

OPERATION FAMILY TREE

by

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OPERATION FAMILY TREE

FADE IN:

INT. TV NEWSROOM - NIGHT

lead story on 6 o'clock news

NEWS ANCHOR

After an anonymous tip from Crime Stoppers, law enforcement officers plowed under a network of 12 marijuana grow houses from Tarpon Springs to St. Petersburg Thursday morning.

"Operation Family Tree" - so named because all the suspects are either relatives or longtime friends - yielded 11 arrests, more than 870 plants, \$31,000 in cash, a Winchester 12-gauge shotgun, a truckload of artificial lights, a vehicle and a copy of High Times magazine. Pinellas County Sheriff's Office said the street value of the plants could have exceeded \$4 million. Jessica Rahl is in Clearwater with more on this story...

EXT. PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE - DAY

NEWS REPORTER

Well Keith, the arrests were initiated at 6 a.m. this morning after 13 search warrants were issued. Those arrested were charged with possession and/or cultivation of marijuana. Michael Platt, captain of the Pinellas County Narcotics division, said the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force worked hard for 90 days to bust the grow house chain. He said this operation dismantled a drug organization. Earlier today, I spoke with Pinellas County Sheriff Jim Coates about these arrests..

CUT TO INTERVIEW

## NEWS REPORTER

Sheriff Coates, this was a rather large marijuana operation with the unique aspect being that all those involved were family members or longtime friends.

## SHERIFF

That's correct. We believe the organization was headed by Joseph Maggert, 52, and his wife, Susan, 60. Richard Decker, 50, who was the brother of Susan, and his son Kevin Decker, 27, are also suspected kingpins of the operation. The friends rented 16 houses in Tarpon Springs, Palm Harbor, Clearwater, Dunedin and St. Petersburg and set up nurseries in each one.

## NEWS REPORTER

By shutting these operations down, how much marijuana does it take off the streets?

## SHERIFF

We believe they were capable of producing up to 1,000 pounds of marijuana per year, which could have a street value of more than \$4-million. I should also emphasize that this investigation is far from over. It could take months to unravel the sophisticated network established by these people, and there may be additional arrests, but we will unravel it. Those who choose to set up these elaborate and illegal grow operations must realize that we are serious about prosecuting each and every one of them.

BACK TO SOLO NEWS  
REPORTER

## NEWS REPORTER

Now, Keith, it appears that this group was not stealing power and they all apparently were paying their electric bills, unlike some growers. The Sheriff also told us that narcotics detectives worked

(MORE)

NEWS REPORTER (cont'd)  
with Clearwater Police, Tarpon  
Springs Police, Pasco County  
Sheriff's Office and DEA agents on  
the investigation and that each  
agency will receive a part of the  
take. Officials would not comment  
on the cost to taxpayers for this  
investigation. They said all the  
equipment will be destroyed. The  
plants will be burned at Pinellas  
County's waste disposal site, not  
smoked.

INT. GROW ROOM - NIGHT

Scene begins with cameras inside dark grow room. Sounds of fans in background as timer controlled lights (three 1,000 watt) come on and bring room to life. Low humming sound of ballasts as camera pans room and shows 48 healthy green marijuana plants under three lights. Visuals of carbon filters, duct work and sophisticated controls.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

Scene opens with camera on clock which is positioned on nightstand. The time is 5:55 AM. Darlene and Ken are asleep in bed. Alarm goes off, Ken shuts alarm off, gets out of bed and walks to kitchen in his boxer shorts. The kitchen is located at the front of the house on the second level. He turns on the light and begins to reach for the coffee when the day takes an unexpected turn.

Suddenly a tremendous commotion begins at the front door with a series of hard loud bangs. The moment catches Ken so off guard that his mind can't understand what is happening. At this moment, a clear and loud voice yells...

DEA AGENT

DEA! We have a warrant to search  
your house.

The door explodes and pieces of wood moulding fly. As the door flies open, camera catches law enforcement officers rushing in military style, one of which is holding a small battering ram used to break the door.

By this time Ken is half way down the stairway which leads to the front door.

Uniformed policeman begin rushing in as if it were a well rehearsed training mission. Two of them have guns drawn and point them at Ken's head.

DEA AGENT

(In a loud intimidating voice) Sit down now and place your hands behind your back.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

Do you have any firearms or weapons in the house?

Deputy places handcuffs on Ken while he is asking question.

KEN

No. Do you have a search warrant?

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

Yes we do.

SHERIFFS DEPUTY

Are you growing marijuana in this house?

KEN

Yes.

Six officers spread out. Four of them, a DEA agent, a sheriff's Deputy and two city policemen rush up the stairs just as Ken's wife Darlene is coming out of the bedroom. Another DEA agent along with a sheriff's deputy goes in the garage.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

Ma'am, you need to sit down with your hands behind your back.

Darlene has her nightgown on. In a calm low voice she responds...

DARLENE

Can I get some clothes on?

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

Right now ma'am you need to sit down with your hands behind your back.

As Darlene complies, handcuffs are attached.

Camera pans room where officers are searching. Their grand daughter stays with them often. This is her room. Drawings

and pictures by a 6 year old hang on the wall in addition to various toys in the room.

Ken is being escorted up the stairs as officer emerges from Granddaughter's room.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Are there any children in the house?

DARLENE

No.

Ken is led by the arm into a room where a desk and computer are located. As he turns the corner, he can see into the dining area where Darlene is seated. Their eyes meet. Darlene gives Ken a smile and winks.

Ken is taken into the room with desk.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Take a seat.

Ken starts to sit in comfortable chair behind desk.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Not there. Not today. Sit over here so you won't get to comfortable,

Ken is directed to a hard plastic chair. The cuffs are tight and digging into the wrists.

KEN

Can you loosen the cuffs a bit?

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

In a while. Agent Lutz is coming in soon and we're going to give you an opportunity to make things a little easier. An opportunity to tell us what's been going on here and what you know about the others. At this very moment, we have agents sitting down with your son going through the same exercise. My advice to you is that when agent Lutz comes in, you tell him everything because your son already has.

Ken sits quietly. This is the first time he has heard mention of the others. After a short time, Agent Lutz enters the room.

DEA AGENT

(Agent Lutz)

Look. We know you have a grow op going on in this house, in the garage behind the false wall. Either you tell us how to get in or we're going to rip the fucking wall down.

KEN

The door is behind the pegboard sheet with tools hanging on it.

DEA AGENT

(Agent Lutz)

Come down and show us.

Agent Lutz grabs Ken by the arm with a strong grip and pulls him from the chair.

KEN

There's really no need to get upset here. I'll show you the door or anything else and I think it's clear that I'm no threat.

Camera pans out to show Ken still in underwear.

Lutz escorts Ken out of the room and down the stairs into the garage. Just as they enter into the garage, an officer speaks.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

We found it. We've got it now.

Lutz shakes his head in frustration and turns to go back up the stairs. As they enter the room, the deputy that had stayed behind had gone through the closet. He had discovered a box of High Times magazines, some empty zip lock bags and an ounce of pot which was displayed on the desk. He had his nose in the bag. Then he reached in and grabbed a handful of buds.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

Nice bud. This is quality.

Agent Lutz takes a seat behind the desk. He places a notepad in front of him and has a pen in his hand. He begins a penetrating glare at Ken as if he was looking into his mind. Nothing was said for several seconds.

DEA AGENT

(Lutz)

So Mr. Baker, I want you to clearly understand that this morning beginning at 6 AM, we initiated "Operation Family Tree." Search warrants have been exercised in thirteen houses that belonged to or was attended by people you know...

SCENE QUICKLY JOINS  
LAW ENFORCEMENT  
OFFICERS, SWAT  
TEAMS, DEA AGENTS,  
ETC, AGGRESSIVELY  
CONDUCTING MARIJUANA  
GROW HOUSE BUSTS.

Six to eight law enforcement officers are present at each grow house including two DEA Agents. Very aggressive and intimidating behavior coming from officers. The following raid scenes are fast moving from one house to the next. These are very brief shots with the purpose of illustrating the general flow of the busts and the intimidation attempts by law enforcement.

Matt's house, 6AM. Matt is sleeping.

Join scene just as law enforcement are announcing their presence. Agents bang loudly on door as they speak.

DEA AGENT

DEA! We have a search warrant.

Without waiting for response, they break the door in with battering tool. Police rush in with guns drawn. The house is a small two bedroom. Matt awakes from the sofa startled.

DEA AGENT

Get down on the floor! Get down on the floor.

Matt is in his boxer shorts. He immediately lies on his stomach. Police place guns to the back of his head.



SCENE SWITCHES TO  
ANOTHER GROUP OF LAW  
ENFORCEMENT OFFICERS  
AT KEVIN'S  
HOUSE.SAME SCENARIO.  
KEVIN AND CINDY ARE  
IN BED.

Officers are in the house as Kevin and Cindy begin to abruptly get out of bed. Officers enter the bedroom with guns drawn.

DEA AGENT  
Remove your covers and lie on your  
stomachs with your hands behind  
your back.

Kevin and Cindy are both naked as they follow instructions. Cuffs are applied as officers rush the house.

TRANSITION TO RICK'S  
HOUSE.

As door flies open Rick jumps out of bed naked. Danielle remains in bed. Rick realizes what is happening and throws himself on the floor. Agent immediately pulls the covers from Danielle and orders her to sit up with her hands behind her back.

TRANSITION TO LEE'S  
HOUSE.

Similar situation.

TRANSITION TO  
BRUCE'S HOUSE.

Bruce sits up on edge of bed. Because of his nerve problems with his feet, he is unable to stand. Officers rush his bedroom with guns drawn.

DEA AGENT  
Get up and sit on the floor with  
your hands behind your back!

BRUCE  
I can't. I have a nerve problem  
with my feet.

DEA AGENT  
Yeah, and I have an itchy trigger  
finger.Now get your ass up.

Bruce makes attempts to get up but is unable to.

BRUCE

I really can't stand right now.

Two officers grab Bruce by the arms and jerk him from the bed. As they do, he falls to the floor. face down.

DEA AGENT

Hands behind your back.

BRUCE

I think I broke my nose.

Blood is gushing from Bruce's nose.

DEA AGENT

You'll be fine.

TRANSITION TO JOE'S  
HOUSE.

TRANSITION TO  
JULIE'S HOUSE.

TRANSITION TO RYAN'S  
HOUSE.

Ryan is the son of Ken and Darlene.

TRANSITION BACK TO  
KEN AND DARLENE'S  
HOUSE. KEN SPEAKING  
WITH AGENT LUTZ.

DEA AGENT

...including your son. We've been  
watching you for some time now...

TRANSITION TO BUSTS  
CONTINUE WITH CAMERA  
RAPID SHOTS OF LAW  
ENFORCEMENT  
CONDUCTING RAIDS.

Chaos is in progress at the various homes. Police are dismantling grow tables, cutting electrical cords, removing equipment, removing marijuana plants, breaking sheet rock in walls, ransacking houses for additional evidence.

TRANSITION BACK TO  
KEN AND DARLENE'S  
HOUSE.

DEA AGENT

...and know that you and your friends have been growing and trafficking marijuana.

TRANSITION BACK TO  
RAIDS.

Camera quickly moves to suspects with agents asking them where the money is as walls are being broken, drawers being pulled out and dumped, kitchen cabinets and food being destroyed. Agents telling everyone it is in their best interest to cooperate and tell them everything they know.

BACK TO KEN AND  
DARLENE'S HOUSE.

DEA AGENT

My best advice to you is to be honest with me right now and tell me everything you know.

TRANSITION BACK TO  
BUSTS

Camera moves from one suspect to the next. In each case, agent is looking suspect in the eye, telling them that those who get on the bus early will get the breaks. They tell them that this is not just a State offense but a Federal conspiracy charge looking at them and they are facing the possibility of long prison sentences. Cooperating now will help reduce those sentences.

BACK TO KEN AND  
DARLENE'S

DEA AGENT

We need you to cooperate fully with us. You seem like an intelligent guy and I believe you want to do the right thing. I can tell you right now that those who get on the bus early will get the breaks. If you choose otherwise, I promise you that with the number of people involved, someone is going to cooperate. Once we have a couple of people that's cooperating with us, we don't need you. Then it will be too late. The bus will leave without you and you'll get no breaks. Do you know what I'm saying? Do you understand the advantage you have in talking

(MORE)

DEA AGENT (cont'd)  
with us right now?

TRANSITION TO BUSTS  
COMING TO A CLOSE  
AS SHOTS SHOW  
SUSPECTS BEING  
PLACED IN PATROL  
CARS AND DRIVEN OFF.

All those involved are in various forms of dress. Matt is in his boxer shorts, Bruce is in pajamas, Rick is wearing jogging shorts, etc. Everyone looks terrible as a result of the obvious and the fact they were rushed out of bed without showers or any personal hygiene.

As they are escorted to patrol cars, piles of dirt, pots, plants and various equipment are visible on front lawn as neighbors are watching with curiosity and surprise.

TRANSITION BACK TO  
KEN & DARLENE'S

Ken responds in a calm voice.

KEN

I understand and I'm sure that as officers of the law and public servants, you are aware that one of your primary responsibilities is to serve and protect. To me, this means that you respect and understand my constitutional right not to say anything until I have an attorney present

DEA AGENT

(Lutz)

That's the wrong answer Mr. Baker.

KEN

It is? Because to me that seems to be the right path to follow here and I always thought you guys would respect that."

CAMERA CUTS TO  
DARLENE SITTING AT  
THE DINING TABLE AND  
IS JOINED BY TARPON  
SPRINGS POLICEMAN

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

It could be extremely helpful for you to cooperate and tell us what you know about this whole operation.

DARLENE

I have two things to say...this operation as you call it isn't what you think it is and could I please get some clothes on?

The Policeman gets up from the table, walks behind Darlene and removes the cuffs,

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

We don't have any female officers present so technically, I'm not supposed to let you get dressed because I can't let you out of my sight.

DARLENE

You can watch me get dressed if you like, you know, because it's the right thing for you to do, right?

The Policeman shows obvious embarrassment

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Look. Just step in your closet and get dressed. I'm going to wait right outside.

DARLENE

Thank you.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

You're welcome.

Darlene walks into bedroom closet to get dressed.

CAMERA RETURNS TO  
ROOM WITH KEN, AGENT  
LUTZ AND SHERRIFF  
DEPUTY

DEA AGENT

(Lutz)

Do you have an attorney you can call?

KEN

Yes.

DEA AGENT

(Lutz)

Who?

KEN

David Parada.

DEA AGENT

Do you have his number?

KEN

His card is in my wallet which is  
in my bedroom.

Lutz instructs the deputy to escort Ken into the bedroom to retrieve the information. With hands cuffed, Ken directs him to his wallet. The deputy opens the wallet and retrieves the card.

KEN

Can I put on some clothes?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

Tell me where they are and I'll  
get them for you.

Ken directs the deputy in retrieving clothes from various drawers. The deputy removes the cuffs. As Ken gets dressed the deputy speaks.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

We kinda messed up your round of  
golf this morning, huh?

Ken offers a slight smile but does not reply to the comment.

Upon completion of getting dressed, the cuffs are locked once again and the deputy and Ken return to the room where Lutz is sitting. The Deputy hands the card to Lutz. Lutz views the card and places it in his shirt pocket.

KEN

I'd like to contact my attorney  
now.

DEA AGENT

(Lutz)

It's only 6:30 in the morning.  
They're not in the office anyway.  
I'll call him for you in awhile,

(MORE)

DEA AGENT (cont'd)  
when things settle down.

KEN  
Can't I just give his office quick  
call? I can at least leave a  
message.

DEA AGENT  
No!

KEN  
I always thought a person had the  
right to contact their attorney in  
situations like these.

DEA AGENT  
Well, you thought wrong.

Lutz picks Ken's cell phone up from the desk.

DEA AGENT  
Anyway, you don't have access to a  
phone right now.

Lutz leaves the room. The Deputy takes Ken out to the dining  
table where Darlene is sitting.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
You can sit here but I don't want  
to hear any talking.

Deputy walks to window and looks out.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
Your neighbors most likely doesn't  
know what is happening. We have no  
patrol cars in front of your  
house.

KEN  
That's the least of my concerns  
right now.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
In a few minutes, a Tarpon Springs  
Police will take you to the city  
jail. You'll be held there until  
the Sheriff's van arrives to  
transport you to the county.

Tarpon Springs policeman enters front door and proceeds  
upstairs.

## TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Mr. & Mrs. Barber, I'm going to escort you to a patrol car waiting outside. We'll be going to the Tarpon Springs Police Department for further processing.

Ken & Darlene stand up and begin to walk toward the stairs which leads to the front of the house.

## KEN

What about the officers still here? What about my wallet and phone and medicine?

## SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

These men still have some work to do here. Your personal property will be available later. You're not going to need them anyway for awhile.

Ken, Darlene and the Policeman proceed down the stairs and out into the front of the house. The garage door is open. Several agents are busily dismantling the grow room. Outside on the front lawn were 48 two gallon pots scattered on and around a pile of dirt from the pots. The plants had been cut and stacked in a pile. Three lights, ballasts, electrical cords, filters and other miscellaneous equipment were piled in another area.

Neighbors on both sides of the property were gathered, watching with surprise and curiosity. The policeman escorted Ken & Darlene to the edge of the property.

## TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Stand here for a moment while I have a word with the sheriff's deputy. I don't want to hear any talking. Just stand here and be quiet.

Camera pans the debris created by the officers tearing down the grow room, then to the officers working like busy ants going in and out of house bringing more equipment. Camera scans neighbors faces and curious chatter.

## DARLENE

Well, it's clear that we will be the topic of conversation in our neighborhood today. (smiles)



KEN

I believe you are correct. This is all just so amazing. I'm sorry you have to go thru this baby. I believe we have a very long day ahead of us.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

(Overhears Ken & Darlene talking.) Now listen to me! You were told to stand here quietly. Do you understand what quiet means?

Ken nods silently.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

This day will be easier for you if you follow instructions. Can you do that? Because if not, we'll separate you and it won't be pleasant.

The Tarpon Springs Policeman returns, opens the back door of the patrol car and places Ken & Darlene inside, one at a time on hard plastic seats without saying a word. Once in the car, the policeman gets in the drivers seat, lights a cigarette and pulls away.

KEN

I could breathe better without the cigarette smoke.

No reaction or acknowledgment from the policeman.

INT. TARPON SPRINGS POLICE DEPT. - DAY

Scene opens with patrol car pulling into the rear of Tarpon Springs Police Dept. Officer gets out of car, opens back door. Ken & Darlene are removed from patrol car and escorted into the building where cuffs are removed and they are placed into separate jail cells with concrete benches. There are combination toilet and drinking fountains in the corner in each that is obviously not functional. Camera notes time of 7:45 AM.

DARLENE

Excuse me Officer, can I get a blanket.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

Oh sure. I'll be right back with that. Is there anything else I can get to make you more comfortable?

Officer departs area.

INT. KEN & DARLENE'S HOME - DAY

Scene opens with three officers ransacking house. One is radically looking in bedroom dresser drawers, rummaging through clothes and personal items. Camera switches to another officer in office area searching through desk. The third is in kitchen removing food items from pantry and dumping them in the sink and trash.

DEA AGENT #2

(In the kitchen)

Here it is. This is what we needed to find.

The other officers gathers in the kitchen where the deputy is dumping a box of oatmeal. At the bottom of the box is a bundle of cash wrapped in rubber bands.

DEA AGENT #2

OK. This helps but there has to be more. This can't be much over a few thousand dollars if that.

The agent tosses the money to the other officer.

DEA AGENT #2

Count that. I'm going in the office. There has to be a lot more than what we're finding.

Deputy enters office area. Officer already present is sitting at desk looking at papers.

DEA AGENT #2

What about the computer? Have you looked on the computer?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

I tried but I wasn't able to log on.

DEA AGENT #2

Fuck that. We'll take the system with us and have it analyzed.

Agent reaches to electrical cord and angrily pulls it from the wall, then disconnects the monitor.

DEA AGENT #2

There has got to be more here than what we are finding. This is a conspiracy with a shitload of people involved and all we can find is a couple of thousand bucks? And it's been the same thing at every house. Right now with most of the raids complete, we have about \$16 thousand dollars. That's not even enough to sound good on television.

SHERIFFS DEPUTY

They sure don't fit the stereotype drug conspirators.

Deputy # 2 enters the office with cash in hand.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

Five thousand five hundred dollars.

Agent shakes his head in disgust.

DEA AGENT #2

Amazing! Do the paperwork on this stuff and stop at Tarpon Springs to have Baker sign this money over to the city. Looks like the State may have gotten over anxious on this one.

INT. TARPON SPRINGS POLICE DEPT. - DAY

Scene opens with camera shot of clock which reads 10:15 AM. Deputy enters building and approaches officer that was at the scene earlier.

SHERIFFS DEPUTY

We need to have Mr. Baker sign a release on the money that was found and get them down to County. The party is well underway down there.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN

How much cash did we get?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
Fifty five hundred bucks.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN  
Hm mm. We expected more but with  
the seven grand we got from his  
kid that gives us twelve grand.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
Don't become to attached to that  
amount. Lutz said they needed some  
walkin' money.

Officer shows look of frustration.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN  
OK. Well, I'll have this signed  
and we'll get them down to County.

Officer enters jail area and unlocks cell that holds Ken.

TARPON SPRINGS POLICEMAN  
Step out here Mr. Baker. We're  
going to transport you and your  
wife down to County Jail but first  
you need to sign this paper  
acknowledging that you are aware  
of the five thousand, five hundred  
dollars we found at your home in  
an oatmeal box and that we will be  
keeping this for evidence.

A pink set of papers is placed in front of Ken. Without  
reading them or hesitating, Ken signs the paper. The officer  
removes a copy and hands it to Ken. The officer attaches the  
cuffs. At that time another officer joins them with Darlene.  
Cuffs are also placed on her.

They are escorted outside to a waiting patrol car.

Music plays as the patrol car pulls away from the Tarpon  
Springs Police Department. The last few hours have been a  
stressful ordeal for Ken & Darlene and now the preliminary  
steps have been completed. They are on their way to the  
County jail.

Their facial expression tells what they are feeling. Fear of  
the unknown, embarrassment, concern for others and each  
other. They look at each other, smile and kiss. Darlene  
rests her head on Ken's shoulder. Their body language  
portrays that whatever happens, they will persevere.

At this point, Ken becomes moderator and provides voice over while viewer watches their facial communication. Patrol car is traveling en route to the County Jail.

KEN

(Narrating)

Well, this is a first. After being together with Darlene for 31 years we've experienced a lot, but I never thought we would be riding together handcuffed in the back of a patrol car on the way to jail for marijuana cultivation.

We knew growing was a risk and the possibility of this was always there, but we never thought we would get caught. Truth of the matter is that we never felt guilty or that we were really doing anything wrong. It was amazing to us that we were going thru this over growing a weed. That the Federal and State governments would put this much money and effort into prosecuting people like us. We certainly never caused any harm to a single person. We never stole, lied to or cheated anyone. We were never a threat or detriment to our community. We were terrific neighbors. We contributed to the local economy. Where ever our pot ended up, there is no question it helped someone.

We've read the history and know how marijuana has been around for thousands of years. We know about the smear campaign Hearst, Dupont and Anslinger launched in the 30's to protect their interests. Why Nixon launched the War on Drugs in the 70's. And the corrupt history of the DEA. It's hard to believe that that their efforts for selfish reasons was successful in brainwashing the American public. And it's taken us to where we are today. A disaster that's costing taxpayers billions of dollars and ruining countless lives of good people.

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

We weren't the stereotype pot growers, although in reality, I don't think there is a stereotype...just what a large part of society perceives them to be. We were 60 years old. People seen us as a normal, aging couple that was at or near retirement. We did nothing to suggest that we were growing marijuana or smoking it. When we went out, it was usually Darlene and me alone. The only socialization we did was with others that were doing the same thing. That was our mistake. Someone had made an enemy along the way and talked too much. That person decided to call Crime Stoppers on them. The investigation led them to all of us. We had no idea! We were completely blindsided.

INT. PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFFS BUILDING - DAY

Patrol car pulls into back of building that enters into the jail holding and processing area. The patrolman gets out of patrol car, opens the door for Ken & Darlene and they are led into the building as the music ends.

Officers escort Ken & Darlene down the hall and into the jail holding area. The door is opened and as they enter the holding area they see for the first time everyone else that were busted.

DEA AGENT

Any of these people look familiar?

Everyone was emotionally distraught and intimidated after what they had been through that morning. They sit with a blank stare as Ken & Darlene entered.

An officer opens a cell door that contained Bruce, Lee, Rick, Kevin, Ryan, Scott & Joe. He motioned for Ken to enter, while Darlene was placed in an adjacent cell that contained Danielle, Susan & Julie. Matt was sitting in a chair facing the wall outside the cell in his boxer shorts.

The two cells were about 12x15 with concrete benches and a toilet/drinking fountain combo.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

I'm going to tell everyone one time to keep quiet. I don't want to hear a word from anyone and if I do, I'm going to separate you. Is that understood?

Casual acknowledgement from everyone.

Ken becomes moderator with voice over. Camera scans the cell as voice over begins.

KEN

(Voice Over)

So there we were. My family and friends in Pinellas County jail for growing marijuana. This was a day we wouldn't forget. It was painful to look at them in this state. I knew one day we would laugh at this, but right now it was hard to smile. The amazing thing about us was how we came together. An unlikely group of characters that were dealing with life when destiny took over. No one planned it. No one gave it much thought. It just evolved from a chance meeting in 1995 between Joe and a pot dealer.

Sheriff's deputy approaches cell.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

Who is Ken Baker?

KEN

That's me.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

Do you have a pink piece of paper which you were given at Tarpon Springs police Department?

KEN

Yes I do.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

I need you to hand it to me. Slide it on the floor under the cell.

Ken is puzzled by this request but complies as he slips the paper under the cell as directed. The Deputy retrieves it

and walks over near the processing desk where other officers and agents are standing. As he glances at his female counterpart with a smile, he tears the paper in pieces. This was done out of sight of Ken, however, Darlene who was in the adjacent cell was able to witness the act.

Camera shows deputy tearing document and Darlene watching.

The room is quiet except for the talking from law enforcement as they work on processing.

Camera scans everyone as Ken begins the dialogue that tells the story of how Operation Family Tree was born.

Camera stops on Joe.

KEN  
(Narrating)

It was Joe who got this whole thing started, although he had no idea what roots it would grow when he began. The Feds thought Joe and Sue were the Kingpins of this highly sophisticated operation.

INT. INSIDE OFFICE BUILDING - DAY

Scene begins as Joe is polishing the floor with a buffing machine.

Joe's boss appears from around a corner in the hallway,

JOE'S BOSS  
Joe, when you finish the floor, I need you to set 60 chairs to 20 tables in conference room C. That needs to be completed in the next hour. Normally, Ed would help you but he went home early. I know you can handle that by yourself though, right?

JOE  
Sure, but It'll be tough to do it in an hour.

JOE'S BOSS  
I have faith in you.



Boss walks away and disappears around corner. Joe pauses for a moment to wipe the sweat from his face and take a drink of water. Just then the boss pops back around the corner and looks at Joe with a smile.

JOE'S BOSS

By the way, no overtime.

Joe shakes his head and continues working.

KEN

(Narrating)

Joe was 54. He had been working on the maintenance staff at a conference center in St. Petersburg for nearly four years. He worked long days for \$8. an hour and no benefits. Joe had chronic back pain stemming from an injury years ago. No insurance and a limited budget, he lived with the pain and Motrin.

INT. JOE'S APARTMENT - DAY

Camera shows Susan, Joe's wife leaning on rail of second floor balcony. She walks into the apartment and opens a bottle of water, then sits in living room blankly staring at the television.

KEN

(Narrating)

Joe and Susan had been married 21 one years. Susan had been in remission from leukemia for nearly two years. She worked for years as a medical recorder, but lost that job resulting from missed work after chemotherapy treatments. No insurance, so what little help she received came from the state.

JOE PULLING INTO  
PARKING AREA AT  
APARTMENT

As Joe gets out of car, he holds his back in obvious pain. As he walks toward the stairs which led to his second level apartment, camera pans to a young man looking over the balcony. He watched as Joe slowly made his way thru the lot and up the stairs. The young man's name was David. He lived three apartments down from Joe. They had talked seldom in

the past, however, David was familiar with the challenges Joe and Susan faced.

DAVID

(As Joe reaches  
the top of  
stairway)

Mr. Joe. Welcome home. How goes  
the battle?

JOE

Hi David. I'm doing all right. Are  
you OK?

DAVID

I'm marvelous. And I've got to  
tell you Joe, it saddens me to see  
you and Susan in so much pain and  
struggling all the time just to  
survive.

JOE

(with a smile)

Don't be concerned about us David.  
I appreciate the thoughts but it's  
hard enough to take care of your  
own problems. We'll be fine.

DAVID

That may be Joe, but what if I  
told you I may have an opportunity  
for you that could make you a lot  
better off financially and you  
wouldn't have to break your back  
for eight hours every day.

Joe remains silent for a moment and his eyes begin to water  
with emotion.

JOE

I'd say that sounds good. I'd like  
to hear what you have in mind.

DAVID

Let me make a call. You going to  
be home tonight?

JOE

I'm always home.

DAVID

I'll stop over in a couple of  
hours.

Joe nods as they shake hands.

JOE  
OK....Alright then. I'll talk to  
you in awhile.

TRANSITION INTO  
JOE'S APARTMENT.

Joe enters apartment. Susan looks up at him and smiles.

SUE  
Welcome home my dear. Was your day  
tolerable?

JOE  
Another day in paradise. Hey, I  
just had a conversation with  
David, the guy that lives down a  
few doors. He said he may have a  
job opportunity for me.

SUE  
Doing what?

JOE  
I have no idea. He's supposed to  
come over in a few hours and talk  
about it.

SUE  
Well, it won't do any harm to  
listen.

TRANSITION BACK TO  
JAIL

An officer notices Ryan smiling at his Mother.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
(Approaches Ryan)  
OK...You were told to sit there  
and shut up but you chose not to  
so we'll just move your ass in the  
other room.

RYAN  
(With anger)  
I didn't say a word.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
(Gets in Ryan's  
face)  
Now you want to argue with me? I  
(MORE)

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY (cont'd)  
 strongly suggest you sit in this  
 chair and not speak another word  
 to anyone or look at anyone. Can  
 you do that?

RYAN  
 Are you Gay?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
 (Angry/embarrassed)  
 What? Do I look like I swing that  
 way?

RYAN  
 You never really know in today's  
 world. But it's like you enjoy  
 getting close to me.

The Deputy chooses not to respond and turns away.

BACK TO JOE'S  
 APARTMENT

Knock on door. Joe opens door and greets David and another  
 man named Alan. David introduces Alan. They take a seat in  
 the living room with Susan.

David and Alan displays concern over Susan's presence. Joe  
 notices.

JOE  
 It's OK David. Sue is fine with  
 anything we talk about.

DAVID  
 OK. Before we talk, I need your  
 word that what we talk about  
 tonight will go no further. This  
 is strictly between us here in  
 this room. Fair enough?

JOE  
 Fair enough.

Alan and David look at Susan.

SUE  
 You don't have to be concerned  
 about me.

ALAN

David has told me a little about you and Susan. Now, I'll admit I'm not real comfortable talking with you at this point because everything is based on what David has told me. I don't know anything about you but I hope David's opinion of you is correct.

Look. I need help. It's not an easy job and there's a lot to learn. You'll have to keep your job for awhile because I can only pay you every two months. And that's assuming we get along and can work together. If we can't, we'll go our separate ways and pretend this never happened. But I really want this to work because I can't do it myself any longer.

Joe, I grow marijuana. I want you to take care of the plants. I have two houses with 50 plants in each house.

The information completely blindsided Joe and Susan.

ALAN

Should I continue?

Alan and David looks at Joe, then at Susan. Susan looks at Joe.

SUE

It's your decision. This needs to be between you guys. I'll get us something to drink.

Sue rises and leaves the room.

JOE

Continue.

ALAN

I'll train you in every aspect of growing and there's a lot to learn. If you do everything right, it can take a couple of hours every other day, but I'll expect you to check on them every day.

An average harvest will net 6 lbs.

(MORE)

ALAN (cont'd)

That equates to \$24 grand. If you do your job right, I'll pay you 10% after it's sold. So for both houses, you'll make about 5 grand every two months. How much do you make now Joe?

JOE

\$1,500. a month

ALAN

Well, this will give you the chance to nearly double that, and although it's not easy, you'll be much more independent than you are now and the physical work will definitely be less. The first couple of months will be tough because you'll be working two jobs. But once you're thru that, you can set your own schedule. If you decide to quit your other job, you'll have a lot of free time.

Sue enters room with ice tea. Joe is on edge of seat.

DAVID

So what do you think Joe.

JOE

Wow! This is pretty overwhelming. Are you involved in this David?

DAVID

I'm in sales.

JOE

Tell me about the risk. I mean, it's against the law, and I'm not interested in spending time in prison.

ALAN

There's definitely risk involved and it's a shame. This shouldn't even be illegal. It's an herb that's been around for thousands of years and causes no harm to anyone. But you'll learn that as you get into this. We take every precaution by living a normal lifestyle and and being aware of every aspect. Unfortunately, the

(MORE)

ALAN (cont'd)

law doesn't look at it in the same light as we do. Marijuana has a strong odor in the final stages. We use filters to eliminate that. The power bill can't get too high, the noise coming from the fans can't be heard from outside, the light must be completely contained, you have to be aware of what goes in the trash. The yard must be maintained to keep the neighbors happy. You have to be aware of who you talk to and what you say. Never trust anyone outside this room with the knowledge of what you are doing. You have to watch your neighbors more than they watch you. Learn their habits, their work schedules and anything else you can find out. You can be friendly but not their friend. Plan on staying at the house for several hours each visit and be prepared to come up with a reason you don't hang around the house much in case you're ever asked. In short Joe, there is risk, but you can minimize it greatly if you just be smart.

JOE

And if you get caught?

ALAN

First offense probably probation and a fine, although you could get jail time. Joe Look. The bottom line is that if you do this, you'll be doing something that is against Federal and State law in Florida. Some states have much more lenient laws. If you get caught, you'll pay consequences. If you don't, you'll have a very comfortable lifestyle. And in your case, you should not only grow it but smoke it. I understand your health isn't that great and neither is Susan's. Cannabis is an amazing herb that has tremendous medicinal value. I'll help educate you on the history as we go. But

(MORE)

ALAN (cont'd)  
seriously Joe, if you do things  
right, the chances of getting  
busted are minimal.

JOE  
It doesn't seem right that the  
laws should be different depending  
on the state. This is still  
America.

DAVID  
Welcome to America.

ALAN  
So Joe, the ball is in your court.  
If you want to do this, we'll  
start tomorrow. In about a week,  
I'll give you a few hundred bucks  
to help me trim. After that, you  
can count on a few thousand every  
two months.

JOE  
I've never had the balls to step  
outside my little comfort zone.  
I'm approaching 60 and don't have  
shit to show for the years of work  
I've done.

Joe glances at Susan.

SUE  
It's your decision.

JOE  
I'm gonna do this. Count me in.

David smiles and shakes Joe's hand. The gesture is followed  
by Alan.

ALAN  
Welcome Joe.

Camera pans out as David, Alan, Susan and Joe continue to  
talk.

KEN  
(As narrator while  
camera is still  
on the group.)  
So that was it. The initial seed  
for Operation Family Tree was  
born. Joe began working with Alan  
(MORE)



KEN (cont'd)  
nearly every day. In a few weeks,  
things started to fall into place  
and Joe was on his way to being a  
master grower.

INT. PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFF'S BUILDING - DAY

Darlene had taken the high road in all this and was humoring the other girls. The mood had changed and they were laughing and feeding of each others comments. The Deputy realized what was happening.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
My, my ladies. It seems as though  
you are enjoying yourself way too  
much. We asked you nicely to  
remain quiet, but as we should  
have known, a cell full of women  
finds that challenging.

Deputy opens cell door and singles out Darlene.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
Young lady, step outside and have  
a seat in that chair next to me.  
It appears that you are the  
comedian in the group, so we'll  
see how your sense of humor is out  
here.

Darlene takes a seat in a chair located near the desk where the processing is being conducted.

Rick is in adjacent cell and is watching Darlene. They make eye contact. Rick gives her a thumbs up gesture and smiles. The deputy sees this.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
Are you going to be next hotshot?  
Mind your own business and you'll  
be better for it, trust me.

RICK  
I was just providing her with  
moral support. Can't you see she's  
distraught. I was comforting her.  
She shouldn't even be here.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY  
I'm sure none of you thinks you  
should be here.

RICK

You're right. What did we do that hurt anyone or took advantage of anyone? Marijuana should be legal anyway.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

But it's not. so you need to sit down and be quiet.

DARLENE

Do you think it should be?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

It doesn't matter what I think. You broke the law. I enforce the law.

DARLENE

But do you think if it was legal it would be a bad thing?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

Personally, I think it should be. And at some point it might be. But until that time comes, people like you are breaking the law.

RICK

But look at us. We're not criminals. We're just people trying to get by.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

No more talking.

Camera pans to Rick laughing and shaking his head. Ken begins moderating.

KEN

(Narrating)

The next member of Operation Family Tree was Rick.

INT. LAS VEGAS, NEVADA - DAY

Scene opens with "Welcome to Las Vegas" sign, then transitions to Green Valley Ranch in Henderson, NV. Camera scans crowd on casino floor, then slowly zooms in on blackjack table where Rick is sitting. A small amount of chips are in front of him. Dealer completes the deal and looks to Rick who is in the number one position at the

table, for his playing decision. Rick looks at his cards and sees a King and a Jack.

RICK  
(Makes a hand  
motion indicating  
that he was good.)  
I'm not only good, I'm great!

Dealer moves on to the other players as narration begins.

KEN  
(Narrating)  
The year was 1998. It had been nearly three years since Joe and Susan began their relationship with Marijuana. Rick was Susan's brother. They hadn't been that close over the years, but that was about to change. Rick never seemed to find a comfort zone in life. After 15 years of marriage and two sons, he became bored with his life. That's when he met Julie which turned out to be the wedge that drove him and his x apart. When he left, his boys were 10 and 12. She filed for divorce. In the process, the courts ordered a hefty child support payment to be made by Rick. That was seven years ago. Rick had a thriving real estate appraisal business and was netting about \$100 grand a year, but somehow, there was never enough money for the support payments.

The last player in line hits a five and receives a face card which gives him 15. He hits again and receives another face card and busts. Dealer turns his cards to reveal 16. His hit turns a 5 for 21.

RICK  
Sonofabitch. Why would you hit a 15? You're not only losing your money but your losing other peoples money. You're an idiot.

Rick Grabs what little chips he has and angrily leaves table. He walks around casino floor until he spots Julie playing a video poker machine and takes a seat next to her.

Julie acknowledges his presence with a smile and an affectionate rub of the leg.

JULIE  
How's it going?

RICK  
Shitty. I'm down about \$3,200. How about you?

JULIE  
Down \$400.

RICK  
Fuck. You know what. Let's get the hell out of here. I don't know why we even come. Is it to loose money? Because that seems to be what happens every time.

JULIE  
It's relaxing.

RICK  
Relaxing my ass. If this is your idea of relaxing then you can do it without me and my money.

Rick angrily begins to walk away from Julie.

JULIE  
Rick, wait. Let me cash out and I'll go with you.

RICK  
Well hurry the fuck up. I'll meet you by the front door.

Rick walks outside the main entrance and hands his valet ticket to the attendant when his phone rings.

RICK  
Hello.

JOE  
Hey Rick. Joe. How ya doing buddy. Haven't talked to you in awhile. What's going on back there?

RICK

Hi Joe. How the hell are ya?  
You're the last person I expected  
to hear from today. It's been  
awhile.

JOE

Yes it has. Too long. Susan and I  
miss you. So how's things going  
there?

RICK

My business is going down the  
tube, I've been summoned to court  
over back child support, Julie is  
becoming a pain in my ass and  
Kevin and Bryan think I'm the  
worst Dad a kid could have. Other  
than that, things are OK. How  
about you guys?

JOE

Life is good for us. We're doing  
good. Susan has been feeling great  
and so have I. We just moved into  
a new house last week. No more  
apartments for us.

RICK

You must be doing better  
financially. Last we talked, the  
maintenance job wasn't doing it  
for you.

JOE

Rick, I quit that job about a year  
ago.

RICK

No shit. And what are you doing  
now?

JOE

Well, we took control of our  
lives. We went into business for  
ourselves and it's been good to  
us.

RICK

What kind of business?

Julie walks out the door.

JOE

We're involved in the horticulture industry.

RICK

Horticulture? What the fuck you mean horticulture? Are you growin' shit?

The valet attendant drives up with Rick's car. He motions to Julie as he tips the attendant and they get in car.

JOE

You could say that. Rick listen. I can't go into the details, but Susan and I would like you to think about coming down for a visit. Bring Julie with you. It could be a nice relaxing getaway for awhile. We'll tell you all about it then. And if you're interested, there could be a great opportunity for you. You need to get out of Vegas Rick. Get a new start. Will you think about it?

RICK

I will. I really will Joe. You've got me curious. Give me a few days to tie up some loose ends and I'll see if I can't get away.

JOE

That's great. Your sister will be happy to see you. I'll tell her you're making plans.

Rick & Joe end their conversation.

JULIE

So what's up?

RICK

I don't know. Joe & Susan want me to visit them in Florida. They say they have a business opportunity for me. I might take a trip in a couple of weeks.

INT. PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFFS BUILDING - DAY

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

All right people. Listen up. We're about finished with the paperwork, so in about 20 minutes some vans will be ready to load up and take everyone to Pinellas County Jail. Once you get checked in over there, you'll be allowed to make phone calls to arrange for bail or whatever other reasons. Continue to sit tight and be quiet. You'll be out of here shortly.

The two Pinellas County Sheriff's Detectives who are the leads in this bust are standing off to the side of the processing desk talking. Darlene is sitting quietly in back of them.

LEAD DETECTIVE 1

(Female)

What about the money?

Detective turns toward Darlene and back to his partner.

LEAD DETECTIVE 2

(In low voice tone)

What money?

Detective # 1 all of a sudden realizes Darlene is within earshot and nods to her partner.

LEAD DETECTIVE 1

We'll talk about it later.

INT. JOE & SUSAN'S HOUSE (CLEARWATER, FL.) - DAY

Sue exits the kitchen with two cups of coffee and a plate of danish. She sits it in front of Rick and Joe who are sitting on the lanai.

SUE

Here you are Brother. It's amazing to lay eyes on you. As long as it has been since we've seen each other it's like no time was lost.

RICK

Time is a mystery to me. There's periods when time seems to stand still, sometimes good and sometimes not so good, and then

(MORE)

RICK (cont'd)

all of a sudden you're wondering where the last twenty or thirty years went. But a lot has happened since I last saw you. The big thing is my split with Tammy. I'll regret that for the rest of my life. I think about that every day and wonder if I'll ever have a relationship with the boys. I owe a huge amount for back child support and I'm not sure how or when that's going to be resolved. Julie just keeps being there. She has an attraction to meth and pain pills, mainly Oxycontin. There's no love between us. I just feel sorry for her. I often think about leaving her but I haven't been able to do it. She wanted to make this trip with me, but I needed some solitude time.

Rick stands up and looks at his surroundings.

RICK

And it looks like you guys have had a few changes yourself. Great house you have. And you look like you're feeling good. You both look healthy.

JOE

Rick, the last few years have been very good to us. My back feels good most of the time and Sue has been in complete remission. Our stress level is low and we have no financial struggles like we did for years. If you're healthy, have no money problems and you're happy with yourself and those around you, life is pretty good.

RICK

OK. Let's get to it. It's great to see you, but the main reason I'm here is to learn about this possible business opportunity. What are you doing that's making this possible?

Joe smiles and reaches for a danish.



JOE

Let's have a danish and finish our coffee. We'll take a little trip while I explain things.

INT. DRIVING IN CAR (CLEARWATER, FL) - DAY

RICK

OK Joe. So what's the deal? Talk to me. What's this horticulture business you speak of?

JOE

About three years ago I met this guy that was a marijuana grower. It was just a chance meeting. Actually, the guy that sold it for him lived in our apartment complex. He knew we were struggling and our health wasn't that good. It just so happened that at the same time, his grower was looking for someone to help him with his crops.

RICK

No shit? So he brought the two of you together?

JOE

He did. Looking back, he had his own interests at heart, but he did me a great favor. Changed our life.

RICK

So you went to work for this guy? He taught you how to grow marijuana?

JOE

Rick, I've learned every aspect of it.

RICK

Sonofabitch Joe. This is awesome! And you've been working with these guys every since?

JOE

Actually, I no longer have a relationship with either the grower or the distributor. About a  
(MORE)

JOE (cont'd)

year ago, he went through this period where I couldn't please him. He was always complaining about something. Nothing was ever the way he wanted it and shit Rick, I was doing things better than he ever did. I was doing everything right. I doubled his yields and he was making more money than he ever did, but didn't want to share the wealth.

RICK

How much is each plant worth?

JOE

An average plant will yield about two ounces of dried weight. The grower was selling it to David, the distributor, for \$250. an ounce or four grand per pound. This is an excellent strain. It will get \$400. an ounce on the street.

RICK

Holy shit Joe. So eight plants are worth four grand?

JOE

On average.

RICK

Unbelievable! And how long does it take a plant to go from beginning to end?

JOE

Depends how long you veg them, but approximately 10-12 weeks. Then you have another 7-10 days of drying after they're trimmed.

RICK

Amazing! So you're doing this on your own? The other guys are no longer involved?

JOE

That's right. It finally got to a point where I hated to be around the guy. The last time a cut clones for him, I cut extras for

(MORE)

JOE (cont'd)  
myself. I had enough money saved  
by this time to rent a house and  
buy my own equipment. I no longer  
needed them.

RICK  
What about the selling part?

JOE  
Well, Roxy, your niece who you  
barely know, married a guy that  
that was familiar with that world.  
He had a large number of people  
that were willing and able to  
purchase all we could grow. So now  
him and I are doing the same thing  
David and Alan were doing.

Joe pulls the car into the driveway of a well groomed home  
in a very well kept sub division.

RICK  
What about the guy that got you  
started? Was he pissed that you  
left?

JOE  
Very much so. I didn't tell him  
what I was planning. After a  
heated argument one day, I just  
told him I had had enough and that  
I was finished. Alan accused me of  
stealing from him and told me that  
if I left, I would pay for it  
somewhere down the road.

RICK  
What do you think he meant by  
that?

JOE  
I don't know. Probably just false  
threats in the moment of anger.  
Anyway, that was over a year ago  
and we haven't seen each other  
since.

Here we are. House number one.

RICK  
Number one?

JOE

I have another smaller home about  
8 miles from here.

Joe and Rick exit the car and enter the house. There is a very modest but well set living room. It looks no different than one might expect.

RICK

Very nice.

Joe smiles as he escorts Rick down the hall and opens what looks to be a bedroom door.

JOE

Welcome to my world Rick.

Music plays as camera pans the room.

Raised tables on each side of the room held 64 plants which stood about 3' tall. Brilliant lights presided over the room, serving as a substitute for the sun. Fans, ductwork, filters and other equipment were spread throughout the room.

RICK

I'm speechless. I've never seen  
anything like this.

JOE

These plants are about two weeks  
from harvest. Look at these big  
beautiful buds. Feel how hard they  
are Rick.

Rick places his hand around a bud and slightly squeezes but quickly releases it.

Joe laughs.

RICK

Good Lord. They're so sticky they  
feel like glue.

JOE

The stickier the better. Now smell  
your hand.

Rick puts his hand to his nose.

JOE

That's the resin and these plants  
are full of it.

Joe picks up a magnifying glass from one of the tables.

JOE

Look at them thru this glass.

RICK

Wow! They're amazing. They're beautiful.

JOE

These plants have been under the lights for 8 weeks.

RICK

The ducting is blowing air through the lights to keep them cooler?

JOE

Exactly. And the carbon filter back there insures that the room doesn't get to stinky.

RICK

I'm overwhelmed. It looks like a lot of work setting this up.

JOE

It is. Then there's a lot more to do if you want good results.

RICK

Where do you get the new plants that replace these when they're done?

JOE

From the next room.

Joe walks into the hall and into another bedroom where there is a table with small fluorescent above. There are 70 small plants all looking dark green and healthy. In the corner under separate lights are two 6' plants in large pots.

JOE

These are called the Mother Plants. Without them, you have nothing.

RICK

Amazing! What happens when they're done growing?

JOE

Then they're cut and trimmed. For me, that's the toughest part. I always have plenty of Motrin on hand to relieve muscle aches. Once you experience it, you'll know what I mean. It's challenging trimming these ladies by yourself. It'll take me a good two days to trim these.

JOE

Muscle aches. Once you experience it, you'll know what I mean. It's challenging trimming these ladies by yourself. It will take me a good two days to trim these.

RICK

What's the objective of trimming? Just removing the leaves?

JOE

That's it. Then they're hung upside down in the other room and dried for about a week.

At that moment the doorbell rings.

JOE

Who the fuck can that be?

Joe exits the room and walks toward the front door. Rick freezes, not knowing how to respond. He hears Joe open the door and engage in conversation for a short time. The conversation ends and the sound of the door shutting allows Rick to relax a bit. Joe enters back into the room. He notices Rick is visibly shaken.

JOE

Everything is good. It was a guy selling security systems.

RICK

Jesus Joe.

JOE

I know. When you get an unexpected visitor, it always makes me paranoid. I'm better than I used to be, but It still freaks me out. That salesman could have been a nosy neighbor that could cause problems or an undercover DEA

(MORE)

JOE (cont'd)  
agent. That's why it's so important to be on top of things. If I would have opened the door and a strong smell of marijuana hit the wrong visitor, it could be the beginning of the end. If I didn't have that filter, the house would definitely smell.

RICK  
So anyway, after they dry, then what?

JOE  
All the buds are cut from the stem. They're weighed and packaged.

Joe leaves the room for a moment and returns with a 4oz. bag of weed.

JOE  
This is what the finished product looks like.

Rick opens the bag and smells it. He dips his hand in the bag and fills it with large premium buds.

RICK  
Joe, I'm not an expert, but this is different than any weed I've ever seen. In the 70's a bag of weed would be all ground up with stems and seeds. It looked nothing like this.

JOE  
That's what I understand. I was never exposed to marijuana before this so this is how it's always been for me. When people are paying \$400. an ounce, they expect quality. This will smoke as smooth as a good scotch too. Tonight, we'll sample a couple of bowls.

RICK  
I'll be ready for that. So tell me how you see me fitting into all this Joe.

JOE

It's simple. I want you to come out and help me. When you get the money and knowledge to do your own thing, you're on your own. It's an opportunity you may never have again. It gives you freedom Rick. Plus it'll be nice to have you living nearby. As long as you stay smart and take the necessary precautions, the risks are minimized. Don't get greedy. I'm not expecting to get rich, I just want enough to pay the bills and live a modest lifestyle.

I'd like you to move out here as soon as possible. If you're short on money, I'll loan you some. You'll like the lifestyle here. Get a boat and go fishing everyday or play golf or do whatever you want.

I know I've laid a lot on you. Take some time to think about if you want. But tell me what your thoughts are?

RICK

Joe, you had me at "Welcome to my world."

INT. PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFFS BUILDING - DAY

LEAD DETECTIVE 1

All right people. Listen up. We're done processing here and the vans are waiting outside. We're going to split up in three vans.

The Deputies open the jail cell doors and begin placing cuffs on everyone.

DEA AGENT

Ladies and gentlemen, let me give you some very good advice. I want you to take this serious because it could change your life. You're all in a very critical situation. Cultivating and trafficking marijuana at the level you were and conspiracy against the Federal

(MORE)



DEA AGENT (cont'd)  
Government can easily get you 10  
years in prison. Remember when I  
tell you that the first ones on  
the bus get the breaks.

KEVIN  
I never did like buses.

DEA AGENT  
And that's fine. Federal prisons  
are full of guys like yourself. If  
that's the route you want to take  
it's your choice. I'm telling you  
though, with the number of you  
involved in this, I can promise  
you that there's going to be some  
that are smarter than the others.  
They're the ones that are going to  
sit down and talk with us. They're  
the ones that will decide to  
cooperate with us and stay out of  
prison. But let me be clear. The  
clock is ticking. The first ones  
to cooperate is going to get the  
breaks. So you think about it. I  
hope you make the right decision.  
I don't want to see any of go to  
prison. But I can't help you if  
you're not willing to help  
yourself.

The Deputies begin to escort everyone out side to the  
waiting vans. The day is hot. Humidity high. Nearly six  
hours had passed since the arrest. Everyone was tired,  
hungry and stinky.

The seven men are placed in one van, the four women in  
another.

KEN  
(Narrating)  
So in the van we went. God it was  
hot. As soon as I got seated, my  
heart snapped into triple time. I  
have a mild heart condition that  
requires a pill every morning.  
Ryan was sitting next to me. He  
knows about the condition and can  
recognize the symptoms.

KEN  
Sonofabitch.

RYAN

Are you OK Pop? You're heart's  
fucking up on you isn't it?

KEN

Yeah. Fuck. There's nothing I can  
do about it.

INT. INSIDE DETENTION TRANSPORT VAN - DAY

The vans are large extended cabs. Inside, there is a bench seat on each side that is designed to seat six. An iron mesh screen is located over the window that looks into the cab.

The door had not yet been closed and two officers were standing outside.

RYAN

Hey, my Dad has a medical  
condition with his heart. He needs  
some help.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

(Casually looking  
into the van.)

You'll be fine. We'll be at the  
County Jail soon and they can  
provide medical assistance if  
needed.

The door to the van was closed.

RYAN

Bastards. I don't know what to do  
Pop.

KEN

I think I'll be OK, but I feel  
like I'm going to pass out.

Two deputies enter the front of the van, start the engine and begin to drive out of the lot. The trip to County jail is about 10 minutes. Music plays as camera shows the two different groups in the back of their respective van. Everyone is hot, sweaty and crowded. Ken has closed his eyes and is slumped down in an attempt to relax and mentally remove himself from the situation in hopes that will help.

The van pulls into the parking area of County jail. One deputy gets out and walks into the building. The driver pulls out a laptop and begins to check the status of his Fantasy Football picks. The engine had been shut off and

what little air conditioning that was coming to the back had stopped.

KEN

I don't know if I'm going to make it Ryan. It's so hot in here and my heart is beating like crazy. This is fucked up.

Ryan yells as loud as he can.

RYAN

You've got to open the door and let us get out. My Dad is in serious condition.

The Deputy does not acknowledge Ryan's plea. He closes the laptop, slumps down in the seat and closes his eyes. Everyone in the Van begins to yell and stomp their feet. The Deputy doesn't move. After several minutes, the other Deputy comes from the building and motions for both vans to bring their people inside.

The Deputy gets out of the van. He walks to the back and opens the door. Kevin, Matt, Ryan, Scott, Lee, Bruce and Ken file out in that order.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

How's the ticker old man?

KEN

Do you really care?

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

Of course I do. I'm offended that you would suggest otherwise.

KEN

Look. I've got this irregular heart beat problem. All the way over here we were asking for help and you ignored us.

A Deputy comes out of the building.

SHERIFF DEPUTY # 2

C'mon. Get these people in the building.

SHERRIFFS DEPUTY

OK. let's move it people. Tell your story to someone inside.

INT. PINELLAS COUNTY JAIL - DAY

JAIL EMPLOYEE 1

Listen up. When your name is called, step up to the desk. You'll be signed in, finger printed then strip searched.

Operation Family Tree group along with others there for various crimes begins to file through the process of removing cuffs and fingerprinting. Upon completion, each person is escorted into a wooden closet similar to a large fitting room in a department store. Camera focuses on Kevin as he enters the closet with a jail employee for the strip search.

JAIL EMPLOYEE #2

Remove your clothing, bend over and spread your cheeks.

Kevin undresses, bends over, places his fingers in mouth and spreads his cheeks.

JAIL EMPLOYEE #2

Sir, you're not funny or original. I don't enjoy looking at your asshole any more than you do showing me. Now spread your ass.

Kevin complies. Jail Employee inspects.

JAIL EMPLOYEE #2

Get dressed and sit down outside until your name is called.

Camera fixes on Kevin as he gets dressed and moves to waiting room. Music plays as he exits, Matt and Ryan enter. Ryan exits and joins Kevin as Ken begins narrating.

KEN

(Narrating)

Kevin and Ryan brought Operation Family Tree to it's current level. They met in the 8th grade and had been best friends since. Kevin was always cool under fire. Seldom would he allow the game of life to rattle him. He was that way when I met him in 1995 at the age of 16 and he never changed. Always challenging the system, always pushing the envelope. He was an opportunist in the sense that he was always looking for the

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
shortest and smartest way to the  
finish line. Once he became  
passionate about something,  
nothing derailed him. Ryan had the  
same philosophy which brought them  
together like magnets.

INT. OUTSIDE MIDDLE SCHOOL - HENDERSON, NEVADA - DAY

The year is 1995. Scene opens with Ryan and Mickey (15 years old) running from the school in the afternoon. They spot an ice cream truck parked at the end of the school parking lot.

RYAN  
(Yelling to the  
truck as they  
approach.)  
Hey Gus. How ya doing buddy. Can  
you get me and Mickey out of here?  
We're skippin' last period and I  
think they're hot on our trail.

Gus looks up from reading a High Times magazine.

GUS  
Well Hell, I guess I don't have a  
choice seeing as how you're here  
now and the sheriff is coming.

Gus gets up and opens the back door to the truck. The boys scramble in and the truck pulls away from the school.

MICKEY  
Thanks Gus. You're always there  
for us. Can you drop us in the  
subdivision behind my house?

GUS  
I can do that. You boys are good  
people. I appreciate you. How ya  
doin' on that last bag. Got any  
money for me?

RYAN  
Shit Gus, you just gave us that  
two days ago. Give us a week.  
We'll get rid of it. Remember,  
we're in a middle school here.  
Most kids don't get their  
allowance till Friday.

GUS

No problem. Just askin'. How much are ya sellin' a joint for now?

MICKEY

Five bucks. So what we give you twenty bucks for makes about 20 joints.

GUS

Jesus! I'm on the wrong side of the fence.

Gus pulls over in a partially completed subdivision.

GUS

Here you are Gents.

RYAN

Thanks Gus. We'll have some money for you on Monday and we'll get another bag from you then.

GUS

Fair enough. OK boys be careful and be aware.

MICKEY

Always are Gus. Always are.

Boys begin to exit truck.

RYAN

Oh shit. Gus, you have any smokes on your truck?

GUS

Just Camels.

RYAN

Can you throw me a pack?

GUS

For three dollars.

Ryan shakes his head and smiles as he pulls out a five.

RYAN

Here Gus. Keep the change. You deserve it.

Camera follows Ryan and Mickey into a partially completed tract home where they sat on the upstairs balcony and light a joint. Narration begins.

KEN

(Narrating)

We moved to Vegas in 1994. It was an exciting time. I had a good job as a marketing rep for a meat company and Darlene landed a job at the newly opened MGM Grand. We were making good money. Ryan was 14 and Niki our daughter was 11. More than anything, we wanted a good environment for them. Good schools with great opportunities in a good neighborhood. Mickey lived a block from us. He and Ryan became friends immediately.

At that point, a third boy speeds up on a bike and drops it in the front yard of the house where Ryan and Mickey were.

MICKEY

Shit. It's Egg.

RYAN

Dude. What the fuck? I didn't expect to see you till later.

EGG

I seen you guys splitting and tried to catch you. When you hopped in Gus' truck, I lost you. Fuckin' Gus. I think he saw me but he didn't stop. Anyway, I walked home to get my bike. Kevin and Matt are on there way over. We're supposed to meet them in the park in an hour.

KEN

(Narrating)

Ricky Gosland was Egg. He was the son of the husband and wife real estate team we bought our home from. Egg was already best friends with Kevin and Matt. The five of them became inseparable and it seemed that everywhere they went and everything they did during those years, their best friend marijuana was with them.

INT. KEN & DARLENE'S HOME - GREEN VALLEY, NEVADA - DAY

Scene opens with Ryan on phone to Egg.

RYAN

What up Skillet? Hey listen. My Mom is staying home today. I'm supposed to be sick and you're supposed to be in school...so, instead of coming in the front door, let me know when you're outside by throwing pebbles at my room. I'll open the window and you can climb the basketball pole to get on the roof. We can hang in my room for most of the day.

Darlene calls to Ryan from downstairs.

DARLENE

(In a calm voice)

Ryan, I went thru your room while you were gone yesterday. I was amazed at all the pipes, bong, magazines and other marijuana related stuff I found. This is unacceptable in this house. I mean, it seems like you are obsessed with anything that has to do with smoking weed. Look, I want you to know that we love you. I don't inspect your room because I'm trying to find another reason to get on your ass. But it's clear that this is out of control...at least as far as your father and I are concerned. You're 15 son. We're responsible for your actions. Marijuana is illegal. If you get in trouble, we also have to pay consequences. If you screw up at school, it affects us as well as you. You know that your Dad hates being responsible for things he has no control over. We're working hard trying to provide a good environment for you and Niki and you don't give a shit. You think you're on Paradise Island and you can do whatever you want, but we're the one that's paying all the bills and trying to give you guys opportunities. You're in a good school system and

(MORE)



DARLENE (cont'd)

you live in a good neighborhood.  
You don't have to pay for  
anything.

RYAN

I'm sorry Mom. I do appreciate the things you and Dad do for us. You're great parents. All my friends love you. I'm grateful for the nice house we live in. And look, I'm not at the top of my class at school, but I'm doing ok. But you're right about the obsession part. I am obsessed with marijuana. It's the most amazing plant on earth. As far as I'm concerned, it only causes problems because it's illegal.

DARLENE

Son, I can't argue that point, but it's illegal and you're 15. We're trying to be responsible parents and do the right thing. Legally, when you're 18, you become responsible for your actions. But to me, that's only as long as the consequences of your actions affect no one but you. As long as you depend on others for your food, shelter and other shit, you should take them into consideration when you make decisions.

RYAN

I understand what you're saying Mom, but in all honesty, I can't see myself not using marijuana. I want to learn everything I can about it. I want to grow it and teach others about it. That's all I think about. You and Dad both have said how fortunate a person is if they are able to discover their true passion at an early age. I mean, some people never do. They just go through life surviving and doing shit they really don't want to do, but after a point, it's harder to change. Look at Mickey's dad. Store manager for Albertsons. Been in

(MORE)

RYAN (cont'd)

that business for over 20 years. Yeah he makes decent money, but he hates it. He's told me he hates it every day but he's in too deep. Doesn't think he can change things. Afraid to try. He doesn't have the balls to do something he'd really like to do. Too many financial sacrifices to make. Thinks he's too old to start over. He's trapped Mom. Trapped in a situation that allows him to live pretty good but he's miserable. What if you could be in a position where you live good and are doing what you're passionate about. Wouldn't that be something that people should shoot for?

EGG OUTSIDE HOUSE

While Ryan and Darlene are having discussion, Egg, Kevin and Matt appears outside and begins to toss pebbles against upstairs window. After no response, Egg climbs up basketball pole and onto roof. The window is closed. Egg makes repeated attempts to open it without success. He slides down roof, back onto basketball pole and down to the ground where he calls Ryan.

EGG

Dude, Kevin, Matt and I are outside your house and we're getting no response. We're walking over to the park. Call me when you get the message.

NEIGHBOR'S LIVING ROOM

While Egg is climbing on roof, neighbor across street is watching from living room window. They conclude that this young man must be trying to break into house and call police.

BACK TO CONVERSATION WITH RYAN AND DARLENE

DARLENE

I can appreciate the way you're thinking Ryan, but, what you have a passion for is illegal. And you're also a minor. We're

(MORE)

DARLENE (cont'd)  
responsible for your actions. I know you're passionate about this, but you're young. There are so many opportunities you have available. Each decision you make will take you down a different road in life. And what if your passion gets you arrested and you end up going to prison? Then you may wake up one day and realize you're 30 years old and have no experience or knowledge in anything but prison life. Trust me son. Life goes by fast. Don't make decisions that can steal time from you. You can't make it up. One day very soon you will be independent and on your own. Sooner than I care to think about. Then, you can do what you want. But today, I want everything to do with marijuana out of the house. End of discussion.

Ryan returns to his room. He notices a missed call from Egg and returns the call.

RYAN  
My Mom told me to get all the paraphernalia out of the house. I'm loading it up in my coat and I'll meet you at the park in 10 minutes. Can I keep it at your house for awhile?

EGG  
No problem Dude, but can't you just hide it in your house somewhere?

RYAN  
I could, but I told my Mom I would get it out. I don't lie to my Mama.

EGG  
OK. See you in a few minutes.

Ryan loads up paraphernalia inside coat pockets along with a bag of weed. He walks downstairs.

RYAN

Mom, I'm going to the park to walk Hercules. I'll be back in awhile.

Hercules is the family pug.

DARLENE

Watch your back. You're supposed to be in school.

Ryan leaves house. As he turns the corner at the first block, he is surprised by a police car. Egg is sitting on the curb in hand cuffs. The police immediately approach Ryan with guns drawn.

POLICE

Turn around and place your hands on the wall. What's your name and where do you live? We had a report of three boys trying to break into a house.

RYAN

I live at 22 Carmel Way. I just left the house to walk the dog.

POLICE

Do you have any guns or knives?

RYAN

No.

Policeman begins to frisk Ryan and feels an object in jacket. He immediately backs up.

POLICE

What's in your jacket?

RYAN

A bong.

POLICE

A bong? Take your jacket off slowly and lay it on the ground.

Police picks up jacket and begins going thru pockets. He pulls out a large bong, a glass pipe and a foil pipe, cigarette papers, blunts and a bag of weed.

POLICE

Damn son. Were you getting ready for a party?

Egg, Kevin and Matt begin laughing. Hercules, begins pissing on the tires of the police car.

POLICE

This isn't a laughing matter boys.  
Is there a parent you can call  
because you're in a serious  
situation here.

RYAN

My Mom's home.

POLICE

Call her.

RYAN

Hi Mom. Remember our conversation  
about consequences of our actions?  
If you come down to the corner  
right now, you'll be able to see  
the consequences of that  
conversation?

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

JAIL EMPLOYEE 1

Everyone on your feet. We're going  
across the room into a holding  
cell until general population is  
ready for you. No need for  
talking.

A group of eight are led to a room that is crammed with people. Some are laughing, unconcerned about being there. Others are sitting off by themselves and others are glaring at the group that is entering

A large, bald burly man in his 40's wearing a tank top and shorts covered with tattoos picked Kevin out of the group. The glaring stare freaks him out. The only defense he knows is to approach it head on.

KEVIN

What's up. How long have you been  
in this room?

PRISONER #1

Seems like a long time. Probably  
about an hour. Might as well  
relax. You'll be here for a  
awhile. These people don't give a  
shit about us. Once you're in  
here, you become scum to them.

(MORE)

PRISONER #1 (cont'd)  
This is their world man. They get  
to play God.

KEVIN  
What did you get arrested for?

PRISONER #1  
Assault I guess. They just told me  
the dude I beat up is in a coma.

KEVIN  
(Shaking his head)  
Man, that's not good.

PRISONER #1  
Hell no that's not good. If he  
dies, that would turn assault into  
murder or manslaughter. I'd  
probably get 3-5 for that even if  
things went my way.

So what are you in for?

KEVIN  
Marijuana cultivation.

PRISONER #1  
Oh fuck! Well I wish you luck man.  
Personally, I'd rather be me. You  
know if the Feds convict you for  
growing weed, you're likely to get  
more time than I would for killin'  
a guy.

Kevin is at a loss for words.

KEVIN  
That's hard to believe.

PRISONER #1  
Believe it. Something about weed  
that makes the Feds come down  
hard. Especially on those that  
make things happen. The growers  
and distributors. I've got a buddy  
in Federal prison that's in his  
eighth year of a fifteen year  
sentence for trafficking  
marijuana.

KEVIN

I guess we'll find out. Hey man, I hope things work out for you.

PRISONER #1

Same for you brother, same for you.

Kevin walks away and takes a seat on concrete bench.

INT. LAS VEGAS - DAY

Scene opens with Ryan, Kevin and Egg sitting in living room of their apartment passing a bong. Furniture is scarce, tv is small old school beat up.

EGG

(Passing bong to Kevin)

This my friend, is some quality weed. How did we get so fortunate. We live in a rat hole, can barely afford to pay rent and never are sure where or when the next meal will come our way, but by God, we always seem to have some excellent weed.

RYAN

That's because we have always placed the necessity of good weed high on our priority.

KEVIN

As it should be. But we have to make some changes. Move our lives ahead to the next stage. Look at us. Look at where we live. We've been out of school for over a year and we're bums. Stoner bums. Our lifestyles gives weed a bad rap.

RYAN

I agree. People who smoke weed should be considered as innovative, creative, energetic thinking people that are always in a good mood. Not losers who work at 7-11 for minimum wage. I never wanted to be there as long as I have. It's a shit job.

KEVIN

Exactly. And Egg might enjoy working on cars, but Christ man, that fucking station you're at is dead end.

EGG

You are correct about that sir. I'm ready to move on.

KEVIN

And so am I. I mean shit, look at me. Working at a craft store. If Matt wouldn't have gone to Texas with his Mom to avoid the possession charge, he'd be in jail right now. But look at Mickey. He looked at things different. Instead of wrecking his first car, he fixed it up and sold it for more than he paid. Then he did it again and again until he accumulated enough to buy a house. He did the same thing with the houses and shit, look at him now. He had the same environment that we did. We all had pretty much the same opportunities. Difference is, Mickey had a passion for something he was good at and he did it. It's about choices man. Let's face it. We look at people like us and call them losers. And right now we all have girls. But how long do you think that will last. Shit, we can't even take care of ourselves let alone them.

RYAN

So we all have the same desire, but how the fuck are we going to change things? I could move back home. That would help the money situation, but it wouldn't change things really.

KEVIN

Look. All through school we fucked around, partied all the time and didn't get concerned about anything. We always had our parents to take care of the big things. We never took anything serious. And this is where it's

(MORE)



KEVIN (cont'd)

led. The only way for us to escape this is to step completely out of the circle we're in. Force change in our lives. Take control.

EGG

Sounds good Kevin, but easier said than done. We need to get out of this town and start fresh somewhere else, but that takes money. It seems like we're stuck. We need a miracle.

KEVIN

Just going to a different town isn't the answer. We can't blame our situation on Vegas. What we need is a plan. It's like your Dad said Ryan, If you want to be happy, do something that you have a real passion for and you'll never work a day in your life. That sounds appealing to me. So what do we all have a passion for?

EGG

Cars.

RYAN

Weed.

KEVIN

That's it! Weed. You may have a passion for cars Egg, but it takes money to get started down that path unless you want to settle for what you're doing now. I'm talking about setting the stage for greatness. You want to fuck with cars, fine. Get yourself in a position to do it with style. Don't just be a mechanic. Be an automotive God. We need to get some money together, buy equipment and start growing weed.

RYAN

Count me in. I know we could produce amazing crops.

EGG

Sounds good now, but there's a lot to consider before going down that path. I mean dudes, if we get busted, then we're really fucked. We need to change up things before we get serious. Like where we live, how we live and how to get our hands on about 3 G's for equipment.

KEVIN

You've got to be willing to take risks. Let me talk to my Uncle. You know he does that renovation business and lives like a fucking king. I think he would put us all to work. We could make more than what we're making now. Our goal would be to save enough money to buy equipment. If we all move back home, in 6-8 months we could have enough to get started.

Conversation continues as sound slowly fades and narration begins.

INT. OLD THEATER-LAS VEGAS, NV. - DAY

KEN

(Narrating)

The boys all moved back home. Kevin talked to Uncle Bill and he agreed to put them all to work. He said he would start them at \$400 a week and assured them if they proved themselves and was willing to take on new responsibilities, they could be making a lot more than that real soon. And he meant what he said. One week later, he sat down with the boys to explain a new job description.

The conversation between Uncle Bill and the boys takes place at an old theater Uncle Bill is renovating. The scene begins with Kevin, Ryan and Egg shoveling debris and tossing it in nearby dumpster. Uncle Bill enters.

UNCLE BILL

Sit down boys. I have a proposition for you that can make us all a good amount of money.

(MORE)

UNCLE BILL (cont'd)

This can only work if we stay smart and understand the possible consequences if we get stupid. I'll tell you right up front that what we are about to talk about needs to be kept absolutely between us. Nothing we talk about can leave this room. Understood?

The boys agree in unison.

UNCLE BILL

Here's the deal. As you've noticed, my company employees a lot of Mexicans. None of them are legal citizens. Using them just makes good business sense. Now, these people just don't appear at my doorstep looking for a job. They are contracted out to me by a company in Mexico. The owner of the company has business interests other than providing workers to American companies. One of those interests is marketing product for a manufacturer down in Mexico. The product is cannabis. Another business under this same umbrella is representing a paint manufacturer and distributor. I use a good amount of paint in the renovation of properties. My paint order is placed and is shipped by truck from El Paso, TX. When it arrives in my equipment yard, it's unloaded in an equipment storage area. This is where your opportunity comes.

KEVIN

You're putting weed in the paint cans.

Uncle Bill smiles.

UNCLE BILL

As usual Kevin, I think you've already figured it out. There will be special gallons of paint marked with green dots on the lid. These cans will contain one pound of marijuana. You guys will receive the shipment, load enough paint to

(MORE)

UNCLE BILL (cont'd)  
fulfill your weekly needs in addition to legitimate paint which you will bring to the theater for the Mexicans to paint the walls. There's a lot of walls to paint here and you can paint them as many times as necessary.

KEVIN  
Let's talk about the financial part.

UNCLE BILL  
We have a good opportunity. This is top quality chronic and we are getting it for three grand a pound. Most areas are getting a minimum of \$350. an ounce which comes out to about \$6,500. a pound. A \$3,500. profit. If you sell a pound outright you're probably lookin' at around \$5 grand. Now I would guess that you guys could develop a good market for eighths, and you should get \$60.-\$70. for those which would push a pound over 7 grand...a profit of \$4 grand. So it's up to you as to how you market it.

RYAN  
And what's your take?

UNCLE BILL  
I want \$1,000. a pound. I know you have the risk and have to do all the work, but If I wouldn't have set this up, you would never have the chance. So, are you in?

KEVIN  
Definitely in. How and when do we start? I mean, you know we have no money.

UNCLE BILL  
I'll front the money for the first month. You can build up some working capital. We can start as early as next week. All I have to do is give the word. Now, I'll know how many "green dot" cans are in each shipment. So each delivery  
(MORE)

UNCLE BILL (cont'd)  
 you pick up, we'll compare notes.

Camera shows Uncle Bill and the boys shaking hands as Ken begins to narrate.

KEN  
 (Narrating)  
 So Uncle Bill and the boys had cut a deal. This was the chance they were looking for and they took advantage of it.

INT. BOY'S APARTMENT - LAS VEGAS - NIGHT

Six months later

Scene opens with Ryan, Kevin and Egg in their apartment, (New furniture, 60" flat tv, large well stocked kitchen, etc.) with their girlfriends, 6 months later. Kevin is in kitchen preparing a meal.

KEVIN  
 Look at these steaks Jackie.  
 They're perfect. It's amazing the quality and service you get when you tip the butcher on a regular basis.

Jackie gets up from her seat, walks behind Kevin and embraces him.

JACLYN  
 I think you're perfect.

KEVIN  
 That's because I take care of you the way a lady should be taken care of.

EGG  
 It wasn't long ago that we weren't in the position to fly this way. Life has changed in the past 6 months.

Orissa walks across room and embraces Egg.

ORISSA  
 Yes it has Baby. You guys have been working hard and it's paid off. But you can't keep doing this. It's to risky long term. The  
 (MORE)

ORISSA (cont'd)  
older couple upstairs already  
suspects you're growing, dealing  
or something.

RYAN  
They're nosy people for sure. It  
seems every time I come home,  
they're on they're patio looking  
at me.

KEVIN  
Well, look. Remember, we never got  
into this for the long haul. Our  
objective was to find a way to  
accumulate money so we could start  
growing. We just went down a path  
that we never anticipated.

RYAN  
Ain't that the truth. We jumped on  
the fast train. Six months ago we  
were in that rat hole apartment  
trying to figure a way out.

KEVIN  
But we've met our objective. It's  
a good time to move on. We've  
gotten way to big.

SHANA  
You guys have moved so much weed,  
and great weed at that, you've  
gotten a reputation as the place  
to go for good weed.

KEVIN  
You're right Shana. A lot of  
people know about us and that  
bothers me. Right now, we're clean  
other than a little smoking weed.  
And that's the best time to move  
on. I'm not even going to tell  
anyone it's over except Uncle  
Bill. I just want to stop and move  
on.

Kevin lifts beer to offer a toast.

KEVIN

Let's take this night, this occasion to proclaim success and begin looking for a plan to move on.

Everyone toasts as Kevin's phone rings.

KEVIN

Hello.

RICK

Kevin. It's your Dad. Can you talk?

KEVIN

Hi Dad. I'm surprised to hear from you. It's been awhile. I'm in the middle of a celebration here but I can talk for awhile. What's up?

RICK

What are you celebrating?

KEVIN

Well, Ryan, Egg and I have been working on a special project with Uncle Bill. As of tonight, after nearly six months, we've completed our mission and are ready to move on.

RICK

Interesting. Knowing Uncle Bill like I do, I could probably guess what the project was. Care to be more specific?

KEVIN

No. I don't want to go into it. I'll just say it's enabled us to smoke a lot of world class weed and accumulate a good amount of money.

RICK

Man Kevin. The timing of our conversation couldn't be better. You say you're at a point where you're ready to move on and I'm in the position to offer you an option.

KEVIN

Are you serious? Let's be honest Dad. You haven't been in my life much over the past 10 years. Now you call and tell me you have an option for me. I think I'll pass without even hearing about it. But it's sure been nice talking to you Dad.

RICK

Kevin listen. Before you walk away from this, let me buy you a ticket to Tampa for a short visit. After you give me a chance to show you what I have in mind, then you can walk away if you want. Just give me that much as your Father. I haven't been in the position to do much for you over the years, but I think this is something that could work for you.

KEVIN

I don't think you're in the position to know what will work for me. I'm travelling down a different path Dad and it's working.

RICK

Ok Kevin. I understand. Let's take the option off the table. But I'd still like you to come out for a visit. Just for a few days. We'll have a good time. We can go fishing in my boat and visit the beach communities. Bring your girlfriend with you. I'll put you up in a nice place. Get out of the desert for a few days and see what life on the water is all about.

KEVIN

Actually, that sounds good. Let me talk to Jackie. If she's up for it so am I. It might be a good trip before starting the next chapter in our life.

RICK

Ask her now. Then you can schedule your trip tomorrow.



KEVIN

Give me A call tomorrow. I'll talk to her later tonight.

RICK

OK Kevin. I'm excited that you're considering the trip. I'll talk to you tomorrow. Love you son.

Kevin ends conversation and walks in room where everyone is.

KEVIN

Jackie, want to take a trip to Florida next week?

INT. IN AIRPLANE HEADED TO TAMPA, FLORIDA - DAY

Kevin and Jackie are in first class section on their way to Tampa, FL.

AIRPLANE CAPTAIN

Good evening folks. We are currently 90 miles from Tampa and have begun our descent. I trust you've had a pleasant flight and our attendants have provided excellent service as they always do. Temperature in Tampa tonight is a pleasant 82 degrees. Thanks for flying with us. We'll be on the ground in about 20 minutes.

JACLYN

I'm looking forward to meeting your Dad.

KEVIN

It should be interesting. This is the first time as an adult that I've spent any time with him. I really don't know what to expect. Part of me says he's basically a good person. Just a free spirit that made some bad decisions which took him down some paths he didn't anticipate. I know he treated my Mom like shit and he never helped her out financially from the time he left. And this woman Julie that he left mom for, she's a trip. I'll never understand what attracted him to her.

JACLYN

Well, I hope it all works out OK. I love the relationship I have with my Dad and can't imagine life without it. But even if things go south, we're only here for 4 days.

KEVIN

Yeah. I'm sure it will go fine. But I'm looking forward to getting back and starting our next chapter in life. After we return, I should have everything up and running in two weeks. And three months after that, we'll see our first harvest. You feelin' OK about all that?

JACLYN

Most definitely. I'm excited that we'll be living in the same house and always having some good weed to smoke. And I know you have a passion for this so that makes me happy. The fact that it's illegal doesn't bother me from a moral perspective. That's crazy anyway. But I am uneasy about the real possibility of you getting busted by those who's mission is to bust people like you. Your reputation in Vegas has become legendary in a short time. You guys were moving some pretty big numbers on the street for the past 6 months. The law could easily have their eye on all of you.

KEVIN

Possible. But it's a risk reward thing. If we're smart, there should be no problems. It would be great if we had just started growing and never got involved in the dealing part. Then we could have stayed low key and only dealt with a couple of people. But, we'll be fine Baby.

JACLYN

I know baby.

Shot of plane landing in Tampa, FL. Cut to Kevin and Jackie at baggage claim retrieving the last item of luggage.

KEVIN

That's it Jackie. Now let's go outside to see if my Pop is waiting.

Immediately upon exiting baggage claim, Rick comes through the crowd.

RICK

Kevin. Kevin. Man, It's great to see you son.

A handshake leads to awkward embrace.

KEVIN

Hi Dad. Meet Jaclyn. Jaclyn, meet my Dad.

Jackie embraces Rick like a long lost relative.

JACLYN

I'm so glad to meet you Rick. I'm excited about our visit.

RICK

Believe me, so am I. I've got some great things planned and a few surprises. Tonight I'm taking you to dinner at Eric's, a little steakhouse. Then, I've rented a seaside cottage for you in Dunedin, just a few miles from where I live.

KEVIN

That sounds good Dad. We're starved.

RICK

Let's get the bags in the truck and be on our way.

INT. RICK'S TRUCK - NIGHT

Rick, Kevin and Jackie depart Tampa airport. Rick retrieves a fatty from the console.

RICK

The welcoming committee would like to offer you a little something to relax with after a long flight.

KEVIN

Very nice. It smells marvelous.

RICK

It tastes even better. I brought a bag for you to enjoy over the next few days.

Kevin lights the joint, takes a hit and passes it to Jackie.

KEVIN

Wow Dad. This is awesome. What's an ounce of this worth?

RICK

Never less than \$350. It's the leading strain in Florida. We call it Fruity Spice.

Kevin and Jaclyn continue to pass the joint as they begin to cross the Courtney Campbell Causeway.

JACLYN

My God. This is beautiful. I feel like we are entering paradise.

RICK

That's the first impression most people have, especially at night. It only gets better. I'll quit talking and we'll enjoy the trip.

Music plays as they drive across the causeway, up Hwy 19 and over to the Gulf community of Palm Harbor. Rick pulls the truck into a spot in front of Eric's Restaurant.

RICK

Here we are. Right on time. Our prime steaks and fresh caught gulf shrimp await us.

Silence from Kevin and Jackie.

RICK

You guys OK?

KEVIN

We're fantastic. That weed is some of the best I've ever had. In fact, I believe it is the best I've ever had. And I've had plenty.

Rick laughs as he exits the truck, walks around to passenger side to open door for Jackie and Kevin.

RICK

Only the highest quality for my son and his girl. The food here is almost as good as the weed.

Kevin and Jackie look at each other and smile, then embrace before they enter Eric's.

JACLYN

I think this is a corner of the world that I could enjoy.

KEVIN

You may be right my dear. But the night is young.

RICK

Oh trust me. It only gets better.

Quick shots of Kevin, Jackie and Rick enjoying dinner, meeting people, laughing, Jazz music going on in the background by a sax player. They leave restaurant and take a drive along the gulf to Clearwater Beach. On the return trip to the cottage in Dunedin, they stop off at a couple of beach side pubs, all through the evening, smoking weed and having a great time. It is 2 AM when Rick pulls the truck up to the cottage he had rented for Kevin and Jackie.

RICK

Here we are. Home Sweet Home for you guys for the next few days. Here's the keys, there's food in the kitchen including a selection of wine and beer. Oh and here. Let us not forget the miracle herb that God created for mankind to enjoy and be healed with. Get at least a little sleep. I'm coming by at 10 AM in the morning. We're going to breakfast and then to the boat.

KEVIN

OK. We'll be ready.

RICK

Oh and by the way, Joe is going to join us tomorrow. He's looking forward to seeing you.

KEVIN

No shit. Uncle Joe. God it's been forever since I've seen him. Ok Pop, see you tomorrow. And thanks. It was a great evening.

Hey. By the way, what's up with Julie? She still with you?

RICK

Yeah. Off and on. She's a pain in my ass more than anything. But yeah, she's still around.

INT. RICK'S FISHING BOAT - DAY

The weather is perfect. Rick has the boat stocked with food and drink. All the fishing gear is in place. The bait box is full. Rick shows Jackie how to place a pinfish on the hook and throws her line in. Joe and Rick have a line in the water. Kevin is sitting down smoking a joint.

RICK

(Raising hands in air)

Thank you Lord for another beautiful Florida day. I'll bet we'll hook some Reds right out there.

JOE

Kevin, it's really good to see you. I couldn't believe it when your Dad told me you were coming. I think you were about eight when we last seen each other.

KEVIN

It's been awhile. I remember though. It seems like we used to see each other all the time and then it just stopped.

JOE

That's the way life is. Did you grow up in Vegas Jaclyn? Do you have family there?

JACLYN

We've been there about 15 years.  
My Dad is a jeweler and a  
musician. My step Mom works at a  
lounge in Summerland.

JOE

Do you like it there?

JACLYN

I'm not in love with it. I've just  
never considered living anywhere  
else. I've only been out of school  
a couple of years.

JOE

Do you like it here?

JACLYN

I love the first impression. I  
think I could live here. Could you  
live here Baby?

KEVIN

Haven't been here long enough to  
even say. Living anywhere is  
different than being on a vacation  
there. I will say the weed is the  
best I've had. I'd like to take a  
clone of this back to Vegas.

RICK

We could make that happen.

KEVIN

How could you make that happen?  
You would need live plants for  
that to be possible.

RICK

We have live plants.

KEVIN

We? Whose we?

RICK

Joe and I. Right now we have about  
175 in four locations.

Silence from Kevin.

RICK

I wanted to tell you when I called you in Vegas but you didn't want to hear it.

KEVIN

So you're growing what we're smoking?

RICK

Yes.

At that moment, Jackie gets a monstrous tug on her line.

RICK

Jackie, yank your pole. You've got one.

JACLYN

Oh my God.

KEVIN

Stay calm baby. Stay calm. You can do this.

After 10 minutes of fight, Jackie brings a 32" Red alongside the boat and Rick slips the net over it.

JACLYN

I can't believe I just caught that fish. I've never done anything like that in my life. What a rush.

KEVIN

You handled that like a pro Jackie. Talk about a trip while you're stoned. Entertainment value on that was a "10".

JOE

Kevin, you've got a bite.

Kevin hooks on to another giant Redfish, followed by Rick and Joe. For the next hour, it is a fisherman's dream. Camera captures Kevin, Jackie, Rick and Joe catching fish one after the other. Music plays as camera pulls out and shows a widening aerial shot of the Gulf.

Scene continues showing Rick, Joe, Kevin and Jackie heading back to shore going full speed, Jackie at the helm of the boat. As they approach the markers, they slow and cruise toward the dock of the Anclote River.



KEVIN

Absolutely amazing fishing experience Dad. I can't imagine anything that could have made it any better.

RICK

Just another day in the Gulf son. It's like living a dream here. Let's get the boat out and get something to eat at the Marina. Then I'll take you home to clean up and recharge for the evening.

KEVIN

That sounds good to us. And when we reconvene, we have a conversation to finish that we started before the fishing frenzy began.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

JAIL EMPLOYEE 1

All right. Single file and follow the line on the floor across the room. That's general population where you can make calls, go to the bathroom and relax until either you're bailed out or checked into jail. After photos and prints are taken, you'll get a sandwich and juice. If you don't have a reason to be standing, sit down. Bathrooms will open for 10 minutes every hour. You can talk but keep it down. If anyone causes problems, you'll immediately be admitted to jail. If you have a medical issue, there will be someone in there you can talk to.

Camera shows group entering general population area and scans room which contains about 200 people of all age, ethnicity and gender. New groups are admitted in as people process out, either through bail or admission to jail. Camera zooms in on large wall clock. It is 7:15 PM.

KEN

(Narrator)

I now know that when you are arrested for anything, it's going to be a time consuming ordeal. It

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

had been over 12 hours since we began our intimate relationship with the law. Everyone looked like crap. The criminal photos of the members of Operation Family Tree were scary.

Show photos of each person involved in Operation Family Tree taken during various activities prior to the arrest vs the shot that was taken that night. Ex: Bruce laughing while standing on the tee box of a golf course, Rick laughing sitting at a poker table, Kevin and Ryan smiling while trimming marijuana plants, etc.

KEN

(Narrating)

Over the next few hours, the rest of Operation Family Tree joined the general population. At some point, everyone was fingerprinted and had their photo taken. Once these steps were behind us, we were given a meal ticket which entitled us to one bologna and cheese sandwich. No condiments, just bologna and cheese along with water or juice. Those sandwiches were the only food we had eaten that day and they actually tasted decent.

While narration is in progress, show shots of people getting finger prints and photos taken. Show attendant handing prisoners a meal ticket and how they handed them to the sandwich sheriff for redemption.

Kevin sits next to Ken, Darlene and Ryan.

KEVIN

I just finished talking with Cindy. I should be getting bailed out soon. You guys should follow shortly thereafter. I had fifteen grand under my mattress and they never took it. Your bail is set at \$15,000 which means \$1,500 each to the bondsman and you'll be bailed out. I told her to pay bail for me, my Dad, you, Darlene, Ryan & Matt. Bruce's brother has bail arranged for him and Lee. Annie is taking care of Scott. Joe's daughter is getting money

(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)  
together for Joe and Sue. Julie's  
friend Sheila is paying her bail.

KEN  
Thanks Kevin. You've showed cool  
under fire once again.

KEVIN  
No problem. I'm glad I had the  
money to do it. Don't even worry  
about paying it back. This is all  
going to be OK. Just an unexpected  
bump in the road.

INT. LAS VEGAS - KEVIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

First day back after Kevin and Jackie's trip to Florida.  
Ryan, Shana, Egg, Orissa and Jackie are present. Kevin gets  
a beer from the refrigerator and walks into the living room.

KEVIN  
Here's the deal. Jackie and I  
believe our trip to Florida was  
destiny. We had an amazingly good  
time, but more important, we were  
introduced to our future. And it  
could be your future too. Two  
weeks ago, we all sit in this room  
and toasted to a new chapter in  
our life. We all agreed it was  
time to move on and establishing a  
marijuana grow operation was our  
goal. We just didn't know where or  
exactly how we were going to  
approach it. Well, the trip to  
Florida shed some light on that.

I thought my Dad was appraising  
real estate and my Uncle Joe was  
working for a maintenance company.  
As it turned out, they're both  
growing marijuana. Joe started in  
'95 and my Dad joined him in '99.  
They have about 175 plants in four  
different locations.

RYAN  
No shit? How crazy is that?

KEVIN

It was really crazy Dude. We couldn't believe it. My Dad had been giving us this weed that was unlike any we had ever smoked. I made the comment one day that I would love to take a clipping of it to Vegas. He said he could make that happen and then told me about the world him and Joe were living in. They showed us the houses and their set up in each. It was amazing. My Dad explained every aspect of their business to us and took us to the hydroponics shop they buy from to meet the people there. I'm telling you, they have everything in place. After they harvest and dry a crop, it all goes to one person, which is Joe's son-in-law. They stay low key and don't have to deal with anyone. It's perfect and just what we want.

RYAN

How much are they getting for a pound?

KEVIN

That's another beautiful part of this. They're growing a high quality strain and sell it for 4 grand a pound. Each harvest at each house yields about 5 pounds every three months. Do the math.

JACLYN

And it's gorgeous there. It just seems magical. Everywhere you go is just laid back and has this special ambiance. This would give us all a fresh start away from Vegas. I think we all know that setting up a grow operation here would be risky at best.

KEVIN

So...My Dad offered to let us all come out and work for him until we get set up on our own. We'll stay in the houses he's growing in and watch over the crops while we are looking for a place of our own.

(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)

It's perfect. This is what he wanted to tell me when he called a couple weeks ago, but I wouldn't listen. I had no idea. But Jackie and I are making plans to move out there in two weeks. Are you in?

RYAN

(Without  
hesitation)

I'm in. I want to do this. This is great!

Ryan turns to Shana who has been completely silent.

RYAN

Are you interested? I'd love for you to join me.

SHANA

I need to think about it.

RYAN

I understand. You've got two weeks. How about you Egg? You've been quite.

EGG

I don't know dudes. It all sounds great and exciting. There's just something that's holding me back. My Mom just hooked me up with this landscaping company in Green Valley that pays pretty good. She's going to loan me some money to rent a commercial space to set up an automotive shop. Man, I just don't think the time is right for me.

KEVIN

Totally understand. We'd love to have you join us, but we'll get set up and you can visit. Maybe you'll change your mind later. You're always welcome Egg.

Now what you and I need to do Ryan is get our shit together, make plans, tell our parents and say our good byes.

RYAN

I'm on it. But I'm going to tell my parents that your Dad is in the appraisal business and he's putting us both to work. I don't think I'm ready to have a conversation with them about moving to Florida to start growing weed.

KEVIN

However you decide. We're leaving in two weeks. I'm booking flights now and making them non refundable.

KEN

(Narrating)

The stage was now set for the third and fourth members of Operation Family Tree. Kevin, Ryan and Jackie left Las Vegas as planned two weeks later. Shana and Egg decided to stay in Vegas.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - DAY

JAIL EMPLOYEE #3

I need the following people to come to the window: Joe Maggert, Sue Maggert, Rick Decker, Danielle Porter, Kevin Decker, Julie Huffy.

Everyone called walks to window to pick up release papers. They say their good byes and check out with a jail guard before leaving the room.

Ken takes a seat next to Scott.

KEN

Well Scott, it looks like we're close to bringing this day to a close.

SCOTT

Man, it's been a long one hasn't it. Annie should be posting bail as we speak. It just blows my mind to think we have to go through this for being a peace loving citizen that was growing a natural herb.

KEN

(Narrating)

Scott was 58. After twenty one years of marriage, he divorced from his first wife. Tara and Jackie were children from that marriage and although their custody was given to Scott's X, Scott remained very close. Annie and him met in Vegas 4 years ago at a concert in which Scott was performing. Scott's passion was music. His profession was a jeweler which his Dad taught him.

KEN

I have no idea what we're going to do now. They took what little money we had, so now we can't pay our rent. I have a little available on credit cards but for the most part, I can't even buy groceries. I guess we'll probably have to move in with Niki.

SCOTT

I think we'll sell everything and move to Colorado. I'll talk to an attorney tomorrow and see if that's possible. Fortunately, our rent is paid till the 1st so if we blow town before that, we're good. Don't despair though bro, this isn't the end of the good life. They're just trying to make us think it is. The reality as I see it is that we had to go through this to get to the next step which is really where we want to be.

KEN

Shit Scott. I admire your perspective. I'm all fucked up in the mind right now. I'm thinkin' where is the money going to come from to eat, live, pay for gas. Where am I going to get a job. How can I afford an attorney and if I don't, am I going to prison. I'm thinking I should have thought about these consequences before I went down this path. Everything would be much better if we just would have been able to set some

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

money aside to prepare for a day like this.

SCOTT

I think we all knew the possibility of this happening was out there. None of us thought we would get caught. In our minds, we weren't doing anything so wrong that we deserved this. Don't be too hard on yourself. I mean, you've been able to live a relatively decent lifestyle the last few years and help your daughter and grand daughter. But it was time for a cleansing of sorts. The Universe has a mysterious way of creating change in our lives when necessary. Don't get me wrong. I'm not saying we were doing anything wrong from a spiritual, moral or humanistic perspective. Just from a legal one. The bottom line for me is that I'm resolved to the position of being glad this happened so we can get on to the next phase of our lives which will be better. I'm sure of it.

KEN

I believe you are right Scott. It's just difficult for me at this moment to see the future as clearly as you seem to be doing.

SCOTT

I never used to be so confident of the future when things like this happened, but life has taught me that things really do happen for a reason. Every decision, even what seems to be small ones, take us down a different path in life and there are billions of paths available to us. I think we are all predestined to some extent. Some of us are more sensitive to our inner self than others. And the events in our lives influence our decisions. Sometimes, we stray too far away from our destiny, mainly from making the wrong decisions, so shit has to happen

(MORE)



SCOTT (cont'd)  
to get us back on our track so to  
speak. Some people never make it  
back.

KEN  
That is profound Scott. You're a  
fucking Guru.

SCOTT  
It's true man. Think about some  
decisions you've made just in the  
last month and how things could  
have been different had you made  
different decisions. Think of the  
times when people come into your  
life through whatever path, and it  
turns out those people  
participated in your going down a  
specific path. A good example is  
when Jaclyn met Kevin and decided  
to establish a relationship. I  
came to know Kevin thru Jackie.  
When Annie and I were in Vegas,  
life got pretty dismal. They got  
that way because of decisions we  
had made. We needed a change, a  
way out. We were looking for a  
path that we could follow to  
escape our situation. Kevin is the  
one who paved that path for us.

INT. LAS VEGAS - PT'S PUB LOUNGE - NIGHT

Camera shows outside of PT's Pub with neon sign. People coming and going. Scene shifts to inside showing scattered people at the slot machines, people sitting at the bar playing video poker, and various conversations taking place. Camera travels around bar and slowly zooms in on Annie who is the bartender and Scott's wife.

ANNIE  
Hey Mario. What's up? Vodka Tonic?

MARIO  
(Smiles.)  
You always know. I haven't been in  
here for a month and you still  
remember.

ANNIE

That's what good tipping will get ya.

At that moment, the jackpot bell rings and lights flash above a dollar poker machine in front of Annie's station indicating a royal flush has been hit.

ANNIE

(Looks up while making Mario's drink.)

Son of a bitch. That fucking machine hit. I knew it was ready.

MARIO

Sounds like you're taking it personal.

ANNIE

I've hit that machine for four deuces three times and aces once earlier this week, but since then, I've dropped about a thousand dollars with zero results. I knew it was ready. I was going to play it when I get off in 30 minutes.

Annie serves Mario his drink.

The bar is filling up. Annie is serving several people while having conversation.

ANNIE

So what's been going on with you? Where have you been for the last month?

MARIO

Florida. Visiting my folks.

ANNIE

No kidding. Scott's daughter just moved to Florida. The Tampa area. I've never been there.

MARIO

Yeah. My folks live in St. Pete, just south of Tampa. I really like it there. Great beaches, restaurants, clubs. Just a laid back place with good ambiance wherever you go.

ANNIE

Sounds appealing. Then again,  
anyplace but Vegas sounds  
appealing to me.

MARIO

I always got the impression you  
were content here.

ANNIE

Used to be. But over the years I  
let myself get tangled in the  
Vegas web. Seems like all I do now  
is work and gamble and lately,  
I've had to work more to offset my  
gambling losses. I wake up feeling  
like shit and I go to bed feeling  
like shit.

MARIO

That's not good Annie.

ANNIE

I know. I make about three grand a  
week here and just sold my car for  
six thousand to pay bills and give  
me gambling money. Scott doesn't  
even know about that yet.

MARIO

How do you hide something like  
that from your husband?

ANNIE

I haven't really hid it. I'm  
buying time. I told him it's in  
the shop.

MARIO

Is Scott doing OK?

ANNIE

About the same as I am. He's still  
a jeweler and doing musical gigs  
whenever he can get them. He  
should be here soon.

Can I get you another? My shift is  
ending.

Annie leaves the floor. Camera follows her into the  
employees lounge where she opens her locker and retrieves a  
blouse. She removes the PT's Pub logo shirt and replaces it.

Quickly from her purse, Annie finds a med. bottle and shakes out two tablets which she immediately takes. She walks back in the pub and takes a seat at the video poker machine that previously hit. A co-worker approaches her.

CO-WORKER

Hey Annie. I don't know how you do it. If I just got off a 12 hour shift, my ass would be draggin'.

ANNIE

I get by with the help from my little white friends. I've got to wait for Scott to pick me up in awhile so I'm going to just relax and play. Can you get me a bloody mary and an order of fries?

Scott enters PT's Pub, spots Annie and sets at a machine next to her.

ANNIE

Hello. I was beginning to wonder where you were.

SCOTT

I was at the studio wrapping up "Breakfast In Rome". As I was leaving, I received a very disturbing call from Jaclyn. She's been diagnosed with cervical cancer.

Scott, unable to contain his emotions, begins to sob. Annie embraces Scott.

ANNIE

Let's get out of here. Things are going to be OK. I know they are.

INT. LAS VEGAS - SCOTT & ANNIE'S HOME - NIGHT

Annie enters living room with two glasses of wine. Scott is halfway through a joint.

SCOTT

I can't bear the thought of never seeing her again.

He passes the joint to Annie. She hands him the glass of wine.

SCOTT

Thanks.

ANNIE

Scott, we've both had some crisis in our lives. And looking back, we've always observed that strange as it is, they always happen for a reason. A reason that's damn difficult to understand at the time. But it always forces us to take action of some sort. It causes us to do things or make decisions that we otherwise wouldn't. As a result, it sends us down a different path in life.

Annie passes the joint back to Scott.

ANNIE

When did she find out? How serious is it.

SCOTT

Today. The doctor is still waiting for more test results, but he told her it was in the very early stage.

ANNIE

Scott, that's good news. Cervical cancer isn't near the killer it used to be. If caught that early it can be resolved with surgery and the prognosis is usually always very good. Technology has probably made advances we don't even know about.

SCOTT

Let's blow this town Annie. We could use a change.

ANNIE

You thinking Florida?

SCOTT

I am. Look, Vegas is in a boom right now. I'll bet we could sell this house fast. We could make enough to move and carry us until we get some work there.

ANNIE

I would love to get out of this town.

SCOTT

I'm putting the house for sale tomorrow. We're gonna do this.

ANNIE

I'm with you. But we're moving fast. Maybe you should take a trip to Florida. Line things up. A place to stay. A job.

SCOTT

It's hard to just pick up and leave your comfort zone. But if we both want change, we can make it happen. Now. I'll call Kevin. He'll let us stay with them for a couple of weeks while we establish ourselves. Maybe him and his Dad need some help in the appraisal business. Who knows. We'll find out when we get there but the first step is getting there.

Annie and Scott sit silently sharing a joint, their thoughts absorbed by what has happened over the last two hours.

ANNIE

You realize what just happened? We made a decision to change the course of our lives. That fast. Everything is going to change from this point forward.

Music begins to play and narration ends the scene. While the narration is in progress, camera shots of Scott and Annie shaking hands at the real estate closing, loading furniture in U-Haul truck, paying money to get Annie's car back, Annie saying goodbye to the PT's Pub staff, Scott embracing daughter Tara, Annie getting in her SUV and Scott with his guitar climbing aboard the truck, portray their departure from Las Vegas.

KEN

(Narrating)

Scott and Annie's home sold in one day. It was a cash deal. Everything was completed quickly. In the following days, they loaded their furniture into a U-Haul and placed Scott's car on a trailer

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
behind the truck. Scott paid \$6,000. from the \$18,000. they made on the house to get Annie's car back. With that done and their goodbyes said, they were on their way to Clearwater, Florida.

INT. KEVIN AND JACLYN'S HOME = CLEARWATER, FL. - DAY

Scene opens showing U Haul in front yard. Scene moves to inside the house where Kevin, Scott and Annie are sitting in the lanai. The sound of garage opening and a car pulling in is Jaclyn returning home. She enters thru kitchen door. Scott is there to embrace her. Both in tears.

JACLYN  
I can't believe you're here Dad.  
And not just to visit, but to live.

SCOTT  
It's crazy when we think about all that's transpired in just the last week. After our conversation, I knew we were destined to come here. It took us a few hours to rationalize, but once we did, it's unbelievable how fast the Universe moved. What are the odds of selling your house in one day? That just doesn't happen.

ANNIE  
The next step is finding a place to live and some jobs.

KEVIN  
You can stay here as long as you need to. I think I have a gig set up for you at Eric's Restaurant if you're interested in doing a solo during the dinner hours.

SCOTT  
Seriously? I would love it. That's all I want to do. I just can't seem to break through.

Knock on the front door and it opens.

RYAN

Hello people.

KEVIN

Hello friend.

Ryan and Kevin perform their special handshake.

Ryan and Jaclyn embrace.

JACLYN

Ryan, this is my Dad and his wife  
Annie.

RYAN

Very good to meet you both. It's  
awesome that you moved here.

Kevin disappears into the kitchen and returns with a tray holding five glasses of champagne. He sits them down, leaves again and returns with a water pipe freshly loaded with weed. Kevin lights the pipe inhales deeply and passes it around. Kevin lifts a glass of champagne.

KEVIN

Here's to your new home in  
Florida. May it prove to be the  
most fun place you've ever lived  
and your life's stepping stone to  
the next chapter.

INT. ERIC'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Scene opens with camera showing Eric's from the outside and transitioning inside where Scott is singing and playing guitar to a full house.

SCOTT

Livin' in Vegas  
Down on my luck  
Had a half a million  
Now I don't have a buck  
No, I don't gamble, don't throw  
the dice  
But I'm seeing this lady tonight  
Yeah, that pearly white lady  
Every day and every night

She's got her hooks in me  
Don't want to let me go  
I visit my friends you see  
Down in St. Vincent's row  
Sometimes I wonder

(MORE)



SCOTT (cont'd)

How things ever got this way  
They tell me I'm lucky  
Yeah I guess I'm lucky  
To see the sunrise another day

Well my Sis sends me money  
But I always need more  
Got this little honey  
She knows when I got dough  
And when I find her  
I break her up and grind her  
Pack me up, Jack me up, and shoot  
me down the road

If you call this livin'  
Well I guess I just don't know  
Take all I've been given  
and turn it right in to blow  
Sometimes I wonder, why I can't  
set myself free  
They tell me I'm lucky  
Yeah, I guess I'm lucky  
I'm so blind I can't see

Yeah I had fast cars  
And I partied at my friend's house  
Seen the stars in the bars  
Make 'em scream brother, make 'em  
shout  
Then we would find that lady and  
brother don't you know  
Good for one more line  
Give me more, give me more, give  
me more

I'm still down in Vegas  
Can't seem to find my luck  
You know I had a whole lot of  
money  
Blew right thru it  
Now I can't raise a buck  
No I don't gamble or throw the  
dice  
But I'm seeing this lady  
Yeah, still seeing this pearly  
white lady tonight

Scott has the crowd hanging on to every word and they show their appreciation for him by wild applause.

SCOTT

Thanks everyone. Thank you very much. I'm going to take 20, then we'll do it again. Hope you are all enjoying yourself. See you in a bit.

Scott leaves the stage and joins Kevin, Jaclyn, Ryan and Annie at a private table outside.

JACLYN

Dad, they love you. I love you. You are amazing.

Scott kisses Annie and Jaclyn.

SCOTT

I'm lucky to have all of you in my life.

Waitress comes to table with a tray of beer.

KEVIN

Grab your beer Scott. Let's take a walk to my car.

Kevin and Scott sitting in car. Kevin lights a joint and passes it to Scott.

KEVIN

Listen Scott. I want to set your mind at ease. I know you're concerned about Jaclyn's health, but it's going to be fine. What they found were pre-cancerous cells. So she was very fortunate to discover them this early. They have a procedure where the area with the cancerous cells is frozen and then the cells are scraped away. The doctor seems to think that will result in a clean bill of health, although she will have to stay on top of it for the rest of her life.

SCOTT

Life is interesting. Jaclyn's prognosis is awesome. She was very upset when she called me in Vegas. I freaked out. My first thought was that I was going to lose her. I couldn't deal with that. That very night, Annie and I decided to

(MORE)

SCOTT (cont'd)  
sell the house and move to Florida. I guess we were looking for a way out and this pushed us over the edge. And now, less than two weeks later, here we are. Once again, life has shown me that things happen for a reason. No matter how bad you may think things are, I believe it's the universe trying to get you back to your destiny. If I was writing the script, I would never have wanted to use a call like that from my daughter. But it's like the Universe knew it would take something like that for us to make the decision we made.

KEVIN  
Yep. Life definitely has unexpected twists. Six months ago, I wouldn't have ever thought I would be here, but here I am. Anyway, I just wanted to let you know Jaclyn will be taken care of as long as she is with me. So what do you think your destiny is?

SCOTT  
I have no clue. I know what what I like. What my passions are. Music is at the top of the list. I enjoy the creativity of making jewelry, but it's more of a hobby. Something my Dad taught me, but not really a passion. And I love smoking weed.

KEVIN  
Then you should love growing it.

SCOTT  
I would love to grow it. Just never pursued that path.

Ryan approaches the car and climbs in back seat.

RYAN  
Hey there scoddily boodies. Pass that world class home grown chronic my way.

KEVIN

If you want to grow what you're smoking, I can set you up. I'll teach you everything you need to know.

SCOTT

No shit? You know how to do it and have access to seeds?

KEVIN

Ryan and I both are experts. And we don't use seeds. My Uncle Joe started growing this strain years ago. Everyone has maintained mother plants and they provide us with all the clones we need. Joe passed it on to my Dad and he passed it on to Ryan and me. Now, It would be an honor to pass it on to you.

SCOTT

I would be honored to accept your gracious offer.

RYAN

Fuck. I'm honored to be a witness to this conversation.

KEVIN

Awesome. Let's get together tomorrow and get a game plan.

Narration begins as scene shows shots of Kevin and Scott talking over coffee. Transition to Kevin's grow house showing Kevin explaining the operation to Scott. Transition to looking at newspapers in the for rent section, driving down neighborhoods looking for rentals. Transition to Scott meeting property manager and taking tour of house, then shaking hands to seal the deal. Transition to shots of Kevin and Scott in hydroponics store purchasing equipment and supplies. Transition to Kevin, Scott and Ryan setting up grow room at Scott's new rental house. Transition to planting clones in 3 gallon pots, mixing nutrients in water and applying initial water to the plants. Transition to Kevin, Scott and Ryan standing back sharing a joint while admiring the result of their efforts.

KEN

(Narrating)

The following day, Kevin explained to Scott how years ago, his Uncle Joe began growing, then his Dad

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
followed by Him and Ryan. He explained how the process worked, took him on a tour of his operation and sent Scott off with the mission of securing a rental house. Once that step was complete, it was time to buy the equipment and supplies. Kevin, Scott and Ryan worked continuously for two days setting up the room. The clones were carefully planted, watered. The fans were turned on and the lights fired up. The three of them shared a joint and admired their efforts. Scott became the 5th member of Operation Family Tree.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

Scene opens with camera on clock. The time is 10:45 PM.

JAIL EMPLOYEE #3  
The following people come to the window...Scott Hunt, Ryan Baker.

Scott and Ryan say their good byes to Bruce, Lee, Mat, Ken and Darlene. Ryan gives his Mom and Dad a hug.

RYAN  
Don't worry. I'll make sure you're bailed out real soon.

Ken and Darlene change their seating location next to Bruce, Lee and Matt.

DARLENE  
Well, It's down to us five. What a night.

BRUCE  
My brother is supposed to be working on bail for Lee and me.

KEN  
(Narrating)  
Bruce and Lee met 6 years ago. Lee was down and out after a couple divorces sent him in a downward spiral. He had no job and was living in a shack in Henderson. Bruce put him to work and let him  
(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
move in the house. After a couple  
of years, life was good for Lee  
thanks to Bruce's helping hand.  
And Lee showed his appreciation  
through his loyalty.

Bruce looked bad. His face and nose were swollen from the  
initial fall he took during the raid earlier in the day. He  
could barely walk due to the intense pain in his feet.

DARLENE  
Kevin said Cindy was working on  
Ken, Matt and me. Bruce, you don't  
look so good.

BRUCE  
I'm in so much pain. They gave me  
two Motrin. If I could just smoke  
a joint I would feel so much  
better.

KEN  
How are you doin' Matt?

MATT  
I'm ok. Tired and cold, but OK. We  
should be out of here soon. My  
house is trashed. I'll probably  
stay with Kevin and Cindy tonight.

LEE  
Fuck. You should see our houses'.  
We have a major clean up job ahead  
of us.

DARLENE  
We all do.

Everyone became quiet. Bruce Matt and Lee tried to sleep.

Darlene reaches for Ken's hand.

DARLENE  
How are you doing baby?

KEN  
I'm OK. I guess it's better now  
that this day is about to be  
behind us. Now we know what people  
go thru when they get busted. I'm  
a little anxious about the future.  
We have a lot of challenges ahead  
of us. Scott seemed to be taking  
(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

all this in stride and ready to move on. His thought on the decisions we make was interesting.

DARLENE

It was wasn't it. And he's right. Look at us. How different would have things been if we had made some different decisions.

KEN

They could have been a lot different on so many levels. I can honestly say though that I don't regret where we are. I wished we wouldn't have got busted, but it's been a pretty good ride. I think about how it could have been if I would have accepted that position in Green Bay. If we had gone there none of this that we're experiencing now would have happened, but then all the great stuff that we've experienced wouldn't have happened either. It wasn't bad decisions we made that took us down some paths that we may otherwise not have chosen. It was a lot of good decisions that resulted in some necessary sacrifices. I'm thinking of one in particular. Know what it is?

DARLENE

When Niki became pregnant?

KEN

Exactly. She was 18. Ryan was 21. I remember I had fleeting thoughts of our kids soon becoming independent adults and we would enter into another phase of our life. Be able to do some things we hadn't been able to do for the past twenty years. But when Niki announced she was pregnant, everything changed. It had to. It was the right thing to do. Without hesitation, we made the decision to support her and make sure her and Trinaty were taken care of in every way for as long as

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
necessary.

DARLENE  
And we've done a pretty good job of that. I look at Niki today and am so proud of the person she has become. The great Mother she is and the love that shows so brilliantly between her and Trinaty.

KEN  
I know. And had we not made that decision to make them our top priority, we may have never experienced that joy.

On the other hand, if that hadn't happened, we may have still been in Vegas. I think you and I could have worked our way through a few more months of unemployment until a job came along that wouldn't have required a move. As it turned out, I took the next offer that came along which resulted in our move to Virginia.

DARLENE  
I never felt settled there. I loved the part about being so close to my sister, Lee and their kids, but something about the area always made me feel unsettled.

KEN  
I loved that part too. It was great to be with family on so many occasions. Les and I played more than our share of golf. But I hated the commute every week to Reagan.

DARLENE  
But in the process, we were able to provide a good income and have the joy and peace of mind of knowing our daughter and grand daughter were taken care of and safe.



KEN

That's true. So it's likely that we may never have ended up in Virginia if it had not been for Niki, but we would have never ended up in Florida had it not been for Ryan.

DARLENE

And we wouldn't have learned the art of growing marijuana.

They smile as the scene fades.

INT. RYAN'S GROW HOUSE - CLEARWATER, FL. - DAY

Scene opens with Ryan watering marijuana plants in a spare bedroom which had been turned into a grow room. His cell phone rings. Ryan looks at the caller ID and sees that it's Kevin.

RYAN

Hey.

KEVIN

Hey. I'll pick you up in 20 minutes. We'll go get some lunch.

RYAN

I can't dude. My Dad should be here soon. He was doing some business in Vidalia, Georgia and is driving down for the weekend.

KEVIN

Call him and see where he is. If he's close, tell him to call us when he gets across the causeway and give him directions to Chili's.

RYAN

That's a good idea. I'd like to have you around when I tell my Dad what we're really doing down here. I'm a little stressed. Just not sure how he will react.

KEVIN

You gotta just say fuck it and lay it on the table. My guess is that your Dad will be fine with it. He probably already knows anyway.

RYAN

Possibly. It's just that all the times he caught us in Vegas didn't make him happy. He was very clear about his position. This will be the first time I've ever blatantly put it out in front of him.

KEVIN

I think you'll be surprised. That was when you were younger. He had a responsibility to take that position. But it's different now. Your Dad is a good man. I've always admired him because he's the only parent that I knew who would actually listen to what you say. He was always willing to reason.

Ryan dials his Dad.

RYAN

Hello Pop. How's the trip going? Where are you?

KEN

Hi Ryan. It's going good. I left Vidalia earlier than I thought. I'm actually only about 20 minutes away.

RYAN

Glad to hear that. Since you're that close, forget the directions to my house. After you get across the causeway, take a right on McMullin-Booth. About two miles up, you'll see a Chili's restaurant. I'll be there with Kevin and we'll have lunch together.

KEN

Sounds good. Looking forward to seeing you son. I'll be there soon.

INT. CHILI'S RESTAURANT - DAY

Kevin and Ryan are sitting at outside table. Ken drives into parking lot. As Ken approaches restaurant, they spot each other. Ryan and Ken hug. Kevin and Ken do a handshake hug.

KEN

Hey buddy. Man it's great to see you. You too Kevin.

RYAN

It's good to see you Dad. I miss you and Mom and Niki. How are they doing? How's Trinaty.

KEN

Everybody is good. We're just pluggin' away one day at a time. None of us really like living in Virginia, but at least for now, we're getting by. I keep looking for other opportunities, but there's not much out there. Shit, I'll soon be 60 and we're still living paycheck to paycheck. I need an unexpected ship full of gold to come in with my name on it. I'll be working till I die.

RYAN

How's your job going?

KEN

Good. Travelling all the time. Airports, hotels, rental cars and restaurants. Most of the time is spent in the Carolina's or Miami.

KEVIN

Shit. You should move down here. It would be less travel.

KEN

A nice thought. They want me to stay closer to the North East though. Technically, I'm supposed to cover all the Eastern states. Just seems like all the projects lately are down south. How's the appraisal business?

Ryan flags the waitress. Ryan and Ken order ice tea, Kevin a beer.

RYAN

Well Pop. I don't know exactly how to tell you this.

Ken glances at Kevin and back at Ryan.

KEN

You guys are growing marijuana aren't you.

RYAN

We are.

KEN

Fuck. That concerns me. Darlene and I thought you might be doing that.

KEVIN

No need to be concerned. No one knows what goes on in people's homes. As long as there is no reason for neighbors to be concerned no one should know. And we don't give them any reason to be concerned.

KEN

What's the law in Florida if you do get busted?

KEVIN

As long as you have less than 300 plants and it's your first offense, you're looking at a slap on the hand. Probably probation. When you get over 300, the Feds get interested and things become more complicated. But we'll never have to worry about that.

KEN

It's a different environment from a few years ago. 911 changed things. The Patriot Act robbed us of our privacy. Now, I've read that the Feds view any drug related activity as contributing to terrorists.

So when you guys came here, your plans were to grow pot?

RYAN

That's been our plan for years Dad. We didn't plan on doing it in Florida, but things just worked out that way.

KEVIN

Back in '95 my Uncle Joe was introduced to a marijuana grower. He hired Joe to help him take care of the operation. After a couple of years, Joe went on his own and began growing. A few years went by and Joe brought my Dad to Florida and set him up. Shortly after that, My Dad invited Ryan and me out to do the same.

RYAN

We had to get out of Vegas Dad. You and Mom had no idea, but we were dealing a serious amount of weed. It came from a Mexican organized crime group and transported to Vegas through Kevin's other Uncle's business. We did that heavy for six months with the intention of accumulating enough money to stop dealing and start growing. But by then, we had the attention of the Vegas police. Or at least we thought we did. Looking back, we may have just been paranoid but nevertheless, it was time to move on.

KEVIN

It just so happened at about that time, my Dad called me, which was weird because we hadn't talked in years. He brought me and Jaclyn out for a visit and showed us everything he had going. It fit right in with what we wanted to do and Florida gave us a fresh start. It also gave my Dad and I a chance to get to know each other as adults.

KEN

Holly crap Ryan. I had no idea.

RYAN  
I know you didn't.

KEVIN  
Shortly after Ryan, Jaclyn and I came out, Jaclyn discovered she had early stages of cervical cancer. She called her Dad in Vegas and within two weeks, him and Annie had sold their home, quit their jobs and moved here. I hooked him up with a music gig at a restaurant and Annie got a job as a waitress, but it barely paid the bills. I told him our story and showed him what we had going. A couple weeks later, he started doing the same thing.

Ken is silent and slowly shakes his head.

RYAN  
Florida is a paradise Dad. It seems to be a good environment for what we're doing. You want to see our houses?

KEN  
Wow. Yeah, I do.

INT. RYAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Scene begins with Ryan, Kevin and Ken entering the front door of Ryan's house.

RYAN  
Welcome to my home.

The inside of the small two bedroom home looked like a flop house. A mattress on the floor, a futon for furniture and a television that could only receive two local stations.

KEN  
This is paradise? It's depressing.

RYAN  
Only if you let it be. The only time I'm here is to take care of the babies and sleep. I don't need anything more right now. I'm paying \$800. a month and it serves my purpose. I never use the oven and I keep the lights off to save  
(MORE)

RYAN (cont'd)  
electricity. I keep the refrigerator on, but other than that, all the power used is from the grow lights and air conditioning. It's important to keep the power bill as low as possible. C'mon. I'll show you where everything happens.

They walk down the short hallway. Extension cords are visible on the floor leading to the other bedroom and the bathroom. Ryan opens the bedroom door. Instantly, the brilliant fills the hallway. A table supported by plastic milk crates served as the pedestal for 60 amazingly healthy, dark green marijuana plants.

RYAN  
So what do you think?

KEN  
Wow! It's amazing. It's like walking into another world. I've never seen anything like this. And the plants look so healthy. What's with all the cords and hose going out of the room?

RYAN  
I have to use different outlets to get the lights on different circuits. The hose goes into the pump which is in the bathtub. I mix the nutrients in the tub and pump it in here. The water that drains out of the pots runs down into the gutter and into this reservoir. The pump here takes the water into the toilet.

KEVIN  
(Directing  
question to Ken)  
What are you thinking?

KEN  
Actually, I'm impressed. Everything seems relatively simple but it took some real ingenuity to put it all together.

Ken pats Ryan on the back.

KEN

You've got skills son.

RYAN

Putting everything together is the simple part but there's a lot of knowledge involved to do everything right. You need to create the right environment.

KEVIN

If you put a plant in a pot, put it under a light and water it, it'll grow. I mean, it's a weed. Pretty hard to keep it from growing. But this strain is a high level chronic that is as good as anything you can find out here. That's why it's important to do everything right and strive for excellence.

Now, may I suggest we adjourn this meeting and reconvene at my house. Ken you can meet Jaclyn and I think my Dad is coming over. I'll give Scott a call too. Later, I'll throw some prime steaks on the grill and we'll add some of that high level chronic to the evening for your pleasure.

Ryan puts his arm around Ken's shoulder.

RYAN

Sounds wonderful. C'mon Pop, we have a great evening in store for us.

INT. KEVIN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Scene opens with camera on Kevin and Jaclyn in large, well equipped kitchen putting together an assortment of munchies. They are laughing and talking in a way that makes their enjoyment clear. Camera slowly moves around the room and brings Scott playing his guitar, sitting on a stool with one foot resting on the chair support, into view. He pauses to accept a joint from Ryan. Slowly he inhales deep and releases a cloud of smoke that drifts up to surround Annie's face as she stands in back of him, resting her hands on his shoulder while he plays. Camera continues to move around the room, telling the visual story of the setting. Next stop is



Kevin's Dad, Rick, standing while laughing and talking to Ryan and Ken, who are sitting. Sound of everyone laughing and talking is kept low along with a light background music. Rick pauses to accept a joint from Annie. Narrator begins from the top of the scene while camera is moving around the room.

KEN

(Narrating)

Kevin and Jaclyn's home was nice. It was roomy and furnished in a way that made you feel immediately comfortable. By this time, I knew I had taken a side trip down a path I didn't intend to take but realize it's a path that is paved with warmth and friendliness. I began to realize this was truly one of those moments the Universe throws your way occasionally. Everything about it is different and special. I knew that this was going to be one of those evenings you remember the rest of your life.

Kevin and Jaclyn seemed right for each other at this point in their lives. Maybe not the BIG love, but a love for each other that flowed with respect and passion. Scott and Annie were fun. Scott had a hell of a musical talent. Annie was passionate about her natural/alternative medicine. Rick was as real as anyone you'll meet. He made it clear that every word, laugh and action were from the soul. If somehow he annoyed, insulted, offended or angered you, it wasn't intentional. He was just being honest.

RYAN

That joint is coming your way next Pop. What do you think?

KEN

Ya know, I'd like to take a hit.

KEVIN

(Yelling from the kitchen)

What's that. Did I hear your Dad

(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)  
say he was going to take a hit?

RYAN  
You heard correctly.

RICK  
Here you are Ryan's Dad.

Rick extends the joint to Ken. Ken accepts and pauses silently while the anticipation from the others peak.

RYAN  
(laughing)  
Are you going to hit it?

KEN  
I am. But, honestly, at my age, I've come to recognize special moments easier than I did when I was young. When they happen, and you never know when or where they will happen, but when they do, it's important to embrace them. Because if you don't, you'll look back someday and wish you would have relished the moment, the time given to you.

SCOTT  
Christ. If he's talking like this now, I can't wait for him to get stoned.

Everyone laughs because at this point, they are all involved in the moment. Scott strikes up a tune on his guitar.

SCOTT  
Ok. So I sense you want to make a point or a toast. I'll provide some soft background music for it.

Scott begins playing.

KEN  
(laughing)  
Well, look. This is a momentous occasion for a couple of reasons. I've not been stoned for 30 years. I used to love it and decided that I would always maintain that relationship. Then life intervened and all of a sudden, 30 years passed. The second is that I'm  
(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
about to smoke marijuana with my  
adult son for the first time. Now  
for me, those alone are  
invaluable. But to add to the  
experience by being here with  
everyone, makes this truly a gift  
from the Universe.

SCOTT  
Well said.

Ken re-lights the joint and enjoys a long, slow hit and passes to Ryan. The sounds of Scott's guitar, the talking and laughing continue as camera pans the room. Camera makes repeat shots of Ryan interacting with his Dad. Laughing and talking. Sometimes just staring while Ken is talking.

SCENE FADES

INT. STARBUCK'S COFFE - DAY

Sunday morning. Ryan and Kevin meet Ken at coffee shop. Ken is driving back to Vidalia, GA. Scene opens with Ryan and Kevin sitting at table as Ken approaches with coffee.

RYAN  
Have a seat Pop. So how did you  
sleep?

KEN  
It was amazing! I had the best  
sleep I've had in a long time. I  
slept 7 uninterrupted hours. I  
didn't get up every two hours to  
piss. And I feel great today.

KEVIN  
Another positive testimony for  
marijuana.

KEN  
It was a good evening. I'm glad I  
had the chance to meet your Dad,  
Jaclyn and Scott and Annie. Fuck,  
I laughed so hard last night.

RYAN  
No shit. Me too. You were  
hilarious.

KEVIN

Marijuana is an anti-inflammatory. It probably relaxed your prostrate and took the pressure off your bladder. That allowed you to sleep through the night with out pissing.

RYAN

Dad, are you aware of all the good things weed can do?

KEN

Actually, no.

RYAN

You should do some research on it and look up hemp too. It's unbelievable to me that man took a plant capable of providing so much good, and made it illegal.

KEVIN

Fucking Hearst, Dupont, Anslinger, Nixon...

RYAN

And Dad. I need to tell you that it was great being with you. It was awesome to smoke weed with you. Something I never thought would happen.

KEN

It was amazing wasn't it. You know, I came down this weekend to see you and find out how you're doing. I never would have thought I would be talking to you a day later about how good the weed was last night.

RYAN

You know, you really should talk to your company again about moving here. It would be great to have you, Mom and Niki and Trinaty all here. I think Mom would love it here.

KEN

It's a nice thought, but I don't see that happening. I would like to be here. We could buy fixer

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
uppers and resell them.  
Eventually, you wouldn't have to  
grow weed.

RYAN  
It's not that I have to grow weed.  
And I'm not really growing weed in  
order to make enough money to do  
something else. I like it. I like  
where I'm at right now. And to  
your point last night, when you  
recognize that the Universe has  
put you in a special place, you  
should relish it.

KEVIN  
You should just quit your job and  
move here. Start growing weed.  
Look how much extra time you would  
have. You could probably make as  
much as you're making now. And  
enjoying it more.

KEN  
I would definitely enjoy it more.  
I couldn't do that if I wanted to.  
We have Niki and Trinaty with us.  
I wouldn't put them at risk by  
growing in the same house. But  
maybe one day when I retire. But  
hey, I'm gonna get going. I've got  
eight hours ahead of me.

Ken stands up. Ryan and Kevin follow.

RYAN  
OK Pop.

Hugs.

RYAN  
Keep thinkin' about the  
possibilities. About moving down  
here. There might be a way.

KEVIN  
(laughing)  
We'd just love to have ya.

Sound fades as Ken and Kevin shake hands and hug. Ken turns  
and exits the coffee shop.

INT. CAR - DRIVING BACK TO VIDALIA, GA. - DAY

Scene opens with Ken driving north on 75. Camera catches sign that reads "Jacksonville - 180 miles." Ken begins narrating.

KEN

(Narrating)

What a weekend. There was plenty to think about during the drive to Vidalia. I was at a crossroad in life and I knew it.

INT. RIPPON STATION - WOODBRIDGE, VIRGINIA - DAY

TRAIN CONDUCTOR

Next stop, Rippon Station.

Scene begins showing Ken standing in overcrowded commuter train as it approaches his destination. The train comes to a stop, doors open as passengers exit. Ken's wife, Darlene, awaits him in passenger pick-up area. He emerges from the crowd and spots Darlene. Trunk pops open as luggage is placed in car. Ken gets in car and kisses Darlene.

KEN

Hi baby.

DARLENE

Hello Dear. Nice to have you back. It's been a long two weeks.

KEN

Nobody knows that better than me.

Darlene begins driving.

DARLENE

But an interesting trip though, huh?

KEN

Yeah, most definitely. I guess getting stoned for the first time in nearly 30 years with your son can be classified as interesting. There's a lot more to this trip than that though.

DARLENE

Wow. Now you've got my interest  
aroused. I can't wait to hear  
about it.

Darlene exits train station as scene fades.

INT. KEN & DARLENE'S CONDO - WOODBRIDGE, VA - DAY

Ken walks down stairs and enters into living area. Darlene,  
Niki (daughter) and Trinaty (Grand daughter) are present.

DARLENE

Fresh coffee made. Want some?

KEN

Sounds great. Thanks.

Ken walks to Niki and gives her a hug. He picks Trinaty up  
and kisses her.

KEN

This was a long trip. I missed you  
guys.

NIKI

We missed you too Pops. Kinda  
weird without you being around for  
that long.

Darlene brings coffee.

KEN

Hopefully, that won't happen to  
often. The weekend was the only  
time I could get down to see Ryan.

NIKI

How'd that go?

DARLENE

Yes. Give us all the details.

KEN

Well, it was one of those weekends  
I'll remember for the rest of my  
life.

Ken begins to tell Darlene and Niki about the weekend as  
sound fades and narration begins.

KEN

(Narrating)

So I laid the whole story out. About Ryan and Kevin's grow operation and how it all came about. I told them about Ryan's dealing activity in Vegas which explained how he got the money for Florida. About meeting Scott, Annie, Jaclyn and Rick and how they ended up in Florida. How we all smoked weed together and the conversations we had.

NIKI

I knew they were growing pot. I can't believe you guys never knew. But I can't imagine you smoking with them.

DARLENE

We suspected that's what they were doing, just never knew for sure and chose to ignore it. But I'm surprised you smoked with them too.

KEN

Look. It comes down to how much I love my family. I can't imagine being alienated from any of you. When you were younger, it was different. Discipline was easier in the sense that Darlene and I understood our roles as a parent. When you got mad at us and told us you hated us and was going to run away from home, it was hard, but we had to hold firm. We knew you didn't hate us and wasn't going to leave home. We were trying to establish perimeters, morals and values.

NIKI

I think you and Mom done a good job. In spite of our challenges, we've grown up to be good people with good values.

KEN

I agree. But now that you're adults, it's different. We can't always control you and expect you

(MORE)



KEN (cont'd)

to do things our way and think like us. When you do something that's contrary to what we would do, we can't rag on you about it just because we don't agree. It may not always be the right decision, but it's your decision and we're going to try and respect that.

DARLENE

Getting pregnant at 17 is a good example. It's not the way we would have wanted it at the time, but what would have happened if we wouldn't have embraced you and supported you and Trinity with our love. It could have easily driven a wedge between us that would last a lifetime. And look at how we have been blessed by it all.

KEN

Ryan growing marijuana isn't the worst thing in the world. I mean, it's illegal, and that concerns me. But it shouldn't be. He really has a passion for it. If you would have seen what they have going, it would impress you. My point is, Ryan is a good person. I see the way he interacts with people and the respect he shows. People like him. He's honest and has integrity. I'm proud of both of you in so many ways. But my point is, if we would take a firm position against him growing marijuana, there's another possibility of a wedge in our relationship. It's going to take something far worse than marijuana before I will allow that to happen.

NIKI

So did you enjoy getting stoned?

KEN

It was amazing. We all had a great time and a lot of laughing. I had the best sleep I've had in a long time. I felt so refreshed the next

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

day. I forgot that was one of the reasons I liked to smoke pot when I was younger. You never have a hangover.

DARLENE

So was that it?

KEN

There's one other thing. Driving back to Georgia, I got to thinking about our situation.

DARLENE

Oh no. Are we moving again?

NIKI

Yeah. Let's do it.

KEN

Well, look. None of us are in love with Virginia. I was thinking if we went to Florida, maybe we could buy some houses and fix them up for resale. If it works, it may provide us more income and give Ryan an opportunity to do something legal. I could keep my job, just travel out of Tampa instead of DC. We'll soon be 60 Darlene and we don't have shit for retirement. I don't know if it will work, but we've got to try something.

DARLENE

I thought the company didn't want...

KEN

It's been taken care of. I have their approval.

DARLENE

Well, you've got my vote.

NIKI

Mine too.

INT. DRIVING SOUTH ON I-95 IN U-HAUL TRUCK - DAY

Scene opens with aerial shot of U-Haul truck driving south on I-95. Ken is driving while Darlene, Niki and Trinaty follow in car. Camera shots show mileage signs as they get closer to Florida in addition to various landmarks along the way. Final shot reads, I-75 South, Tampa, Florida, 4 miles. Truck and car pulls into house in Tarpon Springs, Florida. Ryan and Kevin are there to greet them.

INT. KEN & DARLENE'S HOME - TARPON SPRINGS, FL. - DAY

Scene opens with Ken working in home office setting agenda for following week.

KEN

(On phone)

I'm scheduled to arrive in Greenville at 10:30 Monday. Assuming the flight is on time, I'll be at your office by 11:30. If you and Jack have no plans, I'll buy lunch.

Pause...

I'd like to go over the financial data, inventory and current orders so we have a good understanding of where we're at. That should take about two hours. Then I'll begin visiting the stores.

pause...

OK Dick. Thanks. I'll see you Monday.

Ken dials his company located in Green Bay, WI.

KEN

Hi Mike. Just wanted to check in before I call it a day. I just spoke to Dick Koury at Food Smart. I'll be there all next week.

MIKE

There's some things going on here that I'm not happy about.

KEN

Your tone makes me nervous.

MIKE

Well, most the corporate staff was blindsided yesterday. It seems the company has been struggling for some time and has negotiated the sale of American Meats.

KEN

No shit? That's the last thing I expected to hear. I thought everything was good. The project I'm on is doing very well.

MIKE

They kept it very quiet. We never recovered from the two ground beef recalls last quarter.

KEN

How does this affect us?

MIKE

There's still a lot we don't know. But effective immediately, the retail division is shutting down. We're pulling out of the project in the Carolina's.

KEN

Sonofabitch. Am I loosing my job?

MIKE

I went to bat for you. You can remain with the company if you're willing to work at the wholesale phone desk in Green Bay.

KEN

In Green Bay? Wow Mike. I just moved down here last week. Will the company move us?

MIKE

Unfortunately, no. You would be responsible for the move.

KEN

And if I don't move, I'm done?

MIKE

I'm afraid so.

KEN  
Shit Mike. This is going to  
destroy me financially. Is there a  
severance package?

MIKE  
None. And I need your decision on  
Monday.

KEN  
I can tell you now I'm not moving  
to Green Bay. So, I guess I'm  
done.

MIKE  
I'm sorry Ken. You've always done  
a great job. It's just part of  
corporate downsizing.

INT. GROCERY STORE - DAY

Scene joins Ken in an interview for Meat Cutter at a local  
Grocery chain.

GROCERY STORE MANAGER  
Your experience is certainly  
impressive. We would like to offer  
you a position at our Tarpon  
store. The beginning wage will be  
\$11. per hour. If this is  
acceptable, we'll put you on the  
schedule next week.

The low salary catches Ken by surprise.

KEN  
Eleven dollars per hour? Are you  
serious? I was making more than  
that 20 years ago.

GROCERY STORE MANAGER  
I wish we could offer you more.  
After 1 year, we can probably get  
that up to \$12.

INT. KEN & DARLENE'S HOME - DAY

KEN  
Darlene, we're between a rock and  
a hard spot. We came here thinking  
there would be opportunities that  
would allow us to do something  
(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
different, make more money. I never factored in losing my job. Fuck. We've been here less than a month and I've gone from eighty grand a year to eleven bucks an hour. We've got enough money to pay the bills for three months, then we're done.

DARLENE  
I need to get a job. It wouldn't be much, but it would help.

KEN  
That won't work. That's not an option. You have to focus on taking care of Trinity while Niki works. Otherwise, she'll have to continue depending on us for everything. That's no good for her or us.

There's only one way out of this as I see it.

DARLENE  
Grow marijuana?

KEN  
Exactly.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

JAIL EMPLOYEE #3  
Fuchman, Matt Fuchman, come to the window.

Matt is asleep. Ken nudges him and he wakes up as they repeat his name.

BRUCE  
That's you buddy. See you on the other side.

Matt said goodbye, walked to the window for release papers and left the room.

KEN  
(Narrating)  
Matt had returned to Vegas after spending a couple of years in Texas. It wasn't the same. Kevin  
(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

and Ryan were gone along with others that were there when he left. He had been in touch with both Kevin and Ryan. They encouraged him to move to Florida and join them. Kevin offered to set him up and front him some cash. Since he just got out of a legal situation involving marijuana, he was reluctant to accept the offer. However, he wasn't thrilled with his current situation.

INT. LAS VEGAS ADULT BOOK STORE - NIGHT

Scene opens showing the flashing neon lights of a large Adult Book Store. The sign read, "Open 24 hours". Camera shots move inside and finds Matt working behind the counter. Two gay men enter and proceed to counter for cards that allow them into the video viewing room located in the back of the store. Camera shows a man and woman in the aisle. The man is holding a large vibrating device as the woman giggles. A black couple enters the store. They say hello in unison and walk to the XXX rated videos. Matt is oblivious to the routine activity as he sits behind the counter reading a High Times magazine. In the distance Matt hears the sound of what seemed like an automatic revolver. Pop, pop, pop, pop. Camera shows clock which reads 3:25 AM.

KEN

(Narrating)

There was nothing Matt enjoyed about working in the Adult Book Store. After returning from Texas, it was the only job he could land. Mickey's Uncle owned a chain of them and hooked Matt up. He always worked the graveyard shift when the strange people came in.

BLACK MALE CUSTOMER

Excuse me, could you help me out back here.

Matt complies. He leaves the counter and approaches the customer.

BLACK MALE CUSTOMER

Hey man, help me convince my girl here that sex is better rough, cause she ain't into the same shit

(MORE)

BLACK MALE CUSTOMER (cont'd)

I am and it's making finding a movie hard.

MATT

Define rough.

BLACK FEMALE CUSTOMER

Hair pulling, ass smacking. Shit like that.

MATT

Well, I believe every woman secretly enjoys it a little rough. It's important not to get carried away though. There's a fine line in that behavior and you can't cross it.

BLACK FEMALE CUSTOMER

That is bullshit. Slow, sweet and passionate is what works for me. If I wanted my fucking hair pulled, I'd go to Great Clips and get a perm.

At that moment, a woman in her late 60's busts through the door.

WOUNDED WOMAN

Help me please. I've been shot.

Matt rushes to the front of the store. The woman is holding her leg and collapses to the floor in a puddle of blood. She reaches in her pocket and pulls out a piece of paper.

WOUNDED WOMAN

Don't call the police. Call this number. Tell them Eve is here and that I've been shot. They'll come get me. Please hurry.

Matt takes the paper and rushes behind the counter. He dials 911.

MATT

(on phone)

This is the Las Vegas Adult Book Store on North Las Vegas Blvd. I have a lady here named Eve that's been shot. She said you would help her, Could you please send someone right away.



MATT

What were you doing that caused someone to shoot you. It's four in the morning.

WOUNDED WOMAN

I was just shopping.

MATT

Shopping? For what, Crack?

Woman does not reply, but appears to have passed out on the floor.

BLACK MALE CUSTOMER

What the fuck? Is she dead?

MATT

I don't think so. The police and ambulance should be here any moment.

At that moment, sirens are heard and two police cars speed into the lot. Cameras show them attending to the woman and talking to Matt as the scene fades.

INT. MATT'S APARTMENT - LAS VEGAS - DAY

Scene shows Matt dialing phone.

MATT

Kevin. This is Matt. Does your offer still stand? I have to get the hell out of this job and this town. If you could help me, I can be ready to leave tomorrow.

INT. COUNTY JAIL - NIGHT

Bruce, Lee, Ken and Darlene remain seated in the general population area waiting to be bailed out.

BRUCE

This is ridiculous. I know my brother paid the bondsman over two hours ago.

JAIL EMPLOYEE #3

Bruce Costen, Lee Norwood, Ken Baker, Darlene Baker. Come to the window please.

BRUCE

Finally. Help me up and let's get out of here.

Lee and Ken each grab an arm.

KEN

Looks like this day is finally coming to an end. I'm sorry you guys had to go through this.

LEE

Shit. We're all in this together. I'm sorry we got caught. We had some good times.

BRUCE

It was a good ride.

INT. PHYSICIAN'S BLEND CALL CENTER - LAS VEGAS, NV. - DAY

Scene opens with camera panning The Las Vegas Strip from above and zooms in on strip mall which contains the Call Center for Physician's Blend Human Growth Hormone. Camera moves inside. Bruce is pouring coffee. The call center seats 14. Only four telemarketers are seated.

January - 2006

KEN

(Narrating)

Bruce had made a small fortune selling Human Growth Hormone via Telemarketing out of a Las Vegas call center. When the "No Call" law went into effect in 2003, sales began a slow but steady drop. During those years, Bruce had increased his spending. At the same time, a long time employee that kept the books, seen what was happening and decided to take a severance package worth about \$800 grand and disappear. The consequences of more spending, less income and a thief, began to play out.

BRUCE

Lee, look at this place. Four talkers in the house. This room used to be filled with energy. Things happened in this room.

(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)  
Everybody was making a lot of  
money. Especially me. No matter  
how much I spent, there was always  
more available.

LEE  
I've been trying boss.

BRUCE  
So what do we do? Keep riding a  
dying horse or change horses?

INT. LAS VEGAS AIRPORT - NIGHT

Scene opens with Bruce pulling into a spot in front of  
baggage claim. Bruce drives a 1 ton Ford dully, extended  
cab. As he gets out of truck, his waiting son Josh spots  
him.

JOSH  
Hey Pop.

BRUCE  
Hello son. How was Florida?

Josh throws luggage in the truck bed.

JOSH  
It was a good trip.

Bruce and Josh get in the truck and pull away. As they  
depart, camera rises above scene as narration begins.

KEN  
(Narrating)  
I never knew Bruce in Vegas. His  
sons and my kids went to school  
together. They would come over to  
our house Our kids would go to  
theirs. But I never met him. His  
son, Josh had told Bruce that  
Kevin, Ryan and Rick were growing  
pot in Florida. Now with Bruce's  
business woes, he was looking at  
his options. He paid for Josh's  
trip with the understanding that  
he would research their activity.

INSIDE TRUCK

JOSH

They seem to have their shit together. You know it's not just Kevin, Ryan and Rick. Matt's back there now. Jaclyn's dad Scott and his wife are doing it and so are Ryan's parents.

BRUCE

Are they making any money?

JOSH

Kevin had just finished one up before I got there that turned into twenty grand. But yeah. Everybody is making money and livin' pretty good. I think if you took someone with you and set up two houses, you could make about forty grand every three months.

BRUCE

Do they all get along. Do they do shit together?

JOSH

They all get along OK I guess. Everyone just does their own thing. I didn't see them hanging out together too much. Rick took us out in the gulf fishin' with his boat.

BRUCE

Josh, I'm calling Kevin tomorrow. I can do this. I'll get Lee to go with me. You can run the call center. The way things are right now, I don't have time to waste.

INT. BRUCE'S TRUCK - FLORIDA BOUND - DAY

Scene opens with Bruce and Lee in truck on highway headed to Florida. The extended cab is jammed. A trailer with Bruce's Harley follows.

BRUCE

To be honest Lee, I have no idea what to expect out of this. If it works the way Kevin says, we'll do good. He says we'll be up and running in two weeks. It's like a turnkey business opportunity. But

(MORE)

BRUCE (cont'd)

I'm going to depend on you to do most of the work. With my feet, It would be impossible for me to do it.

LEE

Shit Bruce. Everything you touch turns to gold. I've seen it over the years. I'm honored you ask me to join you. If it wasn't for you, I don't know where I'd be. You know I'll do everything I can to make this work.

BRUCE

I'm really excited about this one. Maybe the risk aspect makes the thrill better. I think we have the makings for a community here. Shit, I'll bring everybody together. We'll get some poker games started, play golf, go fishing with Rick's boat, cook-outs, dinners. All that and more. We'll create a family.

Bruce and Lee continue talking and laughing. As they fade music begins. Camera shots of truck moving on the highway from above.

Scene Fades

INT. WALL SPRING'S PARK, PALM HARBOR, FL. - DAY

The day after the bust.

Scene opens with everyone gathered at a covered picnic area in a quiet corner of the park. Kevin and Cindy are just arriving. Everyone is hugging.

BRUCE

Well, I'll say that everyone looks a lot better than they did last night.

Laughter.

KEVIN

That was a Mother Fucker wasn't it? I would have never thought we would all get busted at the same time.

Kevin laughs

MATT

You should see my house. It's trashed.

LEE

You should see ours....

The group begins telling their stories and sharing their thoughts as their sound moves to the background and the narration begins.

KEN

(Narrating)

Everyone was ready to tell their story. How bad the house was damaged, how they were treated by police, what they were doing when the bust came down and how paranoid they were now that it was over. No one saw it coming.

KEVIN

Listen up everyone. Listen up. We've all just gone through a very traumatic situation. It's pretty scary when police bust in your door and put a gun to your head. Then to go through all the shit we went through yesterday. Life is going to be different for the next few months and probably the better part of the year. We'll have to get jobs and somehow muddle our way back.

I know most of us are afraid right now of what we are facing. The Feds would like us to believe that unless we cooperate with them, we'll be spending time in prison. I'm telling you, that just isn't true. We are all vulnerable and that's when they throw out these threats. Stay strong and don't be willing to tell them

(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)  
anything.

KEN  
I think they went into this with the assumption it was something far bigger and more sinister than a bunch of independent mom and pop growers. They suggested we were involved in a conspiracy. That's probably why the Feds were involved. But it seems to me that if they investigated us like they say, they pretty much know everything anyway.

KEVIN  
To me, that says they believe there was far more going on than what they know. But they can't get us on a conspiracy charge because we were all independent of each other. Just like the Hell's Angels. The Feds tried to nail them with conspiracy but they couldn't because each chapter was operating independently. Just like us.

RYAN  
Ok. Here's the article in the Tribune about us?

Ryan reads the article.

MATT  
870 plants? What the fuck did they count?

RYAN  
This is fucked up. \$4 million dollars? 870 plants. They wanted to make it sound like more than it was. I'm surprised they even listed the High Times magazine. I mean, that's like the twelve days of Christmas...all that other shit and a High Times magazine. And they called Joe and Rick the Kingpins of a sophisticated operation. That's hilarious.

KEVIN

What we built over the past few years was really unbelievable. We brought a group of family and friends together in a way that had to be destiny. Look at how close we all have become. We've shared good times and bad. I hope the relationships survive this but it's going to be difficult. It would be very easy for all of us to go separate ways and move on with life.

BRUCE

It was a great ride. I already miss it.

LEE

It was the best years of my life.

INT. OZONA BLUE RESTAURANT - DAY

The week before Christmas - Two years earlier.

Scene opens with Bruce on stage directing the entire bar in his rendition of the Twelve days of Christmas. He has the house in the palm of his hand.

BRUCE

...And a partridge in a pear tree.

The crowd explodes in applause and whistles. Bruce walks off stage and over to the section where the Family Tree group were. His two sons were visiting from Vegas. They embraced.

JOSH

Great job Dad. Great job.

Everyone was congratulating Bruce.

RICK

Here's a beer Bruce.

BRUCE

Let me tell you all something. I love every one of you like family. This is our 1st annual Christmas party and there's going to be many more. Our foundation is now complete. Now we can build on that and enjoy life.



Camera pans everyone laughing, taking pictures, embracing as scene ends.

INT. GOLF COURSE - DAY

Scene opens with series of quick clips. Three golf carts pulling up to the opening tee box. Bruce, Rick, Ken and Lee, Ryan and Matt. Transition to boat in the Gulf with Rick, Kevin, Ryan, Ken and Matt. Transition to houseboat with everyone aboard slowly pulling up to remote island in the Gulf. Transition to leisure beach time with Darlene, Ken, Niki, Trinaty, Ryan, Kevin, Jaclyn. Transition to Rick and Bruce riding Harley's side by side up the highway. Transition to gala holiday parties with huge variety of food on display. Transition to poker night where everyone is present. Transition to house with trimming party in progress. Bruce, Lee, Ken, Ryan and Matt is present. Transition to local pub where Scott is on stage performing. Everyone is present.

KEN

(Narrating)

Life was good. Since none of us had conventional jobs, we had time to do what we wanted. There were weekly rounds of golf, fishing, boating, beach time, Harley trips, Holiday gatherings, birthdays, weekly Texas Hold 'em nights, trimming parties and Scott's gigs. No one was getting rich, but we had enough money to live a good life, stress free. Kevin and Jaclyn split up. She moved back to Vegas. It was a friendly but sad departure. Shortly after, Kevin met Cindy. Everyone was happy except Julie. She seldom hung out with the rest of us. Regardless of how she tried, Julie was never able to kick the pain pill obsession. And since Rick and Julie were still together, that made Rick's life miserable at times.

INT. COURTROOM - DAY

Scene opens with Julie at the podium in front of judge.

JUDGE

Your record doesn't tell a very good story Ms. Huffy. You've been here four times over the past two years, all for drug abuse violations. The court has been lenient and tried to help you. You've chosen to stay on this path of self destruction. Now, here you are again, but this time, there are no more chances. Records indicate you've been informed of the three strikes, you're out law, is that correct?

JULIE

Yes your Honor.

JUDGE

Does the defense have anything to say?

PUBLIC DEFENDER

Yes your Honor. I know you've been patient in this case, however, I would like to make a final request that you delay sentencing for 30 days in order for the defendant to make some arrangements in her personal life.

JUDGE

Thirty days is unnecessary. The court will give you 14 days.

JULIE

Thank you your Honor.

INT. WALL SPRING'S PARK, PALM HARBOR, FL. - DAY

RYAN

Any thoughts on who made that call to Crime stoppers?

RICK

It had to be Alan. The guy that Joe started the whole thing with. He was upset when Joe left him. He told Joe then that someday he would pay for dropping him.

KEVIN

But Dad, that was a long time ago. I can't believe someone would wait that long to get even.

KEN

It seems to me that for someone to lay out the details like this mystery caller did, they had to be someone that knew what was going on in our world. And how would they have known to go directly to the garage in my house? They didn't even look upstairs. They knew. I think they spoke to someone that had inside information. And if that's the case, it was someone we trusted. Someone that had intimate knowledge on what everyone was doing.

KEVIN

I suppose we'll never know. The cops have their ways of getting information. For all we know, they could be watching us right now. Our phones could be tapped and our houses could be bugged but I doubt that. The most important thing now is to stay calm. I don't know what your plans are. Some of you may be thinking of hiring an attorney. If you don't already know, attorneys are going to charge a lot of money. I'm not doing anything until I feel it's necessary.

MATT

I couldn't if I wanted to unless they return my seven grand. Even then, that wouldn't pay for a lawyer.

KEVIN

One more thing. What we all have learned over the last few years is valuable. In a sense, we've got a degree in horticulture specializing in cannabis. We know everything about it. We were good! Everyone always said what great weed we produced. Most of us probably never considered how much

(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)  
we were helping people.

RICK  
Hell, we contributed a lot to our local economy. Everything we made went right back in.

KEVIN  
That too. But I'm talking about medically. We used it mostly for recreation but think about all the people that have medical conditions that marijuana helps. I mean, think about it. I get headaches a lot. I was going through 200 Motrin a month. Now, I never buy them I smoke a joint. Weed helps so many things.

KEN  
You're right Kevin. A part of society thinks nothing of getting prescription drugs that can often mess you up. Marijuana, in their mind, is worse.

KEVIN  
I just want to plant the thought that I think we should not let our knowledge go to waste. After the dust settles and all this over, it should continue. Probably not here, but there are other states that take a much different position.

RYAN  
It's a shame our strain has been destroyed.

KEVIN  
I'm working on a solution for that.

INT. FLORIDA CHAPTER OF NORML - DAY

KEN  
That's the story. I wanted to hear your thoughts on this before I move forward.

NORML REPRESENTATIVE

Well, I'll tell you, of all states to grow marijuana, you picked one of the worst. Where the prosecution of marijuana offenders is concerned, no expense is too great in spite of the struggling economy. No allocation of valuable resources such as manpower, equipment, or jail space is beyond the reach of the Florida law. They're dedicated to crushing and fleecing anyone who comes close to pot. Despite the clear fact that the war on marijuana is a footless fraud, no end appears in sight. So you better get ready.

KEN

(Shaking head)

Wow.

NORML REPRESENTATIVE

You and your lawyer need to understand that marijuana prosecutions are different from any other criminal action. No other type of law violation has caused police to develop such intrusive investigative techniques or to bully and terrorize an entire class of harmless citizens. When you're the subject of a marijuana prosecution it is you, not the government who occupies the moral high ground and the only victim in the courtroom is the defendant!

KEN

What about the mystery of the anonymous crime stopper call that started this whole thing? Can I find out who made the call?

NORML REPRESENTATIVE

Assuming there was a legitimate call made, you'll probably never find out who it is. Often times, it's just a reason they use to begin an investigation. The call alone isn't enough to get a search warrant but it allows them to search everything but the inside

(MORE)

NORML REPRESENTATIVE (cont'd)  
of your home. For all you know, it could have started from them grabbing your license number during a visit to the hydro shop. Or someone involved may have had a prior unrelated incident that made the cops suspicious.

KEN  
The day of the arrest, I was surprised to see the DEA involved. I always thought they focused on Federal crimes.

NORML REPRESENTATIVE  
In Florida, the state often tries to persuade the Feds to get involved by painting a picture that would qualify for a Federal violation. If they succeed and you are busted by the feds, the situation becomes much more desperate, assuming the state gave them accurate information. The Feds have rigid penalties that could easily land you in prison for 5 years with no parole. There's usually only one way out at that point. Cooperate by providing substantial assistance in the prosecution of another.

KEN  
How can this be? Extreme measures to prosecute aren't justified.

NORML REPRESENTATIVE  
You know Ken, for decades the government has looked for scientific support for marijuana prohibition and they've come up empty. Science has shown not only that cannabis is a harmless substance, but also that it has valuable legitimate uses. People want it and need it - for medicine, for recreation, for creativity, for sleep, and yes, even for exhilaration and intoxication. Science has confirmed what closet users from Sugar Ray Leonard to Carl Sagan have known for a long time.

(MORE)

NORML REPRESENTATIVE (cont'd)  
Marijuana doesn't lower the  
quality of their life but enhances  
it.

KEN  
It seems clear then that we need  
to find an attorney.

NORML REPRESENTATIVE  
If you can afford one, absolutely!  
Public defenders have so much on  
their plate that they just don't  
have the time to devote to your  
defense, although, sometimes an  
average public defender is better  
than a greedy, overpriced lawyer.  
It would be good if you had the  
luxury of waiting to see how this  
was going to develop, but based on  
what you've told me, I don't think  
you do.

INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

KEN & DARLENE'S ATTORNEY  
I'd like to represent you both.  
Under the circumstances, you need  
to get an attorney involved right  
away. We don't know yet if it's  
going State or Federal. Based on  
some calls I made, they're trying  
to take it Federal for at least  
some of the people involved. Then,  
it gets more complicated. It would  
be a conflict for me to represent  
your son, but he needs to find an  
attorney as soon as possible.

KEN  
How much is this going to cost us?

NEWS ANCHOR  
I'll represent both of you for  
fifteen thousand dollars and I'll  
need that paid in full before I  
can move forward.

KEN  
Wow! I didn't expect that. There's  
no way we can afford that.

## KEN &amp; DARLENE'S ATTORNEY

I understand. I'll give you the number of the person to call to get a Public Defender assigned to you. Let me stress that if there is any way you can borrow the money from a relative or friend, you should do it. This could be a very serious case and Public Defenders are so busy, they don't have your best interest at heart. I know the financial aspect is a concern, but right now, you should put that aside and get the money for professional representation if you can. The money can always be paid back. You'll never get prison time back.

INT. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE - DAY

Scene opens in attorney's office with Ken, Darlene and Ryan present.

## RYAN'S ATTORNEY

I've done some research on your case. You are in a very serious situation. If this thing goes Federal, and from the looks of it right now, that's where it's headed, you definitely need professional representation. If convicted at a Federal level, you could easily be looking at 7 years in prison.

## KEN

What would your fees be to represent Ryan?

## RYAN'S ATTORNEY

Fifteen thousand dollars if it stays at State level. If it goes Federal, that will move to twenty thousand. If it should become necessary to litigate at a Federal level, you're looking at twenty five thousand.

Ken buries his head in hands.



KEN

OK. Thanks for your time. It's going to be impossible for us to come up with that kind of money. We'll just have to go with a Public Defender and hope for the best.

RYAN'S ATTORNEY

I understand. The Defenders at State level are average at best. If this goes Federal, at least you'll have better counsel. Some of the Public Defenders in State are still learning the ropes and the good ones stay so busy, they're often not available for you. But I clearly understand. I wish I could help you.

INT. CAR - DAY

Scene opens with Ken, Darlene and Ryan walking to their car in silence after leaving attorney's office. They get in car and begin the drive home.

KEN

Fuck! We're fucked. I'm very confused right now and not familiar with how the system works. Can we trust the lawyers? They're making it sound like it's very likely we could do time for this. Or are they just trying to scare us into paying them an insane amount of money.

DARLENE

I don't know either, but I think we need a lawyer. We can call Les and Cher. You know they would help us if they can.

KEN

I'm not going to do that. I can't do that. It's way too much to ask of anyone. We got ourselves into this, we shouldn't ask someone else to come up with that kind of money to help us.

RYAN

Dad, we have to. We don't have a choice. They're the only ones that can help. From what we've heard, we may be fucked either way, but there's a better chance if we have a lawyer. We don't know how the system works and it sounds like a Public Defender won't help. We need a lawyer Dad. If there's a way we can get one, we should do it.

Obviously stressed, Ken remains silent.

Ryan's phone rings.

RYAN

Hello.

DEA AGENT

Hi Ryan. This is Agent Lutz. How ya doin'?

RYAN

How am I doing? Well, it's not the best day of my life.

DEA AGENT

You broke the law son. What you're feeling and what you're about to go through is very unpleasant. Marijuana cultivation and conspiracy against the Federal Government is serious. Everyone involved is in a lot of trouble right now. Do you understand that?

RYAN

Yes.

RYAN

It's unfortunate that your parents got caught up in this. I don't believe they were involved as others. Never the less, they're still in a corner. We may have a way for you to help them Ryan.

RYAN

OK.

DEA AGENT

If you cooperate with us, lay everything on the table, we may be able to get the charges on your parents dropped. No guarantees but there's a good chance we can make this happen. Does that sound like something that would interest you?

RYAN

Man. I don't know. Look. I'm in the process of finding an attorney. I don't feel comfortable agreeing to anything until I have a lawyer.

DEA AGENT

This offer won't hold. You have to move fast or we pull it. If you agree, it's got to be today or tomorrow.

RYAN

I think you need to pull it. I don't see that happening. There's nothing I could tell you anyway that you don't already know.

DEA AGENT

OK Ryan. You understand that we just offered you a chance to get your parents out of this, right?

RYAN

Well, I understand you said you would try, but no guarantees. I have to decline your offer.

DEA AGENT

OK son. See you in court.

RYAN

Dad, we've got to call Uncle Les.

INT. KEVIN'S CAR - DAY

Scene opens with Kevin and Rick on Highway 10 headed east, just past Baton Rouge, LA. The time is 2 AM.

KEVIN

We've saved the empire Dad.

RICK

We're not home free yet. Hal said the cops in Louisiana will stop you just for having out of state tags. If we get stopped, it could be a nightmare.

KEVIN

I know. We'll be fine.

KEN

(Narrating)

A couple of years ago, Rick had shared the strain with Hal, a friend who moved to San Antonio. Rick called Hal to confirm he still had it and when the answer was yes, Kevin and Rick made the 1,200 mile trip to get some clones. Instead, they left with a Mother plant which they placed in a tall box and set on the back floor.

Rick is sleeping when a Louisiana State Trooper comes up on Kevin from nowhere.

KEVIN

Dad. Wake up. Wake up. We're about to be pulled over.

Rick doesn't respond. Kevin slaps him in the chest.

KEVIN

Wake the fuck up Dad. The cops are behind us.

Rick awakes.

RICK

Holy shit Kevin. This isn't good.

Police lights go on. Kevin pulls over.

STATE TROOPER

Put your hands out the window.

Officer looks in car at Rick.

STATE TROOPER

Slowly, get me the registration and your license. Then get out of the car and step to the back.

The temperature was about 50 degrees. Kevin is wearing a t-shirt.

STATE TROOPER

This is just a random stop sir.  
Not many cars travel this road  
from Florida at two in the  
morning. Where you coming from?

KEVIN

San Antonio. Visiting a friend  
there with my Dad. On our way back  
to Clearwater.

STATE TROOPER

Can we search the car?

KEVIN

I'm not comfortable with that.

STATE TROOPER

Got something to hide?

KEVIN

No sir. I just know it's my right.  
My Uncle is an attorney. He told  
me to never agree to a search  
unless there's a warrant.

STATE TROOPER

I'm going to have the dog come out  
then.

KEVIN

Do what you have to do.

The German Shepard dog sniffs around the perimeter of the car. He shows no sign of detection.

By this time, Kevin is shivering from the cold temperature.

STATE TROOPER

Cold?

KEVIN

I am. Could I get a blanket in the  
backseat of the car?

STATE TROOPER

I'll get it for you.

The trooper enters the car and retrieves the blanket on the backseat. His head was inches away from the box that contained the Marijuana Mother plant. Rick sits silently.

STATE TROOPER

Here you go. What's in the box?

KEVIN

Just clothes and shit.

STATE TROOPER

OK. You're free to go. Have a safe trip.

Kevin returns to car and drives away.

KEVIN

Wow. That was a little scary.

RICK

When he came in the car, I thought we were done.

KEVIN

Oh man. I thought I had fucked up. I did, 't expect him to use that as an excuse to get in the car. But now it's behind us. We're home free.

Kevin and Rick drive on as camera shows Trooper turn around and head west. Music plays as scene ends.

INT. NIKI'S HOUSE - DAY

Scene opens with series of short scenes as narration begins. Darlene, Ken and Ryan moving into Niki's small three bedroom home. Ken working in meat department of Wal mart, Darlene in produce and Ryan stocking shelves. Matt at county property seizures where they are counting out \$7,000. Ken receiving computer and \$4,080. Ken, Darlene and Ryan moving out of Niki's house. Kevin at podium in front of judge receiving sentence. Ken and Darlene in front of judge with lawyer at their side receiving sentence. Bruce in meeting with the DEA and State prosecutors along with attorney. Bruce and Lee overlooking floor of penny slot machine business. Scott and Annie loading u-haul trailer bound for Colorado.

KEN

(Narrating)

After the bust, we were broke. Darlene, I and Ryan had retained attorney's thanks to Darlene's

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)

sister and husband. That call was hard, but the money was wired without condition. We all moved in with Niki. The only place that would hire us was Wal Mart. They love folks like us because we were good workers and couldn't leave. Things were quiet for the next few months while the prosecutors decided what to do with us. Our attorney's confirmed that the District Attorney and the DEA were frustrated because we weren't what they thought we were. Everyone was split up and assigned different judges. Six months after the bust, some seized property was released. Matt had \$7,000 returned. My computer and \$4,080. was returned. We'll never know what happened to the other \$1,500. Our attorney said we should take the 4 grand and move on. The unexpected money allowed us to move out of Niki's house and regain somewhat normal living conditions. After nine months Kevin, Matt, Rick, Joe, Susan, Lee had gone through the system with Public Defenders. They were sentenced to 18 months probation, 16 weeks of drug abuse classes and fines of \$1,500. not including the cost of drug classes, which was another \$400. Everyone had the opportunity to be released early if all fines were paid.

Ken, Darlene and Ryan received exactly the same sentence, in spite of their high priced attorneys.

Bruce was charged with trafficking which carried a mandatory prison sentence. After paying a lawyer \$20,000. and agreeing to cooperate with Federal and State, the charges were reduced to cultivation. Even in the eleventh hour, the Feds still thought they were missing something. He received 2 years probation. Bruce

(MORE)

KEN (cont'd)  
and Lee are now running a penny  
slot machine business in Florida.

Scott and Annie moved to Colorado.  
Sentencing is still pending.

Julie became a mystery. She  
distanced herself from everyone  
and eventually, her charges were  
dropped.

INT. PINELLAS COUNTY SHERIFFS BUILDING - DAY

Three months earlier

Scene opens with State Prosecutor, District Attorney, DEA,  
Pinellas County Sheriff and Julie.

DEA AGENT

We're here today because you  
indicated to your Public Defender  
that you have information which  
could be helpful to us. You are on  
the third strike of the three  
strikes and you're out law. You  
understand that there are no  
guarantees, however, if the  
information you provide us proves  
to be accurate, you may set the  
stage for a get out of jail free  
card. Do you have any questions?

JULIE

No.

DEA AGENT

Please tell us the information you  
have.

JULIE

I know about a large marijuana  
growing operation that has been  
going on in Pinellas County for  
some time. It involves about a  
dozen people. I know who started  
the operation and who the main  
players are.

DEA AGENT

Are you prepared to provide us  
with names, addresses and other  
information that could assist us  
(MORE)



DEA AGENT (cont'd)  
in an investigation.

JULIE  
I am prepared to tell you anything  
you want to know.

INT. MEDICAL MARIJUANA DISPENSARY - DENVER, COLORADO - DAY

One year later

Scene opens with camera shot of the sign which reads Welcome to Colorful Colorado, followed by a sign that reads, Denver City Limits. Camera moves inside a busy medical marijuana dispensary. A large sign greets patients as they enter which reads: God has given us every herb bearing seed to use as food and medicine. A large waiting room with a 60" flat screen and comfortable overstuffed chairs is moderately full of patients. Darlene is seated at a reception desk. A counter which resembles a pharmaceutical counter shows a patient receiving Medical Marijuana. Kevin and Cindy are behind the counter. They are wearing white medical smocks.

Upright coolers and shelves occupy one wall. Camera shows Matt in white jacket replenishing inventory. In the back room, Ryan is weighing out Marijuana and placing it in medical containers. Camera moves behind retail area and reveals a large warehouse 100' x 100' with rows of marijuana plants, sectioned off to identify various strains for patients. Smooth jazz is playing softly. Camera shows a sign that reads, Please walk through sanitizing device before entering. Authorized personnel only. Rick and Ken are talking in growing area, both wearing white jackets. Camera moves out of growing area and down a hallway to a door that reads, Seminar in Session. Camera goes inside to show Annie conducting an alternative medicine class to about 30 people. From there, camera travels upstairs to executive office suites. Sign on door reads, Niki Baker Vice President, Marketing. Down the hall another door reads, Darlene Baker, Human Compassion Director and Scott Hunt, Community Events.

Camera moves outside building and slowly reveals large sign on outside which reads,

Family Tree Growers and Dispensary. Music escalates as scene ends and credits begin.

The End