

Eddie, The Collegiate Freshman

Chapter Five Spring Semester

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With Spring finally arriving, Eddie is finally getting around to building a few new Dune Buggies. Johnson decided that he wants a Dune Buggy so he can get off campus a little more. And, Bobby B. has decided he wants one too. Finding out that his BSA motorcycle is not too suited for Winter or during the rain, Bobby B., too, has decided to get something a lot more practical, such as a Dune Buggy. And, Eddie has acquired three frames, and two wrecked Porsche 911s, and is ready to start building them. The third frame is reserved for Eddie's brother, who will be getting his driver's license soon.

The University track team had their best Winter season ever, and now it's on to the Spring season. With the team stronger than ever, all anyone can see are more victories in their future. The team now has six training sleds for the sand track, and none for the gravel track, which has been replaced by an all-weather track. Eddie has built quite a few of the units for the University, the high school, and for a few individuals.

Dr. Paxton and Coach Herndon has taken the team's training to a new level, combining the interval training with resistance training on the sled. In the new workout, the runner drags the resistance sled for 220-yards on the sand track, heads over to the track and sprints for 440-yards, and then takes a recovery lap. Heading back to the sand track and dragging the sled again, they repeat the exercise. And, as with the standard interval training workout, once dragging the resistance sled for 220 yards proves too difficult, the weight on the sled is lowered, but the sprinting distance remains at 220 yards.

One morning, in the early Spring, as the University team is headed out to the track to practice, Kathy, out of the blue, comments to Eddie, "hey! How come I have to walk out to the track?" Reminiscing the days where the tribe would often carry their girlfriends down the main road to the

pizzeria, Eddie puts Kathy on his shoulders, and carries her out to the track. Paula looks at Mark, and asks him, "what are you waiting for?" Paula quickly ends up on Mark's shoulders. In no time, Bobby B. is carrying Erika, Johnson is carrying Barbara, and Braden is carrying Wendy. Hoffer is sad because Tessa is on the swimming team, and is in her dorm sleeping. Looking at Hoffer and Mitchell, Mark comments, "it looks like you guys got off easy." Mitchell reminds Mark, "next year, Amber will be here." Mitchell's comment just announced Amber's intentions after high school.

Following the team out to the track, Dr. Braun, and the other coaches, all watch as the tribe carry their women to the track. Coach Herndon comments, "well, there's a workout I've never seen before." Dr. Braun points out, "and, those women are big. It's not like they weigh 90 pounds." Paying close attention to the shot doc, Dr. Bonamo exclaims, "and, just take a look at that! Bradshaw is doing squats with Erika on his shoulders." Dr. Braun adds, "these guys certainly take this sport seriously." Once the team is at the track, Coach Herndon remarks, "now, they're all doing squats with the women on their shoulders."

The coaching staff catches up to the team, as the guys continue doing squats. Apparently, a competition has developed to see who can go the longest. As he is doing squats, Bobby B. claims victory, stating, "you guys are slowing down. I won!" Eddie disputes Bobby B's claim, stating, "we're all still going. You haven't won yet." Braden chimes in, telling Bobby B., "I'm way ahead of you, bro! You ain't won nothing yet!" Bobby B. rebuffs, "yeah, but Wendy is a lot lighter than Erika." Bobby B. does have a point. The competition goes on and, in the end, Bobby B. is the last man standing. Kathy and Paula weigh a little more than Erika, so Mark and Eddie claim they had more weight on their shoulders. Bobby B. will not hear it, claiming victory nevertheless.

The coaching staff allowed the competition to continue, but then it's down to business. Dr. Braun announces, "it looks like some of you just had a pretty good warm up. The rest of you, take a warm-up lap, and then we'll get started." The guys in the squatting competition apparently get a pass on today's warm up, but immediately hit the training sled before they cool down too much.

During the warm-up lap, McCutchen tells Leggett, "my brother warned me about those guys last year. He told me that, if I don't get rid of them, I won't have a place on the team." Leggett reminds McCutchen, "it's already happened. You're an alternate, and I got bumped down a few notches. As long as they're around, it's their show." McCutchen adds, "from what I hear them saying, next year there might be a few more coming up." Leggett informs McCutchen, "I'm graduating this year. You'll have two more years of this." McCutchen tells Leggett, "I got to take them

down somehow.” Leggett offers, “just let me know how you’re going to do it. I’ll help.” Leggett, who was supposed to be the team’s star sprinter this year, is one step away from joining McCutchen as an alternate.

After the warm-up lap, the team begins their workout. The sprinters hit the training sled, and the distance team begins the interval training workout. Halfway into the workout, referring to McCutchen and Leggett, Paula mentions to Kathy, “those guys haven’t done squat all day.” Kathy replies, “our guys did squats. So did we. We were the weight. That counts, right?” Paula laughs, but points out, “I don’t like it that McCutchen pointed over to where we all park a few times. Watch them. They’re definitely up to something.” Before taking her turn on the training sled, Kathy mentions, “McCrutchen was really ticked off when Braden got a Dune Buggy.” Kathy then takes her turn on the training sled, as Paula awaits her turn.

When practice comes to an end, Kathy mentions to Paula, “I see what you mean. McCutchen and lug nut haven’t done squat all day. All they did is talk and take a few recovery laps around the track.” Joking around, Paula tells Kathy, “hey! Give them a break. I think I saw them sprint once.” Kathy comments, “no wonder they’re alternates. They’re acting like they’re on vacation or something.” The women head into the locker room, wondering why McCutchen and Leggett even bother to stay on the team. They’re both sub par, and neither seems to want to improve their performance.

In the men’s locker room, Eddie tells Bobby B. and Johnson, “I got some good news for you guys!” Johnson asks, “what’s that?” Eddie informs them, “I got your Dune Buggy frames, and I have two 911 drive trains and front ends, and they’re in great shape.” Johnson exclaims, “awesome!” Bobby B. exclaims, “wow! I can’t wait!”

Eddie then tells Johnson and Bobby B., “I need you guys to help me out.” Johnson comments, “uh oh. Here it comes. I didn’t think it was going to be that easy.” Eddie laughs, and tells Johnson and Bobby B., “I need you guys to pick out the color you want. I need to order the body.” Bobby B., wasting no time, announces, “I’ll take red.” Johnson asks, “does it come in silver?” Eddie replies, “no. But, I might be able to swing getting you a custom color.”

Hearing the conversation, Braden yells across the locker room, “if I knew we can get a custom color, I would have picked gold, to match all my gold medals!” Johnson yells back, “hey, thanks for the idea, bro! Maybe I’ll get gold, to match all my medals.” Voicing his opinion, Mark yells out, “I wonder if you can get a dirt colored Dune Buggy for Bobby B., so it will match the dirty shot-put he’s been tossing around.” Bobby B. thought that issue was put to rest a long time ago, but apparently it

hasn't. After today's locker room talk, everyone knows what's on the way for Johnson and Bobby B. The only question that remains is what color the Dune Buggies will be.

Over the next few weeks, the University team delivers fantastic performances at all their meets. Eddie has been busy building Johnson's and Bobby B's. Dune Buggies, hoping to get them done before Summer break. Eddie has also been doing a lot of training at home with Kathy, both in their home gym and in their pool. Mark and Paula have been enjoying their own pool, looking forward to a Summer in the sun.

As Eddie and Kathy get to practice one Monday morning, they park in the area unofficially reserved for the tribe. Heading to the locker rooms, Eddie and Kathy notice the men's locker room has been closed off, with yellow tape across the door. Eddie mentions to Kathy, "I wonder what's up." Kathy replies, "maybe you'll get the day off." Eddie remarks, "well, I do have a few Dune Buggies to build."

As Kathy and Eddie are talking, Mark and Paula arrive. Paula asks, "what's going on?" Kathy replies, "we don't know. The men's locker room is closed." Eddie tells Mark, "it looks like we might get the day off." A few other team members arrive, and a discussion of what may be the problem arises. With no information, everything discussed is pure speculation.

Braden emerges from the locker room in his police uniform, and removes the yellow tape. Braden announces, "the men's locker room is now open. You may now enter, and get dressed." The women who were standing around watching now head to their locker room. As the men enter their locker room, Braden calls Eddie and Kathy aside.

Braden tells Eddie and Kathy, "you ain't gonna believe this shit." Kathy asks, "what's going on?" Braden explains, "the Dean of Students¹ got an anonymous tip that Eddie was taking steroids, and that he's also selling them. The tipster said the steroids are in his locker." Totally in shock at what he is hearing, Eddie exclaims, "what?" Braden continues, "the dean had Eddie's locker searched, and Officer Levy found steroids. Officer Levy did the search. They wouldn't let me do anything but stand there and watch, because I'm on the team." Eddie exclaims, "I can't believe this shit! I'm not taking steroids or selling them!" Kathy exclaims, "this is total bullshit!" Braden agrees, telling them, "yeah, I know. Something's going on. Somebody must have planted that shit there."

¹ Dean of Students: The Dean of Students is a liaison between college administrators and student organizations.

Braden then tells Eddie, “the dean was in there, but he’s gone now. He said he’s not letting you back on the team until you talk with him. I wish I could tell you more, but there’s an investigation starting.” Eddie tells Braden, “you know what? I’m out of here! I’m not putting up with this shit!” Kathy tells Eddie, “I’m coming with you.” Eddie tells Kathy, “no. Go to practice. See what’s being said. I want to hear this later.” Braden tells Eddie, “I’ll let you guys know what’s going on.” Braden heads into the locker room to get dressed for practice, and Eddie and Kathy step outside the locker area into the arena to talk for a moment.

All upset, Eddie tells Kathy, “I’m just going home. I’m done with this place.” Kathy explains, “someone’s trying to take you down! This is bullshit! You can’t let them win!” Kathy then tells Eddie, “well, Braden said that they won’t let you on the team until you talk to the dean.” Eddie replies, “I’d love to hear what this is all about.” Eddie kisses Kathy, and heads home. Kathy heads to the locker room, wondering what in the world has happened.

As Eddie is walking away, he runs into Dr. Braun. Dr. Braun asks Eddie, “can I see you for a moment?” Figuring he might get some answers, Eddie replies, “sure.” Dr. Braun and Eddie walk to the office in the arena usually reserved for the meet officials. Dr. Braun explains, “unfortunately, I have some bad news.” Already knowing what is about to be said, Eddie sits back and listens. Dr. Braun continues, “Eddie, the dean got an anonymous tip that you are taking steroids and that you are selling them. He had your locker searched, and they found steroids. So, they have started an investigation. Until the investigation is complete, unfortunately you are suspended from the team. This was not my decision. It was the dean’s decision.” Shocked by the news, Eddie tells Dr. Braun, “I really don’t know what to say. I’m not taking steroids, and I’m not selling them either.” Dr. Braun tells Eddie, “I believe you. But, for some reason, the dean has taken full control of the situation.”

Dr. Braun tells Eddie, “they have asked that you submit to a urine test to check for steroids.” Wanting to clear himself, Eddie asks, “when, and where?” Dr. Braun answers, “you can submit the sample at the infirmary. I can tell you that the sooner you do it, the better. If you wait three weeks, they will claim that you waited in order to allow any steroids to leave your body.” Sick of the crap someone is always putting him through, Eddie tells Dr. Braun, “fine. I’ll head there right now. And, it’s going to come out clean.” Dr. Braun tells Eddie, “that would be a good start. I want to get this cleared up as much as you do.” Eddie heads to the infirmary to submit his urine sample. He will then head home to work on Johnson’s and Bobby B’s Dune Buggies.

While Eddie is at the infirmary submitting his urine sample, track practice is held out on the field. Braden, who took part in conducting the

investigation, is keeping his eyes and ears open for any information he can ascertain regarding Eddie's case. Braden has his list of suspects, but proving anything will be difficult, if not impossible. To make matters worse, Coach Herndon has the difficult task of finding someone to take Eddie's place in the 100-yard dash, the 220-yard dash, the 4 by 440 relay, and the mile medley relay in Eddie's absence.

Now that the University has him under investigation, Eddie has a little more time on his hands. But, Eddie doesn't care that he has been suspended from the track team. If they want to expel him, he couldn't care less.

While out and about one day, Eddie becomes more curious about the street Mr. Crum lives on. Mr. Crum came to Eddie's mind simply because he was a troublemaker from the past in Eddie's life. Taking a drive to Second Street, Eddie is wondering whether Mr. Crum's house may be for sale, since Mr. Crum will be headed to jail for a long time. Having more time on his hands, Eddie is looking for a place to build a storage yard.

Arriving at Second Street, Eddie notices a sign in Mr. Crum's front yard telling the public that the house has been foreclosed upon, and will be sold on the courthouse steps on the first Tuesday of the month. Eddie also notices that the firm Davies and Rice are handling the foreclosure for the bank. Eddie gets out of his MGB, and takes a walk around the neighborhood. None of the houses seem to be occupied. All are in disrepair. None are worth much. Eddie thinks back to what Paula once said, that the street needs a bulldozer and an exorcist.

On his way home, Eddie drives to the Davies and Rice law firm, who also handled the closing when Eddie and Kathy bought their house in the woods. After waiting for a few minutes, Eddie is escorted to the office of Mr. John Davies. Eddie and Mr. Davies talk in depth about athletics at the high school. They both share their interesting stories, mostly revolving around confrontation involving the administration. Eddie finally gets the full and unedited version of how Mr. Davies lost his football scholarship, courtesy of Mr. Crum. As it turns out, the circulated story is very accurate.

Getting down to business, Eddie tells Mr. Davies, "I want to buy Mr. Crum's house on Second Street. And, I want the other three houses too." Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "well, let's talk about Crum's house first. The title is clear, except for the foreclosure. There is no second mortgage. The taxes are up to date, and there are no liens. If you show up on the courthouse steps, I can just about assure you that you'll get it. There is absolutely no interest in that house, or in that area. That street is pretty much a slum."

Glad to hear what he thinks is good news, Eddie asks, "how much will it cost?" Mr. Davies replies, "you'll have to bid on the house. It could go for five thousand dollars. It could go for fifty thousand dollars, or it could go for a million dollars if someone is stupid enough to bid it up that high."

Eddie then asks Mr. Davies, "so, what do I do?" Mr. Davies explains, "just show up on the first Tuesday of the month at the courthouse steps, and bid on the house. By the way, that is the week after next. And, you'll need to produce certified funds by the end of the day." Taking notes, Eddie is ready to go.

Moving on, Eddie asks, "how about the other three houses? Is there any way I can buy those? They're abandoned, and just sitting there." Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "the other three houses are owned by Carmen and Lang, L.L.P. They're a real estate development firm and, honestly, I'm sure they'd be glad to unload them." Quite surprised Eddie asks, "really? How do I find out?" Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "if you want, I can find out for you. I'll give them a call and see where they stand." Eddie replies, "sure. I'd love to get all four properties." Mr. Davies tells Eddie to check back at the end of the week. Eddie then heads out, formulating a plan.

When Kathy gets home, she finds Eddie relaxing on the sofa, deep in thought. Not used to seeing Eddie so idly sitting around, Kathy asks, "hey, what's up?" Eddie explains, "I drove down Second Street today." Before Eddie can finish his sentence, Kathy exclaims, "and, you didn't ask me and Paula if we wanted to go?" Second Street is the last place Paula would want to be seen, and it's not exactly Kathy's favorite place either. Driving down Second Street once was enough for Paula. Finishing what he was about to say, Eddie explains, "Mr. Crum's house has been foreclosed. And, Mr. Davies thinks I might be able to buy the other three properties too." Kathy asks, "why would you want to buy them?" Eddie replies, "so I can bulldoze the houses down."

Thinking about what Eddie said, Kathy is very quiet. Kathy asks, "so, you want to buy all four houses, and just bulldoze them down?" Eddie replies, "yeah." Kathy asks, "how is that fair?" Eddie asks, "what do you mean?" Kathy replies, "there's four houses, and you get to bulldoze them down all by yourself? I want to help!" Eddie asks, "so, I take it you want us to buy them too?" Kathy replies, "yeah. But, I want to be the one to bulldoze Mr. Crum's house down!" After what Kathy had to put up with Mr. Crum, she'll take pleasure in bulldozing down his house.

Kathy then asks Eddie, "you're serious about this, aren't you?" Eddie replies, "yeah. I could use the land for something someday. After all, there's a lot of land there. If we bulldoze the houses down, it might look really good." Kathy replies, "I see what you mean."

Kathy tells Eddie, "I'm calling Paula." Thinking that Kathy talking with Paula about buying the houses on Second Street will be quite amusing, Eddie tells Kathy, "now, that's going to be a really interesting conversation. Why don't you just invite them over?" Kathy replies, "I think I'll do that. Or, maybe we can go out and get pizza." Kathy calls Paula, and invites her and Mark out for pizza. Wanting to take a look at Second Street after they eat, and knowing that Paula probably would not want to come, Kathy suggests they drive separately.

The two couples meet at the pizzeria, sitting at their usual table near the window. Eddie and Mark place their orders and, when they return to the table, Kathy announces, "we have some news." Paula comments, "okay, this is going to be interesting. I can tell." Paula's superpowers are apparently at work.

Kathy asks Mark and Paula, "do you know how Mr. Crum got arrested and has been in jail for the last whole semester, and then some?" Mark mentions, "yeah. It's too bad that they didn't lock him up when we were in high school." Eddie adds, "ain't that the truth." It seems everyone is glad to hear the principal is in jail. The worst part, for Mr. Crum anyway, is that his bail was set very high, and no one has stepped up and bailed him out.

Kathy continues, "so, Mr. Crum's house got foreclosed, and Eddie is going to buy it on the courthouse steps." Paula interrupts and exclaims, "what? You've got to be kidding me! Why?" Kathy continues, "but, wait! Mr. Davies, the attorney, is seeing if the owner of the other three properties wants to sell them. So, Eddie wants to buy all four houses, and then bulldoze them down!" Paula exclaims, "no! Tell me you're not!" Eddie assures Paula, "yeah, I am." Paula asks, "but, why?" Eddie explains, "I don't know. Just for fun, I guess. I can get it zoned commercial, and use it for a storage yard for cars or my dad can store some of his construction equipment there. The lots are about a half acre each. So, that's two acres with a road right down the middle."

Hearing that Mr. Crum's house will be bulldozed, Mark casually asks, "can I help?" Eddie assures Mark, "of course, bro. I need someone to show me how to work a bulldozer." Mark tells Eddie, "a bulldozer with a large backhoe might make it go easier. We can rent one. It should take less than a day to knock all that shit down." Quite unexpectedly, Paula exclaims, "I'm ready!" If Eddie's plan goes through, everyone apparently wants to be in on the fun.

After pizza, Kathy tells Paula, "we're driving over to Second Street to take a look." Again, quite unexpectedly, Paula exclaims, "I'm coming!" Looking at Eddie, Mark tells him, "I guess we're all going." Eddie tells Mark, "I just want to take a good look at it before I buy it." They all head

to Second Street in their Dune Buggies, ready to plan the future for that street.

When they arrive at Second Street, the four dilapidated houses are not only in very bad condition, but the yards, including Mr. Crum's, are now all overgrown. Getting out of their Dune Buggies, they take a walk around the street. Mark asks Paula, "are you okay?" Paula replies, "yeah. This whole place looks like crap. But, knowing that all of this shit will be gone soon, I'm okay. I'm good."

Kathy tells Paula, "I'm knocking down Mr. Crum's house." Paula exclaims, "I want to knock one down too!" Pointing to the house across the street from Mr. Crum, Paula announces, "I'm knocking that one down." Mark asks, "why that one?" Paula replies, "because it's the ugliest house on this street. And, it's probably the ugliest house in the world." Kathy comforts Paula, telling her, "that's because the boogie man lives there." Paula replies, "ain't that the truth." Paula finally agrees with Kathy that the house across the street from Mr. Crum's house is the boogie man's house.

Eddie tells Kathy, "the best part about this is that the land is level. The main road is on the other side of where First Street was, and the train tracks are behind the houses on Second Street." Kathy mentions, "you can't even see where First Street was." Eddie tells Kathy, "I guess we'll get that too." Kathy asks, "how is that?" Eddie replies, "squatters rights." Pointing to the dead end, Eddie explains, "behind that brick wall is the recycling plant. Their entrance is up on the main road. So, this would be like a private road to all four properties." Kathy is beginning to see how buying all four properties might be advantageous.

So do Mark and Paula. While Eddie and Kathy were looking at the borders of the lots, Mark and Paula were talking with each other about their own plans. Paula asks Kathy, "if you guys get this, is there any chance we can buy some of it from you?" Eddie replies, "sure. I don't care." Paula explains, "Mark was thinking about buying some heavy equipment someday, like a bulldozer or a small dump truck. And, Mark's father has two trailers in his back yard, and no good place to keep them." Mark adds, "and there's that shit load of angle iron on the side of his house. This would be the perfect place to store stuff like that."

Eddie looks at Kathy, and tells her, "it looks like we can all put this place to use." Eddie then mentions, "my dad has a trailer that he uses once or twice a month. And, he has that cement mixer that's sitting behind his house. He'd probably like to store that stuff here too. And, he always talks about buying equipment, but says he has no place to store it. So, he always ends up renting stuff instead." Kathy exclaims, "so, then let's get it!"

The plan is now moving along. Eddie and Mark can put the two acres on Second Street to good use. Kathy and Paula are onboard and, for the moment, are mostly interested in knocking the houses down. And the street, only about 400 feet long, will be like their own private road. Now, all they have to do is wait and see what happens over the next two weeks.

Eddie has decided to meet with the Dean of Students, Dean Addison Grimsby, if only to clear his name. If he is to ever participate with the team again, he was told that the meeting is mandatory. So, Eddie arranged the meeting just to scratch one prerequisite of competing again off the list. As he waits to be called into the dean's office, Eddie wonders what the dean will have to say.

Escorted to the dean's office, Eddie is a bit nervous not knowing what to expect. He takes a seat across the desk from a stone-faced man who clearly gives the impression that he is judge, jury, and executioner. Eddie sits for a few minutes while the dean reviews some paperwork. Looking around the office at the furnishings and decor, Eddie gets the impression that the dean, whatever he does, must be considered important. It's not everyone who has an office furnished in such grandiose style. And, the diploma on the wall indicates that the dean has a Ph.D. in mathematics. Eddie surmises that the dean must be very smart.

Dean Grimsby opens the meeting by stating, "Edward Bogenskaya, did I pronounce that correctly?" Eddie replies, "yes, sir." The dean immediately begins lecturing Eddie, "now, it is my understanding that you are taking steroids, selling them for profit, or both." Eddie interrupts, and replies, "that's completely false." The dean insists, "please do not interrupt me again. Is that clear?" The only thing now clear to Eddie is that the dean must be some sort of asshole, at least in Eddie's book. But, Eddie cordially replies, "yes, sir."

The dean continues, orating, "the use of illicit drugs at this University is highly frowned upon. I am conducting an investigation to gain a full understanding of the accusations against you. Until then, you are suspended from competing on the track team, but you still may attend your classes." Eddie replies, "okay." The dean is obviously unaware that Eddie does not attend classes. But, Eddie lets the dean continue.

Slamming the folder onto his desk, and resuming his lecture, the dean tells Eddie, "honestly, Edward, you have been a great embarrassment to this University. It is not every day that I have to deal with a situation as severe as this. While I hope for the best outcome for you, this looks very grim from my perspective."

Laying it on the line, Dean Grimsby tells Eddie, "I really don't know why you wanted to meet with me today. This is an ongoing investigation

and, to be quite frank, there's nothing I'm going to do until the investigation is completed. You will be notified of the date and time of your hearing. During your hearing, the results of the investigation will be presented to you, and the University's decision in the matter will be final."

The hearing that Dean Grimsby is referring to is a meeting with the dean and other administrators that Eddie must attend in order to get back on the team. That small detail was not made clear to Eddie, who wants to get this all behind him as fast as possible.

The dean then concludes, telling Eddie, "until then, there's nothing that I can, or that I will, do. Now, unless there's anything else, I really need to get back to my business." Eddie replies, "then, I guess we're done." As he gets up to leave, Eddie wonders why he even bothered to set up and attend the meeting with the dean.

Eddie hasn't been to practice since being suspended from the team. He did, however, receive the news that he passed his drug test. No steroids were found in his urine. Even having a sample of what they were looking for, the lab reports that Eddie is clean. Since he passed the drug test, his suspension has partially been lifted by the Dean of Students. The dean informed Eddie that he may practice with the team, but he may not compete until the dean decides that he can. Eddie, however, has chosen to not return to the team. He has other things to keep him busy, such as building Johnson's and Bobby B's. Dune Buggies, which are coming along well.

Eddie's absence seriously concerns Dr. Braun and Coach Herndon, and justifiably so. Leggett is taking Eddie's place in the 100-yard dash and the 4 by 440 relay. McCutchen has been assigned to Eddie's place in the mile medley relay. Unfortunately, McCutchen's and Leggett's performance is sub par, not even remotely close to Eddie's performance. Resulting from the change, neither the mile medley relay team nor the 4 by 440 relay team have placed in a race since Eddie left. And, needless to say, neither Leggett nor McCutchen has placed in an event all year. But, McCutchen and Leggett got what they wanted. McCutchen is no longer an alternate, and Leggett got bumped up a few notches, all at the expense of the team.

Before practice one Wednesday, the upbeat tone of McCutchen and Leggett is evident to all. In the locker room, Braden distinctly overhears McCutchen imitating one of his rants, exclaiming, "just suck it into your lung. Inject it into your vein. Just get it up to your brain. The Eddie man's living on the juice. And, now he's hanging from a noose." Overheard by Braden, the officer is cued in, suspecting that McCutchen and Leggett are definitely up to something.

The Wednesday practice session brings relay drills, giving the athletes a break from the grueling workouts on Monday and Tuesday. The Monday and Tuesday workouts involve the training sled and intense interval training. On Wednesday, the relay drills give the athletes a bit of a break before returning to the Thursday and Friday workouts, when they are back on the training sled and interval training.

The mile medley team gets on the track, running a race for time. Mark, the lead off man, takes the baton. The gun is fired, and Mark is off. Coming around the curve, Mark approaches the transition zone. McCutchen takes off, albeit quite a bit slower than Eddie normally does. Mark attempts to deliver the baton, but McCutchen fails to receive the goods. As Mark and McCutchen leave the transition zone without transferring the baton, Mark shoves the baton into McCutchen's ass, sending McCutchen to the ground. Mark drops the baton, throws his hands into the air, and walks off his run.

Coach Herndon yells out, "okay! Let's try that again! And, let's get it right this time!" Coach Herndon is used to the seamless transition between Mark and Eddie. Today's first transition between Mark and McCutchen did not go very well. Mark picks up the baton, and blatantly walks across the red zone, back to the starting line. Mark, however, continually looks to his left in case a stray javelin or discus comes his way. McCutchen limps back to the transition zone, hoping the second attempt goes a bit better.

The gun is fired, and Mark is off again. Coming around the curve for the second time, Mark approaches the transition zone where the look of fear is on McCutchen's face. McCutchen takes off, waiting for the delivery of the goods. Mark has to slow his pace considerably to transfer the baton, but this time McCutchen is somehow able to grab the baton. Mark, just glad to get the transition completed, stands off to the side and watches across the track as McCutchen approaches Braden. As McCutchen approaches the transition zone, Braden takes off. Not being able to deliver the baton to Braden, both Braden and McCutchen leave the transition zone, failing to complete the transfer.

Coach Herndon yells out, "okay! I've had enough already! Let's try to get it right this time!" Mark takes the baton again, having to repeat the procedure several times. At the end of the afternoon, the relay team finishes with a whopping three legal transfers of the baton involving McCutchen. At the end of the day, Coach Herndon decides to reassign McCutchen to the lead off position. The coach's decision is solely for the reason of making McCutchen responsible for transferring the baton once instead of twice during the race.

In the locker room, McCutchen tells Leggett, “did you see that out there? That Mark guy intentionally shoved the baton into my butt.” Leggett informs McCutchen, “he’s just taking it out on you because Eddie’s gone.” McCutchen laments, “yeah, well, he’s making me look bad.” Leggett suggests, “so, figure out a way to make him look bad.” McCutchen, lambasted several times today by Coach Herndon, considers Leggett’s advice. McCutchen contemplates how he can make Mark look bad. With someone as skilled and witty as Mark, McCutchen has a very difficult task ahead of him if he is to make Mark look inferior in any way.

A little farther down in the locker room, Mark, Braden, and Johnson realize they have lost all hope of winning a relay race this year, unless, of course, Eddie returns. Mark tells Braden, “if McCutchen doesn’t get his ass in gear, I’m going to shove the baton up his ass until he gets it right.” Braden informs Mark, “yo, bro! Coach Herndon made McCutchen the lead off man. He’s handing off to you.” Quite disgusted, Mark replies, “then, I’ll just accidentally jam the baton into his balls when I take off.” Braden exclaims, “I don’t want to miss that!” Mark then asks, “I wonder where they’ll put Leggett in the 4 by 440 relay.” Startled, Braden exclaims, “I forgot about that! Dang. I ain’t cutting his ass no slack.” Mark replies, “me either.”

The next meet will prove interesting. Fortunately, for the tribe, they still have their individual events, which they still are likely to win. With dropped batons, failed transitions, and slow starts, the best the relay teams can hope for is to finish the race without being disqualified. But, on the optimistic side, Coach Herndon has reassigned the relay legs to minimize the possibility of mistakes.

Toward the end of the week, on Thursday, Eddie calls Mr. Davies to find out about the other three properties on Second Street. Eddie finds out that Carmen and Lang, L.L.P., will be glad to sell all three properties. Not only will they sell them, they will sell all three at a discount. Mr. Davies relays the price to Eddie, and Eddie agrees to buy all three, telling Mr. Davies that he has the funds. Carmen and Lang, L.L.P., like Mr. Crum, expected the area to go commercial, but there was one lone holdout who simply would not sell his house and move. As it turns out, the lone holdout was Mr. Crum. So, Mr. Crum and Carmen and Lang, L.L.P. were deadlocked for years.

Since Mr. Davies represents Eddie in the transaction, he suggests that Eddie pursue acquiring the three properties as quickly as possible. Should Carmen and Lang, L.L.P., discover Mr. Crum’s house has been foreclosed on, they will certainly show up at the courthouse and bid on the property. Eddie asks Mr. Davies about drawing up a contract. Mr. Davies informs Eddie that he will take care of all the details. Eddie tells

him to go ahead and arrange the sale. Eddie and Mr. Davies agree to meet tomorrow, when Eddie will sign the contract.

The next day, Eddie drops by to see Mr. Davies about the three houses on Second Street. Entering Mr. Davies office, after a brief conversation, Eddie asks, "so, how is it looking?" Moving quicker than Eddie expected, Mr. Davies informs Eddie, "I have the contract all prepared. I strongly suspect they are standing in front of their FAX machine right now, waiting for the signed contract to appear." Eddie asks, "what's a FAX machine?" Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "it's a way to send a picture of a document over the phone lines."

Mr. Davies explains the contract to Eddie, which goes fairly quickly. Filling in a few items on the contract, Mr. Davies asks, "when do you want to close on the properties?" Eddie replies, "is sometime next week okay?" Eddie wants to secure the properties before the first Tuesday of the month. Mr. Davies replies, "we'll write it in. I don't see any reason why they wouldn't accept it." Mr. Davies asks a few other questions and, once the contract is ready, Eddie signs it. After transmitting the signed contract over the FAX machine, Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "well, the ball's in their court. I'll let you know as soon as I hear anything."

Before Eddie leaves, he and Mr. Davies talk a while, continuing their conversation about Mr. Crum, and how he has been interfering with the track team over the last few years. Eddie explains the incident of when Mr. Crum threatened him, stating that he would not graduate if he does not help Chuckie stay out of jail. Mr. Davies is quite amused at the stories Eddie has, and what Eddie had to endure during his high school years. Mr. Davies has a few of his own stories as well. They both wonder why Mr. Crum is so averse to athletes.

As Eddie is leaving, the paralegal hands Mr. Davies a copy of the contract, signed and accepted by Carmen and Lang, L.L.P. Looking over the contract, Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "it looks like you're in luck. They accepted the contract. They must have been standing in front of their FAX machine." Quite surprised, Eddie asks, "wow! That was fast! Now what do I do?" Mr. Davies informs Eddie, "I'll have the deeds prepared, and we can close next week, as planned. Your job is to bring me a certified check for the sales price, closing fees, and your part of the taxes for this year. I'll let you know the bottom line early next week." Mr. Davies gives Eddie a copy of the contract, and Eddie heads home.

A stormy day causes the University track team to practice indoors one Tuesday morning. This is good news to some, particularly those who detest using Eddie's resistance sled and running when the temperature and humidity are not just right. Bobby B. and Erika even arrive a bit late,

hitching a ride from Mitchell in his four-seat Opel 1900. Even Kathy and Paula have left their Dune Buggies garaged today.

Since the distance team and sprinters are all together, sharing the indoor arena, practice begins with the interval training drill. Certain groups form during the drill. Johnson, Barbara, Mitchell, Akinmola, and Stone form a group, and all run together. Among them, a vague competition exists between Mitchell and Stone. And, Akinmola is always chasing Mitchell. The synergy between these runners gives them a better workout.

Among the sprinters, Kathy, Paula, and Erika form a group of their own. Erika, a bit better at distance than Kathy or Paula, adds synergy to their group. Mark runs with Braden and Hoffer, all of them missing Eddie. Leggett runs with McCutchen, if it could even be called running at all. And, a few team members go at their own pace, competing with either themselves or the clock. The clock is always a formidable opponent. The clock shows you how well you did, and immediately suggests that you could have done better. The clock has no compassion if you are having a bad day.

During the drill, as Kathy and Paula are taking their two recovery laps, Kathy mentions to Paula, “the undynamic duo is at it again.” Paula asks, “what’s up?” Kathy explains, “McCrutchen and lug nut aren’t running at all.” Pointing to the side of the arena with the entrances to the locker rooms, Kathy points out, “when they get to that side of the track, they run like snails.” Paula comments, “they always run like snails.” Kathy laughs, and tells Paula, “you’re sounding just like Mark! But, just watch them.” Dropping to the inside of the track to sprint, Paula clearly notices what Kathy was referring to. McCutchen and Leggett seem to be inspecting the exit doors, perhaps figuring out a way to escape from practice.

After 45 minutes of running the interval drill, Dr. Braun blows his whistle, and everyone meets in front of the bleachers. Dr. Braun announces, “for the next half of our workout, we’ll be running relay drills. We’ll be running the drill with four batons. Everyone will be in rotation, and who you will transfer to or receive from will be completely random. Coach Herndon, Dr. Paxton, and myself, will be watching your handoff skills. And please, let’s not have a collision on the track.”

Dr. Braun has adapted Mr. Frazier’s workout routines that he learned from Eddie, Kathy, and a few other tribe members. The resistance sled, interval training drills, and relay drills have stepped the University team up a few notches.

It is unquestionable that Mr. Harris, at the middle school, develops superior talent every year. When the track athletes enter high school, Mr.

Frazier and Mr. Zunde take their skills and abilities to the next level. Mr. Frazier, who once almost made the Olympics, not only understands how to train, but how to motivate the athletes as well. His training methods have once again been proven, this time at the University.

The handoff skill taught to the sprinters by Mr. Frazier is a nonvisual-nonverbal exchange. During this exchange, the runner ready to receive the baton is looking back at the runner approaching the transition zone. The outgoing runner then carefully judges when it is time to leave. When the time comes, the outgoing runner takes off, facing forward, reaching top speed as quickly as possible. The incoming runner uses an up sweep motion to deliver the baton in the hand of the outgoing runner. Once the baton is transferred, the outgoing runner should already be near or at full speed. With a seamless transition, very little time is lost during the exchange.

During each runner's leg, the baton always remains in the same hand, and is never switched to the other hand. Switching the baton to the other hand causes the runner to lose time. If the first runner in the race leaves the blocks with the baton in the right hand, the baton is delivered to the left hand of the runner running the second leg. The runner running the second leg transfers the baton to the right hand of the runner running the third leg. And, the runner running the fourth leg will receive the baton in his left hand. Runners must be equally proficient delivering or receiving the baton with either hand.

The nonvisual-nonverbal exchange takes a lot of skill and practice. Visual exchanges are always accompanied with a break in cadence or slowing of one or both runners. The outgoing runner simply cannot run at top speed if they are looking behind them as the baton is transferred. The nonvisual exchange, if properly executed, will not result in a break in cadence or slowing of either runner.

The nonvisual-nonverbal exchange is why Eddie, Mark, Braden, and Johnson work so well together. They have been using this technique since the eighth grade. It is the only technique they know. It is also the reason why Kathy, Paula, Barbara, and Erika perform so well together. With years of practice behind them, each relay team member can accurately gauge when to leave, how fast to run, and expect the baton to be properly delivered regardless of which of the other three runners is delivering the baton. This is also the reason why substituting a less-skilled runner within their relay teams usually results in disaster.

On the track, the relay drill appears to be running like a well-oiled machine. Some handoffs go well, yet others go not so well. But, that is the purpose of the drill, to improve the skill one has. The coaches prefer

that everyone learn and perfect the nonvisual nonverbal exchange, and that is what the team is specifically practicing today.

Johnson hands off to Braden, and the transition goes smoothly, as it has for the last few hundred times. Braden sprints 220 yards, handing off to another runner at the transition zone. This time the handoff goes well. Occasionally, when a runner skilled with the nonvisual handoff technique is matched with a runner of less skill, the handoff does not go as well. Braden's handoff to the next runner does not go quite as well.

Mark approaches the transition zone, seeing Leggett directly ahead of him. Leggett, aspiring to take Eddie's place on the 4 by 440 relay team and the mile medley relay team, wants to earn a medal or some type of recognition through the efforts of Mark, Braden, and Johnson. Leggett, however, is studying the architecture of the arena as Mark approaches. Quickly realizing he should have left earlier, Leggett leaves after Mark enters the transition zone. Worse yet is that Leggett has the wrong hand out to receive the baton. Attempting to hand off the baton, Mark slams into the back of Leggett, who crashes to the floor.

Dr. Braun blows his whistle, waiting for the track to clear. Leggett is slow to get up. As everyone waits, Johnson whispers to Braden, "that was a good takedown." Braden replies, "if that guy wants Eddie's spot, he'd better learn to get his ass moving on time." Leggett gets up, and Dr. Braun tells him to finish his leg. Leggett, moving slower than usual around the track, believes Mark collided with him intentionally. Coach Herndon suspects the same but, being military, allows Leggett to learn by experience. If Leggett wants to win, he will have to adapt and learn. It would be also beneficial if Leggett, now a senior, learns when to start running to accept the delivery of the baton.

Inevitably, McCutchen, not much more skilled than Leggett, ends up on the track. This time out, McCutchen is lucky enough to be the one to receive the baton from Braden. McCutchen repeatedly looks forward and behind him when Braden comes around the curve. As Braden approaches, McCutchen, a bit intimidated by Braden, panics and freezes. Braden, having to slow his pace considerably, leaves his lane, and shoves the baton into McCutchen's rear end. Braden then helps McCutchen find the floor with a brisk shove to the back. With a little help from Braden, McCutchen goes down hard, prompting Dr. Braun to again blow his whistle.

With McCutchen laying on the track, Braden exclaims, "what kind of shit was that? You were supposed to get your ass moving! How do you expect us to win a race if your ass is just standing there?" Disgusted with McCutchen, Braden kicks the baton that is laying on the floor, and exclaims, "a dead tree can run faster than you! Now, get your fat ass off

that floor and get back on the track! And, if you don't get your ass moving next time, I'm gonna shove that baton up your ass so hard, you're gonna need a surgeon to get it out!" McCutchen gets up, albeit very slowly. Looking over at Dr. Braun and Coach Herndon for sympathy, McCutchen gets none. Coach Herndon tells McCutchen, "you heard him! Get back on the track, and let's see if you can get it right this time!"

Braden picks up the baton, and tells McCutchen, "this time, get your flimsy ass moving! If you don't, I'm gonna run your fat ass over!" Braden takes off, restarting the drill. McCutchen stands in the transition zone, with all eyes on him. Some team members are secretly hoping to see McCutchen go down again, if only to hear another one of Braden's pep talks. The coaching staff freely allows Braden to lecture McCutchen. It simply saves them the trouble.

Approaching the transition zone again, Braden yells, "go," when it is time for McCutchen to run. McCutchen's fear of getting a baton shoved up his ass stimulates him to actually take off this time. Running with his hand behind him, McCutchen awaits the baton. Braden delivers the baton, and McCutchen takes off.

Dr. Braun whispers to Coach Herndon, "I hate to say this, but apparently getting the baton shoved into his ass once or twice is what it takes." Coach Herndon, replies, "I really like this Braden guy. He would have been a great asset to the military. It's too bad that he's color blind. But, I'm glad he's with us." Coach Herndon apparently relates to Braden quite well.

The remainder of practice goes somewhat better. Knowing that a baton could be shoved into your rear end, and nothing is done about it, seems to be the motivation some of the athletes need to perform better. Fortunately, for McCutchen, random chance did not allow for Braden to hand off to him again today. At the end of the practice session, the storm outside is nothing compared to the storm that was on the track today.

The end of the month brings good news for Eddie and Kathy. They head to the office of Davies and Rice, L.L.P., where they will be signing the papers for the three abandoned houses on Second Street. When they arrive, Eddie and Kathy wait a few minutes while the paperwork is prepared. While they are waiting, Kathy tells Eddie, "Paula is really happy about this. Can you believe that?" Eddie reminds Kathy, "and, I thought Paula once said that Second Street is haunted, and it's spooky. I thought I'd never see her anywhere near that street again." Kathy replies, "something changed her mind." Eddie suggests, "maybe it was the bulldozer."

When they are called in by the attorney, Kathy tells Mr. Davies, "I'm so glad to meet you. I've heard a lot about you over the years!" Mr. Davies replies, "it's nice to meet you too. And, that story about my football scholarship has made me famous around this town." As they walk down the hall toward the conference room, Mr. Davies asks Eddie, "are you ready for next Tuesday?" Eddie replies, "I am." Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "usually when a house is foreclosed, I get a lot of people calling, wanting information on the property. For Crum's property, I got nothing, nada, nil, zilch." Eddie replies, "that sounds like good news." They then enter the conference room, keeping quiet any further conversation regarding the foreclosure.

Kathy and Eddie take a seat at the conference table, across from the representative from Carmen and Lang, L.L.P., who is Mr. Lang himself. Mr. Davies goes over the paperwork, which is minimal since Eddie and Kathy are paying cash for the three properties. Eddie and Kathy sign the required documents. Mr. Lang signs the three deeds, conveying the properties to Kathy and Eddie. Kathy hands Mr. Davies the certified funds, and the quick closing is over inside of fifteen minutes.

Mr. Davies tells Eddie, Kathy, and Mr. Lang, "congratulations. It sounds like everyone got exactly what they wanted out of this transaction." Mr. Lang assures Mr. Davies, "you can be sure we did." Eddie replies, "good. I'm glad we could help you out."

Curious why Eddie wanted the property, Mr. Lang asks, "so, what are your plans for the properties?" Eddie replies, "we needed a place to park some construction equipment." Mr. Lang tells Eddie, "good luck! There's a crazy guy who lives on that street. He's as stubborn as a brick wall." Not anymore, for Mr. Crum is in jail. But, Mr. Lang does not know that. Everyone heads home, and everyone is happy.

Over the weekend at the University, Braden is assigned the night shift along with Officer Jeff Levy. With fraternity and sorority parties going on all weekend, two officers are always on duty. The other officer, Officer Kevin Morrison, has the night off. Chief Anthony Toledo also patrols the campus, primarily during the week, but occasionally on the weekends. And, a few retired police officers routinely walk the campus, looking for and ticketing illegally parked cars. Braden is glad to take the weekend shifts, since he now has to pay for insurance and gas for his Dune Buggy, not to mention dates with Wendy. Fortunately though, the Spring semester is a bit quieter than the Autumn semester during rush week².

² Rush Week: The period of time in the Autumn when fraternities and sororities recruit students to join their respective organization.

While on patrol, at around 3:00 a.m. early Saturday morning, officer Braden radios to officer Levy, “365 to 412, meet me on TAC-1.” Officer Levy replies, “412. 10-4. TAC-1” On tactical channel one, Braden tells Officer Levy, “we might have something going down at the arena.” Officer Levy replies, “what do you have?” Braden explains, “I have three guys hanging out around the service door to the arena. One of them keeps looking around the corner.” Officer Levy replies, “I’m on my way.” Officer Braden tells Officer Levy, “meet me behind the student center. Lights off.” Officer Levy informs Braden, “I’m on frat row. ETA two minutes.” Braden then radios the dispatcher, telling her that he and Officer Levy are out of service until further notice.

Behind the student center, Officer Braden has a great view of the service door to the arena, which is approximately 200 feet away. In addition, behind the student center is dark, so Officer Braden cannot easily be seen. Officer Levy arrives, clearly seeing Officer Braden’s concern. As Officers Braden and Levy are watching, they see one of the perpetrators trying to pick the lock. Officer Braden whispers to Officer Levy, “okay, now we got trouble. Something’s going down.” Officer Levy tells Officer Braden, “we’ll let them enter, then move in and see what they’re up to.” Officer Braden replies, “well, I can tell you they’re not here to take a few laps around the track.”

Since Officer Braden is more familiar with the inside of the arena, Officer Levy asks Officer Braden, “is there really anything in there of value?” Officer Braden replies, “in one storage room, there is a lot of track equipment, like starting blocks, the shot-put, and field equipment. In one of the offices, there are a lot of stopwatches and a bunch of files and clipboards. I don’t know what’s in the other two offices. And, there’s the men’s and women’s locker rooms.”

Officer Levy, who is very familiar with the entrances and emergency exits to the arena, asks Officer Braden, “how many entrances are there to the locker rooms?” Officer Braden replies, “in the men’s locker room there are three. One in the hallway, another leading to the arena, and an emergency exit to the outside. I’m guessing the women’s locker room is probably the same.” Three doors, three perpetrators, and two officers is not exactly the best scenario. Making matters worse is that there is no back up officer available. But, worst case, Officer Braden and Officer Levy will catch two of the three perpetrators.

One of the perpetrators, obviously skilled in lock picking, picks the lock and opens the door. All three trespassers walk in, closing the door behind them. Officer Levy whispers to Officer Braden, “they’re in.” Officer Braden and Officer Levy move in slowly. As Officers Braden and Levy hide around the corner from the service door, Officer Braden jumps up and grabs onto a brick ledge. Pulling himself up, he takes a look through the

window. Officer Braden sees the three perpetrators heading in the direction of the men's locker room. Seeing the perpetrators open the locker room door, Officer Braden jumps down, telling officer Levy, "they went into the men's locker room."

Officer Levy tells Officer Braden, "okay, we move in together." Officer Braden suggests, "we probably should enter by the door in the hall. If they leave through the door to the arena, we'll have plenty of time to catch them. If we enter from the arena side, they'll have two exits. We definitely don't want them to get to the emergency exit." If either officer covers the arena entrance to the locker room, all three perpetrators could potentially escape through the emergency exit. Officer Levy agrees with Officer Braden's strategy, and they move in to make the bust.

Officer Levy opens the service door but, unlike the perpetrators, he uses a key, making entry go a lot faster. Quietly closing the door, the officers peek around the corner. They can clearly see the light is on in the men's locker room through the air vent on the lower half of the door. As they approach the locker room, they hear people whispering inside. Holding off for a minute or so to see whether they can discover anything, they hear one of the perpetrators whisper, "I got it." They then hear a locker door open. Officer Levy motions to Officer Braden that it's time to move in.

Gently opening the locker room door, yet ready to act quickly, the officers immediately do not see the perpetrators. Officer Braden ascertains that they are on the other side of the central group of lockers. In the worst case, one perpetrator could potentially escape, either through scrambling, or a quick exit into the arena, and out another door. Carefully thinking this out, Officer Levy signals that he will move in from the left, and that Officer Braden will move in from the right.

Officers Levy and Braden move in. Making the ambush, Officer Levy exclaims, "freeze!" The three perpetrators, seeing the officers, attempt to rush out of the locker room and into the arena. Two make it out, but Officer Levy quickly tackles and subdues one of the perpetrators. Officer Levy cuffs him, as Officer Braden hurdles over the traffic jam through the door to the arena. Officer Braden chases down the other two perpetrators, who are quickly running toward the exit door to the arena.

With 40 yards on Officer Braden, the perpetrators exit the arena and make a run for it. Officer Braden slams through the door, and is quick to see the perpetrators have split, and gone in opposite directions. Officer Braden picks one of the culprits, and chases down the one who broke to the left. Braden's 45-second quarter-mile is put to good use, as he quickly gains on the perpetrator.

Sensing that the officer is closing in rapidly, the perpetrator sharply breaks to the right. Officer Braden reacts quickly, and goes in for the takedown. Officer Braden chop blocks his opponent, making the tackle, and takes him down hard. The perpetrator cushions Braden from the impact into the concrete. Sliding across the concrete for a few feet, the perpetrator takes the full brunt of the takedown. Officer Braden cuffs the perpetrator, who is none other than Todd McCutchen.

Seeing who it is that he was pursuing, Officer Braden exclaims, "I wasn't expecting to see your flimsy ass until Monday!" Officer Braden reads him his rights. Braden declares, "your fat ass has the right to remain silent. Let me start this again. You have the right to remain silent. If you give up your right to remain silent, anything you say may be used against you in a court of law. You have a right to speak with an attorney, and have him or her present during questioning. If you cannot afford an attorney, one will be provided for you by the court. Do you understand these rights as I explained them to you?" With blood flowing down his face from having it sandblasted during the takedown, McCutchen exclaims, "yeah, yeah! Whatever." McCutchen then exclaims, "I'm bleeding! Get me some help!" Braden tells McCutchen, "I told you. You have the right to shut your fat ass! And, I suggest you exercise that right, or I'm gonna shut it up for you!"

Officer Braden radios Officer Levy, telling him, "I got one of them. They split and the other one got away. This one's pretty bad. I'm dragging his ass to the infirmary." Officer Braden drags McCutchen to the University's infirmary, which is a shorter walk than back to the patrol car. McCutchen limps along the way, exclaiming, "my leg! My leg! It hurts! It might be broken!" Officer Braden responds, "I told you. I suggest you exercise your right to remain silent. So, shut your fat ass up."

Over the radio, Officer Levy informs Officer Braden, "we have a crime scene here. I'm taping off the locker room." Officer Braden replies, "as soon as I dump this one off, I'll be headed that way." Officer Levy relates to Officer Braden, "it looks like it's going to be a long night." Apparently, what was going down in the locker room is a little more serious than a skirmish between fraternities.

On the way to the infirmary, Officer Braden asks McCutchen, "what kind of shit were you pulling in there?" Hoping that one of his cohorts is able to cover their tracks, McCutchen replies, "nothing." Officer Braden responds, "yeah. We have a crime scene, and you were doing nothing. Ain't no one gonna believe that." McCutchen insists, "I needed something from my locker." Not believing that for a moment, Officer Braden replies, "yeah, right. Ain't no one gonna believe that shit either."

Arriving at the infirmary, Officer Braden transfers McCutchen to the medical staff. Officer Braden explains that McCutchen is under arrest, and to not allow him to leave the building. It's not likely McCutchen is going anywhere anyway, for he can barely walk. McCutchen is warned by Officer Braden that, if he does leave, he will be in deeper trouble than he already is.

Officer Braden tells the medical staff, "his right leg is in pretty bad shape. I had to help him get here. And, his face had an argument with the concrete when I took him down. The concrete won." Officer Braden then tells the medical staff, "call us when you're ready to release him. We'll put him in the campus jail." The campus jail, as Braden puts it, is four holding cells in the campus police station, which are usually reserved for unruly frat boys who get into an altercation while under the influence of alcohol.

After dropping off McCutchen, Officer Braden makes his way back to the arena. On his way, Officer Braden wonders what McCutchen could have been possibly doing in the track team's locker room at 3:00 a.m., in the middle of the night. Officer Braden is also wondering who the other two perpetrators are. He is about to find out from Officer Levy who one of them is.

Returning to the locker room, Officer Braden announces his entrance by saying, "okay, what do we got going on here?" Officer Braden sees the other perpetrator sitting on the floor in the corner in handcuffs, with his head hanging down. Wondering who it is, Officer Braden tells him, "you, sitting on the ground! Look at me!" The perpetrator looks up at Officer Braden. Officer Braden laughs and exclaims, "I can see this is gonna be a really fun night!" The other perpetrator is Steve Leggett, which comes as no surprise to Officer Braden.

Officer Levy explains to Officer Braden, "let me show you what we got so far. First off, there's a tension bar and rake³ on the bench. We got three boxes of metandienone in the locker, and two on the floor. I radioed the dispatcher. They called the infirmary. It turns out that they're steroids. And, we have some pot too. I found a dime bag in the locker, and two on the bench." Braden looks around, amazed that this is the same locker room that he was in yesterday morning.

Officer Braden asks Officer Levy, "did you get anything out of him?" Officer Levy whispers, "he coughed up a little bit. Step over here." The officers momentarily step away from Leggett. Officer Levy whispers to Officer Braden, "before I could arrest him and read him his rights, he was

³ Tension Bar and Rake: Common lock picking tools.

screaming some obscenities about some guy named Mark. He's been drinking, but he can walk the line. I arrested him. Then, he got real quiet."

Officer Braden finds his own locker and, knowing that Mark's locker is three down from his, exclaims, "that's Mark's locker!" Officer Braden asks Leggett, "what were you doing in Mark's locker?" Leggett replies, "I don't remember." Officer Braden tells Leggett, "that's okay. You just keep believing that. I'm sure Mark is gonna jog your memory someday. I want to be there when all that goes down. And, don't look to me for help when he does."

After photographing the crime scene earlier, Officer Levy now bags and marks the evidence, emptying Mark's entire locker. Officer Braden tells Officer Levy, "I'm going back to get my car. We'll take this one to the tank⁴ when I get back." Officer Braden heads out on foot to retrieve his vehicle, as Officer Levy finishes collecting and marking the evidence. Leggett, meanwhile, sits on the floor, handcuffed.

When Officer Braden returns, they load the evidence into the trunk of Braden's patrol car. Leggett is placed into the back seat, and they all take a ride to the campus police station. On the way, Officer Braden asks Leggett, "so, are you gonna tell us what you were doing in the locker room?" Leggett replies, "I told you! I don't remember." Officer Braden suggests, "maybe your memory ain't so good because you've been taking drugs." Leggett answers, "I haven't been taking drugs!" Braden asks, "how would you know? If I remember correctly, you just said you can't remember shit." They arrive at the station, where the evidence is checked in and filed. Leggett is placed in the holding cell until it is decided what to do with him.

Once they are done at the station, Officer Braden gives Officer Levy a ride back to his car. As a precaution, Officer Levy returns to the men's locker room, placing crime scene tape across the doors. Braden goes back on patrol, wondering what will happen Monday morning when Leggett and McCutchen fail to show up to track practice.

Monday morning arrives, and Braden, Leggett, and McCutchen are nowhere to be found. The men's locker room is still closed off, with no explanation. With massive amounts of tape that reads "Police Line - Do Not Cross" across each entrance, no one dares to enter the locker room. Dr. Braun calls the campus police department, and is instructed to find another locker room, or cancel practice for today. The police department declines to give Dr. Braun any details regarding the situation.

⁴ Tank: The holding cell at the police station.

Hearing the news, Dr. Braun instructs the team to have a seat in the arena. Dr. Braun announces, "I spoke with the campus police just a moment ago. I am informed that the men's locker room will be unavailable today. I was told to either find another locker room, or cancel practice for today." Bobby B. remarks, "a lot of our stuff is in there." Dr. Braun continues, "that's why I'm canceling practice today. But, before everybody leaves, do any of you know what this is about?" A few of the tribe members know, but Braden strictly told them to not say anything. No one offers up any information, so Dr. Braun apologizes to the team about the cancelled practice session, and sends everyone home for the day.

The next day, on the first Tuesday of the month, Eddie heads out to the courthouse steps, ready to bid on Mr. Crum's house. Kathy heads to track practice, wondering if the news that she is already aware of will be made public. Kathy got the rundown from Braden that McCutchen, Leggett, and a third person broke into Mark's locker. No one, however, is more interested to find out the details than Mark.

Eddie arrives at the courthouse steps, and finds Mr. Davies, who will auction off Mr. Crum's property himself. Eddie and Mr. Davies talk for a while, as Mr. Davies is waiting to see if anyone else shows up. At the requisite time, 9:00 a.m. sharp, two other attorneys begin auctioning properties. One particular piece of property has seemed to attract a lot of interest, with about two dozen investors bidding on the parcel.

Mr. Davies tells Eddie, "okay, I need to get started." Mr. Davies announces the description of the property being sold, the name of the bank that is foreclosing on the property, the name of the person whose house is being foreclosed, and a few other details of the property, such as the full legal description. Mr. Davies whispers to Eddie, "he has a five-thousand dollar balance on his mortgage. Start bidding at six-thousand, because the mortgage will have to be paid off, and there are other fees."

Mr. Davies then asks for an opening bid. Eddie offers, "six-thousand dollars." Mr. Davies then asks, "do I hear another bid?" No one answers, primarily because Eddie is the only one to show up. Waiting a minute, Mr. Davies proclaims, "we have a bid of six-thousand dollars. Do I hear another bid?" With no answer, Mr. Davies announces that the house is sold to Eddie. Mr. Davies and Eddie talk business for a few minutes, then Eddie heads to the bank to get the certified funds. Mr. Davies heads back to his office to prepare the foreclosure deed.

When Kathy gets home from classes later in the afternoon, she runs through the door and exclaims, asking, "did we get it?" Eddie replies, "we did!" Kathy yells out, "woo-hoo! We got it! Time to get a bulldozer!" Kathy asks, "so, how much did we pay for that old Crum's piece of shit

house?" Eddie replies, "six-thousand dollars." Kathy replies, "wow! Are you serious? That's nothing!" Eddie tells Kathy, "I was the only one who bid on it. I guess no one else wanted it." Kathy replies, "I can see that."

Now owning all four properties on Second Street, Kathy tells Eddie, "I'm calling Paula!" Eddie informs Kathy, "I need to talk to Mark sometime too. We need to bulldoze all that shit down. Oh, and after the auction, I got Mr. Davies to apply for the rezoning, and a demolition permit. He said that shouldn't be hard to do." All excited, Kathy calls Paula with the good news.

While Kathy is talking with Paula, Eddie goes downstairs to work out in their home gym, where he thinks about what to do with the land. After Kathy is finished talking with Paula, she comes downstairs to work out with Eddie.

Eddie asks, "so, is there any more news on why the locker room was closed down?" Kathy replies, "no one is saying anything. The coaches know that Braden knows, but they're not pumping him for any information. And, Dr. Braun is really ticked off that Leggett and McCutchen weren't at practice today." Eddie laughs, and comments, "and, they won't be there tomorrow either. I wish I could be there to see that." Kathy and Eddie work out, speculating on why Mark's locker was targeted by McCutchen and Leggett.

A week later, the news finally breaks surrounding the incident that occurred at the men's locker room in the arena. Due to the seriousness of the situation, Police Chief Anthony Toledo and the Dean of Students, Dean Addison Grimsby, arranged a meeting with the track team and the coaches. To avoid stirring up the rumor mill, Dr. Braun wanted everyone, not only half the team, to be present. Dr. Braun also wanted everyone to hear the news directly from those who have accurate information.

The meeting is held in the arena at a time familiar to all, 7:00 a.m. Once the team is dressed and ready to practice, they all hang out in the arena, as usual, waiting for the coaches to walk in. Dr. Braun walks in, and blows his whistle, prompting everyone to take a seat on the bleachers. Today, Braden is sitting along with the tribe on the bleachers.

Dr. Braun announces, "okay, everyone listen up. Today, we have Police Chief Toledo with us, who is going to advise us on certain recent discoveries that have been made surrounding an incident that recently occurred in our locker room. Once Chief Toledo is finished, Dean Grimsby will address the team. Then, we will move on to today's training session." Dr. Braun introduces Chief Toledo, giving him the floor.

Chief Toledo begins, telling the athletes, “first of all, I apologize for the training session you missed the other day. But, maybe some of you enjoyed your day off. Now, on to business. A certain two members of the track team have been detained, and are currently under investigation. I’m sure you can figure out who they are by their absence. These two students have been arrested for possession of a banned substance, and attempting to plant that banned substance in Mark Svoboda’s locker. This banned substance is an anabolic steroid called metandienone. In addition, we have evidence that marijuana also was attempted to be planted in the same locker.” Many of the team members are surprised at hearing the announcement, but they now know why Leggett and McCutchen have not been at practice. The tribe, thus far, has not heard anything Braden hasn’t told them.

Needing help with his investigation, Chief Toledo announces, “now, I need help from some of you. Officer Braden and Officer Levy distinctly saw three perpetrators enter the arena that night. The two track team members who were taken into custody insist that it was only the two of them, and maintain that they know nothing about a third person. If any of you hear anything regarding this third person, please let one of the officers or myself know. Please be assured that anything you tell us will be held in strict confidence.” Braden whispers to Mark, “whoever the third guy was, he was definitely faster than McCutchen. I picked the slower one to chase down.” Mark whispers back, “anyone is faster than McCutchen.”

Moving on to more interesting news, Chief Toledo continues, “there has been some concern about another member of this team, Edward Bogenskaya, that many of you know. We have concluded our investigation into Edward, which is now closed. Dean Grimsby and myself feel it necessary to reveal the results of that investigation to the team and the coaches.” Neither Braden nor the tribe has heard what Chief Toledo is about to announce. Since Chief Toledo’s announcement involves Eddie, Kathy is sitting on the edge of her seat.

Out comes the announcement from Chief Toledo, “Edward Bogenskaya was accused of taking and distributing anabolic steroids. Our investigation reveals that the steroids attempted to be planted in Mark’s locker bear the same lot number, the same production date, and chemically match those found in Edward’s locker. Based upon these findings, the department has closed the investigation into Edward Bogenskaya, finding nothing by which to incriminate him.” Kathy is immediately happy to hear the news, but maintains her composure until Chief Toledo is finished speaking.

Chief Toledo concludes by telling everyone, “thank you for your time, and I will now turn the floor over to Dean Grimsby.” Hearing the news,

Kathy is as happy and bubbly as she can be. Cheers come from the bleachers, primarily from where the tribe is seated. Everyone in the tribe exchanges high-fives, exuberant that Eddie has been vindicated. Kathy receives more high-fives in a fifteen-second time span than she can ever remember. Everyone on the team hears the news, except for Eddie, who is home, getting ready to go to work.

Chief Toledo exits the arena, going back to his duties, as Dean Grimsby walks up and stands in front of the group. Kathy has heard about the earlier meeting between Eddie and Dean Grimsby, which did not go too well. Eddie's impression of Dean Grimsby is that he's pretty much an asshole, an opinion the tribe now shares. But, now everyone will find out what the dean has to say. The tribe will now decide for themselves whether Dean Grimsby really is an asshole or not.

Dean Grimsby begins, addressing the team, "it is my understanding that some of you are taking steroids, selling them for profit, or perhaps both. The use of performance enhancing drugs in this University is highly frowned upon, and has the potential to severely tarnish the University's reputation. I am now conducting an investigation into the use of performance enhancing drugs by the entire track team. For right now, two specific team members are being investigated." Several of the team members yell out the names, "McCutchen" and "Leggett" in response to the dean's statement. The team has figured out what happened, and who has been absent from practice.

The dean sternly warns the team, "excuse me, but I was not finished. I expect complete silence and your full attention when I am speaking." Kathy whispers to Paula, "just like Eddie said, he's an asshole." The dean continues, "now, as I was saying. Two of the team members are under investigation. They will continue to be with you in the classroom and will still be allowed to participate with the team. No specific action will be taken until my investigation is complete." Dean Grimsby has screwed up once already, clearly demonstrated by the way he handled Eddie's case. This time, the dean will wait for the final results of the investigation before taking any action.

The dean, finishing up his not so popular presentation, states, "I will conclude by saying that what has happened here has been a great embarrassment to this University. I can firmly say that I am not very happy that I have to deal with a situation such as this. Be assured that all of you are being closely watched." Dean Grimsby's address is met by boos and jeers, which the athletes figure they can get away with since they are in a large group. Kathy has now seen first hand Eddie's beef with Dean Grimsby. The dean leaves the arena, which could not have come soon enough.

Once Dean Grimsby is out the door, Kathy tells Paula, “wow! Eddie can be back on the team if he wanted to!” Paula asks, “what do you mean, ‘can be back on the team if he wanted to?’” Kathy informs Paula, “don’t tell the coaches, but Eddie’s pretty much had it with this University. He may not come back.” Paula replies, “that would really suck. But, I can’t say that I blame him. Oh, and can you believe it? Dean Grimsby is a bigger asshole than Mr. Crum!” Kathy agrees, telling Paula, “yeah. Eddie was right about that guy. Dean Grimsby really is an asshole.”

Dr. Braun blows his whistle, and announces, “on that note, it’s time to get some training in and burn off some of that adrenaline the dean was kind enough to cause you to release!” The team heads out to the track, with everyone, including the coaches, now knowing exactly what is going on.

During the walk out to the track, Dr. Braun informs Kathy, “today’s news probably means that Eddie’s hearing is on the horizon. It should be any day now.” Kathy asks, “why can’t Eddie come back right now?” Dr. Braun explains, “well, the dean started an investigation. The hearing is how they officially close it out. It sounds like the hearing will be just a matter of formality.” Not sounding too excited, Kathy replies, “I can’t wait.”

A few days later, McCutchen and Leggett return to the team practice sessions. As the dean mentioned, McCutchen and Leggett will be attending their classes, and still practice with the team while they are under investigation. While they are getting dressed in the locker room, they are keeping a watchful eye out for Eddie, planning their exit strategy should Eddie appear and approach them. McCutchen and Leggett are also carefully watching the tribe, especially Mark and Braden, as the tribe members occasionally glance over at the two outcasts.

Seeing that McCutchen has returned, Mark is contemplating preparing another special bottle of shampoo for McCutchen, and is planning to mix one up for Leggett as well. Mark has made a mental note of Leggett’s brand of shampoo, planning to buy one during his next trip to the store. But, for now, since McCutchen and Leggett are keeping a watchful eye, it might be difficult to move in and make the swap. Mark is studying the situation, and will make his move when he finds an opening, just like Mitchell when he runs the mile, but in a different sense.

Out on the track, it’s a day on the training sled and running interval training drills. The sprinters gather around the sand track, taking their turn on the sled. After taking two runs down the track and back, Mark notices that McCutchen has not taken a turn. Right before Johnson is about to take a turn, Mark interrupts the sequence, announcing, “it’s McCutchen’s turn.” Reluctantly putting on the harness, McCutchen

cannot dispute Mark. With a less than notable effort, McCutchen makes his way down the track. As McCutchen struggles to return the sled to the starting point, Braden exclaims, “look at his sorry ass! No wonder he ain’t worth shit to this team.”

When McCutchen finally makes it back, Mark comments to Braden, “he’s weak. He definitely needs to be taking steroids.” Braden tells Mark, “I’ll get his ass moving. Just wait until relay drills. I’ll shove that baton up his lazy fat ass. Then, we’ll see how fast he can run.” Mark’s and Braden’s comments are fully intended to be heard by McCutchen. Their comments are also heard by Coach Herndon, who always laughs under her breath at Braden’s remarks. With two sleds returning to the starting point, Mark and Braden both take a turn, showing McCutchen how it’s done.

After Braden returns from taking his turn, he yells at McCutchen, telling him, “get your lazy ass back on that sled! I don’t like losing, and I’m not about to start now!” McCutchen replies, “but, I just took a turn!” Hoffer announces, “I’ll go.” Stepping up, Hoffer puts on the harness, and heads down the track.

Braden points at McCutchen, and rants, “I wish they’d put your ass back on the bench and give us Hoffer! Look at him! He works! You don’t do shit!” McCutchen reminds Braden, “you sprained my knee when you took me down!” Braden counters, “so what! When I hand off to you, if you don’t grab that baton, I’m gonna shove it up your fat ass and sprain your ass too!”

Listening to the exchange, Coach Herndon asks McCutchen, “so, your knee is sprained?” Wanting some sympathy, McCutchen explains, “yeah. It’s sprained really bad. Braden sprained it when he took me down. He did it on purpose.” Coach Herndon tells McCutchen, “that’s too bad. I don’t want you running if you’re injured. You’re back to being an alternate.”

Focusing her attention on Braden, Coach Herndon tells him, “Hoffer will replace McCutchen in the 4 by 440 and the mile medley relay.” Braden replies, “thank you! Thank you! Now, we’re gonna win something!” Coach Herndon’s decision to replace McCutchen with Hoffer is the best news Braden has heard all day.

When Hoffer returns, he receives the good news from Coach Herndon. Braden has his own way of delivering the news, telling Hoffer, “Coach Herndon took out the trash. The good news is now we’re gonna win! The bad news is I’m not gonna get to shove the baton up McCutchen’s fat ass anymore.” Happy with the coach’s decision, Hoffer tells Braden, “I’m definitely looking forward to this!” Knowing that the relay teams might

now win something, Braden and Mark exchange high-fives with Hoffer. Johnson will receive the good news later.

McCutchen, not happy with coach Herndon's decision, discusses the coach's decision with Leggett. In a depressed mood, McCutchen laments, "they did it again. I can't believe this. What is it with these guys?" Giving McCutchen some encouragement, Leggett replies, "my days at this University are over. I'll be graduating soon, but you have two more years here. Good luck with those guys." McCutchen comments, "at least Eddie is gone." Leggett informs McCutchen, "I wouldn't count on it. I don't think he's going to give up that easily." McCutchen breaks into a temper tantrum, kicking the gravel with his right foot. Grabbing his sprained right knee, he quickly realizes that he shouldn't have kicked the gravel, escalating his temper tantrum.

Word that Hoffer has been substituted for McCutchen has quickly made its way around the team. Hearing the news from Mark, Kathy comments, "I'm glad Coach Herndon made that change. But, I really wish Eddie was back on the team." Mark replies, "I think we all do. McCutchen's got to go. I'm getting rid of him." Kathy asks, "how are you going to do that?" Mark replies, "little by little. When I get done with him, he'll be a basket case." Kathy replies, "after that shit he pulled with Eddie's locker, and now yours, all I can say is 'good.'" Mark adds, "and, my wedding. Paula is really ticked off at McCutchen and lug nut for pulling that shit."

Since he has not been attending track practice, Eddie has been busy working on Johnson's and Bobby B's. Dune Buggies. After building a few, Eddie can now crank them out very quickly. Getting the Dune Buggies done before the Summer, they are now ready for delivery. And, just as ordered, Johnson's Dune Buggy is silver and Bobby B's. is red. Matching everyone else's Dune Buggies, Johnson's reads, 'Johnson's Dune Buggy' and Bobby B's. reads, 'Bobby B's Dune Buggy' on the back. With five matching high-performance Dune Buggies soon to be on campus, they are certainly going to be attracting a lot of attention.

Figuring out how to deliver the Dune Buggies to their new owners, what better way is there to do it than to arrange a pool party. Eddie and Kathy plan the party, inviting the tribe and one or two others from the track team. McCutchen and Leggett are intentionally left off the guest list, and Mark made sure they knew it. Mark, letting McCutchen know that he is not invited, is eroding away McCutchen's fragile ego. Mark is simply working toward his goal of getting the loser off the track team.

The day of the party arrives, and the guests arrive one by one or, in some cases, two at a time. Eddie's brother, John, is among the guests today, wanting to take a look at his Dune Buggy in its partially assembled

state. Mitchell arrives early, driving his Opel, with Bobby B., Erika, and Akinmola. Erika would ride her motorcycle, but she wants a ride home in Bobby B's. brand new Dune Buggy.

Driving up, Bobby B. sees his metallic red Dune buggy parked in front of Eddie's workshop. Getting out of the car, Bobby B. rushes toward his new Dune Buggy. No one has ever seen the shot-doc run so fast before. While Bobby B. is looking it over, Erika sits in the driver's seat, quickly understanding what the big Dune Buggy craze is.

Eddie walks out of the house, and asks Bobby B., "so, what do you think, bro?" Bobby B. exclaims, "it looks great!" Eddie tosses Bobby B. the keys, telling him, "go ahead and take it for a spin. I haven't driven it yet. Let's see if it makes it back." Bobby B. asks, "you haven't driven it? Really?" Eddie replies, "no. I'm pulling your leg. I drove it to the service station and did the wheel alignment. It runs like a charm." Now feeling a bit more confident, Bobby B. gets behind the wheel, and heads out for a short ride with Erika.

Eddie, Mitchell, and Akinmola are checking out Johnson's Dune Buggy while Bobby B. and Erika are away on a test drive. Johnson arrives with Barbara, seeing the guys checking out his new toy. Johnson walks over, joining the group, immediately exclaiming, "nice!" Eddie throws Johnson the keys, telling him, "take it for a ride, but watch out. Bobby B. is out on the roads test driving his." Mitchell comments, "he's been gone for a while." Eddie replies, "that's because Erika is driving it now. She's going to want one when she gets back."

While Bobby B. and Johnson are away, much of the rest of the tribe arrives. With the workshop garage door now open, John, along with a few others, is checking out his Dune Buggy, which is only partially assembled. Looking over his brother's work, John is quite amazed at the intricacies under the body. The wiring is all laid out neatly, as are the brake lines and fuel line. Eddie used all stainless steel bolts, washers, nuts, and screws. The engine and front suspension all look brand new. Seeing the partially finished product, John can't wait for his Dune Buggy to be finished.

Bobby B. returns with Erika driving, and Johnson is right behind them. Apparently, they met on the road somewhere, and drove around for a while. As they pull up, Erika yells out, "I want one!" Eddie asks, "what color?" Erika yells out, "light blue. Like, really light blue. Not like Braden's blue one." Eddie replies, "I'm sorry. I'm all out of light blue Dune Buggies. I'll have to build one." It's hard to tell whether Erika is serious or not. But, Erika and Bobby B. have both found out that a motorcycle may not be the best mode of transportation in the rain and snow.

While some in the group were checking out the Dune Buggies, others were relaxing in the pool or at the pool side. Braden is relaxing in the pool with Mark, giving him all the details on what is going on behind the scenes regarding the tampering of his locker. Braden tells Mark that he has been investigating McCutchen and Leggett, finding out a few details that will be very incriminating when the time comes. Hearing the news, Mark is more convinced than ever that he needs to get rid of McCutchen.

Braden and Mark are working on a few ways to get rid of McCutchen and Leggett. Braden proposes to Mark that, in order to get McCutchen and Leggett off the team, one thing that would help will be writing some running cadences. Braden suggests, "I could write some running cadences, and we can all chant them when we run at practice." Mark asks, "what's a running cadence?" Braden explains, "it's that chanting that the military does when they run." Mark replies, "oh yeah. I've heard them." Braden adds, "they're also called Jodies or military cadences. But, I call them running cadences because I run."

Braden then tells Mark, "some good stuff has run through my head when I take the recovery lap during our drills. I could lead the running cadence, and you guys just repeat what I say." Mark asks, "I got to hear this. Tell me some of them." Braden tells Mark, "check this out."

Braden chants, "

McCrutchen is a great big pain.
Watch his times go down the drain.
When he runs we lose the race.
He can't run a decent pace.
Get McCrutchen off the team.
That is our biggest dream.

Leggett's ass is fat as shit.
That is why he likes to quit.
Leggett's slow just like his friend.
They will both come to an end.
Leggett's on his way to jail.
All his classes he will fail."

Braden then tells Mark, "that's what I'm talking about." Mark laughs, telling Braden, "we seriously need to do this, bro! How about Monday at practice?" Braden tells Mark, "we'll have to make it later in the week. Eddie's hearing is Monday morning, and they told me that I got to be there. And, they're making McCrutchen and Leggett show up too." Mark suggests, "we'll do it the first chance we get."

Hearing the military marching cadence, Paula exclaims, “that’s great! Let me know when you’re going to do this! I want to be part of it!” Wendy, who is laying on a float, tells Braden and Mark, “you guys are so funny!” Paula remarks, “Mark is right. McCrutchen has got to go. First he was after Eddie, then Mark. Who knows who’s next.” Braden tells Paula, “it’s probably gonna be me, because I put his ass in jail twice. Once this year, and once during your wedding.”

Hearing everyone laughing, Eddie and Kathy walk over to the pool area to see what’s going on. Kathy asks, “what did I miss?” Paula tells Braden, “do that thing again.” Braden starts repeating the chant, with Paula, Mark, and Wendy joining in, practicing for when the time comes. Adding a few new variations and verses this time, everyone is impressed at Braden’s ability to make this stuff up on the fly. After everyone has a good laugh, the plan is set. At the right moment, Braden will begin basic training on the track.

Kathy and Eddie couldn’t throw a pool party without pizza. The pizza delivery arrives, and Kathy yells out, “the pizza’s here!” Kathy heads from the pool to the house, taking the delivery. It’s hard for the guy delivering the pizza today to not notice all the Dune Buggies. He has seen Kathy’s, Paula’s and Braden’s Dune Buggies on and off, but not five in one place at the same time. After delivering the pizza, he checks out the dune buggies before he leaves.

Paula and Erika are the first to head inside, but that is not surprising. Within a few minutes, everyone is inside, indulging in a few slices of pizza. Over pizza, John asks Eddie, “when do you think my Dune Buggy will be ready?” Eddie replies, “don’t worry. It will be done before the Summer. If you want it faster, you can come over and help.” John tells Eddie, “I can do that. I can definitely do that.” John, who will be a senior next year, wants his Dune Buggy ready for the Summer.

After an afternoon in the sun, everyone heads out one by one. Johnson and Bobby B. are among the first to leave, simply because they want to drive around in their new toys. Eddie and John tinker with John’s Dune Buggy for a while, which mostly amounts to Eddie explaining to John what is left to do. Hearing that Johnson was able to get a custom color, John went with metallic copper. Eddie tells John that he is welcome to come by and help next weekend, making everything move along faster. John has no problem helping. He wants his Dune Buggy yesterday.

After everyone is gone, Kathy and Eddie get in their pool, waiting for the sun to set. Kathy puts her legs around Eddie’s waist, and asks Eddie, “I wonder how many times we’ve changed the future.” Thinking about Kathy’s question, Eddie replies, “every day.” Kathy asks, “how can you know?” Eddie explains, “when we went to the future, the mechanic told us

that you didn't make it. But, somehow we changed the future, and you did make it. So, we change the future every day. So do Mark and Paula, and everyone else, because you're here now." Kathy is silent, then tells Eddie, "wow! I never thought of it that way."

After thinking about changing the future, Kathy then wonders, "then how about Mr. Crum's house and all that?" Eddie replies, "well, if he's the school drug dealer, he should go to jail." Kathy tells Eddie, "I mean like that we now own his property. I was supposed to die. We now own his property, and I shouldn't even be here." Eddie explains, "his house went to foreclosure. I'm guessing someone else would have bought it if we didn't." Kathy replies, "oh yeah. I guess you're right."

Kathy and Eddie finish the day by ushering in the beginning of the pool season, catching up on Kathy's promise to kiss Eddie once for every star in the sky. They take a brief pause, watching for Katarina's star to appear. When Katarina's star appears, Kathy whispers to Eddie, "billions and billions to go."