

WHAT IT TAKES

PILOT

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FADE IN:

SUPER: YEAR 2005

INT. NEEDHAM B. HIGHSCHOOL- GYM ROOM- NIGHT

Reflection emanates from the gym floor, where the resounding cheers of the crowd reverberate against the concrete walls and metal lockers. Swiftly zipping through...

INT. BASKETBALL COURT- CONTINUOUS

A whistle blows, thrusting us into the midst of a gripping basketball game in progress.

On the scoreboard, the score reads 33-30, with Needham High Players leading by a few points over Millbrook High Players.

A Millbrook High player skillfully secures the ball and dribbles towards the net. With a powerful leap, he dunks, but his opponent swiftly jumps and slaps the ball out of his hand. It's DEONTAE LOCKWOOD (17), a formidable athlete with a strong build, long arms, powerful legs, impressive speed, and a Cocky demeanor, his eyes depict determination and utter ruthlessness.

We shift our focus to Deontae, observing his swift and skillful movements as he secures multiple points for his team. These scores consist of moves such as dunks, three-pointers, Euro steps, and more.

LANDRY (17), a Millbrook High Player, stands at a corner and signals Deontae. Despite Landry's signal, Deontae, who is being tackled by two opposing players, disregards him. With impressive skill, Deontae dribbles past the players and charges towards the net. Suddenly, a Needham High player rushes in, attempting to tackle him.

Deontae forcefully tackles an opponent at the net immediately after successfully blocking a potential score, causing the player to collapse onto the ground. The Referee, along with several other players, rush to his assistance.

Landry is visibly frustrated. As Deontae sprints back towards the center of the court. Determined, Landry swiftly moves in the direction of Deontae.

LANDRY

Yo', be nice, let me feel some'

Deontae nudges Landry slightly with his shoulder, an action nobody notices, except GREGORY HALLS (47) Husky, tall, he rises to his feet from the bench. He heads to the corner to get Deontae's attention, he does.

Halls mouths, "Play nice."

The whistle goes off again and the game continues, the Needham High Players secure more goals, adding to their scores.

Deontae acquires the ball at the midcourt, he is heading towards the opponents' midpoint line when two Needham players tackle him, one strikes the ball off his hands, the other is about to take it when Landry swoops in and secures the ball.

Landry heads on to score a goal, a shot thrown at the free-throw-circle.

HALLS

Yes!

Landry and Deontae make brief eye contact, it's almost as if they're playing against each other.

The game continues, Landry scores more goals, he's a skilled three-pointer, he could land a shot from any direction.

A Needham High player secures the ball and attempts a midcourt three-pointer. Landry leaps into the air to swat the ball from his hand, but Deontae swiftly jumps and grabs possession, swiftly running and dunking the ball into the basket.

Deontae secures the ball once more, when two Needham players rush in to double team him. He attempts to dribble his way out, but they manage to knock the ball from his grasp and score. This scenario repeats itself twice, until finally, the ball finds its way back to Deontae.

The same two players block his way, again. Landry is by the corner, he's open. He signals Deontae.

DEONTAE

Time out! Time out!

Landry groans in frustration. The Referee blows on the whistle.

Deontae heads to Halls. Halls has his hands wide open with a look as if to say, "What are you doing?"

Deontae sits on the bench and wipes his face with a towel. He looks up at the Countdown timer, they only have 10 seconds left.

DEONTAE

I can't do nothing coach they double teaming me every possession.

HALLS

Son, you've been getting double team this whole game ain't no point of complaining now.

Deontae Groans. He's pissed.

DEONTAE

We have to find a way to get me open. That's the only way we're gonna get quick basket. Maybe double screens.

LANDRY

(Scoffs)

This guy. You're not the only one on this court right now Deontae. Let other people touch the rock.

NEEDHAM PLAYER 1

Yeah, Deontae, we're open half of the time, you still refuse to pass the ball.

NEEDHAM PLAYER 2

Nigga what's wrong with you?

LANDRY

Selfish ass Nigga.

Deontae stands up. He's furious.

DEONTAE

Hold on Nigga who you talking to. I done let yawl touch that rock plenty of times and yawl blew it. We could've been blowing these niggas out.

LANDRY

I ain't blowing nothing. I got 19 points to go along with your 30, I'm putting in work.

DEONTAE

(Scoffs)

Yeah, right, you, "Putting in the work".

Deontae and Landry are so close they could land blows at each other. Halls stands in between them.

HALLS

Now is not the time, get a hold of yourselves! You only got this little bit of seconds left, don't blow it!

(Looks to Deontae)

This game... is a very big game... and one player's not gonna win it.

Hall's words sink in. Deontae glances briefly at Halls and then to Landry.

Landry and the other players prepare for the final seconds of the match.

Deontae idles stagnantly for a beat. Gregory pats his shoulder and heads to another bench.

Deontae bolts back into the game.

The referee blows the whistle, and once again, the countdown timer sounds.

The ball is passed from player to player until it reaches Deontae. Suddenly, two Needham players swiftly block him.

Deontae sees that Landry is open, it's only 5 seconds left on the timer. Deonate makes a quick decision to pass the ball to Landry.

Landry is thrust with a wave of surprise, but he knows there's not much time left, he bolts to the three-point-line, where he could get a better shot, and he throws the ball.

We watch the ball as it goes, heading towards the basket.

The timer counts down, 4,3,2,1,0.

INT. LOCKER ROOM- AFTER THE GAME

We see Deontae and his teammates in the locker shut out, Completely quiet, devastated as his team just lost one of the biggest games of their life.

Deontae has his forehead resting on the Locker, sweat dripping down his face.

INT. BASKETBALL COURT

The ball lands on the basket. Both Landry and Deontae had a confident smile on their face, until the ball rims out.

INT. LOCKER ROOM

Deontae gathers his things from his locker.

DEONTAE

...I mean when we look back, all we can think is damn Deontae should've taken that last shot.

Landry groans. He shuts his locker and starts heading out.

DEONTAE

Where you going Landry? You wanted the ball so bad, you was screaming for it. You had it and you blew it.

Landry quickly put's his things down, strikes over to Deontae and lands a blow.

The other teammates separate them, as the two continue to throw punches at each other.

Coach Halls comes around the corner, Yells at the boys and gets in to separate them.

HALLS

Hey yawl break it up. I said break it!

EXT. NEEDHAM HIGH- NIGHT

Halls rests on the wall, smoking a Cigarette, some Needham High players walk out with their Coach, MASON SIMMONS, (40s)

Mason sees Halls, he signals the boys to go away.

Mason stands next to Halls.

MASON

Hey.

HALLS

Hey.

MASON

That was pretty intense don't you think?

HALLS

Yeah.

MASON

Yeah, your boys did good, but, we weren't gonna let you come and trash us in our own house.

(Chuckles)

That'll be very humiliating.

MASON

Could you?

Mason gestures with his fingers like he's taking a smoke.

Halls fetches a pack of Cigarette from his jacket, Mason takes one.

MASON

Oh, you are a life saver.

Halls helps him light his Cigarette.

Beat.

MASON

Your boys... They're good, at least most of them. But they're messy, very messy, they're like an Octopus without a brain, y'know...

Mason laughs at his own analogy, Halls doesn't even hint at a smile.

MASON

The tentacles keep flapping around, it's kinda like y'know, the octopus has a brain up here.

(He points to his head)

And they got other brains in their tentacles.

(He demonstrates with his fingers)
So like there's no one source that controls everything, it's just like--

HALLS

I get your point.

MASON

Ahh. And that guy... Uhh... Player 8, what's his name again? Deontae... Yes, Deontae, he's really good, but he's very sloppy, he's like Rambo or John Matrix in Commando.

Mason laughs. Halls resists the urge to throw a punch at Mason, he just smokes his Cigarette

MASON

Sorry, sorry. I'm sorry. I'm just a very funny man, I joke about everything, I'm not making fun of you, no, off course not. Your boys did good... But mine did better.

Beat.

MASON

It's also like--

HALLS

This was only a minor setback, we'll get you guys next time.

MASON

(Smiles)

"Next time"... Right--

HALLS

And Deontae... You're gonna wish you were his Coach, your boys won't stand the test of time, in a long run, they'll fade away, like dust, Deontae, his name will be clamoured in the mouths of millions of fans. He will lose a few games... But... he'll win a whole lot more... You're gonna wish you were his Coach.

Halls exits.

EXT. RALEIGH NORTH CAROLINA- NIGHT

We see Coach Halls truck ride through the Projects of Raleigh North Carolina. Glamorous graffiti on the wall, Streetlight beams over the project buildings.

INT. COACH HALLS TRUCK- MOVING- NIGHT

Halls is driving while Deontae idles on the passengers sit, staring out the window.

Halls glances at Deontae.

HALLS

You know you couldn't do anything about that last shot right? You would've did the same thing if the ball was in your hands.

DEONTAE

No, I would've made the shot.

Halls looks over at Deontae.

HALLS

Landry shot at least 60 percent tonight. You shot 43.

DEONTAE

I had more points and steals.

HALLS

And he had more Assist and blocks. You ask me he was the player of the game he had the right to take that shot.

DEONTAE

I shouldn't have gave up that shot. We could've been celebrating right now.

HALLS

I understand that son but plays like that is what builds character. It took you having character and putting your pride to the side for you to pass that ball to Landry. You ask me, You shouldn't beat yourself up about it. While there's room for improvement, everything works out in a given pace, from time to time.

Coach Hall's picks up a news paper that was beside him. He hands it over to Deontae.

Deontae reads the papers.

"High school Phenom Deontae Lockwood Becomes top 15 of the best High-School basketball players in the country".

Deontae's mood shifts, a smile builds up on his face.

DEONTAE

(Excited)

Yo! this is crazy top 15 in the country though. Who you know doing it like me coach?

HALLS

(Laughs)

Not to many son. Not to many.

DEONTAE

Shit, all right.

Deontae admires the papers.

HALLS

Your mom's gonna be proud of you and so am I.

DEONTAE

I can't wait to tell her this.

Halls turns right at the light. We notice a car coming from the same direction, speeding.

INT. SEDAN- MOVING

FREDERICK WELLS 20s is listening to a 50 Cent song as he drives, he bites down on his Burgers, but it slips off his hand and falls under the seat.

FREDERICK

Fuck.

Frederick goes down to pick his food up.

EXT. DOWNTOWN RALEIGH- CONTINUOUS

Deontae sees the car first.

DEONTAE
Coach, look out!

Immediately, Frederick also notices the truck coming his way.

FREDERICK
Shit, shit, shit, shit!

Halls makes a hard right, he successfully dodges the Sedan, but the truck collides into another parked car, causing it to tumble and land fatally.

Civilians are distraught as they gather the scene.

The Sedan idles for a minute and then Frederick steps out of the vehicle. He looks around. He notices blood dripping from his forehead, he had bashed his head into the window by the driver's seat. He turns and sees people gather near the truck.

Filled with anxiety, Frederick jumps back into his car and drives off.

Some people see him driving away.

WOMAN
Hey! What the fuck! We just gone to
let that motherfucker drive off,
Somebody go get that cracker.

Some guys head over to the truck which was lying upside down.

Halls and Deontae are inside the truck, upside down, their faces covered in blood.

INT. KITCHEN- NIGHT

Deontae (16) eats cereals from a bowl, that has "Number 1 Player" Imprinted on it. Deontae is still wearing his Jersey.

LUCY LOCKWOOD (31) rests on the counter and listens to Deontae's story, she has an unfading smile on her face.

DEONTAE
It was only 30 seconds left on the
timer, I just dunked our last shot,
and I knew Raegan High ain't gon' let
us score another goal. But, we had
them over by 10 points, there was

nothing they could do within that 30 seconds that's gonna save them. They just wanted to score and get rid of that gap, at this point they were looking for a three pointer or a two pointer, so we don't have to tell them after the game that we beat them by 10 points...

Lucy chuckles, Deontae takes in two spoons of his cereal.

DEONTAE

But, Mama, I wasn't gon' let them score another goal.

Lucy laughs.

DEONTAE

I wasn't... So the final seconds was just passing and throwing and passing and throwing. We didn't even let them cross our three point line, it was hilarious.

LUCY

Well, I'm glad that you're having fun.

DEONTAE

Coach says "hi".

LUCY

Oh, yeah, I'll give him a call later in the morning.

DEONTAE

Sure.

Deonate drinks the milk off the plates, Lucy attempts to take the bowl.

LUCY

Let me.

DEONTAE

Don't worry, ma', I'll do the dishes.

Deontae heads to the sink, the bowl slips from his hand but he immediately catches it.

DEONTAE

Slick.

Deontae wears a bragging smile as he glances to his mother.

Lucy rolls her eyes and chuckles.

DEONTAE

Always been a good catcher.

Deontae does the dishes.

INT. KITCHEN- CONTINUOUS

The maid, LESLIE, 20s is watching youtube videos as she sits on the kitchen countertop.

Lucy, 32 enters. Leslie immediately gets down.

LESLIE

Ma'am?

LUCY

You're still here?

LESLIE

I uh.

(Chuckles nervously)

I, wanted to use your WIFI for a minute.

LUCY

Oh... Okay.

LESLIE

Thanks, Miss Lockwood.

Leslie continues watching youtube videos.

Lucy opens the cupboard where there are several ceramic bowls, but one is missing.

LUCY

Hey, leslie, there's one bowl missing.

LESLIE

Huh?

LUCY

It had something imprinted on it--

LESLIE

Oh... I'm sorry Miss lockwood, I was
arranging the dishes in the cupboard
and it fell off my hands and broke.
I'm so sorry.

Lucy walks to the bin. Leslie looks at her with a worried
face.

Lucy sees the broken peices of her son's favorite bowl in the
bin, a thought grazed her mind, this was a premonition, and
not a very good one.

Almost immediately the Telephone rings.

Lucy heads to it and answers the call.

LUCY

Hello.

We do not hear the person speaking on the Phone but from
Lucy's expression, as her face starts to melt and tears fill
her eyes, we know it's not good news.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOME- CONTINUOUS

We watch Lucy through the window as she lets go off the
telephone, gets down on her knees and cries bitterly.

SMASH INTO:

TITLE CARD

SUPER: YEAR 2023

INT. LUCY LOCKWOOD HOME - MORNING

MALIK LOCKWOOD (17), searches the couches in the living room.

MALIK

Aye ma have you seen my keys?!

Lucy (42) prepares breakfast in the kitchen; Bacon and Eggs.

LUCY

I don't know baby, where is the last
place you remember having them?

Malik gets down and peers under the couch, he squeezes his hands through the space to see if he can get anything.

We survey the living room, adorned with portraits showcasing Deontae's basketball glory days, as well as some capturing the cherished moments of Deontae, Malik, and Lucy together.

Malike gets up, frustrated, he heads to the kitchen.

LUCY
You find it already?

MALIK
No!

LUCY
All right, all right, calm down.

Lucy pauses to think, Malik waits for her response.

LUCY
Well, have you checked your closet,
the clothes you wore the other day?

MALIK
Oh, yes, yes, yes, shit I forgot.

LUCY
Stop Cussing.

MALIK
Sorry Ma.

Malik runs, heading to his room.

LUCY
No running in the house!

Malik stops running and then walks to his room.

We see posters of famous NBA Players on the wall. We see he loves basketball just like his big brother.

Malik opens his closet and searches through his jackets and hoodies, he takes out his keys from one of the pockets.

MALIK
Sweet.

Malik throws his bag around his shoulder. There's a poster of Allen Iverson on the wall. Malik touches and kisses it, he proceeds to do an Allen Iverson crossover move as he exits the room, he mimics a powerful dunk at an imaginary hoop.

MALIK

Hell yeah!

Malik heads out.

MALIK

See you later Ma!

LUCY

Wait, aren't you going to--

Lucy sees that Malik had already left the house.

Lucy sighs, she sits down and starts eating. We get another angle of her and see "Deontae No 1" tattooed on her arms.

EXT. MILLBROOK HIGHSCHOOL- MORNING

A typical high-school. Students gather outside, chatting amongst themselves.

A gray Honda civic drives into the school parking garage.

Malik is approached by his childhood best friends OMARI TOWNS (17), QUENZEL FILLERY (17).

Malik gets out the car.

OMARI

Yo Malik, What's up my dawg?

They do their signature handshake.

MALIK

Wow! yawl niggas literally just couldn't wait till I got in the school building?

QUENZEL

Nah we couldn't for what we have to tell you my boy.

MALIK

How did yawl know where I was gone to park?

QUENZEL

I mean, You have been parking here since last year?

MALIK

I ain't park here yesterday.

OMARI

But you parked there the day before.

MALIK

Whatever. so, what?

They start's walking towards the school building.

OMARI

So look, word went around that Coach Sights is done. They fired that nigga. The new coach's coming today.

Malik stops where he is. Looks at the two as they are steps ahead.

MALIK

For real?

Omari and Quenzel nod their heads simultaenuously.

MALIK

Mr. Sights noncoaching ass finally got fired. Maybe yawl can win something now.

Malik and Quenzel gives each other look and laughs.

QUENZEL

Nigga I play, but I can't lie that shit was funny.

They enter the school building.

INT. HALLWAY- CONTINUOUS

Immediately they enter, they are approached by the quirky Cheer captain MONIQUE HODGES (17).

MONIQUE

Hey losers. Listen I don't know if you plan on winning this year, But I would like to ask--

QUENZEL

Bye Monique.

They walks past her. Monique turns around towards them.

MONIQUE

That's why you niggas suck now. Don't want nobody help.

The bell Rings.

INT. CLASSROOM- MORNING

Malik sits behind by the corner, whilst the other students pay attention to the teacher, he has his phone under the table, he's watching John Wall Highlights.

The Teacher stops and sees Malik's eyes looking under the table, the students all turn to Malik.

TEACHER

Malik, What is the definition of Environmental Science?

Malik puts off his phone and looks up.

MALIK

Uh... That's easy, The study of the environment that includes physical, bio, and social.

TEACHER

Okay now, Malik. I see you, but you still need to pay attention and turn off them NBA highlights.

Students in the classroom make a sound "ooouu"

Malik puts his phone into his pocket.

INT. CORNER STORE - DAY

ADAM HAYNES (18), enters. Adam has a calm but tough-guy demeanor.

Adam gestures with his face a greeting at TOMMY HILLS (51) the Cashier.

TOMMY
That's good morning Sir for you, I
ain't one of your homeboys.

ADAM
Good morning... Sir.

Adam rolls his eyes.

TOMMY
(Murmurs)
These kids, they be very fucking
disrespectful these days.

Adam walks to a Freezer, and picks out a Soda, a little boy, holding a small basketball walks up to him.

KID
Diet Coke, Please.

Adam turns to look at the boy, he sees the ball and gazes deeply at it for a beat.

KID
Sir?

Adam snaps out of it.

ADAM
Don't call me Sir, I'm 17.

Adam opens the freezer, the door hits the ball off the kid's hand, it rolls away.

A man picks it up. It's GARY MILES (30s). Gary constantly wore a grin, exuding handsomeness with his chiseled jawlines. His unpredictable nature instilled fear in many people.

Adam is shocked to see him, but he maintains his calm, he just stares at Gary.

GARY
Here you go kid.

KID
Thank you.

GARY
Did you watch the game today?

KID
I did, with my dad.

GARY
Oh did you? That's amazing, a lot of
people love basketball.

Gary rolls his eyes to Adam and then back to the kid. Gary takes the diet coke from Adam and hands it over to the boy.

GARY
I believe this is yours.

KID
Thank you.

The boy runs to his father. Gary and Adam lock eyes, tension filling the air.

Gary smiles again.

GARY
Adam, my boy, what's with the look,
ain't you happy to see me?

Gary gives him a gentle jab on the chest.

GARY
You a good looking kid, but I've never
liked that glare on your face.

Gary wraps his hand around Adam's neck and pulls him closer.

GARY
Come on, we're friends, aren't we?

Adam and Gary head to the counter.

The boy waves goodbye at Gary and Adam before he exits the store with his dad. Gary waves back, Adam doesn't.

Gary takes the Soda can from Adam's hand and places it on the counter, he rests on it.

GARY
What's up, Uncle Tommy?

Tommy is visibly irritated by Gary.

TOMMY

I'm not your uncle. That'll be 50 cents.

Adam searches his pockets.

GARY

Nonsense, daddy's here.

Gary drops some coins on the table, as he does, Tommy observes Adam, Adam looks tensed.

TOMMY

Adam is this guy bothering you?

GARY

I'm not.

TOMMY

I wasn't talking to you.

GARY

Okay.

(Turns to Adam)

Adam am I bothering you?

Beat.

ADAM

N-- No.

GARY

See? "No"

ADAM

Appreciate your concern.

GARY

(Rudely with a smirk on his face)

Thanks for your concern.

Adam exits. Gary is about leaving--

TOMMY

One of these days, they're going to find your body in the streets, with bullet holes punched into them.

Gary pauses, he turns to Tommy and glares at him.

GARY

I'll make sure to go out with a bang.

Gary's smile builds back up again and he exits the store.

INT. MILLBROOK HIGH GYM - DAY

Malik and his friends enter, they're in their jersey's they head to the Court, the Millbrook Players are practicing.

Malik and his friends sit on a bench. Malik ties his shoe laces.

JORDAN LYLES (18) a loud-mouth, pompous and aggressive.

Jordan skillfully maneuvers past defenders, effortlessly dribbles past his opponents, and executes a magnificent dunk, triumphantly scoring the ball into the net.

Jordan spreads his hands high up and looks up.

JORDAN

Nobody, no-fucking-body.

Jordan spots Malik and his friends. The excitement in his face fades away.

JORDAN

You gotta be fucking kidding me!

Jordan storms to Malik.

PLAYER 1

Yo, Jordan, what up?

Jordan ignores them.

Quenzel sees Jordan approaching them.

QUENZEL

Yo Malik, we got company.

Malik glances at Jordan and puts his head back down.

MALIK

This Nigga.

JORDAN

Hey you. How many times do I have to tell you? You're not allowed here.

MALIK

Says who?

JORDAN

Says me.

MALIK

All the more reason why I should stay.

JORDAN

You're not even on the team, if you love Basketball so bad and you want to watch, go join the cheerleaders or remain on the bench, nobody wants you on this court.

Malik gets up and walks pass him.

JORDAN

Hey, I'm talking to you.

MALIK

Or maybe you're just afraid I'd beat you.

JORDAN

(Scoffs)

What? You? Beat me?

MALIK

Yes. You're afraid that someone who's not on the team would be able to trash the captain of the team.

JORDAN

You've gone delulu.

(To Quenzel and Omari)

Is he always like this?

Malik goes to pick up the ball.

MALIK

Well, there's always one way to find out.

INT. HALLWAY- DAY

ROMAN SHAW (30s) fit and athletic he walks down with
PRINCIPAL SMITH (50s) who is giving him a tour.

PRINCIPAL SMITH
How did you find the field?

ROMAN
Pretty standard, it'll do.

Smith laughs.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
What's funny?

PRINCIPAL SMITH
Pretty standard? Must have High
expectations Coach.

Roman loves over to Smith.

ROMAN
I mean when we talk about my job being
on the line, I have no choice but to
have high expectation's.

SMITH
I'm loving the spirit.

INT. MILLBROOK HIGH GYM - CONTINUOUS

Roman stops by the door and examines everyone at the gym, he
sees the students playing in the basketball court.

SMITH
Well, there you have it, you've got a
lot of toys to play with.

Roman looks at Smith in an awkward manner.

ROMAN
That is very, very inappropriate.

Smith shrugs, Roman enters.

Roman enters and sits on the bench, he watches the players.
Roman takes out a bag of Cheetos and starts eating as he
watches.

Malik glances at Roman briefly.

JORDAN
Hey, I'm right here.

Malik turns to Jordan.

JORDAN
Come on.

The other players stand aside and watch.

Malik starts to bounce the ball.

JORDAN
Come on boy, yo mama done wash those
tiny little butt cheeks.

Malik moves closer with crossover dribbles. Jordan spreads his arms wide to. Malik successfully evades Jordan, he runs to dunk a goal.

QUENZEL
Yeah, baby!

Malik smirks at Jordan.

Roman watches.

They're back in the middle of the court. Malik performs the same move again, evades Jordan and is heading towards the net, he dunks, Jordan jumps almost immediately and slaps the ball out of his hand.

JORDAN
Woah!

Jordan laughs and does some dance moves.

They go again, this time, Jordan has the ball, he dribbles but Malik gets a hold of the ball, Malik runs to score, Jordan slaps the ball off his hand.

JORDAN
Yeah!

Jordan laughs boisterously, he's getting to Malik who is now visibly annoyed.

JORDAN

What's wrong? You gon' cry home to
mommy?

Jordan's friends laugh at Malik.

Quenzel and Omari encourage Malik.

OMARI

You can do this, don't listen to them'
fat ass Niggas.

Jordan and Malik go another round. Jordan has the ball, he
dribbles, and unexpectedly jumps up for a three-pointer.

The ball lands inside the net.

PLAYER 1

Yo' final round guys.

Jordan glides his thumb delicately across his neck as his
gaze viscously fixates on Malik.

Jordan regains possession of the ball and starts to dribble.
However, this time, Malik manages to snatch it from his
grasp. Jordan remains in his path as Malik skillfully
dribbles and executes a swift Euro-step, successfully
tricking Jordan into moving in the same direction.

Seizing the opportunity, Malik attempts a three-pointer from
his current position, but Jordan expertly swats the ball out
of his hand.

JORDAN

Yes!

MALIK

Hey, that's a tie.

JORDAN

You still didn't beat me.

Jordan laughs, then puts back a serious face.

JORDAN

Now get the fuck off my court.

Malik walks away, his friends go after him.

Roman sits there and watches.

INT. WAFFLE HOUSE- DAY

Lucy cracks open an egg on the grill pan. It fries.

LUCY
Bacon-egg all-star meal coming up
right now, Susan.

SUSAN, 30s, charismatic, Lucy's close friend. Susan is on the other side of the counter; she's arranging the dishes.

SUSAN
Heard you on that, Lucy.

Lucy's attention is swiftly drawn to the T.V.

NEWSCASTER
Breaking news today, as we bring you a tragic incident involving a 17-year-old boy who goes by the name of Darius Linder. He lost his life in a devastating car accident on West Martin Road. Stay tuned as we delve deeper into this developing story.

Lucy gazes at the TV, a long pause. In that moment, the past washes over her mind.

A close-up of her Tattoo "Deontae" on her hand.

LUIS (O.S.)
Lucy!

Lucy is snapped back to the present.

The Manager, LUIS (50s) huge and grumpy, but a softie on the inside.

LUIS
That better not be the eggs you serve
my customers.

Lucy looks down and sees the burnt egg.

LUCY
Shit!

Lucy scrapes the egg off the grill and dumps it into the trash.

Susan looks over at Lucy and laughs.

Lucy wipes the sweat off her forehead. We see scars on her wrist.

INT. MILLBROOK HIGH- DAY

Malik rests on the bench, Roman sits next to him, he had opened another bag of chips.

ROMAN

That move, the Euro-step, I've seen very few players perfect it. But I've seen a lot of players do it so excellently in animes. It only takes one step forward and one step backward but, it's not as easy as it sounds... But that's why I'm here.

MALIK

I think you should be talking to those guys.

Malik gestures to Jordan and his friends.

ROMAN

Why not you?

MALIK

Cos' I'm not in the team, I don't play the game.

ROMAN

But you love the game.

MALIK

Yeah, but that don't mean I have to play the game. Basketballs got like a billion fans do you think all billions of them take it up as a profession?

Beat.

ROMAN

I saw the way you played, you ain't no fan, you love the game, and you want to play the game.

MALIK

So, you're the new Coach everybody's been yapping on about? What makes you so special?

ROMAN

I ain't special, I just coach real good.

MALIK

Like what you're doing to me right now?

Roman shrugs. Malik looks him in the eye, for a moment he considers. Malik gets up.

MALIK

Nah. I don't play.

Malik is walking away.

ROMAN

Then I better not see you in my Court.

Malik pauses, he could turn around and change his mind, but he walks away.

INT. PRINCIPAL OFFICE - MID-DAY

Landry, 23, sits next to Smith. Smith is going through a yearbook.

SMITH

Ahh. There you are. I know I've seen your face somewhere here. I'm sorry, I just got appointed 2 years ago.

LANDRY

That's okay.

SMITH

Coaching?

LANDRY

Yes.

SMITH

We already got a coach.

LANDRY

Oh... I see.

SMITH

And besides, we would have to review a track record before we can even consider appointing you.

Landry becomes nervous.

LANDRY

Ahh...

SMITH

You were amongst Deontae Lockwood's set, right?

LANDRY

Yes.

SMITH

Ahh. I may have seen you in one of the pictures.

LANDRY

Yeah.

SMITH

You know he has a brother here and I must tell you, the apples didn't fall too far apart...

Beat. The two exchange an awkward stare.

SMITH

That was-- wrong...

Smith chuckles nervously.

SMITH

You know what, let me talk to Roman, he's our coach, newly appointed, we haven't quite accessed him with the students, but he's got an amazing track record. Maybe he'd let you work as an assistant.

LANDRY

Yes, that will be awesome.

SMITH

Perfect.

INT. RALPH'S GYM- DAY

RALPH, 30s crosses his legs on a bench and watches funny cat videos on his phone.

The resonant thud of a gloved fist colliding with a punching bag captures our attention, directing our gaze to Gary and Adam. Gary executes powerful punches, while Adam adeptly secures the bag in place. Aside from them, there's no one in the Gym.

Gary lands a hard blow and goes to grab his bottle of water. Adam massages the pain off his elbow and goes to sit.

Gary drinks, he gazes at Adam with one eye.

GARY

Wanna drink?

ADAM

I'm good.

GARY

Suit yourself.

Gary sits down, facing Adam.

GARY

So, listen, I understand you've been trying to start back focusing on school and shit. I respect that. But Adam you came to me, wanting me to change your life. You wanted me to help you touch some money. Right?

ADAM

Yeah, but--

GARY

But what? That basketball starting to call your name, isn't it?

Gary grabs a towel from off the chair beside him and wipes the sweat off his face. As he does, Adam waits.

GARY

You know, you're just like me. Soon as I felt like shit was getting a little tough at home I wanted to run and jump in the streets, earn that quick money.

(Grins)

But, Adam, what we do is toxic, once you get in, you get out, you burn, still.

ADAM

I'm not built for this.

GARY

Nobody ever is, at least from the start. I wasn't.

ADAM

Listen, if I got to sell a little bit more dope just for me to be done with this, That's fine. I'll so it.

Gary grins at Adam. Intrigued.

GARY

Okay bet. You want out?

Adam doesn't give a direct response.

GARY

I want you to do a hit on Mr. T's store. Easy peasy, right?

Adam wants to go off but keeps his composure, He laughs.

ADAM

You want me to rob Tommy's store? Ain't no way I'm getting away with that.

GARY

Shit, you want out, don't you? This ain't gonna be easy.

INT. HALLWAY- DAY

Roman sits on a bench as he gazes at the 2003 portrait of Deontae and the other basketball players.

Landry approaches.

LANDRY

Mr. Shaw.

Roman looks at Landry while opening a bag of Chips.

ROMAN

Landry?

LANDRY

Yeah.

ROMAN

Great. Have a seat.

Landry sits next to Roman. Landry gazes at the portrait. At himself in the picture.

ROMAN

What do you crunch?

LANDRY

What?

ROMAN

What do you crunch?

Roman shows Landry his chips.

LANDRY

Oh... Uh... Fritos.

ROMAN

Oh. that's like my top 5...

Roman shows Landry the brand name on his chips, "Hot fried and Chester".

ROMAN

So hot, I can eat this all day.

Landry nods his head and gazes at the portrait again.

Roman glances at Landry and back at the portrait.

Landry focuses on Deontae.

ROMAN

He came and stole the spotlight. There was nothing really special about him,

he was cocky, aggressive. But, the people at the bleachers, all they see is the player holding the ball and he held it 60 percent of the game... He didn't deserve to die.

Beat.

ROMAN
Assistant coach, huh?

Landry nods his head.

ROMAN
Well, welcome back.

Roman cleans his hands and shakes Landry.

INT. MILLBROOK HIGH GYM- MOMENTS LATER

The guys are practicing when Roman and Landry walk in.

Quenzel nudges Omari.

QUENZEL
Hey, it's that guy from yesterday, the one who was lurking.

OMARI
Oh, what's he doing here?

Jordan joins the conversation.

JORDAN
He's probably the new coach.

OMARI
Who's the other guy with him?

JORDAN
That's Landry, he played with Malik's brother.

QUENZEL
Oh.

Roman approaches them and signals the other players to gather.

They all gather.

PLAYER 1
Who are you?

ROMAN
Look at me.

Roman gestures, presenting his outfit; He's wearing a tracksuit a whistle hanging around his neck and a jockey cap on his head.

Beat.

ROMAN
This is my assistant, some of you may know him and if you don't, well, I'd say you'd have to be well versed in Millbrook's history.

LANDRY
I'm Landry.

ROMAN
I only got one rule. You must follow all of my instructions no matter what.

PLAYER 2
You haven't told us your name y--

ROMAN
I'm Roman Shaw, you can call me Coach Roman.

OMARI
Coach Ramen?

The boys laugh.

ROMAN
Yes. That's also my name. But if you call me that again you'd be mopping the bathroom floors for the rest of the semester.

OMARI
Sorry, Coach.

Roman sense someone, he turns around and sees Malik up on the bleachers. Malik gets up and walks out.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOME- EVENING

Lucy's truck is parked outside.

INT. LUCY'S BEDROOM- CONTINUOUS

Lucy sits on the edge of the bed, holding a knife. Lucy presses the knife down on her wrist, about to make a cut. Her phone rings.

Lucy is startled, she drops the knife and goes to pick up the phone.

LUCY
Hey, Smith.

SMITH (V.O.)
Lucia... How are you doing?

LUCY
I mean... I'm okay.

SMITH (V.O.)
We should really get together one of these days, it's been a while since we hanged out.

LUCY
Yeah, sure... It's just... Work.

Lucy lets out a sigh.

SMITH (V.O.)
Don't you worry dear, come to me, you know you can always talk to me.

LUCY
Thank you.

SMITH (V.O.)
... So, what have you decided on Malik?

LUCY
Malik?

Lucy gets up and paces the room.

LUCY
What about him?

SMITH (V.O.)

Let's not try to act like the kid
doesn't like ball, he does, but what's
stopping him from joining the team.

LUCY

R--Really... I always thought he
was...

SMITH (V.O.)

Well, he's not.

Lucy hears the door open and close.

LUCY

I'll talk to you later.

Lucy heads into the--

INT. LIVING ROOM- CONTINUOUS

Malik is just entering.

LUCY

Hey.

MALIK

Hey.

LUCY

How was school?

MALIK

Cool.

An awkward silence.

MALIK

Ah... Okay.

Malik is heading to his room.

LUCY

Have you considered joining the school
team?

MALIK

(Sighs frustratedly)
That nosy Mr. Smith.

LUCY

He's just concerned. He knows you can play that's why he wants you to play.

MALIK

No! He knows Deontae can play... Not me.

LUCY

B--

MALIK

I got homework to do.

Malik enters his room and shuts the door.

INT. VAN- NIGHT

Adam and Gary idle.

Gary gazes at Adam. Adam doesn't make eye contact.

The van opens, LAMONTE MAYO AKA LITTLE MAN 19, Short, his friends describe him as a joyful Labrador, and he's got a lot of friends.

Little man is with so many masks.

LITTLE MAN

I got a lot with me.

Adam examines the masks, he puts his fingers through the holes.

GARY

What's the matter if he sees you anyways... The old man can't do shit. He'll obviously be scared shitless... I say, you don't need a mask at all.

LITTLE MAN

I robbed a bank with a Dali mask before, it was fucking cool.

Adam finds one, he puts it on and looks at his face in the mirror.

LITTLE MAN
I'm throwing a party tomorrow, you
have to be there.

ADAM
Okay.

Little man watches as Adam looks at himself in the mirror.

LITTLE MAN
Does he really gotta do this?

GARY
Yes.

LITTLE MAN
Why?

GARY
He wants out.

LITTLE MAN
(To Adam)
You want out?

GARY
He wants to play basketball.

LITTLE MAN
Oh he's great, you should see him
play. He's point guard.

Gary doesn't respond. Adam seem to have gotten the right fit,
he looks at Gary.

GARY
It suits you.

Adam opens the Van and exits.

LITTLE MAN
Be careful.

GARY
He'll be fine. He was born for this.

Little man drives away.

EXT. CORNER STORE- CONTINUOUS

Adam is approaching the store. A Couple is just leaving.

Adam practices changing his voice, he forms a deeper tone.

ADAM

Give me all your money... G--Give me
all your money.

(Normal voice)

No, no... That's not it.

(Deep voice)

Give me all your money.

INT. CORNER STORE- CONTINUOUS

Adam walks in. There's no one in the store, just Tommy.

Adam turns the sign on the door, "Closed"

Adam points the gun at Tommy. Tommy puts his hands up.

Adam speaks in a deep tone. He doesn't yell.

ADAM

E--Empty the counter.

Tommy lowers his hand down towards the counter, his eyes slowly dart to where the telephone was.

ADAM

(Clears throat)

D--Don't think about it.

Tommy examines Adam with an eye. Adam's hand is shaking.

ADAM

Hurry.

TOMMY

You don't want to do this son.

Tommy gazes into Adam's eyes. Adam moves closer with the gun.

ADAM

Don't look at me.

TOMMY

Okay, okay.

Tommy looks down and takes out money from the counter. Adam frantically looks from one end to the other. Tommy raises his eyes up and gazes at Adam briefly.

TOMMY

Adam?

Adam's eyes widen.

ADAM

Shut up and--

TOMMY

Adam, you don't have to do this.

Tommy is moving closer.

ADAM

Stay back.

Adam pulls the trigger. Tommy takes a shot to the shoulder.

ADAM

Fuck!

Adam wanted to get down and tend to Tommy, but he grabs the money and runs away.

EXT. CORNER STORE- CONTINUOUS

Adam runs out, the Van stops next to him, he enters. The Van drives off.

INT. VAN- MOVING

Gary laughs and squeezes Adam's shoulder.

GARY

You did it!

Adam is still in shock.

ADAM

I shot him.

GARY

That fucker deserved it.

Adam hands over the money to Gary.

GARY

Ahh. No. You had fun didn't you?

Adam glares at him.

GARY

Don't worry, you're free to go, but I know, you'll be back.

Gary ruffles Adam's head and continues laughing.

INT.PARK- NIGHT

Malik plays ball with Omari and Quenzel.

They're finished. Malik bumps fist with them.

MALIK

See you boys in school man. I'm finna head home.

OFF, Quenzel and Omari sitting on the park bench smoking a spliff.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOME- NIGHT

Malik sees Principal Smith's car outside.

INT. LOCKWOOD HOME- CONTINUOUS

Malik enters. Smith is sitting on the couch.

SMITH

Hey.

Lucy is doing the dishes in the Kitchen.

LUCY

Welcome home, honey.

MALIK

Ma.

Malik turns to Smith.

MALIK

What do you want?

SMITH

I and your mom, we're good friends.

MALIK
She's not gonna marry you.

SMITH
(Nervously)
What? That's not. We're very good
friends.

MALIK
Yeah, I'm watching you.

Malik walks in. Smith gets up.

SMITH
Hey, can we talk? Outside

MALIK
No.

SMITH
Come on, just briefly.

Malik considers.

MALIK
You have five minutes.

Malik is heading outside.

SMITH
You know you're a pain in the ass,
right?

MALIK
You got 3 minutes.

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOME- CONTINUOUS

They both walk outside. Smith and Malik stare at each other.

MALIK
Your time's counting.

SMITH
I--

MALIK
I already know what you want to say.

SMITH

And you're still here... Which makes me think that you still got interest for the game.

MALIK

I don't.

SMITH

But, you can play.

MALIK

That's--

SMITH

And I mean you, not your brother.

MALIK

... You've been talking to my mother way too much.

Smith takes few steps closer.

SMITH

Don't just do it for you... Do it for her. She's a trainwreck, she needs you to give meaning to her life... I know you wanna play and you feel like people are gonna look at you to best your brother, so what even is the big deal in that?

MALIK

They're just gonna know me as "Deontae's brother".

SMITH

Then play hard... Hard so that they know you as Malik Lockwood.

Malik considers, he walks towards the door and turns to Smith.

MALIK

You can go home now, I hear you... Also, I'm telling my mom you called her a train-wreck.

Malik shuts the door.

EXT. MOVING AMBULANCE- NIGHT

Ziping inside of a moving ambulance, Having our eyes set on a Fractured and disabled Tommy Hills. Tommy Laying on the stretcher, Breathing through a tube and can barley speak.

PARAMEDICS

Sir are you okay? You have to talk to us. (Tommy doesn't say anything)

Paramedic looks over her shoulder.

PARAMEDICS

He still won't say a word.

Over her shoulder, In the corner Is RASHAD HILLS (25), Son of Tommy. Rashad's sits there with his business suit well tied.

On his face gives he's soaping over his father but still hates his guts.

RASHAD

(sighs) Thank you. I'll take it from here.

Rashad hovers over his father, Look's him in his eyes.

RAHSAD

Dammit Pops.

OFF, We see the ambulance speed dow the street. What a crazy night in down town Raleigh.

INT. HOSPITAL- LATER

ON Tommy, Laying on the hospital bed, Hopeless. Beside him is his armor, His rock, His son Rashad. Rashad sits there staring at his dad, Thinking how thing's have went wrong.

Suddenly.. Tommy moves one of his fingers. Rashad sits up.

RAHSAD

Pops. Hey, You good?

Tommy looks at Rashad.

TOMMY

What you doing here boy?

Beat..

RAHSAD

To see if you are okay. What I can't
come see if my da-

TOMMY

Stop right there. You stopped being my
son, once you started repping that
badge. You don't deserve to call me
pops.

Rashad blankly stares at Tommy. Laughs while trying to fight
back tears.

RASHAD

You know what. I'm just gone let you
talk. All i need is answers on the
behalf of your shooting and I'm
leaving. Any specific attire, Any-

TOMMY

Get the fuck out Rashad.

Beat..

Rashad stares at Tommy for a second. Rashad then gets up and
leaves.

SUPER: 2005

EXT. RALEIGH NORTH CAROLINA- NIGHT

Coach Halls Truck somersaults and crashes upside down.

Frederick gets out of his car. Frantic. He flees.

WOMAN

Somebody go get that cracker.

EXT. STREET- NIGHT

Frederick runs into a street, he tries to catch his breath.

FREDERICK

Fuck! Fuck!

EXT. SHAW APARTMENT- NIGHT

Frederick knocks.

The door opens, it's Roman and his wife, MARISSA mid 20s, long braided hair.

Frederick is too scared to speak.

FREDERICK

I--I

MARISSA

Come on in.

Marissa holds him by the shoulders and takes him in.

SUPER: PRESENT

EXT. SHAW APARTMENT- DAY

Frederick knocks on the door. The door opens, Roman and Marissa opens the door.

MARISSA

Hey.

Marissa gives Frederick a big hug.

Frederick is nervous.

FREDERICK

Hi, Marissa.

MARISSA

Come on in.

INT. SHAW APARTMENT- LATER

They're all at the dining table, eating.

FREDERICK

Hey, so... I don't wanna be a bother to both of you.

MARISSA

Off course not.

FREDERICK

I just... I was just wandering if you can help me with a job, anything, I'll do anything. To help pay the bills.

MARISSA

Oh no, you don't have to do that.

FREDERICK

I have to... The-- Uh-- The guys at rehab recommended--

Marissa holds his hand.

MARISSA

Off course honey.

ROMAN

... It's not much, but I could get you a job at Millbrook, they're in need of a Janitor.

Marissa looks to Roman, "Really?"

MARISSA

But Honey, that's the.

ROMAN

Look, it doesn't matter, nobody knows, nobody will know, and hey, look at me.

Frederick looks at Roman.

ROMAN

It is high time, you stop beating yourself about this, wasn't that the whole point of your therapy? Accidents happen.

FREDERICK

Yeah... I'm fine... I'll take the job.

ROMAN

Perfect. You're following me to school today.

FREDERICK

Okay.

Frederick continues eating. Marissa gazes at him briefly and gently strokes his hair.

FREDERICK

I'm fine.

Frederick lets out a smile.

EXT. MILLBROOK HIGHSCHOOL- DAY

The students walk into the school.

INT. MILBROOK HIGHSCHOOL- LATER

Malik sits on a chair and gazes at Deontae's portrait.

Landry comes to join him.

LANDRY

Hey.

MALIK

Hey... Landry, right?

LANDRY

Yeah.

MALIK

... You played with my brother.

LANDRY

Yeah.

Beat.

MALIK

What was so special about him? Was it the way he balled? The way he treated people? What made him so special that he had to go on and live through me?

LANDRY

Really... nothing, he was just a regular guy who plays basketball, like everyone else, like you.

MALIK

... S--So why do I feel like I have to live up to him or something.

LANDRY

Really Bro. That is on you... I don't think anybody would want you to be like Deontae, your mom wouldn't. Deontae, he was cocky, aggressive, hot-headed, a complete lonewolf on the court, if you play with him, he ain't

gon' pass the ball to you, he'd score 80 percent of the goals, it's like it was Mill-brook high against Deontae and Needham. Needham was our last game together.

Landry sighs.

LANDRY

But, he was good. He was determined. I always envied him for that. He had everyone in the hood yelling he was the next Kobe.

Beat.

Landry gets up.

LANDRY

So, you're coming or what? The time to start your own legacy is now.

A brief pause. Malik gets up and follows Landry.

INT. MILLBROOK HIGH GYM- MOMENTS LATER

Landry and Malik enters.

Roman is with the other students, their attention is drawn to Landry and Malik.

JORDAN

This fucking guy... Keeps popping up everywhere.

Landry stands next to Roman. Malik walks to Roman. Roman gazes into his eyes, awkwardly.

Malik avoids eye contact, he's a bit nervous.

MALIK

Uhhh... I wanna play.

Roman ignores Malik for a second. He then responds.

ROMAN

Oh I'm sorry. You wanna do what?

MALIK

I wanna play.

ROMAN

You don't look like you want to play.

MALIK

What do you want me to do? Go down on my knees and beg?

ROMAN

That'll prove to me that you really want to play.

MALIK

(Scoffs)

Come on.

Beat.

ROMAN

What position you think you play?

MALIK

Point guard. And I don't have to think anything.

Roman looks over to Landry. Landry raises his eyebrows and looks down.

ROMAN

Allright, let's see what you can do.

Roman strongly hands the ball over to Malik.

Landry winks at Malik.

LATER

The boys are playing. They're going hard and aggressive.

Malik does a in-out crossover and freezes the defender, He drives, Behind the back passes it to Quenzel in the paint for a point.

LANDRY

That's it Malik.

Adam enters, nobody really notices him except Jordan.

Jordan runs to Adam.

JORDAN
Yo, where have you been?

ADAM
Uh--

JORDAN
That twat, You know Malik Lockwood the
new point-guard now right?

Adam looks at Malik play.

ADAM
What you mean he the new point guard?
Bro don't even hoop foreal. He come
his first day and now he automatically
the new point guard? Because of who
his brother is?

JORDAN
Look g, You better do something to get
your position back. I tried to tell
them you was gone to come back.

Jordan runs back to the court. Adam watches him as he quickly
glances at Malik looking back him.

EXT. MILLBROOK HIGHSCHOOL- MID-DAY

Everywhere is empty.

INT. MILBROOK HIGHSCHOOL- CONTINUE

Frederick is mopping the hallway. He stops and gazes at a
portrait of Deontae. He continues mopping the floors until..

A classroom door opens and Malik walks out, he steps on the
mop stick and it breaks in half.

MALIK
Oh, shit, my bad.

FREDERICK
It's okay.

MALIK
I'm sorry Mr... (Reads his name-tag)
Wells.

FREDERICK

It's okay. I can get another one from
the inventory.

MALIK

Ight. Well, Have a nice day now
Mr.Wells.

Frederick looks at Malik's face as he walks away, He
recognizes him.

FLASHBACK..

EXT. LOCKWOOD HOME- NIGHT

Frederick stands outside and gazes into the Lockwood home.

Through the window, he could see Lucy in black, in the arms
of some relative, consoling her.

7 years old Malik idles on the couch.

LATER

Malik sits on a bench outside, he throws a ball to a wall, it
bounces back, he catches it. He continues, until, the ball
doesn't hit the wall, it just rolls over on the ground.

Malik doesn't even bother to go get the ball.

SUPER: 2005

Frederick picks the ball and heads to Malik, he hands the
ball over to him and sits on the bench.

FREDERICK

Hey.

Malik doesn't give any response.

He just stares.

FREDRICK

I know, you shouldn't be talking to
strangers. But..

A long beat.

FREDERICK

I'm sorry.

Malik turns and looks up to Frederick, confused. Frederick puts his head down and cries.

FREDERICK

I'm so sorry.

Fredrick walks off, The guilt and karma sticks with him as he fades away.

BLACKOUT..

END OF PILOT.