

~~KIDD/JORDAN~~

Imagine 'contact, you tumble. Do it subtle, no leaping, no one shot you, you ain't no gazelle.

*Yates eases off on the massage.*

Throw-ins, fouls, offsides, corners—any decision the ref gotta make, you claim for *us*. Make him *think* for *us*. He's lost, you beckon him to the truth—as we define it. There it is.

*Kidd makes to exit.*

JORDAN. I won't cheat.

*Kidd stops, turns.*

—START—

I don't *cheat*.

KIDD. It's a *team* game!

JORDAN. I know.

KIDD. Team fuckin' game, kid!

JORDAN. I know that!

*Yates quietly slips over to the sink, rinses his hands. Watches.*

KIDD. Can't play a lad does his own selfish thing.

JORDAN. I won't dive.

KIDD. These *words*!

JORDAN. I'm not a cheat.

KIDD. Did I ask you to?

JORDAN. No.

KIDD. Did I use that word?

JORDAN. No.

KIDD. So?

JORDAN. Sorry.

KIDD. What I encouraged you to do was to apply game intelligence.

JORDAN. Can I...?

KIDD. Can you think about it? No. You step up or fuck off. Right now.

*Silence. Jordan gets off the treatment table and hands Kidd the "17" shirt.*

Thass a shame.

JORDAN. Sorry.

KIDD. Uh-huh.

*Now Jordan sadly offers Yates the club tracksuit and kit bag. Yates makes a slight move but Kidd glances at him, Yates stays put. Jordan starts to put his own clothes on. Track bottoms, a sweatshirt.*

You reckon yourself? Too super talented to play non-league?

JORDAN. No.

KIDD. You might be half-decent but you ain't the bollocks, boy. You wouldn't be *here* if you were. But there is a road *out* of here; you play for me—play *with* me—I will show you to some *glory*. I can change your life. This is a step to another step up.

JORDAN. (*Passionately.*) I won't cheat, I won't lie, I won't *fake*. Not for you, not for no one! I mean to *stand* for something—you got it, mister? All my life they tell me what to think and to feel and to do but no one—*no one* knows what I feel—sometimes *I* don't know! You don't get to mess in this maze I got. You ain't my father—you ain't my boss—you got nothing I need. Show me *beauty*—give me what's true and tender and real. You don't get to play with my morals just cos I wanna play. Fuck you and your slyness. Don't tell me to be strong—GIVE ME SOME STRENGTH!

KIDD. OK. One: No, not my job, you find it in *you*. Two: Chill the fuck out. Three: Shut the fuck up and Four: Listen: We are *winning*! Eight games unbeaten—I've built a miracle—a winning *team*—and I'm picking *you*! Cos me, Si, Rodge, Yatesy—*my* team—we've noticed you can kick a ball about in a delightful fashion. We think you have heart and intelligence. We believe you might be a *footballer*. A *real* one. We talk about kids like you and we gurgle with joy. In three hours' time a contest will be staged out there. Seven hundred people will pay cash money to observe a spectacle of aggression, technique and guile. BE IN IT!! You know that word?

JORDAN. I know that word.

KIDD. The word "guile."

JORDAN. I know it!

KIDD. So get involved! *Belong!* Do what I say: Play for the team,

earn what is our due, win the game. Our supporters—this club—your *team*—they will *love* you—if you let them. Don't be the fuck-up! Be the one who makes it through. You're gonna say "yes" so let's not drag it out.

*Jordan glances at Yates, who remains inscrutable. Then Jordan looks at Kidd.*

JORDAN. Alright.

KIDD. Good lad.

JORDAN. Yeah.

KIDD. We're good.

— END

*They shake hands. Kidd raises his eyebrows to Yates and exits.*

JORDAN. Did you cheat?

YATES. I cheated, I lied and I conned anyone I could. I terrorised the young, kicked shit out the old. And I went looking for it. In my defence, I was a deranged young man. Five years we were the best team in this district. We were hooligans. On the park, on the piss, home, away. Up the high road. We were *kings*. But *you*... don't lower yourself. Don't do a thing you don't believe in. You're different class, boy.

*Yates holds his look, lets Jordan settle a moment and then taps the treatment table.*

JORDAN. You know this man...

YATES. Jimmy.

JORDAN. Is he all that?

YATES. I work for him. He's my boss.

JORDAN. I saw a picture down in that bar. You *were* the boss.

YATES. Twenty years ago. For two seasons.

*Jordan removes his clothes, climbs back on the treatment table.*

I took us down. Lowest points total in the club's history. People who loved me couldn't look at me. Took me ten years show my face again...

*Yates continues the massage.*

All that season, in here: "Do this, track this one, you tuck in if he goes. We can get out of this, lads. We won't be *relegated*. Believe, boys, *believe!*" And other horseshit from the same yard.