

THE MORNING SON

by  
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FADE IN:

EXT. GHANA, ACCRA BOXING GYM - DAY

A man (ABEEKU, aged twenty-eight) enters a tired, used boxing ring. He has dark skin, a lean build and is tall.

An old bell rings. Abeeku bites down on a mouth guard.

Abeeku and another man begin to spar.

The boxing ring has seen better days. The floor is made of plywood. It is dusty and unstable. The ropes are frayed or missing.

The gloves the men wear are weathered and cracked. The outer material is peeling and the strings are also frayed.

Just outside of the ring, a young boy (ADDAE, aged eight) watches the men box.

He keeps his eyes mostly on his father, Abeeku.

He dances around and mimics the men's movements. He throws punches in the air to match their punches. With each thrust, air is expelled from his mouth.

YOUNG ADDAE

C'mon father, watch his left. Yes, yes, move, keep those feet moving father.

Abeeku bends over near his son is.

YOUNG ABEEKU

Addae, son, please I can't keep focus with you yelling at me.

Abeeku faces his sparing partner. A glove connects with his face.

Abeeku is thrown against the ropes. Addae cringes at the sight.

Abeeku looks to his son.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)

You see, now I am at his mercy.

He removes himself from the ropes and steps out of the ring.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
 Come here Addae. Now do you  
 understand why you must never lose  
 your focus while in that ring?  
 Imagine there are walls built up  
 around you while inside the ring  
 and the only people inside these  
 walls are you and your opponent.  
 That's all that matters.

He kneels down to his son's level.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
 Always use this -  
     (touches Addae's head)  
 And this -  
     (touches Addae's chest)  
 The fists and feet will follow.  
 Okay?

His son eagerly nods.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
 Very good, very good. You know, if  
 you continue to learn what I teach  
 you, I am confident you could be  
 one of the greats son.

YOUNG ADDAE  
 Really? Do you think so father?

Abeeuku nods.

YOUNG ADDAE (CONT'D)  
 You think I could be like Frazier,  
 Sugar Ray, Ali or even Rocky?

YOUNG ABEEKU  
 Whoa, whoa there my little Leo.  
 First, Rocky is just a movie and  
 second, lets take things one day at  
 a time. How about that?

YOUNG ADDAE  
 Yes father, one day at a time. I  
 understand.

Addae's eyes lock onto his father's necklace. It has a thin,  
 gold chain with a ruby that hangs.

YOUNG ABEEKU  
 This is pretty huh? It is your  
 birth stone, son. I wear it so you  
 are always with me in the ring.  
 (MORE)

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
C'mon, how bout' we head home? Your  
training starts tomorrow.

Addae holds the ruby in his hand. Mesmerized.

CUT TO:

EXT. AMERICAN CITY COLISEUM, REAR ENTRANCE - DUSK (PRESENT)

The ruby necklace dangles from a man's hand. The man (Addae, aged 28) sits in the back of a Lincoln Town car. He wears a designer suit and sunglasses. The Town car pulls up to a group of adoring fans.

Addae sees the fans through the tinted glass. A sigh is released.

Addae exits the vehicle. The fans express their excitement audibly.

They hold up home made signs. Flash bulbs from digital and disposable cameras pop. One fan even carries a set of boxing gloves.

Addae approaches the door. The fans move in. They call his name. Pens and memorabilia are shoved in his face.

Addae pushes forward. He ignores them. He even shoves the fan's boxing gloves aside.

INT. COLISEUM, LOCKER ROOM - LATER

Music, the stomping of feet and the various cheers of the crowd resonate through the walls of the coliseum.

Addae sits on a table. His bright colored, silk robe drapes over his broad shoulders. Hood pulled over his head.

He makes some final adjustments to the laces on his boots. His trainer (BILLY C, forties) attempts to pep talk Addae. He is bald and sports a dark mustache.

BILLY C.

Now listen up Addae. I know this  
isn't your biggest challenge, but  
you don't wanna lead with your chin  
on this one. Keep your guard up,  
Dae.

Addae avoids eye contact. He continues to fiddle with his gear. He reaches for his gloves.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

He's not exactly a palooka here either. He has been known to sneak in some sketchy blows without the ref catchin' it.

Addae still avoids eye contact. He pulls out an mp3 player. Headphones are already in place.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

This is our last smaller fight until the light heavy weight title in Vegas. With dat said, I don't expect you to pull any punches out there. Let's try to give them a good show --

Addae cranks his mp3 player up. Billy's voice fades out. Hip-hop fades in. Addae moves his head with the beat. He begins to lace up his gloves.

Billy paces in front of Addae. He shoots a look of disgust to Addae, watching him bob his head.

Billy stops directly in front of Addae. We see from Addae's POV. Billy bends over slightly. Snaps his fingers in Addae's face. Addae hops off of the table and exits the locker room.

Billy looks to the door. Then to his corner men. He shakes his head. Billy gestures the corner men to exit.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

(to himself)

This has gone on too long Dae.

Billy follows and slams the door.

INT. COLISEUM, BOXING RING - NIGHT

The unmistakable ring of the bell sounds. The fight is on.

Addae wastes no time, immediately pounding his opponent's face and body with combinations.

He enjoys the fight. Making it look easy.

Addae is quick. He floats over the canvas. The opponent has a hard time keeping track of Addae's movements.

Addae moves in for another attack. He completes his combo with a solid blow to the jaw. The opponent flies against the ropes and goes down.

The crowd is on their feet. Their cheers and applause are deafening.

Addae loves it. He feeds off of the energy. Addae turns his back to his opponent. The ref begins his count.

Addae looks to the crowd. He playfully fuels the crowd's fever. With a yawn, Addae suggests he is bored.

His eyes scan the sea of bodies. They stop on a man. He stands on a stair way, starring back.

Cheers and applause become muffled, distorted. Addae's world slows down dramatically.

The man is older, in his fifties. He is dark skinned. Tall and slender. His face, along with his eyes, display signs of wisdom. His hair is grayed in parts.

Addae locks eyes with him. He strains to bring the man into focus. The world around him falls out of focus.

The man stares at Addae. A moment passes. The man turns and walks away.

Addae's face shows disbelief. Then frustration. Cheers from the crowd fade in. Time catches up.

He turns slowly towards the center of the ring.

THWACK! An upper cut attacks his face. Addae is lifted off the canvas slightly. SLAM! Onto the mat he goes.

We get a glimpse from Addae's POV. Vision blurs in and out. He searches back out into the crowd.

The old man continues to disappear down a hall.

Addae shakes off the blow. The ref throws hands in his face, beginning the count.

Addae gains his composure. His mind is back in the fight.

FADE TO BLACK.

The final bell rings. The fight is over.

FADE IN:

INT. COLISEUM, LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Addae sits atop a table. Sweat beads and flows. Muscles exhausted.

A trainer rubs out a shoulder. Over his other shoulder rests a beautiful, heavy looking championship belt.

Another trainer loosens his gloves. Suddenly a knock at the door.

Billy opens the door slightly. Some words are exchanged. Addae tries to make them out.

Billy opens the door fully. Standing in the doorway is the older man from the crowd.

ABEEKU

Thank you kindly sir.

Addae immediately sits upright. The man enters. Addae jerks his shoulder away from the trainer. The other trainer quickly halts loosening Addae's gear.

ADDAE

What is this man doing here?

BILLY C.

Dae, this guy says he's --

ADDAE

-- I know *who* the hell this man is.  
*What* is he doing here?

BILLY C.

Dae, c'mon, he's harmless.

ADDAE

Harmless? He nearly cost me the fight.

(to Abeeku)

What are you doing here father?

ABEEKU

Can't a father visit his son  
without scheduling an appointment?

ADDAE

No. Especially when that son hasn't  
spoken to his father in years.

Addae hops off the table, moving to his locker. Abeeku moves with him. The trainers make themselves scarce.

ABEEKU

Addae, please forgive me. This  
isn't what I wa --

ADDAE

-- Listen father, I am a busy man.

ABEEKU

Yes so I've seen on the television.  
You have grown into quite the  
celebrity over here haven't you?

ADDAE

Is that why you are here, you want  
a handout father?

ABEEKU

Choose what you say carefully, son.  
I might be old, but remember who  
taught you everything you know.

ADDAE

How did you afford the trip?

ABEEKU

(hesitantly)

Well...to be honest son, I made a  
deal with a sports reporter. I gave  
him a story in exchange for a round  
trip ticket. I had to come see you.

Addae glances over his shoulder. He sends his father a glare.  
He turns back to his locker.

The ruby necklace catches his eye.

EXT. COLISEUM, REAR ENTRANCE - LATER

Addae and his father exit.

More fans await Addae, yet again.

Addae reflexively throws on his sunglasses. He speeds through  
the gauntlet of fans.

Abeeuku is all smiles. Shaking hands and talking with the  
fans.

Addae turns to find his father doing this. He rushes over to  
Abeeuku.

ADDAE

Come father, keep moving or we will  
never get home.



ABEEKU

But, Addae, what about all of these people who adore you? They just want a picture or a handsha --

ADDAE

-- Yes I know. Then they turn around and sell their pictures and autographs online. I do not appreciate these people making profit off me. You know this better than most.

Addae pulls his father by the arm. Abeeke is outraged. He yanks his arm out from Addae's grip.

ABEEKU

(speaking in their native language of Ga)

(Addae, you are not above these people. They pay their good money to come see you and this is how you show thanks. They have done you no harm. If it weren't for them, you would not be here in the position you are in right now.)

ADDAE

Father, please do not speak to me in Ga. And do not speak about things you know nothing abo --

ABEEKU

-- (I cannot believe you. We are going no where until you at least show some of these people a little respect.)

Abeeke stops, arms folded. He gives his son a very fatherly stare.

Addae looks at him with disbelief. Reluctantly, he moves towards the crowd.

ADDAE

Alright, father. Does this make you happy?

He grabs a fan's pen, signs pictures, various memorabilia. He poses for some photos, shakes a few hands.

ABEEKU

(Yes, that is better.)  
(long pause)  
(MORE)

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

(Um...son, I know my visit is quite abrupt and there has been this divide with us. Well, that is actually why I am here. Uh..I was hoping to mend this wound I have made. It is actually something that I need to do because) --

Addae looks at him and nods, frantically signing his name.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

-- (Addae, my son...I am dying.)

Addae stops immediately. He stares at his father. Conflict in his eyes. He appears to fight off tears, jaw clenched and nose flared. Still looking at his father, he hands the pen back. Addae grabs Abeeku, quickly moving for the Town car.

INT. ADDAE'S APARTMENT - NIGHT

Addae and Abeeku enter.

Addae turns on a few lights.

ADDAE

Go ahead and relax. Um...You can...stay with me.

Abeeku slowly enters further. Scanning the room, he is bowled over by Addae's gadgets.

The apartment is very sleek and linear. Nothing has a softness to it. A large flat screen television hangs against one wall. To the left of the television, floor to ceiling windows over look the city. A gorgeous view of the night time activity is displayed.

A surround sound system, Blu-ray player, receiver and every major video game console resides in the entertainment center.

Abeeku takes a seat on the very "box like" couch. He bounces up and down, testing the cushions.

Surprised approval streams across his face.

Addae enters the living area, fiddling with his touch sensitive cell phone.

ABEEKU

Well it would be safe to say that you have taken a liking to life in America.

Addae gives a hint of a smile. He checks his schedule on the phone. Then moves to the kitchen, phone in hand. Scans the fridge and cupboards. Nothing catches his fancy.

Abeeuku glances at the glass coffee table. A thin, metallic looking device "calls" to him.

Curiosity bests him. He picks up the device. Looks to Addae, still deep in his phone. Addae also checks the voice mail from his land line phone.

Abeeuku examines the device. Depresses the front panel. Suddenly, electronic anarchy ensues.

The receiver, cranked full blast, pounds out hip-hop. The television displays highlights from the fight. The Blu-ray disc drawer opens. A picture-in-picture screen on the television displays the Blu-ray logo.

Abeeuku is thrown back against the couch. Frantic, he attempts to shut everything off.

Addae looks to his father, shaking his head.

He approaches, both phones still in hand, takes the device and with one touch, all is calm.

ADDAE

Welcome to my home father.

ABEEKU

Addae, my god, do you really need all of these things?

Addae goes back to burying himself in the phones. He checks email, surfs the web, listens to voice mail.

ADDAE

No father, they are just nice to have. What else am I going to do with my money?

ABEEKU

Well, I do not know. I've never had that problem. All I have is my family son. And --

ADDAE

-- Yes I know, "and that is what truly matters in life." I've heard this since I was a boy father.

ABEEKU

It would seem that you do not care much for family as you once did Addae.

ADDAE

I don't have time for family these days.

ABEEKU

You still have family none the less son.

He looks at his son enthralled with the small device.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Could you please listen to me.

ADDAE

Father, I can hear you just fine.

ABEEKU

Yes, but you are not listening. Did you forget why I came all this way?

Addae clicks his land line off, stops typing away on the hand held and looks up to his father.

ADDAE

No, I haven't forgotten, but what am I supposed to do? I don't see or hear from you for years --

ABEEKU

--And a big part of that is because of what I did, I know this. I thought I was doing the right thing.

ADDAE

You expect me to change my life completely because you come all this way to tell me in person you are dying? It is just a large chunk to swallow.

ABEEKU

I understand that. But I had to try and make things right again. Is there anything wrong with that?

ADDAE

No, no there is nothing wrong with that father.

(MORE)

ADDAE (CONT'D)

Um...listen, how about you just get some rest. I'll show you around my gym tomorrow, how does that sound?

ABEEKU

I would enjoy that very much.

Abeeuku gets up from the couch. Addae leads him to his bedroom.

ADDAE

Okay, I will see you in the morning.

ABEEKU

Sleep well son.

ADDAE

You too father. Good night.

Addae enters the living room again. Phone in hand.

He switches on his television.

He looks around his apartment, to his phone. He looks towards the room his father now sleeps in. Looks around his living room, taking in all of his gadgets and possessions.

He pulls out the ruby necklace from under his shirt. He takes a seat on the couch.

He clenches the stone in one hand. Fights to hold back tears, but loses.

He slams the phone on the wood floor. Pieces shatter in all directions.

INT. GHANA, ACCRA BOXING GYM - EVENING (ADDAE'S MEMORY)

A tall mirror shatters in all directions. Smaller, triangular mirrors now lay on the dirty gym floor.

Addae, age sixteen, stands among the mirror pieces. Blood runs from his clenched fist.

YOUNG ADDAE

(to Abeeuku)

Why are you doing this? What did I do father?

YOUNG ABEEKU

(eyes welling up)

Addae, please, calm yourself.

(MORE)

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
 You did nothing -- all of you did  
 nothing wron --

YOUNG ADDAE  
 -- Why now? Why are you choosing to  
 leave now, when I need you most  
 father?

Abeeku rushes to him. He wraps a towel around the bloody  
 hand.

YOUNG ABEEKU  
 Son, this is something I need to  
 do, for me. I know it is hard to  
 understand right now, but some day -  
 -

Addae yanks the towel away. He holds it tight around his  
 hand.

YOUNG ADDAE  
 -- I understand enough. You are  
 selfish. A man offered you a boxing  
 job and you chose it over me, over  
 all of us.

YOUNG ABEEKU  
 Son, you are going to be fine. You  
 don't give yourself enough credit  
 and do not need me. You are ten  
 times more talented than I am and  
 no longer need my train --

YOUNG ADDAE  
 -- I *know* I don't need a trainer. I  
 need a father.

Addae starts to walk away. Towel soaked with blood. Abeeku  
 grabs his arm. Addae stops, looks at the hand holding him,  
 then to his father. The hand releases him.

Abeeku unclasps his necklace, reaches around Addae's neck -  
 clasps the necklace. Addae looks down to the ruby - looks up  
 to his father.

YOUNG ABEEKU  
 I will come back for this someday.

YOUNG ADDAE  
 I won't wait for you father. I have  
 plans for my future too you know.  
 I'm going to America some day. And  
 you won't be here to stop me.

Addae exits, punching a speed bag on the way.

INT. ADDAE'S TRAINING GYM - MORNING (PRESENT)

State of the art equipment adorn every corner. Top of the line treadmills connected to computers and digital displays. Heavy bags and speed bags, also connected to digital displays, give the boxers instant feedback.

Four sparring rings are evenly dispersed in the center of the gym. They appear to be well maintained.

On the heavy bag, Addae thrusts his fists. Sweat pours from his head. Fierce intensity.

A trainer holds the bag steady. He shouts tips to Addae.

Elsewhere, Abeeku explores. His eyes glazed over by the technology. He gives into human nature, testing the equipment as best as his body will let him.

Addae catches a peripheral glimpse of Billy approaching. The intensity fades slightly.

Billy taps the trainer on the shoulder.

BILLY C.

Hey Roger, can you help out on the speed bags? I think our rookie could use a hand.

Roger nods and Billy takes over.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

Thanks buddy.

He shoots Addae a serious look. Addae continues his assault on the bag. The blows come harder now.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

Dae, listen, we really have to discuss what happened on fight n --

ADDAE

(winded)

-- What is there to discuss? I went in the ring, performed like the champion I am, and won. That's my job.

BILLY C.

Yeah, that's great and all, but that ain't what I was talkin' about.

Addae shoots a glare to Billy.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

There is more to boxing than making money and being a celebrity. I think you have forgotten a few things. You have to continue to learn and grow, on a technical level.

ADDAE

I have learned everything I need to know.

Addae moves to the speed bags.

BILLY C.

Dae, c'mon, you really think that? When you came to the states, yeah you had tremendous potential, but we made you what you are today. You, me, all of us worked together to build you up.

ADDAE

Can we talk about this later Billy? I have much on my mind. And you know how big Vegas is for me.

BILLY C.

That's it isn't it? You still think it's all you. The moment you started winning bigger fights and scoring endorsements, your ego became our toughest contender yet.

Addae slowly works up his tempo.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)

Well... I'm sorry Dae. I can't take this shit any longer. None of us can. Your attitude toward your team and even the sport of boxing has changed for the worse.

Addae is silent, keeping his eyes forward. Speed increases.



BILLY C. (CONT'D)  
 I don't know where things went  
 wrong, but it's time you took a  
 step back to get some perspective.

Billy moves in to Addae's face. Addae keeps focus.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)  
 I...I have to let you go Dae. Your  
 disrespect has just become too  
 much, for everyone.

Billy walks away.

With one last blow, Addae launches the bag from the mount. He  
 turns his attention to Billy.

ADDAE  
 BILLY, YOU CAN'T DO THIS.

BILLY C.  
 Listen, you are more than welcome  
 to train here, but you will pay  
 your dues like the other fighters.  
 I'm sorry.

Billy turns, continues to his office.

BILLY C. (CONT'D)  
 When you learn a few things, Dae, I  
 we will be here waiting.

Billy enters the office.

ADDAE  
 BILLY, I AM YOUR NUMBER ONE  
 FIGHTER. YOU ARE NOTHING WITHOUT  
 ME, NOTHING.

All activity in the gym halts. Addae feels the stares.

He looks to his father. Their is concern in Abeeku's eyes.

Abeeku heads towards Addae. Addae moves to meet his father  
 half way. The activity in the gym picks up pace again.

ABEEKU  
 Do I dare ask?

ADDAE  
 No, father, it is nothing I cannot  
 handle.

ABEEKU

Addae --

Addae moves his eyes from his father.

ADDAE

-- Father, please. I have a lot of work to do. Besides, you need to take things easy.

ABEEKU

Son, please, you know I can help you. Let me. I am never going to have this opportunity again.

Addae looks back up to his father.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Give me this chance to reconnect with my son. I will not let you down again. I can't let you down. Please.

Abeeuku searches Addae's eyes for any sign of forgiveness.

ADDAE

Father... I just don't know. Do you think you are up for it?

ABEEKU

I've been ready since the day you left.

ADDAE

I...I need your help, father. Will you train me?

Abeeuku places his hands on Addae's shoulders. A big smile shines through his tired face.

ABEEKU

My son, you have made my journey worthwhile. You won't regret this.

Addae cracks a hint of a smile.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Let us begin.

They make their way to a boxing ring.

EXT. GHANA, OUTSKIRTS OF ACCRA - DAY (ADDAE'S MEMORY)

A makeshift boxing ring lies on the dirt. It is not raised. A few layers of cardboard form the "mat". Wooden stakes are driven into the ground at each corner.

Surrounding the ring are various substitutes for rope. The top rope is actual rope and is the sturdiest of them all. The other materials vary from T-shirts tied together to socks tied together.

Two sets of bare feet enter the ring.

YOUNG ABEEKU  
Alright, let's begin boys.

He takes a hammer to a old, weathered and rusted bell. The young men begin their sparring match.

One of the young men is Addae, aged fifteen.

The two young men do not pull any punches.

Aged, beaten gloves slam into bodies and faces without mercy.

Addae glances at his father, hoping to catch any sign of approval.

A glove sends him to the cardboard mat.

Abeeeku steps into the ring and stands over his son.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
ADDAE, how many times do I have to remind you? Your focus is the other man.

He points at the other young boxer.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
Do you understand?

Addae nods, dazed from the blow.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
Do you? Because you are not showing me you do.

Abeeeku helps him to his feet and they move to Addae's corner.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
Son, when you are in here, keep yourself in here. Do not let your mind wander out there.

(MORE)

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
Nothing matters there. You have an  
incredible natural ability for  
boxing, but you are not mindful of  
your opponent.

Addae, frustrated, punches his head.

After the sparring match, Abeeku takes Addae through a  
gauntlet of training exercises.

CUT TO:

Addae works on a heavy bag. The heavy bag consists of a  
duffel bag filled with wet clothes and sand. Abeeku is in his  
face the entire evolution.

CUT TO:

Addae moves onto the speed bag. Again we see Abeeku is  
relentless with his training methods.

CUT TO:

Abeeku pushes his son through a circuit of calisthenics. He  
starts with crunches. Then pushups with one of his sisters on  
his back. Leg lifts, jumping jacks, back to crunches, more  
pushups.

CUT TO:

Addae runs with his father , bare foot for miles, as the sun  
begins to set. Dust follows.

Abeeku, stops his analog stop watch. They both come to a slow  
walk. Addae places his hands his knees.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
Addae, do not show this weakness.  
Stand straight.

Addae reluctantly stands up.

YOUNG ABEEKU (CONT'D)  
Son, I think you are more than  
ready for your fight.

INT. ADDAE'S APARTMENT - DAY (PRESENT)

The morning sun is just peaking above the horizon. Addae  
enters the apartment.

He is barefoot. He wears running clothes and is winded from  
an early morning's run.

His father's bags are packed and ready to go.

He looks over and finds his father sitting quietly on the couch.

The only sound coming from his father is that of his breathing. It is erratic and ill.

A plane ticket sits on the coffee table.

Their eyes meet. Each of them carries a sorrowful tone to their face.

ABEEKU

I am sorry son, but my time is up here.

Addae moves to kneel down beside his father.

ADDAE

Father, no you can't leave, not now the fight is only a few days away. I don't think I am --

ABEEKU

-- Addae, you have *been* ready. I accomplished what I set out to do here.

Addae gives him a bewildered look.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Yes, I had a motive for my visit, but you are ready.

Abeeuku extends his hand to Addae. Addae grips it tight and pulls his father to him and hugs him.

Abeeuku pats the couch cushion next to him.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Sit with me for a moment.

Addae moves to the spot indicated. Abeeuku looks to his son. Wisdom, sorrow, regret, joy, fulfillment, floods his eyes.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Addae, from the moment of your birth, there has always been this bond between us. I never told you this but, when I held you that day, I instantly fell in love with you. My world changed so dramatically. I felt cleansed, rejuvenated.

(MORE)

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

Nothing before that day mattered.  
It was a new beginning, like the  
dawn of a new day.

Addae lets a tear go.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

This is your name sake, Addae. The  
morning sun.

ADDAE

I love you father.

They hug one last time.

ABEEKU

And I you. Son, I hope that you  
will one day forgive me for my  
selfish actions. They were  
unfounded and I came to realize too  
late how much you really needed a  
father.

ADDAE

Honestly, I think I started  
forgiving you the day you arrived  
here.

A sparkle, a glint of hope shines through Abeeku's eyes.

Addae reaches behind his neck - unclasps the necklace. Abeeku  
realizes what is happening. His eyes glaze over with tears.

Addae reaches behind his father's neck - clasps the necklace  
closed.

ADDAE (CONT'D)

Here father. You once told me you  
would be back for this.

Abeeku is speechless. He wants to say something but Addae  
stops him.

ADDAE (CONT'D)

No need to say anything. I no  
longer have a need for it. It is  
time I return it to the rightful  
owner.

Addae stands. He helps his father stand - slow and steady.

ADDAE (CONT'D)

I guess we should be getting you to  
the airport, yes?

Abeeku cracks a smile and reluctantly nods.

FADE TO:

INT. MGM GRAND, CONFERENCE ROOM - MORNING

Addae sits at a long table. MGM Grand logos cover everything, the backdrop, the table, even the podium.

Starring back at Addae - a sea of media. Camera lenses peer into his soul. Flash bulbs burn his eyes. They wait for the signal to pounce with their questions.

Addae sits calm, cool and collected at the table.

His opponent sits on the opposite side of the podium.

He leans back - stares at Addae - in an attempt to toy with him for the cameras.

Addae looks the opponent's way - gives him no reaction. He throws his sunglasses on to avoid eye contact.

The press now have their signal - conference room comes to life - no one voice is discernible from the next.

The opponent answers his questions in an arrogant manner. It mirrors Addae's past attitude. The media questions Addae - expecting the same treatment.

His answers are brief and too the point. He is professional and respectful. The media is some what speechless.

EXT. MGM GRAND, THE NEXT DAY - DUSK

Addae arrives at the MGM Grand via the usual Lincoln Town Car. Limo tint on the windows.

Fans awaiting his arrival.

He exits the vehicle. They begin to call for him.

Addae approaches them slowly. No reaction on his face.

He wears his designer sunglasses and designer suit as always.

Addae reaches the first fan. Stops, puts his bag down, raises his sunglasses to his head and gives everyone a smile.

The fan extends his pen and photo as Addae gladly receives them.

Addae engages in chit chat with them, shakes hands, takes photos. He thanks all of them for their support.

Just before Addae proceeds to the door, one last fan calls for him.

Addae turns to find a pair of boxing gloves being presented to him. The same fan from his last fight that he shoved.

He takes the gloves and shakes the man's hand. He then signs his name with a small apology note on the gloves. The fan expresses his gratitude with a big smile. Addae returns the smile. He turns back to the door.

FAN (O.S.)

ADDAE! Do you have time for one more fan?

Addae stops, frozen. Eyes widen. He recognizes the voice. A quick snap of the head reveals...

BILLY C.

I know you're busy, this being your biggest fight and all, but I was hoping I could get your picture?

INT. MGM GRAND, LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT

Addae sits on a bench, silent.

His gear is laced up and ready. The colorful robe covers him. The hood is pulled over his head.

The vibrations of music and the huge crowd find their way to his quiet area.

A knock is heard and a representative of the MGM Grand enters.

MGM REPRESENTATIVE

It's time to go sir.

Billy has Addae's complete attention.

BILLY C.

Alright, this is it. You've come a long way. I just want you to know that I am more proud of you now than ever.

Addae stands, moving for the doorway.



BILLY C. (CONT'D)  
 Hey, don't focus so much on  
 winning. Fight *your* kind of fight.  
 You will still be a champion  
 without that belt. Don't think of  
 it as a failure, but a new  
 beginning. We will take things one  
 da --

ADDAE  
 -- day at a time. My father always  
 said the same thing to me.

BILLY C.  
 Sounds like your dad was a wise  
 man.

ADDAE  
 Thank you Billy. I'll see you  
 ringside.

BILLY C.  
 I'll be there. We'll all be there.

FADE TO:

INTERCUT - INT. MGM GRAND, GARDEN ARENA/GHANA, ABEEKU'S HOME -  
 NIGHT

The fight is underway. Addae does not play with his opponent  
 this time.

He can hear his father's teachings come flooding back.

He pauses slightly. He looks into the crowd. Time slows down  
 once again.

He searches for his father.

INT. GHANA, ABEEKU'S HOME

Abeku lies in his bed. His wife by his side.

He can barely speak a word.

The life slowly drains from him.

Abeku gestures to his wife to bring her ear closer.

ABEEKU  
 Could you please get it for me? I  
 want to hold it one last time.

She pulls back slightly. Gives him a look as to ask, "are you sure?"

Abeeku nods back.

INT. MGM GRAND, GARDEN ARENA

Time slams back into motion. A fist slams into Addae's face.

He quickly throws up his gloves, blocking the onslaught of punches. He attempts to regroup.

Addae pushes his opponent away to get some breathing room.

The ref brings them back to center ring.

Addae frantically scans the crowd. The opponent moves in for another attack.

He comes in fast and furious. Addae is not ready for it.

Addae attempts to throw some blows. Some make contact with the opponent's gut.

Addae receives a hook across the face. To the mat he descends.

Addae searches the crowd in vein once again. Vision blurred. Head pounding. He punches his head in frustration.

INT. GHANA, ABEEKU'S HOME

Abeeku's wife enters the room with a closed fist. At Abeeku's bedside, she opens her fist. The ruby necklace drops and spins.

She hands it over to Abeeku. He holds it up in front of his face. It dances, catching and reflecting light.

ABEEKU

Thank you.

Abeeku's condition worsens.

His wife immediately sits on the bed. She helps him take a sip of water.

He struggles to clasp the necklace around his neck. The wife relieves his struggle and clasps it for him.

He looks to his wife. Tears fill her eyes. He reaches up to brush his hand along her cheek. They both know this is their last moment together.

She grabs his hand and clenches it.

ABEEKU (CONT'D)

He forgave me my dear, just as you  
said he would, just as you forgave  
me.

INT. MGM GRAND, GARDEN ARENA

Addae struggles to pull himself up with the aid of the ropes.

He still searches the crowd until...

An apparition of a man stands in one of the stairways. Not completely in focus.

He is similar in appearance to Abeeku.

Addae and the man lock eyes. Vision comes into focus. It is Abeeku.

The ref attempts to get Addae's attention.

Addae just nods. His attention not entirely on the fight.

He looks to his opponent. He looks to his father.

The ref brings them back to center ring.

Addae and his opponent dance around the ring. He tries to stay in the fight. He looks back to his father.

Abeeku waves to his son, turns and leaves.

Addae pauses. He watches the apparition disappear.

He suddenly becomes very aware of his opponent.

The opponent rushes him. Greater determination in his eyes.

A glove is launched head on. Addae's head cocks back hard. Instantly white light fills his vision.

Another hit to the head. Another flash of light.

Then a shot to the stomach.

Addae tries to regroup. He sends a punch to his opponent's jaw.

It only momentarily halts the attack. The opponent quickly shakes off the effects. He proceeds to work Addae over.

Addae tries to block the blows. Fancy footwork doesn't help either. He gets cornered. The combinations are too quick for him.

His head takes hit after hit. He succumbs to the damage and falls to the mat. Knees hit first. The rest of his torso falls like freshly cut timber.

INT. GHANA, ABEEKU'S HOME

Abee ku and his wife continue to speak to each other with only their eyes.

Tears flow.

Abee ku's eyes slowly close.

They clench each other's hands one last time. We see the tension in Abee ku's hand relax.

One final breath expels from his lungs.

INT. MGM GRAND, GARDEN ARENA

Addae continues his decent to the mat - his face hits hard.

The sounds in the arena become slow, muffled.

The ref gets down to Addae's level to begin his count.

Addae's vision gradually fades to black.

He rests his head on the mat and we --

FADE TO:

EXT. GHANA, ABEEKU'S HOME - DUSK

A taxi pulls up. Abee ku's wife steps out - curious to see who their visitor could be.

Addae steps out. He wears sunglasses - his beaten face still shows through.

Surprise, joy, sorrow - Her face shows it all. Overwhelmed with emotion, she cries out loud - rushes to hold her son at long last.

Addae takes a moment. Then wraps his arms tightly around his mother. Finally his tears flow.

They make their way into the house - arm in arm.

Above the door hangs Abeeku's beaten, weathered, cracked boxing gloves.

FADE TO BLACK.

