



A modern day adaptation of a
Shakespearean tragedy

by
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Shooting Script

Revision: 2/17/99

"O"

FADE IN

1 INT. PALMETTO GROVE ACADEMY CUPOLA - NIGHT 1 *

CLOSE-UP of white shapes mingling with one another. The image sharpens to reveal white pigeons...we see a head, a beak, a wing... *

HUGO'S NARRATION

All my life, I always wanted to fly.
Always wanted to live like a hawk. I
know you're not supposed to be jealous of
anything, but to take flight, to soar
above everyone and everything, now that's
livin'. *

AUDIO FADE UP: sounds of a ROARING CROWD and a SCHOOL BAND.

2 INT. BASKETBALL GYM - NIGHT 2 *

Camera WHIPS around a packed highschool gym following the flight of a hawk as it circles the small arena. *

CLOSE ON ODIN JAMES, the Palmetto Grove Hawks' point guard, 18, black, intense, the player college scouts dream about. He glances up to the SCORE BOARD that reads Titans 60, Hawks 59, 28 seconds left. The crowd is going crazy. *

It's time out. HUGO GOULDING, 17, white, and other PLAYERS crowd around Odin and COACH DUKE GOULDING, Hugo's father. Known to his players as the Duke, he is 50ish, gruff, intense, a "Frank Mancuso" type. *

COACH DUKE

Now listen. They're not gonna foul. I know that sonofabitch, and he plays conservative. So we're gonna burn fifteen seconds and then end this thing. We stack it up. I want to see Odin, Michael and Billy with the ball, that's it. Hugo, you and Todd take the screens. At thirteen seconds we run the Tulsa play for Odin. *

He diagrams it on a small chalkboard. *

COACH DUKE

Billy, you're in a stack with Michael. Hugo, you're at the right elbow, Todd, you're at the low block. You two *

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED:

2

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

are decoys. I don't want to see either of you with the ball.

*
*

Hugo takes that in.

*

COACH DUKE

We free up Odin for the one on one, and if not Odin, Michael.

*
*
*

ON THE COURT - The referee blows the WHISTLE. The players head for the court. Coach pulls Odin aside.

COACH DUKE

It's all yours, buddy.

*

AT HALF COURT - The REF hands the ball to one of the Hawks players.

*

ON THE SIDELINES - The HAWK, is roused by the Falconer. With the bird perched on his gloved hand, he runs up the sidelines. Each section stands up and does the wave as the bird flaps past.

*

The Hawks form a line. On the slap of the ball, they disperse, and Odin takes the inbound pass. The defense is man to man.

*
*
*

COACH DUKE

Discipline! Discipline! Let's execute!

*

The opposing point guard steps up, tightening his coverage. Another guard steps up, tries to trap, but Odin puts on a dribbling show, evading his defenders... the kid's got "handles."

*

The CLOCK SECONDS tick away. Hugo holds his position at the elbow, screening for Michael.

*
*

Michael darts out, taking a pass from Odin. Odin goes into the stack. Billy darts out, takes a pass from Michael. The Hawks are playing keep away as the clock ticks down.

*
*
*

Fifteen seconds.

*

Odin has the ball, and he raises his hand. The Hawks back into position for the game's final play.

*
*

Hugo and Todd line up on the right. Michael and Billy are in a stack on the left.

*
*

Odin moves forward with the ball. He passes to Billy, and runs off a back screen from Michael. Billy passes to Michael and down screens for Odin.

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

2 CONTINUED: (2)

2

Michael fires Odin the ball, and Billy and Michael clear. They've bewildered the defense. It's a one on one for Odin.

*
*

CROWD

Six...five...four...

*

Odin drives against his man, beating him easily. With two seconds left, he lays a finger role up and... MOTION SLOWS until the ball hits nothing but "net". The buzzer sounds. Game over. The Hawks crowd ROARS wildly. Coach Duke bear hugs Odin.

*
*
*
*

The PICTURE FREEZES.

HUGO'S NARRATION

Palmetto Grove is a prep school, but they put basketball and winning above everything. I'm a senior, so it was cool that we won, but frankly, I couldn't care less.

*

RESUME ACTION.

The TEAM and FANS rush the floor. Hugo, however, isn't happy. A few celebrating players slap his back, which only makes him more pissed as he watches the coach hugging Odin and Michael. They are hoisted on shoulders.

3 INT. BASKETBALL GYM - DAY

3

A sports assembly. STUDENTS AND TEACHERS fill one side of the stands, gathered to honor their teams. Students who have won awards sit with coaches behind a podium.

A sign reads: "CONGRATULATIONS HAWKS BASKETBALL - LEAGUE CHAMPS"

*

Coach Duke steps up to the microphone.

ON MICHAEL - He starts a slow chant.

MICHAEL

Duke, Duke, Duke...

The other team members join in.

TEAM (TOGETHER)

...Duke, Duke, Coach Duke, Duke, Duke,
Duke, Duke, Duke, Coach Duke, Duke,
Duke...

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED:

3

COACH DUKE

All right, all right. Pipe down. Odin,
would you come up here? *

Odin stands, makes his way past Hugo. He and Hugo exchange a
one arm hug, all smiles.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

As you all know I'm not a man of many
words...

HUGO

...except when one of us is late for
practice, right Pop?

That draws laughs.

COACH DUKE

Now, since we have the best record in the
coastal region, we have home court
advantage all the way up to the state
championships. And one of the reasons--I
say one because this is a team--but one
of the reasons for that is this young man
right here. *

Coach puts an arm around Odin.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

All year long this kid came through
for us. I've never seen someone who
could handle pressure like he can. I
love him like my own son.

TIGHT ON HUGO - He didn't like that.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

And not only is he a shoe-in for a
high school All-American, but he's
gonna take us to the twentieth state
championship in this institution's
hundred and fifteen year history.
Four more games and we got it,
gentlemen! *

More cheers.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

I don't think anyone will be surprised
that this year's M.V.P is Odin James.

Odin steps up. A beat, then:

(CONTINUED)

3 CONTINUED: (2)

3

ODIN

Yo, yo, Hawks, what time is it?!

TEAM (TOGETHER)

(ala a black fraternity chant)

Game time! Roooh! Game time!

Odin has a cocky way about him, but he's charming as hell.

ODIN

At the beginning of the season we decided to go all the way. And I gave all I had, but that wouldn't mean shit--excuse me, my bad.

Chuckles from the assembled.

ODIN (CONT'D)

...That wouldn't have meant nothing if I didn't have a go-to-guy. Michael, come up here, homey.

Michael squeezes past Hugo.

ODIN (CONT'D)

I told Coach I wouldn't take the M.V.P. unless the "man with the hands," could share it with me.

Coach pulls out two trophies. He hugs Odin.

HUGO'S NARRATION

Odin transferred in at the beginning of the year. He was the brother I always wanted, the son my father never had. Before he showed up we were a good ball club. With him in the lineup, we were great. USA Today ranked us twelfth in the nation for prep schools.

THE CAMERA floats through the APPLAUDING crowd and team, finally stopping on Hugo. He's CLAPPING louder than anyone.

4 INT. BASKETBALL GYM - LATER THAT NIGHT

4

A post assembly school party. Sockless kids are dancing on the hard wood while faculty members supervise. Hugo is standing beside his girlfriend, EMILY. He watches as -

ACROSS THE ROOM

- Michael and other players flirt with a few girls. Michael, with his movie star charisma, is getting a lot of attention.

(CONTINUED)

4

CONTINUED:

4

A FEW FEET AWAY - Odin is with a 18 year-old girl. She's blonde, sexy. This is DESI BRABLE, the girl every schoolboy wants. She's loving Odin's presence.

The D.J. mixes a slow jam. Odin bows to Desi as if she were a queen. Desi feigns shock, takes his arm, and is led to the dance floor. They settle into a slow, gentle sway. Michael joins Odin with his partner. *

AS Hugo watches Michael, ROGER CALHOUN appears beside him. Roger is a rich kid, but he's the type that wants to be "in" so bad that he's a loser. *

ROGER

(frazzled like always)

I, I, I don't understand. You can get me and Desi together? She's with him.

HUGO

They're breaking up.

ROGER

When people are breaking up, they, they don't snuggle. Those two are definitely snuggling.

HUGO

Relax, dude. We're gonna break them up.

ROGER

I thought you two were friends. You hang around him all the time.

HUGO

And that's perfect. If we're gonna do this, I gotta act like I'm cool with him anyway.

Roger isn't buying it.

HUGO

You know what a utility man is?

ROGER

A what?

HUGO

I'm considered a utility man. I rebound, I can shoot. I play guard, forward, power forward... You name the position, I play it.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (2)

4

ROGER

What's your point?

HUGO

Point is, I'm the M.V.P. on this piece of shit team. I've been runnin' screens and bangin' in the paint for four years... He chooses Michael, a fuckin' sophomore? No way. When I started playing varsity, he was still begging his mom for Whinny the Pooh pajamas.

ROGER

He's... Well, he did do kind of good in the game the other day.

HUGO

He hasn't earned anything, all right. He should be a god damn ball boy.

Hugo watches as Odin and Desi slip out a door.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Look at this shit...

5 EXT. CAMPUS QUAD - NIGHT

5

Odin and Desi stand beneath a row of archways at the foot of the campus's main building, kissing tenderly. It's that young, adolescent, "sex is still new kissing."

ODIN

Did I tell you how happy I am around you?

DESI

You can tell me again.

Odin kisses her more, turning up the heat.

DESI (CONT'D)

Do that thing on my neck again.

ODIN

That?

DESI

Um...mm.

More kissing. Odin moves to the other side of her neck.

DESI (CONT'D)

Hey. You know I never had sex with anyone before you, right?

(CONTINUED)

ODIN

Yeah.

DESI

Do you love me?

ODIN

D, I never felt like this for nobody.
For real.

(a beat)

Look, you know what I think about poetry,
right?

DESI

Ahh, lets see, you said it was candy ass,
bullshit. *

ODIN

Except Langston Hughes and James Baldwin.

DESI

So I guess you're not really into it.

ODIN

Let's just say I'm selective. But I wish
I could talk like a poet right now,
'cause I could say I love you and be all
smooth about it. *

DESI

You're going in the right direction. *

ODIN

I never made plans with a girl before,
but look, I got scouts sweatin' me right
now. All I gotta do is get to the state
finals. And if you keep on getting those
grades... we have our choice of schools.
One way or the other I gotta be around
you, D. I love you.

DESI

So, U.C. Berkeley it is then.

ODIN

I thought we agreed on Duke.

DESI

Duke is cool for a ball player, but this
girl might want some California sunshine.

(CONTINUED)

5 CONTINUED: (2)

5

ODIN

Aw, D, you can go to a tanning booth.
Duke is basketball central, baby.

Odin stops because Desi is grinning.

DESI

Just for your information...

She lifts her shirt, flashing him for a second.

DESI

...these are going to Berkeley.

ODIN

You ain't got no bra on, girl!

DESI

What school did you say you wanted to go
to?

They both get a laugh. Odin chases Desi out onto the quad. *

6 EXT. AN UPPER CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - ESTABLISH - NIGHT

6

Roger and Hugo walk, swilling rum.

HUGO

Money, women... If his knees stay
healthy, he's gonna have everything.

ROGER

What if he ahh, if he flunks out of
college or something?

HUGO

If we go to the state finals, he'll get
all the hype he needs to go straight to
the NBA.

ROGER

I, I guess if he gets a little money, she
and Odin will maybe get married. Their
kids would probably be good-looking.
Mixed kids are always good.

They fetch up in front of a large house.

HUGO

All right. Get that bad boy out.

Roger pulls a cell phone from his jacket.

(CONTINUED)

6 CONTINUED:

6

ROGER
I'm not sure about this.

HUGO
Don't wuss out on me, man.

ROGER
He'll boot me out of school.

HUGO
We're one block from the newly renovated
"Roger Calhoun Senior library." Your
father is this institution. You want
Desi or not? *

7 INT. DEAN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

7

MR. BRABLE, the Dean of Palmetto Grove Academy, is sound
asleep on his Florida porch when the phone RINGS. He
answers, groggy. *

DEAN BRABLE
Good evening.

ROGER (O.S.)
Ah, hi, hi, Dean Brable?

DEAN BRABLE
Yes, who is this?

INTERCUT: HUGO AND ROGER ON THE STREET. *

ROGER
I don't know how to say this sir, but
someone, someone sort of stole something
from you.

Hugo leans to listen in. *

DEAN BRABLE
What are you talking about?

ROGER
Your daughter.

DEAN BRABLE
Roger, we agreed you wouldn't be calling
anymore. Desi doesn't want to date you.
Now enough is enough.

ROGER
I know, sir, but your, your daughter--

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7

Hugo silences Roger, then steps in and disguises his voice.

HUGO

(imitating Roger)

Right now your little sweet sixteen-year-old and, and, and Odin James are taking the skin boat to tuna town. They're groanin' and bonin', Dean. Your lily white daughter is ridin' the black pony. She's poundin' a pick-n-inny, she... she's getting prodded by a porch monkey, doggy style, sir. *

DEAN BRABLE

Watch your mouth, you little prick! *

HUGO

(imitating)

If, if you don't do something, you're going to have big, oversized nigger grandkids... I'm talking bubble asses, afros and criminal records.

DEAN BRABLE

Roger!

Hugo signals Roger to continue.

ROGER

Dean, I, I respect you, sir, and--

Through the windows of the porch, the boys can see the Dean rise out of his chair. *

DEAN BRABLE

Where are you?

ROGER

Ah, on your lawn. Sir. *

DEAN BRABLE

Wait there.

The phone goes dead.

HUGO

Good luck. I'm outa here.

Hugo hands Roger the cell phone.

ROGER

Hey wait, wait a minute.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

7

HUGO

Don't be a jerkoff. I can't let Odin find out I'm helping you. Remember what I told you to say.

ROGER

I'm gonna get murdered here.

HUGO

Stand tall, comrade. Be a man. I'll see you at the dorm.

Hugo bolts, as Brable opens the house's front door. *

8 INT. BOYS DORM - DAY *

8 *

Odin and Hugo burst through the front door of the Boys Dorm. *

ODIN

Roger's a little bitch. Why would he want to salt me like that?

HUGO

I should whoop his ass right now. I wish I didn't have a conscience, kid, sometimes I want to kill a guy like that. A little sorry-ass-egghead honky assed motherfucker like Roger?

ODIN

That wouldn't solve nothin'.

ODIN leads them into a common area with a fridge, a television, and chairs. *

Odin goes for a coke. *

HUGO

You didn't hear what he was sayin' about you, O. He was dissin' you. It's a respect thing. Dean Brable might be an asshole, but he could have you kicked out the school. The Duke wouldn't even be able to stop it. And for what? Some ho.

ODIN

Don't be calling her a ho, all right.

HUGO

I'm tellin' you, player, you should just deny you were ever with her.

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

8

ODIN

Hugo. I told you. Me and Desi are together. How am I gonna dog her out like that?

There's a commotion outside in the hall.

VOICE (O.S.)

Where's Odin?!

VOICE #2 (O.S.)

Check the common room. *

HUGO

Here we go. I knew it. I'm tellin' you, lie through your teeth if you have to. *

Michael enters. *

MICHAEL

Did you guys hear?! *

HUGO

Hear what?

MICHAEL

Last night. Magnolia beat Gaffney. That means we play 'em Saturday. *

Michael high fives an unexcited Odin.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Coach says we're gonna open the court up on 'em. You're gonna be running old school "Laker brakes."

Odin grabs his books and exits.

MICHAEL

What's wrong with him?

HUGO

Dean Brable found out about him and Desi.

9 INT. CHALK ROOM - DAY

9 *

Coach Duke is at a chalkboard. The team looks on.

COACH DUKE

...we're gonna run 'em 'till they drop dead. That means pressing them too. Hugo, you were dragging in the fourth quarter. Either get to your position on

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

9 CONTINUED:

9

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)
those traps or tell me you can't handle
it.

HUGO
I'll be all right, Coach.

COACH DUKE
That goes for everyone!

Michael taps Odin on the shoulder and motions to the side
door. Dean Brable enters.

10 INT. COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

10

Duke and Odin are seated. Brable paces.

DEAN BRABLE
And I have a witness that says he forced
himself on her.

ODIN
What? Who?! Look, if Desi says I did
anything even close to wrong to her, I'll
leave the damn school! That's on the
real.

COACH DUKE
Take it easy.

ODIN
Pssh.

COACH DUKE
That's a serious allegation, Bob. Do you
have proof?

ODIN
Of course he don't, 'cause I wouldn't do
somethin' like that. Never.

DEAN BRABLE
You mean to tell me you never had any run-
ins with the police?

ODIN
I didn't force myself on Desi, all right?

DEAN BRABLE
That's not what I just asked.

ODIN
What are you saying, Dean?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

10

DEAN BRABLE

I'm saying--

ODIN

You sayin' I ain't clean? I ain't on that shit no more. Test my ass. Man, this is fucked up.

DEAN BRABLE

And some of the things I hear you said about Desi are "fucked up," too.

Brable shoves a finger into Odin's chest.

DEAN BRABLE (CONT'D)

Don't underestimate me, son. Not when it comes to my daughter

ODIN

That finger's got a few too many years to be hanging out there like that. So, I suggest you get it out my face before I break the mothafucka off.

COACH DUKE

Hey hey hey hey now. Odin. All right, Bob, back off. Odin... *

ODIN

Man if you so worried about me, why'd this school bust its ass to get me here?

A TAP on the door. Desi enters.

ODIN

Yo, D. Tell these guys what's really goin' on.

COACH DUKE

Have a seat, Desi.

DEAN BRABLE

I think we know what's going on.

COACH DUKE

Bob, you have to be reasonable, here.

The Dean weighs his words carefully.

DEAN BRABLE

Honey, we never had any secrets before. Now, I want you to tell me the truth. Did Odin ever harm you or force you to do

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (2)

10

DEAN BRABLE (CONT'D)

anything you didn't want to? Anything at all?

DESI

Dad... I can't believe you think he'd hurt me. Odin and I have been together for four months now.

DEAN BRABLE

What does that mean, together?

DESI

Dad, that's none of your business.

DEAN BRABLE

I asked you a question.

DESI

And I said it's none of your business.

Dean and Desi stare at each other.

COACH DUKE

Well, Dean, no sense in fussing over something that's already happened.

ODIN

Sir, you got a great daughter. I mean that. She and I got something real cool goin'.

The Dean leans in close to Odin. Desi can't hear this:

DEAN BRABLE

She deceived me, son. What makes you think she won't do the same to you?

The Dean pulls the door open, team members who were trying to listen scatter. The Dean exits.

11 OUTSIDE THE COACH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

11

Desi kisses Odin, then goes after her dad. The coach emerges.

ODIN

Hey Duke, thanks... for sticking up for us I mean. Dean was trippin'.

COACH DUKE

You know the rules, Odin. I don't like distractions on this team. I hear you're screwing up, you sit the bench. State championship or not.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED: 11

The coach storms off down the hallway.

12 INT. HALLWAY - DAY 12

The halls are filled with kids. Roger is walking with Hugo when Odin and Michael grab Roger and shove him through a door and onto a balcony. Hugo stays in the hallway.

*
*

13 EXT. BALCONY 13

FROM ABOVE, Michael pulls Roger to the rail and holds him as...WHAM! Odin nails him in the stomach.

*

CLOSE on Odin.

*

*

ODIN

You know what's up, punk! Ever lie on me again, and I'll smooth fuck your bitch-ass up a whole lot worse than this.

BLAAM! Another punch, this time to the face. Roger slides to the floor.

BACK IN THE HALLWAY

Odin comes back in from the balcony.

*

ODIN

(to Hugo)

See you at dinner.

14 INT. DORM ROOM - EVENING 14

Everything is upscale, obviously a rich kid's room.

Roger is nursing his eye, swigging RUM. He is playing with his CELLULAR PHONE. The door opens. An ice pack lands in his lap.

*
*

HUGO (O.S.)

Thought you might need this.

These guys are roommates.

*

ROGER

You're an asshole, you know that? Why didn't you do something?

HUGO

Me? You're the one that let Odin punk you, dude. You didn't even fight back. The whole school's talking about it.

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

You're such a bastard.

HUGO

Get some sleep.

ROGER

I can't sleep. I feel like killing myself.

*
*

HUGO

But then I'd never see you again.

Roger stands, half way between crying and rage. He moves onto a screened balcony. Hugo follows.

*
*

ROGER

This isn't a joke! You said you were gonna take care of this. I can't stop thinking about her.

HUGO

Do you really like the girl, or is this one of those, "if I can't have her no one else can" things?

*

ROGER

What am I supposed to do?

HUGO

Listen to me, Rog, you got weeds in your garden. Don't sit there and cry about it. Get off your ass, pull the weeds and plant some frickin' roses!

ROGER

What are you talking about?

HUGO

What do you have more of, than anybody in this place?

ROGER

CDs?

HUGO

Try again. What do you use to buy CDs?

ROGER

Money?

(CONTINUED)

14 CONTINUED: (2)

14

HUGO

Money. You got money. We gotta use it, dude.

Roger brightens a bit.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Trust me. Odin's gonna get tired of Desi. "Niggas" are dogs, bro, and she'll get tired of him. She's just hot for his body, but in a couple weeks it'll be over, and you'll be there. You got the car, you got the dough, you got brains, you got a garden, my friend. You just need to tend it. I told you I got this situation under control. Now, let's get back inside and get that pack on your honky head. You look like shit on a stick--just a big ole' shitsicle.

Hugo smacks Roger affectionately on the cheek.

PUSH IN ON Hugo. His wheels are spinning.

15 EXT. CAR COMPOUND - DAY

15

A fenced off parking lot connected to a small trailer/booth. MR. KIRBY, the caretaker, is with Hugo and Roger. Roger hands Kirby some cash.

HUGO

How they been hanging, Mr. Kirby?

KIRBY

You know, one at my ankle the other at my knee. They do tend to drop as you get on in life.

Kirby unlocks the gate.

KIRBY

Since you boys are going to be out for the day, maybe you wouldn't mind bringing me a little mouth wash.

ROGER

Cherry Shnops?

KIRBY

If you wouldn't mind.

Kirby hands Roger his car keys.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

15

As Roger and Hugo pull off, Kirby locks up.

KIRBY (CONT'D)

(singing)

YOU CAN PAY ME NOW AND YOU CAN PAY ME
LATER/ I LOVE RICH KIDS AND THEIR DADDY'S
PAPER...

16 EXT. DOWNTOWN CHARLESTON- DAY

16

The historic district. Toney shops occupy the ground floors
of beautifully preserved antebellum buildings.

Hugo and Roger come out of a jewelry store. Both are
carrying bags from a day's worth of shopping.

HUGO

Beautiful, Roger. Friggin' beautiful.

Hugo holds up a pair of DIAMOND EARRINGS.

ROGER

Think she's gonna like them?

HUGO

Rog, trust me. When a girl says no, all
she really wants is a little jewelry.

Roger hugs Hugo, excited. Hugo looks uncomfortable.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Three second limit on the hugs, dude.

ROGER

Sure I shouldn't give them to her?

HUGO

She's pissed at you right now. Look, I
have to take care of some things in the
city, but I'll get them over to her
tonight.

ROGER

Where ya' going? Want me to come with
you?

Hugo takes the car keys from Roger, and gets into the
driver's seat of the car.

HUGO

No, I'll see you back at the room. I'll
handle everything.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

16

ROGER
Wait, what? This is my car.

HUGO
So get a cab. Later, Herb.

Hugo has started the engine, and squeals off.

17 INT. PAWNSHOP - DAY

17

A grizzled, Southern pawn broker is examining the earrings.

LANNY
You didn't steal these little fellers by any chance. 'Cause you know I don't deal on that level.

HUGO
Yeah right. How much?

18 EXT. NORTH CHARLESTON--DAY

18

HUGO drives Roger's car through a depressed, dangerous area of town.

19 EXT. MITCHELL'S CLUB - EVENING

19

Hugo pulls up in Roger's car. It's early yet, and the parking lot's virtually empty.

20 INT. MITCHELL'S CLUB - EVENING

20

HUGO passes a woman readying the bar for the evening.

HUGO
He's back there?

She ignores him.

21 INT. BACK OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

21

Dell, black, forties, old school--perhaps a gangster turned businessman--is preparing a huge syringe. If you don't like needles, this scene isn't for you.

DELL
Gonna keep doin' this crap all year, yo?

HUGO
You tell me. You're the pharmacist.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

DELL

Some of the drugs I sell will most definitely twist you up. This steroid shit right here? Fifty fifty chance, brotha'.

HUGO

My vertical is three inches higher this month and I cut half a second off my time in the forty.

Hugo counts out a few C-notes.

DELL

Cool, cool. Just remember, if you end up playing for North Carolina or something, make sure you hook a Nigga up with a few tickets. And I'm talkin' court side, brotha.

HUGO'S NARRATION

I'd been "juicing" for about a year. Put on twenty pounds of muscle like that. It wasn't hard to get either. My dad has always said "be the best, victory at any cost." And that's just what I did.

Hugo lifts his shirt, exposing his stomach. Dell slowly pushes the syringe into his belly, squeezing the liquid manhood into the boy.

HUGO

Son of a bitch!

DELL

We'll cycle you onto something else next week. You been drinkin' enough water?

HUGO

By the gallon. I'm surprised it doesn't come out some of these holes you keep sticking in me.

The needle comes back out now. Hugo winces.

DELL (CONT'D)

Yeah, I know you all into this basketball, but if it don't happen it's all right, know what I'm saying? There are some things we just weren't meant to have. Don't go makin' yourself crazy.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

HUGO

I got you here sellin' "dream in a bottle". How can I go crazy?

Dell laughs at that, as Hugo re-dresses.

DELL

You all right, Hugo. Go ahead and keep runnin' up and down that gym floor, but remember, a man only needs four things to be happy: Food, shelter, pussy... and sneak pussy. So, let's go spend the rest of that grip, baby.

22 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

22

Desi is there with her roommate, Emily. They lounge in their underwear. Emily's a pretty brunette. She's normally bright-eyed, but tonight seems depressed.

DESI

So have you talked to him about it?

EMILY

There's nothing to talk about. I do everything for him, but he's been acting completely insane lately.

DESI

Lately? Try, "always."

Emily doesn't appreciate the sarcasm.

DESI (CONT'D)

Sorry.

EMILY

What's the deal? Everyone at the school likes Hugo except you.

DESI

No one doesn't like him, and that seems impossible to me. I don't trust anybody who doesn't have at least one enemy.

A KNOCK at the window. It's Odin, who's climbed up to the ledge outside.

ODIN

What's up, "D-dog"? Hey Emily, how you doin'?

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED:

22

DESI

Didn't think you were gonna make it.

ODIN

No way, girl. Can't beat Magnolia tomorrow without seeing my good luck charm. And I got you something, too.

Odin pulls out a SILK SCARF.

ODIN (CONT'D)

It's over a hundred years old.

DESI

It's over your price range is what it is.

ODIN

Naw, girl, nothing's too expensive for you... It was expensive, though.

(beat)

I'm playin'. It was my grandmother's. Been in my family forever. It's supposed to stay that way, but you're kinda like the only family I got here, so...

Odin climbs in bed and pulls the covers over them. He sticks his head out.

ODIN

Yo, Emily. Got the new Westside Connect, baby.

Odin flings Emily a new CD. She unwraps it, puts it in a Walkman.

DESI

You are so nice.

ODIN

I got something nice for you.

Emily puts on headphones and pulls her own blankets over her head.

UNDER DESI'S COVERS

Odin takes his shirt off.

DESI

O, Emily's here.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (2)

22

ODIN

We're not gonna do anything. I just like feeling your skin against mine.

Desi smiles, then removes her shirt. A silent moment, as they stare at each other. Odin strokes her blond hair. Desi runs her hand over a scar on his black chest.

DESI

My father's a smart man, but he's never really been through anything. He acts like he's in control all the time, but underneath it, he's really just scared. You never seem scared.

ODIN

Are you asking how I got that scar?

DESI

You do have the best stories.

ODIN

I was a C-section baby and they cut through too far. My mom couldn't afford a good doctor.

DESI

Are you serious?

ODIN

I fell off my skateboard.

They start giggling again.

ODIN (CONT'D)

I get scared all the time.

DESI

You do not.

ODIN

Yes I do.

DESI

When?

ODIN

The first time I tried to talk to you I thought I was gonna faint. For real.

DESI

No way. The second sentence out of your mouth was, "do you have a boyfriend?"

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (3)

22

ODIN

I said I was scared. I didn't say I couldn't handle the pressure. Hey, I got playa' skills.

DESI

Oh, ladies and gentleman, he's getting a little cocky.

ODIN

Hey, don't put little and cocky together in a sentence when you're talking about me, all right?

She slugs his shoulder.

DESI

(laughs)

Shut up.

ODIN

You think I'm too cocky for real?

DESI

It's all right. You should be. You pulled me, didn't you?

Desi gives Odin "daps" (they pound fists).

ODIN

Yeah I did.

DESI

I don't know how, but you did.

ODIN

What do you mean, how? I pulled you 'cause I'm that kind of nigga.

Desi flinches at the sound of the "N" word.

ODIN (CONT'D)

Don't worry, I can say nigga, see, 'cause I'm a nigga. You can't, but I can.

DESI

Why can't I say it? My people invented the word.

ODIN

Matter of fact, you can't even think it.

(CONTINUED)

22 CONTINUED: (4)

22

DESI

You're the one. You said that I was so fine, you'd let me dress you up and play "Black Buck Got Loose in The Big House".

ODIN

Hey, don't go repeating that. If a black person knew I said that to you, I could get my suffering-Negro-league card revoked. I'm serious.

DESI

Then you better be cool. Because it looks like I got some dirt on you... player.

Odin wrestles Desi onto her back. They start giggling.

ON EMILY

She cranks the volume up on her CD, trying to ignore Odin and Desi's antics. The music takes us to...

23 EXT. BASKETBALL GYM - ESTABLISH - DAY

23

24 INT. BASKETBALL GYM - DAY

24

*

An excited crowd.

With much ceremony, THE FALCONER enters with the team mascot perched on his gloved arm. The hawk leaps into the air, spreads his wings and soars a full circle around the gym, buzzing the fan's heads. The gym goes crazy.

*

ON HUGO

Something about the spectacle of the hawk bothers him. The timer's HORN SOUNDS and Hugo heads to...

*

MID COURT

Players match up man to man. Odin sees the PLAYER who is guarding him.

ODIN

Hold up, you're guarding me? Hugo, look who's guarding me, baby.

HUGO

(to the player)

Oh, man, I'm sorry for you, dude. You know you're about to get embarrassed, right?

(CONTINUED)

24 CONTINUED:

24

ODIN

I see a little fear in those eyes. Does he look like a crier, Hugo?

HUGO

Yeap, I see tears before half time.

ODIN

Aw damn, another bitch.

PLAYER

Fuck you.

The crowd CHEERS as the REF tosses up the tip-off. Michael jumps and taps it back to Odin.

Odin drives down court, dishes to Hugo. Hugo dishes back to Odin who shoots over the player.

ODIN

Fuck you too, baby. You about to get run.

Michael gets in the guy's face. His teammates pull him back.

BEGIN GAME MONTAGE:

Odin runs the fast break and Hugo finishes.

SCOREBOARD reads: Hawks 23, Marauders 16. 1st half.

Hugo passes to Michael...he "alley-oops" to Odin, who dunks.

The other team is looking exhausted.

Odin breaks the full court press with amazing dribbling skills.

SCOREBOARD reads: Hawks 78, Marauders 61. 2nd half.

Coach Duke yells at Hugo on the sideline.

Odin grabs a rebound and pushes the ball up court. It's 2 on 3, but he takes it straight at the other team's big man. He leaps. WHAM! He gets plastered and goes down hard. Odin's head hits the floor.

The CROWD GASPS. Odin rolls around in pain.

25 INT. GYM/SIDELINE (MOMENTS LATER)

25

Odin is helped to the bench. Coach Duke is there, but from Odin's POV, his voice is way off in the distance. Everything looks and sounds distorted.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

COACH DUKE
(echoing voice)
What day is it, son?

ODIN
Ahh... It could be Saturday.

COACH DUKE
Game's almost over. Sit the rest out.

ODIN
Naw, coach, let me get fifty. How many I
got now?

One of the ASSISTANT COACHES is there with the stat book.

ASSISTANT COACH
Forty-six.

ODIN
Come on, coach. I'm cool.

COACH DUKE
All right. No flash. Just knock down
some jumpers.

Odin heads back to the court.

26 INT. LOCKER ROOM SHOWERS - LATER

26

The Hawks are celebrating. Odin is in the shower. He tries
to lather himself, but suddenly collapses, out cold.

WHITE FLASH OUT TO:

27 EXT. HOSPITAL - ESTABLISH - NIGHT

27

28 INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT

28

Michael, A FEW OTHER PLAYERS, and Coach Duke are there
waiting, silently.

Hugo enters with Desi and Emily.

DESI
Is he all right?

COACH DUKE
They're doing a CAT scan right now.

Michael kisses Desi and Emily innocently on the cheek.

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED:

28

HUGO

Michael gets more kisses from my girl
than I do.

DESI

Could you stop being a sarcastic asshole
just once, Hugo.

HUGO

I was joking, all right? Give me a
break.

Michael takes Desi's hand and cuddles it, to calm her. Hugo
takes note as the hand holding turns into another hug.

HALLWAY - Odin enters accompanied by a nurse. He approaches
Michael who is still hugging Desi.

ODIN

Gone for a few hours and you're already
taking my girl, huh?

Desi goes to Odin; hugs him tightly.

ODIN (CONT'D)

I was worried about you.

DESI

You were the one hurt, stupid.

ODIN

No, you don't understand. I was thinkin'
if I was messed up really bad, who would
you go to Duke with?

DESI

Of course. And you're still gonna play
"Big House" with me right?

ODIN

You better stop with that.

DESI

Well, you better stop getting hurt. I
love you, baby.

ODIN

I love you too.

EMILY

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

watches Odin' and Desi's banter--envy in her eyes. She catches herself staring, and glances to Hugo. He was watching her.

COACH DUKE

All right, you kids need to get back to the dorms.

ODIN

Where's my boy, Hugo?

HUGO

You had us goin' for a minute.

ODIN

Did we take it to 'em or what?

HUGO

No, you took it to 'em all by yourself, player.

ODIN

You comin'? There's a party tonight off campus.

HUGO

I'll see you there.

Hugo gestures toward his father who is speaking to a doctor.

HUGO (CONT'D)

I have to ride with my dad.

Hugo falls back as the crowd exits. He goes to a pay phone and dials as he watches Michael and Odin walk off together, all arm in arm with the girls. Michael even puts an arm around Emily.

HUGO

(into the phone)

Roger, it's me. We got plans tonight.

29 INT. OFF CAMPUS HOUSE (DAY STUDENT) - NIGHT

29

The place is bumpin'. No parents or faculty this time. All KIDS. Some doin' Tequila shots. Some dancing. Some dropping acid. The smell of marijuana is thick.

Odin stands, drinking juice with his arms draped around Desi. They watch as the team huddles around a big screen TV watching a tape of yesterday's game. Hugo is hamming it up.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

HUGO

(as a commentator)

Odin James looks down court, he's got a man open, it's, it's Michael Casio. Casio kicks it over to Hugo Goulding. back to Casio who slams it home!

They CHEER. Hugo shoves a champagne bottle to Michael's lips. The team dog piles on Michael, mimicking the tape.

OFF TO THE SIDE - Dell is there with a woman. He offers Odin some weed. Odin declines. Instead he pulls Desi off onto...

30 EXT. BALCONY

30

Odin leads Desi to the railing overlooking the water. He takes a deep breath.

ODIN

I think when I passed out, I had a vision.

Pulls something out of his pocket.

ODIN

You've gotten a ride on the handlebars of one of your friend's bikes before, right?

DESI

Yeah.

ODIN

Well, I used to sit on the bars and try to close my eyes. I couldn't do it. It's some scary shit, 'cause you don't trust the person not to crash.

DESI

You're trippin' me out right now.

ODIN

I feel like I can close my eyes with you.

Odin reveals a rubber band in his palm. He takes Desi's hand and puts it on her wedding finger.

ODIN (CONT'D)

Look, we're eighteen, I ain't tryin' to get married by an Elvis impersonator in Vegas or nothin', but I was thinking we could sort of pretend, see how it feels.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED:

30

DESI

You're practicing a marriage proposal with a rubber band?

Desi hesitates, then hugs the crap out of him.

DESI (CONT'D)

That's the sweetest thing I've ever heard.

31 EXT. HOUSE - LATER

31

The party is still jumping, inside and out.

BY A SWIMMING POOL, Hugo is with a now very drunk Michael. Hugo shoves a bottle of champagne at him.

*
*

MICHAEL

No need to get drunk if you're already drunk.

HUGO

You're right. No more champagne. How about some Tequila?

Hugo offers a choice of bottles.

MICHAEL

I can't, man.

HUGO

Dude, come on. We get to sleep in tomorrow. Just fuckin' drink it and shut up.

MICHAEL

Don't want it, dude.

HUGO

Drink it down, Mikie. Mikeeee...

Drinky, Mikie.

(playing an Asian Hooker)

Me love you long time if you drinky, Mikie...

Michael takes the champagne, downs it.

HUGO

Yeah, baby. Now we're feeling good.

Michael casts the bottle aside, and staggers off.

*

Hugo looks over and signals to Roger, who approaches.

*

(CONTINUED)

HUGO

Time to pull some weeds, pal.

ROGER

Just for the record. Why am I doing this again?

HUGO

Because I said so. Now get your ass in gear.

Roger heads over -

ONTO THE LAWN

- where Michael is flirting with a girl, call her BRANDY. She's 15, brunette, and beautiful.

CLOSE ON Hugo, who watches Roger, a gleam in his eye.

Roger stands close to Michael and Brandy.

ROGER

Hey.

MICHAEL

Excuse us Roger.

ROGER

Excuse you?

MICHAEL

We're talking.

ROGER

What, you're diagraming some basketball plays, wiffle brain?

Michael shoves him.

MICHAEL

What'd you say?

Roger shoves back, and a drunken fight begins, which stretches out behind a hedge. Roger comes flying out, falling to the ground. Michael storms out, grabs Roger and WHAM! Punches him.

MICHAEL

I don't care if your father owns the whole fucking school.

Michael tries to get at Roger again, but Hugo holds him.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED: (2)

31

HUGO

Take it easy, big guy. He's nobody.

Michael is starting to relax, when Roger scrambles to his feet and SMACK! He tags Michael with a right cross.

Michael marches toward Roger, ready to kill him, but...

THE CHAMPAGNE BOTTLE

Roger grabs it and starts swinging. Even drunk, Michael's athletic ability keeps him out of the way. The fight has now cleared the front lawn.

*
*
*
*
*

ON THE BALCONY

Odin notices the fray.

ON THE LAWN

Hugo steps out as if to intervene.

HUGO

Come on, Roger. What are you doing?

ROGER

Not so tough now, are you, Mr. basketball?! That three point shooting ability isn't helping much at the moment, is it?

Odin appears with Desi, just in time to see Roger swing the bottle and miss. Michael tackles Roger over a hedge... CRASH! The bottle breaks. Some girls SCREAM.

*

Odin rushes over and pulls Michael off.

ODIN

Chill, man. Chill the hell out!

Odin slaps Michael a few times to get him to calm down.

Desi sees Roger bleeding from the stomach.

DESI

Oh God, Roger, you're bleeding!

Roger tries to stand, grabs his stomach and collapses.

32 INT. COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

32

Silence.

(CONTINUED)

32 CONTINUED:

32

Odin, Hugo and Michael are there with Coach Duke.

COACH DUKE

So, this kid loses a pint of blood and you guys don't have anything to say.

HUGO

Dad, it was an accident. Roger's been starting crap all year. *

COACH DUKE

Who threw the first punch?

(beat)

Hugo?!

Hugo looks torn, playing the part of a loyal friend.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

Talk to me, damnit! *

HUGO

Mike did, Pop, but it wasn't his fault. He just had a few too many beers, that's all.

COACH DUKE

I don't want to hear it. I didn't hear that.

(to Michael)

You know my rules, son. You'll have to watch the next two games from the stands. Then we'll see. And if this had been on campus...

MICHAEL

I know, sir.

COACH DUKE

Now get out of here. All of ya!

33 INT. HALLWAY - MOMENTS LATER

33

The hallway is empty, lonely. Odin stares hard at Mike.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry.

ODIN

We tryin' to get us a championship. I ain't got time for dumb shit, dude. And that was most definitely some dumb shit.

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED:

33

Michael watches his friend walk away. He heads off in the opposite direction, alone.

Hugo watches the two friends part paths.

34 EXT. HOUSE - MIDDLE CLASS NEIGHBORHOOD - ESTABLISH - NIGHT

34

35 INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

35

Hugo is with the coach and his MOM. They eat in silence.. Hugo stares at his father for an uncomfortable moment.

COACH DUKE

What is it, son?

HUGO

If O had got into a fight, would you have made him sit, too?

COACH DUKE

I'm eating.

A beat as Hugo continues to stare at his father, then:

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

I don't play favorites, you know that.

HUGO

I'm sure you'd sit me for a lot less, but, Odin? I don't know, Duke.

COACH DUKE

Odin would never do anything that stupid, and I hope you wouldn't, either. Eat your dinner.

Hugo puts his fork down and gets up.

HUGO

I'm going back to the dorm.

36 INT. BIOLOGY CLASSROOM - DAY

36

It's dissection day. Each table has a frog strapped down under a lighted magnifying glass. Michael and Hugo are lab partners. Hugo assists while Michael operates.

HUGO

What did Roger do to you, anyway? I know he's a geek, but he only weighs a buck-o-five. I'd feel guilty kickin' his ass.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED:

36

MICHAEL

Save it, Hugo -

Michael slips and stabs the frog.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

- damn!

HUGO

I think it's already dead, pal.

That was meant as a joke. Michael doesn't laugh.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Gimme that.

MICHAEL

I'm screwed, man.

HUGO

No, this frog here is screwed. You have a minor inconvenience. You'll be playing next year. So who cares?

Hugo starts dissecting. He's very good at it.

MICHAEL

Dude, it's different for you, 'cause your dad is cool, but my parents are gonna find out.

HUGO

Why are you in school?

MICHAEL

Huh?

HUGO

You here for your parents or for you?

Michael has to think about that one.

HUGO (CONT'D)

So they'll be a little pissed off. What, are they gonna spank ya'?

MICHAEL

My parents always talk about reputation. Once you lose that--

HUGO

Reputation? Who cares about friggin' reputation? Mikie, I love you, man, but
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (2)

36

HUGO (CONT'D)

you're a mamma's boy. The only person you have to answer to is yourself. You make your own rules. As soon as you figure that out, you're free.

SCHOOL BELL RINGS. Hugo packs up.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Look, you really wanna get back on the team?

37 EXT. CAMPUS WALKWAY - DAY

37

Students come and go. Michael and Hugo exit a building.

MICHAEL

Why can't you just talk to your dad?

HUGO

I'm telling you, guy, my dad trusts Odin. If Odin says we can't win without you in there, you're in there.

MICHAEL

Odin won't even talk to me.

HUGO

Michael, am I your boy? Am I your boy?

Michael nods.

HUGO (CONT'D)

All right, then. This is what you have to do. You're friends with Desi, right?

MICHAEL

Of course.

HUGO

Well now you're her best friend, and you're gonna get her to talk to Odin for you. Just pour your heart out. Girls are suckers for guys who pour their hearts out. Then she talks to Odin. But listen to me. You gotta hang with her. That's the only way this works. It's worth a shot, buddy. And I'll have Emily work on Desi, too.

MICHAEL

Yo, Hugo. Thanks, man.

38 EXT. CUPOLA - ESTABLISH - DAY 38 *

The glass-paneled dome atop a school building. *

39 INT. CUPOLA 39 *

Close on: THE HAWK through the bars of a makeshift pen. *

HUGO *

It's okay, baby. You're okay. *

Pigeons huddle on a ledge nearby. *

Footsteps. The hawk tenses. *

HUGO (CONT'D)

Shhh.

- the door bursts open, startles the bird. It's Roger. He's pissed, and he looks ashen. *

ROGER

You son of a bitch. Odin and Desi are still together. This is bunk!

HUGO

Bunk?

ROGER

I'm not playing around.

HUGO

I'm sorry, did you say "bunk?" Where'd you get that one? Sesame Street or Barney?

ROGER

She didn't say anything about the earrings. You don't get a five hundred dollar pair of earrings and not say something!

HUGO

She didn't say anything about the earrings? That's really strange.

ROGER

No, that's bullshit, Hugo. What are you doing with that stupid bird, anyway? People are looking for it.

HUGO

I borrowed him for a while.

(CONTINUED)

39 CONTINUED:

39

ROGER

Great. We got things to do, and your playing pranks with the frickin' mascot.

Roger swats the cage, jostling the bird. Hugo grabs him, shoves him against the wall.

HUGO

How come you rich shitheads never have any patience? You think we can just throw money at Desi, and she'll hop on your little shriveled pecker? Anything worth anything takes time, you spoiled fuck.

Roger pulls up his shirt. His chest is bandaged.

HUGO (CONT'D)

You did get your ass kicked pretty good.

ROGER

No, I got my ass kicked pretty good twice, in less than a week. I need to know where this is going.

HUGO

You got him, guy. You got him. This is part one of our freakin' plan. Michael is off the team and lucky to still be in school. Now it's Odin's turn. And once he's off the team, that means no NBA dream, and that means no NBA quality girlfriend.

ROGER

You're... you're serious? I want results.

HUGO

You'll get results.

ROGER

You promise?

HUGO

I promise.

40 INT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

40

The BAND plays as a local announcer calls the game.

*

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED:

40

ANNOUNCER

This tournament has seen some excellent play, but nothing better than Odin James of Palmetto Grove. His team is two games away from the State finals, but they'll have to do it without the team mascot. Evidently the bird was stolen. Looks like James will have to do all the flying himself.

Odin takes a pass from Hugo. He drives, leaps, goes sideways in the air, Michael Jordan style... BOOYOW... and slams it home over TWO DEFENDERS. Odin gets in the defender's face. There's a shoving match. The other team calls for time out.

ON THE BENCH

Coach Duke diagrams a defense.

COACH DUKE

They only have one guy that's worth a shit. When he gets freed up outside, it's an automatic lay up. So we're going box-one on 'em! And Odin, you're the floater. You deny that kid the ball! I don't care if you have to hang on to his testicles, he doesn't get a shot off...

Hugo looks behind the bench and sees -

IN THE STANDS

- Michael sitting with the fans. Desi and Emily are sitting a few rows over.

Hugo makes eye contact with Michael, motioning for Michael to go sit with Desi and Emily. Michael heads over to the girls.

WHISTLES sound. Players join hands in the center of the circle.

COACH DUKE

What time is it?

TEAM

Game time! Rooh!

The players head out onto the court. Odin looks up to Desi.

ODIN'S POV

IN THE STANDS - Michael squeezes in next to Desi.

(CONTINUED)

40 CONTINUED: (2)

40

Hugo watches Odin watching Desi.

DUKE

Let's go. Hugo. Odin. Let's finish this off.

GAME MONTAGE:

Odin handles the ball like the star that he is. He dishes out assist after assist to Hugo--behind the back, no look-over the shoulder, long range bounce passes... Magic Johnson would give him props.

On defense, Odin is playing more physical than normal. He denies his man the ball.

He fights for position in the paint, banging with the other team's big men. He grabs the rebound, using his body like a weapon.

Odin clears the ball out, pushes the ball up court and passes to Hugo. Hugo gets it right back and Odin scores. The defender tried to take the charge, but gets called for a foul.

Desi and Michael in crowd cheering.

Odin and Hugo bump chests, celebrating.

Scoreboard reads: Hawks 62 - Dutchmen 55, final. *

Odin and Hugo celebrate with team. Odin looks up to the stands to see Desi, Michael, Emily cheering and hugging.

41 INT. WEIGHT ROOM - DAY

41 *

The next day. Hugo and Odin work out together. Other players do so around them. *

ODIN

Maybe I should talk to coach about Mikie. He should be a part of all this, man. *

A pause.

HUGO

Listen, did Mike know you and Desi were getting together?

ODIN

Yeah, I guess. Why?

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED:

41

HUGO

I didn't think he knew.

ODIN

He kinda hooked us up.

HUGO

You trust Mike?

ODIN

I don't know. He can play some ball.

HUGO

But do you trust him?

ODIN

Yeah, he's cool.

HUGO

Hummmh.

ODIN

Why you trippin'?

HUGO

It's nothing.

ODIN

Say what you got to say, player.

HUGO

You're not a jealous person. I am. It's a weakness. Sometimes I see things that aren't really there, but I can't help think that... Watch your girl, man. She and Mike spend a lot of time together.

ODIN

So.

HUGO

I'm just saying. They're always together. And I know the Dean would rather see Mike up in that piece.

ODIN

Fuck you.

HUGO

See. I shouldn't have said nothin'. Forget about it. Mike's a good guy.

Hugo moves to another machine.

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

41

ODIN

Man, you can't just say some shit like that and break.

Odin grabs his towel and follows.

HUGO

Hey, I feel bad talkin' about him. I don't like trashin' a guy's reputation, ya' know? What else you got in this world but your rep?

ODIN

You better start talkin', Hugo, so help me, I'm about to kick you in your ass.

HUGO

You and Desi were hangin' out for like six months before her father even had a clue. So obviously the girl knows how to keep a secret. Now, I know you grew up in the hood, so you've seen plenty of hustlers, but the one thing I do know better than you, is white girls. White girls are snaky, dude, you don't understand. They're horny, snakes. They act like we're the ones who want sex all the time, but they want it worse than us. They're just subtle about the way they go after it.

ODIN

Damn, Hugo, Desi's not like that.

HUGO

And think about how she played her father, dude, when he found out about you and her.

ODIN

Did Emily say something?

HUGO

No, no, no, she wouldn't tell me anyway. They stick together. There's one way to find out, though.

ODIN

Yeah, like ask Mike.

HUGO

No. If something is going on, and I'm not saying there is, but if something is

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (3)

41

HUGO (CONT'D)

going on, they aren't going to come clean. If you really want to know for sure, just don't tell the Duke we want Mike back yet.

Odin doesn't quite follow. One of the other players nears, and Hugo has to lean in close to Odin's ear.

HUGO (CONT'D)

We have a few weeks before the finals. But one thing we don't want is Michael on the team until we know it's true or not. Watch her. If she keeps hangin' with Mike, talkin' about him--whatever, then we got somethin' to think about. We don't let on. We just watch.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

41A INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

41A

Hugo talks to Odin while they eat lunch in the cafeteria. They keep an eye on Desi.

41B EXT. QUAD - DAY

41B

Odin watches from across the quad as Michael talks to Desi.

41C EXT. QUAD - DAY

41C

On the quad, Michael laughs with Emily and Desi.

41D INT. CUPOLA - EVENING

41D

Hugo nurtures the hawk. Odin sits looking depressed.

41E INT. MAIN LOBBY - DAY

41E

In the posh main lobby of the school, Odin secretly watches Mike and Desi studying.

41F INT. LOUNGE AREA - DAY

41F

In a lounge area, a few players are laughing, but stop when Odin enters.

END MONTAGE ON:

42 EXT. GIRLS DORM - LATE AFTERNOON

42

Odin is seething as he heads into the building, passing Michael on the way out.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

42

MICHAEL

What's up, O?

Odin stops for a moment. He thinks about confronting him, but continues inside without a word.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Hey, O. O! What's that all about?!

43 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

43

Emily watches an excited Desi pack. Odin enters.

DESI

Hey, baby, I'm almost ready. *

ODIN

(quietly)

Yeah, cool.

DESI

Just cool? I've been planning this night for a month. You know what I had to do to get this car? *

ODIN

Uh huh...

DESI

You got your pass?

ODIN

Yeah.

DESI

What's wrong with you?

ODIN

Hey, D. You and Mike never went out, like before I got here or somethin'? *

That draws a look from Emily.

DESI

Michael? He's like my best friend... besides Emily.

ODIN

I thought I was your best friend.

Desi strokes Odin's head with her scarf.

(CONTINUED)

43 CONTINUED:

43

DESI
Does my baby feel like he's got a little
competition?

ODIN
Come on, girl, don't.

Desi continues. Odin grabs the scarf and tosses it aside.

FOLLOW the scarf to the floor where it settles. *

ODIN (O-S) *
Don't I said, damn! Let's go.

Odin heads out. Desi grabs her bag and follows.

DESI
Did somebody say something?

ODIN
No, let's just go.

When Desi is gone. Emily stares at the scarf left on the floor. *

44 INT. HUGO'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

44 *

Hugo is at a desk with books in front of him. Roger sits in front of a video game.

ROGER
All I'm saying is, I don't think it's
working. Desi thinks I'm a dick.

HUGO
Well you are a dick. Now give me the
money. It's only a hundred bucks.

Roger holds out a C-note. Hugo grabs it.

ROGER
This is it, Dude. I'm tapped out. My
dad said he won't send any more.

HUGO
Well, then you're gonna have to use the
credit card too, 'cause I need a cell
phone.

ROGER
What?

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

44

ROGER

You and I have to be in constant contact, dude. Just get a cheap one. It's not your fuckin' money.

A KNOCK at the door.

EMILY

Hey, guys.

HUGO

Yo.

Emily shoots Hugo a secret look.

HUGO

Roger, my friend, can you do me a favor?

ROGER

Yeah?

HUGO

Get lost.

EMILY

You could stay. We could work on Spanish.

(a playful sexual innuendo)

You know, uno, dos, tres.

HUGO

Rog is still looking for uno.

Emily smacks Roger on the butt as he exits. Once he's gone:

EMILY

I have something for you.

HUGO

You have things for a lot of guys.

Emily pulls out the scarf. Hugo's eyes light up.

HUGO (CONT'D)

You are amazing!

Hugo grabs for it, but Emily holds it away.

EMILY

What are you going to do with it?

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2)

44

HUGO

Just a little prank. I'm not gonna keep it. I swear.

EMILY

When it turns up missing, she's gonna go nuts.

HUGO

What would I do without you?

Hugo kisses Emily passionately.

EMILY

All this time I've been trying to get romance out of you, and all I had to do was steal something.

HUGO

You didn't steal it. You borrowed it. And if you don't mind, I'd like to borrow you for a minute.

Hugo carries a LAUGHING Emily to the bed. He falls on to her as we...

CUT TO:

45 EXT. MOTEL - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

45

An out of the way motel where no questions are asked. *

46 INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

46

Odin and Desi sit on the bed half clothed. *

DESI

I want you to be able to do anything. I want you to do what you want with me. *

ODIN

Uh huh. *

DESI

I want you to have me however you want. I want to give myself to you how you want me, Odin. *

INSERT: A FLASH FRAME: *

Michael kissing Desi's bare breast.

Odin blinks, trying to stay calm.

(CONTINUED)

DESI
Tell me what you want.

ODIN
What I want?

DESI
Anything you want.

He begins to kiss her.

DESI (CONT'D)
Anything, Odin. I'm all yours. Don't
hold back.

ODIN
Like this.

DESI
Yes. Don't hold back.

ODIN
You think I'm holdin' back?

He pushes her gently onto the bed, lying on top of her
kissing more passionately.

DESI
Yes. That's my baby.

INSERT ANOTHER FLASH FRAME:

Michael on top of Desi, making love.

Odin shakes the image.

BACK TO ODIN AND DESI

making love.

Odin blinks hard, and when he opens his eyes -

IN THE MIRROR

Desi on top, in the throes of passion with Michael.

BACK TO REALITY AS

Desi rolls on top of Odin. They're making love.

DESI (CONT'D)
Is this good? Do you like this?

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (2)

46

ODIN

Yeah, I like it.

*
*

DESI

You like it?

*
*

Odin flips Desi over and climbs on top.

DESI

Come on, baby. Take us where you want.
Yeah, boy. Do your thing. Yes.

*
*
*

ODIN

Oh, you wanna get serious?

Odin starts pounding. Desi MOANS as Odin rocks her furiously.

DESI (CONT'D)

That's my baby!

Odin thrusts harder now, his athletic body going all out.

He violently spins Desi on her stomach.

The editing gets faster.

Rage emanating from Odin's naked body makes him look like an animal, his face contorted. TEARS well up in his eyes.

ANOTHER FLASH FRAME:

Michael and Desi wrapped around each other, naked and sweating.

IN THE MIRROR - Odin grinds away. SMACK! He slaps Desi's back, then puts an arm around her neck.

CLOSE ON DESI

The pain sends a little flicker of fear through her body, but she's into the moment.

Desi is in ecstasy; Odin in agony, but somehow their faces look the same.

Odin pulls Desi's hair back, grotesquely arching her backward. She cries out somewhere between pleasure and pain.

*

DESI

O, please!

Odin's body clamps around her like some dark serpent.

(CONTINUED)

46 CONTINUED: (3)

46

DESI (CONT'D)

Odin. O, you're... hurting me! Stop.

Odin gets rougher, she cries out, cries out again, then... silence.

THE CAMERA finds Odin sobbing, shaking, out of control.

Desi can feel Odin's body shake as he cries. She lays there beneath him, afraid to move.

47 EXT. MOTEL PARKING LOT - DAY

47

Odin and Desi in the car. Desi tries to connect with Odin, who ignores her, looking straight ahead.

She starts the car, and pulls out.

48 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD--DAY

48

Desi and Odin drive back to the school.

49 EXT. QUAD - DAY

49

Lunch time. Kids mill about, eating, talking, grabassing

Michael is there, basking in the noon sun with Brandy, the 15 year-old brunette from the party. Michael looks up and sees -

ACROSS THE QUAD

- Hugo motioning to him.

ON MICHAEL

as he crosses over to Hugo. Hugo says nothing, looks to Brandy then gives him a look as if to say, "you lucky bastard."

MICHAEL

I know.

HUGO

Hot.

MICHAEL

And she doesn't board here and she's wild. You know what that means. We bone in her car, we bone in her house... In her parents bed. I'm layin' it down, man.

(CONTINUED)

HUGO

Don't say I never did anything for ya'.

Hugo pulls out the SCARF, wrapped by a bow.

HUGO (CONT'D)

I got a couple of these in Charleston. It's like a hundred years old. Gotta impress a girl these days.

MICHAEL

You want me to give this to her?

HUGO

Well, don't tell her it's from me, comrade.

MICHAEL

Thanks--

HUGO

Just looking out for my boy.

(beat)

Hey, you're coming to the dunk contest, this weekend, right?

MIKE

Actually I was supposed to spend time with Brandy.

HUGO

Mike, this is important. You said you wanted back on the team. Desi'll be there... You can chase the "flea-males" anytime.

MICHAEL

You're right. I'll go.

Hugo gives Mike a slap on the back and exits.

Class is in session. The teacher, MS. SERNEY, lectures about Shakespeare. Hugo sits behind Odin. Emily is in the class as well.

*
*
*

Hugo sits forward and whispers to Odin.

HUGO

Didn't you give Desi a scarf a while back?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

50

ODIN

Yeah.

HUGO

It was silk or somethin'?

ODIN

I showed it to you.

The teacher clears her throat, interrupting them.

MS. SERNEY

Gentlemen.

When Serney turns her back, Hugo and Odin continue.

HUGO

. But you gave that scarf to Desi?

ODIN

You know I did.

HUGO

I saw Mike with that same scarf an hour ago. I'm not sure, but I swear it was the same one.

ODIN

Get out of here, man.

MS. SERNEY

Mr. Goulding, Mr. James, would either of you care to name one of Shakespeare's poems for us?

HUGO

I thought he wrote movies.

Chuckles from the class.

MRS. SERNEY

Perhaps you two should pay attention. That way, after you win this big, nationally televised championship, you'll be able to say something more profound than "Hi, Mom."

More laughs from the class, but Hugo silences them with:

HUGO

Well, Ms. Serney, a Lover's Complaint was good, but The Passionate Pilgrim was my favorite.

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

50

MS. SERNEY

Very good. There's hope for the sporting world yet.

*

Serney continues her lecture as we're tight on Odin who stares ahead, lost in a growing rage.

*

*

51 EXT. DORM ROOM - ESTABLISH - NIGHT

51

The streets are quiet.

52 INT. DORM ROOM - NIGHT

52

Emily and Desi are there.

EMILY

What do you mean rough? Has he ever been like that before?

DESI

Never. We were having sex and all of a sudden he got rough.

EMILY

He forced you?

DESI

No, not like that. We were already doing it.

EMILY

Did you say "stop?"

*

DESI

Sort of.

EMILY

Then he forced you.

DESI

He didn't rape me.

EMILY

Desi, I like O, too, but you act like the guy is a saint or something.

DESI

Maybe he's not a saint, but he's never done anything even close to that before. Half the time, he doesn't even want to mess around. He just lays naked with me.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

EMILY

Come on, everyone acts like an asshole once in a while.

DESI

One time--I haven't told anyone this--but one time, Odin and I went to this full-on black club and this "brother" was comin' on to me, right? So Odin tried to laugh it off at first, but then the guy called me a bitch. Odin punched the guy in the chest; knocked him over a table. Odin jumps on the guy, goes all "black," cursing at him and stuff. The guy almost started crying. So Odin feels bad, helps the guy up and we all end up hanging out, drinking. He's the biggest sweetheart ever.

A KNOCK ON THE DOOR

ODIN (O.S.)

D. It's me.

Desi opens the door. Odin hugs her.

DESI

What are you doing? It's after hours.

Desi, excited, pulls him inside and shuts the door.

ODIN

Yo, Emily, what up? Sorry, girl, no presents this time.

DESI

Where were you? Michael was waiting for you tonight.

ODIN

Michael, huh?

DESI

Yeah, Michael.

Odin hugs Desi again. They kiss.

ODIN

Ooh damn, I love huggin' on this girl. If other guys knew how good this felt, they'd be tryin' to get at you all the time.

(beat)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (2)

52

ODIN (CONT'D)

Hey, D. How come you never wear that scarf I gave you?

That caught Emily's attention.

DESI

I haven't thought about it.

ODIN

Can I see it, right quick?

Emily watches, uncomfortable, as Desi goes to her drawer and searches... nothing.

DESI

I keep it right here.

ODIN

You lost it?

DESI

It's here somewhere.

ODIN

My mamma gave that scarf to me when she got sick. She said to "give it to someone special, and it would keep your love right."

Desi looks for another beat, then stops.

DESI

It'll turn up around here somewhere.

ODIN

I want you to look some more.

EMILY

O, she'll find it later.

ODIN

I'll help.

DESI

No, I'll find it later. Right now I really want to talk about Michael. You guys have a big game coming up and you know Michael deserves to play. He's your friend. It's all he talks about.

ODIN

I really want you to find that scarf.

(CONTINUED)

DESI

And I said I'll find it later.

Desi looks to Emily, confused. Odin stares for a moment.

ODIN

You'd never give out no love behind my back would you, D? I mean, maybe I ain't enough for you. You know you all hot, girl.

DESI

What?

ODIN

Hot, you know. You should hear this girl, Emily. *

DESI

Are you kidding? This is really shitty.

ODIN

All right, all right.

Odin backs off.

ODIN (CONT'D)

But check it, if you were a virgin like you said you was, how come when we doin' it, right, you act all freaky, askin' me, what, to do what I want with you, you don't care. *

EMILY

I don't think I need to be here right now. *

Emily heads to the door. Odin heads her off. *

ODIN

You don't have to go nowhere. Look, I'm cool. I'm sorry.

DESI

That wasn't what I-- You're being an asshole. *

ODIN

Let's just find the scarf. Emily can help us look.

EMILY

Maybe Emily doesn't want to look. *

(CONTINUED)

DESI

I think you should go.

ODIN

Where is my scarf?

DESI

I don't know!

ODIN

You lost it.

DESI

I'll find it, later.

ODIN

Does Michael know where the scarf is? Is that why you want me to talk to him?

DESI

What? If you want to ask me if I'm cheating on you, go ahead, get some balls and ask. Go ahead. Come on.

Odin doesn't respond.

DESI (CONT'D)

No, I'm not. Michael? You're the only one I've ever been with. I don't want to be with anyone else. Now, if you want to be with me, don't ever ask me that again. Ever.

A beat. Odin exits. Desi calls after him.

DESI (CONT'D)

Never again, O. I'm always straight with you.

EMILY

I guess even sweethearts get jealous.

53 INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE CLASSROOM - DAY

53

*

Students mill about. Hugo is talking to Michael, Desi, and Emily.

*

DESI

I'm not gonna talk to him. I brought your name up last night and he went off on me.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED:

53

HUGO

He's probably upset because he likes Mike so much. That's his boy. This tournament is too important. And Odin knows we need him. It's probably tearing him up.

*
*

EMILY

He's like every other guy. As soon as they get a little, they act like they own you.

DESI

Look, I don't want to see him for a while, okay?

HUGO

Give him a break. It's just pressure.

MICHAEL

I gotta play this game, Desi. You don't know.

HUGO

Desi, I already asked my pop. He's not budging. Odin is the only person who could talk him into changing his mind. I hate to say this, but if we don't win this tournament, Odin's college dreams fade a little bit. You're gonna fuck with his future like that?

*
*
*

She thinks for a moment.

DESI

I'll try.

The bell sounds. A 40ish TEACHER, whisks by.

*

TEACHER

Will you future leaders of America be joining us?

*
*

HUGO

(to Desi)
You're wonderful.

Hugo kisses Desi. Emily doesn't appreciate that.

*

54 INT. CAFETERIA - DAY

54

Odin looks troubled. He is with TEAM MEMBERS and STUDENTS. WESTLEY and JASON, are debating.

*

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED:

54

JASON

Kobe Bryant is wiggady-whack! Now, Allen Iverson... That kid can ball.

WESTLEY

Give me a break, dude. Kobe started on the all-star team. And can I say two words? Age nineteen.

JASON

Kobe's a copy, kid. He's trying to be like Mike. Watch, I bet you he ends up doin' "Space Jam two"? It's all about Iverson. Yo, O, tell 'em.

ODIN

I'm a Tiny Archibald fan myself.

JASON

What the fuck is a Tiny Archibald?

ODIN

When did you start watching basketball, when the Bulls started winning?

Odin's teammates get a laugh out of that. Desi approaches.

DESI

Hey, O, can I talk to you for a minute?

Odin looks at her then goes back to eating.

DESI

O.

ODIN

We're sort of having a meeting.

Odin's friends look confused.

DESI

It's important.

ODIN

So is this.

JASON

Yo, Odin, kid, it's cool. You always got time for a "honey."

ODIN

Was I talking to you?

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

54

DESI

It's about Mike.

That doesn't sit well with Odin.

ODIN

Like I said, I'm in the middle of something. Damn.

DESI

Odin.

ODIN

Get out of my face.

Desi tugs on Odin's arm. He freaks; stands up. Odin turns one of the tables over. It CRASHES. Scores of heads turn to see Odin storm off.

55 INT. BASKETBALL GYM - DAY

55

The familiar squeaks of sneakers bring us into a practice session. Michael sits the bench beside the coach.

COACH DUKE

Come on, Hugo. Move it! Move it!

Odin and Hugo are lagging. They get beat on a fast break drill.

Hugo inbounds to Odin. There's a full court press. Odin loses the ball. Coach blows the WHISTLE.

COACH DUKE

I don't get it. North Charleston's got a bunch of track stars turned basketball players, and you two are lolly gaggin' the ball up the court!

Odin stands there, glassy-eyed and out of breath.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

Michael! You run the point for a while. Odin have a seat.

Michael looks uncomfortable with that announcement.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

Run the point! Let's go!

Odin stares at the coach.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

55

Michael starts for the court. Odin lunges for Michael, grabbing his hair. It's an awkward struggle. Odin pulls Michael's head back with one hand and yanks on Mike's jersey with the other.

COACH DUKE

Hey, hey!

Odin wants to kill this guy, but some glimmer of good deep in his soul, holds him back. OTHER PLAYERS step in.

Odin rips away from Michael. He heads toward the exit, kicking the ball on the way.

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

Odin. Get your ass back here. Odin!

Hugo watches as Odin kicks the doors open and exits.

56 INT. COACH'S OFFICE - DAY

56

Coach Duke is just finishing up with another PLAYER, when Hugo enters carrying dinner. The other player gets a pat on the back from coach and exits.

HUGO

Hey, Duke.

COACH DUKE

Have a seat.

HUGO

You haven't called me into your office for dinner for a long time.

COACH DUKE

What's going on with Odin?

Hugo's cheery attitude disappears.

HUGO

I don't know. Saw him in English, earlier, he was all right. I'm getting an A in there again.

COACH DUKE

That's great, son. Congratulations.

Coach hugs his son. Hugo looks satisfied, but:

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)

You know I don't worry about you, Hugo, I never have. You've always

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED:

56

COACH DUKE (CONT'D)
done well and you always will. Odin
is different. He's all alone here.
We're his family. I want you to stick
by him. Find out what's going on.

HUGO

Okay, pop.

The CAMERA PUSHES IN on Hugo as his father rambles on.

COACH DUKE (O.S.)

If his head's not right, we got problems.
And so does he.

HUGO

You got it.

57 EXT. UNIVERSITY ARENA - ESTABLISH - DAY

57

Parents and students file into the building.

Dell is in the crowd. He looks around, checks to make sure
no one is watching, then darts into a side door.

58 INT. GYM FLOOR

58

High school players from all over the region are on the
floor. Some stretching, some shooting. Cameras are
everywhere.

Two ESPN2 announcers talk to camera

ANNOUNCER #1

The state finals are a few days away, and
Palmetto Grove comes in a heavy favorite.
Coach Duke Goulding, or The Duke, as he
is called has got to be even more jittery
than the players. A win here, could pave
the way for a position at the college
level...

ANGLE ON SIDELINES - Duke stands with a couple of SCOUTS.

ANNOUNCER #2

... But right now you're about to see
something that might make the NBA's
finest a little nervous. And that's
exactly why all the scouts are here.
It's the Southeast regional high school
slam dunk contest. And young legs mean
lots of air...

IN THE STANDS

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

58

Desi, Emily, Michael, and Jason sit with other Palmetto Grove STUDENTS, and Odin's TEAMMATES. Desi scans the floor. Odin's not in sight. *

Roger enters, goes to some empty seats in front of Desi. *

ROGER

Hey, Desi.

MICHAEL

Where do you think you're going, dude?

DESI

Michael, don't.

MICHAEL

I hope you don't think you're gonna sit there.

JASON

Bye, Roger. Good seeing you.

ROGER

I, I had this seat here with Hugo.

MICHAEL

Hugo's not here, and I'm telling you to go sit somewhere else.

JASON

Later, Rog. Peace.

DESI

Jason, stop. Leave him alone. Michael, come on.

MICHAEL

Go ahead and sit down then, maybe I won't kick your ass again.

DESI

Sit down, Roger. It's okay.

JASON

Faggot. Tag-along, faggot.

EMILY

Jason...

JASON

Find some friends to sit with. Oh, you don't have any--everybody hates you.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (2)

58

Roger pauses. He wants to tell this guy off, but Jason starts flicking Roger's ear.

JASON (CONT'D)

Later, tag along. Later. Shoo.

DESI

That's so messed up.

Michael flicks him too.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Asshole. Later asshole. Later.

Roger starts to go, then hesitates. WHAM! Michael slaps the back of his head.

MICHAEL

Get out of here!

Roger leaves, deeply hurt.

59 INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

59

Odin is with Dell, Hugo's steroid connection.

DELL

This ain't your style, player.

ODIN

And it ain't gonna be. I just haven't slept in two damn days. Gimme the shit and take your ass on.

Dell offers a FOLD OF COCAINE. Odin offers some money.

DELL

Money's only for customers. If this is a one-time gig for you.

Odin takes a fingertip's worth and does it.

DELL

These white boys sure got you all twisted up.

ODIN

Fuck you, nigga.

DELL

You should've come to me when you first climbed up in this ivory tower. See, you the chosen one for now. It's high

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

59

DELL (CONT'D)

pressure tryin' to be "Mr. I'm-on-the-way-to-the-NBA." I feel for you. I bet the alumni is offerin' you all kinds of shit. Cash, cars, watches... they're daughters. If they haven't already, they will.

Odin laces up his shoes; tries to ignore Dell.

DELL (CONT'D)

Yeah, boy, you got skills. I'll give you that. You just ain't thought it all the way through. See, eventually some rich white man, gonna offer you a million dollars. Then you gonna be his million dollar nigga. He gonna hand you a gold leash and parade your ass around his little parties. Champagne, caviar and coochie. Umm-hmm! But, in return, you gotta fill up his stadium. Now, suppose one of them ashy knees of yours gets blowed out, or you fuck up in some other way. He gonna take your money. And what's a million dollar nigga without his million dollars?

ODIN

Thanks for the words of wisdom. It's always good to know I can count on another brotha' for support.

DELL

I'm not trying to start no beef. I'm only being real. Someone's got to keep you grounded.

Odin doesn't appreciate the sarcasm.

DELL (CONT'D)

Look here, I gotta spread out like gravy, but since you are a friend of Hugo's, I would consider offering counseling services to a future million dollar... dope fiend like yourself. So if you ever need me, do give a brotha' a call. Peace and many blessings, my nigga.

Odin flips Dell off. As Dell exits, he passes Hugo. Hugo slyly slips him a C-NOTE.

ANGLE - Hugo approaches Odin.

HUGO

You only got five minutes. What's going on?

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (2)

59

No response. Odin pulls his sweats on. A beat, then:

ODIN

You really fucked me up.

HUGO

Me?

ODIN

Yeah, you, bitch. If I knew Desi was goin' behind my back, I could handle it. But all this wonderin' is bullshit.

HUGO

You can't be thinkin' about that now.

SLAM! Odin slams Hugo up against the wall. Odin's arm pushes up against Hugo's throat.

ODIN

Imma tell you like this. You better hope to God you can prove that Desi is trampin' around. You hearin' me?!

Hugo struggles to breathe. Odin releases him.

HUGO

I try and help my friend and I get this. Fuckin' "A."

Odin tries to pull it together.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Why don't you just forget her. You got everything, man. I'd give my left nut to be in your shoes. Fuck Desi. She's not some gold medal you need to win. You're the medal, dude.

ODIN

From the first moment I saw her... It's like the only reason I want to do anything big, is so she'll be proud to stand next to me. Shit. Look, is she playin' me or not? What the fuck?

HUGO

Let's... let's talk after you win this thing, okay?

Hugo is holding something back and Odin knows it.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (3)

59

ODIN

Don't you hold back on me now!

HUGO

Come on!

ODIN

No, you come on, bitch!

HUGO

You're gonna hit me.

ODIN

I will if you don't speak.

HUGO

I don't know if he's tellin' the truth,
but that bastard Mike told me...

(hard to say)

He said he and Desi were making out
yesterday, and I don't know what else.

Wham! Odin kicks the locker.

ODIN

God damn!!

HUGO

And he said if you didn't play hoop, she
wouldn't even talk to you. Said it was a
waste that you were with her. That's all
I'm telling you for now. We'll hook up
tonight and figure this out.

ODIN

(quietly to himself)

They don't know who they fuckin' with.

HUGO

What's that you said?

ODIN

They don't know who they fuckin' with!

Odin heads for the exit, slamming the wall on the way.

ODIN (CONT'D)

I said, they DON'T KNOW WHO THEY FUCKIN'
WITH!!!

60 INT. STATE UNIVERSITY GYM - DAY

60

The crowd is juiced. Lots of CHEERS.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

60

Odin enters. He struts the sideline looking furious, determined. He looks up to -

IN THE STANDS

- Desi, who is waving down. With her of course is Michael.

BACK TO ODIN

He paces like a caged animal.

ON THE COURT

One of the other players does his dunk. The JUDGES hold up scorecards. Decent numbers, not spectacular.

Hugo, Coach Duke, and the SCOUTS stand together. Coach gives Odin a thumbs up. Hugo rolls his eyes. *

COACH DUKE

Grab your jocks, gentlemen, he's about to blow you away.

They watch as Odin makes his way to the scorers' desk looking crazy. A WOMAN is running the check in.

ODIN

Odin James.

WOMAN

Highest score is fifty. You get one minute to do three dunks. *

ODIN

I'm doin' one.

WOMAN

What?

ODIN

I'm only doin' one.

WOMAN

But you get to throw out the two lowest--

Odin heads to the ball rack. It's showtime. He slips his warm-up top off, but leaves the bottoms on.

ON THE CROWD

Dell is sitting courtside, next to some SCOUTS.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (2)

60

SCOUT #1

Here's what we've been waiting for.

ODIN

looks up to the CLOCK, 50 seconds and counting. He paces, pounding his fist against the ball. All the while alternating glares from Desi, Michael, Hugo and the scouts. The coke is really kicking in.

ODIN

(to himself)

They don't know who they fuckin' with.
They don't know who they fuckin' with...
This is Odin James, here, baby. I am
Odin-God-damn-nut bustin-pimpslappin-
muhfuckin-James.

THE CROWD

senses something. They start rhythmic clapping. PLAP!
PLAP! PLAP! PLAP!

THE CLOCK gets down to 20 seconds, then 10... 5.

Odin circles out to half court and starts running to the bucket. He plants his foot at the free throw line. He soars up like a bird, his body angled. SLOW MOTION for a moment...

BLOW! He slams it down, hard. The glass backboard CRACKS, turns into a spiders web, but doesn't shatter.

The crowd CHEERS wildly. Some holding up scores of "50"

The SCOUTS love it too. This kid is all that, but then -

ON THE FLOOR

- Odin sees the cracked glass. He grabs the ball.

The BALL BOY, a 14 year-old black kid, comes up to Odin.

BALL BOY

Yo man, that dunk was all that, but I
need the ball, kid.

ODIN

What?

BALL BOY

The ball, homey. Give it up.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED: (3)

60

ODIN

Oh, you talking about this ball?

BALL BOY

Naw, nigga, the two balls hangin' under
yo' dick.

The ball boy tries to take the ball. Odin holds him off.

ANGLE ON SCENE

Coach Duke watches from across the floor.

COACH DUKE

What the hell's he doing?

A few CHUCKLES from the crowd as they watch the ball boy try
and get the ball, then Odin shoves the kid to the floor.

ODIN

Get off me before I bust your little
black ass.

GRUMBLES from the crowd.

Odin turns to the crowd and stares at Desi. He stands there
like a statue, with the ball held up over his head. The
crowd starts to quiet down.

We hold on Odin staring at Desi for a long, unnerving moment,
then...

ODIN (CONT'D)

(to the ball boy)

You want the ball? Here's your ball.

Odin starts walking, now he's trotting, then running full
speed toward the broken backboard.

Odin fires the ball like a quarterback. BLASH! The ball
blasts through the backboard. GLASS SHOWERS down everywhere.

THE FANS AND SCOUTS

watch as Odin pumps his fists in the air wildly. He picks up
the fallen RIM AND NET, holds it high like a trophy.

A CAMERAMAN gets in his way. Odin bowls the guy over and
runs to the locker room.

SCOUT

He's Dennis Rodman with an attitude.

61 INT. HALLWAY - DEAN BRABLE'S OFFICE - NIGHT

61

Someone is arguing behind a glass office door.

Suddenly, Odin storms out. He upends a garbage can and marches down the hallway right past -

A DARK CORNER

- where Hugo hides in the shadows, watching.

The Dean and the coach come out. Hugo watches from the dark corner. Coach and the Dean continue to squabble.

COACH DUKE

I'm asking for one game, Bob.

DEAN BRABLE

One game for who? You or the kid? He's lucky he's not suspended.

ON HUGO - A shaft of light makes him look demonic.

HUGO

(to himself)

Yeah, Pop, who's your favorite now?

Hugo disappears into shadow.

62 EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

62

The grounds are empty. Michael walks Desi to the walk leading to the Girl's Dorm.

MICHAEL

Want me to hang out?

DESI

You've done enough baby-sitting. Thanks for... Thanks.

MICHAEL

Sure?

Michael hugs Desi. The hug lingers a bit.

DESI

See you tomorrow, Mikie.

Michael looks into her eyes. He kisses her. It lasts for a second, but she pushes him away.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

MICHAEL

Whoa, I'm sorry. I shouldn't...

DESI

I can't do this... I can't do that to Odin.

MICHAEL

I'm sorry.

DESI

You can't do that to Odin.

MICHAEL

You're right, shit. I'm sorry. I'll see you later. Sorry.

Michael heads off. Desi heads up toward the dorm. *

63 EXT. DORM BUILDING PORCH - NIGHT

63 *

Desi opens the door to the building's sweeping screened porch, and sees *

ODIN *

on the swing, waiting. *

DESI

Jesus!

ODIN

How ya' been, D?

DESI

You scared the crap out of me. Where've you been?

Odin moves in to kiss her. She shies away.

ODIN

Is that cologne?

Odin grabs her arm.

ODIN (CONT'D)

Out celebratin' Michael getting back on the squad? Mike's in, I'm out.

DESI

Odin, you lost it in front of five thousand people. What the fuck is up?

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

63

Odin shoves her.

DESI (CONT'D)

Did you just push me? Don't put your hands on me like that.

ODIN

Sorry. I smelled the cologne and... I'm sorry.

DESI

Yeah, everyone's sorry after they do something.

Odin calms himself.

DESI (CONT'D)

I gave someone a hug at the library. They were probably wearing too much cologne.

A quiet moment as Odin starts to tear up. So does she.

DESI (CONT'D)

I told my father if you don't play, I'd never talk to him again. I didn't think he'd do this.

ODIN

I was gonna go all the way, D. All my life, just when I get things flowin', shit gets fucked up. But y'all can't stop me.

DESI

I'm not gonna stop you, O. I want to go wherever you go. I want us back, Odin.

Odin stares through Desi for a long disconcerting beat.

ODIN

Are you a ho?

DESI

What?

ODIN

Are you a ho?!

DESI

Fuck you!

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED: (2)

63

ODIN

I'm sorry, my bad. I thought you were just some ho sent here to fuck with my shit..

Desi doesn't answer.

ODIN (CONT'D)

I wish I ain't never met you.

With that Odin exits abruptly. He slams the screen door. *

A beat then... BLAM. A pound at the door. Desi jumps.

ODIN

You can't stop me! I'm goin' all the way! Can't nobody stop me no more!

BLAM! Another pound, Desi jumps again, and then silence. Odin is gone. *

64 INT. BOY'S DORM BUILDING - NIGHT

64

A tight shot of a door. Odin is banging on it. The door opens, revealing Hugo. Odin enters without saying a word. MUSIC blares.

CUT TO:

65 EXT. BOY'S DORM BUILDING - ESTABLISH - NIGHT

65

HUGO (O.S.)

I'm gonna take care of you.

66 INT. HUGO'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

66

Music still on--not so loud. Hugo pours Odin a stiff drink. He prepares some drugs from a baggie of blow. Odin has already been drinking.

HUGO

This right here will help you sort things out.

ODIN

Man, I ain't been on this shit in a long time. Don't want to be doin' this.

HUGO

We're making it through, player. This is just temporary.

Hugo gives Odin his drugs and cocktails.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED:

66

HUGO

So while the shit was going down tonight, I was doin' some detective work. Mike told me half the time she just wants to get in bed and do nothing, just be naked with him. But they're fucking, O, and they have been for over a month now. And there's another thing--don't get mad at me--they call you "the nigger."

ODIN

You bullshittin' now. Desi ain't say no shit like that.

HUGO

You callin' me a liar, here?

A KNOCK at the door.

ODIN

(to himself)
Knock-knock to you too, bitch.

Hugo gets up to answer.

AT THE DOOR

Michael is there. Hugo quickly pushes him back into the hall and blocks the door, before he sees Odin.

67 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

67

MICHAEL

What's the matter?

HUGO

What do you want?

MICHAEL

I need to talk to you.

HUGO

Give me like two minutes, alright?

MICHAEL

But--

HUGO

Two minutes.

68 INT. HUGO'S DORM ROOM - CONTINUOUS

68

Hugo slams the door shut. Odin is half out of it. Hugo goes to him.

HUGO

O, that's Mike.

ODIN

Outside.

HUGO

He wants to talk to me about Desi.

ODIN

I'll talk to his bitch-ass alright.

HUGO

O, listen. I'm gonna ask him what's up. You can hear for yourself.

ODIN

Oh, hell yeah.

Hugo leads Odin, staggering, out onto the balcony.

SFX: KNOCK at the door.

HUGO

Come on. Hurry up.

FREEZE FRAME.

HUGO'S NARRATION

I had no idea Michael would show up when he did. What happened next was never planned. In fact, there's no way I could have planned it. Sometimes coincidence just works out better than design.

RESUME ACTION.

ODIN

You my boy, man. You my boy. You and me gonna be down forever.

HUGO

Yeah, yeah, just be quiet.

Hugo tries to keep Odin on the balcony.

(CONTINUED)

ODIN

I'm serious, Hugo. You and me gonna be tight for life, brotha'. Fo' life.

Odin hugs Hugo clumsily and tightly, like only a drunk can. He won't let go.

HUGO

Three seconds in the key, man. Three seconds.

Odin releases him, then disappears into the shadows. *

Hugo goes back into the room, lets Michael in. *

HUGO

What's up, big "baller"?

MICHAEL

Don't remind me about basketball.

HUGO

(loudly so Odin can hear)
So you and Desi have been talking a lot lately, right?

(whispers to Michael)

If you could just handle Desi like you do Brandy. You'd be in business.

MICHAEL

That girl does do whatever I say.

ON THE BALCONY *

Odin peers through the slightly open door.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

I'm just hanging out with her, but I think the girl is in love with me.

HUGO

I heard she thinks the two of you are gonna get married.

MICHAEL

Yeah, right. Give me some credit. She's a slut, man. I'm just a customer.

69 INT. DORM HALLWAY - SAME TIME

69

Brandy marches into view. She pounds on a door down the hall. Another student opens a door across the hall. *

(CONTINUED)

69 CONTINUED:

69

BRANDY (CONT'D)

Where's Michael?

70 INT. HUGO'S ROOM - SAME TIME

70

Odin watches from the closet as Hugo and Mike share a laugh.

HUGO

People are already starting to talk.
You've been spending a lot of time
together.

MICHAEL

Girl follows me everywhere. I was in the
library yesterday and she takes me in the
back...

HUGO

What?

MICHAEL

She's says, "Oh, Michael, I want you in
my mouth, make me..."

HUGO

In the freaking library?

MICHAEL

And check this out. She told me, down
the road, it doesn't matter who she's
with, even if she's married, she said
she'd do me 'til the day she dies.

HUGO

What? What about Odin?

MICHAEL

What about him? Freakin' loser is what
he is. The ghetto just popped out of
him.

HUGO

You don't have to go there.

MICHAEL

The nigga's out of control, dude. I'm
glad he's off the team. And he better
not come at me again or I'll have to kill
his ass.

A KNOCK AT THE DOOR.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED:

70

BRANDY (O.S.)

Hugo! I know Mikie's in there. Open the damn door!

Brandy storms in carrying the SCARF.

HUGO

What's up, Brandy?

She marches up to Michael.

BRANDY

What the hell do yo think you're doing, giving me something that you got from some other bitch?

MICHAEL

What?

BRANDY

Asshole.

She throws the scarf at Michael.

MICHAEL

Shit, Brandy, what are you tripping about? It's a present.

Out the door she goes.

MICHAEL

Brandy!

(to Hugo)

You see what I have to deal with.

HUGO

I wish I had your problems, guy. Go get her.

Michael exits. A second later Odin emerges from the balcony. He looks possessed. He picks up the scarf, pauses a moment. *

HUGO

O, I am so glad you are you. I couldn't take that, bro'. In the library? If some girl was doing that to me...

ODIN

How we gonna kill this mothafucka? *

HUGO

He was laughin' at you, man!

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (2)

70

ODIN

I said, how we gonna kill this
mothafucka, Hugo?

Hugo takes the scarf. He stares at Odin for a beat.

HUGO

That's a big step.

Odin's eyes lock with Hugo. He's over the edge.

HUGO (CONT'D)

What about Desi?

Odin's head is swimming with emotions, not to mention drugs.
Could he bring himself to do this? Yes, he could.

71 EXT. PAWN SHOP - ESTABLISH - DAY

71

Roger is parked outside waiting.

72 INT. PAWN SHOP

72

Hugo is with Lanny. An expensive watch is on the counter.

HUGO

Come on, you know this thing is worth a
grand easy.

LANNY

I don't get people in here with that kind
of money. But then this is one hell of
time keeper. What are you lookin' to get
for this?

HUGO

That "nine" have any papers on it?

Hugo looks into the case at a 9 MILLIMETER PISTOL.

73 INT. CUPOLA - DAY

73

Camera moves gradually straight up the center of the spiral
staircase leading to the cupola. We hear Hugo with Odin.

HUGO (O.S)

You've been everything to me, O. To me
you're not my friend, you're my brother.
And when a brother is wronged, so am I.
I'm you now, O. I'm a part of you.

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

73

Camera has reached the top, revealing the two boys. Hugo rolls out a diagram. He has Xs and Os marked out like a playbook.

HUGO'S (CONT'D)

The plan I've come up with is flawless, planned out to the minute. I spent day after day, going over every possible angle, every detail. All we have to do is start things in motion and never look back. Tomorrow, I'll tell my dad that me and Mike will find our own way to the game. I'll say we want to get there early.. We'll take Roger's car...

Hugo's voice bleeds into the following scene.

74 EXT. CAR COMPOUND - DAY

74

Hugo and Roger pay off Kirby again to get Roger's car.

HUGO (V.O.)

You're gonna talk to Desi...

75 EXT. QUAD - DAY

75

Odin and Desi talking close.

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

... You tell her you want to make up, a little love session before you go watch the game. She should be alone in her room. Emily will go on without her. Now if this is going to work, we have to make sure it looks like Michael did it...

76 INT. HUGO'S ROOM - EVENING

76

Hugo offers Michael a drink. Michael takes it gladly.

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

... The only way to do that is with evidence. I'm gonna take Michael with me to the game, but before we go, I'm going to leave a little present behind...

Michael sets the drink down. He and Hugo exit. Once they're gone, Odin comes out of the closet. He takes THE GLASS Michael drank from and puts it in a plastic bag.

77 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT 77 *

Desi opens the door. She is shoved back and attacked by Odin.

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

... At exactly seven PM, you'll take Desi out, and plant Michael's glass.

Odin carefully places the glass near Desi's nightstand.

ANGLE ON DESI

Her lifeless body on the bed behind Odin. He checks his watch and picks up the phone.

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

When that's all done, you call me on Roger's cellular...

78 INT. CAR - NIGHT 78

Hugo picks up the ringing cell phone.

79 EXT. ROADSIDE - NIGHT 79 *

A sedan is parked on the shoulder with hazards flashing. A figure is slumped over the wheel. *

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

... We'll have a rent-a-car waiting on the side of the road. *

Hugo and Michael pull up ahead of it, stop and get out. *

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

When Michael and I get out to help... *

Just as Michael walks up to the car. Roger reveals himself.

Hugo shoves Michael towards Roger. Roger pulls the 9 MM out and BLAM! Shoots Michael at point-blank range.

HUGO (V.O. CONT'D)

... we make it look like a suicide...

Hugo and Roger drag Michael's dead body off the side of the road. Hugo pulls out Desi's SCARF and tucks it conspicuously in Michael's jacket.

Hugo and Roger jump into Roger's car.

DISSOLVE BACK TO:

80 INT. CUPOLA - DAY

80 *

Odin and Hugo are still there.

HUGO

... Then we'll all make our way to the game, on time. I know the Duke. Without Michael, he's gotta play you. We win the game, and we all swear that we haven't seen Michael or Desi at all. If everyone sticks to the timetable, we can pull this off.

ODIN

What about Roger?

HUGO

He thinks you and Desi are just breaking up. After it's done, I'll tell him. He'll be so scared, he'll go along with whatever I say.

ODIN

And if he doesn't?

HUGO

You said you're going all the way with this, right?

Hugo hands Odin Roger's cell phone.

81 EXT. DORM ROOM - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

81

A peaceful night.

82 INT. DESI'S ROOM - NIGHT

82

Emily prepares to leave for the game. Desi prepares her body for Odin. Some sexy lingerie, lotion...

EMILY

Sure you don't want to come with me?

DESI

O wants me to wait.

EMILY

He's probably out breaking backboards somewhere. Or maybe he's moved up to windshields.

DESI

Don't be mean, Emily.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED:

82

EMILY

Gonna make up in bed, huh? That's always good for sex.

No response from Desi. She looks depressed.

EMILY (CONT'D)

Desi, I know you like O, but every guy in this school would kill to be with you. You don't have to put up with his shit.

DESI

We'll be fine.

EMILY

Ever think, maybe he's gettin' it behind your back, and all this jealousy is a cover?

DESI

Guys are so deranged. Are there girls out there that act like guys do?

EMILY

Me.

DESI

You cheated on Hugo?

EMILY

No... Not yet, but sooner or later.
(beat)

Look, if high school guys are cheating on us and talking behind our backs, it's only gonna get worse as we get older. They started it. We didn't. So I say what's good for the goose is good for the, "Hos," as Hugo calls us.

DESI

Well, there's no way I could cheat on Odin. Not for the world.

EMILY

The world is a big place. You wouldn't fuck some guy to give Odin the World?

DESI

I don't have it in me.

(CONTINUED)

82 CONTINUED: (2)

82

EMILY

Trust me. A couple drinks, a cute guy...
you could get it in you. What if you
found out Odin was cheating?

DESI

Can't do it. That payback attitude
doesn't fly with me. I can't just give
up on him. This will all blow over. I
love Odin. He'll figure that out.

Emily pulls on her coat.

EMILY

You got a lot more heart than I do. Sure
you don't want me to wait?

DESI

Save me a seat.

EMILY

Okay, later.

Emily starts to head out then stops.

EMILY

The whole world?

DESI

Bye.

Emily exits. But from behind the door we hear:

EMILY (O.S)

The whole world plus three of Jupiter's
moons?

Desi chuckles, checks her clock. It's 6:30 PM.

83 INT. HUGO'S ROOM - NIGHT.

83

Two glasses sit beside some Vodka. Hugo is on the new cell
phone.

HUGO

(on the phone)

What time did he check the car out?
Hello. Hello! I can't hear you. You're
dropping out--okay, thanks.

He hangs up and turns to Odin.

(CONTINUED)

HUGO (CONT'D)

The "Herb" is on time so far.

Just then a KNOCK at the door. Odin heads to the balcony. He hesitates, turns to Hugo. They shake hands and do the "one-arm" hug. *

Hugo goes to the door and ushers Mike in.

MICHAEL

It's game time, baby. Let's do this.

HUGO

How about a little pep-up for the road?

Hugo offers Mike the drink.

MICHAEL

No. Not tonight, buddy.

HUGO

Come on, guy. This is my last game as a Hawk. For me. *

MICHAEL

Too nervous.

Hugo shoves the drink towards his hand. Mike won't touch it.

HUGO

Come on.
(as Asian hooker again)
Me love you long time, Mikie. *

FROM THE BALCONY - Odin watches. This doesn't look good. *

MICHAEL

I can't. Really.

HUGO

Pshhh.

Hugo looks hurt. A tense beat, then Michael grabs the drink and downs it.

MICHAEL

There, okay, let's go. Fuck. *

HUGO

What? *

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

MICHAEL

Nothing. I was supposed to meet Brandy.
She was gonna ride with us.

*
*
*

HUGO

Not anymore, comrade. She's got wheels.

*
*

They exit.

Odin slithers out and bags the glass.

*

84 EXT. BOY'S DORM BUILDING - NIGHT

84

Brandy at the steps of the building as Hugo and Michael drive
off in Roger's car.

*
*
*

85 EXT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

85

Odin is below the fire escape, pacing. He looks up to Desi's
window, checks his watch. It's nearly 7 PM.

Odin starts his climb up the fire escape. He notices his
hand is shaking.

86 INT. CAR - NIGHT

86

Hugo looks nervous as he checks his watch: 7:05 PM.

MICHAEL

You're driving like my grandmother, dude.

No response from Hugo. He sees something and slows down.

MICHAEL (CONT'D)

Dude, come on. The Duke is gonna kill
us.

ON THE ROAD AHEAD

It's Roger's rent-a-car with the lights flashing. They drive
past without stopping.

87 INT. ROGER'S RENT-A-CAR

87

He peeks over the dashboard, confused as Hugo drives by.

MICHAEL AND HUGO

The cell phone rings and Hugo jumps at it.

(CONTINUED)

87 CONTINUED:

87

HUGO

Yeah. What? You're cutting out. I can't hear. Hello! Shit. Listen, it's done. Right now. What?

88 EXT. FIRE ESCAPE

88

Odin is on the phone with Hugo.

ODIN

(tries to whisper)
Maybe we should wait--

HUGO (O.S.)

What'd you say? It's done. It's done.

ODIN

I think we should wait--

Click the phone goes dead. Odin takes a breath, he starts to open the window, but...

ON THE STREET BELOW - Some students walk by, chatting. Odin pushes back into the shadows. Once they're gone, Odin peers into the window.

89 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

89

Desi, looking pretty as ever, is asleep on the bed.

ON THE FIRE ESCAPE - Odin gathers himself, then quietly slides the window open and enters. Odin bends down and kisses her, then -

90 INT. BASKETBALL ARENA - SAME TIME

90

- BLAM! A base drummer in the school band pounds away. The stands are filling up. The CROWD is rowdy, however, when the falconer comes out with the new team mascot, a PLASTIC HAWK, the fans BOO.

91 IN THE LOCKER ROOM

91

The rest of the team is dressing. Coach Duke turns to one of the ASSISTANTS.

COACH DUKE

Send someone over to check their rooms.
Now!

A man, MR. BRADLEY, enters. An assistant introduces him.

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

ASSISTANT COACH

Duke, this is Mr. Bradley. He's head of the Tar Heels athletic department.

MR. BRADLEY

I've been keeping an eye on this team. Hell of a job, Coach.

COACH DUKE

Thanks. Thanks a lot. I wouldn't mind helping you guys out next year.

MR. BRADLEY

Yeah, that's what I hear. Any chance I could meet this Odin kid?

92 INT. CAR - NIGHT

92

Hugo turns to Michael.

HUGO

Did you see that car back there?

MICHAEL

What?

HUGO

That car with the lights flashing. I think the guy was in trouble.

Hugo does a sudden U-Turn.

MICHAEL

No way. We'll miss warm-ups.

HUGO

It'll just take a second to check. It's going to be freezing tonight for crying out loud. We have to check.

93 INT./EXT. ROGER'S RENT-A-CAR - MOMENTS LATER

93

Roger is slumped over the wheel. Lights approach.

ANGLE ON HUGO AND MICHAEL

From their car, they see someone passed out in the rental.

Now here comes the quiet before the storm.

BEGIN A SLOW MOTION MONTAGE AS:

Michael strolls up to the Rental car.

94 INT. BASKETBALL ARENA - NIGHT 94 *

Emily sees the Hawks team run out to the floor. Michael, Hugo, and Odin are missing. *

The Dean looks to the stands, Desi is not in her seat.

95 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT 95 *

Odin stands over Desi, he pulls the glass from his pocket. Just as it touches the table top - *

96 EXT. ROAD 96

Michael knocks on the rent-a-car's window.

MICHAEL

Hey, mister. You all right?

Michael tries the door. It's unlocked. He grabs the guy's shoulder. Now we see the guy's face. It's Roger. Roger's eyes pop open.

PUSH IN ON MICHAEL as Roger shoves the gun in his face.

MICHAEL

What the fuck?

Roger climbs out of the car. He hesitates. He can't...

HUGO

Do it!

Roger is frozen. Michael grabs the gun, drives forward. They struggle. Roger scrambles away, but Michael has the gun.

WHUMP! Hugo slams Michael in the ear with a tire iron. Mike drops the gun, staggers. Roger lunges for the weapon.

BAM! Roger fires, hitting Michael.

HUGO

No!

Michael goes down.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Ah, shit, Rog. It's gotta look like a suicide! I told you it's gotta look like a fucking suicide. Son of bitch!

(CONTINUED)

ROGER

(crying)
I got him, Hugo. I, I, I did like you
said. I got him. I got that fucker.

HUGO

SHIT!

Hugo leans an ear down close to Michael.

HUGO (CONT'D)

He's still breathing.

ROGER

I got him, Hugo. Now we do one close
like you said.

Roger starts to shove the gun up under Michael's chin.

HUGO

No, no! The cops can tell someone else
shot the first bullet. You Herbed us,
man. Fuck! Fuckin'... Fuck!

Roger looks down the road. A car's headlights are coming.

ROGER

We, we have to get out of here.

HUGO

Let me think.

ROGER

Come on! We have to go!

HUGO

Let me think!

Roger looks to the approaching car. It's getting closer.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Where's the scarf?

ROGER

The car's almost here!

HUGO

WHERE'S THE SCARF?!

ROGER

I thought I gave it to you.

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: (2)

96

HUGO

We're screwed without that scarf!

ROGER

We have to get him off the road. We have to get him off--

Hugo grabs Roger's head with both hands.

HUGO

When that car comes. I'm going to tell them Michael attacked you and you defended yourself. You hear me?

ROGER

If he wakes up, he'll tell on me.

HUGO

That won't matter.

Hugo grabs Roger's hand that is holding the gun. Roger is taken by surprise. Hugo slowly overpowers Roger, forcing the gun barrel until it aims at Roger's chest.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Desi's dead, Rog. I'm sorry.

BLAM! Roger falls dead.

Hugo wipes the gun clean, then places it in Roger's lifeless hand. He goes to Michael, tears his shirt and uses it to stop the bleeding.

ON THE ROAD - The car is almost there. Hugo signals it to stop. It does, with it's headlights on the scene.

DRIVER'S POV - Michael is now moving, groaning. Roger lays dead, gun in hand.

HUGO

There's been a murder. Call 911!

Hugo runs around to the driver and is shocked to see...

BRANDY

She steps out of the Jeep, but gets scared.

BRANDY

What'd you do to him? What did you do?
Oh my god!

(CONTINUED)

96 CONTINUED: (3)

96

HUGO

Help me get Mike in the car--

Brandy leaps back into her car. She slams it in reverse. Hugo comes towards her and she SCREAMS. Brandy frantically spins the Jeep around and peels off.

HUGO (CONT'D)

Brandy! Brandy! Shit!

Hugo rushes to the car. As an afterthought, he leaps back out, grabs the gun from Roger's hand and scrambles back in the car. REVEAL THE SCARF under the front seat.

Hugo speeds off after Brandy.

97 EXT. GIRL'S DORM - NIGHT

97

The grounds are mostly deserted. Emily is headed into the building. She stops a few STUDENTS on their way out.

EMILY

Have you guys seen Hugo?

The students shrug, not knowing. Suddenly... Brandy's Jeep barrels around the corner, HORN BLARING. She hops a curve and skids onto the lawn. Brandy jumps out and runs to the dorm, SCREAMING, stumbling, totally hysterical.

BRANDY

They killed him! They killed him!

98 INT. DESI'S ROOM - NIGHT

98

Desi wakes to the commotion outside. A dark figure is sitting in the corner, watching her. It's Odin. She smiles.

DESI

What time is it?

When Odin steps into the light, her smile fades. She senses danger, instinctively backs away. *

A pause, then... Odin lunges, grabs and spins Desi into a choke hold. She gasps for breath, fear in her eyes. She tries to scream, but no air can get out. *

99 INT. STAIRWELL - SAME TIME

99

Emily, Brandy, and a couple others rush up the stairs.

100 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

100 *

Odin throws Desi on the bed, still choking her.

ODIN

I saw Mike with the scarf. He's dead.
He told me y'all were together, and now
he's dead.

That realization hits her hard. She cries.

ODIN (CONT'D)

You cryin' for him? Fuck that.

DESI

I don't want to die, now, O. Please. I
don't want to die...

ODIN

- No, stop it. No -

DESI

- I swear Mike and I have never done
anything -

ODIN

- I can't lose you, girl. I want to be
able to let you go, but I can't, girl. I
can't -

DESI

- No, Odin', no! Listen to me...

101 INT. GIRL'S DORM HALLWAY

101 *

Emily races up from the stairs at the end of the hallway.

EMILY

Desi!

102 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM

102

ODIN

You lyin'. You're trying to make me feel
guilty for what I'm about to do.

DESI

I'm begging you, just wait a day, an
hour. You'll see, I didn't do anything
wrong. Please. Please.

A glimmer of pity crosses Odin's face. He's having second
thoughts. He kisses her. He wants to believe her, but...

(CONTINUED)

102 CONTINUED:

102

Odin's muscular forearm clamps around her throat like a snake. She fights, gasps. She's no match for him. Odin struggles more with his own tears than Desi.

Desi makes one last-ditch effort. Desi arches her back, trying to free herself, then... Nothing. She goes limp in Odin's bulging arms. We hold on this gruesome image for a long, unsettling moment.

A KNOCK at the door. Odin still squeezes the life from Desi.

ODIN

It's over now. Go to sleep. Shhhh.

EMILY (O.S)

Open the door, Desi.

Odin releases the shell of a girl. Desi slumps to the bed. He caresses her face, her lips... he kisses her, crying.

103 INT. GIRL'S DORM - SAME

103

*

Outside her and Desi's room, Emily digs in her backpack. Finally finds her key, and bursts...

*

*

104 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - NIGHT

104

*

...into the room to see Desi. She goes to her.

*

EMILY

Desi?

Odin starts to weep again.

EMILY (CONT'D)

What did you do?

ODIN

They made me. They made me.

EMILY

She's not breathing.

ODIN

She was a whore. Desi and Michael were fooling around on me. It's true. Ask Hugo.

EMILY

Hugo?

(CONTINUED)

ODIN

Hugo's the only honest person up in this mothafucka.

EMILY

My Hugo?

ODIN

Yeah, you heard me.

EMILY

Hugo said Desi and Mike were sleeping together? What did you do?

Odin gets up in her face, threatening.

ODIN

Don't you say anything.

EMILY

Help! Help me!
(yells at the top of her lungs)
Help me!

AT THE DOOR - Hugo, Jason, and a few other STUDENTS enter.

Emily runs into Hugo's arms, then realizes who it is and SCREAMS again.

JASON

What happened?

EMILY

Tell me Odin is lying. Tell me you didn't say Desi was cheating on him. Tell me you didn't do that.

HUGO

I told him what I heard.

EMILY

That's a lie. Desi and Michael?! You said she slept with Michael?

HUGO

Would you shut up.

Jason feels for Desi's pulse. Nothing but cold.

JASON

Damn!

(CONTINUED)

EMILY
They killed her!

HUGO
Emily.

JASON
Somebody get an ambulance.

One of the other STUDENTS runs for a phone.
Odin falls on the bed beside Desi. He's crying.

EMILY
Get away from her!

Emily lunges at Odin, swinging, scratching.

ODIN
She was a ho'! She was playing me.
Hugo pulls her off. Emily SCREAMS when Hugo touches her.

ODIN
She was with him. He admitted it. And
then she went and gave my scarf to him.
They were laughin' at me!

EMILY
That silk scarf?

HUGO
Emily, get the fuck outa here.

EMILY
No. No, Hugo.

HUGO
Wait outside!

Pulls out the PISTOL.

JASON
Ahh, shit!

The students at the door scatter.

HUGO
Be quiet, Emily.

EMILY
Hugo had that scarf.

(CONTINUED)

104 CONTINUED: (3)

104

HUGO

I said be quiet.

EMILY

You begged me to steal it for you.

HUGO

Take that back.

Aims the pistol at Emily.

EMILY

You gave that scarf to Michael.

HUGO

Emily, you tell him the truth. She's frickin' lying, bro'. She's lying.

EMILY

You gave that scarf to Michael.

HUGO

Tell the truth!

EMILY

You gave that scarf to Michael!

WHAP! The gun shot startles Hugo. He has shot Emily.

105 EXT. COUNTRY ROAD - SAME

105

*

Two police cars tear toward the campus.

*

106 INT. DESI'S DORM ROOM - SAME

106

*

Hugo staggers out of the room.

107 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

107

A few STUDENTS think about stopping Hugo, but he brandishes the gun and they scatter. He makes it down the hallway outside Desi's room, but Jason trips him from behind.

*

*

The gun slips out of Hugo's grasp and falls to the ground as Jason struggles to control the stronger Hugo. Students gather around, but don't move to help. One GIRL finally kicks the gun away, back toward Desi's room.

*

108 INT. DESI'S ROOM

108

Odin goes for the door, marching into the...

*

109 INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

109

...hallway, where the gun skitters to his feet. The students scatter again as Odin grabs the gun off of the floor. He pulls Jason off Hugo and levels the gun in Hugo's face.

JASON

Whoa! Whoa!

Odin swings the gun towards Jason. Jason cowers, then:

ODIN

Jason, ask this motherfucker why he did this. ASK HIM!

JASON

Hugo?

HUGO

You don't ask me nothin'. I did what I did. That's all you need to know. From here on, I say nothing.

With Odin following, Hugo backs through a COMMON AREA of the girls' dorm. Students scatter down the stairs, or onto the second floor balcony.

ODIN

Why'd you do it?!

JASON

Where the hell are the cops?

Odin looks as if he may shoot, but Hugo simply stares back at him, scampering out onto the...

110 EXT. SECOND FLOOR BALCONY - CONTINUOUS

110

...balcony. Odin follows. Off in the corner SOME GIRLS are crying, hoping somehow that by averting their eyes they can escape the scene.

ONE GIRL simply SCREAMS hysterically, over and over. Others students whimper.

ODIN

Shut up! Shut the fuck up!

The girl quiets a bit. Odin again thinks about shooting Hugo, but then notices the other students. They cower when he looks at them. One of the YOUNGER BOYS makes a break for inside.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

110

ODIN (CONT'D)

Hey, hey! Sit the fuck down.

The boy huddles into the corner with the girls. He starts crying as well.

Off screen SIRENS blare, as on the lawn below police cars arrive, their lights flashing. Odin tries to think.

ODIN (CONT'D)

Someone up in here knows the damn truth...someone needs to tell the damn truth. My life is over. That's it. But when y'all are livin yours, and you're sitting around talking about the nigga who lost it back in high school, make sure you tell the truth. Make sure you say I loved that girl. I got played. He twisted my head all up. I ain't no different than y'all My mother wasn't no crack head; I wasn't no gangbanger... it wasn't a hoodrat, drug dealer that tripped me up. It was this white, prep school, mothafucka right here.

The COPS come running up the stairs. Students SQUEAL at the sight of more guns.

COPS

Put the gun down. Drop it, boy. Drop it.

Odin calms himself and looks dead into Hugo's eyes.

ODIN

You tell 'em, where I came from didn't make me do this.

Odin abruptly turns the gun on himself. WHAP...fires a shot directly into his heart. His body crumples. Students react, horrified, as Odin's life light fades.

111 EXT. DORM BUILDING - NIGHT

111

Police cars abound, lights flashing. A paramedic team on it's way in.

The Dean arrives, frantic. He sees Hugo being crammed into a squad car. Hugo looks blankly at him, says nothing.

ANGLE - A police officer is taking a statement from Jason.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

111

JASON

...I just reacted. Situation like that, you don't have time to think. You just act...I had to take him down. Everyone else was scared. I was scared but, I had to take him...

The first news team has arrived. A newscaster is standing in front of a camera filing a report.

NEWSCASTER

...in what seems to have been yet another high school shooting, in what's becoming a tragic epidemic in teenage America...

HUGO'S NARRATION

All my life I always wanted to fly. Always wanted to live like a hawk... a simple, solitary life...

INTERCUT:

112 EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

112

An ambulance carries Michael away.

Roger lies dead.

Cops find the scarf in Roger's car.

113 INT. BASKETBALL ARENA - NIGHT

113

Someone whispers in Coach Duke's ear; he runs for the exit.

114 EXT. GIRL'S DORM - NIGHT

114

The Dean arrives just in time to see a sheet pulled over Desi's face.

115 INT. CUPOLA - NIGHT

115

The hawk's cage, empty -- white pigeons on the ledge.

HUGO'S NARRATION (CONT'D)

I know you're not supposed to be jealous of anything, but to take flight, to soar above everyone and everything, now that's livin'...

EXT. BALCONY - NIGHT

Odin lays face up, eyes lifeless. A YELLOW CRIME TAPE is being strung around the scene as shell-shocked or hysterical

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

students are pushed gently away. A police PHOTOGRAPHER snaps photos. *

HUGO'S NARRATION

... but a hawk is no good around normal birds. It can't fit in... *

116 INT. BOY'S DORM ROOM

116

Coach Duke sits reading HUGO'S JOURNAL. He's crying, racked with guilt.

C.U. - CAMERA MOVES across words on page as they are spoken.

HUGO'S NARRATION

... Even though all the other birds probably want to be hawks, they hate him for what they can't be. Proud, powerful, determined, dark. *

117 EXT. DORM BUILDING

117

The chaos winds down... A BODY wheeled out on a gurney. Jason comforts some CRYING girls. Police mill about. The PARAMEDIC TEAM gives up working on Emily in the ambulance... And Finally, Hugo in the back of the squad car, is driven away. He looks back, trying to get one last glimpse at the havoc he has wrought.

HUGO'S NARRATION

Odin is a hawk; he can fly. And one of these days, everyone is going to pay attention to me, even my pop, because I'm gonna fly, too. *

The End.