

A Quest Called Bonita

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INT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

Class is over and the hall fills with students. Lockers open and close. Boys jostle each other up and down the hall. Girls stand in front of lockers talking.

BONITA, a high school senior dance team leader walks down the hall. She tosses her long dark hair over her shoulders. She locks eyes with a boy.

JOSEPH, high school junior athlete. He pulls the straps of his backpack tight and stretches the Batman logo on his shirt. "Electric Relax" from A Tribe Called Quest PLAYS in his earphones as they stare at each other.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

I can't take my eyes off her. Not that I want to. But she's out of my league.

Bonita and Joseph pass each other, but neither breaks eye contact. Bonita turns around and Joseph stops in the center of the hallway.

JOSEPH (V.O.)

Teasing me with her stupid pretty face. Nah. She wants me. Imma make a move.

Joseph smiles brightly and puffs out his chest. Bonita places a lock of hair behind her ear. Joseph steps forward confidently. Joseph's pants drop to his ankles and he falls forward.

BOBBY, a high school senior meat-head flexes beneath his letterman jacket. He stands over Joseph in triumph. He dances in victory and makes kissing lips at Bonita.

BOBBY

Grande!

Bobby runs down the hall past Bonita. Joseph gets to his feet and pulls his pants back up. He looks at Bonita and hesitates for a second. Joseph chases Bobby down the hall and pushes past the other students. Joseph slams through the main hallway exit.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL PARKING LOT - DAY

Scattered groups of kids remain in the parking lot. They meander close to their cars.

Bobby trots his similarly dressed group of friends. Joseph follows, but stops a safe distance from the group.

JOSEPH
What the fuck, Bobby?

BOBBY
What's up bro, problem?

JOSEPH
You know that the fuck is up.

BOBBY
Nah, I'm not sure. Why don't you come a little close and tell me.

The scattered groups of kids move in closer to Bobby and Joseph. Some pull out cell phones and all eyes are on the pair. Joseph sees that Bobby and his friends outnumber him.

JOSEPH
I ain't stupid.

BOBBY
You looked pretty stupid a minute ago.

A pickup truck pulls up behind Bobby and his friends jump in. Joseph turns away and walks out the school gate.

JOSEPH
Man fuck you, Bobby.

BOBBY
Grande!

JOSEPH
(mumbling)
What does that even mean?

LEO a skinny artistic junior jumps on Joseph's back playfully. Joseph shakes him off and the two walk together.

LEO
I think it means he's the biggest. I mean, that just makes sense.

(CONTINUED)

JOSEPH
I wasn't really looking for an
answer, Leo.

LEO
(holds up fists)
You weren't looking for them
problems either.

JOSEPH
He had his boys with him.

LEO
And you was in your chonies. In
front of Bonita.

JOSEPH
Man fuck you too, Leo.

LEO
I'm just saying man. You gotta do
like my boy Beans would do.

JOSEPH
What's that?

LEO
Beans would say, "You can either
get down, or you could lay down."

JOSEPH
Wow.

LEO
I'm just saying, bro. One.

Leo runs across the street, as Bobby and his friends pull
out the parking lot. Music blasts as they pass Joseph and
Bobby points his fingers like a gun at Joseph.

DOWN THE STREET

Joseph walks. He punches the air and berates himself. He
only makes it a block before he almost runs into a car. The
car blocks the crosswalk and the driver watches Joseph from
the passenger window. Joseph looks up and locks eyes with
the driver.

MRS. DIANE, mid-fifties high school teacher waves Joseph
into the car.

INT. ECONOMY CLASS CAR - DAY

The small, almost claustrophobic beige car has stained floors. Mrs. Diane sits and simply stares at Joseph. He tries to avoid eye contact. He turns to her, when she revs the engine.

JOSEPH

I don't want to talk about it.

The car pulls away from the curb and Mrs. Diane concentrates on the road.

MRS. DIANE

You never want to talk about it. But Bobby isn't going to go away, so you might as well.

JOSEPH

I'm not worried about Bobby.

MRS. DIANE

You're worried about something. Or do you normally walk around punching the air?

JOSEPH

No I don't.

MRS. DIANE

Then what is it?

JOSEPH

Of course it's Bobby again. I'm sick of his bullshit.

MRS. DIANE

No you're not.

JOSEPH

Yes I am!

MRS. DIANE

Then do something about it.

JOSEPH

What am I supposed to do about Bobby and the Cool Kids?

MRS. DIANE

You have three choices. You can run or you can fight.

(CONTINUED)

JOSEPH
Great choices.

MRS. DIANE
Whenever you don't feel like running, you've got to fight. Anytime you don't want to fight, you better run. But that's a cycle that never stops.

JOSEPH
That's no help.

MRS. DIANE
Well that's what you got.

JOSEPH
I thought you said three choices?

MRS. DIANE
The third choice, is you can win.

JOSEPH
Huh?

MRS. DIANE
You can win. Make it so he second guesses even looking your way. Whether you win or lose the fight, put the fear of God in him.

JOSEPH
How am I supposed to do that?

MRS. DIANE
Use some of that courage you muster up when Bonita is around and put it into your fist. Then try your damndest to put your fist through his face.

JOSEPH
I don't think a teacher is supposed to tell me that.

MRS. DIANE
I'm not a teacher. I'm an old lady who just gave you a ride home. So get out of my car.

EXT. CITY BLOCK - DAY

Joseph Looks around and sees that he's at home. Mrs. Diane smiles at him. He opens the door and steps out. Before he closes the door, he peeks his head back inside.

JOSEPH

Thank you.

MRS. DIANE

There are few things girls find
more attractive than a decisive
man.

Joseph closes the door and Mrs. Diane drives off. He stands in front of his house with a bemused smile.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPLE'S OFFICE - DAY

Joseph sits with the same bemused smile. His lip is split and his clothes are torn slightly. Behind him in the office, Bobby sits with a black eye hidden under a pack of ice. Bobby has multiple bruises. Leo stands outside the office pantomiming the fight.

LEO (O.S.)

So I told him, you can either get
down, or you could lay day. My boy
got down!

IN THE HALLWAY

Bonita walks down the hallway. She carries her books in front of her and looks over them at Joseph. He looks up and watches her get close. When she passes, she stops short. She turns, quickly pecks him on the cheek and hands him a folded note. She turns and walks down the hall. She put on headphones and listens to "Bonita Applebum" by A Tribe Called Quest, as Joseph leans back in triumph.