

Forgetting the Fight

By

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FROM THE BLACK WE HEAR--

The sound of a loud thud. Again. Again. Again.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
He's really pouring it on  
now! He's looking for the finish!

FADE IN:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT

FIGHTER #2 is backing up with his hands covering his head. His back bounces off the Octagon fencing. FIGHTER #1 closes the distance quickly and starts to unleash a flurry of combinations.

Fighter #2 can't get off the fence. He's trying to cover up but he is getting teed off on.

The REFEREE is watching the action closely. He can sense the end of the fight is near and looks like he is about to step in to stop it.

Fighter #1 continues the assault while the crowd is getting worked up in a frenzy. They smell blood.

Fighter #2 throws a defensive jab and leaves himself open. Fighter #1 sees the opening and throws a vicious right hook. He catches Fighter #2 right on the button who is knocked out cold.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Oh my god! What a amazing  
knockout. Listen to this crowd.

The crowd's electrified.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

SILENCE.

BRANDON CRAMER, LATE 20'S, handsome in a rugged sort of way, sits on a chair in the back corner of the locker room alone. He is moments away from fighting for the Mixed Martial Arts Heavyweight World Title.

His sweatshirt hood is pulled up and his head is down. You can't see his face.

(CONTINUED)

Across the room, there is a TV mounted on the wall showing a replay of Fighter #2 being knocked out in slow motion over and over again. The sound is muted.

The floors of the locker room are lined with thin, cheap carpeting and are covered with small wrestling mats. There are empty chairs against one wall and a table with athletic tape, MMA gloves and other assorted fight gear against another.

COACH TOM BOLAND, late 30's, a skinny man that looks more like a college professor than MMA trainer, opens the door to the room and sticks his head in.

TOM

Brandon.

Brandon doesn't look up or even acknowledge Tom.

TOM

It's time.

Tom closes the door and Brandon is left alone again. Moments pass and Brandon still doesn't move.

Brandon's breathing starts to get heavy but in rhythm. His breathing starts to get heavier and the pace gets faster.

Suddenly, Brandon lets out a primal scream. He raises his head up. His face is glistening with sweat.

He stands up and walks quickly towards the locker room door with bad intentions. This man is a human weapon.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - BACKSTAGE HALLWAY - NIGHT

Coach Boland and TWO TEAMMATES of Brandon's wait outside the locker room door. TEAMMATE #1 is holding a rolled up banner while TEAMMATE #2 holds a bucket filled with bottled water, ice packets and other equipment. They are all nervous and don't speak.

Standing nearby is a TV PRODUCTION CREW waiting. The CAMERAMAN and BOOM MIC OPERATOR talk quietly to each other. A PRODUCTION COORDINATOR wearing a headset stands next to them looking down at his clipboard then at his watch.

The locker room door suddenly swings open and Brandon emerges. There is an intense energy radiating from him.

(CONTINUED)

Tom looks Brandon in the eye and turns to the Production Coordinator.

TOM  
He's ready.

The Production Coordinator presses a button on the headset box attached to his pants.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
(into the headset)  
We're ready to go here.

The Cameraman puts his camera on his shoulder and starts to film Brandon. The Boom Mic Operator is right behind him.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
Let's go.

The whole entourage starts making its way through the backstage area of the arena. Tom and the two teammates file in behind Brandon while the Cameraman and Boom Mic Operator walk backwards in front of Brandon filming the procession.

A few people line the arena's backstage hallway. Some watch silently as the TV Production Crew and Brandon walk pass while others shout words of encouragement.

The entourage finally reach the backstage entrance to the arena. A FEW FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEES are standing near by.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
Hold here.

Brandon stops and waits with his head down. He bounces a few times and shakes his arms out.

As he is waiting, Fighter #2 walks through the backstage entrance to the arena right pass Brandon. Fighter #2 is bleeding from the bridge of his nose and his left eye is swollen shut. Neither Brandon nor Fighter #2 acknowledge each other. They don't even make eye contact. This is out of respect.

FIGHTER #2 (O.S.)  
(Yelling)  
FUCK!

In the background, you can heard the sounds of chairs being tossed. Nobody in the entourage turns to see what is happening. They all know.

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
(holding his earpiece)  
Yes, sir--  
(to Brandon)  
Ten seconds.

FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEE #1  
Alright Brandon! This is what we  
do! This is what we live for! Go  
out there, son, and put on a  
show! No regrets!

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR  
(Holding his earpiece)  
Cuing Brandon.  
(to Brandon)  
Good luck. GO! GO! GO!

Brandon's entrance music, "For Those About to Rock (We Salute You)" by AC/DC starts to blast through the arena.

Brandon takes on last deep breathe and walks into the arena. He's not nervous at all, but completely calm and confident. Brandon knows that tonight is going to be special.

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BRANDON'S BEDROOM - DAY: 10 YEARS LATER

On a table next to the bed sits an iPhone next to a framed picture of Brandon with his arms around his wife, BETHANY. They look like young newlyweds.

On the iPhone screen is a clock reading 5:59am. The time changes to 6:00am and an alarm on the phone goes off.

A hand reaches over and switches it off. The hand belongs to Brandon.

He sits up and swings his feet over the side of the bed to put his feet on the floor. As the camera pans up, a large scar can be seen running vertically down Brandon's left knee.

As the camera keeps panning, we see the rest of Brandon's body. He is still very muscular but has the start of a beer belly. Brandon's bottom lip looks a little swollen, his nose is slightly crooked and both his ears are completely cauliflowered.

As Brandon rubs his face, we see his knuckles. One looks like it is missing while the others are enlarged from calcium deposits.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon starts to rub his hands as he looks around his bedroom trying to wake up. He almost looks like he doesn't know where he is.

The bedroom is small. There is barely any natural light except for a small window on one of the walls. The only furniture in the room is the bed and the end table next to it.

On one of the walls is a bunch of fight memorabilia. There are MMA gloves, shorts, framed pictures and championship belts from regional fight promotions.

In one picture frame sits a *Sports Illustrated* cover with Brandon on it, standing over a knocked out opponent, arms raised triumphantly with the headline reading "Believe the Hype: Cramer Set to Take On the Champ". In another picture frame is the front page of the *USA Today* with the heading "Rios vs. Cramer: Fight of the Century" with Brandon face to face with RONALDO RIOS.

Brandon picks up the picture of him and his wife. He looks at it, only for a moment then places it back on the table.

He grabs his iPhone and slowly starts to stand up. The years of fighting has taken its toll on his body and he looks like an old man trying to get up from a chair.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - DAVID AND GINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Inside the bedroom that is twice the size of Brandon's sits two beds.

In one bed, DAVID CRAMER, 11, who looks exactly like Brandon except without the scars, is sitting up in his bed playing on his PlayStation Portable. On the wall above is bed are posters of Lionel Messi, Cristiano Ronaldo and Clint Dempsey. David's comforter has the logos of all the Major League Soccer teams on it.

On the opposite side of the room, GINA CRAMER, 17, athletic and pretty, is asleep in her bed with her back to David. Hung above Gina are pairs of worn ballet slippers and a movie poster of "The Black Swan".

Brandon pops his head into the bedroom.

BRANDON

Gina, time to get up.

Gina doesn't move

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Gina.  
(beat)  
Gina.  
(beat)  
GINA!

Gina still doesn't move.

BRANDON

Davey, little help buddy.

David flashes a smile and stands up on the bed. He bounces twice and jumps across the room landing directly on Gina who screams.

Brandon smirks.

BRANDON

We leave in forty five minutes.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S KITCHEN/LIVING ROOM - DAY

The kitchen isn't so much a kitchen as it is an open closet without a door. The kitchen connects directly to the living room which makes both rooms appear like one big one.

In the kitchen, there is barely enough room for a refrigerator, an oven with a stove top, a few cabinets and a sink with a small counter top next to it.

There are dirty dishes laying in the sink and clean ones drying on a rack on the counter next it.

Next to the drying rack sits a cheap coffee maker brewing a fresh pot. The clock on the coffee maker blinks 12:00.

Brandon puts a bowl of cereal down on the counter then removes the coffee pot and slides a mug under the freshly brewed coffee that is dripping. While the mug fills, Brandon checks his iPhone.

#### **BRANDON'S IPHONE SCREEN**

Brandon pulls up a calendar app and looks at his schedule for the day:

8:00am - Drop kids off a school

9:00am - Open gym

(CONTINUED)

9:30am - Teach class

11:00am - Go to Chad's office

12:30pm - Appointment at Dr. Faller's office

2:30pm - Pick kids up from school

3:00pm - Drop Gina off at home, bring David to practice

3:30pm - Reminder: Caron bringing Gina to dance

5:30pm - Pick Gina up at dance

CUT BACK TO:

David walks into the kitchen still playing his PSP. He grabs the bowl of cereal off the counter and notices Brandon's coffee mug overflowing.

DAVID  
Coffee, Dad.

Brandon turns and notices coffee spilling everywhere. He grabs some paper towels hanging over the sink, moves the mug and starts to clean up the spill.

BRANDON  
Shit.

DAVID  
(Sitting down at the small  
table in the living room)  
Ass.

BRANDON  
David, buddy. What did I tell  
about swearing?

DAVID  
Don't swear except for when you  
do.

BRANDON  
Yes.  
(pause)  
Well.  
(pause)  
You got me there.  
(beat)  
Are you winning?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

You betcha. No one can beat me and Messi.

Gina walks into the kitchen half awake wearing skinny jeans and a low cut shirt showing a lot of cleavage. Brandon is still cleaning up the coffee spill and doesn't notice her.

She grabs the overflowing cup of coffee of the counter, takes a sip and sits down at the table next to David.

Brandon goes to reach for the cup of coffee on the counter and realizes it isn't there. He turns around.

BRANDON

Morning sunshine.

Gina grunts in response.

BRANDON

Do you want me to make you a bowl of cereal or a pop tart? You need something besides coffee.

GINA

I'll get a banana or something at school.

BRANDON

You sure. A bowl of cereal takes only a minute to make.

GINA

(annoyed)  
I'm fine.

DAVID

Gooooaaaalllll, Liiioonneelll  
Meeesssssiiii.  
(Holds the PSP up to Gina's face)  
Wanna to see the replay?

GINA

(annoyed)  
Get that out of my face you little geek.  
(she pushes the PSP away)  
So annoying. Dad, do you really have to have Davey jump on me in the morning?

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Not if you get up when I ask. If not, then I will restore to using the flying alarm clock.

DAVID

That's me.

GINA

Whatever. I gotta get my stuff ready for school anyways.

Gina gets up from the table. Brandon finally notices what Gina's wearing.

BRANDON

Wait a second. You are not seriously going to school like that. I might as well give you a ring card and have you parade around the apartment.

GINA

I have nothing else to wear.

BRANDON

Seriously?!?! You more clothes than Davey and I combined.

DAVID

Yeah!

GINA

I do Dad, but all of them are dirty. You haven't done laundry yet and this is all I have left.

BRANDON

Shit.

DAVID

Damn.

BRANDON

Sorry. I'll do laundry tonight when I get home.

(Brandon starts typing on his iPhone)

There. I just set myself a reminder.

Gina rolls her eyes and walks away.

BRANDON

Grab a sweatshirt out of my closet.  
You are not leaving the house like  
that.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

A beat up Cadillac Escalade drives down the street. One of the SUV's side mirrors is held on by duct tape, the rear driver's side door has a bowling ball sized dent in it and there are scratches all over the bumpers and quarter panels.

Inside the SUV, Brandon drives, David sits in the front passenger seat still playing his PSP while Gina sits in the back wearing an over sized sweatshirt and headphones playing loud music.

The interior of the SUV is no better than the outside. There is trash all over the floor and the seats are so worn down that there are holes where the seat cushion is popping through.

An old school Garmin GPS unit sits on the dash calling out directions.

Brandon checks his iPhone again.

BRANDON

Davey, you have soccer practice  
right after school so I am going to  
bring your gear so we can do  
directly there when you get out.

DAVID

Don't forget my Messi jersey.

Brandon pulls up in front of the school. He pulls out his iPhone and starts typing.

BRANDON

I won't. Gina, I am going to drop  
you off at the apartment on the way  
to Davey's soccer practice and  
Caron's going to bring you and  
Lauren to dance. I will pick you  
girls up after Davey's practice,  
okay?

Gina doesn't respond. Brandon turns around.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON  
Gina, did you hear what I said?

Gina takes off her headphones

GINA  
(sarcastically)  
Yes, Dad. You told me all of this  
last night.

BRANDON  
I just wanted to make sure you  
didn't forget.

GINA  
I won't, but are you sure you  
won't?

Gina grabs her backpack and gets out of the SUV.

BRANDON  
(under his breathe)  
What the fuck's her problem?

DAVID  
Shit.

Brandon laughs. He kisses David on the head.

BRANDON  
Love you, buddy. Have a great day  
at school.

DAVID  
Love you too.

David grabs his backpack and starts to get out of the SUV.

BRANDON  
Hold it. Where's the PSP?

David reaches into his backpack, pulls out the PSP and gives  
it to Brandon.

BRANDON  
Nice try. I appreciate the effort.

David smiles at Brandon then closes the door. Brandon  
watches him walk into the school with the rest of the  
students.

Brandon pulls away once David is greeted by a TEACHER.

EXT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

Brandon pulls into a nondescript strip mall. The parking lot is empty except for two other cars.

Wedged between a local pizza shop and beauty saloon is a store front with big windows. Outside of the letters "HKG" on the glass door, there are no other markings identifying that there is a mixed martial arts gym inside.

Brandon grabs a gym bag out of the boot of the SUV and heads towards the gym. As he is unlocking the front door, his iPhone rings. The ringtone is "For Those About to Rock (We Salute You)" by AC/DC.

BRANDON

Hey Coach.

(beat)

Yup, I just got here and I am opening up.

(beat)

Yeah, I am going to do the 9:30 class and then go Chad's and the the Doc's.

(beat)

Yup

(beat)

Okay, see you in a few.

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

The gym is big but feels small due to the low ceilings.

Almost all of the gym's floor is covered in wrestling mats except in the weight area. The walls next to the wrestling mats are covered with floor to ceiling mirrors.

The weight area is littered with traditional weights along with a few speed bags, heavy bags, a huge monster truck tire, sledgehammer, kettle bells and two large ropes.

In one of the back corners of the gym is half of a Octagon with a wall, lined with padding, acting as the other half.

On the wall above the padding, the words "HKP Wall of Champions" are painted on the wall with pictures of fighters underneath. Brandon's picture is in the center and is the biggest. He looks twenty years younger and is absolutely ripped.

Next to the cage sits a small office with a window that looks out over the whole gym.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon walks to the back of the gym, throws his bag down and turns on all the lights. The lights take a moment to flicker on.

Brandon opens a closet door and starts to pull out MMA gloves, boxing gloves, head gear, sparring mitts and shin guards. Once everything is out of the closet, he neatly starts to arrange the gear all over the gym.

CUT TO:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

A group of sweaty middle-aged women, all wearing boxing gloves that look oversized, throw one-two combinations in rhythm.

Brandon stands in front of the class calling out commands.

BRANDON

One-two, one-two, knee, knee, duck,  
one-two, one-two...

CUT TO:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - TOM'S OFFICE - DAY

Tom is sitting behind his desk eating an large, greasy sandwich. He looks as identical as he did ten years ago but just a little aged.

There is a knock on the office door.

TOM

Come in.

Brandon opens the door and sticks his head in. Tom is excited to see him.

BRANDON

Finally trying to put on some size,  
you skinny bastard?

TOM

(mouth full of food)  
Don't even get my started. I wake  
up this morning and the wife is  
immediately on my ass about  
who-knows-what. Sometimes being  
deaf doesn't sound so bad.

(CONTINUED)

Tom pushes the sandwich aside and pulls an envelope out of his desk. He hands it to Brandon. Brandon opens it momentarily and looks at the cash inside.

TOM

Thanks for covering that class this morning. I know teaching the soccer mom class isn't high on your list of fun things to do.

BRANDON

No problem. I needed the extra cash anyways.

(pauses)

I'm taking off for that doctor's appointment now.

TOM

That's right. You going to see that neuropathologist my friend recommended?

BRANDON

Yeah.

TOM

Are you coming back later today?

BRANDON

No. I have to pick my kids up afters, then Davey has practice.

TOM

You going to be at Alex's fight tomorrow night, right?

BRANDON

Yup.

There is an awkward silence because there is nothing more to say.

TOM

Alright, get out of here.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

Brandon checks his iPhone while driving. The GSP unit is calling out directions.

INT. CHAD'S OFFICE - DAY

Brandon is sitting in a chair across from his BROTHER IN LAW, CHAD GIBBONS, EARLY 40'S, who is sitting behind a large desk. Chad is in a shirt and tie, but looks a bit disheveled and tired.

Chad's desk is covered with paper and has a computer monitor on it. On the wall is Chad's framed college diploma and CPA certification.

Chad leans forward in his chair.

CHAD

You're not broke, but you're getting close.

Brandon has a look of concern on his face but looks at Chad optimistically waiting for some good news. None comes.

CHAD

Even with all the MMA expos you are doing and the classes you teach at the gym, you don't have enough income to cover everything. You are going to be in the red in 6 months.

Brandon has nothing to say. He expected this but the news still hits him hard.

CHAD

Listen Brandon, you know I love you and the kids. The way you took care of my sister while she was sick and dying puts me in debt to you forever which is why I am going to shoot you straight. If you don't figure out some way to make some serious cash over the next few months, you and the kids are going to be out on the street. And you know I would help you guys if I could, but all assets are frozen cause of this divorce. I couldn't even buy a crappy cup of coffee from 7/11 this morning without my credit card being declined.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon takes the envelope of cash out of his pocket. He pulls out a twenty and slides the rest over to Chad.

BRANDON

I got to head to a doctor's appointment, put this in the kid's college fund.

CHAD

Keep it and put it towards something else.

Brandon gets up and starts to leave the office. He stops and turns.

BRANDON

I might not be able to give my kids a home in a few months, but at the very least, I will send them to college so they don't end up like their old man.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

Brandon checks his iPhone while driving. The GPS unit is calling out directions.

CUT TO:

INT. MRI ROOM - DAY

Brandon is lying on his back in a hospital gown and slowly being slid headfirst into a MRI machine.

INT. DR. MARK FALLER'S OFFICE - DAY

Brandon is again sitting in a chair in an office. This time he is sitting across from DOCTOR MARK FALLER, LATE 50'S, the top neuropathologist in the world.

Unlike Chad's office, this one is large and immaculate. Numerous degrees hang on the wall behind Dr. Faller.

DR. FALLER

...so after running a few tests and hearing about your symptoms, the memory loss, trouble focusing,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DR. FALLER (cont'd)  
irritability and considering that  
you were a professional fighter, I  
believe you have chronic traumatic  
encephalopathy or CTE.

Brandon looks at Dr. Faller confused.

BRANDON  
What's chronic tra..tra..tramon--

DR. FALLER  
Chronic traumatic encephalopathy  
occurs when the brain has  
experience reoccurring trauma and a  
protein called Tau starts to build  
up in your brain cells. This  
protein basically shuts down the  
brain cells which ultimately kills  
them.

Brandon looks even more confused. Dr. Faller takes notice.

DR. FALLER  
Brandon, come here and look at my  
computer screen.

Brandon walks around the desk and stands over Dr. Faller's  
shoulder.

On the computer screen are two back and white pictures of a  
brain side by side. Dr. Faller points to the brain on the  
left.

DR. FALLER  
See here, this is a healthy  
brain. No damage to it at all.

Dr. Faller points to the brain on the right and then clicks  
his mouse. Red marks appear on the outside part of the  
frontal lobe.

DR. FALLER  
Now on this brain, one that has  
been positively diagnosed with CTE,  
you can clearly see the  
damage. There is scar tissue right  
here on the surface of the frontal  
lobe where this brain we repeatedly  
slammed into the skull and there  
are some large openings here where  
the surrounding tissue has died and  
shrunk away. You can also see the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

DR. FALLER (cont'd)  
tau markings all over frontal lobe  
and hypothalamus. I believe if we  
were to look at your brain, it  
would look like this one on the  
right here.

Brandon walks back around the desk and sits in the chair  
again.

BRANDON  
Doc, you are not making this any  
clearer.

DR. FALLER  
Basically, due to all the blows you  
have received to your head over the  
course of your fight career, your  
brain has been injured over and  
over again. Combined that with  
your symptoms and you have a case  
of CTE. I think.

BRANDON  
You think? You mean that it could  
be something else.

DR. FALLER  
I am almost certain it is CTE, but  
there is no way to test for  
it. The only way we can know  
positively that it is CTE is to  
take a slab of your cerebral  
tissue, cut off some micron  
shavings and analysis  
them. Unfortunately, we can only  
do this when your dead and we can  
remove your brain.

BRANDON  
So what do we do now, Doc? What's  
the next step? How do we treat it?

DR. FALLER  
Well Brandon, CTE is very, very  
similar to dementia and Alzheimer's  
so there is no really way to treat  
it. I can prescribe you medicine  
like Exelon and Namenda to help  
with the memory loss, it won't stop  
or reverse the damage.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

What's going to happen to me?

DR. FALLER

CTE is a relatively new condition so there hasn't been a chance to have an definitive studies done on it, but in other cases of patients that have been diagnosed with CTE, they regress the same way an Alzheimer's or dementia patient would.

BRANDON

So when I am old, I am not going to remember anything and anyone?

DR. FALLER

Unfortunately, CTE seems to progress faster and appears earlier than Alzheimer's which is why you are already experience symptoms like memory loss, mood swings and dizziness. Frankly, in a few years, your symptoms might be the same as a seventy year old patient with a severe case of Alzhemier's.

Brandon looks like he just lost the biggest fight of his life.

DR. FALLER

Brandon, I know this is a lot information to take in, but I want you to make an appointment with a cognitive therapist I work with. She is the best in the country. She has helped Alzheimer's and dementia patients immensely.

Dr. Faller writes down the therapist's name and number on a piece of paper and hands it to Brandon.

DR. FALLER

Give her a call sometime this week and set up an appointment. I will call her right after you leave so she will be expecting your call.

Brandon looks down at the piece of paper in his hands. He doesn't say anything.

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT: FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS  
AGO

The crowd in the arena is still buzzing over the knockout from the previous fight. That fight was the appetizer. The main event title fight is about to start.

In the middle of the arena is the OCTAGON. CAMERAMEN stand on the outside of the Octagon so they can film the action inside from different angles.

A RING GIRL walks around the outside of the Octagon holding a ROUND ONE sign above her head. She blows a kiss into one of the cameras as she returns to her seat.

Inside the Octagon, a RING ANNOUNCER is introducing both fighters.

RONALDO RIOS, early 30s, a muscular Brazilian, who is the long reigning MMA Heavyweight Champ stands across the Octagon from Brandon. His TRAINER pours some water in his mouth. Ronaldo spits it out on the mat below him and wipes the bottom of his feet in the water. Ronaldo is calm. He is been in this situation many times before.

On the opposite side of the Octagon, Brandon stands with his back to Ronaldo. He puts his hands on the top of the fence and looks down at his feet.

Coach Boland stands next to Brandon on the outside of the Octagon looking across at Ronaldo.

TOM

Alright Brandon, everything we have done these past eight weeks, all that pain and sacrifice, all that time away from your kids and Bethany, is for this moment. Your moment. You know the game plan and you know what you need to do. Don't stand on the outside and let him pick you apart. Get on the inside and bust this guy up.

Brandon's head is still down. He nods his head in acknowledgment.

The Ring Announcer finishes the introduces. The REFEREE asks both fighters to come to the center of the Octagon.

Brandon turns around and heads to the center of the Octagon. He's shirtless and this is the first time we see his body. Every muscle is clearly defined and there isn't an ounce of fat on him.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon and Ronaldo stand face to face with the Referee in the middle of them.

The Ring Announcer stands behind the Referee holding the microphone to his mouth.

REFEREE

Gentleman, this is a five round fight for the Heavyweight Championship of the world. Obey my commands at all times and protect yourself at all times. We went over the rules backstage so I want a good, clean fight. Any questions?

Both fighters nod their head "no".

REFEREE

Okay, touch gloves and go back to your corner.

Both fighters touch gloves and walk backwards to their corner. They don't take their eyes off each other.

The Referee points to Brandon.

REFEREE

Are you ready?

Brandon nods. The Referee then points to Ronaldo.

REFEREE

Are you ready?

Ronaldo nods.

REFEREE

Let's do this! Fight!

Brandon and Ronaldo both come out cautious and tentative.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Here. We. Go. Rios. Cramer. For the Heavyweight title of the world.

They circle each other while throwing lazy jabs that don't come close to landing.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Both fighters start by feeling each other out.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

This is how most of Rios's fight start. He likes to gauge the distance and timing of his opponents before attacking.

Ronaldo throws a leg kick. Brandon catches it, puts his head into Ronaldo's chest and drives him against the cage.

Brandon leans on Ronaldo and presses him against the Octagon fencing.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

He got Rios against the cage here. Cramer is going to soften him up then look for the takedown.

Ronaldo tries to control Brandon's wrists but Brandon occasionally frees his hands and lands short punches to Ronaldo's face and body.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Rios has said all week that he spent a big part of his camp working on his takedown defense but he's never been in the Octagon with a wrestler like Cramer before.

Quickly, Brandon drops down, wraps his arms around both of Ronaldo's legs and puts Ronaldo on his back with a double leg takedown. Brandon ends up in Ronaldo's full guard.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Takedown, Cramer. He's in Rios's full guard and looking to pass.

Brandon tries to pass Ronaldo's guard but can't. Brandon postures up and tries to land a some ground and pound unsuccessfully. Brandon can't do any damage and the Referee stands both fighters up.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

And the Ref stands them up. If Cramer can't get an offense going when he has Rios on his back, it is going to be a long night for him.

Brandon and Ronaldo circle each other again. Ronaldo gets aggressive and goes on the attack.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Rios on the attack.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
He's throwing punches a little too wild here and he is leaving himself open to being taken down again.

He is too wild. Brandon ducks under a left hook and takes Ronaldo down again.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
There it is. Rios is on his back for the second time tonight.

This time, Brandon is a little more successful with his ground and pound. Punches are starting to get through and connect with Ronaldo's face.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
That one connected. And another.

With thirty seconds left in round 1, Brandon passes Ronaldo's guard and moves into side control then into a full mount.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
He's got the full mount here.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Rios is in big trouble here if he can't improve his position.

The crowd starts to cheer in appreciation of Brandon's excellent ground game.

Brandon starts raining down punches. Punch after punch connects. He opens up a cut under Rios's left eye. Blood immediately starts pouring out all over Rios's face.

The Referee watches over closely to see if Ronaldo is properly defend himself.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Cramer is opening up. Rios better do something quick or the Ref is going to stop the fight.

It looks like the Referee is about to stop the fight when the buzzer sounds for the end of round one.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Great round for the challenger.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

Cramer executed his game plan  
flawlessly. If he can keep this  
up, we may have a new world champ.

Brandon gets off of Ronaldo and calmly walks back to his corner. Even though he is drenched in sweat, Brandon isn't breathing heavy at all. His conditioning is excellent.

BOTH CORNERS rush into the Octagon to attend to their fighter. Rios's CUT MAN quickly goes to work on the cut under Rios's left eye. RIOS'S TRAINER is speaking to him in Portuguese. Even though we can't understand what he is saying, the urgency in his voice is understood.

Brandon sits down on the stool in his corner. Brandon's Teammate puts a bag of ice on the back of his neck while Tom gives him a sip of water. Brandon swishes it in his mouth and spits it in the bucket his other Teammate is holding.

Brandon takes a deep breath.

TOM

Good, Brandon,  
good. Breathe. Breathe. How do  
you feel?

BRANDON

Good.

TOM

That was a great first round. I  
need more of the same from you in  
the second. Stay out of his range  
and when he gets frustrated and  
starts to rush in, take his ass  
down again. Keep doing it until  
you put this guy to sleep.

Brandon nods.

The Ring Girl walks around the outside of the Octagon holding up a sign reading round two.

Both corners leave the Octagon leaving only Brandon, Ronaldo and the Referee inside.

The Referee points to Brandon.

REFEREE

Are you ready?

Brandon nods. The Referee then points to Ronaldo.

(CONTINUED)

REFeree  
Are you ready?

Ronaldo nods.

REFeree  
Fight!

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - NIGHT: PRESENT DAY

Brandon checks his iPhone while driving. David is sitting next to him in the passenger seat playing his PSP.

The GSP unit is calling out directions.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

A group of parents lean against the wall watching. In the middle of the studio, the STUDENTS, all female, dressed in dance shoes and leggings, start to move about.

The DANCE INSTRUCTOR waits for all her students to take their positions and then starts the music.

Brandon enters the dance studio with David who is still wearing his soccer cleats and shin pads. His clothes and face are covered in dirt.

Brandon nods hello to a few other parents.

David sees Gina.

DAVID  
Dad, there she is.

BRANDON  
Shh. Just watch buddy.

A flurry of activity starts. The students start their routine. After a few moments, Gina is left alone in the center of the dance studio. She is the principle dancer and this is her big solo.

The Dance Instructor sees Brandon and slowly starts to make her way towards him without ever taking her eyes off Gina.

Gina's movement is fluid and precise.

Brandon watches intently. Even David is memorized.

(CONTINUED)

The Dance Instructor sidles up next to Brandon.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
Yes, Gina. Finish strong.

The music ends and Gina freezes in her final position.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
Good work tonight everyone. I will  
see you later on this week.

Gina walks over to her gym bag. All the other students  
converge around her and they start chatting.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
How did you like it, Mr. Cramer?

BRANDON  
That was amazing.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
How about you Davey? Did you like?

DAVID  
Sure did.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
Mr. Cramer, Gina is one of the best  
students I have had in a long  
time. She has everything you would  
want in a dancer. She learns new  
steps and techniques up very, very  
quickly. Its rare that I have to  
show her a new step more than once  
before she picks it up. And the  
most impressive thing about her is  
that whenever she makes a mistake,  
she doesn't let it faze her. She  
fights through it. She is so  
mentally tough.

BRANDON  
Mentally tough, huh?

Brandon looks over at Gina. He has never noticed that about  
her before.

BRANDON  
I guess she got that from  
me. Probably the only thing she  
got from me.

Gina and LAUREN, 17, say goodbye to the rest of the students  
and make their way over to Brandon.

(CONTINUED)

LAUREN  
Hey, Mr. Cramer.

BRANDON  
Hey Lauren.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
Good work tonight ladies. Gina,  
you were excellent tonight. One or  
two more practices and you will  
have your part perfected.

Gina blushes.

GINA  
Thanks.

BRANDON  
Sweetie, your part at the end  
there, it was really good.

GINA  
Whatever. Are we ready to go?

Gina walks out of the dance class. Lauren grabs her stuff  
and runs to catch up. Brandon watches them leave. He's  
confused. He doesn't know what he said.

The Dance Instructor lightly touches Brandon's shoulder to  
let him know its okay.

DANCE INSTRUCTOR  
Don't worry about it. My oldest  
daughter was the same way. Night,  
Mr. Cramer.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - NIGHT

Brandon checks his iPhone while driving again. David is back  
sitting in the front passenger seat while Gina sits in the  
back next to Lauren staring out the window with her  
headphones on.

Brandon looks at her in his rearview mirror trying figure  
her out.

The GSP unit is calling out directions.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Brandon, David, Gina and Lauren walk down the hall of the apartment building. Lauren stops at her apartment door and takes out her keys. Before she can unlock the door, it swings open.

CARON ALLEN, late 30s, emerges. She looks younger than her age.

GINA  
Hey Ms. Allen.

CARON  
Hey girls. How was class tonight?

LAUREN  
I sucked but Gina was amazing like usual.

GINA  
You weren't bad.

LAUREN  
Compared to you I was.

CARON  
You still have homework?

Lauren rolls her eyes.

LAUREN  
I guess I will see you all later.  
Thanks for the ride Mr. Cramer.

BRANDON  
No problem.

Lauren walks pass Caron into the apartment. Everyone else is just standing around staring at each other. Caron looks at Brandon, wanting him to say something. She clearly has a crush on him. It's awkward.

CARON  
So, Brandon, thanks again for driving Lauren home.

BRANDON  
Don't worry about it. Thanks for driving the girls to class.

Awkward silence again. Gina notices.

(CONTINUED)

GINA

Dad, can I have the keys?

Brandon reaches into his pocket and gives Gina his keys.

GINA

Come on, Davey, lets get you washed up.

Gina and David walk down the hallway towards their apartment. Caron watches them until they are out of sight.

CARON

So Lauren is going to be gone this weekend at her grandmother's and I wanted to know if you wanted to get dinner or something? If you didn't already have plans.

Brandon pulls out his iPhone and checks his calendar app. He isn't trying to seem important, he just can't remember if he has plans for the weekend.

BRANDON

A guy at my gym has a fight this weekend that I told him I would be in his corner for and I also got a mixed martial arts expo I am suppose to appear it--

CARON

Oh, okay. Its not a big deal or anything. I just figured I would ask, but if you already have plans--

BRANDON

No, no. Sorry. The fight isn't until Saturday night and the expo is on Sunday, so I have Friday free?

Caron smiles.

CARON

Friday works.

BRANDON

My brother-in-law Chad owes me a favor, so I can get him to watch the kids.

(CONTINUED)

CARON  
Great, its a date.

That comment catches both of them off guard. Its awkward again.

LAUREN (O.S.)  
Mom, did you wash my green top? I want to wear it to school tomorrow.

CARON  
I got to go. See you on Friday.

Brandon nods. Caron smiles coyly and shuts the door. Brandon starts typing in his iPhone.

INT. STAPLES CENTER - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Brandon sits in the corner of the locker room wearing a HKG shirt watching Tom warm up ALEX MORRIS, 23. Alex is so confident that it borders on cocky and has a boyish, immature quality about him.

Tom calls out orders and Alex hits the mitts with bad intentions.

TOM  
One-Two, One-Three, body kick. Good. Again. One-Two, One-Three, body kick.

In the background, there are also TWO FIGHTERS also warming up.

BRANDON'S POV: He is watching Alex and the other fighters. He starts to get dizzy. The room starts to spin.

Brandon gets up, stumbles a bit. Tom notices.

TOM  
Brandon, you okay?

Brandon puts one hand on the wall next him to balance.

BRANDON  
I'm fine. I am just going to step out for a second.

CUT TO:

INT. STAPLES CENTER - BACKSTAGE - NIGHT

A frenzy of activity is happening. FIGHT PROMOTION EMPLOYEES are running around trying to get things done.

Brandon leans against a wall sipping on a bottle of water. He tries not to notice the commotion going on around him. He starts to get dizzy again and crouches down.

All the sudden Brandon feels a tap on his shoulder.

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Brandon Cramer! How the fuck are you?

Brandon looks up and sees DEAN BLACK, 40s, the MMA President, super clean cut in an expensive suit with no tie and the shirt unbuttoned one button too far.

Brandon slowly stands up and shakes Dean's hand.

BRANDON

Not to bad, Dean.

DEAN

You look great. You still rolling?

BRANDON

Not as much as I used too. Mostly just teach the classes now.

DEAN

Yeah? You look great though.

BRANDON

You said that.

DEAN

I know and I mean it. You look so good. You look like you could go five rounds right now.

BRANDON

I probably couldn't finish one round.

DEAN

I don't believe it. I am excited to see that kid from your gym tonight. Tom said this kid has some skills.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

He'll do alright if he doesn't let his first fight in the big leagues get to him.

DEAN

After training under Tom and working with you, I am sure the kid will be fine.

Dean leans in closely to Brandon. He looks around to make sure no else is close enough near them to hear what he is about to say.

DEAN

Listen, I got a offer for you--

BRANDON

The MMA expo? I am already signed up for tomorrow.

DEAN

No, not that. You said you are signed up though, right? Good. I got something else. Something big. You know what is coming up in a couple of months?

Brandon has no idea. He stares blankly at Dean.

DEAN

Its the tenth anniversary of your fight with Ronaldo.

BRANDON

No shit. Its been ten years already.

DEAN

Sure has. You know that is the greatest fight of all time, right? Well, you two never fought each other again. So I talked to Ronaldo the other day and he is open to you two finally having a rematch.

BRANDON

Really? Is Ronaldo still fighting? I thought he retired a while ago?

(CONTINUED)

DEAN

He did, but he is running his academy down in Sao Paulo and he still in pretty good shape.

BRANDON

I don't know. I haven't even sparred seriously with anyone in over two years.

A FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEE #2 walks over to Brandon and Dean.

FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEE #2

Mr. Black, they need you in the production truck to approve a highlight package.

DEAN

Tell them I will be there in just a second.

FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEE #2 walks away.

DEAN

Hey, just think about it, okay? This could be one last big pay day for you.

Dean has said the magic words: big pay day.

BRANDON

How much?

DEAN

I am not sure yet. My people are still running the pay per view estimates of a rematch between you and Ronaldo. It should be a big number. You have to realize that I get asked about you two having a rematch everyday. I want it, the media wants it, the fans are drooling over it. If you did this, I would honor the terms in your last contract.

BRANDON

(suprised)

I would get the same purse and same pay per view cut?

(CONTINUED)

DEAN  
(confidently)

Yup.

FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEE #2 comes back again.

FIGHT PROMOTER EMPLOYEE #2  
Mr. Black, sorry to interrupt  
again, but they really need you in  
the truck.

DEAN  
Alright.  
(turns to Brandon)  
Think about it and give me a call  
in a week or two. I don't need an  
answer right away.

INT. STAPLES CENTER - NIGHT

Alex makes entrance to the Octagon with Tom and Brandon following. Alex's fight is on the undercard so the arena is only half full.

CUT TO:

Brandon stands on the outside of the Octagon with Tom.

Alex is taking a beating inside the Octagon and Tom is trying to shout out instructions.

TOM  
Move forward! Move forward! No,  
don't back up! Damn it!  
(turns to Brandon)  
This kid doesn't listen.

CUT TO:

Alex's back against the cage and he is taking punch after punch. His OPPONENT is mixing up combinations to the body and head.

CUT TO:

ANNOUNCER #1  
Morris is definitely one tough kid,  
but things are not going well in  
his debut.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2

I'm shocked. Morris trains under Coach Boland at HKG and we have never seen one of his fighters take a beating like this.

ANNOUNCER #1

Except for the great Brandon Cramer, who happens to be in Morris's corner.

ANNOUNCER #2

Yeah, but Brandon has tremendous heart. You could never count him out of a fight. He orchestrated some of the greatest comebacks in MMA history. Unless Brandon has taught Morris how to overcome a beating like this, then Morris might be out of luck.

CUT TO:

Alex's still getting lit up. His face is cut up and one of his eyes is almost swollen shut.

In a moment of desperation, Alex wings an overhand right. It catches his Opponent on the chin. Lights out. Alex wins. The half filled arena goes nuts. Alex jumps on the railing of the Octagon fence and flexes for the crowd.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

That was amazing, ladies and gentlemen! Have you ever seen anything like that! I mean, I haven't seen a fighter with that much heart since--

(beat)

Brandon Cramer.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT: FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS EARLIER

Brandon's back bounces up against the cage in front of Tom. Ronaldo is teeing off on him.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

Oh, things are not going well for Brandon in round 2 folks. He

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.) (cont'd)  
dominated round 1 but is getting  
taken apart in this round.

TOM  
Get off the fence! Get off the  
fence!

Brandon tries to get away from the fence, but Ronaldo cuts him off. Ronaldo continues his assault. It isn't pretty. Brandon has a cut on his forehead that is gushing blood.

The blood covers both fighters.

ANNOUNCER #1  
Ten seconds left in round 2. It  
looks like Brandon Cramer is going  
to survive.

The round ends. Both fighters head back to their corner and are greeted by their team.

Brandon sits on his stool and his CUTMAN immediately goes to work on the cut on Brandon's forehead.

TOM  
Breathe. Take a few deep breaths  
for me.

Brandon inhales deeply.

TOM  
Good. I need for you to stay away  
from the cage. You keep circling  
to you right and Ronaldo keeps  
cutting you off. You need to mix  
up your movement.

Brandon nods. He takes a swig of water and spits it out. He missed the spit bucket completely.

The Cut Man rubs a big swab of Vaseline in Brandon's cut. The bleeding stops.

TOM  
At the start of this round, I want  
you to immediately close the  
distance and take him down. You  
need to control where this fight  
takes place. Put him on his back  
and bring him into your world.

Tom and the rest of Brandon's corner leave the Octagon.

(CONTINUED)

Again, its just Brandon, Ronaldo and the Referee alone inside the cage.

CUT TO:

ANNOUNCER #1  
Brandon needs to do something  
different in round 3.

ANNOUNCER #2  
He's got to do something or he's  
not gonna see round 4.

CUT TO:

The Referee points to Brandon.

REFEREE  
Are you ready?

Brandon nods. The Referee then points to Ronaldo.

REFEREE  
Are you ready?

Ronaldo nods.

REFEREE  
Fight!

Round three begins.

Brandon quickly closes the distance and shoots in for a takedown only to be met with a knee to the face. Brandon is knocked onto his back. He is rocked.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
OH! He caught him with that  
knee! He's rocked, folks.

Ronaldo senses Brandon is out of it and goes in for the kill. Brandon somehow manages to stand up and gets Ronaldo in the clinch before Ronaldo can do anymore damage. Ronaldo pushes Brandon against the cage.

Ronaldo separates and walks back to the center of the Octagon. Brandon takes a deep breath and follows.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
That was smart by Rios. He sensed  
Brandon was hurt and instead of  
letting him recover by staying tied  
up against the cage, he back away.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

TOM  
Recover, Brandon. Circle  
away. Stay away from him.

CUT TO:

Brandon listens to Tom, but he starts to circle to his right again. Ronaldo cuts him off and throws a head kick. Brandon manages to block it, but the force of it pushes Brandon against the cage again.

Ronaldo presses forward. Brandon tries to throw a jab to keep Ronaldo at bay, but its slow and sloppy. Brandon pays for it.

Ronaldo lands a straight left. Brandon's legs start to give out, but somehow he stays up.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
He hurt him with that one.

BRANDON'S POV: Brandon's peripheral vision is completely blurry. He can barely make out Ronaldo who is coming towards him. Brandon's head starts to shake back and forth. He is getting hit with punches over and over again, but can't see them coming.

CUT TO:

TOM  
Move, Brandon, move! Get the fuck  
off the fence!

CUT TO:

Brandon's hands aren't even up and he can barely stand. The cage is keeping Brandon up. Ronaldo is just unloading on him. Punch after punch to the head. Brandon's head snaps back with every punch landed.

The crowd isn't cheering anymore. They're silent. The beating unfolding in front of them if just too much.

The Referee watches the action closely. He wants to step in but there are only a few seconds remaining in the round.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
If Brandon makes it to the bell  
still standing, I am going to be  
amazed.

(CONTINUED)

The round ends. Brandon staggers back to his corner. He falls. Tom and one of Brandon's teammate have to help him back to his stool.

CUT TO:

INT. LOS ANGELES CONVENTION CENTER - DAY: PRESENT DAY

The convention center is packed with people. FIGHTERS are sitting at booths taking pictures with the fans and signing autographs. MMA apparel companies have racks of clothing set up everywhere. Women in bikinis are promoting the newest fitness supplements.

CUT TO:

Brandon sitting on a stool behind a curtain out of sight from the crowds talking on his iPhone.

BRANDON

Yes. That's fine.

(beat)

Is her parents going to be home?

(beat)

You sure?

(beat)

Do I need to call and check?

(beat)

No, Gina, I believe you--

(beat)

I will pick you up right after the expo--

(beat)

Probably around three o'clock.

(beat)

Alright.

Tom pops his head in the curtain.

TOM

Brandon, its time.

Brandon nods.

BRANDON

Gina--

(beat)

I got to go.

(beat)

I will see you in a few hours.

(beat)

Love you.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon hangs up and goes to bring up his schedule app on his iPhone. Tom reaches through the curtain, grabs Brandon by the arm and pulls him through the curtain onto a stage.

A crowd of people are waiting. They start applauding when they see Brandon.

ANNOUNCER #1

The great Brandon Cramer everyone.

Brandon didn't get a chance to put a reminder in his iPhone calendar about picking up Gina.

CUT TO:

Brandon is sitting behind a table signing autographs. There is a line of people waiting to meet him.

CUT TO:

The convention center is empty. Fliers are all over the ground and most of the booths are already empty.

Brandon stands with Tom and a few other FIGHTERS chatting.

An EMPLOYEE of the MMA Expo approaches the group and hands each fighter, including Brandon, an envelope. Brandon opens it and counts the cash inside. It isn't what he expected.

BRANDON

This is it?

EMPLOYEE

Yup.

BRANDON

Are you kidding me? This place was packed. Did you see the line at my booth?

EMPLOYEE

I don't know what to tell you. My boss gave me these envelopes and told me to pass them out.

Brandon stares at the Employee.

EMPLOYEE

Sorry.

Brandon looks down at the envelope. He's in disbelief. He was counting on making more money from the Expo.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

Hey Brandon, don't worry about it. I will give you some extra classes to teach this week. Let's go get a drink, my treat.

BRANDON

What time is it?

TOM

A little before three.

Brandon looks confused. He is trying to remember something.

TOM

Do you have something?

BRANDON

I think so. I can't remember.

Brandon checks his iPhone and see nothing scheduled for three.

BRANDON

It looks like I don't have anything till tonight.

TOM

That's right. Your big date.

BRANDON

Its not a date, just dinner with a neighbor. Our kids are friends.

Tom winks at Brandon.

TOM

Your kids are friends. I gotcha.

INT. LOCAL SPORTS BAR - DAY

Brandon and Tom are sitting in a booth sharing a pitcher of beer and reminiscing.

BRANDON

... and I couldn't believe he holding his hands down by his waste. I know the Japanese basically invented martial arts and have some strange philosophies, but fighting with your hands down and chin out shouldn't be one of them.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

I remember when the ref started the fight, you look at me really quick completely baffled like, "What should I do?"--

BRANDON

And you yelled, "Punch him in the fucking face if he is going to fight like a retard".

Brandon and Tom are both starting to laugh.

TOM

And you did. Crack. First punch, right on the button and the guy is out cold.

BRANDON

Didn't he fall funny?

TOM

He was like a tree falling. First really slow and then, boom, face first.

BRANDON

Everyone thought my one punch broke his nose but it was mat when his face slammed into it.

TOM

Fuckin Japanese. They are centuries ahead of us when it comes to martial arts and they still haven't figured out that this hands down karate bullshit doesn't work.

BRANDON

Remember the fight in England where I ate that head kick and I couldn't remember where I was between rounds.

TOM

You came back to the corner with a blank look on your face and asked "What's going on Coach?" and I said, "You just got kicked in the head". You look at me for a moment and said "I'm in a fight?". Good thing you knocked the guy out at the start of the next round or you would have been in big trouble.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon and Tom are in hysterics now. Tom wipes a tear off his face.

TOM  
How long ago was that fight?

BRANDON  
Seventeen years. It was like my fourth or fifth fight. It was just before Gina was born.

TOM  
Damn. We have been doing this a long time.

BRANDON  
Yes we have.

Brandon and Tom tap their beers together.

BRANDON  
Cheers.

TOM  
Salute.

Brandon's iPhone on the table starts to vibrate. He looks down at the screen and sees Gina calling.

BRANDON  
Speak of the devil.

Brandon picks up.

BRANDON  
Hey Gina.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. GINA'S FRIENDS HOUSE - BATHROOM - DAY

Gina is clearly pissed. She speaks in an angry, but quiet tone.

GINA  
Where are you?

BRANDON  
I am out with Coach Boland.

(CONTINUED)

GINA

Seriously?!?! You were suppose to pick me up an hour ago. Kimmy's parents are now thirty minutes late for their reservation because they are waiting to leave till you pick me up.

BRANDON

What do you mean? When did you tell me you were going to Kimmy's?

GINA

I called you a few hours ago and asked if I could hang out at Kimmy's after school. You got on my case about Kimmy's parents being home and everything. You said you would pick me up after your expo.

BRANDON

You sure? I didn't have it on my phone calendar

GINA

Yes, Dad. Will you just come and get me? This is so embarrassing.

BRANDON

Yes, I am leaving right now. Text me the address.

Brandon hangs up and starts frantically checking his phone.

TOM

What's up?

BRANDON

I was suppose to pick up Gina at her friend's place an hour ago. I don't remember her ever asking me if she could go.

TOM

Did you put a remember on your phone calendar?

BRANDON

I checked. There's nothing. She said she called me a few hours ago about it.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

Maybe she is just trying to pull a fast one on you. Check your recent calls.

Brandon scrolls through his recent phone calls and sees that he talked to Gina earlier.

BRANDON

Shit.

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

Brandon pull's up to Gina's friend's house. Gina comes out the front door in a hurry and gets in the SUV. She doesn't say anything or look at Brandon. She immediately puts her headphones on and turns the volume up loud.

KIMMY'S FATHER is standing in the front door of the house. Brandon rolls down his window.

BRANDON

Sorry.

Kimmy's Father gives Brandon the "you're-a-terrible-parent" look and closes the front door.

Brandon looks over at Gina. He knows is it is going to be a long, quiet ride home.

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Chad is sitting on the couch watching TV while David sits on the floor in front of him with the TV remote in his hand. They are watching a replay of a Barcelona vs. Real Madrid soccer match. The commentary is in Spanish.

Chad is annoyed that David is making him watch this.

CHAD

Don't you already know who won?

DAVID

Yes.

CHAD

And you realize that it is in Spanish which you can't understand?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID  
Si.

CHAD  
Isn't there anything else on?

DAVID  
Yes.

CHAD  
But we are not going to watch anything else, are we?

DAVID  
Yes.

CHAD  
You do realize I could lock you in your room and watch what I want if I wanted to, right?

DAVID  
Yes.

CHAD  
Alright then.

Chad stares at the TV for a moment. Having to watch the soccer match is killing him. He starts to get whiny like a child.

CHAD  
Come on, change the channel. This is killing me.

DAVID  
No.

Chad gets up and tries to take the remote from David. He can't pull the remote out of David's hands. It is a tug of war that Chad is losing.

Brandon enter the apartment and surveys the scene unfolding out in front of him.

Chad looks up and sees Brandon standing above him.

CHAD  
Hey.

BRANDON  
Hey Chad. What's going on here?

CHAD

Nothing. Just showing my nephew a few tricks you can do with a remote.

Gina enters the apartment. She still has her headphones on and the volume turned way up. She storms past everyone, walks into her bedroom and slams the door.

CHAD

Well, this is going to be a fun night.

Chad lets go of the remote. Brandon helps him back on his feet.

BRANDON

Sorry. I forgot to pick her up at her friend's house.

CHAD

Don't worry about it. She's a teenager and will forget all about it the next time she sees a hot guy.

Brandon shoots Chad a look. Chad realizes what he said.

CHAD

I mean, the next time she--

BRANDON

Thanks for watching the kids tonight.

CHAD

Glad to. I usually don't get to spend time with my niece and nephew even though it looks like I am only going to be spending time with my nephew tonight. What time is your big--

Chad looks down at David who is mesmerized by the game on the TV. He leans in close to Brandon.

CHAD

(whispering)

D-A-T-E.

BRANDON

He can spell, you know.

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Date!

Brandon takes out his phone and looks at his calendar.

BRANDON

Its in like an hour. We just going to that new Thai restaurant in town that opened up a couple of weeks ago. I actually need to start getting ready.

CHAD

Nice. Before you start to get pretty, I have some good news for you. I talked to a employment recruiter friend of mine and he got you some job interviews.

BRANDON

Really?

CHAD

Yeah, he knows who you are and called around to a few clients that were hiring. I did the math and if you get one of these jobs, keep teaching classes now and again and keep doing the expos, we should be able to get you back on some strong financial footing.

Brandon is completely taken back by his brother-in-law. He wraps his arms around Chad.

BRANDON

I don't know what to say.

CHAD

Don't say anything yet. You need to nail the job interviews first, but I will help you. I already got a resume typed up for you.

BRANDON

I've never been on a job interview before. I've actually never had a real job before. I'm not sure what to do.

CHAD

Its nothing. If you can take getting punched in the face for the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CHAD (cont'd)  
past twenty years, then you can sit  
in a cubicle. Although, you may  
find sitting in a cubicle 40 hours  
a week worst than getting hit in  
the face.

Chad pushes Brandon away.

CHAD  
Alright you big softie, go and get  
ready. We don't need you hanging  
around, crying and making your face  
puffy before going out tonight.

INT. THAI RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Brandon and Caron sit across from each other. They are the  
only white people in the restaurant. Everyone else is Thai.

A SERVER comes over with two large noodle and sets them down  
on the table. Caron looks a little queezy after looking at  
the contents of the bowls.

BRANDON  
Which one is the one with the fish  
balls?

SERVER  
(heavy Thai accent)  
This one.  
(points to a bowl)  
And the other has the tripe.

Brandon is excited. These dishes are familiar to him.

SERVER  
I will be right back with your pork  
belly.

The Server leaves. Brandon sees the uneasy look on Caron's  
face.

BRANDON  
Don't worry. This stuff looks  
terrible but its really, really  
good. These noodle bowls got me  
through my time in Phuket.

CARON  
POO-CAT? What's that?

Brandon smiles.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Phuket? It's an island in Thailand. It was one of the places that got wiped out by that big tsunami that happened on Christmas Eve a few years back. I was there a couple of years before the tsunami training at a Muay Thai academy and this is basically what I ate for all of my meals. This and chicken rice.

Caron still looks uneasy, but curious.

BRANDON

Trust me. Its really good.

Caron takes a small sip. Then a big one.

CARON

This. Is. Surprisingly good.

BRANDON

I told you. And it is really good for you. When is the last time you have seen a fat Thai person?

Caron points to the statue of Buddha behind the restaurant bar.

CARON

He looks like he could skip a few meals.

Brandon and Caron both laugh. They are enjoying each others company.

CARON

Where else have you been?

BRANDON

Oh geez. Lets see. I have been all over the U.S., Brazil, Holland, Japan, China, Russia--

CARON

I should have asked you where you haven't been.

BRANDON

I got to travel a lot as a fighter. I would go to Brazil to train for a few months, then have a

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)  
fight in Japan, then come back to the U.S. to do some appearances and stuff. It really was a blessing, but it had its downside.

CARON  
Really?

BRANDON  
Yeah. All the time on the road was time away from my kids and Bethany.

CARON  
Bethany was your wife?

Brandon nods.

BRANDON  
When she got sick, I cut down my traveling a lot, but I occasionally would have to travel for a fight and appearances my sponsors would want me to do.

CARON  
Sounds like a lot.

BRANDON  
It was. I probably didn't spend enough time with Bethany when she was sick but I had to keep getting out there so we had money coming in to pay for the medical bills.

CARON  
How come? Didn't your health insurance cover the medical bills?

Brandon laughs to himself.

BRANDON  
No. As a professional fighter, you are a private contractor for whatever promoter you happen to be fighting for, even the big ones so we don't get health insurance, 401k or any benefits people get at normal jobs. The only time any of the promotions covered any of my injuries was if I got injured during the fight. If I got injured training, I was on my own.

(CONTINUED)

CARON

Yeah, but there are tons of people out there that work as private contractors and are able to get insurance.

BRANDON

I tried but no health insurance company is going to cover a professional fighter. It is basically like having a pre-existing condition. They see you're a fighter and shut the door. You know, its funny, when I was younger and started to make some serious money from fighting, you don't worry about things like health insurance cuse you figure you are going to keep fighting and keep making more and more money. You just assume you will have enough to cover anything. When I met Bethany, she had a good job with health insurance and all that stuff, but I convinced her she didn't need to work because I was going to make enough to cover the both of us forever. So, when we got married and had Gina and Davey, Bethany became a stay at home mom and for a while it worked out great. I was climbing the ranks and my paychecks kept getting bigger and bigger. I would travel, fight and then return home to my family as the conquering hero. It was the perfect life for a while.

Brandon pauses. He feels that he already shared too much, but talking about what his wife and their family went through is feeling therapeutic.

Brandon looks at Caron. She seems like she is enjoying the story about his wife and family. He continues.

BRANDON

I didn't know how sick she was for a while. I don't think she did either. For a while, she was saying how she was tired all the time and I just thought it was normal for being a stay at home mom

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)

taking care of two young kids. It wasn't until after I returned from my title fight that I realized that something was seriously wrong with her. I left for three months before the fight to train in Denver. I didn't see Bethany or the kids during that whole time. When I got back home after the fight, I noticed Bethany lost a bunch of weight and her skin turned a light shade of yellow. I thought she was just really run down, so I told her to go visit her parents and brother for a couple of weeks to recuperate and I would watch the kid. When she came back, she looked even worse. That is when I finally decided it was time to see a doctor. We went in and she had a bunch of tests done. I knew it was bad when we met with the doctor to get the results and he couldn't look me in the eye. He said she had pancreatic cancer and it was spreading fast through out her whole body. He said she only had six to ten months left.

Brandon starts to choke up. Caron reaches across the table and lightly touches Brandon's hand.

BRANDON

I was in denial for such a long time. I'm a fighter, you know. Hearing the words, "there is nothing we can do" doesn't really mean anything to me. You know how many times I was told I was going to lose only to come out and prove everyone wrong. Someone tells me so and so is going to kick my ass, I will train my ass off to prove them wrong. So, I decided that I was going to get Bethany the best treatment available no matter what the cost because we were going to fight this and win. We tried so many treatments. Chemo, holistic medicines, herbal remedies. You name it, we tried it. I literally emptied my bank accounts trying to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)  
find anything that would keep  
Bethany alive, even a month  
longer. When she died, I lost that  
fire inside that fueled everything  
I did. I lost my next few fights  
and eventually my coach made me  
hang up my gloves, because it was  
just getting too dangerous let me  
keep fighting. I just didn't care  
if I won or lost anymore or even if  
I got seriously hurt. Without  
fighting, I had no money coming in  
but I still had to pay Bethany's  
medical bills that were piling  
up. I eventually had to sell  
everything we had but that still  
wasn't enough. Then our house got  
foreclosed on.

Brandon stops. This is the first time he has spoken at length to anyone about what he has gone through since his wife died. He feels any enormous weight lifted off his shoulders.

BRANDON  
It feels good to talk about Bethany  
and everything we went through.

CARON  
Its always good to talk about  
things you are dealing with. Its a  
really good release and a good way  
to get everything off our  
shoulders.

BRANDON  
Sorry to lay this all on you the  
first time we have gone out. I  
haven't been out with a woman other  
than my wife in such a long time  
and talking about her on date  
probably isn't a turn on.

Caron shoots Brandon a comforting smile.

CARON  
Its sweet. Most guys just talk  
about how much money they make or  
don't even talk at all.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Well, I don't make much money, so you don't have to worry about me talking about the size of my bank account.

Caron giggles.

INT. CARON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brandon and Caron are sitting on the couch chatting and enjoying a glass of wine. Brandon makes Caron laugh and she puts her hand on this thigh. Brandon leans in and kisses Caron.

BRANDON

So I guess I didn't scare you at the restaurant.

CARON

Only the food did.

BRANDON

Next time, I will let you choose the place.

CARON

What do you mean "next time"?

BRANDON

Well, I just thought--

CARON

I'm kidding. I was hoping there would be a next time.

Brandon looks at the clock on the wall.

BRANDON

Its late. I better go relieve my brother-in-law from babysitting duty. What are you doing next weekend?

CARON

Hopefully going out with you again.

Brandon takes out his iPhone and opens his calendar app.

BRANDON

Friday again?

(CONTINUED)

CARON

Sure, if you can fit it in your busy schedule.

BRANDON

Huh?

CARON

Well, you had to check the phone to see if you could pencil me in.

BRANDON

No, trust me, its not that I am super busy. I just don't remember things well.

CARON

But the story you told about your wife was so detailed and vivid.

BRANDON

Yeah, my long term memory is great but my short term memory is not very good. I need to put everything in my phone so I can, well, the so the phone can remember everything.

CARON

Really? What would happen if you lost your phone?

BRANDON

I'd be screwed.

CARON

Doesn't that worry you?

BRANDON

It does, but there is nothing I can do about it. I went to see a specialist the other day and he said I have CTE.

CARON

What's that?

BRANDON

Basically, the older I get, the worse my memory is going to get. The doc said it was caused from fighting. Too many blows to the head.

(CONTINUED)

CARON

So you kind of have Alzheimer's?

BRANDON

Except it is affecting me now  
instead of when I am an old man.

CARON

Oh.

All Caron's excitement from the date is gone. Brandon gives Caron a kiss on the cheek and gets up.

BRANDON

See you on Friday?

CARON

(distant)

Yeah.

INT. THERAPY CENTER - WAITING ROOM - DAY

Brandon sits in the waiting room pretending to read a magazine. He looks over the top of it at the other patients.

The waiting room is filled with OLD PEOPLE. Brandon is the youngest person in the room by thirty years.

A young women in scrubs, SANDRA FELTS, opens the door to the waiting room. She looks down at the chart in her hands.

SANDRA

Mister... Brandon Cramer.

INT. THERAPY CENTER - REHAB ROOM - DAY

Just like in the waiting room, the rehab room is filled with other ELDERLY PATIENTS working one on one with a therapist. Some of the patients also have a family member or nurse with them. Most are suffering from Alzheimer's, some are suffering with dementia.

Brendan is looking around the room watching everything that is going on. He feels really uncomfortable. There are no other patients in the room that are even close to his age.

SANDRA

Mr. Cramer? Mr. Cramer?

Brandon turns his attention back to Sandra.

(CONTINUED)

SANDRA

As I was saying, we can't reverse your short term memory deterioration but hopefully, we can use these therapy sessions to slow down the effects of your condition.

BRANDON

(unenthusiastically)

Great.

SANDRA

You said you use your phone to store most of your day to day stuff like your schedule?

Brandon nods.

SANDRA

Okay, here is a simple game we can play that can help your short term memory so you don't have to rely on your phone as much.

Sandra pulls out TWO DECKS OF CARDS, one blue and one red.

SANDRA

On the red cards are objects.

Sandra fans out the cards to show Brandon the pictures on them.

SANDRA

On the blue cards are locations.

Again, Sandra fans out the cards to show Brandon the pictures on them.

SANDRA

What I am going to do is pair up the objects with a location and you need to remember where the location of every object is. Pretty simple?

Brandon nods.

Sandra matches some of the cards together and hands them over to Brandon. Brandon looks through them. He thinks this is stupid.

Brandon hands the cards back to Sandra.

(CONTINUED)

SANDRA  
Okay, ready?

Just as Sandra is about to start the exercise, an ELDERLY PATIENT across the room starts to freak out. ANOTHER THERAPIST and a NURSE tries to calm the Elderly Patient down.

ELDERLY PATIENT  
I don't know who you are?

THERAPIST  
Yes you do. You were just excited to see me a few minutes ago.

ELDERLY PATIENT  
No. You are trying to steal from me. Help! Help!

The Nurse tries to get the Elderly Patient to sit back down. A tussle ensues. The more the Therapist and Nurse try to control the Elderly Patient, the worse it gets.

TWO MEDICAL TECHNICIANS come running in the therapy room. One holds the Elderly Man still while the other one administers a shot. The Elderly Man immediately calms down.

Brandon watches the whole thing. He is horrified. It's like looking into the future.

SANDRA  
Mr. Cramer, lets begin. First one, Ball?

BRANDON  
Closet.

SANDRA  
Good. Bread?

BRANDON  
Fridge.

SANDRA  
Skis?

Brandon goes to answer but nothing comes out. He can't remember. He quickly looks around the room at the other patients and all he sees is agitated elderly people.

SANDRA  
Mr. Cramer, Skis? Do you remember which location the skis are?

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Um, um--

Brandon is becoming agitated himself. Why can't he remember something so simple.

BRANDON

(under his breath)

Fuck this.

Brandon gets up and tries to rush out of the therapy room. Sandra quickly gets up and cuts him off.

SANDRA

Mr. Cramer, please don't leave. This is the point of therapy. Stay and work with me so we can improve this. It's only your first day. It will get better. Come on, I know you are a professional fighter Mr. Cramer. Its going to be really hard and really tough, but you can fight this. Don't quit.

Brandon doesn't say anything. He walks right past Sandra and out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT: FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS AGO

BRANDON'S POV: All Brandon can see is a bright, white light and there is a loud ringing in his head. Slowly, Brandon's focus starts to return and the ringing starts to go away. In front of Brandon's face is a blurry Tom yelling at him

CUT TO:

The Cut Man furiously works on Brandon's face while one of Brandon's Teammates holds a bag of ice on the back of his neck.

Coach Boland waves smelling salts under Brandon's nose.

TOM

Hey! Don't quit on me! You're Brandon Cramer, you don't quit anything!

(CONTINUED)

The scent wakes Brandon up. He jerks his head away from the smelling salts and pushes Tom's hand away.

TOM

There he is. Welcome back.

The Referee approaches Brandon's corner.

REFEREE

Brandon, if you don't show me something at the beginning of this round, I am going to have to stop the fight. You got me?

BRANDON

Yup.

The Referee walks over to the otherside of the cage to check in with Ronaldo.

TOM

When this round starts, you need to tie up with him until you get your feet back under you. You are down two rounds to one. You can't lose this round. You got me? You can't lose this round!

Tom and the rest of Brandon's corner leave the Octagon.

Again, its just Brandon, Ronaldo and the Referee alone inside the cage.

CUT TO:

ANNOUNCER #1

I don't know how Brandon Cramer is still standing.

ANNOUNCER #2

He may be the toughest man alive, but that isn't going to help him unless he can mount some offense in this round.

CUT TO:

Round four begins and Ronaldo quickly closes the distance.

Ronaldo fakes a couple a legs kicks then unleashes a fight ending over hand right that just misses Brandon.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Oh, Ronaldo is now trying to finish  
this fight with one punch.

Brandon fires off a body kick that catches Ronaldo right in  
the liver. Ronaldo grabs his stomach and backs up.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
That was a vicious body  
kick. Ronaldo is badly, badly  
hurt.

Brandon charges towards Ronaldo and pushes him up against  
the cage. Brandon leans on Ronaldo and then throws a knee  
to the body. It catches Ronaldo in the exact same place as  
the body kick and Ronaldo drops to one knee.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
He got him again with another shot  
to the body.

Ronaldo goes to get back up, but Brandon drops down a level,  
secures a double leg takedown and puts Ronaldo on his back.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Takedown, Cramer.

Brandon is in Ronaldo's full guard. Brandon postures up and  
starts to throw punches and elbows. Almost all of them  
connect.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Nasty ground and pound from the  
challenger.

Ronaldo grabs the back of Brandon's head and pulls it down  
to this chest.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Rio is going for a triangle.

He then wraps his right leg behind Brandon's head and puts  
his right ankle under this left knee. He's secured a  
triangle submission.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
He's got it and its tight!

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Could this be it!

Brandon tries to pull his head out, but can't. Ronaldo  
keeps squeezing harder and harder. Brandon is about to pass  
out.

(CONTINUED)

In an act of desperation, Brandon picks Ronaldo up and lifts him over his head. Ronaldo doesn't let go of the triangle.

BOOM!

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Big slam from Cramer.

Brandon slams Ronaldo onto the mat. Ronaldo lets go of the triangle. Brandon is free. Brandon immediately passes into side control then into full mount.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
He's free. Side control. Full  
mount. This isn't a good position  
for Rios.

Again, Brandon starts to rain down punches and elbows. Ronaldo tries to move his head and put his hands up, but he is basically defenseless.

Having no other option, Ronaldo rolls over and gives Brandon his back.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
He's giving him his back!

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
He didn't have a choice. The Ref  
was looking to stop the fight in  
that mounted position.

Brandon uses his legs to to flatten Ronaldo out so he can't move. Again, Brandon starts with the ground and pound.

Ronaldo uses his hands and arms to cover his head, but leaves an opening.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Rios better protect his neck. He  
is leaving himself open for a  
rearnaked.

Brandon sees it and wraps his left arm under Ronaldo's neck and grabs his right biceps with his left hand. He has Ronaldo in a rearnaked choke.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
He locked it in.

Brandon rolls over so he is on his back with Ronaldo on top his him. There are only seconds left in the round. Brandon squeezes with everything he has.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

Cramer is squeezing with everything he has. He trying to end it right here.

Ronaldo's face turns bright red and the veins in his forehead are bulging. Ronaldo is about to go to sleep but the round ends.

Brandon lets go of the choke. Ronaldo lays on top of Brandon. Brandon doesn't care. Both fighters are completely exhausted.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

This is incredible! Have you ever seen anything like this!

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

I have been doing this for a long time and I have never see a back and forth battle like this. Both fighters have giving everything they have and are completely exhausted.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

There is no quit in either of these guys. This is the definition of having a fighter's heart.

Ronaldo slowly rolls off of Brandon and crawls to his corner.

Brandon gets to his knees, takes a few deep breaths, stands up and lumbers his way to his corner.

The crowd is going bananas.

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY: PRESENT DAY

Brandon is wearing a white button down shirt, dress pants and looking into the mirror trying to tie his tie. The tie is ugly.

David sits the edge of bathtub watching his father.

DAVID

Dad, why are you getting so dressed up?

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

I am going on some job interviews  
that your Uncle Chad set up for me.

DAVID

But you already have a job?

BRANDON

Yes, but these could be better  
jobs. High paying jobs. Jobs that  
can let us get out of this small  
apartment and back into a house.

DAVID

Oh.

Brandon is having trouble tying his tie. He starts to get  
frustrated.

BRANDON

Stupid fucking tie.

DAVID

Cockface.

Brandon shoots David a look.

DAVID

Sorry. You swore.

CUT TO:

MONTAGE - VARIOUS CORPORATE TYPE OFFICES

Brandon sits silently while INTERVIEWER #1 looks over his  
resume. Brandon smiles.

INTERVIEWER #1

So you never have had a real job  
before?

CUT TO:

Brandon is in a conference room with THREE CORPORATE  
EXECUTIVES.

CORPORATE EXECUTIVE #1

I take it you are familiar with all  
the latest cloud computing systems?

CUT TO:

(CONTINUED)

Brandon is sitting in another office. The top button of his shirt is undone.

INTERVIEWER #2

You understand that physical violence is not condoned in the work place, Mr. Cramer?

CUT TO:

Another office. Brandon isn't wearing a tie anymore. INTERVIEWER #3 is leaned down next to Brandon with his arm around him.

INTERVIEWER #3

No one is going to believe I got to meet Brandon Cramer. This is fucking incredible.

Interviewer #3 takes his phone out of his pocket and extends his arm to take a picture of Brandon and himself.

INTERVIEWER #3

Say cheese.

Brandon looks miserable but manages a small smile.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

Brandon is sitting in a small, cramped warehouse office across from a WAREHOUSE MANAGER. Brandon is still wearing the button down shirt without a tie.

There is a large window in the office over looking the warehouse floor. WORKERS are busying loading trucks and moving boxes around.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

The jobs pretty simple Mr. Cramer.

BRANDON

Please, call me Brandon.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Alright. The job is pretty simple Brandon. We tell you to move a box, you move a box. We tell you to load a truck, you load a truck.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Sounds simple enough.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

It sure is, but you wouldn't believe how many people mess it up. The job is non-union, but I can guarantee you between forty and sixty hours a week. Anything over forty is overtime and after three months, you qualify for health insurance.

Brandon is taken back. He never thought he would qualify for health insurance.

BRANDON

That's

(pause)

great. Do you need to see my resume by the way?

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Resume? You're funny. I like funny. You'll fit right in. How's Friday sound for your first day?

Brandon's confused. He doesn't understand how he got the job.

BRANDON

You mean I got the job?

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Me and your brother in law, Chad, go way back, Brandon, so I am going to level with you. See this stack of paper right here. These are job applications. And I have more in a filing cabinet in our storage area. The jobs in this warehouse turn over fast. This means you cannot miss a day of work or your gone. You also can't miss your daily quota or they will fire you for that too. Corporate don't give a fuck if your cripple, sick, dead or if your grammie just died. They'll just fire your ass and replace you with another name from this pile. It's fucked up, I know, but in this economy, they can afford the turnover.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Got it. I better be dead or I need to drag my ass to work.

The Warehouse Manager gets up and walks over to Brandon. Brandon stands.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

You pick up fast, Brandon. You are going to do just well here.

Brandon and the Warehouse Manager shake hands.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

See you Friday at 8am. Don't be late or I am going to have to fire your ass.

Brandon laughs.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

That wasn't a joke.

CUT TO:

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brandon walks towards his SUV. He is typing on his iPhone as he walks.

Brandon gets in his SUV, leans back and exhales deeply. He is relieved. He turns on the SUV, smiles and pulls away.

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

A GROUP OF STUDENTS in Gis are in the middle of a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu class. They are sitting on their knees, covered in sweat as the CLASS INSTRUCTOR is demonstrating a technique on a STUDENT.

Tom watches the class while standing in his office door.

DAVID

Coach Boland!

David runs through the entrance of the gym, pass the class towards Tom. Brandon enters right behind him carrying a gym bag and is still in the button down shirt and dress pants.

(CONTINUED)

TOM  
Hey Davey.

Tom gives David a hug. He lets out a grunt.

TOM  
That's quite a squeeze.

DAVID  
(excited)  
Dad's got something to tell you.

CUT TO:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - TOM'S OFFICE - DAY

Tom is sitting behind his desk.

Brandon is looking out the office window watching David horse around with the Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu students. David gets one of the students in a submission. The student doesn't fight back and taps.

Brandon smiles. He knows moments like this aren't going to be happening as frequent.

TOM  
What's up Gordon Gekko?

Brandon turns to Tom.

BRANDON  
I got another job today. I'm gonna have to cut down my hours here.

TOM  
I figured this was going to happen sooner or later.

BRANDON  
You know I would stay here forever if I could Coach, but I need something that pays more.

TOM  
You know if I could afford to pay you more I would.

BRANDON  
I know that Coach. You have already done more than enough for me. If it wasn't for you, I would probably be in jail.

(CONTINUED)

The situation is a little too emotional for both men. Neither one knows what to say next.

BRANDON

I can still teach a weekend class or two.

TOM

The Wednesday morning women's intro class is going to be pissed when they hear you're not coming back.

BRANDON

Just get Alex to do it. That pretty boy will make them forget about me real quick.

Tom and Brandon both share a laugh.

TOM

Speaking of Alex, Dean happens to be in town and is he coming here to talk to me and Alex about his next fight and sign the contract. Do you have time to stick around for a bit?

BRANDON

Yeah, we got time. Davey's having a good time anyways.

Brandon looks out the window again at David who happens to be wearing oversized head gear and gloves. He is hitting mitts with one of the students.

TOM

Dean also said he had something he wanted to talk to you about?

BRANDON

I saw him at Alex's last fight and he offered me a rematch with Ronaldo.

TOM

Rios? Ronaldo Rios?

BRANDON

The one and only.

TOM

He's still around.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Apparently. Dean said he is running his own academy down in Brazil and was up for the rematch.

TOM

What did you tell him?

BRANDON

Nothing. I told him I would think about it. Dean said I would get the same purse and pay per view points as my last contract if I said yes. I was seriously considering it until I got this job and now I get to tell him no.

TOM

He's not going to like that. People usually don't say no to him.

BRANDON

I think it is time he experiences that.

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

Brandon and Tom are standing together watching ALEX spar with a TEAMMATE. Brandon has changed into gym clothes.

The sparring isn't going well for Alex.

TOM

Dammit Alex, stop backing up. Move forward. This is how you got tagged in your last fight.

Alex clearly isn't listening. He keeps backing up and getting peppered with jabs.

BRANDON

(to Tom)

Let me talk to the kid.

TOM

Time!

Alex and his teammate stop sparring. Brandon walks over to Alex. The teammate Alex was sparring with steps aside.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Tell me what you are thinking.

ALEX

(breathing heavily)

Waiting for an opening. Those jabs aren't hurting me. Once he commits then I'll counter.

BRANDON

That didn't work very well in your last fight.

ALEX

I won, didn't I?

BRANDON

That is because you somehow landed a hail mary.

Alex is getting annoyed. Why should he be taking advice for a washed up fighter.

ALEX

I don't know why are you getting on my case. Frankly, you took more shots than anyone so I can't figure out why you think I should be doing something different.

Brandon doesn't acknowledge Alex's comment. He knows what goes through a fighter's head.

Brandon grabs a spare set of gloves on the floor and puts them on.

ALEX

You going to spar with me old man? I don't want to have to hurt you.

Again, Brandon ignores what Alex says. Brandon and Alex start circling each other.

BRANDON

You need to be the aggressor. You need your opponent to react to what you do, not reaction to what your opponent does.

Brandon starts walking Alex down. Alex starts throwing a few jabs while backing up. Brandon slips them easily and tags Alex with a few jabs of his own.

(CONTINUED)

Dean Black enters the gym quietly and stands off to the side watching Brandon and Alex spar. Neither fighter notices Dean.

Brandon hits Alex again with another jab. Alex is getting frustrated.

BRANDON

When are you going to counter,  
Alex? Or are you going to let me  
keep hitting you?

Brandon lands a jab again.

Alex is now really irritated and Brandon knows it. Brandon fakes a jab and Alex throws a looping overhand right. Brandon dodges it and counters with a left hook, right straight combination that staggers Alex.

Brandon presses forward and continues the assault. Alex tries to cover up, but Brandon mixes it up with attacks to the head and body. Alex takes a knee and holds up a hand indicating "no more".

BRANDON

See what happened? I got you to do  
what I wanted to do and you got  
rocked. If you continue to wait  
for the perfect opening, you are  
probably going to be knocked out  
before that opening comes. Nothing  
can break your opponent like  
constant pressure. It will make  
your opponent worry more about what  
you are doing than what they should  
be doing.

Brandon extend his hand to help Alex up. Alex smacks it away and gets back to his feet.

DEAN (O.S.)

The old lion still has a few  
tricks.

Brandon and Alex turn towards Dean.

DEAN

Let's talk some business.

TOM

Alex, when you get that gear off,  
come meet me and Dean in my office.

DEAN

Actually, let me talk to Alex in a little bit. It looks like he still has some more training to do.

Alex puts his head down in embarrassment.

DEAN

Brandon, come join us.

CUT TO:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - TOM'S OFFICE - DAY

BRANDON

The answer is "no".

DEAN

You don't even know what I am going to ask.

Brandon gives Dean a look.

DEAN

Alright, you do know what I am going to ask but I want you to understand the magnitude of your decision.

BRANDON

I don't want to hear it. I just got a new job that pays well and offers benefits. This one fight isn't worth it.

Brandon looks out the office window at David who is hitting the heavy bag.

BRANDON

I appreciate the offer and you still thinking of me, but I have other priorities now.

Brandon opens the office door and starts to leave.

DEAN (O.S.)

Five Million Dollars.

Brandon stops dead in his tracks.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

What?!?!

DEAN

My finance department just got back to me and the early estimates for the pay per view buy rate is two million. It would be our biggest pay per view ever. Combine that money from the pay per view buys and the money from the gate and you will make at least five million dollars.

Brandon takes a long look at David who is laughing and having a great time. The money just isn't worth it.

Brandon turns to Dean.

BRANDON

No.

DEAN

You serious?

TOM

Brandon, this is a huge offer. At least take a few days and think about it.

BRANDON

It don't need to.

The room is silent. No one was expecting Brandon to turn down the fight.

BRANDON

If we are done here, I am going to play with my son.

Dean doesn't say anything.

TOM

Can you tell Alex to come in here?

Brandon nods. As he leaves the office, Brandon has a huge smile on his face. He knows he made the right decision.

CUT TO:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

Brandon is on the floor wrestling with David. Its a playful moment between father and son. Both of them are enjoying their time together.

Dean, Tom and Alex leave Tom's office. Dean shakes hands with Tom and Alex then walks out of the gym past Brandon without saying goodbye.

Tom walks up to Brandon.

BRANDON  
He's pissed, huh?

TOM  
He'll get over it.  
(pauses)  
Probably.

Tom turns to Alex who is putting back on his sparring gear.

TOM  
What do you think you are doing? It's your turn to pick up lunch--

BRANDON  
I got it.

TOM  
You sure?

BRANDON  
Yeah, the kid needs the practice anyways. Where am I going? Pizza place next door?

TOM  
No, we are trying out the new Brazilian place that just opened. Its under my name.

BRANDON  
Geez, could you have ordered from a place more far away.

Tom just shrugs his shoulders.

BRANDON  
Davey, you want to come with?

(CONTINUED)

DAVID

Can I stay? Pleeeaaaassee?

TOM

Its fine with me. There isn't another class for two hours. Maybe he can spar with Alex and show him a thing or two.

DAVID

Yeah!

BRANDON

Alright. Be good.

Brandon gives David a kiss on the head.

BRANDON

See you guys in a few.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

Brandon is driving in his SUV. He flips through the radio stations and settles on a sports talk radio station.

Brandon is the happiest he has been in a while.

CUT TO:

Brandon pulls into the parking lot of the Brazilian restaurant. He seems confused.

He reaches into one pocket of his pants and pulls out his wallet. He reaches into the other one. There is nothing in there.

Brandon starts to look around the inside of his SUV for something. He checks the center console, glove box and the back seat.

He can't seem to find what he is looking for.

CUT TO:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

Tom is watching shadow box inside the practice Octagon.

TOM  
Good Davey. Nice and smooth.

Alex approaches Tom.

ALEX  
Where's lunch, Coach?

Tom looks at his watch.

TOM  
Brandon should have been back by  
now.

Tom pulls his cellphone out of his pocket and dials Brandon.

In the corner of the gym, a cellphone can be heard ringing inside of a gym bag. The ringtone is "For Those About to Rock (We Salute You)" by AC/DC. Its Brandon's phone.

TOM  
Shit.

DAVID  
Bag of dicks.

ALEX  
What's wrong?

TOM  
Brandon doesn't have his phone.

ALEX  
So?

TOM  
He needs it or he won't remember  
where he is going.

ALEX  
Seriously? He can't remember to  
pick up lunch and bring it back? Is  
he retarded--

TOM  
Watch your mouth. You keep taking  
as many shots to the head as him  
and your memory isn't going to be  
great either.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

Brandon is now driving around aimlessly.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brandon enters his apartment. Gina is sitting on the couch watching TV. She sees Brandon but no David.

GINA  
Where's Davey?

BRANDON  
(confused)  
He isn't with you?

GINA  
You were suppose to pick him up  
after school.

Brandon doesn't say anything. He is trying to remember what happened. He can't.

Gina can see Brandon struggling to figure out where David is.

GINA  
Dad, do you know where Davey is?

BRANDON  
He's, he's--

GINA  
You don't know where he is. You  
have no idea where your eleven year  
old son is, do you?

Brandon doesn't answer. He's too confused.

GINA  
Are you fucking kidding me? How  
can you not know where Davey  
is? You are such a fucking  
idiot. Thank god Mom is not alive  
to see this.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Hey! That's over the line!

GINA

Do you have any idea what its like Dad having you as a father? Its like having two children in the house. "Dad, don't forget to go grocery shopping today", "Don't forget to do laundry", "Don't forget to pick, up, your, SON!".

BRANDON

Gina, it's not that simple--

GINA

What's not that simple? Explain to me how it's not that simple?

BRANDON

It just isn't. There are things are you not old enough understand.

GINA

Don't understand? I understand you're a terrible father who makes his seventeen year old daughter share a room with her eleven year old brother because her father couldn't afford to keep them in a house.

Brandon loses his cool.

BRANDON

I couldn't afford to keep us in that house because I spent all our money trying to keep your mother alive you ungrateful little bit--

Brandon stops himself.

GINA

Bitch! Is that what you were going to call me? A bitch.

Brandon doesn't answer.

Gina's had enough. She grabs a jacket and slams the door as she leaves the apartment.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - NIGHT

Brandon and Gina are driving around looking for David. They don't say anything to each other.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - NIGHT

Brandon and Gina walk down the hallway of the apartment building looking defeated. David's not with them.

When they approach their apartment door, they see Tom and David sitting on the floor in front of it.

DAVID  
(casually)  
Hi Dad.

Gina excitedly runs to David.

GINA  
Davey!

David looks at his sister confused. He doesn't understand why his sister is so excited to see him. Tom didn't tell him Brandon forgot about him.

GINA  
I am so glad you're okay. Let's go  
inside and get you something to  
eat.

Gina takes David inside the apartment.

Tom reaches into his pocket and pulls out Brandon's iPhone. He hands it to him.

TOM  
It was in your gym bag.

Brandon gives Tom I-know-I-fucked-up look.

Tom taps Brandon on the shoulder. He understands what happened and is sympathetic.

TOM  
I'll see you this weekend.

Tom walks away leaving Brandon alone.

Brandon just stares at the phone in his hand in shock.

EXT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brandon arrives to the warehouse for his first day at work.

As he is walking in some of the other CO-WORKERS stare and whisper to each other. They recognize Brandon.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brandon is being shown around the warehouse by the floor FOREMAN.

The warehouse is massive and feels like it is alive. WORKERS are moving items around fast.

A FORKLIFT passes by carrying a huge crate.

The Foreman hands Brandon a device that looks like a pricing gun with a big cellphone screen on top.

FOREMAN

Here is your gun. Don't lose it or it comes out of your paycheck. And if you do lose it, don't take anyone else's because each gun is programmed with your employee ID number. This job is pretty simple, but you wouldn't imagine how many people fuck it up. Alright, the item you are looking for is going to show up on the screen here.

The Foreman shows Brandon the screen. A picture of a toaster appears.

FOREMAN

It is going to tell you the location and bin the item is in. This one is aisle 11, bin 3 which happens to be right behind us.

The Foreman reaches into the bin and pulls out a toaster that is still in it's box.

FOREMAN

You are going to scan the barcode which indicates you found the item. Once you do that, you are going to walk over to delivery.

(CONTINUED)

The Foreman and Brandon walk over to the delivery department.

FOREMAN

When you get here, you are going to scan this barcode on the wall which indicates you made it to delivery. Then you are going to scan the item which will register that you drop the item off at delivery. Once all that is done, the next item will pop up on the screen. Simple?

BRANDON

Yes, sir.

FOREMAN

Last thing. This gun tracks everything you do. In order to meet your quota, you need to find your next item within two minutes and drop it off at delivery within one. Each item should take a total of three minutes from the time it appears on your gun's screen to the time you drop it off at delivery. You hit the three minute mark eighty-five percent of the time and you will do fine.

BRANDON

And if I don't.

FOREMAN

Then I will be explaining all this to someone new on Monday. Any more questions?

BRANDON

No, sir.

FOREMAN

Alright, get to work.

CUT TO:

Brandon is walking up and down the warehouse looking the aisle numbers. He stops at aisle five.

BRANDON

Aisle five.

Brandon looks down at the gun.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Bin 22.

CUT TO:

Brandon drops off a large box with a picture of a table on it at delivery. Brandon is sweating profusely and looks really tired, but he is enjoying himself.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - LUNCH ROOM - DAY

Brandon sits by himself eating lunch.

More CO-WORKERS stare at him wondering why he is working in a warehouse.

Brandon notices, but keeps his head down and goes about his business.

CUT TO:

INT. WAREHOUSE - DAY

Brandon is back at it. He is walking down an aisle looking for a bin.

He finds it. It is high on shelf thirty feet up. Brandon rolls over a ladder.

He walks up the first few steps and looks up. He immediately gets dizzy. He steps off the ladder and leans against it.

CUT TO:

Brandon is struggling as he walks to find his next item. He feels dizzy and light-headed but fights through it.

CUT TO:

Its the end of the day. Brandon is leaving the warehouse and walks by the Foreman.

FOREMAN

Eighty-six percent, Cramer. Not bad for your first day.

Brandon manages a smile, but it goes away fast. He's not doing well.

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - NIGHT

Brandon sits in his SUV outside the warehouse. He is covered in sweat. He grabs a bottle of water in his SUV and chugs it.

He pulls out his iPhone and pulls up his calendar app.

CUT TO:

BRANDON'S IPHONE SCREEN

8pm - Date with Caron. Meet at apartment

CUT TO:

Brandon looks at the clock on his SUV's stereo. It reads:

6:30

INT. RESTAURANT BAR - NIGHT

Brandon and Caron sit at the restaurant bar. Caron is talking and Brandon looks like he is paying attention, but he's still feeling terrible.

Caron notices he isn't paying attention.

CARON

Hey.

Caron taps Brandon on the leg.

CARON

Was my story about zoo not entertaining enough?

BRANDON

No, no. Its not that. I'm just wondering when our table will be ready. I had my first day at my new job today and I haven't eaten anything since lunch.

CARON

Oh yeah. You started your new job today. How was it?

BRANDON

It was good. It's not a career, but it will pay the bills for the time being.

(CONTINUED)

CARON

That's great. I am so excited for you.

The beeper sitting between them on the bar goes off.

CARON

It looks like our table is ready.

BRANDON

Let me settle up here and I will meet you at the table.

CARON

Great.

Caron gets up and leaves.

Brandon motions "check" to the bar tendered. He reaches into his pocket to pull out his wallet.

Another dizzy spell hits Brandon. This is the worst one yet. A wave of nausea washes over Brandon. He is about to throw up.

Brandon sees the sign for the men's room and starts to walk towards it, but after two steps, he passes out.

A few PATRONS at the bar see Brandon collapse and rush to his aide.

Brandon lies on the floor unconscious. His arms and legs start to shake uncontrollably.

PARTON #1 lightly taps Brandon on the face. Brandon doesn't respond.

PATRON #1

Someone call 9-1-1.

Caron comes running over and see Brandon on the floor.

CARON

Oh my god!

PATRON #1

Do you know this man? What's his name?

CARON

Brandon

Parton #1 keeps tapping Brandon on the face.

(CONTINUED)

PATRON #1  
Brandon. Brandon.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT: FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS  
AGO

TOM  
Brandon? Brandon? Look at me.

Brandon is sitting on his stool looking down. He's  
completely exhausted.

TOM  
Brandon!

Brandon looks up. Tom grabs his face.

TOM  
Look at me. This is it. Last  
round.

Brandon's Teammate tries to hand him a water bottle but he  
smacks it away. He is too tired even to drink.

BRANDON  
I can't do it, Coach. I got  
nothing left.

TOM  
Hey! You have enough left for five  
minutes. You can do anything for  
five minutes. I need you to reach  
down inside and pull out whatever  
you have left. This guy doesn't  
have the heart you have. Look at  
him.

Brandon looks across the Octagon at Ronaldo who is sitting  
on his stool looking just as bad as Brandon.

TOM  
No motherfucker on the face of this  
earth can break you. You hear  
me? You can't be broken. Are you  
going to let him break you?

BRANDON  
No Coach.

(CONTINUED)

TOM

Louder. Are you going to let this motherfucker break you?

BRANDON

NO COACH!

TOM

Alright. Take him into the deep end!

Both corners leave the Octagon.

Brandon and Ronaldo stand across the cage from each other. Both men don't want continue, but their pride won't let them quit.

The crowd is on their feet clapping and cheering. The appreciate the sacrifice these two fighters have made to entertain them.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

This may be the greatest mixed martial arts fight of all time.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

This may be the greatest fight of all time.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

I second that, partner.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

This round is only going to be about who wants it more. Who has the heart to dig down and push through the blood, sweat and tears.

The Referee points to Brandon.

REFEREE

Are you ready?

Brandon nods. The Referee then points to Ronaldo.

REFEREE

Are you ready?

Ronaldo nods.

(CONTINUED)

## REFEREE

Fight!

Brandon and Ronaldo meet in the middle of the Octagon and lightly touch gloves out of respect then immediately start winging punches at each other.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

Both fighters are going all out here.

Both men stand in the middle of the cage going toe to toe. They are not defending themselves at all and don't budge.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

Neither one is backing down.

Brandon lands a right cross.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Right from Brandon.

Ronaldo lands a left hook.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Left from Rios.

Brandon connects with a straight left.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

Left from Brandon.

Ronaldo hits Brandon with a right.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)

And a right from Rios. This is incredible!

Ronaldo gets Brandon in a Muay Thai clinch, pulls Brandon's head down and knees him in the face. Brandon's nose breaks and blood immediately comes rushing out.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)

Huge knee from the Champion. Brandon is hurt.

Brandon breaks the clinch and pushes Ronaldo away. Ronaldo comes forward but Brandon throws a leg kick that hits Ronaldo on the outside of his lead leg. Ronaldo falls to the canvas.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
That was a wicked leg kick from  
Cramer.

Brandon backs up and lets Ronaldo get up. Ronaldo limps forward like a warrior.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
I have no idea how these two men  
are doing this.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Neither do I.

The two fighters begin winging punches at each other again. They all land.

Brandon goes to duck under a left hook, but eats a right upper cut from Ronaldo. Brandon's legs buckle but he doesn't go down. Brandon is wobbly.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Oh my! What an uppercut from  
Ronaldo. I don't know how Brandon  
is still standing.

Ronaldo pushes forward to try and finish the fight. Brandon fakes a left jab and digs a right hook into Ronaldo's side. Ronaldo cringes.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Vicious body shot and the Champion  
is now on the ropes.

Both fighters look up at the clock and see only thirty seconds left.

They engage again in the middle of the Octagon and throw everything they have left at each other.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
This is like out of a  
movie. Almost like "Rocky" except  
better.

Neither fighter bother defending themselves and just accept the punishment they are dishing out and receiving.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
They are leaving everything in the  
Octagon here folks.

The final round ends and both fighters collapse where they stand.

(CONTINUED)

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Listen to this crowd. Have you  
ever heard anything like this?

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Never in my twenty years in the  
business have I heard a crowd this  
loud. It's a great show of respect  
from the people in  
attendance. They know they just  
witness something  
special. Something they will tell  
their grandkids about.

The crowd is going berserk. The sound in the arena is  
deafening.

The camera closes in on Brandon's face. He is all busted up  
and bloody. He closes his eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY: PRESENT DAY

Brandon slowly wakes up. He doesn't know where he is. He's  
disoriented.

He reaches up to his face and feels the oxygen mask. He  
then touches his arm and feels the IV.

A NURSE walks into his room and sees he woke up. She walks  
over to him and tries to comfort him.

NURSE  
Mr. Cramer, you are in a  
hospital. You had an incident at a  
restaurant where you passed  
out. Mr. Cramer, do you understand  
what I am saying?

Brandon is trying to focus, but he is sleepy. He nods off.

CUT TO:

Brandon wakes up momentarily and sees Gina sleeping in a  
chair in the corner of the room.

He passes out again.

CUT TO:

Brandon wakes up again. He no longer is wearing an oxygen  
mask.

(CONTINUED)

He looks over to the chair Gina was sleeping in except she isn't there. Tom is sitting in the chair reading a magazine.

BRANDON  
(softly)  
Coach.

Tom looks over at Brandon and notices he is waking up. He puts down the magazine and walks over to Brandon's bedside.

TOM  
Hey, how are you feeling?

BRANDON  
What happened?

TOM  
You passed out at a restaurant when you were on your date with Caron.

Brandon is trying to remember what happened but he can't. Tom can tell Brandon is trying to make sense about what happened.

TOM  
The doctor said your, um, head problem most likely caused you to pass out.

Brandon starts to freak out a little bit.

BRANDON  
Where are the kids?

TOM  
Don't worry about them. Caron called Gina, Gina called Chad. They're at his house.

Brandon calms down.

BRANDON  
How long was I out?

TOM  
Well, its Monday morning. So, about three days.

BRANDON  
Fuck. I had work this morning.

TOM

Don't worry about it. I called Chad and he said he would call his buddy at the warehouse and explain to him what happened.

Brandon takes a deep breath. He is relieved that nothing else bad happened.

BRANDON

Man, my head must be really screwed up because I dreamed I saw Gina sleeping in the chair your were sitting in.

TOM

She was.

Brandon's in shock.

BRANDON

Gina? My Gina?

TOM

Yeah, she has been here since you passed out at the restaurant. Hell, she slept in that chair the past couple of nights. She would be here right now, but I had Chad come pick her up so she could shower and get something to eat. Let me tell you, that girl is tough.

Brandon lays his head back down on his pillow. He can't believe his daughter.

CUT TO:

Brandon is sitting up on his bed watching the TV mounted in the corner. He looks much better.

DAVID (O.S)

Dad!

David comes running into the room and jumps onto the bed, into his Brandon's arms.

BRANDON

Davey!

Chad and Gina enter behind David.

(CONTINUED)

CHAD

Guess who wanted to see you before school today?

Brandon smiles and gives David a huge hug. Gina stands back and seems distant.

BRANDON

How you been, buddy?

DAVID

Awesome. Uncle Chad let us stay up late and watch scary movies. In one movie, this guy got his head blown off and there was brain everywhere. It was so gross.

Brandon doesn't care. He is just happy to see his kids.

CHAD

He must have dreamt he watched that movie.

DAVID

No I didn't. You said  
(in a funny, deep voice)  
Don't tell your Dad when you see him or he is going to beat the shit out of me.

Brandon chuckles.

BRANDON

Nice, Chad.

CHAD

How are you doing?

BRANDON

I feel good. They are releasing me today so I will be home when you guys get home from school today.

DAVID

YAH!

CHAD

Alright you little loud mouth, it's time to go to school.

DAVID

Nnnnoooooo!

(CONTINUED)

CHAD  
(mocking)  
Yyyyyeeeeessssss.

BRANDON  
I'll see you tonight.

Brandon looks over at Gina.

BRANDON  
And you too. I love you guys.

DAVID  
Love you too Dad!

David gives Brandon another big hug and gets down off the bed.

CHAD  
Come on, let's go.

Brandon watches them leave. It breaks his heart to see them go so soon, but he's thrilled he gets to see them again in a few hours.

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandon opens the door to his apartment and looks around. This place is a mess.

CUT TO:

Brandon doing the dishes

CUT TO:

Brandon is vacuuming

CUT TO:

Brandon folding the laundry

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BRANDON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Brandon is putting his own clothes away. He sits down on his bed and looks around. He sees the picture of wife on his nightstand.

Brandon slowly picks it up and looks at it.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

I didn't think it was going to be this hard.

(beat)

They should have taken me instead of you.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandon is sitting on the couch watching TV. The apartment is spotless.

Gina and David enter the apartment.

BRANDON

Hey guys. How was school?

DAVID

It was great. Some kid tried to eat twenty twinkies at lunch. He only ate twelve before he threw up everywhere. It was awesome.

BRANDON

Sounds like a good time. Gina, how was your day?

GINA

Fine. I got some homework I have to do.

Gina heads to her bedroom.

BRANDON

(yelling to Gina)

I ordered some pizzas for dinner. They will be here in about thirty minutes.

DAVID

Pizza!

BRANDON

And I got extra pepperoni just for you.

David smiles.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON  
What else happened today?

DAVID  
Well--

CUT TO:

Brandon is sitting on the couch with David laying on his lap. Both of them are asleep. The TV is left on.

Gina emerges from her bedroom and slow walks towards the TV. She turns it off.

Brandon wakes up and sees Gina.

GINA  
Sorry, I thought you were asleep.

BRANDON  
Just dozing.

GINA  
I'm going to go to bed.

BRANDON  
Wait a second. I want to talk to you about something.

GINA  
I am really tired. Can't it wait till morning.

BRANDON  
It will only take a second. Come. Sit.

Gina sits down next to Brandon. Brandon looks lovingly down at David.

BRANDON  
Tom told me you slept over in the hospital a few times.

Gina looks down.

BRANDON  
You know, one night, I woke up for a moment and saw you asleep in that chair. I thought I dreamt it.

Brandon pauses and tries to gather his thoughts.

You know, a few days ago, when I forgot Davey at the gym, I said you  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)  
weren't old enough to understand  
what's going on. I was wrong.

Gina lifts her head and looks at Brandon. She wasn't expecting him to say that.

BRANDON  
I think you understand a lot more  
than I think you do so I am going  
to tell you something you need to  
know. Your Dad's sick. Its why I  
passed out at the restaurant and  
had to go to the hospital.

Brandon pauses. He doesn't know how to explain to Gina about his condition.

I don't have a disease or something  
that can be cured by surgery or  
medicine. I went to see a doctor,  
a neuropathologist, a few weeks ago  
and he diagnosed me with CTE. The  
reason I can't seem to remember  
anything is because my brain is  
injured from all those years of  
fighting. Right now, I have  
trouble remembering things that  
happened yesterday or even an hour  
ago. It just doesn't stick and its  
not going to get any better. Its  
actually going to get a lot worse.

Brandon goes to speak, but he starts to get chocked up. Gina's eyes start to tear up as well.

BRANDON  
There could even come a day where I  
don't remember who you and Davey  
are anymore. You will just look  
like strangers to me.

Gina starts weeping. She finally understands why her father can't remember simple things. Its not his fault.

Gina wraps her arms around Brandon and squeezes him tight.

GINA  
I'm sorry. I'm so sorry.

BRANDON  
It's okay. It's my fault. I  
should have told you sooner. But  
Gina, I am going to fight with

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)  
everything I've got to make sure  
you and Davey are taken care  
of. You don't have to worry about  
anything, okay.

GINA  
Okay, daddy.

Gina releases her huge and wipes some tears off her  
face. Gina and Brandon needed this moment, this release.

GINA  
Thanks for doing the laundry. You  
only shrunk a few of my things.

They both laugh.

INT. WAREHOUSE OFFICE - DAY

The Warehouse Manager is sitting at his desk going over some  
reports. He hears a knock on his office door. It's  
Brandon.

BRANDON  
Hey, Chad told me you wanted to see  
me.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER  
Yes. Come in.

Brandon sits down.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER  
Chad called me and told me what  
happened. How are you feeling?

BRANDON  
Much better, thanks.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER  
That's great. I am glad to hear  
it.

BRANDON  
I should be able to come back to  
work in a few days.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER  
That's what I wanted to talk to you  
about.

(CONTINUED)

The Warehouse Manager gets up and closes the door to his office then sits back down at this desk.

Brandon knows this isn't going to be good.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Brandon, I respect you and everything you went through so I wanted to tell you this to your face instead of over the phone. We have to let you go.

Brandon knew this was coming, but it still hits him like a ton of bricks.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Its nothing personal, but Chad explained your condition to me and we just can't have you working in the warehouse. Its too much of a liability.

BRANDON

(defensive)

So I am being let go because of a condition I have?

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

No, officially we are letting you go because you didn't come in for work at all this week. I wanted to bring you back anyways since you did so well on your first day, but we can't have someone working here that could pass out at any moment. Its too much of a danger to the company and your co-workers.

Brandon looks down trying to think of something to say to save his job.

WAREHOUSE MANAGER

Brandon. I'm sorry. I know it's fucked up, but there is nothing I can do. This came from upstairs.

Brandon starts to fill with rage, but stops and contains his emotions. There is nothing he can do.

He stands up and shakes the Warehouse Manager's hand.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Thanks for the opportunity.

Brandon leaves. The Warehouse Manager watches. He feels terrible.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY

Brandon walks down the hallway of his apartment. He sees Caron holding a basket of laundry trying to unlock her apartment door.

BRANDON

Hey.

CARON

Hey. Lauren told me you got out of the hospital. How are you doing?

BRANDON

Not too bad.

Silence. This moment is awkward. Caron feels like she needs to say something.

CARON

I've been meaning to come visit you, but things have just been crazy lately.

BRANDON

Don't worry about it. Today hasn't been great and I got nothing to do, so if you want to come over and watch a movie or something--

CARON

Yeah, I just don't really have time today.

BRANDON

Oh. What are you doing this weekend?

CARON

You know, I just have so much going on right now, I just don't think I have time for anything new in my life right now.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon gets it. She is trying to find a nice way to say "This isn't going to working out".

CARON

But I am glad to see you are out of the hospital and feeling better.

Caron gets her apartment door open.

CARON

It was good seeing you, Brandon. Really. I can still drive Gina to dance later on this week if you need me to.

BRANDON

Don't worry about it.

CARON

Okay. You let me know if you need anything. Anything at all, okay.

BRANDON

Sure.

CARON

Talk to you later.

Caron steps into her apartment and closes the door.

Brandon stands alone in the hallway wondering if his day can get any worse.

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandon enters his apartment and plops himself down on the couch. He looks around trying to figure out something to do.

He takes out his iPhone and makes a call.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - TOM'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Tom's cellphone rings. He sees it's Brandon on the caller I.D.

TOM

Hey Brandon.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Hey Coach. What's going on?

TOM

Nothing much really. Trying to teach Alex how not to get punched in the face. Other than that, same old, same old. What's up?

BRANDON

I was wondering if I could get my old hours back at the gym.

TOM

Of course. The Wednesday morning women will be thrilled. I think Alex was a little too young for their taste anyways.

BRANDON

That's great.

TOM

Hey, I was thinking, one of the new kids at the gym has a fight this weekend down in San Diego for a small regional promotion. One of the guys here that was going to corner him can't go and I need someone to fill in if you want to go.

BRANDON

I don't know.

TOM

Come on. I already got an extra hotel room paid for so you don't have to worry about that. And you can bring the kids. It will be a nice, short little vacation for you guys. You will even get a cut of the fight purse for cornering.

Brandon thinks about it for a moment. He needs the money and wouldn't mind getting away for a bit.

BRANDON

What the hell, I'll do it.

TOM

Great. You really going to be helping me out. You don't have to

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TOM (cont'd)  
be there for the weigh-ins on  
Friday, so you can head down on  
Saturday morning.

BRANDON  
Okay.

TOM  
I'll text you where the fight is  
and the directions.

BRANDON  
Okay, see you Saturday then.

Brandon hangs up and immediately brings up his calendar app on his phone to type in the trip.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BATHROOM - DAY

Brandon is taking a shower. He turns off the water, steps out of the tube and grabs a towel.

CUT TO:

Brandon wipes the steam off the bathroom mirror and looks at his face. He has some serious stubble.

He opens the bathroom mirror to reveal a medicine cabinet. He grabs a razor and shaving cream.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BRANDON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Brandon is now all clean shaven. He looks at the clothes in his closet trying to decide what to wear. There's not much in the closet. He pulls out a pair of jeans and a t-shirt.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandon sits back down on his couch and looks around the apartment again. He pulls out his iPhone.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - TOM'S OFFICE - SAME TIME

Tom is still in his office. He cellphone rings and sees Brandon calling again. He picks up.

TOM  
(confused)  
Hey Brandon.

BRANDON  
Hey Coach, what's up?

TOM  
Not too much since we talked thirty minutes ago. Did you forget to tell me something?

BRANDON  
What do you mean?

TOM  
You called me about thirty minutes ago. I asked you to come to San Diego this weekend to fill in as a corner man for a fight.

BRANDON  
Really? Are you fucking with me?

TOM  
No. We literally just talked.

Brandon doesn't know what to say.

TOM  
Brandon, is everything all right?

BRANDON  
Yeah  
(pauses)  
I was just fucking with you. I got to go though.

Brandon hangs up. He sits back for a moment trying to figure out what just happened.

He grabs his iPhone again and opens up the calendar app. He sees the trip to San Diego on his schedule. He begins to freak out a little.

He then brings up his recent calls. There it is. Thirty minutes ago he talked to Tom. Call duration: five minutes.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon tosses the iPhone on the couch. He completely forgot he already talked to Tom.

Brandon screams.

INT. BRANDON'S SUV - DAY

Brandon, Gina and David are all in the SUV heading down to San Diego. They are all laughing and having a good time.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN DIEGO FOUR POINT SHERATION - BALLROOM #1 - NIGHT

The hotel's ballroom has been converted into a mini-mixed martial arts arena. There is an Octagon in the center of the ballroom with chairs surrounding it. There are maybe one hundred people in the audience.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN DIEGO FOUR POINT SHERATION - BALLROOM #2 - NIGHT

A ballroom next to where the fights are taking place has been converted into a warm-up room. A curtain cuts the room in half with some fighters warming up on one side and their opponents warming up on the other.

Brandon, Gina and David enter the ballroom. They look around for a moment and then spot Tom warming up his FIGHTER as Alex sits next to a table with MMA gear on it watching.

Brandon and the kids walk over to Tom.

BRANDON

Hey Coach.

Tom stops for a moment.

TOM

Hey Brandon. I didn't think you were going to make it.

BRANDON

Tons of traffic and we ended up having to park a couple blocks away on the street. You know how it is. I didn't even have time to check into the hotel yet.

(CONTINUED)

Gina looks around and sees all the young, ripped FIGHTERS warming up.

GINA

That's okay Dad. I don't know why you haven't taken me to a fight before.

Tom looks startled. Gina is being pleasant. Brandon notices Tom's look.

BRANDON

We had a talk.

TOM

Wasn't going to say anything. Can you do me a favor and double check to make sure we having everything on the table over there? I still have to wrap his hands.

BRANDON

Sure.

Brandon walks over to the table. Alex doesn't even look Brandon's way.

BRANDON

Hey Alex.

Alex doesn't say anything.

BRANDON

(to himself)

Alright.

Brandon does to sit down on a empty chair next to the table but takes his iPhone out of his back pocket first and places on the table. He sits down and processes to check everything on the table.

Alex sees Brandon's iPhone on the table. He slowly walks next to Brandon.

ALEX

Hey man. Sorry, I didn't recognize you at first.

(points to Gina)

Is that your daughter?

Brandon turns and Alex quickly swipes Brandon's iPhone off the table and puts it in his pocket.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON

Yup. She's not eighteen yet.

ALEX

No, that's not what I meant. I just didn't know you had a daughter. I've never seen her around the gym. I've only seen Davey.

BRANDON

She's never been interested in any of this.

ALEX

That's cool. I gotta hit the head. See you in a bit.

CUT TO:

Brandon sits on the floor with Gina and David watching Tom wrap his FIGHTER'S hands.

GINA

Why is Coach doing that?

BRANDON

It protects his hands.

GINA

Oh.

DAVID

Dad, I'm bored.

BRANDON

Play your video games until the fights start.

DAVID

I forgot my PSP in the car.

Brandon looks at the clock on the wall.

BRANDON

There is still a good amount of time till the fights begin. Let me run to the car and get it for you. Gina, watch your brother for a few minutes. I will be right back.

(to Coach Boland)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)  
Coach, I am running to my car to  
get Davey's video game. I will be  
back in just a few minutes.

Coach nods as Brandon walks out of the ballroom.

CUT TO:

EXT. SAN DIEGO - NIGHT

Brandon walks out the hotel. He walks a few blocks down the  
street and makes a turn where he think the car will  
be. Nothing. He keeps going.

CUT TO:

Brandon is still walking but stops for a moment. He looks  
around. He doesn't know where he is. He's disoriented.

He starts to feel around his pockets for his iPhone. He  
doesn't have it on him.

Brandon begins to freak out. A MAN and a WOMEN walk by  
Brandon holding hands. He stops them.

BRANDON  
Excuse me, where are we right now?

MAN  
Palm Ave.

BRANDON  
No. What city are we in?

MAN  
San Diego.

BRANDON  
(to himself)  
San Diego?

MAN  
Are you okay? Do you need us to  
call someone for you?

BRANDON  
(confused)  
No, I'm fine.

The couple walks away.

(CONTINUED)

Brandon looks around some more. He has no idea where he is or how he got there. He's scared.

Brandon sits down on the curb and begins in weep.

CUT TO:

INT. SAN DIEGO FOUR POINT SHERATION - BALLROOM #2 - NIGHT

Gina appears to be worried. She looks at the clock on the wall. Brandon's been gone way too long. She walks up to Tom who is sitting with Alex.

GINA

Coach, have you seen my Dad?

TOM

No. Not since he went to get Davey's video game. He didn't come back yet?

GINA

No.

TOM

When did he leave?

GINA

Over an hour ago.

TOM

He should be back by now. I'm sure he's fine. Let me call his cell.

Tom pulls out his cellphone and dials Brandon.

We hear the "For Those About to Rock (We Salute You)" by AC/DC ringtone. Tom and Gina look at each other. It's Brandon's phone.

Gina looks at Alex. The sounds is coming from him.

GINA

You have his phone.

TOM

Alex, tell me you didn't take Brandon's phone.

Alex pulls the phone out of his pocket and hands it to Tom.

(CONTINUED)

ALEX

I just took it as a joke. You know, I little prank for what happened in the gym the other day.

Tom is fuming. He puts his hands on his head and walks away for a moment to compose himself.

GINA

Are you fucking serious?

ALEX

What?

GINA

My dad's sick. He needs that phone to remember where he is.

ALEX

I didn't know.

GINA

Yes you did. That's why you took it. And now my father is lost out there and he probably doesn't even know what city he is in.

Tom walks back over. He cooled down a little bit.

ALEX

Coach?

TOM

You fucked up, Alex. You fucked up big time.

(to Gina)

Come with me. We'll go look for your Dad.

(to Alex)

And you. You stay here and watch Davey. Whatever you do, don't tell him we don't know where his dad is. Do you think you can handle that?

Alex nods.

Tom and Gina run out of the ballroom.

EXT. SAN DIEGO FOUR POINT SHERATION - NIGHT

Tom and Gina run out of the hotel.

TOM  
Where did you guys park

GINA  
(pointing)  
That way.

A cop car pulls up in front of the hotel. A POLICE OFFICER gets out and opens the rear door. Brandon gets out.

Gina sees Brandon and goes running up to him.

GINA  
Dad!

She hugs him.

GINA  
I'm so glad you are okay.

Brandon is still disoriented and confused. He doesn't know why Gina is so worried.

Tom approaches the Police Officer.

POLICE OFFICER  
He with you?

TOM  
Yes. Where was he?

POLICE OFFICER  
He was wandering around a few blocks away. I'm a big fan and recognized him. He said he didn't know where he was. I knew these fights were happening here tonight, so I figured I would take a shot and bring him here first before I brought him down to the station.

GINA  
Thank you so much, Officer.

POLICE OFFICER  
Not a problem. It's not everyday you run into one of your hero's.

A call comes over the Police Officer's radio.

(CONTINUED)

POLICE OFFICER

I got a go.

TOM

Thanks.

The Police Officer gets back into his car and pulls away. Gina is still hugging Brandon while he is still trying to figure out what is going on.

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT: FLASHBACK - 10 YEARS  
AGO

Brandon leans against the Octagon with his hands resting on top of the cage. His head is down. He's exhausted.

His Teammate pours water over his head. Brandon doesn't even notice.

CUT TO:

ANNOUNCER #1

I don't know which way the judges are going to go here.

ANNOUNCER #2

You have to give Cramer rounds one and four and Rios rounds two and three. Whoever they think won the last round is going to win this fight.

ANNOUNCER #1

I think it's safe to say either Cramer or Rios lost this fight. You can certainly make a case for either man.

CUT TO:

Tom spins Brandon around.

TOM

You did good kid.

Tom pulls a shirt over Brandon's head and puts a hat, backwards, on his head.

The Referee grabs Brandon by the wrist and brings him to the center of the Octagon where Ronaldo is waiting. The Referee holds each fighter by the wrist.

(CONTINUED)

The Ring Announcer walks behind them. Dean stands in the background holding the championship belt.

RING ANNOUNCER  
After five rounds, we go to the  
Judge's scordcards. Judge Townsend  
scored the bout 48-47 Rios.

Ronaldo gives a little fist pump.

RING ANNOUNCER  
Judge Lennon scores the fight 48-47  
Cramer.

Brandon looks over at Tom. Tom gives Brandon a little head nod like "you got this".

RING ANNOUNCER  
And Judge Kelleher scores the fight  
48-47 for the winner by split  
decision...  
(long beat)

Brandon closes his eyes.

RING ANNOUNCER  
and still the Heavyweight Champion  
of the world, ROOOONNAAALLDDOOO  
RRRRIIIIIOOOOSSS!

Ronaldo raises his hands high in the air while Dean puts the belt around his waist.

Half the crowd cheers while the other half boos.

Brandon and Ronaldo embrace.

Ronaldo whispers into Brandon's ear in broken English.

RONALDO  
(heavy Portuguese accent)  
You champion. You champion.

BRANDON  
Thank you.

Brandon walks out of the Octagon with Tom and the rest of his corner while Announcer #2 interviews Ronaldo in the Octagon.

Brandon walks down the entrance way out of the arena with he head down. He gave it everything he had and still came up short. The fans applaud in appreciation as Brandon walks by. Brandon doesn't notice.

(CONTINUED)

CUT TO:

Announcer #2 has his arm around Ronaldo.

ANNOUNCER #2

That fight was so close. What are your feelings of a rematch with Brandon?

RONALDO

(in broken English)

Yes. He a champion. Yes.

The crowd applauds.

CUT TO:

The closer Brandon gets to the exit of the arena, the louder the fans cheer. Brandon didn't notice at first but lifts his head.

TOM

They're cheering for you.

Brandon stops just before the arena exit and takes it all in. The crowd is going nuts.

A wave of emotion floods over Brandon. He loves this. He just fought the fight of his life and left everything in the Octagon. No regrets.

Brandon grins. Tom pats him on the back.

They walk out of the arena into the backstage arena.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT BUILDING - DAY: PRESENT DAY

Brandon enters his apartment building and opens his mailbox. Its half full. He quickly goes through the mail.

A bill from the hospital. Cable bill. Utility bill with past due written on it. Phone bill.

Brandon slams closed his mailbox.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BRANDON'S BEDROOM - DAY

Brandon throws the mail on the table beside his bed and then lays down. He stares at the ceiling for a moment and then pulls out his cell phone. He dials.

BRANDON

Hey, Dean.

(beat)

Good, good.

(beat)

Is that fight with Rios still on the table?

(beat)

For the five mill, right?

(beat)

Great, I'm in.

(beat)

I'll be ready.

(beat)

Cool. Talk to you later.

Brandon hangs up and brings up his calendar app and starts typing.

He dials another number.

BRANDON

Tom, I took the fight.

CUT TO:

INT. DANCE STUDIO - NIGHT

The dance studio is empty and lightly lit.

Gina sits on the floor next to her gym bag putting on her dance shoes and stretches out a bit.

She stands up and begins to dance. Slowly.

As Gina looses up, he moves are much fast and more complex.

There is a certain grace and power to her dancing.

Brandon quietly enters the dance studio and leans against a wall. He watches his daughter silently.

Gina finally stops and freezes in her final pose.

Brandon starts clapping. Gina's startled.

She turns around and sees her father.

(CONTINUED)

GINA  
How long have you been watching?

BRANDON  
Just got here.

Gina grabs a towel out of her gym bag and wipes her face.

GINA  
Where's Davey?

BRANDON  
He's with your Uncle Chad.  
(beat)  
I took a fight.

GINA  
Like the one in San Diego where you  
helped out Coach?

BRANDON  
No. I am going to be the one in the  
cage this time.

Gina turns her back to Brandon.

BRANDON  
I wanted to come here and tell you  
instead of you hearing it on the  
news or seeing it on the internet  
before we had a chance to talk.  
(beat)  
I'm broke, Gina. You already know  
this. The job at the warehouse is  
gone. They can't have a guy on  
their staff who can't remember  
anything and gets lost easily. I  
can't get another job because I  
don't have any skills besides  
fighting and working at the gym and  
doing appearances don't cover all  
the bills.

Brandon walks around Gina to see her face. She's crying.

GINA  
Fighting caused all of this and you  
want to do it again.

BRANDON  
I don't, but there's no other  
way. If there was, I would do  
it. I am going to make at least  
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON (cont'd)  
five million off this fight  
alone. That will cover all our  
bills and let us move out of that  
shitty apartment. It will even pay  
for you and Davey to go to college.

GINA  
I don't care. It's not  
enough. That money wouldn't make  
you remember who Davey and I are.

BRANDON  
Gina, look at me.

Gina looks up at Brandon.

BRANDON  
This is the only way I can give you  
and Davey a life worth  
remembering.

Gina buries her face in Brandon's chest. Brandon hugs her.

GINA  
I know but I still hate it.

Brandon grabs the towel off the ground and hands it too  
Gina.

BRANDON  
I know you do.

She wipes her tears away.

GINA  
You better win.

Brandon chuckles.

BRANDON  
There's no way I won't.

Brandon picks up Gina's gym bag and puts her arm around her.

BRANDON  
Let's go home.

INT. HIT, KICK, GRAPPLE GYM - DAY

The gym is empty and lightly lit.

Brandon sits on the floor next to his gym bag putting on his hand wraps. He does it very carefully. Almost ritualistic.

Brandon stands up and begins to bounce up and down in front of the wall mirror. He shakes his arms out and begins to shadowbox.

He throws one jab, then another and another.

He's loosening up and starting to sweat. He's feeling good.

Brandon unleashes a combination and finishes with a headkick. He balances himself and starts another combination.

Like Gina at the dance studio, there is a power and grace to Brandon's movement. It's like all his problems have melted away.

Alex emerges from the locker room in the back carrying a bag. His hair is wet from just getting out of the shower. He watches until Brandon stops.

ALEX

I heard you took the fight.

Brandon turns and sees Alex. He sits down and starts to unwrap his hands.

BRANDON

Yup.

Alex approaches.

ALEX

You look good. Real fluid.

BRANDON

Thanks.

ALEX

I wanted to say sorry for what happened in San Diego--

BRANDON

(indifferent)

Don't worry about it. I don't remember it anyways.

(CONTINUED)

Alex walks past Brandon like he is going to leave but stops. He turns to Brandon.

ALEX

What happened to you?

BRANDON

The years of doing this finally caught up to me. And they will catch up to you if you don't start listening to Coach.

Alex gives Brandon a look like "not me".

BRANDON

I'm serious, kid. You keep talking shots to the head like you do and you won't remember your own mother's name.

ALEX

Why are you getting back into the cage then?

BRANDON

For my kids.

ALEX

No offense, wouldn't the better thing for them be you not getting back into the cage.

BRANDON

When you have kids, sometimes the best thing for them is the worst thing for you. You have to make sacrifices for them and this one last fight is one of them.

Brandon gets up and slings his gym bag over his shoulder.

BRANDON

I might not remember the fight when it over or whether I won or lost, but I will remember that I did everything in my power to give me kids the best chance to succeed in this life. They win no matter what happens.

Alex stands taking in what Brandon said. Finally, something someone said may have sunk in.

Brandon walks past Alex and taps him on the shoulder.

(CONTINUED)

BRANDON  
Keep your chin tucked, kid.

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - BRANDON'S BEDROOM - DAY

On a table next to the bed sits an iPhone next to a framed picture of Brandon with his arms around his wife. On the iPhone screen is a clock reading 5:59am. The time changes to 6:00am and an alarm on the phone goes off. Brandon rolls over and switches it off.

Brandon sits up and swings his feet over the side of the bed to put his feet on the floor. As the camera pans up, a large scar can be seen running vertically down Brandon's left knee.

As the camera keeps panning, we see the rest of Brandon's body. Unlike at the beginning, Brandon's beer belly is gone. He's not as chiseled as he was ten years ago, but he's in great shaped.

As Brandon rubs his face, we see his knuckles again. They are red and swollen from training.

He grabs his iPhone and slowly starts to stand up. He still gets up like an old man.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - DAVID AND GINA'S BEDROOM - DAY

Gina and David are still asleep.

Brandon enters with a big duffle bag thrown over his shoulder.

He walks over to David and gives him a kiss on the head.

David slightly opens his eyes and sees Brandon.

DAVID  
(sleepy)  
Kick his ass, Dad.

BRANDON  
Will do, buddy.

Brandon walks over to Gina's bed. Gina has her back turned to him.

Brandon leans over to give her a kiss and notices a tear rolling down her face. He wipes it away.

(CONTINUED)

He whispers something into her ear. She doesn't open her eyes, but she smiles.

Brandon goes to walk out of their bedroom but turns around one last time to look at them before leaving.

CUT TO:

INT. BRANDON'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Brandon walks past Chad who is sleeping on the couch and out the door.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT

TWO FIGHTERS are in the middle of the Octagon circling each other. FIGHTER #3 fakes a kick to the body which makes FIGHTER #4 put his hands down to block it. Bad move.

FIGHTER #3 immediately follows with a head kick that connects flush.

ANNOUNCER #2 (O.S.)  
Head kick.

FIGHTER #4 is knocked out cold.

ANNOUNCER #1 (O.S.)  
Oh my god! What a spectacular  
knockout. Listen to this crowd.

The crowd's electrified.

CUT TO:

INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

SILENCE.

Brandon sits on a chair in the back corner of the locker room alone. His sweatshirt hood is pulled up and his head is down. You can't see his face.

Across the room, there is a TV mount on the wall showing a replay of Fighter #4 being knocked out. The sound is muted.

(CONTINUED)

The floors of the locker room are lined with thin, cheap carpeting and are covered with small wrestling mats. There are empty chairs against one wall and a table with athletic tape, MMA gloves and other fight gear against another.

COACH TOM BOLAND opens the door to the room and sticks his head in.

TOM

Brandon.

Brandon doesn't look up or even acknowledge Tom.

TOM

It's time.

Tom closes the door and Brandon is left alone again. Moments pass and Brandon still doesn't move.

Brandon's breathing starts to get heavy but in rhythm. His breathing starts to get heavier and the pace gets faster.

All the sudden Brandon lets out a primal scream. He raises his head up. His face is glistening with sweat.

CUT TO BLACK

END.