

-- START --

1 INT. COMIC BOOK SHOP - CHECK-OUT AREA -- NIGHT 1

At the cash register, CHARLIE BRONSON, 30s, determined, full of adrenaline, holds a phone to his ear, closely listening. Dressed as a comic book hero, he is half of a gun-man duo.

He grips tightly a .38 LUGER, holding it in the face of the store cashier, WAYNE, a wiry 20-something comic book nerd. Beads of sweat slide down Wayne's frozen face.

DETECTIVE SGT. JIM BAKER is on the other end of the phone, camped outside the store.

BAKER (OVER PHONE)
I'm going to need more time,
Charlie.

Without losing a beat -- BANG!

Charlie unrelentingly unleashes a round into Wayne's right shoulder. He bellows out in pain, falling back as he clutches his wound.

CHARLIE
(to Baker)
Now ... let's try this again.
You've got ...

Charlie glances over at the

CLOCK ON THE WALL: 11:50

CHARLIE
... ten minutes to deliver. No
more negotiating.

BAKER (OVER PHONE)
Charlie, work with me here. A
million dollars is a lot of money
to pull together at this hour.

2 INT. COMIC BOOK SHOP - AISLE -- CONTINUOUS 2

ADAM, 12, lying face-down on the ground, is clutching a copy of "Freeze!". MICHELLE, 30s, scared beautiful, lies on the floor next to her son.

Around them, other CUSTOMERS lie around assuming similar face-down positions. Adam peeks up, looking off in Charlie's direction.

3 INT. COMIC BOOK SHOP - CHECK-OUT AREA -- CONTINUOUS 3

Charlie's expressions growing ever more serious.

CHARLIE

Look, it's getting late. We're all getting tired and hungry. If you don't have the money by midnight we're gonna start executing one hostage for every hour that passes until you deliver.

-- STOP --

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11 INT. COMIC BOOK SHOP - ENTRY -- CONTINUOUS 11

A knock at the door. Charlie cautiously rushes to it, Ted closely guarding from behind -- gun drawn. Charlie opens the door to reveal

DETECTIVE SGT. JIM BAKER, mid-50s, rugged, jaded, holding a COUPLE OF BOXES OF PIZZAS -- right hand under the boxes, left hand on top. Charlie allows Baker to slowly come through the door.

Charlie motions towards the counter.

CHARLIE

Put 'em over there. Nice and slow.

Baker slowly makes his way towards the counter.

12 INT. COMIC BOOK SHOP - CHECK-OUT AREA -- CONTINUOUS 12

He puts down the pizzas slowly on top of the counter.

CHARLIE

Open it.

Baker slowly opens the box to reveal a steaming hot CHEESE PIZZA inside.

CHARLIE

Charlie absorbs the sight, salivating like a Pavlovian canine.

CHARLIE
That extra cheese?

BAKER
Of course.

CHARLIE
Good. Close 'er up.

Baker shuts the case, surrendering himself to Charlie. As Charlie pats down Baker ...

CHARLIE
Now, listen. Don't you try nothin' funny, ya hear?

BAKER
Okay, Charlie. Let's just see how everyone's doing.

Baker leads the pack, as they walk behind the counter.

-- STOP --