

"A Father's Son"
By
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FADE IN:

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER ARENA - NIGHT

The NCAA basketball championship game is in the final minutes. Westgate University Warriors and the Duke Blue Devils are at war.

Sneakers squeal. Muscles slap. Sweat drips. A symphony for championship division one basketball and the madness of March.

Fanatical fans add their voodoo. Chants, obnoxious body paint, homemade signs and insults directed toward players and the referees.

SCOTTY REYNOLDS is intense. Twenty-three year-old junior point guard, six foot six with six nine court vision. All-everything for the WU Warriors.

He moves with the deliberate air of someone who wins repeatedly. Cocky. Confident. Crack for basketball junkies.

Scotty caroms the basketball past half court with urgency. He sets, drills a long three. The fanatics go nuts.

On defense, Scotty gathers on Blue Devil junior point guard, BO STEVENSON. Bo is twenty-three, a carbon copy of Scotty talent wise. His arch rival.

Bo dribbles past the arc and attempts to float a scooper. Scotty hustles. Extends. Smacks the ball into row nine.

Brows high. Eyes wide. Scotty wags his index finger in Bo's face.

SCOTTY

Don't bring that shit in the paint.

REFEREE slaps his hands perpendicular.

REFEREE

Technical, Reynolds!

Scotty bird-dogs the ref pleading his case, but it doesn't bear fruit. He continues to jaw-jack until a stern glare shuts him down.

After Bo sinks his charity throw, Scotty shoplifts the inbound pass. Tomahawk jam.

Back on defense, Scotty picks up Bo yo-yoing over the half court line. He waves off the double team. Scotty reaches. Bo crosses, pulls up for a long three.

Duke's cheering fans annoy Scotty. He pounds his chest like a rabid Silverback.

Game clock ticks. Eleven seconds remain. Score board; WU, ninety-five, Duke, ninety-six.

Time is called.

The Warriors engulf their leader, EDDIE "COACH T" THOMAS. Known to all as just "T." Eighties. Stubborn. Salty. Wise as an owl. If college basketball was a church, he would be its Pope.

COACH T

Nineteen thousand goddamn maniacs
screaming their goddamn heads off.
All wanting the same... a winner
and a loser.

T eyeballs the scoreboard, vets the crowd and pulls a cohiba from his inside coat pocket. He cradles the tobacco under his nose and inhales deep.

COACH T

The late Mrs. Thomas hated the
smell, but loved what it stood for.

T pushes the cigar back inside his pocket, adjusts his britches and genuflects. Focused like a magician at the turn, he crosses himself.

COACH T

Scotty, everyone in this whole
goddamn place is expecting you to
take the last shot. We're not going
to disappoint the sonsobitches.

T scribbles on his clip board.

COACH T

Dallas, I want you to run stack
two. Don't tiptoe -- You hear?
Move! Lickety-split. Leave your man
hear.

He taps hard on his board.

COACH T

Get the ball to Scotty. Here!

He taps again on his board.

COACH T
You should be as open as an empty
mind.

The hoopsters break huddle.

Scotty claims his spot on the arc. Bo leans in against his left hip.

SCOTTY
I can see the gram now... me
scoring the winning basket all over
your sorry ass.

BO
Wake up, fool.

Another Duke player moves in on Scotty's right side.

SCOTTY
(to Bo)
Bitch belong to you?

BO
(to teammate)
Big shit. No stink.

Bo curbs Scotty's balance by pushing on his waist.

SCOTTY
Down a little and to the right,
you'll find what you're lookin'
for.

BO
Your balls were removed a long time
ago.

SCOTTY
Yo' moms had to have a souvenir.

The crowd starts a wave of chants. Deee-fense! Offf-fense!
Take the ball! Keep the ball!

Scotty tugs a gold charm that dangles on a thin chain around his neck; a basketball surrounded by a pair of angelic wings. He presses it to his lips.

The ball is in play. Dallas runs his pattern toward Scotty's double team.

Scotty breaks loose, followed by two Blue Devils.

Dallas receives the ball at the top of the key. He looks into Scotty who is fighting to shake his defenders.

Game clock, four seconds.

Scotty finally breaks free. Dallas floats a pass to Scotty but it is batted away.

Time expires. The crowd erupts.

Bo gets in Scotty's face, pantomimes placing a crown on his own head, then a chocking gesture.

BRENT MUSBURGER shoves a microphone in Scotty's face.

BRENT MUSBURGER
Scotty, third year in a row you and
the Warriors come up short.

Scotty ignores the comment.

BRENT MUSBURGER
Critics say you can't win the big
games.

SCOTTY
I don't give a damn about the
critics.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - FOYER - SAME NIGHT

Two story spacious. Marble floors, high ceilings. Lots of wide open space cluttered with mid-nineties furniture. Maid service would bring this place back to its wonder years.

Action photos of a vibrant, young powerhouse player with the New York Knicks and Los Angeles Lakers line the hallway leading to the family room.

IN FAMILY ROOM

A gigantic oak hutch spans floor to ceiling. A resting place for aging basketball memorabilia, trading cards, plaques and newspaper clippings.

Three Maurice Podoloff Trophies cover center shelf. Inscription on each reads: "NBA MOST VALUABLE PLAYER, ERSE WINGS REYNOLDS."

Framed New York Knicks and Los Angeles Laker jerseys, number twelve, hang on either side of the hutch. "Reynolds" stitched on the back of each.

ERSE "WINGS" REYNOLDS is antsy as he reclines in an easy-boy nursing a bottle of amber ale. Sixties. Power forward tall and wide. Graying temples. Lat spread that could easily be mistaken as wings.

His features are worn from neglect, but still bare a strong resemblance to the photographs of his younger days.

Erse is consumed by the interview with Scotty on his dated television.

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)

You and your father are basically the same.

SCOTTY (V.O.)

(sarcastically)

Who?

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)

Smooth, in control, with great court vision. You even have his three point skills.

SCOTTY (V.O.)

(agitated)

Don't compare me to him.

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)

It's hard not to. Dub-U basketball is Erse Reynolds. Do you ever get tired of playing in his shadow?

SCOTTY (V.O.)

I'm better then he was. You'll see next year.

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)

Does that mean you're coming back for your senior year? If you turn pro you're slated to go number one in the draft.

SCOTTY (V.O.)

I'm leaving Westgate with a national championship.

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)

You must be envious. At his alma mater, constantly being reminded of his four national titles while you're struggling to get one.

Scotty gives a penetrating stare and walks away.

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)
All-American Scotty Reynolds, son
of the great Erse "Wings" Reynolds.
Once again he leads everyone in
scoring, but unable to lead his
team to a national title.

Erse finds a VHS tape and pushes it into a player held
together with black electrical tape.

Images riddled with static marks appear on the screen; two
twin eight year-old youths during a park league game.

INT. BARCLAYS CENTER ARENA - LOCKER ROOM - SAME NIGHT

Scotty settles in front of his locker. After a beat he
explodes, splintering his clothes across the room.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. WESTGATE UNIVERSITY SKYLINE - DAY

The sun makes its entrance over a blueish purple sky.

SUPER: "NEXT SEASON"

INT. SCOTTY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A shrine to basketball. Trophies, posters, and carefully
framed newspaper clippings give praise to Scotty's round-ball
skills.

A Sports Illustrated basketball clock radio interrupts the
quiet with a drive time morning DJ team in the middle of a
comedy bit.

Scotty shakes away the sand and slaps the "off" button on the
radio, bumping a framed 8x10 of two adolescent twin boys in
team basketball uniforms.

With a final stretch, he skids off the sheets.

INT. FOREST LAWN CEMETERY - DAY

A headstone reads "George Otis Reynolds, loving son and
brother. Nine years of life was not long enough".

Scotty brushes leaves from the base, exposing a HAND WRITTEN
NOTE; "I miss you. Love Dad".

He cramps the note tightly in his fist, and leans against the headstone.

EXT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - DAY

Scotty brings his car to a stop in the driveway. He steps out and admires the surroundings as if he was reunited with an old friend.

A black Range Rover pulls to the curb. NWA reverberates the deep, dark, tinted windows. Thump, thump, thump-thump-thump. The window glides half mast as the music fades.

A match strikes and lights a cigarette protruding from the mouth of LO JACK, late thirties. An original neighborhood gangsta. Flashy, charismatic, tenacity of a pit bull. Mean as hell.

Lo Jack's voice thunders.

LO JACK
(calling)
Yo -- Scotty! Haven't seen you in a minute.

SCOTTY
(pointing up street)
County office is down the hill and three blocks over.

Lo Jack cracks up.

LO JACK
Why you want to do me like that?
I'm on a social call. Lookin' for your old man.

Scotty slowly approaches the Rover.

SCOTTY
What do you want with my father?

LO JACK
He's been asking around for me.

SCOTTY
He moved. I think Paris.

LO JACK
France or California? It don't matter, my reach is far and wide. I'll catch him later. Maybe I can interest you in a little somethin'?

SCOTTY
 You have a national championship in
 your counterfeit designer purse?

Lo Jack howls. Ignores the crack.

LO JACK
 Why you want to do me like that?
 Where did you say that county
 office was?

Lo Jack laughs. The window bumps up, music booms as the Rover moves down the block. Boom, Boom, da-boom.

AT FRONT DOOR

Scotty pushes the bell three times. No response. Raps on the casing. Still no answer.

He opens his wallet and removes a key tucked in a hidden pocket. Slides it into the lock, surprised it turns.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE FOYER - DAY

Scotty cautiously steps through the front door.

SCOTTY
 (shouting)
 Anyone home?

The room is oddly out of sorts. Pots and pans are stacked on tables and eating utensils rest crossways on piles of fading magazines. An organized typhoon.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

A ten year-old boys room. Two single beds. Dual work desk.

Scotty shuffles in, surveying the accommodations. He beams as he touches a tonka toy truck sitting on a shelf.

He sits on the bed on the left. The exact same picture of two adolescents he has on his dresser sits on a shelf. He clutches it to his chest and closes his eyes.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Scotty advances down the stairs through the hallway to the family room. He looks mystified at yellow post-its stuck to photos:

"Erse against Robinson."

"Erse and Patrick, last championship."

"Erse winning first MVP."

A matted photo strikingly framed of a jubilant WU basketball team has a sticky that reads:

"The Warriors winning their fourth national championship"

Scotty presses his fingers to the glass with great admiration.

IN FAMILY ROOM

He squeezes out a smile as he crosses to the oak hutch.

He gives each MVP award a loving touch.

Five NBA championship rings rest perfectly straight in a cedar box. Scotty removes all five and places them on his left hand. After admiring, he carefully returns them.

The front door opens and closes. Erse barrels around the corner, startled by Scotty.

ERSE

You scared the shit out of me.

SCOTTY

Sorry.

ERSE

Brother, it's been a long time.

An exuberant Erse opens his arms for an embrace. Scotty coldly extends his hand. Erse brings one arm down and extends the other, shaking Scotty's hand vigorously.

SCOTTY

Why are you calling me brother?

ERSE

My mistake. Baby wings... it's good to see you. It's been a while since you were here.

SCOTTY

I thought you would have changed the locks by now.

ERSE
It's still your home.

SCOTTY
This hasn't been my home for a long
time. Lo Jack is looking for you?

ERSE
Who?

SCOTTY
You know who I'm talking about.

Scotty continues to admire the memorabilia. He eyeballs a framed photo of a young Scotty and George shooting a basketball.

Sticky attached: "Scotty and George at six."

SCOTTY
What's with the sticky notes?

ERSE
Ain't nothing. It's good to see
you. It's been a while since you
were here.

SCOTTY
You're leaving messages for me all
over campus. Starting to piss
people off. I came to see what you
wanted.

Erse takes a basketball off the shelf and spins it on his finger.

EXT. RECREATION CENTER - OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY

Alligatored asphalt. Metal nets. Broken lights. Wood backboards scream for sandpaper and paint. No one plays here anymore. Yet, a father and son pick-up game elevates.

Scotty bumps off his father's defense and shoots from a pot-hole that would normally be the top of the arc. Swish.

Erse dribbles the baseline clumsily. He picks up, faces the basket and stares. Scotty pirates the ball and puts up a mid-range jumper. The metal nets sing.

SCOTTY
Look alive, Erse.

Erse dribbles against Scotty's hard defense.

ERSE
Bring it, brother! Bring it!

SCOTTY
Why do you keep calling me brother?

ERSE
Sorry.

Erse attempts a hook. Scotty hammers it back into his face.
Erse rocks.

ERSE
Time!

Erse scuttles to a nearby drinking fountain. Scotty adoringly
watches his father try to suck up water from a modest flow.

ERSE
I'm not as good as I used to be.

SCOTTY
I remember when I couldn't beat
you. You taught me everything I
know.

ERSE
I didn't teach you all that fancy,
spinnin', skippin', double pump,
rotation backwards crap.

SCOTTY
I guess they didn't do that when
you were playing.

ERSE
No, we didn't use up all our energy
on one shot.

Scotty squiggles out a smile. He scans the park.

SCOTTY
This place has changed.

ERSE
Gone to hell. We used to come here
all the time to play. Remember?

SCOTTY
I remember.

ERSE
This place is special to me.

SCOTTY
I like shooting baskets with you.
It reminds me...

Scotty holds.

ERSE
I was thinking about attending a
few of your games this season.

SCOTTY
Dub-U Fieldhouse has 10,238 seats.
You don't need my permission to
occupy one of them.

ERSE
How does the squad look this year?

SCOTTY
Small talk?

ERSE
Can't a father make small talk with
his son?

Scotty laughs.

SCOTTY
Father? Son? You must be kidding.
You'll be gone soon. Just like
before.

ERSE
I thought it was time I right my
wrongs.

SCOTTY
I think I read somewhere a man's
average life expectancy is 77
years. You should have started a
long time ago. You're gonna' run
out of time.

ERSE
I don't blame you for being angry.
I was hoping we could work on that.

Scotty boils during seconds of uncomfortable silence.

SCOTTY
Have you heard from mom?

Erse shakes his head hesitantly.

SCOTTY
Even after all these years?

ERSE
If you don't want to be found...

SCOTTY
You've been visiting George.

ERSE
Sometimes.

SCOTTY
What about your son that's still
alive? When's the last time you
visited him?

Erse lowers his head, searching for words he can't find.

SCOTTY
That's why I'm angry.

Scotty moves down the street.

INT. ABANDONED RAIL YARD - DAY

The homeless assemble and live. Tattered tents, tarps and ropes create make-shift shelters. Shopping carts are scattered about, filled to capacity with decades of personal mementos.

Erse meanders along the rail tracks, carrying a grocery bag. He stops an approaching family of three.

ERSE
Helen? You seen Helen.

They ignore him and move past.

Erse stands before a man brushing his teeth from a paper cup.

ERSE
You seen Helen?

He points down the tracks.

HELEN REYNOLDS sits on a rock, taking long drags on the filtered section of a cigarette butt.

A frail woman. Late fifties. Moth eaten hand me downs. Her face is timeworn and wrinkled, but her deep brown eyes sparkle.

It's obvious she's been on the streets for a while, but carries herself with a certain class and elegance, even with years of neglect framed on her face.

Erse stands before her.

ERSE
The bread you like.

She takes the bag.

HELEN
You don't look well.

Erse ignores her comment and sits next to her.

ERSE
I saw our boy today.

She becomes animated.

HELEN
How is he?

ERSE
He asked about you. You should see him.

She lowers her head and shakes it slowly.

HELEN
I can't.

ERSE
It's time, Helen.

HELEN
No.

ERSE
At some point...

Helen moves her hands in front of her.

HELEN
(shouting)
I said no!

Silence. Helen shuffles away.

INT. TENT - NIGHT

A lit lantern glows. Helen parts a loaf of french bread into small pieces and stirs it into a brewing stew.

She rummages through a bag of photographs and pulls out a cracked photo of nine year-old twins, Scotty and George. Erse stands behind them with his hands on each of their shoulders. Hawaiian plumeria lei's around their necks.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. KAHULUI AIRPORT - DAY

Helen Reynolds is posing nine year-old Scotty and George with Erse for a photograph.

HELEN

This is our first trip to Hawaii. I
want to remember this moment
forever.

BACK TO PRESENT

Helen holds the photo to her chest and begins to sob.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - DAY

Sneakers squeak on the pristine hardwood floors. A state of the art professional caliber arena on a college campus. The envy of every other university.

A Warrior inter-squad scrimmage is in full force. Pick-and-rolls, slip cuts, storm-the-floor outlets and trash talk. It's intense.

T stands on a chair, keeping a close eye on his team.

Scotty's presence is overwhelming. After all, he is the star.

The Fieldhouse inner doors slam open wide and loud. Play stops.

Parading down to courtside is freshman TINYOHYEDU BAHBA, TINY for short.

An African national from the Congo. Tiny is Nineteen. Seven feet tall and almost as wide. Ceremonial predator dreads dance on his scalp.

He looks menacing. Muscular and cut. Traditional warrior tats along his arms and shoulders. Still, nothing more than a big fish in a bigger pond.

The WU players look as if a god from the heavens descended to bless them... except Scotty. He's not impressed.

T hustles over to acknowledge Tiny. His whistle yells for attention. The Warriors gather.

COACH T

Men, this is Tinyohyedu Bahba.

Tiny's accent is thick. English, European proper.

TINY

Please refer to me as Tiny.

COACH T

Tiny is our new freshman from the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

TINY

Good morning.

The Warriors offer various types of greetings. Scotty hangs in the background, ignoring the fanfare for the giant.

SCOTTY

He's big. Scary. Intimidating. But can he ball?

T smiles. He hands a nylon mesh practice jersey to Tiny.

IN THE POST

In the midst of a play, Scotty leans in on Tiny.

SCOTTY

What do all those tatoos mean?

TINY

I come from family of warriors.

SCOTTY

Warriors? You're with the right team.

Scotty calls for the ball. He reverse jams unmolested. Tiny is frustrated.

SCOTTY

Too bad you don't have game to match.

Scotty hustles back on defense and leans hard against Tiny. The mismatch in size is amusing.

SCOTTY

I want you to look good for T. I'll slack off when the ball comes in so you can get an easy basket.

TINY

I don't want your charity.

SCOTTY

Have it your way.

Scotty intercepts the pass, dribbles the length of the court and throws down a show boat dunk. Tiny hopelessly lowers his head in embarrassment.

T is delighted with the interaction. He whistles as he makes his way high in the fieldhouse. He plops into a seat in the second to-last row and admires his players like a proud mother hen.

COACH T

(shouting)

Look alive, Tiny! Don't let Reynolds rattle you.

ATHLETIC DIRECTOR TREVOR FISK, lanky, late sixties, preppy; clumsily navigates the stairs.

Trevor falls into an empty seat close to T.

TREVOR

You sit way up here on purpose.

COACH T

Obviously not high enough. I thought you were afraid of heights.

TREVOR

Fooled you this time.

Trevor acclimates to his fear and gets comfortable.

TREVOR

I see your big man arrived.

COACH T

It brings joy to my heart.

TREVOR
I hope it helps.

COACH T
(screaming)
Make 'em pay, Scotty! Make 'em pay!
(to Trevor)
It will.

Scotty skillfully part three defenders to score an aggressive lay-up.

TREVOR
Damn, Reynolds looks good.

COACH T
A first year NBA player.
(screaming)
Pick up the slack, Bobby!

TREVOR
Why do you think he decided not to go pro?

COACH T
Unfinished business.

TREVOR
So we should win a title. Right?

T pauses for a moment, cuts Trevor a look, then continues enjoying the scrimmage.

COACH T
This isn't you talking?

Trevor fiddles. He eyes T, then releases a breath.

TREVOR
I'm here on an official capacity as the A.D. of Westgate University. They're growing impatient. If you don't bring home a championship this year ...

COACH T
(screaming)
Keep the pressure on, Styles!

TREVOR
Second place three years in a row...

COACH T

Thirty-five goddamn years of faithful service. Eleven national championships. Nine final fours. Thirteen elite eights. Five sweet sixteens. A dynasty of basketball greatness and superiority. Not to mention character development of young, hormonal and immature minds. Income for the student body in the millions and notoriety that's priceless. Still it's not good enough.

TREVOR

You know what they want.

COACH T

They want you to fire me.

TREVOR

They want that cheap keepsake made of wood for the trophy case, so they can show off to their friends. And yes, they think a younger coach is the direction for this team.

COACH T

Ungrateful sonsabitches. I don't need this. I can coach in the NBA. It's not like I don't get the offers. I stay for them.

T points toward the court. Scotty reverse jams.

Trevor arches his brow and squints his eyes in reaction to Scotty's skill.

TREVOR

Only a first year? Is Reynolds going to play nice with the big man?

COACH T

Of course.

TREVOR

Are you sure?

COACH T

I have a plan.

T moves towards center court.

IN THE POST

Scotty picks up Tiny on defense. He checks hard.

SCOTTY

I've seen a lot of interesting things in my life time. I once saw Elvis at a seven-eleven buying a cherry slurpie. Saw a Yeti hitchhiking. I even saw a UFO abduct a cow. But you are without a doubt the first seven-foot pussy I've ever seen.

Tiny goes after Scotty with lots of vinegar. He is saved by T's whistle.

COACH T

That's it for today.

A slow parade toward the locker room begins. Tiny is worked up.

COACH T

Good job Tiny. The team manager will get you settled.

T wrangles Scotty to his side.

COACH T

What's your assessment of the big man?

SCOTTY

He's a project.

COACH T

We don't need a project. We need a center.

SCOTTY

I'll put hair on his chest.

COACH T

I was hoping you'd say that. I want you to take him under your wing. Show him Oz! The yellow brick road to excellence.

SCOTTY

I can do that.

COACH T

You should probably spend time with him off the court as well. Solidify that relationship. Make the connection. Form that bond.

T makes an uncomfortable clamping motion with his hands. Scotty curiously arches his brow.

SCOTTY

Where you going with this?

COACH T

You could be the deciding factor in his success as a Warrior. I ask that you consider taking him as your roommate.

Scotty's face goes slack.

COACH T

You owe me.

SCOTTY

How do I owe you?

COACH T

Remember that game of horse over the summer?

SCOTTY

T--

COACH T

That will teach you to question my underhand set shot.

SCOTTY

You know I live with my Aunt Cammie...

COACH T

I already spoke with Camilla. She's good with it.

SCOTTY

What?

COACH T

Biggest booster Dub-U basketball has. She'll do anything to help the team. She has that huge house... just you and her, and that spare bedroom.

SCOTTY

T--

COACH T

I know I'm asking a lot. After all, he's not from around here. Probably has weird customs or something.

SCOTTY

Exactly. Probably something to do with animals.

COACH T

Mess up your Aunt's fine hardwood floors. Besides, he's young. Impressionable.

SCOTTY

A freshmen.

COACH T

Snot all up in his nose. I'm sorry for even suggesting it.

SCOTTY

You're just doing your job.

Scotty moves toward the locker room.

COACH T

Rich clay from the Serengeti. Just waiting to be harvested and molded into something... beautiful.

Scotty stops. T is in the moment.

COACH T

A raw stone in need of a jeweler, with precision hands, bruising that stone into a brilliant diamond. Your dad used to take every freshmen under his wings... get their mind right. Turn them into diamonds. I thought I'd give you the same opportunity.

SCOTTY

My father would do that?

COACH T

One hundred percent success rate.

SCOTTY

I can beat that.

COACH T
I'm sure you can.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

Tiny organizes his locker.

SCOTTY (O.S.)
Pussy!

Tiny sighs. Scotty moves in.

SCOTTY
You bunk with me now.

Scotty begins to walk away until he hears Tiny mumble under his breath. He stops in his tracks.

SCOTTY
Excuse me?

TINY
Do you have a problem with me,
Scotty Reynolds?

Scotty moves closer.

SCOTTY
You swag in here all messiah like
and shit. But you're not our second
coming. Not yet, but you will be
when I finish with you.

Scotty moves closer still.

SCOTTY
From now on you will come early and
stay late after practice. You will
hustle the court on offense and
swarm on defense. You will go after
every rebound, try to block every
shot. You will be feared by anyone
who dares to venture into the
paint, because you will own it.

Scotty grows intense.

SCOTTY
By the time you leave Dub-U, you
will be a team leader. You will
also be called a champion. A true
warrior.

Scotty is in his face. Nose to nose.

SCOTTY

You can be sure of that because I am gonna' ride you like you have a saddle on your back until the final game of the NCAA tournament when we celebrate becoming national champions by cutting down the nets.

Tiny swallows the lump in his throat.

INT. CAMILLA'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Scotty leans in the corner, arms crossed. Tiny moves down from upstairs. CAMILLA DAY, Scotty's Aunt Cammie, glides out from a side room. Fifties, uniquely appealing, but she doesn't date; her life is Scotty.

CAMILLA

I forgot your linens, Tiny.

TINY

Thank you, Aunt Cammie.

SCOTTY

She's not your Aunt.

CAMILLA

You can call me Aunt Cammie.
Everyone else does.

Camilla cuts Scotty a glare as she moves up stairs. Scotty's out-stretched hand holds two legal size pages stapled together.

SCOTTY

House rules.

Tiny takes the pages and skims.

SCOTTY

Is there anything I need to know about you before you move in? Habits? Fetishes? I don't want any surprises.

Tiny rolls his eyes.

TINY

I shrink heads in my spare time.

SCOTTY

Really?

TINY

Don't worry. Your's is much to large for me to work with.

Camilla returns.

TINY

It says here I can only use toilet between six and seven in the morning, eleven to twelve in the afternoon and nine to ten at night?

SCOTTY

That's right.

TINY

I have bladder like squirrel.

SCOTTY

That's going to be a problem for you. I suggest you get a coffee can. Might as well get a few redwood plugs for the other end.

TINY

You are a crazy man, Scotty Reynolds.

CAMILLA

Tiny, what are you talking about.

TINY

House rules.

Camilla snatches the list and gives it the once over.

CAMILLA

My house rules are simple. Make yourself at home... and win basketball games.

She rips the pages in half and points a disciplinary finger at Scotty.

TINY

Very good Aunt Cammie!

Tiny picks up a framed photo of a youth standing at attention.

TINY
Is this you Scotty Reynolds?

Scotty snatches the photo. He takes it up stairs.

CAMILLA
Scotty's twin brother, George.

TINY
There is two Scotty Reynolds?

CAMILLA
He's with Jesus.

TINY
That is very sad.

CAMILLA
Yes, it is. Tiny, I hope you'll
enjoy staying here.

TINY
I'm going to love it.

Tiny hugs the big screen TV.

TINY
American satellite television.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - FRONT PORCH - NIGHT

Camilla waits. When Erse opens the doors she pushes inside
with a force.

Erse fumbles a bit.

ERSE
Hello, Camilla.

CAMILLA
Don't hello Camilla me. What are
your intentions with Scotty?

ERSE
I'm... looking to re-connect with
him.

CAMILLA
Again? Why now?

ERSE
It's time.

CAMILLA

Is Helen part of this?

Erse embarrassingly shakes his head.

CAMILLA

Have you seen her lately?

ERSE

She moved to the old train yard.

CAMILLA

You and my sister... he's your son,
but he's mine. You brought him to
me.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. CAMILLA'S HOUSE- FOYER - NIGHT

Helen stands outside on the steps, in tears. Erse gives a ten year-old Scotty a loving nudge towards Camilla.

ERSE

It's just for a little while.

Scotty resist.

10 YEAR OLD SCOTTY

No, I don't want to stay with Aunt
Cammie! No!

Camilla engulfs Scotty with her arms, but he fights.

CAMILLA

Come with Aunt Cammie, baby.

10 YEAR OLD SCOTTY

No! No! I don't want to go.

Camilla gets a handle on him and hugs with all her love. He fights. Erse backs out of the house.

ERSE

It's just for a little while...

BACK TO PRESENT

CAMILLA

He's strong, but still fragile. You
can't keep disappointing him.

Camilla notices sticky's on the photos.

CAMILLA
Are you okay?

Erse sighs deeply and shakes his head.

ERSE
I'm forgetting a lot. Can't
remember little things. Simple
things. Doctor says it's early
stages of dementia.

CAMILLA
Does Scotty know?

Erse shakes his head slowly.

ERSE
Sometimes I have to think about who
he is. Who I'm supposed to be. I
don't want him to know that.

CAMILLA
I'm sorry, Erse.

Erse nods his head.

ERSE
I want to make things right, while
I can.

CAMILLA
I get it. I'm all for it, but I'm
not going to let you hurt him again
so you can feel good about
yourself. I will protect that boy
with my entire being.

She storms out, leaving the door open.

EXT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - NIGHT

Tiny sits on the landing. All seven feet bent into a perfect
lotus. He ardently sings a traditional African song in his
native tongue.

Students move by, wrenching their face to the god-awful sound
coming from Tiny. Scotty scales the steps and sits next to
Tiny as he modulates to a higher octave. After a few more
bars he ends his anthem.

SCOTTY

I can hear you howling on the other side of campus. I came to put you out of your misery.

TINY

I am sorry Scotty Reynolds. First game has me in knots. I am also a little home sick. It is times like this I used to talk with my father... for his advice.

SCOTTY

Were you tight?

TINY

What is tight?

SCOTTY

Close. Buds...

Tiny grins widely.

TINY

Yes... buds, very tight. Until -- I told him I was coming to America to play basketball. Then... un-tight.

SCOTTY

My father and I were tight. Then... un-tight.

TINY

Father is good... taught me how to be good man. The distance between us is great. So it is hard to be tight. But, Scotty Reynolds, your father is near, right? You can work on being tight again.

Scotty gives the concrete a cold blank stare.

SCOTTY

My father is not good. Unlike yours, he has many faults.

TINY

And mine doesn't? Mother got very angry at father's faults. Once she was so annoyed I thought he would have to take up fellowship with waterbuck. He even disappointed me a few times. But -- he still father. Not perfect. Human.

Scotty nods his head approvingly.

SCOTTY

Tell me about where you come from.

TINY

I am from Kolwezi in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

SCOTTY

Is it a big city? Running water and electricity?

Tiny is slightly offended.

TINY

Scotty Reynolds, you think I come from a grass hut in the middle of the jungle?

SCOTTY

That's why I'm asking.

TINY

It is capital city of Lualaba Province. A mining town. What about you, Scotty Reynolds? Tell me about George. I know he is no longer of this world.

Scotty hesitates for a moment, then lets go.

SCOTTY

He was born two minutes before me, but I always told him I was the oldest, so he looked up to me.

Scotty soberly looks into the distance.

TINY

How did he pass?

SCOTTY

It was accident. A very unfortunate accident. I miss being his big brother.

Scotty reflects quietly for a moment.

SCOTTY

Is your father as tall as you?

Tiny pops to his feet. He extends his hand to pull Scotty up. They move down the steps.

TINY

Taller. Seven feet nine inches?
Anatomically proportioned. Unlike
you, Scotty Reynolds.

Scotty pops Tiny on the shoulder.

SCOTTY

What are you doing looking?

TINY

It wasn't easy.

Scotty gives Tiny a playful push.

INT. CAMILLA'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Camilla scrubs pots and pans as Scotty does homework. She smiles at the activity.

CAMILLA

I like having two handsome men in
the house. It makes me feel safe.

SCOTTY

T... that damn set shot.

CAMILLA

You don't fool me. You like having
Tiny around... to mold in your
image. Your mini me.

SCOTTY

There's nothing mini about Tiny.

CAMILLA

It reminds me of you and George,
how you two used to go back and
forth all the time.

Scotty is irritated.

SCOTTY

He's not George.

Camilla realizes she struck a nerve.

CAMILLA

No, he's not. I'm sorry I didn't
mean to...

Scotty ignores her.

CAMILLA
How was it going back home? You
haven't been there in a long time.

SCOTTY
This is my home.

CAMILLA
Yes it is.

SCOTTY
Do you ever hear from my mom?

Camilla pauses her chores. Almost floored by the question.

CAMILLA
You haven't asked me that in a
while.

SCOTTY
I know, I used to ask you all the
time. Going back to the house got
me thinking about her.

CAMILLA
I'm sure she's okay.

SCOTTY
How do you know that? She could be
dead. People don't disappear for no
reason. I'm hoping she turns up one
day. Do you have any idea where I
can start looking for her?

Camilla sighs. She ponders the question, debating with
herself how she should answer.

She dries her hands and sits next to Scotty.

CAMILLA
I'm sorry.

She fidgets.

CAMILLA
How do you feel about your dad
reaching out to you?

SCOTTY
You know how he is. Every few
years, in for a day or two, than
out. He'll be gone soon.

CAMILLA
 This time I think he's serious
 about being a father.

Scotty puts down his pencil.

SCOTTY
 He screwed that up a long time ago.

CAMILLA
 He's trying to make up for it.

Tiny barrels into the room, waving a playbook.

TINY
 Scotty Reynolds. I need your help
 understanding my court position on
 this play... Excuse me Aunt Cammie.

CAMILLA
 No, no, it's okay. Those plays are
 important.

She returns to her pots and pans. Tiny sits.

SCOTTY
 You know how to read don't you?

TINY
 Of course I know how to read.

SCOTTY
 English?

TINY
 (with indignation)
 I am not from foreign planet,
 Scotty Reynolds

Camilla watches and smiles as they banter back and forth.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The Warriors sit in nervous excitement.

Scotty nods at senior guard, HAYWOOD NESTOR.

SCOTTY
 It's time.

Haywood reaches into a pouch at his feet and removes a pair of hair clippers with accessories. He snaps on a guard and flicks the switch. Its hum feels the room.

Scotty settles into a folding chair. Haywood pops a sheet high into the air and drapes it over Scotty's shoulders. He passes the clippers quickly over the top and sides of his scalp.

Another player takes the chair and gives Haywood cutting instructions.

TINY

What is this, Scotty Reynolds?

SCOTTY

DUB-U tradition. First game of the season the clippers must touch every player's head in some way.

TINY

(excitedly)

Very good, I could use an edging.

Scotty smiles like a Cheshire cat. Tiny pushes his way to the front of the line and sits.

TINY

Line the back, please.

Tiny cranes his head forward and lifts his dreads, exposing the back of his neck. Haywood peers at Scotty.

SCOTTY

Freshman cut.

HAYWOOD

You heard the man.

TINY

What is this -- freshman cut?

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - ENTRANCE TUNNEL - SAME NIGHT

Tiny rubs the back of his neck. No more dreads. Hair high and tight. The freshman cut. A zebra without his stripes.

T strides forward. His players circle him.

COACH T

As dawn broke, the hillside and valley resembled a rolling shadow. They traveled far and wide throughout the night to wish their warriors Godspeed before they entered into battle.

(MORE)

COACH T (CONT'D)

Although the warriors had witnessed this celebration many times with their fathers, and their father's fathers. Their faces showed amazement at the support of the village.

T makes eye contact with each player.

COACH T

Many were very young and afraid. Others had done this many times before. They were from over the valley or very far away.

T touches the shoulder of each player as if he was anointing them.

COACH T

Although they were from different townships, tribes and tongues, their war cry echoed collectively.

The upperclassmen let out a cry. Whoa Wha Woo. Whoa Wha Woo. It startles the freshman but they soon catch on to the cadence and join in.

COACH T

They were one. Side by side. Shoulder to shoulder. Front to back.

(shouting)

Prepare for battle.

The Warriors let out another war cry that echoes off the tunnel walls.

COACH T

(shouting)

Prepare for battle!

Another war cry fills the air.

COACH T

Men, I want to introduce you to the greatest to ever play Westgate basketball, and one of my favorite players. Erse "Wings" Reynolds.

Erse moves in from the shadows. The circle opens to allow him in the center.

Scotty stands pensively in the background.

COACH T
Wings, say a few words?

Erse is unsteady and shaky. Nervous. He reaches for words that aren't there. But the wide eyes and concentrated faces of the young Warriors brings confidence.

Erse wipes his brow. He slowly finds his tongue.

ERSE
T always told us the first game sets the tone for the entire season. He was right.

Approving nods from around the room.

ERSE
The paper says you will finish number two. Don't let someone elses prediction determine your season. They don't know your drive and determination to be champions... warriors. They don't know how bad you want it.

Erse relaxes and embarks on a pilgrimage among the players, resting close to Scotty.

Scotty perks as Erse continues his trek.

ERSE
You've heard the saying, it's not if you win or lose, but how you play the game? That's bull shit. Losers say that. You play the game to win. No one plays to lose. If you want to lose, just don't show up. Automatic loss. You are winners. So, when T ask you for sweat, give him blood. Lean on one another. Be great. Show the paper how wrong it is.

Erse clumsily initiates the Westgate fight song. He can't remember half the words, but the players join in. Soon they are all engaged, including Scotty, in a rousing version of "Fight On Warriors, Fight On".

The Warriors bump and move into a circle and extend there hands to the center.

ERSE
Lace em' up tight gentlemen!

After three additional war chants their exuberance propels them out of the tunnel to center court.

Scotty gives his father a nod and look of approval before he heads out of the tunnel.

EXT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - SIDE DOOR - LATER THAT NIGHT

Erse paces the sidewalk. He crowds Scotty when he sees him leaving.

ERSE

Hey brother, you wanted to see me?

SCOTTY

Why do you keep calling me brother?

ERSE

I'm Sorry.

They step together through campus. Erse is like an excited dog waiting for a treat.

SCOTTY

The guys really appreciated your words.

ERSE

What about you?

SCOTTY

It reminded me of the talks you would give before my park league games. It got us pumped.

ERSE

I'm glad I could contribute.

SCOTTY

I was thinking... maybe we could try hanging out... or something.

Erse gets his bone. He can barely control his zeal.

ERSE

Congrats on the first win of the season!

SCOTTY

First step to a title.

ERSE

Big man is a little soft, but he'll come around.

SCOTTY

T said you used to break in every freshman.

ERSE

That's no lie. I would acquaint them to the principles of being a warrior.

Scotty releases a brief smile.

SCOTTY

Props on being elected to the hall.

ERSE

I was hoping you would introduce me at the enshrinement. Maybe have a gospel choir do that song I like so much. How does it go?

Erse takes a stab at singing a few bars of "This joy that I have, the world didn't give it to me". He's off key and forgets the lyrics, but keeps trying.

His second attempt is worse.

ERSE

Nothing heavy. I want people dancing and singing. It's supposed to be a happy time.

SCOTTY

You should ask a former teammate. Or T, someone like that.

ERSE

I'm asking you.

Scotty looks away and slowly shakes his head.

ERSE

Well, if you change your mind.

Erse fidgets.

ERSE

Is your aunt doing okay?

SCOTTY
She reminds me of mom. You never
hear from her?

Erse quickly looks away.

ERSE
No.

Erse's answer unsettles him.

SCOTTY
I'd really like to know where she
is.

ERSE
She'll turn up one day.

Erse quickly changes the subject.

ERSE
Maybe you'll break my scoring
record this season.

SCOTTY
Maybe.

ERSE
How's your aunt?

SCOTTY
You asked about her already. Are
you high?

ERSE
No, no. Just got a little confused,
that's all.

SCOTTY
Are you sure?

ERSE
I'm clean. I'm not doing that
anymore.

Scotty looks carefully at Erse.

SCOTTY
Are you going to be around for a
while this time?

ERSE
We missed a lot of life together.
I'm hoping we can make up for it.

SCOTTY
I would like that.

Father and son continue their "small talk" as they move through the campus

EXT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - DAY

Lo Jack hammers the front door with his elbow. His huge frame transcends the entire jab. Bi's and tri's fight for freedom from his snug muscle tee. A collection of gangsta' tats on his arms and chest demand attention.

Erse springs open the door. Lo Jack pushes his way in.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

LO JACK
Erse what's going on, man? You looking for me?

ERSE
(confused)
Ah -- umm. Am I?

Lo Jack looks around.

LO JACK
I haven't been here in a minute. Like old times. Tell Lo Jack your needs?

ERSE
Ummm. I'm not really sure.

LO JACK
Check this out. I have some new white, better than the candy you used before. Shit is different now. Thunderous.

Lo Jack puts two small cellophane packets in Erse's hand. Erse is puzzled what to do with it. Lo Jack takes a small, weather beaten, leather bound journal from his back pocket and makes a notation.

LO JACK
(writing)
Your MVP hall of fame cred is good with me, Erse. I want you back as a customer.

The transaction is insanely blurry to Erse. Lo Jack's attempt to give him a "dap slap" confuses him even more. Lo Jack gives up.

LO JACK
Shit's gonna tickle you.

Lo Jack departs.

Erse is puzzled by the cocaine. He takes it into the family room and drops it on a table.

INT. REYNOLDS HOUSE - FAMILY ROOM - LATER SAME DAY

Erse sits docile at center couch. Blank face, holding a soft conversation with himself.

The front door opens and closes.

SCOTTY (O.S.)
You home?

Scotty moves into the room. He fixes on Erse and the packets of unopened cocaine.

ERSE
Hey Brother.

Scotty gives his father a cold, piercing glare. He snatches the cocaine envelopes.

SCOTTY
You said you were done with this.

Erse stammers.

SCOTTY
You used to be so great. People shouted your name in packed arenas. What happened to you? What is it about this shit that has such a hold on you? Let me see what it's all about.

Scotty searches the room. He pulls a laser etched glass plate from the hutch.

SCOTTY
Collegiate player of the month.
This is appropriate.

Scotty slams the plate on the table and spreads out the cocaine. Erse realizes what is happening.

ERSE

No, no.

SCOTTY

Am I doing it right?

Scotty uses his finger to create lines. Erse tries to physically stop him.

ERSE

No, don't do this...

SCOTTY

What do I do next? Help me get high so I can understand how it can make you forget about your son... and family. It must really be good.

Erse knocks the plate across the room. Cocaine flies.

Erse shoots a glare and storms outside into the back yard.

Scotty sighs long and deep. He calms.

BACK YARD

A make-shift wood-working craft shop. Band saws. Jointers. Double-end tenoner.

Erse maneuvers around an antique rocking chair. With craftsman precession, he sands the top rail with grit one-twenty paper. An artist perfecting a masterpiece.

He stops and holds spellbound into the sky. Almost lost.

Scotty moves in quietly. Surrounds an old rocker.

SCOTTY

Is this grandma's old chair?

ERSE

I'm trying to bring back its luster.

SCOTTY

I remember how she used to rock herself to sleep.

ERSE

When you were a baby, I remember how she used to rock you to sleep... and George. I should have done this while she was alive.

(MORE)

ERSE (CONT'D)

It's gonna' look real nice when I'm finished.

Scotty sits in the chair and rocks like a geriatric.

SCOTTY

Do you remember my 13th birthday?

Erse shakes his head.

SCOTTY

What about my 16th? Or 18th?

Erse sighs and shakes his head once more.

SCOTTY

It's because you weren't there. You were supposed to be. But you never showed. I'm glad you're back in my life. But if this is going to work, you have to be straight with me.

ERSE

I'm clean.

Scotty jumps up.

SCOTTY

That's bull shit. If you were clean you wouldn't have cocaine in the house!

Scotty moves around the workshop.

SCOTTY

I don't get you. You wanted to reconnect. So we're reconnecting.

Scotty returns to the rocker and slowly rocks.

SCOTTY

I can see her with those sharp crochet needles. Yarn piled in her lap.

(reminiscing silence)

We have a good thing going here. Don't mess us up.

INT. SCOTTY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Tiny stands over a slumbering Scotty. He shakes a stick with burning sage on the end.

Scotty jerks awake.

SCOTTY
What the hell...

TINY
I am very sorry Scotty Reynolds. I
did not mean to wake you.

SCOTTY
What are you doing?

TINY
I am conducting a ceremony of
transference. You are such a great
athlete. I want to be as good as
you.

Scotty rockets out of bed.

SCOTTY
That smells like marijuana! You
can't do this in the house. Aunt
Cammie is gonna have a fit.

CAMILLA (O.S.)
What's that I smell. I know you two
aren't smoking reefer!

SCOTTY
(shouting)
It's Tiny Aunt Cammie, not me!

Tiny's eyes grow larger than donuts. He is shocked at being
fingered.

TINY
Scotty Reynolds, why you throw me
under bus?

Scotty cracks up under his breath.

CAMILLA (O.S.)
Tiny, I don't allow that in my
house.

TINY
(shouting)
Yes Aunt Cammie. Many apologies.

Scotty laughs in silence.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - DAY

The Warrior coaching staff focus on a scrimmage between the squads.

Tiny loses a rebound to Haywood.

COACH T
(screaming)
That should have been yours Tiny.

A player zooms past Tiny like he's anchored and makes an easy lay-up.

T throws his clip board down in disgust and kicks it across the court, sounding his whistle.

COACH T
Damnit! I can't stand this any longer -- get out of my sight.

With jolting rhythm, the Warriors move off court, careful to avoid the wrath of T. He flings towels and basketballs as they move by.

Tiny is disgusted with himself. Scotty tosses him a towel.

TINY
Coach T is not happy with me.

SCOTTY
You'll get the hang of it.

T stops Scotty as he moves past.

COACH T
It was a mistake! I never should have made Tiny your responsibility. Clay molding, that was all bull shit. He's not ready to be a Warrior. This is your-opt out. I'm revoking his scholarship.

T has Scotty's attention, but he purposely moves away.

SCOTTY
Wait... T, you don't need to do that.

T stops in his tracks.

COACH T
Are you sticking up for a lousy freshman?

SCOTTY

He has game.

COACH T

I need to see it.

INT. TINY'S BEDROOM - EARLY MORNING

Tiny is dead asleep. Scotty bumps on the light.

SCOTTY

Get your big ass out of bed.

Scotty pulls the blankets from Tiny's large frame. He slowly wakes, his eyes find the clock. He lets out a groan.

TINY

It is six o'clock in the morning.

Tiny lays back down.

TINY

I get up with the elephants, around twelve.

Scotty takes a glass of water from the night stand and pours it on Tiny. He sits straight at attention.

TINY

Why you do this to me Scotty Reynolds?

EXT. WESTGATE UNIVERSITY - TRACK FIELD - DAY

Scotty and Tiny stretch their muscles.

SCOTTY

You want to be like me? You start today. You have the potential to be a force.

TINY

(pumping his fist)
A force!

SCOTTY

An animal!

TINY

What kind of animal?

SCOTTY
Any kind you want.

TINY.
I want to be Meerkat.

SCOTTY
No you don't. You want to be something fierce. A gorilla, or a rino -- A lion!

Tiny growls.

TINY
Yes, I will be Lion. So, you are Miyagi and I am Danielsan?

SCOTTY
What?

TINY
Karate Kid. I watched it last night. Very motivational.

Tiny makes swirling motions with his hands.

TINY
Wax on, wax off.

SCOTTY
Too much TV. It's making you soft. Start running.

Tiny and Scotty move around the track. Tiny is still making "wax on, wax off" motions.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - DAY

Scotty demonstrates proper foot placement to execute a move. Set. Pivot. Set. Pivot. Over and over. Tiny tries to emulate.

EXT. WESTGATE STADIUM - DAY

Scotty runs Tiny through a jumping drill on the stadium stairs. Up. Up. Higher still. Pushing and pushing to get more out of him. Sweat pours from his face.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - WEIGHT ROOM - DAY

Scotty spots Tiny during a bench press. Sliding more plates on the ends after each set. Tiny grunts and groans, pushing harder and harder.

AT THE SQUAT RACK

Tiny crouches parallel with over 400 pounds on the bar. Scotty lets out a spirited yell.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - DAY

Scotty demonstrates a defensive move. Tiny executes.

Scotty displays a power move to the basket. Tiny improves and rattles a dunk.

Scotty and Tiny, full court "give-and-go", up and back. Over and over. Pushing. Pushing faster.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - NIGHT

The Warriors are in the midst of a game against Nebraska. A cornhusker drives the lane. Tiny elevates high and rejects the shot.

The ball falls into the hands of another Nebraska player who attempts from the free-throw line. Tiny steps out and blocks that shot as well. Scotty chest bumps his big man.

Another play unfolds. A Nebraska guard pushes into the middle toward a lay-up. Tiny steps into the paint, roars like a lion and hammers his shot out of bounds.

On offense. Tiny hits Scotty with a pass at the top of the key. He continues to the basket for his reward, an alley-oop slam dunk.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - DAY

A vigorous and intense practice is in session. Tiny has a bold swagger. He runs the court like a crazed giraffe.

A shot bumps off the rim. Tiny spins, ducks and jerks sideways for position to snatch the rebound. He slams the put back so hard the basket shakes. Tiny roars like a rabid mandrill.

On defense, Tiny clears a rebound and sends it down court for an easy team mate basket. He roars again.

The coaching staff gloat like proud parents on their child's first day of kindergarten.

Scotty brings the ball up court and pushes down the middle, challenging Tiny.

Tiny bumps Scotty in the air and bats his shot down court.

Scotty tumbles to the hardwood but quickly rises.

Tiny wags his finger in Scotty's face.

TINY

No, no, no. The paint belongs to
Tinyohyedu Bahba. I did not give
you permission to enter.

SCOTTY

That was a hack!
(yelling to sidelines)
T, that was a hack!

TINY

No hack! You cry like yappy dog.
You want tittie for mouth?

Tiny roars in Scotty's face, up close and personal.

COACH T

(enjoying the exchange)
Did you guys see a hack?

The coaches shake their heads, mutter "no", "not me", "didn't see a thing."

TINY

I am lion. You will bow down to the
king.

Frustrated, Scotty asks for a sub. He meanders over to the coaching staff.

Tiny claims his position in the paint. Receives congratulatory slaps from his teammates and roars.

SCOTTY

I've created a monster.

LATER AFTER PRACTICE

With flawless form, Scotty drops three pointers, one after another. Barely touching the net.

Tiny moves under the basket, eyes sparkling, teeth gleaming. The ball falls through the net and into his huge hands. Scotty motions for the ball but Tiny is frozen.

SCOTTY

Ball!

Tiny grins like an audition for a dental commercial.

SCOTTY

What's wrong with you freshman? Get that stupid smirk off your face and give me the rock.

Scotty tires of the wait and moves in.

TINY

Coach T is starting me next game.

Scotty snatches the ball.

SCOTTY

He should. You're nasty. You must of had an awesome teacher.

TINY

Miyagisan.

Tiny makes swirling motions with his hands.

SCOTTY

Too much TV!

Scotty moves off the court. Tiny trails at his side.

SCOTTY

It was a hack.

TINY

No, no, no. All ball.

SCOTTY

Where did you learn to roar like that?

TINY

From the diaphragm...

SCOTTY
You have to teach it to me.

INT. CAMILLA'S HOUSE - DINING AREA - NIGHT

A "Happy Birthday Scotty" banner hangs lifelessly. Cake sits alone on the table. Balloons and streamers are scattered. A paper party favor sadly protrudes from Tiny's head.

Camilla has a cell phone to her ear. Scotty paces.

CAMILLA
He was on his way. Something must
of happened.

SCOTTY
Old habits happened. I know where
to look for him. Tiny, lets go.

Scotty and Tiny move out the front door.

CAMILLA
Be careful!

INT. ABANDONED APARTMENT - SAME NIGHT

A woman, house wife type, reclines on a foam cushion stained with green and yellow ick. She tries to entice a hit on a crack pipe from a tattered man sitting to her left.

In separate corners, spaced out junkies enjoy their high.

In another section, a young female lays on the floor and jerks out of control.

Scotty and Tiny creep through a make shift plywood door carefully hung by a nail to swing side to side.

Tiny is stressed.

TINY
Scotty Reynolds!!! You brought me
to new jack city!

IN THE BOWELS OF THE APARTMENT

Lo Jack has a junkie against the wall, beating him senseless. Four of his soldiers stand by at attention.

Scotty and Tiny tread carefully inside. The soldiers react. With a slight hand gesture, Lo Jack motions them back.

Lo Jack continues to pommel the junkie unconscious.

Tiny is nervous at first, but finds the courage to stand taller and wider.

LO JACK
Don't ever disrespect me again. I
don't like being disrespected.

Lo Jack allows the lifeless body to fall. He takes a hanky from his pocket and cleans his hands.

SCOTTY
I'm looking for my father.

Lo Jack looks to a soldier, who shakes his head.

LO JACK
Erse ain't here.

SCOTTY
He has to be.

LO JACK
I know everything that goes on in
my house. I'm not your father's
keeper. Erse ain't here. Why don't
you check with your moms.

SCOTTY
What?

LO JACK
She and Erse are always hanging.
She might know where he is.

SCOTTY
You know my mother?

LO JACK
Know her? She's one of my best
customers.

Scotty rocks backwards, butts against the wall.

SCOTTY
Where is she?

Lo Jack chuckles.

LO JACK
You don't know? You need love from
Lo Jack after-all. Tent city, by
the railroad yard.

SCOTTY
 (to Tiny)
 Let's go.

LO JACK
 That was a freebie, but I am
 collecting from Erse.

SCOTTY
 Collect what?

LO JACK
 He knows.

Scotty and Tiny strike out.

EXT. RECREATION CENTER - BASKETBALL COURT - SAME NIGHT

Even the police don't come here after hours.

Erse is on the court, dressed in underwear and tube socks. He darts around the key dribbling an imaginary basketball.

TEENAGE GANG BANGERS, smoking weed and drinking beer, are entertained by the spectacle. They laugh at every imaginary shot Erse attempts.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

A capacity crowd cheers the New York Knicks. Erse in his basketball prime, runs the offense.

He fakes to the left and goes right, pulls up and hits a jumper.

BACK TO PRESENT

Erse raises his hands in the air and pumps his fists. He screams out his satisfaction.

BANGER #1
 Homes, who's winning?

The laughter of the bangers ricochet throughout the empty park.

BANGER #2
 You're on some good shit. I got to
 get me some of that.

Bangers continue to laugh and slap five.

Erse doesn't recognize their taunts. He's in the middle of a game. He puts a move on an unseen defender, shakes and bakes away.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

Erse fights for a rebound against two defenders. He throws a lead pass down court for a teammate score.

Time out is called.

On the sidelines. Erse suddenly falls to his knees. He cries uncontrollably. The KNICK COACH is concerned.

KNICK COACH
Erse, are you okay.

Erse can't stop sobbing. Knock Coach grabs him.

COLOR MAN
Something is up with Reynolds.

PLAY BY PLAY
It looks like he's having a
breakdown.

COLOR MAN
It's been tough for him since he
lost his son in a tragic accident.

PLAY BY PLAY
He hasn't been the same since.

COLOR MAN
I'm afraid he is still suffering
from his loss.

KNICK COACH
Hayes... go in for Reynolds.

BACK TO PRESENT

ERSE
Don't take me out. I can still
produce. Just give me a chance!

Erse springs up and down. Excited. Jubilant. The bangers barely control their amusement.

ERSE
 Just let me know what you want.
 Twenty points? Thirty? I'll give
 you a triple double.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

Erse straightens and lurches up.

ERSE
 I can play.

KNICK COACH
 Erse, settle down.

Torment is seen on Erse's face.

ERSE
 I can play!

Erse is distressed. The Knick Coach calls to his trainer.

KNICK COACH
 Help him to the locker room.

COLOR MAN (O.S.)
 Reynolds needs to take more time to
 come to terms with his loss.

Erse receives pats on the back from his coach and team mate.
 He slowly moves off court.

The Knick coach and players are saddened.

BACK TO PRESENT

The bangers perform a dilapidated "wave" to compliment their
 laughter, falling on the ground in hysteria.

Erse falls to his knees and lets out a suffering cry. It
 startles the bangers sober.

EXT. ABANDONED RAIL YARD - SAME NIGHT

Scotty and Tiny maneuver through the maze of tents and
 cardboard boxes. Scotty carefully scans every nook and cranny
 for a familiar face.

TINY
Do you see her?

SCOTTY
It's been a long time. I'm not even
sure what she looks like now.

Then, he stops. Frozen.

SCOTTY
I think that's her.

Helen Reynolds sits outside her tent on a milk crate, a
stones throw away from where Scotty and Tiny stand. A kettle
boils over a hibachi.

Helen pours water into a cup and drops in a tea bag, bobbing
it up and down. Her sleeve slides back, revealing a small
tatoo on her wrist, exactly like the charm Scotty wears
around his neck.

He takes the charm and holds it to his lips.

FLASH BACK TO:

INT. CAMILLA'S HOUSE - FOYER - NIGHT

Ten year old Scotty is resisting.

10 YEAR-OLD SCOTTY
No! No! I don't want to go.

Camilla hugs the young Scotty. Erse backs out of the house to
Helen, who stands emotionally broken.

Helen digs deep inside for strength. She removes a gold chain
with a charm of a basketball surrounded by angelical wings
from Erse's neck.

She rushes inside and holds her son until he quiets.

She slips the chain around his neck.

HELEN
My big strong man. Mama's not well.
You have to let me get better. I
want you to wear this for mama
until I come back. You'll be my
baby wings.

She rolls back her sleeve to reveal a tatoo on her wrist,
identical to the charm.

HELEN

I have one just like it.

She kisses the charm then holds it to Scotty's lips.

BACK TO PRESENT

Helen sips her tea. Legs crossed, foot bouncing, as if she was lounging at a chateau in France, instead of a homeless tent city. She is enchanting.

A hush falls over Scotty. He takes it all in.

TINY

Go speak to her.

Scotty forges a significant sigh. He begins to take a step, but stops when a woman takes a seat next to Helen.

The woman shares her cocaine rock. They both giggle like young school girls.

Scotty withdraws. Tiny follows.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME NIGHT

A handcuffed Erse is escorted into a holding area. His underwear clad body is covered by a paper hospital gown. He looks more like a bum than a hall of fame athlete.

The escorting OFFICER directs Erse to a bench. He attaches his hand cuffs to a large steal ring secured to the wall.

Watch Commander, SERGEANT MALACHI, approaches. Forties, career law enforcement.

OFFICER

Disorderly conduct in public.
Appears to be under the influence.
No ID. Doesn't remember who he is.

Malachi takes a hard look at Erse. He moves closer to get a better view.

SGT. MALACHI

You look familiar.

INT. SCOTTY'S CAR - MOVING - SAME NIGHT

Tiny watches as Scotty is quietly in a moment. Tiny begins to speak, but Scotty raises his hand to shush him.

Scotty answers his vibrating cell phone.

SCOTTY

Yes.
(beat)

Scotty closes the call.

SCOTTY

Found him.

INT. POLICE STATION - SAME NIGHT

Scotty peers at his father inside a holding cell. He sits docile. Malachi unlocks the door.

SGT. MALACHI

When I was twelve I waited after a game along with a bunch of other kids to get an autograph from Wings Reynolds. I was so afraid he wouldn't get to me, but he stayed until every one of us got his signature on whatever it was we were holding. I was the last one. I still have the ball he signed. I will always remember the integrity he had to make a little kid happy.

Malachi opens the cell door.

SGT. MALACHI

Get help for your father.

EXT. POLICE STATION - SAME NIGHT

Rain begins to fall. Erse, Scotty and Tiny move through the station doors. Erse lifts his hands to admire the rain.

ERSE

Brother, it's raining.

Erse shows Scotty the puddles in his palm.

SCOTTY

I'm not brother. I'm Scotty.

Erse looks confused. He wanders aimlessly. Scotty shakes his head in disbelief. Erse trips and lands into his arms.

ERSE

Brother -- help me.

SCOTTY
(screaming)
Brother's not here.

FLASH BACK TO:

EXT. MAUI BEACH - DAY

Nine year-old Scotty stands in the surf. Frantically screaming at the top of his lungs.

9 YEAR OLD SCOTTY
Brother! Brother! Broooooother!

Young Scotty tries to run into the ocean. Erse grabs him, but the youths momentum drags his father in.

Erse tackles Scotty to keep him in place. Scotty continues to call out for his brother.

Helen kneels in the surf, crying uncontrollably.

9 YEAR OLD SCOTTY
I want brother! Brother!!!

HELEN
Brother's dead.

BACK TO PRESENT

Scotty saddens. He takes in a few deep breaths. Then emotionally explodes.

SCOTTY
You son of a bitch.

In a rage, Scotty violently shoves Erse to the ground.

SCOTTY
(screaming)
What did you do to her?

Erse tries to get up. Scotty swings his arm. The blow knocks Erse back down.

Tiny restrains Scotty.

TINY
Scotty Reynolds... No! That is your father!

SCOTTY

He got her hooked... you bastard!
You told me you didn't know where
she was.

ERSE

Brother! Brother!

TINY

Scotty Reynolds!

Scotty refuses to retreat. Tiny gets rough, he tackles Scotty
and holds him still.

SCOTTY

Tiny... You saw what he did to her.
You saw!

TINY

He is your father. I am not going
to let you do something you will
regret.

Scotty calms.

SCOTTY

You saw what he did to her.

TINY

Go! Scotty Reynolds. Go now!

Tiny directs Scotty away from his father.

He helps Erse to his feet.

Scotty begins to move away, but continues to shout
profanities at his father as he distances. "You son of a
bitch"...

ERSE

Brother...

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The Warriors dress for their evening contest. The TEAM
MANAGER pokes his head in from an outer door.

TEAM MANAGER

(calling)

Scotty ...

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - OUTSIDE LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Scotty pushes through the door. Erse is near. After a beat of eye contact, he turns to move back inside.

ERSE

Wait -- Scotty, please.

Erse ushers him to the side. Scotty holds and draws a deep breath.

ERSE

Baby Wings, I'm sorry.

SCOTTY

Stop calling me that! I hate that name. I don't want to be associated with you. Do you know why I play at your alma mater? It's so I can be the last Reynolds everyone remembers. I break your records deliberately so I can erase your name from the books.

(pulling at his jersey)

I wear this number because it's the exact opposite of the one you wore. You know why I can't introduce you when you go into the hall? It means I have to say something nice about you.

Scotty tries to hold it together.

SCOTTY

I find out my mother is homeless... because of you! Your addiction.

Scotty slowly exhales and calms.

SCOTTY

I'm glad you weren't around me when I was growing up. I might have turned out just like you. I don't need you in my life.

Erse's eyes are windows of misery. He is unable to utter a sound. Scotty moves toward the locker room.

ERSE

Scotty...

SCOTTY
 (snapping)
 Take your broken down sorry ass out
 of here! I don't want anything to
 do with you!

Erse tries to speak but nothing comes out.

Scotty returns to the locker room. Erse feebly disappears
 into the crowd.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - NIGHT

In the midst of a game against Louisiana. Scotty goes for a
 breakaway dunk and misses badly. He's not himself.

OVER GAME ACTION:

FRAN FRASCHILLA (V.O.)
 Scotty Reynolds and his Westgate
 Warriors crash and burn ...

BILL RAFTERY (V.O.)
 Westgate continues to struggle as
 they lose to ...

FRAN FRASCHILLA (V.O.)
 Slumping Scotty Reynolds continues
 to have problems as Westgate falls
 to ...

BILL FRASCHILLA (V.O.)
 Powerhouse Scotty Reynolds
 experienced his lowest scoring game
 since he was an infant in a
 stroller ...

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE- NIGHT

Tiny charges center court like a mama rhino searching for its
 young.

TINY
 (calling)
 Scotty Reynolds! Scotty Reynolds.
 Are you here?

SCOTTY (O.S.)
 Stop all that noise.

Tiny finds Scotty prone lifelessly on a bleacher. He presses an oversized compress to the back of his head.

TINY

My God, you look like dung. You are mess. For us to have a chance at title you must be at your best.

SCOTTY

Yeah... I know. I'll get in gear.

TINY

Scotty Reynolds, I feel I must fix you.

SCOTTY

Do you now?

TINY

If ointment was available to solve your problem, I would smear it all over you. Instead, may I offer advice?

SCOTTY

No.

TINY

I give anyway. Scotty Reynolds... man the fuck up! Your parents life is separate from Scotty Reynolds life. Intersections along the way... yes, but still separate.

SCOTTY

You changed your major to Psychiatry?

TINY

I took class.

SCOTTY

They lied to me, Tiny.

TINY

Parents did what they did for a reason. One day you will know why. But for now, you have to suck up and move on. You cannot fix what has already happened. You cannot be angry at parents for being human and making mistake.

SCOTTY
Sounds like a good class.

TINY
I got an "A".

SCOTTY
I'm really trying, Tiny. It's not
easy.

TINY
I know, but you must.

Tiny pulls his teammate erect.

TINY
Shall I carry you?

SCOTTY
Don't make me hurt you.

TINY
Tough words coming from someone
holding a sanitary napkin to his
head.

They move together across center court.

TINY
We must hurry. At seven o'clock I
find out if Rachel and Ross end up
together.

SCOTTY
You know that's an old TV show. A
rerun.

TINY
To you.

SCOTTY
What kind of dung?

TINY
Yak. -- the worse there is.

INT. CAMILLA'S KITCHEN - DAY

Camilla is flouring a chicken for frying. Tiny moves in.

TINY
Aunt Cammie, let me assist.

Camilla drops several thighs into hot oil.

CAMILLA
You are so thoughtful.

Tiny lays chicken parts in the oil.

TINY
You should not have to do all the
cooking.

Scotty is seen outside the kitchen window in the driveway
shooting hoops.

Tiny projects his voice into the air.

TINY
There are others in this house who
should be helping too!

Camilla smiles at his obvious comment directed at Scotty. She
uses tongs to move the chicken around.

CAMILLA
It's okay Tiny. I enjoy it.

TINY
Scotty Reynolds has been moping
around like an ostrich who can't
find a hole to stick its head in.

CAMILLA
I've noticed.

TINY
Disagreement with father. He needs
answers. He had a chance to ask his
mother but did not wish to speak
with her.

Camilla is clobbered.

CAMILLA
What? He saw Helen?

TINY
I am worried for him.

Camilla look up towards the heavens and lets out sigh under
her breath. She gives the tongs to Tiny.

CAMILLA
When they turn a nice golden brown,
they're ready.

INT. CAMILLA'S BEDROOM - CONTINUOUS

Camilla comes through the door, closing behind her.

She sits on the edge of her bed, elbows on knees, head in hands. She cries hard.

Eventually she slides off the bed onto her knees. She can't control her pain.

EXT. DRIVEWAY - SAME DAY

Scotty lifelessly tosses a basketball in a worn, ragged hoop on the garage.

Camilla moves through the back door and leans against the door. Scotty cuts her a glare for a moment, then continues with his shots.

SCOTTY

You knew.

CAMILLA

I dreaded this day. I knew it would eventually come.

SCOTTY

Why would you lie to me?

CAMILLA

I'm sorry I wasn't honest with you. I tried to raise you the best way I knew how. I didn't think you needed to be bothered with all this family drama.

SCOTTY

All these years I asked you if you knew where she was. You should have told me. I needed to know.

Camilla rebounds the ball and holds it. Scotty goes to take it from her, but she holds on.

CAMILLA

I couldn't. You always had this angel image of your mother. I didn't want to take that from you. Neither did your father. I didn't want you to know how far she had fallen.

SCOTTY

That ass hole got her hooked.

CAMILLA

No, my dear sweet and wonderful nephew. She did it to him.

SCOTTY

What?

Scotty absorbs the reality. He tugs the charm around his neck.

CAMILLA

George's death devastated her. She started to self medicate. First it was alcohol. When that stopped working she moved to marihuana. She still suffered, so cocaine and heroin became her solace.

Camilla drops the ball.

CAMILLA

Her misery needed company. She pulled in Erse. He would do anything to ease her pain. I don't know what made them think I knew how to raise you. I had no children of my own, never married... but bringing you to me was the right thing for them to do. Your mom started living on the streets. Erse struggled with a drug problem that eventually ended his basketball career. I was determined to shield you from all of that and raise you to be the man I knew you could.

SCOTTY

They just forgot about me.

Camilla surrounds Scotty with her arms.

CAMILLA

They were broken.

SCOTTY

So was I... I lost my brother.

CAMILLA

And they lost a son.

Camilla holds Scotty tighter. She begins to sob.

CAMILLA

I should have never lied to you. I know you're angry with me. But don't be angry with your dad. He tried to stay connected to you. He wanted you in his life, but he was too messed up.

SCOTTY

Now he's back.

CAMILLA

I'm glad he's back in your life. You need each other. He wants a son as much as you want a father. He doesn't want you to know, but he's in the early stages of dementia.

SCOTTY

What?

CAMILLA

It's time you two work all this out.

Scotty is floored.

SCOTTY

The last time I saw him I was mean and cruel.

CAMILLA

Work it out. You're both Warriors of Westgate.

(she makes a bad attempt
at a war cry)

You're cut from the same mold. It's never too late. Go get your father back.

Camilla holds him tight.

EXT. REYNOLD'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Erse uses long smooth strokes as he sands the base of the old rocker. He hums softly.

Scotty looms in the shadows and peers over the side gate, admiring his father with glorious envy. He quietly unlatches and slips in.

Erse snaps upright and glows when he finds Scotty. He quickly rises, but is cautiously still.

Scotty moves around the workshop, touching and exploring.

SCOTTY

You should have told me about your dementia.

Erse looks away for a moment.

ERSE

It's hard to admit at times I didn't know who you were -- who I was? I didn't want to be a distraction.

Scotty kicks a bucket.

SCOTTY

I'm so angry with you.

ERSE

I don't blame you. I need to be up front with you. Your mother...

Erse becomes unsettled and fidgety. Scotty watches as his father rivets with apprehension. He interrupts.

SCOTTY

I know what happened.

Erse relaxes but is surprised.

ERSE

You do?

Scotty sees the anticipation in his father's face. He nods.

SCOTTY

Aunt Cammie.

ERSE

She still needs to work through some things. It's been tough for her. She thinks she failed... and can't forgive herself.

SCOTTY

I guess you both did the best you could.

Erse looks at his son with undying admiration.

ERSE

Our best didn't do right by you.

Scotty clumsily meanders about the rocking chair.

SCOTTY
It's looking good.

Erse Rummages through a cardboard box and finds a clean piece of sandpaper. He tosses it to Scotty.

ERSE
Make yourself useful.

Erse continues his work. Scotty finds a rough spot on the arm and begins to rub. He stops after a moment to compare his style to his father's.

SCOTTY
Am I doing it right?

Erse doesn't miss a beat from his own form.

ERSE
I see potential.

Scotty holds a smile. He eyes his father like a five year-old with a bead on Santa.

SCOTTY
I love watching you work.

ERSE
Less watch, more work.

After a few moments, Scotty drops to one knee. He picks up his father's gaze.

SCOTTY
You need someone to look after you.

ERSE
I have someone in mind.

SCOTTY
Pop -- I'm your son. It should be me.

Erse jerks alert.

ERSE
There's a lot I don't remember. I do know it's been a long time since you last called me "Pop."

SCOTTY
I want to be here for you.

Erse puts his arm on his sons shoulder.

ERSE
You have been.

INT. WESTGATE FIELDHOUSE - LOCKER ROOM - DAY

The Warriors are seated around a wide-screen TV, watching GREG GUMBLE on the SELECTION SHOW broadcast.

GREG GUMBLE (O.S.)
It's an annual right of spring,
bringing with it excitement and
emotion that can be found in no
other sporting event, the NCAA
tournament. The wait is finally
over, the brackets are ready and
the drama of March madness is about
to begin. Hello everyone I'm Greg
Gumble. Joining me is Ernie
Johnson.

The Warriors cheer like spectators at one of their games.

COACH T
Listen up gentlemen.

GREG GUMBLE (O.S.)
In the west regional, it's Dub-U,
those Westgate University Warriors
as the number one seed...

The players dance and cheer around the locker room.

EXT. DRUG RECOVERY CENTER - DAY

A former Junior high school converted into a treatment center. No glam. No glory. Just rows and rows of paint peeling buildings.

Scotty scales the steps of the largest structure and scuttles through the front door revealing...

GYMNASIUM

Highly polished pristine hardwood floors, backboards and rows of bleacher seats.

Above the door a hand painted sign reads: "Oh God, let me not be afraid of my loneliness."

Ten men impressively run a full court scrimmage. Red shirts against blue. Various ages, sizes and skill level. A pot of gumbo.

The biggest piece of meat is Erse. He runs with the blues. He looks... hall of fame.

Scotty moves in with eyes wide, admiring the facility and intensity of play. He catches his father's gaze and throws a wink.

JOHN, the center director, mid fifties, former NBA star who still has the look, approaches Scotty.

JOHN
Scotty? I'm John.

They shake.

SCOTTY
Nice to meet you.

JOHN
I met you a long time ago when you were...
(John positions his hand
at his knees)
Yea big. Your father and I were
teammates.

SCOTTY
What is this place?

JOHN
This is a drug rehab center I affectionately refer to it as "The final game of the season". It's designed specifically for the needs of basketball players. Most of those guys out there came to me after years of abuse. I'm their last resort. If they fail here... Your dad came here to get clean years ago.

SCOTTY
Why did he want to come back?

JOHN
He needed to be around what's most familiar. The game. It's his world.

SCOTTY

But he doesn't have a drug problem any more.

JOHN

No, he has other problems now. I help all who need it, no matter what it is. Especially your dad.

Scotty watches his father with adoration.

SCOTTY

I need to make permanent arrangements for someone to look after him.

JOHN

When I was a rookie your dad looked after me. He did for me like no one else. I'm your permanent arrangement. He can stay with me forever. He doesn't remember my name half the time, but he knows my face. He knows I'm here to help.

Erse encroaches the sideline on his way down court.

ERSE

Scooby, can brother play?

JOHN

He thinks I'm some cat named Scooby-Doo. But I don't know who brother is.

Scotty smiles.

SCOTTY

That's what I called my twin brother that passed. He thinks I'm him.

JOHN

George? No shit? You were identical. Now I'm wondering what that dude Scooby-Doo must look like? You thought he was still using, didn't you?

Scotty nods.

JOHN

Don't let it bother you. It's the dementia.

(MORE)

JOHN (CONT'D)

It makes it look that way. He's been here two weeks. Look at him... going up and down the court like a teenager.

John slaps Scotty on the shoulder.

JOHN

You want to run?

SCOTTY

Can I?

JOHN

They love to beat up on you college hot-shots.

John darts on the court and blows his whistle.

JOHN

New meat! Take it easy on him.

Erse runs to Scotty.

ERSE

Brother... my team.

ON COURT

Scotty and Erse execute a give and go power play.

Later in the game, Erse feeds Scotty for a dunk.

Father and son flawlessly double team an opposing player for a steal.

Scotty scores on a behind the back pass from his father.

Celebratory high fives, chest bumps and ass slaps.

ON THE SIDE LINE

Game over. Scotty and his father wipe off the sweat.

SCOTTY

Damn pops! You still got it.

ERSE

Did you see my sky hook from the corner?

SCOTTY
That was a lucky shot.

ERSE
Only if you don't expect to make it.

SCOTTY
You telling me that was planned?

ERSE
Hell yes.

SCOTTY
Bull shit! The ball followed the corners of the backboard, then fell in.

ERSE
You think you're the only one in the family who has game? Remember, my basketball blood flows through your veins.

They slap five.

JOHN
Erse... Scotty. Please join us for our sharing session.

SCOTTY
What's that.

JOHN
That's when we're... honest.

LATER THAT NIGHT

It's quiet. Lights dimmed. Scotty, John, Erse, the red and blue players gather on folding chairs arranged in a circle at center court.

Erse drifts. He gapes into the rafters.

ERSE
There's so much I can't remember. I wish I could forget this.

Erse struggles to keep his composure.

ERSE
It is crystal clear.

Erse looks over at Scotty.

ERSE
Life was so good.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. MAUI BEACH - DAY

Erse and Helen lounge on a blanket in the sand. Erse tries to get fresh. She slaps his hand.

HELEN
Not out here.

ERSE
What's wrong with out here?

HELEN
You're really asking that?

ERSE
It's time to try for that girl.

HELEN
What if it's another boy?

ERSE
Then it's a boy.

HELEN
Or two.

ERSE
I don't care if it's an army, as long as you're their mama!

They kiss romantically.

ERSE
Speaking of boys, where are they.

Erse looks toward the surf, calling.

ERSE
Scotty! George!

Helen looks toward the ocean.

HELEN
Scotty! George! Do you see them?

ERSE
Nothing to worry about. They're
just being boys.

HELEN
They can be boys where I can see
them.

Helen stands in the surf calling.

HELEN
Scotty! George!

Scotty floats in from the ocean.

9 YEAR-OLD SCOTTY
What's wrong?

HELEN
There you are.
(hugs him)
Where's your brother?

9 YEAR-OLD SCOTTY
He's not here? He came in before
me.
(calling towards the
ocean)
Brother! Brother!

HELEN REYNOLDS
Where's my baby? I don't see him!

BACK TO PRESENT

Erse stuffs his head in his hands. He breaks.

ERSE
I wish i could forget what
happened.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. MAUI BEACH - DAY

A crowd gathers as first responders bring in George's
inactive body from the ocean. Erse, Helen and 9 year-old
Scotty watch in horror.

George is laid on the sand. CPR begins. Helen is on her knees
next to George in tears.

Life saving efforts are aggressive and continue while Helen and Erse watch. Scotty stands off to the side, frozen.

A LIFE GUARD motions for CPR to stop. He rest his fingers on George's carotic.

LIFE GUARD

I'm sorry.

Helen lets out a scream. Erse holds her erect.

9 YEAR-OLD SCOTTY

No! Brother!

Scotty takes off running along the surf.

HELEN

Go after him. I can't lose another son.

Erse dashes. He digs in, full speed. Scotty is fast, but no match for the athletic skill of his father. Erse eventually catches him.

Scotty is frantic. Screaming.

9 YEAR-OLD SCOTTY

Brother! Brother!

They fall into the surf. Erse holds on tight as Scotty wrenches in emotional pain.

BACK TO PRESENT

Erse has broken down.

ERSE

Oh god... Every thing had changed in that one instance.

Scotty distresses.

ERSE

We were so focused on our own pain, we didn't think about yours. About you. We forgot about you. We failed you. I failed you.

Erse gathers his son in a tight embrace. They sob together.

ERSE

I'm so sorry, son. I'm so sorry.

The reds and blues settle on the father and son. Tears streak down their faces. John nods with approval.

INT. CAFE - NIGHT

A down-home country place families yearn for on week-ends. A frazzled waitress hurries to deliver coffee to Scotty and Erse.

They are peacefully quiet. Erse sinks into his chair and takes in the environment. His eyes dance.

ERSE

I like this place, brother.

SCOTTY

Scotty.

ERSE

I was thinking Scotty but...

SCOTTY

It's okay.

ERSE

My mind... I'm getting worse everyday. I can feel it.

SCOTTY

It was great playing with you.

ERSE

We make a good team.

SCOTTY

Yeah, we do.

ERSE

You are such a talented player. When its all said and done. You will be known as the better Reynolds.

SCOTTY

No one will forget the great "Wings" Reynolds.

ERSE

Are you ever going to break my scoring record?

SCOTTY

That record is like Chamberlain's hundred point game. No one will ever touch it.

ERSE

You could if you put your mind to it. You broke all my other records out of hate. This one you can break out of love.

Scotty sparkles at the flattery. He takes a long sip from his cup.

ERSE

The madness is here. Excited?

SCOTTY

You know I am. Tell me, which is sweeter, an NBA championship or a national title?

Erse thinks for a moment.

ERSE

In the NBA, if you lose a game you can make up for it the next night. In the tourney, it's win or go home. One and out. There's nothing like that madness. But the NBA championship is pretty sweet.

Scotty lowers his head and stares at the table.

SCOTTY

I can't seem to make it happen. I have the reputation of not being able to win the big games.

ERSE

Be more concerned about your character than your reputation. Character is what you really are. Reputation is what others say you are.

SCOTTY

But pop, it's the championship, the national title. I don't want to leave Westgate without it.

ERSE

Son, I'm going to tell you something you may find difficult to hear. Winning is not what's important. Wanting to win is. Tell me, why do you play?

SCOTTY

I don't understand what you're asking.

ERSE

The game. Basketball. Why do you play it?

SCOTTY

Because I love it.

ERSE

Exactly. I do too. You loved it at a young age. I not only taught you the fundamentals of the game, but I taught you to play it the right way... with love. I can see it when you're on the court, gliding towards the basket. You love what you do.

Erse smiles and places his hand on Scotty's shoulder.

ERSE

Don't let the pressure or expectation of championships and titles take away from your journey. It makes us who we are. Stronger. Better. It's the love.

SCOTTY

You're pretty smart.

ERSE

I'm your father!

He slaps Scotty's shoulder.

A ten year-old boy and his FATHER advance toward the Reynolds' table. The young lad holds an asphalt battered basketball and black sharpie. He's so mesmerized he's unable to utter a sound.

FATHER

Pardon me, gentleman. We don't mean to disturb your meal. My boy and I couldn't help noticing you both.

(MORE)

FATHER (CONT'D)

He's a real big fan. Hell, so am I.
Wonderin' if we can get you-all to
sign his basketball?

Scotty and his father look at each other and smile.

SCOTTY

Sure!

ERSE

We'd be glad to.

Scotty takes the sharpie and scrawls his signature above the
NBA logo. He hands the ball and marker to his father. Erse
looks at it clumsily.

SCOTTY

Do you want help?

Erse stares at the ball then smiles.

ERSE

No thanks. I remember what to do.

Erse carefully scribbles out his name. He holds on his
signature for a time before returning the ball to the ten
year-old.

INT. ALAMODOME - DAY

First round NCAA tournament action of the sixty-four teams.
March madness is in full swing.

COMMENTATORS OVER GAME ACTION:

DICK VITALE (V.O.)

Today, in first round action,
Westgate demolishes ...

DAVE O'BRIEN (V.O.)

The Westgate Warriors, the scariest
team in the tourney, moves into the
next round of ...

BRAD NESSLER (V.O.)

The Westgate Warriors continue to
roll over all contenders as they
move into the elite ...

BRENT MUSBURGER (V.O.)
 Scotty Reynolds and the dominant
 Westgate Warriors will be in the
 final four ...

ON COURT SIDE

DICK VITALE
 Cinderella has her shoes and her
 dress is all picked out! Westgate
 Warriors and the Duke Blue Devils
 are dancing, baby!!! This years
 national title game.

EXT. DRUG REHAB CENTER - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Erse paces. His cell phone signals him. He fumbles to find
 it.

ERSE
 (into phone)
 Uber?

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Scotty leans against his locker.

SCOTTY
 (into phone)
 What?

INTERCUT BETWEEN SCOTTY AND ERSE

ERSE
 Is this Uber?

SCOTTY
 No, it's Scotty.

ERSE
 Who?

SCOTTY
 Scotty -- your son.

ERSE
 My son?

SCOTTY
(sighing)
It's brother.

ERSE
Hey, brother!

SCOTTY
Are you on your way?

ERSE
I'm waiting for my Uber.

Scotty smiles.

ERSE
I'll be there. I won't let you
down.

SCOTTY
I know you won't. I'm just anxious
for you to be here.

ERSE
I wouldn't miss it.

SCOTTY
Okay. I love you, pop.

Erse jolts alert.

ERSE
Son.

SCOTTY
Yeah?

ERSE
You've made me proud.

Scotty chokes. He tries to gather himself, but is clearly
touched.

ERSE
You still there?

SCOTTY
Can we visit George's grave
together? And... I want to go see
mom? We need to bring her home.

ERSE
I would like that.

SCOTTY

All right pop. See you when you get here.

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - SAME NIGHT

Mascots energize the crowd with their antics. The arena oozes excitement and energy. Championship fever is in the air.

DICK VITALE

The moment everyone's been waiting for is finally here. The Westgate Warriors and the Duke Blue Devils go head to head. The winner dances away with a national title.

BRENT MUSBURGER

This is essentially a rematch of last year's game. It goes without saying, Scotty Reynolds and Bo Stevenson don't like each other much. Their rivalry is well known.

DICK VITALE

It's gonna be a war, baby... of championship caliber.

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - LOCKER ROOM - SAME NIGHT

The Warriors sit in nervous silence. T moves to the center of the room.

COACH T

Are you ready?

The Warriors murmur affirmative responses.

COACH T

I want you all to know, you are the gutsiest team I've ever coached. You didn't make it here because of me. You got here because of your heart.

HAYWOOD

T, all this time I thought it was your divine leadership and magnificent coaching.

The team chuckle.

COACH T
 First day of practice next year I
 want ten laps from you for doubting
 my coaching ability.

The Warriors laugh harder.

COACH T
 You remind me, Tiny.

TINY
 I will make mental notation.

T puts his arm around Haywood's neck and gives it a playful
 shake.

COACH T
 You are Warriors! In every sense of
 the word. There's no reason why you
 can't be champions.

T scans the room.

COACH T
 I love you guys.

They all cheer.

TINY
 New tradition!

Tiny stands and begins an African war cry. He parades
 vigorously around the room, stamping his feet to his rhythmic
 chants. A Haka.

Tiny encourages his teammates to join in.

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - TUNNEL - SAME NIGHT

The Warriors burst from the tunnel in a Haka led by Tiny.
 Fierce facial expressions. Grimaces. Poking out of their
 tongues. Eye bulging. Grunts and cries are performed in
 unison while slapping their arms, legs and chest.

Westgate fans explode into a frenzy.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)
 If that doesn't exorcise the Blue
 Devil, nothing will.

BO
 (to Scotty)
 That bullshit ain't gonna help you.

SCOTTY

We're not the same team you played last year.

BO

But you're the same.

Scotty looks over at an empty floor seat next to Camilla. He cocks his head in wonderment. Camilla shrugs her shoulders.

Scotty is concerned.

Tip-off.

EXT. DRUG REHAB CENTER - FRONT ENTRANCE - SAME NIGHT

Erse waits patiently.

Lo Jack's Range Rover pulls to the curb. Erse double times to the Rover and tries to get in.

Lo Jack steps out.

LO JACK

A little birdie told me I might find you here.

Lo Jack lights a cigarette and takes a long deep draw.

ERSE

Uber? Let's go, I don't want to be late.

LO JACK

I'm not no goddamn Uber. All of a sudden you don't know your ol' buddy Lo Jack.

Lo Jack plants his right foot on the front bumper. With dancing eyes, he leans into Erse.

ERSE

I have to get to Staples Center. My boy is playing in a championship basketball game. I can't disappoint him.

LO JACK

What the hell do I look like? Uber?

ERSE

Yeah.

Lo Jack snarls. He removes a journal from his back pocket. Thumbs the pages with familiarity. Down to business.

LO JACK

My records indicate I extended you credit on some... product. It's time to settle your account.

ERSE

I'm not sure what that means.

LO JACK

I'm not here to play with you Erse. I want my money.

Erse is puzzled. Lo Jack probes the neighborhood.

LO JACK

Maybe I can give you a lift.

ERSE

Let's go. I don't want to be late.

Lo Jack opens the back door.

ERSE

You know the way?

LO JACK

Oh yeah. I know the way.

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - SAME NIGHT

Scoreboard reads: WU, 21. Duke 49.

A break in play. The Warriors huddle around T.

SCOTTY

We're getting our ass kicked.

COACH T

Settle down. We're not converting on offense... switching on defense. We're playing into their style of basketball.

Scotty looks over at the empty seat next to Camilla. T notices Scotty's inattention and pops him on the shoulder.

COACH T

Focus.

Scotty nods. They buzzer breaks the huddle.

TINY
No father?

Scotty shakes his head.

SCOTTY
I'm a little worried.

TINY
Like Coach T said... you have to
focus.

EXT. ALLEY - SAME NIGHT

Lo Jack pulls to a stop. He yanks Erse out of the back seat and pulls his pockets inside out. He finds a few dollars, but nothing near what is owed. He takes Erse's wallet and finds empty compartments. He tosses it aside.

LO JACK
I want my money, Erse.

ERSE
This isn't Staple Center. You're
not a very good Uber driver.

LO JACK
You think I'm playing with you. I
want my money.

Erse grows angry. His voice elevates. He gets in Lo Jacks face.

ERSE
You are worthless! I told you I
need to get to Staple Center!

LO JACK
You raising your voice at me Erse?
I find that very offensive.

ERSE
Yes! I am raising my voice at you!
You useless piece of shit! I told
you I need to get to Staple Center!

Erse begins to hyperventilate.

LO JACK
Watch your tone, Erse. I like you,
but that doesn't mean your mouth
won't get your old ass in trouble.

ERSE

I have to see my boy play...
basketball! I told him I would be
there and I will. You piece of
shit!

LO JACK

You just crossed the line Erse. I
don't like being disrespected.

ERSE

I don't care! I told my boy I would
be there. I am not going to let him
down. Not again. Not ever again

Erse pulls away.

ERSE

You piece of shit! I will walk to
Staple Center. Brother is playing.

Erse turns to move away. Lo Jack lands a violent blow with
his massive arms to the back of Erse's head. Blood explodes
from his mouth.

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - SAME NIGHT

In the midst of the game, a Duke defender smashes Scotty in
the head and draws blood.

INTERCUT - STAPLES CENTER ARENA AND ALLEY

Scotty is slammed to the hardwood by a defender.

Lo Jack is a one man legion. He lands a crushing elbow to the
back of Erse's skull. It knocks him to the ground.

Scotty extends for a lay-up and receives an elbow to his rib
cage.

Lo Jack whips around Erse like a gale. He kicks him
repeatedly in the ribs while he lays defenseless on the
alligatored asphalt. Blood cascades from his beaten body.

Lo Jack picks up a long two by four and beats Erse like a
pinata. He elevates his foot and stomps Erse repeatedly in
the face. Erse falls over in a twitching, thrashing heap and
abruptly jerks to a stop, never to move again.

Scotty settles on the bench, battered and bruised. He covers
his face with a towel and pushes against the back rail of the
chair.

EXT. ALLEY - SAME NIGHT

Yellow crime scene tape sloppily defends the perimeter. CSI's meticulously prepare drawings and secure evidence.

A uniformed officer stands guard next to a canvas that barely covers Erse's crumpled corpse.

Sergeant Malachi steps under the tape and lifts the canvas. Anguish crosses his face when he recognizes the victim.

INT. STAPLES CENTER ARENA - SAME NIGHT

DAN SHULMAN

With the second half on its way,
the Warriors are down by twenty
one.

JAY BILAS

This has not been a good night for
the Warriors.

Duke extends their lead.

Trevor Fisk draws toward the Westgate bench and hands T a folded square of paper.

TREVOR

You should be aware of this.

T unfolds the square and reads.

TREVOR

I'm sorry.

T sighs heavily and kicks a pile of towels out of his way.

COACH T

(to Haywood)

Go in for Reynolds.

T crunches into a seat at the far end of the bench, away from everyone. He lowers and inhales deeply. Kicks a water bottle and throws a few more towels.

Scotty takes a chair among his teammates. Glancing again at Erse's empty seat.

COACH T

Scotty, come here, son.

Scotty ambles over to T and slams into the seat next to him.

SCOTTY

They're pick and rolling us to death. We have to pick up the defense sooner. We should also swing around the weak side.

T reverently rest the squared note on Scotty's knee cap.

Scotty unfolds the paper. After he takes it in, he sits motionless. He refolds the note several times until it's barely noticeable and slips it inside the corner of his shoe. His eyes plunge into the shiny hardwood.

COACH T

If you want to get dressed --

SCOTTY

Who can I go in for?

T sees the determination on his face. He scans the court.

COACH T

Haywood.

T scratches his neck hard as he watches Scotty in a daze at the scorers table. Scotty's emotions release when he's buzzed in.

Scotty takes a pass and immediately dribbles down court picking up a double team. Unfazed, he sinks a long three.

Scotty hustles back on defense. Tears mix with sweat. His teammates and opponents recognize the anxiety. Whispers of "are you okay" come from his teammates. Scotty ignores them.

A play unfolds. Scotty steals the ball and drives the length of the court. He blows past three defenders to complete a massive basket-shaking dunk.

Scotty's emotions are uncontrollable. He tries to keep it together but his attempt is useless.

Camilla leans behind T.

CAMILLA

Eddie, what's wrong with my boy?

T can't look at her. He lowers his head.

COACH T

Time!

The Warriors run to the bench, except for Scotty. He stands at mid court, focusing on the rafters. Distressed, but focused.

T quickly races to Scotty.

DAN SHULMAN (O.S.)
Something appears to be going on
with Reynolds.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)
He looks a little distraught.

T looks around the arena.

COACH T
Crazy, fanatical fans. The late
Mrs. Thomas loved games like this.

No reaction from Scotty.

COACH T
Talk to me son. Your Aunt Camilla
is worried about you.

Scotty shoots a look at the clock. Seventeen minutes left in the game.

SCOTTY
I need to do this.

T nods.

COACH T
I used to think Erse Reynolds was
the greatest player I would ever
coach, until his son came to play
for me. I know you never liked me
comparing you to your father. But,
You are your father's son.

T solemnly fixes on Scotty and gives a fatherly pat to the side of his face.

COACH T
Handle your business.

T moves to his players on the sideline.

COACH T
Concentrate on getting the ball to
Scotty, anyway you can.
(MORE)

COACH T (CONT'D)

I don't care if he's double teamed,
triple teamed -- hell, the whole
goddamn team. Get the ball in his
hands. Hear me?

The Warriors nod approvingly.

COACH T

We're gonna' help him get his
father's record.

T pumps his fist and lets out a Westgate war cry. The
Warriors return to the court.

Play resumes. Scotty hits a quick basket, steals the ball and
hits another. A quick steal and score, then he blocks a shot
on defense. Scores again.

BO

(to Tiny)

What's up with Reynolds?

TINY

He's about to make history.

BO

Not against us.

TINY

Try and stop him.

ON MEDIA TABLE

DAN SHULMAN

Reynolds appears to be very
emotional. It almost looks like
he's -- crying.

A note is passed to Jay Bilas.

JAY BILAS

I've just been informed that Erse
"Wings" Reynolds, father of Scotty
Reynolds has been killed.
Apparently murdered.

DAN SHULMAN

What a tragedy. That may explain
his emotions.

JAY BILAS

Can you imagine how tough it must
be for him right now?

The score board publicizes Erse's death. The arena buzzes to respectful silence as play stops.

Every head in Staples looks up and takes in the message board. Except for Scotty.

Bo takes in the revelation.

The Warriors and Blue Devils offer Scotty looks of condolence. He's not having it.

SCOTTY
Let's play ball.

TINY
You heard the man.

Camilla is in anguish. She moves behind T.

CAMILLA
Eddie... take him out.

COACH T
Camilla, you did a good job building a boy into a man. Let him do what a man needs to do.

Stunned, she scatters back to her seat.

DAN SHULMAN
The Warriors are down by 18, with Scotty Reynolds on a magnificent run. This is just a guess, but I think Reynold's is going after his father's scoring record.

JAY BILAS
I think you're right. What a way to honor his father, now a fallen warrior. What courage. What a heart this young man is displaying.

Jay whistles loudly to root Scotty on.

Scotty and Bo go on a run trading baskets.

Scotty is fed constantly by his teammates. Westgate is cutting the lead, but Duke is still in control.

The crowd cheers Scotty on.

Westgate creates turnovers that become baskets for Scotty.

Scotty is double and triple teamed but still manages to get the ball in the hoop.

Scotty is unstoppable.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)

With one minute left to play, the Blue Devils have a fourteen point lead. Time is running out for westgate to become national champs and for Reynolds to break his father's scoring record.

DAN SHULMAN (O.S.)

It's going to be tough. Scotty Reynolds is ten points away with fifty seconds left to play.

Scotty hits a three. The Warriors trap and steal the ball. Scotty gains position and is fed for two more points.

The clock shows thirty seconds left in the game. The entire arena roots him on.

The in-bound pass is stolen by Scotty. He lays it in. Duke calls time out.

ON THE SIDE LINE

The Warriors huddle around their coach.

T looks at the clock. He knows the power of time... or lack of it.

The Warriors know too, but remain focused.

T lays hands on each of his players, where their heart is.

COACH T

I'm proud of all of you.

He gives Scotty's neck a fatherly shake.

COACH T

You good?

Scotty nods.

AT CENTER COURT

Tiny and Scotty congregate.

TINY
 Scotty Reynolds, I wanted your
 final year at Dub-U to be
 memorable. This is so emotional.
 Like when Maggie first spoke and
 called Homer "daddy."

Scotty looks at Tiny in amazement. He can't help laughing.

SCOTTY
 Tinyohyedu Bahba, My final year at
 Dub-U was made memorable because
 you and I were friends.

Tiny puts his arm around Scotty's neck.

TINY
 Brother.

Scotty jolts.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. MAUI BEACH - DAY

Nine year-old Scotty and George play beach volleyball. George makes a good play to win the game. Scotty throws his arm around his neck.

9 YEAR-OLD SCOTTY
 Brother!

BACK TO PRESENT

SCOTTY
 What did you call me?

TINY
 You are not my friend, Scotty
 Reynolds. You are brother.

Tiny grabs the back of Scotty's head and presses forehead to forehead. Nose to nose.

SCOTTY
 This is getting uncomfortable.

Scotty relaxes and settles in to the display of brotherhood. Tiny soon releases.

TINY

George would be pleased to know you
are big brother to someone else.

Scotty smiles. He looks high into the arena and gulls his arms as if he was receiving a Pentecostal blessing. He presses the basketball charm against his lips.

Play begins. Duke keeps the ball from Westgate long enough to run the clock down to twelve seconds.

Dallas commits an intentional foul. On the missed charity shot, Tiny kicks the ball out to Scotty. He hurries down for two more points.

Scotty looks up at the clock. Eight seconds remain. Not enough time. He lowers to one knee and anguishes at his failure.

DAN SHULMAN (O.S.)

The Duke Blue Devils are on their way to repeating as national champs, and with eight seconds left on the clock, Scotty Reynolds is running out of time.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)

It looks like he's going to end the game one point shy of his father's record.

DAN SHULMAN (O.S.)

So close.

Hands on his waist, gasping for air, Scotty stands at the Westgate free-throw line. He looks high into the arena.

Bo presses in.

BO

I'm sorry about your father.

The ball comes in play to Bo. Scotty surrounds him. Bo picks up his dribble and signals his team into the back court. He tosses the ball to Scotty.

BO

Do it for him.

DAN SHULMAN (O.S.)

What is this. Bo Stevenson gives up the ball to Reynolds.

Scotty is surprised by the gesture. He quickly shoots, but Bo blocks the shot, knocking it out of bounds.

BO
It's no good if you don't work for it.

The arena goes shockingly quiet.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)
Bo Stevenson, in a gesture of sportsmanship, gives Scotty Reynolds a chance to get the score he needs for his father's record.

Opposing team players tap somewhere on Scotty's body and offer their encouragement. "Do it for your Dad." "Make him proud." "For him." "Honor Him." "He's with you."

Every spectator in the arena stands to their feet.

BO
This is going to be the toughest basket you ever make. If you make it.

The inbound pass goes to Bo. He tosses it to Scotty and sets into his defensive posture as the clock ticks.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)
Reynolds dribbles against Bo's tough defense.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. RECREATION CENTER - BASKETBALL COURTS - DAY

Scotty and Erse play one on one.

BACK TO PRESENT

Bo hand checks hard and pushes Scotty off balance.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. WESTGATE UNIVERSITY - NIGHT

Scotty and Erse walk the campus.

BACK TO PRESENT

Bo pushes, checks harder. Normally a foul, but the referees stay out of it.

The clock continues to tick.

BO

You have three seconds to break his record.

FLASHBACK TO:

EXT. REYNOLD'S HOUSE - BACK YARD - NIGHT

Scotty and his father sand the old rocking chair.

BACK TO PRESENT

Scotty digs down. He throws a head fake, crossover dribbles, pumps once, twice...

FLASHBACK TO:

INT. DRUG RECOVERY CENTER - GYMNASIUM - DAY

Scotty and his father hooping on the same team.

BACK TO PRESENT

Scotty takes a jumper at the free throw line.

Bo bumps him in the air and makes a worthy effort to block the shot, but misses by a fingernail.

The ball rolls around the rim and falls through.

Time expires. The arena goes nuts.

DAN SHULMAN

He's done it! Scotty Reynolds has broken his father's scoring record.

Scotty falls to his knees and lifts his arms high into the air.

Scotty stands and makes his way to Bo. They look respectfully at each other. Nod, then embrace.

Trevor takes Coach T's hand and gives it a firm shake.

TREVOR
Good effort, Eddie.

COACH T
Go get your younger coach. I won't
stand in your way.

Trevor slowly nods his head.

Tiny and his team mates lift Scotty on their shoulders in a joyous celebration. The Blue Devils join in on the emotional gesture.

JAY BILAS (O.S.)
Based on the celebration, you would
think the Warriors won the game.
But the Blue Devils are the ones
who repeat as national champions.

DAN SHULMAN (O.S.)
No one seems to care. The
excitement is centered around
Scotty Reynolds and his emotional
quest to honor his father.

Scotty looks high into the rafters and squeezes out a faint smile.

INT. SOUP KITCHEN - DAY

Helen Reynolds sits alone at a table. Her head rests on top of a newspaper. Her tears pour.

A hardy plate of eggs, bacon, biscuits and gravy is placed in front of her.

She gains control of her tears and lifts her head from the paper.

The leading headline, "Former NBA all star and hall of famer, Erse Wings Reynolds murdered".

Coffee is poured from a full carafe.

HELEN
Thank you.

She sips her coffee and looks up at her server to offer a smile. She is startled to see Scotty.

SCOTTY
You're welcome.

She drops the coffee, spilling it over the table. She makes a futile attempt to straighten her clothes and smooth back her hair. Abashed, she stands and tries to scurry away, but stumbles. Scotty steadies her frail frame.

In his arms, he lovingly beholds his mother. She struggles to move away, but Scotty holds on, not allowing her to leave. Her brown eyes wail.

He removes the gold chain and charm from around his neck.

SCOTTY

You gave this to me when I was ten years-old.

Helen takes the jewelry in her hands and holds it gently to her cheek.

She rolls back her sleeve to reveal the identical tatoo on her wrist.

HELEN

Yes, I did.

She sobs. Scotty throws his arms around her and holds firmly.

SCOTTY

It's okay.

INT. SOCIAL SERVICES BUILDING - DAY

Helen sits nervously on a chair as Scotty and Camilla speak to a social worker.

INT. DRUG REHAB CENTER - DAY

Scotty completes paperwork to have his mother admitted.

INT. POLICE STATION - FRONT DESK - DAY

Scotty stands across from Sergeant Malachi and signs a complaint form. He finds Lo Jack behind a glass enclosure, shackled, shuffling next to a police escort.

Scotty locks and holds a hostile glare. Lo Jack lowers his head, refusing to engage.

EXT. FOREST LAWN CEMETERY - DAY

A new headstone is erected next to George's.

It reads: "Erse "Wings" Reynolds. NBA Hall of Famer, Loving father and husband".

Scotty brushes away leaves from both.

INT. SPRINGFIELD SYMPHONY HALL - NIGHT

A large banner spans the stage:

"Welcome new members to the NBA hall of fame."

The lead singer of a gospel choir involves the capacity crowd in the chorus of "This joy that I have, the world didn't give it to me". Scotty joins the choir and sings along.

At the song's conclusion the choir marches off stage in perfect cadence. Scotty stands at the dais proudly.

SCOTTY

I'm here on behalf of my father.

Roaring applause.

SCOTTY

Let me tell you about him...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - NIGHT

Filled with screaming, fanatical New Yorkers. The Knicks battle the Charlotte Hornets.

JEFF VAN GUNDY (O.S.)

Game seven of the NBA finals is a nail-bitter. Rookie sensation Scotty Reynolds is leaving it all on the court.

Scotty crosses mid-court and calls a time out. Three seconds on the clock.

On the Knicks bench, rookie coach, Eddie "Coach T" Thomas, dressed in his customary lucky orange tie and blue-brown blazer with suede elbows. Clipboard in hand.

SCOTTY

T, I want the ball.

COACH T

Everyone in this whole goddamn place is expecting you to take the last shot. There will be so many hands in your face you'll never even see the basket.

SCOTTY

But if the ball comes to me, I'll find a way to get it in the hole.

COACH T

I know you will.

T takes his clipboard and jots down X's and O's of the play.

COACH T

You should be open here.
(tapping hard on the
clipboard)
Get Scotty the ball!

At mid-court, Scotty looks over at the family section. Helen; clean and sober. Camilla; head to toe in Knickerbocker gear, and Tiny; sporting an official NBA Scotty Reynolds T-shirt.

The ball is pitched in to Scotty at the top of the key. Time moves; three seconds ...two seconds...

Scotty dribbles the baseline, extends for a jumper.

FREEZE ACTION.

FADE OUT.