

JITS

Written by

Jake DiBattista

Jake.a.dibattista@gmail.com
240-490-0190

ACT 1: WHITE BELT

I/E. MULTIPLE LOCATIONS - DAY

As Bamboleo by the Gipsy Kings plays the story opens with A CLASS bowing in, credits begin. A rhythmic montage starts as cuts of a day in the office and gym start to play, a comparison of BRETT PETERS and KEVIN "NO CHANCE" NOGERA. Brett is a straight edged former marine who works as an accountant now. Kevin is your prototypical Brazilian alpha male, who since the age of five has rigorously trained jiu-jitsu and martial arts. With his slicked back black hair and matching black gis Kevin is revered and thought of as a bad ass by anyone lucky or unlucky enough to come across his path. As Brett goes through a monotonous day of work where he is visibly emotionally devoid, we see cuts of Kevin coaching multiple jiu-jitsu classes and rolling with his students, in what appears to be a lively and fun day. At one point we see BRETT looking at a Facebook ad "learn to fight like a Challenger" and we feel his longing. He wants to be a hero, he wants the excitement of Bamboleo. As the opening credits come to a close we see Brett standing outside Kevin's gym "Challengers" with a flier for a free jiu-jitsu self defense class in his hand, nervous about the world he is about to walk into.

INT. CHALLENGER'S GYM - NIGHT

Challengers is a CrossFit style hanger gym, with Brazilian flags on the wall along with trophies adorning almost every inch of the front desk. The gym is divided by a fighting cage into two areas. In the back lies a red and black padded floor and walls (roughly 40mx40m). Up front is a full weight room which sits adjacent to the front desk and main entrance. As Brett enters this new world he sees Kevin on the mats in the front of a class, as a LINE OF MEN in black gis and white belts stand facing him.

KEVIN

Welcome to jiu-jitsu. I will be honest with you to me there are two types of people in this world. Those that train jiu-jitsu and those that do not. Jiu-jitsu will make you strong of heart and strong of mind. Do I push my students? Yes. Can they take it? I don't know, can you?

Kevin looks up and observes Brett waiting at the unmanned front desk in his ill fitting karate style gi.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

When I train, when I coach I give it everything. I expect nothing less from my students. Nothing less, maybe more. Because through hard work we will become legends. Challengers of the status quo, and those that fulfill their purpose in this world.

Kevin waves Brett over as he nervously walks from the front desk onto the mat.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I would like to welcome a new student to class today.

As Brett walks on the mat he is scolded by Kevin who points to his feet. Brett pauses to take off his shoes and runs to stand in line with the other WHITE BELTS who now stare at him.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

My friend what is your name?

BRETT

Brett, sir.

KEVIN

Please, no sirs in here. No shoes, and no sirs. If you wish you can call me professor, or coach. But, sir no that will not do.

BRETT

Yes, Si.. coach.

KEVIN

Brett as you begin your journey I want you to know that this is a family. While we must push you, it is only to make you a better Brett. Is that understood?

BRETT nods.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ok let us begin. Class please bow in.

Everyone bows in unison besides Brett. As Kevin clicks his 2 phone, music from the sound system washes over the gym.

A young man resembling a collegiate football player touting a purple belt and black gi comes on to the matted area and starts running around the perimeter. The white belt closest to the wall follows suit as the line of MEN IN WHITE BELTS now follow the young man named Achilles. Warm-ups ensue as Achilles shouts out various commands such as "high knees" and "sprawl". As the rest of the class quickly executes the drills, Brett noticeably lags behind and is quickly out of breath. Kevin now stands in the center of the circle watching as his students run around him.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Class please pair up! Sweep for sweep.

With his hands on his knees, Brett looks around as all the other men in white belts pair up. Brett feels a tap on his shoulder and turns around. In front of him stands a short women with a tattoo sleeve and half shaved head. She is wearing a Blue belt.

ADRIANNA
Hey new guy I will work with you

BRETT
Thanks, but shouldn't I be working with a guy?

ADRIANNA
Shouldn't I be working with another blue belt? Look, I'm late do you want a partner or not?

Brett nods embarrassed by his presumptive misstep.

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)
Also where is your belt?

BRETT
I'm Brett, and um I don't have one?

ADRIANNA
Oh, well you are in for a treat then. I'm Adrianna, alright you heard Kevin, sweep for sweep. I will do a move and then you. Make sense?

BRETT nods but seems overwhelmed.

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)
Just try and do the same thing as me since you don't know anything yet.

(MORE)

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)

Now get on your knees and let me wrap my legs around you, we are going to start in closed guard. It's the most basic one ok?

BRETT

Ok.

Brett awkwardly sits into Adrianna's guard and gets swept. Adrianna then sits into Brett's guard as he begins aggressively thrusting at her, as she remains based on her knees, unmoved.

ADRIANNA

As much as I like to watch your sexist ass flail, I don't really like being humped by men anymore. This isn't army training camp, you need to relax.

BRETT

Actually I was a marine. How did you know?

ADRIANNA

Because all you guys are wild when you first start. Just do what I say, and we will make it through boot camp. Does that work for you or do I need to find a colonel to translate?

Brett nods

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)

First, grab my left collar with your right hand. (Brett grabs) Not so hard, you aren't trying to mug me. Now grab my left sleeve with your left hand. (Brett grabs) No, like this (She adjusts Brett). Now bump.

Brett fails to move her.

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)

Bump like your putting your hips through though left side of my pelvis.

Brett is able to sweep Adrianna this time, but it is very choppy.

BRETT
Sorry, was that too hard?

ADRIANNA
Don't say sorry, it was fine. Just
try and be more smooth with it.

CUT TO: END OF
CLASS

The class continues on for another hour as Adrianna works
with Brett on basic moves.

KEVIN
Ok everyone bring it in.

THE CLASS walks to get in line at the front of the mats as
Kevin places a white belt at the back of the room. The line
looks like a military unit, as the line of white belts stand
in rank behind Adrianna, who is behind Achilles. As Brett
gets in line he is pushed to the very end of the white belt
line, as various students tell him it is stripe order.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Good job today everyone. Brett in
jiu-jitsu we have a tradition. As
you see everyone here has a belt.
Some schools give you the belt. But
here, no here we earn our belts. In
the back of the room I have placed
a white belt. It could be yours.
How bad do you want it Brett? How
bad do you want to be a white belt?
Do you want a white belt?

BRETT
Yes Professor.

KEVIN
Ok then go get it. It's right back
there.

Brett starts walking towards the back of the room. When
suddenly Achilles comes out of nowhere to blast double
(tackle) him to the ground.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Brett I thought you wanted your
white belt?

The class now circles around, with higher level belts walking
on to the mats from the weight room to watch.

Achilles mounts Brett.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Stay calm Brett it is ok, I promise
you if you listen to me you can be
a white belt today.

Brett starts to lay calm on his back and protect has face.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Brett why do we train jiu-jitsu?

MOLLY
Because Kevin is a Sadist!
(Class Laughs)

Brett rolls over to his belly and manages to get on his hands
and knees, while doing so Achilles transitions onto his back.

KEVIN
Brett do you want to challenge
yourself? Do you want to be the
Brett as god intended?

Brett starts to crawl with Achilles on his back.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Then keep moving, and protect your
neck! Don't quit on me.

Achilles starts to choke Brett from behind. Brett keeps
crawling.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
What are you gonna do? Are you
gonna quit now? You're so close.

Brett grabs belt as he goes unconscious.

ACHILLES
Brett wake up!

Achilles is shaking Brett as he awakens. Kevin emerges from
the outer circle surrounding them.

KEVIN
I'm proud of you Brett. Not every
man shows the heart that you just
did. Just listen to me and you will
be a black belt in no time. Alright
enough of this, everyone I have an
advanced class to teach let's line
up and bow out, the shows over.

Everyone walks back into their lines as Brett ties his belt,
poorly.

He sees the now crowd of advanced students in various belt colors and gis warming up on the side and in the weight room. Class bows out and everyone shakes hands saying "Oss". Brett runs up to Kevin. Who is now greeting upper belts entering onto the mats.

BRETT

That was amazing.

KEVIN

Ah yes, did you enjoy your first class?

BRETT

Yeah, I mean, I am sorry I suck, but I promise I won't quit. I want to be here, I want to learn jiu-jitsu.

KEVIN

Brett calm yourself, it appears the blood is still getting back to your head, but we enjoyed having you too.

BRETT

So, how do I sign up?

KEVIN

I have a competition class to teach now, but I want you to come back again and make sure this is really for you. You know students come to me every week and they say, "coach I am gonna be a big star!" ok, great. Accomplish your dreams, be a big star, but I got to see it. After all this is my namesake on the line. Come back Wednesday and when we will get you all set up.

BRETT

Sounds great, see you then.

KEVIN

Oh and Mr. Brett please no socks next time.

Brett looks down at his feet embarrassed at his disheveled gi and socks.

INT. BAR TABLE - NIGHT

Brett enters White Flag, a typical modern micro brewery, and is greeted by a waving man sitting at the bar. The waving man is pudgy and a similar age to Brett. Brett walks over to the waving man.

TRISTAN

I didn't think you were going to make it tonight.

Brett sits down next to TRISTAN.

BRETT

You know I wouldn't miss hump day wings and beer. How are the Padres doing?

TRISTAN

They suck, but what else is new. Did you do CrossFit or something you smell terrible?

BRETT

First of all you always smell terrible. Second, you are actually talking to a certified Brazilian jiu-jitsu white belt.

TRISTAN

So what are you going to be a UFC fighter or something?

BRETT

I don't know about all that. I am just trying to survive class for now.

Tristan blankly stares.

TRISTAN

So you aren't going to be the next Chuck Liddell?

BRETT

Not quite, I won't have a mohawk.

TRISTAN

So if you were to see a fight break out right now would you be able to put the guy down?

BRETT

Well, maybe. It's more like wrestling without so many of the rules. Plus it was literally my first class in gi.

TRISTAN

Gi?

BRETT

Yeah like a uniform to simulate clothes. Kind of like Samurai used to wear.

TRISTAN

[In fake accent] Ooooooooo konichiwa master.

Tristan bows his head to an appalled Brett.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

Anyways I bet I could still kick your ass. Don't make me remind you what happened in marine combat training.

BRETT

Listen this time it's going to be different. No quitting, no running away to see about a girl. Young Brett had a lot to learn.

TRISTAN

Hey man, five years of service is nothing to hang your head at. And if a girl like Sam asked me to run I would have been out of their faster than Usain Bolt.

Brett brushes off the comment, seeming to have a bit of regret for his time in the service.

BRETT

Anyways, you should come try it if you think you're so tough, the first class is free.

TRISTAN

If I wanted to roll around with a bunch of sweaty men I would sooner turn to Craigslist.

The men laugh.

BRETT

Alright fair enough. But hey when you're ready to get off Craigslist and give it a try let me know.

EXT. BAR PARKING LOT - NIGHT

As Brett waves goodbye to Tristan he begins the walk to his car which is parked a block down the street. As he walks to his car he notices a fight breakout across the street at a local laundry matt. He stands watching through the glass as one man pushes another and a women tries to separate the two. He looks down at his carry out bag and steps towards the street before putting his head down and continuing to walk towards his car.

INT. BRETT'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Brett's wife SAM, his high school sweet heart, lays on the couch reading a book with the TV on in the background when Brett walks in the front door. They live in a typical middle class townhome with a living room and kitchen on the main floor and the bedroom upstairs.

SAM

You're home late. How was your first day?

Brett drops his sweaty laundry bag on the ground.

BRETT

Yeah sorry I ended up grabbing a drink with Tristan after class. On that note, I don't think I could walk up the stairs if I tried.

SAM

Want me to grab some ice? Or did you just have too much to drink?

BRETT

Definitely not drunk, some ice would be great.

Sam walks over to freezer while Brett plops down on the couch. She continues to talk to him from the kitchen.

SAM

So did you enjoy your new exercise class?

BRETT

I don't know if enjoy is the right word, it was pretty rough.

SAM

I'm sorry to hear that, do you think you will go back?

BRETT

Definitely. You know when you do something and it's terrible in the moment but right after you feel invincible? Well that's what tonight felt like.

SAM

You sound like your describing doing drugs.

BRETT

Exactly!

Sam walks back over to the couch handing Brett some ice.

SAM

You smell terrible.

BRETT

Thanks.

Sam takes a seat next to Brett.

SAM

So why exactly are you learning to fight again?

BRETT

Well it's not really fighting per say. Well, it is, but to answer your question I am not really sure. I guess I just am looking for a new challenge and a way to shed some weight. Ever since the leaving the service I feel like I have been a little stagnant in life.

SAM

Well if you wanted to lose weight you could probably just stop with the beer and wings nights.

BRETT

Now that is one sacrifice I am just not willing to make.

SAM

Well in non sweaty pajama men related news, things have gotten worse with mom. I think it's time to start thinking about getting her some more help.

Brett leans in to give Sam a hug.

BRETT

I'm sorry to hear that, Let me know how I can help.

SAM

I appreciate that, just be here for me that's all.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

Kevin stands alone in front of a class of white belts.

KEVIN

Jiu-jitsu... the gentle art. We come here to face our fears and confront the reality of our limitations, or rather the lack there of. Let us begin class.

The class starts running as Brett walks in, still in his work attire. Brett checks the large boxing clock mounted on the wall and see's it is 5:55. Kevin bows off the mat and walks up to the unmanned front desk to greet Brett.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Welcome back Mr. Brett. It seems you still not have not mastered the art of a timely entrance.

BRETT

My bad Sir.. Professor, I am sorry I'm late, I thought class started at 6:00.

KEVIN

It is quite alright, you will learn. Jiu-jitsu is not like other sports you may have done, we actually fight here. I mean this isn't taekwando or akido, we mean business you need to take this serious Brett.

BRETT
Got it, again I am so sorry.
Anyways despite the best interest
of my body I think I am going to go
ahead and sign up.

Kevin breaks his aura of stoicism and cracks a small smile.

KEVIN
Ah wonderful news, welcome to the
family.

BRETT
So ummm, how much is it going to
cost me to get set-up?

KEVIN
Brett we are family here.

Kevin waves at a young Asian women in a black gi and brown
tethered up belt with four pieces of tape on it. Kevin hands
Brett a piece of paper.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Here is the class schedule. I
recommend you stay in the 6pm or
7am beginners class for the time
being. Once you earn your second
stripe we can discuss introducing
you to the advanced class and more
competitive rolling, again it is a
pleasure to have you join our
family. Molly will go ahead and get
you all set up.

Molly steps behind the desk with Kevin.

MOLLY
What's up KEVIN?

KEVIN
Molly, please help our newest
student get setup. I have a very
good feeling about him.

Kevin starts to walk back to the mats as he pats Brett on the
back.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Again welcome to the family. When
Molly gets you setup please put on
your gi and belt and join us for
class.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

A life of pain and fulfillment
await you. Remember no where in the
world will you find the quality of
training and level of competition
that you will here, I guarantee it.

Kevin walks to the mats. Molly starts to type at the computer
ignoring Brett in front of her.

BRETT

Hey, I'm Brett.

MOLLY

Yeah I know, so you want to sign up
or what?

BRETT

Yeah Kevin gave me this belt
yesterday, do you need it back?

MOLLY

No the belt is free along with the
team gi so we can get you out of
that oversize trash bag you wore
last time. Sign-up and initiation
fees are \$250, and after that it's
\$200 a month on a two year minimum
contract. No refunds for dead
beats.

BRETT

Wow ok, well that's more than I
expected. And how exactly is the Gi
free if there's a \$250 initiation
fee?

MOLLY

Listen I got a class to help teach.
You can take it or leave it. We
aren't a charity and have enough
freeloaders as is.

BRETT

Do you take card?

MOLLY

No only blood oaths.

Brett stares at a stone faced Molly before they both finally
laugh breaking the tension. He hands Molly his card as she
processes his account and gets him a gi from behind the desk.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

So what do you do for work?

BRETT

Well I used to be in the Marines,
but now I'm an accountant.

MOLLY

Defender of freedom, Brett Peters.
Well thank you for your service you
should fit right in here.
Mike was a soldier too, as was
Shane and Jake, and hell half the
people on the mats right now have
served in some manner or another.

BRETT

Yeah, honestly the service wasn't
my finest hour. I am sure those
guys are much better at this than
me.

MOLLY

Oh stop, I am sure you all equally
suck. Anyways, I got you an A3 gi
that should fit you, and if, not
too bad because it's all we got. If
it feels a little big you can
always shrink it in the wash. Team
gi is required, especially on
promotion and competition days.

Molly hands Brett the gi in a team bag.

BRETT

I think I am large is that A3?

MOLLY

Yeah you should be fine, anyways
hurry up and get dressed and get
out there. You're already late. Oh
and don't forget to bow-in. And
shoes on unless your on the mat.
And please try and remember to
shower before and after class, this
isn't boot camp. Any questions?

BRETT

There are showers here?

Molly gives Brett a look and starts to walk back to ongoing
class.

MOLLY

Oh yeah and your account number is
4-3-4 don't forget to punch in
before every class, we track
attendance.

Brett stares at the pile of clothes in front of him, ready to
join this unusual world.

INT. MAIN MAT - NIGHT

As "It's a Jungle Out Here" by Mastodon plays from the sound
system the shot follows Brett running during warm-ups. Kevin
stands in the middle of class as Achilles leads the running
line performing various warm-up drills.

ACHILLES

High knees!

KEVIN

Today we are going to work on the
arm bar from full guard. This move
is a powerful part of any
competitor's game, so please pay
careful attention. The details are
where the move is, never forget
that.

ACHILLES

Butt Kicks!

KEVIN

In 2007 I was in the Brazilian
national championships and I had
the full guard. Down two points.

ACHILLES

Toe touches!

KEVIN

My opponent was ferocious, a former
Purple Belt world champion. Every
day I would train this very move in
preparation of this very moment.

ACHILLES

Forward rolls.

KEVIN

So I take his left arm and boom! I throw my hips right and the rest is history. The man had no chance! No chance!

ACHILLES

Partner up!

KEVIN

I am happy today to show you that very move which won me the championship so many years ago. Achilles please come here.

Achilles gets in Kevin's guard as the class of white belts circle around the two men.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

First and foremost in jiu-jitsu we must always control our opponent when in the guard. Achilles try and hit me.

Kevin controls his wrist and head as Achilles is forced to flail aimlessly.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

He cannot. No matter how hard he try. The guard works because I have control.

CUT TO: A FIRST
PERSON
PERSPECTIVE OF
BRETT WHO CAN
BARELY
COMPREHEND WHAT
IS BEING SAID,
ALMOST LIKE
KEVIN IS
SPEAKING A
FOREIGN
LANGUAGE.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ok and that's it for now. Everyone pair off and drill the position. Ready, 1-2.

Everyone claps as Brett looks around nervously. A burly brown man with a full beard and a two stripe white belt approaches Brett.

JON
Hey man are you down to work
together?

BRETT
Yeah that would be great, just
letting you know I am still pretty
new.

JON
So you grabbed the belt?

Brett relaxes and smiles.

BRETT
Yeah. Name's Brett.

JON
Jon, alright I will go first. Two
for two?

Brett nods and the two men start drilling. Kevin walks over
from the other group he was working with.

KEVIN
How's our newest student coming
along?

Brett stumbles through the move and cranks too hard on a
submission attempt.

JON
Easy their cowboy, tap!

KEVIN
Ok Brett follow after me, don't do
anything unless I say so, ok? First
pull his hand across your body and
break down his posture.

Brett attempts to nervously yank Jon's arm across his body.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Brett you need to listen to me. Do
it again.

Kevin is being sharp now, similar to the belt grab he seems
to flip a switch between overly polite and heated. Brett this
time does it right.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Now grab his head with your hand..

Brett grabs Jon's head, releasing the arm he held.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
No your other hand!

A group next to them starts to look over as Kevin continues nitpicking a nervous Brett.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Now put your leg over his head,
isolating the arm.

A shaking nervous Brett performs the action.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Very nice. Finally you listen! Now
hip up, and...

JON
Tap!

KEVIN
Nicely done, but please work on
paying attention. I have many
students here, I cannot devote
hours to repeating with you. This
move is not hard, and you had ample
time to ask questions when I was
teaching.

KEVIN walks over to next group.

JON
You're doing good man, especially
for your second class. Kevin just
expects a lot.

Brett looks at Kevin with a bit of disdain and also with
disappointment, in himself.

BRETT
Let's go again.

INT. CHALLENGER'S FRONT DESK - NIGHT

As Brett leaves the locker room after class he approaches the
front desk where Kevin sits.

BRETT
I feel bad holding my training
partners back. Do you have any tips
for getting started out with all
this?

KEVIN

There you go again, not listening.
There are no shortcuts in jiu-
jitsu, many men have tried and all
have failed. Just keep showing up
and you will get better, one day at
a time.

Kevin glances at the clock.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Now, I have to get to the
competition class, however if you
are free tomorrow at six AM we can
do a private lesson. But please be
prepared.

Kevin waves over to Molly. Kevin walks to the mats briefly
stopping to whisper something to Molly as she comes to main
desk.

BRETT

[to himself] Come prepared? Hey
Molly what does Kevin mean by come
prepared for tomorrow?

MOLLY

I'm sure you'll be fine, just make
sure to bring a blood offering, or
50 dollars. Whatever is easier for
you.

Molly walks away as Brett remains at the desk, perplexed. He
watches the advanced class as they elegantly flow through
moves. He notes some of the students even keep a journal
which they write in as Kevin explains different moves.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - MORNING

Brett arrives to an unlocked and unlit gym. He walks back
with his gym bag to the dimly lit matted area where he sees
Achilles cleaning the mats. Brett approaches the fence to
talk with him.

BRETT

Excuse me, my name is Brett I am
supposed to be training with
Professor Kevin this morning.

Achilles continues to mop, paying no attention to the
question.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Do you know if Kevin is going to be here soon?

ACHILLES

Yep.

Achilles continues to mop

BRETT

Are you going to be training with us?

ACHILLES

Nah, I just clean the mats.

BRETT

So how long have you been training?

ACHILLES

I don't know. I can't remember a time I didn't train. Maybe eight years now?

BRETT

And you're in high school?

ACHILLES

Yep.

BRETT

You must be a great wrestler then.

Achilles looks up from the floor he is mopping.

ACHILLES

Nah I don't do that.

BRETT

Oh I just figured you would have an edge considering you have grappled you're whole life.

ACHILLES

Nah I don't think my dad would like me getting coached elsewhere very much.

BRETT

Oh.

Kevin walks in the front door, already in his gi and walks over to the mats.

KEVIN

Achilles are you done getting the mats ready?

ACHILLES

Yes coach.

KEVIN

Good. You are free to go. Remember to be back at eight AM for another cleaning and practice. Brett I told you to be prepared to train at six, why isn't your gi on?

Achilles puts the mop away and leaves the gym. As Brett starts putting on his gi. Kevin sits on the mats and begins to stretch.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

My boy, is he going to be a world champion one day? I don't know, probably. But it's gonna take some growing up, some discipline, you know Brett?

BRETT

Oh I didn't know Achilles was your son.

KEVIN

There is a lot you do not know. But yes, he bears my name.

BRETT

He seems like a hard worker, hell more so than me at eighteen. I am sure he will be fine.

KEVIN

Oh so you are sure? Perhaps you know more than me on that front then.

They stare at each other awkwardly.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

You know I try my best. Like with everything. But all boys must learn to be a man, and they must go out and battle alone. As all men do. Brett, do you have a son?

BRETT

No, but I want one. I just don't know if it's the right time. How did you know you were ready?

KEVIN

Ready, who is ready? You will see. How it comes to define you. How your name, your legacy now fall upon not only what you do, but them as well. I can only win so much, but that is for me. That is my responsibility, to myself and more importantly to him. No one wants a father they cannot look to as a hero Brett. For this much I am sure.

Brett looks embarrassed. He does not think himself a hero.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Anyways, enough about fatherhood, are you ready?

BRETT

Yeah, I brought a notebook by the way. I thought that might help.

KEVIN

A wonderful idea, finally you are beginning to show the artform the respect it truly deserves.

Brett walks into the cage feeling validated.

EXT. CHALLENGER'S PARKING LOT - MORNING

As BRETT is leaving his private lesson he walks to the parking lot behind the building and sees ACHILLES walking out of what appears to be a storage unit with a door drilled on. He is wearing his gi and has a coffee mug in his hand.

BRETT

Hey what are you doing back here?

ACHILLES

I live back here. What chu mean?

BRETT

Oh, is that part of your work arrangement?

ACHILLES

Yeah the competitors all live on site, it's part of the training program.

BRETT

So you don't live with your dad?

ACHILLES

Why do you care so much where I live?

Achilles continues walking towards the gym as BRETT gets in his car and watches as a string of boys ages 16-25 daunting black gis leave the storage units behind the gym to go train.

INT. BAR TABLE, NIGHT - NIGHT

Brett and Tristan sit at the bar, wearing normal work attire.

TRISTAN

I am shocked you finally made it on time for once, and you only kind of smell like ass tonight.

BRETT

Yeah, well you know I wouldn't miss a chance to see the Giants lose.

TRISTAN

Yeah that's what you said last time. After three months of jiu-jitsu I have gotten used to cheering on the friars with the guys in town who don't even know who plays third base.

BRETT

The local drunks don't know Machado?

TRISTAN

Is there a greater tragedy?

BRETT

By the way, you can always come you know.

TRISTAN

I told you I ain't doing any of that gay kung fu shit with you.

BRETT

It has to be more fun than educating the locals about Manny. Plus the guys there are cool, we could always drink and watch the games after practice.

TRISTAN

I'll pass, I am not convinced all this is even good for you. What are you going to leave Sam and live in one of those sheds behind the gym once you get your yellow belt?

BRETT

First off the next belt is blue, and second we are a long way from that. Professor Kevin is good for those kids, a lot of them don't have families to go home to.

TRISTAN

Look at you, that guy has you drinking the Kool-Aid. What kind of man ordains himself a professor. What's he a professor in anyways?

The men sit in silence watching the game, feeling some sort of odd tension between them.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

Molly stands in front of a class of white belts (mostly men and Adrianna who is the lone blue belt and lone female in class). In her neatly tied brown belt and white gi she stands in contrast to the ROOM OF BURLEY MEN in black gis.

MOLLY

Alright white belts listen up, Kevin is going to be late tonight so you are stuck with me. I am not a patient person by nature, so please try and pay attention. Adrianna can you come up here.

Adrianna runs to the front of class where Molly is standing.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

So tonight we are going to work on the lapel game a little.

(MORE)

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I know it may seem daunting, but you won't be able to hide in this class forever and I want you to be ready for the next step. So with the lapel game, I want you to think tension. Please no flailing or kicking or tying a knot around yourself. We want to create tension to pull and to push.

Molly sits down and grabs Adrianna's lapel. Demonstrating the push and pull.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

If you are going to wear these gis you might as well use them. The cloth is an extension of your opponent. So watch me now as I do a basic single leg attack from lapel position.

Molly performs the move.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Does anyone have any questions?

The room stays silent.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Here I will do it again. Notice how I grab the gi with a pistol grip and how I use it to create tension on the knee. Besides that nothing changes from the normal single, it's just more secure. I want perfect drilling here. If you are confused about any part of this let me know, there are only a few stupid questions and none of them are about the details of this drill, got it? Ok, ready, break.

The class claps as Jon and Brett pair up together and begin drilling. It is clear they have built some rapport now and Brett is much more competent than their first session.

JON

Molly is such a good instructor I wish Kevin would let her teach more.

BRETT

Yeah this is actually the first time I have been to her class, it's funny I think I have only seen lapel guard on YouTube before today.

Brett gets in position as Jon sits to do the move. Jon hits the takedown on Brett. Brett does it back. Molly walks over to the men as they drill.

MOLLY

You guys doing ok.

BRETT

I think so.

Brett performs the move as Molly watches.

MOLLY

It looks, close. Here, when you are coming up use the lapel as more of a lever. Like this.

Molly demonstrates the move on Jon. Brett tries it again.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Much better. Hey are you two staying for the advanced class tonight?

JON

Yep.

Molly looks at Brett.

BRETT

Oh, I only have one stripe I can't do that yet.

MOLLY

Oh come on are you going to stay in here and play pretend forever? Besides we always need fresh meat for the grinder, I promise you will be fine.

BRETT

Are you sure?

MOLLY

I competed my third week of jiu-jitsu. You have to rip the Band-Aid off eventually.

Molly walks away.

BRETT

Alright I guess I will let Sam know
I am going to be late.

Brett continues to drill with Jon. As Achilles walks on the mat. He immediately goes over to Achilles and starts rolling with her as the rest of the class drills. Achilles is nearly twice her size and as they roll he purposefully does not take it seriously, and is crossing the line from playful to flirting. Molly approaches the two of them.

MOLLY

Hey Achilles I want to work on
something I am teaching advanced
tonight can you help me?

ACHILLES

Yeah girl, no problem.

Adrianna mouths [thank you] as Achilles walks over to Molly.

ACHILLES (CONT'D)

What are you trying to work on?

MOLLY

Let me get in spider guard real
quick?

Molly gets in spider guard and quickly tosses Achilles high in the sky, slamming him down hard and mounting him.

ACHILLES

Damn girl, chill what da fuck was
that?

MOLLY

[softly] If I ever see you make a
female in her feel uncomfortable
again I will end your ass do you
hear me? Your dad taught you better
than this.

ACHILLES

Girl, it wasn't like that we were
just rolling.

MOLLY

It's professor.

Molly stands up and brings the class in for the next instructional.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

Kevin arrives looking out of sorts. He spends a moment putting away some papers at the front desk before walking on to the back mats where the class is drilling. Molly approaches him.

MOLLY

Where were you? Why didn't you let me know you were going to be late?

KEVIN

Thank you for covering for me, I was preparing a special arrangement. Why have we not started rolling yet? Everyone drilling is over, get your mouth guards on for live rounds!

The class walks over to the side of the mats to get water and get ready.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

We are going to do four ten minute rounds tonight. Please no leg locks on the lower belts.

Kevin sees that Brett is in class.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I see Brett has decided to advance himself tonight, please give him a deserved welcoming. Train smart, but more importantly train hard, and don't quit.

KEVIN sets the timer as students start pairing up. Brett is shaking with fear and walks up to Jon.

BRETT

Hey Jon do you mind rolling with me? Since it's my first time and all.

JON

No can do, looks like you're with Big Charlie.

Brett sees a large man in a blue belt approaching.

BRETT

You mean Charles?

JON

We call him Charles when he's being
nice, and when he's rolling he's
never nice.

Jon walks away as Brett stands across from Charlie ready to begin their round. They shake hands as Brett shakes with nerves.

KEVIN

Alright everyone, bombatch!

KEVIN put's on Brazilian music which plays throughout the duration of this entire sequence.

Brett quickly gets taken down and smothered by Charlie as the audience gets a panning shot of the entire class rolling. It should be shot almost like a concerto or opera, as the elegance of a class of rolling students is captured. Shots are broken up by the sound of the boxing clock, which lets off a loud triple ding. Competitors all shake hands and move on to their next rolling partner in cadence.

A middle aged but very fit man in a camouflaged gi and purple belt approaches Brett.

MIKE

Hey new guy I will go with you!

BRETT

I (breath) think (breath) I need a
round off.

MIKE

We don't do that here. Don't worry
we can go light.

BRETT

Ok.

Brett walks over as round starts. Brett sits to guard and MIKE immediately goes all out to pass him and hits him hard in the face with a crossface.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Hey man, I thought we were going
light man.

MIKE

This is light.

Mike taps Brett with a kimura.

BRETT
Hey man you got me now can we slow
it down a little now?

MIKE
No problem.

Mike goes hard again, this time Brett comes back at him even harder, passing Mike's guard.

MIKE (CONT'D)
AHHHHH.

BRETT
Are you OK?

MIKE
I'm fine it's just my knee acting
up. You need to learn how to relax
kid.

Ding. Ding! Jon walks over to Brett.

JON
I saw you did a round with spazzy
Mike?

BRETT
Yeah (pants) I thought purple belts
(pants) were supposed to be
controlled.

JON
Nah Kevin does promotions for
winning tournaments, Mike isn't
exactly beginner friendly.

Molly approaches.

MOLLY
Hey Brett, I saw you hurt Mike you
want to pick on someone your own
size?

BRETT
Oh sorry. I...

MOLLY
I know how he is, just be chill and
we will have a good round.

As Molly rolls with Brett she is his best partner yet. Taking it slow and letting him work his game. As time ends she makes Brett tap with a rolling knee bar.

BRETT

Damn what was that? You did like a spinning knee break?

MOLLY

Don't worry about it for now, you did a really nice job staying calm and working on your fundamentals good work.

The two fist bump. As Brett sees Kevin motioning for him to come over to him.

Kevin guides Brett through their roll calmly, always a move ahead like a Jedi. Until the final minute of class.

KEVIN

So tell me why are you here?

BRETT

Molly told me I could come.

KEVIN

But you decided to, yes?

Kevin take's Brett's back.

BRETT

Yeah, I assumed you were on the same page.

KEVIN

Don't do that.

Kevin starts to put in a choke as Brett taps. Kevin does not let go.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Assumptions have been the death of many a man, how much trust we must have in here.

Ding! Ding. Kevin releases the choke as Brett remains barely conscious.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Alright class line up.

Kevin stands up and extends a hand to Brett.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I assume we will be seeing you in here moving forward.

Brett nods as he takes Kevin's hand.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Oh and just remember, I make the
promotions here not Molly.

EXT. CHALLENGER'S PARKING LOT - NIGHT

Brett leaves Challenger's and walks to his car. He texts Sam "sorry I am late but I have exciting news...". Upon entering his car Brett immediately cranks the heat and reclines back. He immediately falls asleep and wakes up to Kevin pounding on his window. The lights of the gym are off and the lot is empty.

KEVIN
Hello friend. You don't have to go
home but you can't sleep here.
Unless you plan on cleaning the
mats of course.

Brett wakes up disoriented and confused.

BRETT
Oh shit, I am so sorry.

Brett checks the clock on his phone and sees 11 missed calls.

KEVIN
Good night, and see you tomorrow.

Brett calls Sam as Kevin walks into the night.

BRETT
(on phone) Sorry I know you must be
worried sick, I literally fell
asleep while driving home. No No
not while driving, I mean like when
I got in the car, but before
leaving the parking lot. No I am
fine to drive. No I am not at the
bar. See you soon. Ok, ok bye.

ACT 2: COMPETITION

3 MONTHS HAVE
PASSED

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Sam and Tristan sit at a table with Brett and some of his friend's from Challenger's. The two groups seem split as they sit on opposite sides of the table.

BRETT

Does anybody know why Mike wears a
camo gi?

JON

How else is he supposed to blend in
with his surroundings?

They laugh.

SAM

Wait there is a choice in fashion
at your pajama parties.

ADRIANNA

Well we have a team gi, but some
special flowers like to push the
rules.

BRETT

You know between the gis, the
merchandise, and training fees
Kevin must be making a fortune
running the gym.

ADRIANNA

You're telling me, and he doesn't
even pay Molly for all the time she
covers for his ass.

JON

Hey Kevin puts in a lot of work,
and plus the rent must be a fortune
when you factor in he owns the
entire lot.

TRISTAN

Well damn, I didn't know y'all were
paying top dollar for this.

(MORE)

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

You know I used to do Karate back in the day? I will gladly teach you for half the price.

ADRIANNA

That's nice did you play with Crayons too?

Tristan clearly takes it the wrong way as everyone laughs at his expense.

TRISTAN

Hey you better watch it.

ADRIANNA

Or what?

SAM

Everyone calm down, you had your play time to fight one another already. So how did you all get into pajama fighting anyways?

BRETT

Honey how many times do I have to tell you it's called jiu-jitsu.

ADRIANNA

It's ok Brett your wife is hot she doesn't need to be smart too.

Everyone laughs as Adrianna gets a dirty look from Sam.

SAM

Point stands, how did you get into the boys club Adrianna?

ADRIANNA

Well I didn't really have a choice. I used to come home every day to a man ready to fight. So my choices were to take it, or learn to fight. And I ain't no bitch.

Tense silence consumes the table.

ADRIANNA (CONT'D)

Anyways I no longer have a man, and am happy to report all my choking at home is by choice with my lovely wife.

SAM

Well damn, I am sorry to hear that.
You really are an inspiration.

ADRIANNA

Hey if it wasn't for him I never
would have had the courage to walk
away from the life I was living and
start embracing the life I
deserved. Jiu-jitsu stripped away
the fear and put me right in the
heart of what kept me trapped all
along.

CHERYL (the waitress) comes over to the table to take orders
as side conversations resume.

JON

Hey Brett let me buy you a shot.
Before you, I was the guy in
advanced class everyone wanted to
pick on.

BRETT

Sure thing, glad I could help the
cause.

They walk away from their table and approach the bar
together.

BRETT (CONT'D)

So how did you get into jits?

JON

After all these nights you finally
ask.

BRETT

It always seemed so cliché. But I
figure Sam is probably
uncomfortable asking now and I want
to know.

JON

Well, if you must know. About two
years ago I was working patrol when
I see someone I suspect trying to
break-in to a car downtown. You
know routine B&E. So I go up to him
and ask what he's doing, just to
confirm my suspicion. When this
mother fucker comes full force
charging into me.

(MORE)

JON (CONT'D)

When I say mother fucker I mean every bit of 6 foot 4, 250 pound man rampaging right at me. So I try and draw my gun, but I am too late. Before I can yell "freeze" I am on the ground underneath this behemoth of a man getting hit and scratched.

Jon sips his drink

JON (CONT'D)

I try and do what they teach us at the academy but he's just too damn big. I barely am able to get my walkie out and call for backup before I see him pull out a knife. At this point I don't know what came over me. Call it adrenaline or call it the grace of god, but I am able to get control of his wrist and push the knife into his gut. But he's a big man and of course he knows at this point he's passed the point of no return so he keeps trying to beat me to death. For sixty seconds I lay there completely helpless getting beat to the point of going out when my backup arrives. I was in the hospital for two months with bruises and breaks all over. The day I walked out of the hospital, was the day I joined Challenger's and met Kevin.

The shots arrive

BRETT

Holy shit, so are you still on the beat, or mostly at a desk now?

JON

You don't just stop being a cop. In fact I feel safer now then ever, even got a couple of my partners to come in and try a class in the mornings after a night of patrol. Kevin let's em come in for free. Good guy. You know all this stuff we learn in there isn't just for tournaments and show. It works.

Jon raises his glass. Brett looks at him with a newfound admiration and sense of camaraderie.

JON (CONT'D)
Anyways, cheers maybe next time we
train you'll take it easy on these
surgically repaired joints.

INT. MOLLY'S KITCHEN - DAYTIME

Molly is at work as a sous chef. The bloated HEAD CHEF stands behind her.

HEAD CHEF
Molly your knife work is lazy at
best and you look like shit. What
is wrong with you?

MOLLY
I'm sorry Chef.

HEAD CHEF
Don't be sorry be better. You think
I got here by being lazy? I expect
better from you. I can find plenty
of pieces of ass out there, I am
looking for chefs is that
understood.

Molly bites her tongue.

MOLLY
Yes chef.

As she leaves the kitchen at the end of her shift she lights a cigarette, clearly embarrassed and frustrated. As she changes out of her chef's clothes and into her gi she is embarrassed about how small she lets herself become in this world.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - MORNING

Kevin and Brett work together at their bi-weekly 6 AM private lesson at the gym. A tournament is coming up soon and perhaps there is evidence of it as flyers and promotional material litter the gym, as KEVIN will be headlining the event.

KEVIN
Brett have you signed up for the No
Tap tournament yet?

Brett jogs as he warms up.

BRETT
Yes coach, last night.

KEVIN

Ok there is no time to wait then
come here.

Brett stops jogging and walks over to Kevin.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ok I am your opponent, how are you
gonna get me down.

BRETT

Well, I guess I will just shoot a
blast double on you.

KEVIN

There's no time to guess. We are
getting tournament ready now Brett.
I am your opponent. A man not so
different from yourself set on
winning, trying to take what is
rightfully yours. How are you going
to stop me?

BRETT

I shoot.

KEVIN

Ok, show me.

Brett shoots, Kevin shrugs him off.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Again.

Brett takes another shot, this time chaining a failed double
into a single and picking up Kevin's leg.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ten more times. As you see you must
push through. React to the
reaction.

Brett does it again, taking Kevin down.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ok great you got me down, and you
are in my half guard, now what do
you do?

BRETT

I pass.

Brett attempts a pass but is quickly swept by Kevin.

KEVIN
Not like that let me show you.

Kevin switches positions with Brett, now on top.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Brett if you think of nothing else
come the tournament, remember to
control the head and the hips.
That's the key. We are passed the
legs, they may do things, but today
we focus on the head and the hips.
Now pay close attention. Step one,
boom!

Kevin passes to side control.

GET CLOSE, THE AUDIENCE SHOULD FEEL DOMINATED.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Now you got your three Brett. What
now? We take the back like this.

Kevin takes Brett's back.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Now we are on the back and you got
your five. Your wife, me we are all
going crazy in the stands. But we
aren't here to score points, we are
here to submit. So we choke.

Kevin puts in a rear naked choke.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Breath Brett it's ok to be in the
darkness. You're in the deep end
now.

BRAZILIAN INSTRUMENTALS START TO PLAY. A FIRST PERSON
PERSPECTIVE OF THE CEILING FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF BRETT
PLAYS WITH MAJOR DISTORTION. WHEN SUDDENLY A HIGH PITCHED
RING PLAYS.

FULL SHOT OF KEVIN ON BRETT'S BACK

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Brett, escape. Swim out of darkness
and into the light, grab my hand.
My choking hand.

Brett grabs hand.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Now pull it over and turn your hips
down.

Brett escapes to side control.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
We must train until the competition
is ingrained inside of you. Until
we beat all mental weakness and
avenues for failure to enter. When
the time comes we will execute, is
that understood?

BRETT
Yes coach.

KEVIN
Do it again.

INT. BAR - NIGHT

Brett and Tristan are at there normal table at the bar. Brett
sips a water and nervously fidgets, anticipating the
tournament coming up. Cheryl approaches the table.

TRISTAN
Can we get two High Life's and an
order of wings.

BRETT
Actually just a water for me.

CHERYL
Ok you got it.

Cheryl walks away.

TRISTAN
Since when do you pass on a post-
practice beer?

BRETT
I have to make weight this weekend
for the tournament. I just found
out I have to weigh 170 pounds with
a gi on.

TRISTAN

What is jiu-jitsu now a modeling agency?

BRETT

No ass hole I am competing at lightweight.

TRISTAN

You look more like a heavy weight to me.

BRETT

It's just the name of the division, anyways I need to cut five pounds by Saturday.

TRISTAN

And this is for fun?

BRETT

Well I never said this was the fun part.

Cheryl arrives with the water and beer.

TRISTAN

So what made you want to do a tournament?

BRETT

How else was I supposed to know if all the training was working?

TRISTAN

I don't know you could stop being a pussy fight me?

BRETT

Beating you shows literally no development between now and when I started. When are you going to come in and roll with me to see that?

TRISTAN

When they let go of the requirement to give up beer.

Brett sips his ice water.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

You know this guy really is getting you to make a lot of changes in you're life.

(MORE)

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

You sure this isn't some Tony
Robbins bullshit dressed in a gi?

BRETT

Nah, Kevin is real. Honestly his
speeches before and after class
have really helped me. I remember
as a kid I used to always wonder
what happened to all the
philosophers and wise man. Like
where is today's Socrates you know?

TRISTAN

And you think the answer is some
guy running a gym in the burbs of
San Diego? You need to read more my
man, or at least go to a comedy
show. I always knew you were dumb,
but come on.

BRETT

Hey who are you to judge, you won't
even come in.

Tristan chugs his beer.

TRISTAN

I'm sorry I can't hear you over the
sound of this cold and delicious
beer.

I/E. BRETT'S HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD - DAWN

Brett wakes up the day of the tournament and checks the
scale, he is 2.4 pounds over weight with his gi on. He
panics. Scene progresses as he does a series of sprints,
pushups, and even spitting as he runs around the
neighborhood. He checks his weight four times before being
.11 pounds over and seeing it is 8 a.m and he has to go.
During this sequence he has a sweat suit on and keeps it on
as he rides to the gym. Sam gives him a confused look from
bed and wishes him good luck on the way out.

INT. CHALLENGER'S LIFTING AREA - MORNING

As Brett arrives to the gym he sees the ENTIRE TEAM getting
ready for the ride over to the arena as Molly frantically
runs around getting things together. There is a nervous aura
about. Kevin stands up as the clock strikes 8:30 and a loud
alarm goes off.

KEVIN

This isn't Friday Night Lights. I have no words of motivation. If we do out there what we do in here they will have...

ENTIRE ROOM

No chance!

KEVIN

You already know. I train warriors. I have traveled around the world, and fought everyone twice. We are here to win and will accept nothing short. Trust your coaches and don't quit.

Kevin leaves the gym as competitors begin to head to the parking lot where a team van is parked for those competitors living at the gym. Molly stands on a chair to make final announcements.

MOLLY

Alright everyone listen up for your coaching assignments: Jon, Charlie, Brett, Tom....

BRETT

What are coaching assignments?

CHARLIE

Exactly what they sound like.

MOLLY

Kyle, you're with me. Everyone else is with Kevin. Be in the holding area twenty minutes before your match. If you miss weight don't bother talking to me, the walk home should provide adequate calorie burn. If I say green go hard, yellow take it easy, and red chill the fuck out. See everyone there.

INT. CHARLIE'S CAR - MOMENTS LATER

Brett, Jon, and Charlie are in the same car as they leave the dojo and drive to the tournament.

JON

Man I swear this never gets easy.

CHARLIE

Yeah this is my fifth tournament and the drive there and moments before still feel like the climb up a 20,000 foot roller coaster.

JON

You are 10-1? What do you have to be nervous about?

CHARLIE

The one. But it's not about the past, it's about the next match up. The uncertainty of it. Not the loss itself, but the chance of it. The fear of knowing you will be out there, and hey who knows what will happen. Your mind trying to rationalize the chaos. But look I got jitters, you got jitters, world champions have jitters none of this is rationale, it's just preservation.

Brett stares out the window quietly in the back visibly nervous.

JON

Brett how you holding up back there, you excited for your first match?

BRETT

I think terrified is an understatement.

JON

It will be fine just listen to Molly and remember to breathe.

BRETT

I think I would rather be on a Humvee in the middle east right now, why the hell did I invite Sam and her mother.

CHARLIE

Listen just remember you are a 35 year old lightweight white belt. Whoever you are going to face is equally as terrible and afraid as you are right now, and likely as old and out of shape.

BRETT
Was that supposed to help?

CHARLIE
Yeah, didn't it?

JON
What I think Charles was trying to say, in so many words, is that you're going to be ok, plus it's not like there's any going back now, might as well embrace the moment. We are all stressed, take some solace in that.

BRETT
Why didn't you guys warn me that I would have a non-stop feeling of being at the top of a roller coaster.

CHARLIE
Because you would have never got on the ride.

PAN OUT OF CAR AS ROCK MUSIC PLAYS AS THEIR CAR FOLLOWS THE TEAM VAN DOWN A ROAD.

INT. TOURNAMENT HALL - MORNING

Brett and Jon sit in the bleachers of a massive gymnasium with wrestling mats laid across the center. Among the boundaries of the mats are judges tables and a fenced off perimeter separating spectators from the competitors.

JON
You want to go down and cheer on Achilles?

BRETT
For sure.

They walk down as other competitors and teams of various belt colors and sizes jog around and eye them up. Brett and Jon wear their team gi as others wear a mixture of gis, hoodies, and warmup gear.

BRETT (CONT'D)
I can't believe how many other teams there are at this thing.

JON
Yeah, it's wild, BJJ used to be
niche now there's a grappling
academy on every corner.

The two men walk by a yelling man.

TY'S COACH
Barimbolo Ty. Go!

Brett looks over as a brown belt does a Barimbolo.

BRETT
Is that a bear in polo?

JON
It's Barimbolo, try not to
embarrass me man.

The men arrive at the perimeter of Mat 1 where many of their
teammates now gather. Achilles and a Purple belt from another
academy now stand on the edge of the mat waiting to enter.

ANNOUNCER
Achilles Nogera please come in.

Achilles runs onto the mat pounding his chest.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
Tony Peria please come in.

TONY runs in facing off against Achilles.

7 MINUTES ON THE CLOCK

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)
Bombatch!

Achilles gets an early take down.

KEVIN
Pressure Achilles. Make pressure!

Achilles starts to dominate. Taking his opponent's back and
trying to choke him in a crucifix.

MOLLY
There you go!

KEVIN
Submit, Achilles submit!

Tony taps. Achilles' hand is raised as he wins the match. Pointing to the heavens and jogging out to the fence to get high fives and praise from his team.

MOLLY
Nice job bud.

KEVIN
Next time when you have the collar
I want you to finish like this.

Kevin starts demonstrating a move on a team member standing next to him.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Ok understood? Now get ready for
finals.

MOLLY
You know it's ok to say good job
before getting into the details?

KEVIN
Please Molly not now. I know my
boy. This is war we can celebrate
later.

INT. TOURNAMENT HALL, MAT 1 - AFTERNOON

"Master's 1 White Belt" calls over the loud speaker as Brett walks from the stands down to the weigh in area. Various teammates wish him good luck, some now wearing medals around their necks as Brett is among the last to go. As he walks over to the scale a ref checks his gi measurements and instructs him to weigh in. At first he is .2lbs too heavy, but remembers he has his socks on. He takes them off and weighs in again, now making weight. He then walks over to a ref who points him to mat 1 where his OPPONENT, another man in his 30s but in much better shape, now stands. Brett's heart is pounding and the shot should feel anxious and uneasy up until the moment the match starts. Molly stands behind the barrier with his teammates, as his mother in law and Sam film from the rafters. Brett is standing next to Molly in front of the judges table.

MOLLY
Just breath and remember your plan.
And remember most important of all,
nobody really cares what a middle
aged man on a Sunday does.

REF
Competitors to the middle.

Brett walks out to the center and shakes his opponent's hand. His opponent wears a Blue Gi with the words FOUNDRY printed on it.

REF (CONT'D)

Bombatch!

Brett gets taken down early but rallies back to even up the score with one minute left.

MOLLY

Brett you are tied! If you pass his half guard you win! Green! Green! Green!!

SAM

Let's go BRETT!

JON

Come on BRETT!

We get an eerie quiet as we hear Brett remembering his game plan, repeating Kevin's words from the private lesson over and over to himself.

CLOCK SHOWS 30 SECONDS LEFT

Brett almost has his leg out of his opponents guard when he gets caught in a kimura. Brett is awarded an advantage and is up 2.5 to 2 but is now at risk of having his shoulder dislocated.

MOLLY

Brett it's not in don't tap don't move you have an advantage. Red! Red!

With 15 seconds left Brett taps, losing despite being up 2.5 to 2. His opponent's hand is raised by the ref and the two men shake hands.

OPPONENT

You ok man?

BRETT

Yeah good stuff out there.

OPPONENT

You too.

The two men hug and walk to their respective teams.

MOLLY

You did so good for your first time, you stayed calm and mostly listened.

Molly hugs Brett as Sam walks down to the fenced in area.

SAM

I am so proud of you honey! You almost won.

BRETT

Thanks, I guess it was ok for a first go around. My forearms are on fire though.

SAM'S MOM

Oh my goodness when I saw that tattooed man step in across from you, I was scared for your life!

BRETT

Me too!

SAM'S MOM

But honey you did so good. By the way who do I talk to about getting the AC on in here? And have you tried the Acai bowls, they are delightful.

BRETT

No ma, but I am starving do you mind getting me one? I will be right over when I am done.

Sam and her mom walk away.

JON

You did great man, really that was an impressive first time out there. You want to go tell Kevin about it?

BRETT

I am not sure I want to, but I might as well face the music.

Brett makes his way through the crowd to approach KEVIN who is standing by the fence coaching.

KEVIN

Lucas breath, breath!

BRETT
Hey, professor.

KEVIN
Lucas I need you to focus, we need
a sweep.

Molly pulls Brett to the side.

MOLLY
Not right now Brett.

Lucas sweeps his opponent but his ref does not call it. Lucas goes on to lose match.

KEVIN
Ref that was two! Two at the end!
[he continues to swear and yell at
the ref in Portuguese]

Lucas (a 20 year old blue belt who just lost the title fight) walks over to Kevin after slamming the ground in frustration.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Lucas it's ok. That call was bull
shit. We will work on it Monday.

Brett now approaches Kevin who still is fuming at the ref across the barrier.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Did you see that Brett. Fucking
bullshit. No ref gonna give my
school a fair chance. Been this way
for years.

BRETT
Yeah Lucas definitely got him
there. I don't know what happened.

KEVIN
Ah, we can't let it be that close.
Give the ref an inch and they will
take a mile. How did your bout go?

BRETT
Well, it was close, and I swept
him. But ultimately I lost by a
submission, despite being up an
advantage.

KEVIN
Ah, so you tapped?

BRETT

My opponent had been training two years, so honestly I am kind of happy about it.

Kevin looks away.

BRETT (CONT'D)

But yeah I tapped.

KEVIN

Please no more excuses. It is in defeat that we can learn more than any victory. An admirable effort none the less.

Kevin walks away, Brett's post fight "high" is now all but gone. The mats start to close off as preparation is underway for the main event.

INT. TOURNAMENT HALL, BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Kevin drills with Achilles and Molly in a back room of the gymnasium as they prepare for his main event fight.

MOLLY

Alright Kevin, what's the plan.

KEVIN

Take my shot, stay on top. Give him no chance.

Kevin continues doing fit ins and take downs on Achilles as Molly stands besides the two with a clipboard.

MOLLY

Ok, just wanted to let you know that I watched film on Nick's last two fights. He really likes to lead with a left side collar drag. Figured you might want to be aware.

KEVIN

Please Molly, none of this. I don't make adjustments. This is my fight we will follow my plan. I am going to keep the pressure high.

MOLLY

Ok, well if by some miracle he does get you down just know he is an explosive passer to the left.

(MORE)

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I would probably try and tie him up
and sweep to the right.

Kevin stops drilling as the announcements' from the main
auditorium start to announce the fight.

KEVIN

Thank you Molly, you always have
been my brightest protégée. Now
please enjoy the show.

Kevin walks away from an annoyed Molly.

CUT TO: MAIN MAT
AREA WHERE A
STAGE HAS BEEN
CONSTRUCTED AND
AN ANNOUNCER NOW
STANDS.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and gentleman, it's time for
the main event we have all been
waiting for! In the red corner
three time Brazilian National
Champion, three time Pan American
Champion, and 2009 Light Weight
World Champion, KEVIN "NO CHANCE"
NOGERA!

THE SONG SYMPATHY WITH THE DEVIL PLAYS AS THE LIGHTS GO DARK
AND A SPOTLIGHT GOES TO KEVIN WALKING OUT UNDERNEATH AN LCD
DISPLAY OF A BULL.

Kevin comes out almost like a WWE wrestler, hyping the
audience and shouting "no chance". He jogs around the stage
and does some wrestling shots as the audience and his team
cheer him on.

ANNOUNCER (CONT'D)

And in the Blue corner, defending
No Tap Fight Night champion, 2017
Pan Ams champion, 2018 World's
Runner-up, Nick "No Mercy" Salvo!

Nick walks out to techno and does some chauvinistic entry,
maybe a backflip. Both fighters come to center stage where
the ref stands.

REF

Fighters you know the rules, this is a light weight ten minute title fight for the No Tap tournament commission. Submission at any time will end it. If there are no submissions at the end of the round we will use the traditional IBJFF scoring as a tie breaker understood?

KEVIN

Yes

NICK

Yes

REF

Alright shake hands and let's fight.

The men shake hands and do a quick bow before walking to their respective corners.

REF (CONT'D)

Bombatch!

Both men walk forward and Kevin immediately tries to take his opponent down but gets stuffed. Nick does a collar drag like Molly explained and gets Kevin down. Kevin is now on the bottom in open guard.

CUT TO: AUDIENCE

BRETT

Charlie, have you seen Kevin fight before?

CHARLIE

Yeah but it's been a year now due to injuries. Come on Kevin!

CUT TO: STAGE

Kevin tries to do the sweep that Molly recommended, but gets passed as Nick is too fast. Nick has him in side control and hits him with a pretty rough cross face.

AUDIENCE

Come on coach you got this!

NICK'S COACH

You got him right where you want him Nick, make the old man pay!

Kevin gets his guard back. He finds his second wind sweeping his opponent but almost getting caught in a submission in the process. Kevin is now free and on top.

CUT TO CLOCK WITH 30 SECONDS LEFT

MOLLY

Kevin he's giving you space, roll for it!

Kevin goes for a rolling knee bar and gets it. Nick taps with 3 seconds left on the clock.

AUDIENCE

Crowd chants "No chance, no chance!"

Kevin jumps up and eggs on the crowd.

KEVIN

What I say! No chance, No chance!

Both men come to center of ring, Nick is slightly limping.

ANNOUNCER

By submission this contest has come to an end. Your new No Tap Grappling Tournament champion, Kevin "No Chance" Nopera!

Kevin raises hands and does a lap around stage, bringing Achilles on stage.

KEVIN

We're not done this is just the beginning!

INT. BUFFET TABLE - NIGHT

Much of the gym, excluding Kevin, is now at a long buffet or Korean BBQ table as they celebrate the tournament.

CHARLIE

Cheers everyone to a great team outing. The fear of competition is but a mere diversion from the joy of being done!

Charlie raises a glass over his seemingly endless stacks of plates.

MOLLY

Everyone did great today, it really was a pleasure to coach all of you. Well those of you who listened to me and didn't just freak out <cough> Jon <cough>.

JON

Hey it was hard to hear you over the sounds of taps from all my opponents.

Brett and others laugh.

ADRIANNA

Hey now it is us who beholds the true honor, the students of a world champion and now Tap Out champion, whatever the hell that means. Molly you're a monster.

The crowd raises a glass to a modest Molly.

BRETT

Hey Molly speaking of which when are you going to teach me some of those sweet lapel moves you did today?

MOLLY

How about you focus on getting those fundamentals down first? And thank you Adrianna. You know I am not one to get sentimental, but you all are the reason I keep on coming back. I mean hell where else in life can I have an engineer, an artist, and a cop all hanging on my every word.

ADRIANNA

Awww girl you know we love you. And for the record I am sure you could teach us all a thing or two in the kitchen.

MOLLY

Yeah but that wouldn't be nearly as fun.

JON

For the record I definitely second the idea of a combo BJJ and cooking academy.

(MORE)

JON (CONT'D)

Charlie you were a beast out there today, you went 4-0 right?

CHARLIE

Yes sir.

BRETT

What is your secret?

CHARLIE

Well I could give you some long spiel about the intricacies of preservation and stylistic decision making in the modern lapel game. But I will keep it simple, be the guy on top.

ADRIANNA

Wise words from our very own seven foot Buddha. Hey Brett what do you think your walk-out song would be? And if it is devil related what does that say about your sense of self?

BRETT

Hmmm let me think on that, I think I left my wallet at the gym this morning. You think it will still be unlocked?

MOLLY

Yeah and if not you can go around back and get one of the live-ins to let you in.

BRETT

Live-ins?

MOLLY

Yeah the cultists of Kevin who train and live their full time. The team van got back 30 minutes ago.

BRETT

Yeah what's the deal with those guys. Does Kevin have a stand at next to the local army recruiter?

MOLLY

Your guess is as good as mine, every time I ask him about it he just talks about being a guiding light for the lost souls.

(MORE)

MOLLY (CONT'D)

I just try and help them out, who am I to judge.

JON

Yeah those kids have a troubled past Brett, hell I have seen a few on the streets before they got straight and joined the gym. It wasn't pretty.

ADRIANNA

Yeah Brett you see it's really quite simple. Jon threatens to throw them in jail unless they come to class, and Kevin serves as the parole officer.

JON

Well isn't that fake news if I have ever heard it.

Brett laughs unsure about how much of Adrianna's depiction is rooted in truth.

I/E. CHALLENGER'S - NIGHT

As Brett parks he sees the lights to Challenger's are dimly lit from the outside. A single TV is on and visible from the front glass door. As Brett walks in he sees Kevin sitting alone on in a chair watching the matches from the day with a note pad in hand.

BRETT

Hey Kevin I didn't think you would still be here.

KEVIN

I am glad my whereabouts are of concern to you. Tell me what brings you here, shouldn't you be out with the others?

BRETT

I forgot my wallet this morning before we left, I guess I was so nervous and just wasn't thinking.

Brett walks over to the lockers to grab his wallet.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Hey any chance you want to come over to the bar with me?

KEVIN

No thank you, I am quite alright
here with my tea.

BRETT

Oh, well the team is all there and
I would love to buy you a drink.
Come on just one round?

Kevin pauses the footage and turns to Brett. Kevin is still
in his gi.

KEVIN

I don't drink, not anymore. Plus I
need to review my match, there's no
time to rest on my laurels.

BRETT

Not even for a night?

KEVIN

Maybe next time. Plus Achilles and
the other competitors should be
done showering soon and we need to
review technique.

BRETT

Tonight?

KEVIN

When if not now?

BRETT

Don't you think the kids could use
a night of I don't know being kids?

KEVIN

Brett, I appreciate you telling me
how to run my training camp. Please
enjoy a drink and reflect upon your
match. I will see you Monday, Yes?

BRETT

Yeah.

Brett leaves the academy feeling embarrassed and questioning
his right to celebration.

INT. BRETT'S HOME, LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Instead of returning to the restaurant Brett decides to go
home. As he arrives Sam is on the couch watching TV.

SAM
Hey welcome back, how was the celebration?

BRETT
Pretty good, although Kevin never showed.

SAM
That guy is such a downer.

BRETT
He means well, he just has an interesting way of showing it. That's all. Plus it's not like I had much to celebrate.

Brett walks over to the kitchen and starts making something to eat.

SAM
Yeah well at least Kevin got an invite.

BRETT
Oh you know you were welcome to come, don't pull that?

SAM
Was I though?

BRETT
I mean of course I thought it was implied.

SAM
Why would it be implied?

BRETT
I don't know. I just figured you didn't really like it last time you came out with us?

SAM
Did I say I didn't like it?

BRETT
Well no. But you were quiet that night, and I thought you felt out of place.

SAM

So you are ok inviting me and my sick mother to come cheer for you, but dinner afterwards is off limits. Makes sense, got it.

BRETT

It's not off limits. I love having you around.

SAM

Really because the more you get into this sport, the more it feels like you are running away.

BRETT

How can you say that? I would give up anything to be with you. Hell I gave up a career to be with you, to be right here.

SAM

You hated the marines, don't put that on me.

Brett stops making cereal to walk over to Sam.

BRETT

I am not blaming you, I am just it's ridiculous to say I wouldn't want to be with you.

SAM

You aren't around anymore. My life is becoming a revolving cycle of taking my mom to appointments and planning around your fucking workouts.

BRETT

Well then go out and find something else to do while I am at jiu-jitsu. Join palates, hell buy a bike I am all for it. Or come join the gym, seriously I would love to have you there.

SAM

My ideal Wednesday night isn't getting inflated ears and bruises with a bunch of meat heads. Plus that's not the point.

(MORE)

SAM (CONT'D)

You go to this place that makes you feel like shit, and keep going for what, some sort of validation that you are a tough guy. I have hobbies! This isn't a hobby, it's an obsession. And what about when we have kids? Do you just want me to stay home and take care of it while you go out with Tristan, or spend another weekend at some tournament.

BRETT

Of course not. I can't believe you are this mad about dinner, you don't even like Korean food! I spent years spending every night with you and now you are jealous, why because I made some new friends? Is that it?

Sam stands up and starts to walk up the stairs.

BRETT (CONT'D)

You think I'm obsessed? Kevin is in the gym six hours a day rolling and another six studying film. I see Kevin and that man is willing to die to win a championship, I don't care that much about anything.

SAM

Then start caring. If you think obsessing in some gym all day is what's going to give you a sense of purpose or fulfillment I have news for you, it won't. Eventually all you have is what you have, and if you think that's not good enough for you then that's your fault not mine.

Sam walks upstairs as Brett remains in the kitchen and pours himself a drink.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

Kevin stands in front of the advanced class the Monday after the tournament.

KEVIN

Good evening everyone. Today I would like to remind you that whatever happened this last weekend, it was as it should be. If you won, good job. Are you done? Is this it? If you lost, just know failure is a gift. A chance for you to embrace the pain of demise and adapt. You will return even stronger. I put my belts and medals next to all of my students on the wall because I am not special. I fail, but I did not quit. The only way for weakness to truly consume us, is by bowing our head to it, and to that I say, no. No to the sound of defeat. No to all those that stand in our way, between us and our destiny. I promise you, follow me against the forces of failure and we will come back like a honeybadger, clawing our way through the depths of darkness, into the light. And to that I say let us begin another day, as we must fight out of the darkness.

As class bows in and continues Brett seems off and distracted. What was he throwing away his marriage for? Was he even happy to begin with? Can Kevin be trusted, and does he live by the words he speaks?

EXT. BEACH - DAWN

Brett and MEMBERS OF THE COMPETITION TEAM stand in a parking lot next to a beach. They are all in their team t-shirts and shorts. Brett is starting to look more defined and bruised up as a few months have passed and he has thrown himself deeper into the sport. Brett gets out of his car and approaches Achilles.

BRETT

Why did he tell us to meet him on the beach?

ACHILLES

Who cares, you're lucky you are even invited.

Kevin pulls up in an older car and gets out. He wears a team rash guard and board shorts as he approaches the group of men.

KEVIN

Good morning gentleman, shall we begin?

Kevin begins running as the men follow him on the beach. They form a line and occasionally will do jiu-jitsu drills as they run. Kevin stops after 4 miles in near the edge of the ocean.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Circle up everyone. You know back Brazil there were two camps of thought when it came to combat. One was Vale Tudo, the other jiu-jitsu. This was not a harmonious relationship, the fighters were raw, men who fought to survive, not for sport or fitness. One day on the beach a great fighter from each camp came, knowing this would be the day that the scores would be settled. We did not have refs, only honor. So the men fought, and well the rest is history. Jiu-jitsu would go on to become the dominant form of grappling in the fighting world, while imposters would fall at the way side. Today I want to pay homage to our founders and fight as they once did. No weight limits, no gi, in the wild as god intended. Charlie come here, me and you let's go.

Kevin fights the giant, quickly submitting him.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Anybody else?

Brett steps forward. Kevin stares him down. Brett lunges forward tackling Kevin into the ocean. The class quickly circles around the two men as Kevin mounts Brett and begins to drown him.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

You going to tap this time? Who is going to save you?

Brett seems on the verge of drowning as Kevin holds his head under water. Before he goes out Kevin lifts him up and throws him onto the beach.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Consider that your baptism.

Brett is coughing on the beach bent over.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

You need to want this as bad as you want to breathe, or else you have no chance of making it. You want to be a masters world champion? Prove it, every day you train. That goes for everyone here. I train and I fight to be the best, and I expect the same of my students. My teammates. What other sport is a coaching willing to go into the fire with his students, huh? If you aren't ready for that, than go now. Walk away. If you're here, you are all in. There is no plan b.

INT. BAR TABLE, NIGHT

Tristan and Brett sit at their normal spot at the bar. They watch a female UFC fight on the tv together. Brett has cauliflower ear with a magnet on it.

TRISTAN

So are you going to order or is the side of cauliflower on your face part of your new diet?

BRETT

Oh fuck off.

TRISTAN

So I have been meaning to ask you, when you workout with the chicks in class do you just shove your face up in there, or?

BRETT

I mean to some extent yes, but it's not like that. Why don't you just come and try it if you are going to keep asking questions about it?

TRISTAN

Oh woah is you! I am but a burden on the intellectual choke artist!

BRETT

Dude come on, starting is the hardest part but it's really fun. Plus Kevin makes the first day a memorable experience.

TRISTAN

So now I not only have to appease you but this Kevin guy as well?

BRETT

I mean yeah it's his academy.

TRISTAN

Listen I get that y'all have your fancy belts and gis, but I really think that's just a construct to make you respect these people. Putting on a colorful belt doesn't make you any better than someone else. I don't want you getting taken advantage of, you're too good a dude. I know these people are nice, but you have to admit there's some serious flaws in this hierarchy they got you believing in.

BRETT

I don't know man, it takes over a decade to earn a black belt. UFC champions are brought to tears at the honor of getting one. I really think you have to come and in see to get it.

TRISTAN

Alright and if I come in and play by the rules of your overzealous orgy what do I get?

BRETT

How about this, if you come in for the free week I will get us tickets and dinner to a Padres game.

TRISTAN

You have my attention.

BRETT

And if you make it a year I will give you a game of your choice from my Chargers season tickets.

TRISTAN

Make it two and you have yourself a deal.

BRETT

Well I already know you aren't going to make it, so I will make it four games if it makes you feel better.

TRISTAN

It's a bet.

INT. CHALLENGER'S - NIGHT

Tristan walks into Challenger's behind Brett.

BRETT

Here change into this and I will get you setup with Kevin.

Tristan takes Brett's ill fitting gi from day 1 and gives it a disgusted glance before walking to the front desk with Brett.

BRETT (CONT'D)

Hey Professor my friend was hoping to join us today.

KEVIN

This is excellent news, welcome friend my name is Kevin.

Tristan and Kevin shake hands.

TRISTAN

Tristan, nice to meet you, are you the guy that's going to teach me how to beat up this douchebag?

Kevin cringes at Tristan's language

KEVIN

I don't know, Brett works very hard, I would be lucky to stand a chance myself. But maybe today you can be a little better than you were yesterday. Please come join us in line after you have changed.

Kevin walks on to the mats as the two men follow behind.

BRETT

Remember to bow in and take your shoes off when you go on that mat.

TRISTAN

Listen I saw your match I know the rules of the church of Brazil, I won't embarrass you Brett.

BRETT

Oh yeah and none of the Marine Martial Arts stuff.

TRISTAN

I should have asked for more tickets.

Class continues on as the two men drill together. Tristan seems to be enjoying himself. As class ends Tristan signs up and gets a white belt at the front desk from Kevin. Brett is perplexed as Tristan was not forced to grab the belt as he once did.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

A few months have passed and Brett now has three stripes on his belt. Tristan also has a stripe. The two men stand in the line of an all white belts, except for Adrianna and a fat man in a brown belt. Molly stands in front of the class.

MOLLY

Alright everyone start running.

The class starts to run.

BRETT

Who is that brown belt sitting out warm-ups in the corner?

JON

Oh Alex? He started training here eight years ago when his other gym kicked him out. Kevin hates the dude but he just won't quit.

BRETT

So he just watches?

JON

Nah he will roll sometimes to, and help out. I think that's why he comes to white belt class, he kind of likes to do what he wants.

MOLLY

Alright everyone warm-up for five minutes. Please pair up and work on open guard back and forth.

Jon and Tristan pair up, forcing Brett to look around for a partner.

BRETT

Molly I think we have odd numbers today.

The large man in the brown belt approaches.

ALEX

I'll go with you white belt.

BRETT

Thanks man.

ALEX

Didn't want you crying all night, just try not to spaz out.

BRETT

Of course, so do you want to go first?

ALEX

Doesn't matter to me.

Brett goes on to do some sweeps.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Easy their killer.

BRETT

Too hard?

ALEX

Some of us have to work for a living here. Try it again but with some grace this time.

Brett tries to go slow and relaxed but can't move Alex now.

BRETT

Dude I think you're too big.

ALEX

I think you just suck, I am the old man with a bad back.

BRETT
Well want to explain how I can not
suck?

ALEX
Leverage.

BRETT
Ok.

ALEX
Grab my collar and break me down.
(Brett does it). See how I am bent
over now? Ok, now try your balloon
sweep princess.

The move works.

INT. CHALLENGER'S LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Jon, Brett, Alex and Tristan change and pack up their bags
after class in the locker room.

JON
Hey Brett are you down to grab a
drink?

BRETT
Yeah man let me wash up and I will
be over in ten.

ALEX
Are y'all going to Cateye's?

TRISTAN
Isn't that a strip club.

ALEX
Obviously.

Alex nods as the other men look put off.

BRETT
No, we are going to White Flag
Brewpub.

ALEX
Sounds lame, but if you insist.
Mind if I tag along?

BRETT
Umm sure?

ALEX
Thanks white belt.

ALEX leaves the locker room as the men continue to pack up.

TRISTAN
Did you just invite the old fat
guy?

BRETT
He's a brown belt show some
respect.

TRISTAN
I will respect him when we are
rolling, but I don't need some
weird dude rolling up with us.

INT. WHITE FLAG BREWPUB, OUTDOOR TABLE - NIGHT

ALEX is already drunk and loudly roaring about some old fight
story from the 90s.

ALEX
So there he was, four seats down
from me. [BURP]

BRETT
The Chuck Lidell?!

ALEX
Yeah man and he had trained with me
the night before so he goes "Are
you the fat fuck I couldn't take
down yesterday?" And that I was!
Those were the days. Before
everything got so mainstream and
all these rules got introduced.

Cheryl walks up to the table.

ALEX (CONT'D)
Hey toots can I get another gin and
tonic.

TRISTAN
Dude, we come here all the time.
Show some class. Sorry, Cheryl.

CHERYL
It's ok, and sir you know this is a
brewery right?

ALEX

Can you not brew Gin?

BRETT

How about two Growling Snakes for me and him on my tab.

CHERYL

Sounds good, I'll be right back..
toots.

Cheryl cuts Alex a look and walks away walks away.

ALEX

First you try and tell me how to sweep and now you're telling me how to drink. You have got a lot of nerve white belt.

BRETT

I just want you to try the Growling Snake. It's the special.

ALEX

Anyways back to what I was saying. This game has gone to shit. I have been fighting since before I can remember. Boxing, wrestling, jits you name it. Met a lot of people in my time, a lot of white belts, and even more so called masters. But things have changed.

TRISTAN

No offense man, but if you love fighting so much why are you coming to white belt classes 100 pounds overweight.

ALEX

I do take offense to that, and shit if you think fighting the sport and fighting the lifestyle are the same. Well man you don't know shit man.

JON

I mean isn't the goal still to win tournaments and get better. Look at Kevin, the guy still trains three times a day and even won a couple MMA fights back in his prime training nothing but jiu-jitsu.

ALEX

Last time I checked I ain't Kevin. Listen kid this may be your gym for a year or four or whatever, but life is long and you will always have a gym. If you let it dictate how you're gonna train, that's on you. So yeah I train when I want, and how I want. But fuck it, it's my life. Ain't nobody gotta live it but me.

TRISTAN

Yeah but you're kind of being a dick by just bullying the white belts.

Alex stands up and gets in Tristan's face.

ALEX

You want to say that to my face. I have seen guys like you come and go. You'll get some injury or have a kid and I will still be here doing me. I hate to break it to you, but the only reward this game has for you is some bad joints and a broken ego. Hell y'all should be appreciative I am still willing to help out and come work with you.

Cheryl arrives with the beers as Alex returns to his seat. Alex raises his glass.

ALEX (CONT'D)

Cheers to hipster beer and embracing the daily suck in life. Especially the extra wet suck of those men that drink this shit (Alex swirls his glass). You will do what you want [BURP]. But I am just going to let you know that this fighting game is long and painful, so stop being so damn stuck up about it. Why do I keep doing it? Hell what else do I got? A shitty job and some shitty car?

The men toast to appease Alex, but Brett is embarrassed. Alex makes him question the respect for rank he has, and further the reality of what a life in this sport may entail.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - MORNING

Brett is warming up in the gym area as Achilles cleans the mats. Brett is preparing for the Pan American championships which is now being advertised on all the walls. Kevin sits on his phone and watches from the side.

KEVIN

Achilles I was watching film from last night's practice, you're getting stuck in lasso too much. Have we not went over this?

ACHILLES

My bad coach, I was struggling to break Charlie's grip.

KEVIN

Did I ask you for excuses? So we have went over this, and yet you continue to disappoint?

ACHILLES

My bad coach. Can I go practice in the back now, the mats are clean?

KEVIN

Of course. Brett please start your escape sequences.

Brett steps on the mat and begins shrimping. Achilles puts away the mop and swiftly exits.

BRETT

Don't you think you're being a little tough on him?

KEVIN

I don't think much about how tough I am being. That said your escapes look better, maybe this time you won't get submitted huh.

BRETT

I mean not just to him, in general. Don't you want people to think you are a nice guy?

As Brett continues shrimping Kevin ponders the question as he tapes his fingers. He looks conflicted as he contemplates his public image.

KEVIN

Did you join this gym because you wanted me to like you or because you wanted to learn jiu-jitsu? You know being a champion is not easy. I push you competitors because I have seen what it takes. I don't ask you to do anything that I am not doing. Is that understood?

The two men stare at each other.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Alright, passing sequence two now.

Brett walks over to Kevin who lays down and begins doing passing drills.

BRETT

Listen I am not saying this as a student, but man to man. Eventually you have to leave a legacy right, you can't keep striving for the next gold forever. Eventually there's just this moment and the life that's played out. Hell, I joined the marines to be a war hero, but the times I remember most were in basic training, you know the down times. I think you're a great coach, but..

Kevin stands up knocking Brett over as he does.

KEVIN

If a bird flies south what can happen? Can it appreciate the flight and say "ok I am a happy bird?". No it goes south, or it freezes and dies. We all need to find our south, I don't pay much concern to the flight. Now you can come into my gym, my place of worship and teach me how to live my life? No, that's not right. You can go if you think you have this figured out. Or you can stay and train. I don't need philosophers and politicians on the mats, I need champions. And that's all I have to say about that, is that understood?

BRETT

Yes, coach.

The practice continues in silence.

ACT 3: BECOMING BLUEINT. BAR TABLE - NIGHT

Tristan and Brett sit at a bar together in their post practice sweats. Tristan is bruised up and heavily drinking.

TRISTAN
Man, that was brutal.

BRETT
I told you man it takes time, pre-tournament practices are another thing all together.

TRISTAN
Have you gotten a chance to roll with Corey yet?

BRETT
Who is Corey?

TRISTAN
Man you really are big time now, can't even remember the names of all us lowly white belts.

A GUY IN A BIKER JACKET walks by and bumps into Tristan.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
Watch it ass hole!

Guy in a biker jacket gives Tristan a dirty look.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)
What you going to do about it?

Biker guy takes a swing at Tristan hitting him clean in the face. Tristan falls out of his chair. BRETT then stands up and wraps the guy up from the side.

BRETT
Cool it man, he's drunk.

Biker guy starts flailing forcing Brett to take him down to the ground. A group of people come over at this point pulling Brett off the Biker Guy as they call the police.

BRETT (CONT'D)
Tristan, let's go.

TRISTAN

Fuck you.

TRISTAN stands up and storms out of the bar as JON arrives in a squad car. He comes in the bar and walks over to the man on the ground being held down by some employees. Brett walks outside to check on Tristan.

CUT TO: OUT
FRONT

BRETT

Hey man are you ok?

TRISTAN

You come out here to gloat?

BRETT

Not at all, I wanted to make sure you were ok that was a cheap shot.

TRISTAN

I talked to Sam she tells me you are taking some time apart, what's going on with you?

BRETT

What's going on with me? You just started a bar fight, what's going on with you.

TRISTAN

(lights a cigarette) I guess I just thought all those nights in the gym were worth a damn.

BRETT

They are, that was just a cheap shot.

TRISTAN

So are you going to throw away your marriage for some martial art that doesn't even work?

BRETT

My marriage is fine, and if you didn't notice jiu-jitsu just saved your ass.

TRISTAN

Ohhhh is this your big moment now. My hero, what do you want a fucking trophy?

BRETT

That's the difference between me and you. You don't listen. You always think that you know best, and if people don't conform to your world, well fuck em. Honestly I'm still shocked you didn't get yourself killed in Iraq.

Tristan drunkenly stumbles and points in Brett's sternum.

TRISTAN

(with a stutter) You and Kevin think you have it all figured out huh? Na, you're just some dude looking to inflate your ego. Some loser wanting to impress his dad and be the all-American man. You know I'm happy you met Kevin, at least someone finally told you how much of a spineless bitch you really are.

BRETT grabs his wrist.

TRISTAN (CONT'D)

What you gonna put me down now?

BRETT

You know I regret ever bringing you in. You are a self righteous prick, and a terrible drunk. I thought I could get the old Tristan, the guy that actually gave a damn back. But nah you're just a washed up ex-pat.

BRETT walks away.

TRISTAN

Yeah walk away! Just like you left us high and dry back in the service, fucking quitter. You hear that you are a fucking quitter Brett! That's what everyone says! Your dad, your wife, your squad hell who don't you fucking quit on!

INT. BRETT'S HOME, LIVING ROOM

Brett arrives home to an empty house. It is clear he has been sleeping on the couch as his gis hang all over the living room banister and the dining room table is littered with empty protein shakes.

He goes to the kitchen and finds a note from SAM "At a friend's". Brett crumples up the note and throws it in the trash next to his jiu-jitsu bag.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

Tristan stands at front desk with Kevin. Brett watches with a BEGINNER'S CLASS as they stretch out on the mat.

WHITE BELT 1
Isn't that your friend up there?

BRETT
Yeah he had a rough night.

WHITE BELT 1
What happened?

BRETT
Some idiot at the bar took a swing at him.

Kevin walks over to the mat as Tristan leaves the gym.

KEVIN
Class line up. It appears Tristan will no longer be joining us. As I said many come, many go. It's ok, we are all not destined for greatness. Let's bow in.

The class lines up and bows in as they begin to run.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Wait Brett, why are you running?
You brought a quitter in to my gym
please stand in the middle with me.

Brett walks to the center of the mat. As the class shoots him dirty looks.

WHITE BELT 2
Way to invite a quitter Brett.

WHITE BELT 3
How you gonna let your boy walk out like that?

BRETT
Hey about Tristan, I didn't know he was leaving.

KEVIN
It's ok, no problem.

BRETT

It's just he got in a fight last night and I think he was a little deterred that he got hit.

KEVIN

Do I look like a force field salesman? (to entire class) Class is this Challenger's Magic Academy?

CLASS

No Coach!

KEVIN

Well Brett, it appears I was not mistaken, I do not teach magic. I cannot make you immune to contact, I just teach you how to avoid it and to be the one delivering it. Everyone planking position!

The class gets in a planking position as Kevin and Brett stand in the middle watching. As Brett goes down to plank Kevin picks him back up, forcing him to watch.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Brett I want you to see what happens when we quit on one another. It makes everyone else work harder. We rely on each other as a team, as training partners. Your friend the force field salesman, he has broken the sacred trust we put in one another. So now we need to work harder.

Brett awkwardly watches next to Kevin, keeping quiet. He is quiet partially out of fear and partially out of embarrassment.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Alright everyone, get up. Let's work on self defense today. I don't want any of my soldiers getting hurt out there.

EXT. BRAZILIAN BEACH, 20 YEARS EARLIER - MORNING

YOUNG GRANDMASTER has YOUNG KEVIN in his closed guard on a rocky beach. They are in their dirty Gis as a few other questionable characters train beside them in a make shift outdoor gym. Young Kevin is a purple belt.

YOUNG GRANDMASTER

Kevin, eu admiro sua paixão, mas quero que você seja mais técnico com seu jiu-jitsu. Nem todas as batalhas são vencidas com fogo; às vezes, temos que vencer mentalmente antes de vencer fisicamente. **(En: Kevin I love your passion, but I need you to be more technical with your jiu-jitsu. Not every battle is won with fire, sometimes we need to win the mental before the physical.)**

YOUNG KEVIN

Sim, mestre. Não vou lhe desapontar. **(En: Yes master. I won't let you down.)**

YOUNG GRANDMASTER

Não vai me desapontar, mas você vai se desapontar. **(En: You won't let me down, only yourself.)**

Young Kevin tries to escape Youn Grandmaster's guard but is quickly swept and mounted.

YOUNG KEVIN

Eu deveria ter previsto isso. **(En: I should have seen that coming.)**

YOUNG GRANDMASTER

Não se desiluda. **(En: Don't be so hard on yourself.)**

Gunshots are heard in the distance as the two men quickly stand up.

YOUNG KEVIN

Odeio esta cidade, odeio esta gente. Quero estrangular a todos. Quando eu for mestre, meus alunos formarão um exercito. **(En: I hate this city, I hate these people. I want to choke them all. When I am master my students will be an army.)**

YOUNG GRANDMASTER

Um exército?! Kevin, eu lhe ensinei o jiu-jitsu para se proteger, não vá procurando a violência. Já há bastante violência neste mundo.

(MORE)

YOUNG GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

Lembre-se quando sua mãe trouxe você para mim; você odiava os valentões e a dor que eles tinham causado. (En: An army!? Kevin this is skill I have taught to protect yourself, don't go searching for violence. There is enough of that in the world. Remember when your mother brought you to me, you hated those bullies and the pain they brought you.)

YOUNG KEVIN

E eles chegariam a odiar ainda mais a dor que eu lhes causei. (En: And they would come to hate the pain I brought them even more.)

YOUNG GRANDMASTER

E a dor que eles ainda lhe causam agora...o que você tem para dizer sobre isso? Me prometa se você lograr a faixa preta, você vai se esquecer desta dor que leva consigo. (En: And the pain that they still bring you even now. What do you say about that? Promise me that if and when you become a black belt you will let go of this pain you hold on to?)

YOUNG KEVIN

Eu lhe prometo. (En: I promise.)

CUT TO:

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - AFTERNOON

The entire academy is in matching gis and sit on the main mat before a man in his 60s and Kevin. The elder man is in an all white gi with no patches and has a coral belt on. The class all matches perfectly in team gis and rash guards as they sit in belt order. Achilles holds a tape recorder as he stands in the back.

KEVIN

Class today we have a very special treat. My instructor from Brazil has flown in and will be teaching today, as well as through the duration of the week leading up to the Pan American championships.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

I expect you will give him all the respect you would give me, as he has taught me everything I know. He is also a legend of the sport and a former Brazilian champion and MMA competitor, so please know he is capable of beating anyone in here if he sees fit.

The class laughs.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Grandmaster Rivero, the floor is all yours.

GRANDMASTER

Thank you so much for the kind words. When I started the sport of jiu-jitsu, it was not a sport. We trained as we lived. It is beautiful to see men and women of all ages in here embracing that life, and growing it far beyond what we could have ever imagined. I am not here to sell you a DVD or tell you how to win a tournament, but perhaps to share with you some of what I have learned through my time training the art through many decades. Please feel free to ask me questions, and don't hesitate to ask for help. Let us begin.

The class goes on as Achilles walks around filming. Grandmaster helps various groups as they attempt the old school move he has taught. Kevin and Grandmaster walk to the cage as they sit and watch the class as Molly walks around helping.

KEVIN

Muito obrigado pela visita (**En: thanks again for coming**)

GRANDMASTER

O prazer é meu. Molly sera uma instrutora excelente. Quando você vai promovê-la. (**En: The pleasure is mine. Molly is going to be a great teacher, when do you plan on promoting her?**)

KEVIN

Bem, memo que ela seja uma boa instrutora, duvido que ela tenha uma mentalidade vencedora. A gente formou esta equipge para vencer, exatamente como voce me ensinou.
(En: Yes she has been a godsend, but I do not know if she has the winning mentality. This team and I were made to win just like you taught me.)

Grandmaster looks over class as a few of the newer white belts struggle to perform the move.

GRANDMASTER

Pois, talvez nem todos os alunos
(En: well, maybe not all the students)

The two men laugh

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

Você ainda esta competindo? **(En: are you still competing?)**

KEVIN

Estou, sim **(En: Yes)**

GRANDMASTER

Em adulto? **(En: In adult?)**

KEVIN

Claro, (Of course)

GRANDMASTER

(Joking tone) Maracuja da gaveta.
(En: You have not aged like fine wine)

KEVIN

Fale por você mesmo. **(En: Speak for yourself)**

The two men laugh again.

GRANDMASTER

Eu vou ficar, mas eu acho que voce nao deve competir em adulto. **(En: I will stay but I advise you not to compete in adult)**

KEVIN

Eu tenho que competir e vencer para mostrar os alunos. **(En: I have to win to show the students)**

GRANDMASTER

Your students know who you are, they see you everyday in here working. Não confunda sua percepção com seu ego. **(En: Don't confuse your perception with your ego).**

Grandmaster stands up and has the class once again gather around him.

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

This next move I learned in 1997, I do not think Kevin still uses it in his classes which is a shame. Please Molly come to the center so we can demonstrate.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - AFTERNOON

As the seminar wraps up Kevin and Grandmaster stand at the front of class with Molly. The class neatly lines up as a box of colored belts lays before the three instructors.

GRANDMASTER

Thank you everyone again for attending my class today. It was a great honor to be among you and share some of what I have learned through the years. Kevin has told me some of you have been particularly exceptional in your commitment to the sport, so I will now turn it over to him for some promotions.

Brett nervously jitters in anticipation that he may receive his coveted blue belt.

KEVIN

Today on this Saturday, we have not only the privilege of hosting my instructor but the honor of granting some long overdue promotions. First up we have a student who came to me about two years ago. I mean you should have seen this guy, pudgy and all bruised up.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)

He tells me coach I need to learn how to fight, my life depends on it. Listen I hear a lot of people saying a lot of crazy things, but your life? No way. But it's true. In his two years here he has brought in his colleagues and made jiu-jitsu a staple of our local law enforcement, of which I could not be more proud. White belts just remember it is all about consistency and embracing sucking a little less every day. Jon please come up and receive your blue belt.

Everyone claps and cheers as Jon walks up and shakes the black belts and Molly's hand. While shaking Grandmasters hand he bear hugs and picks him up out of pure joy. As he walks back in line he goes to the white belt line, before Charlie quickly pulls him up to the blue belt line.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Very well. Next up, ohhh this is a good one, very long over due. Back when I started jiu-jitsu there were not many females if I am being honest. The culture in Brazil regarding combat sports is different. So when Molly came to me nearly a decade ago, I did not know what I was going to do. I wanted to train strong females, to fight like I would hope my mother or sister might. Strong women, the backbone of a good society. So it is with great pleasure I honor another strong women with the advanced rank of purple belt. Adrianna please come up.

A teary Adrianna gives Kevin a big hug. She then goes onto a long embrace with Molly.

ADRIANNA

(to Molly) Thank you, I couldn't have done it without you.

MOLLY

(to Adrianna) I'm so proud of you, I know you are too cool to care but days like today make all the shitty days worth it.

Adrianna walks back into line.

KEVIN

Ok next up, a warrior. I do not give out many Brown Belts. Maybe five in the time I have been coaching here. It is the final milestone before you reach your black belt, and when you start to move from student to teacher. After his last performances I have no doubts he will be one of the most ferocious brown belts in the world, and is ready. My son I bestow upon you my old brown belt.

Achilles hands the camera to Molly before breaking down in tears as he goes to hug Kevin.

ACHILLES

Thank you dad, I won't let you down.

KEVIN

I know you won't. This world is ours for the taking.

Kevin ties the old tattered new brown belt on Achilles.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Alright that is all for today, no more tears back to work.

GRANDMASTER

Wait, one more. It has been a privilege for me to attend and watch the next generation of black belts grow. But I must say I have one key point to make, it is not over when you get to black belt. Jiu-jitsu is a life journey and even in our advanced years I would like to think that we could keep learning, keep pushing forward. With that I will honor one last student, Kevin. Please allow me to present you the 3rd degree on your black belt.

Class roars as Kevin stands stunned and perplexed. Grandmaster walks over to give him a third stripe on his black belt.

KEVIN

But I have not won the Pans yet?

GRANDMASTER

I have made my decision. Look at what you have built. This was just a small way to defend ourselves and you have grown a community. A conquest of a champion worthy of honoring.

The applause continues, audibly louder than the roars he got after winning his fight earlier on. As class ends and everyone begins to take pictures with the newly promoted students Grandmaster notices Brett in the corner sulking and walking towards the locker room. Grandmaster approaches Brett.

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

Brett, is it?

Brett looks up.

BRETT

Yeah, do you go by Grandmaster or Professor Rivera?

GRANDMASTER

No that would be ridiculous, call me Pedro. Do you not wish to celebrate with your friends?

BRETT

Yeah I will at the bar later, I am just packing up so I have time.

GRANDMASTER

Do not rush this moment, there are only so many belt promotions in life.

Brett looks at Grandmaster knowing that he senses his frustration, and hearing his advice beyond the moment.

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

I will see you at the bar later though, yes?

BRETT

You drink?

GRANDMASTER

Of course, do I look like a man that does not enjoy a good time? Why do you think I had to learn jiu-jitsu?

The two men laugh.

INT. BAR TABLE - NIGHT

Grandmaster, Jon, Shelly (Jon's wife), Charlie, Adrianna, Molly and Brett sit at a table as they celebrate Adrianna and Jon's promotion.

BRETT

So are you going to still train with me now that you're a blue belt?

JON

I think I will find time to deal with the peasant class.

BRETT

How did you know you were ready to be a blue belt? Was it because you won the last tournament?

JON

Honestly I didn't. Kevin just always seems to know when you are ready. I think I started winning more of my rolls in practice and hell I am down 20 pounds in the two years since I started so that has to count for something.

ADRIANNA

Well let's not get too ahead of ourselves, we do take it easy on you. Hey Brett where is Sam at, I was hoping I might see her tonight?

BRETT

Oh she's busy. So you don't think Jon has become a better man through all this?

GRANDMASTER

Waste no more time arguing about what a good man should be. Just be one. Where is Kevin and Achilles at? Will they not be celebrating their big promotions?

MOLLY

I don't think either of them drink.

GRANDMASTER

How much Kevin has changed! Please Molly as you progress into a black belt and leader, remember that we must drink, if nothing else but to commemorate the good times and to forget the bad.

MOLLY

Leader of the academy? I'm just a chef trying to help out here and there.

GRANDMASTER

Oh hush, you are so much more. You come in and deal with Kevin and his madness. I trained with that man for many years, I know how he can be. It is a marvel he has found a student such as yourself, tell me why do you stay?

MOLLY

Grandmaster I am sworn by blood to protect the academy.

Everyone laughs.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Well to be honest when I come into Challenger's I know that I am in control. That if I see something I don't like I can change it. Is Kevin ideal, no but at least he respects me and cares about my progress. And plus, how can I quit now knowing I am so close to reaching the magic powers of black belt?

GRANDMASTER

I am sorry to tell you there are no magic powers, at least not at black belt. It is my theory Kevin talks so much to let his bones heal between rounds, what magic man would need such a practice.

The group awkwardly laugh realizing no one besides Grandmaster could ever get away with such a jab.

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

But that's him, that's his life. As I aged I learned to let go of the need to win, and embrace the sport for what it truly is. We must all choose our path, in jiu-jitsu. It wants to take and consume, but will we let it?

Grandmaster stares at BRETT.

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)

One final word. Please if my life comes to nothing else, let this school remain as a legacy of what I stood for. Persistence, loyalty, honor and a respect for the art and each other. Whether it be on or off the mats. (Raises glass) Oss!

TABLE

OSS!

The group continues with their night, enjoying Grandmaster and showing the camaraderie that makes jiu-jitsu so appealing.

I/E. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

After the bar Molly has driven to the academy as she walks up to the door Kevin sits on the couch in the waiting area watching an old jiu-jitsu match. Molly seems to be a little drunk as she pounds on the door.

MOLLY

Kevinnnnn! Open up.

Kevin walks over to the door and opens it.

KEVIN

Molly what are you doing here so late?

MOLLY

Why didn't you promote me today? You know damn well I am ready.

KEVIN

Have you been drinking?

MOLLY

Of course. Just like you should have been.

(MORE)

MOLLY (CONT'D)

But that's not the point. Do I not show up here every day? For a decade did I not put up with your academy of sex crazed dogs, and help to build a safe community that women could actually come and train in. Do I not compete and win, constantly?

KEVIN

Of course you do.

MOLLY

Then why not promote me? Huh, what else do I have to do to prove to you that I am worthy of a black belt?

KEVIN

I expected better from you, then to come here and question my decision.

MOLLY

I have gone years without questioning. Trusting in you, and to what end? Huh? So that I can have the privilege of covering for you? So that I can be the one who sells your bullshit, hell you barely pay me pennies for the hours I put in here. And for what?

KEVIN

I don't know Molly, you tell me. If I am such a bad guy why haven't you left me? Oh, did Molly not her black belt? Uhhh a shame. How many weep for the tragedy that is. You know I had a plan. I wanted you to have the opportunity to win this weekend. To show you are the best female brown belt in the world. Once I promote you, you can never go back. Did you not think about this?

MOLLY

Of course, you don't think I thought about this every day the last four years? At every shitty shift I had to work to cover the costs of competing across the world, the sacrifices I made to be the athlete I am today.

(MORE)

MOLLY (CONT'D)

You don't think I thought about this? But it's not about that, it's about you and me. Why don't you promote me. Is it because of the others? Because they left?

KEVIN

The others were cowards. Dogs compared to the lion I see in you.

MOLLY

Then why did you promote them to black belt?

KEVIN

Because I was naïve. Because I thought they were ready. A mistake I will never make again. A black belt is a black belt for life, that is my honor to bestow. A privilege of the select few. I wasted that privilege before and I will not do it again. If you cannot wait, then you can go. I would rather die than promote another black belt and see them leave.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT - NIGHT

Achilles is watching a Youtube video of one of Kevin's old fights on the TV next to main mat as the advanced class gets ready for one of their final practices before the Pan-Am Championship.

ACHILLES

Damn coach when you going to teach us that? You wiped the field clean back in 08'

KEVIN

If you watch closely this weekend you shall see everything I did back then and then some. Class line up on the wall.

The class of students line up against a wall before Kevin who paces like a general before a final battle.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

To help prepare Achilles for the Pan American Championships coming up we are going to do a line drill for him.

(MORE)

KEVIN (CONT'D)
I will call the guard and you will
pass him or be swept. Molly please
begin in Achilles 's X guard.

Achilles and Molly begin rolling as everyone watches in line.

BRETT
So we just watch and wait for
Achilles to have his way with us?

MIKE
Yep

BRETT
But what about the rest of us
competing?

MIKE
Like you actually have a chance of
winning.

The timer rings a few times as people cycle through. We cut
back to Kevin engaged in a stalemate with Achilles.

KEVIN
You are becoming tired.

ACHILLES
No

KEVIN
Alex please make sure this round is
recorded.

Alex starts recording on his phone from the corner of the
room.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
I let you sleep here, work here,
and this is all you got. Failure?
Weakness?

Kevin passes his guard but keeps attacking

MOLLY
Alright Kevin you got him, you made
your point.

KEVIN
Do I teach my competitors to give
up, to quit when things get hard?
If you aren't here to win, why do I
let you compete under my name.

Achilles does an explosive move to roll Kevin off mount but get caught in a triangle choke during the transition.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Emotion will get you nowhere.

Achilles taps.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Molly back in.

ACHILLES
Dad I think I tweaked my neck.

Kevin looks at Achilles.

KEVIN
Molly did I stutter.

Molly hesitantly reenters and is going easy

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Molly please this is no time to
feed his weakness.

MOLLY
You know what I'm done.

Molly storms out of the gym as Kevin follows behind.

KEVIN
Pushup position everyone until I
get back!

CUT TO: PARKING
LOT

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Molly come back I can't have you
setting a bad example to the class.

MOLLY
Fuck off Kevin!

KEVIN
You have to see that this is all
for the good of Achilles. If he
wants to be a world champion it
won't be easy. I know what it
takes, I have been to the top, I
know what others will do.

MOLLY

He doesn't know what he wants! You create this self-fulfilling prophecy of pain and grind which has been passed down for generations, whose to say it is the right way.

KEVIN

I teach him the way I was taught, the way of a champion!

MOLLY

You go around speaking in metaphors and soliloquies thinking you have it all figured out, I'm here to tell you after ten years of training with you that you know less about jiu-jitsu than most of the white belts in there. It's all an act I see right through your bull shit.

KEVIN

Go cool off and come back when you're ready to be part of this team. If you don't think you need me, you can go! Who in this state going to teach you better than me?

Kevin starts to walk back inside.

MOLLY

Don't forget I am every bit as decorated in competition as you are!

Kevin shutting the door mutters under his breath:

KEVIN

Let me know when people start caring about female world champs.

The door closes.

INT. MOLLY'S CAR - NIGHT

Molly sits in the front seat of her car in her gi blasting heavy metal music as she screams in contempt for Kevin. A tap is heard on her car window. She rolls down the window and lowers the music.

MOLLY

You come to convince me to go back in? Because I'm not going. I have given Kevin enough second chances.

GRANDMASTER

I know you must go now. But before you do I want you to have something.

Grandmaster hands her a black belt.

MOLLY

I can't take this.

GRANDMASTER

Please, you are as deserving a student as any.

MOLLY

I don't know what to say.

GRANDMASTER

Then say nothing, not every promotion requires a big speech.

GRANDMASTER WALKS AWAY AS MOLLY SITS IN THE CAR STARING AT THE OBJECT INDICATING OVER TEN YEARS OF GRUELING WORK NOW BESTOWED UPON HER. ON THE BELT THE FOLLOWING IS INSCRIBED MOLLY "NO QUIT" LEE. AS GRANDMASTER CONTINUES TO WALK WE SEE HIM ENTER THE BACK ROOMS OF THE COMPETITORS. A CROSS BETWEEN A COLLEGE DORM AND A BARRACKS, WITH MATTRESSES AND TRASH SCATTERED ON THE GROUND. AS HE WALKS AROUND AND SEE'S STEROID NEEDLES IN THE TRASH CAN. HE IS DISAPPOINTED AT THE REALITY HIS PUPIL'S GYM HAS BECOME. AS CLASS WRAPS UP HE WATCHES ALL THE STUDENTS LEAVE THE GYM. STARING DOWN ACHILLES.

INT. CHALLENGER'S MAIN MAT -DAY

Kevin is training with Achilles during the last day before the Pan-American championship. These are generally the most grueling practices and it is limited to competitors only. It is non-stop rounds for an hour. We see in the center of the mat Kevin rotating through a group of students that he calls out. Brett arrives late to class and as he bows into the mat Kevin stops the room of ROLLING MEN.

KEVIN

Everyone stop!

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Brett this is the final day before
the biggest competition of your
life why are you late?

BRETT
I am sorry I was just helping my
mother in law out. She had an
emergency.

KEVIN
An emergency! Is she dying?

BRETT
No professor.

KEVIN
Ok well I don't see what could be
so important that you were ok
sacrificing the commitment you have
to your team. 200 crunches and find
a partner. Everyone we will keep
rolling but the timer will not
start until Brett and his emergency
are ready.

The class keeps rolling as Achilles mounts Kevin.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
Achilles I need you to push me this
isn't just another local
tournament.

Achilles takes Kevin's back. Kevin is obviously toying with
him as he easily escapes.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
You know my opponents are not going
to be this easy. Stand up and this
time do it right.

As they stand up Achilles immediately makes a diving lunge at
Kevin. Grabbing his one leg in the air.

KEVIN (CONT'D)
You ain't gonna take me down, no
chance.

As Kevin hops on one leg Achilles snaps down, causing Kevin's
standing leg to buck. Kevin winces in pain.

ACHILLES
Are you ok?

KEVIN

I am fine! Keep going. Brett are you done yet?

Achilles is now hesitantly attacking as Brett rejoins the class.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Don't take it easy on me boy.

Achilles turns up the intensity. Kevin's right leg is physically shaking as he intensely grabs Achilles's neck and goes on to choke him. As he attempts to stand up he collapses as the buzzer rings.

ACHILLES

Coach are you ok? Can I get you ice.

KEVIN

I am fine it's just a sprain, Brett get over here I don't need two legs to beat you after.

ACHILLES

Coach I am so sorry.

Brett hesitantly walks over. As Kevin remains seated in the center mat.

KEVIN

Alright Brett here is your chance to beat up on the old man.

BRETT

Coach I really think you should see someone.

KEVIN

Did I ask what you thought, now come on.

As Brett and Kevin begins to roll the pain becomes unbearable forcing Kevin to slam the mat and walk off in disgust. Achilles tries to help him limp off but he pushes him away instructing him to keep training.

INT. PAN AMERICAN CHAMPIONSHIPS (ROAMING SHOT) - DAY

Wide shot of a huge audience and mix of gyms from around the world entering the Pan American championship.

As Brett and Jon walk around the early matches they see all different types of jiu-jitsu they have never seen before (include footage of real black belt match).

BRETT

Do you think we are ready for this?

JON

In Kevin we trust right?

INT. PAN-AM STADIUM, MAT 2 - DAY

The scoreboard reads "Brown Belt Adult Finals **Time:** 2:01 Red-3 Blue-2" with Achilles on top of his OPPONENT in his half guard. Kevin is coaching from behind a barrier on the mats, as the rest of the gym watches from the rafters.

KEVIN

Achilles I need you to pass, you are up one, more pressure. Smash the knee shield and pass Achilles .

Achilles makes two explosive attempts to get passed his opponent, but gets knocked off balance.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Achilles one minute left, this is the championship round. Don't quit! Don't quit!

Achilles's opponent moves to X-guard and reaps Achilles's knee (a banned position in tournaments) causing Achilles's knee to let out a loud "pop!".

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ref he is reaping. Ref! Ref! Ref! Penalty.

Achilles is now physically shaking to stand and gets swept with 10 seconds left.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Ref! He reaped. Ref!

Kevin jumps over the barrier and runs up to the scores table.

OFFICIAL

Sir, you must stand back.

The match ends as the buzzer rings. Achilles and his opponent stand up and the Ref raises Achilles's opponent's hand, declaring him the Pan American champion. Kevin runs onto the mat to carry off the injured Achilles.

KEVIN

This boy worked his ass off ref and you are going to call this bullshit!

REF

Sir, get back to the designated area or you and your entire team will be disqualified.

KEVIN

You should be ashamed of yourself, you dishonor the sport and your family.

CUTS TO BRETT
AND MIKE IN THE
RAFTERS.

BRETT

Man Kevin is really leaning into that guy.

MIKE

Achilles spends every moment of his life getting ready for this, Kevin cares as much about that boy's success as he does his own.

BRETT

Yeah, but his opponent sacrificed to get here too.

MIKE

You're missing the point.

Brett stares off watching the other matches, looking put off.

INT. PAN-AM STADIUM, REGISTRATION DESK - DAY

Kevin stands in front of a registration desk with his knee brace on.

STAFF MEMBER

Kevin Nogra, lightweight Black belt male?

KEVIN

Yes that's right.

STAFF MEMBER

I don't see you on the list?

KEVIN

Please check again I am a former world champion, entry should be guaranteed.

STAFF MEMBER

Oh my apologies, yes I will get you right in. Here is your wrist band.

KEVIN

Thank you.

Grandmaster approaches Kevin as he walks away from the desk. The two men walk as Kevin heads to the warm-up area.

GRANDMASTER

You are competing? I thought we discussed this and you withdrew.

KEVIN

Yes. But after seeing what happened to my boy, I have to.

GRANDMASTER

But you are hurt? Are you sure you are doing it for the boy?

KEVIN

I'll be fine. It's nothing I haven't dealt with before.

GRANDMASTER

You aren't a young warrior anymore, it's time to fight smart. You already have the medals, what else do you need from this.

KEVIN

I have to get it back, this year is my last shot, my best shot. I am ready professor.

GRANDMASTER

Within desire is only desire.

KEVIN

Apenas me treine desta última vez.
(En: coach me this one last time)

GRANDMASTER

Não tenho gosto por vinho estragado
(en: I have no taste for spoiled wine)

The two men stare at each other knowing this will be their final encounter.

GRANDMASTER (CONT'D)
You were always my greatest student, but my biggest disappointment.

INT. PAN-AM STADIUM, MAT 3 - DAY

Kevin and his OPPONENT are warming up besides the judges table. Kevin is whispering to himself and slapping his face to hype himself up.

ZOOM IN ON KEVIN AS THE STADIUM GOES QUIET.

KEVIN
All your life is for this moment right here... Everybody want to be a champion but only one can be... Am I the bad guy? Maybe? Who gets to win, the bad guy? I don't know. Who else gonna look out for me? Who else gonna push these kids? Can't let them see me lose. No chance.

BACK TO PAN OUT WHERE THE TENSION OF A MATCH ABOUT TO START IS UNDER WAY.

REF
Competitor 1 come in.

Kevin runs into the circle as his young cult of followers cheer.

REF (CONT'D)
Competitor 2 come in.

Kevin's Opponent, a much younger man in his early 20s, runs in.

REF (CONT'D)
Shake hands. Bombatch!

Things go quiet as Kevin and his opponent tie up and start jockeying for position. Kevin is almost able to take his opponent down but can't explode up off his bad knee. He continues up an advantage as neither man can take the other down. Kevin finally goes for a Judo throw but blows his knee out while executing it. Now up 5 for a take down and side control, Kevin struggles to stay on top of his opponent.

With 30 seconds left his opponent is able to get him to lean on his bad knee and take Kevin back. He refuses to tap but loses on decision. He cannot stand up after the match and Achilles and another student have to carry him off the mat as he curses at the ref in Portuguese.

INT. PAN-AM STADIUM, LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Brett walks up to Kevin who is alone in the locker room after his match. No one wants to talk to the defeated former champion as he sits with his head in his hands in the dimly lit room.

BRETT

Hey professor, I just want you to know-

KEVIN

Enough

Kevin proceeds to take off his black belt.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Why do we fail?

BRETT

You're not a failure

KEVIN

We fail because we are weak. We fail because we accept our fate and all that goes with it. I accepted defeat today. Allowed my body to dictate what my mind would do. Six years ago that boy would have had no chance. No chance, I tell you.

Kevin goes on packing his bag as Brett walks over to sit next to him.

BRETT

You're a champion just for getting out there. For putting it all on the line in front of your friends and family, despite injury and age. Failure is a gift, you told me that. Your students aren't going to leave you because of one loss.

KEVIN

I don't need your excuses, excuses are the poison which fuel failure.

KEVIN LOOKS UP AND THE AUDIENCE SEES HIS FACE. COVERED IN SCARS AND SWOLLEN EARS, THE RAW FACE OF A LIFE LONG MARTIAL ARTIST.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

A champion is carved in stone. We break away the stone of insecurity and forge a benevolent statue for thousands to behold. Why do you think people train under me? Because I was a champion. Because I know what it takes to win. I strip away the fear and create a life worth living, the life of a champion. Life is suffering, this sport is suffering, sacrifice and victory are our salvation Brett. Excellence is our only freedom.

The two men look at each other as Kevin stands up.

BRETT

That's not why I train. I never was the best athlete, not the worst. But certainly not the best. So why do I do it. To win? To let off some steam? Maybe. I would like to think after all these years though my real reason was all of you. The community, the friendships you make and the 6 AM wars, win or lose.

KEVIN

Did I ask you why you train? You are here aren't you? You are going to compete to prove yourself tonight, and chip away the mentality of a loser.

Starts tapping Brett on the shoulder.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Chip, Chip, Chip

BRETT

I train to feel alive. To get away from the monotonous existence, the bullshit. Not to win, but to feel something. We aren't here to win golds Kevin, we are here because here is all we got.

KEVIN

Life is bullshit, everything is bullshit! Have I taught you nothing? Your complacency is your limitation, your failure holding you back. Jiu-jitsu is not for everyone, if you want to pretend we live in a world where it is you can go ahead and do so.

BRETT

I thought failure was a gift?

Kevin stands up and puts himself together, tying his belt.

KEVIN

That's just what losers tell themselves to justify defeat. I will see you on Mat 1, yeah? Or are you going to let defeat conquer your soul once more. I don't care that choice is on you.

Kevin walks away as Brett sits on the bench reflecting on his journey. He no longer feels pre-competition jitters only remorse. He questions the values which he has endorsed, and why he ever looked to Kevin for validation.

EXT. SAM'S MOM'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Brett arrives to Sam's mother's house still in his Gi. He knocks on the door. Sam's mother answers.

SAM'S MOM

Oh my goodness. Sam!! There is a strange man in a karate uniform at our door!

Sam runs to the door.

SAM

Brett what are you doing here?

BRETT

Sam, I'm sorry.

Sam doesn't look up.

SAM

It's late and my mom just took her medicine, can we talk tomorrow?

BRETT

I have been a real dick. And worse, I thought I was righteous for being one. Look, I realize what I said was wrong. But you have to know that I didn't join jiu-jitsu to get away from you, or the normalcy of our life. That wasn't fair.

SAM

No it wasn't.

BRETT

This marriage, this life, it's all I wanted. I am never going to sacrifice it again, not for anyone. And especially not for some guy promising me a belt. Sam you have to trust me I'm not willing to lose this. I didn't even compete today, I will quit tomorrow if you want me to.

SAM

I don't want you to quit for me. I never wanted you to quit, or give up something that makes you happy, I just wanted you to stop using it to run away from what you are actually feeling.

Brett leans in to hug Sam.

BRETT

I'm so sorry. I just wanted to make you proud, to make everyone and anyone proud. I thought that quitting and losing defined me, but that ain't it. I just wanted to be a man someone would be happy to call their dad.

Sam pulls back and stares at Brett before closing the door. We are unsure if his repentance is enough. He sits alone on the stoop, contemplating the emotional and physical toll of the sport he once loved.

I/E. GYM 1,2, AND 3 - AFTERNOON

Brett stands outside of another jiu-jitsu gym with his bag in hand. As he nervously exhales and walks into the gym.

FRONT DESK GIRL
Can I help you?

BRETT
Yeah I was hoping to try out a
class?

We get a montage of multiple first classes Brett goes on to try as he tries a mix of different gyms. Each are uniquely flawed to him.

GYM 1

As Brett is in line for class he looks around and there are only 3 other white belts in class and 1 brown belt teaching.

BRETT
Is this it?

STUDENT
Yeah we keep a tight environment.

GYM 2

Brett is walking around the gym which is a combination weight room, MMA gym, yoga studio. He is led by an OUT OF SHAPE MAN in a gi top, black belt, and jeans.

OUT OF SHAPE MAN
At Pride MMA we only offer the best
in class Jiu Jitsu, Yoga, Boxing,
Akido, and Catch Wrestling. If it
is used in combat, we teach it.
This studio is where legends are
made.

Brett sees a young boy get knocked out in the ring they are walking past.

OUT OF SHAPE MAN (CONT'D)
Get up Lou this isn't nap time!
Also for every member you refer
it's a free month for you, so
please get all your friends in
here.

GYM 3

Brett sits in a circle before class as THE OLD INSTRUCTOR of the class (an older black belt) leads them in a prayer like opening.

THE OLD INSTRUCTOR

Class today I am going to open with Colossians 3:23 "Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men" we train, and we compete, and we live to be closer to god. Please Brett stand with us in the battle of the righteous path, STAND BRETT.

Class chants: STAND! STAND! STAND!

We see Brett in all three situations look kind of turned off. As he walks out of Gym 3 and waves to the old instructor he gets an alert on his phone. He see's the name Kevin with the message: "Why weren't you in class this week". He stares at his phone for a moment before throwing it back into his bag.

INT. RESTAURANT TABLE - NIGHT

San and Brett sit at a table together at a casual restaurant.

BRETT

Thanks again for agreeing to meet with me.

SAM

Thanks again for showing up without your pajamas on.

BRETT

I think I am going to quit Challengers, and jiu-jitsu all together.

Sam gives Brett a sharp look.

SAM

Brett I already told you, do whatever you want. Are we really going to spend another dinner talking about jiu-jitsu?

BRETT

No, that is the last of it. I just wanted you to know I am quitting. I don't need it anymore, and I can't see myself going back to Kevin or any other gym for that matter.

SAM

Well, while I appreciate the thought, I do hope you keep up with it. Despite your obsession, it did make you happy. You can lie and say it didn't, but I know it did.

Brett stares at Sam knowing she is right, but in shock she would encourage the habit that was at the center of their tension.

BRETT

You know I didn't join because I wanted to replace you, or the life we built. I joined because I wanted it to mean something.

SAM

And I want you to know that I didn't walk away because you were more passionate about jiu-jitsu than our relationship. I left because you couldn't acknowledge it. Because you took what you had for granted.

BRETT

I know, I was wrong. Can you find a way to give me another chance?

SAM

I don't know, but I can try.

The two continue to have diner. It appears the relationship has not fractured beyond repair. Brett realizes their relationship's struggles were never the sport's fault but rather his own. His pride and willingness to take other's for granted was independent of what jiu-jitsu brought into his life.

I/E. CHALLENGER'S - DUSK

Brett, Charlie, and Jon are in their normal parking spaces outside of Challenger's. As Brett tells the two something they hug and take small jab at each other, laughing and promising to stay in touch. Brett walks inside to see Kevin at the front of a class about to start.

KEVIN TOWERS IN FRONT OF COMPETITION CLASS WITH DARK LIGHTING
AND AN OLD TETHERED BLACK BELT ON.

KEVIN

I find myself today a shell of my
former self. From 2007 to 2010
there was no man out there who
could beat me. No man was winning
as much as me. We train to compete
and we compete to win. If we ain't
winning what are we.

Kevin stares at Brett as he walks in the front door.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

You know some people. Some people
they take and they take. Me, I
don't got nothing left. I try and
give everything to the sport I
love. What is it going to give back
to me? Huh? Who do we got other
than the man looking back at us in
the mirror.

Kevin takes off his belt and hangs it on the cage as he
leaves the mat.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Class warm up.

Kevin walks over to Brett.

KEVIN (CONT'D)

Finally decided to come in and
quit? I always wondered what virtue
would fail with you, it appears it
is loyalty.

BRETT

I just wanted to thank you, for the
time I spent here. It taught me a
lot, for better or worse.

KEVIN

I don't want you going around
telling others I taught you
anything. As far as you are
concerned you have no endorsement
from the Challenger's gym. You have
no belt from this academy.

Kevin stares at Brett. The student who so desperately tried
to win his approval and fit in, but who now could care less.
Brett places his white belt on the counter.

INT. MOLLY'S GYM - NIGHT

Jazz music plays at MOLLY's new gym. The gym is packed with a diverse group of students (some new, some from Challenger's). This gym has a much less militaristic feel to it. The mats are white and the walls are decorated with art and modern TVs streaming fights. BRETT stands outside the gym just as he once did at Challenger's entering for the first time. BRETT walks in. MOLLY sits at the front desk.

MOLLY

Well, well, well if it isn't my
favorite soldier back at it again.

BRETT

Hey Molly! Man this place is
awesome. I can't believe it used to
be a laundry mat.

MOLLY

Best of all it permanently smells
like week old detergent.

The two laugh.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

You know I have to warn you, if
you're here to find some sort of
validation for your shortcomings
you are better off staying at
Kevin's.

BRETT

No I know, to be fair I am not sure
that guy really had what he was
selling.

MOLLY

Alright well what are you waiting
for, class starts in five.

BRETT

Yes, professor.

MOLLY

Oh stop, call me Molly.

The two stare at each other knowing this time it will be
different.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Oh, by the way it's policy I ask
every new student why they are
starting to train here?

BRETT

Don't ask me why I started to
train, ask me why I keep coming.

BRETT walks to the matted area, shocked to see SAM sitting in the gym. He goes over to her only to be grabbed by Molly and pulled onto the mats as she walks to the front of the class. He turns around to apologize to SAM who gestures for him to go in.

MOLLY

Alright class bring it in!

Everyone lines up in belt order left to right. This is different from KEVIN's where Brown belt's would stand in their own line closer to the front.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Thank you so much for joining me today. As we start this new adventure together I would like to kick off with a bit of exciting news. Today we have a promotion. For over a year and a half now I have got to work with this student at my old gym and I am extremely proud of his commitment and progress, and more importantly his mental growth as an athlete. Brett please come up and get your blue belt.

The class roars as Brett walks up to give Molly a big hug, he may even be tearing up a little as he looks around at SAM and his teammates.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Brett this is your moment would you like to say anything, these new white belts need to know what they are in for after all.

BRETT

I don't know what to say really. I didn't expect this, not today. Well, you know when I walked into my first class, I didn't know what to expect really. You get caught in these loops, these endless marches, anyways all I knew is that I wanted out of it. A new sense of purpose in life.

Looks around crowd and specifically SAM.

BRETT (CONT'D)

And then I thought I wanted to be a black belt. The guy who breaks up a bar fight, the guy that their friends are jealous of. That wins all the medals, and has thee movie made about him. But you get your ass kicked enough times and you realize you ain't shit. So now I stand here and I have come to terms with it. With the loop, that damn forsaken beautiful loop. That what we are is what we are, and each day is a battle we can win.

BRETT stares at SAM.

BRETT (CONT'D)

But it's ok as long as your working towards something, and not wasting it you know? Anyways that's all I got. Train to be blue in this sport and in life, and enjoy the journey.

BRETT bows as he walks back to line with a roaring applause. MOLLY now stands alone at the front of class. The screen cuts to a side by side shot of her and KEVIN as she starts class.

MOLLY

You know I had a coach once tell me there are two types of people in this world. Those that train jiu-jitsu and those who do not. But to me it's not about if you train, but how and why you train. What keeps you coming back.

KEVIN's face fades away as Molly is now full screen at the front of a class attended by her students.

MOLLY (CONT'D)

Let us bow in. OSSSSSS

FADE TO BLACK.

FIN