

OVER BLACK:

Sneakers squeak against hardwood maple floors.

A net swishes. Followed by the soft echo of a bouncing ball.

FADE IN:

INT. GYM - BASKETBALL COURT - DAY

The game clock counts down from 4:00 (4 minutes).

On the court we see a MAN, shirtless and sweaty, working on his form. He's wearing OLD, beat up sneakers. We're behind him. Watching his muscles contract as he dribbles and shoots inside the paint.

The basketball arcs then swishes cleanly through the net. He launches again. SWISH. Again. SWISH. He looks like a machine who knows of only three functions: rhythm, release, repeat.

As we begin to pull back on this training athlete, the faint sound of a roaring crowd resounds in our ears. He takes another shot. The ball rolls off his finger tips. The crowd drowns out everything else...until his stomach growls.

The ball hits the rim. The crowd dies into silence.

He grabs at his stomach as if the action itself would make it stop. After a few seconds, it does.

He takes a deep breath to steady himself, bounces the ball a few times, rolls his shoulders back then takes another shot.

The ball slips through his sweaty hands and rattles off the rim. He rebounds and relaunches. CLANG. It ricochets off the backboard. Another. BRICK.

As control is replaced by chaos, he GROWLS in frustration and LAUNCHES the ball against the wall. It bounces past him.

He walks towards the sideline and pulls out his phone. The NAVY FEDERAL app loads on the screen. We pull back as he types information in. Beat. The tension is palpable.

He chucks his phone inside his duffel bag. He fishes out an envelope, dumping the contents in his hand. Out comes: a crumpled dollar bill, pennies, nickels, and dimes.

He stares at the last of his cash then carefully places it back inside, absent-mindedly clutching his stomach.

He grabs a Gatorade bottle next. As he turns around to take a sip, we reveal... MOSES BRINTON (20s). Breathless.

He greedily drinks but there's only a few sips left. He squeezes the bottles for its last drops then tosses it aside.

The game clock is down to 2:00.

Moses grabs a towel, dabs off some sweat, then drapes the towel over his head. It casts a contrasting shadow over his eyes. He bends down to retie his shoelaces and casts a glance at the clock winding down... 1:12. 1:11.

Moses refocuses on tying the knot on his laces (harder than necessary) then reclaims the basketball.

He dribbles himself into a rhythm then shoots. This time, the ball finds its way through the hoop with a gratifying SWISH.

He launches again. Swish. Again. Swish. Again. Swish.

Moses stands frozen. Chest heaving. Feet shoulder width apart. Right wrist flicked.

His controlled expression starts to crack as a bead of sweat drips down his face. A faint curve, reminiscent of a smile, sneaks its way onto his lips. But it's only for a moment.

He continues practicing his shooting drill. Basketball dribbling in hand, as the game buzzer winds down to 0:00.