

The Teddies

Characters:

Mason - M - Dying

Finbar - M - A ghost or maybe immortal

Addy - F - Struggling Academic

Cara - F - Struggling to be kinder.

George - M - Got a PhD in history in this economy.

Todd - M - Incel but not hateful about it.

Setting:

The Rec Room / Gym of a Catholic Church in Edgewater Chicago.

2022.

"I believed, I believe, I want to believe, and I will believe, what more do you want?"

- Alyosha, Brothers Karamazov

"The World Owes Me so Fuck You" - Green Day

Lights up on the recreation room of a church.
There's a few machines. A bench, a squat rack.

George is spotting Addy on bench press.
Todd does squats. Cara is doing tricep pull
downs. Mason is doing biceps.

Todd is struggling with his squat. He looks at
Mason.

TODD

Hey Mason, can you help me with this?

Mason doesn't say anything.

TODD

Mason?

MASON

All you motherfuckers are gonna burn in hell.

TODD

What?

Slowly he puts his hands down.
He drops his weights.

Everyone jolts up.

MASON

It's all swallowed. It's all empty.

Mason coughs up some bile.
It lands on the floor.
Everyone stops what they're doing.
Todd pushes through and puts the bar up.
Addy tries to lift gets caught under the bar.
George does not notice.

GEORGE

Yo Mason.

CARA

Mason.

ADDY
(Struggling.)

George!

GEORGE

Oh shit. Sorry.

George helps Addy lift the bar.

Mason coughs more, this time into his hands. Blood comes out. He separates his hands and some falls onto the floor.

Addy raises just in time to see it.

ADDY

Ew.

Mason stands still. Everyone looks at him.

MASON

Sorry. I---I'll be right back.

Mason walks into the bathroom and shuts the door.

Everyone looks at each other.

No one says anything.

Then:

ADDY

What the fuck was that?

TODD

Was that blood?

Cara walks up to it.

CARA

Yeah, it's blood.

GEORGE

Did he say we're all gonna burn in hell?

ADDY

Yeah I heard that too.

TODD

Is he gonna be okay?

GEORGE

Why would he say that.

CARA

We should clean this up.

George gets a towel and some spritz.

CARA

Don't use a towel. Is there a mop somewhere?

GEORGE

I don't know. I've never been here before.

TODD

Is Mason going to be okay?

ADDY

We don't know, Todd.

GEORGE

Maybe there's still someone in the clergy's office?

CARA

Might as well ask.

Todd walks up to the pool of Mason's fluids.

CARA

Don't touch that.

TODD

I wasn't gonna!

CARA

Will one of you check on him?

I got it.

GEORGE

Cara walks out.
George walks to the door.
He knocks.

Mason?

GEORGE

MASON
(Inside.)

Just a minute.

GEORGE

Anything you need man?

MASON

No.

GEORGE

I have some gatorade in my car.

MASON

Fuck off George.

GEORGE

Right.

George walks to Addy and Todd.
He takes a beat.
They all look in different directions.

GEORGE

I'm gonna...get some just in case.

He leaves.
Todd looks at Addy.

TODD

That was crazy.

ADDY

Yeah. That was fucked up.

TODD
You think we're done for the night?

ADDY
I don't know.

TODD
Right. Yeah. That was fucked up.

ADDY
Yeah that was crazy.

TODD
I hope Mason's okay.

ADDY
Me too.

Todd walks around the gym.

TODD
This place is so creepy. Why did we even meet here?

ADDY
It was my suggestion.

TODD
Oh. My bad.

ADDY
It's okay. You're right. All Catholic Churches are creepy.

TODD
I didn't realize churches had gyms.

ADDY
They have to keep the priests busy or else they become alcoholics.

TODD
Does it work?

ADDY
Not really. But it's a good gym and the Priest I was interviewing said they hardly ever use it. Plus it's cheaper than anywhere else in the city.

I miss the Armory. TODD

Me too. ADDY

Do you think it'll re-open? TODD

ADDY
They said once the flood damage is cleaned up but Cara lives over there and she said it's still destroyed.

Damn. Church it is I guess. TODD

And so it is. ADDY

And also with you. TODD

Amen. Haha ADDY

Ha. Amen. TODD

Did you also grow up Catholic? ADDY

No. I just saw that on The Sopranos. TODD

Sorry. ADDY

What? TODD

That's a personal question. ADDY

I don't mind. TODD

ADDY

I know we're not supposed to, like, talk about outside of gym stuff when we're in the gym.

TODD

Oh yeah. The rule.

ADDY

Yeah. The rule.

TODD

I think we can break the rule. Cause of the--

He gestures towards everything.

ADDY

Yeah. Okay.

TODD

Why were you interviewing a Priest?

ADDY

I'm doing research here.

TODD

You're a student, right?

ADDY

PhD, yep.

TODD

You joined to study us.

ADDY

Who told you that?

TODD

George said it the first time you came in.

ADDY

George talks out of his ass.

TODD

He always seemed smart to me.

ADDY

He is smart but he talks out of his ass.

TODD

That makes sense.

ADDY

But I did. Initially. Join. Because I was interested in the history of fitness. In this country.

TODD

You're getting a PhD in Fitness?

ADDY

American history.

TODD

Why are you interviewing Priests and joining lifting groups then?

ADDY

It's all related. Fitness. Religion. Patriotism.

TODD

Really?

Todd opens a closet on the Upstage wall.

Inside: A giant crucifix containing an extremely muscular Jesus Christ.

TODD

Woah.

ADDY

Woah!

TODD

What is that?

ADDY

That's Jesus.

TODD

I know it's Jesus! Why does he look like that?

ADDY

Like what?

TODD

He's like...Built.

ADDY

Yeah, he's ripped.

TODD

He looks like he's on steroids.

ADDY

He looks like an Avenger.

TODD

(Way too excited.)

He looks like John Cena and Dave Bautista fused and then got eaten by The Rock.

ADDY

This is the answer.

TODD

The answer to what?

ADDY

The gym, the church, and America. Muscular Christians.

TODD

Muscular Christians?

ADDY

They were these guys in the 1900s who worshipped God by going to the gym. This is my thesis. I think.

TODD

You think?

ADDY

I think. Yeah. They thought civilization was going to collapse because all the men had become too feminine and weak.

TODD

Sounds familiar.

ADDY

They're the original Fox News watchers.

TODD

Are they still around?

ADDY

They all died in World War I. Wanted to prove their masculinity by enlisting.

TODD

Damn. That sucks.

ADDY

Yeah dying in war sucks.

TODD

Cool sculpture though. Or Crucifix. Is a Crucifix a sculpture?

ADDY

Does it matter?

TODD

So you're gonna whole thesis about these guys huh.

ADDY

Maybe. Do you think it's interesting enough.

TODD

Sounds pretty interesting.

ADDY

Only pretty? Maybe not then.

TODD

I'm sure you'd make it interesting.

Addy really examines the cross.

ADDY

What if I told you. That the group at this church. The muscular christians who made this Jacked Jesus, were especially strange.

TODD

That could be interesting. Who were they?

ADDY

They were known as The Teddies.

TODD

That does sound weird.

ADDY

They were Catholic. So they were already weird. AND THEN they named themselves after Teddy Roosevelt.

TODD

Teddy Roosevelt was Catholic?

ADDY

No, but he was a big deal back then.

TODD

Teddies is a funny name.

ADDY

Yeah, that is funny. Isn't it.

TODD

Yeah. Haha. Muscular Christians. Kind of a funny concept even.

ADDY

They're ridiculous.

TODD

I bet they were goofy.

ADDY

Well, they were still white nationalists. It *was* the 1910s.

TODD

Oh. Yeah.

ADDY

But maybe this is my thesis. And then I tie it in to today and how societies become obsessed with body image when they're in decline.

TODD

Is that actually true?

ADDY

Oh yeah. England. Germany. All super body obsessed when things got bad.

TODD

I'm obsessed with my body image.

ADDY
So am I. That's our society.

TODD
So then are we in decline?

ADDY
Depends on who you ask.

TODD
I'm asking you.

ADDY
Yeah, I think we're getting towards the end here.

TODD
The end of what?

ADDY
I don't know! We'll know later.

TODD
That's terrifying.

ADDY
We can't control it. That's why we go to the gym. We take control of what we can.

TODD
I just wanted to get ripped.

ADDY
I wanna get ripped too!

Cara walks back in with a mop.
She looks at jacked Christ.

CARA
What the fuck is that?

TODD
That's Jacked Jesus.

CARA
Why does he look roided-out?

TODD

That's what I said.

CARA

He looks like if John Cena and Dwayne The Rock Johnson had a child with Vin Diesel.

TODD

That's also what I said!

CARA

You did?

TODD

Different details but similar sentiment.

CARA

How's Mason doing?

TODD

He said he just needs a minute.

CARA

Mason?

No response. Cara walks up to the door.

CARA

Mason?

MASON

I'll be right out.

CARA

He says he'll be right out!

TODD

That's good. That's better than a minute. Right?

ADDY

I think so.

TODD

Does he have Covid?

Todd. CARA

What? TODD

Cara hands him the mop.

Why do I have to do it? TODD

Because I got the mop. CARA

Isn't there a janitor. TODD

No and the guy up front was creepy enough, so you'll do. CARA

Todd begins to mop. Cara gestures to Addy and the two walk over to the other side of the gym.

What do you think we should do? CARA

What can we do? Take him to the hospital? ADDY

He won't go. Same as last time. CARA

This happened before? ADDY

You guys weren't there. He passed out a few weeks ago when it was just him, me, and George. CARA

Could be Covid. TODD

CARA

It's not Covid. I had Covid. This is something else. And obviously the gym is exasperating it.

ADDY

Well, it's his choice.

CARA

He might not know he has a choice.

ADDY

What does that mean?

CARA

I think he views himself as the de facto leader and he doesn't want to let us down.

ADDY

He's not the leader.

TODD

I thought he was the leader.

ADDY

Cara's the leader.

CARA

You think I'm the leader?

ADDY

You always start the text thread to schedule our meetings.

TODD

But Mason makes the workout sheets.

ADDY

That's true. I guess you're co-leaders.

CARA

There's no leaders!

TODD

But if there *was* leaders.

CARA

There aren't.

ADDY

Just tell him to take a few weeks off. He can still make the sheets.

CARA

I don't know if that will be enough. He needs the routine.

TODD

You sure know a lot about Mason.

CARA

I think he's depressed.

ADDY

Because he's getting divorced?

CARA

Who told you that?

ADDY

He stopped wearing his wedding ring.

TODD

Mason's getting divorced?

CARA

It's not our business.

ADDY

Sorry.

CARA

But yes. He is. Don't tell him I told you that. We never discussed this.

TODD

How does everyone know except for me?

CARA

I mean, Addy's right. He hasn't been wearing his wedding ring.

ADDY

And you're friends with his wife. Ex-wife.

CARA

How do YOU know that.

ADDY

I follow your instagrams. I'm a research student, I'm good with context. What do you want from me?

CARA

Remember the rule. We keep our gym lives and our personal lives separate. When we're here. We're focused on our work out.

TODD

Except right now.

CARA

Except right now. Yes. These are extraordinary circumstances.

TODD

We can always change the rules though.

ADDY

I like the rule. Otherwise George would be bothering me with school stuff all the time and every work out would take three hours.

TODD

Wait George is also in school?

ADDY

Was. Yeah. He was in my cohort.

TODD

He's also a PhD student?

ADDY

He was. Already graduated. You didn't know that?

TODD

Why does everyone know everything except for me?

CARA

We can't answer that for you Todd.

George walks back in with way too much Gatorade.

GEORGE

Hey.

CARA, ADDY, TODD
 Hey.

CARA
 That's a lot of Gatorade.

GEORGE
 I figured everyone might want some.

ADDY
 You just keep those in your car?

GEORGE
 Yeah.

ADDY
 Interesting.

GEORGE
 I like Gatorade. It keeps you hydrated.

ADDY
 You got mellow yellow?

GEORGE
 Of course.

He tosses one to Addy.

GEORGE
 Is Mason still---

CARA
 Yeah.

GEORGE
 Anyone want cool blue?

TODD
 Right here.

George tosses to Todd. He points towards his bottles for Cara.

I'm good. CARA

Oh yeah. Did anyone bike here? GEORGE

I did, why? CARA

Is your bike bright yellow? GEORGE

Yeah--- CARA

Damn. Someone just jacked it outside. GEORGE

What?? Are you serious? CARA

Yeah, he broke the chain when I was coming back in. GEORGE

And you didn't do anything?? CARA

I didn't know it was yours! GEORGE

Cara still looks at George.

My hands were full of Gatorade! GEORGE

God Damn it. CARA

Cara runs out.
George looks at Jesus.

What's up with that Jesus? GEORGE

TODD

He's jacked. Addy was telling me all about it.

ADDY

I don't really feel like talking about it again.

TODD

Oh.

ADDY

George knows it anyways.

GEORGE

Oh. Right. The Muscular Christians.

ADDY

Yes!

GEORGE

Man, they really just went to town on Jesus's delts.

TODD

I know.

GEORGE

And he doesn't skip leg day either.

ADDY

He's the son of God!

GEORGE

You're not still doing your thesis on this right?

ADDY

Why wouldn't I?

GEORGE

Isn't it kind of thin? Boring?

TODD

I thought it was cool.

GEORGE

Well, if Todd thinks it's cool.

ADDY

(Pissed.)

Great.

Cara reenters.

CARA

It's gone. Fuck.

Cara kicks the side of the wall way more violently than anyone expected.

CARA

Sorry. I just. Spent too much money on that bike to begin with.

She looks at Todd.

CARA

Todd, what the fuck are you doing?

TODD

I'm mopping.

CARA

That's not mopping, Have you ever worked a job before?

TODD

I'm a programmer!

Cara grabs the mop from Todd.
She starts mopping.

Then:

Mason emerges wiping his hands with a towel.
Everyone looks at him.

MASON

All right. Sorry about that.

He looks at Cara.

MASON

Ah, I can clean that up Cara.

CARA

I thought you might be disposed.

MASON

I'm fine. Just something in my throat.

He claps.

MASON

All right. Let's get back to it.

No one moves.

CARA

Mason. Are you okay?

MASON

Yeah. Still getting over being sick. I'm fine.

Mason walks over to the weights. Still no one moves.

MASON

What?

CARA

You just fucking barfed blood on the floor.

MASON

I didn't barf. I coughed and had a nose bleed.

GEORGE

You said we were gonna burn in hell.

MASON

I did?

ADDY

Yeah!

MASON

I must have been singing a song or something.

ADDY

What song is that?

MASON

I don't know. Maybe Morrissey?

CARA

Mason, You should go to the hospital.

MASON

Guys. Everybody. I'm fine. We were almost done anyways. Let's just finish up our reps.

No one moves. Todd starts to, but Cara puts her hand out.

CARA

No. NO! Todd. Stop. Mason. You need medical attention.

Mason notices the Jesus.
He stares at it.

MASON

Where did Jesus come from?

CARA

What? Forget Jesus.

MASON

Why does he look like he's on creatine?

TODD

It's because of the Teddies.

MASON

The Teddies?

ADDY

Todd. I told you. I don't feel like explaining it again.

TODD

Sorry.

ADDY

But they were a group of Catholic Men who believed body image was as important as piousness. So naturally they figured Jesus was super jacked.

MASON

Really? That's wild.

ADDY

(Looking at George.)

Yeah, pretty interesting, RIGHT?

TODD

And then they died in World War I!

CARA

Sure. But. Back to Mason-

ADDY

The Teddies didn't die in World War I.

TODD

Oh.

ADDY

That's the other Muscular Christians. The Teddies all died in an accidental mass suicide.

MASON

Woah. Now *that's* wild.

ADDY

They all drank poison because they thought it wouldn't hurt them.

GEORGE

Seriously?

ADDY

Mark 16:18 "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" "When they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well."

TODD

That's in the bible???

ADDY

Oh yeah.

CARA

Wait. There was a mass suicide in here?

ADDY

Accidental. I don't know if it was in here.

TODD

I can't believe it says that in the bible.

ADDY

That's not even like top one hundred craziest things they say in the bible.

MASON

So they all drank poison and died in this room?

ADDY

Allegedly. That's the rumor. Or the legend. Or part of the legend. And I don't know if it was in this room.

TODD

What's the full legend?

ADDY

The full legend. **THE FULL LEGEND**----The leader of the Teddies didn't die. He actually resisted the poison. And continued to live ~~forever~~

BLACK OUT.

Everyone screams.

Lights up. Addy's at the switch.

ADDY

Sorry. I forgot. The lights go on a timer at 10 o'clock. They told me that.

TODD

That was some timing.

CARA

All right. You know what? Mass suicides. Lights flickering. Blood on the floor. I think it's time we called it.

TODD

And your bike got stolen.

CARA

And my bike got stolen. Thank you Todd.

MASON

No guys, come on. Let's push through. We're already here.

ADDY

I mean it is 10 o'clock and I haven't even started the work I have due tomorrow.

GEORGE

Yeah I got an interview tomorrow.

MASON

Seriously, we're just giving up?

CARA

No one's giving up Mason. It's just time to go.

TODD

I have an idea. What if we all went to a diner!

.....

MASON

Todd. Remember the rule.

TODD

I just thought, since what happened was kind of scary.

MASON

Nothing that happened was scary! I'm FINE! Let's finish up. Come on!

No one moves.

MASON

All right. Fine. Leave if you want. But I'm finishing.

ADDY

Can I get a ride?

GEORGE

Uhhhh. Sure.

ADDY

You should offer Cara one too. Cause you got her bike stolen.

George sighs deeply.

GEORGE

Cara. Would you?

CARA

I'll meet you outside.

Addy and George nod.

GEORGE

I hope you feel better Mason.

MASON

I feel fine!

They leave.
Todd, Cara, and Mason remain.

TODD

I can stay.

CARA

Todd, go outside with everyone else.

TODD

It's okay. I live down the street.

Cara shoots Todd a look. He gets the message.

TODD

Right. Well. Same time next week?

Still nothing.

TODD

Yeah. Okay. Good work out everyone. Or you know. Good all things considered. And uh.
Yeah.

Todd slowly leaves.
Cara turns back to Mason.
Mason points to the bench press.

MASON

If you're sticking around, I'm about to do bench.

CARA

I'm confused.

MASON

It's really simple, you just lift the barbell off your chest.

CARA

You're really gonna stay here. And work out.

MASON

If I thought there was a reason for concern. I'd tell you.

CARA

We both know that's not true.

Cara shakes her head.

CARA

Fuck it. I have to track down my bike.

MASON

You do that.

CARA

Will you at least call me when you get home?

MASON

I'll text you.

CARA

Do whatever the fuck you want just let me know you didn't die trying to squat.

MASON

You know you can just stay. Spot me.

CARA

And you can drive me home.

MASON

Thirty minutes and I got you.

CARA

I have to find my bike.

MASON

And I have to finish my work out.

Cara sighs. She shakes her head. She looks at Jesus on her way out.

CARA

Have fun with Jesus.

She leaves. Mason is alone.
The lights above can suddenly be heard.
This place really IS creepy.
He puts the mop over to the side. He examines where he coughed. He sets up the bench press. He sits on the bench. He looks behind him.

MASON

(Yelling.)

And you better not tell Taylor about this!

No one's there.

MASON

You will. Of course you will.

He lies back. He gets ready to bench.

Then: BLACK OUT.

MASON

Great. PERFECT.

Lights up.
Finbar stands at the light switch.
Mason turns around. He jumps up.

MASON

Woah.

FINBAR

Sorry. I didn't realize anyone was in here.

MASON

No, it's my bad. I'm new.

FINBAR

Usually empty this time of night.

MASON

I'm finishing up. I was here with my lifting group.

Finbar looks around.

MASON

Not. Right now. They just left.

Finbar looks at the mop.

MASON

There was a little accident. We cleaned it up.

FINBAR

You have a lifting group?

MASON

Yeah we're just---We all took a weight lifting class together and then we decided to keep going.

FINBAR

How long have you been together?

MASON

We're not really together. We just work out with each other.

FINBAR

I see.

MASON

But I guess coming up on a year.

FINBAR

I have a lifting group as well.

MASON

Oh yeah. And where are they?

FINBAR

We've been together for many years. I like to lift alone occasionally. Gather my thoughts. Think about God.

MASON

Sounds nice.

FINBAR

The gym and the church are equally important to me.

MASON

I can tell you're uh---

Mason looks at Finbar's immense muscular definition.

MASON

Pretty well defined there.

FINBAR

I didn't know there were other lifting groups at my church.

MASON

Well we usually work out at the armory. But after the flood.

FINBAR

There was a flood?

MASON

During that freak storm a few weeks ago.

FINBAR

In Chicago?

MASON

Right up the road. They said it was a once every hundred years thing.

FINBAR

I don't recall.

Finbar points to the bench press.

FINBAR

Do you mind if I work in with you?

MASON

If you don't mind spotting me.

Finbar approaches the bench he examines it.

FINBAR

145.

MASON

Yep.

FINBAR

You look like you're capable of more.

MASON

I was.

Mason lowers himself again.

FINBAR

Ready?

Mason nods.
He lifts. He does one. two. three....He can't quite
get four. Finbar takes the bar from him. Mason
jumps up and punches the air.

MASON

God damn it.

FINBAR

HEY!

Mason turns around partially stunned by
Finbar's volume.

FINBAR

Do not. Take the name of the Lord in vain.

MASON

Sorry...I forgot I was in the house of God.

FINBAR

Don't let it happen again.

MASON

Really?

What?
FINBAR

Nothing. Sorry.
MASON

He looks at Jesus.

Sorry Jesus.
MASON

I get the sense. You are not sorry.
FINBAR

I am, I promise. You want to go?
MASON

Not until you apologize.
FINBAR

Did you notice how jacked this is Jesus is. Isn't that weird.
MASON

Finbar crosses his arms.

Oh, come on. I said sorry!
MASON

This is a Catholic Church.
FINBAR

It's more of a Catholic room.
MASON

This is a Catholic room attached to a Catholic Church and you will respect God.
FINBAR

I'm not in the mood.
MASON

Excuse me?
FINBAR

MASON

Honestly, God's actually been kind of a dick lately.

FINBAR

What did you say?

MASON

Nothing. Sorry. I'm sorry. Jesus. God. Holy Spirit. Amen. I'm sorry. Okay?

FINBAR

What problem do you have with the Lord?

MASON

I'm just joking around. You don't want to hear it.

FINBAR

I do. I think I really do.

MASON

God hasn't been kind to me. So I'm taking a few instances of his name in vain as a bit of revenge. It's my own personal little vendetta, I'm sure he does not notice.

FINBAR

He does.

MASON

Okay. Well. Then maybe that's good. 'Cause he's been screwing me.

FINBAR

How?

MASON

How? Have you looked around. The world's a fucking disaster?

FINBAR

How to you specifically.

MASON

The pandemic.

FINBAR

And?

MASON

AND?

FINBAR

Pandemics have happened all throughout history. You are not special.

MASON

Well. My wife and I broke up.

FINBAR

That is more your doing than God's.

MASON

It's the timing. The pandemic. The Divorce. The flooding? All in a couple of months?

FINBAR

He has given you with the opportunity to start over. Live your life anew.

MASON

No. He hasn't.

FINBAR

That's the wrong mindset.

MASON

No, I mean. I'm sick. I think. Really sick.

FINBAR

With what?

MASON

I don't know yet. But I've been throwing up blood. Passing out. Losing weight. So. Probably something bad.

FINBAR

Have you seen a doctor?

Mason holds up his phone.

MASON

He took some tests. Called me yesterday. Said it was urgent. I haven't call back.

FINBAR

Why not?

MASON

Because the minute I call back, it's real.

FINBAR
But you know.

MASON
I do.

FINBAR
So why wait?

MASON
It doesn't matter. I shouldn't be telling you this anyways.

FINBAR
Why not?

MASON
It's a rule I have. Can I take his name in vain or what?

FINBAR
No.

MASON
You're kidding.

FINBAR
But this is all very revealing.

MASON
Oh it is?

FINBAR
It tells me most of what I need to know about you.
And I see the rest in your body.

MASON
My body?

FINBAR
Yes, your body. Which is far from it's potential.

MASON
Excuse me?

FINBAR
You don't have to tell me anything. It's all written out. I know you've lived a selfish, small,
life designed to please yourself.

MASON

Woah-

FINBAR

You have the same problem as all modern men, you've become so civilized and selfish that you've completely lost touch with your masculinity.

MASON

Oh sorry Mr. Fucking 32 pack. I'm not masculine enough. For who? God.

FINBAR

For you. For who you could be if you actually gave yourself into your potential.

MASON

I'm happy with who I am.

FINBAR

Then why are you so scared to die?

Mason is taken aback.

MASON

Who said I was scared?

FINBAR

A man who truly lived by God's word would welcome his chance to ascend to heaven.

MASON

Because he'd be so fucking bored and horny that death probably seems like a blessing.

Mason catches himself

MASON

Sorry. I'm being an asshole. I respect what you believe in. I grew up Catholic. I just. I'm upset. Okay? Can you allow me that?

FINBAR

I was sick like you once.

MASON

You weren't as sick as me.

FINBAR

Sicker.

MASON

If you were sicker than me, you'd be dead.

FINBAR

I was. But then. I gave in to God.

MASON

I just heard this story. Is this a bible thing?

FINBAR

If you lived another forty years.
 What would it matter?
 You'd still dread death.
 You'd still feel like you didn't have enough time.
 You'd still feel like the world owes you.

MASON

Doesn't everyone feel like that?

FINBAR

You're not scared of dying. You're scared that your death doesn't mean anything.

MASON

Who isn't?

FINBAR

Men. Real men. Who have something to die for.

Mason puts his hands on his hips.
 He resigns.

MASON

Let's. Agree to disagree. Thanks for hearing my sob story. And once again.

He looks up.

MASON

God, I'm dearly sorry. I'm sure you have your reasons for doing---whatever you're doing to me.

He looks at Finbar. Finbar nods.

MASON

How much do you want?

225. FINBAR

225? Are you maxxng out? MASON

Warming up. FINBAR

You're warming up with 225? MASON

Put it on. FINBAR

They load up 225. Finbar sits on the bench,
lowers himself. Mason approaches to spot.

Let me know when. MASON

Finbar grabs the bar before Mason can touch it.
He does ten reps of 225 easily.
Mason's jaw drops.

Holy--- MASON

Finbar shoots him a look.

I mean. Wow. What---are you? MASON

Catholic. FINBAR

No I mean. What is this. Are you a professional body builder? MASON

It's not my trade. FINBAR

Your skin's too clear for steroids. MASON

FINBAR

I've never taken any such substance.

MASON

So how are you lifting ten reps of 225 and you're not even out of breath.

FINBAR

Because I've reached my potential.

Finbar rises. He walks over to the dumbbells and starts curling 50s.

FINBAR

My name's Finbar.

MASON

Mason.

FINBAR

I'm here every night at 10. If you ever want to work in together.

MASON

I have my group.

FINBAR

Right. Well. If that doesn't work out. You can always join mine.

Fade out on Finbar and Mason.
Lights up on George driving Addy and Cara.
Cara's getting out.

CARA

Thanks for the ride.

GEORGE

No problem. Have a good night.

CARA

I won't.

Cara slams the door and leaves.

GEORGE

Fuck. She's pissed.

ADDY

What, because you let her bike get stolen?

GEORGE

I did not let her bike get stolen.

ADDY

She'll be fine. You know how she can be.

George starts driving.

ADDY

Your car is disgusting.

GEORGE

I wasn't really expecting to play chauffeur.

ADDY

I'm not complaining. I'm just saying. For your own sake.

GEORGE

I was helping my friend move.

Addy looks out the window.

GEORGE

So---

ADDY

What?

GEORGE

The Teddies, huh?

ADDY

What about em.

GEORGE

Addy, come on.

ADDY

What?

George shakes his head and smiles.

ADDY

Okay fine. I exaggerated. A little bit.

GEORGE

You said they all died in a mass suicide.

ADDY

I know. I know. I just. I can feel people zoning out when I talk to them about my research.

GEORGE

You have to trust yourself. Or maybe find something more interesting.

ADDY

Muscular Christians ARE interesting. It's hard. You don't get it. Your thesis was easy.

GEORGE

It was not easy.

ADDY

You did Reagan and Gorbachov. Easy. That's why you finished two years earlier than me.

GEORGE

That's not easy. That's the whole point. People think that's easy.

ADDY

At least you have a chance of getting published.

GEORGE

Yeah, I wish. I've barely heard a thing since I passed my dissertation. I have an interview to teach high school tomorrow.

ADDY

At least you'll be teaching history.

GEORGE

I won't. They have enough history teachers. They want me to teach math.

ADDY

Oh God. Do you even know math?

GEORGE

Of course I know math.

ADDY

But do you really know math?

GEORGE

I know enough math. I can teach high school.

ADDY

High school math is pretty hard when you've spent eight years in the history department.

GEORGE

I know math!

Addy sighs.

ADDY

Great. If that's you. Imagine me. I'm gonna end up broke and homeless with a fucking PhD.

GEORGE

That's the humanities for you.

ADDY

Don't I know it.

GEORGE

What song do you think Mason was singing?

ADDY

What?

GEORGE

When he said we were gonna burn. Cause it sure as hell wasn't Morrissey.

ADDY

I don't know. Maybe death metal?

GEORGE

Mason doesn't look like a death metal guy.

ADDY

He looks a country music guy.

GEORGE

I was gonna say the same thing.

ADDY

He totally listens to like Luke Bryan.

GEORGE

Who's Luke Bryan?

ADDY

Never mind. Are there any country music songs about burning in hell?

GEORGE

None that I've ever heard. But it's been a minute. Country's changed a lot.

ADDY

Yes it has.

A beat. George shakes his head.

GEORGE

You shouldn't lie like that.

ADDY

About what? The Teddies?

George nods.

ADDY

Who cares? I was having fun.

GEORGE

Even if it doesn't always translate financially. People view us as an authority on history. We have a responsibility.

ADDY

In what universe does anyone care what I say?

GEORGE

Lies can get out of control. Now you have a room full of people thinking those dudes all poisoned themselves and died.

ADDY

Well there was one survivor. Don't forget.

GEORGE

Oh right. The legend. What his name?

Addy thinks.

ADDY

Finbar.