

KING OF THE HILL
"It's a Carnival"

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ACT ONE

FADE IN:

INT. STRICKLAND PROPANE - DAY

Hank sits at his desk. Buck Strickland walks up.

STRICKLAND

Hank, I'm off to Cal-e-fornia.

HANK

California? But, you're not a democrat... (EYEING THE DOOR FOR A QUICK ESCAPE) heh, are you?

STRICKLAND

Course not. Wouldn't dream of settin' foot in that nancy-boy state, but got no choice. Some tree-hugging hippie staged a sit-in at the Vogner Char King plant. Claims it's a sexist grill line.

HANK

Sexist? Every man I know loves it.

STRICKLAND

I know, but he claims it's sexist 'gainst the ladies. If me and the boys from the Propane Society don't apologize for keeping the female griller down he's gonna light a candle of defiance -- could blow the whole place up.

HANK

Oh, no.

STRICKLAND

Oh, yes. Hank, in this dire time,
while I'm gone, I'm temporarily
promoting you to manager. (OFF HANK)

Hank?

HANK

Sorry, I thought I was having this
dream again. Manager, really?

STRICKLAND

You ain't dreaming, son. Once I walk
out that there door it'll be official.

HANK

(IN AWE) Manager.

STRICKLAND

Be back in a week.

Buck walks out the front door. Hank watches as the door
closes. As it does, Hank starts pumping his fists in joy.
Buck bursts back through the door catching Hank mid-
celebration.

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

My keys.

Buck grabs his keys off the table.

HANK

(BLUSHING) Heh, okay then.

Buck leaves. Hank lets out a joyous **sigh** of relief.

EXT. COMMON ALLEY - AFTERNOON

The guys, minus Hank, stand in their usual spots drinking beer. Hank's truck pulls into the driveway. He gets out and Bill tosses him a beer.

DALE

(OFFENDED) You're late.

The **roar** of an approaching flat bed truck grabs the guys attention. They turn and watch the truck labeled "THE KILROY CARNIVAL" pull up. The truck along with its payload of a Ferris wheel arm stops in front of the guys.

The passenger window rolls down.

HANK

Hi, there. I'm Hank Hill, this is my alley. Can I help you?

The driver stares blankly at Hank for a beat.

DRIVER

Hi, there, Hank Hill, and his alley.
My pee cup here got full...

An open forty ounce cup sits in the cup-holder filled to the brim with a yellow liquid. Hank noticing the cup quivers and backs up. The other guys make their way to the back of the truck to inspect it.

DRIVER (CONT'D)

...so, I exited 35, and ended up separated from my caravan. Can you get me to LBJ park?

HANK

Huh, sure, okay. What you're gonna wanna do is...

ANGLE ON BILL

Bill knocks on the Ferris wheel.

BILL

Just like I thought, metal.

ANGLE ON HANK

HANK

...now you'll be traveling at a
constant speed of thirty-five miles
per hour...

ANGLE ON DALE

Dale lies down on his back with a lit cigarette in his mouth.
He slides underneath the truck.

HANK (O.S.) (CONT'D)

...after you've past the third light,
not the second light, which you might
miss, but the third light. You're
gonna wanna...

He sees an engraving that reads, "US ARMY". Dale's jaw
drops.

DALE

Aaah!

The cigarette falls out of his mouth burning his cheek. His
head bolts up, hitting the bottom of the truck, knocking him
out.

INT. HILL HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Hank walks in and joins Bobby and Luanne at the table.

HANK

(EXCITED) So you'll never guess what
happened to --

PEGGY

(INTERRUPTING) Don't tell me! I'm
great at these. Let's see... no.

(CHUCKLES) Peggy, that's not it.

Hmmm...

A fly buzzes by her.

BOBBY

The Dallas Cowboys came to Arlen!

HANK

They did?!

BOBBY

I don't know. I was just guessing.

Peggy picks up a fly swatter.

HANK

We live in Arlen, Bobby, not heaven.

LUANNE

(SOFTLY) Not yet.

BOBBY

Did the Sidekicks come to town?

HANK

We don't live in hell either, boy.

Peggy swats and kills the fly.

PEGGY

Hoyeah! (GASPS) That's it! Those
killer bees from Mex-he-co, el muredo
de bee. They finally came to Arlen!

HANK

(SIGHS) No, that's not it. Nothing came to Arlen -- except some stupid carnival. What I was trying to say was... I was promoted to, *manager!*

Everyone pauses. Peggy drops the spatula. Then...

PEGGY/BOBBY/LUANNE

Congratulations!/ Way to go!/ Alright!

Peggy rushes over to Hank and gives him a big hug.

PEGGY

Oh my! This is so exciting! All our hard work has finally paid off!

HANK

Heh-heh. Now it's just for the week.

BOBBY

Wait a minute... you're saying a carnival came here, to Arlen?!!

HANK

(PERTURBED) Yes.

BOBBY

Alright! This is the best news ever!

LUANNE

(WILD LAUGH) Wow, a carnival! How exciting!

BOBBY

I love carnivals! Especially the carny. They're quite brilliant, you

(MORE)

BOBBY (CONT'D)

know. Mom, go ahead and cancel my dinner. I need to start saving room for cotton candy -- plus, I'd like to slim down so I can ride the ponies.

LUANNE

They have ponies at the carnival?!

Bobby shooting Luanne with his finger.

BOBBY

You know it.

HANK

(EXASPERATED SIGH)

INT. DALES BASEMENT - NIGHT

Dale, with a bandage on his forehead, types, "KILROY CARNIVAL AND US ARMY CONSPIRACY" into a search engine on his computer. He presses enter. A webpage opens that reads, "0 MATCHES FOUND".

DALE

They're good.

He deletes "CONSPIRACY". The search now reads, "KILROY CARNIVAL AND US ARMY".

DALE (CONT'D)

Gotcha. (CHUCKLES)

He presses enter. The same webpage opens, "0 MATCHES FOUND".

DALE (CONT'D)

Very good.

INT. HILL HOUSE - MASTERBEDROOM - THAT NIGHT

Hank sits in bed reading a propane trade magazine "Propane Nation". Hank does not see Peggy in the bathroom dressing herself in "respectable" lingerie.

HANK

It's gonna be important that we keep a level head 'bout the promotion this week.

PEGGY (O.S.)

Mm-hm.

HANK

Since we're now officially part of Arlen high society were gonna have to work extra hard to unofficially not be a part of it.

PEGGY (O.S.)

Mmm-hm.

HANK

Bobby needs to grow up appreciating the crack of a baseball bat, not the crack of a lobster's tail.

PEGGY

Mmmm-hm.

HANK

Nothing can change. We need to maintain the same friends, same clothes, same cut of meat, same everything. Nothing changes.

Hank finally looks up from the magazine and finds Peggy seductively dressed leaning tenderly against the bathroom door.

He looks at Peggy then turns and looks at the calendar.

HANK (CONT'D)

It's not Tuesday.

PEGGY

(GIRLISH GIGGLES) I know that. But I
just had to get to know my new (FRENCH
ACCENT) man-a-jeur. (GIGGLES)

HANK

Didn't you just hear a word I said?
Nothing changes. Nope, we'll have...
ahh, you know, tomorrow night, like
usual... heh, yep.

PEGGY

Oh. Don't count on it!

Peggy throws on a robe and dashes out the door.

INT. HILL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peggy sits down and turns on the TV.

TV

Welcome to another edition of...

"We're Rich and More Fabulous than

You!"

The cheesy music blares as a montage of fancy cars, elegant
restaurants, outlandish homes flashes across the screen.

The music and pictures grab Peggy's attention.

TV (CONT'D)

Ever dream of eating caviar for
breakfast?

PEGGY

Yes.

TV

In your one-point-two million dollar
bathtub?

PEGGY

(SHOCKED BUT VERY INTRIGUED) No.

TV

Well our next guest did, and does!

PEGGY

(EXCITED GASP)

EXT. TOM LANDRY MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

A couple of kids straggle into the school.

INT. TOM LANDRY MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

Kids go to and fro in the hallway. The hallway speaker
crackles on.

TEACHER (O.S.)
(over the hall speaker)

Good morning, Tom Landry middle
school. Umm, due to an unfortunate
incident, half the school band is out
with mono. Therefore, Friday night's
PTA will no longer open with a
dazzling recorder rendition of Yankee
Doodle as promised. The meeting will
now commence with the comedy stylings
of our very own Bobby Hill.

BOBBY (O.S.)
(over the hall speaker)

Thank you, Mrs. H! The laughs will be
a plenty. So tell your parents to
come on down.

CUT TO:

INT. TOM LANDRY MIDDLE SCHOOL - ADMIN. OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Bobby at the mic.

BOBBY

We want a packed house out there, it's
not going to be no *study hall!* Right,
Mrs. H?

TEACHER

Right. Thank you, Bobby. And on a
related note, girls, please stay away
from Dooley Peterson, he is *not* a
licensed tonsil inspector. Thank you.

The teacher cuts off the mic.

INT. STRICKLAND PROPANE/DALE'S HOUSE - INTERCUT

Hank is on the phone. Above him hangs a poorly constructed
sign that reads "Congratulations, Manager Hill!"

HANK

Peggy's been acting strange ever since
I got the promotion. All morning she
was trying to convince me to get
creative with the Strickland sales
plan. She thinks if I boost sales
drastically this week Buck will keep

(MORE)

HANK (CONT'D)

me on as manager permanently. Then she said we could eat caviar in our bathtub every morning.

DALE (ON THE PHONE)

Mmm-hm, I see.

HANK

Course I told her that sounded like a terrible idea, and that tinkering with Strickland's normal sales routine was an even worse idea... she didn't care too much for that.

DALE

Hmmm... well I find it interesting that Peggy started acting so strange at the exact time the carnival came to town.

HANK

That's not interesting.

DALE

Isn't it, though? Hank, the carnival was driving Army issued trucks. Think about it... *Army issued.*

HANK

Why am I even talking to you about this?

DALE

It makes perfect sense: the *carnival* is actually a covert Army task force executing civilian mind manipulation exercises. Peggy's been hit.

HANK

I'm hanging up now.

DALE

We must de-program her.

HANK

That's it!

Hank leans forward to hang up the phone.

DALE

Don't let anyone know we had this conversation! Retain complete deniability! Comple...

The phone hits the receiver, **click**.

EXT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - ESTABLISHING - DAY

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - CONTINUOUS

Peggy and Bobby walk into the library.

BOBBY

I'm going to check out every book they have on carnivals and the carnies that make them so enjoyable.

PEGGY

Okay, but don't let your dad find the books. Remember how he nearly choked

(MORE)

PEGGY (CONT'D)

to death on that tater tot when he
found your book, "The Ballet of
Clowns".

BOBBY

I know.

Bobby runs off. Peggy turns to the librarian at the counter.

PEGGY

Excuse me. Where would I find your
business management books?

LIBRARIAN

In the business section.

PEGGY

Mm-hmm, exactly where I'd expect. How
'bout your books on obstinate
husbands?

INT. PUBLIC LIBRARY - SELF HELP SECTION - CONTINUOUS

Peggy scans the books and locks in on one titled, "HOW TO
MOVE YOUR MAN, WITHOUT HIM FEELING THE PUSH". Peggy glances
down the aisle to make sure she's alone then grabs and opens
the book.

PEGGY

I already do that...

She flips a page.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

...and that...

She flips another page.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

(CHUCKLES) amateur.

She flips another page.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

(GASPS) Oh, my. Is that legal?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT HILL HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM - LATER THAT NIGHT

Peggy lies awake as Hank sleeps. She slips out of bed, then reaches under her side of the mattress. Hank turns.

HANK

Go! Go! Go!!!

Peggy tenses up.

HANK (CONT'D)

Alright, son! Another touchdown.

Peggy **sighs** as Hank is just cheering in his sleep. Peggy pulls out a book from under the mattress and leaves the room.

INT. HILL HOUSE - PEGGY'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Peggy turns on a flashlight and begins to read the book, "HOW TO MOVE YOUR MAN, WITHOUT HIM FEELING THE PUSH".

PEGGY

Strickland is going to have its best
week ever or my name isn't Peggy Hill -
- and it is. Hoyeah!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

ACT TWO

FADE IN.

INT. HILL HOUSE - KITCHEN - NEXT MORNING

Hank sits at the kitchen table wearing his normal work clothes. Peggy is about the kitchen.

PEGGY

Good morning, my husband, who I love
so much.

HANK

Uhh, morning, Peggy.

Peggy sets a nice plate of breakfast in front of Hank.

PEGGY

It's a beautiful day, don't you think?

HANK

Uhh, yeah -- aren't you mad at me?

PEGGY

Mad? (FAKE LAUGH) No.

Peggy sets a glass of orange juice down in front of him and "accidentally" spills it all over him.

HANK

Dang it!

PEGGY

(STEELY) Oh, no. I am sorry. I am
sure I don't know how that happened.

HANK

Now I'm going to have to go and
change.

INT. HILL HOUSE - MASTER BEDROOM CLOSET - MOMENTS LATER

Hank looks in the closet for another pair of his work clothes, but there are none.

HANK

(TO PEGGY O.S.) Where's my other work clothes?

PEGGY (O.S.)

Oh, shoot, that's right, they're at the cleaners. I guess you're going to have to wear your suit.

HANK

(MUMBLES) Dad gum it.

INT. HILL HOUSE - KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Hank walks into the kitchen knotting his tie. Peggy stands by the counter. There's a can of V-8 juice next to her.

PEGGY

Well, that's nice. I'd say you're certainly dressed for success.

HANK

I thought I had more work clothes.

PEGGY

Well then, you better get going. Good luck, Mr. Manager!

Peggy slaps Hank on the butt. Peggy grabs the V-8 juice.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Here, have a V-8.

She shoves the can into Hank's hand.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

It's nutritious.

HANK

I can't drink this. I'm not a woman
or a soccer player.

PEGGY

It'll give your day a boost.

Hank peeks out the window and sees the guys in the alley.

HANK

What if the guys see me?

PEGGY

They won't see you. Go get 'em,
tiger.

EXT. COMMON ALLEY - CONTINUOUS

Hank heads for his truck trying not to be noticed.

ANGLE ON HANK

HANK

(TO SELF) Easy, easy, they don't see
you, easy.

ANGLE ON THE GUYS

BILL

Let's go watch them setup the carnival
today!

BOOMHAUER

Yeah, man, that...

Boomhauer grows quiet as he and the other two notice Hank
unlocking his truck-door.

ANGLE BACK ON HANK

As he slides the key into the door-lock.

HANK

(TO SELF) Easy does it.

DALE (O.S.)

Nice suit!

Hank stops cold. Reluctantly, he takes the key out and then raises his head.

HANK

Oh. I almost didn't see you all, heh.

ANGLE BACK ON THE GUYS

BOOMHAUER

Dang ol' fancy digs man. Look, like
dang ol' oil exec, fancy c e o an all.

DALE

Yeah, which one of your leer jets are
you off to?

ANGLE ON HANK

HANK

What are you talking about?

DALE (O.S.)

Sell-out!

Hank unknowingly sets the V-8 can on his truck's roof.

HANK

I haven't sold out. My normal clothes
are at the cleaners.

ANGLE ON THE GUYS

DALE

Like that's logical.

BILL

(INNOCENTLY) Is V-8 juice the drink of choice for all sell-outs or just you?

ANGLE ON HANK

HANK

I wouldn't know, Bill.

Hank grabs his drink and gets in his truck.

ANGLE ON THE GUYS

DALE

He's changed.

CUT TO:

INT. HANK'S TRUCK - MOMENTS LATER

Hank drives with frustration.

HANK

Being manager comes with a pretty nasty price. Everyone acts all strange but you, yep. (THEN, REASSURING) Hey, this must be how Troy felt when he won the Superbowl. Everyone around him probably changed too, (CHUCKLES) yup.

Bird poop splatters on Hank's windshield. He holds the anger in.

HANK (CONT'D)

Yep. Exactly how Troy felt.

He reaches past his can of V-8 juice in the drink holder and turns on his windshield wipers. The wipers smear the poop all over the windshield. His anger grows.

INT. HILL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Peggy sits on the couch with a pad of paper reading the "MOVE YOUR MAN" book. There's a check mark on her pad next to "TIP 22: Take all the blame and your man's putty in your hands" and next to "TIP 48: Suit him up and count the bucks".

She checks "TIP 51: Have him drink like a champ and he'll perform like a champ".

PEGGY

(TO SELF) I'll try tip sixty-two once
my passport arrives.

INT. STRICKLAND PROPANE - HANKS OFFICE - DAY

Hank sits at his desk. Behind him, the "congratulatory" sign droops far lower than yesterday. The phone rings. Hank brightens as he reaches for the phone.

DONNA (O.S.)

Don't bother. I got it, *Mr.* Hill.

HANK

(MUMBLING) Can't do anything round
here anymore.

DONNA

It's for you.

Hank picks up the phone, excited.

HANK

Hank Hill, (DEFEATED) *manager* of
Strickland Propane. Taste the meat
not the heat.

STRICKLAND (ON THE PHONE)

(SHOUTING) Hank!

HANK

Buck?

INT. STRICKLAND PROPANE/BUCK OUTSIDE CHAR KING - INTERCUT

STRICKLAND

It's worse than we thought! That
protestor's having a calf-fry and he's
using my balls.

HANK

What do you mean?

Several firemen and policemen walk around the Char King
plant. The fire marshal rolls yellow "Do Not Cross" tape
around the entrance to the building.

STRICKLAND

They're shutting down the King!

HANK

That's our best line.

A skinny hippie dances and claps in the background.

STRICKLAND

We're finished! That tree-hugger dug
up all kinds of California state codes
we're violating. I'm faxing them over
now.

Hank turns and looks as paper is coming through the fax
machine.

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

Without the Char King we've got
nothing! Just propane. That won't

(MORE)

STRICKLAND (CONT'D)

keep us a float for even a week.
We're all gonna be out of work.

HANK

Don't say that, sir. If you've taught
me one thing it's that lady propane is
all we need.

STRICKLAND

It was a lie! All lies!
(UNCONTROLLABLE SOBBING) We're
doomed.

Buck pulls out a flask and hangs up.

HANK

Sir?

Hank leans forward thinking hard.

HANK (CONT'D)

I'm gonna have to boost propane sales
to make up for the Char King loss.
It's the only way.

Hank looks at a picture of Peggy that sits on his desk.

HANK (CONT'D)

Looks like you're getting your wish
after all.

INT. HILL HOUSE - KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

CLOSE UP

Peggy looks up.

PEGGY

It worked.

WIDE SHOT

Peggy has a pencil in hand and a newspaper on the table.

PEGGY (CONT'D)

Fifteen across, Constantinople.

INT. STRICKLAND PROPANE - HANKS OFFICE - DAY

An idea strikes Hank.

HANK

Hey, Joe Jack, would you come in here
for a minute?

Joe Jack walks in.

HANK (CONT'D)

Joe Jack, do you know of anyone who
needs a lot of propane?

JOE JACK

Hmm... can't say that I do.

HANK

Okay thanks. (TO SELF) So much for
plan A...

JOE JACK

I just drive the truck, Hank.

HANK

(NOT PAYING ATTENTION) Okay.

A revelation.

HANK (CONT'D)

That's it, the truck. Thanks Joe
Jack, you're a life saver.

JOE JACK

Welcome.

Joe Jack leaves as Hank picks up the phone and dials 411.

HANK

I'd like the number to the Kilroy

Carnival please... thanks.

Hank quickly writes down a number.

EXT. LBJ PARK - DAY

Dale, Boomhauer, and Bill drink beers atop a hill watching the carnival below come together. Rides and game booths are nearly set up. Dale, decked out in fatigues and sporting a fake mustache, hides halfway behind a bush.

DALE'S POV

A man holding a rifle emerges from behind a white delivery truck.

DALE

Geeh!

NORMAL ANGLE

Dale throws his beer into the air as he jumps for cover behind the bush. Just then the white delivery truck pulls away revealing a game booth that has a big sign, "BB GUN SHOOTOUT".

Hank walks past the BB GUN booth into a mobile trailer.

BILL

What's Hank doing down there?

Dale's eyes open with nervous curiosity.

INT. LBJ PARK - MOBILE TRAILER - CONTINUOUS

A terribly dressed, short, overweight man, JOHNNY WETFIELD, sits behind a sloppy desk smoking a cigarette. The whole room is filled with smoke.

JOHNNY

Ahhhhhh, the gas man.

HANK

Uhh, well, yes. Strickland Propane.

JOHNNY

Strickland sent me a city slicker --
dang, that's a nice tie, gas man.

HANK

It's Hank, and thank you.

Ed turns to the window behind him and yells out.

JOHNNY

Cindy, my coffee! (TURNS TO HANK,
EYEING THE SUIT) It's not a latte...
but, you want a cup?

HANK

No, thank you. Now, Mr. Wetfield, I
want to start off by thanking you for
letting me introduce you to...

CINDY, an unattractive smoker, hurries in with a Styrofoam
cup of coffee. She hands it to Johnny.

HANK (CONT'D)

Propane, the Strickland way. So, I
was surveying your set up here and
I...

Hank notices a stethoscope pressed to the window. Dale's
head pops up and then back down with the stethoscope still
pressed against the window.

JOHNNY

What?

HANK

Nothing. Heh, now sir, I think
Strickland will be a perfect fit for
all your propane needs...

Dale's head pops up again, Johnny notices Hank looking up at the window. Johnny looks and sees Dale. Being found out, Dale lets out a girlish **scream**.

JOHNNY

What on earth?!

Johnny looks back at Hank and catches Hank motioning for Dale to leave. He then sees Dale mouthing ARMY and pointing at Johnny.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

City, what game are you playing?

HANK

I'm not playing a game.

JOHNNY

Don't think you can come in here and
play me for a fool. I may not shower
but I'm not an idiot.

HANK

I didn't think you were.

JOHNNY

I work at a carnival, City. I know a
scam when I see one, your jig is up.
Now git out!

HANK

Now wait just a minute, please. I promise you I don't know what that was all about. I have never needed or used a jig to sell propane. Propane sells herself.

JOHNNY

Not this time. Meeting's adjourned, City.

Hank stands and turns for the door.

STRICKLAND (V.O. IN HANK'S HEAD)

We're doomed!

Hank stops, an idea...

HANK

Mr. Wetfield, Johnny, I'd hate to lose your business, and I know that was very, very strange, but to earn your trust back I'm prepared to do something that's never been done before at Strickland Propane.

Johnny looks at his watch-less wrist.

JOHNNY

You've got ten seconds.

HANK

As acting manager of Strickland Propane it is in my power to offer you

(MORE)

HANK (CONT'D)

a discount that has never and will never be offered again -- the employee discount, it's ten percent.

Johnny yawns with disapproval.

HANK (CONT'D)

I'll throw in a sterling silver spatula at no additional cost, heh. Ask your driver about me! The one that pees in a cup. I gave him directions once, he'll vouch for me.

JOHNNY

Oh, Vinny, yeah, he has a bladder problem... (HE CHECKS OUT HANK'S TIE, THEN) tell you what, I'll give you one shot at the contract. Come back tomorrow morning. We'll have all our games set up then. Pick any one you want. You play it. If you win, the contract is yours. If you lose, that tie is mine.

HANK

Alright, heh, you've got a deal.

Hank and Johnny shake hands.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

ACT THREE

FADE IN:

INT. HILL HOUSE - BOBBY'S ROOM - EVENING

Several books about carnivals are strewn across Bobby's bed. One is called "HOW I TURNED MY LIFE AROUND AND BECAME A CARNY". Another is called "GAMES THE CARNY WAY". Another book is opened with a "how to juggle" picture drawn in it.

Bobby juggles three baseballs.

INT. HILL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Peggy reads the "HOW TO MOVE YOUR MAN, WITHOUT HIM FEELING THE PUSH" book. Hank walks in the door startling Peggy. She quickly hides the book under the couch cushion.

PEGGY

(NERVOUS) Six thirty, already?

HANK

It's seven forty-five.

PEGGY

Oh, my, where does the time go? Why are you so late?

HANK

I was down at that carnival trying to drum up some new business.

Peggy pats the couch cushion, which hides the book.

PEGGY

(KNOWINGLY) Oh, really.

HANK

I had no choice.

PEGGY

I know. (SMILING) Well, please make sure you're not late Friday. Bobby's big gig is at seven.

HANK

I can't promise that.

PEGGY

You know it's important to him that you're there.

HANK

I know, but as acting manager there are duties that may come up. I'm no longer an eight to sixer. I'm always on call now.

PEGGY

Always? You mean just for this week.

HANK

If Buck lets me keep the promotion it'd be always.

PEGGY

But you'd be the manager. You could do as you please.

HANK

No, it'd be just the opposite. Buck would expect a bigger commitment, which would mean more hours. That added responsibility would be nice,

(MORE)

HANK (CONT'D)

but it'd definitely cut into family
time.

Peggy looks vexed.

PEGGY

That wasn't part of the plan... you
can't miss out on family time.

HANK

We'll just have to get used to it.

PEGGY

Bobby's growing up. He needs you.
You know he's a special boy. (OFF
HANK) Special boys that don't have
dad's end up in jail or in
institutions. Oh my this is terrible!
And it's all my fault!

HANK

It's your fault?

PEGGY

Yes! I moved my man!

HANK

What?

PEGGY

Ohh... my sweet, sweet, clueless Hank.
Don't you see? I made you want that
promotion more than life itself
through a series of powerful, powerful
suggestions, and now our boy is doomed

(MORE)

PEGGY (CONT'D)

to live out his adult days in a padded
cell at the local crazy house! (SOBS)

INT. HILL HOUSE - BOBBY'S ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Bobby drops one of the baseballs he is juggling. It rolls
out of his room. He starts to chase it into...

INT. HILL HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

The baseball rolls into Hank's foot. Hank looks up and sees
Bobby run in the hallway.

PEGGY

Oh, Bobby.

Hank looks down at the ball and back up at Bobby. Hank grows
a smile.

HANK

(CHUCKLES) Been practicing, son?

Bobby walks into the room.

BOBBY

(APPREHENSIVE) Yeah, a little.

HANK

Way to go, Bobby. That's my boy!

BOBBY

Really... geeeh, thanks! It takes a
lot more practice than you'd think --
and ooh, the bruises, don't get me
started. Who knew juggling would be
so painful?

Hank's demeanor changes rapidly. He turns back to Peggy.

HANK

Whatever you think you did didn't work. Buck called this morning. The Char King line has been cut. If I don't go down to the carnival tomorrow morning and beat them at one of their game's Strickland might be forced to shut down.

PEGGY

Oh, well, that's terrible.

HANK

I know.

PEGGY

But Hank, the carny are very tricky. You'll never beat them at one of their games.

HANK

I have no choice. Besides I may have the upper hand. (HE HOLDS UP HIS ARM) Give me any game where there's a ball that I get to throw, and I'll give team Strickland the W.

PEGGY

Your aged athleticism won't help you. Those games are rigged. There's no way you'll win.

HANK

(POINTING TO ARM) Peggy.

BOBBY

Dad, you won't win.

HANK

Why would you say that?

BOBBY

I've been studying up on it.

PEGGY

(FORCED LAUGH) Bobby, tater tots.

BOBBY

I've been reading all about carnivals,
their games, and the carny lifestyle.

HANK

Where'd you get that kind of garbage?
And don't use the word lifestyle.

A beat.

HANK (CONT'D)

Bobby?

Peggy looks nervous.

BOBBY

(FAST) Mom took me to the library and
said I could get 'em.

PEGGY

Bobby!

HANK

Peggy!

BOBBY

Sorry, mom! But dad has no chance.
The splinterhead's likely to have
planted a shill whose gonna falsely
build dad's confidence, setting this
mark up for a fall. Dad will be lucky
to come home with a handful of slum.
(BEAT) That's carny speak.

HANK

(ENCOURAGING) Bobby, would you show me
how they rig their games?

BOBBY

Alright.

INT. HILL HOUSE - BOBBY'S ROOM - EVENING

MONTAGE:

Time passes with dissolves of Hank and Bobby in Bobby's room standing and sitting in various spots as Bobby flips through the different books. Hank nods as he learns.

MONTAGE ENDS WITH:

Hank and Bobby sitting next to each other on Bobby's bed. Hank, with his arm around Bobby, holds a book open as Bobby points to the page.

BOBBY

So, when they throw the ball all the
metal milk cartoons fall because they
put the weighted one on top, but when
it's your turn they put it on bottom,
and no matter how hard you throw the
ball, it won't fall over.

Bobby picks up the baseball and starts to juggle. He then catches himself.

BOBBY (CONT'D)

Sorry, I'll stop.

HANK

Uhh... no, that's okay. It's good for your hand-eye coordination, I guess.

BOBBY

Yet another benefit of the carny lifestyle -- sorry.

HANK

That's okay.

BOBBY

Dad, what are you going to do? I mean the games are still rigged, how can you win?

Hank looks at the fax he carried in with him that says "California State Operating Codes".

HANK

I have some hidden weight of my own.

EXT. LBJ PARK - DAY

Hank walks into the carnival taking in the various games: Mini-Basketball, Darts, The Fish Bowl, Skee Ball, Ring Toss, Softball Toss, BB Shootout, and One-Ball. Hank also notices some large combustible containers. Johnny waddles up.

JOHNNY

Morning, City.

HANK

Good morning.

JOHNNY

Bring the tie?

HANK

Yep.

Hank pulls it out of his pocket, then puts it back in.

JOHNNY

So what floats your boat, Gas man?

Hank looks at the games and settles on One-Ball.

HANK

I'll play that one.

As they head over there Hank eyes the cooking booth, and the outdoor open flame grill behind it. They get up to the One-Ball booth.

JOHNNY

Gas man, this is Skeeter. Skeeter,

Gas man.

Skeeter looks a bit crazy.

SKEETER

It's a pleasure, Gas man.

JOHNNY

When Skeeter was baptized the water
boiled right off him. Skeeter, show
the city slicker how the game works.

SKEETER

Sure.

Skeeter sets up three metal milk bottles into a pyramid formation; one on top of the other two, eyeing the bottom of the bottles as he sets them up. Skeeter takes the ball and looks at Johnny for permission.

JOHNNY

Go ahead.

Skeeter throws the baseball at the milk cartoons, successfully knocking them all down.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

See, easy as pie. I hope you aren't very athletic, otherwise I may be in trouble. (TO SKEETER) Set up the bottles again.

Johnny winks to Skeeter, then hands Hank a baseball.

HANK

I tell you what, why don't you go ahead and set the bottles up like you did last time.

Skeeter pauses.

JOHNNY

That's what he's doing.

HANK

Are you sure? Because I would sure hate to be conned. I mean, I know your establishment isn't a scam. But why don't you go ahead and set those bottles up exactly like you did last time. My name's Hank, after all. It's not gas man or city slicker, and it's definitely not, Mark.

JOHNNY

Well, *city slicker*, I don't know what you're implying. But I do know that if you keep it up there's no way you'll win that mighty big propane contract.

Johnny shoves the baseball into Hanks hand.

JOHNNY (CONT'D)

So play nice and take a shot.

HANK

I tell you what. Set those bottles up correctly because if I lose I might get so dog-gone mad that I may just call up my friend, the fire marshal. I know he'd be shocked to hear about an open flame inches from the cooking booth, and he'd definitely be upset to learn that there were no ten B extinguishers around. And who knows how mad he'd get if he found out that there were combustible tanks sitting inches from the building. He may shut a place like that down.

Johnny holds in his boiling rage as best as possible.

JOHNNY

Skeeter, it looks as if those bottles may not be set up correctly after all. Would you please set them up again.

SKEETER

Uhhh... not properly?

JOHNNY

Yes, I mean, no... you know the ethical way.

SKEETER

Ethical?

JOHNNY

Dang it! Put the weighted bottle on top so Hank wins.

SKEETER

No problem.

Skeeter takes off the top bottle and switches it with the bottom bottle that is weighted. Hank takes the baseball aims and throws it. Knocking all of the bottles over.

HANK

(CHUCKLING) How 'bout that. That was fun. I tell you what, go ahead and make sure all your games work this well while you're in Arlen 'cause the fire marshal answers my calls twenty-four hours a day seven days a week.

INT. STRICKLAND PROPANE - NIGHT

Hank stands in front of Buck at Buck's desk.

STRICKLAND

Hank, you did one heck of a job
boosting sales the way you did.

HANK

Thank you, sir.

STRICKLAND

Ain't nothing compared to the money
we're gonna make on our new Char Queen
line! The hippie dropped the entire
lawsuit once he heard 'bout the Queen.
We'll be rolling in the dough now!
Nonetheless, you've earned the right
to stay on as manager, permanently.

HANK

Thank you, Buck. It would be an
honor.

Hank sees the clock on Buck's desk. It's 6:44 PM.

HANK (CONT'D)

But, unfortunately, I'm gonna have to
respectfully decline.

STRICKLAND

Why would you do that?

INT. TOM LANDRY MIDDLE SCHOOL - CAFETERIA

The place is packed. Peggy sits next to an empty chair.

PRINCIPAL MOSS

And now for the comedy stylings of
Bobby Hill.

Bobby walks out, and looks at his mom who waves. He halfheartedly waves back, then he starts to wholeheartedly wave as we see Hank sit down next to Peggy. Hank, waves back, and with a smile puts his arm around Peggy.

BOBBY

Good evening, ladies and gents. Did
you all ever hear about that well
spoken, well groomed carny? (BEAT)
Me, neither.

Bobby laughs. Hank, Peggy, and the audience join in.

FADE OUT.

END OF SHOW