

# Rain Man (1988)

Screenplay by Ronald Bass and Barry Morrow

Directed by Barry Levinson

## BASIC STORY MAP

**PROTAGONIST:** Charlie Babbitt, mid-20's, narcissistic, luxury sports car dealer

**CHARACTERIZATION/MAIN MISBEHAVIOR:** Entitlement

**EXTERNAL GOAL:** To use his father's estate money to solve his business problems

**INTERNAL GOAL:** To satisfy his needs at all costs / To do what's best for Raymond

**MAIN DRAMATIC CONFLICT:** Raymond

**THEME:** Patience and generosity towards others leads to inner peace.

**CENTRAL DRAMATIC QUESTION:** Will Charlie grow enough to give Raymond the care he needs?

**ENDING:** Charlie realizes he cannot give his brother proper care and gives Raymond back to Dr. Bruner and Wallbrook, putting Raymond's needs before his own.

**ARC:** Charlie goes from an angry, controlling loner to a caring brother who values family over money.

## STORY ENGINES

### ACT 1:

Charlie travels to Cincinnati to bury his father in the midst of a collapsing business deal, only to find out that he has an autistic brother who has been given the entire inheritance.

### ACT 2A:

Charlie drives to Los Angeles with Raymond as his business crumbles, and learns he can't control Raymond.

### ACT 2B:

Charlie learns secrets about his family history and uses Raymond to win money in Vegas that he needs to prop up his business.

### ACT 3:

Charlie refuses \$250k to walk away from Raymond and tries to take care of him on his own, but ultimately decides that it's best for Raymond to return to Dr. Bruner and Wallbrook.

## FULL STORY MAP

### ACT ONE:

**1 - OPENING:** Charlie runs a business importing high-end sports cars. He has money problems, unethical business practices and insists employees lie to clients. Charlie is a liar.

**7 - INCITING INCIDENT (Internal):** Charlie's father has died. Funeral tomorrow in Cincinnati, Ohio. Susanna, Charlie's girlfriend, insists that she comes with him.

9 - At the funeral, Charlie stands at a distance from the casket & mourners; makes Susanna wait in the car.



10 - Charlie takes Susanna to his childhood home. The 1949 Buick Roadmaster - he knows the exact details of car, comments he's only driven it once.

12 - Charlie tells Susanna the story that drove him and his father apart: At 16 years old, he takes the Buick out against his father's orders and his father has Charlie arrested.

**13 - INCITING INCIDENT (External):** Charlie gets no money from his father's estate valued at \$3 million. The estate has been left to an unnamed, third party beneficiary.

16 - At the bank, Charlie, sweet talks a bank employee into giving him information on the third-party beneficiary. Implied: Charlie lies to get what he needs.

18 - Charlie meets with the executor of the trust, Dr. Bruner, who works at a mental institution named Wallbrook. Bruner is loyal to Charlie's father, conceals identity of beneficiary.

**21 - STRONG MOVEMENT FORWARD:** A Wallbrook patient, Raymond, knows details of the Babbitt family and the Buick. Bruner appears and tells Charlie Raymond is his brother.

22 - Bruner reveals the details of his brother: Raymond is a high-functioning autistic savant who cannot function in the outside world.

**27 - END OF ACT ONE TURN & DECISION:** Charlie takes Raymond from the institution to get control of the money from his father's estate.



**ACT TWO-A:**

29 - Raymond uncomfortable at hotel, Charlie oblivious to his brother's anxiety. Susanna questions Charlie about why Raymond is with them - Charlie lies.

**37 - FIRST TRIAL / FIRST CASUALTY (Internal):** At hotel, Raymond hears Susanna and Charlie having sex and walks into the room. Charlie scolds Raymond, offending Susanna. Susanna leaves.

**42 - FIRST TRIAL / FIRST CASUALTY (External):** - Charlie calls Bruner. Legally, Charlie does not have to bring him back. Charlie wants his half of the estate, but Bruner refuses to give in to Charlie's blackmail scheme. Charlie tells him that they'll see each other in court.

**47 - COMBAT:** Raymond has a panic attack at the airport, so Charlie is forced to drive him to California in the roadster.



49 - Accident on the highway. Raymond gets out of the car, refuses to travel on interstate, furthering Charlie's business problems.

54 - Charlie on the phone with his attorney: Charlie should get custody of Raymond and the \$3 million.

**60 - MIDPOINT DISASTER:** Charlie loses Raymond. Raymond stops in the middle of a busy intersection after reading a flashing “Don’t Walk” sign. Raymond cannot function in the outside world.



**ACT TWO-B:**

62 - The doctor examines Raymond and reveals his mathematic ability, but also uncovers extreme deficiencies with simple problem solving skills.

70 - At hotel, Charlie’s credit card is rejected - financial problems increase.

**75 - ASSUMPTION OF POWER:** As Charlie draws a hot bath, Raymond attempts to protect Charlie from harm, but has a violent panic attack. Charlie now realizes that he was the reason that his father put Raymond in Wallbrook, thus he must take true responsibility for Raymond as his family.



80 - The bank seized the cars and the buyers want their down payments back. Charlie doesn’t have the money (\$80k) to pay them back. Financial disaster pending...

**87 - ACT TWO EVENT / TURN:** Raymond can count cards and win the money (\$80k) Charlie needs to save his business. They speed back to Vegas.

**88 - DECISION:** Charlie pawns his Rolex. Charlie risks all to hatch the gambling scheme, betting on him and Raymond as a team -- coming together as brothers for the first time for a common purpose.



### **ACT THREE:**



89 - At Caesar's Palace, Charlie buys matching designer suits for both him and Raymond, before they start gambling...presumably, to look like high-rollers. Symbolically, the brothers are now a family; working together.

92 - Charlie and Raymond clean up at the blackjack tables and win money (\$86k plus), but the casino closes in, observing their game via video surveillance.

**103- POINT OF NO RETURN (Internal):** Charlie teaches Raymond how to dance. Charlie tries to hug him, but Raymond freaks out and Charlie realizes they can never have an ideal relationship.

**113 - POINT OF NO RETURN (External):** Bruner offers Charlie a check for \$250k to walk away, but Charlie gives back the check. For the first time, Charlie doesn't care about money -- he wants a brother.

115 - Raymond attempts to fix his breakfast, sets off the smoke alarm and has a violent panic attack. Charlie skeptical he can protect and care for Raymond.

118 - At Raymond's evaluation, the doctor asks Charlie if Raymond had any emotional outbursts during the trip.

- Charlie doesn't lie: Charlie tells the truth; airport and smoke alarm that morning.
- Charlie tells the truth, confessing that he took Raymond from the institution and wanted \$1.5 million from Bruner to get him back - Charlie admits he was wrong.

**124 - CLIMAX:** Charlie realizes he does not have the ability to care for Raymond. Charlie gives up the money for his brother's well-being.



**128 - EPILOGUE:** Charlie drops Raymond off at the train station and into Dr. Bruner's care.