

YOU MUST BE THIS TALL

PILOT EPISODE

Written by

Randall R. Reese

randall.reese@randallreese.com  
(716) 471-0524

COLD OPEN

EXT. ISLAND FANTASY AMUSEMENT PARK - PARK ENTRANCE - DAY

Four ticket booths with faded paint stand across the entrance to a small amusement park, which is visible past the booths.

A weather-beaten sign reads "Island Fantasy Amusement Park." Below that reads "Family owned for over 50 years and counting". 'and counting' is crossed off.

A sign below that says 'We do not accept credit cards. Cash only'

Below that reads a newer-looking sign with a picture of an elderly man in a big cowboy hat. Written under the picture is "J. Desiderio. 1940-2020. Riding the Great Roller Coaster in the Sky.'

Three of the ticket booths are shuttered closed. A long line of families is lined up to get a ticket into the park.

COLETTE DESIDERIO (70) is in the ticket booth. She moves slowly and is telling stories about her late husband to the mother and two young children at the ticket window as the patrons in line wait patiently.

COLETTE

(Handing tickets to the  
mother)

Oh, he was such a wonderful man and  
such a virile man! There isn't one  
ride here that he didn't get me on.  
You haven't had delicious sex until  
you've done it upside down at 60  
miles per hour.

The mother looks offended and hurries her children away from the ticket booth. As the next family steps up, Colette starts another story.

COLETTE (CONT'D)

Let me tell you about the time my  
husband and I fell off the merry-go-  
around buck naked.

EXT. SEASTORM RIDE - DAY

JULIA (30s) walks by a park ride called 'The SeaStorm' as KRISTOPHER (20), super skinny, hangs a chain across the queue line with a sign that says "Closed for Repairs." Julia wears a name tag that says 'Supervisor' and carries a clipboard.

KRISTOPHER  
Sorry, folks. The ride is closed.  
Come back later. Or not, that's ok,  
too.

The crowd waiting to ride walks away in disappointment.

JULIA  
Did the breaker pop again?

KRISTOPHER  
No.

JULIA  
Is the safety bar acting up again?

KRISTOPHER  
No.

JULIA  
Don't tell me one less person came  
off the ride then went on?

KRISTOPHER  
Not this time.

JULIA  
So what's wrong with the ride?

Kristopher dances around in fear.

KRISTOPHER  
There's a really, really big snake  
in there! Eww! Eww! Eww!

Julia rolls her eyes.

JULIA  
Did you call Ryan?

KRISTOPHER  
I did. He said wild animals in  
control booths weren't a  
maintenance issue.

JULIA  
Oh, for Christ's sake.

Julia grabs the walkie-talkie hanging from her belt.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Julia to Ryan.

Nothing.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Julia to Ryan.

Nothing.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Ryan, if you don't answer your damn  
radio, I'll tie you to the roller  
coaster tracks.

RYAN (V.O.)  
(impatiently)  
What?

JULIA  
I need you to remove a snake from  
The SeaStorm.

RYAN (V.O.)  
I told that kid just to kick it out  
of the booth.

KRISTOPHER  
Gross, no. I'm not going near that  
thing. It would swallow me up if I  
tried to kick it.

JULIA  
A little snake is not going to  
swallow you up.

She looks him up and down and is reminded how skinny he is.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Probably not.

KRISTOPHER  
It's not a little snake. It's huge!

Julia sighs and keys the walkie-talkie.

JULIA  
He says it's a big snake.

RYAN (V.O.)  
Maybe it's The Mangler.

KRISTOPHER  
Wait, what? What's The Mangler?

JULIA  
(to Kristopher)  
It's not The Mangler.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 (on the walkie-talkie)  
 It's not The Mangler.

RYAN (V.O.)  
 If it's a giant snake, it could be.

Kristopher's eyes widen with fear.

KRISTOPHER  
 Oh, my God! It's The Mangler!

JULIA  
 It's NOT The Mangler! That's just  
 an urban legend told around here to  
 scare skinny teenagers.

Julia talks on her radio again.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
 Ryan, can you please get the snake  
 out of The SeaStorm?

RYAN (V.O.)  
 I can't. I'm at The Tilt-A-Whirl.

JULIA  
 Did ANOTHER ride break?

RYAN (O.S.)  
 No, I'm just making a few  
 adjustments.

A bunch of screams come from somewhere in the park.

RYAN (V.O.)  
 There we go!

Julia runs in the direction of the screams.

JULIA  
 What now?

**END OF COLD OPEN**

EXT. TILT-O-WHIRL - DAY

Julia rushes up to the Tilt-O-Whirl as riders stumble out of their seats. Many of their shirts are covered in vomit.

EMILY (18), a cute and perky park employee who wears a small cross necklace, helps riders off the ride.

EMILY

Thank you for riding the Tilt-O-Whirl. Enjoy the rest of your day at Island Fantasy Park, and God Bless!

RYAN (50s), overweight, balding, and wearing a greasy mechanics outfit, is standing nearby, laughing uproariously.

JULIA

What happened? Was there a power surge?

RYAN

Nah, I just turned the ride up to level five.

JULIA

The Tilt-O-Whirl only has three levels.

RYAN

Not after I got done tinkering with it.

Julia watches in shock at the people coming off the ride.

JULIA

You made people vomit all over themselves!

RYAN

Well, technically I think they're wearing the puke of the person sitting next to them.

JULIA

Ryan, what were you thinking?? These customers are never going to come back.

RYAN

They're not coming back anyway. Look around you.

(MORE)

RYAN (CONT'D)

Old man Desiderio was a cheapskate when he was alive, and this place has become even more of a dump since he died. Old lady Colette can't remember what year it is. We'll be lucky to finish out the season. Might as well have some fun while we're still working here.

JULIA

We can still treat the customers with respect. They've been supporting us for fifty years, so they deserve that much. Now clean up this ride.

RYAN

I'm maintenance, not cleaning crew. Get Joe to do it.

JULIA

Joe quit yesterday, and since you not surprisingly seem to have time on your hands, you're now both maintenance and cleaning crew.

RYAN

And if I refuse?

JULIA

Do you really want to test the job market as a middle-aged white male with minimal skills?

RYAN

Hey! No, but hey!

JULIA

Now get a mop and let's get this ride open at its normal speed!

Ryan grumbles with frustration as Emily carefully brings down CORNELIUS 'NEIL' SINCLAIR (late 20's), a good-looking guy covered in vomit. Emily is holding on tight to Neil as he looks very shaky as he walks.

Neil and Emily stop in front of Julia. As Emily lets go, Neil starts to sway.

NEIL

Whoa, Neily!

As Emily grabs Neil again, Ryan leans over to Julia.

RYAN

Did he just say 'Whoa, Neily?'

NEIL

I did. My name is Neil Sinclair and I'm prone to vertigo. It's kind of what I say when I get dizzy.

RYAN

You go on these kinds of rides even though you get dizzy spells? Did your mom prematurely squeeze you out on a ride like this?

JULIA

Ryan! See, this is what I'm talking about. It's these kinds of loyal park-goers that we should always treat with respect. Ones that come to the park no matter...

Julia becomes at a loss for words as she points to Neil

NEIL

...the risk of being covered in digested intestinal projectiles?

JULIA

Exactly! Ryan, get this ride re-opened. Neil, I'm going to get you cleaned up.

NEIL

Oh, that's not really neces-

JULIA

Come on!

Julia grabs him by the arm and drags him away.

EXT. MIDWAY - DAY

Julia arrives at the Midway, still dragging Neil by the arm. The Midway is the area of the park where the games are, including The Ring Toss, Milk Bottle Knockdown, Basketball Free Throw, Balloon Dart Throw, and Ball Bounce.

Prizes ranging from stuffed animals, both small and gargantuan, shirts, mirrors labeled with mostly 80's metal bands, and an assortment of other generally cheap stuff ring each game booth.



Julia storms up to the Balloon Dart Game. AVA (18), a very Goth-looking teenager, is working in the booth.

JULIA

Let me have one of those large T-shirts, Ava.

AVA

I can't give away T-shirts. It's company policy,

JULIA

Look at this man. He's covered in vomit! We need to treat our customers with respect, so I'm getting him a new shirt.

AVA

You fired someone for giving away a prize, remember?

JULIA

Well, I'm telling you it's ok.

AVA

Nuh uh. This is police entrapment. I give you a shirt, you fire me. If you want a shirt, you have to win it.

JULIA

Oh, for Christ's sake.

Julia digs out a dollar from her pocket and slams it on the counter. Ava takes the dollar and lays a dart down.

JULIA (CONT'D)

You're only giving me one dart?

Ava shrugs and points to a sign that says '\$1 per dart. SPECIAL \$5 for 4 darts.'

NEIL

Do people fall for that?

JULIA

Sadly, yes.

Julia takes the dart, throws it at a balloon, and misses.

AVA

(in a carnival barker voice)

(MORE)

AVA (CONT'D)

Oh, that was really close, young lady. How 'bout giving it another try? Just one dollar and you can win a prize!

Ava points to Neil.

AVA (CONT'D)

What about you, sir? How about trying for a prize for your girlfriend here. You don't want her to walk out of here empty-handed, do you?

NEIL

Uh, she's actually not my girl-

Julia takes another dollar out of her pocket.

JULIA

Give me another dart!

Ava lays another dart down. Julia throws and misses again.

AVA

Oh, so close! How 'bout another round? Just one dollar and you can -

A shoe flies by Ava's head and pops a balloon. She looks at Julia, who is now wearing just one shoe and has an angry look on her face.

JULIA

There. I popped a balloon. Now give me a prize.

Ava slowly and carefully reaches under the counter and brings out a pair of fake glasses and mustaches, and puts it down.

JULIA (CONT'D)

What is this?

AVA

You actually need to pop three balloons to win a shirt.

Julia screams in frustration, reaches into the booth, grabs a shirt, and stalks off with Neil in tow.

EXT. RESTROOMS - DAY

Julia waits outside one of the park's restrooms. Neil comes out, wearing a T-shirt that says "Frankie Say Relax." The shirt is about 3 inches too short. Julia looks him over.

JULIA

I forgot we always keep the smaller, and therefore cheaper, ones at the top. Just in case someone tries to do what I did and steal one.

NEIL

The extra ventilation will keep me cool and comfortable in all the right places. By the way, there's an old cowboy in the bathroom taping up his ribs.

JULIA

Yeah.

Neil looks at her quizzically.

NEIL

I feel that comment should have gotten more of a reaction out of you.

JULIA

That's just Bill. He's one of the actors in the Gunfight Shootout that takes place in our Old West town over there.

Julia points to some buildings across from the restrooms. There is a faux Saloon, Sheriff's Office, and General Store.

BILL (70s) comes out of the restroom, wearing black cowboy pants, a black cowboy shirt, and a black cowboy hat. He tips his hat to Julia.

BILL

Ma'am.

JULIA

Bart.

Bill ambles over to the Old West Saloon, walking distinctively bowlegged. A crowd of spectators sit on bleachers in front of the town.

NEIL

Bart is the character's name?

JULIA

It was 'Black Bart', but then we ran into some confusion if we could use the 'Black' part of the name without violating cultural appropriation rules, so now it's just 'Bart.'

NEIL

I see.

Neil looks around.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Is he supposed to ride in on a horse?

JULIA

No, why?

NEIL

He's walking really bowlegged.

JULIA

Yeah, well, during the gunfight he's supposed to climb on the roof of the general store...just watch.

EXT. SALOON - DAY

The SHERIFF (any) comes out of the Sheriff's Office and enters the Saloon. From inside the Saloon, The Sheriff and Bart start arguing.

SHERIFF (O.S.)

I told you to never show your face in town again, Bart.

BILL (O.S.)

Well, Sheriff. I got some unfinished business in town.

SHERIFF (O.S.)

What kind of unfinished business?

BILL (O.S.)

This.

Gunfire sounds erupt from inside the Saloon, along with a scream. Bart comes running out of the Saloon and into the General Store.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

The Sheriff runs out of the Saloon and looks around. He kneels in front of a LITTLE KID sitting in the front row of the bleachers.

SHERIFF

Which way did he go, pardner?

The little kid points in the direction of the General Store.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

Much obliged.

The sheriff stands and faces the General Store.

SHERIFF (CONT'D)

It's over, Bart! The good citizens of this town have given you up. Come out with your hands over your head!

BILL (O.S.)

You'll never take me alive, Sheriff!

The second-story window opens, and Bill climbs out of it slowly and laboriously. The Sheriff patiently waits for Bill to climb out onto the roof.

SHERIFF

I won't let you menace the citizens of this town anymore.

BILL

Well then, Sheriff...you'd better draw!

The Sheriff gives Bill a second or two to draw his gun before he draws his own. He aims at the top of the roof and shoots. Bill, somewhat overdramatically, clutches his chest, stumbles, and to the collective gasp of the crowd, rolls off the roof, bounces off a pile of hay bales under the roof, and lands in a large trough of water.

EXT. RESTROOMS - DAY

Neil looks over in concern.

NEIL

Oh, my God. Is he okay?

JULIA

Don't know yet.

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

The Sheriff hurries over to Bill, who gives The Sheriff a thumbs up. The Sheriff lifts Bill out of the trough and "arrests" him.

SHERIFF

You're going to jail for a long time, Bart.

The Sheriff leads Bart into the Sheriff's Office among scattered and tepid applause.

EXT. RESTROOMS - DAY

Neil also applauds while talking to Julia.

NEIL

That stunt looks pretty dangerous.

JULIA

Especially when Bill forgets to put water in the trough. It's happening more and more lately.

NEIL

What?

JULIA

Oh, yeah. Sometimes he misses the trough altogether. Once he bounced back onto the roof.

NEIL

Don't you have someone who checks these things before each performance?

JULIA

Bill won't let anyone else touch any part of the stunt. Don't worry about him. He started the day the park opened. He's had so many bumps, bruises, and broken bones he's one big walking tissue scab.

NEIL

Ewww.

Julia sighs and sits down on a nearby bench. Neil sits next to her.

JULIA

You know, I've always loved amusement parks. I started working here when I was 15. Lied about my age on the application.

NEIL

Did they ever find out?

JULIA

Oh, yeah. Mr. Desiderio knew right away. Kept me on because his motto was "Child labor doesn't get paid adult wages." I didn't care. I loved working here.

NEIL

Why?

JULIA

I think because it was great to see so many happy families walking around together. I didn't have the best childhood, so it was so nice to see so many smiling faces all the time. Well, that's the way it used to be, anyway. Things are slowly falling apart.

NEIL

Oh, I don't know. This place has a less than modern feel about it.

JULIA

You can say that again.

NEIL

I mean that any other amusement park I've been to felt so sterile, so corporate. This park feels like what it is, one of the last family owned parks in America. You love the park. Obviously Bill loves the park. Sure, it's getting a little run down, but I don't think it would take much to give it new life.

Neil looks down as sadness crosses his face.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
I've actually always hated when  
places like this get shut down.

JULIA  
Hopefully, old lady Colette will be  
able to sell it to someone who sees  
the potential you do and keep the  
family-friendly feel here.

She pauses as she looks in the distance.

JULIA (CONT'D)  
Before the loser step-kids ruin  
everything in the park.

Kristopher, Ryan, Emily, Bill, and Ava all come running up to  
Julia.

KRISTOPHER  
I think The Mangler is loose on the  
merry-go-round!

AVA  
I called my lawyer about that  
police entrapment. She'll be  
sending you a cease-and-desist  
letter.

BILL  
I think I finally broke that last  
rib of mine!

EMILY  
All that vomit from the ride is  
bothering me. Do we get paid time  
off if we're anxious?

RYAN  
The safety bars on the roller  
coaster ride aren't working. Don't  
worry, no one got hurt too badly.

Julia reaches the breaking point.

JULIA  
Enough!! Sometimes you all make me  
want to just burn the place down!!

RYAN  
Yeah! Let's do it!



Ryan takes out a pack of matches, lights a match, and tosses it onto a bush by the restrooms. A small flame appears.

Julia walks over and steps on the flame to put it out.

JULIA

Ryan! Look, everyone. Maybe this park doesn't mean as much to you as it does to me or Bill, but all I want to do is make people happy here. People like Neil here, who love amusement parks so much he goes on rides his stomach can't handle, and all we've done is cover him in vomit, made him wear a too-small, grossly irrelevant shirt, and have him listen to a bunch of whiny employees who don't care, while one of them tries to burn the park down.

RYAN

I thought you were serious.

JULIA

Even through all that, he hasn't gone running and screaming out of the park. He's still here!

She turns to Neil.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Why are you still here?

NEIL

Actually, I'm thinking of buying the park.

JULIA

Whaaaaaaa?

EXT. FOOD PAVILION - DAY

Julia, along with Neil, Kristopher, Ava, Emily, Colette, and Bill, sit at picnic tables next to a food stand. Behind them is a ride called The Pirate Ranger.

Ryan joins the group, carrying a huge plate of chili cheese fries from the food stand.

JULIA

Do we even sell that big a serving a chili cheese fries.

RYAN

We do if you know the right palms  
to grease.

Ryan winks at Colette, who blows a kiss back at him.

JULIA

I wouldn't think she would need the  
money.....oh....ewww!

Julia looks between Colette, who smiles mischievously, and  
Ryan, who shrugs and shovels a bunch of fries in his mouth.

JULIA (CONT'D)

So, Neil. You're thinking about  
buying the park?

NEIL

Yes. Well, my father is.

AVA

Is your dad like an amusement park  
collector?

NEIL

Not specifically. He likes to take  
run-down, grossly mismanaged  
properties and make them  
profitable.

He turns to Colette.

NEIL (CONT'D)

No offense.

COLETTE

It's accurate. My husband didn't  
know anything about running a  
business. He just loved owning this  
park.

NEIL

Anyway, it's kind of a passion of  
my father's. He wants me to get  
more involved in the business, so  
here I am.

JULIA

Is your father here in the park  
with you?

EMILY

I sure would like to meet the  
savior of the park.

BILL

It would be nice to clear out some  
of this worn-down useless junk.

RYAN

You're retiring?

JULIA

Ryan.

Behind the group, a knocking sound is heard as The Pirate Ranger starts up, a ride that looks like a wooden ship that lifts into the air and turns the riders upside down. The ride hits its apex.

NEIL

So, I'm really -

Ryan holds up his hand towards Neil.

RYAN

Shhh!!

Surprised at the interruption, Neil looks at Julia, who holds up a hand, indicating Neil should wait. The rest of the group listens intently. After a second, they hear the sound of metal clinking on concrete, and in the background, coins and a few dollar bills appear to be falling from the sky.

The ride spins around a few more times and comes to a stop at the bottom. As customers are getting off, two EMPLOYEES crawl under the ride. After a minute, they crawl back up, holding fistfuls of coins and paper money.

COLETTE

\$8.10

Ryan yells over to the ride's control booth at the employees who are counting the money they found.

RYAN

How much?

EMPLOYEE #1

\$7.90

The group murmurs in awe at how close Colette was in guessing the amount.

NEIL

Wow. That was a pretty good guess.

RYAN

Guess? Colette can tell how much falls out of people's pockets within fifty cents every time!

EMILY

She's like a money prophet.

NEIL

As I was saying, I'm really just the advance scout. My father asked me to come in and take a look around and to go over the financials with Colette.

Colette fishes out a set of keys from her pocket and tosses them to Neil.

COLETTE

All the paperwork is sitting on the office desk. Just lock up when you're done.

NEIL

You're not coming with me?

COLETTE

Looking over all those stuff will give me a headache. Besides, I've got a debt to collect.

Colette grabs Ryan by the arm and drags him away.

COLETTE (CONT'D)

C'mon, loverboy. Let's put the mini-golf windmill to good use.

As Colette and Ryan leave, the rest of the group watch in shock.

NEIL

You guys must sell some pretty awesome chili cheese fries here.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Julia and Neil enter the office. Windows look out over the park entrance. To the side is another set of windows with its curtains drawn.

The office looks like a room out of a hoarder show. Stacks and stacks of papers, boxes, folders, old props, used equipment and other bits of old junk fill the office.

NEIL

Did we come into the storage room  
by mistake?

JULIA

Nope. This is the office. Mr.  
Desiderio didn't like to throw  
anything out.

They come to a desk covered in stacks of more papers. In the center of the desk is a folder labeled "Financials" and a post-it note that says, "Do not touch ANYTHING else!" Neil reads the note.

NEIL

I guess Colette doesn't like anyone  
messing with her stuff.

JULIA

It's not that. Everything in this  
room is exactly where it should be.

NEIL

I don't understand -

Neil is cut off by a low rumbling sound. It gets louder, and the room starts to shake. Neil grabs onto the desk.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Are we having an earthquake?

JULIA

No, it's just this.

Julia walks to the side window and opens the curtains. The roller coaster zooms by just outside the window as the rumbling and shaking crescendos.

NEIL

Good Lord, how often does that  
thing go by?

JULIA

Every two minutes.

NEIL

Why did the Desiderios put an  
office right next to the coaster  
tracks?

JULIA

Mr. Desiderio said it reminded him  
that every time the coaster went  
by, he was making money.

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

If you look out the front windows,  
it's a great view of the ticket  
booths.

The shaking stops as the rumbling fades. Neil lets go of the desk and walks around the piles of junk and stacks of papers to the front window.

NEIL

Well, I like the fact that there is  
a long line of people waiting to  
get in. Of course, that's probably  
due to the fact that only one  
ticket window is open...

A confused look crosses his face as he tries to get a clearer view of the booth.

NEIL (CONT'D)

..and the fact that no one is in  
the booth.

Julia walks over and looks out the front window.

JULIA

Yeah, Mrs. Desiderio probably isn't  
back yet from...whatever she's  
doing.

NEIL

But the people in line, it looks  
like they're just standing there,  
waiting patiently.

JULIA

That's what makes the park so  
special!

NEIL

Because Colette likes to sneak off  
for some afternoon delight?

JULIA

Yes! No! I mean...

She pauses to collect her thoughts.

JULIA (CONT'D)

Mrs. Desiderio has been leaving the  
booth to do whatever it is she does  
for 50 years. Since some of those  
little kids' grandparents came to  
the park. They know she'll be back.

(MORE)

JULIA (CONT'D)

It's almost become a badge of honor to be stuck in line when Mrs. Desiderio was gone from the booth.

NEIL

You mean the park customers would want to have to wait in line?

JULIA

You know, for a while, Mr. Desiderio would hand out T-shirts with a big smile on his face to the ones that had to wait on Mrs. Desiderio that said 'I had to wait while Old Lady Desiderio was getting some, and all I got was this lousy T-shirt.'

NEIL

For a while? Why'd he stop?

JULIA

They went through a lot of t-shirts. The point is, traditions like that are what make this park special, why generations of families have been coming for years.

Neil turns to look at Julia.

NEIL

I think it's people that care so much for this park are what make the park so special.

There is a brief, awkward moment as the two smile at each other. A faint rumbling is heard as the room begins to shake, snapping Julia and Neil out of their moment.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Well, let me grab those financials, and we'll get out of here before we shake our fillings loose.

They maneuver around to the desk and hang on to it as the rumbling and shaking peak and fade away. Neil grabs the folder and looks around again at the stacks of papers, folders, and boxes.

NEIL (CONT'D)

Man, I can't believe all this stuff doesn't fall over whenever the coaster goes by.

He reaches out and gently pushes a stack with the tip of his finger.

JULIA  
Neil, don't -!

The stack Neil pushed wobbles and then falls over, causing a cascade effect. Julia and Neil are buried under the mess and start to dig themselves out.

NEIL  
Whoa, Neily!

JULIA  
Did that trigger your vertigo?

NEIL  
No, I was just thinking how impressed Neil deGrasse Tyson would have been at the physics involved in keeping all those stacks from falling whenever the coaster went by, but one touch of a finger...

He mimics an explosion and things crashing down.

JULIA  
Well, the Desiderios had 50 years of practice to get it right.

As Neil pushes the piles of paper off of himself, something catches his eye.

NEIL  
Hmmm.

JULIA  
What is it?

NEIL  
It looks like a tax bill from the county. It says the amusement park is behind on its property tax and the county is going to foreclose unless it's paid by 5:00 pm on June 30th.

JULIA  
Today is June 30!

NEIL  
Surely Colette would have paid this, right?



JULIA

Mr. Desiderio always handled the financial stuff. She probably has no idea these taxes are due today.

NEIL

We need to find her. Let's go!

EXT. FOOD PAVILION - DAY

Julia and Neil rush to Food Stand they were at earlier. Ryan is standing there, eating another plate of chili cheese fries. Also at the stand are Ava, Emily, and Kristopher.

JULIA

Ryan, where's Mrs. Desiderio?

RYAN

She went to the hospital.

JULIA

What??

Ryan shrugs his shoulders unconcernedly and shovels fries into his mouth.

RYAN

Yeah, she was having gout, or chest pains, or maybe it was Sphenopalatine Ganglioneuralgia. I dunno. It's hard to tell sometimes.

JULIA

This is horrible!

RYAN

Nah, she's a tough old bird. She'll be fine in a few days.

JULIA

That's not it. I mean yes, it's horrible she's in the hospital, but she never paid the property tax on the amusement park. If we don't come up with five thousand dollars by the end of the day, the county is going to foreclosure on the park and sell it!

EMILY

Oh, I'm going to miss all the nice people....and even Ryan.

RYAN

Why doesn't your boyfriend's daddy, Old Man Sinclair, just pay the taxes, since he's going to buy the park anyway.

JULIA

That's a great idea! Neil, your dad was going to save the park anyway, can he help us out?

Neil looks down in embarrassment.

NEIL

Well, I never said he was going buy the park. I said he likes to take distressed properties and make them profitable.

JULIA

Meaning?

AVA

Meaning 'Whoa Neily' here is part of the corporate bourgeoisie whose only goal is to maximize profits for their greedy overlords at the expense of proletariat sweat equity.

The group turns to stare at Ava.

AVA (CONT'D)

(rolling her eyes)

They are going to buy the property, tear down the park, and put in something more profitable.

NEIL

(mumbling)

Condominiums.

JULIA

What?

NEIL

My father wants the land to build condominiums. Look, this area is really growing, and the land this park sits on has become valuable. My father has been trying to buy this property from Mr. Desiderio for years.

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

He made a deal with someone from the county to buy the land and rezone it for condominiums.

RYAN

So you came here to spy on us, huh? You know they used to hang spies during the Revolutionary war. Someone get some rope! We'll hang the mole from the Whack-a-Mole!

JULIA

Ryan. We aren't hanging anyone. Neil, I thought you were here because you really loved amusement parks like this.

NEIL

Actually, I do. My father said today was the last day the park was going to be open. I thought the deal was done and I wanted to come and experience it before they closed it. I always have loved amusement parks, and this one really does have that special feel about it. I mean, you have customers patiently waiting an hour at the ticket booth to get in like it's a secret tradition. I mean, it's an odd tradition, but one they feel part of. Where do you find something like that nowadays?

JULIA

You don't.

A sense of sadness permeates the group.

RYAN

Aw, man. Where am I going to find a job with such great perks?

Emily clasps her hands together and silently whispers a prayer.

RYAN (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

EMILY

Matthew 7:7 says 'Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.'

RYAN  
Riiiiiggghhht. Anyway -

Ryan points a finger at Neil.

RYAN (CONT'D)  
Don't think I'm done dealing with  
you, because I'm not.

JULIA  
Ryan.

An idea comes to Neil.

NEIL  
Done dealing. A done deal. The  
deal's not done!

JULIA  
What?

NEIL  
The deal's not done! My father was  
going to wait until the county  
foreclosed to buy the property. If  
we get the tax money to the county  
by the end of the day, we can buy  
some time for Colette.

JULIA  
Neil, there haven't been a whole  
lot of customers in the park today.  
Most of them are still waiting out  
at the ticket booths. The park  
hasn't even taken in one thousand  
dollars yet today, let alone five  
thousand dollars.

NEIL  
We need some way to get them spend  
more money, and fast!

A knocking sound is heard behind them as The Pirate Ranger  
starts up. When it reaches its apex, the coins clink as they  
drop to the bottom of the ride. A few bills of paper money  
float down.

The group looks at each other in amazement, then at Emily.

EMILY  
(smugly)  
Ask, and it will given to you; see,  
and -

RYAN  
My man, Matty!

JULIA  
Ryan, what's the top setting on  
that ride?

RYAN  
Officially, three.

JULIA  
How high can you get it,  
unofficially?

A big smile crosses Ryan's face.

RYAN  
I'll turn that ugly girl into a  
perfect ten.

JULIA  
Gather round, everyone. We have a  
park to save!

EXT. THE PIRATE RANGER RIDE - DAY

Ryan puts up a sign on the queue line that says 'Closed for  
10 minutes', then crawls under the ride with a bunch of  
tools.

EXT. TICKET BOOTHS - DAY

Ava puts up a sign on the ticket booth that says 'Free  
Admission - today only' and waves the waiting customers into  
the park.

EXT. MIDWAY - DAY

Emily hangs a sign on a sandwich board that says 'The Pirate  
Ranger ride is the only ride open till further notice' with  
an arrow pointing toward the ride.

EXT. THE PIRATE RANGER RIDE - DAY

A long line waits in the queue. Julia is at the controls. The  
customers are quickly loaded in. The ride reaches its apex  
and then shakes back and forth intensely, and money pours of  
the customers' pockets. When it comes back down, Neil helps  
them out as fast a possible. Many customers stumble down the  
ramp, but all have smiles on their faces.

EXT. UNDER THE PIRATE RANGER - DAY

As the ride is being loaded, Kristopher crawls under the ride and collects all the change and paper money that fell. He dumps it into a pile next to the ride where Ryan is standing.

EXT. THE PIRATE RANGER RIDE - DAY

Ryan watches as the pile of money grows.

RYAN

We're going to need something to carry this in.

Neil looks around the park. An idea comes to him.

NEIL

Come with me!

EXT. GENERAL STORE - DAY

The Sheriff is standing outside of the general store, looking up at the second-story window.

SHERIFF

It's over, Bart! The good citizens of this town have given you up. Come out with your hands over your head!

BILL (O.S.)

You'll never take me alive, Sheriff!

The second-story window opens, and again Bill climbs out of it slowly as the Sheriff patiently waits.

SHERIFF

I won't let you menace the citizens of this town anymore.

BILL

Well then, Sheriff...you'd better draw!

As before, the Sheriff shoots Bill who stumbles, then rolls off the roof, bounces off the hay, and into the trough. Unlike last time, there is a loud clang as Bill forgot to refill it with water. Neil and Ryan rush up to him.

NEIL

Are you okay?

Bill gives the thumbs-up sign. Ryan and Neil grab the trough and upend it, tumbling Bill to the floor. They then pick up each end and rush off to the Pirate Ranger.

EXT. THE PIRATE RANGER RIDE - DAY

Ryan is in the control booth. The rest of the crew stands around the trough that is full of money.

JULIA  
Do you think it's enough?

NEIL  
(glancing at this watch)  
It'll have to be. We're running out of time.

JULIA  
Ryan, we have to go. Shut it down!

Ryan brings the ride to a stop and grabs a microphone in the booth.

RYAN  
Ladies and gentlemen. Island Fantasy is now closed. Get out.

He looks down and Julia and Neil, still talking into the mic.

RYAN (CONT'D)  
I'll get my truck.

INT. COUNTY OFFICES - EVENING

Julia, Neil, Ryan, Ava, Emily, Kristopher, and Bill all carry the heavy trough to an office door. The door says 'County Offices - Richard White - Commissioner'. Underneath it is a handwritten sign that says 'Back in 5 minutes'

NEIL  
What the...?

They set the trough down and it makes a loud thud. The door opens and a RECEPTIONIST opens the door. She looks at the sign.

RECEPTIONIST  
Oops. I forgot to take that down.  
We're open.

The group grabs the trough and waddles in.

RICHARD WHITE (any) is standing at the reception desk looking through a folder when the group comes in and sets the trough of money down.

RICHARD  
What is this?

NEIL  
This is where they pay the taxes,  
right?

RICHARD  
Right.

JULIA  
This money is to pay the overdue  
taxes on the Island Fantasy  
Amusement Park.

NEIL  
Five thousand dollars. It's all  
there.

Richard looks at the trough full of money.

RICHARD  
I'll take your word for it, for  
now. I'll issue a receipt after we  
count it.

The group gives each other congratulatory hugs and handshakes and leaves the office.

Richard watches them leave and looks over the money in the trough. Richard picks up a phone and calls Neil's father, MR. SINCLAIR (50s).

MR.SINCLAIR (V.O.)  
Yes?

RICHARD  
The park employees came in and paid  
the tax bill. I was little  
surprised to see Neil with that  
group.

MR.SINCLAIR (V.O.)  
That's ok, there's been a change of  
plans. He's going to be staying on.  
Will that complicate things on you  
end?



RICHARD  
(surprised)  
No, not at all.

EXT. FOOD PAVILION - EVENING

All the characters are gathered around the Chili Cheese fry stand, along with Colette. Ryan is eating another plate of cheese fries.

JULIA  
How are you feeling, Mrs.  
Desiderio?

COLETTE  
Oh, I'm fine, dear, and I think you can start calling me Colette. I'm so thankful you were able to save the park. My husband resisted selling the land for all those years. I know he'll be happy wherever he is knowing that the park will go on. I just have to find someone that knows about numbers and taxes to help me out.

NEIL  
Actually, I'd like to offer my services.

JULIA  
Really?

NEIL  
Yeah. I kinda feel like I belong at a place like this...

He looks at Julia.

NEIL (CONT'D)  
...with people like you.

RYAN  
I'm going to be keeping my eye on you, Neily.

Colette grabs Ryan by the arm and drags him toward the Pirate Ranger.

COLETTE

Come on, loverboy. You still have  
to pay for those chili cheese  
fries. Does this thing still go up  
to 10?

Everyone laughs.

**FADE OUT.**

**TAG**

EXT. MERRY GO ROUND - EVENING

A giant snake slithers around the merry-go-round.

FADE OUT