimonious experience.

Alan Shore: Wonderful. Why don't we begin then by you giving her back all her money?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well! Ha! Well! Ha! I don't know if we can do that. But I do think we can make this pretty young woman happy. Okay then. We have this saying in Texas, 'Time to let the horses out of the barn.'

Alan shakes his head slightly and neighs softly.

In Judge Clark Brown's courtroom.

Clerk: You swear to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, so help you God?

Brad Chase: I do.

The clerk leaves and Brad sits down in the witness chair.

Shirley Schmidt: **In stage whisper to Denny who seems to be sleeping.** Denny!

Denny Crane: **He gets up.** First off, if it had been my child who had been kidnapped? There are no words that could express my gratitude. I'm sure we all agree.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection.

Judge Clark Brown: Mr Crane. Do not address the jury.

Denny Crane: Oh. Sorry. Brad. First question.

Brad Chase: I got involved because my colleague Denise Bauer came to me distraught that her housekeeper's child had been kidnapped and frustrated the police and FBI were making no progress.

Denny Crane: Second question.

Brad Chase: I went to a friend of mine Kevin Drummond at the FBI and asked him for help.

Denny Crane: Third question.

Brad Chase: He told me that while the FBI was limited by State action that private citizens had sometimes successfully taken things into their own hands.

Denny Crane: Fourth question.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection. He's not asking any questions.

Denny Crane: I told him last night the questions I was gonna ask him. Judge I'm just trying to speed things up for the jury who I know are already annoyed at even being here for this ridiculous prosecution.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection.

Judge Clark Brown: Mr Crane.

Denny Crane: Call me Denny, Judge. Denny Crane.

Judge Clark Brown: You will ask the question in their entirety so that we may understand what the witness is answering. Outrageous!

Denny Crane: You kidnapped an innocent man?
Brad Chase: Now the brother wasn't so innocent. He'd provided safe harbor for the suspect, and he had information.
Denny Crane: So that's when you used violence?
Brad Chase: Threatened violence.
Denny Crane: Only threatened?
Brad Chase: Only threatened.
Denny Crane: Didn't use it?
Brad Chase: Did not.
Denny Crane: What a fiend.
A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: He's making light of a kidnapping, false imprisonment...
Brad Chase: Objection!
Judge Clark Brown: You're a witness.
Shirley Schmidt: Objection!
Denise Bauer: Objection!
Denny Crane: Objection!
Judge Clark Brown: Stop it!!
Brad Chase: None of us is making light of this, Judge. We're just trying to put some perspective on things.
A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: There is no question before the witness.
Judge Clark Brown: Sustained.
Denny Crane: What can you tell us about perspective?
A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection.
Denny Crane: That's a question!
Judge Clark Brown: Sustained.
Denny Crane: The brother told you about the priest?
Brad Chase: Yes.
Denny Crane: And that's when you went to the church and cut off his fingers?
Brad Chase: I swung an axe at his imported door knowing it cost a lot of money.
Denny Crane: How much?
Brad Chase: Nine thousand.
Denny Crane: Dollars?
Brad Chase: Dollars.
Denny Crane: For a door?
Brad Chase: He somehow could afford it.
A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Objection.
Denny Crane: Bitch, bitch.
Judge Clark Brown: Mr Crane!
Denny Crane: Call me Denny, Judge.
Judge Clark Brown: No! I will not call you Denny!
Denny Crane: So you swung at the door?
Brad Chase: I only wanted to make him think that I was about to destroy the door and he stuck his hand out right at the last second. I never meant to make contact. It was an accident.
Denny Crane: You didn't mean to hit his hand?
Brad Chase: No. And I regret that I did. To the extent that it led to the safe recovery of Tito Perez, I'm glad about that. But I never meant to cause any physical injury to Father Ryan. And again, I apologize.
Denny turns toward the jury, mouths his name, then goes to sit down.

Shirley, Denny, Brad and Denise make their way through a mob of reporters and photographers.

Denny Crane: Denny Crane. Fair and balanced. The nut job Fair and balanced. Denny Crane.
They walk into an elevator. Shirley pushes the stop button.

Shirley Schmidt: That was you not becoming the story?

Denny Crane: I was practically invisible.

Shirley Schmidt: What the hell was that about?

Denny Crane: The prosecutor wants to horrify the jury. We were diluting... the horro... scope.

Shirley Schmidt: To my money you trivialized it. You may have just alienated the jury.

Denny Crane: People like a happy ending. The child came home safe. We play the happy ending.

Shirley Schmidt: It's not that simple, Denny.

Denny Crane: Yes it is, Shirley. We're talking juries. It always comes down to simple. And, I mean, there's nobody simpler than me.

Paul and Shirley are in Paul's office at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Paul Lewiston: Please tell me you're making this up.

Shirley Schmidt: I am not. He said, "Question one. Question two. Question three." And so fort. Almost as if he were deliberately mocking the whole proceeding. And we could very well lose, Paul.

Paul Lewiston: Is he out of his mind?

Shirley Schmidt: Well, he's always out of it. Clearly it's where he's most comfortable.

Denny Crane: **He comes in.** What are you doing in my office?

Paul Lewiston: This is my office, Denny.

Denny Crane: Oh. That must mean I've come to see you. Why?

Paul Lewiston: I don't know.

Denny Crane: It could be to say we were right to mock the proceedings. A child was saved. That's what you say in your closing.

Shirley Schmidt: It isn't.

Denny Crane: Yes it is. That's the button for your closing: It's that simple. **He starts to leave.** It's not polite to talk about crazy people behind their backs.

Alan, Melissa, Jerry and Melvin are in the conference room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Melissa Hughes: I accept that I have debt and that I should pay it. But to suddenly up it from ten to fifty thousand? I...

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Melissa. You know in the short time that we've spent together I can appreciate that you are an honorable person.

Jerry Espenson: **Typing on his computer.** That's a FOUR HUNDRED PERCENT increase.

Alan reads it off the screen.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: And one that lives up to her obligation. Am I right about that?

Melissa Hughes: Yes.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well, you did apply for the Prominence bank card and entered into a contract accepting its terms. I'm right about that too, aren't I?

Jerry Espenson: **Typing on his computer.** Argue NO MEETING OF THE MINDS. The contract should be voided because they deceived Melissa. **Alan reads it off the screen.**

Attorney Melvin Palmer: And you then went out and made voluntary purchases pursuant to the terms of that contract.

Melissa Hughes: These sound like trial questions.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Oh. I assure you they are not. No. See. Here's the thing about me I like to take the adversary out of adversary system. Okay? I'm just trying to get the full picture here so that I can better understand where you're comin' from. And so you can better understand me.

Alan Shore: You seem swell.

In Judge Clark Brown's courtroom A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg is giving his closing argument.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: Of course we're all happy that Tito Perez was rescued safely. But, the ends cannot justify the means. Not when the means involve kidnapping, FBI impersonation, false imprisonment, chopped off fingers, extortion and assault. And whether he intended to sever the fingers of Father Ryan or not? He clearly and intentionally swung that axe with reckless disregard. We are a nation of laws. We are also a country that stands for civil liberties and human rights. These are principals imbedded in our constitution. Our Bill of Rights. This man not only broke the law. He obliterated fundamental constitutional tenants in the process. Vigilante justice may be acceptable in other lands? It is not so here. This is...

Denny Crane: *Under his breath.* Here it comes.

A.D.A. Frank Ginsberg: ...the United States of America.

He goes to sit down. Denny moves to get up. Shirley stops him.

Shirley Schmidt: Don't even think about it. *She gets up.* We keep hearing about the rights of the accused in this country. What about the victims? What about his rights? We're supposed to say, "Sorry, Tito, we'd love to save you, but there are these rules?" There's a murder in this country every thirty-one minutes, a forcible rape every six minutes, a robbery every one minute. But, hey! Let's all band together and protect the constitutional principals that make this country great. Things clearly got ugly here. But a human life was at stake. With all due respect to the civil liberties of the suspect's brother, with great deference to canon law and Father Ryan's imported door and his fingers, the life of a four year old boy was at stake. Brad Chase saved that little boys life. *She points to Tito then looks at Denny. Denny mouths, "Say it."*

Shirley Schmidt: It's that simple.

Alan, Melissa, Hands and Jerry are in the conference room at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Melissa Hughes: You're not giving me anything here?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: First of all, if I were to forgive your obligations, believe it or not? I'd be hurting you.

Melissa Hughes: Hurting me?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Okay, this is me. The way I raise my own kids. It's not what you give them. It's how you teach them to get things for themselves.

Alan Shore: *He moves in, slowly reaches his hand out and feels Jerry's face. Jerry gives him a questioning look.* Just making sure you're real.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: *He chuckles.* You know, I don't know you yet Mr Shore but I get this feeling I'm gonna like you.

Alan Shore: May I ask? You spoke of honoring obligations as if it's a good thing?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Indeed I did.

Alan Shore: Then why do you and other credit card companies refer to the customers who pay off their debts promptly as, deadbeats?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well, that's not a term I would personally use.

Alan Shore: No. Cause you're swell. But your company uses the term like a mantra.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Here's the thing. Let me tell you a little about me and why I chose to represent Prominence Bank. Like any other credit card service it's a business, sure. But it is a service. We help people who are short of cash. Help them make their rent so they don't get thrown out on the street. Help them make a car payment so they can get to work. Help them buy Christmas presents for their children during tough times.

Alan Shore: You're like Santa Claus.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: I can see you and I need to go out and shoot some ducks together.

Alan Shore: Do you explain all the credit terms to your customers?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well, they're on the back of every application.

Jerry Espenson: *He suddenly gets and places an application on the table.* Like this? With the tiny print? I have JD and an MBA from Harvard and even I can't make heads nor tails of this deception and fraud. It's deception and fraud!

Nobody speaks for a moment. He slowly sits down.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well, look who found his tongue! And you Mr Shore. You're a hoot. That's what.

Alan Shore: Is it true your company actually targets people with bad credit ratings?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well, we have an extremely complex marketing strategy, one that I'd be happy to take some time and explain to you.

Alan Shore: That's okay. I think I've got it. You find people in dire straits and market directly to them with the hope of forming a lifelong relationship. I had a former client who kind of operated his business the same way.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Really? What line of work was he in?

Alan Shore: He sold heroin.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Ha. My friend, I'm not a man who offends easily.

Alan Shore: So I could call you a loan shark and you'd be fine? When you charge your customers thirty percent interest, you're a loan shark.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: That term implies criminal conduct.

Alan Shore: It's not criminal because your parasitic lobbyists have penetrated both aisles of Congress. The credit card industry is more profitable than McDonalds, Microsoft and Walmart. You've got yourself a multibillion dollar racket going, Mr Palmer.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Given that we are bigger than Walmart or McDonalds or Microsoft we enjoy some security. And potential lawsuits like this? We have an expression in Texas, Mr Shore. You're all hat, and no cattle.

Alan Shore: **He chuckles.** Here's the thing about me. I am a hoot. But I insist on putting adversary back into the system. And I do it openly and notoriously for all to hear. While a swell guy like you doesn't want the public to know that of the thousands of industries tracked by the Better Business Bureau the credit card racket is number one in customer complaints. You don't want them to know that you deliberately target those who won't be able to pay off their debts. People you call, 'Revolvers'. People who see 'zero percent interest' in big blue print and don't know that with just one late payment you skyrocket their interest to thirty percent. That if they so much as inquire about leasing a car you raise their rates. You don't want the public to know that while over seven million families have filed for bankruptcy in the last five years you got Congress to change the bankruptcy code to make it next to impossible for people to discharge credit card debt. You don't want people to know that the credit card industry is essentially a pack of hyenas crunching on the bones of the poor. Do you? I smell something awful. **He leans in to smell Jerry's body.** I think it's you. Yes, this case has the stench of big tobacco and asbestos all over it. Luckily our firm has nine offices around the US, London and Hong Kong, strategically positioned for massive class action suits. And once the company you represent smells it too they'll find you're not nearly smart or powerful enough and they'll drop you for a firm that employs expertise and intimidation rather than down home hokum and smiley handshakes. And this is my favorite part, when your firm fires your obsequious ass for losing their client... Oh my God! The stress! Your tan will fade, you'll gain a few pounds, drink a bit more, scream at the kids, and maybe your wife will finally leave you. For the realtor who sells your house because after all he'll still be able to afford Christmas in Aruba and next year's convertible. Hey, fella. Don't worry about it. It'll be a hoot.

Melissa walks out of Alan's office and sees Brad standing pensively in the lounge at Crane, Poole and Schmidt.

Melissa Hughes: You okay?

Brad doesn't answer.

Shirley Schmidt: Brad! Jury's back.

Brad Chase: Already?

Brad grabs his coat.

Shirley Schmidt: Let's go.

They leave. In the hall they pass Melvin. He is on his way to Alan's office.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Mr Shore! May I borrow a moment of your time?

Alan Shore: At thirty percent interest.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Ha, ha, ha. You know what you are? You're a pistol, that's what. Listen. I've thought a lot of many of the issues you raised. And, well, you touched me.

Alan Shore: Did I?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: It was certainly never our intent to victimize Melissa. Or anybody for that matter in her financial constraints.

Alan Shore: No?

Attorney Melvin Palmer: I talked to my clients. Relayed to them that, well...

Alan Shore: You were touched.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: We've decided to forgive all debts and loans to Melissa. Just wipe it clean. How about that?

Alan Shore: Now I'm touched.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: 'Course, ahem, my people are concerned about precedent. And others demanding similar amnesty. So the offer would have to be conditioned on confidentiality.

Alan Shore: Mmm.

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Well! May I say as a personal aside, it has been a real pleasure meeting both you and Melissa. I wish you continued health and happiness in the future.

Alan Shore: You know we have a little saying in Massachusetts, 'Maybe someday you'll get horribly sick and die.' **Melvin looks startled.** Until then!

Attorney Melvin Palmer: Oh! **He starts to laugh.** You. You dog. **He leaves.** Ah

In Judge Clark Brown's courtroom. The Judge hands the clerk a piece of paper.

Judge Clark Brown: Mr Foreman. Have you reached a verdict?

Jury Foreman: We have, Your Honor.

Judge Clark Brown: What say you?

Jury Foreman: On the charge of kidnapping we find the defendant, Bradley Chase, not guilty. On the charge of false imprisonment we find the defendant, Bradley Chase, not guilty. On the charge of aggravated assault, we find the defendant, Bradley Chase, not guilty.

Judge Clark Brown: The jury is dismissed. The court thanks you for your service. Mr Chase? You are free to go. Though personally I find your behavior to be shocking and outrageous! We are adjourned.

Brad Chase: **To Shirley.** Thank you.

Shirley Schmidt: You got lucky, Brad. You do know that?

Brad Chase: I know. **To Denny.** Denny? Thanks. **To Denise.** Thank you.

Alan and Melissa are in Alan's office.

Melissa Hughes: First of all, I just wanna say, "Thank you" which, of course, goes totally without saying, but I'm saying it anyway. Second, I will work here for free to pay off my legal fees if you want me to.

Alan Shore: I don't.

Melissa Hughes: Third, and this is not a come-on it is just a statement of fact. When you rattled off that whole 'you don't want the public to know' laundry list. That was the single sexiest thing I have ever seen a man do.

Alan Shore: You should see me when I do it naked.

Melissa Hughes: I'm just gonna go, uhm, change my... **Alan's head comes up.** ... screensaver. **She leaves.**

Denny is out on the balcony, smoking. Alan comes out with drink in one hand and cigar in the other.

Denny Crane: We won our case. Did you hear?

Alan Shore: I did. Brad must be relieved.

Denny Crane: How'd your case with Hands go?

Alan Shore: Well!

Denny Crane: Can I ask you something, 'Friend to friend'?

Alan Shore: Of course.

Denny Crane: Shirley made this comment, 'don't make it about me'. Do I do that?

Alan Shore: Get outta town.

Denny Crane: Hm. Seriously. Do I act like I'm the only one in the room?

Alan Shore: Denny, one of the things I love about you is when we talk; often it's as if you're not even in the room.

Denny Crane: Promise? **Alan nods his head.** I was brilliant by the way. I wish you'd been there, Alan.

Alan Shore: I wish I had as well, Denny. I must tell you though it's not that I don't appreciate the value of fascistic problem solving, but given Brad and the FBI's tactics here, if I had been the prosecutor Brad'd be in prison tonight. And if I'd be representing the pedophile I'd be getting him out.

Denny Crane: I'd have shot him.

Alan Shore: Right.

Denny Crane: Think we'll ever see the day when the defense lawyer will be legally permitted to shoot the defendant?

Alan Shore: We seem to be making progress.

Denny Crane: Denny Crane. I'll be your attorney. **With his hand he makes a motion of shooting a gun. He chuckles. Alan looks pensive.**

~ fin ~