

Dropouts

by
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Fade In

INT. CLASSROOM

A classroom full of students is taking notes diligently. One student, however, has spent the entire class filling a whole page of a notebook with drawings. This is MATT.

INT. CLASSROOM

It is near the end of class and all the kids are lined up at the door except one kid who is still sleeping at his desk. This is TOM.

MONTAGE - OPENING CREDITS

- The bell rings and everyone in Matt's class gets up and goes to the teacher who is handing back quizzes.
- Everyone has left Tom's class. A teacher comes over and taps him on the shoulder. He doesn't move.
- Two kids in front of Matt get their quizzes back and high five each other. Matt gets his and drops it in the trash without even looking at it.
- The teacher shakes Tom's desk. He just sits there.
- Matt opens his locker and a bunch of papers and trash falls on him.
- The teacher slams a book down next to Tom. He still doesn't move.
- Matt finds an old lunch in his locker. He sniffs it and starts coughing.
- The teacher grabs Tom and drags him out of his seat. He hits his head and finally wakes up.

- Matt opens the locker next to him and places the old lunch inside it.

- Tom is standing in the doorway holding up his hands like he did not do anything. His backpack comes flying at him and the door slams shut.

- Matt looks around to see if anyone saw him and walks away.

- Tom, still half asleep, is walking down the hall rubbing his eyes and bumping into people.

END MONTAGE

INT. HALLWAY - CONT

Tom lazily walks up to his locker as Matt spots him and runs over to him.

MATT

There you are!

TOM

Hey.

Tom takes out his sweatshirt and hat and starts putting them on.

MATT

Dude, what are you doing?

TOM

What?

MATT

It's only eleven o'clock. We still got another three hours.

Tom groans. He puts his stuff back and starts banging his head against the locker.

TOM

Four for me. I got an hour.

He slams his locker shut.

MATT

Fall asleep again?

They start heading to their next class.

TOM

Yeah, but it was during math class. That shouldn't count.

MATT

I know, they're pretty much asking for it.

TOM

Whatever. I'm not gonna go anyway.

MATT

Then they'll just give you more hours.

TOM

So I won't go to those either. See, I beat the system.

MATT

Yeah, until they expel you.

TOM

Honestly, I wouldn't even mind that. I'm probably going to drop out of here anyway.

MATT

Really?

TOM

Well I want to, at least...
Dude, you should do it with
me!

MATT

Um, no, I don't think so.

CONNOR

Why not? We would have so much
fun!

MATT

Well first of all, we don't
have jobs.

TOM

Who said anything about jobs?
I'm talking about dropping
out.

MATT

But it's not like we do
anything here anyway.

TOM

Yeah, but we could be doing
nothing at *home*.

MATT

I don't know...

TOM

Oh come on! What happened to
your dream about becoming a
racecar driver?

MATT

That was in second grade.

INT CASHMAN'S ROOM

MR. CASHMAN is front of the class, finishing a

story.

CASHMAN

And that's why nobody likes
you.

A kid in the front row puts his head down on his desk and starts crying. Matt and Tom enter the room casually.

MATT

(nodding)

Cashman.

They head for their seats but Cashman stops them.

CASHMAN

Hold on, why are you guys
late?

Matt thinks about it for a second and turns to Tom for help, but he just shrugs.

MATT

Yeah, I got nothing.

Cashman is not in the mood to deal with them.

CASHMAN

Just sit down.

They sit down in the back of the class next to their friend JOHN.

JOHN

He's going to kill you guys
one day.

TOM

It doesn't matter, we're
dropping out soon anyway.

MATT

We are?

They ignore Matt.

JOHN

That's awesome. What are you
guys gonna do?

TOM

Nothing.

JOHN

Nice.

All the other kids take out their homework.

CASHMAN

Matt, could you tell us the
answer to number one?

MATT

Cashman, we all know I don't
know the answer, so why are
you wasting our time?

TOM

Yeah, come on Cashman. You're
better than that.

CASHMAN

Shouldn't you be sleeping,
Tom?

TOM

Oh yeah. Thanks Cashman.

He throws his book on the floor and goes to sleep.
Cashman goes to his desk and takes out a piece of
paper that says "Days to retirement:4,287".

CASHMAN
(to himself)
Someday, Cashman. Someday.

INT. HALLWAY DAY

Matt is heading for his class, and Tom sprints after him and stops him just as Matt reaches the door.

TOM
I need to talk to you.

Matt looks in the classroom and then back at Tom.

MATT
Ok.

Matt follows Tom away from the room.

INT. LIBRARY DAY

Tom and Matt head for a table and sit across from each other.

MATT
That was good timing. I had to present a project.

TOM
Nice. This is actually my free period.

MATT
Free period?

TOM
Oh yeah, they screwed up my schedule and didn't give me a sixth period.

MATT
So what do you do?

TOM
I don't know, wander around
mostly.

MATT
Oh.

TOM
Anyway, I think I have a
solution to our school
troubles.

MATT
We want to do better in school
now?

TOM
No, I'm talking about us
dropping out.

MATT
Don't tell me you were serious
about that.

TOM
It's different this time.
Look.

He goes to get a piece of paper out of his bag, but he cannot find it because his bag is full of a bunch of loose papers.

TOM
Um, hold on a second.

He starts throwing papers around as he looks for it. Matt rolls his eyes and to occupy himself he takes a book off a shelf and puts it in the bag of the kid sitting behind him, FRANKY. Tom finally finds it and hands it to Matt.

TOM

I was thinking that once you and me get out of here we could start our own business together.

MATT

Our own business? Do you think we could do that?

TOM

Yeah, this company I found will show us all the secrets and stuff. We send them three hundred bucks and they send back a complete guide to help us start our own business.

Matt reads through the rest of the paper.

MATT

Three hundred bucks sounds like a lot.

TOM

Dude, we'll make that back in like a week.

MATT

Are you sure that this isn't some kind of scam?

TOM

Yeah, look, they guarantee it.

MATT

Oh, sorry I didn't see that.

TOM

So what do you think? Are you in?

MATT

I don't know, it sounds too easy.

TOM

Matt, there's nothing this place will do for us anymore.

Matt thinks about it for a moment.

MATT

Alright, let's do this, man.

TOM

Yes! Now that's more like it.

Franky then picks up his bag heads out of the library. However, just before he reaches the door alarms go off. MR. SCOTT comes out of nowhere and pins him up against the wall. He opens his bag, takes out the book and holds it up to him.

SCOTT

Forgetting something?

FRANKY

I didn't know that was there!

SCOTT

Yeah, that's what they all say. Come on.

Scott drags him away.

TOM

I guess there are some things I'll miss about this place.

INT. OFFICE

Matt and Tom are standing over a piece of paper labeled "Dropping Out".

MATT

Ok, here goes nothing.

Matt signs his name and Tom follows.

MATT

So is that it?

TOM

That's it, man. We're free.

MATT

Then let's get the hell out of here.

They start to head out, but Tom hangs back to talk to the SECRETARY.

TOM

Do we get like a gift bag or anything for leaving?

She just stares at him.

TOM

Or not.

Tom leaves to meet back up with Matt.

EXT. FRONT STEPS

Matt and Tom are standing outside, looking over the town.

TOM

Matt, my friend, this is the first day of the rest of our lives.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE

They are both sitting in the basement playing video games. Tom then looks at the time.

TOM

I'm going to see if the mail
is here.

He gets up and heads up stairs. Matt takes Tom's
controller. Tom returns shortly holding the mail
with a worried look on his face.

MATT

Did it come?

TOM

Um...yeah.

Worried, Matt stands up.

MATT

What's the matter?

TOM

Nothing.

Matt takes the book that they sent for, which is
surprisingly small, and looks through it.

MATT

Tom, this is just instructions
on how to win money on scratch
tickets!

TOM

And?

MATT

It's supposed to tell us how
to start our own business!

TOM

Well that will be easier once
we win money.

Matt throws it back at Tom.

MATT

I can't believe we wasted all
of our money on this.

TOM

You haven't even given it a
chance yet!

Matt becomes so angry that he cannot even respond,
so he just sits down and tries to calm down.

MATT

Ok, we can figure something
out later.

(beat)

Do you mind if I stay here
tonight? My parents kicked me
out.

TOM

Oh, we can't stay here either.

MATT

Your parents kicked you out
too?

TOM

Well I'm kind of leaving on my
own...

INT. TOM'S HOUSE - FLASHBACK

Tom comes storming through the kitchen where his
parents are sitting, holding the paper that signed
him out of school.

TOM

Ha! You always said I'd never
be anything but I'm gonna drop
out and I'm start my own
business and there's nothing
you can do! And when I'm rich
you can't come stay at my
mansion!

He leaves in a big commotion. His parents are just sitting there, not sure what to do.

DAD

What was that about?

INT. TOM'S HOUSE

MATT

So you're moving out just to spite them?

TOM

Pretty much.

MATT

Great, now we have no money *and* nowhere to go.

TOM

Any ideas?

MATT

I guess we'll have to find jobs now.

TOM

I can't believe you! We've been living the dream for only a day and you want to look for a job?!

MATT

Then what are we supposed to do for money?

EXT. STREET DAY

Matt and Connor are standing on a street corner. Matt has an acoustic guitar and is singing. Tom is singing backup and is holding out a hat for people to drop money in. Nobody walking by gives them any

money. Tom follows a MAN, trying to get money out of him.

MAN
Get away from me!

Tom walks back to Matt, who has stopped playing.

MATT
I don't think this is working.

TOM
I know, I came in a little late. I sorry.

MATT
No, I mean this is working at all.

TOM
Oh. Well it's a bad location.

Frustrated, Matt tosses his guitar on the ground and sits on the curb.

MATT
How much did we even make?

TOM
Let's see...

Tom sits down next to Matt. He mutters to himself as he counts the money in the hat.

TOM
Two bucks.

MATT
Two?

TOM
Two.

MATT
(angrily)
Great.

TOM
You know, we can buy a scratch
ticket with two dollars.

MATT
We're not buying scratch
tickets!

TOM
Just a thought...

Matt looks at his watch.

MATT
It's going to be dark soon.

TOM
Actually, I think I might have
a friend that can help us out.

MATT
Really?

TOM
Yeah. It's not too far either.

Tom takes out his phone and looks for his number.

MATT
Will he mind?

TOM
No, he's cool.

INT. FRIEND'S HOUSE NIGHT

Tom's friend, MIKE, is leading Matt and Tom through
his house to the basement where they will stay.

MIKE

I'm so glad you guys finally dropped out. Trust me, it will be the best decision you'll ever make. Everyone's gonna tell you that you the opposite, but don't listen to them. Look at me, I dropped out and I'm doing fine. Not once have I had to use algebra or speak Spanish. School is all just a big sham. Soon you'll see that this is the way to live.

They reach the basement and Tom and Matt get settled in.

TOM

So are you sure you don't mind?

MIKE

Of course not! My mom doesn't even know, so we don't have to worry about her.

TOM

Ok, well thanks again for letting us stay here.

MIKE

It's no problem, man. Mi casa es...um, your casa.

Mike heads back up stairs. Matt and Tom, exhausted, lie down on the two couches in the basement and try to go to sleep.

TOM

Hey Matt, guess what?

MATT
(impatiently)
I don't know, *what?*

TOM
Fine, forget it.

MATT
No, I'm sorry. What?

TOM
No, not if you're going to
have that attitude.

MATT
Oh, come on. I hate when we
fight like this.

Suddenly, the lights go on and a bunch of people
can be heard coming down the stairs. Mike is coming
down with a bunch of his FRIENDS.

FRIENDS
Fight club! Fight club!

They are all chanting excitedly until Mike realizes
that Matt and Tom are there and stops.

MIKE
Oh, yeah...
(to his friends)
Ok guys, plan B!

They resume their chanting as they head back up the
stairs. The lights go off. Tom lies back down but
Matt is still sitting up, wide awake. Then the
light come back on once again and Mike pokes his
head in the room.

MIKE
That never happened.

EXT. STREET NIGHT

Matt and Tom have left Mike's house and are now walking to their car.

TOM

I don't see why we had to leave. I mean, how often do you get to see a fight club?

MATT

Sorry, but I don't want to end up in jail. Or dead.

TOM

But why the car?

MATT

Because it has locks.

TOM

I call shotgun then.

MATT

Fine.

They reach the car and open the doors. Tom looks at the back seat where Matt lies down comfortably. He then looks at the cramped front seat.

TOM

Crap.

MONTAGE - Life On the Road

- Matt and Tom are walking down a street.
- They are playing guitar again on a street corner.
- Tom struggles to sleep in the car.
- They walk down the street in the opposite direction.

- They are playing poker. Tom loses all of his chips. They don't have any money so they flip the table and run away.

END MONTAGE

EXT. STREET - DAY

Matt and Tom are walking through a neighborhood looking miserable.

TOM
Dude, I'm starving!

Matt reaches into his pocket and tosses him a candy bar.

MATT
Here.

TOM
I'm so sick of these. I need some real food.

MATT
Well unless you know someone that will just give us money, that's all we've got.

They walk buy a nice looking house. Tom stops and looks at it.

TOM
They look they have money.

MATT
Why would they give us money?

TOM
That's not what I meant.

Matt gives him a strange look, but he then realizes

what he is talking about.

MATT

No way.

TOM

Why not?

MATT

Because we can't rob someone's house!

TOM

We can pay them back later.

MATT

Absolutely not.

TOM

Ok, then I guess we can try out that comedy act I've been working on.

Tom takes out a piece of paper from his pocket, clears his throat, and reads from it.

TOM

So what's the deal with global warming? I thought that-

MATT

Ok! We'll do it!

TOM

Excellent.

He puts the paper away, and they head for the house.

MATT

You really suck. You know that?

EXT. HOUSE

Tom is standing outside the front door. He takes out his phone and calls Matt who is in the back.

MATT

Ok, I'm ready.

TOM

Good. Wait for them to answer the door. Over.

MATT

Alright. Just don't do anything stupid.

TOM

Don't worry, I won't. Over.

MATT

Tom, we're using phones. You don't have to say 'over'.

TOM

Roger that.

He hangs up. He walks up to the door and knocks. The OWNER answers the door.

OWNER

Can I help you?

TOM

Good evening, sir. I'm here to ask you if you would like to be rich.

He takes out their scratch ticket program and hands it to the man.

INT. HOUSE

Matt opens the window and stumbles inside.

EXT. HOUSE

OWNER

Sorry, we're not interested.

He starts to close the door as Matt can be seen sneaking through the house in the background. Tom puts his hand up and stops the door from closing.

TOM

Wait, you haven't even heard the best part yet!

Matt sneaks up the stairs, which is right behind Tom and the owner.

INT. HOUSE

Matt is tearing apart a room but he can't find anything. He leaves and enters the hallway where John suddenly appears.

JOHN

Matt? What are you doing here?

Matt freezes and tries to think of something.

MATT

Um...Surprise?

EXT. HOUSE

OWNER

We're really not interested.

He tries to close the door but Tom stops him yet again.

TOM

Did you know that you are five times more likely to win the lottery than to be struck by

lightning?

INT. HOUSE

JOHN

So you guys really dropped
out, huh?

MATT

Yep.

Matt looks nervously downstairs.

JOHN

That's great. I wanted to drop
out to but my mom said I
needed to think about my
"future".

John starts heading downstairs, and Matt
reluctantly follows him. They reach the bottom and
John sees Tom talking to his dad.

JOHN

Tom, you're here too?

Tom is not sure how he should respond and he just
says nothing.

OWNER

(to John)
You know him?

JOHN

Yeah.
(beat)
What's going on?

They all just stand there for a moment, looking at
each other.

TOM

Run!

Matt pushes John and his dad out of the way and runs out of the house with Tom. They run down the street until they are far enough away and they stop and rest.

MATT
Are they coming?

TOM
No, I don't think so.

MATT
That was close. Did you know
it was his house?

TOM
No.

MATT
Let's get out of here.

They start walking down the street, and then Tom stops.

TOM
Shoot, I left the program at
the house.

Matt shoots him a dirty look.

MATT
Just be thankful that we got
away-

Suddenly, a bright light shines on the two of them, as a cop car pulls in front of them with its siren blaring.

INT. JAIL DAY

They have just spent the night in jail and Matt is sitting in the cell with his back to Tom.

TOM

Well, at least we didn't have to worry about where we were going to sleep.

Matt ignores him.

TOM

Oh come on. This place isn't even that bad...Except for that guy.

A creepy looking man, sitting opposite them, is staring at Tom.

Dave ignores him.

TOM

Dude, lighten up.

MATT

I'm not talking to you.

The OFFICER comes up to the cell and unlocks the door.

OFFICER

They're not going to press charges. You're free to go.

They leave the cell and pass by Mike, who is pleading with an officer.

MIKE

We weren't doing anything!

He spots Matt and Tom.

MIKE

Ask them! They were there!

Matt and Tom look away and keep walking.

OFFICER
Of course they were.

EXT. WALPOLE CENTER DAY

TOM
So where should we go now?

MATT
You can go wherever the hell
you want. I'm going home. Then
I'm going back to school.

TOM
What?! You can't do that!

MATT
Watch me.

TOM
So you're just going to give
up?

MATT
Tom, it's been a week and
we're worse off than we were
before! I can't keep living
like this. I should of never
let you talk me into this.

They arrive at Matt's car and Matt opens the door.

TOM
Why are you acting like this
is all my fault?

MATT
Because it is your fault!

Matt gets in his car.

TOM

But I can't do this by myself.

MATT

Well I'm sorry.

He shuts the door and drives away, leaving Tom standing there alone.

MONTAGE - SPLIT APART

- TOM is walking up a street alone, staring at the ground.

- Matt is driving in his car.

- Tom has snuck back into his house to play videogames. He looks at the empty seat next to him and sighs.

- Matt is in his room, and he digs out his old school supplies.

- Tom is at a street corner trying to play the guitar.

- Matt is packing his backpack.

- Tom is walking down the street when he finds the two dollars they had made earlier playing guitar in his pocket. He takes it into a store.

INT. TOM'S HOUSE

Tom sits down on his couch with a scratch ticket that he bought with the two dollars. He scratches all the numbers. He looks at it and he sits up. His eyes widen. He looks at the time. School has already started.

MONTAGE - SAVING MATT

- Tom goes flying out of his driveway on his bike.

- Matt enters a room in the office with MR. CONNOR. A paper labeled "Dropping In" is on the table.
- Tom runs up the front steps and catches the door right before it closes.
- Tom runs down the hallways looking into different rooms.
- Tom runs through the cafeteria. He comes back to take a bite out of a kid's lunch and then leaves.
- He runs into his old class with Cashman and runs out. Cashman rolls his eyes and continues teaching.

INT. HALLWAY

Tom turns a corner and sees his FRIEND at a water fountain.

TOM

Hey, have you seen Matt anywhere?

FRIEND

I thought you guys dropped out?

TOM

We did, but Matt's trying to get back in.

FRIEND

Have you checked the office?

Tom turns and heads for the office.

FRIEND

No wonder they dropped out.

INT. OFFICE

The secretary bursts into the room.

SECRETARY

Some kid has been seen running
around the school without a
visitor's pass!

MR. CONNOR

Dear God!

They both run out of the room, leaving Matt alone.

INT. LOBBY

Tom sneaks by MR. Connor and enters the office.

INT. OFFICE

Tom sees all of the papers Dave is signing.

TOM

Nooo!

Tom jumps on the table and rips up all the papers
Matt is signing.

MATT

What in the hell are you
doing?

TOM

Saving your life.

He sits down across from Matt.

TOM

Matt, you can't do this.

MATT

I told you, I've made up my
mind. I can't spend the rest

(cont'd)
of my life following you
around aimlessly.

TOM
Do you really think that
you're all of a sudden going
to become a good student?

MATT
Yeah, why not?

TOM
Because it's not you. Come on,
we don't belong here.

MATT
No, you don't belong here. You
know, I've been doing some
thinking and it's time I
actually start doing something
with my life. From now on, I'm
going to-

TOM
Oh, for the love of God! *Here.*

Tom takes out the scratch ticket and throws it to
Matt. Matt sits there for a moment just looking at
it.

MATT
Huh.
(beat)
And why didn't you mention
this earlier?

TOM
The other stuff seemed nicer.

INT. LOBBY

MR. Connor is heading away from the secretary, into

the office.

MR. CONNOR
When I give the signal, start
the lockdown.

He enters the room.

MR. CONNOR
Sorry about that-

He looks in the room and there is nothing there
except shreds of paper.

EXT. PARKING LOT

Matt and Tom are walking to Matt's car.

TOM
And Matt, guess what?

MATT
What?

TOM
I didn't even use the program!
See, all we had to do was
believe in ourseleves!

Matt is about to argue but decides against it.

MATT
Sure, why not...

They get in the car and start driving as Matt
throws all of his papers out the window. They never
look back.

FADE OUT