

~~JORDAN / YATES~~

And the third time... slow... if he falls out of love with the game.  
*Yates continues the massage*

OK?

JORDAN. *(Slight pain.)* Mmm.

YATES. Here?

JORDAN. Lower.

YATES. *(Of the knee.)* Bit swollen.

JORDAN. S'alright.

*Yates continues in silence. Finally, he taps Jordan.*

YATES. You're done. You warm up good and strong. Keep these loose.  
*Yates goes to the sink, washes his hands.*

JORDAN. Reckon I'll get on?

YATES. You might. I'll nudge him.

JORDAN. Can I tell you something?

YATES. The kit man is a priest, you tell him anything.

JORDAN. I'm scared.

YATES. Be insane if you weren't.

JORDAN. My heart's burning and bumping.

*Yates stills him, gently.*

YATES. Adrenaline. It's alright. You're safe.

*Yates holds him a moment. Jordan calms. Looks at Yates.*

JORDAN. He's paying me. Said he'd find me thirty quid. He said don't tell no one. Call it expenses. Thass not right. Is it?

YATES. What else d'he say?

JORDAN. He banged on about losing. Bit fuckin' out there, you know

YATES. Oh yeah. He's that. Styles himself a maverick. Likes a press. He lives for the cameras. But round here, they are scarce.

*Jordan gets up from the treatment table, stretches a bit. Yates puts the towels in a laundry basket, the massage oils back in his cupboard.*

They'll be coming in. Soon enough.

—START—

*Jordan starts putting his kit on. Yates takes out the warm-up tops, hangs one on each hook. Jordan watches him, intently.*

JORDAN. What's your cut?

YATES. Eh?

JORDAN. Before. Thing you said. What would you *take*?

*Yates shakes his head.*

Everyone wants a cut.

YATES. I don't.

JORDAN. ...You...?

YATES. No.

JORDAN. No take?

YATES. No. I'd...you know...

JORDAN. You'd...?

YATES. Yeah.

JORDAN. You'd do it for love?

YATES. The honour. I believe in you.

JORDAN. You'll look after me?

YATES. Yes.

*Pause.*

JORDAN. You got a deal, mister.

*Jordan offers his hand, Yates shakes it.*

Home team.

*Jordan hugs Yates. Yates is overcome.*

Thanks, boss.

YATES. Easy. Jim's the boss.

*Jordan gets his boots out, starts to loosen the laces.*

What are those?

JORDAN. Shit boots. You gonna get me a sponsor?

YATES. When you play like a young God.

*Jordan watches Yates. Thinks. Flexes his leg. Wants to tell him something.*

Don't take his money.

JORDAN. It's thirty quid.

YATES. When he comes to pay you, say you can't take it.

JORDAN. Why?

YATES. Principle. The club should pay you, not him. Keep it clean.

JORDAN. Alright.

YATES. Let him know who you are.

JORDAN. Who I am is broke.

*Yates offers Jordan a twenty-pound note. And then a ten.*  
No—I wasn't asking—I can't.

YATES. I'm a billionaire. Pay me back when you're flush.

*Jordan nods, takes the cash.*

JORDAN. Thank you.

*Yates goes to his cupboard, takes out a mop and a packet of Rich Tea biscuits.*

YATES. Ref's due. I gotta slop out his lair. Keep them limbs nice and easy.

JORDAN. Always loose.

*Pause. They look at each other.*

YATES. See you on the park.

*Yates exits.*

*Jordan sits back on the bench, luxuriating a moment.*

*Then he goes to the window. Looks out.*

*He returns to the bench and unzips a pocket in his bag.*

*He pulls out a syringe and loads it from a small phial.*

*He straightens his left leg.*

*Then he injects himself just above the knee.*

**End of Act One**