

STROKE  
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**INT. HIGH SCHOOL SWIM STADIUM - DAY**

Adolescent SWIMMERS dive off racing blocks and soar through the pool at top speed. They travel back and forth in the cool, blue water.

A faint HUMMING NOISE begins to grow louder and louder, until it's all that we hear.

**SMASH CUT TO:**

**INT. DINER - NIGHT**

TOMMY, 17, clean cut, dressed in an oversized hoodie and jeans, slouches in a tiny booth. He clutches a mug of coffee with both hands.

MARCO, 25, shaggy, disheveled, sits across from Tommy in the booth.

TOMMY

Thanks again for meeting with me.

Marco nods his head.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I came to see you because I need your help.

Tommy leans in.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

We can't let him get away with this.

MARCO

Who?

TOMMY

Coach Ed.

MARCO

What about him? I haven't seen him in years.

TOMMY

(whispers)

I know what he did.

Marco thinks on this for a beat.

MARCO

And what do you want from me?

TOMMY

I want to go to the cops. I want everyone to know what he's done. We can try to file a report, or something. I can talk to-

Marco SLAMS his fist on the table. Tommy jumps.

MARCO

Listen. It's your word against his. No one will ever believe you. You need to let it go.

TOMMY

Just like you did?

They stare at each other for a tense beat.

Marco's BOSS, a greasy man in his 50s, yells from the back of the diner.

BOSS

Marco. Break's over. Get back to work.

Marco stands, puts his apron back on, and begins to walk away. Tommy GRABS his arm with a firm grip.

TOMMY

Eric Johnston is a senior. He's captain of the team, just like you were. He tried to kill himself. His parents think it's because he's depressed.

Marco wrenches his arm away.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

But I know why he did it, and so do you. I'm just trying to do something about it. Please, help me.

MARCO

I can't. I'm sorry.

Marco walks away, leaving Tommy alone in the booth.

#### **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Tommy enters quietly through the front door and creeps into the living room.

MAGGIE, 50s, his mother, is asleep on the couch. The blue glow of the TV bounces off her soft face.

Tommy grabs the remote from her hand and turns the TV off.

Maggie stirs on the couch.

MAGGIE  
(mumbling)  
Tommy? It's late.

TOMMY  
I'm home now. Go back to sleep, Ma.

Tommy puts a blanket over his Ma and heads up to his room.

#### **INT. TOMMY'S ROOM - NIGHT**

Tommy pulls a CARDBOARD box out from his under his bed and takes out stacks of papers.

He examines various newspaper clippings about the high school swim team:

- "Two-Time Olympian Coach leads local swim team to league finals."

- "Local swimmer disqualified from Olympic trials."

Tommy pulls out a POLAROID of him and ERIC and examines it carefully.

#### **INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY - 1 YEAR EARLIER**

Tommy showers amongst other random TEENS on the swim team.

He looks over at ERIC JOHNSTON, 16, who is washing his hair and joking around with his teammates.

Eric catches Tommy staring. They share a curious look.

Tommy turns away and continues to shower.

COACH ED, 40s, walks through the locker room, staring at a clipboard. We don't see his face.

COACH ED  
Meeting in 5, guys.

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL SWIM STADIUM - MORNING**

It's early morning. Sunlight breaks through barred windows.

Tommy sits alone in the bleachers, wearing his backpack and hoodie.

He stares at an empty pool. The water is dark blue. All is calm. Then, the school bell RINGS.

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM - DAY**

MRS. STEVENS, 50s, lectures the class about Calculus.

Tommy sits in the back of the room and stares out the window. The teacher's voice fades out and we hear the familiar HUMMING NOISE again, growing louder, until-

MRS. STEVENS

Are you okay, Tommy?

Tommy snaps out of it, looks around. The class is staring at him.

TOMMY

I'm not feeling well.

Tommy quickly grabs his books and backpack and exits the classroom.

**INT. LOCKER ROOM - DAY - 6 MONTHS AGO**

Tommy and Eric get dressed in the locker room, alone together.

Tommy watches as Eric slips his a t-shirt on, which sticks to his partially wet chest.

TOMMY

Are you gonna try to qualify?

ERIC

I don't know. It's a lot.

TOMMY

You should do it.

Tommy walks closer to Eric and holds him.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Just don't forget the little people when you're a big shot Olympian.

Tommy and Eric kiss. Eric smiles and slips Tommy's hands off.

ERIC

Not here.

The boys grab their duffel bags and walk out, passing by Coach Ed.

**INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY**

Tommy walks through a hospital hallway. He looks down at a crumpled piece of paper in his hand that reads: ROOM 231.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - (DAYDREAM SEQUENCE)**

Tommy peeks inside the room. Eric lies in a hospital bed. He's propped up and faces the window.

Tommy slowly enters.

There are balloons, "get well" cards, and remnants of hospital food everywhere.

Tommy walks closer and closer, but Eric continues to stare out the window. Tommy pulls up a chair and sits next to the bed.

TOMMY

Hey.

Silence for a beat.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I just wanted to say that I'm sorry  
I haven't visited. I really am.

Eric ignores this. Tommy moves the chair even closer.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I know about Coach Ed.

Tommy leans in, to whisper.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

You're not the only one he did this  
to.

Eric's fists tighten. Tommy GRABS his hand.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

I can fix this.

Eric quickly turns to Tommy, aggressively, with tears in his eyes.

ERIC

You can't. No one can.

**END DAYDREAM SEQUENCE**

Tommy snaps out of it. He's still standing in the doorway of the hospital room.

Eric is lying down in a hospital bed, clearly unconscious. His PARENTS sit bedside and hold Eric's hand, their backs facing Tommy.

Tommy stares for a beat, then leaves the room quickly.

**EXT. HOSPITAL - DAY**

Tommy leans up against his CAR in the parking lot. He stares off into the distance.

**INT. LOCKER ROOM - 9 MONTHS EARLIER**

Tommy walks through the locker room, hair still wet, with a towel around his neck. He hears jumbled VOICES. He slowly peeks around a corner.

Tommy sees Eric speaking with Coach Ed, whose back is to us.

Tommy squints as he tries to decipher a seemingly intimate conversation. Their words are mostly inaudible.

Coach Ed runs his hand down Eric's back. Eric winces.

Tommy's watches, expressionless.

**I./E. TOMMY'S CAR - DAY**

Tommy pulls up to a suburban household, and looks around.

**EXT. BEACH - PIER - 6 MONTHS AGO**

Eric stands on the edge of the pier, staring out into the ocean. It's dark and cold and the waves break violently.

Tommy stands further back, watching Eric, with a concerned look on his face. He flips his hood on and shoves his hands in his pockets.

TOMMY

It's fucking freezing. Can you just tell me what's going on?

No response. Waves crash.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Eric?

ERIC

Just leave me alone.

TOMMY

Did I do something wrong? You know you can talk to me about anything, right?

Tommy walks over to touch Eric, who turns around violently and shoves Tommy.

ERIC

Get out of here. Please, just get out of here.

Eric turns around again and faces the ocean from the edge of the pier.

TOMMY

Fuck you, Eric. Fuck you.

Tommy turns and walks away for a long beat.

Eric steps closer to the edge. Waves thrash.

Tommy begins running away from the pier, a few tears now streaming down his face.

In the distance, we see Eric climb on top of a railing. Then, he leans forward and falls into the ocean.

Tommy stops running. He wipes his tears. Turns around.

Tommy begins sprinting back toward the pier.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

Shit. Shit.

Tommy reaches the end of the pier and looks around. No sign of Eric.

TOMMY (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Somebody help! Somebody!



**BACK TO:**

**I./E. - TOMMY'S CAR - (DAYDREAM SEQUENCE)**

Tommy finally gets out of his car and begins to walk toward the suburban house.

**EXT. FRONT PORCH - CONTINUOUS**

Tommy knocks on the door. A beat. Coach Ed answers. We see his face for the first time. He's balding. Tan. Rather average looking.

TOMMY

I need to talk to you.

Coach Ed nods and Tommy walks inside.

**INT. LIVING ROOM - CONTINUOUS**

Coach Ed leads Tommy into his living room and sits down in a recliner chair.

Tommy looks over around the room: it's decorated with accolades of universal recognition. Trophies, pictures, newspaper articles, etc.

Tommy eyes a PICTURE of Coach Ed with his wife and kids on the coffee table. Next to it is a silver MEDAL in a case.

ED

1980. Moscow.

Tommy nods his head.

ED (CONT'D)

So. What can I do for you?

TOMMY

I went to the hospital yesterday.  
To see Eric.

ED

Oh. How's he doing?

Tommy stares at Coach blankly.

TOMMY

I want you to admit what you've  
done.

COACH ED

I don't know what you're talking  
about.

Tommy slowly creeps toward Coach Ed. It's threatening.

TOMMY

You're going to admit what you did.  
To Marco. To Eric. And you're going  
to turn yourself in.

The two stand face to face.

COACH ED

I have nothing to say to you. I  
think you should leave, Tommy.

All in one quick motion, Tommy grabs a nearby TROPHY and  
SLAMS it into Coach Ed's face.

Coach falls to the ground, holding the side of his head, some  
blood on his hand.

Tommy drops the trophy, and stands over Coach. He begins  
swinging his fists, pummeling Coach Ed.

The familiar HUMMING NOISE returns and builds to a climax.

**END DREAM SEQUENCE**

**BACK TO:**

**I./E. TOMMY'S CAR - DAY**

Tommy sits in his car, still staring at the house. A SEDAN  
enters the driveway. Coach Ed gets out of the driver's seat.  
His WIFE and CHILD follow him into the house, carrying  
groceries.

Tommy drives off into the distance.

**INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY**

Tommy enters Eric's hospital room. The same PARENTS from  
before are in the room. They are wearing different clothes,  
but have clearly been in the room for days.

Eric's mother looks up.

MOM

Tommy. We were wondering when you'd  
come around.

Tommy stares intently across the room.

TOMMY

I need to talk to you about Eric.

**INT. HIGH SCHOOL SWIM STADIUM - DAY**

Tommy takes his mark on the racing block and dives into the water. He swims hard and fast. He doesn't stop.

**FADE OUT.**