

COLLEGIATE

Written by

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INT. CHURCH - NIGHT

An eclectic group of people, sit among pews that have seen better days. They listen to a WOMAN, up at the podium, struggle through a speech.

In the center of the room, nodding and listening intently is, BEN (40'S). He's all smiles but the deep lines on his face tell a different story.

WOMAN

I know it's only been a month but it feels different this time, you know? Like, I actually have a shot at this.

She holds her 1 month chip up, tears in her eyes.

WOMAN (CONT'D)

This is for my son.

Claps permeate around the room as she wipes her face.

EXT. CHURCH - LATER

Members of the NA group leave the church and climb into their respective vehicles.

Ben waits, by the door.

The woman, who was up on stage, steps out.

BEN

Hey...

She turns to him.

BEN (CONT'D)

That was really powerful. I'm happy for you.

WOMAN

Thanks. I'm hoping to be like you one day.

BEN

(chuckles)

Everyone has their own journey.

He pats her on the back.

BEN (CONT'D)

One day at a time.

INT. BEN'S HOME - NIGHT

The door unlocks and he steps inside a dark apartment

Groceries in hand, he heads into the kitchen. Placing the bags onto the counter, he grabs a cup and fills it with water from the tap.

He takes a big swig then refills the glass.

He bring the glass to his mouth again, then stops.

His eyes go wide and he reaches for a drawer next to the sink.

Across the room, in the darkness, a man's voice calls out.

MAN

Uh. Uh.

The lights flip on as Ben spins around.

Sitting at the kitchen table is, PROPHET (30'S), a hardened drug dealer.

He holds up a Glock.

PROPHET

Looking for this.

Two LARGE MEN, enter the kitchen and take hold of Ben.

They drag him over to the table and sit him down in front of Prophet.

PROPHET (CONT'D)

How was your meeting?

Ben frantically starts to think of excuses.

BEN

It's been real slow. People aren't buying like they used to. I'll have your -

SMACK.

His head jerks to the side as one of the henchmen backhands him.

He shuts up real quick.

PROPHET

You know what I hate?

Ben glances at Prophet out of the corner of his eye.

HENCHMAN 1

A liar?

PROPHET

That's right. And you -

He points to Ben.

PROPHET (CONT'D)

Are a fucking liar.

BEN

I swear to you -

Prophet holds his hand up.

PROPHET

You may have fooled me once, with your reformed born again bullshit, but what I've learned over the years is that once an addict you're always an addict.

Ben still tries to plead his case.

BEN

Prophet, I swear I didn't use any of it.

PROPHET

Then where are the pills? Where's my money?

Ben is silent.

PROPHET (CONT'D)

Hmmm?

He leans in and puts a finger behind his ear as if trying to listen.

PROPHET (CONT'D)

Sorry, I can't hear you.

Prophet motions to his men.

They pick Ben up then throw him down onto his back on top of the table.

They lift his shirt up.

Prophet pulls out a knife.

Ben struggles with the henchmen.

PROPHET (CONT'D)
I should cut you open and take back
what's mine.

He presses the blade against his stomach.

BEN
Please. No.

Prophet presses harder.

He breaks skin and a tiny sliver of blood runs down Ben's side.

BEN (CONT'D)
I'll get you your money!

PROPHET
Damn right you will.
(to henchmen)
Sit him up.

They lift him so he's now eye to eye with Prophet.

PROPHET (CONT'D)
No more chances, Benny.

He points the blade towards Ben's stomach.

PROPHET (CONT'D)
How's that star athlete of yours?

BEN
Leave him out of this.

PROPHET
You're in no position to negotiate.
He's making some money now isn't
he?

BEN
He's got nothing to do with this.

PROPHET
(laughs)
I decide that, don't I?

He cracks his neck and steps back.

PROPHET (CONT'D)
(to henchmen)

(MORE)

PROPHET (CONT'D)

We should pay him a visit shouldn't we?

Ben struggles under their grip.

BEN

If you touch him -

PROPHET

What?

Prophet raises the knife to Ben's neck.

PROPHET (CONT'D)

What're you going to do? Huh?

Ben deflates.

BEN

Please. Just leave him out of it.

Prophet nods to his men.

They release him and he slumps forward.

Prophet raises his head up.

PROPHET

Don't fuck with me. I will make your life a living hell.

(to men)

Let's go.

They head out of the room.

As the door slams behind them, Ben slumps into a chair and peers down at his blood stained shirt.

INT. YOUNG HOUSE - DAY

Bright morning sun shines in on packed boxes and plastic totes in the middle of a spacious room.

Sitting on the bed, among trophies, medals, and posters of football players is an athletic black boy, ROMAN YOUNG (18), lost in his thoughts.

He stares down at a photo of a black woman swinging a small black child near a jungle gym.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

The door opens as Roman quickly stuffs the photo into his bag.

He peers over at his adoptive white mother, LISA YOUNG (40's). There's a warmth about her that could make anyone feel safe.

LISA
Oh, you're up...Nervous?

A sympathetic smile crosses her face, as she peruses the room.

ROMAN
No. Just ready to go.

She takes hold of a medal in her hand.

LISA
It's all happening so fast.

MAN (O.S.)
Let's load up! Don't want to be late.

She laughs and shakes her head.

LISA
You get the punctuality from your father.

She places the palm of her hand on his cheek.

LISA (CONT'D)
Let's not keep your dad waiting.

She steps out of the room.

Roman slings a bag over his shoulder and picks up a couple of plastic totes.

He peers into the bedroom across the hall.

His brother, NEAL (18), glances up at him from behind thick black rimmed glasses.

Their rooms are both filled with trophies but Neal's is littered with model planes and robots.

One clearly athletic and the other academic. At times oil and water.

Roman forces a smile which Neal doesn't reciprocate. He averts his attention back to his desk.

Roman continues down the hall and almost crashes into his little sister, AVA (14).

AVA
You need help?

ROMAN
Yeah. Thanks.

She takes one of the plastic totes allowing him to see.
They walk down the stairs towards the front door.

EXT. YOUNG HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Outside, on the driveway, they find their father, GENE (late 40's) filling the family SUV.

AVA
I can't believe you're both leaving.

ROMAN
More space for you.

Their father folds down the seats.

GENE
I'm starting to think we should have gotten a trailer hitch. Where's your brother? We need to get going.

AVA
In his room.

GENE
Get him out here. We don't want Coach Bowman waiting on us.

ROMAN
He doesn't have to move in until tomorrow. Why don't we just go today, if it's easier?

GENE
I'm not making two trips.

He walks over to the front door.

GENE (CONT'D)
NEAL! Let's get a move on!

Roman moves past his father and heads up the stairs to get more stuff.

As he steps onto the second floor landing, his brother is waiting with his own belongings.

NEAL

The star can't be late for his big debut.

ROMAN

It's not my fault.

NEAL

Yeah. Nothing is cause you're perfect.

Neal shoves past him and heads down the stairs.

Roman sighs and steps into his room. He looks around and takes in his adolescence one last time.

A text comes through on his phone.

BEN

Hey, can we talk?

GENE (O.S.)

Let's go, y'all!

Roman slips the phone back into his pocket, without responding, and picks up another box as he exits the room.

INT. NEW HOUSE - DAY

A realtor leads a middle-aged couple through double doors.

REALTOR

And here we have the primary suite.

Both enter and gawk at the immense space. The woman, SUSAN (late 40'S), usually poised has lost all composure at sight of the bathroom.

SUSAN

Jackson! The closet.

The man, JACKSON (Jack) BOWMAN (50), peers over at the realtor.

JACK

I think you've outdone yourself.

He looks like a coach, in his khakis and red University of Georgia polo.

Susan reappears with a huge smile on her face.

SUSAN
Can we really afford this?

JACK
Whatever we want. Courtesy of the school.

She shakes her head.

SUSAN
You should have gotten a promotion years ago.

REALTOR
I'll give you two a minute.

She slips out the door as Jack embraces his wife.

JACK
Did I do good?

SUSAN
The kids are going to graduate soon. Do we really need so much space?

JACK
So you don't want the closet?

SUSAN
I didn't say that.

He checks his watch.

JACK
I've got to run but is *this* it?

SUSAN
I love it. What do you think?

JACK
It's doesn't matter what I think.

SUSAN
Of course it does.

JACK
Sure. I love it.

She rolls her eyes.

He kisses her.

JACK (CONT'D)
I've really got to go. Do you want
it or not?

SUSAN
Yes. Coach.

JACK
Great.

He nods as if to the realtor.

JACK (CONT'D)
Let her know.

He turns to leave when -

SUSAN
Do you ever feel bad?

This halts him.

JACK
About what?

SUSAN
How it all went down.

JACK
...He knew what was coming.

Susan peers outside.

SUSAN
I don't want that to happen to us.

This catches him off-guard.

JACK
It won't...

He squeezes her hand.

Her gaze hasn't left the window.

SUSAN
You should get going.

Still uneasy, he kisses her cheek.

JACK
I'll be home for dinner.

She nods as he steps out of the room.

JACK (O.S.) (CONT'D)
(to realtor)
I think this is it. I'm needed on
the field but she has final say.

REALTOR (O.S.)
Alright, sounds good to me.

A door is heard opening and closing.

Susan continues to peer outside. She watches her husband
climb into his truck and take off down the street.

She doesn't move from the window. She's a million miles away.

The realtor steps back in.

REALTOR (CONT'D)
So, what do you think? Should we
keep looking?

Pulled from her thoughts, Susan faces the realtor

SUSAN
How fast can we move in?

REALTOR
(smirks)
Let me see what I can do.

INT. CAR - DAY

In the backseat of the SUV, Roman watches as hordes of
students are dropped off by their parents.

LISA
This is it. You boys excited?

Neal, also in the backseat on the other side of their sister,
stares out the window away from the activity.

NEAL
Thrilled.

A text comes through on Roman's phone.

BEN
Can I see you? It's important.

At her son's response, Lisa peers over her shoulder.
 She forces a smile as they pull up to the curb.
 Roman clicks his screen closed, without texting back.

GENE
 Alright. Look alive.

EXT. RUTHERFORD HALL - CONTINUOUS

The Young's hop out of the car as a vibrant RESIDENT ASSISTANT (RA) steps up to them.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT
 Hi! Welcome to Rutherford Hall.
 Could I have your first and last
 name please.

Her perkiness isn't matched by Neal's sullen demeanor.

NEAL
 Neal Young.

The RA's face brighten's, when she see's Roman step out from behind the trunk with a plastic tote in his hand.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT
 No way! I didn't know you were
 living here.

She quickly checks her list then frowns.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
 Looks like we only have Neal.

NEAL
 Sorry to disappoint.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT
 Oh, no. Not at all! We're so
 excited to welcome you!

She pulls a cart over and assists Neal with putting his things inside.

RESIDENT ASSISTANT (CONT'D)
 (to Gene)
 If you go around the corner and
 park, we'll be able to get you all
 inside.

Gene checks his watch.

GENE

We've got another drop to do. Will it be long?

NEAL

Y'all go ahead. I'm fine.

LISA

Honey, we want to see where you'll be living.

NEAL

It's okay. Unlike some people, I don't need a whole entourage.

Lisa peers over at Gene, as if asking for his help.

Not getting anything in return, she adheres to her son's request.

LISA

Okay, we'll take your brother and then come back right after. I'll help you get your things all setup.

Neal doesn't respond. He pushes his cart up the sidewalk towards the dormitory.

The RA's eyes haven't left Roman, a permanent smile plastered on her face.

LISA (CONT'D)

Shouldn't you show him where to go?

RESIDENT ASSISTANT

Right! See you all soon.

She dashes off towards Neal.

Lisa looks on longingly at her son, worry all over her face.

LISA

(to Gene)

I could have used some help.

GENE

You know him. He's stubborn.

LISA

Right...

GENE

Well, let's get a move on.

Gene and the family climb back into the car.

INT. OGLETHORPE HOUSE - DAY

SAMMY (20), tall and blond, pushes a cart filled with her belongings towards an open room door.

She steps into a suite and is immediately bombarded by her roommates.

A brunette, KAYLA (19), with a round face fills her view.

KAYLA
You must be Sammy!

She wraps her arms around her and squeezes tight.

Caught off-guard, Sammy awkwardly returns the gesture.

Kayla releases her and turns to face two other girls. Both of whom, based on their broad shoulders, are swimmers. Their wide smiles feel almost plastered on.

KAYLA (CONT'D)
This is Carmen.

She gestures to an Asian girl (20) with jet black hair.

KAYLA (CONT'D)
And that's Maeve.

A stocky red head (19) with light colored eyes waves nervously.

MAEVE
We're so excited that you're with us.

KAYLA
We're going to make sure you have an amazing time on the team.

Sammy glances from the almost shining girls to Carmen, who seems bothered.

SAMMY
Thanks. Glad to be here...Where's my room?

KAYLA
Over here.

She guides her through the adjacent door where two beds are setup. One of which is barren.

KAYLA (CONT'D)
You'll be sharing with Maeve.

SAMMY
Cool.

She drops her stuff down and takes in the space. She then turns around to face her wide-eyed roommates.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
Is everything okay?

She glances from each one then -

CARMEN
They're just overcompensating with everything that happened at Auburn.

KAYLA
Carmen!

The air is sucked out of the room.

CARMEN
What? You are.

SAMMY
It's okay. It's not like it's a secret.

KAYLA
Oh - Well, if you ever want to talk. Just know that we're here for you.

MAEVE
No matter what. We want to make sure you have the best time here...

SAMMY
Thank you. I appreciate that.

Maeve glances at the clock on the wall.

MAEVE
We should get going or Bayer will have us doing Fly for warm up.

SAMMY
He has practice on move-in day?

CARMEN

It's his claim to fame. Don't you know that?

SAMMY

No. I didn't.

CARMEN

Well you should. Considering you're on *our* team now.

She walks off out of sight, leaving the girls in an awkward silence.

KAYLA

See y'all in a sec.

She follows in Carmen's direction.

Sammy chuckles and shakes her head.

SAMMY

She's a bundle of Joy.

Sammy reaches down and picks up her SPEEDO branded bag. An Auburn keychain hangs from a zipper. She takes hold of it in her hand.

MAEVE

Sorry about Carmen. She can be a little direct.

SAMMY

It's fine.

Maeve slings her bag over her shoulder.

MAEVE

We are glad you're here. I'll wait for you out in the hall.

Sammy watches her walk out then peers back down at the keychain in her hand.

MALE STUDENT (V.O.)

(laughs)

You know you wanted it.

She breaths in then rips the keychain from her bag.

She throws it into the trash then steps out of the room.

INT. RUTHERFORD HALL - DAY

Students move in and meet their new roommates all up and down the dormitory hall.

An anxious, mixed-race athlete, LIAM (18), searches for his room.

He pushes a cart filled with his belongings.

As he passes open doors, he glances in and watches awkward greetings of parents and students.

He peers down at a paper in his hand then glances over at an open door.

He steps up and peers inside.

He watches as his roommate, Neal, tacks a poster of *Akira* onto the wall.

A smile crosses Liam's face.

LIAM

That's one of my favorites.

Neal peers over his shoulder.

NEAL

Oh, hey roomie.

He steps up to Liam and outstretches his hand.

NEAL (CONT'D)

Good to meet you.

LIAM

You too.

Even behind Neal's glasses, there's no hiding his immediate attraction to his roommate.

He gestures to the poster.

NEAL

From what I remember, you're into anime right?

Now it's Liam's turn to show his nerd.

LIAM

I love anything by Makoto Shinkai.
Do you know his stuff?

Neal lets out a nervous giggle.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Oh god, I'm being too weird huh?

NEAL
No. Not at all. One of my favorite movies of his is 5 Centimeters Per Second.

Neal shakes his head.

NEAL (CONT'D)
I thought you were an athlete?

LIAM
What I can't also like obscure Japanese anime?

NEAL
I'm just not used to athletes being into the same stuff that I am.

LIAM
I get it. We don't have a great rep but I'm a swimmer. We're built different. We actually have brains.

The two laugh easy.

NEAL
Tell that to my brother.

STUDENT (O.C.)
Hey, you Liam?

The two turn to see a tall slim guy, JASON (19), in the doorway.

LIAM
Yeah.

JASON
I'm supposed to be your guide for the next few days. We met during recruitment. Did Coach Bayer mention it?

LIAM
Jason, right? Yeah, He did.

JASON
Well, we're going to be late to practice.

LIAM
Practice? I just got here. Can I at least unpack my stuff?

JASON
Do it later. We have to go. Come on.

Liam glances back at Neal.

LIAM
Be glad you're not an athlete.

He grabs his swim and equipment bag and hurries out the room.

INT. SANFORD STADIUM - DAY

A football flies through the air and zips by Jack's head.

Roman jumps up and catches it.

JACK
I didn't even see it coming. Out here runnin' my mouth.

He's with HEAD COACH, Jack Bowman, of the University of Georgia Football Team.

Gene
It's that quick eye he's got. He can see plays coming before anyone else.

Behind him are his mother and sister beaming proudly.

They're being given a tour by a new recruit specialist, the coaches daughter, KELSEY (19).

KELSEY
I bet that helps off the field too.

The quarterback, CONNOR (21), calls out to them.

CONNOR
Good looking out, Young!

He jogs up to the group.

CONNOR (CONT'D)
Can't wait to get you onto the field. Really give these guys a run for their money.

ROMAN
I don't know about that.

CONNOR
Don't be modest. What do you say
about modesty, dad?

JACK
Modesty doesn't get trophies.

CONNOR
And *you* are getting us trophies.

Kelsey takes the ball from Roman and tosses it to her brother.

KELSEY
Alright, Connor. Calm down. Like a
dog in heat.

CONNOR
Whatever Kels.

He jogs back to the other teammates.

JACK
(to Young's)
The joys of working with your kids.

GENE
You're living the dream, aren't ya?

JACK
Pretty damn close.

CONNOR
(over shoulder)
Come ready, tomorrow. It's make or
break time.

Roman watches as his teammates set up a play.

LISA
That'll be you soon.

JACK
New recruits get to enjoy freedom a
little longer.

He motions to his daughter.

JACK (CONT'D)

Our new recruit specialist's get them accustomed to college life and the rigor of our training. I can't tell you enough how important it is to ease players from home life to school.

KELSEY

It's a big adjustment.

A woman, Jack's assistant, MARTHA-ANN (50's), steps up.

She whispers into his ear.

JACK

Here? Now?

She nods and motions behind her.

Jack peers over his shoulder to see a tall MAN (60's), in a suit and tie, at the helm of the stadium.

He turns back to the Young's.

JACK (CONT'D)

Please forgive me. I'm late for a meeting I didn't know I had.

He says his goodbyes and turns to Roman.

JACK (CONT'D)

You'll be in good hands with Kelsey. She was practically raised on the field.

He waves goodbye, as he walks off with his assistant.

KELSEY

(to Roman)

We can continue our tour but I think there's something that you'd like to see other than the field.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Kelsey guides them through rows of UGA branded lockers.

KELSEY

And here we are.

She motions over to one that has Roman's name and number above it.

LISA

Oh, honey.

She takes her husband's hand.

AVA

Damn, Rome. It's the real deal.

Roman opens up the locker and pulls out a jersey with the number 23 on it.

He peers down at the jersey, the weight of the SEC now setting in.

INT. SANFORD STADIUM - DAY

A tall middle-aged man, HENRY ANDERSON, watches the football team run plays from the comfort of a box seat.

Jack bursts through the door, a bit flustered.

JACK

Sorry to keep you waiting, I didn't know you were coming today.

HENRY

The boys look good.

He points down to the field.

JACK

They're definitely stronger than last year. What do I owe the pleasure of a visit?

HENRY

Now that you're head coach, I'm going to have to lean on you more.

JACK

Oh, yeah. How so?

HENRY

There's no easy way to say this but we're behind schedule on the new stadium.

JACK

Oh. Isn't construction always behind schedule? I thought it was something more serious.

HENRY

It is serious. We're behind because our major donor backed out. \$200 million to be exact.

JACK

Shit.

HENRY

That's right. The fallout from our lovely Hugh Langford keeps rearing its ugly head. I thought once we got past summer, we'd be in the clear but that's obviously not the case.

JACK

I don't know how you want me to help but I don't have that kind of money.

HENRY

Don't be ridiculous. I've already got another backer tee'd up.

JACK

Who's that?

HENRY

Adam Walker. He gets in tomorrow. Show him around.

JACK

You're not giving me much notice. I've got a team to coach. I can't be playing tour guide right now.

HENRY

You'll learn, when billions are on the line, you'll be tour guide and ass kisser. Whatever gets him to sign the check.

Jack nods, knowing the former UGA athlete turned shrewd businessman.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I need you to do the whole dog and pony show. Let him see what his money is going towards. Not just the school but the future of the NFL.

He pauses and considers.

HENRY (CONT'D)

What about that new recruit?

JACK

Young?

HENRY

Yeah. The one with the Cinderella story.

JACK

What about him?

HENRY

Jack. If you're going to perform at this level, I can't be spoon feeding you the whole time.

JACK

No. I got it. Show him the opportunity he can't pass up on.

HENRY

Exactly. That kid's background. Growing up where he did and making it out, it'll really appeal to Walker. If I remember, he was also a product of the Atlanta inner city schools.

JACK

I'll get it done.

HENRY

I know you will. The future of this school, the program and your job rides on this stadium being built. Remember, more seats, more advertisers, more money in your pocket.

Jack nods.

HENRY (CONT'D)

I'll check in tomorrow on how it's going.

He turns to leave, then peers back at Jack.

HENRY (CONT'D)

Don't be a mess like Langford. I can't have two fuckups in less than a year.

JACK

You can count on me. I'll get the
job done.

PRELAP: A whistle BLOWS.

INT. NATATORIUM - DAY

Swimmers dive into the water and race to the other end of the pool.

Liam is in the middle lane. He charges down to the other end at race pace.

As he and the other swimmers hit the wall their coach, LANDON BAYER (50'S), calls out their times.

LANDON

four-seven, five-oh, five-five,
seven-oh...

He continues to call out times as Liam climbs out of the water and onto the bulkhead.

He breaths hard.

Jason, climbs out next to him and claps his back.

JASON

Nice job. I'm surprised you're
keeping up.

LIAM

Barely.

They both walk down the bulkhead as the ASSISTANT COACH ready's the next group.

ASSISTANT COACH

Take your marks!

Swimmers at the other end of the pool bend and grip the diving blocks.

Landon blows hard on the whistle. The swimmers catapult into the water.

Liam's gaze strays to the other side of the bulkhead, where the women's team trains.

They're having an equally grueling workout.

Landon calls out times again.

Liam's eyes land on a swimmer in a lane by herself. Confusion crosses his face, as the whistle blows again.

He watches Sammy do a flip turn and continue her workout alone.

INT. NATATORIUM - LATER

After practice, Landon instructs his swimmers to take a seat on the bleachers.

LANDON

Good job, today. That's what I want to see each and every practice. I know some of you are looking at Trials and a select few of you are vying for a spot on the US Olympic team. If we put in the work here everyday, we'll make those goals a reality.

He glances over at Sammy.

LANDON (CONT'D)

I'm also excited to have an Auburn Tiger in our midsts. Sammy, I'm glad you made the right decision to be a Bulldog.

The team cheers!

LANDON (CONT'D)

Alright. I won't keep y'all any longer. We've got an early day tomorrow. Rest up and no partying tonight.

The swimmers start to stand.

LANDON (CONT'D)

Remember what you're here for!

INT. NATATORIUM - MOMENTS LATER

Swimmers climb the stairs to the main lobby area. Liam and Jason are among them.

JASON

There's a party tonight. You in?

LIAM

Didn't you just hear coach?

Jason fans his hand.

JASON

Don't worry about him. He gives the same spiel every year. One drink won't kill you.

Liams thinks about it.

LIAM

I don't know.

JASON

The whole teams going. Come on.

Liam thinks then -

LIAM

Alright. I'm in.

INT. ROMAN'S APARTMENT - DAY

Roman, and his parent's, stand in the middle of an immaculately decorated two bedroom apartment.

GENE

Student housing has changed a lot since I was in school here.

KELSEY

What can I say, the football team is treated very well.

Roman walks over to the window and peers down.

He watches as students and parents navigate downtown Athens.

They're clearly in two different worlds, even though they're on the same campus.

LISA

This is covered by room and board?

KELSEY

Almost. The scholarship takes care of necessities like tuition, books, and fees, everything else though is covered by athletics.

ROMAN

This is amazing.

KELSEY

You haven't seen amazing yet.

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING - MOMENTS LATER

A brand new LUXURY CONVERTABLE beeps. It's doors unlock.

KELSEY

Your new car to get you to and from
class with ease.

She throws Roman the keys.

ROMAN

No way!

He hops into the car and looks around in awe.

GENE

Is this necessary?

KELSEY

The school believes that athletes
should see what hard work can
afford them, especially now that
they're able to earn like their
professional counterparts.

LISA

I mean this is a little absurd.

Kelsey hops in shotgun.

KELSEY

(to Roman)

Go ahead. Turn it on.

He pushes start and the engine roars to life.

Kelsey presses a button and the top drops.

KELSEY (CONT'D)

Let me show you around campus.

Roman glances over at his parents who look on in awe and fear
at his new level of access.

GENE

Go ahead. Enjoy yourself.

LISA

We should be getting back to your
brother anyway.

Kelsey takes Roman's hand and helps him put it into sport mode.

KELSEY
Now, you're ready.

He slams down on the pedal and the car shoots off.

He veers onto the street past masses of onlooking students.

Kelsey sits up, wind in her hair, so that everyone can see she's riding with UGA's new All Star.

EXT. CAMPUS - DUSK

Among a pack of students, Sammy walks towards the dining hall with her new roommates.

Maeve glances over at Sammy who appears to be in a bit of a funk, despite the new year excitement.

MAEVE
You okay?

SAMMY
Yeah. I'm fine.

Maeve continues.

MAEVE
With your times, you could make the Olympic Team.

CARMEN
Of course *he* can.

This rubs Sammy the wrong way.

SAMMY
What's that supposed to mean?

A silence falls between the girls.

CARMEN
Come on. Look at you. You're built different.

KAYLA
Carmen, stop.

SAMMY
No. It's refreshing that someone is being real.

(MORE)

SAMMY (CONT'D)

That's why I was in my own lane today, huh? I'm just too fast for the women's team?

KAYLA

Let's not do this.

CARMEN

Nothing personal. It's just biological.

SAMMY

That's bullshit. I'm not the only one with Trial's cuts on the team.

CARMEN

That's right. I was looking at making the US team next year but with you conveniently *transitioning*, that might not be an option now will it.

SAMMY

Look, I'm sorry if you feel like I'm taking something away from you -

CARMEN

It's not a feeling. You are! I've worked damn hard for this!

SAMMY

And I haven't?

Kayla steps between thee two.

KAYLA

Both of you stop!

CARMEN

Please...All you did was take a pill and get a little snip. You're no different than a Kardashian.

Sammy glances at each of her roommates and then the crowd slowly forming around them.

SAMMY

Don't pretend like you know my story. You have no idea what I had to do to get here.

CARMEN

(chuckles)

Don't you mean who?

A fire rages behind Sammy's eyes.

MAEVE

Carmen, that's *enough*.

SAMMY

So much for being here for your teammates.

Sammy shoves around the girls.

KAYLA

Sammy don't go!

She doesn't stop. She continues into the crowd of onlookers.

KAYLA (CONT'D)

(to Carmen)

What the hell is wrong with you?
She's going through a hard enough
time as it is.

CARMEN

Everyone is too afraid to say it.
I'm tired of walking on eggshells
to make her feel comfortable. As a
boy, she wasn't even close to
Trials cuts. Now, she's number one
contender for a spot on the team.
Meanwhile, the rest of us have to
duke it out for that second place
spot.

She shakes her head.

CARMEN (CONT'D)

You know there can only be two and
she just weaseled her way into one.
Why? Because she *felt* different?
You know that's bullshit. She's a
fucking a man!

A bystander calls out.

STUDENT

Damn right!

MAEVE

I can't listen to this. I'm going
to go find her.

Maeve walks off.

Kayla stares at her teammate.

KAYLA
How could you be so cruel?

CARMEN
How could you be so complicit?

She goes to respond but the question strikes a chord with her. She just stares at her friend.

EXT. CAMPUS - MOMENTS LATER

Sammy hurries along the walkway.

She's about to step onto the crosswalk when a convertible cuts through the busy intersection.

Heads turn to see Roman at the wheel with music thumping from the speakers.

Easily impressed, the onlooking crowd cheers him on as he drives by.

Annoyed, Sammy takes note of the driver.

SAMMY
(to self)
Pompous prick.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - CONTINUOUS

Roman turns the music down.

ROMAN
Do you not have eardrums?

Kelsey beams at the audience she's managed to acquire.

KELSEY
You should live a little. Give the fans what they want.

ROMAN
Fans?

He shakes his head and chuckles.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
I'm not like you. I didn't grow up with all this.

He motions as if to the world around him.

The phone rings.

It's Ben.

He quickly declines the call and switches the screen back to the music and pretends like nothing happened.

KELSEY
Who's Ben?

ROMAN
No one.

KELSEY
You sure?

He glances over at her.

ROMAN
Yeah. Where to next on this tour of yours?

Kelsey holds her stare on him as if contemplating if she should pry into his personal life.

She decides not to.

KELSEY
Turn up here.

He follows her instruction and turns the wheel.

They land smack dab on fraternity row.

KELSEY (CONT'D)
You ready for some real fun?

Though it's early, students are already flocking to the famed Greek Houses.

Roman and Kelsey descend on one in particular, Phi Delta Theta.

INT. COACH'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Jack sits behind a mountain of paperwork.

He takes notes as he watches playback of the team.

KNOCK. KNOCK.

He peers up, from his desk, to see his assistant coach, KEVIN (30's), at the door.

KEVIN
I'm heading out. You need anything?

JACK
Nah. I'm good. See you in the morning.

As Kevin turns to leave, he stops and glances back.

KEVIN
Good first day today.

JACK
You think so?

KEVIN
Yeah. I know it's a lot to take on.

JACK
You don't know the half of it. Now I know how Langford must have felt.

Kevin nods silently.

KEVIN
You heard from him at all?

JACK
Nah. You?

KEVIN
Radio silence. Not like him.

JACK
Not at all. Makes me feel like he's up to something.

KEVIN
Yeah...

JACK
Don't worry about him. We'll get through this. We've got to focus on the year ahead.

KEVIN
(nods)
Roman's looking good right?

A text comes through, distracting Jack.

He peers down at his phone, ignoring Kevin.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
I'll leave you to it. Night.

JACK
Night.

He proceeds out the room.

Jack opens the text.

MADISON
Guess where I am.

A photo of a cheerleader comes through.

She wears nothing but her cheer skirt and a pom pom over her bare chest.

From the looks of it, she's in the stands of the stadium.

Jack sits up, intrigued.

Another text comes through. This time from his wife, Susan.

SUSAN
Working late?

INT. STADIUM - NIGHT

The air is thick with humidity.

Jack wipes his brow as he climbs the stairs towards a half naked cheerleader. In the middle of the stands with a wide grin on her face is MADISON (20).

JACK
You look pleased with yourself.

MADISON
That didn't take long.

JACK
What are you doing out here?

MADISON
Waiting for you.

She motions to the sky.

MADISON (CONT'D)
It's a beautiful night, isn't it?

Jack sneaks a peak at her erect nipples.

JACK
Shouldn't you be out with your
friends?

MADISON
Shouldn't you be home with your
wife?

She spreads her legs and slides her fingers into the opening
of the skirt.

She bites her lower lip.

Jack peers over his shoulder making sure no one is around.

She rolls her eyes and stands. She pulls him in close and
locks her lips with his.

She then spins him around pushes him down into the seat.

She takes his hand and brings it up her skirt.

MADISON (CONT'D)
(whisper)
You feel that?

Overwhelmed by her, he can barely get a word out of his
mouth.

She smirks and mounts him.

EXT. CAMPUS - NIGHT

Sammy walks alone through throngs of students on their way
out for the night.

She continues to a quiet part of campus. She's near the
stadium.

A text comes through.

MAEVE
Where are you?

She doesn't respond.

She stands just outside the gate and peers up at the
monstrosity in front of her.

Lost in her thoughts, she lets out a sigh.

MAN (V.O.)
Hold her down...

SAMMY (V.O.)
Please...no.

MAN (V.O.)
(laughs)
Isn't this what you want?

GROUP OF MEN
Hahaha...

She shakes the thoughts away and slips through the fence into the stadium.

INT. SANFORD STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

Stepping onto the field, Sammy peers up in awe at the sheer size of the structure.

She walks out into the middle of the field and pulls out her phone.

She types out a text to CHRIS.

SAMMY
I miss you.

A moan from the stands distracts her.

She peers up and sees she's not alone.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
(whisper)
No way.

She watches as Madison rides Coach Jack. She moans in pleasure.

Sammy laughs to herself and shakes her head.

She retypes her text.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
Check this shit out.

She raises her phone and takes a photo of the two.

The FLASH goes off.

SAMMY (CONT'D)
Shit.

This doesn't go unnoticed.

JACK
What was that?

MADISON
What was what?

He peers over Madison's shoulder to see Sammy struggling with her phone.

JACK
Hey!

He pulls Madison off of him.

MADISON
Owe! That hurts.

Jack scales the benches towards Sammy as he buttons his pants.

JACK
Don't you move!

Sammy doesn't take any chances. She takes off across the grass.

Jack stumbles and falls onto the field. He recovers but not fast enough.

He watches Sammy slip into the bowels of the stadium.

JACK (CONT'D)
Fuck!

Madison steps up beside him and kisses his ear.

MADISON
Don't worry about it.

Jack pushes her away.

MADISON (CONT'D)
What's your problem?

JACK
Do you not understand how serious
this is?

She rolls her eyes.

MADISON
We're both adults.

He shakes his head.

JACK

Not in everyone else's eyes. You're still a student. If they say something -

MADISON

Then it's their word against the Head Coach. Who do think will believe her?

JACK

...Tell that to Langford.

EXT. SANFORD STADIUM - SAME TIME

Sammy tears across the empty parking lot onto the main campus.

She rounds a corner and catches her breath. She peers around to make sure she wasn't followed.

DING.

She peers down at her phone.

CHRIS

Is that Coach Bowman? That's definitely not his wife.

EXT. PHI DELTA THETA - NIGHT

A party rages.

Roman is with Connor and other members of the football team in the backyard of the frat. They raise shot glasses.

CONNOR

To new blood.

TEAMMATES

New blood!

They all, except Roman, down the liquid and slam the glasses onto the table in unison.

Kelsey hasn't left Roman's side since he stepped foot onto campus.

She holds onto his arm like she's with him.

She brings her finger up under the glass and pushes it towards his face.

KELSEY

Come on.

Roman obliges and downs the liquor. He coughs.

Conner claps his back.

CONNOR

There you go!

KELSEY

See. I told you. Loosen up.

A text comes through.

BEN

Don't ignore me.

Kelsey catches a glimpse of it before he clicks it closed.

KELSEY

Who's Ben?

ROMAN

No one.

KELSEY

Doesn't seem like it.

Roman opens his mouth to rebuttal then decides otherwise.

ROMAN

I need pee.

He turns and heads inside.

Kelsey steps up to her brother.

KELSEY

Something's not right with him.

CONNOR

It's his first day, give him a chance to settle in.

KELSEY

He just seems off.

She catches a glimpse of Roman in the kitchen window.

He texts on his phone.

CONNOR

Off?

KELSEY
I don't know. Maybe you're right.

CONNOR
Of course, I'm right.

She rolls her eyes and walks off to a group of girls.

EXT. PHI DELTA THETA - SAME TIME

Liam leads Neal up the steps towards the raging party.

NEAL
Are you sure you want to do this?

LIAM
We're already here. You can't back
out now.

JASON (O.S.)
Hey!

They peer up to see Jason coming down the steps towards them
with SOLO cups in his hand.

JASON (CONT'D)
You made it!

He hands the cups to both Liam and Neal.

NEAL
What's in here?

JASON
Hell if I know. Come on.

He leads them up into the house.

INT. PHI DELTA THETA/KITCHEN - SAME TIME

Propped up against the counter is Roman. His head is buried
in his phone.

ROMAN
What do you want?

BEN
Just to talk.

ROMAN
I don't know.

BEN
You really going to make me beg?

Someone accidentally bumps into him.

He peers over to see - Jason, clumsily making a drink.

LIAM
I'm so sorry.

ROMAN
Don't worry about it.

JASON
Where's the damn Coke?

Liam catches his eye.

LIAM
Hey, aren't you -

NEAL (O.C.)
You've got to be kidding me.

Roman glances over to see his brother in the doorway. He notices the drink in his hand.

ROMAN
What are you doing here?

NEAL
I can't have a good time too?

ROMAN
I didn't mean it like that.

Liam's playing catch up.

LIAM
Do you two -

NEAL
I can be cool too, Rome.

He downs his drink.

NEAL (CONT'D)
See.

JASON
Fuck yeah.

Jason hands Neal another drink and he downs it immediately.

JASON (CONT'D)

Liam you need to catch up.

ROMAN

You don't need to prove anything to these people.

NEAL

Who said I wanted to?

ROMAN

I don't want to fight. Just -

He's distracted by a MAN he sees walking through the front door.

Neal notices too.

NEAL

What's *he* doing here?

The man, Ben, peers around the room. His eyes land on Roman.

EXT. PHI DELTA THETA - NIGHT

A little off to the side of the house, Roman and Ben have a heated argument. Unbeknownst to them, their conversation isn't totally private.

Kelsey eavesdrops from the side of the house and Neal watches from the porch.

ROMAN

You can't just follow me around.

BEN

You've been ignoring me.

ROMAN

For good reason. Every time you show up, shit goes wrong.

BEN

That's not fair. You know I've been working through shit.

ROMAN

I'm not rehashing our past. What do you want?

Ben sees the pain in his Roman's eyes. He sighs, knowing his greeting isn't all friendly.

BEN
You're in danger.

ROMAN
(laughs)
You've got to be kidding me.

BEN
I'm serious.

ROMAN
What bullshit did you get yourself
into now?

Again, Ben can't argue. It's all true.

BEN
It's Prophet.

ROMAN
Are you serious? Why would you get
involved with him again?

BEN
I needed the money.

ROMAN
For what? What do you need money
like that so bad for?

BEN
What I can't have goals? Ambitions?

ROMAN
Are you using again?

The directness of the question catches Ben a little off guard.

BEN
How could you ask me that?

ROMAN
It's the only logical reason why
you'd mess around that crew.

Ben is silent for a moment.

BEN
Can you just lay low?

ROMAN
How much do you owe him?

Ben hesitates.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

How much?

BEN

A few hundred.

ROMAN

Hundred what?

BEN

Thousand.

ROMAN

Are you serious!?

BEN

I know it got out of control. He's out for blood and I need money...I need you to sell for me.

ROMAN

What? No way. My parents would kill me.

BEN

I'm your parent.

Roman, immediately feels bad for the comment.

ROMAN

You know what I mean. I've got too much to lose. None of this came from selling pills.

BEN

What about your Gene? He has money.

Quickly catching on, Roman sizes up his father.

ROMAN

You didn't come here to warn me. You came here for money. For quick cash.

BEN

That's not it.

ROMAN

It isn't? Then prove me wrong.

Ben takes a moment. He can't lie to his son.

BEN

It's Prophet and his crew. I just need a little to get them off my back.

ROMAN

I'm done.

Roman tries to step around his father but Ben takes his arm.

BEN

Rome, please. Just hear me out.

ROMAN

(stern)

Let go.

Defeat in Ben's eyes, he releases his grip.

BEN

Just watch your back.

Roman shakes his head.

ROMAN

I wish it was you instead of mom.

That cuts deep.

Ben, defeated, watches his son storm off down the street.

EXT. PHI DELTA THETA - SAME TIME

Neal, having been a silent member of the argument, watches his brother climb into a convertible and peel out.

Liam steps up behind him.

LIAM

There you are.

Neal turns to face him.

NEAL

I needed some air.

LIAM

So, how do you know Roman?

NEAL

He's my brother.

Confusion spreads across Liam's face.

NEAL (CONT'D)
Adopted.

LIAM
Oh...Who was that guy?

NEAL
(hesitates)
No one. I need a drink.

The two step back into the party.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

Roman races through an empty campus. His hands tight on the wheel, his blood boils through his veins.

A text comes through.

He glances over at the dash.

BEN
Please don't be mad.

ROMAN
Fuck you.

He makes a turn -

ROMAN (CONT'D)
Shit!

He flies straight towards a tall blond girl.

She jumps out of the way as he throws the wheel.

The car screeches to a halt.

He glances in the rearview mirror.

He doesn't see her.

He unbuckles and steps out.

EXT. STREET - CONTINUOUS

He scans the area and sees Sammy unmoving on the grass.

ROMAN
Fuck. Fuck. Fuck.

He runs over to her side.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

You okay?

Sammy stirs.

SAMMY

What the hell? Didn't you see me?

ROMAN

I'm so sorry. Let me help you.

He lifts her to her feet.

ROMAN (CONT'D)

Are you hurt?

SAMMY

I'm fine.

ROMAN

What are you doing out here anyway?

SAMMY

What does it matter? You could have killed me.

Sammy winces as she puts weight on her leg.

ROMAN

You sure, you're okay?

SAMMY

Perfectly, fine.

She begins to walk away.

ROMAN

Let me at least give you a ride.

She peers over her shoulder at the offer.

INT. PHI DELTA THETA - MONTAGE

Neal downs shot after shot.

Music pulses as he dances in the middle of the room.

He laughs obnoxiously at a group of girls.

He's on top of a table cheering everyone on.

Then he slips.

INT. PHI DELTA THETA - SAME TIME

Liam watches Neal fall onto the floor.

He steps up to his roommate and helps him to his feet.

LIAM

Time to go.

He drags him through a mob of people and out the front door.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

Roman drives Sammy back to her dorm.

SAMMY

Where were you going anyway?

ROMAN

I don't even know. I usually don't intentionally try to run over people.

SAMMY

(chuckles)

I hope not.

She takes note of the car.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

They give you football guys everything, huh?

ROMAN

How'd you know -

SAMMY

Please, don't do that bashful shit. You know everyone knows who you are. The star bringing us out of scandal and back to the Georgia glory.

She rolls her eyes.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

If only there was an actual glory to go back to.

He pulls up to her dorm.

SAMMY (CONT'D)

Thanks for the ride.

ROMAN
It's the least I could do.

She opens the door.

ROMAN (CONT'D)
You sure you're okay?

She peers over at him.

SAMMY
For now, I am.

ROMAN
If you need anything, just let me know.

She nods and climbs out of the car.

INT. RUTHERFORD HALL - NIGHT

Liam, with Neal hanging on his shoulder, opens the door to their room.

They stumble in and over to Neal's side.

LIAM
Let's get you to bed.

NEAL
Mhmm.

Liam tries to hoist Neal up but he slips and the two topple to the floor with the mattress.

Neal bursts out laughing.

LIAM
It's not funny.

NEAL
(slurred)
Yes. It is.

LIAM
It might be easier to sleep on the floor anyway.

Neal nods and slumps onto his mattress. Instinctively, he reaches for his face.

He blinks. Confused.

NEAL
My glasses.

Liam quickly looks around and finds them.

LIAM
Here.

He hands the black frames to Neal who takes hold of his hand and drags him onto the mattress with him.

NEAL
Stay with me.

LIAM
Oh. Um -

NEAL
You're cute.

He rests his head into Liam's chest.

LIAM
Um -

A loud snore echos up from Neal.

Liam shakes his head.

LIAM (CONT'D)
Sure. I'll stay with you.

He leans back and allows Neal to sleep on his chest.

INT. CONVERTIBLE - NIGHT

Roman pulls into his building's garage. He shuts the car off and sits in silence for a moment.

He then pulls out his phone and types out a text to Ben.

ROMAN
Let me see what I can do.

He stares down at the message. He shakes his head then erases it.

He opens the door and steps out.

INT. PARKING DECK - CONTINUOUS

He steps up to the elevators and presses the button. While waiting on the elevator, he pulls his phone out again. He opens the message to his father.

DING.

The elevator doors open.

He glances up.

He comes face to face with two HARDENED MEN. He's not given a chance to react.

They grab hold of him and a bag slides over his head.

Everything goes dark.

ROMAN

Hey!

Roman struggles but he can't get out of their grasp. One of the men slugs him over the head.

Now disoriented, they drag him over to a van and throw him inside.

The doors shut and tires squeal.

INT. VAN - LATER

One of the men continues to rough Roman up.

ROMAN

Let me go!

MAN

Shut up!

A fist connects with Roman's face under the bag.

BEN

Rome. Don't fight them.

Hearing his voice, Roman halts his struggle.

ROMAN

Dad?

PROPHET

Isn't this great? Getting the family together again.

ROMAN
Where are you taking us?

PROPHET
Nowhere special.

The van makes a hard turn. Not seeing anything but black under the bag, Roman loses his balance and falls to the floor.

Suddenly, the van stops. The doors are heard opening.

Roman hears Ben being dragged out.

BEN
Let go of me!

PROPHET
You've played with us for too long.

Roman hears a car roar by.

He's dragged out the van and brought to his feet.

BEN
Ahhh!

The bag is pulled from Roman's head.

His eyes go wide as he watches Prophet's thugs hang his father upside down over a bridge.

Cars speed by on the highway below.

Roman tries to run to his father's aid but he's held back by one of Prophet's cronies.

Prophet stands next to Ben.

PROPHET
Where's my money?

BEN
I told you, I'm getting it.

PROPHET
It's been a week.

A tractor trailer approaches.

BEN
I promise. I'm getting it together.

Tears stream down Ben's forehead.

ROMAN

Let him go!

Prophet glances from Roman to Ben.

He shrugs.

PROPHET

Okay.

He motions for his men to drop him.

The men move Ben further out from the bridge.

Roman panics. He quickly looks from Prophet, to his dad to the oncoming 18-wheeler.

QUICK FLASHES - MEMORY

A non-responsive woman on a hospital gurney being rushed into the ER.

Ben holds a young Roman (5) who screams and reaches for her as the doors shut.

YOUNG ROMAN

Mom!

Then the overbearing sound of a flatline.

The deafening bellow of the tractor trailers HORN, brings him back to the present.

ROMAN

I'll get it! I'll get you your money.

A smirk crosses Prophet's face.

He snaps his fingers and the men pull Ben back up onto the bridge as the 18-wheeler barrels by.

PROPHET

(to Roman)

Now, that's a good boy.

The thugs toss Ben to the ground.

PROPHET (CONT'D)

We'll be in touch.

They climb into the van and take off down the road, leaving Roman and Ben in the middle of the bridge.

BEN
(to Roman)
Thank you...

Roman's eyes burn into his father, after making a deal with the devil.

END OF EPISODE