

Blake Tahoe
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FADE IN

INT. GYM CORRIDOR -- NIGHT

A dimly-lit hallway in a sports training facility.

BRENDA, a formidable athletic woman in athletic attire, is leaving the locker room. Toward it moves NIK, a white-haired male trainer.

BRENDA

(livid)

You better tame that tiger, Nik.
Else he gonna get hisself killed.

NIK

That's the last of them.

BRENDA

The swagger! I'm done, I tell you.
I am DONE. I am SO done. He keeps
up this showboatin, I'm lucky I
don't kill him myself.

NIK

It'll work out. Go get some rest.
Keys in the trench.

BRENDA

You got that right. --

She storms off. Nik continues toward the locker room while her rant diminishes in the distance.

BRENDA (CONT'D)

Jeezus Lordamighty. I intend to
rest all right. I am so DONE.
Starting fights in a parking lot
over smoking near an exit. And
since when is that a lead news
item? It better work out. "Red
Guard." Humph! I tell you I am SO
done. If I see another news camera
out here I swear I'm gonna punch
it. --

INT. THERAPY ROOM -- LATER

BLAKE -- a brawny male specimen -- solemnly considers the reflection of his shirtless OLIVE PHYSIQUE, while mechanically enduring the routine presently being performed on it.

Nik finishes applying an unmarked tonic to Blake's skin. With a tape and calipers he begins to take measurements of Blake's arms and torso, recording them on a clipboard. Preoccupied with the evening's commotion and reluctant to engage, he is more proud than scornful toward his protégé.

BLAKE
How long to put it back?

NIK
(blindsided)
What?

BLAKE
I want to go back.

NIK
You don't mean that.

BLAKE
I do. I want it like it was.

NIK
Like it was?

BLAKE
Yes.

NIK
You want it to go back like it was.

BLAKE
That's right.

NIK
No.

BLAKE
How long?

NIK
Why?

BLAKE
I was wrong. This was a mistake.

(CONTINUED)

NIK
How can you say that to me?

BLAKE
It's true.

NIK
Blake Tahoe is an icon.

BLAKE
Blake Tahoe is a sham.

NIK
You're talking about my life's
work.

BLAKE
But my life.
(beat)
Nik. I was wrong. The world is not
a better place with this in it. I
want you to take it back.

NIK
Just like that?

BLAKE
Just like that.

NIK
One little headline and you'd spit
me out? Just like that?!

BLAKE
Hold on.

NIK
Don't tell me to hold on. I made
you.

BLAKE
What you made is a mistake.

NIK
You bite your tongue.

Beat.

BLAKE
I'm sorry. I don't know what to
say. I thought it would be
different. I thought I could make a
difference. Make the world better.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BLAKE (cont'd)

Make things right. But look at me.
I'm just one man. No. A monster. I
want you to put me back like you
found me.

NIK

Like I found you.

BLAKE

Yes, Nik.

NIK

Puny and weak.

BLAKE

Yes, Nik.

NIK

Like I found you.

BLAKE

Yes.

NIK

Well there's a problem.

(beat)

I didn't, remember? It was you
found me. I didn't want to do this.
Didn't think it possible. Wasn't
sure, anyway. But you kept after
me. Right? Said I'd missed my great
opportunity and here you were to be
my second chance. Right? Ring any
bells? "Train me," you said. "Build
me." Right? Right? You sold me,
Blake. You sold me.

BLAKE

Did I?

NIK

Damn right you did. Now you start
to get a little recognition and
it's Press Undo. Is that right?

(beat)

I said is that right! --

BLAKE

It's not right! None of it is
right. I'm not even my real name.
He's not my blood or even my real
skin. They took this and made a
whole new thing. --

(CONTINUED)

NIK

You think you can just pop into someone's life one day, turn it over, shake it all out onto the sky & dance in it, then call Takebacks six months later? --

BLAKE

-- This was never part of the plan. Celebrity was never part of the plan. --

NIK

-- It doesn't work that way. --

BLAKE

-- He -- I -- was supposed to just drop in and make a few things right. --

NIK

-- It's not right, and it isn't fair. --

BLAKE

-- Squash a few punks. Bust a few heads. --

NIK

-- You can't just go around saving people like that. --

BLAKE

-- But instead they had to go and make a whole deal out of it. --

NIK

Whose messiah do you think you are?

BLAKE

-- And I don't want this. I never wanted this. I want to go back.

Beat.

A pregnant silence swells as what they've said and heard sinks in. One terrible outcome looms inevitable. Suddenly--

BRENDA (O.S.)

Get *off* me!

Her distant cry shatters them. Blake bolts from the room.

BLACK