

SEMI PRO

by

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FADE IN:

EXT. THE STAPLES CENTER - PRESENT DAY

We hear the faint sounds of a crowd cheering on Kobe Bryant.
The real Bob Costas does narration.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Before the NBA was the NBA, there
was another basketball league in
America...*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: This is real ABA footage. A series of
great plays are made by ABA stars.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*...From 1967 to 1976, there was the
American Basketball Association. A
maverick minor-league that would
change the game forever. The ABA
made the fast break FAST...
Invented the three point shot...
And introduced the world to
something called the Slam Dunk
Contest.*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: Dr. J launches from the foul line and
dunks in the world's first dunk contest. David Thompson
finishes an Alley Oop.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Singer Pat Boone owned the Oakland
Oaks. Wilt Chamberlain coached the
Conquistadors. I myself was the
young voice of the St. Louis
Spirits.*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: A young Bob Costas broadcasts from St.
Louis, looking pretty sweet in side burns and a tweed jacket.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Players like Dr. J, Ice-man George
Gervin and Moses Malone were as
entertaining as they come. But
despite the league's flair,
convincing fans to show up for
games was often a struggle.*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: The infamous TV interview where Freddy
Lewis wins a 'race horse.' Footage of 'Dime Beer Night.'
Footage of the Kentucky Colonials fielding a cheerleader as
one of their starting five.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*For owners, promotional ideas
became an art form all to
themselves.*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: The Miami Ball Girls dance in bikinis
(In truth, some of the girls were still in high school).

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*One night, the Nets went as far as
to give a free gerbil to it's first
fifty fans... There were plenty of
punches too, giving the National
Hockey League a run for it's money.*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: A guy elbows Connie Hawkins, who turns
and punches the guy in the face.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Yes, the ABA had a style all it's
own. The hair was big, the shorts
were short and the ball was red,
white and blue.*

DOCUMENTARY FOOTAGE: Harry 'The fat Mexican guy' dances.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*In 1976, rumors of a merger spread
throughout the league. In the end,
only four teams would join the NBA
and survive.*

QUICK CUTS: THE PACERS. THE NUGGETS. THE NETS. THE SPURS.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Teams like the Kentucky Colonels
and the Virginia Squires would
disappear forever. But their spirit
still lives on to this day.*

EXT. A BASKETBALL STADIUM - 1976

We hear a crowd going crazy.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Here, we present the legend of the
ABA... Exactly as it happened.*

Some FUNKY MUSIC plays.

BOB COSTAS (V.O.)
*Except, this Flint Michigan team
never existed.*

(beat)
*And, well, everything in this movie
 is completely fake.*

INT. AMIGO STADIUM - DAY

TITLE CARD: ANAHEIM AMIGO STADIUM, 1976.

CLOSE ON: A logo of a basketball with a sombrero on it.
 "LET'S GO AMIGOS!"

Welcome to the American Basketball Association. A fan chugs his beer and throws some guacamole.

The crowd screams and curses at MONIX, mid 40'S -- talented, but past his prime. (There are three leading characters in this movie. This is the old rock. Think Nolte in 48 hours. Cosner in Durham. Newman in Slap Shot).

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*The Amigos are up by one here.
 They'll need to find a way to stop
 Monix. He checks the clock,
 waits... And now drives the lane...*

MONIX suddenly takes a HUGE HIT, TOTALLY SLAMMED by a big asshole, PETRELLI. He flies into the crowd -- everyone erupts, screaming with glee.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Ooh, Monix gets taken out hard.
 Some tough love from Patrelli.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
*WHAT!? Where's the foul on that?
 That was all ball.
 (covering mic, screaming)
 Jesus Christ Leonard! Let them play
 for once! This ain't fuckin'
 Greenpeace!*

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Some might say that was a close
 call, but these referees have done
 a nice job tonight.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
Oh please. These refs SUCK.

Still stuck in the crowd. Monix struggles to get back on the court. The crowd shoves him around, twisting his ankle, slapping him. The crowd is nuts.

DRUNK LADY
Hey Monix, want a sip?

Monix is confused, until the woman throws the beer in his face.

DRUNK LADY
(smart ass)
Oops.

She and her friends laugh. Monix says nothing. Instead, he holds his aching back and limps up to the foul line, annoyed.

PATRELLI
(smiling)
Sorry, Monix, I got pushed.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Well, it looks like the Amigos are in trouble here. Monix is a ninety percent shooter, if he can hit both of these free throws, it's over.

Monix performs his ancient free throw ritual: Three dribbles and a quick spin of the ball. But he MISSES.

DRUNK LADY
HA. NICE SHOT MONIX! YOU FUCKIN' SUCK, MAN! YOU SUCK DONKEY DICK.

Again, Monix ignores the drunk lady.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
They dodged a bullet there. But Monix still has one last chance to tie it up.

Monix focuses on his ritual again.

DRUNK LADY
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? SHOOT THE BALL YOU PUSSY!

Monix aims at the basket, about to shoot, but then suddenly WHIPS THE BALL HARD AT THE LADY, PEGGING HER IN THE FACE.

DRUNK LADY
AHH!

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
(re: nailing the girl)
And the second free throw sails wide.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
*Yes! He just pegged a chick! That's
 the greatest thing I've ever seen.*

The lady runs on court and attacks Monix, her boyfriend jumps in -- Monix hits her boyfriend with some quick hockey punches. The benches clear, everyone is punching everybody.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
 (re: violent fist fight)
*And we've got a little bit of
 pushing and shoving under the
 basket. What do you make of this,
 Lou?*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
I'm goin' in.

Lou Redwood takes his headphones off, climbs over the announcer's table and jumps into the fight.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Alright then.
 (beat)
 More on this Amigo victory, right
 after this message from Colt 45.*

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Monix is beat up pretty bad. He dabs his cut with toilet paper.

SCHNACK (O.S.)
 Want one?

SCHNACK, the owner, carries a six pack of Schlitz.

MONIX
 I'll take two.

Schnack hands them over. Monix might speak, but he drinks instead.

SCHNACK
 So, Monix. The trade went through.

MONIX
 Really?
 (beat)
 For who?

SCHNACK

You know, you're not exactly a
spring chicken anymore...

MONIX

Just tell me.

SCHNACK

That score board.

ANGLE ON: Pieces of an old scoreboard are crammed into the
back of the locker room.

SCHNACK

It's a Magnovox.

(beat)

Tell me: What the Hell did you want
to get traded back to *Flint* for, of
all places? Please tell me this
isn't about Lynn.

MONIX

You still owe me \$400.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. FLINT MICHIGAN - NIGHT

A wide shot of the Flint Michigan skyline.

TITLE CARD: FLINT, MICHIGAN

ECU: AN OLD TV. A COMMERCIAL PLAYS:

Super-cool CLARENCE WITHERS, 20's African-American, walks
around a pet store. This guy is all flash. He spins a ball on
his finger, but he's more Bootsie Collins than Dr. J.

CLARENCE (V.O.)

(on TV)

*Don't get all lonely on me people,
get yourself a dog or a cat or some-
- (studies a weird animal) Or a
couple of these, from PET GALAXY.
When I'm not dribbling between my
legs or sinking jump shots, I'm
buying animals. And if this isn't
the best store in Flint Michigan
(re: his afro) I will shave this
off. No joke. Make a fast break
over to PET GALAXY. And be sure to
tell 'em Sugar Dunkerton sent you.*

With that, Clarence chest-passes the ball out of frame and smiles.

INT. QUINCY'S BBQ - NIGHT

WE PULL BACK to see the TV is on inside a restaurant, Quincy's BBQ.

REVEAL: Clarence. The guy from the TV is also a waiter in this restaurant. He's taking an order from some customers.

CUSTOMER

Hey, wasn't that you just now,
there on the TV?

CLARENCE

Yeah, so?

CUSTOMER

What are you waiting on us for, if
you're a basketball star?

CLARENCE

Who the Hell are you, the barbecue
police? Tell you what, I've got the
note pad, so I'll ask the
questions: Do you want a baked
potato with that?

CUSTOMER

The TV said your name was Sugar
Dunkerton. How come your name-tag
doesn't say that?

CLARENCE

'Cause I changed my name, that's
why.

CUSTOMER WOMAN

(reading his name tag)
Downtown Funky-Stuff Malone?

CLARENCE

You like it?

CUSTOMER WOMAN

I guess it's fine.

CLARENCE

It ain't fine.
(as in smooth)
It's fine...

A large woman, QUINCY -- Clarence's Mom -- yells from the kitchen.

QUINCY
HEY CLARENCE!

CLARENCE
DOWNTOWN!

MS. QUINCY
I NEVER NAMED NO SON OF MINE
DOWNTOWN!

CLARENCE
THEN I CAN'T HEAR A GOD DAMN THING.

MS. QUINCY
IT'S SEVEN FORTY-FIVE, YOU BETTER
GET YOUR ASS OUT OF HERE.

CLARENCE
Shit.
(to the customers)
It's been a pleasure serving you.

Clarence tosses his note pad on the table and his Mother tosses him his duffle bag.

MS. QUINCY
And don't think I didn't see those
cotton briefs of yours in there.

CLARENCE
Stay outta my stuff!

MS. QUINCY
Don't you know our ancestors had to
pick that cotton? Get yourself some
silk underpants. Have some respect.

CLARENCE
Panties are silk. Briefs are
cotton. I'm out of here.

JACKIE MOON (O.S.)
*Ladies and gentleman, please
rise...*

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - NIGHT

Welcome to Flint Michigan Fairgrounds Coliseum, basketball's end of the world. This is more like a shitty airplane hanger than a stadium.

JACKIE MOON (O.S.)
*...For the National Anthem... Of
 your Flint Michigan Tropics.*

MUSIC CUE: SOME SERIOUS DISCO BOOGIE

INT. FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - LOBBY - CONTINUOUS

WE PAN SOME STILL PHOTOS OF JACKIE MOON IN THE LOBBY.

PICTURE 1: The one-hit-wonder, Jackie Moon is on an album cover, shirtless, petting a white leopard.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)
*Baby, who wants to; love me sexy.
 baby, are you ready to; lick me
 sexy.*

PICTURE 2: Jackie Moon in Reno, singing with Pat Boone. He holds up his only hit single.

PICTURE 3: Jackie is getting married to LUCY MOON. She's the hottest girl in the world.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)
*Take off your shoes and; suck me
 sexy. Baby, we're naked and we're;
 humping sexy--*

PICTURE 4: Jackie hands over a giant check, PURCHASING THE FLINT TROPICS.

EXT. FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - NIGHT

Center court, we finally see JACKIE MOON. He sports a perm, lamb chop sideburns and black frame glasses. He continues to sing this song of his own creation...

JACKIE MOON
 (singing)
*Oh yeah, Baby, who wants to; love
 me sexy. baby, are you ready to;
 lick me sexy.*

Jackie Moon is a sight to see. His one-hit-wonder is ridiculous. But you have to admit it's catchy.

QUICK CUTS: THE RETARDED WORLD OF THE FLINT TROPICS:

THE CROWD: Under 100 people are in the stands, but they're high energy. Lots of drinking and dancing.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)
*Take off your shoes and; suck me
 sexy.*

THE BALL GIRLS: They bounce around in shiny-funky hot pants -- dancing cool, but not in sync. When it comes to ball girls, Flint delivers.

THE TROPICAL AISLE: A rowdy bunch is decked out in Hawaiian shirts and packed in behind the visitor's bench, looking for trouble.

THE SCOREBOARD: The Magnovox has been sold. The Tropics now do it by hand.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)
*Baby, we're naked and we're;
 humping sexy...*

ANGLE ON DARREN AND JODY: Two kids in WHEEL CHAIRS are parked next to the hardwood, eating nachos and drinking giant cokes.

OPPOSING PLAYER
 (to kids in wheel chairs)
 Hey there son, what's your name?

WHEELCHAIR DARREN
 Fuck you, Mitchstien.

WHEELCHAIR JODY
 Yeah. Throw any elbows tonight and we'll pound your fuckin' head into the floor.

MUSIC CUE: 'TOO HOT TO HANDLE' BY HEATWAVE.

With that, the lights go out, PITCH BLACK. A spot light drops on Jackie Moon.

JACKIE MOON
 SO TELL ME FLINT, ARE WE HOT
 ENOUGH? WHO'S READY FOR SOME HOT,
 LUSCIOUS, FLINT TROPICS ACTION?

The crowd cheers, but not all that loud. Jackie looks off screen and nods off screen.

BOBBY DEE works some sound effects, dialing up a knob that says CROWD NOISE. The speakers are blown, but they're loud.

JACKIE MOON
 NOW, HERE'S THE STARTING LINE UP
 FOR YOUR FLINT MICHIGAN TROPICS!

(beat)
 At ball girl, measuring thirty
 four, twenty two, thirty six, MELIN-
 DAAAAAAA.

MELINDA shakes her perfect measurements in the spotlight,
 then does a series of cartwheels.

JACKIE MOON
 I'm living a dream, Flint and I
 know you are too.
 (Booming voice again)
 AT GUARD, from Peoria Illinois, six
 foot one -- this guy's single and
 he can cook lasagna, I've seen him
 do it -- TWIGGY -- MUNSONNNNNNN!

Bobby Dee hits the disco ball as TWIGGY trots out.

JACKIE MOON
 FROM SOUTH BEND INDIANA, the man
 with a heart of gold, his brother's
 a retard, six foot one, he drives
 down to visit all the time, at
 forward, he reads to him, BEE BEE
 ELLISSSSSSS!

BEE BEE ELLIS does a cartwheel into a round off.

JACKIE MOON
 YOUR MAN IN THE MIDDLE. Seven foot
 two, from the People's Republic of
 Uzbekistan, he's tall, he's
 sensitive -- loves candle light and
 long walks on the beach -- VAKIDIS
 ROSCOVENSKIHHHHHHH!
 (Vakidis remains seated)
 Vakidis, that's you man, I called
 your name. (no response) VAKIDIS!
 C'mon dude, let's go, get it
 together.

Players push the giant Vakidis out onto the court.

JACKIE MOON
 Now this next guy, where do I
 start? First of all, that wife of
 his, she is... Wow.
 (gesturing re: her chest)
 CANONS, people. If you know what
 I'm saying. I don't think she's
 here tonight, but if she was you'd
 see what I'm talking about.

He's a small forward, the luckiest
man in Flint: SCOTSIE DOUBLE-
DAYYYYYYYY!

Scotsie Double Day 'pops n' locks' his way onto the court.

JACKIE MOON

AND FINALLY: The man you've been
waiting for, six foot four, a
solid, meaty, two hundred fifteen
pounds, your pre-game announcer,
your owner, your coach, your pop
singing sensation, but most
importantly, your POWER FORWARD...
Yours truly... JACKIE MOOOOOOOON!!!

Jackie takes off his blazer, twirls it, then tosses it off
screen. It's game time.

At center court, PLAYER/OWNER/COACH JACKIE huddles them up.

JACKIE MOON

Alright you guys, let's huddle up!
(Vakidis is wandering)
Vakidis! Where's he walking to?
Kong, get Vakidis.

A very short Asian man, KONG, nods. The uniform hangs on his
tiny body.

KONG

You got it boss.

JACKIE MOON

(now huddled up)
Let's put on a good show tonight,
okay? Let's keep it in the air,
keep shooting, look for the
baseball pass, launch some early
threes to set the tone. Bee Bee,
try and do that no-look behind your
back thing, I love that, okay? Now
let's bring it in. One two three--

EVERYONE

(together)
LET'S GET TROPICAL!

REVEAL: An orange cone sits over a puddle on the court.

As the Tropics break the huddle, Jackie talks to the
overweight FATHER PAT THE REF.

JACKIE MOON
 (smart ass)
 Hey, you lose weight, Father Pat?

FATHER PAT THE REF
 Oh, fuck off. What's with the cone
 tonight Jackie?

Jackie points up to a leak in the ceiling.

JACKIE MOON
 For safety.

Just then, Vakidis jogs over, SLIPPING HORRIBLY in the
 puddle, ripping his groin.

BOBBY DEE (V.O.)
 (as P.A. Announcer)
 Okay Tropics fans, it's time to
 guess today's attendance... Is it
 A) 9,254... B) 10,506... or C) 91

TIP OFF: The Tropics gain possession.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Scotsie drops it in low to player-
 owner-coach Jackie Moon. Known best
 for his aggressive defense, leads
 the team in rebounds. He's an
 animal under the boards Lou.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
*You're Damn right. He may not be
 black, but he can play basketball.*

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Now, look at this, Jackie waves the
 rest of his team away, looking for
 the isolation. These fans are in
 for a real treat.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
*He looks to be setting up his 'Tear
 Drop from Hades.'*

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Jackie is shooting thirty-nine
 percent from the field, but the
 crowd always loves to see him go
 for it.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
He's a true showman.

Jackie dribbles hard to the hoop, tossing up a high arcing baby hook. AIRBALL.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Airball.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
Yep, a Polish swish.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Scotsie Double-Day gets the offensive rebound and Jackie calls for it again, trying to establish the low post early.

Jackie holds the ball, preparing for another 'Tear Drop from Hades'... But now he suddenly gets distracted by something up in the stands.

JACKIE MOON
(into the stands)
HEY! RAVI! WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING, MAN?

IN THE STANDS: A Pakistani vendor, RAVI, IS POURING CHEESE ON SOME NACHOS.

RAVI
What?

JACKIE MOON
Enough with the cheese already. More chips, less cheese, how many times do I have to tell you?

WHISTLE! Jackie's been walking with the ball. FATHER PAT THE REF wears a holy collar with pin strips over it.

FATHER PAT THE REF
Traveling.

JACKIE MOON
Traveling!?... On who?

FATHER PAT THE REF
On you.

JACKIE MOON
That's bullshit, Father Pat!

Jackie, furious, SLAMS THE BALL down on the floor.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Jackie Moon. The most passionate
 man in sports.*

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - MEANWHILE

Some hot girls in shorts hold up a sign that says 'ALL STAR PARKING.' Ms. Quincy's BBQ delivery truck rips into the lot. Clarence skids to a stop.

INT. FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

The crowd looks off camera and suddenly erupts.

CLARENCE enters out of the tunnel, he takes a bite of a Hershey bar, then gestures to the crowd, giving the international symbol for 'Let's get funky.'

BOBBY DEE (V.O.)
*Ladies and gentleman, put your
 hands together for Downtown Funky-
 Stuff Malone!*

Clarence tosses the half eaten candy bar, wipes his hands off on his jersey and jogs right out onto the court during the game, TAGGING HIS TEAMMATE OUT as if it were pick up.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Downtown, wastes no time entering
 the game -- tagging out Vakidis
 Roscovenski.*

CLAWS COACH
 (to the ref)
 C'mon Father Pat, he's got to check
 into the game doesn't he?

The ref just shrugs. Downtown calls for the ball and gets it.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Downtown dribbles left, then right
 a little shake and bake through the
 legs -- double teamed now, he's got
 Twiggy Munson open under the
 basket. Downtown, still with the
 ball, dribbles behind his back,
 they triple him, he's got Munson
 and Ellis wide open under the hoop,
 but look at these moves!*

The entire other team leaves their men and guards Clarence five on one, but Clarence never passes. His four teammates watch from under the basket.

Despite his selfish attitude, it's clear Clarence actually has some serious talent.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

*Downtown has all five guys on him --
He sprints to the corner and forces
up a fade away three... YES! Wow.
You think this league's going
bankrupt? Well, think again.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)

*People call him selfish. I call him
the greatest show in shorts.*

INT. LOCKER ROOM - HALF TIME

CLOSE ON: An old-timey photo of a man with a handle-bar moustache. It's been autographed by the inventor of basketball: 'Go Tropics! -James Naismith'

The team enters the locker room happy, even though they're losing badly at half time.

JACKIE MOON

Yes! Nice first half guys! That's what I call Flint Tropic's basketball!

(beat)

I've been telling you all season, we're about to make a run. Flint Michigan is destined for greatness.

(at the chalkboard)

Twiggy, enough with the bounce passes, let's show some zip. Bee Bee, try not to get fouled so much, free throws take too long. Scootsie, what did I tell you about catching with two hands? God gave you one hand for a reason: To look awesome.

Jackie points to the chalkboard. Where one of his catchy slogans is spelled out.

JACKIE MOON

Let's stay focused on the four 'D's'.

(pointing to the board)

Dangerous, Dangerous, Dangerous, Dunks. Remember: This isn't just a basketball team. It's a lifestyle.

Everyone claps. Meanwhile, Clarence grabs a bunch of hair products and goes to work. But he notices something.

CLARENCE

Yo, Jackie, is the washing machine broken?

ANGLE ON: A few workers are taking out the washing machine.

JACKIE MOON

Listen up guys: I've got some good news and I've got some bad news. The good news is, we're getting rid of that piece of shit washing machine. The bad news is, everyone does their laundry at home from now on. Towels too.

Everyone complains. Boo etc. Jackie turns to BOBBY DEE a 'front office' guy.

JACKIE MOON

And Bobby Dee, I need you to clean out your desk.

BOBBY DEE

No. I have kids.

JACKIE MOON

You're not fired. I sold your desk.

BOBBY DEE

Oh.

JACKIE MOON

(to the team)

And I'm going to shed a few lockers, so everyone's getting a locker buddy.

CLARENCE

Forget that. I need my own locker... For the panty dropper.

Clarence reveals his 'panty dropper' a brown full-length leather coat.

JACKIE MOON

Fine. Now, there's one last thing: I've added some depth to the roster. I think he could deliver some firepower.

CLARENCE
Firepower? Who'd you hire?

JACKIE MOON
At guard, six one, the hometown
kid, from your very own Flint
Michigan -- He punches in bunches --
Ed MONIXXXXXXXXX!

We hear a TOILET FLUSH. Monix exits the bathroom stall
buttoning his pants.

MONIX
You're out of toilet paper.

Monix doesn't receive a warm welcome. It's more of a stare-
off.

JACKIE MOON
Okay, now, I know everyone in this
room has probably been punched in
the face by Monix at one time or
another.

(Scootsie fumes)
One of you may have even had your
collar bone broken, twice. But
that's in the past now and-

BOBBY DEE (O.S.)
Yo, Jackie, you're on in two.

JACKIE MOON
Thanks Bobby.
(almost to himself)
I love half time.
(abruptly to Monix)
Anyways, welcome aboard.
(leaving)
One last thing: If you see a possum
try and kill it.

With that, Jackie leaves. Monix faces his team in silence.

MONIX
So. Who wants to be my locker
buddy?

INT. FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - MEANWHILE

It's half time show. Jackie has pulled a lucky contestant
from the audience.

DUKES, the contestant, is shirtless with jeans, with a star-spangled bandana over a mullet. He plays with a ball a little.

A giant five by ten check is propped up, with the words 'TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS' written in glitter.

JACKIE MOON

Ladies and Gentleman, this man is about to attempt the impossible. The \$10,000 full court shot. So, tell me, what's your name?

DUKES

Dukes.

JACKIE MOON

Okay, Dukes. You feeling it?

DUKES

Yeah dude.

JACKIE MOON

What are you going to spend all of your money on if you win? A shirt?

DUKES

Yeah man, a shirt. Ha! Whoooo!

JACKIE MOON

Okay people, Dukes is excited. Let's get some clapping going as he prepares himself for the impossible.

(leading the clapping)

This is drama, folks! C'mon now, let's hear it! The \$10,000 shot people, let's hear it!!!

For the first time, Dukes looks kind of serious. He sizes up the distant hoop...

JACKIE MOON

(doing play by play)

He looks ready... And... Here he goes!

An uncoordinated baseball pass... Sailing off into the distance... And...

SWISH!

The crowd can't believe their eyes.

JACKIE'S FACE TURNS GHOST WHITE.

JACKIE MOON

Shit.

DUKES

YES!!! HOLY SHIT DUDE!!! I'M A
MIRACLE!!

Jackie is freaking out. Dukes has just won \$10,000! Dukes runs around court, shirtless, leaping in celebration.

JACKIE MOON

(to Father Pat the Ref)

Did he step on the line?

FATHER PAT THE REF

No, it was legal. He made it.

JACKIE MOON

Who the Hell has \$10,000? I sure he
stepped on the line, you know what
I'm saying?

FATHER PAT THE REF

(getting the hint)

Listen to this crowd. You can't
screw a kid over like that. People
will kill you.

He's right. The crowd is too hyped for Jackie to explain that he's broke.

JACKIE MOON

(accepting his fate)

Fuck me.

JACKIE HANDS DUKES THE GIANT CARDBOARD CHECK MADE OUT FOR
\$10,000, IN GLITTER.

JACKIE MOON

(pretending to be happy)

CONGRATULATIONS DUKES! YOU JUST WON
A GIANT CHECK THAT SAYS TEN
THOUSAND DOLLARS!

(faking it to the crowd)

LOOK AT THE SIZE OF THIS THING!
LET'S HEAR IT FOR DUKES!

INT. LYNN'S HOUSE - MEANWHILE

A beautiful, down to earth woman, LYNN, 30's, is reading a book. In the background, her boyfriend, KYLE, is listening to the Tropics game on the RADIO.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Monix was an All-American at Michigan State, but then went on to a disappointing journeyman career in the NBA. But he did manage to sit on the bench with the world champion Boston Celtics years ago and won a ring.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
 (on radio)
I should hire his agent.

Kyle listens to this and yells to the other room.

KYLE
 Hey honey, guess who got traded to Flint?

LYNN
 I don't know, who?

KYLE
 Monix.

The word Monix stops her in her tracks.

LYNN
 Monix?

KYLE
 Yeah! He's already got an NBA ring, but he's *still playing... In Flint.* Can you believe it?

LYNN
 No, I can't.

Lynn closes her book, fidgety...

KYLE
 They say he asked to be traded. Who the Hell leaves California to come here? I love this guy.

MUSIC CUE: THE BROTHERS JOHNSON 'GET THE FUNK OUTTA MY FACE.'

EXT./INT. JACKIE'S MONTE CARLO - NIGHT

Jackie cruises the streets of Flint in a pimped out Monte Carlo. He's got chrome rims and a gold grill. The interior is wall to wall carpeting. He swigs a beer as he turns.

JACKIE MOON
(singing with car stereo)
Get the funk outta-of-my-face...

A SIGN SAYS: THE KREMLIN. Jackie rolls up and parks in a reserved parking space. He rolls up the windows and locks the doors by hand and exits.

REVEAL: JACKIE HAS GIANT ICE PACKS TAPED TO HIS KNEES, Patrick Ewing style, right over his slacks.

A police officer drinks, in uniform, outside.

COP
What's up Jackie?

JACKIE MOON
Not much.

COP
(re: the big ice packs)
Your knees okay?

JACKIE MOON
Oh yeah. Just icing them down.

INT. THE KREMLIN - NIGHT

'The Kremlin' is rocking. The beer is served in cans only.

BALL GIRL MAGGIE (O.S.)
Hey Jackie!

JACKIE MOON
Well look at you! You look beautiful. What's different?

BALL GIRL MAGGIE
I dyed my hair.

JACKIE MOON
No, that's not it... Did your tits get bigger?

BALL GIRL MAGGIE
No.

JACKIE MOON

Don't lie to me. Those things got bigger.

BALL GIRL MAGGIE

No, they're the same.

JACKIE MOON

Well, good job.

Jackie keeps walking, bumping into MS. QUINCY, Clarence's mother.

MS. QUINCY

Yo Jackie. You know, that wife of yours has been making out with that Mark Spitz lookin' motherfucker all night.

She gestures to a guy who's lip-locked with Jackie's wife. LUCY MOON unbuttons her fur coat.

JACKIE MOON

Oh. It's okay, Lucy and I've got an open relationship.

MS. QUINCY

I know that. But he's about to suck on her Damn tits, right here in front of all these people.

JACKIE MOON

She's hot right? What can I say, we're freedom lovers.

(calling off to his wife)

Hey honey!

Lucy Moon ignores him, only making out harder.

JACKIE MOON

(to his wife)

Right on!

(to Quincy)

I'm not jealous. It's a sweet deal for both of us.

MS. QUINCY

Have you ever slept with another woman?

JACKIE MOON

I could. That's the beauty of it. No ball and chain here.

I can just go for it. You know, if I ever get invited to some cool orgy, it's definitely not a problem at all.

MS. QUINCY

Have you ever been to an orgy?

JACKIE MOON

Pshh. Are you kidding? When haven't I been?

INT. THE KREMLIN - AT A TABLE - MEANWHILE

MONIX is hanging out with Bee Bee Ellis, Scootsie Double Day and Twiggy Munson. They all do a shot together.

BEE BEE ELLIS

I heard Jackie is going to go to some owner's meeting. What do you think that's about?

MONIX

I don't know, but it can't be good.

TWIGGY MUNSON

Hey, let's see that championship ring, Monix.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

Yeah, you promised we could see the ice.

Monix takes the ring out. It hangs from his neck.

MONIX

Look at this piece. It says Celtics right there in diamonds.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

Why don't you wear it on your finger?

MONIX

I don't know, I just like to wear it around my neck, that's all.

NOW CLARENCE chimes in without looking over...

CLARENCE

Not everyone sits around dreaming of playing in the NBA, you know.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

Maybe not. But you do.

TWIGGY MUNSON

Yeah, that's all you ever talk about.

MONIX

You're not jealous, are you Clarence?

CLARENCE

No one calls me Clarence.

BEE BEE ELLIS

His name's Downtown.

MONIX

Okay Downtown. I'll make sure Downtown is only referred to as Downtown, okay Downtown?

CLARENCE

Don't think I don't know what you're doing. You're doing that thing where you pretend to mean what you say, but you don't.

BEE BEE ELLIS

Sarcasm.

CLARENCE

Yeah. How'd you like that sarcasm smacked off your face?

MONIX

Bring it, funky stuff.

BEE BEE ELLIS

That's sarcasm, man. He's doing it again!

CLARENCE

(to Bee Bee)

I got this, alright?

Monix squares off with a smile that says 'hit me.' Clarence takes off his leather full length and folds it nicely.

CLARENCE

(in Monix's face)

How'd you like a knuckle sandwich?

MONIX
Knuckle sandwich? Who says that?

CLARENCE
 I do motherfucker. I'm gonna pound
 you so hard, you're--

MONIX REARS HIS FIST BACK, about to release a strong Popeye
 hook--

CLARENCE
 WAIT!

CLARENCE IMMEDIATELY SWITCHES GEARS, PUTTING HIS HANDS UP
 LIKE A SCARED LITTLE GIRL.

CLARENCE
 (like a sissy)
 --WAIT! OKAY? COOL COOL COOL. CHILL
 OUT, MAN, ALRIGHT? WE'RE COOL--

BAM. MONIX PUNCHES CLARENCE IN THE STOMACH ANYWAY.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 YESSS! I LIKE IT! IT'S OUR OWN
 TEAM, BUT I LIKE IT.

One of the party people, a ball girl, GAYLE, interrupts.

GAYLE
 Excuse me boys. You mind, if I
 borrow your friend for a minute?

INT. DANCE FLOOR - MEANWHILE

Jackie is dancing to his own song, still wearing the ice
 packs on his knees. The song ends and A DIFFERENT ONE STARTS.

JACKIE MOON
 (looking to the DJ)
 Hold on a second.

MELINDA
 What's wrong?

JACKIE MOON
 Where's the boogie?

Jackie fights his way through the crowd to the DJ booth.

JACKIE MOON
 (to DJ, over music)
 HEY! WHERE'S THE BOOGIE?

DJ
I ALREADY PLAYED YOUR SONG FOUR
TIMES.

JACKIE MOON
GET UP.

DJ
NO. YOU CAN'T KEEP DOING THIS,
JACKIE. I'M THE DJ.

JACKIE MOON
(taking over as DJ)
NOT ANY MORE. YOU'RE ON SNACK
PATROL.

SCREECH -- The music stops.

JACKIE MOON
(into the mic)
The year was 1973. A young musician
named Jackie Moon, finishes years
of musical training, only to find
he is a slave to the notes on the
page. He knows it's time to break
free. In a sudden fit of creative
mastery, he grabs a pen and a
napkin and writes a song that
breaks all the rules. Ladies and
gentleman... Let's get sweaty.

MUSIC CUE: Jackie's song. Everyone goes crazy.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)
(studio version)
*Baby, who wants to; love me sexy.
baby, are you ready to; lick me
sexy. Take off your shoes and; suck
me sexy. Baby, we're naked and
we're; humping sexy--*

INT. DAIQUIRI ROOM - NIGHT

Gayle and Monix walk upstairs into the 'coolest' room ever.
Carpet on the ceiling, a plaid couch, a fish tank, a water
bed, mirrors, etc.

GAYLE
I'm glad they traded for you, I got
myself a cute one.

MONIX
So, this is the Daiquiri room?

LUCY MOON (O.S.)
That's right.

REVEAL: LUCY MOON, Jackie's wife, is on the couch. She's the hottest girl in the world.

LUCY MOON
What do you think, Gayle? Does he like it with my boots on, or does he like my boots off?

GAYLE
He seems like a boots on kind of guy.

LUCY MOON
Then it looks like I'm ready. As soon as you slide these shorts off of me.

MONIX
Aren't you Jackie's wife?

LUCY MOON
He knows about the Daiquiri room.

GAYLE
It's a new tradition we're starting, when new players join.

MONIX
I see. Well, I'm going to have to pass. I'm good, thanks.

LUCY MOON
Honey, you don't know what *good* is.

With that, Lucy flicks on the stereo--

MUSIC CUE: THE BAR KEYS 'TOO HOT TO STOP.'

MONIX
Listen um...
(i.e. what's your name?)

GAYLE
My name is 'no strings attached.'

LUCY MOON
You can call me Mrs. Moon.

Gayle and Lucy perform a funky/seductive dance, moving closer and closer to Monix.

MONIX

I don't think this is going to happen, Mrs. Moon.

LUCY MOON

It has to.

GAYLE

It's bad luck if you don't.

MONIX

Yeah, I'd hate to bring bad luck to Flint Michigan.

Lucy has sprayed some WHIP CREAM on her nipples.

LUCY MOON

(whip cream)

Why don't you lick these clean for me?

MONIX

I can't eat dairy.

Lucy decides that now is a good time to aggressively KISS him. Monix pushes her away.

MONIX

Nice tits, Mrs. Moon. I gotta go.

Monix walks down the stairs.

LUCY MOON

(calling after him)

I see what this is: You want us to send Eric and Marcus up here?

On the way out, Monix flicks her off.

INT. LYNN'S HOUSE - LATER THAT NIGHT

Lynn is asleep next to Kyle. She awakes to someone pounding on the door.

EXT. LYNN'S FRONT YARD - NIGHT

Lynn has arrived at the screen door. Monix, wasted, doesn't notice Lynn yet, he keeps pounding until she opens it.

LYNN

Why are you here?

MONIX
I got traded.

LYNN
I mean, why are you *here*?

MONIX
Can we talk?

KYLE (O.S.)
--Yo, Monix, you're wasted! Ha!

Kyle has come out to say hi.

MONIX
Yeah. Sorry man--

KYLE
What's up! That ol' jump shot of yours ain't broke yet, is it?

MONIX
No. Ha.

KYLE
Great back door cut for the lay-up in the third. That's how basketball should be played.

MONIX
Kyle, can you give us a second? We need to talk.

KYLE
No problem. Great game tonight man.

MONIX
Why does your boyfriend like me so much?

LYNN
You're his favorite player.

MONIX
Look, there are still some things I think we need to talk about.

LYNN
I've already said everything I'm ever going to say to you.

MONIX

I see.

(beat)

Well, I guess I'll be leaving then.

Monix walks away... Then turns back.

MONIX

You're really not going to stop me?

LYNN

No.

Monix walks more, until Lynn speaks.

LYNN

You're going to end up walking with a cane the rest of your life. You have to quit.

MONIX

And do what?

LYNN

I don't know... Kill yourself, I guess.

MONIX

Kill myself?

LYNN

You act like there's nothing else in the world besides basketball. If that's how you really feel, then go ahead and get it over with. I'm going to sleep.

MONIX

Thanks for the pep talk.

LYNN

No problem.

MONIX

Lynn.

(she opens the door again)

Can I ask you for one favor?

LYNN

You want a favor?

MONIX

My knee.

LYNN

Oh, Jesus Christ Monix. It's 4 a.m.

Lynn stares at him in disbelief. Monix shrugs.

MONIX

No one here can drain it right.

LYNN

Fine.

Monix nods, then makes a move toward the door.

LYNN

No. You're not coming in. We'll do it in the yard.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. JACKIE'S MONTE CARLO - DAYS LATER

Jackie drives in his car, practicing for the meeting. tries to build some confidence.

JACKIE MOON

(into the rear view, very civilized)

Well, hello Commissioner -- Why sure, I would love one of your Puerto Rican cigars -- Oh, I know I'm a legitimate owner, you don't have to tell me that -- We're merging with the NBA? Oh, that's nice -- Ha Ha Ha! Good one, Commish...

EXT. INDIANAPOLIS - CONTINUOUS

A brick building on the outskirts of Indianapolis. A sign says. WELCOME ABA OWNERS. Jackie pulls into the lot and parks. He looks in the mirror one last time.

JACKIE MOON

Your Mom would be proud of you today.

INT. CONFERENCE ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Not-quite-Rich guys surround a large oak table. JACKIE is by far the youngest of the owners.

COMMISH

...I'm sure each of you have heard the rumors. And I'm here to tell you, the rumors are true. The ABA will be merging with the NBA at the end of this season.

JACKIE MOON

YES!!!

(to an old guy)

GIVE ME TEN, NORTON! YES!!

(fists to the ceiling)

EVERYONE CAN EAT SHIT! I AM THE GREATEST MAN IN THE WORLD!

COMMISH

Our league is sold. And the NBA agreed to all of our financial demands!

Now Jackie turns inward, more quietly intense. This is, without question, the greatest moment of his life.

JACKIE MOON

(to himself)

You're a real owner. You're in the NBA.

COMMISH

Four of our teams will be absorbed into the NBA family, the rest of you will terminate operations.

JACKIE MOON

Exactly! You know it!

(now hearing)

I'm sorry, wait, what?

COMMISH

The Nuggets, The Nets, The Spurs and the Pacers will play in the NBA next year. The rest of us will dissolve.

JACKIE MOON

Dissolve? Dissolve, like, how? How do I dissolve into the NBA?

The winning owners look at each other, not sure how to handle Jackie.

JACKIE MOON

What's happening?

COMMISH

I'm sorry Jackie. We all know how emotional you get. We waited until the very last second to tell you.

Jackie pounds the table.

JACKIE MOON

No. NO! NO!!!

He kicks over his chair...

THE COMMISH

We know you're upset, Jackie. But you'll be very well compensated.

LOSING OWNER #1

Everyone's agreed to a very large sum.

JACKIE MOON

I don't want a sum! I want my team!
(to the losing owners)
C'mon you guys, you're not going to just sit here and take the money, are you?

They are.

JACKIE MOON

(to winning owners)

What do the Spurs have that we don't?

THE COMMISH

A huge fan base. A brand new stadium. A solid economic growth package, including strong tax incentives.

JACKIE MOON

Oh, c'mon, that's BULLSHIT!

COMMISH

The NBA is taking four teams, Jackie, there's nothing I can do.

Jackie goes quiet, thinking... An epic idea hits him.

JACKIE MOON

The best four teams should go.

COMMISH

What?

JACKIE MOON

Forget the huge fan base, the
stadiums, the economic...

(a little lost)

Growing... package... inventions...

WINNING OWNER #1

(correcting him)

Economic growth pack--

JACKIE MOON

I KNOW WHAT I SAID!

(to the room)

The four teams with the best
records should merge.

LOSING OWNER #2

He's right.

LOSING OWNER #1

Yeah, that's the fairest way.

COMMISH

These four teams DO have the best
records. Flint's only won six games
all year!

JACKIE MOON

So far. The season isn't over.

LOSING OWNER #2

Yeah, maybe we should finish the
season first.

COMMISH

This plan sounds like a lot of fun,
but it's too late. The
commissioner, me, has already
decided.

LOSING OWNER #2

Actually, the terms of a merger can
only be approved by a league
mandate.

JACKIE MOON

YES. That's right. What he said.

LOSING OWNER #1

I move that we vote on the terms of
the merger.

EXT. FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - NEXT DAY

The team sits around the parking lot, sitting on their duffle bags, dejected. Jackie is having a team meeting.

JACKIE MOON

C'mon you guys, let's try to stay psyched. This is a chance to become a real NBA franchise!

CLARENCE

There's no way we can make it to fourth place. It's mathematically impossible.

JACKIE MOON

I ran the numbers. All we have to do is win about eighty-two percent of our remaining games.

CLARENCE

Eighty-two percent? Isn't that a lot?

JACKIE MOON

Oh, c'mon! We just gotta start hitting our threes.
(guys look around, unsure)
Listen, I know this seems like bad news, but it doesn't have to be. This is a big road trip for us. We've just got to start playing solid Flint basketball.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

I don't know. We suck, man.

JACKIE SLAPS SCOOTSIE.

JACKIE MOON

(re: The slap)

Sorry.

JACKIE SLAPS HIM AGAIN, HARDER.

JACKIE MOON

We do not suck, okay? We just have to want it!

Pumped, Jackie walks around with his hands on his hips.

BEE BEE ELLIS
What do you think, Monix?

All eyes turn on the grumpy one.

MONIX
I think we suck.

JACKIE MOON
Well... See, now there's some team
unity! Now let's load up the jet.

REVEAL: A SHITTY SCHOOL BUS has the words 'THE JET!' Spray-painted in graffiti letters with a palm tree next to it.

JACKIE MOON
(as they load up)
Now we've got a special treat. You
know I take care of my family.
Today, the Jet is catered. I had
Downtown's Mom pack us some hot
dish.

BEE BEE ELLIS
Ms. Quincy's hot dish? Sweet!

INT. BUS - CONTINUOUS

The guys load up. It's so packed it's ridiculous. Everyone tries to stuff their gear somewhere and sit down.

Jackie carries a big pot of hot dish, accidentally burning Scootsie's back.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY
Ah, watch the hot dish, man.

JACKIE MOON
Sorry Scootsie.

TWIGGY MUNSON
Hey Jackie, there's some dude out
there, wants to talk to you.

POV: Out the window, we can see DUKES, the full court shot winner, holding his GIANT CHECK and looking into the bus. He's still shirtless, with a star-spangled headband.

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - MOMENTS LATER

Jackie and Dukes are next to the bus, discussing the check.

DUKES

I tried Jackie. They won't take it.
They said it's 'symbolic.'

JACKIE MOON

What does symbolic mean?

DUKES

I don't know. But they said I need
a real check.

JACKIE MOON

I don't know what your bank is
talking about. That *is* a real
check. I signed it myself.

DUKES

It's written in glitter, dude.
Can't you just give me, like, a
regular sized one?

JACKIE MOON

I don't get it. People are usually
able to cash these. Maybe you
should try another bank.

(trying to wrap it up)

If you run into any more trouble,
let me know.

DUKES

Okay Jackie, thanks man.

JACKIE MOON

Any time, congratulations.

Jackie turns away from Dukes and exhales, walking back to the
bus.

MUSIC CUE: 'SHORT PEOPLE' BY RANDY NEWMAN.

EXT. THE HIGHWAY - DAY

We're flying down the highway.

INT. THE JET - DAY

Kong, the small Asian player, is driving, singing along with
Jackie to the radio...

JACKIE MOON & KONG

(singing Randy Newman)

SHORT PEOPLE GOT, NO REASON...

SHORT PEOPLE GOT, NO REASON...
SHORT PEOPLE GOT, NO REASON TO LIVE

Jackie reaches up into a special bin and takes out some beef jerky, then yells out the window.

JACKIE
(out the window at a car)
YOU IN-THE-GREEN-CAR GOT, NO REASON
TO LIVE...

Pan back to see the whole team crammed into tiny seats. Vakidis has his knees pointing straight toward the ceiling.

Twiggy Munson is reading '70's pornography. Clarence is sewing a new name onto his jersey. The rest of the guys are eating their hot dish.

MONIX
So, Clarence, what's in this 'hot
dish' anyway?

CLARENCE
My Mom cooked your ass a whole Damn
meal, why you gotta go asking
what's in it?

MONIX
It's a compliment. It's good.

CLARENCE
If it's good, then it's good. Why
do you gotta know what's in it?
What's in hot dish? Hot dish is in
hot dish, asshole.

BEE BEE and SCOOTIE look over the seat, facing them.

BEE BEE ELLIS
Hey Monix, what were the Celtics
like?

MONIX
They were fast.

SCOOTIE DOUBLE-DAY
Fast? No one's faster than me. I
should be on the Celtics.

MONIX
(pointing to his mind)
Fast up here.

BEE BEE ELLIS
You're supposed to be Mr.
Smartball. Why'd you get bounced?

MONIX
Well, you have to be able to jump
too.

SCOOTIE DOUBLE-DAY
Hey, let us see that ring again.

MONIX
Not right now, okay Twiggy?

CLARENCE
Isn't it a little embarrassing
wearing that thing everyday?

MONIX
Embarrassing?

CLARENCE
You call yourself a Celtic? You sat
through every single playoff game.
You didn't see action once. And now
you walk around wearing the ice
like you're Bill Russel. Well you
ain't.

BEE BEE ELLIS
Oh, you're just jealous.

SCOOTIE DOUBLE-DAY
Yeah, Monix played solid minutes,
for lots of teams. He's played in
the NBA, that's more than you can
say.

CLARENCE
Whatever. At least I never sat on
the bench and then called myself a
champion. You didn't do shit for
that Celtic team. If I was Dave
Cowens, I'd yank that ring right
off your neck.

That was a pretty heated exchange. Monix looks like he's got
something to say, but he doesn't. Clarence has the last word.

CLARENCE
He doesn't wear it on his finger
because he knows he didn't earn it.
He didn't even play.

Monix looks out the window.

EXT. ROAD GAME #1 - NIGHT

'The Jet' is parked outside the arena.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

We're just a few minutes away from game one of the Tropic's 6 game road trip. With talk of an NBA merger hitting the league, there's a new electricity surrounding tonight's game...

INT. VISITOR'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Jackie addresses his team before tip off.

JACKIE MOON

Alright. Now, a lot of people out there are writing us off. A lot people are saying things like 'Jackie Moon is an offensive liability.' They're saying 'Flint's turnovers led to sixty fast break points per game.'

(Making this up)

They're saying 'Bee Bee's retarded brother is so retarded that his eyes look too big. Like a French Bulldog.'

BEE BEE ELLIS

No one said that, man.

JACKIE MOON

(trying to motivate)

Yes they did. And we're going to use it as motivation, okay? THIS IS OUR TIME! WE'RE GOING TO SHOOT MORE THAN WE'VE EVER SHOT BEFORE! NOW BRING IT IN! READY? ONE TWO THREE-

EVERYONE

LET'S GET TROPICAL!

MONTAGE: FLINT PLAYS HARDER BUT THEY STILL SUCK.

GAME 1) JACKIE MOON sprints across the floor tries to get two feet planted in the lane. It's not even close, JACKIE HAS TAKEN A GUY DOWN HARD. The ref whistles a blocking foul.

JACKIE MOON
OH, C'MON!? Where's the charge,
Father Pat?

FATHER PAT THE REF
Both feet weren't planted.

JACKIE MOON
OH, SUCK MY COCK. I WILL MURDER
YOUR FAMILY.

FATHER PAT THE REF
That's it, you're out.

JACKIE MOON
What!? What did I say?

Jackie takes a ball and drop kicks it, PUNTING IT high up
into the rafters.

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: COLONELS 111 TROPICS 92.

GAME 2) MONIX drives the lane, fast and smart. -- A no-look
pass hits Scootsie Double-Day in the shoulder.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY
AH. MY COLLAR BONE!

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: SQUIRES 90 TROPICS 70.

GAME 3) CLARENCE and BEE BEE jog back on Defense.

CLARENCE
I ain't guarding my guy anymore.

BEE BEE ELLIS
Why not?

CLARENCE
He's too Damn sweaty, man.
(re: his wet uniform)
Look at me.

BEE BEE ELLIS
Gross. Well, I ain't guarding him.

Monix notices this discussion.

MONIX
Quit talking and play defense!

The sweaty guy backs in on Clarence, posting up top.

CLARENCE
 (guarding the sweaty guy)
 Dude, this sucks.

Clarence backs away. The guy backs in some more. Clarence backs away some more. Right under the hoop, the guy scores.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
And the Conquistadors with another easy lay up.

CLARENCE
 I need to shower.

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: CONQUISTADORS 92 TROPICS 70.

GAME 4) QUICK CUTS: Clarence misses three pointer after three pointer. Jackie misses a 360 dunk. Bee Bee Ellis tries to dribble between his legs but it goes out of bounds.

KONG YI, the Asian guy, is trying to play defense.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Jackie Moon with the first chess move, he's got 5'3" Kong Yi playing power forward.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
Now I don't get this move. I know it's 1976 and everything, but the Asians just don't play basketball.

The ball goes up, but bounces off the rim. Everyone fights for the rebound.

ON KONG: He SQUEEZES HIS MAN'S BALLS in a Kung Fu grip. The player buckles in pain. Little Kong grabs the rebound.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Kong Yi with the offensive rebound!

But now Kong panics, dribbling with both hands and then throwing it into the stands.

LIVE TROPICS RADIO (V.O.)
But now he chest passes it into the stands.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
I have to admit, I liked what I saw there. He had the right idea.

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: AMERICANS 81 TROPICS 74.

GAME 5) Jackie Moon plays great defense, rejecting a shot! Monix grabs the ball and dribbles on a fast break. Clarence trails, in perfect position...

CLARENCE

Right on! I'm open baby! Try a behind-the-back!

Monix delivers a nice two handed bounce pass, but Clarence isn't ready for anything fundamentally sound -- The ball hits him in the nuts.

CLARENCE

Ah, shit.

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: PIPERS 105 TROPICS 91.

EXT. HOTEL STRIP - NIGHT

Angle on a big hotel with fancy lights -- but then we pan to reveal: A shitty motel. The 'Jet' is parked at the cheap place.

INT. MOTEL ROOM - NIGHT

Two twin beds in a crap-box motel room. Monix has the phone to his ear, but it just keeps ringing. He'd leave a message for Lynn, but answering machines haven't been invented yet.

He hangs up, looks in the mirror, and now takes his Championship ring necklace off.

He looks at the ring in his hand... And shoves it into his duffle bag.

CLARENCE (O.S.)

I brought us some ice.

Monix is startled. Clarence, his roommate for the night, enters.

MONIX

Ice? What for?

CLARENCE

I don't know, it's free.

Clarence takes some ice, pops it in his mouth and starts crunching.

CLARENCE

Want some?

MONIX

No thanks.

Now BEE BEE enters, yet another player in the small room.

BEE BEE ELLIS

That Root Beer machine took my
fucking change, man. White people
are assholes.

Monix ignores this. Laying back, he focuses on the TV: THE
CELTICS are playing. Their trapping defense is a thing of
beauty.

Clarence walks over and flicks the channels, until he stops
at 'Love American Style.'

MONIX

You turned off the Celtics?

CLARENCE

I don't watch people play
basketball. They watch me.

With that, Clarence pulls out a JOINT and lights it.

MONIX

(re: the marijuana)
What the Hell is that?

CLARENCE

(as he inhales)
It's a fucking Egg-McMuffin.

Monix opens the window, clearing the pot smoke out of his
face.

JACKIE EXITS the bathroom, having just taken a shower. He's
wearing a very small robe. This is now the fourth player
who's sleeping in this tiny room.

MONIX

Why don't you shower in your room?

JACKIE MOON

My wife is using it. I'll be
crashing with you guys tonight.

(noticing)

Ice? Awesome.

(as he eats ice, re: TV)
Love American Style? Turn it up.

Jackie doesn't say a word about the pot. Instead he keeps his eyes glued to the TV, then reaches for the joint and SMOKES IT.

MONIX

Jackie, have you ever even slept with your wife?

JACKIE MOON

(lying)

What? Are you kidding? Try, like, every weekend. She's so hot.

MONIX

Sounds like a great arrangement.

JACKIE MOON

You guys need to wake up. Quit living like it's the 1950's, man. Live it up.

(showing off)

Hey Clarence, let's have some of that smoke, bro.

MONIX

I'm pretty sure we have a game tomorrow.

JACKIE MOON

(as he inhales)

This stuff won't affect you. It's premium.

Jackie finishes inhaling, then holds it out for Monix. He stares at the joint, then around the room at his teammates.

MONIX

Well, if this is really going to be my life, I might as well be stoned like everyone else.

JACKIE MOON

Well said.

Monix takes the stupid joint. The instant Monix inhales he COUGHS LIKE CRAZY.

MONIX

What the Hell is this?

CLARENCE

What do you mean?

MONIX
It's harsh.

CLARENCE
Take that back.

MONIX
Take what back?

JACKIE MOON
His Mom grows it.

CLARENCE
Yeah, in the yard.

MONIX
Your Mom grew this?

CLARENCE
It's sweet grass.

MONIX
Well, I'm finished, thanks.

CLARENCE
What's wrong, my Mom's weed ain't
good enough for you?

MONIX
I guess not.

JACKIE MOON
C'mon man, have some respect for
his Mom's weed.

CLARENCE
That's it, I ain't sleeping in the
same bed as this motherfucker.

INT. AMIGO STADIUM - ROAD TRIP GAME 6 - NEXT NIGHT

Television cameras are being set up. A camera man cleans the lens.

Jackie studies the cameras, mesmerized by the idea of television. He speaks with the Amigo's manager.

AMIGO MANAGER
You want all the fans to sit on one
side of the stadium?

JACKIE MOON

Yeah, just move all those people over to this side.

(demonstrating)

See, the TV cameras are going to face this way, right? Well, if we fill the seats on that side, we'll look sold out.

AMIGO MANAGER

Actually, that's not a bad idea.

MEANWHILE, ON THE COURT: Both teams are warming up. Clarence now has a new name on his Jersey. There are so many words, there is barely space for a number. It's a mess.

CLARENCE

(re: Jersey, new name)

Check it out. I sewed it on the bus.

SCOOTIE DOUBLE-DAY

(struggling to read it)

What's it say?

CLARENCE

Jumping Johnny Johnson.

The asshole, PETRELLI, wanders over near the Tropics side of the court.

PETRELLI

Yo, Granny Yarn Barn, how's the needle point going?

CLARENCE

Kiss my ass, Petrelli.

PETRELLI

(re: the Jersey name)

Hey man, I think you spelled 'Flint sucks balls' wrong.

(beat)

This guy's the next Betsy Ross!
Aren't you Clarence?

The guys laugh. MONIX walks up, defending his teammate.

MONIX

No one calls him Clarence. His name is--

(beat)

What's your name?

CLARENCE
 Jumping Johnny Johnson.

MONIX
 His name's Jumping Johnny Johnson.
 (nose to nose)
 You got that?

Jackie hurries over.

JACKIE MOON
 Alright, break it up.
 (to his team)
 Everyone huddle up!... VAKIDIS!
 OVER HERE. Where is he walking to?
 (beat)
 Fuck it. Listen up, we're on
 National TV tonight. And you all
 know what that means: The league
 needs a good clean game.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Oh, that's a bunch of dog shit.

JACKIE MOON
 Hey! You guys want to merge or not?
 Because the fastest way to screw
 this up is to start punching people
 in the face while the commissioner
 is at home, watching the game with
 his kids... Children are very
 impressionable. Their minds are not
 yet soiled by the cruel realities
 of this world.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 What?

JACKIE MOON
 No punching.

Behind the huddle, FANS BEGIN WALKING RIGHT ACROSS THE COURT.
 Both teams turn to watch this strange thing.

The Amigos manager leads the herd, Jackie helps out,
 directing them across to the other side.

JACKIE MOON
 THAT'S RIGHT, JUST MOVE RIGHT
 ACROSS. IF YOU COULD JUST FILL IN
 ALL OF THOSE EMPTY SEATS IN THAT
 AREA, THAT'D BE GREAT.

INT. AMIGO'S STADIUM - LATER

The optical illusion has worked. The game does indeed look crowded. The game is in full swing.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

This sold out crowd is loving this one, the Amigos up by twenty-six here in the second.

Monix drains a nice jumper, but out of nowhere, Petrelli, the guy we hate, throws a hard shoulder, knocking Monix to the floor.

MONIX

That's a moving pick Father Pat!
C'mon!

FATHER PAT THE REF

Play on.

Monix can't believe it. Petrelli taunts Monix.

PETRELLI

What's wrong Monix, cat got your 'nads?

Monix faces off.

JACKIE MOON

MONIX! NO!
(pointing)
Not with the cameras.
(miming 'the commish')
He's watching.

Monix looks around and thinks...

MONIX

What about commercials?

JACKIE MOON

What?

MONIX

Commercials, what about commercials?

Jackie thinks about this, then nods 'good idea.'

JACKIE MOON

I like it. Time out Ref!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

*A time out on the floor, 5:20 left
before the half, the Amigos 45, the
Tropics 19, we'll be right back
after this message from Shasta.*

The camera's 'on air' red light turns off.

CAMERA MAN

(rooting them on)
And... You're clear.

JACKIE MOON

SOMEBODY HIT SOMEBODY!

BAM! MONIX CLOCKS PETRELLI.

BAM! JACKIE MOON PUNCHES ANOTHER GUY.

PETRELLI TAKES THE HIT AND TACKLES MONIX.

BOTH BENCHES CLEAR. THE CROWD GOES NUTS.

INT. THE COMMISSIONER'S HOUSE - MEANWHILE

The commissioner relaxes at home with his two kids... A Shasta commercial is on TV.

SHASTA COMMERCIAL (V.O.)

(on TV)

*I want a pop... I want a --
Shasta...*

INT. AMIGO STADIUM - CONTINUOUS

MAYHEM. JACKIE MOON IS YANKING A FAN'S HAIR.

A TALL GUY IS ABOUT TO POUND SHORT LITTLE KONG. BUT NOW KONG JUMPS IN THE AIR AND DOES A SWEET ROUND-HOUSE JUDO KICK, KNOCKING THE TALL GUY TO THE FLOOR.

KONG

Hi-Ya!

MEANWHILE: MONIX AND PETRELLI ARE TRADING HOCKEY PUNCHES...

CAMERA MAN

And we're back in -5-
(Monix punches Petrelli)
-4-
(Petrelli punches Monix)
-3-
(Monix punches Petrelli)

-2-

(Monix ducks and punches)

-1...

(cuing the announcers)

AND WE'RE ON.

THE 'RED LIGHT' GLOWS.

ON A DIME: EVERYONE STOPS PUNCHING, STANDS UP STRAIGHT AND SMILES.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

Welcome back to the ABA game of the week...

Players hold their heads in pain. Others limp back to the bench.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

...The camaraderie and spirit of this league is on full display here tonight...

Off camera, Monix delivers a secret punch to Patrelli's spleen.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - HALF TIME

Jackie runs the half time talk, standing in front of the chalk board.

JACKIE MOON

Okay, solid first half guys, but we're going to have to make some adj--

Monix interrupts Jackie, pissed. He addresses the team, stepping in front of Jackie Moon.

MONIX

--This is bullshit guys. They're kicking our ass in basketball and they're kicking our ass during the commercials, too. Does anybody here understand the concept of the pick and roll? Because they're going to keep double teaming at the top of the key until somebody rotates the Damn ball...

JACKIE MOON

Yeah! C'mon guys! Rotate the ball.

Monix looks at this group and gets even madder.

MONIX

Does anyone in this room have any pride? Don't you realize, this is the last four weeks of basketball any us are ever going to play? Is this how we're really going to go out? You'd think we'd want to end our careers battling, hustling after every loose ball. Boxing out under the boards. Setting picks for our teammates. But we haven't done shit out there.

Twiggy Munson and Scootsie Double-Day hang their heads.

MONIX

We're a bunch of selfish assholes --
And I've got news for you, we
aren't going to finish in fourth,
we're going to finish dead last.

Monix paces in front of the guys, a man possessed.

MONIX

One day, you're going to look back
on your life... And you're going to
look back on this time... And
you're going to realize...

Monix is staring right at Clarence. And Clarence is actually listening...

MONIX

...You're going to realize you
never even played basketball.

A moment of silence after the intensity. Monix waddles to the door.

MONIX

Now, you guys have fun out there in
the second half. If anyone needs
me, I'll be in the training room,
draining my knee.

Monix limps off, everyone's head is hanging low.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

He's right.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Of course he's right. But what the
 Hell are we supposed to do about
 it? We don't even have plays.

INT. JACKIE MOON'S OFFICE - DAYS LATER

We're back in Flint. Jackie is back in his office, speaking
 on the phone.

JACKIE MOON
 (into phone)
 Dukes! I don't make the rules. If
 they can't cash it, maybe you'll
 have to go out of state.
 (beat)
 I would if I could, but if I give
 you another check, that would be
 two checks. That would be \$20,000,
 not ten. What are you trying to
 pull here?
 (the other line rings)
 I've got to take this other call
 Dukes. Bye!--
 (hits a button, answering)
 Flint Tropics hot line... Oh hey
 Commish...

INT. FLINT MICHIGAN TROPICS STADIUM - MOMENTS LATER

On the floor, instead of a basketball court, the stadium
 holds an ice-rink. A 'Welcome to the Flint Ice Capades' sign
 is being removed.

The entire basketball team is on their hands and knees
 ASSEMBLING THE HARD WOOD. This is a lot of work. Clarence
 hits his thumb with a hammer.

CLARENCE
 Why do we have to put the court
 together?

SCOOTIE DOUBLE-DAY
 I guess the Ice Capades sold out.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Yeah, kids love that stuff.
 Although, I find the wild-life
 masks realistic and frightening.

CLARENCE
 Monix should be here helping us.

JACKIE MOON (O.S.)

Guys.

The guys look up to find Jackie. He does not look happy.

JACKIE MOON

The commissioner just called.

CLARENCE

What's wrong?

JACKIE MOON

I looks like we've got ourselves a situation. We've got some new 'terms and conditions' for this merger deal.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

What'd he say?

JACKIE MOON

Basically, we've got to average at least 2,000 fans per home game for the rest of the year.

TWIGGY MUNSON

2,000 people? Every home game?

JACKIE MOON

He said the NBA will only take a franchise that has fans.

CLARENCE

Shit. Winning is going to be hard. But getting 2,000 people to watch is going to be impossible.

JACKIE MOON

Let's try and stay positive. My Mother always believed Flint was a town of destiny. And I believe that. Now, I've already started work on a huge idea to promote us.

CLARENCE

What kind of huge idea?

INT. THE KREMLIN - DAY

Jackie's place is empty. Monix is drinking alone, totally blasted in the middle of the day. He hangs his head, barely able to order.

MONIX

Two more Johnny Walkers. And another pack of Kools.

BARTENDER

You could use some fresh air, Monix. You want to take a nap in the back of my truck?

MONIX

(angry)

Just the drinks and the smokes, alright?

(beat)

Do you have any idea where Lynn is these days?

BARTENDER

She asked me to tell you to quit going to her house.

MONIX

Well, tell her that's just fine with me.

BARTENDER

Okay. Sorry man.

CLARENCE (O.S.)

Monix.

REVEAL: Clarence.

MONIX

Well, well, well, look who it is.

(to the bartender)

Brian, I'd like you to meet Jumping Johnny Downtown Funky stuff Boner-time finger-blast Fag-erton.

CLARENCE

(to the bartender)

Johnny for short.

(to Brian, re: Monix)

Two coffees.

MONIX

So, what brings you to the The Kremlin?

CLARENCE

Listen, I know you and I haven't always been the best of buddies.

But I've been thinking about what you said the other night. This is gonna be our last chance. If I'm ever going to get into the NBA, it's going to be with the Tropics.

MONIX

I hate to break it to you, Clarence, but the Tropics will never play in the NBA.

CLARENCE

So maybe we won't. But like you said, I don't want to look back on this with any regrets. I know what you think of me. But I'm willing to put our differences aside. I'm telling you right now, I'll do whatever it takes to win.

MONIX

You mean, like, pass?

CLARENCE

(with a smile)

I would consider passing, yes.

MONIX

Sorry kid. Even if I wanted to play harder, this knee won't let me.

CLARENCE

I'm not just talking about you playing point guard... I'm talking about you teaching us...

Monix could not be less interested.

CLARENCE

Monix, you know more about basketball than any man who's ever set foot in Flint.

Monix drinks, not into it...

CLARENCE

All I'm saying is, instead of getting so pissed off at us all the time, why not just show us what the Hell you're talking about? Coach us a little. I mean, we can't get any worse.

MONIX

And why should I give a shit about
the Tropics?

CLARENCE

I know you. You've got all that
basketball shit stored up in your
head. I know you're dying to pass
it down to somebody. Why not us?

MONIX

What about Jackie? He's the coach.

CLARENCE

Jackie's got his hands full, trying
to sell tickets. He's obsessed.

(looking up, re: TV)

HEY! IT'S OUR VIDEO! TURN THE SOUND
UP!

ECU: THE TROPIC'S VIDEO ON TELEVISION.

ON TV: The Tropics are performing a video not unlike 'The
Super Bowl shuffle.' Each member takes a turn rapping,
dancing around wooden palm trees with a smile.

ALL THE TROPICS (V.O.)

(rapping badly)

*We are the Tropics hooping crew,
running and gunning and dunking on
you -- But we're not here to talk
no trash, we're just here to do the
Tropical Mash --*

This is the worst video ever made. All the guys boogie around
until Clarence steps forward, taking focus...

CLARENCE (V.O.)

(rapping badly)

*I'm Johnny Johnson and I got the
moves -- If you try and stop me,
I'll just get smooth --*

KONG (V.O.)

(rapping badly)

*My name is Kong and I ain't five
feet -- But I get more ass than a
toilet seat --*

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)

*This is my team, so get to know
them -- If you get near the lane
I'll yank your scrotum --*

ALL THE TROPICS (V.O.)
 -- We are the Tropics hooping crew,
 running and gunning and dunking too
 -- We're not here to talk no trash,
 we're just here to do the Tropical
 Mash --

The ball girls trot out and boogie with them.

BALL GIRLS (V.O.)
 -- They're not here to talk no
 trash -- they're just here to do
 the Tropical Mash --

CUT BACK TO:

MONIX CAN'T BELIEVE HIS EYES. Either can the bartender. Monix ignores Clarence.

MONIX
 (to the bartender)
 Two more Johnny Walkers.

CLARENCE
 So that's the way it's going to be?

Monix doesn't answer, he just drinks. Clarence gets the hint and walks out.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MONIX'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Monix looks like shit, laying on the couch, as if he hasn't moved for days. Apparently he's been drinking and smoking, but not much else.

KNOCK KNOCK. Someone's at the door.

REVEAL: LYNN lets herself in.

Monix is so depressed, he is non-plused.

LYNN
 Looking good Monix.

MONIX
 Thanks. You too.

LYNN
 Ms. Quincy told me the Tropics
 asked you to coach them.

INT. MONIX'S BATHROOM - LATER

ECU: A SHARP NEEDLE PIERCES FLESH.

Lynn is draining Monix's knee. It looks painful.

MONIX

I know what it takes to be a real team, Lynn.

LYNN

(re: his knee)

Stay still.

(beat)

And that's the reason you won't coach them?

MONIX

It doesn't matter. The truth is, I hate basketball right now.

LYNN

Do you really hate basketball? Or do you hate yourself?

MONIX

Why would I hate myself?

LYNN

Well, for one, you cheated on me.

MONIX

You hate me for that. Not me.

Lynn just stares at him.

MONIX

Okay, maybe I hate myself a little.

LYNN

You don't wear the ring around your neck anymore.

(no response)

Where is it?

MONIX

I rode the bench through the playoffs, Lynn.

LYNN

Monix, that was greatest moment of your career. And you look back on it like some kind of embarrassment.

MONIX

Riding the bench was the greatest moment of my career?

LYNN

You did more than ride the bench, Monix.

MONIX

What else did I do?

LYNN

Every practice, you took your team to the limit. I know you did. I was the one draining this stupid knee of yours every night. The Celtics were practicing against *you*, Monix. And when you ran that scout team, you were running Milwaukee's offense better than their first stringers ever could.

Lynn continues the business of disposing fluid into the toilet and preparing another syringe.

LYNN

By game time, your team knew where Milwaukee was going to be before their own players did. The Celtics made the right adjustments to win that series. And those adjustments came from you.

MONIX

So, I should be proud of running the scout team?

LYNN

Dave Cowens put that ring in the palm of your hand. And he told you to wear it with pride, because you were a champion. And he meant it too.

MONIX

He was being a nice guy. The bench is the bench.

LYNN

Your whole life, you've bitched about people playing selfish. It takes a team to win, right?

MONIX

That's right.

LYNN

But when you're on the team, your effort doesn't count? Is that it?

(beat)

If you weren't on the Celtics that year, would they have won it?

MONIX

Watch that needle.

LYNN

Answer me. Would they have won?

MONIX

I don't know.

LYNN

Yes you do. You know.

Monix looks away for a moment.

MONIX

Why are you doing this? What does any of this matter, anyway?

LYNN

What's it matter? You're drinking yourself to death!

(beat)

God, I wish I hated you as much as you hate yourself!

Lynn throws the needle. Monix dodges it.

LYNN

I made sacrifices! How many years did I support you? And finally, after all of our blood and sweat and bullshit together, you got there, Monix! You made it, you won an NBA championship ring. It wasn't just about you, okay? And I'm sick of you acting like you're some kind of joke. You didn't blow it. You're not a fraud. You're not a fake champion. And all the time we spent together, fighting for you to get to that moment, was not a waste! You're a champion, you asshole!

(beat)

But if you want to drink yourself
to death, go ahead. Fuck you.

With that, Lynn is gone. Monix stands alone in the bathroom,
then checks his knee.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLLISEUM - NEXT DAY

It's practice. But this isn't basketball, it's DANCE
PRACTICE. The entire team performs a complicated 'intro-
dance.'

JACKIE MOON

(choreographing)

1 and 2 and 3 and 4 and turn like
you mean it -- Bee Bee, Arch that
back. Yes. Now, the waterfall...

One by one, each dips down like a waterfall. And now a leg
kick.

JACKIE MOON

Nice leg kick Kong. Those flexible
hips are a coach's dream.

(beat)

Now big finish -- and freeze. And
then we start the game after that.

CLARENCE

Are we going to practice or what?

JACKIE MOON

This is practice, okay Clarence? We
need to get two thousand people in
here! Our intro dance has to blow
people's minds.

He begins pacing around, more passionate than ever...

JACKIE MOON

From now on, I want our afros
bigger... And shinier.....I want
our shorts shorter... And
tighter... We're going to pull our
tube socks up higher than we ever
have before.

The team seems to be looking off screen.

JACKIE MOON

What's wrong?

REVEAL: Monix has been watching this whole thing. With Monix on the court, everyone feels kind of stupid.

JACKIE MOON

Hey, you're back! Listen, you should probably chalk your hands up for this number.

CLARENCE

Jackie, I asked Monix to coach us.

JACKIE MOON

Coach?

Jackie is totally thrown by this. He looks around at the team. Clearly, a decision has been made.

JACKIE MOON

What do you mean, coach?
(truly hurt)
What is this? What's going on?
(staring his team down)
It's a Mutiny.

CLARENCE

Jackie. Don't be like that.

JACKIE MOON

Hold on a second. Last time I checked, we didn't live in Flint, Russia. We live in Flint, America. I'm coach until a new one is elected.

CLARENCE

Don't make us elect Monix, man.
(Jackie Moon holds firm)
Alright, show of hands. Who wants Monix to step in as player-coach?

Everyone feels bad, but they all raise their hands.

JACKIE MOON

Please God No.

TWIGGY MUNSON

Sorry Jackie.

JACKIE MOON

(starting to cry)
It's cool. I get it. I'm a big boy, I can handle it.

Jackie cries harder.

CLARENCE

Don't take it so hard, Jackie.
You're a great owner. We all know
that.

JACKIE MOON

Woah. Hold on. Did you just say
'great owner?'

CLARENCE

Yeah. Everyone thinks so.

JACKIE MOON

Now, when you said great owner,
were you just saying that? Because
it's not cool to mess with me about
this.

CLARENCE

We mean it. For real. Monix is just
more of an X's and O's kind of guy,
that's all.

Jackie is emotional. It's a bittersweet moment. He takes off
his whistle, then walks over and hands Monix his whistle.

JACKIE MOON

(re: The whistle)

Here. You may need this.

Now he pulls out a bunch of crazy notes on loose paper
written in ball point pen. The pages look insane.

JACKIE MOON

(handing him papers)

And here are some ideas for plays
I've jotted down. Just thoughts.

MONIX

Thanks Jackie.

(to the team)

The way I see it, any team in this
league can put together a run. Most
of our opponents are all flash. If
we play unselfish, fundamental
basketball, we can win games.

JACKIE MOON

I like it. Unselfish, guys.

MONIX

Yes. Unselfish. Unselfish meaning tough team defense, full and half court traps, boxing your man out to help the team rebound.

(beat)

Unselfish means sprinting up the floor on every fast break NOT because you can get a DUNK -- and get your DICK SUCKED after the game -- but because if you sprint up the floor you might pull the defense out of position and free a teammate up for a high percentage shot.

JACKIE MOON

Wait, so, what's going on with the blow jobs?

BEE BEE ELLIS

I vote we keep the blow jobs.

JACKIE MOON

(raising his hand)

All in favor?

Everyone raises their hands in favor of blow jobs.

CLARENCE

Would everyone let the man talk please?

Clarence is serious. This shuts everyone up.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - LATER

The starters have gotten into position, guarded by the scout team, in blue jerseys.

MONIX

The most important work we do on the court is away from the basketball.

Monix FLIPS OPEN A SWITCH BLADE KNIFE AND STABS THE BALL, deflating it. This gets everyone's attention.

MONIX

(re: deflated ball)

Until you start moving like a real team, you practice without a ball.

He flings the deflated ball into the bleachers and snaps the knife closed.

MONIX

Alright, Clarence, run the offense.

CLARENCE

I don't get it.

MONIX

Set a pick for somebody.

Clarence jogs over and stands next a scout team opponent.

MONIX

Okay, that's kind of a pick, I guess. Try standing on the other side of Scootsie's man, so you free him up to cut into the lane.

Monix corrects Clarence, moving his body the way he wants him to stand.

MONIX

Widen your stance. Plant your feet. Hands back. Like this. Now Scootsie GO. Set a pick for Jackie.

Scootsie cuts across the lane. The team slowly gets it, rotating faster.

MONIX

Now Jackie pick Bee Bee's man, and rotate to the rim like this... Everyone move to the open space. And Clarence you swing back out up top.

They've completed the play. Monix stands there, smiling. The players look at each other, what's the big deal?

MONIX

You know what that was?

CLARENCE

What.

MONIX

A flash to the high side post with an outside screen and a back door cut. Let's do it again.

BEE BEE ELLIS

Hey, how come you don't have to run with us? You're a player, just like the rest of us.

MONIX

I'm saving my knee for the games. Coach's decision. NOW RUN.

Clarence sets a screen for Scootsie and they perform the same basic rotation.

MONIX

(as they run)

We're not just rotating, we're clearing out, making space. A pass and cut can change defensive match-ups. Creating seams can give us back door looks. Down screens can make a team vulnerable to penetration.

JACKIE MOON

Hold on. I'm lost.

BEE BEE ELLIS

No shit. What's up with all of these fucked up words, man?

TWIGGY MUNSON

Yeah, what are we, building some kind of basketball space ship?

MONIX

You don't have to understand it yet. Just run it again. You heard me -- AGAIN.

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - DAY - LATER

It's many hours later...

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - LATER

The team is still doing the exact same thing. Nothing in their moves have changed at all. They're exhausted.

CLARENCE

We've been running this play for a long time, man.

JACKIE MOON

Yeah, maybe we could try, like,
play number two.

MONIX

No. We're running this play. We're
running this play until we puke.

BEE BEE ELLIS

Basically, we have.

JACKIE MOON

Yeah, I'm pretty beat.

MONIX

'Until we puke' is not a figure of
speech. We are literally going to
puke.

JACKIE MOON

What does he mean by '*literally?*'

CLARENCE

I think he's talking about vomit.

BEE BEE ELLIS

Not cool.

JACKIE MOON

Monix, can I talk to you for a
second?

MONIX

No. No talking.

JACKIE MOON

Wait...

MONIX

GO!

Jackie hangs his head, but then accepts his fate. He runs.

MONIX

(as they run)

We need to get in shape fellas. And
we need to learn some fundamentals
quick. -- AGAIN!

They run it again, getting more and more winded.

MONIX

I want you to be brain dead.
Because someday you're going to be
too tired, or too nervous to think -
- AGAIN! And when you are, this is
the play I'm going to call. The
play that your lungs and legs will
have memorized. We will be able to
run this in our sleep.

Clarence tries to gag himself with his fingers.

MONIX

HEY! No sticking your fingers down
your throat, Clarence, I saw that.
You're going to puke. And it's
going to be all natural -- AGAIN!

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LOCKER ROOM - LATER

We pan along a row of toilet stalls. Behind the doors, each
player is throwing up...

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

JACKIE IS THE LAST PLAYER LEFT. He crawls across the gym
floor, dying. Monix screams down at his deflated body.

MONIX

MOVE MOVE MOVE! FOURTH QUARTER NOW!
FOURTH QUARTER!

JACKIE MOON

You're fired!

MONIX

Fuck you.

JACKIE MOON

Fuck you.

MONIX

Get up and run. You're going to
puke like everybody else.

JACKIE MOON

Monix, I need to talk to you.

MONIX

We'll talk after you puke. GO!

Jackie can't get up, but he crawls, dying...

JACKIE MOON
I can't puke Monix!

MONIX
Yes you can. Go.

Jackie crawls harder along the hardwood.

JACKIE MOON
Monix! You don't understand. I've never thrown up in my life.

MONIX
What are you talking about?

JACKIE MOON
I've never puked. Ever.

MONIX
That makes no sense. Everyone has thrown up before.

JACKIE MOON
I haven't. I swear to God. I can eat anything. I can drink anything. I've been sick, but I've never puked. I swear to God.

MONIX
That's bullshit. Keep moving, you're going to puke.

JACKIE MOON
I don't puke. I can't do it! It's the truth! I swear on my Mother's grave.

At this point, Monix can't help but be intrigued.

MONIX
What about when you were a baby? Babies throw up all the time.

JACKIE MOON
My Mom said I never did. I swear. She said I was fascinating.

MONIX
No way.

JACKIE MOON

You can call my Dad! I've never puked.

When Jackie looks up at Monix, it's clear he is not lying.

MONIX

Isn't that kind of dangerous?

JACKIE MOON

What do you mean?

MONIX

What happens if you swallow poison?

JACKIE MOON

I don't know. I ate bad sausage before. But nothing happened.

MONIX

Stand up.

Jackie manages to stand up.

MONIX

Have you ever been punched in the Jejunum?

JACKIE MOON

I don't know. What's a Jejunum?

MONIX

It's part of your small intestine.

JACKIE MOON

I don't know. I doubt--

BOOM.

MONIX'S POWERFUL FIST LIFTS JACKIE'S TORSO IN THE AIR.

ECU: Monix's knowing fist digs deep under Jackie's rib cage.

It's the hardest punch ever filmed.

ON JACKIE'S REACTION: He stands, beyond pain, empty of any possible air. The blood leaves his face and his eyes become confused, watering strangely.

Part of Jackie's brain wants to speak, but he feels unhuman -- his lips separate only slightly.

He wanders out of frame.

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLLESIUM - LATER - DAY

A SIDE DOOR BURSTS OPEN. JACKIE STUMBLES OUT INTO DAYLIGHT, INTO THE GRASS. HE PAUSES, THEN SUDDENLY STARTS RUNNING, BUT STOPS, CONFUSED, LIKE A WOUNDED GAZELLE...

JACKIE STAGGERS FURTHER, USING A TREE TO KEEP HIS BALANCE AS HE STRUGGLES TO STAY CONSCIOUS.

JACKIE IS ABOUT TO SPEAK, BUT HIS BODY LURCHES. HE HOLDS HIS RIB CAGE, SHOCKED. A SUDDEN FEELING OF FEAR SHOOTS THROUGH HIS BONES.

JACKIE MOON
(to the sky)
Mom?

WITH THAT, JACKIE PROJECTILE VOMITS. THE DISCHARGE IS BEYOND BELIEF. A LIFETIME'S WORTH OF TOXINS ARE LAUNCHED OVER A SHRUB. JACKIE WAILS IN DESPAIR.

MONIX stands in the doorway, watching this.

MONIX
You okay?

Jackie is about to speak, but then takes stock of his feelings. There is now an air of tranquility about him. Reborn. He's almost Euphoric...

JACKIE MOON
I'm beautiful.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - NIGHT

An intense game is underway. The Flint team works hard away from the ball. As the Monix voice over continues, we watch the team move just like in practice. Monix is playing too.

Note: The team also looks 'hot.' Clarence plays with an even bigger afro. Jackie Moon sports a large perm, striped tube socks and the whitest thighs you've ever seen.

MONIX (V.O.)
*...On offense, we share the ball.
We look for the easy pass, not the
spectacular pass...*

Jackie rolls off the pick and looks for it. For the first time in this sequence, we see the ball. Clarence has a clear passing lane -- He feeds Jackie for a lay up.

MONIX (V.O.)

...If a guy's more open than you are, he gets the ball...

Instead of celebrating, Clarence hustles back on Defense. The Tropics execute a half court trap. As we watch Monix play, we continue to the voice over from practice...

MONIX (V.O.)

...On defense, we're going to learn to play together. We're going to use team traps to pressure people into turnovers.

On the in bounds, Monix and Jackie Moon trap an opponent. Monix slaps the ball free. He flips to Clarence who fakes the fast break dunk and dishes to Scotsie.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

Can you believe that? Jumping Johnny Johnson actually passed the ball.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)

It was a great pass, too.

The other team calls time out.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

And Jackie Moon has made several great defensive plays down the stretch. I tell you, Jackie's not afraid to knock people around in the lane. He's a monster.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)

Like a retard in a China shop.

A twenty-second time out on the floor, Monix huddles them up.

MONIX

(huddling up)

Listen up. I'll in-bound. Clarence, protect the ball and penetrate if you can. Kick it out to Scotsie or me and everyone crash the boards hard. Looking good, we're thirty seconds away from taking this one home. Let's bring it in.

JACKIE MOON

He's right guys. But remember, we want to win, but not by too much.

TWIGGY MUNSON

We don't want to win *by too much?*

MONIX

What the Hell is he talking about?

CLARENCE

He's worried about the corn dogs.

MONIX

What?

CLARENCE

If we score a hundred points,
everyone gets a free corn dog.
There are signs everywhere.

JACKIE MOON

I'm sorry, Monix, but we don't even
have corn dogs.

MONIX

I don't give a shit. We're taking
it to them.

JACKIE MOON

We're up by seven, Monix. Can't we
just take it easy? We're talking
about a lot of corn dogs here.

BEE BEE ELLIS

There could be a riot.

MONIX

I don't give a shit about the corn
dogs, okay? We play hard every
second. We're running the offense.
Everyone got that?

Everyone nods. WHISTLE!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

*The Tropics are just one bucket
away from the magic number. Listen
to this crowd. They know what's at
stake: A free corn dog.*

Monix has the ball in his hands. He in bounds to Clarence.
Clarence penetrates and kicks it to Scootsie.

Scootsie has an open look. He sizes up a jumper...

FLYING IN LIKE THE WIND IS JACKIE MOON... JUMPING HIGHER THAN HE EVER HAS BEFORE IN HIS LIFE...

REJECTED. SCOOTIE'S SHOT IS BLOCKED.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Look at this, Jackie Moon has just blocked his own teammate's shot. I've never seen this before.

THE BALL BOUNCES UNDER THE BASKET TO VAKIDIS, WHO SEEMS TO HAVE NO IDEA WHAT'S GOING ON.

JACKIE MOON
 VAKIDIS! NO!!!

VAKIDIS TAKES THE BALL AND GOES FOR A DUNK --

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Vakidis takes it up strong to the basket...

BAM! JACKIE MOON TACKLES VAKIDIS INTO THE STANDS.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Ooh. He gets taken out hard by the coach.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
Nice!

The ball bounces into the air, rolls around the rim... And DROPS IN.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
 And the basket is... GOOD!

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE. TROPICS 100 PRO STARS 91.

JACKIE MOON
 Shit.

INT. DAIQUIRI ROOM - LATER

The daiquiri room is crowded with guys. JACKIE is having a team meeting.

JACKIE MOON
 I asked you up to the Daiquiri room, because this is a private matter.
 (everyone looks around)
 As you know, I threw up recently.

It was the first time in my life.
And, well, it's made me feel... I
guess you could say I've got a new
clarity in life.

(Everyone stares back)

Since vomiting on Wednesday, I've
been facing my demons. I'm not
going to be an imposter any more.

(beat)

And I want you to know, I just
mailed out 562 corn dog coupons.

(beat)

And I'd like to bring somebody
special in... DUKES!

Dukes walks in. He is still shirtless. Jackie hands him a
duffel bag.

JACKIE MOON

In this bag, is ten thousand
dollars.

DUKES

No way. Really?

JACKIE MOON

Actually, it's twenty three
hundred. But I'm going to pay you
the rest. The Tropics will not let
you down. From now on, I want my
conscience clear.

DUKES

Wow. Thanks Jackie.

JACKIE MOON

Can I confess something to
everyone? It's something I've never
told anybody.

CLARENCE

What is it?

JACKIE MOON

You know my song 'Love Me Sexy?'

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

Everyone knows that song.

JACKIE MOON

I stole it.

TWIGGY MUNSON

No.

JACKIE MOON

It's true.

(turns away, dramatic)

My Mom wrote it. Three weeks before she died. And I stole it.

Even Monix is fascinated by this.

BEE BEE ELLIS

Wait, your *Mom* wrote that? Was she a singer?

JACKIE MOON

No, she wrote it on a napkin. I duped the whole world. I'm nothing but a fraud.

(beat)

It's true, I'm a famous singer. And I've landed the hottest wife in the world. But, to be honest, we usually only sleep together once a year. On VJ day.

CLARENCE

Damn. VJ day? That's cold.

JACKIE MOON

(ignoring Kong)

And even on that day, I don't feel like it's me who's sleeping with her.

BEE BEE ELLIS

What does that mean?

JACKIE MOON

She married me because of my song, but I didn't write it. So sometimes I feel like it's not even me who's with her.

(more emotional)

Deep down, I feel like it's really my Mom who is making love to her. When I hold Lucy's supple breasts in my hands, they are my Mom's hands. When I eat a pair of edible panties off of her, they are my Mom's teeth.

DUKES

That's pretty weird.

JACKIE MOON
I'm living in a prison, Dukes.

CLARENCE
Why don't you write a song
yourself? Then you wouldn't feel
like a fake any more.

JACKIE MOON
Oh please! I could never write
anything as brilliant as 'Love Me
Sexy!'
(standing tall)
Listen to me, Tropics. Today is a
new day. I am going to be the
greatest basketball owner you've
ever seen. And we're going to make
it to fourth place.

MUSIC CUE: HOT CHOCOLATE 'EVERY 1'S A WINNER.'

MEGA-MONTAGE: THE TROPICAL FEVER SEQUENCE. (Note: The music
fades in and out throughout as needed).

-PRE GAME: The Tropics do their 'intro dance.' They perform
the waterfall down into a cool pose. The crowd loves it.

-TROPIC HIGHLIGHTS: They run a fast break weave, Monix makes
the layup. Clarence penetrates and dishes to Jackie for a
pull up jumper.

-THE TROPICAL AISLE: Fat people in Hawaiian shirts go crazy.
A lady chucks her nachos at the other team.

-RESULTS: The scoreboard shows a Tropics win.

-ATTENDANCE: A clicker counts up to 182 fans.

-MORE INTRO EXCITEMENT: Jackie introduces his starting five.

JACKIE MOON
(into mic)
And at guard, six foot two.
Formerly known as Clarence Withers,
and Sugar Dunkerton, and Downtown
Funky Stuff Malone, and Jumping
Johnny Johnson -- He's launching
his new name tonight -- Put your
hands together for: COFFEE BLACK.

Clarence jogs out with Coffee Black sewn into his jersey...

-RESULTS: A newspaper shows the Tropics have moved out of last place.

-ATTENDANCE: A clicker counts up to 406.

-JACKIE THE PROMOTER: He's giving away a mountain of cupcakes. A lucky fan stands next to him.

JACKIE MOON

(into mic)

*Eric has just won CUP CAKE
MOUNTAINNNNNNNNN!!! Can you imagine
how that feels? Who wants to see
Eric take a bite!?*

-ATTENDANCE: A clicker counts up to 620.

-THE KREMLIN: The team parties like it's 1976. The ball girls are looking pretty good.

-MONTAGE CONTINUES WITH TROPIC HIGHLIGHTS. As music cranks, Clarence dribbles and pulls up for a little floater. On defense, Jackie rejects a shot.

-WHEELCHAIR DARREN AND JODY: Jody wheels right out onto the floor, an opponent flips over her and tumbles. Jody spills out of her wheelchair, totally psyched.

OPPOSING PLAYER

My God, are you okay little girl?

WHEELCHAIR JODY

Eat my crippled ass.

-RESULTS: Three successive winning scores are flashed in a row. A newspaper shows the Tropics moving up further in the standings.

-CLARENCE'S MOM: Quincy is throwing a party for the team at their BBQ place. She dances happy.

-NEW PROMO PHOTOS: QUICK CUTS of the team's new glossy calendar: Mr. January: Jackie wears only a tool belt. February: Clarence lies on a lamb wool rug. March: Bee Bee Ellis, by a waterfall, wears a cardigan. April: Monix, annoyed, holds a rose in his teeth.

-ATTENDANCE: A clicker counts up to 711.

-MONIX THE MASTERMIND: In the meeting room, Monix and the team study film. Monix draws up a defensive scheme on the board. On the court, he gives Clarence an advanced lesson.

MONIX

Rotate further out from the key, so when you get the ball you can face the basket. You've actually got some moves, so you can penetrate...

FLINT RALLIES AROUND THEIR TEAM: The guys in Hawaii shirts are out flyering.

TROPICAL AISLE GUY

Come see the Tropics tonight!

TROPICAL AISLE GUY #2

See the biggest half time stunt ever.

-MONIX THE PLAYER: Despite his knees and back killing him, Monix plays like a champion. He's still got some jump left too. He knows this is his last run, there's nothing left to save it for.

-TRAINING ROOM: Clarence drains Monix's knee.

-JACKIE THE PROMOTER: Jackie's wife, Lucy Moon, rides a mechanical bull topless. The crowd goes nuts.

JACKIE MOON

Good job honey! Looking good.

-ATTENDANCE: A clicker counts up to 890.

-TROPIC HIGHLIGHTS: Scootsie Double Day Scores. Twiggy Munson Scores. Bee Bee Ellis scores. Jackie Moon hits a ill advised three pointer. Monix rejoices, he's actually having fun.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

...Jackie Moon with a three. He's the fourth player in double figures. They're really sharing the ball tonight.

-FLINT RALLIES AROUND THE TROPICS: People are buying Tropic's jerseys.

-RESULTS: The standings show the Tropics all the way up to sixth place.

-FLINT RALLIES AROUND THEIR TEAM: The ball girls are doing a kick line, wearing cute cheerleader skirts. Clarence watches from the bench.

CLARENCE

Hold up. Are these girls wearing underwear?

JACKIE MOON

Which girls?

(turning around)

Oh. It doesn't look like it. Wow.

It's true, the ball girls are flashing the crowd with every kick.

CLARENCE

(mesmerized)

Nice work, Jackie.

JACKIE MOON

I didn't do it. They did.

Melinda winks at Jackie, as her skirt flips up. The crowd is going goes crazy.

-ATTENDANCE: The clicker raises to 906.

-MORE PRACTICE: Clarence slams a dunk and does a jig.

MONIX

Clarence, do me a favor, if you dunk the ball, don't dance afterwards. Act like you've been there before.

JACKIE MOON

Actually, Monix, I need him to dance. A lot. The fans need it.

(beat)

It's either that, or we play with a monkey.

MONIX

Fine, you can dance a little bit.

JACKIE MOON

If you dunk it, go fuckin' ape shit.

-GAME TIME. CLARENCE DUNKS THE BALL: He immediately launches into a preposterous celebration: Back flip, 360 spin down to the splits, back up, he and Jackie give each other ten and then do an extended hand jive routine. Now Jackie blows Clarence a kiss, which 'knocks him out flat.' Clarence then poses, elbow on the floor, hand under his head, smiling.

JACKIE'S WIFE: LUCY MOON sleeps with LOU REDWOOD.

-JACKIE THE PROMOTER: Halftime, at center court, a ramp is set up. Behind the ramp, all the ball girls lay head-to-toe.

BOBBY DEE (V.O.)
*These beautiful girls reach a
 combined total of 47 feet... And
 here he comes...*

Jackie comes ROLLER-SKATING at high speed. He hits the jump --
 It's going to be close --

BAM! HE LANDS HARD, POUNDING DOWN ON TOP OF THE LAST GIRL.
 SHE IS ABSOLUTELY FLATTENED BY THE IMPACT.

JACKIE HOLDS HIS LEFT SHOULDER IN PAIN, THEN STANDS AND LIFTS
 HIS OTHER HAND, CLAIMING VICTORY.

THE GIRL ROLLS OVER TO HER BACK, TRYING TO STAY CONSCIOUS.

BOBBY DEE (V.O.)
How about that!

END OF MONTAGE.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - NIGHT

Jackie is on the bench, mid-game. Bobby Dee is taping his
 shoulder.

JACKIE MOON
 OW.
 (Bobby Dee stops taping)
 No, keep doing it.

BOBBY DEE
 You sure boss?

JACKIE MOON
 Just keep taping it up. I'm fine.

Now the COMMISH (the league official) steps over.

COMMISH
 Hey Jackie.

JACKIE MOON
 Oh, hey Commish.
 (a little worried)

I didn't know you were in town this weekend.

COMMISH

Listen, my office has been getting your numbers. You claim you've had over two thousand people at every home game this month.

JACKIE MOON

(dead pan)

That's correct.

The commissioner looks around, skeptical. As we scan the stands, it's clear the crowd is still not big enough.

COMMISH

Well, we've counted only nine hundred and eighty three here tonight.

JACKIE MOON

What, you don't think people go to the bathroom?

(Commish isn't buying it)

Saturdays can be a little slow. You should have been here the other night, it was SO PACKED.

COMMISH

Don't bullshit me, Jackie.

The commish waves over a little bald man in a suit. PEEKSKILL carries a brief case and never talks.

COMMISH

From now on, Peekskill here will be attending every Tropics home game. You're going to have to get a real crowd here if you want to qualify for the merger.

INT. TELEVISION STUDIO - DAY

Jackie Moon is being interviewed on a local talk show.

INTERVIEWER

So, the Tropics will be at a size disadvantage against the Americans. How do you intend to match up with their strong inside game?

JACKIE MOON
 Tomorrow, at half time, I, Jackie
 Moon, will wrestle a bear.

INTERVIEWER
 Oh, well there's something. But,
 defensively, as a team, do you
 think--

JACKIE MOON
 --That's tomorrow! One night only!
 See Dewie the wrestling bear attack
 me. He's killed people in public
 before.

INTERVIEWER
 Okay, well, that's some half time
 show.

JACKIE MOON
 I'M TELLING YOU, NOBODY CAN MISS
 THIS! IF YOU'RE A CHILD, TAKE MONEY
 OUT OF YOUR MOTHER'S PURSE AND WALK
 TO FLINT MICHIGAN FAIRGROUNDS
 COLISEUM! EIGHT O'CLOCK!

INTERVIEWER
 Well, there you have it. Jackie
 Moon, thanks for stopping by. From
 channel 5, this is Mick Kenterman,
 signing off. Good night.

JACKIE MOON
 DEWIE IS INSANE. HE COULD RIP MY
 HEAD OFF!

EXT. LYNN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

LYNN carries the garbage out. As she closes the lid, she
 notices something.

REVEAL: Monix is standing in the yard.

LYNN
 Well, if it isn't the toast of
 Flint Michigan. Shouldn't you be
 out signing autographs?

Monix doesn't speak... He stares into her eyes for a moment.

MONIX
 Will you marry me?

LYNN

What?

MONIX

You heard me.

LYNN

Technically, we're still married
right now, Monix.

MONIX

You know what I mean.

LYNN

Do I?

MONIX

Do you love me?

LYNN

Probably.

MONIX

Then let's do it. For real this
time. I need you.

LYNN

Shit. I know you need me, Monix.
The question is, do I need you?

KYLE (O.S.)

WHAT'S UP MONIX!?

Kyle pokes his head out of the screen door. He wears a Flint
Jersey with Monix on the back.

KYLE

CHECK OUT THE JERSEY, MAN. I'M YOU.
HA!

MONIX

YEAH. HA!

(to Lynn)

And I suppose you need him?

LYNN

He's loyal.

MONIX

Dogs are loyal.

LYNN
He ain't stupid, if that's what
you're trying to say.

MONIX
HEY KYLE!

KYLE
YEAH?

MONIX
CAN YOU DO ME A FAVOR? CAN YOU GO
PICK ME UP A TUBE OF BEN GAY?

KYLE
NO PROBLEM, I'LL LEAVE RIGHT NOW.

Monix and Lynn meet eyes. Lynn tries not to smile, trying to
be mad. Kyle pulls on some jeans and gets into his truck.

LYNN
Don't fuck with him. It's just
rude.

MONIX
(while looking at Lynn)
DON'T GO TO THE PHARMACY, KYLE. I
NEED A BIG TUBE, THE KIND THEY SELL
OUT AT LUGER'S, ON ROUTE 59.

KYLE
I'M ALREADY GONE BRO.

LYNN
(eyeing Monix)
What do you think you're doing?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. LYNN'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Monix and Lynn are HAVING SEX.

Lynn is aggressive.

Years of pent up emotion are building to a climax...

INT. LYNN'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Meanwhile, KYLE RE-ENTERS THE HOUSE!

KYLE
 (to the empty living room)
 What's up. I forgot my stupid walle-

-Kyle stops in his tracks. He HEARS a sound he's never truly heard before, Lynn having an orgasm. He slowly walks toward the bedroom.

KYLE'S POV: Peeking around the corner, we spy Monix and Lynn still going at it.

ON KYLE: His whole body goes numb, his face turns red... We hold on his face until:

KYLE
 Monix?
 (beat)
 Yes.

Still undetected, Kyle settles in to watch the show, still wearing his Monix jersey.

Lynn finally looks over and spots Kyle. We can't be sure, but his hand might be in his pants. Lynn can't believe her eyes.

LYNN
 (having sex, whispering
 off to Kyle)
 Stop that.

KYLE
 Stop what?

LYNN
 (in pig Latin)
 Ixne-on-the-erking off-je.

Monix finally notices his sex partner is having a conversation. He turns to see Kyle.

MONIX
 Woah. What the fuck?

KYLE
 Monix, you ol' dog!

MONIX
 What the Hell are you doing!?

KYLE
 Hey, I'm the victim here. I'm allowed to do as I please. This was an honor.

LYNN

What?

Monix stands up, wrapping a sheet around him.

MONIX

I'm outta here.

KYLE

Oh, c'mon man. Don't be like that.
It's all cool.

MONIX

Believe me, this is not 'all cool.'

Monix grabs his shit and walks out of the bedroom.

MONIX

I'll call you.

KYLE

Okay.

LYNN

Not you, asshole. He was talking to
me.

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - NEXT NIGHT

There's a real buzz in the air. People are pouring into the stadium tonight. Clarence is right outside the locker room, eating a Bit-o-Honey, watching with amazement.

OFFICER MILLER

Hey is that Coffee Black? I'm
officer Miller, State Correctional,
I'm a big fan, you can call me
Jimmy.

CLARENCE

Nice to meet you.

OFFICER MILLER

Jackie Moon ordered up a bus full
of prisoners. Any idea where we all
should sit?

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

PAN: The PRISONERS are all packed into the stands. Next to them is a huge group of ladies from an OLD FOLKS HOME... Next to a bus load of SICK KIDS from the hospital.

ON PEEKSKILL trying to count. There's no use analyzing it, the place is sold out and the fans are going nuts.

CENTER COURT: In a wrestling ring, Jackie is in a wrestling singlet, wearing head gear, drinking from a squirt bottle.

PAN TO DEWIE THE BEAR, ready to go.

CLARENCE, DRESSED AS A REF, is standing in front of JACKIE, messaging his shoulders.

CLARENCE THE REF
We sold out, man. You did good.

JACKIE MOON
I'm scared of bears, Clarence.

CLARENCE THE REF
What?

JACKIE MOON
I hate these things. I'm freaking out right now.

CLARENCE THE REF
If you're scared of bears, why the Hell are you wrestling one then?

JACKIE MOON
Look at this place. We're packed. It was a good idea.

CLARENCE THE REF
Well, don't worry, you'll pin him easy. It'll be fine.

JACKIE MOON
You don't understand. I don't like bears. I'm feeling dizzy.

Jackie is seriously petrified. Clarence adjusts the collar of his ref jersey and looks around, worried about his friend.

CLARENCE THE REF
Maybe we should call it off.

JACKIE MOON
NO. Look into my eyes.
(Clarence does)
You're the ref tonight. No matter what happens in there, do not stop the fight, okay?

These people came to see a show.
I've got to make it through at
least one round.

CLARENCE THE REF
Okay, until you finish the first
round, I won't call it. Hey, how
bad can three minutes be, right?

BEAR HANDLER (O.S.)
Are you guys ready?

The bear handler is a large frizzy haired woman.

CLARENCE THE REF
I don't know, are we ready?

JACKIE MOON
Yeah, let's do it.

BEAR HANDLER
You guys want to give me a safe
word?

CLARENCE THE REF
What's a safe word?

BEAR HANDLER
It's a word for you to yell to the
Ref, so he can stop the match.

JACKIE MOON
I don't need a safe word.

BEAR HANDLER
Tell you what, if you get injured
or you really feel like you're in
danger, yell, um, I don't know...
Spumoni. Once I get a signal from
the ref, I'll come in.

CLARENCE THE REF
What's Spumoni?

JACKIE MOON
It's an Italian Gelato, sort of
like Almond flavored ice cream.

CLARENCE THE REF
Is it good?

JACKIE MOON
I don't know, I've never had it.

BEAR HANDLER

It's really good.

(Jackie and Clarence nod)

Okay, so Spumoni is the safe word then?

JACKIE MOON

No, I don't need a safe word, okay?

Let's just do this. One round.

(nodding to the bell man)

DING DING DING! The bell has rung. The crowd goes crazy. Clarence assumes his position as ref.

Jackie walks slowly toward the bear, frightened.

The bear scratches his belly, cute. Jackie immediately quits.

JACKIE MOON

(re: The scratching)

Okay, fuck this.

CLARENCE THE REF

What? You can't quit already.

JACKIE MOON

SPUMONI. I'm out of here.

CLARENCE THE REF

You can't SPUMONI, all he did was scratch his nuts.

JACKIE MOON

Well, too bad, I'm SPUMONI-ING.

PEOPLE START TO BOO. Jackie looks around at the angry crowd.

CLARENCE THE REF

You gotta give 'em a show. C'mon, the bear seems pretty tired, look at him.

It's true, the bear is pretty docile. The bear's indifference gives Jackie a glimmer of confidence.

CLARENCE THE REF

Just test him out a little. Maybe it won't be so bad.

Jackie nods, then hops around with his dukes in the air. Now he does a shuffle for the crowd. After dancing a bit, the bear is still motionless.

JACKIE MOON
 (tapping the bear)
 C'mon Dewie...
 (off screen)
 What's going on? Is he going to--

--THE BEAR MAULS JACKIE. LIKE LIGHTENING, JACKIE HAS ALREADY BEEN TACKLED AND STRANGLLED AGAINST THE ROPES.

JACKIE MOON
 AAAHHHHHH!!!!!!

CLARENCE THE REF
 Damn.

BEAR HANDLER
 Woah-ho. I've never seen that before.

THE CROWD IS GOING BALLISTIC. NOW THE BEAR THROWS JACKIE ACROSS THE RING LIKE A LIMP RAG DOLL.

JACKIE MOON
 AAAHHH!!! SPUMONI!!!

CLARENCE THE REF
 NO SPUMONI.

JACKIE MOON
 FUCK YOU CLARENCE! SPUMONI!

THE BEAR IS GOING BALISTIC. JACKIE TRIES TO CRAWL AWAY, BUT DEWIE JUMPS ON HIM, GRABS HIS HEAD AND TRIES TO RIP IT OFF OF HIS SHOULDERS. THIS BEAR HAS LOST HIS MIND.

JACKIE MOON
 (to the handler)
 SPUMONI!

ANIMAL HANDLER
 (to Clarence)
 I THINK MY BEAR'S SPOOKED, REF. I THINK YOU NEED TO CALL IT.

CLARENCE THE REF
 NO. ONE ROUND. THIS IS WHAT HE WANTS, TRUST ME.

GASPING FOR BREATH, JACKIE IS BEING SUFFOCATED BY A POWERFUL BEAR HUG.

JACKIE MOON
PLEASE GOD, SOMEONE SPUMONI! I'M
BEGGING YOU, CLARENCE.

CLARENCE THE REF
LOOKING GOOD, BOSS.

JACKIE IS HANGING HALF WAY OUT OF THE RING. HE'S NOSE TO NOSE
WITH THE BEAR HANDLER.

JACKIE MOON
(screaming at the bear
handler)
GELATO! ALMOND ICE CREAM!
(in Italian)
Asta zittu'sto parcnuso spumoni!

BEAR HANDLER
(to Clarence)
WE HAVE TO STOP IT!

CLARENCE THE REF
NO WAY! I'M THE REF!

BEAR HANDLER
(climbing in)
Screw this, I'm stopping it.

The bear handler tries to get into the ring with a stick and
loop. But CLARENCE TRIES TO PUSH THE BEAR HANDLER back out of
the ring.

DEWIE TURNS TO FIND HIS HANDLER IN DANGER.

LIKE LIGHTENING, THE BEAR MAULS CLARENCE.

CLARENCE THE REF
AAAHHHHH!!! I'M THE REF!!!
SPUMONI!!!

DING! The first round is over, but the bear does not return
to his corner.

CLARENCE THE REF
THE BELL RANG! SPUMONI!!!

MUSIC CUE: 'KING KONG' BY JIMMY CASTOR

MONTAGE: SOLD OUT FLINT ROLLS TOWARD FOURTH.

The Tropics play awesome.

A SIGN SAYS 'SOLD OUT!'

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*And it's another sell-out crowd for
 the Flint Michigan Tropics.*

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: TROPICS 111 COLONELS 98.

AGAIN, THE SIGN SAYS: SOLD OUT!

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: TROPICS 90 SQUIRES 81.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Taking it strong to the rim is
 Coffee Black. Yes! This sold out
 crowd is going nuts. You've been a
 little quiet Lou, how are you
 doing?*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
A Mexican stole my bike.

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: TROPICS 92 AMERICANS 87.

ON THE SIGN: SOLD OUT!

BUZZER! FINAL SCORE: TROPICS 105 CONQUISTADORS 91.

The team celebrates the win.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*And, believe it or not, the Flint
 Tropics are in perfect position to
 qualify for the NBA merger. If they
 win their final game, they'll
 clinch fourth place. But nothing is
 ever easy against the first place
 San Antonio Spurs.*

As Jackie does a victory dance, the commissioner approaches.

COMMISH
 Jackie.

JACKIE MOON
 Oh, hey Commish. Good game huh? And
 a packed house too.

COMMISH
 I need to talk to you... And the
 rest of your team. Alone.

INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

The whole team stands solemnly.

COMMISH

I'm sorry, but even if you beat the Spurs on Friday, we just can't have an NBA franchise in Flint.

MONIX

What are you saying?

COMMISH

It's just not good business. Flint isn't a big enough media market, okay? This stadium is small and, frankly, it needs to be torn down before someone gets hurt. I'm sorry but nobody ever thought you guys could ever get this far.

CLARENCE

Well tough shit. This team did make it this far. Rules are rules.

COMMISH

Rules are rules... Until the expansion committee makes new rules. Then those rules are the rules.

Everyone looks at each other. Jackie's brain has slipped into a deep trance. He is no longer inside his body.

COMMISH

Don't take this personally, Jackie. These other teams have strong markets, new stadiums. It's just not going to happen for you Flint boys. I'm sorry.

The devastation of what is happening is palpable. Nothing has ever hurt this bad before.

COMMISH

I know you're going to punch me, Jackie. So let's just get it over with.

The commissioner stands brave, eyes closed, chin out.

Jackie is too confused and devastated to hit anything. He stumbles out of the room like a zombie. The team follows.

The commissioner opens his eyes. A long silent beat...

COMMISH
 (to himself)
 How did I get out of that one?

Suddenly KONG darts in and squeezes the commissioner's balls with a kung fu grip.

COMMISH
 Ah!

EXT. FLINT TROPICS COLISEUM - MOMENTS LATER - NIGHT

The team files out into the parking lot, totally devastated.

TWIGGY MUNSON
 This can't be happening.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 They can't just do this, can they?

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY
 We can get a lawyer, dude. We can fight this!... Can't we?... Monix?

Monix just looks to the ground, as in 'it's over.'

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Jackie... Please... Say something.

Jackie opens his mouth... He tries to speak, but he can't.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Are you crying?

JACKIE MOON
 I don't know.
 (contorting his face)
 I'm trying to.
 (looking to the sky)
 I wish I could just puke this away.
 (to Monix)
 Do it to my Jejunum, Monix. Help me.

But Monix is leaving. He turns and walks off, alone down the dark street... The others walk away too...

JACKIE MOON
 Wait! Monix! Where is everyone going?...

MUSIC CUE: 'IT'S TOO LATE' BY ISAAC HAYES.

MONTAGE: PLAYERS OF FLINT ARE DOWN AND OUT.

-CLARENCE walks alone along the river.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*In an American Basketball
 Association policy shift, it seems
 the Flint Tropics will not be
 playing for an NBA birth after
 all...*

-BEE BEE ELLIS stands in the middle of the Tropics court,
 upset.

-JACKIE walks, sad, along the streets of Flint -- Now he
 suddenly picks up a pipe and SMASHES THE WINDSHEILD of an
 innocent truck. He turns and TACKLES A GARBAGE CAN.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Friday's match-up against the first-
 place San Antonio Spurs will be the
 Tropics final basketball game...*

-SCOOTIE DOUBLE DAY finishes spray-painting the words
 'BULLSHIT' on a wall. REVEAL: He is in his own child's
 nursery room. The baby starts crying.

-The TROPICAL AISLE guys are fat and shirtless, burning their
 Hawaiian shirts outside the stadium.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*And if that news wasn't bad enough
 for the Tropics, we've just been
 informed that Coffee Black, the
 team's top scorer, has been traded
 to the Spurs.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
*At least someone from Flint is on
 his way to the NBA next year.*

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. THE THE KREMLIN - CONTINUOUS

MONIX is back on his bar stool, drinking and smoking, it's
 been a long night.

Now CLARENCE ENTERS the Kremlin... And makes the long walk
 over to sit next to Monix.

CLARENCE
Thought I might find you here.
(long beat)
I got traded.

MONIX
Yeah, I heard.

CLARENCE
I guess the San Antonio Spurs are
picking up the players they want,
before we're eligible for the
expansion draft.

MONIX
Coffee Black, going to the NBA...

CLARENCE
They won't let me finish out with
the Tropics. So, we'll be playing
against each other in the last
game. That's pretty weird.

MONIX
It won't be weird. The game doesn't
count.

CLARENCE
Listen I'm sorry about--

MONIX
Don't be sorry.

CLARENCE
I mean, I just want to say that,
this year, you really--

MONIX
--DON'T. Alright? Just don't.

Clarence stares at him. Then eventually stands up to leave.
There are a million things he wants to say, but he says this:

CLARENCE
We worked so hard.

MONIX
Well, it was all for nothing.

CLARENCE
So, that's just it then?

MONIX
That's just it.

Clarence shakes his head and walks out.

EXT. FLINT MICHIGAN - MORNING

The morning sun shines down on the sad town of Flint.

Monix walks home in the street. He stops and TAKES A LEAK right in the middle of the road. A car honks at him to get out of the way, then skids to a stop.

Lynn pokes her head out of the car.

LYNN
What the fuck are you doing?

MONIX
Oh. Hey Lynn.

INT. LYNN'S HOUSE - LATER THAT DAY

Monix is on the couch, drunk. He gazes at the TV and swigs his beer.

Now LYNN walks in.

LYNN
I thought the deal was, you were going to sleep.

MONIX
Pshh. Relax.

LYNN
So, you're just going to sit here in my house and drink for the entire day?

MONIX
You got a problem with that?

LYNN
Yeah, I do. Maybe you could put some pants on and go piss off somebody else.

MONIX
Fine, maybe I will!
(standing)
Where are my pants?

LYNN
Tell me something, Monix-

MONIX
No.

LYNN
What were you trying to accomplish this year? You never really gave a shit about that NBA merger, did you?

Monix doesn't say anything.

LYNN
The merger, Monix, did you ever care about it?

Monix still stays quiet.

LYNN
Tell me, if you didn't care about the merger, what the Hell were you playing for!?

MONIX
I wanted fourth place! Okay? That was the whole fucking thing!

LYNN
Well, guess what! Fourth place is still sitting there, waiting for you to win it!

Monix doesn't look at her.

LYNN
Think about it.

EXT. FLINT MICHIGAN - DAY

A wide shot of an alley. We hear a familiar voice off screen.

JACKIE MOON (O.S.)
(singing bizarre)
*Baby, who wants to- love me sexy!
baby, Ugh, are you ready to; lick
me sexy!!!!? Yeah yeah!! HA!*

INSIDE A DUMPSTER, REVEAL: Jackie lays in garbage and sings up to the sky. It's official, he has lost his mind.

JACKIE MOON
 (tweaking the lyrics)
*I'm a big faker and I stole this;
 Song-ly sexy. I'm the biggest
 failure in the; world-ly sexy. I'm
 going to kill my; self-y sexy.*

BEE BEE ELLIS (O.S.)
 Jackie?

Bee Bee Ellis hears Jackie voice and discovers him in laying
 the garbage. Jackie ignores his teammate.

JACKIE MOON
*I'm going to hang myself with an
 extension; cord-y sexy.*

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Jackie! What the Hell are you doing
 in a dumpster?

JACKIE MOON
 (ignoring Bee Bee)
 I am urinating in my pants right
 now.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 You gotta get it together, man.
 Monix called a team meeting.

INT. THE KREMLIN - LATER DAY

The entire team has gathered. Monix addresses them.

MONIX
 Listen up. We all know that
 Clarence has been traded. And we
 all know that this game doesn't
 matter anymore, right?

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Right.

MONIX
 Well I've got news for you. This
 game does matter. It matters
 because this is the last real
 basketball game any of us is ever
 going to play. Ever.

The guys nod, solemn.

MONIX

Tomorrow night, I say we leave it all out there on the floor. Because there's nothing else for us to save it for. Clarence or no Clarence. NBA or no NBA. Merger or no merger. We decided we are going to win fourth place. And that's what we're going to do.

Jackie is moved. The guys look at each other and nod.

MONIX

Over the past five weeks, we've become a team. And that is no small thing. Jackie, have you ever been on a real team before?

JACKIE MOON

No sir.

MONIX

How does it feel?

JACKIE MOON

It feels pretty good.

MONIX

All your lives, you've dreamed of playing in the NBA. Well, guess what? Tomorrow night, you are. You're playing an NBA team. And for one night, the world is going to know that you belong.

(beat)

Look, I tried to pretend like it didn't matter to me if we made it to fourth or not.

Monix turns inward, speaking with an emotion that is pure.

MONIX

But the truth is, I want this more than anything I've ever wanted in my whole fucked-up life.

(beat)

And I think you do too. I think you can taste it. Because we earned this. We made this happen. And we're four quarters away from making our dreams come true.

JACKIE MOON
LET'S DO THIS!

BEE BEE ELLIS
YEAH! LET'S GO!

MONIX
JACKIE, YOU'VE GOT ONE MORE GAME TO
PROMOTE!
(to the team)
LET ME HEAR IT! FOURTH PLACE!

EVERYONE
FOURTH PLACE!

Pumped, they jump around, ready to make their own history.

MONIX
FOURTH PLACE!

EVERYONE
FOURTH PLACE!

INT. TV STUDIO - NIGHT

A sports show host is interviewing Jackie.

JACKIE MOON
The Spurs may be the #1 team in the
league, but they're going to have
to prove it on Friday night.

TV ANNOUNCER
Since this game doesn't count,
Jackie. What exactly is your
motivation?

JACKIE MOON
(with a gleam in his eye)
We're going to win this game,
because we want it. It's as simple
as that. That alone should make
people want to show up and root for
us.

Jackie and the announcer look at each other for a long moment
of silence...

JACKIE MOON
Plus, this is the FLINT MICHIGAN
MEGA-BOWL!

TV ANNOUNCER

What?

JACKIE MOON

Save your ticket stubs, the mega-bowl is an historic event.

TV ANNOUNCER

I'm not sure I understand.

JACKIE MOON

It's a Mega-Bowl. What's not to understand?

TV ANNOUNCER

This game has no effect on--

JACKIE MOON

--The Mega Bowl trophy is twelve feet high. AND IT IS GLORIOUS.

TV ANNOUNCER

I'm sorry, but this sounds like something you just made up.

JACKIE MOON

Well, I didn't.

TV ANNOUNCER

Well, it doesn't make any sense. They're just words.

JACKIE MOON

Oh please. You're just words.

(directly at camera)

COME SEE THE FLINT TROPICS RAISE
THE MEGA BOWL TROPHY HIGH ABOVE OUR
HEADS. WE'RE NOT JUST GOING TO
FINISH IN FOURTH, WE'RE GOING TO
TAKE HOME THE MEGA BOWL TROPHY.
TOMORROW NIGHT AT 8 O'CLOCK!

EXT. FLINT MICHIGAN - MORNING

The sun rises above the city. In the morning light, Flint looks almost electric.

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - FRIDAY NIGHT

The parking lot is rocking. The whole town is jazzed for the big event.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
If the commissioner is listening, I recommend he stay out of the city of Flint tonight. He's not too popular in this town.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
I will stab him in the stomach with an eight inch hunting knife.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
There were many wild protests in Flint this week. But it seems like the whole city is now focused on beating the San Antonio Spurs. This team seems to have captured every heart in this town of underdogs. People have poured in from around the state to support this drive toward their first mega-bowl championship.

INT. SPURS LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Clarence is getting dressed in the visitor's locker room. He holds up a Spurs Jersey and now pulls the strange colors over his head.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
The Flint Tropics will be playing without their number one scorer, Coffee Black tonight. The Spurs have signed several new players from around the ABA, locking them in before they hit the free market in next year's expansion draft. The big man, Pete Petrelli has been sent over from the dismantled Anaheim Amigos.

Now Petrelli enters frame. The guy we hate has been traded to the Spurs too.

PETRELLI
 We may be teammates, but I still think you're a dick.

CLARENCE
 Thanks Petrelli.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

WHEELCHAIR DARREN and JODY take their positions next to the court. DUKES sits in the stands. QUINCY wears a new fur coat, sitting center court. The TROPICAL AISLE cheers, rowdy. The BALL GIRLS look almost nervous. You can feel the excitement.

And now entering, by herself, standing in the back, is LYNN. She takes a deep breath.

INT. TROPICS LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Monix addresses the team.

MONIX

You want to know what I love? This. The eleven of us right here, right now, waiting for the biggest game of our lives to begin.

(beat)

I want you to remember something. I want you to remember what this feels like, to be here in this locker room together, one last time, shoulder to shoulder with these men. Because we are not ourselves tonight. We are one. This is what I love.

(beat)

Let's play basketball.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - LATER

The game is well under way. It's full tilt action.

It's immediately clear that the Tropics are being overpowered.

QUICK CUTS: PETRELLI knocks over Monix and scores.

-The Tropics offense is getting shut down.

-Jackie gets a rebound, but then dribbles off his ankle.

-The fans are disappointed. The guys in the Tropical Aisle are all bummed out. Wheelchair Jody looks pissed.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

Not a good first half for the Tropics so far. They're already down by ten.

ON CLARENCE: He sits on the Spurs bench.

SPURS COACH
Coffee Black, you're going in.

CLARENCE
I can't. I've got back spasms.

The coach stares him down, then picks another player.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*This is easily the worst half of
basketball the Tropics have ever
played. And that's saying
something.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
Yep. It's a shit fucking sandwich.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Let's watch the F-bomb, Lou. We're
live.*

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)
*Oh, please, this is our last game.
I can say whatever I want. Watch
this: I hope Gerald Ford gets ass
raped.*

LIVE TROPICS RADIO
*Okay then. We've got just fifteen
seconds left in the first half...
Here's Monix with a no-look to
Jackie... He goes up strong--*

SLO MO: PETRELLI FLIES IN AND ELBOWS JACKIE HARD IN THE HEAD.

SLO MO: JACKIE'S HEAD SNAPS BACK...

SLO MO: JACKIE FALLS TO THE HARDWOOD, UNCONSCIOUS, HE BOUNCES
OFF THE FLOOR.

LYNN
Oh my God.

Everyone in the stadium watches as Jackie lays out cold.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*I've never seen anyone take a hit
quite like that before. This looks
serious.*

CLARENCE looks worried from the Spurs bench.

CLARENCE

JACKIE!

SPURS COACH

Do not leave this bench, Coffee.

BEE BEE leans over Jackie, worried.

BEE BEE ELLIS

Jackie? You awake?

FATHER PAT THE REF

Bring in the stretcher!

BEE BEE ELLIS

We don't have one.

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)

I don't want to speculate, but I'm pretty sure he's dead.

MONIX gets in Petrelli's face.

MONIX

What are you trying to prove Petrelli? You afraid to play basketball?

PETRELLI

Hey, check the scoreboard.

Monix attacks Petrelli.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

Now Monix is after Petrelli. This is total chaos.

FATHER PAT THE REF

(to the clock man)

Let those fifteen seconds run out!

(to everyone)

It's half time! Everyone off the court!

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

And at half time. It's the Spurs 60, the Tropics 29.

The guys carry Jackie off the court and into the locker room.

ON CLARENCE: He's had enough. He stands up and begins walking across the court, to join the Tropics.

SPURS COACH
Where the Hell are you going?

CLARENCE
I'm going to my team.

SPURS COACH
This is your team. You are not
leaving this bench.

From the front row, the COMMISSIONER hears all of this and
stands up, surrounded by security guards.

COMMISH
You sit down! You're not playing
with those idiots ever again. If
you walk away from this bench now,
you're never coming back. I'll see
to it you never play in the NBA!
Ever! Do you understand what I'm
saying to you, Coffee?

CLARENCE
My name ain't Coffee. It's
Clarence.

With that, Clarence walks across the floor. The crowd erupts.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Look at this. Coffee Black is
walking over to the Tropics. This
crowd is going crazy!*

Clarence takes off his Spurs jersey and throws it into the
crowd.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - LOCKER ROOM - HALF TIME

Jackie is laid out on a bench. Scootsie pours a bucket of
water on him. It doesn't work. Everyone looks worried.

Clarence enters the locker room.

TWIGGY MUNSON
Clarence!

CLARENCE
Is he okay?

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY
I don't know.

MONIX
What the Hell are you doing here?

CLARENCE
I'm with you guys.

MONIX
Are you out of your mind? You want
to lose your NBA contract? Get out
of here.

CLARENCE
No.

MONIX
You're going to give up the NBA for
this?
(he is)
Well, you're a fucking asshole.
(now to Jackie)
Jackie. Are you okay buddy?

Monix cracks a smelling salt and waves it over Jackie's face.

WE PUSH IN ON JACKIE...

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. DREAMLAND - DAY

We're in Heaven. Jackie floats next to his Mother, who wears
a white robe and holds a red, white and blue basketball. A
basketball hoop hovers behind their heads.

JACKIE'S DREAM MOM
(in a dream)
*Now, I want you to go forward, and
tell the others what I have told
you here today. Do you understand
me, son?*

JACKIE MOON
(in a dream)
*Yes Mother. You are so kind.
(beat)
I'm sorry I stole your song.*

JACKIE'S DREAM MOM
*I forgave you for that a long time
ago. I'd say it's about time you
forgave yourself.*

JACKIE MOON

*I don't want to leave this place.
It's so fluffy. I miss you, Mom.*

JACKIE'S DREAM MOM

*I miss you too, Jackie. Now, you
gotta wake up. You're missing the
game.*

JACKIE MOON

*Oh. I am? That's bad isn't it?
(beat)
Can you make time go backwards?*

JACKIE'S DREAM MOM

*Not really. Now hurry up. And don't
forget what I said.*

Jackie walks into the clouds, then turns back.

JACKIE MOON

Hey Mom, I threw up.

JACKIE'S DREAM MOM

I know you did, sweetie.

INT. TROPICS LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Jackie wakes from his dream. Confused.

JACKIE'S POV: Bee Bee Ellis, Twiggy Munson, Scootsie Double-Day and Kong Yi look down at camera.

BEE BEE ELLIS

He's awake.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - MOMENTS LATER

We're back with Live ABA radio.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

*This just in. It sounds like Jackie
Moon is up and around the locker
room. That's good news for the
Tropics.*

INT. TROPICS LOCKER ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Monix coaches the team. Jackie rubs his head, not listening.

MONIX

And I don't care how quick their defense is, we need to move the ball and--

JACKIE MOON

--Hold on you guys. I have something to tell you.

MONIX

What is it?

Jackie seems very serious...

JACKIE MOON

I had a dream. I had a dream, I was in heaven and my Mother spoke to me... She was wearing a flowing white gown... And she showed me a whole new way to score a basket. She spoke to me and said *'with this gift, you will win fourth place.'*

BEE BEE ELLIS

He's lost his mind.

TWIGGY MUNSON

We need to figure out what we're going to do in the second half.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY

Yeah, we don't have time for any ghost baskets.

JACKIE MOON

YOU WILL NOT SPEAK OF MY MOTHER THIS WAY! THIS SHOT IS MAGICAL! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

Jackie's eyes are intense and he's breathing way too hard. This dream was real. Monix tries to pacify him.

MONIX

Alright Jackie, relax, okay?

JACKIE MOON

I WILL NOT RELAX! WE HAVE TO USE THIS! IT'S A GIFT FROM THE OTHERWORLD!

Monix and Clarence shoot each other a look. Clearly, Jackie is not going to take no for an answer.

CLARENCE

Okay Jackie, so what's the play?

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLLESIUM - NIGHT

The second half is underway. Clarence and Jackie are both playing for the Tropics.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

We're back in action here at the Mega Bowl. Coffee Black is playing for the Tropics... And Jackie Moon makes the start... In fact, it looks like he's trying to run the offense here...

Jackie dribbles at the top of the key, doing a lot of pointing along with multiple hand signals.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

This is a new offense for the Tropics. Jackie dribbles to the top of the key... And...

Jackie makes eye contact with Clarence.

Clarence cuts to the basket and Jackie throws him a lob.

SLO MO: As Clarence leaps, we hear Jackie's voice over from the locker room...

JACKIE (V.O.)

I had a dream. And in my dream, my mother jumped... Her gown flowing in the wind... And she caught a pass in the air and dunked it, without ever touching the ground...

SLO MO: Clarence catches it and slams it hard.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)

...She lifted her veil and said 'I call this the Alley Oop.'

Everyone stands there, astonished. The other team is frozen. The fans are confused. The ref has no idea what to do.

JACKIE MOON (V.O.)

...And she said it would change the game forever...

The other players are starting to appreciate what they've just seen.

SPUR #1

Damn, bro.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

Woah. I'm sorry, I don't know what just happened.

SPUR #2

Doesn't he have to dribble first?

LOU REDWOOD (V.O.)

What the Hell is going on?

SCOOTIE DOUBLE-DAY

Hey Jackie, isn't that against the rules?

JACKIE MOON

No. My Mom said it was fine.

The whole arena is waiting for Father Pat the Ref to process this information.

SPURS COACH

C'MON FATHER PAT! HE CAN'T DO THAT!
IT'S TRAVELING!

WHISTLE! Father Pat The ref waves his hands.

FATHER PAT THE REF

HOLD ON. STOP THE GAME.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)

The ref has stopped the Mega Bowl.

FATHER PAT THE REF

FOUL ON NUMBER TWENTY FIVE.

JACKIE MOON

FOUL? I DIDN'T TOUCH ANYBODY!

FATHER PAT THE REF

WELL, PEOPLE CAN'T JUST FLY IN THE AIR LIKE THAT!

THIS CAUSES JACKIE TO LOSE HIS MIND.

JACKIE MOON

OH, PLEASE! DO YOU THINK MY MOM WOULD CHEAT IN MY DREAMS?

FATHER PAT THE REF

WHAT?

JACKIE MOON
SHE'S AN ANGEL! HEAVEN WANTS US TO
WIN! I WILL BURN YOUR HOUSE DOWN!

The other players stop Jackie's attack. Monix steps over and calmly states the facts.

MONIX
It's not a foul unless you touch
another player. And it can't be
traveling without first
establishing a pivot foot. It's two
points, Father Pat, two points.

Father Pat the Ref thinks about this...

FATHER PAT THE REF
I'M GOING TO ALLOW IT. TWO POINTS
FOR FLINT!

The crowd goes nuts. The other team protests. Jackie points to the sky, right through the hole in the roof.

MUSIC CUE: THE JACKSON FIVE 'DANCING MACHINE'

QUICK CUTS: THE TROPICS ALLEY OOP THEIR WAY TO FOURTH PLACE.

-Clarence slams down another alley-oop. Wheelchair Darren and Wheelchair Jody go crazy.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*There it is again, Clarence
leaping, and forcing the ball in a
downward direction through the goal
net off of a high arching pass --
Hold on, I'm being told this is
called an Alley Oop. Yes, That's
easier to say.*

-Another Alley Oop! Dukes, shirtless, pumps his fist.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Jackie lobs to Clarence again. YES!
Another Alley Oop! The Spurs don't
know what's hit them.*

-Monix double teams and forces a turn over. In the back of the stadium, LYNN can't help but scream.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Monix with a steal-- A long bounce
pass to Scootsie Double-Day for a
lay-up.*

I'll tell you, Monix is playing on one leg here in the second half.

-Monix cuts off a Bee Bee Ellis pick toward the basket...

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Monix penetrates-- and-- Wow! He flipped it up behind his back and Clarence slammed it home with one hand!

SCOREBOARD: SPURS 100, TROPICS 99 -- :15 left.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - FIFTEEN SECONDS LEFT

Monix's team breaks the huddle and takes the floor.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
In all my years of radio, I've never seen anything like this. The Tropics have fought their way back from a twenty nine point deficit. With twelve seconds left to play, they're down by one point. A basket here could win it.

IT'S THE FINAL PLAY: The fans pray. Monix takes a deep breath, then in bounds the ball--

SLO MO: Jackie dribbles, looks up and lofts a perfect pass to Clarence...

SLO MO: Clarence flies up for the alley oop slam dunk...

SLO MO: At the last second, Petrelli flies into frame and swats it away!

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Petrelli with the rejection! It's out of bounds -- The Tropics keep the ball, with seven seconds on the clock. I'll tell you Lou, the Spurs were looking for that one.

IN THE HUDDLE: Monix is yelling above the noise.

MONIX
(in the huddle)
Okay, listen up: They've made adjustments out there. We can't just keep running the Alley Oop, okay? They're keying on Clarence.

Everyone looks at each other, worried.

SCOOTSIE DOUBLE-DAY
We're not going to run the alley
oop?

BEE BEE ELLIS
What are we going to run?

MONIX
We're going to run The Puke.

BEE BEE ELLIS
The Puke?

MONIX
Don't tell me you've forgotten it.

Everyone smiles at each other. They haven't.

MONIX
We're going to pick away from the
ball. We're going to move to the
open space. I won't in bound the
ball until someone has a good look.
(beat).
The Puke.

CLARENCE
Amen.

JACKIE MOON
Bring it in! One two three--

EVERYONE
LET'S GET TROPICAL!

THE TROPICS RUN THE PUKE: A flash to the high side post with
an outside screen and a back door cut.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Monix, looking to inbound...

SLO MO: Clarence sets a pick for Scootsie- Everyone rotates.

Jackie picks and rolls to the basket, open...

Monix zips Jackie a no-look pass...

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
Jackie goes up strong...

BUT PETRELLI ELBOWS HIM IN THE HEAD AGAIN! WHISTLE!

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
No Good! But Petrelli fouls him!

JACKIE IS ABLE TO SHAKE OFF THE HEAD INJURY.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*Jackie Moon will shoot two free
 throws here, his team down by one,
 with two seconds on the clock. One
 will tie it. He needs both to win
 it.*

The ref hands Jackie the ball. The players take their places along the lane. Jackie steps to the line. The whole arena is on pins and needles.

JACKIE MOON
 (to his team)
 Don't worry you guys, I got this...
 (to the ball girls)
 I am awesome at free throws.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*I'll tell you, I don't remember the
 last time I've ever seen Jackie
 attempt a free throw...*

JACKIE MOON
 (Louder now, to the fans)
 IT'S OKAY EVERYBODY. SERIOUSLY.
 FREE THROWS ARE, LIKE, MY BEST
 THING.

Now Jackie sets up for the shot...

BUT, AS JACKIE PREPARES, HE SETS UP TO SHOOT GRANNY STYLE,
 TOSSING UNDERHANDED FROM BETWEEN HIS KNEES.

MONIX
 What the Hell are you doing?

JACKIE MOON
 What, you've never seen me shoot
 free throws before?

CLARENCE
 He shoots them Granny style.

BEE BEE ELLIS
 Always has.

MONIX
 (to himself)
 Shit.

Jackie's ritual is insane. He breathes, spins the ball, turns around 360, deep knee bends, touches his left shoulder four times, then SUDDENLY WINGS THE BALL HIGH IN THE AIR.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
 The first attempt is... GOOD!

IT SWISHES. THE CROWD GOES NUTS...

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*The game is tied. One more and the
 Tropics win.*

Jackie does the same ritual. But this time a bead of sweat rolls over his forehead. He is nervous. But he tosses anyway...

SLO MO: The Ball floats toward the basket. Flash bulbs pop.

SLO MO: The ball bounces off the rim, away from the basket.

SLO MO: Monix elbows his way into position for a rebound.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
No Good -- Monix with the put back!

SLO MO: Monix catches the ball in the air and re-shoots a fade-away jumper. Swish!

MUSIC CUE: 'HOME SWEET HOME' BY CAPTAIN FUNK.

LIVE ABA RADIO (V.O.)
*FLINT WINS THE MEGA BOWL! FLINT
 WINS THE MEGA BOWL! FLINT WINS THE
 MEGA BOWL!*

Victory. All the Tropics go crazy, screaming, they pile on top of each other at center court.

The crowd is going nuts. Wheelchair Darren and Jody roll out onto the court. Dukes jumps into the pile of players. Lynn has tears in her eyes.

In the madness. LUCY MOON finds her husband, Jackie.

LUCY MOON
 Jackie!

JACKIE MOON

Lucy?

LUCY MOON

Kiss me, you hero.

JACKIE MOON

My Mom says you're a bad lady. She says your vagina is for sad people.

EXT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

Tropics fans pour out onto the streets from the sports bars and immediately start smashing shit. It's a total riot.

A group of Flint COPS see the riot, then FLIP THEIR OWN COP CAR OVER.

INT. FLINT FAIRGROUNDS COLISEUM - CONTINUOUS

The team is still celebrating, going crazy at center court.

CLARENCE, MONIX AND JACKIE ARE ALL HUGGING EACH OTHER AMONGST THE CHAOS.

JACKIE LIFTS A GIANT TWELVE FOOT GOLDEN TROPHY IN THE AIR.

CLARENCE

Wait, there really is a trophy?

JACKIE MOON

Hey, it's the Mega Bowl.

VICTORY. IN THIS MOMENT, ALL THREE OF THEM SEE THE BEAUTY IN WHAT THEY'VE ACCOMPLISHED.

CLARENCE

We did it.

FREEZE FRAME ON JACKIE, MONIX AND CLARENCE LIFTING THE TROPHY TOGETHER.

THE END

BEGIN END CREDITS.

As Credits roll, we hear a voice...

ANNOUNCER (O.S.)

With their first pick in the 1977 NBA draft, the New Jersey Nets select...

INT. NBA DRAFT - SIX MONTHS LATER

The NBA draft is crowded with businessmen and fans.

DRAFT ANNOUNCER
...Shit, bitch, you be *fine*...

Clarence stands up, happy, and walks on stage.

He holds up a uniform with words: SHITBITCH U.B. PHYNE on it.

REVEAL: In the crowd, Monix claps, cheering Clarence on... He is with wife, LYNN.

But now Monix stands up and walks on stage too. He puts a NEW YORK NETS hat on.

DRAFT ANNOUNCER
Here to welcome him is rookie Nets coach, Ed Monix.

Monix and Clarence shake hands for the cameras.

CLARENCE
Thanks for bringing me on board, coach.

MONIX
All the good players were gone.

CLARENCE
Do we really have to live in New Jersey?

MONIX
Just smile for the cameras, Shitbitch.

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY

Jackie is in a recording studio, playing the synthesizer. He plays some beats, then hits the keyboards.

TITLE: JACKIE MOON WENT ON TO WRITE AND RECORD HIS OWN ORIGINAL SONG.

We recognize Jackie's song as the most familiar song in the world. It's Gary Glitter's 'Rock N' Roll Part II' the most famous sports-stadium standard in history.

JACKIE MOON
(singing Gary Glitter)
HEY!

(waiting for the beats)
 HEY!
 (waiting for the beats)
 HEY!

TITLE: HIS SONG WOULD LATER BE STOLEN BY GARY GLITTER AND
 PLAYED IN STADIUMS ACROSS THE GLOBE.

JACKIE MOON
 (singing Gary Glitter)
 HEY!
 (waiting for the beats)
 HEY!
 (waiting for the beats)
 HEY!

The song ends. The recording engineer pipes in.

RECORDING ENGINEER
 Sounded pretty nice.

JACKIE MOON
 Yeah, that was a great take. Play
 that back for me, would you?

RECORDING ENGINEER
 Listen, can you take that ring off
 for a little while? I'm getting
 some feedback from your microphone.

ECU: JACKIE WEARS A HUMONGOUS FLINT MICHIGAN TROPICS FOURTH
 PLACE DIAMOND RING.

Jackie studies his ring with a smile.

JACKIE MOON
 Sorry Robert, the ring stays on.

MUSIC CUE: 'SHAKE YOUR GROOVE THING' BY PEACHES & HERB.

END CREDITS CONTINUE.