

12/21/77

A SYNOPSIS OF THE SHOOTING SCRIPT

OF

HARRY'S BOARDWALK ADULT BOOKSTORE\*

Satirical comedy-drama that centers around a boozing Atlantic City public defender named Peter Moon, about 35, who would rather carouse the new casinos and bars on the Boardwalk than represent the downtrodden in the courtroom. The picture's villain is an overzealous legal bonehead named Richard Duck who recently joined the Atlantic County District Attorney's Office after finally passing the New Jersey bar exam in mid-life on the fifteenth go-around.

When Moon, redfaced from a lot of scotch, follows a leggy buxom hooker fresh from Las Vegas named Gretchen Good into the "Grand Opening" of an adult bookstore on the Boardwalk next to the merry-go-round, the place gets raided by the DA'S office. This is goin to be Duck's first case in court, so he personally leads the raid with drawn service revolver. In the commotion that follows Gretchen jumps out the toilet window and gets away. As the cops seize the pornographic movies and magazines, Moon tries to give the proprietor, Harry Fink, a little on-the-spot legal advice and gets arrested himself for obstruction of justice. Moon is hauled off screaming he's a claustrophobe. Duck reckons he's a fag public defender.

The next morning Harry gets charged in court with 37 counts of "exposing obscene pictures to the view of others." Duck offers to dismiss the obstruction of justice charge against Moon if Moon promises to stay out of the case. Moon promises and Duck dismisses. But Moon, incensed over spending a long claustrophobic night in jail, reneges on his promise and gets himself appointed as Harry's public defender. Then, while Duck is still ineptly protesting the appointment, Moon gets Harry released on his own recognizance. Duck is fit to be tied. When Moon and Harry sashay out the front door of the courthouse, Duck, convinced that they're both "public perverts," has them followed.

Harry is looking forward to Moon successfully defending him at his obscenity trial. Moon however is more interested in finding Buxom Gretchen. He enlists Harry's help and eventually does find her - under surveillance of Sgt. Claudia Finger - working in an Atlantic City whorehouse called the Seahorse Motel. Moon is very fond of hookers so he and Gretchen hit it off and go out on the town, loosing Claudia on the way. They have a wonderful time slurping steamed clams in a famous Atlantic City seafood eatery, riding the Boardwalk in a rolling chair, gambling at the Chalfonte-Haddon Hall, and rounding out the evening on Moon's furry waterbed in his oversized beach shack in the sand dunes.

\*Registered WGAw No. 195577, December 21, 1977

Next morning, Gretchen dresses to go back to work at the Seahorse, but Moon talks her into staying with him.

Moon continues to outmaneuver Duck in court during pretrial motions that Moon has to make because Harry is so insistent on having a jury trial. Moon doesn't want to have a jury trial. It means a hell of a lot of work for him. Moon wants to just wait until Deal Day comes, and make a plea bargain with the prosecution. But Harry, who feels he hasn't committed any crime, doesn't want to hear about plea bargains. Harry is adamant about having a jury trial. Moon tells Harry he's facing 111 years. That gives Harry pause, but he still wants a jury trial. So Moon files a discovery motion and, over Duck's objection, gets temporary custody of the 37 movies Duck had seized as evidence. Moon screens the movies for everybody in the Atlantic City Public Defender's Office - including his expert witness, Dr. Jonathan Glass, a strange man who went around the state of New Jersey recording people's responses to

Meanwhile, Duck plots to nail Moon - this time nail him right. Besides believing Moon's a fag pervert, Duck believes he's Gretchen's pimp. Duck tells Claudia "pimping is a common sideline of fairies." This is when Claudia starts to have doubts about Duck.

Using Claudia's surveillance information, Duck goes to the Seahorse armed with a concealed Fargo transmitter, posing as a john in the market for a with the new girl with the big boobs. The madam calls Gretchen at Moon's place. Gretchen is expecting Moon home for lunch soon, but she hops in a cab and shoots over to the Seahorse for some fast bucks. When Gretchen takes \$200 from Duck in the bedroom, Claudia records the transaction in her unmarked police car parked down the street. Then Duck arrests Gretchen for solicitation and prostitution.

Moon speeds through the streets of Atlantic City, cutting in and out of traffic, heading for the Seahorse ... where he suspects Gretchen went. He arrives out front just as Duck is marching Gretchen out the front door in handcuffs at gunpoint. Duck is delighted that Moon arrived in time to witness this scene, even though Duck is unable to arrest Moon too. Duck asks Moon, "How come you're here? Are you the pimp? Or just looking for some sport?"

Moon goes off and gets drunk. The madam bails Gretchen out. Moon doesn't want to have anything more to do with Gretchen. But Gretchen finds him in a sweaty Boardwalk singles bar, cries, and promises never to run off again. Moon eventually wanes and they go back together. He now however has a new score to settle with Duck.

When Deal Day rolls around, Duck is anxious to make a plea bargain in the case against Harry. If Harry will plead guilty to just one count, the prosecution will dismiss the other 36. But Moon refuses to deal and forces the judge to set the case for trial.

The judge, infuriated at Moon's pigheadedness, revokes Harry's own-recognizance status and orders him back into custody.

Now Harry is having second thoughts about not having made a plea bargain. Harry keeps talking about the 111 years. Moon says, "Yeah but that's just the maximum - you would get something less than 111 years ..." Moon wants to punish Lousy Lawyer Duck by having a jury trial. After the trial starts, and Duck begins screening each pornographic movie for 12 somber-faced jurors, Harry demands Moon accept the offer to plead guilty to just one count. Only now it's too late because Atlantic County Court Rule 22E provides that once the trial begins, deals are prohibited. If Harry wants to plead guilty now, it will have to be guilty to all 37 counts.

But something happens after Duck finishes screening the movies. The trial takes a sharp turn for the defense. Moon calls Dr. Glass and Glass's testimony is very persuasive. Glass testifies that he's a clinical psychologist and he conducted a poll of 1500 households to determine whether sexually explicit material appealed to prurient interests - the legal definition of obscenity. A majority of the of the people he polled would not state that the material appealed to prurient interests, and in his opinion, based on his study of contemporary community standards, the 37 movies seized by Duck - although explicit - are not obscene according to the legal definition of obscenity. Duck's inept attempts to crack Glass on cross-examination just worsen the case for the prosecution. And Duck's closing argument to the jury is nothing short of terrible.

As Duck argues, Moon leans over and tells Harry the case is in the bag. And it is. Duck sees Moon and Harry beaming, turns to the jury and says, "I realize this case is a big joke to Mr. Moon and his client ..." Moon jumps to his feet to object. Before the judge can rule, Duck further charges Moon that Moon is giggling. Moon calls Duck a liar. The judge tries to restore order. Duck tells Moon he should stick to pimping. Moon shoves Duck. Duck shoves Moon, calling him a fairy pimp pervert. Then all hell breaks loose. Moon dives at Duck. The bailiff tries to pull Moon off but goes flying into the reporter. Duck and Moon wrestle into tables and chairs. Books and papers and file folders fly every which way. The judge is hollering "Stop them ... somebody stop them ..." The bailiff takes out his MACE canister and sprays Moon and Duck as they roll over and over across the floor. People are screaming. The bailiff runs out of MACE. Moon crashes into and pulls down a large bookshelf along with 400 lawbooks. They keep fighting. Duck swings the New Jersey state flag at Moon, but Moon gets it and throws it through a window. More fighting. Moon is winning. The courtroom is a shambles. In a final act of violence, Moon heaves Duck ass over tincups into the vacated jury box ... where he comes to rest.

The next time we see Moon he's locked in the cage with Harry. Harry's disgusted with Moon. "You're the worst lawyer in New Jersey," Harry says. "Don't talk to me." Then Harry and Moon are brought into the courtroom. The jury has a verdict.

Actually the jury has 37 verdicts. All not guilty. Moon is ecstatic. Duck is livid.

To celebrate the victory, Moon throws a night swimming party. Even the jury foreman attends with his wife. Then lightning and thunder signal the coming of a Northeaster, so everybody moves inside Moon's shack where Harry sets up a projector in the bedroom and shows his pornographic movies. But behind the shack, atop a sand dune, is an embittered Duck watching the projector's flickering light in the curtained bedroom window through binoculars. He tells Claudia, standing beside him, that if only he could witness one illegal act, he would kick in the door and arrest every "pervert with his pants down" he could catch. Duck is convinced that "crimes against nature and the State of New Jersey" are going on inside Moon's shack but he can't see anything through the curtained windows. Claudia wants to go home.

Then Gretchen comes out the front door to walk on the beach with her drink in the howling wind ... which Duck sees as his one and only chance to get into Moon's shack. Duck has Claudia intercept Gretchen and tell her the DA'S office is willing to dismiss the prostitution charges against her. Claudia brings Gretchen back to Duck waiting in a paddy wagon parked in the sand dunes. Duck proceeds to try to get Gretchen to admit on tape that Moon's having a sex orgy. Gretchen begins to cry and holler that she wants to go back to the shack. Claudia says okay, blocks Duck and lets Gretchen out. Duck is screaming, "I'm not finished with that whore!" As the paddy wagon pulls away, Duck lunges out and goes after Gretchen.

Meanwhile Moon has left the party and is walking on the beach with his drink, yelling "YOOOOOOOO GRRRREEEEETTCHENNNNN ...."

Duck overtakes Gretchen and tries to get his handcuffs on her. But she throws sand in his face and takes off running. Duck curses and takes off after her. As he runs, he draws and cocks his service revolver. As Gretchen runs, she hollers "Peter! Peter!"

Moon hears her in the distance, turns and runs in the direction of her voice.

Duck stops running, assumes a stance and draws a bead.

Gretchen comes around a dune and breaks into a broad smile. Moon is standing 50 yards in front of her. Then Duck pulls the trigger. BAAAMMMM! Gretchen sinks to the sand like a released piece of meat.

Moon can't believe what he has just seen. He tries to say something but he can't form a word. He dashes forward and falls to his knees beside Gretchen's slumped body face down in the sand. A blue-red glob of blood oozes out and swells over the behind of her white bikini. Duck walks out of the darkness with his smoking revolver. Moon is about to go for his throat when Claudia pulls up in the paddy wagon. Gretchen lets out a sickening groan.

Claudia calls an ambulance and Duck is taken into custody.  
Gretchen lives.

Picture ends with Duck in jail clothes several days later being marched with other prisoners into the courthouse. He's charged with attempted murder. Moon helps Gretchen hobble along the sidewalk. They're going to testify for the prosecution at Duck's preliminary hearing. They watch Duck as he passes. He's made a better adjustment to custody than G. Gordon Liddy. We fade out on Moon and Gretchen watching Duck disappear in the courthouse.