INT. PROFESSOR JEROME'S CLASSROOM - DAY

Cad and Simon sit among fifteen other BOYS. PROFESSOR JEROME, a priest, turns his chair and sits like a "cool teacher." He leads the class in reciting *Julius Caesar's Notes on the Gallic War*, all from memory. He holds a small leather BALL.

**JEROME** 

...et minus facile fīnitimīs bellum īnferre possent;

Cad looks around the room. He sees Hugh gazing sheepishly out a window. Roger and Walter are huddled, GOSSIPING quietly.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Because of these things, it came to pass that they both roamed less widely and were able to bring war to their neighbors less easily.

Roger looks up to meet Cad's eye. Cad gives a small smile. Roger returns a confused, uninviting glare. Embarrassed, Cad turns his attention back to the front of the class.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Think about what Caesar is really speaking about. How does the physical environment breed conflict in a population? Walter, pick us up: Qua ex parte...

Jeromee throws the ball across the room to Walter, who catches it, stands, and searches his memory.

WALTER

Qua ex parte... hominēs bellandī cupidī... dolōre... shut up...

The class LAUGHS at Walter's struggle. Cad looks over at Simon in the seat diagonal from him. He watches as Simon carves CARTOON BREASTS into the desk with his chewing stick.

WALTER (CONT'D)

Er...magno dolōre afficiēbantur. On which part... on which ground, the men, eager of warring... were affected by great grief.

Simon notices Cad looking over his shoulder and WHISPERS.

SIMON

It's tits.

**JEROME** 

'At a boy. Cheer him on.

The boys all BANG on their desks.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Let's give our new fellow a try, eh? Give it a go, Simon. Skip on ahead to *Hīs rēbus*.

SIMON

I'm afraid I am a bit underprepared.

**JEROME** 

Quite alright. First day.

Jerome takes a book, the written Caesar's Notes, from his front desk and has the student's pass it back to Simon. He hesitantly opens the book and finds the page.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Page 33. At your own pace. Walter, pass him the ball.

Walter throws the ball to Simon but - purposefully - misses high and pelts Simon just above the eye.

SIMON

Jesus fuck!

**JEROME** 

Woah, language! Enough! All of you.

SIMON

He fucking pelted me!

**JEROME** 

Enough!

SIMON

Where'd you learn to aim, you fat whale?

WALTER

Here in England. How about you, mate?

**JEROME** 

Walter, Simon, sit down.

SIMON

JEROME (CONT'D)

I think he knocked my eyeball You're fine. Pick it up. out of its socket. Do something about it! He hit me! You just gonna ignore

Silence!

that?

Jerome stands and grabs a beating stick. He beelines for Simon and whips his arm. Simon YELLS. Everyone goes silent.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Oxford does not tolerate foul language and disrespect. You'd best learn that quick, lad. Be grateful it's me giving you that lesson. Professors here can be pretty tough, but I like you boys. I get you. Right?

STUDENTS

Yeah./Right, sir.

Jerome returns to his desk. Simon sits. Cad watches.

**JEROME** 

You're a man of Merton College, now. So, Hīs rēbus.

Simon picks the ball off the ground. Cad sees him holding back anger and embarrassment. Simon's Latin pronunciation is rough, even compared to Walter.

SIMON

Righteous. Well...it says here...Hīs rēbus addūcti et autōritāte...

(Pronouncing this with an Italian soft "q") Orgetorigis permotī...

**JEROME** 

Orgetorigis. With a hard "g."

SIMON

Oh, well fuck me, I guess...

**JEROME** 

That's quite enough. Sit down.

The class LAUGHS. Simon sits and slams the book closed.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Would anyone care to bail out Mister Postel? Anyone?

No one raises their hands at first, making it as awkward for Simon as possible. Finally, Cad raises his.

JEROME (CONT'D)

Cad, m'boy. We're glad to have you back. Take it away.

Cad stands. He's about to speak...

JEROME (CONT'D)

Hand Cad the ball, please, Simon.

Simon looks up at Cad with disdain. He hands him the ball. Cad takes it. He recites confidently and without mistake. Simon looks up, eyes wide, impressed by Cad's aptitude.

CAD

Hīs rēbus addūcti et autōritāte Orgetorigis permōtī cōnstituērunt ea quae ad proficīscendum pertinērent, comparāre, iūmentōrum et carrōrum quam māximum numerum coemere, sēmentēs quam māximās facere, ut in itenere cōpia frūmentī suppeteret, cum proximīs cīvitātibus pācem et amīcitiam confirmare. Led by these things and by the counsel of Orgetorix they decided to move those things which were pertinent to go forth, to prepare, to purchase as much as the greatest number of beasts of burden and of carts, to make as much as the greatest number of sowings, that on the journey, a plenty of corn might be in store, to confirm peace and friendship with the nearest states.

**JEROME** 

Well done. Good lord, well done indeed. Give it for Cad, everyone. Next, to Roger.

The class BANGS their desks. Cad tosses the ball to Roger and sits. As Roger starts RECITING the next verse, Cad looks over to Simon. Simon refuses to look back at him.

INT. MERTON COLLEGE LIBRARY - DAY

Cad and Simon sit opposite one another at a table in a small, dimly lit library.

Cad practices his letter-writing, switching between reading a manual and replicating the format on parchment. Simon doodles in the margin of his pages.

CAD

Venerabili domino suo. Then the recipient. You writing or what?

SIMON

You've got it, mate.

CAD

If Latin's not your thing, I think we have we some Joachimite reading.

Simon SNICKERS mockingly.

CAD (CONT'D)

What's funny?

SIMON

Ignore me.

CAD

(Under his breath)

Superbum sequitur humilitas.

INSERT SUBTITLES: Pride brings a person low.

SIMON

What was that?

CAD

Ignore me.

SIMON

What did you say?

CAD

Read a book and find out.

Pause. Simon smiles. He gathers his papers and rises.

CAD (CONT'D)

Where are you going?

STMON

Town.

CAD

We're not done.

SIMON

I'm done, sad boy.