

TOOTHPICK MEN

Robert Sarkanen

A drunken bar patron sets his mind to throwing a toothpick across the room into a beer can while his bored date tries to distract him.

Close up of a man (CARL) turning toward us away from his table, clearly drunk, sipping a cheap beer to match his office wardrobe, nodding tiredly to the non-descript music. He's got a tag on his chest, "Hi, my name is" with CARL scribbled sloppily beneath. We're in a Tiki-bar, late night, a few stragglers or a slow night - some kind of company party maybe? He looks bored until he spots a can of beer on the other table. He looks down to the toothpicks next to him. He looks back to the beer. Back to the toothpicks.

Cut to Carl pitching the toothpicks at the can, gathering his focus. At first wildly missing, one by one bouncing off the other table. We pan over behind him to reveal a substantial quantity of empty beer bottles behind him. He keeps on missing. Dozens of toothpicks lie now next to the can, stacking up. We pull back further to reveal his bored date sitting by the table. On her nametag: DANA.

Dana gets sick of it and pokes Carl. Carl shrugs, indifferent. *In the zone*. She pokes again, harder this time. No reaction except another failed throw. Suddenly he turns around to find no more toothpicks! Frantically searching around him, Dana tiredly gets a pack of toothpicks from the table behind her when she notices his wallet peeking out of his coat on the table. Her fingers creep closer and closer to it as Carl keeps throwing the toothpicks, now getting closer, even bouncing against the can. She manages to sneak out a thousand peso bill and heads for the bar. She orders a drink, a smooth crooner type in a fancy suit walks up next to her, ordering. His discreet nametag: "ROY". They smile at each other flirtatiously.

Carl is down to his last toothpick (or straw if you will). He takes careful aim, pacing himself for his last shot. He takes it and IT'S A SLAM DUNK. He bites his lip to refrain from screaming in joy and looks around himself, only now finding Dana's gone. Then she comes walking past him, arm in arm with Roy who suddenly stops by the other table, picks up the beer, downs it and starts choking on the toothpick inside while the shocked Dana looks on. Carl throws his arms in the air cheering.

THE END