

F O S T E R

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FADE IN:

INT. CLASSROOM. LATE MORNING

Chalkboard is shown with a drawing of a circle on a graph in the upper right hand corner of the board. Camera pans to show students sitting at desks watching teacher instruct on the basis of lecture.

TEACHER

So, I want you guys to plan for the exam Friday and not get caught up in the shenanigans of the talent show or whatever else is going on this week.

Teacher intentionally looks at Hugh to make a point.

(Bell rings and the students pour out into the hallway)

Hugh is seen walking out into the hall with a fellow classmate as conversation starts.

CLASSMATE

How's it looking?

HUGH

How's what looking

CLASSMATE

The new mixtape

HUGH

Eh, it's coming along...

CLASSMATE

Nice, nice. Everybody is hyped for that thang. We are all waiting for it.

HUGH

So I've heard... (looks stressed by the thought)

JAMES

(Walking by) What's up Hugh God.

HUGH

What's up James?

JAMES

Keep grinding homie!

HUGH

Always brother.

CLASSMATE

Alright, see you tomorrow

Hugh stands for a moment lost in the thought, then an alarm rings on his phone saying "Bus leaving in 2 minutes." Hugh walks off and gets on bus in seat next to window.

INT. STUDIO.

Inside studio, the news is playing as an engineer sits and watches the news. Special report comes on TV.

NEWSCASTER

Earlier today, a 16 year old boy was the victim of a shooting in what many believe to be gang or drug related. Terrence Johnson, known to associates as Bony T, was gunned down near the Lake and Central train stop in the Austin neighborhood. No eye witnesses at this time, but suspect and weapon are still at large.

HUGH

(Softly) damn.

ENGINEER

Friend of yours?

HUGH

Nah. Just crazy out here.

Engineer pounds hugh's fist and exits.

Hugh sits in front of a monitor listening to music writing as beats play through headphones. Constant cuts of mouse click, can popping, pencil scribbling. These sounds are loud over the soft echo of the beat in the background.

Hugh pulls headphones out to play music over speakers. He softly speaks the words he's written down to rehearse the lyrics.

He receives a text. Text message shows on screen (Pop up style) Text reads "6:00." Hugh looks at time to see it is 5:15. He leaves.

EXT. STREET. EVENING

Hugh walks along the block with a small backpack. Noticeably empty. Hugh walks down the block and gets on the bus.

INT. BUS. EVENING

Hugh enters the bus and sits towards the back, alone and isolated. He looks over and notices a woman breast feeding on the bus. Hugh looks into the camera. He looks across the isle and notices a drug addict scratches his arm, mumbling random phrases to himself. He puts his headphones on and writes. A new beat can be heard playing through the headphones. He mouths the words to it as rides along.

EXT. STREET. EVENING

Hugh exits the bus. Steps onto sidewalk and walks towards building. He cuts toward the side of the building and walks in a door where there is only a single light in the alley.

INT. ROOM.

Hugh enters the room. Man is sitting in chair smoking cigar. Blows smoke as Hugh walks up to him.

BOSS

(Scratches beard) What's happening, young blood?

HUGH

Surviving, you know how it is.

BOSS

(Laughs) heh. Yeah I do. Well ain't shit changed just a new roll of tissue. Gone drop this off, check for your deposit tomorrow come back for your pick up Wednesday.

HUGH

Word.

Hugh grabs identical backpack and gives the one from his shoulders as replacement. Hugh shakes hands with man and walks out.

EXT. STREET. NIGHT

Hugh pulls up phone and requests ride from destination. As Hugh wait for his ride to arrive, he notices a homeless man pushing a shopping cart across the street. The homeless man looks at Hugh

HOMELESS MAN

Almost time to go home, ain't it?

Homeless man pushes his cart as his continues
Time to go home. Time to go home

Older car pulls up and window rolls down. AS the window rolls down, a puff of smoke can be seen escaping from the car.

DRIVER

You requested Mustache Rides? Hugh?

HUGH

(Hesitantly) Yeah.. I guess so.

Hugh gets in. As Hugh opens the back door, even more smoke escaped the car.

DRIVER

600 w Chicago?

HUGH

Yeah.

Hugh Looks out of the window.
Question. Did you say mustache rides?

DRIVER

Aw yeah. I know it's "must have" rides but that's just my way of breaking the ice. I use it all the time, even with the guys.

This is the Driver's attempt at a joke. TO lighten the tensions. Hugh recognizes it's a joke, but is still reserved.

HUGH

Alright bro.

DRIVER

Turns up radio. Abrasive Hip-Hop Playing
(Loudly) Yo, you like this music?

HUGH

It's cool. It's not ba- (Cut off)

DRIVER

Yeah this my shit. Me and my niggas in a rap group. This our new shit. It's called "Clucks and Strags" (Sings Along with song)

Hugh gives a weird look at the driver. Music continues to play loudly as the car pulls up to destination.

EXT. SIDEWALK. NIGHT.

The car door opens and Hugh steps out. Driver rolls down the window and yells out.

DRIVER

Be breezy. Gimme a 5 star rating and check out our music on black world.

Hugh stares at his car as he pulls off. Hugh walks through the alley to apartment building.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY

Hugh walks up to door. Knocks. The sound of someone looking through the peep whole can be heard. Hugh knocks again, this time lower than before. Door opens to show a hooded man. His face can barely be seen. Hugh hands him the backpack, shakes his hand, and walks off.

INT. CLASSROOM. LATE MORNING

Hugh in class. Camera is on Hugh as he stares at the board. Teachers words are distorted. The graph on the board is in full focus and seems to have Hugh's attention more than class.

Bell rings

The students pour into the hallway.

(CONT'D)

CLASSMATE

Yo, Hugh! Update?

HUGH

Coming along. You know how it is.

CLASSMATE

Come on man! As your manager, I have to know these things!

HUGH

Oh, you're my manager now?

CLASSMATE

Of course I am, what are best friends for? I'm here to ride the wave of your success, act like I do all the work, and take the trickle down booty!

HUGH

Wow. Well I gotta go. One.

EXT. MAILBOX

Hugh digs into mailbox. Grabs mail that says Hugh on it.

INT. STUDIO.

Hugh sits down in chair, opens mail to pull money out. Counts it twice and tosses it in bag.

Hugh in studio working on songs. Repeat of can popping, pencil writing, mouse clicking, headphones blaring. Saves to hard drive and unplugs it.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM. LATE MORNING

Teacher talking as bell rings. Teacher announces to students as they walk out of the classroom.

TEACHER

Don't forget, you will have an exam on Friday. Chapters 10-19.

INT. HALLWAY.

CLASSMATE

Yo, Hugh!

HUGH

(walking quickly) yeah man it's coming, hopefully by the weekend.

CLASSMATE

Oh that's coo- wait what? No I signed you up for the talent show tomorrow. And I don't wanna hear no excuses why you cant. I know you ain't doing nothing. Grand prize is \$200 and that's studio time.

HUGH

Yeah, Idk man. Seems short notice as fuck.

CLASSMATE

Don't hoe out man. Get this money and we in. If that bogus ass song James and his cousins made is all over the radio I know you can get somewhere too. Plus my cousin from sell out records gone be there.

HUGH

James got a song on the radio?

CLASSMATE

Did you not hear what I said. Yeah. It's like strags and clucks and clucks and strags. Some whack ass song. They put anything on the radio now. That ain't the point, my cousin gone be there. He put everybody from the hood on. Yung booty, Lil kangaroo and 26 savage.

HUGH

I see.

CLASSMATE

Yeah. But just practice what you gone do, and tomorrow night, we getting signed.

HUGH

On god.

INT. STUDIO.

Hugh in studio working on songs. Repeat of can popping, pencil writing, mouse clicking, headphones blaring.

Phones goes off and a text says 6:00. Hugh looks at clock it says 5:00.

INT. ROOM.

Hugh enters the room. Man is sitting in chair straight up with hands folded. Hugh walks up to him

BOSS
(More stern) What's happening, young blood.

HUGH
Just living.

BOSS
Yeah Well I ain't gone bullshit with you today. One of the runners got popped, so i'm a need you to make another drop tomorrow too. It's getting hot out there but you look green and clean so we gone use that.

HUGH
You said Tomorrow?

BOSS
Yeah.

HUGH
I mean I got a talent show I was gone do-

BOSS
You been with me for a long time. Now, I need you. This Chicago, its lil talent shows and open mics every night. You can miss one.

HUGH
Ok

Hugh switches the bags and shakes hands with the man.

BOSS
See you tomorrow kid.

Hugh walks out and gets in must have rides. As he gets in, he hears "Clucks and Strags," playing again.

INT. APARTMENT HALLWAY.

Cuts of Hugh knocking and delivering backpack.

INT. CLASSROOM. LATE MORNING

Hugh is in class listening to teacher. Shot shows Hugh looking where his classmate usually sits, but is not there today. Hugh receives text from classmate, "Fuck, woke up late. I'll be there tonight. Send me song so we can scream the lyrics from the crowd." Hugh digs through backpack for hard drive but can not find it. Hugh looks frantic as he searches wondering where it could be. Bells rings and class leaves while Hugh is texting lyrics.

Teacher walks up to desk

TEACHER

I guess that text was more important than my lecture today.

HUGH

Nah it was just an emergency.

TEACHER

Well don't bring it during the exam tomorrow or it's mine.

HUGH

(Ignoring the comment) I got a question. Why every day you got that circle on the board but we never use it. I mean this ain't math class.

TEACHER

(Chuckles) I was wondering when one of you would ask about it.

HUGH

(Waits a second) So?

TEACHER

Universally it's known as the perfect circle, or godspeed. Me I think I use it to represent life.

HUGH

Life? Like circle of life rafliki type sh-stuff?

TEACHER

Life. As in everything is revolving around one central theme or idea of happiness. (Points at the board) Sometimes you'll be at the bottom of the circle, sometimes you'll be at the top, but it'll always come back full circle.

(MORE)

TEACHER (CONT'D)

That goes for the way we treat people too, money, everything. Just something to think about.

HUGH

(Nonchalant) riiiiight. Well I gotta go.

TEACHER

Mhmm. See you tomorrow Mr. Lee. (As hugh walks away) And study for your exam!

INT. SCHOOL. HALLWAY

(Music plays during this scene of multiple actions and shots) Hugh walks out into the hallway, looking at his phone before walking into an auditorium. Hugh walks up handing another student a USB drive. Hugh walks out and heads towards the studio where he sits and prepares for his performance. He hops in a must have rides and proceeds to destination.

INT. ROOM.

Hugh enters the room. Man is standing with another man next to him. He is pacing.

BOSS

You're late. You never late.

HUGH

Yeah I'm sorry I got held up in class.

BOSS

This is rock. He'll be going with you. This is our first meet with these cats so I couldn't have you on your own this time. Plus it's a lot more this time. (Hands rock a black duffle bag)

HUGH

Sup Rock. (Shakes Hand)

ROCK

Look kid, you're gonna run point, I'm just there to make sure it all goes smooth as new ass.

HUGH

Alright.

BOSS

Now Rock is gonna take the pickup for me,
so you can just go after y'all make the
drop. Deposit tomorrow. Got it?

HUGH

Alright bet.

Hugh and Rock walk out.

EXT. ALLEY

Hugh and Rock walk out the door and Hugh stops to look at
his phone.

ROCK

What you doin lil nigga

HUGH

Calling a ride

ROCK

Get in kid (as he walks to the trunk and
tosses the black duffle bag)

HUGH

Oh that's coo too.

Both get into black truck and pull off. Radio plays. It's
one of Hugh's songs.

HUGH (CONT'D)

Turn that up, let me hear it. (Rock turns
up) This my shit bro.

Radio finishes song as radio jockey comes on.

DJ

Yes that was a new kid he ain't drill,
but it's so real. Called Chicago Sunroof
by God Flow Jones. Somebody tell me what
that is??!

ROCK

(Turning music down) So you on the radio
huh? Good shit kid. Put this in the glove
box. (hands Hugh a gun)

HUGH

(As he puts the gun into the glove box)
Nah bro I don't even know how they got
that, it's not done .

ROCK

Sounds done to me.. They said God Flow
Jones. Yo name ain't even jones. Why not
just go by Hugh Lee?

HUGH

Everybody gone think i'm asian or
something. (Both Laugh) yeah I don't want
Car seen crashing into the side of the car from inside.

EXT. STREET. EVENING

Hugh's jacket is pinned between the seat and a large
piece of glass piercing his arm. Hugh takes the jacket
off and examines his arm. It is bleeding. Hugh looks over
to find Rock bloodied and unconscious. Hugh stumbles out
of the car and looks around. The streets are damp from
the rain earlier in the day. Hugh looks across the street
to see the other car totaled with smoke coming from the
hood as the damaged front end and it's halogen lights are
almost blinding. Hugh scurries back to the car and tries
to wake Rock. Rock is alive, but still unconscious. Hugh
opens the glove box and grabs the gun. He hears the
footsteps approaching as he runs to the trunk and grabs
the bag with the work.

BUDDY

Drop that bag and we'll let you go, B.

Shots echo as bullets connect with the tires and
windshield.

Hugh looks to his left and right. He notices an alley
opening. He sprints towards it, the men shoot at him just
barely missing as Hugh makes an escape through the alley.
Camera cuts t men approaching car and seeing Hugh's
jacket. Hugh can hear the sound of foot steps splashing
in the puddles as they gradually become softer behind
him. He is losing them. They continue to shoot through
the alley ways as Hugh jumps fences and runs into a
grocery store. He hides in the isle . The men enter the
store

INT. STORE

CLASSMATE

I saw him run this way.

BUDDY

(Pointing gun at cashier) Anybody just
come in here?!

Cashier shakes his head as he tries to open register

BUDDY (CONT'D)

Nobody want yo bitch ass money nigga. You sure nobody came in here a few seconds ago?!

Shot of camera panning past the cashier to the television monitors show Hugh in the isle eating potato chips. Cashier can see this as well.

CASHIER

(Distraught) No I Swear!

Camera cuts to Hugh in isle staring at the man and his classmate's backs as they aim a gun at the cashier's head.

BUDDY

You say you know who he is right?

CLASSMATE

Yeah. He in my school

MAN

Bet then we'll get his ass. We gone get that work or you gone end up like Bony T.

Hugh watches as the two exit the store. Hugh waits a few moments and walks up to the cashier

HUGH

Hey why'd you do that. They could've killed you.

CASHIER

You can die everyday. Wouldn't you give your life to save one?

HUGH

Oh. (stands puzzled for a moment)

CASHIER

Think it over. And don't worry about the chips you stole back there.

HUGH

Thanks (walks out)

EXT. STREET. NIGHT

Hugh stands next to the bus stop waiting for its arrival as he looks around suspiciously.

The bus arrives and he gets on. Camera continues to show bus stop as the bus pulls away.

INT. BACKSTAGE. BEFORE SHOW

Host stands backstage pacing impatiently. He stands talking to the audio tech. He flicks ashes from a half smoked cigarette which hangs out of his mouth as he pushes his fuck-boy shades up to his eyes from his nose.

HOST

Every year it's the same shit with these damn kids. I come down to this shit neighborhood, offering money, hoping to find a lick of talent and y'all sign up but don't show up.

TECH

You can't smoke in here

HOST

Look, I rented the place for the night. If I wanna whip my dick out I'm a do that shit.

Tech looks at him and walks away.

Hugh quickly approaches, out of breathe. Audio tech approaches behind him.

HOST (CONT'D)

Whats up foo;, who you?

HUGH

I'm Hugh Lee.

HOST

Hugh Lee. Hugh Lee.

He reaches out his hand and the tech hands him the list of names. He glances at it quickly then looks up. Ain't no "Hugh Lee" on this list. Now I don't know what your little skinny ass tryna pull-

HUGH

It should be under God Flow Jones. I changed it to Hugh Lee.

HOST

(Gives a condescending look) Good. God Flow Jones is a dumb ass name- Wait You got that Sunroof Song right?

HUGH

Yeah

HOST

They been playing that all day on the radio. People been chanting for it all day.

HUGH

For real?

HOST

Yeah man you up next after clucks and strags. But nobody really showed up so you gone have to do that track twice or add a verse or something.

HUGH

Bet. I got you

Host walks out onto the stage

HOST

Alright, alright, give it up for the Cook County Boys with their song, "Clucks and Strags." Nice job fellas nice job. Now y'all get ready, cause up next we got God Flow Jones aka Hugh Lee. (Crowd screams). Yeah track been playing all day. Let's see how this young man brings it!

Host walks back stage to a nervous Hugh.
What's wrong young blood.

HUGH

It's a lot of people.

Hugh walks across the backstage area further from the stage entrance where he begins to pace for a second. Host walks over to him.

HOST

You be aight . Boy you must be trippin'. Go make this money cause ain't nobody gone make it for you. I know you ain't come all this way just to hoe out, so do the damn thang.

HUGH

You're right.

The classmate and man come bursting through the back entrance and running up the stairs to the backstage area. Hugh runs onto the stage.

HOST

(As Hugh runs onto the stage, host signals tech) Start the music!

Hugh performs Chicago Sunroof (Extended Version). As he performs the man and classmate look on waiting for Hugh to finish. They pace anxiously backstage. Hugh notices and during the performance, towards the end, performs a stage dive and is swept away by the crowd.

CLASSMATE

I know where he gone end up, there's only one other exit this way, we can wait for him there.

BUDDY

Show me where

EXT. NIGHT. ALLEY

The show is over and Hugh is saying good bye to everyone. Camera overlooks the man and the classmate hiding as they watch Hugh. As they wait they are grabbed from behind and stuffed into a trunk by two men as they are watched by a man (only his back can be seen). The man turns around and it's Rock. He has a bandage on his head and bruises on his face. He walks over to Hugh and hands him an envelope.

ROCK

Good job tonight kid.

HUGH

Hey! You good, man?

ROCK

Yeah .

HUGH

Good, yo those two dudes are-

ROCK

Already taken care of. Listen you out man.

Hugh looks at him with a confused expression.

The boss knows what you been up to with this music stuff. You got a real shot and nobody wanna see you throw it away for this shit. Go do your thing man.

Shakes Hugh's hand and starts to walk away.

Yo, Rock HUGH

Yeah ROCK

Thanks HUGH

 ROCK
(Smiles) Good Luck.. Hugh Lee.

Rock walks away. Hugh walks to the bus stop and sits down. He pulls out a pen and paper . He puts his headphones in his ear and presses play on his phone. Music Plays. Hugh is on left 1/3 of screen writing . Credits roll on right.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END