

**"THE RICH GUY"**  
**by Chris Charney**

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**OVERVIEW:**

"THE RICH GUY" is a comedic feature film about a cocooned-naive-millionaire forced to grow and mature. . .after he's blown a massive litigated fortune. Shunned by his family for living a Peter Pan existence, Josh Hobbes turns to his high school-pal Chachi Smalls for guidance. The duo embark on adventures fueled by free food, sexy cars, and danger--it's during these hilarious exploits that Josh begins to realize that life's true riches have nothing to do with money.

Josh's comic journey follows a humanistic model of pop psychology. As he wanders the streets broke and vulnerable he begins to ascend the pyramid Abraham Maslow outlined in his "Hierarchy of Needs." The primary stage of the model (base of the pyramid) is comprised of "Physiological" needs- food, oxygen, water, sex, and money. Money is what preserves Josh in his adolescent state. He eventually moves up Maslow's pyramid model as his material world is ripped away. He reaches the "Safety & Belonging" stage when his buddy Chachi takes him under his wing, then he moves to "Love" when he meets Linda Thomson, "Esteem" as he takes pride in his new job, and finally "Self-Actualization" as he plays the tambourine in the story's climax.

Tonally, the film should be a collision of different genres- comedy, action, social satire (rich greedy imbecile in a litigation-happy world), and romance. The world Josh inhabits is hyperreal, mischievous, and at times quite dangerous. It should look, sound, and feel like a summer blockbuster comedy.

**CHARACTER SET UP:**

We meet our protagonist Josh Hobbes as a uniformed seventeen year old, dedicating his lucky penny to the school's time capsule. There's a mischievous look in his eyes, as though life as he knows it is about to change. Trailing him is his tag-along pal Chachi Smalls who refuses to part with his time capsule items -a portable television and commodore 64 computer. Chachi and Josh

decide to cut out of the ceremonies in lieu of fast food.

Then it happens. . .the life changing event that gives Josh a lifetime of wealth and means to shelter himself from reality. A renegade tow truck flips Josh's car onto its roof in the drive-thru of a fast-food restaurant. His life is literally turned upside down. A cup of hot coffee slides from its holder, its contents splashes across Josh's arm, severely burning him.

FLASH FORWARD 18 YEARS. Josh is the picture of wealth. Big house, lots of toys, and swimming pool in the backyard. It's apparent, a lot of people paid for Josh's tragedy- from the Burger chain that sold him the coffee to the farmer who grew the beans. But money is at the root of Josh's stagnant life. He has become a naive yet innocent thirty-something year-old man. Metaphorically, he has sealed himself up in a posh human time capsule, ignorant to the toll money would take on his personal life. In montage we watch as Josh floats across a sparkling aquatic fantasy completely alone. . .until one day. . .

Josh is torn away from his hermetic fantasy-land, the sound of a FOR SALE SIGN as its pounded into his front lawn echoes down the neighbourhood. The material things he has spent the past eighteen years hiding behind are literally stripped away from him. For the first time Josh is poor, completely alone and has no idea how to get his life back.

**STORY:**

The plot starts with a BANG! Actually, it's a crash in the drive-thru of a fast-food restaurant, and it gets the ball rolling for JOSH HOBBS' litigated fortune. A take-out cup of coffee slides from the drink holder and splashes across Josh's arm. His screams are answered only by his pal CHACHI's leap into action. A crowd gathers around, but they just point and gawk at the horrific spectacle. Arriving late to the scene is LINDA THOMSON, the teenager who flirted with Josh while serving him coffee and her punk-rock coworker PAULA LINDEN. We flash forward from this intense, rather grisly scene to:

18 years later. . .Josh Hobbes is laying face up on the living room floor of his multi-million dollar mansion, a

glazed look on his face. The doorbell rings and he greets a plethora of pool mooches at his front door. Breaking into the house moments later is Paula Linden, now a hard-boiled but beautiful magazine journalist, with a penchant for McGyver reruns. Paula's latest assignment is a where-are-they-now piece on North America's most famous and ridiculous lawsuits. Josh, who reluctantly agrees to an interview, is at the top of her list of subjects.

Quick cut to: Days later, Josh scrambles to keep a REPO CREW from scooping up his material world. Persian rugs, ultra-modern chairs, and his favorite ROBOT DOG all march out the front door of his home. He is literally being picked apart by strangers due to the careless neglect for his life. After chasing a REAL ESTATE AGENT off his front lawn, Josh hops into his repossessed Delorean with his stolen (reclaimed) robot dog and embarks on his journey into the real world.

Uptown, Paula Linden dines her old chum LINDA THOMSON (now Dr. Thomson). Linda exudes beauty and success, but lately has been plagued by finances and a potential fiance. The two women trade stories about love and happiness over late-night pasta and loud accordion music. . .we find out that Linda doesn't want her boyfriend to propose because of "bad vibes." She also confides in Paula about recent problems at the experimental test lab where she works. Paula tells Linda about a story she's covering for the magazine. . . the same guy who was the victim of an accident they witnessed long ago as drive-thru restaurant employees.

When Paula Linden revisits Josh to finish the interview she discovers. . .a for sale sign on his front lawn. Her subject has disappeared into thin air! His little half-page story now has the potential of becoming the magazine's feature. . .

Meanwhile, Josh has been pounding the pavement, searching for his way back into the lap of luxury. The first place he turns is to his former lawyers. THE WALLACE'S are an off-the-wall father son law team who believe life's problems can be solved by taking a good soak in the company hot tub. The duo made a fortune and career off of Josh's accident, but there's a rocky history with their client. In this meeting, the Wallace's attempt to

convince Josh to hurt himself again for the sake of more litigation. Josh, the naive 17 year-old, doesn't catch onto the hint and storms out of the office.

Frustrated, without a home, and fresh out of ideas, Josh seeks help from the MOTHER and FATHER he once abandoned. His visit couldn't come at a more inappropriate time and he ends up crashing a birthday party of a niece he has never met. Once inside Josh pleads with his knife-wielding/birthday cake cutting mother to give him some money, an early inheritance, anything just to get back on his feet. But his mother simply throws Josh onto the street and out of their lives.

Cut to: A phone booth on a derelict city street. Josh feverishly dials the ghosts of his past. . .but no one is willing to help. It's at this moment that a passing car crushes his robot dog- his only emotional support in his lonely world. It's the final straw and it causes him to appeal to a higher power. Then it happens. . .a Devine intervention. Josh spots a poster taped to a phone booth. . .the face of his high school pal Chachi Smalls. Chachi, the poster tells us, fronts a sensational all-white Reggae band. But how will he ever find him? A gust of wind flips the pages of a phone book laying on the ground in front of Josh, coming to a stop on Chachi's name, phone number, and address.

But Josh's visit to his long lost friend seems too little too late. He is bewildered as he stumbles on the corpse of his pal laying face up on his apartment's living room floor. In a moment of weakness, Josh decides to loot his deceased chum's pockets. . .and he manages to snag Chachi's wallet! He pockets the money and tosses the evidence out an open window. Josh returns to the corpse to search it for more valuables when the unimaginable happens. Chachi comes alive! He had been in deep meditation the whole time.

Unaware of Josh's thieving, Chachi welcomes him into his home. He decides to impart life's true riches to Josh, and the duo become the close friends they once were. The ultimate gesture of friendship Chachi makes toward Josh is asking him to play the tambourine in his Reggae band competition, a competition Josh believes could be financially lucrative to him as well.

Meanwhile, at the K.B.C.C. experimental test lab. . .Dr. Linda Thomson labours over her microscope and pages of research when. . .her two-faced Movie Producer boyfriend appears. RICHARD SATAN definitely gives off "bad vibes" with his pushy over-the-top affection. This, Linda believes, is the appropriate moment to let him down gently. . . but he is called back to set and she's unable to break the news.

Back at Chachi's cluttered band rehearsal space, Josh takes part in his first-ever jam session! The old tambourine he stiffly shakes has a therapeutic tone. Each shake seems to momentarily transport him away from life's problems. Until. . .Josh steps on an electrical cable with exposed wires. Electricity momentarily courses through his body, but overall he appears to be unharmed. The accident gives him a great idea. . .he'll hurt himself again. . .for more money.

The next several scenes are of Josh's great idea. . .Josh jumping in front of cars on a busy street, attempting to maim himself, but all stop without touching him. . .Josh foiled as he attempts to step on a mess of marbles he places on the stairs of an office tower. . .and finally Josh's visit the local zoo's shark-turned-dolphin exhibit, strapping raw hunks of meat to his body and diving into the water.

Hours later. . .Josh and Chachi sit in the waiting room of the K.B.C.C. experimental test lab. Chachi frequents the lab, testing some of the world's most dangerous creams and shampoos for quick cash. At the lab, Josh and Linda meet once again. . .their flirtations echo back to simpler times at the drive-thru, the place they first met. But recognition fails them both. Linda finds out that Josh needs a job and so she solicits the help of her soon-to-be ex-boyfriend to find him employment on his movie set.

Quick cut to: the set of an action movie. A jet black sports car smashes into a brick wall as cameras roll and Paramedics mill about. Josh pulls up in his Delorean automobile and is instantly mistaken as the new stunt man. Though he has absolutely no idea what he is doing, his lust for litigation ensures he knows how to crash cars. In fact, Josh turns out to be the perfect candidate for

the job. He's great at it and loves doing it. Richard offers him a chance to make a year's salary if he's willing to perform a non-union stunt that's guaranteed to be dangerous. Josh agrees to do it, dollar signs in his eyes.

The second act highlights Josh's new-found love for his profession- stunt driving. Each crash prepares him for the "big one" that will bring him the money he needs to get back on top. He starts maturing, gaining confidence as a man. It's during this time that he starts to romantically pursue Linda, but he is disappointed when he finds out she is still involved.

Back at the apartment, Chachi's cream testing days are starting to catch up to him. He develops a severe rash that gets progressively worse as the second act goes on. But Chachi's worries that the rash won't clear up in time for the Reggae competition are only overshadowed by his concern about his band's intentions of supporting him. With the odds against him, Chachi vows to never give up!

Together Chachi and Josh are unstoppable, their friendship stronger than ever before. . .that is until Chachi finds out his friend stole his wallet. Chachi kicks Josh out of his home, sending him back out onto the cruel city streets.

Paula and Linda's stories have become just as complicated in the second act. Paula searches madly for Josh as she attempts to finish her magazine article. Linda, on the other hand, finds out some disturbing new details about her employer. K.B.C.C. executives know the creams they test are potentially fatal to their clients, and Linda confronts the money-hungry pigs at the expense of her job. Linda also has to face Richard and turn down a last minute proposal/wedding in the oddest of places.

The groups problems, desires, and fears culminate at Chachi's Reggae competition. Josh must choose between his friendship with Chachi or performing the super dangerous stunt that will give him his old lifestyle back. Contemplating his future in an idling sports car, Linda convinces Josh to choose friendship over money.

In the end, Josh and Chachi reunite on stage for one final

gesture of friendship. This time Josh saves the day and is rewarded by being asked to lead Chachi's band in a tambourine solo. Josh refuses at first, his confidence shaken. Chachi then produces the lucky penny Josh tossed into his high school's time capsule long ago. . .he had saved it for a moment just like this. Josh takes the penny from his friend and in an instant realizes life riches transcend all material wealth. Josh is happy with himself and the life he has built, and that's better than anything money can buy.