

ERIC

"Air Ric"

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EXT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

MATT JAMES and his stepson, BILLY NELSON, are playing one-on-one basketball. They tough-talk back and forth. ERIC NELSON walks out near the garage. BONY, the family dog, and EDDIE, the family cat, walk with him.

ERIC

Matt, I told you that I would bring my algebra grade up to a "C". Here's my report card.

MATT

(continues to play ball)
Oh, that's good, son!

ERIC

And you said that we could all go out to dinner, my choice.

MATT

(stops playing)
Oh, okay. Start getting ready, then we'll clean up after this game.

BILLY

(shoots and makes a basket)
Which is almost over!

MATT

(to Billy)
Hey, no fair!

Matt and Billy continue to play.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - KITCHEN - SAME

Eric enters the kitchen and walks past RHONDA NELSON-JAMES, his mother.

RHONDA

Hey, Eric, what's going on?

ERIC

(places his report card on
the kitchen table)
The usual.

Eric exits. Rhonda looks at the report card and opens the kitchen door.

RHONDA
 (calls out to Matt)
 Hey, "Giannis", can you come here,
 please?

MATT
 (enters the kitchen, panting)
 What's up, babe?

RHONDA
 Eric looked a little upset.

MATT
 He's upset? I should be upset. He's happy
 that he got a "C"!

RHONDA
 That's a good thing! For him, anyway.

MATT
 Okay, but I told him that we would go out
 to eat.

RHONDA
 Just make sure that you take an interest
 in what Eric's doing, too, as well as
 Billy.

MATT
 Oh, come on, me and Billy always have the
 one-on-one competition when he comes to
 town.

RHONDA
 Honey, please.

MATT
 Alright, I hear you. But Eric needs to
 aim a little higher.

RHONDA
 Didn't you get "D's" in math?

MATT
 He doesn't need to know that.

RHONDA
 (smirks)
 And you barely graduated, right?

MATT
 (exits the kitchen)
 Hey, the teacher didn't like me because I
 was black!

RHONDA
But wasn't she Puerto Rican?

Matt grunts off-screen.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - ERIC'S BEDROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Eric sits on the edge of his bed. Billy gets dressed in the bathroom with the door open.

BILLY
I'm up 4 to 3 on Matt!

ERIC
You guys don't have to hoop every single time you come back from college.

BILLY
Aw, you're just mad 'cuz you can't hoop.

ERIC
I can too hoop!

BILLY
(exits the bathroom)
Yeah, right!

ERIC
Can't be too hard if you can do it!

BILLY
Don't kid yourself, Eric. Basketball ain't for everybody.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - SAME

Eddie dons a jumpsuit and a sweatband. He dribbles a basketball and shoots it towards the hoop. The ball goes on top of the garage. WHISKERS the mouse and his brother, FRISKERS, take the ball and switch it with a lit bomb decorated as a basketball. They toss the ball back to Eddie.

SFX: Flame on the bomb SPARKLING.

Eddie bounces the "ball" and prepares to shoot it. He notices the sparkling flame and opens his eyes wide.

SFX: The bomb EXPLODES!

Eddie is an ashy mess and trickles down to the ground. The mice roll on the ground laughing. Bony, the director, makes a call overhead.

BONY (O.S.)

Cut!

Bony and the mice run up to Eddie, who is still on the ground.

WHISKERS

Is he dead?

FRISKERS

How many lives does he have left?

BONY

Can't take that risk. Bring the other guy in.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

Another cat wears a jumpsuit and bounces a basketball. An ANNOUNCER begins to speak.

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

The part of Eddie the Cat will now be played by Marcus the Cat.

Whiskers and Friskers lightly unscrew the hoop from the garage. Marcus drives to the hoop and dunks the ball. The hoops comes down with him, and they both crash to the ground.

SFX: Glass SHATTERS!

BONY (O.S.)

Cut!

Bony and the mice run to Marcus, who is now a pile of debris.

BONY (CONT'D)

(calls out)

Bring Eddie back!

Eddie, bandaged up, walks with a cane and approaches them.

EDDIE

Oh, look who came crawling back.

BONY
Just get ready.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - MOMENTS LATER

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
The part of Eddie the Cat will once again
be played by Eddie the Cat.

Eddie dribbles the basketball near the hoop and prepares for a layup. Whiskers and Friskers both wear referee jerseys. Whiskers blows a whistle.

SFX: The whistle TWEETS!

Eddie trips over his feet, and crashes into the trash cans.

SFX: CRASH!

Eddie holds up a sign from the mess.

INSERT - THE SIGN, WHICH READS:

"Five years until retirement"

INT. SCHOOL - GYM - DAY

Eric and other male students play basketball. A kid passes the ball to Eric. He runs with the ball. COACH SUGGS, the gym teacher, yells.

COACH SUGGS
Stop! Nelson, you're traveling!

ERIC
Traveling where?

INT. SCHOOL - GYM - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

JACOB JACKSON, a white teen, dribbles the ball. Eric tries to steal the ball from him.

JACOB
Nelson, what the hell?! You're on my
team!

Other students laugh.

ERIC

Oh yeah. Well, shouldn't we wear different jerseys or something?

JACOB

Yeah, in the NBA!

COACH SUGGS

Nelson does have a point, class. Which leads me to say that tryouts for the basketball team is over there. Write your name down.

ERIC

Tryouts, eh?

Eric walks to the tryout listing.

COACH SUGGS

Well, I didn't necessarily mean you, but okay...

ERIC

(to Jacob in passing)

Keep your little game. I'm trying out for the team!

JACOB

(to another student)

Another stereotype debunked.

(calls out)

Bring the ball in!

A student off-screen throws the ball to Jacob, but it slips out of his hands and rolls to the opposite side of the gym, where female students play basketball. SHANA JONES, who stands at 5'10", sits on the bleachers with her legs crossed and files her nails. Two Gothic girls, KATHY and KEISHA, both 15, don all black and sit near her. The ball rolls to Shana.

JACOB (CONT'D)

(to Shana)

Hey, beanpole! Little help!

Shana takes the ball throws it to Jacob.

SHANA

(sotto voce)

Jerk.

Jacob instantly passes the ball to a male student, who lays the ball into the basket. The team cheers.

JACOB
 (to Shana)
 Nice pass!

SHANA
 Thanks, I guess!

CONNIE McDOWELL dribbles a basketball and prepares for a layup. Shana turns around and spots Connie. Shana raises her arms and blocks the ball that Connie still holds. Connie falls to the ground.

SHANA (CONT'D)
 (helping Connie up)
 Oh, sorry, Connie!

CONNIE
 Don't be! Hey, why don't you go post?

SHANA
 Post what?

CONNIE
 Stand near the basket and block. We need a center!

SHANA
 We have a center. You know, that rec center next to the church that used to be a Church's.

CONNIE
 Stand right there.

Connie directs Shana to the basket.

CONNIE (CONT'D)
 Now hold your hands up.

A girl pulls up for a jumper. She shoots, but Shana blocks the ball. The girls cheer. COACH MALDONADO, the female gym teacher, approaches Shana.

COACH MALDONADO
 Oh my god! Jones, how would you like to try out for the girls' team?

SHANA
 What? No, I don't do sports.

CONNIE
 (to Shana)
 Well, it's gotta be better than hanging out with those losers.

Connie points to the Gothic girls.

KATHY
 (to Keisha)
 Is she talking about us?

KEISHA
 Who cares?

KATHY
 Not me. Whatever.

KEISHA
 Whatever what?

SHANA
 No way, I could get hurt out here!

COACH MALDONADO
 Don't worry. As long as you keep blocking
 like that, you won't have to lift a
 finger!

SHANA
 Well, not lifting a finger is what I do
 best! Let's do it!

Everyone around her clamors excitedly.

EXT. NELSON HOUSE - GARAGE - DAY

Eric dribbles a basketball. Billy stands to the side.

BILLY
 Basketball team? The ball's bigger than
 you! How you gonna join a team?

ERIC
 Oh yeah? Watch this!

Eric takes the ball and runs up to the basketball hoop.
 He jumps in the air attempting to dunk. He is nowhere
 near the hoop, and he crashes onto the ground.

SFX: PLOP!

BILLY
 If you're done goofing off, me and Matt
 got a game to play.

Billy walks away.

ERIC
 (getting up)
 Hmmph. I'll show him. Ow. But first, I
 need to get in shape!

INT. INDOOR KITCHEN - MORNING

SFX: Background "Rocky"-esque MUSIC.

A glass sits on the counter. A hand cracks two eggs and puts the eggs in the glass. The hand lifts up the glass and pours it onto a skillet on the stove.

SFX: Music SUBSIDES.

Camera tilts up to reveal the hand is Billy's. He cooks the eggs. He turns his head and looks to the camera, appearing to break the fourth wall.

BILLY
 Want some breakfast?

Camera zooms out to reveal that he is naked with his backside facing his roommate, RON TYSON, who stands by the open front door.

RON
 (looks disgusted)
 I don't want anything ever again for as long as I live.

BILLY
 All of my clothes are in the wash.

RON
 Please, you just wanted a chance to walk around naked.

Billy pauses.

BILLY
 Yeah, I really did.

INT. SCHOOL - GYM - EVENING

The gym is filled with spectators watching a basketball game. Coach Suggs talks to his team.

COACH SUGGS
 Alright, now does everyone remember their assignments?

ERIC

Not me, Coach. What do I do?

COACH SUGGS

(pointing away)

For the moment, you wait on the bench.

Eric looks at the bench with the other basketball players. The bench stretches miles long. Eric walks to the end of it and sits next to ARNOLD ALLEN.

ERIC

Hey. What you in here for?

ARNOLD

Screwed up on a play. You?

ERIC

Not cuttin' it, I guess.

(turns to another teammate)

How long you been here?

MALE PLAYER #1

A few weeks. I actually lost track.

ARNOLD

Well, I learned to make the most of it.

He pulls out an iron and walks over to an ironing board with some clothes on it.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

Anybody else need their stuff ironed?

ERIC

No, my uniform is neat and tidy as it is.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - EVENING

Matt and Rhonda sit and watch TV.

ON THE TV

The HOST of "Amateur Evening" interviews a MAN who wears a sweater vest and khakis.

HOST

So what are you gonna sing for us?

MAN

A composition I wrote.

HOST
All right. Fellas, show your love!

SFX: SCATTERED APPLAUSE.

The man walks over to the microphone.

SFX: BACKGROUND BALLAD MUSIC.

MAN
(singing)
I...

SFX: Audience BOOS LOUDLY. Fire alarm RINGS.

BACK TO LIVING ROOM

RHONDA
Maybe it was his delivery.

Matt turns off the TV with the remote. Eric comes downstairs.

ERIC
Got another "A", guys!

He hands a sheet of paper to them.

MATT
Eric, you've been doing great in your classes lately!

RHONDA
Yeah, what's your secret?

INT. SCHOOL - GYM

Eric and other players sit on the bench with open books. They pay attention to Arnold, who stands in front of a blackboard with notes on it.

ARNOLD
Okay, team, did everybody read that chapter last night?

PLAYERS
Yeah.

MALE PLAYER #1
But do you think it'll be on the test tomorrow?

ARNOLD

It could be.

ERIC

Man, this sucks! We're over here warming the bench, when we should be out there playing!

ARNOLD

(walking up to Eric)

Well, none of us can play right now until the girls' game is over.

The girls' basketball team plays a game on the court.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)

I mean, what do these girls know about basketball?

A female player passes the ball to Shana, who quickly passes it to Connie for a layup.

SFX: The crowd CHEERS. The referee BLOWS a whistle.

JUNIOR, Eric and Billy's biological father, announces the game.

JUNIOR

The Lady Senators call time out with the Lady Warriors leading 48 to 47.

CONNIE

(to Shana as they huddle with the team)

See, Shana, nothin' to it, just block and pass.

SHANA

Okay!

JUNIOR

And once again, this is Willie Jr. providing you with the entertainment and the scores, since I was the only one who would do it for free. Ain't public school great?

The audience is silent.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

I'm on the guitar, and with me is Dr. Syd on the drums...

DR. SYD the mole plays a drum solo on a miniature drum set.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)

...and on the ones and twos is DJ Fresh
D!

OLIVER the duck, as his alias, DJ Fresh D, dons a black doorag, black shades, and a black leather jacket. He wears headphones and cuts a scratch on the turntables.

OLIVER

(who speaks telepathically)
The "D" stands for "duck"!

Dr. Syd SQUEAKS at Oliver.

OLIVER (CONT'D)

(to Dr. Syd)
Everyone does too care!

INT. SCHOOL - GYM - MOMENTS LATER

A female player passes the ball to Shana, who is right next to the hoop. She freezes up.

CROWD

Shoot! Shoot!

SHANA

Uh, okay.

She tosses the ball to the hoop, and the ball goes in.

SFX: Buzzer SOUNDS. Crowd CHEERS.

JUNIOR

And that's game! Your Lady Warriors win!

The team gathers around Shana and jumps with excitement. Shana cheers along with them. They try to lift her body up but struggle.

CONNIE

Little help?

More people come around and help lift Shana. Everyone continues to cheer.

ERIC

Wow.

ARNOLD

She's good!

Another MALE PLAYER interjects. He stands in front of a small table with cooking utensils.

MALE PLAYER #2

Hey, do you mind? I'm trying to make my cake.

ARNOLD

Oh, sorry.

MALE PLAYER #2

And Chaz is trying to sleep.

CHAZ TREPUR, wears a basketball uniform and is stretched out on the bleacher.

SFX: Chaz SNORES.

INT. SCHOOL - GYM - DAY

Eric dribbles a ball in the empty gym. He shoots the ball but misses the basket. Shana arrives.

SHANA

Hey, Babycakes, what you doin'?

ERIC

Quit calling me "Babycakes", and what does it look like I'm doing?

SHANA

(chuckles)

Missing badly.

ERIC

Oh, what do you know? You just started learning yourself.

SHANA

Here, let me help you.

ERIC

Great, the blind leading the blind.

SHANA

We'll help each other. I practice guarding you, and you practice...everything else.

Eric pauses to think.

ERIC
 (sighs)
 What do I have to lose?

SHANA
 Alright, teammate!

She SMACKS Eric on the behind.

ERIC
 Hey!

SHANA
 We have to get down to every aspect of
 the game.

ERIC
 Well, leave my aspect out of this, and
 let's practice already!

MONTAGE - ERIC AND SHANA PRACTICE

-- Eric drives to the basket. Shana lifts her hands and
 knocks the ball away.

-- Eric tries to drive to the basket again. Shana blocks
 him and sends him to the ground.

SHANA
 (helps him up)
 Oh, sorry, Babycakes, are you okay?

ERIC
 I'll be fine.

SHANA
 Any more blows to your body, and you
 won't be able to help produce our
 children!

BERNIECE WILLIAMS enters the gym.

BERNIECE
 (calling out)
 Eric, can I talk to you?

ERIC
 (to Shana)
 Time out.

He walks over to Berniece.

BERNIECE

You better not be on team trying to impress me, because it ain't gonna work!

ERIC

I'm not.

BERNIECE

(pauses first)

Are you sure?

ERIC

Yeah.

BERNIECE

Well, uh, good, because most of these guys just join the team to pick up girls.

ERIC

I'm not. I'm doing this for me.

BERNIECE

Alright then. As long as you're sure.

SHANA

(calling out)

Times's up!

ERIC

I gotta go.

Eric jogs over to Shana.

SHANA

Let's finish up.

Shana SMACKS Eric on the butt. Berniece watches.

BERNIECE

(calls out angrily)

Hey! Focus!

Berniece marches out of the gym as TIMMY ROBERTS, 40's, enters.

TIMMY

Hey, kids!

ERIC

Timmy, what are you doing here?

TIMMY

I'm recruiting some kids for my basketball team. The annual tournament is coming up.

ERIC

I didn't know you had a team.

TIMMY

Two of them, a boys' one and a girls'.
(to Shana)
And I've been especially watching you. We really need you!

SHANA

Me?

TIMMY

Yeah, with your prowess, I can finally beat the Burger Town Wildcats! The owner stole my girlfriend back in school!

Eric and Shana look at him.

TIMMY (CONT'D)

...but it's a team sport, of course.

Arnold comes barging in.

ARNOLD

Hold it! You have to run it past her agent first, which is me!

THE OTHERS

"Agent"?

ARNOLD

Slash bodyguard, slash manager! Here's my card.

He passes cards to each of them.

ERIC

Arnold, what are you up to?

ARNOLD

Shana's a rising star, and she's gonna need someone to protect her! I know all about people chasing after me!

ERIC

And I believe that.

ARNOLD

Well, also believe this! Shana's star power won't last forever, so it's time to cash in!

ERIC

Idiot, she doesn't get paid!

ARNOLD

No, but she's loaded!

SHANA

Yeah, I really am.

TIMMY

Shana, what do you say?

SHANA

Well, okay, I'll do it as long as you sign Eric up, too!

ERIC

What? Shana, I don't know.

SHANA

Come on, this is your chance to get off the bench and really show your stuff!
(amorously)
Your real sexy stuff!

ERIC

But I'm kinda getting used to being a benchwarmer. We're having Movie Night during the next game.

TIMMY

Well, Eric, there'll be no benchwarmers during the tournament. Everyone gets a chance to play.

ERIC

Is that a good thing or a bad thing?

ARNOLD

(to Eric)

Hey, I was just about to say that! Quit stealing my lines!

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Shana walks down the hallway. A GIRL approaches her.

GIRL
Hey, Shana, can I have your autograph?

SHANA
Wait, don't you sit next to me in
History?

GIRL
Yeah, and it's so cool!

Shana signs a napkin and gives it to her.

SHANA
Fine, here.

GIRL
Oh, thank you!

SFX: The girl SNEEZES.

She uses the napkin for her nose.

GIRL (CONT'D)
Oh, dang it!

Shana walks away. A mob of students run up to her and
clamor excitedly.

SHANA
Hey, hey! Can't I just go to class?

Arnold runs and blocks Shana.

ARNOLD
(to the crowd)
Hey, back up! Give her space!

The crowd leaves.

ARNOLD (CONT'D)
(to Shana)
You're welcome.

SHANA
This is nuts! I can't even tell who's
being sincere anymore!

Eric walks up to them.

ERIC
Don't worry, Shana. I still don't like
you.

SHANA
Aw, thanks, Babycakes!

ARNOLD
And I'm only here because you're paying me.

SHANA
Shut up, Arnold.

INT. DUMBECK MANSION - EVENING

Shana sits at a table and eats dinner with her father, JOHN DUMBECK, and her little half-sister, ELEANOR DUMBECK. Their butler, JENTILLE, serves them their meal.

JOHN
Thank you, Jentille.

Jentille walks away.

ELEANOR
(to Shana)
So, you're ready for the tournament tomorrow?

SHANA
Yeah, I'll be fine.

ELEANOR
How does it feel being a big basketball celebrity?

SHANA
About as fun as going to the dentist.

ELEANOR
(smiling, with eyes open wide)
Really?

JOHN
(calling out)
Jentille, there's no mustard on my sandwich!

JENTILLE
(walking to John)
I know, Mr. Dumbeck. We seem to have run out.

ARNOLD
 (popping out of nowhere)
 That's because I used the last of it for
 Shana's hot dog at lunch. Gotta make sure
 our star is happy for the big game
 tomorrow!

SFX: Doorbell CHIMES.

JENTILLE
 (exiting)
 Excuse me.

JOHN
 (to Arnold)
 And who are you?

ARNOLD
 Arnold Joseph Allen, sir.

JENTILLE
 Ms. Jones, there is a mob of people just
 dying to see you.

SHANA
 (sighs)
 Arnold?

ARNOLD
 I'm on it!

He walks away.

ARNOLD (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Hey, get outta here! She's trying to have
 a peaceful dinner!

JOHN
 Shana, why is he here?

ELEANOR
 (giggling)
 Dad, you hired him, remember? Jentille's
 our butler!
 (to Shana, sotto voce)
 And you guys call me stupid.

SHANA
 (sotto voce)
 No, the rest of Milwaukee, too.

JOHN
 I'm talking about Arnold!

SHANA

Don't worry, Dad, he won't be here long.

JENTILLE

Sir, I'll go to the store and get you some more condiments.

ARNOLD (O.S.)

(to crowd)

Hey, get away from that garage!

JENTILLE

On second thought, I'll get the condiments tomorrow.

Jentille walks away.

ELEANOR

(walking towards John)

Condiments, Dad? What, you got a hot date tonight? Eh?

She repeatedly nudges John and winks at him. John looks at Shana in disbelief.

SHANA

Thank God we're only half-related.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Eric and Billy sit on the couch and watch TV. Matt enters the house.

MATT

Eric, I was just at Timmy's. He told me that you're gonna play in the tournament tomorrow?

ERIC

Uh, well...

RHONDA

(entering from the kitchen)

Really? How come you didn't say anything?

ERIC

Well, I...

BILLY

Oh, guys, he's just being modest.

ERIC

Yeah!

(to Billy, sotto voce)

What's "modest"?

BILLY

I'm sure he would want all of us to be there!

ERIC

Well, it's during the day. I'm sure both of you are busy. Mom, you at work, Matt, whatever it is you do.

RHONDA

I can take off.

MATT

Yeah, me too.

BILLY

And I don't have class tomorrow. Hey, I should call Sharon and bring her down! Hell, why don't we invite everybody to see ol' Eric's debut?

MATT

Sounds cool to me!

RHONDA

Yeah! Now go get washed up for dinner, boys.

Eric and Billy get up and walk upstairs.

ERIC

(to Billy)

Why are you doing this to me?

BILLY

(with an evil grin)

I'm your big brother. It's my job.

RHONDA

That was pretty nice of Billy to do that for him.

MATT

Well, he's his big brother. It's his job.

Rhonda and Matt head to the kitchen.

EXT. OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

The stands are filled with spectators. Junior, Oliver (as DJ Fresh D), and Dr. Syd perform near the announcer's desk.

JUNIOR
 (singing while strumming his
 guitar)
 Gimme some of that funky business/And
 don't you say no/Gimme some of that funky
 business/Cuz I said so-o-o-o-o!

SFX: Oliver SCRATCHES on one side of the turntable.
 Background music BLASTS from the other side. Dr. Syd
 PLAYS a rim shot on the drums.

The audience weakly applauds.

JUNIOR (CONT'D)
 Thank you! And welcome to the annual
 tournament! But first, let me give a
 shout-out to my lovely Nelson family over
 there!

Junior points to Matt, Rhonda, and Billy. The crowd turns
 to look at them. The family looks around.

RHONDA
 Where's the Nelson family at?

On the sidelines is a female REPORTER and a cameraman.

REPORTER
 I'm here at the tournament, and Milwaukee
 is really feelin' it today! Everybody is
 getting in the basketball spirit!

EXT. APARTMENT BUILDING ROOF - SAME

FRANKFURT the pig and WINSTON the snake look over the
 ledge of the roof. Frankfurt holds a basketball.

WINSTON
 Okay, off the coffee shop, off the water
 tower, then the school, nothing but net.

FRANKFURT
 Right.

Frankfurt gives Winston the ball. Winston wraps his tail
 around the ball and tosses it off the roof.

SFX: Cars CRASH off-screen.

Frankfurt and Winston look at each other and sneak away from the scene.

EXT. OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT - DAY - LATER

Shana and her team play against another team on the court. Arnold, dressed in a jumpsuit, and wearing sunglasses, stands on the sidelines next to Connie.

ARNOLD

If Shana's team wins, we're gonna be rich!

CONNIE

What?

ARNOLD

Okay, I'm gonna be rich.

CONNIE

(cutting her eyes)

Yeah, that's much better.

A player passes the ball to Shana. Before Shana passes the ball, the OPPOSING PLAYER lightly bumps into her. Shana falls to the ground.

SHANA

OW!!!

SFX: The REFEREE BLOWS the whistle.

Timmy and the team run to Shana's side.

SHANA (CONT'D)

I got fouled!

OPPOSING PLAYER

What? I barely touched her!

REFEREE

So you admit you touched her! Jones goes to the line!

SHANA

(grimacing)

But I can't even get up!

TIMMY

(to Shana)

I'm gonna have to sub you, then!

ARNOLD

Shana, this may not be a good time, but I don't think I'm cut out to be your agent-slash-everything. It's affecting my schoolwork.

SHANA

Oh, is that right?

ARNOLD

Hey, if I'm lying, may God strike me.

A basketball falls from the sky and lands in Arnold's path.

SFX: Ball BOUNCES.

Arnold SHRIEKS, then looks around.

WINSTON (O.S.)

Okay, best two out of three.

EXT. OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT - DAY - LATER

Timmy's basketball team plays against another male team.

SFX: The referee BLOWS the whistle.

JUNIOR

(announcing)

Time out on the floor with 10 seconds left, tied at 55!

TIMMY

Huddle up, team! Nelson, you too!

ERIC

Huh?

Eric runs to the huddle.

TIMMY

Nelson, you guard number 10.

ERIC

Right!

EXT. OUTDOOR BASKETBALL COURT - DAY - MOMENTS LATER

Eric is out on the floor with his team. Arnold and Connie are on the sidelines with Shana, who stands with crutches.

SHANA
 (calling out to Eric)
 You the man, Babycakes!

ARNOLD
 (rolling his eyes)
 Yeah, right!

CONNIE
 (to Arnold)
 Oh, you're one to talk!

ARNOLD
 Hey, I know I can't play. He thinks he
 can play!

Eric's man dribbles the ball and tries to pass it. Eric steals it.

SFX: The crowd CHEERS.

JUNIOR
 Five seconds left!

Eric dribbles, then shoots. The ball flies in SLOW MOTION. The crowd looks on. The ball goes through the hoop.

SFX: Buzzer SOUNDS.

Eric lifts his arms victoriously.

SFX: SILENCE from the audience.

Eric's TEAMMATE runs up to him.

TEAMMATE
 You fool, that's the other team's basket!

Eric puts his arms down, then pauses.

ERIC
 Well, thank God I didn't beat the buzzer!
 The refs are gonna review that, right?

The referees leave the court. The crowd begins to murmur and exit, as do the basketball teams.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 Dang. Well, maybe my family will help me
 feel better.

Eric starts to walk and look around. Junior talks to a SEXY LADY.

SEXY LADY

Is that Eric Nelson boy related to you?
Ya'll have the same last name.

Junior sees Eric walking.

JUNIOR

(to the lady)

Uh, hey! What did you say about needing a
sugar daddy?

Junior and the lady walk away. Shana sits on the bench.
Eric approaches her.

SHANA

Aw, I'm sorry that happened to you,
Babycakes.

ERIC

I'll be alright, I guess. Let's get outta
here. Oh, and leave your crutches here.
Coach will get them.

SHANA

Okay.

Shana gets up and begins to walk with Eric. Eric stops
and looks at her legs. Shana pauses.

SHANA (CONT'D)

(chuckling nervously)

Especially since I'm healed, right?

She weakly lifts her hands in excitement.

SHANA (CONT'D)

Woo-hoo!

Eric stares at Shana and gives a little smirk.

SHANA (CONT'D)

(sighs)

How did you know?

ERIC

No sense in both of us looking silly,
right?

They both exit the court.

INT. NELSON HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - LATER

Eric sulks in the couch. Matt enters the room and sits next to him.

MATT

Hey, son, cheer up. You know, your team should have never been in that position. You're not the reason your team lost.

ERIC

Actually, the team said that I was exactly the reason why we lost.

MATT

Well, it's not how you win or lose, it's how you play the game.

ERIC

And I played crappy.

MATT

Okay, well, it's just a game.

ERIC

But Timmy said that if we lose one more game, we're eliminated.

Matt pauses.

MATT

Well, damn.

Matt grabs the remote and turns on the TV.

MATT (CONT'D)

If you don't mind, I wanna catch the rest of the Bears game.

ERIC

You mean the Packers game.

MATT

Oh, whatever!

ERIC

I never see you watch the Bears games!

MATT

That's because I'm usually watching them at Timmy's, but his bar is closed. Or his liquor license expired, or something.

ERIC
 (looking at the TV)
 Alright, great field position for us!

MATT
 (looking at the TV)
 Come on, Bear down!

SFX: CRASH on the TV.

ERIC
 Hey, where's the flag?

MATT
 Oh, stop it, that was legal! And you're
 in field goal range now!

ERIC
 Five dollars says we hit the field goal?

MATT
 You're on!

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)
 And the kick is good! Packers win!

ERIC
 (jumping up happily)
 Yeah!

MATT
 Alright, son, here.

Matt gives Eric the money.

MATT (CONT'D)
 We should do this again.

ERIC
 But we don't play you guys anymore.

MATT
 Well, I like watching football, no matter
 who's playing.

ERIC
 Yeah, me too. Deal.

Eric leaves the room and walks past Rhonda entering.

ERIC (CONT'D)
 Hey, Mom!

RHONDA

What's all the excitement?

MATT

Just watching the football game. Your Packers won.

RHONDA

Didn't we already beat you guys two hours ago?

MATT

Shhh!

RHONDA

(smiling)

Honey, you're something else.

She kisses Matt on the cheek.

MATT

Thanks, now loan me five dollars.

They both giggle.

INT. TIMMY'S PLACE - DAY

Eric sits at a table drinking a soda. Timmy walks up to his table holding a tray with some dishes.

TIMMY

Eric, the big game is today. Now, whatever you decide is up to you. I support you.

ERIC

Nah, Timmy, I won't be there. Basketball's not really for me.

TIMMY

(exhales)

Oh, thank God, 'cuz you really suck!

Timmy leaves as Billy walks up to Eric's table.

BILLY

Hmmph. He's not exactly Phil Jackson.

ERIC

And what do you want?

BILLY
 (sitting down)
 Nothing much.

They both sit in silence.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 You know, Eric, you did hit the game-winning shot.

ERIC
 Are you kidding me?!

BILLY
 Yeah, great form, follow-through, and everything.

Eric looks at him angrily.

BILLY (CONT'D)
 Hey, that's as close as a compliment you're gonna get from me.

ERIC
 (getting up)
 Whatever, man.

BILLY
 Where you goin'?

ERIC
 (walking away)
 With Matt to watch a game.

BILLY
 (catching up with him)
 Ooh, can I come?

ERIC
 No.

BILLY
 Well, I'll tag along anyway. What's family for?

They both head for the exit. Junior and the sexy lady enter and walk past them.

JUNIOR
 You're gonna love being my wife, honey!

SEXY LADY
 As long as you don't have any kids. I don't do kids.

Junior pauses.

JUNIOR

Well, then, this is your lucky day!

Eric and Billy look back at Junior and frown.

THE END