

CARUSO AND THE SWORD

A scrawny, bullied teen finds himself through the sport of fencing.

Paula Smith
Paula@Script2ScreenLLC.com

Fade In:

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CLASSROOM -- DAY

CARUSO (13 but looks about 12, short and slender), sleeps soundly with his head on his desk.

Caruso's teacher, CHARLENE (early 20's), hair in a bun, eighty years old in her dress and demeanor, stands with her arms crossed next to Caruso's desk.

Caruso's mother, ELAINE (35-40) stands next to the desk as well as Caruso's dad, JIMMY (35-40). Both parents look lost as to what to do about their son.

CHARLENE

This is why we don't encourage children to skip a grade.

ELAINE

He's doing okay in his other classes.

CHARLENE

No, he's not. We've checked.

Charlene is stern, slapping her hands after each point.

CHARLENE (CONT'D)

We need to give children a set bed time and insist that they do their homework.

Elaine's look changes from unhappy to angry.

ELAINE

Maybe it's lack of teaching skills rather than lack of sleeping.

CHARLENE

That's offensive.

Jimmy tries to smooth ruffled feathers.

JIMMY

Ten hours of sleep is enough for a child his age.

CHARLENE

We need to assure that the sleep occurs at home not at school.

Charlene raises her voice and smacks her hand on the desk.

CHARLENE (CONT'D)

We can't have this!

Caruso jumps. He looks around at his teacher and then his parents.

CARUSO

Crap.

Caruso puts his head back down.

CHARLENE

Come to my desk. We need to have a parent teacher conference and discuss the possibility of demotion back to middle school.

Elaine, Charlene, and Jimmy take seats around Charlene's desk. There is nothing on the desk but a folder and a pen.

Caruso drags behind them and slinks into a chair.

Charlene opens a folder, removes Caruso's report card and slaps it down on the desk. Math, reading, social studies, science, history, three D's and two F's.

Caruso looks at the three adults as Charlene flips through the folder with Caruso's work.

CARUSO

We are bored.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - CAFETERIA -- DAY

STUDENTS sit at the tables, some eating, some doing homework, some chatting.

A JADED CASHIER (70'S) sits at the end of the food line collecting money and scanning lunch cards.

A despondent Caruso grabs a tray off the stack of trays. He takes a milk and a small salad and moves down the line. The FOOD WORKER hands him a plate with food. He puts it on his tray.

SHAQ, (16), as big as his namesake, gets in line behind Caruso. If the chip on his shoulder was any bigger he'd trip over it.

Caruso picks up a chocolate pudding. Just as he puts the pudding on the tray, Shaq flips the tray up, over the railing past Caruso and onto the floor.

Shaq laughs.

SHAQ

Caruso. Guess you're lucky your mom didn't listen to Britney Spears.

Caruso looks at the mess on the floor and slinks back to the beginning of the line.

Shaq picks up a milk.

SHAQ (CONT'D)
We'd be calling you Britney.

Caruso picks up another tray.

Shaq calls after him and laughs at his own joke.

SHAQ (CONT'D)
Britney. Oh, Britney.

Shaq gets to the register. He points to Caruso.

SHAQ (CONT'D)
He's paying.

The cashier grabs the milk from Shaq's hand.

JADED CASHIER
I don't think so.

SHAQ
Shove your milk. They're all expired anyway.

BOBBI (14) happy-go-lucky, cherub-faced with no-frills hair, gets in line behind Caruso. She takes a tray.

BOBBI
You shouldn't take that from him.

CARUSO
I'll take care of it. As soon as I grow two feet and gain a hundred pounds.

Caruso puts a milk on his tray.

Bobbi checks the expiration date of several milks before she picks two. She puts one of the milks on her tray. Then she exchanges the milk on Caruso's tray for the other one she picked.

BOBBI
My sister takes Krav Mega. She got attacked outside work and the cops had to pull her off the guy - before they took him away in an ambulance.

Caruso takes a salad.

Bobbi puts a salad on her tray. She dumps another salad on top of the salad already on her tray and puts the empty dish back.

CARUSO

Susan with the pink hair and dog collar? She scares me.

BOBBI

My oldest sister, Karen.

Caruso takes a plate of food from the food worker.

CARUSO

Skinny. Short. Blue hair.

BOBBI

That's the one.

Bobbi takes a plate of food from the worker. She smells it and grimaces.

CARUSO

How come you're so normal?

BOBBI

Normal is relative. I whack people with swords.

TABLE

Caruso and Bobbi sit at the table and eat. JUSTIN (14) gawky, thin with curly light brown hair. A young Napoleon Dynamite.

Across the room Shaq tosses the tray of a SKINNY BOY WITH GLASSES.

Caruso watches the exchange with dismay.

CARUSO

Do you ever wish you were back in kindergarten?

Bobbi shakes her head "no."

BOBBI

The food servings and desks are too small.

CARUSO

At least back in middle school I wouldn't be the smallest.

BOBBI

You're not the smallest. And, you're
too smart to be demoted.

Justin watches SANDY (14), a female version of Justin
except for the braids and pink shirt. She sits with
several TEENAGE GIRLS laughing and giggling.

Caruso and Bobbi watch Justin.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Why don't you ask her out?

JUSTIN

She would never go out with me.
She's popular and good looking.

CARUSO

No mirrors in his house.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY -- DAY

A hallway with doors leading to offices.

Bobbi stands behind Caruso with her hands on his shoulders.
They face a door with "Counselor" printed on the glass.

CARUSO

I'll get picked on even more.

BOBBI

The school brags about their no
bullying policy.

Caruso turns away.

CARUSO

It won't help unless they have enough
bodyguards for every geek, nerd, and
loser in school.

Caruso walks down the hall.

Bobbi shouts after him.

BOBBI

You're not a loser.

EXT. HIGH SCHOOL -- DAY

The buses are lined up outside the school.

STUDENTS exit the school. Some get in their PARENTS'
cars and some get on the buses.

Caruso stands in a doorway. From the way he is pressed up against the door and wall one might think he is hiding. He stands there watching the buses.

Bobbi jumps from around the corner.

BOBBI

BOO!

Caruso jumps and clutches his heart.

CARUSO

Bobbi.

Bobbi laughs.

BOBBI

If you won't talk to the counselor then you need to take some kind of self-defense. Boxing.

Bobbi air-boxes.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Kung Fu.

Bobbi attacks an imaginary opponent.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Heeyah!

CARUSO

Maybe I could grow a foot.

BOBBI

Maybe you could grow six more and whack him like an octopus.

Bobbi slaps furiously at the air and laughs at her own joke.

Caruso scowls and solemnly heads for the bus.

CARUSO

The bus is here.

Bobbi follows.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -- DAY

Caruso boards a bus full of STUDENTS and walks down the aisle. Bobbi is behind him.

Shaq sits in the middle of the bus. He sticks his foot out to trip Caruso as he walks down the aisle.

Caruso effortlessly hops over Shaq's foot.

Caruso takes a seat in the back next to Justin.

JUSTIN

Tyler tried to trip me once.

BOBBI

Caruso needs to learn self defense.
What did you do?

JUSTIN

I fell on him with a cup of orange
juice when he was wearing white
shorts. A full cup of orange juice
is a good defense. About as good as
a cup of hot chocolate.

Caruso and Bobbi nod in agreement.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)

And you won't get detention even if
his dad is an attorney.

EXT. SCHOOL BUS -- DAY

Caruso, Bobbi, and Justin get off the bus.

BOBBI

If you took self-defense you could
get off at your own bus stop.

CARUSO

You don't like us going to your house?

JUSTIN

It's safer to travel in groups.
Even in middle class suburbia.

INT. CARUSO HOME - KITCHEN -- DAY

An average eat-in kitchen. A built-in desk in the corner.
In the middle is a table and chairs.

Caruso sets the table. He puts out silverware and four
plates.

Elaine makes a salad.

ELAINE

Are you feeling okay?

CARUSO

Huh?

ELAINE
Falling asleep in class isn't good.

CARUSO
I'm bored.

ELAINE
You need to do what you need to do
to be able to do what you have to.

Caruso stares at his mom.

ELAINE (CONT'D)
That didn't come out right.

CARUSO
You think?

ELAINE
What can we do so you do well in
your classes?

CARUSO
Find me an interesting teacher?
We're guinea pigs. She never taught
before.

ELAINE
She'll get better.

CARUSO
And she does that "we" thing.

ELAINE
You aren't doing well in any of your
classes.

CARUSO
Well is relative.

ELAINE
Doing better than D's.

CARUSO
I'm passing.

ELAINE
You're smart enough to be getting
A's.

CARUSO
That's the age old puzzle. What
does it take to keep the smart kids
entertained?

ELAINE

It's school. You aren't supposed to be entertained. You're supposed to learn.

CARUSO

Learning should be fun. Why would anyone want to learn anything that isn't fun? I watch the discovery channel and I don't fall asleep! And I learn lots! I watch the cooking channel and I can make a souffle better than my teacher.

ELAINE

Well. Well.

Elaine searches for something to say.

ELAINE (CONT'D)

Teachers aren't eligible for Emmy's.

CARUSO

Maybe if they were their students wouldn't fall asleep.

Elaine is stuck about what to say and just tosses the salad.

Caruso puts out glasses.

LATER

Caruso, Elaine, and JACK (10) Caruso's younger brother, sit at the table. Elaine fills each plate with salad.

JACK

What's for dinner?

CARUSO

It's Wednesday.

Jack looks at him.

CARUSO (CONT'D)

It's burgers and dogs.

Jack's head sinks.

JACK

We need to hide the grill.

Jimmy enters with a plate of barbecued burgers and hot dogs. He sets the plate down on the table and sits.

Caruso and Jack stare at the plate like they are going to vomit.

Caruso, Elaine, and Jack look at Jimmy. They all speak at once.

CARUSO
(in unison)
Potatoes and buns.

JACK
(in unison)
Potatoes and buns.

ELAINE
(in unison)
Potatoes and buns.

Jimmy gets up from the table and heads back to the deck.

CARUSO
We appreciate the modern sharing of duties but Jack and I are really sick of burgers and dogs three times a week.

JACK
Can't you teach him to make something else?

CARUSO
I never thought I'd say this but I've heard zucchini is good grilled.

ELAINE
I appreciate your dad making dinner.

CARUSO
Maybe he could do the laundry. Or vacuum.

JACK
I could learn to cook. Spaghetti doesn't look that hard.

ELAINE
Thanks, but we don't want to hurt your dad's feelings.

Jimmy enters with a plate of potatoes and buns.

Caruso gets up from the table.

CARUSO
I'll get the mayo.

JACK
Get the peanut butter, too.

JIMMY
Jack, how was school?

Caruso puts the mayo and peanut butter on the table.

JACK
Boring.

Jack grins at Caruso.

JACK (CONT'D)
But I didn't fall asleep.

Caruso takes the peanut butter off the table just as Jack grabs for it.

LATER

Elaine washes dishes. Jimmy clears the table.

Caruso trudges into the kitchen with a stack of schoolwork. He puts the books and supplies on the table.

CARUSO
How long are we gonna do this?

JIMMY
Until your grades get better.

Caruso sits.

CARUSO
I meant tonight.

JIMMY
Until all your homework's done.

Caruso drops his head onto the table.

CARUSO
I'll be here all night.

INT. CARUSO HOME - CARUSO'S BEDROOM -- DAY

The sun shines into Caruso's room. Caruso sleeps soundly when the alarm goes off. He thumps the snooze button and covers his face with a pillow.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY -- DAY

Caruso flies into a wall of lockers, his backpack and contents scattering. He slides down the locker until he sits on the floor.

Shaq looms over Caruso.

SHAQ

Britney.

Caruso looks up at him. He doesn't seem frightened - more like he has become accustomed to such treatment.

WHACK! A mop comes out of nowhere and smacks Shaq across the back of the head.

Shaq turns, rubbing his head.

Bobbi, wielder of the mop, stands in a fencing position mop in one hand, left hand curled up. She is dressed in fencing pants and a black t-shirt. Her backpack is on the floor next to her.

SHAQ (CONT'D)

Stupid.

Shaq tries to brush the mop away.

Bobbi is too fast for Shaq. She moves the mop under and over and under his hand, spins it, and plunges the mop squarely into his chest, sending him flying backwards into the lockers.

Bobbi waves the filthy fibers under Shaq's nose.

BOBBI

I picked this up outside the boys' bathroom.

She wiggles the mop.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Mmmm. Smell that bouquet.

Shaq grimaces and walks away, wiping his face with his shirt.

Bobbi thumps the mop on the floor triumphantly.

Caruso struggles to his feet and collects his scattered belongings.

CARUSO

Saved by a girl. Again.

BOBBI

Give it a couple of years. You'll be the rescuer.

CARUSO

Somewhere in America there's a school
where no one gets picked on.

Bobbi digs a form out of her backpack. She waves the
form in front of Caruso.

BOBBI

If you don't file a complaint, I
will.

CARUSO

Why would you file a complaint? You
seem capable of defending yourself.

Caruso trudges down the hall.

Bobbi looks over the form in her hand.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM -- DAY

MALE STUDENTS (14-15 years old) are in gym clothes. Shaq,
one of the biggest boys in the group, stands off to the
side alone.

KYLE, the gym teacher wears fencing pants and a black T-
shirt. Bobbi is next to him. She also wears fencing
pants and the black T-shirt.

There is a fencing strip and a scoreboard behind the strip.

KYLE

Today we start our fencing segment.
The local fencing club let us borrow
their equipment. Bobbi takes classes
at the club and will help demonstrate.

Kyle holds up a mask.

KYLE (CONT'D)

This is your mask. You must wear it
on when you fence. The only time
you are on the strip without it is
when the Judge checks your equipment
and when you salute your opponent.

Kyle grabs a glove.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Another piece of important safety
equipment is your glove. Even though
there is a spring tip on the blade
it can still cause a nasty bruise.

SERIES OF SHOTS

- A) Kyle holds up the vest and puts it on.
- B) Bobbi holds up the woman's breast plate.
- C) Kyle holds up the jacket and puts it on.
- D) Kyle and Bobbi hold up the body cords and loop them through the loop on their jacket.
- E) Kyle and Bobbi connect the cords to their blades.
- F) Kyle and Bobbi take a fencing position on the strip.

END SERIES OF SHOTS

Kyle holds three blades. An epee, a foil, and a saber.

KYLE (CONT'D)

There are three kinds of weapons.

He holds up each one as he names it.

KYLE (CONT'D)

A foil. A saber. And an epee.
We'll be fencing epee. The rules
and jackets are different for each
but you'll only be learning the epee.

Kyle holds up the epee.

KYLE (CONT'D)

On the tip is a spring. Make sure
it is not damaged. Treat your blade
like a weapon.

Some of the boys rough house. Kyle stops and stares at them. They slow their rough housing down but continue pushing and poking and laughing as they watch at Kyle.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Vladimir Smirnov, who won Gold at
the 1980 Olympics, was killed in
1982 during the World Championships
when a blade broke and went through
his mask . . .

This gets the boys' attention and they stop playing and look at the teacher more seriously. Kyle walks slowly and menacingly, glaring at the boys as he speaks.

KYLE (CONT'D)

. . . plunging into his brain and
killing him instantly.

He stops and returns to his normal teaching voice.

KYLE (CONT'D)

It was a sad day for fencing, but it also put into motion safety standards for masks.

Kyle holds up the epee and presses the spring tip.

KYLE (CONT'D)

The spring tip will budge when it is pressed against your opponent.

The scoreboard behind Kyle lights on the green side.

KYLE (CONT'D)

One of you will be attached to the green light and your opponent will be attached to the red light. When your light lights that means you have touched your opponent and you will score a point.

Kyle presses the tip again. The green light goes on.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Whoever gets to five points first wins that bout.

Kyle pushes the tip four more times.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Direct eliminations, also called D. E.'s are fifteen points instead of five.

Kyle puts the blade down and faces the students.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Everybody get in a line and face that wall.

The students get in a line.

KYLE (CONT'D)

If you are right-handed hold your right hand out.

The right-handed students put their right hand out.

KYLE (CONT'D)

If you are left handed hold your left hand out.

The left-handed students put their left hand out. Shaq is left-handed.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Now follow your hand with the same foot.

Kyle demonstrates the correct advance technique for right-handed fencers.

Kyle switches hands and demonstrates the correct advance technique for left-handed fencers.

The students clumsily advance. They have no rhythm.

Kyle shakes his head.

KYLE (CONT'D)

It makes it easier if the back foot follows the front foot.

Kyle demonstrates a smooth advance, again.

The students advance to the end of the gym.

KYLE (CONT'D)

When you get better at advancing I'll have you retreat, but for now turn around and continue to advance.

Kyle turns around and advances to the other wall. The students do the same thing.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - HALLWAY -- DAY

Caruso and Bobbi are at their lockers.

CARUSO

That was boring. Like dancing only worse.

BOBBI

It gets better. Wait until you actually get to fence someone.

CARUSO

You enjoy math, too.

BOBBI

Just because I do the work and study doesn't mean I like it. I plan on graduating and going to college some day. How are you going to earn a living?

CARUSO

I've got about ten years before I have to decide that.

BOBBI

Time flies. You turn around and the kids are grown.

CARUSO

Huh?

BOBBI

Don't you listen to your parents? Mine are always lamenting about how we aren't babies anymore.

CARUSO

That's what happens when kids listen to their parents. They talk crazy.

BOBBI

I'm not talking crazy. I'm concerned about eventually having to earn a living. Mortgage. Groceries. Cable. Internet. Fencing equipment.

Caruso thinks for a second.

CARUSO

Can I live with you?

Bobbi slams her locker and gives a dirty look to Caruso.

BOBBI

Not a chance. I don't need my parents whining about the worthless bum I married.

INT. CARUSO HOME - KITCHEN -- NIGHT

Elaine is at the kitchen desk paying bills.

Caruso enters. He looks at what his mom is doing.

ELAINE

How was school?

CARUSO

Boring. Are you paying bills?

She looks surprised at Caruso's question.

ELAINE

They won't pay themselves.

CARUSO

What kind of a job do you think I'll get when I'm older?

ELAINE

Not a very good one if your grades
don't pick up.

CARUSO

Would you mind if my wife and kids
lived here?

Elaine looks shocked.

ELAINE

What!?

CARUSO

I don't have a wife and kids.

Elaine looks relieved.

CARUSO (CONT'D)

Not now. I mean when I'm older.
And I get married. Can I bring my
wife and kids here to live?

ELAINE

Your dad and I are retiring to Hawaii.

CARUSO

Oh.

Caruso trudges out of the kitchen.

Elaine watches him, still confused, shaking her head.

EXT. BOBBI'S HOME -- NIGHT

Caruso rings the doorbell.

BOBBI'S MOM Answers the door.

BOBBI'S MOM

Hi Caruso. Bobbi is still at fencing.

Caruso looks at his watch.

BOBBI'S MOM (CONT'D)

They have a guest speaker this
evening. Some Olympic fencer.

Caruso nods and slinks down the steps.

BOBBI'S MOM (CONT'D)

I'll have her call you.

CARUSO

Thanks.

INT. SCHOOL BUS -- DAY

Caruso sits in the seat leaning against the window. Other STUDENTS are on board.

The bus stops and Bobbi buoyantly gets on.

She walks down the aisle and sits next to Caruso.

CARUSO
You didn't call.

BOBBI
I got home really late.

Bobbi digs in her back pack and pulls out a picture.

BOBBI (CONT'D)
I had my picture taken with an Olympic fencer. Look at the medal.

Caruso glances over at the picture. He's intrigued.

CARUSO
They give medals for fencing?

BOBBI
It's been an Olympic sport since the 1896 Olympics.

CARUSO
Is that your goal? To fence in the Olympics?

BOBBI
I haven't really thought about it.

Bobbi puts the picture back in her backpack.

CARUSO
Yeah, right.

Caruso leans his head against the window.

INT. HIGH SCHOOL - GYMNASIUM -- DAY

Students are lined up in the gym. They all wear fencing gear. They hold their masks and epee blades.

The fencing strips and scoring equipment are set up.

Kyle and Bobbi take their places on the strip. Bobbi has the red light and Kyle has the green light. They hook up their cords. They hold their masks in their left hands and salute with their blades with their right hands.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Red light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Green light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Green light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Red light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Green light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Red light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Green light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Red light.

Kyle and Bobbi fence.

Red light.

End series of shots.

Bobbi and Kyle remove their masks and shake hands.

Shaq leans over to Caruso.

SHAQ

I challenge you to a duel to the
death!

Kyle watches the exchange between Shaq and Caruso.

KYLE

Shaq! You're up!

Shaq takes his place on the strip. He wears a left-handed
jacket.

Kyle hooks Shaq up.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Shaq here is left-handed. Watch out for left-handed fencers. Most fencers are right-handed and it is sometimes difficult for a fencer to understand a left-handed fencer's moves.

Bobbi hooks up.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Check your blades.

Shaq stands there. Bobbi moves her weapon toward Shaq. He backs away.

Kyle grabs Shaq's blade and hits Bobbi's bell with the blade.

Bobbi does the same with her blade touching Shaq's bell.

Bobbi salutes. Shaq stands there.

KYLE (CONT'D)

It's common courtesy to salute your opponent before the bout.

Shaq salutes.

Bobbi and Shaq put their masks on. Bobbi has the green light, Shaq has the red light.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Fence.

Shaq creeps forward.

Bobbi lunges and scores a point.

Shaq takes off his mask.

SHAQ

She cheated.

KYLE

Hardly. Put your mask back on.

Shaq gallops toward Bobbi. She deftly moves to the side and Shaq runs past her. As he passes, she scores off his back.

Shaq removes his mask.

SHAQ

She hit me from behind.

KYLE

Then don't run past her.

Caruso laughs.

Shaq puts his mask back on and approaches Bobbi.

SERIES OF SHOTS

Bobbi and Shaq fence.

Green light.

Bobbi and Shaq fence.

Green light.

Bobbi and Shaq fence.

Green light.

END OF SERIES OF SHOTS.

Shaq takes off his mask.

Bobbi takes off her mask and approaches Shaq with her hand out.

Shaq starts to unclip himself.

KYLE (CONT'D)

It's customary to shake hands after the bout.

Shaq grudgingly shakes Bobbi's hand.

Caruso goes up to Bobbi.

CARUSO

That was awesome.

BOBBI

I'll give you some pointers.

Caruso and Bobbi go to a corner of the gymnasium.

Kyle points to two students who take their place on the mats.

CORNER OF THE GYMNASIUM

Bobbi coaches Caruso.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Say a fencer is coming at you and you want to deflect their blade. You do what is called a parry. There are a lot of intricacies but basically you slide your blade over which stops their blade.

Caruso looks confused.

BOBBI (CONT'D)

Put your mask on. We'll go over a couple of these things real quick.

Caruso puts his mask on.

MAIN GYMNASIUM STRIP

The two students fence.

The green light goes on.

KYLE

Halt. Five. Four.

The students remove their masks and start to unclip themselves.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Shake!

The students stop and shake each other's hand.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Shaq and Caruso! You're up!

CORNER OF THE GYMNASIUM

Caruso stops and looks terrified.

Bobbi tries to reassure him.

BOBBI

You'll do fine. You're faster than he is. And smarter.

Caruso nods, not really believing her.

CARUSO

Yeah.

Caruso takes a spot on the strip with the red side and connects his cord.

Shaq does the same, connecting to the green side, with a swagger and a glare at Caruso.

Caruso looks up at Shaq.

Shaq grins and waves his blade from side to side.

Caruso gulps and gives a pathetic wave to Shaq.

KYLE

Shaq. Salute correctly.

Shaq gives an emphatic salute.

Both fencers put their masks on.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Fence.

Shaq rushes toward Caruso.

Caruso sidesteps him and Shaq runs past.

Caruso hits Shaq in the back.

Shaq whips off his mask.

SHAQ

What's with the hitting in the back!?

KYLE

If you stay in front of your opponent
they won't be able to hit you in the
back. One. Zero.

Shaq angrily puts his mask back on.

Shaq approaches Caruso more slowly this time.

Shaq lunges.

Caruso parries and lunges scoring a point. Both boys
look at the scoreboard.

The red light is lit. Caruso does a "yes" sign.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Two. Zero.

They return to the start position and approach each other.

Caruso lunges and scores a point.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Three. Zero.

Caruso is standing taller, more confident.

Caruso advances toward Shaq. Shaq lunges. Caruso parries and flicks off Shaq's back, scoring another point.

Shaq removes his mask.

SHAQ

I didn't run past him and he still hit me in the back.

KYLE

It's called flicking and it is an acceptable touch. Four. Zero.

Shaq angrily puts his mask back on.

Both boys approach.

Shaq lunges.

Caruso quickly retreats leaving Shaq in an awkward position.

Caruso lunges while Shaq is still down.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Five. Zero.

Bobbi quietly claps her hands together quickly.

Caruso confidently removes his mask and shakes Shaq's hand.

KYLE (CONT'D)

Good job students. Next class we'll go over some of the moves you saw today.

Bobbi approaches Caruso.

BOBBI

You're a natural.

CARUSO

Something I'm actually good at?

BOBBI

Something you actually enjoy?

CARUSO

It was fun.

Caruso nods, realizing what he did.

CARUSO (CONT'D)

I beat Shaq.