

Indeed. What would I do? It was easy to say I'd grab the book advance and trash the legal career when it was just a plan. But now, on top of all the other bills and obligations, I had a kid. I'd spent ten years slugging it out in the trenches of a wretched industry in a desperate city, clawing to a point where I didn't have to worry about money, and now I was just going to throw it all away? How would I pay for the kid's tuition? How would I ever practice law again if I needed to after writing a book pissing on the field?

It's second nature to see all the downsides when you're a lawyer. I'd been taught to see danger and loss around every corner, the glass eternally half empty. That was what had me second-guessing the plan as I drove home from the hospital to pick up a bag of clothes for Lisa. But on the drive I passed four different train stations, including the one just below my house—the one I trudged to on so many mornings. As I drove by them, I thought about what the easy path would be, what it would look like. I saw myself in my fifties and sixties, an absentee lawyer-dad paying tuitions with bonus checks. Gray and paunchy, fiddling with a BlackBerry and filling out time sheets on the train. An aging partner with high blood pressure, a corner-office physique, and bottles of pills—some to numb me, some to get me hard. Then what? Seventy on a deck in Florida, fumbling through a medicated

haze to remember some book I had the chance to write? Fuck  
that. Better to go down swinging than live in the slow suicide of  
*What if?*