

## ARTHUR

Michael. Dear Michael. Of course it's you, who else could they send? Who else could be trusted? I know it's a long way and you're ready to go to work. All I'm saying is wait, just wait, just-just-just... please hear me out because this is not an episode, relapse, f-k-up, it's- I'm begging you, Michael. I'm begging you. Try and make believe this is not just madness because this is not just madness.

Two weeks ago, I came out of the building, okay. I'm running across Sixth Avenue, there's a car waiting, I got exactly 38 minutes to get to the airport and I'm dictating. There's this, this panicked associate sprinting along beside me, scribbling in a notepad, and suddenly she starts screaming, and I realize we're standing in the middle of the street, the light's changed, there's this wall of traffic, serious traffic speeding towards us, and I- I-I freeze, I can't move. And I'm suddenly consumed with the overwhelming sensation that I'm covered with some sort of film. It's in my hair, my face. It's like a glaze like a- a coating, and, at first I thought, oh my God. I know what this is, this is some sort of amniotic – embryonic – fluid. I'm drenched in afterbirth, I've-I've breached the chrysalis, I've been reborn. But then the traffic, the stampede, the cars, the trucks, the horns, the screaming and I'm thinkin' no-no-no-no, reset, this is not rebirth. This is some kind of giddy illusion of renewal that happens in the final moment before death. And then I realize no-no-no, this is completely wrong because I look back at the building and I had the most stunning moment of clarity.

I- I-I- I realized Michael, that I had emerged not through the doors of Kenner, Bach, and Ledeen, not through the portals of our vast and powerful law firm, but from the asshole of an organism whose sole function is to excrete the- the-the-the poison, the ammo, the defoliant necessary for other, larger, more powerful organisms to destroy the miracle of humanity. And that I had been coated in this patina of s-t for the best part of my life. The stench of it and the stain of it would in all likelihood take the rest of my life to undo. And you know what I did? I took a deep cleansing breath and I set that notion aside. I tabled it. I said to myself as clear as this may be, as potent a feeling as this is, as true a thing as I believe that I have witnessed today, it must wait. It must stand the test of time. And Michael, the time is now.