

# **The Strip**

## **Pilot**

by

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&  
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**COLD OPEN**

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - DAY

A bar in a strip mall in North Las Vegas. The decor is tacky/sports theme. It's crowded. CUSTOMERS drink beer and eat baskets of HOT WINGS while watching Nascar. (There's a HUGE wide-screen TV hanging in the foreground, bolted to the ceiling, facing away from camera. We HEAR a car race.)

The 5 cute, young WAITRESSES are in brightly colored, very revealing short-shorts, push-up bras and micro-mini-Tees that read: BUBBA JR.'S.

Behind the bar, TIM (Thomas Lennon), is over-dressed, wearing a tie. He's drinking a glass of red wine and reading a MANUAL, trying to figure out the high-tech CASH REGISTER.

At the bar sits: RANDY (Robert Ben Garant), in a security guard uniform with a gun belt, and MR. MAURICE, a tall black guy with a "slick" four button suit. Randy is playing *Trivia Whiz*. He stares at it, no clue what the answer is.

RANDY

Who won the most Tony Awards for choreography? ... Who would know that?

TIM

Bob Fosse. 8.

Randy and Mr. Maurice look at him, suspicious.

TIM (CONT'D)

What? Lots of straight guys know that. Not knowing who Bob Fosse is would be like... *not knowing who George Balanchine is.*

The guys stare blankly back. Another question pops up on the machine. Mr. Maurice talks to the Trivia Whiz:

MR. MAURICE

Come on. Give us something we know.  
(reads, hits the button:)  
YES -- *Teabagging!*

The machine CHIMES -- *correct!* Randy and Mr. Maurice bump fists. Tim rolls his eyes, and takes a big sip of his wine.

At the bar, a waitress, NATASHA (Brunette, 20's), is asleep, using a bag of FROZEN CHICKEN WINGS as a pillow. She had a rough night.

The back of her hand is covered with STAMPS from nightclubs. Another waitress, ASHLEY (Blonde, 21), perky and cute-as-a-button, comes up with a drink order:

ASHLEY  
Drink order. Natasha, DRINK ORDER.

Natasha's head snaps up, with a start.

NATASHA  
Red Bull and vodka.

She wakes up, and sees that she's on duty. Ashley bounces over next to Tim, flirty:

ASHLEY  
Morning, cutie.

TIM  
Good morning, Ashley.

Then he looks at his watch, slightly horrified.

TIM (CONT'D)  
My God. It *is* still morning. People are eating chicken wings and it's 11:30 a.m.

She laughs: he's cute. She puts her arms around his waist.

ASHLEY  
Well -- the game is on.

TIM  
(flirting back)  
Yes indeed it *is*.

He GROWLS, like a tiger. She looks at him, confused.

ASHLEY  
... what? The U.N.L.V. game's on. That's why everyone's here. You have the remote.

TIM  
(snaps out of it)  
Oh. Right.

He takes the remote from his shirt pocket, and clicks it at the overhead TV. The channel doesn't change. He fiddles with the remote. Nothing. People in the bar groan.

TIM (CONT'D)  
Okay, okay. I'm on it.

MR. MAURICE

Gimme that. Come on, come on.

Mr. Maurice takes the remote, and tries. No luck. The crowd is getting restless. A VERY CURVY waitress, IRINA, tries to JUMP up and down to change the channel. Tim goes to the TV. He jumps up and down too, trying to change the channel.

MR. MAURICE (CONT'D)

I liked it better when *she* was doing it.

Randy brings over a chair, and climbs up -- not tall enough.

RANDY

Here -- give me a boost.

Mr. Maurice lifts Randy up, they struggle to reach the TV. Irina tries to help -- but they can't reach.

NATASHA

People, people. (It's so obvious:) Duh -- human pyramid.

They agree, and start to form a human pyramid -- they look ridiculous. Tim shakes his head.

TIM

Guys. GUYS.

The others stop, in mid-pyramid.

TIM (CONT'D)

You look like one of those experiments where they tie a banana to the ceiling, and see if the monkeys can build a little ladder out of blocks.

Tim calmly goes to the POOL TABLE, and gets a POOL CUE.

TIM (CONT'D)

The difference between us and monkeys: is that we know how to use -- tools.

He reaches up with the pool cue and presses a button on the TV. Nothing happens. He presses HARDER. He gives the TV a little WHACK. He accidentally KNOCKS the TV off of its mount - the TV swings loose from the ceiling. It CRASHES down, in a rain of plaster, and sparks. The dust settles... Ashley picks up Tim's remote and looks at it:

ASHLEY

This is for the stereo.

TIM  
Right... let's listen to the game, huh?  
LAS VEGAS! WE'RE NUMBER 1!

MR. MAURICE  
9th place, actually.

TIM  
Right. *WE'RE NUMBER 9! WE'RE NUMBER 9!*

Everyone stares at him, dumbstruck as we:

SMASH CUT TO:

### MAIN TITLES

The Las Vegas band THE KILLERS plays over shots of drab, arid NORTH LAS VEGAS. We pass rows of identical houses, condos, and strip malls. Bank clocks tell us it's 111 degrees! This isn't Mayberry, this is America of the future, and *welcome to it!* Titles close over an establishing shot of BUBBA JR.'S -- at the end of a run down strip mall.

### ACT ONE

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - DAY

It's CROWDED. Tim's showing Ashley and Natasha the computerized cash register system.

TIM  
It's easy. Just swipe your card, enter your code. Then hit *COMMAND* and *CASH DRAWER* at the same time, then *OPTION*. Then *EXECUTE*. Then it asks if you're sure, hit *YES*. And -- bingo. The cash drawer opens.

He pushes a button. Nothing happens. He tries again. Nothing.

TIM (CONT'D)  
I think we might need a little more help around here.

ASHLEY  
Yeah. We could probably use somebody who knows how to change the beer and work the register and stuff.

TIM

I can do it. Just... gimme a sec.

He tries the register again. Nothing. Tim WHACKS the register. It DINGS and the cash drawer opens.

TIM (CONT'D)

Nice! See. You just needed me to *Fonzie* it. *Aaaayyyyyy*.

Tim does a *Fonzie* pose. Ashley stares at him, confused.

ASHLEY

I'm sorry, I guess I'm too young for that reference. Do your thumbs hurt?

TIM

*The Fonz*. Arthur Fonzerelli. Wow, you really don't know who that is? That's like not knowing who Darth Vader is.

ASHLEY

Please. I know who Darth Vader is.  
-- Hayden Christiansen. He's cute.

She bops off, adorably. Tim watches her go, smitten.

TIM

God I love her.

Mr. Maurice enters, dabbing his forehead with a handkerchief.

MR. MAURICE

Tim, it is days like these that I feel less like the Duke of Mattresses, and more like Sisyphus himself.

None of the other REGULARS at the bar respond. He sits at the bar. Tim hands him a beer and a shot.

MR. MAURICE (CONT'D)

Too obscure a reference for this crowd?

TIM

Greek Mythology, cursed to roll a boulder uphill, over and over, forever. Please. Look where I am. You don't have to tell me about Sisyphus.

Randy returns from the Men's room, sits at the bar. He only heard the end of their conversation.

RANDY

I got sisypus in Laughlin once, but if you put Witch Hazel on a scraped-out banana peel and wrap it around your business while you sleep, it helps the itching. Plus it's kinda fun.

Mr. Maurice and Tim just stare at him for a moment, then:

MR. MAURICE

Face it Tim. We're not like these yokels. We are men of the world, with refined tastes.

TIM

*(The Irish toast:)* Slainté.

Tim drinks wine. And Mr. Maurice DROPS his SHOT into his beer, and downs it in one gulp. Then burps.

MR. MAURICE

Mm. *Coors Light and Rupleminze*. Keep 'em coming, my white brother.

TIM

*As you wish, Mr. Bond.*

Tim makes Mr. Maurice another drink.

MR. MAURICE

Tim, I need your help at my place next door. I got a couple that's nibbling on a Tempurpedic Mattress. They've been in to look at it 3 times, but they won't bite. You used to be an actor, right?

TIM

As a kid, yeah. On *Bubba Jr.*  
(he sings a catchphrase:)  
*BUBBA JR., VITTLES IS ON!!!*

He holds as if someone might applaud. Nobody does.

MR. MAURICE

It was a sort of *whitebread* show, right?

TIM

It was very popular at the time. "*Bubba Jr., vittles is on*" was huge. I was as big as that little midget guy who says "*Boss, de plane, de plane!*"

RANDY

Herve Villachez? That man was a *legend*.

MR. MAURICE

Don't compare yourself to Herve Villachez, Tim. Have a little respect.

TIM

I'm not, I just... it was *fairly* popular. We lasted 3 seasons. Me, Kenny Rogers... And a bear, living on the prairie.

MR. MAURICE

I don't think bears live on the prairie.

TIM

THEY DON'T... We brought it with us. I think.

Ashley passes through, setting down plates of HOT WINGS.

ASHLEY

I've never heard of it either.

TIM

You're 21, you've never heard of anything. It was FAIRLY POPULAR. Did you think I called this place *Bubba Jr.'s* for no reason? It's a horrible name.

MR. MAURICE

Look, Tim. I need a man with your acting chops. I'll call you if they come in. I just need you to come over, and ACT interested in the mattress, okay? I don't need Dame Judi Dench, just give it your best amateur performance.

TIM

Please. I was nominated for a *People's Choice Award* when I was 18.

RANDY

He lost to that little robot girl from *Small Wonder*.

MR. MAURICE

That girl was a delight.

TIM

She was good. She was very, very good.

NATASHA

I got paid to act like a robot once. You know how when a bunch of dudes throw a party and they wanna pretend they bought a sex robot, so they stuff you in a box and wrap you in bubble wrap. And then they take you back to Dubai you have to escape from the sex disco they keep you in.

TIM

... That really happened to you?

NATASHA

Pretty much. Don't ever try to trap me in your sex disco, pal. There ain't a sex disco built that can hold me.

She exits. Randy watches her go, smitten.

RANDY

*God I love her.*

Randy finishes a hot wing, and TOSSES it over his shoulder, onto the floor. Tim catches him.

TIM

Did you just throw a chicken bone on the floor?

RANDY

What else am I supposed to do with it?

TIM

Put it back on the plate like a person who's not horrible.

RANDY

We been throwing them on the floor.

TIM

That's you who's been doing that?

ASHLEY

Everybody does it. I just sweep 'em up. It started a couple weeks ago. I thought it was a theme you were doing.

TIM

What would that *theme* be? That this is a horrifying den of monsters, littered with bones of their prey?

MR. MAURICE

I thought we were ENCOURAGED to throw peanut shells on the floor?

TIM

That's different. Peanut shells on the floor is *joie de vivre*, bones on the floor says the dude from *Saw* lives here.

RANDY

What's the difference?

TIM

Well. Um...

(he's stumped...)

Peanut shells are an exoskeleton, for one thing.

RANDY

So we could throw shrimp tails on the floor?

MR. MAURICE

What about entire crabs?

RANDY

Or that thing from *Alien*?

Tim picks up the bone, drops it in the garbage and *Purells*.

TIM

No more bones on the floor please!

They nod -- okay, fine. Ashley approaches Tim.

ASHLEY

Bad move. People like to throw the bones.

TIM

Really? ... Then I'm gonna need to figure something out. This isn't a disgusting lair of some wild animal. This is my... disgusting lair.

MUSIC STING  
SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - LATER

Tim's just finished hanging a BELL up on the wall, right above a large GARBAGE CAN.

TIM

Ladies and Gentlemen! Since we all love  
*(hates saying it:)*  
*throwing animal bones at things.* Why not  
 test your aim, with our new WING-DING  
 BELL?!

ASHLEY

I thought up the name.

She jumps, like a cheerleader. Everyone CHEERS for her.

TIM

Yes. I thought of everything else. Ashley  
 thought of the name. Good name, for a  
GREAT concept. Now who needs some wings?

People CHEER. The Waitresses start taking orders. People  
 start tossing bones at the BELL. *Ding! Ding Ding!* The bones  
 drop into the garbage can below. It's pretty fun. Ashley  
 tells Tim:

ASHLEY

Another girl flaked today. Tanya.

TIM

We definitely need a new girl. Do you  
 have any friends who need a job? Somebody  
 young, and... perky. Who can, you know...

ASHLEY

Fit in the outfit?

TIM

Yeah.

ASHLEY

... Actually I totally do! My roommate.  
 She's awesome. You'll love her. She looks  
 a lot like me. She needs a job, too.

TIM

Wow! Two of you. Talk about (*à la Wayne's*  
*World:*) *SCCHWING!*

ASHLEY

Is that something Fonzie says?

TIM

Ugh. No. Just give her an application.  
 You're a lifesaver, thanks.

They hug. She smells him:

ASHLEY  
Mmm. *Old Spice*. I love that.

TIM  
That's me. Spicy. And... old.

A FLYING CHICKEN BONE smacks Tim in the face. He wipes his face with Purell.

RANDY  
Sorry.

Tim picks the bone up off the floor, and throws it into the garbage can WITHOUT throwing it at the bell.

MR. MAURICE  
WHOA! Party foul, Tim. You can't just throw your bones in the garbage.

RANDY  
THAT GOES AGAINST THE WHOLE POINT OF A WING DING BELL. There have to be RULES. Without rules it's anarchy. Like England.

Tim starts to correct him, but doesn't.

TIM  
The point is that they go *in the garbage*.

RANDY  
We should have a penalty box.

MR. MAURICE  
And a point system. I don't even know who's winning right now.

RANDY  
I am. FIVE TO THREE. IN YOUR FACE!

MR. MAURICE  
Oh, *it's on* now!

Mr. Maurice throws a wing, EVERYBODY DOES. *Ding! Ding ding!* Everyone's having a blast, except for Tim, who watches the bones flying overhead, horrified.

ASHLEY  
What's wrong? They *love* the bell.

TIM  
My vision for this place never involved *meat games*. We should get a Skee Ball machine and fill it with hush puppies.

ASHLEY  
*Not a terrible idea.*

She laughs. Tim looks at her, a little in love.

TIM  
 Why are you so happy all the time Ashley?  
 You never get down, do you? And I don't  
 even pay you very well.

She thinks. Then answers -- totally bright, and honest:

ASHLEY  
 Well. I've got a Miata and a hot tub.  
 What else do I need?

TIM  
 (genuinely impressed:)  
 That's the most Zen thing I've ever  
 heard.

She smiles, she's a ray of sunshine.

TIM (CONT'D)  
 Ashley -- will you go out with me?

ASHLEY  
 On like, a *date date*?

TIM  
 Yes.

ASHLEY  
 ... Sure. Yeah. Fun!

She bounces off to the short order window, leaving him  
 stunned, smiling. Then he gets hit with a wing again.

MR. MAURICE  
 You're blocking the bell, dude. That's  
 goal tending.

TIM  
 (like *Oh, shit*:)  
*Oh, Sisyphus.*

END OF ACT ONE.

## ACT TWO

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - BAR AREA - NIGHT

Randy's at the bar. Next to him, with a cosmopolitan, is DAVE (the very gay owner of the strip mall's Christian Bookstore). They're both throwing bones at the bell. *Ding! Ding! Dave hits every time.*

DAVE

It's all in the wrist. (To Natasha:)  
Another dozen wings, Tash.

Natasha pops up -- she was asleep on the bar again. This time a bag of frozen wings is STUCK to her face. She peels it off.

RANDY

Hey Dave. Does your store carry them  
*Bible Cats* calendars, where cats act out  
scenes from The Bible?

DAVE

(offended:)

Randy. Please. We're a Christian  
Bookstore. (beat:) *Of course we do*. And  
the Bible Cats puffy sweatshirts. And the  
Bible Cats Dreamcatchers.

RANDY

My mom wanted one. And all this time I  
been telling folks your store only  
carries crap.

DAVE

Oh, trust me. We carry crap too.

Tim pops up from behind the bar, fixing something on the tap.

TIM

Voila!

He taps a beer glass, but it's SUPER HIGH PRESSURE FROTH. It shoots out of the glass right up into his face like a fire extinguisher. He gets it shut off, and calls to the Kitchen.

TIM (CONT'D)

Gian, can you change the keg, please.

GIAN (20), the VERY sweaty 200 lb. Mexican guy who washes dishes, calls back from the short order window.

GIAN

No can do, Jefe. Still drawing workman's comp from my last job.

TIM

... Really?

GIAN

Oh yeah man. I lift that keg, some lawyer sees me, it's so long to the sweet life.

On that, he drinks (almost an entire) 2 Liter YELLOW SODA straight from the bottle. Tim shakes his head.

AT THE OTHER END OF THE BAR:

Natasha is at the cash register. She is typing up a storm.

TIM

See. Told you you'd catch on.

Natasha SCREAMS at the computer, and tosses it in the trash. Tim picks it out, picks chicken bones off it, and Purells. Natasha yells at the cash register.

NATASHA

SUCK MY NADS!

Two CUB SCOUTS with their DADS watch her curse out the machine. Tim tells them:

TIM

See -- this is why you should stay in school, kids.

Natasha turns to the kids:

NATASHA

You don't need to stay in school if you got this.

She does a flourish "presenting" her butt. Then Tim gets hit with a HAMBURGER.

TIM

Wait -- that was a hamburger.

RANDY

They're easier to throw.

TIM

No. No no no. Only chicken bones.

MR. MAURICE

Told you.  
 (to Dave and Randy)  
 Bank shot.

Maurice finishes a wing, and tosses the bone -- right into someone's pitcher of beer.

MR. MAURICE (CONT'D)

My bad. 'Nother dozen, Tash.  
 (to Tim)  
 You're still helping me with that thing later, right?

TIM

What thing? (He remembers) Oh yeah, right right. I'll come right over.

A big group of SKEEVY WHITE TRASH CUSTOMERS enters.

SKEEVY WHITETRASH CHICK

You still got the wing toss thing going?

TIM

Oh god.  
 (to Natasha)  
 We need help... I thought Ashley's roommate was coming in today?

NATASHA

She is... that's her.

JACKIE (LATE 30's) enters. She's in cut-offs, cowboy boots, and a push-up bra. She's too sun-tanned -- but she's kinda hot, in a trailer park way.

NATASHA (CONT'D)

Man. She is OLD.

Jackie approaches Tim. She hands over her application.

JACKIE

Here go, boss -- oops.

She "accidentally" drops her application. She bends to pick it up -- somehow managing to point both her rear AND cleavage at Tim. She hands Tim her application, still bent over, pointing her boobs at him.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

I think it's all -- *filled* out.  
 (she stands)  
 I made a pun. About my boobs.  
 (MORE)

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
The application's filled out, and my  
bra's filled out too. With boobs.

TIM  
Yeah. I got it. You're Ashley's... ?

JACKIE  
Roommate. And best friend. I'm 23.

Tim pauses -- he recognizes her.

TIM  
*Jackie French?* Is that you?

Jackie takes off her sunglasses:

JACKIE  
... Tim?

She HUGS him -- POUNCES on him. Everyone in the bar notices.

NATASHA  
You two know each other?

TIM  
We went to High School together. It's  
been...

JACKIE  
(lying about her age to  
everyone, loudly:)  
Almost five years!

TIM  
... Right. Or 21 in human years.

JACKIE  
Wow. You look great!

TIM  
And you look... ... tan.

CUT TO:

INT. TIM'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

It doesn't look anything like the rest of Bubba Jr.'s.  
There's art, tasteful furniture, and one wall is a fantastic,  
full WINE FRIDGE. Tim leads Jackie inside.

TIM  
Glass of wine?

JACKIE

Sure. I'm easy, I'll do anything. Peach, peach-blueberry. Peach-banana...

TIM

How about, uh -- grape?

JACKIE

Sounds good.

He opens a bottle.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Sorry she lied about my age. She thought maybe you wouldn't give me an interview. Guess I don't need these anymore.

She takes out LARGE FALSIES she's wearing. She fans under her shirt, standing by the air conditioner.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Ooh. Sweaty underboob.

They stare at each other -- not sure what to say. Finally, she shakes her head, with sad sympathy:

JACKIE (CONT'D)

How you been holding up, sweetheart?

TIM

Good. I've been... good.

Beat. Then she hugs him -- with motherly love.

JACKIE

You can tell the truth, Timmy. It's me. I saw your E True Hollywood Story. I'm so sorry.

TIM

I guess you didn't get to the end. The part about how I found something better than showbiz -- and I'm finally happy.

JACKIE

They always say that and it's never true.

TIM

Really. I'm good.

JACKIE

... Really? *Here?* In this rat hole?

TIM

No offense taken. Yes. This is... this is a dream come true.

Natasha enters:

NATASHA

Are we allowed to sell people *just* bones -  
- without chicken on them? A lot of  
people are asking.

He shakes his head "no," bleak. She exits.

TIM

... This place is disgusting. Everything  
we serve comes with Handy Wipes. If I  
didn't work here, there's no amount of  
money you could pay me to come here.

JACKIE

Why don't you quit?

TIM

(ashamed:)  
I own this place.

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - BAR AREA - CONTINUOUS

Dave, Randy and Mr. Maurice are throwing bones at the bell.

RANDY

Off that tray, off that bald dude, then  
you gotta hit the bell off the wall --  
bank shot.

MR. MAURICE

Easy.

They put money on the bar -- betting. Mr. Maurice throws it.  
We hear a DUDE say "ow" -- then a DING.

MR. MAURICE (CONT'D)

Yessss.

RANDY

(shouts to the bald guy)  
Sorry.

INT. TIM'S OFFICE - LATER

Jackie and Tim are almost done with a bottle of wine.

JACKIE

I heard you were back in town, but I thought you opened a real nice place? Timothy's... whatever.

TIM

*Auberge. Timothy's Auberge.* I did. That's what this place used to be. People hated it. It lasted 3 weeks. For the record, we got excellent reviews in *Conde Nast* and *Food and Wine*.

JACKIE

I don't think we have those here.

TIM

No. No you don't.

He opens another bottle of wine.

TIM (CONT'D)

So. I took down the art, put up a bunch of TVs, hired girls in short-shorts. My kitchen has a hundred grand worth of equipment, and one of the finest sous chefs from Barcelona and all he uses is the frydaddy.

(totally depressed)

And the place is packed every night.

He finishes his LARGE glass of wine.

TIM (CONT'D)

How have you been?

JACKIE

Well. You know. After you broke up with me, and left me when I got pregnant...

TIM

*Not my kid. We've been over that.*

JACKIE

I know, I know...

TIM

We never had sex. *We dated four years, and we never had sex.* We were saving ourselves until we got married. Then that foreign exchange student got you pregnant, like one day after you met him.

JACKIE

God he was gorgeous. Like a chiseled, amazing-looking version of... you.

TIM

Yes, he was. *Olag*. Very, very handsome.  
(then, serious:)  
I really loved you, Jackie.

Beat.

JACKIE

Maybe it's the wine, but I guess I can tell you: You're the best thing that ever happened to me, Tim.

TIM

Thanks, Jackie.

JACKIE

Well, that's not saying much.

They drink. Beat.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

So. You seeing anybody?

TIM

(reluctant)  
Sorta.

JACKIE

Somebody in town? (He nods.) Somebody from... this place?

He nods... *kind of*.

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Oh God, Tim. You're not dating one of these *bimbos*, are you? They're *kids*.

TIM

She's a *little* younger than me.

JACKIE

(Obviously meaning HER:)  
You should be dating someone your own age. Your real age, not the one on IMDB.

They laugh and drink. She changes the subject:

JACKIE (CONT'D)

Look. I need this job Tim, or I wouldn't be here. I didn't get to go off like you did, and live a life of adventure. I had to stay here and raise 3 kids.

TIM

Doing blow off of Soleil Moon Frye at Corey Feldman's 19th birthday party wasn't a life of adventure... 3 kids?

JACKIE

Yeah -- mine is the classic story: "*Girl meets Carny, Carny goes to jail for mail fraud, Girl gets a job dealing Pai Gow, falls for a Navajo dude who claims to be a medicine man but is really just running a pyramid scheme out of her van.*"

TIM

Right. *The classic tale.*

Tim takes a breath. He thinks.

TIM (CONT'D)

You don't think that maybe you working here would be a bad idea?

JACKIE

(flirty)

Why? You don't think you can control yourself?

TIM

No. I just mean, that we have too much...

JACKIE

Chemistry?

TIM

History.

JACKIE

(flirty)

I failed both. (Then, earnest:) I need this Tim. Please. Come on. We're both grown-ups now.

TIM

Maybe we should sleep on it.

JACKIE  
 (eyes him -- sexy)  
 Here?

TIM  
 I meant *think about it*.

JACKIE  
 ... That's probably a good idea. We  
 should take this nice and slow.

He reaches out to shake her hand. She YANKS him over and kisses him. After a moment, he starts kissing back, they both get caught up in it. Then they break it off, awkward. Then:

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
 I'll work one shift. We see how it goes.

She exits. A stunned beat. Tim's a little dazed. There's clearly still some sparks between them.

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - CONTINUOUS

He enters. It's like *The Birds*. Bones flying everywhere. Randy is BLOCKING the bell with a cricket bat he's pulled off the wall. It's chaos.

CHEF PABLO, in the kitchen, sets MORE wings in the window.

CHEF  
 (YELLS IN SPANISH, ANGRY)

Gian cracks up.

TIM  
 What did he say?

GIAN  
 "He didn't come all the way from Spain to shovel chicken into pigs." It's funnier in Spanish.

Tim tries to take control of the situation.

TIM  
 Guys. GUYS. *ENOUGH WITH THE BELL ALREADY.*

They ignore him. Finally, he pulls the bell down. Everyone stops. Tim throws the bell away -- macho. Then he Purells.

TIM (CONT'D)

This a restaurant. Not some... *chicken thunderdome*. We can all act like grown ups, can't we?

Beat. Then they all pelt him with wings.

MUSIC STING

END OF ACT TWO.

**ACT THREE**

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - BAR AREA - LATER

Tim is trying to get the beer tap to work. Nothing is coming out but AIR. Just then there's a LOUD POUNDING ON THE WALL.

TIM

What is that?

More pounding. The PHONE RINGS. Natasha answers:

NATASHA

Yo. (then, to Tim:) It's Mr. Maurice. He's pounding on the wall to signal you to come do that thing you talked about.

TIM

Got it. Tell him he can stop pounding on the wall.

NATASHA

(into phone:)

You can stop pounding on the wall.

The pounding from the other side stops.

TIM

Wow. That was the most efficient thing that's happened here all day.

INT. DUKE OF MATTRESSES - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Maurice's mattress store, next door in the strip mall. There's mattresses, and life-sized cardboard cut-outs of Mr. Maurice. Tim enters, a COUPLE is hovering by a fancy mattress. Mr. Maurice greets Tim, "casually."

MR. MAURICE

Oh hello. Welcome to the *Duke of Mattresses* -- where we treat every customer like a king.

Tim plays along, and for some reason does a FAIRLY GOOD SPANISH ACCENT.

TIM

Oh, gracias. My name is *Ricardo*. I'm interested in a mattress like...

He waits for a cue from Mr. Maurice, who shoots a look to the mattress the Couple is eyeing.

TIM (CONT'D)

Ah, that's it! The...

MR. MAURICE

... *Tempurpedic Celebrity Mattress? Yes it is. Best on the market.*

TIM

I'll take it. You take Visa, *si?*

The Couple approaches, concerned. They are very polite:

YOUNG MAN

Excuse me. Sorry, but uh... Actually we were about to buy that mattress. You only have one in stock, right?

MR. MAURICE

Sorry, but this gentleman (Tim) made the offer first.

TIM

How is it you say? You snooze/you lose!

MR. MAURICE

Wait, hold up Ricardo. I'm not sure how things work in... *Spain?*

TIM

*Italy. I am Italian.*

Mr. Maurice shoots him a look -- *seriously?* Tim nods.

MR. MAURICE

Well this is America and they were here first. If they want the mattress...

YOUNG MAN

We just want to know if you'll throw in some pillows for that price.

Tim gets REALLY INTO IT.

TIM

Free pillows? Signore! (He spits on the floor.) That is an insult. For that price, you get the best mattress on the market! *What's a matter for you?* I will take this exquisite mattress with NO CONDITIONS asked! Pronto, Signore.

Mr. Maurice eyes Tim -- tone it down.

MR. MAURICE

Sorry, I have to go with my... *European* friend here. It really is a good price.

YOUNG MAN

Well -- it's 38 hundred dollars. Can we at least think about it for a minute?

TIM

This is nonsense! They do not know a good thing when they see it. I will buy it, no strings! Here.

MR. MAURICE

Sure, but...

Tim makes a DRAMATIC show of pulling his credit card out.

TIM

THERE! I take it... *unless these people can convince me they truly desire it.*

The couple is debating. Mr. Maurice takes the credit card, to run it through the reader. He holds it. Going once, going twice...

YOUNG MAN

You know what -- he can take it. You seem really... passionate.

Mr. Maurice RUNS the credit card. The Young Couple leaves. Tim drops the act, disappointed.

TIM

Sorry man. Too bad. I just did "Italian guy" in case they knew me from TV.

MR. MAURICE

Zero chance of that. But don't stress.  
You won't be disappointed. It really is  
the top of the line mattress.

Mr. Maurice hands him a CREDIT CARD receipt.

TIM

Wait -- what?

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - DAY

It's crowded, but no one is using the BASKETBALL HOOP that  
Tim has put up where the bell once was. Tim enters. Dave and  
Randy are at the bar.

TIM

What's wrong guys? How come nobody's  
shootin' at the good ol' *Chicken Basket*?

Randy shoots a wing through the basket, perfectly.

RANDY

You hear that?

TIM

What?

RANDY

Exactly! IT DON'T MAKE ANY NOISE!

TIM

Basketball hoops don't make noise. That's  
why I changed it.

DAVE

Basketball hoops DO make noise. What  
about: (makes a BUZZER sound).

TIM

That's the SCOREBOARD. At the end of a  
quarter. Not the hoop.

RANDY

Then we need a scoreboard. And there  
always needs to be 1 second on the clock.

TIM

I'm not doing that. This was to make it  
LESS annoying. The bell was driving me  
nuts. It was like the *Tell-Tale Heart*.

Off Randy's blank look:

TIM (CONT'D)

*Tell-Tale Heart*. Edgar Allen Poe. 1843.  
It's about a murder, then the murderer  
gets haunted by a beating heart...

Randy covers his ears, sarcastic and deadpan.

RANDY

Spoiler alert. Don't ruin the ending. I  
was about to run to *the library* and read  
it.

Dave laughs. Tim spots Ashley, bent over, re-tapping a keg.

TIM

Hey you sexy thing.

She turns: it's Jackie, not Ashley. She's in the tiny Bubba  
Jr.'s outfit, and it actually looks great on her. He jumps.

JACKIE

I refilled the nacho cheese, I married  
all the ketchups, and I re-tapped all the  
kegs. Some moron hooked them up wrong.  
You'd think these girls never worked in a  
restaurant before, T-Bone.

She winks, and pats him on the butt, flirty, and hustles to  
get an order of wings at the window.

TIM

... Okay. Thanks Jackie. And maybe don't  
call me T-bone around everybody, okay?

JACKIE

Sorry. You got it, boss.

Ashley approaches.

ASHLEY

T-bone? Sexy nickname. I love it, *T-Bone*.

TIM

(suddenly he likes it:)  
Or do. Do call me that. *T-Bone's fine*.

She bops off. He looks at the HOOP. No one is throwing bones  
at it, they're just throwing them on the floor again. He  
looks down, and finds -- a BONE... and gets an idea.

END OF ACT  
THREE.

**ACT FOUR**

INT. BUBBA JR.'S - NIGHT

We PAN OFF of a MUCH SMALLER BELL, hung where the old bell was. The new garbage can below it is WIDER. Randy is back to Trivia Whiz. Dave walks up to the garbage can, aims, and throws a bone at the bell. He misses the bell.

DAVE

This is too hard. You only miss and hit the garbage can.

TIM

(to himself:)

*God forbid.*

(then to the room:)

Yeah, this one's harder to hit. That's why I call it the *Extreme Wing Ding Bell!*

Everybody "Oohhs," loving the name. Dave downs his cosmopolitan.

DAVE

If I wanted to do something hard, I woulda stayed in junior college. I gotta get back to the shop anyway. *The Smurfs Nativity Sets* are coming in today.

Dave exits. Down the bar, Jackie is helping Natasha work the register.

JACKIE

OK, they want to split the check 8 ways -- the total is 28 bucks. So...

(Natasha is stumped.)

How many grams in 1/8 of an ounce?

NATASHA

3.5.

She smiles, psyched, and totals the check. Mr. Maurice enters. Mr. Maurice gives Tim some "dap."

MR. MAURICE

Dude. It's been delivered. You're gonna love it.

TIM

I told you I don't want it.

MR. MAURICE

Don't get mad at me. You're the one who scared 'em off. I told you I didn't need no Judi-Denching it. You spit on my floor -- what was that?

TIM

Sorry about that. I got carried away.

MR. MAURICE

Don't be sorry. Now you own a very high-end mattress, congratulations.

TIM

But I don't want it. I have a mattress.

MR. MAURICE

You don't have a *Tempurpedic Celebrity Mattress*. This is your fault Tim.

He takes off his sunglasses, looks Tim in the eye, sincere.

MR. MAURICE (CONT'D)

I should've got an amateur, not a professional actor. Your talent put us in this terrible situation. *I'm* the victim here. You scared off my customers, so don't turn this on me.

TIM

(feeling guilty)

Well... Okay. I'm sorry I scared 'em off.

They shake hands.

MR. MAURICE

I give you my word, you will have the best night's sleep of your life. And if you can't trust me, who can you trust?

Then -- the YOUNG COUPLE from the mattress store enters, looking for Mr. Maurice. The Man is very "*street*" (he was putting on an act before too).

YOUNG MAN

Yo Mr. Maurice! Where's my 20 dollars at?

Mr. Maurice freezes. The Couple and Tim make eye contact.

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)

What you looking at?

Mr. Maurice looks at Tim. He gives the Young Man 20 bucks. As the Couple exits. The Young Man says to Tim:

YOUNG MAN (CONT'D)  
Loved you on *Bubba Jr.* bro. Bears don't live on the prairie though, man.

The Couple exits. Tim glares at Mr. Maurice. Beat.

MR. MAURICE  
You're not gonna be mad after a good night of sleep on that *Tempurpedic* mattress.

He downs his drink and dashes out the door.

MR. MAURICE (CONT'D)  
All sales are final!

Ashley enters.

ASHLEY  
Don't feel bad. He's tried that scam on everybody.

TIM  
Did everybody else fall for it?

ASHLEY  
... No. Just you and Randy.

TIM  
That doesn't make me feel a lot better.

Randy downs his beer.

RANDY  
Well -- off to fight for truth, justice, and the American Way.

He stands up. He has "the spins."

RANDY (CONT'D)  
Where's my gun?

TIM  
In your belt.

RANDY  
Yep.

Randy opens the already open door, and walks into the floor to ceiling window. BANG. He walks around the door and exits.

Jackie calls to them:

JACKIE  
Hey! Check this out:

She gestures to Natasha, who nervously pushes three buttons on the CASH REGISTER. It DINGS -- and the register opens. Natasha is thrilled.

JACKIE (CONT'D)  
And...

She walks behind the bar, and turns on the beer tap, it works. Jackie and Ashley both turn to Tim.

ASHLEY  
... Well?

Tim thinks. He looks at Jackie.

TIM  
You're hired.

Jackie and Ashley jump for joy. They HUG him. Not seeing that the other is doing it -- BOTH of them smack him on the butt.

TIM (CONT'D)  
Okay, okay. Back to work.

ASHLEY  
What section you want, mom?

Tim's smile fades.

TIM  
... Mom?

And... *with a look of horror*, Tim BREAKS his wine glass in his bare hand.

MUSIC STING.

THE END