

The Flippin Ninja

written by

Chris Loveland

EXT. AMERICAN NINJA WARRIOR COURSE, SEATTLE

The course, equipped with various ropes, pads, and trampolines, vacantly waits its next challenger.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOOTH OVERLOOKING COURSE

Akbar Gbaja-Biamila and Matt Iseman stand stoically staring into the camera.

AKBAR

Welcome back all, we're almost ready to see the main event of the night: everybody's favorite American ninja warrior: Captain NBC, Jamie Rahn. Before that though, we have one more run.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURSE.

Bill walks onto the course with his head down gently waving to the crowd. The countdown begins and Bill looks up with an inspired intensity. Today is his day.

MATT (V.O.)

Here we have Bill Fletcher, also known as The Flippin Ninja.

AKBAR (V.O.)

Why do they call him the Flippin Ninja, Matt? Is he a high flying acrobat? Can we expect to see some flips this run?

Bill speeds through the first obstacle.

MATT (V.O.)

No, Akbar, no flips from this Flippin Ninja. This is Bill's first year competing. He calls himself the Flippin Ninja after his tiny home town of Flippin, Arkansas.

Bill narrowly skates through the second obstacle.

MATT (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Flippin is a town of only 1300, and I'll be darned if at least half of them aren't in this crowd tonight to watch forty-five year old family man Bill Fletcher. Fletcher has the chance of a lifetime right now.

AKBAR (V.O.)
Especially running right before Captain NBC, this run could be great exposure for the forty-five year old HR rep.

MATT (V.O.)
He's carving through this course with ease Akbar. I haven't so much as a slip from him so far.

Bill confidently crawls onto the third obstacle (some kind of Mad Max looking monkey bars).

AKBAR (V.O.)
He's not slowing down either, Matt--
-OH NO!!

MATT (V.O.)
He caught himself!! Can he save it!!

Bill slips off the top of the monkey ladder and hangs off the bar, the next bar just out of reach. The audience gasps.

AKBAR (V.O.)
Oh no, Matt. This looks like the end for the Flippin Ninja.

Bill stays hanging for a long time without moving. He twitches on the bar, attempting to make a move, the audience cheers him on.

MATT (V.O.)
Don't speak too soon Akbar, Bill could save this. We've seen crazy things happen on this course. Can Bill make magic again tonight?

Bill continues hanging, and meekly reaches his arms up to no avail. Time is slowly passing. The crowd's energy fades out.

AKBAR (V.O.)
Well, let's go down to the sideline where Bill's lovely wife, Irene, joins our very own Zuri Hall.

Bill is still noticeably gently swaying on the bar, clearly unable to move forward.

CUT TO:

EXT. SIDELINE OF COURSE

ZURI

Wow, Bill's really clinging on for dear life, do you think he'll make it through?

IRENE

No. No chance.

ZURI

(Shocked, now fake laughing)

Don't think he has the strength?

Irene looks into the camera, her expression: lifeless.

IRENE

He has the strength, but to make it back up, he'll have to take a risk. That's not my Bill. He'll just cling and cling, with no plans to advance until he's too exhausted to hold on, then he'll finally blissfully crash.

ZURI

Oh, well. I--uh--don't know what to say. Back to you guys in the booth.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOOTH OVERLOOKING COURSE

Matt and Akbar both look visibly shocked. A long pause.

MATT

That was not the sentiment I expected.

AKBAR

No me neither, Matt. Let's go back to Bill.

CUT TO:

EXT. COURSE.

Bill hangs from the bars like a scarecrow. His sad eyes seem on the brink of tears.

Bill's hands finally slips and he falls to the water. He does not move a muscle on his fall, then floats frozen in the water beneath the obstacle like a dead fish.

AKBAR (V.O.)
Down goes Fletcher!

Bill does not move in the pool.

MATT (V.O.)
Is-is he okay? It wasn't a far fall but he is not moving. I cannot tell if it is sadness induced, or if he is seriously injured.

AKBAR (V.O.)
I'm going to go with sadness on this one Matt.

CUT TO:

EXT. BOOTH OVERLOOKING COURSE

The two commentators stand silently for a moment. Finally Matt speaks.

MATT
The way he just crumbled off the obstacle, and floated in the pool like a sad, lonely, turd---I have to tell ya Akbar, that was bone-chilling.

AKBAR
His wife's lack of faith was really confirmed.

Matt and Akbar both noticeably shift and face another camera.

MATT
Now the moment you've all been waiting for: Captain NBC!