

BACON EGG & CHEESE

Pilot

"#FREELONGBACK"

Written by

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EXT. BISHOP VINCENZO HIGH SCHOOL - JACKSONVILLE, FL - DAY

It is 6AM.

Campus is empty, classes aren't yet in session. We have a look around.

Large, lush TREES with deep roots.

Brick buildings, one with stained glass windows.

Corridors lined with bright Florida wildflowers.

A SPEAKER crackles to life and echoes over campus.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
This one? Oh frick.

INT. BV FRONT OFFICE - SAME

MARLOWE BERGERON (15, White, clumsy but calculating) stands with an ADMINISTRATIVE WOMAN (50s) near a landline phone.

ADMINISTRATOR
Yes, that one. Try again.

Marlowe nods, determined.

INT. BV HALLWAY - SAME

We move down the hallway, empty and quiet. Red lockers and beige classroom doors.

Over the intercom, Marlowe continues rehearsal.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
Good morning, Bishop Vincenzo High School this is--.

ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
(cutting her off)
No need to identify yourself, Ms. Bergeron.

We see a small GIRL (14) sitting in a strange pose, colorful paper and markers scattered around her. She draws on one, pausing only to grab a snack: strawberry dipped in yogurt.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
Good morning, BV--.

ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
Acronyms!

MARLOWE (O.S.)
Shoot--.

ADMINISTRATOR (O.S.)
That's okay. This is why we
practice.

The girl laughs. This is EDIE ADISA (Black, dramatic). She has a flower pinned in her Afro.

She stops drawing, holding the poster up, considering it with a proud grin.

We see it: a very New Age poster with the following -

NEW CLUB!

YOGA AND YOPLAIT!

STRETCH YOUR **MIND** AND YOUR **GASTROINTESTINAL** TRACT!

Eddie puts the finished poster to the side, and starts on a blank sheet.

EXT. BV FOOTBALL FIELD/TRACK - SAME

Busted-up sneakers hit the pavement. Heavy breathing.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
Welcome back to another fantastic,
no, spectacular? No, okay...

A large Indian boy (14) runs around the track. One of his shoes slips off. He bends down to tie it up again.

This is BISWAJIT NUPUR (sweet, simple) and he wears a shirt with a football camp logo on it. His hair falls into his face, he swipes it away, getting sweat in his eye.

It STINGS.

BISWAJIT
Ah, hell!

He turns towards the field, where we see: an Indian man (40s) with a tattoo sleeve sitting atop a riding lawn mower. This is KHALIL NUPUR (humble, strong), Biswajit's father and head maintenance at BV.

KHALIL
In your eye again?

Biswajit staggers over.

BISWAJIT
What was my time?

Khalil checks his watch. A large grin spreads across his face.

KHALIL
Eight point nine. That's down two whole seconds!

He goes in for the high five, much to Biswajit's dismay.

Khalil sees this, checks the watch once more.

KHALIL (CONT'D)
Well, I've still got time before they need me on the hallways. Back to it, huh?

He ventures for another high five. With a slow smile, Biswajit gives it to him.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
Welcome back to another great year at Bishop Vincenzo High School.

INT. CITY BUS - SAME

Deserted at this early hour, except for a BAG WOMAN (70s) and a GIRL (14) in a BV uniform and Timberlands. This is CARMEN MILLER (Black, realist) and she's chatting it up with the woman.

CARMEN
Really? And you tried the back door?

BAG WOMAN
Back, front, side, everything. Wouldn't budge a fuckin' inch.

The bus driver, VERNE (30s, Black) interrupts.

VERNE
You know the rules about language on my bus, Linda.

Linda ignores Verne, back to her conversation with Carmen.

LINDA
Not an inch.

CARMEN
You know, they did change the sign
from a glazed donut to a sprinkled.
I bet the Donut Shoppe's under new
management, that's all.

Linda shakes her head.

LINDA
Well, whoever it is cost me my
fuckin breakfast.

VERNE
One more time, Linda. One.

CARMEN
I'll swing by after school and see
what I can do.

Linda grabs Carmen's hand, thankful.

LINDA
That's right. You're starting that
preppy school today. Gon snag you a
rich white husband.

EXT. BV CAMPUS - SAME

The bus comes to a noisy halt at the edge of campus. The door
slams open.

CARMEN
(re: Linda)
Hoping more for a rich white job!

Verne laughs, closing the door after her.

Carmen strides forward, her braided hair resting on her
shoulders, her Timberlands pounding the pavement. But as she
nears campus, the quick change begins.

Tims to Sperrys. Hair up in a high ponytail. Lokai bracelet.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
A very special welcome to the
freshmen, uh, hope you're all...?
Shoot--uh, and then the prayer
right?

She pauses under a palm tree and stuffs the remnants of her Black identity into her backpack. She takes a long sigh, and heads into the building.

INT. BV HALLWAY - LATER

A BELL rings and students pour into the once-empty hallway. It's the first day! Emotions are high and so are pheromones!

MONTAGE as we meet the typical Bishop Vincenzo student.

- iPhone with a picture of the beach as the wallpaper.
- Lily Pulitzer academic planner.
- Vineyard Vines socks.
- North Face backpack.
- Justin Bieber circa 2011 haircuts.
- General aura of capitalism and fruit smoothies.

END MONTAGE

INT. BV CLASSROOM - SAME

Edie stands inside the door, dozens of yoga flyers in her hand. Students file in, and she hands them out.

EDIE

New club. New club at BV. Yoga!

They take the flyers, but immediately crumble them up and throw them away.

Edie sees this, discouraged.

MS. HOPKINS (26, White, spritely) approaches her.

HOPKINS

You might have more luck hanging
them on the bulletin board?

Edie nods, turning to cross the classroom but COLLIDING WITH BISWAJIT as he enters.

She falls back, the flyers remaining in place. He extends a hand to help her up.

BISWAJIT
 You've got a death grip on those
 things, don't you?

Edie laughs, her next words cut off by---

FOOTBALL BRO
 BACON!!

Biswajit turns, hollering back at a group of football players at the back of the room. They look the part, but don't carry the confidence of upperclassmen. See: ties tied tight and shirts freshly ironed.

BISWAJIT
 Mikey, my guy!!!!

He joins them, jostling them about, ruffling hair.

Edie shakes her head, continuing to the bulletin board.

Carmen walks in, quickly scanning the room. She sees EMILY ELLIOT (14, White, cheerleader-type) talking with a group of White girls.

She approaches her.

CARMEN
 Is anyone sitting here?

Emily smiles at her.

EMILY
 You are!

Carmen forces out a smile and sits.

The BELL rings again.

MARLOWE (O.S.)
 Good morning, Bishop Vincenzo.
 Please stand for the Pledge of
 Allegiance.

A QUITE DRAMATIC INSTRUMENTAL of the national anthem plays over the loud speakers. We scan the room as the students stand.

Blond hair. Blue eyes. Freckles. And then there's Edie, Biswajit, and Carmen. Brown in a sea of stark white.

MARLOWE (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 And now for morning prayer.

INT. BV CLASSROOM - MOMENTS LATER

Ms. Hopkins passes around worksheets. Carmen instantly starts doodling on hers. She is distracted by a sound from the hallway. DOGS...?

Edie hears it too. She raises her hand.

EDIE

Ms. Hopkins? That noise?

HOPKINS

Oh, they must've forgotten to announce it.

The barks get louder, closer, louder -- then come to a halt.

The door opens and a POLICE OFFICER (50s) steps into the room.

OFFICER

Daniel Petruzzi?

No one moves for a while. But, then a scrawny 15-year-old boy JUMPS OUT of his seat and BOOKS IT for the back door.

A chorus of voices arise.

STUDENTS

Oooh, Longback! Get em, officer.
You're in trouble! Run, Longback,
run!

The officer casually walks out into the hallway.

BV HALLWAY - SAME

The students flock to the door, Edie at the front of the herd.

HOPKINS

Everyone, back in their seats! No
need to gawk!

Daniel did not make it very far. The officer walks him back down the hallway towards two more OFFICERS (various ages).

One of them holds a GERMAN SHEPHERD on a leash next to a locker.

Daniel opens it.

The dog goes berserk. One of the officers reaches inside, revealing A DIME BAG OF WEED.

The students GASP, laughing, shouting.

Daniel is led past them out the door.

ON EDIE

Her face a mix of intrigue and excitement.

INT. BISHOP VINCENZO CAFETERIA - DAY

Edie walks through the lunch line, flyers tucked under her arm. She sees burgers. Chicken tenders. Grease upon grease.

She gets to the register.

ON TRAY

A packaged boiled egg and a water bottle.

BACK TO SCENE

The LUNCH LADY (60s, White) questions her.

LUNCH LADY
That all, hon?

EDIE
Do you have any naturally sourced
food options? Or even just...not
fried?

The lunch lady LAUGHS and points across the room.

WRAP STATION

Edie stands in line, mouth threatening to water at the fresh ingredients before her.

She arrives at the register.

EDIE (CONT'D)
(beaming)
Just this, please.

The WRAP LADY (50s, White) taps on the register.

WRAP LADY
That'll be nine dollars and forty
cents.

Edie's face falls. She opens her fist to reveal a FIVE DOLLAR BILL.

LUNCH TABLES

Edie sets down her boiled egg and water and gets to work.

She hops from table to table, canvassing with a smile.

EDIE

New club at BV! Stretch your mind!

Until...

CHARLIE

Egg! Over here!

Edie stops, grimacing. She turns like the Earth on its axis to face JV wide receiver CHARLIE VANCE (14, Black, Rolex).

She reluctantly walks over to where he sits, the football jock table.

EDIE

Hello Charlie.

CHARLIE

Whatcha got there?

EDIE

What do you care?

Charlie feigns disappointment.

CHARLIE

C'mon Egg, you know I've always admired your initiative. That didn't stop when we cut things off.

Edie regards him for a second. Choosing to believe him, she hands him a flyer.

Charlie reads it, Edie standing hopeful over his shoulder.

He nods, then whips out a Sharpie and DRAWS A PENIS ON THE YOGI'S HEAD, drawing laughs from the guy next to him, back-up quarterback HENRY HARBINGER (14, White, sun-kissed).

Edie slaps him on the shoulder.

EDIE

You're despicable, Charlie Vance.

She storms off.

ELSEWHERE--

Carmen sits next to Emily and some of the girls from class. She has CHICKEN TENDERS, FRIES, AND FRUIT PUNCH on her tray.

Emily takes a bite into her WRAP.

EMILY

So, Carmen, would you say you're a good dancer?

Carmen's eyes widen just a tad before she remembers herself and answers.

CARMEN

Yeah, I guess I'd say that. I'm definitely more of a dance-alone-in-front-of-the-mirror type, but you know.

EMILY

Oh, that's a shame. I was gonna ask if you wanted to go to try-outs with us tomorrow.

CARMEN

Try-outs?

EMILY

For the cheer team.

Carmen takes a long sip of fruit punch, looks around the table. The smiling faces. The *white* smiling faces.

As she looks, she spots Edie on her way out of the cafeteria. Sad and alone. *Black* and sad and alone.

She makes her decision.

CARMEN

I'll, uh, have to think about it.

Emily smiles, nods. One of the girls points at Carmen's fruit punch, making a face.

GIRL

Is that Hawaiian punch?

Carmen frowns, confused.

CARMEN

Yeah?

Emily laughs, pulling out a PERRIER from her bag. Hands it to Carmen.

EMILY

Try this!

Carmen is hesitant, but takes a sip. It is less than satisfactory. But, she plasters on a smile.

ANGLE ON

Henry Harbinger CHUGS A CHOCOLATE MILK, making quite a mess.

Biswajit approaches the table of football players who are cheering Henry on. There isn't a spot for him, really. He squeezes in between Charlie and a freckly kid with a stopwatch.

CHARLIE

C'mon Harbinger, almost!

The cheers escalate as Henry finishes the bottle with a BURP.

HENRY

Time?!

FRECKLES

Forty-nine seconds even.

CHARLIE

A new personal best!

The guys CHEER, pat Henry on the back like he's won an ESPY.

Biswajit watches in awe, taking in how the guys praise Henry.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Do we have any...CHALLENGERS??

The guys ooh and aah. Biswajit becomes fascinated by something on his tray. Is that jello...periwinkle?

Charlie notices their hesitancy.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

I know he's varsity back-up, but
c'mon?

Biswajit makes quick, but ill-fated eye contact with Charlie.

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

Big guy in the back! Vish right?
C'mon I bet you could down two of
these things with a stomach like
that!

The other guys laugh. Biswajit blushes a bit. But, a perk of being brown is that you can't really see it.

He pushes down the shame of the stomach comment and slowly, but certainly, answers.

BISWAJIT

Okay.

The table cheers, Charlie proud of his persuasive tactic.

Biswajit is presented with another chocolate milk. Freckles kid is ready with the stopwatch.

Biswajit looks around. Starts chugging.

THE WORLD FADES AWAY and we only hear Biswajit's beating heart and his throat chugging down chocolate milk.

He's nearing the end of the bottle when a door SLAMS open at the side of the cafeteria.

Biswajit stops, spitting some milk out of his nose.

CHARLIE

Ha! Disqualified!

Everyone looks to see GABE KEATON (15, White, Warby Parkers) bursting in with a large NEON YELLOW poster-board that reads: "#FREELONGBACK."

GABE

BV Knights, let's stand in
solidarity with our brother
Longback!

He marches around, waving the poster board in people's faces.

GABE (CONT'D)

He is yet another victim in our
school's unjust war on drugs!

People are going back to their lunches, uninterested. Time to pull out the stops.

GABE (CONT'D)

Brothers and sisters, don't be
another cog in the machine! Stand
up! Make a change! Fight for
Longback!

Edie watches from outside the cafeteria, eyes transfixed.