

FADE IN:

**TITLE CARD:**

**COMPTON, CA., 2002**

EXT. STREETS OF COMPTON, L.A. - DAY

JORGE (51) and NICKY (15) are walking away from a park. Suddenly a black car screeches around the corner. Jorge grabs Nicky and runs with him for the shelter of a parked car. Gunshots erupt from the black car and Jorge goes down on the sidewalk.

NICKY

Papi! Papi!!

Nicky tries embracing his father and is shocked by blood on his hands. Suddenly Jorge grabs Nicky by the shirt lapels.

JORGE (BLEEDING AND GASPING)

Son, remember this! Do right by your mother and sister, study hard, be a good man!

Jorge dies. Nicky bawls and hugs his dad. Onlookers gather. We hear sirens approaching.

**TITLE CARD:**

**3 YEARS EARLIER**

INT. NICKY'S HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

NICKY BRAVO (12) and his Dad (JORGE, 47), Mom (MIRACULO, 43) and sister MARISELA (MARI, 16) are all sitting on a couch, laughing while watching a TV show. It's one happy family.

JORGE

Ohhh Dios mio!(my God!) What a funny show!

MIRACULO

*Ay si!* (oh, yes!).

NICKY

Papi, can we go play some basketball?

JORGE

Of course, but can we go tomorrow after church? I'm rather tired

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right now.

MIRACULO

Si, Nicolas. Let your father rest and he will play with you tomorrow.

NICKY

OK, papi! Tomorrow is fine!

MARI

Hey Nico, let's go play checkers!

Nicky and Mari go upstairs and Jorge and Miraculo cuddle together.

INT. NICKY'S ROOM - NIGHT

Jorge walks into the room. Nicky is reading a book on his bed.

JORGE

Son, have you thought about what you want to do after high school?

NICKY

No, I haven't, but if I can go to college, I'd like that!

JORGE

That's good! What would you like to study?

NICKY

I'm not sure, yet. I like science and math so maybe I'll study engineering. Or maybe I can become an astronaut!

Jorge approaches his son, puts an arm around him.

JORGE

There's nothing like an education to get you ahead in this world!  
I'm proud of you!

EXT. STREETS OF COMPTON - DAY

Nicky and Jorge walking together toward a large store, where Jorge works.

JORGE

Today I will show you where I work and what I do.

Nicky is excited.

NICKY

Gee Dad, how come you never took me before?

JORGE

Well, son, some of the areas where I work are dangerous for a child. But now you are becoming a man, and it's time!

We see them walk into the store, then PAN SWISH to a dock area where Jorge is driving a forklift and unloading big rigs. We see Nicky is at the side of the dock, clearly enjoying, watching his Dad.

EXT. THE COURTS (PUBLIC BASKETBALL COURT) - AFTERNOON  
Jorge and Nicky are playing basketball. The two are having a good time until...

A gang of teenagers enters the basketball courts and sits on the benches, watching them. Then one of them, DIAMOND (17) catcalls:

DIAMOND

Hey Nicky, you throw like a girl!  
Jorge stops dribbling and looks at the gang.

JORGE

Come on guys, leave us in peace.  
We're just shooting some hoops and we'll be gone, soon.

DIAMOND (STANDS UP)

And what if we don't?  
The rest of the gang members start hooting and shouting.

JORGE  
OK, let's go, Nicky.

DIAMOND  
Not so fast, *viejo* (old man). If you use our courts, you gotta pay for it. It's 10 bucks. Now, pay up.

NICKY  
What are you talking about? These are public courts, you don't own them!

DIAMOND  
We own everything in *Los Monstruos* (The Monsters) turf! Anybody who wants to use our facilities has to pay.

JORGE  
Fine, I will pay you.

Jorge reaches for his wallet, but Nicky grabs his wrist.

NICKY  
No, papi! They don't own these courts!

Diamond steps forward and the rest of the gang does likewise, following him.

DIAMOND  
You either pay, or you fight us. That's the rules!

JORGE  
No, no! I will pay you. Leave my boy alone! But... if I pay you, you promise not to bother him anymore?

Jorge pulls out his wallet and spreads the billfold to take out a bill. Diamond snatches the wallet from him. He looks into the wallet, pulls out all the bills (we see more than \$10) and throws the wallet back at Jorge, who catches it.

DIAMOND  
OK, deal. For... (he counts the money) \$38 I'll agree to your

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terms!

Jorge grabs Nicky and they walk off the courts.