

"BAKERSTOWN"

EXT. NEW YORK CITY - MORNING

From high above, we observe BUSES, LIMOS and yellow checkered CABS carrying the nearly 5 million PEOPLE to work.

EXT. WALL STREET - MORNING

We focus in on the "New York Stock Exchange."

INT. NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE - SAME

The floor is bustling with activity, as hundreds of MEN and WOMEN prepare for battle. The BELL rings, and the WORKERS scurry to their respective EXCHANGE BOARDS.

INT. PIT - SAME

A LARGE area in the exchange's center is inundated almost exclusively with MEN standing on different levels of the CIRCULAR stairs. Looking at the COMMODITIES board, our MEN study the price fluctuations on SWEET CRUDE OIL.

With ID BADGES dangling from their necks, several of the MEN write numbers on large pads, then YELL loudly across the PIT -
- to another group of MEN on the opposite side.

Standing on the top floor, dressed in a 1,500 Armani suit, REVEAL: (28) year old MARTIN ROSS. At 6'0" tall, MARTIN is handsome, physically fit, and commands attention with his dark hair, and deep piercing blue eyes. MARTIN glances silently at his fellow brokers, while simultaneously remaining fixated on the ever changing price of SWEET CRUDE OIL. (72,1/2, 72... 72,3/4)

MOMENTS LATER - The price begins to drop. (72, 71,1/2 71 etc...) With his fellow BROKERS trading at a feverish pace, MARTIN initially remains silent, then without warning, jumps into the air, spins, looks to the board, then screams out --

MARTIN

Buy, 3 Blocks -- 68 and 1/2, SOLID!!

MARTIN'S eyes then focus on two MEN at the far end of the pit. One of the MEN'S eyes meet MARTIN'S. A nod and a wave later, and the MAN writes on the ticket order, 3 at 68 & 1/2.

INT. PIT - MOMENTS LATER

MARTIN exits, checks his notes, then opens his TREQ 700 PC/Cell. Moments later, he sprints back to the top stair, shouts out --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

Sell 3 blocks at 70, FIRM!!

Another MAN across the pit acknowledges the sell order. MARTIN then looks to the SPECTATOR area on the second floor, where a stunning, well dressed, blond beauty of (26) smiles down at him.

MARTIN holds up 10 fingers, (10,000 dollars). The WOMAN points to her ring finger, smiles back. Standing next to the WOMAN, a stoic, distinguished and silver haired MAN of (55) dressed in a dark grey suit.

MARTIN steps out of the pit. On his PC/Cell a CNN HEADLINE READS: "Insurgents target refinery." Within seconds, MARTIN is back at the TOP step buying 5 blocks of Sweet crude at 72 dollars a barrel. Provided with the same information, his COMPETITORS seem one step behind the tenacious broker.

EXT. RESTAURANT - EVENING

A line of expensive Limousines line the curb. Exiting the second Lincoln, MARTIN and REVEAL: HEATHER BUMSTEAD, our (26) year old, 5'9" blond beauty. Sporting a large engagement ring, HEATHER flaunts an expensive Versaci gown, MARTIN a double breasted, dark blue, pin stripe, Ralph Lauren. They enter the restaurant.

INT. RESTAURANT - SAME

HEATHER glances back from the coat check, notices MARTIN with the Matre Di (50), snobbish.

MATRE DI

Your table should be available
in approximately ninety minutes, sir.

MARTIN removes a fifty dollar bill from his pocket. The MATRE DI glances at the money, then looks to MARTIN.

MATRE DI (CONT'D)

Or possibly longer.

HEATHER approaches, slides an arm inside MARTIN'S elbow.

MATRE DI (CONT'D)

Miss Heather. This is indeed a pleasure.

HEATHER

Evening, Charles. My fiancée and I are celebrating our recent engagement. (shows ring) Perhaps a table in the garden?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MATRE DI
Our finest.

HEATHER leads the way. MARTIN smiles at CHARLES.

MARTIN
Hey Charlie, now you're gonna
have to kiss ass all night,
and then spilt 10%.

MARTIN slides the FIFTY back into his pocket, joins HEATHER.

INT. APARTMENT - NIGHT

THREE FLAT screen televisions decorate the south wall of the elegant living room. Glancing at the various business news casts, MARTIN takes notes, while reclining in a leather chair. HEATHER approaches. Dressed in a low cut silk black dress, she hands MARTIN a drink, then sits next to him.

HEATHER
I spoke with father this afternoon.
He has very big plans for you, Marty.

MARTIN
How big?

HEATHER
House in the Hamptons to start?

MARTIN
I'd really love that seat on
the exchange, Heather. You
think he'd ever sell it to me?

HEATHER
He might. (off her look) Help me
pick out a gown will you, dear?

HEATHER shuts down the TV monitors, then turns to a page in the bridal book. A moment later, the PC/Cell phone on the coffee table vibrates. MARTIN moves toward it, receiving a glare from HEATHER.

MARTIN
I'm just checking the caller ID.

Suddenly, a power surge runs through the apartment. The lights flicker off, then back on again.

HEATHER
What was that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN glances at the PC/CELL -- immediate fear overtakes him, as the area code reads (716). Seconds later, the window reads, 1 MISSED CALL.

MARTIN

Wrong number.

A relieved, MARTIN downs his drink, then glances through the bridal book with HEATHER. A few moments later, MARTIN'S PC/Cell window reads, (1 new message.) A look of fear and apprehension overtakes MARTIN. He glances toward HEATHER.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Heather? (pause) I have to go away for a few days.

HEATHER

Away? To where?

ROLL OPENING CREDITS:

EXT. LAKE - DAYBREAK

High swells pound off the breakwall. Moving along the shoreline of LAKE ERIE we observe a now sleeping GIANT, the LACKAWANNA, NEW YORK -- BETHLEHEM STEEL PLANT.

A half mile to the west, the spherical dome of OUR LADY OF VICTORY BASILICA envelops the sky.

We PICK UP on a black TOWN LINCOLN making its way along the modest city streets. The Lincoln continues past the Basilica, pulling into the entrance of a cemetery adjacent to the shrine. The Lincoln stops some 200 FEET short of a small FUNERAL service. The driver, ANGELO (20's) fast talking, opens the back door.

Exiting from the vehicle, flowers in hand, is MARTIN. Dressed in a black Armani, MARTIN stays by the back door, looking in on the proceedings.

At the service, THREE well dressed older looking MEN listen attentively to the PRIEST at the podium. The THREE onlookers then lay flowers atop a magnificent cedar CASKET.

The second MAN in line -- bald, heavy set, late (60's) and sporting gold plated eyeglasses, notices the Lincoln. His eyes meet with MARTIN'S. MARTIN'S disposition gradually changes to one of anger, as he stares back at the man.

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CONTINUED:

FLASHBACK: 16 YEARS EARLIER

EXT. STREET - DAY

A young BOY of (12) impatiently waits by the curb, as a late model LINCOLN CONTINENTAL moves slowly down the street. The car stops a hundred or feet so down the block.

Exiting the car, a (30) year-old bleached, blond beauty. Dressed in tight fitting clothes and dark sunglasses, the woman tosses a half-spent cigarette, as the (12) year old sprints toward her. He reaches her, stops -- the WOMAN backing off from any emotion.

WOMAN

How you doing, kid?

BOY

We made it to the championship, Ma.
The game's on Sunday. I was hoping --

WOMAN

Sorry, Johnnie and me are off
to the Bahamas.

BOY

Who's Johnnie?

WOMAN

I didn't tell you about him?

The WOMAN knocks on the tinted passenger side window.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Hey, cueball, get out here and
say hello to my kid.

Exiting the driver's side door, our now much younger second MAN in line at the funeral service. REVEAL: JOHNNIE (50), Thinner, JOHNNIE is still bald, and wearing those same type of gold plated eye glasses. JOHNNIE nods, points to his watch, then returns to the car.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

I gotta' get going --

The WOMAN retrieves several 50 dollar bills from her purse, looks to the boy.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

Here. (hands him money) You can
never have too many dead presidents.
You always remember that, kid.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The WOMAN turns to exit. The BOY rushes her. The two hug. The WOMAN'S sunglasses fall off during the embrace, revealing a swollen left eye. The BOY glares at the Continental, then kicks the back tire.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

He treats me right, kid.

BOY

You could do better.

WOMAN

A person can't change who they are, son.

The WOMAN replaces her glasses, then enters the Lincoln. A moment later, the car exits. The BOY stands there, tears streaming down his face.

PRESENT DAY:

MARTIN stands there, his eyes welled up. He quickly gathers himself, retrieves a fifty dollar bill from his pocket, hands it, along with the flowers to ANGELO.

ANGELO approaches the funeral service, lays the flowers atop the casket, then returns to the car. MARTIN is already inside on his PC/cell.

INSIDE THE LINCOLN -

MARTIN

The price just hit 75. I
could have killed that. (Pause)
Everything here went fine.
I'll be home -- (call fails)

The car exits the cemetery. MARTIN glances back, observes the casket being lowered into the ground. He wipes his eyes, struggling to continue on.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

Suddenly, up ahead, a SLUE of young BOYS on bicycles, sprint through the red light at the corner. The Lincoln swerves to avoid them, plowing into the curb in front of the church. MARTIN'S forehead BANGS hard into the side window. ANGELO rushes to assist MARTIN, who has exited the vehicle.

ANGELO

You okay, Mr. Ross? (off nod)

ANGELO checks the front wheel, it's flat. He immediately delivers expletives toward the boys.

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CONTINUED:

All continue on but one, REVEAL: A dark haired, athletic looking boy of around (12). The BOY'S attention is drawn toward MARTIN, who glares at the flat tire, then shifts his anger toward the youngster.

In the distance, standing in front of a two story home, yelling at the boys, is an attractive WOMAN in her late (20's). MARTIN'S focus shifts toward her, then to the sign behind her which reads: FATHER BAKER GROUP HOME. Next to the home, another sign reads: "Our Lady of Victory Hospital."

A moment later, his PC/Cell phone rings. MARTIN glances down to answer it, then looks up. The WOMAN, her back toward us, climbs the stairs to the GROUP home. The BOY and his bike have sped away into the distance.

MARTIN

(into phone)

Sorry Heather, I think the call dropped. (pause) Angelo, what time is my flight scheduled to depart?

ANGELO

Just the other side of two hours, sir.

MARTIN glances at the flat tire.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

You'll be sipping a martini inside the terminal in half that time, Mr. Ross.

MARTIN

I'll be counting on that.

ANGELO begins work on the tire.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(into phone) I'll be at JFK around five. I'll take the service. Fine, pick me up then. (pause) Love you too.

MARTIN takes in the BASILICA. A large statue of FATHER NELSON BAKER stands near the front entrance.

ANGELO

Built that whole thing in four years. Cost 2 mil' and was debt free upon completion in 1934. Brains behind the cloth.

MARTIN shifts his attention to the flat tire.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGELO (CONT'D)
 (kneels in puddle, to himself)
 Damn Baker Boys -- a pain in the
 ass the whole lot of them.

MARTIN moves toward the statue, It reads, "Father Nelson Baker, Padre Of The Poor." Born 1841 Died 1936. A strong gust of wind kicks up, opening fully the front door.

Exiting from inside, an elderly PRIEST in his (80's). MARTIN looks to him, then to ANGELO, who is busy with the tire. MARTIN glances back toward the PRIEST who has suddenly vanished.

EXT. CITY STREETS - SAME

The pack of BOYS, (15 bikes) speed down a steep incline, forcing cars off the road. The GROUP makes a sharp left into a small park. The BOYS sprint through the park, the whole time several of them exchanging superlatives at one another.

Racing to the front of the group, the athletic BOY who glared at MARTIN: REVEAL: LOU "BIG E" TOBIAS. (12). Directly behind him, (12) year old BRIAN "MUSH" Mushiello.

The two BOYS pull away from the group, finishing first, BIG E slams on his breaks underneath a railroad bridge trestle. MUSH is a distant second, the other boys bring up the rear.

REVEAL: TOMMY CLANTON (12), Aristocratic disposition. TOMMY is the leader of MUSH'S group. REVEAL: FRANKIE "USED CAR" SORRENTINO, (11). The leader of BIG E'S group. FRANKIE sports the attire of the ultimate pitchman.

FRANKIE
 Big E took your boy to the
 house, Tommy. Uncle Andy's
 coming to our house for dinner.

He extends his hand. TOMMY hands him a twenty dollar bill, as Frankie's group begins to exit. Then --

TOMMY
 Another Jackson says Mush takes
 Little E in chicken.

Joining them, sandwich in hand, MICHAEL "FATS" BARONE (11).

FRANKIE
 You gonna' let him diss you like that?

*

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG E

The money mean that much to you,
you race him?

FRANKIE

I ain't got your athletic prowess,
Big E, or your cajones. (pause) Fats?

FATS

Could pick up that other Andy
Jackson at the pool game.

TOMMY shoots a look to MUSH.

MUSH

Why don't you guys go talk it over
with your parents? Oops, that won't
work. None of you losers got none.

REVEAL: KENNY WOOD (12). KENNY appears older than his age.

KENNY

Them is fightin' words Mush for brains.

Behind KENNY, REVEAL: BILLY WOOD, (10). BILLY repeats
everything his brother says.

BILLY

Them is fightin' words Mush for brains.

TOMMY

(to Frankie) We racin' or not?

BIG E exits. His group follows. TOMMY glares at MUSH.

MUSH

Hey Big E? Must have got them
looks from your dad, 'cause just
yesterday I saw your momma's picture
next to the word UGLY in the dictionary.

BIG E sprints toward MUSH, knocking him to the ground.
Several boys jump on the pile. TOMMY pulls MUSH off.

BIG E grabs his bike, proceeds up the steep incline leading
to the tracks. All the BOYS cheer him on but one, REVEAL:
(11) Year-old, MICHAEL "FU" Fujiamo." FU is a slender,
bookworm type, sporting glasses and paisley attire.

FU

Gentlemen, if I may interject.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FRANKIE

No you may not, FU baby.

FU

Regardless of Mush's comments concerning, Mrs. Big E. If anything goes a sunder up there, and I suspect it will, Hitchcock is going to allocate the blame on us.

FATS

Hitchcock's a paper pushin' pinhead.

FRANKIE

Pinhead said we screw up one more time he shuts us down.

TOMMY

Ain't no stoppin' your boy now.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - SAME

KENNY steps onto the tracks. BILLY follows. KENNY grabs his brother, takes him to the side.

KENNY

You stay off the tracks, Billy.

The two BOYS prepare for the race, BIG E on his bike to the right side of the tracks, MUSH to the left. In the distance, the faint, eerie sounds of a large Locomotive.

Standing by, FU, REVEAL: REVEAL: JACOB "SUMMER SCHOOL" SKINNER. A (12) year old who constantly laughs off his pain, SUMMER SCHOOL'S voice is identical to that of the WATERBOY.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Hey Fu baby, Big E's mom really in the dictionary?

At the starting line, TOMMY raises the makeshift flag, then lowers it quickly. The two BOYS take off, quickly reaching top speed. Heading directly for the oncoming train --

The CONDUCTOR blasts the train horn, as the boys continue their death ride. With the train less than twenty feet away, a perspiring, MUSH veers off the tracks. His bike hits a rock, flips several times before disappearing into the RAVINE below. BIG E jumps from his bike, slides down the other side of the hill.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - SAME

The BOYS rush to their respective warriors. BIG E rises, his clothes tattered. On the other side of the tracks, MUSH'S twisted bike lays wrapped around a tree. The sound of the train's horn is replaced with that of an ambulance in the distance.

EXT. BASILICA - DAY

ANGELO approaches MARTIN, who is sitting on the Lincoln.

ANGELO

All set, Mr. Ross. Your flight leaves in ninety minutes, sir. I know a shortcut -- have you down memory lane, and to the airport with plenty of time to spare.

EXT. PARK - DAY

The Lincoln approaches the park, turns. Up ahead, ANGELO notices two FIRE trucks and an EMT vehicle blocking the road.

MARTIN

Shortcut? See if we can go around.

ANGELO exits the car, heads toward the EMERGENCY vehicles.

INSIDE THE LINCOLN -

MARTIN logs sweet crude oil quotes onto a scratch pad. With the signal weak, he moves the cell around, opens the back door, then moves to exit. Suddenly, a loud CRASH forces the open back door into MARTIN, knocking him hard to the ground.

MARTIN glances up, and observes a young BOY summer salting over the car door above his head. The BOY lands very hard several feet away on the concrete surface. MARTIN quickly moves to assist, as the BOY lays motionless on his back.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You okay, kid? (off nod, pause)
Hey, you're that boy from the Baker --

BIG E quickly rises, reaches for his mangled bike. Unusable, he abandons it, then sprints off into the woods.

ANGELO returns, looks to the damaged back door and bike.

ANGELO

What happened?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

Kid slammed into the door while
I was opening it.

ANGELO

What kid?

MARTIN

He took off into the woods.

ANGELO

(pause) I'm sure I'll hear from him.

ANGELO retrieves the bike, places it in his trunk.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Mr. Ross? I'm afraid I have some
more bad news.

INSIDE THE LINCOLN -

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Your flight to New York's been delayed
three hours. Apparently, there's
75 mile wind gusts at the New York
airports. (off reaction) Got some
Canadian beer and bottled water back
there if you'd like.

MARTIN

You got any scotch?

ANGELO

Dewar's in the cabinet. Help yourself.

MARTIN does, as the Lincoln passes by the accident scene.

ANGELO (CONT'D)

Buddy of mine was first on scene.
A boy fell off his bike playing
chicken with an oncoming train.

MARTIN

He one of those kids from the Baker home?

ANGELO

No, but the boy he lost to was.
10 to 1, the kid who beat him was
the same one who smashed into my car.

MARTIN

That boy hit his head pretty
hard on the concrete.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANGELO

Nothing to worry about, Mr. Ross. Those Baker Boys are tough sons-of-bitches.

MARTIN downs the scotch, answers his PC/Cell.

MARTIN

(into phone)

Hey, Heather --

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)

I just IM'd you. Do I not look absolutely fabulous in this, Martin?

INSERT: on the TREO 700, a PICTURE of HEATHER in an expensive evening gown.

MARTIN

It looks great. What's up?

HEATHER (O.S.)

I just secured two tickets to the Sloan Kettering Cancer Fund-raiser. It's the who's who of New York's elite. We'll need to be there tonight by eight.

MARTIN

My flight's been delayed. Something about wind at the New York airports.

HEATHER (O.S.)

It's a calm day here.

MARTIN

I'm not the weatherman, Heather.

HEATHER (O.S.)

You really need to be there this evening.

MARTIN

I'll call you as soon as I know something. Love you too.

HEATHER (O.S.)

Martin, I didn't say anything.

MARTIN

Oh, sorry. Bye.

A preoccupied, MARTIN closes his cell.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DUSK

Sitting on the hand-stitched Afghan couches, the BOYS. Adjacent to them, standing, REVEAL: (28) year old ALLISON O'LEARY. ALLISON (28), is an attractive woman with brown hair and dark eyes. Dressed in a simple T-shirt and Blue Jeans, this caretaker exhibits strength and humility.

MALE FIGURE (O.S.)

For the past two hours my office has been inundated with angry parents. Monsignor Martin's phoned three times. Anybody care to give me an explanation of what transpired out there?!

BIG E

I raced Mush in a game of chicken.

MALE FIGURE (O.S.)

What precipitated the event?

BIG E glances toward FU.

FU

Who started it?

BIG E

Does it really matter?

REVEAL: TOM HITCHCOCK, early (40's). TOM is of average height, slender and meticulous with his attire. He sports a bow tie, jacket, wire rimmed glasses and pleated slacks.

HITCHCOCK

I explicitly told you boys if there was one more incident --

FRANKIE

Mush's got a broken leg, Mr. Hitchcock. It's minor.

HITCHCOCK

I've already had two lawyers contact me with inquiries to sue.

FRANKIE

Sue for what? It wasn't our fault.

HITCHCOCK moves from his position in front of the active fireplace, then approaches FRANKIE and FATS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FATS

Used Car's right on this one, Mr. Hitchcock. Dude dissed, Big E's mom.

HITCHCOCK

What type of monetary compensation did you two shylocks acquire on this scam?

FRANKIE quizzically looks toward, FU.

FU

How much did you and Fats take'em for?

FRANKIE

Who said we made anything?

HITCHCOCK

You're denying you received any money?

HITCHCOCK'S attention then shifts to a boy on the other couch, REVEAL: JONATHAN "JOHNO" KEOUGH. JOHNO is the youngest of the group, (10). His problem, he must always tell the truth. HITCHCOCK approaches him.

JOHNO

Please, Mr. Hitchcock? The last time I told on someone, me and my clothes ended up in Casanova Creek.

JOHNO stands. HITCHCOCK stares him down. Finally, a nervous, JOHNO blurts out the following.

JOHNO (CONT'D)

What Fats said is true! Mush dissed Big E's mom to get him to play chicken. But before the train came, Frankie collected a twenty spot from Tommy Clanton on the race to the tracks -- and another Andrew Jackson after Mush crashed into the tree.

Several of the boys grab pillows. ALLISON intercedes.

ALLISON

Anybody touches Jonathan answers to me.

HITCHCOCK

Effective next Friday, this home will be closing indefinitely.

KENNY

Why are we always blamed for everything?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BILLY

Why are we always blamed for everything?

HITCHCOCK

Because I, along with society reflect upon you boys as bad seeds, Billy -- sorry, you're problem children with special needs.

ALLISON

Our boys have been provoked on numerous occasions by those West Seneca kids.

A loud cheer emits from the boys.

HITCHCOCK

That's not the way the board will see it, especially after my report. See me in the morning, we'll need to arrange transfers to central lockup.

The group disperses. HITCHCOCK approaches BIG E.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

This whole thing can disappear, Louis.

BIG E

They won't play for you.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Why not?

BIG E

Because no one likes you.

HITCHCOCK

I don't give a damn about that. Nobody liked that Lombardo guy!

BIG E

His name was Lombardi.

HITCHCOCK

The ball's in your court, Louis.

BIG E

You don't want a bunch of bad seed, problem children playing for you do you, Mr. Hitchcock?

HITCHCOCK

As long as we win.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BIG E shakes his head at the man's ineptness.

EXT. CITY STREET - AFTERNOON

MARTIN'S Lincoln gingerly makes its way down a very narrow street in dilapidated section of town. The Lincoln stops in front of a very modest two story dwelling.

MARTIN exits the Lincoln, approaches a WOMAN (20's) standing on the front steps.

WOMAN

Mr. Ross? (Off nod) I'm Danine Stevens with Hunt Realty.

MARTIN

Sorry you ended up with this one.

DANINE

It was no trouble, sir. The woman who rented from your mom upstairs bought the house.

DANINE removes closing papers and a check from her folder.

DANINE (CONT'D)

Here you are, Mr. Ross. Your closing papers and certified check.

MARTIN

Thank you. (pause) Well, goodbye.

MARTIN moves to exit.

DANINE

Mr. Ross?

He turns, notices a set of keys shaking in DANINE'S hand.

DANINE (CONT'D)

The walk through?

MARTIN

Oh, tell the new owner she can have whatever she'd like. Then throw the rest out, or give it to Good Will. You guys decide.

DANINE

There's some priceless photos of a handsome young boy in the basement.

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CONTINUED:

MARTIN

The past belongs in the past, Danine.

DANINE hands him the set of keys anyway.

DANINE

The title doesn't transfer over for another week, sir. I have to give them to you. It's the law.

MARTIN takes the keys, retreats to the Lincoln. The car takes off down the block. Several hundred feet later it stops. MARTIN exits, then slowly makes his way back toward the old house.

EXT. HOUSE - SAME

MARTIN inches his way around the side of the house, stops at the back entrance, opens the locked door after several tries.

INT. OLD HOUSE - SAME

He edges along the small hallway, then notices an open door leading to the basement. MARTIN flips the wall switch, then gingerly makes his way down the stairs.

INT. BASEMENT - SAME

A SIX foot high ceiling, broken concrete walls and a weather beaten concrete floor are home to an array of cluttered boxes. MARTIN bends down, walks through the clutter.

At the back of the cellar, by an old workbench, MARTIN is drawn to a small metal door. He approaches, a padlock is affixed to it. Several key attempts later, the metal door lock is opened.

INSIDE THE ROOM -

MARTIN observes for the first time, a makeshift FOOTBALL shrine in pristine condition. Various little league photos, trophies and several sealed boxes fill the room. MARTIN glances at a photo of a little (8) year old BOY in his first football uniform.

FLASHBACK: (20 YEARS EARLIER)

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

Open on an NFL Football being SNAPPED off the manicured grass and into the hands of our (8) year-old BOY dressed in makeshift football gear.

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CONTINUED:

The BOY sprints round the corner, passes by a tire hanging from a tree, picks up several BLOCKERS, and almost effortlessly makes his way to paydirt. He looks to the stands -- an empty seat his reward.

PRESENT DAY:

FEMALE VOICE (O.S.)
-- young man? Young man?

An elderly WOMAN of around (80) stands at the doorway.

ELDERLY WOMAN
(sternly) Who let you in here?

MARTIN
(he turns) I'm --

ELDERLY WOMAN
Maggie's boy, I know. I'm Ida
Murphy. I'm sorry we have to meet
under these circumstances.

MARTIN
Likewise.

MARTIN steps out of the room.

IDA MURPHY
Your mom knew someday you'd come.
I imagine you'll be taking
everything inside there with you.

MARTIN
(pause) No, I don't think so, Mrs.
Murphy. You keep what you'd like --
throw the rest away.

IDA MURPHY
Are you sure about that?

MARTIN nods, then exits. IDA emits a knowing smile.

IDA MURPHY (CONT'D)
(to herself) He'll be back.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

MARTIN approaches ANGELO, whose look says it all.

MARTIN
Now what?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGELO

Your flight's been delayed another two hours, sir.

MARTIN

I'll never get out of here.
(pause) Is there a place nearby to get something to eat?

ANGELO

Curly's Grill -- best wings in town.

INT. RESTAURANT - DAY

MARTIN and ANGELO finish lunch at a corner booth.

ANGELO

How were your chicken wings, Mr. Ross?

MARTIN

Fine.

Suddenly, a bright light shines through the window, hitting MARTIN in the eyes. He looks out the window, notices the gold domed shape of the Basilica glaring back at him.

EXT. GROUP HOME - DAY

FRANKIE, FATS and SUMER SCHOOL play cards on the front porch. PULLING UP on a bike, REVEAL: DANIELLE "DANNY STEVENS. DANNY is an attractive (12) year-old GIRL with a boyish countenance. She glances toward FRANKIE and FATS.

FRANKIE

(points) He's out back, Danny.

She exits toward the backyard. MARTIN'S Lincoln then pulls to the curb. He exits, approaches FRANKIE and FATS.

EXT. PORCH - SAME

MARTIN

I'm looking for the headmaster. (pause)
The individual in charge of you boys.

FRANKIE

Who wants to know?

MARTIN looks at the boy sternly.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Her name's, Miss O'Leary.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

Kid live here -- dark hair, athletic looking?

FATS

Why, you one them perverts or something?

MARTIN'S cell rings. He shoots a sharp look through FATS, then steps away to answer the call. The boys overhear his conversation. MARTIN closes the phone, humorously readdresses the two.

MARTIN

Let's try that again. Where do I find, Miss O'Leary?

FATS

She's putting together our eats inside.

MARTIN

Thank you.

MARTIN moves toward the door.

FRANKIE

When you're done in there, you interested in a game of eight ball with me and my friend here?

MARTIN

That depends on how well you know your dead presidents.

FRANKIE

They're friends of the family, Mr. Wall Street.

FRANKIE pulls out two crisp twenty dollar bills, flashes them at MARTIN. MARTIN grins, enters the home.

ON THE PORCH -

FATS

What do you make of this guy, Used Car?

FRANKIE

I make he's a pigeon in a two-thousand dollar suit waiting to be plucked.

INT. HOME - DAY

Inside the hallway MARTIN is greeted by, REVEAL: (11) year old fubu dressed, African-American, BRENT "HOOD" HIGGINS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

I'm looking for Miss O'Leary? (off nod)

MARTIN moves down the hallway, glances into the TV room, observes REVEAL: ANTHONY "TOE" JULIANO (11). ANTHONY sits in a recliner chair watching, "I LOVE LUCY" reruns.

INSIDE THE KITCHEN -

FU and JOHNO set the table, as ALLISON prepares dinner.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Miss O'Leary?

ALLISON turns, the two are immediately drawn to each other. MARTIN glances toward the boys, than back to ALLISON.

ALLISON

Boys, go tell the others dinner will be ready in ten minutes please?

They exit.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

I presume you're here to discuss the incident today?

MARTIN

(nods) The name's Ross. Martin Ross.

MARTIN extends his hand, ALLISON refrains, attends to a boiling pot of water on the stove.

ALLISON

Rest assured, Mr. Martin Ross, I will not be intimidated by your expensive attire or manipulation of our English language.

MARTIN

Ma'am?

ALLISON

The boy has already been reprimanded for his actions.

MARTIN

Reprimanded? I see no need for that.

ALLISON

Do you know what happened, Mr. Ross?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

Yes. I witnessed the whole thing myself.

ALLISON

Really. And you allowed the incident to occur?

MARTIN

There wasn't much I could do to prevent it. I was stopped in --

ALLISON looks out the window, sees the Lincoln, turns.

ALLISON

-- your fancy Lincoln, and ignored the fact a boy could have been killed out there today.

MARTIN

I came here to see if he was okay.

ALLISON

You came here to see what you could get.

ALLISON empties the boiling pasta into a colander in the sink. MARTIN removes a checkbook from his jacket.

MARTIN

Okay lady, how much?

ALLISON

(confused) Excuse me.

MARTIN

How much to make this whole thing go away?

ALLISON

Would you please leave, sir?

MARTIN

At least let me pay for the boy's bike.

ALLISON shoots a look through MARTIN, as the BOYS filter in for dinner. Seething, MARTIN exits.

OUTSIDE ON THE PORCH -

FRANKIE takes the cards, slides them under the rug, as MARTIN exits onto the porch. FRANKIE whispers to ANGELO.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FRANKIE

You just saved yourself a 20 spot,
pigeon.

MARTIN

You guys know the name of that
lady's boss?

FATS moves to speak. FRANKIE stops him, glances toward
MARTIN expectantly.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Don't mess with me, kid. (Off look)

FRANKIE

The man you're looking for is
named Hitchcock. He's got an office
just down the street on Lake Avenue.

ANGELO

I know where it is, sir.

MARTIN and ANGELO move toward the Lincoln.

FATS

Looks like our pigeon just flew away.

FRANKIE looks to FATS.

FRANKIE

He'll be back.

EXT. CENTRAL OFFICE - DUSK

ANGELO opens the car door. MARTIN exits.

INT. BUILDING - DUSK

MARTIN enters the building, makes his way down the hallway.
He stops in front of an opened door, knocks.

VOICE (O.S.)

C'mon in.

INT. OFFICE - SAME

HITCHCOCK is perched behind a large CEDAR desk, his head
immersed in paperwork. Initially, he does not look up.

HITCHCOCK

I'll be right with you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN glances at his watch. His attention then shifts to several LEROY NEIMAN football paintings decorating the walls. In the corner of the room, a TROPHY CASE complete with team pictures and trophies of little league football players. HITCHCOCK glances up, notices MARTIN inching toward the case.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Eleven straight championships through 2001. Lombardi would have been proud.

MARTIN

Mr. Hitchcock? (off nod) Martin Ross.

HITCHCOCK

Should I be expecting you?

MARTIN

That depends. You the man in charge of those kids at the foster home?

HITCHCOCK moves from behind the desk, extends his hand to MARTIN. The men shake.

HITCHCOCK

You look familiar, Mr. Ross. Have we met before?

MARTIN

I don't believe so.

MARTIN turns away, moves toward the paintings.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Mr. Hitchcock, one of your boys was riding his bike today and slammed into the car I was parked in.

HITCHCOCK

One of our Baker kids?

MARTIN

You haven't heard about it?

HITCHCOCK

No, but that's not unusual. Did you get a name?

MARTIN

He ran off before I could do anything.

HITCHCOCK

Was this boy approximately twelve years old, dressed like a shyster?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

No.

HITCHCOCK

An eleven year old, Charles Manson type waiting to happen? (off Martin's glare) Well, whoever it was, I'm sure he was one of ours. Those boys are always shaking down somebody. I presume you didn't add to his coiffeurs?

MARTIN

I'd like to at least pay for the bike?

HITCHCOCK

No need. I'm sure it was a setup --

HITCHCOCK adjusts one of the NEIMAN paintings.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

-- but rest assured those hoodlums won't be harassing our good citizens any longer. The home will be closing its doors for good next Friday.

MARTIN

Oh -- and why's that?

HITCHCOCK

Aside from what happened to you today, there have been numerous complaints about the boys certain activities. And when you combine that with our recent budget cuts, I see no alternative but to close the home down.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(pause) What happens to the kids?

HITCHCOCK

Most of them will go to central lockup. (off look) It's okay, they're used to it.

MARTIN moves back toward the trophy case, glances at the team pictures from years past.

MARTIN

Mr. Hitchcock, perhaps then I'm here to offer you an additional alternative.

HITCHCOCK steps from behind his desk, approaches MARTIN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HITCHCOCK

I'm not sure I understand.

MARTIN

A donation -- tax deductible of course.
What's your break even on the home's
monthly expenses?

HITCHCOCK

(confused) Approximately 5,000 dollars.

MARTIN

Fine. I'll cover six months. Who do I
make the check out to?

HITCHCOCK

Our Lady Of Victory Services --

MARTIN removes his checkbook from his jacket, fills out a
check, then hands it to HITCHCOCK.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Although, I feel compelled to inform
you, your donation will not be
earmarked for the group home.

MARTIN

You telling me you can't use thirty-
grand?

HITCHCOCK

On the contrary. I'd most certainly
allocate the funds to the place it
would do the most good. Possibly
the infant home, or our hospital.

MARTIN

What's wrong with the boys home?

HITCHCOCK

I'm afraid you'd be wasting your money.
Those boys are undeserving delinquents
with no hope of rehabilitation.

HITCHCOCK approaches an old trophy on the mantle.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Why the great interest in our home,
Mr. Ross?

MARTIN

Why the great disinterest, Mr. Hitchcock?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

HITCHCOCK reaches for a rag, begins dusting off the trophy.

HITCHCOCK

I arrived here in 02. During my tenure, we've lost 35 straight games and four coaches. (pause) I've resigned myself to the fact they'll be no championship season for me.

MARTIN

You're closing the place down because of a few losing seasons? (pause) I'd take the check, Hitchcock.

HITCHCOCK

Thank you, no. We close next Friday. Unless you know someone who could take over the coaching duties by then. Perhaps someone like yourself?

MARTIN

Sorry, I'm not from around here.

HITCHCOCK

You're not?

HITCHCOCK returns to his polishing, as MARTIN moves to exit.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Connelly Cup winner, 1996 -- awarded to the best high school football player in Western New York. You once scored 7 touchdowns in a little league championship game. I followed your career all the way through college, son.

MARTIN turns, remains speechless.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Now, I don't know what you did, or may have done -- maybe you changed your name out of embarrassment. Personally, I don't give a damn. All I care about is getting that championship. Think of it as a chance to give back to society.

MARTIN

I'm not your man, Mr. Hitchcock.

MARTIN approaches the door.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (5)

HITCHCOCK

I'm hopeful that child you injured today won't develop any complications. No, I'm sure he'll be fine.

MARTIN glares at him, opens the door to exit.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Mr. Ross? (turns) I'm sorry about your mother. (off confused look) I saw the notice in the paper a few days ago.

MARTIN nods a thank you, then exits.

INT. AIRPORT - NIGHT

Dozens of PASSENGERS crowd the ticket agents at gate 13. In the background we HEAR the final boarding call for flight 44 departing at 10:00PM to New York City.

MARTIN moves toward the gate. In his line of vision, a small billboard reads: OUR LADY OF VICTORY SERVICES, celebrating 100 years of service. (A picture of Father Baker, along with several young BOYS highlights the advertisement)

AT THE GATE - MARTIN hands the ATTENDANT his ticket. Suddenly, the board in front of him illuminates the words, FLIGHT CANCELLED. Dozens of disgruntled passengers approach the front desk. Their objections fall upon dead ears.

MARTIN

(into cell) Angelo?

Stopping in front of the sign, MARTIN looks down, notices one of the BOYS on the sign is BIG E. A chill shoots through MARTIN as he observes the initials B.V.S. on BIG E'S T-shirt.

EXT. HOME - MORNING.

A hand holding five cards fills the screen.

VOICE (O.S.)

I got all hearts. That mean anything?

SECOND VOICE (O.S.)

This ain't Valentine's day, School. Five broken hearts don't even beat a pair.

PULLBACK TO REVEAL: SUMMER SCHOOL, FATS and FRANKIE playing poker on the porch. Several dozen M&M candies fill the pot.

SUMMER SCHOOL

What should I do, Frankie?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

Trade in three and hope for a miracle.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Shouldn't I keep the ones with the pictures?

FATS

School, the lower the better.

SUMMER SCHOOL grabs the King, Queen and Jack of hearts, attempts to turn them in. A hand stops him.

VOICE (O.S.)

You may want to hold onto those.

The BOYS look up, it's MARTIN. SUMMER SCHOOL nods a thank you. MARTIN'S attention shifts toward, BIG E throwing a football at a hanging tire in the backyard.

MARTIN

(To Frankie) He any good?

FRANKIE

As good as that royal flush, Wall Street.

MARTIN exits off the porch, makes his way up the driveway. His PC/Cell rings. We MOVE IN in on the conversation.

MARTIN

(into phone) I'm still in Buffalo. Heather, we already agreed, I'd discuss everything with you when I got back. (pause) No, this has nothing to do with another woman --

MARTIN looks to his cell screen. It reads: CALL TERMINATED. He shuts down the phone, then moves toward the backyard.

INT. BACKYARD - SAME

BIG E fires a pass that bounces hard off the tire. MARTIN retrieves the ball, then approaches BIG E.

MARTIN

You took off before we could talk.

BIG E

Look Mister, I don't have enough money to pay for that door. So if you want to go tell Miss O'Leary, she's inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

I'm not here for that?

BIG E

You're not gonna' turn me in?

MARTIN

For what? It was an accident. (pause)
What's your name?

BIG E

(pause) Everyone calls me, Big E.

MARTIN

I'll bet that's short for Big
Easy, right?

BIG E

How'd you know?

MARTIN

I can hear the accent. (tosses him ball)
Word has it you got game.

BIG E

Hitchcock send you?

MARTIN

I spoke with him.

BIG E

Then you're wasting your time.
No way me, or anybody else
around here plays for nerd boy.

MARTIN

Who said anything about playing for him?

MARTIN removes his jacket, takes the ball, drops back and
delivers a rocket through the heart of the hanging tire.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Started at flanker my freshman year
at Syracuse. (pause) When you
drop back, keep the ball parallel
with your right ear. Then step toward
the target and follow through.

MARTIN snaps the ball to BIG E, who drops back and fires a
rocket right through the center of the tire. MARTIN nods,
then moves to exit, glancing back at a smiling BIG E going
over the new steps he just learned.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

Standing by the fireplace, his back toward the exit, MARTIN speaks sternly into his PC/Cell.

MARTIN

-- no, you don't need to get on a plane and come here. Heather I'm fine, really. I'll call you later.

MARTIN shuts down his phone. ALLISON enters, tea tray in hand.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Let me help you with that?

He takes the tray from her, then sets it down on the table.

ALLISON

I'm sorry about yesterday. I thought you were another lawyer looking for an easy payday.

MARTIN

I've never been mistaken for that before. (off look) It's okay, we just both got our accidents confused. Plus, you thought I could have protected the boy -- can't fault you for that.

ALLISON pours him a cup of tea. The two sit.

ALLSION

You see, Mr. Ross, these children are my responsibility. A responsibility I take very seriously. (pause) Now, you seem like a sincere man -- and I do believe you intentions to be good --

MARTIN

but --

ALLSION

-- but too many people have come into the boys lives -- all with good intentions, and then followed it up by disappearing without a trace.

MARTIN

And you're concerned I'd do the same.

ALLISON

You live five hundred miles away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

You know what happens if they don't play?

ALLISON

That path they've been down.
I'm more concerned with the road
they'll travel if they do play.

MARTIN

I don't understand.

ALLISON

I watched you and Louis in the
yard earlier. He hasn't smiled
like that since arriving here.

MARTIN

I'll talk with Hitchcock. Maybe we
can work something out.

ALLISON nods.

EXT. ADMINISTRATION BUILDING - DAY

MARTIN and HITCHCOCK converse while walking past a run down
playground area. HITCHCOCK stops dead in his tracks.

HITCHCOCK

-- you want me to coach those hoodlums?

MARTIN

Who knows those kids better than you?

HITCHCOCK

(reflects) No, it would never work.

MARTIN

Why not?

HITCHCOCK

Well, irrespective of the fact that those
boys despise me, they're unmanageable.

MARTIN

Unmanageable? They're just regular kids.

HITCHCOCK

Is that right? (pause) I still haven't
been able to find out which of them
hit your car. Apparently, some of
their outside friends have borrowed
a number of the boys bikes.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

Sounds like they're a team already.

HITCHCOCK

It's a ruse to get back at me. (pause)
Frankie and Fats would abscond money from
their own mothers given the opportunity.
Just regular kids, Martin?

The two men reach a concrete cornerstone. It reads: 1906 AD.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

And, Kenny Wood. That boy's a Mike
Tyson waiting to happen. Anybody so
much as looks the wrong way at his
younger brother, he loses it.

The two make their way toward the central lockup area.

HITCHCOCK (CONT'D)

Then we have, Fu. Who on several
occasions has hacked into our accounts
payable, costing us thousands in fees.
And let's not forget, Brent Higgins,
whose main goal in life is to return to
the hood and follow in his peepers
footsteps.

MARTIN

I believe the word is peeps.

They pass by a large building with bars on the windows. Two
large SECURITY GUARDS walk the compound. HITCHCOCK continues
on, oblivious to the surroundings.

HITCHCOCK

Have you met, Summer School? That
boy belongs in Special Ed -- for
his own protection.

MARTIN

There's two ways to perceive a half
glass of water, Mr. Hitchcock.

HITCHCOCK

And I'll admit my sometimes half empty
attitude, has certainly been influenced
by my 25 years of involvement with these
types of children.

MARTIN

I wouldn't be too tough on yourself.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HITCHCOCK

Anthony Juliano in my opinion, will one day grow up to be an expert in, "I love Lucy" reruns. Not a valid function in today's society, but a novelty nonetheless. Jonathan Keough is a decent boy. His problem is he's a snitch. He can't seem to help himself.

They reach the Lincoln. ANGELO opens the door for MARTIN. He reaches inside, retrieves a football, hands it to HITCHCOCK.

MARTIN

Tom, what if I stuck around a few days -- helped you out with the coaching -- just until you got things going?

HITCHCOCK

You'd do that?

MARTIN glances back to the central lockup building.

MARTIN

Sure, why not.

*

HITCHCOCK

I am willing, Mr. Ross. Read nearly every book every written on the subject.

MARTIN

See, you're halfway there already.

HITCHCOCK

I'll do it. (pause) Maybe I can convince the board to keep the home open -- IF I win the championship.

MARTIN

There ain't no I in team, coach.

MARTIN shakes HITCHCOCK'S hand, then enters the Lincoln.

INSIDE THE LINCOLN -

MARTIN (CONT'D)

That guy's a moron?

*

ANGELO

His older brother ran the show here through the glory years.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTIN
Sibling rivalry.

The LINCOLN exits. MARTIN glances out the window, observes two hardened looking young BOYS being escorted into the central lockup building.

INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT

KENNY and BILLY WOOD place two large dishes of mashed potatoes on the table. The other boys tend to their chores, as ALLISON enters with a large plate of roast beef.

ALLISON
Whose turn is it to say grace?

All look to ANTHONY.

ANTHONY
Bless us O Lord for these thy gifts --
and bless Father Baker, (disposition
changes) a real cool dude who started a
home for kids without one.

GROUP
Amen.

The BOYS help themselves, as ALLISON gathers a plate of food, hands it to MARTIN.

ALLISON
Boys, I'd like your attention for a
moment please? (pause) There may
be a way for us to keep the home open.

The boys show their excitement. ALLISON remains somber.

JOHNO
You don't seem too happy about
it, Miss O'Leary.

ALLISON
I'm grateful we have the opportunity.

FRANKIE
But there's a catch right?

FATS
We ain't gotta work do we?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLISON

No Michael, you're still protected under the child labor laws. But we would have to put together a football team.

FRANKIE

And play for nerd boy Hitchcock?

KENNY

The guy's a pinhead.

BILLY

The guy's a pinhead.

BRENT

That white boy ain't never been on no football field.

ALLISON

You wouldn't be playing for just, Mr. Hitchcock.

FRANKIE

Who else would be bustin' on us?

MARTIN

I would. Temporarily. Just until you guys got things going.

FRANKIE

You, Wall Street? I bet you ain't never been out of the boardroom.

BIG E

Save you money, Used Car -- coach has got game.

Most of the boys grow silent, respecting BIG E'S judgement.

MARTIN

There is one small thing however. The home stays open, only if you boys can win the championship.

BRENT

You lost your mind, dude?

MARTIN

Hey, it wasn't my idea.

GROUP

Hitchcock.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALLISON

You guys don't think we can do it?

FRANKIE

Most of these daisies ain't never even been on a football field.

ANTHONY

(to Frankie) And you have?

ALLISON

Louis? What are your thoughts?

BIG E

With, Mr. Ross coaching, we got a shot.

FRANKIE

What about when Wall Street leaves?

A long silence fills the room.

FU

Perhaps we could contact the board, inform them of Mr. Hitchcock's ultimatum.

ALLISON

Of which I'm quite confident, Mr. Hitchcock would deny. And with our track record --

BIG E

This place closes unless we play.

ALLISON

Practice tomorrow morning, 9:00AM?

Grumblings from FRANKIE, FATS and the WOOD brothers.

MARTIN

Only those who want to be there need to show up.

FRANKIE

Sounds like a plan, Wall Street.

INT. DEN - DUSK

ANTHONY watches another episode of, "Lucy," while the other boys, dressed in their pajamas play video games. MARTIN and ALLISON sit on a couch by the exit.

MARTIN

-- you make all their clothes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLISON

It's sort of a hobby of mine.

MARTIN

Is there anything you can't do?

ALLISON

Convince, Mr. Hitchcock these boys are worth the effort. And they are, Martin. If people only knew of the disadvantages these kids started out with.

MARTIN

Hitchcock apparently doesn't. He just spent twenty minutes giving me the rap sheet on each of them.

ALLISON

Unfortunately, he's a political appointee with his own agenda.

MARTIN

He's a pompous ass.

ALLISON notices some of the BOYS listening in.

ALLISON

You feel like getting some fresh air?

The two of them then exit via the sliding door.

EXT. BACKYARD - SAME

Several deck chairs and a makeshift swing hanging from the ceiling decorate the back porch. A beautiful sunset cascades over the yard and the large GRAVEYARD the next lot over.

ALLISON

It's a beautiful sunset.

MARTIN

Yeah, it's nice. (pause, quietly)
Allison, can I ask you something?

ALLISON

Sure.

MARTIN

Why would a woman, in her prime, want to take care of a bunch of misfits who'll be gone in a few short years? (pause) Why make that choice?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLISON rises, steps off the porch. MARTIN follows.

ALLISON

Initially, I think I was rebelling against my parents. For the first 24 years of my life, they managed to isolate me from the real world. Then, after receiving my masters, the umbilical cord was finally severed.

MARTIN

How long have you been here?

ALLISON

Going on five years now. And yes, I still believe I can make a difference.

ALLISON stands, walks into the backyard. MARTIN follows.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

There are no bad children, Martin, only kids without the proper direction. That's an old quote from Father Baker.

They reach the fence to the graveyard and stop.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

That's his gravesite over there.

A chill shoots through, MARTIN. He and ALLISON then make their way back toward the house.

MARTIN

The guy helped a lot of people, huh?

ALLISON

They're pushing him for sainthood.

MARTIN

I'm not into that whole sainthood thing. You know, who gets in and who doesn't. But if anybody deserves it, Father Baker sounds like a real shoe in.

ALLISON

I never quite heard it put that way.

AT THE PORCH -

MARTIN'S attention then shifts to inside the house, where ANTHONY is still watching "I LOVE LUCY."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

That boy really likes those reruns, huh?

ALLISON

Anthony's father left when he was five. Two years later his mom was killed in a head on car collision. The two of them used to watch all the shows together.

MARTIN

Can't these kids ever catch a break?

MARTIN'S cell rings. He looks to the caller ID, sets the cell to vibrate. He then checks his watch, looks to ALLISON.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

I really should be going.

ALLISON

You have a place to stay?

MARTIN

Angelo booked me a room way out in Cheektowaga somewhere -- apparently there's some big bowling convention here in town. (off her smile) What?

ALLISON

Angelo books everybody who comes to town in Cheektowaga -- his uncle owns a hotel there.

MARTIN

Why am I not surprised?

ALLISON

You're welcome to stay here if you'd like. There's an extra room upstairs. It's very comfortable. (off look) There's ten of you living here already.

MARTIN gives her a nodding approval.

INT. ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

MARTIN plugs his PC/Cell in the charger, then powers up his laptop sitting on the bed. A knock at the door. ALLISON enters with some towels, sets them on his bed.

ALLISON

Bathroom's on the second floor. The boys are pretty good at keeping it stocked with shampoo and soap.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She begins to exit, then turns.

ALLISON (CONT'D)
Martin? Just be honest with them.
They'll respect that. Good night.

MARTIN
Good night.

MARTIN returns to his Laptop, switches over to his E-mail and begins reading. His PC/Cell phone rings.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
(into phone) Hi, Heather --

HEATHER (O.S.)
Are you online?

MARTIN
Yeah --

HEATHER (O.S.)
I. M. on the way.

A handsome MAN in a black tuxedo appears on the screen.

HEATHER (O.S) (CONT'D)
What do you think?

MARTIN
He's not my type.

HEATHER (O.S.)
Not the guy, Martin, the tux. It's a Verde'. I bought it for you today.

Suddenly, the loud sounds of BOYS playing emanates from the hallway. A moment later, MARTIN'S door flings open, as three BAKER BOYS fall to the floor in front of him.

FATS
Sorry, coach.

The BOYS exit back into the hallway.

HEATHER (O.S.)
What's all that noise?

MARTIN
The kids are playing football
in the hallway.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HEATHER (O.S.)

In a hotel, at eleven o'clock at night?

MARTIN

I'm not at the hotel, Heather.

HEATHER (O.S.)

Then where are you?

MARTIN

I'm at a foster home for boys.

HEATHER (O.S.)

What the hell are you doing there?

MARTIN

I'll explain it to you when I get back tomorrow. Good night. (Hangs up)

MARTIN shuts down his cell, then pulls up the market on his laptop computer screen.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Dressed in his TERRY BRADSHAW jersey, an excited, BIG E plays catch with SUMMER SCHOOL. FU stands by taking notes of the activities, while BRENT and JOHNO wrestle with the blocking dummies lying on the ground. ANTHONY sits under a tree. The group joins MARTIN and HITCHCOCK at the dummies.

MARTIN

This everybody? (off nods) Okay, Big E you're in front. The rest of you boys form two lines.

BIG E

Ten sets of jumping jacks on a four count. Ready -- one, two, three, one --

Chaos among the ranks. MARTIN approaches a tired ANTHONY.

MARTIN

We're not cutting in on your rest time are we?

JOHNO trips over his untied laces.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Might want to think about tying those, Jonathan. (to Brent) Summer look?

BRENT

Colors in the hood, coach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN approaches a surprising adept, SUMMER SCHOOL.

MARTIN

Pretty athletic there, School.

SUMMER SCHOOL

I seen it done before on the TV.

BIG E

Push ups. Everybody down.

MARTIN joins a very excited HITCHCOCK, who has arrived complete with clipboard, hat and whistle. In his right arm, several football books.

MARTIN

(quietly) We probably won't get to all that today, Mr. Hitchcock.

HITCHCOCK

Right. I'll just follow your lead.

The group begins their pushups. Huge laughter can be heard emitting from FRANKIE, FATS and the WOOD brothers in the back hallway. MARTIN glares at them. They quickly exit.

On the field, the BOYS line up for passing drills. BIG E throws a twenty yard strike to FU. The ball goes through his hands, knocking off his glasses. FU falls to his knees, searches for them. JOHNNO goes out for a pass next. He ducks, as the ball sails over his head.

JOHNO

It never touched me!

MARTIN

This ain't dodge ball, son.

BRENT sprints out for a pass. He attempts to make a one handed catch. The ball falls to the ground.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Better hang onto those colors if you're set on catching the ball like that.

BRENT

It's all good, coach. All good.

MARTIN

Two hands.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ANTHONY lines up, then takes off down the field almost as if he's in slow motion. The ball passes by him. ANTHONY reaches for it a second too late. ALLISON shrugs.

SUMMER SCHOOL sprints out for a pass. BIG E delivers the ball over his head. SUMMER SCHOOL dives for the ball, catching it in his outstretched hands.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Where'd you learn to catch like that?

SUMMER SCHOOL

I saw Jerry Rice do it once on the TV.

MARTIN

(to group) Five laps around the yard.

BIG E leads the group. ALLISON joins MARTIN and HITCHCOCK.

ALLISON

How do they look?

MARTIN

Louis is solid. Brent's got talent -- possibly, Summer School, too.

ALLISON

Jonathan, Anthony and Michael?

HITCHCOCK

A non issue, Ms. O'leary, unless you can convince those other boys to participate.

A concerned, ALLISON looks toward MARTIN.

INT. BEDROOM - DAY

*

Lying on his bed, BIG E flips through a football book. The walls of the room are decorated with Pittsburg Steeler paraphernalia. A knock at the door. BIG E opens it.

MARTIN

Got a minute?

BIG E

Sure, coach.

MARTIN enters, notices football books and instructional videos occupying the shelves.

*

MARTIN

Impressive.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN continues his tour of the room, notices an old original oil painting of FATHER BAKER hanging on the wall.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Louis. (pause) We need to put together an offense. Hitchcock's not gonna' be much help there. I thought maybe you might have some ideas.

BIG E removes a playbook from his drawer, hands it to MARTIN.

BIG E

Basic pro, con sets, trips on occasion work for you?

MARTIN

You think those guys can run this?

BIG E

Don't know, nobody ever tried to teach it to them.

MARTIN notices a framed photo of a WOMAN in her early (30'S). The picture stands alone and centered on the chestnut brown dresser. He picks up the photo.

MARTIN

This your mom? (off nod) She's pretty.

MARTIN returns the photo, as BIG E approaches, repositions the picture back to its center.

BIG E

She'll be coming to get me any day now. Just as soon as she gets better.

MARTIN

Oh, is she sick?

BIG E

It's nothing serious.

MARTIN

That's good to hear.

MARTIN'S attention shifts to a picture of TERRY BRADSHAW.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You like, Bradshaw?

BIG E

Louisiana native -- greatest Superbowl quarterback ever. Student of the game.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

No argument from me there. Oh, I almost forgot. A package came for you a little while ago. I told the delivery guy to leave it by the garage.

BIG E

Something came for me? Really? (off nod) You think it could be from my mom?

MARTIN

It's not from her, Louis. But I think you may want to check it out anyway.

The excited BOY exits. Moments later, MARTIN looks out the window, observes BIG E taking off on his new bike.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

An aggravated, HITCHCOCK leads the BOYS in warm ups. MARTIN approaches ALLISON.

MARTIN

How'd you get them to show?

ALLSION

With Frankie and Michael it was simple economics. We close, so does their little business. In Kenny and Billy's case -- there aren't too many families willing to adopt two boys, especially at their ages.

MARTIN

Why's Kenny so overprotective?

ALLSION

Three years ago the boys and their parents were involved in a hit and run. The father died the next day, but not before telling Kenny to watch over the family. The mother passed a week later.

INSIDE THE GROUP -

FATS

(finishing a candy bar)
I hope Hitchy Baby ain't gonna make us run.

BRENT

You wouldn't last a minute in the hood, Fatman. All we do is run.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

Ten bucks says I get us out of here
in five minutes. Any takers?

ALLISON approaches.

ALLISON

Glad you gentlemen decided to join us.

ANTHONY approaches, kicks a football lying on the ground in
front of him. The ball sails high over the fence.

MARTIN

Strong leg.

ALLISON

(to group) Coach Ross and Mr. Hitchcock
have been gracious enough to offer
us some their time. I suggest you
boys give them your full attention.
Your first game is on Saturday.

HITCHCOCK points toward two large boxes off to the side.

HITCHCOCK

There's football equipment in those
boxes over there -- help yourselves.

Several of the BOYS sprint to the boxes. MARTIN takes a call
on his PC/Cell. FRANKIE glares at him. MARTIN then hangs up
and approaches HITCHCOCK, as the boys return with old spikes
and helmets.

MARTIN

That the best we got, coach?

HITCHCOCK

Budget cuts.

MARTIN approaches BRENT, who is still wearing his sneakers.

MARTIN

(re: shoes) Brent, those Chuck Taylor's
may cut down on your vertical.

BRENT

So I go thirty instead of thirty-
five. It's all good, coach.

FRANKIE

Hood's hightops don't come off for
nothing, Wall Street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

And why is that? (no response)

BRENT and FRANKIE exit. JOHNO and FATS approach.

JOHNO

They belonged to his dad.

MARTIN

Sandals, Fats?

FATS

None of those spikes'll fit me.

MARTIN is shocked at the sheer size of his feet.

MARTIN

At least put on some socks. (to group)
Frankie, Fats, Wood brothers, let's
see what kind of hands you have.

FRANKIE takes off. BIG E delivers a strike that goes through his FRANKIE's hands. KENNY takes off. BILLY follows close behind. BIG E isn't sure who to throw the ball to.

FATS

Me and my shadow, coach.

MARTIN

Let's see what you got.

FATS runs three steps, stops and turns.

FATS

I'm having some tightness in my chest.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Nothing a Steak Hoagie wouldn't cure.

The West Seneca BOYS gather by the street. MARTIN looks to HITCHCOCK, hands him the plays. HITCHCOCK freezes, not sure how to react. MARTIN steps in.

MARTIN

Set'em up in Pro. Frankie's at
split -- School at flanker --
Fats at tackle -- Kenny at fullback
-- Billy at tail. You other
guys are on the sheet.

BIG E takes charge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

BIG E

You heard coach, let's go. We gonna
let those rich punks diss us like that?

They huddle. MARTIN rejoins the group.

MARTIN

I'll play end. Okay, first play,
fake 22 dive, split end post. Frankie,
you do a ten yard out. School, go
out ten and head toward the post.

BIG E drops back to pass, and hits SUMMER SCHOOL on a thirty
yard post downfield. The youngster makes another acrobatic
catch. The West Seneca kids begin to exit.

MUSH

We'll still kick your sorry butts on
Saturday. That's if you decide to show.

They exit. MARTIN with BIG E.

MARTIN

They practice around here?

BIG E

A few miles down the road.

MARTIN

You interested in taking a little
scouting trip later? (off nod)
Okay, it's your team, get'em going.

BIG E approaches the group, begins lining them up.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The boys struggle to execute the last running play.

MARTIN

Everybody take five laps.

BIG E leads the group around the yard. HITCHCOCK exits, as
ALLISON approaches MARTIN.

ALLISON

Louis was right, you do got game.

MARTIN

The kid's a natural, student of the
game, just like his idol. (pause)
Have you seen his football library?
(off nod) Pretty awesome, huh?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLISON

Yes, he's very proud of it.

MARTIN

Not as proud as that picture of his mom.

ALLISON

He talk to you about her?

MARTIN

A little. Said she was having a few problems. But he seemed pretty confident she'd be back to get him real soon. (off look) She's not coming back is she?

ALLISON

The two were separated during Hurricane Katrina. Louis came here to live with his grandfather. Unfortunately, Mr. Tobias died of a heart attack 6 weeks after Louis arrived. And with no other living relatives, we took him in here.

MARTIN

What happened to the mother?

ALLISON

Moved to Mexico with her boyfriend. She sends Louis a postcard every once in a while. She claims she's sick -- that she has to live there because of the weather.

MARTIN grabs a football, fires it at one of the heavy bags.

INT. DEN - DAY

ANTHONY watches "I Love Lucy -- FU draws architectural diagrams on his computer. MARTIN enters, approaches ANTHONY.

MARTIN

That the one where Lucy meets William Holden?

ANTHONY

You know this episode, coach?

MARTIN

It's one of my favorites.

LOUIS enters, hands MARTIN a yellow pad full of plays.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

We'll look'em over on the way there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FU

Mr. Ross? Can I speak with you a second?

BIG E

I'll be outside.

BIG E exits.

MARTIN

(re: computer) If you need help with any of that, I'm not your guy, Fu.

FU

It's just F-18 flight configurations, this stuff's easy. (pause) Mr. Ross, I'm not keen on the prospect of children my age and older mind you, bouncing me around like a beach ball and pummeling my undersized bodily frame. Perhaps, I could assist your staff, possibly help with the compilation of a playbook. I have windows XL.

MARTIN hands him the plays written down on the yellow pad.

MARTIN

Can you transfer and make copies of these plays on that computer of yours?

FU

How many you need?

MARTIN

Twelve sets to start with?

FU

Have them for you this afternoon.

MARTIN turns to exit, stops at the door.

MARTIN

Oh, and Fu -- the coaching staff appreciates your generous offer, but we're pretty full right now. I'm sure you understand.

FU returns to his computer, a look of concern on his face.

INT. LINCOLN - DAY

MARTIN and BIG E continue with their conversation.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG E

-- I think we can go with a 52
Defense against them.

MARTIN

We'll know more after looking at
their quarterback.

MARTIN offers BIG E a soda, then grabs a water from the small
refrigerator in back of the Lincoln.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You ever been in a car like this? (off
nod) You keep that same work ethic
you have in football, the sky's the
limit for you. You remember that.

The Lincoln passes by the graveyard. MARTIN stops, glances
toward the entrance, stares in. A quick flashback of his
mom's funeral plays in front of him. A moment later, he
gathers his composure, looks to BIG E.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hey, Big E? (Struggles) If your mom
doesn't come back and get you right
away, that doesn't mean she doesn't
love you. You hear me? (Off nod)
My mom was kinda' sick like yours.

BIG E

Really? (Off nod) But she came back
and got you, right?

MARTIN

(pause) No, Louis -- she never did.

BIG E

I'm sorry you had to go through that,
coach. But my mother would never do
that to me. (emotion wells) Not my mom.

BIG E struggles to contain his emotion, then begins crying.
MARTIN slides an arm around his shoulder, then with his off
hand, smashes his fist against the side window. ANGELO
glances back through the rear view mirror.

ANGELO

It's shatter proof, Mr. Ross --
help yourself. (approving smile)

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

The practice and main field are manicured to perfection. On the main field, The West Seneca PLAYERS are all dressed in matching gear. They execute a pass play to perfection.

OUTSIDE THE FENCE - MARTIN and BIG E look on.

MARTIN
Quarterback's got an arm.

BIG E
That's, Tommy Clanton. We pop him good a few times, he'll get happy feet -- throw off his entire timing.

TOMMY hits another strike right over the middle.

MARTIN
Better pop him real good.

MARTIN jots down some notes. His attention then shifts to a pickup game on the practice field. MARTIN observes one of the PLAYERS make a spectacular diving catch over the middle.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Who's playing over there?

BIG E
It's just a pickup game.

MARTIN observes that same PLAYER make another great catch.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
I think we just found our eleventh man.

BIG E suddenly becomes very nervous.

BIG E
Coach, you don't want to go over there.

MARTIN
Why not?

BIG E
Those guys are bad news, trust me.

MARTIN
Worst than Frankie and Fats?

MARTIN approaches the group of PLAYERS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Hey twenty-five, you got a second?

The PLAYER approaches, MARTIN.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Those were some nice catches you made. Listen, we're putting together a team, and we need a tight end. You twelve or under? (off nod) Interested in playing? (off nod) Why not?

PLAYER

Because your team won't play with me.

MARTIN

And why's that?

The PLAYER takes off her helmet, REVEALING: DANNY STEVENS. DANNY'S hair falls onto her shoulders.

DANNY

Because I'm a girl.

MARTIN

You're the girl I saw on the bike at the group home.

BIG E turns away in embarrassment.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

What's your name?

DANNY

Danny.

MARTIN

Well Danny, practice starts at nine tomorrow morning. Will we see you there?

DANNY

The guys won't like it.

MARTIN

You let me worry about that.

BIG E glares at DANNY. He and MARTIN then exit.

BIG E

Coach, she can't play.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

Oh yes she can. Did you see those catches she made?

BIG E

I don't mean that.

MARTIN

What do you mean?

BIG E

Coach, she's a, a --

MARTIN

A what?

BIG E

A girl.

MARTIN

And a very pretty one at that.
(off reaction) My girl was that nice and pretty, I'd make sure she was around me all the time.

They ENTER the Lincoln. It exits, as COACH CLANTON looks on.

EXT. GROUP HOME - DAY

The Lincoln pulls up to the front of the curb. BIG E exits.

MARTIN

Great job today, Big E. Make sure you tell those guys in there to study their plays.

BIG E nods, starts to exit, then turns to MARTIN.

BIG E

Coach? You know when you're taking off?

MARTIN

I'm not sure yet.

BIG E

Tomorrow's, Monday.

MARTIN

You let me worry about that, okay?

BIG E forces a smile, then exits.

INSIDE THE LINCOLN -

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANGELO

That boy's taken a real liking
to you, sir.

MARTIN

Just drive the damn car okay, Angelo!

ANGELO puts the car in drive and exits.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

The Lincoln drives through the city streets. MARTIN Looks out the window, observes dozens of kids riding their bikes, playing in the park, hanging out on the street corners.

INT. BASEMENT - DUSK

Several team photos of various little league football, baseball and track teams fill the screen.

FLASHBACK 15 YEAR EARLIER

A 13 year old BOY slides into home plate with the winning run. The BOY jumps to his feet and is mobbed by his fellow teammates. Friends and family pour out of the stands to congratulate the players. The teary eyed BOY looks to the empty stands, walks off the field, joins an ornery WOMAN in her early (60's).

The same young BOY receives his eighth grade diploma. He exits the stage, then sits alone in his chair. A LOUD RINGING can be heard in the background.

PRESENT DAY

PULLING BACK, we observe MARTIN flipping through several of the scrapbooks he has removed from the boxes. He glances at his cell phone, then answers it.

MARTIN (INTO PHONE)

Hello.

INTERCUT:

HEATHER in her living room. On the computer in front of her, the, "Our Lady Of Victory" Website.

HEATHER

I've haven't heard from you
all day. Where are you?

MARTIN

I'm at a house.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HEATHER

Which house, Martin? The group
home house, the house on the hill --

MARTIN

Does it really matter, Heather?

HEATHER

Father expects you at work in the
morning.

MARTIN

Well tell father I need a few extra days.

HEATHER

He leased you that seat with the
assumption you'd be here everyday.

MARTIN

And everyday for the past 6 months I
have been. Your father's already made
more money off that seat in six months,
than he did all of last year.

HEATHER

There's no need to get testy. He
certainly appreciates what you've done.

MARTIN

Yeah, but do you?

HEATHER

(pause) How's Allison?

MARTIN

Who?

HEATHER

The woman who runs the group
home you're staying at?

HEATHER pulls up a picture of ALLISON on the Baker website.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

There's a picture of her on their
website. She's very pretty.

MARTIN

Are you accusing me of something here?

HEATHER

You certainly can afford a hotel.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

You wouldn't understand if I told you.

HEATHER

We're engaged to be married. Try me!

MARTIN

I'm coaching a football team of foster kids, Heather. I think I may have figured out a way to help them keep their home open.

HEATHER

Why the hell would somebody help a bunch of kids they don't even know, Martin?

MARTIN

I told you, you wouldn't understand.

HEATHER

Is that why you went there in the first place?

MARTIN

No, that was for another reason.

HEATHER glares at the picture of ALLISON.

HEATHER

Yeah, and I'm staring at it right now.

MARTIN

A few more days, Heather -- then I'll be home, I promise. (pause) You just have to trust me on this.

An irate, HEATHER slams down the phone, then shuts off the monitor.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

The team is getting ready for practice. The WOOD brothers, BRENT, JOHN and ANTHONY help MARTIN set up the obstacle course. HITCHCOCK and FU walk onto the field together, approach MARTIN.

FU

Here you go, coach.

FU Hands him the playbooks. MARTIN flips through one, looks surprised.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HITCHCOCK
Something wrong?

MARTIN
They're in color.

FU
Would you prefer black and white?

MARTIN
No no, they're fine, Fu. Thanks, guys.

FU joins the group.

HITCHCOCK
That boy i s very resourceful.

MARTIN
I can see that.

HITCHCOCK
What I don't see is our eleventh man.

MARTIN glances around, spots DANNY walking down up driveway.

MARTIN
On her way now. (to group) Guys,
say hello to our new tight end.

Shocked and somewhat confused, the boys react.

KENNY
That's Danny, coach.

BILLY
That's Danny, coach.

MARTIN
I know, we've met. Is there a problem?

BRENT
Yeah. She ain't a dude.

MARTIN
No, but she's got game.

MARTIN glances toward ALLISON, who proudly steps forward.

ALLISON
Any objections? Good.

BIG E scowls at his teammates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BIG E
Anybody touches her, you're dead.

FU
I believe we have a more pressing issue.

The group huddles together.

FU (CONT'D)
Fats and Used Car aren't back yet.

BIG E
Coach or Miss O'Leary know?

MARTIN blows the whistle to begin practice.

SUMMER SCHOOL
I believe they will shortly.

BIG E begins warm ups, as MARTIN reviews the color playbooks. ALLISON approaches the BOYS, glances toward a petrified JOHNNO, then addresses the group.

ALLISON
Anybody want to tell me where they are -- beside Jonathan?

FU
Frankie and Fats are involved in a pool game for profit, Miss O'Leary.

ALLISON
Where's the game at?

FU
Tommy Clanton's.

ALLISON looks to HITCHCOCK.

HITCHCOCK
If I go and find something, we close.

MARTIN
You guys stay here with the kids.

MARTIN and FU exit.

INT. BASEMENT - DAY

TIGHT ON - a slow spinning EIGHT ball dropping into a side pocket. In the background, a loud roar can be heard. PULLING BACK, we observe FRANKIE embrace FATS.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

Way to go, Fatman.

FRANKIE then collects money from several of the spectators.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

Pleasure doing business with you boys.

TOMMY

One more game. Fats and me.

FRANKIE

What are we playing for?

TOMMY

Everything in your hand.

FRANKIE

There's over a hundred dollars here.

FATS

Frankie, it's past 10:30 --

FRANKIE

That Wall Street dude's all talk --

MARTIN approaches, holding the looksee BOY by the collar. Behind him, FU. All the kids immediately scatter. FATS tries to warn FRANKIE, who continues shooting off his mouth.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

-- shows up in that lame Lincoln, probably write the trip off on his income tax.

MARTIN

Unless of course I win some money. Then I'll have to claim the additional income. (to group) Who lives here?

TOMMY

(defiant) I do, why?

MARTIN

I'd like to get in on the game -- play Fats here for all that money Frankie's holding.

The boys gather around the table.

FRANKIE

Ain't we late for practice, coach?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

TOMMY

Frankie's gone Purdue on us.

The group begins heckling him.

FRANKIE

Fats and me ain't afraid of nothing.

TOMMY

Fine. Visitor breaks.

MARTIN breaks, immediately sinking three striped balls.

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

A dejected, FRANKIE, FATS and FU stand by the Lincoln parked in the driveway. MARTIN stays back with TOMMY.

TOMMY

Where'd you learn to play like that?

MARTIN

Nevermind. This happens again, and I find out about it, I'll talk it over with your father. Understood?

TOMMY

Yes, sir.

MARTIN hands TOMMY back his money.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - SAME

ANGELO places the two bikes in the back of the Lincoln. FRANKIE, FATS and FU enter the car, as MARTIN approaches.

FRANKIE

Hey Wall Street, you really hustled us back there -- made the Fatman and me look like fools.

MARTIN

No argument from me there, Frankie.
(pause) What's their tab, Fu?

FU

They owe you eleven-hundred dollars.

FATS

I told you I didn't want to play him again.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE
I didn't think he'd collect.

FATS
How we gonna pay that, Used Car?

FRANKIE
How should I know?

MARTIN
I have a suggestion. (off smile)

EXT. FIELD - MORNING

BIG E drops back to pass, hits FRANKIE over the middle. The ball goes through his hands, sticks into his face mask. Unable to see, FRANKIE falls to the ground. Laughter emits from the group, as MARTIN removes the boy's helmet.

FRANKIE
I told you I sucked at this.

MARTIN
Next time watch the ball into your hands.

FRANKIE returns to the huddle. FRANKIE to BIG E.

FRANKIE
What the hell kind of pass was that?

KENNY
Just make the damn catch.

BILLY
Just make the damn catch.

BIG E
Used Car, you're split left.
Pro right, 28 post bend out.
Everybody know their assignments?

BIG E glances at SUMMER SCHOOL.

SUMMER SCHOOL
Post?

BIG E then looks to FRANKIE.

FRANKIE
Dude, I heard you. This ain't brain surgery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The BOYS approach the line. BIG E barks out signals, drops back to pass. Moments later, SUMMER SCHOOL and FRANKIE collide head on some twenty-five yards down the field.

FRANKIE runs at SUMMER SCHOOL, but is intercepted by MARTIN, who knocks him too hard to the ground.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)

That dumb bastard ran the wrong route!

MARTIN looks to BIG E.

BIG E

It was Pro Right, 28 post bend out.

MARTIN

You do the bend out on the post,
Frankie! Start paying attention before
you get somebody killed out here!!

FRANKIE takes his helmet, flings it across the field, then moves toward MARTIN. MARTIN gets in his face.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

You got something you want to say to me?

FRANKIE initially steps back, then holds his ground.

FRANKIE

You don't kick my butt I say it? (off nod) You come here in your styling Lincoln, hoping to buy yourself some peace of mind for all that money you're making. You don't care about us -- making your deals on the wireless the whole time. That's okay, man's got to eat, Wall Street. And after you're gone tomorrow, we'll survive. Donate a couple extra shekels, feel good about yourself. Then go back to your tall blond and cushy penthouse. (moves to exit) Fats, you coming?

ALLISON and HITCHCOCK moves to intercede.

MARTIN

Let'em go.

They exit. ALLISON addresses the remaining boys.

ALLISON

Boys, let's break for lunch. Then after that, we'll head over to the Basilica,

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The boys exit. HITCHCOCK approaches MARTIN.

HITCHCOCK

Undeserving delinquents with no
hope of rehabilitation, coach.

He exits. MARTIN turns to ALLISON.

MARTIN

You think Frankie's right about me?

ALLISON

Only you can answer that.

MARTIN walks down the driveway, stops at his Lincoln, glances back toward BIG E standing on the porch. MARTIN then enters the car. Moments later, it exits.

INSIDE THE LINCOLN -

ANGELO

He had no right to talk to you
that way, Mr. Ross.

MARTIN

Sure he did, Angelo. He had
every right.

The Lincoln passes by the Basilica. Strewn across the front steps a large sign reads; "PENNIES TO HEAVEN." MARTIN observes that same elderly PRIEST from before, standing on the church steps. The Lincoln continues on.

EXT. BASILICA - DAY

A small group of KIDS and PARENTS have gathered outside the Basilica. Thousands of pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters line the pavement. ALLISON and the boys enter the Basilica.

INT. BASILICA - SAME

The group gathers inside.

BRENT

I ain't going down there. I hear he
don't like nobody from the hood.

ANTHONY

Father Baker helped all those who
came to him.

JOHNO

Miss O, this place gives me the creeps.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FU

They've recently added a wax replica of his face.

MARTIN enters. The BOYS show their excitement.

MARTIN

Whose face?

FU

Father Baker. I understand its realism is very convincing.

KENNY

How would you know that, Fu baby?

BILLY

How would you know that, Fu baby?

FU

I researched it on the internet.

BIG E

You're not scared right, coach?

MARTIN does not respond. ALLISON to the group.

ALLISON

We only have a few minutes. They close at four.

The group makes their way down the stairs, and through a long corridor. Off to the side, a door leading to several small rooms. ALLISON opens the door.

INT. ROOM - SAME

Inside the room, several wooden shelves are filled with FATHER BAKER items including; his original Priest's outfit, slippers, rosary and other miscellaneous items -- all dating back to the late 1800 and early 1900's.

In the room adjacent to the case, the Padre's bedroom. All contents from his original room have been placed in their identical places. Some of the BOYS look through the window.

Inside the living room, we observe a wax figure of FATHER BAKER inside a wooden coffin type container. *

Entering the small hallway, a middle aged couple, (50's). The somewhat INEBRIATED MAN scowls at his wife.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MAN

Niagara Falls -- the casino on the list. And we spend our last vacation day looking at some dead priest and his slippers. What did this guy do that was so special anyway?

FU and the BOYS overhear the conversation.

FU

Actually sir, Father Baker was recently beatified by the Vatican. Prior to that, in 1897, his first year here, he built a home that housed 385 abandoned boys. By 1901, at age sixty, he was responsible for over 1500 boys. A number of them were actually mailed here from different parts of the country.

The MAN sits down in a chair.

MAN

Pretty tough to breath that way, wouldn't you say, son? (laughs, pause) They say you can measure a man's contribution in life by how many people show up at his funeral. You happen to have those numbers, Einstein?

FU removes a brochure from his bookbag, hands it to the MAN.

FU

After having dispersed some fifty million meals in his lifetime, Father Baker passed away at the age of ninety-five in 1936. One-half million people paid their respects at his wake and funeral.

The man stumbles off. His wife grabs the brochure off the floor, smiles at FU, then exits.

GROUP

Way to go, Fu Baby. Yeah, baby.

ALLISON

Time to go boys.

BIG E attempts to open the door, turns to ALLISON.

BIG E

It won't open. That drunk guy must have locked us in.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

ALLISON
That isn't funny, Louis.

BIG E
Try it yourself.

A scream from the boys looking in on the wax figure.

ANTHONY
He moved! I saw him move!

JOHNO
I saw it, too.

BRENT
Hey guys? Johnno don't lie, remember?

The BOYS let out a loud scream, force open the door, then sprint out of the basement. ALLISON chases after them.

INSIDE THE HALLWAY -

MARTIN presses his hand against the door's entrance. The locked partition opens. He gingerly enters, moves about the room, focuses in on the wax replica.

VOICE (O.S.)
You can almost feel him in the room.

MARTIN turns. BIG E stands in front of him.

BIG E
That's because he's here, coach. (pause)
He sent for you. He sent for both of us.

MARTIN
Why would he do that?

BIG E
To help keep his home open.

BIG E exits. MARTIN stares at the replica of FATHER BAKER.

FLASHBACK: 16 YEARS EARLIER

Open on an NFL football being snapped off the manicured grass, and into the hands of the same (12) year old BOY we observed earlier saying goodbye to his mother.

The BOY rounds the corner, eludes two would be TACKLERS, then crosses the goal line, spiking the ball in the endzone. The ball bounces off the ground, over the fence and into the graveyard in back of the field.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

After breaking a VASE of flowers, the ball comes to rest in front of a TOMBSTONE. The BOYS stop playing, frozen in their tracks.

BOY I
Bet you really pissed him off
this time, Bobby.

All look to (12) year old, BOBBY.

BOBBY
He ain't upset.

BOBBY scales the fence, edges his way toward the grave.

BOY II
Don't do it, Bobby. No tellin' how
many of us he's dragged in there
over the years after messin' up.

BOBBY
He's in there by himself.

BOY II
I bet he's got enough of us down
there for a whole team.

BOBBY
No way. He's one of us.

BOBBY inches his way toward the gravestone. The inscription reads; FATHER NELSON BAKER, born 1841 died 1936. "Padre Of The Poor." BOBBY looks back.

BOBBY (CONT'D)
See, one of us.

Suddenly, dark clouds appear overhead. A strong gust of wind swirls, followed by lightning and then thunder. The boys scream for BOBBY to get back, then exit.

PRESENT DAY -

MARTIN is tapped on the shoulder by the night JANITOR.

NIGHT JANITOR
We're closing, sir.

MARTIN exits. Waiting for him in the hallway is BIG E.

BIG E
You okay, Coach? (off confused look)

INT. HOUSE BASEMENT - DAY

FRANKIE and TOMMY CLANTON.

FRANKIE

I'm doing you a favor here, Tommy.

TOMMY

How you figure?

FRANKIE

Fatman's luck has got to run out
sometime. Why not today? (flashes money)

TOMMY

You're done here, Frankie.

FRANKIE

Why, you got your money back.

TOMMY

You don't play till you pay --

FRANKIE

Who, Wall Street? (off nod)
And Fats and me can't pay unless
we play in that stupid game
tomorrow. (off his look)

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

HITCHCOCK finishes drawing the final X's and O's on the
blackboard in front of the fireplace.

MARTIN

53 defense, what is it?

FRANKIE

Five guys on the line --

He looks to the other boys.

ANTHONY

With three behind them?

BRENT

And three slow movin' white
dudes behind them.

MARTIN

And if they beat us on the pass?

SUMMER SCHOOL raises his hand. MARTIN nods to him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SUMMER SCHOOL

We switch to a 52, coach. I saw that --

GROUP

We know, on the TV.

The group disperses.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

Footage of West Seneca plays on the VCR. MARTIN takes notes. Next to him on the couch, BIG E. ALLISON enters with some hot tea, milk and cookies.

ALLISON

Break time you two.

BIG E

Okay if I take it to my room,
Miss O'Leary?

ALLISON nods.

BIG E (CONT'D)

Night coach.

MARTIN

See you in the morning.

BIG E exits. MARTIN'S PC/Cell phone rings. He shuts it off without checking the caller ID.

ALLISON

You've done a great job with the
boys, Martin -- especially, Louis.

MARTIN

A few days doesn't make me a coach.

ALLISON

You're a natural at it.

MARTIN

Ten boys, day in and day out.
You're the one who's a natural.
How do you do it, Allison?

ALLISON

I've got two little angels
looking over my shoulder. (pause)
I'll leave you to your videos.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN

Allison, you mind if I hang out down here a while -- watch a little TV?

ALLISON

What kind of shows do you like?

MARTIN

You promise you won't laugh?
(off nod) Promise?

ALLISON

I promise. Cross my heart -- (gestures)

MARTIN

I love old World War II movies.

ALLISON

(hands him clicker) Channel fifty-three.

MARTIN switches to the channel. ON SCREEN, REVEAL: JOHN CASSEVETTES and TELLY SAVALAS in GI uniforms.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

(smiles) Hey, the "Dirty Dozen."

MARTIN

You know this movie?

ALLISON

Seen it at least ten times. (off look) My grandfather was a General in the army.

MARTIN

Feel like watching part of it again?

ALLISON

Sure.

She sits. MARTIN offers her a cookie.

INT. LACKAWANNA STADIUM - DAY

A large CROWD has gathered on the WEST SENECA side. The BAKER contingent, a few CLERGY, ANGELO and HITCHCOCK. Dressed in outdated uniforms, the BAKER team enters the field. Across from them, dressed in NEW uniforms, the West Seneca players execute their plays with utmost precision. MUSH runs by FATS, laughing at his uniform.

MUSH

Good Will fire sale, Fatman?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The OFFICIAL blows his whistle.

ANGLE ON - A black LIMOUSINE pulling up the entrance gate.

BAKER lines up for the kickoff. Back deep are BIG E and BRENT. The ball is kicked. It bounces off the ground, hitting FATS in the stomach. The ball bounces high into the air and is recovered by a West Seneca PLAYER.

ALLISON
(to Martin) Can he do that?

MARTIN
Free ball after ten yards.

Lying on his back, grasping for air, is FATS. He notices two smashed CANDY bars by his side. He grabs the candy, quickly rises, then joins the huddle.

FRANKIE
Now they went and done it.

On the next play, FATS tosses his BLOCKER aside, tackles the ball CARRIER for a two yard loss.

The play after that is a sweep. The BALL CARRIER is stopped by DANNY for no gain. MARTIN High-Fives ALLISON on the sideline.

With the scoreboard showing 3rd down and 10 from the Baker 25 yard line, TOMMY calls signals, fakes up the middle and rolls to his right. FRANKIE reads the play, leaves his man, makes a B-Line toward TOMMY, who releases the ball a second before being slammed into the ground by FRANKIE.

FRANKIE (CONT'D)
Baker's in the house, Tommy boy.

TOMMY
Your man just scored six.

On the ensuing kickoff, BIG E makes a nice return into West Seneca territory.

MARTIN, ALLISON and BIG E on the sideline.

MARTIN
Pro right, 28 post bend out.

BIG E enters the huddle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BIG E

Let's get that TD back right now.
Pro right, 28 post bend out. Frankie,
you're doing the bend out. Everybody
else know their assignments?

A blank stare fills the huddle.

BIG E (CONT'D)

It's a pass. Guys on the line, stay
at home and block. School? (off
nod) Okay, on two. Ready, break!

BAKER approaches the line. FRANKIE splits close to the West
Seneca sideline. The PLAYERS begin heckling him.

SIDELINE PLAYER I

Ten to one says you already forgot
the play, Used Car.

FRANKIE

Double that says you ride the pine
all day, nerd boy.

The BALL is snapped. BIG E fakes to KENNY over the right
side, then drops back in the pocket. He spots SCHOOL open
down field. Suddenly, FU is knocked into him by two opposing
players. BIG E is buried by the two defenders.

FU

I don't believe I'm physically
capable of thwarting the
efforts of those two players.

BIG E repositions his helmet, moves to the sideline.

MARTIN

What happened?

BIG E

Too many guys coming up the middle.

MARTIN

Run the same play. (off look) There's no
way School's man can stay with him. This
time, fake the dive, then roll to your
right. That'll give you some extra time.

BIG E returns to the huddle.

BIG E

Okay. Same play, guys.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

FU

Big E, I'm quite certain I can not prevent a similar occurrence from happening to you again.

BIG E

Do the best you can.

The TEAM approaches the ball. BIG E takes the snap, fakes the handoff and heads toward the sideline. The West Seneca team gives chase. BIG E unleashes a thirty-yard strike downfield to SCHOOL who continues on into the endzone.

The BAKER CROWD erupts. The players celebrate -- HITCHCOCK looks for someone to High-Five, settles for the MASCOT. MARTIN hugs ALLISON, then calls out to BIG E on the field.

MARTIN

Quarterback sweep right.

BIG E sweeps right and scores -- ending the quarter with the two teams tied at 8 apiece.

AT THE BENCH -

FRANKIE approaches MARTIN.

FRANKIE

That dude keeps dissing me, coach.

MARTIN

Sticks and stones right, Frankie?

FRANKIE

Things have changed a little since you came up, Wall Street. Nowadays we kick butt for name calling, too.

MARTIN

It happens again you tell the official, understand? (no response)

INT. LACKAWANNA STADIUM - LATER IN DAY

The scoreboard reads: West Seneca 16 Baker 16. Two minutes remain in the contest. West Seneca has the ball on the Baker thirty yardline. TOMMY pitches to his halfback, who rounds the corner and is greeted by FRANKIE three yards down field. FRANKIE makes the tackle, jumps up with the opposing player's shoe in his right hand.

SIDELINE PLAYER I

Watch him ref, he'll steal that, too.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

Hey window licker, I was wondering --

BIG E grabs FRANKIE.

BIG E

We hold'em, we get the ball back.

On the next play, TOMMY tosses a strike to FRANKIE'S man on the sideline. The receiver fakes FRANKIE out. Fortunately, BIG E is there to make the saving tackle one yard shy of the first down. The Baker sideline erupts with excitement.

OPPOSING SIDELINE PLAYER

Hey Frankie? I hear your old man's got a boyfriend named Bubba.

An irate, FRANKIE tackles the HECKLER into a table filled with several cups of Gatorade. A small fracas breaks out. Before it's all over, Baker is hit with a 15 yard penalty. West Seneca takes over on the Baker five yard line with thirty seconds remaining in the contest.

Moments later, West Seneca takes the ball and punches it into the endzone on a game winning sweep. The dejected Baker players head to the sideline. MARTIN approaches FRANKIE.

MARTIN

Was it worth it?

FRANKIE

That punk dissed my pop. Ain't nobody gets away with that.

FRANKIE joins the other boys. ALLISON moves toward MARTIN.

ALLISON

His father's serving 15-30 upstate.

The players gather around MARTIN.

MARTIN

There's no reason to hang your heads. You guys played great -- gave it all you had. That's all anyone can ask.

Suddenly, a FIGURE comes walking toward them at a fast pace. It's HEATHER. MARTIN stands there speechless. ALLISON looks to the BOYS.

ALLISON

There's pizza and pop in the locker room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

The BOYS exit. ALLISON glances toward HITCHCOCK, then MARTIN.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

We'll meet you inside.

She and HITCHCOCK exit. HEATHER approaches.

MARTIN

Heather, what are you doing here?

HEATHER

(sarcastic) I came to offer my support
for the big game. Did you win?

MARTIN

We lost in the last minute.

HEATHER

I'm sorry to hear that. (pause)
Martin, is it customary for coaches
to hug on the sideline?

MARTIN

It might happen -- on occasion.

HEATHER

Well, this occasion is over. You asked
for a few days to deal with a personal
issue. I'm quite certain coaching
juvenile delinquents has nothing to
do with that.

MARTIN

They're not delinquents.

HEATHER

And they're not your family. I am.
I'll be in the car.

HEATHER turns, moves toward the exit.

MARTIN

Pretty confident your lap dog will
be right behind you, Heather?

She spins. Initially shocked, her emotions then seethe.

HEATHER

Don't play me, Martin. I'm much
better at it than you.

HEATHER gets in MARTIN'S face.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

HEATHER (CONT'D)

But like me, you too are all about the money. You love the fancy cars, the expensive clothes -- and let's not forget about all those dead presidents. It's okay, Marty. You can't help it. It's in your blood -- it's who you are.

MARTIN

Is it really, Heather?

HEATHER

(pause) Martin, you coach the less fortunate for a few days and suddenly you develop a conscience?

MARTIN

The kids need my help.

HEATHER

And I don't? (pause) I'll meet you by the car.

MARTIN

No.

MARTIN glares at her, then moves toward the locker.

HEATHER

Half a degree from Syracuse University. Good luck finding a job in today's market.

MARTIN spins, approaches her.

MARTIN

I lost my scholarship because of a knee injury, Heather. I had to work! That's something you wouldn't know anything about!

HEATHER

I'm sorry, that was uncalled for.

MARTIN turns, begins to exit.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Martin. I wasn't going to tell you this until after the wedding. But I convinced father to give you his seat for 100,000 dollars.

MARTIN stops dead in his tracks, turns, looks to HEATHER.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (4)

MARTIN

I could own it for 100 grand? (off nod)
It's worth 3 mil.

HEATHER

And it's all ours -- provided we
stay married.

MARTIN looks to her, feigns a smile.

HEATHER (CONT'D)

Poverty is for the poor, Martin, not
us. I'll wait for you in the car.
Dewar's on the rocks, right? (off nod)

MARTIN watches her exit. A chill shoots through him, as he
enters the locker room.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

The group is enjoying the pizza and sodas. MARTIN speaks
with HITCHCOCK by the door. He then approaches the team.

MARTIN

Everybody bring it in.

The players gather around MARTIN.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Great effort out there again today
guys. (struggles) Listen, uh --

JOHNO

It's okay, coach. We know that lady
came here to take you back.

MARTIN

I wish I could stay longer --

FRANKIE

Ain't no big thing, Wall Street.
Me and Fatman all clear on our
debt? (off nod)

MARTIN

Coach Hitchcock will be taking over
for the remainder of the season.

A smug, HITCHCOCK stands at the door.

BRENT

It's all good, coach.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

An emotional, MARTIN exits. Some kids begin crying, others toss their equipment at the lockers. ALLISON steps in.

ALLISON

Hey guys. We all knew Coach Ross couldn't stay on with us forever. But I want you to know his leaving had nothing to do with you kids.
(pause) I'm very proud of all you.

Allison exits.

EXT. LOCKER ROOM - SAME

ALLISON catches up to MARTIN.

ALLISON

Hey. (pause) I just wanted to say thank you -- thank you for caring so much about the kids.

MARTIN

I let them down and you know it.

ALLISON

You did the best you could. You certainly made a heck of an impression on them. (pause) God bless you.

She kisses him on the cheek, turns to exit, stops.

ALLISON (CONT'D)

And, Martin? Your money had absolutely nothing to do with it.

A teary eyed, ALLISON exits. MARTIN continues on to a black stretch Limo parked by the entrance.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

Dozens of offensive plays decorate one side of a blackboard. Defensive plays occupy the remaining space. The players rest on one knee, as HITCHCOCK reads from a book.

HITCHCOCK

-- from an offensive perspective, our objective should be predicated on the element of surprise --

He continues reading. BIG E glances toward his teammates.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FRANKIE

Fu Baby, you know what the hell
he's talking about?

FU

The book he's reading from is the
biography of Andrew Carnegie. A real
juggernaut in the industrial revolution.

SUMMER SCHOOL

He's teaching us how to go to war?

FU

I believe he's attempting to draw a
parallel between football and the
invention of big business.

FRANKIE

Well, it ain't working.

The BOYS glance over to FATS, who is sound asleep. The
others are soon to follow. HITCHCOCK stands at the bulletin
board, oblivious to the goings on.

INT. STOCK EXCHANGE - DAY

The TRADING is intense. The clock reads 2:25PM. A patient,
MARTIN studies the floor. With seconds to go before the
market closes, MARTIN sells 5 blocks of sweet crude to end
the day's trading. He glances upstairs toward HEATHER,
smiles, then puts ten fingers up in the air.

INT. DINING AREA - NIGHT

An exhausted group of boys finish dinner. FATS grabs a large
piece of chocolate cake off the table.

FATS

Miss O'Leary, we keep gettin' worked
like this, I'm afraid I might have
a heart attack or something.

KENNY

Hitchcock's nuts, Miss O. He don't
know nothing about football.

BILLY

Hitchcock's nuts, Miss O. He don't
know nothing about football.

JOHNO

And nobody likes him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BRENT

Yeah, Hitchy Baby's about to get a visit from my peeps.

ALLISON

I'll talk to him.

FU

I'd feel more secure if Coach Ross were still at the helm.

FRANKIE

Forget it, Fu baby. Wall Street's forgotten all about us by now.

A somber ALLISON looks on.

INT. PENTHOUSE - NIGHT

A cocktail party for New York's social elite is in full force. Dressed to the nines, HEATHER introduces MARTIN (sporting his new tux) to one of her Aristocratic friends. REVEAL: JENNIFER FOLGER (20's).

HEATHER

Jen, say hello to my fiance, Martin.

JENNIFER FOLGER

(to Heather) My man looked that good, I'd have him chained to me twenty-four seven.

She exits. Annoyed, MARTIN downs his drink.

MONTAGE:

EXT. FIELD - DAY

A CHALKBOARD decorated with numerous offensive plays, stands adjacent to head coach, HITCHCOCK.

ON THE FIELD - BIG E runs a play. His linemen and two receivers collide into one another on a pass play. All look to HITCHCOCK, who flips through a play book, his confusion apparent. BIG E'S attention shifts to ALLISON.

INT. APARTMENT - EVENING

MARTIN sits in his chair. In front of him, three flat screen TV'S supply the world news. Behind MARTIN, on a large bulletin board, 3x5 index cards with news information he has collected. MARTIN glances over to HEATHER, sampling wedding gown fabric with her mother.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

An exhausted group of youngsters sit back on the couches. Standing by the fireplace, chalkboard behind him, HITCHCOCK.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

HEATHER and MARTIN sit at a table. HEATHER reaches in her purse, pulls out a commission check, hands it to MARTIN. It reads: 44,000. The two toast champagne. HEATHER high-five's MARTIN, who reluctantly accepts.

MARTIN THEN NOTICES - A WOMAN struggling to maintain order with several young boys two tables over.

A LOCAL NEWSPAPER ARTICLE READS: BAKER BOYS go down in defeat; 48-7. Dissension among the ranks.

INT. NEW YORK STOCK EXCHANGE - DAY

MARTIN finishes a not so successful day, flipping 1 finger toward HEATHER.

INT. GROUP HOME - NIGHT

A frustrated, HITCHCOCK hands BIG E a piece of chalk and eraser. BIG E proceeds to erase nearly all the plays on the board. The boys cheer. HITCHCOCK sneers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MARTIN works at the living room table. HEATHER enters. She shuts off the TV's, then grabs MARTIN'S hand. MARTIN turns the news back on, as HEATHER storms off toward the bedroom.

EXT. FOOTBALL FIELD - DAY

THE SCOREBOARD READS: BAKER 8 SOUTH BUFFALO 6. The only one excited on the sideline is HITCHCOCK.

A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING READS: BAKER BOYS squeak by WEST SIDE team who is 0-53 over the past five seasons.

EXT. LOWER MANHATTAN - DAY

MARTIN watches several young BOYS playing football in the park. He sits on a bench, searches for a number on his PC/Cell. HEATHER joins him. MARTIN abandons his search.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

The boys are complaining to ALLISON. On the chalkboard, their new daily schedule.

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

MARTIN watches football on his big screen TV. Moments later, he reaches for his PC/Cell phone. He looks up ALLISON'S number and presses send. MARTIN quickly hangs up.

A NEWSPAPER CLIPPING READS: Erratic BAKER BOYS lose 52-7.

INT. OFFICE - DAY

Sitting behind a chair in his new office, MARTIN stares down at a 72,000 commission check.

A NEWSPAPER ARTICLE READS: BAKER BOYS DROP TWO IN A ROW. By line reads: They must win next week to secure a playoff position. Their opponent, the Sting Rays Blue Devils, a team who beat them 52-7. The winner will face and undefeated West Seneca in the championship Tyro bowl.

INT. OFFICE - NIGHT

MARTIN works diligently, sifting through his research papers.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

The boys are in a heated discussion. *

KENNY

You're singing to the choir, Big E.
No way we take those guys on Saturday.
Not with Hitchcock running the show.

They all look to BILLY.

BILLY

What he said.

FRANKIE

The guy's more predictable than Summer School in a poker game.

FU

Possibly, Mr. Hitchcock could alter his offensive and defensive play selection?

BRENT

That dude couldn't alter a skirt.

INT. OFFICE - EVENING

MARTIN shuts off his four flat screen TV's, then powers down his Desktop. Standing at the door, the silver haired MAN we saw at the exchange, REVEAL JAMES BUMSTEAD (52).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MR. BUMSTEAD

How do you like your new office?

MARTIN

It's very nice, sir. Thank you.

MR. BUMSTEAD

Obviously, Martin you're on the floor all day. This is more of a place to come and work after hours. A sort of separation of business from your home life. You understand. (off nod) What do you say the two of us go out for a drink?

MARTIN

I'd like that, sir.

MARTIN gathers his things, then notices his DESKTOP computer is back on. On the screen, the "Our Lady Of Victory Services" website. MARTIN makes several attempts to exit the site. Finally, when hitting CTL, ALT, DEL, doesn't work, he pulls the cord from the wall. The two men then exit.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

The argument has escalated.

BIG E

You guys leave, we got no chance at staying open.

FRANKIE

We ain't got a chance now. Even if pinhead wasn't in charge, we'd still be dead. Sting Rays kicked our butts last time, remember? Let's go, Fatman.

INT. OFFICE - LATE NIGHT

MARTIN is slouched back in a chair, his feet resting on top of the desk, his eyes closed. The desktop computer turns on. Illuminating from the screen, the "Our Lady Of Victory Services" website. Half asleep, MARTIN opens his eyes, looks back at the screen. On it, several pictures of FATHER BAKER with kids at the foster home. MARTIN stares at the photos.

FLASHBACK: 16 YEARS EARLIER

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

CONTINUATION: (12) year old, BOBBY grabs the ball, glances above the tombstone, observes an APPARITION of an elderly PRIEST dressed in full regalia.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOBBY sprints toward the fence, leaps the four foot high structure in one fell swoop. Unfortunately, he catches his pant leg on a sharp edge, then falls to the ground. The BOYS continue on without him.

PRESENT DAY -

INSIDE THE OFFICE -

VOICE (O.S.)

Hello, son.

MARTIN'S looks up. Standing in front of him, dressed in his full regalia, FATHER BAKER. MARTIN is both shocked and speechless. He pushes back in his chair.

FATHER BAKER

Do not fear me. (pause, then)
Interesting website they arranged
for our Lady. I guess one cannot
stop progress.

He moves closer, glances at the flat screen Televisions and other items in the room.

FATHER BAKER (CONT'D)

Ironically, I felt the least constrained
in my life when I possessed a minimal
amount of material possessions.

MARTIN gathers himself, then sits up in his chair.

MARTIN

You sent for me didn't you, father?

FATHER BAKER

To those he's given much, much is
expected.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

And you expect me to go back there
and help those kids.

FATHER BAKER

I saw the look in their eyes when
you were coaching them. You saw it,
too. And that's what's bothering you.
You've been given a special gift.
The gift to touch a child's soul.
Unfortunately, a great deal of
sacrifice and responsibility
accompanies that gift. Know
thyself and follow your heart, son.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

FATHER BAKER turns to exit, then disappears. MARTIN'S attention then shifts to his desktop computer. On it, he sees a smiling picture of BIG E.

EXT. BACKYARD - MORNING

BIG E drops back in the pocket. Half the team run blocks, the other half, pass block. DANNY, FRANKIE and SCHOOL collide going for a pass down field. A huge fight ensues. HITCHCOCK and ALLISON rush to stop it.

FRANKIE

That was my ball!

SUMMER SCHOOL

I'm pretty sure it was meant for me.

DANNY

I have no idea.

FRANKIE

We're freaking dead tomorrow.

All look to BIG E, including HITCHCOCK.

VOICE (O.S.)

You guys do more complaining than a bunch of old ladies.

BILLY

Coach Ross, you're back.

They all rush him. HITCHCOCK throws up his hands.

HITCHCOCK

They're all yours.

MARTIN approaches a chalkboard, glances at the dozens of plays filling its surface.

MARTIN

You guys join the NFL after I left?
Everybody line it up. Pro right,
split left, 22 Dive. Keep it simple.

HITCHCOCK exits. The kids then run the play to perfection.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

FU staples the last of the 12 copies, approaches MARTIN, who is studying game film from the Sting Ray defeat.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Mind handing them out, Fu?

FU passes the sheets to everyone.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
They blitzed nearly every down because
of our formations. A few misdirection
plays should keep'em off balance.
Defensively, you guys got pretty much
manhandled. We'll have to work on that.

MARTIN nods to ALLISON.

ALLISON
Time for bed everybody.

The boys exit.

MARTIN
The room upstairs still available?

ALLISON
Only for the coach who called to
see how the boys were doing.
(off look) Caller ID.

ALLISON kisses MARTIN on the cheek, moves to exit, turns,
gives him a big hug and kiss on the lips. MARTIN stands
there speechless.

EXT. FOOTBALL STADIUM - DAY

The clock reads 30 ticks remaining in the contest. The
score: BAKER 14 STING RAYS 8. The Sting Rays have the ball.

IN THE STANDS - TOMMY CLANTON and MUSH slip from the crowd
and sneak into the BAKER locker room.

ON THE SIDELINE -

MARTIN
53! 53! Kenny, Brent, Danny,
move back 15 yards.

The QUARTERBACK throws a pass that is intercepted by DANNY.
She runs it back and is slammed out of bounds by a Sting Ray
Player to end the game. BIG E wrestles the player to the
ground. FRANKIE and the other boys jump in. MARTIN, ALLISON
and the Sting Ray COACHES separate the players.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Everybody in the locker room. Now!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The teams head toward their respective locker rooms.

AT THE LOCKER ROOM DOOR -

Two uniformed POLICEMEN approach ALLISON.

UNIFORM I

Ms. O'Leary?

ALLISON

It's under control, officers.

UNIFORM I

Ma'am, are you the legal guardian of Francis Sorrentino and Michael Barone?

ALLISON

Is there something wrong?

UNIFORM II

Two nights ago a Lap top computer was stolen from Steno's Electronics.

ALLISON looks to the OFFICER.

ALLISON

And?

UNIFORM 1

And the owner's son identified the two boys off the video surveillance tape.

FRANKIE, FATS and MARTIN approach.

ALLISON

Were you two at Steno's recently?
(off Fat's guilty look)

INT. POLICE STATION - DAY

FRANKIE and FATS sit in the waiting area. FATS eyes a candy machine, glances toward the OFFICER behind the front desk.

FATS

Mind if I grab a Milky way bar?

OFFICER

Get'em while you can? (smirks)

Standing by one of the desks, MARTIN, HITCHCOCK, REVEAL:
DETECTIVE GIARDINO (50) and MR. SONNTAG (60's).

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HITCHCOCK

What exactly happened here?

SONNTAG

Those two hoodlums broke into my store and lifted one of my laptop computers.

DETECTIVE GIARDINO

Surveillance tape matches.

SONNTAG

I want them prosecuted.

All look to HITCHCOCK.

HITCHCOCK

Fine. Take them down to juvie.

Two uniformed OFFICERS approach.

MARTIN

Mr. Sonntag, these boys are from a foster group home --

SONNTAG

-- and I'm from a broken home, big deal. (off look) What, you want me to feel sorry for them and drop the charges?

MARTIN

I'd be happy to compensate you for any damages, and of course for your time.

SONNTAG

Underprivileged kids from a broken home need a break. What about me? When do I get a break? This is the third time I'm down here this month! Not to mention my business being off 40%. I can't even afford to advertise. (pause) You know what the problem is with society today? There's no accountability. People do whatever they want. Now you want me to give these two a break. Lock'em up. Obviously, that home you're running hasn't taught them anything.

He exits.

MARTIN

A guy like that needs a beating to account for his bad behavior.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

HITCHCOCK
Season's over, Martin.

HITCHCOCK moves toward the soda machine. MARTIN looks to the boys.

FRANKIE
With an attitude like that, it's no wonder his business is down 40%.

MARTIN
You two just ruined it for everybody.

FRANKIE
Hey Wall Street, we may underprivileged, but we ain't stupid. With you gone and Hitchcock at the helm, no way we win that game today. So Fats and me figured we pick up some extra cash and do some traveling.

FATS
Yeah, lockup wasn't looking too good to us, coach.

MARTIN
It beats Juvie.

FRANKIE
Like you'd know the difference.

MARTIN looks to one of the OFFICERS.

MARTIN
Could I have a minute, please?

UNIFORMED OFFICER 1
We'll be over there.

They exit to a coffee table. MARTIN approaches FRANKIE.

MARTIN
So what's your story, Frankie? Your old man's in jail. But he's still your hero, right? (off look) Must not be too good at what he does spending all that time behind bars. Sounds to me like he's more of a loser than a hero -- and you need to face it.

FRANKIE
Don't call my pop that!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (3)

MARTIN

Why not? That's what he is. A loser.

FRANKIE

No!

FRANKIE tries to tackle MARTIN to the ground. MARTIN holds the boy upright.

MARTIN

But that doesn't mean you have to be. It doesn't have to go that way for you, Frankie.

FRANKIE stops struggling. MARTIN smiles at him, straightens FRANKIE's shirt, then approaches FATS.

FATS

You gonna' kick my ass too, coach?

MARTIN

No, Michael, I'm not.

MARTIN slides an arm on FAT'S shoulder.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

(Pause) Your parents fight all the time while you were growing up? (off nod) I bet you hated how that made you feel right, son? So you ate to help you cope with the fighting. Nothing wrong with that. Foods great at changing how you feel. But when it comes to stealing, there's never a good enough reason for that.

FRANKIE steps back into frame with HITCHCOCK.

FRANKIE

Hey coach? I think there may be a way to get Sonntag to drop the charges. (pause) If you and Mr. Hitchcock are interested?

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

The team executes a perfect pass to DANNY over the middle. On the next play, BIG E fakes a dive and hits SUMMER SCHOOL on a quick slant. MARTIN and ALLISON look on.

MARTIN

Trips right, quarterback draw.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The kids run the play flawlessly.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Three days till we shut West Seneca down for good.

ALLISON

Let's not get too overconfident, coach.

INT. DEN - NIGHT

The boys and DANNY are watching the movie, "THE DIRTY DOZEN."

INSERT: JIM BROWN dropping grenades in the air vents.

BRENT

Coach, who'd you say this brother was?

MARTIN

Jim Brown.

BRENT

He's got some wheels.

SUMMER SCHOOL

He play professionally?

BIG E

Walter Payton and Emmitt Smith are the only two players in NFL history to rush for more yards than him.

FU approaches.

FU

Coach, I think we have a problem.

FRANKIE

Fu baby, your monitor burn out?

FU

It's highly probable West Seneca has possession of our entire playbook.

FU hands MARTIN and ALLISON a copy of the dialogue he has taken off the internet. MARTIN begins reading.

MARTIN

Where did you get this?

FU

My Space dot com. Tommy Clanton's on it.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ALLISON

How they'd get our plays?

MARTIN

They must have gotten a hold
of one of our playbooks.

FRANKIE

Yeah, but how?

SUMMER SCHOOL

(raises hand) I think I know --

GROUP

(pause, finally) How?!

SUMMER SCHOOL

I saw Tommy Clanton and Mush go into
our locker room during the fourth
quarter against the Sting Rays.

BIG E

Why didn't you say something?

SUMMER SCHOOL

Something about what?

The group looks at SUMMER SCHOOL in disbelief.

BIG E

Coach, if they know all our
formations, and what plays we
run from them, we're dead.

MARTIN

I know.

ANTHONY

What are we gonna do about it?

ALLSION

Tomorrow morning I'll go to the
tyro bowl President and explain
to him what happened.

MARTIN

You can't do that, Allison?

ALLSION

Why not, they cheated.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

Maybe. But does anybody in here really want to win by forfeit?

Half the players raise their hands.

FATS

A win's a win, coach. And we stay open.

MARTIN

You guys want to be remembered as the only team in sports history to win a championship without even showing up?

FU

I could think of worse things.

FRANKIE

I say we go over to Tommy's place, kick his and his old man's butt right now.

MARTIN paces the room, looks to the TV.

BIG E

Coach, what's our game plan here?

MARTIN

We need to come up with a new offense.

FATS

In three days?

MARTIN

Three and a half.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Didn't it take us the whole year to learn this one?

The room draws silent. ALLISON looks to MARTIN.

INT. DEN - LATER THAT NIGHT

MARTIN sits in the recliner. On the TV, "THE DIRTY DOZEN" is playing again. MARTIN raises the volume.

INSERT: STOCK FOOTAGE - Of twelve SOLDIERS going over their assignments in the movie. The COLONEL places a pointer along several points on the target, a model sized GERMAN CHATEAU.

COLONEL

One --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOLDIERS

Magget takes out the main gun.

COLONEL

Two --

SOLDIERS

Franco rushes on through.

COLONEL

Three.

SOLDIERS

Maggio waits as the referee.

MARTIN

(re: TV) That's it.

INT. DEN - MORNING

A hand hits the pause button. Pullback to reveal, a confused group of boys, DANNY and ALLISON.

MARTIN

Those guys weren't brain surgeons, gentlemen. The leader of their group used an old melodic technique to get them to remember their assignments.

FRANKIE

Huh?

FU

He used rhymes. That's why it's so easy to remember the words to a song.

MARTIN

Exactly. Now, I can't teach you guys a whole new offense in three days. But, we can learn a dozen or so plays with minimal variations. Let me show you.

MARTIN moves to the bulletin board. On it, a series of 12 offensive plays. Above each play, a player's name appears. He grabs a pointer, positions it on the first play. Above the play is SUMMER SCHOOL'S name.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Our first play is a fake dive and pass to School on a slant pattern. It's called fake 34 dive, criss-cross pick off. If they blitz, we audible to play number seven. (off look) What's the matter?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The boys look to him completely confused.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Coach, did you say criss-cross apple
sauce, fake 34?

MARTIN

School, you don't have to remember any of
the plays, just the numbers. Let's start
with play one. Here's the rhyme. One,
"Frankie and School flank to the right to
have some fun." Frankie, what do you do?

FRANKIE

Split right, go down seven yards and pick
off School's man. Hey, this works.

MARTIN

School?

SUMMER SCHOOL

I cut inside Frankie -- then go over
the middle and have some fun.

MARTIN

Guys on the line, you just have to
remember if it's a pass or run. Now,
numbers one through five will be for all
our pass plays. Six through ten, all of
our runs. If there's a pass play
called and they're coming on a blitz,
we'll switch to a running play.

MARTIN places the pointer on play number six.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Let's say we audible to play number
six. That's a dive to the right.

FATS

Coach, what was one again? Frankie and
School get some gum?

ANTHONY

Split to the right and have some fun.

DANNY

What's the rhyme for play six, coach?

MARTIN

Six is the two back through the four
hole. That never changes. But here's
how we'll remember it.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Six, Big E calls out the tricks, and Billy and Kenny get lost in the mix. Billy, you get the ball and follow your brother into the four hole. Guys on the line run block. Alright, let's go through it. Johnno, one -

JOHNO

Frankie and Speed split to the right to have some fun.

MARTIN

And you do what?

JOHNO

Join the fun?

ALLISON

Block the man over you. It's a pass play. Remember, one through five.

MARTIN

Anthony, on an audible if Big E calls six, what do you do?

ANTHONY

Six, six -- it's a run play. Billy and Kenny get lost in the mix.

MARTIN

And what's your assignment?

ANTHONY

I block the man over me.

MARTIN

There you go.

SUMMER SCHOOL

Coach, you said we could learn twelve plays. I do believe that was ten.

MARTIN

Just worry about these for now.

INT. VAN - DAY

MARTIN drives, ALLISON sits in the passenger seat. The BOYS and DANNY fill up the remaining seats.

MARTIN

One --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BOYS

Frankie and Speed flank to the right to have some fun.

MARTIN

Two --

BOYS

Danny drags over the middle, she's no fool.

OUTSIDE THE VAN - we see the Basilica in the background.

MARTIN

Three --

BOYS

School catches interference from the referee.

MARTIN

Four --

BOYS

Frankie runs by the defender, closing the door.

The Van enters the stadium parking lot.

MARTIN

Five --

BOYS

Fats, Johnno and Fu take a dive.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The team stares at the blackboard, twelve plays decorate its entire surface. MARTIN at the board.

MARTIN

Six --

BOYS

Big E calls out the tricks. Kenny and Billy get lost in the mix.

A knock at the door. In steps a young MAN with a large box in his arms. HITCHCOCK enters behind him.

HITCHCOCK

Just put in on the floor anywhere.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The BOY sets the box down, collects a tip from HITCHCOCK, then exits.

ANTHONY

What's in the box, Mr. Hitchcock?

FRANKIE glances toward HITCHCOCK, then removes a shirt from the box.

FRANKIE

Mr. Hitchcock made a deal with the guy we lifted the computers from.

The back of the shirt reads: SONNTAG'S AUDIO.

BRENT

Way to go, Hitchy Baby.

ALLISON

Brent!

HITCHCOCK

That's okay, Miss O'Leary. (smiles)

MARTIN

Okay, everybody grab a shirt and pay attention.

The players each grab a shirt from the box.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Seven --

BOYS

Kenny's up the middle to heaven.

MARTIN

Eight?

BOYS

Danny's got a date.

MARTIN

That's right, with the endzone. Tight end reverse. Follow your blockers and you got yourself six points. Nine --

BOYS

Billy takes the pitch on the dime.

MARTIN

Follow your brother kid. And ten --

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BOYS

Father Baker comes home again.

MARTIN

Alright, bring it in.

The group gathers around him.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Remember, winning's not everything, but giving a 100% is. You do that and everything else will take care of itself.

MARTIN nods to ALLISON, who leads the team in prayer.

ALLISON

Our Father --

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The CROWD is considerably larger than we've seen before.

The PLAYERS meet at midfield. BIG E, FRANKIE and DANNY for Baker. TOMMY and two other players for West Seneca.

OFFICIAL

Baker, call it in the air. (flips coin)

BIG E

Tails never fails.

OFFICIAL

Tails.

BIG E

We'll take the ball.

FRANKIE

Spend a lot of time on the internet this weekend, Tommy?

BIG E returns the opening kickoff to the thirty yard line. He retrieves the play from MARTIN. Baker approaches the line. BIG E calls out signals. TOMMY, playing in the middle of the defense, recognizes the formation, responds.

TOMMY

Shift over. Dive right, dive right.

KENNY takes the handoff and is immediately met by four DEFENDERS, resulting in a three yard loss.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the next play, BIG E is buried by half the defense. With the ball now on their own twenty, Baker is faced with a third down and twenty. BIG E heads to the sideline.

BIG E

You want me to switch now, coach?

MARTIN

You're doing fine. Student body right.

BIG E

Coach, they'll shift and we won't --

MARTIN

Just run the play, Louis.

INSIDE THE HUDDLE -

BILLY

You sure you heard him correctly?

FATS

What happened to the rhymes?

BIG E

Coach said we're doing fine.

FRANKIE

What game's he watching?

BIG E calls out signals. The defensive unit shifts, as FRANKIE goes in motion. The ball is snapped, DANNY chops her man, FRANKIE runs over his and KENNY takes down another. BIG E takes the ball around end. DANNY makes a second block, allowing BIG E to gain 22 yards on the play.

MARTIN

Go ahead and punt it, Anthony.

ANTHONY kicks the BALL thirty yards downfield. Now on defense, BIG E looks to MARTIN on the sideline.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Eleven man line, switch to a 53.

The West Seneca team approaches the ball. TOMMY stares at the eleven man line, looks to his father on the sideline.

COACH CLANTON

Twenty-seven pass right!!

MARTIN

Switch, switch!! Three back.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

BIG E, FRANKIE AND BRENT drop back into coverage. Confused, TOMMY throws a pass that is intercepted by BIG E.

EXT. FIELD - DAY

The clock shows three minutes remaining in the second quarter. The scoreboard reads: West Seneca 0 Baker 0.

AT THE LINE - BIG E drops back to pass, scrambles for his life, and manages to pick up one yard on the play.

FRANKIE

Hey coach? One, two, buckle my shoe --

On the next play, BILLY gains eleven yards off the left side.

INT. LOCKER ROOM HALFTIME - DAY

The Baker players are about to mutiny.

JOHNO

Coach, I'm all for giving 100%, but aren't we at a slight disadvantage here?

FRANKIE

Yeah, why'd we stay up all night if you're not going to switch offenses?

MARTIN

Hey guys? It's zero, zero.

DANNY

We didn't come here to tie.

INT. STADIUM - DAY

TOMMY returns the kickoff 80 yards for the touchdown. The extra point is good. West Seneca 8 Baker 0.

INT. STADIUM - DAY

BIG E continues to call regular plays. He throws a pass to FRANKIE, it bounces off his hands and is intercepted. The DEFENDER returns the ball for the score. West Seneca 16, Baker 0. The quarter ends with FRANKIE being taunted.

FRANKIE

Coach, they come at me again, I'm taking one of them out.

MARTIN and BIG E converse on the sideline. BIG E then returns to the huddle.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

BIG E

Okay boys, we're in business. Play number three. Everyone know their assignments?

PLAYERS

School gets interference from the referee.

BIG E lines the team up in the new formation. He drops back to pass, hits SUMMER SCHOOL over the middle for a twenty yard gain. On the next play, BIG E looks over the defense, then changes the play at the line.

BIG E

Seven! Seven!!

FATS

Seven, seven -- hey, Fu?

FU

Kenny runs it up the middle to heaven.

BIG E hands off to KENNY, who runs straight up the middle for the touchdown.

FATS

Hey, Tommy? Is that chat room of yours right next to your pool table. LOSER!!

INT. STADIUM - DAY

With three minutes remaining in the contest, Baker is down by eight. West Seneca has the ball. MARTIN sends his entire team on the blitz. The result is a six yard loss. BIG E returns the punt to midfield. He then moves under center.

BIG E

Five, five --

FATS and JOHNNO look to FU.

FU

All three of us take a dive.

The ball is snapped. BIG E drops back and is smothered by three defenders coming up the middle. JOHNNO helps him up.

BIG E

What were you guys doing?

JOHNNO

Taking a dive like coach said.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

On the next play, BIG E yells out --

BIG E
Eight! Eight!

PLAYERS
Danny's got a date.

The ball is hiked. DANNY takes the handoff, heads around end, runs 50 yards for a touchdown. West Seneca 16 Baker 14. West Seneca returns the kickoff to midfield. After three plays, they punt. Baker takes over at their own 45.

MARTIN
(yells) No time outs! Catch the ball and go out of bounds right away. Four, four!!

In the huddle, all the players look to BIG E.

PLAYERS
Frankie runs downfield to close the door.

BAKER approaches the line. BIG E drops back, tosses a pass downfield. FRANKIE makes the catch and is tackled on the 18 yard line. Fifteen seconds remain and counting.

MARTIN
Spike the ball!! Spike the ball!

BIG E spikes the ball with five seconds left in the contest.

BIG E
What play you want, coach?

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Hail Mary. And throw it up high.

HITCHCOCK approaches MARTIN, field goal kicking tee in hand. The two men converse a moment. MARTIN glances at the goal post, holds a moment, then approaches a REFEREE.

MARTIN (CONT'D)
Ref, can we try a field goal?

The OFFICIAL confers with his colleagues. Moments Later --

OFFICIAL
You want to kick it, go ahead.

The team huddles around MARTIN.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED: (2)

MARTIN

Anthony? Just keep your head down,
and you'll be fine, son. (off look)

BAKER lines up for a 35 yard field goal attempt. A small breeze appears, as the ball is snapped. ANTHONY kicks the ball. It looks high enough, but appears to be headed short. Suddenly, the slight breeze turns to a strong gust, assisting the ball through the goal post. The OFFICIAL raises his hands. Baker wins 17 to 16. The BAKER sideline erupts. HITCHCOCK joins in on the celebration.

EXT. CITY STREETS - DAY

ANGELO'S Lincoln passes through the city streets. It makes its way past the Basilica on its way to --

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

The entrance of "Our Lady Of Victory" cemetery. The Lincoln passes by several tombstones before stopping by a large headstone near a small tree.

EXT. GRAVESITE - SAME

ANGELO opens the back door. Out steps MARTIN. With flowers in hand, MARTIN kneels beside the grave, placing the flowers underneath a large stone marked, MARGARET ANN SLATER.

MARTIN

You were right, mom. A person
can't change who they are. My
name is Bobby Vincent Slater
and I love you.

BOBBY rises to leave. Standing behind him is ALLISON.

MARTIN/BOBBY

Allison. What --

ALLISON

I came to see my two little angels.
And you?

MARTIN/BOBBY

My mom.

The TWO walk a short distance. ALLISON stops by two graves. The inscriptions read: Michael O'Leary, Born 1990 DIED 1995. Thomas O'Leary BORN 1988 DIED 2000. "ANGELS IN WAITING."

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARTIN/BOBBY (CONT'D)
Allison, there's something I'd
very much like to tell you.

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

MARTIN/BOBBY catches a pass and is tackled by BIG E and
ALLISON.

INT. OLD HOUSE - DAY

MARTIN/BOBBY sifts through old photos at the kitchen table.
ALLISON and MRS. MURPHY sit across from him.

FADE TO BLACK:

THIS FILM IS DEDICATED IN LOVING MEMORY TO:

GINA MASTROGIACCOMO
(1961 - 2001)