

SCRIPTING FROM NONFICTION: REENACTMENTS

From *The Luckiest Woman on Earth* by Nathaniel Rich:

Of all forms of lottery games, scratch-offs are the most vulnerable to fraud. The most common example is the so-called Retailer Scam. One made headlines just a few months ago when a customer tried to redeem a \$10,000 scratchoff ticket at a Baltimore liquor store. The clerk, Melissa Stone, told the customer that the ticket was not a winner. The next day, Stone tried to collect the money herself at the Lottery headquarters, only to be arrested for grand theft. The customer, it turns out, had been an undercover cop.

Since we don't want to have to clear Melissa Stone's name or buy her life rights, we can genericize this in the following way:

<u>Video</u>	<u>Audio</u>
TITLE CARD: THE INSIDE JOB [Reenactment]	NARRATOR: The most common kind of fraud is called the Retailer Scam.
INT. BODEGA – DAY (SURVEILLANCE CAM) A CLERK (Male, 30s, T-shirt and jeans) is at the register, which is next to a Lottery machine. A CUSTOMER (Male, 30s, dressed like one of the track-suited guys from <i>Donnie Brasco</i>) comes up to the register. CUSTOMER [ALL SPOKEN WORDS ARE SUBTITLED]: Dude, I think I won! Customer holds out a lottery ticket. Clerk takes it and looks at it closely, then punches up a number on the Lottery machine and looks at that closely. CLERK: Nah, sorry, man, it's close but not a winner. CUSTOMER: Seriously? [BLEEP]. I thought it was. The Customer walks away and the Clerk pockets the ticket.	AMBIENCE (Static) [SOUND OF SPOKEN WORDS ARE ECHO-Y AND REMOVED DUE TO SINGLE MICROPHONE] CUSTOMER: Dude, I think I won! CLERK: Nah, sorry, man, it's close but not a winner. CUSTOMER: Seriously? [BLEEP]. NARRATOR: Watch what the Clerk does here: He keeps the ticket.
EXT. LOTTERY HQ – DAY (REENACTMENT) A MAN DRESSED LIKE THE CLERK walks into Lottery headquarters .	AMBIENCE NARRATOR: The next day the Clerk went to Lottery Headquarters to claim the prize.
DISSOLVE TO: GRFX: MUG SHOT OF CLERK	NARRATOR: Unfortunately for the Clerk, the Customer was an undercover cop...
EXT. LOTTERY HQ – DAY (REENACTMENT) A MAN DRESSED LIKE THE CLERK is walked out of the building in handcuffs by two POLICE OFFICERS.	SFX: <i>Law & Order</i> sting NARRATOR (continued): ...and the Clerk was arrested for theft.