

FADE IN:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT-DAY

BRAD YOUNGER, 17 tall and lanky stands at mid-court. He's decked out in a snappy black suit. A basketball tucked under his arm.

He dribbles down the court and pulls up around the three-point line for a jump shot. He leaps high into the air releasing the ball at his peak, perfect form.

THE BALL

arcs high into the air coming... down... slowly

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. GYM-DAY

A ball swishes into the nets.

We pull away and see-

Brad backpedals down the court. His right hand stretched high in the air. He holds up three fingers.

The packed gymnasium roars excitedly.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

DAVID YOUNGER, late twenties and bald, lays in bed. An IV runs from his left arm.

DAVID

Have you been working on that weak jump shot? You have to improve your range. Mine starts when I walk into the gym. Don't laugh. How many times did you see me miss?

(beat)

Exactly. Well, tell me what happened at the game pretty boy? I heard you lost. I hope you didn't choke in front of the scouts.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM-LATER

The opposing coach shakes his head.

COACH
Can't somebody stop him!

Looking on from the crowd-

An older white man, wearing glasses, scribbles in a notebook.

ON THE COURT

Brad defends his man. TERRANCE, a chubby teammate knocks the ball loose from his man.

In a flash Brad scoops it up and starts off toward the basket.

Terrance hustles down court and frantically waves for a pass. He's wide open.

Brad looks him off, sidesteps a defender, drives the baseline and throws down a thunderous dunk.

He runs back down the court, flashing a million dollar smile at the head cheerleader.

Terrance shakes his head and gets back on defense.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

David spins a basketball on his index finger.

DAVID
Does Coach still run that same boring play? I'll be damned if it doesn't always work though. Did you push off like I showed you?

(beat)

I told you, works every time. The refs won't call anything that late in the game, not on someone who's all-city.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM-LATER

CLOSE ON

Scoreboard: Home-74 Away-76

On the sideline COACH RHODES, tall and bald headed talks to his team.

COACH RHODES
20 seconds left. Everybody man up.
Marcel take the ball out. Brad,
Terrance, you two run a give and go at
the top of the key.

Terrance nods. Brad's attention is focused on the head cheerleader.

COACH RHODES (CONT'D)
Brad! What are we doing?

Brad snaps to.

BRAD
Ummm, I'm taking the shot?

COACH RHODES
Brad!

BRAD
(million dollar smile)
Give and go, top of the key with
doughboy.

Terrance shoots him a dirty look.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM-LATER

A skinny teammate looks to inbound the ball. Brad breaks into the open and receives the inbound pass. He checks the clock and dribbles to the top of the key.

Terrance comes over. Brad hands him the ball and quickly cuts to the basket.

Terrance lofts a perfect alley oop pass to a leaping Brad. He catches it... cocks... and

CLANKS the ball off the back rim.

BUZZZZZZZZ!

Brad lands on the floor and walks right over to Terrance.

BRAD

That was a lousy pass doughboy.

TERRANCE

The pass was perfect pretty boy. You blew it.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

DAVID

Can't carry your teammates? I used to feel the same way. You can't look at them as a burden. They're not as good as you and they never will be. You have to help them, help you. Don't screw your face up at me. It's easy to win a scoring title when you don't win any games.

(beat)

Scorers are a dime a dozen. Big time programs want leaders... Well, leaders who can put the pill in the basket.

(smiles)

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM-NIGHT

Brad picks at his food. His younger brother RELL, 10 and troublesome, makes faces at his sister, CHINA, 6 and adorable, across the table. Their mother DONNA, early 40's and pretty, puts a plate of biscuits on the table.

DONNA

What's the matter Brad not hungry?

RELL

He's just mad because they lost tonight.

Brad shoots him a dirty look.

BRAD

Shut up.

DONNA
I should've known. Did you go see your
brother today?

BRAD
No. I, forgot.

DONNA
Brad.

BRAD
Sorry, playoffs are next week. I just
forgot.

DONNA
Well we're going tomorrow after I get
off work. You can come with us.

CHINA
We're going to see D!

BRAD
I got practice tomorrow.

DONNA
Brad.

BRAD
I'll try and go after.

DONNA
Make sure you do.

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL-DAY

Brad walks out of the gym dribbling a basketball. MICHELLE DANIELS, tall and pretty head cheerleader, walks out behind him.

MICHELLE
Hey Brad wait up.

Brad stops dribbling and turns around.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

David sits up in his bed.

DAVID
The head cheerleader? I taught you
well. Long legs right?

CUT TO:

EXT. SCHOOL-DAY

CLOSE ON

Michelle's legs.

BRAD
Hey, Michelle. Just getting out of
practice?

MICHELLE
Yeah, you?

BRAD
Same.

MICHELLE
That was a great game the other night.
You really did your thing.

BRAD
Yeah, too bad the scrubs on my team
can't pass. I don't know how I'm going
to win the city title with those
chumps.

MICHELLE
I'm sure you'll find a way.
(smiles)
Where are you headed?

BRAD
(watches a passing car)
I was actually on my way to-
(he turns and notices
Michelle's smile)
walking you home.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOUSE-NIGHT

Brad still dribbling his ball, walks down the street and into the driveway of a modest two-story home. A car pulls into the driveway. Brad steps out of the way.

The car's headlights go out and his mother Donna steps out. China and Rell scurry out of the back seat.

DONNA

Brad.

BRAD

Hey, where are you guys coming from?

DONNA

The hospital.

CHINA

We went to see D!

Donna turns to the younger two.

DONNA

Rell take your sister inside and get her ready for bed.

CHINA

I not sleepy!

RELL

Come on.

He picks her up and takes her into the house. Brad starts to follow them.

DONNA

Brad wait a minute.

Brad turns, still dribbling and walks back to the car.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I guess we just missed you.

BRAD

(stops dribbling)
What?

DONNA

At the hospital. David said you left just before we got there.

BRAD

Oh, right... just missed you.

Donna looks into his eye.

DONNA

What time was that?

BRAD

What?

DONNA

That you left, what time did you leave
the hospital?

Brad tosses the ball up in the air and catches it.

BRAD

I don't know. I didn't have my watch
on.

(looks at his mother)

You don't believe me? You think David's
lying too?

DONNA

I didn't say that.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

David lays in bed. A pair of "Get Well" balloons hang in
the corner.

DAVID

That's just like mom. She always thinks
we're up to something but, she never
knows what.

(smiles)

Remember when we kept that stray dog in
the basement? Mom kept asking where is
all this cereal going?

(beat)

I told her I was trying to gain weight
for basketball season.

(laughs)

I was already bigger than everyone
else.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM-DAY

Brad is off in a corner by himself- taking jump shots.

Coach walks over.

COACH RHODES
Worried about the game?

Brad swishes another shot.

BRAD
Never.

COACH RHODES
(smiles)
Just like your brother. Cool as a cat
with a canary in his mouth. How is
David doing?

BRAD
He's good. I think he's getting better.

Coach looks away.

COACH RHODES
That's
(beat)
good to hear. Tell him I want to see
him knocking down that hook shoot again
ASAP.

BRAD
I will.

Coach Rhodes starts to walk away, stops and turns back.

COACH RHODES
You know Brad you're brother wasn't the
most gifted player I ever coached but
he was the best.

BRAD
Better than me?

COACH RHODES
You may have a better jump shot.
(smiles)
Your brother won games with his head.
He never forgot he was on a team. He
trusted his teammates. Made them
better. Next time you see him, ask him.

BRAD

I will.

CUT TO:

EXT. HOSPITAL-DAY

Brad stands at the entrance to the hospital. He walks up the steps and places a hand on the door. He pauses and withdraws his hand. Shaking his head he retreats down the steps.

BRAD

Tomorrow, after the game... I promise

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM-NIGHT

Several trophies line a bureau. Brad lies on the bed, looking up at the ceiling. He gets up and walks over to the bureau. He picks up a trophy. It reads "MVP 1996 City Classic- David Younger"

Knock! Knock!

BRAD

Yeah.

The door opens and his mother walks in.

DONNA

Brad? What are you doing in here?

BRAD

Nothing just
(beat)
nothing.

His mother walks over and places her hand on his shoulder.

DONNA

Big game tomorrow.

Brad nods.

DONNA (CONT'D)

I know it's killing him that he can't be there.

BRAD

Is he coming back?

DONNA

I
(beat)
I don't know.

BRAD

What does he look like? Does he look
the same?

DONNA

He looks...
(she looks away)
He looks good. He still has his smile.

BRAD

I just can't look at him lying there
like that. It's not, him. You know?

DONNA

I know.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

David yawns and stretches his arms.

DAVID

Big game? Big deal. No guts no glory.
Man I used to love it. You better live
up to the family name. You break my
record I'll break your tail.

(laughs)
And if you don't break it I'll break
your tail.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM-LATER

The gym is packed to the rafter with rabid fans. Both teams
go up and down the court.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Brad hits a three pointer from the corner.

Brad forces a steal and takes it down court for a break
away dunk.

Brad drives the lane and lays it up between two defenders.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

David tosses a sponge basketball up and down in the air.

DAVID

Crunch time is when you have to step up
your game.

CUT TO:

INT. GYM-DAY

ANGLE ON

The scoreboard reads Home-75 Away-76

We see Brad looking up at the scoreboard. He walks over to his bench where Coach Rhodes has the team huddled.

Coach Rhodes barks out final instructions and the team breaks from the huddle.

ANGLE ON

Scoreboard Clock- "00:15"

Terrance takes the ball out of bounds. He passes it in to Brad. Brad dribbles to the top of the key. He shakes his defender to the ground and drives to the basket.

Two defenders converge on him blocking his path.

ANGLE ON

Scoreboard Clock- "00:07"

Brad scans the floor, frantically. He sees Terrance cut to the basket. He throws a bounce pass across the lane. Terrance catches it in mid-stride and lays it up just over the outstretched hand of a defender and into the basket.

BZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZZ!

Terrance is mobbed by his teammates. Brad nods and looks at the crowd, searching.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM-DAY

David lies in the bed, his eyes closed.

DAVID
My little bro Superman passing with the
game on the line? I thought
(opens his eyes)
you weren't listening all this time.

He looks around the room. We see no one else is there.

DAVID (CONT'D)
(smiles)
Good game bro, good game.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT-DAY

BRAD stands at mid-court. He's decked out in a snappy black suit. A basketball tucked under his arm.

He dribbles down the court and lays the ball in. He then runs down to the opposite end of the court and lays it up.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Brad dunks the ball over and over, each more vicious than the other.

CUT TO:

EXT. BASKETBALL COURT-DAY

ANGLE ON BRAD

Exhausted he lays in the center of the court. He weeps.

CUT TO:

EXT. CEMETERY-DAY

ANGLE ON

A basketball-

Written in a felt pen: St. Anthony's 2002 City Champs MVP
Brad David Younger

We pull back and see the ball has been placed before a tombstone. David Younger 1974-2002

Brad stands there nods and walks away.

FADE OUT:

