

THE FIGHT AFTER

by

Gunnar E Garrett Jr.

2182 Alberto Way
Oakdale, CA 95361
Gunnarimpalas@hotmail.com
920.255.1873

FADE IN:

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Around a boxing ring in the center of the room, fans cheer on two young, male, amateur boxers who pummel one another.

Boxers and coaches of all ages, sizes, and sexes are scattered about the room and prepare for their bouts.

INT. BALLROOM - DARKENED CORNER - NIGHT

Far from the crowd, ELLE (17) determined and physically fit, sits backwards on a chair, arms draped over the back rest.

SONNY (40's) Elle's father, Brooklyn native, coach and former professional boxer, who's speech is a little slow, wraps Elle's hands with gauze and tape.

SONNY

Make sure you're working the jab
right out the gate, but be
careful... I heard this girl's
good...

Sonny stops and glares at Elle.

Elle's focus is on the fighters now exiting the ring.

SONNY

... Hey!

Elle snaps her head back to her father with attitude.

ELLE

What?

SONNY

I'm trying to help you here.

ELLE

You act like this is my first
fight.

SONNY

You're so smart, you tell me what I
was gonna say, huh.

ELLE

Work the jab, side step, yeah, I
know.

Elle turns her attention back to one of the fighters who walks past. He holds a towel covered in blood to his nose.

Sonny snatches Elle by the cheeks and rips her head straight.

SONNY

This is how you get yourself beat!

Elle pulls away frustrated and angry.

SONNY

You better start using your head! I know this girl don't have the best record, but she's tough. You remember Olivia?

ELLE

Yeah, I remember Olivia.

SONNY

Yeah, well she got a first round K.O. over Olivia.

Sonny continues to wrap her hands.

SONNY

Now listen... I want you to start with the jab. Everyone keeps telling me the girl's just gonna keep coming forward... But she's wide with her punches...

Sonny slaps the last piece of tape on Elle's hand.

SONNY

Make a fist.

Elle makes a fist and Sonny packs it tight. Sonny rises.

SONNY

(mimicking the punches)

When she comes in, you plant your feet and go straight down the middle. Bang, bang! And I don't care if this girl hits you with a brick. You stand your ground. You hearing me?

Elle rises, packs her fists and nods.

ELLE

You're saying we ain't boxing, we're brawling.

SONNY

Thank you. Now glove up.

Sonny helps Elle slip her hand into a boxing glove.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

A curvy Latina dries dishes, but stops for a concerned glance at the clock.

The clock TICKS.

INT. BALLROOM - DARKENED CORNER - NIGHT

WILLY (70's) a weathered old man with a raspy voice, approaches Elle and Sonny, drink in hand.

WILLY

Doctor's looking for her passbook.

SONNY

Finish getting her laced up and I'll see why he ain't got it.

Sonny leaves and Willy laces Elle's gloves.

WILLY

He in a mood again?

ELLE

Only every time I fight.

WILLY

Never mind him. He's just mad he was never as good as you.

Willy shoots Elle a wink and she smirks in return.

Finished with Elle's gloves he raises his glass, then drinks.

WILLY

No playin' around tonight. You get out there and beat the piss outta that girl and you do it quick! I ain't drinkin' this warm.

Sonny steps back in and takes over.

SONNY

What's all the chatter? You know we got a fight, huh?

WILLY

She said you're fat, and need to
get back in the gym.

SONNY

Telling me things I already know.
You ready?

Elle gives a determined nod.

Sonny gives Elle a slap on the back. Elle bangs her gloves
together, and the trio make their way to the ring.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Latino woman continues with her dishes. Behind her at the
kitchen table a young girl colors in a notebook.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Sonny and Willy stand behind Elle. She steps side to side,
eyes on the boxers going toe to toe in the ring.

Sonny watches the fighters and makes slight head movements,
avoid the punches as if they're thrown at him.

Through the ropes, Elle spots her opponent across the room
warming up. Her punches are fast and hard.

The POP of the gloves against the mitts can be heard over the
crowds CHATTER.

Elle studies her opponent, lifts her hands and slips
imaginary punches, then throws a few mock punches of her own.

The crowd ROARS and everyone's attention is brought back to
the ring.

The referee stands over a fallen fighter and waves his hands
to signal the fight has been stopped. The victor raises his
hands and celebrates in his corner.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN

The Latino woman pauses for a moment and nervously stares at
her phone and TAPS her fingers on the counter.

The screen on the phone is black. SILENCE.

INT. BALLROOM - RING - NIGHT

In her corner of the ring, Elle dips side to side, shakes out her arms and readies for battle.

Elle's eye's are locked with her opponent across the ring.

LUCY GARCIA (17) a thuggish girl, who's most likely had more fights out of the ring than in it, glares back at Elle.

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

In the red corner, fighting out of the Bulldog Boxing Club. Lucy Garcia... Garcia.

Lucy eyes Elle, but glances to the ref for a split second, then returns her eyes to Elle. Elle now smirks.

Sonny and Willy take their seats in Elle's corner outside the ring and watch with anticipation.

SONNY

Remember what I told you!

ANNOUNCER (V.O.)

And in the blue corner... Your home town hero... Elle "Diablo" Shelton... Shelton.

The referee signals to Elle, then Lucy. They both nod, ready for battle.

The bell DINGS.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Latino woman dries dishes and the girl puts them away.

INT. BALLROOM - RING - NIGHT

Both contenders rush to the center of the ring. Elle immediately slips a few punches, and lands a quick one two.

Lucy shoves Elle back and charges in with wide punches that fail to connect.

Elle plants her feet and fires straight punches one after another that send Lucy back into the corner.

The fans CHEER on the gladiators.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The Latino woman dries a glass. It slips from her hands and in slow motion, falls to the floor.

INT. BALLROOM - RING - NIGHT

Lucy slips out of the corner, turns back towards Elle and fires a few wide punches.

Sonny watches intently from ringside.

SONNY

That ain't what I told you to do!

Elle's eyes wander to Sonny for a split-second.

Lucy throws a huge right hand. Elle's hands are down.

The punch connects.

Sonny's eyes widen with concern.

Elle falls to the canvas in slow motion.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

The second hand on the clock TICKS in slow motion.

The glass hits the floor and SHATTERS at woman's feet.

INT. BALLROOM - RING - NIGHT

Elle, seated on the canvas looks up at the REFEREE (50) who counts in front of her.

Lucy celebrates across the ring.

REFEREE

Two... Three... Four...

Elle springs to her feet and holds her gloves high.

REFEREE

You okay?

Elle nods.

REFEREE

Step to me.

Elle step to the ref, eyes locked on Lucy.

Lucy scowls at Elle and rocks in anticipation of the ref's signal to continue.

The referee wipes Elle's gloves onto his shirt, steps to the center of the ring, then signals for the fighter to continue.

Lucy rushes in for the kill.

Elle slips a wide punch from Lucy, spins out, then with a barrage of punches sends Lucy into a corner.

Elle's attack is relentless and Lucy is unable to stop the barrage. Nearly every punch connects.

DING. DING. DING. The bell signals the end of the round.

The ref separates the fighters and Elle heads to her corner out of breath.

INT. BALLROOM - ELLE'S CORNER - NIGHT

Sonny slides a stool between ropes and climbs into the ring.

Willy stands in her corner just outside the ring.

SONNY

What the hell was that, huh?

ELLE

I almost had her.

SONNY

Almost had her? You almost had yourself a loss.

WILLY

He's right. You need to keep your damn hands up.

ELLE

I was about to finish her but the bell--

SONNY

I don't care what you were about to do. I'm not taking a loss to some girl who landed a lucky punch because your hands were down. You keep them fuckin' hands up and finish this girl. You hearing me.

Elle's lips pucker, and she glares at Sonny.

REFeree (O.S.)
Seconds out.

INT. BALLROOM - LUCY'S CORNER - NIGHT

Lucy rises, ready to finish the fight. Behind her, her coach removes the stool from the ring.

LUCY
That bitch is dead.

INT. BALLROOM - ELLE'S CORNER - NIGHT

Elle rises. Sonny grabs her gloves, lifts them, then places them against her cheeks.

SONNY
Right here.

Elle's anger is apparent with the look she shoots Sonny through her headgear.

SONNY
Now get out there and finish.

TAP. TAP. TAP.

The tension is broken only by the sound of the gavels BANG that signals for the corners to exit the ring.

INT. BALLROOM - RING - NIGHT

Elle rises and locks eyes with her opponent across the ring.

DING. DING. DING.

Elle and Lucy march to the center of the ring.

Lucy throws a wide right hand and Elle steps straight in and lets her hands fly.

Her punches fly straight down the middle. They all land clean, one after another, sending Lucy into the ropes.

The referee leans closer and closer, then with no choice, he steps in and waves off the fight.

Elle's punches continue to fly until the ref tears her away.

Sonny rushes into the ring, grabs Elle, pulls her back to her corner and removes her gloves.

SONNY

What are you doin', huh? Trying to get yourself D-Q'd?

ELLE

That good enough for you?

Sonny's dismay slowly turns to delight.

SONNY

Yeah, that's good enough. Way to finish strong. One step closer to that gold, huh? Next time maybe we listen a little and avoid both that right hand and the canvas, huh?

Elle's resentment builds and she looks into the crowd to avoid her father.

SONNY

I mean you did good, but she almost had you in the first round. They ain't all gonna hit so soft. Especially at nationals.

Audience members drink, eat and laugh and enjoy the company of friends. Everyone with smiles, except Elle.

Elle's eyes wander to Willy at ringside. He pleasantly grins, raises his glass and points to the ice.

SONNY

Ya done good, Kid.

Elle's exuberance returns.

INT. BALLROOM - DARKENED CORNER - LATER - NIGHT

Seated across from each other, Elle's eyes wander everywhere except at Sonny who cuts the wraps from Elle's hands.

SONNY

What's with the attitude?

ELLE

(with attitude)
What attitude?

SONNY

That one. I say you done good, and you give me attitude.

ELLE

No attitude. Just ready to go home.

Sonny stops and stares at Elle, until she finally breaks and makes eye contact.

ELLE

What? I'm hungry, that's all.

SONNY

You sure?

ELLE

Yes!

Sonny holds for a moment, then cuts the last of the wraps.

SONNY

Yeah, me too. You get a little angry like your old man when he gets hungry, huh?

Sonny slaps Elle's shoulder and winks.

SONNY

You better give your mom a call, let her know how you did. I'm sure she's waitin'. And tell her set another plate. Willy's comin' for supper.

ELLE

Supper or drinks.

SONNY

Ah. You're a clever one! You keep moving that head in the ring so you stay that way. If not you're gonna end up a little stupid like me, huh.

ELLE

A little?

SONNY

Ah. See.

Sonny pulls Elle in for an unwanted hug, but she can't help but smile.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE

GLORIA (39) the curvy Latina, Sonny's wife, cooks dinner and continues to check the clock.

GLORIA

Sam!

With no reply, Gloria stirs the food, then holds.

GLORIA

Samantha Geniviene Shelton!

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

I'm coming.

GLORIA

You had better get your little booty in here, now!

SAMANTHA

Ugh. I said I'm coming.

SAMANTHA (9) Elle's energetic sister and aspiring artist enters and plants her self back at the table in front of her notebook, then begins to draw.

GLORIA

I don't think so. You need to help me put these away.

SAMANTHA

Elle never has to do the dishes.

GLORIA

True, but Elle also has to put up with your father. You... You get to spend time with your beautiful, kind, caring and funny mother.

SAMANTHA

You got the funny part right.

EXT. ELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Parked in front of the house, Elle opens the passenger side car door and reaches for Willy's hand.

ELLE

Here.

WILLY

I ain't that old...

Willy attempts to exit the car on his own, but stumbles back into the seat.

WILLY

... But I may be that drunk. Help me up.

Sonny rounds the front of the car from the drivers side and helps Elle pull Willy to his feet.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Samantha puts dishes away. Gloria cooks.

SAMANTHA

Still not fair that Elle gets to hang out with dad all day, and I have to do all the chores. Maybe I should start boxing--

Gloria immediately stops.

GLORIA

Absolutely not. I need you to keep this little brain of yours strong so you can keep drawing me all those beautiful pictures.

Samantha let's a smile slip.

SONNY (V.O.)

And still undefeated... Your current State Champion...

Samantha rolls her eyes, mocks Sonny, then drags herself to the other room.

SAMANTHA

Undefeated. Meh, meh, meh.

Gloria lets out a sigh of relief.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Elle and Sonny are near the front door with Willy.

SONNY

Elle... Diablo... Shelton!

Samantha enters and upon sight of Willy, springs to life.

SAMANTHA

Willy!

WILLY

There's my girl!

Samantha throws herself at Willy, and nearly knocks him over. Elle and Sonny quickly steady him.

WILLY

You're almost getting too big for that. Ya almost knocked this old man over.

ELLE

Thought you weren't old?

Willy turns straight to Sonny.

WILLY

Don't gotta look too far to see where that attitude came from.

SAMANTHA

Momma didn't say you were coming for dinner.

GLORIA (V.O.)

That's because mommy didn't know.

Gloria enters. Elle cringes and shrugs her shoulders.

ELLE

Sorry. I may have forgot to call.

GLORIA

Hi Willy. I'll set you a plate.

Gloria leans in and hugs Willy.

WILLY

If it tastes as good as you smell, I'll enjoy every bite.

GLORIA

So... She obviously won.

SAMANTHA

Yeah. But, did you get beat up?

ELLE

No, I didn't get beat up.

SAMANTHA

Too bad.

ELLE

Actually, they stopped it because they didn't want the other girl to get killed. Kinda like how mom and dad stop me when they know I'm about to murder you!

Samantha makes a nasty face at Elle.

GLORIA

Enough. You two go get washed up for dinner.

Samantha socks Elle in the arm and runs off.

ELLE

You're so dead.

Elle gives chase.

GLORIA

No running.

WILLY

And hurry up in there so's you can bring old Willy a drink.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

Okay!

ELLE (V.O.)

Told you, you were old.

GLORIA

No, they are not making you a drink, Willy. I'll get it. Sonny, help him to his chair.

Sonny reaches for Willy's arm, but Willy pulls away.

WILLY

Why the hell is everyone trying to hold my damn hand tonight. I ain't no damn baby learning to walk.

Willy starts off on his own, then stumbles.

SONNY

It's probably--

WILLY

You better keep that comment to yourself.

(MORE)

WILLY (CONT'D)
(mumbling)
House full of smart assess.

Willy staggers to a recliner and lowers himself into it.
Sonny smirks at Willy, then follows Gloria into the Kitchen.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gloria mixes a drink in a small glass.

GLORIA
So she won again?

SONNY
Yeah. It was over pretty quick, but she got caught with her hands down.
(shadow boxing)
But she got right back up and went to work on the inside and the ref had to stop it. You should have been there.

WILLY (V.O.)
You better not be making me no damn soda in there!

Gloria grabs a larger glass out of the cabinet and pours the drink from the small glass into it and adds more liquor.

GLORIA
I could barely watch you. And even hearing about her getting hit...
Absolutely no way.

Sonny follows Gloria out.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

SONNY
Yeah, but Elle's so much better than I ever was. Ain't that right Willy.

Gloria hands Willy his drink. He takes a sip and recoils.

WILLY
Stronger than you for sure, and damn near as strong as this drink. Perfect. Thank you.

GLORIA
You're welcome.

SONNY
I'm just saying... She's got something special. And let me tell you something else. If I could get her to listen to me for more than two seconds... She'd be unstoppable.

WILLY
(chuckling)
That's funny.

SONNY
It's true and you know it.

WILLY
I meant the part where your child won't listen to you.

SONNY
You keep on laughing, Willy.

Willy continues to laugh and takes another sip of his drink.

Samantha flies into the room, notebook in hand, flings herself onto Willy's lap and spills a little of his drink.

WILLY
What's so important you gotta be spilling my soda.

SAMANTHA
Doesn't smell like soda.

Willy takes a sip and set the glass down.

WILLY
Don't taste like it either.

SONNY
You be careful you don't hurt that old guy, huh.

Willy makes a disagreeable face at Sonny.

Samantha opens her notebook and flips through the pages.
Sonny and Gloria head into the kitchen.

SAMANTHA

This dress is one of my favorites because of the different color pinks, and I really like how it opens on the bottom...

Willy grabs his glass and takes another drink.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gloria prepares the plates for dinner and Sonny plucks food from the frying pan off the stove. Gloria slaps his hand.

GLORIA

Why do you do that?

SONNY

What? I'm hungry?

GLORIA

I'm talking about you and Willy.

SONNY

Hey. He was the one who started it.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Samantha flips through pages in her notebook.

Willy pulls a handkerchief from his shirt pocket and wipes the sweat from his brow.

SAMANTHA

... And this one I think might be my third favorite, or maybe second. Wait, no, third... I think.

Samantha flips back and forth between a few pages.

WILLY

Why don't you hop down for a second, Sweat Pea. It's a little warm in here.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - ELLE'S ROOM - NIGHT

An exhausted Elle, in front of her mirror, towel around her head, places her hands on her dresser.

She stares into the mirror, rubs her cheek softly and winces.

Her eyes leave the mirror and find a stack of text books and folders. She turns back to her reflection in the mirror.

Elle stares deep into her own eyes, then steps back from the dresser and lowers herself onto the bed.

Elle lets herself fall back and sink into her bed. She stares at the ceiling fan as it spins.

The fan spins just a touch out of balance.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

Sonny reaches for another bite and Gloria slaps him again.

GLORIA

Stop. It's not done yet. And yes, I heard what he said, but it doesn't mean you need to add to it.

SONNY

You know good and well he--

WILLY (V.O.)

Sonny. Gloria.

Concerned, Sonny and Gloria head back into the living room.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

On his feet, Willy heads to the door.

SONNY

Where you goin'?

WILLY

I'm heading home.

Gloria rolls her disapproving eyes to Sonny.

SONNY

Look. I didn't mean nothing by it, alright.

Willy stops at the door.

WILLY

What?

SONNY

I'm sorry, okay.

WILLY
I'm not leaving because of you,
Princess, so don't get your
bloomers all in a bunch...

Sonny rolls his eyes back to Gloria.

WILLY
I just ain't feeling the best.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - ELLE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Elle lies on her bed and lets her fingers lightly run through her hair, then caress her temples.

GLORIA (V.O.)
Elle! Come say bye to Willy!

Elle's hands fall to her side. Reluctantly she rises, rolls to one side and cringes as she pushes herself up.

Seated at the edge of her bed, Elle takes a deep breath, forces herself to her feet and out the door.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria gives Sonny a nudge.

SONNY
Let me drive you home.

WILLY
I'll walk.

Elle enters.

ELLE
Where are you going?

WILLY
Home.

SONNY
Just let me give you a ride, huh--

WILLY
For Christ sakes. It's only four
houses down. I'm pretty sure I'm
capable of doing it my damn self.

ELLE
I can walk with you.

WILLY

No. I'll just see you at the gym,
tomorrow.

Samantha runs to Willy and give him a big squeeze.

SAMANTHA

Can I go to the gym tomorrow, too?

WILLY

Don't be ridiculous. You're always
welcome, Sweat Pea. Just make sure
Princess over there doesn't forget
to bring you.

Willy opens the door and makes his way out.

ELLE

Night.

GLORIA

Night.

SONNY

Night, Willy.

The door closes behind Willy.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Backpack flung over her shoulder, Elle impatiently waits at
the front door.

ELLE

Mom! Let's go.

GLORIA (V.O.)

Hold on. I'm finishing your
sister's hair.

ELLE

Can we please just go?

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

Mom said wait, Loser!

ELLE

Shut up, Sam! I'm gonna wait in the
car.

SAMANTHA (V.O.)

Shotgun!

ELLE

You can't call it till you get
outside.

EXT. ELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Elle makes her way out the front door, then slows. Her eyes widen, she drops her backpack, then races to Willy, who lies face down on the front lawn.

ELLE
(hysterical)
Willy!

Elle quickly kneels at his side and gives him a shake.

Willy's eyes flutter. He lifts his head and MOANS.

ELLE
Don't move, I'm gonna go get help.

Elle sprints back into house.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Gloria and Samantha nonchalantly head towards the door, when Elle bursts through.

ELLE
Call 9-1-1! Willy's out front, he
fell, or, or passed out or
something.

GLORIA
Sam, go get your Papi.

Gloria races out the door and Samantha freezes.

ELLE
Go!

Sam sprints out of the room.

SAMANTHA
Dad!

Elle rushes back out the front.

INT. CAR - DAY

Gloria drives the girls to school in silence. Elle in the passenger seat and Samantha in the back.

Samantha's puffy eyes stare at her backpack. She fidgets.

Elle stares out the window.

Gloria glances at Elle, then at Samantha in the rearview.

GLORIA
He's gonna be okay...

Elle peeks at Gloria, then back out her window.

GLORIA
... He just had a little too much
to drink is all--

ELLE
Why didn't dad just drive him home?

GLORIA
You know Willy--

ELLE
Yeah, he was being stupid, but dad--

SAMANTHA
He's not stupid! You are! Now take
it back!

ELLE
You're not even old enough to know
what happened.

SAMANTHA
I said take it back!

Samantha reaches into the front seat and punches Elle in the arm several times.

GLORIA
Girls, stop!

Both girls slump back into their seats.

GLORIA
No, Willy is not stupid, but what
he did was, and he's old enough to
know better. And yes your father
should have just driven him home,
or at least walked with him. But he
didn't. What matters is that
Willy's okay. Now apologize to each
other.

ELLE
(reluctant)
Sorry.

SAMANTHA
(mumbling)
Sorry you're stupid.

GLORIA

Sam!

SAMANTHA

Sorry.

GLORIA

Sometimes whether we like it or not, we have to accept people for who they are. Even when we want them to be what we need... All we can expect is for them to be what they've always been... Themselves. And anything more than that... We should be thankful for.

Elle and Samantha both let their eyes wander, then shift to a window. They continue their ride in silence.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - DAY

Willy lies in bed with an I.V., and blood pressure cuff on.

Sonny sits in a chair next to him.

SONNY

You know... Maybe after this, you think about going easy on the drinks, huh?

WILLY

You know you can leave at any time.

SONNY

Why you gotta be this way? Forget about me... Treat me like shit, I don't care. But them girls... Them poor girls... They were the ones that had to find you that way. For all they knew, you was dead.

DR. JENSON, (50's) enters, clip board in hand.

Willy sits himself up, and removes the blood pressure cuff.

WILLY

Good, now I can get the hell outta this place.

DR. JENSON

Maybe we don't start yanking at things, and just let the nurses take care of all that.

WILLY

I think I've heard enough preaching
from the minister in the corner.

Sonny shakes his head while Willy lightly tugs at the IV.

WILLY

Okay, maybe we need a nurse for
that one.

DR. JENSON

I can already see you're not gonna
listen, but it's my job, so... I'd
like for you to stay overnight
while we run a few more tests and
make sure your blood work comes
back okay before you leave.

WILLY

Forget it.

DR. JENSON

Imagine my complete lack of
surprise.

Willy tugs at the IV and Sonny hops to his feet to stop him.

SONNY

Maybe you can wait five minutes for
a nurse, huh.

WILLY

Ya got five minutes.

DR. JENSON

Again... I strongly suggest you--

Willy eyes Dr. Jenson and grips the IV tube.

WILLY

Again... Five minutes. Either
someone unplugs this garbage, or
it's walking outta here with me.

Dr. Jenson exasperatingly slaps his notebook closed and makes
for the door.

DR. JENSON

Why listen to me? It's not like I
spent eight years at an Ivy League
medical school.

INT. SCHOOL - CLASSROOM - DAY

At her desk, Elle's head is down and she works on an assignment.

The rest of the classroom is filled with chatter from student who wait for the bell to ring.

IVAN (17) lean, fit, Hispanic boy, leans over Elle's shoulder from his desk behind hers.

IVAN
So what happened to Willy?

ELLE
(eyes down)
Working.

Ivan lowers himself back into his seat.

TANNER (17) cocky and ready to respond to any conversation without an invitation sits across the aisle.

TANNER
Better be careful. You don't want
the big bad boxing bitch to beat
you up.

Elle slams her pencil down explodes from her desk.

ELLE
What did you just call me?

Ivan immediately grabs Elle and holds her back. Tanner stands from his desk.

TANNER
Just because you can box doesn't
mean I'm gonna be afraid of you.
I'll fight you right now. You're
still, a girl... Sorry, I meant,
Bitch.

Elle tries to push through Ivan but he holds her back.

The TEACHER spots the ruckus from his desk.

TEACHER
Back in your seats till the bell
rings.

Elle, Tanner and Ivan all hold their ground.

TEACHER

Seats!

Elle slowly lowers herself, eyes still on Tanner.

Ivan turns his attention to Tanner.

IVAN

You're such a Billy-Bad-Ass, step to me then.

TANNER

It was a joke, Dude. Calm down. It's not my fault your girlfriend's on her period.

Elle springs from her seat.

ELLE

Fuck you! He's not my boyfriend--

TEACHER

Miss Shelton...

Elle holds her position and Tanner quickly slides back into his seat.

TEACHER

Can you come here please?

The class snickers at Elle's outburst and Ivan lowers himself into his seat.

Elle still glares at Tanner, then makes her way to the front of the classroom. The bell RINGS. The students file out.

Ivan packs his books into his backpack while Tanner exits past him.

TANNER

Dude. Just a heads up. You're never getting out of the friend zone.

Ivan watches Tanner exit, then turns to Elle who explains herself to the teacher. Ivan's eyes wander away from Elle.

EXT. SCHOOL - YARD - DAY

Elle walks with Ivan.

IVAN

So is he gonna be okay?

ELLE

Yeah, sounds like it. My mom said they were gonna give him an I.V. and run some tests, but chances are he's just dehydrated.

IVAN

So, just face down in the lawn?

ELLE

I thought for sure he was dead.

IVAN

That's impressive... Even for Willy.

ELLE

I should have just walked him home.

IVAN

Yeah, but isn't it only like three houses down.

ELLE

Four.

IVAN

Either way, you shouldn't blame yourself... We both know how Willy is.

ELLE

True. He wouldn't even let me help him from the car to the front door last night--

MR. DAVIDSON

Miss Shelton!

MR. DAVIDSON (late 40's) a school guidance counselor, dressed more like the students than faculty, approaches.

MR. DAVIDSON

Can I get a few minutes with you in my office, please?

Ivan turns to Elle as if she's done something wrong.

ELLE

(to Ivan)

I'll fill you in later.

IVAN
Hope you didn't do anything too
stupid.

ELLE
Whatever. I'll see you tonight.

Elle follows Mr. Davidson into the school.

INT. SCHOOL - COUNSELORS OFFICE - DAY

Elle sits across the desk from Mr. Davidson.

MR. DAVIDSON
Tell me. How are things at home,
Elle?

ELLE
They're fine. Why? Am I in trouble
or something?

MR. DAVIDSON
No, but I did see you were late
this morning because of a medical
emergency.

ELLE
Yeah, it turned out to be nothing.

MR. DAVIDSON
Good. I'm glad hear. So... The
reason I brought you in was because
this showed up in my box this
morning.

Mr. Davidson lifts an envelope from his desk and hands it
over to Elle.

ELLE
What's this?

MR. DAVIDSON
You tell me? It's addressed to you.

Elle stares at the envelope from The University of Texas.

MR. DAVIDSON

I'm gonna cut right to it, Elle. I've been a counselor for most of my adult life, and every time I've seen an acceptance letter come directly to the school for a student, it's because the student doesn't want the parents to know they've applied.

Elle opens the envelope, slides the letter out and reads it. She hold back a smile the best she can.

MR. DAVIDSON

If it'll make it any easier for you, I can sit down with your parents, throw out a few things, including the possibilities of you continuing your education, see how they respond, and go from there.

ELLE

I don't think that's the best idea. My dad--

MR. DAVIDSON

Your dad's got this idea of what he wants for you. I know. This isn't the first time I've heard this. At least twice a year I have to give this same speech to parents who know what's best for their kids.

ELLE

No. Well... Kinda yeah, but, even still, our situation's a little different. My dad says we have a good chance of making the Olympic team next year and I don't want college getting in the way.

MR. DAVIDSON

Yeah, I saw you on the news a few weeks back, and it looks like you're doing very well.

Mr. Davidson leans back in chair.

MR. DAVIDSON

Let me ask you this... If this isn't what you want, then why take the time to apply?

Elle clams up. Her eye's fall back to the letter.

MR. DAVIDSON

At least let me sit down with them,
and see where they're at.

Elle gives a nod.

Mr. Davidson opens a desk drawer and takes out a book titled:
"Everything You Need to Know About College" and passes it to
Elle.

MR. DAVIDSON

I don't expect you to read it, just
flip through it a little, and I'll
set up a time for your parents to
come in.

Elle hesitantly takes the book, gives it a once over, then
slips her letter between the pages.

ELLE

Thank you.

MR. DAVIDSON

You're welcome.

Elle begins to exit.

MR. DAVIDSON

Elle?

Elle holds.

MR. DAVIDSON

Real soon everyone's gonna start
throwing out ideas of what you need
to do with your life. Remember,
they're only suggestions. You're
the only one that can make the
decision that's right for you.

INT. CAR - SCHOOL - DAY

Sonny behind the wheel, is parked. Elle climbs into the
passenger seat and goes straight for her phone.

Sonny drives away in silence, with an occasional glance at
Elle. Ready to speak, he holds back.

Elle and Sonny drive in silence.

SONNY

Looks like Willy's gonna be okay.
They gotta do some tests and stuff,
but I guess he was just a little--

ELLE

(eyes on her phone)
I know. Mom called me at lunch.

SONNY

You already knew that, huh.

Elle ignores Sonny.

SONNY

I guess you probably know a lot of
things. Like you probably knew I
got a call from a Mr. Davidson
today.

Elle stops texting, but never looks up.

SONNY

Says he wants to sit down and talk
about some stuff. Says you're not
in trouble or nothin'. Just wants
to talk. You know about that?

Elle shakes her head.

SONNY

Maybe if it's nothing bad, maybe
you won, like an award or
something. You think you won an
award?

Elle shakes her head again.

SONNY

You know so much all the time, how
come you don't know nothin' about
this?

ELLE

(under her breath)
I know someone should have taken
Willy home last night.

SONNY

What was that?

Elle returns to her phone.

SONNY

(playing)

You wanna keep busting my chops
with your bad mood. Maybe I punch
you up a little, huh. You want some
of this?

Sonny throws soft punches that push Elle repeatedly against
the door.

SONNY

Huh. You like that. You wanna piece
of this? You get you some of that,
huh?

Elle attempts to hold a smile back, but slips.

SONNY

Yeah. There it is. You do want some
of this.

ELLE

(smiling)

Stop. You're so dumb.

Elle pushes Sonny's punches away.

SONNY

(chuckling)

Maybe a little dumber now that I
got a brat kid and all. But one
time... One time I used to be
pretty smart.

ELLE

Just one time?

SONNY

Yeah, Smart Guy. I have you know
that when I was your age... And not
just one time, I got--

A TRAIN HORN BLARES and Sonny's head whips back to the road
ahead, his foot slams the brake pedal.

The tire's on Sonny's car SCREECH to a halt.

SONNY

Son of a...

Shaken, Elle's hands are planted against the dashboard.

Sonny's white knuckles grip the wheel tight.

At an uncontrolled railroad crossing, a train ROARS past, only feet from the front of Sonny's car.

SONNY

You okay?

ELLE

Yeah. Scared the shit out of me.
You?

SONNY

Yeah, me too. But watch your mouth.

Elle still trembles, but removes her hands from the dash, and flops back into her seat.

ELLE

Shouldn't they have like, those bars that come down, with the lights and everything.

SONNY

Right. Maybe I uh, clean my drawers and uh, then I give the city a call and see what the deal is.

Elle glares at Sonny with a thankful and perilous look.

ELLE

Is that what that smell is?

Elle fights back a smile, that causes Sonny to break into a relived laughter.

The train continues to pass.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Samantha, on the couch, frantically works in a notebook, when Gloria passes through.

GLORIA

I thought I said no drawing until you finish your homework.

SAMANTHA

This is my homework.

GLORIA

Oh... Okay... Wait. Why are you so excited about doing your homework?

SAMANTHA

(eyes on her paper)

Dad said as long as I finish my homework, I can go with him and Elle to Willy's today.

Gloria glances at the clock, then looks back to Samantha with a deep breath and disappointment.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

Ivan works the heavy bag, then stops when Elle and Sonny stroll through the front door.

WILLY (V.O.)

I didn't hear no timer, so why the hell don't I hear no punchin'?

Willy steps out from his office and spots Elle and Sonny.

WILLY

You two. Stop distracting the rest of my damn fighters and get to work.

The round timer DINGS.

Elle hurries over to Willy and throws her arms around him. He embraces her for only a moment.

WILLY

(softly)

Get your ass to work. I don't need all these other idiots thinking I'm soft.

(to Sonny)

Come here, You. We gotta talk.

Willy heads to his office. Sonny follows.

IVAN

Sure, sure. Stroll in whenever you feel like it.

ELLE

Not even my fault. Sonny over here almost killed us on our--

SONNY

What did you just call me?

Sonny stops in his tracks and spins back, provoked by Elle.

ELLE

Nothing.

Ivan pulls back, caught in the middle.

SONNY

No. What did you say?

ELLE

I said you almost killed us.

SONNY

You called me Sonny. Don't ever disrespect me like that. I'm your father. You hearing me?

Scared and confused Elle glances to Willy.

Willy sits uneasy with Sonny's approach.

WILLY

Give the kid a break. She didn't mean nothin' by it.

Sonny holds his ground.

SONNY

I asked if you heard me.

ELLE

Yeah. I heard you.

The round timer DINGS.

WILLY

Get to work, You!

Out of place, Ivan nods, lifts his gloves, then returns to the heavy bag, but his eyes float to Elle and Sonny.

Sonny eases, then gradually follows Willy to his office.

Elle finds a seat, plops down and pulls her wraps from her gym bag and wraps her hands.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - OFFICE - DAY

Willy takes a seat behind his desk. Sonny enters behind him.

WILLY

Shut the door and sit down.

Sonny closes the door and plants himself in a chair.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

Ivan fires punches at the bag, then lightens.

IVAN

Hey. What was all that about?

ELLE

Long story.

Ivan hammers the bag, then lightens again, lustfully peeking over at Elle. He stops all together.

IVAN

So I was thinking...

Elle looks up from her wraps.

IVAN

... Maybe--

WILLY (V.O.)

How come I don't I hear that bag.

Ivan falters, shakes his glove and head at Elle, then reluctantly returns to hitting the bag.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - OFFICE - DAY

Sonny sits with his arms crossed, visibly upset.

WILLY

All I'm saying is I ain't gettin' no younger.

SONNY

So what then? You're just gonna walk away from Elle, from--

WILLY

Would you listen to me for fuck's sake! I'm still gonna be in here everyday. Hell I ain't done nothin' but for the last sixty years and I ain't planning on changing that now...

Willy pours water from a pitcher on his desk into a glass, takes a drink, then cringes.

WILLY

... That doctor's full of shit by the way...

Willy cups his fingers over his glass and pours the water into the pitcher, keeping the ice.

He then pulls a whiskey bottle from his desk drawer, pours it into the glass, then takes a fully enjoyed sip.

WILLY

... It ain't no secret I ain't gonna live forever, and I ain't about to have the God damn government step in and tax the shit out of this place when I die. If they want any more money they can go ask the God damn Chinese, or Korean's for all I care, but they ain't gettin' it here... So I'm signing the deed, and that's that.

Sonny slowly uncross his arms and rises in his chair.

SONNY

So you want me to run the gym?

WILLY

Get your head out of your ass. You can run this place when I'm in the ground. I'm just putting it on paper.

The ring timer DINGS.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

Ivan lands one last big blow on the bag, removes his gloves, then glances to Willy's office on his way to Elle.

IVAN

What do you think's going on in there?

Elle finishes the wrap on one hand and pulls the other wrap from her bag, uncovering the college book.

Ivan spots the book and quickly snatches it from the bag. It sends Elle into a frenzy.

IVAN

(teasing)
What's this?

Elle peeks over at Willy's office, then grabs at the book, but Ivan pulls away.

ELLE
Quit playing and give it back.

IVAN
Look at you college girl.

ELLE
I'm not playing, Ivan. Give it.

Ivan lifts to book above his head out of Elle's reach.

IVAN
And if I don't?

Without hesitation, Elle thumps Ivan in the stomach.

Ivan buckles over with the wind knocked out of him and he extends the book to Elle. She grasps it.

Willy's office door CLICKS open, Elle immediately release the book and leaves it in Ivan's hand.

WILLY
(to Sonny)
Now I don't want to make a big deal
out of this, so let's keep it--

Willy, and Sonny, fist full of papers, exit the office and slow at the sight of Ivan buckled over in pain.

WILLY
You gotta take a shit or something?

IVAN
(catching his breath)
Not anymore.

WILLY
Then get your ass back to work.

Ivan stretches himself into the upright position.

Sonny notices the book.

SONNY
Hey, Smart Guy. Maybe you put the
book away and do what you're
supposed to so as I ain't gotta
read you no bed time story when you
get put to sleep, huh?

Ivan extends the book to Elle, but she gives a subtle head shake and reaches for the other wrap from her bag.

The round timer DINGS.

Ivan recognizes Elle's discomfort, but so does Willy.

Ivan tosses the book on his bag and returns to his workout.

SONNY

(to Elle)

I got to take care of some things quick, so why don't you catch a ride home from one of these two and I'll see you at home, huh? And don't be lazy just cuz I ain't here. I know you keep winnin' and all, but that don't mean you get days off.

Elle nods and finishes her wrap.

On his way to the door, Sonny glances at the book.

SONNY

(chuckling)

College, huh? You a smart guy?

Ivan ignores the comments and glances at Elle while he continues to hit the bag.

SONNY

Maybe you don't worry about college, Smart Guy. Maybe you worry more about keeping that right hand up when you throw the left hook, cuz you ain't gonna look so smart laying on the canvas.

Elle listens close to Sonny's comments and swallows hard.

Willy watches Elle's reaction to Sonny's comment.

WILLY

Enough talk. Let's get some work done.

Elle slams her fist into her palms ready to train.

LATER

Willy sits in the corner of the gym and watches an exhausted and sweaty, Elle and Ivan jump rope side by side.

The round timer DINGS.

WILLY

Time.

Elle and Ivan stop and hang their ropes over the ring ropes.

Willy struggles to lift himself from his chair, then turns to his office.

WILLY

Good enough for today. Get them wraps off and I'll get you home--

IVAN

I can take her.

WILLY

Easy, Casanova. I'll take care of it.

ELLE

No. It's okay...

Willy stops and turns back to Elle surprised.

ELLE

I mean it's fine if he wants to drive me home. There's a homework assignment I kind of need help with anyway.

WILLY

Homework? And you need his help?

Elle nods.

WILLY

From that kid there?

Willy points at Ivan. Elle nods again.

WILLY

If you say so. You just make sure he keeps his homework in his pants.

Willy heads to his office with a smirk.

Elle grabs her bag, Ivan his bag, and both awkwardly avoid eye contact on their way out.

INT. IVAN'S CAR - DRIVING - DAY

Silence and tension are in the air, Ivan drives and Elle fans through the pages of the book.

IVAN
 Willy seems to be his normal
 friendly self.

ELLE
 Yeah, I think he's gonna be okay.

Elle stares at the book pages as they flutter past, and stops
 at her acceptance letter tucked between the pages.

IVAN
 So... It's pretty obvious your dad
 doesn't know.

ELLE
 Know what?

IVAN
 That you're planning on going to
 college--

ELLE
 Who said I'm going to college?

IVAN
 I just thought with the book--

ELLE
 What is everyone's deal lately. I'm
 so sick and tired of everyone
 knowing what's best for me, or, or,
 what I should be doing with my
 life.

Ivan stares at the road ahead, a bit taken back.

IVAN
 Sorry. I, I didn't mean anything by
 it. It's just... You were in Mr.
 Davidson's office earlier, and now
 you're carrying around a book about
 college. I just thought... Sorry...
 I should--

ELLE
 (guilt ridden)
 I'm sorry.

IVAN
 It's fine.

ELLE
 It's not fine. I'm sorry I snapped
 like that. It's just...

(MORE)

ELLE (CONT'D)

I don't know what the hell I'm supposed to do. I know if I stay, I'm always gonna wonder if I should have gone, but I know when my dad finds out I've been accepted to Texas, he's gonna--

IVAN

Wait. You've been accepted to Texas already?

ELLE

Yeah, but that's not--

IVAN

Elle... Congratulations! That's amazing!

ELLE

No. Not congratulations. My dad's gonna flip his shit if he finds out I wanna quit boxing.

IVAN

So you want to quit boxing?

ELLE

What? No. I mean... Maybe. I don't know. Why are you asking me so many questions. Agh!

Elle buries her head in her hands.

INT. CAR - PARKED - DAY

Ivan pulls his car up to the curb in front of Elle's house.

ELLE

All I really wanted was to have an option. I honestly didn't even think I would get accepted. Now I have to make a real decision.

IVAN

It kind of sounds like you already did.

Elle lifts her head from her hands to peer over at Ivan.

ELLE

My dad's gonna kill me, isn't he?

IVAN

Probably.

Elle slaps Ivan in the shoulder.

ELLE

You're such a jerk! You're supposed to say, no... It'll be fine... All he cares about is what's best for you and what's gonna make you happy.

IVAN

I'm sure he does, but we both know how Sonny is, so... Enjoy your time chained up in the basement.

Elle smacks Ivan again.

IVAN

What? I'll come visit. Maybe throw a loaf a bread down from the top of the stairs.

ELLE

(with smiles)

You're so stupid.

IVAN

Talk to your mom. Maybe she can soften him up first. Work the body before you go for that knockout blow, right?

ELLE

Yeah, I guess. Thanks for the ride.

Elle reaches for the door handle.

IVAN

Hey.

Elle stops and turns back to Ivan.

ELLE

Yeah?

IVAN

I was thinking... Maybe tomorrow, like after training or something... Maybe, and you don't have to if you don't want to. I don't wanna pressure you or anything.

(MORE)

IVAN (CONT'D)

I mean I know you have a lot of stuff going on... Obviously... But I was thinking maybe, we could... You know--

BANG! Samantha slaps the passenger side window. Elle jumps.

ELLE

Get out of here you stupid little jerk!

SAMANTHA

Why? So you guys can make out or something.

Samantha pretends to make out with an imaginary person.

ELLE

We're just friends, you little idiot!

SAMANTHA

Yeah. Friends who like to make out.

ELLE

You're so dead!

Elle flings her door open, and Samantha sprints off towards the house.

ELLE

Sorry.

IVAN

No big deal. My little brother's kind of a dick too.

ELLE

Anyway. What were you gonna say?

IVAN

Huh? Oh, nothing. Just maybe we can hang out tomorrow... As friends, you know, incase you wanna talk more about the whole college thing.

ELLE

Is that really what you were gonna ask?

IVAN

(unsure)

Yeah, no. I mean, just if you want to talk, or whatever.

ELLE
I mean... I guess that's fine.

IVAN
Great. Then it's a date.

Ivan squints with regret.

IVAN
Not like a date, date. Like a date
on the calender. You know, a time
for us to talk. As friends.

ELLE
Okay. I'm gonna get out now so you
can finish being all weird. Text me
later when you're done.

Elle opens her door and climbs out.

IVAN
I'll text you later.

ELLE
Okay. Bye... Friend.

Elle shakes her head, shuts the door and heads to her house.

Ivan drops his head into his hands on the steering wheel.

IVAN
See you tomorrow, Friend. Smooth,
real smooth--

BANG! Samantha slaps her hands on the car window and Ivan's
head springs from the steering wheel.

SAMANTHA
What's the matter. All done making
out?

Samantha makes out with the air.

ELLE (O.S.)
So dead!

Elle runs towards Samantha from the house.

Samantha SCREAMS, then sprints around the car, then back
towards the house, followed by Elle.

Ivan watches from the car and laughs.

Elle turns back to give Ivan a wave before chasing Samantha back into the house.

Ivan waves back with a smile.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Gloria prepares dinner.

Elle wanders in, heads straight for the fridge, opens it and rummages around.

GLORIA

Hello.

ELLE

Hey.

GLORIA

Uh, no. Hello, I'm making dinner.

Elle backs out of the fridge with a yogurt cup in hand.

ELLE

Okay.

GLORIA

Hello, I'm making dinner so put that away, hello.

Gloria takes the yogurt from Elle and puts it back. Elle gives an exasperated sigh and pulls herself onto the counter.

GLORIA

How are you feeling after this morning?

Elle steals a piece of food from what Gloria is preparing and tosses it into her mouth.

ELLE

I'm okay.

GLORIA

You sure?

ELLE

Yeah. Willy seems like he's doing good.

GLORIA

I suppose there isn't much to keep him from that gym.

(MORE)

GLORIA (CONT'D)

We all know he loves that place
more than his first born.

ELLE

He'd have to be dead before he'd
stop showing up there.

GLORIA

I imagine even then it'll be a
challenge to keep him out. Like a
ghost. Whooooooo.

Elle and Gloria chuckle.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sonny makes his way through the front door and spots
Samantha, on the couch legs crossed, drawing in her notebook.

SONNY

There's my girl.

Samantha, head down, lifts her eyes only to drop them right
back to the notebook.

SONNY

Hey. What's the matter? You don't
hug your old man no more, huh?

Samantha continues to ignore Sonny.

SONNY

What? You that busy?

SAMANTHA

Yup!

Sonny approaches Samantha and takes a seat next to her.

SONNY

That good, huh?

SAMANTHA

Yup.

SONNY

Let me see what you got.

Samantha hands her notebook over to Sonny.

SONNY

I don't get it. What's going on
here?

Samantha's notebook has a drawing of Elle and Sonny in a car giving high fives, and Samantha, with a rain cloud above her being eaten by wild dogs.

SAMANTHA

That's you, that's me, and that's Elle.

SONNY

I see that. You got our names up there. I mean what's with the clouds, and the tears, and what's this?

SAMANTHA

Oh, that's blood, because I'm being dragged away by wild dogs.

SONNY

Okay... But why are you being dragged away by wild dogs?

SAMANTHA

Because you and Elle are driving away to the boxing club, without me, even though you promised to take me with you today, and then it started to get really cloudy and dark, and rainy, and then all these wild dogs came out of the forest and started biting me and trying to eat me, and because I'm soooooo small, and I was all by myself, with no one to help me, the wild dogs dragged me away in the rain and ate my dead body.

Sonny sits silently and processes Samantha's story.

SAMANTHA

Oh. And that's you and Elle giving each other high fives and laughing.

SONNY

Sammy. I didn't forget about you. I was gonna pick up...

Samantha's face puckers and she folds her arms.

SONNY

... Something came up, and I had to take care of it.

SAMANTHA

Something more important than your daughter?

SONNY

Come on now. You know there ain't nothin' more important than my Sammy, huh? You tell me you know that.

Samantha turns her face away from Sonny.

SONNY

You better let me hear it, Little Sammy.

Sonny pokes Samantha in the side a few times.

SONNY

You better speak up, You.

Sonny tickles Samantha. She attempts to fight it.

SONNY

Come on you! Let me hear it.

SAMANTHA

No.

SONNY

You tell your old man, that you know he loves you.

Samantha squirms and SQUEALS.

SAMANTHA

No! Never! Okay! Stop. I'm gonna pee all over your couch.

SONNY

You go ahead, cuz I ain't stoppin till I hear it.

SAMANTHA

Fine! I know.

Sonny lets up and the two settle.

SONNY

Yeah. You better know it.

SAMANTHA

Yeah, I know. But I wanna go do something.

SONNY

Do something? What do you wanna do, huh?

SAMANTHA

Something with just you. Without Elle.

SONNY

Why? You don't like your sister.

SAMANTHA

Ugh. Who does? She's a dumb teenager.

SONNY

Hey.

SAMANTHA

What? She is. All she wants to do is sit around on her dumb phone.

SONNY

That ain't no lie. What's today Wednesday, no Thursday, Thursday. How bout this... Saturday morning... We get up before your mom and Elle, and we go to breakfast. Just me and you, huh?

SAMANTHA

Yeah. And then after can we go to Ferry's Fun House and play miniature golf and ride go carts? No. Go carts first, then miniature golf.

SONNY

Maybe we start with breakfast, huh?

SAMANTHA

Fine. But if you're just taking me to breakfast, you're still gonna owe me. And you better not forget again. Or I'm gonna find Ricky Wallace and have him beat you up again.

SONNY

Hey! Who told you about that fight?

SAMANTHA

Seriously? The newspaper is on the wall at Willy's gym, Dad.

SONNY

Yeah, well I don't care what that newspaper, or them judges said. I won that fight. Even Ricky Wallace could tell you that, except he don't talk so good no more.

Sonny shakes his fist and gives Samantha a wink.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elle keeps sneaking food Gloria is using for dinner.

GLORIA

So Sam said Ivan gave you a ride home today. He's kind of a cute.

ELLE

Mom, don't.

GLORIA

What? I'm just saying--

ELLE

Mom, please don't.

GLORIA

If I was your age--

ELLE

Oh my God, Mom stop!

GLORIA

Alright. Fine... He's got a cute little butt too.

ELLE

Mom!

GLORIA

Alright. Alright.

ELLE

Stop.

Elle reaches for another piece of food and Gloria smacks her.

GLORIA

You stop. You're just like your father.

ELLE

Ugh. I sure hope not. He's such a nerd.

Gloria clears her throat.

GLORIA

I happened to have married that nerd.

ELLE

Sucks to be you.

Gloria stops cooking and points her spatula at Elle.

GLORIA

Hey. Let me tell you. Your father can be very romantic--

ELLE

Nope. Stop. I'm sorry. He's not a nerd, he's amazing and all that. Just please don't finish that story.

Gloria eyes Elle, then slowly turns back to dinner.

ELLE

Speaking of your husband. I kind of want to run something past you.

Gloria perks up.

GLORIA

Is it about Ivan?

ELLE

What? No. I'm being serious. Mr. Davidson called me into his office at school today...

GLORIA

Because...

ELLE

... Because I got a letter from--

SONNY (O.S.)

Two of my favorite girls right here.

Sonny enters the room behind Elle, closes in on Gloria, then hugs and caresses her from behind.

GLORIA
Pretty smooth for a nerd.

ELLE
Oh my gross.

Sonny pulls away.

SONNY
What? You think I'm a nerd?

GLORIA
Yeah, but you're my nerd.

Sonny reaches for a piece of food. Gloria slaps his hand, but he's able to snatch one and toss it in his mouth.

GLORIA
Anyway. What were you saying about Mr. Davidson?

SONNY
That's the guy we gotta meet with. The counselor, right?

ELLE
Yeah.

Gloria perks up.

GLORIA
Counselor.

SONNY
Yeah, but she don't know what for. He said it ain't bad though.

GLORIA
Maybe she won an award.

SONNY
That's what I said.

Elle rolls her eyes, hops down from the counter and starts out of the room.

ELLE
It's not for an award.

GLORIA
Maybe he wants to talk about college or something. You graduate this year, and you have to do something.

Elle slows.

SONNY

She is doing something. She's a fighter.

GLORIA

No, she needs to do something with that beautiful brain of hers.

Elle begins to speak.

SONNY

Yeah, but she's too good a fighter to throw that away. She's got a real shot at the Olympic team this year. I mean that depends on how she does at nationals. Hey, you get your run in?

ELLE

I did like, two hours at Willy's today.

SONNY

That's not what I asked. I asked if you ran.

ELLE

No.

SONNY

You gotta understand. You ain't fightin' at no local club show. Nationals is only about a month away, and we need to be ready.

ELLE

Dad. I know when nationals is.

SONNY

(getting heated)

Then you know you should be doing your run. If you ain't out there doin' your work, some other girl is... And we ain't making it to no Olympics, if we can't even compete at nationals.

ELLE

We?

SONNY

Yeah, we. Me and you.

ELLE

We. We, we, we. You keep saying we!
But there's no, we! I'm the only
one training. I'm the only one
running. I'm the only one in the
ring getting hit, and taking a
beating... Even when I do win, I
still get hit!

Gloria places her hand on Sonny's shoulder.

GLORIA

Maybe we all calm--

Sonny rips his shoulder from Gloria.

SONNY

You think all those hours I spend
coaching you, and, and, driving you
around to all your fights, and all
the sacrifices, both me and your
mom and your sister make to help
you get to this level ain't work?
You think it ain't work trying to
keep you motivated? You think that
every time you get hit I don't feel
it? You think it's easy to sit
outside that ring and watch my
daughter get beat on because she
ain't doing all them things I told
her she needed to do so that
wouldn't happen.

ELLE

Fine.

Elle starts out of the room.

SONNY

It ain't fine. Where you going?

Elle stops and turns back to Sonny.

ELLE

What you said. I'm going for a run,
that way you don't have to feel so
bad the next time I take a beating.

Elle storms out.

Sonny rests his hands on the counter, hangs his head and
Gloria rubs his back.

GLORIA

You can't be that hard on her.
She's a good kid. She works hard
and stays out of trouble. Most kids
can't even do that.

Sonny thrusts himself off the counter.

SONNY

She ain't most kids. She's my kid,
and boxing ain't like most sports.
It ain't like baseball, or
basketball. You don't just get beat
and go home. When you get beat...

Sonny holds up his fists.

SONNY

... You get beat. I seen guys after
a win, look like they lost because
of the beatin' they took. I know
you don't want that for her.

GLORIA

I get it. But you can't push her so
hard. Look what happened with you
and your father. Is that what you
want?

Sonny's face turns sorrowful.

SONNY

She don't think of me that way,
huh?

GLORIA

I don't know what she thinks,
Sonny. You have to ask her?

SONNY

Come on... She's only seventeen.
Even she don't know what she
thinks.

GLORIA

Did you?

EXT. DOWNTOWN - STREETSIDE - NIGHT

Elle jogs past local businesses with her head down.

A car pulls into a parking lot in front of Elle and slams its
brakes. It almost hits her.

Startled by the close call, Elle lets the car pass. She interlocks her fingers, places them on her head, breathes deep, then continues on.

A SKATER BOY (16) in the parking lot, practices tricks, and catches Elle's attention until her eyes lock on a group of college students in the window of a cafe.

Lap tops open, the students sip their drinks and laugh.

Elle slows to a stand still and stares. Tears swell and her hands fall to cover and wipe her eyes.

Elle takes deep controlled breathes. Unable to concentrate, her eyes and head wander without focus.

Frustration builds and Elle clenches her teeth and fists, then lets out a SCREAM.

The skater boy stops to stares at Elle.

Elle collapses to a seated position on the curb and buries her head in her hands. Tears fall.

The skater boy cautiously approaches.

SKATER BOY

Are you okay?

ELLE

(head down)

I'm fine. Go away.

The skater boy takes another step closer and leans to get a look at Elle's face.

SKATER BOY

You don't seem fine.

Elle pops her head up.

ELLE

Are you fucking retarded? I said
I'm fine.

The skater boy throws a hand up in concession.

SKATER BOY

Dude, relax. You just looked like
you needed help? I wasn't trying to
start anything.

ELLE

Well I don't...

Elle takes a deep breath.

ELLE
... Sorry. You're obviously just
trying to help.

The skater boy gestures to the curb next to Elle.

SKATER BOY
May I?

ELLE
Free country.

The skater boy plants himself on the curb next to Elle.

SKATER BOY
Friends, boyfriend or parents?

ELLE
What you mean?

SKATER BOY
I'm guessing it's one of those
three that's got you crying on a
curb in a parking lot at night.

Elle cracks a slight smile.

ELLE
Parents.

SKATER BOY
My parents are kind of shitty too.

ELLE
Actually, it's mostly my dad. It
doesn't matter what I do, or how
good I do it, all he ever does is
tell me where I screwed it up.

SKATER BOY
I'm sure he means well.

The skater boy pats Elle's knee, then lets his hand linger.

Elle uncomfortably stares at the skater boy's hand.

SKATER BOY
Maybe I can make you feel better.

The skater boy slides his hand from her knee down her thigh.

Elle springs to her feet.

ELLE

Get off me you fucking pervert!

The skater boy rises.

SKATER BOY

What's your issue, Bitch--

Elle throws a straight right that connects with the skater boy's nose and sends him ass first to the ground.

The skater boy holds his nose in shock. It bleeds.

SKATER BOY

You broke my nose!

ELLE

Stand up, Creeper, and I'll do it again.

Elle takes a step towards the skater boy and he instantly scrambles backwards from his rear and rises to his feet.

SKATER BOY

Fuck you! Give me my skateboard.

ELLE

This one?

Elle snatches the board from the ground and in a rage, slams it against the curb.

SKATER BOY

What the fuck?

The skater boy takes a step towards Elle.

Elle abruptly stops and marches toward the skater boy, who instantly backpedals to keep his distance.

ELLE

What's the matter? You don't want to come make me feel better again?

Elle hurls the skateboard into the parking lot.

SKATER BOY

Fuck you, you, Psycho Bitch!

ELLE

Yeah! You wanna see psycho?

Elle charges towards the skater boy. He scrambles to his skateboard, snatches it from the ground and sprints off.

Elle slows, frustration builds, and with fists clenched, she loses control and SCREAMS.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria scoots through the dimly lit room, arms overloaded with clean laundry. A sock falls and she bends to pick it up.

SONNY (O.S.)
You need a hand?

Gloria jolts and drops of few other pieces.

GLORIA
Why do you do that?

SONNY
Do what?

Sonny curiously watches Gloria attempt to pick the clothes she dropped without dropping more.

GLORIA
I know you do that on purpose.

Sonny smirks.

SONNY
How come you don't just make two trips?

GLORIA
How come you don't help me?

Sonny meanders to Gloria and picks up the few pieces she's dropped, then follows her to the bedroom.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - SONNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Gloria drops the laundry onto the bed, then folds it. Sonny trails behind and tosses the pieces he holds onto the bed.

GLORIA
Why can't you just talk to her?

SONNY
Who, Elle? I talk to her all the time.

GLORIA
Then maybe you try listening, huh.

SONNY
What was that?

GLORIA
What was what?

SONNY
That thing. That thing you just
did, with the, huh? That's my
thing. You try'na steal my thing,
huh?

With a grin, Sonny closes in on Gloria, pulls her in close,
then grabs a hand full of her ass.

GLORIA
What are you gonna do, Mr. Boxer
man... Huh?

Sonny spins Gloria around, then flings clothes from the bed,
never letting his eyes stray from hers.

SONNY
Maybe I just show you, huh?

GLORIA
Yeah?

Sonny leans in and kisses Gloria. They hear the front door
SLAM closed.

Sonny stops, sighs, then lets his head fall to Gloria's
shoulder.

GLORIA
Elle? You back?

ELLE (V.O.)
Yeah.

Sonny reluctantly pushes off of Gloria and moves into the
doorway of the bedroom.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Sonny props himself in the doorway of his bedroom as Elle
walks through.

SONNY
Long run, huh?

ELLE

It was a run. You told me to run, I ran.

Elle waits. She's eager to be done with the conversation.

SONNY

Why you got that face on?

ELLE

No face.

SONNY

You mad at me now?

ELLE

Not mad.

SONNY

You look mad.

ELLE

Dad. I'm not mad, no face, just tired, now can I please get something to eat so I can go to bed?

Both hold in momentary silence.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - SONNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sonny glances back at Gloria. She gestures for him to reach out to Elle.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

SONNY

Maybe... Like... If you need to talk about why you're mad--

ELLE

Dad! I said I'm not mad. I'm exhausted. Can I please just--

SONNY

No, yeah. You do your thing. I'll just, uh, see you in the morning then, huh?

ELLE

(irritated)
Good night.

Elle hurries off.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - SONNY'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Sonny closes the door and turns to find Gloria with a glare and hand on her hip.

SONNY

What do you want me to do? I asked her, she said no.

GLORIA

Because she's seventeen. You can't give her a choice, or it will always be no. You... Have to talk to her, not just ask if she wants to.

SONNY

Yeah, maybe.

GLORIA

No. Not maybe. Now go talk to her.

Sonny holds and takes a good look at Gloria.

SONNY

You know she gets that attitude from you.

GLORIA

(with attitude)
Excuse me?

SONNY

See.

GLORIA

Stop playing and go talk to your daughter.

SONNY

Yeah, okay. I'll talk to her. You work on that attitude.

Gloria grabs a sock from the pile and throws it at Sonny. He ducks it any hurries out the door.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Elle removes some leftovers from the fridge.

SONNY

So... There's fights in two weeks
down at Donny's place. You want me
to find a girl for you.

Elle replies with a shrug and piles food onto her plate.

SONNY

(shrugging)

What's this? All the time, no
answers, just this.

ELLE

It means I don't know.

SONNY

I know what it means. I wanna know
why all the sudden no answers.

Elle stops fixing her plate and snaps at Sonny.

ELLE

I don't know, okay!

SONNY

(aggressive)

I'll let that one go because I know
something's up. But it won't happen
again. You hearin' me?

ELLE

(timid)

Yes, Dad.

SONNY

Good! Now I come out here to talk
to you. So now we talk. I know you
don't wanna hear what I have to
say... So this time... This time
I'm just gonna try and listen. If
there's a problem, or you... Maybe
you did something bad. I don't know-

-

ELLE

I didn't do anything wrong, I
just...

SONNY

You just what?

ELLE

I just don't know what I'm supposed
to do after school.

SONNY

What? Like tomorrow?

ELLE

No, not like tomorrow. Like after I graduate. I can't just live at home with you and mom forever.

SONNY

Why? You don't like us now.

ELLE

(ranting)

Oh my God, you are so frustrating. Everything doesn't always have to be a question? I mean... Do I go to college, do I keep boxing, do I get a job, what? I have no idea what I'm supposed to do.

Sonny goes silent, unsure of what to say.

ELLE

(solemn)

I can't do all those things... But I have to do something.

SONNY

Yeah. I sometimes forget you're growing up, huh. And I don't know too much about all this other stuff. All I know is boxing. And you know more than anyone else. It's like a disease. It get's in your blood and it's there forever. It's hard work, and it's painful. It messes with your mind and you want to quit it but you can't. Every time you try and step away, that's all you can think about.

(beat)

I don't know... Maybe I just got hit in the head to many times.

Sonny wait in a momentary silence unsure how to proceed.

SONNY

So you uh... You think you wanna do the college thing then?

Elle looks away.

SONNY

You talk to your mom about this?

Elle shakes her head.

SONNY

Maybe I talk to her, and... I don't know... Maybe we think of somethin'.

Sonny and Elle linger in an awkward silence. Sonny taps the counter with his knuckles, then turns away to exit.

ELLE

Dad.

Sonny turns back and Elle's mood lightens.

ELLE

Who we beatin' up in two weeks?

SONNY

Anyone stupid enough to stand in the ring with my Champ.

Sonny and Elle share a momentary smile, then Sonny exits.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

An array of fighters workout throughout the gym. Elle works the speed bag.

Willy watches from his chair in the corner.

Sonny enters with excitement and hand CLAPS.

SONNY

Guess who's got some work to do today?

Elle fires a quick, hard punch on the speed bag, stops, then turns her attention to Sonny.

OLIVIA (17) braids in her hair, athletic build, game face on and hands pre-wrapped, follows Sonny into the Gym.

A man in a track suit at Olivia's side, takes her gear bag, places it next to the ring.

SONNY

(to Olivia)

Just let me know when your ready and we'll get some head gear on you two. And thanks again, Freddie.

Sonny shakes the man's hand and excitedly makes his way to Elle who curiously eyes Olivia, and her companion.

ELLE
What's she doing here?

SONNY
She agreed to come in and work you a little.

ELLE
And track suit?

Sonny peeks back over his shoulder. The man in the track suit slides gloves onto Olivia's hands.

SONNY
Freddie's a promotor who's been working with Olivia since she won nationals. He's already helped her signed two deals. A clothing line and some, uh, power drink company.

ELLE
An energy drink.

SONNY
Yeah. You know. It gives you power or somethin'. Now grab some water, and once she gets warmed up, we'll get you two some work.

Elle steps to her gym bag, removes a water bottle and drinks.

Olivia approaches, gloves on.

OLIVIA
Hey.

ELLE
Hey.

The two hold momentarily in an awkward standoff.

ELLE
So I heard you won Nationals.

OLIVIA
Yeah. I heard you beat Lucy.

ELLE
Yeah.

OLIVIA
You know she was my only loss?

ELLE
That's what I heard. Did you know
my only loss was to you at
Regional's?

OLIVIA
I remember.

Tension and unease build between Olivia and Elle.

OLIVIA
I'm gonna go warm up them.

ELLE
Yeah, you better go do that.

Olivia does a double take, unsure if she should be insulted by the comment, then warms up on a heavy bag.

LATER

In her corner of the ring, Elle shakes out her arms. Behind her, Sonny holds a towel and a water bottle.

SONNY
Keep your head and hands moving. I
don't need her catching you with
your hands down.

ELLE
You?

SONNY
Yeah. I don't want you gettin'
hurt, and if you look good here,
maybe Freddie gets you a contract
too. Like a energy bar or somthin'.

Across the ring, Olivia steps side to side, ready for battle.

DING. DING. DING. The rounds timer sounds.

Elle and Olivia meet in the center of the ring, touch gloves, then circle on another.

A few punches are thrown. None connecting.

Freddie closely watches.

Sonny slips punches from the corner.

SONNY

Let them hands go! We're here to work.

Elle's covers up with her gloves, and her eye's peek through to Sonny. She's hit with a clean one-two punch from Olivia.

SONNY

Don't just stand there. Move your head.

Elle peeks through her gloves, out the ropes to Willy, then hands up walks straight to Olivia and never throws a punch.

Olivia fires punch after punch. Elle's hands are up and her defense tight, but Olivia continues to land.

Willy quickly lifts himself from his seat and heads to Sonny.

WILLY

Stop it.

SONNY

What do you mean stop it?

WILLY

I mean stop the damn fight. She ain't gonna win.

Elle rushes in to Olivia, hands up, then leans on her, still without a punch thrown.

SONNY

She can take this girl--

WILLY

I know she can, but she won't, now stop the damn fight.

Sonny watches Elle close. Elle peek through her gloves once more and she make eye contact with Sonny.

Olivia fires a barrage of punches, most of which are blocked, but some sneak through and land. Elle still doesn't throw.

Sonny quickly throws his towel between the two girls.

SONNY

Hey! Whoa, whoa, whoa!

The girls step apart and Sonny climbs into the ring. Olivia is confused and Elle heads straight to her corner.

SONNY
No more. We're done.

Olivia raises her hands confused and makes her way back to her corner.

Sonny turns to Elle in her corner and furiously rips the gloves from her hands. Elle refuses eye contact.

SONNY
Get out of my ring.

Elle exits the ring past where Willy waits.

WILLY
What the hell was that?

ELLE
I guess we weren't as good as we thought.

WILLY
What the hell is this we shit?

ELLE
I don't know. Ask him.

Elle points to Sonny who speaks with Olivia and Freddie across the gym, while she unwraps her hands.

Willy makes a bee-line towards Sonny. Freddie and Olivia pack their gear.

SONNY
My apologies again.

WILLY
What the hell are you doin'?

SONNY
I'm apologizing for her. That's what I'm doin'.

Elle, bag in hands hurries past Sonny towards the door.

ELLE
Well don't. After all, we did the best we could.

SONNY
Where do you think you're going?

ELLE
I have homework to do.

Livid, Sonny starts towards Elle but is grabbed by Willy.

WILLY

Save it.

SONNY

So what? I say nothin'?

WILLY

There ain't a damn thing your gonna say to her right now that's gonna fix this.

SONNY

You're an expert all the sudden, huh?

WILLY

An expert, no. But at least I can recognize when I've made a mistake. Think about it.

EXT. SCHOOL - COUNSELORS OFFICE - DAY

Elle sits silently across from Mr. Davidson at his desk.

Mr. Davidson's fingers tap his chair in a rhythmic pattern. His eye's break from elle to check the clock.

MR. DAVIDSON

You think I should try calling again?

Elle glances up at the clock.

ELLE

I have to get to practice.

Elle rises from her seat, and Mr. Davidson in his.

MR. DAVIDSON

Elle wait.

(beat)

Don't let this discourage you. If this is what you want, know there will be challenges, and it'll never be easy. Rewarding, yes. Easy, no.

ELLE

Can I go now?

MR. DAVIDSON

Have a nice day Miss Shelton.

Mr. Davidson sinks back into his chair. Elle exits.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

Willy leaves his office and heads towards Elle and Ivan.

Elle stretches and Ivan steps in place and throws punches straight above his head.

WILLY

Keep your elbows in tight. And
reach all the way... Like your
trying to grab a pair of tits.

Willy turns to Elle to catch or look of disapproval.

WILLY

Don't look at me like that. Get
your ass in there and join him.

Elle finishes her stretching and joins Ivan.

MONTAGE

- Ivan and Elle throw punches above their head.
- Elle slips side to side under a rope and throws punches.
- Ivan hold a pad to his chest and Elle fires punches at it.
- Elle works the speed bag.
- Elle and Ivan take a break and drink from water bottles. Ivan squirts Elle and she splashes water back at them. Willy yells at them and shoes them back to work.
- Elle and Ivan jump ropes side by side and glance at each other with a smile.
- Elle and Ivan work on the heavy bags.

END MONTAGE

Sonny enters the gym with Samantha. He watches Elle and Ivan, then makes his way to Willy.

Samantha plops down in a chair next to Willy.

SONNY

How they doin'?

WILLY

Not bad. I had to yell at em for playing grab ass a couple times though.

SONNY

Really?

Elle steps in and out around a heavy bag, throws a few punches, slips, steps to the side and fires a few more.

Ivan works the heavy bag next to her.

Sonny makes his way between the Elle and Ivan.

SONNY

Make sure you're turning that right over. Bang! Bang!

Sonny shows the proper technique.

Samantha opens her notebook and draws.

WILLY

What do ya think? She gettin any better?

SAMANTHA

Who?

WILLY

Your sister... I guess I should have clarified looking at the two of them girls.

Samantha peeks up at Elle and Ivan, then smirks.

WILLY

What do ya got?

SAMANTHA

I'm drawing this one for you. It's for your office.

WILLY

For me?

SAMANTHA

Yeah.

Samantha shows Willy her drawing.

WILLY

That one me?

The notebook shows Willy, overly muscular, in a boxing ring, with a man in black across from him. Elle, Sonny, Gloria and Samantha are drawn outside the ring.

SAMANTHA

Yeah. And there's me, and dad, and mom--

WILLY

And what uh... What's going on over here.

SAMANTHA

That's Elle. She's got a bloody nose because she got beat up in her fight. And look. I even have ice in your glass.

Samantha points to a drink in Willy's corner of the ring.

WILLY

What about this guy here. Who's that?

SAMANTHA

That's the grim--

SONNY (O.S.)

Hey!

Willy and Samantha hold, their attention's stolen by Sonny.

The gym is silent. Sonny inches closer to Elle.

SONNY

What's your problem, huh?

ELLE

Nothing.

SONNY

Then why ain't you listen'?

ELLE

(reserved)

I am. I turned--

SONNY

No! You ain't. You just hung it out there, like a piece of God damn fruit. I said turn it over...

Sonny latches onto Elle's right arm and rips it towards the bag, jerking Elle with it.

SONNY

Bang! If you're gonna throw it.
Fucking fire it!

Timid and in pain, Elle silently pulls back and rotates her right shoulder with an unsettling stare.

Willy, Samantha, and Ivan all watch with unease.

SONNY

Now you just gonna stand there?

Elle nervously steps to the bag, hands up.

DING! DING! DING!

The round timer SOUNDS.

Unsure of herself, Elle lowers her hands and takes a step away from the bag, eyes on Sonny.

Sonny glares. Fury builds.

SONNY

You don't wanna work out here...
Fine. You work in there.

Sonny points to the ring, then storms towards a shelf filled with gloves and head gear.

Samantha hops to her feet and hurries to Sonny while she flips through her notebook to find one page in particular.

SAMANTHA

Do you wanna see my--

SONNY

Not right now.

SAMANTHA

But I drew--

SONNY

Sammy, I said not now. Go sit down.

Samantha backs away slowly, pauses then drops her notebook back onto her seat.

Sonny moves a few pieces of gear with purpose, then grabs a head gear and tosses it to Elle.

Elle catches the headgear and breaks her stare with Sonny only to glance at Ivan.

Ivan uncomfortably pulls his gloves off and hurries to Sonny, then grabs his head gear of choice.

SONNY

What are you doin'?

IVAN

This one fits better.

SONNY

Huh, uh. You ain't gettin in there.

Willy rises to his feet as fast as his body will let him.

WILLY

What are you doing?

SONNY

She don't wanna work out here...
She's gonna work in there.

Sonny pulls a pair of gloves off the shelf and slides his hands in. Willy steps in nice and close to Sonny.

Elle climbs into the ring and Ivan helps tighten with her head gear.

WILLY

I didn't ask you what she was doing. I asked you what the hell you were doing?

SONNY

(hiding his frustration)
We're gonna work. I'm gonna work a little defense, and she's gonna learn to throw. Nothin doin.

Elle and Ivan share a look of concern.

WILLY

Then why does she need head gear?

DING! DING! DING!

Sonny glares at Willy, wraps the Velcro strap around his gloves, then heads to the ring, eyes on Elle.

Samantha hurries over to the heavy, and throws several uncoordinated punches at it.

SAMANTHA

Dad. Like this?

SONNY

Yeah, that's fine. Do your thing.

Sonny never even glances at Samantha, climbs through the ropes into the ring, and shakes out his arms.

Samantha's hands fall to her side and the bag sways. Samantha returns to her seat and places the notebook in her lap.

Elle nervously waits, Ivan in her corner outside the ropes.

Willy apprehensively steps to the edge of the ring.

Everyone waits in anticipation of the bell.

DING! DING! DING!

Sonny moves to the center of the ring and waves for Elle to do the same.

Fear-stricken, Elle steps out to meet Sonny. The two circle.

Elle throws a few jabs. Sonny slips. Elle misses.

SONNY

You gotta be faster than that.

They circle. Elle fires a few more jabs then a right. Sonny slips jabs, not the right, but he blocks it with his gloves.

SONNY

Still slow, but better.

Willy watches every move close.

WILLY

You're too tense. Relax. Don't be afraid to let your hands go.

Samantha glares at the sparring session, then glances at her notebook. A sketch of her and Sonny playing miniature golf.

Samantha slaps her note book closed, then undetected walks past the ring and out the front door.

Elle and Sonny continue to circle. He sides steps and dodges a few more of Elle's punches.

SONNY

What happened? I thought you were--

Elle fires a quick jab square into Sonny's face. It lands.

Sonny takes a step back, wipes his glove to his nose, then glances at it. No blood.

SONNY

What was that? You gonna throw cheap shots.

Elle give a snide shoulder shrug.

SONNY

All right.

WILLY

Keep your hands up, and keep moving.

Sonny and Elle circle. Elle throws a quick combo, but Sonny covers up, blocks the punches, then sends a quick half hook into Elle's side. She drops to her knees.

WILLY

What the hell was that!

From her knees, Elle catches her breath.

Sonny gives a nonchalant shoulder shrug.

WILLY

Enough! Get out of my ring!

Elle springs to her feet.

ELLE

(through her mouthpiece)
I'm good.

Sonny and Elle refuse to break eye contact.

WILLY

No! You're done! This is my gym...
Not yours!

Willy shakes, sweat beads from his brow.

SONNY

She's fine. Just a little soft in the midsection. She maybe should be doin' more crunches, huh?

Elle waves Willy off and continues to circle.

EXT. STREETSIDE - DAY

Samantha wanders down the street, notebook in hand, kicking a few rocks along the way.

INT. WILLY'S GYM

Sonny and Elle circle in the center of the ring, Elle sending out a few soft jabs in search of an opening.

WILLY

Get your damn elbows back to your sides. And stops throwing that nothing bullshit. It you're gonna throw it out there, you fire that damn thing. And you! You better keep your damn hands to yourself.

Willy, breathes heavily and pulls a handkerchief from his pocket, then wipes the sweat from his brow.

EXT. STREETSIDE - DAY

Samantha reaches the set of unguarded railroad tracks that cross the road in front of her.

She stops, looks into the distance in both directions, chooses one, then heads down the center of the tracks.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

With each step, Samantha places one foot in front of the other, hopping from one railroad tie to the next.

With a curious look, Samantha stops and stares at a flattened coin in the gravel between the ties, then bends down.

In the far distance behind Samantha, the headlight of a train shines bright, even through the light of day.

The faint sound of the HORN is heard.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

Elle moves in and out, gloves to her chin, she slips in then throws a quick combo.

Sonny, quickly slips the punches, then throws that little half hook back at Elle's body.

Elle tucks her elbow, blocks the punch then fires a quick left hook and straight right. Both land clean.

Seething, Sonny wipes his nose and gives a nod. Chin down, gloves up, Sonny locks eyes on Elle.

WILLY

No more! We're done!

Ready for battle Elle and Sonny ignore Willy and circle.

Willy leans forward, rubs his chest and cringes.

EXT. RAILROAD TRACKS - DAY

Samantha rests her knees on a rail road tie and tries to pry the coin free, but it doesn't budge.

Behind Samantha the train approaches and blares its HORN. She peeks back at the train, then frantically pulls at the coin.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

Elle fires a quick combo at Sonny. He tucks in tight, no attempt to slip, every punch blocked, then he fires a stiff jab between Elle's gloves.

Elle stumbles back in a daze. Her eyes gloss, and a knee buckles but she stays on her feet.

WILLY

God damn it! I said enough!

Elle snaps out of her daze and regains her footing. Blood pours from her nose onto her shirt.

ELLE

That what you've been waiting for!
I'll make it easier for you this
time!

SONNY

You wanna see what happens when you
put your hands down?

Elle places her hands behind her back.

WILLY

Get out! I want you the hell out of
my...

Willy clutches his chest, falls to his knees, then crumples to the floor.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

Samantha glances back at the train then rapidly turns back to the railroad ties and plucks some rocks out from the rail.

Samantha scrambles to free the coin, but it doesn't budge.

The train approaches. The HORN blares.

INT. WILLY'S GYM - DAY

In the center of the ring, Elle stands before Sonny. Blood drips from her nose. Sonny moves in.

IVAN

Willy!

Ivan hops from the rings and rushes to Willy's side.

Elle and Sonny stop and hurry from the ring. Elle wipes the blood from her nose with her shirt.

Lying on his side, Willy clutches his chest and struggles to breathe.

SONNY

Ivan. Go call an ambulance.

Ivan springs to his feet and sprints to Willy's office.

Sonny and Elle kneel next to Willy. Sonny, peeks at Elle as she wipes blood from her nose.

SONNY

Ivan's calling an ambulance.

WILLY

(struggling)

No shit. I'm having a heart attack,
I'm not fucking deaf.

Elle tears, but chuckles at Willy's comment.

WILLY

Elle. Go make sure Sammy's okay.

Elle, blood stopped, gives a nod and darts off.

SONNY

Dad. I--

WILLY

Bullshit! We ain't startin' that now. You wanna fix somethin'? You fix it with your daughter, not me.

Sonny nods.

ELLE (O.S.)

Where's Sam?

Sonny's head whips to Elle.

SONNY

What do you mean?

ELLE

She's not here.

Ivan jogs over.

IVAN

Ambulance is on its way.

WILLY

Go. These two can baby sit me...
Well, her anyway.

Willy points to Elle and glares at Ivan, who throws his hands up confused at what he did to earn Willy's constant razzing.

Sonny nods and jumps to his feet.

SONNY

You make sure he gets in that ambulance.

Sonny races out the door.

Elle and Ivan kneel at Willy's side.

INT. SONNY'S CAR - DAY

Sonny drives the same route Samantha just walked. With his radio on and window down he scans the area.

The radio station fades to static, Sonny reaches over and turns it off.

EXT. TRAIN TRACKS - DAY

The steel railroad tracks dip at each passing set of the trains wheels. The HORN blasts.

Ambulance SIRENS SOUND in the distance.

Samantha's notebook lies next to the tracks. The pages turn from the gusts of wind caused by the passing train.

INT. IVAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Ivan drives Elle home, both solemn and silent.

Elle's phone lights and she checks it.

Ivan glances over with concern.

IVAN
He find her?

ELLE
Wasn't him.

Elle turns to the window and gazes out lost in thought.

ELLE
Do you think we should have stayed?

IVAN
Even if we had, we wouldn't have been any help anyway. Besides... I'm pretty sure you'd have given him an aneurism to go with his heart attack if you hadn't listened and just stayed.

Elle lets the slightest hint of smile escape.

Elle's phone lights, she peeks down at it, then catches Ivan's eyes on her.

ELLE
My mom... Again. She keeps asking where I am.

IVAN
Aren't you gonna text her back?

ELLE
I'm sure she just wants to know how Willy's doing, and really don't feel like talking about it.

IVAN

What if they can't find Sam?

ELLE

If my dad hadn't found her already,
he'd be blowing my phone sending us
everywhere looking for her.

IVAN

True.

Ivan balks for a moment.

IVAN

So... Speaking of blowing up--

ELLE

He's an asshole.

IVAN

That's not exactly what I was gonna
say--

ELLE

Well I did, so there! All he cares
about, is using me to live out some
stupid dream of his, by being some
sort of... Champion boxer.

(whips her head to Ivan)

What is your deal, by the way?

IVAN

My deal? I don't--

ELLE

Every time I get in your car, it
turns into some sort of therapy
session. Is that your game plan?

IVAN

Game plan?

ELLE

You know. Pretend to be my friend,
interrogate me about my family
issues. Get me to open up about my
feelings so it'll open my legs.

Appalled and straight faced, Ivan pulls the car to the curb
in front of Elle's house and keeps his eyes focused ahead.

IVAN

Sorry about your grandfather. Hope
the rest of your night goes better.

Elle glares at Ivan who refuses to look at her.

ELLE

What? That last comment a little too true for you?

Ivan snaps.

IVAN

Too true? You wanna hear true? You're so fucked up from your daddy issues, you couldn't see a nice guy if he was sitting in the car next to you. Maybe, if he threw a few punches at you though. How's that for a little too true.

Elle furiously gathers her things and exits the car.

ELLE

Fuck you! And thank you. Thank you for reassuring me that every guy is in fact an asshole.

Elle slams the car door and storms off and into her house.

Ivan takes a regretful deep breath and lets his head fall to the steering wheel.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM

Elle storms through the front door and SLAMS it.

Gloria sits on the couch, hands cupped over her face, then lifts her head and tear filled eyes.

Elle tosses her things aside, then spots Gloria.

Gloria rises and speechless, Elle shakes her head fearfully.

Gloria steps forward barely able to speak through the sobs.

GLORIA

Elle--

ELLE

No! They said Willy was gonna be fine.

GLORIA

Elle--

ELLE

They said it was a small heart
attack, but they caught it in time.
He's gonna be fine.

INT. IVAN'S CAR - NIGHT

Ivan raises his head from the steering wheel, then stares at
Elle's front door.

He takes a deep breath, exits the car and makes his way to
the house.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

Gloria places her hands on Elle's shoulders. Elle pulls away
and tears build.

GLORIA

Elle, stop.

ELLE

No. He's fine. Tell me he's okay.

The tears roll from Gloria's eyes.

GLORIA

Willy's fine.

Elle's frozen. She gazes deep into her mother's eyes.

Samantha flies into the room and charges straight for Elle.

SAMANTHA

I hate you! I hate you!

Samantha squeezes between Gloria and Elle, then lets a fury
of punches fly towards Elle.

SAMANTHA

This is all your fault.

Elle holds Samantha back and her eyes find Gloria's.

Gloria covers her mouth and weeps uncontrollably.

SAMANTHA

... He's gone and it's your fault!

Gloria pulls Samantha back from Elle.

Samantha collapses into Gloria's arms with tear filled sobs.

ELLE

Mom?

Elle backs up against the door.

GLORIA

The intersection. It was... He never even saw the train, Elle.

Elle spins away and flings the front door open.

EXT. ELLE'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Ivan stands in the doorway about to knock.

Elle breaks from the house, shoves Ivan to the side, and sprints off down the side walk.

Ivan quickly turns and gives chase.

EXT. STREETSIDE - NIGHT

Eyes swollen and tear filled, Elle pumps her arms, one foot in front of the other, she runs. Her breaths rhythmic.

In the distance behind Elle, Ivan keeps pace. He doesn't gain, just keeps pace.

IVAN

I'm sorry.

Elle peeks back, focuses ahead and forges on.

IVAN

Elle!

Ivan struggles, slows to a walk, only for a moment, he takes a deep breath, fills his lungs, then rejoins the chase.

Elle glances back. The distance between her and Ivan has grown, but Ivan continues on.

Head turned back at Ivan, her foot catches an extrusion from the sidewalk.

Elle crashes to the concrete and her head PINGS off a steel, sign pole. She buckles, gasps, her eyes roll into her head.

IVAN

Elle!

Ivan musters what energy he has left and sprints to her side.

Blood pours from a laceration on Elle's forehead. Ivan instantly peels his shirt and applies pressure to the wound.

IVAN

Stay with me. You're gonna be okay.
You're gonna be okay.

Ivan pulls his cell from his pocket with one hand and dials. He applies pressure to Elle's head with his other hand.

INT. HOSPITAL - EMERGENCY ROOM - NIGHT

Elle lies asleep in a hospital bed.

Gloria at the foot of the bed, eyes red and swollen, receives instruction from the ER DOCTOR (50's).

ER DOCTOR (V.O.)

Blood pressure's good, heart rate's good. We'll monitor her for the rest of the evening, and as long as everything continues to look good, we'll get you discharged by morning. She is gonna have a pretty bad headache, but you're over the counter pain killers should take care of that. If for any reason that doesn't help, just give us a call and we'll give her something a little stronger.

GLORIA

And the stitches?

ER DOCTOR

They should dissolve on their own in a few days, but if they seem to be lingering go ahead and bring her in and we'll remove them.

Elle's eyes flutter open.

GLORIA

Thank you.

ER DOCTOR

Not a problem. The nurse should be in shortly to move you to your room.

The ER Doctor leaves Gloria with Elle.

ELLE

Mom?

Elle rubs her hand across her head and winces when her fingers cross the laceration and stitches.

GLORIA

Elle, Baby, don't touch it.

Gloria seats herself on the bed, hugs Elle, then brushes Elle's hair from her face.

GLORIA

Do you want me to see if the doctor
can give you some more pain
killers?

Elle solemnly shakes her head and the two sit silently.

Gloria tears, then Elle. Elle lets her eyes wander the room.

GLORIA

Elle, he was... You know your
father...

Elle turns her head away from Gloria and tears fall.

GLORIA

... All he ever wanted--

ER NURSE (O.S.)

Mrs. Shelton?

An ER NURSE (35) enters.

ER NURSE

Your room's ready, so we're gonna
go ahead and bring you on up there.

Gloria wipes her tears and rises from Elle's bed.

The ER Nurse adjusts the bed.

ER NURSE

That's a pretty big gash you got
yourself there.

Elle wipes her tears and takes a deep breath.

ER NURSE

(playfully)
I heard that pole you ran into got
the worst of it, though.

The ER Nurse pushes Elle and her bed from the room.

ER NURSE

You really should be thankful. I've been working this ER long enough to see plenty of people that weren't nearly as lucky as you.

Elle closes her eyes and her lips quiver. Try as she might, Elle can't keep the tears from falling.

INT. HOSPITAL - ROOM - NIGHT

The ER nurse wheels Elle and her bed into a curtain divided room and positions it. Gloria follows them in.

The ER nurse hands Elle a remote on a cord.

ER NURSE

There's your remote, and at the bottom there's a call button. Just press it if you need anything.

Elle drops the remote to her side and lies quiet.

ER NURSE

Before I let you be, there was a gentleman who was asking to see you.

ELLE

Tell Ivan now's not the time.

The ER nurse looks to Gloria for confirmation, then peels back the curtain.

Willy lies in a bed next to Elle's, hooked up to monitors. He appears frail and weak.

Samantha sleeps in a chair next to Willy's bed.

Elle throws her blanket back and rapidly rises, but the ER nurse quickly holds her back.

ER NURSE

Whoa... Easy now.

The ER nurse steadies Elle and helps her to her feet, then slides a chair next to Willy's bed for Elle.

Elle steps to Willy, leans across his bed, hugs him and bursts into tears.

Gloria cups her mouth and tears.

WILLY

Easy.

Elle loosens her hold on Willy and takes a seat in the chair.

ER NURSE

I'll let you folks be.

The ER nurse exits and Gloria takes a seat on Elle's bed.

Willy turns Elle's face to the side to take a better look at her gash.

WILLY

You look like shit.

Elle can't help but let a giggle slip through her tears.

ELLE

Thanks. Now I almost look as good
as you.

Willy lets a small chuckle out, then winces in pain.

ELLE

Willy... Dad--

WILLY

Stop. Let me tell you something
about your father. That man loved
his family more than anyone. You
may not know it, but he gave up
everything for you and your mom.
And I mean everything.

Willy stops to catch his breath.

WILLY

Get me some of them ice chips,
there. They say I can't have
anything to drink. The first time I
want some damn water and they won't
let me have any.

Elle grabs a cup of ice chips off a tray near Willy's bed and feeds him a spoon full.

ELLE

That good.

Willy nods and Elle places the cup back on the tray.

WILLY

The only reason your father never made it to the Olympics wasn't because he wasn't good enough. He quit. He quit to fight pro, because he needed the money. Your mom was pregnant, and he needed a way to support his family. That was his way. Not mine, but his.

Willy takes a moment to catch his breath once more.

WILLY

Now I know I wasn't a great father like he was... But I know I must have done something right by him, because my son...

Elle, Gloria, and even Willy, cry.

WILLY

... Because my son was the only man that ever had enough balls to stand up to me.

Willy's breathing become increasingly harder.

GLORIA

You both need your rest. Elle let me--

Gloria rises to help, but Elle shakes her head, and Gloria sits back in her seat.

Elle rests her head on the bed at Willy's side, and grips his hand with hers.

ELLE

I miss him already.

Willy tightens his grip on Elle's hand.

WILLY

Me too.

INT. WILLY'S HOUSE - KITCHEN - DAY

SUPER: TWO MONTHS LATER

Elle, knelt on the counter removes dishes from the top shelf, and replaces them on the lower shelf.

Ivan KNOCKS on the doorway to the kitchen.

IVAN
How's it coming?

ELLE
Hey. It's coming along. I only have two more cabinets, but I still have to do both bathrooms.

IVAN
I imagine Willy's super happy about you moving all his stuff around.

ELLE
Surprisingly he's been pretty cool about the whole thing.

IVAN
Really? Because he's done nothing but give me shit for the past three weeks.

ELLE
I appreciate you driving him up there by the way.

Elle places the last dish on the lower shelf and goes to hop down. Ivan hurries to her side and lends her a hand.

ELLE
Thanks.

Elle and Ivan are face to face, barely any space between the two of them. They stare into each other's eyes.

IVAN
It's not really that big a deal.
I'm always there anyway--

WILLY (O.S.)
You're right. It ain't.

Willy sluggishly enters using a cane to steady himself.

WILLY
Now stop patting yourself on the back, and enough of whatever that is. It's making me sick.

Ivan gives Elle an I told you so look.

WILLY
Why are you here so early anyhow.

IVAN

I don't really have anything going on--

WILLY

Of course you don't.

ELLE

Good, then you have time to walk me home.

WILLY

What about you? You gonna be back in the gym today?

ELLE

(with a smile)

The answer's still the same as yesterday, Willy.

WILLY

Yeah, yeah. Still trying to be smart, huh? I guess... Just leave your old grandpa all by his lonesome.

ELLE

You still have Ivan to keep you company.

Willy glares at Ivan, and Ivan stares back for a moment. Ivan breaks and lets his eyes shift to anywhere else.

IVAN

I'm just gonna wait outside.

WILLY

Good idea.

Ivan makes his way out.

ELLE

I'll be out in a sec.

WILLY

So what's the deal with you two. You together still.

Elle nods.

ELLE

He really is a nice guy.

WILLY

Yeah, he's a good shit.

ELLE

Then can you please be a little nicer to him?

WILLY

Well I ain't gonna be wiping the kid's ass, if that's what you want.

Elle stares at Willy expecting a better response.

WILLY

Fine. But, your asking a lot. You should hear all the stupid that comes out of that kid's mouth.

ELLE

Thank you.

Elle leans in and gives Willy a hug. He pats her on the back.

ELLE

I'll be back tomorrow after school to finish the bathrooms.

WILLY

Alright. Your old grandpa loves you.

ELLE

I love you too, Willy.

Elle starts on her way out of the room.

WILLY

(half-joking)

You know it's okay to call me grandpa.

ELLE

Bye, Willy.

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD - STREETSIDE - DAY

Elle exits Willy's house. Ivan waits on the sidewalk. They start off towards Elle's house.

IVAN

You realize that's what I've dealt with everyday for the last three weeks, right?

ELLE
And I appreciate it.

IVAN
You still owe me.

Elle interlocks her hand in Ivan's, then kisses his cheek.

ELLE
That better.

IVAN
(smirking)
It's a start.

Elle and Ivan continue forward.

IVAN
So, did you hear anything back from
state yet?

ELLE
Not yet. I'm getting a little
worried. I would have thought they
would have made a decision by now.

IVAN
What if you don't get in? You
realize there's always that
possibility.

ELLE
I don't know? There's always Texas.
And you'd think that since I got
accepted to there, State wouldn't
be a problem.

EXT. ELLE'S HOUSE - DAY

Ivan stops and lets go of Elle's hand. They stand in front of
Elle's house.

IVAN
Wait. Are you saying if you don't
get in you're going to Texas? You
know I could never move--

ELLE
No, no, no. I'm not saying
anything. I'm just--

IVAN

If there's still a possibility
you're leaving, then why are we
even doing this?

ELLE

Ivan. Stop.

Elle takes Ivan's hand back in hers.

ELLE

You're getting upset over something
that hasn't even happened yet. I'll
get into state. Don't worry. It'll
happen.

Ivan takes a deep breath and turns away.

IVAN

I'm sorry. You're right. And I
guess if something does happen,
we'll just worry about it then.

ELLE

Thank you.

Elle places her hand on Ivan's cheek and turns his face to
hers and leans in for a kiss. Ivan leans in, then abruptly
pulls away and scans the area.

ELLE

What?

IVAN

Just making sure Sam isn't hiding
in the bushes ready to jump out or
whatever.

Elle laughs, then pulls Ivan in and they kiss.

ELLE

Alright, Mister. You better get
back to Willy's. I'm sure he's
ready.

IVAN

(raising his hands)
Yay. Another fun drive, filled with
confidence boosting sarcasm.

ELLE

Call me when you're done.

IVAN
Alright. Bye.

Ivan gives Elle another quick kiss and jogs off towards Willy's house.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY

Elle makes her way through the living room.

ELLE
Mom, I'm back. Mom?

Gloria scurries in with a cheesy grin and letter in hand.

ELLE
Oh my God, is that it?

Gloria excitedly nods.

GLORIA
Quick. Open it. I want to see.

Gloria quickly hands the letter to Elle, and Elle frantically rips it open and unfolds it. She reads.

ELLE
Dear Miss Shelton. Unfortunately,
at this time...

Elle woefully continues her read in silence.

Gloria's heart sinks into her stomach and she pulls Elle in for a hug.

GLORIA
It's okay. It's only State. There's
plenty of other schools that would
be lucky to have you.

Elle pulls away from Gloria and stares back at the letter.

ELLE
I don't know... Maybe I--

GLORIA
No. You are going to get in
somewhere. Don't you worry about
that.

ELLE
Yeah... Maybe this is sign that I
should just--

GLORIA

Listen to me. I know your father made sacrifices for this family and I loved him for that. But I made sacrifices too. I stayed home. Made sure this house was taken care of. Did the dishes, cleaned, did laundry, all of it, for him, you, your sister, every day... That way you girls were taken care of. But I don't want that for you. I don't want you to stay at home, and be some house wife. I want you to learn, and explore, and make a life outside of this house... Outside of boxing. Not just live for your family. Love your family, yes, but live for you. I don't want to see my daughter sacrifice herself for everyone else. Keep applying... You'll get in somewhere. I know it.

Elle leans in and hugs Gloria.

ELLE

I love you.

GLORIA

I love you too.

Elle lets go of her mother and ponders her next move.

ELLE

I have something for you.

GLORIA

For me?

ELLE

Yeah... Just... I'll be right back.

Elle points towards her room, then heads that direction.

GLORIA

Elle.

Elle holds.

GLORIA

I know he's watching us, over you girls... And he'll make sure the world takes you where you need to be.

Elle nods with a radiant smile, then heads to her room.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - ELLE'S ROOM - DAY

Elle slides a drawer open on her dresser, lifts some clothes and pulls the book "Everything You Need to Know About College" from under them.

Elle flips through the pages until it opens at her acceptance letter from Texas. She removes the letter and unfolds it.

She reads the letter and a smile lights Elle's face.

With a deep breath and grin, Elle cheerfully makes her way out of her room.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Elle gleefully makes her way back down the hall with her book and letter.

She slows to a stop at Samantha's room, when some ODD NOISES catch her attention.

Elle gently pushes Samantha's door open a crack.

Samantha, in front of her mirror, hands up and out of breath, throws a few awkward punches. Elle looks on.

Elle glances down at the acceptance letter in her hand, then back to Samantha.

Elle lowers her head to the letter, holds, looks to the ceiling, then slides it back between the pages of the book and with a soft smile enters Samantha's room.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - SAMANTHA'S ROOM - DAY

Samantha is startled and drops her hands.

Elle tosses the book onto Samantha's bed, then lifts Samantha's hands to proper form.

ELLE

Hand's up to your cheeks. Okay
elbows in nice and tight. Now jab
straight out, and bring it straight
back.

INT. ELLE'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY

Elle throws a few punches to demonstrate. Elle gestures for Samantha to do the same. Samantha mimics her.

Elle and Samantha move forward and back next to each other throwing punches into the mirror on Samantha dresser.

FADE OUT