

"DROP"

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FADE IN:

INT. BENNY'S APARTMENT - MORNING

CAMERA is close on a pair of hands. Skin is calloused.

They hang perfectly still.

Slowly, CAMERA PULLS BACK from the hands. Revealing BENNY [early thirties, scrawny body, timid voice] seated at his couch. A small coffee table in front of him.

FRANK (O.S.)

How long you been doing this?

This line snaps Benny away from his hands.

FRANK [late 50s, bit overweight] is facing away from Benny. A toolbox at his side.

He looks at three trophies that are placed on a small shelf in the corner of the apartment. A few newspaper clippings are pinned to the wall.

They are local newspaper articles, showing a young Benny juggling at a school talent show. Among a sea of large paragraphs of text and advertisements.

BENNY

Since I was six years old.

Benny picks himself off the couch.

The apartment is a studio, small and cluttered. No sense of organization. The kitchen is practically a closet. Furniture visibly old and scratched.

In the center is a large rug, completely clean, a set of juggling balls lay on it.

FRANK

Must be pretty good then, eh?

Benny picks up a sheet of paper from the coffee table. He quickly scans it over.

CAMERA is ABOVE showing the paper, a rent overdue notice.

He then stuffs it into his pocket.

BENNY

About the ren--

FRANK

Listen, kid. I know you called me up here about the sink. But. I got a policy. A simple policy. You give me the rent money, and then. I fix your shit.

BENNY

Work has just been horrible this month. I just nee--

FRANK

What'a mean? Paycheck is a paycheck.

Benny visibly straightens. His hands fall into each other nervously.

BENNY

I'm self employed.  
(a pause)  
I juggle.

Frank scratches at his head.

FRANK

Juggle? Like--  
(pointing at the newspaper clippings)  
For a living?

Benny reaches into his wallet.

BENNY

Yeah. Sometimes I get four gigs in a week. The next, maybe one.

He pulls out a business card.

BENNY (CONT'D)

It's a living. Just a different one, you know?

FRANK

Who hires a juggler?

Benny hands Frank a shiny, bright yellow, business card. On it is a phone number and a photo of juggling balls.

Frank admires it for a moment.

BENNY

Well, a variety. A lot of my gigs are school events, assisted living facilities - things like that.

FRANK

And that pays well?

BENNY

Ever heard of a hospital audience?

FRANK

(disgusted)

You get payed to watch people die?

BENNY

No. No. Its a program, for the arts. Musicians, painters - jugglers like me - get payed to perform at hospitals for the mentally challenged, elderly, and sick children. Thats the majority of my work.

Frank holds up the card again, inspecting it.

FRANK

Lemme ask you this. I got a kid. He's turning eight in a coupla days. And, on Friday, he's having some school buddies over. Maybe you could come by, show off a coupla tricks?

A long stale silence.

BENNY

Fix my sink?

Frank chuckles. Moving towards the sink.

He places his heavy and greasy toolbox onto the kitchen table.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Woah! Woah!

Frank freezes.

Benny rushes over.

FRANK

Whats happen-in'?

BENNY

My table.

Benny hoists the toolbox into the air.

FRANK

Sorry.

BENNY

No, no. Its ok. I just got this fixed up. Its a family piece.

FRANK

My fault.

Frank takes the toolbox from Benny's hands.

Benny swipes away some dirt on the table with a rag.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Is it good here?

Frank stands nervously next to the sink.

BENNY

On the floor, yeah. Sorry if I scared you. Just a little protective of this one.

Frank plops the toolbox down and crawls under the sink.

BENNY (CONT'D)

As you can see, I'm not too worried about the other shit in here.

FRANK (O.S.)

I don't normally do this.

Frank slides out from under the sink.

FRANK (CONT'D)

And, don't go thinking this'll happen again. When you pay me, things get fixed. Thats how it works.

Frank slides underneath the sink again, only his legs and belly stick out.

Benny leans against the counter.

BENNY

I won't be late again. Work starts to pick up in the winter time.

FRANK (O.S.)

Good. Because I'm not afraid to kick you to the street. Someone else is always hungry for a spot.

Frank slides out, wiping his hands on his shirt.

He sits up.

FRANK (CONT'D)

Ever thought of pizza deliveries or something? Just to have some steady cash.

(a pause)

Is it really just juggling?

Benny looks down at his scratched up watch.

INT. BENNY'S APARTMENT - LATER

Dropping down the needle onto an old jazz record, "It Could Happen To You" by Ryo Fukui fills the room.

Benny begins to button up a white shirt, tucking it into his black pants. Then he slides into bright yellow socks. And finally fastens a bright yellow tie to his neck.

His black suit is worn a bit too big, and clearly looks old.

Benny picks up one of the bright yellow juggling balls and begins to toss it back and forth between two hands. Its slow but precise.

Then he adds in a second ball - then three - then four. Always taking the time to familiarize himself with each new ball.

As Benny reaches the eight ball, his movements have become confident. Not looking strenuous.

He focuses hard on the pattern.

Each toss and catch is executed perfectly. All spins and tricks added in are clean.

Not a single ball touches the floor.

Then, simple as ever, he lets them all fall into his hands.

BENNY

Act one.

Now, seated, Benny slowly eats a banana.

CUT TO:

Benny, on his feet, has a juggling ball on his face. His body contorted in a way to balance the ball.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
I must get myself out of this  
situation, ladies and gentlemen. Or  
wait, no - boys and girls.

As he continues to juggle, the ball slowly slides off of Benny's face and into his hands.

He incorporates the new ball into the pattern gracefully.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
Act two.

Benny takes a sip of some water. Studying a sheet of paper that has notes for the performance. Lines of dialogue and certain tricks written out.

CUT TO:

All of the juggling balls fly into the air.

Benny's foot spins.

He catches each one, easily. Then takes a bow.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
Act three. Thank you, thank you!

EXT. BUS STOP - MOMENTS LATER

An enclosed bus bench. Benny sits alone, waiting. Rain falls on the passing cars as they whip past.

Benny sits focused. Reading his notes.

INT. ELEMENTARY SCHOOL OFFICE - LATER

Slightly wet, Benny strides into the office. A secretary stands immediately when he enters. Coming out from behind her desk.

MRS. RICH  
Benny it is so good to see you! How  
are you?

Benny places his backpack down. They hug.

BENNY

Good, good. How are--

MRS. RICH

--I'm just fine. Your Mother is going to be so excited to see you! She's been talking about this all week.

BENNY

(smiles)

Should I get set-up or?

PRINCIPAL TEE [late 30s, clean suit, strong voice] enters the office in a rush.

MRS. RICH

Principal. Benny is--

PRINCIPAL TEE

(at the printer)

Yes I see. How are you Benny.

A few sheets of paper pit out of the machine.

PRINCIPAL TEE (CONT'D)

(now facing Benny)

Great to have you back! You all set for today?

BENNY

Thanks. In the gym as usual?

PRINCIPAL TEE

First, if we could, just a quick chat before the assembly?

BENNY

Of course.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Benny sits in an elementary school sized chair, facing the large desk where Principal Tee is seated in a normal chair.

Behind the desk is a poster of a rock climber that reads: "You're almost there. Believe in yourself!" And a cluster of smaller posters that advertise upcoming school events.

BENNY

I'm not in trouble right?

PRINCIPAL TEE

(laughs)

No. Not at all. I just wanted to talk with you about the payment.

BENNY

For next years show?

PRINCIPAL TEE

For today. What do you normally charge for an assembly?

BENNY

Well. For this school, we've always agreed on fifty.

Benny straightens in his chair, struggling to look his normal height.

PRINCIPAL TEE

Right. I was wondering - I mean your Mother did help you with this and--

BENNY

--Sort of. I went here. When I was younger, and started juggling here. I've always ha--

PRINCIPAL TEE

--I see. You should know better than most then, how our school operates.

Principal Tee produces an envelope from his desk and places it in front of Benny.

PRINCIPAL TEE (CONT'D)

But, that brings me to your payment. I have been working closely with the school board to make sure that all of our events are vital to students learning. And that the parents money, and taxpayer dollars, are going to well thought out places.

He pushes the envelope closer to Benny.

PRINCIPAL TEE (CONT'D)

So, I was hoping you'd be able to accept a lower payment.

BENNY

How much?

PRINCIPAL TEE

We, as a school, decided that before you - juggle. There would be a, more useful, segment. For the first thirty minutes of the assembly there will be a speaker talking about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

BENNY

Thirty minutes?

Principal Tee gives a slight smile.

BENNY (CONT'D)

How much lower?

Benny doesn't touch the envelope.

BENNY (CONT'D)

How much time did you cut me down to?

PRINCIPAL TEE

Benny. Please. Step into my shoes here, I have people to make happy. It doesn't seem essential year after year to--

BENNY

How much time?

PRINCIPAL TEE

You'll go on after the talk. So, about ten minutes.

There is a stale silence.

BENNY

This is a well rehearsed forty five minutes. I've always done that!

PRINCIPAL TEE

The times are a changin' Benny. Parents either want their kids in the classroom or at educational assemblies.

(a pause)

Everyone here vouches for you. We all like you Benny. Ten minutes is the best we can do.

Benny picks up the envelope and peels it open.  
 He takes a long moment to study the contents.

BENNY  
 Lunch money.  
 (chuckles)  
 Should I expect to not have this  
 gig next year?

PRINCIPAL TEE  
 We can talk when that time comes.

INT. SCHOOL GYM - LATER

The space is filled with middle school kids, seated in neat rows. Teachers sitting on the ends.

A man, dressed in comfortable clothing, slowly talks about the dangers of alcohol. Pointing at a graph.

All the kids are silent. Some trying to sleep.

Benny makes his way down the small aisle and kneels beside one of the teachers.

BENNY  
 (whispering)  
 Hey.

MOM [late 50s, some grey hair] turns to face him. Behind her, a full row of students. A few pass around a piece of paper.

MOM  
 (whispering)  
 Benny. How are you?

BENNY  
 Good. Good. I'll be going up soon.  
 But, I just wanted to--

MOM  
 --The money?

Benny looks around the gym.

BENNY  
 Yeah. Could-can you talk after  
 this?

MOM  
 Can I come to your apartment?

Benny's head falls to his knees.

BENNY  
I haven't really set up yet.

Mom is turned around now. A few students are quietly arguing.

MOM  
(stern)  
Put it away.

One of the students quickly shoves the piece of paper into their pocket. Not worrying about their game.

Mom turns to face Benny again.

MOM (CONT'D)  
Sorry. You haven't set up? You've been there for, what, a little under a year now.

BENNY  
True. But, I really don't have--

MOM  
Do you need a ride?

The drug man flips to a new slide, a few hideous post-drug photos appear. Some of the students groan.

BENNY  
Where?

MOM  
To your apartment.

BENNY  
Fine. Yeah, that would be great.  
I'll find you after. Love you.

Benny begins to walk away.

MOM  
(normal speaking voice)  
Good luck! Love you!

A few teachers glance over. Benny gives them polite smiles.

INT. SCHOOL GYM - MOMENTS LATER

Benny is on the stage now. Most of the kids seem to be alert.

BENNY

(amplified by microphone)  
Ladies and gentlemen. Boys and girls. Mean teachers and no homework teachers. Today, I will be demonstrating the magic of practice. The magic, of time and effort. I - stand here today to show you that hard work pays off.

Benny looks down at the crowd, while talking. He looks towards his Mom. She begins to scratch the right side of her head.

Following the signal, Benny scratches the right side of his head. Giving her a smile.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Some of you may want to make the basketball team next year, start now. One day at a time! Anything is possible when you keep doing it.

Benny begins to juggle. A simple three ball pattern.

A few students visibly sit up in their chairs.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Slowly. As I go. We are gonna make this harder. But, in order to prove that this magic is real. I'll need an assistant.

Principal Tee stands from the side of the stage.

PRINCIPAL TEE

Ok students. You heard him. Raise those hands high.

About twelve hands shoot up.

PRINCIPAL TEE (CONT'D)

No. No. What did we say at the start of the assembly? Only students who have completed their monthly reading journals.

Four hands fall down.

Benny continues juggling the three balls, calmly.

PRINCIPAL TEE (CONT'D)

Ok. Let's do-  
 (pause)  
 Alicia.

ALICIA [4th grader, joyful] springs from her seat and jogs up to the stage. Happy to be selected.

BENNY

Alrighty! Alicia, come on up!

She climbs up the stairs and stands beside Benny, nervously.

Keeping the juggling pattern, every few seconds Benny sticks his hand out for a high five.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Gotta be quick! C'mon. I can't drop them!

He sticks his hand out, Alicia doesn't move. Back to juggling. Then he does it again.

She slaps his hand.

Benny holds the pattern calmly. A light applause.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Alright. See those yellow balls, there, on the the stool? Take ahold of them. And, whenever you'd like. However you'd like. Throw 'em at me. And I'll adapt and adjust to keep the juggling going. Can you do that for me?

She grabs a single ball.

BENNY (CONT'D)

What? One.  
 (chuckles)  
 Wanna make it easy for me?

The crowd of students yells, "no".

BENNY (CONT'D)

Go on! Fill your pockets. Put a few in your shoes.

With a big smile, Alicia runs back to the stool and grabs the handful of bright yellow juggling balls.

ALICIA

I will throw them, all!

BENNY  
 (laughing)  
 Yes! Yes! Whenever you'd like.  
 Throw 'em right at my nose.

Alicia, patiently waits. Smile wide on her face.

The crowd of students begin to yell in encouragement.

Benny continues juggling the three balls with ease. We see on his face, the joy of performing.

A few moments of stale silence. Alicia cocks her arm back, hesitates. Relaxes.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 (laughing)  
 Pump fake!

Then, in a quick motion, Alicia throws one of the balls high into the air. Over Benny's head.

ALICIA  
 I'm sorry!

Benny turns and does a sort of half lunge, catching the ball low to the ground. He incorporates the new ball into the pattern comfortably.

Some of the crowd claps.

BENNY  
 No, no. That is quite alright. It makes this all a little mor--

Alicia fires another ball towards Benny.

Benny catches it quickly, like an ice hockey goalie.

Juggling five balls now.

A few more claps from the crowd.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
 A fast ball! I see you. Now this time, throw two balls at once. Can you do that Alicia?

She take another ball out of her pocket.

ALICIA  
 (shy)  
 I will try.

BENNY

Give it a good throw, all you got!

Alicia loads up and fires the two juggling balls in Benny's general direction.

The first ball flies right into Benny's hand. But the other comes in very low to the ground.

In a flash, Benny sticks out his leg, and using a hacky sack motion, kicks the ball up into the air.

The crowd roars with excitement.

While juggling in a six ball pattern, Benny moves himself and catches the seventh ball on his face.

The ball sits on his nose and eye socket.

A few students scream.

BENNY (CONT'D)

That was a hard one, there.

All of the students are on the edge of their seats. Totally engaged. Drugs and alcohol a thing of the past.

Even Principal Tee looks impressed.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Ok, Ok. It wouldn't be to fun if I stopped now. Right?

The crowd erupts.

BENNY (CONT'D)

I must- get myself out this situation. Get the balls back to my hands?

Benny looks away for a moment, to his Mom. She is locked in a smile, watching her son.

Then to Principal Tee, who looks intently at his wristwatch.

Slowly, Benny begins to back up. Widening his legs.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Here we go.

Benny straightens his body, holding the juggling pattern with some extra effort.

He starts to wiggle his head.

The ball slides around a bit. Then slips out of the eye socket - rolling off of his nose.

In a flash, Benny staggers backwards. Trying to get an opportunity to catch the ball.

As he does this, he loses his footing.

Benny crashes into two chairs and a projection screen left on the stage from the drug and alcohol speaker.

With a loud smattering of metal, Benny falls off the stage.

The microphone buzzes and pops as he hits the ground.

The bright yellow juggling balls scatter across the stage and air as Benny's arms flail.

CAMERA is on stage. Looking out at the students. They are silent for a moment. Some stand. Looking. Then a few students begin to laugh.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
(muffled through speakers)  
Sorry. Sorry.

CAMERA is extreme high, looking down. Benny staggers to his feet, twisting himself out of the chairs and cloth.

He picks up one of his juggling balls. Scanning the area for the rest of them.

The laughs continue. He struggles to collect himself, looking up at the crowd.

Benny's POV: A sea of children giggly and energized.

PRINCIPAL TEE (O.S.)  
Are you ok? Benny?

Principal Tee comes to his side. Moving aside one of the chairs.

Benny still stares at the crowd. He looks horrified.

INT. BENNY'S APARTMENT - LATER

A small drawer in the kitchen is opened.

CAMERA is close on - coins, scattered gift cards, and a small wad of cash.

MOM (O.S.)  
This place is-really, nice. Cozy.

BENNY (O.S.)  
It was cheap.

The drawer closes.

Mom sits on the couch. A chocolate milkshake in hand. She is looking around the messy apartment.

MOM  
You need any help organizing?  
Hanging up that picture?

Benny strides in, strawberry milkshake in hand.

He plops down onto a squeaky outdoor lawn chair.

BENNY  
(pointing behind him)  
That? I like it there.

A framed picture of Steve Prefontaine leans against a pile of cardboard boxes.

The text reads: "Somebody may beat me, but they are going to have to bleed to do it".

BENNY (CONT'D)  
I can see it easier.

Benny plops the milkshake onto the floor. Undoing his bright yellow tie. Loosening his belt.

Then he gets up, moving to a small dresser.

MOM  
Are you sure that elbow is ok?

He slides into a t-shirt.

BENNY  
It's fine.

A stale silence.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
(sitting back down)  
Thanks for the.

He raises the milkshake.

MOM  
I knew you'd like it.

Another moment of silence. Mom scans the area, again.

MOM (CONT'D)  
So, any new friends in the  
building?

BENNY  
Nope. Not really.

Mom sits up. Hesitating for a moment.

MOM  
Benny, please don't be so hard on  
yourself.

BENNY  
Hard on myself? I did the one thing  
I'm not supposed to do! A ball hit  
the floor. Fuck, multiple hit the  
floor. I hit the floor! It was a  
disaster!

MOM  
Those kids were loving it Benny!  
They were so excited to see you.

BENNY  
Until they weren't.

Benny gets up. Fast.

MOM  
Every year, they look forward to  
you! Benny--

BENNY (O.S.)  
Toast?

MOM  
Huh?

Benny stands in the kitchen. A loaf of bread in his hand.

He raises it.

BENNY  
Bread. Toast?

MOM (O.S.)  
(confused)  
Sure.

Mom sits nervously on the couch. Looking around again.

MOM (CONT'D)  
How much has rent been each month?

BENNY (O.S.)  
Enough.

MOM  
(sincere)  
Do you need some help, again?

BENNY (O.S.)  
No, no. Thank you. I'm good, now.

MOM  
That's good. Oh don't forget t--

BENNY (O.S.)  
I know. I know. Butter, with peanut  
butter over it.

She ease back into the couch. Smiling.

BENNY (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Can I ask you? Today during the  
performance, when I slipped up.  
Did--

Benny stops talking, abruptly.

Mom looks up.

CAMERA is medium. In kitchen. Benny stands staring down.

Benny's POV: His left hand is slightly shaking, holding the  
butter knife over the pieces of toast.

MOM (O.S.)  
You don't need to worry about it  
Benny. It was a mistake. Who cares?  
You messed up, in front of some  
kids, too! You know--

His hand continues to jitter uncontrollably. Benny grabs at  
it with the other hand.

Then, continues to spread the peanut butter.

BENNY  
(agitated)  
How would it feel, if you went to a  
hockey game. And the referee  
forgets to bring the puck?

Mom sits puzzled.

BENNY (CONT'D)  
That's what happened.

MOM  
(sympathetic)  
Benny.

BENNY  
There's no excuse. I dropped it!

There is a stale silence. Knife hitting crisp bread.

MOM  
Don't be so hard on yourself. You  
are so talented. And you are--

BENNY  
Please.

Benny comes to the couch. Placing the plate of toast on the  
coffee table. He sits back down into the lawn chair.

MOM  
Talk to me, Benny.  
(a pause)  
Really talk.

BENNY  
About what?

MOM  
You know, how you are feeling. Your  
day-to-day. I never get to hear  
about your day, anymore. You hardly  
call?

BENNY  
What do you wanna hear? I'll call  
every night, no problem.  
(fake excitement)  
Hey Mom! Just went grocery  
shopping. Oh and it was so fun, I  
hopped on the wrong train for two  
hours. How silly of me, to not  
realize!

MOM  
Remember when you were away at  
college?

Benny interrupts his motion of toast to mouth.

BENNY

I thought we signed a treaty on that.

MOM

No, no. When you texted me.

BENNY

Saying goodnight?

MOM

Yes! It used to mean so much to me, every night. Reading a goodnight from you.

(a pause)

I know it probably bothered you. Or, or embarrassed you in front of a girl or something.

BENNY

It wasn't a bother.

MOM

Can we do it again?

Benny looks down at his wristwatch.

MOM (CONT'D)

It could be good for the both of us. Just a simple goodnight.

BENNY

(standing)

If it makes you happy. Look-I need to get going.

MOM

What for?

BENNY

I need to practice.

Mom takes a few quick bites, finishing her toast.

Benny starts to fill his backpack.

MOM

Benny. I don't want you, to think, or to.

(a pause)

Don't ever think I'm not proud of you.

BENNY

Please, I don't need that anymore.  
Stop lying to me. Just stop. I know  
it's a fuck-up, going on here.

He stops his movement.

BENNY (CONT'D)

But, I'm fixing it. Believe me!

MOM

When is rent due?

BENNY

I'm fine, please. I don't want your  
help anymore.

(throwing his notebook  
hard into the backpack)

I'm thirty-two years old!

They both enjoy silence for a long moment.

MOM

So then, what is wrong? I can see  
it in you. Feel it, too. The way  
you move - you are hurting. Is it  
girls, again?

Benny zips up the backpack. Throwing on a yellow hoodie.

BENNY

(chuckles)

I gave up on that.

MOM

On what?

BENNY

Love. Trying to find someone. You  
know how hard it is, too, have that  
feeling. Like, this is it - this is  
my shot, she really likes me this  
time. You ask. Nah. They turn you  
down - kick you around sometimes  
too. How many times can you take  
that - hope, and then hit a wall.

(a pause)

I can't do it anymore.

MOM

Have you tried these new dating  
websites? Sharon was saying, her  
daughter, found a really nice guy.  
Oh, what was it called?

BENNY

I'm not doing that. I'm done embarrassing myself.

Mom stands. Moving towards Benny.

MOM

But you can't, not try.

BENNY

(yelling)

Maybe, I'm just pathetic! Not to many people like a person like me. Never been in a relationship, barely had my first kiss!

He quiets himself.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Anything else you wanna know?

Mom goes in for a hug. Benny dodges.

BENNY (CONT'D)

I'll walk you out.

Benny turns, putting his backpack on.

There is a long silence. Benny opens the door.

MOM

Will you invite me over for dinner? Whenever you set up, of course.

BENNY

You're lucky I have a table.

Mom smiles.

MOM

Did you get the stain out?

Benny moves back towards the kitchen.

BENNY

Come look. Funny enough. I used Papa's old trick--

Benny puts his finger on the wood.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Can't see it right?

MOM

No?

BENNY

Mayo. You remember that trick? I used like, two or three spoonfuls.

MOM

You can't even tell!

She wipes her hand over the spot a few times.

MOM (CONT'D)

(looks to Benny)

Papa would be so proud. He was so happy, seeing you down at the workshop. Taking an interest in his furniture.

BENNY

I didn't have any other choice.

MOM

(laughing)

That's true.

(a pause)

You two are a lot alike, you know. Passions. Dedicated to a craft.

BENNY

He made some money, though. Let me walk you out.

EXT. STREET - MOMENTS LATER

A heavy rain.

Benny holds his backpack over Mom.

BENNY

You'll be ok to drive?

Mom fumbles for the car keys in her bag.

MOM

I'll be fine. I must have left them upstairs?

BENNY

We have to walk back.

They stop.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Make sure.

She digs through the bag.

MOM

Oh, got it. They were all the way  
at the bottom. Crazy things.

They continue walking.

BENNY

I'll text you tonight.

MOM

I would love that. Let's talk more,  
Benny. I don't want you to be so  
lonely.

BENNY

Been making it work for years.

They reach her car, parked on the street.

MOM

Benny! I almost forgot, here.  
(she pulls out a scrap of  
paper from her pocket)  
Would you ever work at a  
convention?

BENNY

What kind of convention?

MOM

Remember our old neighbor, Mr.  
Morell? He lived at the end of the  
hallway.

BENNY

The fancy suit guy?

MOM

Right. Well, he called me the other  
day. Asking about you. He  
remembered seeing you juggle on the  
roof as a kid. And well, he's back  
in town for some kind of  
convention.

BENNY

For what?

Benny looks down at the paper.

MOM

I think its a fundraiser for an ad agency. Something like that.

The piece of paper has his Mom's perfect handwriting, a phone number is highlighted and a few sentences about the event.

BENNY

He wants a juggler? Really?

MOM

That's what he said.

Benny flips over the paper. Noticing another document. He quickly stuffs it into his pocket.

BENNY

(sincere)

Thanks, Mom. I really needed this.

They hug. Rain slowing.

MOM

Please, text me!

Benny walks off. Waving goodbye.

INT. SUBWAY STATION - NIGHT

A poorly lit station, crowded with people. A saxophone player belts out a tune in an opposite corner.

In the center, Benny stands juggling a five ball pattern.

His moves are simple, but perfect.

A small cup sits beside his bag. A few coins and a single dollar bill sit inside.

No one pays attention to Benny. People pass by, phones in hand and ears occupied.

Not a single eye focuses on the bright yellow balls being tossed around, except for a TOURIST BOY [8 years old, tourist].

Stopping in his tracks, in front of Benny, Tourist Boy watches him juggle with a smile.

Benny flips a ball high, catching it behind his back, and then continues with ease.

Tourist Boy claps. Following close behind, the boy's parents appear. Giving a half, awkward smile to Benny.

TOURIST FATHER [40s, polo shirt] grabs onto the shoulder of his son.

Benny, using his head, points down at his backpack.

BENNY

Reach in there. Throw me another ball?

Tourist Boy looks up at Tourist Father, who nods in agreement.

Quickly, Tourist Boy kneels down and opens the bag. Pulling out a bright yellow ball.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Go on, whenever you're ready. Throw it at me!

TOURIST MOTHER [40s, designer clothing] pats him on the shoulder. Tourist Boy cocks his arm back and with all his might throws it straight at Benny's chest.

Benny catches it, and incorporates it.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Woah! Good throw!

Tourist Father pulls out his wallet, Benny looks away from the excited boy. To the money being pulled out.

Tourist Boy stands still, amazed. Watching the juggling.

Benny looks back to Tourist Boy.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Another trick?

Clapping, Tourist Boy nods.

A five dollar bill. Benny glances over at it, while juggling. Watching it slowly being placed into his cup.

Benny, suddenly lets all the balls fall to his hands. Then begins to juggle in a new pattern.

TOURIST BOY

(astonished)

Woaah!

In an instant, one of the balls slips from Benny's grasp and falls to the station floor.

BENNY

Fuck!

Tourist Mother's eyes widen. Tourist Boy, no longer with a smile, stares at the ball on the floor.

Tourist Father gives Benny a piercing dirty look. Then, grabs his son and pushes him away.

Benny watches them walk away.

At the ball on the floor. He's amazed at the mistake.

Then, Tourist Father returns. Quickly plucking his five dollar ball back out of Benny's cup.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Hey! Wait--

TOURIST FATHER

No, no. This is mine! Fuck you.

Benny slumps down to the floor. Sitting beside the fallen ball. He looks down at it.

BENNY

(to the ball)

What was that for?

He looks over to his cup. Practically empty.

Benny's POV: His hands are outstretched. The left hand shakes steadily. Benny grabs at the hand, trying to make it stop. He lets go, and it continues to shake.

BENNY (O.S.) (CONT'D)

What the hell is happening to me?

The saxophone player at the other end of the station, reaches a crescendo and the stops. A crowd erupts in applause.

Benny looks up, watching the group huddled around the musician. People have take their earbuds out. Some record.

He pours the contents of the cup into his hands.

Benny's POV: The change, rattles, in his left hand. A few dimes fall through the cracks of his fingers.

CAMERA is OPPOSITE CORNER, from the crowd of the saxophone player. Benny is all alone. Sitting on the floor. Counting the coins and picking up a few from the floor.

We see people taking money out of their wallets, handing it to the musician. Bills, not coins.

BENNY (CONT'D)

Two dollars, and. Seventy-six.

Benny gathers his things. Standing up.

He stares at the happy crowd.

INT. BENNY'S APARTMENT - MORNING