

DAREDEVIL

THE MAN WITHOUT FEAR

Final Draft Treatment

by

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There's a long version and a short version of this story and I'll opt for the short one: In the mid-nineties I was working on a screenplay for producer/screenwriter Chris Columbus: an original I'd pitched, and sold, to his company, 1492 Pictures, called Straight On Till Morning. Around the same time I met—and became instant best friends with—a wonderful director named

Carlo Carlei. Well, it turned out that Carlo was also working with Chris and his partners—helping them to develop Marvel Comics' blind superhero, Daredevil, into a feature film. The movie had been through a number of drafts and the creative team was looking for a new take. Short story even shorter: Carlo wanted me involved and, since I was already working for 1492, Chris and Company were happy to bring me on board. They presented me with two earlier versions of the script (there'd been several more)—one by Columbus, one by Carlei—and set me loose. (I found both of those earlier scripts to be superb and folded many elements into my version.)

I learned, very quickly, that, even with a background in both comics and film, turning a superhero saga into a movie was no easy feat; but after some false starts—and fantastic input from Carlo, Chris and two exceptional members of the 1492 team, Jim Mulay and Michael Barnathan—I completed a detailed treatment that seemed to please all involved. I was delighted, to say the least, but delight turned to ecstasy when I came home one day to find a message from Stan Lee—one of my childhood heroes and a man I still admire beyond words—on my answering machine. He'd read my treatment, he said (in his uniquely Stan way), and absolutely loved it. Stan "The Man" rhapsodizing about my work? It took about a week for my feet to touch ground again.

With that positive response, it seemed certain that my treatment would be approved by the Powers That Be at Fox—the company that held the DD rights—and I'd soon get to work on the screenplay. But...

Hollywood being Hollywood, the Fox executive in charge of the DD project wasn't as thrilled with my treatment as Carlo, Chris, Stan and the others were. The rights, which were coming up for renewal, were allowed to lapse and new producers, writers and directors came along, ultimately bringing Daredevil to the screen in 2003. (I like to think that somewhere, in some alternate universe, the version I worked on made it into production and there's a special edition DVD sitting on my shelf.)

Here, just for the fun of it, is (roughly) the first third of the treatment. And keep in mind that's all it is: a treatment. The screenplay would have gone deeper into the characters and fleshed out the world. If you want to see more let me know: I'll be happy to post the rest in the coming weeks. (One quick note: I injected the names of many comic book creators into the treatment. I suspect they all would have been removed before I ever started the first draft of the script.)

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ACT ONE

FADE IN—

—on the Manhattan neighborhood called Hell's Kitchen, fifteen years ago, where we find a gang of teenagers strutting their stuff down the hot summer streets. The clear leader of the group is sixteen year old MATT MURDOCK...a cocky young Cagney, with energy, anger, and an attitude. He's the focus of the group's attention: their unquestioned leader.

As they strut, Matt's clear second-in-command, GENE ROMITA, asks about Matt's father. "Who's he fighting this week, huh?" Gene says with a laugh. "Michael Jackson?"

Without thinking, Matt backhands Gene across the face, knocking him to the pavement. "Shut up about my old man..."

"Hey," a defensive Gene says, wiping blood off his lip, "it's nothin' you don't say all the time..."

"I can say whatever I want," Matt growls. "You keep your fat mouth shut." Then Matt softens. An astute observer would see a flicker of regret, of shame, in his eyes. "You okay?" he asks, helping his friend up, trying hard not to sound too concerned. "Yeah, yeah," Gene says. "No big deal."

The group stops across the street from an overweight, overheated policeman, OFFICER KELLY...who's standing outside a Korean deli nursing a cold bottle of soda. "There he is," Matt says. "This ain't such a good idea, Matt," Gene says. "Kelly knows you. You cross him one more time and—"

Matt reaches into his back pocket, pulls out a ski mask. "Who says Kelly's gonna see me?" He slips it on. Stan's not convinced. It's too risky.

"That's the whole point," Matt says as he bolts. "You know me...I'm a freakin' daredevil!"

He moves, with the speed and stealth of an urban ninja, across the street, and ever-so gently snatches Kelly's billy club.

By the time the policeman realizes what's happened, Matt's just a blur, racing up the street. The policeman gives chase...as do two other cops in a passing patrol car—

—and we see that Matt, far from being frightened (this kid seems to have been born without fear), is finding a heady exhilaration in the chase. Just as the cops are closing in, Matt...with the effortless grace of a gymnast (he's a natural athlete)...grabs the bottom rung of a fire escape and, in a few astonishing moves, scales the building, takes to the roof, and runs, leaping—again, without an iota of fear—from rooftop to rooftop. He's running at top speed, approaching a between-buildings chasm that would give anyone pause—

—but Matt's eyes are alive with a recklessness, a delight in the challenge and the dare. He leaps—and in this moment he seems truly, fully alive.

Having ditched the cops...and the ski mask...Matt stands on a roof-edge, surveying the city, so full of potential and excitement and danger. This city's mine, his eyes seem to say. I can just reach out and take whatever I want, whenever I want it.

Matt hurls the stick high into the air, then effortlessly snatches it as it falls. Grins as he holds it tight in his hand: a trophy. A symbol of his youthful arrogance, his wildness. Of the devil in his soul. CUT TO:

The Murdock apartment. Several days later. Curtains drawn. No lights. Stacks of filthy dishes in the sink. A squalid mess.

Matt's father, JACK MURDOCK, is on the couch, half-a-dozen beer cans scattered on the floor, talking on the phone. "I know, but...but this wrestling thing...yeah, yeah...but it's humiliating, it's...yeah, Mr. DeFalco, yeah..." We see the defeat in his eyes, as he clutches a flyer advertising a wrestling match between "Mephisto" Murdock (Jack, in a tacky devil's suit) and "Ape-Man" Miller (a hulking brute in a cave-man costume). Matt comes in....walks past his father heading for his room.

Jack slams down the phone. "One damn minute," he says.

Matt turns to see his father...drunken rage in his eyes...holding the nightstick in his hands. He found the nightstick on the roof, he says. He pulls out a duffel bag filled with other stolen goods...dumps them on the floor. "Along with alla this." Matt doesn't say anything. "Why?" Jack growls.

"Because I could," Matt says, defiant. Not an iota of fear in his eyes.

"My own son," the boozy, bloated Jack slurs, "a common thief."

"My own father," Matt spits, the words out before he even realizes it, "a drunken joke."

Jack backhands Matt across the face, sending him sprawling.

Matt gets up without a word and leaves the apartment.

Jack stands there, shame and regret shadowing his face. He staggers into the adjoining bedroom. In the corner is a little table with pictures of the saints, a crucifix on the wall, and—clearly the central image, the holiest of holies—a framed photograph of Matt's mother, Jack's late wife, MAGGIE. A desperate Jack looks at Maggie. "What am I gonna do?" he says. "Maggie...what am I gonna do?"

CUT TO: The roof of the Murdocks' apartment building. Matt sitting on the edge, feet dangling over. There's a vulnerability, a little boy softness, on his face we've never seen before. The second self that hides behind the tough-guy facade.

Jack comes out through the roof door, approaches Matt—and the boy's shields go back up. "Get away from the edge," Jack says, "you're makin' me nervous." "Heights don't scare me," Matt says, arrogantly. Then, after a beat, with absolute sincerity. "I'm sorry."

Jack sits down. "Yeah. Me, too. Not too far from the truth, though, is it...what you said?"

"You're a great guy, Dad. The best. It's just that...lately—" And that "lately" carries the weight of the world.

Jack tells his son how much hope Maggie had for him, what dreams she nurtured about her son's future. How she prayed that one day he'd be a doctor or a lawyer. "But I know you, Matt. I know you like a book. There's something wild inside you. A devil. I know—'cause you got it from me.

"But I'm a loser, Matt," Jack confesses. "A jerk in a Halloween costume tossing guys around a wrestling ring. Don't end up like me," he pleads. "Yeah, you got me inside you...but you've got her, too. Don't lose her, Matt. Don't throw her away. I'm begging you, I'm begging you..."

Something in his father's vulnerability touches Matt: "Don't you lose her, either," he says, starting to cry. Matt clutches his father, holds him close. "Swear to me, Matt," Jack says, "swear on your mother's grave that you won't live by your fists, won't go dancin' with the devil. Swear to me. Swear to her."

Matt looks up at the father he still loves so much. "It's gotta work both ways. You swear. That you'll stop drinking. That you won't give up on yourself."

Jack smiles. "You got my word, Matthew. On your mother's grave."

Matt: "And you've got mine." CLOSE on Matt, tears streaming down his face. "I swear," he whispers. PULL WIDER—as Jack says—indicating the bag of stolen goods—"Now whadda we gonna do with this?" CUT TO:

The rectory of Our Lady of Refuge Catholic Church—as FATHER NOCENTI walks into his office...and finds the sack, emptying it out on his desk. Watches, rings, wallets...and a night-stick? CUT TO:

An abandoned gym, boarded up, heavy with dust and memories. On the wall is a tattered poster from Jack Murdock's glory days as a heavyweight boxer. At the bag: Matt Murdock pounds and pounds and pounds till his fists are raw and bloody. The devil inside him will not be dispatched so easily. CUT TO:

"Mephisto" Murdock in the ring, being tossed around in an obviously faked match with a wrestler dressed like a 1950's Man From Mars—while the crowd howls with laughter. The we CUT TO:

Jack's dressing room, after the bout. Murdock strips off the hated costume, just as TOMMY "THE FIXER" DE FALCO—a local wiseguy who's managing Jack's wrestling career—comes in, accompanied by two of his goons, O'NEIL and MAZZUCHELLI.

DeFalco says he can see how Jack feels, how awful this wrestling thing is, how humiliating. He remembers what a great fighter Jack was when he was at the top of his form. How close he came to reaching the big-time. Fixer informs Jack that he's been talking to Mr. Fisk about him. (Fisk's name is spoken with hushed reverence.) And they've decided that a fighter like "Battlin'" Jack Murdock deserves another chance.

Murdock can't believe it. A second chance is all he ever wanted. If he can make his boy proud of him, regain his self-respect.

"Have I ever," DeFalco says, smiling, "steered you wrong?" CUT TO:

Autumn. The roof of the Murdocks' apartment building. Matt sitting on the ledge, his head in a text-book, studying. Around him we HEAR the sounds of the city, the temptations of the night.

A look of anger and frustration on his face, Matt slams the book closed. Almost hurls it off the roof. But he struggles, forces the demons down.

And returns to his studies.

CUT TO: Our Lady of Refuge Church. Rows of votive candles. Matt on his knees, in prayer. He wants to be everything his Dad wants him to be....everything his mother dreamed for him. But it's so hard. "Dad was right...there's something inside of me...and it won't let go. It won't let go..." He begs God for help in staying clear of temptation, keeping on the right path.

And in the shadows of the church, Father Nocenti stands silently watching. Feeling the torment in this boy's soul. CUT TO:

Matt walking home from the church (which is still visible behind him). He cuts across a vacant lot, finds his way barred by the very gang of kids that worshipped him just a few months earlier. Now led by Gene Romita—who has assumed Matt's cocky Cagney stance and attitude. Beneath his bluster, Gene is clearly hurt and confused by Matt's rejection of their friendship; by his sudden transformation into a straight arrow, more interested in studying than in raising hell.

They begin to push Matt around. "So come on...Daredevil," Gene says. "Let's see if you're still as tough as you used t'be." We see the devil rising in Matt's eyes—

—as Romita and the others beat the living hell out of him, taunting him with every blow: "Daredevil...Daredevil... Daredevil..."

Matt's body tenses; vow or no vow, he's going to take these kids apart. He reaches out for a broken beer bottle in the dirt, wraps his fingers around it, ready to smash Romita across the face. But then Matt sees something—

—across the street: a BLIND MAN steps off the curb, into the traffic. He doesn't see the truck barreling toward him.

Matt drops the bottle, leaps to his feet, pushing through his attackers.

As Romita and the others watch in dumbfounded amazement, Matt races into the street—

—and leaps: knocking the blind man clear.

Matt falls, hard. The truck careens into a lamp post, flips over. Barrels of radioactive material eject from the rear cabin, crash to the street.

The liquid moves, almost with a life of its own, toward the semi-conscious Matt...pools around his eyes.

He SCREAMS.

CUT TO: a hospital, where Matt, eyes bandaged, sleeps. His grief-stricken father sitting by his bed. There's a gentle knock at the door.

Tommy DeFalco enters. He tells Jack how terrible he feels about what's happened to his little boy. On top of that, he knows that Jack has no insurance to cover the hospital stay. But he doesn't want him to worry. "I spoke to Mr. Fisk personally about this. Everything's gonna be taken care of. Your boy's gonna get nothing but the best."

Jack can't believe this. He can't accept this, he says. How could he ever pay them back? How—

The Fixer tells him that the time will come when Jack will do something for them in return. But for now—don't give it a second thought.

CUT TO: Later. Matt bolts awake in bed. Panicked. Clutching his ears. It's as if every sound in creation is pouring into his head. As if every scent that ever existed is flooding his senses. A million hearts beat. A million babies cry. A million gun shots crack the night.

Matt staggers out of bed, whimpering, overwhelmed. He drops to his knees, pounds his head against the floor, trying to make it stop, make it stop. "Make it STOP!"

CUT TO: Several days later. The bandages are off. Matt's eyes are wide and blind. But we see that something has changed. What was overwhelming at first is becoming integrated. The radioactivity has heightened his senses—

—senses he casts out across the room, across the city, like a net...capturing the information he needs.

He settles back into bed, picks up a newspaper left by a visitor, runs his fingertips over the ink, "reading" it—

—just as his father walks in. "It's gotta be hard," Jack says. "So many things you used t'be able t'do."

Matt puts the paper down. Looks up at his father, almost tells him what's happened...and doesn't. (He can't say why.) What he does say is that he's not a quitter or a whiner. "If you came back, Dad, so can I. You'll see. I'll make you proud."

Jack smiles; fights back a tear. "We'll make each other proud, Matt." CUT TO:

Matt, in his ski-mask and blacks, out on the rooftops, dead of night. Exulting in his new senses, racing, leaping, whirling. Tasting the city, his city: every sound, every scent, every heartbeat. Feeling, in his blindness, an exhilaration he hasn't felt in years. A primal wildness. A reckless freedom.

And a devil, whispering in his ears. That's why he couldn't tell his father. This is his. This belongs to him. Here, in the night, in the blackness, he can be reunited with his true self. CUT TO:

A MONTAGE that INTERCUTS between—

Jack, back in the ring, battling his way up the ladder toward the championship. Matt, in the crowd, always cheering him on. Fixer watching every bout intently, intensely. Collecting piles money on Murdock's meteoric rise.

And—

—Matt, applying himself to his studies at home, enthusiastically participating in class...avoiding his old gang while continuing his secret workouts on the rooftops and in the gym...striking up a friendship with a straight-laced, overweight kid named FRANKLIN “FOGGY” NELSON. Finally, we see Matt—eighteen years old, a handsome young man—graduating high school.

We END THE MONTAGE with a shot of a poster, announcing Jack Murdock’s upcoming title bout. Then we DISSOLVE THRU TO:

The Fixer’s office—where DeFalco calmly informs Jack Murdock that he’s going to take a fall on Saturday. It will be lucrative for all of them. All these months of fixing Murdock’s fights, making him look like a returning hero, are going to pay off.

Jack is stunned. He can’t believe it. His entire comeback, engineered by DeFalco. His battle to regain his self-respect, his self-worth, a fraud? He refuses to believe it. And he refuses to take the fall.

DeFalco stays calm. “Jack, Jack—you can’t turn your back on us now...not after all we did for you. And for your boy. It ain’t me I’m thinking of, Jack. But we have to keep Mr. Fisk happy. He’s got a lot riding on this. A huge investment.” DeFalco smiles. “Keep Mr. Fisk happy, Jack. Believe me, you won’t like what’ll happen if you disappoint him.”

CLOSE ON JACK—as his soul collapses inward in shame. His dreams go up in flames. CUT TO:

The fight. Jack in the ring, being mercilessly beaten by his opponent. Matt, with Foggy, in the crowd, can’t understand it. It’s as if his father’s just letting this gorilla destroy him. Jack falls. He’s down. Face swollen. Bloody. A broken man. DeFalco grins. “Good boy,” he says.

But then, through the bloody haze, Jack sees his son. Sees his dreams. All that’s good and decent in his life.

And heroically, miraculously, he gets to his feet. DeFalco steaming. ("What the hell is he doing?") Matt, with Foggy at his side, is triumphant and proud as—

—Jack pounds his opponent to his knees. He wishes it were different, but Jack knows that the ring is the only place on earth he can find a little dignity and a little grace. No matter the price, he will not have that dignity taken away from him. And he will not disappoint his son.

One blow, two, three.

And he's the new heavyweight champion.

Matt and Foggy cheer. DeFalco curses. He looks across the stadium to a pricey box where a hulking, yet paradoxically dapper, figure is sitting: WILSON FISK, THE KINGPIN.—accompanied by his gorgeous and elegant wife, VANESSA. Fisk fixes a cold stare on DeFalco. Nods his head.
CUT TO:

After the fight: As Jack heads to meet Matt and Foggy for a victory dinner, he's waylaid by DeFalco, O'Neil and Mazuchelli. "Mr. Fisk isn't happy, Jack," DeFalco says. "And neither am I." They take him off to a nearby—

—WAREHOUSE—where they beat him to a bloody pulp. Fixer wants Jack to beg for mercy, but he whispers only two words: "Maggie" and "Matt."

IN THE RESTAURANT: Matt's hyper-senses pick up his father's words. To Foggy's surprise, Matt rushes outside. Casts out his sense-net. Zeroes in on the ugly sound of fist against pulped flesh.

He runs.

IN THE WAREHOUSE: Fixer puts a gun to Jack's head. Cocks it.

IN THE STREET: Matt, hearing all this, doubles his speed.

IN THE WAREHOUSE: Jack whispers, "I love you, Matt"—and the Fixer fires.

IN THE STREET: That gunshot is the loudest sound Matt Murdock has ever heard.

Matt arrives at the warehouse just as Fixer and the others drive away. One of the goons notes Matt's presence. "A blind kid," Fixer laughs; "what's to worry about?" Matt—

—rushes inside, cradling his father in his arms—

—as Jack Murdock dies. And Matt Murdock is reborn in grief and rage CUT TO:

The upper East Side. A high-priced house of prostitution on the top floor of a luxury apartment building—where O'Neil and Mazuchelli are indulging in a drunken bacchanal with half a dozen women.

The lights go out. The brownstone is plunged into pitch blackness. In drunken confusion, the goons scramble for their guns. The prostitutes run.

We TRACK WITH a figure, moving through the house. We “see” what he sees: this world of darkness illuminated by an eerie radar sense.

Our POV shifts back to the darkness—where a figure is moving, all around O’Neil and Mazuchelli, like a ghost. Every time they think they have a bead on him, fire, he’s gone.

Finally, at the top of the stairs, O’Neil thinks he has him. Shoots once, twice. A body falls at his feet: It’s Mazuchelli—badly wounded, but alive.

Then the intruder leaps down onto O’Neil’s back, tumbles with him, down the stairs. O’Neil sprints. The wild-man, using a metal cane, swats him through the window onto the fire escape. The moon shines down—

—on an impossible sight. “Mephisto” Murdock—back from the dead. It’s Matt—wearing his father’s old wrestling costume. The symbol of Jack’s greatest humiliation...will be the symbol of Matt’s vengeance. O’Neil looks up, terrified.

Matt pounds him mercilessly, then hops up to the railing of the fire-escape, O’Neil hanging by his tie, dangling and choking. In the distance, we HEAR POLICE SIRENS, coming CLOSER. “You killed Jack Murdock,” Matt hisses. “Confess your sins.” “I didn’t do nothing...” O’Neil insists. Matt loosens his grip. “Confess. Your. Sins.”

And O’Neil confesses. Matt yanks him back up, just as several police cars screech to the curb down below. “And now,” he says, “you’re going to tell that to the police. Or I’ll be back to finish this.” “Anything,” O’Neil whimpers, “anything you say.”

We go in CLOSE on Matt’s face: For all the justifiable anger, for all the broken-hearted seeking of vengeance, there’s a dark pleasure Matt’s taking in the hunt. A naked thrill. He’s enjoying this too much. At last, the devil inside him has found a valid excuse to break free; to become him. “Y’know,” he says, “I could get to like this...” CUT TO:

The Mafia “social club” where the Fixer headquarters himself. Dead of night. A nervous DeFalco playing cards with two of his goons, while half a dozen other armed goons stand guard.

The lights go out. DeFalco panics. And rightfully so.

Matt, in the wrestling costume, is there. We “see” the room through his blind eyes; his radar-sense guiding him more confidentially than any sighted man as he tears through Fixer’s army like an unstoppable demon from Hell.

The goons buy the frightened DeFalco—who’s sure this is Jack Murdock’s ghost, come to punish him for his sins—time to run for his car.

There follows a chase—with Daredevil, vanishing and reappearing, playing with DeFalco, taunting and terrifying him; ultimately forcing the Fixer off the road.

The Fixer scrambles out of his crashed car. Races for a subway station. On a deserted platform, DD advances on the winded mobster—whose hand goes to his chest. He’s having a heart attack. “Please,” the now-pathetic DeFalco whimpers, “please help me...”

Matt grins an awful, soulless grin. “Just shut up,” he says, “and die.”

The Fixer obliges.

We go in CLOSE on the grinning Matt—as his expression shifts to one of revulsion and disgust. As he finally realizes the dark joy he’s taken in this. CUT TO:

The confession booth. Father Nocenti on one side; Matt, on his knees, on the other: "Forgive me, Father," Matt whispers, "for I have sinned." And then we—

CUT TO: A courtroom. Matt, Foggy at his side, watches triumphantly as O'Neil and Mazuchelli are sentenced. As the law has its victory. Perhaps, his face seems to say, he doesn't need the devil. Perhaps the law is bigger, nobler, than one man's passion for vengeance. "We got the puppets," D.A. TOWER—a fortyish district attorney who still clings tenaciously to her idealism—says to Matt; "too bad we can't get our hands on the puppeteer." "What do you mean?" asks Matt. "Not a breeze blows in New York," Tower replies, "without the Kingpin's say-so. But he's made of teflon. No one can touch him. Most people in this town don't even know he exists. But he's the real power, Matt. And that power's growing every day." This is the first Matt has heard of Fisk.

CUT TO: Wilson Fisk and his closest advisor, JOHN MACKIE. O'Neil and Mazuchelli, Mackie says, will be out in three years. Their loyalty will be rewarded. "Good," says Fisk; "and then...as soon as they're back on the streets...I want them dead. Their incompetence should be rewarded, too."

CUT TO: The courtroom. CLOSE on Matt. In this moment, he chooses his life's path. He will embrace the law, use it to protect little guys like his father. And when the law isn't enough—

CUT TO: Matt, standing on the roof-edge of his apartment building. The wrestling costume is crumpled at his feet. In one hand he's holding a yellowed poster for one of "Battling" Jack Murdock's fights. Matt's fingers gently move across the poster, caressing his father's face.

He lets the poster go. It's carried off on the winds, wafting across the city Matt so loves. Then, an expression of determination on his face...it's as if he's embracing his destiny...Matt reaches down, picks up the wrestling costume, holds that devil's mask in his hands. We go in CLOSE on the mask, then—

—CAMERA PANS out to the lights of the city as Matt casts his sense-net into the night. We HEAR the SOUNDS of New York: love and rage, hope and fear. Then we PAN BACK to Matt—

—to see him standing not on the roof of a Hell's Kitchen tenement, but atop the towering Chrysler Building. He's wearing a costume of red and black, the letters "D.D." emblazoned on

his chest. The costume is clearly modelled on his father's wrestling suit...but more dramatic, more majestic. And more foreboding.

Daredevil listens intently to his city. HEARS a SCREAM piercing the night air.

He presses a button on the cane in his hand. It splits in two, both sections connected by a heavy metal wire. The wire shoots across the street to the opposite rooftop, its curved end hooking the ledge. Daredevil holds tight to the bottom half of the cane—

—and leaps, swinging directly toward “camera” as we—

END ACT ONE

BRIDGING ACT ONE AND ACT TWO

We have a SPLIT SCREEN MONTAGE, as the years fly by:

ON ONE SIDE OF THE SCREEN: We see Matt and Foggy in law school. Their graduation. Matt in a courtroom, arguing passionately. We ALSO get a series of news reports about a strange costumed figure who has been irregularly reported in New York. Stopping robberies, drug deals, busting mob operations. A TV reporter asks the question: “Does Daredevil exist?” He appears, we learn, so infrequently and the reports about him are so confusing, that most people aren't sure if he's real...or just New York's equivalent of Bigfoot.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE SCREEN: We witness Wilson Fisk's double life. To the world at large he's a philanthropist, a businessman, whose empire grows larger and more far-reaching every day. But the underworld knows him as the Kingpin of Crime. We see drug operations, hijackings; the Kingpin meeting with the city's mob leaders. The same reports that lionize Wilson Fisk speculate about the identity of the man who allegedly holds all of New York in his hands.

ACT TWO

Winter in New York. A lower Manhattan Chinese restaurant. Eight p.m. and the place is packed. Businessmen. Politicians. Families.

An exhausted, nerdy looking TOURIST with a shock of red hair, glasses, buck teeth and an ill-fitting suit walks in. He's told that there's a long wait, but if he'd care to sit at the bar—? He does. The bartender puts down water, a napkin, chopsticks. "Uh...could I have a knife and fork, please?" the tourist says, timidly, clumsily handling the chopsticks, "I've never been able to eat with these things..." The bartender obliges.

The tourist looks out across the room full of diners. In the back, six men—they don't have the word "Mafia" stamped on their foreheads, but it's pretty obvious—sit drinking and laughing. The clear leader of these men is mob-boss CARMINE DECICCO. Beside him is a six foot slab of MUSCLE with wary eyes, who keeps watching the room.

The tourist looks at the menu, orders some dumplings and chow fun, fiddles with his silverware—

—then leaps up onto the bar—

—simultaneously hurling the knife and fork, with astonishing speed, across the room.

The knife sinks, handle-deep, into Carmine DeCicco's forehead. The fork does the same to his wary-eyed muscle. They fall back, dead. The tourist grins: "Bullseye," he whispers. (My feeling is that we would never LINGER on any of this. The violence would happen very fast, quick cuts.)

Before anyone can react, the tourist flips forward off the bar, pulling two guns from his coat, blasting away at the remaining wiseguys.

No bullet is wasted, every one hits its target straight through the heart. But one of the goons dives under the table, opens fire.

The restaurant is screaming chaos. One woman in particular is out-of-control; desperate to run for the door. Her husband is trying to hold her down, keep her out of the line of fire.

CUT TO: Blind lawyer Matt Murdock—on his way home from work—in the back seat of a taxi, caught in rush-hour traffic. “Can’t you go any faster?” “Yeah, sure,” says the cabbie, “I’ll just sprinkle my pixie-dust on the cab and I’ll fly ya home.” Matt shakes his head in disgust, rifles through some braille legal briefs—

—and then freezes. We HEAR the sounds of the city as he sifts through them; finally arriving at the sound of screaming and gunfire.

CUT TO: The restaurant. The remaining goon gets a clear shot at the tourist. The hysterical woman breaks away from her husband. The tourist casually grabs the woman, using her as a shield. She takes three bullets while her husband looks on, helpless and horrified.

CUT TO: Matt, HEARING that scream in all its amplified terror. He jumps out of the cab, tossing a ten at the cabbie. We PULL WIDE to see that Matt is in the middle of four lanes of gridlocked traffic that seem to go on into forever. CUT TO:

The restaurant. The goon under the table springs to his feet. Rushes forward, screaming, guns blazing.

The tourist drops the wounded woman, grabs a fountain pen off the counter by the cash register, whirls, hurls it through the air—where it enters the goon’s mouth, lodging in his throat.

While the goon gasps and flails, the tourist draws a bead and puts a bullet through the goon's head. Then he's out of there.

CUT TO: Matt—as he dives down, rolls underneath one of the gridlocked cars—and keeps rolling. We catch shadowed glimpses of him as he rolls between cars and then finally—

—an astonishing figure in red and black leaps up, races over the tops of the cars: Daredevil! From the end Daredevil's billy-club, the grappling line shoots out—and DD swings around a lamp-post...up into the air...sailing high above the gridlocked traffic.

CUT TO: Outside the restaurant. The fleeing killer strips off his breakaway business suit (he's dressed all in form-fitting black underneath), his wig and glasses...tosses his guns into the sewer...and vanishes into the crowd (casually lighting a cigar as he runs): this is JUAN DEL TORO, also known as BULLSEYE.

CUT TO: Daredevil, arriving in the restaurant, surveying the carnage via his radar sense. Blind or sighted, this is horrible. He kneels by the wounded woman...her husband crying hysterically at her side...and she dies in Daredevil's arms, leaving a smear of blood across his blood-red uniform.

We go in CLOSE on DD—and his silent rage is terrifying to behold.

Daredevil rushes outside. Finds the discarded suit. Picks up the scent like a bloodhound. "Still here?" he says—scanning the streets, listening for a particular kind of heartbeat to match the scent. Someone with icewater for veins. An island of calm amidst the chaos.

But, where? Where?

There! CUT TO:

BULLSEYE—hunched like a gargoyle atop a tower on the Manhattan Bridge. Suddenly, the cable of DD's billy-club comes whipping around from behind, yanking Bullseye off the tower, down toward one of the suspension cables where DD is standing. As Del Toro falls he does a mid-air flip, double-kicking Daredevil, who slips but—using his billy club cable to hook onto the bridge—manages to save himself, swinging spectacularly around and landing behind Bullseye.

Del Toro looks at Daredevil, amazement and delight on his face. He'd heard about this masked devil, he says (hurling several shuriken, which DD astonishingly dodges). But he never believed that such a man existed.

"Believe it," says DD, charging forward, butting Bullseye in the head, then hitting him unrelentingly. Bullseye gives as good as he gets: they punch and kick each other mercilessly. But where Daredevil is Grimness Personified (it's as if, when he puts on the mask, all vestiges of Matt Murdock vanish. As if all the demons in Matt's soul take control), Bullseye is clearly from another school: "Who designed that get-up?" he asks. "It is so cool! You think I could get one like it? But I want an original, y'know, I don't wanna buy it off the rack—"

DD's not amused. "I don't care about DiCicco and his men," he hisses. "They got what the deserved. But an innocent woman died back there."

We HEAR POLICE SIRENS as a dozen cop cars converge below.

"You think she matters?" Del Toro says. "You think any o' those ants down there matter?"

That arrogance goes right to DD's soul. He loses it, pounding Del Toro right off the cable. Bullseye falls—

—and reaches out, taking Daredevil with him: they tumble toward the river together.

Again, Daredevil's billy-club cable saves the day. He hangs there above the water...Bullseye holding on to his hand. The two of them dangling like puppets. "You gonna pull me up, or what?" a casual Bullseye says.

"Confess your sins," is Daredevil's only reply.

"You're kidding, right?"

"Confess. Your. Sins."

"Okay," says Bullseye. "I've had lustful thoughts about Kathie Lee Gifford. When I was little I flushed turtles down the toilet and I enjoyed it. And I prefer classic Star Trek to the new stuff." Bullseye laughs: No one gets a bigger kick out of him than he does.

Daredevil's not amused. He lets go.

Bullseye tumbles—down into the water. He howls, delightedly, as he falls.

ON Daredevil—a moment of shock...as he realizes what he's done.

Down below, Bullseye surfaces, gasping for breath—

—to find himself surrounded by police boats shining spotlights. A dozen rifles trained on him. "I don't know what you're bothering with me for," he says; "the real nut-case is up there."

The spotlights sweep the upper pylons of the bridge. We glimpse a red and black figure swinging away and then—

CUT TO: A haunted Daredevil swinging across the city. He hunches on a rooftop overlooking Our Lady of Refuge Church. But, after a poignant pause, he moves on. The time for repentance, for forgiveness, is long past. CUT TO:

A hotel called “The Top of New York”: the tallest building in the city. Just across from it, a second building, an extension of the first, is being constructed. Monuments to the man whose ego built them.

On the top floor of the completed hotel is the living quarters and business center of that man: Wilson Fisk, the Kingpin. Head of Fisk Construction, Fisk Import and Export, Fisk Entertainment, and a dozen other high-powered businesses.

Fisk sits in his office...clutching the diamond-tipped walking stick that's always at his side...looking down on the city he controls. He's in the middle of a conversation with the Mayor (and it's clear who holds the power in the relationship)...when Fisk's dear friend and business associate, Greek shipping magnate NIKOS NATCHIOS enters. Nikos has come to New York for a huge charity ball Fisk is throwing, under the banner of the Vanessa Fisk Foundation.

Fisk dumps the Mayor, welcomes Nikos warmly. We see the clear and genuine bond between these two men. “And where is Elektra?” “Exhausted from the flight. She's gone straight to bed.” Nikos notices something haunted in his friend's eyes. “What is it, Wilson?”

Fisk takes out a key, unlocks the door to an adjoining room. He lights one candle and then another and then another and then another—and the room slowly comes into focus.

The walls are covered with photos and paintings of Fisk's late wife, VANESSA. “The Foundation,” Fisk says, “was a dream of hers, Nikos. She had...such a good, such a pure, heart. She wanted to use our wealth...to help people. I've waited too long...to make her dream a reality...” He pulls out a bottle of cognac, pours for both of them, raises a glass. Speaks with

a vulnerability and a passion that is utterly surprising. Choked with emotion: "To the woman who, for too brief a time, showed me that that love and decency...could exist...in this cold and brutal world. 'Grow old along with me,'" he goes on, quoting Browning, "the best is yet to be. The last of life for which the first was made."

Then, in an instant, that vulnerability is gone. His eyes ice over. He exits the room and locks the door behind him.

"As much," Fisk says, "as I would like to sit and talk...I'm afraid I have to leave you. A pressing business meeting..."

Nikos looks at his watch. "At this hour?"

Fisk nods.

"Wilson," Nikos says, "let the birth of the Foundation be a new birth for you. Wilson Fisk has the world. Let the Kingpin rest. Let him die. Isn't that what Vanessa wanted...more than anything?"

Fisk turns away, looks at the lights of the city, glittering like jewels. "I own New York. Nothing happens here—not the smallest drug deal, not the highest corporate decisions—without my consent. I have achieved...everything. And everything is far emptier than I ever imagined."

Nikos: "Then let it go..."

Fisk: "I am not you, Nikos. You walked away from the life...and never looked back."

Nikos, with great emotion: "I had good reasons..."

Fisk nods, agreeing: "But I need challenges I need to climb, fight, the way I have my whole life. Perhaps, if Vanessa was still here..." He shakes his head. "I'm not ready to sit back like Don Corleone and tend my garden."

Nikos, a sad smile: "There's much to be said for a garden..."

Fisk heads for the door. "Rest well, my friend. I'll see you in the morning."

The door closes. An anguished Nikos stands alone and we—

CUT TO: Fisk and his advisor John Mackie heading for a private elevator that takes them to the roof. Mackie is furious about Del Toro's apprehension. Bullseye was told to do the hit on DiCicco (who had been planning a move against Fisk) discreetly. Instead he walks into a crowded restaurant in the middle of Manhattan, kills an innocent bystander, witnesses everywhere—

They can't afford to have any wild cards around. Especially not on the eve of their greatest triumph. Now, more than ever, Fisk's hold on the city must be clear and unchallenged.

"Leave Juan to me," is all Fisk says as they approach his private helicopter. Six other copters are ready to go—armed men in each one. Fisk gives the signal—

—and the copters take off. CUT TO:

Daredevil, swinging across the city, sees a woman...standing on the edge of the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Fearing a suicide attempt, he swings for the Tower. Scales it.

But the extraordinarily beautiful young woman is no jumper. It's Nikos's daughter, ELEKTRA (although we don't know that yet)—who throws a rope, creating a tightrope between the two towers. To DD's amazement, she steps out—and effortlessly, with extraordinary grace, walks the rope—one hundred and ten stories above the world. She whirls, pirouettes, leaps. Almost falls—and recovers with ease and style.

Daredevil can't stay away: He can feel the daring, the wildness, in her soul. He leaps for the rope, lands in front of her. It's love at first sight.

Elektra, thinking this is an attack, defends herself...and her skills as a hand-to-hand combatant are as advanced—hell, more advanced—than any Daredevil has ever seen. They battle briefly there, high above the world, Daredevil trying to convince her that he's not out to hurt her, he just wants to talk. She smiles a disarming smile—

—as then leaps—over DD's head, racing to the South Tower, cutting the rope (with a distinctive Sai), sending Daredevil falling.

Elektra watches, smiling—she's clearly intrigued by this man—as DD's billy club wire whips out, hooks a ledge, and Daredevil saves himself.

Then she's gone.

Daredevil surreptitiously follows her—

—to the “Top of New York,” where he observes her taking a private elevator...up to Wilson Fisk's top-floor living quarters. However intriguing this woman was, she's far more so now that he knows she's connected to Fisk.

CUT TO: A private yacht, miles off the New York coast, where Fisk's helicopter lands. The other helicopters circle the ship, Fisk's soldiers ready to descend at the first sign of trouble.

Mackie is barred from the meeting by armed guards—and Fisk is ushered in to meet BARON VON STRUCKER: a former German crime-lord who heads a very exclusive international arms cartel called HYDRA. Von Strucker brusquely welcomes Fisk—and it's instantly clear that there's bad blood between these two men.

Fisk insists (as he does in all his criminal dealings) that he be called Kingpin. It's as if Wilson Fisk doesn't exist in this world.

"A rose by any other name," Von Strucker says. He reaches for a remote control and brings a bank of video monitors to life. Onscreen, we see:

VORTEX WEAPONS, capable of shooting shockwaves that travel hundreds of miles an hour...with most explosive results.

MICROWAVE WEAPONS—capable of creating both microwave "force-fields"—and literally cooking a man to death.

Blinding LASER RIFLES that can destroy a man with light.

ACOUSTIC GUNS that can use sound to kill.

And, perhaps most amazing of all, a silvery CRAB-LIKE VEHICLE (think of a state-of-the-art tank, with claws instead of wheels, capable of moving across any terrain, scaling mountains, climbing walls)...on which any and all of these weapons can be mounted.

Fisk watches with interest. "I have transferred the money into the account, as you requested," Fisk says. "The remainder will be deposited after the weapons arrive."

"Excellent," says Von Strucker, "Few men can pay Hydra's price."

"Few men," Fisk replies, "are the Kingpin." He rises, turns to leave.

"One more thing," Von Strucker says. "My business depends on extreme secrecy. Our client list is very exclusive. And as such, we require...assurance that our existence will remain unknown."

"You have my word," Fisk says.

"My associates and I require more than that," Von Strucker says. "A man like you, Kingpin, knows that a business transaction of this magnitude...must be sealed...with blood."

Fisk turns.

"One death," Von Strucker says. "Only one...and we will consider our covenant complete."

CLOSE ON Fisk...he knows what's coming,

CLOSE on Von Strucker as he speaks two words: "Nikos Natchios."

Fisk explodes. It was only Nikos's insistence, he says, that spared Von Strucker's life all those years before, when he kidnapped and tortured Elektra. When he murdered Maria Natchios. "Do you really think that I would do this...to my friend? For what?"

The images of the new weapons play out on the monitors behind him.

"For power," Von Strucker says. "I know that you are attempting to unify all of America's crime families under your control. My weapons will help you achieve that end. How much does it mean to you...to truly be the Kingpin? How much are you willing to sacrifice?"

We go in CLOSE on the wild-eyed Fisk, then—

—PULL WIDE...as Fisk whirls, firing a blast from the end of his walking stick. Von Strucker looks up, smiling (but glistening with sweat): there's a hole, three feet wide, in the conference table. And off that we CUT TO:

A lower Manhattan courtroom—where we find Matt Murdock arguing a simple eviction case; but, for Matt, this is a cause of extraordinary passion. He sees himself as the last line of defense between the Little Guy and the forces that would steamroll him out of existence. The landlord, Matt argues, is hungry to renovate and raise rents—and he's willing to break the law to serve his greed. "But the law," Matt says, "is all we have. It's the only thing that stands between us and chaos. Between good people and the devils from hell. Please...don't let the devils win." He goes so far as to mention Wilson Fisk by name, claiming that this "benevolent" businessman is responsible for dragging the city down to the depths.

Matt sits down beside his law partner, Foggy (nervously popping peanut M & Ms), and their clumsy-but-dedicated assistant, KAREN PAGE. "Did you have to bring up Fisk?" Foggy asks. "Yes, I did," Matt replies. Their client, MR. EVERETT, expresses concerns about paying the lawyers' fees. Matt tells him not to worry. "I told you the first time you came to the office...you pay me what you can...when you can."

"Did I mention," a clearly annoyed Foggy says, "that I got an offer to join the legal department at MTV?" "You won't take it," Matt says confidently. "Well, no," Foggy replies. "But I might. One day." He shovels the rest of the candy bar in his mouth. "We've gotta eat, too, y'know." Matt: "Somehow I'm not worried about you starving."

As Matt, Foggy, and Karen leave the courtroom, D.A. Tower arrives. "Here he is," she says, only half-jokingly, "the George Bailey of the legal set." She goes on to tell him that none of the witnesses from inside or outside the restaurant were able to identify Bullseye in a line-up. Matt's outraged. "But we had people who swore they saw him ditch the disguise." Tower: "They've all been struck with a case of mass amnesia." "What about the weapons the police pulled out of the sewer?" "Conveniently misplaced. Maybe," she goes on, half-joking, "we should just leave the bad guys to this Daredevil character...if he really exists." Matt's furious. "Is that what it's come down to? We just throw up our hands and leave justice to the vigilantes?" (As paradoxical as it sounds...he means it!)

"Don't get self-righteous on me, Matthew," Tower says. "I've been asking you for years to join my staff...help me nail Fisk and his maggots...but you insist on staying there in Hell's Kitchen, working out of that storefront..."

They walk into the hallway, where a statue of Blind Justice stands. "I've worked with you, haven't I, Diane?" Matt says. "Every free moment I've got has been dedicated to helping you bring Fisk down. But I can't leave Hell's Kitchen, you know that. That's where I came from, the place I have to give back to. Those people need me."

"So do I," says Tower, who turns and walks away. "See you around, Mr. Bailey."

Matt walks off, Karen staring at him like a love-struck teenager. "Forget it," Foggy says. "The only woman he's in love with—" He points to the statue of Justice. "—is right there." CUT TO:

Fisk and Bullseye in a Fisk's living room. Sharing cigars and glasses of cognac. Fisk is surprisingly warm, almost avuncular, with Del Toro. "Juan," Fisk says "your father and I were friends. We grew up together, clawed our way up from the same wretched streets. When he died, I made a promise to watch out for you. And I have, haven't I?"

"Yes, sir," a surprisingly-respectful Bullseye says.

"Then why aren't you doing the same for me? You were asked to dispose of DeCicco quietly..."

"Mackie complaining again?" Bullseye snaps. "That stupid Mick doesn't know his ass from his—" Fisk fixes Del Toro with a harsh glare that stops him cold.

"Look, look," Bullseye says. "There's nobody who's been more loyal to you than me. You ask me to shoot the Pope, I'll do it. You ask me to put a gun to my own head and I'll do that. But I am who I am. I am what I am. You know that better than anyone."

"I do," Fisk says. Then, after a moment of contemplative silence: "I will forgive and forget. Providing you do your next job quickly, quietly, and efficiently..."

Bullseye grins. "Brighton Beach? The Russians?"

Fisk: "If my idea for the Council is to work...I can't have Mr. Smerdyakov being difficult." Fisk leans back, blows out a ring of smoke. "How would it look?"

Del Toro leans back, blows out an identical smoke-ring. "Yeah...how would it look?" he says.
CUT TO:

"The Top of New York." A charity ball—where New York's elite is on display. Where Wilson Fisk, standing in front of a portrait of his late wife, is presenting a check for five million dollars, given by the Vanessa Fisk Foundation, to a cancer research organization. The media is out in force, light bulbs are popping, video cameras recording every moment. Fisk speaks movingly of his wife's death from cancer, ten years before. How he prays the day will come when no one has to suffer as she did. As he did along with her.

Matt Murdock enters. Scans the room with his radar sense. "Reads" Fisk's physiological responses. Surprised that this isn't an act. He's telling the truth.

Foggy, Karen in tow, rushes over to Matt, glad that he's made it. "Isn't this incredible. I mean," he says, stuffing his face, "have you tasted these hors d'oeuvres? But I still can't understand why we were invited." "You were invited," a booming voice says—

"—because I know talent when I see it." Fisk approaches them, accompanied by Mackie, Nikos, and Elektra: She looks radiant, glorious, like royalty. Kingpin tells Matt that he has no hard feelings about Matt's campaign against him. He knows that there have been vile accusations made. That his character has been assassinated by experts. "But I want you to know, Mr. Murdock, that everything you've heard is a bald-faced lie." Matt "reads" Fisk again: the only lies are coming from Kingpin.

And yet there is something darkly charming, utterly seductive, about the man. He's warm, gracious, astonishingly intelligent, surprisingly funny. This doesn't jibe with Matt's image of the man who killed his father—and he's clearly thrown by it.

When Fisk offers him a job, Matt is speechless. "I've had my eye on you, Matt. I could use a legal mind like yours." He offers to start Matt at \$200,000.00 a year. "And you can bring Mr. Nelson along with you." "I don't think so," Matt says—while Foggy nearly chokes on his food. Fisk reaches out—"Just give it some serious thought"—shakes Matt's hand. Without thinking, Matt reaches back.

And it's like George Bailey shaking Mr. Potter's hand. Matt can feel the slime oozing all over him. He pulls back quickly. Fisk notes the disgust on Matt's face, then excuses himself—seeing bigger fish to fry, other men to manipulate.

"Mr. Fisk," Matt calls out.

Fisk stops, turns.

"Do you remember a boxer named 'Battling' Jack Murdock?"

Fisk looks genuinely mystified. "Should I?" he says, walking away, Mackie and Nikos behind him. (Mackie looks back for a moment, fixing Murdock with an enigmatic stare.)

"A fascinating man, our Mr. Fisk, isn't he?" says a voice from behind Matt. Matt turns to face Elektra—clearly overwhelmed by her grace and beauty. She invites Matt to join her for a walk onto the terrace. (As they go, Karen Page has daggers in her eyes.) CUT TO:

Matt and Elektra together, out on the terrace. There's such heat between them it's a wonder they don't burn up: Elektra seems a little flustered...yet totally enchanted by this man who is so different from the men she's known in her life.

Matt, speaking of his childhood, the deaths of his mother and father, gets Elektra to open up about her past. How, when she was a girl, an enemy of her father's, a man named Von Strucker, kidnapped both Elektra and her adored mother. Maria Natchios was murdered and Elektra... She shudders, unable to catalogue the horrors she endured. (Let the audience fill in the details themselves.) When her father's men, aided by Fisk's organization, finally located and rescued her, she swore that she would never be a victim again. She trained for years (she's training still)...with the best experts money could buy. And she re-made herself, in body and mind. "Kill me," she says, "and I will resurrect myself. Bury me—and I will claw my way up from the grave. And any man I give my heart to," she says, drawing closer, "must be capable of the same."

She speaks, too, about her father. After her mother's death, Nikos and his daughter became closer than ever, clinging to each other, each one preventing the other from drowning in grief. It was Nikos who guided Elektra past her blind rage, helped her move on with her life. "Without my father's strength, without his gentle spirit, I might have become...something terrible."

Since then, Elektra and Nikos have been a universe of two. Inseparable. Wildly protective of each other. "If I ever lost him..." she says. She can't even finish the sentence. The thought is too shattering.

Matt, moved by her tale—and feeling a profoundly kindred spirit—tries to tell her what a devil Fisk is—but Elektra won't, can't, hear it. Fisk has been a second father to her. He helped save her life. "He may not be without sin—and who among us is?—but he is family to me."

Before Matt can pursue this further, Elektra takes him by the hands, leads him out onto the dance floor. All eyes turn toward them—this elegant young woman of power and grace, and this darkly handsome blind man—as they glide across the floor as if they were born to be together. Their bodies intuitively understand each other. And so, we sense, do their hearts.

We INTERCUT Matt and Elektra's sensuous and romantic dance with—

Coney Island—where the ferris wheel spins like a glittering UFO in the night. Where the delighted screams from the roller coaster echo out to the nearby ocean. Where a FAT MAN—shoveling in cotton candy and hot dogs, guzzling down a giant cup of beer—is at a shooting booth, using a pellet-gun to effortlessly hit bullseye after bullseye. Which only makes sense since it is Bullseye...in yet another disguise.

ON THE ROLLER COASTER—ALEXEI SMERDYAKOV, boss of the Brighton Beach Mafia, is having a helluva time...a tacky blonde on either arm...his bodyguards in the car, in front and behind him. He's a huge bear of a man, laughing and shouting like...well, like a kid at a carnival.

The disguised Bullseye downs his beer, tosses the cup, and—still munching his cotton candy—hops a fence and climbs on to the underside of a cab on the moving ferris wheel.

The wheel comes up alongside the roller coaster. Grinning, Bullseye pulls out a gun, affixes a silencer to it. Takes aim.

Then he looks at the gun, looks at the roller coaster...and snaps off the silencer. Sighs. "Ah, shit," he says—

—leaping from the back of the cab...it's a jump no sane man would attempt...onto one of the roller coaster cars. And, as the cars head down the steepest slope of the coaster—

—he stands up on the descending car and opens fire on Smerdyakov and his men, howling at them in mock-Russian as he puts a bullet in each heart.

There's blood everywhere. Dead bodies falling from the roller coaster. Smerdyakov's two blondes are shrieking in terror. So is everybody else. "So much," Bullseye says, "for quick, quiet, and efficient."

He leaps again, scrambles down the side of the tracks.

Pursued by three more of Smerdyakov's men, he races down the midway. As he goes, he passes a booth where people are throwing baseballs at milk bottles. He grabs three baseballs, whirls, throws them...

...and his three pursuers drop. Stone dead.

Throwing off his breakaway "fat man" suit, Bullseye runs for the water. Dives in. Swims out to a waiting boat.

He heads out to sea, sits back, puts his feet up, lights a cigar.

CLOSE on Bullseye. Some sixth sense alerting him to...what?

PULL WIDE—as the boat EXPLODES. INTERCUT ENDS—

—as we return to the charity ball. Wilson Fisk's cell-phone rings. He listens. Nods. He looks grim as death. Turns to John Mackie. "You were worried about Bullseye?" "Yes...?" He strides off, strangely disturbed. "You don't have to worry any more..."

ON the dance floor, Elektra invites Matt to come upstate this weekend to the country retreat her father has outside Rhinebeck. Matt instantly accepts. She smiles. Gives him the sweetest, gentlest kiss.

ON the brooding Fisk watching Elektra and Murdock—with jealous eyes?

CUT TO: The Natchios Mansion, outside of Rhinebeck. A heavy snow falling on Nikos's three hundred acre retreat.

INSIDE, Matt is having dinner with Nikos and Elektra—and it's instantly clear that both father and daughter like this young man immensely. There is, it seems, room for one more in their universe of two.

Nikos speaks of his life with almost shocking candor. He began, he tells Matt, as a peasant in Greece. He swore he would rise above the poverty he was born into. That he would never be used and abused by more powerful people the way his father was. "There was a fire in me, Matt," he says, "and I couldn't keep it from burning. From consuming me." He rose to become the unquestioned leader of the Greek Mafia...but he paid for his rise in dearest blood when one of his enemies kidnapped Elektra and her mother...torturing his daughter, killing his beloved Maria. (And the pain, we see, is still fresh. These are wounds that will never heal.) He could have spent his life seeking vengeance, paying blood for blood, but he chose instead to withdraw from the criminal's life. The fire in his heart died with his wife. He sold off his illegal interests, went legitimate. "And I thank God I did. Those that harmed my family...I leave to His justice. What we have in this world is too precious, and I refuse to spend my life," he goes on, passionately, "held hostage to the past."

Nikos feels a kindred spirit in Matt. He respects Murdock's commitment to the poor. His ability to transcend his handicap. "I see something in you," Nikos says. "The same fire that once drove me. To be a lawyer...to help people as you do...this is a noble thing. But you are hungry for more. Whatever it is," he says, proposing a toast, clinking glasses with Matt and Elektra, "may you find it." He grows serious. "And may it do you no harm."

OUTSIDE—the Mansion is being watched through infrared glasses.

CUT TO: Later. Matt and Elektra out on the ski-slopes, dead of night, under a fat moon: Elektra marveling at Matt's skills. "For a blind man?" he asks. "For any man," she says, impressed by his ability to keep up with her. To surpass her.

They find themselves at a small cabin on her father's property. Inside, by a roaring fire, they share a moment of romance and intimacy. They kiss, and each one is strangely shy. Neither wants to make love yet. It's as if the raw passions each one constantly holds in check would destroy the delicacy, the purity, of this moment.

CUT TO: Armed men in hooded white parkas, white pants and boots, moving silently through the snow toward the Mansion.

CUT TO: Matt and Elektra—as they share their hopes, their dreams of the future. They are two souls vibrating as one. Each one knows that this is it: They belong together, now and forever.

Matt takes out a ring. It belonged, he tells her, to his mother. He knows how sudden this is, but he can't ignore or deny what he's feeling. He wants her to be his. To share every secret of his soul. "Do you have many secrets?" Elektra asks, as he slips the ring on her finger.

They snuggle into each other's arms, drifting off to sleep. "You have no idea..."

CUT TO: Nikos's security men being taken out, silently, one by one. Another security man walks in on this, opens fire. The time for discretion is past. The assassins return the fire. It's war now.

CUT TO: Matt bolting awake, his hyper-senses picking up the sound of gunfire.

CUT TO: Cars boldly screeching up to the Natchios Mansion. Dozens of armed men, all dressed identically, pouring out now. Wild gunfire as the remaining security men try valiantly to protect Nikos.

CUT TO: Nikos in his bedroom. He grabs a hunting rifle from his armoire. Turns to find himself face to face with a hooded assassin. A gun pointed at his head.

And a billy club knocks the gun from the assassin's hand. It's Daredevil...who grabs Nikos, tells him that he'll get him out of there. "But, my daughter—" "—is safe," DD assures him.

CUT TO: Elektra, waking up, looking for Matt. She feels a dread to the bottom of her soul. She reaches for something secreted in her boot. Runs from the cabin.

CUT TO: Daredevil and Nikos—as they race downstairs to the Grand Ballroom. More armed men flood the room. Nikos is ready to go down fighting alongside Daredevil. But Daredevil convinces him to take cover...if only for his daughter's sake. He does.

Daredevil faces the assassins. There's doubt that even he can protect Nikos from all these shooters.

But then a figure comes leaping through the window. Half-naked, clutching a Sai, animal ferocity in her eyes.

Elektra. And we quickly see that her years of training have paid off. There is no stopping this woman. She is swift, she is brutal, she is relentless. What happened all those years ago will not happen again. She will not lose her father the way she lost her mother.

Together Daredevil and Elektra are more than enough to take these men.

But then Daredevil becomes aware of a heartbeat behind them.

Another shooter—with a grenade launcher.

“Down!” DD roars, throwing Elektra to the ground as the room explodes around them.

When the smoke clears, Elektra is unconscious and the staggered DD scans the room to see—

—that Nikos is gone.

CUT TO: a limousine racing across a frozen lake. Wilson Fisk in the back with Nikos. His cane pressed against Nikos’s chest. “You know it’s not my way to get personally involved in these matters,” he tells Nikos; “but for you, my old friend...I had to.

You deserve this much.” “Wilson,” the stunned Nikos says, “how can you do this? You...you’re more than my friend. You’ve been a brother to me.”

CLOSE on Fisk, and we see the depth of emotion on his face. “And that brother,” he says, “will mourn you. Wilson Fisk will weep for you. Ah, but the Kingpin...” His eyes ice over. “The Kingpin will see you in Hell.”

CUT TO: The car reaching Nikos’s private airstrip. Fisk and his goons get out. Fisk removes a hi-tech grenade from his pocket, hits the detonator, rolls it under the car. “May God have mercy on your soul,” he says, “and mine...”

The grenade detonates. The ice beneath the car explodes. The limo sinks.

INSIDE—we see the frightened eyes of Nikos Natchios. CUT TO:

Daredevil racing through the woods, through the snow, in pursuit. And there, up ahead, he “sees” the airstrip. And the helicopter taking off.

And the distinctive scent and heartbeat—of Wilson Fisk.

He throws out his billy-club cable, catches the underside of the copter. Swings up onto the roof.

Fisk’s men open fire, shooting through the roof—

—but Daredevil comes crashing through the front windshield, goes straight for Fisk. He wants this man’s head—and there’s every chance he’s going to have it.

Until Fisk points out that Natchios isn’t on the copter. DD’s senses reach out. He “sees” the rapidly-closing hole in the ice...the swiftly-sinking car...hears Nikos’s fading heartbeat.

DD is torn between hunger for vengeance and the desire to save Nikos. We FLASH BACK to young Matt, on the night of Jack Murdock’s death, racing through the streets, desperate to save his father. CUT BACK to the Now—

—as Daredevil releases Fisk—

—and dives for the ice—Fisk's men firing on him as he falls—hitting the freezing waters. But the ice above him is rapidly sealing. He uses his billy club to keep the gap open, dives for Nikos—

—kicking open the car window and pulling Nikos out. We see now that Nikos has been shot in the chest, blood pooling out.

DD swims upward.

The billy club is snapping. The ice planes about to totally seal.

DD gets Nikos up to safety. Barely gets himself out—

—when the club snaps. The ice seals.

Nikos dies in Daredevil's arms. We CUT TO: Jack Murdock dying in young Matt's arms.

CUT BACK to the Now—as Elektra races up, sees her father lying there, and drops to her knees, letting out a harrowing wail of grief and rage. The one person in all the world who gave her hope and faith...who balanced the demons in her soul...is gone.

"I'm sorry," Daredevil says. "I tried...I tried my best—"

He pulls back his mask...tears in his blind eyes. “—but I couldn’t save him.”

She looks at Matt, at Daredevil: there’s a flash of surprise in her eyes that is quickly swallowed by her all-consuming grief. He reaches out to comfort her. She pulls away, like a frightened animal. Buries her face against her father’s neck, weeping.

Daredevil kneels there on the ice...silent, helpless...as Elektra, moaning like a madwoman, rocks her father like a baby in her arms. And, off that, we—

CUT TO: A cemetery. A few days later. Elektra, Fisk beside her, is watching Nikos’s coffin being lowered into the ground. Matt stands, with Foggy, away from the main group of mourners. Elektra, we learn, hasn’t answered his calls. She’s totally shut him out. Foggy encourages Matt to go and talk to her.

He approaches her, she sees him. Excuses herself from Fisk. Walks over to Matt. “Why are you here?” she says, in a voice like ice.

“Why? Because I love you, Elektra, because—”

“Love? There’s no place in this world for talk of love...”

“Listen to me, I know how you feel, but you can’t—”

“You don’t know how I feel. No one on this Earth knows how I feel. I see your face...and I’m back there, holding his dead body in my arms. Whatever we had...whatever it was...it’s over now, do you understand? As dead as Nikos...”

"But you'll turn to him?" Matt says, indicating Fisk, who stands glowering, watching them.

"He's the only family I have left..."

"He murdered your father."

She looks at him like he's insane.

"I swear to you, Elektra, it was him. I saw him..."

We go in CLOSE on Elektra. For an instant, it seems as if she really hears what Matt's saying. Hears and believes. Then, her eyes ice over. "You...saw him?" She laughs a cruel laugh. With Nikos gone, it's as if every demon she's struggled to contain all these years...is rising in her soul. "Lies," she hisses. "Lies to cover your own incompetence. You let my father die...and look for others to blame."

"I swear to you, I—"

"I know Wilson Fisk! But, you..." She turns out, walking back toward Fisk. "I don't know you at all."

And as Matt "watches" the Kingpin embrace Elektra and lead her toward a waiting limousine, we—

CUT TO: Dead of night. Trucks driving into a warehouse, where John Mackie himself is supervising the opening of the crates: The first shipment of weapons Kingpin purchased from Von Strucker. CUT TO:

The same night. A fog-enshrouded pier. A figure clambers up, out of the water. Half-naked. Burned and scarred. With an insane grin and blazing eyes that could incinerate a man's soul. Bullseye. CUT TO:

Fisk, in his office, talks, via video link, to DON MACCHIO, godfather of the L.A. mob. A silver-haired Mafia elder statesman in the Paul Castellano mode. "Don Macchio," Fisk says, in a conciliatory tone, "one word from you and the few men who oppose the Council will willingly follow me. What can I do to change your mind?" "Nothing," Don Macchio replies coldly. "Because I don't oppose the idea of the Council...I oppose the idea of you leading it. If I may be honest: I respect you...but I do not trust you. And I like you even less. If this Council is to succeed, Mr. Fisk..."

Fisk's conciliatory tone vanishes. "Kingpin, sir, you will address me...as Kingpin..."

Macchio: "If this Council is to succeed, Mr. Fisk, we must all meet as equals. Not as slaves to one man's delusions of grandeur. Good night."

And the connection goes dead.

An angry Fisk slams his cane on his desk, swivels in his chair, faces a bank of video monitors behind him. On several monitors we see the warehouse...Mackie and his men unloading the weapons. Fisk presses a button. We go in CLOSE on one of the weapons: a microwave cannon.

CLOSE ON Fisk—smiling a cold smile. CUT TO:

Elektra, in shock, in bed in her suite in the “Top of New York.” The phone rings and rings. The look on her face tells us that it’s Matt—but she refuses to answer.

“The blind man?” Fisk asks, entering.

“The past,” Elektra replies.

Fisk sits on the edge of the bed, apparently as numb with grief as she is. “I swear to you,” he says, lying like a master, “that the men who did this will pay for their sins. In blood.”

“What does vengeance matter?” the numb Elektra says. “I have lost my mother. I have lost my father. I have nothing.”

Fisk opens up to Elektra, talks passionately about Vanessa. How devastated he was when she died, eaten away by that hideous disease. How he had to fight to pull himself up out of the most soul-shattering grief he ever experienced. “I never knew a hell like that one. I will never know such a hell again.

“You survived,” he goes on to say, “your own hell when you were just a girl”—referring to her kidnapping—“and it didn’t destroy you. Don’t let this destroy you. You have your pride, your rage. You have your father’s empire.” He takes her hand, speaks softly, passionately. “And you have me. Join me, Elektra.”

She looks up at him, surprised. Confused.

“You have grown into such an extraordinary woman. So beautiful. So strong. So much like my Vanessa. Oh, Elektra,” he whispers, passionately. “There is so much I can offer you.”

For a moment, something bright, something frightening, rises in Elektra's eyes; but it's soon replaced by a calm determination. "And there is much," she replies, taking Fisk's hand, kissing it, "I can offer you..."

CUT TO: Late afternoon. Nelson and Murdock's storefront law office. D.A. Tower was right: this is the legal equivalent of George Bailey's Building and Loan. A place where every person with a problem, no matter how poor, no matter how small, can find a helping hand.

And today, it seems, they all decided to show up at the same time.

While Karen Page chases a chicken across the office, a grateful CLIENT is thanking Foggy for getting him out of jail. He swears he's going to get a good job. But till then, will they accept the chicken in payment?

Foggy nods, a smile frozen on his face. The man leaves. The smile drops. Foggy buries his head in his hands. "Where is Matt, anyway?" he asks. Karen says Matt called and told her he had an important meeting. "With who?" Foggy asks as the chicken jumps onto his head. CUT TO:

A run-down diner on the Lower East Side: Matt meeting with a nervous John Mackie. Since this business with the Council started, Mackie says, Fisk is out of control. Loyalty, he realizes, no longer counts. Friendship doesn't count. "If he turned on Natchios, he'll turn on anyone."

"You know about Natchios?" Matt asks.

Mackie nods. "You may find this one hard to believe, Murdock... but I've got a heart. I've got a conscience."

"A conscience," Matt asks, "or a fine instinct for self-preservation?"

"Natchios was a good man. He didn't deserve to die." He shakes his head, disgusted. "Believe what you want," Mackie says sadly. "Believe whatever the hell you want. Just get me out." Mackie wants Matt to be his go-between with the F.B.I., to negotiate his way in to the Witness Protection Program.

"Make me believe in your conscience," Matt says. "Tell me what you know." "No," says Mackie. "You talk to the Feds. Make the deal. Then I'll talk. In the meantime, I'm going to need protection. Fisk may not know about this yet...but he will." "You want protection?" Murdock says, smiling, "I'll get you the best." CUT TO:

A raging rain-storm. Daredevil—tailing John Mackie's limo through the city. He's like a blood-red guardian angel, swinging through the night. When Mackie reaches his brownstone, just off Central Park, DD—after scanning the place with his radar sense to make sure there are no bombs planted, no assassins waiting—fixes himself on the roof like a gargoye. But Daredevil doesn't move. Until—

—his radar-sense picks up a figure, moving across the roof-tops toward the brownstone. A familiar heartbeat. A familiar scent. Elektra: masked. In full battle regalia, a Sai clutched in each hand.

She descends toward the brownstone.

Daredevil bars her way. "What in God's name do you think you're doing?" he says, astonished. "Bullseye's dead...so you're taking his place?" Her reply is two swift kicks that take Daredevil down. And she leaps, crashing through the brownstone skylight, DD in pursuit.

Mackie wakes up to find Elektra standing over his bed. "You have betrayed your King," she says, "and for that, there must be payment." Elektra brings the Sai down in one swift and deadly move. When the Sai is less than an inch away from Mackie's heart—

—a billy club swats it away. Elektra turns just as Daredevil leaps forward, grabs her—

—and a desperate, frightened Mackie runs—out of the house, into the street. Suddenly, a long black limo screeches up, blocking his way. Mackie looks in, scared to the bottom of his soul and we CUT BACK TO:

Daredevil and Elektra as they battle—tumbling over the brownstone balcony, down to the street below. Daredevil wants to know why she's doing this; serving a devil like Fisk, after all he's done. Her response is a swift slash of the Sai that slices through Daredevil's costume, cuts his chest. A spinning double-kick to the head sends Daredevil down, flat on his back.

"How do you know," Elektra says with a sneer, "that the devil doesn't serve me?" She leans in close, kisses Daredevil...a kiss of such naked passion, such unexpected lasciviousness, that Daredevil is taken aback. And then Elektra pulls away, races off. By the time Daredevil scrambles to his feet, she's gone—

—into the heart of the storm. CUT TO:

Beverly Hills. An thirties mansion. Armed guards patrolling the grounds. Don Macchio sits by the pool with his WIFE, a white-haired, attractive woman of seventy.

ON the gate of the mansion. As it's crushed.

By a silver crab-like vehicle, that crawls relentlessly, like a juggernaut, down the driveway, toward the mansion. Cannons emerge from the vehicle's hood.

One of Macchio's men sees it coming. "What the hell is that?"

The word is given. Shooters come out of the woodwork. Guns are aimed.

The Silver Crab stops. We HEAR a HIGH-FREQUENCY WHINE as the microwave cannon comes alive.

Don Macchio looks down at the pool. The water—

—is beginning to boil.

All across the grounds, the shooters fall, screaming...as their insides turn to steaming paste.

CLOSE on Don Macchio—

—as his eyes go wide with terror...and his glasses—

—melt. CUT TO:

Morning. Matt Murdock's apartment. His Daredevil costume crumpled on the floor. Matt bolts up out of a heavy slumber. "Elektra...?" he cries.

On the pillow beside him is Matt's mother's ring. She was there, he realizes. In the apartment. While he slept.

He takes the ring in his hand, runs his fingers over it. This is final notice—if he needs it—that Elektra has chosen her path...and it no longer includes him.

Still holding the ring in his hand, Matt slams his fist into the wall. The phone rings. Matt picks it up. It's John Mackie. "Some protection you got me." Matt: "Where are you?" Mackie: "Forget that. The deal's off." "Where's your conscience?" an angry Matt demands. But Mackie hangs up. CUT TO:

John Mackie, racking the receiver, a nervous smile on his face. "Okay?" he says. ANGLE WIDENS to reveal Wilson Fisk standing beside him. "Very good, John. Very good." He reaches out, massaging Mackie's shoulders; telling him not to worry. We all make mistakes now and then. They've been associates for too long. They'll work this out.

"You've got to understand why I went to him, Wilson," the edgy Mackie says. "When you had Natchios killed, I panicked—"

While continuing to massage Mackie, Fisk explains that killing Natchios tore his soul to pieces. "I value friendship and loyalty above everything," he says. "And you...my dear John...are the only true friend I have left."

Mackie relaxes. Fisk—

—snaps his neck. CUT TO:

Murdock's apartment. Matt picks up his mother's ring, walks across the bedroom to a small, adjoining room; opens the door. Inside: a shrine to the past. Jesus and the Saints, from Matt's parent's apartment...Maggie's picture still at the center of the firmament. He puts the ring down in front of Maggie's picture. In his mind, he HEARS JACK MURDOCK'S VOICE, asking him to swear he'll give up living by his fists. To swear on his mother's grave.

CUT TO: Fisk standing, surrounded by dozens of burning candles, in Vanessa's shrine. Gazing up at his wife's portrait with a loss and longing, love...and shame.

CUT TO: Matt...as he looks from Maggie's photo to the devil's mask, lying on the floor. He turns away from his mother's eyes.

CUT TO: Fisk, turning away from his wife's eyes.

CUT TO: Matt, closing the closet door behind him.

CUT TO: Fisk, closing the door on Vanessa.

CUT TO: A private airstrip on Long Island. Another of Kingpin's weapons shipments coming in from Von Strucker.

Two goons struggle with a heavy crate, load it into the back of a truck.

The crate comes barreling out at them, pinning them to the ground.

Daredevil stands in the back of the truck. He's got three days worth of beard on his face. And a snarl on his lips. His costume looks like it's in desperate need of dry-cleaning. "Tell Fisk," he hisses, and he sounds almost inhuman, "that it ends here. It ends now.

"Tell him," he goes on, as the goons open fire, as he deflects bullets with his billy-club and pounds away at them with a rage that is awful to behold, "no drug deal is too small, no arms shipment too big. Tell him that I will not sleep any more. I will not eat any more. I will live for one thing and one thing alone. To. Destroy. Him."

In seconds, ten men are unconscious on the ground, DD standing over them like a mad dog. We HEAR applause. Daredevil turns—

—to face Bullseye, standing atop the truck. But this is a new Bullseye, masked, wearing an outrageous costume with a bullseye on the chest. “Whaddaya think?” he says, spinning like a runway model. “I designed it myself.” He jumps off the truck, approaches Daredevil. “But you were my inspiration, old buddy.” He laughs. “You the man!”

“Del Toro...you’re alive,” is all the astonished Daredevil can say, backing up, cautious, ready for Bullseye to strike.

“Not alive,” Bullseye says. “Born again.” He looks at the unconscious goons. “And, as I’ve always suspected, we belong to the same church.” He circles Daredevil warily, launching into a perfect imitation of Wilson Fisk. “And don’t call me Del Toro. The name...is Bullseye.” And he laughs like a maniac.

As the two enemies continue to warily circle each other, Daredevil whips out his billy-club. “Come on,” says Bullseye, “you don’t need that. I don’t work for fat-boy any more. I’m like you...I operate on my own...”

“You’re not like me,” Daredevil says.

“Come on, get real. We both like to dress for success. We both like to work outside the law. And we’re both doing it for the same reasons...”

“And what reasons are those?”

“For the thrill of it! For the dare! We see a line, we have to cross it! We see an edge...we have to go over it!”

"I serve justice," Daredevil says...but even he doesn't sound convinced.

"You serve yourself," Bullseye says. "I saw your face when you let me drop off that bridge...no hard feelings, by the way, I would've done the same thing...and I knew we were one and the same. But, y'know, there's one thing you still need to develop..."

"What's that?"

"A sense..." Bullseye slaps a button on his belt, strike a Lord Byron pose. "...of theater!"

DD's hyper-senses pick up a radio signal, the tripping of switches.

He runs, jumps—

—just as every truck and every plane on the runway EXPLODES. Fireball after fireball after fireball lighting the night.

ON Daredevil, on the ground, wreckage falling around him. In the distance he HEARS laughter, but when he gets up—

—Bullseye is gone. CUT TO:

The offices of Nelson and Murdock, the next day: It's a sea of chaos and Foggy's drowning in it. Adding to his frustration is the pre-packaged diet lunch on his desk. "How's anyone supposed to eat something like this?" He reaches into his desk drawer for a Snickers, but puts it back—

—when a bedraggled Matt...unshaven and haggard...walks in. Karen takes one look at him at her maternal instincts start to pop. "Matt what is it? What's wrong?"

Foggy doesn't feel quite so benevolent: "So glad," he says, oozing sarcasm, "that you decided to grace us with your presence."

"I'm only here for one reason."

Something in Matt's voice stops Foggy cold. "What is it?"

"If that MTV job's still open, Foggy, I'd advise you to take it."

"What're you..?"

"I quit," Matt announces.

Foggy and Karen are stunned. "You're joking," Foggy says.

Matt shakes his head.

"You can't," the agitated Karen says, "just walk away from all this. Remember what you told D.A. Tower? This is where you came from. These people need you."

"These people need something that I can't give any more."

"Is this all because of that woman?" Karen says. "Matt, I know you, I—"

And Matt roars: "You don't know me, Karen! You've never been able to see behind these glasses!" He takes off his dark glasses, throws them to the ground, crushes them. The eyes that stare at Karen's are a demon's: blind and raging. "Well, look, Karen. Take a good long look at who I really am!" She turns away. He grabs her, forces her to face him. "Look at me!"

And then Matt realizes what he's done. And he's sickened. Horrified. "I...I'm," he mutters. But he can't even apologize.

All he can do is leave.

CUT TO: "The Top of New York." Fisk and Elektra, in formal attire, in the ballroom where the charity gala was held. But tonight the room is empty...except for the two of them. A small band plays 1940's love songs...and they glide across the floor, Fisk surprisingly graceful, Elektra unsurprisingly luminous. They seem happy, at peace. In love?

"Things," he says, "are going very well with the Council since I made an example of Don Macchio. Everyone's falling in line. But we still have one small problem."

"And what is that?" Elektra asks.

"Our friend Daredevil. Something seems to have...set him off."

"Oh, really?"

"Really. He's like a man possessed. Totally out of control. I thought perhaps there would be other ways to...tame him, but I see now that we have only one avenue open to us."

Elektra looks at Fisk over her wine glass.

Fisk smiles. "Kill him, Elektra. Bring all those glorious skills of yours to bear on our masked Galahad."

She pauses, silent. Then nods. "Is tonight soon enough?" she says.

"Tonight," Fisk says, a three hundred pound Fred Astaire whirling a samurai Ginger Rogers, "would be delightful." CUT TO:

Matt Murdock's apartment. A tired Matt waking up out of a nightmare. He sits there a moment, sweating and shaken, then walks toward the back room, toward his mother's shrine—

—then turns away, heading for the kitchen instead. He opens the fridge, grabs a cold drink. But as he puts the juice carton to his lips—

—a Sai touches his throat. "How long have you been here?" he asks, unsurprised. "I've been watching you sleep," Elektra says. "I've been watching the demons eat away at you." "What do

you want?" Matt asks. "I want you to leave New York. I want you to forget that I ever existed. That there ever was a man named Wilson Fisk." "And, if I don't?"

She moves the blade slowly across his throat. A minor cut...but enough to draw blood. And then—

Elektra's gone.

But she knows Matt. Despite her warning...he's not going anywhere.

Except after her.

CUT TO: A wild storm. Torrential rains. Heavy winds. Thunder and lightning. Daredevil in pursuit...across the entire city. Over buildings. Through sewers. She tries everything she can to lose him, to avoid the confrontation that must come...but the devil keeps coming. He can't, he won't, let her get away.

Finally, Daredevil and Elektra stand facing each other high atop the Manhattan Bridge. The very place where he had his first confrontation with Bullseye.

He's let Matt Murdock die, he tells her; all he has now is the devil's mask. The demons his father warned him against...have stolen his soul. But if he can have her...maybe there's hope for him. With Elektra at his side, he could forget Fisk, forget everything he ever was, everything he ever will be. Their love is all that matters.

Elektra approaches him. He has been her hope, she says; she saw in him a man of dreams and ideals, fighting against his demons, triumphing over them. She loves him in a way she's never loved before. Every cell in her body burns for him. Every atom sings his name. Perhaps, with Matt's help, she can crawl away from her demons...embrace the light.

They kiss.

A look of astonishment crosses Daredevil's face.

ANGLE SHIFTS—to reveal a Sai, plunged into D.D.'s back.

Elektra steps back, a look of cold sorrow on her face. "I'm beyond hope of saving," she says.

A helicopter swoops down out of the night...lights flooding the bridge tower. Inside is Wilson Fisk, watching with terrible delight—

—as DD staggers to the edge of the bridge—

—and falls, into the roiling waters below.

Fisk lowers a rope-ladder from the copter. Elektra takes one last look at the river below, then grabs hold. The helicopter flies away and we—

END ACT TWO

ACT THREE

A body sinks down through the waters of the East River. A trail of blood swirling behind it.

Daredevil. Dead?

Not quite.

As he sinks, we HEAR the voice of his mother, speaking proudly of her dreams for Matt. Of her faith in him...and in God.

We HEAR the voice of his father, warning him about the devils in his soul. Begging him to drive them away, to embrace the light.

And we hear Elektra, speaking the words she said the night she and Matt first met: "Kill me—and I will resurrect myself. Bury me—and I will claw my way up from the grave. And any man I give my heart to—must be capable of the same."

The figure moves. Slowly at first, weakly; then faster. More powerfully. With every iota of strength he has—and some that seems to have come from some divine source—he swims steadily up, up, up.

CUT TO: the surface. As Daredevil breaks the waves, sucks in breath. CUT TO:

Hell's Kitchen. Deserted. A drenched figure staggers through the streets. He weaves, he falls, he stands up.

Every step, we see, is pain. Every inch he walks is agony. And finally—
—he collapses on the steps of a building.

We HEAR a door open. See a man's feet ENTER THE SHOT.

Daredevil looks up. "For..." he gasps. "Forgive me, Father..." And he collapses into unconsciousness.

PULL WIDE—as Father Nocenti pulls Daredevil up, and carries him into Our Lady of Refuge Church. CUT TO:

Several days later. Kennedy Airport, in the dead of night—as the various members of the Kingpin's Council arrive in New York via private jets. The time for Wilson Fisk's coronation is at hand. The crime-lords and their entourages are whisked into helicopters which carry them over the city to—

CUT TO: "The Top of New York." Elektra's bedroom. Wilson Fisk, in an elegant suit, sits with Elektra, in a gorgeous, sexy evening gown, sharing a glass of cognac, awaiting the arrival of the Council members. This is the moment he's waited his entire life for. He is about to be crowned King. And he wants Elektra to be his Queen. He looks out at New York—and it has never looked more glittering, more beautiful, more magical. "My city, Elektra. Yourcity...if you want it." He takes her hand. "Grow old along with me," he whispers, quoting Browning. "The best is yet to be."

Elektra, taken by surprise, continuing the quote: "The last of life for which the first was made..."? Fisk, with passion: "I love you...as I have not loved for far too many years. Be my bride, Elektra Natchios. Marry me."

"I've always imagined," she says, "that when I'd be proposed to...the man would be on his knees." Fisk kneels down. Pulls out a diamond ring that glitters as brightly as New York. "Please," Fisk says. "Without you by my side...my life would have no meaning. Please," he says again, "be my wife." Elektra's silence is deep. For a moment, Fisk looks wounded, almost afraid. Then she smiles. Whispers one word: "Yes..."

She kneels beside him. They kiss...and their passion is terrible. We go in VERY CLOSE on them and then—

—Fisk's eyes widen in surprise. PULL WIDE to see that Elektra has a Sai at Fisk's throat. "I think," Elektra says, "that I've changed my mind." CUT TO:

A Con Ed power station, elsewhere in Manhattan. We HEAR a KLANKING SOUND in the distance, coming CLOSER.

It's one of Kingpin's Silver Crabs. And inside of it? Bullseye. He looks at his watch. Smiles. Sits back and lights up a cigar. CUT TO:

CUT TO: Our Lady of Refuge. A small room where Matt Murdock, chest bandaged, is lying on a cot. The crucified Jesus hanging on the wall above him. Father Nocenti walks in, carrying a tray of food, happy to see that Matt's awake. "How long have I...?" "Two days," Nocenti says. He sits on the edge of the bed. "You certainly haven't lost your flair for getting into trouble," he says with a smile, "have you, Matthew?" Matt "looks" across the room to the Daredevil costume, hanging on a hangar. "I took the liberty of washing it. You were considerably water-logged when you came in." Matt's hands go to his face.

"If you can't trust a priest, Matthew," Nocenti says, "who can you trust?"

Matt relaxes. "Maybe...maybe that's why I ended up here," he reflects. "It's been a long time since I trusted anyone..." "You were very lucky," Nocenti says. "I had a doctor friend look at you...don't worry, he's the soul of discretion...and he said that whoever stabbed you missed every vital organ." The Father looks mystified. "Almost as if it was intentional, he said."

There's a look of amazement on Matt's face.

The Father smiles. "There must be angels watching over you, my boy."

"I've got to go..." Matt stands up, almost falls. His legs wobbly from being in bed for two days. His muscles aching. The priest catches him, helps him back to the bed. "Not yet you don't..."

Matt sits back, brooding, lost in thoughts no man could be privy to. Then he "looks" up at the crucified Jesus hanging on the wall. "Father?" he says, quietly.

"Yes?"

"I'd like to make confession." CUT TO:

Fisk and Elektra...as Elektra yanks Fisk up, pushes him to the window. "Say goodbye, Wilson," she sneers, "to your city." "Elektra," Fisk sputters, "Elektra what are you doing? Elektra...I love you! I—"

"Good," she says. "That's just what I wanted." She cracks him across the face. His nose bleeds all over his fine white shirt. He falls back, almost weeping: a pathetic sight. He can't believe this, he says, like a dazed and heartbroken child. This isn't possible.

She knew, she says, from the beginning that he was responsible for her father's death. (Which means she did believe Matt when he told her; it's just that, in her moment of grief, she made a choice to go after Fisk her own way...and knew that it could only be done if she broke off connection with Matt.) But what she wanted was not just revenge. She wanted to humiliate him. She wanted him to be naked and vulnerable before her. "I wanted your heart open..." She lifts up the Sai. "...before I plunged in the knife."

Fisk clasps his hands, begging her to spare his life. "Please, oh, please," he pleads, like Cagney at the end of "Angels With Dirty Faces," "I don't want to die, I don't want to die." Desperate, he grabs hold of her legs—

—and from the diamond engagement ring, which he still holds in his hand, a tiny spike emerges, jabs through her calf.

Elektra flinches. Instantly begins to weave on her feet. Her vision blurs. "Wh...what...?" is all she can say.

Fisk moves quickly, jumps to his feet, grabs for his cane. Batters her savagely, once, twice, across the face.

She crashes through the window, hanging over the edge. "I've been waiting for you to make your move," he sneers. "And I thought it might be tonight."

"You..." Elektra says. "...knew...?"

"The best way," Fisk says, "to keep tabs on your enemies...is to keep them close. And I kept you very close, my darling Elektra, didn't I?"

He lifts her up by the throat, dangles her over the edge. She's so drugged that she can't resist: just hangs there in his grasp. "Did you honestly think," he says, with disgust, "that I could love you?" And then his disgust turns to blind rage. "There is only one woman I have ever loved, my dear...and the only thing the two of you have in common..."

CUT TO: Matt, on his knees. "Forgive me Father, for I have sinned..."

CUT TO: Kingpin and Elektra. He begins to loosen his grip on her. She starts to slip from his fingers.

"...is that you're dead."

CUT TO: Matt. "I have lied...I have betrayed my family and my self...I have given in to temptation..."

CUT TO: Kingpin and Elektra. Fisk yanks her inside, throws her to the floor. "But not just yet. There is, after all, a celebration this evening. And I want you to be part of the festivities." CUT TO:

A huge conference room on the roof of the hotel...encased in a bubble of two-way glass that reveals the stars above and the city below...where twenty mob leaders (and their bodyguards) from all across America gather to pay homage to the Kingpin, to cement the new Council that he will lead.

Kingpin's men are on hand—and they're brandishing their new weapons: sonic guns, microwave rifles, laser pistols. It's the most lavish private party in the history of this lavish city. Food from every top restaurant in Manhattan...music provided by a world-famous Sinatra-like crooner. The most beautiful—and most willing—women money can buy.

Wilson Fisk enters the room—a bound Elektra, guarded by three armed men—behind him. There's a round of applause...and Fisk is eating it up.

CUT TO: Bullseye. Checking the time. It seems to be right. He presses a button on the Crab's controls. We HEAR a motor HUMMING into life. The crab skitters toward the Con Ed power station.

CUT TO: "The Top"...as the leader of the Chicago mob, MARTY LEIBER, warmly welcomes Fisk, leads him up to a raised platform where a throne-like chair awaits. There are vows of loyalty, shared dreams of the glorious future Fisk will shape for the Council. The riches and power that await them all under this "new regime for a new age."

And then Fisk sits upon his "throne," waiting to be "crowned" Supreme Leader of the Council. Leiber takes out a ring, designed by Fisk himself, engraved with the cryptic symbols of the Council.

CUT TO: Bullseye...as he launches a missile from the Crab. It slams into the power station and the building EXPLODES in a huge fireball. "Bullseye!" he roars—
—spinning the Crab around and skittering away.

CUT TO: "The Top." Leiber's about to slip the ring onto Fisk's finger when he looks up, amazed. Out there.

The lights of the city blink out. One by one at first, then faster, until...

CLOSE ON FISK, outraged. Everything goes black. CUT TO:

Our Lady of Refuge. Matt's confession ends in darkness as the lights all blink out. Father Nocenti goes to the window. "It's the whole city!" he says.

He lights a candle. Turns to Matt.

But he's gone. And so is the Daredevil suit. CUT TO:

"The Top of New York." There's chaos in the conference room. The assembled crime-lords, fearing a massive hit, all turn their weapons on the Kingpin.

Fisk stays calm. "Gentlemen, gentlemen, nothing to worry about. We have our own generator here. The power will be back on in just a few minutes..."

The guns don't move. Fisk smiles. "Trust me..." CUT TO:

The streets. Fear and confusion. Traffic backed up. HORNS honking. We HEAR GLASS SHATTERING in the distance.

Then through the darkness, we HEAR the SOUND of KLANKING METAL. It's Bullseye in the Crab. He hits another control—

—and the mouth of a small cannon emerges. A vortex cannon, that shoots a shock wave capable of blowing out walls. Shattering glass. And killing.

Bullseye races down Fifth Avenue, firing blast after blast, blowing out storefronts.

It's not long before the looting begins.

Bullseye's loving every minute of this. The Kingpin loves order...and he's giving him a double-dose of sheer chaos.

CUT TO: A few blocks away: Looters are rampaging through a store called Electronic City.

People rushing out carrying televisions, stereos, VCRs. One of them stops, points skyward.

And there, on a rooftop across the way, is Daredevil. Looking proud, powerful. As heroic as we've ever seen him. He doesn't say a word, yet his presence seems to affect the mob.

They put down the things they've stolen. Slowly disperse and walk away. Not out of fear, but out of respect. As if just the sight of this man has touched something nobler, something higher, in their souls.

Daredevil smiles, whips his billy-club cable through the darkness. The world around him may be chaos, but he is the soul of calm. Because he is the only one who can navigate this darkness. We SEE the city through his radar-sense. HEAR the SOUNDS of panic and confusion.

Daredevil moves toward "The Top of New York." But he will not give in to the hunger for blind vengeance. He will not ignore the cries for help along the way:

A nine year old GIRL, racing up a fire-escape, slips and falls toward the streets below. Daredevil is there to save her.

A WOMAN finds herself in the path of a panicked driver. Daredevil swoops down, carries her to safety.

A COUPLE is robbed by a sneering GUNMAN. DD takes the thug out with two lightning-fast moves, returns the purse and wallets, then leaves the mugger hanging from a lamp-post.

And then he HEARS the explosions in the distance. And he's off again.

CUT TO: Bullseye in the Crab...as the police give chase. He blows their cars three blocks with one thunderous BOOM of the vortex cannon.

Up ahead is a police barricade. Bullseye blasts the barricade to pieces; sends the police tumbling, like leaves in a hurricane, then jumps the wreckage, the Crab taking half a city block in one spectacular move. But before it lands—

—a figure in red and black leaps down onto its back. Daredevil! He smashes through the bubble with his billy-club, leaps inside.

The two of them grapple in the cab of the Silver Crab, as it continues to move unrelentingly toward the hotel, crushing whatever's in its way. Bullseye wants to know what they're fighting for.

They're traveling the same path, heading for the same place, sharing the same goal. "Let's do it together, huh? Let's kill the Kingpin!"

"Same goal, maybe," DD says. "But our paths couldn't be more different."

The Crab crashes through the window of a department store. Skittering through the cosmetics department, the lingerie department, the toy department—

—and then CRASHING out the far wall. Flipping over onto its back, its claws moving impotently back and forth. Daredevil and Bullseye are both thrown out. Bullseye unconscious.

Police cars come SCREECHING up. They race toward the crab, guns drawn, cuffing Bullseye. Then everyone stops dead when something extraordinary happens: "The Top of New York" comes alive in the darkness. The lights coming on, floor by floor by floor. CUT TO:

Fisk and his Council. "So you see, gentlemen, nothing to get excited about." Leiber smiles, slips the ring on Fisk's finger. There's wild applause. Kingpin pops a bottle of champagne. "Now let's get on with our celebration!"

Then he stops. "Oh, but wait. There's something I forgot." He grabs Elektra by the hair, throws her to the floor. "As someone once told me, a business transaction of this magnitude...must be sealed in blood."

He takes a microwave rifle from one of his goons, aims it at Elektra. "You were such a sweet little girl," he says. "But you didn't turn out well at all." He squeezes the trigger—
—and a figure descends from the night sky, crashing through the skylight overhead:
Daredevil. He grins. "I wouldn't have missed this for the world, Fisk."

Every gun in the room is aimed at Daredevil. Every trigger ready to be pulled.

"No!" Fisk bellows—and everyone in the place freezes. Fisk steps down from the podium, walks toward Daredevil. "It is time this was settled...between the two of us." The collected criminals form a circle around Fisk and Daredevil. No one will interfere, Fisk says. To prove that he is truly worthy of being Kingpin of the Council, he will kill the devil with his bare hands.

Daredevil sneers at Fisk. "I've been waiting years for this—" "As have I," snarls Fisk.

And the fight begins. We INTERCUT this incredible brawl with scenes of Jack Murdock in his title bout. With images of the Fixer blasting Jack's brains out. All the rage and grief and anguish of Matt Murdock's life comes roaring up and out. Finally, finally—he will be able to lay his demons to rest.

If he survives.

Fisk, we see, is perhaps the most unstoppable physical force on two feet. Three hundred pounds of muscle and hate, all brought to bear on a man whose body has already been pushed beyond the limit. He pounds and pounds and pounds until Daredevil is down. And out. Still as death. We INTERCUT with Jack Murdock, down and out at his title bout.

The Council—members and their goons cheer their new leader. Fisk drinks in their adulation. Elektra beginning to stir from her drugged haze, struggles, vainly, against her bonds.

CUT TO: The dazed Bullseye...the police leading him away. He staggers, drops to his knees...surreptitiously pressing a control on his belt.

And the legs on the Silver Crab invert, digging into the street. The cabin flips over, righting itself. "Here, boy," says Bullseye. "That's a good crab."

The Crab advances on the startled cops, crushing their patrol car. The police scatter and we—

CUT TO: "The Top." As Daredevil—MOVES. Crawling, with agonizing slowness, inch by inch across the floor toward Fisk...who looks down at him with amused disbelief.

But his disbelief turns to awe as Daredevil pulls himself to his feet—just as Jack Murdock did all those years before—launches himself at Fisk—

—and pounds the big man to his knees. Beats him. Breaks him. Fisk collapses.

Daredevil stands over his unconscious opponent...bloody, weaving on his feet. Ready for the others to pounce. Fisk's goons begin to move on him, but—after a nod from Leiber—the rest of the Council's soldiers move to block Fisk's men. "Perhaps," Leiber says, "this...Kingpin isn't the man we thought he was." He snaps his fingers, the assembled mobsters head for the door. But they stop when—

—Fisk scrambles across the floor, snatches up a weapon. A laser rifle that he fires, point blank, in Daredevil's face. When the coruscating light fades...

Daredevil is standing there, unfazed. He doesn't miss a beat: "It's over, Fisk."

Fisk can't believe this. "You...you should be blind! You should be..." He stops as a thunderous truth reverberates in his mind. "Blind," he whispers, understanding at last: that incisive intellect putting the puzzle pieces together. "Murdock!" he roars. Despite his apparent defeat, the Kingpin can't help but laugh. "Jack Murdock. His blind boy. And the terrible accident. Something... radioactive, wasn't it?" He smiles. "All these years running around in that ridiculous suit, risking your life, and for what? To hurt the bad man who hurt your Daddy?" He surreptitiously glances over at one of his goons. "A trifle juvenile," he says, his arrogance returning, "don't you think?"

"I'm not here for vengeance," Daredevil says. "Not any more. I'm here for justice. I'm here in the name of all the people...like my father...the people you've used. The people you've crushed..."

Fisk nods. Daredevil, sensing the shift in Fisk's heartbeat, the movement behind him, whirls—
—as the goon opens fire...with an acoustic rifle. Daredevil drops to his knees, screaming. The sound-waves aren't just hurting him, they're throwing his hyper-senses into overload. EVERY SOUND IN THE CITY assaults him, unfiltered. Wave after wave of sound, pushing against him, battering him.

"You mean the way I'm crushing you now?" Fisk sneers. He walks over to his goon, takes the rifle. Ups the levels.

FROM DAREDEVIL'S POV—we SEE the SOUND WAVES creating havoc with his radar sense. The RADAR-WAVES vibrating, overloading, and finally...vanishing. All that remains is darkness. For the first time in his life—

—Matt Murdock is truly blind. Helpless and panicked.

Fisk approaches Daredevil. "This would be painful to an average man," Fisk says, "but to a blind man with hyper-developed senses? Oh, the agony must be..." He kicks the helpless Daredevil through the glass wall. "...exquisite."

Daredevil tumbles from roof; but even sightless, Matt Murdock refuses to give up. He concentrates, whips out his billy-club...trusting memory and reflex: The cable shoots out—

—and miraculously catches a girder on top of the half-constructed building across the way.

But, unable to depend on his hyper-senses for guidance, he reels wildly, slamming into the side of the building. Hard. He nearly loses his grip...

...dangling, by one hand, a hundred stories above the city.

Fisk, loving every moment of this, keeps the acoustic rifle trained on Daredevil. "What is it the media calls you," he yells down, "the man without fear"? I trust you and fear are on far more

intimate terms now...?"

Inch by terrifying inch, Daredevil crawls up the cable. Manages...after nearly slipping to his doom...to climb up onto the roof opposite the "Top." He hurls his billy-club cable across the way, trying to catch the roof of Fisk's hotel. Fails. Tries again.

Every eye in the conference room is on him: The crime-lords mesmerized by Daredevil's incredible ordeal...and his incredible bravery.

Elektra, her mind clearing now, reaches beneath her skirt. Removes a Sai strapped to her thigh.

"Why, I believe he wants to come back," an amused Fisk says. He nods to one of his men who opens fire with a second acoustic rifle.

Assaulted by another SOUND-WAVE, Daredevil slips, falls, grabs the edge. Pulls himself back up.

Focusing every iota of his being, he throws the cable again. Catches the roof of the "Top."

And he steps out onto the cable. Like a tightrope walker in the greatest high-wire act in history, the blind man inches his way between the buildings.

The annoyed Fisk turns to one of his men. "Shoot him down," he orders. "With a real gun."

Elektra pulls out her Sai, slices her bonds, takes out the two goons guarding her. Before the shooter can fire...

...Elektra hurls the Sai. It pierces the shooter's neck from behind. He falls to the floor, dead, his automatic weapon spewing bullets everywhere. Among the men who are hit is the goon with the second acoustic rifle.

"Stop her!" the angry Fisk roars—as his men swarm toward Elektra...much to their regret. She cannot, she will not, be stopped.

On the high wire, Daredevil keeps coming. Closer and closer.

Fisk ups the setting on the acoustic rifle. It reaches overload levels.

Daredevil, halfway across, freezes: He knows he can't survive this aural onslaught. He only has one chance: He has to make a leap.

A leap of faith.

He jumps—

—from the wire, straight toward Fisk, plowing into the Kingpin, knocking him to the ground. The acoustic rifle falls. DD kicks it away. Fisk scrambles after it. Grabs it.

And it explodes in his face. The blast hurls Kingpin across the room.

Bloody, battered...but alive...Kingpin struggles to his feet; stands there, looking confused. Takes one awkward step forward, then stops. “You wanted justice?” he says to Daredevil. “Well, you know what they say, Counselor...”

CLOSE ON Fisk. And now we can see that his eyes are wide...and blind. “Justice is blind.”

Some of the Council-chiefs’ goons reach for their weapons, train them on Daredevil and Elektra (who’s now at his side). Leiber tells them no. As far as he’s concerned, this is over. The Council is a dead issue.

And so is the Kingpin.

But it’s not. The entire building begins to shake as if it’s being pounded by the hand of God.

One look outside provides the answer: It’s Bullseye in the Silver Crab...climbing the building.

The Crab crashes into the room. Bullseye: “Hope I didn’t miss anything important.” The Crab moves forward, toward Fisk. He’s lifted up in those metal claws. DD moves toward the Crab...but the vortex cannons keep everyone back.

“I can’t believe you betrayed me, Willie,” Bullseye says. “I can’t believe that you’d turn on your own son...”

“Son?” Elektra says, stunned.

“Willie here,” Bullseye says, “loves to say how fond he was of Vincent Del Toro. But it was really Vincent’s wife he was fond of. So fond that they had themselves a little love-child.”

“Liar!” Kingpin roars.

“Mamma told me herself, Willie...just before she died.” He hits a series of switches on the Crab’s control panel. “I really tried to please you, Dad. To be everything you were.” A digital read-out starts to count backwards from ten. “Sorry I was such a dis-appointment. But then,” he goes on, “not half the disappointment you were to your pure and perfect Vanessa.”

“Liar!” the Kingpin repeats.

“She didn’t die of cancer, did she, Willie? She couldn’t bear living with an animal like you...”

“It’s a lie! It’s a lie! It’s a lie!”

“...so she killed herself.”

“A LIEEEEE!!!”

...nine...eight...seven...

Daredevil “reads” Fisk’s physiological responses: “It’s the truth,” he says.

Fisk’s horrified expression confirms it.

...six...five...four...

The Council members run like stampeding cattle for the exits.

“Elektra!” DD shouts, whipping out his billy-club cable. She takes his hand—

—and the two of them leap from “The Top of New York”—

...One...

—just as the entire top floor—

—EXPLODES.

We see flames engulfing Vanessa Fisk’s shrine and then we—

CUT TO: Later. The top of the World Trade Center. Daredevil and Elektra standing together...above the city. She turns to him. Takes his face in her hands. They begin to kiss.

“No,” she says, pulling back. “No?” the mystified DD replies. Elektra: “Take off your mask.”

They kiss...CAMERA PULLS UP AND BACK...as, all around them—

—the lights of the city blink back on. CUT TO:

Matt's apartment. He wakes up, reaches out for Elektra. She's gone. And she's left a note, which he "reads" with his fingertips. You've chosen your path, she writes. And I have chosen mine. But you are my soul, Matt, and I will always carry you with me. Elektra. On instinct, Matt rushes to the shrine in the adjoining room, where he discovers that his mother's ring...is gone: Elektra took it with her. And, despite his pain at losing his beloved again, Matt can't help but smile. CUT TO:

Nelson and Murdock. Foggy sits at his desk, surprised and delighted to find a framed photo of Matt and Foggy in their high school days. Karen's desk is covered in flowers. "It doesn't quite make up for the way I acted..." says a voice.

Matt, shaved and scrubbed, walks in, looking contrite. "...but I hope it's a start." "Just get to work. There's a pile of eviction cases on your desk." Karen comes over to Matt's desk. "This came for you while you were away," Karen says. He opens the package. It's from John Mackie. Mailed before he died. A computer disc.

Foggy and Karen gather around the computer with Matt. "It's all the Kingpin's private records," Foggy says. "Names. Dates. Lists of every politician on his payroll. All his illegal activities. I hope the jails are big enough...because they're gonna get mighty crowded..." "I'll get this," Karen says, "to D.A. Tower right away."

"I guess," Matt says, profoundly moved, "that Mackie had a conscience after all..."

CUT TO: Matt Murdock in court. "Welcome back, Counselor," says the Judge. "Good to be back," he says walking into the corridor, past the statue of blind Justice. CUT TO:

Night. A familiar looking yacht sails under a starry night sky. In his state room, the infamous arms dealer, Baron Von Strucker, sits in bed, reading. Then he closes his book. Shuts out the light. In the darkness, there's a voice: "Baron Von Strucker? I don't know if you remember me. My name is Elektra Natchios."

CUT OUTSIDE—as Von Strucker SCREAMS. CUT TO:

Coney Island. Night. At a shooting booth, an OLD MAN...with a bulbous nose and rotten teeth, one arm in a sling...fires a pellet-rifle at a target. Hits it dead center, again and again. "Bullseye," he says. And, of course, it is Bullseye, in disguise: he's cheated death again.

The WOMAN behind the counter hands Bullseye a stuffed bear. He takes it. And, leaning on his father's diamond-headed cane, Juan Del Toro...Juan Fisk...limps off—
—across the midway. CUT TO:

Hell's Kitchen. Our Lady of Refuge Church. Father Nocenti stands on the steps, breathing in the night air. Suddenly, a shadow crosses him from above. He looks up, smiles.

PULL WIDER to see Daredevil, swinging over the city: he's healed. He's whole.

He's a true hero. And, off that, we—

END