

Royale

Max

MAX

(with finality)

When I said Jay's name, they laughed me off the phone.

(A beat.

Wynton doesn't have to ask why. He knows. Jay breaks the tension.)

Start

JAY

Linen suits, right?

MAX

What?

(A beat.)

JAY

Front row,

You said that's where they were sittin',

MAX

Yeah.

JAY

Linen suits. Three piece. Lookin' sharp.

(A beat.

Jay looks at Max.)

JAY (CONT'D)

I'ma get me one of them suits.

MAX

Okay.

Next stop, I can set it up, Jay,

I'll get the best tailor in town,

Get you one in every color,

JAY

That so?

MAX

Anything you want,

(Jay just glares at him.)

JAY

Anything?

(Max swallows hard. A beat.)

MAX

I'll talk to 'em, okay?
I'm meeting them for Brandy in fifteen minutes.
But I can't make you any promises, Jay.
That ain't what I do –
I never done it –
It ain't good business.

WYNTON

Sometimes I think you forget how good this boy *is* –

MAX

I don't forget.
I can't – not even if I *wanted* to.
He's Jay Jackson.
So *good* at the sport that they call him "The Sport".
Ain't a paper in this country that doesn't run his picture once a week.
That stupid one.
The one I hate.
The one with the smile and the fucking hat.

JAY

That's a fifty-dollar hat –

MAX

Big a star as Jay might be –
Bixby's never fought a negro.
No Heavyweight Champ ever *has*.

JAY

...

MAX

But the last thing you should do is take it personal,
It ain't like he's a bigot,
He's got no problem with 'em,
He likes 'em fine, matter of fact,
His *driver's* a negro.

WYNTON

...

MAX

He just –

What his people *say* is – they see no reason to step in that ring with you.
He's retired. Simple as that.
He didn't come out for Hutchinson,

WYNTON
He wasn't Jay,

MAX
He wasn't *black*,
And Bixby ain't comin' outta retirement for a Title Fight half this country won't recognize.

JAY
I ain't fightin' half this country,

MAX
You're asking the man to piss a lot of people off –

JAY
Come on –

MAX
The Post said he'd disgrace his legacy just by stepping into that ring with you –

WYNTON
Right,

MAX
(to Wynton)
How would *you* like it if I asked Jay to get in the ring with a goddamn grizzly bear?

(A beat. Jay and Wynton share a look. Jesus.)

MAX (CONT'D)
We'll find you a challenger, okay?
We'll find you twenty.
I've got two boys in Nigeria right now,
Scouting for the biggest, meanest ogre motherfuckers they can find,
We'll get 'em visas,
We'll bring them over,
We'll sell a *million* tickets,
You can knock their lights out,
Exhibition,
One after the other,
We'll laugh about it,

WYNTON
They're big, huh? –

As of 10/8/14

End