

White Dolphin Blues

Sitcom TV Pilot
By Carl Burcham

FADE IN:

EXT. PARADISE BEACH - DAY

A packed white sand beach. Colorful umbrellas flapping, kids constructing sand castles, hairy, big-bellied men in Speedos, wrinkled ladies in fringed one pieces and swim caps, hard bodies, soft bodies, everyone enjoying the sunny, summer day.

NOTE: What follows is an opening song and dance number where cast members and extras introduce themselves and the town.

The music begins (It's upbeat, in the style of an opening Broadway musical number.) The cast dances on the boardwalk behind the WHITE DOLPHIN's feisty, smiling owner CARA MULDOON (late 30s) as she belts out her best Bette Midler imitation.

CARA

*Welcome to Paradise Beach!
To see you here is such a treat!
We think you'll love our town.
Nobody will let you down.*

Cara frowns and points to outrageous mega-developer BAILEY GINCH (late 40s), the most despised man in town (his name rhymes with "Grinch" for a reason).

He grins wickedly and points to a row of high-rises with the ego-driven "GINCH" in gilded-letters atop each one.

ENTIRE CAST

Except. For. That. Creepy. Clown!

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - DAY

Cara wipes the bar. "Welcome to the White Dolphin" glows from a neon sign. She slides two mugs of beer to Paradise Beach OG, MARTIN "SHAPPY" SHAPIRO (70) and ALBERT "PAPPY" PORTER (also 70 but thinks he's 17). They gulp down the brews.

CARA

And here's my bar. It's really fun.

SHAPPY AND PAPPY

Really fun for everyone!

Cara tosses down the rag, dances out the door onto the boardwalk with Shappy, Pappy and the rest of the townspeople.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH BOARDWALK - DAY

Cara grabs the hand of BING BRONSON (38), rakish owner of Bing's Biplane Beach Banners and Cara's on again, off again boyfriend. They begin to dance like Broadway .

CARA
And this is Bing.

Bing tips his baseball cap before spinning Cara around.

BING
We got a thang!

CARA
And maybe soon a diamond ring?!

A bell rings in the church tower behind them. Bing gives a thumbs up and winks at the camera.

BING
A ding dong ding.

Cara makes a worried face.

She releases Bing's hand and glides over to blonde-haired giant DIRT JOHANSSON (early 30s) owner of the PB motorcycle shop. He parks his pimped-out Harley and joins Cara.

They slide down the boardwalk, fluttering like a skillful Sebastian and Mia in "LaLaLand."

CARA
This here's my good friend, Kurt.

DIRT
I much prefer my nickname Dirt.

CARA
He loves to drink and ride his Har-ley.

DIRT
But booze makes me bloat like comedian Chris Farley.

Dirt rubs his belly, holds up a photo of Chris Farley and points to show the comparison (or lack thereof).

DIRT (CONT'D)
Oh well!

Cara reaches lovable Madelyn "MISS MADDIE" Gould (74) perched on a boardwalk bench. Cara plops down, and puts her arms around the sweet old lady.

CARA
*To round it out, we can't do
 without, the lovely Miss Maddie.*

MISS MADDIE
*Sure am glad I moved from
 Cincinnati!*

Cara and Miss Maddie join the others in a group dance.

ENTIRE CAST
*We sure are glad. That she moved
 here. Straight from Cincinnati!*

Cara dances over to the voluptuous Mayor of Paradise Beach, GINA D'ALESSANDRA (34) in skimpy skirt and blouse.

CARA
*Oh, I forgot her Honor the Mayor.
 Hanging onto PB by a song and a
 prayer.*

GINA
*Cuz Bailey Ginch is ruining town!
 High rises rising up. And bringing
 us down!*

ENTIRE CAST
How far will Bailey Ginch go?

Ginch jumps in front of the dancers to hog the limelight.

GINCH
Well wouldn't...you like to know!

CARA
Yes, we sure would like to know!

The music reaches a crescendo as the cast reaches the beach.

ENTIRE CAST
*So have we gotta show for youse.
 It's called White. Dol. Phin.
 Bluuuuuuuuuuues!*

Cara and the cast extend their hands Broadway style. In the ocean, a CGI WHITE DOLPHIN extends its flippers too.

MUSIC HARD STOP.

FADE OUT.

FADE IN:

EXT. WHITE DOLPHIN - DAY

Shappy and Pappy greet each other at the bar's front door.

They exchange their "special handshake"--high fives, low fives, elbow touch, foot bump and handlock with fluttering fingers for the butterfly flyaway. They let themselves in with Shappy's personal set of keys.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH BOARDWALK - DAY

Cara parks her old Vespa, and flips the CLOSED sign to OPEN.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - DAY

She passes snapshots of patrons posing on the boardwalk as the sun sets behind them. She nods at Shappy and Pappy drumming their fingers impatiently, and glances at her clock. 10:00 a.m. The Brits could set Big Ben by these two.

CARA

The usual gents?

SHAPPY

Yup. Professional hooch hounds like us got a reputation to maintain.

PAPPY

It's a heavy burden. Everybody's always a coupla drinks behind us.

SHAPPY

Metaphorically speaking.

PAPPY

Or not.

After serving them two draft beers, Cara checks the bank app on her cellphone. She's four months behind on the bar loan payment to the tune of \$22,000. Shappy sees her frown.

SHAPPY

Why the sad face?

CARA
I'm late with bar rent. Again.

SHAPPY
How late?

CARA
Six months.

PAPPY
Better to be six months late with
your bar loan than six months late
with your lady business.

CARA
(sarcastically)
Gee thanks, Pappy. Your inspiring
words mean the world to me.

PAPPY
You're welcome.

Cara shakes her head. Pappy never disappoints.

CARA
Been promising Jason at the bank
I'd get current once Dad's will's
settled. So far, he's let it go.
But, probate could take months. So
I could face...

SHAPPY
Dum de dum dum.

CARA
Yea. Foreclosure.

PAPPY
S'why I always attend the funerals
of my dearly departed friends.

SHAPPY
What?

PAPPY
For. Closure.

Pappy admires his "quick wit" with a cackle.

SHAPPY
You should have your own comedy
show.

Pappy raises his mug.

PAPPY
I'll drink to that.

SHAPPY
You'll drink to anything.

PAPPY
Okay then, to "anything" it is!

Pappy swigs the beer down in a single gulp. The two barflies look up, become uncharacteristically silent.

Two seductive women--OLGA and SASHA (both mid 20s)--sashay in. Heavily made up Russian "dolls" in leopard capris and skin tight tops that expose ample cleavage.

They wiggle onto stools next to Shappy and Pappy. Ever the horndogs, the men scope them out and chat them up.

SHAPPY
Cara, get our two new friends vodka shots to get the day off to a good start. Pappy's buyin.'

Pappy flinches, then smiles at the Russians, eager to get in their good graces--among other things.

CARA
Pappy? Buying? Never thought I'd hear those words in the same sentence.

Pappy winks at the two women.

PAPPY
That was before I met these two gorgeous creatures!

INT. BACK OF THE BAR - LATER

Cara polishes the tables and booths while Shappy and Pappy hit on the flirting Russians at the front bar. She hears laughter but can't discern the words.

INT. FRONT OF THE BAR - CONTINUOUS

The Russian women listen intently to Shappy and Pappy as they flirt with abandon.

PAPPY

Always wanted to know, why do they
call it Mother Russia? Why not
Father Russia?

Both women chuckle. They flash "these Americans are even
dumber than they look" expressions.

SHAPPY

Rather they called it the
Fatherland? Sounds a bit ominous.

OLGA

Father. Mother. We just call it
Russia. Like you locals call
Paradise Beach PB.

SASHA

Da. Same, same. You boys live here
long? In PB?

PAPPY

All our lives. PB OG.

SHAPPY

But maybe not for long, if Cara
can't pay off that 22,000 bucks.

The Russian women look at each other. The men don't notice
the slight smiles on their faces. They're too mesmerized by
the rest of their bodies.

OLGA

So...the bar has financial problem?

PAPPY

Yup. Months behind on rent. Cara
thinks she could lose the Dolphin
if she can't get current.

SASHA

Hmm. Very unfortunate for her.

OLGA

Da. Be shame to lose this nice
White Dolphin swim hole.

SHAPPY

You mean watering hole?

OLGA

Ah, Da! Wettering hole. My bod.

Pappy nods wantonly. His eyes gloss over with lust.

PAPPY
Yes, your bod.

INT. BACK OF THE BAR - CONTINUOUS

Cara checks her watch and heads for the front of the bar.

FRONT OF THE BAR

CARA
Two more shots ladies?

The women seem rushed, almost guilty, like they were caught "in the act" of something. They hop off the bar stools.

OLGA
Nyet, we have important
appointment. Must leave.

SASHA
Yes, only in city for few days.

Sasha turns to Shappy and Pappy.

SASHA (CONT'D)
Blagodarya for the drinks. We be
back boys to make you happy ending.

They jiggle to the door, turn and simultaneously blow kisses to the two men who turn bug-eyed like frightened goldfish. After they leave, Pappy shares.

PAPPY
I think I wet myself. Thank God and
Wal-mart for Depends All Days.

EXT. GINCH CORPORATION OFFICES - DAY

A local WGIN-TV news crew features Ginch on *Good Morning PB*. He puffs a Cuban, exhales into the faces of the camera crew.

The camera pans the beach to show the "Ginch Empire." High-rises tower over the boardwalk and smaller Mom and Pops.

Local TV host BILL BILLSON (20s) a human cartoon character in a suit with an annoying fake smile, reports.

BILL BILLSON (O.C.)
Paradise Beach, Florida. Beautiful?
Yes.

(MORE)

BILL BILLSON (O.C.) (CONT'D)
 But this lovely beach community
 would not be the gem it is today
 were it not for the visionary
 genius of Bailey C. Ginch.
 Developer extraordinaire.

Ginch appears on camera. Billson extends his mike.

GINCH
 Thanks Bill. I'm flattered. Though
 you are absolutely right. As I like
 to say: PB is nothing without M-E.

Billson sucks up to Ginch.

BILL BILLSON
 So true, boss.
 (a beat)
 Er...Mr. Ginch. You can see it in
 every one of these glistening
 monuments to your vision.

GINCH
 Yes Bill, they are truly a
 testament to my genius. One day
 soon, I plan to own every piece of
 property along this boardwalk. And
 on that day I will rename it...
 GINCHWALK.

BILL BILLSON
 A spectacular idea!

GINCH
 And I'll petition city council to
 rename PB...GINCH WORLD.

BILL BILLSON
 Genius! I know I speak for all PB
 residents when I say that life-
 changing day cannot come soon
 enough! So no obstacles impede your
 achievement of that vision?

Ginch shakes his head, flicks cigar ash onto the crew's feet.

GINCH
 Pfft. For a man like me, there's no
 such thing as an obstacle. To me,
 it's an opportunity.

BILL BILLSON
 Very good point! From Sun Tzu, "The
 Art of War," right?

GINCH
 What? No, Scrooge McDuck, "Duck
 Tales: The Movie."

The camera pans left, pauses on The White Dolphin.

BILL BILLSON (O.C.)
 However, there is still one lone
 holdout crucial to making your
 dream a reality, correct?

Ginch sees where the camera is pointing and loses his
 composure. He puffs angrily on the cigar, exhales into
 Billson's face. Billson coughs.

GINCH
 Not for long, Billy Boy. Not for
 long.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - DAY

Cara, Shappy and Pappy watch the *Good Morning PB* story on TV.
 Miss Maddie, an avatar for Betty White, arrives just in time
 to hear Ginch's threatening words.

MISS MADDIE
 Over my dead body!

SHAPPY
 Me too!

PAPPY
 Me three!

CARA
 If Dad's trust isn't settled soon,
 we're all dead.

MISS MADDIE
 S'why we gotta fight the smug
 bastard!

SHAPPY
 We could try to raise the cash.

PAPPY
 I vote for a Worm Grunt.

MISS MADDIE
 What on earth are you babbling
 about, Albert?

PAPPY

We rope off a spot of land in PB Park. Folks buy a square of grass, say one foot by one foot. And the first one who gets a worm to the top gets a pot of cash.

PAPPY (CONT'D)

So instead of horse whispering, it's worm charming.

SHAPPY

Exactamundo! Worms respond to vibrations so you can yell or grunt or whack the ground and they come to the top.

CARA

Lovely idea. What nice imagery.

(beat)

Next.

Silence. The others look at the ceiling, thinking. Then—

MISS MADDIE

Kiss the pig for a slab of bacon!

SHAPPY

Shaved Head Contest!

Cara listens to the trio bandy around one absurd idea after another. Finally, she tosses the dish rag on the bar and heads for her office.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH DOWNTOWN - DAY

Gina spots Bing leave PB Jewelry & Gems with a tiny gift box. She ducks into an alley so Bing won't spot her. But, the rest of the town does.

SMARTASS ONLOOKER

Hiding from the voters again mayor?

GINA

Shush!

Soon a dozen locals hide with her and watch Bing. She whispers a prediction to the throng.

GINA (CONT'D)

He's finally gonna do it! Bing's gonna propose to Cara!

INT. CARA'S OFFICE - WHITE DOLPHIN - DAY

An animated Gina explodes in and plops down in the guest chair. She's excited and focused.

GINA
He's gonna finally ask you!

Cara tilts her head, puzzled. Gina leans forward. Lowers her voice as if she's talking to the Pope.

GINA (CONT'D)
Bing! I saw him coming out of the jewelry store. Just now. With a little wrapped gift box.

Gina points to her ring finger. She raises her eyebrows.

GINA (CONT'D)
He's gonna ask you to marry him!

Cara stares into space. Gina can't understand why her best friend is not over-the-top, jump in the air thrilled.

CARA
(beat)
I'm not sure I'm ready for that right now.

GINA
What? You two're meant for each other. How long you been dating? Eight years?

CARA
Ten.

GINA
Ten years! Christ on a cracker! I could've been married and divorced three times in that amount of time!

Cara rolls her eyes.

CARA
Pretty sure you were.

Gina consults her fingers, mouths names of her ex-husbands as she counts. It takes a bit of time. Cara glances at her watch. Gina finally finishes.

GINA
Damn, you're right!

CARA

It's just not a good time. Bar's in financial trouble. Town's in a semi-panic over Ginch buying up everything. Someday maybe. Not now.

Gina's exasperated. She shakes her head and rises to leave.

GINA

Well, you're not gettin' any younger. Which come to think of it, neither am I. Maybe Bing'll propose to me after you turn him down.

Cara smiles as Gina leaves in her usual suggestive, skirt-swishing way.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Nosey as always, Shappy and Pappy eavesdrop outside the door.

PAPPY

I knew it! I knew Bing was gonna--

They hear rustling inside and scramble back to their barstools.

Shappy whistles "Moon River." Pappy pretends to read the "PB Beachcomber."

As Gina saunters by, she smirks a knowing look.

GINA

Stay out of trouble gents.

SHAPPY

Always do Madam Mayor.

PAPPY

Mmm huh, yes ma'am. We're trouble-free.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - A BIT LATER

Cara cleans the windows facing the beach. Arm in arm with Sasha and Olga, Ginch barges in. The Russians wink at Shappy and Pappy. The two geezers blush.

GINCH

Cara, my Soviet colleagues have advised me that your quaint establishment has encountered a financial dilemma.

CARA
How did--?

GINCH
You have forty-eight hours to pay
off or face default. Remember, I'm
Chairman of the PB Bank board. The
bank that owns your loan!

Shappy and Pappy gawk at the Russian women. Disappointed and
now aware their fantasies won't be coming true.

SHAPPY
You betrayed us! You said you
wouldn't tell anyone.

PAPPY
And you promised us a happy ending!

SASHA
Sorry boys, sometimes good times
end with spurt instead of rocket
launch.

Ginch begins to leave. Cara confronts him.

CARA
Ginch. You may have more money than
me. And more power. And more
property and--

Cara turns toward Shappy and Pappy.

CARA (CONT'D)
Help me out here.

PAPPY
Uh, more belly fat?

CARA
Not really what I was looking for
but it'll do in a pinch. More belly
fat. But you know what you don't
have?

Cara pauses dramatically, tilts her head, waits for Ginch to
respond. No dice.

CARA (CONT'D)
Friends! I've got lots of 'em. And
I'm sure they'll help me out.

She crosses her arms, proud of her commanding soliloquy.
Ginch looks her in the eye and smirks.

GINCH

Know your problem? You lead with your heart. I lead with my head. Only fools need friends. And they tend to surround themselves with other fools just like themselves.

Ginch extends his arm at Shappy and Pappy. Exhibit A.

GINCH (CONT'D)

Need I say more?

Finished, Ginch leaves arm in arm with his Soviet colleagues. At the door, he turns back.

GINCH (CONT'D)

Oh, and don't think about going to Jason. As of this morning, he's looking for another job.

Cara happens to glance out at the beach. She sees Dirt playing beach volleyball. He's amazing. He aces serves, spikes for points, dives for saves. She has an idea.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH BOARDWALK - DAY

Cara catches up with Ginch as he plods down the boardwalk.

CARA

I have an offer.

(beat)

A beach volleyball match. A team of yours versus one of mine. And no ringers! You win, I'll sell the bar to you for a song. I win, you forgive the White Dolphin's twenty-two grand debt and I resume operations like normal.

GINCH

Why would I make a dumb deal like that?

CARA

Because the talk about the match will make the Dolphin even more valuable when you take it over.

Ginch knows a good deal when he hears one.

GINCH

Guess I better call my lawyers. Time to prepare take-over papers.

E./I. GINCH CORPORATION OFFICES - A BIT LATER

As they enter the building, Ginch turns to Sasha and Olga.

GINCH

Ladies, thank you for your
undercover sting today.

SASHA

Da, reminds me of when we peed on
the hotel bed for Commander Putin's
hidden camera! Remember Olga?

OLGA

Oh da! What a fun blackmail prank
we pulled on that bloated orange-
haired buffoon!

GINCH

Wait! What? You two ladies were--

Sasha and Olga just smile and nod. Ginch shakes it off.

GINCH (CONT'D)

Well anyway thank you for today's
spywork. And I'll tell you what, no
way I'm gonna lose that volleyball
match. No matter what it costs.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH BOARDWALK - DAY

Cara continues to watch Dirt play beach volleyball. This time
his play is embarrassing. He misses the ball, trips and face
plants in the sand. Cara shakes her head and mumbles.

CARA

What have I gotten myself into?

She hang-dogs it back to the bar.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - DAY

Cara confronts Shappy and Pappy about the Russians.

CARA

Why guys?

SHAPPY

We couldn't help it Cara! You know
how Russian women are. Haven't you
ever seen a James Bond movie?

PAPPY
Or Natasha on Rocky and Bullwinkle?

SHAPPY
So conniving. So ruthless--

PAPPY
So sexy!!

SHAPPY
And that.

Cara shakes her head--

CARA
Natasha on Rocky and Bullwinkle?!

PAPPY
What? She's a good actress.

CARA
I need to do some paperwork.

Cara traipses back to her office.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - LATER

Miss Maddie shuffles into the bar.

MISS MADDIE
What's this I hear about a big
volleyball game that's gonna
determine the fate of the bar?

SHAPPY
It's legit. Cara has a wager with
Ginch.

MISS MADDIE
Oh my Lord! The poor thing won't
even get a chance to enjoy her
proposal. Did you hear? Bing is
gonna propose to Cara!

PAPPY
Oh heck yes. Heard that hours ago.

MISS MADDIE
Wonder how the word got out so
fast? Gina just now told me.

Shappy and Pappy look away. Their guilt's palpable.

INT. CARA'S OFFICE - DAY

At her desk, Cara sees a letter from the liquor distributor, BREWMART. She reads it aloud.

CARA
Dear Customer. We regret to inform
you our beer and liquor prices will
increase twelve percent beginning
immediately.

Cara tosses the letter on the desk.

CARA (CONT'D)
BrewMart? More like SCREWMart.

Just when she thought the day couldn't get any worse, Cara sees the front page of the "PB BEACHCOMBER."

INSERT - NEWSPAPER HEADLINE

"Cooters Beachfront Bar Opens Soon! Tangerine Hot-pants,
Bottomless Wings and the Coldest Beer in Town Coming to the
Boardwalk."

BACK TO SCENE

CARA (CONT'D)
(sarcastically)
Yippie, more competition!

Cara trudges to the chalkboard on her wall, examines the list she has written under the title.

INSERT - CHALKBOARD TITLE

"REASONS TO CLOSE THE BAR AND MOVE TO HAWAII"

On the MOVE side, the list reads:

Financial trouble

Vespa being repossessed

Hemorrhoids getting worse

IRS auditing bar

She grabs the chalk and adds...

ScrewMart raising prices

Cooters/Hotpants coming to town

Shappy's/Pappy's bar tab beyond control

She stands back and checks to see what's listed under DON'T MOVE. Nothing. She adds one item.

Bing might propose

Then, she steps back, thinks twice and erases it.

There's a knock on the door. An exasperated Bing comes in. Cara puts down the chalk.

CARA (CONT'D)
Hey B. Just thinking about you.

He gives Cara a quick hug and kiss.

BING
I'm always thinking of you, C.

Bing sees the board. He reads the list, sees nothing listed under don't move.

BING (CONT'D)
Geez. Lots of bad stuff, but
nothing good. How about this?

Bing grabs the chalk and writes under DON'T MOVE.

Bing is here!

Big smiles from both of them, Bing's sincere, Cara's artificial. Bing removes an envelope from his back pocket.

BING (CONT'D)
Just got word Ginch Corp's bought
the airport. And first thing he's
doing is raising tenant rents by
five hundred bucks a month!

He wads up the envelope and tosses it at the trashcan. It bounces off onto the floor. He shakes his head.

BING (CONT'D)
How in holy hell am I gonna cover
that much more every month?

Cara hugs him, hoping to ease the pain. Over her shoulder, Bing sees party balloons and buckets of paint in the corner. His frown abruptly transforms into a mischievous grin.

BING (CONT'D)
What're the balloons for?

CARA
Special occasions. Birthdays,
anniversaries, football Sundays.

BING
Mind if I borrow a bag?

CARA
Sure, I guess.

He takes a bag of balloons, turns to her.

BING
And those two buckets of paint?

Now she's confused.

CARA
What's up Bing?

BING
Just an idea.

Bing loads up with balloons and paint, and strides out the door. After a beat, he returns and kisses Cara on the cheek.

BING (CONT'D)
Geez, sorry. Forgot! Thanks babe!

He leaves again. Cara shakes her head as the door slams behind Bing. She sighs.

CARA
Anytime. Babe.

EXT. ABOVE RITZY SUBDIVISION - NIGHT

In his biplane, Bing buzzes Ginch's estate, tossing out paint-filled balloons. They splash the roof and side of the mansion with explosions of pink and yellow paint.

He flies over one last time to admire his handiwork.

BING
Hope you enjoy your new Jackson
Pollock paint job, Mr. G.

Flying away from the scene of the crime, he notices Ginch in his swimming trunks sitting by the pool at the mansion beside the one Bing just paint-bombed.

Bing realizes he didn't bomb Ginch's house. He bombed his neighbor's.

EXT. GINCH'S NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE - LATER

Bing knocks on the front door. A porch light flashes on. Bing nervously adjusts his baseball cap, fiddles with his shirt and places his hands behind his back.

A tall, muscular 'LURCH' of a man opens the door. Adam's Apple bobbing, Bing swallows, takes a deep breath and begins his confession.

BING

So, uh...

(beat)

I may have accidentally paint bombed your house.

Bing flashes a full-toothed grin at the giant man towering over him. Lurch doesn't look too pleased.

FROM BING'S POV

Knuckles on a gigantic, clenched fist blast toward Bing.

SLAM TO BLACK.

RETURN TO SCENE.

EXT. GINCH'S ESTATE - NIGHT

Ginch watches the encounter. He's laughing his ass off, his rotund belly wobbling like a half-filled water balloon.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT - DAY

In a COACH cap, Cara addresses the motley bunch of players she loosely refers to as her team.

Dirt is in leather motorcycle pants, bike chain and boots.

Pappy, in Bermuda shorts and a short-sleeved work shirt.

Bing, sporting a fresh black eye, in torn jean shorts and Aloha floral shirt.

Shappy, in a dress shirt, bow tie and seersucker pants.

And Gina, in a mini-skirt and cleavage-revealing silk top.

CARA

Other than Dirt, has anyone here ever played volleyball before?

Pappy's hand shoots up.

CARA (CONT'D)
And when was that, Pappy?

PAPPY
Middle school.

CARA
So roughly a half century ago, give
or take a few decades?

Pappy is offended.

PAPPY
I'll have you know I'm still at my
old playing weight. I take good
care of myself. Know my secret?

Cara waits for it.

PAPPY (CONT'D)
Garlic!

Standing next to Pappy, Shappy mumbles.

SHAPPY
It's not really a secret.

And covers his nose.

Cara gathers around the team for a pep talk.

CARA
I know you all love the Dolphin.
That's why we have to win! Just
imagine what the bar would be like
if Ginch owned it. No more two
dollar mugs. He'd serve over priced
drinks. You'd need a reservation to
eat there. And if you did, his food
would have pretentious French names
that nobody could pronounce!

PAPPY
Like that snail thing!

DIRT
I dunno. I kinda like escargot.

Everyone peers at Dirt, amazed that he is the one who likes
slow crawling slugs served in the shell with butter and
garlic sauce.

DIRT (CONT'D)

What?! You think a man of the world like me only eats at Diners, Drive-ins and Dive joints?

Cara tries to regain control.

CARA

Okay guys, let's focus. We know Ginch won't play fair. So we're gonna use the element of surprise. Any thoughts?

Pappy raises his hand, waves it like a elementary schooler asking the teacher for a potty pass.

CARA (CONT'D)

Pappy? You don't need to raise your hand by the way.

Pappy drops his hand quickly. But he's still excited to offer his strategy.

PAPPY

Okay, what if I fake a heart attack on the court. And while everyone's distracted Dirt spikes the ball!

All the other players mumble and nod. Why not give it a try?

CARA

Might work. But we also need to find their weakest link and send all our balls in their direction.

SHAPPY

That's gotta be Ginch.

BING

Yea, and if that doesn't work and it looks like we're cooked, I can do a flyer over and create a sand storm!

Cara, arms crossed, smiles and sighs. She blows her whistle.

CARA

Why don't we just practice a bit?

BEGIN MONTAGE.

A) Dirt serves. The ball rockets over the court, and nails a screaming skateboarder who flies off the boardwalk pier and into the ocean.

B) Seductively, Gina unbuttons her blouse to expose more cleavage. On the other side of the net, Pappy gazes at her, mesmerized. Gina serves. The ball bounces off Pappy's forehead and drops to the sand. Pappy drops soon thereafter.

C) Bing spikes the ball but it bounces off the net, rebounds, hits him in the face, and drops to the sand. On his side.

D) Shappy and Pappy dive for the ball. They knock heads and the ball drops to the sand.

In pain, Shappy nurses his shoulder. A young man Cara has never seen before escorts Shappy to the team bench.

END MONTAGE.

RETURN TO SCENE.

Cara sighs, shakes her head and whispers to herself.

CARA (CONT'D)
I am so royally screwed.

EXT. WHITE DOLPHINS' TEAM BENCH - LATER

Cara checks on Shappy. He introduces the lean, lanky young man, HOWIE (22), bursting with energy, eager to please.

SHAPPY
Cara. Howie. My grandson.

HOWIE
Nice to meet you Cara. You're one of Grand Pop's favorite people.

CARA
Thanks, he's one of mine too.
(beat)
Sometimes.

She smiles at Shappy who's caught up in his own personal drama, still babying his shoulder. Cara turns to the team.

CARA (CONT'D)
Guess that's it folks. If Shappy's out, we don't have enough players so...

HOWIE
I can play.

Cara spins around. Did he just say what she thought?

SHAPPY

That's for sure. Howie's on a full athletic ride at Florida State.

Cara's eyes widen. The rest of the team gathers around.

CARA

Shappy. Do you mind if--

SHAPPY

Hell no! I was only playing to help you and the bar out anyway. Gotta save the Dolphin from His Greediness.

CARA

Okay then Howie, get out there. Let's see what you got.

Howie serves. The ball zooms over the net and lands in the far right corner for an ace.

The players are dumbstruck. Nobody moves for a few seconds before Dirt finally retrieves the ball and tosses it back to Howie for another serve. Cara confronts Shappy.

CARA (CONT'D)

Why in the hell didn't you tell me your grandson could play like a God?

Shappy shrugs and continues massaging his shoulder.

This time as Cara watches her team play, she's smiling. She whispers to herself.

CARA (CONT'D)

Maybe I'm not so screwed after all.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH - DAY

It's the day of the big match. Screaming fans fill the temporary stands. Everybody in Paradise Beach--and then some --has turned out.

EXT. WGIN REMOTE BOOTH, COURTSIDE - CONTINUOUS

HAROLD GEM from local radio station WGIN--owned by Ginch-- broadcasts from court side.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Both teams--Cara's and Ginch's--parade past the boisterous, applauding crowd on their way to their respective benches.

EXT. WHITE DOLPHINS' TEAM BENCH - DAY

Cara's team--Bing, Dirt, Howie, Pappy and Gina--wear plain white T-shirts with "White Dolphins" stenciled on front and their names handwritten in Sharpie on the back.

On hers, Gina has printed GINA in Pink next to a red lips icon.

Pappy has written "The Pap is Back."

Dirt's has no name at all.

CARA
Did ya forget to write your name
on your shirt Dirt?

DIRT
I'm goin' stealth.

CARA
Ah.

DIRT
Plus I'm a bad speller.

CARA
Right.

EXT. GINCH GOLDEN GLADIATORS' TEAM BENCH - DAY

Ginch's players have their names printed in gold on the back of black velour form fitting T-shirts. The men's read: CRUNCH and SPIKE. The women's: HERICANE, AMAZON and BALLBUSTER. Ginch's reads HEAD HONCHO.

None of Ginch's recruits are shorter than six two; Amazon is nearly seven feet tall. All "specimens" have muscles upon muscles and less body fat than a block of granite.

Cara stomps to Ginch and gets in his face.

CARA
I thought we agreed no ringers!

GINCH

There are no ringers on my squad.
All my players are gainfully
employed by the Ginch Corporation.

CARA

Doing what... wrestling hippos?

GINCH

Not at all. They all work in HR.

Cara rolls her eyes.

CARA

Who runs your HR department? Dwayne
"The Rock" Johnson?

EXT. PARADISE BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT - DAY

The teams take the court. Ginch's team serves. It quickly
begins to look like a blowout.

BEGIN MONTAGE

Quick shots of the Gladiators making point after point. White
Dolphins' players dive and jump and run but--with the
exception of Howie--can't return the serves or volleys.

END MONTAGE

EXT. SCOREBOARD - LATER

The score reads Gladiators 9, White Dolphins 0.

EXT. WHITE DOLPHINS' TEAM BENCH - CONTINUOUS

Cara calls time out for a pep talk. Everyone gathers around.

CARA

You act like they're invincible!

GINA

It's like David vs. Goliath.

CARA

But David killed Goliath. What do
they got that we don't got anyway?

PAPPY

Uh, great tans, hummingbird speed
and bodies like Gods.

DIRT
And Goddesses.

Dirt winks at Amazon on the other side of the net. She rolls her eyes, growls at him, and sticks her finger in her throat.

CARA
Maybe. Well, probably... but we've got one thing they haven't got--a good cause. A really good reason to win. To keep the White Dolphin open for business!

EXT. PARADISE BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT - CONTINUOUS

The team isn't convinced. Their heads droop as they return to their positions on the court. A siren wails in the distance. The fans and players turn toward the noise.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH - CONTINUOUS

Zooming toward the court, siren screaming and lights flashing, is a dune buggy piloted by a PB Lifeguard named TREVOR (20s) with Miss Maddie in the passenger seat. The White Dolphins and the Gladiators watch the developing spectacle with anticipation.

INT. DUNE BUGGY - CONTINUOUS

Miss Maddie rises up in the buggy and yells.

MISS MADDIE
Stop the match! Stop the match!

The buggy rolls up onto Ginch's side of the court. His team scatters. Mumbled cuss words abound.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT - CONTINUOUS

Miss Maddie lumbers out.

MISS MADDIE
Thanks for the ride Trevor.

TREVOR
Anytime Miss Maddie.

Trevor wheels away spinning sand into the Gladiators' faces in the process.

MISS MADDIE
 You broke the rules Bailey Ginch.
 These players aren't PB residents--
 you cheatin' bastard.

She points at five cars, all late model convertibles, lined up on the beach beside the volleyball court.

MISS MADDIE (CONT'D)
 Check out those plates.

Cara, the Dolphins and the fans look. Each of the cars' vanity plates owned by the Gladiators' players--SPIKE, HERCANE, AMZON, CRNCH and BBUSTR--sport New Jersey tags.

MISS MADDIE (CONT'D)
 I did some research. That Google gadget on the Interwebs comes in right handy.

Miss Maddie points at the Gladiators.

MISS MADDIE (CONT'D)
 They're all from Jersey. And they play on the East Coast Pro Beach Volleyball circuit. Ginch is paying pros to play for him today!

Ginch scrambles to respond with an alternative fact--

GINCH
 I DID say they were gainfully employed by me!

Fans boo. And hiss. And throw empty--and full--red Solo cups at him. GINCH'S MOTHER emerges from the crowd like Moses parting the Red Sea.

GINCH'S MOTHER
 Your father would have been ashamed of you, Bailey C. Ginch. Just as I am.

At only five feet tall, Mrs. Ginch shoots eye daggers at her jelly-bellied, ogreish offspring and shakes her index.

GINCH'S MOTHER (CONT'D)
 You WILL forfeit the game to this nice Cara lady or I will cut off your inheritance. And maybe a body part!

Cara, quiet until now, steps forward.

CARA

Thank you, Mrs. Ginch. But that's not necessary. I asked you to the match so you could see for yourself how your son's win at all costs approach is not good for PB.

GINCH

Mother, I agree with you and 'the nice Cara lady.' So I think there's only one way to determine this. Fair and square. We play Mano to... woman-o!

Cara turns to face Ginch and hear his proposal.

GINCH (CONT'D)

Just us two. In a shootout. Winner of the coin toss serves. First person to go up two points wins.

Ginch looks at his mother. She seems to be okay with the counter proposal.

CARA

Deal.

MISS MADDIE

You don't have to do that, Cara. Ginch should just forfeit.

The Dolphins players nod in agreement. Cara waves them off.

CARA

But I do need to do it. For myself. You may have noticed us Irish folk are sort of proud. Plus imagine how I'm gonna feel when I kick Ginch's ass!

Miss Maddie and the Dolphin players smile. Pappy pats Cara on the back.

PAPPY

Make that sumbitch squirm, girl!

Cara wins the coin toss and steps up to serve. It's just Ginch and her on the court. Silence. Only the cackling gulls and soothing ocean waves can be heard in the background.

Cara serves a floater; it hangs in the air for what seems like forever. Ginch gets under it, but the sun glares into his eyes. He swings wildly at the ball and misses. The ball plops to the sand. The fans go crazy.

EXT. WGIN REMOTE BOOTH, COURTSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Harold Gem whispers into his radio microphone.

HAROLD GEM

Cara Muldoon can win the game with
this next serve.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT - CONTINUOUS

Cara tosses the ball into the air, jumps as high as she can, smacks it hard. The ball just barely clears the net. Ginch plants both feet, eyes the ball coming his way, and raises his hand to hit the return.

The volleyball smacks him squarely in the nuts.

EXT. WGIN REMOTE BOOTH, COURTSIDE - CONTINUOUS

Harold Gem screams into the mike.

HAROLD GEM

Cara Muldoon has done it. She has
won the match! She retains
ownership of PB's most beloved
watering hole--The White Dolphin!

EXT. PARADISE BEACH VOLLEYBALL COURT - CONTINUOUS

The fans swarm the court. Total chaos. The Gladiators head for their convertibles. Ginch is sprawled on the sand. PB EMTs place him on a stretcher and cart him off.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - DUSK

The bar is packed. The entire town turns out to celebrate the White Dolphin's volleyball victory and being able to stay alive to see another day. There's lots of pride for standing up to Ginch. Toasts everywhere. Singing. Laughing.

BING

Can I have everybody's attention? I
have something I'd like to give to
Cara.

He withdraws the gift-wrapped box. The crowd gathers around anticipating a diamond ring and a proposal. Cara acts wildly excited but in reality, she is anxious, torn between happiness and dread. Bing presents it to her.

BING (CONT'D)
I've been wanting to give you this
for a long time.

She slowly unwraps the box. The ribbon falls to the floor. As she opens it, Bing drops to a knee. The crowd sighs. He really is going to propose!

She opens the box and sees that it's not a ring but a white dolphin pendant. Bing stands up again, hands her the ribbon that fell to the floor.

BING (CONT'D)
You can probably use this again. I
hate to waste wrapping paper and
ribbon.

Cara takes the ribbon, smiles uncomfortably.

BING (CONT'D)
I hope you like it. It's to
commemorate the day you bought the
bar from Miss Maddie. Ten years ago
today!

Cara hides a sigh, forces a smile and leans forward as Bing places the pendant over her neck. She gives Bing a hug and a kiss.

Gina winks at Cara; their secret is safe.

INT. WHITE DOLPHIN - SUNSET

The celebrations continue inside the bar. Cara yells to the bar patrons.

CARA
Come on you party animals. Sunset!
Photo time! Gotta fill that wall.

She points to the sunset photos on the wall by the bar. Everyone inside starts to scramble out the door.

Bing sees Ginch walking on the boardwalk past the bar. He shoves his way past everyone else to go outside. Pappy sees Bing and Ginch and envisions a combustible situation about to occur. He motions to Shappy.

PAPPY
That ain't good.

EXT. PARADISE BEACH BOARDWALK - CONTINUOUS

Ginch sees the celebrating crowd pouring out of the White Dolphin. Head down, feeling left out, he plods on.

BING
Hey... Bailey!

Ginch stops. Turns around slowly. Wonders why Bing Bronson is addressing him. Bing takes a few steps toward Ginch.

The boardwalk is filled with revelers now. They gather around Ginch and Bing. Pappy whispers to Shappy.

PAPPY
Get ready to call 911.

Cara approaches Bing, grabs his shoulder. He raises his hand, shakes his head, steps toward Ginch again. A beat, then...

BING
Why don't you join us for a photo?
Don't recall seeing you in any of
the sunset shots.

Ginch raises his eyebrows. Cara's eyes widen. Shappy pokes Pappy in the shoulder. The crowd mumbles, some for the idea, some against. Miss Maddie walks to Ginch, grabs him by the arm and pulls him to the others lining up for the photo.

MISS MADDIE
Come on, you dumb fool. Tomorrow,
you can get back to conquering the
world. Tonight, just help us
celebrate the ass kicking--or
should I say ball busting--you got
today.

Miss Maddie chuckles. Ginch smiles, accepts her invitation and finds a spot for the shot. Everyone lines up, shortest in front, tallest in back--something they've done many times.

Gina snaps the photo on her phone as the sun sets behind the smiling, half tanked horde. We see a close up of the photo.

Ginch stands between Cara and Bing. Everyone is smiling even Ginch, despite the fact that Cara and Bing have made devil's horns with their fingers behind Ginch's head.

And somehow, unbeknownst to the folks being photographed, a white dolphin has snuck behind them in the ocean. And he is smiling for the camera too.

THE END