

POOL BOYS

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Second Place, One-Act Play/Scripts

FADE IN: INTERIOR BILLARDS ROOM—NIGHT

Pitch black. Only the occasional camera flash from an unseen crowd lights the room. Each reveals a billiards table with a full 9-ball rack for a moment.

Without announcement, a large, single spotlight illuminates the table from above. Cheers arise from the darkness-hidden crowd.

From out of the darkness emerges RUSSELL DOBBS, a clean-cut guy in his early 20's. He takes a seat on one of two bar stools just inside the circle.

Applause and cheers erupt at some unseen celebrity...RUSSELL squints his eyes and tapes his foot nervously, cracking his knuckles as his brother, LEWIS DOBBS, jumps into the circle.

CROWD (O.S.): (chanting) Lewis! Lewis! Lewis!

LEWIS is a few years older than RUSSELL, a pudgy guy with long, combed hair and a trimmed beard. His pinstripe suit is the definition of gaudy, black with red sequenced pinstripes (think Billy Flynn in CHICAGO). In one hand he holds a slender cue stick case with a large white Q stitched on it.

LEWIS sets the case down, snaps the latches open and pulls out two halves of a cue stick, connecting them with broad strokes of his arms. He holds up the assembled stick, grinning a curled, Cheshire cat grin.

LEWIS: Behold! The Mighty Q!

The crowd goes ape shit as LEWIS turns to RUSSELL, gesturing with an "after you" movement. RUSSELL reluctantly gets off his stool, his own house cue in hand.

The crowd hushes as RUSSELL lines up his obviously warped stick. He pulls back, and launches the cue ball forward. CRACK, it connects, only to bounce off rack and fly into the darkness, smashing into some poor onlooker.

ONLOOKER (O.S.): Son of a bitch!

The crowd bursts into laughter. RUSSELL solemnly takes his seat as Lewis stands patting him on the back, too hard to be anything but mocking.

LEWIS circles the table, looking out into the darkness, picking the crowd back up with his large gestures and animated facial expressions. He widens his eyes and reaches into his pocket, producing a second cue ball. He tosses it from hand to hand, then sets it down on the table.

LEWIS' eyes his target, pulls back *The Mighty Q*, and fires, sending the cue ball flying like a bullet from a gun. CRACK. It connects, the rack of balls scatter sending balls 1,2,3 and 4 into the corner pockets all at once. LEWIS prances around the table and lines up his next shot.

INT. BILLIARDS ROOM—MONTAGE

LEWIS shoots with his eyes closed. CRACK. Sinks the 5.

RUSSELL wipes sweat from his forehead.

LEWIS adjusts and takes a behind the back shot. CRACK. Sinks the 6.

RUSSELL squints as he tries to see the crowd in the darkness.

The cue ball zooms around obstacle balls and hitting its target like a little RC car on crack. CRACK. Sinks it.

RUSSELL looks at his cue stick, which warps more and more in seconds.

CRACK. LEWIS knocks in two more balls to opposite corners with one shot, they stop just on the lips of the pockets. Lewis looks as the cheering crowd and stamps his cue stick on the ground. The ball drops into the pocket obediently.

RUSSELL roles his eyes in embarrassment.

END MONTAGE

The table is now clear with the exception of the final 9 ball. Lewis turns and stares across the table like a hawk at Russell, aiming his final shot. RUSSELL looks up and—ANGLE ON—finds himself sitting spread eagle on the corner pocket. He looks down, then up in absolute, unbridled dread.

RUSSELL: Dear God...

LEWIS is laughing maniacally, nodding as if saying "here it comes". RUSSELL shakes his head as LEWIS pulls back his arm and CRACK, launches the ball forward. RUSSELL screams as the ball flies towards his crotch.

RUSSELL'S screams as the ball advances. Just as it is about to hit its target

JUMP CUT TO: INT. ENTERPRISE POOLS SHOW FLOOR—MORNING

RUSSELL screams, jolting himself out of the nightmare. He checks his package, sighing in relief. He sits up on the pool chair he is lounging in, looking around the faux-tropical show floor surrounding him.

He stops when he sees WILLY PETERMAN, the middle-aged owner of the store.

WILLY is standing, arms crossed, glaring at RUSSELL. His greasy, slicked back Rogain rug shining under the show lights. RUSSELL stands up, running his own, natural hair through his fingers.

WILLY: Jesus, Russ, were you just sleeping?

RUSSELL: What? No no. I was resting my eyes, that's all.

WILLY: (*angered*) How the hell can you fall asleep in that lounge chair when you have the register to run?

RUSSELL *peers over to the deserted register, seeing no one near it, or in the store, for that matter. He looks back annoyed at Willy.*

RUSSELL: Willy, you know it doesn't get busy this early. I was just—

WILLY: I don't care if it's not busy, you know there always has to be someone at that register guarding it at all times. How many times do I gotta fucking say it?

RUSSELL: (*annoyed*) At least a few times more, damn.

RUSSELL *admits defeat and shuffles towards the register, ignoring his permanently agitated boss.*

WILLY: And where the hell is that pain-in-the-ass jerk-off brother of yours?

RUSSELL *stops and spins, a stern look on his face.*

RUSSELL: (*confronting*) Hey, no one calls that pain-in-the-ass brother of mine a jerkoff.

WILLY: Well he was supposed to be here a half hour ago to help you open. Where is he?

RUSSELL: The hell should I know? He wasn't even home when I woke up so I figured he might have already come here.

WILLY: Now why would Lewis go and do a dumb thing like show up to work early?

RUSSELL *shrugs and hoists himself on the checkout counter, sighing in frustration.*

RUSSELL: Dunno. Finally found some initiative and motivation in his life?

WILLY: Well you can tell him he's fired when you see him.

RUSSELL *turns, surprised and a bit angered. WILLY has the shit eating smirk of a boss who thinks his farts don't stink.*

RUSSELL: I'm not tellin' him that.

WILLY: Yes you damn well are.

RUSSELL: No. I'm not.

WILLY: He'll find out either way.

RUSSELL *hops off the counter, stomping over to WILLY defiantly.*

RUSSELL: If you fire him, then I quit.

WILLY: You kiddin' me? This job is all you got, which is pathetic. You ain't exactly got anything else goin' for you. You can't quit.

RUSSELL: Watch me, asshat. I've already been setting up some clients for my own business. One that's gonna blow this little pussy ass store out of the water. He gestures mockingly at the lack of extravagance surrounding the small store.

WILLY: (laughing) Oh my god, that's good. The day you actually have you're own business up and going and beating this store, I'll close up shop and come work for you. Get it, you little prick?

RUSSELL *scoffs and rips his name tag off, throwing it on the ground. He turns and begins to head out the door.*

WILLY: You ain't got the know-how to run your own business, Russ! You gotta be tough. You don't have the balls.

RUSSELL *grabs a small box of beach balls off the bargain rack as he kicks the door open, he holds them up, not even looking back at WILLY.*

RUSSELL: (over his shoulder) I do now, bitch!

INT. DOBB'S APARTMENT—LATER

The lock to the front door turns and the door swings open as RUSSELL walks in. He stops in his track and drops his keys, staring in shock.

Sitting before him in the small living room is a gigantic ornate pool table. His brother LEWIS is laying on the table face down, butt naked, Sleeping like a bear and snoring just as loud as one.

RUSSELL: What the hell??

LEWIS snaps awake mid-snore, wiping the dribble from his mouth and sitting up to face RUSSELL. He looks at him groggy eyed for a moment before snapping awake and hopping off the table.

He is a far cry from RUSSELL's dream. His black hair is frayed in random directions and his beard thin and patchy. He grabs a random pair of shorts from the floor and attempts to put them on. He gets one leg in, but stumbles forward.

Lewis hits the ground with a thud but quickly rebounds, tugging the shorts up with him. He gestures widely to the table.

LEWIS: Behold, brother man!

RUSSELL: What the hell is this?

LEWIS hesitates for a moment, confused by the simple question

LEWIS: It's... A pool table.

RUSSELL: I know it's a pool table, retard. Where'd it come from?

LEWIS: I bought it this morning. Our next door neighbor knows a guy who's brother is married to a chick who's cousin works at a billiards shop.

RUSSELL turns, flabbergasted. LEWIS smacks him on the chest, telling the story.

LEWIS: He says to me yesterday, he says "Hey my friends brother's wife's cousin could get you a great deal on a table."

RUSSELL: Yeah I got that part. Why the hell do you need a pool table?

LEWIS is again confused by the question.

LEWIS: Cause... I like pool.

RUSSELL: Jesus Christ, man. How much was it?

LEWIS: Oh dude, it's totally paid for. I just rolled both our paychecks into it. It was a couple of thousand after I talked him down from five grand. Five grand! Good shit, yeah?

RUSSELL walks around it, letting out a long, exasperated sigh as he runs his fingers through his hair. He sits on a stool by the table as LEWIS stares on confused, rubbing his hands on the soft felt of the table.

LEWIS: What's the problem, man? It's beautiful.

RUSSELL: *(stressed)* Lewis we needed that money. We needed it bad.

LEWIS: *(oblivious)* It's no sweat, I'll get an advance from Willy today. Balls, I should call him and tell him I'm gonna be late, huh?

RUSSELL falls forward, his head clunking on the table. LEWIS walks over to the phone and grabs it, starting to dial. A bell goes off in his head and he turns, looking suspiciously at RUSSELL.

LEWIS: Wait, why aren't YOU at work?

RUSSELL doesn't bother to pick his head up.

RUSSELL: I quit.

LEWIS: What the fuck did you do that for???

RUSSELL sighs again and lifts his face towards LEWIS.

RUSSELL: Because Willy was being a asshole. I couldn't take it. He was asking for it.

LEWIS: Oh yeah, real good. *(as RUSSELL)* Hey, Willy! You're an asshole! I quit! *(as himself, sarcastic)* That'll teach him.

RUSSELL: Look, he told me to fire you cause you were late. I told him I'd rather quit. So... that's what I did.

LEWIS eyes widen as he pulls at his hair in frustration.

LEWIS: Russell, he fires me every fucking Monday! By the time Wednesday roles around, he can't live without me and I'm back! I make more sales there than HE does. Why do you think I always leave early on Monday's and don't show up Tuesdays?

RUSSELL stares blankly into space, shocked.

LEWIS: What the shit we supposed to do for money??

RUSSELL: Hey, I didn't know you decided to go blow both our paychecks this week on a fucking table!

LEWIS: Don't turn this clusterfuck around on me!

RUSSELL: Can't we just return it?

LEWIS: You kidding? I practically got this thing off the back of the truck, there's no way I'm gonna be able to take it back.

Both brothers stand silently for a moment.

LEWIS: Any chance in hell that Willy'll take us back?

RUSSELL: Doubtful. *(A light bulb goes off above RUSSELL's head and he runs down the hallway, leaving Lewis still yanking at his hair. RUSSELL returns with several sketches in his hand.)* We're not proper fucked yet, we can sell these. We can start our own pool business and build our own shit. These are good designs.

LEWIS closes his eyes and slaps the drawings out of RUSSELL's hand.

LEWIS: We need something more immediate! We got nothing! That shit is gonna take time. Both brothers stand thinking. They take a breath, starting to speak their plan, but then stop, going back to thinking. A few more rounds of this and Lewis snaps his fingers. I got it! Pool!

RUSSELL: You said it was gonna take time.

LEWIS gestures at the pool table.

LEWIS: No, pool! We play for money. Remember how we won that couple of hundred bucks at Ruby's? We do THAT. We can practice on this baby. It'll give us some pocket money to stay alive while we kick your plan into gear.

RUSSELL looks at him, unsure.

RUSSELL: We're gonna win money by playing a game?

LEWIS: Damn right. People get paid to play all the time. We go in and we play like shit, get people think we're a couple of easy marks or something. Then, like a fucking ninja cobra, we strike!

LEWIS enthusiasm and the look in his eyes frightens RUSSELL slightly. It dawns on him what his brother is suggesting.

RUSSELL: You mean hustling?

LEWIS: Hustling. Having an unfair advantage. Trickery. Acting. Fucking with the man. Whatever you wanna call it.

RUSSELL: I'm not lying and cheating, Lew. We know enough about pools to apply it somehow, maybe we can get jobs at Paddock or something...

LEWIS: No! No! I will not work at another one of them stores. I'll tie a fucking plastic bag around my face and slit my wrists first.

RUSSELL sighs and looks down at his drawings, then at the pool table, then back at LEWIS.

RUSSELL: Just temporary, right?

LEWIS: Yes. Of course. We'll do this until we find a place for you to start your own deal.

RUSSELL smiles and nods. The two brothers look at the drawings on the pool table, smiling triumphantly at their plan.

LEWIS: I mean, how hard can starting your own pool place be?

INT. DOBB'S APARTMENT—SIX MONTHS LATER

RUSSELL'S alarm blares, waking him. He groggily rolls over and smashes it with his hand, making it shut right the fuck up. He crawls out of bed, smacking himself in the face to wake himself up. He stops when he hears loud rock music coming from the hallway.

INT. DOBB'S APARTMENT—CONTINUOUS

RUSSELL, now wearing a baby blue robe that would make Heffner cringe, walks out of his room. The cluttered hallways serves as an obstacle course for Russell to maneuver through. Exiting the hallway, he stops and looks at the pool table, which is stacked with empty pizza boxes and KFC buckets. He groans and heads into the kitchen.

INT. DOBB'S KITCHEN—CONTINUOUS

The sizzling of the stove is heard just barely over the old school rock music. RUSSELL rounds the corner and stops, staring at LEWIS cooking to the tunes. Pulling up his sagging pajama bottoms, he flips a mutant pepperoni pancake onto the lid of a pizza box, joining it with three others.

RUSSELL: The hell you doing?

LEWIS: Cooking you your full balanced breakfast. You're welcome.

RUSSELL: I'm not eating that shit. *(beat)* What time did you go to bed?
You're never up this early.

LEWIS: Didn't sleep. Don't worry about it.

RUSSELL *smacks* LEWIS *upside the head*.

LEWIS: What the fuck!?

RUSSELL: The night before we have a job, a good job that will pay us good enough to pay this months rent, and you pull an all-nighter? C'mon man. We need to be good for this, or this roof over our heads goes adios.

LEWIS: Yeah yeah, I know. Mr. Ass Clown stopped by late last night to complain about our rent.

RUSSELL: Mr. Leibowitz came by? Good God Lewis, please tell me you didn't call him ass clown again. Please.

LEWIS: No, no. Don't worry. *(beat)* I DID call him a crotch jockey though. I mean, it was just kinda just a throwaway comment, but I'm pretty sure he didn't like it.

LEWIS *shrugs and grabs a can of Red Bull and a bottle of Hershey's chocolate syrup from the fridge*. LEWIS *fills his mouth with chocolate, then takes a swig of the red bull, smiling*.

RUSSELL: You're disgusting.

LEWIS: It's what's kept me going all night. Want one?

RUSSELL *turns away without a word and heads back to his bedroom*.

EXT. POOLBOY'S TRUCK—DAY

Down the road the Dobbs Boys sputter, trying to get the most out of their crummy pickup, which is filled with various tools of the pool cleaning trade. Aside from the peeling paint, the simple stenciled word POOLBOYS decorates the truck. RUSSELL turns in a very upper class neighborhood.

INT. POOLBOY'S TRUCK—CONTINUOUS

RUSSELL *peers out his dirty front windshield, searching for the correct address*. LEWIS *lets out the mighty snore of a bear*. RUSSELL *looks over to see Lewis, asleep with half a pancake in his hand, the other half dangling out of his mouth*. RUSSELL *grabs a half empty bottle of water and chucks it at LEWIS, snapping him out of his dream*.

LEWIS: *(waking up)*—trout and in the corner pocket.

RUSSELL: Lewis! We're close. Are you gonna wake up, or am I leaving you in the truck again?

LEWIS: I'm not staying in the damn truck again. Not after those fucking cops fucking goosed me that one time.

RUSSELL: It was a strip search man, you were giving them shit.

LEWIS: It was fucking violating.

RUSSELL: Then wake up and get your game face on. These people we were set up with aren't the kind of people who are going to put up with your shit.

The little truck pulls up to a gigantic villa, screeching to a stop. The brothers stare up at it, swallowing meekly in unison. Nervously, the brothers climb out of the truck and head to the front door.

FADE OUT

