

STREET LIFE

An Original Screenplay
By
DANTE ORANGE

21st Revision
12 / 20 / 2013

Dante A. Orange
275 Neely Drive Room 637
Carbondale, IL 62901
(773) 437 0887
danteorangestudios@gmail.com

Copyright © 2013
#PAu003656550
WGA East Registered
#I249550

I/E.CONVENIENCE STORE.NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

We OPEN to the exterior of a convenience store. CUT to a CLOSE UP of the store's Open/Closed sign (it reads "Open")

INSIDE, the aged shopkeeper stands behind the counter eating a sandwich, as he reads a magazine. An adolescent African-American boy (WILLIAM, 17) comes up to the counter, with a handful of snacks.

SHOPKEEPER

All set?

WILLIAM

Yes, sir.

SHOPKEEPER

Gotta awful lotta junk, son.

WILLIAM

That's not all for me. I got some stuff for my brothers 'n 'em too.

SHOPKEEPER

Oh okay, how's your mother and father doin'?

WILLIAM

They good.

SHOPKEEPER

Tell 'em I said hello. \$6.00 even (after receiving the money) Alright now, you be safe out there, ya hear?.

WILLIAM

I will. See ya next time, Mr. Walker.

He leaves the store. As he walks down the desolate street, he snacks on a candy bar. His phone rings, interrupting him.

WILLIAM

Yo

REGGIE (V.O.)

What up Will, what'chu on?

WILLIAM

Just left the store. After I take this stuff to the crib, I might go over Keisha house. What y'all on?

REGGIE (V.O.)

Nuttin', we was just try'na see if
you wanted to go wit' us to this
kickback.

WILLIAM

Naw, I'm good, I got practice in
the morning. Ay let me call you
back when I get to the crib...ight
(hangs up)

Seconds later, he hears a trash can fall somewhere close by.
He looks behind him but sees nothing and continues on. He
then hears another peculiar sound but once again, zippo. Out
of nowhere, two disguised THUGS appear before him.

MASKED THUG #1

Ay scud, lemme hold somethin'!

WILLIAM

(fidgety)

I-I-I ain't got nothin', man! I'm
broke, real talk.

MASKED THUG #2

(helps himself to a bag)

This nigga got chips 'n shit!

WILLIAM

Look, y'all, I don't want no
trouble, I gotta get home!

MASKED THUG #1

(mockingly)

"I gotta get home!" (normal) Yo
scary ass! Run his pockets, folk!

Thug #2 attempts to search his pockets

WILLIAM

Ay man, c'mon get off that!

MASKED THUG #2

Shut the fuck up!

William punches the thug in the face and runs for dear life.

MASKED THUG #1

Get up, man, let's get this nigga!

William hurtles through the streets with the muggers hot on
his trail.

WILLIAM
Help me! Somebody help me!!

MASKED THUG #1
Bring yo bitch ass back here!!

WILLIAM
Leave me alone!!

They catch up and knock him to the ground, proceeding to give him a barbarous beating. Thug #2 then unveils a gun and hands it to Thug #1. Horrified and out of luck, the innocent boy begs for his life.

WILLIAM
No! Please!!

WILLIAM'S P.O.V: Thug #1 pointing the gun at him.

MASKED THUG #1
In case the word "snitch" comes to
mind...

CUT TO BLACK:

POW!

OPEN FROM BLACK:

INT.CHURCH.AFTERNOON

A church brimming with mourners, young and old. We see William's closed casket, surrounded by flowers and a medium-sized picture propped on an easel. We then see his devastated parents holding each other as they mourn. The camera PANS LEFT, introducing REGINALD 'REGGIE' SMITH (17), TYSHAWN DAVIS (18), and CHRISTOPHER 'CHRIS' THOMAS (17).

REGGIE (V.O.)
My dog William had his whole life
ahead of him. He had dreams of
goin' to college, joining the
NBA...makin' somethin' of his life.
The sad part is that he could've
made it too. He had the drive *and*
the talent. But in a city like
Chicago Illinois, not everybody get
to make it out alive.

CUT TO:

INT.REGGIE'S HOUSE.MORNING

TITLE CARD: 2 MONTHS LATER

We hear the BLARING sound of an alarm clock, right next to William's obituary, that reads 6:45am. Reggie slams his hand down on it, shutting it off. He rises from his slumber, stretches, goes over to the door and slips into his robe.

REGGIE (V.O.)
That's me, Reggie.

We then see him in the bathroom, staring into his reflection as water runs from the sink.

REGGIE (V.O.)
I'm a high school senior, with no job and no money.

As Reggie sits at the kitchen table, writing in a notebook, his little brother JAMAL (4), sits across from him eating cereal. Their divorcée mother, RENÉE (40) enters the house clad in her work uniform, evidently exhausted. She's a bus driver for the CTA-Chicago Transit Authority.

RENÉE (O.S.)
Boys! I'm home!

REGGIE
We in the kitchen!

She enters the kitchen and joins her sons at the table.

REGGIE
Mornin', Mama

RENÉE
Good mornin', baby...(exhales)

REGGIE
I got the mail for you.

He hands her a short stack of envelopes. She looks through them and isn't surprised with what she finds.

RENÉE
These ain't nuttin' but more bills
and more bills mean more people
try'na get some money outta me!

JAMAL
Mama, can I have a dollar?

She disregards the question and replies back with-

RENÉE
See what I mean?

REGGIE
 (soft chuckle)
 So how was work?

RENÉE
 Same as always. Tirin'.

REGGIE
 Yeah, you look tired. Go get some
 rest, I'll take Jamal to school.

RENÉE
 (yawning)
 Oh no that's okay, I can do it.

REGGIE
 Ma, you sittin' here goin' to
 sleep. I'ma go start the car right
 now.

He reaches for her keys but she draws back.

RENÉE
 Nice try. The next bus come
 in... (looks at her phone) 11
 minutes.

REGGIE
 We better hurry up then. C'mon get
 your stuff, Jamal.

JAMAL
 Okay. Bye, Mama.

RENÉE
 Bye-bye sugar, be good at school.

REGGIE
 (pecks her on the cheek)
 See you later, Ma.

RENÉE
 Be careful...Lord, please keep my
 boys safe out there.

EXT.REGGIE'S BLOCK.MORNING

As the brothers walk to the bus stop, SLIM (early 30s), the
 neighborhood weed man attempts to make a sale.

SLIM
 I got that loud 2 for the 10! Early
 bird special, baby, talk to me!

REGGIE

Naw, I'm good.

SLIM

Come on, fam, we go waaay back! Buy 2, I'll throw you a extra one for free!

REGGIE

Gone somewhere, Slim! You see my little brother right here!

SLIM

Ahhh damn, iight homie!

JAMAL

What's loud?

REGGIE

Nuttin', don't worry 'bout it.

When the bus pulls up, the boys run faster to avoid being left behind.

REGGIE

Ay hold the bus!

As Reggie narrates, the boys board and take their seats. He gazes out the window, displeased with the world before him.

REGGIE (V.O.)

Welcome to Chicago. And as you can see, I don't live in the suburbs and I don't live Downtown. I live in the ghetto. Chiraq. A place where bein' ignorant is a badge of honor. A place where the average male don't live past 18. You can't even walk down the street without lookin' over yo shoulder every two seconds.

He turns and looks at Jamal, who's pre-occupied playing his hand held game. A devious duo of guys stand at the bus' rear exit and watch the child.

REGGIE (V.O.)

Out here, ain't no love. No mercy. Niggas rob kids and old ladies, not thinkin' twice about it. (aloud) Ay man, put that up.

JAMAL

I'm playin' it!

REGGIE

I said put it up! Mama told you not to bring that out the house anyway!

Disgruntled, Jamal does as instructed.

REGGIE (V.O.)

That's a shame, man. He can't even play his game without somebody watchin' him. But I rather him be mad at *me* for tellin' him to put it up than for somebody to take it from him.

INT. SCHOOL. MORNING/AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

Tyshawn and Chris wait in line to go through the metal detector. As Tyshawn empties out his pockets, he realizes he has a small bag of pot on him and whispers "Oh shit". Thinking fast, he discreetly slips the bag into his inattentive friend's pocket. Just as he gets it in, Chris turns around and says -

CHRIS

You can go in front of me. I gotta put my bookbag through the scanner.

TYSHAWN

(refrains from laughing)
Iight.

CHRIS

What's so funny?

TYSHAWN

Nuttin'

Tyshawn's turn is next and he goes through the detector without scrutiny. Unfortunately for Chris, the machine buzzes and he is subjected to be searched. The guard (dubbed "RENT-A-COP") finds no weapons on him but he does find the weed, much to Chris' shock.

RENT-A-COP

(seizes Chris)
Jones, we got one!

CHRIS

No, no, no, that's not mine I don't smoke! C'mon man, lemme go! Ty,

(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'ma kill you for this!!

Tyshawn wickedly chuckles to himself as he continues on.

Meanwhile, a distraught young woman argues with someone on the phone in the middle of the hall causing a scene. This is TRAMEKA MATHIS (17), gorgeous, well-dressed, yet slightly hard-looking.

TRAMEKA

(sobbing)

Naw nigga, kiss my ass, you make me sick! (pauses) Naw, naw, don't gimme that shit! You should've known I was gon' find out sooner or later wit'cho dumb ass!

A female teacher steps out of her class to calm the girl down.

FEMALE TEACHER

Young lady, you're being a disturbance to my class, please hang up the phone now!

TRAMEKA

(hangs up)

I hate you!!

Enraged, she puts her phone in her purse and stomps off. It slips out through a small hole. Assuming he's being nosy, she snaps off at Reggie (who's just arriving at school) as he passes by.

TRAMEKA

'Fuck you lookin' at?!

REGGIE

Well damn...

He spots her phone on the ground and holds on to it with the intention of returning it to her.

Later that afternoon, students transition to their next classes. Tyshawn is leaning against his locker texting, as Reggie walks up.

TYSHAWN

What's good, G?

REGGIE

What up, Ty.

TYSHAWN

Ay lemme copy yo English homework!

REGGIE

What?! *Hell naw!* Last time I let you cheat you got caught and we both got a "F"!

TYSHAWN

That was a long time ago!

REGGIE

This was just last Tuesday!

TYSHAWN

Right! *Last week,* quit trippin'!

REGGIE

Ugh... Iight man, here.

TYSHAWN

Good lookin'! So how that job interview go? They ever call you back?

REGGIE

Nope, I'm mad as hell.

TYSHAWN

Dang.

REGGIE

Real talk, I need some bread. This our senior year, things gon' be different after this.

TYSHAWN

Hell yeah, G, my mama tweakin'. Steady talkin' 'bout she gon' kick me out but my Pops ain't goin' though.

Chris happens upon his two buddies.

CHRIS

'Sup Reg?

REGGIE

What up

TYSHAWN

'Sup Chris, you can't speak?

CHRIS
(sour)
Go to hell!

Tyshawn laughs

REGGIE
What 'chu do?

CHRIS
Yeah, tell 'em what 'cha did!

TYSHAWN
I forgot I had some loud on me,
right? I ain't wanna get booked so
I put it in his pocket!

REGGIE
You petty!

CHRIS
As hell! Better be lucky I'm cool
wit' Mr. Crump and he let me go!
Anyway, y'all goin' to Stacy party?

TYSHAWN
Stacy party? How da hell you get
invited?

CHRIS
I tutor her in Algebra. She asked
me did I wanna come.

REGGIE
That's wassup. At least you got
invited.

CHRIS
Yeah I guess so. If y'all want a
ride be ready at around 8. Reg,
I'll pick you up first since you
live closest.

REGGIE
Cool.

The bell rings.

CHRIS
Well that's the bell, I'll catch up
wit' y'all later.

REGGIE
Iight.

TYSHAWN

Later.

CHRIS

(to Tyshawn)

Oh and by the way- security lookin'
for you!

TYSHAWN

Huh?

RENT-A-COP

Mr. Davis!

Tyshawn turns and spots Rent-a-Cop at a close range.

TYSHAWN

Aw damn, Rent-a-Cop!

He takes off with the guard in pursuit.

INT. ENGLISH CLASS. AFTERNOON

Reggie sits at his desk, writing in his notebook yet again. Tyshawn quietly slinks into the classroom and takes a seat. A quartet of hoodlums: MEECHIE (18), JON-JON (20), COREY (18), and Q (17) sit off in the cut. Meechie, a dark-skinned dreadlock-sporting roughneck, hits Reggie with a paper ball. He looks back at them with a cold stare and resumes writing. Wanting a reaction, all four thugs throw one, causing Reggie to finally lose it.

REGGIE

Do it again, and I'ma beat yo ass!

MEECHIE

Shut yo bitch ass up! This ain't
what'chu want, kid!

ENGLISH TEACHER

Hey, hey, hey, enough! Mr. Smith
you need to compose yourself! This
is a classroom, not a boxing ring!

REGGIE

But-

ENGLISH TEACHER

No excuses! I'm writing you up.

REGGIE

Are you serious?!

ENGLISH TEACHER

Very.

TYSHAWN

It wasn't his fault, Meechie 'n 'em started it!

ENGLISH TEACHER

Tyshawn, you stay out of this!

REGGIE

I ain't even do nothin', man! You gon' write me up and not him?! You bogus as hell!

Humming a melody to himself, the instructor ignores Reggie as he fills out the misconduct form.

ENGLISH TEACHER

Take this and go *straight* to the main office. I'll be calling down to make sure you're in there.

REGGIE

Man...ain't this about a-(groans in frustration)

He gives the thugs the evil eye as he heads out the door, livid and humiliated. Meechie jumps at him and softly roars ("Raah!") to scare him but he doesn't react. Tyshawn looks at them and shakes his head.

INT.MAIN OFFICE.AFTERNOON

Fuming, Reggie writes in his notebook as he waits outside the main office. The girl from earlier sits beside him.

TRAMEKA

Hey.

REGGIE

Hey.

They don't say anything else.

TRAMEKA

Look, I'm sorry for hollin' in yo face earlier. I'm just havin' a bad day.

REGGIE

You good, shawty.

TRAMEKA

Them lyrics?

REGGIE

Naw. I ain't try'na be no rapper.
Too common. I'm try'na be the next
James Baldwin, Alex Haley...

TRAMEKA

(dumbfounded)

Who?

REGGIE

You never read Roots? Going to Meet
the Man?

TRAMEKA

Naw. But I like to read Kama Sutra
when I'm on the toilet.

REGGIE

(perplexed)

Oh.

TRAMEKA

Ain't yo name "Ronald"?

REGGIE

"Ronald"? Hell naw! It's Reginald
but people call me Reggie.

She giggles

REGGIE

What'cho name is?

TRAMEKA

Why?

REGGIE

I'm just curious.

TRAMEKA

Why you curious?

REGGIE

Quit playin' what's yo name?

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Reginald Smith?

REGGIE

Comin'! (groans) I shol' don't feel
like this today.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

When I'm gon' see you again?

MAN'S VOICE (O.S.)

Mr. Smith!

TRAMEKA

You betta gone before you get in trouble again.

REGGIE

Damn, ight. See you later.

TRAMEKA

See you.

INT.GARDNER'S OFFICE.AFTERNOON

Reggie knocks on the already-open door of the counselor's office. NEIL GARDNER (35), a handsome, well-groomed Caucasian man sits at his desk, filling out paperwork.

NEIL

Good afternoon. You must be Reginald.

REGGIE

Yes.

NEIL

Come on in, have a seat. I'm Mr. Gardner. Let's see, your misconduct form says that you were being unruly and disruptive in your English class. Care to explain what happened?

REGGIE

Yeah, man, this dude named Meechie kept botherin' me, throwin' paper balls and stuff.

NEIL

(looks at form)
Meechie?

REGGIE

Oh naw, that ain't his real name. It's Cletus. Cletus Carter.

NEIL

"Cletus Carter", yeah that kid's a real pain in the ass. Breath stinks to high heaven.

Reggie snickers.

NEIL

It also says here that you told the instructor that he was bogus as hell.

REGGIE

I'm sorry but yeah, he was. I ain't even do nuttin' but I was the one who got in trouble.

NEIL

Well did you tell the teacher this guy was bothering you?

REGGIE

No. I got mad and went off.

NEIL

See? Had you kept calm and told the teacher, you wouldn't have got wrote up. The other kid would've. So Reginald-

REGGIE

Reggie.

NEIL

Excuse me, Reggie - you seem like a good kid. Tell me some things about yourself? Interests? Hobbies?

REGGIE

Well um...I like basketball, air hockey, Call of Duty, kickin' it. I don't know basic stuff I guess. And I like to write. Writing little stories and stuff. (holds up notebook)

NEIL

Okay, okay, sounds interesting. Any siblings?

REGGIE

Just a brother. He four finna be five next summer. I take care of him when my OG at work. That's just slang for "Mom", "Mama", my mother.

NEIL

Oh okay, I get it.

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

Forgive me, if I'm intruding but what about Dad? Is he around?

REGGIE

Yeah somewhat, but my parents got divorced almost a year ago. He live down in ATL now.

NEIL

Ouch...sorry to hear that. My folks split up when I was a kid too. Plan on going to college?

REGGIE

I thought about it, but I don't think I can afford to.

NEIL

Well there's plenty of ways to pay for it. Grants, scholarships, loans. It's possible.

REGGIE

Okay cool, I'ma look into that, most def. So am I gettin' detention, suspended or somethin'?

NEIL

Nah. Just forget it ever happened. If he bothers you again just tell your teacher. No need to add fuel to the fire, ya know?

REGGIE

Yeah.

NEIL

Alright, you can head on back to class now. It was a pleasure meeting you.

REGGIE

(shakes his hand)

You too.

NEIL

Oh and one more thing - are you looking for employment?

REGGIE

Yes! Like crazy!

NEIL

I'll see what I can do. Stop by
Monday, after school.

REGGIE

Got'cha.

NEIL

Alright, bud.

Moments after Reggie has left, Gardner realizes he left his notebook behind and decides to take a look at it.

EXT.SCHOOL GROUNDS.AFTERNOON

After school, the boys walk to their favorite burger joint.

TYSHAWN

So what happened when you went to
the office?

REGGIE

Nuttin'. The counselor let me
slide. And he said he gon' help me
get a job. Shol' need that. I feel
like a mexican without a
hedgetrimmer. But ay- y'all know
this girl wit' blonde hair?

CHRIS

Yeah, Beyoncé.

TYSHAWN

Man, you askin' us like we psychics
or somethin'!

REGGIE

I was talkin' to her for a minute
earlier but she wouldn't tell me
her name. She was-(stops)

He sees the girl across the street, walking with two of her girlfriends: CHANEL ANDERSON (16, pretty, doe-eyed) and DESTINY SHELTON (17, meek, ravishing).

REGGIE

That girl right there! The one in
the middle.

TYSHAWN

Damn! She fine as hell. Go over
there and hol' at her!

CHRIS
 Hold up, hold up! Her friends wit'
 her you know how girls can be!

TYSHAWN
 Man, whatever, Reggie just go, G!

REGGIE
 Iight

Reggie trots across the street, nearly getting hit by a car-
 much to the girls' amusement.

TRAMEKA
 (softly)
 That's o'boy I was telling y'all
 about.

CHANEL
 Aw okay, he cute!

TRAMEKA
 Shhh!!

REGGIE
 Wassup?

DESTINY
 Hi.

CHANEL
 Hey.

REGGIE
 You gon' tell me yo name now?

TRAMEKA
 Nope.

REGGIE
 Dang, come on!

ACROSS THE STREET -

TYSHAWN
 Let's go over there and hop down!

CHRIS
 Yeah, um...No.

TYSHAWN
 What'chu scared of?

CHRIS
Scared? Mmm-mmm I ain't
scared!...Maybe a little.

TYSHAWN
Just come on!

MEANWHILE -

REGGIE
Where y'all finna go?

TRAMEKA
Up here to the train station.

TYSHAWN
Reggie, yo thirsty ass!

He and Chris catch up and join them.

TYSHAWN
Wassup, ladies, how y'all doing?

GIRLS
Hey.

TYSHAWN
I'm Tyshawn, Tyshawn Davis, my
young boy right here is Chris.
(fake cough) He a virgin!

The girls laugh.

CHRIS
Oh real nice, Ty, very flattering.

TRAMEKA
Y'all this my friend, Destiny. She
just transferred here from CVS.

CHRIS
Nice to meet you, Destiny. I'm
Christopher, but you can call me
Chris.

DESTINY
I know. Chris Thomas, we have music
together.

CHRIS
(thinks about it)
We shol' do, Destiny Shelton. I
thought you looked familiar.

TYSHAWN

And what's yo name, gorgeous?

CHANEL

(giggles)

Chanel.

TYSHAWN

How 'bout a last name?

CHANEL

Anderson.

TYSHAWN

Chanel Anderson-Davis. Got a nice ring to it, don't it?

CHANEL

Ha! You got jokes.

TYSHAWN

I'm dead serious! Y'all goin' to Stacy party tonight?

TRAMEKA

Hell yeah! We finna turn up!

CHRIS

Hope to see you ladies there.

GIRLS

Alright.

They go their separate ways but Reggie stops them.

REGGIE

Ay hold up! You. Come here right quick!

She goes to him and he returns her phone.

TRAMEKA

(hugs him)

Ooh, my phone! I thought I lost it, thank you sooo much!

REGGIE

You welcome. See you tonight.

TRAMEKA

Okay!

They part ways only for Reggie to turn around upon hearing the sound of her voice.

TRAMEKA
Trameka!

REGGIE
Huh?

TRAMEKA
My name Trameka!

REGGIE
Trameka?

TRAMEKA
Yeah.

REGGIE
Trameka...

CHRIS
Oh lord.

TYSHAWN
Reggie, bring yo ass on man, damn!
We hungry as hell!

REGGIE
Don't rush me, nigga!

TYSHAWN
Over there all in love, flirtin'
and shit!

EXT.REGGIE'S BLOCK.EVENING

Reggie gets off the bus and walks down the street.

REGGIE (V.O.)
This the part of the day I hate.
Havin' to come home to this hell
hole. You'd think after livin' here
all my life I'd get used to it.
Please. Not even.

REGGIE'S P.O.V: A bum pulling down his pants about to
defecate in an alleyway.

He cringes with revoltion, nearly losing his lunch.

REGGIE (V.O.)
Uggh man! Who does shit like that?!

As he walks home, he happens upon a crime scene. A corpse
lies in the middle of the road covered with a white sheet. A
grieving woman mourns uncontrollably.

Renée, with Jamal on her lap, watches from the porch.

REGGIE

Hey Mama. What happened down there?

RENÉE

Ms. Thompson nephew got shot.

REGGIE

Are you serious?! They shot him out in the open like that?!

RENÉE

Mmm-hmm. These crazy folks don't value life no more.

REGGIE

And didn't *nobody* try to help him?! Call the police or somethin'?!

RENÉE

Now you know ain't nobody gon' say or do nuttin' when that mess go down. They scared that *they'll* become targets or if they can't get to them, they'll get their kids or anybody close to 'em. And it don't always stop there, so with that being said. It's a lost cause.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. REGGIE'S HOUSE. NIGHT

TILT DOWN to the exterior of the Smith residence where we see Reggie on the front porch waiting for Chris, soundlessly thinking to himself.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

Reggie, Tyshawn, Chris, and William (with a basketball in hand, sporting a jersey that reads "#17") walk and talk.

WILLIAM

I keep tellin' y'all, when I'm the next Derrick Rose, y'all gon' be sayin' I know him!

REGGIE

Derrick Rose?! More like Kwame Brown!

All but William laugh.

WILLIAM

You say that now but when I get my mansion wit' a jacuzzi full of hoes, y'all gon' claim me then!

CHRIS

I know I will! I can see it now! A hot, bubbly jacuzzi full of scrumptious harlots! (shudders) Hurry *UP* and get drafted!

TYSHAWN

What'chu in a rush for? You still gon' be a virgin!

REGGIE AND WILLIAM

Oooooh!!

END OF FLASHBACK

Reggie smiles. Renée steps outside and sits beside her son.

RENÉE

You okay?

REGGIE

Yeah, I'm straight.

As they gaze out into the sky, the sound of police sirens fill the air.

REGGIE

Ya know...for once I'd like to sit outside and not have to hear the sound of gunshots, sirens, and stuff.

RENÉE

Me too, I understand how you feel.

REGGIE

I wish there was something I could do to help you out....money-wise.

RENÉE

Don't you worry about that, that's my job. You just focus on school and enjoyin' yourself.

REGGIE

Enjoy myself how? All these killings and shootings, I can't take it no more.

RENÉE

Everything's gon' be alright. I promise. You know yo Mama's a go-getter. I got this.

Simultaneously, Chris arrives at the house.

CHRIS

Hey Ms. Smith, how you doin'?

RENÉE

I'm fine, Chris, how are you?

CHRIS

I'm good!

RENÉE

You boys have fun and be safe!

REGGIE

We will!

I/E.CHRIS' CAR.NIGHT

Reggie gets in Chris' car and examines his attire.

REGGIE

Boy, what the hell you got on?! We goin to a house party, not church!

CHRIS

Quit bein' a playa-hater, I look good!

REGGIE

(baffled)

"Playa-hater"? Huh? Wha-, never mind, you look sharp though, dog, you look sharp.

CHRIS

Thanks.

REGGIE

(murmurs)

Still ain't gon' get no ass though.

They drive off.

INT.TYSHAWN'S HOUSE.NIGHT

Tyshawn's parents, PAULINA (39) and RICK (42) sit in the living room and watch television.

Tyshawn enters and looks out the window.

PAULINA

Look at you! Think you look good or
some shit?

He ignores her. Rick disregards Paulina and shakes his head.

PAULINA

Cat got'cha tongue, huh? Just like
yo Daddy, both of y'all ain't shit.

TYSHAWN

Bitch, quit talkin' to me. It's
Friday, I'm feelin' good, don't
kill my vibe wit' dat shit right
now.

PAULINA

Mmm-hmm, bet you wont be talkin'
all that shit, when them niggas got
a glock pointed at yo ass.

RICK

Now why you gotta say some shit
like that?! Was that even
necessary?!

PAULINA

Rick, shut yo ass up, and watch TV,
it's the truth. Truth hurt.

RICK

Don't be talkin' to him like that!
Somethin' happen to dat boy, yo ass
gon' be the main one, hollin' and
screamin' gettin' on my goddamn
nerves!

Thankfully, Chris pulls up and honks the horn, saving
Tyshawn from having to hear this. He slams the door on his
way out.

I/E.CHRIS' CAR.NIGHT

He gets in Chris' car, visibly embittered.

CHRIS

You cool, dog?

TYSHAWN

I'm good, let's just go.

CHRIS

You sure?

TYSHAWN

I said I'm good, drive!

CHRIS

Watch yo tone, pimpin'.

They drive off. Reggie quietly acknowledges Chris' clothes to Tyshawn, who then heckles him as well.

TYSHAWN

Yo ass finna go play golf or somethin'? What'chu got that on for?

CHRIS

Oh god, here you go...

TYSHAWN

Finna go fight crime? Lookin' like *Miami Vice* and shit. (laughs, then sighs with relief) I needed that laugh. They up in there stressin' me out. Time for my medication.

He lights up a blunt and starts smoking.

CHRIS

Could you not do that in the car, please?

TYSHAWN

(whiny)

"Could you not do that in the car, please?"

CHRIS

He can roll a blunt, but cant get a job.

REGGIE

Man, this party finna be turnt up! Remember the last one she had back in the summertime?

CHRIS

Um yeah! When y'all gave me the wrong address!

Reggie and Tyshawn pause for a second then laugh their asses off, whereas Chris doesn't find squat funny.

CHRIS

Yeah, ha-ha, real funny.

TYSHAWN

C'mon Chris, lighten up, you know you our boy!

CHRIS

Mmm-hmm, well Stacy gave me the address herself this time, so I know exactly where I'm goin'!

TYSHAWN

(playfully smacks him)
Man, shut up and watch the road!

REGGIE

(Southern hick accent)
You watch 'dat road, boy! Boy, boyyy!! (messes with his hair)

CHRIS

Stop y'all, quit, I'm drivin'!

INT.GARDNER'S HOUSE.NIGHT

Mr. Gardner has dinner with his wife KAREN (31)

NEIL

So by this time next year, I will have made enough for us to get a place in River Forest. Like you always wanted.

KAREN

Sounds great, hun. So how was work?

NEIL

Pretty good. Didn't have to break up any fights.

KAREN

I doubt that a guidance counselor who sits behind a desk all day has had very many fights to break up.

NEIL

Hey when you're dealing with kids, anything's possible. But (bites, and swallows) I met this one young man today. A change of pace from most of the kids that come in my office. Cordial, well-mannered.

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

This guy has so much potential.

KAREN

How so?

NEIL

He left his little journal thing on my desk. I read through it, and I'm telling ya babe, he's one *hell* of a writer. I'd like to do something to help him out.

KAREN

Neil, honey, take into consideration that a lot of those kids don't believe there's a life for them beyond what they see everyday. Get to know him, spend time with him. You have to make sure he even wants the help.

NEIL

I know Karen, but I have a good feeling about this. Watch, I'm gonna make a difference in this kid's life.

She sighs and looks into her husband's eyes.

KAREN

And I believe you can do it.

He smiles back and they continue eating.

CUT TO:

I/E.STACY'S PARTY.NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

Stacy's party. We hear the sound of BOOMING hip-hop music, and see a large crowd of teens hanging around the premises.

INSIDE, host STACY HUGHES (18, curvy, glamorous) is in the kitchen with two other girls serving drinks.

REGGIE

What up, Stacy?

STACY

Heyyy! When y'all get here?

TYSHAWN

We just got here, we rode wit' Chris.

STACY

That's wassup. It's 2 dollars if y'all want a cup.

CHRIS

I'ma have to pass. I gotta drive.

STACY

Dang, Chris, I ain't know you had a car.

CHRIS

Yeah, I had it for a minute now.

STACY

You gon' gimme a ride to school, one day?

CHRIS

Yeah, sure. But my dad doesn't like me givin' everybody rides so I-

TYSHAWN

(pulls Chris away)

'Scuse us one second! Nigga! Why would you say that? That's yo golden ticket to some pussy, fool!

CHRIS

By givin' her a ride?

TYSHAWN

Yes! You got a whip, right? You want some clit, right? Look, you my boy, and I love you, no homo, I'm just sayin' you need to start usin' yo car to yo advantage. Hoes love a nigga wit' a ride! Point blank! Then that way, you can get you some umph-umph (grinds) and a little mmm-mmm (thrusts), see what I'm sayin'?

CHRIS

I understand you try'na help me, dog, but I want a lady, not a ho.

He walks away.

TYSHAWN

Just think about it, man! Nice guys finish last!

OUTSIDE -

Meechie and his goons tread down the block, en route to the party.

MEECHIE

Naw, scud, shawty ass playin' games!

JON-JON

You wasn't gon' hit no way! She ain't goin'!

MEECHIE

Yeah, ight!

Q

Remember o'dude from earlier? You should'a beat his ass!

MEECHIE

Nah, I'd prolly kill dat lil boy! He dont wanna fool wit' me, ya know why?! (jumps on the hood of a car) I'm Meechie, nigga! King of Chiraq, Drillinois! Every hood is *my* hood! Every block is *my* block! Believe dat!

COREY

Maaan, get'cho ass down! Yo name Cletus, nigga!

MEECHIE

Ay don't be sayin' dat shit out loud or ima beat yo ass!

Concurrently, Trameka and her girls cross the street entering the party.

JON-JON

There go Trameka!

MEECHIE

Speak of the devil. Watch this...Trameka! (no response) Trameka!

TRAMEKA

What?!

MEECHIE

Lemme hol' at you right quick!

TRAMEKA

Naw!

MEECHIE

Girl, quit playin' come here!

TRAMEKA

I said "naw" Meechie! Don't say
nuttin' else to me!

COREY

Damn, she treated yo ass!

MEECHIE

So?! That's why don't nobody like
her no way!

BACK INSIDE -

A cute girl (SHAUNA, curvaceous) walks by.

SHAUNA

Hey Reggie, Hey Ty.

TYSHAWN

'Sup Shauna?

CHRIS

Hey how you doin'?

She keeps going.

CHRIS

Y'all saw that right?! She spoke to
y'all but she didn't speak to me!

TYSHAWN

Chris, don't start that crybaby
shit! Please! Not tonight, I told
you what to do! (stares at the
girl's buttocks)

CHRIS

If they can't like me for me then I
don't want em, so until then I'm
goin' celibate!

TYSHAWN

Nigga, you a virgin, you been
celibate since birth!

CHRIS

You got one more time to deride my
plight, before I kick yo-

REGGIE

Enough! Both of y'all! And did you really just say "Deride my plight"? You wonder why you dont get none.

Chris spots the girls approaching, and immediately retracts his statement.

CHRIS

Never mind.

TRAMEKA

Hey Reggie.

REGGIE

Wassup?

TRAMEKA

Y'all ain't happy to see us?

TYSHAWN

Hell yeah, we is!

Trameka's favorite song comes on.

TRAMEKA

'Dis my shit right here, come on!

She leads Reggie off to dance. Tyshawn and Chanel follow suit. Chris and Destiny are left behind, unsure of what to do.

OUTSIDE -

The thugs are being blown off by the girls.

MEECHIE

These hoes actin' like we some goofies or somethin' man.

They notice a soft-looking kid approaching.

COREY

We got a live one!

MEECHIE

Hold up, hold up, fam! 20 dollars!

PARTY BOY

20 dollars?!

MEECHIE

20 dollars or you ain't gettin' in!

PARTY BOY
Man, move, this ain't yo party!

MEECHIE
(hardens up)
Who you think you talkin' too?!

PARTY BOY
You nigga!

They stare each other down as the goons stand by and watch.

MEECHIE
You know what? I like fam, I can't even get mad! (laughs, pats him on the shoulder) My bad, folk, I ain't even try'na be on that wit'chu.

PARTY BOY
You good.

MEECHIE
Come over here, lemme rap to you for a second.

JUMP CUT to the thugs jumping the boy in an alley.

MEECHIE
Talkin' shit to me, nigga? Huh?!
I'm Meechie, nigga, you ain't gon' come at me like I'm some kinda bitch! (powerful kick)

As the boy lies there in pain, the thugs stand over him, proud of their fiendish act.

COREY
Look at his lil mark ass!

Q
Talk yo shit now!

Meechie gathers up saliva (throat sound: "Haawwk!") and spits on the boy.

MEECHIE
(out of breath)
Whoo! I feel good as hell, G! We at the party!

The thugs ditch the kid and excitedly run back to the party.

INSIDE -

Once they're inside, Meechie spots Reggie and Trameka talking.

MEECHIE

Aw hell naw! Look! She'll talk to him but she won't talk to me?!
Jon-Jon, come on G!

Q

Awww snap, it's on now!

MEECHIE

Ay!

TRAMEKA

OMG Meechie, gone somewhere, I don't wanna talk to you!

MEECHIE

Aw right, right, you diss me: a real nigga, cause you want him: a *bitch* nigga! But you know what, I'm happy for you. You finally found somebody you ain't already fucked!

REGGIE

First of all, don't be talkin' to her like that! If she don't like you, she don't like you period! And who you callin' a bitch, pussy?!
(hard push)

Meechie and Jon-Jon attempt to fight back but Tyshawn and Chris break it up.

MEECHIE

Think you tough, lil nigga?! Let's take this shit outside!

REGGIE

Let's go then!

Stacy intervenes

STACY

Hold up! Hold the fuck up! Y'all need to calm that shit down, ain't finna be no fightin' at my party!

REGGIE

My bad Stacy, I ain't even try'na mess up yo lil party.

MEECHIE

(murmurs)

Soft ass.

STACY

Meechie, you ain't even supposed to be here! I told you don't come and yo stupid ass still came!

MEECHIE

Free country, bitch! This party weak as hell anyway!

STACY

Bye, Leave!

MEECHIE

And you know what, baby boy? You ain't even worth my time, you just showin' out in front of her but both of y'all can suck my dick!
(grabs crotch)

TRAMEKA

(two middle fingers)

Yeah, rather not!

MEECHIE

C'mon y'all we out this jam!

COREY

Why we gotta leave cause you not invited?

MEECHIE

(pushes someone)

Fuck out my way!

TRAMEKA

I swear, dudes like him the reason why girls go gay.

STACY

Y'all good?

REGGIE

Yeah. We straight.

STACY

(walks away)

Iight, well y'all have fun.

DESTINY

What was that all about?

REGGIE

I don't know. He be trippin'. Y'all
wanna stay or do y'all wanna go
somewhere else?

TYSHAWN

I don't care what about y'all? (the
girls agree) Let's roll then.

As the others head out the door, Chris stands there in
disbelief that he got in this predicament.

CHRIS

Man, black folks always want a ride
but never offer gas money.

EXT.PLAYGROUND.NIGHT - CONTINUOUS

After going out for a meal, they retreat to a playground.
Each couple is stationed at a different spot.

REGGIE

Girl, you was eatin' like it was
the last supper or somethin'!

TRAMEKA

Boy please! No I was not!

REGGIE

Uh-huh! You was- (wild chomping)

TRAMEKA

(punches his arm)
Quit makin' fun of me!

REGGIE

But for real though, what was you
so mad about earlier?

TRAMEKA

Cause...My boyfriend cheated on me
with this girl who stay on my
block. She posted a picture of them
kissin' up on Instagram.

REGGIE

For real? Damn...

MEANWHILE -

TYSHAWN

Enough about me.
(MORE)

TYSHAWN (CONT'D)

I wanna hear about you! You got a man?

CHANEL

Nope. And I'm glad. Y'all boys just some wannabe thugs who ain't gon' do nuttin' but be in the streets. Ain't nobody got time for that.

TYSHAWN

Ayyy, hold on, don't be so quick to judge. I'm different. (sings) "I'm different, yeah, I'm different"

CHANEL

I mean, don't get me wrong, you seem cool it's just...I don't wanna get my feelings hurt. It happened to me too many times before.

He takes her chin and turns her face towards his.

TYSHAWN

You not...

ELSEWHERE-

CHRIS

So what made you wanna transfer here? You don't strike me as the type who'd wanna come to a school like ours.

DESTINY

It was gettin' too crazy at my old school. Somebody brought a gun to school and my dad made me transfer.

CHRIS

Yeah this city gets worse everyday. I'm surprised I made it this long.

DESTINY

What do you mean?

CHRIS

As you can see I'm not the hardcore, dread-head type. I'm more of a preppy, school-boy type..."A lame"

DESTINY

Not to me.

(MORE)

DESTINY (CONT'D)

You're really sweet and nice.
You're your own person. I admire
that about you.

CHRIS

Thanks but I doubt you'd want
somebody like me.

DESTINY

Perhaps I do.

CONCURRENTLY -

REGGIE

I'm just sayin' though, you don't
deserve nobody treatin' you like
that. Like how Meechie was all up
in yo face hollin' at you and
stuff. Real men treat women with
the utmost respect. Like queens.

TRAMEKA

Hmm. I like the way you stood up
for me today. I like somebody wit'
a backbone. Confidence. Not just
that, I want somebody who got
somethin' goin' for them. I got
dreams & goals of my own. I don't
wanna be held back, ya know?

REGGIE

Yeah, I feel you...Look Trameka, I
understand you just got out of a
relationship and whatnot but I feel
like we got this connection that I
ain't ever had wit' nobody before.
I wanna be wit'chu and I'm willin'
to do whatever it takes to make
sure you straight and keep a smile
on that pretty face.

TRAMEKA

Straight up?

REGGIE

Straight up.

They stare into each other's eyes. He leans forward and
softly kisses her upon the lips. She smiles and kisses him
back.

REGGIE

So you my girl now? (she nods)

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Now what?

She looks directly INTO FRAME with a lascivious smirk.

JUMP CUT TO:

Reggie and Trameka lustfully making out in his bedroom, stripping each other down. We jump to Tyshawn's room where he throws Chanel on the bed and removes his shirt. She has a change of heart.

CHANEL

Ty, wait a minute!

TYSHAWN

It's okay, I ain't gon' forget to pull out!

CHANEL

No, it's not that, I just feel like we movin' too fast. I mean we did just meet earlier today.

TYSHAWN

So? You like me right?

CHANEL

Yeah but I don't think--

TYSHAWN

(puts finger on lips)
Shhh...you in good hands, ma. You can trust me.

CHANEL

(sighs)
Okay. But can we just cuddle instead?

TYSHAWN

Say what?!

CHANEL

Cuddle. Like this.

She wraps his arm around her and they get cozy. He lies there in disappointment. CUT BACK to Reggie's room. Clad in nothing but a bra, Trameka lies on top of a shirtless Reggie.

TRAMEKA

You ever had a "Butterfly Flick"?

REGGIE
What the hell is that?

TRAMEKA
A lil somethin'-somethin' I learned
from Kama Sutra.

She slips under the covers and performs fellatio on Reggie.

REGGIE
Whooo!! Goddamn, girl!

TRAMEKA (O.S.)
Be quiet 'fo yo mama wake up!

REGGIE
Her ass knocked out! She ain't gon'
hear me!

Elsewhere, Chris and Destiny sit in his car outside her house. There's an awkward silence between them.

DESTINY
You think they're?...

CHRIS
Oh yeah.

DESTINY
(dry)
Mmm. Thots.

They look at each other and laugh a little.

CHRIS
I had fun tonight.

DESTINY
Me too.

CHRIS
We should go out again sometime.
Movies, dinner, whatever works for
you.

DESTINY
I'd love to. Well, it's pretty
late. I better go inside now.
(after she takes off her seatbelt)
Oh and by the way, sorry we
didn't...you know.

CHRIS
No need to apologize.
(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)

I'd rather us end the night like this. No need to rush into things.

DESTINY

Thank you, Chris. (kisses him)
Goodnight.

CHRIS

Goodnight...

As she gets out of the vehicle, he sits there for a moment and smiles to himself.

INT.REGGIE'S HOUSE.MORNING

The next morning, Reggie helps Trameka sneak out.

REGGIE

Yo people know where you was at all night?

TRAMEKA

I sent my Mama a text sayin' I was at Chanel house. She aint gon' trip. Yo Mama aint gon' say nuttin' bout you havin' a girl over?

As this goes on, Renée quietly watches them.

REGGIE

Please! I'm a grown ass man, she know what the deal is!

Renée makes a face as if she's thinking "Oh no he didn't!". The couple then share a salacious kiss goodbye.

Renée cringes in disgust.

TRAMEKA

Bye...

After he closes the door, he does a little strut only to look up and see his mother. He's aponic.

REGGIE

Uh hey, Mama! I was just takin' out the garbage!

RENÉE

(polite)

Oh really? You mean that garbage over there?

She points out the overflowing trash can.

REGGIE

I-I was talkin' bout the bathroom garbage can. You know the little small one? (swallows) Um--

RENÉE

Don't even try it! I saw that lil' girl leave up outta here!

REGGIE

Dang!

RENÉE

She's pretty. What's her name?

REGGIE

Trameka.

RENÉE

The hell?! Her parents couldn't think of a better name than that?

They laugh.

RENÉE

Look at you, got you a lil' girlfriend. No babies!

REGGIE

I already know...if you go into heat, package your meat! (reveals condom, cocky laugh)

She looks at him with a dry expression, not one bit amused.

REGGIE

Too much?

RENÉE

Too much.

REGGIE

(weak chuckle, walks off)
Guess I'll go take out that garbage now.

RENÉE

Yeah, you do that. Grown man.

INT.GARDNER'S OFFICE.AFTERNOON

The following Monday after school, Reggie stops by Mr. Gardner's office. He's busy on the computer when he hears a knock at the door.

NEIL

Come in!

REGGIE

Wassup, Mr. G?

NEIL

Hey buddy. I've got some great news for ya.

Reggie takes a seat.

NEIL

I was able to get ahold of Jewel-Osco on 95th & Stony Island. There's a cashier job open. If you want it, it's yours.

REGGIE

Yeah that's cool.

NEIL

Awesome, here's the application, hand it back in to me first thing tomorrow and I'll fax it over there.

REGGIE

Iight.

NEIL

So how was your weekend?

REGGIE

It was decent. Me and my guys went to this party, met this girl. Let's just say we got to know each other real good. (winks)

NEIL

Ah stop it with the code stuff, we're both men here. Gettin' laid in high school is as american as warm apple pie. (chuckles)

REGGIE

True, true...how 'bout you? What'chu do this weekend?

NEIL

(points to Karen's photo)
Oh nothing. Just spent some time with the wife.

REGGIE

That's wassup, she decent.

NEIL

(retrieves notebook)

Oh, I almost forgot. You left this on my desk Friday.

REGGIE

Aw snap thanks! I ain't even know it was missing!

NEIL

I checked it out. Got some pretty good stuff in there.

REGGIE

Think so?

NEIL

I know so. A buddy of mine released a book through self-publishing. If this is something you're serious about, you should look into it. Wasted talent's not cool.

REGGIE

Thanks, but don't nobody wanna read about the life of some hood kid. They don't even like the movies.

NEIL

Never know. Just think positive. So do you live in the area?

REGGIE

Naw. I stay on 99th & Lafayette.

NEIL

Is the neighborhood relatively safe?

REGGIE

If you consider a block where people get shot in the middle of the day safe then yeah. And to be honest, I'm tired of it. Right about now I need to go to college to not only get my education but to get away from all this.

NEIL

Really?

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

Well I have a proposition for ya.
As long as you stay out of trouble
and keep your grades up, I will
personally see to it that you're
walking across someone's campus in
the fall. Deal?

REGGIE

Deal!

NEIL

Alriiight!

They do a fist bump.

INT.REGGIE'S HOUSE.EVENING

The Smith family have dinner together.

RENÉE

In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

BOYS

Amen.

REGGIE

Good news, Mama. I found me a job.

RENÉE

Really? Where at?

REGGIE

Jewel's. The one on 95th.

RENÉE

95th? Mmm...I don't know about
that, it's pretty wild up there. A
man got robbed in the parking lot 2
days ago.

REGGIE

I know, but a job is a job, and we
could use the extra money.

RENÉE

Yeah but still, Reg, watch your
back. This a rough city we livin'
in. Gotta keep your guard up.

Having ignored him long enough, Renée demands Jamal to put
his game away, while Reggie responds to a text.

RENÉE

Boy, put that game down and eat!

JAMAL

Reggie on his phone!

She looks up to find Reggie on the phone with a goofy grin on his face.

RENÉE

And you, off the phone! This family time!

REGGIE

Hold up, Ma, lemme just respond back right quick.

RENÉE

(takes phone)

Uh-uh, gimme the--

REGGIE

No, no, Ma, that's private!

RENÉE

Why is Trameka sending you pictures of sliced ham?

REGGIE

Uhhh Ma...that's not...

She takes a closer look at the photo and is immensely disgusted by her discovery, giving the phone back.

RENÉE

Ugghh!! Y'all kids are sick!

REGGIE

(laughing)

I told you it was private!

RENÉE

That ain't private that's just plain nasty! Her lil fast self!

REGGIE

But in all seriousness, Ma, I really need this job. You work too hard supporting two kids by yourself. You always sacrificing for us. I wanna do somethin' to show my appreciation.

RENÉE

Thanks, baby, I know you appreciate it. But that's my duty as a mother. Put my boys first, no matter what.

REGGIE

And as a son, sometimes I have to consider what's in my mother's best interest.

Jamal eases a dollar across the table to his mom.

JAMAL

You can have it back, Mama.

This kind act tugs at Renée's heartstrings.

RENÉE

It's okay, sugar, you keep it.

The family resumes eating but Reggie breaks the silence by saying:

REGGIE

You know what'll go good with this Mama? Some sliced ham!

She drops her fork and does a face palm.

RENÉE

Oh god!

I/E.JEWEL-OSCO.AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

Reggie has just finished up a woman's groceries.

REGGIE (V.O.)

The next week, I started my new job at the grocery store. (aloud) \$6.48 is your change, you have a nice day

WOMAN

You too.

Someone from off-camera throws a bunch of snack foods on the conveyer belt. TILT UP to reveal Meechie.

MEECHIE

Aww heckie naw! You work at a grocery store?! This too funny!

REGGIE

Look, don't be comin' to my job startin' stuff. This ain't school.

MEECHIE

Ain't nobody thinkin' bout you, cuz!

REGGIE

\$4.32

Meechie hands him a \$5 but draws back just to be a nuisance.

REGGIE

(snatches it)

Quit playin' man, give it here!

MEECHIE

Keep the change. Yo broke ass need
it more than I do.

REGGIE

(dry, with a phony smile)

Have a nice day.

MEECHIE

You gay as hell, famo!

Meechie leaves. Reggie observes Meechie regroup with his crew outside the store and sell someone a bag of weed, receiving \$20 in exchange.

LATER THAT EVENING -

Reggie's shift is over. The thugs are still hanging around. Slightly afraid, Reggie keeps going as if they aren't there. They look at each other, smile minaciously, and follow him.

MEECHIE

Ay boy! Ay come back for a minute!

REGGIE

For what? I don't fool wit'chu like
that, homie.

MEECHIE

I'm try'na be nice to yo bitch ass!

REGGIE

That's how you talk to people when
you try to be nice? Kick rocks.

MEECHIE

Okay, okay, I'm sorry just stop for
a second.

Reggie reluctantly stops and listens.

REGGIE

(bugged)

May I help you?

MEECHIE

Lemme just cut to the chase, I'm impressed with the way you handled yo'self at Stacy party. I see you got some balls after all.

Q

(amused, nudges Corey)
He said 'balls after all'!

MEECHIE

Shut up! Anyway, G, me and the guys been talkin' and we think you got what it takes to be one of us!

REGGIE

Is this some kind of joke? Man, I don't want *nothin'* to do wit' y'all! You just a buncha lames who be out here flexin', goin' around botherin' people cause you ain't got nuttin' else better to do.

JON-JON

(pissed)
What'chu say?! (walks up on Reggie)

MEECHIE

(stops him)
Calm down, folk, relax!

JON-JON

He try'na go in on us!

MEECHIE

Let him finish! I wanna see where he goin' wit' this.

REGGIE

My mama told me back in the old days, before it was all this gang-bangin' shit, people like the Black Panther Party was actually about somethin'. They fought for rights, protected the 'hood, Huey Newton fed starvin' kids. They looked out for people. They wasn't out here fightin' and killin' people over rap songs and Twitter posts. So with that being said - No, I don't wanna be a part of y'all whack ass gang. (walks off)

MEECHIE

But don't you wish you had one of these?!

Reggie turns back to find Meechie presenting a fat wad of cash with a cocky smile. Astounded and somewhat mesmerized, Reggie stares as if he's fallen in love with it.

REGGIE

Dang...

MEECHIE

Come on home, bro!

Reggie fixes his lips to say something but immediately snaps out of it, and keeps going.

REGGIE

No! Sorry but the answer's no.

COREY

I feel like we just got a history lesson or somethin'!

Q

On life though!

JON-JON

(to Meechie)

Told you 'dat pansy ass nigga wasn't gon' go! Talkin' bout he got heart! *Phhft!* I shol' can't tell.

Q

Naw, he got heart alright! *Holiday Heart!*

The goons laugh (all but Meechie).

MEECHIE

I ain't even trippin' cause trust me, this ain't nowhere near over. This just the beginning.

INT. TRAMEKA'S BEDROOM. EVENING

Reggie and Trameka are doing homework.

REGGIE

You understand these questions? I don't remember going over this.

She looks at his book, and then looks at him like he's stupid.

TRAMEKA

Bay...

REGGIE

Huh?

TRAMEKA

Wrong page.

REGGIE

Aw snap, I'm tweakin'!

TRAMEKA

(giggles)

So how was your first week?

REGGIE

It was iight. All I do is ring up people stuff. Nuttin' too hard. But it ain't enough for what I'm try'na do. I'm 17 years old, it's time I start pullin' my weight helpin' my moms out. She can't do it all. Then not just that, I wanna be able to spoil you wit' diamonds & gold, Louie's & furs.

TRAMEKA

Awww that's sweet, but material stuff don't matter to me.

REGGIE

But that's my job as a man to take care of you.

TRAMEKA

It ain't nuttin' a man can do for me that I can't do for myself. I can buy my own clothes, get my own nails done. Now unless it's my birthday or Valentines, hell yeah you betta buy me somethin'! But what matter most to me is what we got. Each other.

REGGIE

(weak)

Yeah.

TRAMEKA

I feel like money is the root of all evil. When boys be gettin' in gangs, sellin' drugs and stuff,

(MORE)

TRAMEKA (CONT'D)

what be they ultimate goal? Gettin' money. They be out here on dummy doin' all kinds of crazy shit.

REGGIE

But I'm sure it's some people out here who be havin' it hard and they ain't got no choice *but* to do that. Unless they just screwed up in the head, it's about survival not bein' evil.

TRAMEKA

I guess but still, people need to be mindful of what they do cause it always come back on you one way or another.

The conversation stops and they resume working.

REGGIE (V.O.)

For some reason, I wasn't try'na hear a word she was sayin'. Even though I had already told Meechie 'n 'em No, I knew I needed more money and was determined to get it. So I knew *exactly* where to go.

EXT.REGGIE'S BLOCK.AFTERNOON

Reggie locates Slim on his corner.

REGGIE

Yo Slim!

SLIM

Reggie, what up lil folks, what'chu want? I got that loud, rocks, Molly.

REGGIE

I don't wanna buy nothin', I gotta ask you somethin'.

IN SLIM'S VAN -

SLIM

Boy don't you know yo Mama would whoop yo ass *and* mines if she knew I had you out here slingin' that shit?!

REGGIE

Man, relax! She aint gon' find out!

SLIM

I don't think this such a good idea. If somethin' was to happen to you out here 'cause of me I'd never forgive myself.

REGGIE

Oh my god, Look! Ain't nuttin' finna happen to me, so quit worryin'! Now how can I be down?

Slim sighs and looks at Reggie with uncertainty.

SLIM

Iight man this what'chu do...Rule #1: Only sale to people you know. You don't wanna take no chances. You might have a undercover snitch on your hands. Rule #2: Never call the weed "weed", only use the street names- "loud", "kush", whatever. Never know who's listenin'.

REGGIE

Huh?! Man people ain't stupid! Nowadays everybody know what them words mean. Even my lil brother!

SLIM

Yeah but it's still some who don't so like I said, don't call it by its real name. Rule #3: Unless you got a death wish, never sell on another nigga turf. That's how you get popped!

REGGIE

You ain't gotta tell me twice!

SLIM

And Rule #4: The most important one of all...Watch the company you keep. Don't trust none of these niggas.

REGGIE

Oh naw, man, my guys ain't like that. Chris and Ty cool as hell.

SLIM

They might not be on that, but still- everybody ain't yo friend. They'll chill wit'chu today and turn on you tomorrow. I ain't gon' force nuttin' on ya but if you really wanna do this...it's yo call.

REGGIE

(thinks about it)

Yeah...I'm sure.

I/E.REGGIE'S HOUSE.EVENING

CHRIS

Hell naw!

TYSHAWN

Chris, come on man, quit bein' scary!

CHRIS

I ain't bein' scared I'm bein' smart! Reg, you got more sense than this, man!

REGGIE

What other choice I got? The money I make ain't enough to get by wit'!

CHRIS

That's why you save your money and take it one day at a time!

REGGIE

Do you know how long it take me to get 1 check? 2 weeks. Wanna know long it take Meechie to make \$10?! 1 minute!

CHRIS

Meechie is a menace to society! Why the hell would you wanna follow in the footsteps of the sorry likes of him?!

REGGIE

Oh my god, this nigga- Ty, what'chu think?

TYSHAWN

I think that's smart as hell!

(MORE)

TYSHAWN (CONT'D)

Think about it, he can still go to work *and* he can deal. It's as easy as Trameka!

REGGIE

That's what I'm talkin' bout! Wait, what?

CHRIS

Y'all really that desperate for a few funky ass dollars?!

REGGIE

A few funky ass dollars that can help us survive!

CHRIS

You survive by usin' your head, stayin' in school, havin' faith in God!

REGGIE

Man, whatever.

CHRIS

You know what, I'm outta here! When your lil plan backfires don't say I didn't warn you! Ty, if you want a ride you better come on!

TYSHAWN

Naw, I'm good, I'ma get on the red line.

Disappointed, Chris storms out of the house.

Feeling bad, Reggie goes after his friend.

OUTSIDE -

REGGIE

Chris! Chris, hold up man!
Look I know all this sound crazy,
but I'm tellin' you it can work!
All we doin' is dealin'!

CHRIS

You missin' the bigger picture. It ain't about sellin' drugs, it's the fact you willing to put yo life in danger over a temporary problem! If you die, don't you know what that'll do to your brother?

(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)

Even worse- your mother? Don't fall into the trap, man. Last thing we need is another statistic.

Chris drives away.

REGGIE

Chris!

REGGIE'S P.O.V: Chris' car disappearing down the road.

TYSHAWN

Reggie!

Reggie goes up the steps.

TYSHAWN

He gon' be straight?

REGGIE

Yeah, I guess.

TYSHAWN

So where we go from here?

REGGIE

Simple. We get to work.

DRUG DEALING MONTAGE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

DAY 1 - The boys meet with Slim, who supplies them with a batch of drugs. That same day, they sell to a boy in the boys' locker room.

DAY 2 - A boy approaches Reggie who's at his locker with Tyshawn and a few other kids, and makes a purchase.

DAY 5 - The boys proudly present Slim the proceeds, having already sold the batch he gave them. Impressed, he gives them more along with their cut.

That night, Reggie puts a few dollars on his mother's nightstand as she sleeps. He gives her a soft peck upon the forehead.

DAY 14 - Reggie and Tyshawn hang in the school parking lot with a group of other kids. Chris and Destiny are on their way inside. Chris momentarily stops and looks at them with disapproval. Urging him to come on, Destiny takes his hand and leads him away.

DAY 20 - Tyshawn sneaks up on Chanel from behind with a bouquet of roses and kisses her on the cheek. Elsewhere, Reggie chats with Mr. Gardner in his office.

Later, Trameka answers her door to find Reggie standing there with a teddy bear, candy, and a big smile. Aroused, she yanks him inside by the shirt. That night, Chris and Destiny cuddle in bed (fully-clothed) and watch television.

DAY 28 - Meechie and his boys ride pass a liquor store and find the duo in front of the store dealing. Meechie (confused and speechless) sits there pondering on what he just saw. Later, Tyshawn gives his father some money.

RICK

I can't take your money, son, I'll be okay.

TYSHAWN

No. I want you have it. I understand you strugglin' right now. Think nuttin' of it.

Accepting the money, Rick smiles and hugs Tyshawn.

RICK

Love ya, son.

TYSHAWN

Love you too, Pops.

DAY 30 - Reggie counts his money and hides it under his bed.

END OF MONTAGE

INT.GARDNER'S HOUSE.MORNING

The Gardners are leaving out for work.

NEIL

What time do you have to be in the office?

KAREN

9:30

NEIL

Alright, babe. (kisses her) I'll see you this evening.

KAREN

Wait! How's your little buddy doing? Roger?

NEIL

Reggie. He's doing fine I guess.

KAREN

You should invite him over for dinner tonight.

NEIL

Oh no, honey, that's a bit much. I could lose my job.

KAREN

You'll be fine! Besides I'd love to meet him.

He's still not up for it.

KAREN

(cutesy, eyebrow raise)

I'll let you have dessert.

Neil chuckles a little and gives in, though still uncertain.

NEIL

If you insist...

KAREN

Great! See you tonight!

NEIL

Bye.

He leaves.

INT.SCHOOL.AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

Later that afternoon, Chanel is on her way to class when she catches Tyshawn flirting with another girl (Shauna from the party). Their conversation is indistinct.

As she watches the two share a sensual hug goodbye, Tyshawn squeezes her buttocks and whispers something in her ear. The girl laughs and walks away. He then notices Chanel. Hurt, she storms off with Tyshawn right behind trying to explain.

TYSHAWN

That ain't what it looked like, she just my friend!

CHANEL

Yeah right, and who am I? The main chick or the side chick?

TYSHAWN

Do it matter? Either way it go, you still gettin' the same dick!

CHANEL

Whatever nigga, just leave me alone! I knew you was on bullshit the minute I met you!

TYSHAWN

I'm sorry, it was a joke! Chanel!

CHANEL

Leave me alone!!

He suddenly grapples her and forces her against a locker with a firm grip on her arms.

TYSHAWN

Listen...if I say she just a friend, she just a friend...you hear me?

She nods.

TYSHAWN

I said do you hear me?!

CHANEL

Yes! Yes! I hear you! Loud & clear.

Feeling remorseful, he calms down and releases her from his grip. He then straightens her hair and holds her in a tender embrace.

CHANEL

Don't ever do that to me again.

TYSHAWN

I won't. I promise.

MEANWHILE -

Gardner excuses Reggie from class to ask him about dinner.

REGGIE

'Sup Mr. G? Am I in trouble?

NEIL

Oh no, not at all. I just stopped by to see if you would like to join my wife and I for dinner tonight. Not quite sure what she's cooking, but if there's something you would like I could always call and let her know.

REGGIE

Naw, you ain't gotta inconvenience her like that. I'm cool wit' whatever y'all got. I'm black, we like to eat period!

NEIL

Sounds good. But first, I'll have to call your mother and make sure it's alright.

REGGIE

No problem.

INT.GARDNER'S OFFICE.AFTERNOON

INTERCUT phone conversation.

Gardner calls Reggie's house. He waits for answer.

RENÉE

Hello?

NEIL

Good afternoon, ma'am, am I speaking to Ms. Renée Smith?

RENÉE

Yes. Who am I speaking with?

NEIL

This is Mr. Gardner, Reginald's guidance counselor.

RENÉE

Oh so you're Mr. Gardner, Reggie's told me so much about you.

NEIL

Really? That's nice, I was just calling to see would it be alright if Reggie joined me for dinner.

RENÉE

Pardon me?

NEIL

It's alright Ms. Smith, I assure you there's no funny business going on. My wife and I would like to have him over for a little while. I'll bring him home immediately after.

She thinks it over.

RENÉE
 Alright. That's fine.

NEIL
 Super. I'll have him home by 8.

RENÉE
 Oh and by the way, sir - thank you
so much for all you've done for
 Reggie. He really looks up to you.

NEIL
 No problem at all. He's a good kid.

INT.GARDNER HOME.EVENING

Gardner and Reggie enter the house.

NEIL
 Well, here we are!

REGGIE
 Nice house!

NEIL
 Thank you!

Karen comes downstairs and greets them.

KAREN
 Hi there. You must be Reggie. I'm
 Karen.

REGGIE
 (shakes her hand)
 Yes ma'am. Nice to meet you.

KAREN
 Same here. So...dinner will be
 ready in a little bit. Neil, why
 don't you take Reggie on a little
 tour of the house?

NEIL
 Sure thing. Come on buddy.

A SHORT TIME LATER -

Neil and Reggie enter the basement. It's dark. Neil hits the
 light switch.

NEIL

And last but not least, my
man-cave.

Reggie walks around getting a closer look.

REGGIE

Dang. You got a flat screen, video
games, air hockey...(sad) I used to
love playin' air hockey wit' my
dad. Those was the days, man.

NEIL

Wanna play?

REGGIE

Oh naw, I'm good. Just feelin' a
lil' nostalgic that's all. Plus I'm
a guest in yo house, I don't wanna
be touchin' stuff.

NEIL

It's fine, really, come on.

Gardner turns on the table and gives Reggie a handle.

NEIL

Wanna serve?

REGGIE

Yeah.

Reggie serves the puck and manages to get it in that first
pass.

NEIL

Whoa! Pretty good. Bet you won't
get it in this time!

He attempts to score but Reggie gets the point again.

REGGIE

I just did, and I'll do it again!

NEIL

We'll see about that!

Through this lengthy game, the two became more than just a
counselor and his pupil. They became friends. Karen watches
for a brief moment, happy to see them bonding.

KAREN

Guys! Food's ready!

BOTH

Ahhh!

KAREN

Sorry!

REGGIE

Good game, Mr. G!

NEIL

Same to you, bud. Rematch after we eat!

I/E.TRAP HOUSE.NIGHT

Back on the Southside, Tyshawn stops by a trap house in a rather seedy neighborhood. We hear the muffled sound of hip-hop music reeking from the rundown establishment. He walks up to the door and knocks.

EJ (O.S.)

Who is it?!

TYSHAWN

It's me!

EJ (O.S.)

Who da fuck is "me"?!

TYSHAWN

Tyshawn! Yo cousin!

EJ (20s, big & burly) opens the door, and happily greets Tyshawn with a big bear hug, smothering him.

EJ

Awww shit, lil Ty-Ty, wassup homie?!

TYSHAWN

I'm good. (cough)

EJ

Come on in here, I ain't know that was you! Thought you was that nigga Telly from around the corner I was finna shank yo ass!

Tyshawn enters the trap escorted by EJ. The gangsters lounge around drinking, smoking, and gambling.

EJ

Ay y'all this my lil cousin! Rick son!

They all greet Tyshawn, who in turn nods back.

TYSHAWN
EJ, folk, you got the goods?

EJ
Yeah follow me.

EJ leads Tyshawn upstairs to his room.

EJ
This the whole lil ya'dig right
here.

TYSHAWN
(sinister)
Yeah...this perfect.

TYSHAWN'S P.O.V: Several guns lined across EJ's bed

EJ
Pick whichever ones you want.

Browsing through the wide variety, he selects a silver &
black 9mm pistol.

TYSHAWN
How much for this one?

EJ
Since you family just gimme \$100

TYSHAWN
Cool, cool. I want this one and the
other one just like it.

EJ
Iight then that's \$200.

He pays his cousin the \$200.

TYSHAWN
Iight I'm out.

EJ
Hold tight, hold tight fam. Just
one more thing...if you get caught,
you ain't get em from EJ.

Tyshawn nods his head in agreeance and leaves.

BACK TO:

EXT.GARDNER'S HOUSE.NIGHT

REGGIE

Thanks for dinner, Miss G. That steak was bangin'!

KAREN

Don't mention it, sweetie. It was nice having you.

Neil unlocks his car for Reggie.

NEIL

It's open. Gimme a second.

REGGIE

Tight. See you later!

KAREN

Bye!...Now what did I tell you? It wasn't so bad was it?

NEIL

Not at all. We had a blast. For a moment I felt...(stops)

KAREN

Felt what?

NEIL

I don't know...It's hard to explain. The whole air hockey thing meant alot to him. He was able to re-live a special part of his life because of me. In a way, I feel really good about that. Now will you get off my back about it being a waste of money?

They laugh a little and then kiss.

REGGIE

Uh-oh Mr. G, I see you boy!

NEIL

Well let me go ahead and take him home. I'll see ya when I get back.

KAREN

Drive carefully!

EXT.REGGIE'S HOUSE.NIGHT

They pull up in front of Reggie's house.

REGGIE

I had fun tonight. I'm glad we did this.

NEIL

So am I.

REGGIE

Maybe next time you and yo wife could come over my house for dinner. My mama can cook too. Just don't eat her cornbread. So nasty, Ethiopians turn it down.

NEIL

Sounds like a plan.

REGGIE

Iight, Goodnight Mr. G

NEIL

Night, Reg.

Reggie gets out and makes his way toward the house but turns back and says:

REGGIE

Hold up. You called me "Reg". Only my friends call me that.

NEIL

Well...we are friends aren't we?

REGGIE

Yeah...yeah, we are. See you on Monday.

NEIL

Later!

I/E.SUBWAY.NIGHT

Elsewhere - Tyshawn is riding the subway. It's relatively empty. From his point of view: we see a group of males talking. A girl facing sideways on her cell phone (her face is unseen). A young man with a music player.

Tyshawn pays close attention to the boy. He gets up and stands in front of the exit where the boy is sitting. He looks around to make sure no one's watching as the train comes to a complete stop. Once the door opens, he SWIPES the music player and makes a break for it.

BOY

My iPod!!

A man on the platform chases after Tyshawn ordering him to stop. Tyshawn runs at top speed through 63rd & King Drive. He cuts through an alley and hides beside a dumpster.

The man doesn't see him anymore and gives up. In the clear, Tyshawn looks at the music player feeling guilty for a hot second but the thrill of committing such an act overpowers him.

INT. TRAMEKA'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

The girls have a sleepover at Trameka's house.

TRAMEKA

You lyin'!

CHANEL

I'm dead serious! She screenshotted his ass. Put it all on the internet, and she broke up wit' him.

TRAMEKA

Hell naw, his ass lost a good girl for some community coochie. I bet dudes would never cheat again, if God took a inch off they dick every time they did it.

DESTINY

So listen, I've been thinking...we've been going out with the guys for a while now, do you think it's time Chris and I...?

TRAMEKA

Fuck?

DESTINY

Dang potty mouth, if you gotta put it that way then yeah. I just feel it'd be more special if our first times were with each other. You do it more than any of us so I figured--

CHANEL

Oooohh!!

TRAMEKA

(slightly amused)

Uh-uh, hold up, what'chu try'na say?

DESTINY

Not like that! I mean realistically speaking you do have the most experience so...what do you think?

TRAMEKA

Hmm...I mean I know it's bad to have sex and not be married and I don't wanna lead you in the wrong direction but if you feel like he the one just follow your heart. Chris ain't the type that'll dog you out like these other dudes.

CHANEL

Tell me about it.

TRAMEKA

Why you say that?

CHANEL

I don't know. Ty been actin' real funny lately. For a minute he was cool but now he act like I be botherin' him or somethin'. Y'all think he got a side chick?

TRAMEKA

Naw, girl, that boy crazy 'bout you!

CHANEL

Him and o'girl Shauna been awfully friendly lately. And he be extra secretive 'bout where he be goin' and who he be wit', hidin' his phone and stuff. That's suspect!

TRAMEKA

Uh-uh, I *refuse* to let Reggie hide his phone from *me*. As long as we together, he ain't got a iPhone, he got a wePhone! I read text messages, Instagrams, Facebooks, all that!

DESTINY

See, that's what I love about my hunny bun. We tell each other everything.

TRAMEKA

Yeah and he tell everybody else too! Like how y'all like to dip off to the parking lot, 5th period?

DESTINY

Whatever, hater! Ohhh, I go crazy when I wrap my legs around his neck and then he does this thing with his tongue where he-(stops)-Never mind.

CHANEL

Freak.

TRAMEKA

You ain't even gotta finish, I know the story. Me & Reggie ain't got no secrets between us either. I know he'd never lie to me or hide nothin' from me.

CHANEL

Never say never, Meka. Anything can happen.

DESTINY

She's right. No one's perfect. Our flaws is what makes us human. Like me, I'm insecure. I cry myself to sleep some nights, I get jealous when I see Chris with other girls. I'm nowhere near perfect. Just human.

CHANEL

You just gotta be realistic about it and understand that if you wanna make things work wit' somebody, you'll stick it out no matter what.

TRAMEKA

Right...

INT.SCHOOL.AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

Monday, Meechie attempts to win Trameka over.

MEECHIE

Trameka, bay-beee!! What 'chu on, girl?

TRAMEKA

Goin' to class, bye!

MEECHIE

Damn shawty, chillax! I just wanna talk to you right quick! First off, let's put our beef behind us and be friends!

TRAMEKA

I ain't got no beef wit'chu. You just a hater.

MEECHIE

On some for real shit, I need to hol' at you but some thangs.

TRAMEKA

And what might that be?

MEECHIE

I hate to be the bearer of bad news but ya man Reggie ain't who he say he is!

TRAMEKA

Oh really?

MEECHIE

Yeah, really! Me and my guys know what him and o'dude be doin' behind yo back! I'm worried about you.

TRAMEKA

Boy gone somewhere, you just mad cause he got me and you don't. Typical of a lowlife like you to try 'n break up a happy home, move around shawty!

MEECHIE

At least I ain't lyin' to yo ass like he is! Don't come cryin' to me when he mess up! I'm just try'na warn you and help you realize you should'a got wit' me in the first place!

TRAMEKA
 (flips him off)
 Nah I'm good! Byeee!!

As he watches her go, the other goons congregate.

JON-JON
 Yo Meech! What happened?

MEECHIE
 She ain't wanna listen!

JON-JON
 Damn. So now what?

MEECHIE
 I got a plan. Look his locker on the first floor right? This what we gon' do: Q, be on the lookout for when Rent-a-Cop at his post. Then I want you to text Jon-Jon when to come. And Corey, you call five-0 and let 'em know wassup. (sinister smirk) This finna be funny as hell.

MEANWHILE -

CHANEL
 So what we doin' this weekend?

TYSHAWN
 I don't know. I got work.

CHANEL
 We not goin' out or nothin'? It's our 2 month anniversary.

TYSHAWN
 Don't nobody do that anniversary shit if you ain't married, and you *can't* have no anniversary unless it's been a year! Duh!

CHANEL
 Here you go...

TYSHAWN
 What I do this time?

CHANEL
 When we first started talkin' you swore to me that you was different from other boys. Everything you said you wouldn't do, you doin' it!

TYSHAWN

All this cause I said I don't know
what I'm doin' this weekend?!

CHANEL

Not just that, it's like you
changed! You don't care about
nobody but yourself!

TYSHAWN

People change.

CHANEL

People change?

TYSHAWN

Yes people change!

CHANEL

People change, oh okay, so I guess
all that bullshit you said to me
was just so you could get some
right?

TYSHAWN

(gets in her face)

Bitch, you know damn good & well it
ain't like that!

CHANEL

Who you callin' a bitch?!

TYSHAWN

You bitch!!

Rent-a-Cop intervenes.

RENT-A-COP

Hey, hey, hey that's enough! Get to
class!

CHANEL

Since I'm such a bitch, maybe we
need to see other people.

TYSHAWN

What? Come on girl, just let it go,
it ain't that serious.

CHANEL

No, what I need to do is let you
go! I don't mean nothin' to you, I
never did.

They just look at each other as the guard tries to defuse the situation.

RENT-A-COP

You two can have your little soap opera on your own time, now get to class!

TYSHAWN

You know what?! I'd rather get shot than spend another day wit'cho crybaby ass! Deuces!

CHANEL

Good riddance!

They part ways but then she turns around and says-

CHANEL

Oh and one more thing:
Just remember I was there for you
when nobody else gave a damn!

Hearing those words, he realizes he has lost the best thing he had in his life. He watches her with regret as she walks away.

Later that afternoon, the boys loiter the halls waiting for someone to come along and make a purchase. Rent-a-Cop stands at his post. Q lurks at the other end of the hall pretending he's reading when in fact, he's texting Jon-Jon.

REGGIE

I heard about what happened wit'chu and Chanel.

TYSHAWN

Man, don't even mention her name to me. She can kiss my black ass.

Given his cue, Jon-Jon walks up to the boys.

JON-JON

What up fam?

TYSHAWN

Da fuck you want?!

JON-JON

Damn scud, chill. I ain't even try'na be on 'dat!

TYSHAWN

Get the hell on somewhere, Jon-Jon!

(MORE)

TYSHAWN (CONT'D)

Go find you some business! Old ass should've graduated 3 years ago.

JON-JON

Man whatever. Reggie, cuz-(projects voice) I heard you got 'dat loud.

REGGIE

Yeah.

JON-JON

What else you got?

REGGIE

(opens locker)

What'chu want?

JON-JON

(looks out corner of his eye)

A nick & a dime.

Tyshawn suspects something fishy about this.

REGGIE

\$20

JON-JON

(sniffs weed)

Naw kid, this too loud! You ain't got nuttin' 'dat ain't reekin'?

Rent-a-Cop hears this and looks down there.

REGGIE

That's all I got.

JON-JON

Dang thats it? No more loud? You got a banger in there too?

Concurrently, Meechie walks by the other end of the hall and nods to Tyshawn with a sinister simper.

REGGIE

What'chu steady askin' questions for?

JON-JON

I just wanna know if yo shit good 'fo I spend my money!

REGGIE

Yeah but why you wanna know if I
got a banger?

RENT-A-COP

Hey fellas!

TYSHAWN

Damn!

REGGIE

Hurry up, man, security comin'!

TYSHAWN

Reggie, hide that shit, he set us
up!

RENT-A-COP

What's in the locker?!

JON-JON

(runs off, drops weed)

See ya!

Reggie retrieves the bags and frantically tries to lock the
locker.

TYSHAWN

Hurry up!

REGGIE

I can't, it's jammed!

The guard walks faster.

REGGIE

Fuck it man, run!!

The boys split up with Tyshawn running past the guard, and
Reggie going in the opposite direction with the guard in
pursuit. Just as he makes it to an exit, another guard
seizes Reggie and restrains him. He tries to break free but
to no avail.

EXT.SCHOOL GROUNDS.AFTERNOON

Reggie is escorted away by the police in handcuffs. As the
cops put him in the squad car, Trameka runs after them to
find out what happened.

TRAMEKA

Reggie! Reggie, baby, what
happened?! What'chu do?!

Ashamed of himself, he keeps quiet.

TRAMEKA

Talk to me!

POLICE OFFICER

Young lady, please step away from
the vehicle.

As the squad car drives away, Trameka observes the hoodlums at a distance laughing at the situation. She angrily marches over to Tyshawn and Chris, demanding the truth.

TRAMEKA

Why he get locked up?!

TYSHAWN

Huh?

TRAMEKA

Nigga don't play dumb, I know you know! One of y'all *better* start talkin'!

CHRIS

Trameka relax, alright? We can't--

TRAMEKA

Hell naw, I want the truth, right here right now! So Ima ask y'all one more time, why is my man on his way to jail?!

The boys look at each other with uncertainty, regretting what they're about to do.

CHRIS

Reggie got arrested because--

TYSHAWN

He was dealin'. Both me *and* him.

CHRIS

He didn't want you to know. He knew you'd be upset.

DESTINY

You weren't doing it too, were you Chris?

TYSHAWN

Naw. He actually tried to stop us.

CHANEL

Well maybe you should've listened!
Come on girl, let's go.

Trameka, boiling hot, looks at him with antipathy as they walk away.

CHRIS

(beat)

Well that couldn't have gone any worse.

TYSHAWN

That ain't nuttin'. Just wait til his mama find out.

DISSOLVE TO:

I/E.POLICE STATION.NIGHT

DISSOLVE to the exterior of the police station where Reggie is being held. He quietly sits in a holding cell all by himself.

POLICE OFFICER

Reginald Smith?

REGGIE

Yes?

POLICE OFFICER

You made bail. You're free to go.

As Reggie makes his way to the front, he wonders who could've got him out. Low & behold it was Mr. Gardner.

REGGIE

Awww snap, Mr. G! I am so glad to see you!

He extends his fist for a fist bump but the stone-faced, crestfallen counselor doesn't move a muscle.

NEIL

The cops found 28 grams of pot, and 5 grams of MDMA in your locker. Lucky for you, I convinced them to drop the charges. It wasn't easy but they did it.

REGGIE

Thanks.

NEIL

But I want you to know that this is the last time I'll be going out of my way to help you. We had a deal. Keep your grades up and stay out of trouble.

Reggie sadly nods.

NEIL

Come on. I'll take you home.

OUTSIDE -

NEIL

I try to do good by you, and this is the thanks I get? (scoffs)
Thanks a lot.

Reggie stops and looks at Gardner with distaste.

REGGIE

What's in it for you?!

NEIL

Excuse me?!

REGGIE

Why are you so determined to help me?! Is the rich white man try'na save the poor little black boy?! Look, I don't need shit from you so you need to go find yourself another charity case!

NEIL

Let me tell you something, kid, I didn't help you for any goddamn charity, I did it because I saw potential in you and I wanted to help you succeed!

REGGIE

Man, wake up! You act like them teachers on TV who show up in the 'hood, try to save the black kids, and look like some kinda hero but guess what- this is real life, it ain't that simple!

NEIL

I understand that, but I always do what I can for those who need me!

REGGIE

Why?!

NEIL

Because when I was your age no one was there for me! (calms down) My mother died when I was 9 and my father abandoned me when I was 15. He wasn't there when I needed him to be. He made me deal with the hurt & pain on my own. I dropped out of school, fell in with the wrong crowd. My life went to shit. But- I eventually got myself together, went back to school, earned my master's and became the person I am today. I made a promise to myself to make sure that my students go on to have prosperous futures. Do things for them no one ever did for me.

Feeling bad, Reggie can't help but think about Gardner's story.

I/E.REGGIE'S HOUSE.NIGHT

They arrive at his house.

REGGIE

Thanks for the ride.

NEIL

(dry)

You're welcome.

REGGIE

Mr. Gardner, I know I was wrong and I know I let you down. Despite all this, I'm grateful for everything you done for me. God gon' bless you, man. Don't give up on people just because of me. You got a good heart.

Gardner nods with a weak smile. Disheartened, Reggie gets out of his vehicle and goes inside.

ONCE HE'S INSIDE -

It's pitch black. He turns on a light.

REGGIE

Dang, she still at work? She don't work this late on Mondays. (looks at the time) 9:47.

He shrugs it off but as he turns around he is met with a forceful *SLAP* in the face, courtesy of Renée.

RENÉE

Have you lost your rabid ass mind?!(no answer) Have you?!

REGGIE

No.

RENÉE

Are you sure cause it shol' & the hell seem like it to me!

REGGIE

I know Mama, believe me I do! But the good news is- the school dropped the charges. I'm just suspended for a couple of days!

RENÉE

And that's supposed to make everything alright?!

REGGIE

Naw, but still Ma I did it for us!

RENÉE

Us?! Who exactly is this "us" cause I don't play that gang-bangin', drug-dealin' shit!

REGGIE

You, me, Jamal, Trameka.

RENÉE

Trameka?! You out here gettin' in trouble, riskin' yo life try'na impress some fast ass girl?! You know I raised you better than that!

REGGIE

I ain't do it to impress her! Me & Ty realized he had to do what we had to do to get some bread!

RENÉE

Did Tyshawn put you up to this?

REGGIE

No! It was *my* idea! He just went along wit' it!

RENÉE

Then both of y'all stupid! Bet Chris ain't out there doin' that dumb shit!

REGGIE

Instead of just appreciatin' the fact I tried to help you, you wanna come at me like I ain't jack! You don't be sayin' all that when I be givin' you money!

RENÉE

Help?! You think what'chu doin' is helpin' me?! Puttin' your life in danger everyday, got me thinkin' you doin' the right thing, that's helpin' me?! (no answer) Boy, you better answer me!

He storms off and goes straight to his bedroom. There, he angrily stuffs some clothes into a gym bag.

RENÉE

So I guess you finna run away now, huh?

REGGIE

The night Will got killed, it wasn't just him that died! My peace of mind went wit' him! He was walkin' home from the store, mindin' his own damn business, not botherin' nobody! All that did was show me that in Chiraq Drillinois, *everybody's* a target! Nobody can hear you scream!

RENÉE

Reggie, baby, listen...

REGGIE

No, let me finish! (pauses)
Everyday...when I walk out that door, I wonder...am I next? Will I be one of them kids you hear about on Channel 7 news? I worry 'bout you on these buses. Jamal.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Little kids can't even play outside
in this city without gettin' caught
in a crossfire.

Jamal eavesdrops from outside the room. Renée sheds a few
tears.

REGGIE

So yes. I sell drugs on the side to
make some extra money. I ain't in a
gang or nuttin' else like that. I
don't know how long it's gon' take
me but I promise you...I'ma get us
outta here.

As he walks pass, she gets a firm grip on his hand.

REGGIE

Let me go, Mama.

RENÉE

You... are my first born son. I
refuse to let you walk out that
door and let these streets take my
baby from me. I understand you're
afraid, I understand that. I'm your
mother, I'll keep you safe, but
please Reggie...don't go. Please...

Fighting back tears, Reggie removes himself from his grip as
gentle as possible.

JAMAL

Don't leave, Reggie.

He stops and looks back Jamal. He goes and gives the child a
hug, sends him over to their mother and leaves.

EXT.GARDNER BACKYARD.NIGHT

At the Gardner residence - a discontented Neil sits in a
lawn chair with a beer. Concerned, Karen steps outside to
check on him.

KAREN

Feelin' okay, hun?

NEIL

Ya know Karen, I still can't
believe he did this. The ball was
in his court, now look at him! Look
at me! Should've just suspended the
kid from jump street.

KAREN

He made a mistake. I'm sure he's sorry.

NEIL

No, I'm the one sorry. Sorry I ever met the little crook.

KAREN

Oh like you're so perfect? Give me a break.

NEIL

I never said that! I just want to give these kids what I never had. I know if I can get through to one, I can get through to them all! Finding another kid'll be easy as pie.

KAREN

Neil, I love you but you are *annoyingly* optimistic.

NEIL

It has nothing to do with optimism! No one should have to endure what I had to.

KAREN

It made you the man you are today!

NEIL

But with no one there for me.

KAREN

Exactly! Jesus Christ, Neil, it's not such a terrible thing that you had to learn and grow on your own. Sometimes, the best place to find a helping hand is at the end of your own arm. If you continue to spoon-feed these kids, they'll never thrive. All things in life happen for a reason. Think about it!

She leaves her husband to sit there and let it sink in.

EXT.SCHOOL.MORNING

The next morning, Tyshawn and Chris cut class to speak with Reggie, who's waiting for them outside at the main entrance.

TYSHAWN

What happened?

REGGIE

I'm suspended. I can't come back for 10 days. I'm stayin' at my grandma house til I get things straightened out.

CHRIS

Damn. Try talkin' to the principal or somethin'.

REGGIE

They ain't gon' let me up in here!

RENT-A-COP

Hey man, I told you to get outta here!

REGGIE

Man, lemme talk to my homies right quick!

RENT-A-COP

Beat it before I call the police!

REGGIE

You doin' the most, come on man!

CHRIS

Just hit my line later.

REGGIE

Iight. Ty, what'chu on? You comin' wit' me or you stayin'?

Unsure of what to do, Tyshawn turns to Chris.

CHRIS

You don't need my approval. Do what you think is best.

TYSHAWN

(thinks about it)

Man, I'm wit' this money.

He exits the building and walks off with Reggie. Chris sadly watches them go, not liking what his friends have become.

RENT-A-COP

Show's over! Back to class!

Chris doesn't budge.

RENT-A-COP
 (grabs Chris' arm)
 You hard of hearin' boy?! I said
 let's go!

CHRIS
 (frantic)
 Iight I'm goin' quit touchin' me!!
 Rent-a-Cop!

RENT-A-COP
 I got'cho "Rent-a-Cop", Urkel!

EXT. TRAMEKA'S HOUSE. MORNING

The boys stop by Trameka's. When she opens the door, her body language indicates that she's still upset with them.

REGGIE
 Hey boo.

He tries to kiss her but she coldly turns her face. Tyshawn snickers, and whispers "Damn".

REGGIE
 How come you not at school? You
 overslept?

TRAMEKA
 Mmm-hmm...So...I guess you was
 lyin' to me 'bout that job right?

REGGIE
 Naw I was tellin' the truth.

TRAMEKA
 Then what the fuck is you dealin'
 for?! I thought you was better than
 that.

REGGIE
 Ima tell you like I told my mama
 last night, I'm doin' this for us!
 All of us, includin' you! Remember
 you said you wanted somebody with a
 backbone? Somebody that ain't
 scared to take charge? What girl in
 the hood don't want a nigga on the
 block gettin' money?

TRAMEKA
 I'm not like everybody else!
 (MORE)

TRAMEKA (CONT'D)

They some stupid, ratchet hoes who don't know no better.

REGGIE

I'm try'na get outta here! I can't just click my heels three times and make a wish. Think about when we come home for holidays! Are you really gon' stand there and tell me you wanna come back to a place like this?

TRAMEKA

Naw, but still this is *not* what I meant! You took the whole thing outta context! I went through the same thing with my last boyfriend. For a while, yeah I thought it was cute or whatever, I used to hold it down for him but the minute he got shot it clicked in my head that that's not what I want. Shouldn't no girl want that. I hope and pray to God don't nuttin' bad happen to you cause that'll kill me. I really like you, Reggie. I can't bear the thought of losin' you like that.

REGGIE

Ain't nuttin' gon' happen to me! I promise! (reaches for her hand)

TRAMEKA

(draws back)

No. Uh-uh. Until you get it together I can't see you no more. I put that life behind me and I'm not goin' back!

REGGIE

C'mon Trameka, damn!

TRAMEKA

"C'mon Trameka" nothing! I don't know what done got into yo head but whatever it is, I don't like it!

She goes back inside, slamming the door behind her. Heartbroken, he's frozen in silence, fighting back tears.

TYSHAWN

I lost my girl too, G. You gon' be good.

They leave.

REGGIE (V.O.)

Things were falling apart but we were too far along to turn back. We had to keep it movin'. No lackin'.

CUT TO BLACK:

TITLE CARD: 4 DAYS LATER

EXT. PARK. AFTERNOON-CONTINUOUS

OPEN FROM BLACK we see the boys in the park on their phones.

REGGIE

Yeah, man, I'm out here gettin' mines.

TYSHAWN

Ay G, I'm guy on his way he say he need four of 'em.

REGGIE

He want four? Iight, tell him gimme one minute.

TYSHAWN

(mumbles)

One minute? Man, I'll get this shit myself. (gets up)

REGGIE

(on the phone)

Yeah. But ay, lemme get up wit'chu later on though! Iight. (hangs up)

Tyshawn gathers 4 bags of weed from their stash bush.

TYSHAWN

Ay man, I been thinkin'...We need to start thinkin' of some other ways to get bread. I'm talkin' big money.

REGGIE

What? You try'na pull off a bank heist or somethin'?

TYSHAWN

Hell yeah, I'm down!

REGGIE

Fuck outta here, I ain't doin' that
dumb shit!

TYSHAWN

But you'll do this though!

REGGIE

So? I'd rather do this than that!

EJ arrives with Stacy, who turns out to be his girlfriend.

REGGIE

Hold up, ain't that Stacy?

TYSHAWN

(looks closer)

Hell yeah. What she doin' wit him
though?

They give each other a knowing look.

EJ

What up, cuzzo.

TYSHAWN

What's good?

STACY

Hey Reggie. What'chu doin' here?

REGGIE

Workin'

STACY

You a dope boy now?!

REGGIE

Somethin' like that.

EJ

Ty, you got the four?

TYSHAWN

Yeah, step over here.

They step to the side while Reggie and Stacy chat.

STACY

Now tell me somethin'...since when
do you...(unsure)

REGGIE

It's complicated.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Things just crazy right now.

STACY

Mmm...well just be careful. I been knowin' you for 4 years. I know this ain't you. (looks at Tyshawn)
Aw yeah...(softly) you need to watch him. You ain't hear it from me but I saw his ass snatch this boy iPod on the train the other night. Friday night, I think.

FLASHBACK SEQUENCE

Tyshawn gets up and stands by the door. The girl facing sideways turns around, revealing herself to be Stacy. When the door opens, Tyshawn swipes the music player and runs.

END OF FLASHBACK

EJ

Come on boo, we gone.

STACY

See y'all. Reggie...(reminding look)

He does a confirming nod. Tyshawn responds to a text, not taking his eyes off the phone. Reggie looks at him with suspicion.

REGGIE

Where was you at Friday night?

TYSHAWN

Over Chanel crib. Why wassup?

REGGIE

Nuttin'. Just curious.

INT. SCHOOL.AFTERNOON

Chris and Destiny study in the library.

DESTINY

Did you answer number 8 yet?

CHRIS

Yeah, it's...B

DESTINY

So what's the deal with Reggie?

CHRIS

I don't know, it's one big mess.
Tyshawn ain't no better both of 'em
in it together. I'm startin' to
think maybe I need some new
friends.

DESTINY

True friends don't bail when all
the fun stops and things get rough.
Now's the time when you have to be
there for them the most!

CHRIS

Sometimes you gotta quit worryin'
about everybody else and just do
you. The less people you chill
with, the less drama you deal with.

DESTINY

If you say so...

The bell rings. She smiles.

DESTINY

5th period.

CHRIS

Yeah so?

DESTINY

(stale face)
5th period, Chris!

CHRIS

I heard you the first time.

She kicks him.

CHRIS

Ow! What the...Ohhh...(creepy
giggle)

INT.JEWEL-OSCO.NIGHT

REGGIE

You have a good evening, sir.

MAN

Same to you, brother.

A few moments after the man has left the store, a masked
ROBBER storms in with a pistol and a laundry bag.

ROBBER

I want everybody down now!!

He fires a shot in the air. The shoppers panic.

REGGIE

(ducks)

Shit!!

ROBBER

Empty the muthafuckin' registers
right now!!

As the mugger goes from lane to lane collecting the dough, Reggie crawls away attempting to get help but he gets caught in the process.

ROBBER

Where you think you goin' pretty
boy?! Turn around!

REGGIE

Look, man I--

The robber flashes his face for a hot second, revealing himself to be TYSHAWN in disguise.

TYSHAWN

Now I want all y'all asses to count
to 50 right now! (fires shot)

While Tyshawn makes his escape, Reggie lies on the floor trying to come to pieces with what just happened.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. LIQUOR STORE. NIGHT-CONTINUOUS

Reggie waits for Tyshawn outside the liquor store. The latter creeps up behind him.

TYSHAWN

Gimme yo money!

Reggie doesn't react as he's more furious about the robbery.

REGGIE

Are you kiddin' me?! You robbed the
place I work at?!

TYSHAWN

It ain't like I killed nobody, plus
half the money yours anyway! You
welcome!

REGGIE

I'm welcome?! Do you understand
that stunt you pulled could fuck up
everything?!

TYSHAWN

Maaan, never mind all that! Here. I
been meanin' to give this to you.

He gives Reggie a brown paper bag.

REGGIE

(looks inside, sees gun)
What's this for?!

TYSHAWN

It's time we raise the stakes.
Servin' only gon' get us so far.
I'm talkin' robbin', hittin'
stains, real nigga shit!

REGGIE

Hell naw, are you crazy?! We ain't
robbers, we ain't killers! Hell we
barely even drug dealers! We just
two boys in the hood try'na get
some paper to get up outta here,
that's it that's all!

TYSHAWN

When did I ever say I was leavin'
the hood?! No nigga, I'm in this
for the money! Just the money!
"Leavin' the hood". To go where?! I
ain't got nowhere else to go, I'm
stuck here!

REGGIE

Don't even talk like that man, you
gon' go to college, start a
career--

TYSHAWN

News flash, I ain't goin' to
college! I ain't even fill out no
applications! I got a 14 on my ACT,
a low ass GPA, who gon' wanna
accept me wit' dat shit on my
record?!

REGGIE

It's still hope for you man, you
just gotta stay positive!

TYSHAWN

For what?! That's right up my mama alley just so she can talk shit, sayin' I'm this, I'm that, I ain't finna give dat ho the satisfaction!

REGGIE

Who cares what she think?! People like her don't ever have no good luck no way! Prove to her that you more than what she think!

TYSHAWN

You ain't listenin' to me man, I can't! I can't, I can't, I can't!! Ain't shit special about me! I am a hood nigga!! I love the streets and the streets love me back!

REGGIE

No the streets don't love you, you fuckin' moron, they just take you away from the people who do!

TYSHAWN

Well ain't you the pot callin' the kettle! You got a whole buncha people that love you! You ain't no better than me! Only difference is: if you get killed, everybody at a loss, if I get killed, won't nobody give a fuck! They gon' throw the dirt on me, go on with they life, and Tyshawn Davis ain't gon' be shit but a distant memory!

Across the street, Meechie and his boys overhear this.

MEECHIE

Nigga, shut yo faggot ass up!

TYSHAWN

What'chu say?!

MEECHIE

Did I stutter?!

REGGIE

Ignore him man, all he ever do is run his mouth!

TYSHAWN

(shoves Reggie out the way)

Naw fuck that shit! Wanna run dat by me again?

MEECHIE

Stay across that street 'fo I pop yo ass!

REGGIE

Ty!

TYSHAWN

You ain't gon' do shit!

MEECHIE

Wanna bet nigga?!

REGGIE

(blocks Tyshawn)

Forget him man, just walk away! We got bigger problems to worry 'bout!

Jon-Jon quietly hands Meechie a gun, who then aims for Tyshawn.

TYSHAWN

Move out my way!

REGGIE

No!

TYSHAWN

Move out my way!

REGGIE

No!

TYSHAWN

I said move out my-- (sees Meechie)
Watch out!!

They attempt to flee but Meechie pulls the trigger, inadvertently shooting Reggie, who falls to the ground and hits his head, rendering him unconscious. Reggie's life flashes before him in a SPED-UP RECAP of events leading up to the shooting. CUT TO BLACK upon completion.

FADE IN:

INT.HOSPITAL.MORNING

We hear the sound of a heart monitor ("beep...beep...beep")

The next morning, Reggie wakes up in a hospital bed with his family there beside him.

RENÉE

Hey. How you feelin'?

REGGIE

How I'm feelin'? Feel like I got shot. My head hurt like a mug.

RENÉE

I'm just glad you're alright.

REGGIE

Where's Tyshawn? He okay?

RENÉE

I haven't seen him since last night, but he stayed with you til I got here.

Reggie doesn't respond. He instead looks around, then looks at himself. Overwhelmed, he starts to cry.

RENÉE

It's alright, baby, it's okay (rubs his hand) Shh...(wipes his face)
It's gon' be alright...

REGGIE

All I tried to do was look out for the people I love. Now look at me. I got shot. I got arrested. Mr. G, Trameka...they not talkin' to me (sniff) I messed up.

RENÉE

And that's okay, you know why? You are *still* a young man. You have a lifetime of learning and growing to do. You'll see the older you get that it's not about what you look like, what you have or don't have, it's the person you become. Just take this whole thing as a learning experience, and move on.

The Gardners enter.

REGGIE

Mr. Gardner?

NEIL

Hey buddy. Ms. Smith, how are you?
Neil Gardner, we spoke on the
phone.

RENÉE

(shakes his hand)

Yes, I remember. It's nice to
finally meet you.

NEIL

Same here. This is my wife, Karen.

RENÉE

(shakes her hand)

Hello, it's a pleasure to meet you.

KAREN

The pleasure's all mine.

NEIL

Ms. Smith, is it alright if Reggie
and I talk in private?

RENÉE

Sure, go right ahead. (to Karen)
Would you like some coffee?

KAREN

Oh yes, thank you.

RENÉE

(to Jamal)

Come on, baby.

As Gardner takes a seat beside the bed, Jamal gives his
brother his stuffed lion before leaving.

REGGIE

I'm sorry Mr. G. I did this to
myself. I was so determined to do
what I thought I wanted to do. I
just hope you can forgive me.

NEIL

I forgive ya, Reg. As long as you
forgive me.

REGGIE

Why? You ain't do nuttin'.

NEIL

Yeah I did. When you were arrested,
I was never mad at you, per se,

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

I was angry with myself. I felt like I failed you. But when I got home that night it hit me. As your mentor *and* your friend, giving up on you goes against everything I believe in. But that doesn't mean what you did was acceptable, so I need you to make a promise to yourself this instant to stop.

REGGIE

I promise.

NEIL

Alright, big guy. You're gonna be just fine.

Tyshawn and Chris arrive.

REGGIE

Yo, wassup?

CHRIS

'Sup bro.

Speechless, Tyshawn sadly looks at Reggie, angry with himself.

REGGIE

Ty, you good, man?

NEIL

I'll leave you guys alone.

Gardner leaves. Chris sits in his chair.

CHRIS

I prayed for you last night when I heard. I see it worked.

REGGIE

Thanks, cause I shol' needed it. All I need now is some chicken from Harold's and I'm straight.

TYSHAWN

Damn, G...I am so sorry about this. You told me to walk away but I just had to keep runnin' my mouth.

CHRIS

I'm sorry too. We been friends since the 4th grade.

(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)

We need to stick together and look out for each other best interest.

REGGIE

It's all good.

TYSHAWN

What'chu want me to do to them dudes, man?

REGGIE

Don't even worry about it, let the feds deal wit' it.

TYSHAWN

The feds?! Skip that, Ima handle they ass myself.

CHRIS

Naw man, that cant happen!

TYSHAWN

What'chu mean "naw"?!

CHRIS

I mean, I understand but why would I want another one of my guys like this? Stop try'na be Superman and let the cops do they job.

TYSHAWN

Police in Chicago don't do shit! When Will got shot where was they ass at?! When all these other people be gettin' shot where do they ass be at?! Nowhere to be found, so don't tell me nuttin' 'bout no police!

CHRIS

Look, all we can do right now is wait and pray about it.

TYSHAWN

Pray?!

CHRIS

(stands up)

Yeah boy, that's the only thing we can do! Why would you wanna end up like this, what if you die man?!

TYSHAWN

Ain't no time for all that prayin'
and waitin' (to Reggie) I told you
I got you!

CHRIS

You are so damn difficult, it's
ridiculous. Stop try'na be all
hardcore just to prove a point!!

TYSHAWN

If I don't do it then ain't shit
gon' get done about it!!

REGGIE

SHUT UP!! If y'all gon' be arguin'
get the fuck out! I ain't feelin'
that shit right now!

CHRIS

Alright, alright, we sorry...we
sorry.

They calm down. Chris sits back down.

TYSHAWN

All I'm sayin' is...it was my fault
you got shot, I owe it to you to
get that nigga back. The two of
y'all all I got. Will gone, you
layin' here injured. I'm tellin'
you, he ain't gon' stop til you
dead, and 9 times outta 10, (to
Chris) he gon' try to get you too!
(storms out)

REGGIE

Ty, wait!

TYSHAWN

I'm out!

REGGIE

Tyshawn!! Damn...

Chris goes after him.

CHRIS

Ay!...Ay!

TYSHAWN

What?!

CHRIS

Where you goin'?!

TYSHAWN

Where you think?!

CHRIS

Look, I appreciate you try'na look out for us and all but you need to stop bein' so goddamn difficult and listen for a change! Killin' that boy is not the answer!

TYSHAWN

This my life, Ima do whatever the fuck I want!

CHRIS

(grabs arm)

Wait a second, man!

TYSHAWN

Don't touch me!

CHRIS

Just shut up and listen! Don't say nothin'! You need to quit walkin' around with this vigilante, army commando attitude like you untouchable! This is not a game, it's a matter of life & death. Keep it up and you gon' end up one of two places!

TYSHAWN

Where?

CHRIS

Either Gatling's Chapel or A&R Leak!

TYSHAWN

I ain't try'na hear that shit!

CHRIS

Don't do it, man!

TYSHAWN

Bye!

Tyshawn boards the elevator, CLOSE UP on his frowning face as the door closes.

INT.TYSHAWN'S HOUSE.AFTERNOON

Tyshawn loads his guns and kneels at the foot of the bed.

TYSHAWN

Heavenly father, have mercy on my soul for what I'm about to do. Forgive me for every sin I've ever committed or done in my heart. If today shall be my last on this Earth, give me a second chance to spend the rest of eternity wit'chu. The one person who loved me when nobody else would. Amen.

Upon completion, he retrieves his phone and starts dialing.

INT.MALL.AFTERNOON

The girls are at the mall. Chanel's phone rings.

CHANEL

Ugh!

DESTINY

Who is it?

CHANEL

Tyshawn, worsesome ass! I ain't answerin' that.

DESTINY

Girl just answer it! Remember you the one that said if you wanna make things work with somebody, you gotta stick it out...answer it.

This statement strikes a chord with Trameka.

CHANEL

(groans)

Fine. (answers) Hello?

BACK TO:

INT.TYSHAWN'S HOUSE.AFTERNOON

INTERCUT phone conversation.

TYSHAWN

Hey. You busy?

CHANEL

Kind of, why?

TYSHAWN

I just wanted to hear your voice,
that's all.

CHANEL

Okay? Look I gotta go-

TYSHAWN

Wait a minute! Just hear me out.
I'm sorry for everything I put you
through. I was caught up in my ways
and I hurt the girl I love.

CHANEL

Tyshawn-

TYSHAWN

I wish you the best of luck with
the next boyfriend you get. Hope he
give you everything I didn't.

CHANEL

Ty, it's gon' be alright, I forgive
you. Ima call you back later, okay?

TYSHAWN

I might not be alive later.

CHANEL

What?!

TYSHAWN

Goodbye, Chanel. I love you.

CHANEL

Tyshawn!

He hangs up.

Meanwhile in the living room, Rick and Paulina go at it.

RICK

You know damn good and well, I
ain't workin' right now! I'm tired
of yo ass steady throwin' that shit
in my face! I'm doin' the best I
can to make sure we get by!

PAULINA

Well you doin' a sorry ass job,
nigga, cause you ain't done shit!
Who pay all the utilities in this
bitch? Me! Who make sure it's gas
in the car? Me!

(MORE)

PAULINA (CONT'D)

Yo bum ass don't do shit for me.

RICK

If you don't wanna be here then go!
Ain't nobody makin' you stay!

Paulina turns and sees Tyshawn, as does Rick.

PAULINA

'Fuck you lookin' at me all crazy
'fo?!

TYSHAWN

(mumbles)

You the devil. (heads for the door)

PAULINA

What?!

TYSHAWN

You the devil!

PAULINA

I'm the devil?! Lemme tell you
somethin'--

She slams him against the wall, getting up close and personal, staring him down with a grimace. She takes a puff of her cigarette and blows the smoke in his face.

PAULINA

Had it not been for ya grandmama,
yo stupid ass wouldn't even be
standin' here cause guess what? I
wanted to abort yo ass! But she
said "nawww, keep the baby let 'em
live, let 'em live..." Biggest
mistake of my fuckin' life!

RICK

Paulina, you take that back right
now and I ain't playin'!

PAULINA

I used to wanna model. I could've
been big, could've been large. But
naw...I got knocked up by yo sorry
ass daddy, and got stuck wit'chu.
And every time I look at yo *ugly*
face, more and more I wish I had
got that damn abortion. Ain't shit
special about you boy! You a
fuckin' dumbass, you just a--

He shuts her up with a powerful punch to the face, and gets on top of her hitting her repeatedly as she screams in agony. Rick breaks it up, pulling him off of her.

Tyshawn whips out his pistol and aims at his mother.

TYSHAWN

I'm sick of you!! All my life you treated me like shit for somethin' I ain't have no control of!! I didn't ask to be here, Mama, but I am!! I'm yo son, you supposed to love me, be there for me!! Why is that so hard for you to do?!!

Paulina, with a bloody mouth and tear-drenched makeup rolling down her face, lies on the ground, staring up at her gun-wielding son.

TYSHAWN (CONT'D)

Huh?!

She smirks a little and starts laughing.

PAULINA

You one sad lil' bastard..

TYSHAWN

I fuckin' hate you!!

He storms out of the house.

RICK

Ty!!

Tyshawn angrily marches down the street, before finally breaking down. Knowing there's nothing he can do, and still determined to go through with his plan, he continues on.

I/E.HOSPITAL.AFTERNOON

The cops gather as much information as they can from the adults.

RENÉE

They're gonna try to find him as soon as possible.

REGGIE

Try?! If we don't go now he gon' get killed!

CHRIS

He's right, Ms. Smith.

RENÉE

We'll find him, just stay calm!

She walks off to go talk to an officer.

REGGIE

I can't let this happen. I gotta go
find him myself.

CHRIS

I'm not lettin' you go alone, man.
This time I'm down. Ride or die.

They shake on it.

REGGIE

Ride or die.

He looks over his shoulder.

REGGIE'S P.O.V: Renée and the Gardners talking to the cops.

REGGIE

Let's go.

They run out of the hospital and straight to Chris' car but
before they can take off, Chris' phone rings.

REGGIE

That's him?!

CHRIS

Naw, it's Destiny. Hello?

DESTINY (V.O.)

Chris, it's me, where's Tyshawn?!

CHRIS

We don't know we finna go look for
him now!

DESTINY (V.O.)

He's not answering his phone!
Should we call the police?

CHRIS

We already done that! Tell Chanel
to stay by the phone in case he
call! (hangs up)

REGGIE

What she say?

CHRIS

They been try'na call him too, he
ain't pickin' up! We gotta move,
fast!

EXT.DAN RYAN.AFTERNOON - CONTINUOUS

The thugs are on their way to the movies.

JON-JON

What time the movie start, G?

MEECHIE

2 o'clock, the hoes already up
there waitin' on us.

Q

This movie finna be funny as hell.
All his movies be funny!

COREY

Hell yeah!

Simultaneously, Tyshawn gets off at the bus stop.

He crosses paths with them but doesn't notice as he is
pre-occupied looking at his music player. He bumps into
Meechie, who doesn't recognize him due to his hoodie.

MEECHIE

Watch where you goin' fam!

TYSHAWN

My bad.

They continue going their separate ways but Tyshawn
recognizes that voice and turns around.

TYSHAWN

Ay Meechie!! I got one word for yo
ass...Payback! (removes hoodie,
draws gun)

THUGS

Oh shit!!

They take off just as Tyshawn fires a shot causing the
bystanders to scream and run for their lives. He gives chase
into a nearby parking lot until Meechie draws his own gun,
prompting him to take cover beside a car. Meechie fires two
shots before the gun runs out of bullets. The others keep
going, leaving their superior to fend for himself.

MEECHIE

(terrified)

Don't leave me, y'all some bitches
man, come back!!

Tyshawn discards his own gun and takes on Meechie with hand-to-hand combat in a series of FAST CUTS. They both put up a good fight until Meechie starts to get the upper hand.

MEECHIE

Give up, bitch?!

He slams Tyshawn against a car but he manages to get him off. During the struggle, Tyshawn's other gun falls out of his back. Elsewhere - Reggie and Chris happen to be on the same street, stuck at a red light.

CHRIS

We been ridin' around for over an hour, and still no sign of him. I'm startin' to get worried.

REGGIE

Me too. When the light change, make a turn up in here.

Back in the lot -

TYSHAWN

Get up! Come on Cletus! Come on!
Ain't so tough now, huh?! You just a scared little bitch who hide behind a gun!

MEECHIE

Yeah...you right, cuz. But you wanna know somethin' else about me?

TYSHAWN

What?!

MEECHIE

(turns over)

I'm Meechie, nigga!

POW! Shot in the chest with his own gun, Tyshawn falls flat on his back, gushing blood.

MEECHIE

I don't know how many times I gotta tell y'all muthafuckas, I'm king of Chiraq! I run this muthafucka!

The boys pull into the lot. From a distance, they see Meechie standing over Tyshawn with the gun.

CHRIS
Holy shit!!

REGGIE
Go, go, go!!

Chris slams his foot on the pedal but another car cuts him.

REGGIE
Nooo!!

CHRIS
We just gotta run, come on!!

They abandon the vehicle and race to the scene.

MEECHIE
Yo punk ass... lookin' just like yo
friend before he got killed.

Tyshawn's eyes widen with shock upon hearing this revelation.

CUE FLASHBACK to the opening scene where William is murdered by the two thugs who are now revealed to have been Meechie and Jon-Jon in disguise.

PRESENT DAY -

TYSHAWN'S P.O.V: Meechie pointing the gun at him.

MEECHIE
And in case the word "snitch" comes
to mind...

He's stopped by the ear-piercing sound of police sirens as the cops come speeding into the lot.

POLICE OFFICER
Freeze! Put your hands in the air!

MEECHIE
Put the guns down or ima blow his
fuckin' brains out!

POLICE OFFICER
Calm down, son, it doesn't have to
end this way!

MEECHIE
Son?! Nigga you ain't my daddy!
(MORE)

MEECHIE (CONT'D)

Put the guns down right fuckin'
now, I ain't playin'!

POLICE OFFICER

Drop the gun!

MEECHIE

One!

POLICE OFFICER

Drop it!!

MEECHIE

Two!

POLICE OFFICER

Goddamn it, I said drop the gun!!

MEECHIE

Three!!

POLICE OFFICER

Open fire!!

The officers fire away, effectively killing the pernicious delinquent. Reggie and Chris rush to their friend's aid, in spite of the cops trying to hold them back. Reggie stops and dolefully looks at Meechie's bloody, bullet-punctured corpse before tending to Tyshawn.

REGGIE

All this could've been avoided,
man...

Chris cradles Tyshawn in his arms trying to stop the bleeding but with no luck.

CHRIS

Reggie! We gotta get him to the ER,
he losin' too much blood!

TYSHAWN

Reg- (cough)

REGGIE

Don't talk, man, it's gon' be
iight, we promise!

TYSHAWN

It's too late for me. It's too
late.

CHRIS

Don't think like that, we ain't

(MORE)

CHRIS (CONT'D)

gon' let you die!

TYSHAWN

I know I messed up. For real this time. But ay, that's how the game go in the street life...live by the streets, die by the streets...But it's all good. As long as y'all straight, that's all that matter. I love y'all...

REGGIE

Ty...Ty, no!!

CHRIS

Stay wit' us, man, come on!!

REGGIE

Come on!!

Tyshawn then chokes up blood and his eyes roll in the back of his head, as he finally passes away.

REGGIE

No!!!...Nooooo!!

He attempts to resuscitate him but it fails.

Affected by this heartbreaking display, some of the officers wipe away tears.

CHRIS

He gone, Reg!

REGGIE

No he ain't, we can still save him, come on!!

CHRIS

Stop it Reggie, it's nothin' else we can do! He dead, man...he dead.

The grief-stricken boys cradle his body as they mourn.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT.CHURCH.AFTERNOON

Reggie stands before the congregation at Tyshawn's funeral.

REGGIE

Hello, I'm Ty's friend, Reggie.

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

Some of you know me, some of you don't. Me, Tyshawn, Chris, and another guy named William, who's also passed on, all grew up together. Ty was the life of the group. As time goes on and push comes to shove, we find out who our real friends are. Tyshawn was as real as they come. A person who was there with you at your best, and stood by you at your worst. And today...today we celebrate not only a remarkable young man, but a fallen soldier in the war of Chiraq. Loyal, courageous, and selfless. Sacrificing his life to ensure the safety of his comrades. His friendship was a blessing, and he's someone to be honored. It breaks my heart that he had to leave us so soon, but I do find comfort in knowing that all weight has been lifted from his heavy heart and no longer will he have to endure a life of misery and abuse from those who were supposed to love him. I will miss him for the rest of my life, and I'll never forget him. Goodbye Tyshawn...I love you, man...(breaks down)

He receives thunderous applause as he makes his way back to his seat where he's comforted by his mother.

FUNERAL PRECESSION MONTAGE

After the service, the precession heads to the cemetery to bury Tyshawn and we see brief clips of happier moments with him. At the cemetery mourners gather around the casket. As the pastor makes a final prayer, the casket is lowered into the ground and mourners throw flowers into the grave plot. Chris removes his tie and tosses it on top of the casket. Finally losing it, Chanel runs after the coffin, sobbing severely, but the girls pull her back. As the cemetery begins to clear out, Renée goes over to Tyshawn's family.

RENÉE

Hey...I know now's not the time for talking but if you need anything, anything at all. Don't hesitate to stop by or give me a call, okay?

Rick nods.

PAULINA

Thanks, Renée.

Renée looks at her in disgust and walks away. Paulina tries to rest her head on Rick's shoulder, but he rejects her. Once the cemetery has cleared out, Reggie and Chris remain behind looking at Tyshawn's grave. With nothing else they can say or do, they sadly walk away. As the boys leave, they pass Paulina. A few tears trickle down her face as she accepts the harsh reality that her only son is gone.

EXT. TRAMEKA'S HOUSE. MORNING

The next morning, Reggie stops by Trameka's. He rings the bell and waits for her to answer.

TRAMEKA

Hey. You okay?

REGGIE

I will be...eventually.

TRAMEKA

He was a cool dude. Ima miss him. That was a nice lil speech you said at the service too. It was real touching. I know how much yo friends to mean to you, and how much y'all mean to each other.

REGGIE

Yeah but...Chris the only friend I got now.

TRAMEKA

Nuh-uh. You still got me.

He looks at her and smiles weakly.

TRAMEKA

You got me, him, Chanel, Destiny.

REGGIE

Yeah, that's true. That is true.

TRAMEKA

What was it you wanted to talk to me about? On the phone you said it was important.

REGGIE

Aw yeah, that. This probably the

(MORE)

REGGIE (CONT'D)

last thing you wanna hear from me
right now but Imma say it anyway.

She listens closely. He takes her by the hand.

REGGIE

The day I met you was the best day
of my life, and every passin' day
since always been better than the
one before...I'm not perfect.
Neither one of us are. Everything
not gon' go right all the time and
I'm cool with that. But Trameka
Elaine Mathis, you hear me and hear
me good. I love you! And I swear on
my life to never do nothin' like
this to you again. I ain't ever
gon' find another girl like you.
Please...I need you.

She thinks about it and gives him an honest answer.

TRAMEKA

Look, I was just scared. I don't
care about the past no more, it is
what it is. As long I got you and
you got me, that's all that matter.
I love you wit' every beat of my
heart, Reggie. You and me against
the world.

REGGIE

Straight up?

TRAMEKA

Straight up.

They passionately kiss and embrace.

TRAMEKA

This was perfect timing.

REGGIE

Why is that?

TRAMEKA

I learned some new tricks.

She winks. They laugh a little and keep hugging.

EXT.REGGIE'S BLOCK.NIGHT

Later that night, Reggie meets up with Slim on his corner.

REGGIE

Slim?

SLIM

Reg, man, wassup? Ain't seen you in a while. I heard about'cha boy. Real sorry to hear that.

REGGIE

(hands him a shoebox)

It's cool. Here, this for you. That's all the money I saved up from workin' for you. Everything that's happened taught me that I can't be somethin' that I'm not. I ain't bout that life. I'm sorry.

SLIM

You ain't gotta be sorry. I'm the one sorry. What I started to do was tell Renée, but I aint wanna get you in trouble. Ya know...they say a kid's behavior starts at home with the parents. I see that's true. She did a good job raisin' you. Yo daddy too, even though they ain't together no mo'.

He lets Reggie keep the money.

SLIM

Just promise me one thing...do somethin' wit'cho life and get up outta here. Ain't nuttin' out here but trouble. You don't wanna end up like me. Grown ass man, never left the block. You still got a chance. I believe in you. (they shake hands) You be careful out here.

REGGIE

You too.

He walks away but looks back and yells:

REGGIE

Ay Slim! It's never too late to make a change! Do the right thing!

Touched, Slim sees the truth in Reggie's advice.

REGGIE (V.O.)

There are so many chapters in the
(MORE)

REGGIE (V.O.) (CONT'D)
 story of your life. And right now,
 I was just ending a bad one and
 entering a new one. A hopeful one.

INT. SCHOOL. AFTERNOON

TITLE CARD: MONTHS LATER

It's the end of the year. As Stacy walks around reminding people of her upcoming party - Chris helps Reggie clean out his junky locker for the last time.

STACY
 Tomorrow night at 8 o'clock!

REGGIE
 Iight, we got'chu!

STACY
 Don't forget! Make sure you tell
 Trameka 'n 'em too!

RENT-A-COP
 (blows whistle)
 Let's go! Hall sweep! Ms. Hughes,
 kill the chit-chat, let's go!

STACY
 Boy, shut up, its the end of the
 year! Aint nobody listenin' to you
 no mo'!

He blows the whistle a little harder.

STACY
 Okay, okay, damn!

CHRIS
 Whew! I feel sorry for Trameka when
 y'all get married! (chuckles)

REGGIE
 That's what I got a Mama for!

CHRIS
 (finds Reggie's camera)
 Ay, lemme have this!

REGGIE
 Hell naw! That cost me a grip, let
 me see that!

Together they browse through the photos.

REGGIE

Look at Jamal, caught his lil ass lackin'. My Mama. That's Miss G, Mr. Gardner wife. Trameka. Trameka again. Trameka again. Oh snap, close yo eyes!

CHRIS

Not bad.

REGGIE

Tell her I showed you that and that's yo ass! (Next photo)

CHRIS

(looking at himself)

Who's that handsome gentleman there?

REGGIE

Next! Chanel and Destiny.

They go to the next photo and stop for a second in complete silence. The picture they see is William. Chris presses the button, and next they see Tyshawn. Lastly, the final photo is a group picture consisting of themselves, Tyshawn, and William.

CHRIS

Well since we all done here, ima go find the girls. Just meet us in the parking lot.

Reggie watches him go but soon catches up to him.

REGGIE

Yo Chris! I just want you to know that I treasure all these years we spent together and all the ones we *will* spend together. You just not my friend, you my brother. I'm real blessed to have a friend like you.

CHRIS

Thanks, Reg.

They hug. Reggie then remembers something.

REGGIE

Dang I almost forgot! Yo, it's somethin' I gotta go do right quick! I'll meet y'all in the parking lot!

CHRIS

Light, man.

INT.GARDNER'S OFFICE.AFTERNOON

Reggie pays one last visit to Mr. Gardner. He's busy on the phone.

NEIL

Alright. Thank you, goodbye.
(hangs up) Reggie! How's it goin'
man? Ready for graduation?

REGGIE

Hell yeah. I'm finally finna get
out this jam!

NEIL

I heard that! So what's the plan,
big man? Seeing how you've decided
to take a year off from college,
what are you gonna do with all that
free time?

REGGIE

Keep workin' and finish my book. I
actually found a self-publishing
company online like you told me
about. But- I'm still gon' go to
school and get my education. That's
non-negotiable.

NEIL

You've been through hell and back,
you could use a little break.

REGGIE

Aside from all that, I just wanted
to come by and thank you for
everything you done for me. I
wouldn't have made it without you.

NEIL

Mmm-hmm...and what exactly did I
do?

REGGIE

Ya know, the job, our talks and
stuff.

NEIL

That's about it. Everything else
you did on your own. You never

(MORE)

NEIL (CONT'D)

needed me, you know why?
Perseverance. You had it in you all
along. You see Reg, life can be
pretty discouraging. Sometimes we
do things right and nothing happens
but if we just be patient
everything will fall into place.
Here's a last bit of advice:
Always be yourself. Always stand up
for what you believe in. Never
regret the past. Every mistake,
every tragedy, learn from it. Grow
from it. And as long as you believe
that and more importantly, believe
in yourself...you can never lose.

Gardner extends his fist for some dap but instead Reggie
gives him a big, warm hug.

REGGIE (V.O.)

It's safe to say everything worked
out fine.

EPILOGUE MONTAGE - VARIOUS LOCATIONS

REGGIE (V.O.)

Graduation Day came. Trameka went
to Northern, and Chris and Destiny
went to Ball State. Chanel
transferred after we left, now she
go to school out in the suburbs.
She doin' real good, on the honor
roll, and got her a white boy.
(laughs)

REGGIE (V.O.)

As for Mr. Gardner, he got promoted
to assistant principal and his wife
havin' a baby. I'm happy for him.

REGGIE (V.O.)

Jon-Jon, Corey, and Q each got 10
years for armed robbery. I just
hope for their sake, they don't
drop the soap.

REGGIE (V.O.)

Slim gave up dealin' and got a real
9 to 5.
Sometimes he do sponsor work for
narcotics anonymous.

REGGIE (V.O.)

Stacy in school for business management, hoping to start her own party plannin' company someday. Gone 'head Stacy!

REGGIE (V.O.)

Me & Trameka still together. She studyin' Criminal Justice *and* joinin' a sorority. Let's hope she don't blow it cause y'all know she do got a mouth on her!

REGGIE (V.O.)

We still keep in touch with Chris & Destiny. We link up and chill every now and then. Oh and by the way- they are *no longer* virgins!

REGGIE (V.O.)

My moms got a new job that pays better than her old one, so we were finally able to move. Now I can sleep at night, knowing everything gon' be okay.

We see Reggie speaking before a small crowd.

REGGIE (V.O.)

And as for me, I took Mr. G's advice and got my book published. And it's called: "*Street Life*" Dedicated to Will and Ty.

He sits at his desk, writing. His lamp is the light source.

REGGIE (V.O.)

I still miss them. Everyday. Wonderin' to myself where would they be if they were still livin'. But hey, that's the way it was meant to be. We all have problems sometimes, but all we can do is keep moving forward and pray for better days. There's always hope. Hold your head up high, go in the direction of your dreams, and enjoy life because there's a whole world out here and so much to live for. You can do it.

He stops writing and turns off the lamp. CUT TO BLACK.

"Let us dream of tomorrow where we can truly love from the soul and know love as the ultimate truth at the heart of all creation" - Michael Jackson.

THE END