

# Michelangelo

By

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Based on the Novel "The Agony and the Ecstasy"

By

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FADE IN:

EXT. FLORENCE, ITALY, 1488 A.D. - EARLY MORNING

ESTABLISHING SHOT. Quiet Florentine streets bathed in golden morning light. A city not yet awoken.

INT. BEDROOM - CONTINUING

MICHELANGELO BUONARROTI, age 13, gangly, dark haired with large set eyes. Sits in front of a mirror examining the details of his own face.

He looks down at a sketch pad. It is an accurate and detailed portrait of his awkward self.

VOICE OVER

If beauty is withheld... plain  
features may still please the eye.  
But deny someone proportion... and  
the result would be unkind.

He frowns. Erases portions of his eyes, forehead, cheeks and lips. Then redraws them. Making his chin stronger, lips fuller. His eyes more proportioned.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

Like plans for the facade of a  
Duomo... a face should be approved  
before it is given birth.

Someone WHISTLES from the street below. Moving to the window, He sees GRANACCI, a blond, blue eyed 19 year old, waving to him.

MICHELANGELO

Aspetta. I'll be right there.

Careful to not awaken his four brothers still asleep, Michelangelo hides his drawings under a large bed and quietly slips out of the room.

EXT. STREET - VIA DEI BENTACCORDI - CONTINUING

Michelangelo exits the building. Approaches Granacci who slaps him on the shoulder.

GRANACCI

I can't believe it. You're actually going with me this time?

MICHELANGELO

It's my birthday. A present to myself.

They start walking.

GRANACCI

Remember what I told you about Ghirlandaio? I've been his apprentice for five years. I know him well. He wants to be appreciated. So be humble.

MICHELANGELO

Yes. You've told me many times.

GRANACCI

Let's hurry. Early morning is the best time to see him. Before he starts drawing.

They quicken their pace through the narrow streets. Classic structures of Florence provide their backdrop.

- magnificent stone piles of the Bargello
- rough hewn blocks of the Pazzi Palace
- stone palaces of the Old Irons
- arches and towers of the Palazzo della Signoria

Something catches Michelangelo's eye. He stops abruptly in front of a tall niche of the Orsanmichele.

Granacci notices and runs back to him.

GRANACCI (CONT'D)

What is it?

Michelangelo is gazing up at Donatello's marble statue of St. Mark.

MICHELANGELO

This is definitely the greatest of all art.

GRANACCI

What is?

MICHELANGELO

This... Sculpture.

GRANACCI

You can't be serious?

MICHELANGELO

Is this marble not beauty?

GRANACCI

You are seeking an apprentice with one of the master painters of Florence. I advise you to speak only of the beauty of paint.

INT. GHIRLANDAIO STUDIO - MORNING

A large high ceiling room filled with the busy clutter of a painters workshop.

Rough plank tables. Stacks of colored cartoons of completed frescoes. Paper, pens, brushes, charcoal, volumes of manuscripts, all strewn about...

Six youths of various age are immersed in tasks of cleaning and preparation.

Granacci and Michelangelo enter. They approach a raised platform at the back of the studio.

GHIRLANDAIO, 43, thin and wiry, with long black hair and piercing dark eyes, is busy sketching.

GRANACCI

Scusi Signor Ghirlandaio.... Uh,  
this is my friend Michelangelo...  
the one I spoke about.

Ghirlandaio looks up from his drawings and stares.

Michelangelo squirms under the prolonged silent examination.

GHIRLANDAIO

And who is your father?

MICHELANGELO

Lodovico di Lionardo Buonarroti-  
Simoni.

GHIRLANDAIO

I have heard the name. How old are  
you?

MICHELANGELO

Thirteen.

GHIRLANDAIO

We start apprentices at ten. Where  
have you been for the past three  
years?

MICHELANGELO

Wasting my time at Urbino's school  
of grammar.

A slight smile from Ghirlandaio. He puts down his pen.

GHIRLANDAIO

Can you draw?

MICHELANGELO

I have the ability to learn.

GRANACCI

You're small for thirteen. Too  
frail for the heavy work in this  
studio.

MICHELANGELO

One does not need large muscles to draw.

Granacci flinches at the quick sarcastic response.

MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

I'm sorry. I didn't mean to offend.

Ghirlandaio nods. Rises from his desk.

GHIRLANDAIO

Very well. Suppose you sketch for me. What will it be?

Michelangelo scans the studio.

MICHELANGELO

The studio perhaps?

Ghirlandaio laughs.

GHIRLANDAIO

Granacci. Give your friend some paper and charcoal. Now if you will excuse me, I must return to my work.

Ghirlandaio goes back to his desk.

Granacci gathers some material. He follows Michelangelo to the doorway where they take a seat.

GRANACCI

(whispering)

Why did you have to pick something so difficult?

Michelangelo ignores him. Goes straight to work...

With quick speed, his hand blurs through a detailed sketch of the large room, the apprentices working, images becoming details on paper.

He doesn't notice the time pass until...

A looming presence causes him to look up.

HIS POV: Ghirlandaio reaches down quickly and snatches up the sketch...

The drawing is clearly gifted and masterful. Stunning for anyone's hand; yet alone an unschooled thirteen year old.

GHIRLANDAIO

Granacci is right. You have a strong fist.

MICHELANGELO

It is a stone cutter's hand.

GHIRLANDAIO

I have no need for stone cutters in a fresco studio. I'll start you on the same terms as if you were ten. You must pay me six florins for the first year...

MICHELANGELO

Excuse me sir... I am sorry, but... I can pay nothing.

Ghirlandaio looks at him sharply.

GHIRLANDAIO

The Buonarroti are not poor. If this is what your father wishes...

MICHELANGELO

My father does not respect art. He beats me every time I mention painting.

GHIRLANDAIO

I cannot take you unless he signs the Guild agreement. Will he not beat you when you take it to him?

MICHELANGELO

Not if you pay him six florins for  
the first year, eight for the  
second, and ten for the third.

Ghirlandaio's eyes narrow and flash.

The other apprentices turn to look.

GHIRLANDAIO

What? Pay money to your father? For  
the privilege of teaching you?

MICHELANGELO

I'm sorry Maestro Ghirlandaio. It  
is the only way.

Granacci stands in shock.

Stares of disbelief from the apprentices silence the studio.

Ghirlandaio's piercing eyes burn through Michelangelo.

Michelangelo straightens his spine. But remains respectful.

Ghirlandaio takes a long, hard look at the drawing. Then  
finally exhales a deep sigh...

GHIRLANDAIO

The Tornabuoni choir is behind  
schedule. We will never complete it  
without extra help.

(beat)

Bring your father in.

EXT. GHIRLANDAIO STUDIO - CONTINUING

Granacci and Michelangelo stumble out into the busy Via dei  
Tavolini now crowded with morning merchants and shoppers.

They are all smiles. Elated. Granacci grabs Michelangelo's  
shoulder.



GRANACCI

That was not humble... But you got in!

MICHELANGELO

Not yet.

INT. LODOVICO STUDY - DAY

A small room overlooking the Via dei Bentaccordi below. Record keeping books are stacked and rolls of parchment documents fill the spaces.

LODOVICO BUONARROTI, Michelangelo's father, sitting at his desk, looks up slowly from his accounting ledger.

His brooding face permanently etched with gloom, is now turning red with rage.

LODOVICO

You have done what?

Michelangelo stands in the doorway.

MICHELANGELO

I have just come from Ghirlandaio's studio. He has agreed to sign me as an apprentice.

Lodovico is trembling. Steadying himself, he rises from the desk. Walks over to the boy as he speaks.

LODOVICO

I took great pains to apprentice you to the Wool Guild. Sent you to an expensive school. Paid money I could ill afford so you would be educated. How many of the great Florentine fortunes were started this way... even the Medici's.

(beat)

Do you think that I will now allow you to waste your life as a painter?

(MORE)

LODOVICO (CONT'D)

To bring disgrace to the family name? For three hundred years no Buonarroti has fallen so low as to work with their hands.

MICHELANGELO

No. But low enough to be money lenders.

Lodovico lashes out and slaps Michelangelo with the back of his hand.

LODOVICO

We belong to the Money Changers Guild. The most respectable in Florence. It is an honorable profession.

Lodovico rubs his knuckles.

LODOVICO (CONT'D)

Why do you insist in injuring this family?

MICHELANGELO

I have as much pride in our name as anyone. Why can't I learn to do fine work that all Florence will be proud of? As they are of Ghiberti's doors, and Donatello's sculptures, and Ghirlandaio's frescoes? Florence is a good city for an artist.

The father puts a hand on the boy's shoulder.

LODOVICO

Michelagnolo... you are the favored of my five sons. In whom my highest hopes rest.

MICHELANGELO

And what of my hopes father?

LODOVICO

Ghiberti and Donatello lived as artisans and died as artisans. Their work never raised their social status one arm's length. Donatello was so poor in his old age that the Medici had to give him a charity pension.

MICHELANGELO

Everyone knows Donatello was not good with money. But Ghirlandaio makes a fortune.

LODOVICO

(anger building)

An artist is a laborer. From this you expect wealth? What kind of dream is that?

MICHELANGELO

The only kind I know. Bleed me of art and there won't be enough liquid in me to spit.

Lodovico's frustration boils over.

LODOVICO

BLEED YOU? It is only STUPIDITY that shall be BLED FROM YOU!!!

He begins pummeling Michelangelo with his fists.

Michelangelo covers up but is knocked over. He crashes into a bookcase. Furniture is knocked over. Lodovico continues his assault.

Suddenly the blows stop. Michelangelo looks up to see...

HIS POV: His grandmother, ALLESSANDRA, standing in the doorway. A matriarch dressed in black, she glares at Lodovico.

Lodovico slumps back into his chair. Out of breath.

LODOVICO (CONT'D)

No more... enough... never let me  
hear again of this...  
apprenticeship to artists.

Allessandra walks over to Lodovico.

ALLESSANDRA

What difference does it make which  
Guild he joins? You don't have the  
inheritance for five chickens, let  
alone five sons. He must choose for  
himself. If you cannot help  
Michelagnolo... you should not  
hinder him.

MICHELANGELO

I am going to be apprenticed to  
Ghirlandaio father. You must sign  
the papers. I'll do well for us  
all.

Lodovico stands again in utter frustration. Allessandra  
stands between him and Michelangelo.

LODOVICO

I swear. You must be possessed by  
the devil! You insist on making me  
explode in anger ten times over!

(beat)

I shall not say it again! WE HAVE  
NOT A SCUDO TO PAY FOR ANY  
APPRENTICESHIP!!!

Michelangelo rises from the floor.

MICHELANGELO

There is no need for money father.  
Ghirlandaio has already agreed to  
pay you.

Lodovico stops.

LODOVICO

What?... Pay me?... For the  
privilege of teaching you, he will  
pay me?... Why?

MICHELANGELO

He thinks I have a strong fist.

INT. GHIRLANDAIO STUDIO - DAY

MONTAGE: Non-stop activities swirling as Ghirlandaio directs the apprentices through one painting project after another. With many overlapping assignments, they work often through the nights and weekends mixing paints and prepping cartoons and frescoes.

Michelangelo is kept busy, engulfed in the chaos of the work.

VOICE OVER

The Ghirlandaio studio was the most  
bustling and successful bottega in  
all of Italy... and a year passed  
as if in a day.

MONTAGE: Michelangelo spending time individually with each apprentice. Learning their different skills and assignments.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

There was no formal training.  
Simply time spent together on  
projects, one cultivated the  
skills... and friendship from each  
other.

MONTAGE: The personalities and quirks of each apprentice.

VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

Benedetto, who could not draw  
freehand but only by mathematical  
sections... Mainardi, an expert at  
formulating colors in paints...  
Bugiardini, a gentle but talentless  
soul... Cieco, the spy who reported  
all activities to Ghirlandaio...

(MORE)

## VOICE OVER (CONT'D)

David, the skilled cartoonist...  
and Jacopo, the talented but lazy  
jester with an insatiable interest  
in gossip and women.

## EXT. THE DUOMO - DAY

The main gathering place for the city on a lazy Sunday  
afternoon.

Young men on the marble steps watching the parade of people  
go by. Young Florentine girls in colorful gowns flirting for  
their attentions.

Older men in somber suits taking their place of prominence  
along the square. Older women immersed in the gossip of the  
day.

## VOICE OVER

It was a happy time. And yet... a  
yearning for something more still  
burned.

Jacopo is sitting on top of an old Roman sarcophagus carved  
with horses and armored figures.

His fellow apprentices stand around him. Entertained and  
laughing at his running commentary on the passing girls.

Michelangelo is not interested. Instead, he examines the  
sarcophagus, running his hands over the delicate grooves and  
cuttings in the stone.

## MICHELANGELO

These marble figures are still  
alive and breathing.

Jacopo and the others stop. They turn to Michelangelo.

## MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

God was the first sculptor. Man was  
his first figure. And what material  
did he choose for his Laws? The Ten  
Commandments were carved in stone.  
(MORE)

MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

Yet look at us on these Duomo steps. We are all painters. There is not one sculptor among us. Why?

His friends are silenced by the odd outburst.

MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

It is because there is much strength needed for hammer and chisel. They exhausts both mind and body... in contrast to the painter who is only required to wield a delicate brush.

The boys look at each other... then burst into laughter.

JACOPO

If that is true, then the laborer in the quarry is the greatest of artists. Does he not exhaust the most of mind and body?

The others chime in agreement.

MICHELANGELO

All I am saying is that nobility in art is measured by its truth. Truth in form. The more of the form, the more it is true.

(beat)

In marble, the form is approachable from all four sides. But one cannot walk around a painting. It exists only as a flat one dimensional illusion on a canvas.

JACOPO

But creating that illusion requires skill, craftsmanship. That is the art.

MICHELANGELO

No. The illusion is required because paint has limitations.  
(MORE)

MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

But a sculptor? He works in complete reality. This requires even greater skill.

Jacopo jumps down from the sarcophagus.

JACOPO

Sculpture is a bore. What can you make? A man? Woman? A horse? Monotony! But a painter can create the whole universe. The sky, the sun, the moon and stars. What sculptor can do that?

MICHELANGELO

Painting is perishable. A fire, too much cold. But stone is eternal. Show me a painting that is two thousand years old. But this Roman sarcophagus... as strong as the day it was carved.

JACOPO

And as cold!

The others laugh.

Mainardi walks up to Michelangelo. Puts a gentle hand on his shoulder.

MAINARDI

Michelangelo... Jacopo is right. A sculptor can only copy. Ghiberti and Donatello were the masters. Today there is nothing left. Even Bertoldo makes copies of Donatello.

(beat)

Everything that can ever be made in sculpture... has already been made.

Michelangelo casts a frustrated gaze toward Granacci who looks away, unable to help.



INT. MICHELANGELO'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Michelangelo tosses in his bed. Bothered and wide awake. His four brothers near him, all sound asleep.

Finally, he rises in the dark and gets dressed.

EXT. FLORENTINE STREETS - NIGHT

As Michelangelo makes his way through the empty streets. Unrecognizable buildings and structures loom in the shadows. Barely lit by the light of the stars.

Through the Piazza Sant'Ambrogio, he heads out of the city and toward the river Affrico.

At the river, he makes his way uphill. Leaving the city behind.

The faint glow of dawn hints at the vast Tuscan countryside in the distance. Awaiting him...

EXT. SETTIGNANO - MORNING

He is in the countryside now.

Distant peaks, rolling ridges, villas and dozens of tiny family run stone yards can be seen for miles.

Michelangelo walks up to a small, modest house. A father, three sons and a grandfather shape marble blocks in the yard. Chickens, ducks and pigs scurry about.

The father, TOPOLINO, smiles warmly when he notices Michelangelo.

TOPOLINO

Michelangelo!

MICHELANGELO

Good morning Topolino.

The three sons and grandfather also greet him with familiar affection.

TOPOLINO

Michelangelo... How are you?

MICHELANGELO

Not bad. And you?

TOPOLINO

The same. We hear you are  
apprenticed to Ghirlandaio?

MICHELANGELO

Yes. About a year now.

TOPOLINO

About how long we last saw you.  
You don't care for it much?

MICHELANGELO

Not much.

TOPOLINO

Then why stay?

MICHELANGELO

Where else is there to go?

TOPOLINO

I've always told you... we could  
use a cutter.

MICHELANGELO

I know.

TOPOLINO

More stones... more to eat.

MICHELANGELO

So you will take me as your  
apprentice?

TOPOLINO

What apprentice? The stone is our  
master. Yours too perhaps.

Michelangelo grins. The others nod and smile at him as they continue working.

The grandfather hands him a tool and motions for him to sit. Michelangelo removes his shirt takes a seat in front of a column of rough cut marble.

He balances a hammer in one hand and a chisel in the other. With a fluid ease, he begins to carve into the stone.

His talent is obvious. His movements effortless. The marble quickly takes shape as from an expert.

TOPOLINO (CONT'D)

Remember. The stone works with you.  
It does not resent the chisel. It  
needs you to be changed and to be  
shaped. Handle it carefully or it  
will shatter. Never let the stone  
destroy itself.

He picks up the rhythm of the others. No one speaks. Just the sound of their hammers and chisels forming a cadence of "clicks."

EXT. TOPOLINO HOUSE - LATER, SAME DAY

Under the shade of a tree, the men and boys have just finished consuming a large meal.

Topolino's wife, is collecting the remnants of chicken, bread, olives, cheese and fruit. She piles them onto a large plate and takes them back into the house.

The men recline in the shade, full, content and ready for their afternoon nap.

Michelangelo rises.

TOPOLINO

Stay for the day. You can return  
tomorrow.

MICHELANGELO

I would like to. But I have obligations.

Topolino walks over to the boy.

TOPOLINO

Michelangelo?

MICHELANGELO

Yes?

Topolino rubs his beard.

TOPOLINO

(searching for words)

The best stone... gives itself to the sculptor... it does not fight the blow... In this same way, give yourself to God.

(beat)

Understand?

Michelangelo embraces Topolino.

MICHELANGELO

Capisco. I will try.

INT. GHIRLANDAIO STUDIO - DAY

Granacci bursts into the studio. Excited and breathless. A huge grin on his face. Runs up to Michelangelo.

GRANACCI

You must come with me now.

MICHELANGELO

What is it?

GRANACCI

I must show you.

EXT. FLORENTINE STREETS - CONTINUING

Michelangelo tries to keep up as Granacci runs through Piazza San Marco.

Across the piazza, near the church, Granacci stops in front of a gate.

GRANACCI

It's in here.

He pushes the gate open. He then waits as Michelangelo enters first.

EXT. SCULPTURE GARDEN - CONTINUING

Michelangelo enters. His eyes widen. Mouth open. He gasps as he sees...

HIS POV: A enormous oblong garden with all four walls displaying antique marble busts of... Emperor Hadrian... Scipio... Emperor Augustus... Agrippina... Nero's mother... numerous cupids.

The garden is also busy with activity as several men work over a piece of stone. Others measure and mark a marble piece. While still others are busy chiseling.

Michelangelo turns to Granacci, stuttering...

MICHELANGELO

Who... what... is this?

GRANACCI

A sculpture garden.

MICHELANGELO

But... what for?

GRANACCI

A school.

MICHELANGELO

School?

GRANACCI

To train sculptors.

MICHELANGELO

What sculptors?

GRANACCI

This garden belonged to Clarice de' Medici. After she died, Lorenzo Medici transformed it into a school for sculptors. He has brought in Bertoldo to teach.

MICHELANGELO

Bertoldo? I thought he was dead?

GRANACCI

Lorenzo carried Bertoldo here on a bed from the hospital. Showed him the garden and told him he must restore Florence to its past greatness in sculpture.

(beat)

I am told Bertoldo got up immediately from the bed - cured.

Michelangelo's eyes devour the garden... the urns, the statues, vases and various busts.

He see's a frail old man with long flowing white hair, sitting in the far porch.

GRANACCI (CONT'D)

That's Bertoldo. Shall I present you?

Without answering, Michelangelo is already marching ahead toward the old man.

As they approach, Bertoldo is instructing two young boys on shaping a rough marble piece.

GRANACCI (CONT'D)

Maestro Bertoldo?

Bertoldo doesn't hear. Keeps his attention on the two students.

GRANACCI (CONT'D)

(louder)

Scusi... Maestro Bertoldo?

The old man turns.

BERTOLDO

Yes?

GRANACCI

Maestro Bertoldo, may I present my friend... Michelangelo.

The old man looks at Michelangelo curiously.

But someone calls out to Bertoldo from across the garden and he excuses himself abruptly.

Granacci shrugs as they watch him walk away.

MICHELANGELO

Who are these apprentices? How did they get in?

GRANACCI

Lorenzo and Bertoldo chose them.

MICHELANGELO

I have two more years at Ghirlandaio's. Mamma Mia. I have destroyed myself.

GRANACCI

Patience. You're young. After you have completed your apprenticeship at Ghirlandaio...

Michelangelo grabs his friend by the shirt.

MICHELANGELO

(exploding with great passion)

(MORE)

MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

Patience!? No!!! I've got to get in! NOW! I don't want to be a painter. Granacci, you know my heart! I want to be a marble carver! Please, help me... how do I get in?

GRANACCI

You have to be invited...

MICHELANGELO

...How do I get invited?

GRANACCI

I don't know...

MICHELANGELO

...Then who does know? Who can tell me?

Granacci holds his friend at arms length.

GRANACCI

Miche'... please stop... you will push me over.

Michelangelo turns away. Tears welling up in his eyes.

Granacci sighs. Saddened.

GRANACCI (CONT'D)

I'm sorry... when I saw this place, I thought it would please you.

Michelangelo slumps down onto a bench against the wall.

MICHELANGELO

I know you mean well...

(pause)

But... this is all I have ever dreamt about... wanting so badly that it pains my heart...

(beat)

(MORE)



## MICHELANGELO (CONT'D)

To now see that it exists, and to  
be kept from it... is a torture  
almost too much to bear.

## EXT. PIAZZA SAN MARCO - DAY

Michelangelo sits at the fountain, oblivious to the bustle of people around him. His eyes are transfixed on the gate leading to the sculptor garden.

Finally, he rises. Hesitates a moment, then starts toward the gate.

## INT. SCULPTURE GARDEN - CONTINUING

Michelangelo peaks in from the gate. It seems even busier than before.

Gingerly, he steps inside. Walks along the perimeter of the walls. Trying not to be noticed.

He finds a bench under an overhanging tree. He sits quietly and watches. As if trying to absorb every motion and facet of the garden's activity.

## INT. GHIRLANDAIO STUDIO - DAY

The studio is unusually silent. Heads are down. Concentrated in their own sketches. No one speaks.

Ghirlandaio is smoldering at his desk. Visibly irritated.

Michelangelo enters. Stops as he is met by Ghirlandaio's icy stare.

## GHIRLANDAIO

And where have you been these past  
days?

## MICHELANGELO

I'm sorry... I have been ill.

GHIRLANDAIO

And now?

MICHELANGELO

A little better... thank you.

Ghirlandaio throws a parchment roll at Michelangelo's feet.

The apprentices look up, stunned.

GHIRLANDAIO

Lorenzo Medici... Il Magnifico...  
has summoned me.

Michelangelo shuffles his feet. Uncertain.

GHIRLANDAIO (CONT'D)

He has asked if I would like to  
send two of my best apprentices to  
his new Medici school.

Granacci looks to Michelangelo, who is riveted like stone to  
the floor.

GHIRLANDAIO (CONT'D)

NO! I would not like to send my two  
best apprentices! To have my  
bottega raided? NO! I have  
contracts to fulfill. We are  
already behind schedule!

Ghirlandaio stands. Michelangelo's head sinks.

GHIRLANDAIO (CONT'D)

But then again... who dares say  
"no" to Lorenzo Medici?

He points directly to Michelangelo.

GHIRLANDAIO (CONT'D)

YOU!... BUONARROTI!... you would  
like to go?

MICHELANGELO

Huh?...

GHIRLANDAIO

Granacci! You and Buonarroti are released from your apprenticeship. I will sign the papers tomorrow. Now back to work all of you! Do you think I am Ghirlandaio the magnificent? So rich that I can support all of you?

Ghirlandaio whirls back to his desk.

Michelangelo is breathing hard. He looks toward Granacci speechless.

After a moment, he makes his way toward Ghirlandaio.

But unable to speak. He stands at the foot of the desk.

Ghirlandaio looks up and sees gratitude in the boys eyes. He softens.

GHIRLANDAIO (CONT'D)

(quietly so the others  
can't hear)

Never forget that Ghirlandaio was  
your first master.

INT. LODOVICO STUDY - DAY

Lodovico is hunched over the parchments on his desk.

Granacci stands behind Michelangelo in the doorway to the study.

MICHELANGELO

Father, I have some news. I am  
leaving Ghirlandaio's.

Lodovico looks up. A tiny smile forms on his lips.

LODOVICO

I knew you would come to your  
senses. Tomorrow I will contact the  
Wool Guild and...

MICHELANGELO

...I am leaving to become a student  
at the Medici sculpture garden.

Lodovico's joy is interrupted by confusion.

LODOVICO

What?... Medici garden?... What  
garden?

Granacci steps forward.

GRANACCI

I am going too Messer Buonarroti.  
We are to be apprenticed to  
Bertoldo.

LODOVICO

The stonecutter?

MICHELANGELO

The sculptor. Father, Bertoldo is  
the last master left.

LODOVICO

What is a sculptor? He is lower  
than a painter! Not even a member  
of the twelve Guilds. A laborer,  
like a woodchopper, or an olive  
picker. My son, you have gone from  
bad to worse!

(beat)

What is he paying you?

MICHELANGELO

I don't know. I didn't ask.

LODOVICO

You didn't ask? You think we have  
the wealth of the Granacci? That we  
can support you in your fantasies?

GRANACCI

I asked. There is no pay. Just free  
instruction.

Lodovico collapses into his leather chair.

Michelangelo approaches him cautiously.

MICHELANGELO

Father, I beg of you please.  
Lorenzo de' Medici wants to create  
a new generation of sculptors for  
Florence. I would like to be one of  
them.

Lodovico looks up wearily at his son.

LODOVICO

Lorenzo has asked specifically for  
you? Because he thinks you have  
talent?

The word "yes" begins to form on Michelangelo's lips. But he  
is unable to lie.

MICHELANGELO

Lorenzo asked Ghirlandaio for his  
two best students. Granacci and I  
were chosen. It is a great honor.

Lodovico grips the sides of his chair. Wearily struggles to  
stand.

LODOVICO

I will never give my consent to  
this madness.

He pushes past the boy and hurries out of the room.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX

THIS IS A SAMPLE ONLY  
FOR A COMPLETE SCRIPT  
CONTACT MIKE MIYASHIRO