

The *Eddie, The Mechanic* Series

The Story of Scott McCutchen

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Author's Note: This outtake never made it into the *Eddie, The Mechanic* storyline, but gives insight behind Scott McCutchen (Todd McCutchen's father) and a few other characters in the series. The setting for this outtake is in the 1950s.

As Scott McCutchen, the University's top sprinter, walks down the hall to his dorm room, he is promptly intercepted by Dan Leggett, the quarterback of the school's football team. Leggett firmly announces to McCutchen, "hey Scott McKitchen! We's needs to talk. Step into my pad like." Leggett's command of the English language would lead one to believe that he got sacked one too many times during the football season. Filled with elation that the quarterback of the football team pays him any attention at all, McCutchen walks into Leggett's dorm room and, trying to act cool, replies, "what's going on?" Leggett closes the door, telling McCutchen, "take a seat."

Leggett opens, telling McCutchen, "I hear you're gonna be burning some serious rubber on the track this year." McCutchen confidently boasts, "I'm number one." Leggett replies, "so am I. Big shit." McCutchen is shocked that Leggett is so bold, and not impressed with either his own nor McCutchen's athletic performance. Shifting gears, and making McCutchen suddenly feel important, Leggett adds, "look, man. We didn't get to be number one by hanging in the library with the pencil necks. But, I

really need your help with something.” Quite puzzled, sharply interrupting Leggett, McCutchen asks, “you need my help? What do you need my help with?” Leaning over on the desk, and taking firm control of the conversation, Leggett replies, “cut the gas¹ and listen to me carefully.” McCutchen now seriously wonders with which class Leggett needs help. Or, perhaps, displaying his overly energetic enthusiasm, Leggett has something bigger in mind.

Leggett asks McCutchen, “did your eye catch my new Chevy?” McCutchen replies, “everyone’s seen it. It looks really classy. How were you able to afford that set of wheels?” Avoiding answering the question, Leggett explains, “that’s why you’re here, Daddy-O². As I said, I need your help.” Realizing the top jock in the University has just potentially invited him to be part of the in crowd, McCutchen replies, “just name it.”

Getting right to the point, Leggett explains to McCutchen, “I got my Chevy by playing football the way the top cats want me to play football. The top cats tell me what they want the final score to be, and that’s what it is. Well, as close as I can get it. And, I make a lot of dough doing it. I mean like a lot of dough. That’s how it works. Now, this is how you’re gonna help. I need you to lose a few races this year.” Shocked at what he is hearing, McCutchen replies, asking, “lose a few races?” Leggett replies, “what? Is there an echo in here? Yeah. I need you to lose a few races. Well, not me. The top cat wants you to lose a few races. He asked me to talk to you, and bring you in. The way these guys work, you don’t have much of a choice.”

McCutchen asks, “what’s in it for me? I mean, like, I can’t just lose a race!” Quite puzzled at McCutchen’s lack

¹ Cut the gas: 1950s slang for “shut up”.

² Daddy-O: 1950s term for a “cool dude.” In the 1960s, the same term was a vague reference to the police.

of understanding, Leggett explains, “what’s in it for you? Dude! Your cut is a few hundred bucks per race. You’re gonna be the man in the shade³, driving around in a new Chevy, just like me.” Enticed by Leggett’s offer, McCutchen replies, “wait a second, here. This sounds too good to be true.”

McCutchen’s sudden, but hesitant, interest in Leggett’s offer comes as no surprise. McCutchen grew up on the wrong side of the tracks, to use the popular vernacular. Barely able to make ends meet, McCutchen now has Leggett’s full attention. After all, a few hundred dollars⁴ to lose a race is a lot of money for very little, if any, effort.

Explaining the facts to McCutchen, Leggett quietly advises him, “you don’t really have a choice. The top cat told me to bring you in. If you refuse the cats, they’s gonna send out the goon squad and you’ll be cruisin’ for a bruisin’ and you’re gonna end up with a knuckle sandwich⁵ for lunch. I’m telling you, Daddy-O. This is the word from the bird⁶. Got it?” McCutchen, who is not quite as hip as Leggett, replies, “I totally understand. What do I do next?”

Not that he left McCutchen a choice, Leggett asks, “so, you’re in?” Practicing the art of being cool, McCutchen energetically replies, “yeah, Daddy-O. I’m in. What’s next. Gimme the plan.” Leggett replies, “good. Let me talk to the cats, and I’ll let you know when the word comes down.” McCutchen confidently tells Leggett, “I’ll

³ Man in the shade: 1950s slang for not having a care in the world.

⁴ At the time of the discussion, \$100.00 would be worth approximately \$1,000.00 at the time of this writing.

⁵ Knuckle sandwich: 1950s slang for a punch in the face.

⁶ Word from the bird: 1950s slang for telling the truth.

be waiting.” Leggett then warns McCutchen, “and, not a word about this to anyone. No one. Clear?” McCutchen replies, “clear.” Leggett replies, “good. You don’t want these cats burning your house down⁷.”

With great curiosity, McCutchen asks Leggett, “by the way, who’s the top cat?” Leggett replies, “hey! Stay in your lane, Daddy-O. They’ll break you in. Just hang loose.”

Leggett and McCutchen talk for a bit longer, mostly about how much money McCutchen will be making were he to perform as the top cat instructs. McCutchen heads out, still wondering who the top cats are. On the short walk to his dorm room, McCutchen finds himself full of adrenaline and in a really good mood.

The next day, Dan Leggett hangs out near the physical education building, waiting for an opportune time to discuss matters with the top cat. It’s hard not to notice Leggett, the quarterback, hanging around the athletic center. But, being an athletic star, Leggett’s presence in the athletic building arouses absolutely no special attention nor suspicion.

Seeing the top cat walk into the building and down the hall, Leggett discreetly follows, albeit at a distance, not saying a word. As Gerald Paxton, a trainer for various athletic teams, walks into his office, Leggett follows and quietly closes the door.

Paxton sits behind his desk, telling Leggett, “have a seat.” Succeeding at his assignment to bring McCutchen into the organization, Leggett takes a seat, telling Paxton, “I got some good news.” Knowing exactly what today’s agenda is, Paxton instructs Leggett, “tell me.” With his hand, Leggett brushes back his hair, explaining,

⁷ Burn your house down: *slang*. Giving a person so much trouble that burning their house down seems like the better alternative.

“he’s in. I mean, like, it didn’t take much. He’s definitely in.” Paxton asks, “how confident are you?” Leggett replies, “he’s in. I didn’t give him any choice. I used the goon squad angle.” Paxton snickers and replies, “good.”

Paxton explains to Leggett, “Scott McCutchen is the number one seed in the 100-yard dash and the 220-yard dash in the divisional meet this year. His first assignment is going to be to lose one of those races. I’ll let him make it up for a few meets after that, if you know what I mean. I don’t want him to get too tarnished. We can make more money if it looks like he’s still at the top of his game.”

Leggett asks Paxton, “what’s the word?” Explaining the plan, Paxton replies, “as I said, the divisional meet is coming up. I want McCutchen to hang back in second place in the 100-yard dash, begin his lean into the finish early, then take a fall on the track. I want it to look like a mishap. I don’t want him placing in that race. Then, in the next meet, he’ll be back, and perform at 100 percent. That will restore everyone’s confidence.” Paxton then instructs Leggett, “read it back to me.” Leggett reiterates Paxton’s plan, assuring both parties that they are in full agreement.

Following a short discussion, Paxton tells Leggett, “here, let me take care of you.” Paxton opens his locked desk drawer, pulls out two envelopes, and hands them to Leggett. Paxton tells Leggett, “the one with your name on it is yours. Give the other to McCutchen. Tell him it’s his sign-on bonus. And, keep your eyes on him for me. I don’t want anything blowing up.” Leggett replies, “yes, sir,” quite the departure from his normal conversational style. After a lengthy conversation, Leggett heads out, glad to pick up a big chunk of cash for organizing something that, should anyone ever ask, never happened.

Later that evening, Leggett walks down the hall to McCutchen’s dorm room. Making a grand entrance, Leggett announces, “yo, Daddy-O! I got something for you!” Quite puzzled, McCutchen asks, “what’s that?”

Throwing an envelope of cash onto McCutchen's desk, Leggett replies, "it's your sign-on bonus."

Curious himself to know how much is in the envelope, Leggett instructs McCutchen, "open it up." McCutchen opens the sealed envelope, finding two hundred dollars in cash. Leggett informs McCutchen, "that's your sign-on bonus. That's nothing compared to what you're gonna be making." McCutchen smiles, and replies, "thanks. Really! Thanks!"

Leggett takes a seat, telling McCutchen, "this is how it's gonna go down, Daddy-O. The top cats want you to hang in third, no, second place in the 100-yard dash in the divisional meet. That's what it was, second place. Then, at the finish, start your lean early, and take a fall on the track. The cats don't want you to place in that race. I mean, like, don't even cross the finish line. Make it look like an accident." McCutchen asks, "that's it? That's all I have to do?" Leggett replies, "that's it, Daddy-O. Not bad for a few hundred. You'll be on easy street."

Giving McCutchen some advice, Leggett informs him, "by the way, don't put the brass⁸ in the bank. Hide it somewhere. You don't wanna leave a trail." Living not too far from the University, McCutchen tells Leggett, "I'll keep it at home. My parents live fifteen miles from here." Leggett replies, "good deal, Daddy-O. You're getting the hang of it already."

Leggett then informs McCutchen, "after the divisional meet, I'll introduce you to the top cat. Then, after that, you're on your own, the man in the shade." The newly found friends, Leggett and McCutchen, then head out for dinner together, where McCutchen will learn the ropes a little better. Getting into Leggett's new Chevy, McCutchen realizes that, in short order, he can have a new car too.

⁸ Brass: Another term for money.

Meanwhile, as Dan Leggett and Scott McCutchen begin their gambling career, fifteen miles away, a young track athlete named George Frazier can be found carrying his dad's tools up to their top floor apartment. Clear across the country, Mr. O'Brien is reading a book about communism, learning how nothing in this country is fair. Four miles away, Dominik and Nina Bogenskaya can be found moving into their first home, built by Dominik and his friend, Joseph Svoboda. And, at the very same University attended by McCutchen and Leggett, a guy named Dr. Alexander Karakova just accepted a position as a professor in the Exercise Science department.