

Youth on Fire

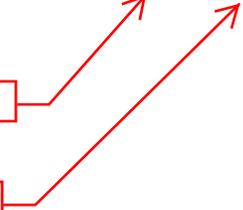
by

Olufemi S. Sowemimo

"OH-loo-feh-mee"



"Ess"



"SHOW-weh-MEE-moe"



CASTOR (V.O.)
It takes three things to start a
fire.

INT. COLLEGE LECTURE CLASSROOM - NIGHT

Two figures stand hugging in the room's center:

SARAFINA WYNGAARD (19, exotic, gorgeous). Drenched in some viscous yellow goop; stringy globules of it drip from her.

CASTOR POLLACK (22, gangly, geek-nouveau). Clutching Sarafina like a drowning man would a life preserver. His face a beaten and bloody mess.

Around them: overturned chairs. Shattered windows. Scattered glass. A whiteboard cracked from a human-sized impact crater.

Rivulets of the goop crawl down the walls from splatters, spilling into growing puddles on the floor.

Outside the windows, smoke billows and fires rage: a college campus set ablaze.

Sarafina's arms are at her sides. In one hand she twirls a simple Bic LIGHTER.

CASTOR (V.O.)
Oxygen.

CUT TO:

INT. HOSPITAL BURN WARD - DAY

A SEVERELY BURNED FIGURE on a bed in a sterile room. O2 tanks connected to a respirator facilitate his fractured BREATHING.

KEN (V.O.)
Heat.

CUT TO:

INT. GRASSY FIELD - NIGHT

Two silhouettes make love. A burning gazebo directly behind them casts their intertwining shadows.

SARAFINA (V.O.)
Fuel.

CUT TO:

EXT. CITY STREET - DAY

An ANGRY MOB full of teens and twenty-somethings fights a squad of police, overwhelming them with their numbers.

CASTOR (V.O.)
And all it takes to set it off...

INT. COLLEGE LECTURE CLASSROOM - NIGHT

The lighter dances through Sarafina's fingers.

She places her thumb on the igniter switch.

ALL (V.O.)
...is a spark.

CLICK. Before we see if it sparks, we:

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. ARIZONA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (AIT) CAMPUS - DAY

"Good Luck on Finals, and CONGRATS GRADUATES!!!"

The banner hangs high in an archway over a glorious college campus - the same shown burning moments ago. An unrelenting sun burns bright in the sky.

At the head of a fountain, the college mascot: a bear carved from oak, rearing on his hind legs. A placard beneath reads "The AIT Great Bear".

A DISTRESSED STUDENT exits a building, book bag slung over a shoulder, a crumpled paper in hand. He opens the paper-

ANGLE ON EXAM

Red marks cover the page like battle wounds: "Nonsense!" "Absurd." "You can do better", etc. Up top, a score of 13/50.

The Student squints at the banner, shielding his eyes from the sun. He drops his things and flips off the banner with both hands.

Then he turns his attention to the oaken bear.

DISTRESSED STUDENT
FUCK YOU, RAPE BEAR!

He flips off the bear with gusto.

DISTRESSED STUDENT

Screwed me right up the ass, you
stupid bear! You like that? Did you
like it, huh?

He crushes the paper and chucks it at the bear. Then pulls a
textbook from the bag, and throws it too.

CASTOR (V.O.)

Every school has its traditions.
One they all have in common, and
feel free to back me up here,
because we all know it's true, is
this: schools screw over students.

The student throws a calculator. Pencils. The whole damn bag.

CASTOR (V.O.)

Now, one that's pretty unique to
Arizona Tech is-

The student places his butt against the bear's crotch and
makes an anguished face, like he's being humped.

CASTOR (V.O.)

...we take getting screwed a little
more literally.

He pulls a phone from his pocket and takes a picture.

CASTOR (V.O.)

Not exactly striking a blow against
the academic hegemony...

KEN (V.O.)

Well, no, but- it's a statement,
right?

The furious student starts kicking the bear.

DISTRESSED STUDENT

(punctuating each word
with a kick)

Screw! You! Rape! Bear! I hate!
You! I hate! School! I hate! My
life!

Two uniformed CAMPUS POLICE grab the kid and shoo him along.

SARAFINA (V.O.)

It's a hollow statement.

CASTOR (V.O.)

Yeah, that's what I-