

FADE IN

1 BLACK

1

The screen is black. Thunder rumbles.

THEO (VO)

When you hear thunder...

A black bowling ball pulls away from the lens. The ball is in the hands of THEO SKINNER, an intense, handsome 28 year old man with sideburns dressed in worn bowling attire.

THEO (VO)

...God is bowling.

He holds the ball in front of him, wristbrace on, his face a study in concentration.

CUT TO:

CREDITS

CUT TO:

2 EXT. BRIDGE - DAY

2

An empty causeway spans a bay somewhere along the south shore of Long Island. The sky is overcast. SHEILA, a woman in her late twenties, wearing a full length heliotrope pleather coat over a waitress outfit, kneels in the middle of the road. A souped-up Vespa motor scooter stands nearby.

KEN AND BARBIE

Sheila holds a Bridal Barbie and Ken doll set. She sets them down on the road, pulls out a can of lighter fluid and soaks the dolls. She pulls out a bowling pin-shaped lighter and torches the nuptial tableau.

3 INT. THEO'S CAR

3

Theo drives his ratty old American car along a highway. The car has Ohio plates. He sucks coffee from a 7-Eleven "Big-Swig" cup and examines a map. A yellow plastic "Bowler on Board" sign is stuck to a side window. Theo's music PLAYS. His eyes nod off, then snap awake.

4 NIGHTMARE

4

The screen is black, except for three circles in the middle

of the screen. The light shining through them is snuffed out by three large pink objects. There is a loud POP, like a thumb being pulled out of a tight hole.

BOWLING BALL

A slow motion low tracking shot of a bowling ball hitting a polished lane.

BOWLING PINS

Close-up of the milky white surface of two bowling pins on opposite sides of the lane - a seven-ten split. The RUMBLING ball is heard in the distance like a furious hulking steamroller of doom. The pins begin to tremble, and then transform into a Bridal Ken and Barbie. The dolls burst into flame.

BALL

The ball blasts past the camera and metamorphoses into Theo's car.

RAPID DISSOLVE TO:

5 EXT. BRIDGE

5

Theo's sedan blasts past the camera down the empty road.

BURNING DOLLS

The flaming couple stand in the middle of the bridge. Theo's car hits the pair and they fly into the air in slow-motion. A distant SOUND of pins scattering is heard. The two dolls smoke as they spin into the sky, then hit the water with dual HISSES.

DISSOLVE TO:

6 PIN RESET MACHINERY

6

An American Machine and Foundry pin reset machine performs its functions like a mechanical ballet as the camera follows a bowling ball through its journey. The "Spare Me!" theme MUSIC (similar to "Balboa Blue" by the Marketts) swells. TITLE: SPARE ME! appears on the bowling ball. Pins tumble across the back plate, are loaded into the pin conveyor, lifted up to the crown feeder, distributed into the rotating carousel, and then set down in perfect formation upon the polished bowling alley.

BURN-IN PRINCIPAL PLAYER TITLES. Titles appear on the pins. The ball trundles along the return trough straight into the lens.

BLACK

7 INT. 7-ELEVEN - DAY

7

A muzak cover of 'Broke, Busted, and Disgusted' PLAYS in the background as Theo gingerly pulls a hot taco out of the microwave oven. ALFIE, the rickety old man who runs the store, shuffles up to the self-serve island and begins wiping it down. Theo pokes at the taco with a spork as steam rises. He pulls a disgusted grimace. Alfie pours himself a cup of coffee and then attempts to open a tiny container of half & half. Because his hands are shaking so much, the cream goes everywhere but into the coffee.

ALFIE

I'm an addict. I can't go through a day without the stuff. Theo reaches over and pours for him with a steady hand.

ALFIE

You're not from around here, are you?

THEO

I'm from Akron.

Alfie looks at Theo's bowling shoe attired feet.

ALFIE

You a bowler?

Theo's hand starts shaking uncontrollably. He puts down the cream.

THEO

I'm looking for a man.

ALFIE

What kind of man?

THEO

A bowler.

Alfie presses a matchbook into Theo's hand and then trundles off. Theo looks down at the matchbook; it reads "Bowl for health, enjoy yourself. Babylon Lanes."

8 EXT. BABYLON LANES - TWILIGHT

8

Theo pulls into the empty parking lot of Babylon Lanes beside a cheap looking American sedan.

9 INT. BABYLON LANES

9

Theo walks into an empty run-down forty lane bowling alley carrying his ball bag. It is dark. The fluorescent lights switch on and the pin re-set machines whirr into action. SID and BREEZE, two shady looking guys in a basement-sale suits walk up lane dividers towards Theo.

SID

Lane's closed big fellah, league night.

THEO

I'm not here to bowl.

SID

(gesturing to Theo's bag)

You drag that coconut around for your health, or do you know how to use it?

THEO

(bristling at the challenge)

I'm looking for somebody.

BREEZE

Hey, ain't I seen you on the tour?

SID

No, pinhead, he ain't here to bowl.

THEO

I'm looking for Buzz Fazeli.

Sid and Breeze look sideways at each other.

BREEZE

Fazeli...I don't know no Buzz Fazeli.

SID

What do you want with old man Faz?

THEO

Some unfinished business.

SID

If you wanna do business in this town, there's other people around here got more weight than old Faz.

A lady dwarf walks by.

DWARF

Evening Sid, evening Breeze.

SID

Evening Tina.

BREEZE

Good luck tonight Tina.

Tina opens a door and goes down some stairs.

THEO

You guys got something going on downstairs?

SID

We provide some extracurricular activities for the senior citizens in the community.

THEO

Basement bingo?

Breeze sniggers into his hand

SID

(smirks)

Yeah, basement bingo.

BREEZE

Lemme see your ball.

Breeze grabs Theo's bag.

THEO

Let go of my bag.

Sid sidles around behind Theo who tries to keep him in sight.

BREEZE

Ah, come on, lemme see your ball.

SID

You afraid we're gonna steal it?

Breeze unzips the bag and pulls the ball out. Theo's temper is rising, he breathes deeply. He is obviously making a Herculean effort to keep himself in check.

THEO

I said, let go of my bag.

With lightning speed Theo's hand shoots out and grabs the middle fingers on Sid's right hand. Sid howls in agony.

SID

Aagh! Stop! Those are my bowling fingers!

THEO

Tell your little pal to let go.

SID

Breeze, give him his ball back!

Breeze, astonished, drops Theo's ball into the bag. Sid cringes in front of Theo.

THEO

Where can I find Buzz Fazeli?

BREEZE

Whoa, cool your maples. Over the bridge, past the Peter Pan, last house on the dead end. Theo releases Sid's hand. Sid drops to his knees and cradles his damaged hand.

BREEZE

Haven't seen a ball like that since '69.

THEO

It belonged to my dad.

Theo turns and walks out.

10 EXT. WOODS - NIGHT

10

JUNIOR, a dumpy man in his late thirties with a rat tail, bad skin and wearing a white straitjacket and fluorescent orange pants, runs desperately through dark woods. Bloodhounds BARK in the distance.

11 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

11

Theo drives over the draw-bridge and past the Peter Pan Diner with its huge neon sign.

12 EXT. DEAD END STREET

12

Theo's car pulls up in front of a modest suburban house. A rooftop weather vane in the shape of a bowler CREAKS ominously in the wind.

Theo rings the doorbell. The porch light comes on, and MILLIE, a fifty-five year-old woman dressed for a night on the town in Reno, but with fuzzy slippers and a hairnet, opens the door. A miniscule neurotic poodle leaps at Theo's bowling ball bag, YAPPING and snapping at it.

THEO

Is Mr. Fazeli in please?

MILLIE

Who wants to know?

(to dog)

Zeus!

THEO

I'm a bowler.

MILLIE

I'm sick of you people. Why don't you leave him be?

BUZZ (OS)

Let him in, Millie. And don't frisk him.

Millie and Theo, with Zeus hot on his trail, enter the room. BUZZ FAZELI, a sixty-five year-old man shaped a lot like a compressed bowling pin, slouches in a recliner. The room is decorated with trophies of Buzz's bygone pro-bowling halcyon days.

MILLIE

Oh sure. Let everyone in. From now on I leave the door wide open. Let the parade begin!

BUZZ

Clam it!

Millie is silent. Buzz gets up and approaches Zeus.

BUZZ

Hey, rat. C'mere.

Zeus growls at Buzz as he comes nearer, then clamps onto his sleeve and hangs from his arm, growling ferociously. In one smooth motion, Buzz flings the rabid poodle through an open window and into the night.

MILLIE

Jerk.

She heads outside.

BUZZ

Sit down.

Theo sits on the edge of the couch. Buzz puts out his hand. Theo shakes it.

BUZZ

Buzz Fazeli.

THEO

Theo.

BUZZ

I know your face, you're an up-and-comer.
You bowl on the tour.

THEO

I'm not on the tour this year.

BUZZ

(nods understandingly)
Need some advice, huh.

THEO

Well, Mr. Fazeli, the Bowling Congress
says I'm a thorn in their side.

BUZZ

(dismissive wave)
Don't worry about the Congress, they're
just a bunch of moralistic busy-bodies.

15 EXT. THEO'S CAR

15

Millie's furry slippers protrude from the driver's side door. Zeus chews furiously on the yellow plastic 'Bowler On Board' sign. She rifles through the contents of the overstuffed glove compartment. She notices her dog.

MILLIE

(under her breath)
Get that outta your mouth!

16 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

16

THEO

They suspended me.

BUZZ

Why'd they suspend you?

Theo's eyes glaze over, the lights in the room dim, and Buzz seems to recede into the far distance.

17 TV SCREEN - FLASHBACK

17

In ultra-slow scan we see an image of two bowlers, one is smiling cockily to off-screen fans and waving, the other is Theo, his face filled with hate, winding up to smash the other man in the head with his bowling ball.

THEO (VO)

It wasn't really my fault.

In the far background the hollow booming VOICE of a judge delivers sentence.

JUDGE (VO)

The American Bowling Congress hereby suspends Theo Maynard Skinner from all professional bowling activities within the jurisdiction of the American Bowling Congress and its international co-signers... The ball mashes into the smirking mans head, causing it to snap forward. The judge's gavel BANGS and the crowd ROARS.

18 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

18

Theo snaps out of it, the room lights come up, and Buzz leans in.

BUZZ

I got suspended when I was young, too. I was pretty cocky in my day.

THEO

They suspended me for 100 years.

BUZZ

100 years!
(knits his brow)

THEO

I can appeal in five. I was hoping you could help me Mr. Fazeli.

BUZZ

(uneasy)
What do you think I can do?

THEO

(sweating slightly)
I need a sponsor to get my sanction card back. Where I come from, you're the king.

BUZZ

Sure, around here, any fat old bald guy could be king. I'm nothing. It wouldn't do any good for me to talk to the Congress.

(briskly changing subject)
Hey, you thirsty? You like orange whips?

THEO

I've never had orange whips, I'm from Akron.

CUT TO:

19 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

19

Millie and Buzz are in the kitchen, talking in loud whispers. Millie fills a blender while Buzz cuts oranges.

MILLIE

He's the guy Buzz.

BUZZ

He's not the guy, Millie. Just whip the whips.

MILLIE

I looked in his car. He's got pictures of you, clippings, maps.

BUZZ

Bowlers don't go around killing other bowlers. He's only a fan, Millie. I'll give him some tips and an autograph and he's outta here.

MILLIE

You're in trouble, aren't you Buzz? You're doing something dangerous in that alley.

BUZZ

Millie, I know what I'm doing.

MILLIE

We should leave this town. I can't take this anymore. I'm not gonna let him kill you in my house.

20 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

20

Buzz rejoins Theo in the living room.

THEO

Remember the finals in Akron in '59? You had a seven-ten split in the final frame.

BUZZ

Yeah, against that prick VanDeMark.

THEO

Ten thousand to one, but you pegged it. The toughest shot on the last frame.

BUZZ

That game was before you was born.

THEO

My mom was there. She told me about it. The 'Fazeli Split.'

21 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, KITCHEN

21

The blender is wailing at high speed as Millie throws in a whole box of laxative, a can of Drano and a jar of pills. Her hands are trembling.

22 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

22

Millie walks into the living room with a silver tray holding two orange whips; one thick and deadly, the other thin and safe. There is laughter coming from both men.

BUZZ

And the irony is, thirty years later, that prick is bowling in the seniors on TV all over the world, and look at me. Ah well. The docs made me stop, on account of my ticker.

(taps his chest)

I don't really miss it, but then...

(chokes up)

...I miss it.

He spies Millie approaching with the tray.

BUZZ

Orange whip, nectar of the bowling gods.
Thanks sweetie. Millie turns the tray so
that Buzz takes the untainted whip. Theo
takes the other glass.

THEO

Thanks.

ZEUS

Zeus is on the sofa, GROWLING and tugging
at Theo's bowling bag. The bag rips apart
and the ball hits the floor.

ORANGE WHIP

Theo brings the drink to his lips. The
ball rolls across the room.

BUZZ

The ball rolls into Buzz's feet.

BUZZ

This your lucky bullet?

Buzz picks it up and reads the writing on the ball. He snaps
a look into the kitchen, seeing the empty Drano and laxative
cartons. Buzz slams the drink away from Theo's lips. The
drink explodes across the room. Buzz is up on his feet.

BUZZ

(with intensity)

Where'd you get this ball?

THEO

(stunned - looks at the mess on
the floor, then at Buzz)

It's mine.

BUZZ

Who gave it to you?

THEO

Grace Skinner.

BUZZ

(astonished)

Grace Skinner. Who's Grace Skinner to
you?

THEO

She's my mom.

Theo stands and takes the ball from Buzz's hands. Buzz is in shock, staring at Theo.

BUZZ

(regaining his voice)

Who are you? Who sent you here?

THEO

I'm your son. You're a hard father to find.

MILLIE

Son?

BUZZ

(to Millie)

Millie, please.

(to Theo)

I don't have a son.

I think you better leave now young man.

Buzz gestures towards the front door.

THEO

(calmly)

Grace Skinner Fazeli, you must remember her?

Buzz takes Theo by the elbow to eject him from the house.

BUZZ

I don't know no Grace Skinner.

THEO

(pulls his arm away)

You knew her. You married her in 1963.

MILLIE

Married?

Buzz grabs a large bowling trophy and waves it at Theo.

BUZZ

You're a bullshit artist, that's what you are. You got no right to be here! Theo yanks the trophy away from Buzz.

THEO

I got a right. You're my father.

BUZZ

I ain't nobody's father!

Theo hurls the trophy at Buzz. He ducks and the trophy sails into a large glass trophy case. Broken glass and trophies fly everywhere.

MILLIE

(noticing Zeus)

ZEUS!

Zeus is laid out cold near the spilled orange whip on the living room floor. Millie hunches over her comatose poodle.

MILLIE

My poor baby!

BUZZ

(to Theo)

You see what you did?

(he picks up the ball)

Take your ball and get out.

Theo takes the ball and exits the house.

23 EXT. BRIDGE - NIGHT

23

Theo, bathed in sweat, practices his release form with obsessive determination. He is alone near the empty bridge. Sheila spies on him from behind the bridge control booth. Theo takes a long slug from a bottle of liquor. He hears a motor scooter start and ROAR off into the night.

24 INT. 7-ELEVEN - DAY

24

Theo stands at the self-serve island sipping coffee. A muzak cover of 'Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head' PLAYS.

THEO

(resignedly)

99 years, 241 days,

(looks at his watch)

15 hours, and 20 minutes of no bowling.

Alfie shuffles up to the self-serve

island and begins wiping it down.

ALFIE

Find your bowler?

THEO

Yeah, but it didn't go so good. He wasn't the man I thought he'd be. Theo is trying to affix the lid on his cup, but his hands are trembling, spilling some of the coffee.

ALFIE

My father used to say to me "Never..."
no, hmmm. "Always..." No, no...
(puzzles)
Ah! Love and hate are blood relations.

THEO

Maybe I should have left the ball in the
car.

25 EXT. BUZZ'S HOUSE - DAY

25

Millie kneels on the front lawn patting dirt down on a little
grave marked by a wooden cross. Theo walks up.

MILLIE

He's not here.

THEO

I'm sorry about Zeus, Millie.

MILLIE

(points to grave)
This is a sign! Someone's coming to take
Buzz away from me. I don't know if you're
the guy or what, but I'm not letting it
happen. I'm leaving him first.

THEO

I couldn't kill Buzz. I need his help.
Theo helps Millie load suitcases into the
trunk of her car.

MILLIE

Buzz Fazeli never helps anybody but
himself.

THEO

He's my father, Millie.

MILLIE

He's no father to you.

Theo lifts a box full of new bowling pins into the trunk.

MILLIE

Careful with that one. He won't tell me
anything, but I know there's something
strange going on over at the lanes. If
you ask me, I'd say the old fart wants to
die.

THEO

Where can I find him?

MILLIE

(looks at her watch)

The Peter Pan.

Millie gets into the car.

MILLIE

You tell Buzz I went to my sister's in Ronkonkoma. Oh, I'm sorry about trying to kill you last night, Theo. It was nothing personal. Millie puts on a pair of sunglasses and patches out in a cloud of gravel and dust.

26 INT. PETER PAN DINER - DAY

26

A blender WHIRRS. Sheila, in her waitress uniform, carefully chops something. She watches an indoor motocross rally on the diner's color TV. 12-PACK, a hefty construction worker, sits at the counter.

12-PACK

Hey Sheila, how's that orange whip comin'?

SHEILA

(mimicking him under her breath)

How's that orange whip comin'?

THWAP! Sheila is dismembering a Ken doll with a big knife. She scoops the parts into the blender and switches from purže to frappž.

12-PACK

So, I heard Junior busted out again?

Sheila puts the glass down in front of 12-Pack with a THUNK.

12-PACK

Hey Sheila, you can whip my oranges anytime. Sheila puts a Barbie head earring on her left ear. Buzz comes into the diner and slides into a booth. Sheila walks over with a pot of coffee.

SHEILA

Cup of joe Mr. Fazeli?

BUZZ

Yeah, and make it extra muddy, I didn't sleep a zee last night. Sheila fills a cup. Buzz lifts it to his mouth, his hands trembling.

SHEILA

You don't need coffee, Mr. Fazeli; you need a vacation. Sheila catches sight of Theo pulling into the parking lot. She puts a Ken head earring in her right ear. Buzz follows Sheila's gaze.

BUZZ

(groans)

Some people will do anything for an autograph. Theo enters the diner and walks over to Buzz.

THEO

Millie left to stay with her sister in Ronkonkoma.

BUZZ

You know what a mixer ball is? It's like you, you come out of nowhere and upset things, scattering everything all over. Buzz grumpily waves at him to sit.

THEO

What are you doing over at the lanes that's so dangerous, Buzz?

BUZZ

You shouldn't listen to her, she's a nervous old Nellie.

THEO

She thinks someone's trying to kill you.

BUZZ

I couldn't pay someone enough to try to kill me. Sheila comes over to take their orders.

BUZZ

I'll have my usual please, Sheila.

SHEILA

Buzz Burger, side of 'cues. You haven't

introduced me to your fan.

BUZZ

Sheila, meet...uh...
(leans in to Theo,
sardonically)
I forget the name.

THEO

(uncomfortably)
Theo.

BUZZ

Theo! This is Sheila Kastle, my partner's
daughter.

SHEILA

(eyeing Theo up and down)
You look like you're something on the
lanes.

BUZZ

Theo's bowled on the tour.

SHEILA

Oh, a professional man. What'll you have?

THEO

What's your specialty?

SHEILA

Whips...orange whips.

THEO

Then I'll have the number four with one
of your finest whips.

SHEILA

How do you want it?
(their eyes meet)
The eggs.

THEO

(discomfited at the blatant
double entendre)
Uh...over easy.

SHEILA

Coming right up.

Sheila smiles and walks away. Theo watches her slink behind
the counter.

BUZZ

Watch out for that one. She's got a great average, but she's looking for a prince. And, believe me, she's
(more)

BUZZ

kissed a lotta tadpoles.
(looking Theo in the eye)
Listen, I been thinking about your problem. I'm not the guy to sponsor you. It would be unethical. But, there is something I could do for you.
(leans in, secretively)
Putt-putt golf.

THEO

Putt-putt golf?

Buzz pulls a golf ball from his pocket, flashes it and slips it back.

BUZZ

It's the next level, the next dimension...
(deep conviction)
...the small ball.

THEO

(in Buzz's spell)
The small ball.

BUZZ

It's gonna be bigger than big. Think Europe. Think Asia. They don't have room for real golf courses in Japan.

THEO

(snapping out of it)
Not for me. Miniature golf's for pansies.

BUZZ

If the Japanese are pansies, then pansies are my kind of people. Sheila steps over to the booth with their food. The Buzz Burger has three holes cut in the middle to make it look like a bowling ball. Buzz sees the two sleazeballs park their car and walk towards the diner.

THEO

(pondering the thought)
Maybe I could bowl in Japan.

Buzz stands up abruptly.

BUZZ

I gotta wash up.

Buzz heads for the rest rooms. The door opens with a JINGLE.

SID

Three whips. To go.

BREEZE

When you get a chance.

Sid and Breeze walk over to Theo's booth and slide in. Sid's middle fingers are taped to an aluminum splint. The BLENDER kicks into action. Buzz watches the group from the bathroom hall and tries to catch the conversation.

BREEZE

Hey, you still here?

SID

We're looking for Buzz Fazeli, seen him?

THEO

I don't know no Buzz Fazeli.

BREEZE

Look Sid, a Buzz Burger. The Faz's favorite lunch. Sid reaches for the plate. Buzz walks over to the booth and pulls his burger away from Sid.

BUZZ

Get away from that burger.

BREEZE

Sorry Faz, we didn't know you was here.

SID

Buzz, Mr. Kastle wants to talk to you.

BREEZE

(to Theo and Buzz)
Are you guys bruddas?

The booth party is silent for a moment. Theo LAUGHS.

BUZZ

No, we ain't brothers.

SID

You know why we call him Breeze?

Sid puts a hand near Breezes left ear and blows into Breeze's right ear. He makes fluttering motions with his hand as if wind was hitting it. Breeze's face breaks into a smile as he pushes Sid away.

BREEZE

Hey, cut it out Sid, that tickles. I'm serious! You guys are related, right?

THEO

He's my dad.

Buzz flashes a warning glare to Theo. Sid grabs some of Buzz's french fries.

BUZZ

(slapping his hand)
Get your own.

BREEZE

See that, toldja Sid. I knew I seen a resemblance.

BUZZ

Why don't you clowns get your whips and get lost.

SID

Look, Faz, Mr. Kastle was not his usual charismatic self today when he told us to tell you...

(gazing artfully upwards and
rubbing his chin)
What was that he said...?

BREEZE

I remember, Sid! Mr. Kastle says he don't like no sticky fingers in the till.

SID

(exasperated)
Pinhead! Don't just blurt it right out.

Sheila comes over and PLUNKS down the three whips-to-go.

BREEZE

(to Sheila)

Your pop said to put these on his tab.
Sid gets up and jerks his thumb towards
the door.

SID

So Buzz, let's skedaddle. Mr. Kastle is
waiting. As Buzz gets up, Theo rises and
steps between his father and the two
sleazeballs.

THEO

I'm coming with you.

Sid shies away from Theo, protecting his hand.

BUZZ

Easy. I got business to do, Theo. I'll
come back and haunt you later.

(drops a twenty on the table,
pats Theo's cheek)

Don't say I never gave you nothing.

Buzz goes outside with a sleazeball on either side. Sheila
takes the twenty dollar bill. Theo grabs his jacket and makes
for the door.

THEO

(to Sheila)

Do those two work for your dad or mine?

SHEILA

Mine, and they never tip.

The sleazeballs hustle Buzz into the front seat of their car
and patch out.

THEO

Do you know where they're taking him?

SHEILA

Yeah, Babylon. Buzz runs the lanes there
for my dad. Everybody who has anything to
do with bowling in this town answers to
my dad. Theo splits.

27 EXT. WOODS - DAY

27

Junior is running at breakneck speed through the thick brush.
Bloodhounds BARK. Junior slows down and drops to his knees,
gasping for breath. He looks up to the sky. The camera pushes
up to his sweaty, tortured face.

JUNIOR
(shrieks)

SHEILA!

28 INT. BABYLON LANES, BUZZ'S OFFICE

28

MILES KASTLE lounges in a cheap chair behind Buzz's desk toying with one of those motorized wire balancing sculptures they have in airport souvenir concessions. He is a carefully groomed middle-aged low-budget version of Hugh Hefner in an acrylic sweatsuit with 'Miles 'O' Lanes' embroidered on the front. Sid and Breeze push Buzz into the room. Buzz is poker faced.

KASTLE

Buzz.

Buzz nods.

KASTLE

(to Breeze)

You got my whip?

Breeze pulls the third whip out of a bag and gives it to him.

KASTLE

(motions to Sid and Breeze)

Lose yourselves.

Sid and Breeze leave the room. Buzz goes to a locker and begins changing into a flashy MC outfit.

BUZZ

What's on your mind, Miles?

KASTLE

We've been partners a long time now,
haven't we Buzz?

BUZZ

Seven years.

Kastle pokes a straw into the whip and takes a long drag.

KASTLE

This scam we got going here was your
(more)

KASTLE

brainstorm, Buzz. I admit, I thought it
was a rotten idea, but I put up the
scratch.

(pulls a smile)
And now we got a beautiful thing.

BUZZ

It's a beautiful thing.

KASTLE

A beautiful thing. And you know why Buzz?
You know what we got? Buzz raises an
eyebrow as he buttons his shirt.

MILES

We got balance.

Kastle flicks the little wire man. It bobs and sways.

KASTLE

A partnership is a very delicate balance.
But let's say something tips the scales,
maybe one partner takes more than his
share, then... Kastle tips the wire man
off his perch. The little motor squeals
pathetically.

KASTLE

... oops. We got no more balance.

Buzz looks on with narrowed eyes as he adjusts his cravat.

KASTLE

And look at that; both partners go down
together. Kastle shoves the sculpture
onto the floor, stands up, and crushes it
under his heel. He goes over and puts his
arm around Buzz.

KASTLE

Simple math, Buzz.
(he holds up his fingers)
Two plus two does not equal three.

BUZZ

Miles, I've always been on the square
with you.

KASTLE

I'm sure you have Buzz.

BUZZ

Wish me luck.

Buzz jogs out into a spotlight.

KASTLE

Break a leg...
(sneers)
...partner.

29 INT. DWARF BOWLING ALLEY

29

APPLAUSE erupts as Buzz appears in the spotlight. The dwarf bowling alley is a pungently smoke-filled room peopled with shady, washed-up bowlers sitting in chairs behind a bowling lane. The old-timers are shouting and pounding shots.

BUZZ

(over the PA)
Greetings, ladies, gentlemen.
(the place grows silent)
My dentist told me this one the other
day: How many bowlers does it take to
screw in a lightbulb?

AUDIENCE

How many?

BUZZ

It takes three bowlers to screw in a
lightbulb. One to hold the bulb, one to
turn the ladder, and one to hold their
balls. Thank you, thank you. Just throw
money.

CUT TO:

30 EXT. BABYLON LANES - EVENING

30

Theo drives through the full parking lot of Babylon Lanes. He pulls around the back and sees dark figures slip into a back door. He parks his car, walks over to the now closed door. It's locked. Theo finds another entrance and sneaks in. He creeps his way through the darkened alley towards the sound of raucous partying.

BUZZ (OS)

Welcome to Buzz Fazeli's Dwarf Bowling,
folks, where we bring you the finest in
specialized bowling entertainment.

THEO'S POV

Through a crack in a door Theo can see
Buzz standing in the spotlight.

BUZZ

I would like to draw your attention to the top of the lane.

(a Casio drum roll PLAYS)

Weighing in at sixty-nine pounds and standing exactly three feet - the diminutive dominatrix Teeny Weenie Tina the Terrible! The crowd CHEERS as the spotlight moves to Tina, a masked lady dwarf duded up in a combination black leather and cowhide western style S&M outfit. She CRACKS a whip and leers at the bowlers. They HOWL with excitement.

BUZZ

Don't be shy, folks!

Tina straps into her customized skateboard. A drunken customer forks over a wad of bills, steps up and grabs hold of the mini-human projectile.

BUZZ

And - bowl 'er!

Tina is hurled head-first towards the pins. The crowd goes wild.

TINA'S POV

The camera tracks low behind Tina as she crashes into the pins.

31 INT. BABYLON LANES, BATHROOM

31

Theo sneaks into an empty bathroom. He hears voices and ducks into a stall. Sid and Breeze shove Buzz into the room.

SID

Seems to me like you ain't got much choice Buzz.

Sid shoves Buzz over to Breeze, Breeze shoves him back.

BREEZE

You're between Miles Kastle and a hard place.

BUZZ

Aaay, hands off the tux!

Sid checks under the stalls, sees Theo's feet and whips open the door.

SID

The busyboy!

Sid yanks Theo out.

THEO

Get your hands off me, you moron.

Theo tries to free himself from Sid's grip. He turns to Buzz.

THEO

What the fuck is this?

BUZZ

What's it look like to you?

THEO

It looks like dwarf bowling.

SID

Very good, busyboy.

THEO

(with intensity)

Dwarf bowling's illegal.

SID

(sarcastically)

What are you gonna do, call the bowling police?

BREEZE

Heh, heh, heh.

THEO

You said it would be unethical to help me. You call dwarf bowling ethical!

BUZZ

I do what I gotta do to survive.

THEO

You have no right to call yourself a bowler. Buzz slaps Theo in the face.

BUZZ

I'm more of a bowler than you'll ever be. I deal with my own shit. I ain't asking anyone to bail me out.

THEO

I'm your blood.

BUZZ

You wish!

Theo pushes Buzz up against a stack of boxes full of new bowling pins. Sid and Breeze hover behind them.

THEO

You knew she was pregnant.

Buzz reaches inside a box and pulls out a pin. He waves it threateningly at Theo.

BUZZ

What makes you so sure it was me? She coulda had lotsa bowlers! Theo rushes Buzz and grabs his arm. The two men struggle for the pin.

THEO

Don't say that about my mom!

BUZZ

I had a career. She wanted a little bowler of her own. Sid and Breeze leap into the fray, prying the two men apart. They wrestle Theo against a wall, pressing his face into the tiles.

THEO

Fuck you and fuck bowling.

BUZZ

That's a laugh. You're all strung out. You're a bowling junkie.

THEO

I don't need the stinking pro-tour.

BUZZ

You're dead without the pro-tour, and you know it. Get him away from me. Sid and Breeze punch Theo in the face.

DISSOLVE TO:

32 DWARF BOWLING ALLEY

32

Theo is dragged through the dwarf alley crowd. He has blood on his face. Half dazed, he looks up at all the distorted leering faces that peer down at him. The crowd cat-calls and laughs at Theo.

Sheila bowls with LUNA, a 30-ish black guy dressed in a Miles 'O' Lanes jumpsuit and wearing extensions in his hair. Sheila prods her friend when she sees Theo.

SHEILA

Luna, that's the guy. I saw him do this spooky bowling rain dance on the bridge.

LUNA

Typical.

Theo walks over. Sheila presents Theo with her ball.

SHEILA

Here Theo, it's the Fazeli specialty; a seven-ten split. Theo looks down the lane and sees the two pins standing.

THEO

I'm not here to - I can't...

Sheila can't release the ball from Theo's now-paralytic grip.

SHEILA

(knowing nod)
Bowling block.

Kastle, Sid, and Breeze stare at a bank of video monitors, their faces illuminated by the screens.

BREEZE

Think he'll bowl it?

KASTLE

Nah, he won't do it.

SID

Weird, comes into alleys and doesn't bowl.

KASTLE

It's not an "Alley". I hate when people call it a "Bowling Alley", it's so common! I prefer "Bowling Center".

BREEZE

What's this guy here for, anyway?

KASTLE

Maybe he's here to pay his last respects.

SID

Someone gonna get kacked, boss?

KASTLE

If I find out Buzz is comin' up short on dwarf bowling, it's lights out for him and pink slips for you. Sid and Breeze look sideways at each other.

KASTLE

I hired you rent-a-thugs to keep tabs on the Faz. I want you all over him like a tent. Find out how that little weasel's ripping me off. Buzz Fazeli's gonna blow the lid off dwarf bowling!

41 LANE, SHEILA & THEO

41

The two of them sit together behind the lanes.

THEO

I came here to have a word with your dad.

SHEILA

What do you want with my dad?

THEO

Business.

SHEILA

Won't your father help you with that?

THEO

(shakes his head)

Having a legend for a dad isn't all it's cracked up to be.

SHEILA

Your dad's one of the only nice people in this fucking town. My Dad is slime. Kastle walks over. Theo stands up and shakes Kastle's proffered hand.

KASTLE

So you're Buzz's boy. I've been expecting you. You hurt my feelings when you didn't come and see me sooner.

THEO

You know who I am?

KASTLE

Nobody sticks a finger into a bowling ball in this town without Miles Kastle knowing about it. You don't mind if I have a word with Theo, do you bunny? Kastle takes Theo by the elbow and pulls him away.

KASTLE

I heard you've been having a little trouble with the Congress.

(waves at a mother/daughter couple)

Theo pulls his eyes off Sheila. Kastle walks Theo past pairs of bowlers.

THEO

You might say I'm at the top of their shit list.

KASTLE

Maybe I can help you.

(calling to a young bowler)

Try a lighter ball, Penelope - you'll get hurt with that big ball, honey.

(to Theo)

I've seen tapes of you bowling on the circuit. You got Fazeli blood running through you. Your pop was a genuine talent in his day.

THEO

What's with the bad air between you two, Mr. Kastle?

KASTLE

(dismissive gesture)

It's nothing, just a slight business imbalance.

(to a seated mother)

How's Gloria's thumb?

MOTHER (OC)

The blister's worse than last week.

KASTLE

No pain, no gain! Keep trying the ice. Chin up, sweetie.

(turning to Theo)

This place is a bowling oasis.

THEO

It's very...clean.

They pause and Kastle waves to some bowlers.

MRS. JACKSON (OC)

Hello, Mr.Kastle.

KASTLE

Hello, Violet. How's my favorite
'bowlerina' doing?

MRS. JACKSON (OC)

132, 154.

KASTLE

You keep that up Carmelita and one day
you'll be a champion just like Mr.
Skinner here. What do you think, Theo?
Think Carmelita's got the stuff?

THEO

That's some pinfall. Almost a 133
average. Her ball's flat, she needs to
work on her spin control.

KASTLE

That's right, didn't you have a slight
control problem in a recent
tournament, champ?

(to Carmelita)

Now go take out your "big four", darling.

(to Theo)

Come on, we're making her nervous.

They continue walking.

KASTLE

I get them while they're young. Builds
loyalty.

MRS. JACKSON (OC)

She hit it, Mr. Kastle!

KASTLE

(waving over his shoulder)

Four or five years when a girl like
that's bowling on the pro tour for Team
Kastle, she'll pay a handsome profit on
my investment.

THEO

And the dwarf bowling?

They stop, and Kastle pulls Theo over to an enormous aquarium near the lounge.

KASTLE

(making sweeping gesture)

Think of this business like a big aquarium. You gotta have some sharks to eat the dirt at the bottom so the guppies can swim free at the top.

(more)

KASTLE

Profits down there, philanthropy up here.

(looks at Theo)

Besides, it beats the pants off bingo.

THEO

Nice set-up.

KASTLE

If it springs a leak, it'll be because Buzz is making waves.

THEO

What if he wants to get out?

KASTLE

(chuckles)

He's earned an early retirement.

(sprays his mouth with Binaca)

But enough about losers; Buzz Fazeli is history. Lets talk about your future.

(puts his arm around Theo)

I wanna show you something.

42 INT. MILES KASTLE'S OFFICE

42

Kastle and Theo stand in front of the huge bank of video screens.

KASTLE

Rac. R-A-C. Renovate, Automate, Computerize. That, my boy, is the future. One of the monitors shows a little girl bowling. Her ball moves so slowly it barely tips over the first pin. Kastle hits a key and the pins explode in an emphatic strike. The little girl jumps

with joy.

THEO

What ever happened to just bowling?

KASTLE

There's a lot of competition for amusement out there. You gotta adapt to survive.

THEO

I like the sport the way it is.

KASTLE

A guy like you could breathe some fire into bowling. You got ambition like a...like a...blowtorch. You go for what you want and anything that gets in your way - PSSSHHT! - shish kebabs.

(puts his arm around Theo)

Maybe lady fate washed you up on my doorstep for your own good.

(pauses for effect)

I think I could help you, Theo.

THEO

(he's been waiting for this)

How Mr. Kastle?

KASTLE

You need a sponsor; I have influence. I could sponsor you.

THEO

Why would you help me?

KASTLE

I like you, Theo. You bowl with soul.

Kastle turns to his video screens.

KASTLE

But, now that you mention it, you could afford me one minor dispensation. Theo follows his gaze to the screen.

KASTLE

While you're in town, I need you to keep an eye on my daughter for a couple of days. Her big brother broke out of the mental hospital... Theo's eyes glaze over, the lights in the office dim, and

Kastle seems to recede into the far distance.

43 THEO'S POV - NIGHTMARE

43

As running FOOTSTEPS are heard, the camera whizzes down a darkened alley towards the pins.

KASTLE (OS)

...and I want someone watching out for Sheila while he's, uh, loose.

44 EXT. WOODS - NIGHTMARE

44

The heels of Junior's running feet.

KASTLE (OS)

Junior's a problem child. He has a thing about -

JUNIOR

(wails)

SHEILA!

45 INT. MILES KASTLE'S OFFICE

45

Theo snaps out of it, the room lights come up, and Kastle points to her image on the TV screen. Sheila turns and looks up at the video camera. Theo and Sheila's eyes seem to meet. Theo freezes for a moment.

THEO

I could do that.

As the two men shake hands, Sheila "flips the bird" to the camera.

KASTLE

One thing,
(pointing to Theo's mid-section)
keep the meat in the freezer.

CUT TO:

46 EXT. HIGHWAY - EARLY EVENING

46

Theo and Sheila blast along the dark roadway on her Vespa, Theo sitting behind Sheila.

THEO

(shouting above the engine)

This is a vicious cycle.

SHEILA

I think that a motorbike is one of the last really free things that people can do.

THEO

Isn't this technically a scooter?

SHEILA

When I'm on my bike I feel like a wild person.

(she looks sideways at Theo)

Better than any sex I've ever had.

THEO

Kinda tough on the butt.

SHEILA

Everything has it's drawbacks.

THEO

Where did your brother escape from?

SHEILA

The mental hospital.

THEO

What does he do?

SHEILA

He follows me, he tries to have sex with me, and then they send him to the nut-hut for a while and then he gets out and then he follows me, he tries to have sex with me, they send him to the nut-hut for a while...

THEO

Whoa.

SHEILA

It's a vicious cycle.

CUT TO:

47 EXT. PARKING FIELD

47

Sheila and Theo motor across an empty beach parking field towards a lone station wagon. Swing-a-delic MUSIC drifts from the parked vehicle.

Sheila pulls up beside the wagon. She leads Theo towards a group of partying people at the tailgate of the car; three white women, three white men and Luna. Luna pulls a rubber hookah hose out of his mouth and offers it to Theo.

LUNA

Hookah?

THEO

No thanks, I don't hookah.

LUNA

Theo, you ever do the 'Swing'?

Theo shakes his head.

SHEILA

These guys all work at the alley, too.
This is John, Susan, Jon, Suzanne,
Jonathan, and Sue. Everyone welcomes Theo
and Sheila.

LUNA

(screams)

Dance Break!

Luna throws himself into a wild body-whip as the music THROBS massively.

EXT. DANCE

Luna and Sheila do a wild jitterbug-derived Swing-a-Delic dance surrounded by weaving white folk.

EXT. BARBECUE

One of the guys is on crutches, has a neck brace, a chest cast, and one arm in a truss. He stands by the barbecue and flips burgers with his one free hand. Theo walks over to him.

GUY

Hey man, howyadoin'?

He wiggles his hand out of the end of his cast. Theo shakes his fingers.

THEO

Don't tell me, John.

JOHN

Cool!

THEO

Theo. Howzitgoin.

JOHN

Hey man, welcome to our parking lot. Lemme give you some advice, if she asks you to dance, make sure her brother's not around. Somebody blew out Junior's pilot light, if you get my meaning.

THEO

How's that?

JOHN

I was doing the lambada with her and the guy freaks, he breaks my arm, tries to kill me. I swear man, the guy thought I was a pi-ata. If nobody else hadn't a been there, he wouldn't have stopped. He woulda killed me. Fuckin' guy man, just snapped. How do you like your burger?

THEO

(meets eyes with Sheila)

Uh...over easy.

JOHN

(throws a blackened burger on Theo's styrofoam plate)

I'll tell you one thing, you won't see me around that alley with that freak on the loose. Stay away from his ass - and don't play any of his fuckin' knock-knock jokes.

Luna comes over to Theo and grabs him. They start to dance.

LUNA

Sheila wants me to show you a few steps before you two swing-a-delic.

THEO

(uneasily)

So, you're the pinman around here?

LUNA

...And one, and two, and yes, I am. But no one gets them working like Junior used to...and two, and one.. - they call him

The 'Quasimodo of the lanes.' He's the best pinman there is.. and one and two...People used to say he got the machines working so well 'cause he lubricated them with blood...and two, and one...but people just love saying things about Junior.

SHEILA

Mind if I cut in?

THEO

No, not at all.

EXT. DANCE

Theo pulls out his resin bag, powders up his hands, and goes for Sheila. Theo and Sheila get low and nasty on the tarmac. Sheila turns and does the freak to Theo, rubbing her rear end into his crotch. As Theo and Sheila dance over near John he makes a throat slitting gesture across his neck. Theo's hands leave white prints on Sheila's butt. The Swing-a-delic funks so hard it causes spontaneous audience dance riots and structural damage in theaters across the country.

SHEILA

You and your sideburns are the talk of the party, Theo.

THEO

The ladies in Akron call them thigh-ticklers.

SHEILA

Can I ask you something personal?

THEO

I'd rather you didn't.

SHEILA

Do you have a girlfriend?

THEO

Not while I'm in training.

SHEILA

Do you have a boyfriend?

THEO

(surprised)

No. Do You?

SHEILA

No. Not at the present.

EXT. PARKING FIELD - NIGHT

Sheila and Theo toast marshmallows over the barbecue as the rest of the party dances in the background.

THEO

So this brother of yours is hazardous to the health of your dates?

SHEILA

Nobody in this town really understands Junior. When I went to family sessions for him I realized he was the sanest one in the family. Actually, he's the only one in this whole fucking town who knows exactly who he is and what he wants.

THEO

Unfortunately what he wants is you.

SHEILA

So, what about you?

THEO

Do I want you?

SHEILA

We'll get into that later.

CUT TO:

48 INT. MILES KASTLE'S OFFICE

48

Alone, Kastle stares at the bank of video monitors and runs a battery powered fuzzball remover around his collar. The monitors are deserted. Miles absently pans a camera over and then sits bolt upright. On the screen he can see Buzz Fazeli, in a room at Babylon Lanes, surrounded by large piles of cash, stuffing rolls of bills into hollow bowling pins.

KASTLE

(with rising anger)

Why that filthy, slimey, double-crossing, misbegotten, two-faced, mangy, son-of-a-bitch bastard!

The motor in the fuzz ball remover SHRIEKS as Miles squeezes it to death. It shatters in his hands.

Theo and Sheila lie on the roof of the station wagon. "Devil With The Blue Dress" by Shorty Long plays on the stereo. The rest of the party throws marshmallows at each other in the distance.

SHEILA

Theo, what would you do if you couldn't bowl?

THEO

I don't know. It's all I ever wanted to do.

SHEILA

I wanted to be a motocross champion. My folks didn't really care what I did. Then Junior blew a fuse and I became their last hope. Most girls get ballet stuffed down their throats, I got bowling. I never understood how anyone could take it so seriously. I hope I'm not insulting you.

THEO

No, I'm fascinated.

SHEILA

Why were you suspended?

THEO

I used to be kind of wild. They used to call me the bad boy of bowling.

SHEILA

So you're hoping Buzz can get you reinstated?

THEO

Well, that was plan A.

SHEILA

What's plan B?

THEO

Plan B is your dad.

SHEILA

What do you think my dad's gonna do for you?

THEO

He said he'd sponsor me.

SHEILA

Ha! And what do you have to do for him?

THEO

Nothing.

SHEILA

Oh really? Nothing? My dad doesn't do anything unless there's something in it for him.

THEO

He asked me to keep an eye on you for a couple of days.

SHEILA

What? Be my body guard?

(she laughs)

Here's my body, Theo. Guard it. For my dad's sake. For your career. Sheila starts to unbutton her bowling shirt.

THEO

Sheila, please.

SHEILA

Come on Theo, what about plan C?

THEO

(looking worried)

What's plan C?

SHEILA

Plan C...

(opens her shirt, showing off
her brassiere)

...is me.

Sheila takes Theo's nervous hands and places them inside her shirt.

THEO

(torn)

Look, Sheila, I really like you but...
Sheila rolls on top of him, and plants a hickey on his neck.

THEO

(stopping her)

Forget it, Sheila.

50 INT. MILES 'O' LANES

50

Kastle hurries through the darkened bowling alley. He stops short as a warning alarm begins to sound from somewhere deep within the building. Lane six lights up and comes to life. Kastle walks slowly forward.

KASTLE

Junior? Is that you, Junior? Don't be afraid. Where are you? I won't hurt you.

INT. MACHINERY GALLEY

Kastle stealthily sneaks along beside row upon row of silent pin reset machines shining a flashlight in front of him.

KASTLE

Come on, Junior. Everyone's waiting for you, son. The beam of light catches Junior's face. He is crouched inside the machine at lane six. Jr. His face is cut and bleeding and his straitjacket torn and filthy.

JUNIOR

Needs lubrication. Lubrication.

KASTLE

We're having a party for you, boy. Cake and shish-k-bob, just like you love. Junior cringes away from the light.

JUNIOR

You made me hurt him!

Kastle reaches into his pocket and pulls a gaudy digital wristwatch from his pocket.

KASTLE

Look what I got for you.

He holds the watch up in front of Junior. Junior looks curiously at the watch.

KASTLE

Happy Birthday Junior!

The watch begins to play an electronic version of "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head." Junior's face lights up.

JUNIOR

Ooooooohhh.

Kastle begins luring Junior out of machine number six with the watch.

KASTLE

I have someone for you to play with Junior.

JUNIOR

Someone wants to play with me?

KASTLE

I have someone for you to play Blueface with Junior.

JUNIOR

Blueface! Blueface is my favorite.

51 EXT. ROAD, SID & BREEZE'S CAR - DAY

51

Breeze and Sid speed down a road in their damaged hulk. The TENOR of Enrico Caruso can be heard from inside.

51 INT. SID & BREEZE'S CAR

51

Breeze drives. Sid gazes out the window. Enrico Caruso WAILS from the car stereo.

SID

Bowling used to be so pure, so...All-American. Breeze sings along with Caruso and pretends to conduct.

BREEZE

La da da dalala...

SID

(looking heatedly disturbed)
I hate fuckin' opera.

BREEZE

How could you hate opera, Sid? Opera has all the drama and excitement of real life - to music!

SID

How do you know, you don't even speak Latin?

BREEZE

You listen to the feelings, not the words.

SID

You got an 8-track tape player on purpose, just 'cause you knew the only thing they had on 8-track was fuckin' opera.

BREEZE

It was a clearance.

Sid seems to calm down.

SID

(wistfully)

You know, Elvis bowled.

BREEZE

No kiddin'.

SID

Bowling was the most incorruptible sport. No megalomillionaires, no
(more)

SID

gambling. And it was a safe place for kids, a place where the whole community could meet for some wholesome, clean fun.

BREEZE

(sympathetically)

Sure, Sid.

SID

(becoming rabid)

But not no more. Now people take advantage. Bowling ain't what it used to be. There's something evil spreading in this sport - like a big, gigantic, puss-ridden -

BREEZE

(getting excited)

- canker sore.

SID

(apoplectic)

Right, eating at the core, eating it's way out. It makes me sick!

Sid starts pressing buttons on the tape deck

SID

How do you turn this thing off?

BREEZE

Wait! That's an aria!

Sid and Breeze struggle for the cassette. The music DISTORTS into a warbling gurgle of an aria.

SID

Gimme that!

Sid yanks the cassette out, but the tape becomes tangled in the player. He pulls at the endless yards of tape and throws the whole mess out the window.

52 EXT. PETER PAN DINER - DAY

52

Theo, wearing sunglasses and dressed in a jogging suit similar to Miles Kastle's, steps out of the diner with a bag containing four orange whips. He goes over to his parked car. Buzz walks up.

BUZZ

(in deadly serious)

Theo, I want you to get out of this town.

THEO

I'm getting to like it here.

BUZZ

Did that porcupine say he'd get you back on the tour?

THEO

I gotta survive.

BUZZ

(shaking his head)

He'll be a barnacle on your ass the rest of your life.

THEO

You got a better offer?

BUZZ

No...

THEO

I didn't think so.

Theo takes a long drag from his orange whip.

BUZZ

Not for somebody who hit a man with his ball on national television.

THEO

(bitterly)

That's right, Buzz, and you know when I did it? Last match, last frame. All I needed was one spare for the crown - and I get stuck with the seven-ten, the Fazeli Split.

BUZZ

You never even took the shot. You couldn't do it. Theo moves towards Buzz in a threatening manner.

THEO

(repressed fury in his voice)

I was beaten on a shot named after my own dad. The moment passes. Theo turns and climbs into his car. He looks up at Buzz.

BUZZ

Look, kid, gimme a break. I'm an old man.
(taps chest)
I'm runnin' on a Delrin aorta. I'm finished - dead from my ankles up.

THEO

I couldn't care less.

Theo starts his car.

BUZZ

You know what I think? You didn't

come here to find a father. You didn't even come here for help. You just came here to take it all out on somebody. Well it ain't gonna be me! Theo pulls out of the parking lot. Buzz yells after him.

BUZZ

(at the top of his lungs)

I SHOULDA HAD MY TUBES TIED!

53 **EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, GARAGE**

53

The Kastle home is a huge nouveau riche Brady Bunch style

house with a large deck jutting over the driveway. The doors are open on the spacious two car garage. Sheila has the headset of her Vespa disassembled. Theo walks up the driveway, orange whips in hand.

SHEILA

I don't think your new outfit suits you, Theo.

THEO

(flicking dust off the suit)
Really? I kinda like it.

He sits nearby.

SHEILA

Do you talk with your mom?

THEO

It's been awhile. She didn't want me looking for my dad.

SHEILA

My mom told me not to stay in this town.

THEO

So why do you stay?

SHEILA

I'm a credit card junkie. I went on a binge and my dad bailed me out. Now I'm trapped in his easy payment plan.

THEO

I bet you get to meet a lot of eligible bowlers.

SHEILA

Yeah, but they're all little wannabes. I'm looking for a professional man.

THEO

(he ponders the thought)
I may not be a pro bowler, but I'm no amateur man. Sheila moves closer to Theo.

SHEILA

(touches his lips)
How much would you charge me for the lips?

THEO

More than you could afford.

SHEILA

Come on, bargain with me.

THEO

I could let them go for ten.

SHEILA

(she pulls away, slightly)
You professional men drive a hard bargain. I'm afraid I only have five on me. Sheila pulls out a 5 dollar bill.

THEO

(smiles)
If you want a professional man, you have to be willing to pay for him.

54 EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, DECK

54

Sheila and Theo stand on the deck. Sheila scans the road leading to the house with binoculars.

THEO

What are you going to do about your brother?

SHEILA

You're here.

THEO

What about the guy he put in the body cast?

BINOCULAR POV

The road is empty

SHEILA

Momentary relapse. Except for that, he's been making progress. Sheila laughs. Theo nervously pulls his collar up over the hickey on his neck.

SHEILA

Junior is like a faithful doggy. He loves his birthday so much, that every year, before we can go pick him up...

BINOCULAR POV

Kastle's car appears, driving hell-for-leather towards the house.

SHEILA

...he breaks out of the hospital and comes home on his own. Here they come. She hands the binoculars to Theo, who immediately trains them on the road.

SHEILA

My mom once had an affair. When my dad found out, he had Junior kill the man. The body was never found, but I think Junior took him to the alley. Theo lowers the binoculars and looks at Sheila.

THEO

Then it's true, isn't it? About...

SHEILA

...lane six. Yes.

55 EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, DRIVEWAY

55

Kastle's car comes belly-flopping to a stop in front of the house. Kastle climbs out and gesticulates wildly to the couple.

KASTLE

(a loud whisper)

He's here! Come on down!

BLACKNESS INSIDE THE TRUNK

KASTLE (OS)

(muffled)

OK, hats on everybody.

SOUNDS of the group gathering outside can be heard.

SHEILA (OS)

(muffled)

Dad, this is ridiculous. Just open it.

KASTLE (OS)

(muffled)

Ssssh! Now real quiet. On three.

One...two...three!

The lid flies up and Kastle, Sheila, and Theo stand there, with party hats and party horns in their mouths. They all cheer and throw confetti.

EVERYONE

Surprise!

Kastle takes a flash snapshot. Junior, lying on some folded blankets in the trunk, looks at his family with a stunned expression. He is in a straitjacket. Junior's new watch begins to PLAY "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head". He struggles to pull his arm out, but can't. Kastle reaches in to untie the straitjacket.

KASTLE

Steady boy, steady.

Untied, Junior presses the BEEPING watch against his ear. His face breaks into a beatific smile.

CUT TO:

56 EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, PICNIC TABLE - AFTERNOON

56

Kastle pulls shish kebab chunks off a skewer. He looks down to see that one of the chunks is a melted Ken head. He throws it away in disgust.

KASTLE

I bet you didn't know that you and Junior have something in common, Theo: Junior can't bowl anymore either. Isn't that right Junior? Kastle SLAMS the ketchup bottle down on Junior's right hand. The table settings jump from the shock. Junior sits impassively, his face a blank.

KASTLE

See! No feeling. Tell Theo what happened to your hand, Junior.

SHEILA

After we eat, Dad.

KASTLE

He stuck it in the ball return machine when he was a kid. Crushed all the nerve endings. Junior starts stroking the ketchup bottle with his dead hand.

JUNIOR

It's not so bad. When I'm alone, it feels like someone else. Sheila grabs the bottle from Junior, opens it and pours some on her shish kebab. She leans over and whispers furiously to her father.

SHEILA

Do you have to get your hooks into every
guy I'm interested in?

KASTLE

(whispers back, defensively)
You're just like you mother! Always
jealous!

SHEILA

That's why Mom ran away, because you had
to control everything!

KASTLE

She ran away to be with that...
(spits out his words)
that Motocross champion.

JUNIOR

Your turn, Theo. Why can't you bowl?

Sheila and Kastle sit up.

THEO

I don't like to talk about it.

JUNIOR

You're prone to violent outbursts, aren't
you?

THEO

It depends.

JUNIOR

It feels good to let it out, doesn't it?
Sheila leans over and whispers furiously
to her father.

SHEILA

You're using Theo for your own deviant
purposes!

KASTLE

Look who's talking!

SHEILA

Leave him alone!

KASTLE

Just because your mother signed part
ownership of the lanes over to you,

doesn't mean you have a right to tell me how to run my business! I can have my lawyers take that deed away from you like that.

(snaps his fingers)

Sheila and Kastle sit up.

KASTLE

Junior, how 'bout a riddle?

JUNIOR

(turns to Sheila)

Sheila. Knock-knock.

Sheila glances nervously at Theo.

JUNIOR

(impatiently)

Come on Sheila, knock-knock.

SHEILA

Who's there?

JUNIOR

Junior.

SHEILA

Junior who?

JUNIOR

J'you-and-your-friend do it yet?

(laughs)

KASTLE

(laughing)

Fantastic! What talent.

SHEILA

(caustically)

You still got the touch Junior.

CUT TO:

57 **EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, CAKE**

57

A bowling pin-shaped cake with candles ablaze is presented to a seated Junior. He is wearing a paper birthday hat. The four orange whips are arrayed around the table.

KASTLE

Make a wish, son.

Junior stares into Sheila's eyes for several seconds.

JUNIOR

Same wish as last year.

Sheila blows out the candles in a hurry.

SHEILA

It won't come true, Junior.

Kastle places a gift-wrapped box in front of Junior and lifts the lid. He reaches in and pulls out a huge, intricate claw-like arm-shaped device made of plastic and metal and covered with cables.

KASTLE

It's a bowling claw. You can bowl now, Junior. With the whole family. Junior beams at the group.

KASTLE

(puts one arm around Junior and
one on Theo)

Pretty soon everybody can bowl!

The two sleazeballs walk up onto the deck and over to the table.

SID

Hello Mr. Kastle.

(nods to seated party)

Junior, long time. I thought they locked you up and threw away the warden!

BREEZE

Is it true they blacked out the whole county giving you electro-shock? Junior looks from one man to the other, breathing heavily, his nostrils flaring.

JUNIOR

Knock, knock.

BREEZE

Who's...

SID

(interrupting)

Don't do it Breeze!

(to Junior)

You ain't getting us into that.

Kastle gets up.

KASTLE

Hey, enough fun and games. We have work to do. Come on Junior. Kastle heads for his car. Junior gets up and follows. The two sleazeballs tarry as Theo stands.

SID

(to Theo)

If Junior thinks you're doing the bouncy-bouncy with his sister, he's gonna tap dance on your spleen.

(pokes Theo in the side)

BREEZE

(pulls down Theo's collar to reveal the hickey)

With cleats.

The two men turn, laughing, and follow Kastle.

58 EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, DRIVEWAY

58

Kastle huddles with Sid and Breeze, Jr. stands nearby fiddling with his new bowling arm.

KASTLE

Buzz has been moving the cash out in hollow bowling pins. Sid and Breeze throw sideways glances at each other.

SID

No!

KASTLE

I want you two to pick up Buzz and bring him to lane six. Junior will take it from there.

JUNIOR

(perks up at mention of lane six)

I'm gonna play Blue Face!

CUT TO:

59 EXT. BABYLON LANES, PARKING LOT

59

Buzz checks if the coast is clear and then stuffs boxes of bowling pins into the trunk of his car.

CUT TO:

60 EXT. KASTLE HOUSE, DECK

60

Theo and Kastle stand on the deck watching the sleazeballs put Junior into the trunk of their car. Kastle lights an oversized cigar and hands one to Theo.

MILES

Champ, as soon as you get back on the tour, we should do an instructional videotape. 'RAMBOWL' Theo Skinner teaches Power Bowling. You on the cover with a flame thrower. Kastle lights Theo's cigar and they puff away.

KASTLE

Theo, how would you like to be my new partner?

THEO

You already have a partner Mr. Kastle. Sheila walks over as the sleazeballs' car pulls out of the driveway.

KASTLE

I think Buzz is retiring soon. In fact, I think he's retiring tonight. Kastle pulls out a shiny gold credit card and holds it in front of Sheila.

KASTLE

Here, Bunny. Why don't you two go and do something fun tonight, on me. Sheila is lured to the scent of the plastic like a junkie to a fix.

KASTLE

One thing, stay away from the lanes. If Junior sees you two together, he'll swallow his tongue. She reaches for the card and Kastle snatches it away from her with a chortle.

KASTLE

What did I say?

SHEILA

Don't go near the bowling alley.

KASTLE

(enunciating clearly)

Bowling "Center"!

Kastle hands her the card and heads into the house.

SHEILA

It wouldn't bother you if Buzz was in danger, would it?

THEO

Nope, I couldn't care less.

SHEILA

I'm sure you wouldn't care if he needed your help, right?

THEO

Why should I help that old fuck.

SHEILA

(sarcastically)

Yeah, what did Buzz Fazeli ever do for you?

THEO

Zip.

SHEILA

And besides, it's probably too late, anyhow.

THEO

(exhaling cigar smoke)

Way too late. Buzz Fazeli is history.

(goes to take another drag,
then stops)

Too late for what?

She turns away.

SHEILA

Nothing.

THEO

Too late for what, Sheila?

SHEILA

You know how people with broken bones know when there's a storm coming?

THEO

You got any broken bones?

SHEILA

No, but something's gonna blow in this town. I can feel it.

THEO

Are you fucking with me Sheila? Is something gonna happen to Buzz? Sheila seems to be trying to tell Theo, but is unable.

SHEILA

(faltering)

I can't tell you, Theo.

THEO

Why not?

SHEILA

I saw your eyes when you hit that guy with your ball on TV. THUNDER rumbles. Theo takes Sheila by the shoulders.

THEO

(gently)

Tell me, Sheila. What are you afraid of? Sheila shakes her head.

SHEILA

I'm afraid you'll hurt him.

THEO

It's Junior, isn't it.

SHEILA

(starting to cry)

I can't - I can't do it.

(she looks up through her tears at Theo)

He's my brother.

THEO

He's my father.

CUT TO:

61 EXT. BUZZ'S HOUSE - NIGHT

61

Sid and Breeze's car sits in front of Buzz's house. 8-track opera PLAYS on the car stereo. A man screams and glass smashes.

INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE

P.O.V. shot running desperately through the house, knocking things over, smashing things. We HEAR Buzz screaming in terror. The scream is cut off. With a THUD, the camera falls over and hits the floor. The golf ball rolls slowly into view, and stops. Footsteps recede, a door slams, and a car drives away.

CUT TO:

62 EXT. MILES 'O' LANES - NIGHT

62

Theo and Sheila walk her Vespa up to the darkened alley. Theo is wearing his own clothes again. The SOUND of a lone bowler is heard. Theo straps on his wristbrace. Sheila pulls out keys.

SHEILA

These open the back door. Don't let him catch you behind the machines; if he does, you're trapped. I'll meet you at the bridge. Theo takes the keys. Sheila grabs his arm.

SHEILA

You don't have to do this. We could just cut out of here, go to Akron, or anywhere else.

THEO

(dislodging her hand gently)
I'll be at the bridge.

63 INT. MILES 'O' LANES

63

Theo snakes his way along the rows of pin machines, towards the only light source - lane six. As he leans in to peer through the machine, a ball EXPLODES into the pins. Junior, wearing his elaborate bowling claw, is working himself into a sweaty froth. Junior picks up his ball and sends it CRASHING into the pins.

THEO

Knock-knock.

JUNIOR

(stops and looks around)
Who's there?

Theo remains silent.

JUNIOR

(getting angry)
Who's there!

THEO
Buzz Fazeli.

JUNIOR
NO. I SAY KNOCK-KNOCK! You say who's
there. I say who's there and then you say
who who. You're not playing right.
(primly)
Knock-knock.

THEO
Who's there?

Junior walks towards Theo.

JUNIOR
Junior.

Theo remains silent.

JUNIOR
JUNIOR!
(boiling)
You're supposed to say JUNIOR WHO! I'm
going to have to hurt you. Theo and
Junior circle one another.

JUNIOR
You shouldn't touch her.

THEO
No, Junior, you shouldn't touch her.

JUNIOR
Nobody touches her. Except me. I touch
her. Sheila told me you played bouncy-
bouncy with her.

THEO
What did your dad tell you to do to Buzz?
Theo scrambles up the lane on hands and
knees. Junior catches him, grabbing his
ankles.

JUNIOR
He told me to play Blue-Face with Buzz. I
like games.

THEO

(struggling to get away)
What did you do to Buzz?

JUNIOR

You played bouncy-bouncy with Sheila, so
I'm gonna play Blue-Face with you.
(he grabs Theo's throat)

THEO

(hoarsely)
I don't want to play.

Theo stretches to get a nearby ball, but just can't reach it,
by millimeters.

JUNIOR

To play, I press my fingers on a throat
like this...
(he presses tighter on Theo's
windpipe)
...and then the mans face would go blue
and I should keep pressing...
(Theo's face goes pale blue)
...and I did and then he stopped moving
and he didn't play anymore after that.
Theo bends back a finger on Junior's
hand. Junior lets out a HOWL of pain and
releases Theo's neck. Theo GASPS for air.

JUNIOR

You didn't play fair.
(stands up)
You were almost blue.

Theo gets his fingers in a bowling ball and brings it up to
bash Junior in the head.

JUNIOR

Go ahead Theo, I saw you on TV. I'm your
biggest fan. Junior offers Theo his
unprotected head.

JUNIOR

(yelling)
Come on Theo, GIVE ME YOUR AUTOGRAPH!

Theo bashes Junior in the head with the ball. It bounces off
Junior's head like a Nerf ball and rolls down the alley.

JUNIOR

Thank you, Mr. Skinner! Thank you!

Theo desperately, but fruitlessly tries to get away. As he crawls over the ball return trough, Junior puts his foot on Theo's head.

JUNIOR

I can have her, you know.
(looks around and whispers)
She's not my real sister.
(he flashes a lecherous smile)
THEO'S POV A ball pops up at the far end of the return and TRUNDLES rapidly towards Theo. The ball hits Theo's face with a POW. BLACK OUT We HEAR "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head." THEO'S BOWLING SHOE ATTIRED FEET Being dragged down the lane. Theo comes to and looks down his body to see the empty lane. He looks up to see Junior pulling him towards the pin reset machine. The cut on Theo's forehead bleeds down the side of his face.

JUNIOR

(muttering)
Lubrication.

MACHINE NUMBER 6

Junior pulls the dazed Theo into the pin-reset machine and positions him under the pins. As Junior prepares the machinery, a control cable on his claw becomes fouled. Junior begins to thrash about as he tries to disentangle himself and his malfunctioning arm. Theo rolls away as Junior's flailing releases the machine. It comes slamming down on Junior just as Theo slips out of harm's way. He gets up and staggers away from the machine. Junior's HOWL echoes across the lanes. His twitching feet protrude from the maw of the device. Lane six goes dark. Theo limps up the lane.

CUT TO:

64 EXT. BRIDGE

64

Theo drives up to the erect draw-bridge. He stops and gets out. The night is silent.

THEO

(loud whisper)
Sheila! Where are you?

Sheila pops out of the bushes and walks towards Theo.

THEO

(angry)

You told Junior that we did it.

SHEILA

It?

THEO

It. Bouncy-bouncy. Fucked. He tried to squeeze my fucking head off. What did you say to him?
When they reach each other, they stop.
Sheila seems to weigh her answer.

SHEILA

I told him you were my boyfriend.

THEO

(very pissed off)

What the hell did you go doing that for Sheila? We haven't even gotten naked yet!

SHEILA

We would have sooner or later.

THEO

Oh great! He tried to kill me! You knew he would go off if he thought I fooled around with you.

SHEILA

Did you - kill him?

Theo paces up and down in front of the upright bridge.

THEO

How do you get this thing down?

SHEILA

Tell me what happened Theo.

Theo backs Sheila towards the bridge control booth.

THEO

(glares at Sheila)

You wanted me to kill him, didn't you?

SHEILA

(in shock)

If he's not dead, he'll keep coming back.

THEO

He's dead Sheila.

SHEILA

I feel sick.

THEO

You should.

SHEILA

Are you sure he's dead?

THEO

I didn't stop to take his pulse.

Theo boosts Sheila up the ladder to the control booth. The hydraulic machinery of the bridge heaves into motion and the bridge begins to lower. Theo walks over to his car. Sheila jumps down from the bridge control booth and follows him.

SHEILA

Where are you going?

THEO

I think your brother may have already gotten to Buzz. He gets into his car.

SHEILA

Can I come with you?

THEO

I did your dirty work for you Sheila, now fuck off. Theo drives away leaving Sheila standing alone. She watches his car recede with a thoughtful expression, then turns on her heel.

CUT TO:

65 INT. THEO'S CAR - NIGHT

65

Theo grips the steering wheel with white knuckles. He nods off at the wheel, the roadway through his eyes wavering and distorting. He hits himself in the face in an effort to keep himself awake.

66 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE - NIGHTMARE

66

The house is dark except for a light coming from the closed bathroom door. Theo cautiously makes his way to the door.

THEO

(whispers)

Buzz? You alright?

WATER is running inside. Theo twists the doorknob and opens the door with a jolt. Junior lunges out of the dark, mangled and bloody with bowling pins sticking out of his chest.

JUNIOR

Don't you KNOCK?

Theo SLAMS the door shut.

67 EXT. BUZZ'S HOUSE - DAWN

67

Theo jerks awake. His car is parked by the Fazeli house. It is a clear, blustery day. A gust of wind pulls the screen door open, then SLAMS it shut. He gets out of the car and walks unsteadily towards the house.

68 INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, LIVING ROOM

68

Theo walks into the house. The place is completely trashed. Theo picks up a golf ball from the floor. He makes his way to the bathroom door and slowly turns the knob; then pulls back. He picks up a nearby bowling ball and holds it over his head as he reaches for the doorknob. This time, he thrusts the door open. The bathroom is empty. Relieved, he cradles the ball in his arms.

BALL

Thick crimson red fluid trickles down his forearm, dripping off his elbow. Horrified, he pulls his fingers out of the ball. Blood streams out of the three finger holes. He drops the ball to the floor. He goes into the bathroom and turns on the sink faucets.

INT. BUZZ'S HOUSE, BATHROOM

Water runs as Theo manically washes the blood from his hands and arms. He rinses the blood from the holes of his ball and looks up to the mirror. "NOK NOK" is smeared in blood across his reflection.

69 EXT. 7-ELEVEN PHONE BOOTH - DAY

69

Theo waits through several rings.

GRACE

Hello?

THEO

Hello, mom?

GRACE

Theodore? Where are you? Are you alright?

THEO

I found dad.

GRACE

He's dead, isn't he.

(pauses)

Buzz Fazeli might just as well have died before you were born.

THEO

Mom, you know I had to do it. I just did it a little too late.

GRACE

You sure you're OK Teddy? You're not bowling are you?

THEO

I gotta go. Love ya mom.

Theo hangs up the phone. Alfie shuffles over.

ALFIE

Did you hear about that bowler who got smeared? I saw them pull a body bag out of the alley. I heard he was kacked but good. They had to take apart the pin machine to get him out.

THEO

(stunned)

The pin machine?

ALFIE

Just like Junior did the last time; lane six. All's I know is it's gonna be a closed coffin. My advice to you is to lay low. He puts on a pair of dark 7-Eleven shades, flips up his collar and skulks away.

Theo pulls into the parking lot. The place is cordoned off with day-glo yellow emergency tape printed with "Bowling Police - Do Not Cross". A black bowling police van, its blue light spinning, is parked in front. Bowling cops herd dwarfs and customers into the van. Mothers and daughters mill around behind the yellow tape. A group of little people brandish "Right to Work" signs. Theo gets out of his car. The crowd moves in as Kastle, hands cuffed behind him, emerges from the door.

LITTLE GIRL

There he is!

Camera flashes POP all over the place. Two black-jacketed bowling cops step out behind him. They are Sid and Breeze.

BREEZE

Bowling police, step back, give him room.

SID

Nothing going on here, everybody stand back. Let him through, ladies. Ladies, please. As they start to move through the female throng, a little girl pops out in front of them, holding her ball.

LITTLE GIRL

Mr. Kastle, we know you wouldn't do anything bad.

KASTLE

Thank-you, sweetheart.

(turns to Breeze)

See that you pinheads! Character witness.

(with sweeping head gesture)

They're all character witnesses!

(he sees Theo)

Thanks to Buzz Fazeli, bowling is dead in this town! He KILLED it! The two officers hustle Kastle towards the van. Theo steps out in front of him.

KASTLE

(between clenched teeth)

You fool, we could have done great things together!

THEO

Where's Junior?

KASTLE

He killed your stoolie embezzler father,

and he's gonna kill you next! Sid and Breeze push him towards the van as the crowd's MURMUR increases. Kastle turns and yells over his shoulder.

KASTLE

(shouting)

Lock your daughters up, ladies! Junior's out there! Mothers and daughters send out a cacophony of screams and scatter for their cars. The BP cops hoist Kastle into the back of the van. Sid slams the doors shut. The van screeches off, sirens wailing. Sid and Breeze walk up to Theo.

BREEZE

Sorry about your loss.

THEO

(shaking his head)

I should've pegged you guys for bowling dicks from day one.

SID

You should probably hit the road. Go home. This place could get hazardous for your health.

THEO

So, Buzz was stooling for you guys.

SID

You call it stooling, we call it cooperating. Breeze looks under Theo's car.

BREEZE

Did you know you were parked in the handicap space?

SID

Kastle's daughter's been lookin' for you.

Theo gets into his car and starts the engine. Sid and Breeze poke their heads in the windows.

SID

She told us you went after Junior to save your old man's hide. You got some balls goin' after that psycho.

BREEZE

Only problem is, you didn't put his lights out, you just got him mad. Then he took it out on poor Faz, God rest his soul. Theo patches out.

SID

Think he bought it?

BREEZE

I'd buy it!

Sid chews his lip worriedly.

71 INT. THEO'S CAR - AFTERNOON

71

Theo nods off for a second and then snaps back. His eyes seem hypnotized by the lines on the road which seem to swim and undulate unnaturally. He nods again. And snaps again.

72 EXT. PARKING FIELD - TWILIGHT

72

Theo pulls up to the old party spot and gets out. He walks over the dunes and towards the beached station wagon. A huge flame rises down the beach. A woman is visible in its light, tossing objects into the fire. Theo walks towards her.

EXT. BEACH, BONFIRE

Sheila is stripping Barbie and Ken dolls and tossing them onto the pyre. Each one goes up in an exaggerated WHOOSH of flames. She notices Theo when he steps into the light.

SHEILA

Once my father walked in on me while I was making Barbie and Ken do it. He freaked. I was seven. He took all my dolls away from me and cut them in half. He gave the top halves back to
(more)

SHEILA

me. Then he made me watch him burn the bottom halves in the fireplace. Theo kneels down nearby and throws a Barbie onto the bonfire. It goes up with a
WHOOSH.

SHEILA

I can see Junior's face in the fire.

Theo puts his hand on Sheila's hand. She looks at him.

SHEILA

Why did you come back?

THEO

When I'm with you Sheila, I don't even think about bowling. Theo takes Sheila in his arms and kisses her passionately. She stops him and looks around nervously.

SHEILA

If Junior finds us, he'll kill us both.

THEO

I killed him once, I'll just have to kill him again.

SHEILA

You don't get two chances with Junior.

THEO

At least I'll die smiling.

Sheila pushes him over. He falls backwards, her on top.

SHEILA

And you only get two chances with me.

Sheila yanks her shirt over her head and tosses it away.

FIRE

The shirt CRACKLES and burns.

She pulls Theo's head up to her breasts.

SHEILA

What's it gonna be, Theo?

A Barbie's breasts blister from the heat.

THEO & SHEILA

Theo bends Sheila backwards, down on her back. She grabs the tail of his shirt, yanks it over his head and off his body. Sheila rubs her hands up Theo's back.

SHEILA

What's the plan, Theo?

A Ken back bubbles and melts. Theo lifts Sheila's back off the sand and works her jeans down her legs.

SHEILA

Say something, Theo. Give me something. A doll's legs catch fire. Theo stares into Sheila's eyes.

THEO

Plan C. From now on it's gonna be plan C. Both bodies throb and grind, their sandy hands sliding over each others' sweaty skin.

THEO

It's gonna be you, Sheila.

They humpty-hump to the beat of "Scientist's" 'DEMATERIALIZE.' We hear Theo and Sheila's stereophonic MOANING as a Barbie and a Ken doll collapse and vaporize from the blazing heat.

We pan up through the flames, the MOANS increasing in volume and intensity as they reach the you-know-what-we've-all-been-waiting-for.

CUT TO:

73 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

73

A coffin moves slowly forward as a solemn DIRGE plays. The top is in the shape of a bowling alley with a miniature black bowling ball inscribed with "The Faz" at the head. The pallbearers; Theo, Breeze, Sid, Tina, and two other bowlers place the coffin on poles above the grave. A rotund priest sprinkles holy water. Sheila stands next to Theo, crying.
(more)

Theo wears a glazed look. The priest clears his throat with a loud AHM.

PRIEST

(with pomp and vigor)

Bowling!

(pauses to reflect)

Bowling is a little like faith. Every now and then, we are blessed with the ability and strength to send a full roller down..

(makes bowling gesture)

...and scatter those babies like nobody's business. And every now and then we end up in the gutter.

(pauses and gets glum)

Buzz Fazeli found himself in the gutter of life. Trapped in hook alley, throwing nothing balls. But before he left us for that pie alley in the clouds, he pulled

himself out of that gutter.
Buzz Fazeli died cleaning up the sport of
bowling. Now he lies at peace alongside
his lane brothers here in Bowlers' Field.

(makes sign of the cross)

He died so that we could bowl - with
dignity. Millie, decked out in mourning
black, lets out a wail, steps up and
throws a bouquet of flowers onto the
coffin.

MILLIE

(sniffles)

I forgive you Buzz.

Sid leans over to Theo.

SID

(in loud whisper)

The Faz sure took care a her.

(points to Millie, does the
cash rub with fingers)

Breeze makes a nasal GRUNT as he tries to
suppress a snigger. Sid - trying to keep
a straight face - elbows him. Sid and
Breeze approach the coffin. Breeze pulls
an orange whip out of a paper bag and
carefully places it on the coffin lid.

BREEZE

Nectar of the bowling gods, Faz.

SID

See ya 'round Faz.

Tina steps up to the grave with a handful of papers.

TINA

These are all your perfect games.

(she drops scoresheets onto the
coffin)

Bowl with God, Buzz.

Mourners sniff and cry. The coffin starts descending into the
ground. A stiff breeze scatters the scoresheets. Sheila
nudges Theo who approaches and tosses a handful of soil into
the grave.

THEO

Maybe you were right Buzz. Maybe I did
just come here to take it out on
somebody. But, I had to find my father...

The muffled BEEPING of "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head" begins playing from inside the coffin. Theo's body jolts. He runs after Sheila who is walking towards her scooter.

THEO

Buzz is alive, Sheila.

The two sleazeballs gaze surreptitiously at him as they walk towards their car. Theo grabs Sheila's jacket.

SHEILA

Theo, Buzz is dead.

THEO

I didn't come this far to bury a guy that's not my dad. He owes me.

SHEILA

(bitterly)

Back to plan A. The vicious cycle all over again. Theo lets go of Sheila.

SHEILA

I've been trapped by Miles Kastle my whole life. She walks over to her scooter, and mounts it.

SHEILA

Now he's the one who's locked up and I'm the one who's free. If I gotta do this alone, I might as well start now. She revs up and peals out.

THEO

(yells)

SSHHEEIIILLAAA!

74 EXT. CEMETERY PARKING LOT

74

As Sid and Breeze walk up to their car, Theo catches up with them.

THEO

Why is Junior's watch in that coffin? Something stinks around here.

SID

Your time is up, busyboy.

THEO

Who identified the body?

SID

The body was identified along proper Bowling Congress guidelines for processing a bowling related fatality.

THEO

I'm the next of kin. I should've seen him.

BREEZE

After we ID, we bury the body. Case and casket closed.

THEO

You tried to make it look like Junior trashed his place. Junior's underground in that coffin you dicks put him in.

BREEZE

It's splitsville for you.

Sid and Breeze back away from Theo.

THEO

You faked my dad's murder. You used him! Where is he! Theo chases Sid and Breeze around their car. He catches Sid and grabs the middle fingers on his right hand. Sid howls.

SID

Ow! Ooh! No, please! Doc said I'd be back on the planks in a week! Show him Breeze! Breeze pulls a copy of "New York Bowler" from his pocket. The headline reads "**RUB OUT!: BOWLING LEGEND KACKED BY DWARFSCAM KINGPIN**" with a photo of Buzz Fazeli.

SID

It's official, you're an orphan.

Happy now, busyboy? Theo stares at the newspaper. He lets Sid's fingers drop.

75 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

75

Sheila speeds along, her Vespa maxing out at 30 mph. From behind her we see Theo's car approaching rapidly. He pulls up beside her.

THEO

(shouting and pointing
frantically)

What makes you think you know me so well
that you can give me an ultimatum? Huh?

SHEILA

Who said anything about an ultimatum? You
want to find your father? Get a shovel
and start digging. Hurry up, he's
probably in Purgatory by now. Sheila
makes a pathetic attempt to speed away
from Theo. He moves up beside her again.

THEO

You're really pissing me off.

SHEILA

I'm pissing you off? I'm doing what I
said I'd do. What the hell are you doing?
What about your word?

THEO

My word is good, and it'll always be
good. When did I ever give my word to
you?

SHEILA

What about plan C?

THEO

Fuck plan C!

SHEILA

Your word is so good, you're never gonna
give it to anyone.

THEO

You think I'm dumping you to get back
into bowling. Well who's dumping who?

SHEILA

I'm not dumping you, I'm suspending you.

THEO

Sez you!

SHEILA

Suck my dick!

She speeds ahead.

76 **EXT. HIGHWAY**

76

Theo THUNDERS along in his car. He listens to his SONG over the stereo. Theo digs into his pocket and pulls out the golf ball from Buzz's house.

77 **GOLF BALL**

77

The logo on the ball reads "PARADISE."

THEO

Paradise.

The white ball fills the frame.

THEO (OS)

(whispers to himself)

Paradise. Hmmm

The camera pulls back from the ball to reveal:

78 **INT. TROPICAL 7-ELEVEN - DAY**

78

Theo standing in flowery long Bermuda shorts, matching airbrush Luau shirt and 7-11 shades. The woman behind the counter looks like Alfie's twin. (It's actually Alfie in drag.) It's the same store as before, only with a tropical motif. Instead of bowling magazines on the rack, there's Mini-Golf Digest. ALFREDA examines the ball at arm's length, through her bifocals.

ALFREDA

You a mini-golfer?

THEO

Nope.

ALFREDA

Paradise, huh? Might be one of the new putt-putts off route 99. Theo turns to leave.

ALFREDA

Can I get you something for the road?

THEO

You have orange whips?

ALFREDA

Orange who? Not from 'round here, are ya?

THEO

No. I'm from Akron.

79 EXT. BILLBOARD - DAY

79

The billboard fills the frame. It reads "Paradise Putt-Putt", and underneath: "A heavenly experience." A motorized cheesy-looking smiling dwarf-angel swings a golden club.

EXT. MINI-GOLF COURSE

Miniature golf obstacles are bathed in the light of the setting sun. The camera passes a huge cement centaur surrounded by astro-carpeting.

WOMAN (OS)

I just hold it loosely with both hands?

MAN (OS)

That's right, sugar, find the grip that's right for you. Then grasp firmly. The camera weaves past a five foot pink whale with a gaping green mouth leading onto a mini-green.

WOMAN (OS)

Grasp firmly. Then what?

MAN (OS)

Line up where you want it.

WOMAN (OS)

Yeah.

MAN (OS)

Now swing it out a little to the right...

WOMAN (OS)

Like this?

MAN (OS)

No, no, that's too far. Try a more gentle stroke. It's all in the stroke. Go ahead, now, honey - stroke. As the camera comes around the side of the whale, we see an elderly man in a fire hydrant red sports coat and white slacks hunched over a diminutive fiftyish woman. His back is to the camera and he is wearing a baseball cap with a plastic halo attached to it.

WOMAN

Strokin'. Here goes nothin'.

She swings a club, sending a golf ball puttering into a cup.

MAN

Hole in one! You're the queen of stroke!

WOMAN

Yippy!

Theo strides towards the couple. The man under the halo is
(more)

Buzz. He raises the club at the approaching Theo, keeping the woman in front of him as a shield. The front of Buzz's cap reads "I'm No Angel."

BUZZ

Get away from me!

WOMAN

Who the hell are you?

THEO

Hi Dad.

WOMAN

Dad? You said you was single.

BUZZ

We ain't married no more.

THEO

He says that to all his wives.

As she tries to wiggle away from him, the club conks Buzz on the noodle, squishing his halo.

WOMAN

(freeing herself - to Buzz)

Geez Maynard, is he telling the truth?

BUZZ

Don't pay him any mind, sweetheart.

WOMAN

You're a nice guy, Maynard, but if you got two wives - I ain't into no polybigamy. Buzz is silent. He takes the club out of her hand. She steps away - startled - then turns and jogs away. Buzz throws down his club in a fury.

BUZZ

Goddam it! I was just about to make a love connection. You sure got a way with women. You show up, women get away.

THEO

(laughs)

The whole world thinks you're underground.

BUZZ

I am underground.

Buzz removes his damaged cap.

THEO

It could just as easily have been me in that box.

BUZZ

I told you to get lost. You forced yourself into this mess, so the mess accommodated you.

Buzz straightens out and carefully remolds the bent out of shape halo.

THEO

What about bowling?

BUZZ

(takes a practice swing)

Bowling died for me years ago. Besides, I'm a living dead legend. I'm a hero.

THEO

You're a scumbag.

Buzz pats his hair down and slips the cap back on his head.

BUZZ

I'm a live scumbag.

Theo digs into his pocket and retrieves the golf ball. He tosses it to Buzz.

THEO

Nice knowing you, dad.

Theo turns and walks towards his car. Buzz pauses and walks after him.

BUZZ

So, eh, you never saw me. Right?

THEO

I never saw you.

BUZZ

Thanks, kid.

(pause)

Where are you goin' now?

THEO

I'm goin' straight. No more short cuts.
Theo gets into the car. Buzz leans in the
open window.

BUZZ

Listen, if straight doesn't work out, you
come work for me.

(hands Theo his card)

Just make sure nobody's following you.
Buzz's face is eerily lit by the glow of
the sunset, his halo bouncing in the
breeze.

BUZZ

I didn't mean that stuff I said. I was
trying to keep you out of this muddle.
I'm glad I didn't have my tubes tied. Oh,
and by the way, I made a call for you
before I - uh - retired. Buzz takes his
card and scrawl on the back with a gold
pen.

BUZZ

(hands the card back)

You give Ed Klein of the American Bowling
Congress a call.

(taps the card)

Tell him your Maynard's boy. He's
expecting you, and he owes me. He'll
getcha back in like Flynn.

(pats Theo's cheek)

Don't say I never gave you nothing.

THEO

(cracks a half smile)

See ya 'round Maynard.

Buzz backs away from the car as Theo peels out in reverse.
Buzz stands and watches as Theo pulls away.

The sign has been changed to "SHEILA'S ALLEY." A sparkling new badass super-chromed Vespa is parked in the handicap zone. The Barbie and Ken dolls are wired to the headlamp. They look incredibly worse for the wear. A parking ticket is nestled between them. Theo's car pulls in nearby.

81 INT. SHEILA'S ALLEY

81

Theo walks through the doors and into the alley packed with serious bowling types. As he walks towards the back of the alley, several bowlers stop bowling and stare at him in awe.

LUNA

Theo! Howya doin'?

Theo walks on. Others greet the conquering hero.

BOWLER

Theo! Hey, Theo's back!

TINA

Hello there, stranger.

LITTLE GIRL

(still crying)

Waaaaaaaaaaaaah!

At the far end, we see Sheila, dressed in a fitted jogging suit, bowling alone on her lane. Bowlers stop and hold their balls at their sides. Sheila notices the whole alley is silent. Theo steps up to the lane, bowling ball bag in hand. As he straps on his wristbrace he peers down the lane and sees a seven-ten split; mule ears.

CUT TO:

82 BLACKNESS

82

A loud ZIP and light spills in through three holes. Three fingers approach the holes, blocking out the light once more. With a POP, the fingers leave the holes and the ball hits the lane with a KLUNK.

LANE

The camera races towards the pins along the maple boards.

PINS

Two pins loom in the foreground, one at each edge of the

screen. The ball slams into the right hand pin in super slow motion with a ROAR. Theo's eyes slowly close. The pin lifts and hurtles slowly across the frame towards its unsuspecting fellow pin. Theo's eyes open. With a reverberating EXPLOSION, the pin is taken out.

83 INT. SHEILA'S ALLEY, THEO & SHEILA

83

Theo turns to Sheila and takes her in his arms.

SHEILA

Very professional.

THEO

I am a professional man.

SHEILA

(touches his lips)

Lips still for sale?

THEO

(nonchalantly)

You bet. For five bucks, I'll even throw in the tongue.

SHEILA

(she pulls away, slightly)

Can you change something this big?

She pulls out a hundred dollar bill.

THEO

I don't know.

Sheila stuffs the bill down Theo's pants.

SHEILA

You'll owe me.

They smooch big time. One by one, balls drop to the lanes again and pins start CRASHING.

DISSOLVE TO:

84 EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

84

Alfie, hands trembling, lays a tiny wreath on Buzz Fazeli's grave. The headstone reads, "Maynard 'Buzz' Fazeli 'I Never Met A Bowler I Didn't Like.'" A muffled watch beeper CHIMES "Raindrops Keep Falling On My Head." The camera pulls up to show ten headstones laid out in a bowling pin set-up with Buzz's at the head.

DISSOLVE TO:

85 EXT. MINI-GOLF COURSE

85

Buzz's silhouette against an orange sunburst sky. He wears his halo hat. He takes a beautiful PGA-perfect slow motion fluid golf swing, connecting with a THWAP. As he follows through, divots of turf dance at his feet. MUSIC swells. He holds the afterswing pose and gazes after the ball, off into the distance.

FADE OUT