

FADE IN:

EXT. SILICON VALLEY -- ESTABLISHING

Sweeping over the Golden Gate Bridge on a day so gorgeous,
Bay Area home prices seem almost reasonable.

SUBTITLE: Silicon Valley, 1990-something.

Over the city of San Francisco --

Down an open stretch of Highway 280, southward to --

The sprawling campuses of high-tech giants --

Billboards with ads for techie job openings --

McMansions of the suburbs, estates of the nouveau riche --

Porsches, Jags, and Bimmers --

Wine bars, cigar bars, sushi bars --

And a strip-mall cafe.

EXT. CAFE -- DAY

Seating himself at an outdoor table is ALEX BRIGHTON, who
wields his latte and Wall Street Journal with the well-
practiced ease of an up-and-coming Silicon Valley technocrat.

He raises the latte as he scans the headlines. But the cup
never reaches his lips.

On the front page is the headline "Who's Making Money In
High-Tech?", and the smaller headline "Who Isn't?".

Alex lowers the cup to the paper. Slides it over to cover
"Who Isn't?".

FIRST BULLY (O.S.)

Loser.

The word hits Alex like a slap on the face. He glances over
to see a pair of young BULLIES harassing a brainy-looking BOY.

The first bully holds a notebook just beyond the boy's reach.

FIRST BULLY

My big ideas, by Edison Einstein.

But rather than plead or grab for the notebook, the boy
crosses his arms and waits.

SECOND BULLY

Hey, I know what it's good for.

The second bully tears a page from the notebook. Sticks his butt out and pretends to wipe it.

SECOND BULLY

Wow! I feel like a "smart-ass".

FIRST BULLY

You were already a shit-for-brains.

They laugh, but get no satisfaction from their victim.

FIRST BULLY

What're you, silent genius type?

The notebook and paper get tossed in the trash.

SECOND BULLY

Later, Rain Man.

The bullies move off, and the boy retrieves his notebook and torn page.

ALEX

Don't worry, it gets better.

As the boy glances over, Alex offers his best "I'm all about success" look.

ALEX

Someday you'll be calling the shots.
And it'll be sweet.

BOY

Duh.

ALEX

I'm serious, you'll be...
(beat)
You... know that?

BOY

Didn't you?
(off Alex's stunned silence)
Hello?

ALEX

Yeah, sure. I just --

BOY

That your car?

The boy nods towards a Porsche Turbo parked right in front of Alex.

ALEX

Oh-yeah.

BOY
So gimme a ride.

ALEX
(holds up a cell phone)
Got some calls to make.

BOY
Whatever.

The boy hops on a skateboard, disappears around the corner, as Alex stares after him.

Alex shakes it off, stands, takes a step towards the Porsche -- only to be cut off by a self-important young TECHIE-GUY who brushes by Alex as if he weren't there.

The techie-guy gets into the Porsche. Starts it up and revs the engine as he pulls out.

Alex stands there a moment. Steps into the parking lot and opens the door of a clean, if aging, Volkswagen Jetta parked next to the space vacated by the Porsche.

EXT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS -- DAY

On an exterior glass office door is the company name "Gambyte Systems".

As he pushes the door open, Alex glances at the company name and manages a smile.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS, LOBBY -- DAY

The glass door swings open, and Alex strides in. Nods at his receptionist, LYNETTE.

LYNETTE
Morning, Mr. Brighton.

If her tone is a bit flat, Alex takes no notice. The sound of his name seems enough to buoy his confidence.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS -- DAY

A standard cube farm, with office doors along one wall.

Alex heads for the offices. Glances around, slows to a stop.

The place is dead silent.

He crosses to an office with the nameplate "Blaze".

ALEX
Blaze, where the --

There's a white board filled with technical diagrams, and a poster for a magic show, "The Smokin' Mirror". But no Blaze.

On a standard-issue desk is a small metal box with switches, LED's, computer ports -- the unfinished prototype of some electronic wonder.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS, LOBBY -- DAY

Alex enters from the back, holding the prototype.

ALEX
Where is everybody?

Lynette gives him a look that's too knowing to pass for a shrug.

ALEX
Just let me know when Ross gets here.

He sees that she's surfing the Web.

ALEX
And do that on your own time.

He disappears into the back of the office.

LYNETTE
Pretty sure I am.

INT. ALEX'S OFFICE -- DAY

Alex enters the corner office, which bears the nameplate "Alex Brighton".

An elegant glass-top desk fronts a high-back leather chair. Alex sits, puts the prototype on the desk next to another, smaller box -- a Game Boy.

He picks up the Game Boy, puts his feet on the desktop.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS, LOBBY -- DAY

Lynette absently clicks her way through web pages. Glances up.

Seated in the lobby is ROSS, a Silicon Valley venture capitalist, who looks impatiently at his watch.

LYNETTE
I'll check on him again.

INT. ALEX'S OFFICE -- DAY

The Game Boy shows a score that couldn't happen in a few short minutes.

Alex sits, feet up on his desk, working the Game Boy's controls. Glances up to see Lynette in the doorway.

LYNETTE
Playing hard to get?

A cocky smile, then Alex resumes his battle with the game.

LYNETTE
Never works for me either.

It takes a moment for Alex to get it -- then he's up and heading for the door.

EXT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS -- DAY

Alex bursts out the office door. Sees Ross crossing the parking lot, dashes after him, slows to a walk before overtaking him. Realizes he's still holding the Game Boy, turns it off and pockets it.

ALEX
Ross.
(catches up)
Sorry to keep you waiting. Another investor on the line.

Ross glances over, doesn't look impressed.

ROSS
Well, that's good, because --

ALEX
(gestures toward office)
Why don't we just...

Ross turns to face him squarely.

ROSS
Look, Alex. I'm here as a courtesy. We're passing.

ALEX
Passing? But -- we're shipping product in ninety days.

ROSS
You said sixty.

ALEX
Well, yeah, sixty, but ramping up and all --

ROSS
Alex --

ALEX
Look, you can't tell me you don't believe in this product.

ROSS

You're right. It isn't just about your product.

ALEX

What then?

(beat)

Me? You don't believe in me? Are you kidding, I'm a CEO waiting to happen.

ROSS

You'll have to wait a little longer. Look, Alex, you've got the bullshit down. But there's more to it than that.

Ross turns to go.

ALEX

(to himself)

No there isn't.

(goes after him)

Okay, look, I've got a few things to learn. So teach me. I mean, you're the best.

Ross gets into a Mercedes convertible with the top down.

ROSS

I'm not looking to pay someone's tuition here, Alex. I've got investors to protect.

He starts the car, and the radio comes on, playing smooth jazz.

ROSS

Radio off.

FEMALE CAR VOICE

Radio off.

The radio turns off.

ROSS

Now there's a product. Voice recognition.

FEMALE CAR VOICE

Check ignition.

ALEX

Yeah, brilliant.

Alex notices the business park's property manager, CLIFF, entering Gambyte's office with a young techie executive, PALMER.

ALEX
(to Ross)
Look, I gotta take care of something.
I'll call you later.

He starts away.

ALEX
Later on.

FEMALE CAR VOICE
Radio on.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS -- DAY

Cliff stands in the middle of the cube farm with Palmer.

CLIFF
Never more than half-full. Their
dreams were way bigger than their
wallet.

ALEX (O.S.)
What's going on?

Alex steps between Cliff and Palmer.

CLIFF
Palmer here just closed his second
round of funding. He's interested
in this space.

ALEX
This is my space.

CLIFF
Not for long.

ALEX
How would you know?

CLIFF
Chasing investors across the parking
lot would be one clue.

Cliff walks off. Palmer gives Alex what starts as a thumbs-up, but ends as the L-on-the-forehead "Loser" sign.

As Palmer strolls after Cliff, Alex scans the deserted cube farm.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS, LOBBY -- DAY

Alex enters to see Palmer leaning over the receptionist's desk, quietly chatting up Lynette.

They're aware of his presence, but don't acknowledge him.

ALEX

Mind if I have a word with my secretary?

Palmer straightens up.

PALMER

Administrative assistant.

(off Alex's look)

My administrative assistant.

Palmer winks at Lynette. Turns to go, the door swinging shut behind him.

LYNETTE

He made me a good offer.

ALEX

I'll bet.

Lynette gets up, grabs her purse.

LYNETTE

You know, I don't know why you guys
make such big deal out of a...

(gestures at the
office around them)

...job.

She heads for the door. Stops and looks back.

LYNETTE

You mind locking up?

The door closes behind her, and Alex stands alone in the lobby.

INT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS -- DAY

Alex stops in front of his office. Looks at his nameplate.

ALEX

A job.

INT. ALEX'S OFFICE -- DAY

The Game Boy registers a monster score.

Alex sits at his desk, feet up, totally into the game.

ALEX

Come on, come on.

He glances up at a clock, which shows a minute before 5:00. Returns his attention to the Game Boy, but it's a beat too long and he can't recover.

Amid dirge-like electronic tones, the Game Boy heckles him.

GAME BOY
Game over, dude.

Alex looks at the screen.

ALEX
So close.

He looks up at the prototype, which sits alone on the glass desktop.

EXT. GAMBYTE SYSTEMS -- DAY

Prototype in one hand, Alex takes a key ring from his pocket, locks the door.

Stands there looking at the company name on the glass, lost in it.

HANDYMAN (O.S.)
Hope you don't like long good-byes.

Alex turns to see a HANDYMAN standing next to him.

The handyman nods toward the company name on the door. Holds up a razor blade.

Alex doesn't budge. His look hardens.

HANDYMAN
Hey, I'm just doing my job, okay?

Alex waits long enough to make the choice look like his own. Then steps aside.

The handyman raises the blade to the letter "G". Hesitates. Glances aside at Alex.

HANDYMAN
Maybe you should, you know...

He nods toward the parking lot.

Alex looks at the name on the door. Holds out his hand. It takes a beat for the handyman to get it.

HANDYMAN
Yeah, I don't know...

Alex flicks his finger in a "hand it over" gesture. The handyman hesitates. Then gives him the blade.

HANDYMAN
Knock yourself out.

The handyman walks off.

Alex puts the prototype on the ledge of a nearby concrete planter.

He stands before the glass door, runs his fingers over the letters. Looks like he might not be able to do it. Then puts blade to glass.

A reflection in the glass catches his attention. But before he can move, an unseen force slams him into the door, flattening him against it and holding him there.

The force is a large Japanese man, TOSHIRO, whose tailored suit makes no attempt to hide his well-muscled frame.

Toshiro takes the razor blade, tosses it aside. Pins Alex's hand, pushes his face hard against the glass.

MR. OYAMA (O.S.)

Good evening, Alex.

MR. OYAMA, a distinguished, middle-aged Japanese gentleman, leans casually against the glass panel that frames the door, flanked by his top henchman, KINPACHI.

But Mr. Oyama isn't looking at Alex. He's holding the prototype.

MR. OYAMA

I never asked you. What does it do?

ALEX

Not enough, apparently. I'm surprised you didn't dig deeper.

MR. OYAMA

I don't invest in... objects. I invest in people.

ALEX

Guess you better not quit your day job.

Toshiro cuffs Alex across the back of the head.

MR. OYAMA

Perhaps it's you who are in the wrong business. Speaking of which...

ALEX

Yeah, actually, we just closed for the day.

MR. OYAMA

How long were you planning to wait before telling me?

ALEX

Long as possible.

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For the complete script please contact Jennifer Brooks at
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