



PRESENTS

DEAD *MAN* RUNNING

PRESS PACK



TAMER HASSAN

DANNY DYER

BRENDA BLETHYN

**AND CURTIS "50 CENT"
JACKSON**

PRODUCED BY

NICHOLAS 'PIKKI' FEARON

ALAN LATHAM

THOMAS MATTINSON

EXECUTIVE PRODUCED BY

**RIO FERDINAND
AND ASHLEY COLE**

A FILM BY

ALEX DE RAKOFF

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DEAD MAN RUNNING



▶▶ The Rio Ferdinand and Ashley Cole produced gangsta flick **DEAD MAN RUNNING** with 50 Cent and Danny Dyer, among others, delivers performances that will almost certainly be hailed as stellar. ▶▶

- The Guardian

▶▶ **DEAD MAN RUNNING** is a very funny, underworld comedy story that had us rooting for the leading man. The cockney slanguage peppered throughout was very entertaining and the characters were played brilliantly - particularly the comic timing between the leading man and his side kick as well as the mother. ▶▶

- MTV Base

▶▶ The new Lock, Stock - guaranteed to crack you up! ▶▶

- Zoo Magazine



NICK KANE

(TAMER HASSAN)

A reformed ex-con with 24 hours to find £100,000.

MR THIGO

(CURTIS '50 CENT' JACKSON)

A powerful New York loan shark thirsty to make a brutal example of Nick.



NICK'S MUM

(BRENDA BLETHYN)

Nick's wheelchair bound Mum, number one on Thigo's hit list.



BING

(DANNY DYER)

Nick's cheeky best mate who comes up with every scam in the book to save his friend's life.



FRANKIE

(MONET MAZUR)

The babe who sells her body to make some quick cash.



OPENING NATIONWIDE ON OCTOBER 30TH 2009

Running time: 90 minutes Certificate: 15 Website: www.deadmanrunning.com

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Detonating a unique, diverse and explosive dream-team of US and British talent, **DEAD MAN RUNNING** is a heart stopping gangster thriller about one man's desperate, gripping race through what could be the last day of his life. Violence and vengeance are waiting round every corner. Take a deep breath. Get ready to hit the ground running.

DEAD MAN RUNNING is produced by Premier League and English international football stars Rio Ferdinand and Ashley Cole, who have brought together a startling squad of talent from the film world: US rap megastar Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson, making his Brit acting debut following his recent appearance opposite Robert De Niro and Al Pacino in *Righteous Kill*; the prolific Tamer Hassan, seen in *Layer Cake*, *Eastern Promises* and the upcoming *Kick-Ass*; Brit acting icon Danny Dyer, star of *The Business*, *Football Factory*, *Severance* and *Adulthood*; Oscar-nominated and BAFTA-winning British actress Brenda Blethyn OBE, a national treasure of stage and screen; Ashley Walters, one of the UK's most talented young actors and star of *Bullet Boy* and *WAZ*; and Omid Djalili one of the UK's most notorious comedians best known for *The Omid Djalili Show*, *Gladiator* and *Pirates of the Caribbean: At World's End*.

Powered by a edgy soundtrack which includes an exclusive track collaboration by Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson, C1 and Ashley 'Asher D' Walters and written/directed by Alex De Rakoff (*The Calcium Kid*), **DEAD MAN RUNNING** is centred around the world's recession-era angst. The film captures one of the most prolific and relevant issues in today's society which has led many people like Nick to go down roads they would not ordinarily pursue in a desperate bid for quick cash inevitably creating the perfect environment for the criminal world to thrive.

"I always draw from personal experiences and the colourful people that I have met over the years in my life and through my work. Then I take the characters and elevate them for cinematic purposes" comments writer and Director Alex De Rakoff.

The story follows Tamer Hassan as Nick Kane, a reformed ex-con with 24 hours to find £100,000 of borrowed blood-money. US rap megastar Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson is Thigo, a powerful New York loan shark who's jetting across the Atlantic to make a brutal example of Nick and everyone he loves – starting with his wheelchair-bound mother (Brenda Blethyn). Hurtling through the UK's criminal underworld, from East London's dog tracks to the drug-dens of Manchester, Nick and his best friend Bing (Danny Dyer) must go to desperate, deadly lengths to scam up the cash before it's too late. The clock is ticking.



SHORT SYNOPSIS

100 GRAND – 24 HOURS – 1 CHANCE

Out of money, out of last chances, reformed ex- con Nick is given exactly 24 hours to come up with the £100,000 he owes brutal gangland loan shark Thigo. He is a **DEAD MAN RUNNING**. With Thigo's men holding Nick's wheelchair-bound mum hostage, he and best mate Bing embark on a frantic race against the clock that hurls them across the country's mean streets, from the East London dog tracks to the underground drug dens of Manchester. Can they go to the desperate, deadly lengths – run, fight, scam, kill – it will take to rake in the cash before it's too late?

Nick: "A nutjob has kidnapped my paraplegic mother and I've got less than 10 hours to find 100 grand and all you can do is take the piss."

Bing: "I like to try and keep it entertaining."

LONG SYNOPSIS

Fresh out of jail and flat broke, Nick (Tamer Hassan) is ready to wipe the slate clean and go legit. With his beloved mum (Brenda Blethyn) now in a wheelchair and his long-suffering girlfriend Frankie (Monet Mazur) struggling to make ends meet, Nick borrowed £100,000 from notorious gangster and loan shark, Mr Thigo (Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson).

The plan?

To set up a travel agency with best mate, Bing (Danny Dyer), and go legit – once and for all.

The problem?

No one banked on the global recession. Suddenly, everyone wants their money back. Suddenly, no one can wait.

Enraged by his deteriorating profits and punters who can't pay, Mr. Thigo decides to take matters in to his own hands. It's time to go old school and send his late-payers a message they'll never forget. It's time to make a savage example out of someone. Unfortunately for our man Nick, that someone is him. The deal is simple: pay back the £100,000 in 24 hours or he will be a **DEAD MAN RUNNING**.

With Mr. Thigo's men holding mum hostage in her own home and the clock ticking fast, Nick and Bing embark on a frantic mission to get the money together by any and all means necessary. Over the next 24 hours, Nick must battle his own conscience and the most vicious thugs from the mean streets of both sides of the Atlantic, before finally going head-to-head with Mr. Thigo himself. But how far is he really prepared to go to save himself and his family? And can he survive long enough?

Only time will tell....

Mr Thigo: "This fucking credit crunch has ripped the lining right out of my back pocket."

"We are going at this old skool."



CAST & CREW PROFILES

RIO FERDINAND – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

“I fancied being an actor when I was a kid.”

Rio Ferdinand grew up with Tamer Hassan on a Peckham Estate, a London borough where almost half the population is either poor or borderline poor. Violent crime was a common occurrence in the area he lived; indeed, Damilola Taylor was murdered in the vicinity.

“As a kid I always wanted to do something different. I’d get bored very easily – even playing football or hanging around with my mates. So travelling away from home, meeting new people... I enjoyed it.”

He chose to attend Blackheath Blue Coats High School, a school somewhat distant from his house, in order to meet new friends and he settled in well, feeling his confidence growing. His second year was marred by the death of fellow pupil, Stephen Lawrence, and the event demonstrated the ever present threat of violence. Ferdinand enjoyed physical expression, taking part in not just football and gymnastics classes but drama, theatre and ballet too. By the age of ten he had been invited to train at the Queens Park Rangers F.C. academy and at age eleven he won a scholarship to attend the Central School of Ballet in London.

The world-class defender broke into the Premiership with West Ham United, under the guidance of Harry Redknapp, before being snapped up by Leeds United in 2000. It was his dominating, skillful displays in the 2002 World Cup that secured a £30 million deal from Sir Alex Ferguson to join Manchester United.

Off the pitch, Rio is well-known for his aspirational lifestyle, entrepreneurship and support of initiatives involving young people, particularly those from deprived backgrounds. He has his own record label, White Chalk, a TV and Film company, Next Generation TV and Film, a property company and is a key supporter of several charities donating thousands a year to various causes. He is a patron of Prince Charles’ charity, The Prince’s Trust, and has supported many campaigns including the recent Damilola Taylor Trust’s Respect A Life, Not A Knife.

Rio is currently setting up his own initiative, The Rio Ferdinand Live The Dream Foundation, and is in the planning stages of opening a series of centres in deprived areas of the UK, aimed at educating and guiding young people with ambitions to work in the entertainment business. Rio’s role as Executive Producer of **DEAD MAN RUNNING** has helped to secure several work placements for dedicated young people keen for the opportunity to gain practical ‘on the floor’ experience within the film industry.

Ferdinand is presently filming a documentary about Peckham, aiming to persuade youngsters away from a life of crime.



ASHLEY COLE – EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

Born in East London, footballer Ashley Cole plays left-back for Chelsea FC and for the England national team.

In 2006, at the eye of a media storm, Cole married Girls Aloud singer, Cheryl Tweedy. He also published his autobiography My Defence, while researching for his autobiography, Cole discovered he is a distant cousin of the pop star Mariah Carey.

He made his Chelsea debut against Werder Bremen in September 2006. Overcoming a series of injury setbacks, he went on to win FA Cup and Premiership medals with Chelsea. After surviving an injury scare in training on the eve of the Champions League Final, he recovered to put in one of the best displays on the night, stepping up to net a spot-kick as the game went to penalties. His consistency has continued through to the current campaign.



CAST & CREW PROFILES

NICHOLAS 'PIKKI' FEARON - PRODUCER

One of the UK's most fearsome semi-pro Muay Thai kick-boxers, Pikki's life was seemingly wrecked by a horrific motorbike accident, which confined him to a wheelchair. But through sheer determination, he revived himself and has become one of the most prolific producers in the UK entertainment industry.

Mother: "The sudden stroke I had last year put me in this chair. It's been a little tough in some ways but the silver lining is it kept my Nicholas out of trouble because his dear old Mother needs looking after... (she smiles cheekily) ...Although I have to say it seems to have left a few specialists scratching their heads."



He was the mastermind behind the highly acclaimed feature film *Rollin' With The Nines*, which won 'Best Feature Film' at the 2005 Raindance Film Festival in London, 'Best Achievement In Black Film Making' at the 2006 Screen Nation Awards and a nomination for the 'Carl Foreman Award' at BAFTA in 2007. Absolutely determined to walk again, Pikki is heralded as a beacon for various disabled charities including the Royal National Orthopedic Hospital Trust and *Aspire*, a charity dedicated to supporting people with spinal injuries.

In addition to his charity work, Pikki works closely with local education authorities and media groups to support and motivate disadvantaged young adults in urban communities. Working in partnership with Rio Ferdinand's charity *Live The Dream Foundation* and *Choice FM*, Pikki used Richard Blackwood's *Real Talk Seminars*, *The Lost Generation*, to offer 15 disadvantaged people the opportunity to work closely with him and Rio Ferdinand on the set of **DEAD MAN RUNNING**.

"Producer Nicolas Fearon (Pikki) has a very inspirational life story. He has survived life on some of the UK's toughest streets to become one of its most talented filmmakers - this is one of the main reasons I support his work. There is no doubt in my mind that his latest offering (*Dead Man Running*) will be a great and successful one" - Richard Blackwood

ALEX DE RAKOFF - DIRECTOR

An award-winning music-video director, De Rakoff made his name with artists including The Rolling Stones, The Neptunes, Dido and Jamie Cullum. His video "Since U Been Gone" for Kelly Clarkson won three awards at the 2005 MTV Music Awards. Based in Los Angeles, De Rakoff recently helmed the working title film *The Calcium Kid*, which starred Orlando Bloom (*Lord Of The Rings*), Michael Pena (*Crash*) and Tamer Hassan (*Layer Cake*), who he is reunited with in **DEAD MAN RUNNING**. De Rakoff has recently completed writing a big screen adaptation of the Korean cult film *Breaking News*, which will be directed by Joel Schumacher (*A Time To Kill*) and released by Paramount Vantage. He is also nearing completion on a big screen adaptation of the TV show *Have Gun, Will Travel* for Paramount Pictures, with Eminem attached to star.



ROCKY TAYLOR - STUNT COORDINATOR

"Without a doubt the complete professional in his chosen field". - Sean Connery

"Rocky is a very honest, hardworking stuntman with great integrity and skill". - Michael Caine

Rocky has more than thirty-five years experience in the industry as a stunt performer and co-ordinator and over 500 credits including *Titanic*, *Saving Private Ryan*, *Braveheart* and the last 3 Bond films.

ALI ASAD - DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Recent notable film credits include; *Pedantic*, directed by Craig Tull, the multi award-winning *Rollin' With The Nine* (produced by Nicholas 'Pikki' Fearon) and *Rise Of The Foot Soldier*, directed by Julian Gilbey.

CAST & CREW PROFILES

TAMER HASSAN - 'NICK' / EXECUTIVE PRODUCER

This 6ft 3ins hard-man burst onto the big screen in 2004 as a psychotic boxer opposite Orlando Bloom in Alex De Rakoff's cult movie *The Calcium Kid*. Hassan has become a go-to guy for the toughest modern Brit films: Matthew Vaughn's *Layer Cake*, David Cronenberg's Oscar-nominated *Eastern Promises*, *Cass*, *Goal! III*, Nick Love's *Football Factory* and *The Business* opposite **DEAD MAN RUNNING** co-star Danny Dyer. Next up for the trained boxer and hard-man is a starring role alongside Nicolas Cage in Matthew Vaughn's hotly anticipated ultraviolent comic-book thriller *Kick-Ass*.



Stepping up now as the leading star and Executive Producer for **DEAD MAN RUNNING**, Tamer looked to his own experience to give the film its gritty authenticity. Growing up on a Peckham council estate with Rio Ferdinand, his street skills were football and boxing. After sustaining a boxing injury, he ran nightclubs, restaurants and the Eltham boxing gym before moving into acting. He is also the owner, chairman, coach and player of both Greenwich Borough Football Club and is a big fan of Millwall Football Club which rival best mate Danny Dyer's team West Ham. Hassan helped producer Nicholas 'Pikki' Fearon secure the support of Premiership footballers Ashley Cole and Rio Ferdinand who helped raise the cash to commission director Alex de Rakoff to write the screenplay.

Bing: "You don't look exactly like Shrek but you do have a bit of a big head. It's not an insult, more of an observation".

DANNY DYER - 'BING'

Renowned for his good looks, charm and honesty, it's hard to think of a harder-working British actor than Danny Dyer. Last year, the tough, talented Londoner mixed TV roles in *Skins* and *Hotel Babylon* with an acclaimed big-screen performance in the gritty London film *Adulthood*. After charismatic turns in Nick Love's bruising trilogy of Brit violence – *Football Factory*, *The Business* and *Outlaw* – Dyer also continues his smart work in the horror genre with *Severance*, *Doghouse* and the upcoming *Malice In Wonderland*. Since breaking out in *Human Traffic*, Dyer has worked with some of the biggest names in stage and screen, from Ray Winstone to Harold Pinter and is on track to become one of the biggest and most iconic stars in British film.



Nick: "Would it be an insult or an observation to say you have a touch of the Nookie Bear's about ya, Bing?"

CURTIS '50 CENT' JACKSON - 'MR THIGO'

Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson is not only one of the most talented and prolific rap artists in the world, his gigantic star wattage has also seen him become a business and entertainment powerhouse: his empire extends into music ownership, artist management, film production, footwear and clothing, video games, publishing, health drinks and supplements worth from over \$300 million each year. With so many credits to his name, it is no surprise that he is set on conquering Hollywood too. His big-screen debut *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* loosely chronicles his extraordinary life story, from the poverty and crime of the New York mean streets to his international fame. Jackson also starred in Golden Globe nominated war drama *Home Of The Brave* and went head to head with Robert De Niro and Al Pacino in *Righteous Kill*. After his role as Mr. Thigo in **DEAD MAN RUNNING**, he'll next be seen in *Streets Of Blood* with Val Kilmer and Sharon Stone, before directing, starring and producing *Before I Self Destruct*, inspired by his music album of the same name.



'50 Cent' has penned a track exclusively for **DEAD MAN RUNNING**, which he performs in his first US/UK collaboration with Ashley Walters and C1.

CAST & CREW PROFILES

BRENDA BLETHYN – ‘MUM’

Two-time Oscar-nominee and BAFTA-winning actress Brenda Blethyn boasts almost 35 years in a career spanning theatre, film and television. Blethyn was classically trained at the prestigious GSA Conservatoire in Guildford and took to the stage immediately, swiftly joining the National Theatre Company in 1975. She seamlessly moved into television during the '80s, but in 1990 made her feature film debut in Nic Roeg's *The Witches* before playing Brad Pitt's mother in Robert Redford's, *A River Runs Through It*. Then came the role that secured her place as one of Britain's most well respected screen actresses: Cynthia Rose Purley in Mike Leigh's unforgettable Brit drama *Secrets And Lies*. Her performance scored a BAFTA, a Golden Globe and an Oscar nomination for Best Actress. Blethyn later returned to the big screen where she again won rave reviews in the critically acclaimed *Little Voice*, earning her another Oscar nomination and a BAFTA. She's since appeared in Kevin Spacey's *Beyond The Sea* and Joe Wright's *Pride & Prejudice* and *Atonement*.



ASHLEY WATERS – ‘FITZROY’

Ashley made his name as a music artist (Asher D) in So Solid Crew and as one of the UK's most gifted young actors in 2004 when he was awarded the 'Most Promising Newcomer' at the British Independent Film Awards, for his heart convincing performance as Ricky in *Bullet Boy*. He's since starred in Danny Cannon's *Goal!*, Jim Sheridan's *Get Rich Or Die Tryin'* (alongside fellow **DEAD MAN RUNNING** co-star, Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson), Richard Laxton's *Life And Lyrics*, Tom Shankland's *WAZ*, in which he starred opposite Stellan Skarsgard, Gary Love's *Sugarhouse* with Andy Serkis and The Wachowski Brothers' *Speed Racer*. He also has a strong presence on the small-screen and stage, with credits that include a leading role in series four of *Hustle* for BBC1 and *Oxford Street* at The Royal Court.



MONET MAZUR – ‘FRANKIE’

Campaigns for Gap instantly captured the attention of Hollywood's directors. She played one of Johnny Depp's stoner cohorts in *Blow* and appeared in *Angel Eyes* as the abused sister of Jennifer Lopez's character in the film. The following year, Monet secured her first starring role in Warner Brothers smash-hit *Torque* and has since racked up a string of major Hollywood pictures including *Monster-In-Law* with Jennifer Lopez and Jane Fonda, *Just Married* starring Ashton Kutcher and Brittany Murphy, *40 Days and 40 Nights*, *Live!* and *The House Bunny* (based on the infamous Playboy mansion). In addition to her acting talents, Mazur has lent her voice to many soundtracks and performed on numerous albums including 'Tricky' for Sneakerpunk and The Dust Brothers. She has also sung alongside The Pussycat Dolls and fronts vocals for her own band, Nancy Raygun.



Q&A INTERVIEW

THE CONCEPT: KEEPING IT REAL

Danny Dyer: "I think it was a great call with the director, Alex de Rakoff. I think he is brilliant. He gives me the freedom to do what I want with just a tweak here and there. He wrote this part for me and he has given me the chance to express myself."

Alex De Rakoff: "I always draw from personal experiences and the colourful people that I have met over the years in my life and through my work. Then I take the characters and elevate them for cinematic purposes."

"It is great to be working with Tamer again. There are a fair amount of stunts in this movie but the biggest was the bare-knuckle fight scene. We were very lucky with Tamer because you don't have to double him. He used to be a boxer so he is game, if anything you have to pull him back a bit because you still have five weeks to shoot and you don't want him bashed up! Tamer was fantastic in that scene because he is athletic and he is a fighter so he did all his own work. Rocky (Taylor – Stunt Coordinator) helped us put this scene together and work out how we could get the most impact whilst making it feel as real as possible. I was really pleased with the outcome."

Nick: "I'll fight anyone in a pit, a cage, or even a phone box. It don't matter much to me."

Tamer Hassan: "I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I have always worked for what I have got because I was never given anything. I come from the back streets of South East London and I have a past. Like Nick, I had to turn my own life around because one day I realised no one was going to do it for me. Everything Pikki and I have managed to get for this movie, we have had to go out and fight for. It is not easy putting together the finance for an independent British movie but I'm sure we will all reap the benefits of a successful movie at the end of it."



Ashley Walters: "I really liked the script because it deals with a world that I have personally been familiar with and am still on the fringes of now so it is not that far fetched for me, it's not that far out of the box."

Nick: "Mum, I gotta go. Something's come up".

[A worried expression crosses Mother's face as she appears back in from the kitchen].

Mother: "Last time you said that I didn't see you for three and a half years".

"Pikki is amazing. This guy has had a rough time, he's had a hard life but he turned it around and he has achieved a lot. I can't speak for him but I would say these films are up there amongst his greatest achievements. With this film, and Rollin' With The Nines, he has now cemented himself as part of the film industry. That is an amazing thing, for someone who has come from where he has, to be in the position he is in today. Pikki is a role model for young black boys out there who want to get into the film industry and it makes what he is doing here even more important."

Pikki: "We linked up with Rio Ferdinand's Live The Dream Foundation on this film. We want to give some kids the opportunity to work on a film set and see how it runs. What I keep hearing is people saying 'we need to give kids a chance' and all they are doing is building music studios to make music. When they make music, they form a group, that group becomes a gang. Before you know it, that gang becomes labeled and they become outcasts. There are a million groups with great music out there but the competition is too high and most of them will never make it."

"We want to give these kids the chance to learn about the career possibilities within the film industry. Not just acting but maybe producing, directing, accountancy, stunt work, script supervising. We want to open their eyes to what really goes on behind the scenes of making a film, to learn how obedient and respectful you have to be. It is hard work and you have to be able to take direction and instructions – it's a good discipline. We selected 12 young people who contacted me through the Choice FM 'Real Talk Seminar' that I did with Richard Blackwood. They came on board to work as runners on the film. Some of them inevitably dropped out but we hope that, by giving them this opportunity, a couple of them may go on to forge a worthwhile career in the film industry."



Q&A INTERVIEW

THE CONCEPT: KEEPING IT REAL (CONTINUED)

Talking of his own achievement in putting the **DEAD MAN RUNNING** production together, Pikki comments; "I know many young black filmmakers that have been trying for years to get their projects off the ground and, I know for a fact, this will make them think. Those people from my environment and my background are people who are not rich, they have struggled in life. I know they will now look at me making this film and say 'if he can achieve it, I know I can achieve my dream as well.'"

Mr. Thigo: "Maybe I could use a man like you heading up the London arm of my organization."

Nick: "That life's not for me, Mr Thigo. A straight go'er. A travel agent."

REUNITING OLD FRIENDS: DANNY DYER AND TAMER HASSAN

Danny Dyer and Tamer Hassan met on the set of *Football Factory* where they developed a close relationship, which they have maintained ever since.

Tamer Hassan: "It is always brilliant working with Danny, who plays Nick's best mate, Bing. We are great friends in any case so we bounce off each other and our characters have a great chemistry, the strength of their friendship is actually very endearing".

"Danny brings the light relief element to this film. He has this fantastic dry humour and I'm playing Nick completely deadpan – the combination works so well, it is hilarious. It is during rehearsals that we can really tell it is working because the crew can laugh out loud. I can't wait to watch it in the cinema because I know people are going to be crying with laughter all the way through."

"The genius of the script and the relationship between Nick and Bing is that Nick's mission is very serious and stressful as he desperately tries to get this money together. Then, just when it is almost unbearable, Bing turns up and makes you laugh. It is almost a Morecombe and Wise partnership, the chemistry works so well."

Nick: "Nine out of ten cunts would have bolted when they heard Thigo was out to put me to sleep. But here you are, stuck like glue. You're a blinder".

Bing: "I'd never leave you mate. I fucking luv ya, Shrek head".

Danny Dyer: "It is great working with Tamer. Alex de Rakoff (screenplay and director) looked at our relationship and went away and wrote about it. It was a no-brainer really because we are already really good friends. Making films, you are always battling against the elements; Alex needed to have the friendship already in place. You can meet an actor, go out and try to bond with them, but it's just not the same. To cast me as Bing and Tamer as Nick made perfect sense."

"Tamer and I have worked together in the past and it was important to me that in this film we would challenge each other in different ways. I think this is a bit different to your run of the mill gangster film. It's [also] about two lifelong friends who love each other dearly. It is a very powerful thing, the love that men have for each other. We don't really open up or show our emotions and feelings but we are there for each other, we would die for the cause. That theme runs throughout this film and there are some very touching and funny moments".

THE CASTING: BRINGING TOGETHER A RARE AND ECLECTIC CAST

Tamer Hassan: "All I keep hearing is, 'Who would put Tamer Hassan, Danny Dyer, 50 Cent and Brenda Blethyn in a movie together?' If you were given those four actors, where would you go with it? That is what is blowing people away. We have a cast and crew who are all top of their game and committed to making this movie the best it can be."



Q&A INTERVIEW

THE CASTING: BRINGING TOGETHER A RARE AND ECLECTIC CAST

Pikki: "I love Danny Dyer's work. On set, I call him "one take Dyer" because he is that sharp. When we got news that Brenda Blethyn had accepted the part, we were all over the moon - we knew we would be making something fresh that would be set apart from other films of a similar genre. These names supported by great British actors like Robbie Gee, Phil Davies, Ashley Walters, John Forgeham and C1 meant we were bringing something established and something new to the table, putting a fresh spin on something that is British."

Ashley Walters: "I haven't had the opportunity to work with Tamer and Danny before, but I've known them both personally for a while, just through friends. I'm a big supporter of their work. I like the realism and the grittiness of their films. I've always wanted to work with them so to be in this position now, working with Tamer, Danny and 50 Cent, it is an amazing thing. I'm in a very good space right now."

"I worked with 50 Cent on Get Rich Or Die Tryin' and it was a brilliant experience. Contrary to what you might believe, he is a very humble and kind guy - we hit it off immediately so it's great to be working with him again."

Mr. Thigo: "Nobody gets hit worse in a recession than Mr fucking Shylock because all of those previously mentioned cats of illicit earnings are struggling to make payments on the green they borrowed from me against projected future income."

Danny Dyer: "We have a really strong supporting cast. I was so chuffed when Brenda Blethyn agreed to do the film, I have admired her for many years, and to have 50 Cent on board is also a moment. Curtis has a real presence and it was very interesting to work with him because he took it very seriously. His character bookends the film; he starts the film off when he threatens Nick, then he disappears, Nick and Bing go on a crazy mission, and then he is there at the end. Curtis played Mr Thigo in brilliant a way. Obviously his character is a real force, a powerful villain from across the pond, but Curtis did it with composure, he did it with a smile. He clearly thought about it a lot because it is very easy to get an audience to hate you, it's much more difficult to get an audience to warm to you. I was very impressed by him."

Pikki: "When we thought about who should play Thigo, we could have gone with a typical choice but I wanted this film to be different, I wanted to do something original. That is when I suggested 50 Cent. Everyone thought I was mad and didn't believe that we could get someone as big as 50 Cent to work on the movie. But when I decide to do something, I do it. I told Alex de Rakoff to go to New York to meet him. They got on really well and 50 sat down with Alex and did some work on the Thigo character. Once that marriage was made, I knew he would appear in our movie. 50 Cent coming to the table is the biggest blessing I could get for this film because it opens the door to America."

Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson: "The first time I heard of the project and entertained the idea of being a part of it was through Pikki. He sent me the script and that is when I got excited about it. Soon after, I had the opportunity to meet Alex de Rakoff in my New York office. We talked through the script and discussed what his vision was for the character of Mr Thigo. He was interested in my ideas and did some re-writes which were really great. Meeting Alex in person made me more excited about joining the project because he clearly knew exactly what he wanted and I knew I would be comfortable under his direction."

Brenda Blethyn: 'I always judge a good script on whether it entertains me and makes me want to read more.

DEAD MAN RUNNING amused me. It's the first gangster film I've ever been offered and I thought the script was really funny. It's a rollercoaster ride, full of excitement, a bit of danger and a few surprises. It's a fun gangster movie. Also, my credibility has soared with my young nephews and nieces. As soon as they heard I was in a film with Tamer and 50 Cent, I was really hip, it's great!"



Q&A INTERVIEW

THE CASTING: BRINGING TOGETHER A RARE AND ECLECTIC CAST (CONTINUED)

Mother: "That was such a good book. A real page-turner. Just when I thought the bad guys were going to prevail the good guys showed up and gave them what for."

Johnny Sands (gangster): "That's just a story Mrs. Kane. In my experience real life doesn't always work out quite that way."

Tamer Hassan: "Pikki was very clever in the way he chose his crew. He has worked with a lot the guys before when he produced Rollin' With The Nines. He wanted to put a family crew together; he wanted a team that understood each other". As such the crew includes his brother Fire and his good friends Sagi, Frank, Boogie, Leon and Chopper who act as security and assistants on set.

Pikki: "Alex had worked on a film called The Calcium Kid with Tamer and they have been good friends ever since. Tamer wanted to get Alex involved but I hadn't met him before and had my own ideas. However, I spoke to Alex on the phone and found out he had directed Grand Theft Auto, he had won numerous awards for music videos and that he was currently writing the new Eminem movie so we agreed to ask him to do a re-write on the **DEAD MAN RUNNING** story and bring it up to the here and now. What Alex did was great."

THE LOCATION: MAKING IT ON THE MEAN STREETS OF NEW YORK AND LONDON

Pikki: "With this kind of film you have to shoot it on location so you get the right feel. Aside from the fact that filming in a studio requires a lot of set dressing, time and money, filming on location makes your film look more gritty and real."

Alex De Rakoff: "Alex de Rakoff had very clear ideas about how he wanted to shoot this. We were filming on 35mm so it looks very stylish and sexy, and the pace of the story is very tight and upbeat. Alex is very energetic and it is essential for this film. The story is set over 24 hours, we cannot afford to slow down because we will lose the audience. It is very high energy and you cannot get bored."

Mr. Thigo: "You have twenty-four hours to get me back the hundred large you borrowed from my organization or I will kill you."

Danny Dyer: "It's a real bonus for me working in London - I love London, I'm a Londoner through and through. It is an amazing place to shoot a film because it is just such a beautiful place. I love the idea of contemporary buildings next to castles and little cobbled streets. I've travelled quite a bit and I don't think anywhere quite touches London."

Nick: "We're gonna pay Terry Biggs a visit, see if he's got anything on." (A glint registers in Bing's eyes.)

Bing: "You going back on the cobbles?"

Nick: "I ain't going there for a pedicure."

Danny Dyer: "There is a great moment in the movie when you just don't know where we are going to go with it. There is also a great twist at the end, which I loved when I read the script. It is 100 miles an hour, you don't have time to breath, you haven't got time to think and it keeps everyone on the edge of their seats. It doesn't get bogged down in any one place because the clock is ticking and I love that idea."



Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson: "I enjoy London in general. Artists in the US feel like London is international. From London, you work your way out of the UK and to the rest of the world. The people that are excited about me as an artist have made a decision to be. There are a lot of different options for people these days so, when someone in the UK decides to have an interest in me, they seem to do so with a little more passion. My experience of performing in this territory has been amazing, it is always something I look forward to. Whenever I release a new album my first stop on the tour is always London."

MAP

LONDON MAP



SOUNDTRACK

SOUNDTRACK: EXCLUSIVE PRODUCERS AND EXCLUSIVE TRACKS

The soundtrack for **DEAD MAN RUNNING** boasts an exclusive collaboration between 50 Cent, C1 and Asher Dee (former member of So Solid Crew). This is the first time 50 Cent has partnered up with British talent in this way and the track highlights the gritty, original and unique nature of the film. Rio Ferdinand was also heavily involved in the soundtrack for the film, selecting music and bringing in artists such as The Prodigy and Donaeo.

Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson: "On my latest album, Before I Self Destruct, I have a song that I feel fits my character in this film. I have needed to do some re-writing and develop it but I feel it is exciting that there will be some music from me that is a reflection of some of the things that go on in this film. The idea just fits perfectly."

SOUNDTRACK LISTING

The Prodigy	Got
Dirty Pretty Things	You Fucking Love It
Vybz Kartel	Gun Session
Mozart	Romance Piano Concerto in D minor
Michael Viner's Incredible Bongo Band	Apache
Mozart	Andante Piano Concerto No21 in C Major
Michael Viner's Incredible Bongo Band	Ohkey Dokey
The Beat	Twist and Crawl
Danny Byrd	Red Mist
Donaeo	Party Hard
Mark Sayfritz	Jerusalem
Stone Roses	Fool's Gold
Wiley feat. Daniel Merriweather	Cash in my Pocket
The Specials	Rude Boys Outa Jail
Satie	Gnossienne No 1
Ruby Andrews	You made a believer out of me
Benga	26 Basslines
50 Cent/Asher D/C1	I Like It

DRAMATIS PERSONAE



Tamer Hassan on Nick

"It is very easy to stereotype a character like Nick Kane and to put this film in the genre of 'British gangster'. Obviously, it has elements of it because we deal with the criminal underworld, but my character actually takes the movie away from that typical back street London gangster film. My character, Nick, is not a villain. He is more a hustler and he has always made his money from street fighting.

When we are introduced to Nick in the film, he has just done a spell in jail and is trying to go straight. It doesn't specify in the script why he went to prison but you know, from the kind of man he is, it would not have been anything serious – he is a petty criminal. Now that he is out of jail he is concentrating on looking after his wheelchair-bound mum and his girlfriend, who he loves - these two women give him the ultimate motivation to stay on the right side of the law so he will be around to support them."

Fisher: (out the side of his mouth) "Speaking of work me and the boys have got something on for next week and we're a big man short. You fancy coming for a stroll down the pavement with the lads for old times sake." Nick stops and looks at Fisher coldly.

Nick: "Everybody knows my Mother's in a chair. If I get put away for another stretch she's got nobody to take care of her. I ain't made it a secret I'm a straight go-er now."

"In this story, Nick is a victim of circumstance. His name is randomly picked out of a list of people who owe money to Mr Thigo (played by Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson). He is given 24 hours to get the money together or he and his mum will be killed. He has no choice but to deal with the people he used to associate with, people who he despises."



Danny Dyer on Bing

"I play a character called Bing who is Nick Kane's best and only friend in an environment where we are surrounded by villains and gangsters. Nick was obviously a bit of a naughty character back in the day but he is trying to change his life for his mother and his girlfriend, who he loves very much, and he turns to me in his moment of need.

Nobody messes with Nick Kane. Everyone fears him and is a bit scared of him. The great thing about the dynamic of our relationship is that I am not scared of him at all and I'm constantly taking the piss out of him.

Bing looks to the Mannequin in front of the mountain. Fixes her scarf.

Bing: (to mannequin) "I know Babes, he's dozy as donuts."

(Nick quickly pops his head back in through the door.)

Nick: (growling) "And don't mug me off in front of the staff."

Tamer plays it very straight. Obviously he has got 24 hours to raise £100,000 or he and his mum will be killed, so he is very focused. My character brings the light comic relief. You just don't know what Bing is going to come out with next. Is he going to get it right, is he going to get it wrong? And that is what keeps the audience guessing. It's a nice balance and I think if we were both playing it straight, it would lose something important."

DRAMATIS PERSONAE



Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson on Mr. Thigo

"I am excited to be a part of **DEAD MAN RUNNING** because I have respect for the people involved in this project. I always feel, with film and music, that these things will last longer than I will be on the planet so I want to be a part of projects that have a specific artistic integrity."

"Mr Thigo is in an awkward financial space. The climate of the economy is making it tough for people to pay back money they have borrowed from me based on their projected income. My character has come over from America to go through the ledgers and enforce these people paying up. On my latest album, Before I Self Destruct, I have a song that I feel fits my character in this film. I have needed to do some re-writing and develop it but I feel it is exciting that there will be some music from me that is a reflection of some of the things that go on in this film. The idea just fits perfectly."

Thigo: "It wasn't personal, Nick. Just business."

(Thigo gets back in his car and closes the door. The electric window glides up, covering the SCOWL on his face.)

Nick: (quiet aside) "It's always personal, Mr. Thigo."



Ashley Walters on Fitzroy

"I play Fitzroy in the movie. I work for, and am very much in awe of, Mr Thigo (Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson). Mr. Thigo has come over from the States to go through some things with me and have a chat about what I have been doing, or not been doing, more to the point."

Thigo: "What are these, Calvin?"

Calvin: "They're jellied eels."

Thigo: "And you expect me to eat these "jellied eels"?"

(Calvin looks into the cup and arches an eyebrow.)

Calvin: "You said you wanted something traditional for breakfast and these guys are right up there on the top ten list with a double decker bus and the crown jewels."

Thigo: "With no disrespect to your royal family, public transport system or national cuisine if you don't get that shit the fuck outta my grill and get me a tasty nutritional breakfast you and I are gonna fall out, Nigga."

Calvin: (nodding nervously) "Yes, Mr. Thigo."

(Calvin takes back the jellied eels and makes himself scarce).



Brenda Blethyn on Mrs Kane

"I play the mother of Nick, who is played by Tamer. She is rather protective of him and it is an interesting relationship. They get on very, very well but she is a respectable woman and he has got on the wrong side of the law and had to spend some time inside. Now he has mended his ways and she wants him to stay that way. He has got himself a respectable little business and he loves his mum, it's a rather nice relationship. When things go wrong for Nick, Mum is held

captive by a henchmen of the baddy in the film and Nick has to find a lot of money very quickly in order to save her life."

Mother: "This global warming is making a mockery of mother nature. One minute it's sunny, the next it's snowing. You don't want to get caught short."

Nick: "That's good to know. I'll keep a close eye out for any stray ice caps floating down the high Street."

Mother: "Always got a smart answer".

Nick: "Always had to".

(Mother SWATS at Nick with her book.)

CAST CREDITS

NICK	Tamer Hassan
BING	Danny Dyer
MR THIGO	Curtis '50 Cent' Jackson
NICK'S MUM	Brenda Blethyn
FRANKIE	Monet Mazur
FITZROY	Ashley Walters
CALVIN	C1
RUDE BWOY	Freddie Kruga
THE MARK	Zig Byfield
SMUDGER	Bronson Webb
FRANKIE'S CLIENT	Jeff Stewart
TERRY BIGGS	John Forgeham
JOHNNY SANDS	Phil Davis
MR JEFF	Tony Rohr
ORLANDO	Keith-Lee Castle
JARVIS	Tom Fisher
THE BRICK WALL	Tiny Iron
FIGHT BOOKIE	Nicholas Ball
FAT BALD FUCK	Omid Djalili
CURTIS	Robbie Gee
MCCLINTOCH	Clive Russell
SOL	Alan Ford

CREW CREDITS

WRITER / DIRECTOR	Alex de Rakoff
PRODUCER	Nicholas 'Pikki' Fearon
CO-PRODUCER	Alan Latham
CO-PRODUCER	Thomas Mattinson
ASSISTANT TO THE PRODUCERS	Eloise Oliver
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Rio Ferdinand
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Ashley Cole
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Mark Rowe
EXECUTIVE PRODUCER	Tamer Hassan
LINE PRODUCER	Andy Chapman
EDITOR	Alan Strachan
DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY	Ali Asad
COSTUME DESIGNER	James Keast
COSTUME SUPERVISOR	Shirley Nevin
PRODUCTION DESIGNER	Matthew Button
ART DIRECTOR	Daniela Faggio
CASTING	Jeremy Zimmermann & Manuel Puro
MAKEUP DESIGNER	Cate Hall
SOUND RECORDIST	Derek Norman
SCRIPT SUPERVISOR	Heather Storr
STUNT COORINATOR	Rocky Taylor
1ST ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Dan Mumford
2ND ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Frazer Fennell-Ball
3RD ASSISTANT DIRECTOR	Chris Hill
LOCATION MANAGER	Richard George
UNIT MANAGER	Jonathan Crampton
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This loan shark charged 2,500% interest and 'threatened to kill one of his desperate victims'

By DAILY MAIL REPORTER
Last updated at 12:56 AM on 06th August 2009

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An ex-convict who built a £3million loan sharking empire by terrorising hundreds of hard-up families into making interest repayments of 2,500 per cent was jailed for five years yesterday.

John Kiely, 36, funded a lavish lifestyle by sending teams of heavies to intimidate his desperate victims.

They had taken loans with his company but then struggled to pay them back when Kiely suddenly hit them with extortionate rates.

One family who borrowed money to pay for a wedding were told they would be shot unless they met his interest repayments of between 433 per cent and 2,437 per cent a year.

Kiely - nicknamed Johnny Boy - used his profits to buy a £900,000 mansion with seven bedrooms in the picture postcard village of Chapel-le-Frith, Derbyshire.

He also drove a black Range Rover with a personalised 'Boy' number plate.

By the time he was arrested in October 2008 he was estimated to be owed about £800,000 in loans, spread between up to 1,200 clients in east Manchester.

Inquiries revealed he was an unlicensed money lender and, unknown to the Office of Fair Trading, had served an eight-month jail term in 2006 for assault after he beat up the mother of a client who fell behind on her payments.

Minshull Street Crown Court in Manchester was told that during his five-year reign of terror, Kiely would cruise around a council estate in Openshaw in his car hunting for clients who owed him cash and making threats.

More...

- **Evil of the loan sharks: This man charged £90,000 interest on a couple's £500 loan (but he won't go to jail)**

Yesterday one of his victims, former auxiliary nurse Donna Ockerby, 45, told how she borrowed £700 in cash from Kiely in 2007 to pay for food and a wedding dress.

But she had to pay back £1,400 and said she was left 'frightened to death' of him.

Mrs Ockerby claimed Kiely turned up on her doorstep demanding money and shouting abuse at her and she feared he would headbutt her.

A concrete slab was thrown at her window and she had a panic alarm installed in her home.

Her husband Stephen borrowed £500 to pay for their wedding in August 2008, but had struggled to meet the repayments when his disability handouts were halted.

The jury was told that a collector then turned up on his doorstep shouting: 'I'm going to shoot you' and during a stand-off brandished a car jack at Mr Ockerby.

Kiely, described as 'ruthless and manipulative' by the judge, was found guilty on two counts of blackmail and admitted illegal money lending.

He will now face having his home and cars confiscated under the Proceeds of Crime laws.

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Ruthless: John Kiely hit hard-up families with extortionate interest rates and threatened them with violence when they couldn't pay

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From The Times

August 7, 2009

‘Loan shark threatened to break my legs if I didn’t pay £1,000’



Adam Fox, who ended up paying £100 interest a day on an initial £100 loan

Paminder Bahra: Case study

1 COMMENT RECOMMEND (3)

Adam Fox went to a loan shark when he wanted £100 to buy a car stereo that was on special offer. He agreed to pay back the entire sum several days later, and was charged £20 interest.

Mr Fox, 26, of Stoke-on-Trent, had successfully borrowed money from a loan shark in the past, but on this occasion failed to pay the full amount owed on the due date — so the lender doubled the interest charge.

As the debt mounted, Mr Fox found it increasingly difficult to repay the growing amounts, and missed more payments — ending up being charged £100 interest every day. “Every time I didn’t pay, it cost me more and more,” he said. “There was no way that I could pay this, and the entire loan had reached £1,000. The loan shark said that he would break my legs if I didn’t pay up. This is the kind of thing that happens to people around here.”

Mr Fox, right, turned to A4e, a debt advice agency based in Stoke. Julie Cliffe, a debt adviser at the agency, said: “Mr Fox was on benefits at the time, and we found that there was additional income to which he was entitled.”

He also turned to family and friends to raise the money to repay the loan. “I’d never go to a loan shark again, never,” he said.

Ms Cliffe said: “The worrying thing here is that the loan shark was not prosecuted and is most probably still trading.”

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Where there are illegal loans, there are usually other debts too. “Mr Fox had faced eviction from his council-run accommodation on three occasions, but we have managed to help him,” Ms Cliffe said.

She said it was common to find borrowers who had been threatened with guns and physical violence.

Pressure among vulnerable groups to turn to loan sharks has been exacerbated by the growing difficulty of obtaining mainstream credit from high street banks. Many people have accumulated debts from before the recession, and now find they have few options.

Chris Peel, director of A4e, said: “We’re seeing more people these days. Clients come to us with priority debts such as rent arrears and council tax, but once we scratch the surface we find people have turned to illegal credit to pay off legal borrowings.

“As people’s loans become more complicated, they become less aware of what is legal and what is not, compounding the difficult situation they are in,” he said.

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Borrowers urged to avoid backstreet lenders as 'ruthless' loan shark jailed

Manchester jury hears moneylender made £3m profits, as Newcastle court is told loan shark made £88,000 from £500 loan

Martin Wainwright
guardian.co.uk, Wednesday 5 August 2009 16:05 BST
Article history



Robert Reynolds and John 'Johnny Biv' Kelly. Photograph: PA

A loan shark who made £88,000 in interest from a victim's initial borrowings of only £500 left court in a Jaguar today, while another was jailed for five years for threatening and blackmailing more than 1,000 poverty-stricken clients.

Both men were condemned by judges at separate courts in the north of England. Agencies and government ministers warned borrowers to avoid backstreet lenders and seek debt advice.

The extraordinary spiral of repayments demanded by 39-year-old Robert Reynolds, of Stanley, County Durham, was revealed by 40-year-old victim Debra Wilson at Newcastle upon Tyne crown court.

She said Reynolds, who lives nearby, posed as a friend who would want only "a bit of interest" when she borrowed the £500 at Christmas nine years ago to buy a computer as a present for her daughter.

Within days, he told her he was only a go-between for the actual lender, who wanted £250 a month – a lie he maintained for eight years while Wilson and her husband, Kevin, took out more loans in a hopeless attempt to meet interest which grew much faster.

The court heard the Wilsons had remortgaged their home, paid Reynolds most of £4,000 given to Mr Wilson as compensation for a motorbike accident, and had their gas cut off because they could not meet payments.

Mrs Wilson, who has three other children, suffered two strokes and a brain haemorrhage during the eight-year ordeal and blamed it on Reynolds.

Meanwhile, he lavishly furnished his home, buying two flatscreen TVs and other luxuries with the money he was getting from his victims.

Ann Richardson, prosecuting, told the court: "The final straw only came in January 2008 when Mrs Wilson's daughter came home with a bag of food leftovers from her babysitting job, saying she was sick of being hungry."

"There was no gas, the house was freezing, and Mrs Wilson went to the police."

While she was at the police station, Reynolds rang with his weekly demand for more money.

PC Natalie Hulse told the court she had listened in to the call and said its tone was "calm and eerie".

"He told Mrs Wilson that he wanted £1,600 by the end of the month, £585 by the end of the week and £85 that day – and suggested someone else might get nasty if she didn't pay," she said.

Reynolds admitted harassment with intent to commit violence, but told the court he was penniless and registered disabled with arthritis and psoriasis.

Kevin Brennan, the junior minister for consumer affairs, said a government drive against loan sharks had secured more than 100 prosecutions.

"Thugs like Kelly who prey on vulnerable people cause untold misery within communities," he said.

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Loan shark who raped customer jailed indefinitely

A loan shark who raped an impoverished customer has been jailed indefinitely.

Published: 5:26PM GMT 20 Mar 2009



Loan shark Paul Nicholson was jailed today. Photo: PA

Paul Nicholson, 39, used threats and weapons to force hundreds of thousands of pounds from vulnerable people, charging them interest of up to 150% on loans.

When one woman could not pay he threatened to petrol-bomb her home and another distraught debtor was told: "Your priority is to pay me, not feed your kids."

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Nicholson, who lived in a £1 million house next to a golf course in Delamere, Cheshire, also forced a woman who owed him money to perform a sex act on him.

The former nightclub doorman was convicted at Warrington Crown Court last month of 18 charges including rape, 12 counts of blackmail, lying about his criminal record, operating without a licence and assault.

He was jailed by Judge Thomas Teague QC for eight years for the rape and seven years consecutively for the blackmail offences.

But the judge also ruled he was a danger to the public and issued an Imprisonment for Public Protection (IPP) order, making the sentence indefinite.

Judge Teague recommended he serve a minimum of six years and 175 days before his case is reviewed.

Nicholson's girlfriend, mother-of-one Tracey Rogers, 28, helped run his "wicked" empire and was jailed for four years after being convicted of blackmail, operating without a licence and acquiring criminal property.

The couple, trading as Falcon Securities, targeted more than 800 poor people across Widnes and Runcorn in Cheshire, charging massive interest on the loans.

When borrowers found themselves incapable of repaying them, Nicholson imposed harsh penalty clauses and threatened his clients, even though some were unable to feed their families.

He created a climate of fear by using weapons such as a knuckleduster and a baseball bat.

The trial jury also heard how women who owed money were offered the option of "payment in kind" through sexual favours to Nicholson, or working in topless bars or as prostitutes to meet the weekly payments they owed to him.

The couple were prosecuted by the North West Trading Standards illegal Money Lending Team after a joint investigation with Cheshire Police.

Jacqui Kennedy, of the Government's Stop Loan Sharks project, said: "Since 2004 we have come across some terrible stories of how loan sharks intimidate and bully people - but this is probably the worst case we have seen so far."

Cheshire Police said Nicholson's substantial sentence would send out a clear message to others involved in money lending schemes.

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HOME - FEATURES - EXPRESS YOURSELF - The terrifying rise of loan sharks

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THE TERRIFYING RISE OF LOAN SHARKS

Friday August 1, 2009
By Adrian Lee

BRIAN Shields was a strapping six-footer who in his mum's words could look after himself.



Money lender Robert Reynolds

Yet in the days before he hanged himself at the family home, she'd seen him crying like a baby as a loan shark pursued him for an unpaid debt. Sucked into a bad crowd, the promising footballer had borrowed money to fund a cocaine habit. Brian was about to move in with his girlfriend and had a good job as a fender but in just 12 weeks a £300 loan had spiralled to £3,450.

When the 22-year-old took his own life he was at his wife's end. Text messages ordering him to repay the loan were found on his mobile phone. "He'd also been getting calls at 3am telling him that the boys from Liverpool were coming to shoot him," says his mother Carol Highton, from Runcom in Cheshire, who found her son's body. "He was scared."

The shark who lent money to her son has been jailed for cases involving other borrowers but Carol says two more have begun preying on desperate families in her area. As the recession claims jobs and legitimate credit becomes even harder to secure loan sharks are thriving. No one knows how many are in the UK but, according to one expert, pleas for help have risen 10-fold since the start of the credit crunch. Government estimates put the number of families using loan sharks at 165,000 and it's predicted this could rise to 200,000 as the recession continues. This week alone there have been two horrific cases.



DEBT: Deborah Wilson, harassed by Reynolds

A mother in Newcastle, who was forced to repay £88,000 on an original debt of £500, had two strokes due to the stress. Even then the loan shark visited Debbie Wilson's hospital bed to demand his cash. In another example loan shark John Kiely, who charged his 1,200 victims in Manchester up to 2,500 per cent interest, was jailed. He is thought to be Britain's most prolific loan shark, raking in £3million in five years. According to Carol, a single mother with two surviving children, these cases just scrape the surface in debt-ridden Britain.

"It's getting worse because of the financial climate," she claims. "They are operating in every community, sometimes on a small scale. You don't find these people in the Yellow Pages, it's all word-of-mouth. People are turning to them for quick money which they need just to survive. Most of them charge exorbitant interest rates then add on fines, typically £10 a day if the repayments are not met.

"At first they're your best friend but if they realise you can't pay or are struggling they quickly turn nasty. People are forced to sell possessions, or turn to crime, or provide sexual favours. Some young people who owe money end up becoming enforcers for the loan sharks because they have no other choice." Carol, whose son died in 2005, adds: "Once you are in debt to these people there is no shaking them off."

Paul Nicholson, 39, the loan shark who harassed Brian, was eventually imprisoned earlier this year for a string of offences linked to his illegal loan business. A judge said the racket he ran was "human greed in its purest form". In less than a year, between 2007 and 2008, he pocketed almost £660,000.

After he was jailed it emerged he had more than 1,100 clients and that his gains had helped pay for a £1.4million mansion in Cheshire and a villa in Spain. Brian had got to know Nicholson through work colleagues who also owed cash to the money lender.

"The problem is that people are either too embarrassed or feel too intimidated to come forward," says Carol, who has founded the Brian Shields Trust to help victims of loan sharks.

© Nea victim of John Kiely, the loan shark jailed in the North-west this week, gives a chilling insight into how these parasites operate.

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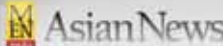
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Violent loan shark jailed for ten years

by Stuart Greer
April 11, 2009



AN Oldham loan shark has been jailed for 10 years for a "reign of terror" which included punishment beatings, kidnap and blackmail.

Majid Tabassum, of Eric Street, Clarksfield, (pictured) ran an illegal money-lending business with his henchman, Karl Gordon, from East London.

A London court heard that a 58-year-old man had borrowed money from Tabassum in 2006, but stopped repaying it in 2007 when the interest charges reached £250,000.

This led to a campaign of intimidation that culminated in a kidnap and punishment beating in July 2007.

In an act of desperation, the victim lied to Tabassum saying a business associate had received some of the borrowed funds.

This resulted in the associate's home being broken into and his family and friends threatened.

Then, in February 2008, Tabassum ordered that the victim be put under surveillance and, as part of the repayments, he was ordered to deliver funds by a deadline.

However, before the date had been reached, Gordon, Tabassum and another man went to the victim's house, where he and a friend were threatened with a large knife and the victim forced into a car and beaten.

Another friend of the hostage then arrived at the house and found the other victim with facial injuries. He immediately called the police.

The court heard that Gordon and Tabassum drove their terrified hostage to a forest in Essex and told him in the car that they had a gun.

The man was then attacked and ordered to buy a plane ticket and his two tormentors threatened to cut off his hand.

He was then dropped off at a railway station, where his friends collected him with the police.

Police started a manhunt for Tabassum, 36, who was finally held at Luton Airport on returning from a trip to Dubai.

Both he and Gordon were found guilty of conspiring to commit blackmail, kidnap and false imprisonment, grievous bodily harm, blackmail, kidnap and two counts of false imprisonment.

Tabassum received 10 years and Gordon was jailed for eight.

Detective Sergeant Tony O'Sullivan, from the Metropolitan Police Kidnap Unit, said: "Both these men conducted their illegal business using a regime of terror to enforce payments.

"The hostage made the bad decision to turn to a loan shark, getting into a huge amount of debt, completely beyond his ability to pay it back.

"This case sadly illustrates just why turning to illegal money lenders not only increases financial difficulties but can put people at very real personal danger, I'd urge anyone coming under intimidation from loan sharks to report it to police before it has the chance to escalate to anything this violent."

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