

Defending Your Life

By Albert Brooks

I was thinking this morning: In two months, I will have been here ten years. And you're like my real family. Isn't that tragic? My mother called and wished me happy birthday... ...and hinted to the fact I wasn't making enough money. If you can call, "Still making the same salary, honey?" a hint. My ex-wife used to say that too, but she never used the word "honey." -In three years, can I double my income? -Good luck. -Four years? -Maybe. You're great people and this is a great present. I wish I could squeeze all of you into one pretty woman. If you'd like to go into my office, I'll try. Thanks a lot. I'll be home soon. I'm taking Daniel to get his new car. -What'd he get? -BMW convertible. Oh, my God. Leather? -Leather? -Oh, yeah. -I want one. -All right. Kiss Alex for me. -I want one. -She says, "happy birthday." These are great. Thanks. -Just stuff I like. -It's great. Why do you drive this? I see people driving these. What, is a flood coming? Hoover Dam broke? I like this car.

It's a battering ram.

This is what Patton drove.

"Hey, you, soldier, forward." In an 8.5 earthquake, you'll beg for a Jeep. In an 8.5 earthquake, I'll beg for a coffin. -What are you doing tonight? -Taking a long drive. -Alone? -Unless someone comes with the car. You don't want to be alone on your birthday. What better day to be alone? I don't have that hang up about birthdays and parties. You're born alone, celebrate it. Celebrate aloneness. That's what birthdays are for. Never thought of that. It's a pitiful theory. I've had these cars before and there's something wrong. The smell is making me sick. That's a normal smell. That's a protective coating, it's not oil burning. -You look fantastic. You lose weight? -Did I what? I was talking to someone else. -Did any lights come on the dash? -I don't think so. That means you're okay. If there's any trouble, they come on. We have a saying around here. "If you smell something and don't see lights, try dry cleaning." Trv what? She has no sense of humor. Dry cleaning? If it smells on Monday, bring it in. -I'm sure it's nothing. -I'm sure it's something. Trouble with a new car? She's a lunatic. Boy, you have lost a lot of weight!

A lot of weight?

You saw me three days ago.

You look different. Why? I don't know. I just wrote you a check for \$39,000. That's it. That's the look. \$39,000 lighter. Let's go get it. Let's get her. What's in the box? -It's my birthday. I got a CD player. -Happy birthday. -You got a CD player in the car. -No, I don't. You paid for it. You wanted the best. The best radio comes with a CD. You'll love it. There she is. It's gorgeous! Look at it. It looks huge! It's beautiful! That's not it. That's a 750. That's it. What a cutie. Try not to show the 750 first. My car looks like a turd now. If I had to choose between this car and yours, I'd take yours every time. You're an idiot, Jim. Do we all have to hear that? Come to me. Good afternoon, and welcome to Judgment City. You just had quite a journey, so relax and enjoy the ride. Considering your recent transformation, you won't have any choice. If we've done our work correctly... ...you should all be from the western half of the United States. Even though this isn't the Earth... ...our surroundings should seem pleasing

and very familiar to you.

Why you're here...

...and what you'll be doing

will be explained later.

No need to worry about that now.

Soon we'll be dropping you off

at your hotel.

You'll sleep tonight and when you awake...

...you'll feel wonderful and raring to go.

You'll find many activities to enjoy in Judgment City.

How many like to play golf?

You won't be able to get

your hands up yet...

...but we have

three championship golf courses.

Sit back and have fun.

You'll be here for five days

and we want you to enjoy yourselves.

Those staying at the Continental Hotel

will be escorted from the tram.

The rest of us will depart momentarily.

Thank you.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome.

My name is Stan.

Because of what you've been through,

you'll want to go fast asleep.

You're already checked in.

Nothing to worry about tonight.

Everything will be explained tomorrow.

Have a good rest.

If you have any questions, I'm here to help.

Thank you.

Excuse me, sir.

Mr. Miller, this is your room.

Make yourself at home.

I'll be right back.

All the clothing you'll need for the time

you're here is in this closet.

We call these tupas.

They're like caftans. They fit everyone.

Would you like to shower,

or are you too tired?

Too tired?

I understand. There are five channels

of programming on the television.

Channel 3 tells you about Judgment City.

Have a wonderful night's sleep.

If I can do anything, I'm at your service.

I'd be surprised if there's anything in there,

but I appreciate the attempt. Sleep well. Good morning, Alan. Good morning, Philip. Glad you could make it, Leonard. -Good morning, Susan. -Good morning, Mr. Diamond. -Who's prosecuting? -Lena Foster. She'll have a field day with this. She lost last Thursday. Really? There is a God. Okay, call him up, please. -Hold on for Bob Diamond, please. -Who? Daniel? Diamond here. How are you? Good sleep? -Yes. -Amazing, isn't it? Listen, you're going to get up, shower, put on those nice clothes... ...and take a tram downtown and come see me this morning. Do you know what's going on? No. In a nutshell, you're here to defend your life. And I'll help you. Defend my life? Soon, you'll be smarter than anyone you've ever met. Sound exciting? I guess. It is, believe me. Did you eat breakfast yet? No. I've got good news for you. It's not only the best food you'll ever have,

I can what?

As long as you're here, you can eat all you want. You won't gain weight. So pig-out. Eat 30 hotcakes. I'll see you at 11:00.

but you can eat all you want.

Eat all I want?

Eat everything. Take care.

I've loved you from the day I met you.

When did you meet me?

Do you remember?

Don't do this to me.

Of course, I remember.

What's my middle name?

-You never told me.

-It's the first thing I told you.

In which life?

In which life?

That's it, Lenore. You tried,

and you failed. The game is over for you.

Stay here and someone

will come and get you.

Stu, the decision is yours.

Do you want to stop here,

or face your fear?

I'll face the fear.

He's facing his fear!

You might just get a hole in one.

Want to eat a lot?

Ted's House of Buffet says you can have

everything you see, plus more.

Our chefs will cook it, but they won't look.

Like to horseback ride?

Judgment Stables, open till sunset,

welcomes you.

If your trial's through early,

come ride with us.

Good morning.

Good morning.

"Take the eggs, I pray thee."

What's good here?

Everything is sensational.

-How's the cheese omelet?

-Sensational.

-I'll take it and some orange juice.

-I'll be right back.

Was this made for somebody else?

No, just for you.

That fast?

Fast and delicious. Eat all you want.

-Delicious.

-That's nice.

A red tram is leaving right now that will get you into town by 11:00.

To make sure you're on time,

you should leave now.

These are the best eggs I ever had.

Of course.

Ladies and gentlemen, welcome

to the lnner City Transport System.

Please remain seated

until the tram comes to a full stop.

Never exit the tram once it's moving...

...because of the electronic field

surrounding the moving vehicle.

So young. AIDS?

Car accident.

Oh, my God!

-But you feel okay now, don't you?

-Yes, I do.

Me, too.

Isn't it amazing? ls this what you thought

it would be? I certainly didn't.

I don't know what it is yet. Do you?

No, I quess I don't.

You make me think of my little poodle.

Do you have a dog?

I did have a dog.

I'll tell you about my dog.

I had a little...

-Have you got a while?

-Yeah, go ahead.

They let us on the train in those days.

We didn't have to put him in baggage.

Every time the conductor came around,

he knew it.

And he would crawl down

in the corner of the bag.

-Did you have a dog?

-You asked me that twice.

-What did you say?

-Yes.

-What did I say?

-It's wonderful.

Well, it is.

Mr. Miller, welcome. I'm Helen,

one of Mr. Diamond's assistants.

Come with me, please.

-Looks familiar, right?

-I was just thinking that.

It was designed to be as stress-free

for you folks as possible.

If we can do anything to make it

more like Earth, we have suggestion boxes.

We'd like your opinion.

If you want to make it more like Earth,

you should build some mini-malls.

It's funny you should say that.

Six just opened up outside of town.

I hear they're lovely.

I never go because I don't like yogurt

and I do my own nails.

Mr. Diamond will be with you shortly.

Daniel, Bob Diamond.

Come in.

How are you?

Sit down, my friend.

What's wrong?

You look good in that tupa.

Some people don't, but you do.

It's flattering to you.

So, is this what you thought it would be?

Thought what would be?

Where am 1? Heaven?

No, it isn't heaven.

-Is it hell?

-No, it isn't hell either.

Actually, there is no hell. But I hear

Los Angeles is getting pretty close.

Daniel, let me tell you what's going on.

When you're born into this universe,

you're in it for a long time.

You have many different lifetimes.

After each one...

...there's an examining period,

which you're in now.

Every second of every lifetime

is recorded...

...and as each one ends, we sort of look at it. Look at a few of the days, examine it... ...and if everyone agrees, you move forward. -What do you mean "move forward"? -Continue onward. The point of the whole thing is to keep getting smarter. To keep growing... ...to use as much of your brain as possible. I use 48 percent of my brain. How much do you use? I'm sorry? I use 3 percent of my brain? Don't worry. Everybody on Earth uses 3 percent of their brain. 3 to 5 percent. That's why they're there. 3? 3 percent? No one on Earth uses more than that? When you use more than 5 percent you don't want to be on Earth. Though your take-out places are lovely... ...there are more exciting destinations for smarter people. Being from Earth as you are, and using as little of your brain as you do... ...your life is devoted to dealing with fear. It has? Everybody on Earth deals with fear. That's what Little Brains do. What are "Little Brains"? That's what we call you folks behind your back.

behind your back.
Forgive me.
Who are you?
I'm just like you.
I was on Earth a long time ago.
But I advanced, I moved forward.
I got over my fears.
And I got smarter.

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Did your friends' stomachs hurt?

-Everyone of them.

-It's fear.

Fear is like a giant fog.

It blocks everything.

Real feelings, true happiness, real joy.

They can't get through that fog.

But you lift it...

...and you're in for the ride of your life.

God, my 3 percent is swimming.

-What are you reading?

-You wouldn't understand.

Just numbers.

-You read numbers?

-Yes, sir.

I'm on trial for being afraid?

First, I don't like to call it a "trial."

Second, yes.

-What happens if I'm guilty?

-Don't think "innocent" or "quilty."

Worse comes to worse,

you'll go back to Earth and try again.

You keep going back until you get it right?

Not forever.

Eventually, they'll throw you away.

-Have I been to Earth before?

-Yeah.

-How many times?

-Approaching 20.

-Is that a lot?

-I was there six.

My God! So I'm the dunce of the Universe.

We've had people

who have been there 100 times.

I wouldn't want them as friends,

but we've seen them.

If you're defending me,

is there a prosecutor?

Damn good one. Lena Foster.

We call her "The Dragon Lady."

That's our prosecutor?

-Who does she work for?

-The Universe.

The Universe is like a big machine,

and we are parts.

If a bad part gets through

before it's ready...

...the whole machine breaks down.

We're here to make sure you're ready.

-What do they look at exactly?

-I can't tell you that exactly.

But I can tell you

it's nine days from your life.

Nine days.

So my trial goes on for nine days?

No. All the trials last four days.

We look at nine days, or episodes,

from your life.

-Tell me which days.

-I'm not allowed.

Is that a normal number? High? Low?

ls that a good number?

You're very concerned about normal.

Kind of cute.

I'd prefer seven, but nine's fine.

Some have twelve.

-Hungry?

-Starving. I didn't have time to eat.

Well, Mr. All-You-Can-Eat, let's stuff.

Come on.

We have about 400,000 residents here.

We service half of the US's dead.

About 2,500 people a day.

Do children come here?

Children don't have to defend themselves.

When a child is taken,

they automatically move forward.

Isn't that nice?

Any teenagers?

Too much trouble. They go elsewhere.

We tried, but they damaged the tupas.

Too rowdy.

How is your chicken?

Delicious.

-What are you eating?

-You wouldn't like this.

What does it taste like?

You're curious, aren't you? I like that.

-Want to try?

-Yeah. Looks so weird.

-Oh, my God! -Like horseshit, huh? As you get smarter, you manipulate your senses. This tastes different to me than to you. This is what smart people eat? So talk to me. Tell me about your life. You feel you had any problems? Sure. I had some problems. Everybody has problems, don't they? Everybody on Earth. Did you give a lot to charity? A lot? A lot of money. Did you donate things? This isn't a good or a bad thing. I'm merely curious. I'm sure I could have given more. I gave a lot to street people, but you never get a receipt. How much do you have to give? What's the total? Don't worry. Relax. There was one person you were really cheap with. Over and over again. I wish you'd been more generous with him. Who? You. -I got to go. -Where do you go now? You wouldn't understand. That's not an insult. I mean it literally. Get out tonight. Have some fun. You know what you might try? Get over to the Past Lives Pavilion. What is that? It's where you see the people you've been before. You see yourself in other lives? Most people love it, but some it makes nauseous.

Don't worry about it.

Take care.

Want to take that chicken with you? They love putting things in bags. If you need to talk to me at any time, just call.

-I never sleep.

-Never?

I do have a question.

I'll call you later.

You're already checked in. You have nothing to worry about tonight.

Everything will be explained to you in the morning.

If I told you how old this man was, you wouldn't believe me.

Should I tell them?

We're talking light years.

Light years. He looks good though.

No prostate, but he looks fine.

You're looking at me like stunned sheep.

Come on!

What is this, a white sale?

I'm going to tell you a story.

About a year ago,

this Little Brain comes in here.

I'm talking...

...half a percent of his brain at the most.

He orders a piece of pie,

he forgets what it is.

He looks down, doesn't know what it is.

It's a piece of pie.

I say, "What are you doing?"

He says, "I'm waiting to make a call."

I say, "Does that look like a phone?"

He says, "It is a phone."

The joke is on me.

He picked up the pie and called his mother!

Folks, come on, please.

Stay with me here.

You're on trial, not me.

-Hi. What's your name?

-Arthur.

-Hi, Arthur? Where were you from?

-Denver.

-Lovely city, Denver, Arthur. Did you ski?

-No.

No.

-How'd you die?

-I was in a coma.

I'm sorry. How long were you in a coma?

I really don't know.

Let's play a game.

-Elvis. Living or dead?

-Living.

Long coma, Art.

Long coma.

Have a nice day.

-What's your name?

-Ernie.

Hi. Having a good time in Judgment City?

It's fun. The food's good.

It is. Have you been to the stables?

Like to horseback ride?

Not very much.

There's a nice-looking young man.

Hi. How'd you die?

On stage, like you.

Funny. Maybe you should come up here.

No, thank you.

Of course, he doesn't want to.

This is very hard work, but I love it.

And I love you, Little Brains.

Have you heard any Little Brain jokes?

I know you, right?

I hope so. Who are you?

-I'm Julia.

-Hi. I'm Daniel.

-You know me?

-I thought I did.

You weren't in the bus, were you?

-What bus?

-I hit a bus.

No. I don't think so.

Sit down.

I'm sorry, you really look...

-...so familiar to me.

-Really?

Maybe because I'm the only man

under 100.

That could be it. I want to tell you a true story. Three months ago, six dead people came in. Obviously, humor has nothing to do with brain size. Obviously. Do you want to take a walk or do you want to stay and see the show? I have to. That's my dad. I'm kidding. -That would be so sad for me. -Awful. So, the moral of the story is, if you got to fart, go outside. Let's go. Folks, please. -Please, you don't want to miss the song. -We'll get the record. Please. Ed and I'd like to do a beautiful song. One of your favorites. We'll do it a bit different. This is from me... ...to you. "That was life "That's how you lived it "And now you Little Brains are here to defend it" I'm glad we stayed. Let's go. "You'll do just swell and if not "You'll go to hell" Just kidding! -What's that? -What? I don't believe you. You'll make a great baby in the next life. Didn't anyone ever tell you, you carry yourself very stiffly? Leave me alone. I'm dead. -How many days are you looking at? -My lawyer says nine. -You call him a "Iawyer"?

-What do you call yours?

Sam. You call him by his first name? It never occurred to me to do that. I bet you called everybody by their first names. What was your butcher's name? Pete. -What about your mailman? -Jesse. What was your mailman's name? No idea. He was coming to my house for over a decade and I couldn't tell you. -Didn't you get him a Christmas present? -Liquor. I just put it in the box. -I don't suppose you had a butcher? -Steve. -Steve Rubin. -Seriously? He wasn't a professional butcher. He was a buddy who liked to cut meat. You'd bring him a steak, he'd cut it. -How many days are you looking at? -Four. That's all? That means you'll go on. I hope so. -Sam thinks so. -Sam does? Yeah. I hope you and Sam are very happy. I'll write to you from hell. I like this. -Were you married? -Yes. -Children? -No.What about you? I had a girl and I adopted a boy. How old were they? Stephanie was 7 and Adam was 9. I bet they miss you. I'm sure they do. I miss them.

But I feel okay about it. Don't you?

I didn't know them that well.

It does, it feels okay.

They say they make it that way so we

can look at our lives without distractions.

My lawyer Bob told me the same thing.

But wouldn't you call this...

...a distraction?

-But isn't eating all you want a distraction?

-Isn't it the best?

I had a dream that I'd go to a place

where I could eat all I want...

...and now I'm here!

You dreamed about this place?

I was dreaming

about the Sizzler near my house.

What about your husband?

Did you have a good marriage?

Parts of it were okay.

What about your wife?

I got married too young.

-How old were you?

-Seventy-one.

-What did she look like?

-Very pretty. Too pretty.

You should be with a person who's just

good-looking enough to turn you on.

Any excess brings problems.

She was much prettier than I needed.

Never heard that theory before.

So you like your lawyer?

He's brilliant.

You know how big his brain is?

I came from a world filled with penis envy

to a world of brain envy.

How big is his brain?

-What's this?

-It's my hotel.

-This is your hotel?

-Yeah. Where are you staying?

At the place for people who weren't

generous and didn't adopt anybody.

I'm at the Continental. Come over one day.

We'll paint it.

Tomorrow after the trials,

do you want to have dinner?

I can't tomorrow.

-You can't?

-No, I'm sorry.

You can't have plans here already?

Should I call you in two weeks?

Sam is having a small dinner party.

He said there'd be very smart people there and asked me to go.

Sam again.

I hope you're not dating your defender.

I know in my heart it's wrong.

I'll call you after the dinner.

We can talk on the phone.

It'll give me time to have sex

with my prosecutor.

Good luck tomorrow.

Good night.

Champagne and caviar now being served

in the Blue Room.

Daniel! Right here!

How are you feeling, buddy?

Doing all right? Let's go.

-Nervous?

-No. Should I be?

I wouldn't be.

-What did you do last night?

-I met this amazing woman.

You met a girl? You're kidding me!

What are you laughing at?

It just sounds funny.

Two days after the car accident

and you're in love.

I've done this a million times

and every time it feels like new.

Here we are.

Ready?

Hello, Robert.

Well, well. If it isn't my old friend.

I heard we lost last Thursday.

-Leave it to you to greet me with that.

-Turnabout's fair play.

I'm going to get you.

I promise.

Don't make conversation. Are you two feuding? It isn't a feud. Feuding suggests at one time you liked each other. We never did. -This should be a mistrial. -It's not a trial. Then it's a mis-whatever it is. You two are already fighting. -Good morning. -Good morning. I'm sure your defender explained the basics to you, but let me just say... ...even though this feels like a trial, it isn't. It's just a process that helps us decide. As imperfect as it may be, we think it works quite well. What you'll see on the screen... ...will look and feel so real to you, you might be uneasy at first. Just relax. After a while, I think it will become pleasurable to you. They tell me it feels something like 3-D. Any questions, Mr. Miller? You may begin. Thank you, Your Honors. Over the following four days, I will attempt to show that Daniel Miller... ...while he is a quality human being, is still held back... ...by the fears that have plagued him... ...lifetime after lifetime. I believe that I can show without a shadow of a doubt... ...that he must once again be returned to Earth to work on this problem. May we begin in childhood, please? Could we go to... ...11-4-19? By the way... ...this signifies you're 11 years, four months and 19 days old. -Is that clear? -I think so.

In other words, if I said, 9-2-17... ...you would be nine years, two months and 17 days old. I understand. Realistic, isn't it, Mr. Miller? -Look what I found. -Give me that. Make me. Why don't you make me? You can't make me because I'll beat the shit out of you. You couldn't. Hit him, Daniel! Come on! Chicken! Hit me right here. Come on, chicken. Hit him, Daniel! Stick up for yourself, low-life chicken. That's too bad. Come over to my house later and I'll help you glue it back together. What were you feeling as you watched that episode? It felt strange to watch myself. Is that what you mean? I mean emotionally. What kind of feelings did this bring up? Frustration? It's not a test. There's no right answer. Is that what you felt? Frustration? I quess. Why were you afraid? I object. How did we introduce the word "afraid"? From frustration to "afraid"? This is already pronouncing him guilty. -Could we use another word? -Which one? What word would I use? How about "restraint"? I think the little boy was dignified. "Restraint"?

May I show you what I mean?

Be my guest. Your Honors, may we go to 1-8-17, please? What are you accusing me of? Say it to my face! -What? -You never think about my problems. -Lower your voice. -Lower my voice? Don't yell in front of the baby. It's always the baby. What about me? I live here, too! I work hard to pay for this house! -I know you do! -The minute I earn it, you spend it! You think I spend too much? All I do is scrimp! If you don't like it, then why don't you leave? Stop it! This happens when you drink! Lecture time! Just sit down and join the lecture! Don't touch me! In that brief moment, when that baby and his father's eyes met... ...this child learned the meaning of restraint. He wasn't afraid. He was mature. He was non-violent. Dignified, I call it. My colleague may believe in "Hit first, ask questions later"... ...but we're not all that way. I resent that. Let's ask Mr. Miller. In the schoolyard, did you want to hit that child back? I wanted to hit him back, but I felt restraint. You felt restraint. I see. Is restraint always the best course of action in every case? No. Wouldn't this have been a case to not restrain yourself? If you had stuck up for yourself... ...this event would not have haunted you

all your life.

You never forgot this.

You always thought about it.

Hold on. People think about lots

of things throughout their entire life.

You're isolating this incident?

Aren't we here to isolate incidents?

Or maybe I don't understand the job.

Your Honors, to save valuable time...

...l submit 11-4-19 as shown

without further comment.

I'm fully satisfied. I love watching this kid.

Anything you want to say?

I feel very good about the "restraint" idea.

Thank you.

You're up.

While we're still in childhood...

...l'd like to show something

absolutely extraordinary.

Could we go to 10-9-15, please?

I'm on probation for stealing books.

They're going to think I stole this.

I'll be expelled.

You won't.

Of course, I will. I'm already in big trouble.

Good afternoon.

Continue working

on the assignment you began last Tuesday.

Take these.

-I'll say I lost mine.

-You'll be in trouble.

Just do it.

Where are your supplies?

-I left them at home.

-Left them?

I lost them.

Did you lose them or leave them?

Both. I left them and lost them.

Where are your supplies? Do you know

how much such these things cost?

-Class, tell Daniel how much paint costs.

-\$10.

-And the brushes?

-\$3.

-What's the total?

-\$13.

You can't be an artist without paint.

Like you can't swim unless you get

in the water. You must have paint.

This is careless behavior.

I have to call your father today.

Somehow, you must pay for this.

Yeah.

You got in quite a bit of trouble for that.

But you felt your friend would have been

punished worse.

At 10 years old, he showed

the kind of courage most adults never find.

I let the life stand for itself here.

Could we go to 10-9-15?

The evening of that same day.

-How will you pay for this?

-I don't know!

I'm very disappointed in you.

I'm sorry.

-We must punish you severely.

-We don't have to!

Yes, we do.

First of all, no television for a month.

I didn't do it! Steve did! It's Steve's fault!

What?

Steve lost the paints.

He probably stole them.

I didn't do it.

Punish him!

What happened to your friend Steve?

Do you remember, Mr. Miller?

What do you mean?

He was expelled from school

two days later, isn't that right?

I thought he left on his own.

What's the point?

I'm looking at the results

of what you call a courageous act.

Mr. Miller might have acted bravely

in class...

...but we just watched him crumble

a few hours later, and why?

At the threat of no television? I was ten years old. Television is everything to a ten-year-old. It's like heroin. You can't just pull it away. I never wanted to watch. My parents made me because they wanted to go out and I got hooked. Miss Foster and I have had this argument before. I think the act itself is what's important. She wants to keep enlarging it until everything loses meaning. If I fixed a flat tire on your car and two years later I lose your garden hose... ...according to you, I won't get credit for the flat. I'm just the dummy who lost the hose. Let me suggest this. Did we ever consider that this boy had a bond with his father? It had nothing to do with his friend. I just think Daniel couldn't lie to his dad. That's all. You're nodding, Mr. Miller. Does that mean you agree? I had a bond with my father. I pretty much never lied to him. You never lied to your father? Would you like to see at least 500 examples? I said, "pretty much." I didn't say, "never, ever lied." You have to lie sometimes... ...in an emergency.

It doesn't mean that the bond is affected.

If you've got the bond,

the bond's always there.

Even if you lie sometimes,

you won't interfere with it.

You know, the bond can wait for a little lie.

In the end, it's there for you.

Sometimes in the middle of a lie...

...l found that the bond would kick in.

Maybe squeeze a little truth out.

Wrap it up. I am through. Very good day. I'm pleased. She's tough, isn't she? If I told you how tough, you wouldn't sleep, believe me. Well, I'm off. You call me if you need me. You going out with that gal tonight? I can't. She's busy. Busy? I'll be damned. -How are you? -Fine. And you? Some sake. How are you? -What's good? -Everything. Everything. Our resident food. How does it taste? You'd throw up. I'll have the tuna. Very good tuna. Very fast.

What's this? It looks like a worm.

So I've been told.

Delicious!

Like it?

Thank you very much.

How many days?

How many days you looking at?

Nine.

Nine days?

Oh, my God! Nine days!

You better have more sake!

9 days?

I have 15.

My name's Frank.

Fifteen days?

-Is that a lot?

-I don't know.

How'd you die, Dan? May I call you Dan?

I got hit by a bus.

-And you?

-Got shot in the head.

Really? Murder?

Hunting accident.

Some putz thought I was an animal.

-How'd you make a living?

-Advertising.

-And you?

-Made a lot of money in adult books.

Selling them?

No, reading them.

Yes, of course, selling them.

Were you from LA?

-Know the night clubs by the airport?

-Those strip clubs?

I coined the phrase, "All nude."

-What do you mean?

-That was mine.

I bought two clubs.

They were only using the word "nude."

I put up "Totally all nude."

Doubled business in a month.

I got to piss. You?

Thank you very much.

I'm not leaving. I'm going to take a piss.

Take a piss!

-Hello.

-Mr. Miller?

I have a message for you.

You do?

Here it comes.

Hi. Where are you?

I'm going to sleep.

Tomorrow, when you're done...

...meet me by the main entrance.

I'll be there.

I miss you. Isn't that funny?

Good night.

This is wild.

Let me get this straight. You actually

had sex with Benjamin Franklin?

Twice.

How was he?

He was fat, Bob.

I couldn't believe it.

It's wonderful. I'd forgot all about it. He was willing to sleep underwater.

Marvelous.

Good morning.

Good morning. I'm Dick Stanley.

I'm going to defend you today.

I'm going to defend you today.

Mr. Diamond couldn't make it.

He couldn't make it? You're kidding.

He'll be back tomorrow.

How can you? You don't know me.

Mr. Miller, I use 51 percent of my brain.

I know everything about you.

51 percent? That's clocked?

Clocked.

Impressive.

I'll lose. I can't start over again with you.

I operate differently than Diamond.

Without tooting my own horn,

I'm quite good at this.

I'm familiar with your life

and I want you to trust me.

I'll lose.

Thank you so much. That was so nice.

It was nothing.

Good morning. Your Honor,

my defender is not here this morning.

Under the circumstances,

this puts me at a disadvantage.

It's quite common.

Mr. Stanley will do fine. Begin.

Today I would like to begin

with an episode in the 24th year of life.

Mr. Miller had been out of school

and working for several years...

...and he had put aside \$10,000...

... specifically to invest.

Do you remember?

One of Mr. Miller's good friends

from school...

...was the son of an executive

of the Casio Corporation...

...which at that time

was not doing particularly well.

Mr. Miller had dinner with this friend... ...at which he was given information... ...which comes along maybe once every five or six lifetimes. May we go to 24-2-16, please? They're gearing up now. They'll start production in three months. -Buy as much stock as you can. -This is fantastic. Switzerland keeps the time, Charles, not Japan. -It'll change. -I doubt it. Why not? Because you need a society that is into precision. Japan makes great radios, but they don't know beans about precision. You come here and tell me the Germans are going to start making watches... ...and I'll invest. What's the present value? -Six. -Here's my prediction. When word hits the street, you're at three. You watch. Remember who said it. For the record... ... Casio is one of the largest producers of time pieces in the universe. I know who they are. For the record, his original investment of \$10,000... ...would be worth \$37.2 million today. I have nothing further to say. I'm fine. You're what? He's not going to reply. You aren't responding? I'd like to hear you speak. You are good. Listen, I'm not as smart as everyone here. Am I defective because I didn't make money on this?

I can't believe that the whole point of the universe is to make money. I can't believe that. This has nothing to do with making money. It's a judgment you made.

Nobody dragged you from home, saying: You chose to do that. You sought the investment. We're just looking at that choice. What did you finally invest in? Do you remember? I think it was cattle. Cattle. What happened? I never got a straight answer. All I know is, their teeth fell out. I rest. Mr. Stanley, you're up. No counter at this time. Wait a second. You're not showing something in my favor? Not at this time. I think it's better to move on. -Shall we move on? -Sure, let's move on. Your Honors, I would like to go to 29-4-5. This is the evening before Mr. Miller took the advertising job... ...he was to hold until his passing. He asked his wife to help him by playing a little game. Remember? You asked her to act the boss... ...so you could practice getting what you wanted. -Do this for me. It helps. -I'm eating. Do it.

-What do you want me to do?

-Be him.

-This is silly.

-It's not. It helps me.

Offer me \$55,000. No more. -How much do you want? -What's the offer? \$55,000. I can't work here for less than \$65,000. I can't pay you \$65,000. Then I can't work here. \$58,000. \$65,000. \$59,000. \$65,000. -\$60,000? -\$65,000. \$61,000. Listen. I cannot take the job for under \$65,000, under no conditions. I would like to go to the next afternoon and show you the real encounter. -I'm prepared to offer you \$49,000. -I'll take it. I'll get you a parking place. Why did you accept less money and do it so quickly?

I'm curious why you caved in so fast.

Here we go again.

Obviously, this is all about money.

I'm guilty.

I didn't make enough money, okay? Call me a "hippie," send me to hell.

You keep thinking it's about money,

but it's about fear.

Why didn't you stand up to your boss

the way you did to your wife?

First, it wasn't my wife.

It was a man in a suit.

The suit had an odor

and the odor said \$49,000.

I like that very much.

Your nostrils said you were worth less,

is that right?

The process of accepting a salary

is a complicated one.

You don't know all my reasons.

We lived fine on that money.

That money was fine.

If you want to make it about money,

you may. But we're looking at fear.

-What was I afraid of?

-You tell me!

\$49,000 is a lot of money!

I have nothing more to say.

Mr. Stanley?

I'm fine.

I can't believe it.

You didn't want to toot your own horn.

Would you like to show something?

I got a raise six months later.

Let us know if you want to show us.

Your Honors, I'd like to present

a compilation of general misjudgments...

...half of them fear-based, half just stupid.

I have assembled 164 misjudgments

over a 12-year period.

Congratulations.

This is so wonderful.

I am looking forward to tomorrow.

I missed you.

Meet Sam.

-Julia told me about you.

-Really?

She doesn't know me.

She could have fooled me.

I heard you had Dick Stanley today.

How'd you know?

Sam uses 54 percent of his brain.

Stanley is a good man.

Quiet, but excellent.

Very quiet.

Julia, see you tomorrow.

Thank you.

We have to go to the Past Lives Pavilion.

Everybody talks about it.

-Don't you want to see who you were?

-Some people don't like it.

You'll love it. They have great hot dogs.

The best hot dogs in town

are by the Hall of Records.

You sure love this eating thing.
To be able to eat all you want,
never gain weight and feel great. Please.
Look at this!
Let's get in line.
Reminds me of Disneyland.

Hope we're tall enough.

On Earth, did you ever feel like you might have been other people?

-Ever see yourself in a past life?

-Never. You did?

I think so. I think I might have been a heavyset man once.

Really? I doubt that.

You never saw yourself as anything?
Once I got stoned

and stared into a mirror for two hours...

...until I saw someone who looked Chinese.

But I think it was just me squinting. Please take the first available booth

on the left.

The show will begin in 30 seconds.

Welcome to the Past Lives Pavilion.

In a moment, you will be asked to place your right hand on the plate next to you.

An image of yourself in a former life will soon appear.

When you have seen enough,

take your hand off the plate.

In order to accommodate everyone...

...you will be limited...

...to five past lives only.

Thank you.

Place hand on plate.

What the hell is this?

Elizabeth! Time for supper, darling.

Be there in a moment, Mumsy.

What the hell's going on here?

Come on, then! To the castle!

That's incredible!

Who are you?

I'm Prince Valiant!

Really?

-Who are you?

-Dinner. I was a prince, I was a whaler, I was a tailor! God. It was so incredible! You were a native? And a dressmaker. That's all I saw. That's so weird. You were a dressmaker, I was a tailor. Interesting. Want some? You're going to eat the stick, too? I can't get you out of my mind. Tell me about it. The screenings are so tough... ...but when I see you, I instantly feel okay. That's great, right? I don't think it has anything to do with me. It worries me. You're doing it. What? What am I doing? I'm not sure. But I read that you had to be okay with yourself... ...before you were okay with another person. I feel okay with you. But I don't know how okay I was with myself before I met you. So maybe you're making me okay. You're not that okay. I'm okay. What's the score? You're losing. We're tied. Beauty. You know, you never told me how you died. I don't want to talk about it. Why? It's embarrassing. What could be embarrassing? I was hit by a bus. I tripped. Seriously? You tripped? On what? We were visiting friends for the weekend.

Everybody wanted to go into town...

...but I wanted to stay and go swimming.

So I went outside...

 \ldots tripped over the chair, hit my head

on the cement and rolled into the pool.

What did the East German judge give you?

Seriously, did you feel anything?

Were you unconscious? Scared?

I was pissed.

You died pissed.

I'm still pissed. I was a good swimmer.

Swimming is only part of it.

You must negotiate the furniture.

In the Olympics,

they're taking that part very seriously.

The Romanians are great at it.

If you make fun of me, I'll get you.

You've already got me.

-What time do you start?

-Early.

I start at 3:

Want to have dinner tomorrow?

I thought I'd start dating others now.

I have my eye on this 91-year-old.

I'll be at the entrance at 5:00.

I'll be there.

If you finish early, come

to my screening room and see my life.

I'd like that.

-Good night.

-Good night.

You'll sleep great.

I have three boxes of candy waiting for me.

Did they give you those chocolate swans?

They're cream-filled.

They're really delicious.

Swans.

I think I'm just getting breath mints.

-Good morning.

-Good morning.

After you.

Thank you.

Now I have no attorney.

That's a very, very nice outfit.

Do you like it here?

I'll make you a promise.

When we're through, if you still want

to know about me, I'll tell you.

But right now, let's concentrate on you.

-Well, look who's here.

-Good morning. I missed you.

-How are you, buddy?

-What do you care?

Stop it.

You think I let you down, don't you?

Where were you? I'm just curious.

You wouldn't understand.

Don't treat me like a moron. Try me.

I was trapped

near the inner circle of thought.

-I don't understand.

-I told you.

Hi. How are you?

Good morning, everybody.

Let's begin. Miss Foster, you're up.

Thank you, Your Honors.

This morning...

...l would like to begin

in the 34th year of life.

Mr. Miller had a speaking engagement...

...to represent all of the West Coast advertising agencies.

He was to give a very important speech to the Ford Motor Company.

If he did well, it could have worked wonders for his career.

Don't make this the end of the world.

May we go to 34-7-7, please?

It's packed like sardines. You ready?

I can't do it. There are too many people.

I can't go out there.

You've got to.

Something has happened to me.

This is way too many people.

I'm having horrible stage fright.

You got to. People are counting on you.

-I'll make a fool of myself.

-No, you're not.

I can't do it. My heart is racing.

I am having some sort of an anxiety attack.

You know this stuff.

I can't think straight.

Listen to me, that's too many people.

I don't want to go out there.

You have to cancel this.

You're on.

Give us a second.

You've got a full house.

It's packed. Let's go!

-You'll be fine.

-Don't make me do this.

Please welcome our speaker

from Foote, Cone & Belding, Daniel Miller.

I'll be right here if you need me.

Your attention, please.

Nothing serious.

We have a gas leak under this room.

We'd like you all to file out.

Be orderly. This is only a precaution.

I would have shown this day

to illustrate just how brave Mr. Miller is.

With all the pain,

panic and confusion in his mind...

...he still walked to the microphone.

He never said anything!

There was a gas leak!

But he never went back

and accomplished it.

He never got up in front

of a large audience again.

Maybe he didn't want to.

Mr. Miller accepted that engagement

with a great deal of excitement.

He wanted to be there.

If he had accomplished that moment...

... I'm positive his life would have gone

in a much better direction.

You're positive! She's wonderful!

"His life would have gone in a much

better direction."

Just incredible!

I'd like to move on to something

I think we'll have a ball watching.

This is damned exciting stuff.

Daniel, where did this scene take place?

What are you showing?

I'm sorry. We're going down to 31-1-9.

The snowmobile.

Big Bear.

Big Bear.

Watch this, Your Honors.

Just dynamite.

"Where the buffalo roam

"And the skies are all cloudy all--"

Oh, my God!

How far did you have to go for help?

About three miles.

You broke your leg in two places?

-Yes, I did.

-I'm proud of you.

With no help, by himself, with as badly

a broken leg as I've ever seen...

...this man crawled three miles to get help.

You're kidding.

What have we just watched?

That is self-preservation.

He didn't risk his life, he saved his life.

You're not a hero if you save your own life?

A hero? No, you're not.

No one here is accusing Mr. Miller

of not having a survival instinct.

We're here to see if he can overcome fear,

not pain.

You don't see fear in this?

Fear of what?

How about death for starters?

I hope you realize it would be very hard

to be a brilliant public speaker...

...if you're lying dead in the snow.

For the record...

...you never rode a snowmobile again.

Hold on. Not because I was afraid.

Because I hated it.

You must believe me.

This is not about fear. This is hate.

This is a rotten contraption. It heats up like a toaster oven. I burned the hair off my thigh from my knee to my crotch! Singed it right off. I don't know... ...if the seat was leather or lined with fur... ...but years of rotting, drying out and getting wet... Mine smelled like an old sheepdog. Also, it's very, very noisy. You don't find that out until the second hour when you can't hear anyone. You get off and your friends are in a silent movie. Pardon me, but your balls vibrate for three weeks afterwards. I'm very proud of you. Very good day. Very emotional day. -What are you doing tonight? -I'm seeing this woman. -Julia? -How'd you know her name? Still don't get the big brain bit? I'll see you tomorrow. You did very well. See you. Here it comes again. Look at her go! Going back for the cat is wonderful. What kind of cat was it? Persian. I love Persian.

Sorry, but I just had to see it again.

That's all right. It was spectacular.

That's all for now. We'll meet once more.

For enjoyment's sake.

Let's make it at 1:00.

Daniel, nice to see you. How are you?

You have a good time tonight.

I'll see you tomorrow at 1:00.

Sam told me

about an amazing Italian restaurant.

Exciting. It was like watching

a Mutual of Omaha commercial.

You're jealous.

You'll never know how much.

-Those portions are gigantic!

-I'm so hungry.

The residents love this place.

It has the best resident food in the area.

Good clumps?

Enjoy your meal.

What was your favorite food?

Turkey with stuffing.

-I couldn't eat turkey.

-Why not?

When I was a kid,

I had one as a pet and I named it.

You can't eat something you name.

I wish I'd known that.

I would have named ice cream.

Do you eat meat?

Sometimes. How about you?

-I like fish.

-Me, too. What kind?

Salmon.

And I like the kind that live

near the nuclear reactors.

-I forget their name.

-Glow fish?

They light up your house

when you cook them.

-How was your screening?

-Very, very good.

Some fine wine for yourselves?

-What's your name?

-Eduardo.

-How are you, sir?

-I'm fine.

You're going to eat a lot with us tonight?

What do you recommend?

You like pasta?

I'll bring you three pounds of it.

Best you've ever tasted.

You'll love it. What about you,

my friend? Do you like shrimp?

They're so fresh, they'll crawl up

onto the plate themselves.

Aren't they high in cholesterol?

I don't know what you're talking about,

but don't worry.

I'll be right back.

Is there a Jacuzzi in your room?

In yours?

Not in my room.

It's in the bathroom.

It may not even be a Jacuzzi.

I think it's just holes in the tub.

You don't have to protect my feelings.

If you have a Jacuzzi, I'm happy.

Okay, I do. I use it every night.

It's just wonderful.

I'm happy for you.

-I love it.

-A lot of bubbles?

Here we are. You're going to love this.

And you will love this.

There's 30 shrimp...

...and 30 more where that came from.

This looks delicious.

Broccoli?

With lots of cheese?

That's my girl. What about you?

Maybe just a touch.

You got it.

That's fine.

How many days you looking at?

Nine.

You like pie?

I love pie.

I like you.

I'll bring you nine pies to take with you.

A pie for every day.

I don't want any pies.

It's my pleasure. They'll keep.

Don't. Really.

Don't bring me anything.

Oh, my God!

Oh, my God.

It's unbelievable.

My prosecutor just sat down.

Look. Don't look!

I can't eat here.

What? You're just eating dinner.

I'm eating 30 shrimp. I'm a pig.

Everyone eats like that here.

Yes, but everyone doesn't have

her watching.

She'll have a tiny resident portion

and I'm eating a fishing boat.

Let's leave.

You're silly. You're just eating.

You're right.

When will that end?

We're having fun. That's important.

See? This woman's looking at that.

This is causing me trouble.

Don't look! Back.

Okay. Suck that up.

It's long.

Bite down now, please. Please bite.

Bite.

Done.

She makes me nervous.

I'm going to the ladies' room.

I pray to God when I get back...

...you've changed.

You're Daniel's prosecutor.

I want you to know he's wonderful.

You are?

Julia.

Pretty name.

-Nice to meet you.

-What did I say?

So you don't forget, I bring these.

You've got nine pies in here.

-Will that be enough for you?

-I didn't want these.

You told me to make them.

I did not.

-You said that.

-No.

Yes, you did.

I have no place for these boxes.

You're embarrassing me.

You're shy.

I'll bring you some steaks.

No steaks! Did Sam say what would happen to you? He said I wouldn't come back to the hotel after tomorrow. That's all I know. I must tell you something. -I know you think I've got it together. -You do. No, not quite. But one thing I do know how to do is make things work. I can take a situation and just make it okay. I've always been able to do that. But it's work. And this... ...this isn't. I don't know what this is... ...but it's--Effortless. I've never, ever had that before. Tell me about it. I didn't think it would happen to me. Where do we find it? In the pit stop. Thanks, God. -Better this than nothing. -I quess. Want to spend the night with me? More than anything in the world. Good. Come on, let's go. I don't think I can. I don't think I should. Why? Because. This is already better than any sex I've ever had. Ever. I don't want to screw it up. Literally. -How do you know what will happen? -I don't. Let's say it's the most amazing thing ever. Then what will I do? I doubt we're going to the same place. So, I'll just have to miss it forever and ever?

And what if it's not so good?

I won't be able to fantasize about it.

I love you.

If I had a fire scene like you,

I would feel differently.

I'd stay here. I'd never leave.

But I've been defending myself so hard...

...and I don't want to be judged anymore.

I have this wonderful feeling inside of me,

but I'm...

I'm just tired of being judged.

It's okay.

-I'll miss you.

-I'll miss you so much.

I love you, Daniel.

I'll miss you.

I should go.

Can you get me the Majestic Hotel?

Yes, Julia.

My God, I don't know her last name!

Excuse me?

I am in love with a woman in your hotel

and I don't know her last name.

What's her first name?

We have two Julias.

Both have "Do Not Disturb" signs on.

Can you ring through? It's important.

I'm not allowed to do that.

But it's very important.

I'm sorry.

Can I leave a message then?

For both of them.

Go ahead, sir.

Tell them both that...

...l love them more than life itself.

I've never met anybody like them...

...and I'll miss them forever and ever.

Is that all, sir?

That's all.

Has Mr. Miller overcome his fears,

Your Honors?

I believe my final summation scene...

...will prove to you that he has.

Your middle-thirties were not very good

for you, were they?

A bad divorce left you with virtually nothing financially. You had about \$9,000 to your name, correct? Months before your divorce... ...you and your wife purchased tickets to Hong Kong. You were going to go together... ...but after the separation, she cashed hers in. What did you do with yours? I used it. He used it. With only \$9,000 to his name... ...with his life in a rut, he didn't do the safe thing. He could have cashed in his ticket. But he said, "To hell with it, I'm going to Hong Kong." That alone, in my book, takes a lot of guts. But, Your Honors, it just begins there. Let us go to 36-9-16. Los Angeles International Airport. You're in seat 41 B. Between A and C. Yes, it is. I'm sitting between people all the way to Asia? Yes, you are. Is coach completely full? Oh, yes. Any space left in first class? There's one seat left. -What's the price difference? -Round-trip?

It's an additional \$3,194.

I'll take it.

This man just spent one-third...

... of his entire life savings

to be more comfortable.

What does that say?

As stressed out and crazy

as his life was at that moment...

...the little boy inside him cried out:

"I need this. Don't worry about money. We'll get it back. Be nice to me." And he was. I feel Mr. Miller is sufficiently past the fears... ...that would keep him from being a remarkable citizen of the Universe. I wholeheartedly recommend full onward movement. I rest. Miss Foster, you're up. At this point, I would like to show my final summation scene. Proceed. My scene takes place not there, but here. We're showing something from here? Yes, we are. I was told we're not doing that anymore. No one told you that. What are we seeing? Something from last night. Please watch this and tell me what you were feeling. Want to spend the night with me? More than anything in the world.

I don't think I can. I don't think I should.

Why?

If I had a fire scene like you, I'd feel differently. I'd stay here. I'd never leave. But I've been defending myself so hard...

...and I don't want to be judged anymore.

I have this wonderful feeling inside of me, but I'm...

I'm just tired of being judged. You genuinely feel for this woman,

don't you?

Why didn't you stay with her?

I was afraid.

Louder.

I was afraid.

I rest.

This is a new one on me.

Sex with somebody and move right on. Is that how it works, Miss Foster? You're not very understanding about the world Mr. Miller came from. It's filled with problems you no longer have: Deadly diseases, confusing identities, changing attitudes. Perhaps he was worried about getting a disease. Were you worried about getting a disease? I didn't think she had a disease. No. But you didn't know. We're getting off the point. We've never been near the point! You're getting him both ways! When he's brave and then does something you don't like, you show the follow-up. Or you blame him for not having any. This is an example of something he wanted to do. And he didn't... ...because he was afraid. This was just last night. You know what I think we just watched? I think we just watched a man who was caring of another human being's feelings. He didn't know what this experience would do to her, so he was careful. But you blame him for it. I praise him for it. You call it "fear." I call it "thoughtfulness." To be caring about someone else's feelings. I'm sorry, but I hope we all can have that quality. Your final summation, please. I think it was thoughtfulness. I'd like to say something about this disease. Your Honors, I didn't think Julia had a disease. But right now on Earth...

...they're filling our heads with these terrible things. They tell you over and over

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you're not sleeping with one person.

You're sleeping with everyone

they've ever slept with.

Now that I've been

to the Past Lives Pavilion...

...that could be 20 to 30,000 people.

As far as my life is concerned,

I truly believe I turned the corner.

I know I had a few fears left,

but I was taken very young.

I could've conquered them.

If you see fit to let me move forward...

...l promise you, I will do the best I can.

I will work very hard,

I'll do whatever is asked.

I'll do the best I can.

Honestly. I will.

I'll do the best I can.

Is that all?

Please just know that I'll--

Do the best you can?

Good.

That's all.

It was nice to meet you. Good luck.

That's it.

Let's go back to my office.

We'll know in 30 minutes.

Judgment's in.

It's early.

-Is that good?

-It's not good or bad.

They don't waste any time.

They must need the hotel space.

How do you like our city?

We do a pretty good job here.

How was the Italian restaurant?

What does it say?

You're going back.

Can I say something?

Because they're sending you back

doesn't mean they're right.

They can make mistakes.

Don't let others get to you.

Just follow what's in here.

Come on. I'll take you to the station. Trams 7 and 8 to onward destinations... I'll never get over it. The organization is amazing. All these different trams going everywhere. These are yours. Your boarding card, various ID. The things you'll need. You won't remember any of this, so you won't kick yourself forever. Just take the opportunities when they come, okay? Passengers going back to Earth, please board trams on your left. Those moving onward, board trams to the right. This is it. Good luck. I've got a lot of faith in you. I can take that here. Keep those and follow the yellow line. All trams now operational. Trams 7 and 8 to onward destinations... ...final boarding please. Here, sir. All personnel, please prepare for departure. Daniel! Julia! What are you doing? Sit down! You'll hurt yourself! I love you. I called, but I didn't know your last name. I won't let you go. I won't let you go. Help! Help! Hold on! Just please, hold on! I love you. I love you. Open this up! Damn it, open it!

Please open the door!
Julia! Wait for me!
Brave enough for you?
Open the door! Please!
Let him go.