

Scene: Betrayal

[**Setting:** Seated at a small, square table in the back of a dark bar are three men in sport coats and dress shirts, no ties: **Me**, an average guy in his late 30s; his charismatic yet clearly slightly crazy **Friend** (think a young Jack Nicholson or a “Lethal Weapon”-age Mel Gibson, before he went really dark); and **Authority Figure**, a severe-looking, very tough bald man at least a 20 years older (think an older Sean Connery). They are discussing a fourth person, a woman who has been betrayed in the midst of a crisis.]

Authority Figure: She should just get over it.

Friend: [Whacks me on the shoulder.] What’s with him?

Me: He doesn’t understand.

Friend: You get it. Explain it to him.

Me: [To Friend] He’ll never get it.

Friend: How about if I explain it to him.

Authority Figure: Yes, explain it to me.

Friend: OK, put your hands together like this. [Friend clasps his hands together in front of him as an example. AF does as instructed.]

Friend: Now, put your hands in my hand.

[AF drops his clasped hands into Friend’s open, outstretched right palm.]

Friend: Now, this is what it’s like to be betrayed by someone you love when you’re in a crisis. Now, let’s say something bad happens. You lose your job. It’s terrible, but your spouse or your friend or your parent is there to help, or at least offer words of encouragement. They say, “There, there.”

[Friend very half-heartedly pats AF’s top hand, patting it twice.]

Now, let’s say your aunt dies. Someone gives you a hug. [Friend again pats AF’s top hand twice.]

Now, let’s say you’re going through the biggest crisis of your life, but instead of helping you out, the person you love does *this*.

[Friend simultaneously squeezes both of AF’s hand together in his upward-facing right hand and with his left stabs AF in the meaty part of his upper hand with a steak knife. The knife just penetrates about a quarter inch. AF gasps silently, clearly surprised and in pain, but he tries to remain stoic.]

Me: Jesus!

Friend: [Holds like a rock.] It's OK. [To AF] It's OK, right?

[AF nods quickly.]

Friend: And then, every minute while you're going through the crisis, and every time you think about it, you get a little bit of this.

[Friend twists the knife slightly, and a small spurt of blood comes out onto the table. AF gasps audibly.]

Me: Let him go!

[Friend removes the knife and drops AF's lifeless hands onto the table.]

Friend: He gets it.