

INT. STAMFORD ATHLETIC CLUB - BASKETBALL COURT- MID AFTERNOON

Players have stopped arguing and are resuming the game. Rome takes the ball, shot fakes, passes to Lance, who passes to Nick. Nick drives in, spots EJ down low and passes to him. EJ goes for the shot, misses, but Maddox gets the rebound and puts it back in.

ROME

That's game. Good job, guys.

Rome walks to the bleachers as Tony and Maddox bump fists.

NICK

Who's got winner?

MADDOX

Give us a break, man. Next game in 15.

NICK

Alright. Let the losers play.

TONY

Shut the fuck up.

The remaining players, and the ones who have just lost, set up at half court and begin to play. Rome, Maddox, Nick, EJ, Lance, and Benny sit on the bleachers, drinking their water and talking amongst themselves.

The gym doors bang open and ANTOINE MITCHELL, 13, rushes in excitedly.

MADDOX

What's up, my man?

Ant and Maddox HIGH-FIVE.

ANT

(to Rome)

You never told me you were back in town! Why didn't you call me?

ROME

Does your mom know you're here?

ANT

(puffing out his chest)

I'm a man. I do what I want.

ROME

So, she knows you're here.

ANT

Yeah. (grins) You know, just because I don't need you to babysit me anymore doesn't mean we can't hang out...

ROME

My bad, Ant. I've been laying low for the last week. Just staying indoors and stuff.

BENNY

Yeah, he's been in bed, pining over Rosalie Capezzo all week.

ROME

Benny. Mind your own business.

ANT

Seriously? Over a girl?

MADDOX

(leaning forward to Ant)

Are Palmer and Adriana fighting? I haven't seen her around at all.

ANT

(shrugging)

I dunno. The whole prom thing seems to be bugging her I guess. Oh, I almost forgot.

(to Benny)

Adriana wants to know if you'll take her to prom.

BENNY

What?

ANT

(hesitantly)

Yeah... she said you guys are in the same math class. And she thinks you're cute. (wrinkles his nose) I dunno.

ROME

Just take her, Benny.

BENNY

I mean, I wasn't going to prom... but... sure. I guess. Do I have to ask her or what?

ANT

Nah, I'll tell her for you. She'll probably go over the details and stuff with you later.

BENNY

(Unenthusiastically)

Great.

ANT

(turning back to Rome)

I didn't think you were the lovey-dovey type!

LANCE

Yeah. It's pretty sad actually.

ROME

Shut up.

BENNY

Don't be mad, because it's the truth. You have this weird obsession with Rose and you're not even doing anything to stop it.

ANT

(pointing to the door)

I forgot I just saw her best friend outside.

MADDOX

(sitting up straight)

Sabrina? Outside?

(nonchalantly stretches)

I'm gonna go to the bathroom.

NICK

Please. We all know you and she bone. Stop acting like it's some big secret.

MADDOX

No, we don't. (pause, then laughing) Who am I kidding?

Maddox mimes a spanking motion and all the boys start to laugh except for Rome, who sits on the bleachers and looks sulky.

MADDOX

(to Rome, very serious)

Look dude, it's one thing to mess with a fine girl and all, but it's another to get all twisted because of it. You got to get over it and find something else.

(heads towards the door)

And with that said, I'm out. Benny, you can play for me. I gotta go work out a different part of my body.

Maddox exits.

ANT

Maddox and Sabrine go out?

EJ

No. She wishes.

LANCE

HA! He wishes.

EJ

Maddox is a confirmed bachelor, man. Always has been, always will be.

LANCE

Times change. You saw him just now, didn't you?

NICK

True that. I never thought I'd see Maddox actually get excited to see a girl he'd already gotten with.

ANT

I can't wait to have a girlfriend.

EJ

Wrong, my friend. You don't want a girlfriend.
Trust me on that.

ROME

(annoyed)

Just because you've never found someone who loves
you, other than your mother, doesn't mean having a
girlfriend is bad.

EJ

Rome, you sad little romantic!

(to Ant)

Take a good look and tell me which one of us you'd
rather be. Happy and horny me? ...

(points to Rome)

Or a pussy-whipped wimp?

ANT

(frowning)

Well...

BENNY

Ignore him, Ant. Just because Rome is looking
particularly pathetic right now doesn't mean he
won't be happier in the long run.

ROME

(sarcastically)

Thanks, Benny.

EJ

Please. I can have anyone I want, at any time.
That's how I like it.

LANCE

Trust me when I say, he's not lying.

ROME

And you'll end up, every night for the rest of your
life, going home to an empty house.

ANT

I'd rather not have an empty house.

NICK

(yelling to the players on the court)

Travel!

EJ

My house will never be empty. It will have a different girl in it every week. I will never be bored.

BENNY

Yeah, you will. Bored and lonely.

LANCE

Do you ever have an opinion that didn't come from Rome? What are you, his echo?

BENNY

I think I could say the same thing for you and EJ, asshole.

INT. STAMFORD ATHLETIC CLUB - FOYER - CONTINUOUS

There is a desk with an ATTENDANT standing behind it in the far corner, a seating area with plush COUCHES and CHAIRS in front of it. The doors to the basketball court are directly ahead, across from the entrance doors. There is a dimly lit CASE OF TROPHIES on the left side of the room.

SABRINE GRAY, 21, a petite, curvaceous girl, is standing with her back to the basketball court, partially obscured from the attendant at the desk.

Maddox enters from the basketball court, his face lighting up when he spots her. He composes his face and sneaks up behind her, wrapping his arms around her slender waist. She squeaks in fake alarm before turning to face him, still enveloped in his arms.

SABRINE

Maddox! I didn't expect to see you here!

MADDOX

Oh, really? Then, what are doing here wearing those tight-ass jeans?

(presses her against the wall)

Did you miss me?

SABRINE

Hmm, well, maybe a little.

He KISSES her passionately for a moment, before she pulls back.

SABRINE (Cont'd)

I guess I did miss you.

They resume KISSING as Rose enters through the entrance. She waits for a moment, unnoticed, and then clears her throat SOFTLY. They don't hear her, so after another moment she clears her throat LOUDLY.

Maddox and Sabrina release each other immediately.

MADDOX

Hi, Rose.

ROSE

(laughing)

Hi, Maddox. Honestly. You two are ridiculous. There's a guy standing behind the desk right over there.

(to Sabrina)

I'll be in the car. You have five minutes and then I'm leaving. I'm hungry.

Rose exits.

ROSE (V.O.)

Love doesn't have to be hard. I guess some people think if it's too easy, then it can't possibly be real. I don't believe that.

MADDOX

(wrapping his arms back around Sabrina)

I can do you in five minutes easy.

SABRINE

(stepping out of his embrace)

That's not something to brag about.

MADDOX

(grabbing her waist)

Hang on.

(turns her to face him)
Am I going to see you this weekend?

SABRINE
I don't know. I'll let you know.

Sabrina runs out of the gym. He watches her go, admiring her, before walking to the COUCHES in the opposite corner and sliding onto one, a satisfied smile on his lips.

Rome enters the foyer, looking for Maddox, clearly annoyed with his friend. He approaches and sits in the chair next to him.

ROME
I see you saw Sabrina.

MADDOX
(running his hands through his hair)
Yeah, man. She's, well, she's... damn. (laughs)
Yeah, she's something else.

ROME
(sullenly)
At least one of us is happy.

MADDOX
For crying out loud! Knock it off.

ROME
It sounds like you're falling for her.

MADDOX
(appalled)
Me? No! Hell, no! (pause) Uh, Rosalie picked her up.

ROME
(sitting up quickly)
What? Why didn't you say something? Where are they going?

MADDOX
(trying not to smile)
Well... I'm not really sure...

ROME

What do you mean, 'you're not sure?'. I know you stalk Sabrina, Maddox! Don't play games with me!

MADDOX

I do not stalk her! Have some respect. And that's really no way to talk to someone you want something from, is it?

ROME

Sometimes you can be the biggest asshole. (sighs)
Okay, what do you want?

MADDOX

Hm. I want that autographed, life-sized Shaq board in your room that was in the Knicks old locker room.

ROME

What?!

MADDOX

I'm not finished... And you have to promise to stop being a bitch and sitting at home all day.

ROME

(after a long pause)

Fine. Tell me where they're going.

MADDOX

You didn't promise...

ROME

I... promise...

MADDOX

They went to go eat. I'm not sure where, though.

ROME

(leaping out of his chair)

I know where! I know all of Rose's favorite restaurants.

MADDOX

(grabbing Rome's arm)

Come on, Rome, please. Let it go. You're starting to creep me out.

ROME

Don't worry about me. I just want to talk. I'll be fine.

MADDOX

Fine. Yeah, okay. Whatever. Just have that board dropped off at my house tomorrow.

ROME

You're crazy if you think I'm giving up my Shaq board.

MADDOX

Don't play me. A deal's a deal.

ROME

Live and learn, chump.

Rome slaps him on the shoulder and exits the foyer as TYLER TAYLOR, 23, enters. Maddox stands up immediately when he spots Tyler and they smile coldly at each other, their dislike evident.

MADDOX

You should probably stop coming to the gym until your neck reappears, Tyler.

(shakes his head)

Dude, you answer phones for a living. You're mad big for no reason.

TYLER

Some of us are built like men.

(looks Maddox up and down)

Some of us are built like boys.

MADDOX

Does it come out of your check if you accidentally smash stuff when you walk around the office?

TYLER

(walking by him)

That's real funny. Ask Sabrina what she thinks about my... (clears throat) size.

Maddox is caught off guard and doesn't answer, so Tyler smirks and EXITS. Maddox KICKS his chair in anger.

ATTENDANT
(startled)

Um, sir..?

MADDOX
(muttering)
Yeah, yeah, I'm going.