

FADE IN:

INT. SCHOOL LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Open up in a dark locker room. MARK a baby-faced freshman is standing in front of a mirror. He is sweating and shaking, with a single light over him. He is wearing a baseball helmet and oven mitts on his hands. Muffled CHEERS and BANGING can be heard rumbling outside the locker room.

A hand lands on Mark's shoulder. Pull back to reveal ERIC (high school senior), he is attractive with a dark complexion but his ethnicity is unclear.

ERIC
(leaning into Mark's ear)
You better not blow this freshman.

Eric kneels down and begins duct-taping the oven mitts to Mark's hands.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I got a lot of money riding on this fight.

MARK
Why would you put money on me?

ERIC
This is bigger than you. It's now or never.

MARK
Never!

Eric smacks Mark in the ass.

ERIC
Wrong answer! Time to fight.

INT. GYMNASIUM

A crowd of high school students is gathered around to watch the fight. Mark is in the center of the crowd fighting another FRESHMAN, also clad in makeshift armor.

Eric circles the crowd collecting money and taking bets.

ERIC (V.O.)
I called it the Freshman Ultimate Fighter.

(MORE)

ERIC (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Every Wednesday night I gave the student body a little entertainment. It was harmless fun and I made a little money off the top.

The doors to the gymnasium swing open as a group of POLICE OFFICERS rush in.

ERIC (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Eventually we got caught.

INT. GUIDANCE COUNSELOR'S OFFICE - DAY

Eric is seated in front of a desk. KENNY, a middle-aged African-American guidance counselor, enters the room. He is carrying a box of what appears to be his personal belongings.

KENNY
 Hi, you must be Eric. Sorry I'm late I...
 (Looks down at the box)
 Just came from a yard sale...

Eric notices a framed family portrait sticking out of the box.

ERIC
 Yeah, that's crazy that they had you're family portrait at the yard sale. Must've been relieved to get it back.

KENNY
 (laughs)
 Got a good sense of humor on you, Eric.

Kenny places his box down and takes a seat behind the desk.

KENNY (CONT'D)
 Ok so, I'm Mr. Lofton, but you can call me Kenny.

ERIC
 Kenny Lofton? Like the baseball player?

KENNY
 No, like the guidance counselor. So lets talk about your... situation.
 (MORE)

KENNY (CONT'D)

Now I know what it's like to be one of the only African-Americans at your school.

Eric shoots him a puzzled look.

KENNY (CONT'D)

It's tough. But we have to rise above. And hosting illegal gambling rings is not the way to do that. That is regression, not progression. Are you writing this down, my brotha?

ERIC

No...

KENNY

(pressing forward)

Here's what I'm going to do for you. We have this program called the "Street Youth Work Connection," where we take trouble youths in need of money, such as yourself, and stick them in the working world. I think you are a perfect candidate.

ERIC

Do you think I'm black, Kenny?

KENNY

Um, I-

ERIC

And do you think I need money because you think I'm black? That's a pretty bold, don't you think?

KENNY

There is no shame in it, Eric. I was a part of the program at your age, and look where I am now.

ERIC

Where?

The phone on Kenny's desk RINGS. Kenny's eyes dart to the phone as he lets it continue to ring.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Aren't you going to get that?

KENNY

No no, it can wait.

The phone BEEPS as the CALLER begins to leave a voicemail.

CALLER

Hello Mr. Lofton this is John Allen calling from Eastern Bank. As you may know I have left you numerous messages regarding the repossession of your house. It has been repossessed as of this morning. Congratulations.

Kenny gabs the phone and quickly hangs it up.

KENNY

Anyway, I'm going to go a head and call my friend Ian over at the restaurant and get you started right away.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

Text: One week later.

An unidentified FIGURE smokes a cigarette. We do not see his face, just his mouth and his hand holding the cigarette

His hand flicks the cigarette and walks away.

The cigarette lands on the patio next to a white fence near a shed. It continues to burn as the fence starts to smoke.

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - DAY

Eric is buffing glasses behind the bar when an attractive MOM approaches.

ERIC

Can I help you with something, miss?

MOM

Yeah, I'm looking for my son. He forgot his tie in the car.

ERIC

Oh well let me take that off your hands and I'll pass it on to him. Who is your son again?

MOM

Mark.

ERIC

Mark...

MOM

Younger looking boy, brown hair...

ERIC

Ohhh, Mark. Yeah I know who he is.

The mom hands Eric the tie.

ERIC (CONT'D)

This is a nice tie by the way, I
might have to keep it for myself.

MOM

(giggles)

Well I'm sure it would look good on
you.

ERIC

Hey listen I got some time to kill
before my shift starts, you wanna
have a drink?

Eric begins to pour a glass of wine.

MOM

(playfully)

Isn't it a little early for a
drink?

Eric slides her the glass of wine.

ERIC

Yeah, but it's too late to say no.

MOM

(turned on)

In that case...

She takes gulp of the wine.

ERIC

So is there a Mr. I'm looking for
my son he forgot his tie?

EXT. PATIO - DAY

A DELIVERYMAN wheeling a handcart walks from the parking lot through the patio. He notices the fence start to catch fire and continues into the restaurant.

INT. DINING ROOM - AFTERNOON

A number of service staff sit at tables scattered about the room. They are not dressed for service and are CHATTING as they await the daily pre-service meeting.

The Deliveryman enters the room through the front, near the large windows overlooking the patio.

DELIVERYMAN

(Calmly)

Hi, is there a manager around?

The service staff looks around to each other, waiting to see who will get up to find a manager. No one moves from their seat.

JOE (24), a guido with a ridiculous blowout haircut, is cleaning a table. He has his iPod earbuds in and is RAPPING to himself. The Deliveryman moves to Joe.

DELIVERYMAN (CONT'D)

Excuse me...

JOE

(to himself)

Huh, word to mother, I'm dangerous.
Crazier than a bag of fuckin' angel
dust.

The Deliveryman taps Joe on the shoulder. Joe turns around.

JOE (CONT'D)

(continues to rap to the
Deliveryman)

When I bust my gat motherfuckers
take dirt naps.

(pulls one ear bud out)

What?

DELIVERYMAN

I'm looking for a manager-

JOE

Ok.

Joe puts his ear bud back in and continues RAPPING and cleaning.

The Deliveryman waits at the front of the room without saying a word. The staff does not notice the fire in the background, which has now spread to the shed, despite the large windows overlooking the patio.

INT. SHED - DAY

Eric is having sex with the mom on the table. Smoke begins to slowly fill the shed.

MOM

I've never had sex with a Mexican before.

Eric stops.

ERIC

Do you smell something?

MOM

Yeah I queeffed. It's odorless, keep going.

ERIC

Jesus Christ! No, I mean the fire!

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The fire continues to burn as IAN, a middle-aged proper looking man with a bad comb-over, enters the room and greets the Deliveryman.

IAN

Hello, how may I assist you?

DELIVERYMAN

(Calmly)

I think something is burning outside.

Everyone's attention is brought to the patio, at which point they finally notice the fire raging on the fence and shed.

Everyone begins to run outside with no intention of putting out the fire, only to look at it. With the exception of Joe who is still RAPPING and cleaning.

EXT. PATIO - DAY

While everyone is crowded around watching the fire Eric and the mom sneak out the back of the shed, unnoticed.

ROBERT, a middle-aged fat Austrian chef wearing a white chef's outfit, a Rambo style cloth wrapped around his head, and utility belt filled with various cooking utensils, barges through the crowd carrying a fire extinguisher.

ROBERT
 (Very thick Austrian
 accent)
 Move out of the way!

Robert semi-heroically battles the fire as Eric sneaks back into the crowd. He stands next to Mark and finishes knotting his tie. TRENT (33), a very large white waiter with a gerry-curl passionately watches the fire.

TRENT
 Yes... yes! Burn!

ERIC
 What's going on here?

MARK
 Someone started a fire.

TRENT
 (assuredly)
 I doubt anyone started the fire- it was probably electrical.

MARK
 (notices the tie)
 Um, is that my tie?

ERIC
 What this? Looks good doesn't it?

MARK
 Yeah, my mom was suppose to drop off my tie. Do you know if she came?

ERIC
 Uh...

Robert puts out the fire.

IAN
 Ok, show's over back inside.

The staff collectively SIGH as they head back in.

INT. DINING ROOM - DAY

The staff enters the room and takes their seats for the meeting.

IAN

Ok... if we've all settled down I'd like to start the meeting. There are 85 covers on the books tonight, not to mention walk-ins. Remember, we strongly encourage walk-ins. Walk-ins mean business. Nothing gets me going quite like a starving family of eight walking-in that door.

The staff shoots Ian a puzzled look.

IAN (CONT'D)

Alright then. On the Ala Carte side of the restaurant will be... Joe, and Cassy. On the Perryville side will be Jayne, Trent, and Eric. Remember Eric you have your weekly evaluation with black Kenny tonight.

ERIC

Ian we get it, you have a black friend. We are all very proud of you. You don't need to call him black Kenny

IAN

Yes I do. How else am I going to distinguish him from my other friend Kenny, the non-black one?

Eric has no response.

IAN (CONT'D)

Alright now- specials for tonight are...

MARK

Um where am I working?

IAN

Who are you?

MARK

I'm Mark.

IAN

Oh are you new?

MARK

No I've been working here for three weeks.

IAN

Great... So the specials are...

MARK

Um you still haven't told me where I'm working.

IAN

Oh right. Uh... you'll just be floating around... Pan-seared tuna, Rack of Lamb, filet... remember not to push the end cuts because there are only two ends.

All the waiters diligently write down the specials.

TRENT

(Blurting out, almost yelling)

What do we do if one person at a table of three asks for an end cut... and then they all ask for end cuts? Do we refuse to give it to them? Do we do rock-paper-scissors?...

IAN

Trent if that happens...

TRENT

(Interrupting)

Do we flip a coin?

IAN

Just get a manager.

Joe does not take his eyes off his note pad.

JOE

Who are the V.I.P's tonight?

IAN

Bernard, big time V.I.P, will be here with a date.

(MORE)