

FADE IN:

CLOSE UP - ROLEX WATCH

A vintage Rolex fills the screen. Slowly zooming out, an older man's weathered hand cradles it.

DR. CANTOR (O.S.)
My father gave me this the day I
matched. Happiest day of his life.

INT. SPARKS STEAKHOUSE -- CONTINUOUS

DR. CANTOR, a well-dressed gentleman, sits across from BEN (mid 20s, handsome in a careless way) and OLLIE (same age, attractive, dressed simply, yet elegant).

Dr. Cantor slides the watch across the crisp white tablecloth.

BEN
Dad, that's your watch! I can't
remember it not on your wrist.

DR. CANTOR
You did just secure your Orthopedic
rotation. Family legacy continues.

Ben picks up the Rolex and fumbles with the clasp.

BEN
So cool.

DR. CANTOR
Not Harvard, but Albert Einstein
will do just fine.

Ollie's smile doesn't quite reach her eyes.

OLLIE
You know I go there also.

Ben nervously laughs.

Dr. Cantor clears his throat and continues.

DR. CANTOR
Set me on my path to be the chief of
Orthopedics at HSS.

The WAITER interrupts.

WAITER
Anyone care for another cocktail?

OLLIE
Yes. Cosmo, please.

BEN
I'll have another beer.

Ben holds up his empty bottle.

BEN (CONT'D)
Big night ahead. Everyone got their rotations.

DR. CANTOR
Always been your problem, Benjamin.
Too many beers, not enough books.

OLLIE
Ben works harder than anyone I know.

Ollie polishes off her drink.

DR. CANTOR
And you, Ollie? No rotation to celebrate?

OLLIE
I am a year behind Ben.

Dr. Cantor cuts his last piece of steak.

OLLIE (CONT'D)
It's gonna take me a bit more time.
Working while paying tuition.

DR. CANTOR (chewing)
See son, some people don't have everything handed to them.

Ben admires the Rolex. Avoids looking at either of them.

OLLIE
Unlike Ben, I'll be the first doctor in my family. My parents are super proud.

DR. CANTOR
The ones that raised you to order steak well-done? At Sparks no less.

BEN
Dad.

OLLIE
Midwesterners prefer their steak "cooked." Didn't order A-One sauce. And I like A-One.

Dr. Cantor actually laughs. He dabs the napkin to his mouth.

DR. CANTOR
So, what type of medicine are you
drawn to?

OLLIE
Orthopedics like Ben. But I don't
like the big bones, more into the
precision work.

Ben smirks.

OLLIE (CONT'D)
Maybe hand or foot surgery.

DR. CANTOR
So, Podiatry?

OLLIE
No, Orthopedic surgery, sir.

The waiter returns with the drinks.

WAITER
Ma'am.

OLLIE
Thank you.

Ollie takes a large sip, then checks her watch.

OLLIE (CONT'D)
Ben, the car service should be here.

DR. CANTOR
No dessert?

BEN
I think we're full, Dad. Thanks.

DR. CANTOR
Will your mother be celebrating your
accomplishment?

BEN
At some point. She's in Europe.

DR. CANTOR
Of course she is.

OLLIE
We'd hate to be late. Lovely meeting
you, Dr. Cantor.

Ollie stands abruptly.

OLLIE (CONT'D)
Thank you for dinner.

DR. CANTOR
Finally, nice to meet my son's
girlfriend.

Dr. Cantor stands. Ben takes his last guzzle of beer as he stands, almost taunting.

BEN
Dad, thanks for dinner.

Ben and Dr. Cantor share a long handshake.

OLLIE
Don't forget the Rolex.

BEN
Oh yeah, thanks for the awesome watch.

DR. CANTOR
Wear it in good health son. I know
you'll do great things.

BEN
Appreciate that.

Ben and Ollie hurry towards the front door.

OLLIE
Wow, you weren't kidding.

BEN
Ollie, I really gotta take a leak.
Go find the car and I'll meet you.

OLLIE
C'mon Ben. This dinner has been a
marathon. Just pee at the party.

BEN
Fine.

CUT TO:

EXT. NYC STREET -- NIGHT

A brisk night in New York City. Smoke drifts from people's mouths and car exhausts. Ben and Ollie hold hands and look up and down the street.

OLLIE
I think he's over there.

Ollie points to a black car with a "Big Apple" sign. They cross the street and Ben taps on the window.

BEN
Hey. Ben Cantor?

DIVER
(in an Indian accent)
Yes sir. North Bronx?

BEN
Yeah, that's us.

Ben and Ollie get in.

INT. LINCOLN TOWN CAR -- CONTINUOUS

OLLIE
How much traffic you think is on the
FDR? We're really late.

DIVER
Eight on a Thursday night? A lot.

They head up 1st Avenue.

OLLIE (mimicking)
"We eat steak medium rare in these
parts young lady."

Ben and Ollie laugh.

BEN
Yep, he knows everything.

Ollie cozies up to Ben.

OLLIE
And Harvard is the best?

BEN
He obviously wanted me to go there.
Didn't ace my MCATs.

OLLIE
That's why you work so hard?

BEN
Pretty much, but right now all I can
think about is the bathroom. All
those pre-dinner beers.

OLLIE
I also should've pre-gamed before
meeting Dr. Cantor.

They laugh again.

The car travels uptown. Ben's face is now between the front
seats. His body shifting weight.

BEN
Traffic not so bad, huh?

The driver smirks.

BEN (CONT'D)
It's a good thing 'cause I really
gotta go to the bathroom.

The driver nods with a disinterested smile.

Over a small rise, an ocean of red brake lights. Flashing
colors at the horizon. Cabs are stuck changing lanes.

BEN (CONT'D)
Oh crap. Can you turn?

DRIVER
Where?

BEN
How about right here on a hundred-
nineteenth?

DRIVER
Okay, sir.

OLLIE
We're gonna be late again.

BEN
Yeah, and I really should have gone
at Sparks. I'm dying.

OLLIE
Sorry.

Ben leans forward again.

BEN
Can you stop? I'm gonna explode.

DRIVER
This is not the best area to be
walking about town, sir.

BEN
I'm not really walkin' about town.
I'm going into that restaurant.

A half-lit sign, The Rib Joint, appears out the window.

OLLIE
I think you should wait.

BEN
That place has a bathroom. Stop.

The car slowly pulls over.

DRIVER
Be careful young man.

BEN
Two minutes.

Ben opens the door before the car fully stops.

OLLIE
We'll be here. Don't get any ribs.

CUT TO:

INT. THE RIB JOINT -- NIGHT

The Rib Joint has brown stained ceiling tiles, worn tables, and a dead jukebox in the corner. Ben makes an abrupt entrance. An OLD WAITER stares.

BEN
Excuse me, where is the restroom?

OLD WAITER
I think it's in your apartment down
on Fifth Avenue.

Some patrons grin. Ben retaliates with a look of disgust.

BEN
C'mon. I really need the bathroom.

The Old Waiter shakes his head and points.

OLD WAITER
It's down that hall, on the right.

BEN
Thanks.

Ben heads back. He doesn't notice the two men in ski jackets at one of the tables.

FAT G is a bit chubby with his front teeth capped in gold. WORM is lanky, with a goatee, and a keloid scar down his cheek that resembles a worm.

FAT G
White boy lost.

WORM
His Rollie don't belong here either.

FAT G
Bet it ain't fake.

They get up slowly, look around to see who is watching them. No one is.

A dimly lit hallway with two doors. One is marked "Restroom" in black marker. Directly opposite is a second door propped open with a can of baked beans.

INT. THE RIB JOINT RESTROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The door FLINGS open. Ben is at the urinal. Fat G fills the doorway.

FAT G
Yo. Nice watch.

BEN
Look, I don't want trouble. Just
needed the bathroom.

Fat G lifts his jacket. His gun handle catches the light.

FAT G
Walk out that door, maybe you don't
get shot.

He points across the hallway to the door leading outside. Ben quickly zips his fly. His hands are shaking.

BEN
I got fifty bucks. Is that cool?

FAT G
MOVE your white ass!

Ben walks across the narrow hall and slowly pushes open the door. He looks towards the restaurant for help.

EXT. THE RIB JOINT ALLEY -- NIGHT

Before Ben is fully through the door, he gets FOLDED in half by a pipe to the stomach. Ben GASPS and falls to his knees.

Fat G kicks the can of beans. The door SLAMS! Worm swings again hitting Ben in the back. Ben SHRIEKS as he falls to the ground.

BEN
(gasping)
Wait, WAIT! We can go to the ATM
and take out five hundred bucks!

WORM
You looked at us like we was trash.
Give us the Rolex, bitch!

With both hands, Worm raises the pipe over his head and SMASHES it down onto Ben's leg. Ben SCREAMS.

BEN
Here, HERE! TAKE IT!

Ben's quivering arm outstretches, with the watch on his wrist. Fat G unclasps the Rolex and takes it. Worm puts his boot square on Ben's face and raises the metal pipe.

FAT G
Yo, let's get outta here. We got
it. Cracka hurt bad enough.

WORM
Fuck this guy! Up in our place.

One blow. Then another. And another. The pipe finds Ben's legs again and again.

FAT G
You gonna kill 'em! Let's GO!

Worm is breathing heavily. Drops the pipe on the concrete, CLANG! They leave. Ben's body is motionless in the dark.

FADE TO BLACK:

CUT TO:

INT. CONNOR'S BMW -- MORNING

Rock music BLARES.

A new BMW glides down a quiet suburban street. Behind the wheel is CONNOR (same actor as Ben), wearing a quarter zip, trying hard to look less anxious than he is.

In the passenger seat, MICKEY, a gym-built, young black man, wears an Everlast tank top. He flips through pages on Connor's laptop.

MICKEY
This is it?

Connor winces.

CONNOR
It's a draft.

MICKEY
It's nine pages and some random ideas.

Connor grips the wheel tighter.

CONNOR
I have till midnight. If I don't
upload a script, I fail. If I fail,
my father's gonna call Columbia Med
Admissions before breakfast.

MICKEY
But you had all week.

CONNOR
Well, we drank all day yesterday.

MICKEY
You were drinking, I was hydrating.

Connor almost smiles.

CONNOR
I work best under time pressure.
Maybe undiagnosed ADHD.

MICKEY
More like undiagnosed laziness with
moderate alcoholism.

They laugh.

CONNOR
Maybe if I get it right, he leaves
me alone.

MICKEY
Your father or the professor?

Connor ignores that.

MICKEY (CONT'D)
You really think Ace and Russel are
gonna help you? Two dumb-asses barely
got outta high school.

CONNOR
I was almost valedictorian. Got me
nowhere.

MICKEY
Not your fault.

CONNOR
They watch a ton of movies. And I
agreed to help with their stupid
bet.

MICKEY
The arbitrage, can't lose bet?

CONNOR
Yeah, that one.

CUT TO:

INT. ACE'S MUSTANG -- MORNING

Heavy metal BLASTS.