

Steve took the elevator to his cubicle on the 24th floor. He would spend the next four hours shuffling papers, pretending to draft 12b6 motions, and staring out the window.

Steve envied the guests at the hotel next door. It was a Tuesday, and he saw they were sipping Mai Tais and mojitos, half-dressed in bikinis and Speedos. Of course, they could not see him through the windows, plopped on his desk with his ill-fitting shirt, which was too big but his preference because he had gained so much weight since becoming an attorney. He hated his life.

He looked out the window. Some middle-aged gray-haired man lay beside his much younger brunette-haired bikini-clad mistress. He had stared out this window at the hotel roof bar for over four years. He witnessed all types: skinny, bald, sexy, and glamorous. They were all different, but they shared one common feature - they all lived better lives than Steve.

His parents had fooled him. His uncle, the other lawyer in the family, had fooled him. Society had fooled him. Being a lawyer was not glamorous or sexy. It was late-night grilled cheese sandwiches, missed gym workouts, missed deadlines, anxiety about Geof firing him, a Court sanctioning him, or, worse yet, the State Bar coming after him. No, all the morons who told him to do the lawyer thing had told him wrong.

The Don Draper-like figure leaned over and kissed his mistress. He raised his head, looked directly at Steve, and winked. Steve could not believe it; there was no way Draper could have seen him. But Draper had looked right at Steve.

That moment broke Steve. A switch inside of him went off.

He began to formulate his escape from the law.

First, he would visit the online costume store and buy a life-like mask. Then, he would stroll in and demand all the bills in the drawer. Then he would walk out. He would hit eight banks in one day: four in the morning and four in the afternoon. He would not take a gun; his words would be enough.

He calculated that in a sprawling city like Los Angeles, the police would be confused if he completed his escape in one day.

He went to his empty apartment and lay on his couch. He closed his eyes, breathed, and thought about his plan. A week later, he did it.

Steve had hesitated but then remembered the view from the 24th floor cubicle. He used an electric bike to get around that city completely undetected that day. He had been sweet but stern in his command to quietly and quickly hand over the money. For a moment, he thought someone might resist-but they didn't. Just confused faces, too stunned to react.

At 5:00 on the day, he had over \$435,000 in liquid cash. His liberation was now complete. Now, he could quit law and figure out his next move. He would spend the first stolen dollar at the hotel pool, look up at his old window and wink at the sucker sitting in his old spot.