

MADISON SQUARE  
EPISODE 102 - "THE PITCH"

Written by

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An original series

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COLD OPEN

EXT. JIMMY'S OFFICE - 10:30 AM

Paul is walking down the hall to Jimmy's office, as he has every ten minutes or so since he arrived this morning, to see if Jimmy is in yet. Door's closed, no lights on. Paul sighs and starts walking back, before he notices a light come on under the door.

He takes a few seconds, then knocks.

JIMMY  
(from other side, sounding  
rough)  
Ah? Who is it?

PAUL  
Paul Goldman, sir.

JIMMY  
Ah. Ah! Good, good, just give me a  
second.

Paul waits a few seconds, a little thumping and clattering behind the door. Then, Jimmy cracks the door a bit, looking very disheveled, in the same suit he was wearing yesterday.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Hey! Come on in.

PAUL  
Sir, did you sleep here last night?

JIMMY  
Shh. Shh. Inside, all will be  
revealed.

He opens the door more and lets Paul in, closing it behind them. Still talking as they walk to his desk:

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Yeah, I did. I just didn't want  
anyone else to hear that.

Jimmy doesn't sit at his desk right away; he goes to his bar and fixes a drink. Still talking with his back to Paul:

JIMMY (CONT'D)

I had too much, sorry. Figured as early as we needed to get going today, no point in going home just to come right back.

Jimmy turns around and sits down with his drink, immediately sipping it.

PAUL

Are you sure that's the best idea today?

JIMMY

(waves him off)

Just a hair of the dog. Just to chase the headache away.

PAUL

You know, I have a vitamin regimen to prevent hangovers that works pretty well. I'd be happy to share.

JIMMY

Maybe later. Or tell me later. We gotta hit the ground running today, right?

PAUL

Just want to make sure you'll be okay.

JIMMY

I will. Will you?

PAUL

I go back with his agent, so I like our chances.

JIMMY

Great. What's the schedule?

PAUL

Flight lands in an hour. I was able to convince them to sleep in a little. We'll get lunch if they haven't had it, tour the facilities, meet you and Cliff, see where it goes from there. I actually gotta go meet them now.

JIMMY

Taking the limo?

PAUL  
The limo?

JIMMY  
(laughs)  
We're a major league sports team.  
Yeah, Paul, we have a limo. You  
said we should roll out the red  
carpet; what was your plan?

PAUL  
...Company car?

JIMMY  
(chuckles)  
I'll get it sent around for you.  
You ready to go?

PAUL  
Yes sir. Will you be?

JIMMY  
I'm ready! Look at me, as fresh as  
the day I was born.

Paul expresses some worry.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
(laughs)  
I'm just fucking with you. I'm  
gonna shower and change. Now get  
going. It'll be downstairs by the  
time you get there.

PAUL  
Right away.

Paul stands up and moves to exit, then turns around.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
...Do you have a shower in your  
office?

JIMMY  
Welcome to the big leagues. Now go.

Paul exits.

**END OF COLD OPEN**

**ACT I**

EXT. AIRPORT - 11:45 AM

A limo pulls up outside, where EDDIE MALDONADO (36, sharp dressed, keen) and ALONZO GEORGE (23, jeans, button-down, cowboy hat, quietly confident) are waiting, and for some time judging from their expressions. Paul steps out of the limo.

EDDIE  
Doctor Jock!

PAUL  
Steady Eddie!

They move in for a quick handshake-hug, then Paul and Alonzo shake hands.

ALONZO  
You two know each other?

EDDIE  
Yeah, MIT. Paul was in the statistics department while I was getting my MBA in sports management.

PAUL  
Might have been the only two people there who liked basketball.

Paul and Eddie laugh; Alonzo is amused but observes.

EDDIE  
You're late, Paul.

PAUL  
Sorry, traffic was really bad today.

EDDIE  
Isn't it bad in New York every day?

PAUL  
I don't know, I just got here. I took the subway everywhere in Boston--

EDDIE  
And I know Terre Haute traffic didn't prepare you for this!

They laugh again.

PAUL

Well, let's get out of here. You guys want to eat lunch?

Eddie looks to Alonzo.

ALONZO

Nah, I ate a big breakfast. I just want to get to it.

PAUL

(emphatic gesture)

To Madison Square Garden, then!

They chuckle and get in the limo.

INT. JIMMY'S OFFICE - 1:30 PM

Paul shows Alonzo and Eddie in, where Jimmy and Cliff are already waiting.

JIMMY

Gentlemen! Pleasure to see you.

CLIFF

How do.

Handshakes and seating.

JIMMY

Let me start. Alonzo-- what are you looking for from us?

ALONZO

Well, sir--

JIMMY

You can call me Jimmy. Or Jim. Or Mr. C. No need to be so formal.

ALONZO

Well, Jimmy, I think I'm ready to take the next step in my career, and I'm looking for an organization with the resources and commitment to help me do that. I think I can lead a team to a championship someday.

JIMMY

Well, we've got resources! New York City. Cartwright Cable Systems. Madison Square Garden. All at your disposal if you come here.

CLIFF

I know I can help you grow if you're up to the challenge.

JIMMY

Cliff's one of the best. He's more old school than Paul, but his track record of development speaks for itself.

PAUL

And you're from here, right?

ALONZO

That's right. The Bronx.

JIMMY

And we'd love to have a gen-u-ine New Yorker leading our team.

EDDIE

Alonzo's roots go way back.

Everyone waits for Alonzo to follow up, but he's studying the wall and thinking about something else.

ALONZO

(to Jimmy)

You play guitar?

JIMMY

Oh, yeah. You like music?

ALONZO

Mostly hip-hop. Couple of my old friends here have a record label.

JIMMY

No kidding? I have a band!

CLIFF

Tell him what it's called.

JIMMY

Oh, Cliff loves this. Are you ready?

Alonzo shrugs.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
 "Cartwright and the Hosses."

No reaction.

CLIFF  
 He's Jimmy Cartwright...

JIMMY  
 And my bandmates are the hosses.

Still nothing from Alonzo.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
 Hoss Cartwright? *Bonanza*?

Paul and Eddie look at each other-- they know what *Bonanza* is; they don't know why Jimmy expected Alonzo to know it.

ALONZO  
 I don't--

EDDIE  
 (to Alonzo)  
 It's an old Western.

JIMMY  
 I used to watch it with my daddy.  
 When I was little. He loved that  
 show. Some of my best memories.

Beat for sincere reactions.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
 I remember once he told me "Son, if  
 people are watching crap like this,  
 there's a fortune to be made in  
 television."  
 (beat)  
 He was kind of a cynic, but we  
 wouldn't be sitting here if it  
 wasn't for him.

CLIFF  
 (to Alonzo)  
 I would have thought you liked  
 Westerns.

ALONZO  
 Before my time. And I'm from here.  
 I like stories about the city.



CLIFF  
That cowboy hat didn't come from  
New York.

ALONZO  
Nah, it was a gift from Mark Cuban.

CLIFF  
(sarcastic edge)  
A gen-u-ine cowboy.

ALONZO  
(assertive but not raising his  
voice)  
I think it suits me.

Cliff looks him over for a few seconds, letting the tension hang. Then a slow smile creeps across his face.

CLIFF  
You're not wrong.

Brief, subtle reaction from Alonzo.

PAUL  
Guys, we can talk music and fashion  
at dinner tonight. Let's give him  
the tour of the place.

EDDIE  
Where's Blue?

JIMMY  
Community outreach. He's speaking  
to a school right now.

PAUL  
Is that a good idea today?

JIMMY  
(missing his point)  
Oh, yeah. Kids love Blue.

CUT TO:

INT. - CLASSROOM

A banner is hanging in the class that reads "FOLLOW YOUR DREAMS DAY." All the desks have been pushed to the walls. Blue is coaching ten of the third graders while the rest stand around the perimeter, getting hands-on, positioning them.

BLUE

Okay... so, Tara, you're going to post up, like this. Hold the ball high... one hand if you can. And Carly, you're going to be guarding her. Up close, keep a hand up, always... Kyle and Monica, you'll be trying to get open behind the line. Brynn, you'll be trying to look for an open lane to the basket to cut through... Jordan, Ansel, you need to keep an eye on the post for that. Everyone clear?

Blank stares.

CUT TO:

INT. JIMMY'S OFFICE

JIMMY

He'll meet us for dinner. Come on, let's show Alonzo what a world-class franchise looks like.

Everyone stands to leave.

**END OF ACT I**

**ACT II**

INT. HIBACHI RESTAURANT - EVENING

Clockwise around the table: Cliff, Blue, Jimmy, Paul, Eddie, Alonzo. Second round of drinks. Paul has a Black Manhattan (rocks glass, one large round ice cube). Eddie and Cliff have bottles of beer. Blue and Alonzo have water. Jimmy has a glass of Scotch, neat, and a sake bottle with six shot glasses. He's the only one drinking sake for now. Everyone's warming up to each other, though:

ALONZO

All right, tell me about the nicknames. What's Doctor Jock?

EDDIE

Oh, I got this.

The table laughs.

EDDIE (CONT'D)

So at MIT--

PAUL

Go all the way back.

EDDIE

(laughs)

Okay, okay.

(beat)

Paul was an All-State guard in high school. Senior year, fourth place Indiana Mr. Basketball--

PAUL

Third place.

EDDIE

Third place. He had offers from... Purdue... Iowa... DePaul... So--

PAUL

And Marquette.

EDDIE

And Marquette! So signing day comes...

(beat, sips his beer)

And Paul announces he's not playing and he's accepted a full ride to MIT's statistics program!

Everyone "ooohs" at the reveal (except Cliff, who doesn't respect the decision). Alonzo looks over at Paul with a nod of respect.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
But he never stopped loving  
basketball. So while he's doing his  
postdoc research, he starts trying  
to build these statistical models  
for player and team performance...  
(another sip)  
...And the rest of the department  
is like, "Why the fuck is he  
wasting his time on that stuff?"

Everyone laughs.

EDDIE (CONT'D)  
So they started calling him "Doctor  
Jock" behind his back. Well, it  
used to be behind his back.

PAUL  
Can you believe I left?

More laughter. After it dies down, and it's clear Eddie's done, Paul speaks up.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Okay, okay, my turn. Eddie... loves  
to gamble.

EDDIE  
Oh, here we go.

PAUL  
I mean, everything. Poker. Sports.  
Who could drink the most beers. Who  
would hook up at the grad school  
parties.

Everyone laughs. Jimmy a little more rowdy than the others, with an "Oh!" indicating how much faster he's drinking than the rest.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
But win or lose... no matter how  
much, or how close, or what it  
was... he never lost his cool.

Oohs and murmurs, theatrically impressed.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
He's the guy I'd trust with my  
money before anyone else.

EDDIE  
Hey, your models made me a lot of  
money back then.

CLIFF  
(to Eddie)  
You gamble on ball?

EDDIE  
Not since I got my agent  
certification.

He and Paul laugh.

PAUL  
Yeah, Steady Eddie had to hang it  
up. Ethics and all.

EDDIE  
Still love the nickname.

BLUE  
Nicknames? Did I ever tell you how  
I got my nickname?

Everyone perks up since Blue has been fairly quiet.

PAUL  
Oh, he told me this yesterday. This  
is fun.

BLUE  
It came when I was playing with the  
San Francisco Warriors. It was  
1968. Or '69. It started around  
then, I think. I had this grow  
house--

Cut for Paul's reaction without interrupting--

BLUE (CONT'D)  
And once we cultivated this strain  
that had blue hairs on it. Don't  
know how. Still don't know the  
genetics. But people loved it. And  
players loved it. Teams would come  
to town, and I'd hear from Bob  
Pettit or Lenny Wilkens, "Hey, can  
we see Blue?" After a while players  
just called me Blue.

(MORE)

BLUE (CONT'D)

(beat)

You know who loved weed? Jerry West.

Beat for mostly baffled reactions (especially Paul), but Alonzo is chuckling. Jimmy breaks the tension:

JIMMY

Blue Robinson, the legend! He's forgotten more about basketball than most of us will ever know. Hey, how'd it go with the kids today?

BLUE

Not bad. It's a work in progress. Kayla is terrible at switching, and Travis spends more time sucking his thumb than getting open off the ball.

JIMMY

(perplexed)

Uh huh.

(to Alonzo)

Hey, how come you're not drinking?

ALONZO

I don't drink.

JIMMY

Why not?

ALONZO

Performance. I don't put anything in my body that's gonna make me a worse athlete.

CLIFF

But you smoke weed.

ALONZO

What makes you say that?

CLIFF

I saw how you laughed at Blue's story.

ALONZO

It's a funny story.

CLIFF

Sounds to me like you have personal experience there.

ALONZO  
I never said that.

CLIFF  
I just think it's funny. Weed is funny to you, but alcohol is a no-no.

ALONZO  
Are you trying to get me to drink?

CLIFF  
No, no. I was just curious about your reasoning. I've always found drinking to be a good way to bond with other men, though.

ALONZO  
We were bonding fine.

JIMMY  
Hey, hey. Easy, Cliff. We're not talking about giving Alonzo 160 million dollars to be my drinking buddy.  
(to Alonzo)  
You want to be the best you can, that's all I ask from my players.

Beat.

BLUE  
Personally, I only drink distilled agave. Preferably *mezcal pechuga*. It's best for the *chi*.

Paul tries to change the subject.

PAUL  
Hey, so, Alonzo, you have any other plans while you're in town tonight?

ALONZO  
Nothing big. Was going to see some old friends later.

JIMMY  
Hey! You want to go see a concert tonight?

ALONZO / PAUL  
Seriously? / What?

CLIFF

Oh, boy.

JIMMY

I know a place we can get in no problem. Good act tonight, too.

EDDIE

(aside to Paul)

He's talking about his bar, isn't he?

PAUL

(aside)

You know about that?

EDDIE

(aside)

Of course. I do my research.

ALONZO

Who's the act?

Jimmy grins, wanting to surprise him.

JIMMY

Let me make a phone call.

He takes out his cell phone and hits one number (speed dial).

JIMMY (CONT'D)

(on phone)

Leon! ... Yeah, it's the big man.  
Are the boys in tonight? ... All  
right, tell 'em I'm coming through.  
We got some guests in town we want  
to impress tonight! ... My man!

He hangs up.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

All right! We head to the bar after  
this, and Cartwright and the Hosses  
will put on a show!

PAUL

You're going to play?

EDDIE

I don't know, Jimmy. We've had a  
long day and I think Alonzo wants  
to meet some of his old friends.



ALONZO  
It's fine.

EDDIE  
(aside)  
You sure?

ALONZO  
(aside)  
I want to see where this goes.

JIMMY  
Great! Hey, invite your friends!  
It's all on me! Call your record  
company boys!

ALONZO  
Now that, I don't know.

JIMMY  
Hey. Just tell them what the deal  
is. Invite them, at least. For me?

ALONZO  
(thinks)  
All right. I'll invite them. But  
I'm not gonna push them.

JIMMY  
I'll take it!

Jimmy pours the bottle of sake into the six glasses on the  
table.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
To music and friends!

Jimmy takes a glass and raises it as for a toast, then drinks  
it as everyone else is reaching for theirs, immediately  
refilling his.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
All right! Let's order!

Everyone else takes their shot (except Alonzo and Blue) and  
starts looking at the menu. Jimmy drums on the table with his  
hands.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Grill it up right here!

Polite chuckles, but Paul covertly checks Alonzo and Eddie's  
reactions to see if Jimmy is making them uncomfortable.

END OF ACT II

ACT III

EXT. - JC'S BLUE NOTE - NIGHT

The crew walk up the sidewalk to the front of the bar, where LEON is waiting. Jimmy is already drunk.

LEON

Hey! Mr. Cartwright! Wow, is that Alonzo George?

JIMMY

Leon, my man! You bet it is! Gonna show this superstar what a superstar town is like!

LEON

I love it.

(to Alonzo)

Big fan.

(to Jimmy)

Your regular table is ready.

JIMMY

Perfect. My regular drink?

LEON

Bottle of Glenfid 18 on the table.

JIMMY

(slaps him on the shoulder)

You're the best!

The crew walk in. Paul grabs Cliff by the arm to get him to hang back.

PAUL

(re: Alonzo)

What do you think?

CLIFF

I like him more than I thought I would. Stood up for himself. Man of few words.

PAUL

Are we a go?

CLIFF

Well, from here, that's not going to depend on me.

PAUL  
What do you mean?

CLIFF  
You'll see.

Cliff walks in. Paul stays for a second, thinking, then snaps out of it.

PAUL  
So you're Leon?

LEON  
My real name is Arthur. Jimmy told me when he had the dream for this bar, the manager was named Leon.

Beat for a quizzical look from Paul.

LEON (CONT'D)  
I told him he could call me Leon for an extra 25k a year. He said, "I'll make it 30."

PAUL  
Huh. Quite the guy, I'm learning.

LEON  
I've had worse bosses.

Paul nods, then goes in.

INT. - JC'S BLUE NOTE - NIGHT

Middlebrow decor, like if the consultant group that designed all the Irish bars in America was asked to design a blues bar. The group is sitting at Jimmy's VIP table. Jimmy is drinking his Scotch. Beers for the other guys except Alonzo (water) and Blue (a tasting glass with a clear liquid-- the mezcal pechuga he mentioned earlier; Jimmy always keeps a bottle at the bar for him).

PAUL  
You doing all right, sir?

JIMMY  
Yeah, yeah. I just gotta get into character. Into the right mind space. Alonzo, you're a performer, too, you understand.  
(Alonzo nods)  
I need inspiration to strike. I'll know when the moment is right--

ALONZO  
(calling out)  
Hey hey!

Everyone turns to look where he's calling. We see he's looking toward the door, where his two friends with the record label, GREG C (31, more talkative) and BIG K (33, more reserved) have walked in. They notice him and head over. Alonzo gets up for hellos.

GREG C  
What's up, baby boy?

BIG K  
My man.

ALONZO  
Yo yo! I didn't know if you'd make it!

GREG C  
The National Basketball League's next superstar, from our block, is in town, and we're not coming?

BIG K  
Wasn't gonna miss you.

GREG C  
Gotta meet the Wakefield crew tonight, but we had time to make an appearance.

JIMMY  
Are these the guys?

ALONZO  
Let me introduce you. My boys from back in the day, Greg C, Big K. We got Jimmy Cartwright, owner of the Knicks--

GREG C  
We fuck with the orange and blue. We know who he is.

ALONZO  
(laughs)  
All right, all right--

BIG K  
Cliff Hawkins and Blue Robinson, too. Respect for our elders.

Cliff nods and raises his beer in acknowledgment.

BLUE

Thanks, son. Stay in school.

Big K and Greg C exchange a look, but Alonzo laughs it off.

ALONZO

Well, then, this is my agent Eddie  
Maldonado and the general manager  
Paul Goldman.

PAUL / EDDIE

How are you? / Pleasure.

JIMMY

These your boys from the record  
label?

ALONZO

Yes sir.

JIMMY

That's the sign! It's time!

GREG C

So what do we have going on  
tonight?

JIMMY

I'm playing a set with the band!

GREG C

Is that right? Mr. Cartwright is an  
entertainer!

BIG K

Love it.

JIMMY

Sorry I can't chat a little longer,  
gents, but it's time.

(stands up)

Have a seat! Grab a drink! On me!  
Hey, maybe if you like what you  
hear, we can talk record deal.

Jimmy walks over to the stage.

GREG C

He's not serious, is he--

ALONZO

Nah, nah.

PAUL  
CCS probably has great media  
distribution...

Greg C and Big K glare at him.

PAUL (CONT'D)  
Sorry, sorry.

CLIFF  
Try not to piss off the star, OK?

ALONZO  
It's fine, it's fine.  
(notices Jimmy at mic)  
Shh.

Jimmy speaks into the mic, putting on a slicker showman's  
voice than usual (but not too smooth), although he still  
slurs his words a bit.

JIMMY  
Hello, friends, fans, lovers...  
We've got some special guests in  
the house tonight, so we're  
bringing you a special performance.  
You know me as the man about town,  
the straw that stirs the drink--

PAUL  
I thought that was Reggie Jackson.

CLIFF  
You try and talk him out of it.

JIMMY  
--The Big Man, or maybe just... Mr.  
Jim. We are Cartwright and the  
Hosses... and we're bringing you  
the blues tonight!

Some scattered applause. Jimmy turns to the band:

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Let's start with "Miss You." Count  
us off, Ace.

"Ace" (not his name, but what Jimmy calls the drummer) hits  
his sticks together for a couple measures for the tempo. Then  
the band launches into the Rolling Stones' "Miss You."

TIME CUT: 10-15  
MINUTES LATER

Third song. Jimmy has a guitar now and is in the middle of his solo. We're seeing him from the table's perspective but then we hear some whispering.

GREG C  
I don't know... we got that meeting.

BIG K  
Yeah, that's enough.

GREG C  
(to Alonzo)  
Good to see you, baby boy.

BIG K  
(to Alonzo)  
Call before you fly back out.

From Jimmy's perspective, we see them standing up to leave. Jimmy notices eventually, and when he does, he runs back up to the mic.

JIMMY  
Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. Stop the music. Stop the music.

The band stops. Greg C and Big K turn around to face the stage.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Hey, hey! Where are you going?  
Don't walk out on a show!

GREG C  
Look, this is not our thing. We showed up as a courtesy to our boy Alonzo, but we have other places to be tonight.

BIG K  
No disrespect, Mr. C. We're businessmen, though.

GREG C  
And we got some business to deal with.

Jimmy considers this, but by now he's drunk and his old resentments and impulsiveness kicks in.

JIMMY  
(slurring as he goes on)  
But you WALKED OUT!  
(MORE)



JIMMY (CONT'D)  
 You disrespected the music! The musicians! You don't disrespect the musicians! You run a record label and disrespect musicians?

BIG K  
 (looking to Paul and Cliff)  
 Hey, control your mans here!

Paul and Cliff get up and immediately move toward Jimmy to get him off the stage.

JIMMY  
 You talk to them and not me?  
 Fuuuuuuck yooooooooooooooooou!

A cacophony erupts, "Whoa"s from everybody, a "What the fuck?" from Big K. Alonzo glances to Eddie, then stands up. Eddie stands, too.

ALONZO  
 Okay, enough!

When Alonzo speaks, people listen. The chatter stops and he moves to the others standing.

ALONZO (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Cartwright, these are my friends. You can't talk to them that way.

CLIFF  
 He didn't mean it, Alonzo, he just gets worked up over his music--

ALONZO  
 (cuts him off)  
 And you. You've been side-eyeing me all day. You don't think I've noticed?

Cliff is taken aback for a second but recovers.

CLIFF  
 I admit I was giving you a hard time. I just wasn't sure about you before.

ALONZO  
 I don't need to be tested. I know who I am.  
 (beat)  
 I know your type. All my life.  
 (MORE)

ALONZO (CONT'D)  
 You think because I'm quiet, I'm a pussy. You think because I wear a cowboy hat, I'm a pussy. You think because I don't drink, because for four years I've come off the bench, I'm a pussy.

Alonzo looks at Paul.

ALONZO (CONT'D)  
 This is your pitch? A coach who doesn't believe in me and...  
 (gestures to Jimmy)  
This?

He looks Jimmy in the eye.

ALONZO (CONT'D)  
 What is wrong with you, man?

Beat; Jimmy says nothing, emotionally exhausted.

ALONZO (CONT'D)  
 (to Eddie)  
 Come on, let's go.

He walks past them over to Greg C and Big K.

ALONZO (CONT'D)  
 (to them)  
 It's all right. It's all right.  
 Let's just get out of here.

The three walk away; Eddie starts walking fast to catch up. Paul walks after him.

PAUL  
 Look, Eddie, I'm so sorry--

EDDIE  
 Yeah. Me too. Uh...  
 (clasps his shoulder)  
 We'll talk.

The four keep walking toward the door, with some muttering and chuckling at the scene they just witnessed.

JIMMY  
 (calling to Alonzo)  
 So you'll think about it?

No answer.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
(not as quiet as he  
thinks)  
Fine. Fuck 'em. Not good enough for  
New York anyway! Can't hack it!

ALONZO  
(off camera)  
I can hear you! And I'm from here,  
asshole!

They leave. After a few seconds, Paul turns to Jimmy and  
Cliff.

PAUL  
Guys? What the fuck?

Jimmy makes an annoyed face.

CLIFF  
I'm sorry. Look, I'll get Jimmy  
home. You do what you can to try to  
patch things up.

PAUL  
I'll give him some time to cool  
off. Reach out first thing in the  
morning.

CLIFF  
Ahh...  
(gears turning but tries  
not to give it away)  
Yeah. Do that.

Paul shakes his head and walks away from the other two, to  
leave.

BLUE  
(to Jimmy)  
Hey, are you going to finish your  
set?

Jimmy and Cliff look at him, perplexed.

CLIFF  
Go home, coach.

BLUE  
Roger that, Cliff.

He doesn't move, instead taking another sip of his drink.

END OF ACT III

**TAG**

INT. JIMMY'S OFFICE - THE NEXT MORNING

Jimmy is very hung over. Paul is not. The TV is on ESPN.

JIMMY

So... how'd it go?

PAUL

Not great.

JIMMY

Shit. What'd Eddie say?

PAUL

Something about "He saw you in your environment as your true self, and you were an entitled, braying jackass."

(quickly)

Not my words.

JIMMY

Fuck. Well, that ain't good. I can't blame him.

(beat)

Sorry I messed things up. I just wanted to show him a good time...

PAUL

Well, I don't think I can fix this. So I'm gonna have to pivot to a new plan--

JIMMY

Oh, no, I've got something.

PAUL

What's that now?

JIMMY

Look... Cliff and I talked last night about it--

PAUL / JIMMY

You'd better not say what I think you're going to say / And he had an idea, for a guy he respects a lot

PAUL

No!

JIMMY

Look, Larry Gray makes sense. Cliff knows him, we know he'll come here.

(points to the TV)

All the other max guys have come to agreements already.

PAUL

He'll tie up our cap space and put our ceiling at 35 wins for four years.

JIMMY

We don't have any other moves.

PAUL

He's a ball-stopper who isn't efficient, this will completely wreck my plans--

JIMMY

Paul. It's done.

Beat.

PAUL

I'm the general manager. I had no say in this.

JIMMY

All personnel decisions are final with me. And nobody else wants to come here anyway.

PAUL

You promised to give me a shot.

JIMMY

You'll still have cap to sign some of your underrated guys. You'll make it work.

PAUL

I can't abide this.

Paul turns around.

JIMMY

Where are you going?

PAUL

To draft a letter.

JIMMY

Paul.

Paul stops.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

What do you think happens if you resign on your third day on the job?

PAUL

If they know why?

JIMMY

"Why" won't matter to them. You were a big risk to begin with. If you immediately wash out... nobody is going to hire you again. Or anyone like you for the next ten years.

Paul considers this.

JIMMY (CONT'D)

You think academia will take you back? Do you want to go back?

PAUL

(quietly)

No.

JIMMY

Look. I fucked up. I'm sorry. But nothing can fix that now. We're making the best of a bad situation. And we can still get some of your guys.

(beat)

Do some research. I know there's gotta be some contract thing that will give us a way out if this goes badly.

Beat.

PAUL

I will. And it will.

JIMMY

Thanks. Close the door.

Paul leaves to consider this, still angry but resigned to the reality of the situation. Right as he's leaving:

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
Oh, hey. One more thing.

PAUL  
What?

JIMMY  
Can you get me that vitamin  
cocktail you talked about?

PAUL  
Uh... sure. Soon as I can.

JIMMY  
Thanks.

Paul closes the door behind him. Jimmy turns on the stereo  
(his own music) and rests his head on the desk.

JIMMY (CONT'D)  
(to himself, re: Alonzo  
and friends)  
What do those guys know about the  
pain and suffering of the blues,  
anyway...

Fade out on Jimmy resting his head on his desk listening to  
his music.

**END OF EPISODE**