

JUST DO IT.



The unauthorized rise of nike.

Written by
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OVER BLACK--

Rhythmic, controlled BREATHS of a man running...

...breath in...breath out.. breath in...breath out...

SMASH UP ON:

LEATHER TRACK SHOES

POUNGING dirt track like a set of efficient pistons, giving rise to the DULL ROAR of a FEW HUNDRED SPECTATORS...

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL TRACK MEET - DAY

TEENAGE PHIL KNIGHT (aka "BUCK", pale, blonde-haired) works his rail-thin body to its breaking point with each step...

But no matter how hard his feet churn, the view is always the same, locked on the back of crosstown rival JIM GRELLE.

As the runners break into the final turn, Phil makes his move. Crowd THUNDEROUS as the two young men explode down the final stretch...

Grelle can feel Phil gaining, and kicks into another gear, pulling ahead and crossing the finish line with ease.

Gasping for breath, Phil watches as Grelle celebrates with his PRETTY GIRLFRIEND. Then, he sees Grelle's feet...

He's wearing Adidas shoes.

INT. CAR - NIGHT

Light misting rain. Phil's father, WILLIAM KNIGHT (staunch, Republican) drives, perfectly erect, almost regal. Beside him, a frustrated Phil quietly turns his RED 2ND PLACE RIBBON over in his hand.

WILLIAM KNIGHT

You're graduating soon. That's a big step. Becoming a man.

Phil nods, a faraway look in his eyes.

PHIL KNIGHT

Yes, sir.

WILLIAM KNIGHT

Stanford is the better school, Buck. It's the *respectable* choice. You go there, you make something out of yourself.

The declaration hangs heavy in the air, until...

PHIL KNIGHT
I want to go to Oregon.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
Oregon isn't as good of a school.

PHIL KNIGHT
They have a better track program.

William nods, allowing the uncomfortable silence to wash over the both of them. No sense in getting upset.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
When I was your age, I used to fantasize about becoming a great novelist. A great journalist, a great statesman. What I do, is respectable.

He sucks in a breath. As though transporting himself back.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)
But the ultimate dream, it was always to be a great athlete...Same as you. I wanted that, that kind of exuberant clarity when the ball is in midair, when both boxers sense the approach of the bell. I wanted that, whatever that was, to be my life, my daily life.

He turns to Phil. The street lights cutting across the misty windows, cascading shards across Phil's disappointed face.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Sadly, fate had made me good, not great. Just like you.

Phil shoves the second place ribbon into his pocket and stares out at the passing blacktop with indignant silence, a quiet determination brooding on his young face as we CUT TO:

INT. UNIVERSITY OF OREGON CAMPUS - DAY

Phil, in his high school letterman's jacket, trekking across campus. Towards the infamous--

HAYWARD FIELD.

Nestled like a wooden cradle in a river basin so green they call it the Emerald Valley...

INT. HAYWARD FIELD - CONTINUOUS

Phil enters the stadium; an arena with its own aura. He stops alongside the empty grandstands, watching as the OREGON TRACK TEAM practices, pushing themselves to the limit.

Phil stays focused on their FEET as-- a VOICE rises above the pounding shoes and belabored breaths.

BILL BOWERMAN (O.S.)
Nobody ever remembers number two!

A voice that can only belong to legendary Oregon track coach BILL BOWERMAN. In his signature Tyrolean hat. Bowerman has a Gary Cooper presence, eyes an impossible blue.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
Life has winners and it has losers!
Which are you going to be?

Phil takes in the runners, keeled over. Gasping. A momentary reprieve before Bowerman blows his whistle and they're right back at it. Phil loves it, *this is where he is meant to be.*

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Bare walls. No plaques or mementos. No reminders of the national championships.

BILL BOWERMAN
Why do you want to come to Oregon?

PHIL KNIGHT
Sir, to be the best miler I can be!

Bowerman stares across his desk, his piercing blue eyes searching this lanky, awkward mop of reddish-blond hair.

He asks again:

BILL BOWERMAN
Why do you want to come to Oregon?

Phil stammers, riddled, which Bowerman reads like a book.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
You're going to Oregon to get an education. You can't run for the rest of your life.

Meeting over. Bowerman rises, stretches out his giant paw.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
 I'm sure you're a fine worker but I
 only got one scholarship spot left.
 You want to be a man of Oregon,
 you'll have to prove it as walk-on.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Coach--

BILL BOWERMAN
 Son, don't call me Coach. Call me
 Bill or Mr. Bowerman.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Mr. Bowerman...I was just wondering,
 maybe you had some advice...about
 how I can get better?

BILL BOWERMAN
 You want to be better, triple your
 speed. Nobody remembers number two.

They shake as we CUT TO:

EXT. BILL BOWERMAN'S OFFICE - MOMENTS LATER

Phil exits Bowerman's office, only to find Jim Grelle waiting
 patiently outside. Phil practically deflates.

But then, that determined look comes over him once again.

SMASH INTO:

SHOES SPLASHING DOWN IN MUD

A dozen of them. One after the other. Oregon green with
 yellow stripes. Adidas. We are--

EXT. THE UNIVERSITY OF OREGON - DAY

Phil and the rest of the MIDDLE DISTANCE RUNNERS grind in the
 shittiest of elements. Rain. Snow. Wind. Bowerman constantly
 barking like a seasoned drill sergeant.

BILL BOWERMAN
 In life you're either a tiger or a
 hamburger. Tigers do not quit! Tigers
 do not ask for permission. If they
 want something they just go and do
 the work necessary to take it.

But with each race - and each practice - Phil still finds
 himself forced to stare at Grelle's back *for four more years.*

EXT. HAYWARD FIELD TRACK - PRACTICE - DAY

Track practice. Bowerman calls out to Phil.

BILL BOWERMAN
Buck, what's your shoe size?!

Phil jogs over. Bowerman holds up A PAIR OF FRANKENSTEINED SHOES. They look like they could fall apart at any moment.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
The average miler's stride is roughly six feet, which means there are 880 strides in a mile. If I take an ounce off a pair of track shoes, then a miler will have 54 fewer pounds to carry around the track.
(beat)
It's simple math.

Phil takes the shoes. They look terrible.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
I call 'em "The Vagina." Look like hell but they feel great once you're inside 'em.

PHIL KNIGHT
(confused)
Why me, Coach?

He claps Phil on the shoulder, man-to-man.

BILL BOWERMAN
Frankly, I can afford a few fuck ups on you that I can't with the some of the others.

Bowerman marches off, SHOUTING:

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
Grelle! New pair of shoes for you.
Carpskin. Top of the line. *Four* ounces!

INT. PHI GAMMA DELTA HOUSE- NIGHT

Luau-themed frat party. Drunk, loud college kids drinking and flirting. We find Phil tucked into a corner in his Hawaiian button-down. Hiding behind his beer as he stares across the room at--

JIM GRELLE, holding court with a TRIO OF CUTE COEDS. The way they're laughing at his jokes you'd think he was the next coming of George fucking Burns.

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF OREGON CAMPUS - DAY

Phil graduates from college. He poses with his family (father, mother LOTA, and twin sisters, JEANNE and JOANNE, 4 years younger than Phil.) Lota kisses his forehead.

LOTA KNIGHT

We are so proud of you, honey.

William measures Phil with his eyes.

WILLIAM KNIGHT

What now, Buck? It's time to go do something respectable.

ON PHIL, staring across the quad, at Jim Grelle, taking photos with his pretty girlfriend and his PROUD PARENTS.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (O.S.)(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

So, what is it you want?

PHIL KNIGHT

I want to win.

CUT TO:

INT. STANFORD UNIVERSITY - BUSINESS CLASS - DAY

SUPER: 1962

Phil, now 22, blends into the rows of graduate students as Professor FRANK SHALLENBERGER scribbles onto a blackboard.

FRANK SHALLENBERGER

Your assignment over the break is to come up with a small business idea, which you will present to the class.

(then)

And remember, have the courage to take a risk. If you fail, guess what, you can always go out and try again!

EXT. STANFORD UNIVERSITY - DAY

Phil and his roommate, CHUCK CALE, out for a morning run. Chuck blatantly checks out every girl that they pass.

CHUCK CALE

Who cares what you come up with, it's just a bullshit assignment. It ain't gotta light the whole damn world on fire, Buck.

Chuck slows, pulls off limping to a bench.

PHIL KNIGHT
What's wrong? Can't keep up?

CHUCK CALE
Ha! You wish.

Chuck peels off his shoe. His foot is bleeding.

CHUCK CALE (CONT'D)
Man, these shoes blow.

He angrily heaves the shoes across the quad. Phil laughs.

A second later, TWO COEDS stroll past, on their way to class.

CHUCK CALE (CONT'D)
Hello, ladies.

Chuck tips his imaginary cap. The gals roll their eyes, giggling a bit.

CHUCK CALE (CONT'D)
You ever been with a woman like
that, Buck? Changes the whole way
you see the world.

He hops up, hobbling after the pretty gals.

INT. OREGON JOURNAL OFFICES - DAY

Phil waits outside his father's office, where he overhears
TWO STAFFERS in mid-debate:

STAFFER 1
It's just not possible. Leica is a
far superior camera.

STAFFER 2
It's a far more *expensive*, German
camera. These new Japanese Nikons
are way cheaper.

STAFFER 1
Leicas are the best though.

STAFFER 2
Wouldn't be the first time the
Germans fell from grace.

They laugh.

STAFFER 2 (CONT'D)
Alfred Eisenstaedt just traded his
Leica in for a Nikon.

STAFFER 1

No shit?

STAFFER 2

Said Nikon sold six million of them
in the US *so far*.

Phil's eyes light up, a jolt of inspiration.

INT. STANFORD - BUSINESS CLASS - DAY

Phil teeters in front of the class, more nervous than we've ever seen him. A room full of eyeballs staring back at him. Including Chuck, who offers a supportive thumbs-up.

Phil barely even looks up from his paper as he reads:

PHIL KNIGHT

What would happen if the Japanese did to German shoes what they have done to German cameras? The German-made Leica is universally known as the best photography camera. But they're expensive. And over the last few years the Japanese Nikon-brand cameras have become cheaper without sacrificing quality.

Most of the room has already checked out, nodding off.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I propose: What if Americans became more oriented toward fitness? With cheap Japanese labor, an American distributor could sell track shoes that rival those of the German-made Adidas, in quality, but while also undercutting them in price...

Even Chuck has stopped paying attention as well, busy flirting with the cute girl in the seat beside him.

INT. STANFORD UNIVERSITY - CAFETERIA - DAY

Phil snakes his way through the crowded tables, searching for a place to sit. He eyes a table of pretty girls and steels himself, working up the nerve to approach, until--

FRANK SHALLENBERGER (O.S.)

Mr. Knight.

Phil turns--

FRANK SHALLENBERGER (CONT'D)
 Your presentation yesterday, a bit
 niche but not without promise. It was
 refreshing to finally hear something
 that wasn't just about electronics.

PHIL KNIGHT
 It was just a crazy idea.

FRANK SHALLENBERGER
 Most of them are.
 (then)
 You want to know something about
 being an entrepreneur, Mr. Knight?
 99% of people in this world never
 even try for fear of failure.

Frank gestures out at the crowded cafeteria.

FRANK SHALLENBERGER (CONT'D)
 Look around. See the guys eating
 alone? They're the ones who are going
 to start their own businesses. The
 ones who aren't afraid of trying.

Frank wanders off, letting his wisdom settle over Phil like a
 boulder. Phil looks back at the table of girls -- he can't do
 it -- and instead finds an empty table and sits alone.

EXT. STANFORD UNIVERSITY - DAY

A college job fair. Recruitment booths litter the quad.

Suddenly, a pale white blur rockets past. It's Phil, racing
 breathlessly across campus.

INT. CROTHERS HALL

Phil charges inside, taking the stairs two at a time...

INT. DORM ROOM

Sweating terribly, Phil barges in. Chuck looks up as Phil
 ransacks his side of the room, which is already a disaster.

CHUCK CALE
 What the hell are you doing? Did
 you just kill someone, Buck?

Phil quickly strips off his clothes.

PHIL KNIGHT
 I have an interview. My dad's gonna
 kill me if I fuck this up.

He hastily pulls on his best green glen plaid suit. Then spins in circles, like a dog searching for something.

Finds it! A handkerchief hidden under his bookbag. He crams it into his breast pocket, then rushes back out the door.

CHUCK CALE

Buck! Wait!

PHIL KNIGHT (O.S.)

Can't. I'm late!

INT. JOB FAIR INTERVIEW - DAY

Phil sweats like a faucet... sitting across from a CONSERVATIVE RECRUITER.

RECRUITER

Mr. Knight, what would you say are your life's aspirations?

Phil takes a deliberate breath. Calmly answers.

PHIL KNIGHT

My goal in life is to be number one. Sir.

RECRUITER

Number one?

PHIL KNIGHT

Yes, sir.

RECRUITER

I don't understand. Number one at what exactly?

Only... *Phil doesn't exactly know himself.* He stalls, reaching for his handkerchief to blow his nose. Only Phil looks down and realizes the handkerchief is actually a sock.

Phil blows his nose anyway. The recruiter's jaw drops.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (PRE-LAP)

What do you mean you got no offers?!

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Phil drinks straight out of an orange juice carton.

WILLIAM KNIGHT

None at all? You're a grown man, Buck.

(MORE)

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)

You have two degrees and nothing to show for it. What the hell do you plan on doin'?!

PHIL KNIGHT

I was thinking... maybe I'd go to Japan.

WILLIAM KNIGHT

Japan? With what money? Dammit, Buck, it's time to quit jackassin' around and do better.

CUT TO:

EXT. GROCERY STORE PARKING LOT - DAY

Phil sells his cherry black 1960 MG. Paid in cash.

EXT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

Phil says goodbye to his disapproving father and twin sisters.

JOANNE

Japan? Why, Buck, it was only a few years ago the Japs were out to kill us! Some of them still don't know they lost.

JEANNE

They might take you prisoner, Buck. Gouge out your eyeballs. They're known for that -- *your eyeballs*.

Phil moves to his mother, who says nothing. But there is something else in her silence. Consent. *Even pride*.

INT. AIRPLANE - DAY

Armed with his backpack and a copy of *Instant Japanese*, Phil crams between TWO JAPANESE BUSINESSMEN. OVER THE INTERCOM, the PILOT addresses the passengers in rapid-fire Japanese.

And now Phil begins to sweat. He cranes his head to get a look out the window-- at the BLAZING RED CIRCLE on the wing.

PHIL KNIGHT

What the hell am I doing?

A STEWARDESS moves past, delivers newspapers and an elaborate silk-screened CERTIFICATE with the juni-shi, or Asian lunar zodiac. The year is 1962. Year of the Tora (or as it's translated on the certificate, the Tiger.)

Phil pulls out the sports page:

"Jim Grelle breaks the 4-minute mile at the Mt. SAC Relays."

Bitter, Phil tosses the paper aside and closes his eyes as the ROAR OF JET ENGINES quickly melt into...

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

Phil awakens with a jolt as the landing gears engage. He peers out the window at-- the pulsatingly bright city of TOKYO. The Ginza lit up like a Christmas tree.

INT. CAB - NIGHT

Phil rides in silence past large swaths of the city appearing only in total darkness.

CAB DRIVER
(in broken English)
War. Many building still bomb.

EXT. DINGY HOSTEL - NIGHT

Phil stands before a dirty, dilapidated hostel that looks roughly two seconds from imploding.

INT. DINGY HOSTEL - LOBBY

An ELDERLY WOMAN is at the front desk. She bows to Phil - who awkwardly returns the gesture, only she isn't bowing. She's just bent by age, like a tree that's weathered many storms.

INT. DINGY HOSTEL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

She shows Phil to his room.

PHIL KNIGHT
(bows, in stilted Japanese)
Oyasumi nasai.

Before Phil enters, he hears LAUGHTER, at the far end of the hallway-- A YOUNG AMERICAN WOMAN and her AMERICAN BOYFRIEND returning to their room, drunk and happy.

Phil and the woman make brief eye contact before she and her boyfriend disappear into their room.

INT. DINGY HOSTEL - PHIL'S ROOM - NIGHT

Phil curls up on a thin tatami mat, alone and wide-awake.

EXT. HOSTEL - EARLY THE NEXT DAY

Phil laces up his green Adidas running shoes, stares out at--
 AN INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT in total desolation. Block after block levelled. Docks and factories, primary targets of the B-29s.

EXT. TOKYO - DAY - VARIOUS

Phil goes for a jog around the city...

He watches ANCIENT FISHERMEN at the TSUKIJI FISH MARKET spread their catches onto wooden carts and haggle with leather-faced merchants. He takes a PHOTO with his camera.

Elsewhere, he watches THREE CHILDREN (two boys and a girl, maybe around 8) play in the street. The LITTLE GIRL has on a red wool hat, pink coat. She smiles at Phil. Then, Phil notices her shoes...they're made of *cardboard*.

LATER

Phil steps inside a Japanese Sporting Goods Store...

INT. JAPANESE SPORTING GOODS STORE

He scans the shoes on display. Naturally gravitating to the TRACK SHOES. One pair in particular drawing his attention.

A pair of imitation Adidas TRACK SHOES. Three stripes and all.

PHIL KNIGHT

Excuse me, these shoes...

He holds up the shoe to a CLERK, who nods rapidly as Phil flips through his translation book.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

(choppy Japanese)

What is name?

CLERK

Onitsuka. *Tora*.

The Clerk gives an enthusiastic thumbs up. *Good shoe.*

PHIL KNIGHT

Tora?

Phil recognizes that word. He pulls the folded lunar calendar from his flight out of his bag. Year of the Tora...Tiger.

EXT. JAPANESE SPORTING GOODS STORE - MOMENTS LATER

Phil exits, wearing a new pair of Tiger running shoes. Under his arm is a second pair. He heads across the street toward the poor little girl in the red wool hat. Gives her the shoes.

EXT. MOUNT FUJI - DUSK

A cool evening breeze swirls through the group of hikers gathered at the base. They're all bundled up. All of them except Phil...in his Bermuda shorts, tee, and Tiger sneakers.

Phil spots a MAN, in a rubberized coat, coming down the mountain. Phil approaches, reaching for his wallet...

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNT FUJI - STATION 7 - NIGHT

Phil hikes up the mountain at night, in his new rubberized coat, alongside hundreds of natives and tourists.

At STATION 7, Phil takes a rest. He buys a Japanese beer and a cup of noodles. Finds a bench to eat at.

A WOMAN (O.S.)
You should buy some sandals.

Phil turns-- and sees the Young American Woman from his hostel. Along with her boyfriend.

WOMAN
Mount Fuji is an active volcano,
the ash and soot is guaranteed to
ruin those pretty shoes of yours.

Phil looks down at his shoes, already covered in a thin layer of soot and ash.

The young woman sits, without an invitation, along with her annoyed boyfriend. They're both out of breath, and sweating.

WOMAN (CONT'D)
You an alien or something?

PHIL KNIGHT
Huh?

WOMAN
You don't even look like you've
broken a sweat yet.

PHIL KNIGHT

Oh. I used to run track at Oregon.
Half-miler.

The boyfriend scowls. But the girl seems impressed.

WOMAN

But here's the million dollar
question: Were you a winner?

Phil looks at the pretty girl, *what should he say? Nobody knows him here. He can be whomever he wants to be.*

PHIL KNIGHT

I was the best.

The girl smiles. She couldn't be more than 20. With a Bohemian spirit and a confidence that cut right to the point of things.

WOMAN

I'm Sarah. From Maryland.

PHIL KNIGHT

Phil. Phil Knight. From Oregon.
Hello, nice to meet you.

SARAH

No-no. No hellos. The trouble with
hello is there is always a goodbye.

Her voice is peculiar, and she over-pronounces certain words making it hard for Phil to discern if's a Maryland accent or a speech impediment. Either way, he finds her adorable.

EXT. MOUNT FUJI - LATER

Phil, SARAH, and her American boyfriend now continue the hike up the mountainside together.

PHIL KNIGHT

So Maryland, huh?

SARAH

(proudly)

Horse country, actually. Grew up
riding and jumping. Practically
grew up in the saddle. Daddy owns a
candy bar company near there. Was
actually my grandfather's company,
and should my father have his
wishes, one day it'll be mine.

(then, flippantly)

Though I can't say I have much
interest in money.

Phil glances over, sees the boyfriend scowling once more.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I'm studying philosophy at Connecticut College.

(then)

Not a great school. I'd wanted to go to Smith, where my sister goes. But I didn't get in.

PHIL KNIGHT

It sounds as if you haven't gotten over the rejection.

She grins, half-laughing.

SARAH

Not even close!

PHIL KNIGHT

Rejection is never easy.

SARAH

You can say that again.

(then)

So, what's a boy from Oregon doing on a mountain in Japan?

PHIL KNIGHT

When I figure it out I'll have to let you know.

She laughs again, then states matter-of-factly:

SARAH

All the boys back home are going to business school. They all plan to become *bankers*.

(rolls her eyes)

Everyone does the same thing-- so *boring*.

PHIL KNIGHT

Boredom scares me.

SARAH

Ah. That's because you're a rebel, Phil Knight from Oregon.

Phil stops walking, stabbing his walking stick into the ground. A *rebel, huh?* He likes the way it makes him feel.

CUT TO:

AS THEY NEAR THE SUMMIT,

The path grows narrow, the climb much more treacherous. Sarah seizes Phil's hand, clearly irking her boyfriend.

AMERICAN BOYFRIEND

The Japanese have a saying...

He shouts over his shoulder, back at Phil and Sarah.

AMERICAN BOYFRIEND (CONT'D)

A wise man climbs Fuji once. A fool
climbs it twice.

No one laughs. Sarah and Phil share a look and snicker to each other behind his back.

EXT. MOUNT FUJI - SUMMIT - SUNRISE

At the very top, the trio arrives at a LARGE WOODEN TORII GATE. They sit beside it, staring out at the horizon. Not quite dark, not quite light yet.

They wait in silence as the sun creeps above the horizon. Phil leans toward Sarah, whispers:

PHIL KNIGHT

The Japanese place Torii gates at
sacral borderlands, portals between
this world and the world beyond.
Wherever you pass from the profane to
the sacred, you'll find a Torii gate.

Sarah looks at Phil, and smiles as the sun crests...

EXT. THE BASE OF MOUNT FUJI - DAY

Phil, Sarah, and her boyfriend have returned to the base of the mountain. Phil turns to them, bows.

PHIL KNIGHT

Yoroshiku ne.

Then starts off.

SARAH

Wait-- Where are you headed?

PHIL KNIGHT

I think I'm going to stay at the
Hakone Inn tonight.

SARAH

Well, I'm coming with you.

Shocked, Phil looks at the boyfriend...who, again, scowls.

PHIL KNIGHT
What about your boyfriend?

SARAH
That's not my boyfriend.

Phil can't help but laugh as the "boyfriend" sulks off.

INT./EXT. HAKONE INN - JAPAN - DAY/NIGHT

Phil and Sarah spend the next two days at the inn, laughing, talking, falling for each other. Drinking sake during the day. Touring the lands around the hotel.

They stare out at the sunset. Sarah takes a rubber band from around her wrist, which is adorned with many handmade beads and bracelets. She puts it onto Phil's wrist.

AT NIGHT - IN THEIR ROOM

Phil watches as Sarah sleeps, peacefully. Smitten by her. Almost sad as he begins to pack his belongings into his bag.

He picks up his soot covered pair of Tigers. Pulls up the tongue of the shoe, eyeing the inscription inside:

"Onitsuka Co Ltd. Kobe, Hyogo Prefecture, Japan"

Phil's mind churns, a thought manifesting...

EXT. HAKONE INN - THE NEXT MORNING

A taxi idles nearby. Phil, with his duffle packed at his side, says goodbye to Sarah.

PHIL KNIGHT
What do you think you'll do now?

Sarah steps back, staring out at the snow-tipped mountains.

SARAH
I don't know. I don't much believe
in plans.

Phil nods, likes the sound of that. Then, extends his hand.

PHIL KNIGHT
The trouble with hello is there is
always goodbye, huh?

Sarah chuckles, shakes her head and then hugs Phil.

SARAH

It was nice meeting you, Phil
Knight from Oregon. Maybe we'll
write to one another.

PHIL KNIGHT

Ok. I'd like that.

Then Phil climbs into the taxi, and he's gone.

INT. BAR - DAY

A dive bar popular with ex-GI's. We find Phil tucked into a hallway next to the restroom, can of Pabst Blue Ribbon in hand as he cold calls a number scrawled onto a cocktail napkin.

Someone on the other end picks up, *in Japanese*. Phil tries to translate but he's doing a piss-poor job. Finally..

PHIL KNIGHT

Do you speak English?

(relief)

Oh thank god.

INT. AMERICAN EXPRESS OFFICE - DAY

Phil makes an exchange for cash. Then, scrawls out a note for Sarah on a piece of paper, along with his address. He writes:

*"You've got to fly over Portland to get to
the East Coast...why not stop for a visit?
- Phil, from Oregon."*

INT. TRAIN - THE NEXT DAY

Phil boards a train to Kobe, in his lone business suit. The train is filthy, floors filled with cigarette butts and newspapers. Seats covered in orange rinds.

And it's packed. Barely enough room to stand. Phil finds a strap by a window, settles in. *It's going to be a long ride.*

INT. TAXI - DAY (MOVING)

Phil bites his nails, leg shaking. He looks out the window.

PHIL KNIGHT

This isn't the place...

Frantic now, he checks his watch. Curses.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

(to the driver)

This is the wrong place!

INT. ONITSUKA HEADQUARTERS - LOBBY - DAY

Phil arrives, sweating heavily. In the lobby await a group of FOUR EXECUTIVES. They bow. So Phil bows.

PHIL KNIGHT

My apologies for my tardiness. The cab took me to the wrong address.

Eventually, one man steps forward. He greets Phil warmly.

KEN MIYAZAKI

Mister Phil Knight, I am Ken Miyazaki. This way please.

Ken motions for a nervous Phil to follow.

INT. ONITSUKA - FACTORY FLOOR

Ken, and his men, lead Phil through the factory.

Phil is instantly captivated by the orchestra of manufacturing around him. Each time a shoe is molded, the metal last falls to the floor, a symphonic *CLING-clong* every couple seconds.

INT. ONITSUKA HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM

A plain conference room spackled with a dozen intimidating men. Much bowing and hand shaking as Ken introduces...

KEN MIYAZAKI

Philip Knight, American importer.

It's Phil's floor now. He stares out at a dozen men around the long table, all staring back at him. It's just like being back at Stanford... only none of these men speak English.

Phil takes a few quick breaths, hands shaking. And Ken's quickly growing suspicious of the nervous young man with the ill-fitting suit in front of him.

KEN MIYAZAKI (CONT'D)

Mr. Knight, what company did you say you were with again?

Phil stammers, mind instantly running blank, as we...

SLAM BACK TO:

HIGH SCHOOL TRACK MEET - OREGON - FLASHBACK

...Teenager Phil, out of breath, stares across the track with longing as Jim Grelle poses for photos with his BLUE RIBBON.

SMASH BACK TO:

INT. ONITSUKA HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM - AS WE WERE

Phil blurts out...

PHIL KNIGHT

Blue Ribbon Sports...Gentlemen, I represent Blue Ribbon Sports of Portland, Oregon.

Ken smiles with measured skepticism. Murmurs pass around the table, as Phil begins his presentation.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Gentlemen, the American shoe market is enormous. And largely untapped.

Ken translates as Phil speaks.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

If Onitsuka can penetrate that market, if Onitsuka can get its Tigers into American stores, and prices them to undercut Adidas - it will be hugely profitable. I have, uh, I've done my market research and selected Tiger brand because of its superior quality.

He's merely quoting his Stanford presentation, line-for-line.

Then Phil pulls out a PHOTO ALBUM. On the first page is Bill Bowerman holding up the 1962 NCAA Track & Field Championship.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Alongside my friend, the legendary Bill Bowerman, we have seen incredible growth in this territory.

A few of the men flip through the album. They seem impressed.

KEN MIYAZAKI

And you have done this before, yes? You have track record?

Phil looks back at Ken, feigning confidence.

PHIL KNIGHT

Of course.

Only, Phil's met by biting silence and blank stares. He exhales: *Fuck, they're not buying any of it.*

Finally, one man breaks the silence. And another. Soon everyone speaks over one another in loud, excited voices. Then, abruptly, they all stand and leave the room.

For a solid minute, Phil just sits there, alone in the room. Convinced they must've seen right through his lies. He's just about to go... when Ken returns.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
(immediately apologetic)
I'm sorry--

KEN MIYAZAKI
Mr. Knight, we've been thinking long time about American market.

PHIL KNIGHT
You have?

Ken spreads PHOTOGRAPHS across the table.

KEN MIYAZAKI
New models. For American market.

THREE NEW SHOES still in the initial design stage. All different models of Tigers. Ken points to each.

KEN MIYAZAKI (CONT'D)
Training shoe, call "Limber Up."
The "Spring Up." And this, discuss shoe. Call "Throw Up."

Phil chokes, tries not to laugh.

KEN MIYAZAKI (CONT'D)
How big you think American shoe market can be?

PHIL KNIGHT
Ultimately?
(totally out of his ass)
Could be a billion dollars.

Ken is...*impressed.*

KEN MIYAZAKI
Would Mr. Bowerman and Blue Ribbon...be interested in representing Tiger shoes?

Phil swallows hard, takes a careful breath.

PHIL KNIGHT
Um, yes. Yes, it *would*.

CUT TO:

INT. OSAKA AIRPORT - DAY

An endless wave of passengers. Nearby, on a payphone, Phil brims with excitement. It's hard to hear over all the chaos.

PHIL KNIGHT
What?! No, I'm serious! I'm starting a sneaker company!

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. THE OREGON JOURNAL - MEANWHILE

William, at his desk, buried in his own swarm of work and impatient employees.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
Have you lost your mind, Buck? What the hell do you even know about sneakers?

PHIL KNIGHT
Based on my research, within three years of start-up, I can be selling some 20,000 pairs of track shoes a year! Mostly to high school and college track team members.

A knock at his office door, William holds up a finger - *one minute* - as Phil continues, a stream of raw enthusiasm.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
All I need is thirty-seven dollars. A small investment compared to the profit I'll make if I can sell to coaches like Bill Bowerman.

Phil can sense the disapproval in his father's silence.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
They're good shoes, Pop. And people will buy 'em on account of how they look like Adidas.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
Buck, there's nothing respectable about being a con man.

His words cut deep. Phil's boyish enthusiasm instantly dashed. But William is just getting started.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Selling imitation knock-off sneakers,
what's the win here, Buck?

PHIL KNIGHT
(feeling so small)
You want me to be a CPA, I'll be a CPA.
Just...let me at least try this first.

William exhales as we CUT TO:

EXT. WATERFRONT WAREHOUSE - EARLY MORNING

Phil waits impatiently in the cold, freezing his ass off, as a HAGGARD CLERK finally arrives and unlocks the warehouse.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BASEMENT

A LARGE BOX covered in Japanese writing. Phil tears it open like a giddy school child. Inside, TWELVE PAIRS of creamy white shoes with blue stripes down the side.

He holds a shoe up, inspecting it like a piece of priceless art. *To Phil, it's the most beautiful thing he's ever seen.*

INT. POST OFFICE - DAY

Phil stuffs two pairs of Tiger Limber Ups into a box and postmarks it for the UNIVERSITY OF OREGON, c/o Bill Bowerman.

Along with a LETTER for Sarah.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - KITCHEN - ANOTHER DAY

Phil eats lunch at the kitchen table when his sister, Jeanne, enters, stack of mail in hand.

JEANNE
Letter, Buck!

With a spark in his eyes, Phil leaps up, grabbing at the letter, hoping it's from Sarah...but it's from Bill Bowerman.

INT. COSMOPOLITAN HOTEL - DAY

An upscale restaurant in a nice hotel. A waitress shows Phil to a table where Bowerman is already seated.

BILL BOWERMAN
Buckaroo!

He rises, grabbing Phil right into a handshake.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
 Those Japanese shoes...pretty good.
 Little heavy but pretty good.
 (they sit)
 But you know, Buck, Adidas is the
 number one track shoe in the world.

PHIL KNIGHT
 These can be better. We can be
 number one.

Phil settles right into the hard sell. No foreplay.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
 Look, Coach-- Bill...if you feel the
 shoes are of reasonable quality, you
 could probably save a little money
 since I wouldn't make a profit on
 the shoes I sold to you--

BILL BOWERMAN
 Don't sell me, Buck. I hate being
 sold. I've driven the same damn car
 for twelve years just so some
 schmuck can't try and sell me.

Phil quiets, his pitch sunk before he's even started.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
 I already told you the shoes were
 good. Hell, ain't everybody out
 here searching the world high and
 low for the perfect track shoe.

Bowerman throws his leg right up onto the table. He's wearing
 the pair of Tiger Limber Ups Phil sent him.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
 Who you got to sell now is everyone
else. Everyone who ain't crazy
 enough to be sittin' in their
 basement makin' their own shoes.

He laughs, then leans forward across the table.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)
 How 'bout you let your old coach in
 on this, Buck?

PHIL KNIGHT
 You mean as a partner?

BILL BOWERMAN

Fifty-fifty. I test the shoes, put athletes in 'em if they're good, offer design ideas and endorse 'em with coaches I know. You handle all that financial business mumbo jumbo.

Phil staggers a bit, shocked but ecstatic.

PHIL KNIGHT

Uh...yes! Yeah. Let's do it.
(then; tempering)
Of course, you'll have to put up half the money.

Bowerman laughs, extends his giant paw...

BILL BOWERMAN

Don't overthink the sale, Buck.
Shoes already did the work for ya.

Phil moves to shake--

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)

On second thought...I don't want to have to be in charge. How 'bout we make it fifty-one, forty-nine?

Is this some sort of joke?!

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)

But I gotta know you're all-in here. That you're willing to do the work necessary to get across that finish line on top.

Phil looks right at Bowerman, without even the slightest hint of hesitation...*and shakes his hand.*

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)

What's this company called anyhow?

PHIL KNIGHT

Blue Ribbon Sports.

BILL BOWERMAN

Hm. Sounds like a shitty beer.

INT. PHIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phil taps out a letter to Onitsuka, on a typewriter, firing off an order for 300 PAIRS OF SHOES.

EXT. PARK - DAY

Phil eats lunch on a park bench, snapping at Sarah's rubber band around his wrist as he anxiously reads a response back from Onitsuka and Ken Miyazaki.

KEN MIYAZAKI (V.O.)
Dear Mr. Knight, we would like to
inform you that we have a sole
agent in New York for the
distribution of our products.

A crestfallen look from Phil.

KEN MIYAZAKI (V.O.)
Therefore, we must ask that your
distributing area be limited to the
thirteen Western states only.

Phil SCREAMS, pumps his fist. Drawing odd looks from passersby.

INT. CUSTOMS WAREHOUSE

A forklift hauls out TEN ENORMOUS CARTONS.

It's like Christmas morning as Phil slices one open-- each carton is filled with thirty pairs of Tigers. Each pair wrapped in cellophane. He lifts one up, inhales deeply.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BASEMENT

Every available nook and cranny is filled with pairs of Tiger shoes. Shoved around the big old furnace in the basement. Stacked neatly under the Ping-Pong table.

Phil's mother struggles to navigate the shoes as she attempts to do laundry.

EXT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - EARLY MORNING

Phil loads the trunk of his seafoam green Plymouth Valiant to the brim with shoes and sets off as...

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S HOUSE - BASEMENT

Bowerman tears apart Tiger shoes and reconfigures different soles. Dr. Frankenstein in his 'lab. Surrounding him are slews of notes, sketches, and shoe design ideas.

For the sneakerheads out there, these will be the initial sketches for what eventually becomes the infamous "Cortez."

EXT. HAYWARD FIELD TRACK - DAY

Bowerman flags over his athletes, handing out new prototypes.

MEANWHILE - AT TRACK MEET AFTER TRACK MEET

As Phil sells Tigers across the Pacific Northwest, to high school and college track athletes right out of his trunk.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

Phil returns home from a long road trip up north. He enters the house, and FREEZES when he sees-- SARAH, sitting at the kitchen table with his mother.

SARAH

Surprise.

They hug awkwardly as Phil's nosy mother and sisters look on.

EXT. WOODED PARK - DAY

A light mist. Phil and Sarah walk.

PHIL KNIGHT

How did you get here?

SARAH

I swam. Across the ocean.

Phil chuckles. Nervous.

SARAH (CONT'D)

I phoned from the airport. Your sister offered to pick me up.

IN THE DISTANCE, Mount Hood looms, looking remarkably like Mt. Fuji. They both stop to gaze at it, reminiscing.

PHIL KNIGHT

So...where are you staying?

Sarah just looks at Phil, shaking her head.

SARAH

Silly boy.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - BASEMENT - NIGHT

Phil leads Sarah down into the basement.

PHIL KNIGHT

Welcome to the worldwide headquarters of Blue Ribbon Sports.

SARAH

Wow. And you're going to sell all of these?

PHIL KNIGHT

That's the plan.

SARAH

And then what?

PHIL KNIGHT

I'll get more. I'll sell those too. And one day, I'll be the biggest distributor in entire country. And then...I'm going to beat Adidas.

She laughs, finding this amusing.

Phil excitedly digs out a pair of Limber Ups.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Here. On the house. You can be my first customer.

Sarah smiles, moved by the gesture.

INT. PHIL'S CAR (DRIVING) - DAY

Phil drives along the coast. Sarah in the passenger seat, her new pair of Limber Ups propped up on the dash. Phil can only smile as he watches her, enjoying the breeze in her hair.

EXT. HUMBUG MOUNTAIN - DAY

Together, they go hiking, laughing the entire time.

Under an 80-foot spruce, they share a kiss. Phil's nerves starting to subside. There's a comfort here.

EXT. PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -DAY

Phil and Sarah say their good-byes. She tears up.

INT. PHIL'S PLYMOUTH VALIANT - DAY

With Sarah back east, Phil sets out again, crisscrossing the Pacific Northwest, car bursting with shoes.

We INTERCUT Phil's travels from town to town, city to city, as SEASONS PASS, and we SEE...

INT. HOTEL ROOMS - VARIOUS NIGHTS

Phil writing letter after letter to Sarah...

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - BASEMENT

...as the piles of shoes begin disappearing from the nooks and crannies. The laundry easier to navigate by the day.

EXT. COLLEGE TRACK MEET - DAY

Phil slips FLIERS into each official coach's packet. One TRACK COACH pulls out the flier, reads:

**"Best news in flats! Japan challenges
European track shoe domination!"**

INT. PHIL'S PLYMOUTH VALIANT - DAY (MOVING)

Phil eats filet o' fish sticks while reading Sarah's letters and driving all at the same time. The car once bursting at the seams with shoes is now almost empty.

INT. PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Christmas time, 1964. Phil meets Sarah at her gate, with a corny handwritten sign. But she looks more sad than jubilant.

INT. PHIL'S CAR - DAY

Snow on the ground. As they drive, Sarah tearfully explains:

SARAH

My folks...they weren't going to
let me get on the plane.

PHIL KNIGHT

I don't understand.

SARAH

They forbade me to come. My father
screamed.

PHIL KNIGHT

What did he scream?

SARAH

(imitating his posh voice)
You can't meet a guy who sells
sneakers on Mount Fuji who's ever
going to amount to anything!

Phil winces. He reaches for his rubber band--*snap, snap*.

PHIL KNIGHT

How did you get away?

SARAH
My brother snuck me out of the
house early this morning and drove
me to the airport.

CUT TO:

INT. PHIL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phil and Sarah lay in bed, there's an uncomfortable silence
that neither of them can quite shake.

SARAH
Are we making a mistake?

PHIL KNIGHT
I don't think so.

SARAH
What would we do? How can this last...

PHIL KNIGHT
Well. You love me, don't you?

SARAH
Of course.

PHIL KNIGHT
And I love you.

SARAH
Maybe that's not enough. Where
would we live?

PHIL KNIGHT
We live here.

SARAH
In your parent's house?

Phil chuckles.

PHIL KNIGHT
Of course not. We get our own place.
We have the company. You can work
with me.

SARAH
I want to travel. Then have a
family.

PHIL KNIGHT
Then we'll travel. And have a
family. We'll do it all.

SARAH

But how? How can we do it all?

There's an obvious cooling in her voice.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Come back to Maryland with me. I'll convince my father to give you a real job.

Phil looks at her, anger and hurt bubbling to the surface.

PHIL KNIGHT

I have a real job.

SARAH

You know what I mean. Being a salesman is...a lot of work. You say you want to be number one, how you want to beat Adidas...if that's the win, then who stands to lose?

Phil hadn't ever thought about it that way. He never had to before. It's a sobering thought.

EXT. PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT -DAY

Cold and snowy. Phil takes Sarah's luggage from the trunk. They look at one another.

PHIL KNIGHT

I'll write you.

Sarah looks away for a brief moment. Then:

SARAH

I've given it a lot of thought, Phil... I'm not sure we're right for each other.

PHIL KNIGHT

Oh. Really?

She nods softly.

SARAH

I'm not sure...you're sophisticated enough for me.

It's like a knife to Phil's heart. He looks at Sarah, ready to protest-- and she sees as much. She softly shakes her head, *don't*. Then, kisses Phil on the cheek, grabs her bag and heads inside the airport. *This is goodbye.*

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

William Knight watches the news from his vinyl recliner with his nightly glass of scotch. Doorbell DINGS.

UNDER THE PORCH LIGHT, teeters some SKINNY KID. Twitchy and shifty-eyed. Like a junky looking to score a fix.

SKINNY KID
Is, uh, Buck here?

WILLIAM KNIGHT
(with a groan)
BUCK!

After a moment, Buck appears, looking deep in the throes of heartbreak, but he's got a pair of Tigers in hand.

He trades the shoes to the excitable kid. Takes the cash. William watches the whole transaction with measured skepticism.

Shaking his head with disapproval, William marches back to his recliner. Phil follows, counting his cash.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)
You think any self-respecting company is selling imitation shoes in the middle of the night out of a basement? I said I'd let you try and I was a man of my word. But it's time you be a man of yours now. Get a real job. Meet a new girl. And stop jackassin' around with these damn shoes.

ON THE TV: A broadcast of the Pan American Games in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Jim Grelle wins the 1500 metres race.

ANNOUNCER (ON TV)
And Jim Grelle will take the gold!

Phil looks up at the TV, his greatest rival thriving on the world's biggest stage while he's still living at home counting loose dollar bills.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD BEDROOM - NIGHT

A heartsick Phil sits on the floor, re-reading Sarah's old letters. Jeanne lightly knocks and enters.

She sits on the floor next to Phil, Indian-style. Rests her hand on his leg.

JEANNE

Forget about her, Buck. She's wrong about you.

Tears well in Phil's eyes.

JEANNE (CONT'D)

Now you can either sit here crying 'bout it, or you can show her she's wrong.

Phil nods, as once more, we see that determination brooding on his face, as we CUT TO:

INT. NEWPORT HOTEL RESTAURANT - KOBE, JAPAN - DAY

A revolving restaurant atop the hotel. Phil waits patiently in his suit at a table by the window...

...as a man he doesn't recognize enters. Roughly Phil's age, not a strand of hair out of place. This is SHOJI KITAMI.

KITAMI

Mr. Miyazaki is no longer with Onitsuka. I am Kitami.

Flustered, Phil shakes Kitami's hand. He sits, all-business, and stares at Phil, waiting for him to begin.

Phil's thrown. But he takes a breath, steadies himself. All the while, the restaurant slowly whirls past the port city of Kobe with its beautiful inlets and terrace slopes.

PHIL KNIGHT

I came here because Blue Ribbon Sports would very much like to become the exclusive U.S. Distributor for all of Tiger's track-and-field line.

A bold ask.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I think it is very much in Tiger's interest that we become that. Our sales have continually risen.

He opens his same photo album from his original pitch. On the first page is a PHOTO of Bill Bowerman with his trophies.

Kitami doesn't even look at the photos.

KITAMI

I am sorry but that will not be possible.

Unlike his predecessors, Kitami speaks more English, though with a thicker accent.

Phil stammers, thrown. Reaches for his rubber band.

PHIL KNIGHT

Oh. Why not?

KITAMI

Onitsuka desires best. Bigger, more established firm. Bigger workload. Offices on the East Coast!

PHIL KNIGHT

But, but, Blue Ribbon *does* have offices on the East Coast.

Kitami rocks back in his chair, surprised. Phil's bordering on desperate now. So, he lies.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

We're on the East Coast, the West Coast, and soon we may be in the Midwest. We can handle national distribution, no question.

Suddenly Kitami's grim face doesn't look so grim after all.

KITAMI

Well, this change things.

CUT TO:

INT. ONITSUKA HEADQUARTERS - CONFERENCE ROOM

Phil signs an exclusive three-year contract for distribution in the United States.

EXT. HAYWARD FIELD TRACK - DAY

Track practice. Bowerman barks orders at his runners as an anxious Phil tries to keep pace with the old coach.

PHIL KNIGHT

We need to expand. Hire more salesmen.

BILL BOWERMAN

You don't win a marathon by sprinting.

PHIL KNIGHT
 We don't have time to pace ourselves.
 If we don't move now someone is gonna
 come in and steal it out from under us.

Bowerman finally stops barking at his runners, turns to Phil.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
 I can do this. I got nothing but
 this. I'm all-in.

Bowerman *really* looks at Phil. Be it heartbreak, or
 desperation (*or both*), but he can see Phil needs this.

BILL BOWERMAN
 Alright. Expand where exactly?

PHIL KNIGHT
 California.

BILL BOWERMAN
 California? How the hell are we
 gonna sell shoes in California?

CUT TO:

AN OVERLOADED DUFFEL BAG

Filled to the brim with Tigers. The bag is zipped shut and
 hoisted up onto Phil's shoulder, and only now do we see...

That Phil's wearing a crisply-pressed ARMY UNIFORM. We are--

INT. LOCAL AIR BASE - DAY

Seeing the uniform, the MP's wave Phil past, where he boards
 a military transport plane. No questions asked.

EXT. LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Phil lands in Los Angeles. Palm trees, sunshine, and Tiger
 shoes. An OLDER MAN salutes Phil, who suddenly remembers his
 uniform and awkwardly returns the gesture.

EXT. OCCIDENTAL COLLEGE - TRACK - DAY

Phil stands on the infield grass in his Tiger shoes. A YOUNG
 MAN approaches (slender, athletic with a magazine smile.)

YOUNG MAN
 Buck? Jeff Johnson. From Stanford.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Oh wow. Heya Jeff. Long time.

JEFF JOHNSON
Gee, what brings you all the way
down here?

Looking like an itinerant peddler, Phil unzips his bag.
Inside are a dozen or so imitation Adidas shoes.

PHIL KNIGHT
They're called Tiger.

JEFF JOHNSON
Sorta look like Adidas.

PHIL KNIGHT
Only cheaper. And *better*.

Jeff turns a shoe over in his hand, studies it.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
You down here coaching?

JEFF JOHNSON
Actually, I'm here selling shoes.

PHIL KNIGHT
No!

JEFF JOHNSON
(nods, laughing)
Adidas, in fact.

PHIL KNIGHT
Screw Adidas! You should work for me,
help me sell these Japanese shoes.

JEFF JOHNSON
I don't know, Phil...I'm getting
married. Not sure I can take on a
new venture right now.

PHIL KNIGHT
So, that's a yes?

Jeff goes to hand the shoes back but Phil waves him off.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Keep 'em. Give them a try. I insist.

TWO TRACK GIRLS approach, and Phil diverts to make a sale.

INT. JEFF JOHNSON'S APARTMENT - SEAL BEACH - MORNING

Jeff stretches, about to slip on his old, work-out Adidas
running shoes, when he sees the Tigers by the door.

EXT. ROAD RACE - ORANGE COUNTY

Jeff runs in a road race...in the Tiger shoes. He finishes as TWO RUNNERS, whom he just smoked, approach.

ROAD RACE COMPETITOR
Hey man, what shoes are those?

JEFF JOHNSON
These? Oh, they're these new Japanese shoes.

ROAD RACE COMPETITOR #2
You know where we can get some?

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS:

- A POSTMAN delivers boxes upon boxes - all filled with Tiger shoes - to Jeff's TINY APARTMENT. Meet BRS employee #1.

- Jeff transforms his apartment, with all the commotion of a young infant, into the closest thing to a store BRS has.

- Customers drop by day and night to try on shoes, much to the displeasure of Jeff's WIFE.

--Jeff opens Blue Ribbon's first retail space in Santa Monica, wedged between a Lu-Ad Beauty Salon and a termite exterminator.

--Phil takes a tour of a small one-bedroom apartment in a spiffy new high-rise in downtown Portland.

--TIME-LAPSE as the bachelor pad quickly fills from floor-to-ceiling with STACKS UPON STACKS OF SHOES. Along with a few simple pieces of furniture. Mattress. Table. A single chair.

--LATER, Phil sits in the middle of the room, alone, paging through a shoebox of Sarah's old letters.

END SERIES.

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S OFFICE - DAY

Bowerman enters to find a BOX on his desk. *Japanese writing.*

He peels open the box, pulls out HIS SAMPLE. With luxurious cushioning and sleek lines, it looks like the future.

EXT. BILL BOWERMAN'S HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Phil and Bowerman gaze at the new prototype, more interested in it than the sparkling river in the valley down below.

PHIL KNIGHT

Adidas says they'll sue if we call it the Aztec. Got themselves a shoe called the "Aztec Gold." Introducing it at the Mexico Olympics.

Bowerman takes off his cap. Rubs his head.

BILL BOWERMAN

Who was that guy who kicked the shit out of the Aztecs?

PHIL KNIGHT

Cortez, I think?

BILL BOWERMAN

Okay. Let's call it Cortez.

(then)

Listen, Buck, there's this kid. Asked to be my assistant coach but told 'im I had something else he could do.

PHIL KNIGHT

Jesus, Bill. You know we can't afford another salesman. I'm already teaching nights at Portland State just to afford Jeff and the office.

BILL BOWERMAN

Just do me a favor and meet him. He's a good kid. Hard worker.

Phil groans as we CUT TO:

EXT. PORTLAND SANDWICH SHOP - DAY

Phil's car, with all its dings and scratches, careens into the parking lot, hitting the curb as it jolts to a stop.

INT. PORTLAND SANDWICH SHOP - DAY

Phil enters, late as usual. There's only one other patron.

PHIL KNIGHT

Bob Woodell? Phil Knight. Pleasure to meet you.

Only BOB WOODSELL doesn't stand to shake Phil's hand, because Bob Woodell is in a wheelchair. Phil doesn't even flinch.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
 Bill says you're gonna be our
 newest employee.

BOB WOODSELL
 I'm sorry but what exactly is the
 job? Bill didn't get into specifics.

PHIL KNIGHT
 We sell running shoes.

BOB WOODSELL
 (deadpan)
 Oh. Perfect.

Both men laugh, as we CUT TO:

EXT. THE PINK BUCKET BAR - DAY

Phil and Bob Woodsell stare up at an old brick building. The ground floor home to a shitty dive bar, "The Pink Bucket."

Above it, a set of half-broken, dusty windows.

INT. STAIRWELL

Phil physically pulls Bob and his wheelchair up to the second floor, step-by-painstaking-step.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS

An empty warehouse. High ceilings and windows, couple of which are broken or stuck open. Which explains the constant breeze.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Comes with free AC.

BOB WOODSELL
 (looking it over)
 Suppose it's got a certain charm.

Just then-- a JUKEBOX kicks in. From the Pink Bucket. Turns out the walls are so thin you can hear every thumping note.

EXT. PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY - ESTABLISHING - NIGHT

A public, nonprofit, coeducational research university, and it looks every bit as sterile as it sounds.

INT. SMALL LECTURE HALL - NIGHT

TWO DOZEN bored, borderline hostile set of eyeballs

REVEAL: Phil at the lectern, "ACCOUNTING 101" scrawled on the blackboard behind him. Phil nervously SNAPS his rubber band as he recites names from an attendance sheet in rote fashion.

PHIL KNIGHT
Mr. Trujillo?

VOICE (O.S.)
Here.

PHIL KNIGHT
Mr. Peterson?

ANOTHER VOICE (O.S.)
Here.

PHIL KNIGHT
Miss Parks?

Suddenly, a YOUNG WOMAN sweeps into the classroom.

YOUNG WOMAN
Sorry! Here.

Phil looks up as she takes an open seat up front. She's got long golden hair that brushes her shoulders. Bright blue eyes offset by dramatic black eyeliner. 19, at best.

Snap-snap-SNAP! Phil's rubber band BREAKS.

He tries not to stare. Gives a half smile as he makes a shaky check mark next to: PENELOPE PARKS. But we'll call her 'Penny.'

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - LATER

By day, Phil erects a plywood wall, separating warehouse space from the retail-office up front. Nearby, Bob uses an old javelin to hook the window latches and pull the stuck windows shut.

INT. PHIL'S BACHELOR PAD - NIGHT

By night, Phil's up late grading tests with beer and a harsh red pen, surrounded by towers of shoeboxes. The scores are atrocious.

Except Penny's. In fact, she aces the test.

INT. PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY - CLASSROOM - DAY

Phil dismisses his class, gathers his bag and papers.

PENNY PARKS (O.S.)
Professor Knight?

Phil looks up, shocked to find the painfully shy Penny lingering at his desk. Books to her chest.

PHIL KNIGHT
Yes, Ms. Parks?

PENNY PARKS
I was wondering... if you might consider being my faculty adviser?

Phil reaches for his rubber band...which is no longer there.

PHIL KNIGHT
Oh. Oh, I'd be honored.
(then, blurts out)
Hey, how would you...like a job?

PENNY PARKS
A what?

PHIL KNIGHT
I've got this little shoe company...and uh...on the side. And it needs some bookkeeping help.

Penny adjusts her textbooks, eyelashes fluttering.

PENNY PARKS
Oh. Well. Okay. That sounds...fun.

EXT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - PARKING LOT - DAY

Phil holds a stopwatch.

PHIL KNIGHT
Ready and...GO!

Woodell races to see how fast he can fold up his wheelchair, cram it into the car, and then himself. HONKS to signal he's done. Phil clicks the stopwatch, milking Bob's anticipation.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Fourty-four seconds!

Bob lets loose a VICTORIOUS HOWL-- until they both turn to find Penny watching them.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - MOMENTS LATER

Bob and Phil show Penny inside the office.

PHIL KNIGHT
This can be your desk.

Bob just stares at her, as if she's some kind of alien.
The Pink Bucket's jukebox kicks in, penetrating the walls.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
That means it's Happy Hour.
(beat)
You get used to it.

They're interrupted by a knock. A TEENAGER in WIRE-RIMMED GLASSES lingers in the doorway.

WIRE-RIMMED TEEN
This the shoe place?

Bob rolls out from behind his desk, eager to help.

BOB WODELL
That it is. What's your size?

But the young man just stares at Bob, *and his wheelchair.*

WIRE-RIMMED TEEN
You sell running shoes?

Bob smacks his lips. Sucks in a breath. Then--

BOB WODELL
GET THE FUCK OUTTA HERE! FUCK OFF,
YOU FUCKING LITTLE PRICK! GET OUT!

The teen scrambles, nearly tripping. Backpedals out the door.

Bob collects himself. Then, turns back to Penny, cool as ever.

BOB WODELL (CONT'D)
I have some invoices need filing,
do you mind?

PENNY PARKS
Not at all.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - OVER DAYS

Penny settles into the new job. But with Penny around, Phil struggles to stay focused. He keeps stealing glances at her, watching how she bites her lip as she crunches numbers.

ANOTHER COLD, WINDY DAY AT THE OFFICE

A STIFF BREEZE blows through the holes in the windows, sweeping papers across the room. Welcome to winter in Oregon.

BOB WOODSELL

Fuck this, I may be paralyzed but I don't have to sit here and take this shit. I'm working from home.

And he wheels off, teeth chattering. Leaving Penny and Phil.

PHIL KNIGHT

You should go too.

PENNY PARKS

Are you sure?

Phil nods. So, Penny reaches for her purse, and leaves.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - LATER THAT NIGHT

Phil's fighting a losing battle with the cold. He finally gets up to leave...when he notices Penny's desk drawer open.

He moves to close it and inside sees...A STACK OF CHECKS. All of Penny's paychecks-- uncashed.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - ANOTHER DAY

Phil waits at the elevator. He pushes 'down', as Penny walks up beside him. They share a smile. Phil presses the button again. He stares up at the light above the elevator door.

PHIL KNIGHT

Miss Parks...may I ask you something?

PENNY PARKS

Oh. Okay. Am I in trouble?

PHIL KNIGHT

No, not at all. I just...wondered why you weren't cashing your paychecks.

PENNY PARKS

Oh. Well. I don't mean to be rude, it's just...

PHIL KNIGHT

Yes?

PENNY PARKS

It's just I've seen the books and if I cashed the checks then we wouldn't be able to pay for the inventory. And I quite like my job, Mr. Knight.

She looks down at her feet, almost embarrassed.

PHIL KNIGHT
Miss Parks...Would you like to,
uhh...maybe go out on Friday night?

PENNY PARKS
Me?

She looks around, there's no one else around but them.

PHIL KNIGHT
Obviously you can say no...if you
don't want to.

PING. Elevator doors slide open.

PENNY PARKS
Oh. Well. Okay then. Sure.

She shuffles quickly onto the elevator, never lifting her eyes from her shoes.

EXT. OREGON ZOO - DAY

Phil and Penny's first date. Phil buys cotton candy and hands it to Penny, who's still too shy to make eye contact.

They walk a few steps, stopping in front of the tiger exhibit.

PHIL KNIGHT
Beautiful, huh?

PENNY PARKS
Or sad. Trapped in a cage your whole
life. Can you imagine such a fate?

Phil now notices the fence more than the great beast resigned to its confined fate behind it.

PHIL KNIGHT
Did you grow up with animals?

PENNY PARKS
Do four siblings count?

Phil laughs.

PHIL KNIGHT
Two sisters. Twins. So, yes.

A chuckle from Penny, which she quickly suppresses.

A LITTLE BOY rushes past them to the railing, excitedly pointing out the animals to his trailing FATHER.

BOY'S FATHER
Sorry, excuse us.

Penny nudges Phil, points to...the FATHER'S SHOES. He's wearing Tigers. They share a smile.

INT. JADE WEST CHINESE RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Another night, another date. There's a nervous silence as they both pick at their food. Penny eats in small bites, careful to cover her mouth as she chews.

PHIL KNIGHT
I have to say that I would have never pegged you for accounting.

PENNY PARKS
Why is that? Because you don't believe women are good at math?

She looks at Phil, as deadpan as can be. He backpedals.

PHIL KNIGHT
No...That's not what I meant at all--

Penny grins, she's just fucking with him. Phil laughs.

PENNY PARKS
When you grow up in a house with five kids, money tends to be a constant source of concern. I much prefer security myself. Accounting just seemed dependable. People will always need accountants. I actually started out at Oregon State--

PHIL KNIGHT
(with mock disgust)
Oh.

She laughs.

PENNY PARKS
If it's any consolation, I hated it. Particularly because they required every student to take at least one class in public speaking.

She looks down at her food.

PHIL KNIGHT
I understand, Miss Parks.

PENNY PARKS
Please. Call me Penny.

PHIL KNIGHT
Okay.
(then)
Penny, if I confessed something,
would you promise not to tell anyone?

Penny nods meekly.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Blue Ribbon's current state as I'm
sure you already know, is...tenuous.
Truth is, the whole thing could go
bust any day now.

PENNY PARKS
Oh.

PHIL KNIGHT
Which, of course, my father would
relish in. Thinks the whole venture
is doomed for failure.

PENNY PARKS
That's not a very kind thing to
wish upon one's own son.

PHIL KNIGHT
He's not a bad man. He's
just...fixated, on the idea of
what's "respectable." But what he
doesn't understand is that this
little shoe company, it's living
now. It's *breathing*. Even if it
does always seem to be on life
support. For the life of me,
though, I can't possibly imagine
anything more respectable than
being one's own boss. To point to
something and say, "Look at that! I
made that." You know?

A woman of little words but he can tell Penny gets it,
intrinsically. The same way she instantly grasped basic
accounting principles.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
But more than anything...

Penny looks up at Phil, seeing the passion in his eyes. Hearing it ingrained in his voice.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
I want to win.

PENNY PARKS
That's silly, one cannot win at everything.

PHIL KNIGHT
Oh, but that's not true.

Now she's testing him, she pushes back.

PENNY PARKS
Well. Okay. One cannot "win" on a date, can they?

PHIL KNIGHT
I would think so.

PENNY PARKS
How so?

PHIL KNIGHT
If a woman is desirable enough, well then she will have multiple suitors. You can win against them. You can win at everything.

Embarrassed, Penny averts her gaze once more.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Can I ask you something, Penny? Are you...seeing anyone?

Penny nods, simply.

PENNY PARKS
But he is just a boy. Seems they all are.

Finally, she looks up at Phil. Into his eyes.

PENNY PARKS (CONT'D)
But you, you've seen the world. And now you're out there putting everything on the line to create this company... it's *respectable*.

She smiles, equal parts sincerity and wry humor. Phil laughs.

INT. ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH - PORTLAND - DAY

Phil and Penny exchange vows. Penny is shaking so much she can't even bring herself to raise her chin and look at Phil.

Amongst the groomsmen is Chuck Cale, Phil's college roommate. Even up on the altar he's hitting on the cute bridesmaids

EXT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE - BEAVERTON - DAY

Phil and a PREGNANT PENNY purchase a modest ranch-style in Beaverton. They pose out-front.

INT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE - BEAVERTON - NIGHT

Penny paints the baby's room by herself while...

IN THE LIVING ROOM

...Phil has his eyes glued to the TV and the 1968 Olympics.

The protest of John Carlos and Tommie Smith plays out. Both men on the podium, heads bowed, BLACK-GLOVED FISTS raised.

But while the rest of the world is focused on their fists, Phil is focused on their FEET. Both men are *shoeless*.

EXT. HAYWARD FIELD TRACK - TRACK PRACTICE - DAY

An excited Phil keeps pace with Bowerman, athletes sprinting past. Phil tries to avoid colliding with the runners.

PHIL KNIGHT

They had no shoes on. Just left their Pumas right there on the stands! Hell, I don't know if that's a good thing or bad thing for Puma.

BILL BOWERMAN

Hell if I know.

(SHOUTS at his runners)

What the fuck are you stopping for?! I'll tell you when you're tired!

PHIL KNIGHT

We got shutout in Mexico City. Not a single athlete competed in Tigers.

BILL BOWERMAN

Plenty of 'em were training in them though. I assure you.

PHIL KNIGHT

Then what's the problem?

BILL BOWERMAN

Quality, partly. But the main reason? Money. We don't have a damn penny to our name for endorsement deals. Meanwhile, Adidas is paying athletes under the table to wear their shoes. Wouldn't it be wonderful to be able to pay the athletes?

Yeah, it would.

BILL BOWERMAN (CONT'D)

Ran into Kitami at the Games. Don't care much for that man. Doesn't know a damn thing about shoes. Little too slick you ask me.

Bowerman BLOWS his whistle. Stomps off, ready to tear some young kid a new asshole and leaving Phil feeling worried.

INT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Phil paces, on the phone.

PHIL KNIGHT

What do you mean they're the wrong number of shoes?!

INT. DOCKS - INTERCUT

Jeff Johnson, apoplectic, surrounded by a shipment of shoes.

JEFF JOHNSON

I mean Onitsuka sent the wrong number. And the wrong sizes. And the wrong models!

PHIL KNIGHT

Calm down, Jeff. Kitami assured me they are building a new state-of-the-art factory. This is all going to get cleared up.

JEFF JOHNSON

Yeah, when it's too late! God, we are really screwing our customers, Buck. Happiness is a boatload of Cortez; reality is a boatload of Bostons with steel wool uppers and tongues made out of old razor blades, sizes six to six-and-a-half!

Phil nearly wraps the phone cord around his own neck.

JEFF JOHNSON (CONT'D)
 I swear, the next size 11 feet that
 cross into my office gets blown off.

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Bowerman and Phil jog around the edges of Bill's estate.

BILL BOWERMAN
 We're broke.

PHIL KNIGHT
 We're not broke. We just don't have
 any money.

BILL BOWERMAN
 Same difference. Without money, we'll
 be bankrupt in a matter of months.

CUT TO:

INT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE - NIGHT

A fundraiser masked as a cocktail party, filled with Phil's former teammates and competitors. Including Jim Grelle, his pretty wife draped on his arm.

Phil eyes Jim closely from across the room.

LATER - DEN

Phil and Grelle alone now. A nervous Phil has just finished pitching him on Onitsuka and Tigers.

PHIL KNIGHT
 ...So as you can see, it's a good
 opportunity, Jim. And a fine shoe.
 What Bill and I are doing, it's a
 win-win. So, whaddya say, Jim? You
 want to invest?

Grelle looks at the shoe. Then back at Phil. He smiles kindly.

JIM GRELLE
 Thank you, but honestly, I just
 don't think it's for me, Buck.
 But best of luck with 'em.

Phil looks down at Jim's shoes-- *he's wearing adidas sneakers.*

PHIL KNIGHT
 Here, take a pair. At least give
 'em a try.

JIM GRELLE

That's okay.

Grelle turns, heads for the door. Phil forced to look at his old rival's back pulling away from him once more.

INT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE - NIGHT

Phil and Penny in bed. It's late. Penny rolls over, sees Phil still wide-awake. She can see the concern on his face.

PENNY PARKS

What is it?

PHIL KNIGHT

I haven't been completely honest with you.

There's suddenly worry in Penny's eyes.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I pledged the house against the business.

PENNY PARKS

Okay, Buck. And why would you do such a thing?

PHIL KNIGHT

We needed a house.

PENNY PARKS

We had a house.

PHIL KNIGHT

We had an apartment. A small one.

Penny grabs her baby bump, almost protective.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I don't want you to worry but if Blue Ribbon fails, we'll lose the house.

PENNY PARKS

Geez, now why would I possibly worry about such a thing?

He laughs. So does she. Then:

PENNY PARKS (CONT'D)

I've seen this story play out before...I'd much prefer security.

Phil rests his hand atop hers.

PHIL KNIGHT
 No matter what happens, I will
 always take care of this family.
 House or no house. Shoe company or
 no shoe company.

He lifts her chin, bringing her eyes up to his.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
 I promise.

PENNY PARKS
 Okay, Buck.

CUT TO:

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Phil at his desk, head hung, when-- a hand SLAPS down a
 check. Phil looks up.

PHIL KNIGHT
 What's this?

BOB WOODSELL
 It's a loan for five grand. It'll
 get us through the holiday season.

Before Phil can even protest--

BOB WOODSELL (CONT'D)
 Take it. We want to. My folks and I.

Bob pivots his chair, wheels back toward the door.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Hey, Bob...are you happy here?

Bob thinks about it for a moment, then:

BOB WOODSELL
 A man who can't walk peddling
 running shoes. Whodda thunk it?

He wheels out, chuckling to himself.

Phil looks down at the check-- grateful but feeling the
 immense guilt and pressure. The phone RINGS.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Blue Ribbon Sports, this is Phil.

As he listens, rage begins to boil over. Phil looks sick to
 his stomach as we CUT TO:

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

The entire Blue Ribbon team is gathered. Phil, Bowerman, and Woodell in person, along with GEOFF HOLLISTER (employee #3, long dark hair, with a handlebar stache.) Jeff via phone.

BOB WOODPELL

Wait-wait-wait, hold up. You got a call from an East coast distributor saying Onitsuka came to *him*?

PHIL KNIGHT

He said he's been in talks with Tiger officials about selling track shoes in the United States. He wanted to know the status of my deal. He's planning to go to Japan shortly and discuss the matter.

JEFF JOHNSON (ON PHONE)

The status is we have a fucking three-year exclusive.

Bowerman looks at Phil, the only one willing to say what everyone else is thinking:

BILL BOWERMAN

Kitami is going to violate our contract.

A quiet, almost defeated beat from the group.

EXT. WOODS OF OREGON - DAY

Phil goes for a run...but his legs feel like they're moving in slow motion as the world around Phil rapidly rushes past.

Unable to keep up, Phil keels over and vomits.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Kitami and his personal assistant, HIRAKU IWANO (20s, practically a kid), gaze at the broken windows, the javelin holding up another. The plywood room divider. Bob in his wheelchair. The walls vibrating from the Pink Bucket jukebox.

PHIL KNIGHT

(nervous laugh)

It may look small but we do a lot of business out of this room.

Kitami says nothing, instead his eyes find a MAP of the United States on the far wall. It's littered with RED PUSHpins.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

One for everywhere we've sold a pair
of Tigers in the last five years.

Kitami moves over to Phil's desk, settles into Phil's chair.

KITAMI

Blue Ribbon sales are disappointing!
You should be doing much better.

PHIL KNIGHT

Our sales are doubling every year.

KITAMI

Should be triple some people say.

Phil blanches.

PHIL KNIGHT

What people?

Kitami ignores the question, motions for his briefcase from
Iwano. Pulls out a FOLDER, flips it open. Reads something
then snaps it shut.

KITAMI

I do not like your numbers. I promoted
to build empire. This no empire.

PHIL KNIGHT

Well, let's talk about that. You've
promised that inventory control
would improve. Yet we have all the
small sizes. Wrong colors.
Deliveries are out of sequence.

KITAMI

Even Mr. Onitsuka not solve problem.
Factories have their own problems.

Phil bites his tongue, finally sits. Still relatively calm.

PHIL KNIGHT

Blue Ribbon might be able to increase
its sales if we could order more
shoes, and we might order more shoes
if we have more financing. And our
bank might give us said financing if
we have more security, meaning a
longer contract with Onitsuka.

KITAMI

(waves his hand)
Excuses.

Kitami taps the file in front of him.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

Market research. Distributor all over America say huge market for Tiger. One say he can sell ten times in one state alone what Blue Ribbon sell in whole country.

PHIL KNIGHT

That's just not true.

Kitami shrugs, slides his folder back inside his briefcase. He rises and moves to the MAP of the United States.

KITAMI

It is regrettable, but distributors not carry Onitsuka product without exclusive territory. Therefore, Blue Ribbon give up some states - starting with California and New York.

Phil's heard enough, watching at his baby is torn apart, limb-by-limb, in front of his very eyes.

PHIL KNIGHT

You can't sign a contract with other distributors! That would be a violation of our written agreement!

Kitami turns back to Phil, with his signature sneer.

KITAMI

Sell us your company then.

PHIL KNIGHT

Excuse me?

KITAMI

Onitsuka buy controlling interest in Blue Ribbon Sports. Fifty-one percent. It is best deal.

Phil staggers, punch-drunk.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

Otherwise, Onitsuka have no choice but to set up *superior* distributors. You would be wise to accept.

Phil strains to control his rage.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

Talk it over with Dr. Bowerman. Get back to me.

Kitami hitches his pants, and leaves.

ON PHIL, practically catatonic, as the BEEPING of a heart monitor blips faintly. Blue Ribbon is on life support.

INT. PHIL AND PENNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

PHIL KNIGHT

I can always fall back on accounting.

PENNY PARKS

You've worked too hard, Buck.

PHIL KNIGHT

Maybe I can negotiate with Onitsuka for a 50-50 split.

PENNY PARKS

Or?

PHIL KNIGHT

Or, I capitulate to Kitami.

PENNY PARKS

Or?

PHIL KNIGHT

Or what? Or nothing. We quit! It's over.

PENNY PARKS

Quitting is losing. There's nothing respectable about quitting. So, why not figure out a way to win?

OFF PHIL, as he lets the idea percolate in his head.

PHIL KNIGHT (PRE-LAP)

What if we made our own brand?

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY OF OREGON CAMPUS - DAY

Bowerman bellows against the blistering wind, undaunted. Phil a step behind him, chattering at the biting cold.

PHIL KNIGHT

We make our own shoes? A trademark
no one can threaten to take away
every three years.

Bowerman slows, looks incredulously back at Phil.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

You already know what makes a better
shoe than those asshats ever will. We
have a loyal customer base.

BILL BOWERMAN

They'll sue us.

PHIL KNIGHT

Then we'll fight them and we'll win.

Bowerman stares at Phil; he's never seen him more determined.
Then, smiles that piano key smile of his.

BILL BOWERMAN

Alright. Let's do it.

PHIL KNIGHT

If this is going to work though, we
have to delay future talks of a
buyout with Onitsuka as long as
possible. At least until we can
find our own replacement.

INT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Phil is sound asleep when Penny shakes him.

PENNY PARKS

Buck, I don't feel so well.

PHIL KNIGHT

Uh huh.

A beat, as Phil nods back off. Then-- he SHOOTs upright.

INT. RANCH-STYLE HOUSE

Chaos. Phil rushes about the house, a chicken with its head
cut off. Penny waddles out of the hallway behind him.

INT. CAR - EARLY MORNING

Still dark. Empty streets. Phil drives, stopwatch in hand,
timing Penny's contractions.

PHIL KNIGHT
Five...four...three...

PENNY PARKS
Stop...doing...that!

She rips the stopwatch away.

INT. EMANUEL HOSPITAL - RECOVERING ROOM - DAY

Finally, calmness. Phil carefully enters-- sees Penny in bed, exhausted but glowing. Her arms wrapped around a blanket. A blue stocking capped head poking out.

Phil kisses Penny's forehead.

PHIL KNIGHT
You're a champion.

She's unsure whether he means her, or the baby, as Phil cradles his SON (MATTHEW) into his arms for the first time.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
We made this.

PENNY PARKS
And unlike your shoes, this one's
not allowed to go on life support.

They laugh, as we CUT TO:

EXT. PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - DAY

Christmas in Portland and the weather sucks. Penny, with baby Matthew strapped into a car seat.

PHIL KNIGHT
I hate leaving you over the holiday--

Penny nods, she gets it, even if it *is* killing her.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
We'll survive. It's just one
Christmas.

Phil kisses her, climbs out.

SMASH TO:

"CANADA"

Or, rather, a really large factory SIGN that *reads* "Canada."
Even though we're in the middle of--

GUADALAJARA, MEXICO - DAY

Phil stares up at the Canada Shoe Factory.

PHIL KNIGHT

Why did you name it Canada exactly?

PORTLY FACTORY MANAGER

It sounded exotic.

Phil nods. Ok.

MEANWHILE - BACK AT HOME

Penny and baby Matthew spend Christmas without Phil. She looks at the phone, waiting for it to ring. But it doesn't.

BOB WOODSELL (PRE-LAP)

Three thousands pairs of leather soccer shoes?!

CUT TO:

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Bob turns a leather SOCCER SHOE over in his hand.

BOB WOODSELL

What the hell are we going to do with all those?

PHIL KNIGHT

We're going to sell them as football shoes.

BOB WOODSELL

And why in the fuck would we wanna do that?

PHIL KNIGHT

Because my deal with Onitsuka says we can only import track and field shoes but it says nothing about importing someone else's football shoes.

BACK TO:

EXT. CANADA SHOE FACTORY - DAY

Phil climbs into a waiting taxi. The Factory Manager comes rushing out of the building.

FACTORY MANAGER
 Wait, Mr. Knight, what is the name
 of your brand?

Phil pauses, he has no idea.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Let me get back to you on that.

INT. PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY - HALLWAY

A GROUP OF YOUNG WOMEN standing around an easel. One of them
 (CAROLYN DAVIDSON) daubs at her large canvas.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
 I can't afford to take a class on
 oil painting. You know how much
 that'll cost me?

Phil slows as he passes by, then doubles-back.

PHIL KNIGHT (O.S.)
 I'm sorry for eavesdropping but my
 company could use an artist.

Carolyn turns to find-- PHIL, admiring her work.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
 Excuse me?

PHIL KNIGHT
 My company needs someone to do some
 designs. I can offer you two bucks
 an hour.

The women exchange odd glances. Carolyn looks wary.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
 To do what exactly, Mister?

CUT TO:

INT. CAFE - DAY

Phil devours his lunch. Across from him sits Carolyn, with a
 pen and pad. But at the moment, she just looks...*confused*.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
 What kind of logo exactly?

PHIL KNIGHT
 I don't know.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
Well that gives me a lot to go on.

PHIL KNIGHT
Something that evokes a sense of
motion. I think.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
Motion?

PHIL KNIGHT
I think.

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
You think.

Carolyn sets down her pen, about ready to give up...when Phil
pulls out a soccer shoe. He sets it right on the table.

PHIL KNIGHT
I need something for this. You know
what Adidas stripes look like? You
know how they go up and down?

She nods.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Well, that's a support system. It's
functional and at the same time it
looks distinctive. Try to come up
with a stripe that is functional
like that, but also visible from a
distance. Try to make it reflect
movement and speed. Are you going
to take notes?

CAROLYN DAVIDSON
No, I got it.

CUT TO:

BOB WOODSELL

looking like he's trying to waft away a particularly bad fart.

BOB WOODSELL
I don't like it.

He's joined by JOHN BORK (a born athlete turned track coach
turned Nike employee) and Jeff Johnson. They're both staring
at a sketch of what appears to be a fat, fleshy CHECK MARK.

PHIL KNIGHT
In twenty-five words or less. Go.

BOB WOODSELL
Looks like an upside-down Puma stripe.

JOHN BORK
Looks like the logo from the
Chrysler campaign a few years back.

JEFF JOHNSON
What was the name of that thing?
Forward looks or something? Yeah I
don't like it either.

PHIL KNIGHT
(getting annoyed)
Do y'all have anything better?

They don't.

JEFF JOHNSON
It doesn't *do* anything. It's just a
decoration. Adidas' stripes support
the arch. Puma's stripe supports
the ball of the foot. Tigers' do
both. This doesn't do *either*.

BOB WOODSELL
Oh c'mon, we've got to pick something.
The three stripes are already taken.

Finally, Phil turns to...

CAROLYN, who has been standing on the other side of the room
this entire time. Phil throws her an apologetic smile.

PHIL KNIGHT
I don't love it but I think it'll
grow on me.

He pulls out his checkbook. Cuts her a check for \$35.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Oh, and can you maybe not cash that
right away?

Shaking her head, Carolyn stomps out.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
(back to the team)
Now we just need a name for
this...*thing*.

INT. PHIL KNIGHT'S HOME OFFICE - NIGHT

It's the middle of the night and Phil is still working, a desperate and frustrated man. We HEAR the baby WAILING.

Behind Phil, Penny staggers out into the hallway, like a zombie. But Phil doesn't even notice or hear what's going on around him he's so entrenched in his work.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

Dozens of names are scrawled on the board: *Falcon... Dimension Six... Bengal...*

BOB WOODSELL

Ford just paid a top-flight consulting firm \$2 Million to come up with the name of its new Maverick. We can't do any worse than...*Maverick*.

PHIL KNIGHT

Canada starts production on Friday.

One of the other reps, HOLLOWAY, speaks up.

HOLLOWAY

I kind of like Bengal.

Bork smiles, that one was his. Another rep - NELSON FARRIS - counters.

NELSON FARRIS

The only possible name is Condor.

PHIL KNIGHT

(losing it)

Animal names. *Animal* names! We've considered the name of just about every goddamn animal in the fucking jungle. *Must* it be an animal?!

(then)

I say we go with Dimension Six.

If the group agrees on anything, it's that they all HATE Dimension Six.

JOHN BORK

It doesn't mean anything!

Another VOICE (GAMBS) sums it up neatly.

GAMBS

All these names suck.

Everyone clamors over one another again. Phil walks out.

INT. BLUE RIBBON HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Bob rolls into Phil's office.

BOB WOODSELL
Time's up. What's it going to be?

Phil groans, his face buried in his hands.

BOB WOODSELL (CONT'D)
There is...one more suggestion.

PHIL KNIGHT
From who?

BOB WOODSELL
Johnson phoned first thing this morning. Apparently a new name came to him in a dream last night.

CUT TO:

INT. BOB WOODSELL'S APARTMENT - LAST NIGHT

4am in Oregon. A groggy Bob fumbles for the ringing phone, finally finds the receiver. Grumbles.

JEFF JOHNSON (ON PHONE)
Bob. I've got it!

BOB WOODSELL
Huh?

JEFF JOHNSON (ON PHONE)
Nike!

BOB WOODSELL
What? What the hell's a--

BACK TO:

INT. PHIL'S OFFICE - AS WE WERE

PHIL KNIGHT
Nike?

BOB WOODSELL
Apparently it's the winged goddess of victory.

PHIL KNIGHT
Huh?

BOB WOODSELL
Nike.

PHIL KNIGHT
Spell it.

BOB WOODSELL
N-I-K-E.

Phil jots it down on a legal pad. Stares at the letters.

BOB WOODSELL (CONT'D)
The stripes sort of look like Nike's
wings if you stretch the point.

Phil draws the new fleshy check mark logo beneath the letters.

BOB WOODSELL (CONT'D)
I once read in an airline magazine
that the most important trade names
were short and contained an exotic
letter like an X, a K, or a Z. Xerox.

PHIL KNIGHT
Kleenex.

BOB WOODSELL
Zippo.

PHIL KNIGHT
Nike.

Yes. Nike.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
We're out of time. Nike or
Dimension Six?

BOB WOODSELL
Everyone *hates* Dimension Six.

PHIL KNIGHT
Everyone but me.

BOB WOODSELL
It's your call.

PHIL KNIGHT
I really don't like any of them,
but I guess we'll go with the Nike
thing for now.

BOB WOODSELL
Maybe it'll grow on us.

Phil nods, unconvinced, as a SECRETARY pokes her head in.

SECRETARY

Kitami is on the line again. He keeps asking for your answer.

PHIL KNIGHT

Tell him I'm in a meeting.

SECRETARY

That's what you said last time. He won't stop calling.

PHIL KNIGHT

Then stop answering.

SECRETARY

The phones? You want me to not answer them *at all*?

Phil just glares at her until she walks out.

INT. PHIL'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Most of the team has gone home for the night, but as usual, Phil is still grinding away in his office.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (O.S.)

Burning the midnight oil.

Phil looks up, surprised to see his father in the doorway.

PHIL KNIGHT

What are you doing here?

WILLIAM KNIGHT

The family had dinner plans. Penny kept calling your office but no one was picking up. She got worried.

(then)

What are you doing, Buck?

Phil gestures to his desk, at all the papers.

PHIL KNIGHT

I'm working. That's what happens when I'm trying to save a company. People depend on me.

WILLIAM KNIGHT

Y'know, Buck, sometimes a man has to know when to just call a spade a spade. You've been at this a long time now.

Phil steadies his eyes on his father.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Take the deal, Buck. Go do something
else. Something stable. For Penny.
For Matthew.

PHIL KNIGHT
You mean something respectable?
Like accounting?

William doesn't respond. There's no use in fighting.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Just say it already.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
Say what?

PHIL KNIGHT
That you've never believed in this
shoe thing.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
Jesus, Buck--

PHIL KNIGHT
No. It's okay. You've made it loud
and clear over the years. Though
maybe it's not the fact I'm selling
shoes you don't believe in. Maybe
it's just me.

(then)
Do you know why I went to Oregon
instead of Stanford even when you
said not to? It wasn't out of some
need to defy you. It's because I'd
rather run my guts out, I'd rather
collapse over that finish line,
feeling like I gave everything I had
to give, every last breath, and die
right there on the track knowing I
did my best, even if that meant
losing, than to not even try at all.
If that's not respectable enough for
you, sir, well then frankly I don't
know what the fuck is.

William exhales. Then, stands and buttons his blazer.

WILLIAM KNIGHT
Okay, Buck. You wanna run your
whole life, Buck, then run.

He heads for the door. Stops.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)
 But while you're chasing whatever it
 is you're after, don't be surprised
 when something else comes up on your
 outside, passes you altogether.
 Without you ever noticin'.

He heads out.

INT. NISSHO IWAI CORPORATION - PORTLAND - DAY

Phil waits in the lobby of NISSHO IWAI, the American offices
 of a sogo shosha based in Tokyo. A sharp-looking suit
 (SUMERAGI) approaches Phil, we pick up on--

SUMERAGI
 Who did you say your contact at
 Onitsuka was again?

PHIL KNIGHT
 Kitami.

Sumeragi snarls.

SUMERAGI
 The man's an ass.

PHIL KNIGHT
 I think you and I are going to be
 fast friends.

SUMERAGI
 I can help you get free of Kitami.
 I can help you beat Adidas. I can
 solve all your problems. I know
 factories.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Factories that can make Nikes?

SUMERAGI
 I can think of five off the top of
 my head better than "Canada."

BEGIN SERIES:

-- Phil boards a PLANE for Japan...

-- ...and TEN HOURS LATER touches down in the land of the
 rising sun...

-- ...Taxi ride after taxi ride across the COUNTRYSIDE...

-- ...Visiting SHOE FACTORY after SHOE FACTORY...

-- ...Staying in SHITTY HOTEL after SHITTY HOTEL...

-- At ANOTHER FACTORY, Phil shows Factory Managers an early model of Bowerman's Nike Cortez. The managers nod gravely.

-- After lunch, Phil returns to the conference room and there on the table awaits a BRAND-NEW CORTEZ. Nike swoosh and all.

-- Phil's excited now as he walks the factory managers through all of his new shoe designs. Tennis, basketball, high top, low top, running shoe after running shoe...

--In the streets, he passes by a SHOE STORE proudly selling brand new Adidas'.

--Back in his shit-hole of a hotel room, an exhausted Phil dials home...

...where the phone just rings and rings...because outside in the backyard a birthday party is taking place. Kids and parents SINGING HAPPY BIRTHDAY to Matthew.

-- Alone at night at the NISSHO OFFICES, Phil inspects shoe sample after shoe sample. Holding them up to the light. Running his fingers along the soles. Even sniffs them.

-- Phil floats down the line of shoes, like an assembly line, scrawling out names on pieces of paper for each:

A tennis shoe named the Wimbledon. Another...the Forest Hill.

A basketball shoe...the Bruin.

Running shoes...the Cortez, of course. And the Marathon.

The Obori. The Boston and Finland. The Wet-Flyte.

-- The sun's just coming up as Phil stumbles out into an already crowded Tokyo street. He looks over his shoulder, one last look at the Nissho offices.

PHIL KNIGHT

We made this.

END SERIES.

EXT. MOUNT FUJI - NIGHT

Phil stares up at the mountain, this time with his own rubberized jacket and a new pair of Nike Cortez shoes.

EXT. MOUNT FUJI - SUMMIT - SUNRISE

Phil sits alone atop the mountain. He looks out sadly at the Torii Gate as the sun crests above the horizon. He reaches down and feels his naked wrist.

INT. POST OFFICE - JAPAN - DAY

Phil stuffs his dusty Cortez's into a box. Along with a NOTE: *"A wise man climbs Fuji once. A fool climbs it twice."*

ANGLE ON: the mailing label -- *for Sarah in Maryland.*

CUT TO:

AN ORANGE AND BLACK NIKE SHOEBOX

WE PULL BACK on a crappy pyramid of new Nikes in bright orange shoeboxes, lowercase 'nike' lettered in white across the side of each box. We are--

INT. HOTEL ROOM - CHICAGO - NIGHT

PHIL KNIGHT

This is it. Tomorrow we announce Nike to Adidas and to the world.

JEFF JOHNSON

How long you think we can hold off Kitami before Onitsuka finds out?

PHIL KNIGHT

Won't even matter if the sales reps don't like the shoes.

JEFF JOHNSON

I can't see why they would.

Jeff has pulled a new shoe out of a box. One of the Wet-Flytes, which looks...literally wet with shiny cheap paint and lacquer. Not to mention, the swoosh is crooked.

Phil's in full-on panic mode when the hotel room door swings open and Bob rolls inside.

BOB WOODSELL (O.S.)

We're so fucking fucked!

JEFF JOHNSON

Yeah, tell me about it.

He tosses the 'wet' shoe at Bob.

BOB WOODSELL
What the hell?! It looks like
someone took a piss all on it.

He rolls the shoe over, sees the crooked swoosh.

BOB WOODSELL (CONT'D)
Ah hell!

Then Bob, like a child who knows he's about to get whooped,
carefully hands Phil a FLYER.

BOB WOODSELL (CONT'D)
Onitsuka just put out a press
release saying they've just
"acquired" Blue Ribbon Sports.

Phil looks over the release...

PHIL KNIGHT
It's a bully tactic. They're trying
to push us into taking the deal.

JEFF JOHNSON
You think they know?

PHIL KNIGHT
How? No. There's no way.

JEFF JOHNSON
We have to shut this down now. It
could tank the Nike brand before we
even get out of the gate.

PHIL KNIGHT
No. If Nike is going to survive, we
need one or two more months of
shipments from Onitsuka. If they cut
off shipments now...we're toast.

JEFF JOHNSON
So what do you suggest we do?

Phil looks at the Wet-Flytes and their crooked swooshes.
There's no real choice except...

PHIL KNIGHT
We gotta sell the goddamn piss
outta these goddamn piss shoes.

SMASH TO:

INT. CONVENTION CENTER - DAY

SUPER: **Chicago, 1972**
The National Sporting Goods Association Show

The Super Bowl, Olympics, and Bar Mitzvah of athletic shoes rolled into one. Amongst the sea of slick vendors is Adidas' booth. Massive. Straight out of a designer catalogue.

And then there's Blue Ribbon and their modest little Nike booth. Nike looks like the snotty little paste eaters at the science fair who haven't done enough work on their project.

PHIL KNIGHT

Look, fellas, this is the worst the shoes will ever be. They'll get better. So if we can just sell these...we'll be on our way.

But before they know it, the mob of hungry salesmen start parading their way like it's an open bar. Total chaos. Hands all grabbing at once. Questions flying like stray bullets.

SALES REP 1

The hell is this?

SALES REP 2

Hell if I know.

SALES REP 1

Hey, hell IS this?

PHIL KNIGHT

That's a Nike.

SALES REP 1

The hell's a Nike?

JEFF JOHNSON

It's the Greek goddess of victory.

SALES REP 1

Greek what?

JEFF JOHNSON

Goddess of vic--

SALES REP 2

And the hell's THIS?

BOB WODELL

That's a swoosh.

SALES REP 2
The hell's a *swoosh*?

PHIL KNIGHT
It's the sound of someone going
past you. Fast.

The Sales Reps look at the swoosh. Then at each other. They nod. They like it. *They like it a lot.*

So much in fact, that they place orders. And it's an avalanche. One order. Then two. Then dozens.

JEFF JOHNSON
This makes no goddamn sense.

He marches over to ANOTHER SALES REP (DAVE).

JEFF JOHNSON (CONT'D)
What the hell's goin' on here, Dave?

SALES REP DAVE
Whaddya mean?

JEFF JOHNSON
I mean, we show up with this new Nike, and it's untested, and frankly, it's not even all that good - and you guys are buying it up like it's givin' out handjobs. What gives?

Dave LAUGHS.

SALES REP DAVE
Jeff, we've been doing business with you Blue Ribbon guys for years, and we know that you guys tell the truth. Everyone else bullshits, but you guys always shoot straight. So if you say this new shoe, this Nike, is worth a shot, we believe ya.

Dumbfounded, Jeff retreats back to the booth.

PHIL KNIGHT
What'd he say?

JEFF JOHNSON
Tellin' the truth. Who knew.

Nike is officially the new hit of the convention.

INT./EXT. VARIOUS BARS - NIGHT

The Nike guys celebrate like only they know how...by getting black-out drunk. It's a veritable boy's club of debauchery.

Phil, beyond hammered, staggers out into the street and pukes all over the sidewalk. The other guys just LAUGH, loving it!

INT. PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - BAGGAGE CLAIM - DAY

Penny -- with Matthew -- sits waiting, when she sees Phil stagger out of the terminal. He looks thin and tired, yet relieved to finally see them.

INT. CAR - DAY (MOVING)

Penny drives, Phil slumped in the passenger seat struggling to stay awake. Matthew out cold in the backseat.

PHIL KNIGHT

I half expected you might not show.

PENNY PARKS

I quite think a part of me will always want to leave you. But a part of me, will never want to.

Phil reaches over, quietly rests his hand atop of hers. There's still so much love here.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. KOBE, JAPAN - EARLY MORNING

Red streaks flare across the factories and war torn buildings. Traditional TAIKO DRUMS gradually building as...

INT. ONITSUKA HEADQUARTERS - DAY

...a perfectly coiffed Mr. Onitsuka leafs through a stack of reports...then stops. Drums STILL BUILDING as Onitsuka sneers.

REVERSE ON: a PHOTOGRAPH. Blue Ribbon's BOOTH from the trade show. Along with a big CLOSE-UP of-- Phil and the NIKE boxes.

The drums pick up their pace now as...

A PAIR OF SHINY BLACK LOAFERS

hit pavement, moving with purpose through--

INT. PORTLAND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

A vengeful Kitami has arrived. He exits the terminal, steps into a waiting town car.

EXT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS

Kitami exits the car, marches toward the entrance...

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - DAY

...and barges right into the Blue Ribbon offices like a blazing fire, breezing past Bob Woodell, who turns to watch with terrified interest. Straight into...

PHIL'S OFFICE

The taiko drums cease. Leaving with it a stark silence.

KITAMI

What is this, this...thing?
This...NEE-kay?

Phil stares across his desk at Kitami.

PHIL KNIGHT

Nike? Oh. It's nothing. Just a sideline we've developed, to hedge our bets, in case Onitsuka does as threatened and yanks the rug out from under us.

Kitami flinches, visibly thrown by Phil's response.

KITAMI

Who make new shoes?

PHIL KNIGHT

A different factory. In Japan.

KITAMI

How many of these Nikes?

PHIL KNIGHT

Not many. Few thousand.

Phil stares back at Kitami, as calm as he's ever been.

KITAMI

Are they in stores?

PHIL KNIGHT

Of course not.

Phil's bluffing.

KITAMI

When do you sign papers, sell Blue Ribbon to Onitsuka?

PHIL KNIGHT

My partner has still not decided.

KITAMI

Then he decide now!

PHIL KNIGHT

No. I don't think so.

Fuming, Kitami unbuttons, then rebuttons his jacket. He's out of moves here.

KITAMI

I will be back.

Kitami turns and marches right back out of the office.

Phil immediately reaches for his phone. Dials.

PHIL KNIGHT

C'mon, c'mon, pick up the damn phone already!

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS RETAIL STORE - SANTA MONICA

The phone RINGS. Over and over. Finally...

JOHN BORK

Blue Ribbon Sports. John speaking.

INTERCUT WITH:

PHIL KNIGHT

Kitami's coming to L.A.!

JOHN BORK

What?

PHIL KNIGHT

You've got to stop him from seeing the new Nike shoes. Don't let him in the back of the store!

Bork hesitates, voice trembling.

JOHN BORK

I don't know how I'm going to do that, Phil.

(MORE)

JOHN BORK (CONT'D)

He's going to want to go in the back and look at the shoes like he always does.

PHIL KNIGHT

Then cover them up with something.

JOHN BORK

Cover 'em up? With what exactly?

PHIL KNIGHT

I don't give a shit, John! But if you want to keep your fucking job, you hide those fucking shoes!

Phil slams down the phone.

Rattled, Bork steps into the back stockroom, eyes scanning with concern. He lets out an exasperated sigh...

THE ENTIRE STOCKROOM IS FILLED WITH STACKS OF NIKE BOXES.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS RETAIL STORE - SANTA MONICA - DAY

The bell above the door chimes. Kitami struts inside, immediately met with a smile from Bork behind the counter.

KITAMI

Where are the shoes?

JOHN BORK

Uh, well...

He motions to the displays all around the showroom.

KITAMI

No. The other shoes.

He goes right at Bork, like a lion on an injured gazelle.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

I know they are here. These NEE-kay.

Bork moves out from behind the counter, doing his best to play dumb. Walks over to the new Tigers display.

JOHN BORK

These are all of the new Tigers we have in stock.

Kitami cools. Knows he's getting nowhere with Bork.

KITAMI

May I use restroom?

Bork tenses, eyes sliding toward the back storeroom door. They both know the restroom is in the back. Through the stockroom. And they both know why Kitami has asked to use it.

Before Bork can protest, Kitami beelines it...

INTO THE STOCKROOM

Bork follows, Kitami finally spots what he's looking for--

DOZENS AND DOZENS OF BRIGHT ORANGE AND BLACK BOXES.

He approaches, leans forward... "nike" in black lettering.

KITAMI

Oooh.

Kitami rolls his eyes, looks at Bork like a cat who's just eaten a canary. Then, like a bull with a hard-on, Kitami storms down the stacks of boxes, opening one after another.

Until he unearths what he's *really* looking for-- THE CORTEZ.

He picks up the shoe, examines it with a look of satisfaction. Proof of Blue Ribbon's betrayal now in hand.

INT. LAW OFFICES OF JOHN JAQUA - CONFERENCE ROOM - DAY

SUPER: May 10, 1972

Phil, Bowerman, and their lawyer, JOHN JAQUA, at one end of a long table. Kitami, Iwano, and their LAWYER, at the other.

KITAMI

I am very sorry that Mister Knight has breached our contract for no reason.

Phil glares at Kitami, refusing to break eye contact with his mortal enemy. Even as Kitami pulls a LETTER out of his bag, which he slides across the table to Jaqua.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

This letter from Kihachiro Onitsuka stating effective immediately our relationship with Blue Ribbon Sports is null and void.

He looks at Phil, then back to Jaqua.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

Very very regret.

(then)

Also, Onitsuka to bill Blue Ribbon, which is owed for shoes delivered.

KITAMI'S LAWYER

Sixteen thousand, six hundred thirty-seven dollars...and thirteen cents.

Jaqua pushes the letter aside.

KITAMI

You cause this. You breach contract by making Nike shoes. Why you ruin such profitable relationship with this...this...*Nike?!*

Phil's a tea kettle ready to explode.

KITAMI (CONT'D)

We have been more than generous in proposal to buy 51% of Blue Ribbon.

PHIL KNIGHT

How do you say "go to hell," in Japanese!?

JOHN JAQUA

Shut up, Buck!

Phil rescinds. A tense beat. Then Jaqua looks across the table at Kitami, calm as a koi pond.

JOHN JAQUA (CONT'D)

Lawsuits can often be highly detrimental to both companies. On the other hand, rifts can often be worked out if the desire exists to repair the relationship.

Kitami scoffs.

JOHN JAQUA (CONT'D)

But...if you have no desire to repair the relationship, Blue Ribbon will proceed with legal action.

Kitami narrows his eyes, absorbing the blow. He's in no mood for negotiating. He rises, motioning to Iwano and his lawyer.

At the door, Kitami turns back. His hardened face softens. *Is he about to offer an olive branch of sorts?*

KITAMI

Can someone please drive us to the airport?

CUT TO:

EXT. PORTLAND - DUSK

Phil runs alone along the empty streets. Breath heavy. Each step pounding the pavement like their own set of taiko drums.

INT. BLUE RIBBON SPORTS HEADQUARTERS - THE NEXT DAY

Jeff Johnson arrives, fresh off a plane, to find everyone gathering in the conference room. Some 30 odd Blue Ribbon employees. Even Penny and Bowerman. Jeff finds Bob, joins him.

JEFF JOHNSON

What's going on?

But before Bob can respond, Phil takes his place at the head of the room. He stares out at the company. Oddly calm. Gone is the nervous tics we'd seen at Stanford.

PHIL KNIGHT

We've come, folks, to a crossroads.
Yesterday, our main supplier,
Onitsuka, cut us off.

A few whispers and shocked gasps. Phil lets the shock settle.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

We've threatened to sue them for
damages, and of course they've
threatened to file a countersuit of
their own. Breach of contract.

Phil looks out over his company. A sea of concerned faces...
He can see - *can feel* - their worry.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Meanwhile, until it all sorts out,
we're on our own. We're set adrift.

Faces drop, sullen and forlorn.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

We have this new line, Nike, which
the reps in Chicago seem to like.
But, well, frankly, that's all
we've got. And as we know, there
are big problems with the quality.
But communication is good, and
Nissho is there at the new factory
trying to get it all fixed. But we
don't know how soon they can do it.
It better be soon, though, because
we have no time and suddenly no
margin for error.

Not exactly the most galvanizing of speeches. Phil looks over at Jeff. He can see the surrender in his eyes. Like everyone else in the room, ready to pack it in.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
So, in other words... we've got them right where we want 'em.

Some chuckles of relief. Jeff stands up a bit taller, eyes lifting up to meet Phil's.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
This is...the moment. The moment we've been waiting for. No more selling someone else's brand. Onitsuka has been holding us down for years! Their late deliveries, their mixed-up orders, their refusal to implement our design ideas -- who among us isn't sick of dealing with all that bullshit?!

Hands shoot up. A few whistles and catcalls.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
If we're going to succeed, or fail, we should do so on our own terms with our own ideas--our own brand.

Phil has found his groove. Taking command of the room.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
We posted two million in sales last year...a testament to our ingenuity and hard work. We got Adidas on their heels! So let's not look at this as a crisis. Let's look at this as our liberation! Hell yeah it's going to be rough. I won't lie. We're definitely going to war, people. But we know the terrain. We know our way around Japan now. And that's one reason I feel in my heart this is a war we can win! And if we win it, when we win it, I see great things for us on the other side of *victory!*

Phil watches as a wave of relief surges around the room like a cool breeze. Nods and excited murmurs.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
We have to grow fast now. Speed is the name of the game.
(MORE)

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

The trade show was merely our introduction, but now we have to prove we belong.

A VOICE roars out from the back.

GEOFF HOLLISTER

We beat the Japs once already, no reason we can't do it again!

ON BOWERMAN, Dr. Frankenstein's mind beginning to churn...

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - MORNING

Bowerman with his paper and morning coffee as his WIFE slides a plate of WAFFLES in front of him. She pours syrup...

Bowerman looks up from the paper with intrigue as the liquid syrup fills the indentations in the waffle's pattern.

Suddenly inspired, Bowerman leaps up, ripping the waffle maker off the counter. Rushes out the door.

BOWERMAN'S WIFE

Where the hell do you think you're going with my waffle maker, Bill?

CUT TO:

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S GARAGE / WORKSHOP

Bowerman pours urethane into the waffle maker and heats it up. Only, the urethane SEALS the waffle maker shut. *Shit.*

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

Bowerman storms inside the house, SIX brand new waffle makers in tow. He leaves the now ruined one on the counter for his stunned wife, then heads right back into the garage.

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S GARAGE / WORKSHOP - NIGHT

This time Bowerman fills the waffle maker with plaster, which hardens over the jaws of the waffle iron.

Then takes a sheet of stainless steel. PUNCHES holes into it, creating a sort of waffle surface mold.

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S GARAGE / WORKSHOP- NIGHT

Bowerman sews a pliable RUBBER MOLD to the sole of a running shoe. Then, pulls out a VEGETABLE SCALE and weighs the shoe.

That old piano key smile breaks across Bowerman's face.

EXT. HAYWARD FIELD TRACK - DAY

Bowerman shouts to one of his RUNNERS.

BILL BOWERMAN
Pre! What size are you?!

STEVE PREFONTAINE, with his long blonde hair, jogs over. He kicks off his green & yellow Adidas', takes Bill's prototype.

A BIT LATER

Prefontaine glides around Hayward Field in his new shoes, a bolt of blonde lightening.

BILL BOWERMAN
That as fast as you can go, Pre?
Don't you start lollygaggin' on me!

INT. BILL BOWERMAN'S OFFICE / INT. PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Bowerman excitedly phones Phil back in Portland.

BILL BOWERMAN
The Cortez and the Boston, they were breakthroughs in the upper construction. Better cushioning. Better nylon. But no one's done a damn thing with the outer soles since before the Great Depression. I call it the nipple sole.

PHIL KNIGHT
You mean like a tit?

BILL BOWERMAN
It's gonna be a revolution, Buck!

PHIL KNIGHT
You think they can sell as much as Adidas?

BILL BOWERMAN
I think they can win.

Phil likes the sound of that. *He likes it a lot.*

PHIL KNIGHT
If we really want a revolution, then we're gonna need to find a way to get athletes to wear 'em.

CUT TO:

EXT. HAYWARD FIELD TRACK - DAY

The stands are a madhouse, packed to the hilt. Runners from all over the country choke every inch of the track. Adidas' presence is everywhere.

SUPER: 1972
US Men's Track and Field Olympic Trials

Down on the infield, WE FIND--

Phil, a pregnant Penny, and the rest of the Blue Ribbon team. Penny hot presses personalized tees. Nike and the winged mark on the front. Passes them out to the athletes.

INT. HAYWARD FIELD - IN THE STANDS - LATER

Phil and Geoff Hollister watch as the MARATHONERS spill into the stadium. The crowd rises, cheering on the finish. In front of them sits a TRIO OF SMUG ADIDAS REPS.

But Phil and Geoff are focused entirely on the runners' shoes as they pour into the stadium. They count.

PHIL KNIGHT
 One... Two...

GEOFF
 Three!

PHIL & GEOFF
 FOUR!

Four of the top seven finishers are wearing Nike shoes. Phil is ecstatic! *Nike is now off and running...*

SERIES OF SHOTS: NIKE GOES ON SALE

The first Nike shoes go on sale to the public. From Portland to Culver City, Eugene to Natick. People trading in their Adidas' for this new thing called Nike.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT

"DESPERADO" by The Eagles tickles lightly from a speaker...

Phil sits in a rocking chair, his newborn son TRAVIS on his chest. Their eldest, Matthew curled asleep on a nearby bench.

PHIL KNIGHT
 We're bigger than Adidas. We did.
 And mark my words, Penny.
 (MORE)

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

By 2001, we will be a fifty billion dollar company. And one day, they will run it.

He puts Travis' tiny feet inside a pair of giant Nikes.

Penny frowns.

PENNY PARKS

Not a day old and already asking him to fill some pretty big shoes.

PHIL KNIGHT

Ambition is what winners are made of. Isn't that right, Travis?

PENNY PARKS

And what if he'll never be able to fill them? What then?

Phil looks at her.

PENNY PARKS (CONT'D)

You're barely here now as it is, Phil.

PHIL KNIGHT

I'm doing this *for* them. If it's not for them, than who are we doing it for?

PENNY PARKS

Yourself. So you can win.

PHIL KNIGHT

And what's so terrible about wanting to win?

PENNY PARKS

Nothing...until it becomes the only thing that matters.

Phil waves her off, but Penny can't hide her growing worry. A second baby and a husband who's never home, it's overwhelming.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. BAR - PORTLAND - NIGHT

ROB STRASSER (300-pounds of sweaty, swollen energy), in a Nike polo, nurses a beer at the bar while watching a ball game.

SUPER:

1982

A group of YOUNG WOMEN and EFFEMINATE MEN enter, sweaty and red-faced. They snag a corner booth. One of the young men moves to the bar to order a pitcher.

ROB STRASSER
Y'all win?

YOUNG MAN
I'm sorry?

ROB STRASSER
What'd you guys play, pickup
basketball? Volleyball?

YOUNG MAN
Oh! No, we just came from an
aerobics class.

ROB STRASSER
Aerobics? You mean that Jazzercise
crap for housewives?

He looks the rotund Strasser up and down.

YOUNG MAN
Hey man, it's a helluva workout.

The Young Man takes his pitcher, about to head back to his friends.

ROB STRASSER
Sorry, one more question...what
kind of shoes are those?

The Young Man looks down at the pair of soft white leather athletic shoes he's wearing... Reebok Freestyles.

INT. PHIL'S HOUSE - NIGHT

POUNDING at the door. Phil answers, Strasser practically falls inside, out of breath. He's come straight from the bar.

ROB STRASSER
We are fucked. They're hot and
we're not.

PHIL KNIGHT
What? Are you drunk again?

ROB STRASSER
Yes, but that's not the point. We
were wrong, Phil.

(MORE)

ROB STRASSER (CONT'D)

The future isn't Adidas and track shoes...it's aerobics. Reebok is what's happening. We need aerobic shoes!

PHIL KNIGHT

Are you out of your gourd? Absolutely not. We make running shoes, for real athletes. Not shoes for fat ladies who dance to music.

CUT TO:

INT. SHOPPING MALL - DAY

Phil takes his boys (Matthew, now 13, and Travis, 9,) shopping. They pass by a SHOE STORE, and a curious Phil enters...

INT. SHOE STORE - DAY

Phil is physically rearranging the shoe displays, moving the Adidas display shoes and replacing them with Nikes in all of the prominent positions.

STORE EMPLOYEE

Excuse me, sir, you can't do that.

Phil doesn't even bother to face the young man, continues with his task.

PHIL KNIGHT

Did you know that in grocery stores, brands compete over shelf space. The brighter the boxes. The more colorful the mascots. The boxes with the most sugar - the most appealing to children - do you know where they put them? Right at eye level of a small child.

Matthew looks on, embarrassed.

MATTHEW

Dad, would you please knock it off?

STORE EMPLOYEE

Look, Mister, are you going to purchase something or not?

But something else has caught Phil's eye. A WOMAN (in her mid-30s, a mother herself.) She's trying on a pair of all-white sneakers. Phil looks closely at the brand: Reebok.

CUT TO:

SERIES OF SHOTS: REEBOK OVERTAKES NIKE

Nike MANAGERS, on streets and in restaurants and shops, staring at people's feet shuffling by. Everywhere they go, they're seeing more and more of these all-white Reeboks--

Even MICK JAGGER is wearing Freestyles in a video.

CYBIL SHEPHERD under a ball gown at the Academy Awards.

Even on the world record holder in the marathon, the heart and soul of Nike. Reebok is cool.

And worse, Nike had no idea that they've just been blindsided.

INT. RESTAURANT - CHATEAU VEGAS - NIGHT

Phil is at the head of a table. He looks tense and ill at ease. In the background, a harpist plays "My Way."

PHIL KNIGHT

Our brand is fucked.

Scattered around the table are Strasser, CHUCK HAYES (grey-haired, thick beard, nearly 300 pounds), Jeff Johnson, and Bob Woodell. But tonight is no party atmosphere.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

We've been so focused on passing Adidas that we failed to see the rest of the race.

Jeff slides some data around the table. Charts and graphs. Which no one at this table even attempts to decipher.

JEFF JOHNSON

I've been going over the data. We've been losing market share in certain running shoe models.

Strasser brushes the graphs aside.

ROB STRASSER

Fucking English, Jeff.

JEFF JOHNSON

Reebok is kicking our ass.
(then)
The running shoe fad is over.

Now grave concern settles over the table.

PHIL KNIGHT

Nike's been a whorehouse. We've been in every discount shop and inventory dump you can find. We've been in gas stations. Unless we make this thing special, no matter how good the products are it's going to get lost.

Phil lets the silence settle over the table. Then...

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I believe people still want something that is real, and that performs for them. And we are going to be that thing. You know why?

ROB STRASSER

Because white aerobic shoes that fall apart are not the fucking answer?

Laughter from the table. Phil leans forward, serious.

PHIL KNIGHT

Reebok is the enemy now. They are number one. Nike is number two. So how are we gonna get it done?

CHUCK HAYES

We can push more money into advertising next year, correct the slide.

BOB WODELL

How much you think we'd need?

JEFF JOHNSON

Twenty million.

Whistles from around the table.

PHIL KNIGHT

No, no, NO! You're thinking about this all wrong. If we want to survive, then we have to change the game. We have to show people that there's a new flag we're flying.

CUT TO:

INT. OFF-CAMPUS MANSION - DAY

A palatial pool. Strasser, Phil, and HOWARD SLUSHER (Nike's head of legal) are squeezed together on a chaise across from the infamous shark that is--

SONNY VACCARO. All showman and Las Vegas glitz. Like Brando in the garden with the Godfather.

PHIL KNIGHT

We're going to sign a player out of the '84 draft. We need a superstar we can build a marketing push behind.

ROB STRASSER

Individual athletes, even more than teams, are the new heroes now; symbols more and more of what real people can't do anymore -- risk and *win*.

PHIL KNIGHT

But it has to be someone fresh, talented--

SLUSHER

Healthy.

ROB STRASSER

Charismatic.

PHIL KNIGHT

And he has to fit the Nike image.

Sonny lowers his shades, relishing his position of power.

SONNY VACCARO

How about Barkley?

ROB STRASSER

I like Barkley.

PHIL KNIGHT

You like him 'cause he's chubby like you.

Strasser shrugs, no denying it.

SLUSHER

What about Ewing? Or the little guy from Gonzaga?

Sonny shakes his head, waving his hands and talking fast.

SONNY VACCARO

No-no-no, it's gotta be Jordan, okay! It's absolutely and only Jordan. The kid is special. Alright? He's brilliant. Best player I've ever seen. He can *fly* through the air!

PHIL KNIGHT
I heard Jordan was an Adidas nut.

SONNY VACCARO
Well, you know...

ROB STRASSER
No, we don't know. Explain it.

SONNY VACCARO
You mean like you're a retard?

Strasser stews.

SONNY VACCARO (CONT'D)
Look, the kid's never worn Nike in his life. Likes Adidas 'cause he can take 'em right outta the box and wear 'em without a break-in period. And Converse, well, they're part of the North Carolina uniform.

PHIL KNIGHT
So you want us to sign a guy whose never so much as sniffed a Nike?

SLUSHER
I hear Jordan's not even going to come out early.

SONNY VACCARO
Oh, he's going to come out early.

ROB STRASSER
Would you bet your job on Jordan?

Phil leans forward, silencing the trio.

PHIL KNIGHT
Would you rather sign ten guys for \$50,000 or one guy for \$500,000?

SLUSHER
Hold up! We can't spend that! It'd be irresponsible to the shareholders.

PHIL KNIGHT
Save the speech, Howard.

SONNY VACCARO
If that guy is Jordan, I'll take the one guy.

ROB STRASSER

You think we can even convince him to change his mind? Be a Nike guy?

SONNY VACCARO

I don't know...but if it was my money, I'd give all I had to Jordan.

The gamble of a lifetime. Phil looks absolutely sick.

INT. DAVID FALK'S OFFICE - DAY

Stifling hot and the AC unit is busted. Power agent DAVID FALK sits across his long conference table from Strasser, who's sweating like a pig on roast and putting back water like a fucking camel. With him is PETER MOORE, Nike's marketing wiz.

ROB STRASSER

We need a symbol in basketball, David. Be real with me, what are the chances that Ewing and Michael are both coming out and that you'll land them as clients?

DAVID FALK

Don't make me perjure myself, Rob. There are rules. Besides, without signature shoes you and I both know this conversation is a non-starter.

ROB STRASSER

Maybe we're ready to try something different. I don't know exactly what yet, but we're open.

DAVID FALK

Oh yeah?

EXT. WASHINGTON D.C. AIRPORT - DAY

Strasser on a payphone. Beside him, Peter Moore sketches in his notebook.

ROB STRASSER

Jordan's declaring for the draft.

INTERCUT WITH:

INT. PHIL'S HOME OFFICE - SAME

PHIL KNIGHT

That's great news.

ROB STRASSER

But he wants shoes named after him.
Plus, royalties on products bearing
his name.

PHIL KNIGHT

You're fucking kidding me, right?

ROB STRASSER

We want a meeting with Jordan,
that's what it's gonna take.

Phil curses under his breath.

ROB STRASSER (CONT'D)

I should warn you, he's already got
meetings on the books with both Adidas
and Converse. We want him, then we
gotta treat him like one of our tennis
players, not some basketball whore.

PHIL KNIGHT

If we go all-in here...and we lose,
it'll be the end.

ROB STRASSER

It'll be the end if we don't.

Phil hangs up. Strasser turns to Peter.

PETER MOORE

What'd he say?

ROB STRASSER

He's thinking it over.

PETER MOORE

I've been thinking...What if we
gave Jordan his own sub-brand? Make
it as elite to Nike as Corvette is
to Chevy?

Peter hands his notebook to Strasser, who eyes it with
delicious intrigue-- a sketch of a BADGE WITH WINGS and a
basketball in the center. The original Air Jordan insignia.

ROB STRASSER

We need to call Sonny.

INT. TONY ROMA'S - SANTA MONICA - NIGHT

A sweltering August night. Sonny tucked into a corner booth
with MICHAEL JORDAN. Michael's wearing a flashy Adidas track
suit. And Adidas sneakers.

SONNY VACCARO

Michael, I'm going to tell you one thing sitting right here. I'll never lie to you. We are a young company.

Sonny is the ultimate salesman, even with BBQ ribs caked all over his hands and bib.

SONNY VACCARO (CONT'D)

But we are going to do something special with you. We are going to name a shoe after you and you are going to be part of the business.

MICHAEL JORDAN

What do you mean name a shoe?

SONNY VACCARO

Nike will be the emblem but it'll be *your* shoe.

MICHAEL JORDAN

I've never worn Nike, Sonny
(then)
I'll probably sign with Adidas.

SONNY VACCARO

Just do me a favor. One favor. I'll send you some Nikes. When you get 'em, just give them a chance. Can ya do that for me?

MICHAEL JORDAN

What about the money?

SONNY VACCARO

Don't worry about the money. Everybody is going to pay you money. If this thing happens, you will be a millionaire.

MICHAEL JORDAN

I want a car.

Sonny laughs, chomps into a rib.

SONNY VACCARO

We'll see you get a car, Michael. Don't worry. Just try out the shoes and meet the guys. Hear 'em out. I promise you won't regret it.

CUT TO:

INT. PHIL KNIGHT'S OFFICE - NIKE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Tense silence. Phil and Strasser hover over a SPEAKERPHONE; an intense, pivotal moment in Nike's history. David Falk is on the other end, and he sounds exhausted.

DAVID FALK (ON PHONE)
What exactly do you want from me,
Phil?

PHIL KNIGHT
I want to fucking win! If we're not
here to win then what the hell are
we even doing here?!

Silence on the other end. Finally:

DAVID FALK (ON PHONE)
Michael just got back from the
Olympics, and after a full college
season...he's exhausted, guys.

Phil is panicked. He mutes the phone.

PHIL KNIGHT
Jordan's bailing on the meeting.

Strasser looks absolutely sick. Phil turns to him.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
What do we do?

DAVID FALK (ON PHONE)
...Guys?

Phil and Strasser share a look. Phil finally unmutes the phone.

PHIL KNIGHT
He has to be here, David. We've put
a lot of time and money into this.

Strasser leans forward, a bit too loud.

ROB STRASSER
You tell me how much you needed to
have a player sign with Nike and we
made it work, David.

DAVID FALK
I know, I know. I'm trying.

BOB WOODSELL
Bernard King. Phil Mord. Moses
fucking Malone.

PHIL KNIGHT
Call Michael's parents, get him on
the plane. We'll be ready.

DAVID FALK (ON PHONE)
(with an exasperated sigh)
I'll do my best.

PHIL KNIGHT
Just do it.

Phil angrily clicks off the speakerphone. He looks up at Strasser, the concern palpable on both of their faces.

Everything they have - *everything they've built* - is riding on landing Michael Jordan.

EXT. PARK - BASEBALL DIAMOND - DAY

Matthew, in shiny new Nike cleats, holds a baseball bat at home plate. Phil tosses batting practice.

In the stands, sits Travis, sketching in a notebook.

PHIL KNIGHT
Just see it all the way off the
bat. It's not rocket science.

Matthew could care less. Phil tosses the ball...and Matthew gives a half-assed swing.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
You're not even trying.

MATTHEW
I swung the bat, didn't I?

Phil explodes.

PHIL KNIGHT
Do you want to be a winner or not?!
Then swing like you give a shit!

Matthew drops the bat. Crosses his arms.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Dammit, Matthew! I have better
things to do than sit here wasting
my time!

Father and son in a stalemate. Phil finally sees the sobering truth, Matthew doesn't want to be here anymore than he does.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Pick up the bat.

But Matthew refuses. Instead, he rips off his Nike cleats, throws them as far as he can. Then, barefoot, storms off.

MOMENTS LATER

Phil packs up the equipment, moves to the bench where Travis is still drawing.

PHIL KNIGHT
Whatchu' got there?

Travis tries to hide his work, self-conscious.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
C'mon, lemme see.

Phil cranes his head to get a look his son's artwork. A drawing of a little boy and a series of doors. It's quite impressive for his age.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
Travis, you know Dad is gone a lot.

Travis nods.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
That I'm busy working.

Travis stops drawing, looks up.

TRAVIS
It's okay, Dad. I understand. Your work is more important.

Then, like it's nothing, goes back to drawing. A beat.

PHIL KNIGHT
C'mon, let's go get some ice cream.

CUT TO:

INT. PHIL KNIGHT'S HOME - NIGHT

It's late. Phil puts the house to bed. He stops outside his son's door, peeks in at Matthew fast asleep.

Penny steps out into the hallway.

PHIL KNIGHT

My entire life has been built around sports. My business is about sports. What little bond I have with my own father...Yet neither of them wants anything to do with *any of it*. I don't get it.

PENNY PARKS

Is it really so shocking to believe that maybe they have their own dreams?

She walks off, into--

THE MASTER BEDROOM

Phil follows.

PHIL KNIGHT

You know damn well how hard I am busting my ass for them. I am trying to build something.

PENNY PARKS

And so are we. Here.

PHIL KNIGHT

So what? You think I'm absent by choice?

PENNY PARKS

Every thing is a choice, Phil.

He tries to ignore the jab. Begins readying for bed.

PHIL KNIGHT

The MJ meeting got moved to tomorrow evening.

PENNY PARKS

We have Travis' play.

PHIL KNIGHT

So you'll videotape it.

If looks could kill Penny would be straight lethal right now.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

What do you want me to do?

PENNY PARKS

Send someone else. You're the boss, are you not?

PHIL KNIGHT

Exactly. I'm the boss. Which means I need to be there. You think I wouldn't rather spend more time with the boys?

PENNY PARKS

I don't know. Do you?

A standoff. One that Phil has no desire to participate in.

PHIL KNIGHT

What I do is for all of us. To ensure one day they'll have security to go to good colleges, to have lives--

PENNY PARKS

Oh, you're such a fucking hero!

PHIL KNIGHT

I'm tired--

PENNY PARKS

No. I'm tired. I'm tired of always having to be the bad guy who has to constantly explain to them why you're not around.

PHIL KNIGHT

I can't be all things at all times. They are children. Explaining such matters won't make a difference.

PENNY PARKS

You could try.

PHIL KNIGHT

So that what? I promise to change? And so maybe I do...until the next trip to Japan. Or China, or god knows where.

PENNY PARKS

You think they don't see how you act when you're here?

PHIL KNIGHT

And how's that?

PENNY PARKS

Like you'd rather be anywhere else.

PHIL KNIGHT

If we don't land Jordan we lose everything. Reebok wins. We lose.

PENNY PARKS

Who cares! Who fucking cares! You're so goddamn obsessed with winning! Guess what? Nobody is undefeated. Especially you! So go win Jordan. Go beat Reebok, or Adidas, or whoever the fuck else there is to beat, because there will *always* be someone else, but don't be surprised when you still come home a loser!

She storms out, and we HOLD ON Phil, her words sinking in.

SMASH TO:

The Pointer Sisters' song "Jump" plays over HIGHLIGHTS OF MICHAEL JORDAN AT UNC. Jump shots, fadeaways, dunks...

We pull back INTO--

INT. NIKE CONFERENCE ROOM - NIGHT

Michael Jordan, HIS MOTHER, FATHER, and David Falk watching the slick highlight reel. As the tape plays...

Phil sneaks a peek under the table at MJ's shoes. He's wearing Adidas.

The video ends, and Phil takes center stage.

PHIL KNIGHT

Michael, we're envisioning building an entire brand around what you do.

Phil signals Peter-- who reveals a series of graphics of the "AIR JORDAN" LOGO. Along with a signature shoe design done up in red-and-black. *The first Air Jordan shoe.*

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

And we guarantee, you'll be the only guy in the *entire* league wearing red-and-black.

Jordan picks up the prototype shoe, examines it.

MICHAEL JORDAN

Guys, I can't wear these. Those are the devil's colors.

Phil's heart practically stops. But Peter's undaunted.

PETER MOORE

Well you better tell that to the
guy who owns the Chicago Bulls
because that's the Bulls' colors.

MICHAEL JORDAN

Well I wanna wear Carolina blue.

ROB STRASSER

Not gonna happen. Sorry.

Jordan's not used to being told no.

MICHAEL JORDAN

Look, guys, it's a nice shoe and
all but I like Adidas. They're
lower to the ground.

PETER MOORE

We can tailor them to your liking.

PHIL KNIGHT

Michael, I'll be frank here. Nobody
does it better than us. Isn't our
advertising the best? Isn't the
Nike name the best? Come with Nike
and you'll be Nike's star.

Phil studies Jordan's face. There is no rudeness but also no
excitement, or reaction at all. He's completely stone-faced.

EXT. NIKE HEADQUARTERS - DAY

Jordan and his parents head for their limo.

ROB STRASSER

If you have any question, any at
all, you know how to reach us.

MICHAEL JORDAN

Where's my car?

Strasser smiles.

ROB STRASSER

If you come with Nike...

Phil clutches at his chest, as if Strasser has keys to a car
in his pocket.

Only, Strasser pulls out TWO DIE-CAST MERCEDES CARS.

PHIL KNIGHT
 Michael, we're giving you cars and
 we haven't even signed you yet.

Michael can't help but laugh, finally a crack in his tough facade. He takes the cars, piles into the limo leaving Phil and Strasser watching as taillights recede into the distance.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
 (uncertain)
 What do you think?

ROB STRASSER
 I think we did a hell of a job.

Off their collective anxiety...

INT. JORDAN'S LIMO - MEANWHILE

Michael examines the red-and-black prototype shoe.

DAVID FALK
 What do you want to do, Michael?

MICHAEL JORDAN
 I'm a loyal guy.
 (then)
 Tell Adidas if they can match the
 Nike deal I'll go with them. Hell,
 tell 'em if they even come close...

Falk nods, his orders clear.

MICHAEL JORDAN (CONT'D) (CONT'D)
 (then)
 You think there's a way to do these
 with the three stripes?

CUT TO:

INT. ROB STRASSER'S APARTMENT - EARLY MORNING

It's early - too early - as Strasser's phone rattles him awake. He rolls over in bed, answers with a groan.

DAVID FALK (ON PHONE)
 Rob, it's David Falk. Did I wake
 you?

Strasser pulls himself upright, overlooking a window in his downtown apartment, watching as the lights of early morning commuters pass over the bridges above Willamette River.

ROB STRASSER
No, I'm good. What's the word, David?

DAVID FALK
We went back to Adidas.

Strasser's head drops.

DAVID FALK (CONT'D)
And Michael's decided he's going to go with Nike.

Strasser lets loose a victorious fist pump!

ROB STRASSER
That's great news, David. Great news.
I'll let Phil and the team know.

He hangs up, and lets out a spontaneous hoot as he excitedly dances around the apartment in his underwear.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - DAY

Ringling phone. Phil picks up. In the background, Travis tinkers with a projector, playing crude "stop-motion" footage he's created with dolls and cheap explosions.

ROB STRASSER (ON PHONE)
We did it, Buck! We got Jordan.

But there's no joy in Phil's expression. He looks back at his boys in the living room. Then at Penny in the kitchen.

PHIL KNIGHT
I sure hope we made the right call.

CUT TO:

INT. MADISON SQUARE GARDEN - ARENA FLOOR - LATER

SUPER: **October 18, 1984**
 Chicago Bulls vs. New York Knicks

Pregame introductions. Michael Jordan is announced to the raucous crowd...and he's wearing the red-and-black Nike shoes.

During the game, Jordan dunks, signature tongue out, in his red-and-black Nike Air Ship shoes. The crowd goes NUTS.

OREGON - NIKE HEADQUARTERS CAFETERIA - THE NEXT DAY

Phil reads aloud from the Chicago Journal to a cafeteria of rapt Nike employees.

PHIL KNIGHT

"Michael Jordan is not the most incredible, the most colorful, the most amazing, the most flashy, or the most mind-boggling thing in the NBA. His shoes are."

The office celebrates. Cheering and high-fiving.

INT. NIKE HEADQUARTERS - PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Strasser plows inside, carrying with him a LETTER.

ROB STRASSER

We got a problem.

He slides the letter - emblazoned on NBA letterhead - across Phil's desk.

ROB STRASSER (CONT'D)

Commissioner's office is saying the red and black shoes violate the NBA's uniformity clause.

Phil scans the letter, can't help but laugh.

PHIL KNIGHT

That's ridiculous. They're not serious, are they?

ROB STRASSER

Said no player will wear them in a regular season game. If Jordan does, he'll be fined a thousand dollars. If he wears them again, then it's five grand. The third time, his team forfeits.

Now Phil looks at the letter more closely.

ROB STRASSER (CONT'D)

You think they'd really fine him?

PHIL KNIGHT

I sure fuckin' hope so.

Off Phil, with a devilish gleam in his eyes...

CUT TO:

MICHAEL JORDAN

staring into a camera, dribbling a basketball, as the camera slowly pans down from his head... all the way to his feet.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

On September 15th, Nike created a revolutionary new basketball shoe.

The camera finally settles on Jordan's red-and-black shoes.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

On October 18th, the NBA threw them out of the game.

Two black censor bars block out Jordan's sneakers.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Fortunately, the NBA can't stop you from wearing them.

The image dissolves into the red-and-black "Air Jordan" logo.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Air Jordans. From Nike.

SMASH TO:

The commercial is a massive success. Stirring up controversy in all types of media. TV, newspaper, radio... It's the most buzzed about commercial of the time.

INT. RETAIL STORES - DAY

Lines snake around blocks as sneakerheads camp out for the release of the first Air Jordan 1's. It's a feeding frenzy! Air Jordan mania has officially hit the streets.

INTERCUT WITH:

ANOTHER MICHAEL JORDAN COMMERCIAL

A basketball rolls across a blacktop toward Jordan. He easily catches the ball with the toe of one of his Technicolor shoes and flips the ball into his hands...

Jordan moves across the court to the keening SOUND OF JET ENGINES REVVING for take-off. By the time the engines roar at critical scream, Jordan is aloft in a slow-motion tableau.

Jordan stays suspended in the air, arms and legs splayed, as the tagline hits: *"Who says man was not meant to fly?"*

CUT TO:

NATIONWIDE AIR JORDAN SHOPPING SPREES might as well be riots. Long lines, hoarding. Secondary street markets.

The aura of panic normally inspired by impending national disasters or wars. And all of it over a pair of sneakers.

It's official: *Air Jordan and Nike are a national phenomena!*

INTERCUT WITH:

EXT. PHIL'S HOME - BACK PORCH - DAY

Phil steps out onto the back porch, as he takes a call from NBA commissioner DAVID STERN.

DAVID STERN

My kid thinks I'm an asshole
because I didn't let Jordan wear
those shoes.

Phil looks out at his two sons in the yard.

PHIL KNIGHT

Maybe your kids are right, David.

Off David laughing...

CUT TO:

With the help of Jordan, we SEE Nike's revenue streams take a dramatic uptick... AS NIKE FINALLY OVERTAKES REEBOK!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. NIKE WAREHOUSE - PORTLAND - DAY

Phil addresses a crowded warehouse of Nike employees. There's no hint of pleasure or pride in his voice.

PHIL KNIGHT

Well...we just crossed a billion in
sales. Which puts us at a crossroads.

He locks eyes with Penny, standing near the back.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

We can either be happy and fat with
where we are at. And this is as far
as we'll ever go...Or, we can go
further. We can be number one.

The rest of the Nike team CHEERING and CLAPPING.

EXT. LAKE - DAY

DAN WIEDEN (distinguished gray hair that matches his manicured goatee) looks lost as he approaches a park bench... where he finds Phil sitting alone, taking a rest from his morning run.

DAN WIEDEN
Phil Knight? Dan Wieden.

Phil stands to greet him. They shake.

PHIL KNIGHT
I just want you to know that I hate advertising, Dan.

DAN WIEDEN
You do know that's specifically what my job is, right?

Phil smiles, nods.

DAN WIEDEN (CONT'D)
What exactly are you trying to create here?

PHIL KNIGHT
Demand. We are creating demand.

CUT TO:

AN OLD-SCHOOL BOX TELEVISION

Bulky with wood-paneling. The same kind that undoubtedly Phil Knight grew up watching sports on in his own childhood home.

ON THE TV, plays one of Nike's INFAMOUS COMMERCIALS...

The Beatles' "Revolution" roars like a ninety-second celebration as a new COMMERCIAL for the Nike AIR MAX plays.

Ordinary people swimming, biking, and lifting weights, all juxtaposed with shots of Michael Jordan and John McEnroe (in cross-trainers) doing their respective sports.

As the commercial continues, WE PULL BACK, revealing...

MORE TELEVISIONS. *Dozens of them.*

On EACH SCREEN a different seminal Nike ad plays, including--

The infamous BO KNOWS BO...

Charles Barkley "I am not a role model"...

Barry Sanders and a manic Dennis Hopper...

Agassi and Sampras take it to the streets...

Title IV-inspired "Let Me Play"... Lil' Penny...

"Chicks Dig the Long Ball"... Tiger's bouncing ball trick...

All of them RUSHING BY IN HYPERSPEED, snippets coalescing, until the images grind to a sudden and collective halt.

CUT TO BLACK.

Followed by silence. Calm.

Then...rhythmic, controlled BREATHS of a man running.

...breath in...breath out.. breath in...breath out...

SMASH UP ON:

NIKE RUNNING SHOES

An armada of feet pounding pavement. Nike employees out for a morning run. With each stride, we see their upper inner thighs, muscled pistons, and on each...a swoosh TATTOO.

PULLING WIDER as we settle on the now SPRAWLING NIKE CAMPUS.

As epic in scope as Nike's own ideas. Nike is more than just a shoe, or a brand now...*it's become a lifestyle.*

INT. NIKE CAMPUS - PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Matthew, now in his early 20s, stands toe-to-toe with his father, mid-argument.

MATTHEW

I just don't think college is for me, Dad.

Phil is now in the uniform that will come to define him in the public eye - a mock turtleneck, jeans, and Oakley shades to hide his eyes.

PHIL KNIGHT

Not for you? Nonsense! Do you realize how hard I've worked so that you and your brother could go to good schools? To have a good home?

MATTHEW

You. It's always about what you've done, and how hard you've worked.

(MORE)

MATTHEW (CONT'D)

I'm not *you*, Dad. Not everyone
needs to win all the time.

Phil stares back, trying to suppress the growing anger in his voice but there's no hiding his displeasure. Or his temper.

PHIL KNIGHT

You're a grown man, Matthew. You
don't wanna go to school, fine,
but it's time to quit foolin'
around and do better! So, you tell
me, what's the win here?!

Matthew half-scoffs, shakes his head.

MATTHEW

I don't know...But I do know it
won't ever be this place.

Matthew exits, leaving Phil stung by his son's words.
Everything he's built, his entire legacy...and his own son
wants nothing to do with it.

LONG DISSOLVE
TO:

INT. A HUT - SAN SALVADOR - EARLY MORNING

SUPER: MAY 2004

Still dark out. Even the local wildlife is still asleep as we
find MATTHEW KNIGHT, now 34, more confident and self-assured
these days. He wakes inside a simple yurt.

Yawning, he sits up from his cot, stretches. Slips on his
tennis shoes. Noticeably not Nikes.

EXT. CAMP SITE - EARLY MORNING

Matthew approaches a white passenger van, two BUDDIES already
loading up scuba gear into the back.

Matt's wearing a T-shirt for "*Mi Casa, Su Casa*," a nonprofit
organization. There's a partially built orphanage nearby.

INT. PASSENGER VAN - EARLY MORNING

The morning fog cuts across this narrow dirt road.

Matthew and buddies travel across a bumpy, off-road path.
There's an excited energy in the air.

EXT. LAKE ILOPANGO - SAN SALVADOR - SUNRISE

Deep blue waters surrounded by lush, green mountains. A large volcanic caldera turned lake.

Matthew stands at the shore, staring out against the majestic blue waters. The stuff of postcards.

EXT. LAKE ILOPANGO - SAN SALVADOR - DAY

Their boat has settled near the middle of the crater lake. Matthew, in scuba gear, balances on the edge of the boat.

He affixes his air piece into his mouth and with a thumbs up, PLUNGES into the water with a splash.

INT. UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS

Beneath the surface, sound dissipates into a hollowed echo. Matthew's steady heartbeat swallowed only by the occasional, deliberate hiss of the oxygen tank.

A single headlight casts just enough light to see a few feet ahead as Matthew DIVES. Deeper into the dark waters, towards a depth where sunlight gets swallowed up into blackness.

INT. UNDERWATER - DAY

ON MATTHEW, looking down at the empty depth below. Something in his face shows a look of determination. He looks *alive!*

He dives deeper...50 feet...

...100 feet

Matthew's steady breath, the hiss of the oxygen tank, his heartbeat thumping.

...nearing 150 feet...

Only something seems off. Matthew's heartbeat stutters. His breath quickens, rapid.

Something's wrong. Matthew begins to panic, gulping at his oxygen tank. Before long, his eyes roll into the back of his head and he loses consciousness.

ANGLE ON

Matthew's BODY FLOATING, weightless, alone in the deep black abyss. There is no more struggle. It's almost...*calm.*

INT. MOVIE THEATRE - DAY

Phil and Penny inside a dark theatre, watching a movie.

Then, sensing someone....Phil turns to find Travis, forlorn, standing at the end of the aisle.

CUT TO:

A WOODEN CASKET

Phil and Travis, looking like a roadie in a black tee and Doc Martens boots, watch as the tomb is loaded into the bowels of an airliner. Phil tries to hold back his emotions.

We hear the DING of an old digital camcorder as we CUT TO:

VIDEO FOOTAGE

Self-taped. Matthew on his trip in San Salvador. It's a fund-raising video. He points out two dilapidated facades.

MATTHEW (ON SCREEN)

They may not look like much right now, but when we're finished, these will be houses for two orphanages. One for boys and one for girls.

Matthew looks so happy, so proud. Kids run up to Matthew, shouting "*Tio Matthew! Tio Matthew!*"

INT. AIRPLANE - NIGHT

The plane's engines hum. Most of the passengers have passed out during the long flight but Phil's light is still on.

Travis stirs, sees his father awake.

TRAVIS

You alright?

Phil snaps out of his daze, nods slightly. He's never been one much for words, but Phil feels a need to connect in this moment. Though, doing so isn't exactly his strong suit.

PHIL KNIGHT

How is the animation thing going?

TRAVIS

It's okay, I suppose.

PHIL KNIGHT

But it's going well? You're enjoying it? You like it there?

TRAVIS
Why do you want know?

PHIL KNIGHT
I just thought it was what you
wanted.

TRAVIS
I did... I mean, I do. But, c'mon.

PHIL KNIGHT
What?

TRAVIS
You bought the studio. You bought
my way in. Just like you bought me
that record deal with MCA when I
was 19 and thought I wanted to be a
rapper.

PHIL KNIGHT
That's not true--

TRAVIS
But it is. And now I'm supposed to
suddenly be the head of this
animation studio? Just like that?

PHIL KNIGHT
I was just trying to help your dream.

TRAVIS
But I haven't earned anything. I
haven't even been allowed to try.
(a beat)
It's why neither of us wanted to
work for you. It's always 'You can
do better.' It's your way. You
always have to win at everything.
Even when you're not the one
playing...

Travis trails off...

TRAVIS (CONT'D)
Matthew never cared about being
number one. Why do you think he
gravitated toward charity work?
Some people are just happy to play.

It's tough stuff for Phil to hear. But he hears it nonetheless.

INT. DALLAS-FORT WORTH AIRPORT - DAY

Phil and Travis awaiting their connection.

TRAVIS

I'm going to get a drink. You want anything?

PHIL KNIGHT

Diet Coke?

Travis wanders off, leaving Phil alone with his thoughts. He stares out at the endless wave of people. And stares at their feet. Boots. Heels. Sneakers. Flip flops. Some Nike. Some not.

Then--

A WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Phil Knight? From Oregon?

Phil knows that voice, peculiar. The way it over-pronounces certain words. He looks up, surprised to see--

SARAH, standing across from him. Older, of course, but there's no mistaking it's her.

SARAH

I wasn't sure that was you at first. But then...I saw the shoes.

Phil looks down at his feet. Of course, he's wearing Nikes.

PHIL KNIGHT

Wow. It's been...

SARAH

A *really* long time.

They awkwardly hug.

SARAH (CONT'D)

Hey, you've done well for yourself! Guess Adidas was no match. Or Reebok.

She laughs.

PHIL KNIGHT

And you? Still in Maryland?

SARAH

(nodding)

Yep. Ended up going to business school, actually.

(MORE)

SARAH (CONT'D)

Joined daddy's candy company. Just
as it was always destined to be.

Now Phil's the one who laughs, the sarcasm not lost on him.

A beat. As they both stare at one another. A thousand things
unsaid. But, alas--

Travis returns, with the sodas.

PHIL KNIGHT

This is my son, Travis. Travis,
this is my old friend, Sarah. We
once climbed Mount Fuji together.

Travis extends his hand.

TRAVIS

Hello. Nice to meet you.

This makes both Phil and Sarah chuckle, which Travis clearly
doesn't understand.

SARAH

It's nice to meet you, Travis.

She shakes, then:

SARAH (CONT'D)

I better get going or I'll miss my
flight. It was, uh, good to see
you, Phil. Looks like the rebel did
pretty well for himself.

PHIL KNIGHT

Yeah. Guess so.

They hug once more. And as Sarah walks off, Phil can't help
but look at her feet...*she's also wearing Nike sneakers.*

"Desperado" by The Eagles begins to play...

EXT. BEAVERTON, OREGON - DUSK

Phil runs, alone, through the darkening suburban streets.
"Desperado" playing in his headphones.

Through quiet neighborhoods... And past quiet homes...

Under street lights and a misting rain...

Finally, Phil comes upon the NIKE CAMPUS and slows...

It's grown into more than just one man's dream. Far beyond a couple of guys holed up in a room above a crappy dive bar.

It's now a machine.

Phil looks out over all of it. Over everything he's created.

EXT. PHIL KNIGHT'S HOME - BACK DECK

Middle of the night. Penny steps outside to find Phil on the back porch with a glass of whiskey, largely untouched.

She moves to him, quietly. Climbs into his lap.

PHIL KNIGHT

You think I let them down?

PENNY PARKS

Phil...

PHIL KNIGHT

They wanted nothing to do with the company. With me...

(then)

Was I wrong, all these years?

PENNY PARKS

Wrong or right, who's to say.

PHIL KNIGHT

We may not have connected about much but Matthew was always there when I needed to talk about Travis stuff. But now...

PENNY PARKS

All they ever wanted was to make their own way. Same as you. Matthew probably more than anyone.

She climbs off his lap.

PENNY PARKS (CONT'D)

Maybe it's time to just talk to Travis.

And she heads inside the house.

PHIL KNIGHT (PRE-LAP)

I've decided to take the summer off.

INT. PHIL'S OFFICE - DAY

Chuck Hayes and Howard Slusher watch as Phil gathers his bag, along with a few choice mementos, and leaves.

CHUCK HAYES
Think we should start finding his
successor this time?

Slusher nods.

EXT. LAIKA STUDIOS - DAY

A nondescript building with no signs out front. Might as well be a warehouse. Phil's car pulls into the parking lot.

INT. LAIKA STUDIOS - DAY

Phil enters, passing a poster for "*Coraline*," an upcoming stop-motion animation film.

INT. SCREENING ROOM - DAY

Travis is alone inside, screening scenes from the movie and taking notes. Phil enters, takes the seat next to Travis.

PHIL KNIGHT
You mind?

TRAVIS
Just going over a few new scenes.

Phil sits, watches for a moment. Then:

PHIL KNIGHT
How you holding up?

TRAVIS
You know...holding.
(then)
You given much thought to what
you're going to do after Nike?

PHIL KNIGHT
Who knows. Maybe I'll go off to
open up a Taco Bell or something.

Travis laughs.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)
I'm serious. People are coming into
the company who do what they do way
better than I ever did.
(MORE)

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I'm just a generalist, one of those entrepreneurs my college professor said would always eat lunch alone, off to the side.

TRAVIS

I think you'll be fine whatever you decide. You always find a way to win.

Phil considers this, eyes trained on the giant screen above.

TRAVIS (CONT'D)

Come a long way since I wanted to be a rap star, huh?

He chuckles playfully.

PHIL KNIGHT

You were one though.

TRAVIS

I was a failure.

PHIL KNIGHT

You did it though. 99% of people in this world never even try at their dreams for fear of failure. But you did it. And now, you're doing this.

Travis nods his head, says nothing.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

You know, when I was young, I fantasized about being this great athlete. I wanted to be the best, whatever that was.

Phil sucks in a deep breath, as though transporting himself back to that rainy night in his father's car.

PHIL KNIGHT (CONT'D)

Sadly, though, fate had made me good, not great...

We recognize that faraway look in his eyes as we DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CAR - NIGHT (FLASHBACK)

Young Phil rides. His father at the wheel. Silence awash as street lights cascade shards across Phil's stoic face.

PHIL KNIGHT (V.O.)

When I told my father I wanted to sell shoes for a living, you know what he said to me? He said I was crazy. "I'm disappointed, Buck." He wanted me to have a nice stable career as a CPA... And maybe he was right. Maybe I should have.

Young Phil shoves his second place ribbon into his pocket.

PHIL KNIGHT

Still didn't mean it didn't break my heart, what he said.

As young Phil stares out the window, his eyes narrow, a quiet determination overtaking him...

PHIL KNIGHT (V.O.)

The fact he thought I couldn't do it probably made me want to even more.

Off Phil, street lights flashing by, taking us to...

EXT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME - NIGHT

Street lights flicker. Phil's car pulls into the driveway.

INT. PHIL'S CHILDHOOD HOME

Phil shuffles inside, finds his father in his favorite recliner. Ten o'clock news on the tube.

There's concern written all over the elder William's face.

PHIL KNIGHT

Everything alright, Pop?

WILLIAM KNIGHT

I just seen a horrible event replayed on the news. You shoulda seen it, Buck. A scuffle broke out during an NBA game. A full-scale melee.

As William speaks, we see bits and flashes of the actual melee playing out... Rockets vs. Lakers...

WILLIAM KNIGHT (V.O.)(CONT'D) (CONT'D)

Rudy Tomjanovich runs towards the melee trying to break things up and this player from the Lakers, looks up, punches Rudy square in the face with such force it actually lifted him up off the floor.

Rudy T, sure enough, is lifted off his feet, landing on his back, blood flowing everywhere onto the hardwood floor.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)

I was sure he was dead, Buck. It was probably the most horrible thing I've ever seen in sports.

Then, after a beat, William's eyes flicker.

WILLIAM KNIGHT (CONT'D)

And Buck, Buck, you shoulda seen it! The camera kept zooming in and you could see quite clearly Tomjanovich's shoes...

The camera ZOOMING IN ON: Rudy T's sneakers and...

WILLIAM KNIGHT (V.O.)

The swoosh! They kept zooming in on the swoosh!

...the Nike SWOOSH! As big as the television screen itself.

BACK TO:

WILLIAM KNIGHT

While he may not utter the exact words, for once Phil can tell that his father is truly proud of him. That what he's built is...respectable.

BACK TO:

INT. SCREENING ROOM - AS WE WERE

Phil still stares up at the movie screen, as--

ON SCREEN, a scene plays out where Coraline vies for her father's attention by dancing with a door.

PHIL KNIGHT

Who did this part? That's pretty good.

But Phil already knows. And Travis already knows he knows.

DISSOLVE TO:

CLOSE ON: PHIL KNIGHT

...in black & white. The camera slowly PUSHES IN as the voice of EARL WOODS narrates:

(Following Tiger Woods' infidelity in 2010, Nike repurposed Earl Woods' audio from a 2004 interview as a father's advice to his son. And now... we repurpose it once more.)

EARL WOODS (V.O.)

...I am more prone to be
inquisitive... To promote
discussion. I want to find out what
your thinking was. I want to find
out what your feelings are... And
did you learn anything.

The image flickers, then flash-cuts to a white **Nike swoosh**.

...THEN BLACK.

After a moment... WHITE TEXT appears over:

*"Today, Nike is the most valuable apparel
brand in the World, worth almost \$32
Billion... adidas was number three.*

*"Following Phil's retirement, his son Travis
was appointed to Nike's board of directors."*

FADE OUT.

