

RECESSED

A limited digital series

written by

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"MONDAY"

EXT. PUBLIC SCHOOL FRONT DOOR - DAY

ERIC (late 20s) stands in front of the brick school, ringing the doorbell. He looks up at a security camera, gives a weak smile and peeks through the small window in the door. Finally, the door opens, revealing KAREN (mid 30s, tired).

KAREN
You the new recess monitor?

ERIC
Yep.

Karen sighs and turns back into the school. Eric barely catches the door before it closes.

INT. PUBLIC SCHOOL HALLWAYS - CONTINUOUS

Eric catches up to Karen and they pass a SECURITY GUARD at the front desk who gives Eric a hard stare. Kids walk through the hallways with their teachers.

KAREN
Have you worked with kids before?

ERIC
Yeah, I used to be a teacher.

KAREN
What happened?

ERIC
I quit to pursue comedy.

Karen laughs. When Eric doesn't respond, she realizes he's not joking.

KAREN
Oh...a lot of comedians work here, actually.

ERIC
Yeah, that's how I heard abou--

KAREN
But they're not very funny.

ERIC
Yeah, that's--

KAREN
Are you funny?

ERIC
Uh...yeah. Yeah, I am.

Karen abruptly stops walking, and Eric follows suit. She stares intensely at him for a beat.

KAREN
Hmm.

She starts walking again, with Eric in tow.

KAREN (CONT'D)
When you're not on duty, you can hang out in the teachers' lounge, but don't talk to the teachers. Don't smile at them, don't make eye contact, don't tell them you used to be a teacher. No one cares. Is that clear?

ERIC
Uh--

KAREN
Good, here's your schedule.

She hands him a slip of paper.

ERIC
This is just a list of classroom numbers. How do I know who's in each class?

KAREN
You don't.

ERIC
Then how do I monitor them?

KAREN
You just have to make sure no one dies, okay? At the end of each class' recess, yell the room number over and over until kids start going inside.

ERIC
What if they don't listen to me?

Karen laughs.

KAREN
You are funny.

They arrive at the teacher's lounge.

KAREN (CONT'D)
Okay, this is the teachers' lounge.
Go grab a vest off the back table.

Eric nods, slowly opens the door, and steps into the--

INT. TEACHERS' LOUNGE - CONTINUOUS

--where a handful of silent teachers eat their lunches. The lounge is a simple room with a refrigerator, a few sitting chairs, and a sad bulletin board. Eric spies the table with the vests and walks toward it, but accidentally kicks a chair, which makes a horribly loud noise as it slides across the tile floor. The teachers all glare at him.

Upon reaching the table, Eric sees it's covered in blue mesh vests with reflective stripes. He picks one up: it's huge. He realizes that all of the vests are XXXL, and heads back toward the door. He opens it and steps into the--

INT. PUBLIC SCHOOL HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

--where Karen is nowhere to be seen. Alone in the hallway, Eric looks both ways. At one end, he sees a door to the outside. As he walks toward it, the dull roar of recess grows louder. He opens the door and steps out onto the--

EXT. PUBLIC SCHOOL BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

--which is teeming with screaming children. Eric looks around in horror at the insanity. Across the blacktop, he spots Karen and catches her eye. She laughs.

KAREN
Welcome to recess!

Eric nods and tries to laugh in return. He takes a moment to compose himself, then takes one step before he's smacked in the face with an errant red kick ball.

END

"TUESDAY"

EXT. SCHOOL BLACKTOP - DAY

Eric, wearing a giant blue vest, stands between the basketball courts and the playground. All around him, elementary and middle school students run, play, and generally lose their shit.

Eric looks around the blacktop and sees a few other solitary recess monitors. Some are talking to students, others are on their phone, and a few just stare listlessly into space. The last monitor he sees is chatting with Karen, his boss.

Finally, Eric notices a small group of students standing ten feet away from him that are pointing at his shoes and laughing. Eric looks down at his New Balances and back at the kids as two of them, DEIONTE (10) and TREVOR (9), walk over to him and strike up a conversation.

DEIONTE

Hey, you the new recess monitor?

ERIC

Yep.

TREVOR

(aggressive)

What's your name, man?

ERIC

Eric. And you?

TREVOR

My name's Yura.

ERIC

Yura?

TREVOR

Yeah, Yura Bitch!

He laughs super hard and gets some dap from Deionte.

ERIC

Excuse me?

TREVOR

You're excused, bitch!

ERIC

How--

DEIONTE
Hey Eric, you play basketball?

ERIC
Yeah.

TREVOR
Not in those shoes though, huh?

He and Deionte laugh and look back at their friends, who are all cracking up.

ERIC
Okay, okay, very funny.

TREVOR
Not as funny as those goofy ass shoes!

ERIC
What do you guys wear?

DEIONTE
Jordans, baby!

He and Trevor each stick out their right foot to show off their very fresh Jordans.

ERIC
Cool.

DEIONTE
Yeah, it is cool.

ERIC
Great.

TREVOR
Yeah, it is great!

ERIC
Okay.

TREVOR
Man, shut up!

ERIC
What is your deal, kid?

TREVOR
My deal is that you suck even more than those corny ass sneakers!

He cocks his fist and pretends to punch Eric, who flinches hard. The kids watching their interaction (a number that is growing by the minute) find it hilarious.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
That's two for flinching!

He raises his fist to actually punch Eric this time.

ERIC
Do not punch me.

Trevor holds his fist in mid-air.

TREVOR
Why not?

ERIC
Because I'm an adult, and I--don't
want you to.

Trevor keeps his fist up. Deion taps him on the arm.

DEIONTE
Trevor, let's go. He's not worth
it.

Trevor slowly puts his fist down.

TREVOR
You're right. I can't punch someone
with that ugly of shoes.

Trevor and Deionte laugh and walk back to their friends. Eric watches as they recreate the entire scene for their friends, amping it up for comedic effect. When they imitate him flinching, their friends fall on the ground laughing.

Eric shakes his head and looks around the blacktop. He sees Karen still talking to the same recess monitor. He catches their eyes and gives them a "Yeesh!" look. In response, they also recreate Eric's interaction with Trevor and laugh uproariously as the school bell rings.

END

"WEDNESDAY"

EXT. SCHOOL BLACKTOP - DAY

Eric, black Timberlands on his feet, surveys the blacktop. The chaos of recess surrounds him: unruly games of tag, dodgeball, and soccer unfold at breakneck speeds.

A kid playing tag runs up to Eric and hides behind him, using him as a shield against the kid who's "it." As if he's a stationery object, the two kids run around Eric a few times.

ERIC
Okay, that's enough.

The kids ignore him and keep playing.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Alright, come on!

The game continues unabashed.

ERIC (CONT'D)
I said--

The kids run off before Eric can yell at them. He sighs, shakes his head, and looks down to see Deionte and Trevor standing in front of him.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Hey! What's up, fellas?

DEIONTE
What's up, Eric?

ERIC
What are your guys' names, again?

TREVOR
We never told you our names. And why should we? You're just one more recess monitor who won't even last the week.

He mean mugs at Eric.

DEIONTE
Chill out, Trevor.

ERIC
Yeah. Chill out, Trevor.

TREVOR
Shut up, Eric!

ERIC
Okay, okay, let's rewind. You guys see my new kicks?

DEIONTE
Black Tims, huh? They're a little scuffed.

Eric crouches down to look at/clean his boots.

ERIC
Dammit! Not bad though, huh?

Deionte shrugs.

DEIONTE
I guess. They're no Jordans.

ERIC
Is that what you wear?

Deionte and Trevor each stick their right foot out, showing off their Jordans.

TREVOR
All day, baby! All day!

DEIONTE
We even have a club. During meetings, everyone who has Jordans stands in a circle and puts a foot in the middle.

TREVOR
In fact, I think it's time for a club meeting right now.
(shouting to friends)
Hey yo! Jordans Club meeting, let's go!
(to Eric)
Eric, you wanna join? Oh, wait...

He points at Eric's shoes and laughs as four other kids run up. Trevor and Deionte turn around to greet the kids. A few feet from Eric, they all get in a circle and start admiring each other's Jordans.

KID #1
Oh, damn! Fresh kicks, bro!

DEIONTE

You too, homie. Those Jordans are
dope!

Eric tries to not let the meeting bother him, but his feelings are clearly hurt. He catches Trevor's eye, and Trevor flicks him off.

Eric shakes his head and looks toward the basketball courts. He sees three kids shooting hoops, and watches them for a beat. One of the kids calls out to him.

BASKETBALL KID #1

Hey, Recess Monitor! You wanna
play?

Eric looks around, then points at himself.

BASKETBALL KID #1 (CONT'D)

Yeah, you! We need a fourth, let's
go!

Eric looks over at the Jordans Club meeting, which is still happening. He thinks about it for a second, shrugs, and slowly jogs over to the basketball court.

When he gets to the court, he nods to the three kids, who all nod back. One of the kids passes him the ball.

BASKETBALL KID #2

Let's see what you got, Recess
Monitor.

Eric takes a deep breath, readies his shot, and shoots. Airball. Beat.

MONTAGE - ERIC PLAYING TWO ON TWO WITH THE KIDS

-Eric and Basketball Kid #1 play defense on the other two kids. Eric gets juke'd by the kid he's defending and falls over as the kid scores an easy layup.

-On offense, Eric sets a pick on Basketball Kid #1's defender and rolls to the basket. He establishes post position against his defender (a 9-year old boy) by giving him a light hip-check, which sends the kid flying.

-Eric takes and misses a jump shot. And then another. And another. And another. On the last miss, he chases madly after the rebound and in trying to save the ball from going out of bounds, sprains his ankle and drops like a stone.

END MONTAGE

EXT. SCHOOL BLACKTOP - CONTINUOUS

Eric crouches on one knee, clutching his sprained ankle and biting his lower lip. Eyes closed, he rocks back and forth and fights back tears.

After a moment, he notices that the entire playground has gone silent. The attention has turned to him, and everyone's now staring at the strange man on the ground.

Finally, after a long beat, Trevor walks over and extends a hand to Eric.

TREVOR
It's alright, Eric. I got you.

ERIC
Trevor?

Eric lifts his head and opens his eyes to see Trevor taping him with his iPhone.

TREVOR
Say cheese, bitch!

INSERT: ERIC'S TEAR-STAINED FACE WITH CUTE BUNNY FILTER

END

"THURSDAY"

EXT. SCHOOL BLACKTOP - DAY

Eric, his right ankle wrapped with an ace bandage, stands at his spot near the basketball courts and chats with Karen while kids run and play around them.

KAREN
How's your first week going?

ERIC
Um...honestly, not great. My ankle really hurts.

KAREN
I bet. I saw Trevor's Insta story, it looked like you were in a lot of pain.

ERIC
Yeah, I've actually been meaning to talk to you about that...as recess monitors, are we allowed to discipline the kids?

KAREN
Oh, absolutely. If a student's acting out, just take them to the office and write them up.

ERIC
Seriously?

KAREN
Yeah, just--
(seeing an issue across the blacktop)
God dammit.
(yelling as she walks off)
Elisha, put down the stick!

Eric watches Karen as she makes her way over to ELISHA, an unruly middle schooler brandishing a broken tree branch as a sword. She tries to negotiate with him, but he fends her off and scampers away.

Eric chuckles and turns away, surveying the basketball courts. He sees Trevor and Deionte walking toward him, and before he can avert his gaze, Trevor catches his eye and makes a beeline toward him.

TREVOR
Yo Eric, you got some shit on your face!

ERIC
Don't swear. And no, I don't.

TREVOR
Yes, you do! Doesn't he, Deionte?

DEIONTE
Yep.

ERIC
Deionte, huh? About time I learned your name.

TREVOR
Stop trying to distract from the issue and wipe that shit off your face!

Eric gives Trevor a long, hard stare. Finally, he wipes the corners of his mouth, which makes Trevor and Deionte burst out laughing.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
Damn, my bad! I guess that's just your face.

ERIC
Okay, very funny. You're really pushing your luck, Trevor.

TREVOR
Pushing my luck, huh? What are you gonna do about it?

ERIC
I'd rather not do anything, so maybe you should just chill out.

Trevor and Deionte look surprised.

DEIONTE
Damn, Trevor! This white boy just told you to chill out. What are you gonna do about it?

TREVOR
Man, shut up!

Trevor gives Deionte a shove and they start tussling.

ERIC
Okay! Break it up, guys.

They ignore him and keep wrestling.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Trevor! Deionte!

Trevor puts Deionte in a headlock.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Trevor, let him go!

Eric looks around for some assistance, but none of the other recess monitors are paying attention. Across the blacktop, he sees Karen still trying to negotiate with Elisha, who now has an even bigger tree branch in his hands.

Eric looks back at the fight in front of him, weighs his options, and then pulls Trevor off of Deionte.

TREVOR
Don't touch me, you pervert!

Eric quickly releases him, but stands between him and Deionte.

ERIC
I am not a--just relax, dude!

TREVOR
Eat my ass.

ERIC
Okay, that's it! Let's go, buddy.

He points at a side door into the school. Trevor is incredulous.

TREVOR
Really?

Eric nods. Finally, Trevor rolls his eyes and starts walking toward the door. Eric hobbles after him.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
So you're gonna write me up, huh?
Wow, guess you finally grew some balls.

ERIC
Keep talking, it's all going in the report.

They reach the door, but it's locked. Eric hits the intercom button and waits. Trevor scoffs.

TREVOR
They didn't give you a key?

Eric hits the intercom button again. No response. In a fit of frustration, he hits the button five times in quick succession and yanks on the door, both to no avail.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
Do you even know my last name?

Instead of responding, Eric hits the intercom button again, this time holding it down for an inordinate amount of time.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
Uh huh. So, I'm gonna go.

He starts walking away.

ERIC
Trevor. Trevor. Trevor!

Trevor ignores him and disappears back into the chaos of recess. Eric sighs. After a beat, a voice squawks out of the intercom.

INTERCOM (V.O.)
Who keeps playing on the damn intercom?

Eric opens his mouth to respond, but thinks better of it.

INTERCOM (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Hello? Hello?! I swear, if this is another recess monitor trying to write a kid up, I'm gonna lose my damn mind. I don't care what Karen told you, recess monitors don't have that authority!

Eric turns around and heads back to his post as Karen, now being chased by Elisha and his giant tree branch, runs by.

END

"FRIDAY"

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

A heavy rain beats against the windows. Karen and Eric walk down the hallway, Eric still has a limp from his sprained ankle.

KAREN

So obviously, we're having indoor recess today. You'll be in Room 119, just keep them in the classroom until it's time for lunch.

ERIC

Okay, do we have any activities I can do with them? Or a video we can watch?

KAREN

We have this half-empty Uno deck.

She holds up a frayed, shabby Uno box. Eric takes it.

ERIC

Wait, Room 119? Is that Trevor's class?

KAREN

Yeah.

They arrive at Room 119 and stop in the front of the door.

KAREN (CONT'D)

Also, Principal Harper is observing the recess monitors today, so she'll pop in at some point.

She walks off, leaving Eric to stare in dread at the door. He grabs the handle and slowly walks in.

INT. ROOM 119 - CONTINUOUS

Eric walks into the room and finds a small gaggle of 5th grade students gathered loudly around the teacher's desk.

ERIC

Excuse me, everybody!

The students all whip around to face him, revealing Trevor sitting in the teacher's chair with his feet on the desk.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Let's grab our seats, okay?

TREVOR
I already got a seat!

The kids all laugh.

ERIC
Good one, Trev.

TREVOR
Nope, my name's Trevor. Not Trev.

ERIC
Okay, great! Noted. Now let's all
find our own seats, because we have
indoor recess today and--

The kids all loudly moan and groan.

ERIC (CONT'D)
(getting louder)
--yeah, yeah, I know. Nobody's
happy about this, believe me.
But...I have Uno!

He holds up the Uno box, but the bottom rips out and the
cards all fall onto the floor. Beat. The kids all laugh.

TREVOR
U-no, you didn't! This dude...man,
let's play tag!

The kids all scream in approval and start running around the
room. They chase each other with wild abandon, knocking into
desks, chairs, and whatever else is in their way.

Eric half-heartedly tries to quell the madness, but quickly
gives up, walks over to the teacher's desk, and slumps into
the chair.

The screams and shouts of tag slowly fade into the distance
as we zoom in on Eric's defeated face. THWACK! An Uno card
hits him in the forehead and we snap back to reality. Eric
jumps out of his chair.

ERIC
(yelling)
Okay, that's it! Everyone stop now!

The kids all stop in their tracks and stare at him with wide
eyes. The moment hangs in the air. The next time Eric speaks,
it's at a low but intense volume.

ERIC (CONT'D)

This behavior is unacceptable. Sit down or I'm taking every single one of you down to the office for a write up.

The kids stare at him, unsure of what to do.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Or better yet, Principal Harper's supposed to be stopping by the room today, so I can just report you all when she gets here.

The mention of Principal Harper strikes a little fear into the kids' hearts (even Trevor's). Slowly, they all find their seats and quietly sit down. Eric leans on the teacher's desk and speaks at a normal volume.

ERIC (CONT'D)

That's more like it.

There's an awkward beat of silence. A few kids cough. Eric looks at the clock and realizes there's still many minutes of recess left.

ERIC (CONT'D)

So, anyone know any good jokes?

Nobody responds.

ERIC (CONT'D)

Come on, somebody's gotta know one.

TREVOR

I heard you're a comedian, why don't you tell us one?

The kids murmur at this news.

ERIC

Come on, Trevor, tell us one. Unless you're scared to tell a joke?

TREVOR

I'm not scared, you are!

ERIC

It just sounds like you're scared, man. And that's okay. If I were you, I'd be scared, too.

Some of the kids lightly "Ooh!" and Eric flashes a grin.

TREVOR
Man, shut your punk ass up!

ERIC
"Punk ass," huh? You make that up
yourself?

A few kids chuckle, and Eric's smile gets even wider.

TREVOR
Stop smiling, man!

This only makes Eric happier.

TREVOR (CONT'D)
Alright, you want a joke? How about
a roast, huh?

ERIC
Yeah, give me your best shot!

The kids all look at Trevor expectantly. He struggles to come up with something.

TREVOR
Man...your...your...your teeth are
so white, that if we turned out the
lights, they'd glow in the dark!

A few kids laugh because of Trevor's delivery, but an air of confusion hangs over the room. Eric walks over to Trevor's desk, and leans in with a menacing smile.

ERIC
Oh no, Trevor. Looks like you were
right to be scared. Because you're.
Not. Funny...

Trevor, silently fuming, glares at Eric. The room goes deathly silent. Eric looks up to see Principal Harper standing in the doorway, shaking her head at him.

ERIC (CONT'D)
Principal Har--

EXT. FRONT OF SCHOOL - MOMENTS LATER

The front door to the school swings open. A security guard pushes Eric outside. The door slams shut as rain beats down on Eric, who gives the school one last look before limping off into the wet, gray afternoon.

END