

10 PIN ALLEY

by
Gene Kato

Copyright (c) 2009 By Gene Kato

CAUTION: Professionals and Amateurs are hereby warned that performance of 10 PIN ALLEY is subject to payment of a royalty. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of The United States of America, and of all countries covered by the International Copyright Union (including the Dominion of Canada and the rest of the British Commonwealth) and of all countries covered by the Pan-American Copyright Convention, the Universal Copyright Convention, the Beane Convention, and of all countries with which the United States has reciprocal copyright relations. All rights, including without limitation professional/amateur stage rights, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television, video or sound recording, all other forms of mechanical, electronic and digital reproduction, transmission and distribution, such as CD, DVD, the Internet, private and file-sharing networks, information storage and retrieval systems, photocopying, and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. Particular emphasis is placed upon the matter of readings, permission of which must be obtained from the Author in writing.

The English language stock and amateur stage performance rights in the United States, its territories, possessions and Canada for 10 PIN ALLEY are controlled exclusively by the Author. No professional or nonprofessional performance of the Play may be given without obtaining in advance written permission and paying the requisite fee.

Inquiries concerning production rights should be addressed to Gene Kato via e-mail at: licensing@nextstagepress.net.

SPECIAL NOTE

Anyone receiving permission to produce 10 PIN ALLEY is required to give credit to the Author as sole and exclusive Author of the Play on the title page of all programs distributed in connection with performances of the Play and in all instances in which the title of the Play appears for purposes of advertising, publicizing or otherwise exploiting the Play and/or a production thereof. The name of the Author must appear on a separate line, in which no other name appears, immediately beneath the title and in size of type equal to 50% of the size of the largest, most prominent letter used for the title of the Play. No person, firm, or entity may receive credit larger or more prominent than that accorded the Author.

10 Pin Alley Characters

PIN 1 - The Leader Pin
PIN 2 - The Racist Pin
PIN 3 - The Accountant Pin
PIN 4 - The Lover Pin
PIN 5 - The Announcer Pin
PIN 6 - The Innocent Pin
PIN 7 - The Lesbian Pin
PIN 8 - The Gay Pin
PIN 9 - The Gay-er Pin
PIN 10 - The Narcoleptic Pin
RED PIN - The Superhero Pin
BLACK BALLS - The Archenemy

Note: While the pins might be standing in different positions in each frame, they are always referred to as the same number they started the play with. The back of this acting edition contains diagrams of the pin positions used in the original production.

Author's Note - I would be completely remiss if I didn't mention the following people who were so instrumental in helping me with the Denver reading of the play -

T. David Rutherford
Dan Langhoff
Tyler Collins
Jeremy Sortore
Jessica Clare
Katie Feld
Michelle Merz
Bernie Cardell
Paul Page
Kirsten Kreig
Gregg Adams
David Kincannon
Karla Puskas

Thank you for giving your time so freely to me.

- Gene

10 Pin Alley was produced by Vintage Theatre Company (Craig Bond, Artistic Director) in Denver, CO and opened on February 27, 2009. It was directed by the playwright with lights being run by Christopher Dezember and sound being run by Michelle Merz-Hutchinson. The opening night cast was as follows:

PIN 1-----Patrick Collins
PIN 2-----Gregg Geis
PIN 3-----Samantha Yon
PIN 4-----Mike Marlow
PIN 5-----Robin Litt
PIN 6-----Jessica Clare
PIN 7-----Stacey Nelms
PIN 8-----Sam Gilstrap
PIN 9-----Jason Maxwell
PIN 10-----Karla Puskas
BLACK BALLS-----Jim Honiotes
RED PIN-----Gene Kato

10 PIN ALLEY

THE SCENE: *A classic beginning with epic music. The pin end of a bowling lane. It's dimly lit. 10 BOWLING PINS stand silently, patiently awaiting their fate.*

PIN 8. I can't see shit! What's happening?

PIN 1. Quiet! He'll hear you!

PIN 8. Maybe he's not out there.

PIN 1. He's there. He's always there!

PIN 4. He's not gonna come at us when the lights are off. That's not his style. He likes to turn on the lights and charge. Cause a little chaos. That's his M.O.

PIN 1. Will all of you please, shutup! I'm trying to concentrate!

PIN 8. On what?

PIN 1. On when and if and such and all kinds of whatnot. Now quiet!
(Silence.)

PIN 4. I don't know what you mean by that.

PIN 9. Does anyone think this dim light makes me look fat? I feel like I look fat in the dark.

PIN 8. You're beautiful. You're perfect the way you are!

PIN 7. He looks just like the rest of us.

PIN 8. Not a chance.

PIN 9. You're biased.

PIN 8. You think? *(They stand in silence)*

PIN 9. *(After a long pause)* Yeeeeeeeeaaaaaaah.

PIN 8. Yeah.

PIN 1. If the two of you, don't shut your F-ing ball holes. . .

PIN 2. Who has a ball holes?

PIN 6. I don't.

PIN 4. I don't.

PIN 10. I'm sleepy.

PIN 9. *(Extremely flamboyant.)* I do. It's right here. But you can't see it because FUCKING 3 IS STANDING IN MY FUCKING WAY! 3!
YOU'RE A GODDAMN ASSHOLE! You're mother hated you.

PIN 3. I don't have a mother!

PIN 7. I'll be your mother.

PIN 3. You will?

PIN 7. Yeah.

PIN 3. Do you hate me?

PIN 7. No. *(Pause)* But I'd love to spank you! *(The lights come up. The pins become more tense. The sounds of the bowling alley become more pronounced.)*

PIN 6. Oh, Jesus! Something is happening that I can't see!

PIN 8. What is it?

PIN 6. I don't know! I can't see!!

PIN 1. Steady as she goes, People! Steady as she goes! We know what this guy is like! He's sleek, he's fast, and he has no conscience! No conscience at all!!!!!!

PIN 2. The rest of you may be afraid of him, but I'm not! Come on Darkie!!! Where are you, you black bastard?! You wanna piece of us! Bring in on!!! There's ten of us and only one of you!

PIN 9. *(Waving his arms)* That's right! I'm here!

PIN 2. Okay, nine of us and one albino cucumber! The point is . . . you're outnumbered you cocksucker!!! *(Silence)*

PIN 9. Which one of us are you talking about?

PIN 1. Alright, folks here we go! Now just remain calm! If we work together, we can beat this kamikaze son of a bitch! If we get knocked down, we're gonna stand up and face him again and again! First thing's first - NO 300! That's our primary objective, then no 200, and if we're really sharp - 100 can be a thing of the past. Are you with me?

(The PINS ad-lib a weak response) I SAID ARE YOU WITH ME?!

(The PINS cheer with more confidence) Alright! Let's do this thing!

(There is a sound of a ball being rolled down the alley) HOLD ON!!!!

(Suddenly, BLACK BALLS runs on from behind the audience. He screams as he enters the stage. All of the pins scream as he charges through the crowd. Sound of pins being hit by BLACK BALLS. All 10 pins lie on the stage, groaning. BLACK BALLS runs to a large scoreboard and marks an "X" - lights out. Sound of a pinsetter resetting the pins. Lights up. The 10 pins are standing again - now in a different order. PIN 5 is now the headpin.)

PIN 5. Welcome back, sports fans! As frame 2 rears its ugly head, our 10 heroes find themselves up the creek without a paddle! Black Balls show that he still has moxie. He's got the goods. He's top rooster in the henhouse! He's the Brie on the cracker. He's -

10 PIN ALLEY

PIN 2. *(Now in the 10-pin spot).* You shut your cake hole, Boy!! He's only attacked us once!

PIN 1. Anybody see him?

PIN 2. No. He must not be smiling.

PIN 8. *(Now in the 7-PIN spot)* Oh, he did not just say that. That was so inappropriate.

PIN 2. I said it. I heard me.

PIN 8. Wait! He's lining up. Here we go again!

PIN 6. *(Now in the 4-PIN position)* I'm scared. I'm naked with fear.

(All of the pins ad-lib about her being naked)

PIN 4. *(Now in the 9-PIN position)* I'll protect you, My Darling!

PIN 1. How can you protect her when you're on the back row? *(The sound of a bowling ball rolling down the alley. The pins all chant "No 300!, no 300!, no 300!". BLACK BALLS runs in. Sound of ball hitting the pins. 9 pins lie on the ground. PIN 9 (who was standing in the 6-PIN spot wobbles trying desperately to stay standing.)*

PIN 9. Whoa whoa whoa whoa!!!! *(He falls. BLACK BALLS laughs a sinister laugh, draws an "X" and runs away. Lights out. Sounds of the pin-setter resetting the pins. Lights up. PIN 10 is now in the front. He's asleep. PIN 1 is in the 5-PIN spot.)*

PIN 1. FUCK ME ON A SHUFFLEBOARD TABLE, PEOPLE! He's got a double! One more strike and he's a third of the way through the game! *(He looks at PIN 9 who is in the 4-PIN spot)* And you! We were counting on you to stay standing - is that so damn hard for your type to do? Always wobbly! Always trying to lie down! Would it help if used the words upright, rigid, and stiff?!

PIN 9. It might. Let's try it. *(PIN 4 and PIN 6 are in the 2-PIN and 3-PIN spot. They hold hands. PIN 8 is in the 9-PIN spot and PIN 7 is in the 8-PIN spot.)*

PIN 1. 3? Where are you?

PIN 3. I'm back here in 10's spot.

PIN 1. What are our chances? Mathematically speaking?

PIN 3. Well, he's in pretty good form today. He's not holding anything back. That's two perfect balls.

PIN 8/PIN 9. You can say that again!

PIN 1. Quiet! I . . . *(An idea hits him)* Wait a second! Maybe that's the problem! Maybe we're being too quiet! *(PIN 10 snores)*

10 PIN ALLEY

- PIN 1.** Maybe we need to make a little noise!
- PIN 7.** That's all you've been doing since the lights came up is making noise! Poor Narkey up there can't get any sleep! (*PIN 10 snores himself awake*)
- PIN 10.** I . . .um . . .sorry. (*He falls asleep again*)
- PIN 6.** As long as he stays away from me. I hate being up front!
- PIN 4.** Don't worry. This guy is right handed - I'll take the brunt *for you.*
- PIN 6.** I love you.
- PIN 4.** I know. I'm one of the nice guys. (*They smile and look out front*)
- PIN 1.** What's happening?
- PIN 8.** We all just landed in a Merchant-Ivory film.
- PIN 4.** I think we have a few minutes, looks like the guy is ordering a drink.
- PIN 1.** What kind of drink?
- PIN 4.** (*Straining to hear*) Bloody Mary. (*The PINS cheer*)
- PIN 5.** Ladies and gentlemen you heard right. An order for a Bloody Mary has been placed here at the Cosmic Bowl-a-Rama! One of Louise's classic cheap liquor concoctions should have Black Balls in the gutter in no time. This is indeed a day for celebration if you are pin numbered one through ten. (*Silence. All of the PINS, except 10, look at 5*)
- PIN 8.** You've been waiting all day to use that stupid line, haven't you?
- PIN 5.** Yep.
- PIN 3.** Black Balls could still take a few more runs at us before the alcohol takes effect. That bowler is pretty fat.
- PIN 9.** Oh, my god, you're mean! You know, for a quiet girl, you can be so verbally rough and tumble. Who knew?
- PIN 1.** I did! He's always there for us! A real pin up gal if you ask me.
- PIN 9.** None of us did, but don't ask - don't tell, Rambo! Am I right? Someone back me up. Am I right? (*PIN 10 snores. PIN 9 almost starts to cry*) Fuckers. That's what you all are. You're little fuckers!
- PIN 8.** Now now, we didn't mean it.
- PIN 9.** You didn't say anything!
- PIN 8.** Well, we didn't mean it. We take it back.
- PIN 9.** Take what back?
- PIN 8.** Nothing - we take nothing back. Are you happy now? (*To the*

rest of the PINS) Don't we everyone? We all take the nothing back.
(*All of the PINS murmur agreement*) See? Now, isn't that better?

PIN 9. MM-hmm.

PIN 8. Good. Now - you have to be strong. Right? (*PIN 9 nods*)
Where's my tiger? Show me my tiger? (*PIN 9 smiles shyly*) Come on.
Where's my tiger? Where's my little sabre-tooth?

PIN 9. Grrr.

PIN 8. THERE HE IS!!!! (*Silence*)

PIN 2. What the hell just happened?

PIN 8. He gets anxiety attacks so I have to calm him down. Verbally.
It's like aromathereapy without the smell. (*All of the pins murmur quips like, "Oh!" and "I've heard of that" or "Candles make me nervous". PIN 10 snores.*)

PIN 1. HEY! 10! You're on! This is it! This is your moment to shine!
WAKE UP!!

PIN 10. (*Waking up*) How did we do? Did we win?

PIN 4. Not exactly.

PIN 6. We're only in Frame 3.

PIN 4. You and I are gonna get hit first.

PIN 3. By my calculations, it's gonna hurt.

PIN 1. That's life, though. You gotta do that sometimes. Gotta get hit.

PIN 2. Gotta be brave.

PIN 1. Take one for the team.

PIN 8/PIN 9. You said it, Brother! We love that!

PIN 1. Please. Not so much enthusiasm from you two.

PIN 9. You know what I always do to chase the blues away?

PIN 1. I swore I wouldn't ask.

PIN 9. You know, 1, my mother had a term for people like you.

PIN 1. She did?

PIN 9. Yes.

PIN 1. Do tell.

PIN 9. She called your type - an ass. (*Silence. PIN 1 turns to the others*)

PIN 1. Well, I feel like I have just been put in my place. Don't the rest of you feel that way? That 9 just smacked me right in my place? (*A beat. Then all of the pins murmur things like, "Yeah" and "I would have to agree" and "What time do you think it is in Dayton?" and "I'm not sure, I don't do impressions".*)

PIN 9. Anyway, as I was saying before I was so rudely *interrupted*. I always find that singing is a good way to chase away the doldrums. You know? Maybe even a little dance to help raise the spirits? Anyone up for that? *(Pause)* Anyone want to give it a try? *(10 snores)*. No? Not even a little polka? Box step? Bunny hop? Nothing? Not even a little funky chicken? *(Silence)* Fine. Go fuck yourselves. What do I care? I'm in 4's no-man's land anyway. *(Pause)* Quakers! I hate you all. I wish this were a skeeball lane, because all of you are just a bunch of holes! You hear me? YOU'RE JUST A BUNCH OF HOLES!!!!

PIN 1. *(Looking around 10)* Oh, god! He's staggering. Poor schmuck almost dropped "He Who Must Not Be Rolled". Maybe we're looking at a gutterball, People!! Hope springs eternal! *(PIN 9 looks at PIN 1)*

PIN 9. What?

PIN 1. *(To PIN 5)* Can you give 9 a recap?

PIN 5. *Hello Sports Fans! Welcome back as our 10 mild-mannered heroes stand and patiently wait as bowler plus drink plus ball may equal standing salvation here on the Rock and Bowl runway. In case you tuned out all of us rednecks were standing shouting fearful epigrams at our dark counterpart hoping he will run afoul and not cause murderous maddening multiple marauding mayhem momentarily! (Pause) Back to you Bob! (Silence)*

PIN 3. Um . . . who is Bob? And what did any of what you said have to do with hope springing eternal?

PIN 1. *It doesn't matter. The bottom line is: we have a chance. First rule of any military strategist - find your enemy's weakness. Now, I've been studying this son of a bitch and I've determined that he has concentration like none that I have ever come across.*

PIN 9. *(More to himself)* I knew it! *(1 looks at 9 for a brief second, then continues, confused.)*

PIN 1. Can anyone tell me what that weakness might be? *(All of the PINS (except 10) raise their hands.)*

PIN 1. You can just say it out loud! This isn't a classroom.

PIN 2. He's black and can't be trusted?

PIN 6. He's short?

PIN 7. He's a man?

PIN 4. He likes music?

PIN 3. Has he ever been to France?

PIN 9. He's bigger than a breadbox?

PIN 10. (*Snoring, then mumbling*) I love a bumblebee in the summer.

PIN 8. No! No! No! I know what it is!!! (*They all go quiet*) It's the way he concentrates.

(*To 1*) Right? Am I right? I'm right, right?

PIN 1. You're right.

PIN 8. Right, I'm right.

PIN 1. Right.

PIN 8. Right.

ALL PINS BUT 10. Right! (*10 snores*)

PIN 1. So, all we have to do is pay attention more closely - weakness begets weakness. Remember that. Weakness begets weakness. Say it with me.

ALL PINS BUT 10. Weakness begets weakness!

PIN 10. Weakness.

PIN 1. 10?!

PIN 10. (*Snapping awake*) Beethoven!!

PIN 1. You've got to look alive! You're the leader this frame!

PIN 10. Right! Leader!

PIN 1. So, what's your gameplan?

PIN 7. This out to be good. Sleeping Beauty leads the way. Does anyone else feel like a sacrificial lamb, or is it just me? (*No answer*)

PIN 7. Ok, it's just me.

PIN 10. *Gameplan, yes, gameplan. I'm going to stand here and keep watch.*

PIN 1. I'm already doing that.

PIN 10. You're already doing that. Okay. Then, I'll see if I can mess up his concentration.

PIN 2. My job! Racial insults and general obscenities.

PIN 10. Okay, 2 has that one. (*Pause. Thinking*) I wiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii . . .hope?

PIN 4/PIN 6. That's us.

PIN 10. Ok - looks like everything is covered. (*Sound of the ball rolling down the lane*)

PIN 3. Oh, my god! He's early! He's really early!

PIN 1. Jesus Christ! He's offline!!! Brace yourselves people!!!

ALL PINS. BROOKLYN!!!!!!!!!!!! (*The lights go out as BLACK BALLS laughs his way toward the pins. PIN 1 covers his eyes as BLACK BALLS*

tears through the crowd. Lights out as BLACK BALLS marks a “9” on the score sheet. Lights up. Only PIN 1 remains. PIN 1 realizes he is still standing and starts laughing.)

PIN 1. YEEEEES!!! How do like that?! Kiss 300 goodbye, Mamma’s Boy!!!

BLACK BALLS. Never fear, Lone wolf! I’ll return shortly!

PIN 1. Yeah, you do that! (*BLACK BALLS exits*) What an asshole. Alright. He missed me once. He can certainly do it again. Just relax. After all I am Number 1. Numero Uno. The Head Pin. Head Honcho. Big Cheese. Relax. Okay. Breathe in. (*He does*) Breathe out. (*He does*) Okay. I’m calm. Psyche him out. Yeah. Get him while he’s weak. (*He looks down the lane*) HEY! Pelotas negras! You do realize that one miss can really screw ya, right? I mean - you’re already looking at about a 49 plus you’re next shot instead Of 60 plus your next 2 shots!! That’s gotta sting! Imagine if you miss me by drifting to the left again! That would really stink, wouldn’t it, Pardner? (*Silence. Then, the sound of the ball rolling down the lane. BLACK BALLS bursts onto the lane and knocks 1 over. As he races by he yells . . .*)

BLACK BALLS. That’s how I roll, Muthafucka!!! (*Blackout. Sound of pins resetting. Lights up. Full set of pins. PIN 2 is now the head pin, behind him are PIN 8 and PIN 9, behind them are PINS 5, 7, and 10. The back row consists of PINS 1,3, 4, and 6.*)

PIN 2. He actually called you a “muthafucka”?

PIN 1. That’s what he said.

PIN 2. After he knocked you down?

PIN 1. Knocked me down. Yelled in my face.

PIN 2. SHIT! I hate that! He’s a racist! That’s what that black sonofabitch is! He’s a goddamn racist! I fuckin’ hate that! (*Silence. PIN 2 fumes while PIN 10 snores. PIN 6 clears her throat.*)

PIN 6. Are you saying you hate racism?

PIN 2. That’s what I said, Mary Poppin.

PIN 9. That’s Mary Poppins. With an “s”.

PIN 2. Don’t be stupid, Powderpuff, anyone can see she’s only one pin. No “s”.

PIN 3. There is a certain logic in that.

PIN 9. It’s there. Flimsy - but present.

PIN 2. Alright, Pins, listen up! The Black Ball has thrown down the

gauntlet. He's moved into our neighborhood and disrespected an upstanding member of the military!!

PIN 8. He's just a bowling pin. As are we all.

PIN 2. Quiet! (*PIN 8 and PIN 9 give each other a look, then back at PIN 7 who makes the "jack-off" hand motion.*) Now, 1, I don't think anyone here is going to argue that despite the fact he was able to get the spare - you held your ground and prevented 300 from being a reality - no matter how remote the possibility. So, where do we go from here? On to the next task! We have to work on destroying 200. Then maybe, just maybe, we can squeak out an under 100 victory! Who's with me? (*Pause. The PINS look at one another, 10 snores.*)

PIN 3. Well, we kind of all are.

PIN 7. Yeah. We're standing here aren't we?

PIN 4. All nine of us.

PIN 10. (*Asleep*) Yes, I love Maury Amsterdam.

PIN 6. What choice do we really have?

PIN 2. Choice? Choice?! We all have a choice! To just lie down and take his abuse or to stand up together and fight!

PIN 6. (*Waving her arms*) What? We have no arms. How can we fight?

PIN 4. Good one, Beauts!

PIN 6. (*Smiling at 4*) Thanks . . .Hants!

PIN 7. Okay. No chance for me at all. I can see that.

PIN 9. (*Whispering to 7*) She can be turned. Let her smell your Brunswick stamp.

PIN 5. This just in! We are all in agreement! We have no plan! (*All of the PINS, except 2, murmur in agreement. Sound of ball rolling down the lane.*)

PIN 2. You people make me sick! I need warriors to stand with me! Who can I count on to make a stand?!?! (*BLACK BALLS rushes in and clobbers PIN 10 and PIN 6 who, in turn, take out the entire back row. PIN 1 clips PIN 5. Blackout. Sound of the pinsweep clearing the PINS. Lights up on PIN 2, PIN 9, PIN 8, and PIN 7 in the "bucket" formation.*)

PIN 8/PIN 9. Here we are! You're Hardwood Warriors! (*PIN 8 and PIN 9 look at each other and laugh.*) Oh, my god! We went there! We SO went there!

PIN 2. Yeah. Alright, Men, listen up -

PIN 7. (*Overlapping*) I'm back here, too.

PIN 2. Like I said - alright, Men, this proves that we are the strongest of the strong. (PIN 9 begins to cry.)

PIN 2. What the matter?

PIN 9. I miss my friends! (*He weeps. PIN 2 grows more impatient.*)

PIN 2. Look, I need you to calm down. Get a hold of yourself!

PIN 8. (*To PIN 2*) Hey! First of all, you need to just zip it, Mister! He's trying! He's just a little lonely. He needs a little reassurance. We all do! But there's no way we can feel the least bit stable with you yelling all the time. It makes us all jumpy and jittery! (*PIN 9 composes himself*)

PIN 2. That's just the point I'm trying to make, Sweet Stack! Don't you get it? We've all just stood here while that . . .

PIN 8. (*Overlapping*) Don't say it.

PIN 2. Jig-a-ball . . .

PIN 8. (*Overlapping*) You said it.

PIN 2. (*Continued*) ...runs roughshod over the entire lane. Someone needs to put that boy in his place.

PIN 7. Boy? You just called him a "boy"? No wonder he likes putting you on your back. (*PIN 9 clears his throat.*)

PIN 9. Just so you know . . .I'm fighting the urge to make a joke.

(*Pause*) Just so you know. Just so you all . . .know.

PIN 2. I've been watching him. Keeping an eye on him and, believe me, his aim is starting to falter.

PIN 8. I told you it would. It's the Bloody Mary.

PIN 2. No no. It's more than that. Much more. I think he's starting to feel the pressure of failure. If I can just get him to crack under the pressure.

PIN 8. Oh, God! What are you going to do?

PIN 2. Just a little more smack talk. It worked last time. I just think he needs to be held down while his sense of self-worth and personal failure be exalted! Nothing wrong with that!

PIN 8. Oh, no! You're going to say something rude aren't you?

PIN 7. Have you considered the possibility that maybe he's just good at what he does? (*Silence. Then PIN 2 bursts into hysterical laughter.*)

What? What did I say that was so funny?

PIN 2. It's just like your kind to be all positive and stick up for the minority.

PIN 7. What does that mean?

PIN 2. Those that have nothing and can't acquire always stick together - you're like society super glue. You all make me sick! Fine. You want to take it up the ass, be my guest, but don't drag the rest of us down with you.

PIN 7. You're hateful.

PIN 2. I'm a survivor.

PIN 9. What was that ass part again? I couldn't hear you because your soapbox was so high. (*Sound of BLACK BALLS rolling down the lane*)

PIN 2. Shut up, Fancy Pants! Someone has to take a stand and that's what I'm doing! (*He looks up just in time to see BLACK BALLS make the spare.*) Shit. (*Blackout. Sound of the Pinsetter setting up the pins. Lights up. In the headpin spot stands the RED PIN. He has a huge, goofy, smile on his face. When he talks he sounds very much like Dudley Do-Right. Row 2 has PINS 1 & 7. Row 3 consists of PINS 3, 5, and 6. The back row has PINS 8, 10, 4, & 9.*)

RED PIN. Get behind me! Get behind me!

PIN 7. Oh, my god! Who the hell are you?

PIN 4. Did he just tell all of us to get behind him? He's the Head Pin. We're already behind him.

RED PIN. Never fear, Brave Warriors! I have arrived! You're safe.

PIN 3. Apparently.

PIN 7. For the moment.

PIN 6. Unless you're Pin 2. Where is he?

PIN 7. Check the other lanes. Any burning crosses?

PIN 3. (*Sniffing the air*) You know, call me paranoid, but I think I might smell a little something burning.

PIN 1. Oh, Sorry. That's me. (*He looks around, slightly embarrassed*) Burrito.

RED PIN. (*Turning to PIN 1*) Ah, Burrito. Well, Buenos Dias, my Mexican Amigo. Me llamo es Pin rojo!!!

PIN 9. Oh! He speaks Tejano! YAY! My nickname is Nueve con Loco! Did any of you know that? (*The PINS murmur things like, "No" or "I never knew" or "Are Duncan Heinz and Betty Crocker having an affair?"*) Crazy Nine! That's me. It's also my CB handle and my MySpace name! (*Silence*) My . . . MySpace name. (Pause)

Treeeeeeennnnnnndy. (PIN 1 turns back to RED PIN)

PIN 1. I'm not Mexican. (*He smiles slightly*) But I am in charge, so if

you'd be so kind to...

RED PIN. (*Overlapping*) In charge? Don't be silly! You're number 2. How can you possibly be in charge?

PIN 1. I'm not number 2. I'm number 1.

RED PIN. If you are number 1 then why are you standing in the 2-pin spot? Hmmm? Answer me that, Sidekick. If everyone would like to take note - I am standing in the Pin 1 position, so that makes me the leader, the guy in charge. You're saviour. I'm like the Jesus Christ of sporting equipment.

PIN 6. And so handsome.

RED PIN. You betcha! (*He smiles. She giggles. PIN 4 looks hurt*)

PIN 4. I was always the handsome one! You always liked me!

PIN 6. Yes...but...oh! He's so red!

RED PIN. Please! Everyone! You may marvel at me at your leisure. After all I'm number nine on the list of the seven wonders of the modern world.

PIN 6. Really?

RED PIN. Number nine!

PIN 4. What's number 8?

RED PIN. (*Jealous*) The Slurpee.

PIN 1. Yes, well, all the same. I'm number 1.

RED PIN. That's the spirit, My South of the Border, Compadre, but you are not numero uno.

PIN 1. Yes, I am!

RED PIN. What position are you?

PIN 1. I beg your pardon?

RED PIN. Position. You. Now. Number?

PIN 1. Number 2, but...

RED PIN. (*Overlapping*) No buts! Number 2 you are and number 2 you shall stay!

PIN 1. I'm just number 2 right now!

RED PIN. That's right. Accept it. Drink it down like a fine wine with a cute little block of stinky cheese. Acceptance of thine own self is the path to enlightenment. Thus spake me.

PIN 1. Look, Friend, we live here! You're only a guest! While we may be in different positions, we all know our place. Sound off, People! (*PIN 10 snores*)

PIN 9. I'm 9!

PIN 8. I'm 8!

PIN 7. 7 here!

PIN 6. YAY!

PIN 5. 5. I'm 5!

PIN 4. I'm 4!

PIN 3. I'm 3.

PIN 1. And I'm 1

RED PIN. You're two.

PIN 1. I'm not two.

RED PIN. Then who's 2?

PIN 1. 2's 2.

RED PIN. That's you. You're 2.

PIN 1. No. 2 is 2.

RED PIN. 2 is 2?

PIN 1. 2 is 2.

RED PIN. 2 is you.

PIN 1. No, 2 is 2. I'm 1.

RED PIN. I'm 1.

PIN 1. No. I'm 1 in 2.

RED PIN. That's 3.

PIN 3. I'm 3.

PIN 1. Yes, of course you're 3.

PIN 3. Thank you.

RED PIN. Again, I must correct your math. She is 4.

PIN 1. She's standing in for 4, but she's 3.

RED PIN. Who is standing directly behind me?

PIN 1. 5.

RED PIN. That's right.

PIN 1. But 5 actually is 5.

RED PIN. Numbers are constant, My Friend. They don't lie. *(Pause)*

Look, why don't I just give you a new name and we can dispense with the number game. I will henceforth call you: Alabaster Sugarbase III.

How is that? *(The PINS all take a moment and murmur their thoughts about the new name.)*

PIN 1. Look here, Buddy. I'm not sure what planet you came from, but you can't just drop in here from out of the sky and start taking over.

This is a war zone! We've been fighting this ball for quite a long time. This is our place, our fight, our community, and our numbering system. I have always led this group and will continue to do so until we vanquish this evil-doer or they throw me out back into a dumpster. The decision will be mine. I've earned the trust of these nine other upstanding citizens and I will not allow that trust to be tarnished by allowing some half-crazed red bodied nut job to weasel his way in and start changing minds and dashing hopes, you got it?!

RED PIN. *(Simultaneous with PIN 1)* Look, Alabaster, times are rough right now. When conflict rears its ugly face and makes its rabid kitty growl, that is when it's time for a new hero. Only two people have the gusto, the stamina, the resolve to stand tall and actually make a difference. Those two people are me and Pat Morita. Since Pat Morita is now dead, it falls on me to save the day. I have what the Japanese call the essence of Yakomoto. Oh, yes. Smell the noodles and call me Ishmael, My friend! Call me Ishmael!!! For I am that which nourishes the soul by protecting the body. And THAT is the whale of a truth! A WHALE of a truth! *(The sound of a bowling ball rolling down the lane. The PINS are so engrossed in the argument, they never see BLACK BALLS coming. He slams into PIN 7 - taking out the back right quadrant of pins. Only RED PIN, PIN 1, PIN 3, and PIN 8 remain in a diagonal line. BLACK BALLS goes to the scoreboard and writes a "6", then grumbles off. Lights down. Sound of Pinsetter. Lights up. RED PIN and PIN 1 are still arguing, oblivious to what just happened.)*

RED PIN. Oh, good. Someone turned on the lights.

PIN 1. Hey, Pal! I'm right here! Screw the lights!

RED PIN. You have an awful vocabulary. That's why you're number 2.

PIN 1. I'm the leader because I'm observant! I take pride in the fact that these pins look up to me! I listen! A good leader listens! *(PIN 8 grabs PIN 3 by the shoulders and points out toward the audience. PIN 3 gets a worried look across his face.)*

PIN 3. Um . . .guys.

PIN 1. *(To PIN 3)* Quiet! We're talking here! This is for your benefit 3!

RED PIN. 4.

PIN 1. 3!

RED PIN. 4!

PIN 3. *(Pointing out to the house)* My number doesn't really matter

right now.

PIN 8. *(Starting to pray)* Now I lay me down to sleep, I pray to 9 my shaft to keep...

PIN 3. *(Overlapping)* Shit!

PIN 1/RED PIN. What?

PIN 3. I just enameled all over myself!

PIN 1. How old are you?

RED PIN. *(To PIN 1)* Leave the lass alone, Alabastard!

PIN 1. That's Alabaster!

RED PIN. I know. I added the "D". It seemed appropriate.

PIN 1. Yeah, well, it's Alabaster, not . . . *(He realizes what he's saying)* Wait! NO! It's 1! My name is 1! *(Silence)*

RED PIN. Cretin.

PIN 1. Fine! You want to think you're all so high and mighty, then go ahead Captain Rojo! I don't care. Once this frame is over you'll either be in some other position, or left off the lane completely then this conversation will be nothing more than pointless babble. Headache is more like it! You'll be gone soon enough! I can wait!

RED PIN. *(Simultaneous with PIN 1)* Good! I will think what I want! I can afford to be high and mighty when I'm standing here drinking in all of life's wonders! Right up front. The head honcho am I, Buddy! The head honcho!! I'm basically the king! King Me! That's my name! Black Balls are no match for me! You hear me! No match! *(During the previous speeches, BLACK BALLS rolled down the lane and took out PIN 3 and PIN 8 - leaving an open frame. RED PIN and PIN 1 are oblivious to all of the action. BLACK BALLS walks up to the score sheet and marks the open frame.)*

BLACK BALLS. Will the two of you shut up?! Jesus Christ! I've never heard such . . . such . . . useless prattle! My God! *(He marks the score, then storms off. We hear him talking as he walks away.)* Pick a little talk a little and all that ridiculous bullshit. Fuckin' pins! *(RED PIN and PIN 1 look at one another)*

PIN 1/RED PIN. What just happened?

**THE PLAY IS NOT OVER! IF YOU WANT TO KNOW HOW IT
ENDS – ORDER AN ACTING EDITION AT
WWW.NEXTSTAGEPRESS.NET**