

OVERHEAD

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EXT. PARK - NIGHT

FADE IN music over a black screen. Slow fade into title screen over black background OVERHEAD as sounds of FOOTSTEPS are walking over pavement. MUFFLED CROWD NOISE can be heard as the screen cuts to reveal the back of JJ BRIGGS as he walks in the dark toward a dimly lit pickle ball court surrounded by spectators.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS BRIGGS IN AN ORGANIC/HANDHELD STYLE WITH A LONG TAKE.

BRIGGS approaches the court confidently and steps into the crowd of shouting and cheering onlookers. The camera sees BRIGGS lean toward a man taking money from the crowd as they place bets.

BRIGGS  
(shouting in the ear of the man  
taking bets)  
I got next match.

BRIGGS hands the man a small wad of cash as the man nods.

CONTINUOUS TAKE THAT PANS AROUND THE CROWD AND SEES BRIGGS PULL OUT HIS PICKLE BALL PADDLE.

The crowd CHEERS as a winning shot is scored and the winning player celebrates, and the other opponent walks off the court -- angered by his loss.

PLAYER 1  
(showboating)  
Oh yeah! Who wants next?

BRIGGS  
Me.

THE CAMERA CONTINUES A LONG TAKE THAT FOLLOWS BRIGGS AROUND THE COURT AS BETS ARE BEING PLACED.

BRIGGS takes the pickle ball and serves. A quick round of shots take place in which BRIGGS scores and the crowd CHEERS.

MR. MILBORNE (V.O.)  
Jalen...Jalen...

HARD CUT TO

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

BRIGGS is awoken by suddenly by MR MILBORNE who looms over his desk with papers in hand.

MR. MILBORNE

JALEN!

BRIGGS

(startled)

Ah - sorry, Mr. Milborne.

LOW ANGLE OF MR. MILBORNE LOOKING UNIMPRESSED. THEIR EXCHANGE WILL BE FILMED WITH ALTERNATING LOW ANGLES AND HIGH ANGLES AS BRIGGS SITS IN HIS DESK.

BRIGGS

Late night.

MR. MILBORNE

Well you clearly weren't up late doing homework.

BRIGGS

(sarcastic smile)

How could you tell?

MR. MILBORNE

Your test.

MR. MILBORNE drops the exam on BRIGGS' desk, a large 58% clearly displayed in red ink.

BRIGGS

That bad, huh?

MR. MILBORNE

Yep. We just went over the answers - which you slept through - so don't even bother asking if you can do test corrections.

BRIGGS

Any extra credit options available?

MR. MILBORNE

Extra credit is for students who actually submit things *for credit*. We're only a month into school and you

have 9 missing assignments, a 4% on a reading quiz, and now a failed exam. Extra credit does not pertain to you.

Camera cuts to a group of boys sitting behind Briggs who are laughing at the exchange between Briggs and Mr. Milborne. Zach Harrison leads the group in making fun of Briggs.

BRIGGS

Gotcha.

MR. MILBORNE

You're also wanted in the counselor's office. You can leave now.

BRIGGS

Okaaaaay. Until tomorrow, sir.

Mr. Milburne grunts disapprovingly as Zach Harrison and his crew disparage Briggs as he leaves the classroom.

INT. COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Briggs KNOCKS on the door frame of the Counselor's Office. MR. HAGAN sits at his desk working as he absent-mindedly acknowledges the knock.

HAGAN

It opens.

BRIGGS

Mr. Hagan? You wanted to see me?

HAGAN

(turning to him)

Jalen, c'mon in. Take a seat. How are you?

BRIGGS

Fine.

HAGAN

Good, but I was hoping to talk to you about your future, Jalen.

BRIGGS

Most people call me Briggs -- or JJ,  
if necessary.

HAGAN

Ok -- JJ, then. You're a senior now,  
and, well, I gotta say that I find  
your grades pretty alarming.

BRIGGS

Really? I didn't know that my grades  
were of any real concern to anyone.

HAGAN

You're failing, or nearly failing, 5  
of 6 classes, JJ.

BRIGGS

Yeah, but I still don't see why you  
should be losing any sleep over it.

HAGAN

I'm just trying to help you, JJ. I  
mean, do you want to go to college?

BRIGGS

I don't really see what additional  
school has to offer me right now.

HAGAN

Well, that's pretty obvious by your  
current performance. So do you hope to  
join the military?

BRIGGS

(scoffs)

Nope.

HAGAN

Jobs then? What do you hope to do with  
your life?

BRIGGS

(emphasizing each word)

Get out of here.

HAGAN

Yes, but you need at least some kind  
of plan. What do you like to do?

Briggs pauses for a beat as he seems to consider the question.

HAGAN

Do you have any hobbies that could be a career opportunity? Do you like working with computers, or cooking, or --

BRIGGS

(interrupting)  
I like pickle ball.

HAGAN

(nonplussed)  
Pickle ball?

Pause for a beat.

HAGAN

That's not really a career path, but I guess it could help expand a college application -- that, and getting passing grades.

Briggs gives him an unimpressed shrug in response.

HAGAN

We don't have a pickle ball team here at school, so maybe you could start one. Colleges love to see students who have initiative outside of the classroom too.

BRIGGS

(flatly, monotone)  
Sure. Sounds great.

Hagan pauses for a beat and looks seriously at Briggs across the desk. He seems to think he needs to change tactics.

HAGAN

Look, JJ. I know life has been... tough for you.

Briggs leans back in his chair, unimpressed.

HAGAN

How are things at home?

BRIGGS  
What do you mean?

HAGAN  
Do you have much support from your  
parents?

BRIGGS  
It's just my mom.

HAGAN  
I'm sorry -- your mom -- is she  
encouraging you to do well in school,  
or think about your future?

BRIGGS  
My mom doesn't do much.

HAGAN  
Oh, ok. Is she ill?

BRIGGS  
She drinks. She's good at it too. If  
drinking could be a career, she'd be  
the CEO.

HAGAN  
That's not very funny, JJ.

BRIGGS  
Well, that's my life -- that, and,  
having to hear my mom and her drunken  
loser of a boyfriend fight all the  
time. I try to stay away from home as  
much as possible. I stay out late  
looking for distractions --

HAGAN  
*Safe* distractions, I hope?

BRIGGS  
Safer than drinking and wallowing in  
self pity, you mean? Yes.

Pause for a beat.

HAGAN  
How long has your mom been... like  
this?

BRIGGS  
For a while.

HAGAN  
Did something happen to --

BRIGGS  
Look, Mr. Hagan, I appreciate your concern, but I really don't want to talk about my mom or her issues.

The school BELL RINGS.

BRIGGS  
That's my cue to leave. I have gym next, and it's the one class I'm not failing at the moment.

He gets up to leave.

HAGAN  
Wait, JJ. If you ever want to talk about what you're going through --

BRIGGS  
-- I know, I can come here and talk to you. Thanks, Hagan. I better go.

He exits and closes the office door behind him.

MATCH CUT TO

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Locker door opens and Briggs grabs his gym clothes and throws on a different shirt. He closes the locker.

CAMERA FOLLOWS BRIGGS AS HE JOGS TO THE TENNIS COURTS AND JOINS A GROUP OF ASSEMBLED STUDENTS

Mr. Ramirez stands beside a short net as students gather around with MUFFLED student dialogue.

RAMIREZ  
Bring it in!

He pauses to wait for students to get quiet.



RAMIREZ

Who can tell me what this set up is?

SAMANTHA

A tiny tennis court?

RAMIREZ

Nope! Try again.

BRIGGS

It's a pickle ball court.

RAMIREZ

(excitedly)

Ding, ding, ding! Point for Briggs!

ZACH HARRISON

And why are we playing this today?

RAMIREZ

Excellent question, Mr. Harrison. Pickle ball is the fastest growing sport in the nation, and it's taking country clubs and city parks by storm. Today I will teach you how to play the game so you can have a fighting chance if you ever play someone my age.

ZACH HARRISON

(raising his hand and smirking)

Someone *old*, you mean?

RAMIREZ

This lesson is especially for you, Mr. Harrison, since you would have a hard time holding your head so high after getting ghetto stomped by a bunch of middle-aged men with bad knees.

Laughter from the students as Zach Harrison glares at them.

RAMIREZ

Alright, enough chit chat! I need a couple of volunteers to show us how it's done.

Briggs raises his hand and steps forward.

RAMIREZ  
Mr. Briggs, thank you. And his  
challenger?

ZACH HARRISON  
(stepping forward)  
Me.

RAMIREZ  
Mr. Harrison, thank you. Looks like an  
epic bout of champions here. Take your  
accoutrements, men.

Ramirez hands the two their paddles and they go to opposite  
sides of the court.

RAMIREZ  
Now pickle ball is normally played as  
doubles, but to keep things simple  
I'll first explain how to play  
singles. Ok, have either of you ever  
played pickle ball before?

Briggs raises his paddle.

RAMIREZ  
Good, so Mr. Briggs do you know who  
traditionally starts the serve?

BRIGGS  
The player on the Northwest court.

RAMIREZ  
Right again, Briggs!

SAMANTHA  
What? Why the Northwest corner?

RAMIREZ  
Tradition. That means that Mr.  
Harrison is serving first. Here you  
go, Zach.

He tosses him the pickle ball.

RAMIREZ  
(addressing the students who are  
watching the demonstration)

To serve you either bounce it, then hit it below your waist, or you can do a drop serve, but you still have to hit it below your waist into the opposite court. Ready?

Zach awkwardly prepares to serve and he powers it out of the court.

RAMIREZ

Oh, shoot! Too much on that one! Briggs has the serve now. In pickle ball it's not about power, but placement. Something you'll want to learn, Mr. Harrison.

Zach looks more and more pissed off as his friends chuckle on the side of the court. He starts to pace the baseline with a caged animal look in his eye.

RAMIREZ

You're turn, Briggs.

Ramirez tosses Briggs the ball. Briggs hits a perfect serve down the line to Zach Harrison's backhand. Zach misses his return.

RAMIREZ

(excited)

Oh! An ace down the line!

The crowd of students look surprised and Zach's squad of jocks start laughing at him and teasing him from off court.

ZACH HARRISON

Shut up, guys! Lucky shot!

RAMIREZ

Alright, so now it's 1-0, Briggs. Another rule to know is that you only score a point if you are the person or doubles team that is serving. Ok gents, let's see it.

Briggs takes a moment to bounce the ball, then serves another perfect serve.

The game continues with quick cuts of action as the two play. Briggs keeps scoring points, and Zach keeps getting angrier.

Zach hits a few balls into the court, but keeps losing the points. After a quick game, Briggs is victorious.

RAMIREZ

And that's game! 11-0! That's what we call "getting pickled!" Alright, now shake hands at center court, you two.

ZACH HARRISON

To hell with that!

Zach storms off the court and brushes past his coterie of mocking friends.

RAMIREZ

(blowing his whistle)

Flag on the field! Poor sportsmanship!

SAMANTHA

(quizzically)

Does pickle ball actually use flags on the field?

RAMIREZ

No, that's just a gym teacher joke. Alright, now let's all play! Grab a paddle and start pickling!

The students start grabbing gear and slowly moving to the court. Ramirez pulls Briggs aside.

RAMIREZ

Briggs, where did you learn to play like that?

Briggs shrugs.

RAMIREZ

Well that was something! Let's go talk shop in my office!

BRIGGS

(surprised)

Don't you need to watch the class?

RAMIREZ

Naw, they'll be fine.

He yells over his shoulder as he pulls Briggs off the court.

RAMIREZ  
Nobody blind each other while I'm  
gone!

CUT TO

INT. GYM TEACHER'S OFFICE - DAY

Ramirez walks into his office and sits behind his desk.

RAMIREZ  
Have a seat, Briggs.

Briggs enters and sits in the chair.

RAMIREZ  
That was really something out there.  
Did you see the look on Harrison's  
face? I don't think he's ever been  
beaten by anyone like that! How long  
have you been playing pickle ball?

BRIGGS  
A while.

RAMIREZ  
(sarcastically)  
*How descriptive.* C'mon, man. Do you  
play often?

BRIGGS  
Yeah. I sneak out at night sometimes  
and play at a court near my house.

RAMIREZ  
Sneaking out to play... pickle ball?  
Quite the rebel.

BRIGGS  
We play for cash.

RAMIREZ  
(intrigued)  
Do you?

BRIGGS

The buy in is \$20, and I can make some pretty good money if they don't know I'm any good, so occasionally I gotta throw a game just to keep it legit.

RAMIREZ

Huh. How many people play?

BRIGGS

There's probably 10 or 20 that show up to bet; maybe 5 or 10 a night who play.

RAMIREZ

And it's pretty competitive?

BRIGGS

It's not exactly "Fight Club" level, but it's definitely competitive.

RAMIREZ

So you keep your street and play for cash, huh? Dang, dude.

Pause for a beat.

RAMIREZ

Ever think of trying tournament competitions?

BRIGGS

Not really my style.

RAMIREZ

Well, if you like playing for money, there's plenty of people who are making some dough playing tournaments and going pro. Like I said outside, this is the fastest growing sport in America, and people want to play for some higher stakes.

BRIGGS

I'm doing fine beating some punks out of a couple hundred here and there.

RAMIREZ

Alright, but if you ever get tired of that and want to really go for the real deal, I might know a guy that could help.

BRIGGS

I don't know, it sounds pretty stupid.

RAMIREZ

Stupid? C'mon, you gotta better idea of how to make it big? You got talent, man. This could be your ticket outta this town.

Briggs looks intrigued but hesitant.

RAMIREZ

Correct me if I'm wrong, but your family doesn't have a lot of money.

Briggs shakes his head.

RAMIREZ

Thought not. So you can't afford to play in competitive tournaments with the country club crowd, right?

BRIGGS

What did my poor kid clothes give me away?

RAMIREZ

No need to get offended, Briggs. I'm just saying, you got talent, but you may need a little help, right?

BRIGGS

Yeah.

RAMIREZ

(leaning in)

Alright, like I said, I know a guy. You ever heard of Ben McGuffin?

BRIGGS

Nope.

RAMIREZ

Google him some time -- No better yet!

Ramirez starts typing on his laptop and brings up a video of BEN MCGUFFIN playing as a young man. As Ramirez says his next lines, highlights of McGuffin's career will appear on screen.

RAMIREZ

Check out this YouTube video of him playing. He was pretty much the GOAT of pickle ball 10 years ago. The guy was a wizard with the paddle, and he had moves that shocked the pickle ball world when it was still in it's infancy.

BRIGGS

That sounds a bit dramatic.

RAMIREZ

Don't interrupt, I'm on a roll! So McGuffin had this incredible career until he made it to the World Championship match in Seattle, and then -- he just had this meltdown. And before you know it: End. Of. Career. Like that!

BRIGGS

Why are you telling me this?

RAMIREZ

Cuz that's the guy! McGuffin moved here, and he lives in an apartment near the Babcock Theater.

BRIGGS

How do you know that?

RAMIREZ

I'm a sports fanatic, Briggs, and people talk. How often does a pickle ball champion go into retirement and move to a town like this?

BRIGGS

Not often, I guess?

RAMIREZ

Darn right. And my point is that he could be a great resource for you -- maybe even a coach who could help you refine your skills!



BRIGGS

Why would this guy help me?

RAMIREZ

Look, you need some help; he needs some purpose. Maybe it will be good for both of you.

Briggs considers it.

RAMIREZ

What's the worst that could happen? You ask to play some pickle ball with someone who was once a heck of player, and who has connections at the country club. He could be your ticket in.

BRIGGS

I'll think about it.

Briggs gets up to leave.

RAMIREZ

Hey, Briggs. Don't think about it too hard. You got talent, man. But talent without purpose is just wasted potential.

BRIGGS

(reflecting)

Yeah. Thanks, Mr. Ramirez.

He exits.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

Briggs walks downtown with a backpack slung over his shoulder. He seems contemplative as he walks. As he passes by the Babcock Theater he slows his pace and seems to consider for a moment. He looks up at the windows of the apartment complex across the alley and thinks for a moment. He then walks down the alley to where there is a door and he opens it and enters.

Briggs walks up a narrow stair case and then approaches an apartment door and knocks hesitantly. There's a SHUFFLING OF

MUFFLED MOVEMENT on the other side of the door, then it OPENS slightly, and a man looks at Briggs quizzically.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS BRIGGS THROUGHOUT THIS SCENE IN AN ORGANIC CAMERA MOVEMENT STYLE

BRIGGS  
 (hesitantly)  
 Hi... uh... Is there where Ben McGuffin lives?

TENET 1  
 (gruffly)  
 No.

The door SLAMS on a startled and embarrassed Briggs.

BRIGGS  
 (to himself)  
 This is so stupid. What am I even doing here?

He walks to the next door he sees in the hallway and knocks lightly. The sound of FEET walking to the door can be heard as Briggs waits nervously. The door OPENS.

TENET 2  
 I'm not interested in buying anything, kid.

BRIGGS  
 Oh, no... I'm not selling anything. I was wondering if you are Ben McGuffin by chance?

TENET 2  
 Wrong place, kid. He lives next door.

Tenet 2 closes the door. Briggs walks to the next door and prepares to knock, but hesitates. He pauses for a beat, but then makes up his mind and knocks more confidently. SHUFFLING MOVEMENT emanates from behind the door and sounds of a SPORTS MATCH can be heard from a TV as someone approaches to open. The door only opens a crack, and McGuffin's eye can be seen peering at Briggs.

MCGUFFIN  
 Yeah?

BRIGGS  
Ben McGuffin?

MCGUFFIN  
Who's askin'?

BRIGGS  
(stammering)  
Uh... my name is JJ -- JJ Briggs.

McGuffin's eye focuses for a moment on Briggs's face and studies him for a moment. Pause for a beat.

MCGUFFIN  
And?

BRIGGS  
Uh... I heard that you lived here...  
and, well --

MCGUFFIN  
Who told you I lived here?

BRIGGS  
What? Oh, a mutual friend --

MCGUFFIN  
I don't give interviews or autographs  
anymore, so beat it --

He begins to close the door again as Briggs quickly puts his hand out to stop him.

BRIGGS  
No, wait! I don't want an autograph or  
anything! I just want to talk to you  
about something --

McGuffin is MUFFLED as he speaks from the other side of the doorway.

MCGUFFIN  
Bout what?

BRIGGS  
Pickle ball.

There's a long pause, then the door slowly opens a crack.

MCGUFFIN  
You with the press?

BRIGGS  
What? No, I'm in high school. I just want to talk. My gym teacher, Mr. Ramirez said you might be willing to talk to me about pickle ball.

Another long pause. McGuffin looks down at the ground for a moment, then his eye, seen through the crack, looks back at Briggs and studies him. The door slowly opens.

MCGUFFIN  
Alright. Come in then.

Briggs slowly walks through the doorway as he studies the surroundings. McGuffin lives in a small studio apartment with few furnishings and it's a mess. A computer sits on a desk emanating the sounds of a PICKLE BALL MATCH being played and McGuffin gruffly closes the laptop.

THE CAMERA WALKS BACKWARD WITH ITS FOCUS ON MCGUFFIN AS HE SPEAKS AND SHOWS HIS FACE CONSIDERING WHAT HE HAS HEARD

MCGUFFIN  
Whaduya say your name was again?

BRIGGS  
JJ Briggs.

McGuffin appears to consider this, as if searching his memory for a lost thought.

He walks toward the window of the apartment and stairs outside as he leans against the window pane. McGuffin is a trim, athletic man in his mid-30s. He has a scruffy beard and unkempt hair. He's dressed in plain clothes wearing mostly black and gray attire and some faded black jeans, and an old, ratty pair of Converse shoes.

MCGUFFIN  
So, whaduya want?

BRIGGS  
(hesitantly)  
I was wondering if... well... I like playing pickle ball.

MCGUFFIN  
Congratulations.

BRIGGS  
-- And, my teacher thinks I have some talent.

MCGUFFIN  
And?

BRIGGS  
Well, I play street pickle ball for money, but I want to maybe take it to the next level. But, I may need some help doing that.

MCGUFFIN  
So why are you in my apartment?

BRIGGS  
I thought... maybe... you could coach me?

McGuffin stares at him for a long awkward moment.

CAMERA TAKES A WIDE ANGLE OF THE TWO STANDING OPPOSITE EACH OTHER AS MCGUFFIN STARES AT BRIGGS, THEN RETURNS TO AN ORGANIC SHOT-REVERSE-SHOT AS DIALOGUE RESUMES.

MCGUFFIN  
Why me?

BRIGGS  
Because -- you're Ben McGuffin.

MCGUFFIN  
We've established that, but that still doesn't answer it. Why me?

BRIGGS  
Because you're one of the greats -- or at least, that's what I've heard.

McGuffin stares at him again.

MCGUFFIN  
(slowly)  
I was one of the greats... But not anymore... I don't do that anymore. Can't help you, kid.

McGuffin moves away from the window and walks back to the door.

BRIGGS

But wait -- can't you just give me any pointers or just a few coaching tips --

MCGUFFIN

(interrupting)

-- You want some pointers?

He pauses for a beat as he turns around and walks back toward Briggs, somewhat confrontationally.

MCGUFFIN

Here's my number one piece of advice: Give up now.

BRIGGS

What?

MCGUFFIN

You heard me. Abandon this stupid idea of yours. Even if you are any good at pickle ball, I bet you ain't got what it takes to be great, and even if you do -- it ain't worth it.

BRIGGS

But, I thought --

MCGUFFIN

Goin' pro ain't what it's cracked up to be. Hardly anybody can do it, and takes everything from you.

BRIGGS

Well I've got nothing to lose.

Pause for a long moment as McGuffin stares intensely at Briggs.

BRIGGS

C'mon, McGuffin. Just give me a chance.

MCGUFFIN

I said I don't do that no more.

McGuffin turns and walks back to the door. He opens it and stands there waiting. Briggs shakes his head and starts walking toward the door.

MCGUFFIN

Best of luck, kid. I'm sorry.

Briggs pauses at the door and squares up with McGuffin.

BRIGGS

No. I'm sorry.

MCGUFFIN

(quizzically)

For what?

BRIGGS

I'm sorry you gave up on yourself.

Briggs walks out the door as McGuffin is startled and pensive. McGuffin then closes the door behind him.

THE CAMERA FOLLOWS MCGUFFIN as he walks around the apartment for a long moment, clearly deep in thought. McGuffin sits at a desk (or looks under his bed, depending on how the apartment set is designed) and he opens a drawer. Inside there is a pickle ball paddle and ball, a gold medal from an old tournament, and a Sports Illustrated magazine with his face on the cover. He stares at the items for a moment.

REVERSE SHOT FROM INSIDE THE DRAWER OF MCGUFFIN LOOKING AT THE ITEMS.

He slams the drawer shut.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

Briggs turns the corner into the alley as he walks out of the apartment complex, clearly frustrated. He walks.

CAMERA CUTS TO THE INSIDE OF A LARGE TRUCK FULL OF GUYS. THE CAMERA SEES BRIGGS WALKING OUT THE SIDE WINDOW.

ZACH HARRISON

Yo -- isn't that Briggs?

NATE

It is!

ZACH HARRISON  
Who wants to go teach him a lesson.

EDDY  
A lesson in what?

ZACH HARRISON  
-- Not being a loser!

EDDY  
What did you have in mind?

The truck quickly pulls into a park, and the boys get out. Zach seems the most enthusiastic about what's about to happen, while the other boys are only half-hearted in their zeal.

CAMERA CUTS TO ORGANIC FACE ON MEDIUM SHOT OF BRIGGS WALKING AS THE GROUP APPROACHES FROM BEHIND IN A SHALLOW DOF. THIS SCENE SHOULD BE SHOT IN A SINGLE TAKE.

Briggs is surprised as he is walking down the alley and a group approaches him from behind.

ZACH HARRISON  
Hey Briggs!

He turns to face them, but does not reply.

ZACH HARRISON  
Where you goin' Briggsy?

BRIGGS  
Home.

ZACH HARRISON  
Not yet.

Zach pushes Briggs and he falls back a few steps. As Zach bounces around, clearly enjoying himself, two of his friends HOOT and HOLLAR and circle around him. Eddy holds back, clearly not impressed with the affair.

ZACH HARRISON  
Whatcha got, Briggs.

BRIGGS  
(annoyed)



You want to fight me because I beat you in pickle ball?

ZACH HARRISON

I wanna fight you because you're a dweeb!

Zach throws a punch that knocks Briggs back into a Nate, who pushes him back into the circle. Briggs attempts a right hook, which Zach easily dodges. He throws a punch into Briggs' ribs that takes the wind out of him and he staggers.

ZACH HARRISON

C'mon hold him!

Nate holds Briggs around the shoulders and neck from behind as Zach starts unleashing a round of punches into Briggs' abdomen.

EDDY

(holding back)

C'mon, Zach, enough. You got him already.

Zach keeps punching and Briggs falls to the pavement with a loud IMPACT on the concrete.

As Zach circles around Briggs looking like he's about to kick Briggs in the gut, Ben McGuffin comes running down the alley.

MCGUFFIN

HEY! Get away from him!

Zach and his gang is startled by the approach of the adult and scatters, running the other direction.

ZACH HARRISON

(off screen as he runs)

We'll finish this later, Briggs!

McGuffin approaches and leans down to Briggs.

MCGUFFIN

Hey, you ok?

BRIGGS

(wincing)

Yep. Couldn't be better.

MCGUFFIN  
Who the hell were those guys?

BRIGGS  
Just the Homecoming king and his loser  
friends.

MCGUFFIN  
C'mon. Let's get you up.

He pulls Briggs off the ground.

BRIGGS  
(panting)  
What are you doing here?

MCGUFFIN  
I was going out for a coffee... Wanna  
join me?

BRIGGS  
Huh?

MCGUFFIN  
(patting him on the shoulder)  
C'mon, kid.

McGuffin turns and walks down back down the alley and Briggs  
turns and follows him, still holding his side in pain.

CUT TO

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Briggs sits at a table as McGuffin approaches with two cups.  
He sits opposite Briggs.

BRIGGS  
Thanks.

MCGUFFIN  
No sweat.

Briggs looks at McGuffin as he awkwardly looks around the  
cafe and out the window, then takes a slow sip of his coffee.  
Briggs then also takes a sip.

MCGUFFIN  
So what did you say your name was?

BRIGGS  
JJ Briggs.

MCGUFFIN  
(contemplative)  
Briggs... That name sounds so familiar. You sure we ain't ever met?

BRIGGS  
(annoyed)  
Preeetttty sure.

MCGUFFIN  
Hmmm. Well, tell me about yourself.

BRIGGS  
Like what?

MCGUFFIN  
Look, kid. I'm just makin small talk, ok, you don't need to make it so hard.

BRIGGS  
(sighing)  
Ok, well. Like I said, I have a teacher that told me I should talk to you.

MCGUFFIN  
Yeah, about pickle ball, but I don't do that anymore, so what else you got?

BRIGGS  
Honestly, nothing.

MCGUFFIN  
(taken aback)  
Nothing?

BRIGGS  
Nope.

MCGUFFIN  
No other interests?

BRIGGS  
Not really, unless you count girls.

MCGUFFIN  
No other hobbies?

Briggs shakes his head.

MCGUFFIN  
No job?

BRIGGS  
I make my money playing pickle ball.

MCGUFFIN  
(surprised)  
Really? How do you do that?

BRIGGS  
There's a group that plays under the lights at Lillis Park a few nights a week. We play for cash.

MCGUFFIN  
Foreal?

BRIGGS  
I sucked at first and lost what little money I had, but you'd be amazed how hard you'll start playing to get back what you've lost.

MCGUFFIN  
(impressed)  
Street ball, huh?

BRIGGS  
That's what got me into the game. That and my dad.

MCGUFFIN  
Your dad played too?

BRIGGS  
Yeah. He taught me when I was little.

MCGUFFIN  
So does your old man still play?

BRIGGS  
No.

MCGUFFIN  
Why not? Retired?

BRIGGS  
Dead.

McGuffin goes slack jawed and silent. He slowly leans back in his chair.

MCGUFFIN  
(sputtering)  
Well -- I'm sorry... what happened to him?

BRIGGS  
Car accident. Almost 7 years ago.

MCGUFFIN  
I'm sorry for your loss. I don't really know what else to say --

BRIGGS  
Don't bother. There's nothing anyone can say, and I'm sick of hearing people say, "I'm sorry for your loss."

MCGUFFIN  
Gotcha. So is that the reason you want to play pickle ball? Cuz of your old man?

BRIGGS  
No. I want to play because it's the only thing I'm any good at, and I don't want to be stuck living here all my life.

MCGUFFIN  
Makes sense, but pickle ball isn't just some game that you can go 4-0 to pro like that. You can't just walk onto a court and rock a tournament with paddle skills alone -- it's a way of life!

BRIGGS  
(scoffing)  
Oh yeah, totally. It's sport *and* religion all in one game, right?

MCGUFFIN

Don't joke. Pickle ball is war -- it's a war of attrition against your opponent, and battle that you gotta fight daily against yourself.

BRIGGS

Myself?

MCGUFFIN

Yeah, yourself! You are your own worst enemy, and if you're going to be a great pickler, you gotta be able to master your mind and body.

Briggs starts to become more serious and nod as McGuffin continues. Briggs thinks for a beat, then looks back at McGuffin as he waits expectantly for Briggs' reply.

BRIGGS

Ok. What's it gonna take to do this?

MCGUFFIN

(smirking)

Meet me at the Valley View Country Club tomorrow afternoon. We'll see what you got.

McGuffin downs what's left of his beverage and pops a toothpick in his mouth, then he gets up from the table and walks out.

MCGUFFIN

See you tomorrow, kid.

Briggs makes a "what was that all about" face and gets up to leave as well.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - EVENING

Montage of Briggs making his way through downtown alleyways and dingy surroundings.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Briggs enters his bedroom. The room is dimly lit with the

lights from streetlamp pouring through the curtains. He sits on his bed and appears pensive.

STREET NOISES and SIRENS emanate from outside his window. An ARGUMENT between his mom and her boyfriend begins outside the door and grows in intensity and volume. EMPTY BOTTLES bang on the floor and a DOOR SLAMS to the apartment.

Briggs rolls his eyes and SIGHS as he takes a pair of noise-cancelling headphones and lays down onto his bed.

CAMERA TAKES A HIGH ANGLE OVER BRIGGS LAYING IN BED.

MUSIC plays as Briggs lies on his bed with hands behind his head and eyes closed.

The MUSIC starts to fade as sounds of PICKLE BALLS being HIT start to fade in.

SLOW FADE TO

EXT. VALLEY VIEW COUNTRY CLUB - AFTERNOON

PICKLE BALL SOUNDS increase in volume as the scene transitions.

STABLE CAMERA IS POSITIONED ON ONE SIDE OF A PICKLE BALL NET WITH MCGUFFIN STANDING OPPOSITE. RACK FOCUS FROM MCGUFFIN TO BRIGGS AS BRIGGS ENTERS THE COURT.

McGuffin watches an intense game of pickle ball as two opponents play each other. Briggs enters the court carrying a cheap paddle. He seems nervous but excited.

BRIGGS

Hey, coach.

MCGUFFIN

I ain't your coach yet, kid. Let's see what you can do first.

Briggs, taken aback, nods and waits. A sudden "AH!" can be heard off screen as the two players finish their game, approach the net and give each other high fives and congratulatory comments.

MCGUFFIN

(clapping)

Nicely played!

CRAIG  
Thanks, Guffy. How'd you like it when  
I ernied this punk?!

EVAN  
You got lucky.

CRAIG  
All skill, bruh!

EVAN  
Haven't seen you out here in a while,  
Guffy.

BRIGGS  
Guffy?

MCGUFFIN  
Yeah, I've been occupied.

CRAIG  
(disbelieving)  
Uh huh.

MCGUFFIN  
Gents, this is JJ Briggs. He wants to  
become a pickler, so I thought you  
could give him a test run.

EVAN  
Gladly.

MCGUFFIN  
Briggs, these guys are two of the top  
junior players in the pickle ball  
circuit, and they're about to make the  
jump to pro tourneys next month. Meet  
Team BlitzCraig.

BRIGGS  
(grimacing)  
*Blitz Craig?*

EVAN  
(flatly)  
I'm Blitz.



CRAIG  
I'm Craig.

BRIGGS  
Are those your *real* names?

EVAN & CRAIG  
(staring intensely at him)  
No.

The two exchange a quick secret handshake and then go back to staring intensely at Briggs.

CRAIG  
So what's your ranking like?

BRIGGS  
Uh...

EVAN  
Yeah, are you like a 3-0, 4-0?

CRAIG  
Look at that paddle, there's no way he's playing 4-0 with that cheap piece of --

MCGUFFIN  
He's just startin' out.

Evan and Craig give a collective wince.

EVAN  
Guffy, you got us playin' some scrub?

MCGUFFIN  
Yeah, and go easy on him at first. Kid needs a little warm up.

CRAIG  
Alright, let's see what he's got.

Blitz and Craig move to the same court and start limbering up and doing high knee jumps and various stretches. The two are dressed in matching outfits and have a fairly ridiculous warm-up routine. Briggs watches them disbelieving and then turns to McGuffin.

BRIGGS

Wait -- you want me to play both of them... at the same time?

MCGUFFIN

Yeah, a little Canadian doubles.

BRIGGS

Why?

MCGUFFIN

You wanna be a pickler, right? Let's see if you can take on two fellas who mean business.

Briggs goes to the baseline and seems to be sizing up his competition.

CRAIG

Scrubs get first serve.

Craig tosses Briggs a pickle ball. He bounces it a few times to warm up. He then serves and they play out the point. Briggs is hesitant and loses the first point.

EVAN

BOOM! Hey, don't worry, Briggs, it's just an ability thing.

Briggs, growing annoyed, tosses the ball to Blitz to serve. Blitz serves and they play out the point. Briggs loses the point again by hitting it into the net.

CRAIG

Watch out, Briggsy, there's a net there.

They play out another point, which Briggs loses.

EVAN

Hey, Craig. Do you think he saved the receipt for that paddle?

CRAIG

I sure hope so.

They play out another point, which Briggs loses and is becoming increasingly frustrated.

CRAIG  
Sorry, Briggs. Were you ready? Do you  
need a mulligan.

EVAN  
Ha!

Montage of more shots, and Briggs loses the set. The set ends  
when Evan hits a shot between his legs and scores the point.

CRAIG  
Bro, nice tweener!

EVAN  
Oof! Pickled! 11-nuthin.

Blitz and Craig approach the net.

CRAIG  
Hey Briggs, we shake hands between  
sets.

They both extend their hands and wait for Briggs who is  
pacing the baseline in frustration.

MCGUFFIN  
It's alright, Briggs. Another set now,  
let's go.

Briggs approaches the net and shakes their hands, then takes  
the ball. He goes back to the baseline and prepares to serve.  
He serves and they hit the return, followed by Briggs losing  
the point.

CRAIG  
Hey Blitz, you think this guy's name  
is actually Dairy Queen?

EVAN  
Why's that, Craig?

CRAIG  
Cuz he's got nuthin but soft serve.

EVAN  
Ohhhhh!

Briggs hits another shot that goes wide to lose the point.

EVAN

Briggs, you just need another six or seven inches added onto the court and then you'll be really good.

Briggs grows increasingly angry and he starts playing better for a few points. He scores a point against BlitzCraig after hitting a shot right down the middle near the baseline.

EVAN

(surprised)

You know, *for you*, that was a good shot.

CRAIG

(surprised)

Oooh, ok. Briggs is awake now. Guess we gotta start playing our real game, Blitz.

They play a montage of more points and the set ends 11-1 with team BlitzCraig winning. After they celebrate, they approach the net to shake hands with Briggs who is clearly upset.

CRAIG

Nice job snagging a point from us, Briggs. Good show.

EVAN

Yeah, and if you want we can start playing left handed if it will help.

Briggs goes to the baseline and fires a low serve that hits the net.

EVAN

Fishy, fishy, fishy --

CRAIG

Net, net, net!

They play a round of several points with Briggs failing to gain any points.

CRAIG

Man, he really must have been something special -- when he was *alive*.

EVAN  
Yeah, hey Briggs, quit being a  
spectator and show us somethin.

They play a few more points. Briggs goes for a low ball near  
the kitchen that pops it up high, and Evan leaps to slam it.

EVAN  
Watch out when you put it in my  
wheelhouse, bruh!

Team BlitzCraig bumps paddles triumphantly.

They play another point and Briggs lunges for a volley but  
crosses into the kitchen and loses the point.

EVAN  
Kitchen! You're in the kitchen!

CRAIG  
Hey, make me a sandwich while you're  
in there.

Briggs tries especially hard in the final few points to score  
and make a comeback, but hits a bad ball that Craig drives  
down the line.

EVAN  
Dayum! Painted the line with that one!

CRAIG  
Briggs, great shot, keep putting them  
right there for me, will ya?

Evan prepares to serve.

EVAN  
Set point!

He serves and aces Briggs.

CRAIG  
Hey if you're gonna just watch the  
ball, buy a ticket.

The two celebrate and prepare to shake hands with Briggs at  
the net.

EVAN  
Hey Briggs, we're just playin', man.  
Bring it in.

Briggs walks off the court in a fury and brushes past McGuffin.

CRAIG  
Rude, tuna.

CAMERA FOCUSES ON MCGUFFIN WATCHING BRIGGS STOMP OFF, THEN HE TURNS BACK TO THE COURT.

McGuffin looks disappointed and shakes his head.

CUT TO

INT. APARTMENT - LATE AFTERNOON

Briggs SLAMS his door to his room, throws his paddle on the ground, and flops onto his bed. THE DOOR OPENS and Lana Briggs can be heard off screen.

LANA  
JJ, you in here?

BRIGGS  
Yes, and can you knock?

Lana Briggs emerges into the room. She's holding a glass of a some brownish liquid. Lana Briggs appears to be on the verge of intoxication.

LANA  
It's my house.

BRIGGS  
What do you want?

LANA  
Don't be rude.

BRIGGS  
Sorry, but what do you want?

LANA  
Can't a mother ask her son about his  
day?

BRIGGS  
Where's Chad?

Lana looks at her drink and leans against the wall.

LANA  
Dunno.

BRIGGS  
Lemme guess. You guys had another  
knock down drag out while in a drunken  
stupor and he left -- presumably to go  
beat up his wife.

LANA  
They're getting a divorce.

BRIGGS  
Clearly he's a real catch.

LANA  
Why do you have to do this? I just  
want to know how your day went.

BRIGGS  
Terribly. Thanks for asking. Now  
please leave me alone.

Briggs rolls over on his bed. Lana begins to cry and Briggs  
attempts to ignore her.

LANA  
I'm sorry, JJ. It's just --

Pause for a beat.

LANA  
I know I am not a great mom. Or at  
least I haven't been since --

She sniffles and continues to cry.

LANA  
...Since...

Briggs rolls and sits up suddenly.

BRIGGS  
 Since dad died? You can't keep using  
 that excuse, mom!

LANA  
 It's not an excuse!

BRIGGS  
 It is when you use it to justify  
 drinking and bringing home loser  
 boyfriends!

LANA  
 You wouldn't understand how it's been  
 for me --

BRIGGS  
 (dumbfounded)  
 I wouldn't understand? Are you  
 kidding?

Lana keeps crying and she raises the glass to her forehead as she cries. Briggs gets up off his bed and grabs his backpack, stuffs his paddle into it, and brushes past his mother.

BRIGGS  
 Forget it.

CUT TO

EXT. APARTMENT COMPLEX - LATE AFTERNOON (CONTINUOUS)

Briggs exits the apartment building and walks off in a fury.

Include some shots to show time passing as he walks down the streets toward the park.

EXT. PARK - EVENING

Briggs walks onto the pickle ball court and looks around. He paces around the court looking at the ground. He takes a ball and paddle out of his backpack and drops the bag on the ground. After bouncing the ball a few times he starts hitting on the wall.



The faint sound of a GIRL SINGING can be heard through the pickle balling on the wall. Briggs hits a wild shot that bounces past him and BOUNCES to a stop. He looks disappointed with himself, but then gets distracted by the SINGING.

He continues to listen for a moment while he slowly walks and picks up his ball, all while keeping an eye on the girl singing in the grass beneath a tree. Briggs makes an internal decision, puts his paddle and ball on the ground and walks over to the girl.

CAMERA CUTS TO MEDIUM SHOT OF LILY ROSE PLAYING A UKULELE AND SINGING.

Briggs is out of focus and slowly approaches. As Lily concludes her song, Briggs claps and walks closer, surprising her.

BRIGGS

Wow, that was really great.

LILY

Oh -- thanks.

BRIGGS

(awkwardly)

Sing here often?

Lily looks at him like he's an idiot.

LILY

Talk to girls often?

Briggs sits down across from her.

BRIGGS

Not really.

LILY

Clearly.

BRIGGS

I'm Briggs.

LILY

I know.

BRIGGS

(Attempted Rizz)

Really? I feel like I'd remember you.

Lily LAUGHS.

LILY

Wow.

BRIGGS

This isn't going very well for me, is it?

LILY

(smiling)

I've heard worse.

BRIGGS

So how do we know each other?

LILY

You were in my geometry class sophomore year.

BRIGGS

You mean the one I slept through every day?

LILY

That's the one. You sat in the back left corner, if I recall correctly. I always wondered how you ever passed the class without being awake for it.

BRIGGS

I think Mr. Harman just passed me so he wouldn't have to watch me sleep in his class anymore.

LILY

High achiever. I like that.

BRIGGS

And I like what you were singing. What song was it?

LILY

One of mine.

BRIGGS

Really? That was really good.

LILY

Thanks.

BRIGGS

Do you ever perform, like out in public?

LILY

You mean besides in a park?

BRIGGS

Well, yeah.

LILY

I have been playing some open mic nights.

BRIGGS

I'd love to come see that sometime.

LILY

Well, good luck. I don't like to tell people about them. Performing is something that's just for me.

BRIGGS

Then it doesn't really count as a "performance," does it?

LILY

What about you? You just come play pickle ball by yourself?

BRIGGS

Sometimes.

LILY

I'm pretty sure that's one sport you can't play alone.

BRIGGS

Yeah. I'm just trying to figure some things out.

LILY

By playing pickle ball?

BRIGGS

Yeah.

LILY

By yourself?

BRIGGS

At the moment, I don't really have anyone to play with.

Lily gets up abruptly and walks toward the court. Briggs looks at her quizzically over his shoulder as she turns back to him.

LILY

Well? Let's play.

BRIGGS

What makes you think I've got two paddles?

LILY

(shrugging)

Just a hunch.

BRIGGS

Well, you're in luck.

He gets up and they walk toward the court together. Briggs removes a paddle from his backpack and hands it to her. He picks his up off the ground.

BRIGGS

So do you play?

LILY

A little.

BRIGGS

Alright. Ladies first.

He hands her the ball and she goes to the baseline. She serves a zinger that he returns and they play out the point.

BRIGGS

Nice point.

LILY

You too. Let's see what you've got.

He hits the ball to her and they play casually for a little bit before she hits a great shot and he returns another great shot.

BRIGGS  
You've clearly played before.

LILY  
Yeah, my dad always takes us to the  
Hamptons every summer and pickle ball  
is all the rage out there.

BRIGGS  
Dang, the Hamptons? Just to play  
pickle ball?

LILY  
It's not just to play pickle ball. My  
dad insists on making me play tennis.

BRIGGS  
Really?

LILY  
Yeah, he had all these aspirations to  
have me compete around the country as  
a junior USTA player, but I hated it.

BRIGGS  
You guys must be loaded.

LILY  
It's not all it's cracked up to be.

BRIGGS  
What do you mean?

LILY  
Nothing. Just play the point.

They play another point that Briggs scores.

LILY  
Nice point.

BRIGGS  
Can't go too easy on you.

He says the previous line as he serves to her and she hits a  
zinger to his backhand side that he misses.

LILY  
Clearly.

Briggs looks impressed.

LILY  
Well, I better get going.

BRIGGS  
But we just started.

LILY  
My parents are making me go to this  
stupid function for my dad's law firm.

Briggs hurriedly approaches the net as she extends the  
paddle.

BRIGGS  
(hurriedly)  
Well, when I can I see you again?

LILY  
Bold. What makes you think I want to  
see you again?

BRIGGS  
Maybe I could -- you know -- hang with  
you at the park next time you want to  
sing by yourself, or we could play  
some pickle ball again.

Lily laughs at his clumsy attempt.

LILY  
We'll see.

She gives him a coquettish look as she turns away and grabs  
her ukulele.

BRIGGS  
Wait -- you didn't tell me your name.

LILY  
You don't remember it yet?

BRIGGS  
(embarrassed)  
I -- well, I slept through that class,  
so...

LILY  
Lily.

BRIGGS  
Just Lily?

LILY  
Lily Langston.

She turns and walks away.

BRIGGS  
(to himself)  
Lily Langston.

He seems lost in thought as he starts hitting the pickle ball against the wall again. He hits it several times as

CAMERA CUTS TO A CLOSEUP OF THE BALL HITTING THE WALL

CAMERA CUTS BACK TO VIEW OF BRIGGS HITTING THE BALL

CUT TO

\*\*might need another scene here to establish Briggs getting pissed -- maybe another bad day at home, or he walks past McGuffin's apartment and decides to confront him?

EXT. MCGUFFIN'S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

CLOSE UP OF BRIGG'S FIST KNOCKING ONCE ON THE DOOR (match this action to the previous shot of the ball hitting the wall).

McGuffin opens the door and looks surprised to see Briggs standing in the hallway.

MCGUFFIN  
You again?

BRIGGS  
Can we talk?

Briggs brushes past a surprised McGuffin and walks into the apartment. McGuffin looks at him as he passes, then turns back to the door.

MCGUFFIN  
Come on in, I guess.

CUT TO ORGANIC CAMERA INSIDE THE APARTMENT AS IT FOLLOWS BRIGGS.

BRIGGS

That was a jerk move the other day.

MCGUFFIN

What was?

BRIGGS

Making me take on Team Blitzkrieg.

MCGUFFIN

It's Blitz-Craig.

BRIGGS

Well it was stupid. I asked for your help.

MCGUFFIN

That's what I gave you.

BRIGGS

(incredulous)

By setting me up to lose? By embarrassing me?

MCGUFFIN

What's gonna happen when you're playing in a pro tourney and you go up against someone who -- *unlike you* -- *actually* has experience? Someone who's *actually* a pro?

BRIGGS

What kinda tournament would have me go against two people by myself?

MCGUFFIN

That's not the point.

BRIGGS

Then what is the point?

MCGUFFIN

The point is you might not be ready.

BRIGGS

Then help me get ready!



MCGUFFIN

I can't help you if you quit every time you lose.

BRIGGS

I *didn't* quit.

MCGUFFIN

You walked away like a pissed off toddler. That's what I call quitting.

BRIGGS

Well I'm back now, aren't I? I just want some help so I can get away from this -- this --

MCGUFFIN

This what?

BRIGGS

This *life!*

Briggs pauses for a beat.

BRIGGS

I've got nothing going for me -- don't you get that? I can't depend on anyone but myself, and you made me think I can't even do that!

McGuffin looks ready to speak but stops.

BRIGGS

(quieter)

The only thing I've ever been good at is a stupid sport played by rich kids and middled-aged men.

McGuffin smirks.

MCGUFFIN

Don't forget middle aged *women*.

Briggs guffaws and shakes his head. He seems to calm down a bit and looks at the floor for a moment.

MCGUFFIN

Look, kid. It's a game, and going pro is a long shot even for the rich kids who have been playing it for a while.

BRIGGS

I know.

MCGUFFIN

To go pro, you gotta make it the focus of your entire **live**. You gotta give everything you got, and you gotta sacrifice it all for a stupid game.

BRIGGS

I know.

MCGUFFIN

But I don't think you really get it. It's not just a game -- **it's gotta be everything to you.** It's late nights and early mornings, and it's pushing yourself to the edge sanity for a dream that might not come true.

cut pink

BRIGGS

I know -- and that's exactly what I'm trying to do.

MCGUFFIN

(sighing)

Look, I've been there. I don't know why I ever did it, either. All it did was ruin me.

Pause for a beat.

MCGUFFIN

I mean look at me now! I got no family, no real money, I live alone -- and that's what I have to show from my dream.

BRIGGS

I'm not you -- and I won't give up.

Pause for a beat. McMuffin turns away and paces the room slowly looking at the floor with his hands on his hips.

BRIGGS

My dad was...

McGuffin waits and looks at Briggs as he pauses.

BRIGGS  
My dad was great.

McGuffin stares focuses his attention on Briggs, waiting.

BRIGGS  
He was a great man, and a great  
pickleballer.

Something appears to dawn on McGuffin.

MCGUFFIN  
What was your dad's name?

BRIGGS  
James. James Briggs.

MCGUFFIN  
James Briggs? And he was good?

BRIGGS  
He was great.

MCGUFFIN  
Like good enough to go pro?

BRIGGS  
He certainly tried.

McGuffin's jaw slowly drops as it dawns on him.

MCGUFFIN  
Wait -- James Briggs? Yeah, I remember  
him! I played him in a tournament at  
Bainbridge Island -- musta been, what  
-- 6 or 7 years ago.

Briggs looks around the room growing excited about the memory  
as it resurfaces.

MCGUFFIN  
Man, he was good too! I remember he  
took me into a 5th set before I  
finally walloped him, but I thought,  
this guy could do it. I even made the  
mistake of putting an overhead up in  
his wheelhouse in the 4th set, and he  
SLAMMED it and painted the line to win  
-- I couldn't believe it!

BRIGGS  
(quietly)  
That was his last match.

MCGUFFIN  
(somber)  
Really? So the accident happened...

BRIGGS  
After. He was on his way home. I just remember my mom coming in screaming and crying, but she wouldn't say why...

MCGUFFIN  
So this is about him?

BRIGGS  
No. This is about me. And I need you to help me.

MCGUFFIN  
It's been a long time, Briggs.

BRIGGS  
But it's never too late to start over. Give me a chance.

MCGUFFIN  
If we do this, I gotta know that you are all in, that you are gonna do whatever I tell you. It's not just about how you swing the paddle. It's about what's in here.

He points at Briggs' head.

MCGUFFIN  
And what's in here.

He points at Briggs' chest.

Briggs nods.

BRIGGS  
I'm in.

MCGUFFIN  
Alright. Let me grab my hat.

BRIGGS  
(surprised)  
Wait -- now?

MCGUFFIN  
As good a day as any for some  
training.

BRIGGS  
I didn't bring my paddle.

MCGUFFIN  
You got runnin shoes on?

Briggs looks at his feet.

BRIGGS  
(confused)  
Yeah.

MCGUFFIN  
Then let's go.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

McGuffin exits the apartment building and walks briskly through the alley toward his car. Briggs exits the building as well and catches up to him.

MCGUFFIN  
Courts at 8th and Central.

McGuffin starts getting into his parked car.

BRIGGS  
Ok, let's do it.

MCGUFFIN  
No, no. You're gettin there on foot.

BRIGGS  
Wait, can't I just ride with you?

MCGUFFIN  
Training starts now, get runnin'.

BRIGGS  
But that's like two miles away!

MCGUFFIN  
It'll be a good warm up!

McGuffin CLOSES THE DOOR and STARTS THE ENGINE.

BRIGGS  
Alright.

Briggs takes off running.

EXT. DOWNTOWN - EVENING

Briggs is running on the sidewalk.

McGuffin drives beside him with his window down.

MCGUFFIN  
Let's go, Briggs. Run like you mean  
it!

Briggs speeds up his pace and looks more determined.

ADDITIONAL SHOTS OF BRIGGS RUNNING IN MONTAGE FORMAT.

CUT TO

EXT. PICKLE BALL COURTS - LATE AFTERNOON

LOW ANGLE TRACKING BRIGGS' FEET THEN PANNING UP TO REVEAL  
THAT HE'S ARRIVED AT THE COURTS.

Briggs slows his pace to a trot and is BREATHING HEAVILY.

McGuffin sees him and gets off the hood of his car where he  
is sitting.

MCGUFFIN  
Nice work, but faster next time.

BRIGGS  
(panting)  
What now?

MCGUFFIN  
Now we do some footwork drills.

MONTAGE OF VARIOUS FOOTWORK AND SPEED DRILLS ON THE COURT.

Briggs slows as he is panting heavily.

BRIGGS

Coach, why are you having me do this?

MCGUFFIN

We gotta get you in shape.

BRIGGS

But like this? I thought pickle ball  
was a sport for old men with bad knees  
--

MCGUFFIN

(overly upset)

What?! Are you trying to start a  
religious war or something?!

BRIGGS

What?

MCGUFFIN

You owe me 50 pushups for a dumb  
question like that! Get down -- do um!

BRIGGS

(startled)

Ok, ok.

Briggs starts doing his pushups while McGuffin paces and talks.

The rest of this scene will be spliced with various montage sequences while McGuffin speaks.

MCGUFFIN

Sounds like you may need a little  
history lesson. The Big Dills, as some  
of us Heavy Hitters like to call it,  
started as a little backyard  
entertainment among some Weekend  
Warriors takin a summer break on  
Bainbridge Island back in '65.  
Congressman Joel Pritchard, his  
business buddy Bill Bell, and the  
Living Legend Barney McCallum started  
the game with a badminton net, a  
wiffle ball, and some battered ping  
pong paddles because their kids said  
they were bored one afternoon.

BRIGGS  
 (with pushup exertion)  
 See? Old people.

MCGUFFIN  
 (continuing)  
 The sport that may have started as a little backyard entertainment has since become the rage of players across the nation. It might have started with a couple old men and their kids, and it might have taken off in retirement communities across America, but now the median playing age is people in their early 30s --

BRIGGS  
 (still doing pushups)  
 That's still old!

MCGUFFIN  
 That's 50 more pushups!

BRIGGS  
 Agh!

MCGUFFIN  
 Volley Jockies gotta know goin into it that they gotta move their feet. You can never be caught off guard. You may think you're up against the Volley Lama doing some binge dinkin on the other side of the net, and then BOOM -- they go Super Smash Brothers on you when you least expect it!

BRIGGS  
 (still exerting from pushups)  
 I don't know what half of that means.

MCGUFFIN  
 You will!

CUTS TO MONTAGE OF BRIGGS DOING DRILLS. This montage will span several locations and several days (costume changes). Possible montage scenes include:

Silhouette of Briggs and McGuffin doing ball drills in front of apartment window.



Fast volleys on practice wall.

Practice serves to hit targets on the other court.

Running scenes.

Sit up scenes.

Pushups.

Pullups.

\*\*Could write more lines for McGuffin talking over the  
MONTAGE ACTION

CUT TO

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

Briggs sits attentively Mr. Milborne's class taking notes on the lecture. The BELL RINGS and students get up to file out.

Zach Harrison bumps into Briggs as he passes.

ZACH HARRISON

Oops.

BRIGGS

You're excused.

Zach just huffs his response to Briggs and exits.

BRIGGS

Thanks, Mr. Milborne.

MR. MILBORNE

(surprised)

For what?

BRIGGS

For the lesson. You've really been bringing this topic to life for us.

MR. MILBORNE

Oh -- thank you.

BRIGGS  
Have a good day.

He exits.

CUT TO

INT. HALLWAY - DAY CONTINUOUS

Briggs exits the classroom and sees Lily.

BRIGGS  
Hey, Lily.

LILY  
(cooly)  
Briggs. Haven't seen you in a while.

BRIGGS  
It's been a minute, hasn't it.

LILY  
Here I thought you had a little thing  
for me.

BRIGGS  
(taken aback)  
Ah -- well... who says I don't?

LILY  
Most guys who are interested don't  
leave me on read.

BRIGGS  
Sorry. I've been really busy lately.

LILY  
Oh yeah, with what?

BRIGGS  
I've been training.

LILY  
Training?

BRIGGS

Yeah, I'm playing in this pickle ball tournament this weekend.

LILY

A *real* tournament, or more street ball?

BRIGGS

No, this is the real deal. National Pickleball League sponsored tournament. I think I might be able to work my way into the pro tournaments if it goes well.

LILY

That soon?

BRIGGS

What can I say, I'm pretty awesome.

Lily snorts.

BRIGGS

And I have a great coach now.

LILY

I'm happy for you.

BRIGGS

I was hoping you'd come and... be my cheer section.

LILY

We'll see. I may have a late night on Friday.

BRIGGS

I hope it's not for a date.

LILY

It is, actually.

BRIGGS

What? Who is he?

LILY

It's name is Bethany.

BRIGGS

What?

LILY

Bethany is my guitar.

BRIGGS

I'm so confused.

LILY

I'm playing an open mic night at the Moose.

BRIGGS

Open mic night?

LILY

Yep.

BRIGGS

I'll be there.

LILY

I hope so.

The BELL RINGS.

LILY

You made me late. I better go.

BRIGGS

I'll see you Friday.

Lily gives him a somewhat flirtatious "we'll see" look with a smile and walks away.

Briggs smiles and hustles in the other direction to get to his next class.

OPITONAL SCENE

\*Briggs runs into Zach Harrison and his crew again as he heads to class. Zach tries to engage Briggs in another fight, but Briggs talks him down. What else could happen here?

INT. THE MOOSE - NIGHT

Lily is on stage playing her final song. Briggs watches her from the audience and seems completely enamored. The song ends and everyone applauds.

EMCEE

Let's hear it again for our final performer tonight, Lilian Rose everyone.

Another round of applause as Lily smiles and gives a small bow to the crowd.

Briggs walks up to the stage with a big smile on his face as Lily is packing up her things.

BRIGGS

(clapping)

Wow, Lily! That was incredible.

LILY

Thank you.

BRIGGS

That song about longing for lost time was so good. What was that called?

LILY

"It May Be for Years."

BRIGGS

Well, I loved it all. You are amazing. The crowd really seemed to love it too.

LILY

Yeah, it was alright.

BRIGGS

Are your parents here too? I'd love to meet them.

LILY

You are literally the first boy to say that. Moving a little fast aren't we?

BRIGGS

No, I just mean...

LILY  
Are you going to formally ask my  
father for permission to court me  
while you're at it?

BRIGGS  
(with rizz)  
Well, would that help my chances?

LILY  
(laughing)  
Gawd, you are ridiculous.

They sit down beside each other.

LILY  
They're not here anyway.

BRIGGS  
Really? This seems like something  
parents would definitely want to see.

LILY  
My parents don't support my music.

BRIGGS  
(shocked)  
Are they mental? You're so talented.

LILY  
They think it's a waste of time. My  
dad has some ridiculously high  
expectations of me. It's like just  
because he is this big time lawyer I  
have to be one too.

BRIGGS  
But you don't want to be?

LILY  
No. I want to be happy.

BRIGGS  
Personally, having a ton of money and  
trips to the Hamptons sounds pretty  
happy to me.

LILY  
Money can only go so far though.

BRIGGS

It can probably go farther than I can without it.

LILY

Well, it hasn't worked for my family.

BRIGGS

For example?

LILY

My parents hate each other. My dad is super possessive and wants to control my life. They fight all the time and I just learned to use music to shut it all out.

BRIGGS

I know what you mean.

LILY

That's why I play music in the park, or at open mic nights, or alone in my room -- it's the only thing that really makes me happy.

BRIGGS

Then you should play all the time, because you deserve to be happy. And I will always be willing listen to you.

LILY

Are you always this cheesy?

BRIGGS

No, but you seem to bring it out of me.

Lily shyly laughs.

LILY

You really lay it on thick don't you?

BRIGGS

Just trying to keep you interested. Is it working?

Lily shakes her head as she smiles shyly and quickly changes the subject.

LILY  
So are you ready for tomorrow?

BRIGGS  
Well, I've been working really hard,  
and Coach thinks I've got a chance.

LILY  
Do you?

BRIGGS  
Do I what?

LILY  
Think you have a chance?

Briggs pauses for a beat.

BRIGGS  
Yeah. I think so. I need this, you  
know? So I'm willing to do whatever it  
takes.

LILY  
Well, if it helps, I believe in you.

He looks at her and smiles, then looks back at the ground.

LILY  
You better get to bed soon, champ.  
Early morning.

BRIGGS  
You're probably right. Will I see you  
tomorrow?

LILY  
Maybe.

BRIGGS  
You know I'm not going to give up,  
right?

LILY  
On pickle ball?

BRIGGS  
No... on you.

Lily laughs and looks away.



LILY  
Wow. That was --

BRIGGS  
--I know, it was a great line. I'll  
see you tomorrow.

Briggs gets up and walks out.

CAMERA STAYS ON LILY SHOWING HER SMILING.

CUT TO

EXT. VALLEY VIEW COUNTRY CLUB - MORNING

\*Film this scene indoors at the Elks or outdoors at the Valley View Country Club depending on weather.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)  
Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,  
and welcome to the electrifying world  
of pickleball! We're here at the Rim  
Rock Open, where the excitement is  
palpable, and the competition is about  
to reach a fever pitch. It's a  
beautiful day for some pickleball  
action, and we've got a thrilling  
tournament in store for you.

Today, we have some of the finest  
pickleball players from all around the  
globe, ready to battle it out for  
supremacy on these courts. The  
atmosphere is charged with  
anticipation, and we're in for an  
incredible showcase of skill, agility,  
and strategy.

Get ready to witness fire fights that  
will leave you breathless, volleys  
that defy gravity, and serves that are  
precision personified. This isn't just  
a game; it's a test of mental and  
physical fortitude.  
So, whether you're a seasoned  
pickleball aficionado or a newcomer to  
the sport, get comfortable, because

you're in for a treat. The action is about to begin, and the drama is bound to unfold. It's time to serve up some pickleball excellence, right here on your screens. Let's get this tournament started!

During the commentator's introduction, drone footage of pickle ball courts will play, intermixed with shots of Briggs warming up and Coach McGuffin helping him get ready.

MCGUFFIN

Alright, Briggs, this is exactly what we've been training for. Now you just go in there and play your game. Don't worry about the cameras, or the crowd, or what's gonna happen in the next match. You just focus on this serve, this hit, this point.

Briggs nods and repeats.

BRIGGS

This serve. This hit. This point.

Montage of Briggs playing competitively against players who are clearly as good or better than he is as he is getting into his groove.

The first set ends and Briggs goes to his bench to talk get some water and talk to coach.

MCGUFFIN

11-8, great set, Briggs. Now you're working too hard to power the ball down the line. You gotta remember that this is a game of placement. Play strategically, now.

BRIGGS

Got it.

Briggs gets up and plays out the next set with another quick montage, ending with Briggs looking triumphant.

MCGUFFIN

BOOM! Another great set. Now don't get cocky. You need one more and he's been keeping it close. Stay focused.

Briggs goes back onto the court and finishes the match with another victory.

BRIGGS

First one down!

MCGUFFIN

Good, good. Now remember, you stay humble. You gotta get better with every match, but don't start thinkin you're the Big Dill until you take down every last Battle Paddler.

BRIGGS

Better every match. You got it.

MCGUFFIN

It's just like General Douglas McArthur once said, "Pickle ball is a lively process of becoming."

BRIGGS

What? Douglas McArthur said that?

MCGUFFIN

Trust the process, Briggs. Now get on that court!

Briggs plays another successful match and celebrates with McGuffin after.

Briggs plays a third opponent and is winning the match. There's another montage of him playing and celebrating with shots of McGuffin celebrating on the side of the court.

CAMERA CUTS TO A TELEVISION VIEW OF THE FINAL MATCH OF THE TOURNAMENT.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

Welcome back Designated Dinkers to this riveting tournament, where the big story of the day is the arrival on the scene of a previously unknown player JJ Briggs who is taking the tournament by storm. He's definitely the underdog in this final bout against the more experienced Zane Newman, but Briggs has been showing us that he has all the potential to be the next Big Dill.

Briggs plays the match against Zane Newman and seems to be doing well.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

This is the final game in the set, and Briggs just needs to finish with the win to bring home the hardware for this Rim Rock Open.

CAMERA CUTS TO COURT VIEW OF BRIGGS PREPARING FOR A SERVE.

As he is playing, there's a moment when Lily approaches the court and sits down to watch. Before serving, Briggs looks at her and smiles as she smiles back and claps for him.

CAMERA CUTS TO TELEVISION VIEW AS BRIGGS MAKES HIS FINAL SERVE.

Briggs wins the match and approaches the side of the court triumphantly.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

He did it! JJ Briggs has just taken the Rim Rock Open as a new entry. The world of pickle ball has a new King of the Court. Where will Briggs strike next?

MCGUFFIN

You did it, kid!

BRIGGS

I can't believe we did it!

MCGUFFIN

You did it, Briggs.

BRIGGS

I'm honestly shocked.

MCGUFFIN

Don't be. Pickling isn't as hard as it looks when you play with heart. It's like Confucious said, "Pickle ball is really simple, but we insist on making it complicated."

BRIGGS

I'm pretty sure Confucious never said that.

MCGUFFIN

Check the history books, kid.

Lily approaches without trying to interrupt.

MCGUFFIN

Well, I'm going make like a tree and get outta here.

BRIGGS

You sure? You don't want to celebrate first?

MCGUFFIN

You two celebrate on my behalf. I have a date with my friends Ben & Jerry.

McGuffin scampers off.

LILY

(laughing)

He's an... interesting sort.

BRIGGS

You have no idea.

The two start walking away from the courts.

BRIGGS

I'm so glad you came.

LILY

Wouldn't miss it. That was really incredible.

BRIGGS

(flirtatiously)

I was, wasn't I?

LILY

Wow! One tournament and your head is double the size.

BRIGGS

Have you seen this trophy?

LILY

Yeah, yeah. Don't get too cocky. What do you say we go celebrate?

BRIGGS

What did you have in mind?

LILY

You hungry after all of that?

BRIGGS

Yeah, you?

LILY

Let's go eat somewhere.

Briggs looks uncomfortable for a moment.

LILY

What? You don't want to take me out to dinner?

BRIGGS

I definitely do! It's just --

LILY

What?

BRIGGS

I don't have a car to drive you anywhere.

LILY

I'll drive.

BRIGGS

Aaaannndddd, I can't afford much. Unless you find McDonald's to be a romantic dinner option.

LILY

(mock shock)

Who said this was a romantic thing?

BRIGGS

(sputtering)

Oh, no, I mean --

LILY  
Stop. I'm just messing with you. Let's  
go to my house and I'll cook you  
something.

BRIGGS  
Cook me something?

LILY  
Yeah, I'm actually a really good cook.

BRIGGS  
Hmmm.

LILY  
Don't believe me? C'mon.

They walk off screen.

CUT TO

INT. LILY'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Briggs sits at an island as COOKING SOUNDS of meat simmering  
and water boiling. He looks around the house and we see that  
Lily lives in opulent surroundings. He looks at Lily and  
watches her as she cooks.

BRIGGS  
Great house.

LILY  
Thanks. My parents seem to think so.

BRIGGS  
And you don't?

LILY  
It's fine. I mean, obviously I enjoy  
growing up in a house like this,  
but...

Lily shrugs rather than finish the thought.

BRIGGS  
But what? You should see the place  
where I live.

LILY  
I would love to.

BRIGGS  
No. I meant that as hyperbole. I have a hard time believing you don't enjoy something like this though.

LILY  
I love the kitchen, I love my room, yes, but I live in a house where my family almost never sees each other except in passing. We each just do our own thing, and we never relate with one another.

BRIGGS  
And that's pretty important to you?

LILY  
Nothing is more important than sharing what you love with someone else.

BRIGGS  
Like cooking?

LILY  
Like cooking.

BRIGGS  
Do you cook for your parents often?

LILY  
No.

BRIGGS  
Well, now I feel even more honored.

Lily smiles at that, all while moving pans around and stirring the food.

BRIGGS  
So are your parents home now?

LILY  
No.

Briggs looks relieved.



BRIGGS

(jokingly)

Oh, shoot. I thought I would be facing a father's interrogation, or an aggressive older brother, or a background check from your mother.

LILY

(guffawing)

Not likely. For one, I don't have an aggressive older brother. And my parents out of the country.

BRIGGS

They're gone a lot aren't they.

LILY

Yeah. This is almost ready.

Lily looks over her shoulder at Briggs with a flirtatious smile. Briggs gives a nervous laugh.

LILY

Finished!

Lily serves their plates and sits next to Briggs who digs into the plate of food. He pauses to take in the flavors.

BRIGGS

Wow! You can sing, and you can cook!  
What can't you do?

LILY

I can't speak Japanese -- yet.

Briggs laughs. They eat for a moment in silence.

LILY

So what's next?

BRIGGS

Ah, well, I hoped I could hang out for a little bit before you take me home since it's kinda far to run in the dark --

LILY

No -- I meant for you. With pickle ball.

BRIGGS

Oh. I dunno. I guess just keep playing in tournaments, which will be tough since I don't have money to travel.

LILY

So what will you do?

BRIGGS

Coach thinks that I might have a chance at some sponsors. He said he knows people from when he played pro that might be able to help us, but I gotta keep winning for that to happen.

LILY

So you think you might be able to make this, like a pro career?

BRIGGS

That's the hope.

Pause for a beat.

BRIGGS

You probably think that sounds so stupid.

LILY

(seriously)

It's *your* dream. Why would that be stupid?

BRIGGS

It's not exactly something that would impress a girl -- or a girls' father for that matter.

LILY

You're right about that, but luckily I don't care what he thinks. And what is a life without dreams?

BRIGGS

It's not exactly a dream that has much chance, let alone much money attached to it.

LILY

You can have money and still not be happy. Case in point: My parents.

BRIGGS

Point taken. But to be real, I've never really had any dreams or goals until now, and I know people might think it's stupid, but...

Pause for a beat while Lily looks at him.

BRIGGS

It's all I've got. And I want to give it all that I've got... I want to be something.

Pause for a beat.

LILY

I know what you mean.

BRIGGS

With music? Or wait, is it cooking, because this is fire!

LILY

Either. Both maybe. Why not? If you have a dream you have to go for it -- anything else is just wasted potential.

Briggs looks at Lily as a moment of silence ensues.

BRIGGS

Tell you what. I'll be on dish duty.

CAMERA SHIFTS TO AN ORGANIC ANGLE THAT FOLLOWS THE BRIGGS TO THE SINK, THEN SLOWLY APPROACHES LILY AS SHE PLAYS AND SINGS.

Briggs gets up and takes their plates to the sink. RINSING SOUNDS AND A LIGHT CLATTER OF DISHES can be heard as Lily walks over to the guitar on a stand in the corner of the living room. She sits on the floor and sings a quiet song. The dish noises get quieter as she sings and plays. Briggs quietly approaches and lays down on the floor next to her.

Lily finishes her song, puts the guitar on the stand and lays down beside Briggs with her head next to his. Their bodies

are positioned with feet going in opposite directions as they look up at the ceiling.

THE CAMERA TAKES A HIGH BIRDS EYE VIEW LOOKING DOWN ON THE TWO AS LILY LAYS DOWN.

\*\*NEED A FINAL CONVERSATION BETWEEN THEM TO END THE SCENE.

CUT TO

INT. PBO SPORTS INTERVIEW - MONTAGE/STUDIO INTERVIEW

The scene opens with CROWD NOISE erupting as Briggs finishes a match in an indoor stadium and celebrates on the court. McGuffin rushes to the court and hugs him. The footage contains an PBO SPORTS logo in the bottom right of the screen indicating that this is a replay during an interview.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

This was the moment that shook the burgeoning pickle ball world to the core as JJ Briggs won the national championship after only 6 months of playing on the pro circuit. Briggs has gone from being a senior in high school who had never played a tournament to the undisputed champion of the United States.

Briggs, how has your life been changed by this meteoric rise to prominence?

CAMERA CUTS FROM MONTAGE FOOTAGE OF BRIGGS PLAYING TOURNAMENTS TO A STUDIO SHOT OF HIM BEING INTERVIEWED. HIGHLIGHT CLIPS WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY THROUGHOUT THE INTERVIEW.

BRIGGS

It's been wild. Honestly, I never thought this could happen to me.

COLLIN COSTA

While it's unprecedented to see someone become such an overnight sensation in the NPL, do you think you've always had it in you to become one of the greats?

BRIGGS

Well, my dad taught me a few tricks at a young age, and I know that a lot of that stuck over the years.

Cut to low quality cell phone videos of young Briggs playing with his dad.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

James Briggs was also trying to make a name for himself in the NPL until a tragic accident ended his life.

COLLIN COSTA

Obviously, losing your father must have been very traumatic for you.

BRIGGS

Ah, yeah, you could say that.

COLLIN COSTA

Has this tragedy also inspired you to take that next step?

BRIGGS

Definitely, Collin. I couldn't have done it without the inspiration that my father provided for me. I mean, I feel like this journey has really taught me more about my father, like I remember him teaching me his favorite moves, and now I get to do those too.

COLLIN COSTA

What was one of those favorite moves?

BRIGGS

Definitely the overhead. But, it's really been my coach who has gotten me this far, because -- well -- he believes in me.

Cut to footage of McGuffin and Briggs interacting on the court, getting coaching and playing rounds.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

That coach is none other than Ben McGuffin -- the GOAT to some, the Big Dills to others, and Guffy to his

devoted fans. McGuffin had not lost a single match in his professional career until he played a Russian Champion, Dimitri "Dinkamir" Pugachev, in the Pickleball World Championships, and he had an apparent meltdown on the court.

COLLIN COSTA

Briggs, the word on the street is that Guffy hasn't played a single pickle ball match since his loss at the World Championships; can you confirm that?

BRIGGS

Yeah, that's true, Collin. He hasn't even touched a paddle since then.

COLLIN COSTA

So how has he even gotten you to this point?

BRIGGS

Inspiration. Dedication. And never giving up. He keeps telling me that what makes a champion is in here and in here.

Briggs points to his head and his heart as he says the final line.

COLLIN COSTA

And that's been enough?

BRIGGS

That's all it takes.

COLLIN COSTA

So what's next for Team Briggs now that you've reached this level?

BRIGGS

I can't get too ahead of myself, Collin. It's just this serve. This point. This game. Then repeat.

CUT TO

INT. MCGUFFIN'S APARTMENT - DAY

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK FROM A PAUSED COMPUTER SCREEN FINISHING  
THE PBO SPORTS INTERVIEW

Briggs and McGuffin look happily at the screen as McGuffin  
hits pause and looks expectantly at Briggs.

MCGUFFIN

Well?

BRIGGS

It's amazing!

MCGUFFIN

You nailed it, kid! And that ending  
was pure gold!

BRIGGS

Thank you, thank you. But really, I  
gotta know: What's next?

MCGUFFIN

Let's just wait.

BRIGGS

Wait? We're on a roll!

MCGUFFIN

Yeah, yeah, but you gotta let it  
simmer for a bit.

BRIGGS

Simmering doesn't bring in more  
sponsors or get me in another  
championship match.

MCGUFFIN

I know, but we just need to take a  
little short break and see how things  
pan out. Let the sponsors and the fans  
wait for it. You gotta make em want  
more, and you don't do that by goin  
and getting yourself beat.

BRIGGS

(dumbfounded)

I'm a national champion.

MCGUFFIN

And you won't be for long if you get too cocky. Wait. Be patient.

BRIGGS

(resigning)

Fine.

MCGUFFIN

Ain't you got class today?

BRIGGS

Milborne Yeah, I better get going or I'll owe Ramirez pushups.

MCGUFFIN

Alright, get movin. You gotta keep those grades up. Just a couple months til graduation.

Briggs gets up and grabs his school bag.

BRIGGS

Yep.

MCGUFFIN

And Briggs...

Pause for a beat as Briggs turns and looks at McGuffin.

MCGUFFIN

I'm proud of you.

Briggs gives him a small smile and nods.

BRIGGS

Thanks, coach. I'll see you for training after school.

Briggs exits the apartment. McGuffin gets up and walks around his apartment for a moment. He tidies up the place a bit, and then he is startled by his PHONE RINGING in his pocket. McGuffin looks confusedly at his phone screen as the caller ID indicates that GAVIN WHITE is calling him.

SHOT OF MCGUFFIN'S PHONE SCREEN, THEN A REVERSE SHOT OF HIS REACTION

MCGUFFIN

Hello?



GAVIN WHITE

Guffy! It's been a while, man. How you been?

MCGUFFIN

Fine.

GAVIN WHITE

Fine? We haven't talked in years and all you can say is "Fine"?

MCGUFFIN

5 years, and yeah, I'm fine. You only call when you there's something you want, so what is it?

GAVIN WHITE

Alright, you don't seem to be in the mood for chit chat, so I'll cut to the point. I just saw the story of your boy on PBO -- he's a hit!

MCGUFFIN

Uh huh.

GAVIN WHITE

I'm hoping we can sit down and talk about it.

MCGUFFIN

Talk about what?

GAVIN WHITE

The kid! I've got something in the works that you might want to hear about.

MCGUFFIN

I'll think about it.

GAVIN WHITE

C'mon, Guffy --

MCGUFFIN

Don't call me that.

GAVIN WHITE

Alright, slow down. No need to get feisty. Just give me a chance to tell you what I know.

MCGUFFIN

We're fine, Gavin. I'll talk to you...  
sometime. Thanks.

McGuffin hangs up the phone and resumes his chores. After a brief pause there's a KNOCK at the door. McGuffin walks to the door and opens it to see Gavin White standing there. Gavin White is dressed in a nice suit and is casually leaning against the door frame. He is cocky and business-like.

GAVIN WHITE

I knew you'd do that. Same old Guffy.

MCGUFFIN

I told you not to call me that.

GAVIN WHITE

Can I come in?

MCGUFFIN

(resigned)

Sure.

They both walk into the apartment.

MCGUFFIN

Drink?

GAVIN WHITE

Got anything strong?

MCGUFFIN

It's 8 in the morning, and no. I got  
coffee.

GAVIN WHITE

Coffee works.

McGuffin grabs two mugs of coffee and sits across the table from Gavin White who sips the liquid during an awkward pause. McGuffin just stares at him and doesn't drink any coffee as he is slumped in his chair, clearly not trusting the man across the table. Gavin sips casually, then puts the cup on the table and leans in.

GAVIN WHITE

So like I was saying before you rudely  
cut me off, I have a proposal for you  
and the kid.

McGuffin sits silently and waits.

GAVIN WHITE

You are aware, no doubt, that pickle ball is now a worldwide phenomena, and there's talk of adding it in the next Olympic Games.

McGuffin nods.

GAVIN WHITE

Well, there's a number of countries working to bulk up their national teams and get some good press before that happens. One country in particular is actively looking for a match that will put them on the world stage of pickle ball competition, and that country is...

Gavin drumrolls on the table.

GAVIN WHITE

North Korea.

MCGUFFIN

(taken aback)

North Korea?

GAVIN WHITE

Yessir. North Korea is currently working on a charm offensive to make them look better to the world before the Olympic Games, and they want to play an American champion to demonstrate how far they have come as a nation -- and *that's* where Briggs comes in.

MCGUFFIN

You want Briggs to play a North Korean in the World Championships?

GAVIN WHITE

Bingo. He'd take on their star player **Kim** Kim Min Joon, dubbed "The North Korean Nemesis," and the championships would be held in pickling arena recently built specifically for the

event in none other than... wait for it... the De-Militarized Zone between North and South Korea.

MCGUFFIN

That sounds like a terrible idea.

GAVIN WHITE

Terrible?! *Fame, fortune*, and the biggest championship match the world has ever seen? That sounds like pure gold to me!

MCGUFFIN

I don't like it.

GAVIN WHITE

Well it gets better. Guess who Kim Min Joon's coach is?

He pauses for dramatic effect and leans in slowly.

GAVIN WHITE

Dimitri... Pugachev.

MCGUFFIN

(taken aback)

Dinkamir?

Gavin leans back nodding with self satisfaction.

GAVIN WHITE

It'll be a rematch unlike any other: The North Korean Nemesis vs. Briggs the Boy Wonder --

MCGUFFIN

That's not his nickname.

GAVIN WHITE

Who cares? The media will come up with something better when they know it's also Dinkamir vs. Guffy the GOAT.

MCGUFFIN

I just don't think the kid is ready.

GAVIN WHITE

Is he ready to make a ton a money? Are you ready to get outta this dump and get back in the game?

MCGUFFIN

We're doing just fine, thank you.

GAVIN WHITE

(snorting)

Fine. Always fine. Never *great*. Not anymore, anyway.

Gavin gets up and starts walking toward the door.

GAVIN WHITE

You've heard the offer. Tell the kid, and I'll send over some numbers. He'd be a fool to pass this up, and Guffy...

Gavin turns toward McGuffin as he opens the door and pauses.

GAVIN WHITE

Don't let *your* failure hold the kid back from making something of himself.

Pause for a beat.

GAVIN WHITE

We'll be in touch.

He closes the door as he says the line.

CUT TO

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

The DOOR CLOSING sound from the previous scene provides a match on action as Briggs closes the door to Mr. Milborne's classroom.

MR. MILBORNE

Oh, Mr. Briggs. You're late.

BRIGGS

Sorry, Mr. Milborne -- won't happen again.

MR. MILBORNE

No, that's fine. Professional sports stars don't always have to be on time.

Zach Harrison excitedly perks up. He is wearing a Team Briggs t-shirt.

ZACH HARRISON

Briggs! I saw your PBO Sports Special -- those shots from your tournament at Red Rocks were perfect!

BRIGGS

(rolling his eyes)

Thanks.

Briggs sits in his desk in front of Zach.

MR. MILBORNE

Ok, let's get back to our discussion of the Cold War, shall we?

Zach leans toward Briggs.

ZACH HARRISON

(in a loud whisper)

Hey Briggs, I'm still hoping that you will take me up on that offer to be your water boy, or I can be the towel guy on your bench, or whatever you need -- I can do it.

Briggs attempts to ignore him and sighs.

MR. MILBORNE

Mr. Harrison, please.

Zach SIGHS in frustration and leans back. The class resumes for a moment when Zach taps on his shoulder and hands him a folded note.

BRIGGS OPENS THE NOTE AS THE CAMERA CUTS TO AN OVER THE SHOULDER HIGH ANGLE TO READ THE NOTE.

The note says PLEASE?

Briggs shakes his head and refolds the note.

CUT TO

INT. APARTMENT - AFTERNOON

Montage time lapse of McGuffin mulling over the decision about the North Korea match. He could look at his previous magazine cover, watch some old footage of himself playing, and re-watch the video of his final match as he gets increasingly downtrodden.

Briggs opens the door to the apartment and walks in. McGuffin is standing at the window, looking out as he is lost in thought.

BRIGGS

Hey, Coach. What do we have today for training?

MCGUFFIN

Take a seat.

BRIGGS

(surprised)

Ok.

McGuffin continues facing the window as Briggs sits on the couch.

MCGUFFIN

I met with a guy named Gavin White today.

Briggs waits as McGuffin pauses.

MCGUFFIN

When I was playin the circuit, he was my agent. I haven't heard from him since...

Pause for a beat.

MCGUFFIN

Since I quit pickling. But ever since he's been working as a tournament promoter. He also represents big name players.

Briggs is getting increasingly excited by this.

BRIGGS

Ok, and?

MCGUFFIN

And... he says he has a match for you.

BRIGGS

(excited)

What is it?

MCGUFFIN

The World Championships.

Briggs leaps from the couch ecstatic.

BRIGGS

What?! Yes! This is what we needed!  
Sign us up, let's go!

MCGUFFIN

Hold on, hold on. You ever heard of  
the North Korean Nemesis?

BRIGGS

Kim Min Joon? Of course. It's him?

McGuffin nods, still looking out the window.

BRIGGS

Wow. He'll be tough, but I know we can  
do this. When's the match?

Pause for a beat.

MCGUFFIN

I don't like it.

BRIGGS

(nonplussed)

Don't like it? Don't like what?

MCGUFFIN

Any of it.

BRIGGS

Why?



MCGUFFIN

Kim Min Joon has got Dmitri Pugachev  
as his coach.

BRIGGS

Dinkamir? So what?

MCGUFFIN

The media is going to be hyping this  
thing like crazy.

BRIGGS

Good.

MCGUFFIN

It's going to be a lot of pressure.

BRIGGS

Ok, I can handle that.

McGuffin turns toward Briggs.

MCGUFFIN

I don't think you can.

Briggs is startled.

BRIGGS

You don't think I can what? Beat him?

MCGUFFIN

The pressure. I don't think you  
realize what all this can do to you.

BRIGGS

Coach, I don't care about any of that.  
I just want to have my chance, and  
this is it! Why won't you just let me  
go for it?

MCGUFFIN

Because I know what this can do! I've  
been there, alright! I can't sit on  
the sidelines and watch you fall apart  
as your dreams go up in flames.

BRIGGS

But you won't have to, because they  
won't! This is my dream, and I just

want to go for it. Coach, none of what we've done so far means anything if I can't do this.

MCGUFFIN

I'm telling you, you're not ready.

BRIGGS

This about you, isn't it?

MCGUFFIN

(shaking his head)

No.

BRIGGS

What, because Dinkamir is coaching against you now you're worried?

MCGUFFIN

(overlapping with Briggs' previous line)

It ain't about that.

BRIGGS

It is, isn't it? "Guffy the Great," still scared of his own failure? Well, guess what Guffy, I'm not you!

Pause.

MCGUFFIN

(quietly)

I know you're not.

Pause for a beat.

MCGUFFIN

You're better than me... That's what scares me... All this could end too fast -- all because I let you fly too close to the sun.

BRIGGS

If it ends, it ends. But I have to try. And I want you to believe that I can do it.

Pause for a beat. McGuffin looks at the floor and shakes his head.

MCGUFFIN

I -- I can't.

Briggs is taken aback and angry. He storms out of the apartment and slams the door behind him.

CUT TO

EXT. DOWNTOWN - LATE AFTERNOON

Establishing and montage shots of Briggs walking downtown, clearly angry.

CUT TO

INT. COFFEE SHOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Briggs walks into the coffeeshop where Lily is sitting working on some song lyrics. She is lost in thought as he angrily plops down on the couch beside her.

LILY

Hey.

Briggs grunts. Lily turns her attention to him.

LILY

Wow, that's quite the hello. What's got your goat?

BRIGGS

McGuffin is really pissing me off.

LILY

Whoa, ok. What happened?

BRIGGS

You saw the HBO interview I sent you, right?

LILY

Of course, and it was amazing.

BRIGGS

Well it wasn't good enough for him, apparently.

LILY

What do you mean?

BRIGGS

He was contacted by some tournament promoter because of it, and now there's an offer on the table for me to play in the World Championships in Korea.

LILY

Briggs, that's amazing! Why are you not happier about this?

BRIGGS

Because McGuffin won't let me.

LILY

Won't let you? What do you mean?

BRIGGS

He just doesn't think I can do it.

LILY

But you've been doing great so far.

BRIGGS

That's what I'm saying! For some reason he thinks I'll lose, or that the pressure will be too much for me.

Something seems to dawn on Lily.

LILY

Ah. Maybe he's worried about you.

Briggs snorts disapprovingly.

BRIGGS

He's just being a coward.

LILY

But maybe he's just got your best interests in mind, Briggs, I mean I bet it is a lot of pressure to --

BRIGGS

*What*, so now you don't think I can do it either?

LILY

I didn't say that, I just meant that --

BRIGGS

Meant what? That I'm not good enough? That I'm not *ready*?

LILY

Whoa, Briggs, calm down, ok --

BRIGGS

This is my chance, and I've earned this!

LILY

Yes, but you had a lot of help along the way, and it sounds like your Coach is worried it might be too much --

BRIGGS

Too much! You know what's too much? My life until now has been *too much*. This is my escape from all of this.

LILY

What good is it if you're alone?

BRIGGS

Alone? What's that supposed to mean?

LILY

You need your team to support you.

BRIGGS

What team?

LILY

Your Coach, for one. Me, for another. Have you asked your mom what she thinks?

BRIGGS

Wow! Ask my drunken, negligent mother what she thinks? That's rich!

LILY

I think you really need to calm down,  
Briggs.

BRIGGS

What a day. First McGuffin is a  
cowardly loser, now you. Fine. I don't  
need any of you anyway.

Lily is shocked into silence as Briggs grabs his backpack and  
storms out of the coffeeshop.

CUT TO

INT. BRIGGS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Briggs slams the door of his apartment and walks in angrily.  
Lana turns the corner and sees him.

LANA

JJ, are you ok?

BRIGGS

What do you care?

LANA

Of course, I care! Your coach called  
me and --

BRIGGS

He *called* you? What, to tell you that  
I can't handle playing in the World  
Championships?

LANA

(sputtering)

No -- he just --

BRIGGS

Of all the things he could do, he  
calls you? The one person who has no  
impact on my decision making? The  
person who cares the least about what  
I do with my life?

LANA

(crying)

JJ, how can you say that?

BRIGGS

I'm going to my room. Leave me alone.

Briggs slams the door of his room behind him.

CONTINUOUS

INT. BRIGGS APARTMENT - NIGHT

Briggs paces around his room angrily. He sits on his bed and runs his wings through his hair and presses his palms to his temples as he looks at the floor and breaths heavily.

Briggs opens up his backpack and pulls out a Sports Illustrated magazine with his face on the cover and a title saying "THE FUTURE OF PICKLEBALL." Briggs looks at it for a moment, then tosses it aside.

He reaches for his phone, then he searches through some files and finds file titled DAD. He opens it and there are a few old cell phone videos of Briggs and his dad playing pickle ball together.

CUT TO

EXT. PICKLE BALL COURTS - LATE AFTERNOON (FLASHBACK)

10 or 11 year old Briggs and his dad play pickle ball as Lana clumsily films and cheers for the boys as they play out a point.

JAMES BRIGGS

Yeah, there you go, JJ! Great hit!

LANA

Yay!

Young Briggs takes the ball and walks back to the baseline bouncing the ball.

JAMES BRIGGS

(pretending to be an announcer)

And now, Briggs goes to the baseline for what could be the final serve in

these World Championships. Can he get one past the old timer here?

Young Briggs serves and they hit it back and forth a few time as they both approach the kitchen.

JAMES BRIGGS

(pretending to be an announcer)

And a great serve, but the old timer returns it brilliantly, and we have a battle in the kitchen -- who will cook up the best recipe?

James Briggs hits a high ball over Young Briggs' head and he hits a solid overhead shot past his father.

JAMES BRIGGS

(pretending to be an announcer)

And a killer overhead takes the title from the old timer -- JJ Briggs is the new champion of the world!

LANA

Yeah, JJ!

James Briggs falls to his knees dramatically as Young Briggs celebrates. Lana starts to clap her hands and the phone awkwardly claps with her and cuts.

CUT TO

INT. BRIGGS APARTMENT - NIGHT

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK FROM BRIGGS PHONE AS A TRANSITION TO

Briggs is smiling at the clip when there's a GENTLE KNOCK on his door. He is calmer now, but still annoyed at being interrupted by his mother who opens the door only a crack.

BRIGGS

What.

LANA

Can I come in, please?

BRIGGS

Sure.



LANA  
I have something that I think you  
need.

BRIGGS  
What?

Lana approaches Briggs and pulls a pickle ball paddle from behind her back and hands it to Briggs. She backs away and stands against the wall next to the door.

LANA  
(choked up)  
It was your dad's.

Briggs slowly turns the paddle admiringly.

POV ANGLE OF TURNING THE PADDLE

Briggs runs his fingers gently over the "beauty marks" on the paddle and runs his hands over the face and grip. As she says the next line he turns it over to reveal the "battle" logo on the backside.

LANA  
Your dad always said that playing  
pickle ball was like --

BRIGGS  
-- Like going into battle.

Pause for a beat.

LANA  
Yeah.

Moment of silence as Lana sniffles.

LANA  
He would be so proud of you, JJ.

Pause for a beat.

LANA  
And I'm sorry that I've been such a --  
I'm sorry for how I've been since he  
died. I've been so angry with him --

BRIGGS

Angry with the man who died in a car accident?

LANA

Angry that he has been taken from us. Angry that I don't know what to do without him... Angry because I don't know how to live without him.

Pause for a beat.

LANA

But I know that I have you. And I need to be better for you... because I see so much of him in you.

BRIGGS

Well not anymore. I'm done with pickle ball.

LANA

(more confidently)

It's not just the pickle ball. It's how you talk. How you walk. You get this look in your eye when you're excited about something, and it's the same on he always got.

Lana slowly sits on the bed next to Briggs.

LANA

And, yes there's pickle ball too... He loved it. It was his favorite thing to do with you, and when he was working a job he hated, he would always come home on Friday and remind me not to plan anything for Saturday mornings because you two would be playing pickle ball the next day.

Briggs gives a small laugh.

BRIGGS

Except for the days when I refused because I wanted to sleep.

LANA

(smiling)

Or because it was too cold.

BRIGGS  
(smiling)  
Or because I just wanted to watch TV.

Pause for a beat.

BRIGGS  
(suddenly sorrowful)  
I really regret that.

LANA  
Regret what?

BRIGGS  
Saying no. I wish I would have said  
yes to every stupid activity he  
planned for us. I should have used  
every minute I had with him.

LANA  
You couldn't have known what would  
happen. Neither of us could. But now  
you have a chance to do what he always  
wanted to do.

BRIGGS  
I don't know if I have what it takes.

LANA  
Your dad would disagree. You've  
already gotten this far, and you're  
only getting started. You've found  
purpose, and take it from me, that's  
not something that most people find.

Pause for a beat.

LANA  
The one good thing in my life... is  
you, Briggs. And all I want is to see  
you be happy. If *this* makes you  
happy... you can't give up.

Briggs sits silently for a moment looking at the paddle. He  
leans in and gives Lana a hug, and she is surprised by the  
show of affection.

BRIGGS  
(whispered)  
I'm sorry, mom.

CAMERA FOCUES ON LANA'S EXPRESSION AS HE HUGS HER

She begins crying again and won't let go of the embrace.

BRIGGS  
I have to go now.

LANA  
But you just got home.

BRIGGS  
I need to go talk to my coach.

Briggs gets up, carrying his paddle and grabbing his backpack.

THE CAMERA STAYS FOCUSED ON LANA WHO WATCHES HIM LEAVE.

Lana wipes some tears and looks out the window.

CUT TO

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

Interior angle of McGuffin's apartment door as there's a persistent KNOCKING on the door. McGuffin opens the door and is surprised to see Briggs standing in the entryway.

BRIGGS  
You called my mom?

MCGUFFIN  
Yeah.

BRIGGS  
You guys talk now?

MCGUFFIN  
I'm your coach. Of course we talk.

BRIGGS  
I had assumed she didn't care about any of the work we've been doing.

MCGUFFIN

I know for a fact that she's watched every single match that you've played since we started.

BRIGGS

(smiling)

Even the disaster against Team BlitzCraig?

MCGUFFIN

(laughing)

Not that one.

BRIGGS

Can I come in?

MCGUFFIN

Of course.

Both walk into the apartment as the camera follows. Briggs' attention shifts to the table where there are some old Sports Illustrated Magazines with McGuffin on the covers laying haphazardly, and another SI with Briggs on the cover laying on top of the others. Briggs picks up the one with him on it.

BRIGGS

Whoa, it came out?

MCGUFFIN

Hot off the press. Great pic, huh?

BRIGGS

(reading)

"The Future of Pickleball."

MCGUFFIN

Yessir.

BRIGGS

Hmm... And what are these?

Briggs puts down his magazine and starts looking at the ones from McGuffin's career.

BRIGGS

Now *this* is cool! (reading) "Guffy the GOAT." I like that!

MCGUFFIN

(bashfully)

Yeah, that was after the National Championships.

BRIGGS

I watched that match.

MCGUFFIN

(surprised)

You did? I didn't know they aired that.

BRIGGS

No, I saw it on YouTube.

MCGUFFIN

Ah.

Briggs flips through some pages and reads from the article.

BRIGGS

(reading)

"Ben McGuffin may not play with the technique of other players, but a firefight with him rarely ends without him taking down his opponents in flames of glory."

McGuffin snorts as he listens to the ending.

MCGUFFIN

Yeah. Didn't last though.

CUTAWAY SHOT TO THE SI MAGAZINE ON THE TABLE SHOWING THE HEADLINE "MELTDOWN"

BRIGGS

That was one match, coach.

MCGUFFIN

(somberly)

And it was the most important match of my career.

BRIGGS

You know something, coach. My dad used to tell me that life is not about what

happens to us... it's about how we react to it.

Pause for a beat.

MCGUFFIN

Wise man.

BRIGGS

I know you're scared to do this. I'm scared too. You can choose to let the bad things in your life hold you back, and you can choose to live your life watching from the sidelines, but I've made my choice and I won't live my life like that.

McGuffin slowly nods as he looks at the floor.

BRIGGS

I'm going to do this. And I need my team behind me. That means I need my coach, because I won't do this without you.

Pause for a beat.

BRIGGS

*I believe in us, coach...* I need you to do the same.

McGuffin nods and looks up with a smile and glistening eyes.

MCGUFFIN

Well, as Confucius once said, "the journey of a thousand pickle balls begins with the first dink."

BRIGGS

(laughing)

There is *no way* that he said that.

MCGUFFIN

(laughing)

He might have. Check the internet. But we have a ton of work to do.

BRIGGS

What do you have in mind?

CUT TO

## TRAINING MONTAGE

Running on the rims

Playing pickleball as coach watches and paces

Jumping into a pool and practicing swings

Rapid wall hits

Sunset shot on top of the rims

CUT TO

EXT. SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA

Drone establishing shot of Seoul, South Korea.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

Welcome, sports fans to Seoul, South Korea where we are about to hear from the two greatest pickle ballers in the world as they meet for the first time at tonight's press conference. And here is the American champion, JJ Briggs and his coach, Ben McGuffin.

Cut to shots of Briggs and McGuffin walking onto the stage and sitting in their seats behind microphones. Briggs and McGuffin both look nervous and awkward as they get on stage to FEW APPLAUSE.

Suddenly the CROWD ERUPTS INTO CHEERS as Kim Min Joon and DIMITRI PUGACHEV and SEUNGMIN CHAN enter onto the stage. Kim Min Joon is stoic, steely-eyed, and determined -- not even acknowledging the crowd. Behind him, Dimitri Pugachev walks onto stage hyping up the crowd as he pumps his arms in the air enthusiastically. He wears all black, and he is wearing black sunglasses. Seungmin smiles and kowtows to the crowd, then is very businesslike in his demeanor.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

And here is the North Korean Nemesis himself, Kim Min Joon, and his entourage, including Dimitri "Dinkamir" Pugachev, and Min's assistant coach Seungmin Chan.



SHIN JISSO walks onto the stage waving to the crowd as they ERUPT into more applause. SHIN JISSO is a young Korean woman who is dressed in trendy business attire. She approaches the podium mic with a beaming smile.

SHIN JISSO  
(in Korean)  
Hello pickleball fans from around the world, and welcome to Korea!

SHIN JISSO  
(in English)  
Hello pickleball fans from around the world, and welcome to Korea! We are especially excited to welcome our American friends to Seoul.

SHIN JISSO  
(in Korean)  
And we are thrilled to have our friends from North Korea and Russia joining us on this diplomatic mission south of the de-militarized zone!

The CROWD CHEERS ENTHUSIASTICALLY.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV  
(in Russian)  
Greetings, my fellow pickle ballers!

The CROWD CHEERS again.

Shin Jisso looks expectantly at Team Briggs for a response as the crowd applause dies.

BRIGGS  
(clearing his throat into the mic)  
Ah, hi everyone. Iiiiit's great to be here.

Awkward silence.

SHIN JISSO  
Who has the first question for our stars tonight?

A flurry of hands are raised from the gathered crowd of press and a number of flashes go off from cameras.

SHIN JISSO

Yes, Gunter Mason, please.

GUNTER MASON

Danke. This question is for Briggs.

Mr.

Briggs, how does it feel to know that you are the underdog in the arena tomorrow?

BRIGGS

I think that my record shows that I'm ready for anything they can throw at me, and I believe in myself and in my coaching to get --

DIMITRI PUGACHEV

(interrupting in Russian)

Coaching? Good luck doing anything with him as your coach.

The CROWD EMITS A SHOCKED response as CAMERAS CLICK and everyone's attention shifts to Dimitri Pugachev.

BRIGGS

I didn't catch that.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV

I said, you won't get anywhere with a coach like that.

The CROWD REACTS NOISILY.

BRIGGS

He's gotten me this far, hasn't he?

McGuffin tries to stop Briggs from defending him.

BRIGGS

And we have what it takes to win this.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV

(in English)

To win? In pickleball? Against the North Korean Nemesis? I think not!

DIMITRI PUGACHEV

(in Russian)

You only have what it takes to play  
paddy cake with your mother!

The crowd goes into an UPROAR.

SHIN JISSO  
Next question, please? Yes, you.

REPORTER 2  
Yes, this question is for Guffy.

MCGUFFIN  
Please don't call me that.

REPORTER 2  
How do you feel being back on the  
court after so long of a hiatus, and  
up against your biggest rival,  
Dinkamir?

McGuffin looks at Briggs as he thinks about his response for  
a moment.

MCGUFFIN  
This match is about Briggs vs. Min.  
But I know everyone wants to make it  
about me and Dink over there. Briggs  
got us here, and Briggs will lead us  
to victory.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV  
(in Russian)  
That's bull!

The crowd gives another SHOCKED RESPONSE.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV  
(in English)  
This is a rematch! But now there are  
two losers facing two champions!

He points at Team Briggs when he says "two losers" and points  
to himself when he says "two champions."

The CROWD ERUPTS AGAIN and the camera is blacked out by the  
press jumping to their feet with hands raised.

CUT TO

EXT. DE-MILITARIZED ZONE ARENA

Establishing drone shot of the pickledome in the DMZ. If possible, include some stock footage shots of guards, tanks, or other military surrounding the structure.

Camera cuts to Collin Costa and Shin Jisso sitting at the court-side table with their headsets on. They are both dressed in tuxedos.

COLLIN COSTA

I'm Collin Costa for PBO Sports.

SHIN JISSO

And I'm Shin Jisso for Korea Broadcasting Network as we are streaming live across the world, and in a surprise move, Kim Jong-un is even allowing this momentous event to be live-streamed in North Korea.

COLLIN COSTA

Yes, Miss Shin, it seems that the Kim Jong-un hopes that this will be a historic event for North Korea as they begin their charm offensive and try to stabilize their relations with the West.

SHIN JISSO

That's the hope, Collin, but I certainly noticed a larger military presence on both sides of the DMZ in preparation for this event.

COLLIN COSTA

Indeed, Miss Shin, and I certainly hope Kim Jong-un can handle whatever the results of this match will be.

SHIN JISSO

(jokingly)

Of course, what could go wrong, right?

COLLIN COSTA

There's certainly a lot of pressure for this event as this matchup is being heralded as the biggest Cold War sports showdown since the 1980 Olympic

Hockey match between the United States  
and the Soviet Union.

SHIN JISSO

The question is, Collin, will the  
world witness a *Miracle on the Court*?  
We'll find out soon.

COLLIN COSTA

Yes we will. Let the dinking begin!

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Briggs stands in his new pickleball jersey with BRIGGS across  
the back holding his battle paddle and hyping himself up.  
He's also wearing a red, white, and blue robe with the hood  
down.

Lily stands against the wall near Lana as they watch him. The  
MUFFLED SOUND of the crowd can be heard through the walls,  
along with STOMPING and CLAPPING.

Coach McGuffin enters into frame.

MCGUFFIN

How we doin'?

BRIGGS

Good.

MCGUFFIN

Gotta stay limber. Let's see you move  
those feet. Yeah, there you go. Now  
move that paddle too.

Briggs begins shadow paddling as the camera circles around  
the room with him in focus.

MCGUFFIN

Ladies, you better go take your seats.

Lily approaches Briggs and gives him a hug.

LILY

You can do this. Don't let anyone take  
this from you.

She steps away as Briggs nods and Lana approaches. She puts her hands on Briggs' shoulders and she has tears in her eyes. She seems at a loss for words, then she moves one hand to his cheek.

LANA

(smiling)

There's that look. That's your dad's look. I know he's with you right now, and he and I are so proud of you.

Briggs brings her in for a hug.

BRIGGS

I love you, mom.

LANA

I love you too.

She half pulls away from the hug and gives another proud and appreciative look to her son before she wipes away tears and walks out the door with Lily.

McGuffin walks back into frame and starts swaying back and forth with Briggs as he leans in and speaks to him intensely. Briggs holds his paddle up and returns his stare.

CAMERA PANS AROUND BRIGGS AND MCGUFFIN IN SLOW CIRCLES. THIS SHOT WILL BE DONE IN A SINGLE TAKE

MCGUFFIN

You hear that? It's all just noise. Nothing matters except what's in here [pointing to his head] and what's in here [pointing to his heart]. You've done this before. You've played this match a hundred times. This ain't no different than every other match that you've ever played.

You're ready. I know it. Your family knows it. You gotta know it too. It ain't you in front a crowd; it ain't you on the world stage. It's you against you. The only battle you gotta win is right here and right here. Now let's do what we came here to do.

McGuffin removes two pickleballs from his pocket and they do some shadow sparring as the camera continues to pan around.

MCGUFFIN

Good. You got this, Briggs. I believe in you. Do you believe?

BRIGGS

(quietly)

Yeah.

MCGUFFIN

C'mon, Briggs. Do you believe?

BRIGGS

Yeah.

MCGUFFIN

It's time.

Briggs puts his hood up and they walk through the door and into a darkened hallway.

FADE TO

INT. PICKLEDOME ENTRYWAY - DAY

Camera transitions into a dark-lit space as the CROWD NOISE fades to silence. Diagetic music plays and grows in intensity as a tunnel of lights slowly illuminates a fog-filled hallway with Briggs standing in the center. He is dramatically backlit, leaving him a silhouetted figure.

CAMERA CUTS TO A WIDE ANGLE TO REVEAL THE LENGTH OF THE HALLWAY.

McGuffin emerges behind him and off his left shoulder two steps behind. Briggs walks slowly down the hallway as the music crescendoes and the CROWD ERUPTS into CHEERS.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

Ladies and gentleman, the Reigning American Champion... JJaaaaayyyyyy  
BRIIIIIGGS!

The CROWD ROARS as Briggs walks down the hall.

THE CAMERA ALTERNATES BETWEEN CUTS FROM A WIDE ANGLE TO A BUST SHOT OF BRIGGS' FACE

Briggs walks forward, shadow swinging his paddle and looking intensely at the camera as he moves and sways.

THE CAMERA PANS THROUGH A DARKENED SPACE THAT MASKS THE CUT

Briggs walks onto the court. He bounces around for a few seconds, swinging his paddle. McGuffin pats him on the back.

MCGUFFIN

Ok, let's go. This is what we've been training for.

The CROWD GOES SILENT AGAIN AS THE CAMERA CUTS TO ANOTHER DARK-LIT HALLWAY

Oriental style hip hop music plays with a resounding chorus like that of a Red Army Choir as a line of blue lights illuminate the hallway.

The silhouette of Kim Min Joon stands at the center of the hallway. He is dressed in his red and blue pickleball uniform and shrouded in a red robe with the hood up. Dimitri Pugachev stands off his left shoulder, and Seungmin Chan off his right shoulder, both dressed in matching North Korea-color schemed outfits. They stand in a dramatic power pose for a beat as the music grows in intensity and the CROWD ERUPTS INTO CHEERS.

CUT TO BRIGGS AND MCGUFFIN'S REACTION AS THEY WATCH AND WAIT ON THE COURT.

COLLIN COSTA (V.O.)

And now, the North Korean Nemesis,  
Kiiiiim Min Jooooon!

The CROWD GOES WILD as Two smoke bombs -- one white and one red -- ignite at the feet of the trio covering them in a veil of smoke.

THE CAMERA CUTS TO A CLOSE UP as the three slowly emerge from behind a wall of smoke walk in slow motion as the music surges through the pickledome.

THE CAMERA PANS THROUGH A DARKENED SPACE THAT MASKS THE CUT



Kim Min Joon and his entourage emerge onto the court as the camera follows behind. They take their position on the opposite court. Dimitri Pugachev removes Kim Min Joon's robe. McGuffin also removes Briggs' robe.

The two opponents face each other across the net.

CAMERA CUTS TO DIMITRI PUGACHEV'S FACE AS HE STARES AT MCGUFFIN.

CAMERA CUTS TO CLOSE UP OF MCGUFFIN'S FACE AS HE RETURNS PUGACHEV'S HAUGHTY LOOK.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV  
Are you ready for a repeat?

McGuffin just stares intensely at him.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV  
Do you know what the word *kpax* means?

McGuffin shakes his head.

DIMITRI PUGACHEV  
Meltdown.

CAMERA CUTS TO A CLOSE UP OF BRIGGS' FACE AS HE STARES AT KIM MIN JOON.

CAMERA CUTS TO A CLOSE UP OF KIM MIN JOON'S FACE AS HE STARES AT BRIGGS.

Kim Min Joon looks down at Briggs' paddle and smirks.

KIM MIN JOON  
(in Korean)  
I like your red paddle.

BRIGGS  
I don't know what you're saying.

KIM MIN JOON  
I like your red paddle.

BRIGGS  
It's my good luck charm.

KIM MIN JOON  
(smirking)  
You'll need it.

Collin Costa steps into frame with an echoing microphone in hand as the CROWD NOISE DISSIPATES.

COLLIN COSTA

Gentleman. You both know the rules of the game. Since North Korea is has the side that is facing northwest, Kim Min Joon will be the starting server. We want to see a clean game, and may the best champion win. Shake hands, gentlemen.

Briggs extends his hand. Kim Min Joon stares at him and then turns away without shaking.

THE CROWD YELLS mixed approval and booing.

COLLIN COSTA

Let's get ready to rumblllllllle!

MCGUFFIN

Alright, here we go. Remember: this serve, this hit, this point. That's all that matters. We go point, by point, by point -- the games take care of themselves.

BRIGGS

Got it.