

THE KING OF TRACKS

by

Kadjo Messou Michel Arsène

kadjoa52@gmail.com

THE SCENE OPENS AT A CYNODROME.

INT. CYNODROME / MORNING / PROLOGUE.

A race is about to begin at the greyhound track.

Men and women are preparing the circuit...

CUT TO :

Owners armed with their GREYHOUNDS (including a DALMATIAN, a SALUKI, a DOBERMAN, a HUNGARIAN SHORT-HAIRED POINTER, a WHIPPET and a SPANISH GREYHOUND) arrive...

SUPERIMPOSE ON BLACK : DISNEY PRESENTS.

The spectators take their seats...

CUT TO :

Each owner puts a muzzle and a numbered vest on their greyhound...

CUT TO :

The owners bring their greyhounds, equipped with muzzles and numbered vests from 1 to 6 (in order of presentation), into the starting box...

CUT TO :

A man behind the starting boxes waves a flag...

SUPERIMPOSE ON BLACK : A PIXAR ANIMATION STUDIOS FILM.

The lure starts moving, gaining a 15-meters lead...

CUT TO :

The starting boxes open, and the greyhound take off for 400 meters...

CUT TO :

Barely off the mark, the greyhound wearing the number 6 vest is already in the lead, but soon the greyhound with the number 2 vest catches up, and the two greyhound engage in a fierce race...

CUT TO :

The crowd is in a frenzy...

CUT TO :

The greyhound wearing the number 5 vest speeds up, overtaking the greyhound with numbers 6 and 2 in the final turn, then crosses the finish line...

CUT TO :

The delighted audience rises as one and applauds...

TITLE CARD : THE KING OF TRACKS

INT. RESTAURANT / MORNING.

Inside a bustling modern restaurant, a TV high on the wall shows a greyhound race. A poorly groomed dog with a long, narrow head, small ears, a broad and long back with brindle fur, and somewhat skinny sits near the entrance. It's a greyhound, seemingly captivated by the screen.

THE DOG

(in awe)

GOLDIE Drave, the fastest dog in the world. Nine-time RACING champion, one of the first to earn the title of KING OF TRACKS.

ON TV : GOLDIE receives an award in the presence of its owner on an elevated podium, to the cheers of the crowd.

FLASH-BACK. GREYHOUND TRACK CENTER / MORNING / ELEVATED PODIUM

The restaurant dog receives a medal and trophy amidst applause from the audience.

CUT TO :

BACK TO PRESENT - INT. RESTAURANT

THE DOG

What a dog ! I would give anything to be as fast as him. WOOF ! WOOF !

The customers look at the barking dog. A man at the back of the restaurant, with half-eaten food on his table, addresses the others.

MAN

Excuse me, whose dog is this ?
(Barking) It's driving me crazy.

Another man sitting with a woman at a table with food speaks up.

MAN #2

(Embarrassed)

No one ! Who would own such a scruffy dog ? Maybe you do.

He forces a smile of discomfort. A skinny, wrinkled man dressed as a chef comes out of the kitchen with a knife in hand and frowns. (This is SAZU, the 40 year-old restaurant owner.)

SAZU
But who is making all this
unbearable noise ?

He looks at the customers who point off-camera. He turns to see the dog, and the camera zooms in on the dog, Sazu is horrified.

SAZU
OOOOOH !!

He goes into a frenzy.

SAZU
(cont'd)
A dog ! A dog in my restaurant !
And it's a mangy one, it hardly has
any fur.

The camera zooms in on the dog's hairless body. Sazu moves angrily toward him.

SAZU
(To the dog)
Hey, you ! What are you doing here
? Didn't you see the sign at
the entrance : "RESTAURANT SAZU -
NO ANIMALS ALLOWED" ?

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE RESTAURANT

Near the entrance, a sign reads " RESTAURANT SAZU - NO
ANIMALS ALLOWED ".

SAZU (OS)
Where are you blind ?

INT. RESTAURANT / SAME.

The dog doesn't budge, its gaze still fixed on the TV. Sazu, beside himself, explodes with rage.

SAZU
I'm talking to you ! Get out of my
restaurant !

The dog and the customers look at him. Sazu brandishes the knife he has in a threatening manner toward the dog. The entire clientele gasps OOOOOOOHH !

SAZU
(In a menacing tone)
Before i add you to my menu.

The customers gasp again OOOOH ! Sazu notices and suddenly changes his tone.

SAZU
Don't take it seriously, it's just
a joke to scare him !

The customers feel reassured.

SAZU
Now scram ! Get out of here before
i lose my temper.

THE DOG
(Coldly, without looking
at him)
But you've already lost it !

SAZU
you're still here !

Sazu throws the knife at the dog. Startled, the dog runs away at full speed, and the knife gets lodged in the door. The customers gasp collectively again OOOOHH !

EXT. STREET / DAY

The panicked dog dashes into traffic without waiting Suddenly, VROOomm !!! A car barely avoids hitting him. Once safe, the dog stops and looks at the restaurants from across the traffic, where Sazu stands mockingly in front of his restaurant.

SAZU
Ha, ha, ha, ha ! Serves you right !
I don't even know why he didn't run
you over.

He suddenly adopts a serious demeanor.

SAZU
And i never see your paws around
here again, hairless animal.

Sazu goes back into his restaurant, removing the knife lodged in the entrance door.

INT. RESTAURANT

He heads towards the kitchen of the restaurant but notices that everyone is staring at him. He stops and responds nervously.

SAZU
What ? !

No one reacts.

SAZU
(Calmer)
Ah, I see... (Beat) Well, grilled
Omar for everyone.

The customers express their joy.

CUT TO :

EXT. STREET / A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The dog is sitting on the sidewalk, visibly depressed.

THE DOG

That was a close call this time.
Puff !

Not far away, a pile of garbage moves. a dog MALT, (a large BOBTAIL, cheeky character) emerges and spots the dog sitting on the sidewalk. He alerts his friends.

MALT

Guys, come see who's here !

Two other dogs appear, coming out from different trash cans : RITCH, (a small, very excited and playful FRENCH BULLDOG) and BEAUCE, (a large BEAUCERON with an impressive physique and a dissuasive look). They notice the dog.

BEAUCE

Isn't that our old friend the
hairless one ?

Malt, and Ritch burst into laughter. the dog sees them.

THE DOG

No, not them.

They join him on the sidewalk.

RITCH

Hey there, hairless one !

The dog sighs, not really happy to see them.

THE DOG

Eh ! Hey guys.

RITCH

It's been a while since we've seen
you. Where have you been ?

THE DOG

Here, in the... !

Malt interrupts him.

MALT

Street ! You mean.

Malt and Ritch start laughing again.

MALT

(Cont'd)

Oh ! oh ! I almost forgot, have you found the master you were looking for ?

THE DOG

(Frustrated)

----- !

RITCH

Is that why you decided to leave, right ?

MALT

(More teasing)

And you even told us before you left that the next time we saw each other, you'd be with your master, right ?

THE DOG

Yes ! But...

RITCH

Oh, wait ! Wait !

Ritch shows a mischievous grin.

RITCH

(Cont'd)

Don't tell me it's him who just chased you with a knife in hand ?

Laughing at the two dogs, he's not amused.

THE DOG

Ha, Ha ! Very funny, but no ! It's not him, and I haven't found a master yet.

Ritch and Malt gasp.

RITCH

Of course, I'm not surprised. How do you expect to find a master looking like that ?

Close-up on the dog's hairless body. Malt and Ritch laugh again.

MALT

But don't worry, you'll find your master.

The dog's eyes widen and his ears perks up, surprised.

THE DOG

Do you really believe that ?

Malt approaches him closer.

MALT

yeah, I believe it firmly ! You're not just anyone, you know ! And knowing you, I'm sure you won't give up that easily.

The dog seems comforted and regains courage.

THE DOG

Yeah !

MALT

But by the time that day comes, you'll have lost all your hair.

Ritch and Malt start laughing again. The dog takes this to heart, and his ears droop again.

BEAUCE

Don't listen to them. Have you found a way to grow your hair back ?

The dog responds, dejected.

THE DOG

Not yet, but I'm working on it.

BEAUCE

Look at how you've become.

The dog looks at his hairless body.

BEAUCE

(Cont'd)

It's even worse than before. Now, they fall off with the slightest movement.

The dog shifts slightly to his right, and the camera follows as some of his fur falls gently to the ground. Malt and Ritch burst out laughing again.

RITCH

Just a few more moves, and you'll be completely naked.

More laughter ensues, Beauce tries to stifle a laugh. The dog is totally affected by all these words.

THE DOG

Very funny, guys. Well, I'm leaving.

He takes a small path to his right. Malt and Ritch continue to laugh.

MALT
Yeah, that's right, get lost,
hairless animal.

Even more laughter.

CUT TO :

EXT. COURTYARD / AFTERNOON

Under a tree, a slightly overweight teenager (16 years old) counts out loud.

THE TEENAGER
7, 8, 9, and 10. Get ready, I'm
coming !

The teenager rushes into the garage next door.

INT. GARAGE

The teenager searches for a few minutes in the garage, then comes out and enters the house across the street.

INT. HOUSE

He takes the stairs and arrives in a bedroom.

INT. BEDROOM

He throws himself onto the bed and lifts the sheet.

THE TEENAGER
Found you !

He is surprised to discover that there is no one under the sheet, just a pile of pillows. He exits the room and starts searching in all the other rooms (bathroom and living room) before heading to the kitchen.

INT. KITCHEN

He searches in the kitchen. A woman (36 years old) is preparing a meal, smiles at him.

THE WOMAN
He's not here.

THE TEENAGER
(Surprised)
Really ?! I thought I searched
everywhere.

THE WOMAN
Are you sure ?

An idea suddenly lights up for him.

THE TEENAGER
(Enlightened)
OH ! Thanks.

He rushes out of the kitchen

CUT TO

INT ATTIC / DAY

THE TEENAGER
I know you're in here. So show
yourself.

He walks over to a dusty box and opens it.

THE TEENAGER
Found you !

He bursts out laughing. Another child (12 years old) pops
his head out of the box, not happy at all.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX
That's not fair. You would never
have found me without her. I know
she helped you.

INT. LIVING ROOM / DINING TABLE / A FEW MOMENTS LATER

The woman in the kitchen is setting the dining table.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
Yes.

THE TEENAGER (V.O.)
No.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
I say yes.

THE TEENAGER (V.O.)
And I say no.

The woman smiles as the children enter the living room. She
waits for them at the table.

THE WOMAN IN THE KITCHEN
I was waiting for you to eat. Come
on, come.

The two children rush to the table. The woman opens a large
dish, and the children are immediately amazed by its
contents.

BOTH CHILDREN
(Simultaneously)
Stew !

THE WOMAN IN THE KITCHEN
Just how you like it, my darlings.

THE TEENAGER
Mmm ! What flavor ! I'm already
drooling.

The woman fills the bowls of both children. They wish each other " enjoy your meal " and start eating joyfully.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
Oh ! Hi, sorry, I got a bit carried
away with all this action, so I
forgot to introduce myself. So I'll
start.

Camera on the teenager eating.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
This is my best friend, BASILE, 16
years old. His father is a lawyer,
and his mother owns the biggest
hair salon in our town. But I see
him as my big brother since Mom
considers him her son.

Camera focused on BASILE enjoying his dish.

BASILE
Mmmm... ! So good.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
He only thinks about his stomach,
that's why he is shaped like that.

Camera on the woman in the kitchen.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
(Cont'd)
That beautiful and sweet woman over
there, well, that's MIRETTE, my
mother, 36 years old. Beautiful
woman, isn't't she ? She's a
veterinarian.

MIRETTE
(To the child in the
box)
Stop talking and eat.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX
Okay, mom.

camera on himself (the child in the box), eating.

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.)
And finally, me, CHARLES, 12 years
old, the beloved son of this lovely
(MORE)

THE CHILD IN THE BOX (V.O.) (cont'd)
 lady. We look alike, don't you
 think ?

CUT TO

A MONTAGE ON : a blank page with doodles coming to life. A man gets out of a car, and a child runs towards him, then the man picks him up in his arms.

CHARLES
 (V.O, cont'd)
 You were all expecting me to
 introduce a handsome, elegeant man
 and say, here's my father, but...
 no, sorry, I no longer have a
 father...

On another page, the man boards a plane, but shortly after Takeoff, the plane crashes.

CHARLES
 (V.O,cont'd)
 I lost him when I was very young in
 a plane crash.

END OF MONTAGE BACK TO:

INT. DINING ROOM

CHARLES (V.O.)
 Well, that's what my mother told
 me. since that day, my mother does
 everything she can to take care of
 me. what a couragerous woman !
 Basically, since my father's death,
 we've become a middle-class family,
 which causes me a lot of trouble
 with the other kids from upper
 class families. in fact, they hate
 me, luckily, Basile is always there
 to protect me.

They finish eating.

BASILE
 Wow ! That was really good. Can I
 have some more, please ?

MIRETTE
 yes, my boy.

Mirette takes his bowl and fills it again.

BASILE
 Great.

He receives his new bowl of stew and starts to enjoy it.

CUT TO :

EXT. IN FRONT OF CHARLES' HOUSE / EVENING

Charles and his mother stand in front of the house, Basile facing them with his bike in hand.

BASILE

Goodbye, ma'am ! Goodbye, Charles.
(To Mirette)
Thank you, ma'am, for the stew, it
was really delicious. I really
appreciated it.

MIRETTE

Let me at least walk you home.

A black BMW X6 parks in front of them and honks, TUUUT !!

BASILE

No need, my father sent the driver.

He gets in the car. The driver takes the bike and puts it in the trunk, then approaches Mirette.

THE DRIVER

Good evening, Mrs. MIRETTE, good
evening, my boy.

MIRETTE

Good evening.

CHARLES

Good evening, sir.

THE DRIVER

And once again, good evening from
Basile's father. He thanks you for
often taking care of his son.

MIRETTE

Without hesitation, tell him he
will always be welcome at my home.

THE DRIVER

I won't fail to tell him. Now we
are leaving.

Basile waves from the car, and the driver gets in and starts the engine.

MIRETTE

(loudly)

And don't forget to say good
evening on my behalf !

The driver drives away, and they leave as MIRETTE enters the house.

MIRETTE

Don't stay outside, come in and close the door.

CHARLES

Okay, mom.

Charles stands in front of the door.

CHARLES

Basile is lucky to still have his father.

CUT TO :

INT. CHARLES' ROOM / DAY

An alarm clock on the nightstand beeps BEEP, BEEP, BEEP repeatedly, showing 9 :00 AM. Charles opens his eyes, and the rays of sunlight streaming in through the window hit his face.

CHARLES

Who left the window open ?

He gets up from his bed and heads towards the window to close it. The alarm clock continues to beep BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, now showing 9 :01 AM.

CHARLES

It's already 9 AM ! (To himself)
I set it as usual, but why is it ringing now ? (Call)
Mom ! Mom !

No answer, he leaves the room, intrigued.

INT. LIVING ROOM / DAY

Charles enters the living room and is amazed by the decor : colorful balloons, sparkling streamers, festive garlands, and pennants floating in the air. The table is adorned with dishes, colorful cups, flowers, candles, and candies.

Suddenly, he notices confetti and glitter floating in the air. He twirls around and sees his mother and Basile smiling and cheerfully welcoming him with enthusiastic gestures.

MIRETTE AND BASILE

HAPPY BIRTHDAY CHARLES !

Charles stands frozen, tears in his eyes, moved by the surprise. Mirette takes him in her arms and gives him a comforting hug.

MIRETTE

Happy birthday, my bunny. (Wiping his tears)

(MORE)

MIRETTE (cont'd)
Don't cry, today is a big day for
you.

CHARLES
Thank you, mom.

BASILE
Come on, stop your circus, Charles.
You're a big boy now. And big boys
don't cry.

Charles looks up and smiles.

CUT TO :

INT. LIVING ROOM / DINING TABLE

They are all three sitting around the table decorated for
the birthday. The cake is beautifully decorated with
candles, and Basile watches the cake impatiently, saliva
dripping from his mouth.

BASILE
Finally, I'm going to get to eat
that cake ! I couldn't wait any
longer.

MIRETTE
Blow out your candles, my darling.

Charles approaches the cake, but Mirette stops him.

MIRETTE
Don't forget to make a wish before
you blow.

CHARLES
Already did, Mom.

MIRETTE
Then blow !

BASILE
(To Mirette)
Tell me, ma'am, does that thing
really work ?

MIRETTE
What thing ? And stop calling me
ma'am.

BASILE
Oh ! excuse me, I was talking about
the wish.

MIRETTE

I don't know much about it, but
it's better to do it. It's a
birthday tradition.

BASILE

Ah ! Okay !

Charles blows out his candles. They applaud, CLAP, CLAP,
CLAP. Suddenly, KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! Someone knocks at the
door.

MIRETTE

Oh ! That must be him.

CHARLES

(To Basile)

Who ? Did you invite someone ?

Basile shrugs.

MIRETTE

Stay here, I'll open it.

She leaves the frame. Basile and Charles exchange curious
looks. Mirette returns with a friendly young man, stylishly
coiffed (about 20 years old).

THE YOUNG MAN

Yo ! Kids, ready for a super photo
session ?

BASILE

Yo ! Humm ! Man !

THE YOUNG MAN

No, not man ! I'm FREDERIC.

CHARLES

Yo Frederic.

MIRETTE

Alright, kids, I hope you're ready
because it's time for the photo
session. (To Frederic)
So let's get started !

Frederic gets into action, and in a series of quick beats,
he takes funny shots.

-- Charles alone with his cake, smiling with a delighted
expression.

-- Charles and Basile posing with the cake, then various
poses without the cake.

-- Basile alone with the cake, showing a clear intention to
eat it.

-- Charles and Mirette, then Charles and Mirette preventing
Basile from eating the cake by holding him back.

-- To finish, a photo of all three together, with Basile

looking displeased.

CUT TO :

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE / A FEW HOURS LATER

Mirette, Frederic, Basile, and Charles stand in front of the house.

FREDERIC

I think I'm going to head out now.

BASILE

Now it's time for the cake ! I've been waiting for this moment forever.

Basile sneaks quietly into the house.

MIRETTE

(To Frederic)

Come have a bite of cake with us before you leave.

FREDERIC

No, I'm good, I don't really like sweets. (Beat)
For the photos, you'll get them during the week.

Frederic looks at Charles and ruffles his hair.

FREDERIC

Happy birthday, my boy.

CHARLES

Thanks.

FREDERIC

Oh ! Wait ! Take this !

Frederic pulls a chocolate cookie from his pocket. Mirette gives a disapproving look to Frederic, who notices it, then hands the cookie to Charles.

FREDERIC

(Playfully)

I know it's not much, but you know, a gift is still a gift, no matter its size or value.

CHARLES

Thank you very much, Mr. Photographer.

FREDERIC

You're welcome. Goodbye, ma'am.

He leaves the frame. Mirette turns toward the house.

MIRETTE
Where's Basile ?

INT. LIVING ROOM

Mirette and Charles find Basile with his mouth full, the cake half-eaten. Basile sees them.

BASILE
(Mouth full)
Oh ! Hi, you're here. (Beat)
Frederic left ?

He tries to smile, but with his mouth too full, it's hard. Charles and Mirette exchange a look. Basile swallows quickly and shrugs while smiling, looking a bit guilty.

BASILE
Sorry, I couldn't resist.

Mirette responds sternly.

MIRETTE
Basile !

He feels bad for having done that. Mirette approaches and touches his head, trying to comfort him.

MIRETTE
No ! No ! Don't make that face.
Just remember that too many sweets
aren't good for your health.

Charles looks at both of them with a resolute expression.

CHARLES
I think we should move on to the
presents, don't you think ?

BASILE
Oh yes ! Good idea.

Basile gets up from the table and heads toward the exit.

BASILE
(To Charles)
Follow me.

Charles follows, impatient and excited.

EXT. CHARLES' YARD / AFTERNOON

Once outside, Charles waits eagerly. Basile returns from behind the house with a brand new sky-blue bicycle that he hands to Charles.

BASILE
And here you go, it's for you. From
me and your mom.

Charles can't believe it, a few seconds later, he bursts with joy.

CHARLES

Wow ! A bike ! I can't believe it.
Thank you, Basile, you're the best
!

Charles rushes to hug Basile enthusiastically.

BASILE

Slow down ! Slow down !

Charles hugs him so tightly that Basile has trouble breathing.

BASILE

(Choking)

I can't breathe, I can't breathe.

Charles immediately lets him go, feeling embarrassed. Basile struggles to catch his breath.

CHARLES

Oh, sorry ! It's just the emotion,
you know.

BASILE

(Still gasping)

Yeah, yeah, I know. (Beat)
But it's not me you should be
thanking so much, it's your mom.

Basile goes back into the house. Charles approaches the bike, admiring it in wonder.

CHARLES

I finally have a bike, my very own
super cool bike !

Basile watches him from the window of the house and smiles. Mirette enters the frame and approaches Charles.

MIRETTE

You look very happy, from what I
can see.

Charles jumps on her and gives her a big hug.

CHARLES

Oh yes, Mom ! And you can't imagine
how much !

He lifts his head and looks at Mirette with childlike curiosity.

CHARLES

(Cont'd)

Tell me, Mom ! What did you buy for me as a gift ?

MIRETTE

Me !

CHARLES

Yes, you ! No, no ! Don't tell me, I'll try to guess.

He pretends to think.

CHARLES

A dog ! You bought me a dog as a gift, didn't you, Mom ?

MIRETTE

No ! Just this...

CHARLES

So you didn't buy me a dog ?!

Basile comes back from the house, mouth full, carrying a plate with a piece of cake and a spoon.

BASILE

Aren't you going to try your bike ?

CHARLES

Not now ! I don't really feel like it.

Basile notices the sadness on Charles' face.

BASILE

What's wrong, Charles ?

He says nothing, and Mirette becomes very cold.

MIRETTE

Sorry, my boy, but I couldn't get you a dog, especially the one you wanted.

Charles looks at her with eyes filled with sadness.

MIRETTE

(Cont'd)

Don't give me that look ! You know very well that we've already talked about the dog.

CHARLES

But I !! You told me I could have anything I wanted on my birthday !

MIRETTE

Yes ! But what you're asking for is really...

Basile watches the scene while eating, affected by the situation.

CHARLES

(To himself)

If I don't get a dog, I won't be able to participate in the championship. I can forget my dream of winning the championship this year.

Tears begin to form in Charles' eyes. Mirette wipes them away.

MIRETTE

No ! No ! No ! Don't cry, my bunny. Today is a big day for you, so you shouldn't cry or be sad.

While she tries to cheer him up, Basile finishes his plate.

MIRETTE

If I could find you this dog, I would have done it. But now...

CHARLES

I thought that if I asked you on my birthday, it would change your mind, but now I see that it hasn't.

Mirette takes this to heart, feeling more affected than Charles, but tries not to let this emotion overwhelm her son.

MIRETTE

But you can choose something else, you know !

CHARLES

(Tears in his eyes)

Thank you, Mom ! But I don't want anything else, I just want a dog.

Charles sniffs back his tears. Mirette is completely saddened to see her son in this state and can't think of anything to lift his spirits, she feels depressed. Seeing this, Basile tries to salvage the situation. He comes over and pats Charles on the back.

BASILE

(Smiling)

Come on, don't make that funeral face. It's just a dog, after all.

CHARLES

(Loudly)

For you, it's just an animal, while
for me, it's something completely
different.

Charles runs off, tears in his eyes, grabs his bike, and
moves out of the frame. Mirette raises her hand as if she
wants to stop him but remains there, powerless.

BASILE

(Confused, to Mirette)

But what did I say ?! (Beat)
Why didn't you mention the bicycle
to him ?

Mirette collapses sadly to the ground, and Basile heads
towards her with his bike in hand.

BASILE

Don't worry, I'll bring him back.

He moves a bit with his bike and hears Mirette's cold voice.

MIRETTE

(Dejected)

Basile... !

Basile stops and looks her straight in the eye as if to say,
"Don't worry, everything will be fine." She returns a
confident smile.

MIRETTE

(Cont'd, with a small
smile)

Thank you.

Basile moves on with his bike and leaves the frame as well.
Mirette stays there, silent, then tears appear along her
face. She rushes into the house.

CUT TO :

EXT. STREET / SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY / SUNSET

The dog wanders through the streets of the city, hungry, its
stomach making strange noises. It stops in front of a
butcher shop window, looking at the pieces of meat with
longing.

THE BUTCHER

(To the dog)

Hey !

The dog notices the butcher speaking to it and wags its
tail.

THE BUTCHER

(Cont'd, in German)

What are you doing here ? Go on,
this isn't a place for dogs. Go
away !

The dog doesn't understand a word he says.

THE BUTCHER

(More, still in German)

You're still here ! I warn you, if
you scare away my customers with
that scraggly body of yours, you'll
hear from me.

THE DOG

Fine, I'm leaving. Anyway, you
won't give me anything if I stay
here.

The dog continues on its way, its stomach growling again.

THE BUTCHER

(In French)

Pff ! The animals of today.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN DOWNTOWN / SAME TIME

CLOSE-UP ON : a billboard showing Charles with a greyhound.
We zoom out to see Charles at the foot of the billboard, and
the sign displays greyhounds racing. He becomes even more
depressed and continues on with his bike.

CARD : DOWNTOWN.

Three boys (LEON, EDITH : 14 years old, and CREPIN : 15
years old) are sitting near a lively fountain in the city
center. Suddenly, Léon spots something off-screen and
points.

LEON

Hey ! Guys, look over there.

The two boys turn and see Charles walking alone with his
bike.

EDITH

Uh ! But that's Charles the broke.
What's he doing here ?

CREPIN

No idea, but we should go say hi to
him, don't you think ?

LEON

Good idea !

Crépin grabs his skateboard.

CREPIN

Let's go, guys.

Léon takes his scooter, and Edith grabs her bike.

QUICK CUT TO :

Charles moving forward, head down, still in shock.
Crépin approaches him doing tricks (kick flip, heel flip, and 360 flips), but Charles barely notices and keeps walking.

Crépin circles him with his board.

Léon arrives with his scooter, and Edith follows. Charles finally notices them and stops.

LEON

(To Edith)

I beat you again.

EDITH

(A bit out of breath)

PFF !

LEON

As usual.

CREPIN

Look who it is ! The broke who
wants to play with the big boys !

LEON

(To Charles)

Why do you have that funeral face ?
Did you lose someone or what ?

Still looking down, Charles says nothing. Crépin and the others exchange glances.

CREPIN

(To Charles)

So, are you still holding on to
your dream of becoming the KING OF
THE TRACKS ?

Still nothing. Charles doesn't respond. They exchange glances among themselves.

LEON

You dream big for a broke guy like
you, you know. (Beat)
You know what's funny about all
this ? it's that the thinks he's
special.

They all start laughing together.

CREPIN

Listen, broke guy, the dog racing tracks are reserved for people of our social class, not for kids like you. (Beat)
I mean, people of your class, of course.

LEON

Exactly. You'd better give up before you embarrass yourself in front of everyone. So go back to your insignificant little world.

A V.O.ICE

He won't go anywhere.

They all turn to look. The camera adjusts its frame and reveals BASILE.

BASILE

(To Crépin)

And he has just as much right as you do to participate in this race.

LEON

Still you ?

BASILE

Yes ! It's still me.

CREPIN

(to Edith and Leon)

Pff ! Come on, let's go. The sumo is here.

Leon gets on his scooter, and Edith takes her bike. Crepin, on his skateboard, does a BACKSIDE 180 and stops next to Charles, then whispers in his ear.

CREPIN

(More, to Charles)

Know that you have no chance of winning this championship, nor the title of KING OF THE TRACKS. (Beat)
And even if that happens, I'll be in your way, believe me.

Then he and Edith leave, Leon stays behind.

LEON

(To Basile)

You can thank your dear daddy otherwise, I would have already settled your account.

BASILE

In your dreams, maybe !

He leaves too, and Basile joins Charles.

BASILE

Charles, are you okay ?

Charles doesn't respond and watches Leon, Crepin, and Edith exit the frame.

BASILE

(Cont'd)

What got into you to leave like that ? Do you know how worried mom was after you left ?!

Charles doesn't react.

BASILE

She went through so much for you despite having so little--the cake, the photographer (Beat) and even this bike you're dragging around right now.

Charles looks confused. Basile continues, turning his back to Charles.

BASILE

And you, what are you doing ?
Nothing. Not even a little thank you. And !

Charles realizes what he just did. Basile turns to Charles.

BASILE

And eh !

He sees Charles walking away on his bike.

BASILE

Where are you going again ?

Charles answers him as he distances himself, leaving Basile in confusion.

CHARLES

Home before mom worries even more.

BASILE

(Surprised)

Uh ! As you wish. (Beat)
See you tomorrow, then, and be careful on your way back.

Charles walks away far enough for Basile to lose sight of him. Basile watches until he disappears.

CUT TO :

EXT. BEHIND A RESTAURANT / A FEW HOURS LATER

The dog rummages through a trash can behind a restaurant, but it's empty. His stomach growls with hunger. He digs into another pot, still nothing.

THE DOG

I'm so hungry. I think this is the end of my adventures, and I didn't even get to participate in a single dog race.

The dog collapses heavily on the ground, dejected. Suddenly, he hears a door open, revealing a 19 year-old waiter in uniform. He struggles to pull out a garbage bag. After a few minutes of struggle, he manages to get it out and closes the door behind him. The waiter turns around and sees the dog sitting, wagging his tail with hopeful eyes, staring at the bag. The waiter grumbles.

WAITER

What are you doing here ? (Beat)
This isn't a place for dogs, go on,
get lost.

The dog gets up, takes a few steps forward as if leaving, then gives him puppy eyes.

WAITER

(Cont'd)

Don't give me those eyes.

The dog continues to look at him, insistent.

WAITER

(More)

No ! No ! Not those eyes, stop, I
hate them.

The dog keeps looking at him with big sad eyes.

WAITER

Fine, alright, you win.

The dog wags his tail excitedly as the waiter pulls a bone out of the garbage bag and waves it.

WAITER

Who's it for, the big bone ? Huh,
who's it for ?

The dog wags his tail even more with excitement, tongue hanging out.

WAITER

...The big bone ! Who's it for ?

The dog slowly approaches the waiter while wagging his tail.
Once close enough...

WAITER
(More, abruptly)
And well, it's mine. Now get lost.

He throws the bone at the dog. Scared, the dog darts into the bushes about fifteen steps away, leaving the bone near the bushes.

WAITER
You flea-ridden mutt.

He thinks for a moment, and the dog returns to retrieve the bone.

WAITER
That one doesn't have any hair, so
I don't think it has fleas. I
should rather say... (loudly)
...Fur-less animal. Yeah, that's
even better. (Beat)
You hear me, fur-less animal ?

The door of the restaurant opens, revealing a little man in an apron with a spatula in hand it's the chef. (40 year-old)

CHEF
(Angrily)
What are you doing here again ?

WAITER
(Stumbling)
It's it's the the dog !

The chef looks around but sees no dog.

CHEF
The dog ! A dog ? Where ?

WAITER
It was just there.

The chef looks in the indicated direction but sees nothing.
WHAM ! The waiter gets hit on the head with the spatula.

CHEF
(Angrily)
I pay you to work, not to make up
excuses to slack off. (Beat)
It's work time and not rest time,
understood ? Lazybones.

The waiter stands at attention.

WAITER
Yes, chef !

The chef points his spatula at him.

CHEF

Get rid of that pile of trash, and
join me in the kitchen in four
seconds flat. Understood ?

WAITER

(Still at attention)
Yes, chef !

CHEF

You're legless centipede.

He goes back into the kitchen. The waiter mumbles.

WAITER

That doesn't make any sense, a
millipede without legs.

He remembers the chef's last words and rushes to get rid of
the garbage bag.

EXT. STREET / BEHIND THE BUSHES / SAME TIME

The dog runs out of the bushes but suddenly BOOM, he gets
hit by something off-screen. The camera moves to reveal
Charles lying on the ground, clutching his bleeding knee.

CHARLES

Ouch ! My knee.

He hears a noise, looks up, and sees the dog on the ground.

THE DOG

AW-AW, AW-AW !

CHARLES

A dog !

Charles gets up and approaches the dog.

CHARLES

Are you okay ? Did I hurt you ? I
hope I didn't hurt you too badly.

THE DOG

Oh really ! How would you feel if I
did that to you ?

The dog tries to get up, but can barely stand. Its right
front paw is hurt, and Charles reacts upon seeing it.

CHARLES

Sorry about your paw.

THE DOG

Sorry ! Is that all you have to say
? I get it, since you're not the
one sprawled out on the ground, you
can say that easily. Sorry, pff !

The dog sighs. Close-up on Charles, who looks at the dog.

CHARLES

I don't speak dog, but I know how
much you're hurting. I'm really
sorry.

THE DOG

Oh really !

CHARLES

I didn't see you come out of the
bushes, so...

THE DOG

You just had to pay attention,
that's all.

CHARLES

(Cont'd)

...but don't worry, I'll find a way
to help you.

THE DOG

So, you're going to finish breaking
my leg and then want to help me ?
What a nice little boy. (Beat)
You'd better come up with a
solution, or else...

Charles looks around the dog's neck.

THE DOG

Hey ! What are you doing ?

CHARLES

Just as I thought, you're a stray
dog.

THE DOG

And now he realizes it !

CHARLES

I can't leave you here.

THE DOG

You wouldn't dare after what you
just did to me.

CHARLES

I've got it !

THE DOG

Got what ?

Charles picks up his bike and starts walking with it. The dog watches him and barks.

THE DOG

WOOF ! WOOF ! Where are you going ?
Don't tell me you're going to leave
me here, that wouldn't be human of
you, you know.

Charles stops and turns to the dog.

CHARLES

What are you waiting for ? Come on,
let's go.

The dog stays still.

THE DOG

Go where ?

Charles starts to walk away, unaware that the dog isn't following him. After a few steps, he turns around to see that the dog hasn't moved an inch.

CHARLES

Come on, I'm taking you home. Once
we're there, my mom will take care
of your paw she's a veterinarian,
and she's the best, you'll see.

THE DOG

Okay ! If you say so, but I hope
this isn't a trick to take me to
the pound.

CHARLES

Just come on.

The dog barks and wags its tail as it approaches Charles, who rubs its head.

CHARLES

I don't speak dog, but I think
that's a yes !

The two leave, and the camera adjusts to show them exiting the frame.

CUT TO :

EXT. IN FRONT OF CHARLES'S HOUSE / NIGHT

Charles arrives home late at night with the dog.
He notices the light inside and heads towards the door,
which he finds open. He goes inside.

INT. LIVING ROOM

Charles finds Mirette, asleep with her head against the dining table. Charles gestures to the dog to stay quiet, unaware that his mother is asleep.

CHARLES
(To the dog)
Come in, don't stay outside.

The dog quietly enters and observes the surroundings.

CHARLES
(More)
Stay here and don't make any noise,
okay ?

Charles approaches to wake Mirette.

CHARLES
Mom ! Mom ! I'm home.

Mirette wakes up.

MIRETTE
Charles, is that you ! (Beat)
You're back ?

CHARLES
Sorry, Mom, I'm sorry for...

Mirette immediately hugs him.

MIRETTE
You scared me so much, you know.

CHARLES
I'm sorry for behaving like that,
Mom.

MIRETTE
The important thing is that you're
home. But promise me you'll never
do that again.

CHARLES
I promise, Mom.

She kisses him on the head.

MIRETTE
Thank you, my angel. (Beat)
I'm sorry I couldn't buy you
that...

THE DOG
So cute.

Mirette then notices the dog next to them, wagging its tail, and jumps back in fright.

MIRETTE
AAAAAAH !

She hides behind Charles.

MIRETTE
(Terrified)
What is that ?

CHARLES
What ?

She points at the dog.

MIRETTE
That !

THE DOG
(Completely confused)
What's wrong with her ?

Charles turns to the dog.

CHARLES
(To the dog)
What are you doing here ? I told
you not to follow me.

MIRETTE
Do you know this thing ?

CHARLES
Yes, Mom, and it's not a thing,
it's a dog.

MIRETTE
A dog ? This thing is a dog ?

CHARLES
Yes, Mom, it's a dog, not a thing.

MIRETTE
As far as I remember, dogs didn't
have...

Camera focuses on the dog's body.

MIRETTE
(Cont'd)
...a body like that.

THE DOG
(Completely falsely)
Thanks for the compliment.

CHARLES

Don't exaggerate, Mom. It's not that terrible.

MIRETTE

Why did you bring it here ?

CHARLES

I accidentally knocked it over while coming in I couldn't just leave it there. (Beat)
Plus, I think I broke its right front paw.

The dog raises its injured paw.

THE DOG

AW-AW, AW-AW !

MIRETTE

Charles ! We've already talked about having animals in the house, especially dogs.

CHARLES

I know very well, but it's because of his paw. (Beat)
You're a veterinarian isn't it your job to help animals in distress ?

Mirette is left speechless by Charles's words.

MIRETTE

I'm proud of you. Send me my first aid kit so we can take care of this paw together.

CHARLES

Great !

He jumps into Mirette's arms. She then notices his knee.

MIRETTE

Did you hurt your knee ?

CHARLES

Oh, that ? It's nothing.

CUT TO :

The end of bandaging the dog's paw.

MIRETTE

There, it's done. It wasn't serious, just a little sprain.

Charles and the dog both have bandages. The dog tries to remove its bandage, but Charles stops it.

CHARLES

(To the dog)

No ! No ! Don't take it off just yet. Mom said it's a little sprain. So you'll have to keep it on for a good week.

MIRETTE

(Putting away her things)

Let him rest. Tomorrow, I'll call the pound to come and pick him up.

CHARLES

But that's not necessary. He can stay here while he recovers.

MIRETTE

Oh no ! Don't even think about it.

(Beat)

Look at this dog, we don't know anything about him. And look at his body maybe he has a contagious disease.

CHARLES

But mom...

She finishes putting away her things.

MIRETTE

There are no buts about it, I'll call them tomorrow.

CHARLES

Mom !

MIRETTE

End of discussion. It's getting late.

Mirette leaves with her kit. Charles and the dog exchange a worried look.

CHARLES

(To the dog)

Don't worry, I won't let them take you that easily.

He leaves as well. The dog, lying on the floor, watches him leave.

THE DOG

Are we not eating ? (Beat)
I'm hungry.

CUT TO :

INT. HOUSE / DAY

Mirette is on the phone while cleaning.

MIRETTE

(On the phone)

Okay ! I understand. No, no, no !
Don't worry ; that time works for
me. Thank you.

She hangs up.

CHARLES

Was that the pound ?

MIRETTE

No, it was JOHN, one of my
colleagues.
And Basile called this morning to
say he wouldn't be here this week.

CHARLES

Why ?

MIRETTE

Well, he's visiting his uncle with
his parents.

CHARLES

Ah, okay. But what about the pound
?

MIRETTE

They're on vacation for a whole
week, so...

Charles, happy, interrupts her.

CHARLES

The dog gets to stay with us for a
week ! So cool !

The dog suddenly sits up.

THE DOG

What !

Charles jumps for joy. Mirette, seeing his enthusiasm,
agrees.

MIRETTE

Yes, that's right.

Mirette continues cleaning.

CHARLES

(To the dog)

I hope you heard what my mom said.
So get ready for a wild week.

THE DOG

Hey ! Not so fast. I have a say in this too. I don't want to stay here for a whole week, I have a ton of things to do.

CHARLES

If you agree, bark.

The dog doesn't bark. Charles rubs its head.

CHARLES

Stop being shy and bark.

Charles gives Mirette a surprising hug.

CHARLES

Thank you for agreeing, Mom. You don't know how happy I am. You're the best.

Mirette returns the hug. Charles gets overwhelmed with emotions and starts to cry, Mirette notices.

MIRETTE

What's wrong, my dear ?

CHARLES

I'm sorry, Mom, for leaving like that yesterday.
I'm so ashamed of my behavior. But I...

Mirette places her hand on Charles's head.

MIRETTE

Don't worry, it's in the past now.
But for the dog, it's only a week.

Charles wipes his tears.

CHARLES

Yes, Mom. A week, no more, no less.

MIRETTE

Exactly, no more, but there could be less, depending on his behavior.

Charles stands at attention.

CHARLES

Noted, Lieutenant Mom.

Mirette kisses him on the head.

MIRETTE

I love you, my dear.

CHARLES
I love you too, Mom.

THE DOG
That's all nice and dandy, but can
we move on to something else now ?

Charles approaches the dog.

CHARLES
I'm counting on you to be as calm
as a slug.

THE DOG
(Totally confused)
I don't understand anything !

Mirette gives a disapproving look to the dog, which doesn't go unnoticed.

THE DOG
Wow ! I feel like I'm going to
enjoy it here for this week.

CUT TO :

A BEGINNING OF A MONTAGE :
As the montage music begins to play, in a series of quick shots, the days go by, and Charles has a lot of fun with his new companion. Both are still wearing their bandages.

INT. CHARLES'S ROOM / DAY

Charles's alarm rings, DRELIN ! DRELIN ! DRELIN !
Indicating 7 :30. Charles and the dog synchronize their wake-up. They both get off the bed and leave the room, heading for the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM / DAY

Charles and the dog walk through the living room, Charles greets his mom, and the dog barks. They are outside before she can respond.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN TOWN / NOON

Charles is bikejoring with the dog.

INT. LIVING ROOM / NIGHT

In the evening, they are all at the table. Charles and the dog are playing with their food. Mirette gets annoyed and asks them to leave the table.

QUICK CUT TO :

Later that night, they return to watch a greyhound race on TV, in the dark.

INT. LIVING ROOM / A FEW DAYS LATER / DAY

Charles and the dog are playing ball in the living room. At each throw, the dog brings the ball back to Charles. But in a final throw, the dog leaps, catches the ball in the air, but falls heavily to the ground, knocking over a nearby vase which breaks.

Mirette immediately comes out of the kitchen with an apron around her neck and discovers the broken vase. She scolds Charles and the dog, sending them out.

INT. LIVING ROOM / NIGHT

Charles and the dog are in the dark. The race on TV ends, and their favorite greyhound wins. Charles and the dog jump for joy, and to their surprise, Mirette stands behind them.

MIRETTE

Turn that off and go to bed !

EXT. BACKYARD / AFTERNOON

Charles and the dog rest under a tree.

CHARLES

(To the dog)

You know, I have a dream I'd really like to achieve.

THE DOG

(Completely uninterested)

And what do you want me to do about it ?

CHARLES

I'd love to win the RACING this year.

The dog's ears perk up.

THE DOG

Wait, you said win the RACING ?
What a coincidence, that's my dream too.

CHARLES

It would be amazing if it came true, don't you think ?

THE DOG

Yeah, it would be so cool.

CHARLES

If only mom would let me have a dog, it would be different. (Beat)
Anyway, the registrations for the championship end in a few days, so...

Charles reties his shoelaces. The dog surprises him by taking one of his shoes off. Charles chases after him until he stops, out of breath. He tries to catch his breath. The dog approaches him, and Charles catches him by surprise. They both start laughing, sprawled out on the grass.

INT. KITCHEN

Mirette, watching them from the kitchen window, smiles.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY / NIGHT

Charles and the dog arrive at the foot of a poster showing him and the dog. The camera zooms out to show a CLOSE-UP of the poster presenting the current KING OF THE TRACKS and his owner.

The montage ends on this frame before CUTTING TO A CARD DISPLAYING : ONE WEEK LATER.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY / DAY

A bespectacled young man (19 years old), wearing a veterinarian's coat, rides a basket bike and passes a woman walking with her chihuahua.

THE YOUNG MAN

Hello, Mrs. Léa !

MRS. LÉA

Hi !

He passes another acquaintance who is watering flowers in front of a house.

THE YOUNG MAN

Hello, Mr. Duck.

MR. DUCK

Hello, my boy.

He encounters a much bulkier man, wearing a tracksuit, with his mouth full and a piece of cake in hand, jogging in the same direction as him.

THE YOUNG MAN

Hi, Mr. Degueul.

MR. DEGUEUL

(Mouth full)

Oh, it's you. Hi !

THE YOUNG MAN

If you really want to lose that weight, be realistic and start by cutting out all those sweets.

MR. DEGUEUL

Thanks for the advice.

Mr. DEGUEUL swallows the rest of the cake and notices the young man on his bike pulling ahead. He tries to overtake him. The young man accelerates as well.

Mr. DEGUEUL runs as hard as he can but fails to catch up and falls flat on his face, out of breath.

THE YOUNG MAN

(Loudly)

Sorry, Mr. DEGUEUL, maybe next time
will be the right one.

Mr. DEGUEUL is lying flat on the ground, reaching out towards the young man who is gradually moving away. He rolls onto his back and pulls a chocolate bar from his pocket to take a bite.

CUT TO :

EXT. IN FRONT OF CHARLES'S HOUSE

The young man arrives in front of Charles's house, gets off his bike, and knocks on the door, KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! The door opens, and Mirette stands in front of him.

MIRETTE

(A bit surprised)

KEVIN ! What are you doing here ?

KEVIN

Hello Mirette. I'm here on behalf
of JOHN.

MIRETTE

Hello, come in, please.

INT. LIVING ROOM

MIRETTE

(Cont'd)

Why didn't he come himself ?

KEVIN

He's too busy at the moment, so he
sent me.

MIRETTE

He told me three days.

KEVIN

Yeah, but he had a little setback.

MIRETTE

A little setback ?

KEVIN

Yeah, but it's nothing serious.

MIRETTE
(Sighs)
Do you have the results ?

Kevin rummages through his coat and pulls out a paper,
handing it to Mirette.

KEVIN
Yes, here it is, but it's negative.

MIRETTE
(Surprised)
Negative ! Let me see.

Mirette checks it herself. The camera zooms in on the paper
: it's the result of an analysis.

KEVIN (V.O.)
Negative for ringworm, rabies, and
also negative for alopecia.

The camera returns to its original state.

MIRETTE
It's impossible, the test can't be
negative.

KEVIN
Why ? Is that not the expected
result ?

MIRETTE
Have you at least seen the dog in
question ?

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE

A blue van with the yellow inscription « ANIMAL CONTROL
AGENCY » with their number below and a drawing of a sad dog
parks.

Two men in work uniforms for animal control, with a dog logo
on their uniforms, get out. (Agent #1, tall and thin, around
28 years old) and (Agent #2, a little overweight, around 22
years old).

They open the back of the van and take out a dog cage. They
head towards the front door of the house.

INT. LIVING ROOM

MIRETTE
So, how does he explain that ?

KEVIN
He said it could be due to an
allergy he contracted on the street
or to shedding.

MIRETTE

To shedding ? (Pause)
The change that affects the
animal's coat.

KEVIN

Yeah, that's it. (Pause)
| He's 70% convinced that what's
happening to him is due to shedding
and 30% to an allergy.

MIRETTE

I was sure he had rabies.

KEVIN

Oh no, you were wrong. Well, I have
to go before they notice I'm
missing.

He approaches the door and grabs his wrist.

KEVIN

I almost forgot, he also said he
was sorry.

MIRETTE

Tell him I thank him, and thank you
too for coming. We'll see each
other again once my leave is over.

KEVIN

You're welcome, Mrs. Mirette. We're
all looking forward to your return.

Suddenly, KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! Someone is knocking at the
door.

KEVIN

Are you expecting someone ?

MIRETTE

No ! And what about you ? Did you
come with someone ?

KEVIN

No !

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK !

AGENT #1 (OS)

This is the animal control, is Mrs.
Mirette there ? We'd like to speak
with her.

Kevin and Mirette exchange a glance.

KEVIN
Animal control ? What are they
doing here ? (Beat)
Don't tell me !

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE

AGENT #1
(To Agent #2)
It seems no one is home, boss.

AGENT #2
Let me handle this.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! Agent #2 knocks on the door.

AGENT #2
(Cont'd)
Open up, I know you're there.

AGENT #1
Are you sure they're in there, boss
?

AGENT #2
They're in there ! It's animal
control, open up.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! He knocks on the door again.

INT. KITCHEN

Mirette and Kevin arrive in the kitchen.

MIRETTE
Understand, I was scared at first
with this dog, I thought he had a
disease.

KEVIN
Knowing you, I know that's not the
only reason for your choice.

Kevin spots Charles and the dog playing in the garden.

KEVIN
(Cont'd)
A dog to which your son has become
so attached. Look at him...

Mirette moves closer to the kitchen window and sees Charles
and the dog playing together in the garden, a big smile on
Charles's face (they no longer have their bandages).

KEVIN
...He seems to be having so much
fun with that dog. Isn't this why
you're enduring all of this ? Have
(MORE)

KEVIN (cont'd)
you thought about the shock this
will cause him ?

A silence falls.

KEVIN
(More)
An indiscreet question : how long
has it been since you've seen him
this happy ?

Mirette begins to realize.

MIRETTE
Since his father died. What have I
almost done ? I didn't even realize
how happy he was with that animal.

AGENT #2 (OS)
I warn you, we're not leaving here
without the dog.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! He knocks again.

KEVIN
You know what ? It's not too late
yet. I'll go talk to them and tell
them you're not home, if that's
alright with you.

MIRETTE
Yes, I agree. Thank you, Kevin.

KEVIN
You're welcome, Mirette. Well, I'm
off.

He leaves the frame.

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE

AGENT #1
There's no one here, boss. We'll
come back another time.

AGENT #2
There's no "another time." Just
know that I never come out for
nothing. (determined)
I'll get that dog.

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK ! More knocks at the door. It opens, and
Kevin is seen. They all look at each other.

AGENT #1
Hello !

Suddenly, Kevin runs, hops on his bike, and leaves. The two agents are left speechless, exchanging astonished glances.

AGENT #2

But... !

AGENT #1

He's gone. What do we do now, boss
?

AGENT #2

(Overwhelmed)

Help me put this away !

The two agents leave to put the cage away, get in the van, and start it up.

INT. VAN

Agent #1 looks out of frame as the van moves forward.

AGENT #1

That kid seems to be having a lot
of fun.

Agent #2 looks and sees Charles and the dog playing in the garden. He stops the van.

AGENT #1

Why are you stopping the car ?

AGENT #2

The boy's dog looks like the one
the woman described on the phone.

AGENT #1

Oh really !

Agent #2 hands a photo to Agent #1.

AGENT #2

Look.

Agent #1 looks at the photo, then at the dog. He observes for a few seconds.

AGENT #1

No, but it's kind of him.

INT. KITCHEN

Mirette looks at the test results and then observes Charles and the dog having a blast through the kitchen window.

It has been a long time since she has seen her son this happy.

We zoom in on her face.

INT. LIVING ROOM - FLASHBACK

Little Charles plays with a big Borzoi. Mirette, her head against the chest of a man whose face is blurred, watches Charles and the Borzoi play and then smiles. Little Charles gives the Borzoi a big hug and laughs.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. KITCHEN

She brings out a smile, and tears begin to form on her face.

EXT. GARDEN

Charles finally spots the animal control van.

INT. VAN

AGENT #1
He spotted us. Come on, start !
Start !

Agent #2 starts the van, and they drive off.

EXT. GARDEN

Charles watches the van pull away.

CHARLES
(To the dog)
Come on, let's go. That's enough
for today, we're heading home.

He and the dog leave the garden.

INT. KITCHEN

Charles joins Mirette in the kitchen.

CHARLES
Mon !

She quickly wipes her tears.

MIRETTE
Yes, my darling ?

CHARLES
I saw an animal control van not far
from our house. Are they here for
the dog ?

MIRETTE
No, darling ! (pausing)
Besides, you can keep your dog.

CHARLES
((Surprised))
Really ? Wait (Beat)
...You mean forever ?

MIRETTE
Yes ! Forever, my dear.

CHARLES
Awesome.

He jumps into Mirette's arms.

CHARLES
(Cont'd)
You're the best mom ever.

MIRETTE
Yes, I know, my dear.

THE DOG
YES ! I stay, how great ! I finally
have a roof and a master. (Beat)
One less goal.

They hear a voice behind them.

THE VOICE
Hello in there ! I found the door
wide open, so I took the liberty of
coming in.

They all turn around and see Basile with a big smile.

BASILE
(Cont'd)
I'm not interrupting, I hope.

CHARLES
Basile !

BASILE
Charles !

Charles throws himself into his arms.

CHARLES
I missed you, you know !

BASILE
You too, my brother.

MIRETTE
Hello, Basile.

Basile approaches Mirette.

BASILE
Hello, Madame Mirette...

He does this while trying to see what's in the pot behind Mirette, who notices.

BASILE
(Cont'd)
I've missed you so much.

MIRETTE
Me or the pot ?

BASILE
Both of you.

They all start laughing. The dog seems confused.

THE DOG
Who's this fat guy ?

Basile notices the dog and jumps back.

BASILE
AAAAAAAAAAAH !!!

He hides behind Mirette.

BASILE
What is that ?

MIRETTE
It's Charles's new pet.

BASILE
That thing ?

CHARLES
It's not a thing, it's a dog, and
his name is NINO.

MIRETTE
NINO ! Just a week, and you've
already found him a name.

CHARLES
A week spent together is more than
enough to give him a name, don't
you think ?

Basile waves at Nino.

BASILE
Hi, NINO.

Nino barks.

NINO
Yeah, hi, fat guy !

CHARLES
I think he already loves you.

NINO
Not even close.

Basile gets a little closer to Mirette and whispers.

BASILE
Please tell me you didn't buy that
for him ?

MIRETTE
(In the same tone as
Basile)
No, it's a stray dog he met.

BASILE
OK, OK !

CHARLES
Don't worry, I can hear you.

BASILE
I think your problem for the
championship is now solved.

Charles grabs his head.

CHARLES
Oh no, the championship ! I forgot.
The registration ends today. (Beat,
in a hurry)
You're coming with me, Basile.

MIRETTE
What championship ?

BASILE
Where are we going ?

CHARLES
To the park to register Nino. (To
Mirette)
Mom...

MIRETTE
You're planning to participate in a
championship, and I didn't even
know.

Charles looks at her, then she remembers Kevin's words : "
Isn't this the state you endure all this for ? "

MIRETTE
(Cont'd)
Alright ! But don't take too long,
okay ?

CHARLES
Okay, mom.

MIRETTE
(To Basile)
Keep an eye on him, Basile.

BASILE
You can count on me for that !

CHARLES
Come on, Nino.

THEY EXIT THE ROOM.

MIRETTE
(Loudly)
And don't get into trouble.

They respond off-screen.

CHARLES AND BASILE (OS)
Understood.

CUT TO :

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE CITY / AFTERNOON

Close-up of Agent #2 sipping a cup of coffee while crossing the street, careless. Suddenly, two bikes rush into the frame and narrowly miss him.

Agent #2, startled, grabs onto a small wooden electrical pole next to him, and his coffee cup spills. The camera adjusts to reveal Charles, Basile, and Nino speeding away.

CHARLES
Sorry, sir !

BASILE
Excuse us.

NINO
WOOF !

They continue on their way.

AGENT #2
(Loudly)
Reckless driver ! Can't you drive
safely ?

He realizes it's the garden dog. Charles, Basile, and Nino turn a corner and exit the frame.

Agent #2 hurries to join the van on the other side of the street, gets in, and slams the door.

INT. VAN

AGENT #1
Hey ! Take it easy. (Beat)
I think I saw the dog and the kid
from this morning pass by.

AGENT #2
They just passed by, for real.

AGENT #1
Oh really !

The two agents look at each other in surprise.

AGENT #2
But what are you waiting for ?

AGENT #1
Me ? Nothing.

AGENT #2
But chase them !

AGENT #1
Okay !

Agent #1 looks straight ahead but sees no one.

AGENT #1
But who ?

AGENT #2
Idiot, the kids on bikes !

AGENT #1
Ah, them !

AGENT #2
(Enthusiastically)
Come on, step on it, step on it !

Agent #1 starts the engine but moves slowly. Agent #2
frowns, annoyed.

AGENT #2
What are you doing ?

AGENT #1
I'm chasing them, just like you
said.

AGENT #2
Do you know that at this speed,
we'll never catch up to them ?

AGENT #1
Yes ! But what do you want me to do
?

AGENT #2
Step on the gas, come on.

AGENT #1
I can't.

AGENT #2
And why not ? (Beat)
You don't have a broken foot, do
you ?

AGENT #1
We're in the downtown area, and
there's a speed limit, look.

Agent #2 sees a speed limit sign indicating 20 km/h to their
right. He explodes in anger.

AGENT #2
AAAAHH !

Agent #1 stops the van and clutches his chest.

AGENT #1
You're going to give me a heart
attack one day with those screams.

AGENT #2
Let's switch places.

AGENT #1
If you want !

EXT. IN FRONT OF THE VAN

Agent #2 grabs the van keys, and then they switch places.

INT. VAN

Agent #2 inserts the key, starting the van's engine. He
grips the steering wheel tightly, then furrows his brow.

AGENT #2
(With a sly smile)
Now, it's our turn.

EXT. CITY

Agent #1 looks at him in fear as Agent #2 floors the
accelerator. The car takes off at full speed, and they take
the same turn as the kids on their bikes.

After the turn, the van rights itself.

INT. VAN

Agent #1, terrified, immediately puts on his seatbelt and
pulls it tight, while Agent #2 laughs maniacally and
accelerates.

EXT. CITY

The camera rises to show them speeding away, dangerously dodging each car until the next turn.

CUT TO :

EXT. PARK REGISTRATION STAND / AFTERNOON

Charles, Basile, and Nino are in line. All eyes are on Nino.

NINO

What's with them staring at me like
that ? (Beat)
Have you never seen a dog before or
what ?

Charles and Basile hear the whispers behind them but pretend not to notice.

A YOUNG MAN #1

Is he going to participate in the
championship too ?

A YOUNG MAN #2

I don't think they'll let him.

Another person takes out their smartphone and takes a picture of Nino.

A YOUNG MAN #3

Little scoop for social media.

BASILE

(To Charles)

Charles, I'm not feeling well here.

A man (47 years old, cold look, not smiling, and hard to impress) behind a reception desk organizes a document.

THE MAN AT THE DESK

Next !

Charles, Basile, and Nino move forward.

CHARLES

Hello, I'd like to register my dog
for...

THE MAN AT THE DESK

(In a cold V.O.ice)

I know.

He hands a form to Charles.

THE MAN AT THE DESK

(Cont'd)

Here, fill this out.

Charles takes the form, fills it out, and hands it back to the man.

CHARLES

Here you go.

THE MAN AT THE DESK

Well, let's see your greyhound.

Charles presents Nino.

CHARLES

His name is Nino.

NINO

I'm finally going to participate in the race, so cool.

The man at the desk examines Nino.

CHARLES

So, can he participate in the race ?

THE MAN AT THE DESK

I'm sorry, but I can't register your greyhound.

CHARLES

Why not ? He's perfectly healthy.

THE MAN AT THE DESK

I'm sorry, but we have to ensure the safety of all greyhounds participating in this championship. And given your greyhound's appearance, he might be sick.

CHARLES

(Insisting)

But that's unfair, Nino is fine, he's just a little hairless, nothing else. Please register him !

THE MAN AT THE DESK

Do you have his health report ?

Charles looks down.

THE MAN AT THE DESK

(Cont'd)

I thought so. (Beat)
I understand your frustration, but we must follow the protocols to ensure the safety of all greyhounds participating in this championship.

BASILE

But... !!

THE MAN AT THE DESK
It's uncertain whether the dog
federation will accept him or let
him participate in this
championship without a complete
health report.

CHARLES
I understand, thank you for
everything.

Charles, discouraged and sad, leaves the line.

BASILE
Goodbye, sir.

Basile and Nino follow.

THE MAN AT THE DESK
Next !

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN THE PARK

NINO
I knew it wouldn't be that easy to
register for this championship.

Basile tries to lighten the mood.

BASILE
Don't make that face. We'll find a
way to register Nino.

CHARLES
(With tears in his eyes)
But...

Basile stops him with a gesture.

BASILE
Trust me. But first, I'm going to
get us something to eat.

Basile exits the frame. Charles sits down on a bench in the
park, shoulders slumped and looking depressed.

Nino, beside him, tries to catch a butterfly and wanders
off, leaving the frame, unnoticed by Charles. Edith enters
the frame.

EDITH
Hey, Charles ! What are you doing
here all alone ?

Charles pretends everything is fine and smiles at Edith.

CHARLES
Hey, Edith ! I came to register
Nino for the RACING CHAMPIONSHIP.
And you ?

EDITH
I came with Crépin, but I'm not
sure why.

CHARLES
Crépin is here ?

EDITH
Yeah, with Léon. So, where's this
greyhound ?

CHARLES
Right over there.

Edith looks but sees only the green space around them.

EDITH
Um... Charles, I don't see any dog
here.

CHARLES
(Surprised)
Really ?

EDITH
Yeah, Yeah !

Charles starts to panic and frantically searches for Nino.

CHARLES
(Worried)
Nino ! Nino ! Where are you, my dog
?

He goes off searching for his furry friend, leaving Edith
behind.

EDITH
Well, I'm off !

Edith also walks away. Basile returns with two large bags of
chips pressed against his chest, already munching on an open
bag.

He arrives and finds neither Charles nor Nino.

BASILE
But where have they gone ?

Charles continues searching for his furry friend.

CHARLES

(Loudly)

Nino ! Nino ! (to himself)
Where could he have gone ?

Suddenly, he spots Crépin nearby. He turns and comes face-to-face with Léon.

LEON

(Snickering)

Well, well ! Look who it is !

He calls out to Crépin.

LEON

(Cont'd, waving his arms)

Crépin ! Crépin !

Crépin sees Léon.

LEON

(More)

Look who's here !

CHARLES

(In a firm tone)

Well, I think I'm going to leave.

Léon stops him.

LEON

Not so fast, broke boy.

Crépin joins them.

CREPIN

(To Charles)

I was just looking for you, no need
to ask what you're doing here, I
know you're here for the
registrations, right ?

Charles doesn't respond and lowers his head.

LEON

No need to be shy, we already know.
Edith told us.

CREPIN

Where's the greyhound you came to
register ?

LEON

I still can't believe you took a
greyhound for yourself. (Beat)
Are you sure you bought it ? It
wouldn't be a stray dog, would it ?

CREPIN

(Mocking)

Ha, ha, ha ! Of course it is !

(Beat)

Since when do broke kids like you have enough money to get such an animal ?

LEON

(Mocking)

Ha, ha, ha ! Yeah, they don't even have enough money to buy decent clothes, so a greyhound ? No way.

CREPIN

Let me tell you something, broke boy. Leave the racing at the dog track, it's not meant for your social class. You'd better find another hobby.

CHARLES

(In a trembling V.O.ice)

You can say what you want, but you won't make me give up my dream. I will participate in this championship.

LEON

(Ironically)

Look at him, he talks like he's a hero, pathetic !

CREPIN

Remember this, broke boy. Someone from your social class won't get far in this championship, nor will they win that prestigious title.

(Beat)

And if you want to ask me why i'm doing all this, i have no idea myself. But letting a poor person like you win this tile makes my skin crawl.

LEON

Ha ha ha ! Well said.

Charles clenches his fists, trying to keep calm in the face of their mockery, and then walks away.

LEON

(Cont'd)

Yeah, that's right, get out of here, you church rat !

Passersby look at them.

LEON
 (To Crépin)
 Registration is ending soon. Aren't
 you going to register your
 greyhound ?

CREPIN
 No, I'm going to participate in
 their little race to get a special
 invitation to this championship
 instead. (Beat)
 My Polish greyhound is the best of
 all, he'll win hands down.

LEON
 Cool, let's go then.

CUT TO :

EXT. OTHER SIDE OF THE PARK / SAME TIME

CLOSE-UP ON :

A crowd gathered on one side of the park. THE CAMERA
 approaches to reveal a greyhound race on a mini-circuit (348
 meters) about to begin.

The greyhounds (a Saluki, a Dalmatian, a Whippet, and a
 Polish greyhound) are placed in the starting box, while
 three judges (two boys and a girl) stand nearby.

Not far from the crowd, a six-year-old girl, LUCIE, plays
 with her toys, while her mother, ANNE, reads a book.
 Suddenly, Lucie spots Nino still following the fluttering
 butterfly in the air. She sees another dog closely following
 its owner, and her eyes light up with curiosity.

LUCIE
 (Watching Nino leave)
 Mom, look at that dog ! Why is he
 so different from the others ?

ANNE puts down her book and approaches Lucie, watching Nino
 leave and smiling softly.

ANNE
 (Kneeling beside Lucie)
 Different how ?

LUCIE
 (In small innocent
 V.O.ice)
 I mean, why doesn't he have fur
 like the others ?

ANNE
 Well, sweetheart, this dog is
 special. You see, every dog is
 unique, just like you and me.

Lucie squints, trying to understand.

ANNE

(Cont'd)

Some dogs are born with little fur,
like that one. It's what we call a
hairless dog. It's not common, but
that doesn't make it any less
special, you understand ?

Lucie thinks for a moment and then looks up at her mother.

LUCIE

(Smiling)

Yes, Mom. (Beat)
But doesn't he get cold ?

INT. IN THE CROWD

The starting signal sounds. The starting boxes open, and the greyhounds leap forth with grace and power onto the track, the crowd is excited.

The butterfly enters the crowd. Nino follows it and weaves through the spectators. He reaches the center of the crowd and discovers the greyhounds in full race, each refusing to give up their place. Nino is thrilled.

NINO

(Enthusiastically)

A race !

Without hesitation, he bolts onto the track, drawing everyone's attention. The spectators are surprised to see an unexpected dog join the race.

IN THE CROWD :

A MAN

Is that dog lost or what ?

ANOTHER MAN #1 IN THE CROWD

But where did he come from ?

ANOTHER MAN #2 IN THE CROWD

Who does this dog belong to ?

Some laugh, others are perplexed, but all are curious to see what will happen.

ANOTHER MAN #3 IN THE CROWD

Look at him, he's almost hairless.

ANOTHER MAN #1 IN THE CROWD

Yeah, he's as bald as a skull.

Laughter. Léon, Crépin, and Edith are side by side. Crépin furrows his brow.

CREPIN

(To the audience)

But you're not going to let that
dog participate in the race !

ON THE TRACK :

Nino hears the whispers and mockery but continues to run.
The greyhounds in front of him are also puzzled by his
sudden entrance into the race.

THE DALMATIAN

Hey guys ! There's a dog behind us
?

THE WHIPPET

What's he doing here ?

THE SALUKI

He's participating in the race.

THE DALMATIAN

That mutt !

THE POLISH GREYHOUND

The little street dog wants to race
with high-class dogs, that's
adorable.

General laughter.

IN THE CROWD :

SPECTATOR #1

What's he doing ? He'll never catch
up from this far behind.

SPECTATOR #2

At this distance, it's dead, he
can't come back from that.

SPECTATOR #3

He's definitely going to give up
along the way.

Jury member 2 stands up.

JURY 1

Where are you going ?

JURY 2

I'm going to get that dog off the
track before he ruins the race.

JURY 1

(Looking at Nino on the
track)

No, let him run, I can't wait to
see what's going to happen.

JURY 2
 (Looking at Jury 1)
 But... !

JURY 3
 (Looking at Jury 2)
 I agree too.

Jury 2 sits back down.

ON THE TRACK :

NINO
 Yeah, keep murmuring and mocking.

Nino starts to gradually speed up, slowly catching up to the greyhounds.

NOT FAR FROM THE CROWD, Charles continues to look for Nino, asking passersby but to no avail.

A PASSERBY
 Sorry, I haven't seen him.

Charles spots the crowd gathered a few meters away.

CHARLES
 (Intrigued, to himself)
 What could be causing such a gathering ?

He heads towards the crowd.

ON THE TRACK :

The race continues. Nino, fully accelerating, catches up with the greyhounds.

NINO
 (To the greyhound)
 So, who's the cattle dog now ?

The greyhounds are astonished. The whippet exclaims

THE WHIPPET
 Impossible !!

THE SALUKI
 What ! Don't tell me he's caught up with us ?

THE WHIPPET
 Yeah, he did.

THE DALMATIAN
 How did he do that ?

THE WHIPPET
 No idea !

THE POLISH GREYHOUND
I refuse to be beaten by a
wandering unknown.

The Polish greyhound accelerates and takes the lead, putting
a good distance between them. Nino catches up and passes the
whippet.

THE WHIPPET
He just passed me.

Then the dalmatian.

THE DALMATIAN
Me too.

THE SALUKI
You're not passing me.

The Saluki starts to speed up. Nino catches up to him.

NINO
(To the saluki)
Move.

He passes the Saluki.

THE SALUKI
No, he passed me.

Nino accelerates even more. The final meters are between
Nino and the Polish greyhound.

The crowd is in a frenzy.

CREPIN
(Worried)
You can't let this dog continue the
race. Where did he even come from ?

Charles weaves through the crowd, trying to get a good view
of what's happening.

ON THE TRACK :

Nino and the Polish greyhound are side and side.

NINO
(To the Polish greyhound)
You've got some serious stamina,
old man.

THE POLISH GREYHOUND
I'm just showing you the extent of
my speed. (Beat)
Give up, you can't beat me. I'm not
like those rookies behind us.

The Polish greyhound starts to pull ahead of Nino.

IN THE CROWD :

Charles finally spots Nino in full stride.

CHARLES
(Surprised)
Nino !

CREPIN
(Agitated)
Stop him ! Someone stop that dog !

ON THE TRACK :

NINO
You think ?

THE POLISH GREYHOUND
It's not a matter of belief. I
ranked seventh in the last RACING
championship, so...

Suddenly, time seems to freeze. The Polish greyhound watches
Nino overtake him.

NINO
Yet you're as slow as a slug. There
weren't any good runners this year.

Time unfreezes, and the Polish greyhound starts to
decelerate. He stops just a few feet from the finish line.

THE POLISH GREYHOUND
(Coldly and softly)
...a mutt like you can't beat me.

Nino crosses the finish line, creating a stunned silence.
The crowd remains frozen, the atmosphere tense.

The other greyhounds stop running.

THE DALMATIAN
What just happened ?

THE WHIPPET
Don't tell me he lost !

Suddenly, the crowd erupts in joy, cheering for Nino. Crépin
and Léon are dumbfounded.

LEON
We lost !

A MAN FROM THE CROWD
Wow, that dog is a prodigy, a real
powerhouse !

ANOTHER MAN FROM THE CROWD
Yes ! A true champion.

A THIRD MAN FROM THE CROWD
Despite his delay, he managed to
win the race. I'm quite impressed.

Charles, with shining eyes, joins Nino and picks him up in
his arms.

CHARLES
Wow ! Nino, how did you do that ?
(Beat)
You were incredible,
congratulations.

He hugs Nino tightly.

NINO
(joyful)
WOOF, thank you, master.

CHARLES
I didn't know you were this fast.

NINO
Stop it, master, I'm going to end
up blushing if you keep this up.

Charles happily pets Nino, and the three judges approaching.

JURY 2
Are you the owner of this greyhound
?

CHARLES
Yes, that's me. Sorry if my dog
disturbed your race.

JURY 2
Julia, we were just looking for
you. Congratulations on your
victory.

Charles shakes Julia's hand.

CHARLES
Thank you, I'm Charles.

JULIA
Nice to meet you, Charles.

JURY 1
(To Charles, waving)
Rodriguez, great demonstration.

JURY 3
(Similarly)
Edmond, and a great performance
too.

CHARLES
(Gratefully)
Thank you.

Julia hands him a card.

JULIA
Here you go, Charles.

Charles takes the card.

CHARLES
(Looking at the card,
curious)
What is this ?

EDMOND
It's a special pass for the
championship.

Charles's eyes widen.

CHARLES
Really ?

Crépin arrives running, out of breath.

CREPIN
(Out of breath)
No, no, no, wait !

CHARLES
(Surprised)
Crépin !

CREPIN
(Surprised as well)
So, that dirty dog is yours !

Léon, Edith, and the Polish greyhound join Crépin.

JULIA
(To Crépin)
Yes, what's the matter ?

CREPIN
(Catching his breath)
You can't give that card to this...
!

He looks at Charles and Nino.

JULIA
And why not ? He did win the race,
right ?

CREPIN

Yes, but his greyhound wasn't even a competitor at the start. It just sneaked into the race.

JULIA

That makes him a competitor. Listen, kid, this race was organized to spot a talented greyhound.

EDMOND

EDMOND
It wasn't just about crossing the finish line. You had to show skill.

RODRIGUEZ

Agility, flexibility, speed, and performance are what we came to find.

JULIA

(Looking at Nino)

And this dog has demonstrated that he has all those qualities.

CREPIN

Yes, but it should be my dog.

EDMOND

It should be, you're right, but it's not.

CREPIN

So you're going to leave my dog to take this rabid-looking mutt ?

CLOSE-UP ON :

Nino, Julia looks at him.

CHARLES

No, that's not true. Nino doesn't have rabies.

CREPIN

(To Charles)

You, shut up !

JULIA

We're still keeping him. (To Charles)
Congratulations again on your greyhound's victory.

EDMOND

We would be happy to count you among the competitors in the championship.

RODRIGUEZ

But with a complete health check,
of course.

CHARLES

(Gratefully)

I'll do it. Thank you for
everything.

EDMOND

(Smiling)

Better thank your greyhound for
giving you this opportunity.

The three jurors leave the frame. Charles and the three boys
look at each other.

LEON

(To Charles)

So, that filthy greyhound belongs
to you ?

CREPIN

I was surprised myself. (To
Charles)

Listen well, broke boy, you might
have won this race, I don't know by
what miracle, but let me say it
again, A broke boy like you will
never be a champion.

CHARLES

That's your opinion. But I know
Nino has everything it takes to
become a great champion.

CREPIN

(Laughing harder)

Your dog ! Ah ! As if a street dog
could compete with the champions of
the cynodrome.
Stop dreaming, Charles, Besides,
what a ridiculous name.

LEON

(In a disdainful tone)

Look at him, he thinks he's a great
champion with his street dog. You
should find another hobby.

CHARLES

(Smiling)

You think ? Yet this street dog
just beat you today, didn't he !

Léon gets angry.

LEON

Oh yeah ! You want to play like that !

Crépin holds him back.

CREPIN

Easy, Léon. (To Charles)
This is the last time I'm beaten by
a broke guy and a dog as filthy as
yours.

He and Charles stare at each other as Charles wears a joyful expression. Suddenly, an old man (63 years old) in a tracksuit approaches them, having heard everything.

OLD MAN

(In a firm tone)
What's going on here, boys ?

EDITH

(In a falsely
innocent voice)
Nothing serious, sir. We were just
chatting with our friend.

LEON

(Backing up Edith's
words)
Exactly, sir. We were
congratulating him on his crushing
victory today.

The old man gives them a disapproving look.

CREPIN

Puff ! We'll see each other again
very soon, and this time, I won't
be the one in this position,
Charles. You can trust me on that.

LEON

Oh yes, very soon. You don't fall
into the dust twice in a row,
Charles.

Léon and Crépin turn to leave, followed by the Polish greyhound.

CREPIN

(To the Polish greyhound)
Oh no ! You're not following me,
you stay here, you
good-for-nothing.

The Polish greyhound slumps down. Everyone looks at them ;
Edith shrugs.

EDITH
 (To Charles)
 Congratulations on your greyhound's
 victory, Charles.

Edith goes to rejoin Crépin and Léon, calling the Polish
 greyhound. The old man watches them leave the frame.

OLD MAN
 (Without even looking at
 Charles)
 Are they friends of yours ?

CHARLES
 Not really.

OLD MAN
 Congratulations.

CHARLES
 Thank you, sir. Did you watch the
 whole race ?

OLD MAN
 Of course, what a question. I was
 very impressed by his performance.
 Speed, agility, he really amazed us
 today. (To Charles)
 You have a real champion there.

CHARLES
 Yes, I just discovered that.

OLD MAN
 I haven't seen such a performance
 in a decade.

Men walk across the frame.

ONE OF THEM
 (To the other)
 Seriously, I didn't believe he
 would win. If this dog is a
 candidate, this year's championship
 would be exciting.

THE OTHER
 I won't say it for you.

Laughter from the two men. The old man checks his watch.

OLD MAN
 (Looking at his watch)
 It's time for me to go home.

Charles extends his hand, smiling.

CHARLES
 I'm Charles, and this is Nino.

NINO

Woof !

The old man takes his hand.

OLD MAN

Well, nice to meet you, Charles.

He crouches down and touches Nino's head.

OLD MAN

And you too, GU.. HEEEEEE...

CHARLES

Nino.

OLD MAN

There you go, Nino.

He stands up.

OLD MAN

I'm...

CHARLES

(Cutting him off)

Is it just me, or are those people
over there staring at us ?

Three men nearby are staring intently at them.

MAN #1

(scrutinizing the old
man)

Are you sure about what you're
saying ?

MAN #2

It's definitely him, look at this.

He shows his phone to the others.

CLOSE-UP ON :

his phone displaying a search with a photo of the old man
that matches exactly.

MAN #3

I knew it, I knew it was him,
ALEXANDER SWIFT.

A commotion among passersby.

PASSERBY #1

Huh, what ?

PASSERBY #2

Alexander Swift is here !

PASSERBY #3

No way, you need to stop with these jokes, it's not funny.

MAN #3

You think this is a joke ? Just look over there.

He points at the old man. The passersby all turn to look.

OLD MAN

What do they all have to look at us like that ?

CHARLES

No idea, should we go ask them, right ?

OLD MAN

No need.

The passersby are all speechless.

PASSERBY #1

Impossible !

PASSERBY #2

I can't believe it.

PASSERBY #3

It's really him.

ANOTHER PASSERBY

Him who ?

Very quickly, the news creates a crowd.

A PERSON

(pointing at Nino)

Look, he's even with his famous companion.

OLD MAN

(To himself)

They recognized me.

ANOTHER PERSON IN THE CROWD

Let's take some pictures quickly before they leave !

They all pull out their phones. As the first photo is taken, the old man grabs Charles' hand.

OLD MAN

Run !

The old man drags Charles into a frenzied sprint.

PASSERBY #
They're fleeing, let's follow them
!

The entire crowd starts running after them.

CHARLES
Why are we running ?

OLD MAN
And your dog ?

NINO
Woof ! Woof !

Nino is right behind Charles, who looks back and sees the crowd dangerously approaching him.

A V.O.ICE IN THE CROWD
Don't let them escape !

CHARLES
(Fearfully)
Mom !!

He speeds up and overtakes the old man, with Nino keeping pace.

ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE PARK / AT THE SAME TIME

CLOSE-UP ON :

Basile, cheerfully walking toward the camera while eating chips. Suddenly, something rushes into the frame and bumps into him.

BASILE
Hey ! Watch where you're going,
you're not...

The camera raises to show Charles running at full speed.

BASILE
(Cont'd)
Charles !

Nino also speeds past him, following Charles.

BASILE
(Again)
Nino !

The old man follows suit. Basile, puzzled, watches the scene. Soon after, the crowd arrives and leaves Basile in a cloud of dust.

BASILE

Cough ! Cough ! Cough !!
What do they all have to run like
that ?

He stops for a few seconds, then shrugs, eats his chips, and continues on his way.

CUT TO :

CLOSE-UP ON :

the three greyhounds. The Saluki is sitting alone, and his friends are watching him from nearby.

THE WHIPPET

Are we going to talk to him ?

THE DALMATIAN

(Looking at the whippet)
No, let's leave him alone for now.

THE SALUKI

I still can't believe we were
beaten by him !

CAMERA POV

They are being watched through binoculars.

INT. VANS

The binoculars lower, revealing Agent #2 and Agent #1, who is using his binoculars to look at the girls while laughing. Agent #2 looks at him coldly.

EXT. VAN

CLOSE-UP ON:

The van parked in front of the park. Suddenly, the back opens, and Agent #1 is violently thrown to the ground. Everyone looks at him. He gets up, all embarrassed, grabs his binoculars, and goes back into the van.

INT. VAN

Agent #1 starts looking for Charles and Nino with his binoculars. He finds Basile but not Charles and Nino. He turns to Agent #2.

AGENT #1

The kid and the dog are nowhere to
be found. We've lost them !

Agent #2 steps on his foot. Agent #1 writhes in pain, grabbing his knee.

AGENT #2
We haven't lost them, idiot !
(Beat)
They just left.

AGENT #1
Oh really !

Agent #2 starts the van's engine.

AGENT #2
I didn't know he was that fast.
Capturing that dog will earn us a
lot. Yes, much more than those
other dogs.

EXT. VAN

The maniacal laughter of Agent #2, followed shortly by that of Agent #1, as the camera rises to show their departure.

CUT TO :

EXT. SUNSET / FAR FROM THE PARK / A FEW HOURS LATER : IN
FRONT OF A MODEST HOUSE

Charles, the old man, and Nino arrive in front of a house,
all exhausted.

OLD MAN
(Out of breath)
This is perfect here, they won't
find us.

CHARLES
(Catching his breath)
You run fast for your age.

NINO
Woof !

The old man opens the door of the house.

OLD MAN
Come in quickly.

They enter, and the old man closes the door.

INT. HOUSE / LIVING ROOM

The living room is spacious and luxurious. Photos of
greyhounds in full race adorn the walls, and medals are
displayed, trophies are showcased on the shelves.

Charles and Nino are amazed by all the beautiful things
inside.

CHARLES

(In awe)

Wow !

OLD MAN

Take a seat, I'll get you something
to snack on.

He leaves the frame. Charles begins to admire the framed
photos of the old man and his greyhound on the tracks, while
Nino searches for a place to rest. He spots a rug.

NINO

Wow ! What a beautiful rug.

He lies down on it.

NINO

(Cont'd)

It's sweet, too.

The old man returns with a tray full of snacks and finds
Nino lying on the rug and Charles in front of the trophy
shelf.

CHARLES

Wow ! All these trophies, it's
really...

He hears a throat clearing.

OLD MAN

(Clearing throat)

Ahem ! Ahem!

Charles turns around and sees the old man, visibly
embarrassed.

CHARLES

Your shelf is really beautiful.

Charles smiles at him.

OLD MAN

Magnificent, isn't it ?

He places the tray on the small table and joins Charles.

CHARLES

(Looking at the shelf)

You didn't tell me you were a
champion of the cynodrome races.

OLD MAN

Oh, I was much more than that.

CHARLES

Oh really !

The old man points out some specific trophies while Charles listens attentively.

OLD MAN

You see this trophy, this one, and that one...

| I won them when I was a young greyhound racer. Every race was a challenge, every victory a testament to our determination. My partner and I spent years racing on the tracks, living for the adrenaline and the passion of racing. It was a vibrant time, full of challenges and glory.

CHARLES

Wow ! Incredible, I mean, I can't believe you... !

OLD MAN

(Interrupting)

You know what wouldn't be believable ?

Charles looks at the old man.

OLD MAN

(Cont'd)

Step back.

Charles steps back, and the old man pulls a small trophy from the shelf, then steps back himself.

CHARLES

I was wondering why that one was so small.

Suddenly, the shelf makes a strange sound : CRACK ! -- CRACK ! CRACK ! Charles watches as the shelf begins to shift, tier by tier, revealing a space in the middle : BRRRRRRR !

Nino's ears perk up at the sound. The shelf finishes moving, revealing a large trophy that shines brightly. Charles's eyes widen, and the old man smiles.

CHARLES

(Stunned)

No, don't tell me it's...

OLD MAN

Yes, it is. (pausing)
THE CYNOPHILE !!

Charles can hardly believe it.

CHARLES

But if you have THE CYNOPHILE No. 1, that means No, no, no ! This isn't possible. The first holder of THE CYNOPHILE hasn't been seen in ages, and rumors say he's dead.

OLD MAN

Yet here I am in front of you, ALEXANDER SWIFT, very much alive, without a wrinkle of old age.

CHARLES

Wait, wait. You mean ALEXANDER SWIFT, the master whose greyhound revolutionized the cynodrome racing world ? The one who gave a hard time to all his competitors for years ?

ALEXANDER

Exactly !

CHARLES

Wow ! This is amazing, I can't believe I'm in front of you.
(Looking at THE CYNOPHILE)
Can I touch it ?

CUT TO :

INT. SWIFT'S HOUSE / LIVING ROOM

Charles and ALEXANDER are sitting on the sofa. On the small table is the tray that ALEXANDER held, and next to it is THE CYNOPHILE. NINO is still lying down. Charles holds a cookie and a glass of milk.

CHARLES

So, if I understand correctly, you and your dog were legends of the circuit. And thanks to your many victories, your dog was crowned king of the tracks.

ALEXANDER

Crowned king of the tracks.
(pausing)
Yes, that's right.

ALEXANDER sees Nino waking up.

ALEXANDER

Ah ! You're awake. Wait, I'll bring you something to eat.

ALEXANDER gets up and goes to the kitchen. Nino turns and sees THE CYNOPHILE. He is completely amazed.

NINO

OHH !! I can't believe it, it's really THE CYNOPHILE, it's really him. (Looking around)
I didn't think I would see him in real life so soon.
What a marvel.

ALEXANDER returns with a bowl and a bag of dog food. He places the bowl in front of Nino and opens the bag.

CHARLES

So why did you stop ?

ALEXANDER

I didn't stop ! I simply retired.

The bowl remains empty. Nino furrows his brow and looks at them.

CHARLES

That's the same thing.
So why ? Everything was perfect.

ALEXANDER

Not quite !

NINO

WOOF ! WOOF !

ALEXANDER

(To Nino)

Sorry, big guy.

ALEXANDER begins to fill the bowl.

CHARLES

But what happened ?

ALEXANDER

It's a very long story that goes back a long time. (pausing)
At a new cynodrome that had just been built in Florida, and I was called to participate in its inauguration...

Nino looks at the bowl, which contains just a few kibbles, then falls heavily onto the rug.

CLOSE-UP ON :

Nino's face, disgusted.

CUT TO :

EXT. DAY / IN FRONT OF THE CYNODROME / FLASHBACK

A crowd stands in front of a new cynodrome, ready for the inauguration. An American-made car pulls up. A young ALEXANDER and his greyhound GOLDIE (an English greyhound) get out of the car, welcomed by journalists, camera flashes, and the cheers of the crowd. The journalists begin their series of questions.

JOURNALIST #1

Tell me, Mr. ALEXANDER, how does it feel to be in Florida ?

JOURNALIST #2

Why did you accept the invitation ?
I mean, do you have something to gain by participating in this inauguration ?

JOURNALIST #3

Is it true what the streets of Florida are saying ? Apparently, GOLDIE, the current king of the tracks, will be the first to test the one thousand meters never run by another greyhound ?

JOURNALIST #4

Have you been prepared for this ?
Is our champion ready to face this new course ?

JOURNALIST #2

Speak up, Mr. ALEXANDER.

Young ALEXANDER feels overwhelmed by all these questions.

GOLDIE

WOOF ! WOOF !

A security guard arrives and pushes the journalists back.

SECURITY AGENT

Let our guest of honor breathe.
What's with all these questions ?
Are you the ones who brought him here ?
Come on, scram ! Shoo !

The journalists continue to ask questions anyway.

JOURNALIST #2

Please answer our questions.

JOURNALIST #4

Are you sure Goldie is up for running these one thousand meters in less than one minute thirty ?

Alexander stops and looks at the journalists.

JOURNALIST #1
Answer, Alexander.

Another agent arrives near him.

AGENT
Please follow me.

He takes Alexander and Goldie to the entrance of cynodrome.

EXT. RACING TRACK ENTRANCE / A FEW MOMENTS LATER.

The mayor of the city (a short, slightly round man, 36 years old) makes his announcement. To his right are ALEXANDER, Goldie, and his assistant holding a giant pair of scissors, and to his left, three guys in suits.

MAYOR
Thank you for coming in such large numbers to attend the inauguration of this new racing track, and I also thank Mr. ALEXANDER and his famous companion for accepting the invitation. (Beat)
| You know, this racing track has been designed to host the final races of kings.

The crowd applauds. The mayor raises his hand, and the crowd quiets down. He reaches out, and his assistant hands him the giant pair of scissors she holds. The mayor approaches the large ribbon blocking the entrance of the racing track and prepares to cut it.

MAYOR
(while cutting the ribbon)
I now declare this racing track open, but not operational.

The crowd becomes even louder, and the mayor raises his hand to calm the cheers and continues his announcement.

MAYOR
(Cont'd)
From this moment on, all the final races will take place here in Florida, at this racing track. All the kings will be crowned here, and a new day will begin !

The crowd cheers enthusiastically.

MAYOR

(Further)

Without further ado, we will move on to the heart of this event. Goldie, ALEXANDER's dog, will be the first to tackle the one thousand meters of this racing track for the inauguration, and to set the best time for these one thousand meters ever run.

The crowd erupts with joy.

CUT TO :

INT. COMMENTATOR'S BOOTH

COMMENTATOR 1

Hello, ladies and gentlemen, what a beautiful day it is today ! We are at 32 degrees, and the sky is completely clear.

COMMENTATOR 2

Absolutely. Well, we are currently at the new racing track built by our beloved mayor here in Florida.

COMMENTATOR 1

Today will see the very first race of this track for its inauguration.

CAMERA POV :

The commentators appear on a television screen. The camera pulls back to reveal a young boy in a living room.

COMMENTATOR 2

(On TV)

And this inaugural race will not be run by just anyone. It will be run by GOLDIE, the greyhound of the famous Alexander Swift, the KING of the CIRCUITS.

YOUNG BOY

(loudly)

Mom, come see, it's dad on TV !

MOM (OS)

I'm coming, sweetheart.

COMMENTATOR 1

(On TV)

Many spectators have come to witness this inauguration.

RETURN TO :

INT. RACING TRACK / A FEW MOMENTS LATER.

The stands of the racing track begin to fill up.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
The stands are filling up like
hotcakes.

INT. SPECIAL BOOTH

COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
We can see that the mayor is
comfortably seated and waiting for
the event to begin.

The mayor is comfortably seated, waiting for the event to start.

ON THE TRACK :

behind the starting box.

COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
Alexander seems to be motivating
Goldie for his one thousand meters.

YOUNG ALEXANDER AND GOLDIE ARE BEHIND THE STARTING BOX.

YOUNG ALEXANDER
(With a confident look)
Hey ! I know you can do it. I have
blind faith in you, you know.

Goldie looks at his master.

YOUNG ALEXANDER
(Cont'd)
Run like you've never run before
and show them a score that will
surpass everyone's expectations
here in this racing track. (Beat)
A score that no one will be able to
beat for the next 3 to 6 years.

GOLDIE
Woof ! Woof !

Goldie enters the starting box. Alexander watches him enter and approaches the box one last time.

ALEXANDER
(Further)
Go ahead ! And show them that the
king is here on this track.

He closes the starting box. A man next to him waves a flag, and the signal is given.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
The signal is given, it's about to
start.

The spectators take out their phones. The lure activates and
takes a 16-meter lead.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
(Cont'd)
The lure is on the move, and...

The starting box opens.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
...Go, it's off !

Goldie shoots out like a rocket.

COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
Wow ! What a start, it's
magnificent.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
That's what I call a good start.

Goldie continues to accelerate, and the crowd is amazed. The
mayor stands up from his seat to admire the scene. They are
all in awe of GOLDIE's divine speed.

COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
What a blazing acceleration from
Goldie !

YOUNG ALEXANDER
That's it, keep going !

The crowd gets louder, and Goldie keeps accelerating. He
takes the turns with impressive mastery and pushes his speed
further.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
Look how he tackles this track and
its turns ! We can feel we are
facing a professional in the field.

Goldie is now thirty meters from the finish line, while the
timer shows twenty-one seconds.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
(Cont'd)
Oh ! This is unbelievable ! He's
going to do it ! He's going to
finish these one thousand meters of
this racing track in under one
minute.

COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
He's less than thirty meters from
the finish line, and we're at
twenty-two seconds.

Suddenly, Goldie collapses in the final meters.

COMMENTATOR 1 (V.O.)
Oh no ! Goldie has collapsed in the
last remaining meters !

The shocked and saddened crowd rises. The mayor stands up as
well. ALEXANDER rushes onto the track to join Goldie.

COMMENTATOR 2 (V.O.)
What's happening ? It seems Goldie
is in bad shape.

The race is interrupted, and the paramedics rush toward
Goldie.

A few minutes later, we see ALEXANDER carrying Goldie in his
arms, heading toward the exit of the dog racing track.

We cut to this tragic event.

END OF FLASHBACK

INT. ALEXANDER'S LIVING ROOM / SUNSET.

Back to reality.

ALEXANDER stands, all sad, holding a bag of dog food in his
hand. Nino's bowl is still empty.

NINO
Wow ! What a story, it gives me
chills.

CHARLES
I'm sorry to remind you of that
event.

ALEXANDER
(Sadly)
He never recovered from that
injury, and I never set foot in a
dog racing track again after that.

CHARLES
But...

ALEXANDER pulls himself together.

ALEXANDER
Well, enough about me like that.
You'd better head home before your
parents start to worry.

CHARLES

Yes, I'm sorry again. But one last thing before I go.

ALEXANDER

What !

CHARLES

Since you know this discipline so well, I was wondering...

ALEXANDER

No ! Don't even think about it.

CHARLES

But I haven't even finished my sentence. Are you sure you don't want to hear what I have to say ?

CUT TO :

EXT. IN FRONT OF ALEXANDER'S HOUSE / SUNSET

Charles is on his knees, begging Alexander.

CHARLES

Please.

ALEXANDER

Go home. It's not up for discussion.

Nino, not far away, stands up and takes a few steps forward.

NINO

Come on, master. This man won't offer us his knowledge or his services.

ALEXANDER

At least your dog understands.

Charles looks at Nino, who walks away behind him.

ALEXANDER

(Cont'd)

Follow him, and don't come back here.

Charles submits, clenches his fists, and stands tall.

CHARLES

Fine, I understand. I'm leaving, but first, I want to know why you refuse to help me. (Beat)
Is it because you think we're not good enough for this championship, or because of our social status ?

ALEXANDER

I have no reason to give you. But let me tell you something : you can be determined, but that alone won't make you win races and reach the top. In a word, determination alone isn't enough in this field.

CHARLES

Thank you, Mr. Alexander. At least I learned something from you.
(Beat, to Nino)
Come on, Nino.

ALEXANDER stays at the door, watching Charles and Nino run off.

CLOSE-UP ON :

ALEXANDER's face.

ALEXANDER

(To himself)

Go ahead, prove yourselves, and come back to see me when the time is right.

CUT TO :

EXT. ON THE WAY BACK / NIGHT

Nino closely follows Charles.

CHARLES

We're going to win this championship, even if all the best greyhounds in this city present.

Nino hears a noise and looks back, but sees nothing, he continues on his way.

CHARLES

(Cont'd)

We'll show them they were wrong about us.

Nino hears the noise again, this time coming from the bushes nearby. He stops and looks while Charles continues talking as he walks away.

CHARLES

We'll become the champions of France and face the best greyhounds from around the world.

CLOSE-UP ON :

the bushes. Nino moves closer, and suddenly a dog pokes its head out.

MALT

BOOOO !!!

NINO

AAAAHH !

Nino steps back in fright and hears laughter. The camera adjusts to reveal his three friends emerging from the bushes. Malt and Ritch are laughing, then Beauce, Nino furrows his brow.

MALT

(Laughing)

Did you see your face ? You looked like you saw a ghost.

RITCH

Come on, don't make that face, it was just for fun. (Beat)
So, still running the streets, the stray ?

NINO

No ! That's all over.

Malt and Ritch exchange glances.

MALT

(Curious)

You look in great shape compared to last time. Tell us, what dump are you eating from now ?

Nino bursts into laughter.

NINO

Ha ha ! Dump ? That one was good !

His three friends exchange confused glances.

MALT

Did I say something funny, it seems ?

RITCH

Stop the circus and give us the scoop. (Beat)
You're not going to hide that from us, remember we're your friends.

NINO

You guys are so funny !

Malt and Ritch exchange looks, Beauce's eyes widen.

BEAUCE

No, don't tell me it's what I think it is ?

NINO
 (With a smile)
 Yes, that's right !

MALT
 (To Ritch)
 Hey, Ritch, do you know what Beauce
 is thinking ?

RITCH
 No idea.

NINO
 I have a human taking good care of
 me now.

Malt and Ritch can hardly believe it.

MALT AND RITCH
 Seriously ! Tell us it's not true !

NINO
 (nodding)
 Yes, and I'm even participating in
 the Racing this year.

The eyes of the two dogs widen.

MALT AND RITCH
 Really !

BEAUCE
 Seriously ! (Beat)
 You mean the championship that's
 happening in a few days ?

NINO
 Oh yes !

BACK TO :

Charles, who continues on his way talking.

CHARLES
 Can you believe it ? We're going to
 become living legends.

He stops.

CHARLES
 (Cont'd)
 Will you, right, Nino ?

He looks around and doesn't see Nino.

CHARLES
 Nino ? Nino ! Where are you ? It's
 really getting late, and Mom isn't
 (MORE)

CHARLES (cont'd)
going to appreciate it if we don't
get home soon. (Beat)
Nino !

They all hear Charles's call.

NINO
I have to go, guys. My human is
waiting for me.

Beauce stops him.

BEAUCE
I'm proud of you.

NINO
Thank you, Beauce. It's because of
you that I am where I am today.

CHARLES (V.O.)
Come on, Nino, let's go, we don't
have all night.

NINO
Okay, I'm going now. (Beats)
See you at the cynodrome or on TV
if you can find one. Just don't get
yourself decapitated, of course.

BEAUCE
Ah, ha, ha ! Very funny.

NINO
Oh, and I forgot...

BEAUCE
What ?!

NINO
...from now on, it's NINO.

He leaves to join Charles.

CHARLES (V.O.)
Where have you been ? Do you want
Mom to scold me or what ?

The three dogs watch them leave.

BEAUCE
(almost in tears)
Oh no ! I forgot to tell him to
take good care of his coat.

Malt starts to laugh.

RITCH
So, is he really going to be on TV
? Uh what was his name again ?

CUT TO :

A CLOSE-UP OF :

The city center, with a visible cynodrome.
| The camera moves toward the cynodrome.

ADIXIA MAELYS
(V.O, suddenly)
And here we are live from the MELBI
cynodrome...

CLOSE-UP OF THE CYNODROME

TITLE CARD : MELBI CYNODROME

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

ADIXIA MAELYS
(V.O, cont'd)
...Where the very first heat of the
championship will take place,
determining the best greyhound in
this city.

INT. COMMENTARY STUDIO

The studio is buzzing with images of the MELBI cynodrome
displayed on the screens.

On our announcers introducing themselves : ADIXIA MAELYS
(23), LISANDRO SATILMIS (33), and ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
(31).

ADIXIA MAELYS
This long-awaited moment has
finally arrived. Hello everyone,
and welcome to the cynodrome racing
championship. I'm ADIXIA MAELYS,
and I'm joined by your favorite TV
commentators, LISANDRO SATILMIS and
ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD, to bring you
all the details of this incredible
competition and let you experience
it live from your screens.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
(Smiling)
Well, hello everyone ! We're
thrilled to be here today to give
you a unique live experience and
moments of pure adrenaline.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
 Exactly, Lisandro. We have a
 beautiful, perfectly sunny day for
 this race. Greyhounds are
 incredible athletes, and we will
 witness diverse and impressive
 performances during this
 championship.

INT. MELBI CYNODROME

The camera moves to show the greyhounds being prepared in
 their kennels by their owners. The dogs are elegant and in
 great shape.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 Look at these magnificent
 specimens, Adixia, all ready to
 show their speed and agility today.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
 Yes ! Each one is ready to compete
 for the championship.

A SHOT OF THE STANDS, as they fill up, and Basil is shown
 munching on chips.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
 (V.O, nodding)
 Absolutely, Adixia. Greyhound
 racing combines speed, agility, and
 strategy. Each greyhound has its
 own abilities, and we're going to
 witness incredible and exceptional
 displays during this championship.

BACK TO THE STUDIO

ADIXIA MAELYS
 So, Abdelhafid, how is this
 championship shaping up ?

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
 This championship will take place
 in four heats...

THE SHOTS OF THE FOUR CYNODROMES are displayed. Labeled
 MELBI, MOLTON, MAO, NOLWENN, they vary in shape and size.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
 (V.O, cont'd)
 The first heat will take place
 right here at the MELBI cynodrome,
 followed by the second and third at
 the MOLTON and MAO cynodromes.
 Finally, the fourth heat will be
 held at the NOLWENN cynodrome.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Indeed. The competitors have been divided into groups of four, labeled A, B, C, and D.

ADIXIA MAELYS

Why this division ?

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

Good question, Adixia. The greyhounds have been classified according to their class and level of competition.

A SHOT OF A GROUP OF GREYHOUNDS

TITLE CARD : GROUP A

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

That's right, Abdelhafid. Exceptional greyhounds, like the Borzoi MAX, who has already participated in several championships, are placed directly in category A.

A SHOT OF :

a greyhound named MAX (a well-groomed, fawn-and-white Borzoi) presented in an insert.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

Max is an exceptional greyhound. His trainer has high hopes for him, and he has proven time and again that he is capable of remarkable performances. He could even become the champion of France.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

Yes, but let's not forget BELLA when we talk about the concept of champion of France...

A SHOT OF :

a female greyhound named BELLA (a French pointer), in another group, presented in an insert.

TITLE CARD : GROUP B

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

(V.O, continued)

She is also exceptional and is among the favorites in this championship.

ADIXIA MAELYS

(V.O, nodding)

That's true, Abdelhafid. Bella has certainly proven herself and has made her mark in various cynodromes. Although the title of champion of France narrowly escaped her last year, she remains one of the best in this championship.

BACK TO THE STUDIO

LISANDRO SATILMIS

As for the other greyhounds participating in this championship for the first time, they are placed in groups C and D.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

Notably the new NINO, who was recently promoted at the park.

A SHOT OF :

another group of six greyhounds, wearing vests and muzzles, tugging impatiently on their leashes as they are led to the starting boxes by their owners. Nino, wearing a blue vest numbered six and a muzzle, is accompanied by Charles and presented in an insert.

TITLE CARD : GROUP D

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

A lot of information about him. Apparently, this little newcomer is full of talent, according to what they say. Let's hope that's true.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

Well, we'll find out soon.

The greyhounds from GROUP D are placed in the starting boxes. Nino is the last.

CHARLES

(To Nino)

Here's the moment we've all dreamed of. Go out there and show everyone what you're worth. Surprise them all.

NINO

Woof !

Then he enters his box.

BACK TO THE STUDIO

ADIXIA MAELYS

And here's the moment we've all
been waiting for. The championship
begins with GROUP D.

ON THE TRACK :

The mechanical lure starts moving and takes a 23-meter lead.
The starting boxes open simultaneously, releasing the
greyhounds who leap onto the track with feline grace.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

And here we go, it's off for the
432 meters of this track.

The greyhounds sprint down the track, competing with agility
and speed.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

Look at them run, it's a wonderful
ballet of power and grace. Each
greyhound is a true artist on the
track.

CAMERA IN THE BACKGROUND :

Charles is pacing nervously.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

Absolutely, Lisandro. These dogs
are virtuosos of racing. Their
agility and coordination are simply
remarkable.

ON THE TRACK :

The greyhounds brush past each other, overtaking and
measuring up against one another with palpable intensity.
None of them wants to give up their place, all are driven by
fierce determination.

The audience holds its breath, captivated by the beauty of
these canine athletes.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

The competition is at its peak. The
greyhounds are fighting for every
inch of this track ; none of them
want to give up.

BACK TO THE STUDIO :

The race is being broadcast on the studio screens in the
background.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

This is an intensely rare race.
Each greyhound is ready to do
anything to take the lead.

ON THE STUDIO BROADCAST SCREEN :

The greyhounds continue their incredible strides, but it is still difficult to pinpoint the leading greyhound.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

We're a hundred meters from the finish line, and there is still no leader in this race.

ADIXIA MAELYS

(suddenly standing up)

Wait ! There seems to be some movement on the track.

ON THE TRACK :

Nino accelerates, his graceful stride propelling him forward, overtaking each of his competitors.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

It's Nino ! He seems to be taking the lead in the race. What a lightning-fast acceleration from him !

ONE OF THE GREYHOUNDS

Where did that one come from ?

Charles leaves the stands and comes to see for himself, astonished.

CHARLES

That's it, keep it up, Nino !

ON THE TRACK :

Nino emerges from the pack and takes the lead in the race.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

He did it ! Nino is now in the lead.

Nino increases his strides, widening the gap between him and his opponents in the remaining meters.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

He doesn't seem to be stopping there. He's pulling away more and more.

ANOTHER GREYHOUND

But how is he able to accelerate like that ?

The finish line approaches quickly. Nino is now in the lead, his gaze fixed on victory. Charles expresses his joy as Nino crosses the finish line first, triggering an explosion of joy in the cynodrome.

The audience rises in unison, and applause echoes throughout the cynodrome. Charles, overwhelmed with emotion, goes to greet Nino at the finish.

CHARLES

(To Nino)

Wow ! You were amazing, Nino. That sprint at the end was truly incredible.

Nino barks and wags his tail. A man retrieves his greyhound.

THE MAN

(To Charles)

Congratulations, kid. Great race.

CHARLES

Thank you, sir.

Others come to congratulate him as well.

BACK TO THE STUDIO :

ADIXIA MAELYS

What an incredible race ! Nino managed to dominate his competitors in the final meters with brilliance and truly deserves this victory.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Absolutely, Adixia. Nino showed unwavering determination from start to finish. It's simply perfect there's nothing to say.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

Indeed, every greyhound demonstrated remarkable technique, but Nino has made it one of the most exceptional.

ADIXIA MAELYS

These greyhounds have given us a magnificent spectacle. Their talent and determination are admirable. But that's not the only surprise of the day, now it's time for the second race.

ON THE TRACK :

The mechanical lure resumes its course, pulling ahead. The starting boxes open as we cut to the greyhounds bursting onto the track with boundless energy.

CUT TO :

EXT. LATER / CHARLES' HOUSE / EVENING

Charles, Nino, and Basil stand in front of the entrance door. Charles opens the door and is surprised to see his mother, standing right in front of him with a joyful expression.

CHARLES

Mom ! What are you doing at the door ?

MIRETTE

Good evening, boys, I was just waiting for you.

BASILE

Good evening, ma'am.

Mirette spreads her arms.

MIRETTE

(To Charles)

So, aren't you going to give me a hug ?

He jumps into her arms, intrigued.

MIRETTE

(Cont'd)

Congratulations on your victory.

CHARLES

How do you know ? Did you watch the race ?

MIRETTE

Yes ! On TV. I wouldn't miss my little rabbit's very first race for anything in the world.

Charles is touched.

CHARLES

(Holding his mother tighter)

Thank you, Mom, you're the best.

BASILE

I hope there's some room for me in all this.

MIRETTE

Yes, of course. Come here.

Basil joins the hug, sniffing something.

BASILE

I wouldn't want to spoil the mood,
but is it just me, or does it smell
good in here ? (Beat)
What's on the menu tonight ?

MIRETTE

Your favorite stews. It's specially
made for this occasion.

Charles and Basil exchange joyful looks.

CHARLES AND BASILE

STEW !

They rush to the dining table, leaving Mirette and Nino.
Mirette approaches and gently strokes Nino's head.

MIRETTE

Congratulations to you too,
champion, and thank you for all the
joy you bring us. I'm sorry for my
initial reluctance to have you, I
didn't want an animal to suffer
from our poverty. But you managed
to hold on. Thank you so much.
(Beat, aloud)
Not so fast, boys, wait for me.

She heads to join them. Nino can't believe it, he barks and
then follows them.

QUICK CUT TO :

Mirette and the children happily enjoying their special
stew. We also see Nino savoring his dish.

CUT TO :

THE MONTAGE MUSIC STARTS TO PLAY.

EXT. CHARLES' HOUSE / DAY

Charles steps out of the house, kisses his mom, and then
rides off on his bike with Nino.

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

TITLE CARD : MOLTON CYNODROME

ON THE TRACK :

Nino accelerates and overtakes all his competitors, taking
the lead in the race.

EXT. SOMEWHERE IN DOWNTOWN / DAY

Basil catches up with Charles and Nino, and together they
continue on a cani-cross.

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

TITLE CARD : MOLTON CYNODROME

Nino wins another race, and the audience stands to cheer for him.

INT. TOW TRUCK VAN / DAY

The two tow truck agents lay out a plan on a sheet of paper for capturing Nino.

INT. CYNODROME / CONTINUOUS

Another greyhound wins a race and is cheered on with his owner.

INT. CHARLES' BEDROOM / NIGHT

Charles lies in bed without a blanket. Mirette enters his room, covers him, smiles, and turns off the lamp.

EXT. DOWNTOWN / DAY

Mirette, Charles, and Basil go to a pet supply store.

INT. VANS / EVENING

The two tow truck agents finalize their plan and rejoice.

INT. CHARLES' HOUSE / DAY

Charles crosses out a new date on his wall calendar. The final race isn't too far away.

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

TITLE CARD : MAO CYNODROME

Nino wins another race. Charles goes to greet him at the finish line while the press surrounds them.

ON THE TRACK :

Max wins a race with a crushing lead.

INT. THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CYNODROME / SAME

Nino spends time with Bella.

INT. STORE / DAY

Mirette, Basile, and Charles are choosing various products for Nino.

INT. PARK / DAY

Charles and Basile are training Nino over a long distance. Two security agents are closely following Nino (they are

animal control agents in disguise).

EXT. CHARLES' GARDEN / DAY

Mirette mixes the products from the store. Charles and Basile try to catch Nino for his bath.

EXT. CITY CENTER / DAY

Newspaper articles about Nino's progress and the final race are everywhere in the streets.

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

TITLE CARD : CYNODROME MAO

Bella wins her race.

INT. PARK / DAY

Charles and Basile are sitting on a park bench with Nino beside them.

IN THE BUSHES BEHIND THEM :

AGENT #1

Are they distracted ? Should we
catch him now ?

AGENT #2

Yes ! But be careful, don't get
noticed. Do you have the net ?

The first agent nods and quietly sneaks up behind Nino. He places a small net over Nino's head, who suddenly gets up. Charles notices.

CHARLES

Hey ! What are you doing to Nino ?

AGENT #1

Me ?
(Backing away, removing and hiding
the net behind him)
Nothing at all.

Charles and Basile give him a sharp look. The second agent arrives and hits the first agent on the head.

AGENT #2

Excuse my colleague, he mistook the
dog.
(Looking at the first agent)
Right ?

The first agent quickly nods.

AGENT #1

Oh, yes, yes !!

AGENT #2
 (With a fake smile)
 We're leaving now.

Nino starts growling.

NINO
 GRRR !!!

CHARLES
 Nino, no !

NINO
 Woof ! GRRR !!

CHARLES
 No, Nino, no !

The two agents exchange glances before fleeing. Nino chases after them through the park. Basile and Charles try to stop Nino.

EXT. CHARLES' GARDEN / DAY

They eventually catch Nino and give him a bath.

INT. HOUSE / DAY

CLOSE UP :

Someone is reading an article about the championship. He lowers the newspaper, and the camera reveals Alexander smiling.

EXT. CHARLES' GARDEN / AFTERNOON

The montage ends with a scene showing a brand new Nino, having regained his coat and ready for the final.

INT. CAR / DAY

An impatient driver is sitting in his car, gripping the steering wheel. He looks frustrated at the dense traffic in front of him. The cars are moving at a snail's pace.

EXT. STREET / DAY

The camera pulls back to show a congested road where traffic is at a standstill. Drivers are annoyed, horns are honking, and frustrated conversations are heard from passengers.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 All these cars.

The camera flies over the traffic jam to the entrance of a cynodrome where a huge crowd rushes to enter.

EXT. CYNODROME ENTRANCE / DAY

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 You might be wondering why all this
 commotion today ? Well, it's simply
 because it's not wise to miss the
 event happening today.

THE CAMERA PERFORMS AN ELEGANT ROTATION AROUND THE
 CYNODROME, PROVIDING AN IMPRESSIVE OVERALL VIEW OF THE
 VENUE. IT TRANSITIONS TO A BEAUTIFUL SHOT ABOVE THE
 CYNODROME.

TITLE CARD : CYNODROME NOLWENN / 780 METERS

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 Welcome everyone to the third and
 final round of the cynodrome racing
 championship ! We are speaking to
 you live from the Nolwenn
 cynodrome, the largest of all the
 tracks in this city.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 What a magnificent setting for this
 final race !

INT. CYNODROME NOLWENN / DAY

CROWD SHOT :

The camera slowly moves through the crowd, capturing the
 palpable excitement in the air.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 Look at all these spectators who
 have come from all walks of life to
 witness this extraordinary event.
 The cynodrome is packed to the
 brim, and I can tell you, the
 atmosphere is already electric.

The camera focuses on the faces of the spectators :
 families, friends, couples, all smiling. Some are holding
 signs with the names of their favorite greyhounds, while
 others wear bright jerseys representing their favorite
 racer.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 And what can we say about this
 cynodrome itself, Lisandro ?

Each corner of the cynodrome is showcased.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 Well, first of all, this cynodrome
 is much more than just a place for
 competition. It's a symbol of
 (MORE)

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.) (cont'd)
 passion, determination, and
 overcoming oneself. With its
 majestic stands offering a
 breathtaking view of the seven
 hundred eighty meters of its two
 grass tracks, the vibrant colors of
 the flags fluttering in the wind,
 the dazzling lights illuminating
 the stage, and above all, the
 architectural beauty of this place,
 it truly lives up to the event
 taking place here today.

ON OUR ANNOUNCERS.

INT. COMMENTATOR'S CABIN / DAY

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
 Well said, Lisandro. Adixia, how is
 this final shaping up ?

ADIXIA MAELYS
 So... this championship is coming
 to an end, and the best greyhounds
 from each category will compete
 today on this track. Only two of
 them will have the chance to run in
 the final, and only one will be
 crowned champion of France in
 cynodrome racing.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
 For the selected greyhounds, we
 have...

The various greyhounds are introduced in a graphic.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
 (Cont'd)
 The Barzoï MAX, nicknamed the demon
 of the tracks in category A, will
 face the French Pointer BELLA from
 category B on the second track. On
 the first track, the Spanish
 Greyhound BORNE from category C
 will compete against the Greyhound
 NINO from category D.

SHOT OF THE BETTING LINE.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 Bets are being placed in large
 numbers today, look at that long
 line.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
That's normal, Abdelhafid, everyone
has come to support their favorite
today.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
Everyone, please return to your
seats, the race will start soon.

INT. CYNODROME / THE OTHER SIDE OF THE TRACK / SAME

BELLA
Hey, handsome.

NINO
Oh Bella, it's you.

BELLA
Wow ! Is it just me or have you
become even more charming than
before ?

NINO
Stop it, you're making me blush.

BELLA
Still so sensitive, as I can see.
So, are you ready for this race ?

NINO
(Excited)
Absolutely, my paws are itching to
go !

BELLA
So am I, but don't lose your race.

NINO
Don't worry about that it won't
happen.

BELLA
Still so confident, that's what I
love about you. But don't forget,
BORNE is your opponent.

CHARLES
Hey you. (To Nino)
Come on, let's go, the race is
about to start.

NINO
Goodbye, Bella, and you too, don't
lose your race.

He turns to leave with Charles.

BELLA
Nino !

He pivots towards her.

BELLA
(Cont'd)
Good luck.

He smiles at her and leaves.

TRACK ANNOUNCER (V.O.)
The greyhounds may now head to the
starting boxes.

SHOTS OF THE STANDS :

A few people take their seats.

EXT. SOMEWHERE ON THE STREET / DAY

Beauce is trying to get a signal on an old television.

RITCH
Come on, Beauce, hurry up, we're
going to miss the start of the
final !

BEAUCE
I'm doing my best.

Beauce adjusts the antenna, and the picture stabilizes.

RITCH
Great, the picture's back.

Beauce takes a few steps before the picture starts to jump again. He turns back, annoyed.

INT. CYNODROME / SAME

ON TRACK 1 :

Behind the starting boxes.

CHARLES
Here we go, Nino. We're just a few
meters away from our big goal. All
I ask for is victory. I know you
can do it, I trust you.

Nino looks at Charles and enters his box.
| The flag is raised on both tracks, and the lure begins to
pull ahead.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
The race begins, and the lure is
off.

The starting boxes open simultaneously on both tracks, and
the greyhounds burst out with impressive energy.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 Wow ! What a start ! You can feel
 the energy they're putting out
 throughout the cynodrome.

The crowd is buzzing.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 They're off for the 780 meters of
 this cynodrome.

ON BOTH TRACKS :

The greyhounds are side by side until the first turn.

EXT. STREET / SAME

Beauce continues to fiddle with the antenna, still no
 signal.

MALT
 (Disgusted)
 We're going to miss the race,
 that's for sure.

BEAUCE
 It's not my fault.

Suddenly, the sound from the television returns, but the
 picture is still absent.

ADIXIA MAELYS
 (V.O, on TV)
 It looks tight on both tracks.

They all exchange looks. The picture comes back. he really
 gets it.

RITCH
 We got it !

They all gather in front of the television.

MALT
 I told you, we missed the start of
 the race.

BEAUCE
 It's okay, at least we'll follow
 the end.

THE CAMERA ZOOMS IN ON THE TV SCREEN.

INT. CYNODROME / SAME

ON TRACK 1 :

both greyhounds are overtaking each other.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 It's serious business for Nino and
 Borne, neither wants to give up
 their position.

Charles crosses his arms, anxious.

ON TRACK 2 :

Bella is starting to take the lead over Max.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
 Bella looks more determined than
 ever, she's now in the lead.

VANESSA
 Yes, my girl, you've got this.

The camera shows Crépin, comfortably seated and smiling.
 The crowd is in a frenzy.

INT. SUPER COFFEE / DAY

A good number of people have gathered in a super coffee to
 follow the race, including Mirette.

BACK TO CYNODROME, ON TRACK 1 :

we approach the finish line, and both greyhounds are still
 side by side.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 We're just a turn away from the
 finish line, and it's still
 impossible to determine the leading
 greyhound on track one.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
 However, Bella is leading on track
 two, increasing her gap over Max.
 (Beat)
 Wait ! Is it just me, or does Max
 seem to be gaining ?

ON TRACK 2 :

Bella is in the lead, but suddenly Max surges ahead and
 starts distancing himself from Bella.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 Incredible ! What a phenomenal
 acceleration from Max.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
 Max, known as the circuit demon,
 seems to be awake now.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 It's amazing, look how quickly he
 closed the gap between himself and
 Bella. He truly deserves his
 nickname, the circuit demon.

Vanessa is stunned while Crépin smirks.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 However, it's still tight on track
 one.

ON TRACK 1 :

the finish line is right ahead, and no greyhound is in the
 lead yet.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 I can't describe the feeling we're
 having right now. Who will win this
 race ?

CROWD SHOT :

total silence reigns, the crowd holds its breath. Charles
 closes his eyes, completely focused.

INT. SUPER COFFEE / SAME

Everyone has their eyes glued to the television. Mirette
 crosses her fingers and closes her eyes.

EXT. STREET / SAME

The three dogs are much closer to the TV screen.

CAMERA ON :

the TV screen, on the track Nino and Borne are still side by
 side.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
 (V.O. TV)
 It's getting heated.

At the finish line, the television suddenly goes dark.

BEAUCE
 What !!

MALT
 Nooooooooo !!

Ritch faints, and Beauce gives the TV a kick, which
 immediately turns it back on.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
(V.O., on TV)
Wow ! That was really tight, who
would have thought ?

The race is over, Beauce turns to the camera, visibly
annoyed.

INT. CYNODROME / SAME

The crowd is buzzing, the race has finished on both tracks.

ON OUR COMMENTATORS :

INT. STUDIO / DAY

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
This race was truly fantastic.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
A real feast for the eyes ! There
was an incredible adrenaline rush,
especially on track one.

A presentation of the last 43 meters opposing Max to Bella
appears in a box. Max finishes the race 23 meters ahead of
Bella.

ADIXIA MAELYS
The nickname circuit demon is well
deserved for Max, who literally
crushed Bella in the final meters.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
Indeed, as for the race between
Nino and Borne...

A presentation of the final meters opposing Nino to Borne
appears in a box...

LISANDRO SATILMIS
(Cont'd)
...It was a display of incredible
tenacity from start to finish.

ADIXIA MAELYS
Yes, neither of them wanted to give
in. But it was Nino who emerged
victorious in the end, thanks to a
well-deserved stroke of luck.

A frozen image of Nino winning the race just ahead of Borne.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
So, Nino will face the so-called
demon of the circuits, Max, in the
final.

GRAPHIC RACE DISPLAYING : FINAL NINO VS MAX

INT. SUPER COFFEE / SAME TIME

The gathering becomes noisy, and Mirette smiles.

EXT. STREET / SAME TIME

ON THE TV :

ADIXIA MAELYS

(V.O. on TV)

Ladies and gentlemen, don't go away
! It's not over yet, a short break
and we will resume the events.

BEAUCE

Awesome ! Nino won the race, guys.

MALT

That's great ! When does the final
race start ?

BEAUCE

Soon. I hope he wins the final and
realizes his dream.

RITCH

Don't worry about that, he's a
tough cookie, he'll do it with his
paws on the nose.

INT. CYNODROME / THE OTHER SIDE SAME TIME

Nino is looking for Bella. Borne is nearby.

BORNE

Congratulations on your victory,
Nino. Great race.

NINO

Thank you, it's thanks to you.

BORNE

I gave it my all, but you proved to
be stronger than me. You're the
toughest opponent I've faced so
far. But less tough than Max.

(Beating)

I hope you won't be humiliated like
those other competitors.

NINO

I hope so too.

BORNE

Listen well, Nino. For the final,
you'll need more than hope, more
than what you've given so far.

Nino looks at him.

BORNE

(Cont'd)

You saw what happened on track number two, right ? Your opponent this time is not just a simple racer, it's MAX, the so-called demon of the circuits. And I can tell you, he hasn't earned that reputation for nothing.

Bella enters the frame.

BELLA

Nino !

Spinning towards her.

NINO

Bella, I was just looking for you.

BORNE

I'll leave you. But don't lose this race. I know you have the ability and skill to win it, so please don't lose.

Nino and Bella watch him leave.

BELLA

A friend of yours ? He seems very nice.

NINO

Yes, a very good friend. (He corrects himself) I hope you're not too shaken up by the race ?

CAMERA ON CHARLES :

Crépin's gang approaches him.

CREPIN

Oh ! Look who we've stumbled upon, the broke one.

CHARLES

My name is Charles !

LEON

I didn't know you had one.

CHARLES

You came to bother me, right ?

CREPIN

No, come on. We have much more important things to do than that, like... (Beating)
...winning this final, for example.

CHARLES

Winning the final ? What are you talking about ?

CREPIN

For your information, I am Max's master, your final opponent.

CHARLES

But how is that possible ?

CREPIN

I knew you would react like this. And given Max's performance, you've already lost the race before it even starts.

CHARLES

When did you become the master of such a greyhound ?

CREPIN

The power of money, it's crazy what you can do with it. I told you we would meet again, and that I would break that stupid dream you hold so dear. (Beating)
| A word of advice from a friend, it's better to give up right now. You have no chance. A little shame is always better than a big one. Now, if you want to play the stubborn, see you on the track.

LEON

You'd better give up, Charles. You really have no chance.

Léon and Crépin laugh before leaving the frame, leaving Charles puzzled.

INT. SUPER COFFEE / SAME / ON THE TV

LISANDRO SATILMIS

We're back after this little break. We've seen incredible performances from these greyhounds, but I guarantee the rest will be breathtaking.

A man in the super coffee.

THE MAN

Come on, the final race is starting.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

I remind you that the greyhounds running in the final are Max and Nino.

ANNOUNCER OF THE TRACKS (V.O.)

The greyhounds can head to the starting box.

EXT. STREET / SAME TIME

RITCH

Malt, Beauce, come on ! The final race is starting.

ON TV :

Max and Nino are presented in two different boxes.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

And here are our competitors for the final. They are world-class greyhounds, ready to clash on this track. Bettors will have to make tough choices, as the final promises to be fierce.

INT. CYNODROME / STARTING BOX / AFTERNOON

Crépin and Charles are behind the starting box. Max is already in his box. Nino and Charles exchange a long look, then nod simultaneously before he enters his box, Charles straightens up.

CREPIN

You finally showed up. Good. I hope you're ready to take that defeat.

Charles ignores this comment, lost in his thoughts.

CREPIN

(Cont'd)

It will be very bitter, I warn you.

INT. STARTING BOX

Nino tries to motivate himself, he closes his eyes and takes a deep breath.

NINO

I'm going to do it, I can do it.

VOICE (V.O.)

And who told you that ?

NINO
(opening his eyes)
What do you want ?

MAX
Let me tell you something, little
newbie. Here, it takes more than
motivation to break barriers. You
need to be capable of...

NINO
(cutting him off)
You'd better focus on the race
instead of wasting your time
babbling.

MAX
(astonished)
You... ! I don't need to focus to
beat you, you're just an
insignificant little pebble in my
way... !

NINO
(once again)
Shut up, you're distracting me.

Max grits his teeth while Nino closes his eyes again.

ON THE CIRCUIT :

The lure starts moving and begins to gain a few meters
ahead.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
It's starting.

SHOT OF :

Charles stressed while Crépin settles comfortably, crossing
his feet, and displaying a big smile.

The starting box opens, and the greyhounds burst onto the
track. Max immediately takes the lead and starts pulling
away quickly.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
What a magnificent start !

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
Especially from Max, who is off to
an exceptional start ! He's
literally flying down the track.
What an incredible performance !

MAX
(To himself)
I'm going to completely crush him.

The crowd is in a frenzy as Max continues to widen the gap. His speed impresses everyone.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE RUNNERS AS THEY TAKE THE FIRST TURN ON THE TRACK.

INT. SUPER COFFEE / SAME TIME

A man in the crowd.

THE MAN

This Max is a real prodigy. Look at how he's annihilating his opponent.

MAN #1

It's clear that this isn't the same category. Pff ! I should have listened to you and bet on Max.

MAN #2

I told you, Nino is strong, but he can't compete with Max.

MIRETTE

(TO herself)

This can't be happening.

EXT. STREET / SAME TIME

The three dogs in front of the TV.

MALT

Nino is getting completely crushed.

RITCH

This Max is truly a demon. He keeps increasing the gap between them.

BEAUCE

At this distance already, it's over. There's no way he's going to win.

BACK TO THE CYNODROME / GRANDSTAND

BASILE

(Loudly)

Come on, Nino ! Keep going, it's not over yet.

Not far behind him.

LEON

(Loudly)

Yeah, that's it, crush him, Max !
Crush that mutt !

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
Max is giving us one of the most
impressive demonstrations. He seems
to be in a different league today.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
He is clearly showing the
difference between himself and
Nino.

ON THE TRACK :

Nino tries to close the distance between him and Max, but to
no avail.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
Nino can't catch up. Max keeps
increasing the gap between them.

The greyhounds approach the final turn.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
We're getting closer to the finish
line, and Nino seems completely
overwhelmed. He is literally
getting beaten.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
It's over for him, Abdelhafid.
Given the remaining distance and
the gap between him and Max, it's
clear the winner has already been
decided.

CAMERA ON :

CHARLES, incredulous.

CHARLES
Nino...

SHOT OF :

Borne, pulling away from the cynodrome.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
I wonder if Nino is really present
on the track today.

Charles collapses to the ground, visibly crushed. Crépin
approaches him, mocking.

CREPIN
So, what's wrong, champ ? I warned
you, didn't I ?

CHARLES
 (With tears in his eyes)
 It's over. Everything is over. All
 this journey to end up here...

CREPIN
 Don't look like that. Your
 greyhound did well, but he just
 can't measure up to mine.

SHOT OF THE FINISH LINE :

Max is dangerously close.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 And there it is, the same scenario
 from track number 2 repeats. Max
 remains unbeatable this year.

INT. SUPER COFFEE / SAME TIME

MAN #2
 It's Max, who wins. We saw that
 coming.

Mirette sits down on a chair, desperate, almost in tears.

EXT. STREET / SAME TIME.

MALT
 It's no use. At this distance, he's
 already lost.

BEAUCE
 I can't believe it, so close to the
 finish...

BACK TO THE CYNODROME.

The crowd is going wild, cheering for Max.

SUDDENLY, A BOOM sounds, and smoke fills the circuit.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 What's happening ? There's smoke on
 the track !

ON THE TRACK :

The lure starts to lose speed, its engine has exploded.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 Oh no. The lure's engine has
 exploded !

All the spectators stand up, surprised.

CHARLES
 What's happening ?

CREPIN
What's going on ?

ON THE CIRCUIT :

The racing greyhounds see the lure slowing down until it stops fifteen meters from the finish line.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
I can't believe it, the lure has
stopped with just a few meters
left.

The racing greyhounds stop around the broken lure, and the crowd murmurs.

ANNOUNCERS (V.O.)
Owners are invited to retrieve
their greyhounds from the track.

Charles and Crépin head towards their greyhounds.

INT. SUPER COFFEE

MAN #2
Oh no, this can't be true. I had
bet big on Max's victory.

MAN #3
But they can't cancel the race. Max
clearly won that victory.

MAN #1
Yes, especially with that distance.

BACK TO THE STUDIO.

INT. COMMENTARY STUDIO

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
It's a shame the race had to stop.
Max was putting on a remarkable
performance.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
Oh yes ! This technical failure
cuts off all that adrenaline rush.

ANNOUNCERS (V.O.)
Your attention, please !

ADIXIA MAELYS
I believe a decision has been made
by the federation. Let's listen in.

CENTER OF THE CYNODROME, PODIUM :

The president of the canine federation (a well-dressed, slender man, about 1.88 m tall for his 38 years, in a

well-tailored suit) addresses the crowd.

PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION
We are deeply sorry for this
incident and sincerely apologize to
every owner and to you, dear
viewers.

Everyone listens attentively.

PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION
(Cont,d)
Due to this technical failure, we
have decided to suspend the race
and resume it in two weeks at the
CYNODROME DES SABLES. We apologize
again for this inconvenience. Thank
you for your attention.

SHOT OF :

Charles and Nino.

CHARLES
Congratulations, champ. You did
very well.

NINO
No, master. I don't deserve these
compliments. I was totally pathetic
tonight.

Charles smiles and places his hand on Nino's completely
defeated head.

CHARLES
Don't look like that. Sometimes it
happens to face defeats. Besides,
I'm sure you'll do better next
time.

NINO
(Holding back tears)
Thank you, master. I promise I'll
do better next time.

CREPIN
(Mocking)
You're congratulating him ? You're
congratulating him for that ?
Unbelievable.

Crépin and Max enter the frame.

CREPIN
You can say you got lucky this
time, but don't worry, it won't
last. I'll win that final sooner or
later.

CHARLES

It's not my fault that the gods are
on my side. I can't help it. It's
my luck or your misfortune.
(Beat, to Nino)
Come on, Nino, let's go home.

MAX

(To Nino)

So, no more big talk now.

NINO

Pff !

Charles and Nino exit the frame, while the press gathers
around Crépin and Max.

BACK TO THE STUDIO

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Here is the decision made by the
federation members. So, ABDESSAMAD,
what can you say about this race ?

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

I can say that Max made a great
impression today. He demonstrated
the difference between him and the
other lower-class greyhounds,
especially Bella and Nino. There's
a lot of work for these greyhounds,
especially Nino, if he wants to
compete with Max, because he
literally crushed him tonight.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Well said, Abdessamad. And I think
that's what we all noticed tonight.
If he doesn't double his efforts,
Max will win the final very easily.
(Beat)

This was Lisandro Satilmis on your
screens. The race is postponed to
the second week due to a technical
failure at the SAND CYNODROME.

INT. LIVING ROOM / ALEXANDER'S HOUSE

THE CAMERA PULLS BACK TO SHOW LISANDRO ON A TV SCREEN.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

(Cont'd, on TV)

I hope many of you will come. With
that, ladies and gentlemen, good
evening.

Alexander turns off the TV.

EXT. STREET / SUNSET

BEAUCE

It's not over yet. He still has a chance to win this final.

MALT

Yes, but there's a lot to do in that case. Did you see the gap between him and Max ?

RITCH

I don't think he will do it. He must be demoralized right now.

BEAUCE

Yes, that's true. After all, he got hit hard today.
(Beat, an idea occurs to him)
In that case, let's go cheer him up.

CUT TO :

INT. CHARLES'S HOUSE / NIGHT.

Charles and his mother are at the table, and Nino is lying next to them, totally dejected. The atmosphere is tense.

MIRETTE

Charles, eat something.

CHARLES

I'm not hungry, Mom.

Mirette looks at him as he leaves the table.

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

It's really tight. The two greyhounds are side by side, it's breathtaking.

ON THE TRACK :

Nino and Max are racing, and Max wins by a hair.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

And in the end, it's Max who wins narrowly over Nino.

Charles collapses on the ground, tears in his eyes.

CHARLES

This can't be happening. Why ? Why does it have to end like this ?

He hears mocking voices behind him.

CREPIN

I told you to give up, but you didn't listen. You were playing tough. Did you really think you could beat me with that stray dog ?
(Beat)
No ! But you can't be serious.

LEON

This is what happens when you play champion.

CREPIN

I won the final and shattered your stupid dream, just like I told you. I'm the champion of France, and you are nothing, just a broke kid.

LEON

You should have given up, like I advised you, Crépin. Look at everyone laughing at you right now.

Charles lifts his head and realizes the entire Cynodrome is mocking him.

CHARLES

No, stop, stop !

The mockery intensifies, and he covers his ears with his hands.

CHARLES

Stop, stop, stop !!!

INT. CHARLES'S ROOM / NIGHT

He wakes up abruptly from his bed, it was a nightmare.
Mirette wakes up.

MIRETTE

What's wrong, my bunny ? A nightmare ?
Go back to sleep, Mom is here.

He lies back down. Nino beside him hasn't closed an eye.

INT. HOUSE / DAY

KNOCK, KNOCK, KNOCK !

MIRETTE

Just a moment, I'm coming !

KNOCK, KNOCK. She goes to open the door and finds Basile at the door.

BASILE

Hello, madam.

MIRETTE

How many times have I told you not to call me madam ?

BASILE

Sorry. Is Charles here ?

MIRETTE

Yes, but he's not in great shape. He hasn't left his bed since yesterday. Come in, I'll tell him you're here. He might come down.

BASILE

Okay.

INT. CHARLES'S ROOM

Mirette enters the room, and Charles has his back to her.

MIRETTE

Basile is here to see you, my dear. Come on, come down.

CHARLES

No, I don't want to see anyone.

MIRETTE

But it's Basile.

CHARLES

I don't want to talk to him. Let him go.

MIRETTE

But it's... !

CHARLES

I want to be alone, Mom.

MIRETTE

Okay, but you're coming down to eat something afterward, understood ?

Without a word, she exits and joins Basile in the living room.

INT. LIVING ROOM

BASILE

Is he coming down ?

MIRETTE

No, he still doesn't want to come down.

BASILE

Let me go talk to him. Maybe he'll listen to me.

INT. CHARLES'S ROOM

Basile enters the room.

BASILE
How are you doing, little brother ?

No response.

BASILE
You know, Charles...

CUT TO :

INT. LIVING ROOM

Basile arrives in the living room. He and Mirette exchange a glance before Basile shakes his head to say no.

INT. CHARLES'S ROOM / NIGHT

MIRETTE
Come on, my dear, let's eat.

CHARLES
I'm not really hungry, Mom.

MIRETTE
But it's been a long time since
you've eaten anything. Come on,
let's eat.

CHARLES
No thanks, Mom. I'm not hungry.

EXT. GARDEN / DAY

Charles sits dejectedly under a tree in the garden. Nino, not far away, sees Malt and gestures to him. Nino joins him.

MALT
What are you doing lying there ?
Don't you have better things to do
?

RITCH
You have a race in a few days, and
you're not even training.

BEAUCE
I knew this defeat would shake you
a bit, but not this much.

MALT
How long has it been since you
trained ?

NINO
I don't remember.

ON THE OTHER SIDE :

Mirette joins Charles under the tree.

MIRETTE

What are you doing, my dear ?

(Pausing)

You can't just stay here like this.
I know you're disappointed right
now, but you have to get up and
move forward. It's not over yet,
and Nino needs you right now. Do
you really think that by moping
around every day, you can win this
final ?

BACK TO NINO

MALT

You think lying down like this will
help you beat Max ?

BEAUCE

If you ask me, he completely
crushed you on that track. You were
just a hair's breadth away from
losing that dream you've held on to
so tightly. This technical failure
gives you a chance, and what are
you doing ?

RITCH

If I were in your place, I'd be
moving heaven and earth, training
like crazy to compete and even
surpass Max in the next race.

BACK TO CHARLES

CHARLES

But did you see the gap between us
? Max is way too strong for Nino.
He won't be able to beat him. I
might as well not show up for the
next race.

MIRETTE

Have you even tried ?

Charles looks at Mirette.

MIRETTE

(Cont'd)

Sometimes, defeat is just a step
towards victory. You have to have
faith in Nino and yourself.

BACK TO NINO

MALT

I've known you to be more tenacious than this. You're not going to tell me you're going to let this little defeat take you down.

BEAUCE

Enough playing around. It's really time to get to work and go win us that championship.

BACK TO CHARLES

MIRETTE

It's in these moments that we recognize the strong, those who win, those who rise up after a great defeat, and the weak, those who stay down after a loss. So, are you a winner or a loser ? (Pausing)
If you want to win this final, get up and do what it takes to win.

Charles stands up and hugs his mom.

CHARLES

Thank you, mom. I don't know what I would have done without you.

BACK TO NINO

NINO

Thank you, guys, you're the best.

MALT

It's always free for a friend.

Suddenly enlightened, Nino remembers Alexander's last words.

ALEXANDER (V.O.)

Come back to me when you feel it's the right time.

Nino rushes over to Charles.

NINO

(As he leaves)

Thanks a lot, guys, I'll repay you someday.

MALT

What's gotten into him all of a sudden ?

RITCH

No idea.

BEAUCE
 (Watching him leave)
 I hope he'll be up to the task.

Nino arrives by Charles' side.

NINO
 WOUAF ! WOUAF !

CHARLES
 What's wrong, Nino ?

Nino pulls on his leg.

CHARLES
 What's wrong ?

MIRETTE
 He wants you to follow him. Maybe
 he has something to show you.

NINO
 WOUAF ! WOUAF !

CHARLES
 Alright, I'm coming.

He rushes to grab his bike and follows Nino. Mirette,
 feeling pleased, makes a call.

MIRETTE
 (On the phone)
 Hello, Kevin ?

KEVIN (V.O.)
 Yes, hello Mirette, did it work ?

MIRETTE
 (On the phone)
 Yes, thank you so much for your
 advice, Kevin. (Pausing)
 I repeated word for word everything
 you told me, and it worked.

Basile enters the frame.

BASILE
 Hello, mom.

MIRETTE
 (On the phone)
 Okay, I'll call you back later, I
 have company. Thank you so much.

KEVIN
 (On the phone)
 No problem. Always free for
 colleagues.

She hangs up.

BASILE
Is he still inside ?

MIRETTE
No, not anymore.

BASILE
Oh really ! But where is he ?

MIRETTE
You just missed him.

BASILE
Didn't he tell you where he was
going ?

MIRETTE
No, he followed Nino.

BASILE
Nino ?

MIRETTE
Yes ! Come on, I'll cook something
for you.

BASILE
Okay.

He heads towards the house.

CUT TO :

EXT. SOMEWHERE FAR FROM THE CITY / AFTERNOON

Charles and Nino arrive in front of Alexander's house.

CHARLES
Is this where you wanted us to come
?

NINO
WOUAF ! WOUAF !

CHARLES
Come on. We have better things to
do than waste our time here. He
won't help us.

He moves ahead, but Nino stays in place.

NINO
WOUAF ! WOUAF !

CHARLES

Come on, Nino. I don't know what's gotten into you, but let me remind you that he clearly told us he won't help us. If you want to stay, stay. I'm leaving.

He takes a few steps, Nino barks before Alexander's door opens.

ALEXANDER

I was starting to get impatient.
(Pausing, rubbing Nino's head)
How are you, buddy ? You were great.

NINO

Thank you, sir.

CHARLES

Alexander, finally... I mean, Mr. Alex...

ALEXANDER

(Interrupting him)
I thought you weren't coming back.
Come on, let's get down to business.

CHARLES

How ? You want to train Nino ?

ALEXANDER

You've proven yourself. I think it's time to give you a little boost. (Beating)
Come on, let's start. We've wasted enough time like this.

All three of them enter Alexander's house.

CUT TO :

INT. CYNODROME / DAY

A cheering crowd fills the cynodrome, with banners and flags in bright colors.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

The cynodrome is packed to the brim. Everyone is here--men, women, children--all come to witness this final.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

The cynodrome is packed to the brim. Everyone is here--men, women, children--all come to witness this final.

VARIOUS SHOTS OF THE CYNODROME.

WIDE SHOT :

The stands arranged in a semicircle around the tracks, filled with enthusiastic spectators.

CLOSE SHOT :

Sand-carved arches adorned with motifs of greyhounds in full sprint.

OVERALL SHOT :

The elegant architecture reminiscent of ancient amphitheaters, offering a stunning view of the track.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

The stands, arranged in a semicircle around the tracks, offer an unobstructed view of the races. Its architecture recalls the elegance of ancient amphitheaters, with sand-carved arches and columns adorned with motifs depicting greyhounds in full sprint.
(Beating)
This cynodrome truly deserves its name, the Sand

TITLE CARD : SAND CYNODROME.

ON OUR ANNOUNCERS

ADIXIA MAELYS

Hello, ladies and gentlemen.
Thrilled to see so many of you for this final, following the accident at the Nolwenn cynodrome.

A presentation of the last meters run by Max, leading up to the explosion of the lure's engine, in an insert.

ADIXIA MAELYS

(Cont'd)

Max literally crushed Nino, showing the huge gap between them. He was ahead of the scene, but this technical failure happened at the last moment, stealing this easy victory from him and giving Nino a chance to catch up. (Beating)
But the question is, will Nino seize this opportunity ?

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

Of course not. Given the huge skill gap between the two, there's no way he'll do it.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Don't talk nonsense, Abdelhafid.
Even though he was beaten in the
last race, he can make up for it in
this one. And don't forget he has
proven himself so far.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

Even if he's proven himself, he
won't be able to beat Max. We're
talking about a rookie against a
professional here, and not just any
professional, it's Max, the demon
of the tracks. Be a little
realistic.

A photo of Alexander and Charles training Nino appears in an
insert.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

I know, but there's new
information, apparently, people
have spotted Alexander, the former
king of the tracks, assisting
little Charles with Nino's
training.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

Alexander, you mean Alexander
Swift, the one who hasn't been seen
for years ?

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Exactly ! That's the one !
(Beating)
He's even here today.

CAMERA ON :

ALEXANDER SWIFT, comfortably seated in one of the best spots
in the cynodrome.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

This is going to complicate things.
But Max remains the best of the
two.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

Well, we'll find out right away.

ON THE TRACK :

Charles and Crépin bring in their greyhounds and close the
starting box.

CREPIN

So, you finally showed up. Wasn't
the beating you took last time
(MORE)

CREPIN (cont'd)
 enough ? You like humiliation,
 don't you ?

CHARLES
 Today is a new day.

CREPIN
 Don't tell me you think your stray
 dog has a chance against Max.

The lure starts moving and takes the lead.

CHARLES
 What if we watch the race in
 silence ?

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
 And here we go, it's starting.

The starting boxes open, releasing the greyhounds who sprint
 onto the sandy track.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 It's the start of this second race,
 pitting Max against Nino.

The crowd grows loud, cheering for their favorites.

ON THE TRACK :

The paws of the greyhounds dig into the sand with impressive
 precision. Their eyes are fixed on the winding path of the
 track. They're in a frantic race, leaving a cloud of dust
 behind. The cheers of the crowd blend with the sound of the
 greyhounds' footsteps, creating an electric atmosphere.

CREPIN
 It seems your little dog is holding
 on, but don't get too excited. It
 won't last long.

Max starts to pull ahead of Nino, but Nino isn't falling too
 far behind.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 And there you have it, Max is
 taking the lead, just as expected.
 It was obvious.

CREPIN
 Ah ! What did I tell you ?
 (Beating, to Max)
 Yes, crush him, Max, crush him !

Charles stays focused, saying nothing.

ON THE TRACK :

The graceful strides of the greyhounds propel them forward, their elegant silhouettes clearly defined against the sandy background. The barks mix with the noise of the crowd, creating a thrilling ambiance.

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)

Max, leads the dance, but Nino is giving him no respite ! What a rivalry, what intensity, what determination.

A tight turn is ahead.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

We're approaching the final turn, the tightest bend of the track.

Max navigates it with agility, closely followed by Nino. Their bodies lean into the curve, but they don't slow down, determined to reach the finish line. The cameras capture every movement of the greyhounds, documenting the intensity of the race from all angles.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)

Wow ! Look at them negotiate that turn. Perfect mastery of their trajectory ! These greyhounds are simply exceptional.

The finish line is in sight, but Max is still in the lead.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)

The finish line is just ahead, and it's Max pulling the strings of this race. But Nino, just behind him, is not giving up.

CREPIN

It's in the bag. (Beating, to Charles)
This time, no technical failure is going to save your face. Ah !

CHARLES

(To himself)

Come on, Nino, this is the moment.

Suddenly, time seems to freeze on the track. Nino glances toward the stands. He sees Alexander smiling at him, Mirette giving him a thumbs-up, Bella, nodding her head, his three stray friends smiling at him too ; and finally, Charles nodding before dashing off at full speed. Time resumes its normal course, and Nino stretches his strides.

INT. COMMENTATOR STUDIO

Lisandro stands up in one swift motion.

LISANDRO SATILMIS
 (Astonished)
 What's happening ?

ON THE TRACK :

Nino accelerates, his paws pounding the sand with renewed energy. He quickly closes the gap on Max.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD (V.O.)
 Nino is speeding up ! They are now
 neck and neck. Who will cross the
 finish line first ?

CREPIN
 (Shocked)
 What ?! How is that possible ?

LISANDRO SATILMIS (V.O.)
 What an extraordinary comeback from
 Nino ! He's matching stride for
 stride, it's truly impressive.

ON THE TRACK :

Nino pulls ahead of Max. In a final sprint, he crosses the finish line ahead of Max, stopping in a cloud of dust. Witnessing his incredible performance, the crowd erupts in cheers, celebrating the grandeur of this epic race.

ADIXIA MAELYS (V.O.)
 And it's Nino who wins ! Nino takes
 this final against Max, the demon
 of the tracks. A whole new era is
 opening for him.

CREPIN
 (In shock)
 No... how is this possible ? How
 could I lose this race ? It was in
 my favor !

IN THE STANDS :

Charles bursts with joy as he runs through the greyhound track before breaking down in tears, overwhelmed with emotion.

MALT
 (Excited)
 He did it ! Nino did it, Beauce !

RITCH
 He succeeded, he is the champion of
 France.

BEAUCE
 I knew he would make it.

Borne smiles discreetly before stepping away. Bella rushes toward Nino.

ON THE TRACK :

Nino and Max exchange a long look.

MAX

Congratulations. I never thought you could beat me.

NINO

(Catching his breath)

No, I should thank you. It's because of you that I was able to surpass myself.

BELLA

Congratulations, Nino ! I knew you could beat him, and you did !

NINO

Thank you, and it's all thanks to you.

Charles comes running to embrace Nino, tears in his eyes.

CHARLES

(Hugging him tightly)

Thank you so much, Nino thank you.

Crépin arrives with tears in his eyes.

CHARLES

So, what were you saying ?

CREPIN

You, I'm not done with you yet.

It's not over.

(Turning to Max)

And you, don't follow me, okay ? I don't hang out with losers.

He exits the frame, leaving Charles and the dogs exchanging a knowing glance. The crowd remains loud.

CUT TO :

INT. CENTER OF THE GREYHOUND TRACK / ELEVATED PODIUM

Charles, Nino, Basile, Mirette, and Alexander are on the podium, proud and radiant.

PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION

It is with immense pride that I present you with this medal. It symbolizes your bravery and the determination you have shown throughout this competition.

The president places the medal around Charles's neck, then crowns Nino with a laurel wreath.

PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATION

And it is with great pleasure that
I present you with this trophy for
the champion of France in greyhound
racing.

He hands the trophy to Charles, who lifts it in joy. Nino looks up at the sky and recalls the crowning of GOLDIE DRAVE, which he had watched on TV.

NINO

(With determination)

Get ready, I'm coming. I will
realize my dream.

The family surrounds Charles and Nino, sharing this moment of glory with their loyal companion. The crowd continues to applaud, recognizing the greatness of this victory. Cameras capture every moment of this unforgettable time.

RETURN TO OUR ANNOUNCERS.

INT. COMMENTATOR STUDIO

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Who would have believed it ? It was
truly amazing !

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD

This race offered us a spectacle of
rare intensity. Their determination
and agility captivated the crowd at
the greyhound track and viewers
worldwide.

ADIXIA MAELYS

Nino finishes this competition with
the title of champion of France.
His journey to the podium has been
marked by unwavering determination.
He fully deserves this gold medal.

LISANDRO SATILMIS

Without a doubt, Adixia. Nino
showed remarkable grace and power.
This victory will remain etched in
memory as a moment of pure canine
elegance.

ADIXIA MAELYS

And that concludes this memorable
day for greyhound racing. Thank you
to all our viewers for joining us
for this incredible adventure. We
look forward to bringing you more
(MORE)

ADIXIA MAELYS (cont'd)
thrilling moments in the world of
canine sports.

ABDELHAFID ABDESSAMAD
Exactly, Adixia. Stay tuned for
more exciting moments and
exceptional performances. In the
meantime, that's all for today. See
you soon !

CUT TO :

EXT. IN FRONT OF CHARLES'S HOUSE / DAY

TITLE CARD : ONE MONTH LATER.

Vehicles are parked in front of Charles's house.

INT. CHARLES'S HOUSE

Everyone is present : Charles, Nino, Basile, Alexander,
Mirette, and impeccably dressed men in suits.

THE MAN IN SUIT #1
As I was saying, we have come in
person to give you this invitation
to the grand tournament of the best
greyhounds from each country, to
elect the new KING OF THE TRACKS.

He hands a card to Charles.

CHARLES
Thank you.

THE MAN IN SUIT #2
I hope you will accept and
represent France in this grand
tournament.

Charles and the others exchange glances and all nod. Charles
turns to Mirette, who takes a moment before agreeing.

CHARLES
(To the men)
Alright, it's settled. I will be
happy to represent France at this
tournament.

THE MAN IN SUIT #1
Well, we are done. Thank you for
agreeing to participate.
Congratulations on your victory.

Charles and our champion, Nino, stand tall and follow the
men in suits. Charles and Nino simultaneously.

CHARLES AND NINO
(Turning to the camera)
Get ready, we're coming. The next
to be crowned KING OF THE TRACKS
will be us.

CUT TO :

Charles and Nino's words.

THE END.

TO BE CONTINUED.