

MASTER GUNS '

Screenplay By
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OVER BLACK:
Sound of phone ringing.

INT. THE INN AT SPANISH BAY - ROLAND'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Dark room. ROLAND (40's, Caucasian, fit) an uptight, short-tempered executive.

Roland sees the caller ID "Daddio." He answers.

ROLAND
(whispers to self)
Well, this can't be good.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Why would you say that?

ROLAND
Because I don't recall you ever calling me.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Fair enough.

ROLAND
Is it mom, is she ok?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Your mother's fine.

ROLAND
Is it Marie?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Your sister is fine as well.

ROLAND
Is it Chance?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Your brother's fine.

ROLAND
Well?

DADDIO (O.S.)
It's your father.

Roland quickly sits up in his bed and turns on the nightstand light.

ROLAND
What about him?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Roland, I'm sorry to tell you, he passed away.

ROLAND

Wow.

Long Pause.

DADDIO (O.S.)

Are you there?

ROLAND

Yeah, gimme a minute.

Roland sets phone down on nightstand, clock on nightstand displays 0716, walks to the window, opens curtains to reveal a gorgeous ocean view just past the golf course. Then comes back to the phone.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

When's the funeral?

DADDIO (O.S.)

Tuesday.

ROLAND

Which Tuesday?

DADDIO (O.S.)

This coming Tuesday.

ROLAND

Where?

DADDIO (O.S.)

Your dad's church, Skyview.

ROLAND

What time?

DADDIO (O.S.)

One P-M.

ROLAND

OK, I'll be speaking.

DADDIO (O.S.)

Yeah, that's the thing. his wife requests your attendance, but the agenda is full, that won't be possible.

ROLAND

I'm not asking.

DADDIO (O.S.)

We thought you might say that. In that case, you'll need to speak to his wife to discuss it.

ROLAND
Which wife?

Both chuckle.

DADDIO (O.S.)
That's funny, Ruth.

ROLAND
Well, I've never met her, now is as good as
time as any I suppose.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Do you mind if I ask where you are?

ROLAND
Yeah, I'm in Pebble for a buddy's fiftieth.
We have a dude's golf weekend.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Good, you're not alone, when do you get
back?

ROLAND
Monday morning.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Ok, please come by the house, your mother
is worried about you.

ROLAND
I'll try, let me get a hold of Darla to
clear my calendar. If not Monday, I'll see
you guys on Tuesday. You'll be there,
right?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Of course.
(pause)
Are you, are you Ok?

ROLAND
Umm, I don't know yet.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Call me if you need anything, or just want
to chat?

ROLAND
Yeah.

Long Pause.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Roland, ya' still there?

ROLAND
Yeah, I'm here.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Ok, well I'm going to hang up now.

ROLAND
Sure.

DADDIO (O.S.)
O-k? B-y-e

ROLAND
B-. Oh wait one more thing?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Sure, anything.

ROLAND
When did he die.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Three days ago.

ROLAND
What? And you're just calling me NOW?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Well, we didn't know how to tell you.

ROLAND
So, you wait three FRICKN' days to tell me?

DADDIO (O.S.)
Roland, I know you're upset.

ROLAND
You're damn right I'm upset. My dad dies
and no one tells me for three days.

DADDIO (O.S.)
We understand you and your father were on
the outs?

ROLAND
That doesn't matter.

Long pause.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Look, I'm going to run now.

ROLAND
One more thing. Why are you the one calling
me?

DADDIO (O.S.)

Well-

ROLAND

Don't answer that, I already know. You drew the short straw, didn't you?

DADDIO (O.S.)

Something like that.

ROLAND

Look, I'm sorry about blowing up at you, it's not your fault.

DADDIO (O.S.)

It's ok, I understand you're upset.

ROLAND

Tell mom I'll try to come by Monday night, if not I'll see you Tuesday.

DADDIO (O.S.)

Please come by, your grandma Barbara is here as well.

ROLAND

Grandma's already there?

DADDIO (O.S.)

Yes, she came last week from Carson when we knew father had just a few days left. Because...

ROLAND

(interrupting)

I'm sorry, what the HELL? He's on his death bed and no one tells me?

DADDIO (O.S.)

Those were his wishes.

ROLAND

Wow.

A long pause.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Ok, see you Monday night I guess. Can you text me Ruth's number? *I will be speaking.* I've earned my right to be on that stage.

DADDIO (O.S.)

If anyone has, you have.

ROLAND
One more thing...

DADDIO (O.S.)
Yeah?

ROLAND
How did he die?

DADDIO (O.S.)
He's been sick for a while.

ROLAND
Damn.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Do you need anything else?

ROLAND
No.

DADDIO (O.S.)
Ok, bye for now.

Roland hangs up the phone without saying good-bye.

CUT TO:

INT. MARIA AND DADDIO'S HOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

DADDIO hangs up the phone and doesn't say a word.

MARIA (60s)
W-E-L-L, how did he take it?

DADDIO
The news of his father passing? Or that
he's not welcome to speak?

BARBARA (90s,) and Maria look at one another.

BARBARA
Both.

DADDIO
Um to be honest, can't tell how he feels
about losing his father, but he's
definitely pissed. And you know your son
(looks at Maria)
and your grandson,
(looks at Barbara)
he's going to bulldoze through Ruth and
anyone else she puts in front of him.

MARIA

Do you think he'll stop by when he gets home?

DADDIO

Doubtful.

Daddio sends text.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. ROLAND'S HOTEL ROOM - DAY

Roland standing at window in deep thought. Phone beeps from text. "Ruth's number 555-555-5555. Be gentle, she just lost her husband." Roland calls the number.

RUTH'S SOFT, SOMBER ELDERLY VOICE ON PHONE

RUTH (O.S.)

Hello?

Roland paces around the room.

ROLAND

Ruth it's Roland.

RUTH (O.S.)

Oh Roland. I'm so sorry for your loss.

ROLAND

(abrupt)

Yeah, you too. Listen Ruth. I'll be speaking at the funeral service.

RUTH (O.S.)

Oh Roland. I'm so very sorry, but that just isn't possible.

ROLAND

I'm not asking.

RUTH (O.S.)

Ok, I kinda figured that this would be your response. I'm going to ask you to speak to the associate pastor of his church, Pastor Lamb. Please work out the details with him.

ROLAND

Please text me the number.

RUTH (O.S.)

Ok. Roland. And Roland?

Roland hangs up without saying good-bye.

Phone beeps from a text message, Roland calls a number.

CUT TO:

INT. SKYVIEW CHURCH OFFICE - DAY

Split screen with Roland and two follow-up calls with two men in suits with quick, indistinct dialogue montages. Angry body language from Roland on each clip until Pastor Garland's phone rings.

Pastor GARLAND (60s), is clean cut, suit & tie, intelligent and soft spoken in an executive style office.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL.

Phone rings.

PASTOR GARLAND
Pastor Garland speaking.

Roland is still pacing in the room.

ROLAND
Hello Pastor, this is Roland Bagster.

PASTOR GARLAND
Ah, Mr. Bagster. I've been expecting your call. I first want to share how sorry I am for your loss. I knew your father well. He was a true man of God and loved the Lord. Now he is with Him, AND he loved you. That said...

ROLAND
(interrupting)
I'll be speaking at my father's funeral.

PASTOR GARLAND
I'm sorry Mr. Bagster, but that is impossible. That *won't* happen.

ROLAND
I'm not asking.

PASTOR GARLAND
Ok, let's take a step back. Suppose if we were to allow you to speak, what would you be speaking on?

ROLAND
Listen Pastor GARLAND, you seem to be under the impression that I'm asking for permission. I'm not. This is going to happen the smooth, churchy way, or not, but it is happening.

PASTOR GARLAND

Ok, once again, what do you intend to be speaking on?

ROLAND

Reconciliation, my father and I were experts at it, with one another that is, we did it all the time.

PASTOR GARLAND

And *if* we were to allow you to speak, how long would you need.

ROLAND

Twenty-two minutes.

PASTOR GARLAND

O-k-a-y, that's pretty specific. Sounds like you already have something in mind?

ROLAND

Only for the past twenty years.

PASTOR GARLAND

May I read it ahead of time?

ROLAND

No.

PASTOR GARLAND

O-k-a-y, can you do it in ten?

ROLAND

Fifteen.

PASTOR GARLAND

Ok. But first let me offer you a piece of advice.

ROLAND

I'm listening.

PASTOR GARLAND

Think long and hard if you really want to say what you have planned for all these years to say, then pray about how your words might impact his mother, your grandmother Barbara. But for clarity, I will share with you what your father shared with me. His biggest regret, the one thing that he wished he could have a do-over is being a better father to you.

(MORE)

PASTOR GARLAND (CONT'D)

I have been in a prayer group with your father for twenty years, and there wasn't a single week that went by when he didn't pray for you. Without fail, every-time for TWENTY years. He loved you deeply and died with the regret of not being reconciled with you.

Roland stops pacing and sits down on the couch.

ROLAND

Duly noted, Pastor Garland. See you Tuesday.

Roland hangs up without saying good-bye.

END INTERCUT.

Roland gets up and looks out the window once again. A tear rolls down his face.

FADE TO:

EXT. THE INN AT SPANISH BAY, RESTAURANT - DAY

Camera pans the entire resort from an arial down to the crowded outdoor restaurant. Roland in golf attire, approaches an outside restaurant table of 3 other men also in golf attire.

ROLAND FRIEND #1

It's about time.

ROLAND FRIEND #2

Did you have a problem kicking that waitress out this morning?

ROLAND

(distracted)

No waitress.

Waiter at table pouring water, pours water in Roland's glass.

WAITER

Coffee Sir? or would you prefer a juice or both?

ROLAND

Uh Yeah, may I please have a coffee, pint glass filled with ice

He gestures with hand showing height off the table.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Shot of Bailey.

He gestures a shorter height.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
and a shot of Jameson's, on the side.

He gestures the same height as the Baileys.

All three men look at one another, then back at Roland.

ROLAND FRIEND #1
Ya think maybe it's a little early for
that?

Roland ignores the comment, just looks off into the distance.

ROLAND FRIEND #1 (CONT'D)
O-k-a-y, well, we're down six hundred after
day one to these clowns. We need to get our
shit together today, and you need to sink a
putt for a change. Plus my back is sore
today from carrying your ass all day
yesterday.

Roland gives a sarcastic smile. The men look at one another, know
something is wrong.

ROLAND FRIEND #2
OK boys, we got Spyglass today, it's all
about trees and sand, lots of sand.

Roland still distracted.

ROLAND FRIEND #3
Ah, I know, what happened,
(gestures)
crash and burn.

ROLAND FRIEND #2
(pointing to friend #3)
Got it, Goose - Top Gun.

ROLAND FRIEND #3
(makes buzzer Sound)
Wrong, it was Slider

Friend #2 pulls out a \$20 bill and throws it at Friend #3.

ROLAND FRIEND #2
Ah dammit!

Roland ignores the comments.

ROLAND FRIEND #1
Definitely crash and burn.

Roland ignores the comment.

The Waiter sets the drinks down.

WAITER

Here you are Sir, coffee, pint glass of ice, shot of Bailey and shot of Jameson's.

ROLAND

Thank you.

WAITER

Will there be anything else at the moment gentlemen?

ROLAND

Not for me, you guys ok?

The men all nod.

ROLAND FRIEND #3

We're good, thank you.

WAITER

My pleasure, I'll be back in a few minutes to check on you.

Roland pours in both shots over the ice, then the coffee, stirs it and takes a big sip. The men all look at one another and back to Roland.

ROLAND FRIEND #1

What is it playa?

ROLAND

(takes deep breath still in shock)

Apparently...

(another deep breath)

My dad, my dad died.

ROLAND FRIEND #2

Wait, what?

ROLAND

Yeah, Daddio, um my stepdad just called me a few minutes ago.

ROLAND FRIEND #1

Oh, man. I'm really sorry to hear that? What happened?

ROLAND

So...I guess...

(pause)

guess he's been sick.

(MORE)

ROLAND (CONT'D)

(pause)
And I'm not sure I am...
(pause)
sorry.

ROLAND FRIEND #3

When?

ROLAND

Three days ago?

ROLAND FRIEND #2

Woe, three days ago and you *just* found out?

ROLAND FRIEND #1

So, when's the uh funeral, do you need to leave? We can cut my birthday short, it's not a problem, really.

ROLAND

(cracks smile)
It's Tuesday. And forfeit? Oh hell no.
We're down and,
(pointing at Roland
Friend #2 and Friend #3)
I won't give these pricks the satisfaction.

ROLAND FRIEND #1

Uh, wait
(thinking)
Gunny Highway, Heartbreak Ridge?

ROLAND

(nodding)
Nice pull.

CUT TO:

Several minutes later. Food has been served and the men except Roland are laughing and gesturing about golf. (Indistinct dialogue)

Roland doesn't look up, continues eating

ROLAND (CONT'D)

And I'm delivering the eulogy.

All the men stop eating and look at one another in shock.

ROLAND FRIEND #3

What? They asked *you* to deliver the eulogy?

ROLAND

Nope, quite the opposite.

ROLAND FRIEND #1

Um, Roland. Please don't take this the wrong way, but are you sure that is a good idea?

ROLAND FRIEND #2

Yeah, I agree, this sounds like a disaster.

Roland Looks at Friend #3.

ROLAND

You want to chime in as well, since it seems today's the day I'm soliciting advice?

ROLAND FRIEND #3

Roland, we're in your corner, we love you man, but this is going to turn out badly for you.

ROLAND

Wait, I know this one.
(thinks for a moment)
Nordic Albino guy in The Firm.

ROLAND FRIEND #2

OK, that was impressive.

ROLAND FRIEND #3

But seriously Roland, this doesn't seem like the right plan at all. This will be a costly mistake, that you could pay for, for a *long* time.

ROLAND

I'm *not* asking for permission. And to answer your question...

He looks at Friend #1.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

I *know* it's a bad idea, and I'm doing it anyway.

ROLAND FRIEND #1

Oh, well, if you're certain about this, we'll be there to support you one way or another, right guys?

He looks to Friend #2 and Friend #3.

ROLAND FRIEND #3

Of course, we'll be there.

ROLAND FRIEND #2
Count me in.

CUT TO:

Men are completing their meal. Roland's phone beeps. He reads the text.

ROLAND
Tom our driver is here, you ladies better
put your big girl panties on, it's time for
a can of whoop-ass!

ROLAND FRIEND #3
Bring it on fools.

ROLAND
We're gonna put you guys down.

ROLAND FRIEND #3
Oh wait, this is probably wrong, Pedrosa -
Heat

ROLAND
You're right.

ROLAND FRIEND #3
I was?

ROLAND
Yes, you're *probably* wrong. You got the
movie, but it was Hanna in Heat!

ROLAND FRIEND #3
Half Credit?

ROLAND
Not a chance, the rules clearly stipulate,
the correct name of the character and the
film, and wrong guesses pay, twenty bones!

Roland holds out his hand.

The men continue walking, laughing.

FADE TO:

INT. SKYVIEW CHURCH - DAY

Funeral day, mid-service. Roland is emotionless.

Pans to show Roland is sitting between Barbara and Marie.

PASTOR GARLAND
Our final speaker today is Hal's son
Roland.

Some audience members look surprised to hear Roland being announced.

ROLAND
Thank you, Pastor GARLAND.

Roland removes watch and places it on the podium. Reaches in his right breast suit pocket places index card on podium. Roland scans the room from left to right and makes eye contact with Barbara. Barbara smiles.

A long pause.

looking down, he takes a deep breath, puts the index card back in his right pocket and pulls one out from his left pocket, and places it on the podium.

ROLAND
As some of you may be aware my father and I shared a very complicated relationship. My father grew up in small town Carson City Nevada.

SOUND FADES

ROLAND (CONT'D)
Sound Fades.

V.O. Carson High Track Meet

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. CARSON CITY HIGH SCHOOL TRACK - DAY

The scene is a track meet at Carson City High School 1961. Typical audio and visual of a high school track meet.

On Screen: CARSON CITY HIGH SCHOOL, 1961 - CARSON CITY NEVADA

Zoom from an arial view of high school track down to the track meet to where the Carson City Track & FIELD COACH is speaking with HAROLD.

CARSON CITY HS COACH
You got this Bagster, but for Christ's sakes, don't be the rabbit. Turner will catch your ass and take that medal from you, got it?

The previous race just ended in background, crowd cheers, and the winner is being announced over the PA system. And announcement for the next race.

CARSON CITY HS ANNOUNCER
Next race, Men's sixteen hundred to begin in five minutes.

HAROLD
Got it, no rabbit. But what if the punk
gives it to me?

CARSON CITY HS COACH
TAKE HIS PACE, dammit don't fall into his
trap!

HAROLD
(Like a military response)
Yes Coach.

FIELD COACH
It's time.

Harold walks away motivated. The runners are gathering on the starting line for a stand-up start. Harold, he's looking around and sees TURNER (tall, lanky, flattop haircut) in Lane #1. Harold glares at him and Turner blows a kiss to Harold. Harold looks back to his coach.

COACH
(sees the visual exchange)
FORGET THAT CRAP BAGSTER, FOCUS!

Harold nods to the coach.

CARSON HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCER
In lane #4 from Carson City High School,
Harold Bagster.

The crowd cheers loudly, Harold waives his hand to the crowd, teammates gather around the coach to watch.

The starting gun sounds.

Harold begins the race ducking behind Turner. Turner is trying to let Harold pass, but Harold stays behind him.

HAROLD
Not today, Turner. I fell for that crap
last time, not today.

Turner smiles.

The race continues like this with a tight peloton.

CUT TO:

The Sound of a COWBELL.

COACH
LASST LAP, STAY WITH HIM!

Turner begins to sprint, Harold is right on his heels, but does not pass, the cheers grow louder.

Camera zooms out and sees the two going stride for stride away from the peloton. Turner starts to slow and in the last 50 meters, Bagster runs past Turner and breaks the tape for the victory, the crowd cheers loudly, Harold celebrating with team.

Coach is yelling in slow motion.

JOHN (15)
 (running to Harold
 jumping up and down)
 THAT WAS REALLY GREAT BIG BROTHER, YOU
 WHOOPED HIS ASS!!!! I'M SO PROUD OF YOU,
 WHOOPED HIS ASS!!!

CUT TO:

The podium ceremony. Two runners already on smaller left and right podium positions.

CARSON HIGH SCHOOL ANNOUNCER
 In first place and a new Carson City High
 School Record of four forty-three point
 three, Harold Bagster Moments Later.

A medal is placed on Harold. The crowd cheers loudly and teammates gather around Harold to congratulate him.

CUT TO:

EXT. CARSON CITY HIGH SCHOOL, PARKING LOT - DAY

The two boys and their father, PETER (50s, tall former military, athletic), and BARBARA (30s, very pretty and proper) walking to their car.

Peter rubs Harold's head.

PETER
 Not bad, sport, not bad at all.

JOHN
 (puzzled)
 Not bad? He whooped Turner's ass, that was
 the best race ever!

Peter points at John.

PETER
 Hey young man, watch your mouth in front of
 your mom.
 (pause)
 But yes, he did whip his ass!

Barbara rolls her eyes; the two boys and Peter laugh and continue walking to the car.

PETER (CONT'D)
What do you all say to some pizza?

HAROLD & JOHN
(Yelling, in unison)
Ya

Peter looks to Barbara for approval.

BARBARA
(smiling)
Pizza it is.

JOHN & HAROLD
Right On!

A couple of female classmates walk by.

FEMALE CLASSSMATES
Great job Bagster! Yeah, way to go!

HAROLD
Thanks ladies.

JOHN
(mimicking the girls)
We love you Harold, you're so handsome,
let's go steady and kiss at the drive-in.

Harold gives John a friendly shove.

HAROLD
Shut-up you twerp!

The boys and family all laugh.

FADE TO:

EXT. JONES LIQUOR STORE, PARKING LOT - NIGHT

The boys in their suits exit car, standing around adding up their money before Harold goes into the liquor store.

HAROLD
How much we got?

JOHN
(Pulling his empty
pockets inside-out)
Well, I don't have anything, but I'm along
for the ride.

HAROLD FRIEND #1
I got a buck fifty,
(MORE)

HAROLD FRIEND #1 (CONT'D)
 (To Harold)
 you've got 2 bucks

HAROLD FRIEND #2
 I've got seventy-five cents

HAROLD FRIEND #1
 I thought you had a buck fifty?

HAROLD FRIEND #2
 I did but had to get me a burger and soda
 at Adele's, and Genevieve was my waitress,
 had to give her a tip of course.

HAROLD
 Why bother, she knows you like she knows
 Reno, *not at all*, she just ain't sweet on
 you.

All the boys laugh and give one another a friendly shove.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
 (counts money)
 We got enough for two six packs.

Harold walks towards the store.

CUT TO:

INT. JONES LIQUOR STORE - NIGHT

MR. JONES
 Howdy Harold

HAROLD
 Howdy Yourself Mr. Jones.

Harold grabs two six packs of beer from the shelf and brings them to the counter. Mr Jones is shaking his head on approach.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
 What gives?

Mr. Jones holds up the newspaper with a section that reads: "Harold Bagster to deliver Valedictorian Speech at Carson City High"

HAROLD (CONT'D)
 Oh that, that's nothin', but thank you.

MR. JONES
 Nothin'? For the past 2 years I thought you
 were old enough to buy Schlitz, sorry, *Mr.*
Valedictorian, not tonight.

HAROLD

But you gotta, the boys will *never* let me live it down and we *just graduated*.

MR. JONES

Come back tomorrow, but not tonight, I don't feel right about it.

HAROLD

Oh man, they're gonna smear me! We had two plans tonight, burning rubber and cruising for chicks. We need some beer to do that!

MR. JONES

Not tonight you don't.

CUT TO:

EXT. JONES LIQUOR STORE - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

JOHN

Where's the beer?

Harold walks out of the store towards the boys holding up his hands like he has nothing, shaking his head no.

CUT TO:

OVER BLACK.

TITLE: MARINE CORPS RECRUIT DEPOT, SAN DIEGO. MCRD

EXT. MCRD GROUNDS - NIGHT

Camera pans the grounds of the base, quiet beside two soldiers walking in the distance.

INT. MCRD BARRACKS - NIGHT

Total Darkness. Then the door quietly opens, a small explosive is lit and thrown in the room. There is a huge explosion noise.

BOOM!

Lights are turned on and some Marines yell, all 50 recruits in the room jump out of bed in their matching white boxers and white t-shirts and immediately stand at attention.

CAMPO (40s, chiseled face, fit, angry) enters, walking through the long narrow barracks with beds on both sides, he makes his way to the opposite end of the room. He places his foot perpendicular to the wall and pulls out a roll of red electricians' tape and tears off a piece of tape about 12 inches long, placing it on the floor parallel to the wall, at the distance of his boot from the wall. Campo continues to pace back and forth. All dialogue is yelling.

CAMPO

My name is Drill Instructor Campo, you will address me as Drill Instructor. If I hear one sir out of any of you, you will come so close to death you will wish you were dead. I am your mother, your father, your nightmare and your dream come true. Because over the next thirteen weeks, I am going to make Marines out of each and every one of you. And that is indeed your dream, isn't it?

ALL RECRUITS

YES, DRILL INSTRUCTOR!

CAMPO

Oh shit, we got a long way to go before your collective pebbles drop, but drop they will, they'll so hard so fast they'll break little your ballerina twinkle toes. If any of you flee bags want leave, you can have your leave on the other side of that red tape, but on this side of the red tape, your butts are mine.

Campo stops in front of a heavy-set recruit.

CAMPO (CONT'D)

What's your name Lard-Ass?

PRIVATE DONALDSON

Private Donaldson!

CAMPO

Private Donaldson what?

PRIVATE DONALDSON

Private Donaldson, Ss... Drill Instructor!

CAMPO

No boot, you are not a Private yet, and may never be. My job is to ensure that by the time I am done with you, you don't want to be, because I intend on beating the crap out of

Campo turns the entire group

CAMPO (CONT'D)

Each and every one of you maggots. Then and only then I will decide if you become a Marine Private.

(MORE)

CAMPO (CONT'D)

For now you're just a BOOT, in fact you're not even a boot, you're the dried up dog shit in the cracks of the soles of my boot from stepping on my dog's shit this morning on the way to my car.

(looking back at Donaldson)

I bet you tilted the earth's axis when you popped out of your mommy, didn't you Lard-ass?

PRIVATE DONALDSON

Yes, Drill Instructor!

CAMPO

And who the hell said that the Marine Corps was for you, Michelin Man?

PRIVATE DONALDSON

My Father Sir! I mean Drill Instructor!

CAMPO

Well, your father is one optimistic son of a gun. Either he hates your guts and wants you out of the house so he doesn't have to look at your lard filled ass, or he's a freakin' genius. We're going to find out which very soon which.

Camera pans to Harold (20s), he lets out the tiniest crack of a smile and Campo caught it and runs over the Harold.

CAMPO (CONT'D)

What the hell are you smiling at scumbag?

HAROLD

Nothing, Drill Instructor!

CAMPO

What the hell is your name scumbag?

HAROLD

Scumbag Harold Bagster, Drill Instructor!

CAMPO

Oh, I like the sound of that, Scumbag Scrotum Bagster! I just might make a Marine out of you yet, Motard!

HAROLD

Thank you, Drill Instructor!

Campo turns to address rest of platoon.

CAMPO

I want each and every one of you maggots to empty your entire footlocker right here in the middle of the room.

Marines confused remain still.

CAMPO (CONT'D)

You want me to break it down barney style for you maggots? What the hell are you waiting for?

Recruits empty all of their belongings onto a pile in the middle of the room. Campo walks over to it and mixes up the pile.

CAMPO (CONT'D)

Now you have fifty seconds to get squared away includes those racks, organize them and in formation outside. Anyone not completed will learn the art P.T. the Marine Corps way!

Campo exits.

The marines rush to pile grabbing any item they can, Harold is the first to complete the task, leaves barrack while others are still scrambling.

CUT TO:

The last Marine leaves the barracks. The door shuts after him.

FADE TO BLACK.

PRE-LAP: Engine truck noise.

FADE IN:

INT./EXT. IM939 TRUCK - DAY

Harold (30's), is driving his M939 Truck on Interstate 5

The interior of the truck, shows the dash shaking as if on a rough road. SIMPSON (20s chiseled features, African-American) sits in the passenger seat.

SIMPSON

What do you think Gunny, we gonna go?

Camera zooms out and sees that the large truck is driving in caravan. It zooms out further, showing that the truck is in a long line of about 10 other trucks, all carrying supplies. Harold driving, SIMPSON (20s, African American, fit) passenger.

CUT BACK TO:

HAROLD

Not sure, I hope so, but it's not looking that way.

SIMPSON

Why is that Gunny?

HAROLD

Well, if that wuss Carter wins, definitely not, but if Anderson wins, we go to war tomorrow. Not looking good for Anderson. But if we do go, probably won't last too long. We built too damn good of a fighting machine. If called, we're ready and if not, we'll remain ready. Oorah?

SIMPSON

Rah Gunny!

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. HAROLD & MARIA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As Harold pulls into his drive-way, in his blue Ford pick-up truck with Marine stickers on the back, he takes one last swig of his Miller can and tosses on the ground of the passenger side where there are 3 other empty cans.

As he is walking up to the front door he hears the screams of his children ROLAND (7 brown hair big brown eyes), and MARIE (9 blonde blue eyes). Harold is holding a small bouquet of red roses. MARIA (30S, extremely attractive, hispanic)

INT. HAROLD & MARIA'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

CHILD ROLAND & CHILD MARIE

Daddy's Home! Daddy's Home!

HAROLD

Happy Birthday, Mimi.

He hands Marie the roses.

CHILD MARIE

(counting them)

Exactly nine, thank you Daddy!

HAROLD

Are you excited about your birthday party tomorrow?

CHILD MARIE

Oh Boy, so excited!

Harold walks to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

HAROLD
Smells good, whatcha cookin'?

MARIA
Lasagna, your daughter's special birthday request, ready in about thirty minutes.

INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Harold walks back to living room, to his black lounge chair. Marie and Roland run up to him as Harold is reclining.

CHILD ROLAND
I got the boots.

MARIE
Not fair, you got them yesterday and it's MY birthday today.

HAROLD
Your sister's right, Roland. She gets the boots, go grab daddy a beer.

CHILD Roland runs to the kitchen as Marie begins to unlace his dirty black boots. Maria walks into the living room.

MARIA
Any word, are you going?

Roland returns with can of beer. Harold cracks it open and takes a big swig before answering.

HAROLD
No word yet and not looking good.

MARIA
I'm sorry, I know how much you want this. Why? I have no clue.

HAROLD
(Getting upset)
Why? I'm a Marine, I was born to fight.

MARIA
(sarcastically)
I'm sure you'll find a way to fight one way or another.

HAROLD
That's not fair, that guy and his two friends had it coming to him.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

He was speeding through that school zone with little kids around. It was three against one. Not my fault if they can't handle themselves.

Maria walks away shaking her head.

MARIA

Tell that to the three sets of hospital bills they want us to pay.

HAROLD

(smiling)

And I never touched that third guy, he tripped over the trashcan running away and broke his arm when he fell.

The kids laugh.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

I'll take care of it. But they had it coming. Ya don't mess with this Marine. Right kids?

CHILD ROLAND

Yeah, mommy, no one messes with the Marines.

Maria rolls her eyes, returns to living room.

MARIA

Yeah, and what about the Padre game on fourth of July? What about those two guys?

HAROLD

Oh, that's entirely different, those squids had it coming to them as well.

MARIA

So, you beat both of them up because they were squids?

HAROLD

Not just because they were squids, but they mouthed off about the Marine Corps. No Marine will allow that to happen. And not to mention that they were Dodger fans at Jack Murphy. That, I was willing to let slide. But you talk crap about the Marine Corps, you get a chauffeured ride to the hospital.

Maria walks away shaking her head.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAROLD'S TOWNHOME - DAY

The scene begins with a moving truck driven by Harold (40s), backing into the driveway of a townhome. A 1980s Camaro pulls up in front of the house. Each man still has their Marine boots on and camouflage pants on and all wearing matching Marine t-shirts. Each mover is in their early mid 20's. Harold takes off his shirt and throws it on the porch, the other Marines do the same.

CUT TO:

INT. LILLIAN'S TOWNHOME - DAY

Across the street, Lillian is in the kitchen doing dishes and spots the men.

CUT BACK TO:

EXT. HAROLD'S TOWNHOME - DAY

The men moving furniture into the house, sweating on a hot day. Two men are struggling with a heavy chest of drawers.

HAROLD

You two candy-asses need a hand.

MARINE MOVER #1

Absolutely not Gunny, piece of cake!

HAROLD

(looks to Marine Mover #2)

What about you, Marine, do I need to call North Island to get some pussy squids to replace you?

MARINE MOVER #2

Not a chance Gunny, smooth sailing, I feel like I'm on the beach in Rosarito eating fish tacos.

HAROLD

People actually eat that shit?

MARINE MOVER #2

Oh, you bet Gunny, best tacos around.

HAROLD

Makes me wanna puke.

All the men laugh.

LATER

Harold walks out of the townhome with (2) six packs.

HAROLD
Is that everything?

MARINE MOVER #1
Ra Gunny.

MARINE MOVER #3 slams the rear of the moving truck.

HAROLD
Nice work Marines, thank you. You all
deserve this, oorah?

ALL MARINE MOVERS
Oorah!

CUT TO:

EXT. HAROLD'S PORCH - LATER

Men gather around the porch to drinking beer and laughing. (Indistinct dialogue)

MARINE MOVER #2 glances across the street and sees Lillian and her three daughters in church dresses getting in their SUV.

MARINE MOVER #2
And what do we have here, Gunny?

HAROLD
Probably the neighbor.

Harold gives her a friendly waive, Lillian just smiles back.

MARINE MOVER #1
Things are looking up already, Gunny.

The marines chuckle. Harold shakes his head and walks towards the front door of house.

MARINE MOVER #3
What's the over under on how long it takes
Gunny to marry this one?

HAROLD
Hear me loud and clear crotch rots, there
ain't no way in hell I'm ever getting
married again.

MARINE MOVER #3
Not buying it, I got 6 months!

MARINE MOVER #1
I got 1 year!

MARINE MOVER #2
I got 6 weeks!

HAROLD
You guys are assholes! Remind me next time
to call North Island to get 6 squids to
help me move.

All the men laugh and begin walking to the car.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Seriously Marines, thank you. Couldn't be
more proud than working with you mean
leathernecks. Oh six hundred tomorrow?
Oorah?

ALL MARINES
OORAH!

CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S TOWNHOME - NIGHT - LATER

Harold is shirtless, reclining on his black lounge chair, drinking a
beer and watching the Padres game, still surrounded in boxes.

Doorbell rings. Harold mutes his TV and gets up to answer the door,
opens door.

LILLIAN
Oh!
(admires Harold's
physique)
Hi, I'm Lillian, I live across the street.
My girls and I wanted to welcome you to the
neighborhood.

She hands Harold some cookies.

HAROLD
Wow, that is so kind of you. I'm Harold,
but you can call me Hal. Nice to meet you.

They shake hands.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
I'm just drinking a beer watching the
Padres game, care to join me?

LILLIAN

Oh uh no, uh no thank you, I'm not much into sports and I don't drink.

HAROLD

Oh, I see, uh well thank you very much for these, um I really appreciate the warm welcome. Maybe we could go for coffee sometime?

LILLIAN

I'll think about it,
(turns to walk away)
enjoy your football game and beer!

Harold checking her out as she walks away. Lillian halfway across the street, Lillian turns back and smiles and continue walking.

HAROLD

THANKS AGAIN FOR THE COOKIES!
(Under breath)
...it's baseball.

Harold shuts the door, cracks another beer, and gets back into his recliner.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Maybe things are looking up...six months.

CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S TOWNHOME - DAY

Lillian and Harold are sitting at the kitchen table talking. Harold is keeping his anger contained.

LILLIAN

Just give him a chance to explain. We all did stupid things when we were young. Be patient with him. Don't blow up at him.

Harold doesn't respond, continues to stare at the front door. A TEENAGE ROLAND walks in with his backpack on and sets it down inside the door.

HAROLD

You're grounded for ONE MONTH!

TEENAGE ROLAND

For what?

HAROLD

Because when you came home yesterday you gave me this horse-crap about how you got a ticket for not wearing a seatbelt.

LILLIAN

I'm going to leave you guys to talk about this, I'm heading home. Call me later.

She kisses Harold on the cheek.

LILLIAN (CONT'D)

(whispering)

Be patient.

She walks out.

TEENAGE ROLAND

I did, I even showed it to you, I apologized, I said I was wrong, and I would find a way to pay for it.

HAROLD

Try again.

Roland pauses.

TEENAGE ROLAND

That's the whole story.

HAROLD

Now it's two months, wanna try for three?

Roland hesitates.

TEENAGE ROLAND

OK, OK. Conan was driving the truck; and uh I was in the back of the truck and we came around a corner and it was a speed trap and that's how I got the ticket. Um... unlawful search and seizure.

HAROLD

And? And before you answer, know this, you're dangerously close to 3 months.

TEENAGE ROLAND

Ok, Ok...and I was uh...

JUMP CUT TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. COMMERCIAL STREET IN RED TRUCK - PREVIOUS DAY

Roland is dancing in the bed of the moving pick-up truck naked, mooning an elderly couple in a Cadillac driving behind the truck. 80s rock is blaring. Two other young men are in the interior of the truck, yelling and laughing.

The truck continues around a corner. A MOTORCYCLE COP is on the side of the road with a radar gun. He motions the truck to pull over. Roland immediately sits down in the back of the trunk, and pulls up his shorts. As the cop approaches we see it's an older SIMPSON, with his helmet on.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. HAROLD'S TOWNHOME - DAY

HAROLD

And did you know the officer that pulled you little crayon eaters over was in my unit 10 years ago? Simpson?

ROLAND

(defeated)

Oh crap...

HAROLD

Oh crap is right. Number one, surfboard in my room, now. Two, you are going to write a 1000-word apology letter to Staff Sergeant Simpson, and you will be meeting with him face to face at the police station tomorrow after school. And your ass is lucky he recognized your name and gave you a break.

ROLAND

My board? You can't...

CUT TO BLACK.

FADE IN:

INT. SAN DIEGO POLICE INTERROGATION ROOM - NIGHT

Camera pans from Simpson's motorcycle boots to his face. Camera tight on Officer Simpson. Roland has a fat scabbed over lip and a black-eye.

SIMPSON

Is that your father's handy work?

Roland nods.

SIMPSON (CONT'D)

You're lucky. If you were my kid, you wouldn't be able to walk in here today.

(pause)

Do you know why you're here?

ROLAND

(Rolling his eyes)

Yeah, I mooned some geezers from the back of a pick-up truck.

SIMPSON

Oh, you only wish that was the reason why. If that were the only reason why, you'd be in juvey begging two gang bangers not to take your Twinkies.

Simpson pauses.

SIMPSON (CONT'D)

You see Roland, when you gave me your name, I knew that you were Top's son, and I instantly knew you were disgracing the honor of your father's name, *your* name. So, I gave you an opportunity to come clean to your father. And did you?

ROLAND

(snaps back rudely)

Did I what?

SIMPSON

Come clean, or did you lie when you got home on Sunday.

ROLAND

(admitting defeat)

I lied.

Simpson points his finger at him.

SIMPSON

And that's why you're here.

Roland knows he's in the wrong.

ROLAND

I'm really, uh I'm really sorry.

SIMPSON

Remember this little Bagster, you have a name that I have tremendous respect for, many Marines do, and it's time for you to learn to respect the name you represent every time you leave your home.

FADE TO:

EXT. CAMP PENDLETON BASE - DAY

The Navy Achievement Award ceremony at Camp Pendleton is occurring, with an entire brigade of Marines in attendance. Harold (late 40s) in camos is standing next to WILSON (60s) grizzly old, tough looking Marine camouflage uniform at podium on stage.

TITLE: US Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton

Camera pans throughout Camp Pendleton, showing a tank collection, a troop running, another training on the beach, and a helicopter taking off. Then aerial of the battalion in attendance for award ceremony.

TITLE: J.W. Wilson, Brigadier General, United States Marine Corps

J.W. WILSON (pre-lap)

For exceptional superior performance of duty while serving as company Gunnery Sergeant of Headquarters and Service Company, fourth medical battalion, fourth Force Service Support Group, San Diego, California. Master Gunnery Sergeant Bagster consistently performed his duties in an exemplary and highly professional manner. Displaying his natural leadership ability, he commanded not only the Utilities Platoon but also served as the Company Gunnery Sergeant to the one hundred and sixty-eight Marines of Headquarters and Service Company. Master Gunnery Sergeant Bagster consistently devoted numerous off-duty hours, at his own expense, to the growth of the battalion, having aided in its development from a six-member detachment to its current full on-line T/O status. Master Gunnery Sergeant Bagster's fierce commitment to duty, loyalty and motivated "can do" attitude inspired all who observed him and contributed significantly to the accomplishment of the battalion. (continues)

CUT TO:

EXT. DANNY'S PALM BAR & GRILL, PARKING LOT - LATER

Campo, (now 60s), sits waiting inside the restaurant, seen through the windows.

WILSON SPEECH (V.O.)

Mastery Gunnery Sergeant Bagster's exceptional professional ability, and loyal dedication to the duty reflected great credit upon himself, the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

Harold still in camouflage uniform from ceremony, walks away from his truck and into the bar.

CUT TO:

INT. DANNY'S PALM BAR & GRILL - DAY

Harold approaches Campo at the bar already having a drink, he looks over and sees a group of Navy men shooting pool. Stud Navy men "mad dog" Harold.

HAROLD

You really know how to pick 'em Campo.

Campo sips his drink.

CAMPO

What? This place?

HAROLD

Isn't this a squid bar?

CAMPO

You see those guys over there?

Both men look to a pool table with a group of stud Navy men shooting pool and drinking beer.

HAROLD

Yeah, I see the squids.

CAMPO

Squids aren't what they used to be. Those guys are Seals, yeah, Seals, they'd whip our asses in about two seconds.

HAROLD

Not if this was fifteen years ago.

CAMPO

Well Marine, that's the problem for guys like us, it ain't.

HAROLD

(chuckles)

Look at you.

Harold steps back to admire Campo.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

You haven't changed a bit in all these years. It's good to see you.

The men shake hands and Harold sits down.

BARTENDER

What can I get ya?

HAROLD

I'll have what he's having.

BARTENDER

Jack. Rocks, or up?

HAROLD

Up's fine.

CAMPO

Thought you dumped your boyfriend Jack?

BAGSTER

I did, a long time ago, but I have a feeling this will be our last one together in a long time.

CAMPO (sips)

The Navy Medal, damn, I'm really proud of ya, Hal. You deserve it.

HAROLD

But? I'm sensing of a big 'ol
(gesturing with his hands)
Rosey Mac Truck BUTT 'bout to run me over.

CAMPO

It's time.

HAROLD

It's time for what?

CAMPO

To move on, the corps has passed guys like us by.

HAROLD

What are you trying to say?

CAMPO

I'm not *trying* to say anything, I'm *saying* it. It's time for you to think about what's next.

HAROLD

Hmm.

He pauses for deep thought.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Maybe, but maybe I'm not done yet? There's still a few more things I want to do.

CAMPO

Yeah, like what? Other than war, what's left? Cause you ain't no Gumby and I know you ain't gonna skate the next two years. That's not your style, Marine. So, what is it?

Bartender sets drink in front of Harold

BARTENDER

Jack up.

HAROLD

Maybe it's extra time to figure out what the hell I wanna do.

CAMPO

I'll drink to that.

The men clink glasses.

CAMPO (CONT'D)

Any thoughts? Because I know that's not all.

HAROLD

All I have is the Marine Corp, it's all I've known the past 20 years. Well, that and a few marriages and yes, before you say it, divorces as well.

Both men in deep thought.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Maybe teaching, like high school, maybe?

CAMPO

Oh dear lord, I weep for the future boots in this great nation.

(both men laugh)

Teaching huh?

HAROLD

Yeah, most kids in troubled areas aren't getting any leadership at home, so why not?

CAMPO

Kids are not what they used to be as well, not like us growing up.

(pauses)

Well, if you're gonna do it, don't keep those kids waiting, they need someone like you to kick their ass. But if you do go down that path, remember this...

HAROLD

What's that?

CAMPO

All kids ever need are hopes and dreams.
But most kids today don't have that. You
help them create their hopes and dreams.
Then you help make those a reality.

HAROLD

Oorah

CAMPO

How's that future Marine of yours?

HAROLD

In his teens, and a pain in my ass, Devil
Pups tryouts next Saturday.

CAMPO

Atta boy. He'll make a fine Marine.

HAROLD

We'll find out just how fine.

CAMPO

Tell me I said to give 'em hell.

CAMPO (CONT'D)

(finishes drink)

I hate to cut this short, but I gotta run,
Hal.

HAROLD

So soon?

CAMPO

Yeah, I've gotta a bird out of North Island
to DC, apparently those politicians need
this Marine to extract their heads out of
their asses.

Both men stand, Campo reaches into his pocket.

HAROLD

Not gonna happen Sergeant Major, I got this
round, you got the next one.

CAMPO (walking away)

Thanks Hal, you take care of yourself,
Semper Fi, Master Guns, and you give dem
kids hell.

HAROLD

Semper Fi.

Harold remains at bar in deep thought, looks over at the Navy men, shakes his head and has another sip.

FADE TO:

INT. GLORIA SHAFFER OFFICE - RECEPTION - DAY

Harold (50s), in a cheap suit, boring tie, sitting in an office waiting area.

RECEPTIONIST
Mister Bagster?

HAROLD
Yes, ma'am.

RECEPTIONIST
Missus Shaffer will see you now.

Receptionist leads Harold to Gloria's office. Knocks.

GLORIA
Come in.

RECEPTIONIST
I have Mr. Bagster for you, your two o'clock

GLORIA
Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA SHAFFER OFFICE - DAY

LOBBY

GLORIA
Hello Mr. Bagster, I'm Gloria Shaffer.
(shake hands)
Pleasure to meet you.

HAROLD
The pleasure is mine.

GLORIA
Please have a seat.

HAROLD
Thank you.

GLORIA
First, I would like to congratulate you on successfully completing all your testing requirements and TA hours.

HAROLD
Thank you, ma'am.

GLORIA
We are thrilled you chose our district for your career. My job is to pair our new hire teachers with the best schools and programs so that will bring maximum benefit to our students.

HAROLD
Terrific.

GLORIA
May I ask you a question?

HAROLD
Yes, of course.

GLORIA
Uh, it says here that you graduated from San Diego State, um just last year?

HAROLD
Yes ma'am.

GLORIA
What was it like going back to school with a bunch of kids?

HAROLD
Humbling, very humbling. A lot has changed since my days at UNR.

GLORIA
UNR?

HAROLD
Yes, ma'am, I went to the University of Nevada Reno for two years.

Gloria looks back at his resume.

GLORIA
I see that, but you didn't graduate?

HAROLD
Uh, no, ma'am.

GLORIA
May I ask why?

HAROLD
Yes, of course.
(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Well, uh when I was there, I was pre-med, Dean's List. But I really didn't know what I wanted to do in medicine, the more I learnt about the bureaucracy of medicine versus helping people, I knew it wasn't for me.

(pause)

Well, my father was a Marine, my grandfather a Marine and his father, my great grandfather was also a Marine. I always knew I wanted to be a Marine, so I thought about being a medic, but that would mean joining the Navy, and, well, medics don't fight.

GLORIA

I see. So, you like to fight?

HAROLD

Uh, I did, I mean, I used to uh years ago, years and years ago.

GLORIA

But no longer?

HAROLD

Oh gosh no, ma'am.

GLORIA

Ok, please continue.

HAROLD

So, well, I decided to drop out of school and nine weeks later found myself in San Diego cleaning latrines in boot camp. Happiest time of my life.

GLORIA

(Sarcastically)

I bet.

HAROLD

OK, maybe not that part, but being a Marine. Then got stationed at Camp Pendleton and eventually well uh had my own unit at Miramar. So long story short, dropped out of school to become a Marine.

GLORIA

And you were there for, let's see... you were a Marine for, twenty, uh twenty-two years?

HAROLD
Still am, ma'am.

GLORIA
Pardon?

HAROLD (smiling)
Once a Marine, always a Marine.

GLORIA
I've heard that before. But you did retire,
or what is it called?

HAROLD
Honorably discharged is what you're
probably thinking of. But I actually
retired, honorably.

GLORIA
I see, that's twenty-two years, that's an
entire career in and of itself. Why do you
want to teach?

HAROLD
Well, Mrs. Shaffer, the most satisfying
part of my job as a Marine was bringing up
the next generation of the Corps, but after
getting injured during a military exercise,
it was pretty apparent, being a grunt is
young man's game.

GLORIA
A grunt?

HAROLD
Oh, pardon me ma'am. A grunt, a Marine who
fights, normally the first to fight and
well,

GLORIA
Die?

HAROLD
(cheekily)
No, Marines *never* die, if need be, go to
hell to regroup.

GLORIA
(surprised)
Um, well, um, ok. But that doesn't
necessarily tell me why you want to become
a teacher.

HAROLD

Many children today do not have the leadership they so desperately need. I want to help create hopes and dreams for these kids and then help makes those hopes and dreams their reality.

GLORIA

Well, then I have the perfect assignment for you.

HAROLD

Ma'am?

GLORIA

It sounds like you're a perfect fit for Montgomery.

HAROLD

(energized)

OK.

She hands Harold a document, both begin reviewing their own.

GLORIA

As you can see from the school demographics, a portion of the student body commutes from Tijuana, you may even have a student or two with a parent at Donovan, or Bailey, and the average household income is at or below poverty level.

HAROLD

I see.

GLORIA

How do you feel about being a minority?

HAROLD

Ma'am?

GLORIA

Well, 97% of the student population is either Hispanic or African American. How do you feel about that? You being *the* minority?

HAROLD

Well ma'am, we, well the Marin Corps doesn't have race, we have rank and green.

GLORIA

Green?

HAROLD

Yes, ma'am, green, we're all just green. Some are darker green, some a lighter green, we're all just shades of green, that's the only color we, the Marine Corps knows.

GLORIA

It's a tough school, Mr. Bagster. But the students continuously score highest in the district, they're gritty, hard working. Can you handle that?

HAROLD

(smiling)

Ma'am, I'm a Marine, yeah, I can handle 'em.

She hands a clipboard to Harold.

GLORIA

I have a feeling you're going to fit right in. As a reminder, your first year is a probationary year. We will reconvene at the end of the year to discuss your progress.

HAROLD

Yes ma'am.

GLORIA

Please fill these out and leave them with the receptionist. Welcome aboard.

Both stand.

HAROLD

Thank you, ma'am.

GLORIA

Good luck, you're gonna need it.

Both shake hands.

PRE-LAP of Contemporary Christian Music.

FADE TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - NIGHT

On Screen: 0430

The school, nearly empty parking lot except for Harold's old blue pick-up truck and one other vehicle and only one classroom has light on with door open. Classroom is completely disorganized.

JUMP CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Harold is organizing his classroom and putting up Marine Corps recruiting posters.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK

ON SCREEN: 0527

Harold, wearing red dolphin style Marine shorts, no shirt jogging in the dark on the track wearing headband flashlight.

CUT TO:

LATER

Music inside the classroom continues. The classroom is completely organized, textbook on each desk. Harold is on his hands and knees checking the lines of each desk as a Drill Instructor would do. Harold glances at clock on wall, reads 07:45.

Harold puts final poster on the wall titled "JJ DID TIE BUCKLE" poster.

Harold surveys the room.

HAROLD

Oohrah.

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Parking lot full, lots of students walking throughout campus, dew on grass, riding lawnmower on football field. Harold's classroom door now shut.

INT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Harold checks the clock in his room and sees it's 7:48. Turns off radio at desk, places in drawer. Walks to front door. Harold takes out a roll of red electricians' tape from his pocket and places a strip down inside the threshold of the door entry way. Opens the door to loud sounds of kids.

10-Minute Bell rings 3 short rings.

With Harold sitting at desk reading the sports section of newspaper, students begin to enter the classroom. 80% of the kids are Hispanic, 20% of the kids are black.

18 of the 30 students are wearing baseball caps, lots of chatter. The class bell rings, one long ring. Harold begins speaking over the chatter and class quiets.

HAROLD

Welcome to Basic Biology. My name is Mr. B-
A-G-S-T-E-R
(as he writes his name on
board)

A few chuckles from class. Harold begins writing Mr. Bagster on the whiteboard

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Or you may call me T--O-P B-A-G-S-T-E-R
(on board)

Harold writes Top Bagster on the whiteboard. A few more chuckles from class. Harold begins writing Master Guns

HAROLD (CONT'D)

You may call me...M-A-S-T-E-R G-U-N-S.
(on board)

The class falls silent, Harold holds up 1 finger in the air.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

We have three rules, rule number one, Be
Respectful.

Harold begins to walk from the front of the classroom to the back of the classroom, between desks.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Respect means that I will respect you, you
will respect one another, and you *will*
respect me. This is not negotiable.

Harold looks around

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Oorah?

No response. He points to the class and opens his hands up.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Well?

STUDENT #1

Oorah?

HAROLD

Exactly. Oorah.

Harold holds up 2 fingers and begins to make his way to the front of the classroom

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Rule Number two, FOCUS. I will promise to focus on you and what I'm teaching you, and you will promise to focus on me and what you are learning. This is also, NOT negotiable. Oorah?

HALF THE CLASS

OORAH!

HAROLD

Nice, almost there. And finally rule number three

Holding up three fingers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

No covers allowed in O-U-R classroom. Oorah?

No response from the class, just confused looks.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Ah, I see. What's a cover? It's that thing on your head, your hats are not allowed to be worn in our classroom. Oorah?

Angry looks from the students, some students remove their hats.

HALF THE CLASS

Oorah.

HAROLD

Anyone violating rule Number one, or rule number two, you will be *respectfully* requested to leave the classroom. If you violate rule number three, I will confiscate your cover and it will be sent to Principal Ruiz's office, and you may pick it up on the last day of the school year.

All but two students remove their hats.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Oorah?

ENTIRE CLASS

Oorah.

HAROLD

Hear me loud and clear, because this is your first and last warning. And yes, this is *our* classroom and *our* rules, it will be a place of RESPECT and FOCUS. They apply to me and they apply to you.

STUDENT #1 with their hat still on, raises their hand.

STUDENT #1

Yo, I have a question, Mr. Top, uh Mr. Bagster

HAROLD

What is it?

STUDENT #1

When do these rules count, or uh go in effect, Ese, I mean, when do they begin?

HAROLD

Ah, Great question. But first, I'm not your ese, and addressing me as ese is a violation of rule number one. I'm going to let that slide, once. And that goes for the rest of you as well.

Harold walks toward the front door of the classroom.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Does everyone see this red line?

The class nods and some say yes.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

It begins when WE cross that red line. As in right *now*. Meaning when you are on the that side of the red line, consider it liberty, but on this side, *our rules*.

The remaining students but one student, remove their hats.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Any other questions?

STUDENT #2

You say OUR rules, but it seems like they're your rules. If they're OUR rules, shouldn't we get a say?

HAROLD

Another great question. I realize this isn't government, but I'll give you a quick explanation anyway.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

The United States has what is called a federal democratic republic form of government. In a sense, the people govern themselves. Now we as a nation have a document that details where laws are generally derived from. Can anyone tell me what the document is called?

Nobody responds.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

It is called the US Constitution.

Some students nod in acknowledgment.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

You personally did not write the constitution, but it is your constitution, the rights and rules that protect each and every one of you, rules we live by because you vote once you turn eighteen for representatives to make rules. But classroom number 34S is not a federal democratic republic form of government. Classroom number 34S, is a dictatorship government. In a dictatorship, anyone can make the any rules they want, but *only* when they become the leader. A dictator does not require input from the people. So yes, you may make all the rules in this classroom you wish, when you become the teacher.

(Some kids chuckle.)

In the meantime, they're *ours* to follow. OK, everyone stand-up and come with me.

Harold leads the class outside.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Now the class is lined up outside.

HAROLD

One by one we will all cross the red line. Every day you cross the red line until June 16th, you are agreeing to these rules. If you do not agree to the rules, do not cross that red line.

STUDENT #2
 (Raising her hand.)
 What happens if we don't uh cross, I mean
 agree?

HAROLD
 Then don't cross the red line.

STUDENT #2
 Then where do we go?

HAROLD
 I don't care.

All of the students except one enters. The single student JAVIER GOMEZ (hispanic, tall, lean, athletic) with hat on walks down the hallway. Harold sees this.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
 Ok, let's get started.

As Harold is opening up his textbook, he notices the empty desk in the back and points to it

HAROLD (CONT'D)
 Who are we missing?

STUDENT #3
 I think that's Javier's desk, he bailed.

HAROLD
 Oh well, let's turn to chapter one.

Class glances at one another. Harold opens the textbook.

FADE TO:

EXT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - 30 MINUTES LATER

Mr. Bagster is writing on the white board.

CLASS
 Mumbling

Harold continues writing, does not turn around.

HAROLD
 Yes, Javier?

JAVIER
 May I please come back in.

Harold continues writing on the white board.

HAROLD

Have a seat.

Javier goes to his desk and sits down.

MONTAGE: Harold teaching, students raising hands and Harold giving a fist pump for right answer.

The class bell rings to end class.

Harold tapes a large piece of paper over the words below the JJ poster.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Before you go, anyone who can tell me what
JJ TIE BUCKLE STANDS for, gets an automatic
A this semester?

Students randomly guess but all are wrong.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Ok, no winners this time, but remember rule
#2 to stay focused, you might get another
opportunity. Have a great day everyone!
Oorah?

STUDENTS

OORAH!

The students leave.

CUT TO:

INT. PRINCIPAL RUIZ'S OFFICE - DAY

RUIZ

We have a problem.

HAROLD

How so?

Camera pans from behind Ruiz to behind Harold, revealing several hundred hats stacked behind Ruiz.

RUIZ

Really? You don't see the problem here?

HAROLD

What I see are a bunch of opportunities to
discipline high school students.

Ruiz holds up a stack of phone messages.

RUIZ

Ok maybe you also don't see these as well from the hundreds of phone calls to my office over the past three weeks from upset parents because you took their kid's hat or in some cases, multiple hats?

HAROLD

What I see are students learning the art of discipline. And respectfully Mrs. Ruiz, each student has agreed to the rules by crossing my red line.

RUIZ

Ah, The red-line? Oh that's right, I heard about that as well. We'll get to that in a minute. Look, here's the deal. Did you play sports in high school or college?

HAROLD

Sure did, lettered in basketball, football and owned the sixteen hundred record for fourteen years.

RUIZ

Ever coach?

HAROLD

Uh, not track, but coached basketball at O.L.G., I mean Our Lady of Grace Catholic School.

RUIZ

Great, we need a JV Women's basketball coach and a JV Track & Field Coach, including Cross Country, you take 'em both, you keep the hat thing and the red tape thing. What do you say?

JUMP CUT TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

PRE-LAP the sounds of a Basketball game.

EXT. OUR LADY OF GRACE, PARKING LOT - NIGHT - RAINING - 20 YEARS PRIOR
Parking lot filled with cars, some students loitering outside.

INT. OUR LADY OF GRACE BASKETBALL GYM - NIGHT

OLG are in blue and white uniforms, St. Therese are in brown uniforms.

ON SCREEN: Our Lady of Grace Gymnasium

Harold (30s), coaching boys youth basketball. Roland (12) misses a free throw and hangs his head in disappointment as he returns to defense.

HAROLD

Time out!

REFEREE

Time Out OLG.

HAROLD

Get your ass over here. Sub!

A player jumps up from the bench to the scorer's table to check in. The horn sounds and Roland walks to Harold at the sideline.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

(yelling at Roland)

I expect you to make those, EVERY time. They're called free throws for a reason, they're free, they're given 'em to you. Any moron can make a free throw. Make your free throws or sit your ass on the bench the rest of the season.

Roland opens his mouth to speak back.

Harold open hand slaps Roland across the face, sending Roland flying into the bench.

The nuns, priests and parents witness this, horrified.

The REFEREE blows his whistle and holds his hands up in a T.

REFEREE

Technical Foul OLG.

HAROLD

What the hell? Really?

REFEREE

Seriously Coach, I suggest you go sit down.

HAROLD

Listen you little Pansy-ass fruitcake, that's my son, I can smack him around anytime I want.

He blows the whistle again, and looks at the scorer's table again.

REFEREE

Technical Foul OLG.

HAROLD

What?

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

You know what, if you were more of man rather than a little black and white fruit stripe, I'd kick your ass too. But your mommy's probably watching.

The gym is dead silent except for Harold yelling. Roland ducks low into the bench, holding his face.

The Referee blows his whistle again.

REFEREE

Technical foul OLG, and this time you're GONE!

HAROLD

What? Seriously?

REFEREE

You leave the gym or forfeit the game.

HAROLD

Then eat shit, we forfeit.

The Referee blows his whistle again and gestures to the scorer's table.

REFEREE

Game over. OLG forfeits, St. Therese wins.

The OLG team members all hang their heads in disappointment.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUR LADY OF GRACE, PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER - RAINING

Harold, Marie and Roland walking in parking lot. Rolland holding a bag of ice to his face. Marie and Harold approach the truck, Roland and Marie approach the passenger side.

HAROLD

Ain't no way in hell you're riding in the front seat, your butt is in the back. The front seat is for those that can make their free-throws.

INT. OUR LADY OF GRACE, HEARING ROOM - NIGHT

Harold is seated in front of the OLG board.

OLG BOARD MEMBER

It is the finding of the board that your behavior is detrimental to the well-being of our students and the reputation of our church and school, effective immediately
(MORE)

OLG BOARD MEMBER (CONT'D)
 you are hereby relieved of your duties as
 head coach of our boys JV Basketball, bangs
 gavel.

END FLASHBACK.

JUMP BACK TO:

INT. RUIZ'S OFFICE - DAY - PRESENT

RUIZ
 Well? What do you think? Do we have a deal
 or not?

HAROLD
 (smiling)
 Deal, I'll do it.

RUIZ
 Great, I'll get the paperwork started

HAROLD
 Oorah.

RUIZ
 Oo-What?

HAROLD
 Uh, Oh, nah, never mind.

RUIZ
 Thank you, you're excused.

HAROLD
 Thank you ma'am.

Harold walks out.

RUIZ
 (to herself)
 Ese es un pajaro loco, el vas er genial.

On Screen: That's one crazy bird, he's going to be great.

CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Students arrive in class and the class bell rings.

INTERCOM (O.S.)
 Happy Friday Aztecs! Congrats to JV
 Football for their victory over Imperial
 beach last Friday.
 (MORE)

INTERCOM (O.S.) (CONT'D)

All clubs will meet today at lunch in the quad, just look for your club sign. Also, if you're part of the historical field trip, all permission slips need to be in by last bell Monday. Cross county try-outs begin Monday, meet at the track after the last bell. Carpool will be provided. And don't forget to come out tonight to support your Aztecs football JV at four thirty p-m and varsity at seven thirty p-m on our field as our Aztecs battle East Lake. Go Aztecs!

A few boys in the classroom wearing are their Aztecs jerseys.

STUDENT #6

You ese's better come at four thirty to see us beat down on East Lake.

Other players chime in, yeah, let's get some, let's go!

Harold, holding up an achievement certificate.

HAROLD

Ok, ok, settle down. On to business. The highest score on Monday's exam, exam number three, belongs to none other than Javier! Come on up here Javier.

Claps and students pat him on the back as Javier struts to the front of the classroom.

Harold hands him the certificate.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Well done, Javier. Keep it up!

CUT TO:

EXT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - END OF SAME SCHOOL DAY

Harold is locking the door of his classroom and the students are exiting school. As Harold is approaching his blue pick-up truck. He hears a male student's voice behind him.

Javier is running past Harold towards a bus pulling away

JAVIER

Esperame! Esperame! Esperame!

On screen: Wait for me! Wait for me! Wait for me!

Harold watches the bus drive down the street, Javier runs after it and catches it at about half a mile down the road and enters bus.

HAROLD
Dang, that boy's got some wheels.

CUT TO:

EXT. PLAZA BONITA MALL - DAY

EXT. FOOTLOCKER STORE

Camera shows the sign of Plaza Bonita Shopping Mall.

Harold is walking out of the Footlocker store with several bags.

CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM

HAROLD
Good morning class, I hope everyone had a better weekend than the JV football team, but I expect you guys to bounce back this week against Sweetwater. Let's get started.

FADE TO:

LATER. Harold is writing on the whiteboard, the class bell rings and students begin to leave.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Javier, stick around for a minute.

Javier walks to the front of the class as other students, chime in with "busted."

JAVIER
Yo, Master Guns, what can I do you for?

HAROLD
What can I do for you, Javier.

JAVIER
Yeah, that.

HAROLD
Great job on the test.

JAVIER
Gracias.

HAROLD
Hey, gotta question for you. Do you play any sports?

JAVIER
Just girls, that's my *deportes*
(MORE)

JAVIER (CONT'D)
 (bobbles head)

On Screen: Sports

HAROLD
 Not exactly what I'm talking about. Do you play any organized sports?

JAVIER
 Nah, just a little pick-up hoops with my boys.

HAROLD
 I'd like you to try out for Cross Country, I'm the new coach.

JAVIER
 Don't think so, Master Guns.

HAROLD
 Why is that?

JAVIER
 You mean running for the sake of running? Nah. I only run from the fuzz.

HAROLD
 You should give it a try, I think you've got a shot at making the team.

JAVIER
 I don't think so, plus, I need to catch the bus after school.

HAROLD
 That' ok, the school arranged carpool.

JAVIER
 Well, I ain't got no creps, and no way in hell mi mama is going to kick down the cabbage for 'em.

Harold begins to walk over to locked cabinet, unlocks it revealing ten shoe boxes.

HAROLD
 Come 'ere. What size shoe do you wear?

JAVIER
 Diez, uh ten.

Harold hands him a box.

HAROLD
Here, creps.

JAVIER
Really, for me?

HAROLD
Yup

JAVIER
(opens box)
Yo, these are *fly*, and my size. But...

He hands him back the box.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
I can't cover these. Sorry.

Harold hands shoes back.

HAROLD
You don't need to, I got you. So today
after the bell, see you on the track?

JAVIER
What the heck, I'll give it a try. Thanks
MG.

Javier begins to walk out and turns back.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
Yo MG?

Harold looks up from his desk.

JAVIER (CONT'D)
What clothes do I wear?

HAROLD
You take P.E., right?

JAVIER
Yeah.

HAROLD
Just wear your P.E. uniform, you'll fit
right in.

JAVIER
Ok, but if I don't like it, I'm bailin',
esta bien?

HAROLD
Oorah.

Javier turns to the door, then quickly turns around.

JAVIER

Wait, I gotta give da shoes back if I bail?

HAROLD

The shoes are yours, regardless.

Javier smiles and nods his head.

JAVIER

Ok, ok, Oorah Master Guns.

HAROLD

Oorah

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY TRACK - DAY

Montage of Javier winning several races, medals being placed on him and Harold and Javier exchanging high-fives. Javier's mother and little brothers and sisters congratulating him.

MONTGOMERY ANNOUNCER

And representing Montgomery High School in the 1600 finals, Javier Gomez.

The crowd cheers loudly including Javier's mother, several little brothers and sisters.

MONTGOMERY ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

Runners to your marks.

Gun sounds.

All of the racers take off in a tight peloton, Javier is the first to take a lead, and half way through he has a huge lead as Harold is trying to get him to slow down. Javier ignore him and smiles at Harold as he races by. Soon the peloton catches up with Javier and in the final lap everyone is nearly even Javier in 3rd place, until the last 50 and Javier sprints past everyone and breaks the tape at the finish.

The crowd cheers loudly and Javier's little brothers and sisters rush to congratulate him.

Javier walks back to a a disappointed Harold.

HAROLD

What the hell was that?

JAVIER

That was called victory, first place! And -

As the announcer begins, Javier stops talking and points up to listen

MONTGOMERY ANNOUNCER

In first place with a new Montgomery record, with a time of four thirty six eighty one, Javier Gomez!

Crowd cheers loudly. Harold and Javier hug and high five.

JAVIER

THAT! I even beat your record, but let's see, um 9 seconds!

HAROLD

Ok, Ok, I'm glad you won, and I'm glad you run better you calculate, it's 6.49 seconds, and I'm still proud of you. But listen amigo, you need get it tight, you're now qualified for CIFs and if you pull that crap in CIF, you're gonna get smashed.

JAVIER

Ok, ok, Master Guns, I'll get it tight.

HAROLD

For today, it's a victory, go celebrate with your family, well done!

FADE TO:

INT. GLORIA SHAFFER OFFICE - DAY

LOBBY

Harold waits in the reception area.

RECEPTIONIST

Mrs. Shaffer will see you now

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA SHAFFER OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

SHAFFER

Well, Mr. Bagster, how was your first year.

HAROLD

It was great, simply awesome.

SHAFFER

Your student scores came in and I'm pleased to share your students scored the highest in all subjects.

HAROLD

Oh WOW, that's pretty cool.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

I knew they were good, but to be the highest in the school, that's really impressive. They worked really hard.

SHAFFER

District.

HAROLD

I'm sorry, ma'am?

SHAFFER

Highest scores in the entire district.

Harold's jaw drops.

SHAFFER (CONT'D)

Congratulations, really.

HAROLD

(shaking his head)

Not to me, that belongs to the students', they did all the hard work.

SHAFFER

Not alone though. Well done, Mr. Bagster.

Harold smiles.

SHAFFER (CONT'D)

Well as you know your first year is a probationary year. We would like to extend a permanent position to you at Montgomery.

HAROLD

A dream come true, I will gladly accept.

SHAFFER

Excellent, enjoy your summer!

HAROLD

Likewise, ma'am.

FADE TO:

EXT./INT. RICHARD J. DONOVAN CORRECTIONAL FACILITY - DAY

Harold (60s) looking more like Willy Nelson, bandana, longer hair, places wallet, keys and coach's whistle in drawer. A door opens with a loud buzz.

A very mean looking muscular Hispanic inmate awaits Harold. The inmate grabs the phone on his side and points to the phone on Harold's side to grab it.

MR. CRUZ
Que onda vato?

On Screen: What's up Bro?

HAROLD
Do you speak English?

MR. CRUZ
(in broken English)
Yes, que quieres?

On Screen: What do you want?

HAROLD
Mr. Cruz, My name is Harold Bagster or Hal, I'm Mariella's Biology Teacher. I'm here to talk to you about Mariela.

MR. CRUZ
Ah yes, the Big Gun.

HAROLD
It's Master Guns, or Mr. Bagster, or just Hal. Whichever you prefer.

MR. CRUZ
What about her? She in trouble, Hal?

HAROLD
Trouble? No, not at all. No, on the contrary, quite the opposite. She's a hard worker, very bright, has the highest score not only in my class but of all the biology students in the school.

MR. CRUZ
(sits up proud)
That's my Mariella. But you didn't get all the way in her to tell me that. I already know all that. So again, Que quieres?

On Screen: What do you want?

HAROLD
Well, this week, we had parent teacher conferences. And uh well, since you couldn't come to me, I wanted to come to you. As far as I'm concerned, you Mr. Cruz, you uh deserve the same respect as any other parent.

MR. CRUZ
Respecto, huh?

On Screen: Respect, huh?

HAROLD

Yes, respect.

MR. CRUZ

What do you know about respect?

HAROLD

Plenty. I know you as a father myself, you deserve the respect to know how your child is doing.

MR. CRUZ

Ok, ok.

(pauses)

You ever been en aqui?

On Screen: In here?

HAROLD

Here at Donovan? A few times, I try to visit all the dads that have kids in my class.

MR. CRUZ

No, on this side of the glass?

HAROLD

Not, that side, *in particular*, but umm I've woken up plenty of times in places just like this, on your side of glass, it was a lifetime ago.

MR. CRUZ

Yeah, so you're a bad-ass, huh?

HAROLD

Hardly, like I said, a lifetime ago. But now I'm just a high school teacher, basketball, track & field coach and advisor of our campus life club.

MR. CRUZ

What's that? campus life?

HAROLD

It's our campus Christian club I oversee.

MR. CRUZ

I see.

(pause)

Didn't her aunt come to the parent teacher thing? She's supposed to take care of that stuff.

HAROLD

Yes, she came, and we met, but you're her father and I wanted you to also know her progress. And, well, she's doing really well.

MR. CRUZ

(puzzled)

OK, what do you need from me?

HAROLD

Here's the thing Mr. Cruz, when I asked Mariela if she has given any thought to college, she said it was impossible. That after she graduates, she's going to go to work in Tijuana to support her little brothers and sisters.

MR. CRUZ

Yeah, and?

HAROLD

Well, with her grades she has the opportunity to go to college and get a degree and have a wonderful career.

MR. CRUZ

Well thank you, Hal, but college isn't for Mariela. We don't have the money to send her college, we're lucky to even get her across the border every day to go to school.

HAROLD

That's the thing, with Mariela's grades, she won't need money, there's scholarships and programs to help her. She has the ability to go far with school. She dreams of being a doctor, but for it's a pipe dream. But I'm here to tell you, with the right support and encouragement, she can do it.

MR. CRUZ

(pauses to think)

Ok, but I can't do much about that from in here.

HAROLD

Yes, yes you can. When you see her next, tell her we met for her parent teacher conference and encourage her to continue working hard and ask her to start thinking about colleges.

(MORE)

HAROLD (CONT'D)

She just needs to know you support her going to college. Can you do that?

MR. CRUZ

Yeah, I can do that.

HAROLD

I really appreciate that. And, Mr. Cruz if you ever want a visitor, I'm happy to come back anytime just to talk, you and I, man to man.

MR. CRUZ

Yeah, I'd like that.

(pause)

Muchas gracias.

On Screen: Thank you.

HAROLD

De nada.

On Screen: You're welcome.

Mr. Cruz hangs up the phone, both men nod to one another in respect. Then Mr. Cruz picks up the phone again, Harold does the same.

MR. CRUZ

You wanna know why I'm here?

HAROLD

Nope, not my business.

MR. CRUZ

What is your business?

HAROLD

I'm in the business of creating hopes and dreams when there aren't any, and helping to turn those hopes and dreams into a reality. That's my business.

MR. CRUZ

(nods with approval)

Bueno, Master Guns, Bueno.

HAROLD

Mantente Seguro.

On Screen: Stay safe.

Both hang up the phone and remain looking at one another.

PRE-LAP of basketballs bouncing and sneakers screeching on floor.

FADE TO:

INT. MONTGOMERY GYM - NIGHT

The JV girls basketball game against rival Imperial Beach. Harold (now in his 60s). The stands are full. It's pre-game and the girls are warming up on the court.

Harold glances back to the stands, checks his watch and looks back to the court, now inspecting the other team, zoom in on player #23. All of her shots are to her right. NICOLE (African American, fit) receives pre-game instruction.

HAROLD
(yells over noise)
Nicole! Nicole!

NICOLE
Yes Coach.

HAROLD
Front and Center!

Nicole runs to sideline.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Ok, they are going to put twenty-three on you and you got her, take a look at her shots.

Both turn to watch the opposing player who's still warming up on the court.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
What do you see?

NICOLE
Some weak-ass hoe.

COACH
HEY FOCUS. Tell me what you see?

NICOLE
(Focuses on 23)
Ok, Ok... Oh, I see it, all of her shots are off her right.

HAROLD
Exactly. What do I want you to do?

NICOLE
Take that ho's right.

HAROLD
 (rolls his eyes)
 Ok exactly. Force *the young lady* to her
 left, you will own her all night.

NICOLE
 Got it.

Runs back to the warmup. Nicole is passed a ball at the 3-point line and makes a swish shot and poses with her hand in the air, she looks back to Harold.

NICOLE (CONT'D)
 Piece of flan! Piece of flan, Coach!

HAROLD
 (to self)
 Flan? geez.

Harold shakes his head, cracks a smile and looks back the stands once again, checks watch.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY GYM - PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Loud car stereos, students loitering, nearly full parking lot, shiny Alfa Romeo Quadrifoglio pulls into a parking spot.

Roland (40s), dressed stylish, remotely locks the vehicle as he walks towards the gym, enters foyer.

INT. MONTGOMERY - GYM FOYER - CONTINUOUS

Roland approaches a table with 3 students selling tickets. ISABELLE (smart looking, hispanic), and two other HISPANIC STUDENTS.

One of the other two Students looks Roland up and down.

STUDENT ATTENDANT #1
 You must be Master Guns'?

Roland, caught off guard, pulls a wad of cash out of his pocket.

ROLAND
 Pardon?

STUDENT ATTENDANT #1
 You must be Master Guns' son.

ROLAND
 (smiles)
 Oh, um, not sure I've ever been referred to
 as that, but yup, that would be me. How
 much are the tickets?

The three students shake their heads at him.

STUDENT ATTENDANT #1

Nah, we got you.

ROLAND

Really? I'm happy to pay?

STUDENT ATTENDANT #2

Nope, he'd kill us if he found out we charged you.

ROLAND

(smiling)

That sounds about right, but here you go anyway, use this for anyone that can't pay.

Roland peels off a \$20 bill out of stack of bills and places it in the cash box and walks away.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Thank you, ladies.

As Roland is just about to enter the gym, Isabelle runs up to him.

ISABELLE

Mister Bagster, Mister Bagster

ROLAND

(Looks back)

Yeah?

ISABELLE

Sorry about that.

ROLAND

About what?

ISABELLE

Those other girls, they're not good students. I'm in Master Guns' CSI Class, we love him, he's great. Tough, really tough but he's the best teacher I've ever had.

ROLAND

(smiles)

What's your name?

ISABELLE

Isabelle, I have him third period.

ROLAND

Cool.

ISABELLE

(sheepish)

May I uh, ask you a question? It's kinda personal?

ROLAND

(puzzled)

Sure, anything.

ISABELLE

What was it like growing up with him? I mean, uh with Master Guns as a dad? I mean, was he as tough as he is now.

ROLAND

(pauses)

What was it like, huh? Two words, pure-hell.

Isabelle shocked.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Well, let me put it this way. As a teacher now, he is a cupcake compared to growing up with him as a father. He was tough, really *really* tough. But I'm here, aren't I?

ISABELLE

Yeah, I guess so.

ROLAND

Listen Isabelle, here's the thing. Master Guns is tough, but that's because he's passionate about seeing his students learn. He really loves it. He's a fair and good man...*now*. He's a much different man today than he was twenty five, thirty ago.

ISABELLE

Tougher than now?

ROLAND

(smiles)

Oh, oh, yeah, yeah, by a mile.

ISABELLE

Wow, interesting.

ROLAND

You keep working hard, He'll respect you for that and run through a wall for you.

ISABELLE

(smiling)

Will do, thank you Mister Bagster. Enjoy the game.

ROLAND

You can call me Roland.

ISABELLE

Ok, Mr. Bagster.

Isabelle smiles and walks away.

Roland smiles and walks into the gym as two quick gym horn sounds.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTGOMERY GYM - NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

The gym is full and noisy. The players begin to gather around their respective coaches. Roland is making his way into the stands behind the Montgomery bench. Roland senses the students' and parents' eyes on him, and some talking about him. He's the only other Caucasian in the gym.

Harold checks his watch.

HAROLD

(In a booming voice)

TEN-HUT.

Team becomes to attention in a huddle, Harold is speaking to them. Indistinct dialog.

One long gym horn sound.

The team puts their hands into the huddle.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Oorah on three, one two three

TEAM

OORAH!!!

As the players make their way to center court for the jump, Harold looks around again, sees Roland, they nod and smile at one another. Roland fist pumps and mouths "Let's Go."

Harold smiles and turns attention back to game.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTGOMERY GYM - NIGHT

MONTAGE of the game:

- Different plays.

- Cuts and flashes to the scoreboard, until the score reads Montgomery 52, Visitor 53. 4.8 seconds left on the clock.

As Nicole rebounds the ball from a missed shot, Harold runs down the sideline to get the referee's attention.

HAROLD
TIME OUT! TIME OUT! TIME OUT!

The referee blows whistle and signals time-out Montgomery.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Hurry up ladies!

The team runs to the sideline. Harold is speaking to them in huddle, the camera zoom on Harold.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
OK, ladies, three point two seconds left,
plenty of time. We're going to have the
ball right here.

He Points to the ground in the huddle, then pulls out a coach's notepad and draws up a play.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
If they come out zone, we're running Radar,
but if they go man to man, run Shanaynay,
hit Nicole on the left flank.

The Girls snicker.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Focus!

The gym horn sounds twice.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Hands-in

The team puts hands in pile in huddle.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Oorah on three, one, two three

TEAM
OORAH!

Imperial Beach comes out in zone.

HAROLD
RADAR! RADAR! RADAR!

IMPERIAL BEACH COACH

SWITCH!

Imperial Beach team switches to man to man

HAROLD

(Booming Voice)

Shanaynay! Shanaynay! Shanaynay!

The crowd laughs.

Montgomery inbounds the ball to Nicole, she shoots and scores.

The horn blows to end the game. The crowd celebrates, the band plays and players and students rush the court to congratulate Nicole.

Roland makes his way down to the bench, Harold turns around, they both high five and hug.

ROLAND

That was unbelievable!

HAROLD

(above the commotion)

We needed that one, dinner at Pietro's?

ROLAND

Sure, see you there, what in about an hour?

Harold checks his watch.

HAROLD

OK, eight thirty p-m it is.

Roland walks away.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Hey son!

Roland turns back.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Thanks for coming!

Roland smiles and turns around and continues walking away.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. THE BOONDOCKS BAR - NIGHT

Roland pulls into the parking lot and looks up seeing Pietro's sign. He checks his watch: 8:10pm. He looks up again and sees The Boondocks sign next door. Roland walks towards The Boondocks sign.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BOONDOCKS BAR - NIGHT

WANDA (30s) tall, gorgeous voluptuous brunette, flirty, bartending.

WANDA
Well, Well, Well.

Roland opens his arms out for ridicule.

ROLAND
Ok, let me have it.

WANDA
You don't write, you don't call.

D-LAKE (40s), extremely tall and intimidating bearded man) walks over to greet Roland.

D-LAKE
Is that, Roland Bagster? *The Roland Bagster?*

ROLAND
Yes, Ok, I'm back in the boons once again, but for just a minute, How ya doin' D-Lake?

The men pound hug.

D-LAKE
Hey, good to see you, I'm good, my man, and just saw your ex, Wen-

ROLAND
(smiling)
Don't you dare finish that statement.

WANDA
Are you here for a Grossmont Reunion, or a drink?

D-LAKE
Apparently, someone wants you all to *herself*.

He tilts his head towards Wanda as he walks away laughing.

ROLAND
Oh, geez, give me a break Wanda, I'm having dinner with my dad next door. What bourbons do you have back there?

She looks at her stock.

WANDA

Your dad? You guys are talking again? The last time I remember...

ROLAND

(interrupting)

It's always, the last time, blah blah blah. I'm trying. He's trying. He's a different person. You should have seen him tonight.

WANDA

Yeah, what happened tonight?

ROLAND

(with admiration)

He's coaching basketball at Montgomery. He was on fire.

Wanda looks for the bourbons again.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

Just give me a jack and diet coke.

WANDA

Just like your dad?

ROLAND

No, he's a regular coke, and I don't normally drink Jack but considering this rat-hole probably the best ya got.

WANDA

Single or double?

She begins to pour.

ROLAND

Single, gotta drive later.

WANDA

Well considering I haven't seen Gunny in...let's see, well years, does he even live in the area still?

ROLAND

Yup, same place, just a block away. But he doesn't drink, doesn't cuss, doesn't fight and hasn't for years.

WANDA

Well, good for him, he was mean when he drank. Open or close it?

ROLAND

Close it, please.

WANDA
That'll be six fifty

Roland hands Wanda a \$20 bill.

ROLAND
This should cover it, please put D-Lake's
next round on me, the rest is yours.

Roland takes just one sip of the drink and walks towards exit.

Wanda admires Roland out as he's walking out and licks her lips.

WANDA
Bye Mister big shot, call me some time!

Roland walking out the door, waives in the air, smiling and shaking his head.

CUT TO:

INT. PIETRO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT - MOMENTS LATER

Roland enters Pietro's.

Pietro's is a cozy, romantic old-style pizzeria restaurant, busy.
PIETRO (60s), an old school mafia looking Italian with a white chef's apron.

PIETRO
(heavy Italian accent)
Aye Oh, Oh Aye the coach's son!

The men shake hands.

ROLAND
Hey Peter

PIETRO
Good to see you, Roland, you don't come
around too often?

ROLAND
It's a little tough for me, I live down in
Little Italy now, so not around La Mesa too
often these days.

PIETRO
Look at you, you've come a long way from
washing my dishes.

ROLAND
Ah, toughest job I ever had.

PIETRO
But you were pretty good though, the best.

ROLAND
Tellin' the same ol' lies I see.

PIETRO
Nah! E vero, e vero.

On Screen: It's true, it's true.

PIETRO (CONT'D)
Well, it's good to see you.

ROLAND
You as well.

PIETRO
Just you tonight?

ROLAND
No, the coach is on his way, he had a game tonight.

PIETRO
Oh yeah? Did they win?

ROLAND
Yes, in the last three seconds, it was fun to watch.

PIETRO
Well, I know exactly what to prepare for him.

Pietro grabs two menus and the men walk to a table in the middle of the room.

ROLAND
Thanks Peter.

PIETRO
The coach's table if he wins.

ROLAND
Yeah? Where does he sit if he loses?

Pietro points to a back corner table.

PIETRO
There, if he doesn't, he doesn't want to be seen.

ROLAND

Yeah, I can see that. Thanks, good to see you again.

PIETRO

I'll be back with a Chianti, I've got something special for you in the back.

ROLAND

Grazie, Pietro, you always too kind.

On Screen: Thank you, Peter.

Peter walks away.

PIETRO

Prego! Prego!

On Screen: You're welcome, you're welcome!

Roland looks over his shoulder to look at the loser's booth, and chuckles to himself.

FADE TO:

INT. PIETRO'S RESTAURANT - LATER

Harold and Roland are mid-meal. The restaurant is much quieter.

HAROLD

Well, what did you think of that last play?

ROLAND

It was great, well executed. *but*, I have one question.

HAROLD

Shoot

ROLAND

Shanaynay?

HAROLD

Yup, that's the name of the play.

ROLAND

Shanaynay?

HAROLD

Yeah, what of it?

ROLAND

Okay, how did you come up with that?

HAROLD

The play, or the name of the play?

ROLAND

The name is the concern.

HAROLD

I told the ladies that every time they win five in a row, they get to name the next installment.

ROLAND

So, *they* came up with Shanaynay?

HAROLD

Yup.

ROLAND

Do you know what Shanaynay is?

HAROLD

Yes, Nicole streaks and takes the ball on the left flank in a tight man to man.

ROLAND

No, Shanaynay, Shanaynay the name.

Harold nonchalantly takes a bite of his chicken parmesan.

HAROLD

Nope, and don't care.

ROLAND

Well, you should care. It's the name of a character on a tv show, called In Living Color. Shanaynay is a transvestite.

HAROLD

So.

ROLAND

So? You can't use that, it's offensive to some. You gotta change it.

HAROLD

And go against my commitment to the team? That *ain't gonna happen*, not ever. *End of discussion*. Oorah?

ROLAND

(nodding head)
Oorah dad, Oorah.

A long pause.

ROLAND (CONT'D)
It's good to see you, dad. You look good.

HAROLD
Yeah, you too.

The men continue eating.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
You ever going to settle down?

ROLAND
I don't know dad, sometimes I feel like it's not in the cards for me.

HAROLD
(sarcastically)
I mean, so how's uh, Teresa, or is it Cami, or was it Wendy, or is it Shannon, wasn't there a Lana in there somewhere? Or how about that red-head Melissa.

Roland shakes his head.

ROLAND
Not cool dad, but ok, here we go. Shannon and I WERE just friends, and it was her sister Tiffany, hence the word were. Cami was when I lived in Washington, and well Wendy, don't want to talk about Wendy. And frankly, Melissa the red head was trouble, but not as certifiably crazy as Theresa. And Lana, well she cheated on me. *But*, that's like me asking how are your x-wives? Yes, all 47 of them. So, can we change the topic?

HAROLD
Too-shay.
(Both laugh)
Both remain silent for a moment.

ROLAND
OK, on a serious note, Dad, I don't know, it's not the marriage part that scares me, it's seeing what you've been through with divorces, that scares the hell out of me.

HAROLD
Yeah, that's not fun and now my best friend is my divorce lawyer, Jenkins.

ROLAND
Dang. But he's the best in the business.

The men continue to eat.

HAROLD

How long has it been? What, two years?

ROLAND

Yeah, somethin' like that, when we went to the Padres game for your birthday. You know how it is, my life mainly consists of airplanes, rental cars and hotels.

HAROLD

Well, you're here now, that's what matters. Oorah?

ROLAND

Oorah Gunny, and I'm glad to be.

HAROLD

Son.

ROLAND

Ya?

HAROLD

Look, we both know we're going to fight again in the future. But let's make a pact right now, that we'll *always* at least try to reconcile?

ROLAND

Deal, I promise.

HAROLD

Me too, promise.

An awkward pause.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

Can I ask you a question and you promise to give me a straight answer?

ROLAND

I'll do my best.

HAROLD

Why didn't you want to join the Marine Corps?

Roland takes a deep breath, looks around the room and back to Harold.

ROLAND

Are you sure you *really* want to know?

HAROLD

I do, it's bothered me for years.

Roland points at his father.

ROLAND

That's why.

HAROLD

What's why?

ROLAND

I knew if I joined the Corps, it would make you proud, bring you happiness, but even more important, it would torment you if I didn't. I've deliberately patterned my life to do the exact opposite of everything you did, because I hated you that much. And frankly, I was ashamed of you. Do you know it wasn't until that Padres game two years, that... that... was the first time I can ever remember leaving the stadium at the end of the game, *with you?*

HAROLD

What the hell are you talking about?

Roland's begins to anger.

ROLAND

What am I talking about? Seriously? Every single game you brought me to as a kid, Chargers, Padres, every-single-game, without fail, you fight, you beat-up some random dude, you get arrested and we have to have Mom, or one of your friends that didn't get arrested drive us home.

HAROLD

(ashamed)

Wow. You were right. I wasn't ready for that. I didn't see that coming.

(pause)

Nope, I didn't see that one coming at all.

(pause)

You're that hurt huh?

ROLAND

I was, yes of course, any child treated the way you treated me would have been hurt as well. But here's the big takeaway for you. I'm here. That is in the past.

(MORE)

ROLAND (CONT'D)

And for as long as I live, you can always know that I believe in you and I know you are capable of being a better man than you were, and I'm watching you do your best to not be.

HAROLD

(upset)

Ok, since you're on a roll. Did you throw the race?

ROLAND

What race?

HAROLD

Devil Pups, did you throw the Devil Pups race?

ROLAND

Devil Pups? I was fourteen years old.

HAROLD

Let's get it all out.

ROLAND

Are you sure you really want to do this, here and now?

HAROLD

(angrily)

I am.

Roland looks into his father's eyes, takes a deep breath.

CUT TO:

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

EXT. CAMP PENDLETON BASE - DAY

It's the Devil Pups Qualification Day. DRILL INSTRUCTOR FOX (30s) chiseled face, fit, prototype Marine, is speaking to a group of 14-17-year-old young men. A score board above shows first place through twentieth place, with a bottom section header DQ.

DRILL SERGEANT FOX

Gentlemen, my name is Drill Instructor Fox, you will always address me as Drill Instructor. Is that clear?

DEVIL PUPS

YES DRILL INSTRUCTOR!

DRILL SERGEANT FOX

Today is going to be the most physically demanding test of your lives. Only the top twenty of the seventy-seven of you will advance to attend the 10-day Devil Pups Basic Training. For those of you here today that are fourteen or fifteen years old, please raise your hands.

Roland raises his hand with six others.

DRILL SERGEANT FOX (CONT'D)

You are more than welcome to stay, but it is unlikely you have any chance of ranking in the top twenty or finishing the qualification at all. Also, if any one of you fail to complete the obstacle course, you will automatically be disqualified from the competition.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE of Roland competing:

- The contestants and Roland doing pull-ups, push-ups, sprints, swimming.
- The scoreboard changing to show Roland moving up the ranks.

END MONTAGE.

EXT. OBSTACLE COURSE - LATER

Roland is with the STARTER, staring down the obstacle course. He glances up at the scoreboard and sees his name at the top. He looks at Harold (40s) standing tall and proud in the front of a group of Marines in camouflage.

STARTER

GO!

Roland eases through several portions of the course and gets to the rope wall section. As he climbs up one side of the wall with ease, he goes over the top and just before propelling downward, he glances at the scoreboard.

SLOW MOTION: The camera zooms in on his feet and he throws himself off the top of the wall and lands on his feet. A snap is heard and Roland let's out an indistinct YELL.

Medics come rushing over to Roland, now on the ground yelling in pain.

CUT TO:

EXT. NAVY CORPSMAN OFFICE - DAY - LATER

Roland and Harold are exiting the medical office, Roland is in crutches and a leg splint boot. Harold looks disappointed. Roland glances up on the final standings in the top section, and below that it says "DQ," listing "BAGSTER" along 12 other names.

END FLASHBACK.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. PIETRO'S RESTAURANT - NIGHT

ROLAND
You're damn right I did.

HAROLD
Why would you ever do that?

Roland stares at his dad dead in the eyes.

ROLAND
Same reason, Dad. That was the one way I knew at fourteen years old I could hurt you, by robbing you of your moment of pride like you robbed me of a halfway normal childhood. Instead it was an ongoing torture and torment.

MORNING ANNOUNCER (pre-lap)
And we have three track & field seniors that made all-county.

FADE TO:

INT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Students and teachers begin their first period classes.

MORNING ANNOUNCER
Senior Lashonda Jones in the long jump,
Seniors Jasmine Brooks in the one hundred
and Javier Gomez in the sixteen hundred.

CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Harold is sitting at his desk with a full class, he hears the announcement and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA SHAFFER'S OFFICE - LATER

Gloria Shaffer calls Principal Ruiz.

INT. RUIZ'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Principal Ruiz picks up her phone.

RUIZ
Principal Ruiz speaking.

INTERCUT PHONE CALL:

GLORIA
Elvia, it's Gloria. How are things?

RUIZ
Oh, hey Gloria, all is well. What can I do for you?

GLORIA
Oh, just getting ready to make my rounds to the campuses.

RUIZ
Terrific, we'd love to see you. When works for you?

GLORIA
I'm thinking four weeks on Thursday the eighteenth, around lunch time. Will that work.

RUIZ
Lemme check, hold one sec.

She checks her calendar.

RUIZ (CONT'D)
Yup, that works. See you around noon then?

GLORIA
Great, see you then.

RUIZ
Wonderful, see you on the eighteenth,

GLORIA
Have a good one, bye.

RUIZ
You as well, bye.

END INTERCUT.

EXT./INT. ADMINISTRATION OFFICE - DAY

Harold is walking into the admin office to retrieve his mail from mailbox.

A RANDOM STUDENT passes him.

RANDOM STUDENT
Hi, Master Guns, hope you had a good
Christmas.

HAROLD
You too, hope you had a good Christmas as
well...

Harold searches for the student's name when...

Another STUDENT ATHLETE passes him by.

STUDENT ATHLETE
Hey Coach Bagster!

HAROLD
Hey there, you...

Harold reads outside of envelope. "CIF Office Sacramento California."
Harold opens it and it reads:

HAROLD (CONT'D)
Dear Coach Baxter, we are honored to
officially invite the Aztecs of Montgomery
High School Track & Field team to the 25th
Annual Elite Invitational Meet.

He fist bumps.

POV on the letter, showing the entry fee is \$3,000, due by February
15th.

Harold glances back at the reception desk of the office, which has a
rolodex calendar showing today is January 5th.

Harold walks into Mrs. Ruiz's office, and knocks on the open door.

CUT TO:

INT. RUIZ'S OFFICE - DAY

RUIZ
Welcome back, Mr. Bagster

HAROLD
Thank you, you as well. Gotta minute?

RUIZ

Sure, it's the quiet before the storm, come on in.

BAGSTER

Here, read this.

He hands her the letter and she reads.

RUIZ

Yeah, so?

HAROLD

Yeah, so? This is only the most important track & field tournament in the nation every year, and they are finally inviting us, this is our first invitation. This a big deal with national recognition.

RUIZ

You got three grand in that backpack of yours?

HAROLD

Well, no.

RUIZ

Here, let me check my purse.

She looks in her purse.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

Nope, neither do I.

HAROLD

Oh, come on, we gotta have some money somewhere? There's gotta be some money?

RUIZ

Some money? The entire athletic department is over budget, we may be cutting some programs after June. Maybe even yours.

HAROLD

No money? Nothing?

RUIZ

The answer is no. And just so you know, it's not just three K, it's transportation, meals, hotels, so you're gonna need at least ten K to make this happen.

HAROLD

Well, can I go to the district?

RUIZ

I'm being polite about this, they're likely to throw you out on your ass. You go right ahead, *but* keep my name out of your mouth. I don't want any blow back from this.

Harold walks away disappointed.

CUT TO:

INT. GLORIA SHAFFER'S OFFICE - DAY

Shaffer reading over the letter.

HAROLD

Well?

SHAFFER

No. In fact not just no, hard NO. There is no way.

HAROLD

There's gotta be a way.

SHAFFER

Where did you grow up?

HAROLD

Nevada.

SHAFFER

Vegas?

HAROLD

No, Carson City.

SHAFFER

Ah yes, the capital of Nevada. Were you raised Washoe?

HAROLD

Ma'am?

SHAFFER

Are you part of the endangered Washoe tribal nation whose language is nearly extinct?

HAROLD

No Ma'am, I'm just a redneck from Carson City.

SHAFFER

So English is your native language?

HAROLD

Yes ma'am.

SHAFFER

Good, because I thought we were having a communication problem.

HAROLD

Ma'am?

SHAFFER

Then let me put this in as clear of English as I possibly can. NO, or Spanish, NO, or Canadian No-eh, or would you like French?

HAROLD

(annoyed)

Message received.

SHAFFER

Are you sure, I just want to be clear. I know you're a scientist, but wasn't sure about your English credentials. So, are we clear?

HAROLD

Like the waters of Lake Tahoe's Sand Harbor.

SHAFFER

Good. Anything else?

HAROLD

Yes, what if I raise the money myself?

SHAFFER

Sure, you go ahead and raise the money yourself. And, remember earlier when we established your superior grasp of the English language?

HAROLD

(rolling his eyes)

Yes, ma'am.

SHAFFER

Do not, under any circumstance d-o n-o-t, I repeat again, do not tell the team about the invitation until you have raised all the money. You will break their hearts when you fail and you WILL fail.

HAROLD

We'll see about that.

SHAFFER
Will that be all Mr. Bagster?

HAROLD
Yes, ma'am.

He gets up to walk out.

SHAFFER
Not one word to the team, it will destroy
those kids.

JUMP CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK - LATER

Close up on on Harold as he reads a letter. The team is seated around him listening in anticipation.

HAROLD
Dear Coach Bagster. We are honored to
officially invite the Aztecs of Montgomery
High School Track & Field team to the 25th
Annual Elite Invitational Tournament.

The team cheers.

HAROLD (CONT'D)
(excited)
Are you guys in?

TRACK TEAM
Yeah!!!

HAROLD
No, you're not. At least not yet.

TRACK TEAM
What?

HAROLD
We need to raise ten thousand dollars to
make this happen.

TRACK TEAM
That sucks, boo.

HAROLD
But I have a plan. Ok, whose mom makes the
best tamales?

TRACK TEAM
Mine, no mine does, my mom's blows your
mom's away -

HAROLD

Not to worry, I got all the ingredients and supplies we need. So here's the plan...

The dialog becomes indistinct as Harold continues with the plan.

FADE TO:

EXT. SKYVIEW CHURCH - DAY

Half the team is outside a church, selling tamales at a table. The other half are in the parking lot washing two cars.

JUMP CUT TO:

ONE WEEK LATER.

There are now three tables of the team selling tamales, with a line of waiting customers. There's five rows of cars now getting washed.

CUT TO:

INT./EXT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Harold is counting money and using an adding machine during lunch time. The bell rings indicating the end of lunch, and the beginning of Harold's prep hour.

HAROLD

Dang.

Writes down on paper spreadsheet: "NEED \$2800", looks at desk calendar displays January 31st.

Harold walks out of his classroom and locks the door.

CUT TO:

EXT./INT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL QUAD/CAFETERIA - MOMENTS LATER

The Students are gathered throughout the quad having lunch, cafeteria is filled with students having lunch.

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL TRACK - CONTINUOUS

Harold is sitting in the stands of the stadium with his head down, appears to be praying. Harold hears the class bell and begins walking back. Lunch garbage all around the quad. Harold turns when he hears cans being dumped in a bin by the janitor. He walks to janitor and has an indistinct conversation.

CUT TO:

INT. HAROLD'S CLASSROOM - NEXT DAY

The bell rings, students begin to leave the classroom.

Harold opens his cabinet, puts on flight gloves, and grabs a handful of trash bags and a trash picker, then walks out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY LUNCH QUAD - DAY

Harold picks up cans during lunch, and takes multiple full trash bags out to his truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY

Ruiz meets Shaffer at the front of the school, the ladies shake hands and begin walking together. Indistinct dialog follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

Ruiz giving Shaffer a tour of the campus. Both pause when they see Harold picking up empty aluminum cans.

SHAFFER

(confused)

Is that... Mr. Bag-

RUIZ

Yup, that's Bagster.

SHAFFER

What on God's green earth is he doing?

RUIZ

I'm afraid to ask, He's on his break period, but if I had to guess, I'd say it has to do with bashing pipe dreams and crushing hope.

SHAFFER

Hmm.

CUT TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY PARKING LOT - DAY

MONTAGE of Harold taking multiple bags of cans to his truck.

CUT TO:

EXT. RECYCLE CENTER - NIGHT

MONTAGE of Harold driving entering Recycle Center with a truck filled with bags and empty exiting.

CUT TO:

INT. RUIZ OFFICE - DAY

Harold knocks on Ruiz's open door.

HAROLD

You needed to see me ma'am?

RUIZ

Yes, this is a private matter, please close the door.

Harold closes the door.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

Is everything ok with you?

HAROLD

Fantastic Ma'am. In fact, I was going to come see you today.

Harold reaches into his backpack and pulls out a leather bank envelope. He hands it to Ruiz.

RUIZ

What's this?

HAROLD

Eleven thousand four hundred and fifty-two dollars.

RUIZ

Does this explain the additional member of our janitorial staff?

HAROLD (chuckles)

Uh, yeah, but you know what they say, better to ask for forgiveness than permission.

RUIZ

Uh huh.

She opens the envelope.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

Wow, it really is. I guess we have our first ever track & field team going to THE Elite. Gotta say, I'm impressed.

HAROLD
Thank you, ma'am.

RUIZ
May I ask you a personal question?

HAROLD
Yes, ma'am.

RUIZ
Have you always been this hard-headed?

HAROLD (smiles)
'fraid so, ma'am.

RUIZ
Well, congratulations, well done. Do me a favor, don't tell the team yet, I have the perfect way to announce it.

HAROLD
OK. Oh, was there something else?

RUIZ
Nope, we've already determined you don't take no for answer.
(pause)
Don't change a thing.

Harold smiles and walks out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MONTGOMERY GYM - DAY

The entire student body is gathered in the Gym for a PEP RALLY.

A small group of students are standing in front of the crowd, with Ruiz at a podium.

RUIZ
Let's give them a round of applause!

Students on stage return to seats.

STUDENTS
Cheer!

RUIZ
And now I would like to invite the entire Varsity track & field team, and their coach Mr. Bagster to join me up here.

The team and Harold join Ruiz on stage.

RUIZ (CONT'D)

So far, this team has had an incredible season with several tournament wins and individuals wins. But I've asked them up here to share this. For the first time in our history, our Aztec track and field team is attending the most prestigious tournament in the nation, THE ELITE INVITATIONAL! Congratulations and good luck to each of you, and bring home the trophy!

The team are shocked. They cheer and hug one another and high fives Harold. The crowd erupts in applause.

CUT TO:

EXT/INT. MARIE'S OFFICE - DAY

An office building in NY in the wintertime, snow on the ground.

Pans office to a windowed office, where MARIE (40s), is sitting at the desk.

MARIE'S RECEPTIONIST walks in holding a large bouquet of roses, and a card.

MARIE'S RECEPTIONIST

Looks like you have a secret admirer.

Marie looks up from her keyboard and smiles.

MARIE

Maybe?

She takes the card out and doesn't open it, but begins counting the roses.

And forty seven, forty eight, and yup forty nine.

Marie smiles at the receptionist.

MARIE'S RECEPTIONIST

49? Happy Birthday. But 49? I thought you were forty -

MARIE

Don't tell a soul.
(smiles)

The desk phone rings, Marie looks down at caller ID, smiles, and answers phone.

MARIE.

(to caller)
Hold one sec?

BEGIN INTERCUT:

Harold (70s) looking old, and frail on cell phone in classroom before school day begins.

HAROLD

Yup.

MARIE

(to her receptionist)

Thanks for bringing these to me, I need to take this.

The receptionist walks out smiling.

MARIE (CONT'D)

Hi Daddy.

HAROLD

Happy birthday to you. Happy Birthday to you. Happy Birthday dear Mimi. Happy Birthday to you

MARIE

Thank you, Daddy, you always remember.

HAROLD

Happy Birthday Mimi, did you get the flowers.

MARIE

Sitting right here on my desk, all forty-
(mumbles)
of them, like clockwork.

HAROLD

Never missed a single one, every year starting at your first, you're welcome.

MARIE

How are you? it's been a couple of weeks?

HAROLD

The girls' basketball tournament is this week, the team looks strong this year. I have six returning.

MARIE

And the track team?

HAROLD

We started Cross County this week, we have a long way to go.

MARIE

And back to the original question, how are you? Are you getting through it ok?

HAROLD

It's been hard. My hardest round yet.

MARIE

I'm sorry to hear that. You'll get through this.

HAROLD

Somehow, I'm sure I will.

MARIE

Have you seen or heard from Roland?

HAROLD

Yeah, I invited him to join Ruth and I at Christmas at my house, or maybe out to Pietro's for dinner over Christmas break.

MARIE

And?

HAROLD

He said he'd let me know.

MARIE

Be patient with him, he'll come around.

HAROLD

I always feel bad, I really put the kid through hell.

MARIE

We all make mistakes, just keep trying. And frankly he didn't make things easy for you. But he does love you.

HAROLD

I will, and I know he does as well.

MARIE

Really Dad, he asks about you all the time. He does loves you Dad, a lot. Don't beat yourself up.

HAROLD

Ok, how are the girls?

MARIE

Nice change of topic, the girls are good, they miss and love you too. You need to come visit.

HAROLD

Ok, maybe summer next year, when I get back from Africa.

MARIE

Africa?

HAROLD

Yeah, we have a group going from church to bring medical supplies and help bring electricity to a few more villages, near the village where Ruth and I met.

MARIE

Always on the go, why am I not surprised.
(pause)

Well Dad, thank you again for the flowers and the annual birthday serenade, but I gotta pile of work in front of me. Can I give you a call this weekend?

HAROLD

Sure, love you Mimi, happy birthday.

MARIE

I love you too, Daddy.

Marie hangs up. She takes a deep breath and admires a picture of a young Harold on her desk, in Marine uniform.

FADE TO:

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - TRACK - DAY

Harold instructing team at the jump pit. An older, larger silver haired Hispanic man, MR. CRUZ, approaches behind Harold without him noticing. Harold notices the students stop to look at Mr. Cruz. Harold turns around to talk to him.

MR. CRUZ

Master Guns, correcto?

On Screen: Master Guns, correct?

HAROLD

Please forgive me, but our practices are not open to parents.

MR. CRUZ

Do you remember me?

HAROLD

I do not, have we met?

Harold coughs violently.

MR. CRUZ

You-ok?

HAROLD

Yes, I'm fine, just a spring cold. What can I do for you?

MR. CRUZ

We met about thirteen, maybe fourteen years ago, at Donovan.

HAROLD

(puzzled)
Mister Cruz?

MR. CRUZ

Exacto.

On Screen: Exactly.

Harold calls over his assistant Jay-Jay.

HAROLD

Hey Jay-jay, take over for me here, I'll be right back.

Jay-jay comes running over and takes over practice. Harold and Mr. Cruz walk away together.

Harold violently coughs again.

HAROLD (CONT'D)

So you're out, that's fantastic, congratulations. How's Mariela doing? The last I heard she in school in Vermont, at Middlebury, then to..

MR. CRUZ

(interrupting)
Excelente memory.

HAROLD (coughs again)

Didn't she go to UCSD for medical school?

MR. CRUZ

Yes, the Vermont winter kicked her butt and she wanted to come close to home. She is graduating number one in all her class, and she is allowed one special teacher guest of honor to join her on stage as she delivers a speech to the entire school. Then she's off to Baltimore to begin her residency at Johns Hopkins.

HAROLD

Oh, wow, that's great. I'm so happy for her. Please wish her well for me. Wow, I'm just so amazed. Wow...Johns Hopkins, that's the best residency in the nation.

MR. CRUZ

The very best, numero uno.

HAROLD

Again, please wish her my best. I'm so proud of her.

MR. CRUZ

(smiling)

Tu no comprendes.

On Screen: You don't understand.

MR. CRUZ (CONT'D)

Why don't you do it yourself. Mariela wants you to join her on the stage at UCSD Medical School graduation in two weeks, on June eleventh.

HAROLD

Me? Oh my gosh, I don't know what
(coughs again)
to say. I am honored.

MR. CRUZ

Say yes. And say yes to our invitation to come to the fiesta for Mariela following the ceremony. Hosted by none other than the Municipal President of Tijuana, The Honorable Juan Manuel Gastelum.

HAROLD

I'm honored, yes, of course I will be there.

MR. CRUZ

I see this time you have ring de wedding, I didn't know you were married. Bring your esposa to the fiesta?

On Screen: Wife

HAROLD

Yes, of course.

MR. CRUZ

Que es tu esposa's nombre?

On Screen: What is your wife's name?

HAROLD

Her name is Ruth, we met in Africa several years ago. I got it right this time.

MR. CRUZ

Bring her, the missus Big Guns, Ruth.

Mr. Cruz chuckles.

HAROLD

Thank you, Mr. Cruz, I certainly will.

MR. CRUZ

No problemo, Mariela will email you the details, Master Guns.

On Screen: No problem, Master Guns.

FADE TO:

EXT. UCSD COMMENCEMENT LAWN - DAY

On stage is Mariela, speaking at her graduation ceremony. Dignitaries are also on stage in formal graduation gowns, and Harold is beside them in suit and tie.

MARIELA

And finally to my hero, who is with me today on this stage, the one that gave me hope and dreams, and helped me turn my hope and my dreams into this reality, my high school teacher, mentor and coach, Senior Bagster. Muchas gracias, Master Guns.

On Screen: Thank you, Master Guns.

Mariela turns to Harold to thank him with a standing ovation. Harold's eyes tear up.

CUT TO BLACK.

TITLE: Five Months Later

EXT. MONTGOMERY HIGH SCHOOL - DAY - BEFORE SCHOOL BEGINS

All of the students on campus are wearing hats and gathering in small groups consoling one another.

A MALE STUDENT with teary eyes speaking to a group of five other MALE STUDENTS.

MALE STUDENT #4

Did you guys go by yet?

MALE STUDENT #5

Not yet, we wanted to wait for you and go as a group.

MALE STUDENT #4

Good, I don't think I can go alone. Ok, let's do this, it's gonna be tough, but we owe it to him.

The boys walk down the hallway and turn the corner.

RUIZ (V.O.)

Good morning fellow Aztecs. It is with great sadness to share with all of you that our beloved teacher and coach, Mr. Bagster has passed away. Over the past twenty years Mr. Bagster earned several teacher of the year, coach of the year, and humanitarian of the year award honors. In order to allow all of our students and teachers to attend the funeral service, school is cancelled tomorrow. All details will be on our home page. Please let's all now take a moment of silence to honor Mr. Bagster.

(pause)

You will be missed, Mr. Bagster, Thank you.

Camera zooms out and shows hundreds of students in a line all the way to the parking lot. The students take a moment in front of the classroom, remove their hats and walk away.

ROLAND (Pre-Lap)

And for those curious, no, we weren't reconciled at the time of my father's passing. But because we loved and cared for one another, reconciliation was always just around the corner. But we never reached that next corner. I encourage all of you to take a look at your life and know that next corner may not come for you and your loved one that you need to reconcile with.

FADE TO:

INT. SKYVIEW CHURCH - DAY - FUNERAL

Roland is at the podium delivering eulogy. 2,000 in attendance, entire cast is present.

A single tear rolls down Roland's face. Roland gathers himself.

ROLAND

Some believe the Marine oorah comes from the battle cry of the Huns, others the Turkish, the Marine Corps adopted it shortly after the Korean War. It's generally used in three ways. The first being a greeting, or like an "amen", an agreement. The second is a loud battle cry, and third, is used to lay a fellow Marine to rest. I'm going to ask for your help today. On the count of three, each of you wish one another an oorah. I'll count to three again, and then as loud as we possibly can, we are going to shout OORAH as though we are going into battle, because once we leave here, there is always a battle waiting for us out there.

He points towards the door and pauses.

ROLAND (CONT'D)

And lastly, on my final count to three, we are going to quietly oorah to lay my father to rest. Are you ready? One two three.

FUNERAL CROWD

Oorah.

(crowd greets one another)

SMALL PORTION OF ATTENDEES REVEALED

ROLAND

ONE TWO THREE!

FUNERAL CROWD

(shouting)

OORAH!!!

LARGER PORTION OF ATTENDEES REVEALED

ROLAND

And finally, one, two, three...

FUNERAL CROWD

(whispering)

Oorah.

ENTIRE 2,0000 ATTENDEES REVEALED

ROLAND

Godspeed, Master Guns, Godspeed.

FADE TO BLACK.

The End.