

THE WALLET
Episode 4:
MONEY MAN

by

Mark F. Martino

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Mark F. Martino
12217 NE 82nd Lane
Kirkland, WA 98033
Office: 425/827-3513
Mobile: 425/765-3698
marmar@seanet.com

FADE IN:

EXT. GINA'S APARTMENT BUILDING, ENTRANCE - DAY

From behind the trees around the building's iron gate come the GARBLED ANGRY SHOUTS of a woman and man.

RAY FOLEY, 37, in a tacky suit that reeks of slick pretension argues with GINA ALLEGRETTO, 28. She wears jeans and a T-shirt, but is every bit as determined as Ray.

They tussle over a pushcart. Its sign reads "Gina's Meatballs." Gina backs through the gate and slams it.

GINA
Back the hell off!

Ray grabs the cart. They both pull on it, back and forth, in and out of the gate.

RAY
You forgot something.

GINA
I'm calling the cops.

RAY
Go ahead. Explain that wallet to them...Yeah, I saw it. Empty, and then you pull money out of it.

Ray yanks the cart away from Gina.

RAY
Want the cart? Give me the wallet.

Gina slams the gate shut.

GINA
I'll get another one.

RAY
I don't know what's going on, but if I call the IRS and they start sniffing around, you better --

GINA
Go sniff yourself!

RAY
Who do think they'll believe, Gina?
That wallet won't help you in jail.

Gina, defeated, opens the gate. She pulls out the wallet.

GINA

You get this? You leave me alone.
No squealing to the cops or anybody.

RAY

Deal.

He takes the wallet. He caresses and strokes it. Triumphant, he holds it out and admires it.

RAY

Nowadays wealth is a number in a computer. A number that can be tracked. But this? Cash. No work or worry. No saving, accounting, or taxes. I can be the money man!

Gina, scared by crazy Ray, backs away.

EXT. RAY'S OFFICE BUILDING, SIDEWALK - DAY

Eyes wide with excitement and his head churning with big deals, Ray almost skips down the street.

He pats his jacket pocket and smiles when he feels the wallet.

A luxurious limo rolls up along side him. Ray stops.

The limo stops and the backseat window slides down. MR. BRAWNER, 56, a hefty hedge fund manager in an expensive suit pokes his head out.

BRAWNER

Ray, I hate to be a bother, but would you by chance be any closer to accruing the minimum for our contract?

Just the opening Ray was waiting to hear. He grins and reaches into his jacket pocket for the wallet.

RAY

Will cash do?

BRAWNER

No one's crazy enough to carry around two hundred grand, but then, it's you isn't it?

Ray fondles the wallet.

RAY

Do you want the money or not?

Brawler gives him a whatever-hit-me-with-it look.

Ray grandly opens the wallet and finds...nothing.

RAY

But, it was just working. I --

BRAWNER

Guess it's in your other wallet, eh?

He gestures to his driver and the limo rolls away.

Dejected, Ray watches it disappear in traffic.

He glares at the wallet as though he's going to toss it.

Trembling with confused rage, he shoves it into his pocket and stalks off.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

The interior looks as pretentious and parsimonious as Ray, who sits at his small desk, huddled over the empty wallet. He quietly negotiates with it as though it were another business person.

RAY

What is it you need? What can I do for you?

Ray closes the wallet.

RAY

There must be some common ground we can find here.

He sneaks a peek inside of it. Nothing. He talks louder.

RAY

Come on. Everybody needs something. You must need something...Something I can give you.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Co-workers walk by the door. A few hear Ray chattering to the wallet, pause, shake it off, and move on.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Ray paces and talks louder at the wallet on his desk.

RAY

You know, I can make things very uncomfortable for...

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE OF RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

Coworker stops at the door, shocked to hear...

RAY (O.S.)
...very uncomfortable for you.

A few more notice and gather by Ray's door. One gently pushes the door open. They see...

...Ray bent over the wallet, yelling.

RAY
You gave it to her. You can give it to me. Give it to me!

He grabs the wallet and shakes it as though choking it.

RAY
Give it. Give me the money!

Someone COUGHS.

Ray turns. As best he can, he composes himself.

Embarrassed and exasperated, Ray slips through the small crowd clutching the wallet.

EXT. RAY'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Ray hurries toward the entrance as though outrunning the embarrassment he suffered.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ray calmly enters his apartment, turns on a living room lamp, and sits on the couch.

A moment later, he trembles with anger and throws the wallet against the wall.

RAY
Mess with me? That's what you get!

Utterly dejected, he glares at the wallet on the floor.

RAY
Aaaaaahhhh!

He curls into fetal position and clamps his eyes shut.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Ray, dressed for another workday, heads for the door. His gaze drifts to the wallet on the floor.

RAY

Nope. Uh-uh. No more. Finito.

He steps past the wallet and heads out the door. It swings shut and locks behind him.

A moment later, he unlocks the door and walks back in. He winces, grabs the wallet, and heads back out.

EXT. CAFE - DAY

Ray wanders toward the cafe. His obsession with the wallet contorts his face into a twitchy frown.

At the door, APRIL, 28, a homeless woman in prim, threadbare clothes blocks his path.

APRIL

Excuse me sir, I haven't eaten in --

RAY

Whatever. I got bigger problems.

He moves to get around her. She blocks him. He explodes.

RAY

Can I ever get any respect? Look at me everybody, I can't even get a crazy homeless person to back the hell off!

APRIL

Hey. You don't have to --

RAY

Oh, I think I do, sister.

APRIL

Why do you have to be such a --

RAY

I don't know. Why doesn't this
(pats pocket)
stupid wallet work? It worked for that meatball selling idiot. Gave her all the money she needed.

APRIL

So, that wallet in your pocket, gave money to someone who sells meatballs?

RAY

She doesn't even understand finance!

This guy does have bigger problems than hers. Way bigger. April relaxes her defensive stance and stifles a smirk.

RAY

Can you believe it? There has to be some secret, some way to --

APRIL

You really need coffee don't you?

April gently takes Ray's arm.

APRIL

I'm April.

Calmed by her voice, Ray goes with her into the cafe.

INT. CAFE - DAY

Ray hands April a small coffee. He sits and takes a gulp of his very large coffee.

APRIL

Thanks. So, you sure about this wallet thing? Because it seems kind of --

RAY

Odd? Crazy? I know, but I saw it.

APRIL

People see a lot of things. Maybe it's about something else.

RAY

What else could it be about?

APRIL

I don't know. That's what my shrink always asked me. What about, like, when you were a kid?

RAY

All I remember is no respect.

APRIL

You had no respect or --

RAY

Nobody respects me. It's like I'm invisible unless I'm paying for something.

A BIT LATER

RAY

...then, when I was in second grade, these guys beat me up, just because they could. Third grade. I'm sitting in the cafeteria and --

APRIL

Ray, I've only got so much coffee here.

LATER

April, now weary, tries to look sympathetic.

RAY

And in seventh grade, those guys, those same guys pushed me off my own driveway so they could use the basketball hoop my dad put up for me. Disrespect. That's what it was. It just kept happening. In college, girls acted like I wasn't there. Didn't even listen to me. This one girl wouldn't even...

EVEN LATER

April looks around and past Ray for an escape route.

RAY

So, it's my first day on the job, and this guy, ten years younger than me, tells me flat out, that I'm just not going to cut it.

MUCH LATER

April stares into her empty coffee cup.

RAY

...and that's when I got the wallet.

Ray's silence makes her snap her head up.

APRIL

I get it. This is your big chance isn't it?

Amazed that someone finally gets it, Ray calms down.

RAY

Yes. It's my last chance. My only chance. Make the big deal. Succeed. Get some respect.

APRIL

That'll be seventy-five dollars.

RAY

What? For what? You just sat there.

APRIL

That's what my therapist got, until I couldn't pay him anymore.

RAY

And if I don't pay you?

APRIL

I'll find a cop. Tell her you solicited me for sex --

RAY

A cop's not going to believe...

Ray pauses. He feels the wallet bulge in his pocket.

APRIL

Kinky sex. Nasty. You said yourself, no one listens to you.

Ray's eyes light up.

APRIL

What?

Ray, amazed and delighted, opens the wallet and shows April what could be about \$75.

APRIL

Now you're just jerking me around.

While she's looking under the table for a hidden trick, Ray pulls out \$60 and stuffs the wallet back in his pocket.

April pops back up. Ray hands her the \$60.

RAY

Take it or leave it.

Still suspicious, April takes the cash and counts it. There's a lot of scheming going on behind Ray's eyes.

RAY

You know, if you'll work with me, I bet there's more to come.

She checks each bill for forgery.

APRIL

What do mean work with you?

Ray stands.

RAY

Come with me. I'll buy you something.

Skeptical, April stands. She leaves with him.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, WOMEN'S COATS - DAY

Ray watches other customers watch April try on winter coats.

April does her best to ignore their disdainful stares. She admires herself in the mirror. Not too shabby.

APRIL

This is the one.

INT. DEPARTMENT STORE, CHECKOUT - DAY

April lays the coat on the counter.

Ray peeks into the wallet. Just the \$15 he kept.

The price pops up on the register: \$213.

He opens the wallet again. Still \$15. He smiles at the clerk.

RAY

Sorry. We changed our minds.

He drags April out of line and heads for the door.

APRIL

Thanks! Thank you so much. I really needed some help hitting bottom. Shouldn't you at least be laughing so one of us gets a payoff?

April storms out of the store and draws a few gawkers.

Ray follows her and stops her at the door.

RAY

It's not a trick. More of an experiment. See? I'm not laughing.

He gives April the remaining \$15. Still pissed, she grabs the cash and dashes out.

Slinking past the gawkers to the counter, Ray watches the clerk put a hanger in the coat.

He feels the wallet bulge. He pulls it out and finds \$213!

Ray rushes to the counter and lays down the cash.

EXT. DEPARTMENT STORE, ENTRANCE - DAY

Ray, the new coat in hand, comes out. He sees April down the block and chases after her.

RAY

April! It worked! We got it. Wait!

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

April speeds up as Ray closes carrying the coat.

He catches her arm to stop her. She spins to face him.

APRIL

What? You didn't get enough yuks back there? Rich guy like you must have better things to do than jerk around poor people.

Ray thrusts the coat at her.

RAY

No. No jerking. Look.
(off her skeptical
look)
Take it. Please.

She inspects it. Seems to be for real, but...

APRIL

You stole it. Great, now they'll come after me and --

RAY

It's legit. No stealing. No tricks.

APRIL

Oh really? Well, let's just wait here for a bit then. If anyone comes after you --

Brawner's limo roll up on them.

She shoves the coat at Ray, but...

...he's already by the limo. The back window slides down.

RAY

Mr. Brawner. Perfect timing. We're on track to --

BRAWNER

Before you start tap dancing again, think about the clause in the contract. The one about prosecution and jail time.

Ray puts on his brave huckster game face.

RAY

Yes, I made a bold statement last time. It's the kind of guy I am. I apologize. But seriously, we got the ball rolling. We have the, ah, financial instrument in place.

Brawner gives him a whatever look.

BRAWNER

Just wire it.

The window slides up.

Ray watches the limo roll away.

April, holding the coat with one hand, touches Ray's arm.

RAY

(startled)

That wasn't about the coat.

APRIL

I got that. How deep are you in?

RAY

Two hundred...grand.

April's eyes go wide.

RAY

And that's just the first installment.

APRIL

That wallet. You think it'll give you that much?

RAY

It paid for the coat, which is the crazy part. After that, why would any amount matter?

APRIL

Maybe it doesn't work the way you think. Maybe --

RAY

The coat. It was for you.

APRIL

Right. So give me the wallet and --

RAY

I gotta think about this more.

He hurries away. April calls after him.

APRIL

I'll share the wealth. Fifty...

Ray turns and disappears around a corner.

APRIL

...fifty. Sixty forty?

She hurries after him.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT BUILDING, HALLWAY - DAY

On a mission, Ray marches to his apartment door.

April comes around a corner and sees him charge into his apartment, slam the door, and lock it.

She knocks on the door...no answer...knocks again.

APRIL

Come on, Ray. I saw you go in there.

(no answer)

I can help you. Two heads and all.

April leans her ear on the door. Silence.

APRIL

Ray, remember, I'm homeless. Got no place to go. It's here or a street corner. It's nicer here.

A moment of silence. The door unlocks and Ray peeks out.

RAY

Go away. I gotta concentrate.

APRIL

Think all you want, but you know you need me to make that thing work.

Ray, defeated, opens the door. April prances in.

RAY

Fine. Stay. But whatever the wallet puts out, I keep it.

APRIL

Sure, we can talk about that.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - DAY

The wallet sits on the otherwise bare coffee table.

Ray and April sit near each other on the couch and study it.

APRIL

Buy me a bunch of clothes with it.
You could sell some of them and --

RAY

April, I got a week. It would take
forever to sell enough to make that
much selling junk.

APRIL

Not junk. High class stuff.

RAY

And who's going to buy it? You think
nobody's going to notice?

APRIL

Okay smartass, what do you got?

Ray snatches it up and holds it close to his face.

APRIL

Please, don't beg it again. It's
disturbing.

He hands her the wallet. She pushes it away.

RAY

Come on. Try. You must have had a
lot of practice.

Insulted, she stands.

APRIL

Because I live on the street? You
think, because I --

RAY

Everybody begs. It's a skill and
you're good at it. It's a compliment.

APRIL

Really. A compliment? You know what
else I learned
(air quotes)
on the street? How to stand my ground
when I'm getting pushed out.

RAY
I'm not trying to push --

APRIL
Then cut me in.

RAY
It's my head in the noose.

They exchange silent glares.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Ray and April sit at opposite ends of the couch. April faces away from Ray, arms crossed.

Ray slides the wallet to different positions on the table.

APRIL
Why do you keep doing that? What do you think is going to happen?

RAY
Helps me think. And what do you care?

APRIL
I could care. Cut me in.

They both stonewall and try to read each other.

RAY
Thirty percent, and only if I get enough to stay out of jail.

APRIL
Worried about prison? Then sixty.

RAY
I'll chance it. Forty.

APRIL
Forty, with an option to renegotiate after you pay off Brawner.

Ray ponders the final offer.

APRIL
Time's on my side, Ray.

RAY
Okay. Okay. Let's get crackin'.

April smiles and slides to the middle of the couch.

RAY

I was thinking, you might be on the right track about buying and reselling. Not clothes. Something with more bang for the buck.

APRIL

Jewelry. Maybe art?

RAY

Too high profile. Electronics, cars, boats.

APRIL

You said low profile. Appliances. Farm equipment.

RAY

Farm equipment?

LATER

Clock: 1:15.

Both perch on the couch and struggle to keep their eyes open.

APRIL

Maybe we should ask that woman. The one who gave it to you.

RAY

Gina? Ah, no. I don't think she'd be much help.

APRIL

Why not? She could at least tell you what didn't work.

RAY

We're not on the best of terms. I'm not sure she'd give me, shall we say, her best advice.

MUCH LATER

Clock: 3:30.

April lays sideways on the couch, almost asleep.

APRIL

Horses.

RAY

Like, racing horses? That's too complicated. We don't know --

APRIL

No, I was just thinking even they
have stables. They have homes.

(drifts into sleep)

Nice to have a home.

SNORES. Ray leans over to wake her. Pauses. He drags himself
into his bedroom.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - DAY

Morning sunlight bathes the kitchen table bearing two plates
mounded with eggs, bacon, and pancakes.

April arranges toast points just so on the plates.

She knocks on Ray's bedroom door.

APRIL

Hey. Wanna eat?

Ray fumbles the door open. Bleary, he squints at April.

Suddenly, his eyes pop open.

RAY

I got it!

He grabs her by the arm and pulls her toward the door.

APRIL

But I made this beautiful break --

RAY

No time. We gotta do this now.

Ray scoops the wallet off the coffee table.

April breaks free long enough to grab a handful of bacon.

Ray grabs her again and pulls her out the door.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

April slouches in a chair and savors the last of the bacon.

Ray types furiously on his computer and talks at her.

RAY

We can't get the two hundred grand
all at once. We'll have to do deals
for bigger and bigger houses.

APRIL

What about not having enough time?

RAY

It'll be a little tight right now,
but once we get the down payment for
Brawner's hedge fund, we'll have
more leeway.

APRIL

We?

He shrugs it off, but smiles and hits print.

Ray grabs the home loan papers and hands them to April.

She scans it closely.

APRIL

You know I don't have twenty percent.

Ray holds back tears.

RAY

Then I am going to jail.

APRIL

We can get this to work.

Ray sobs...and sobs...and...

April perks up. She grabs a pen and lifts Ray's chin to show
it to him. No longer sobbing, he just looks confused.

APRIL

Loan papers need to be signed.

Too lost in his misery, Ray doesn't get it. He gazes at the
pen. He gazes at April. He gets it!

Ray grabs the pen, signs the loan, and hands her the pen.

RAY

We'll tear it up if it doesn't work.

April signs the loan.

Ray opens the wallet.

Inside, in cash, is the twenty percent down payment.

RAY

We got it!

Ecstatic, they do a happy dance that ends with a hug. They
realize what happened and back away from each other.

MONTAGE - WHIRLWIND HOUSE HUNTING

- Morning. Ray and April walk past a townhouse. She shakes her head, no.
- Noon. They stroll to a duplex. No.
- Twilight. They hurry to a two story craftsman. Yes.

INT. RAY'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Tired but exhilarated, Ray and April burst in and drop onto the couch.

APRIL
This is so awesome!

RAY
Pretty amazing.

APRIL
Maybe I could move in there, you know, for just a little while?

RAY
Not that one. We gotta stick to the plan. Keep flipping until we clear the two hundred grand.

April sags a bit with disappointment.

RAY
But, now that we're business partners, you can stay here.
(she's not impressed)
We'll even have breakfast.

She perks up.

Ray heads to his bedroom.

RAY
Blankets are over there. See you in the morning.

April frowns at the couch.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

The wallet sits on Ray's desk. Behind it, another loan form comes out of the printer.

Ray grabs it and lays it on the desk. He and April sign it.

RAY

Here we go.

He opens the wallet. Bingo! Ray beams at April. She hesitates.

APRIL

Is it going to be enough?

RAY

Not yet. We're going to have to buy
and sell another house, maybe two.

Ray grips the wallet tightly and grins.

RAY

But now we have the leverage.

INT. RAY'S OFFICE - DAY

SUPER: A WEEK LATER

Ray furiously types and leans into his computer screen. April sits on the edge of the desk and tries to make sense of what is on the screen.

RAY

This can't be happening now.

APRIL

It went so good with those first
three. We should have lowered the
price yesterday, at least we'd --

RAY

It's all or nothing, April.

APRIL

Don't bite my head off. So we keep
the house. Talk Brawner into taking
what we have now and --

RAY

The contract doesn't work that way.

APRIL

At least we'll have a house.

RAY

Almost two hundred grand is not two
hundred grand. It's all or nothing.

Checks the clock on his computer screen.

RAY

Even if we lowered it now --

Brawner lumbers in.

BRAWNER
Lowered what now?

Startled, Ray shoots up out of his chair.

RAY
Mister Brawner. I was about to --

April snatches up the wallet and steps between the men.

APRIL
-- have a meeting with our consultant.

She hands Ray the wallet. Confused, he takes it. April nods toward the door.

APRIL
We just need one more piece of
information from her and we can --

RAY
(gets it)
Yes. Yes, one more little detail --

He edges his way towards the door. She beams at Mr. Brawner.

APRIL
-- and we can wrap this thing up.

Ray bolts out the door. Brawner spins, realizes what just happened, and explodes.

BRAWNER
Foley!

Brawner charges after him.

EXT. RAY'S OFFICE BUILDING, SIDEWALK - DAY

With Brawner in pursuit, Ray races down sidewalks...

...through alleys...

...across busy streets, until...

He sees Gina with her meatball pushcart.

EXT. SIDEWALK - DAY

Customers line up at Gina's cart. Ray, terrified, sprints towards her waving the wallet. Racing after him, Mr. Brawner.

RAY

I signed a contract for his hedge fund. But this blasted wallet won't work! He's gonna jail me for fraud! I'll give it back! Just help me.

Brawner grabs Ray by the collar.

GINA

I think it's for making meatballs not money.

RAY

Meatballs? Yes! Make stuff. I'll just take it and --

BRAWNER

That's enough crazy for today.

Brawner grabs the wallet and throws it down. Before any of the customers can figure out what to do, Brawner hustles Ray into his waiting limo.

As the limo drives away, a young skateboarder rolls over the wallet, flips, and falls.

SKATEBOARDER (O.S.)

What the...?

INT. PRISON CELL - DAY

Silence, punctuated by the CLANG of a metal door.

Ray, peaceful, sits on his cot. He wears a clean prison shirt and trousers. A GUARD addresses him through the barred door.

GUARD (O.S.)

Foley, you got a visitor.

INT. PRISON, CONJUGAL VISIT ROOM - DAY

Ray steps in through the steel door and faces the barred window. The guard removes his handcuffs.

GUARD

You're a lucky man, Foley.

Ray looks around. The room looks more motel than prison. Bemused, he turns to see...

April strolls in wearing a prim new skirt and blouse. She looks good, and happy.

The guard locks the door behind her and clumps down the hall.

RAY

April? What are you doing here?

APRIL

We're partners, right?

She looks at him in a way that gets Ray considering possibilities he hadn't before. He smiles, warmly.

RAY

You doing all right?

April steps in closer.

APRIL

You'd be amazed at how your life turns around when you've got a home. I got a job. Clothing sales. And I'm studying to be a counselor.

RAY

But how did you get in here?

APRIL

Both of our names are on the deed. Guess they thought we were together. So, I got us a conjugal visit.

APRIL

How conjugal were you thinking?

APRIL

That's up to you, Mister Money Man.

FADE TO BLACK: