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The Ultimate Life

By Brian Bird

Jason, if you're standing here now,
it means that not
only have you succeeded
in receiving all of my gifts,
but you have done so beyond
the boundaries that I have set.
I guess that means that
I have succeeded as well.
What I could not accomplish
in life, I've done in death.
As long as you're still
alive, I will be too.
I love you, son.
Goodbye, Jason.
Are we on yet? Give me a level, Jason.
Testing, one, two,
three. I am Jason Stevens.
Can we get this thing rolling?
Mr. Stevens has meetings
backed up all day.
Quiet, please.
Whenever you're ready.
Hi, I'm Jason Stevens,
director of Stevens Foundation.
For the last two years...
You seem about a million
miles away, Lexi girl.
Mm. Trying to figure
out what my next move is.
Have you told Mr. Billionaire
boyfriend about your Haiti plans?
Not yet. I don't know.
It's a big decision, I'm just
not sure how he's going to react.
Well, it seems you have
something to react to.
You're being paged at
the nurse's station.
- For what?
- Don't worry about what for, just go.
OK, I'm here. What's the emergency?
Is that Miss Hastings back there?
Alexia Drummond, you have been
summoned to a night out on the town

- by a Mr. Jason...

- Stevens?

Stevens! Yes, yes.

Your wardrobe will be provided.

Oh, wow. That's beautiful.

Lex, there's something I need to say
that I should have said a long time ago.

For the past two years, when

I first saw you and Emily...

I can't get your face, your
beautiful face, out of my mind.

Your eyes... your smile...

There's something I need to say. I
should have said it a long time ago.

Ms. Drummond, I hope you
have a wonderful evening.

Thank you, Jim.

- Wow.

- "Wow" yourself.

Tonight's menu, spinach
salad with mangos and chutney.

Then the main course,
steamed broccoli with lobster,
specially flown in from Maine,
with lemon and drawn butter.

And ice cream sandwiches for dessert.

You picked all my favorites.

Oh.

To us.

Jason, thank you.

I love my dress, and you've
made me feel so special.

But you know you don't have to...

...play our song?

Oh...

Oh, my gosh.

Oh!

Get to work.

Lex, there's something I need to say
that I should have said a long time ago.

Not a day passes I don't think

about your beautiful face,
and your eyes and your smile.

You're so sweet.

Jason, there's something I
need to talk to you about.

- It's important. I was gonna...

- Let me finish, please.

Lex, you're... you're my heart,
I can't imagine life without you in it.

Jason!

- Jason Stevens?

- Yes?

You've been served. Have a nice evening.

Mr. Stevens, I am so sorry. I
don't know how he got past me.

- That's perfect. Just perfect.

- What is it?

My family. Aunts, uncles, the
whole greedy bunch of them.

Suing me for breach of fiduciary trust
in the handling of Red's foundation.

I'm really sorry, Lex.

I wanted tonight to...

I just, I have to deal with this.

Please have the limo
take Miss Drummond home.

So, Mr. Stevens, if the court were to
find evidence to support your claims,
what are you proposing be done?

Your Honor, on behalf of
my brother and my sister,
and the rest of the
heirs of Red Stevens,

we request that Jason be removed
as director of the foundation.

And who are you suggesting
would replace him?

- Me, Your Honor.

- Why, Uncle Bill?

You don't have enough money?

My grandfather wanted
me to have the foundation
because he knew his own
children couldn't be trusted.

And that just goes to show just
how far gone he was at the end,
that he left a billion dollar

foundation in the hands of this spoiled,
no-good, party boy who wants absolutely
nothing to do with his own family.
OK, that's enough of
that. Both of you sit down.
I'm taking the plaintiff's
discovery into chambers
and we'll reconvene tomorrow at ten to
determine whether we're going to trial.
Case adjourned.
Miss Drummond, it's so
nice to hear back from you.
Dr. Lousand, good to see your face.
Um, I had a few questions for you.
- I'll be with you in a minute.
- Hi.
- Afternoon, Miss Drummond.
- Oh, hi.
Um, I just wanted to see if I
could get a moment with Mr. Stevens.
I don't know. Mr. Hamilton
said no interruptions.
I guess I'm interrupting.
Hi. I'm sorry. I know
you're really busy.
Yeah, no. Hamilton just wants
us to get all our ducks in a row
for the hearing tomorrow
with the vultures. So...
Uh, I just needed to... needed to...
Uh...
I'm just going to say it.
There's this clinic in Haiti, and
they work with kids who have cancer...
it sounds terrific. That's
definitely a project we can take on.
Why don't you put together
some sort of proposal.
And once I'm through with
this stupid lawsuit...
- No, that's not what...
- ... we can do some great things.
That's not what I meant. I didn't
come here to pitch you for money.

I already made plans to go down there.

They really need experienced nurses,

- and I just thought that...

- Even better.

Once I get past this, we can

both jet down there and we can...

Mr. Stevens? I apologize,

but Mr. Hamilton says we can't

continue prepping without you.

OK, thank you.

- I'm really sorry, Lex, I gotta...

- I know. Um...

- Just whenever you have a second.

- Yeah, sure.

"IS THIS IT"]

Jason?

- What is it?

- She's gone, Hamilton.

- Who's gone?

- Alexia.

Six months in Haiti.

Why would she do this?

I'm sure she didn't just, on a

whim, decide to move to Haiti.

But somehow you're just

finding out about it now.

Yeah, well, if you've not noticed,

I've been a little

busy at the foundation.

I haven't had a lot of "me" time lately.

Or "we" time either, I gather.

Jason, your grandfather

had high expectations

when he left the entire estate to you.

And I guess I've pushed

you a little too hard also.

The 12 gifts that Red taught you,

any idea where they came from?

- No.

- Well, you're about to find out.

See that box over there?

Take a look in there, there's a book.

Only two people in the world knew

that your grandfather kept a journal

from the time he was 15.
One was me, and the other
was your grandmother.
Maybe you can find
something from his past
to help you here in the present,
or possibly in your future.
I'm gonna go back to bed now.
We've got court in the morning.
You're welcome to stay the night.
That's quite a story.
"February, 1941.
My ninth grade teacher, Mrs. Halpern,
gave me this book full of blank pages.
She said it might help
to put my ideas on paper.
Sounds a little girly to me,
but she said that's a diary.
Boys keep journals.
There's a difference.
September 3rd, 1941.
Someday, I swear to heaven, I
am going to be a billionaire. "
February 23rd, 1941.
Finally quit school and got me
my own job today, delivering ice.
From sun up till sundown.
- Move! You're blocking the driveway!
- Sorry.
Come on! Let's go!
That snotty rich kid
did me a favor today
because I might not have ever
seen that newspaper on the ground.
It was right there in print.
This man, Andrew Carnegie,
had started out working in
a telegraph office at 12.
He didn't even go to school, just read
books whenever he could, just like me.
I bet he had to put up
with all those rich kids
turning up their noses at him, too.
And he ended up a billionaire anyway.

I swear to heaven, and to every one
of those snobs who look down on me,
so will I.

Soup's getting cold.

It would be nice to have
something else for a change.

There, now you got something else.

- She sounds bad again, Pop.

- I know.

- She needs her medicine.

- What am I gonna do, huh?

I can't afford it right now.

Hospital's still after me
for last time she was there.

Well, someday I'm gonna buy
that whole darn hospital,
and they'll wish they treated
her better, I swear to heaven.

What are you babbling about?

I'm gonna be a billionaire,
like this man, Andrew Carnegie.

Get it in your head, son.

You ain't ever gonna be rich.

Only thing you're ever gonna be able to
count on is coming up on the short end.

That's what was handed me
by my daddy, and I'm sorry,
but that's all you're
ever gonna get from me.

- What is it?

- Just going to work.

On, baby.

I'm sorry you have to work so hard.

- It's not fair.

- It's OK.

No, it's not.

I'll be up out of this bed soon...

...and then you can quit that job,
and we'll get you
enrolled back in school.

I love you, Mama.

I love you, too, son.

Get some rest, OK?

Get some rest.

September 4th, 1941.

I'm leaving home today.

I don't know for how long, but
it's one less mouth to feed,
and maybe Mama can get her medicine now.

No matter what Daddy says, I don't
accept being poor as my destiny.

I know my fortune's out there somewhere.

And the next time he sees
me, I'll be a rich man.

You can't make your move until
the train leaves the yard.

Wait, wait.

Go on, scram!

Get him!

Let's go. Let's go!

Come on! Come on!

Come on!

Come on! Come on! Come on!

Give me your hand! Jump!

Jump!

- What are you doing?

- I'm, uh... making my golden list.

- Your what?

- My golden list.

Something my ma taught me.

Every day, rain or shine,
I make a list of ten things
that I'm grateful to God for.

Things you're grateful
for? You're kidding, right?

I've got lots of things
to be grateful for.

Everybody got at least ten
things to be grateful for.

- I got nothing.

- You sure about that?

- Sure as I could be.

- You got your health, right?

- I'll be grateful someday.

- No, no. You gotta be grateful now.

You gotta be grateful for
the little things in life.

Otherwise, you'll never

be grateful for nothing.
You know what? Come on! We gotta get
off the train before we hit the yard.
Now you really got something to
be grateful for. We're in Texas!
Wait!
Whoa!
- Morning, fellas. Morning.
Name's Jacob Early.
I'm looking for six strong backs
to put up some cattle fence.
Pick me! Pick me!
Right here!
Mustache. Older guy.
- Out of the way, Slick!
- I don't think so!
Mister! Hey, I'm your man! I can carry
50 pounds of ice up three stories!
What the heck, kid?!
That's all right, young
man. That's all right.
I enjoy an eager beaver. Come on.
Well, you've obviously put up
a few posts. You too, climb in.
Young and strong.
That's six. Let's go, fellas.
Howdy.
That's a good-looking
post there, Slick.
Thanks.
Think it'll hold up to 2,000
pounds of heifer leaning against it?
It'll hold.
Maybe Mr. Early can have you
build him a rabbit fence next.
Got another one for you.
You best water up, Slick. The sun will
lay you out flat if you're not careful.
Don't worry, I didn't spit in it.
I wasn't worried, but I am now.
You can trust me.
That's good work.
Another week, you might
catch up with the rest of us.

Just yanking your chain, Slick.
By the way, name's not
Slick. It's Red. Red Stevens.
Gus Caldwell. Girls call me Stud.
I'm gonna stick with Gus.
You seem to know your
way around a ranch.
Boy, howdy, my whole life.
- Till two year ago.
- What happened?
Stinking Depression.
Bank foreclosed on us.
Now my daddy's stuck working other
men's ranches, trying to make ends meet.
Me, too.
Had to quit school, but
least I'm doing something.
My daddy shovels coal back in
Baton Rouge, when there's work,
so I know what it means
to be on the short end.
Someday, I'm gonna have me my own ranch,
and it'll be bigger than this one.
Then I'm gonna take over the bank.
Yeah?
Well, whatever I do, it's gonna be big,
'cause I ain't stopping
till I'm a billionaire.
That's a big number.
Better plan on a different
career than ranching then.
You oughta head out to California.
They got plenty of jobs out there.
Hey! Maybe you can get into the movies.
I hear The Three Stooges
are looking for a fourth one.
Ante up, gents.
Five-card stud. Like me.
You better give me something
I can work with this time, kid,
or I'll run your hind parts
back to nursery school.
September 6th, 1941.
Working for my supper and

few bucks is just surviving.
I don't want to end up like
the fat man or the old guy,
digging holes when I'm their age.
They should be raking in the
money as their own bosses by now.
He's got what?
Well, so quick to the punch.
Come on, Red, where you going?
There's too many old guys at this table.
Hey, Red.
- What can I do for you?
- Mr. Early...
- I'd like to know how I can be you.
- Be me?
I want to know everything I
can about how to be successful.
Just like you are. I want... I
wanna know how to get what you have.
Have a seat.
Success.
Hm...
Well...
Success takes a lot of things, son.
A lot of things working together.
I guess you don't want be a sheep.
You want to be the bellwether.
The bellwether?
The leader, son.
A leader of men.
To make things successful for yourself.
If I get that fence finished a day
early, does that save you any money?
Sure. On feed. Yeah, you bet.
You split those savings with me, I'll
have that fence finished by tomorrow.
I do like you, son. But
it ain't gonna happen.
We'll see.
Hm...
Where's Red? His bed's made.
That little son of a gun!
Better not have quit on us.
We've only got two days

left to finish that fence.
What the heck, Red?
You've pushed this fence down
a hundred yards since yesterday.
- When did you come out here?

- 3:

- Three-what? -
Three in the morning.
Why? Why not?
Sooner we get this fence
done, sooner we get paid.
Yeah, but why would we want
to cut off another day of work?
Boss ain't paying us by the day.
He's paying us by the finished fence.
Now, I figure if we work
in two groups of three,
we can move even faster.
One man measures and digs,
the next man places the
post, the third buries it,
they place the wire, and they move to
the next hole that's already been dug.
Like an assembly line.
All right? Let's go!
Big guy, here you are.
Thank you very much.
There you go. Thank you very much.
There you are. Thank you very much.
Oh, yeah.
And a little extra here.
Thank you very much.
I've never seen this much
money in one place in my life.
You were the bellwether, kid.
And you came in a day early.
Didn't think it could be done.
- Thank you.
- You bet now.
If you're still around these
parts, in a month or so, stop by.
I might have a job to give you.
I don't begrudge you

making some extra money,
but that's the last time
you'll ever one up me, Slick.
Dolly, bring me a big,
juicy hamburger, medium rare.
- Pack it up to go. Coming
right up, Mr. Wescott.
Gonna catch flies with your
trap open like that, kid.
Sorry, I didn't mean to
stare, sir. It's just...
I've never seen a belt
buckle like that before.
- Had it custom made.
- Looks expensive.
Oh, you can be sure of it.
I'm headed to California
to seek my fortune.
California? What do you wanna
go all the way out there for?
More money here in Texas.
It's just cow pastures far as I can see.
You're just not looking deep enough.
Trust me, there's more of it in
Texas than God knows what to do with.
That'll be \$3.50, Mr. Wescott.
You're talking about
oil, aren't you, mister?
Keep the change, Dolly. Buy yourself
something to go with that pretty face.
Goodness. Thank you, Mr. Wescott.
Am I right? It's oil.
Oil...
- I cannot believe you broke it already.
- Sorry.
Howdy.
Did you say "gug-d?"
Nuh-uh.
He's kind of a strange
talker, but he's cute.
Invite him to the dance.
There's a teen dance over
at the Tyler High School gym.
You're a teen, right?

Mm-hm.

That's swell.

Directions are on the flyer.

Hope to see you there.

OK, bye.

Maybe he's from a foreign country.

GIRL 22 I don't think that's it.

Maybe he's mentally...

Stop it. He's just shy.

Come on, Red. You can do this.

- You made it?

- Come on, doll, it's our song!

Hey, Gus... I think this

young man was here first.

You did want to ask me to dance, right?

You?

You're like toe fungus, kid.

Just when I thought I got

rid of you, you show up again!

All right!

All right, everybody, grab your

partner because it is time to tag dance.

Oh...

- Come here, cutie.

- Thanks, but...

Listen, if you wanna

dance with her, follow me.

Switch partners!

- She...

- Hi.

- Hi.

That's good. An actual word.

Thought I'd try to lead with

something real simple to help you out.

I'm not always so tongue-tied.

I'm not sure whether I should take

that as a compliment or criticism.

Compliment. Definitely compliment.

Switch partners!

You're not from around here, are you?

Baton Rouge.

So, what do you think of Tyler, Texas?

I didn't like it at first.

But now it's starting to grow on you?

I think I wanna marry you.
Well, you're not tongue-tied anymore.
- I'm Red.
- Yes, you are.
What? Oh, no, no, no, my name...
my name is Red. Red Stevens.
Well, Red Stevens,
my name is Hanna Roberts.
September 8th, 1941.
Hanna, what a girl.
I feel paralyzed around her.
It's like my mouth
has a mind of its own.
Maybe I'll give Tyler, Texas
one more chance before I move on.
Red?
What are you doing here?
I was hoping I could walk you home.
- Come on, Hanna.
- Just a second.
Red, I'm flattered.
I had a really nice time at the dance.
But I don't think my dad would
let me get serious with a boy
- who doesn't go to school.
- I was in school, back home.
But I don't need school
to make my fortune.
About done there, hayseed? We got to go!
Hey, learn some manners, Ace! Someday,
this "hayseed's" gonna be a billionaire!
Hanna, we gotta go.
Maybe Daddy Warbucks there
can drive you home in his limousine.
Fine! Just go already!
Red, a billionaire?
So you think you can be
like Andrew "Carneegie"
and make a billion dollars
and not have to go to school?
Yeah, something like that.
OK, I'll let you walk me home,
but I want you to meet someone first.
- Is that a diary?

- Girls have diaries.

- It's a journal.

- Journal then.

Write anything in there about
me after the dance last night?

Maybe.

But he could take the freshman exam
and then be in my class, couldn't he?

Hang on a second. I didn't
say I wanted to do that.

In theory, yes, but that's
a tall order for someone
who didn't finish the ninth grade.

I could take that test
and pass, if I wanted to.

But there's been
plenty of self-made men
who didn't finish school. Abraham
Lincoln, Benjamin Franklin,
Andrew Carnegie, they
were all self-educated,
they did pretty good on their own.

You have ambition, Red.

But a proper education is
important for your future.

- Now, we have a janitor's room...

- A janitor's room?

...that's not being
used. you can stay there.

Give me a number, at least
five digits and a multiplier.

Um...

56,679 times 61.

Four million four hundred fifty-seven
thousand, four hundred nineteen.

Now, as for science, I see you have
a little eczema on your hand there.

That's a ficus, also
known as Ficus benjamina.

The leaves produce an allergen
which can cause scratchy eyes,
the sniffles, and even eczema.

You're educated. You
make, what, \$1700 a year?

In this little nowhere Texas town. I'm sorry, sir, I want more.
Red, wait!
Hanna, I've made up my mind. There's nothing more to talk about. I just think school's a waste of time. Why do you have such a chip on your shoulder?
- A chip?
- It's like you're afraid or something. You don't know nothing about me. You're right, I don't. But I do know that everybody in this world needs somebody to believe in them. I would have believed in you, Red. Yes, you are. You're probably moping all the time, like this. All right, everyone, quiet down, please. Quiet down, please.
Ryan Hales, would you please find your seat. Thank you. Now, I would like to introduce you to your newest classmate. Red Stevens, would you stand please? Thank you, Red. All right, open your textbooks to page 57 and let's get started.
"PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT"]
So just what are you promising me, Red Stevens? Whatever you want. A fancy car, big house, bigger ring... What if I say I just want you?
- I'm turning red again.
- Yes, Red. You're red.
Turn the radio on! The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. This means war!
...a special news bulletin. The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii by air, President Roosevelt has just announced. The attack also was made on all

naval and military activities
on the principle island of Oahu.
We take you now to Washington.
A Japanese attack upon Pearl
Harbor naturally would mean war.
I didn't even know
where Pearl Harbor was,
or that the Hawaiian
Islands belong to us.

But what I do know is when
someone hits us, we hit back.

I'm going to be a pan'
of that. I have to.

...that such a declaration
would be granted...

You gonna walk in circles
all day or come see me?

Hey.

Hanna, there's something I need to...

Not really sure how to
tell you this, but...

What? What is it?

I signed up, Hanna.

- Signed up? For
what? - Mm-hm.

- The Army.

- What?

But, I don't... you're

15! How could they let you?

- I convinced them I was 17.

- This is crazy. You're too young.

I don't care about that, OK?

It's not fair, all those other
guys getting to go off and fight
while I'm stuck in this lousy
little town listening to lectures
about Emily

who-the-heck-cares Dickinson!

I'm not gonna let you do

this. I'm gonna go down there

- and I'm gonna tell them you're 15.

- You will not!

How can I become my

own man if I don't go?

How can I ever be worthy
of getting my share
if I'm not willing to go fight for it?
This is so selfish!
Selfish?
Look, you can say whatever you want,
but I am going, and I leave tomorrow.
Well, I won't wait for you, you hear me?
Fine by me.
There's a hundred other boys
out there who'll want me,
- and I could have any one I want!
- Good!
- They can have you, for all I care.
- I don't want your promise ring anyway!
Hey, good for you! You hear me?
Get married!
I don't need a girl anyway.
Oh, Red.
Oh, Red.
Hanna! Hanna!
Hanna!
I'm sorry!
I love you, Hanna.
I'll wait for you. I'll wait for you.
- Lieutenant!
- Yes, sir.
I need a runner.
You!
Run this message over to
Lt. Harris, First Platoon.
Five hundred yards up
over that tree line.
Private, did you hear me?
I got it, sir.
Get down!
- Watch it, you idiot!
- I was just trying to take cover!
You gotta be kidding me! Toe-fungus?!
Of all the stinking foxholes
I could have taken cover in!
- Well, get the heck out of mine!
- Be glad to.
I'm looking for Lieutenant

Harris, First Platoon.
Nah. Wrong hole. This is Second
Platoon. First is 200 yards that way.
Wish I could say, "Nice to see you. "
No, don't spoil the joy I'll
feel as I watch you leave.
Ahh!
Cover me!
Sarge, where's the medic?
Hey, Slick. Stay with me.
I'm not carrying your sorry
self just so you end up dead.
I can't believe I'm
saying this, but thank you.
Don't thank me yet.
Still, seems like we
might as well be friends.
Might as well. We always seem
to end up in the same place.
And when the war is over,
and this is all done...
...you still thinking about that ranch?
Oh, yeah, sure. You
still thinking about oil?
Just about all I think about.
Red, we've gone down
another 35 feet today.
Sucker rod's completely dry.
- Could be another duster, Red.
- I don't wanna hear that.
You keep that thought muzzled.
I spent the last dozen years
learning how to find other men oil,
and it's my turn now.
My gut says it's here.
I hope you boys weren't
planning on an early supper,
because we're going down another 35.
And we're gonna go down another 35
if we have to!
Oh, that's it! Enough! I quit!
I don't hire a man back
when he quits on me.
- We're running out of good men, Red.

- We'll find more good men.
Come on! We're going another 35.
Get those rods down.
You wanna have a catch, Dad?
Sorry, Billy-boy, I can't today.
It's OK, I'm making your milk
right now. It's all right.
Hey, Jackie. Jackie, look
what the cat dragged in.
It's your daddy.
Hey, Red, why don't you get washed
up. It's almost dinner time, OK?
Yeah, I know. Let me just
sit here for a minute.
You kids quit running in the house!
Sh, sh, sh, sh!
All right, all right.
Let's go on, then. Let's
go on, my very good boy.
Did you wanna help momma?
What's wrong?
- Oh, good, good boy.
- What's wrong?
Is the hole still dry?
If we don't hit it soon,
I ain't gonna make payroll,
let alone be able to
afford to feed you guys.
All I keep hearing is my old
man in the back of my head
talking about
"once-poor-always-poor" crap.
You gotta let that go.
I don't get it.
I mean, I don't. All the
geology reports look right
and we hit the salt formations in
the right depth. I just don't...
Maybe Gus could help.
He's already hit a few.
No, I'm not gonna ask Gus for advice.
Well, since there's nothing
you can do about it right now,
how about investing in us?

What are you talking about?

I know you think it's all about
bank accounts and oil wells.

But it's not.

It's right out there.

It's OK. It's all right.

It's OK, baby.

- Come on, son. Toss it in here.

- Are you serious, Dad?

Come on, kid. Fire it in.

- Keep your eye on it.

- Can you teach me how to throw a curve?

I don't know how to throw a curve.

Well, someone's gotta
know. What you call 'em?

- An expert.

- Yeah.

Can you find me one?

Yeah, we can find you one of them.

RED.' March 4th, 1955.

Out of the mouth of babes,
I went and found an expert.

From the looks of him,
he couldn't throw a curve
ball to save his life.

- Are you sure that we're...?

- Sh...

Whoo!

Come on!

All right, bring it down...

All right, take some.

Hold it.

You, take that... Stick it in quickly.

So, what are you listening to?

Does "shhh" not mean the same in
Texas as it does in California?

Sorry.

We agreed on three percent, right?

Yeah. Three percent.

- Here.

- Here what?

Drill here.

Good job! Can you think of
something else that adds up to ten?

- Good. You did it! Three plus seven.
Oh, Red!
Red! Red!
- We did it! We did it!
- Boys, come here!
- Come here!
- Oh, my goodness!
- Look at you!
- Can you believe it?!

Ruth! Ruth! Ruth!
- Come down here and look at your daddy!
- Ruth!
- Oh, my God.
- Are we gonna be rich now, Dad?
Oh, Billy-boy, are we gonna be rich?
We're gonna be stinking
rich! Stinking rich!
You won't have to worry about
anything, son, anything at all.
And you. Oh, baby.
I'm going to buy you the
biggest ring in Texas.
- Yeah, are you?
- Oh, yeah.
No more promise ring for Mrs.
Stevens. No, ma'am. No, ma'am.
You can have anything you
want. Anything you want.
OK, wait. Hold that thought. Hold that
thought. I got one more person to tell.
- No! Red! Red!
- I gotta go tell Gus!
Ha! Whoo-hoo! Ah!
I hit it! I hit it! I hit it!
Whoo!
- Took you long enough, kid.
- Oh, I hit it! I hit it big, baby!
Well... Yeah, you just remember,
you're still one to my three.
Oh, don't worry about that, Gus.
Don't worry, I'm going way past three.
Pretty soon you're gonna be
dust in my rearview mirror.
We'll see about that.

We're up to 500 barrels a day, boss.

506 yesterday.

At two bucks a barrel, that's a thousand a day on that well alone.

According to college boy, the reserve underneath this land is at least 50 million barrels.

How fast can we drill and set up another derrick?

About two weeks.

Make it one, and it'll be a bonus.

I want big, beautiful, grasshoppers bobbing up and down as far the eye can see.

You got it, boss.

What's this?

That's him. That's him right there.

That there's a delivered subpoena, Red Stevens.

I got proof you been cheating me out of my mineral rights on this land.

I got a lawyer, so you better start to figure out my cut of this operation.

Well, I hope you got a good lawyer, 'cause I got a better one, and he's gonna take you to school.

- I'll see you in court!

- Oh, I'll see you in court!

Yeah, I'll be there, Red!

Oh, I'll be there! I'll see ya!

I'll see ya!

So who's our lawyer, boss?

That's a good question.

Theophilus Hamilton.

- You a lawyer?

- Yes, sir.

- My name's Red Stevens.

I got served a subpoena and I need a lawyer

to meet me at the courthouse next Tuesday. You any good?

First in my class at Howard University School of Law.

Editor of the law review,

four years running.

Would you like a list of
peer-reviewed articles?

Nope. Good enough. I'll
see you next Tuesday at ten.

What you gonna do, represent yourself?

- Mr. Stevens?

- Mr. Hamilton?

- Yes, sir.

- Good to see you.

It's been a long time. How's your wife?

Actually, she died, not too long ago.

I'm sorry to hear that.

I'm not sure his kind is even
allowed in this courthouse.

Here's what they are claiming.

How fast would you like this to be over?

Real fast.

The subpoena appears
to be in order, but...

Of course it's in order. What
do you think I am, an amateur?

Actually, sir, I have no idea
what type of lawyer you are.

Before you interrupted me, I
was saying the subpoena is fine.

The problem is the deed of trust.

I took the liberty of pulling it
from the County Hall of Records.

You didn't know what I'd
be asking you to be doing.

How did you know what to look for?

Well, I looked up the subpoena
and it's public record, too.

Don't worry about it.

As I was saying, in pulling the records
I noticed my client purchased the land
and mineral rights from your client
in a land-swap more than two years ago.

So?

Maybe we should wait till the
judge gets here before we...

Just answer the question.

All right, if you insist.

The deed was recorded exactly
two years and two months ago.
Texas law says that the statute of
limitation on mineral rights dispute
is two years... on the nose.
Please tell me you knew that.
- Well, I, uh...
- Well, how could you let this happen?
I told you, I'm a divorce lawyer.
Come back here!
You told me this was a sure thing.
You said we'd get a settlement.
Tens of thousands of dollars, easy!
I'll be! Mr. Hamilton, how'd you
like to work for me full-time?
My business is going through the roof
and I could use a good
man like you around me.
Well, Mr. Stevens, I'm honored,
but I do have other clients.
OK, OK. Hey, we'll call it
part-time then. Everybody wins.
Somehow, "everybody
wins" means you win first?
Excellent. We understand each other.
- I guess so.
- What do you know about oil?
Well, it's messy.
Texas gold!
So let me get this straight.
What you're telling me is, there's
a bigger deposit on adjacent acreage.
Yeah, at least 200 million barrels.
And we can't get it?
Wow.
That's twice as much as on this patch.
That's 600 hundred
million worth of crude.
Why ain't this rancher selling?
- Red...
- I want this land!
We have offered him triple the
going rate. He's just not selling.
- So why's he being stubborn?

- Because not everything is about money.

Well, that's a lie.

Everything is about money.

Not for this guy.

Last name, Early.

- Jacob Early? Same family tree.

Nephew Andy, the land's been
passed down for five generations.

Cattle is... his legacy.

How come I didn't know about this?

Come on, now, Red. All these
years, in all the land deals,
as long as the price was
right, when did it ever matter
who was selling, as long as they sold?

Tell me again about
this horizontal drilling.

Oh, yeah, thought you'd never ask.

Now...

Yeah, um, so...

It's a cow.

Now, they've tried it
elsewhere with success,
and I think I can make it work here.
Theoretically, a well on our land
could... tap into a neighbor's reserve,
provided, of course, that
you owned the mineral rights.

- What's the downside?

- It's new.

It'll be expensive.

But I think we can get the oil
with minimal environmental
damage to the cow pastures.

How minimal?

No idea, actually, but I just think that
"minimal" is a more
positive way to sell it.

Jimmy, when I promoted
you to acquisitions,
you told me you'd get your
mother to jump off a bridge.

I want you to go see this Andy
Early and get this deal done.

What if I can't convince him?
I want this land!
This is our next play, Hamilton.
We get our hands on that refinery,
we start competing with the big boys.
We control both sides
of the supply chain.
Look, it's risky, Red. I
mean, you heard the geologist.
This new way of drilling is...
it's not gonna come cheap.
And I gotta be honest with
you, I don't think we can afford
to leverage both deals at the same time.
Carnegie believed in
investing in new technology,
new facilities, hard-driving,
pushing the limits.
We gotta start thinking
the same way, Hamilton.
If we develop new technology,
it gives us an advantage.
I just hope we're not soaring
off a cliff, that's all.
I'm not going around and
around about this anymore.
I'll see what I can do.
Red, it's almost Christmas, you know.
I want this meeting
with Carlton Strang. Now.
Why aren't you eating, Ruth?
I told Sylvia last
week, I don't eat meat.
- Since when?
- I saw you eat bacon two days ago.
I said, I don't eat meat!
Well, these are vegetables, right?
So you can have some of mine.
Stop! I don't want your asparagus!
You are so immature.
I swear, it's the last time I
come home for Christmas break.
It's not too late. You can leave.
Why don't you grow up?

- You're not even finished yet.

- I'm just tired.

He'd rather be smoking cigs in his room.

Dad, I'm meeting the
guys at the country club.

I sure could use a few bills.

- What do you need?

- Forty... sixty?

Thanks, Dad.

Hey, Dad, can you
spot me some cash, too?

I'm going to the arcade
with some friends.

Look what you started.

- Here.

- Thanks!

So... there are these really,
really, really cute boots
that I'm dying for.

Yeah? How much?

Let's see...

That'll do. Thanks so
much. You're the best.

They never see you.

And when they do, you
just throw cash at them.

I came home to repack. I've got a
meeting in Tulsa about the refinery.

I should be home before Christmas.

Gentlemen, have a seat.

I know you wanted this
meeting quickly, Mr. Stevens.

Right before Christmas.

Well, let's cut to the chase here.

- You want the Tulsa refinery.

- Yes, I do.

And we trust that you've
reviewed our proposal.

I did.

Does that mean you accepted it?

Or are we just sitting around here
twiddling our thumbs for nothing?

The question is whether or
not I want to sell to you.

- It's that simple.
- That's just ridiculous.
- You don't have another buyer.
- Red...

You're starting to tick me off.
You're here because you want this deal.
Some sort of race to grab all you can.
Seems we both have needs, Mr. Stevens.
And usually I need to meet the
people I'm doing business with
in order to make my determination.
Problem is, you don't
personally impress me.
You're rude, self-serving and greedy.
I will consider your proposal,
and I'll get back to you
just as quickly as I can.
All right.

I expect to have your decision
by tomorrow. That's it. Let's go.
The deal is it.

And right now that's
in my hands, not yours.
We both know you're
still trying to recover
from that explosion at
the plant 18 months ago.

- Red!
- Mm-mm.

Took 11 lives.
Your liability went sky high and the
publicity practically crippled you.
Red...

Your profits...
...are down 22 percent
from last quarter.
Where did you get that information?
I want to buy your refinery,
and you need to sell it.
And that makes you... needing me.
And that...

That just makes your blood boil.
Let's go.
See you later, Red.

"ANGELS WE HAVE HEARD ON HIGH"]

Room service.

- Anything?

- No, it's Christmas Eve.

What kind of game is he playing?

Red, do you consider me a friend?

'Course I do.

Well, as your friend,
let's fly home tonight.

You could be with Hanna, with
the kids, enjoy Christmas.

I told you, I'm not leaving
till I get that refinery.

Look, you could wait
till the cows come home,
but I'm not missing

Christmas with my family.

Now, you can dock my
pay, you can fire me,
you can do whatever you want,
but I'm heading to the airport
and taking the company plane home.

And if you're smart,
Red, you'd come with me.

Hm...

You're right.

You're right. Go home.

Go be with your family.

I'll take a charter plane home.

Go on.

Merry Christmas, Red.

Merry Christmas, Hamilton.

Can't anybody read the
"do not disturb" sign?

Strang?

You gonna invite me in, Stevens?

The docs are signed.

I actually made my decision last
night, put out a press release.

Panhandle Oil is now the proud
owner of its own refinery.

You're welcome.

I'll be on my way, then.

Nice doing business with you, Stevens.

I'm curious, Mr. Strang.
Why did you wait till
Christmas to give me this news?
'Cause I knew I could.
How?
Because you remind me of
myself, you know, 20 years ago.
"Panhandle Gas & Oil is now
a billion-dollar operation... "
I'm a...
I'm a billionaire.
I'm a billionaire.
I wonder as I wander...
When I became a billionaire.
Mr. Stevens, you have a phone call.
Yeah?
Line five.
This is Red Stevens.
Hanna? What?
Pilot!
He was headed straight from the
airport to his mother's nursing home
for Christmas Eve dinner.
A trucker fell asleep,
and hit him head-on.
The doctor said he had
severe internal damage.
Both of his kidneys are
ruptured. He's gonna lose them.
If he survives, they're
gonna put him on dialysis,
but he'll go to the end
of a very long waiting list
for a kidney donor.
It's gonna be a long night.
- You want some coffee?
- Yeah.
You've been with me
for such a long time.
I owe you so much of everything I got.
You been a friend to me...
...even when I didn't even deserve it.
O-positive. Nurse!
Hey, Red.

What's this?
What's going on?
Christmas Eve, you met the
business end of a semi on the 205.
What day is it?
Happy New Year.
Welcome to 1969.
I thought...
I thought you were in Tulsa.
You needed some new plumbing,
so I gave you some of mine.
You know what? I think I
need to go back to sleep.
Maybe this could all be a bad dream.
Starting over...
...is not the easiest thing to do.
I'm sorry. Hope I didn't wake you.
I'm just glad that I can wake up.
So do we have a refinery?
We do.
I think that means you're a billionaire.
Yeah. It does.
How does that feel?
Not a stitch different.
I thought it would,
though. I really did.
All that time thinking about
it and dreaming about it,
and when it finally
happened, it just happened.
The world kept moving on forward...
...and there was no one
there to share it with me.
But you did what you said you would.
You should take pride in that, Red.
I got all the money in the world.
I traded everything that
was important to me for it.
It's not too late, Red.
What if it is, Hamilton?
My kids are a mess.
My wife thinks I'm lost.
You can change that.
You can change that, Red.

See, money's been your dream.
But your legacy...
Your legacy is your family.
Your fortune is your wife, your kids
and all the little
Stevens that comes along.
You still got time, Red.
What's this all about, Dad?
Yeah, is this gonna take long?
Are you guys getting divorced?
No, that's not what this is about.
Well, what are we here for?
You're kinda freaking me out!
- That doesn't take much.
All right, that's enough!
Your father has something that
he would like to say to you.
So you will sit there with
your mouths shut and listen.
Go ahead, Red.
I wanted you kids here because...
Well, I want to apologize to you.
- Apologize?
- For what?
For neglecting you over two decades.
I made my work more
important... over you and...
...more important over your mom.
I learned a lot of
lessons along the way.
But I ended up burying them in
pursuit of the almighty dollar.
Is there a bottom line here, Dad?
I got a plane to catch
back to Princeton.
Your mom and I decided we're gonna
start living life a little bit different.
So future profit from Panhandle Oil
will go into a new fund that we started.
We're gonna start doing
some good in the world.
And we're gonna stop
living for ourselves.
We're gonna to try to

learn how to help others.

Tell me you're not giving our trust funds away to the poor or something?

I'm not giving your money away, son.

In fact...

...your mother and I are going to give each of you \$10,000 right now.

Ruth.

For what?

For the chance to learn the gift of giving.

No strings attached?

We... We hope that you'll use this money to help others.

So we're done here? We can go?

Yeah, ya'll can go.

- I'm gonna put this in the bank.

- It's a lot of money.

I'm gonna spend it.

All we can do is try and hope that their hearts change.

It will take patience.

Hm... I've never been very patient.

Dad?

Yeah, Jay?

Here you go.

I don't need it. Put it in the foundation.

You sure, son?

- This is your money.

- I have enough.

Thank you.

Thank you, son.

My dad got it.

And when my dad died...

...Red knew that I would get it, too.

That's right, Jason.

The monetary inheritance that we accumulate to pass on to our children is not nearly as important as the personal legacy we pass on.

I almost forgot. We

have the hearing at ten.

Are you sure that's where
you want to be this morning?
I thought that's where I had to be.
Naw, I can deal with
those hyenas in court.
What you need to do is
find that special someone
who's gonna help you
pass your legacy on.
Excuse me.

Jason, what are you doing here?
I was hoping you could give me a job.
I could empty the trash, mop the floors.
If... well, if there
were floors, I'd mop them.

- Anything you need.

- What about the foundation?

Decided to take a leave of absence
for a few months... maybe six.

Place isn't gonna fall apart
with Hamilton in charge.

I tried to tell you. I wanted
to tell you in person...

I understand. I understand
why you did it the way you did.

It would have taken a
bomb to get my attention.

And I'm sorry for that.

Forgive me for not putting
you first in my life.

I want to shut up and let you
talk. I want to turn the cell off
and just be with you.

And help you with the things
that are most important to you.

But what if I'm not enough for you?

I... I can't promise to be perfect.

I know I'll fail from time
to time. But I promise...

...that I'll try as hard as I can.

I realized something
that took my grandpa a lot
of hard knocks to learn.

Life's greatest fortunes

are the ones closest to you.
You're my fortune, Lex.
You're worth more to me than
all the money in the world.
And without you, I'm a very poor man.
So I come to you as a poor man,
in need of a fortune
that only you can give me.
I don't want to ask you to do
anything that you're not ready to do.
But this very expensive ring from
the little market down the street...
...is my promise that I'll
never stop trying to be the man
that you deserve and need.
And my promise that I will
wait as long as I have to
for you to be my wife.
OK, under God's laws,
you two are Mr. and Mrs. Jason Stevens,
husband and wife.
You can kiss her.
- What are you doing?
- Making my golden list.
The ten things I'm
grateful to God for today.
Number one,
that we're both young and healthy.
And what else?
That you love me.
- And what else?
- You want the whole list?
I want the whole list.
I'm grateful that Emily
brought us together.
Me, too.
Maybe... we can add
a little Stevens to the list.
Maybe. Maybe someday soon.
Well, maybe, a couple of dogs. Yes.
Yeah? And a house? A white picket fence?
Mm-hm. Two stories. Two stories.
Shutters on the windows. Shutters.
Oh, I have a longer list than you.

"ONE LIFE"]