

"Tommy Tucker, Motherf*cker"

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. GRANT MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY

A pristine, two-story brick building with immaculate grounds. The BUS DEPOT adjoins the school property.

Three flagpoles; the U.S. flag, the Ohio state flag, and the G.M.S. flag with the Blue Racer mascot.

INT. GRANT MIDDLE SCHOOL - FIRST FLOOR - DAY

A long, empty hallway. Lockers line the walls interspersed with classroom doors. All is quiet.

TOMMY TUCKER - 15 (V.O.)
(motivated)
Okay. Now go on. Get out. I got
shit to do.

At the far end of the hallway, TOMMY TUCKER (8th grade and 15) comes around the corner and heads right at us. He stops to let the image sink in - to no one in particular.

He wears a HALL ENFORCEMENT BADGE and a HIP-CLIP cell phone holder on his belt.

TOMMY TUCKER (V.O.)
This is me.

He looks to his sides and shakes his head, discouraged.

TOMMY TUCKER (V.O.)
Dammit. If I'm going to tell my
story I need a better intro.

Tommy does an about-face and goes back around the corner.

TOMMY TUCKER (O.S.)
What are you guys doing? You were
supposed to come with me.
(beat)
And three, two, one...

At the far end of the hallway, Tommy comes around the corner this time with a kid flanked to either side. A taller BOY and a shorter GIRL.

The school bell rings and kids flood the hallway. We can no longer see Tommy or his sidekicks.

TOMMY TUCKER (V.O./O.S.)
Son of a bitch.

Kids move through the hallway and to their classes and exit this hallway into others.

Tommy, still in the chaos, addresses the sidekicks.

TOMMY TUCKER (O.S.)
You guys get to your spots. I'll
get him isolated and you cover.

As the bell chimes again, kids vacate the hallway but Tommy still remains. He ducks in behind a row of lockers.

He peers out from behind them. Waiting.

A moment passes and a kid with a RED BACKPACK rounds the corner at the other end of the hall.

He is ALBERT URIBE (7th grade), a plus size kid with enterprising aspirations.

Albert stops at a locker, dials the combo, and just as the click of the unlock sounds...

TOMMY TUCKER (O.S.)
Let me see your hall pass.

Albert looks up startled, but not surprised.

ALBERT
Dammit, Tommy. What gives? I
thought we were cool.

Tommy strolls up, his right hand hovers over his hip-clip.

TOMMY TUCKER
I thought we were too, Bert. Seems
like things ain't so.

ALBERT
You know this shit gets old, right?
And the hip, again?

TOMMY TUCKER
What's in the backpack?

ALBERT
What's in the back-- we're at
school. I'm at my lock--

TOMMY TUCKER
 Why now? The bells have tolled.
 'Perchance maybe you are the one
 who may be so ill.'

ALBERT
 Ill is right. My mom just dropped
 me off from the doctor's. Is that
 okay with you?

TOMMY TUCKER
 Lies. C'mon, Bert. What's in the
 bag? You know I know.

ALBERT
 Seriously, Tommy. Leave me alone.
 I've got to get to class.

TOMMY TUCKER
 Well go on then. Make your book
 exchange and be on your way.

ALBERT
 Then leave me alone. I'm not--

TOMMY TUCKER
 --you're not going to do it because
 there aren't any books in your bag,
 you don't have a doctor's note, and
 this isn't your locker.

ALBERT
 Jesus, Tommy.

Albert and Tommy hear a CHIRP CHIRP noise. Tommy looks at
 his phone. A text message. [Note: all TEXTS and IMs will be
 in italics.]

KATIE CAT (TEXT)
sum1 coming

Tommy quickly grabs Albert by his shirt and drags him to the
 nearby JANITOR'S CLOSET. Tommy pulls out a KEY, unlocks it,
 and pulls Albert in.

JANITOR'S CLOSET

Tommy yanks the pull chain illuminating the single bulb.

He rifles through Albert's backpack. Finds a zip-lock stash
 of marijuana. Drops the backpack. Freaks out a little.

TOMMY TUCKER
What the hell is this? Where are
the Red Hots?

Albert resists. Tommy grabs an empty five gallon bucket,
flips it over, and sets it under the light bulb.

TOMMY TUCKER
Sit!

Albert is seated, but too low for Tommy. As he's about to
address Albert, he stops.

TOMMY TUCKER
Get up.

Tommy grabs an unopened box of industrial trash bags and
places it on top of the bucket (he wants Albert closer to
the interrogation bulb).

Just as Albert sits, Tommy gets right in his face.

TOMMY TUCKER
What is that doing in my school?

Albert leans back from Tommy.

ALBERT
Seriously, Tommy. Cut it out.

TOMMY TUCKER
I need answers, Bert.

ALBERT
You need help. Please let me just
put my stuff in my locker.

Tommy pulls out a folded piece of paper.

TOMMY TUCKER
Let's see...Ah, here it is. Albert
Uribe. Locker assignment 408. But
that's upstairs.

ALBERT
Please, man, let this one go.

TOMMY TUCKER
Let it go? We haven't even found
out what it is yet.

A polite knock at the door.

VICE PRINCIPAL PHILIP COLLINS (O.S.)
Mr. Tucker, I saw you enter the
room with Mr. Uribe in tow. Open
the door, please.

Albert sighs with relief. Believes he's off the hook.

Tommy cracks open the door.

TOMMY TUCKER
(hushed)
Phil? I'm working.

VICE PRINCIPAL COLLINS (O.S.)
Principal Collins. And you're done
working.

TOMMY TUCKER
Vice Principal Phil. No I'm not.

From Albert's POV:

He can't quite make out the words and watches confused.

Back to Tommy:

VICE PRINCIPAL COLLINS (O.S.)
Five more minutes.

TOMMY TUCKER
Thank you, Phil.

VICE PRINCIPAL COLLINS (O.S.)
No detention for him. You've met
your allowance.

TOMMY TUCKER
I'm onto something, Phil. "I can
feel it. Coming in the air
tonight." Ya know?

Tommy closes the door with a grin on his face. Albert's
face, however, is not happy.

ALBERT
What. The hell. Was that?

Tommy eyes the backpack and then Albert.

TOMMY TUCKER
We're on the clock. Tell me about
the stash or I hand over the bag.

ALBERT
C'mon, Tommy. I can't. I mean,
seriously can't. And I swear it's
better for both of us--

TOMMY TUCKER
(disappointed)
--Bert, Bert, Bert, Bert, Bert,
Bert, Berrrrrt. What is it that I
have to fear? I think somebody
needs a reminder of who I am.

ALBERT
Tommy, stop screwin' around.

Vice Principal Collins KNOCKS on the janitor's door.

TOMMY TUCKER
In fact, it'll be a nice little
moment before you are hauled out.

VICE PRINCIPAL COLLINS (O.S.)
Tommy?

The loudness of the knocking increases. Albert squirms.

ALBERT
Please. Don't.

Tommy picks up the backpack and starts towards the door. He
looks back at Albert.

TOMMY TUCKER
This is a real shame. 'Albert had
so much potential' they'll say.

Vice Principal Collins is now POUNDING on the door.

VICE PRINCIPAL COLLINS (O.S.)
TOMMY! I'm warning you.

TOMMY TUCKER
I am going to miss the candy and--

ALBERT
--Okay okay okay.

The knocking stops. Albert exhales.

TOMMY TUCKER
(loudly)
Phil, gonna need another minute.

Tommy mimes firing dual six-shooters. He slaps one end of his hip-clip holder and his phone spins (the equivalent of a gunslinger twirling his gun before holstering it).

EXT. GRANT MIDDLE SCHOOL - SIDE LOT - NIGHT

Exterior lights illuminate the parking lot. Two kids hide in the shadows of the building.

A vibrating BUZZ BUZZ. The short kid pulls something from a pocket. A light comes on and reveals the face of KATIE CAT.

KATIE CAT

It's a text from Tommy asking where we are.

Katie types into her phone. Waits. BUZZ BUZZ.

KATIE CAT

He says to 'look up.' Stay here.

KATIE CAT (6th grade), short and scrappy, emerges from the shadows.

She looks up and sees Tommy, fists on hips, standing on the roof. Striking a pose.

KATIE CAT

(to herself)

What an idiot.

(to the kid in the shadow)

Dougie, get out here.

Trotting out of the darkness comes DOUGLAS "DOUGIE" DAVIS (7TH grade). He's a tall, stocky kid with Down Syndrome. Tommy affectionately refers to him as "DOUGIE DOWNS."

DOUGIE DOWNS

Whut is it, Katie?

Katie nods towards the roof. Dougie looks up.

DOUGIE DOWNS

(excited, loud)

Whoa! Tummy, you look like Sup--

KATIE CAT

--Dougie be quiet.

DOUGIE DOWNS

(whispers)

He looks like Supahman.

Tommy descends the roof ladder, locks the access cage, and approaches the sidekicks.

TOMMY TUCKER
Dougie Downs!

DOUGIE DOWNS
(big smile)
Tummy Tucker!

KATIE CAT
What were you doing up there?

TOMMY TUCKER
I was being lookout...and working
on my bat signal.

KATIE CAT
Bat sig...I don't want to know.
Look, I have a plan so you guys
listen up--

TOMMY TUCKER
--I have the plan. It's still early
in the year, rookie. You've got the
title, not the badge.

Katie smirks. Tommy motions them in closer.

TOMMY TUCKER
Here's the deal. Albert says he
only carries drugs. He puts them in
a locker and doesn't know where
they go from there.

KATIE CAT
Doubtful. I bet he's--

Katie notices Tommy's look. Shuts up. Dougie grins.

TOMMY TUCKER
He also said, convincingly, that
something is happening at the bus
garage tonight around nine thirty.
Gives us about twenty minutes.

KATIE CAT
--Or we're just wasting our time.

TOMMY TUCKER
Dougie Downs, I want you on one of
the buses close to the garage so
you can video it--

DOUGIE DOWNS

--Yes, soor.

TOMMY TUCKER

Katie Cat, I need you in the
dumpster near the gate for the--

KATIE CAT

--Forget it. I am not--

TOMMY TUCKER

--It's the recycling dumpster.

KATIE CAT

This is because I'm a girl.

TOMMY TUCKER

No. This is cause you're small. And
you took an oath. C'mon.

Tommy dashes off and the sidekicks follow.

EXT. GRANT MIDDLE SCHOOL - BUS DEPOT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The kids approach the fence gate. Tommy unlocks it.

KATIE CAT

I should get in position first.

Tommy nods in agreement. The kids shuffle over to the nearby
recycling dumpster. Three separate doors labeled: "PAPER" -
"PLASTIC" - "CANS"

A large, weathered decal also reads: "NO CAN LEFT BEHIND"

Tommy slides open the "PAPER" door. Katie looks hesitant.

TOMMY TUCKER

It'll be okay. Make sure to get the
license plate number.

(off Katie's look)

You want the badge, you pay your
dues. Right, Dougie?

DOUGIE DOWNS

That's wight.

Katie assents.

KATIE CAT

What are you going to do?

TOMMY TUCKER
When the time is right, I will
introduce myself.

Dougie and Katie look at each other uncertain. Tommy moves
to lift Katie into the dumpster.

TOMMY TUCKER
If anything goes wrong, just stay
in your spots until it's safe.
(to Katie)
And make sure he gets home.

Tommy puts his hands under Katie's arms and lifts. Katie's
feet barely come off the ground.

Katie chuckles at Tommy's effort. Dougie giggles too.

TOMMY TUCKER
Shut up. It's from climbing the
ladder. Dougie, give me a hand.

DOUGIE DOWNS
Tummy, maybe we shood call the
cops. Or tell our pairwents.

TOMMY TUCKER
Don't worry. We'll be home by ten.
If there really are drugs, we'll
call the police in the morning.
Trust me, I'm Tommy Tu--

The sound of cars fast approaching. Blue and red lights
dance off the school and rows of buses.

TOMMY TUCKER
(to himself)
Albert.
(to the sidekicks)
Get outta here. I'll lead'em to the
buses and lose'em.
(serious, to Katie)
Dougie doesn't get busted. Okay?
Get him home. GO!

Katie and Dougie take off.

TOMMY TUCKER
See you at school tomorrow!

Tommy heads for the depot gate as cop cars pull into the
lot.

He opens the gate and enters the...

BUS GARAGE LOT

He swings the gate back and takes off in between the buses. He hears car doors and footsteps in pursuit.

Tommy cuts through a couple buses and over a couple rows. He looks behind him. Stops. Adrenaline fueled breathing.

Footsteps and voices. Radio chatter.

Tommy darts over another row. Looks behind him...runs into a side-view mirror. Hits the ground, heavy.

As he tries to get up, he sees something. Someone. A RED-HEADED TEENAGE GIRL dressed in black hiding under a bus.

He's locked into her gaze.

TOMMY TUCKER
(out of breath)
Hey there...I'm...I'm Tommy.

She smiles. Footsteps closing in. Tommy forces himself up.

TOMMY TUCKER
I'm gonna run away now.

Tommy spies the perimeter fence and makes a break for it. Running at half speed. Lethargic. He leaps for the fence.

About halfway up the seven foot fence, Tommy pauses. Tries to climb. Loses his grip and falls back to the earth.

Two policemen reach him.

SERIES OF SHOTS OVER SILENCE

-Tommy lies on the ground, losing consciousness.

-Officers trying to lift him up. His body limp.

-A stretcher being loaded into an ambulance.

-The ambulance racing down the street.

-Tommy's body is transferred to a bed in the ER.

-A nurse cuts away his shirt revealing a prominent SURGICAL SCAR across his ABDOMEN.

-The medical professionals move with greater urgency.

END OF SERIES

INT. HOSPITAL - HALLWAY - DAY

STILL OVER SILENCE

We have a slightly obstructed view through the glass wall into Tommy's room, which is filled with sunlight.

We see the backs of a man and woman holding hands. A doctor holds a chart, addresses them.

Tommy lies in bed, stares intently at the doctor as he explains the situation to the family.

Tommy's expression gradually changes from "So what do we do?" to "Nothing can be done."

And just like that, Tommy becomes a kid again. The emotion envelopes him, as do his parents. Uncontrollable sobs, convulsions and...love.

As the doctor slides open the door to leave, we can hear...

TOMMY TUCKER
(heavy sobbing)
I don't want them to know. I don--

INT. TUCKER HOUSE - TOMMY'S BEDROOM - DAY

A bed. A computer desk. Office chair and wheel mat. Carpet.

A teenager's room indeed. Clutter and stuff.

Tommy lies awake on his bed. Alone in the quiet.

CHIRP CHIRP. Tommy grabs his phone off the night stand.

KATIE CAT (TEXT)
need 2talk

Tommy is indifferent. Types. Sends.

TOMMY TUCKER (TEXT)
wrong#

CHIRP CHIRP. We see "video message received." Taps play.

ON PHONE

A dirt path and trees. Camera aimed on nothing specific. We HEAR some voices. One of them is Katie.

KATIE CAT
Excuse me! I'm trying to get home.

BOYS' VOICES laughing. Words indistinguishable.

KATIE CAT
Leave me alone! Don't touch me!

The video becomes extremely shaky and chaotic. Katie screams as she gets pelted with fists. Boys laughing.

Then we HEAR her hit the ground and all we see is sky. Sounds of a little girl crying.

Tommy bolts up in his bed. Types furiously. Sends.

TOMMY TUCKER (TEXT)
Are you okay?

A KNOCK on his bedroom door.

TOMMY TUCKER
Go away!

A muffled voice from the other side of the door.

KATIE CAT
(upset)
I'm not okay.

Tommy moves quickly to the door and opens it. There stands Katherine "KATIE CAT" Tucker. She runs in and hugs Tommy. Her face covered with tear soaked dirt.

KATIE CAT
They want the drugs back.

TOMMY TUCKER
Did mom see you?

KATIE CAT
No. She's not home yet.
(sniffles)
They said Dougie's next.

He holds his sister. Katie steps back wiping her face.

KATIE CAT
What are you going to do?

Tommy doesn't reply. Looks uninterested in doing anything.

KATIE CAT
You have to do something, Tommy.

TOMMY TUCKER
I'll give them back.

KATIE CAT
That's it? What about everything
else? What about your school?

TOMMY TUCKER
Katie, there's no--

KATIE CAT
--The Tommy I know wouldn't take
this. He'd find a way to stop the
drugs. He'd find a way to take his
school back.
(beat)
The Tommy I know would get the guys
who did this to his sister!

Tommy paces. Katie's rage lessens.

KATIE CAT
The brother I knew beat the
impossible. And he should remind
others what he's capable of. And if
you don't, I will.

A whirlwind of thoughts go through Tommy's head.
Contemplating. Thinking. Driving. And...a spark.

TOMMY TUCKER
You are absolutely right, Katie. So
right. Ha. And people thought they
couldn't stand me before.

Despite the mud and the scrapes, Katie is all in.

KATIE CAT
If you pull this off, people will
tell your story for years.

TOMMY TUCKER
Yes they will. They'll be like 'and
then he did this' and 'I heard he
said that' and and...and they'll
screw it all up. They won't do my
story justice. Or, they'll
romanticize the shit out of it.
Yuck. They'll turn it into some
Lifetime piece of garbage and women

TOMMY TUCKER
will cry, probably the men too,
kids will rejoice. I want to vomit
already.

Tommy sits down at his desk and fires up the computer.

TOMMY TUCKER
I'm the only one that can tell my
story.
(beat)
Mom should be home any minute. Go
get cleaned up and we'll blame how
you look on me.

Tommy clicks the mouse and adjusts the webcam. His face
appears on his monitor.

KATIE CAT
Well, this is your fault.

Tommy nods and clicks record on the video interface.

TOMMY TUCKER
(motivated)
Okay. Now go on. Get out. I got
shit to do.

He looks into the camera.

TOMMY TUCKER
This is me.
(beat)
Dammit. If I'm going to tell my
story I need a better intro.

Tommy does a 360 spin in his chair, pushes off the desk, and
rolls backwards. The wheels hit the carpet. Chair tips over.
Tommy spills onto the floor.

TOMMY TUCKER
Son of a bitch.

He picks up the chair and calmly sits back down.

TOMMY TUCKER
I'll just edit that part out.
(beat)
I thought we should start by
getting acquainted but that'd be a
waste of time. Here's what you need
to know--
(beat)

TOMMY TUCKER

--I'm a Hall Enforcement Officer currently on suspension. I was found trespassing on school grounds. I'm suspected of cutting the brake lines on several school buses while trespassing--

(beat)

The police showed up responding to an anonymous tip about a drug deal. Anonymous my ass.

(beat)

I'm personally going to put a stop to this shit. I have a nice little video of the Vice Principal and a teacher's aid, so I'm expecting little resistance.

(beat)

I've got an inoperable neuroblastoma and a month to live. And I'm not telling anyone. I can't deal with pity. It's not my first neuroblastoma, but it will be my last.

(laughs)

Truthfully, that first one cured me. I was a poster child caught up in the bullshit haze of life. That first diagnosis really put it all into perspective. But I went another direction. I mean, who's going to yell at the kid with cancer? So I test limits and push people.

(beat)

But it's their bullshit that makes me sick. Even as they watch this, they'll be shaking their heads and thinking they know better than me. How I should behave or how I should talk. They don't know me. Eat me! Like they have all the answers. I can hear them now. Judging me and blaming my parents. Or saying to themselves 'What makes him so special?' or 'Who the hell does he think he is?'

(beat)

Who am I?

(right into the camera)

I'm Tommy Tucker, motherfucker!