

Icarus

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Cast

ASHTON: Early 20s. A young, over eager guy who is eager to please. Fairly new to the world of bodybuilding, but is a huge fan of Roy. Works at the storage unit company.

ROY: 50s. A washed up bodybuilding legend who has nothing left to lose. Embodies the world and culture of bodybuilding, but doesn't know who he is without it.

Place

A storage room.

Time

Now.

ROY

So you really want to compete?

ASHTON

More than anything.

ROY

One cannot simply pick up bodybuilding. It's a discipline of perfectly stacked habits being done over an extended period of time. You understand that with your physique now it's gonna take years for you to be stage ready?

ASHTON

Doesn't bother me. I'll take all the time I need.

ROY

That may not be enough.

ASHTON

Then what is? I know that I'm going to have to track everything I eat, I already have a foodscale. It's no secret that if I'm for real about this, which I am, that I'm going to have to eventually take steroids. None of that scares me!

ROY

Its not just tracking, or simply hopping on a cycle. I wouldn't even think about steroids until you've been lifting for years. You're getting ahead of yourself—

ASHTON

I don't care!

ROY gets up.

ROY

You really think that you have what it takes? Do you? Try tracking every single aspect of your life for years. Sad? Sick? Broke? It doesn't matter, you need to be locked in one hundred percent of the time. No off days cause your body will show it and everybody will know. If you can't handle that, don't even think about pinning yourself.

ASHTON cowers back. ROY realizes he needs to chill the fuck out.

Gear isn't like creatine, it's not something you just do and get results. Once you introduce that

shit into your system you're playing by a bunch of new rules.

ASHTON

Like what?

ROY

What is up with you young guys? So willing to throw your whole lives away...it's like a religion. Or a cult.

ASHTON

Like what?

ROY takes a deep breath.

ROY

I guess it's better if you know the facts. You know the basic side effects, hair loss, acne, anger, sweating, all that shit. There's also a risk of strokes, heart attacks. Death. Some drugs will make your organs grow, like your heart. Not good. There can also be problems if you source it from the wrong places—People will not hesitate to pull a fast one on you. And it's not a one size fits all type of thing, you need to see what works for you at what dose. There's a lot of guesswork until, or even if you find the stack that works for you.

ASHTON

Let's say I do.

ROY

Then you are going to have to get blood work every three months at least. If something's outta wack, you adjust. If you can't adjust then... you're out. You can work your ass off, but at the end of the day if your genetics aren't made for it then you can't live the lifestyle. Speaking of, the lifestyle sucks. Nothing else matters besides eating, training, sleeping, and cardio. There's no time for relationships or job promotions. And it's not like there's any money in this either. The only thing that matters is how you look. Is that really a life you want to live?

ASHTON

What if it is?

ROY

Then I'd tell you to find something actually worth your time to care about.

Ouch. That stings.

ASHTON

You said something about us young guys treating bodybuilding like a religion-
Cult.

ROY

ASHTON

Whatever. Have you thought that maybe, if you look at it from just the right angle that it can be?

ROY gives him a look to say "Are you stupid?"

Just think about it! In a way you are... You're worshipping yourself.

ROY

Sounds narcissistic.

ASHTON

Says the guy who's done all those things for decades? Look, maybe worshipping isn't the best word for it, but bodybuilding is definitely a ritualistic practice. A commitment to yourself. Isn't there something beautiful about that?

ROY

Sure, until it gets excessive. Listen kid, you're trying to fly too close to the sun and it's not gonna end pretty.

ASHTON

How do you know that?

ROY

Cause-Cause look at me! You think my life was all sunshine and rainbows just because I won a few plastic trophies?

ASHTON is pissed off. He completely disconnects from the conversation, walking away to move the bench back. He then goes to the squat rack to load up the bar for benching.

What the fuck are you doing?

ASHTON doesn't respond.

Hey kid. What the fuck? When did I say that you could touch my weights?

ASHTON

Not like you're using them.

ROY just got SASSSED. He doesn't even know how to respond, so he just watches ASHTON load the bar. Once ASHTON is ready he goes under it and starts to bench. His form is atrocious, but he's repping them out.

ROY

You're going to hurt yourself. Stop it.

ASHTON doesn't hear him.

Your form is all fucked up and I dont wanna hear it if you tear your pec. Whatever point you're trying to make, it's not worth it.

Nothing changes. ASHTON is getting more fatigued.

Alright, you win whatever game you decided to play. I'm going to sleep. Wake me up if the door opens.

ASHTON struggles on this last rep. Arms shaking, bar not moving, we aren't sure if he's going to make it. ROY watches him struggle for a moment, probably waiting for the boy to ask for help. He doesn't, and it's looking even worse now.

ASHTON!

When it looks like it's actually going to go wrong, ROY jumps in, re-racking the bar.

What the hell is wrong with you?

ASHTON

(Panting)

How was my form?

ROY

You almost–If I wasn't there you were a dead man!

ASHTON

But you were. Mind spotting me again?

ROY

Why did you do that?

ASHTON

I didn't want to say anything that I would regret. What you said made me upset and I thought that instead of arguing back that I could put it to good use. So are you gonna spot me or nah?

ROY

Not with that form, absolutely not. Take the weights off.

ASHTON

Come on man I–

ROY

I said take them off.

Gumly ASHTON complies. He then tries to walk away but ROY grabs his arm.

Get back on that bench.

ASHTON places himself under the barm ready for ROYS instructions.

Grab the bar shoulder width apart, make sure your hands are even...Good.

ASHTON is doing the suicide grip on the bar.

Oh my god literally never do that–

He fixes the boy's grip.

Were you doing that the first time?

ASHTON

Yeah?

ROY

You know what they call that?

ASHTON

Sucide grip I think.

ROY

If you know the name why the hell would you—That's how you drop a bar on your chest. Shit kid you're gonna give me a heart attack.

ASHTON

Okay okay, I won't do it again. What's next?

ROY

Externally rotate your shoulders like you're trying to bend the bar in half... You got it. If you want you can give your back a little arch. Just never let your ass leave the bench. It means the weight you're using is too high and it just looks stupid.

ASHTON

Like this?

ROY

Yeah, now you're ready to unrack.

ASHTON unracks the bar.

Now keep on trying to break that bar in half as you go down. That's gonna keep your lats engaged, which is gonna help stabilize you and keep tension on your chest.

ASHTON presses the bar. Although much improved we can tell that he's quite inexperienced with the movement.

Do that a couple more times.

ASHTON gets a feel for the movement path. Once he is ready he re racks.

ASHTON

How was that?

ROY

Better. Put on the weights you were using before.

ASHTON loads the bar and gets under it, excited.

Now just because there's weight on the bar doesn't mean you can go all willy nilly on your form. I don't care how much you lift, I want to see your movement path and cues. Okay? I will not hesitate to put fives on each side if you can't do that. Understood?

ASHTON

You got it.

ASHTON prepares himself. ROY spots him for the unrack and for a few seconds before ASHTON presses the weight.

I'm okay, I'm okay.

Cautiously ROY pulls his hands back as ASHTON benches. His form is really getting there. After a couple of reps he re racks the weight and jumps up.

WOOO! LIGHT WEIGHT BABY! That felt awesome!

ROY

I'm sure it did.

ASHTON

Do you maybe want to take a go at it? I definitely can't spot the type of weight you can move but—

ROY

Hell. No. I've done enough benching for a lifetime.

ASHTON

It could be nice to—

ROY

I said no.

An awkward pause. ASHTON'S stomach grumbles.

ASHTON

Sorry I—Wait hold on.

ASHTON slaps around his pockets and finds a protein pop tart. Curious ROY snatches it from him.

Hey—

ROY

(Reading the packaging)

What the fuck is this shit? Protein pop tart? Is this what you young guys are eating?

ASHTON nods.

Really?

ASHTON

Yeah they are really good. And convenient.

ROY

It's an abomination, that's what it is.

ASHTON

You can try it if you want. You gave me a beer, might as well return the favor.

ROY

I got just the thing for you.

Behind the bench ROY grabs a protein drink case. He throws one to ASHTON.

This is what me and the rest of the pros used to basically fight each other for. No protein desert

bullshit, this stuffs the real deal

ASHTON looks at the calorie information.

ASHTON

Huh, not bad.

ROY

Try it.

ASHTON opens the bottle and sniffs it cautiously. It does not smell good.

What, can't handle it? You said it yourself man, whatever it takes.

Under ROY'S watchful eye ASHTON drinks the shake. It's disgusting, worse than the beer. But ASHTON doesn't spit it out. It's a war for ASHTON to swallow it with a straight face.

How is it?

ASHTON

It's..Edible.

ASHTON takes another swig.

Gets the job done. Cant complain about that.

He continues to drink it.

I'm glad you had something in here. You should try that poptart though, it's pretty good.

ROY goes to grab another beer. ASHTON chugs and wipes his mouth. He then flips the bottle upside down to show it's empty.

Not too bad.

ASHTON leans against the wall, tired from the day's events.

ROY

It's a choke through it typa thing. Typical.

ASHTON

Does it have to be?

ROY

When your body is what's being judged and scored... Yeah. Food lost all its fun for me ages ago.

ASHTON

That's sad. Not even for holidays?

ROY

Nope. If it didn't fit in my numbers for protein carbs and fiber then it was out of the question.

ASHTON

Were you ever tempted to go off the rails? Just like, fucking demolish some Chinese food or something?

ROY

Oh yeah, like a motherfucker. Sometimes I'd be lazy and not want to train but I always got myself to grab some weights.

ASHTON

Willpower of steel, I could only wish to have that kind of motivation.

ROY

It's not motivation. You can take one look at someone's physique and tell if they are motivated— Motivation is for losers who only do the work when they feel like it. Kid if there's one piece of knowledge that I can pass down to you... Discipline and routine will get you further in life then motivation ever will. Inspiration fades but habits don't break.

ASHTON has his eyes closed, about to fall asleep.

Are you listening?

ASHTON

Yeah, yeah... Discipline not motivation. Got it.

ASHTON is knocked out. ROY watches him, waits for him to be fully asleep and then opens the protein poptart, investigating it. He takes a bite, and is unpleasantly surprised.

ROY

How the fuck do they do that?