

FADE IN

INT. MGM GRAND CASINO - NIGHT

An insert reads: MGM GRAND CASINO - 1992 CAMERA TRACKS down a busy aisle, between packed slot machines.

It moves on to the gaming tables, past a spinning roulette wheel, past a crowded craps table where someone has just made their point and SHRIEKS IN JOY, onto the blackjack tables.

An insert FADES IN: THE FOLLOWING STORY IS TRUE CAMERA STOPS at a hundred dollar minimum table where JACKIE TOWNSEND, SAMMY KLINE and STEVE JORDAN sit. Jackie, 26, looks like a very small, thin version of Shaft. He lights a long, brown cigarette. D.D. CALHOUN, the dealer, shuffles a six deck shoot of cards.

An insert fades in: ACCORDING TO BRIAN ZEMBIC On the words, BRIAN ZEMBIC -- behind Jackie, at an adjoining table -- we see a MAN wearing a trench-coat and a Winnie the Pooh cap.

WALTER RYKER (obese, skin showing between his shirt and pants) makes his way through the crowd. He carries a plastic shopping bag from Caesar's Palace. Meanwhile, D.D. shoves the deck toward Jackie and hands him the cutter card...

D.D.

Your cut.

Suddenly the man in the Winnie the Pooh cap, hurls his trench coat aside, to reveal an entire Mighty Mouse costume. He leaps onto his blackjack table and screams -

BRIAN

I am the God of hell fire! . . .
And I bring you fi-ya!

He holds high a Zippo lighter which he zips alight. Brian, AKA Mighty Mouse, launches into Fire by Arthur Brown. SECURITY MEN charge from all directions.

In the commotion, Jackie and D.D. make their move. With precision timing, quick as magicians, Jackie grabs the official deck from D.D. and drops it into a passing Walter

Ryker's shopping bag. Jackie pulls a new deck from his jacket, hands it to D.D. under the table who places it into the plastic shoe. No one in the casino knows what hit them.

PIT BOSSES recover quickly and check their tables. Jackie and the others turn to watch the show.

The Security Guards drag Mighty Mouse off the table. He's still singing at the top of his lungs as they haul him through the casino - past Walter, who walks the other way.

BACK TO THE TABLES

Where D.D. is ready to deal.

D.D.
Damn nut-case.
(beat)
Gentlemen, are you ready?

EXT. MGM GRAND CASINO -- MOMENTS LATER

The security guards fling open the doors and hurl Mighty Mouse into the street.

INT. WENDY'S -- LATER

BRIAN sits hunched over a Styrofoam coffee cup. Four other empty Styrofoam cups litter his table. He's wearing the Winnie the Pooh cap.

He hears a TAP on the glass door and sees Jackie motioning to him outside.

EXT. WENDY'S -- CONTINUOUS

BRIAN
What happened?

JACKIE
C'mon.

They walk quickly away from the fast food joint.

BRIAN
It must of worked. Your legs aren't broke.

JACKIE

Who told you to switch the song?

BRIAN

The other one wasn't dramatic
enough.

JACKIE

You could've screwed up the whole
gig.

Jackie's body language says he's the bearer of bad news.

BRIAN

How did we do?

JACKIE

(faking glumness)
Not so good.

BRIAN

Jackie, how much?

JACKIE

A hundred.

BRIAN

You mean, I risked my life for a
hundred dollars? That's sick.

A grin breaks across Jackie's face.

JACKIE

Thousand.

Brian thinks for a second. He looks at Jackie who just
smiles.

Brian jumps like he's been electro-shocked.

BRIAN

Dollars?! A hundred thousand
dollars!

They jump around like football players who just won the
Super Bowl. HOWLING.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. GENERIC BAR -- LATER

Jackie, Brian, Walter, D.D, Sammy and Steve all toast to their victory. This is tradition.

EVERYONE

(chanting)

Boom, chaka laka laka. Boom, chaka
laka laka, Boom, chaka laka laka,
Boom!

They happily drink to their success.

EST. SHOT BINION'S HORSESHOE CASINO - NIGHT

An insert reads: TWELVE YEARS LATER We hear Brian's VOICE. The words come with amazing speed.

BRIAN (O.S.)

Where you from, kid? Kansas?

KID #1 (O.S.)

California.

DISSOLVE INTO:

INT. BINION'S HORSESHOE CASINO, PUBLIC REST ROOM

ROLL TITLES

BRIAN ZEMBIC, 34 now, still wearing the Winnie the Pooh baseball cap, SHUFFLES a deck of cards, one-handed, at shoulder level.

Brian is a compact, rapid-fire speaking, ball of energy with the enthusiasm and emotional maturity of a 12 year-old and the charisma of a successful con man. He knows more slight of hand tricks than most magicians, can count a four deck shoe of cards in his head and is, strangely enough, a world-class ping pong player.

When he walks, he moves with the attractive confidence of a man who knows his business, which, in Brian's case, is gambling - professional, not compulsive.

FIVE GUYS stand around the bathroom, watching him. One, not interested, has his back to us, peeing.

Jackie Townsend leans against a wall next to a calendar page - JUNE 4. Jackie has gotten slick. Hugo Boss suit. Rolex. The works. He wears one of those hands-free, nearly invisible phones that he uses to fire off non-stop calls, although we cannot hear the details.

BRIAN

You got that Kansas look about you.

KID #1

Tarzana, California.

BRIAN

Okay, Tarzana. When I rifle the cards, you tell me when to stop.

He rifles the deck too quickly for the kid to stop him before he's gone through the whole deck.

KID #1

Stop!

Kid #2, off to the side, LAUGHS, like this is real funny.

BRIAN

(To Kid #2)

Does his mother know where he is?

He rifles again.

KID #1

Stop!

Brian stops on a card. He shows the jack of spades to the crowd, but Brian himself can't see it. Brian shuffles it back into the deck. He shuffles the cards twice, talking non-stop.

BRIAN

I knew a girl from Tarzana once,
had an IUD that picked up radio
signals.

I went down and Bon Jovi's coming out of her cooch.

He turns the cards over one at a time.

BRIAN

You don't know her, do you? Tall girl. Large breasts.

He stops on the three of diamonds.

BRIAN

Is this your card?

He shows the crowd the three of diamonds. The Kid smirks.

KID #1

Hell, no.

BRIAN

What's that you're standing on?

The Kid looks confused.

BRIAN

Are you trying to screw up my trick, kid? Move your foot and show us what you're hiding.

The Kid lifts his shoe to expose the jack of spades.

BRIAN

Is that the card you chose?

The Crowd APPLAUDS.

BRIAN

Show 'em that trick in Kansas kid.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. CASINO BATHROOM, JUNE

Brian is doing coin tricks for a crowd of ten or so, including two hookers, ROXANNA AND EBONY. He makes a small coin large, a large coin into three.

Jackie and D.D. (the dealer from the original MGM scam, first scene) are also there hanging out on a back wall watching their friend Brian.

BRIAN

What's your name, honey? You look cute, I'll bet your name is Charisse.

ROXANNA

Roxanna.

Brian puts a handkerchief on a coin and lifts it, revealing a mouse.

BRIAN

You work at the casino here?

Ebony SNORT/LAUGHS.

EBONY

We're hostesses, out at the Lone Wolf Ranch.

Brian's eyes light up.

BRIAN

Uh-oh, professionals. We don't get many working girls in this bathroom.

Check your underwear there, Roxanna.

She reaches into her panties and pulls out a hundred dollar bill.

ROXANNA

How'd - The crowd goes wild.

DISSOLVE TO

INT. BATHROOM, JUNE

Brian bounces from toe to toe playing Ping Pong against the back wall. A MAN washing his hands looks at him in disgust.

DISGUSTED MAN

You wouldn't catch me staying in a public bathroom thirty days, just to win twenty five grand from a casino.

BRIAN

If everyone wanted to be me, it'd be crowded in here, now wouldn't it?

DISGUSTED MAN

You're crazy.

BRIAN

You think so? I really value your opinion on this. If you think I'm crazy, then, gosh, maybe I am.

The Man stalks out of the bathroom, angry.

BRIAN

Idiot.

Jackie walks in talking on his cell phone. He motions a "hello" to Brian as he unzips in front of a urinal.

JACKIE

(into cell phone)

Yep. Tuesday. J.A.L. from Tokyo.

Full load. All plus rated.

BRIAN

I'm cracking up here, Jackie. You got to talk to somebody; get me out of here.

WALTER RYKER sticks his head in the door. Now 35, and even fatter, Walter is dressed in a suit only "Paulie Walnuts" could love. Classic New Yorker, accent and all. He sweats profusely.

WALTER

I got three-to-one on Idaho taking Miss Congeniality.

BRIAN

Wait till it hits four.

WALTER

Right.

He ducks back out.

JACKIE
(into cell phone)
We're on for the 25th. The bus'll
be there.

CLICKing the phone shut -

JACKIE
I told you they'd have gone for
fifteen days.

BRIAN
Thirty sounded more dramatic at the
time.

JACKIE
One more week and you're king of
the crapper.

BRIAN
You wouldn't believe the number of
guys who don't flush.

A cell phone BUZZES and they both answer. It's Brian's.

JACKIE
You want me to send in a girl?

BRIAN
(to Jackie)
Please. I can get my own.
(into phone)
D.D., my man, I need a driver's
license number. Roxanna Atterbury.
(beat)
How the hell should I know?

INT. BATHROOM -- VERY LATE AT NIGHT

Brian paces crazily. He doesn't have anything to do, no
one to entertain. Suddenly, he's not enjoying himself.

INT. BATHROOM JUNE

Brian flirts with the two professionals, Roxanna and
Ebony.

As he talks, he holds his right hand up and appears to
pull off his index finger.

BRIAN

Tell you what, Roxanna, I'll bet you fifty bucks against a hand job that I can guess the last three numbers on your driver's license.

ROXANNA

How could you know that?

Brian holds his left hand out, palm forward. There is no longer a ring finger.

BRIAN

I'm a psychic, privy to the knowledge of God and his angels. Come on. Fifty bucks against a hand job.

Roxanna and Ebony exchange a dubious look. Brian's left hand thumb appears on the right side of his left hand pinkie.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BATHROOM - STALL DOOR

SILENCE. Then, HYSTERICAL LAUGHTER from Roxanna (O.S.).
Then -

BRIAN ___ (O.S.)

Thar she blows!

More LAUGHTER.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. BINIONS CASINO -- MORNING

TWO LINES OF FANS have formed on both sides of the bathroom door. Brian dances out dressed in a satin boxer's robe. The back is brightly beaded in the design of the American Flag.

Underneath are embroidered words that read: Brian Zembic, King of the Crapper. The crowd APPLAUDS AND CHEERS WILDLY.

Brian holds his hands over his head, like a champion.

BRIAN

Thank you, little people. Thank
you.

At the end of the twin lines, Jackie stands beside a table
piled high with cash. A banner on the table reads:
BINION'S HOTEL & CASINO - and in slightly smaller letters:
30 DAYS IN THE CAN. Two ACCOUNTANT TYPES sit behind the
table, watching the money.

Brian accepts the crowd's adulation. Jackie leans into
him.

JACKIE

(Quietly)

They've floated the offer of
another month, double or nothing.

BRIAN

Not on your life.

JACKIE

Quitter.

BRIAN

Pimp.

JACKIE

Loser.

BRIAN

(faking pain)

Ouch.