

SONORAN SAINTS

(EPISODE TWO)

"ALPHA CHARLIE TANGO"

Written for film by:

John J, Sollecito Jr and Jeffrey I. Hoppenstand

Screenplay by

Jeffrey I. Hoppenstand

(562)900-4815

EPISODE TWO

FADE IN:

INT. ACADEMY RECREATION HALL - EVENING

The post-dinner crowd of cadets is able to cut loose a bit. Some play video games, others talk loudly.

AT THE SNACK BAR - ROBBIE(12) a cadet, stands just barely to the height of the counter.

BEHIND IT - a woman puttering through the rear supply shelves has her back to him. The surrounding NOISE combined with his stature makes his presence tough to be noticed.

ROBBIE

Hello, hello? May I get a
strawberry milk shake? Please?
Miss...
(yelling)
Miss -- MISS!

SHARON (O.S.)

Just a minute!

The woman approaching is Sharon Adams. She arrives.

SHARON (CONT'D)

No need to scream at me.

ROBBIE

Sorry.

SHARON

And it's Ms. Ms Adams.

ROBBIE

Ms Adams.

SHARON

Remember that from now on, right?

ROBBIE

Yeah.
(at Sharon's scowl)
I mean YES, I will. I promise.

Sharon expels a *put-upon* sigh.

SHARON

(matter-of-fact)
What does your little heart desire?

ROBBIE
A strawberry milkshake, please.
M... Ms Adams.

SHARON
You know how much refined sugar is
in just one of those?

He's a terrified deer in krypton-bulb headlights.

ROBBIE
No...

SHARON
More than enough to increase male
aggression, general bad behavior
and to override already-taxed
inhibitions.

ROBBIE
(utterly bewildered)
Okay...

SHARON
What you want, young man - is an
apple-beet smoothie. With kale
powder. Coming right up!

EXT. ACADEMY RECREATION HALL - NIGHT

An isolated LOADING DOCK behind the building.

SIX CADETS - Easton Tannor, Bruce Govich, Philip Lenz, Ryan Stultz, Larry Greco and Victor Skorda pass off-duty time.

Energy drinks are plentiful. Empty cans litter the ground. Bruce and Victor share tokes off a cannabis vape pen.

A VERY baked Ryan relieves Philip, taking point as lookout. Philip heads straight for Bruce - the pen is passed to him.

BRUCE
Just like I promised...

He produces the light-green cellphone and motions for all to huddle around. Philip and Victor eagerly comply. Easton casually approaches.

Larry remains seated - content, just chilling. He flips and tosses a steel-jacketed POCKET-BIBLE - over and over.

BRUCE (CONT'D)
Okay, wait for it -- wait. And...

The boys react with disgust and laughter.

PHILIP
It actually sploged on the camera!

VICTOR
That is sick, Dude.

RYAN
Hey! I wanna see...

PHILIP
Think I'm gonna hurl. Stand back.

Unimpressed, Easton steps over to Ryan's "guard" spot and taps him out.

BRUCE
Is that, or is that not - the
world's most royal zit-pop?

Ryan nods a 'thanks' to Easton and rushes to Bruce's side. Bruce plays it again. MORE REACTIONS...

VICTOR
Fucking chemical warfare, man.

RYAN
I'm off yogurt forever.

BRUCE
(forcing a tear)
It's almost - too beautiful.

VICTOR
Larry, what's up? Don't you
appreciate fine art?

Larry stays quiet and politely smiles - but he's not moving from his place-of-comfort.

At the 'guard-post' yards away, Easton is sitting.

EASTON
Bruce, considering the deep, deep
shit you're in if you get caught
with that phone, can't you show us
anything better than zit missiles?

Victor hands the vape to Ryan, then strolls to Easton's spot.

BRUCE
Living the dream...!

He sits & claps a brotherly arm around Easton's shoulder.

VICTOR

Okay, Mr. Tannor - I appoint you
entertainment liaison for tonight.

Easton acts annoyed - shakes off the arm. But he grins.

VICTOR (CONT'D)

Troops, are we all down with that?

Shouted and mumbled assent all around.

BRUCE

What'll it be, Sir? An
inspirational 'Ted Talk' of your
choosing or -- perhaps you fancy a
bit of vintage Granny Porn?

EASTON

Um, any MILF clip starring your mom
sounds good.

The boys erupt. Ryan takes a DEEP hit from the pen.

BRUCE

Sit on a claymore, you *skeev!*

Even Larry nods his head & smiles - impressed by the burn.

EASTON

(joking - maybe)
Watch it, Cadet.

BRUCE

(at 'attention')
You skeev, SIR.

PHILIP

Proximity!

All are alert. Ryan freezes, holding in the vape smoke and
uselessly 'hiding' the pen behind his back.

Which makes it easy for Bruce - to shove the phone down the
front of Ryan's pants.

Ryan scrambles to stand partially blocked by Larry.

THE PHONE SCREEN is still LIT; his crotch shines like a
lighthouse beam in a fog.

But IT'S ONLY MATTHIAS - who trots right past them, heading
straight for a patch of earth. He begins intently digging.

Philip wisely scouts around, scanning for Brother Zach.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
All clear. Solo mission.

EASTON
Matthias. You gangsta!

The dog unearths his treasure (a Frisbee) from its 'vault.' Kicking a bit of dirt over the spot, he trots to the edge of the boys' circle.

He sits before Larry and drops the Frisbee at his feet - where he CHUFFS an invitation. Larry picks it up.

VICTOR
Uh oh, Larry. You been called out.

EASTON
No backing down now.

But now, Matthias has turned his head to stare at Ryan's glowing crotch. He sniffs and WHINES.

Ryan looks down - sees wisps of smoke. He jumps and squirms frantically. His initial SCREAM expels the vape cloud.

RYAN
Ohhh, shit! Hot hot, sweet Jesus...

The others react with YELLS and LAUGHTER. Matthias BARKS.

Ryan jams a hand down his pants - at first managing only to chase the phone round the *pubic perimeter*.

WE SEE THE GLOW - beginning to slip down a pants leg. A second later, he fishes it out.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Ohhh nooo.

EASTON
Stultz, are you okay?

RYAN
I scorched my DWAYNE!

EASTON
Your... Dwayne?

Phillip, Bruce and Victor all line up raggedly. *Not quite* in unison:

PHILIP, BRUCE, VICTOR
Walk it off, Cadet!

RYAN
(sheepishly to Easton)
My Dwayne Johnson...

MOMENTS LATER

LARRY kneels by Matthias, who's now much calmer. He pets and hugs the dog - and whispers unheard words of relaxation. Matthias responds with licks and GROWLS of pleasure.

In the background, WE SEE RYAN reclining. Above him, Victor is pouring a can of energy drink down the front of his pants.

PHILIP APPROACHES LARRY -

PHILIP
Y'all think there's anything to that crazy 'battle banner' story?

LARRY
"Your wealth and your treasures I would give for booty without cost."

BRUCE
(to Philip)
Aww, now see what you did?

LARRY
Yea, what quarrel might you with free booty?

PHILIP
Where the fuck is his "off" button?

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - DAY

CLOSE ON - Sgt. Robin Ayelet, calling commands.

PAN OUT TO REVEAL

A troop of forty cadets (including Paul Kish) practice and move through a series of precision maneuvers. Their "training rifles" look remarkably like the real thing.

Sgt. Robin stops occasionally to correct someone. As this continues...

BLEACHERS AT THE EDGE OF THE FIELD

Daniel sits, casually watching the action in between swigs from a giant bottle of vitamin water.

HIS POV: amongst the cadets, he/we focus on a few who seem to be struggling.

We faintly hear Robin call a COMMAND. The troop halts.

ON DANIEL - a contemplative look on his face. Studying the boys so closely, he doesn't notice/hear Hadley's footsteps on the row above, heading straight towards him.

ON THE APPROACHING FEET, growing larger.

HADLEY (O.S.)
Dream on, Soy Boy.

Hadley sits a seat away and behind Daniel, who half-turns.

HADLEY (CONT'D)
I've watched many a good man lose
his heart and spirit-animal balls
in that pursuit.

DANIEL
If you're talking about Sergeant
Ayelet, I see you haven't lost your
charming degeneracy.

Hadley laughs gruffly. Daniel returns to watching the field.

HADLEY
One of my many qualities.

DANIEL
Such a relic.

HADLEY
Snowflake.

DANIEL
Sturmtruppler.

HADLEY
Throw pillow!

EXT. CITY STREET - MOMENTS LATER

Brother Zach approaches the doors of an Italian restaurant. He reaches for the handle, hesitates - and lets out a SIGH of unease. He pulls a door open and enters.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

It's in-between lunch and dinner; there are few customers. Brother Zach exchanges some words with the hostess. She nods and beckons him to follow her.

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel and Hadley, as before. Hadley points.

HADLEY
Watch Stultz, third column, fourth
from the left.

Daniel peers to find the boy. After a few beats:

DANIEL
Ryan. I see it, he's still locking
his knees.

HADLEY
Fifteen more seconds - and he'll be
sucking sod.

Still watching, Daniel is up and jumps to the next lower bleacher level. Before he can get any further:

HADLEY (CONT'D)
Stand down, Mister Cesta!

A very old programming causes Daniel to freeze and stiffen: something resembling "attention." But only for a second; he shakes it off and meets Hadley's stare.

DANIEL
Then you help him.

HADLEY
Exactly what I'm doing.

DANIEL
He needs a *correction*.

Hadley stretches out on the bleacher, yet still seems to tower over Daniel who is two rows lower.

HADLEY
He's learning to *correct* himself.

IN THE BACKGROUND - the squad is seen, still at *parade rest*.

DANIEL
If he passes out, it'll be his
third time in two weeks.

IN THE B.G. - Ryan appears in real trouble. His legs shake.

HADLEY
See? That's called - *learning at
his own pace.*

Daniel scoffs - but knows there's nothing he can do.

HADLEY (CONT'D)
It works. Hell, you proved me right
thirty years ago Mr. Cesta.

IN THE BACKGROUND - Ryan is on his *last legs*.

Daniel sits back down in his current position.

DANIEL
(muttered)
Fossil.

HADLEY
Pacifist.

ON THE FIELD

Sgt. Robin is focused on inspecting one Cadet's uniform.

IN THE BACKGROUND - unseen by her, Ryan blacks out and hits
the ground. His mass takes with it two smaller cadets -
they're pinned underneath.

As Robin returns to the front of the line, she gives the
FORWARD MARCH command.

The troop moves forward, stepping over the body pile. One of
the wriggling hands protruding from underneath Ryan - grabs a
passing ankle. And so the pile grows.

Robin yells and all come to a halt. She sprints over to the
human pile. We see woozy movement from Ryan.

IN THE BLEACHERS

DANIEL
You cliché...

Hadley casually stands, preparing to leave.

DANIEL (CONT'D)
The old dog - who can't be taught.

HADLEY
 (matter-of-fact)
 Woof.

Hadley exits toward an aisle. He doesn't look back.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - MOMENTS LATER

A FAR CORNER OF THE DINING ROOM -

Brother Zach approaches an isolated booth, we see the back of a woman's head. She's already seated, presumably waiting.

He converts his uneasy, pensive expression into the best smile he can manage.

The woman, possibly sensing his presence, turns her head. We now recognize Suzanne Chen. She smiles warmly.

BROTHER ZACH
 Suzanne, hello.
 (thrown)
 Wow, I-- You look amazing.

Instant regret and embarrassment at his inside thoughts slipping out.

BROTHER ZACH (CONT'D)
 Oh, Lord, I...

SUZANNE
 It's good to see you too.

Brother Zach remains standing awkwardly by the table.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
 (well?)
 I'll have the Pasta Primavera and
 another Frangelico on the rocks.

Brother Zach realizes he is frozen there *like a waiter* - and awkwardly chuckles. Flustered, he slides in opposite her.

She's on her second cocktail. Suzanne notices him noticing.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
 (raising her glass)
 I didn't choose this place for
 their garlic bread.

BROTHER ZACH
 Will you be expecting me to catch
 up?

SUZANNE

Oh, well...

(shrugging)

That's completely up to you - as long as you don't break out a hell-raising sermon on temperance.

BROTHER ZACH

(slowly easing up)

Did I used to do that? I don't think I ever did--

SUZANNE

(nodding)

I kind of recall - a few times actually, When we were shnocked. That's likely why you don't remember.

BROTHER ZACH

(pondering)

Was the... *moral messaging* coherent?

Suzanne laughs a mixture of delight and sadness.

SUZANNE

And how would I know?

Zach laughs, then smiles broadly and genuinely. Warming up.

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - LATER

Sgt. Robin rounds up her platoon. In formation, a second group of younger cadets enters the field, led by Easton and Victor. We see Jacob and Tommy side-by-side.

Robin marches her platoon off to

A FARTHER PART OF THE FIELD. Ryan trails behind.

Easton's group occupies the area her squad just vacated.

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

THE FARTHER PART OF THE FIELD, **in the background** - Sgt. Robin leads her cadets in exercises: bidirectional laps, down for crunches and burpies. Then up for more running.

ON EASTON'S CADETS **in the foreground** - lined up in three rows of six. Rifles are twirled and handled with various levels of precision.

Tommy is struggling; he drops the rifle. He moves haltingly, unsure whether to pick it up or stand at attention.

Tommy freezes at seeing Easton approach; and get right up in his face.

EASTON

Cadet, if your weapon falls on the ground, what do you think you should do!?

TOMMY

I - I g..g..guess I should--

EASTON

You g-what? You g-g-giggidy? Giggidy goo! Are you retarded, Cadet Goo?

TOMMY

Sir, no. I don't think so.

Some quiet chuckles come from others. Jacob glares angrily at his brother, who backs off to address them all.

EASTON

Company, ten--hut!

Easton stalks and glares up and down the line.

EASTON (CONT'D)

Do not let the losers pull the rest of you down.

(beat)

Dress right... dress!

Each cadet lines up with his eyes on the boy to the right. Rifle stocks rest on the ground by each right foot.

EASTON (CONT'D)

Right shoulder... h-arms!

The "weapons" come up to their shoulders as best as twelve-year-olds can manage.

Easton moves to harangue another boy.

EASTON (CONT'D)

No hunchbacks in my unit, Cadet. Stand up straight!

EXT. STAFF PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Daniel pulls a thick folder of papers from his car, closes it and moves toward the classroom buildings.

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - CONTINUOUS

AS BEFORE -

The three lines march forward. Easton now mixes in opposite-direction commands such as "*left flank*" and "*right flank*". The squad changes vectors with varying amounts of success.

Easton sees Tommy struggling and marches alongside.

EASTON
Let's go. Keep up, Cadet Goo!
(beat)
Company -- halt! Order -- h-arms!

The squad halts and rifle butts return to the ground.

INT. ITALIAN RESTAURANT - LATER

Brother Zach and Suzanne wind down their meal. She's a bit more than buzzed.

BROTHER ZACH
(somberly)
When grief is still this fresh, I
don't know what to say, or the
right questions to ask.

SUZANNE
I'd call that odd, considering your
chosen occupation.

BROTHER ZACH
That's true, right? I guess it's
not wise of me to admit--

SUZANNE
But wait.
(hazy)
I remember you saying - that your
occupation chose you.

Brother Zach probes his mind, then his face registers shame. A quick moment later, Suzanne gets it.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
Oh Zach, I'm sorry. I didn't mean
to bring that up.

BROTHER ZACH
Suzanne, it wasn't just an excuse.

SUZANNE
I know, I know. And I don't blame
you for anything.

BROTHER ZACH
(forceful)
Maybe you should.

SUZANNE
No, Zach. I was -- tenacious.

Their eyes meet intensely. Brother Zach can't help but smile.

SUZANNE (CONT'D)
Okay, okay. So how goes the world-
saving business?

EXT. ATHLETIC FIELD - MOMENTS LATER

CONTINUING THE DRILLS

Easton is working something out in his head. It gives the
cadets a few more seconds of rest - but it feels **ominous**.

EASTON
At close intervals, dress right --
dress!

The platoon closes ranks and straightens lines as before.

JACOB
(to himself)
What in hell is he up to?

Easton barks a quick flurry of varied commands: "*Right face,
left face, about face, etc.*"

EASTON
Right shoulder -- Arms!

Rifles return to shoulders. Jacob remains wary; he *feels*
Easton's trap is coming. An eerie pause...

EASTON (CONT'D)
Left face!

The platoon twitches, but REMAINS STILL. That is, all except TOMMY - who does a complete left turn, finally with terrific precision.

And Easton's devious 'forbidden' command gets the expected result:

The barrel of Tommy's rifle THUDS against Jacob's head. Jacob staggers but doesn't fall.

Easton charges at Tommy, stopping two inches away..

EASTON (CONT'D)

So I am supposed to believe a pre-pube, freshman dweeb like you is smart enough to be in Junior year English -- and understand *Kurt Who-gives-a-crap*, but is too big a moron to follow a simple drill.

TOMMY

(quivering)
I'm trying...

Tommy is shaking all over. Jacob rubs his aching head.

EASTON

Squad, Cadet Goo here may start crying any moment. Should we all huddle up for hugs?
(close in to Tommy)
You're welcome.

Easton gets a genuinely sour look on his face.

EASTON (CONT'D)

Did - did you just shit yourself?

TOMMY

No, Sir. Nervous gas, that's all.
Sir.

EASTON

That's not possible. Oh!

Other cadets start to pick up the scent. Laughs among them.

JACOB

Dammit... Leave him alone.

EASTON
(not hearing Jacob)
I realize I've been getting your
name wrong. It's Cadet Poo.

Puzzled, Tommy whimpers.

JACOB
Hey East! Take it easy. He just
transferred in.

Easton turns a fierce glare towards his brother.

EASTON
What - did you say to me, Private?

JACOB
Who you trying to impress?

EASTON
Check yourself, Cadet Tannor.

TOMMY
I'm trying my best.

Easton pinches his nose and gets inches from Tommy's face.

EASTON
Not good enough.

JACOB
Ohh, I see. Well Dad's not here to
stop you. Go for it - kiss him.

With a ROAR, Easton leaps and grabs Jacob by the back of the collar and throws him to the ground. He attempts a kick as Jacob goes down, but he slides on a patch of mud and loses his balance. It's enough for Jacob to bend his knee from the ground and score a kick to Easton's shin.

The boys are YELLING.

NEAR THE CLASSROOMS - Daniel hears the uproar. He changes direction and begins to run toward...

AT THE ATHLETIC FIELD - Chaos as boys from both squads descend on the fight location. Kish is among them.

ON BRUCE GOVICH - approaching while reaching into a back pocket, he deftly slides out his cellphone. His palm partly conceals it; no one pays him any attention.

NEAR THE CLASSROOMS - As Daniel passes the corner of a building, someone SLAMS into him and both are knocked off their feet. Daniel's folder of papers goes flying.

As he recovers, he sees Greer (who blundered into him with the same purpose) several feet away - splayed in a similar way. They both shake it off, stagger to their feet and continue running toward the field.

AT THE ATHLETIC FIELD - The fight is truly vicious. The boys grapple in the mud. The onlookers jostle for a better view.

Easton makes good use of his larger size but Jacob's fury scores punches - not forceful but plentiful.

Easton lands a kick to Jacob's solar plexus; it sends him rolling away. Easton tries to stagger to his feet, but just makes it to his knees.

As Jacob gasps for breath on the ground, there is his fallen rifle right before him. He grabs it by the barrel, gets to his feet and whirls on Easton.

He charges with a SCREAM.

Greer and Daniel are now close enough to see, but not to stop Jacob; he's got the butt raised and ready to smash his brother's skull.

JACOB (CONT'D)

I hate you!!

Easton doesn't see it coming until Jacob is almost on top of him. A second before the butt lands-

A HAND REACHES IN - and deftly yanks the rifle around, tossing Jacob like a rag doll with it. It is Robin.

She's diverted the attack, but Jacob still won't let go; an ANIMAL SOUND of fury rises from deep inside him. She pulls the rifle (and him) close in to her.

SGT. ROBIN

Stand down, Cadet.

Jacob looks into her eyes; enough sanity returns for him to release his grip. Though his eyes still smoulder with rage.

Kish stands a short distance away, scrutinizing every detail of this, his wheels turning.

Greer and Daniel burst on the scene - and push their way through the teens fidgeting about.

SGT. ROBIN (CONT'D)
Sergeant, get these cadets in
order.

GREER
Yes, Gunnery Sergeant!

Greer helps Easton to his feet. Daniel takes Jacob from Robin's hold and leads him through the line of cadets who part to give them a path.

GREER (CONT'D)
Company, eyes front!

Tommy looks about to cry; he bites his lip so hard, it bleeds.

As Greer steers Easton in the opposite direction, the boy turns back:

EASTON
Next time, it'll just be the two of
us!

Daniel sees Jacob's face tighten again.

DANIEL
Keep walking.

From the widening distance, Easton's not done:

EASTON
You got lucky today, **faggot!**

Jacob breaks from Daniel's light hand on his shoulder, turns and charges like a bull straight for Easton.

Even Greer and Robin aren't prepared for this. Every cadet jumps out of Jacob's way. Except for one - Kish moves directly into Jacob's path.

The smaller boy tries sidestepping; Kish reaches out and locks his arms around him. They both go down but Jacob remains locked in Kish's bear hug. They roll together.

As the adults come running up, Jacob runs out of steam. Daniel and Robin arrive - Kish releases him and stands.

KISH
All good now. Go easy.

A DISTANCE AWAY, Easton smirks for everyone's benefit - but anyone looking closely would see how badly he's quaking.

EXT. SMALL COTTAGE BEHIND RESIDENTIAL HOME - AFTERNOON

Twilight approaches. Brother Zach and Suzanne walk down a secluded path with flowers and fresh grass on both sides. They approach the door of a charming, rustic small home.

BROTHER ZACH

When you said "modest" I wasn't picturing anything like this.

SUZANNE

(smiling warmly)

I chose to reject society's custom that all post-separation dwellings must announce -- "pathetic."

She fishes for her keys.

BROTHER ZACH

You did that. Boy, am I reminded now - the *Jesuit Vow of Poverty* has a distinct downside.

Suzanne opens the front door, revealing an immensely inviting & cozy storybook interior.

BROTHER ZACH (CONT'D)

Wow!

Suzanne takes a step inside. Turns to Brother Zach...

SUZANNE

You might say the same for the *Jesuit Vow of Celibacy*.

The smoky look in her eyes paralyzes him.

His phone's PEALING CHURCH BELLS signals a text. He swallows hard, MUMBLES incoherently to Suzanne - then checks it.

THE MESSAGE:

"ZERO-TOLERANCE SITUATION / campus-wide exposure"

EXT. ACADEMY CAMPUS- EVENING

An eerie quiet pervades the atmosphere. A few lone cadets scurry between buildings.

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - EVENING

The main doors open and Sharon steps out. She pauses in the threshold, rummaging in her purse. She pulls out a ring of keys, positions several between her knuckles so their sharp ends protrude.

Comfortably prepared, she strolls off.

EXT. NEAR THE CLASSROOMS - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE TO THE STAFF PARKING LOT - Sharon passes through the site of the afternoon's collision between Daniel and Greer.

Like the entire campus, this area is carefully maintained and free of litter. In the dim light, she spots an unidentified pile on the ground.

Closer now, Sharon sees it's a files-holder, open, filled with documents and surrounded by a few which have fallen out.

We recognize the COLLECTION OF PAPERS which flew from Daniel's hands upon his head-on with Greer. Frowning, she stoops to gather and retrieve them all.

EXT. MINI-GOLF COURSE - EVENING

An ORANGE GOLF BALL crosses thirty inches of green artificial turf and drops into the hole. VOICES of two teenage girls react.

CLOSE ON MONICA CHEN - she manages a smile, mostly for the benefit of her two friends, JASMINE and CHERYL.

The park is having a busy night. LAUGHTER and LOUD VOICES randomly drift our way.

ON THE GROUP--

JASMINE

Woo! You're just running circles
round us, Girl.

CHERYL

(to Jasmine)
Do you believe me now?

JASMINE

Beginning to.

Monica retrieves her ball from the hole.

CHERYL

Oh yeah, oh yeah. She's been hustling us all night.

(to Monica)

Girl, you're so full of shit -
"it's only the second time in my whole life..."

MONICA

It is!

CHERYL

Liar.

MONICA

Really.

JASMINE

Uh huh - and I never borrow my mom's edibles.

MONICA

Whatever, don't believe me. I don't care.

Hearing no quick comeback, Monica actually *looks* at them - and *realizes* what the frustration on their faces is about. She consciously switches gears.

MONICA (CONT'D)

As long as the loser doesn't bail on paying for the fro-yo when I beat both your asses.

JASMINE

Oh, this bitch got a mouth on her! What else she hiding?

All three laugh and move on toward HOLE 8. And we notice the park has several SECURITY CAMERAS.

EXT. STAFF PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

Sharon sits in her car. By the dim light of the cabin lamp, she peruses the papers she just collected.

Agitated, she quickly scans one, then another, changing papers quicker each time. Her anger and disgust grow; we hear MUTTERING of contempt and disapproval.

She stuffs them all back in the folder and

REVIEWS ITS LABEL: *Daniel Cesta, English Lit/Composition.*

SHARON
I got you, babe.

INT. DINER - MOMENTS LATER

CLOSE ON - A LOW OVERHEAD SHOT of Monica, Jasmine and Cheryl arriving at the next hole. They appear to be conversing as to who goes first - but we hear NO SOUND other than the low BACKGROUND NOISE of a diner.

PULL BACK TO REVEAL - this view is on a LAPTOP SCREEN.

KISH (dressed in *CIVIES*) SITS IN A BOOTH by a street-facing window, peering at his screen intently. Half-eaten pancakes and a cup of coffee flank the laptop.

A few times, he turns to look out the window - at the MINI-GOLF COURSE directly across the street.

A 'veteran' WAITRESS comes by and pauses.

WAITRESS
How is everything?
(no answer)
Anything wrong with the short-stack?

KISH
(pulled from the screen)
What's wrong?

WAITRESS
You barely made a dent.

KISH
No, they're fine. I'm just taking it slow - if that's all right.

WAITRESS
(looks around, shrugs)
No *prob, hon.* I see you brought schoolwork. Good idea.

Kish suddenly worries if she's seen the screen, his hand moves to close or hide it - he recovers and plays it casual.

KISH
Yeah, I have a research project. Important.

WAITRESS
Oh?

She expects him to continue but - nothing. Now it just gets awkward. Kish looks for something to say.

KISH
May I have more coffee, please?

WAITRESS
Sure thing - but you think it's a good idea? It'll keep you awake.

KISH
Thanks, but it won't...
(reading her name tag)
Victoria. I - never sleep.

Kish returns his attention to the screen. The waitress is perplexed - and a little unnerved.

A low RUMBLE outside slowly increases in volume.

WAITRESS
A fresh pot's almost ready. Bring you that refill in just a few. Anything else I can get you?

The RUMBLE grows in volume.

KISH
Coffee's enough.

The RUMBLE is now VERY LOUD; definitely a vehicle.

WAITRESS
What?

KISH
Just the coffee.

Victoria leaves. At that moment, Kish sees the noise source directly outside the window.

An immaculately tended BLACK w/FLAME RACING STRIPES 2007 SHELBY COBRA idles with THROATY THUNDER in the left-turn lane, waiting for the signal to change. Thumping BASS and SCREAMO MUSIC blares from a thousand-watt sound system.

The diner's windows RATTLE. A moment later, Kish watches it make its turn into the Mini-Golf street entrance.

EXT. MINI-GOLF PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Pulling into a spot, the Cobra's MUSIC & ROAR go silent. It still intimidates every other vehicle parked nearby.

Two townie males get out. REGGIE(20) and SARANO(19), sporting the faux-careless, tough look of *rebels-without-a-brain-cell*.

Reggie, the taller of the two, pauses to light a cigarette.

SARANO

They don't let you smoke in there.

REGGIE

Who are you - *Mister Fucking Rogers*? I let you talk me into doing this pussy putt-thing. So shut the fuck up.

INT. DINER - CONTINUOUS

Kish at his laptop screen - this time, however, he's viewing the same PARKING LOT scene WE JUST LEFT. Though he can't hear Reggie and Sarano's words, their aggressive body language comes through.

EXT. MINI-GOLF COURSE - CONTINUOUS

Monica lines up a putt. Cheryl grabs Jasmine and yanks her out of Monica's earshot. Whispering urgently:

CHERYL

Will you please cancel that shit?

JASMINE

What are you talking about?

CHERYL

It's her first night out since the funeral.

JASMINE

Thanks for the news flash, I'm well aware. What crawled up your crack?

CHERYL

The way you talk to her. She's suffering and sad - she's not on the goddamn spectrum!

JASMINE

For real. You're the one who sounds like you're baby-sitting a first-grader with low self-esteem.

CHERYL

As if!

JASMINE

Cher, every time Mon makes a good shot, you don't have to act like it made you wet.

CHERYL

Blow me twice on Sunday.

Unseen, Monica walks up behind them. She grabs both their shoulders, startling them.

MONICA

(smiling)

I'm so glad we came here! This is really fun.

INT. MINI-GOLF COURSE FRONT OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Photos of famous golfers and celebrities cover the walls, fake trophies are on display. The vibe is supposed to make the experience feel way cooler and more exciting than it is.

The FAMILY at the counter has five people to serve. The THREE YOUNG KIDS are excited and noisy.

With their view of the worker behind the counter blocked, Reggie and Sarano wait their turn, fidgeting.

REGGIE

This place is Disneyland for losers.

SARANO

Give it a chance.

REGGIE

I feel like a big ol' **douche** right here.

Neither realize or care that the young kids are hearing them. The two parents silently react to the foul language with turns and glares.

SARANO

Geez, make me say it AGAIN. We're not here for the fucking golf-balls, mijo. This is for--

Sarano grabs his balls, smiling stupidly at Reggie.

REGGIE
 (overlapping)
 "This is for **our** balls," right. I
 read you.

SARANO
 Just wait and see how much choice
 high-school pussy's here.

REGGIE
 Eighty percent of which is jail-
 bait, Sarano.

Sarano moves to the window. He looks out to see: **Monica,
 Cheryl and Jasmine at HOLE 17.**

REGGIE (CONT'D)
 That's a verified statistic.

SARANO
 (at the window)
 Hey, Reg, c'mere. That's what I'm
 talking about. Sweet!

Reggie takes a look out the window.

REGGIE
 (still sulky)
 Triple consecutive sentences.

SARANO
 (deflated)
 You can thank me later.

From their position at the window, the YOUNG WOMAN behind the
 counter is now visible.

TIANA(18) is brunette, tattooed, severely curvy and possibly
 pretty, though it's hard to be sure without removing maybe
 ten piercings and sending her twice through a car wash.

SARANO (CONT'D)
 (re Tiana)
 Check out this female specimen.
 USDA Choice, right out the gate.

REGGIE
 (looking her over)
 Eh. I'd maybe fuck her with the
 lights out.

SARANO
 (wants to disagree)
 Well... I'd keep a reading lamp on.

The family is done and files out. The father shoots them a final sneer.

TIANA
Dudes, you're next.

Both walk over to the counter. Up close, it's possible to see that Tiana wobbles a little (is she sleep-working?).

SARANO
Hey.

TIANA
Hey.

REGGIE
Hey.

SARANO
Hey. Two to play.

Her look says, "Yeah, it was tough, but I figured that out."

TIANA
That's one bitchin' ride.

REGGIE
("it's mine")
Damn right it is.

Sarano wants to grab her attention. Tiana gathers the gear.

SARANO
(re her face)
I'm loving the hardware store,
Sweetheart. They must pay you good
to work here.

Reggie stares at him - like "wtf?" Tiana SNORTS derisively.

TIANA
Minimum stinking wage.
(re the Cobra again)
You hauling any Tequila?

Sarano is deeply, soulfully in love.

EXT. MINI-GOLF COURSE - MOMENTS LATER

AT HOLE 3 - Sarano retrieves his ball from the hole. He looks back to the tee, where:

Reggie is tossing *fungoes* with his golf ball - swinging his putter like a baseball bat.

He misses every time but CURSES and keeps trying.

AT HOLE 18 - The obstacles by THE FINAL HOLE are the most elaborate. Monica, Cheryl and Jasmine work their way through it. Much frustration and slow progress.

ON A HIDDEN LEDGE above a *Taj Mahal* mock-up at HOLE 14, Kish sits cross-legged, his laptop balanced on his knees.

He digs into his backpack.

AT HOLE 4: Sarano lies flat on the green, lining up a pool-shot; the tip of his club handle has become a cue-stick. He sinks it and gets to his feet.

SARANO

That's a three for me. You're up.

Reggie is nowhere to be seen.

SARANO (CONT'D)

Reggie, you're... Reggie..?

ON A HIDDEN LEDGE - studying his screen, Kish's face goes from a frown to rage.

AT HOLE 18: Monica lines up a putt. Reggie is glued behind her, crotch-to-butt, "helping correct" her form.

His arms drape round her, hands on hands, demonstrating the *proper* putter grip (which he's making up on the spot).

ON A HIDDEN LEDGE - Kish's face is like stone; he operates a double joystick controller.

AT HOLE 18 - Monica extricates herself from Reggie, lines up her putt and hits. The ball circles the hole, breathing is halted... It drops in!

The girls react and CELEBRATE, mixing with CHEESY MUSIC playing from a nearby speaker. Reggie grabs Monica in a way-too-friendly bear hug.

She looks overwhelmed, flushed, happy, confused, turned-on, and very uneasy...

From BEHIND THE OFFICE ROOF, something WHIRS through the air.

AT HOLE 18, it quickly grows LOUDER.

A small but rugged DRONE hovers ten feet over Monica's head.

She looks up and takes a wary step back. The drone moves that distance forward. Then the *dance step* repeats.

She steps back a third time - but the drone doesn't copy her, it descends. We see it has a grasping CLAW-TYPE APPENDAGE: in its grip is a gift-wrapped, book-shaped package.

At less than two feet above the tee, the claw opens and the package gently lands. The drone ascends and hovers around eight feet.

ON A HIDDEN LEDGE - Kish stares AT THE SCREEN, though -

NOW THE VISUAL FEED comes from the drone's camera itself.

DRONE POV ON THE SCREEN: From above we see Monica hesitantly pick up the package; she begins unwrapping it.

AT HOLE 18 - As Cheryl, Jasmine and Reggie look on, Monica completes the unwrapping to find a box. She flips open an end and slides the contents out. Her face turns pale.

JASMINE

Monica, what IS it?

With shaking hands, she removes a tiny card from an envelope

She reads it; and convulses like she's taken a gut punch. In the background, Sarano approaches this bizarre scene.

CHERYL

Talk to us...

Monica suddenly breaks down - and HOWLS like a wounded, trapped animal.

Her friends move to come to her aid, but Reggie (*having staked HIS claim to the damsel*) changes the picture by grabbing a putter and swatting at the drone. The two girls dive for cover, now more afraid of him than of the drone.

The drone dodges, bobs and weaves. As Sarano arrives - with **no** understanding of the situation - he (like any good minion) also gets to hacking wildly at it.

ON A HIDDEN LEDGE - Kish does his best to avoid the clubs by keeping the drone just out of their reach, yet close enough to keep MONICA'S FACE in view as **often as possible**. So he keeps the craft close, rather than make what would be an easy escape.

AT HOLE 18 - The frenzy goes on, but soon Reggie realizes he has a possibly better weapon. He pulls the golf ball from his pocket and waits for his moment.

Monica silently stands, lets it drop - and turns to walk away. Another second; she'll fade into the gathering crowd.

The drone turns - focuses all its attention on her. Reggie makes his move.

He fires the golf ball - it hits and the force sends the drone careening several yards away. One of its four propellers stops. It falls slowly but steadily to the ground.

It lands a distance away from its attackers.

ON A BENCH AT A CALMER PART OF THE PARK - Cheryl and Jasmine sit flanking Monica, who fights to get her silent tears under control.

JASMINE

Monica, what was in there?

MONICA

(beat)

Can we just go home now?

She stands, starts to walk. Jasmine and Cheryl get up and follow. Cheryl pulls Jasmine back, directing her attention to her bag. We see the mysterious BOX inside.

AT THE LANDING SPOT - The drone, with engines struggling, lies on a mock-up of THE GREAT WALL OF CHINA at Hole 10.

Reggie and Sarano arrive, along with others who watched the gladiatorial event and are spoiling to get in on it.

Tiana is among the new arrivals - to Sarano's delight.

Reggie climbs across obstacles and balances himself shakily.

It'll be an easy but oh-so satisfying kill. As he swings the putter in a vicious downward arc...

The drone springs to life, rises two feet above, three feet away and faces him down.

REGGIE

You mother-fucking junebug--

A jet-stream of liquid dish soap sprays from the drone into Reggie's face. He SCREAMS, coughs, sputters - and falls from his perch.

The drone lowers and circles Reggie - taunting him. Wiping his eyes, he spins dizzily trying to follow it with the putter.

SARANO
 Hey, Reg - we should go look for
 who's flying this thing.

TIANA
 (to Sarano)
That's a good idea.

SARANO
 He's gotta be close by.

REGGIE
 First things--

Reggie is slimed, furious and dizzy. But he swings AGAIN.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
 --first!

TIANA
 (reasonably, to Sarano)
 That donkey-licker owes me twenty-
 three-fifty. Plus tax.

The drone steadies itself - within reach of Reggie's rod. He
 carefully aims--

REGGIE
 You are fucking dead!

--and takes a hack at it.

The angled bottom end of the putter catches on the open CLAW
 GRIPPER. With slippery dish soap all over the putter's grip
 and Reggie's hands, the drone easily yanks it away.

Reggie's balance is wrecked; he falls forward on his face -
 as the drone closes its claw and ascends.

SARANO
 (sincerely, to Tiana)
 I love how you talk.

To assorted CURSES and CHEERS from everyone, THE DRONE
 STREAKS AWAY, the putter dangling like a metal tail - toward
 the park entrance.

ON A HIDDEN LEDGE - THE LAPTOP SCREEN/DRONE'S POV --

We fly from the COURSE over into PARKING LOT airspace. We see
 THE THREE GIRLS crossing the lot, heading for the street.

ON KISH, observing them.

MINI-GOLF PARKING LOT

The girls move past a row of vehicles - among them is Reggie's gleaming COBRA.

The drone WHIRS FAINTLY from HIGH ABOVE them, but TRAFFIC NOISE conceals the sound from the girls. They keep moving.

THE DRONE ASCENDS another fifteen feet - and stops to hover. It angles a bit, then opens its claw - THE PUTTER FALLS like a precision bomb.

There's a loud CRASH, followed by the sound of SHATTERING GLASS. The girls jump, startled. Turning to it, they see:

The COBRA'S FRONT WINDSHIELD is gone, glass shards are everywhere.

THE DRONE CALMLY DESCENDS just enough to *wiggle* "hi" to them.

Monica, Cheryl and Jasmine, in shock, stare from the destruction to the drone and back.

ON THE DRONE - a loudspeaker activates:

KISH'S VOICE

This was really fun, Mon. We'll do it again soon.

The drone slowly flies off.

Monica sinks to her knees. She can't even cry anymore.

CHERYL

Come on, let's go!

MONICA

Go where? It doesn't matter.

EXT. DETENTION DORMITORY - MOMENTS LATER

At an isolated part of the campus, Cameron with Larry and Ryan on either side approach a small one-story building. Each boy carries a plastic-wrapped dinner tray.

INT. DETENTION DORMITORY - CONTINUOUS

Facing the front door is a small alcove off the head of a corridor. It barely holds a writing desk and one chair.

Philip sits there, rocking back and forth in his chair. His book bag hangs from its backrest.

The desk holds a lamp, land-line phone, his homework, an electric pencil sharpener and three boxes of brand new #2 pencils. One is opened.

Stuck into the dropped ceiling above his head is an impressive grouping of about a dozen. He takes a fresh one from the box and with gleeful focus, jams it in, letting the sharpener GRIND away.

When its done, he blows on the needle-like tip, inspects it and leans way back, taking aim.

PHILIP
This - is - SPARTA!

As Philip wings it hard at the ceiling. It joins the rest stuck there. He *end-zone dances* in the chair.

Suddenly, he hears FOOTSTEPS outside.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
Fuck a duck...

Off-balance, he and the book bag sway. He fights to grab it and nearly topples over.

The front door opens. Cameron, Larry and Ryan enter.

Philip jumps to attention.

PHILIP (CONT'D)
Mister Cameron, Sir!

CAMERON
As you were.

From their position at the head of

THE CORRIDOR, we see the layout of the building.

Though of shorter length and lacking wall-mounted phones, it's identical to the cadet dorms: five rooms on each side, a single bathroom at the opposite end.

CAMERON (CONT'D)
(calling out)
Cadet Easton Tannor, Cadet Jacob
Tannor - FRONT AND CENTER.

Two doors open. Easton appears outside Room #1, Jacob outside Room #7. Both stand at attention. Cameron walks past Easton to room #4, opens the door and beckons.

INT. DETENTION DORMITORY - MOMENTS LATER

Number 7, like all the others, is a bare & single dorm room. On the night-stand are TWO BOOKS: *The Uniform Code of Military Justice* & *The Holy Bible*.

Jacob and Easton each sit on an end of the bunk. The imposing figure of Michael Cameron stares down at them.

Neither boy meets his eyes.

CAMERON

Physical violence on this campus is a zero-tolerance offense.

(beat)

You know what comes next.

EASTON

(hopefully)

Dinner?

CAMERON

Don't be insolent!

EASTON

(meekly)

But I saw the trays outsi...

CAMERON

I'm here - to advise you to pray to the Lord. That he--

JACOB

Pray! For what? For God to let me stay?

CAMERON

No, young man, that's not--

EASTON

Sir...!

(claiming the silence)

If I pray harder than Jacob, is God gonna like me better?

CAMERON

Stop this at once--

EASTON

Maybe he'll even get me into West Point. And my dad off my back.

JACOB

And not drinking any more!

EASTON
(to Jacob)
That's right. Uh huh.

JACOB
(to Easton)
We better pray loud.

EASTON
I can pray really loud--

CAMERON
Shut up, shut up both of you!
(deliberately, calmly)
You must pray to - pray for the
Lord to grant wisdom to Brother
Zachary. Wisdom to make a just
decision about you two.

A moment for it to sink in. Jacob reflects deeply.

JACOB
That's a lot of pressure.

Easton raises his head to meet Cameron's eyes. Sincerely --

EASTON
Respectfully, Mr. Cameron - if
that's the best you got for us, you
could have saved yourself the trip.

EXT. PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL FIELD PARKING LOT - AFTERNOON

Students and adults flow from the bleachers onto the parking lot and nearby street. Among them, Monica, Cheryl and Jasmine appear, more subdued than most others.

ACROSS THE STREET is a PARK.

Concealed in the shade of some trees, Kish watches them.

ANGLE ON - the girls move to a waiting car. They get in - the driver can't yet pull out into crowded *school's-out* traffic.

EXT. PARK - CONTINUOUS

KISH'S VANTAGE POINT - He leaves the park & crosses a street.

EXT. CITY STREET - CONTINUOUS

From the opposite side of the road, Kish keeps the car in sight, as it finally merges with bumper-to-bumper traffic.

He's unsure what to do. He tries keeping pace with the car.

Reaching the front of a VIDEO ARCADE, his attention is caught by a shining, PINK FLORESCENT BICYCLE, carelessly leaning against the bike-parking rack. It's unlocked.

He turns to watch THE CAR as it begins to move faster.

EXT. CONSTRUCTION SITE - MOMENTS LATER

Dusk approaches. Monica takes a short-cut across the empty site near her home.

Around a retaining wall, she will be in view of her street. But she freezes at the sight of...

Kish sitting there. The shiny, pink bicycle is on the ground.

She doesn't move, just watches him as he fixes a penetrating stare. Then he looks down.

KISH

I forgive you - for ghosting me.

MONICA

You can't be here!

Kish's face darkens. Monica tries *walking it back*.

MONICA (CONT'D)

(her mind racing)

I mean are you AWOL?

He relaxes a bit and laughs hollowly.

KISH

No. They gave me time off...

His mind groping for something, he looks at the bicycle.

KISH (CONT'D)

To train.

MONICA

Train for what?

KISH

I'm doing the *Toure de Joshua Tree*
at this year's um... Nine-Eleven
festival.

Monica is so appalled, *for-the-instant* it overrides her fear.

MONICA

That is so not funny.

A millisecond of reflection on Kish's face.

KISH

Yeah, I get it. Yeah...

(beat)

But I really am making changes. I'm
a new man and - I got this sweet
new ride for the... ha ha, sweet
new me.

(all the earnest dignity
he can gather)

How about giving that new man a
chance?

He looks ready to move in for the romantic *two-shot*. Monica
crosses, a bit closer to the bike, in a way which still
avoids him. She looks it over.

MONICA

It's a girl's bike, Paul. A small
one.

KISH

Well, sure. I can't risk, ya know,
slamming my --

(off his crotch)

'future' here, if I collide with a
road-runner or something, you know?

MONICA

You stole it.

KISH

No. No, I didn't.

MONICA

From a little girl. You stole a
little girl's brand new bicycle.

KISH

(jumping up)

It's a loaner! Okay? First thing
after I leave, I'm returning it.
That should be **acceptable** to you.

MONICA
 (fearful again)
 Sure, yes. I know-

KISH
 (looking up)
 Lord Jesus, They say all the time
 you're **supposed to help me!**

Thrown by that particular weirdness, she--

MONICA
 I believe you, okay? I do!

KISH
 (beat)
 This doesn't make sense. It's not
 like I got your brother killed.

MONICA
 Oh my God...

KISH
 So why am I being punished?

MONICA
 You have it all SO mixed up.

KISH
 (deflecting)
 Whose fault is that?

MONICA
 Things just felt wrong before -
months before Jeremy got...
 (choking up)
 Before he died, and-

KISH
 (stating a fact)
 Nothing was wrong with us.

MONICA
 I tried telling you. Over and over.

Kish's reptilian brain feels his dominance slipping. Now it's
 he who backs away from her. He paces the yard, speaks with
 exaggerated 'reasoning.'

KISH
 You said - it was your father.
 After your brother got killed, you
 said he...

(MORE)

KISH (CONT'D)
 "can't be reminded of anything
 military" - like that's any kind of
 logical. So he ordered you to shred
 me.

MONICA
 That's not how--

KISH
 I'm not in the retarded army and
 you know I never will be!

MONICA
 That's not what I said.
 (faint)
 I don't think...
 (breaking down)
 I don't remember!

It's getting dark. Monica looks toward the path and its exit
 out to the street.

KISH
 I didn't ask to be sent to this
 place. You know that Brozac yanked
 me out of juvie, same as he did to
 your brother. Just another two lab
 rats to social engineer for his God-
 complex.
 (w/fleeting suspicion)
 Maybe that's what you liked most
 about both of us.

Monica starts to speak - then catches herself.

KISH (CONT'D)
 (shrugs off the thought)
 But now you're all punishing me for
 what the place stands for? It makes
 no sense!
 (pounds his fists above
 his ears)
 THINGS HAVE TO MAKE SENSE TO ME!

Kish goes quiet. He actually retreats, trying to calm her.

KISH (CONT'D)
 Did you like your present?

Monica is so utterly dumbstruck, *fight-or-flight* is put
 aside. She has to sit.

MONICA
 (nearly numb)
 A framed picture. Of you and Jeremy
 - together.

KISH
 (proudly)
 Like the card said, "you'll never
 lose either of us."

She fights off the shudder.

MONICA
 And there he's still a cadet, same
 age as you.

KISH
 (SO proud)
 I put a LOT of time into Photo-
 shopping that.

MONICA
 A lot of time...

With tears welling in her eyes, Monica looks at Kish almost
 with more sadness than fear. The sky is now fully dark.

MONICA (CONT'D)
 (quietly)
 Thank you for that. I do have to go
 now.

KISH
 WHAT?

Kish rapidly closes the distance and stands right in front of
 her. His voice is low but intense.

KISH (CONT'D)
 Monica, Don't you get it? You - are
 the only reason I haven't already
 blown my brains out. And your
 father...

Kish moves to the bicycle, stands it up and admires it, as if
 seeing it for the first time. Remembering his 'skills.'

KISH (CONT'D)
 He's going to see me differently.
 So will you.

Monica turns and walks steadily down the path. He calls to
 her retreating figure.

KISH (CONT'D)
Don't worry, Mon. It'll all work
out how it's meant to.
(she's further away)
That is a promise!

She starts to run, breaks from BETWEEN THE TREES in the distance and onto A STREET.

INT. BROTHER ZACHARY'S LIVING QUARTERS - NIGHT

Something like a studio apartment; sparse but functional.

Brother Zach stands before a mirror, removing his formal religious garb. The coat, *buck-toothed* collar, button-down shirt and slacks are all carefully placed & stored.

HIS IMAGE IN THE MIRROR - Divested of his power-signaling uniform, Brother Zach looks no different from any other baggage-carrying member of the world-weary male tribe.

He and his reflection size each other up.

His phone PEALS for an incoming text. He picks it up, peers at it.

ON THE SCREEN - A thumbnail of Suzanne, smiling beautifully.

ON THE BACK WALL, seen through the mirror - a prominent crucifix is displayed. Brother Zach glances at it, then back down at the phone.

THE PHONE: He taps twice and Suzanne's face completely fills the screen.

Brother Zach gently lays the phone on the bed. He walks to the far wall - then makes a sharp left into the bathroom.

We hear quick RUNNING WATER sounds - then he exits. In one hand is a box of facial tissues. The other holds an extra-large dispenser of skin-moisturizer. He steers clear of the crucifix as he heads for the bed.

CLOSE ON THE CRUCIFIX - Brother Zach's hands come into frame as he tosses a shirt over it.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - NIGHT

Outside the small guardhouse by the barricaded entrance, CADET HECTOR BARRERA(14) stands, doing his best to look officious and alert.

Inside, Tommy Fiacetti sits, doing problems from an open geometry workbook.

Irritated, his eraser attacks the page and he GROANS dramatically. Hector remains at attention as:

HECTOR

I told you three times. Cosine is not the reciprocal of the sine.

TOMMY

Then what is?
(pounding his forehead)
Why can't I concentrate?

IN THE DISTANCE - A dark-colored muscle car turns off the main road. The vehicle's deep, throaty engine GROWLS and HUMS as it approaches; reminding us - WE'VE HEARD THIS BEFORE.

HECTOR

You just gotta remember that once you establish...

Familiar SCREAMO MUSIC can be faintly heard blasting from the car in the distance, growing LOUDER as it approaches.

TOMMY

What? What do I have to remem...

Now Tommy hears it.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

...ber?

He stands and looks toward the sound.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

From the other direction, Kish pedals the florescent-pink bicycle. He can make out the guard post entrance in the distance. The unique ENGINE SOUND has his attention too.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

THIRTY FEET FROM THE GUARD POST -- the approaching car pulls crookedly onto the road shoulder.

Louder MUSIC blasts out as both front doors are flung open. The engine remains on and audibly RUMBLES even while idling. The MUSIC volume is abruptly lowered.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Kish stops pedaling, puts his feet on the ground and assesses the scene at the gate. Seeing & hearing THAT car reveals all he needs to know about the situation.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Reggie and Sarano get out and stalk towards the gate.

AT THE GUARD POST - The cadets nervously watch them approach.

ON REGGIE AND SARANO, closer...

SARANO
(realizing)
Geez! Those are just kids.

REGGIE
You better not puss out on me.

SARANO
Just don't lose your head, Reg.
Okay?

REGGIE
Stick it! Lately, your ideas belong
in the dog-shit file.
(beat)
And don't use my name.

Sarano steps ahead, deliberately making first contact; maybe he can keep it cool-ish.

SARANO
Good evening, Generals.

TOMMY
Same to you, Sirs.

SARANO
Nice night.

HECTOR
Indeed so, Sir.

SARANO
How're they hangin'?

TOMMY
Sorry, I don't understand the
question.

HECTOR
 (to Tommy)
 I'm sure he means these.

Hector flicks two small medals dangling from Jacob's lapel.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 Sir, are you asking what holds them
 in place right here - or how this
 cadet earned them?

More than enough diplomacy for Reggie. He pushes Sarano aside and gets up in Hector's face.

REGGIE
 I want information.

HECTOR
 Certainly, Academy catalogs, class
 schedules. All found at our
 website. But if you prefer--

Hector reaches through, into the guardhouse window and pulls out a CLASS COURSE CATALOG. He holds it out to Sarano.

HECTOR (CONT'D)
 -a hardcopy...

Reggie grabs Hector by the lapels. The bulletin flies from his hand.

REGGIE
 Not that crap! Your secret drone
 program. Now talk!

Hector can turn his head just enough to share a scared and mystified expression with Tommy.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

KISH'S POV - Hector being harassed by Reggie. Sarano barges into the shack. Lots of YELLING, which is mostly drowned out by the Cobra's ENGINE.

Speaking of the Cobra, a female gets out. She staggers.

ON KISH - he expels a quick breath and gets moving again.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

SARANO
 Who has access to them?

HECTOR
To what?

REGGIE
One of you dumb-shit robots here -
bombed my lovely, sweet Cobra.

HECTOR
(utterly lost, stammers)
Uh- your snake needs a vet?

TOMMY
Sir, we don't know anything about
bombs.

With DEDICATION TO THE TRUTH:

HECTOR
(to Tommy)
Well, we did learn a little. In
Physics class.

TOMMY
(to Reggie)
Maybe just a tad.

REGGIE
I want the name of every punk up
there who knows how to fly a drone!

TOMMY
(thinking fast)
Sir, we're in the literature and
poetry track.

Reggie and Sarano exchange baffled looks.

TIANA (O.S.)
Ohmigod! He's adorable!

Unnoticed until now, Tiana, drunk, joins the party.

REGGIE
Aw, for fuck's sake!

TIANA
(to Tommy)
I wanna take you home with me.

SARANO
I said to wait in the car.

TIANA
Sarano, can I take him home?

REGGIE
Get lost, we got business!

TIANA
Don't talk to me like I'm your
bitch! Bitch...

REGGIE
(to Sarano)
Will you move her wasted ass outta
here before she gets us charged
with statutory?

Tiana bats off Sarano's attempt to lead her away.

TIANA
Stop! OKAY, okay.
(to Reggie)
Yes, you're hotter than him, and
that's kinda why I hung around...

REGGIE
Now!

TIANA
But it turns out he's way nicer.
You're a knob, Reggie!

She wanders away - and puts her hands together, creating a
dynamic *triple-Bird flip off* behind Reggie's back.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - MOMENTS LATER

Tiana arrives at the road, not far from Kish's previous
position. She gazes around at the beauty, just as her guts
announce *they'll* be calling the shots.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

The MUSIC is still distantly heard from their car. It mixes
with the explosions of Tiana's VOMITING across the road.

Sarano, his head in his hands, sits on Hector - who is face-
down in the driveway. Both seem to have accepted their fate.

With one fist cocked, Reggie has Tommy pinned against a wall.

REGGIE
(fighting tears)
You got ANY idea what it's like to
find the love of your life,
shattered into a million pieces?

TOMMY
Sir, let me go. Please.

REGGIE
Do you?

TOMMY
In a threat situation, I'm quite likely to--

REGGIE
Likely to what?

TOMMY
Consider this 'fair warning'--

REGGIE

Or what? You'll go all Jason Statham on me?

TOMMY
(all he's got)
I have been known to shit myself.
So back - the fuck - away. Sir!

Reggie freezes; he laughs a little uneasily and looks around for Sarano.

REGGIE
Do you believe this little snot factory? Is he for--

Reggie spots him, still sitting atop a motionless Hector. However, Sarano now busily reads through the **Catalog of Classes**, a delighted, goofy smile on his face.

REGGIE (CONT'D)
Hey!

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Tiana is nearly done *purging*. Pulling herself together, she becomes aware of the MUSIC getting LOUDER.

She looks toward the sound and sees the Cobra back on the road, almost crawling in its approach to pass by her. The headlights are off.

She shakes her foggy head, trying to grasp the idea that the driver's door is hanging open and the inside cabin light shows no visible driver.

TIANA

Those ass-wads - are leaving me?

She looks toward the gate to see both guys still having their twisted fun with Hector and Tommy.

As the car rolls by her, she peers through the open door.

Kish is inside, ducked low and navigating through the narrow visible area between the door and chassis.

Their eyes meet. Kish smiles brightly and waves at her.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Both townies turn toward the MUSIC VOLUME CHANGE and see the moving car.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Tiana watches the car roll on. Kish hears the guys YELLING; he turns on the headlights and floors it. The purring engine now ROARS, burns rubber and lurches forward.

Reggie and Sarano run to the road, SCREAMING obscenities.

INSIDE THE CAR -- Kish's right hand is on the wheel and his left still holds the door slightly open. Through the rearview mirror, he watches them fade into darkness.

AT THE ROAD -- the three watch the tail lights recede into the night. Suddenly a "dark blur" rolls from the driver's side, onto the road and into the opposite brush.

Driverless now, the car swerves and crazily careens off the road and right shoulder, scraping the edge of the woods.

It sideswipes a tree and is brought to a full stop by a CAUTION: SCHOOL ZONE - CHILDREN CROSSING sign which crumples the front end and part of the hood.

EXT. ACADEMY MAIN GATE - CONTINUOUS

Tommy watches all this go down but doesn't move.

Hector is inside the shack, fumbling with the radio.

EXT. ROAD OPPOSITE SCHOOL ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS

Reggie takes off running up the road while Sarano looks back toward where the car was parked. His attention is caught by something there.

I/E. GUARD SHACK - CONTINUOUS

Hector, on the radio.

HECTOR

EMG to command. Request assistance.
Do you read?

Tommy, outside is focused on the road. Both of them witness:

Tiana tries trotting up the road.

TIANA

Reggie! I'm sorry, I love you! I--

She stops, hit by another cramp. She turns and staggers back to the shoulder - where she heaves again.

As Hector and Tommy watch her doubled over, they see Sarano struggle past her, sitting on the **fluorescent-pink bicycle**, cursing and pumping his legs as hard as he can.

INT. DANIEL'S OFFICE - DAY

The small office is a mass of books, loosely bundled and barely organized papers. Two visitor chairs opposite a desk are piled high with more. His front door is open.

Agitated and grumbling, Daniel searches through stacks of academic flotsam on and around his desk. AGAIN - he bangs a shin - hard against the edge of his rogue file cabinet.

DANIEL

OUCH! Son-of-a-bitch!
(to the cabinet)
You sadistic, devil-spawn piece of--

Greer appears in the doorway with a YELL, holding the ARISAKA rifle at the ready. Daniel turns.

DANIEL (CONT'D)

(grimacing)
What? Oh, excellent response time.

GREER
 (taking aim)
 Stand aside, Dan. Let me teach them
 drawers a lesson once and for all.

Daniel hobbles to a chair and sits.

DANIEL
 No, soldier - spare its life. I'm
 the one who doesn't seem to learn.

GREER
 Should I call in a med-evac
 chopper?

Embarrassed, Daniel plays it down.

DANIEL
 Thank you, not this time. I'm good.
 (re the rifle)
 What's the mission?

GREER
 Tomorrow's my day to break down one
 of the antiques in class.

DANIEL
 Oh, right. Quite a collection over
 in the records office.

GREER
 Yeah, they're all way impressive -
 but in my book, nothing beats the
 Arisaka. Even without a firing pin,
 it intimidates me.

DANIEL
 (ruefully)
 I had occasion to partner up with
 it - several weeks ago.

GREER
 (recalling)
 Ohhh... Right, sure.

Now as both men reflect over the weapon, it carries more
 significance. Returning...

GREER (CONT'D)
 Then we're still on, yeah? I mean,
 by tomorrow you'll have walked that
 off.

Rubbing his shin, Daniel looks puzzled. Greer holds the rifle as a guitar and pretends to strum. Daniel gets it and nods.

He gets up, moves toward the file cabinet.

INT. BROTHER ZACH'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Brother Zach sits behind his desk - across from him sit Pastor Mason and Bishop Frederick. Scowling, Hadley stands off from the three, his arms folded across his chest.

BROTHER ZACH

This barely gets us through the Spring semester.

BISHOP FREDERICK

It can't be helped. And be aware it comes with a significant amount of oversight. I'm sorry but--

HADLEY

(overlapping)
Oversight?!

BISHOP FREDERICK

We'll be keeping a close watch.

HADLEY

On what?

PASTOR MASON

Bad behavior has myriad, convoluted ways of coming to light.

HADLEY

Was your father a dictionary?

Brother Zach is too defeated even to chastise Hadley. Though he automatically mutters...

BROTHER ZACH

(nearly inaudible)
Thesaurus...

Bishop Frederick consults a day planner on an iPad.

PASTOR MASON

My father IS... the creator of the Universe, master of all life--

BISHOP FREDERICK
 (overlapping)
 We'll start with a scheduled sit-
 down every other day.

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - NIGHT

At the building's rear door, Kish has difficulty picking the first of the two locks. His backpack is on the ground.

A RUSTLING sound causes him to freeze. He peers into the darkness. Nothing there - he gets back to the lock.

KISH
 They better not have swapped these
 out.

The same sound/feeling causes him to stop and look again.

From behind some trees, Matthias trots out. Twelve feet away he stops and lies down, his head between his paws. His eyes are fixed on Kish.

KISH (CONT'D)
 No offense, but I work alone.

Matthias emits a FAINT WHINE. Kish hesitates, then turns and gets back to work.

KISH (CONT'D)
 Almost... Yes, gotcha!

The lock responds. Kish looks back again to see-

Matthias in the exact same position but now - half the distance closer.

KISH (CONT'D)
 Bug out, will you?
 (beat)
 I don't have doggie treats.

Matthias WHINES a little louder this time.

Kish warily gets to work on the second lock.

Matthias gets, up starts to pace, maintaining the distance between them.

KISH (CONT'D)
 No more interviews for today. Beat
 it.

Matthias answers with a couple of LOW PROTESTS.

KISH (CONT'D)
(alarmed)
Shh! You'll wake the flying
monkeys. Be quiet.

Matthias warily takes a step forward.

Kish now sees the dog is staring at his backpack.

KISH (CONT'D)
What do you want?
(he gets it)
Ohhh...

Kish reaches in and removes the FOLDED FABRIC we last saw during his dorm room meltdown.

KISH (CONT'D)
Is it this?

Matthias perks up at the sight.

KISH (CONT'D)
(chuckling)
You want it back.

The dog vocalizes assent.

KISH (CONT'D)
You think it's yours, how about
that? Just cause you found it who-
knows-where or when? And buried it
in one of your *secret* holes.

Matthias takes a step forward. Kish pulls it back.

KISH (CONT'D)
Trust me, it belongs to all of us.
And I'll put it to good use.

The dog BARKS in disagreement. Kish scoops up a handful of gravel and small stones.

KISH (CONT'D)
Don't you realize? Your possessions
end up owning you.

He takes an aggressive step toward Matthias - who GROWLS but backs up. Kish hurls his missiles.

KISH (CONT'D)
Go hump a cactus.

The dog turns and runs for cover.

Kish jumps back to the door lock, gets it free and opens the door. With the banner locked under his arm, he grabs his backpack and disappears inside.

FADE OUT.