

V I C E P R I N C I P A L S

101 DRAFT 1
6.20.14

EXT. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

The morning sun shines on the American flag as it rises up a flagpole, lifting towards the heavens.

Hoisting the flag is PRINCIPAL WELLES (60's), a kindhearted old man. Behind Principal Welles stand two men:

NEAL GAMBY (late 30's), uncomplicated in appearance and attitude, a guy who's used to putting people in their place. He's the Vice Principal in charge of discipline.

The second man is LEE RUSSELL (30's), clothes horse on a budget. His manner is effeminate, but his tone is sinister. He's the Vice Principal in charge of curriculum.

PRINCIPAL WELLES

And so it goes, gentlemen. Old
Glory rises for the last time by
these hands. Suffice it to say,
it's been an honor.

Welles starts to cry. The two men just look at him. Gamby pats his shoulder.

GAMBY

It's alright, sir. It's going to be
okay. Maria will pull through.

WELLES

I'm sorry I have to leave you both
in this situation. Principal-less
right as the school year is picking
up steam. But Maria needs me now.

LEE

Just be strong.

GAMBY

Stop acting like he's weak, Lee.
His wife has Melanoma. How would
you feel if your wife had Melanoma?
She might very well die.

WELLES

Oh Jesus, don't say it.

LEE

You're a monster, Gamby. Go to hell.

GAMBY

Make me go to hell, Lee. I've seen
it, been there and came back, Jack.
Parris Island, South Carolina.

LEE

What the fuck are you talking about?

WELLES

For Christ's sake you two, knock it off.

GAMBY

Yes, Lee.

WELLES

ENOUGH!

It's silent for a long moment.

LEE

I don't want to make light of the situation, but for my own knowledge, sir. And if you are not comfortable saying, feel free to decline, but do you know who will be replacing you?

GAMBY

Oh, here come the buzzards. Let the man grieve for his dying wife.

WELLES

Superintendant Haas hasn't come to a decision. And quite frankly, I could give a damn. Whoever it is. Just remember, it's all about the students. It's not about you.

GAMBY

I get it. Lee might need a little bit for that to sink in. But I read you loud and clear. That's a Gamby promise.

LEE

Fuck off.

GAMBY

No I will not.

WELLES

Just say the goddamn pledge.

Gamby puts his hand over his heart.

GAMBY

I pledge allegiance to the flag of
the United States of America, and
to the Republic for which it
stands, one Nation, under God,
indivisible, with liberty...

Gamby looks Russell in the eye.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

...and justice for all.

OPENING TITLE: V I C E P R I N C I P A L S

THE SOUND OF CHEERING.

CU: A FIST SMASHING INTO A PRETTY BOY'S FACE IN SLOW MOTION.

INT. HALLWAY. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

The PRETTY BOY is MATTHEW POTTER and he is getting the shit
beat out of him by JOSH PROPS and COREY L.

A teacher, MS. SNODGRASS (late 20's), tries to stop the fight
but can't get through the crowd.

MS. SNODGRASS

Someone STOP THEM! STOP IT!

The tight circle around the fight is several students deep,
all cheering and filming with their smart phones. Corey and
Josh brutally tag team Matthew. When suddenly...

GAMBY

MOVE!

At the sound of his voice, the crowd parts. Gamby rips
through the crowd with no nonsense. He grabs Josh's arm. Josh
blindly takes a swing and SOCKS Gamby in the MOUTH.

STUDENTS

OOOOOHHHH!

INT. VICE PRINCIPALS' OFFICE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby holds an ice pack to his mouth, looking hard at
Matthew, Josh, and Corey. Ms. Snodgrass stands behind them.

GAMBY

It's Mr. Welles' last day of school, and this is the day y'all decide to throw down? Not very respectful, if you ask me.

The boys sit silently.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

Josh Props, Corey L, I always knew you two were idiots, but Matthew Potter I didn't know you were one. How did you get wrapped up in this sort of chicanery? Care to explain?

SNODGRASS

He was being bullied. He didn't throw a single punch.

GAMBY

Ms. Snodgrass, I realize this is an emotional situation to bear witness to, but please let me conduct this investigation.

JOSH

We were just kidding around!

GAMBY

Josh. Shut it. I'm asking Matthew. Matt, tell me what happened.

Matthew looks at the bullies, obviously intimidated.

MATTHEW

Josh is right. We just were playing around, and we got carried away.

GAMBY

Carried away?

Gamby eyes Matthew, giving him the perfect opportunity to come clean. But he doesn't. Josh and Corey smile like punks. Snodgrass looks bothered.

MATTHEW

Yeah, that's all.

GAMBY

Hey, if you just want to stonewall, then I can't do anything for you. I'll just punish you all equally. Makes no difference to me.

SNODGRASS

Can't you see what's happening?
Obviously these kids are pressuring
Matthew into not saying anything.
He's a good student. He's never
been in trouble before.

GAMBY

Ms. Snodgrass, I admire your pluck
but this is not your jurisdiction.
You're a new teacher, I get it. Full
of ideals. Bright eyed and bushy
tailed. Unfortunately we have a zero
tolerance policy when it comes to
fighting. Doesn't matter who started
it. Don't show your inexperience.

Gamby turns back to the students.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

Matthew, unless you have anything
else to say, 5 days in-school-
suspension for all. Mrs. Libby will
have your write-up slips.

The kids file out.

SNODGRASS

I can't believe you're going to put
something like this on his record.

GAMBY

I didn't make the rules, I just
enforce them.

SNODGRASS

Well if a rule's unfair, maybe it
shouldn't be enforced.

GAMBY

That might be the way some vice
principals operate, but that is not
the way I do. Thank you for the
spirited debate, Ms. Snodgrass. You
are dismissed.

Disappointed, she walks out. Gamby watches her ass as she goes.

INT. CAFETERIA. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Lee Russell laughs obnoxiously with a table full of TEACHERS
during lunch period.

From across the cafeteria, Gamby watches as he stands guard of the lunch line. Students wait patiently for their trays.

One of the cafeteria workers, DAYSHAWN (28), takes rubber gloves off and stands next to Gamby, drinking a chocolate milk.

GAMBY

So what's the chatter amongst the other workers? Who are they pulling for in the principal race?

DAYSHAWN

You know, they pullin' for you, but...

GAMBY

But what, Dayshawn?

DAYSHAWN

I just don't know if you're well-liked enough. Look at Lee Russell over there laughing with them teachers. How come you never eat lunch with them teachers?

GAMBY

I choose not to. I would much rather befriend the workers like you and your crew. Harold in maintenance. You are the real guys that keep this school running. The teachers can come and go. Hell, they can call in sick and I just get a substitute. And we pay subs 85 bucks a day. Imagine walking around complaining and being cocky like a teacher, when you can be replaced for 85 bucks. But if one of you guys go down, how do the children eat? Who keeps the floors clean? Do you see what I'm saying?

DAYSHAWN

When we call in sick, the others can pretty much pick up the slack.

GAMBY

Don't undercut yourself, Dayshawn. What you do is really important. And when I become principal, I'll make sure you guys get the credit you are due.

DAYSHAWN

You gonna get us a raise?

GAMBY

No, not a raise. Just make sure people appreciate you.

DAYSHAWN

How you going to do that?

GAMBY

Don't worry about it. You'll see soon enough.

DAYSHAWN

If you could line up a raise, that would be the shit though.

GAMBY

Not going to be a raise.

DAYSHAWN

But I'm just saying.

GAMBY

I'm just saying too. Don't be like the teachers, Dayshawn. Don't be an asshole.

INT. GYMNASIUM. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

The kids and faculty are packed tightly in the bleachers for the farewell assembly to MR. WELLES.

JENELLE GRIMES (15) sings "WIND BENEATH MY WINGS" under a banner reading "GOODBYE PRINCIPAL WELLES."

Gamby spots TWO BOYS laughing in the stands.

GAMBY

You two! I want to know what's so funny in my office after the assembly.

Lee rolls his eyes. Jenelle awkwardly continues singing. Gamby nods to a misty-eyed Welles.

EXT. BUS LINE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

The buses are packed with students. Gamby, wearing aviators, supervises the bus send off with TRAFFIC WANDS like he's directing jet fighters off an aircraft carrier.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby, now done for the day, enters the Teacher's Lounge and sees a few TEACHERS standing by the refrigerator laughing. He approaches to join in on the fun, but as he does the laughter stops, and the teachers scatter, looking uncomfortable.

Gamby sees what they were laughing at: a homemade flyer taped to the refrigerator door. It has a yearbook photo of Neal Gamby copied onto it with a caption underneath that reads, "I'm a fucking idiot who will never be Principal."

INT. VICE PRINCIPALS' OFFICE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby, holding the flyer, storms into Lee's office. He's surprised to find DONNA, an older woman sitting with Lee.

RUSSELL

Hello, Mr. Gamby. You know Donna from the school board?

GAMBY

Of course. Hello, Donna. This is an unexpected surprise.

DONNA

I was just leaving. I'll see you tomorrow, Lee.

RUSSELL

Call me if you want to have drinks.

Donna walks out of the office. Gamby turns to Lee.

GAMBY

Trying to kiss the school board's ass. Ruthless, aren't you? And I saw your little sign.

RUSSELL

What sign?

Gamby crumples up the flyer and throws it at Lee. He misses by a mile.

GAMBY

Come tomorrow, there's a new Principal in town and his name is Neal Gamby. And those who don't play nice can kiss their fucking jobs goodbye. That's a Gamby promise.

RUSSELL

So confident aren't you, Gamby? Too bad the school board's still undecided.

GAMBY

Yeah right. You live in a fantasy world, Russell.

RUSSELL

Why is that job so important to you, Gamby? Is it because you got absolutely dick-all else going on in your life?

GAMBY

You wish you had my life.

RUSSELL

Fucking divorced loser is what you are. Look at you, you're rock hard at the thought of all that power.

GAMBY

I know you like to, but please don't think about my penis. That's private property.

RUSSELL

Eat shit, Gamby.

GAMBY

That's okay. You have fun imagining that, though.

Gamby clears his hands like a Vegas dealer. He walks away, convinced he's being the bigger person. Russell bangs a fist on his desk in frustration.

EXT. TABOR MIDDLE SCHOOL. SPORTS FIELD. SUNDOWN.

The bleachers are sparse with parents watching a middle school field hockey game. GALE LIPTRAPP (30's) sits among them, cheering for her daughter. She sits with RAY LIPTRAPP, a man who never learned to stop wearing athletic wear.

GALE

Go Tabby! Good job!

ON THE FIELD is TABITHA (12), a chubby girl. She uses her weight to her advantage, knocking other players around.

Gamby sees Gale and Ray sitting together. He musters a deep breath and takes a seat about five feet away from the couple.

GAMBY
Hello, Gale. Ray.

GALE
You're late. You missed Tabby almost scoring a goal.

GAMBY
Actually, I saw it while I was standing down below. Worry about yourself.

Tabitha sees Gamby in the stands. She waves to him. He smiles and waves back. Ray leans over and kisses Gale.

GAMBY (CONT'D)
So I got the principal job today.

GALE
Cool.

GAMBY
Cool? Real nice, Gale. Admit that my success enrages you.

GALE
I actually don't care at all.

GAMBY
You do care. You hate seeing me doing so well.

GALE
Yes Neal, I'm always thinking about you. It's all about you.

GAMBY
Well actually it's not about me, because my mentor's wife has Melanoma. So how silly do you sound?

RAY
Aw, sorry to hear that, Gamby. But that's awesome about the principal job. Congrats.

GAMBY
Nobody asked you to chime in, Ray. It's not even official yet. Don't go mouthing off to the whole town like you always do.

RAY

Well, I'm just impressed. Must be tough wrangling all those kids. I don't know how you do it.

GAMBY

Of course you don't understand, Ray. Maybe if I told you I just stole a man's wife and am now living in the house he paid for, I bet you'd understand then, wouldn't you?

GALE

Why don't you go sit somewhere else, Neal?

GAMBY

Nope.

EXT. TABOR MIDDLE SCHOOL. PARKING LOT. EVENING.

After the game, Gamby sees Tabitha flirting with a group of OLDER BOYS. She has her shirt off, only wearing a sports bra. Her chub hangs over the waistband of her skirt.

TABITHA

Hey Dad, did you see my assist?

GAMBY

Where did your shirt go?

TABITHA

I took it off. It was all sweaty.

GAMBY

Put your shirt on right now.

TABITHA

But Dad, it's nasty--

GAMBY

Put it on!

The older boys disperse as Tabitha puts on her shirt. Gamby helps her put it on faster by pulling it down.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

I don't mean to yell. I know you've been spending a lot of time with your mother, and that's the kind of example she sets, but you just can't go around being fast with the boys. That's not what a lady does.

TABITHA

Alright, Dad.

GAMBY

Hey, got some big news. You're looking at the new Principal of Lincoln High School.

TABITHA

No way! So that means when I get to high school I can do whatever I want and never get in trouble?

GAMBY

Actually, that's what people would expect, so I'd have to go harder in the other direction. I'll basically have to be merciless upon you.

Gale and Ray walk to the car.

GALE

Let's go, Tabby.

RAY

Fazoli's is gonna close.

GAMBY

I'm talking to my daughter, Ray. Not your daughter because she'll never be your daughter.

GALE

Wrap it up, Neal.

Gamby rolls his eyes and turns back to Tabitha.

GAMBY

I can tell you're proud of me.

TABITHA

I am proud of you. My Dad a principal. It's pretty awesome.

GAMBY

Thanks, honey.

INT. GAMBY'S TOWNHOME. NIGHT.

Gamby enters his generically furnished townhome, spotless and organized. The answering machine blinks with a new message. Gamby plays the message as he takes off his shoes.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS

(on answering machine)

Mr. Gamby, Superintendent Haas. Just wanted to inform you a decision has been made, and we'd love to sit down and talk with you first thing tomorrow morning. Hope you're having a wonderful evening. God bless.

Gamby drops his shoe and pumps his fist.

EXT. FACULTY PARKING LOT. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. MORNING.

Gamby pulls into a parking space clearly marked "RESERVED FOR PRINCIPAL." He steps out of the car confident and looking good in his Sunday's best.

INT. BOYS BATHROOM. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Lee Russell looks at himself in the mirror. He splashes water on his face. Takes a deep breath. He's ready.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby enters the office and takes a seat behind the vacant Principal's desk. He tries to look natural as if he belongs there. Gamby tries different poses: the comfortable look... the deep-in-work mode... the fake phone call.

The door opens, and Lee Russell comes in. He takes one look at Gamby behind the Principal's desk and rolls his eyes.

RUSSELL

You're fucking pathetic.

GAMBY

Don't ruin this moment, Russell.

There's a KNOCK on the door. Mrs. Libby pokes her head in.

MRS. LIBBY

Superintendent Haas is here.

Russell and Gamby both straighten up to present themselves.

The door opens wide and in walks SUPERINTENDENT Haas. He's a tall, no-nonsense, well-dressed man. Gamby and Russell shake hands with the Super.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS
Hello, Mr. Gamby. Mr. Russell.

GAMBY
Welcome, Mr. Haas!

RUSSELL
Good to see you, Jeremy.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS
Sad news about Welles' wife. Gotta use sun protection. My wife makes me use a strong SPF even if I plan on being inside all day.

RUSSELL
So smart. Your wife rules.

GAMBY
She does, but we've gotta live in the now. Gotta move forward. Talk about the future.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS
That's right. Welles has left some big shoes to fill. It was a tough choice, but I think we went with the right person.

Gamby and Russell both straighten in anticipation.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS (CONT'D)
Someone with a lot of experience...

GAMBY
Gotta have experience. Most important thing.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS
And someone who's very likable.

RUSSELL
Essential to be likable.

The door opens. In walks DR. BELINDA BROWN. A large black woman in a nice jacket-and-skirt combo.

BELINDA
Knock knock!

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS

There she is! Gentlemen I'd like you to meet Dr. Belinda Brown, the new principal of Lincoln High.

Russell is shocked. Gamby is speechless.

BELINDA

So sorry I'm late but there's a car parked in the Principal's space and I could not for the life of me find a spot! HAAAAAAAAA!

Her CACKLING LAUGH echoes through Gamby's ears. His stomach is dropping, and his heart is breaking as reality sets in.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS

Dr. Brown was principal of several very high-achieving schools in California.

BELINDA

Aw, look at you being so nice. And who's this keeping my chair warm for me like a gentleman?

Neal is awakened out of his trance as Belinda extends her hand to shake his. Gamby goes pale.

GAMBY

Excuse me.

Gamby makes for the door.

EXT. DUMPSTERS. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby pukes against the side of the school. He wipes his mouth on his nice suit and walks toward the parking lot.

EXT. FACULTY PARKING LOT. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby backs out of the Principal's parking space.

INT. HALLWAY. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Superintendent Haas is giving Dr. Brown a tour of the school. Lee Russell has rebounded and is now on his game, but Gamby is stewing in his own world.

RUSSELL

And that's the auditorium where we have jazz band and theater performances. Right now drama club's doing *Spider-Man: Turn Off the Dark*.

BELINDA

Sounds like a must-see. My, this campus is just lovely.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS

Indeed. Lincoln High is one of the oldest schools in the district. To me, hands-down the most charming.

RUSSELL

Even more charming now that you're here, Dr. Brown.

BELINDA

(that laugh again)
HAAAA! Why thank you, Mr. Russell. Flattery will get you everywhere. I see a bright future for you here, darling.

They all laugh at the lame quips. All except Gamby.

GAMBY

(under his breath)
Fuck you, Russell.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS

Excuse me, Mr. Gamby?

GAMBY

Sorry. Nothing. Here's the hallway.

SUPERINTENDENT HAAS

Are you feeling alright, Mr. Gamby? You look a little pale.

BELINDA

It must be me. I tend to have that effect on men-- leave 'em breathless.

Belinda puts a hand on her hip and gives a wiggle.

GAMBY

Yeah... yeah, it's you alright.

Ouch. Everyone gets quiet. Gamby's comment made it weird.

INT. TEACHER'S LOUNGE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

FACULTY MEMBERS drink coffee and go over lesson plans when Gamby busts in.

GAMBY

Who here thinks that Dr. Brown
sucks and needs to take her big ol'
butt back to California?

The teachers don't respond too favorably.

SCIENCE TEACHER

Whoa. That's kind of harsh. What's
the big issue with Dr. Brown?

GAMBY

She's going to ruin the school,
that's the big issue. Let's call a
spade a spade here.

A few teachers cringe at Gamby's poor choice of words.

DRAMA TEACHER

She went to Berkeley. You don't
know what you're talking about.

GAMBY

Big deal. I bet she did go to
Berkeley. I bet I know how she got
in, too. Here's what I propose. I
am going to file a formal complaint
to the school board--

SCIENCE TEACHER

A complaint? What's it going to say?

GAMBY

It's going to say she's a bad
choice, get rid of her. I would like
you all to sign this complaint with
me. Send it in as a unified front,
let them know we mean business.

ENGLISH TEACHER

I'm not putting my name on that.

DRAMA TEACHER

Not a chance.

GAMBY

I see how it is. Y'all never backed me up before, I don't see why this time would be any different. I'm disgusted with this cowardice.

Lee Russell chimes in from the back corner of the lounge, where he's been sitting and listening.

RUSSELL

Will you please shut the fuck up? Nobody wants to listen to your misguided bullshit.

GAMBY

Well if it isn't the snake in the shadows. Stay out of this, Russell.

RUSSELL

Have some self-respect for God's sake. You look ridiculous.

GAMBY

I look ridiculous? You piece of shit. She's been here five minutes, and you already have your forked tongue shoved straight up her black asshole.

The teachers GASP.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

Don't you try to spin that into something bad. I'm just saying that part of her is probably black.

RUSSELL

I think I speak for everyone here when I say, you're a jerk off. Nobody wants to sign your letter.

GAMBY

I'm getting real tired of that know-it-all mouth of yours.

RUSSELL

Then make your move, motherfucker! But you better have a gun.

GAMBY

I don't need a gun. But if I did need a gun, I could get a better one than you could, that's the funny part.

The two men stand there like they're going to throw down. Finally a MALE MATH TEACHER stands up.

MATH TEACHER

Alright, let's everybody settle down. No need to get violent.

GAMBY

Forget it! I don't need any of you. I'll do this by myself.

Gamby storms out of the Teachers' Lounge and slams the door.

INT. GAMBY'S TOWNHOME. NIGHT.

Gamby walks in to find Tabitha and Ray sitting in his living room, waiting for him with big smiles. They've hung up a HOMEMADE SIGN that says "Congratulations Principal Gamby" and there is a platter of cookies and snacks out.

TABITHA & RAY

SURPRISE!

Gamby in fear flings his COMPUTER BAG. It misses them and shatters against the wall.

RAY

Whoa, Neal!

GAMBY

Goddamnit, Ray! You broke my computer!

Tabitha deflates when she sees her dad's reaction.

TABITHA

You don't like the surprise?

GAMBY

I don't even know what it is yet. What are you doing here?

RAY

Tabitha wanted to celebrate your big promotion.

GAMBY

Why are you a part of this?

RAY

Tabitha needed a ride, and Gale didn't want to do it.

GAMBY

I should have known you did this, Ray. Goddamnit, I hate that you're about to see me like this, but I don't have the strength to fight you anymore. You win, Ray. This is what you wanted.

Gamby tries to fight it, but he can't. He starts crying.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

I didn't get the job. They picked somebody else.

RAY

Awww, Neal! That's terrible!

GAMBY

(through tears)
Stop, Ray.

TABITHA

Why didn't they choose you?

GAMBY

Sometimes when you're the person enforcing all the laws you don't get to make a lot of friends. A lot of people don't like me.

TABITHA

People like you.

GAMBY

I know it sounds hard to believe, but they don't, Tabby. I'm not an easy man to be around. I just expect a lot out of people, and for some reason it scares them away. God knows it did your mom.

RAY

Gale has a lot of respect for you, Neal.

GAMBY

I'm not trying to get back with my wife, Ray! And stop calling me Neal.

TABITHA

Well can't you get them to change their mind?

GAMBY

I tried, but I don't have the support of the teachers. Because, like I said, nobody likes me.

TABITHA

Who cares about the teachers. The students like you, don't they?

GAMBY

The students...

Something clicks in Gamby's head.

RAY

See? They like you, right?

GAMBY

No, they don't. You're completely wrong, Ray. But that doesn't matter. Because they fear me.

EXT. BUS STOP. DAY.

Matthew Potter waits with a scattering of kids at the bus stop. Gamby pulls up in his car. He rolls down the window.

GAMBY

Matthew Potter. What's shakin'?

All the kids look to Matthew.

MATTHEW

I'm waiting for the bus.

GAMBY

I'm your bus today.

INT. GAMBY'S CAR (MOVING). DAY.

Gamby and Matthew ride together. Matthew's uncomfortable. Gamby lets the awkward silence build before finally speaking.

GAMBY

So how's ISS been treating you?

MATTHEW

So far, so good.

GAMBY

So far, so good? You know what happens to a smart kid like you in ISS? You get your asshole raped.

MATTHEW

Well that hasn't happened yet.

GAMBY

You're in there for a few more days. Still could. What would you say if I could get you out of there today? In fact, get the whole thing wiped from your record. You're a good kid. You don't need that thing following you around when it comes time to apply for colleges. I can free you. Would you like that?

MATTHEW

Well, yeah of course. But why?

Gamby drives in silence for a beat.

GAMBY

What do you think of Dr. Brown, Matthew?

MATTHEW

Who's that?

GAMBY

The new principal.

MATTHEW

There's a new principal?

GAMBY

Jesus H, do you pay attention to what's happening in the world around you? Yes there's a new principal, and she's dangerously unqualified. School board couldn't find a shittier person if they tried. She must be removed. I'm personally writing a letter to Superintendent Haas, but my voice will not be enough. That's where you come in.

MATTHEW

Me? What am I supposed to do?

GAMBY

I want you to organize a mass school walkout.

MATTHEW

A walkout? Like, leaving school?

GAMBY

Yes. Spread the word amongst your classmates. Everyone walks out at the same time to protest how much you hate the new principal. Today at exactly, let's say 2:03pm.

MATTHEW

I can't organize that.

GAMBY

Fine. You can just stay in ISS, get raped. Or you can help me and go to college. What's it gonna be?

Matthew looks defeated.

MATTHEW

I'll help you and go to college.

GAMBY

Alright, total school walkout, all the students, 2:03. We clear?

MATTHEW

Yeah.

GAMBY

No, you respond "crystal" when I ask you that. If I say "we clear" you should be like, "crystal."

MATTHEW

Okay. Crystal.

GAMBY

There you go. Crystal. That's what I like to hear. Now rally your peers.

INT. CAFETERIA. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby monitors the lunch line. He watches as Belinda Brown and Lee Russell laugh it up with the teachers.

Dayshawn eats a pudding.

DAYSHAWN

New principal seems a'ight.

GAMBY

Dayshawn, don't be fooled. Look at her. That screeching laugh. And goddamn Lee Russell, being a bitch. No matter. Let 'em have their fun.

DAYSHAWN

Sounds like you up to something, Mr. Gamby.

GAMBY

You know me well, Dayshawn. All will be revealed in due time, my friend. The revolution will not be televised. It will just happen regular in front of everybody. At approximately 2:03 today.

DAYSHAWN

You talking about like a school shooting or something?

GAMBY

No, Dayshawn. Not like a school shooting. I'm talking a non-violent hearts and minds campaign.

DAYSHAWN

Oh, that sounds dope.

GAMBY

Yes, it does, Dayshawn.

INT. CHEMISTRY CLASSROOM. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby sits in the back of a classroom monitoring MR. HENRICKS (45), teaching Chemistry.

As Henricks gives his lecture, Gamby writes his letter to the school board. "DEAR SCHOOL BOARD, I'M AFRAID TO LET YOU KNOW YOU HAVE MADE A HUGE MISTAKE--"

A nearby student peeks at what Gamby is writing. Gamby covers his work and gives him the "turn around" finger twirl.

INT. SNODGRASS'S CLASSROOM. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Ms. Snodgrass bends over to feed the fish in her aquarium. Gamby shows up at the door and takes a moment to appreciate her ass before announcing himself.

GAMBY

Pardon the intrusion.

Snodgrass turns around.

SNODGRASS

Mr. Gamby.

GAMBY

Just wanted to fly in to give you a quick update. I don't like being questioned, but I must admit your words affected me greatly. Matthew Potter's a good kid, no point in throwing the book at him. This time he gets a pass.

Snodgrass smiles warmly at him.

SNODGRASS

Wow, that's a big turnaround for you. What happened to rules are rules?

GAMBY

Rules may be rules, but fairness is also fairness. And stupid is stupid. I'm not gonna sit here and preach to you. You know what I'm saying.

Gamby sits on her desk.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

I know things have been kind of crazy lately, what with all the changes. I'm sure that's why you questioned me. Not everybody likes some of the choices that have been made. I just wanted to let you know we shouldn't lose hope yet.

Gamby puts his hand on her arm.

GAMBY (CONT'D)

We still got some grown-ups in charge here at Lincoln.

SNODGRASS

Uh, that's good to hear.

GAMBY

You're tough. I like that. Keep your chin up, Ms. Snodgrass. The tides are turning.

He gives her arm an encouraging shake.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Belinda is talking to Gamby and Lee Russell. Lee takes notes, Gamby's watching the clock. It's getting close to 2:03.

BELINDA

I'm going to need your help planning my first faculty meeting. I want the opportunity to show myself, but also have some fun.

RUSSELL

Ooh, lightbulb. Ice cream social? Let 'em see how sweet you are.

BELINDA

Russell, you don't quit do you?

Belinda and Russell laugh. Gamby sees the clock strike 2:03. He looks outside hopefully, but no one walks out.

BELINDA (CONT'D)

Mr. Gamby, what's your favorite ice cream?

GAMBY

I hate ice cream. Lactose intolerant. Excuse me for one second.

INT. HALLWAY. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby looks down the hall. A CLASSROOM DOOR OPENS.

He smiles as one kid walks out. The kid passes Gamby without a word. He goes into the bathroom, not part of the cause.

Gamby turns back to the classrooms. Nobody's leaving. Gamby panics and runs down the hall.

INT. HISTORY CLASSROOM. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Matthew Potter sits in history class. Suddenly, he notices GAMBY'S FACE in the little window of the classroom door.

He looks pissed. He points to his watch and signals for Matthew to come outside to talk.

INT. HALLWAY OUTSIDE HISTORY CLASS. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby stands in front of Matthew Potter. He's in a rage.

GAMBY

What happened? It's 2:08! Where the fuck is my walkout?

MATTHEW

I know, I tried.

GAMBY

You couldn't get any of your friends to walk out of school? What's wrong with you if you can't even do that? Kids hate school!

MATTHEW

I tried! Nobody would do it. I tried, I promise.

GAMBY

God, whatever, Matthew. No wonder those kids pick on you. You're a fucking idiot.

Matthew just stands there. Gamby storms off with a dismissive wave of his hand. Matthew, shaken up, goes back into class.

INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby returns as Lee is walking out. Lee smirks knowingly.

GAMBY

Oh, are we done?

BELINDA

Actually, I would love to speak with you a moment. Have a seat.

Gamby sits. Lee lingers behind, holding the door.

LEE

Closed, right?

BELINDA

Yes Lee, thank you.

Lee smiles at Gamby and closes the door on his way out.

BELINDA (CONT'D)

Mr. Gamby... A funny thing came across my desk today. It seems that somebody has filed a complaint against me with the school board.

GAMBY

That's interesting.

Weird pause.

BELINDA

Is there anything you'd like to get off your chest, Mr. Gamby?

GAMBY

Nothing comes to mind right away.

BELINDA

This complaint says I'm not fit to lead the school. It says, and I quote, "She's not very smart and if she's in charge, this school will suffer in a horrible way. Dr. Brown only cares about herself. She really thinks she's something." Now, who would write such a thing?

GAMBY

Does it say who wrote it?

BELINDA

Yes, it does.

GAMBY

Fine, I'm a man. I wrote the complaint to the school board.

Dr. Brown leans forward, a cool smile on her face.

BELINDA

Mr. Gamby, I've been doing this for some time now. Whenever a new principal shows up at a school, you can guarantee that somebody's gonna feel like they were passed over, and oftentimes they resent the new principal. I can live with people resenting me, that's fine. But from now on, you're going to be very cooperative and very pleasant when dealing with me. Because if you are not cooperative, Mr. Gamby, and you are not pleasant...

The smile vanishes from Belinda's face. Her tone deepens.

BELINDA (CONT'D)
I'll drag your face all up and down
the parking lot of this
motherfucker. Now do we understand
each other, Mr. Gamby?

Gamby is shocked.

GAMBY
Yes, Dr. Brown.

The cool smile returns along with the pleasant tone of voice.

BELINDA
Wonderful. Now I'm going to need
you to come to work two hours
earlier every morning. I'd like you
to jump on the morning driver's ed
program.

GAMBY
So now I gotta be here at 5:10 AM?

BELINDA
Will that be a problem, Mr. Gamby?

Gamby wants to fight back, but he just shakes his head.

BELINDA (CONT'D)
Then if that is all, you are
dismissed. Have a blessed day.

GAMBY
You have a blessed day as well.

EXT. PARKING LOT. LINCOLN HIGH SCHOOL. DAY.

Gamby supervises the send-off, this time no flourish in his traffic wand signals. As the last bus pulls away, Gamby sees someone across the parking lot staring at him. The figure lifts a walkie to his mouth. Gamby's crackles to life.

RUSSELL
(through the walkie)
Seems like Belinda has you by the balls.
Heard about the driver's ed. Tough break.

Gamby lifts his walkie to respond.

GAMBY

Yeah, well, at least I ain't bending over and taking it up the ass with a smile. Over.

Russell walks toward Gamby, speaking through the walkie.

RUSSELL

You have no fucking clue. While you've been throwing your little tantrums, filing your complaints, I've been learning her weaknesses.

Russell drops the walkie, now close enough to whisper.

RUSSELL (CONT'D)

And when the time is right, I'm gonna stab that cunt in her big back!

GAMBY

I thought you loved Dr. Brown.

RUSSELL

Fuck her. I wanted that job as much as you did. She didn't earn this. You think exactly what I think: she should be bounced the fuck on out of here. We're the same!

GAMBY

We're not the same. I don't even like you.

RUSSELL

No shit. I fucking hate you too. But right now, I hate that turd more. She's my enemy and she's also your enemy. My enemy's enemy...

GAMBY

Is my friend.

RUSSELL

Shall we align, friend?

Russell extends a hand. Gamby stares at it.

GAMBY

Let's take the bitch down.

The men shake hands as the American flag waves above them.

CUT TO BLACK.