

THICK WATER

3/21/2018

Original Screenplay by
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EXT. BLAKE'S HOUSE PORCH - DAY

Title Card: March 3, 2017 Tampa, FL

The weather is perfect, not a cloud in the sky. Birds are CHIRPING.

BLAKE (23, Caucasian male) steps out onto his porch.

POLICE OFFICER 1 (50s, Hispanic) cruising in a Tampa Police Department Car, waives at Blake.

Blake smiles and nods. After the officer passes, Blake pulls out a blunt from behind his right ear and begins to smoke it.

BLAKE (V.O.)

They say blood is thicker than water. That only DNA could connect two souls biologically. I beg to differ. We hold a sacred water. A water so potent that it could purify such an unlikely bond. That it cultivated such a deeply rooted love. Intertwined so vigorously that color never mattered. It's a little ironic because water is used to remove color. It is used to lift even blood from a fabric and it has done just that to this beautiful tapestry we call brotherhood.

A 2002 Black Mercedes-Benz E320 pulls up in front of his house.

TJ (22, African American male) anxiously gets out of the car.

Blake, brimming with excitement, approaches TJ and wraps him in a hug, lifting him off his feet.

BLAKE

(Excited)

My baby bro! Turn up!

TJ embraces Blake tightly. It has been a while since they've seen each other.

TJ

(Excited)

Yooo! Turn up! We making movies this week! What's good fam?

Blake puts TJ down. Blake notices his Air Jordan shoes.

BLAKE
Nothing much,
(impressed)

But the shoe game tho-

TJ glances at his shoes and nonchalantly lifts his foot up. Blake bends down and wipes the shoes with his hands.

TJ
-Ahhh you peeped them?

BLAKE
Hell yeah I peep them, the rest of your outfit is whack. But the shoe game tho.

TJ
You got jokes. Where's that peanut head, Shon, at?-

VICTORIA, (21, African American female) gets out of the car, slamming the door in a rush.

VICTORIA
-Oh my god. Where is the bathroom?

TJ
Oh, Blake, this my girl Victoria.

Blake looks confused. He slowly reaches his hand towards her and she gives him a quick hug.

VICTORIA
Hey love, nice to meet you. Where's your bathroom?

BLAKE
What up? Down the hallway to the right.

VICTORIA
OK, thank you.

Victoria enters the house.

2 **INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Victoria rushes to the bathroom as Blake and TJ walk into the house behind her.

TJ
Yeah, so where's Shon at?

BLAKE
(pointing towards
Victoria)
Band practice, be back this evening-
but what's this?

TJ and Blake sit down on the couch.

TJ
(in a hushed voice)
Oh yeah-- she coming too.

BLAKE
Come on bro! This is suppose to be
a man trip, no bitches allowed.

TJ
I know. First she's not a bitch,
and second she's mad cool. She
going to be doing her own thing
most of the time.

BLAKE
Naw man.

TJ
She not even staying in the hotel
with us. She going with her friends
as soon as we get to Panama City.

BLAKE
TJ, trust me, I know how these
things go. She going to be texting
you all day.

Blake mocks Victoria.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Where are you? Lets meet up! You
going to that party tonight? Who
you with? I'm lonely!-

Victoria walks into the room holding an empty toilet paper
roll.

VICTORIA
(Jokingly Sarcastic)
Sweetie I hope you are not
impersonating me, because that's
not how I talk... And you out of
toilet paper, ugh, get your life!

Victoria smiles, and tosses the empty toilet paper roll at Blake. He catches it and Victoria walks back out the house.

BLAKE

(Mocking)

Get your life!-- Lets see how long this one last.

TJ

(Laugh) Chill son--

Blake lifts his shirt up and shows TJ a tattoo on his chest that reads "Rest Up Jade Eryn Johnson 8/9/75 - 6/21/03 Tyrell Lemar Johnson 1/22/73 - 6/21/03"

TJ (CONT'D)

God damn you are all inked up now. Damn I'ma have to catch up.

BLAKE

Man, I'm addicted. Yo check out the new addition.

TJ

Damn! Wow! Moms and Pops, damn I need to get mines done ASAP!

BLAKE

Let me know, my mans can hook you up.

Blake pulls down his shirt. TJ gazes around the room.

TJ

I see you've changed things around here. Looks dope.

BLAKE

Yeah man, I had to, still got a ways to go. Got those records from the thrift store up the street, two dollars each.

TJ

Nice! I'm seeing this here ash tray. Stop playing where's the tree?

Blake and TJ Laugh. Blake reaches in his pocket and pulls out a tiny bag of weed.

BLAKE

Right here my boy!

TJ
Can't get too baked, Mama Lola
wants us over for dinner tonight.

BLAKE
Right, right-

Blake sets a magazine in his lap and breaks down the weed.

BLAKE (V.O.)
*This isn't your traditional story
about brotherhood.*

3 **EXT. PARK - DAY - 1998**

TITLE CARD: November 30, 1998, Tampa, FL

JADE, (22, Caucasian woman) walks alongside her five-year old son Blake as he rides his bike on a beautiful sunny, August day.

BLAKE (V.O.)
*Humble beginnings, I still remember
it like it was yesterday. Mom was
struggling to make ends meet,
determined to make a way.*

Other families are playing in the park.

Toddler Blake hears the sound of an ice-cream truck approaching.

Toddler Blake stops his bike, eagerly fishing his pocket for two quarters.

TODDLER BLAKE
Mommy, I have two quarters. Can I
buy a ice-cream sandwich? It only
cost three quarters. We can share
it.

JADE
Oh no baby, save your money, I'll
buy your ice cream.

TODDLER BLAKE
But I want to help too.

JADE
Awww, you are just the sweetest
little thing ever. I know, you'll
take care of me when you grow big
and strong.

TODDLER BLAKE

I am! I'm going to buy you a house that's so big that you will have to take a elevator to get to your room and it's going to have a pool, with water slides.

JADE

Is that so? OK I'm going to hold you to it.

Jade and Blake walk up to the ice cream truck and wait in line.

ICE CREAM MAN, (45 Hispanic male) opens the window and takes customer's orders.

Blake looks at the menu on the side of the truck.

TODDLER BLAKE

(concerned)

Ummm. I think I want. Well I really want the Spider-man Ice pop, but it's probably too much.

Blake and Jade approach the window.

JADE

Baby, don't worry about that, it's not too much.-- He'll have the Spider-man. Here you go.

Jade gives the ice cream man the money.

TODDLER BLAKE

Thank you mommy.

Blake bounces with joy.

JADE

You're welcome sweetie.

ICE CREAM MAN

Here you go buddy.

The Ice Cream Man hands Blake his ice cream.

JADE

What do you say?

TODDLER BLAKE

Oh yeah, thank you sir.

Blake and Jade walk away from the truck and continue along the side walk.

TODDLER BLAKE (CONT'D)

Want a bite?

JADE

No baby, eat up. Sweetie let me ask you something. How would you feel about having a daddy and a little brother?

TODDLER BLAKE

Ummm, actually I think that would be so cool! But I'm not changing diapers.

JADE

(laughs)

No, there won't be any of that. I'm talking about TJ being your little brother.

TODDLER BLAKE

TJ? How?

JADE

Well Tyrell and I have been dating for a while now. I really love him a lot. Yesterday he asked me to be his wife. I'm getting married.

TODDLER BLAKE

Sooo Tyrell is going to be my daddy, and TJ is going to be my brother?

JADE

Well yes, step-brother, and things will get a lot better for us too. I'm in school, he's working, and TJ is only a year younger than you. So you'll always have someone to play with.

TODDLER BLAKE

I guess that would be cool. So are they moving with us?

JADE

No, We were thinking of getting a new house in the suburbs. And guess what?

Jade bends down to Blake's eye level.

TODDLER BLAKE

What?

JADE

Bunk beds!

TODDLER BLAKE

BUNK BEDS! OH YEAH!

JADE

Alright!!!

They high five and continue walking.

4

INT. CITY HALL - DAY - 1999

TIME CARD: 5 Months Later March 28, 1999

Jade, and TJ's father, TYRELL, (24, African American male) stand in the City Hall chapel holding hands as a court official marries them.

Four year-old TJ and five year-old Blake stand off to the side watching the ceremony.

BLAKE (V.O.)

*The day that changed our fates.
A tender and warm embrace
One look at his face
She'll always love him
No matter what race.
They said, Leave that boy now and
leave him for good
He looks like a thug straight from
the hood
Mom was called an N word lover
because of the inward love her
heart couldn't deny.
Fuck it, who cares-*

COURT OFFICIAL

-You may now kiss your bride.

TYRELL and Jade kiss.

TJ and Blake cover their eyes with their hands. TJ peaks.

IMAGE OF: Tyrell, Jade, TJ, and Blake standing together to take their first family picture as the photographer counts to three and snaps the photo.

5 **EXT. TYRELL & JADE'S DRIVEWAY - DAY - 1999**

Tyrell's minivan pulls up to a splendid two story family home in the suburbs. Tyrell, Jade, Blake and TJ exit the van. TJ and Blake are in awe of their new house.

TODDLER TJ
WOW, it's like a mansion.

TODDLER BLAKE
It's not a mansion. It's a palace.
Mommy, can we put the TV in me and
TJ's room?

JADE
You'd have to ask your daddy that.

Blake pauses and smiles.

TODDLER BLAKE
Umm, Daddy, can we put the TV in me
and TJ's room?

TYRELL
Ummm, not yet. I want you both to
get to know each other first. Play
with each other. Talk to each
other. So let's say no to the TV
for a while.

TODDLER BLAKE
OK.

TODDLER TJ
OK.

Tyrell smiles and they walk into the house.

6 **INT. YOUNG BLAKE AND TJ'S BEDROOM - DAY - 1999**

Toddler Blake and TJ are bored sitting on the floor in their room.

TJ gets up and looks out the wet window and sees the clouds clearing up.

TODDLER BLAKE
It's not raining anymore. I'm so
bored. We should go to the park
before it gets dark.

TODDLER TJ
Ask mommy if she can take us.

TODDLER BLAKE
She's gonna say no, I just know she
is.

TODDLER TJ
Just ask.

TODDLER BLAKE
Alright.

7 **INT. LAUNDRY ROOM - DAY - 1999**

Jade is doing laundry and talking on the phone.

JADE
Seriously, if I was you I'd look
into finding a new job. No
seriously, I don't care who the
hell my boss is, I won't be
disrespected.

Blake pokes his head inside of the laundry room.

TODDLER BLAKE
Mommy, can we go to the park now?

JADE
Wait until after the rain stops,
and I'm on the phone right now.

TODDLER BLAKE
The rain already stopped, it's
sunny now.

Jade continues folding laundry.

JADE
(Into Phone)
No! Shut up, he had the nerve to
say that too? I would've called my
husband right away. What planet
does he live on?

TODDLER BLAKE
Mommy, it's sunny outside now, can
we go?

JADE
Blake sweetie, I told you Mommy is
on the phone. I said yes. We'll go.

TODDLER BLAKE
Yes!

Blake is excited and runs of out the room!

JADE

Sorry. My goodness, these children.
If that other job doesn't work I'll
hire you to come baby-sit.

8 **INT. YOUNG BLAKE & TJ'S BEDROOM - DAY - 1999**

Blake runs back into his bedroom. TJ is still on the floor playing with his action figures.

TODDLER BLAKE

Oh Yeah!!, Who's the man? I'm the
man!! Woowhoo! She said we can go!

TJ hops up in excitement.

TODDLER TJ

Really? Let's Go!

Young TJ puts on his shoes and baseball cap.

TODDLER TJ (CONT'D)

I can't believe she said yes.

TODDLER BLAKE

She's on an important call right
now.

TODDLER TJ

Oh, OK.

TODDLER BLAKE

But I'm in charge though! So you
have to listen to me.

TODDLER TJ

Yeah, yeah!

9 **EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - DAY - 1999**

Toddler Blake and TJ stand at the edge of a busy two lane street.

TODDLER BLAKE

OK, so we have to look both ways
and hold hands as we cross the
street.

Blake grabs TJ's hand.

TODDLER TJ

OK.

TODDLER BLAKE

On my count we run. One-- Two--
Three-

TODDLER TJ

WAIT! My shoes aren't tied.

Blake bends down to tie TJ's shoes.

TODDLER BLAKE

Come on man, you gotta learn how to
tie your shoes. Men tie their own
shoes. What would you do without
me?

TODDLER TJ

Thank you.

TODDLER BLAKE

OK, lets go!

Blake grabs TJ's hand and they run across the street.

TODDLER BLAKE (CONT'D)

Awesome, we made it. Last one to
the see-saw is a rotten egg.

Blake and TJ race towards the playground.

10 **INT. HALLWAY - DAY - 1999**

Jade leaves the laundry room with a basket of clothes in her
hand and phone to her ear.

JADE

Alright girly, call me later, take
care.

Jade hangs up cordless house phone.

JADE (CONT'D)

Alright boys what do y'all want for
dinner, pizza or brussels sprouts?

Jade laughs.

11 **INT. YOUNG BLAKE & TJ'S BEDROOM - DAY - 1999**

Jade enters the bedroom.

JADE
Boys? Blake, TJ!

Jade is confused. She exits the room.

12 **INT. TYRELL & JADE'S KITCHEN - DAY - 1999**

Jade searches the house.

JADE
BLAKE, TJ! Answer me RIGHT NOW! I'm
not playing!

13 **INT. TYRELL & JADE'S GARAGE - DAY - 1999**

Jade presses the button to lift the garage door. She looks inside the car and trunk.

14 **EXT. JADE/TYRELL'S HOUSE BACKYARD - DAY - 1999**

Jade rushes out the house.

JADE
BLAKE, TJ! BLAKE, TJ!

She walks to the edge of the fence where there is a creek with rushing water down a slippery slope. She immediately begins to panic.

JADE (CONT'D)
Help! Somebody help, my boys are
missing!

She runs towards the side of the house.

15 **EXT. JADE'S FRONT YARD - DAY - 1999**

Jade runs into her front yard.

JADE
HELP!

NEIGHBOR, a 35 year old Caucasian male, runs towards Jade from his house next door.

NEIGHBOR
What's going on?

Jade is crying hysterically.

JADE
My boy's are missing. I can't find
them anywhere!

NEIGHBOR
Blake and TJ? I'm going to call
911!

Neighbor runs inside of his house.

JADE
God bring my babies back! Oh no, my
babies! What have I done?

16 **EXT. PLAYGROUND - DAY - 1999**

TJ and Blake are playing on the swing set when TJ notices a
police car with lights flashing.

TODDLER TJ
Look there go the police.

Blake jumps off the swing.

TODDLER BLAKE
Oh boy.

The police car with flashing lights pulls up beside the
playground.

Jade with tears in her eyes gets out the car and runs towards
the boys. POLICE OFFICER 2 gets out on the drivers side.

JADE
My Babies!!!

TJ and Blake begin to run towards Jade.

Jade gives Blake and TJ a hug.

JADE (CONT'D)
Thank God! I'm so glad you boys are
OK. You had me worried sick.

TODDLER BLAKE
(confused)
We're ok mommy.

JADE
 Don't ever scare me like that
 again! I love you all so, so, so
 much---

TODDLER BLAKE
 Sorry mommy.

Jade looks TJ and Blake in the eye.

JADE
 I love you both so much, (takes
 deep breath) but you know when we
 get home I am going to-

CUT TO: BLACK

17 **INT. HALLWAY - DAY - 1999**

From the hallway is heard the LASH of a belt, followed by
 Toddler TJ and Blake screaming uncontrollably.

JADE (O.S.)
 Get over here Blake! NOW!!!

TODDLER BLAKE (O.S.)
 Nooooo! I'm sorry, I didn't know

JADE (O.S.)
 I don't want to hear it, turn
 around right now! DON'T... YOU..
 EVER... DISOBEY... ME.... EVER
 AGAIN.

O.S. WHIP, WHIP, WHIP, WHIP

18 **INT. YOUNG BLAKE & TJ'S BEDROOM - DAY - 1999**

Young Blake and TJ are sitting on the bed crying
 uncontrollably, while Jade is holding a belt.

JADE
 Now y'all clean up this room. No
 dessert tonight!

Jade leaves the room and slams the door.

TODDLER TJ
 (struggling to speak.)
 This... is... all... your fault...
 I hate you.

Blake struggles to speak.

TODDLER BLAKE

I...got... whipped... more... times
than you.

TODDLER TJ

You LIAR!

TODDLER BLAKE

I didn't lie!

Jade yells at them through the door.

JADE (O.S.)

SHUT IT UP! I don't want to hear a
word from you two!

19 **INT. YOUNG BLAKE & TJ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 2002**

TITLE CARD: Three Years Later

Young TJ is fast asleep on the bottom bunk bed while Young Blake is laying on the top listening to Tyrell yell on the phone. Blake climbs out of bed, walks to the door and peaks out a crack.

TYRELL (O.S.)

(Yelling and Angry)

No Nia! TJ's good now. He has a
mother, father and brother. --You
show up at his school and I will
personally--- (deep breath)! You
lost custody over him Nia--- you
blew your shot at motherhood.----
No! I can hear it in your voice.
You're not clean. --What? I'm not
wasting my time with you Nia. Don't
call my house no more.

20 **INT. TYRELL & JADE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 2002**

Tyrell hangs up the cordless house phone, walks over and sits next to Jade on the couch.

JADE

(Annoyed)

What does the crackhead want now?

TYRELL

Same. Talking bout she gonna show
up at school and pick up TJ.

JADE
She can't do that.

TYRELL
The school is fully aware of the judges orders.-- I'm serious. If she comes near him! I'm going to lose it.

JADE
I'm so glad Ryan doesn't even know about Blake.

Tyrell sits back and puts his arms around Jade.

TYRELL
Where's he at now?

JADE
Last I heard he was still in the Jacksonville Penitentiary.

Blake, hiding behind the railing at the top of the stairs, listens in on Jade and Tyrell's conversation.

TYRELL
Good.

Tyrell kisses Jade's forehead.

TYRELL (CONT'D)
I think once our new addition comes,

Tyrell rubs Jades belly.

TYRELL (CONT'D)
Things will seem a little bit more natural for the boys.

JADE
I can't wait.

Blake gets up and sneaks back to his room.

21 **INT. CAFETERIA - DAY - 2002**

The crowded room is packed full of elementary school students doing their homework, playing with toys, and having conversations.

Young TJ (9) is at a table with his friend DWIGHT (10, African-American).

Also seated at the table are three other African-American BOYS (around 9)

DWIGHT

All I know is my rhymes are
"evolutionary". I'm better than Bow
Wow and Romeo combined, and I write
my own stuff.

YOUNG TJ

You're all talk.

DWIGHT

I'm all talk? Give me a beat, I'll
drop bars on you right now.

YOUNG TJ

Alright, here.

TJ begins to bang his fist on the table making a beat.

Young Blake (10), carrying his back pack and lunch box, sits at the table next to Young TJ. Young Blake is intrigued as he nods his head to the beat.

Dwight prepares to rap.

DWIGHT

(Rapping)

*Aye Listen, I got a lot of money
and I got a lot of bars. Girls
chasing me while I'm driving in my
car. I am the future, you are the
past. RayVon standing there
smelling like some a**. Yeah I'm
just a kid, and yeah I like to
curse. You just fat as hell, and
about to burst.*

TJ, Blake, Dwight and the rest of the other friends laugh and applaud Dwight.

DWIGHT (CONT'D)

Who tryna see me tho? You TJ?

YOUNG TJ

Noooo! I got nothing. Blake raps
tho.

DWIGHT

What? No way!

YOUNG BLAKE

Actually I do.

DWIGHT
Who would you compare yourself to?

YOUNG BLAKE
I'm like a mix between-

DWIGHT
-Barney and Sponge Bob.

Everyone laughs.

YOUNG BLAKE
No for real!

DWIGHT
OK "Slim Shady", here- spit to
this.

Dwight begins to bang a beat on the table with his hands.

YOUNG BLAKE
(Rapping)
*First of all let me say, your
rhymes are whack. Thinking I can't
spit a bar cause I'm not black. OK
that's right, tell me a new story,
tell me something different that
isn't too boring, boring, yeah that
was your mom last night, snoring,
snoring, I guess I didn't hit it
right!*

Everyone gets very excited. They laugh, cheer and applaud TJ.

DWIGHT
OK, I give you props kid.

Dwight high fives Blake.

YOUNG BLAKE
Oh no doubt my nigga.

Everyone suddenly stops laughing and says "Wooah".

DWIGHT
What you say?

YOUNG TJ
He didn't mean it like that.

Blake tries to explain himself.

YOUNG BLAKE
Like with the "A", not the "E.R"!

Dwight and the other boys gang up on Blake.

BOY 1

Nah Son, get this kid out of here.
Who does he think he is?

BOY 2

He's asking for a beat down?

BOY 3

Wait, wait, wait, did he just say
what I think he said?

DWIGHT

Yo TJ get your brother! Are you
crazy? You can't say that dog!

TJ stands in front of Blake and tries to calm the situation.

YOUNG TJ

Dwight, it's not like that.

One of the boys tries to pull Dwight back.

DWIGHT

(Jokingly)

I don't care! Do you understand the
words that are coming out of my
mouth? DON'T SAY IT AGAIN!

Everyone laughs.

Blake tries not to smile but gives a slight smirk and nods
his head in acknowledgment.

TJ is still on edge, and puts his hands on his forehead in
frustration.

FADE TO BLACK.

22

INT. TYRELL & JADE'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - 2002

Young TJ is flipping through the TV with the remote, and he
finds a classical music channel.

On the screen he sees a conductor leading an orchestra.

Young TJ is mesmerized as he watches the intensity in the
conductor's face and how he waves his hands in a 3/4 music
pattern.

TJ walks over to the cabinet and takes out a walkman. He sets
it in front of the TV and presses record.

YOUNG BLAKE & YOUNG TJ (CONT'D)
*Dream about better days, then wake
 and make the world a better place.*

YOUNG BLAKE
 (Rapping)
*Dream on baby brother the sky is
 the limit. Don't let no one stop
 you, yeah that is the spirit. Since
 before you were born-*

YOUNG BLAKE & YOUNG TJ
 (Rapping)
-We Got Your Back

YOUNG BLAKE
 (Rapping)
We gonna always be there-

YOUNG BLAKE & YOUNG TJ
 (Rapping)
-And that's a fact

YOUNG BLAKE
 (Rapping)
*So don't let the haters bring you
 down. Fly above the haters and make
 them frown.*

Tyrell opens the closet door.

TYRELL
*Boy's, y'all got to be quiet your
 mother is trying to rest.*

Tyrell notices Blake and TJ playing with his tape recorder.

TYRELL (CONT'D)
Is that my tape recorder?

YOUNG TJ
Ummmm--- Yeah

TYRELL
*What did I tell y'all about going
 into my room and taking my
 belongings without my permission?
 This ain't a toy. And when I need
 to use it and it's broken y'all
 gonna blame it on my other son
 named "I Don't Know".*

Tyrell opens up the tape recorder and removes the cassette tape.

TYRELL (CONT'D)

Y'all bet not have recorded over one of my lectures. What was on this?

YOUNG BLAKE

I don't know.

TYRELL

I don't know, of course I don't know recorded on this, you know what?-

Jade screams from down stairs.

JADE (O.S.)

-TYRELL!!!

TYRELL

Sorry honey, I'll keep it down.

JADE

NO! MY WATER BROKE!

Tyrell, Young Blake and Young TJ urgently run out of the room.

25

INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - DAY 2002

Jade is being pushed in a wheelchair as nurses rush her to the delivery room, Tyrell, Young Blake, Young TJ, and MAMA LOLA, a 56 year old African American woman follow. Blake and TJ are full of excitement and energy.

They bring Jade into the delivery room. Tyrell stops before he enters the room and looks at Mama Lola.

MAMA LOLA

You ready?

TYRELL

Oh yeah!

MAMA LOLA

Go get my grand-baby, I'll watch the boys.

Tyrell kisses Mama Lola on the cheek and runs inside the delivery room.

YOUNG BLAKE

Are we going to get to go inside?

MAMA LOLA
Yes baby, soon.

26 **INT. DELIVERY ROOM - NIGHT - 2002**

Young Blake & TJ slowly walk into the room with Mama Lola. They see Jade holding a beautiful baby boy.

JADE
Come meet your brother Shon.

YOUNG BLAKE
He's so cute. Can I hold him?

TYRELL
Did you wash your hands?

MAMA LOLA
I just made them.

JADE
Come.

Blake and TJ sit next to the bed in the chair and Tyrell slowly hands Blake the baby. Young TJ rubs the baby's little hair.

BLAKE (V.O.)
For the first time I realized that we were a real family.

Baby Shon begins to cry.

BLAKE (V.O.)
And then the crying begins. He cried like it was no tomorrow. This boy had a temper.

27 **INT. JADE & TYRELL'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 2002**

Tyrell holds a crying Baby Shon, trying to get him to fall asleep.

TYRELL
Come on, come on! It's okay.

JADE
Hand him here.

TYRELL
No baby, you need rest.

JADE

Well I cant rest until he is sleep.
You're taking too long. Try playing
him something soothing.

Tyrell hands Shon to Jade. She begins to rock him.

TYRELL

Let me see what I got.

Tyrell opens up his night stand and takes out his tape recorder.

TYRELL (CONT'D)

I think I got some Luther in here
somewhere.

JADE

Not that kind of soothing.

Tyrell presses play on the tape recorder and they hear the song Young Blake and TJ recorded. Tyrell and Jade cannot help but chuckle when they hear their sons voices. Baby Shon begins to settle down and stop crying.

JADE (CONT'D)

(Whisper)
Oh my gosh. Is it working?

TYRELL

(Whisper)
I think so.

28 **INT. KITCHEN - NIGHT - 2002**

Blake and TJ are sitting at the kitchen table doing homework.

Tyrell walks in.

TYRELL

How's the homework coming?

YOUNG TJ

I'm done with mine.

YOUNG BLAKE

I still have to do my social
studies.

Tyrell sits at the table.

TYRELL
Cool. I'll help you with that. But
first-

Tyrell sits the tape recorder on the table.

YOUNG BLAKE
I didn't touch it-

YOUNG TJ
I didn't either.

TYRELL
No one said all that. Calm down. I
heard the lullaby you guys recorded
for Shon. It was really good. It
worked. You guys got some skill.
Keep it up. Want me to get you guys
piano lessons?

YOUNG TJ
(Excited)
YES!

TYRELL
Blake?

YOUNG BLAKE
I want to make beats. Is there
lessons where I can like, make
beats?

TYRELL
I don't know. I can look into it.
But I'll do what ever it takes to
see you guys grow okay? Here, take
care of this.

Tyrell slides the tape recorder across the table to Young
Blake and TJ, and their eyes light up.

YOUNG BLAKE
Thank you!

YOUNG TJ
Thanks Dad!

Jade sits on the couch folding laundry. Blake (10) and TJ (9) play video games while Tyrell grades papers at the dining room table.

YOUNG TJ

No you're not doing it right. Let me try.

YOUNG BLAKE

Stop it TJ. It's my turn. Leave me alone.

YOUNG TJ

That's no fair. You keep losing and going again and again and again.

Jade changes the TV from video mode to cable.

JADE

Or better yet, how bout y'all go get ready for bed, so I can watch my favorite show.

YOUNG BLAKE

Sex and the City?-

Tyrell gets up from the table.

TYRELL

-OhhhKay!!! You heard your momma. Let's go Pokemon... Gotta Catch them All!

Tyrell picks up both Blake and TJ, carrying one in each arm and takes them upstairs.

YOUNG TJ

Ahhh! I'm not Pokemon. I'm a Digimon!

YOUNG BLAKE

I'm a Pokemon!

TYRELL

(To Blake)

Oh ok. Well which one are you?

Jade smiles as she watches Tyrell walk with Blake and TJ up the stairs.

JADE

Y'all be quiet up there. Don't wake Shon up.

30

INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - 2003

Tyrell, Young TJ and Young Blake enter into the bathroom. Tyrell sits on the counter as Blake and TJ take out their red and blue electric toothbrushes and squeeze toothpaste on them.

TYRELL

So imagine how I would feel if another man was to call Jade "Baby" or "Honey".

YOUNG BLAKE

You'd be mad.

TYRELL

Right, cause only I am allowed to call her that. If it comes from another man, it would be very offensive, and he'd probably end up with a black eye.

Young Blake and Tyrell giggle as they brush their teeth.

TYRELL (CONT'D)

Now as far as the "N Word" is concerned I don't want that word being used by neither one of you. TJ good job looking out for your brother. Thanks for telling me this. I want y'all to feel comfortable enough to come and talk to me about absolutely anything.

Tyrell rubs his hand through TJ's curly long hair.

TYRELL (CONT'D)

TJ, man, we got to do something with this hair.

YOUNG TJ

(While brushing teeth)
I want cornrows.

TYRELL

(Laugh) You want cornrows?

YOUNG BLAKE

Cornrows?

31 **INT. TYRELL & JADE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 2003**

Jade is sitting the couch and flipping through the TV when she hears a soft knock on the door. She answers the door to find RYAN (30, Caucasian Male).

Jade is in shock as Ryan stands there sweaty, drunk, and extremely upset.

JADE

What are you doing here? When did you get out?

RYAN

No the question is, why didn't you tell me I had a son?

JADE

Look now is not the time.

RYAN

-And he is being raised by a *(Pause and takes w a deep breath)* Where is he?

JADE

He's not here.

RYAN

Bullshit.

Ryan pulls a pistol from the backside of his jeans and points it at Jade.

Jade screams.

32 **INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - 2003**

Tyrell continues to watch TJ and Blake brush their teeth when they hear Jade scream followed by a loud GUN SHOT.

Tyrell immediately runs out of the bathroom.

33 **INT. TYRELL & JADE'S LIVING ROOM - 2003**

Mid-run, Tyrell gets to the rail at the top of the staircase, looks down and sees a lifeless Jade on the ground covered in blood. Ryan looks up at Tyrell.

TYRELL

The hell did you do?

RYAN
You took my family!

Tyrell tries to run down the steps towards Ryan.

Ryan points the gun at Tyrell and shoots him in the chest.
Tyrell falls to the ground.

34 **INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - 2003**

Young Blake and TJ are hiding in the shower. TJ is trembling as tears flow down his face. Blake is also trembling and terrified.

YOUNG BLAKE
(Whisper)
Shhhh... Be quiet TJ. Don't cry.

Blake and TJ can hear FOOT STEPS searching the house.

RYAN (O.S.)
Son! Where you at son? I'm back. I
won't leave you again!

35 **INT. HALLWAY - NIGHT - 2003**

Ryan continues to search around the house, opening doors and peaking inside of rooms.

RYAN (CONT'D)
Lets go home! Where you at son?
Daddy loves you!

Ryan walks into the baby's room.

36 **INT. TYRELL & JADES BEDROOM - NIGHT - 2003**

Ryan slowly walks towards the baby's crib. He sees BABY SHON, 2-year old mixed race baby, sleeping. He looks at the baby with disgust. He points the gun at the baby. Ryan hears the SIRENS of a police car. He exits the room.

37 **INT. BATHROOM - NIGHT - 2003**

Young Blake and Young TJ continue to hide in the shower. Blake tries to peak through the glass door. TJ's feet slip on the wet floor causing him to fall and make a noise.

Blake quickly moves away from the glass screen door to the shower wall.

Ryan walks into the bathroom.

The sounds of the police SIRENS grow louder and louder as they get closer to the house. Ryan paces back and fourth. He stops and looks in the mirror. He is sweating excessively. He takes a deep breath.

RYAN

Damn!

Blake peaks out the crack of the shower door and gets a glimpse of RYAN standing two feet away from him.

A POLICE OFFICER off screen enters the house.

POLICE (O.S.)

This is the police. Come out with your hands up!

In a panic, Ryan puts the gun to his head and shoots himself.

Blake watches Ryan fall to the ground on the bathroom floor by the toilet.

TJ has his eyes closed, and his hands tightly pressed against his ears.

FADE TO BLACK.

38

EXT. MAMA LOLA'S LIVING ROOM DAY - DAY - 2003

One week later, young TJ, young Blake and TJ's grandmother, Mama Lola arrive back home after the memorial service.

Mama Lola holds both cremation urns in her hands and sets them on the shelf.

TJ & Blake sit on the couch, still confused and in disbelief.

PASTOR ARD, 50-year-old African American man, walks in the house holding flowers. He sets them on the coffee table.

PASTOR ARD

Are you going to be OK Sister Lola?

MAMA LOLA

Yes, this too shall pass, pastor.

PASTOR ARD

You have my cell phone number. Do not hesitate to call. (Whisper) I'm really concerned about the boys.

(MORE)

PASTOR ARD (CONT'D)
They're seeking counseling? And the baby?

MAMA LOLA
My sister is taking care of Shon this week. And the boys are both being very strong through this. They are actually keeping me strong. I'm really concerned about Blake though. He hasn't shed a tear yet. The psychologist said it is a form of denial, and he's masking these emotions.

PASTOR ARD
Hmmm, not unheard of. Lynn and I will continue to keep you all lifted.

MAMA LOLA
Oh, how is the first lady doing?

PASTOR ARD
She's getting better, another round of chemo next week. She sends her warmest regards.

MAMA LOLA
I'll be keeping her in my prayers, too. Give her my love.

PASTOR ARD
Will do. I'm gonna head on out now.

MAMA LOLA
Thank you.

Pastor Ard gives Mama Lola a hug and then walks over to Blake and TJ sitting on the couch.

PASTOR ARD
Boys, how bout that fishing trip next week?

YOUNG TJ
Sure.

PASTOR ARD
Blake?

YOUNG BLAKE
I hate fishing.

PASTOR ARD

OK! Well how about... I take you guys to see Shrek, and then we go for pizza?

YOUNG BLAKE

Cool, that sounds fun I guess.

PASTOR ARD

OK! You got my word. You too keep each other strong, let Mama Lola know if you need to contact me OK?

Pastor Ard raises his hand to give them a high five. They both give him one.

Pastor Ard gets up and walks out the front door.

Mama Lola puts the flowers in the vase.

YOUNG BLAKE

Mama Lola, what's going to happen to us? Are we still brothers?

MAMA LOLA

Baby, the only thing that can end your brotherhood is you two. Everything is going to work out, Y'all coming with me. I'll provide everything you need, and you won't have to worry about anything. Especially being separated. Blake, when Tyrell adopted you, I adopted you. Look at me, both of you. Promise me that no matter what, you two will be there for each other!

They nod in affirmation. Mama Lola gives TJ and Blake a hug.

39

INT. PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE - DAY - 2003

Young Blake is seated with the PSYCHOLOGIST (30, African American woman). He sits silently while she is trying to speak to him.

PSYCHOLOGIST

Blake, I understand if this is too hard for you to speak about right now.

She takes out a piece of paper and a pen from her bag and slides it across the table to Blake.

PSYCHOLOGIST (CONT'D)

Here. How about you write all your feelings down here. Write whatever you want. It can be a story, just random words, a poem, a picture. What ever you want.

He hesitates and then he begins to write.

BLAKE (V.O.)

(Poem)

*What am I to do with a blank canvas
Desolate and bare
White.... like me. Flat
Yielding nothing of importance.
But I guess most good things start
from nothing.
Imagine having so much to say but
no ears to capture it.
So much to write but know eyes to
behold. Well screw it
What could go wrong
What harm could really come from
unlocking the chambers of my
innermost thoughts. And pulling
from places not even explored by me
up until ...now
Maybe someone will understand*

INTERCUT WITH:

40 **INT. PSYCHOLOGIST OFFICE - DAY - 2003**

Young TJ is seated with the MALE PSYCHOLOGIST (late 30's, Asian). He is silent as He tries to ask him questions. He points to the piano and hands him blank sheet music paper. Young TJ slowly gets up and walks over to the piano and begins to play.

41 **EXT. BASKETBALL COURT - DAY - 2012**

TITLE CARD: 2012 Tampa, FL

It is a sunny day. Children are playing on the playground. Young girls are playing hopscotch and jumping rope.

BLAKE (V.O.)

*Through thick and through thin,
whether right or wrong. Nothing
will ever change our bond. Fucks
with one, Fucks with both.*

(MORE)

BLAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*But if you Fuck with one, you get
Fucked up by both.*

Blake (19) is playing street basketball with a group of guys from the neighborhood. Blake is the only Caucasian male on the court.

TJ sits on the sideline as he watches Blake play.

TJ
There you go! Down the middle! Free
throw!-- Rebound! There you go!

Blake gets fouled by MARCUS (18, African American male)

Blake gets up from the ground.

BLAKE
FOUL! You keep on pushing me on
purpose dog.

He shoves Marcus.

MARCUS
Man I don't know what neighborhood
you from, but this is street ball
white boy.

Marcus pushes him back.

BLAKE
Man shut up!

MARCUS
What? Man get your crackerjack ass
out my face-

Blake punches Marcus in the face.

The other basketball players run up and jump on Blake.

TJ runs towards the fight.

Blake falls to the ground as the guys begin to kick and punch him.

TJ
Aye! Aye!

TJ begins punching the guys around him.

Blake gets up and continues to fight Marcus and the guys around them.

Blake and TJ are outnumbered but they still fight.

A SECURITY GUARD (48 Hispanic) runs over and begins to break up the fight.

SECURITY GUARD
Hey, Hey, HEY!

The Security Guard whips out mace. He begins to spray the basketball players in the eyes.

SECURITY GUARD (CONT'D)
Leave! Go home!

Marcus and the other players begin to scatter and exit the court.

MARCUS
(To Blake)
Don't let me see you around here
again homie. It's a wrap!

SECURITY GUARD
I don't want to see any of you on
this court! Take your ass's home!

TJ helps pick Blake off the ground. Marcus yells across the fence.

MARCUS
(to Blake)
Pussy ass cracker!

BLAKE
(To Marcus)
What son?

MARCUS
Come see me across the street!

Blake starts to walk back towards Marcus. TJ holds Blake back.

TJ
(To Blake)
No, let these fools go.

SECURITY GUARD
(To Blake and TJ)
You too. Leave!

TJ
We leaving man, chill.

SECURITY GUARD

Exit over there, on the other side.

TJ and Blake start to walk in the opposite direction, exiting through the other side of the court.

42 **INT. GARAGE - NIGHT - 2012**

TJ sits at his desk with his headphones on, listening to jazz as he studies his A&P textbook.

His face is bruised and there are scratches on his arm.

The garage door opens up. Blake anxiously enters the room with a blunt in his hand. Blake sits next to TJ.

BLAKE

Yo TJ. You trying to hit this blunt? It'll ease the pain.

TJ

Oh hell yeah.

Blake gives the blunt to TJ.

BLAKE

Marcus is a pussy for trying to roll up on me like that.

TJ smokes the blunt.

TJ

Word.

BLAKE

I'm tired of this shit. Cause I'm white, I'm a pussy, or something. That shit is getting old. He ain't realize we related. Here-

TJ gives the blunt to Blake.

TJ

You right. But you ain't always got to prove yourself to people, just do you bruh. Here-

Blake takes a hit.

BLAKE

Yes I do gotta prove myself. I don't want people walking all over me. Here-

Blake passes it back to TJ.

TJ

But you be dragging me in with you. Now I'ma have your back regardless, but it's ok to brush things off sometimes. Cause soon as real shit go down, they going after me. I ain't trying to be locked up or a part of anything that could've been easily avoidable.

TJ takes another pull of the blunt.

Blake turns to the desktop computer and opens up a music recording software.

BLAKE

Chill. It's not a black or white thing, it's a respect issue.

TJ gives the blunt to Blake.

TJ

Here. I know, so imagine how it feels when we both go to the mall or something and I am the one who is followed and looked at.

BLAKE

That happened one time.

TJ

It happens all the time but You're ignorant to the fact that it happens, while I just try to ignore it.

BLAKE

I'm tired of hearing that shit. Stop pulling out the race card. We grew up in the same house, in the same neighborhood. I get in trouble all the time-

TJ

-That's cause you do stupid dumb shit.

BLAKE

Exactly! When I do stupid dumb shit I get in stupid dumb trouble. The same stupid dumb trouble you would get in.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

My biological father was a sociopathic murderer, and your biological mother was a crackhead. Guess what? The law had no mercy on neither one of them!

TJ shakes his head and takes a deep breath.

TJ

(Sarcastically)

You know what? You're right!

BLAKE

It's whatever kid. That's not the point I was trying to make, but I got you. So check out this new record I was working on for us.

TJ

Aight!

Blake plays a song from his desktop makeshift studio. TJ bobs his head as he reads his book. Blake walks around the room nodding his head to the beat.

BLAKE

So right here, I want you to lay a verse down.

TJ continues studying from his AP textbook.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Come on man, let's start brainstorming.

TJ

Naw. I got the AP to study for.

BLAKE

Shit, why you gotta say it like that?

TJ

What?

Blake turns off the song on the computer.

BLAKE

(Sarcastic)

I got the AP to study for. I know you smart.

TJ
(Chuckle)
Shut up fool.

Blake picks up a letter off the desk.

BLAKE
I'm just saying. What's this?

TJ
Oh, it's an acceptance letter, I got into this college summer program, where I can knock out some general courses before I graduate High School.

BLAKE
Oh, that's what's up. Congrats.

TJ
Thanks.

BLAKE
But, we still making that ATL move after you graduate right? I got mad connects there. A producer who will put us on.

Blake sits down by TJ.

TJ continues to read and talk at the same time.

TJ
I mean I want to do it, but I also want to go to college, too. I was holding off on telling you until I found out if I got into FSU or not. But still this is a big opportunity for me.

BLAKE
I feel you but, you can go to college anytime, they even got that online shit. Don't mess up what we've been planning for months.

TJ looks up at Blake.

TJ
We? I'm doing what you want to do. Music is cool and all but there's more to it then just making beats and rapping. I want to know the theory behind it all.

(MORE)

TJ (CONT'D)

I don't want to be bound to just one style or genre. I want more. Like jazz, classical type stuff.

BLAKE

There you go, I, I, I, You're being selfish. We had something together. They don't respect me alone. I'm just a white boy trying to break into hip hop-

TJ

(Spoken Sarcastically)

-Woe it's me Blake. I need my little black brother to help me live out my dreams. (Spoken Normal) Blake, you do know if society was half as progressive as Hip Hop is, imagine where we'd be.

BLAKE

I don't get it?

TJ

All I'm saying is your skin color isn't going to hinder your success in hip hop. This isn't 1989. Have you seen the charts?

BLAKE

This was our plan bruh. All I got right now is a GED and my music. I ain't got much going for me, and now you tell me this BS.

TJ sits in silence, and shakes his head, tapping his pencil on his textbook.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

You know what, Do you.

Blake walks out the garage in anger.

43

INT. BLAKE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT - 2012

Blake lays in his bed writing in his journal as he listens to music in his head phones. He is visibly upset.

BLAKE (V.O.)

(Poem)

44 **EXT. MAMA LOLA'S DRIVE WAY - DAY - 2013**

TITLE CARD: 2013

TJ and KID SHON (11) exit the house carrying luggage.

They pack the trunk of Mama Lola's 2002 Black Mercedes-Benz E320.

Mama Lola walks out carrying a forest green graduation cap and gown.

MAMA LOLA

TJ, what do you want me to do with your gown?

TJ closes the trunk.

TJ

Ummm-- just leave it in my room.

Mama Lola turns around and heads back towards the house.

TJ (CONT'D)

Actually, give me the cap. I'll hang it in my dorm room.

TJ takes the cap from her.

Mama Lola walks back into the house.

TJ goes to the car and places the cap by the back window.

TJ (CONT'D)

(To Shon)

Cool. I think that's about it. Try not to spill nothing on my stuff.

KID SHON

I'm not.

Mama Lola comes back out of the house and locks the front door.

Shon sits in the back seat, and rolls down the window.

KID SHON (CONT'D)

Where's Blake?

MAMA LOLA

I don't know where that boy is. TJ?

TJ walks over to the passenger side of the car and opens the door.

TJ

He was in a session. I texted him
what time we were hitting the road.
I'll try calling.

TJ sits in the passenger seat and takes out his phone and
tries Blake on cell.

Mama Lola walks to the passenger side and stands by the door.

TJ holds the phone to his ear and waits.

TJ (CONT'D)

It's going straight to voice mail.

MAMA LOLA

This boy. That's why I told him not
to leave. We got to hit the road,
traffic is going to be nasty.

TJ is frustrated.

TJ

(To Mama Lola)

He had to he said. He already paid
for the studio time.-- Alright
let's just go. Maybe we can stop by
the studio on the way out. Want me
to drive?

MAMA LOLA

That's why I'm standing on this
side.

TJ gets out the car and walks to the drivers side of the car.

MAMA LOLA (CONT'D)

And you can drive your own self to
school, it's your car.

TJ stops in his place.

TJ

Wait what?

Mama Lola smiles.

MAMA LOLA

I can't send my valedictorian child
off to school without one. Shon and
I will be flying back.

TJ is confused. It takes a second for him to understand what
Mama Lola is hinting.

Mama Lola nods her head.

TJ
Stop playing, I'm going to school
in a Benz?

TJ runs over to Mama Lola, and gives her a hug.

MAMA LOLA
Take care of her.

TJ
THANK YOU! I freaking love you!

TJ gives her a kiss on the cheek.

MAMA LOLA
Let's get going if you're going to
stop and say goodbye to your
brother.

They get in the car and drive away.

45 **INT. STUDIO - DAY - 2013**

Blake sits behind the mixing board and computer.

KRYSTAL, 17 year old Puerto Rican girl, stands in the recording booth singing into the microphone.

KRYSTAL
(Singing)
*Let's play cops and robbers.
I just stole your heart.
Bad cop. Bad cop.
Lock me up. Lock me up.
Bad cop. Bad cop.
Lock me up. Lock me up.*

Blake presses stop on the keyboard.

BLAKE
Good stuff Krystal. Let's stack
that.

KRYSTAL
OK. What time do we have the studio
till?

BLAKE
However long we need, mama.

Blake looks up at the computer screen and sees the time.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Damnit!

KRYSTAL

What?

Blake looks at his phone and sees that it is dead.

BLAKE

We got to go. My brother is bout to hit the road. Got to see him off. You think you can give me a lift to the house?

Blake gathers his belongings.

KRYSTAL

I guess. We're coming back right?

Krystal steps out the booth.

BLAKE

No doubt.

46

EXT. STUDIO PARKING LOT - DAY - 2013

Blake and Krystal leave the studio. Blake quickly locks the studio door and they hop in to the car. They drive away.

Moments later TJ, Mama Lola, and Shon arrive.

TJ gets out of the car and walks towards the studio door. TJ knocks on the door and waits. He knocks even harder and waits. He becomes pestered.

TJ

Damn.

TJ gets back in to the car. Mama Lola is furious.

MAMA LOLA

That boy got some nerves not seeing you off. Wait until I get back.

TJ

It's all good. Lets get out of here

TJ types into the GPS.

KID SHON

I got to pee.

MAMA LOLA
Don't start that!

47 **INT. MAMA LOLA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - 2013**

Blake enters the house through the front door worried.

 BLAKE
 TJ? TJ?

He picks up the gown that is sitting on the sofa and then places it back down.

Blake plugs his phone into the charger already in the wall.

He walks over to the house phone and calls TJ.

INTERCUT WITH:

48 **INT. CAR - DAY - 2013**

TJ is driving. Jazz music plays on the car stereo.

Mama Lola gazes out the window.

In the backseat, Shon's buried in his cellphone playing games.

TJ's phone rings. He puts his head phones on, turns down the music and answers.

 TJ
 (In phone)
 Yo.

 BLAKE
 (In Phone)
 Yo, you dipped already?

 TJ
 Come on man, don't act dumb.

 BLAKE
 My bad man. My phone died, and I
 lost track of time.

 TJ
 Alright man. Cool story. Look, I'm
 on the road now, I need to pay
 attention to this GPS. I'll hit you
 up when I get there, we can skype
 or something.

BLAKE

OK. Mama Lola pissed ain't she?

TJ

Again with the obvious. We'll talk later.

BLAKE

Alright man, well enjoy college. Don't smash too many girls.

TJ hangs up.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Yo! T?

Blake hangs up and takes a deep breath. The car horn BEEPS outside and gets his attention. He unplugs his cell phone and walks out the front door.

49 **EXT. CAR - DAY - 2013**

TJ shuts his phone off and turns up the stereo, losing himself in the music.

50 **INT. MUSIC DEPARTMENT HALLWAY - 2013**

TITLE CARD: H.L. Anderson University, Freshman Year 2013

TJ is trying to register for classes. He sits next to RAY (21, Asian male) who is pre-occupied with his laptop.

TJ

Excuse me.

Ray looks up, slightly confused.

RAY

Yes?

TJ

So I'm putting in my classes and I wanted to know which professor I should take for Music Theory One.

RAY

Well Dr. Perea is the best one, but she only teaches advance students. Have you taken basic musicianship yet?

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)

That's the class you need to take first before you go into Theory. It's good to know the basics first you know?

TJ

But I was told I don't have to go to Basic, I passed the theory placement test.

RAY

You passed? Are you a transfer student?

TJ

No, I'm a Freshman.

RAY

Oh, nice. So are you doing the audio engineering program?

TJ

No, I'm double majoring, Composition and Conducting.

RAY

Well good luck with that. Very strict teachers in that program. Make sure you go to class on time because they lock the door after five minutes.

TJ

(Laugh) OK bruh, thanks for your help.

RAY

No problem. Well, I gotta go to meet with my advisor now.

Ray grabs his laptop and violin and begins to walk away.

TJ

Nice to meet you, I'm TJ by the way.

RAY

Ray.

TJ picks up a book sitting on the floor next to the chair Ray was sitting in.

TJ
Oh Ray, you left your Basic
musicianship book.

RAY
Oh, umm, thanks. Have a good school
year.

Ray quickly takes the book and hurries up the stairs.

TJ
You too. Don't be late now.

TJ hears a girl singing classically from one of the practice
rooms. He gets up out of his chair and approaches the door.
He sees Victoria doing vocal warm ups.

Victoria is trying to sing and play the piano at the same
time, but is struggling.

TJ knocks on the window and gets Victoria's attention.

51 **INT. PRACTICE ROOM - DAY - 2013**

Victoria opens the door.

VICTORIA
Hello.

TJ
Hi, I'm TJ. I'm new. I see you were
having a problem playing the
scales, do you need help?

VICTORIA
God knows I need help, this piano
shit is not for me. Please come in.

TJ walks in as Victoria slides over to make room next to her
on the piano bench. TJ sits next to her.

TJ
So was that the Dorian scale you
were trying to play?

VICTORIA
No, Aeolian.

TJ
Oh ok dope.

TJ begins to play the scale for Victoria and she resumes her
vocal warm ups.

52

INT. RECORDING STUDIO - DAY - 2013

Blake and JONATHAN (32, Arab-American male) sit behind the mixing board engineering a session for Krystal who is in the recording booth.

KRYSTAL

(Singing)

*I wish I could call you mines. But
You're too damn blind.*

Jonathan stops the track.

JONATHAN

I don't know, something don't feel
right about this.

BLAKE

She just's needs to swag it out
more, she's not in the pocket.

KRYSTAL

No, this melody is whack as hell.
Where that nigga TJ at when we need
him?

BLAKE

We good, I got this. Just needs
some fine tuning.

KRYSTAL

Or rewritten.

JONATHAN

OK Krystal, take five.

KRYSTAL

(flustered)

Ima take seven.

Krystal leaves the booth and walks out of the studio.

BLAKE

She so damn negative all the time.

JONATHAN

She can be, yeah, but this, dude,
this is some bull shit.

BLAKE

OK I know this isn't my best work-

JONATHAN

No where near your best.

Jonathan pulls out a bag of cocaine.

Blake hands Jonathan a plate.

JONATHAN (CONT'D)

This shit ain't gonna get us any
type of buzz on soundcloud-- We got
mad love on the last track, this
one gotta be equally as good.

Jonathan pours the cocaine.

BLAKE

OK so just give me until tonight
and I'm going to have something
fire for you.

JONATHAN

Alright man.

53 **EXT. STUDIO'S ALLY WAY - DAY - 2013**

Blake walks outside to the back ally. He lights a cigarette
and begins to inhale it. Frustrated, he paces back and forth.

He takes out his cell phone from his pocket and calls TJ.

54 **INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM - DAY - 2013**

TJ sits in his music history class as the PROFESSOR (50s
Caucasian British male) gives a lecture.

PROFESSOR

I know it's weird but John Cage
actually composed a song called
4:33, literally four minutes thirty-
three seconds of silence. Let's
take a listen.

The Professor presses play on the DVD player, the classroom
is silent.

TJ's phone rings in class. He is embarrassed as everyone
turns and looks at him. He struggles to find it in his
backpack.

TJ

Sorry, my bad.

PROFESSOR

Thank you TJ for destroying this
masterpiece.

The classroom laughs at TJ. He puts the phone on vibrate and types a text message

55 **EXT. STUDIO ALLEYWAY - DAY - 2013**

Blake is seated on the steps as he tries to call TJ but it goes to voice-mail.

Blake, silently reads a text message sent for TJ saying "In Class!!!"

Blake returns the text.

56 **INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM DAY - DAY - 2013**

TJ's phone vibrates. He looks at his phone. The text reads: "Emergency man! call me!". He quietly tries to gather his things and walk out the back door of the classroom.

The Professor is not amused.

PROFESSOR
Don't come back today TJ.

The entire classroom stares at TJ.

TJ
Family emergency.

PROFESSOR
OK, bring me a valid excuse note or this will be an unexcused absence.

TJ hesitates, but proceeds out the door.

57 **EXT. STUDIO ALLEYWAY - DAY - 2013**

Blake is sitting on the steps outside smoking a cigarette.

Blake's phone RINGS and he answers it.

BLAKE
(In Phone)
Yo.

Blake jumps up and begins to pace back and fourth while he talks on the phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

58 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY - 2013

TJ is urgently walking down the hallway.

TJ
(In Phone)
Blake, you good?

BLAKE
(In Phone)
TJ, I'm still waiting on that hook
for the song for Krystal you
promised me. Where the hell is it
at?

TJ
(In Phone)
You've got to be kidding me. This
is the emergency?

Blake sits on the step.

BLAKE
(In Phone)
Uhh, Yeah, I got deadlines, you
messing with my coins now.

TJ
(In Phone)
Blake, I got kicked out of class
for this?

BLAKE
(In Phone)
That's not my fault, you could've
called me after.

TJ stops walking. He takes a deep breath.

TJ
(In Phone)
(Sarcastically)
Damn man. You know you right, I
should've waited until after class,
totally my fault. I'll try to send
you something by this evening, no
promises.

He hangs up the phone, puts it in his pocket, and shakes his head.

Blake smiles, takes one more puff from the cigarette and then puts it out on the concrete.

59 INT. STUDIO - DAY - 2013

Jonathan and Blake listen to the track on the loud speakers. They pace the room and nod their heads to the beat.

The song ends.

JONATHAN
This is genius!

BLAKE
Yessir!

JONATHAN
No, I'm serious, you killed this shit. I'm thinking this may be too good for Krystal, we can shop this around to some big names. Possibly get a placement.

Blake takes a seat behind the mixing board.

BLAKE
For real? Let her at least do the demo.

JONATHAN
Yeah of course that. She gonna be mad, but whatever.

BLAKE
Let's Go!

Blake and Jonathan give each other a fist pound.

Blake's phone rings. He looks at it and answers.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
(In Phone)
Hello? -- Yes this is-- Is that him in the background? Can I speak with him?--- OK then, I'll be there shortly.

Blake hangs up the phone and gets up.

JONATHAN
Where you going?

BLAKE
My little brothers school. He's having another episode.

Blake walks out the studio.

Jonathan shakes his head and continues to listen to music on the computer.

60

INT. MIDDLE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY - 2013

Kid Shon, (11) sits with his arms crossed next to Blake in the office of the PRINCIPAL (late 50s, Caucasian woman). Shon is very upset.

PRINCIPAL

Shon's behavior is becoming disruptive. The assignment was to complete a survey. He decides to be funny and write this in the Ethnicity Section.

Principal gives Blake the survey and on the Race/Ethnic Identity section Shon writes "HYBRID AS FUCK".

Blake looks at the paper and tries to hold in his laughter. The Principal is not amused.

PRINCIPAL (CONT'D)

Perhaps his Grandmother would take this matter serious and I should be speaking with her.

BLAKE

Naw, she's at work. I got him.
Continue.

PRINCIPAL

When his teacher tried to confiscate his phone, he refused and told the teacher to get out of his face.

KID SHON

(Loudly Spoken)
-I didn't even have my freaking phone out and her breath smelt like-

BLAKE

(Loudly Spoken)
-Shut Up Shon!

KID SHON

(Softly Spoken)
Halitosis

PRINCIPAL

Shon's temper. Will go from zero to one hundred in a instant. Anger management is needed.

Blake nods his head.

61 **EXT. MIDDLE SCHOOL - DAY - 2013**

Blake walks Shon to the car. Shon looks over his shoulder and spots the other children from the school window laughing at him.

He gets angry and sticks up his middle finger at the kids.

BLAKE

Peanut head, really?

KID SHON

I'm tired of this school. I don't fit in.

BLAKE

-I wish I could've went to a school this nice when I was your age.

KID SHON

Can I have my phone back?

Blake reaches in his pocket and pulls out the phone.

BLAKE

Look man, You're going to have to chill out. I'm not going to be there to bail you out all the time. You're lucky they have my number down as first contact and not Mama Lola. You're ten years old, you can't be throwing fits like a baby.

KID SHON

I'm eleven!

Blake stops, and looks Shon in the eye.

BLAKE

That's even worse. Look, control yo ass or next time I'm gonna whoop that ass. (Laugh)

Blake tosses Shon the phone and gives him a soft slap in the face.

KID SHON
 (Laugh) Thanks.

Shon and Blake continue to the car.

62 **INT. SCHOOL RECITAL HALL - DAY - 2013**

TJ walks into an empty recital concert hall. On the stage is a STRING ENSEMBLE and Victoria. They begin to rehearse for TJ's conducting recital.

TJ
 Thank you all for coming to help me
 prepare for my recital. We'll go
 from the top measure on the nobody
 knows score and I'll give you four
 come in on the one. Got it?

The Ensemble nods their heads in agreement. TJ gives them a four count prep and begins to conduct. The strings play and Victoria starts to sing.

VICTORIA
 (Singing)
*Nobody knows the troubles I've
 seen. Nobody knows my sorrows.
 Nobody knows the trouble I've seen
 Glory Hallelujah*

INTERCUT WITH:

63 **INT. RECORDING STUDIO - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2013**

Blake in a recording studio session. He snorts a line of cocaine on the table next to the audio mixer.

INTERCUT WITH:

64 **INT. MUSIC CLASSROOM - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2013**

TJ sits in a classroom focused on taking a test.

INTERCUT WITH:

65 **EXT. BLAKE'S BEDROOM - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2013**

Blake lying in bed with a PRETTY GIRL, smoking a joint.

INTERCUT WITH:

66 **EXT. DORM ROOM - DAY - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2013**

TJ and Victoria are relaxing. He takes a hit from a blunt, and blows the smoke in her mouth and then they kiss.

INTERCUT WITH:

67 **INT. DINING ROOM - NIGHT - 2013/2016 - MUSICAL MONTAGE**

Kid Shon (11), Blake, Mama Lola, Pastor Ard, and other family members sit around the Dining room table having Thanksgiving dinner.

Kid Shon is swiftly eating his food. He Takes a gulp from his cup of juice.

As he brings the cup down from his face we see a older teenage Shon (14) sitting at the table with the family members wearing different outfits.

TITLE CARD: 2016

68 **INT. MAMA LOLA'S LIVING ROOM - - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2016**

The living room is decorated for Christmas. Mama Lola watches Shon open up gifts.

Blake comes through the front door with a handful of presents.

Blake approaches Mama Lola and kisses her on the cheek.

Blake, Mama Lola, and Shon video chat with TJ on the cell phone.

INTERCUT WITH:

69 **INT. VICTORIA'S HOUSE LIVING ROOM - DAY -MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2016**

TJ talks to Blake, Mama Lola, Shon on Face-Time on the cell phone. He is happy to see them.

TJ
Love y'all! Talk to you later!

TJ hangs up the phone and walks in the room where Victoria and her FAMILY are playing card games. The room is large and beautifully decorated for Christmas. Everyone is happy and enjoying the holiday.

Victoria puts on a gold necklace and gives TJ a hug and kiss.

TJ unwraps a new tablet. TJ looks at Victoria and gives her a kiss.

INTERCUT WITH:

70 **EXT. TJ'S CAR ON STREET - NIGHT - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2016**

TJ is driving his car when he sees flashing lights through his rear view mirror.

A POLICE OFFICER 3, (mid 30's White Male) flashes a flashlight in TJ's face as TJ hands him his driver's license.

The cops make TJ get out the car and begin patting him down on the side of the car.

Police Officer 3 begin searching the car.

TJ gets back in the car, the Police Officer 3 hands him a ticket. Police Officer 3 walk away. TJ slams the ticket on the dash board out of frustration.

INTERCUT WITH:

71 **EXT. BLAKE'S CAR ON STREET - NIGHT - MUSICAL MONTAGE - 2016**

Blake is driving his car when he sees flashing lights through his rear view mirror.

Blake puts a bag of cocaine in his underpants.

Blake rolls down the window and smiles at the Police Officer 4, (mid 30's White Male.) Blake hands the Police Officer 4 his documents. Police Officer 2 walks away.

Police Officer 4 give Blake his license and registration back and a warning.

Blake smiles

BLAKE

Thank You!

Blake waves goodbye.

INTERCUT WITH:

72

INT. RECITAL HALL - DAY - 2016 - MUSICAL MONTAGE

TITLE CARD: Junior Recital 2016

TJ, wearing a black tuxedo, conducts a full orchestra and Victoria on stage in front of a packed audience.

VICTORIA

*Nobody knows the troubles I've
seen. Nobody knows my sorrows.
Nobody knows the trouble I've seen
Glory Hallelujah*

The audience erupts in thunderous applause. TJ faces the audience and takes a bow.

73

INT. GARAGE - DAY - 2016

Blake and Shon (14) are on the ground doing push ups.

BLAKE

55,56,57,58,59,60. OK one minute
break, then one more set, and then
we move on to sit ups.

Blake and Shon sit up and try to catch their breath. Shon takes a sip from his water bottle.

SHON

Cool. Blake, you think I can borrow
\$30 for later? I'm taking this girl
Aubrey out tonight but I don't get
paid until Friday.

BLAKE

Fasho! Where you taking her?

SHON

To the fair, but I wanted to make
sure I have enough money to at
least get her ticket and buy her
something to eat.

Shon gets up and grabs his cell phone that is sitting on the desk.

BLAKE

Cool, I'll transfer \$50 to your
account.

SHON

Sweet. Thanks man.

BLAKE
So what she look like?

SHON
She's bad!

Shon hands Blake the phone to look at a picture of Aubrey
(Blond hair, blue eyes, Caucasian teenage girl)

BLAKE
OK she is a cutie. First snow
bunny?

SHON
Actually, yes.

BLAKE
Nothing wrong with that. You two
active?

SHON
She's a virgin. She said she's
waiting.

BLAKE
Til prom?

SHON
Marriage.

BLAKE
(Laugh) Yeah OK.

Mama Lola walks into the garage.

MAMA LOLA
Can you all come to the living room
when you're done?

BLAKE
Be there in a second Mama Lola.

Mama Lola walks back into the house.

Blake pulls out a condom from his wallet and hands it to
Shon.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Keep this with you in your wallet
at all times. Those waiting til
prom night girls never last. All it
takes is the right moment and
she'll give it right up.

SHON
You think so?

BLAKE
Know so!

SHON
I'm really trying to prove her wrong. I'm tired of this perception of me being a pretty boy light skin player who just wants to smash every girl on the cheerleader team.

BLAKE
Who gives a damn what people think. Got them good genes boy.

SHON
I'm a mut. You have no idea how it feels to be in this in between gray area. Never gonna be black enough, never gonna be white enough.

Shon sits back on the ground next to Blake.

BLAKE
I get it. I'm misunderstood too. I still get the "you act black" from white people, and then black people think I'm trying to be something I'm not. OK I love hip hop. OK I love curvy women. That doesn't define me. When I see you, I see the product of love. When I look in the mirror I see the product of a misguided teenager's quest to be loved. Just so happened the one who she found was a sociopath. So that's why I strive to be nothing like him.

SHON
Damn. How do you think TJ feels?

BLAKE
About us?-- I'm not sure, he's hard to read sometimes. I know he loves us, but I don't know if he approves of us.

MAMA LOLA (O.S.)
Let's go now!

Blake smiles and shakes his head.

Blake and Shon get up off the ground.

74 **INT. MAMA LOLA'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - 2016**

Blake and Shon enter the living room, where Mama Lola sits on the couch, waiting patiently. Her two grandsons take seats on either side of her.

MAMA LOLA

Ya'll just going to have me waiting all day?

BLAKE

My bad. Was in there giving peanut head some grown man advice.

MAMA LOLA

Oh Lord. Anyways, put your brother on the screen.

BLAKE

Do it from your laptop.

SHON

Just do it from the phone.

MAMA LOLA

Phone, Laptop, I don't care just get him on a screen!

SHON

I'm doing it. What's so important?

Shon pulls his laptop out of his backpack and sets it on the coffee table.

MAMA LOLA

Wait, I'm going to tell you all at once.

Blake mouths "She's Getting Married" and points to his ring finger to Shon. Shon smiles back at Blake. Mama Lola continues to look at the computer screen.

INTERCUT WITH:

75 **INT. DORM ROOM DAY - 2016**

Title Card: Junior Year: 2016

TJ sits at his desk working on his laptop when his video chat RINGS. TJ answers.

TJ
 (To Computer)
 Yo what's good peanut head?

SHON
 Stop calling me that.

MAMA LOLA
 Look at my handsome grandson!

TJ
 Oh how's it going Mama Lola?

MAMA LOLA
 (To Computer)
 I'm wonderful, congratulations on
 pledging baby.

TJ
 Thank you, thank you!

MAMA LOLA
 Don't be doing all that partying,
 keep your head in those books.

TJ
 You already know.

Image of: cell phone text message from Blake "She bout 2 tell
 us she getting married to Pastor Ard"

TJ looks the phone and laughs.

TJ (CONT'D)
 Blake you're an idiot.

MAMA LOLA
 Don't call your brother that. Why
 y'all so mean to each other?

BLAKE
 It's love.

MAMA LOLA
 Anyhoo, Listen I brought all of
 y'all here to tell y'all some
 important news.

TJ
 You not getting married to that
 pastor dude now.

Blake and Shon begin to Laugh.

MAMA LOLA
Ummm, Why y'all laughing?

BLAKE
Nothing Mama Lola, go ahead tell us
the good news.

MAMA LOLA
That's not what I was going to say.
I want to tell you that-- I got
married to that Pastor dude.

Mama Lola begins to laugh as she slips a ring on her ring
finger.

Blake and Shon are silent. TJ looks at the computer screen
with his mouth wide open and in shock.

TJ
Wait what?

BLAKE
You joking right?

MAMA LOLA
No I'm not joking. I'm serious as a
heart attack. Mama Lola getting
old. I can't let this good body go
to waste now. Call me First Lady!

BLAKE
So why you tell us this after the
fact?

MAMA LOLA
Because, Pastor and I didn't want
everyone knowing and getting all up
in our business. And besides I can
name about three of those little
old deaconesses who would've tried
to sabotage the engagement.

BLAKE
I mean I wish you would've a least
let us know. We family.

TJ
Mama Lola, if you're happy, then
I'm happy. I actually like the
Pastor.

SHON
So great, now I'm really going to
have to go to church every week.

MAMA LOLA

Yes you are and we'll be moving in next week.

BLAKE

Wait, wait, wait... So what's going to be done with our house?!

MAMA LOLA

Calm down Blake. I'm going to let you stay in the house.

BLAKE

Oh for real?

MAMA LOLA

Yes, but you going to have to take care of it. It took me years to pay off the mortgage and I still want to be able to sell it one day. And I don't want none of that weed smoking in my house Blake. I mean it.

BLAKE

Me...weed smoking?... Nooo! I got you Mama Lola.

Blake gives Mama Lola a kiss on the cheek, gets up and walks towards the kitchen.

SHON

Can I stay here too?

Blake stops.

BLAKE

Hell No!

MAMA LOLA

-Blake! No, not yet, but I may let you stay over here on weekends.

SHON

Fair enough.

MAMA LOLA

TJ, don't worry, your room will be just like you left it. You're coming home for Thanksgiving right?

TJ

Ummm probably not, I got this internship I can't take off.

MAMA LOLA

Baby, that's no excuse. You're the only college student I know who doesn't like coming home during the breaks. You don't like us?

TJ

Chill, I love you all. I just be having stuff to do.

MAMA LOLA

Well I'm glad I didn't count on you to come to my wedding.

TJ

Don't say it like that Mama Lola. I'll be home for spring break for sure.

MAMA LOLA

OK, that's what you said last year.

TJ

I swear.

TJ smiles and gives a thumbs up

FADE OUT.

76

INT. MAMA LOLA'S DINING ROOM - NIGHT - BACK TO PRESENT

TITLE CARD: 2017 PRESENT DAY

Blake, TJ, Shon (15), Mama Lola, Pastor Ard, and AUBREY, 16 year old Caucasian girl, sit around the dinner table sharing a hot meal.

TJ is eating very anxiously.

TJ

We gotta figure out a way for you to freeze and ship me this meal at least once a month cause this is--- Sorry pastor but I'm sinning tonight. This is pure gluttony!

Pastor Ard laughs.

MAMA LOLA

I'm glad you enjoying it baby. It's so amazing to have all my babies and their significant others here.

(MORE)

MAMA LOLA (CONT'D)

Too bad your girlfriend is too tired to eat with. She just going to come flop down on my couch like that and fall asleep?

TJ leans back in his chair to look at Victoria laying on the couch in the living room.

TJ

(Laugh) She's just tired. Driving all day, the mall, sightseeing.

BLAKE

Hey, I told her don't eat that fake Chinese food from the food court, but she insisted.

MAMA LOLA

Well, I made her a plate and sat it on top of the microwave for her to take.

TJ

Dope.

MAMA LOLA

I put some banana pudding in a bowl for her too.

TJ

Quit playing! You made banana pudding?

MAMA LOLA

Yes I did, and Aubrey helped me.

Aubrey blushes.

AUBREY

I just chopped the bananas.

TJ gets up, does a dance move then walks over to Mama Lola and gives her a big kiss on the cheek.

Mama Lola laughs and looks over at Pastor Ard.

MAMA LOLA

(To Pastor Ard)

I told you he was going to flip out.

TJ walks back to his seat.

BLAKE

(To TJ)

Aye T, don't eat too much. You don't wanna loose that six pack for the beach tomorrow.

TJ

(To Blake)

Real talk tho!

TJ lifts up his shirt and flexes his abs.

MAMA LOLA

(To TJ)

Pull your shirt down. Boy, went away to college and forgot your manners?

TJ

(Laugh)Sorry Pastor.

PASTOR ARD

No worries. No worries. Just make sure those abs don't tempt the honeys down in Panama City too much now.

BLAKE

(Laugh)Pastor what you know bout the PCB honeys?

PASTOR ARD

Boy, I ain't always been a pastor. I am very familiar as to what goes down this time of year in PCB. Turn Up! (Laugh)

TJ

(Laugh)

No! Nooo!

BLAKE

He just said Turn Up. Well that phrase is officially retired.

PASTOR ARD

Good, you all need to be careful down there. I want y'all to have some good clean fun, but the devil is there, and is waiting in the form of--

Pastor Ard covers one side of his mouth blocking Mama Lola from seeing what he is saying.

PASTOR ARD (CONT'D)
(Silently)
Pussy.

TJ
Amen to that!

BLAKE
Amen to that, me and TJ saved, so
we gonna just go spread the light.

PASTOR ARD
OK good, so I'll give you my box of
"Steps To Christ" pamphlets to pass
out while you all are there.

Pastor Ard winks at TJ and Blake.

MAMA LOLA
That's a great idea, I'll go get
them out the garage.

Mama Lola gets up from the table and leaves the dining room.
After she exits, Shon, TJ, Blake, and Pastor Ard begin to
laugh.

SHON
So TJ, you moving back after you
graduate?

TJ
Ummm, that's to be determined, may
do grad school, or I may-

BLAKE
-Move to ATL with me like we were
suppose to do four years ago.

Everyone is silent.

TJ
That too, I'm keeping my options
open.

SHON
That would be dope. I want to go to
college in ATL so we could all be
there together.

TJ
Something to consider.

PASTOR ARD

Well whatever you decide to do,
make sure it's in the Lord's will,
seriously. I know too many young
people who didn't follow their
dreams or let it go to waste just
because they made a bad decision.
Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
and everything else will fall in
place accordingly.

TJ

That's real talk right there.

BLAKE

Yessir!

SHON

Soooo, y'all not about that banana
pudding life tho?

TJ

I was just thinking that, let's do
it.

TJ gets up from his chair.

77

INT. BLAKE'S CAR / BLAKE'S DRIVEWAY - NIGHT

Blake, (in drivers seat) TJ, (in the passenger seat) and
Victoria (laying down in the backseat) drive back to Blake's
house.

VICTORIA

Oh my god. I am so freaking tired.

TJ

Hell yeah, yo Blake you got more
tree?

BLAKE

What kind of question is that?

VICTORIA

Bae!

TJ

What?

VICTORIA

I thought we agreed to quit for a
while, I don't want our lips to get
dark.

They pull into the driveway.

TJ
It's spring break Baby, They not
going to change over night.

TJ hears the bass frequencies of music coming from the house.

A group of PARTY GUESTS stand outside of the house holding
beer bottles and red cups.

TJ (CONT'D)
Wait, what's going on there?

BLAKE
Naw man, this your welcome home
party kid!

Victoria quickly pops up.

VICTORIA
(Excited)
Oh. We turning up already? --Let me
go change.

Victoria leans to the front of the car, kisses TJ on the
cheek and gets out the car and runs inside the house.

TJ is slightly annoyed.

TJ
What the hell man? I told you I
wanted to be low key today. I ain't
want everyone knowing I'm back. We
going to be partying all week.

BLAKE
Chill bruh, this is like the pre-
game party for the week. Everyone
is glad to see you here.

TJ
Blake we got to leave dumb early
tomorrow morning kid. We going to
have to wake up and clean the
entire house?

BLAKE
You don't worry about that.

TJ
I'm tired, I been driving all day.
I just wanted to roll a J and knock
out.

BLAKE
Yo stop being a fuck boy.

TJ
I'm just saying son, you don't
clearly think shit through. You
always-

TJ hears a familiar song. He tries not to smile as he turns his head away from Blake. Blake looks over at TJ and see's him smiling.

BLAKE
Ahhhhh you hear that? You already
know what's bout to go down son!
You already know.

TJ
I hate you. (Laugh)

Blake and TJ get out of the car and walk into the house.

78 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - PARTY SEQUENCE**

The PARTY GUESTS, dressed in black and white are dancing, drinking and having a good time. The DJ is mixing the music on the turn table. Various party guests greet TJ by giving him hugs and high fives.

Blake gives TJ a shot glass and they toast each other and continue to party.

79 **INT. BLAKE'S BEDROOM - DAY - NIGHT**

Blake enters the room with JONATHAN and locks the door.

Jonathan pulls out a small bag with red MDMA pills in it.

JONATHAN
How many?

BLAKE
Four.

KNOCK! KNOCK! KNOCK!

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Who is it?

TJ (O.S.)
Open up, it's me T.

Blake opens the door, and TJ walks in.

BLAKE
Hurry up, come in.

A MALE PARTY GUEST tries to follow TJ into the room. Blake pushes him out and locks the door.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Naw! This room off limits. Wait.

TJ
What ya boys doing in here?

Jonathan looks at Blake.

BLAKE
You ever try molly?

TJ
(Laugh) You a wild boy Blake. Hell
no I've never tried molly.

BLAKE
Want?

TJ
Maybe later this week.

Jonathan hands Blake six MDMA pills and Blake swallows one. He puts the other five in his pocket.

TJ (CONT'D)
How long does it take to kick in?

BLAKE
Like 30 minutes. It last for about
two hours. Here just keep it and if
you feel like taking it, do it.

Blake gives TJ two pills.

TJ hesitates. He takes the pills from Blake.

TJ
This better not make me go crazy.
YOLO!

TJ swallows one of the pills.

BLAKE
Oh Shit. You really just took it?

TJ opens his mouth.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
 Damn! We really bout to be lit
 tonight!

80 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - PARTY SEQUENCE

TJ intimately dances with Victoria as they move over to the wall. Blake grabs SABRINA, an 18 year old African-American girl, by the hand and brings her to the wall. He bends her over and she begins to intimately dance with him.

Blake and TJ are both full of joy as the MDMA begins to kick in. Everything they see is psychedelic and the colors of the party lights grow vibrant.

Blake tries to put his hand down Sabrina's skirt. She pushes him away and walks away. He stands there looking confused.

All of a sudden the house lights turn on. OFFICER WILSON (30, Caucasian male) and OFFICER SANDERS (mid 30s, Caucasian female) stand at the door holding flashlights.

OFFICER WILSON
 Party's over! Let's clear out!
 Drinks down! Music off!

OFFICER SANDERS
 Let's go, let's go, drinks down, or
 we will begin to ID you!

OFFICER WILSON
 Let's Go! Move it!

Blake and TJ approach Officers Wilson and Sanders.

BLAKE
 Look Officer Wilson, we'll quiet
 down. This my baby brother.

Blake puts his arm around TJ.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
 Don't we look just alike? He's home
 from college, it's like a
 celebration! We just having clean
 fun, we'll keep it down.

OFFICER WILSON
 (Un-amused)
 No sir. Let's clear out people!

BLAKE
 Alright whatever, you know what?

Blake closes the door and stands on a chair.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
 AYE everyone PLAN B!

Various people in the crowd begin to chant Plan B.

TJ walks back over to Victoria and they watch the party guests leave the house. A few guests give him high fives and fist pounds as they exit.

VICTORIA
 What's Plan B?

TJ
 When house parties get shut down by police, the party moves to a new location. We call it Plan B. But that shit normally get shut down by the cops too. It's so stupid.

BLAKE
 Y'all coming with me?

TJ
 Naw man, we going to be over there in a little bit. Just let me know when it starts to pop off.

BLAKE
 Oh OK. I know your ass ain't coming but I'll hit you up.

TJ
 I'ma be there for real.

BLAKE
 Aight man.

Blake energetically runs out the front door.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
 Leggo!

Officer Sanders and Wilson continue to flash their lights inside the house through the front door as party guests exit.

TJ and Victoria hold hands and they walk to the bedroom.

81 **INT. TJ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT**

TJ and Victoria enter. She walks over to her luggage, sits it on the bed, and takes out a bikini.

VICTORIA
 Did I show you the bikinis I got
 for PCB?

TJ stands behind her and wraps his arm around her waist as he begins to kiss her neck.

TJ
 No. But since we ain't going to see
 each other all week you should go
 ahead and show them to me now.

Victoria turns around and faces TJ.

VICTORIA
 You want me to model it for you?

TJ
 Yeah, show me what I'll be missing
 all week.

VICTORIA
 (Laugh)
 Seriously? I can't with you!

Victoria gives TJ a soft push and throws the bikini at him.

TJ
 Yeah you can!

VICTORIA
 No. I can't with you.

TJ
 Well let me help you try.

TJ pulls Victoria onto the bed as they passionately kiss.

82

EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT

Party guests are getting out of their cars and walking towards the second party house as Blake leaves the house, walks to his car up the street, while talking on the phone.

BLAKE
 (In phone)
 Aye, yo, I'll be right back, going
 to get my XLR cable. Let everybody
 know to keep it down until I get
 back. When people start showing up
 have them go through the back.
 Alright, bet.

Blake hangs up the cell phone and gets thrown onto the hood of his car by Marcus and ANTONIO (24, large and Latino-American male)

MARCUS

(Upset)

Yo son, what's this I hear about you feeling up on my baby sister like that?

BLAKE

Marcus, man-

MARCUS

-Shut the hell up!

ANTONIO

I seen you feeling on her at the party!

BLAKE

I ain't know that was your sister.

MARCUS

-Don't play with me!

BLAKE

Look man, she was at my house at my party so what do you expect?

MARCUS

-What fool? Think this is a game?

BLAKE

No I don't think this is a game, but I'm willing to play a round or two if you think you just going to roll up on me on some bullshit.

Antonio punches Blake in the face. Blake falls to the ground.

MARCUS

You little bitch ass.

83

INT. TJ'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

TJ and Victoria kiss intimately while laying in the bed. TJ's cell phone rings, he lifts himself off of Victoria and answers his phone.

TJ

(In Phone)

Yo. What?

(MORE)

TJ (CONT'D)
 Look, I'm not down for anymore
 surprises tonight. Who? Where the
 hell is he at? Alright Bet. On my
 way.

TJ quickly jumps up and begins to put his clothes on.

TJ (CONT'D)
 Shit! These niggas trying to jump
 Blake.

VICTORIA
 What's going on?

TJ
 I don't know, I really don't need
 this tonight. Dammit, this dude
 took the keys to my car. Stay here,
 it's up the street.

VICTORIA
 Ugh, Bae... He's a grown ass man,
 He'll be fine, just stay here with
 me.

TJ stops and looks at Victoria.

BEAT

TJ
 What? --Go to bed

TJ rushes out of the room.

84 **EXT. NEIGHBORHOOD STREET - NIGHT**

Antonio has Blake in a choke hold leaning against the hood of
 the car. Marcus's face is only inches away from Blake.

The crowd of onlookers begins to grow.

People in the crowd laugh and record the confrontation with
 their phones.

MARCUS
 Say what pussy? What?

Blake struggles to speak. Marcus softly slaps him in the
 face.

MARCUS (CONT'D)
 Antonio let this fool go. Next time
 I'ma kill you!

Antonio heaves Blake to the ground. Marcus and Antonio walk away. Blake gets up and opens his car door, slowly pulling out a 9mm pistol from under his seat. He aims it at Marcus and Antonio.

The onlooking pedestrians begin to run and scatter in different directions.

BLAKE

Roll up on me like that again!

Marcus and Antonio turn around and notice Blake pointing a gun at them. They quickly pull out guns from their pants and aim them at Blake.

ANTONIO

(Angry)

What son? You trying to pull out the steel? It ain't nothing fool.

MARCUS

This fool done lost his mind!

Blake stands off against Marcus and Antonio.

-A police car with lights flashing and SIREN ringing, speeds down the street towards them.

Marcus and Antonio immediately begin to run in separate directions.

Blake, in a panic, shoves his gun in his pants and runs. He jumps a fence and hides behind a bush on the side of a house.

Officer Sanders and Officer Wilson get out the car with their guns pointed forward.

Officer Sanders speaks into her walkie talkie.

OFFICER SANDERS

Shit! We have a 417 on the run,
Three of them.

INTERCUT WITH:

85

EXT. SIDE ALLY STREET - NIGHT

TJ frantically runs full speed down a dark side ally walkway. He turns a sharp corner, running in the direction of the officers.

OFFICER DANIELS, (33, Caucasian male) comes to back up Officer Wilson and Officer Sanders. The officers spot TJ running and they chase after him.

OFFICER WILSON
(To TJ)
Freeze!

TJ immediately stops and puts his hands up.

OFFICER WILSON (CONT'D)
Get on the ground! Get on the ground.

TJ
Look Officer I'm just trying to find my brother-

Officer Daniels throws TJ to the ground and tries to restrain him.

TJ's hands are placed forward as the officer tries to cuff him.

OFFICER DANIELS
Stop resisting!

TJ
I'm not resisting, I didn't do anything! Please officer!

OFFICER DANIELS
Shut the hell up boy!

Party guests stand in the front yard and street, witnessing the confrontation.

Various ONLOOKERS record the confrontation with their cell phones.

OFFICER SANDERS
Everyone get back in your houses, there's nothing to see here!

Blake hears TJ's shout and begins to run towards him.

TJ
Yo, chill man, why are you on me like that? I can't breathe!

As Officer Daniels tries to restrain TJ, TJ tries to voluntarily put his hands behind his back.

Officer Daniels sees TJ's hand move towards his side.

Officer Daniels quickly stands up takes out his gun, aims it at TJ side. POW! POW! Officer Daniels shoots TJ in the back twice.

TJ begins to jerk as blood pours out of his mouth. Blake immediately stops in his tracks.

The crowd is silent.

Blake breaks through the crowd and runs towards the officer.

BLAKE
(Completely Hysterical)
Why you shoot him man? He did
nothing wrong. Why the hell did you
shoot my brother!

Officer Sanders grabs Blake and tries to hold him back. He pushes her hand away.

Officer Wilson runs towards Blake and grabs him and puts handcuffs on him.

Blake continues to kick and resist.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
(Completely Hysterical)
No, he didn't do anything, why
y'all shoot him? He ain't have
nothing to do with this shit. I
swear to god if you killed my
brother I will fuck you up man. Get
off me.

Officer Wilson and Sanders struggle to drag Blake to the cop car as he continues to forcefully resist.

86 **INT. JAIL HOLDING CELL - NIGHT - TIME LAPSE**

Blake sits in a holding cell.

He paces back and fourth.

On the pay phone, he hangs it up, slamming it frustration.

He sits on the floor in the corner.

He lays down crying on the bench.

He falls asleep on the bench.

87

INT. TYRELL & JADE'S LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - DREAM SEQUENCE

Toddler Blake and TJ stand in front of Jade and Tyrell with their heads down. Jade and Tyrell are upset as they sternly address the toddlers.

JADE

They had me worried out of my mind.
I thought I had lost them. I had to
call the police.

Tyrell holds his belt, and is angry.

TYRELL

Get over hear you two, right now!

Toddler Blake and TJ slowly walk towards Tyrell.

TYRELL (CONT'D)

If y'all don't move it-

Toddler TJ begins to cry harder.

TODDLER BLAKE

Daddy.

TYRELL

WHAT?

TODDLER BLAKE

It was me, I told TJ that mommy
said we could go to the park. I'm
sorry.

Tyrell hesitates, he clinches his belt and then drops it.

TYRELL

Let me tell you boys something. If
anything was to ever happen to you
I don't know what I would do. I
appreciate you being a big boy and
owning up to your fault Blake.
Don't let it happen again.

Door bell rings.

JADE

Honey the police are here.

TYRELL

Let them in, they probably just
want a statement.

Jade opens the door.

JADE
Hello Officers, please come in.

In walks Officer Daniels and Ryan wearing police uniforms.
Ryan pulls out his gun and shoots Jade and Tyrell. POW! POW!

Toddler Blake grabs TJ's hand. Officer Daniels Pulls out his
gun and points it at Young TJ and shoots him. POW!

88 **INT. JAIL HOLDING CELL - DAY - BACK TO PRESENT**

Title Card: March 4, 2017

Blake wakes up from his nightmare.

The Officer calls his name on the intercom.

OFFICER (O.S.)
Johnson, lets go.

The door buzzes open.

Blake gets up and walks out of the holding cell.

89 **EXT. POLICE STATION - DAY**

Blake along with Pastor Ard leave the police station and walk
to the car.

BLAKE
How is he?

PASTOR ARD
He's in ICU. Concussion, broken
rib, and nerve damage in his right
leg. It's not looking too good.
Lola, Shon, and TJ's girlfriend are
at the hospital now, waiting. All
we can do now is pray.

Blake stops in his tracks and takes a deep breath.

90 **INT. CAR - DAY**

Pastor Ard is driving while Blake sits in the passenger seat,
looking very concerned.

BLAKE (V.O.)

OK God I get it. I know that you are all knowing and that you have a plan but damn you got to excuse my lack of omniscience and understand that I am confused. I'm perplexed that bullet chose the innocent the one with the cleanest hands now cling to his own life. God you know me, never really been the inquisitive type but I ask... Why, why am I not swimming in my own blood. Tell me, What are you trying to prove.

INTERCUT WITH:

91 **INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY**

Mama Lola, Shon, Victoria, and two ELDERLY WOMEN, mid 70's, hold hands in a circle as they pray.

Blake and Pastor Ard enter the lobby through the sliding doors.

Shon looks up and lets go of Mama Lola's hand in the circle to allow Blake and Pastor Ard to join as they continue to pray.

92 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - DAY**

TJ is in critical condition with tubes down his throat and nose.

Tears flow down Blake's face as he sits next to TJ's bedside praying for him to survive.

Victoria stands on the opposite side. She kisses TJ's forehead and walks away.

93 **EXT. CHURCH - DAY**

TITLE CARD: March 15, 2017

Blake joined at the hands with Mama Lola, who also holds the hand of Pastor Ard, stand at the microphones at a press conference to address the media. Attorney BETHANY MARIE, (43 African-American female) stands behind the family.

10-15 MEDIA REPS with cameras, microphones, and sound recorders silently wait for Mama Lola to speak.

MAMA LOLA

(In Microphone)

I know my baby. Honor student,
college student, Dean's list,
classical composer, these are just
a few things I want America to know
about my baby! He came home to
visit for his spring break! He's
never been in any type trouble. BUT
because of the way he looks he's
now in the hospital fighting for
his life! How? Why? America, know
this, and hear me closely, NO
WEAPONS FORMED AGAINST HIM SHALL
PROSPER! SOMEONE HAS TO ANSWER FOR
THIS!

Mama Lola steps to the side as Bethany approaches the microphone.

BETHANY MARIE

(In Microphone)

We are pursuing charges against
Officer Daniels for wrongfully
shooting Tyrell Johnson. It is a
shame that no charges or indictment
have been made by the city yet!
This has gone too far. An unarmed
college student, just trying to
find his brother to make sure he
was okay, ends up getting tackled,
beat, and then shot by an officer
of the law. Doesn't make sense to
me at all.

A cacophony of questions launch from the MEDIA REPS.

94

EXT. TAMPA POLICE STATION - DAY

Attorney RODNEY MCDANIEL, (mid 50s Caucasian male) addresses the media at a press conference. Local and national news stations gather around to hear Rodney McDaniels speak.

RODNEY MCDANIEL

It's a preposterous notion to think
that my client Officer Daniels
should receive any charges. Facts
are facts, the facts prove that
Tyrell Johnson approached the
officers full forced. They did what
they had to do to protect
themselves. Moreover, Tyrell
resisted the arrest.

(MORE)

RODNEY MCDANIEL (CONT'D)

It took nearly a minute for them to constrain him. So much could happen in a minute. Police officers are here to protect and serve the community by any means necessary. Questions?

MEDIA REP

Is it true that there was a party hosted by the brothers? And that shortly after it was shut down by law enforcement there was a gun stand off involving the brothers?

RODNEY MCDANIEL

We are looking into that. The officers gave specific instructions to Tyrell and his step-brother. They totally disregarded his instructions and decided to have a "Plan B" party which led into a fight and a gun stand off that TJ was connected to. Not to mention the toxicology report concluded that there was THC and MDMA in Tyrell's blood and He was in possession of MDMA at the time of the arrest. So you see the type of person we're dealing with here.

95

EXT. CHURCH - DAY

Bethany Marie addresses the press.

BETHANY MARIE

I will not be addressing the drug possession claims at this time. Next question.

MEDIA REP 2

Why hasn't his brother,-- Blake, I believe his name is, why hasn't he come forward to clear up exactly what happened?

BETHANY MARIE

I am also representing Blake in the matter and I will not subject him to answering to the media or the court of public opinion.

(MORE)

BETHANY MARIE (CONT'D)

However I can say that he wasn't present at the initial contact with the officer, however he was present at the time of the wrongful shooting, along with a swarm of other witnesses.

96 **EXT. TAMPA POLICE STATION - DAY**

Rodney McDaniel addresses the media at a press conference.

MEDIA REP 3

So, a cellphone video recording has hit the internet, and after Tyrell was shot, we clearly see and hear Blake threaten the officers, and resist arrest, even going as far as pushing officer Sanders. Why wasn't he retained in the same manner of his brother? Instead he was just put in the cop car.

RODNEY MCDANIEL

Obviously the officers used their discretion to do what they had to do. We can't get mad because both of them weren't shot. Then that would be an even bigger mess.

97 **EXT. CHURCH - DAY**

Bethany Marie addresses the press.

BETHANY MARIE

I will not address that at the moment, however it will be addressed in court. No further questions, Thank you very much for your time.

Bethany steps away from the podium and exits the stage with the family.

The press continue to hound the family and attorney with questions as they leave.

98 **INT. GARAGE - NIGHT**

Blake sits at his desk with the lights dimmed low. He opens up a box full of VHS tapes and photos. He looks at pictures of him and TJ during their childhood years.

He pulls out a VHS tape labeled "Shon's 1st Bday". He walks over to an old box TV/VCR, inserts the tape and hits play. Video rolls of baby Shon sitting in a high chair as Jade stands next to him with colorful balloons.

INTERCUT WITH:

99 **EXT. JADE/TYRELL'S HOUSE BACK PORCH - DAY - FLASHBACK 2000**

Young Blake and young TJ hold microphones connected to their karaoke player.

Tyrell walks around with a camcorder capturing the moment.

A happy baby shon has birthday cake all over his face.

YOUNG BLAKE

Happy birthday Shon! We wrote this
song for you. TJ, play the track!

Young TJ presses play on the karaoke player and music begins to play.

YOUNG TJ

(Singing)

*Happy birthday baby.
It's the best day of the year.*

YOUNG BLAKE

*You sleep and you eat,
poop and then cry.*

Jade laughs and claps along.

YOUNG BLAKE & TJ

*We don't care cause it's your day.
Happy Birthday to you!*

A tear falls down Older Blake's face as he watches the video. He laughs.

100 **EXT. HIGH SCHOOL HALLWAY LOCKERS - DAY**

TITLE CARD: P.A. MCCORMICK ACADEMY

Shon walks up to Aubrey who is at her locker getting books out. Shon and Aubrey are both wearing prep school uniforms.

Shon leans in for a kiss. Aubrey turns her head away and he kisses her cheek.

SHON
What was that about?

Aubrey stands there in silence. A tear falls down her cheek.

SHON (CONT'D)
What's wrong?.... Talk to me
Aubrey.

AUBREY
Shon.... I don't want this.

SHON
What?

AUBREY
All this attention, the media, the
protest, the riots.

SHON
You think I do? I can't help all of
that. But it's needed. Justice
needs to be served to that coward
who shot my brother.--

Shon puts his hand on Aubrey's shoulder.

SHON (CONT'D)
If there was ever a time I needed
you by my side it's right now. But
shit, you been ghost lately. I
don't have many people I can trust-

AUBREY
-And that's what makes this hard
for me too!

SHON
What's so hard about supporting
your boyfriend?

Aubrey takes a deep breath.

AUBREY
Because-- My family, -- you know my
father is in law-

SHON
-You been avoiding me through this
hard ass time, and now you want to
tell me that?

(MORE)

SHON (CONT'D)

My brother is fighting for his life at this very moment-- Oh so your dad doesn't want his family being affiliated with a cause that stands against his political views.

AUBREY

Shon you have to understand how difficult it is for me too--

SHON

-What's to understand? Right is right, and wrong is wrong. Daniels is wrong! The system is racist! You can't understand that, then leave me! Go!

Aubrey turns to her locker and proceeds to pull books out.

Shon SLAMS the locker closed.

AUBREY

Shon!

SHON

You want to leave me? Go!

AUBREY

Really Shon? Please calm down. Y'all are making this about race. It's not about race!

Shon closes his eyes, clenches his fist and takes a deep breath. Aubrey looks at his fist. He unclenches his fist and opens his eyes. He puts his hands on both of her shoulders and looks her in the eye.

SHON

(Softly Spoken)

Aubrey, you're going to make me say something that I might regret. Just go!

Aubrey walks away, crying.

BANG! Shon punches the locker door.

101

INT. NEWS STUDIO - DAY

DAN HOPE (36, Black Male) seated behind his news desk as he has a discussion with BOBBI LAUREN (25, White Woman) and NIKKI SANDERS (34, Black woman). Things get tense as they debate.

DAN HOPE

Joining us tonight in the studio we have Conservative commentator and President of the Millennial Conservative Movement, Bobbi Lauren, and we also have legal Commentator and Prosecutor, Attorney Nikki Sanders. Welcome ladies. We have a lot to talk about tonight. Tyrell Johnson had MDMA pills in his possession and in his blood. Could this in anyway have affected the turn of events on March 3?

BOBBI LAUREN

(Deep Southern Accent)

Dan, there's an old saying we say in the south "If it looks like a duck, swims like a duck, and quacks like a duck, then it probably is a duck". Say want you want Tyrell Johnson was a drug dealing thug who tried to attack the police-

NIKKI SANDERS

-Absolutely not. I'm sorry but I cannot allow you to come on national TV and discredit and defame Tyrell Johnson like that. That's all you want to do. Let's talk about how Tyrell was the Valedictorian of his high school class. Let's talk about how he was on the Dean's list every semester in college. Let's talk about how he has a 4.0 GPA. Let's talk about how he likes to listen to and compose Classical Music. You're narrative is all wrong, you should be ashamed of yourself.

BOBBI LAUREN

And yet he still found the time to get high and attack the police. I will forever stand on the side of our men in blue who put their lives on the line for us everyday. Blue Lives Matter!

DAN HOPE

Bobbi, The police had no reason for believing he had drugs in his system or in his possession at the time of the shooting. If they did, that's called racial profiling-

BOBBI LAUREN

-We should trust the judgement of our law enforcement. If it

NIKKI SANDERS

WOW! ARE YOU SERIOUS RIGHT NOW? So you're saying Police Officers are never wrong?

BOBBI LAUREN

In this case. No.

INTERCUT WITH:

102 **INT. GYM - NIGHT**

Blake is doing squats when he sees on the television the news update.

DAN HOPE

(ON TV SCREEN)

-Hold, Hold one second. We're getting some developing news. Sources say that Tyrell Johnson is no longer in critical condition and is being taken from the ICU into the recovery unit. This is awesome news. We're still awaiting more details, and we'll share them as they come in.

Blake, without hesitation gets up and runs to the locker room.

103 **INT. LOCKER ROOM - NIGHT**

Blake goes into the locker room and enters the combination code to his locker. He pulls out his phone and sees that he has 12 missed calls, and a few unread text messages.

IMAGE OF: cell phone text message from Mama Lola saying "CALL ME ASAP, TJ is speaking now!"

He smiles and tries calling Mama Lola back. He puts his pants on and gathers his belongings as he holds the phone to his ear.

The call goes to voice mail.

MAMA LOLA VOICE MAIL (O.S.)
 Blessings! You have reached Lola
 Ard-

Blake ends the phone call. Standing at the locker next to Blake is an ELDERLY MAN (a physically fit African American).

Blake wipes his face with his towel when he overhears two MIDDLE AGED MEN, both Caucasian, talking by the lockers. Blake looks at the middle aged men's reflections through the mirror as they talk.

MIDDLE AGED MAN 1
 They have nothing better to report
 on the news these days. The kid
 should've known better.

MIDDLE AGED MAN 2
 I just turn to ESPN every time I
 see this on the screen. These
 people'll learn to respect the law
 sooner or later.

Blake takes a deep breath, turns around and walks towards the Middle Aged Men when the Elderly Man grabs Blake's shoulder.

ELDERLY MAN
 Son, just let it ride. I know who
 you are. Don't do anything that
 will hurt the cause. You have the
 power to turn this around.

Blake hesitates.

BLAKE
 You're right, thank you for that.

The Janitor smiles at Blake.

ELDERLY MAN
 Let this old man be the one to
 educate these fools.

The Elderly Man tosses his towel on his shoulder and walks towards the Middle Aged Men.

Blake begins to walk out the bathroom.

ELDERLY MAN (CONT'D)
I couldn't help but overhear you
fella's conversation--

Blake gives a smirk as he exits the locker room.

104 **INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT**

Blake walks into the hospital and approaches the
RECEPTIONIST, middle aged Indian woman, at the desk.

BLAKE
Hello, I'm here to visit my
brother, Tyrell Johnson, he was
just moved out of ICU into this
unit.

RECEPTIONIST
Oh, OK, just one second. What's
your name?

BLAKE
Blake Johnson, I'm his brother.

RECEPTIONIST
OK, it looks like he is taking
visitors, but your name is not on
his list.

BLAKE
I don't understand I've been coming
to see him for weeks now.

RECEPTIONIST
Yes I know, I've seen you. That was
before he was taken into the
recovery unit, and before he was
able to respond.

BLAKE
OK, well can someone call his room
and have him add me to his list,
I'm family.

RECEPTIONIST
Sorry, I cannot grant you access.

BLAKE
Really?

RECEPTIONIST
Until he gives us consent we cannot
grant access to go back there.

(MORE)

RECEPTIONIST (CONT'D)

Maybe if you can call a family member or something to see if they can ask him to add you to his list. But right now you are on the do not enter list.

Blake is confused. He takes a deep breath

BLAKE

Wow, OK, I'll be back.

Blake goes and has a seat in the waiting area. He gets on his cell phone and tries to make a call to Mama Lola, however it doesn't go through because of weak cellular service. He tries to send a text, but it doesn't go through. Blake gets up and walks to the receptionist desk again.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Hey, do you guys have a WiFi Password?

RECEPTIONIST

Sorry, WiFi in this area of the hospital is for staff only. You can go to the cafe and there is free wifi there.

BLAKE

You've got to be kidding me.

Blake sees Shon and Victoria come out of the elevator. Blake walks towards them.

SHON

I know.

BLAKE

Why the hell is TJ not allowing me access to come see him?

SHON

He just doesn't want to see you right now. He's recovering and-

BLAKE

-I know man, but I gotta see him, I need to hear his voice. You gotta let him know I'm here.

VICTORIA

Just give him a few days. This is a lot on him right now.

BLAKE

A few days?

VICTORIA

I'll go talk to him when he wakes up. They got him drugged up, so today isn't the best time to speak with him. We're about to go to the cafe to get Mama Lola some coffee, you wanna come with us?

BLAKE

Naw, I'ma just head home and try to text him or something.

SHON

OK cool, Mama Lola said avoid the press, don't tell them anything.

BLAKE

Yeah I know.

VICTORIA

Don't stress yourself out Blake. It'll be okay.

Blake nods his head and walks away.

105 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - DAY**

Shon, enters TJ's hospital room.

SHON

Yo

TJ, is tired and weak.

TJ

What's up peanut head?

SHON

How you feelin'?

TJ

Like shit.

SHON

Well you sure don't look bad.

TJ

Oh never that.

SHON

(Laugh), Sooo-- Blake came by yesterday.

TJ

I don't care, He can't come up here. Don't even ask me.

SHON

I know, I know... But you need to speak with him, at least tell him how you feel.

TJ

He should know how I feel. No, I have nothing to say to him.

SHON

He really does care, and I can tell that this situation has changed him to. He's been beating himself up everyday.

TJ

Whatever man, he can beat himself up all day cause I bet that pain isn't nearly as much as the pain I'm in right now- Ahhh

TJ's face squints as he feels pain in his side.

TJ (CONT'D)

Shhhhh! Oweee!

Shon stands up.

SHON

You good? Take it easy man.

TJ

This messed up everything I got going for me. I,(Beat) I just wish I never came back. I don't want nothing to do with Blake, I love you, I love Mama Lola, but-

SHON

-And you love Blake, and he loves you!

Tears begin to fill TJ's eyes.

TJ

Look, I just want things to be back to normal. I don't want this. Turning on TV seeing my face all over the news. I'm a thug, like what? I don't have a thug bone in my body. I left Tampa to get away from the ignorance, now it's trapped me. I'm done for man.

SHON

No You're not. We're here for you man. I look up to you, I always have. Believe it or not, even tho he's older, Blake looks up to you too. He just doesn't know how to handle situations sometimes. Look at it like this. Mama Lola is your biological grandmother, you have her, you have biological family who looks like you and me. Blake doesn't, He grew up confused.

NURSE, a late 20's Caucasian woman, walks in.

NURSE

Hey TJ, time for your pain medication.

Shon moves out the way to let the Nurse give TJ the medication.

106 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT - MONTAGE**

IMAGE'S OF: Peaceful protest, marches and rallies in various cities in the USA. Protesters are carrying signs saying "No Justice, No Peace" "stop police brutality" "black lives matter" "Justice for Tyrell Johnson" "J4TJ".

INTERCUT WITH:

107 **INT. TV NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT**

Motion Graphics: Grace Wells Special Report

GRACE WELLS, 40 Year old Caucasian female news anchor, sits at the news desk.

GRACE WELLS

Thanks for tuning in to Grace Wells. We have breaking news.
(MORE)

GRACE WELLS (CONT'D)

We learned just a little while ago that the officer Joshua Daniels, the police officer involved in the Tyrell Johnson Jr shooting will not receive any charges. That's right! No indictment!

INTERCUT WITH:

108 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - NIGHT**

TJ lays in the bed, tears cascading down his face in disbelief. Mama Lola holds his right hand, and then wipes the tears from his eyes.

Pastor Ard puts his arm around Mama Lola.

Attorney Bethany Marie is on her cell phone visibly upset.

Shon can barely contain the fury behind his eyes. He leaps out of his seat by TJ's side and storms out of the hospital room.

GRACE WELLS (O.S.)

Another unarmed African American male has been shot, nearly killed by an officer of the law, and yet he will not receive justice. How much longer will this go on America? Riots are happening all over the country as we speak.

INTERCUT WITH:

109 **INT. TV NEWS STUDIO - NIGHT**

Grace Wells Special Report continued

GRACE WELLS

It looks like Dan Hope is on site in Tampa. Dan are you there? Dan?

110 **EXT. FRONT YARD - NIGHT**

Dan Hope, holding a Microphone follows Blake.

DAN HOPE

Yes Grace, I'm here with the step-brother of Tyrell Johnson, Blake Johnson.

(MORE)

DAN HOPE (CONT'D)

I know this must be devastating news for you to hear, how do you feel?

Blake is walking fast, his anger beyond words.

BLAKE

You said it. Devastated.

DAN HOPE

Have you spoken with TJ and how is he feeling?

Blake stops.

BLAKE

Dan-- I'm going to go inside now before I say something that I may regret.

Blake walks towards his house.

Cameraman follows Blake with his lens as he walks up the driveway and into the front door.

INTERCUT WITH:

111 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Cameras FLASH and the media personnel CLAMOR outside.

The TV screen plays the news report.

Blake enters the living room, slams the door and locks it. He falls to the ground out of frustration and stress.

112 **INT. CAR - NIGHT**

Shon sits in the passenger seat of a TEENAGE LATINO BOY's car as he drives down a residential street. In the back seat are two other TEENAGE BOYS, one white and one black.

Shon and his friends are visibly enraged. Heavy metal BLARES on the radio.

Teenage Latino Boy parks the car in a residential neighborhood. Shon and his crew hop out.

Teenage Latino Boy opens the trunk, and hands Shon a baseball bat.

Shon puts a mask on his face.

They walk towards a massive SCREAMING crowd of protesters and rioters.

Most of the protesters are African American.

The protesters are chanting "Fuck The Police" "Justice for TJ" "No Justice, No Peace".

113 **INT. PASTOR ARD & MAMA LOLA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Mama Lola and her husband Pastor Ard watch the news featuring the nationwide riots and protests.

Mama Lola sips her tea.

MAMA LOLA
It just don't make any sense.

PASTOR ARD
Honey, just turn it off.

MAMA LOLA
When is this all going to stop?

PASTOR ARD
It's been happening for years.

Mama Lola sets her tea cup on the coffee table, takes the remote and turns the TV off. Pastor Ard brings the tea cup into the kitchen. Mama Lola crosses her arms and slowly rocks back and forth. Pastor Ard sits next to her and rubs her back as they gaze into the CRACKLING fire place.

PASTOR ARD (CONT'D)
This too shall pass.

114 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - NIGHT**

TJ flips through the television channels trying to avoid the news. Victoria sits by his side.

VICTORIA
Babe, just turn off the TV. You don't need to be watching this right now.

TJ stares at the TV in a daze.

TJ
All of this is happening, because of me.

VICTORIA

Your story is going to help change
the world TJ.

TJ

Really? Or is it just benefiting
the wallets and pocket books of the
right and the left until the next
high profile shooting.

VICTORIA

Well that's media for you-

As TJ flips through the channels, he sees an image flash
across the screen of Shon removing the mask from his face,
standing on top of a car holding a baseball bat. TJ is
surprised.

TJ

SHON?!

Victoria looks at the TV.

VICTORIA

Oh my god, that is Shon!

TJ begins to panic.

TJ

Hand me my phone.

Victoria quickly reaches for the phone and gives it to TJ.

INTERCUT WITH:

115 **INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Blake is lying on the couch when his cell phone rings. He
sees it's TJ calling. Blake quickly lifts his body up and
answers the cellphone.

BLAKE

(Hesitation)

Hello?

TJ

Blake! I just saw Shon on TV. He's
out there rioting man!

BLAKE

What?

Blake starts putting his shoes on with urgency.

TJ
Go get him man, it's crazy out there!

BLAKE
I am, you know where he's at?

TJ
It looked like he was in near the Holiday Burger on Front Street.

Blake grabs his jacket and keys and runs out of the house.

BLAKE
Damn, I know they got Front street blocked off.

TJ
Take Sherwood.

BLAKE
Bet.

INTERCUT WITH:

116 **INT/EXT. DRIVEWAY / CAR- NIGHT**

Blake gets in his car starts it, puts it in reverse, and peels out of the driveway.

BLAKE
I'm on the way- I'll be there in 15. Have you called Mama Lola?

TJ continues to stare at the TV screen.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Yo? T?

TJ
There he go again! He's by the Starbucks in the same plaza of the Holiday Burger.

BLAKE
Aight! Does Mama Lola know peanut head is out there.

DING, DING! The computer by TJ's bed rings

TJ
I haven't spoken with her yet.

BLAKE

I'm gonna get him. Don't worry man.

Nurse walks in the room and looks at the monitor. She begins to type on the keyboard.

NURSE

TJ sweetie, your heart rate is increasing.

She looks at the TV screen.

NURSE (CONT'D)

I think you should turn the TV off.

TJ's eyes are glued on the TV screen.

She walks over to the TV and reaches to turn it off.

TJ

Don't turn! Leave it on. I'll be fine!

NURSE

I know you're concerned but I think-

TJ

-I didn't ask you what you think. I need to make sure my brother is OK first.

The nurse walks over to the light and dims it.

Blake looks at his phone while driving. He see's the low battery notification pop up.

BLAKE

T. I'm on twenty percent battery. I need to save it for when I get there.

TJ

Call me back!

BLAKE

Got You!

Blake and TJ both put down their phones.

TJ

Excuse me, can you do me a favor, and have my brother Blake Johnson added to my visitation list.

NURSE
Sure thing.

The Nurse exits the room.

TJ trembles, unable to contain his fear.

117 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Shon, carrying a baseball bat, hops on top of a car hood. He hops from car to car with his friends.

Shon jumps off the car into the RIOTING CROWD.

SHON
NO JUSTICE!

RIOTING CROWD
NO PEACE!

SHON
NO JUSTICE!

RIOTING CROWD
NO PEACE!

SHON
NO JUSTICE!

RIOTING CROWD
NO PEACE!

POLICE OFFICERS stand beside each other in a straight line holding their guns and shields, ready to face the rioters.

The POLICE CHIEF, a middle-aged Caucasian male, holds a megaphone

POLICE CHIEF
This is the last warning! Leave now
or you will get tear gassed and
arrested!

Crowd continues to scream at the police officers.

Blake gets out of his car and sprints towards the crowd of rioters.

Blake shoves his way through the crowd.

INTERCUT WITH:

118 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - NIGHT**

TJ lays on the bed watching the TV. The Nurse gives him a cup of water and some medication. He swallows the pills.

INTERCUT WITH:

119 **INT. PASTOR ARD & MAMA LOLA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Pastor Ard holds Mama Lola as she rocks back and forth, humming and singing.

Her soft voice cracks as she tries to sing.

MAMA LOLA

(Singing)

We are Soldiers,

In the army,

We have to fight,

Although we have to die

We have to hold up the bloodstained

BANNER

We have to hold it up

Until we Die!

My mother, She was a Soldier

She had her hand on the Gospel Plow

But ONE day she got old,

She couldn't fight anymore, She

said stand up and fight anyhow

INTERCUT WITH:

120 **EXT. STREET - NIGHT**

Shon stands next to an angry RIOTER (African American male) holding a megaphone.

RIOTER

(In Megaphone)

*Filthy Pigs! The justice system was
never design to protect us!*

A Police Officer throws a can of tear gas into the crowd. The gas lands inches away from Shon. Shon and the crowd begin to back away from the gas covering their eyes.

A TEENAGE RIOTER (African American Male) wearing a gas mask bursts forth, quickly grabs the can and hurls it back at the cops.

Some of the rioters covering their faces with masks and cloths, inch back towards the cop.

SLOW MOTION

The Police Chief raises his hand and begins to count down from five with his fingers.

Once he reaches one, POW! The Police Chief is shot in the head and falls to the ground.

NORMAL SPEED

Everyone begins to frantically scream and run.

Blake sees Shon from a distance and starts to break through the crowd in his direction.

BLAKE
SHON! SHON!

Shon is running for his life. Blake loses sight of Shon. Shon's eyes begin to water up and his vision blurs.

Shon stops and tries to wipe his eyes with his shirt. A protestor knocks Shon over onto the ground.

The police officers advance on the crowd.

Blake frantically searches for Shon in the chaos. Blake's eyes get watery as he runs and hides behind a car.

121 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - NIGHT**

TJ fights falling a sleep as his eyes get heavy. He dozes off.

122 **INT. PASTOR ARD & MAMA LOLA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Pastor Ard continues to rock Mama Lola while she sings with tears flowing down her face.

MAMA LOLA
(Singing)
*My Father was a Soldier
He had his hand on the Gospel Plow
But one day he got old,
He couldn't fight anymore!
He said, stand up and fight
anyhow!*

123 **INT. STREET - NIGHT**

Blake wipes his eyes as they clear up.

The crowd continues to run from the police.

Police officers arrest and beat protesters.

Blake sees Shon from a distance trying to get up off the ground.

Blake begins to run in the direction of Shon.

BANG BANG! The sounds of the police gun shots cause the crowd to panic even more.

The protesters begin to stumble and trample over Shon.

Shon struggles and screams on the ground.

SHON
AHHHHHH!! HELP!

Protesters are running over Shon's back and head.

As Blake gets closer he sees protesters running over Shon.

BLAKE
Shon! SHON!!!

Blake finally breaks through the crowd of protesters and pushes them off of Shon.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
No, get off of him! Move, Move!

Blake grabs a hold of Shon on the ground and holds him tightly trying to shield him.

Blake clenches his eyes closed because of the intensity of the tear gas.

As the crowd clears from around Blake and Shon, Blake, still with eyes closed, tries shaking Shon awake.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Shon! Shon!

Blake feels Shon's face covered in blood.

Blake puts his hand by Shon's heart feeling for a heartbeat.

Blake begins to cry.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
Shon! Come on man, answer me! Shon!
Answer me buddy! SHON ANSWER ME!

124 **INT. PASTOR ARD & MAMA LOLA LIVING ROOM - NIGHT**

Mama Lola is now sleep in Pastor Ard's arms in front of the fireplace. The Cell phone RINGS. It is an incoming call from Blake. Pastor Ard answers it.

PASTOR ARD

Hello?

125 **INT. HOSPITAL HALLWAY - NIGHT**

Five PARAMEDICS surround Shon lying on a stretcher as they rush him to the emergency room.

Blake with eyes full of tears follows them.

A NURSE stops Blake from walking any further, as the Paramedics bring Shon into the E.R.

126 **INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - NIGHT**

Mama Lola and Pastor Ard burst through the double doors.

Blake approaches them. He stretches his arms out and shakes his head in denial as Mama Lola falls into his arms.

Pastor wraps his arms around both Blake and Mama Lola and begins to console them.

127 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - DAY**

Blake, Mama Lola, and Pastor Ard walk into the emergency room. The DOCTOR, (Middle aged African American male) pulls back the sheet from over Shon's body. Shon lays there lifeless.

Mama Lola shakes her head. She unleashes an unnerving scream, her cries REVERBERATE around the entire floor of the hospital. Pastor Ard holds her with all his might.

Victoria sits off to the side crying with her hands in her face.

BLAKE (V.O.)

(Poem)

*There's a small section in the pit
of my soul that still believes
that this is all a joke, that this
nap you're taking wont be as
eternal as they say.*

(MORE)

BLAKE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
*Part of me still thinks that if I
 call you..... You'll come, running
 like you used to.*
 WAKE--- UP--- NOW!

Blake slowly walks towards Shon, touches his hand and then breaks down crying.

BLAKE (V.O.)
*Get up man.
 There's more work to be done. No
 indictment doesn't necessarily mean
 that they've won! This domino
 effect keeps knocking down the
 wrong chip. Now I'm left standing
 to bare witness to this nightmare
 that seems to be never ending. Gone
 but not forgotten just for fighting
 for the forgotten.*

Blake falls to his knees by Shon's bedside, holding his hand.

128 **INT. HOSPITAL ICU - NIGHT TO DAY**

TIME LAPSE: Night to Day

Blake stands by the window with dried tears in his eyes.

TJ wakes up.

TJ
 Blake?

Blake goes and sits next to TJ. He grabs TJ's hand.

TJ (CONT'D)
 Where's Peanut head?

BLAKE
 I,-- I tried--

TJ
 You couldn't find him?

Blake stands in silence, Blake begins to cry

TJ (CONT'D)
 What? Blake! What's going on.

BLAKE
 Shon.-- Shon was killed during the
 riot.

TJ sits in disbelief.

BLAKE (CONT'D)
I tried man, I really did-

TJ begins to cry.

TJ
-Don't tell me that man, no, don't
tell me that man!

Blake embraces TJ, and they cry in each others arms.

BLAKE
We did everything we could to stop
him but-

TJ
-No, no, I can't take this! That's
our brother man, He's our baby
brother, don't tell me that!

BLAKE
I know! I know!

FADE TO BLACK

129 **EXT. NEW HOPE SDA CHURCH**

News trucks from various News outlets are parked along the street of the Church.

DAN HOPE
It is indeed a sad day here at the
New Hope Seventh-day Adventist
Church in Tampa, FL as family,
friends and schoolmates gather to
say their final goodbyes to Shon
Timothy Johnson, the brother of
Tyrell Johnson. He was tragically
killed during a protest turned riot-

130 **INT. NEW HOPE SDA CHURCH SANCTUARY - DAY**

The sanctuary is huge and packed to capacity with several hundred attendees. The students from Shon's High school all sit in the balcony wearing their uniform jacket and a T-shirts with Shon's face on it.

Mama Lola and Blake are sitting on the front pew while TJ sits beside them in a wheelchair. Blake wraps his arm around Mama Lola as she trembles with tears cascading down her face.

TJ, wearing dark sunglasses, stares at the casket in disbelief. Cries ECHO throughout the sanctuary as Pastor Ard gives an uplifting eulogy.

PASTOR ARD
(Spoken with authority and
Power in Voice)

And God shall wipe away all tears
from their eyes; and there shall be
no more death, neither sorrow, nor
crying, neither shall there be any
more pain, for the former things
are passed away.

Now saints, this world is
temporary, this life is temporary.
Situations like this maybe hard to
comprehend. We don't understand. I
can't begin to comprehend God's
logic. My family is a unique
family, We're blended, but we're
family.

Aubrey sits in the middle of the sanctuary in between her FATHER (Middle Aged White Male) and MOTHER (White Middle Aged Female). Aubrey is distraught, her eyes red. Her Mother holds her hand, and her father wipes the tears from her eyes with a tissue. Aubrey shakes her head in disbelief.

PASTOR ARD (CONT'D)
Tragedy has hunted us many times.
But what the devil meant for evil,
God made for good! Yes I mourn, yes
I'm confused, but I know without a
shadow of a doubt that my grandson
Shon is resting right now in
Christ, and on that day where the
clouds crack open I know, that
Shon, Jade, and Tyrell will rise,
and be reunited.

The ORGANIST begins to play the Hammond Organ while Pastor Ard preaches. People in the congregation begin to stand and clap their hands and raise their hands in affirmation and SHOUT "AMEN", "PREACH", "YES GOD", "GLORY", and "HALLELUJAH"!

PASTOR ARD (CONT'D)
No more worries of death, no more
racism, no more profiling, no more,
riots, no more pain, no more saying
goodbye to loved ones!

Pastor ard leaves the pulpit and walks back to his seat. The whole congregation stands and applauds in praise.

Blake gets up from his seat and approaches the pulpit as things begin to calm down.

The room is now silent, the only sounds heard are people SNIFFING and CRYING.

BLAKE

(Poem)

I, I'm not one for public speaking,
but ummm-- Pain has it's own way of
squeezing either life or emotion
from it victims.

And it's up to us to decide which
one we let go of.

I've cried, I've questioned the
very omniscience of my god pleading
for answers.

A mistake only made by those tried
by fire in a furnace meant to mold
and shape them, tribulation is a
hell of teacher and as I stand up
here grappling with the fact that
the absence of my baby brother will
ultimately serve some greater
purpose, unfathomable to the mortal
mind please excuse the self
centered portion of me that can't-

TJ wheels himself to the center aisle right in front of Shon's casket. He gives the ORGANIST (Playing Pipe Organ) (Middle aged White male) a que and begins softly conducting a 4/4 pattern.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

-Handle losing another piece of my
world I search for solace in the
fact that someday I will lay eyes
on him again scanning his
countenance, which stretched the
full width of his face, void of
imperfection full of life bursting
with promise and adoration someday
I'll see them all again my soul has
grown impatient wrecked by a
villainous urge unsatisfied with
the hand I was dealt, from the
deck of the less fortunate but I
owe them, I owe them my survival in
exchange for their sacrifice.

Blake exits the pulpit and returns to his seat while TJ conducts Victoria.

VICTORIA

(Singing)

*Burdens now may crush me down,
 Disappointments all around.
 Troubles speak in mournful sigh.
 Sorrow through a tear-stained eye.
 But there is a world where pleasure
 reigns.
 No mourning soul shall roam it's
 plains.
 And to that land of peace and glory
 I want to go Someday.
 I do not know how long 'twill be
 Nor for what the future holds for
 me. But this I know, if Jesus leads
 me I shall get home Someday.*

The CHOIR crescendos with chilling intensity.

TJ struggles to conduct the Choir/Victoria as tears flow down his face. He is trying his hardest to get through the song.

People in the congregation are crying and standing up. Mama Lola wipes her eyes with a handkerchief before standing up and raising her hands. Pastor Ard leaves the stage and embraces Mama Lola.

CHOIR

(Singing)

*I do not know how long 'twill be
 Nor for what the future holds for
 me. But this I know, if Jesus leads
 me I shall get home Someday.*

The Organist's intensity increases as he follows TJ's direction. The DRUMMER follows suit, STRIKING the drums and symbols as the song builds to its climax.

TJ still struggles to conduct the song. His hands are shaking, his eyes are red and full of tears. Blake walks over to TJ, puts his arms around him, and helps him stand on his good leg. TJ passionately conducts the climax of the song while Blake helps him balance.

CHOIR (CONT'D)

(Singing)

*I do not know how long 'twill be
 Nor what the future holds for me.
 But this I know, if Jesus leads me
 I shall get home Someday.
 I SHALL GET HOME SOMEDAY!*

The entire congregation rises to their feet and gives a thunderous APPLAUSE.

131

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY

Blake, TJ, Mama Lola, and Pastor Ard sit in front of the casket. They are crying and consoling each other.

Blake holds the urn of his mother Jade and TJ holds the urn of his father Tyrell.

Blake approaches the opened casket where Shon's body lays. He gently places the urn inside of the casket. Blake walks over to TJ, and TJ gives the urn to him. Blake gently places the urn in the casket.

Blake reaches into the pocket of his suit jacket and pulls out the old tape recorder that Tyrell gave them back when they were children. Blake presses play on the tape recorder and the adolescent voices of Blake and TJ singing a lullaby plays. He gently places the tape recorder in the casket.

YOUNG BLAKE & YOUNG TJ (VOICE)

(Singing)

*Sleep tight, and good night go to
sleep little brother. Dream about
better days, then wake and make the
world a better place.*

YOUNG BLAKE (VOICE)

(Rapping)

*Dream on baby brother the sky is
the limit. Don't let no one stop
you, yeah that is the spirit. Since
before you were born-*

YOUNG BLAKE & YOUNG TJ (VOICE)

(Rapping)

-We Got Your Back

YOUNG BLAKE (VOICE)

(Rapping)

We gonna always be there-

YOUNG BLAKE & YOUNG TJ (VOICE)

(Rapping)

-And that's a fact

YOUNG BLAKE (VOICE)

*So don't let the haters bring you
down. Fly above the haters and make
them frown.*

The casket is closed by the FUNERAL DIRECTOR (Elderly African American male) and then lowered into the ground.

132 **EXT. DRIVEWAY - PRESENT - DAY**

TITLE CARD: 15 Months Later, JULY 19, 2018

Blake, in the drivers seat of the van, picks up a picture of Shon. He places the picture back and gets out of the van. He walks to the back and opens the door, revealing TJ in his wheel chair.

He brings TJ inside the house.

133 **INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

Blake helps TJ practice walking around the living room with a walker.

BLAKE

I got you bruh, no worries.

TJ

I can't.

BLAKE

You got it. Take it easy, slowly.
Just one more step.

TJ

Man you don't have to do this .

BLAKE

But I want to, I'm here, you can do it.

TJ

Aright I'm good, I need to sit.

Blake carries him to the wheelchair.

BLAKE

You are getting a lot better man.

TJ

I'm weak man, it's been a year and I still can't walk.

BLAKE

But you are blessed. Doctors didn't think you would ever walk again.

Doorbell rings.

Blake opens it.

TJ
Who that?

BLAKE
It's the mail.

Blake's cell phone rings. Blake opens the door while TJ answers the phone.

TJ
Yo, I'ma answer your phone.

BLAKE
Bet.

MAIL MAN
Can I get you to sign here?

Blake signs for the package.

TJ
Hold on just one second, Blake will be right here.

Blake takes the package and closes the door, he hands the it to TJ. TJ hands him the phone.

TJ (CONT'D)
It's Dev.

BLAKE
Thanks.

Blake walks into the kitchen.

134 **INT. KITCHEN - DAY**

Blake stands next to the sink and tries to quietly talk on the phone.

BLAKE
(In Phone)
Dev, what's good man? Look I contemplated and as much as I want to work with you guys I might have to turn down the offer. If I can't bring my brother with me, then I can't go.... We're a writing team Dev. OK so look into seeing if they can purchase another ticket, and hotel room that is handicap accessible. Those are the requirements, no negotiating that.
(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Now I don't mind working from home
and sending you all samples,
however it's us or nothing. OK text
me.

Blake hangs up the phone and walks into the living room.

135 **INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY**

TJ opens up the mail and removes his College diploma.

TJ

Look what came in the mail.

BLAKE

Oh Sweet! You're official now, I'm
proud of you man!

Blake plops on the couch.

TJ

Yeah, long time coming, but I'm
glad I finished it online.

BLAKE

TJ, I know I've said this a million
times but I'm really sorry-

TJ

-Don't do that. You don't owe me
anything. Stop apologizing.

BLAKE

I can't help it man, that should be
me sitting in that chair. You
should've graduated school a year
ago, in grad school, maybe even
engaged to Victoria. I did this. I
took you off course from reaching
your dreams. And then Shon-

TJ

-Blake, stop! Mistakes happen. Yeah
it's messed up that this happened
but guess what? You are my
brother... Oh and I highly doubt
that I would be engaged. (Laugh) But
seriously, friends come and go.
Even females come and go but you are
my brother! Until the day one of us
are laying six feet under we will
always be brothers.

(MORE)

TJ (CONT'D)

Nothing will ever change that. Now what's up with Cali?

BLAKE

I don't know if I'm interested man.

TJ

Shut up, don't turn it down cause of me. Don't do that man. This is your time.

BLAKE

Naw, I gotta be here for you man. I can't leave without you. It's us or nothing man. You've always been there for me, always getting me out of stuff I got us into. Now it's my turn to be there for you! The opportunities will come and when it's right for us we'll take them. But as of now, as of right, right now. I'm going to help your ugly butt up on your feet-- and show you how proud I am of you!

Blake helps TJ stand up, and they hug each other with a tight embrace.

TJ

(Laugh) Thanks man.

BLAKE

Us against the world, But we going to make it bruh, we going to make it. Love you man.

TJ

Love you too.

Blake and TJ sit back down.

BLAKE

So I got an idea.

TJ

What's good?

BLAKE

If we don't stop this domino effect that has you in that chair and that killed our brother, who knows what will happen next? If the system is broken, lets get involved and fix it rather than fight against it.

(MORE)

BLAKE (CONT'D)

I want you and I to be the poster children of what society can and should be.

TJ

So what are you thinking?

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INT. COMMUNITY CENTER - DAY

Blake stands in front of the inner-city youth orchestra, a racially diverse group of TEENAGERS and YOUNG ADULTS.

BLAKE

How's it going everyone?

The members of the orchestra individually respond "Good" "Fine" "Alright".

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Y'all ready to create music?

Members of the orchestra nod their heads in affirmation.

BLAKE (CONT'D)

Alright, but first we gotta create healing, and then Unity. I'm sure y'all seen what happened to my brothers right?

TEENAGE GIRL (15, African-American) holding a violin, speaks up.

TEENAGE GIRL

That was messed up!

BLAKE

It was.

The back door opens and in walks a middle aged Caucasian POLICE OFFICER. Everyone turns around, and their look of confusion and frustration is the same. The Police officer props the door open and TJ walks into the room with his walker followed by twelve Police Officers carrying instruments in their hands. The officers sit in the empty seats in between the orchestra.

TJ is now in front of everyone, sitting next to Blake and the Police Chief.

Everyone sits in a awkward silence for a few moments.

TJ

I know we are all hurt. But if I
can do this, so can you.

BLAKE (V.O.)

So we talked. That's right, talked.
You know that thing humans use to
do before the internet, smart
phones, and television? We shared
stories, cried, and most
importantly listened to one
another.

IMAGE OF: Teenage LATINO GIRL talking while holding a wallet
size picture of her deceased brother as tears fall down her
face.

IMAGE OF: Middle aged African American FEMALE COP talking
while holding a gold necklace with a picture of her deceased
son.

IMAGE OF: PUERTO RICAN MALE talking and showing a tattoo
reading "ONE PULSE" in memory of his mother killed in the
Pulse night club shooting. He thanks and hugs a Police
Officer.

IMAGE OF: Teenage MUSLIM GIRL wearing a hijab, sharing her
story as tears fall down her face.

IMAGE OF: Police Officers and Orchestra hugging each other
and shaking hands.

IMAGE OF: TJ conducting the Orchestra and Police Officers.

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INT. STUDIO - DAY

Blake is in the studio with two Police Officers and a few
African American and Latino teenage boys.

A Latino TEENAGE BOY and an African American COP (20's) stand
behind the microphone in the booth and rap as Blake
engineers.

TEENAGE BOY

(RAP LYRICS)

COP

(RAP LYRICS)

TJ conducts the Orchestra and Choir as they record an
inspirational song.

CHOIR
(LYRICS)

TJ looks over at Blake sitting behind the mixing board and smiles. Blake smiles back and TJ continues to conduct.

BLAKE (V.O.)

*This is my brother. I would say
until death but I doubt a grave
possesses enough strength to pull
us apart. 6 feet wouldn't be far
enough. We were taught to stick
together as our bond would carry us
through the Bullshit. You are
strong baby bro. I can only hope to
be as steady as you were and
still are. Blood may be thicker
than water. But we also recognize
the healing and cleansing
properties of water. That water is
willing to conform to its container
no matter the circumstance for the
greater good. Water holds no
allegiance to color. Water can be
both fierce and calm. Water seeks
to fill. When it runs out of space
it overflows and never stops
giving. Kinda-- kinda like you. Yea
that's right you are like water to
me. Thick Water.*

THE END.