

MISS EDWARDS #1

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3.

JOE

I picked **North Carolina** because they got good coaches, good players, and great fans. (he points to another unseen reporter, listens to a question, then answers:) I plan to play hard, but study hard. I take my education very serious. (another question) Believe in yourself, stay in school. (another question) I get to the rim. You can double team me, triple team me. I love to win. (another question) My strength? (grins) Figuring out your weakness.

We HEAR LAUGHTER, APPLAUSE, then a SCHOOL BELL'S RING, abrupt, authoritative, clamorous.

SCENE TWO

START
LIGHT UP on MEREDITH EDWARDS, a seasoned public high school English teacher. She is matter-of-fact as opposed to no-nonsense, with a sense of irony and humor. Joe and Cheerleader take their seats:

MISS EDWARDS

Alright, everyone in their seats, everyone quiet, I said quiet. No talking.

As she says the above, Joe pays no attention, writing a note on his test paper, and the cheerleader, HANNAH, obeys everything. Then, walking as if patrolling up and down the rows of desks of a classroom:

MISS EDWARDS (CONT'D)

This is a final exam, English 301. Put away all books, papers, cell phones, make-up, weapons; no passing notes, no eating or throwing of food, no cheating off your neighbor, no leaving your seat, even to sharpen a pencil. This is your last high school exam, seniors, so make it count. The college that accepted you can still reject you. And, begin.

(then, without looking)

Yes, Joe?

JOE

Can I sharpen my pencil?

MISS EDWARDS

No.

(to the audience)

Ordinarily, that question would irritate me. But not today. Today is my last exam, too. I finally quit. Today, who cares if I have their attention? You find Shakespeare boring? You don't want to analyze a poem? Read a book? You'd rather see the movie? English won't get you a job? Don't care! I'm going into real estate! In real estate, you have knowledge the client actually wants! And, get this, you can actually make a living doing it! Where you're allowed to chew gum! Not only that-

(she stops, sees Joe
trying to pass a note)

Joe Marks, are you really trying to pass a note during a final?

(then)

Give me the note.

(she sighs)

Give-me-the-note.

(he hands her note)

Thank you. Class continue.

(then, to audience)

Ordinarily, passing a note would garner an immediate "F" on a final. Which I'd be convinced to change to a "D" as it gives, you know, the kid a chance, and the school, funding. (then) Oh, well - if I'm happy, why shouldn't everybody be? I'm outta here, they're outta here. Heck, everybody passes. I am done. Why should I --

(then, consumed, reading
on)

Joe Marks, please see me after class.

END
BLACK OUT.

FADE UP on Miss Edwards' classroom, the teacher seated, reading, absorbed, a stack of exams nearby, as if Joe isn't there. Joe looks at her, us, rolls his eyes, at having to endure this.