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The Challenger

By Kent Moran

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Miller,
they're ready for you.
Sneaker, you're late.
I had to run.
Run faster.
Get a move on, Sanchez.
That car's got to

be ready by 3:

All right, boss.
-What's up, man?
-What's up, brother?
Damn it.
You couldn't
tell me this last week?
I looked at
the brakes last week.
-They looked good then, I...
- Oh, "good then"?
I'm not playing with you, boy.
Go get Joey for me.
You want me to get him?
Yeah, go get Joey now,
all right?
I looked at the brakes,
and I'm telling you...
Oh, you didn't look
at the brakes, all right?
They did, they looked good.
No, you didn't look
at the brakes...
Last week your mom needed
the car and the bus was late.
-Bus wasn't running today.
-Look, sneaker.
-It's Jaden.
-That's twice already.
You been here a month.
One more thing, you're gone.
Now you get
the hell out of here!
Ramirez was finally released
from the icu yesterday

and said you were
his most frequent visitor.
Not his fault
that his manager
made a bad decision.
Ramirez
was the second opponent
you've hospitalized,
and still you've never even
been knocked down.
Is it true?
Are you just undefeatable?
I guess
no one's found my weakness.
We'll see
what happens next week.
Good luck.
Thank you.
Sneaks. You gonna punch out?
Yeah, I'm sorry.
Yo, j. You need a ride?
Yeah. Cool.
You know, you're the only one
that calls me by my name.
Hell, I'm the only one
that knows your name.
Still live at your mom's, huh?
Can't afford
the rent on her own, you know.
Oh, man. I understand.
Tough times.
Yeah.
Well, uh,
thanks for the ride, man.
And, j...
Be on time tomorrow.
Yeah.
Oh, Jesus.
What the hell
are you doing, kid?
Get out of there.
Yeah?
At least I'm not late, right?
He's not late.

Stay as long
as you need.
Joe's gonna kill me
if I don't get that oil
out of my suit.
There's a laundromat
on prospect, man.
They get anything out.
The address is on the fridge.
Hey, I dropped a suit off
in here before.
You know where the guy is?
Uh, Duane. Um, in...
In the market.
Should I wait in here?
He's been there a while...
The one on the corner?
The red and yellow sign.
He's probably sitting
to the... in the door
to the left of the...
-All right, thanks.
-S, bueno.
Hey, do you know
where the laundry guy is?
You know that guy?
Banging there?
You're hearing banging?
That guy,
crazy guy back there?
Every day the same thing.
-Thanks.
-He's crazy, man.
Uh, Duane?
I just came by
to pick up my...
Hold on.
Yo! The machine's broke again.
And this time it's mine.
Let me see. Let me see.
Quarters are mine,
gum is yours.
Let's go.
What? I just do that

when it gets slow.
I do lottery tickets.
That's dumb.
Lottery.
Feet.
What is it?
It's a pack of gum
wrapped in a 20.
I got a spot
20 blocks from here,
I just heard
they got 50s and 100s.
This all from today?
Twelve bucks.
What's up, Duane?
There's a boxing gym
across the street, huh?
Can you just
walk in there or...
Five bucks a day.
20 bucks a month.
Cool. Thanks.
Oh, man, you're crazy, dog.
Right.
Hey yo, j.
-Yeah.
-We're all gonna go down
and check out
my boy's fight tonight.
You down?
What kind of fight?
Boxing, bro.
Come on, you know I'm a boxer.
I mean, I knew you boxed.
I didn't know
you were a boxer.
Oh,
homeboy said you box,
but you ain't no boxer.
- Man, shut up!
Dumbass.
What?
Is that not what he said?
That's not what I meant.

So, is that how you make
that extra cash?
I mean, it's not much.
But it helps.
What do you guys think?
This guy any better than you?
It'll be a good fight.
I promise you.
Get up and fight.
- That's it! Stop!
Well, it lasted
longer than I thought.
Winner
by way of knockout,
and still your
champion of the Bronx,
Manuel Rodriguez.
I thought you said
he was good.
He is.
This Rodriguez guy must be...
Must be
a hell of a lot better.
You cannot do that
with that guy.
I told you that
too many times.
Yeah, well, the next fight's
got to be better than that.
We staying for
another ass-whooping, man?
Of course.
-J?
-Guess not.
Fists in front
of the face, firm.
Off the ropes. All you do
is rotate. You don't listen.
Damn it.
You could have
beaten that guy.
So could my girlfriend.
Did not listen,
that's why you lost.

Excuse me.
Excuse me.
Lottery ticket?
What're you doing here?
Dt. This is j. J, this is...
Duane, I know.
You guys know each other?
It's Mr. Taylor.
That's your gym, isn't it?
What do you want?
I want you to train me.
In what, tennis?
I don't train rookies.
- I got experience.
- Come on, sneaks.
No, I do. Fighting, but...
Look... I'm not good at
many things, Mr. Taylor,
all right? But, I can do this.
I know I can.
Lottery tickets, huh?

6:

You know where it is.
I'll see what you can do.
Thank you, Mr. Taylor.
You won't regret it.
You serious? You really gonna
train this guy?

That's 6:

Yes, sir, I'll be there.
All right.
Terrence, see you Monday.
Yeah, coach.
Come on, dt!
So, you're a boxer now, huh?
I didn't even know you boxed.
Yeah, well. I don't, yet.
You're killing me, man.
Turn your hips
into those punches.
Morning.
You're early.

You're late.
When did you get here?

Around 5:

Good. You should be
warmed up then.
Well,
i mean, I was just...
Whoa, hold on.
First thing's first, lottery.
This ain't fighting.
Boxing is one of the hardest
sports in the world.
It requires
endurance, strategy,
technique.
I'm not looking for a fighter.
Show me your stance.
Feet shoulder-width apart.
Left foot forward.
Spread your feet
like a triangle.
Back foot always up.
These up, firm.
Okay. Throw a punch.
-What was that?
-What do you mean?
That's a straight right.
It's a power punch.
Where's the power?
Where does the power
in that punch come from?
-My arms.
-That's a jab, rookie.
Power punches
aren't thrown with your arms.
Okay, we're gonna
try this again.
This time, rotate your hips,
and shift your weight from
your back foot to your front.
Snap back immediately
and return to
defensive position.

Okay. Again.

Hips. Again.

Harder.

--Hips!

Swing your hips again.

--Harder!

--Harder, hips.

--Again!

--Harder!

Okay.

So, why are you here, kid?

I don't know.

I want to be somebody.

Sick of playing the lottery.

What'd you mean when you said
you used to fight?

I was 11. Was gonna start
private school in the fall.

And then I, uh,

got in my first fight.

Got kicked out of school.

Lost the scholarship.

Got in more schools,

more fights...

Never finished high school.

Never finished
anything really.

Been job-to-job ever since.

Why do you fight?

The right reasons.

You win?

Always.

I don't, uh,

train boxers anymore.

What do you mean?

What about...

What about

Maxwell and Terrence?

Exactly. I really
just run the laundromat.

My last real boxer
was Keenan Anderson.

After four years,

we were finally

gonna get a shot at the title.
But the other manager needed
a win for one of his fighters.
So, I matched him up
with another one of my guys.
Malik Jones.
He threw that fight.
I remember.
In three months,
I lost two fighters
and my reputation.
I'm sorry.
It's like playing
the lottery, kid. Dumb.
So, that's why
they call you "sneaks"?
Yeah.
When you
come in here tomorrow,
I want you to get
some new ones.
Tomorrow?
Those things
will ruin your back.
So, uh... that means
you're gonna train me.
I think it's time Hector
did some damn work
at that laundromat.
Thank you.
Okay.
So, um... I never got your
full name, or is it just "j"?
No, it's... it's Jaden.
Jaden Miller.
Jaden Miller?
Well, Jaden.
Same time tomorrow?
Yes, sir. I'll be here.
All right.
Jaden Miller.
Jaden Miller,
have you lost your mind?
I need to get us

back home, ma.
No. Not like that, j. No.
Uh, excuse me,
this ain't your place.
So, look. You go to this...
Uh, trainer...
I can't even watch
my own damn TV.
Regina, please. Hush, Regina.
Go and tell this man
that you're not
doing this anymore,
you're not trying this.
-But, ma, I...
-Promise me, honey.
Look, I am proud that
you're doing good on your job.
See, that's how you help.
Another week,
I'll have enough money,
and we can get...
Get the hell out of here.
-Regina, please.
-What?
It's only gonna be a few days.
And whose couch
were you sleeping on
before you moved into
this place?
-Couch?
-That's right.
That thing was
plywood with a cushion.
-Oh, so now you're...
-That thing ain't no couch...
That marks the champ's
sixth straight title defense,
and still
renders him undefeated.
It begs the question,
is there
a challenger out there
that can beat him?
Damien Wright sure thought so,

but as we saw last night,
Wright was proven wrong.
When are you gonna find me
a real challenger, vin?
Keep embarrassing them
like that
and no one will fight you.
I can't change
the way I fight,
you know that.
Maybe you can find
someone who can.
One, two!
One, two! One, two!
One, two! Come on!
Why you holding back?
-One, two!
-I'm not!
One, two! One, two!
You're hitting like a girl.
One, two! One, two!
One, two! Stop holding back.
-One, two!
-I'm not!
So you do have a pulse.
I'm doing my best, all right?
No.
-What do you want from me?
-Your best.
You want to tell me
what's going on?
What are you afraid of, huh?
What are you afraid of?
What the hell am I doing
wasting my time with you?
You think
i came back to boxing
to get embarrassed again?
Look, my mom doesn't know
I'm here, all right?
-She doesn't want me fighting.
-Oh.
Mama's boy.
How long you gonna

keep that up?
You want to keep living
from job-to-job, fine.
But I've seen too many boxers
waste their talent,
waste their lives,
because they were afraid.
Afraid of losing. But mostly,
afraid of winning.
You can be great
and you're already quitting.
If you don't
stand up and fight
for who you are now,
right now,
you never will.
I better not see you
in here tomorrow.
I'm here, all right?
I'm ready.
I'm ready!
Really?
Show me.
One, two! One, two!
One, two! One, two!
One, two! Come on!
One, two! Harder!
One, two! One, two!
Harder! Harder, come on!
Keep moving.
You can't stop.
Ain't no days off.
I told you that.
You wanna be the champ,
that's what you got to do.
Harder! Harder, come on!
Let's go!
One, two! One, two!
One, two! One, two! One, two!
One, two! Come on!
One, two! Harder!
Where do you wanna be?
Where do you wanna be?
Come on.

That's how you got to work.
Got to keep working.
That's what I'm talking about.
That's how you do it.
That's what you need.
Don't be out-worked.
Maybe outclassed,
maybe out-techniqued,
but don't be out-worked.
You got to train like that.
You can't get tired.
It's endurance,
technique, strategy.
Ain't no days off.
Keep working.
One, two! One, two!
One, two! One, two!
Hips! Hips! Harder!
Harder! Keep moving!
One, two! Come on!
50 more seconds.
Last round! Last round!
Last round! Last round!
One, two! Hips!
Hips! Let's go.
Come on! How do you
want to be remembered?
Champ or chump?
How do you
want to be remembered?
Huh?
What do you want out of life?
Switch it,
go around, go around!
Let's go, come on,
give me 10 more seconds.
Come on, five more!
Five more
for the championship.
Three! The champ is here!
Two, one. Time!
Show me something now.
Yeah, there you go.
Can't play hockey

till you know
how to skate, baby.
Whatever direction
you're going in,
that foot leads.
You need hips to throw a punch
and balance
to throw your hips.
-Damn!
-Hold on, let's try something.
Hear that?
Yeah. Okay?
Try no hands.
React to your opponent.
Dance.
Yeah. Yeah.
No hands.
There you go. Sway.
Back and forth.
He can't touch you.
Down, down, back and forth.
There you go.
What's the difference
between a fight and boxing?
Endurance!
Strategy.
Technique.
Yeah.
Come on, come on,
that's right.
Move. Move your hands,
move your hands.
There you go.
That's it, that's it.
Yeah.
Good work, fellas, good work.
Sway the hips though,
there you go.
Okay, that's good.
That's it for now.
Great fighters.
Yeah.
You wanted to see me?
I think you're ready

for your first fight.
What do you think?
Yeah, sure.
It's the only one in a frame.
It's the only one
worth framing.
That's Derrick Taylor.
Man trained me
since I was a kid.
Knew more about the sport
than anyone.
Never made it
as a boxer, but...
He was a great man.
A great father.
He used to say that great
boxing was more of a dance
than a fight.
-A dance?
-Yeah.
One leads.
The other one follows.
And then it switches.
You get two great
equally matched boxers
in the ring,
and it's choreography.
It's beautiful.
You ever see
something like that?
Hmm. Once...
Ali, Frazier.
They called it
"the fight of the century."
Pop got us tickets
for my seventh birthday.
I never knew what he meant
until I saw that fight.
Lasted a full 15.
Ali was quick and agile.
And Frazier was a powerhouse.
--It was 15 rounds of...
Dance.
That was real boxing.

Boxing ain't
what it used to be.
You can't have great fights
without great fighters,
and it takes more than
knowledge to be great.
It takes something special.
Pop and I never had it.
I think you just might.
Get some rest.
I'm on a stairway
to heaven right here.
Stairway to heaven, baby.
That's what we want.
All these steps
lead to something.
All these steps lead
to a better life.
Pretty soon,
it's gonna be the big venues,
ain't gonna be
this place no more.
All right.
Get to your feet
as soon as you can.
Control yourself,
control the fight.
And throw those hips, rotate.
Okay, you can do this.
You're ready? There you go.
Let's go do it.
And here's
tonight's challenger,
Jaden Miller.
You're ready. Stay ready.
Come on, get up in there.
Get in there.
Get loose.
Newcomer Jaden Miller
enters the ring.
And here's
your champ of the Bronx,
Manuel Rodriguez.
Stay warm,

stay warm, baby.
Move around, baby. Get ready.
Get ready. Get ready.
Make sure you're tough now.
Make sure you're tough.
That's it. Let's do it.
Let's do it.
Move around, get ready.
Champ of
the Bronx, Manuel Rodriguez,
clearly looking for
another stepping stone here.
All right, come on,
let's go, baby, come on.
You sure about starting him
with Rodriguez, coach?
Yeah.
Gentlemen. Give me
a good, clean fight.
Obey my commands at all times.
And protect yourself
at all times.
And at this time,
i want you to touch gloves.
Touch gloves!
Back to your corners.
Good luck to both.
Box!
Get your feet. Get your feet!
Come on! Get off those ropes!
Feet! Feet!
The crowd loves you, Jaden.
It's you!
Five, six,
seven, eight...
Box!
Fists cover the face! Firm!
Move, baby, move!
Put him down! Put him down!
Right now!
- Hips!
That's it!
Out!
Check this refrigerator.

I bet you there's some
science projects in here.
It's still buzzing.
Check the sink.
Oh, he fixed the sink.
Oh, that Joe is a good guy.
Those extra hours
really paid off, Jaden.
Ah, well, let me get
my coat off
and get going. Whoo...
I am so glad to get away
from Regina,
I don't know what to do.
That girl was about ready to
drive me crazy.
--It's good to be home, baby.
Yeah, it is.
Get this stuff going.
And then I can mop the floor.
Get those dishes,
get us some food.
'Cause Regina
can't cook either.
Ooh, that girl is toppy.
Bronx boxing
is making a comeback
and there's a new kid in town.
Last month,
he took Rodriguez down
in one round.
He fights again tonight.
Willis Avenue boxing gym.

8:

-Check him out.
-Yeah.
Come on!
Pick your punches!
Pick your punches!
Let's go. Get going!
Come on! Hips!
Endurance!
Yeah!

Good work, Jaden!
The winner,
by way of knockout...
The Bronx boy, Jaden...
-Jaden...
-Jaden Miller!
- Down!
- Look at those feet!
Stop showing off!
Five, six,
seven, eight, nine, 10.
Out!
Whoo! Woohoo!
There you go!
Oil's good, man.
I checked it already.
I can tell you've done
a lot of work today.
I make this
look easy, bro.
I can't believe he still
keeps you around.
Terrence?
-Oh...
-Hey.
-Hey, Ms. Miller...
Hey, baby.
What are you doing here?
Well, my car's acting funny,
so I thought I'd bring it by
for Jaden to look at it.
Uh, he free?
Um, actually Jaden is...
Hey, ma. Check this out.
No more buzzing.
Where did you get the money
for that, j?
I told you, I picked up
some extra shifts at Joe's...
You haven't worked at
the body shop for six months.
Fighting ruined everything, j,
don't you know that?
No. It didn't.

I did the right thing.
Not the right thing for you.
And what was that?
Letting my friend get beat up?
Oh, okay. All right then.
Where's Alvin now, Jaden?
Tell me that.
-Where is Alvin now?
-Alvin's alive, okay.
Alive,
and in an Ivy league school.
Where are you?
I'm a boxer now.
And I'm winning.
Yeah. Until you get
knocked into a coma?
You know, this time I mean it.
You're gonna...
You're gonna
stop this thing and...
You're gonna go back
to your normal job.
No. I said no!
I finally found something
I'm good at.
I'm good at this.
Can't you just
be happy for me?
So how do you like the fridge?
It doesn't buzz.
--Jaden...
Yeah?
I'm afraid of this.
I know.
This is
what boxing needs.
Anderson was ranked
third by the wbc.
He was next in line
for a title shot.
Last night, this kid knocked
him out in the third round.
We are a basic cable network.
We haven't shown boxing

since the '60s.
But, that's what's
so interesting.
We all know,
heavyweight boxing
hasn't done
big numbers in years.
And that's because
we haven't had a challenger
anyone cares about.
The crowd loves this kid.
He's poor, from the Bronx,
no high school diploma,
was working
as an auto mechanic
when he and his mother
were evicted.
He quit his job
to start boxing
and won back her apartment.
Hasn't lost yet.
And what? We give him
a shot at the title?
Yes.
I can see why the other
networks turned you down.
You're talking
about a massacre.
People are tired of watching
three-round fights.
No, Mike...
People are just tired.
They need something
to believe in again.
So...
We make a show...
The challenger.
We show people his life.
Home, training, everything.
Follow him right up to
the fight.
Everyone's an underdog
right now.
America's an underdog.

We get America behind this kid
and this fight
could bring boxing back.
Thanks for coming.
Jaden, you know
i can't watch that.
So, how's this
new trainer of yours?
You just can't let it go,
can you?
It's just that, I've heard
some things about this guy...
Like people
heard things about me?
They want to spin it
as a public interest story.
Give a no-name a shot.
That's your idea of getting
me better fights, huh?
It's a pay day, James.
Besides, they're paying
double this time.
I don't fight for the money.
You're gonna tell me
Ramirez wasn't a pay check?
Come on.
That's him coming.
I'm rolling.
-All right, here we go.
-Jaden Miller?
Jaden Miller.
How does it feel?
Are you ready for
the opportunity of a lifetime?
Yeah, man.
Are you nervous
-taking on burchard?
-What's going on?
J, my office.
...for one of
your first big fights
of your career?
I mean, you've only had
like seven fights...

-Are you ready for this?
-What are they talking about?
Let's talk in my office.
Get back.
Hey, easy.
Don't touch the camera.
- Get back.
- What are they
-talking about, Duane?
-They offered you
a title shot.
What?
But it's got conditions.
They want to film
your training.
Well, not just the training,
not just the training...
They want to film everything.
Your life.
They want to make it
into a show.
Why me?
Apparently Anderson was
next in line... if he'd won.
But look, j...
Anderson is one thing.
You got to think about this.
Oh. Easy, easy.
Don't touch the camera, man.
- Don't touch the camera.
- Move.
Uh, I need some time,
all right?
Go. Go. Move!
Hey, man. That's
not part of your contract.
Get back here!
Hey, what are you doing?
- Get back here, baby!
- Get back!
Tell me you're not actually
considering this.
It's suicide, j.
He'll kill you

out there. Literally.

Thanks.

He's put three opponents
in the hospital,
one in icu.

You're talking about
the champion of the world.

So what, man?

What do you want me to do?

Run away?

Get this far and not finish?

Where's that gotten me?

Finish.

But finish

when you're ready, man.

Hey, ain't seen
that face in a while.

No lottery ticket, champ?

Hmm.

I can't do it.

What did you just say?

I can't do it.

Hmm.

Let me tell you
something, son...

There's a reason
why I found you.

There's a reason why
this fight found you.

Now, I know I've tried
to fight it...

But this is your path.

So take it.

Hmm?

Take it.

I'm gonna
take the fight.

Oh, yes.

There's one thing
i need to know first, though.

Okay.

How do you know my mother?

She says she's heard things
about you.

Everybody's heard things, j.
She doesn't know anybody
in the boxing world.
-How old are you now?
Well, about 23 years ago,
your mother and I...
We were in love.
What?
Even talked about
getting married.
She wanted a kid so bad.
When she found out
she couldn't have any, well...
I think that's why she worked
at that adoption agency
for so long.
One night I came home,
a little bit
later than normal.
She was holding a baby
in her arms...
A white baby.
She just said he was
left on the doorstep.
That it was a sign.
She believed in that stuff...
Although,
i might believe in it too.
So what'd you do?
What could I do? I panicked.
I was saving up to open
up my own gym.
Establish myself.
I was trying to do like you...
Be somebody.
I could hardly
take care of myself.
I couldn't
take care of a kid.
Even if that kid needed you?
You got to
give us something.
You got to give us something.
The camera's heavy.

Did you... tell me
about the neighborhood.
This looks like
a rough neighborhood.
You grew up around here?
Did you... did you go
to school around here?
So man,
what was it like growing up
in this neighborhood, man?
Hey, did you get in
a lot of fights
when you were at school?
Is that what kept happening?
Yeah, is that how you
learned how to fight?
How long have you been, uh,
training with Duane?
-Come on...
-Come on, man...
Open up. I'm telling you.
-You're gonna wanna...
-You signed a contract
to do this, man. Come on.
So is this, uh,
how long
have you been living here?
I'm digging the, uh,
the vibe in here.
How long have you been
in this place, Jaden?
I told you, man.
I'm done with questions.
Ma! Ma? Are you all right?
What happened?
What's wrong with her?
Are you okay?
What's the matter?
Call 911! Right now! Call 911!
Okay, yeah, yeah...
Get your phone!
Just
put the Mike down!
Get out of here!

She's stable now.
I'm surprised
it didn't happen sooner.
Has she been taking
her medication?
I give 'em to her every day.
She hates taking pills.
I don't know if
it would've mattered.
Her heart is very weak.
I'd like to keep her
in the hospital.
Get her strength back.
When she's ready,
we need to operate.
Operate?
I don't see another option.
Star boxing's
new show the challenger
has been canceled
following the shocking news
that Jaden Miller,
at the very beginning
of his promising career,
has quit boxing.
The sudden decision came
just days after
Miller's mother suffered
a massive heart attack,
last Thursday night.
It has been reported
that she will need
to undergo a triple...
Hey, what happened?
Where'd it go?
Cops took it.
Said it was gambling.
-Let me have a pack of gum.
-All right.
How you feeling?
Better.
Great.
Hey, who got you these?
He didn't leave me, j.

What do you mean?
Well, maybe for a day.
But the very next day,
he was at my door.
With a dozen roses in one hand
and a ring I wanted
in the other.
He proposed...
Every day that week.
I left.
Why?
I wanted to be a mother,
more than anything.
And I couldn't take
a chance on someone
coming in and out
of your life.
I chose you.
I chose you.
I love you, Jaden.
I love you too, ma.
-Hey.
-Hey.
She, uh...
She told me everything.
Sorry it took this long
for you to hear.
Me too.
Flowers and everything, huh?
She still didn't
take you back?
She's a tough woman.
Yeah. That's the truth.
You know she needs surgery.
We can't afford it.
Your mother never gave me
a second chance, kid.
But you did.
Turns out, just a few weeks,
the ratings of
that show of yours...
They want you to finish it, j.
The purse is big. 70-30 split.
If you win,

it'll be more than enough.
What if we lose?
We don't fight to lose.
Okay,
breaking news, New York.
Star boxing's hit show
the challenger is back!
Apparently, Jaden Miller
has officially agreed
to continue filming the show
that will follow him
all the way
to the light
heavyweight title.
Now, where did Miller's
change of heart come from?
His mother.
The fighter says he will
continue the show
and win the fight to pay for
his mother's heart surgery.
That little bastard.
Good for you.
-Good for you.
-Jaden Miller is literally
fighting for his
mother's life.
We have to take her
in there now, Jaden.
Mmm-hmm.
Let's go.
Anderson drives Miller back.
Miller hasn't even
thrown a punch yet.
It's a one-sided fight so far.
Anderson would've been
your best fight in a while.
Anderson with the jab,
now the cross.
Miller is on the ropes again.
And this fight is
turning out to be... oh!
Miller's first punch
is devastating!

Anderson doesn't know
what hit him!
Miller with a left!
Another left!
There's another left.
Another left!
Now it's Anderson
on the ropes!
Anderson is saved
by the bell! Wow!
Who the heck is Jaden Miller?
I'll tell you what...
Miller
knocks him out next round.
He threw only eight punches
the whole fight.
Is that right?
Let me take a look at that.
Another left!
Now it's Anderson
on the ropes.
Anderson is saved
by the bell! Wow!
Who the heck is Jaden Miller?
Looks like we found
our challenger after all.
Doctor said
the surgery went great.
Thanks, honey.
-Get some rest.
-Hmm.
I'm ready.
Now first, we're gonna
watch him in slow motion.
Good. Good.
Chin up. Confusion.
Study his moves.
Learn his style.
Technique.
To the body,
to the body!
Push him back,
push him back. Good. Good!
And then, gonna speed

the whole thing up.
Push him
back on the ropes.
Easy. Easy. Easy, stop! Stop!
'Course, nobody
i put you against
is gonna be as strong,
or as quick,
or as fast as burchard.
Take it easy.
I said the body. Easy! Stop!
Stop! Stop, James!
The hell is wrong with you?
'Cause in that ring,
you gotta be
a split second faster.
The hell's wrong with you.
You okay?
-You sure?
-Yeah.
Okay. James.
Every man is beatable,
gentlemen.
But to beat the man
you gotta learn
things about him.
You gotta do your homework.
This is homework.
He's there for a reason.
He has worked it.
He has earned the right
to wear that
championship belt.
So on those days you don't
feel like working too hard,
remember, somebody's workin'.
That's him.
When you don't feel like
hitting that bag
for three more minutes,
he feels like it.
He wants to be a champion.
You want what he has.
But he has worked

hard to get it.
How hard are
you willing to work?
Because I have seen him work.
And believe me,
you better be ready.
Because he's gonna be ready.
When I get on you,
it's not because
i don't like you.
I want you to be ready
for that right there.
'Cause that is a machine.
That is gonna come after you.
When that bell rings,
it's going to be eye to eye.
You lookin' at him.
Him lookin' at you.
And then you're
going to see everything
that I ever taught you.
Technique.
Endurance.
Strategy.
You gotta do those things,
gentlemen, if you want to win.
That's Jaden Miller.
Hey, Bronx boy!
Go get him, buddy!
- Jaden!
Bronx boy!
I was wrong, bro.
You're ready.
Definitely ready.
Oh, my god.
Whoo.
Come on, let's go.
Let's go get
a milkshake.
- Come on!
Ugh, god.
These were my father's.
Then mine. Now yours.
Duane, I...

He always wanted
to be in the ring
for a championship fight.
You think you can
wear 'em tomorrow?
Of course.
Thanks for giving me a chance.
Thank you for giving me
a second chance.
For the first time
since the 1960s,
a boxing title fight is being
broadcast on basic cable.
That's right, America,
it's free.
Everyone will have the
opportunity to tune in tonight
for the fight of
the 21st century.
From his
meek beginnings in the Bronx,
to the heavyweight title
in just under a year.
And we've seen it all.
America has fallen in love
with the Bronx boy,
Jaden Miller,
and tonight he lives
the American dream.
Watch it here,

7:

Tonight, the Bronx boy
fights for it all
in New York's capital city.
I'm here in
what has become
the poorest neighborhood
in the country.
This is the south Bronx.
And what Jaden Miller
calls home.
Here, it's more than
just a fight.

For these folks,
Bronx boy Jaden Miller
is fighting for them.
Hi, Scotty.
Hey, Joe. How you doin'?
I'm good, how about yourself?
Not bad.
The fight of the 21st century.
-What are you havin'?
-I'll have a beer.
...really serious
about that title.
That title of course
in reference to the...
So, big night tonight
for the j, huh?
Yeah. Yeah,
it's gonna be the big one.
I think he's gonna
do real well.
I hope so.
Heavyweight boxing is back.
More fans
are tuned in tonight
than for any other fight
since Tyson-holyfield
back in 1997.
And it's all due
to one person.
The challenger, Jaden Miller.
Miller,
they're ready for you.
Listen to that.
It's clear who the favorite is
here tonight.
Jaden! Jaden!
Come on, champ,
let's go!
And here comes
the challenger now.
This is our fight.
This is what we've worked for.
Let's do it!
The crowd really showing

its appreciation
for Bronx boy Jaden Miller.
Well, I'm afraid it's all
just wishful thinking.
Jaden Miller
has a better chance
at hitting the lottery
than winning this fight
here tonight.
This is where we wanna be!
This is where we wanna be!
Let's go, Jaden!
Get him, baby!
Get him, babe! You can do it!
We all know
what that sound means.
And here comes your champion,
James burchard.
Get him outta here!
This has got to be
the first fight that burchard
is actually getting
less applause
than his challenger.
Besides
Mrs. burchard, of course.
Guess you owe that
to the pride of the Bronx.
And that good ol'
American spirit.
-What's that, the fight?
-Shut up!
This is the moment
we've all been waiting for!
Our main event of the evening!
Introducing first,
the challenger!
He comes to us tonight
from the Bronx
in New York City!
Big welcome to the Bronx boy,
Jaden Miller!
And how about Duane Taylor?
This guy used to be one of the

best trainers in the business
until that fixed
fight scandal.
No one's heard from him since.
He gets
a second shot here tonight.
Come on, Jaden. Go, go, go!
...you can't say he didn't
put in the time and effort.
Fighting
out of the red corner...
...he weighs in
at 175 pounds.
No losses.
29 wins by knockout.
Mr. undefeatable,
James burchard!
Burchard looks to be
in the best shape
of his career.
Good evening, gentlemen.
This is 12 rounds for the
light heavyweight
world championship.
Protect yourself at all times.
Touch gloves now.
Come out fighting at the bell.
James burchard simply
towers over the challenger,
Jaden Miller.
How is Miller
ever going to hit him,
if he can't even reach him?
You hate to question
his motives, Peter,
but at some point,
doesn't it come down
to ethics?
Taking a title fight
with such a novice fighter?
You said it, Jason.
I mean, he has no business
being in the ring tonight.
And knowing

burchard's history,
Jaden Miller
is gonna get hurt.
Boy, this is it.
This is what
you've been training for.
All that stuff
you went through as a kid,
all those early morning
workouts,
it's for this moment.
Right here, right now.
And no matter
what happens out there,
I want you to know, I'd be
proud to call you my son.
Thanks.
Go out there and get him.
All right, come on,
let's do it!
Look...
I don't care what they say.
We both know
this is your biggest fight!
He's never gone
more than three rounds.
You outlast him.
That's how we win.
You hear me?
-Yeah.
-Good.
--Box!
Miller
trying to get something going.
Come on.
Not much going
on here in the first round.
There's a...
A jab from burchard.
And another stiff left
by burchard
and Miller's shaken!
Shaken in the first round
as burchard is landing

punch after punch on Miller!
Peter, this is not the
end of the round
that Miller wanted.
Let's go! This is just
the beginning! Come on!
He may be
out of his league here.
Trying to stay in the round
with burchard.
- But backed into the corner.
Burchard with total control
after round one.
Jaden Miller lasted one round
longer than I thought he would
but I gotta tell you,
he didn't look half bad.
Don't count him out
just yet, Peter.
His Bronx brethren
must be proud.
That's my man!
Go get him. Go get him!
Deep breaths, deep breaths.
There you go. Relax.
Look here. Good. Good.
Burchard has never
been knocked down.
This round, knock him down.
You hear what I'm telling you?
This round,
he gets knocked down.
Not later, not tomorrow,
right now, tonight.
This guy gets knocked down!
This round, by you!
Because after today people
are going to call you champ.
After today,
you are the champ!
-You understand me?
-Mmm-hmm.
Okay, give me that. Come on.
Relax, baby. You got this.

Relax, but knock him down.
As the second round continues,
Miller can't seem to get
anything going
once again.
He's taking stiff left jabs
from burchard.
And now a right,
a nice left-right combination
there from burchard.
Miller... I can't believe he's
still standing at this point.
No, Peter, I can't believe
he's still standing either.
He's got the face of a rhino,
the fact that he hasn't
broken yet.
Right now!
Wait a minute. Now it's
Miller getting in some shots!
Actually, Miller is landing...
Come on give it to him!
Work that body!
...punch after punch
and the champ is feeling it!
Hit him! Come on, hit him!
I can't
believe what I'm seeing!
And James burchard goes down!
James burchard is down!
What did I tell you?
What did I tell you?
I can't believe it! For the
first time in his career,
James burchard
is on the canvas!
Boy, Scotty, look at that!
Look at that shot!
Yes, yes!
Did you see that?
I know that kid!
I have never seen
James burchard down.
He's not only down,

he's bleeding
and he's hurt.
And he's struggling to
- get back to his feet.
That's my boy! That's my boy!
Come towards me.
-Let's see your gloves.
-I'm good, I'm good!
Box!
And burchard is furious!
That has got to have
- shaken him up.
Time!
Whoa, whoa! Break it up!
What a round!
Where did
Jaden Miller come from?
That's easy.
And I hope they're watching,
because Bronx boy Jaden Miller
is making history
here tonight.
The champ of the Bronx
versus the
champion of the world!
Hold onto your seats, folks!
We've got a fight
on our hands!
And now Miller is down!
What a shot!
Welcome to the big leagues,
Jaden Miller!
And he looks hurt.
Get up, get up.
Get up! Get up!
Get up! Get up!
-Come on.
-Get up, j, not now!
Come on. Get up!
Jaden...
Yeah?
If you don't stand up
and fight for
who you are now...

...I'm afraid of this.
Right now. You never will.
I know.
Get up. Get up!
Right now.
- Wait a minute.
- One,
two, three,
four, five, six...
Jaden Miller is back up!
There is no doubt about it!
Nobody is getting out of this
fight easy here tonight.
Whoo!
Jaden! Jaden! Jaden!
Let's see your gloves.
Time!
That's my son.
He's out there
fighting for me.
As round 4 begins, Jason,
this is uncharted territory
for the challenger.
The question is,
how long can he survive?
--How you feelin'?
I can't feel my arms.
That's all right. Believe me,
he's hurtin' just as bad.
Okay, do me one favor.
-Yeah.
-Forget the training,
forget the pain...
Just dance. Remember that?
Remember the man with no arms?
The hips, the hips, baby.
That's all we gotta do
in this fight.
Forget everything else.
Dance on him.
Come on, you got this.
You got this, come on!
This is our fight, come on!
This is what we worked for.

Let's do it!
The crowd
is electrified, Jason.
We've gotta be
the only two people
sitting down
watching this fight.
Round 4 may have done it.
That's a knock-down!
Shake that off!
Shake that off!
...six, seven, eight,
box!
That's it! That's it!
Move! Move!
Keep moving! Keep moving!
Come on, baby, come on!
There you go,
almost time, almost time!
Beautiful.
There you go baby, beautiful!
--Come on, get up!
Peter,
Burchard takes that round,
but the champ has never
seen a challenger like this.
--Work the body, work the body!
Burchard with
another powerful right,
but Miller answers again.
That's it, that's it!
Knock his ass out! Yeah!
One,
-two...
-I'm okay.
...three, four, five...
Here we go! Here we go!
-I'm good, I'm good.
-...Eight. Come towards me.
- Let me see your gloves.
What the hell's
going on out there?
Anyone who is
scoring this fight

has gotta give that round
to the challenger.

Endurance.

Endurance, right?

Speed kills, baby.

Speed kills.

I don't know what to do.

I don't know what to do.

Keep your arms up.

Watch the body.

Watch the body.

-Just like we practiced.

-Okay.

-Just like we practiced.

-Yeah.

Let's do it!

Keep movin' there.

Keep movin', endurance!

Both fighters

are simply exhausted.

Burchard with

another weak jab.

He can barely

keep his hands up, Jason.

Miller comes back with

another shot to the body

as he continues to pound

the champ's midsection.

Burchard

now in excruciating pain!

One-two, one-two.

This could be it, folks!

And burchard

is saved by the bell!

Unbelievable!

Listen to this crowd!

What was anticipated to be

a one-round fight

has now turned

into an all-out war,

with James burchard

literally in jeopardy

of losing his title!

All right,

everyone take a ticket!
For good luck because
it's the last round.
Everyone take a ticket!
Spit it out.
Let me take a look.
- They're broken.
- You think?
- Can you breathe?
- -Yeah.
-I'm good.
-James,
if they broke...
-No, no...
-Look, I can't let you...
I said no, okay!
You're not stopping
this fight!
Okay, kid...
Keep 'em covered.
-You hear me?
-I got this.
Keep 'em covered.
Jason,
how do you score the fight?
Every round has been close,
but I've got it 7 to 4,
James burchard.
But I've gotta tell you,
what a job by Jaden Miller!
Going the distance!
Nobody saw this coming.
If he has anything
left to prove,
it's to himself.
This is it!
-I got nothin' left.
I know. I know.
And in 10 minutes,
this'll all be over.
You can rest.
You can go back to your mom
and you can tell everybody
about how you made it to

the last round with the champ.
Nobody can take that
from you now.
But if you can just find it
within yourself,
to give me
three more minutes...
180 seconds...
One day,
you'll tell your kids,
when you were up
against the ropes,
when you were down
and had nothin' left,
that you stood up
and you fought
for who you are!
When I first met you,
they didn't even
know your name.
Now listen to 'em!
Jaden! Jaden! Jaden!
Where we're from, we gotta
fight for what we get.
Seconds out!
Okay, okay, okay.
There's just 10 seconds left.
Look, listen to me.
Go for his ribs.
They're hurting.
You can do this, j.
I know you can.
Let's show 'em
where you're from, j!
Show 'em
where you're from, baby!
Burchard with
a left hook, and another.
-Miller counters with a jab...
Burchard
with a powerful right.
Miller now with another shot
to the body.
Burchard is taking a beating

here in the final round!
Miller just
attacking those ribs!
Working so hard
for the knockdown!
Finish him! Finish him now!
...pounding away at the body
with everything he's got left.
Jason, I can't believe
both of these guys
are still standing
at this point.
And now it's Miller
who's in the corner!
Come on! Don't give up!
Body! Body!
Hips!
...two...
...four...
- ...seven... it's over!
You've taken enough
punishment, champ.
--I can't believe it!
Jaden Miller
has done the unthinkable!
Miller, the new
light heavyweight
champion of the world!
How about that!
Oh...
And you lost.
Never did win these things.
You ready?
Yup.
We did it, pop.
Always the last one.
You know, I never asked you
how those sneakers feel.
They're a little
tight actually.
Oh, really?
Well, get your own next time.
Here you go, ma.
We don't train to lose.

I'd just like to say
it's been a pleasure
working on the challenger.
This has been one of the most
innovative movies
i have ever done
and I told this guy
right here,
when I first met him
at the airport...
I said there's only
two director-actors
that I've ever worked with...
Anthony Hopkins and him.
He's in a really
good category.
From this guy right here...
From this guy right here.
This is our man.
He's the sound guy.
And all these guys standing
over here, all you guys,
come here.
Come here. I want everybody
over here, come here.
I want everybody to see this.
All these guys made
the challenger...
And are gonna make
the challenger a great movie.
- Everybody.
And from me,
Michael Clarke Duncan,
I wanna say thank you
to the cast and crew
for really making this
a unique experience.
I didn't know what to expect
when I got down here.
I was truly flabbergasted
that these guys
are doing a hell of a job.
From me to everybody
in Hollywood,

watch out for the challenger.

Thank you guys.

Thank you, Michael.

Thank you so much.

Man, that was awesome,
seriously.