

MIDWAY

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MIDWAY

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. MIDWAY - DAY (ESTABLISHING)

SUPER IN/OUT: "FALL, 1996"

A pristine wooden family fun complex running along side the ocean. Three long buildings with massive garage doors expose the attractions inside to the outside world.

The first building, a large arcade packed full of games. A mini golf course made up of large metal dinosaurs separates the arcade from Fun house building; tall slides, mazes and a large ball pit fill the room.

A small pizza place separates the fun house from the last building which houses a merry go round overlooking the ocean.

Massive standing red letters spell out "Witch City Midway" across the roof.

INT. ARCADE - DAY

BRENDAN REESE(9) short jet black hair, green eyes and freckles stands on a small stool in front of a "Tapper" video game cabinet wearing a paper birthday hat with the number nine on it.

A swarm of CHILDREN LAUGH and chase one another behind him.

BRENDAN

Dad! I'm closing in on your high score.

PAUL REESE (36) tall with brown hair, thick mustache and a Red Sox cap runs over to the machine and looks over Brendan's shoulder.

PAUL

You better not beat my high score.

BRENDAN

What are you gonna do about it?

PAUL

I will return all your birthday gifts. The Pats beat the spread last week so I went all out too. There might even be something with two wheels and handlebars hiding in this place.

BRENDAN

You're bluffing.

PAUL

Am I?

Brendan stares at the screen; a tiny animated bartender flings mugs of beer down four long bars, running back and forth, faster and faster. The score climbs on the top left corner of the screen.

BRENDAN

Mom said you have a lousy poker face.

PAUL

How would you know my poker face?

Brendan looks up quickly from the game and sees a huge grin on his father's face. Brendan LAUGHS.

BRENDAN

Did you really get me a new bike?

PAUL

Depends if you beat my score or not. I might forget where I hid it.

Paul leans into the screen and squints at the score.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Almost there, shit!

Two WOMEN approach. KATIE REESE (31) short with auburn hair, big green eyes, a tight Bruins T-shirt carrying a large birthday cake. Katie is with STEF (33), an Italian woman with thick glasses and curly hair carrying a large stack of pizzas.

PAUL (CONT'D)

Okay, your mom is here now. If you beat that score, I'm telling her not to give you any cake.

KATIE

Don't listen to him honey, beat that score.

Paul looks over at Katie who winks at him, he makes a kissy face back at her.

PAUL

Okay, last chance! If you beat my high score, I am taking this damn game apart and throwing it in the ocean.

BRENDAN

I only need two more mugs!

CLOSE ON VIDEO GAME SCREEN: The words "New High Score!" Flash across the screen.

Brendan throws his hands up in the air.

PAUL

Just barely beat it!

BRENDAN

I didn't want to embarrass you too bad.

Paul smiles, picks up Brendan and gives him a huge hug while Brendan LAUGHS.

PAUL

I'm proud of you, son. Took me a long time to get that score. It's too bad I have to throw it in the ocean now. Right next to your birthday gifts.

Brendan narrows his eyes and stares at his dad.

BRENDAN

Yup. You're bluffing.

PAUL

Okay, smart ass. You got me.

Paul puts Brendan down, Brendan races to the machine and enters his initials on the high score screen. "BBR" under a score of 567,353.

MATCH CUT TO:

FLASH FORWARD

INT. ARCADE - DAY

Tapper game screen: the score climbs up to 557,162.

BRENDAN REESE (31) freckles, slicked black hair, black suit and piercing green eyes in a trance playing the now aged cabinet game. He smiles as he glances at the score.

SUPER IN/OUT: "FALL, 2018"

BRENDAN

I'm closing in on my high score.

MEGHAN FINN (27) a beautiful spitfire, long red hair, short stature and defined biceps poking out of a black dress watches over Brendan's shoulder and rubs his back.

MEGHAN

When was the last time you played this?

BRENDAN

Over twelve years.

"Game over" flashes across the screen with a score of 560,071. No new high score.

Brendan looks at the score and starts to well up with tears. He steps back from the machine and it BUZZES. He walks away.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

I need some air.

The room is full of people dressed in black. They're gathered around a casket next to the skee ball machines.

EXT. MIDWAY PARKING LOT - DAY

Groups of PEOPLE dressed in black wander the parking lot.

Brendan stands alone staring at the now rundown Midway.

The arcade games are ancient and mostly broken, the Fun house is ready to collapse, the mini golf course is covered in overgrown weeds, the carnival rides are now death traps with "out of order" signs hung everywhere.

Brendan shakes his head as Meghan comes to his side.

BRENDAN

This place was perfect for so long
and now it's just ready to
collapse, it's a shame.

Meghan looks long and hard at the Midway.

MEGHAN

She still has some spark in her.

BRENDAN

Bike for my ninth birthday, mom
leaves on my eighteenth and dad
dies on my thirty-first.

Beat.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

I should have been around more for
him.

MEGHAN

You can't blame yourself for this,
B. Parents and children drift
sometimes.

Meghan pulls a flask out of her purse and hands it to
Brendan. He take a big swig.

Brendan emphatically points at the midway, where his father's
casket rests.

BRENDAN

He was my best friend but he just
fell apart more and more every year
after mom left.

Brendan sits on the curb and starts to cry. Meghan sits next
to him and rests her head on his shoulder.

MEGHAN

If you're in the market for a best
friend, I'd like to throw my hat in
the ring. I got you a birthday cake
and Sox tickets if that helps your
decision, birthday boy.

Brendan turns his head and kisses her on the head.

BRENDAN

You're hired.

Meghan pumps her first.

MEGHAN

Yes!

MEGHAN (CONT'D)

Not everyone gets a perfect childhood with their parents in a literal fun house and giant arcade. Now you have me and that's pretty damn good.

BRENDAN

You're right. I'm still pretty lucky. But my dad's still dead, I'm a substitute middle school gym teacher and I have no car.

MEGHAN

Well, you can't have everything.

Brendan kisses Meghan on the head again and hands her the flask. She takes a sip.

BRENDAN

You're my favorite.

MEGHAN

Yea. You're okay.

Meghan stands up, then helps hoist Brendan from the curb. They dust themselves off and head back into the arcade.

INT. ARCADE - DAY

Brendan stands next to the open casket with his father resting inside. Some guests play arcade games, others drink and eat.

MARTY WALKER (59) approaches; tall, thin and dapper, he reaches for Brendan and gives him a big hug.

MARTY

I'm so sorry, Brendan. Your father was a good man.

BRENDAN

Thanks, Marty.

MARTY

Terrible with money though. He didn't even have life insurance.

BRENDAN
(annoyed)
I'm aware.

MARTY
Speaking of which, come to my
office later this week to discuss
the will.

BRENDAN
(sarcastic)
Can't wait. Should be fun.

Marty pats Brendan on the shoulder and walks away.

GARY ROGERS(58) stumbles up to Brendan with a beer in his hand and another one sticking out of his pocket. Gary, tall and barrel chested with Navy tattoos, gray beard and messy hair.

Gary falls into Brendan and wraps his arms around him.

Meghan puts her arms out, ready to catch Gary if he falls.

GARY
Your father was my best friend.

BRENDAN
I know, Gary.

GARY
What happened to Uncle Gary? You
always called me that when you were
a kid.

BRENDAN
But you're not really my uncle.

Gary visibly offended and drunk.

GARY
How DARE you! We might not be blood
but we are family.

Gary starts to tear up. Brendan hugs him back.

BRENDAN
You're right, Uncle Gary. I'm
sorry.

Gary reaches into his pocket and hands Brendan the full beer bottle.

GARY
That's better.

Brendan cracks it open, toasts Gary and takes a sip.

GARY (CONT'D)
I'm gonna go mingle some more.

BRENDAN
Go get em, Uncle Gary.

Brendan shakes his head.

Two OLDER BIKERS give Brendan hugs, one after another.

OLD BIKER 1
Sorry about your old man.

Brendan nods.

BRENDAN
Thanks, guys.

JAKE ESPOSITO (47) a gruff well built man with dark glasses and an expensive suit approaches Brendan slowly. Brendan squints at him.

JAKE
Hi, I'm Jake. An old business associate of your father's.

BRENDAN
Is that so?

Brendan sheepishly extends his hand to shake Jake's.

JAKE
Yes. I was really sorry to hear he passed. He was a good man. Sorry for your loss.

BRENDAN
Thanks.

JAKE
I'd like to discuss some important business with you. I have something of his that belongs to you now.

Jake hands Brendan a business card. Meghan, walks up and stands next to Brendan, she stares at Jake with concern.

BRENDAN
 (uneasy)
 Business?

JAKE
 Yes. Please give me a call later in
 the week when you get a chance.

BRENDAN
 (dismissive)
 Will do.

Jake shoots him a stern look after hearing Brendan's tone.

JAKE
 (stern)
 See that you do.

Jake makes his way to the parking lot and gets in a shiny black Cadillac and speeds off.

Meghan leans over to Brendan.

MEGHAN
 What the fuck was that about?

BRENDAN
 No idea.

Brendan looks at the business card.

Close up of card that reads: "Jake Esposito" with a phone number and no business title listed.

Brendan looks confused, stuffs it in his pocket and greets more guests in the procession line.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. GYMNASIUM - DAY

A swarm of CHILDREN run across the basketball court hurling large red rubber balls at each other.

Brendan stands on the edge of a basketball court, whistle in his mouth and a clipboard in his hand wearing a blue polo with "coach" stitched on the chest. He BLOWS the whistle loud and points.

BRENDAN
 Billy! I saw that, you're out. Get
 over here, buddy.

BILLY (11) short, freckled with bad haircut and Batman T-shirt runs to the sideline next to Brendan.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
You okay, Billy?

Billy doubles over trying to catch his breath.

BILLY
Yea, coach. I just was trying to give 100 percent like you taught me.

BRENDAN
You don't need to suck up to me buddy, everyone gets an "A" if they show up.

BILLY
I know, coach. I just wanted to make you proud.

Brendan forces a smile.

BRENDAN
I am proud of you, pal. I'd be more proud if you weren't the first one out.

Billy finally catches his breath.

BILLY
I'll do better next time, coach. The sub yesterday made us run two miles while he smoked cigarettes and read the newspaper.

BRENDAN
Sorry, I was at a funeral.

BILLY
Oh no!

Billy opens his arms and moves in for a hug.

Just then a rubber ball pegs Billy in the head and he hits the ground hard.

Brendan drops his clipboard and goes to the floor.

BRENDAN
Billy! Are you okay?

The children LAUGH as Billy struggles to get to his feet.

Brendan points to JESSICA (11) with blond pigtails and a Wonder Woman T-shirt, she's the only one not laughing at Billy.

Marty Walker walks in with a briefcase in his hand, Brendan sees him and waves Marty over.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
Jessica, can you help Billy to the nurse.

JESSICA
Yes, sir!

BRENDAN
Shake it off, Billy.

Jessica runs full speed, helps Billy up and leads him out of the gym.

Billy struggles to wave to Brendan.

MARTY
What the hell happened there?

BRENDAN
Dodgeball injury. He'll be fine.

Brendan sits in the stands, BLOWS his whistle and waves the kids off.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
Class dismissed, get changed and head to lunch.

The kids run out the door.

Brendan gestures to Marty to sit down.

MARTY
Is there a reason you couldn't come to my office? My air conditioned office with fine leather furniture and a Harvard Law degree hanging on the wall.

BRENDAN

Because I sold my car to pay for the funeral and you're all the way in Boston and I'm stuck in the suburbs walking everywhere.

Brendan pulls an airplane bottle of cheap whisky from his pocket and drinks half of it. Marty gives him a judgemental look.

MARTY

You drink while teaching children?

BRENDAN

Do you see any children around?
That was my last class.

Marty opens his briefcase and pulls out a large document.

MARTY

There are some minor stipulations to your inheritance, the Midway.

BRENDAN

(dejected)
Of course he left me that dump.

Marty flips through some papers as Brendan finishes his tiny bottle of whisky.

MARTY

That dump is worth two million dollars.

BRENDAN

(shocked)
What?!

MARTY

It's prime oceanfront property. Some developer will tear down the Midway and build condos.

BRENDAN

(excited)
Where the hell do I sign?

MARTY

Not so fast. The will stipulates that in order for you to gain ownership of Witch City Midway you must run said business for one full year.

BRENDAN

What the hell are you talking about?

Marty looks closely at the document.

MARTY

The Midway will be held in escrow until then. Once the year is up, the property is yours to do what you please. The will also states you must continue to employ each remaining staff member for that year.

BRENDAN

(furious)

Are you kidding me?! My Father is messing with me even after he's dead!? Perfect. This is so like him.

Marty holds out a pen, the will resting on the top of the briefcase.

MARTY

Are you going to sign?

He becomes impatient.

MARTY (CONT'D)

I don't have all day, Brendan. You're lucky I'm waving my hourly rate as a favor to your old man.

Marty pokes Brendan hard with the pen.

Brendan snatches it from his hand and begrudgingly signs.

BRENDAN

What am I going to do at the Midway for a year?

Marty looks annoyed, shakes his head, puts the will inside his briefcase and SNAPS it shut.

MARTY

Be happy your dad is taking care of
you after passing.

Brendan sits motionless, letting it sink in.

BRENDAN

(frustrated)

Can I get a ride home?

INT. ARCADE - NIGHT

Brendan stands in front of Tapper transfixed on the screen
and taking sips from a bottle of whisky resting on the top of
the machine. Suddenly the screen goes blank.

BRENDAN

What the hell?

Brendan looks up to see Jake with the plug in his hand. Jake
looks much different than he did at the funeral, a little
less put together and somehow more frightening.

JAKE

You never called.

BRENDAN

I've been busy.

JAKE

I can tell.

Jake nods at the video game. Brendan narrows his eyes looking
at Jake.

BRENDAN

I remember you now. I didn't
recognize you at the funeral. You
were my dad's bookie when I was a
kid. Weren't you?

JAKE

I was your dad's bookie your whole
life. How do you think he paid off
this place?

BRENDAN

Never pegged dad for a winning
gambler.

JAKE

I wouldn't say he was a *winning*
gambler.

(MORE)

JAKE (CONT'D)

But when he did win he'd be smart with the money at first. Pay some bills, buy you a bike or your mom jewelry. But he'd always come back for more.

BRENDAN

So how the hell did he pay this place off?

JAKE

He bet your college fund on the Red Sox to win the World Series in 2004.

BRENDAN

Ah ha. Good old dependable dad.

Brendan takes a sip of whisky, offers some to Jake who declines. Brendan settles at the Skee ball machines and takes a seat on the rail.

JAKE

That's why I'm here.

Brendan hangs his head in disappointment.

BRENDAN

(somber)

What does he owe?

Jake pulls out a small black notebook from inside his suit. He opens the book and examines it.

JAKE

\$118,560.

BRENDAN

Jesus Christ. Well, I clearly can't give you that much. So what do we do? Do you kill me or break my arms or something?

Jake puts the book back in his pocket.

JAKE

It will be pretty hard to get my money if you're dead. And it would be pretty hard for you to earn my money with broken limbs.

BRENDAN

I'm happy you feel that way.

Jake sits down next to Brendan.

JAKE

We have two options. Option one, you sign this property over to me, your debt is absolved and you will be awarded a handsome finder's fee.

BRENDAN

I don't own this property for another year. It's in escrow.

JAKE

Why should I believe you?

BRENDAN

Do you honestly think I want to keep this place?

Jake looks around the rotting interior of the Midway and nods. A small mouse runs across the room.

JAKE

That leaves us with option two. You pay me three grand a week until you're paid up, with interest.

BRENDAN

What if I can't make a payment?

JAKE

Then I set this old tinder box on fire. Maybe some people don't make it out.

Brendan shakes his head in disgust.

BRENDAN

When?

Jake stands up and adjusts his suit.

JAKE

One week from this Friday, the first three thousand. Deal?

Jake reaches out his hand, Brendan stares at it and looks around the dusty dilapidated room.

BRENDAN

(rhetorical)

What other choice do I have?

JAKE

Exactly. See you in nine days. Make
sure you have all the money,
Brendan.

Jake reaches out and shakes Brendan's hand, Brendan declines.

Jake smiles and drifts out the door.

Brendan grabs the whisky bottle, throws it hard against the
wall, SMASHING it to pieces.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN:

INT. FUN HOUSE - NIGHT

Brendan and Meghan smoke a joint while they sit in the ball pit of the dilapidated fun house.

Massive slides stretch from the roof to the floor, large mazes fill the room. Time has ravaged the once joyous palace.

MEGHAN

Do you have any savings?

BRENDAN

I'm a substitute middle school gym teacher, Meg.

MEGHAN

(sarcastic)

How could I forget?

Brendan takes a pull from the joint, billowing smoke from his mouth.

MEGHAN (CONT'D)

Could we sell any of the games in the arcade? They must be worth something.

BRENDAN

Nope. That breaks one of the stipulations of the will.

MEGHAN

Shit. We could sell a couple games and be fine.

BRENDAN

But even if we could sell the games, it would only hold Jake off for a few weeks. Then we'd have no games and zero income. The Midway doesn't make much but I gotta pay the remaining employees.

MEGHAN

Do you have anything worth money?

Brendan shakes his head.

The balls in the pit next to them start to shake, they both stare at the disturbance. The balls settle and they look away again.

BRENDAN

I wish I could just sign the place over to Jake. It gets him off my back and I can get away from this nightmare and make a little money. We could buy a house or something.

MEGHAN

Why would you want to do that?

BRENDAN

Buy a house?

MEGHAN

No. Get away from this so called nightmare. Why do you hate this place so much? You always talk about your childhood here like it was a spoiled kid's dream.

BRENDAN

All the good memories got swallowed up by the bad.

MEGHAN

Little dramatic but I understand. Who the fuck is the Jake guy, anyway?

The balls start to shake again as a large raccoon emerges from the ball pit. He looks over at the couple, crawls out of the pit and waddles into a hole in the wall. Brendan and Meghan stare at the hole he disappeared into.

BRENDAN

(annoyed)
Jesus Christ.

MEGHAN

Shit.

INT. ARCADE - DAY

A handful of KIDS and their PARENTS scattered throughout the room play games and collect tickets.

Brendan stands behind an open cabinet game with a large bag of tools by his feet. He reaches inside with a screwdriver in hand.

Gary approaches with a lit cigarette in his mouth and beer in his hand.

GARY

Waste of time, kiddo. Nobody ever plays these old cabinet games. They're only interested in the ticket games.

Brendan pokes his head out from the back of the machine and looks at Gary.

BRENDAN

Because they're broken.

Gary takes a sip of his beer.

GARY

Nah. Even when they did work nobody ever touched them. Just a few older guys from time to time.

Brendan steps out from behind the machine, looks Gary up and down and shakes his head.

BRENDAN

Would you mind not smoking in here? There are kids around.

Gary drops the cigarette on the floor and steps on it. Brendan stares at the floor disapprovingly.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

(sarcastic)

Thanks.

GARY

No problem, boss.

BRENDAN

Gary, do you know any ways we could make three grand before next Friday?

GARY

Holy shit. What the hell do you need three grand for?

BRENDAN

Not important.

GARY

Have you tried gambling? Scratch tickets, Keno, maybe some action on the Pats?

Gary takes a sip of his beer.

BRENDAN

Gambling is how my dad got me into this mess, doesn't feel wise to gamble to fix it. Any other ideas? Other than gambling of course.

GARY

You could grow some weed.

BRENDAN

Not a bad idea, but I don't think that would grow in a week.

Brendan leans back into the arcade cabinet. Then pulls his head back out quickly.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Could you grow some weed in the basement?

GARY

Oh hell yes. I got a nice little plant growing in the mini golf course behind the brachiosaurus.

Gary starts to LAUGH like a lunatic.

GARY (CONT'D)

Get it?

Brendan stares at Gary blankly as his laugh turns into a CHUCKLE.

GARY (CONT'D)

Because they're herbivores. Herb! Get it?

Brendan stares at Gary.

BRENDAN

(losing patience)

I get it. Why don't you get started with the planting?

GARY

You got it, boss.

Gary walks away, lights a fresh cigarette, puffs large plumes of smoke as he passes a CHILD playing skee ball. The child COUGHS.

INT. ARCADE - NIGHT

Brendan stands behind the prize booth. A wall of stuffed animals, funny hats, toys and Salem MA T-shirts with the ticket amounts tagged on them.

Three STAFF MEMBERS gather on the opposite side of the booth chatting with one another.

BRENDAN

Thank you for staying late today
for this meeting. I'm sure my
father wasn't much of the meeting
type.

TRACY (55) a thin blonde woman in overalls and a scar on her cheek takes a sip out of a flask.

TRACY

How long will this take? I have an
AA meeting in twenty minutes.

BRENDAN

(annoyed)
This should be quick.

Gary walks up to Tracy, she hands him the flask and he takes a sip.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Do any of you have an idea how we
can bring more money into the
Midway?

The group LAUGHS.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

I'm serious. More money coming into
the midway means more money for you
guys too; more hours, better pay,
maybe insurance. I need ideas. Any
ideas. Legal or otherwise.

GARY

(slurring)
Nobody suggest growing weed.

Gary stumbles a bit and CHUCKLES.

TRACY

We could have some cock fights in the back of the pizza place. Or a fight club.

BRENDAN

Sounds pretty messy.

TRACY

Underground strip club?

Brendan ignores Tracy.

BRENDAN

Does anyone ELSE have an idea?

KEEGAN (24) tall, chubby with a long red beard and thick glasses sheepishly raises his hand. Brendan points to him.

KEEGAN

Yes, sorry. You could have a movie night. Charge ten bucks a person, show a flick and families would stick around and play games.

Brendan nods his head enthusiastically.

BRENDAN

Yes! I love that plan. We don't have a projector or screen but I'll look into it.

Keegan smiles ear to ear.

TRACY

Can we leave now?

Brendan looks around the room at bored looking employees.

BRENDAN

Yes. That's all. Thank you so much, you can go.

Brendan grabs a large bucket full of Tootsie Rolls and dumps them out. He empties his wallet into the jar, grabs a marker and writes "\$24.75" on the side of the bucket.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Shit.

Brendan throws the marker, grabs a handful of Tootsie Rolls and begins to eat them.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Meghan cleans a cluttered table covered in plates and pint glasses when a MASSIVE MAN with a grin on his face approaches.

MOOSE DAVIS (33) a large gentle giant, stretched 6'9" and 300 pounds with a T-Rex tattoo on his neck, plops himself down at the table.

Meghan glares at Moose as he sits silently and stares back.

MEGHAN

I hope you have my money big boy.

MOOSE

Where the hell did you get so god damn good at pool?

MEGHAN

My grandfather owned a pool hall. I spent most of my teenage years there.

Moose shakes his head, reaches into his pocket and pulls out a large wad of cash.

Meghan stares at the money and cocks her head.

MEGHAN (CONT'D)

(confused)

Where the fuck did that come from?

MOOSE

My side hustle.

Moose pulls a thick pink rubber band off his wad of cash, counts out four crisp twenties and hands them to Meghan.

Meghan stares at the money and glares at Moose, who smirks back at her.

MEGHAN

If you're dealing drugs I'm gonna smash this over your head.

Meghan holds a glass beer pitcher over her head.

MOOSE

Settle down, Meg, I deal poker. That's why I can't work here on Friday nights. The game starts at eight and goes to about five in the morning.

MEGHAN

Jesus.

MOOSE

Yea. It's a long night but well worth it.

Meghan stares at the wad of cash in Moose's hand.

MEGHAN

How much do you make in a night? If you don't mind me asking.

MOOSE

Not at all. I make between five and seven hundred in tips a night.

Meghan's jaw drops as she stands up from the table.

MEGHAN

You make that much money in ONE night?! Why the hell do you work here?

MOOSE

To meet girls.

Meghan SCOFFS.

Meghan picks up a half drunk glass from the table and downs the remaining contents in one GULP. Moose cringes.

MEGHAN

I'm in the wrong line of work.

MOOSE

If you think that's crazy, you should see how much the guy who runs the game makes.

MEGHAN

What do you mean? How does he make money?

MOOSE

From the rake. It's a pretty high stakes game.

MEGHAN

What the hell is a rake?

MOOSE

The rake is what the house takes from each pot. Like a fee for hosting the game.

Meghan stares at Moose in confusion.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

You know how when you make people drinks you take the first sip before you serve them.

MEGHAN

Yes. It's my genius way to get drunk during my shift for free.

MOOSE

Right. It's also kind of fucked up and gross.

Meghan shrugs.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Those drinks are like each pot at the poker game. A little is taken out of each one and the house keeps it.

Meghan nods her head, very impressed.

MEGHAN

I like it. I like it a lot. How much does that guy make?

Moose leans in closer to Meghan's face.

MOOSE

(whispers)

Between fifteen hundred and two grand every game.

MEGHAN

(shocked)

Holy shit! Two grand!?

MOOSE

On a good night.

Meghan grins.

MEGHAN
Do you like skee ball?

INT. ARCADE - NIGHT

Brendan hangs up a painted sign that reads: "Vintage Games" over a section of the arcade full of newly repaired cabinet games.

Meghan walks in with Moose, who stares at all the games in awe. Moose stops at the wall of skee ball machines.

MEGHAN
Honey, the games look great. Did you fix all of these?

BRENDAN
Yup. I was up all last night rewiring them. I found \$150 in quarters, a rat's nest, a dead raccoon, and what I'm assuming was my father's playboy collection.

MEGHAN
Jackpot.

BRENDAN
Not bad, right? I gave the Playboys to Gary. He gets lonely.

MEGHAN
I'm so proud of you.

Brendan looks at the crooked hanging sign, then back at Meghan.

Moose drops a quarter into one of the skee ball machines and starts to awkwardly stretch.

Brendan cocks his head towards Moose.

BRENDAN
What's Moose doing here?

MEGHAN
We might have a way to pay Jake off.

INT. ARCADE - LATER

Brendan and Meghan walk up to Moose who tosses balls down the skee ball alley with a fierce determined look on his face.

BRENDAN
Hey Moose, nice to see-

Moose leans in and gives Brendan a huge bear hug, lifting him off the ground.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
Whoa.

MOOSE
Sorry to hear about your dad, man.

BRENDAN
Thank you.

MOOSE
Wanna gamble? Ten bucks a game.

Brendan looks up at Moose's score from the game he just finished.

BRENDAN
Let's make it twenty.

Moose nods his head, they both drop a quarter in the machine and start.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
What's this idea you have for me?

Moose tosses a ball.

MOOSE
I deal an underground poker game.
It makes around two thousand every
week. Meghan and I figured with all
the space you have here and locking
metal gates for all the doors, it
would be a great spot to host a
game.

BRENDAN
But isn't it illegal?

Brendan stares at the wooden skee ball in his hand.

MOOSE
Yes. But cops rarely break up games
or press charges when they do.

MEGHAN
What do you care if it's illegal?
You had Gary plant twenty weed
plants in the basement yesterday.

BRENDAN

I know but this is gambling and money flying around. Seems a little risky. Couldn't we get robbed too?

MOOSE

All the guys at my Friday game are legit and they'll be the ones playing. No trouble from them at all.

BRENDAN

What do you get out of this?

Brendan tosses a skee ball and it drops in the hundred point hole.

MOOSE

I get the tips, you get the rake. We both make money. Win, win. But I can only help for a few months.

BRENDAN

Who would deal once you're gone. Not that I'm agreeing to have the game yet.

Moose points at Meghan while holding a skee ball.

MOOSE

I'll teach Meg and you can run the game together.

MEGHAN

(excited)
Yay! New job!

BRENDAN

I haven't agreed to do it yet.

Brendan looks up at the skee ball score.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

That's four games I'm up so far.

MOOSE

One more game, double or nothing.

Brendan nods and drops in another quarter.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

It's low risk to run the game, you just need a table and some chips.

(MORE)

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Order pizzas for the players and have some booze on hand. If you run the game for seven hours you can make well over a thousand dollars in a night, maybe two.

Moose tosses a skee ball that lands in the ten point hole. Brendan tosses another in the hundred point hole.

BRENDAN

And you'll deal, and teach Meg to deal as well.

MOOSE

Yup.

Brendan tosses his last ball.

The high score alarm BLARES and lights up on the skee ball machine.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Shit!

Moose digs into his jeans, pulls out the wad of cash and hands eight crisp twenties to Brendan.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

What do you think, man? Do you want to give this a shot?

Brendan stares at the Tootsie Roll bucket with "\$24.75" written on it. Brendan looks at the money he just won and back at Moose with the wad of cash in his hand.

BRENDAN

Okay. Fuck it. Let's do it.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

EXT. SUBURBAN HOME - NIGHT

Brendan KNOCKS on a large red door and waits.

No answer.

Brendan notices a doorbell and presses it lightly. "Kokomo" by The Beach Boys RINGS through the house.

BRENDAN
(singing to himself)
*That's where I wanna go to get away
from it all-*

The door FLIES open and there stands VALERIE BERGERON (60) with a tiki glass in hand, sporting a Hawaiian shirt. Her attire says - "let's party" her face says - "get the hell out."

VALERIE
Who the hell are you?

BRENDAN
(nervous)
I'm Brendan, I--

VALERIE
What the hell do you want, Brendan?

BRENDAN
I called earlier.

Valerie GROANS.

VALERIE
Right. Okay, Let's make this quick kiddo, I have bingo in a half hour. Come on in, you're letting bugs in.

Brendan reluctantly steps inside.

INT. VALERIE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Brendan scans each room he walks past as he makes his way down the hall behind Valerie.

The house is a mess, boxes haphazardly packed and stacked, full ashtrays every ten feet. Trash barrels full of spent scratch tickets, stacks of bingo cards and Keno tickets are scattered like fallen leaves in autumn.

BRENDAN

Are you moving?

VALERIE

Yea. This house is too big for one person.

Brendan stares at a pile of letters on the hallway table. The letters are stamped "Final Notice" in red. They rest next to a wooden bowl full of casino flyers for free hotel rooms.

Valerie opens a door near the end of the hallway and walks inside. Brendan Follows.

INT. VALERIE'S HOUSE - SUNROOM - CONTINUOUS

OVER BLACK.

VALERIE

Where the hell is that thing?

CLICK.

Brendan and Valerie stand in the middle of a gorgeous tropical theme room. The walls are covered with framed photos of Valerie with a man on various beaches.

Large hibiscus plants line the far wall. One corner stands a tiki bar made of bamboo, countless alcohol bottles are lined up perfectly on the bar.

In the center of the room rests a large custom made poker table with the words "Val and Artie's Tropical Casino" printed in the center of the felt.

BRENDAN

Who's Artie?

Valerie spits out a plume of smoke.

VALERIE

None of your fucking business.

Brendan nods.

BRENDAN

That's fair. How much do you want for the table?

VALERIE
Table, chairs and chips, three
hundred dollars.

Brendan inspects the table's quality. Valerie rolls her eyes,
walks to the bar and starts making a drink.

BRENDAN
Are you firm on that price?

VALERIE
Very firm.

Valerie takes a sip of her fresh cocktail. She taps the hips
of a hula girl lamp on the bar and the grass skirted woman
starts to dance.

VALERIE (CONT'D)
I'll throw in this lamp and a
bottle of whisky.

BRENDAN
Make it three bottles and three
tiki mugs.

Brendan points to a long shelf full of ornate tiki mugs.

VALERIE
Two bottles, two mugs.

BRENDAN
(excited)
Deal!

VALERIE
(sarcastic)
Fucking fantastic.

EXT. VALERIE'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Brendan and Valerie struggle to load the table into a beat up
white van with the word's "Gary's love wagon" painted on the
door. They manage to get the table inside, Brendan SLAMS the
door closed.

Valerie pulls out a cigarette. Lights it and exhales a white
cloud. She hands one to Brendan and lights it for him.

BRENDAN
Sorry about your husband.

Valerie nods her head and takes a puff.

VALERIE

Thanks.

Valerie taps Brendan on the shoulder half affectionately.

VALERIE (CONT'D)

Sorry about your dad.

Brendan looks up shocked.

BRENDAN

You knew my dad?

VALERIE

Yea. Me and Paul go way back. He used to play in our card game.

BRENDAN

Was he any good?

VALERIE

No. Total fish. But he was a good man. Talked about you a lot.

BRENDAN

Really? What did he say?

Valerie looks at her watch.

VALERIE

Bingo time, I'll tell you some other time kiddo.

Valerie turns around and disappears into the night.

EXT. LUXURY HIGH RISE APARTMENT - NIGHT (ESTABLISHING)

BELL HOPS greet RESIDENTS and open large glass doors to let them inside.

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT - POKER ROOM - NIGHT

Moose sits in the center of a large poker table, surrounded by PLAYERS. The room is relatively bland, except for a few televisions on the wall playing different sporting events.

JOHNNY CARS (50) clean cut, gray, with a two hundred dollar hair cut. He wears a charcoal custom tailored suit loosens his tie while staring at a TV.

JOHNNY CARS
Sox are about to cost me a fucking
Lexus.

CHRIS MILLER (35) short and balding LAUGHS as he stacks
chips.

CHRIS
Typical Friday for you, Cars.

JOHNNY CARS
Shut the fuck up, Chris.

DANIEL GIOCARE (45) a large man with a long beard stands with
his arms crossed watching the game.

Moose glances over at him and continues to deal.

The doorbell RINGS.

DANIEL
That's the food.

JOHNNY CARS
(sarcastic)
Great, pizza will cheer me up after
losing twenty grand.

Daniel exits the room, Moose watches intently.

MOOSE
Would any of you guys be interested
in playing on Thursday?

JOHNNY CARS
Look at you Moosey, Daniel leaves
the room for one minute and you're
already starting a new game.

MOOSE
I don't care what Daniel thinks,
this new game won't mess his up.

CHRIS
For a big guy, you're pretty damn
spineless.

MOOSE
Fuck you Chris. Do you guys wanna
play or not?

BRITTANY HAZE (26) petite with designer sunglasses and a small dog on her lap removes her glasses to look Moose in the eye.

BRITTANY

Where?

MOOSE

Witch City Midway.

CHRIS

That place is still open?

MOOSE

It sure is.

BRITTANY

I loved that place when I was a kid, do they still have skee ball?

MOOSE

I can personally vouch that the skee ball machines are alive and well.

JOHNNY CARS

I'm in. My wife has girl's night on Thursdays and I usually go to the casino. This will save me the two hour drive to Foxwoods.

Daniel enters the room with a stack of pizza boxes.

DANIEL

Dinner time, degenerates.

The room is quiet.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

What's going on?

MOOSE

Nothing-

Daniel shoots Moose a dirty look. Johnny Cars stands up and slaps Daniel on the back.

JOHNNY CARS

We were just talking about Moose's date last night. He went in for the kiss but she closed the door on his face. We all just feel bad for the big guy.

Johnny Cars shots Moose a finger gun and winks.

JOHNNY CARS (CONT'D)
Her loss big guy, you'll get 'em
next time.

Daniel looks at Moose suspiciously.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LUXURY APARTMENT - POKER ROOM - NIGHT - LATER

Daniel counts out stacks of hundreds and twenties as Moose racks up the chips. Daniel hands Brittany a wad of cash, she counts it again.

DANIEL
Thirteen hundred and forty dollars,
well done sweetheart.

Brittany counts the money a second time.

BRITTANY
Thanks. Don't call me sweetheart.

DANIEL
(correct her)
I was talking to Jarvis.

Brittany stuffs the money in her wallet and kisses her dog before putting him back in her purse.

BRITTANY
Good night, Moose. I'll see you
Thursday.

Jarvis BARKS once as he and Brittany leave.

Daniel glares at Moose.

DANIEL
What is Thursday?

MOOSE
(nervous)
Ummm. We have a date.

DANIEL
(suspicious)
Try again big guy.

Moose looks around the room nervously.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
What the fuck is going on?

MOOSE
Nothing. You're being paranoid.

Daniel walks up to Moose slowly.

Dan cranes his neck to look Moose in the eye.

DANIEL
(suspicious)
Maybe I am being paranoid. But let me remind you Johnny Cars is *my* whale. With a bottomless bankroll he keeps money in my pockets, your pockets, and my boss's pockets.

MOOSE
I know.

DANIEL
You know who owns my game, don't you?

MOOSE
Yes.

DANIEL
And you don't want to fuck with them, do you?

MOOSE
No.

DANIEL
Just be careful, big guy.

Daniel hands Moose a stack of cash. Moose counts it nervously and stuffs it in his pocket.

MOOSE
Thanks, Daniel.

Daniel stares at Moose as he leaves slowly.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT

Meghan drags in chairs and places ten of them around the poker table.

MEGHAN

I gotta say, I love this table.
Who are Val and Artie?

BRENDAN

The patron saints of our poker
game.

Moose pulls out a case of chips, starts cutting out stacks
and placing them around the table. Ten stacks, ten seats, one
empty seat for the dealer.

Brendan crosses his arms satisfied and nods at the table in
approval.

MOOSE

You ready?

BRENDAN

Yup. Let's do this. Meg, would
bring them in, please?

Meghan shoots Brendan a thumbs up and skips away.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT

Brendan, Meghan and the Midway misfits; Gary, Tracy, and
Keegan all sit behind stacks of chips at the poker table as
Moose deals cards.

GARY

How much are we playing for?

BRENDAN

Nothing. This is just practice so
we can learn the game better.

GARY

I know how to play poker.

TRACY

Me too.

KEEGAN

Yea. So do I.

BRENDAN

Everyone listen up. This is for me
to learn so I can keep you all
employed. Please, for me, listen to
Moose.

Gary takes a sip out of his flask and nods.

GARY
Okay, boss. Shuffle up and deal,
Moose.

Gary winks at Moose.

DISSOLVE TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS - PRACTICE POKER

A) Moose shuffles the cards masterfully and pitches them at each person with focus and accuracy.

MOOSE (V.O.)
No limit Texas Hold em is a pretty
simple game.

B) Brendan picks up his cards and looks at them like a child would, holding them two inches from his face. Moose reaches over and places them back on the table.

MOOSE (V.O.)
Each player is dealt two cards face
down, make sure nobody sees those
two cards before the hand is over.
Always protect your hand.

C) Gary takes a pull out of his flask, hands it to Tracy then throws a few chips into the middle of the table.

MOOSE (V.O.)
After your two cards are dealt,
there is a round of betting.

Moose places three cards face up in the center of the table.

MOOSE (V.O.)
These three cards are called the
flop and they are community cards
for everyone to share.

Tracy grabs her whole pile of chips and flings it in the middle.

MOOSE (V.O.)
Then a fourth card is placed in the
middle, this is the turn. After
that there is another round of
betting.

D) Keegan pushes all his chips in the middle, Gary tries to look at Keegan's hand but Keegan hides it. Moose places a fifth card in the middle.

MOOSE (V.O.)

Then the last community is placed face up, the river. There is one last betting round. The person with the best five card hand using the two in their hand combined with the five cards in the middle wins.

Meghan flips over her cards, Moose pushes all the chips in the middle to her. She winks and makes a kissy face at Brendan.

MOOSE

(to Meghan, Brendan)

It's simple. But honestly, my players know what they're doing and all you need to know is how to get them chips and deal the cards.

Brendan and Meghan nod in approval.

INT. MIDWAY WORKSHOP - NIGHT

Brendan walks inside a dimly lit workshop. There's a workbench covered in tools, video game parts and empty beer bottles.

BRENDAN

Uncle Gary! You in here?

GARY (O.S.)

No.

BRENDAN

(annoyed)

Come on man, I need the garage keys to the fun house. I think we might have a raccoon issue that I want to stay on top of.

Gary appears from the shadows.

GARY

Oh yea, those bastards run a muck in there.

BRENDAN

We gotta do something about that.

Brendan looks at Gary who drinks a beer.

GARY

The keys are right on top of the work bench.

Brendan looks around.

BRENDAN

Do you live here or something?

Gary nervously takes a sip of his beer.

GARY

Your dad let me crash here after the ex kicked me out a few years ago. He was a good guy like that.

BRENDAN

I didn't get to see that good guy too much the past thirteen years.

Brendan wanders around the workshop, grabs the keys and notices some things hung on the wall.

Gary FLIPS on the light switch.

Brendan stares at the wall above the work bench, covered in framed pictures of him and his dad.

GARY

He loved you, kiddo. He just had his own problems.

Brendan leans in and stares at a photo of him and his dad on a Carousel.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. MIDWAY - DAY (FLASHBACK)

Brendan (9) sits on a top of a wooden witch on a Merry go Round while his father tinkers with some wires inside an old electrical box.

BRENDAN

Dad, we've been here almost an hour.

PAUL

Have a little faith in your old man.

Paul (36) flips a switch, SPARKS fly, the music SWELLS, the lights glow perfectly and the Merry go Round starts to turn.

BRENDAN

Dad! It's working! You did it!

Paul jumps on the back of the witch behind Brendan.

PAUL

Told you, I'd fix it for you.

Paul kisses Brendan's head as Brendan LAUGHS in pure joy.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MIDWAY WORKSHOP - NIGHT (BACK TO PRESENT)

Gary BELCHES and crudely snaps Brendan out of his trance.

GARY

You can keep that picture if you let me stay here.

BRENDAN

You can stay here as long as you want.

GARY

Thanks, kiddo.

BRENDAN

All haunted houses need a ghost.

GARY

BOO!

INT. ARCADE - DAY

Brendan and Moose inspect the poker chips at the prize counter while Meghan practices shuffling cards. The arcade is sparsely occupied by KIDS and PARENTS.

BRENDAN

Why aren't the values printed on the chips?

MOOSE

In case cops raid the game. If there is a cash value printed on the chip they book you for running an illegal casino.

BRENDAN
(confused)

Oh.

A COP (46) medium height, built like a linebacker and tattoos covering both arms lumbers up to the counter. Brendan panics and pushes the chips on the floor behind the prize counter.

The Cop SLAPS a ten dollar bill on the glass counter and glares at Brendan.

COP
Your coin machine is broken, chief.
Can I get some quarters?

BRENDAN
No problem at all, officer.

Brendan reaches under the counter into a drawer and pulls out a small cup full of quarters. The Cop smirks and grabs the cup.

COP
Thank you.

The Cop bounds towards the skee ball machines, pops in a quarter and nods his head in glee.

Gary walks up to the Cop and gives him a big hug. Gary smiles and approaches the counter.

GARY
Afternoon boys, who wants to grab a
beer and a slice of pizza.

MEGHAN
I do!

BRENDAN
(to Gary)
Gary, who the hell is that guy?

Gary points to the Cop playing skee ball.

GARY
You mean, Chip? He's a regular. He
comes in after his shift and blows
off steam playing skee ball for an
hour or so.

BRENDAN
It never dawned on you to tell me
that?

(MORE)

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

We are about to run an illegal poker game and a *COP* comes in every day.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

(to Meghan, Moose)

Poker game meeting in the Fun house, right now.

GARY

I'll be at the Pizza shop if you need me.

Gary glides out of the room without a care in the world.

INT. FUN HOUSE - DAY

Brendan, Meghan and Moose stand next to a large slide that stretches all the way to the ceiling and leads to a massive ball pit.

Moose looks around the room in utter amazement.

MOOSE

This place is amazing. Probably should be condemned but it's incredible. Do you think I could fit down that slide?

BRENDAN

I'm very concerned about this Cop hanging around the Midway.

MEGHAN

It's not like he's going to be around when we're running the game. Midway closes up at eight and the game starts at nine. The garage doors will be down and locked. He can't get in unless we let him in. He'd have no reason to be here anyway.

MOOSE

She's right.

BRENDAN

What happens if we get caught?

MOOSE

Brendan, relax. Cops only care about high stakes games, our game is nothing compared to those huge ones. Only hero cops seek out smaller games, mostly it's crooked cops looking for a cut of the action.

BRENDAN

(frustrated)
I need a minute.

Brendan walks to the top of the stairs for the slide, and paces on the platform silently muttering to himself.

MEGHAN

(to Moose)
Give him a minute to cool off, he's hard to talk to when he's acting manic.

Moose nods.

BRENDAN

(yelling to Meghan and Moose)
Who would you rather cross, the cops or the mafia?

MOOSE

(yells back to Brendan)
Ever seen Goodfellas?

Brendan stares at the ceiling in contemplation.

BRENDAN

SHIT!

Brendan climbs into the slide and rides it down, plopping into the ball pit.

Moose and Meghan stare, waiting for an answer.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Let's do this shit.

MEGHAN

Yes!

MOOSE

Alright, nice. Can I get turn on that slide?

The balls in the pit move, all three look on as two raccoons scurry out.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

Never mind.

EXT. MIDWAY - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Moose walks to his car and climbs into his SUV.

Daniel watches from behind a tree.

Moose starts the engine and SPEEDS off.

Daniel pulls out his phone and dials.

DANIEL

Hey, boss. It's me. We might have a serious problem.

FADE OUT

END OF ACT THREE

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT

Brendan closes the massive metal garage doors to the Midway and locks them.

Moose adjusts the table and chairs while Meghan sets up a bar at the ticket counter.

MEGHAN

I hope my work doesn't miss all these bottles of booze I stole.

BRENDAN

You stole those?

MEGHAN

I figured I should start to lean into my new criminal career.

BRENDAN

(to Moose)

What time are these guys coming?

MOOSE

About a half hour. One of these guys in a bookie and most of the players bet with him, so they'll wanna watch the Sox.

BRENDAN

Shit. Well that could be a problem.

Meghan points over her head to the top shelf of the ticket prize wall.

Brendan looks up and spots the seventy inch flat screen marked: "one million tickets."

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT - LATER

Brendan plugs in the TV as it rests on the glass ticket counter, it lights up.

BRENDAN

Hey! Not bad. I can't believe it wasn't just an empty box.

Brendan taps the empty TV box and knocks it over.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

Here we go.

Moose calmly walks over, looks through the peep hole then opens the door.

SERIES OF SHOTS - PLAYERS ARRIVE

A) Brittany, Chris and Johnny Cars walk in, Hug Moose and shake Brendan's hand. Chris looks around the room disgusted. Jarvis BARKS from Brittany's purse.

JOHNNY CARS

Thanks for having us, this place
bring back memories.

CHIS

I'm gonna need a tetanus shot after
this.

B) Brendan brings the three players chips, they each hand him a wad of cash in return. Meghan mixes drinks.

C.) Moose answers the door. In walks ROMAN (50) portly with a gray beard, thick glasses and notebook tucked under his arm. Behind Roman is JAMIE (37) thick dreadlocks, bloodshot eyes with a perfect smile and a backpack slung over his shoulder.

ROMAN

Sorry, this pot head followed me
from the parking lot.

D.) Moose moves to close the door as TERRY (19) and KENT (20) walk in. Two college kids dressed in J Crew sweaters, who barely look old enough to drive walk in, cocky.

TERRY

(to Kent)
What a dump.

KENT

(to Terry)
We aren't buying the place, we came
to gamble so play it cool. We'll
clean these fish out by morning.

Moose leans into Kent's ear.

MOOSE
 (whispers)
 Just make sure you tip well. Now
 sit down.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT - LATER

Moose shuffles cards as the seven players double check their chips.

Brendan locks the money in the register as Meghan mixes some drinks.

BRITTANY
 Where are the last two players?

MOOSE
 (to Brittany)
 Those are Brendan's guys.
 (to Brendan)
 Hey, boss. Where are your players?

BRENDAN
 They'll be here soon.

There is a KNOCK at door.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
 Speak of the devil.

Brendan bounds toward the door and FLINGS it open. In walks Valerie Bergeron and CEDRIC MAXWELL (62) a towering man with a bald head, a short gray beard and a Celtics polo on.

ROMAN
 Holy shit! That's Cedric Maxwell.

TERRY
 Who?

MEGHAN
 (to Terry)
 He played for the Celtics from 1977
 to 1985 you infant. Show some
 respect, he won us two
 championships.
 (to Cedric)
 Big fan!

Cedric waves and walks toward the table.

VALERIE

Okay, everyone settle the fuck down. Let's play some poker.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT - LATER

Brendan watches from the sidelines while the players splash chips in the center of the table. Roman stares intensely at the TV, the Red Sox game is in full swing.

ROMAN

Fucking Pedrinoa! You bum! You couldn't hit a god damn beach ball.

JAMIE

Yo, chill. It's just a game.

Cedric looks at his cards then back up at Roman.

CEDRIC

(to Roman)

Did you ever play professionally?

Roman looks away from the TV and directs his attention to Cedric.

ROMAN

(sheepish)

No-

CEDRIC

What about college?

ROMAN

Nope.

CEDRIC

Then shut the hell up. I'm sick of people like you who think they know better than us pros. You just watch the games and think you could hack it. You can't, you've never been there and you never will, so shut up.

Johnny Cars LAUGHS so hard he knocks over his chips.

ROMAN

Fuck you, Cars. And fuck you Maxwell, you lost me ten grand in eighty six.

CEDRIC
That's your fault, never bet
against the dynasty.

BRITTANY
He has a point.

Roman glares at Cedric.

There is a KNOCK at the door.

Everyone stares at the door then back at Brendan.

Brendan nervously drifts towards the door, every player puts
an eye on him.

Brendan looks through the peephole and panics.

BRENDAN
It's that cop! He was in here
earlier.

JOHNNY CARS
(shocked)
A cop?!
(sarcastic to Moose)
Great game you got here, buddy.

JAMIE
Shit!

Jamie takes his backpack and hides behind one of the arcade
games.

MEGHAN
What do we do?

BRENDAN
I don't know! Hide?

EXT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT

Chip, still in uniform BANGS on the door even harder.

CHIP
Hello? Is anyone in there? I can
see the lights on.

Gary drunkenly walks by smoking a cigarette with a beer in
hand.

He's singing "How Will I Know" by Whitney Houston.

GARY
 (singing)
*There's a boy, I know. He's the one
 I dream of-*

CHIP
 Gary! Hey, man.

Gary jumps, startled and embarrassed.

GARY
 Hey, Chip. What brings you here?

CHIP
 Hey, can you let me in the arcade?
 I think I left the keys to my squad
 car in there.

GARY
 Yea. No problem at all.

Gary stumbles to the door and fumbles with the keys.

CHIP
 I hope you're not planning on
 driving, buddy.

GARY
 No way Jose. I live here.

Chip gives a confused look as Gary finds the right key.

INT. ARCADE - CONTINUOUS

Brendan runs around the room.

BRENDAN
 Guys! We have to hide, get behind
 the pop shot machines.

Nobody moves except Meghan and Jamie who hide.

The door unlocks, Gary stumbles in.

Chip in uniform walks in behind and scans the room.

GARY
 (to Brendan)
 Chip left his keys here earlier
 today.

Chip wanders the room, the players are frozen.

BRENDAN
(terrified)
No bother at all, officer. Where
did you see them last?

Chip walks up to the skee ball machines, leans down and grabs
a set of keys resting on an empty machine.

He turns towards the table and watches.

CHIP
Don't mind me. Please keep playing.

Moose looks over his shoulder at Chip and nervously deals a
new hand.

Chip walks away from the table and nods his head at Brendan
towards the opposite end of the room, Brendan nervously
follows.

CHIP (CONT'D)
Is there something you want to tell
me, son?

BRENDAN
I-

Chip rests one hand on his hip and the other on his gun.

Brendan puts his hands in the air, ready to be cuffed.

CHIP
Save it. I know what's going on
here. My cut is twenty percent,
free skee ball and pizza anytime I
want. Deal?

Brendan looks at Chip and a smile zaps across his face.

BRENDAN
(confident)
Ten Percent.

CHIP
Fifteen.

BRENDAN
Twelve.

CHIP
Deal.

Chip nods his head.

CHIP (CONT'D)
(to Brendan)
Good.
(to the poker players)
Enjoy your evening folks.

Chip reaches out his hand, Brendan does the same and they shake.

Chip smiles and walks out, Brendan locks the door behind.

Brendan proudly walks back to the table.

JOHNNY CARS
Everything okay?

BRENDAN
Of course, nothing to worry about.

JOHNNY CARS
I love this kid, he's got ice in
his veins.

Moose pulls out a flask and takes a huge GULP.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - NIGHT - LATER

The players look tired, Moose's starts to deal a little sloppier.

A hand comes up, Roman pushes all his chips in the middle.

Cedric grins.

CEDRIC
I call. Flush.

Cedric flips over Ace-Ten of clubs.

Roman looks back at the board and sees three more clubs.

ROMAN
Shit! You lucky tall fuck.

Cedric LAUGHS as Moose pushes him all the chips.

JAMIE
(to Roman)
You need to chill out, man. I have
just the thing for you.

ROMAN
I bet you do, burn out.

JAMIE

Hey now, no need to be hostile.
This will chill you the fuck out.
And you could use it.

Jamie holds a bag of weed and shows Roman.

ROMAN

I'll pass, thank you.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - DAWN

The game winds down, Moose starts to fade. He's visibly drunk.

Brendan walks over to Moose and whispers in his ear.

BRENDAN

(sternly whispering)
What the hell, Moose? Are you
hammered?

MOOSE

(slurring)
I'm fine, BOSS. Let me do my job.

Only five players are left: Valerie, Roman, Johnny Cars, Brittany and Cedric. They all nervously look at Moose.

Brendan walks back to the ticket counter and takes a seat.

Terry and Kent play in the vintage game section of the arcade.

BOOM, Moose falls out of his seat.

Brendan runs back over to help him up.

BRENDAN

Are you okay, man?

MOOSE

(slurring)
Yea, I'm fine.

After a struggle, Brendan gets Moose to his feet and walks him to the ticket counter.

BRENDAN

(whispers angrily)
You asshole! Are you friggin'
kidding me?!

Moose starts to teeter.

Brendan guides him behind the counter.

Meghan makes a makeshift bed with the largest stuffed animals from the prize wall.

Brendan pushes Moose onto the pile of stuffed animals.

He's out like a light.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)

(to Moose)

Sleep it off.

(to Meghan)

You ready, honey?

Meghan nods her head confidently and walks to the poker table and sits down.

JOHNNY CARS

New dealer, coming out!

Meghan nervously starts to shuffle, shaking a bit.

Valerie puts her hand on Meghan's shoulder.

VALERIE

You got this, sweetie. Take your time.

Meghan smiles and starts to shuffle and pitch the cards half decently, making small mistakes but hanging tough.

BRITTANY

Looks like we have a replacement for Moose.

The whole table LAUGHS.

Brendan smiles at Meghan, she winks at him.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - MORNING

Brendan cashes out the players, counting chips and handing money to each remaining player.

Cedric plays the Pop Shot basketball game while waiting for his money.

Valerie smiles and stuffs her money into her cleavage.

Johnny Cars looks over at Moose sound asleep on the stuffed animals.

JOHNNY CARS
(to Moose)
You big dumb bastard.

Johnny Cars walks up to Brendan and shakes his Hand.

JOHNNY CARS (CONT'D)
Nice game, kid. I'll be back again.

BRENDAN
Thank you, sir.

Cedric signs one of the basketballs from the pop shot game and hands it to Meghan.

MEGHAN
Thanks!

CEDRIC
No problem. Anything for a fan.

All the players funnel out the door and Brendan locks it behind them.

Brendan walks to the cash register and starts to count the rake.

MEGHAN
How are we looking?

Brendan counts the last of the bills.

BRENDAN
Two thousand one hundred.

MEGHAN
That's great!

BRENDAN
It is. But adding this to the four hundred we already had, we are still five hundred short.

MEGHAN
Shit. When is Jake coming?

Brendan nervously looks at the clock.

BRENDAN
Twenty minutes.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

ACT FIVE

FADE IN:

INT. FUN HOUSE - DAY

Brendan sits in the ball pit smoking a cigarette and stares at the sky through one of the holes in the ceiling.

Jake walks in, finishing a slice of pizza and approaches the edge of the pit.

JAKE
(mouth full)
Rough night?

BRENDAN
I've had worse.

JAKE
Do you have my money?

Brendan snubs out his cigarette, reaches into his pocket and hands a wad to Jake.

Jake counts it.

JAKE (CONT'D)
You're light five hundred.

BRENDAN
I know.

JAKE
Get out of there.

Brendan climbs out of the ball pit and stands in front of Jake.

Jake pulls him in hard.

Jake SMACKS Brendan across the face.

Brendan's lip starts to bleed.

JAKE (CONT'D)
I am not the kind of person to fuck
with, Brendan. I want the rest of
my money.

Jake clenches his fist, cocks back and is stopped mid-punch.

Moose and Meghan storm in and tackle Jake into the ball pit, taking Brendan with them.

Jake pops his head out of the pit.

JAKE (CONT'D)

(annoyed)

What the fuck is wrong with you people?

MEGHAN

We're not gonna let you hurt, Brendan.

Meghan throws her arms around Brendan like a human shield.

Moose stands in front of Brendan and Meghan.

MOOSE

If you want him, you're gonna have to go through me.

Jake cleans off his suit.

JAKE

(annoyed)

You know I have a gun, right?

Moose closes his eyes in terror.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Cut the shit, guys. I'm not going to shoot you, today. I just want you to know I can.

Jake climbs out of the pit.

JAKE (CONT'D)

You guys are starting to fucking piss me off. I'm not leaving until I get the rest of my money.

BRENDAN

We don't have it.

JAKE

(furious)

If I don't see five hundred dollars in the next five minutes, I'm getting a bat out my truck and smashing every game in that god damn arcade.

BRENDAN

That is every dollar we have, I swear.

Jake starts to walk towards his car.

MOOSE

Wait.

Jake freezes and turns around.

Moose pulls out his wad of cash and tosses it to Jake.

MOOSE (CONT'D)

(to Brendan)

Figure I owe ya for falling asleep on the job.

BRENDAN

(shocked but relieved)

Yea. Don't let it happen again.

Jake counts it and drops a hand full of twenties on the ground.

JAKE

(calm)

There was seven hundred here. I only want my five. I'll see you all next week.

Jake walks towards his car. Moose jumps out of the pit to grab the cash on the ground.

MEGHAN

Come on, honey. Let's have a drink.

BRENDAN

I'd love one.

INT. MIDWAY ARCADE - DAY

Brendan, Meghan and Moose sit around the poker table drinking cheap beer.

Gary sits in the corner smoking a cigarette.

BRENDAN

(to Moose)

How are you feeling, buddy?

MEGHAN

For a big guy, you're a real light weight when it comes to drinking.

MOOSE

I'm sorry guys, I was scared so I started drinking to calm my nerves.

MEGHAN

What were you scared of?

The door FLIES open, Daniel storms in with a gun drawn.

DANIEL

I fucking KNEW you poached my whale!

MOOSE

(scared)

That.

BRENDAN

Who the fuck is this guy?

MOOSE

My boss.

Daniel bounds towards Moose and Meghan, Brendan stands up and gets in his way.

Gary hides behind the ticket counter.

JAKE (O.S.)

STOP!

Jake walks back in, dust still on his suit from the ball pit.

JAKE (CONT'D)

Stop right there, Danny.

DANIEL

But, boss-

DANIEL (CONT'D)

These guys stole Johnny Cars. He just called me and said he found a new game and was done with ours. Are we just gonna let that slide?

JAKE

No. But since your game is MY game, I'll handle this. Get the fuck out of here, Danny.

Daniel hobbles out, defeated.

BRENDAN
Welcome back.

JAKE
If your game gets me paid, I'm fine with you running it. But Johnny Cars stays with Daniel. He keeps the lights on.

Jake turns to leave.

BRENDAN
(confident)
No.

Jake freezes and turns back to Brendan.

JAKE
What's that?

BRENDAN
No deal. Johnny is my player now.

JAKE
This isn't a negotiation.

BRENDAN
How about a bet?

Jake looks confused.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
We'll cut the deck for it. High card wins. If I win, Johnny stays here.

JAKE
And if I win?

BRENDAN
You get fifty percent of my game's profits on top of the three grand a week. And I concede your whale back to you.

Jake contemplates for a moment.

JAKE
Fifty percent? You got a bet.

Jake grabs a deck from the table, shuffles it and places it back on the table.

BRENDAN
I'll let you go first.

Jake cuts the deck, grabs a card and grins as he looks at it.

Brendan grabs a card, peeks at it.

Gary watches from a distance.

Jake shows Brendan the king of hearts.

BRENDAN (CONT'D)
Fuck!

JAKE
Sorry, kid.

BRENDAN
Don't be.

Brendan flips his card and shows the ace of spades.

JAKE
(angry at himself)
Fuck! Stupid god damn bet. Why the
hell did I agree to that?!

BRENDAN
Do we have a deal?

Jake paces the room, fuming over his bet.

He kicks the side of a skee ball machine, five tickets spit out.

Jake walks back to Brendan and looks him dead in the eye.

JAKE
I honor my bets.

Jake reaches out his right hand, Brendan shakes it.

BRENDAN
See ya next week, Jake.

Jake storms out.

MOOSE
How the hell did you do that?

Brendan shows Moose his left hand, with a palmed ace of spades in it.

BRENDAN
Magic set, two thousand tickets.

MEGHAN
God, I love you.

MOOSE
Wow.

Gary grabs a bottle of whisky from the ticket counter.

Gary reaches into the glass prize counter and pulls out four shot glasses with witches painted on them. He fills each one up and hands one to Brendan, Moose and Meghan.

GARY
Getting one over on Jake Esposito?
Your dad would have been proud of
you, kid.

Brendan's smile beams across his face.

He raises his glass.

BRENDAN
A toast. To vices, the reason we're
in this mess and hopefully the way
we get the fuck out.

They all CLINK glasses and down their shots.

FADE OUT.

THE END.