

"Blood and Leather"

written by

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FADE TO BLACK.

SUPER: "Blood and Leather"

FADE IN:

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NEVADA - USA - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "September 2031"

MUSIC PLAYS over a series of shots of Las Vegas, Nevada. Each image is a composition of the streets, landmarks, and the minute details of this beautiful summer's day at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.

EXT./INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT

HUGO WILLIAMS (31) comes into the hall... there are SHOUTS and APPLAUSE, and the sound moves through the arena.

HUGO

passes the faces and the press; his attention is on the bright twenty-by-twenty-foot ring.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO, a handsome man with an athletic fighter's physique, is in the ring.

A) Feet move.

B) Body lunges.

C) Fists swing and push at the air.

D) In the corner, Hugo's feet float, waiting.

The bell RINGS for round one.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. CAPE TOWN - SOUTH AFRICA - MORNING

MUSIC PLAYS over a series of shots of Cape Town and the minute details of this beautiful, exciting summer's morning.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "January 2022"

EXT. BAXTON JOGGING TRAIL - MORNING

NINE YOUNG ATHLETES

jog up a steep hill.

YOUNG MALCOLM WILLIAMS (18) AND YOUNG HUGO WILLIAMS (22)

lead the pack. They race each other and are running at the same pace, but Hugo accelerates in the last twenty meters and finishes first. Malcolm is out of breath.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Does everything in this life have to be a competition for you?

Hugo rubs sweat out of his eyes.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Well, I guess the goal of boxing is to win, right?

LINTON

Can you guys please compete on your own time? We don't want to sprint our morning jogging sessions. Your Dad is hard enough on us inside the gym.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Tell that to Hugo; if I don't keep up with him, my Dad will make me skip twelve rounds.

EXT./INT. APEX BOXING CLUB - CAPE TOWN - SOUTH AFRICA - DAY

The streets are busy with traffic and pedestrians.

An agate black metallic Ford Everest SUV comes to a halt in front of Apex Boxing Club.

CALEB WILLIAMS (50s) AND NINE YOUNG ATHLETES

get out of the car and step onto the pavement. They are talking amongst themselves MOS.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Enough, gossiping, get in the gym.

FUNCTIONAL FLOOR

Hugo is glistening with perspiration, directed through tortuous exercises by the hands of his Father. The gym is alive, with thirty fighters pounding away on an assortment of equipment.

HUGO AND MALCOLM

enter the ring.

CALEB

is wearing his trademark cap; he stands on the ring's apron observing his two sons.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Okay, boys - let's see what ya got!
Hugo, if you jump around like a
grasshopper again like yesterday.
You can rerun the morning trail.

MALCOLM

moves forward and throws several jabs.

HUGO

lashes out and catches Malcolm with a right to the gut and a left to the jaw. Hugo pounds his brother into a corner and unleashes a furious barrage.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Time.

MALCOLM

tries to move out of the corner but is backed up.

HUGO

double-hooks to the body. Malcolm buckles to one knee.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Hugo, do you have ear trouble?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

What's your problem?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'm sorry, but I thought we were
here to focus on our distance, stop
getting countered, and focus on our
rhythm.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Enough, now hit the showers.

INT. CALEB WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - EVENING

Hugo takes chicken mushroom spinach lasagna out of the oven, places it on a serving tray, and walks toward the dining room.

DINING ROOM

Malcolm sets the dinner table and hollers.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Dad, dinner is ready.

Caleb, Malcolm, and Hugo sit at the table.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Well, I hope this tastes as good as it looks. Hugo, will you say grace?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Bless us, O Lord, and these, Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty. Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.

EXT. CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - MORNING

RUNWAY

A GROUND CREWMAN

with red flashlights directs the plane.

INT. CAPE TOWN INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - SAME

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Seven A.M."

CALEB, MALCOLM, AND HUGO

sit on a chair waiting for their flight. They hear a P.A. voice behind them announcing that it is "PRE-BOARDING TIME."

P.A. VOICE (V.O.)

Good morning passengers. This is the pre-boarding announcement for flight SAA four-six-two-four to O.R. Tambo International Airport. We are now inviting those passengers with small children and any passengers requiring special assistance to begin boarding at this time.

(MORE)

P.A. VOICE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 Please have your boarding pass and
 identification ready. Regular
 boarding will begin in
 approximately ten minutes. Thank
 you.

CALEB, MALCOLM, AND HUGO

head for the terminal, with a few passengers ahead of them.

INT. SAA FOUR-SIX-TWO-FOUR AIRLINE - LATER

HUGO

looks out the window, there is a rumbling SOUND, suddenly the
 sun is replaced by dark clouds, and rain lashes the window.

CAPTAIN

Ladies and gentlemen. Good morning;
 this is your Captain speaking.
 We've already started our descent
 into O.R. Tambo International
 Airport. We expect to land at Eight
 Thirty-five A.M. There is a
 thunderstorm, and we're in the
 middle of it, so please sit back in
 your seats and buckle up. We wish
 you a pleasant stay in
 Johannesburg, and we hope to see
 you again soon.

EXT. O.R. TAMBO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT - RUNWAY - CONTINUOUS

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Eight Thirty-five A.M."

The SAA Four-Six-Two-Four Airline touches down. The welcome
 SCREECH of tires hitting the runway brings a palpable relief.

EXT. RADISSON BLU GAUTRAIN HOTEL - SANDTON - JOHANNESBURG -
 AFTERNOON

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Four P.M."

HOTEL SUITE BEDROOM

HUGO AND MALCOLM

are in their beds sleeping. Caleb walks in and blows an air
 horn, and both Hugo and Malcolm holler.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Rise and shine, sleepyheads! Get
your kit; we're off to The Ring.

INT. THE RING - SANDTON - CONTINUOUS

HUGO'S

fists fly in a reeling motion, hitting the speed bag. But
it's his eyes that

arrest us... focused, concentrated.

LATER

HUGO is in the ring sparring with an opponent.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Throw that hook!

CALEB WILLIAMS
Throw that hook off the pivot!
Transfer! Go through him - That's
it! Leave nothing on the table.

HUGO

throws again and is caught with a sizzling combination, and
Hugo is stung.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Too much distance! Get closer. Move
forward, not back.

HUGO

drives forward, and his opponent is caught with a four-punch
combo which sets him back on his heels.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Time - that's it.

Hugo exhaustedly steps out of the ring.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Looks like we need to change
strategies. We gonna approach this
training in a whole different way.

HUGO WILLIAMS
What way?

CALEB WILLIAMS

We'll talk about it tomorrow. Meet me at the car, but first, get your brother and shower up.

LATER

Hugo and Malcolm wearily walk toward the locker room.

INT. TABOO NIGHT CLUB - NIGHT

HUGO

enters the club and buys himself a drink. A young woman strolls toward him and begins talking to him, MOS.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO HAS FUN

- A) Gets acquainted.
- B) Dances with the attractive young woman.
- C) There's intimacy on the dance floor.
- D) Experiments with Marijuana and Crystal meth.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT./INT. RADISSON BLU GAUTRAIN HOTEL - SANDTON JOHANNESBURG
- MORNING

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Twenty hours later"

HUGO

gets out of a cab drunk and staggers toward the entrance. Caleb is waiting outside the hotel entrance.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Where the hell have you been?

CALEB

helps Hugo to walk toward the Hotel.

THE HOTEL DOORMAN

assists in getting Hugo in a wheelchair.

HUGO

I don't need a wheelchair. I'm fine.

Hugo tries to hold onto a banner but falls over when he realizes it isn't solid.

LATER

HUGO'S BEDROOM

The door is opened, and the black gives way to blinding white light.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Seven A.M."

ANTHONY HAMILTON (40s) stands at the door. While Hugo is fast asleep in bed.

ANTHONY

walks toward Hugo with a air horn and wakes him up.

HUGO

opens his eyes, the way one experiences the first glimpse of the day amid a hangover, and Anthony leaves. He takes his phone and sees he has twenty-one missed calls from Chloe. So he puts the phone down.

KITCHEN

ANTHONY HAMILTON

I can't believe it. Hugo is in bed instead of training. I thought that's why you brought him here in the first place.

CALEB WILLIAMS

You're right; that was my primary objective. Do you want some coffee?

CALEB

pours milk into his coffee and walks toward the balcony with Anthony trailing behind him.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Holy smokes, what the hell is going on? Hugo is in bed, wholly unresponsive, and you act as if you're on holiday.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Then do something about it. The way I feel right now, I'm about to use him as a cardio strike bag.

INT. THE RING - SANDTON - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO'S TRAINING

- A) Standard rope.
- B) Heavy bag.
- C) Speedbag.
- D) Sparring.
- E) Shadowboxing.
- F) Mitts.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. LES CRÉATIFS RESTUARANT - EVENING

Caleb, Hugo, and Malcolm sit and have dinner together.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Hugo, you are here to train, not to party. So if you are not going to take your training seriously, it's the end of chapter eleven. More importantly, don't even think of back chatting me. Do I make myself clear?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yes, Dad.

CALEB WILLIAMS

As a result of your foolish behavior, you have lost a valuable day of intense training. You'll need to change your mindset very quickly if you want to become the next middleweight champion. Tomorrow morning we are headed to the Waterfall Country Estate and Country Village. It is approximately a fifteen to twenty-minute drive from here.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Now, I am really starting to get concerned about your priorities toward us.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Don't interject; they have over twelve miles of a scenic bike trail. Which is perfect for you both to run while I cycle.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You are going to cycle?

Hugo giggles, and Malcolm and Caleb exchange questioning glances.

EXT. WATERFALL COUNTRY ESTATE AND COUNTRY VILLAGE - AFTERNOON

MOUNTAIN BIKE TRAIL

CALEB

is cycling ahead of Malcolm and Hugo.

CALEB WILLIAMS

C'mon, asswipes, what's taking you so long?

HUGO WILLIAMS

It's eighty degrees Fahrenheit. I'm not a camel.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Duly noted, but we are all doing this together, and you are here to train.

INT. ASIAN KITCHEN AND SUSHI BAR - EVENING

Caleb, Hugo, and Malcolm read the menu.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Your uncle Anthony said that sushi is art on a plate rich in antioxidants, omega three, fatty acids, calcium, iron, iodine, and other nutrients. As far as I'm concerned, it's what you boys need. Especially you, Hugo, after your reckless behavior.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I think uncle Anthony should rather eat than use the time he spends reading about the food. It's not like he's a supermodel.

CALEB WILLIAMS

I think you need to spend more time reading books on humility than talking so much.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Sometimes humility is just being scared to say what you wanna say.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Hugo, do you remember coming home from school after fighting with Vincent Reed?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yes, how can I forget! That Christmas, Ma gave me my first pair of boxing gloves to train to become a professional boxer.

CALEB WILLIAMS

I was flabbergasted. Mom certainly took us all by surprise.

BEGIN FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - PARENTS' BEDROOM - NIGHT

MR. AND MRS. WILLIAMS

is in bed talking to each other.

CALEB WILLIAMS

So how did the teacher-parent meeting go?

HUGO

walks toward his parents' bedroom; he stands behind the door and listens to his parents' conversation.

MRS. WILLIAMS

Hugo's teachers' have recommended that we take him to see a Psychiatrist.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Why?

MRS. WILLIAMS

Hugo's school teachers' told me that they think he has severe signs of hyperactivity and impulsiveness that a Psychiatrist should analyze and treat.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Oh, c'mon, he's a boy! He is no different from me, and look at me; I am a successful businessman. I have a wife and two boys, who I'm proud of, so have you gone behind my back and scheduled a meeting with a shrink?

MRS. WILLIAMS

Yes, we have a Nine A.M. appointment with Dr. Vorster.

CALEB WILLIAMS

What!? There is nothing wrong with him.

MRS. WILLIAMS

Caleb, calm down before you have a heart attack. They told me that the school kids humiliate him whenever he cannot answer a question. She said he can't focus. So, now he doesn't even try anymore. His marks are good enough, but they could be better.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Big deal, he is not supposed to know everything. That is why he goes to school in the first place!

Caleb switches the light off, and they both go to sleep.

HUGO

has tears in his eyes and returns to his bedroom.

INT. THORNWOOD HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY - DAY

VINCENT REED

Hey crazy boy, I heard you went to the doctor for your stupidity.

Vincent's friends laugh.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yeah, they told me I couldn't go on Monday, because you had an appointment.

TEEN HUGO

takes a few punches and a knockout punch from Vincent and falls to the floor.

INT. WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - KITCHEN - AFTERNOON

TEEN HUGO

staggers into the kitchen.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Ma, look at my eye.

Mrs. Williams turns toward Hugo.

MRS. WILLIAMS

Holy smokes, what happened? Who gave you that black eye and fat lip?

Teen Malcolm walks in SNIGGERING.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

It was Vincent Reed.

MRS. WILLIAMS

Didn't I warn you, boys, to stay away from him? You know I'm against conflict and violence.

Teen Hugo and teen Malcolm exchange questioning glances.

MRS. WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Well, I have had about enough! I'm going to contact his mother right this minute. Just wait until your father sees that!

INT. HUGO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

HUGO'S

bedside lamp is on, and he is seated upright.

MRS. WILLIAMS

sits on the edge of his bed.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Everybody thinks I'm a failure. And now the doctor has confirmed it.

MRS. WILLIAMS

We are all gifted in different things. I'm not as athletic as you are, so does that mean I'm less of a person?

HUGO WILLIAMS

But the doctor diagnosed me with ADHD. I don't even know what it is, but it sounds terrible.

MRS. WILLIAMS

So what? We all love you and believe in you. You can achieve anything you put your mind to, and don't ever forget that!

INT. WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - LIVING ROOM - MORNING

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Christmas 2012"

Everyone is unwrapping their gifts and reading their Christmas cards by the tree.

TEEN HUGO

picks up one of his presents, takes the gift card, and looks at it.

The card reads: "Make me proud! Love Mom. xxx"

Teen Hugo immediately opens his gift and finds a blood-red pair of beginner boxing gloves.

END FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

INT. ASIAN KITCHEN AND SUSHI BAR - CONTINUOUS

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

When last did you speak to Chloe Richards?

HUGO WILLIAMS

That's none of your business.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Well, that might be so; however, it is undoubtedly mine. What have you been up to?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Dad, please, cut me some slack.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Oh brother, now you've done it!

HUGO WILLIAMS

You're just jealous because you like her.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

No, I'm jealous because you treat her like shit, and she still likes you.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Isn't she the young girl that was arrested for narcotics?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Yes, and the two of them have been going steady.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Malcolm keeps making a list of things I do wrong to inform her. He also won't hesitate to tell her I cheated on her.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Hugo, if you want to use girls' feelings as a source of entertainment. I have doubts about how I raised you.

Hugo leans back in his chair, folds his arms, raises his eyebrows, and laughs.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Now the pawpaw has hit the fan. Is there anything else you would like to add?

CALEB WILLIAMS

That's enough; cut it out.

Hugo looks at Malcolm with intense anger.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

You are an asshole; I honestly don't understand what she sees in you.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Just get your own girl and keep your nose out of my business before I break it.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

You think you are always going to beat me.

CALEB WILLIAMS

That's enough. Go to your room, both of you.

HUGO WILLIAMS

We have the same room.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Then go to my room, Hugo!

INT. THE RING - SANDTON - MORNING

CALEB, MALCOLM, AND HUGO

enter the gym.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - CHLOE'S BEDROOM/HUGO'S GYM

CHLOE (21)

paces around her bedroom, then she punches numbers on her phone.

HUGO'S

cellular phone RINGS.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yo, can I call you later?

CHLOE RICHARDS

No, I thought you were with your Dad?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I am!

CHLOE RICHARDS

Then let me speak to him.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I don't think that is a wise idea.

CHLOE RICHARDS
How so?

HUGO WILLIAMS
Because my brother told him you
were arrested for drugs.

CHLOE RICHARDS
Those were your drugs!

HUGO WILLIAMS
I didn't ask you to do it.

CHLOE RICHARDS
You couldn't stop talking about the
fight. What other choice did I
have?

HUGO WILLIAMS
Chloe, please can I just call you
later.

CHLOE RICHARDS
Malcolm said you were juiced when
some slut came onto you at the
nightclub, and you only got back
twenty hours later, totally
trashed. So don't even think of
contacting me when you get back.
Okay!

TWO GUYS walk past Hugo into the gym. They overhear his
conversation and start LAUGHING.

CHLOE RICHARDS (CONT'D)
Am I on speaker? Is this a joke to
you? I'm done, bye. Tell your
friends to laugh at your other
sluts.

Caleb turns in Hugo's direction.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Get your ass over here!

HUGO WILLIAMS
(to Chloe)
I have to go.

MATCH CUT:

ANTHONY

watches two fighters box in a sixteen to twenty-four feet ring.

The scene arises on a stark graceful visual of two boxers engaged in combat. The dominant fighter, known as VINCENT PIERCE 'THUNDERBOLT' (25), the undefeated national middleweight champion, moves in for the kill.

His body language is fluid, and his boxing skills are pure precision savagery. He feints and throws a thunderous blow that crashes with devastating results against his opponent's chin in extreme slow motion.

DAVID CARSTENS (50s)

ambles toward Anthony.

DAVID CARSTENS

Hi, I'm --

ANTHONY HAMILTON

-- I know who you are.

DAVID CARSTENS

Ah, so you are a no-nonsense man.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

How can I help you?

DAVID CARSTENS

Well, I've heard a lot about your nephew.

INT. THE RING - SANDTON - CONTINUOUS

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Which one?

DAVID CARSTENS

Hugo. I've also been watching how you train him. It's awe-inspiring.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Thanks, but he has a long way to go!

DAVID CARSTENS

I have a proposition for you, his father, and Hugo. Your boys haven't started training yet. So, how about Hugo sparring with Vincent Pierce.

(MORE)

DAVID CARSTENS (CONT'D)
As you can see, he has already been
in the ring for fifteen minutes.
So, I think it would make it an
even match. What do you say?

ANTHONY HAMILTON
Okay, but no headshots.

DAVID CARSTENS
Oh, c'mon, be a sport.

ANTHONY HAMILTON
Alright, but my nephew gets to wear
protective gear.

DAVID CARSTENS
Suit yourself. So, aren't you
interested in what my proposition
is?

ANTHONY HAMILTON
I thought the sparring was what was
on offer.

DAVID CARSTENS
No, not at all. In fact, if your
nephew can knock Vincent out, I
will give him a shot at his title.

ANTHONY HAMILTON
Hmm... now we are talking.

DAVID CARSTENS
Oh, so I do have your undivided
attention?

ANTHONY HAMILTON
Yes, you sure do! And thank you for
the opportunity.

DAVID CARSTENS
The pleasure is all mine. May the
best man win.

INT. THE RING - LATER

Anthony, Caleb, and Hugo amble toward David.

DAVID CARSTENS
Welcome to my paradise and my
boxer's hell. Or should I say your
son's hell for today, Mr. Williams?

HUGO WILLIAMS
I guess it's a good thing I'm the
devil then.

BATHROOM

VINCENT PIERCE (23)

walks out of the toilet cubicle and heads for the shower.

David and Hugo walk toward Vincent.

DAVID CARSTENS
Vincent, I have offered this young
man a chance to fight for your
title if he knocks you out in the
ring.

VINCENT PIERCE
I just had a fight.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Are you scared?

VINCENT PIERCE
Okay, let me shut this fool up.

DAVID CARSTENS
There is no need for animosity.

LATER

HUGO AND VINCENT

stand in their neutral corners. They both are wearing
protective gear.

DAVID CARSTENS (CONT'D)
Okay, let's see some boxing.

VINCENT

charges Hugo, but Hugo leaps out of the way, trapping Vincent
in the corner. Then, Hugo releases a series of combinations,
each hitting their target.

VINCENT PIERCE
You punch like a baby.

HUGO WILLIAMS
You don't punch at all.

HUGO

gets caught with an uppercut and stumbles two feet back.

VINCENT

gets too excited and moves in to land a right hook. However, Hugo catches him with a straight right, and he drops to the canvas. Hugo stands right before him.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
 (to Vincent)
 I have a size thirty-two waist.

HUGO

climbs out of the ring.

CALEB WILLIAMS
 This means we can expect a title
 fight within a few months?

DAVID CARSTENS
 It might not happen now, but your
 son has to learn a hard lesson
 about respect.

CALEB WILLIAMS
 I apologize for his behavior.

INT. CALEB'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

CALEB WILLIAMS
 Was that really necessary?

HUGO WILLIAMS
 He had it coming.

CALEB WILLIAMS
 You realize if you lose this fight,
 there will be no rematch after
 humiliating him like that in front
 of his manager.

HUGO WILLIAMS
 I don't need a rematch.

CALEB WILLIAMS
 Where has this wave of arrogance
 come from? You weren't like this in
 the amateurs.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Sometimes you have to play mental games with these guys.

CALEB WILLIAMS

So, you are the mental game magician now; what's wrong with you. You are a boxer, not a comic book hero. You better come down to earth, or I'll make you jog until you puke this arrogance out.

INT. APEX GYM - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Cape Town, Monday"

About ten athletes are pounding the gym equipment while Hugo and Malcolm are sparring.

CALEB

sits down with his laptop on his lap and begins viewing his laptop screen.

HUGO AND MALCOLM

continue being distracted as they look at their father anxiously until a notification goes off on his laptop.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Did they send the contract?

CALEB WILLIAMS

No.

(to Malcolm)

Malcolm, come over here.

(to Hugo)

Hugo, go to the speedbag for ten minutes.

HUGO WILLIAMS

He's not going to send the contract; he knows he will lose.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Enough showboating, go to the speedbag.

Malcolm walks toward his father.

CALEB

hands Malcolm a document, and Malcolm reads it.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
I'm now officially a licensed
boxer.

Everyone in the gym turns toward Malcolm and APPLAUDS.

ALEX PETERSON
You know what that means, Malkie?

The people in the gym begin to CHANT.

THE CROWD
Body shots, body shots, body shots.

CALEB WILLIAMS
You know the tradition.

Malcolm enters the ring with TWENTY ATHLETES. They each give him a blow to the midsection. Hugo is last in line and knocks the wind out of him.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Now you are one of us, baby
brother.

LATER

A NOTIFICATION SOUND goes off on Caleb's laptop, silencing the whole gym. Everyone looks toward Caleb while he reads it.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Hugo, listen up.

Hugo ambles toward his father.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Hugo Williams vs. Vincent Pierce
for the South African middleweight
title will take place on March 15
at the EMPERORS PALACE. It will be
sanctioned by the Western Cape
Boxing Authority; congratulations
Hugo Williams, you got your fight.

INT. WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - HUGO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Hugo is busy posting a picture of his title fight contract on his Instagram story; Cara reacts to his post with a kiss and her phone number.

EXT. PARKING LOT - NIGHT

HUGO AND CARA (20)

are making out in the back of a car. Chloe is on her way to the cinema and sees Hugo in the back of the vehicle; she stops her car and walks over to the window.

CHLOE

knocks on the car window aggressively.

HUGO

gets out of the vehicle with an unbuttoned shirt, pulls up his pants, and fastens them.

CHLOE RICHARDS

So this is why you couldn't
celebrate your title fight with me?
We are done asshole.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I thought we were done?

CHLOE RICHARDS

Did you even like me, or was I just
one of them?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Look, you left me; let me live my
life. Go talk to my brother if you
want to stay in the family that
bad.

Hugo gets in the car and drives away. Chloe cries in the parking lot, and her friends get out of her vehicle and console her.

INT. HUGO'S CAR - CONTINUOUS

CARA

You just reminded me of something I
saw in this one movie scene.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What scene?

CARA

Pull over, and I'll show you.

Hugo pulls over and stops his vehicle.

CARA

takes a small bag of cocaine out of her purse.

CARA (CONT'D)

This guy in the movie just broke up with his girlfriend, then he did cocaine.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'm not sure this is a good idea.

CARA

What, the South African champion can't handle a little cocaine?

Cara throws a line on her forearm, sniffs it, then throws another line and holds it in front of Hugo.

Hugo caves in and snorts it.

INT. CARA'S BEDROOM - MORNING

Hugo wakes up; he looks baffled as to where he is. Finally, he realizes that he is sleeping next to Cara, and wakes her up.

HUGO WILLIAMS

How did I end up in your bed?

CARA

It was your idea to come back here after we left the club.

HUGO WILLIAMS

We were at the club?

CARA

Are you kidding me? You got thrown out of the club, and you don't remember anything?

HUGO WILLIAMS

What happened?

CARA

Your ex-girlfriend's brother told you you're an asshole, and you beat the living crap out of him. He was rushed to the hospital. The bouncer told you to get out of there before the police arrest you.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Did we sleep together?

CARA
Many times.

HUGO WILLIAMS
What's the time?

CARA
About Nine A.M., why?

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'm late for training.

INT. APEX GYM - LATER

Hugo walks into the gym, and Chloe's parents are inside.

CHLOE'S MOM
(to Hugo)
My son missed the hockey trails
today because of you.

CHLOE'S DAD (40s)

restrains the mother and walks toward Hugo.

CHLOE'S DAD/MR. RICHARDS
If you ever come near my family
again, I'll press charges for what
you did to my son. I respect your
father, but I have zero respect for
you.

Chloe's parents leave the gym.

CALEB WILLIAMS
You broke his eye socket Hugo.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I can explain.

CALEB WILLIAMS
I'm canceling the fight.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'm sorry, Dad.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Sorry isn't enough. Go home; there
is no training today.

INT. RESTAURANT - NIGHT

Anthony sits at a table while looking at his watch and gets frustrated when he sees the time. Hugo finally arrives and joins him at the table.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Sorry, I am late; my girlfriend is really peeved off with me.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

That is fine. Why weren't you at training this morning?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I went running.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Sure you did. Hugo, the reason I called you here alone is that; I am honestly worried.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You don't have anything to worry about.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

You are missing workout after workout. I saw you at Kentucky Fried Chicken twice this week. On top of that, you are getting trashed with your friends every night now. You need to understand that those idiots are not your friends.

HUGO WILLIAMS

First of all, my personal life is none of your business. You are my assistant coach, not my psychologist. My father gives me enough shit, so, please.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Your father wants to kick you out of the gym if you don't get your act together.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

I wasn't supposed to tell you that, but he wants to focus on the athletes who want to train; he said your ego has been inflated way too much since you got that sponsor.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You can tell my father he does not have to kick me out. I will find a new trainer.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Just calm down. That is why I called you here. I know your schedule better than anyone, and I found someone; that can help.

An old man approaches from the back. He greets them both and takes a seat in front of Hugo.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Hugo, I'd like you to meet David. He's --

HUGO

-- I know who he is; are you kidding me. He coaches and manages Vincent Pierce, the bum I will beat for the South African title.

David giggles arrogantly.

DAVID CARSTENS

That's right. I have to say I was impressed with your performance.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Thanks.

DAVID CARSTENS

However, I do have one concern about your career. My only concern is your team.

Hugo is shocked.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What? My team has brought me to where I am now.

DAVID CARSTENS

Let me put it to you this way,
working with a mediocre team is
like a flat tire. You might get to
your destination once, but sooner
or later, the whole rim will break,
then you can't go any further until
you finally change it.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You don't have to worry about that.
It seems my team has already thrown
me out.

INT. RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

DAVID

looks at Anthony and smiles.

DAVID CARSTENS

Great, your uncle will bring you to
my gym tomorrow. Then you can meet
the team. But, gentleman, I have to
run; I've got an appointment. Have
a lovely day.

David leaves.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Who's going to break this to my
father?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Why don't you just take care of
your training, and I'll handle
things with your father?

EXT. CALEB'S HOUSE - MORNING

ANTHONY

repeatedly knocks at the door.

CALEB

answers the door.

CALEB WILLIAMS

It's Ten A.M., what do you want at
this time?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

I spoke to Hugo about missing training this morning.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Did he have an excuse for missing training?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

I don't like it that I'm the one who has to break it to you, but he's looking for a new trainer.

CALEB WILLIAMS

What?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

He told me that he wanted to do his own thing. He offered me a job as his head coach; I'm so sorry, brother, I don't know what got into him.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Did you take the job?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Of course not I am with you and Malcolm, you know that.

CALEB WILLIAMS

So, he is just going to train himself then.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Honestly, I don't have a clue.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Hugo is a big boy; he can do what he wants. I just hope he knows his brother has a big fight coming, and we really need him for sparring.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

I can try to bring him back.

CALEB WILLIAMS

No, just leave it. Let Hugo do what he wants. I'll see you tomorrow morning.

INT. EMPERORS PALACE - DAY

HUGO

is in a terry-cloth robe and walks faster than the press photographers. They race to keep up as Hugo slams through a door into a large room.

THE WEIGH-IN ROOM

VINCENT

pushes past people and leaps at Hugo.

HUGO WILLIAMS

(to Vincent)

Are you sure you want to get
knocked out before getting paid,
bum?

The handlers struggle to keep them apart and wrestle Hugo onto the scale.

ATHLETIC COMMISSIONS REPRESENTATIVE

(reading)

One hundred and sixty-five pounds.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Are you sure you got that right?

THE ATHLETIC COMMISSIONS REPRESENTATIVE

nods. Hugo gets off and is pulled aside.

VINCENT

gets on and gives an unremitting stare of death at Hugo.

DRESSING ROOM

HUGO'S

shirt is off, sitting on a bench, having his hands taped. In the background, Anthony, Vincent, David, and TWO MEN (50s) in dark suits, one person from Vincent's camp, and the BOXING INSPECTOR (50s).

CORRIDOR

A door slams open.

HUGO

comes along the hallway, his entourage surrounding him. Three officials accompany him. Vincent is carrying the tools of the trade. A bucket, swabs, and Vaseline.

They reach the end of the corridor, and against the wall stand four men with cigars. The SOUNDS from the arena drift into the hallway. Then, the light drops out, and the sudden EXPLOSION OF MIX MUSIC ROCKS the arena.

An array of laser lights rip across the audience.

VINCENT

climbs the steps into the ring. He dances around as his group holds up his belts.

THE CROWD

CHEERS LOUDLY as Hugo enters the ring and waves. The ring and corner posts are covered with sponsor logos.

COMMENTATOR

Both parties look anxious to get at each other; there's the bell, and this fight is underway.

ARENA

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Round Two"

THE RING

VINCENT

has Hugo against the ropes. Hugo pushes him off. Vincent comes in again.

HUGO

dances, feints, and catches Vincent over the left eye with a jab.

HUGO

watches Vincent advance toward him. Vincent throws a left cross over Hugo's right, which Vincent leans away from, and adds two rapid, glancing jabs to the same spot. And Vincent opens a cut. The bell SOUNDS, ending round two.

THE CROWD

goes ballistic.

VINCENT'S CORNER

VINCENT

inhales a colossal breath through his nose and blows it out.
He can't wait for the bell to ring.

HUGO'S CORNER

works on the cut. The bell SOUNDS round three.

LATER

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Round Nine"

HUGO

feints a right and throws a right cross over Vincent's
attempt to block it.

VINCENT

comes in again.

INT. EMPERORS PALACE - CONTINUOUS

HUGO'S

subsequent three ripping left jabs are almost like Wushu
shots, all with a sharp snap at the point of impact.

VINCENT'S

eyebrow streams blood, interposing himself between their
arms.

The BELL SOUNDS.

HUGO AND VINCENT

stagger toward their corners.

HUGO'S CORNER

ANTHONY HAMILTON

You didn't come so far to get beat
by Vincent! He's got you, Hugo!

VINCENT PIERCE

You're outpointed. You gotta knock
him out!

HUGO

takes a swing of water and spits blood into the bucket.

The bell SOUNDS for the tenth round.

VINCENT

charges at Hugo. He slides away, jabbing, punching, piling up points.

In Hugo's corner, Anthony stands and yells at Hugo.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Knock him out!

COMMENTATOR

Look at Hugo! He looks calm and very relaxed.

VINCENT

fires off a beautiful six-punch combination.

HUGO

roars back and pounds a torrent of punches that gets people to their feet. Suddenly Hugo explodes with a right hook, and Vincent is sent crashing to the canvas.

The crowd goes wild

Caleb approaches Hugo to celebrate

HUGO WILLIAMS

Your job as my trainer has officially ended.

Hugo walks away.

DRESSING ROOM

HUGO

comes out of the shower with his towel around his waist and walks toward the bench.

A middle-aged man in Adidas sportswear walks toward Hugo.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

You're not allowed here!

KASPER RORSTED

Mr. Williams, I'm the Chief Executive Officer of the Adidas Group in Germany. Please excuse my accent.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Is this a joke? Why would the CEO of Adidas happen to be here? Let me guess; you were in the vicinity?

KASPER RORSTED

Well, you certainly have me made. I'll tell you what, here's my business card.

KASPER

hands Hugo his business card.

The business card reads: "Kasper Rorsted, Chief Executive Officer, with Adidas logo and contact details."

KASPER RORSTED (CONT'D)

I'm here for a few days, so contact me if you're interested in what I have to say. I'm staying at the One and Only Hotel on the Waterfront.

KASPER

walks out of the dressing room.

LATER

ANTHONY, VINCENT, AND DAVID

enter the dressing room.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Who the hell was that? And what was he doing here?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Leave him alone. Besides, it's for me to know and for you to find out.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Listen up, kid, don't ever forget who you are talking to. You can lose it as quickly as it was to gain your new title.

INT. EMPERORS PALACE - CONTINUOUS

VINCENT

begins LAUGHING.

VINCENT PIERCE
It's too late! I've reported it.

HUGO

turns toward Vincent.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Reported what?

VINCENT PIERCE
That you allowed an unauthorized
person into the dressing room while
I was naked.

HUGO WILLIAMS
You were in the shower at the time,
you little bastard.

VINCENT PIERCE
Oh, don't cry, you won by pure
luck, and now I will get my title
back. Just see it as a bad dream.
Besides, your father bribed me to
lose. So, now we're even.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Oh really, that explains why you
punched so soft.

VINCENT PIERCE
I almost knocked you out.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I thought you were bribed. So, shut
your mouth, liar.

VINCENT PIERCE
Or what?

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'll place you in intensive care.

VINCENT PIERCE
Oh, brother, the title has gone to
your head.

HUGO

is infuriated and storms toward Vincent.

DAVID

comes between Hugo and Vincent.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Get out of my way. Otherwise, I cannot be held responsible for my actions.

VINCENT PIERCE

Security, Security, help!

INT. EMPERORS PALACE - LATER

HUGO WILLIAMS

Who's crying now? Don't worry, baby; you will sleep tight in intensive care.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

That's enough, don't lower yourself to his standards.

INT. ONE & ONLY HOTEL - DAY

VISTA BAR AND LOUNGE

KASPER AND HUGO

sit in front of a large glass window with a scenic view of the Marina and Table Mountain.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Thank you once again for this opportunity. I apologize profusely for my behavior in the dressing room.

KASPER RORSTED

There's no need for an apology. I shouldn't have imposed. Nonetheless, I've been considering whether or not to purchase a beachfront holiday home in Yzerfontein. But that's beside the point.

(MORE)

KASPER RORSTED (CONT'D)

I'm a boxing fanatic, and I happened to overhear an employee in our marketing department who mentioned that your match would occur. So, I decided that I would attend if I was in South Africa and had no prior engagements.

HUGO

looks and listens to Kasper intently.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Oh, and what did you think of my opponent and I?

KASPER RORSTED

I'm impressed, but more so with your apparent probability of advancement and success. What do you know about Adidas and our sponsorship mandate?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Your company receives many sponsorship requests from deserving athletes. All proposals must be sent to your Sports Marketing department for assessment and consideration.

KASPER RORSTED

That's right; however, I have the final say as the Chief Executive Officer. That being said, I am willing to sign off a sponsorship agreement between you and my company. We would, however, have a say regarding your manager and coaches. After all, we see this as an investment.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Wow, are you for real? I can't believe this is happening to me.

KASPER RORSTED

Are you down?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Of course, I am.

KASPER RORSTED

Great, then I will need a complete color photocopy of your social security card in the meantime. After that, I will send it through to my office for them to prepare the contract.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I can give you my South African identity card now. How long would it take for me to receive the contract?

KASPER RORSTED

Meet me here at the same time tomorrow, and then it'll be finalized.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Great! I cannot begin to thank you for this opportunity.

KASPER RORSTED

It's a pleasure.

KASPER AND HUGO

stand up and shake hands, and part ways.

INT. BALTAZAR RESTAURANT - DAY

HUGO, CALEB, ANTHONY, AND DAVID

sit at a large table. A bottle of sparkling water is on the table, and Hugo drinks his water and looks at each of them.

CALEB WILLIAMS

What is this all about, and why did we have to meet here?

DAVID CARSTENS

Yes, you know very well that we have a tight schedule, and you haven't cooperated.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Neither here nor there, we want to know who that man was, the night of the tournament?

CALEB WILLIAMS

And don't even consider being a pompous ass and end your promising career.

HUGO

is calm and collected and smiles.

DAVID CARSTENS

That's it, I'm out of here.

HUGO WILLIAMS

David, if you leave, it will be to your detriment. Now, can you all take a deep breath and let me talk?

CALEB WILLIAMS

Being patronizing toward us is only going to escalate things.

DAVID CARSTENS

What have you been up to? And what's the bottom line?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Well, as for the first question. I've been lighting fires and chasing rainbows.

Suddenly there is dead silence. Everyone looks toward Hugo with intense anger.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

The man that spoke to me; happened to be the chief executive officer of the Adidas group in Germany. He gave me his business card.

DAVID CARSTENS

Don't piss on our backs and tell us it's raining.

HUGO

places the business card in the center of the table.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Man, you are so gullible!

ANTHONY HAMILTON

There are many con artists out there.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Well, whatever floats your boat. But, I've signed a contract with Kasper. After all, you have all been threatening me for some time. Here, use my iPhone and knock yourself out. You'll see that he is, in fact, the chief executive officer.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Who in their right mind signs a contract without legal counsel? I'm your father, for heaven's sake. You could have at least discussed this with me.

HUGO WILLIAMS

He advised me to do precisely that, and he paid for it.

CALEB WILLIAMS

So, how did you go about selecting legal advice?

HUGO WILLIAMS

This friend of mine studies law; he's at the top of his class.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Well, do you mind if we have a look at your contract?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Sure.

Hugo takes a document out of his Adidas shoulder bag and places it on the table.

INT. BALTAZAR RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Caleb grabs hold of the contract and starts paging through it.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'll be at Apex gym tomorrow afternoon at Two P.M., and my new coach will be there too. We'll then discuss the way forward from there.

INT. APEX BOXING CLUB - DAY

MAIN ENTRANCE

HUGO, CALEB, ANTHONY, AND DAVID

are standing against the wall talking MOS.

LATER

ROBERT WALKER (50s) AND KASPER

enter the gym and walk toward Hugo.

HUGO

introduces his father and the other men to Kasper and Robert MOS.

ROBERT WALKER

Kasper mentioned that you're very competitive? Don't train hard train smart, and listen to your body. As your strength and conditioning coach, you will undergo training rather than throwing weights around as an athlete.

EXT./INT. APEX GYM - MORNING

Hugo opens the trunk and picks up his togbag, Robert parks behind him and gets out of his car, and they both walk into the gym.

FUNCTIONAL FLOOR

ROBERT WALKER

There's got to be a start point and an endpoint with strength and conditioning. So we are looking at assessing your strengths and weaknesses, imbalances, and so forth. Then, after that, we will create a plan which will reflect the improvements and deficiencies and then enhance the strengths. So it's not just a case of doing arm curls because everybody else is doing it.

MONTAGE - HUGO BEGINS TRAINING

-- Squat Warm Up Routine.

-- Deadlift.
 -- Glute Bridge Exercises.
 -- Push-Ups.
 -- Bent-Over Row.
 -- Hollow-Body Hold.
 -- Single-Leg Moves.

END MONTAGE.

INT. CHLOE RICHARD'S ROOM - MORNING

CHLOE

is lying on her bed scrolling through Hugo's Instagram.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - MALCOLM'S BEDROOM/CHLOE'S KITCHEN

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

punches numbers on his cellular phone.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
 Hey Chloe, how are you?

CHLOE RICHARDS
 Hey, Malkie, how are you?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
 I can't complain. I beat this guy
 in sparring today; it totally
 destroyed him. You should have seen
 me; my Dad even said I'm getting
 better than my brother.

Chloe rolls her eyes.

CHLOE RICHARDS
 That's great.

A NOTIFICATION GOES OFF on Chloe's phone while she is talking to Malcolm. It's Hugo.

CHLOE RICHARDS (CONT'D)
 Malcolm, I have a message that's
 just come through. Please hold the
 phone.

Chloe checks her iPhone.

The iPhone screen reads, "Incoming call from Hugo."

CHLOE RICHARDS (CONT'D)
Malcolm, I have an incoming call.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Can I come over for coffee, please?
We can talk about anything. You
know I'm not like Hugo.

CHLOE RICHARDS
That sounds great, but I have to do
something actually. I'm so sorry,
maybe another time.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Sure. Just let me know when you are
free. We can do it any time.

CHLOE RICHARDS
Sure, but I have to go.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Okay Chloe, bye-bye.

MATCH CUT:

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - CHLOE'S KITCHEN/HUGO'S GYM

Chloe answers Hugo's call.

CHLOE RICHARDS
I don't wanna talk to you.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Then just listen, please.

CHLOE RICHARDS
Fine.

HUGO WILLIAMS
But can you listen in person? I
have a lot to say, please I can
explain everything.

CHLOE RICHARDS
My dad will literally kill you if
you come here. That's not the point
you nearly killed my brother. My
parents are considering getting a
restraining order against you.

HUGO WILLIAMS

That girl drugged me, please! I don't even remember anything from that night.

CHLOE RICHARDS

How the hell do you plan on explaining yourself then?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Through footage, please, you are the only one I can trust.

CHLOE RICHARDS

I hate you!

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'll pick you up. Then we can talk at our old spot.

CHLOE RICHARDS

Fine, but you are not forgiven.

MATCH CUT:

INT. HUGO'S CAR - DAY

Chloe gets into the car.

HUGO

leans in to kiss Chloe.

CHLOE RICHARDS

What the hell is wrong with you?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Come on, why did you come here? If you're not going to talk, I know you.

CHLOE RICHARDS

You are terrible. Honestly horrible. All you care about is that guy in the mirror. You will literally burn down my entire house just to feel the heat.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Is this about your brother?

CHLOE RICHARDS

You cheated on me, and you nearly killed my brother. You don't even care about your own brother. You treat everyone around you like total shit. You think you're so bad. People only care about you because you have mastered the art of being an asshole. Everyone keeps warning me about you, even your own family. I keep thinking you can change. Did you even want to explain yourself?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I told you I was drugged.

CHLOE RICHARDS

Come on, I know you use drugs. I literally took the fall for you.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Why did you come here then?

CHLOE RICHARDS

Because I love you. No matter what you do, who you hurt, everything. I just can't stop; I honestly hate myself for it. But now I'm done. Honestly, I'm done. You can get all the championship gold in the world. It's just a shame you still have to be you.

INT. CALEB WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - NIGHT

DINING ROOM

CALEB, ANTHONY, MALCOLM, AND HUGO

sit at the dinner table eating grilled ostrich fillet steak with creamed spinach, figs, and brie cheese.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

How was your first day with your new coach?

HUGO WILLIAMS

It was tremendous. Robert gets me, and he knows what he's doing.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

That's great.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'm scheduled to train with him
tomorrow.

HUGO

pours himself a glass of fresh orange juice.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
Compliments to the chef.

ANTHONY HAMILTON
Thanks, and while your father and I
relax on the porch, you guys can
wash the dishes.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Hear hear.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Thank you, kind sir, but I'm
sparring first thing in the
morning, and I'm exceptionally
exhausted.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I second that.

CALEB AND ANTHONY

exchange questioning glances.

INT. APEX BOXING CLUB - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Two weeks later"

FUNCTIONAL FLOOR

DAVID CARSTENS
I have good news and bad news.
Which do you want to hear first?

HUGO WILLIAMS
The bad news.

DAVID CARSTENS
Well, you asked for it --

HUGO WILLIAMS
-- Okay, okay, the good news.

DAVID CARSTENS
Hmm... are you sure?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Holy moly, can you just get on with it?

David laughs.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Has the cat got your tongue?

DAVID CARSTENS

You'll be fighting against Alex Laurent in Geneva, Switzerland, in four months. He's their middleweight champion.

HUGO

flares up with joy.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Are you for real?

EXT./INT. GENEVA-COINTRIN AIRPORT - SWITZERLAND - DAY

RUNWAY

Lufthansa's landing gear is down; its lights blasting into the lens fills the frame as it descends to the runway. Then, finally, it wipes out the strobe racks in a chaotic blast of xenon.

BAGGAGE CAROUSEL

HUGO

lifts his luggage and places it in his luggage trolley.

EXT./INT. HOTEL RAMADA ENCORE - GENEVA - CONTINUOUS

A black sedan pulls to a sudden stop outside the hotel.

The sedan door opens.

LOBBY

HUGO, CALEB, AND ANTHONY

walk through the entrance.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Holy moly, isn't this spectacular?
I can't believe we each have our
own private bedroom. Needless to
say, I can't wait to explore this
place and Geneva.

INT. HUGO'S HOTEL ROOM - MORNING

The hour hand of an electric clock shifts slightly, marking Six A.M. a soft alarm sounds. A body moves beneath the plush duvet, and a weathered hand reaches out to silence the alarm.

A sigh... a groan... and Hugo pulls back the duvet, kicks out his legs, sits on the edge of the bed, rubbing his eyes, and staring unblinkingly out the hotel window.

HUGO

gets out of bed in his boxers and walks toward the bathroom.

BATHROOM

HUGO

is in the shower, frantically soaping himself quickly; he steps out and stands in front of the wash hand basin and brushes his teeth at twice the average speed.

BEDROOM

HUGO

emerges from the bathroom, walks toward his wardrobe, selects his outfit for the day, and gets dressed.

RESTAURANT

CALEB AND ANTHONY

are enjoying their buffet breakfast.

INT. STARKGYM - DAY

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO'S CONDITIONING AND CIRCUIT WORK OUT

A) One to two punches on the bag, step back, and one to two punches on the bag. The classic jab-and-cross combo.

B) Prisoner squat.

C) High knees and straight shots.

D) Plank.

E) High knees and uppercuts.

BACK TO SCENE

(NOTE: The dialogue in this scene is spoken in French).

INT. HOTEL RAMADA ENCORE - NIGHT

SUPER: "Boxing match between Hugo Williams and Alex Laurent"

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "December 22, 2021"

THE WEIGH-IN ROOM

THE ATHLETIC COMMISSIONS REPRESENTATIVE

stands in front of the press.

HUGO AND ALEX

stand on either side of the Commissions Representative.

THE ATHLETIC COMMISSIONS
REPRESENTATIVE

Ladies and Gentlemen, I will call
the weight of both fighters. I
don't want a debate if they start
rocky in the changing. They will
step on the scale, I will note the
weight, and they will step off, and
I'm calling the weight, that's the
weight, end of the story.

HUGO

stands on the righthand side of the Commissions
Representative. He then removes his clothes and stands on the
scale in his boxers.

THE ATHLETIC COMMISSIONS
REPRESENTATIVE (CONT'D)

One hundred and nine.

ALEX

steps on the scale.

THE ATHLETIC COMMISSIONS
REPRESENTATIVE (CONT'D)

One hundred and seventy-three.

ARENA

Bright floodlights illuminate the arena. The auditorium is filled with CHEERING fight FANS.

THE RING ANNOUNCER

steps into the center of the ring.

A microphone descends from the overhead lighting grid. The ring announcer's hand takes it.

THE RING ANNOUNCER

And now for the thousands in attendance and the millions worldwide who wish they could be here. Ladies and Gentlemen, fasten your seatbelts and man your battle stations. For the middleweight championship, fifteen rounds of boxing. Let's get ready to rumble. Here is the young man who has inherited Switzerland's middleweight championship, the undefeated Alex Laurent.

ALEX

jumps into the ring.

THE RING ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

And now, for our exceptional guest, in the opposite corner, the undisputed, undefeated middleweight champion of South Africa, Hugo Williams.

HUGO

jumps into the ring and starts bouncing on the balls of his feet. Looking out the hood of his robe, dancing, shaking it out, and loosening up. He bites down on his mouthpiece while giving his opponent a demonic stare.

THE REFEREE'S

instructions are given in slow motion.

REFEREE

Let's have a clean fight, touch hands, and go back to your corners.

HUGO

is bent over at the waist, flexing and releasing the last tension in his shoulders. As the bell for round one RINGS.

HUGO AND ALEX

charge out toward each other. Then Hugo dips, throws a left, which Alex takes on the shoulder, and then a big right hand to Alex's head. The crowd goes nuts.

Alex clinches, picks up Hugo, and swings him through One hundred and sixty degrees with his power.

Hugo pushes Alex's head down and away. Hugo clocks Alex with another right. Alex clinches and drives Hugo back to the rope. Alex throws a right that lands. Hugo dances, circles, and stays out of Alex's way.

Then Hugo slams Alex again with a right. Alex gets Hugo in the corner, throws a vicious combination and a hook that nails Hugo in the body, and a wild shot hits Hugo on the side of the head.

INT. HOTEL RAMADA ENCORE - CONTINUOUS

Hugo pushes Alex out of the way and dances and circles. Alex ties him up again. Hugo pushes out, dances, and hits Alex with a right. Alex ties Hugo up, and there's the BELL.

INT. RING - CONTINUOUS

The bell RINGS.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Round Two"

ALEX

comes in like a freight train.

HUGO

merely leans away to avoid Alex, he circles and then snaps off and opens a cut under Alex's right eye. Then, he splits out of there.

HUGO

moves toward Alex and hits him with more combinations. He then gives hard-hitting combinations that rock the presumably immovable Alex. The bell RINGS.

HUGO'S CORNER

HUGO

stands a moment before he sits.

HUGO

breaths heavily, ignores the stool, looks over the crowd and sits down.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Round Fourteen"

ALEX

rushes toward Hugo.

HUGO

pounds right and left hooks. WHAM-WHAM-WHAM-WHAM-WHAM... five powerful hooks.

ALEX

is in trouble, and Hugo is desperate to end it. Haymaker after haymaker; some connect, others are blocked but knock Alex sideways.

Alex is blind but keeps backing and dancing. The bell RINGS.

HUGO'S CORNER

HUGO

waits for the fifteenth bell.

The bell RINGS

HUGO

rises as if on wings, followed by a ROAR from the crowd.

COMMENTATOR

Alex Laurent is not coming out!
Wait a minute... Alex Laurant is
not coming out.

ALEX

sits on his stool and spits out his mouthpiece.

THE RING ANNOUNCER

The new middleweight champion of
Switzerland is Hugo Williams.

HUGO

jumps onto the ropes in his corner.

END OF SUBTITLES

EXT. CLARKE QUAY - SINGAPORE - MORNING (MAY, 2022)

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Five A.M."

HUGO

is out-pounding the streets.

INT. GARAGECIRCUIT BOXING CLUB - DAY

The gym looks like a garbage can turned inside out.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO'S TRAINING

A) Boxing Jump Rope Workout.

B) Hollow-Body Hold.

C) Glute Bridge Exercises.

D) Push-Ups.

E) Single-Leg Moves.

F) Squat Warm-Up Routine.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. ONE FIFTEEN MARINA HOTEL - SENTOSA COVE - DAY

POOL BAR

CALEB, ANTHONY, AND HUGO

sit at a table alongside the swimming pool.

Caleb looks at Hugo.

CALEB WILLIAMS

I found out that the management company, Ringstar Asia, represents your opponent Steven Chen. And that he has a Russian coach named Alexey Volodin, based in Kuala Lumpur in Malaysia.

(MORE)

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

The good news is that he has not trained full-time with his coach, which could be to your advantage.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What else do you know about him?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

He has won one hundred and forty amateur fights.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Impossible.

INT. ONE FIFTEEN MARINA HOTEL - ARENA - NIGHT

The arena is packed, and the crowd is rowdy and waving banners. And lights shine down on the stylishly modern ring, resembling a high-tech launching pad.

There is a large screen, and on stage right of the screen is a large blue partition, and on stage left is a large red partition.

The large screen reads: "The men's middleweight final."

THE RING ANNOUNCER

is in the middle of the ring with a microphone in his hand.

THE RING ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Lady's and Gentlemen, the men's middleweight final, please welcome the boxer, three, two, one, introducing first of the blue corner, from South Africa, Hugo Williams.

HUGO

appears from behind, stage right of the big screen side partition, and trots toward the ring.

CELEB

splatters water on Hugo's face and dabs it off with a towel.

HUGO

gets into the ring.

THE LARGE SCREEN

has a red background with a white numeric countdown in the center.

THE RING ANNOUNCER (V.O.) (CONT'D)
The boxer from the red corner, our
undefeated champion Steven Chen.

STEVEN CHEN (23)

appears from behind, stage left of the big screen side partition, and trots toward the ring.

Steven enters the ring and bows toward each side of the auditorium.

THE REFEREE

stands between the two opponents and gives them instructions MOS.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Forty-two minutes later"

HUGO AND STEVEN

touch gloves.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: Round Fifteen"

THE CROWD

is insanely CHEERING to inhuman heights of endurance.

STEVEN

takes incredible punishment throughout the last round. Then, finally, the last brutal minutes of the savage fight draw to a close.

HUGO'S

eyes are swollen but full of fire, and he blasts the Singaporean across the ring and into unconsciousness. The crowd goes BESERK.

HUGO

walks out of the ring into the locker room.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Well done with the fight.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Yeah, whatever.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Excuse me?

HUGO WILLIAMS
You are not even my trainer
anymore; why do you keep coming to
the locker room after my fights.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Okay, then I'll leave goodbye.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
You think you're the shit now, ey?

HUGO WILLIAMS
We can talk when you have some
belts of your own, baby bro.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Just be careful I don't take yours.

HUGO WILLIAMS
You are struggling to get Chloe
from me; the belts will be more
challenging.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
You think you're always going to
beat me.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Exactly.

INT. ONE FIFTEEN MARINA HOTEL - ARENA - CONTINUOUS

TWO REPORTERS

overhear the two talking.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Give me a shot at your belts, then.

HUGO WILLIAMS
You have like seven fights?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
So, you have nothing to worry
about.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Fine. I'll beat you like I beat the Swedish bum.

MALCOLM

walks out.

REPORTER

Is the fight confirmed?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

What fight?

REPORTER

Between the two pugilistic brothers?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

You sneaky bastard, you were Eve's dropping.

REPORTER

So, is it?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS

Yes, someone needs to bring my brother down to earth. Winning a belt for that doesn't seem like a bad deal.

INT. MR. WILLIAMS GARAGE - DAY

MALCOLM

is doing intensive training.

There is a look in his eyes that has not been seen yet.

FLASHBACK - INT. APEX GYM - YOUNG HUGO'S (10) TRAINING - DAY

- A) Skipping rope
- B) Destroying heavy bag
- C) Doing mitts
- D) Shadow boxing while he is looking at a picture of Hugo.
- E) Young Malcolm (5) is standing at the side of the ring while Hugo is training.
- F) Caleb is standing next to Malcolm.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Come on, Hugo, use the triangle
movement I showed you.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Daddy!

CALEB
is ignoring him.

CALEB WILLIAMS
Hugo, move forward.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Dad.

CALEB WILLIAMS
What is it, Malcolm?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Can I also box like Hugo?

CALEB WILLIAMS
I'm busy, Malcolm; just wait,
please.

HUGO WILLIAMS
No, you can't. Because I'm too
good.

Malcolm walks away.

INT. WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - MALCOLM'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

MALCOLM

enters his bedroom, and starts crying.

MRS. WILLIAMS

gently opens the door and enters the room.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Malkie, why are you crying, baby?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
I wish I could be Hugo.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Why?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
He is better than me.

MRS. WILLIAMS
Because of his boxing?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Yes.

MRS. WILLIAMS
You know what, I think one day you
can beat him. But I will love you
even if that doesn't happen.

END OF FLASHBACK.

INT. APEX GYM - DAY

MALCOLM

shadow boxes while looking at a picture of Hugo, and he
starts CRYING.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
(to self)
I will beat you.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO GETS EVEN

- A) Hugo is drinking at the nightclub.
- B) Conversing with girls.
- C) Dancing.

BACK TO SCENE

INT. EMPERORS PALACE - DAY

WEIGH IN ROOM

PRESENTER
Now, to introduce the fighters for
tomorrow's main event. The duel
between two brothers. Let's see who
is going to carry the family name
the highest. Introducing first to
the scale Hugo Williams.

Hugo walks into the room like he owns it. His arrogance is
almost off-putting at this point. Yet his entourage is still
cheering him on. Hugo steps on the scale.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)
 One hundred and fifty-seven pounds.

Hugo gets off the scale and throws a middle finger at Malcolm's side of the scale.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)
 Next to the scale, we have the underdog. Malcolm Williams.

Malcolm comes to the scale.

PRESENTER (CONT'D)
 One hundred and fifty-six pounds, fighters get ready for the face-off.

They both walk to each other with fierce speed. They square up, but people are standing between them as they are unpredictable.

HUGO WILLIAMS
 Your career is done, baby bro.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
 We'll see.

LATER

ARENA

HUGO

gets out of the ring and walks toward the dressing room. People are laughing at him and teasing him.

DRESSING ROOM

Hugo is sitting on the bench. He looks very disappointed.

CARA
 I'm breaking up with you.

HUGO
 Because I lost the fight?

CARA
 Yes.

MALCOLM

comes walking into the dressing room. Cara goes and stands next to Malcolm with her arm around him.

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
I guess you were wrong about your
belt and your girl?

HUGO

rushes to his feet, engaging in a fight with Malcolm. Landing
a solid shot to his ribs and then leaves.

CARA
(to Malcolm)
Are you alright?

MALCOLM WILLIAMS
Yes, I'm fine.

EXT. CORNER OF EBENEZER ROAD AND DOCK ROAD - CAPE TOWN -
NIGHT

Hugo is sitting and drinking a bottle of whiskey. It's Eight
P.M., and his phone rings, and he answers.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - HUGO IN CAPE TOWN/DETECTIVE
NEVENS AT THE CAPE TOWN POLICE STATION

HUGO WILLIAMS
What's up?

DETECTIVE NEVINS
Hugo Williams, Detective Nevins,
calling from Cape Town Police
Station. Where are you?

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'm sitting and getting drunk at
the corner of Ebenezer Road and
Dock road beneath Helen Suzman
Boulevard with my new friends.

HUGO

stares at a few homeless people making a fire.

DETECTIVE NEVINS
You need to stay there; you are a
person of interest in the murder of
your brother.

Hugo drops his bottle.

HUGO WILLIAMS
What?

DETECTIVE NEVINS
Just stay where you are; your
brother died from internal
bleeding.

MATCH CUT:

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. CAPE TOWN - HIGH COURT - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Six Months Later"

INT. CAPE TOWN - HIGH COURT - DAY

THE JUDGE

sits behind the bench.

JUDGE
Mr. Williams, I need you to
approach the stand.

HUGO

walks toward the podium.

JUDGE (CONT'D)
Mr. Williams, the court has
rigorously reviewed the record
concerning the defendant's trial.
Including both the guilty and
penalty proceedings and the
memorandum submitted by both the
state and the defense. The court
has evaluated and weighed the
aggravating factors as the jury has
found to exist beyond a reasonable
doubt. And the mitigating
circumstances established by the
evidence.

HUGO

is in front of the podium with his hands cuffed.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

The court acknowledges that this weighed is not a quantitative comparison but instead requires a qualitative analysis of each aggravating factor and each mitigating circumstance. The court has assigned an appropriate way to each and finds that the aggravating factor heavily outweighs the mitigating circumstances presented. The court finds the jury's recommendation to impose a fifteen-year prison sentence and the possibility of parole is consistent with its verdict. Further, it is based on the evidence presented regarding any aggravating and mitigating circumstances. The court agrees with the jury's aggravating and mitigating circumstances. The court agrees with the jury's anonymous recommendation based on assessing the aggravating factors weighed against the mitigating circumstances.

Hugo is sad and bewildered. The Judge continues passing sentence.

JUDGE (CONT'D)

The court finds that the aggravating circumstances substantially outweigh the mitigating circumstances and sufficiently warns of a fifteen-year prison sentence in this case, with the possibility of parole. Therefore the court finds that this sentence is the appropriate penalty the court should impose for the death of Malcolm Williams as charged in count one of the indictment. Accordingly, as to count one, for the death of Malcolm Williams, the defendant, Hugo Williams, is hereby sentenced to fifteen-years imprisonment.

(MORE)

JUDGE (CONT'D)

The defendant shall be delivered into the Cape Town state of corrections custody at Thornwood prison, where he shall be confined until the date is determined. You will remain incarcerated until your release is scheduled to occur. We are now concluded.

EXT./INT. THORNWOOD PRISON - DAY

The law enforcement van rattles as it drives into the drop-off zone and comes to an immediate halt, and the engine shuts off.

A BUZZER SOUNDS.

TWO CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS escort Hugo into the building and uncuff him.

PRISON FRONT DESK

OFFICER 1

Hand over all your personal belongings.

Hugo hands over his watch.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yes, other than the clothes on my body.

OFFICER 2

Alright, the other two officers will attend to that shortly.

TWO CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

escort Hugo into a communal shower room.

OFFICER 1

Stand against the wall and face us.

HUGO

stares at the two men.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Now what?

OFFICER 2

You left your modesty at the entrance of the prison. Now get your kit off.

OFFICER 1

looks at Hugo.

HUGO

strips naked and stands before the two officers.

OFFICER 2

examines Hugo's clothes.

OFFICER 1

Turn around.

Hugo turns around.

OFFICER 1

puts on surgical gloves and begins twisting Hugo's head and inspects it. After that, he examines Hugo's face and mouth. He then raises Hugo's arms, places them against the wall, inspects his armpits and buttocks, and takes his gloves off.

Hugo turns around and faces the two men.

OFFICER 2

gives Hugo a bar of soap.

OFFICER 2

Don't just stand there; take a shower.

INT. HUGO'S PRISON CELL - NIGHT

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Five years later"

HUGO

is lying on his bed, paging through a Playboy magazine.

MITCH (20s) is standing beside Hugo.

MITCH

That magazine is going to drive you crazy.

HUGO WILLIAMS

How?

MITCH

It's like window shopping without money.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Don't you have something better to do?

MITCH

No.

Hugo and Mitch LAUGH.

MITCH (CONT'D)

At least you got your girlfriend visiting you.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Ain't my girlfriend.

MITCH

Okay, friend.

MITCH

has bunny ears.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I don't have friends.

MITCH

Am I not your friend?

HUGO WILLIAMS

You are my cellmate.

Mitch

gets up angrily.

MITCH

Screw you, man. We'll see how far you get with that mentality in this place.

MITCH

walks out.

GUARD

Hugo, you've got a visitor.

INT. THORNWOOD PRISON - DAY

VISITOR'S TELEPHONE CUBICLES

CHLOE

sits in front of a window with a telephone receiver in her hand.

HUGO

walks and sits on the other side of the window; he refuses to pick up the phone and stares at Chloe with a lousy attitude. Finally, after a few seconds, he picks up the receiver.

HUGO

What do you want?

CHLOE RICHARDS

Hugo, this isn't you.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I don't understand?

CHLOE RICHARDS

Come on, you're not a criminal. It was an accident. You don't have to be mean to everyone.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You don't know the real me.

CHLOE RICHARDS

I do.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You don't; you just know the version of me that you want me to be.

CHLOE RICHARDS

Maybe that's true, but I know this is not you. You're not what everybody says you are.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Why is everyone saying it then? This is who I am. This is where I belong; even my father thinks so.

CHLOE RICHARDS

You made a mistake; why can't you see that.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What does it matter when he's dead.

CHLOE RICHARDS

Hugo, let me help you, please.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You know what, Chloe, just get the f#*k out of here. The only reason you are here is that your dad doesn't love you. So now you crave attention from any man you can find, including me, because no one else wants you, right, only a killer?

CHLOE

storms out, CRYING.

HUGO

goes back to his cell.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Three days later"

PRISON GUARD

ambles toward Hugo's cell.

PRISON GUARD

We received news that Chloe Richards attempted to take her life and is in intensive care after visiting you. You undoubtedly know how to ruin people's lives.

HUGO

starts crying in his cell.

MITCH

Why are you crying like a baby? Did your girlfriend not want to kiss you?

HUGO

walks toward Mitch and throws a left hook dropping him to the floor.

A few of Mitch's friends come running to his cell and begin fighting with Hugo.

HUGO

just throws a flurry of punches, dropping a few of them.

ONE GUY pulls out a knife.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Do you think I'm afraid to die?
Then, go ahead and stab me.

The guy is hesitant.

FRIEND 1

What the hell is wrong with you,
white boy?

HUGO

drops to his knees and signals them to come and beat him. The four friends start hitting Hugo until the guards come, and they run away.

MITCH

is lying on the floor unconscious.

A GUARD

walks in and sees Mitch and immediately takes Hugo to solitary confinement.

INT. THORNWOOD PRISON - CONTINUOUS

SOLITARY CONFINEMENT

HUGO,

with his face covered in blood and stares toward the wall. He lies down on the floor and starts talking to himself.

HUGO WILLIAMS

(to self)

I did everything you wanted me to do my whole life. I never said anything. All you ever cared about was boxing this, boxing that! But, you know what, Dad? Look where boxing got me. Look where it got me! I killed your f-ing son. I killed my own f-ing brother.

Hugo SCREAMS

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
 (to self)
 What do you want?
 What do you want, Dad?
 You taught me this shit, and now
 you left me.

HUGO

starts CRYING.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
 (to self)
 Why did you die, Malkie? Why did
 you f-ing die, man?

Hugo gets up and starts hitting the wall.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)
 Why did you die? Why did you die?

Hugo falls to his knees.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

CHLOE'S PARENTS

are looking over Chloe lying on a hospital bed.

MR. RICHARDS
 I hate him.

CHLOE'S MOM
 He's a child, and he's not that
 different from you.

MR. RICHARDS
 I fail to remember where I killed
 my brother.

CHLOE'S MOM
 You don't know the whole story.
 Hugo might be many things to many
 people. Yet he is the only one to
 ever confront you about your
 drinking.

MR. RICHARDS
 He nearly killed our son, yet you
 still defend him.

(MORE)

MR. RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Now he almost killed our daughter.
Do you love this boy?

CHLOE'S MOM

He doesn't have a mother to teach him. All he had was competition his whole life. He is literally you. All the people who helped shape him into what he is, have left him to the wolves.

MR. RICHARDS

If he ever gets out, I'm going to kill him myself.

CHLOE

goes into a seizure on the hospital bed.

MR. RICHARDS

runs out and calls the staff.

MR. RICHARDS (CONT'D)

Please help me; my daughter is having a grand mal seizure.

THE STAFF

run toward Chloe's bed and force everyone to leave.

MR. RICHARDS

leaves his wife, gets into his car, and drives to one of his old army friends.

EXT./INT. HARDY'S SCRAP YARD - CONTINUOUS

THOMAS

is sitting in front of his desk.

THOMAS HARDY

John, it's good to see you. I'm sorry about your daughter.

MR. RICHARDS

Yes, it takes me back to our army days together. The uncertainty of whether we would ever see our families again. I need your help.

THOMAS HARDY

Anything.

MR. RICHARDS

Do you still have contacts inside prison from your illegal dogfighting days?

THOMAS HARDY

John, you know that was my old life.

MR. RICHARDS

I saved your life when we served together. You owe me one.

THOMAS HARDY

Now, you want to put me back in the hole?

MR. RICHARDS

The fate of my daughter is more important, I'm sure you understand.

THOMAS HARDY

Please don't tell me what I think you want to say to me. Hugo's twenty-two years old.

MR. RICHARDS

His life causes more harm than good. I need him dead; all is fair in love and war. The fate of my daughter is both love and war.

THOMAS HARDY

Are you sure about this?

MR. RICHARDS

I'll pay anyone anything, but I need him dead. Otherwise, my daughter will keep running back to him.

THOMAS HARDY

I'll keep you updated.

MR. RICHARDS

I knew I could trust you.

MR. RICHARDS

storms out.

THOMAS

scratches his head, picks up the phone, and starts punching in numbers.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - THOMAS'S SCRAP YARD/THORNWOOD PRISON

THOMAS HARDY
Is this Thornwood prison?

THORNWOOD PRISON RECEPTIONIST
Yes.

THOMAS HARDY
I need to speak to a dear friend of mine; he is in cell block Three hundred and forty-five.

THORNWOOD PRISON RECEPTIONIST
What's his name?

THOMAS HARDY
Clinton Amber.

THORNWOOD PRISON RECEPTIONIST
No problem, you can see him on the 8th of this month at 10 A.M.

THOMAS HARDY
Thank you.

THORNWOOD PRISON RECEPTIONIST
Please remember to bring your social security card. Without it, we cannot allow you to enter the premises.

INT. HARDY'S SCRAP YARD - CONTINUOUS

THOMAS HARDY
I will do so.

MATCH CUT:

INT. THORNWOOD PRISON - DAY

VISITOR'S TELEPHONE CUBICLES

THOMAS

sits in front of a window with a telephone receiver in his hand.

CLINTON

sits down and picks up the receiver.

THOMAS HARDY

Clinton.

CLINTON

I thought your criminal days were over; why are you here? Are you writing a Christian biography saying how much you have changed?

THOMAS HARDY

I got a job for you.

CLINTON

I knew I saw that devil in you again; what you need?

THOMAS HARDY

Are you familiar with

Hugo Williams?

CLINTON

The boxer?

THOMAS HARDY

Yes.

CLINTON

Let me guess. This has something to do with that girl who tried to kill herself.

THOMAS HARDY

Don't worry about the reason; all you need to know is that someone will pay a large amount of money if he goes to the canvas one last time and doesn't get up.

CLINTON

Well, he will waste his money. That boy will kill himself one of these days.

THOMAS HARDY

Why don't you make sure that one of these days becomes today?

CLINTON

I hope you know I don't do hits for pennies. This will cost a lot.

THOMAS HARDY

We get the blood; you will get your money.

CLINTON

nods and gives a devilish smile, and then returns to his cell.

FOUR MEN

are sitting and playing cards.

CLINTON

hands one of them a photo with Hugo's face on it.

THE MAN

walks out to the cell door and checks for guards.

He then whistles twice, and three more men walk toward their cells.

THE MAN

at the door hands the three men walking by casually a picture and a knife.

THE HITMAN

looks at the photo.

HUGO'S CELL

Hugo is lying on his bed and is alarmed when they come in; he jumps up as soon as he gets up...

THE HITMAN

walks inside the cell and stabs Hugo four times in the stomach.

THE HITMAN

rubs the photograph over the wounds to get blood on the image. Then, he walks out, and the knife and picture disappears into the crowd.

INT. GROOTE SCHUUR HOSPITAL - CONTINUOUS

EMERGENCY ROOM

The Emergency Room personnel are busy with patients.

Doors crash open.

TWO PARAMEDICS

wheel in Hugo.

PARAMEDIC 1

Where do you want him?

NURSE

Uh, check with the triage nurse.
I'm off duty.

PARAMEDIC 2

C'mon, man, he has multiple stab
wounds.

The nurse shoots a look at the gurney. The young man's eyes
are open, wide open.

LATER

There is eight emergency staff surrounding Hugo. He is
immediately hooked onto equipment, and a nurse injects him in
the arm.

DOCTOR

What we are going to do is get an
x-ray done first.

HUGO

is carted off to have his x-ray taken.

EMERGENCY ROOM

The staff is trying to stem the bleeding.

INT. THORNWOOD PRISON - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Two months later"

A correctional officer walks along a row of Cells. Prisoners
lie on their cots, listen to their radios, and read comic
books. The walls of every cell are decorated
with graffiti and naked women playboy posters.

THREE CORRECTIONAL OFFICERS

enter Hugo's cell.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER 1
Hugo... moment you've been waiting
for.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'm ready.

The odd foursome exits the cell and moves down the tier to
CATCALL, HOOTS, and scattered APPLAUSE. HUGO stars ahead as
he takes proud, almost military strides.

EXT. THORNWOOD PRISON - CONTINUOUS

HUGO

blinks at the sun as the correctional officer brings him out.
There's no car waiting for him, no family or friends.

CORRECTIONAL OFFICER 1
Any people comin' for ya?

HUGO

shakes his head and then starts walking.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

HUGO AND CLEO GORDON (25)

sit on the beach, they are smoking a joint.

CLEO GORDON
Tell me you didn't miss this.

HUGO WILLIAMS
A lot has changed since the last
time you've been here.

CLEO GORDON
That night was crazy, man. You
nearly drowned in the ocean.

HUGO AND CLEO

LAUGH HYSTERICALLY.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You know, you were the only one other than Chloe to visit me in prison, Cleo. So I must thank you for that.

CLEO GORDON

You don't have to thank me. I had to make sure you weren't raped, you know.

HUGO LAUGHS

HUGO WILLIAMS

How's Chloe been?

CLEO GORDON

Her brother died in a car accident.

HUGO WILLIAMS

She'll never forgive me.

CLEO GORDON

She still likes you, but she never wants to see you again. That's what she told Sarah.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You're still dating Sarah?

CLEO GORDON

We're married; we've got two kids.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Why didn't you tell me?

CLEO GORDON

I didn't want to make you feel like you were missing out, man, don't hate me for that.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What else have I missed?

CLEO GORDON

Apex reopened.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Are you training there?

CLEO GORDON

No, it's not your dad's gym anymore. But, your uncle Anthony sure is some piece of work.

HUGO WILLIAMS

He's a psychopath; that's what he is.

CLEO GORDON

He did you dirty. You wouldn't guess who's the World Champion now and Chloe's new boyfriend.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Vincent Pierce? That's impossible.

CLEO GORDON

He's a local superstar now. You beat him when we got high and drunk every night for four weeks. Now he's the world champion. You could beat him if you just go talk to your father.

HUGO WILLIAMS

No.

CLEO GORDON

Are you going to let Vincent steal your girl and your belt just like that?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Screw you.

CLEO GORDON

What else are you going to do? You've changed Hugo, and I don't see any trace of the real you anymore. You're just this docile sad man with no care in the world.

EXT. BEACH - CONTINUOUS

CLEO GORDON

I haven't seen the real you in a long time, but I kept visiting you, leaving my life on hold to ensure you don't kill yourself in a prison cell.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I didn't ask you for anything.

HUGO

stands up.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Why don't you stand up and find out
how docile I am?

CLEO GORDON

You know you can't touch me. You're
on parole.

HUGO

punches Cleo directly in the face.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Call the police.

HUGO

takes Cleo's car keys, gets into his car, and starts it.

EXT./INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

HUGO

is intoxicated and kicks the door until it breaks open and
collapses through the doorway.

EXT. CLEO AND SARAH'S HOUSE - DAY

SARAH

is on the phone, looking outside her window impatiently.

SARAH

sees Cleo Gordon and runs outside.

SARAH GORDON

Where the hell have you been?

CLEO GORDON

It's a long story.

SARAH GORDON

Does the story start with the name
Hugo?

CLEO GORDON

Woman, mind your own business.

SARAH GORDON

Your business is my business. I'm your damn wife. What's he ever done for you?

CLEO GORDON

Just give me a chance to talk.

SARAH

gives Cleo a blank stare.

SARAH GORDON

Where is the car?

CLEO GORDON

He's just borrowing it for a while; it's okay, baby.

SARAH

shuts the door in his face.

EXT. CLEO AND SARAH'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

CLEO

takes his cellular phone out of his pocket and calls Hugo.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - HUGO'S MOTEL ROOM/CLEO'S HOUSE

HUGO WILLIAMS

That's payback for hurting my feelings; what did she say, and where are you?

CLEO GORDON

You are insane, man; I'm at my house. But you won't know where that is, you jailbird. Just meet me at Ristorante-Posticino in Sea Point.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I see your wife's got your balls in her purse.

CLEO GORDON

Just hurry your ass up.

MATCH CUT:

EXT. RISTORANTE POSTICINO RESTAURANT - CONTINUOUS

Cleo waits in front of the restaurant. Hugo pulls up next to him.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Get in!

Cleo gets in the car.

CLEO GORDON

Man, what is wrong with you?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'm going to fight again.

CLEO LAUGHS.

CLEO GORDON

This is about Chloe, uh?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yes, but it's more about Vincent.

CLEO GORDON

So, what are you waiting for?
First, let's go to your Dad.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'm not going to do this with my
Dad.

CLEO GORDON

Who then?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Especially when they almost killed
me in prison. A guy kept visiting
me, I could see him, but I couldn't
talk at that time due to my
punctured lung. He wondered why no
one came to visit me. So, he kept
telling me stories to help me get
through it. I don't know his name.
I don't know where he lives. But I
damn sure know he is a boxer and a
trainer.

CLEO GORDON

How do you know he is a boxer?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I just know.

CLEO GORDON

So, you want this stranger to train you, and you don't even know for sure he is a trainer?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yes.

CLEO GORDON

Maybe Sarah is right about you.

INT. SUPERSPORT INTERNATIONAL - DAY

STUDIO

REPORTER

Thank you for being here.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Thank you for having me.

REPORTER

You have been incarcerated for five years. Yet, most people consider you as a has-been. How did you acclimate to life behind bars, and what do you have to say to those who don't believe you could have a successful come back?

Hugo grins.

HUGO WILLIAMS

While I was incarcerated, the lousy publicity kept coming, coming and coming. And it was tough to adjust and adapt to my new surroundings. Everyone is entitled to an opinion. When you're on a high, you have a lot of followers, and when you're going down, these people will leave. They also don't just leave. They break you down mentally, and then they leave. I've also known it to be true, but to see it happen to me, was a different story altogether. I know what's it like to take blow after blow. However, I am determined to make a comeback. The stigma that you have to be undefeated is overrated.

(MORE)

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

What is essentially more important is if you lose, to have the tenacity to come back again until you reach your full potential.

REPORTER

Before the fall, you held the International Boxing Organization (IBO) middleweight belt and the WBF Africa middleweight belt. Then you won Switzerland's middleweight champion and Singapore's champion with a two-month gap in-between. Only to return to Cape Town after having an altercation with your brother, which cost you your brother's life and the consequences of your actions.

HUGO WILLIAMS

First of all, you have no idea what happened that day. Secondly, I served my time, so it's none of your business. More importantly, I was under the impression that this would be an interview, not a criminal trial.

REPORTER

Oops, did I hit a nerve?

HUGO WILLIAMS

That's it; this live interview is over.

HUGO

storms out of the studio.

EXT. SEA POINT - PROMENADE - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Three weeks later"

HUGO

runs while looking at the stunning views of the Atlantic Seaboard. Finally, he comes to a halt at a bench with a man reading The Cape Argus newspaper.

NICKY OPPENHEIMER (70s)

folds up the newspaper, and they have direct eye contact.

MR. OPPENHEIMER
Nothing is what it seems.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Excuse me, were you talking to me?

MR. OPPENHEIMER
I don't see anyone else around, do you?

HUGO WILLIAMS
Do we know each other?

MR. OPPENHEIMER
Should we?

HUGO WILLIAMS
Sorry, but I'm pretty busy right now.

MR. OPPENHEIMER
Of course, you are. Let me buy you a drink at the Winchester Hotel across the road.

HUGO WILLIAMS
I'm sorry, I don't swing that way.

NICKY LAUGHS.

MR. OPPENHEIMER
I know.

HUGO WILLIAMS
What do you want?

MR. OPPENHEIMER
I can give you a break that you've been looking for, interested?

HUGO WILLIAMS
What makes you think I need a break, old man?

MR. OPPENHEIMER
Humor me.

EXT. WINCHESTER HOTEL - CONTINUOUS

TERRACE

A WAITRESS

takes them to their table and gives them each a menu.

NICKY AND HUGO

sit at a table and look at each other.

WAITRESS

Can I take your drink order?

MR. OPPENHEIMER

Yes, I'll have a scotch neat, and
he will have still water.

The waitress then leaves.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Okay, I'm here; now, let's cut the
BS. Who are you?

MR. OPPENHEIMER

You are a wannabe has-been that
wants a comeback. And I know about
your injury and the people who left
you and your old allies.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Okay, and now you want a noddy
badge.

MR. OPPENHEIMER

Be careful, son. I could well be
your last shot! My name is Nicky
Oppenheimer.

HUGO WILLIAMS

The South African diamond magnate?

MR. OPPENHEIMER

Yes, do I have your attention now?

HUGO WILLIAMS

Yes, Sir, you most certainly do.

MR. OPPENHEIMER

Can I take you to your backpackers
and collect your stuff and then we
can go to my estate.

HUGO WILLIAMS

When, now?

MR. OPPENHEIMER

Yes.

EXT. TSWALU KALAHARI - GAME RESERVE - JOHANNESBURG - DAY

Mr. Oppenheimer's Bell longranger helicopter flies over the Korannaberg mountains toward the red dunes, rippling away to the horizon.

HUGO

looks out the window and admires the view.

LATER

INT. TARKUNI HOMESTEAD - NIGHT

HUGO'S LUXURIOUS EN-SUITE BEDROOM

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - HUGO'S BEDROOM/CLEO'S LIVING ROOM

HUGO

punches numbers on his cellular phone.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Eight P.M."

CLEO GORDON

What's up? Let me guess, you can't make it.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Hmm... --

CLEO GORDON

-- I knew it; when will you learn to keep to your word? Where are you?

HUGO WILLIAMS

When are you going to cut me some slack?

CLEO GORDON

I will, as soon as you grow up and start being responsible.

HUGO WILLIAMS

You're right; I can't make it because I'm in Johannesburg.

CLEO GORDON
 Right, and I'm the Pope. So let me
 guess; you are high?

HUGO WILLIAMS
 No, I'm at Tarkuni Homestead.
 However, you are welcome to look up
 the number and ask them to put you
 through to me.

CLEO GORDON
 Okay, I will.

MATCH CUT:

INT. KLEIN JAN RESTAURANT - MORNING

MR. OPPENHEIMER AND HUGO

sit at a table and have breakfast.

MR. OPPENHEIMER
 I am an affluent, influential man
 and money talks son.

HUGO WILLIAMS
 If that happens, I will eat my hat.

MR. OPPENHEIMER AND HUGO

begin LAUGHING.

INT. ADIDAS AG - GERMANY - DAY

BOARDROOM

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Six weeks later"

EXECUTIVES OF THE ADIDAS MARKETING DEPARTMENT, ADIDAS LEGAL
 COUNSEL, MR. OPPENHEIMER, HUGO, AND MR. RORSTED

sit and discuss business.

KASPER RORSTED
 Well, gentlemen, my marketing
 department advised me that boxing
 is a young man's game. But, more
 importantly, the likelihood of Hugo
 being a viable contender for the
 world middleweight championship is
 zero to none.

(MORE)

KASPER RORSTED (CONT'D)
 Therefore, I apologize for being
 apprehensive about seeing you
 again. Thank you for giving us time
 to discuss and assess his training
 footage. Nevertheless, I am very
 impressed with what you have
 presented us today. After careful
 assessment and consideration, we
 would be delighted to be Mr.
 Williams's official sponsor again.

INT. BALTAZAR RESTAURANT - NIGHT (CAPE TOWN)

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Two weeks later"

MR. OPPENHEIMER
 The renowned boxing coach Teddy
 Atlas has been appointed to coach
 you.

HUGO WILLIAMS
 Wow, that's great!

MR. OPPENHEIMER
 You begin training first thing
 tomorrow morning. So you better get
 your beauty sleep.

INT. LONG STREET BOXING CLUB - DAY

As Hugo walks the rope, jumping up and back.

TEDDY ATLAS (50s) AND TIM CLARK (25)

enters the gym, with the paparazzi behind him, who start
 photographing. At the same time, Hugo's coach introduces him
 to his new sparring partner.

TEDDY ATLAS
 Hi Hugo, meet your new sparring
 partner, Tim Clark; he's twenty-
 five years old and is an American
 kickboxer.

TIM CLARK
 Pleased to meet you.

HUGO WILLIAMS
 The pleasure is all mine.

TEDDY ATLAS

Great, now that the two of you have become acquainted, let's get to it.

LATER

THE RING

Like a distant bird, Teddy gives the two opponents instructions MOS.

TIM CLARK AND HUGO

touch gloves.

TIM

throws his long left jab. It keeps Hugo at a set distance. Now he has Hugo's range, dancing away from Hugo's charges.

Then, halfway through the round, Hugo's eyes have hunted out an opportunity. To Tim's surprise, he throws his first combination with a few hard shots that rock Tim's head back. And, then, Hugo easily evades.

INT. CALEB WILLIAMS RESIDENCE - NIGHT

TERRACE

Caleb sits at a wooden table and drinks his martini.

ANTHONY

walks toward Caleb and hands him a newspaper.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Read the headlines. Do you see anybody you know?

CALEB

places his martini on the table and reads the Cape Argus.

CALEB WILLIAMS

I smell a rat; there's no way Hugo could have pulled this off on his own.

Caleb looks at Anthony intently.

CALEB WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Needless to say, being able to convince Adidas to consider being his official sponsor again, after what went down, without the help of an affluent, influential person within the industry with a track record. Whoever that person is must undoubtedly be convinced beyond the shadow of a doubt that Hugo still has what it takes to become the world's middleweight champion.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Yes, but who would want to invest so much time and money into a criminal?

CALEB WILLIAMS

Well, now that we have reached a consensus. Is there something you wish to tell me?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Oh boy, I don't quite know how to respond to that. Are you insinuating that I'm the mastermind behind this?

CALEB WILLIAMS

Are you?

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Look, Caleb, I think you have had too much to drink and should get into bed before you drown in the swimming pool.

Caleb LAUGHS.

CALEB WILLIAMS

If you think that I'm intimidated or afraid of you, you are in for a big surprise. I've lost my wife to cancer, my youngest son to a son who's a psychopath. You better think again.

ANTHONY HAMILTON

Well, you have just proved that you are drunk.

(MORE)

ANTHONY HAMILTON (CONT'D)

Firstly, I would never do anything to harm you, and I haven't seen or contacted Hugo in years. So let me help you to your bedroom, and I'll let myself out.

CALEB WILLIAMS

Okay, fair enough. I'll take you up on your offer.

INT. RICHARDS RESIDENCE - DAY

LIVING ROOM

Mr. Richards is watching television.

NEWS CHANNEL TWELVE theme music introduction.

NEWS ANCHOR

Good afternoon South Africa; it's One P.M. Wednesday, January 1, 2031. Let's take a live look outside; courtesy of our wireless camera, you can see Cape Town International Airport. We are now joined by our international boxing news correspondent.

On the television screen, the interior of domestic arrivals.

DAN RAFAEL

This is Dan Rafael reporting live... from Cape Town International Airport. Teddy Atlas is one of the world-renowned boxing coaches who has been appointed to coach Hugo Williams.

Dan looks toward Teddy.

DAN RAFAEL (CONT'D)

What is your opinion around the controversy of Mr. Williams returning to the ring after five years of incarceration and being scheduled to fight for the WBA middleweight title in six weeks?

TEDDY ATLAS

Many points in Mr. Hugo William's career and character will probably always remain controversial.

(MORE)

TEDDY ATLAS (CONT'D)

However, he is scheduled to fight for the WBA title in six weeks. The African Boxing Confederation is trying to do their damndest to prevent the fight from happening. They see it as unfair and unjust to the many well-deserved fighters' who are running for the title. And I wish them the best in their endeavors as the fight takes place.

Teddy walks off.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - CONTINUOUS

NEWS ANCHOR

Thanks for watching your local news. On behalf of all of us at Channel Twelve, see you next time.

INT. RICHARDS RESIDENCE - CONTINUOUS

Mr. Richards picks up the remote, switches the television off, gulps down a beer bottle, and smashes it against the wall.

After that, he immediately walks toward the kitchen, picks up the telephone receiver mounted on the wall, and starts punching in numbers.

INTERCUT - PHONE CONVERSATION - MR. RICHARDS KITCHEN/THOMAS'S KITCHEN

THOMAS HARDY

Hello.

MR. RICHARDS

Do you want to know an interesting story?

THOMAS HARDY

Sure.

MR. RICHARDS

Your wife received a bouquet of tulips at work five minutes ago with a card.

THOMAS HARDY

Oh, ye, from who?

MR. RICHARDS

Don't you want to know what it said?

THOMAS HARDY

What did it say?

MR. RICHARDS

Our sincere condolences for the loss of your husband.

THOMAS HARDY

That's a sick joke.

MR. RICHARDS

Well, your wife is on her way to me right now.

THOMAS HARDY

What on earth for?

MR. RICHARDS

Apparently, your body was found in a dumpster.

THOMAS HARDY

Listen, whatever you are smoking, it's got to be good. Can I have some?

Mr. Richards slams the receiver down. Thomas looks at the phone and hangs up.

MATCH CUT:

MR. RICHARDS

sits in his study in a lazy boy recliner, unscrews the cap off the bottle of scotch, and pours himself a healthy dose. He opens his desk drawer, reaches into the back, and finds an old pack of cigarettes, half-empty.

He taps one from the pack, places it between his lips, and lights it, taking a deep pull. He holds it and exhales and relaxes. He finishes his drink along with the cigarette and pours himself another...

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

TWO MEN

prop Thomas up as a long-chained shackle is clamped to his left ankle. The other cuff is thrown over the ceiling beam to hoist him for a good, prolonged beating.

INT. ARMORY - MINNEAPOLIS - USA - NIGHT

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: Six weeks later"

ARENA

An array of laser lights rip across the audience. The auditorium is filled with CHEERING fight FANS.

THE RING ANNOUNCER

steps into the center of the ring.

A microphone descends from the overhead lighting grid. The ring announcer's hand takes it.

THE RING ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen, presenting
the exciting former world champion
Hugo Williams.

THE CROWD ROARS.

HUGO

climbs the steps into the ring, and both his feet are synchronized as they hit the canvas.

THE RING ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

The WBA world champion and rising
superstar in boxing David Morrell.

DAVID MORRELL (27)

enters the ring.

REFEREE

Let's have a clean fight, touch
hands, and go back to your corners.

The bell RINGS.

SUPER: "Round One"

HUGO

stands up and immediately goes
right at Morrel.

LATER

COMMENTATOR 1/JOE
Williams goes down after absorbing
a left hand to the jaw.

THE CROWD ROARS.

THE REFEREE

walks toward Hugo.

REFEREE
One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six,
Seven, Eight, Nine.

COMMENTATOR 2/MIKE
Could this be the end of Williams?

SUPER: "Round Two"

COMMENTATOR 1/JOE (V.O.)
He just tries to assert himself,
and I'm talking about Williams.
Right off the bat, he's going right
at Morrell, and it looks like he's
trying to use that right hook
because Williams is known to keep
that left hand down a lot, and he's
going right after him. Looking for
that right hook, like right there.

COMMENTATOR 2/MIKE (V.O.)
Morrell's left hand is fast toward
Williams. He's got Williams dancing
already. There Williams steps in
again, his ability to land the left
hand. Now Williams has Morrell in a
corner, and he can't stay there.

THE REFEREE

separates Morrell from Williams.

JOE (V.O.)
Williams gets a right hook, and
Morrell just spins around.

The bell RINGS.

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Round Three"

JOE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Williams hits Morrell with a right
jab and holds him.

REFEREE
Don't hold, break.

Hugo and David, let go of each other.

JOE (V.O.)
Williams is calm and positioned;
he's got the capability of being a
positioned fighter like this. He
doesn't get overly excited and
waist punches as he continues to do
that.

INT. ARMORY - MINNEAPOLIS - USA - CONTINUOUS

MORRELL'S CORNER

MORRELL

sits on his stool and spits out his mouthpiece.

MORRELL'S COACH

enters the ring and kneels before him.

MORRELL'S COACH
Let's see some blood. Then, work
the body and kill Williams! Come
on, let's see some blood. You got
him, kid. Take him down! You cannot
win a fight laying on a guy, okay?
So let's win it.

HUGO'S CORNER

HUGO

waits for the bell.

TEDDY

stands before him.

TEDDY ATLAS

You are doing great. So far, you've landed twenty, and Morrell has only landed nine. So what are you waiting for? Take him out.

The bell RINGS.

SUPER: "Round Four"

HUGO

stands up and immediately goes right at Morrel.

MIKE

Williams goes down after absorbing a left hand to the jaw.

THE CROWD ROARS.

THE REFEREE

walks toward Hugo.

REFEREE

One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine.

Hugo stands up and moves toward Morrell.

MIKE

Those are great uppercuts from Williams.

LATER

RING ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen, Mark Nelson called a stop to the contest in less than two minutes. In round number four.

THE REFEREE

stands between Hugo and David.

RING ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

The winner by TKO, the new Super Middleweight Champion, and undefeated Hugo Williams.

THE REFEREE

raises Hugo's arm.

INT. ARMORY - PRESS CONFERENCE ROOM - LATER

HUGO

stands behind the podium. Behind him is a large banner displaying the contestants, date, venue, and sponsors.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Thank you very much, everybody, and this is something I'm really thankful for. Thank you to Show Time and everyone who made this possible it was indeed a historic night, and I'm so proud to be a part of it. I know my behavior in the past has been reckless. Yet I can assure you that I am a changed man, and I'm not just saying it; I'll prove it when I become World Champion.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER

We are ready for questions. So whenever you're ready, please raise your hand. We have two microphones. We are going to start over there.

REPORTER 1

When you first became a professional boxer, what would you have told yourself, knowing where you are now?

Hugo smiles.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I would have told myself to remain disciplined, to believe in myself, and never lose passion for boxing. I would also tell myself to keep the chaos inside the ring.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Okay, next question --

REPORTER 2

-- What was the outlook on the fight for you?

HUGO WILLIAMS

The fight itself was exactly how I had envisioned. The first four rounds were tough, but it was just as I had expected it.

(MORE)

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

And thanks to my coach's game plan, we were delighted with the outcome.

REPORTER 3

When do you see yourself fighting again?

HUGO WILLIAMS

I'll be fighting again in May for the WBC title at MGM Grand Garden Arena in Las Vegas, Nevada.

REPORTER 4

Is it essential for you to obtain these weight titles and defend them?

HUGO WILLIAMS

When I was looking for the best fights, defending the title is always important. We are focused on enjoying this fight and the meaningful moment, and when the time comes, we will think about the future.

CONFERENCE SPEAKER

We are almost done; we will then conclude the conference with one more question.

REPORTER 3

Does the death of your brother still follow you through your boxing career?

TEDDY ATLAS

Hugo, you don't have to answer that.

HUGO WILLIAMS

(to Teddy)

I will.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Yes, it does follow me, but not just in my boxing career. It follows me everywhere in life. I would also like to add that you have no right to ask me that question. But, I did you the courtesy by answering. Good day to all.

EXT. RESTAURANT - DAY

HUGO

walks toward Kasper, sitting at a table drinking a beer.

KASPER RORSTED

Thank you for meeting me at such short notice.

HUGO WILLIAMS

Sure, no problem.

KASPER RORSTED

Have you seen the news?

HUGO WILLIAMS

No.

KASPER RORSTED

The match between you and David Morrell was rigged.

HUGO WILLIAMS

What?

KASPER RORSTED

Unfortunately, we cannot be a part of matches being fixed. So, your contract is officially canceled.

HUGO WILLIAMS

That's impossible! Not even you have the power to get out of our agreement.

KASPER RORSTED

Well, seeing that I like you, I will give you the benefit of the doubt. However, you have your father to thank for this mess. And unfortunately, I cannot be seen interacting with you. Therefore, I suggest you acquire the services of a private investigator and a reasonable defense attorney.

INT. POLICE DEPARTMENT - DAY

INTERROGATION ROOM

DETECTIVE NEVINS (30s)

enters the room, takes his overcoat off, and tosses it on the empty chair. A big ass .45 for just a second under his suit jacket is seen.

DETECTIVE NEVINS

Alright, Mr. Hardy, is that your name?

THOMAS

nods.

DETECTIVE NEVINS (CONT'D)

Name's Nevins. I'm the detective investigating the case. If you cooperate with me, we'll go easy on you. Are we on the same page?

THOMAS HARDY

Yes.

DETECTIVE NEVINS

Good, tell me what you know.

THOMAS HARDY

The father of Hugo's ex-girlfriend, who attempted suicide, is the mastermind behind all of this.

DETECTIVE NEVINS

sits on the corner of the table and looks directly at Thomas.

DETECTIVE NEVINS

Hmm... go on.

THOMAS HARDY

He kidnaped me and forced me to orchestrate his strategic strategy.

INT. THOMAS'S DAYDREAM - WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

TWO MEN

prop Thomas up as a long-chained shackle is clamped to his left ankle. The other cuff is thrown over the ceiling beam to hoist him for a good, prolonged beating.

LATER

MR. RICHARDS

walks toward Thomas.

MR. RICHARDS

Thomas, the only reason you are alive is that I've decided to give you another chance.

THOMAS HARDY

At what?

MR. RICHARDS

Wiseass... did you really think I wouldn't know that Hugo is still alive.

THOMAS HARDY

Look, it came as a surprise to me too.

MR. RICHARDS

Sure it did.

THOMAS HARDY

Did you really think I would be able to kill him myself? Don't be daft. He was in a maximum-security prison, and I hired someone to kill him. The chances of him surviving were next to none. I can get the x-rays to prove it.

MR. RICHARDS

I have a strategic plan that I want you to participate in. Hugo is fighting for the WBA world champion title in six weeks. I want you to create a scene where you give David Morrell an envelope with a cheque to lose the fight. Then, I will have a reporter take a few snapshots of you and Hugo's father seen with Mr. Morrell discussing business and paying him. After the match, the reporter will publish the evidence and police report. Once that is done, you are a free man.

THOMAS HARDY

Okay, that's a deal. What's in it for you?

MR. RICHARDS

I will carouse with the outcome of the demise of his career.

BACK TO SCENE

DETECTIVE NEVINS

Alright, you are free to go. Just
don't leave town.

EXT. LAS VEGAS - NEVADA - USA - NIGHT

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "September 2031"

MUSIC PLAYS over a series of shots of Las Vegas, Nevada. Each image is a composition of the streets, landmarks, and the minute details of this beautiful summer's night at the MGM Grand Garden Arena.

THE THREE RINGSIDE COMMENTATORS

sit in their sartorial splendor before a bank of monitors.

EXT./INT. MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - CONTINUOUS

The atmosphere is super-charged as high rollers are still filtering into their front-row seats.

THE RING ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

The World Boxing Super Series tournament was organized by Comosa AG. Invites our first boxer with thirty-eight wins by way of knockout in his twentieth world title appearance... ladies and gentlemen, here is the renowned boxing sensation, an acclaimed pound for pound great, the four-division world champion, and the current unified WBC, WBA, and WBO, super middleweight champion of the world; introducing, Hugo Williams.

HUGO WILLIAMS (31)

comes into the hall... there are SHOUTS AND APPLAUSE, and the sound moves through the arena.

HUGO

passes the faces and the press; his attention is on the bright twenty-by-twenty-foot ring.

SERIES OF SHOTS - HUGO, a handsome man with an athletic fighter's physique, is in the ring.

- A) Feet move.
- B) Body lunges.
- C) Fists swing and push at the air.
- D) In the corner, Hugo's feet float, waiting.

BACK TO SCENE

LATER

HUGO AND VINCENT PIERCE (34)

stand side by side with the referee.

REFEREE

Protect yourself at all times and
obey my commands.

HUGO AND VINCENT

touch gloves.

The bell RINGS for round one.

HUGO

takes a variety of incredible punishments throughout the round. Bam!

VINCENT

a fast, middleweight jabs Hugo in the face.

VINCENT

staggers forward. No matter how hard Hugo is hit, he always moves forward like a bull. The bell SOUNDS. Battered, Hugo slumps on the stool in his corner.

INT. YOUNG HUGO'S DAYDREAM - BEDROOM - NIGHT

In the center of a blood-red background is a metallic stopwatch. The second hand is ticking... Then the screen fades to black.

MRS. WILLIAMS (V.O.)

Hugo, there is nothing wrong with
you or playing chess. You are very
good at it.

(MORE)

MRS. WILLIAMS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Our family has a history of boxing champions, it's in our blood, and your father only wants the best for you. First, however, you must learn to defend yourself, and I envisage you excelling in both. Boxing and chess are very much the same. It's a mental war, and you need to be a Mozart at it. At the champion level, the objective is not to win but to strategically outsmart your opponent. The speed at which you adapt in response to every blow makes you a master or not. So the best players need extraordinary mental and physical endurance. You have the tenacity to become the youngest number one ever in chess and boxing. I envisage people not knowing how to explain what you do and how you do it. It will seem that your abilities have come from another world. I want you to promise me that you will never doubt yourself; you are a conqueror.

HUGO'S DAYDREAM - MGM GRAND GARDEN ARENA - NIGHT

A polished surface shimmers with light. Then, pulling back, other squares are revealed; the black and white tiles of a chessboard.

The board rises and spins, slipping beneath us; we find ourselves moving across the board, like moving through a chess game. The pieces are everywhere, checking and covering other pieces.

It has reached that critical moment when pieces are traded. The board begins to clear as two strategies unravel toward an outcome. Then, standing above the pieces around Hugo, we see the black king.

BACK TO SCENE

LATER

SUPER: "Round Twelve"

COMMENTATOR (V.O.)

Both parties look anxious to get at each other; there's the bell, and this fight is underway!

VINCENT

rushes to the center of the ring.

HUGO

is in hot pursuit and unloads a right hook with devastating results.

VINCENT

begins an unconscious descent to the canvas.

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

COMPUTER KEYS POUND: "Two Weeks Later"

HUGO

approaches Malcolm's grave alongside his mother's grave. He gets down on one knee, and tears slowly run down his cheek. After that, there is a few moments of silence.

HUGO WILLIAMS

I don't know what to say. You are on my mind every single day. I hate what I did to you. How could you forgive me? How will I ever know you forgave me. I'm so sorry, I'm sorry. I don't know how to take away this guilt. Malcolm, I wish you could be here to see me. I beat Vincent Pierce; remember how we made fun of him for running like an ostrich.

HUGO

GIGGLES.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

Mom was right, Malkie...

HUGO

looks over at his mother's grave.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

You beat me; you beat me fair and square.

HUGO

closes his eyes for a few seconds. He then opens his eyes, takes his world championship belt, and puts it between his mother and brother's grave.

HUGO

stands up and talks to God.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

(talks to God)

God, I know I did some wrong things in my life heck, I even murdered someone. I know I deserve to go to hell. Yet if you can only get one message of me to heaven, I'll be okay with your judgment. God, tell Malcolm I'm sorry. Tell my mom I'm sorry. Tell them I did love them, even if I am a selfish person. I didn't know what love was.

HUGO

looks over at Chloe sitting in the car behind him.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

(talks to God)

But I know now. I wish my mother and brother were still here so I could give it to them. But I got to live on. I got to fight on. I know boxing killed Malcolm, but it changed me into what I needed to be. So, I can never hate it. I tried for so long when I was in prison.

It starts raining.

HUGO WILLIAMS (CONT'D)

(talks to God)

It's who I am.

HUGO

kisses his fingers and places them on Malcolm's tombstone and then on his mother's tombstone. He then leaves and walks toward the car.

CHLOE

immediately gets out of the car and gives Hugo a hug.

CHLOE RICHARDS
Are you okay?

HUGO WILLIAMS
Yes.

CHLOE RICHARDS
I found the ring in your car.

HUGO WILLIAMS
Let's get married then and
undertake to never use drugs again.

CHLOE

nods her head and smiles.

CHLOE RICHARDS
Yes, I promise. I don't want our
children to grow up with that.

HUGO AND CHLOE

embrace and kiss.

SUPER:

"After Hugo won the undisputed world middleweight championship title. He donated fifty percent of his winnings to medical research for children suffering from Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorders. In addition, Hugo managed to make amends with his family, relatives, and friends. Hugo and Chloe are now happily married with two boys and two girls. His tenacity, love for people, and sport have helped him overcome the challenges of his Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder."

FADE TO BLACK.