

Swimming with Sharks
By George Huang

Influential, abrasive and tyrannical movie mogul and film producer Buddy Ackerman verbally abuses his newly-hired, naive and gullible young assistant/writer Guy, a recent college graduate. He even remains belligerent when Guy ties him up and seeks some "payback time." Buddy reveals how he had made it to the top by putting up with tyrants, and suffering the senseless rape and death of his wife:

Buddy:

You think you know it all, don't you? You're 25 years old. You're a baby. You don't know shit. Look, I can appreciate this. I was young too, I felt just like you. Hated authority, hated all my bosses, thought they were full of shit. Look, it's like they say, 'If you're not a rebel by the age of 20, you got no heart, but if you haven't turned establishment by 30, you've got no brains.' Because there are no story-book romances, no fairy-tale endings. So before you run out and change the world, ask yourself, 'What do you really want?'... You were getting complacent, ungrateful, complete and total job burnout, and don't think I didn't notice. You just didn't give a shit anymore. Draggin' your feet everywhere, telling everybody you were doing my job. That you were running the show. That without you, I was nothing. Yeah, people tell me things. So don't come preaching to me about your ideas of what's fair. You're no martyr here. You're no hero. You're just a fuckin' hypocrite. You're just like any other punk kid out there, lookin' for a way in, any way in, and you need me... Because I earned it. What, you think someone just handed me this job? I've handled the phones. I've juggled the bimbos. I've-I've put up with the tyrants, the yellers, the screamers. I've done more than you can even imagine in that small mind of yours. I paid my dues...and I spent ten. Dammit - it's my turn to be selfish. It's my turn. See, that's the trouble with your fuckin' MTV, microwave-dinner generation. You all want it now. You think you deserve it just because you want it? It doesn't work like that. You have to earn it. You have to take it. You have to make it yours. But first, Guy, you need to decide what it is you really want...

I gave you life. Before me, you were nothing. Before me, you were an inkspot, and now you're playing in the majors. I made you. You will always be Guy from Buddy Ackerman's office. You wanna go back to your shitty little existence? Go ahead, leave. There's the door. No one's stopping you. You could have left any day, but you stayed. So let's forget the Dudley-damn-do-right-crap. Because out here, it's kill your parents, fuck your friends, and have a nice day!

Look, I don't make the rules. I play by them. What, your job is unfair to you? Grow up, way it goes. People use you? Life's unfair? Grow up, way it goes. Your girlfriend doesn't love you? Tough shit, way it goes. Your wife gets raped and shot, and they leave their unfinished beers...(weeping) their, their stinking long-necks just lying there on the ground? - So be it. Way it goes...

All right, Guy, come on, let's finish this. Give it to me. Show me what you're made of. Show me what you've learned. Don't let me down, son. Everything I've taught you comes down to this. This is the only way that you can hope to survive. Because life is not a movie.

Everyone lies. Good guys lose. And love does not conquer all. So let's do this thing. Let's finish it...Do it! Come on, do it now!

